

MEDIA RELEASE

17 June, 2019

Australia launches search for the Children’s Word of the Year as the UK announces its choice: Brexit

Monday, 17 June 2019: Oxford University Press Australia and New Zealand (OUPANZ) has launched its search for the Oxford Australian Children’s Word of the Year.

Primary school children across Australia are invited to nominate their ‘Word of the Year’ and submit a short piece of free writing based on that word. The piece can be creative or factual, funny or serious – it’s up to the student.

The search comes as Oxford Dictionaries for Children in the UK this week announced its 2019 Children’s Word of the Year: ‘Brexit’. Brexit was identified as the Children’s Word of the Year not only because of its significant increase in use (a total rise of 464% since 2018) but also because of the political and social awareness that children demonstrated in their stories and the variety of contexts in which it was mentioned by entrants.

In the search for the Oxford Australian Children’s Word of the Year, a judging panel consisting of experts in children’s English language will evaluate writing pieces submitted by students, based on a word’s popularity, use of the word in context, and frequency.

It is the third time the competition has been held in Australia. ‘Equality’ was named the winning word in 2017, and ‘creativity’ was Oxford Children’s Word of the Year in 2018.

OUPANZ Schools Publishing Director Lee Walker said the language used by primary school students revealed children’s engagement with current affairs.

“In past years we have been surprised by how aware Australian children are of what is happening in current affairs and politics, and I think the UK’s Children’s Word of the Year is clear evidence of that. Entries have drawn on themes of the environment and equality, as well as subjects that are closer to home, like family, friends, pets and sport.

“The Oxford Australian Children’s Word of the Year offers fascinating insight into the issues that are important to young people.”

OUPANZ has partnered with the Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA) for this year’s competition. PETAA and OUPANZ will provide learning resources as part of more than \$6,000 in prizes for winning schools and students.

The Oxford Australian Children’s Word of the Year writing competition closes 20 September, 2019.

More information on the search for the Oxford Australian Children’s Word of the Year is available at OUP.com.au/cwoty.

Ends

For more information, please contact Oxford University Press:

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About Oxford University Press

Oxford University Press (OUP) is the world's largest university press with the widest global presence. OUP Australia and New Zealand is the oldest continuous educational publisher in Australia, supporting Oxford University's objective of furthering excellence in research, scholarship, and education in the region since 1908. We believe that education changes lives, and the right learning resources can make a positive difference for learners of all ages.

About the Primary English Teaching Association Australia (PETAA)

PETAA is a national, not-for-profit professional association supporting primary school educators in the teaching and learning of English and literacies across the curriculum. PETAA builds knowledge, capacity and resources to create confident, skilled, best-practice educators in the areas of literacy, literature and language.