



ART & POETRY COMPETITION 2025



NO PLACE LIKE HOME

*Sanctuary Foundation presents a
National Art and Poetry Competition*

**Create a response to the theme “No Place Like Home” in art
or poetry.**

**Win the opportunity to have your work displayed at the
British Library for World Refugee Week.**

Open to all children aged 7-18

**We are looking for original art work that helps people
connect emotionally with the refugee experience.**

Deadline for submissions: Friday 9 May 2025

To submit: www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk/art





Sanctuary Foundation is proud to present an exciting art and poetry competition which we ran for the first time last year. We invite students aged 7-18 to reflect on what life is like for the 43.3 million children around the world who are displaced.

Students can create either a piece of artwork or a piece of poetry illustrating their empathy with or experience of being separated from the place they call home.

These creations will be judged by a fantastic panel of celebrities, refugees, and journalists with the top 30 entries going on display in The British Library during National Refugee Week (16th-22nd June 2025).

**NO
PLACE
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HOME**

Inspiration

**Empathy: the ability to be aware of the feelings of others
and imagine what it might be like to be in their position
(or in their shoes)**

*“When I am older I want to help build a world
where children like me don’t have to feel
scared every day in their own homes.”*

*“It makes me sad when I can’t
speak to my teacher. I try my best
but other children will laugh at me
if I say the wrong word.”*

*“I have to help look after my brothers and
sisters while my mum looks for work. It is my
dream to be able to go to school.”*

*“On 1st March I left my whole life behind and
moved in with strangers. I like my new family
but I miss my friends back in Ukraine.”*

*“I heard that millions of children are displaced, but most of the time
I feel like the only one who can’t go home.”*

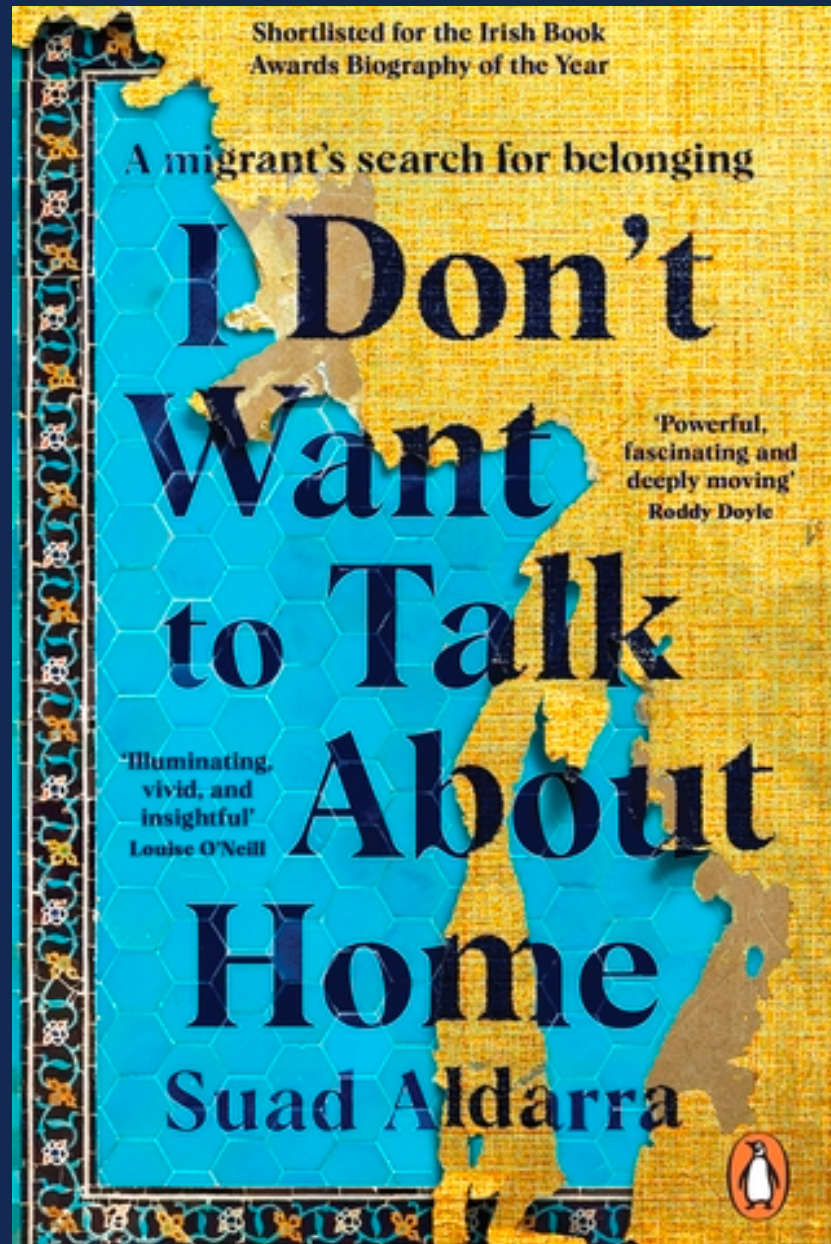
*“My favourite part of the day is drinking tea at bedtime.
It reminds me of my home in Afghanistan.”*

