



The Portico Sadie Massey Awards for Young Readers 2017 - 2018

A good book review...

Some of the most wonderful discoveries we will ever make in our lives will come from reading. Knowing how to read and engage with books can open up countless possibilities, both in the real world and in our imaginations. Writing a review is a fantastic way of really connecting with a book and understanding its deeper meanings and ideas.

We are looking for a review that starts with *This Book Might Change Your Life!* A good review will consider the book fairly and convey a genuine and persuasive argument about whether or not other people should read it. See the website www.theportico.org.uk for some ideas and resources. The rest is up to you!

Judging criteria

1. A reminder: reviews from Key Stage 2 should be no longer than 300 words and reviews from Key Stages 3 - 5, no longer than 500 words.
2. The judges will be looking for evidence of **personal engagement**, therefore originality and a sense of how the reader relates to the book is important. All reviews should be written in the first person. They should not be essays.
3. Judges will not take errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar into account as we are looking for engagement and enthusiasm rather than correctness. Although naturally a secure grasp of English is very helpful in written communication!
4. Don't think that excessive praise is all that is required – 'This is the best book I have ever read!!' This is not the X-Factor. We will reward concise summary, and a reasoned appreciation of the chosen book's distinctive qualities, as well as an account of the effect the book has on the reader. The judges will also appreciate an entry that puts the book in context by mentioning other books the entrant has read which are similar.
5. In the older category, we would expect an awareness of the conventions of book reviewing. Having said that, a review which is written in a ground-breaking way would be very interesting too!
6. We will not be considering the book chosen – for example, a middling review of *Vanity Fair* by William Thackeray will be beaten by a riveting review of *Harry Potter* or even *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. We are after the chemistry between the reader and the book, and we want to find the young people who really enjoy reading on a personal level.
7. You may submit entries on the same book by your class, although this might make their entries less distinctive.