

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
SEPTEMBER 8, 2024



# FUN DAY

## TIMES



**At 'AERO BASH 2024'**

Pic. by Eshan Fernando

**WINNERS** 

**POETRY & ESSAYS**

**PAGES 2 & 5**



**LITERACY**  
**PAGE 3**

**(ONLINE)**



**REPORT**  
**PAGE 6**

**KIDS NEWS**

**PAGES 7 & 8**

Follow us on  
[www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk)

Please send competition entries to:



**Funday Times**  
C/O the Sunday Times  
P.O. Box 1136, Colombo.  
Or  
8, Hunupitiya Cross Road,  
Colombo 2.

Please note that competition entries are also accepted by email.

Write the name of the competition and the date clearly at the top of your entry and include the following details:

Full Name (including Surname),  
Date of Birth, Address,  
Telephone Number and School.

Please underline the name most commonly used.

All competition entries should be certified by a parent or guardian as your own work.

Competition entries without the full details requested above, will be disqualified.

Closing date for this week's competitions:  
**September 25, 2024**

Telephone: 2479337/2479333

Email: [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)



**Aadila Ahmed**  
11 years on September 6

Photographs of members and non-members between 4 – 15 years, for the birthday page, should reach us at least ten days before the birthday, along with a letter from a parent giving full details.



**Age groups:**  
**6 – 10 years / 11 – 15 years**  
**Word limit: 100 Words**

## Poetry Competition

This is your chance to get your poem published here. Entries should be in your handwriting and clearly certified by a teacher or parent as your own creation. Your poem should be posted to Funday Times with 'Poetry Competition' written at the top of the entry. The winner of each age category will be awarded a British Council Young Learner's Library membership.

**11 – 15 years**

**The Dance of Emotions**



In the quiet chambers of the heart,  
Emotions stir and play their part.  
Joy dances with a vibrant hue,  
While sorrow paints a shade of blue.

In the dance of heart's delight,  
And the shadows of the night,  
Each emotion has its place,  
In life's rich, unfolding space.

Anger roars with fiery might,  
And calm arrives in soft twilight,  
Fear lurks in shadows, quiet deep,  
While hope climbs high on a hill too steep.

So let each emotion find its place.  
In the heart's wide endless space,  
For in their dance we find our way,  
Through night and dawn and each new day.

**Methara Perera**  
Lyceum Int. School, Wattala

Please write the date at the top of your entry.

Please note that copied poems will be disqualified.



or [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

Win super books from



**Age:** 9 years and below

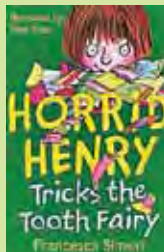
**Word Count:** 150

**Topic:** My favourite story book character

**Win:** Horrid Henry tricks the Tooth Fairy by Francesca Simon

It's Horrid Henry's chance to get rich! So Henry sets out to trick the tooth fairy, with hilarious results.

Not content with causing havoc at home, Henry then ruins Moody Margaret's sleepover, sabotages a wedding... and makes all his teachers run screaming from school.



**Age:** 10 – 12 years

**Word Count:** 150 – 200

**Topic:** The importance of reading

**Win:** Dork Diaries - Popstar by Rachel Renee Russell

Nikki Maxwell's school is holding a talent competition and Nikki can't wait to start practicing dance moves with her BFFs, Chloe and Zoey, and impressing Brandon, with her singing skills! But then Nikki finds out that her arch-nemesis MacKenzie, is entering the contest too.

Can a dork like Nikki take on the most popular girl in school and win? Let the showdown commence...



**Write at the top of your Essay**

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic

### Book Competition



**9 years and below**

*My Best Friend*  
**Aara Akram**  
Harvard Int. School, Matale

**10 – 12 years**

*Kandy Esala Perahera*  
**Ramiru Thissera**  
D. S. Senanayake College, Colombo

**13 – 15 years**

*Olympic Games 2024*  
**Nadithi Kulasekera**  
Ladies' College Colombo

**Age:** 13 – 15 years

**Word Count:** 200 – 250

**Topic:** What you know about International Literacy Day

**Win:** Percy Jackson and the Battle of the Labyrinth by Rick Riordan



As the son of a Greek god, Percy has had his share of near-death disasters – and now his arch-enemy Luke wants to invade Camp Half-Blood via an ancient Labyrinth. If Luke succeeds thousands of bloodthirsty monsters will attack...

So, Percy and his friends descend into the terrifying Labyrinth to stop the invasion!

# International Literacy Day 2024

Compiled by Cecilia Hewavitharana

International Literacy Day has been observed annually since 1967, on September 8, after its declaration by the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), with the aim of reminding people of ‘the importance of literacy as a matter of dignity and human rights’.

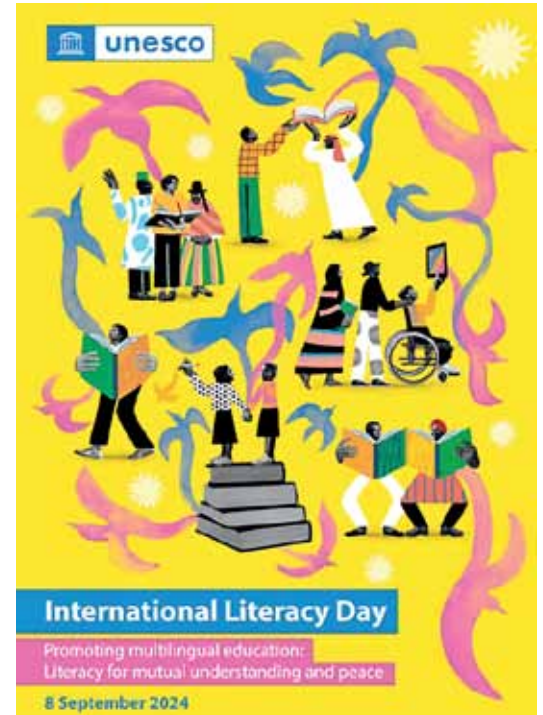
This year’s theme is ‘Promoting multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace’, so let’s look at some interesting facts about languages and the other ways that humans communicate with each other.