*“I have a good life here in England,
but I miss my cousins coming round
for lunch.”*

*“I hope that one day it will be safe for me to go home. I can’t even imagine
what that is like as I have lived in this refugee camp in Lebanon since the day
I was born.”*

“When we left Myanmar, we had to walk for days and we ran out of food. I still have nightmares.”

Inspiration



What After All Is Home? by Suad Aldarra

It is the smell of a traditional home-cooked meal that greets you as you walk through the front door after a long day.

A warm hug from a grandmother who always treats you like a special guest.

Hysterical laughter with an old friend at a favourite coffee shop where they know your usual order.

A loud family gathering you secretly wish to escape to avoid the endless prying questions.

Your native language on the street signs and on the radio.

Familiar faces, and roads you know like the back of your hand.

It is all those little things that can't be written down or described to those who haven't been there.

It is the hole inside your soul that can't be filled by any other place.



Sanctuary Foundation, in partnership with the British Library and the Church of England Education Office, are inviting all schools across the UK to be part of their art and poetry competition. Students aged 7-18 can participate, with schools digitally submitting their top 3 pieces in each category.

Sanctuary Foundation's panel of celebrities and experts will judge the competition, and shortlisted pieces of art and poetry will be displayed at the British Library during Refugee Week (the week beginning Monday 16 June 2025). They will also be featured in a special national online assembly, in the press and elsewhere. Some of the prize-winning poems will be read out by multi-award winning actor Sir Jonathan Pryce. The prize ceremony will be at the British Library on World Refugee Day (Friday 20 June 2025).



Guidelines



- The competition is open from Saturday 1 February 2025
- Any student aged 7-18 can enter a single submission
- Judging will take place following the closing date
- Artwork should be produced on A4-sized paper, in landscape format, as two-dimensional submissions in any appropriate media
- Poetry should be no longer than 14 lines
- Schools, families or community groups should submit a .jpg image of the artwork or a .pdf file of the poem with the student's first name, year group and school contact details via a link on the Sanctuary Foundation website (www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk/art). Each submission should not be larger than 4MB
- Please retain physical copies of artwork and poetry submitted for potential display
- Schools, families or community groups will be notified of shortlisted winners on Friday 23 May 2025
- Winners of each category will be revealed on Friday 20th June 2025

Please note:



- One entry per student is permitted
- Each entry should be an original unpublished work
- Poetry submissions should be typed, and artwork scanned. This should allow schools to “save as” a .pdf (poetry) or a .jpg (artwork)
- No changes can be made once entries have been submitted
- The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into
- All pieces will be judged on how effectively they express or elicit empathy with an aspect of the refugee experience

We will only use pupil information for winners and highly commended entries that are displayed on the website or at the British Library. We will display pupils' first name, Key Stage and school however we can remove any of these details from our website at your request.

The British Library

The British Library is one of the biggest libraries in the world, with a collection of more than 170 million items from the UK and around the world. As well as housing this enormous cultural heritage, the British Library uses their space and resources to inspire those who are imagining the future.

Over the past year, the British Library has helped to launch the “Books without Borders” initiative that seeks to print and distribute books for newly arrived children and families. It also helped in the launch of a bilingual welcome book for newly arrived children from Ukraine.

The British Library is pleased to be part of the “*No Place Like Home*” competition, inspiring and showcasing young talent that has the potential to make a difference for the 43.3 million children who are displaced worldwide.

All finalists in all categories will have their work displayed at the British Library in the week beginning Monday 16 June 2025.



The *Judges*



Christina Lamb

Christina is one of Britain's leading foreign correspondents and a bestselling author. She has reported from most of the world's hotspots starting with Afghanistan. She has been named Young Journalist of the Year and won 15 other major awards. She was made an OBE by the Queen in 2013 and is an honorary fellow of University College, Oxford.



Sir Jonathan Pryce

Sir Jonathan is a Welsh actor who is known for his performances on stage and in film and television, recently starring in the Netflix series 'The Crown' as Prince Philip. He has received numerous awards, including two Tony Awards and two Laurence Olivier Awards. In 2021 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his services to drama.



Lord Alf Dubs

Lord Dubs was born in December 1932 in Prague, and was one of the Czech children rescued from the Nazis in the Kindertransport. Lord Dubs was appointed a Labour working peer in 1994, and is an active and independent-minded member of the House of Lords, participating in well over the average number of debates. He serves on the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights. He is a trustee of the Open University, and Chair of the Road Safety Foundation.

The *Judges*



Suad Aldarra

Suad is a Syrian-Irish writer and engineer based in Dublin. She was selected as the Common Currency writer in residence for Cuirt International Festival and English/Irish PEN in 2021 and was awarded the Art Councils of Ireland English Literature bursary. Her debut memoir, *I Don't Want to Talk About Home*, was published by Penguin (Doubleday) in July 2022 and was shortlisted for An Post Irish Biography of the Year Award.



Arezoo

Arezoo's family were displaced to the UK, and she used this experience to produce an outstanding piece of art which won one of the categories in last year's art and poetry competition.



Alex Whitfield

Alex is the Head of Learning at the British Library where she leads a team that supports both children and adults to benefit from and enjoy the Library's unique collection. She previously worked at Tate, where she also delivered programmes for everyone from the under 5s to adults both in the UK and internationally, with a particular focus on large-scale, playful events that encouraged everyone to become an artist.



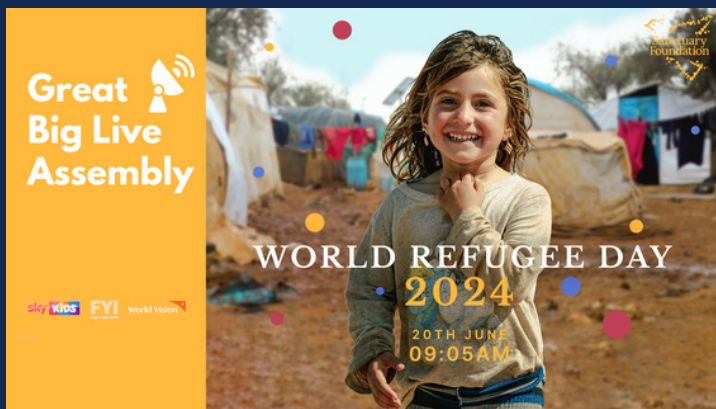
Alysia Lara Ayonrinde

Alysia-Lara is the National Education Lead for Racial Justice within the Church of England. Her distinguished career in education spans 15 years, encompassing senior leadership roles across the U.K., West Africa, and South America. Alysia-Lara is deeply committed to fostering diversity, equity, inclusion and justice, evident through her transformative contributions to learning environments.



Sanctuary Foundation

At Sanctuary Foundation we believe that children can make a significant difference in the world, especially on behalf of the 43.3 million displaced children. We are committed to inspiring and informing children about the experiences of refugees.



Sanctuary Foundation runs the GREAT BIG LIVE ASSEMBLY which has helped over 300,000 children gain understanding and empathy for children across the UK and the world who have been forced to flee. We have helped over 30,000 children from Ukraine receive a warm welcome to the UK through inspiring and equipping hosts and by producing a children's welcome book. Our youth council is made up of children and young people who shape and inspire our work



Sanctuary Foundation is led by Dr Krish Kandiah OBE, and is committed to working quickly and collaboratively to find solutions to issues involving vulnerable people groups, including refugees and asylum seekers.

Sanctuary Foundation has partnered with Save the Children, FYI TV, First News, UNHCR, Choose Love, Great Ormond Street Hospital, Anna Freud Centre, The Children's Commissioner and many others in supporting displaced children in the UK and worldwide.



www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk
Registered Charity Number: 1198534



NO
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43.3 million

children around the world have had to flee their homes due to
war, terror or disaster

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