## Spoken languages

The history of spoken (or oral) languages is difficult to trace, but the group of languages known as Indo-European, which comprise nearly half of today’s languages, are thought to have come from Europe and Asia.

Its origins are speculated to be a language spoken by nomads thousands of years ago.

Currently, the world’s ten most widely spoken languages are English, Mandarin Chinese, Hindi, Spanish, Standard Arabic, Bengali, French, Russian, Portuguese and Urdu.



## Braille

Visually impaired people read and write using a universally accepted system of characters consisting of raised dots, called Braille (named after its creator, Louis Braille).



## Sign languages

When spoken communication is difficult or not possible (such as with those who are deaf or hard of hearing), sign language is used. Sign language is the method of communicating using bodily movements and is thought to predate verbal communication.

National sign languages, such as French Sign Language (FSL) and American Sign Language (ASL), are more similar to each other than the spoken languages of those countries, because the signs convey concepts and not words of a particular language.

**Literacy in multilingual contexts**

More than half of the world’s population is bilingual, using at least two languages or dialects daily.<sup>6</sup> Yet, 40% lack access to education in a language they speak or understand.<sup>7</sup>

Over 31 million young people who have fled war or crises are learning in a language that differs from the official language of their country of origin.<sup>8</sup>

In our world, which has around 7,000 living languages unevenly spread across some 200 countries—with greater diversity in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia and the Pacific—multilingualism is becoming an increasingly common phenomenon.<sup>9</sup>

**Literacy for mutual understanding and peace**

“ Without language, one cannot talk to people and understand them; one cannot share their hopes and aspirations, grasp their history, appreciate their poetry, or savour their songs. ”

Nelson Mandela

## Esperanto – An International Second Language

In 1887, L. L. Zamenhof, a Polish oculist, created the artificial language called ‘Esperanto’, which he hoped could be used as a way for people of different languages to communicate with each other and thus reduce misunderstandings and conflicts.

Esperanto draws on common European languages, making it easier for Europeans to learn, and today, it is the world’s most widely spoken constructed language.

Sources: UNESCO, United Nations, Britannica, National Geographic

## A tour of British Council Library by students

Recently, British Council Colombo was visited by students of Brightwood International School, Horana for a guided tour of the Library.

There were nearly 130 students from their Primary section of the school, who participated in a few sessions on 'creative writing' and 'importance of reading' which were carried out by British Council to encourage the reading habit among children at an early age.

Children are looking forward to starting the upcoming Reading Challenge programme with the British Council in the month of September which is the 'Literary Month'.

For more information, schools/teachers can reach British Council via [library.events@britishcouncil.lk](mailto:library.events@britishcouncil.lk)



## FROM THE EDITOR

Hi Kids,  
Please send in your Articles and Art for Kids' World, to be published in the Funday Times online edition and website.

As you can see, we have space only once a month for Kids' World articles and art in the print edition.

Therefore, we are planning to carry them every week in the Funday Times online pages as well as on the Funday Times website.

We also invite schools to send in their students' work for a school page in the online edition and website.

Thanking you in anticipation of your positive response.

Mail  or  [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

## 'Aero Bash 2024'

'AERO BASH 2024' an educational, technical and trade exhibition organized by the Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) Academy China Bay was held from August 22 - 26 at the Academy premises.

Pix by Eshan Fernando



### In our online issue this week:

- **Page 5** – Book Competition Winners Essays
- **Page 6** – Young Reporter
- **Page 7** – Kids News
- **Page 8** – News in Pictures

Please log on to the Funday Times website on [www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk) or check out the Sunday Times epaper on [www.sundaytimes.lk](http://www.sundaytimes.lk) for additional pages of this week's Funday Times.

# Book Competition



## 9 years and below

### My Best Friend

I have many friends but my best friend is Amrin. She is smart, beautiful and kind. She holds a special place in my heart. I share my little secrets with her. It is said that "Friends are forever". She is so loving and caring. She likes to play with me. We spend our spare time together.

Amrin has long hair and a nice smile. Her handwriting is so beautiful, and she taught me how to write nice letters. We love reading books together after school and she always cheers me up when I'm sad. Amrin is also very generous and always shares things with me. She is a very understanding friend and I love to be with her.

Amrin is not just my best friend she is like a sister to me. I'm so lucky to have Amrin as my best friend. I love my best friend very much and always cherish our friendship.

**Aara Akram (Grade 2)**  
Harvard Int. School, Matale

## 10 – 12 years

### Kandy Esala Perera

The Esala Perahera also called 'The Festival of the Tooth' is a festival held between July and August in Kandy, Sri Lanka.

The Esala Perahera is held once a year to pay tribute to the Sacred Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha placed at the Sri Dalada Maligawa in Kandy. It contains lots of beautiful traditional items such as fire balls, whip crackers and Kandyan dances. The Esala Perahera is thought to date back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC with the arrival of Princess Hemamala and Prince Dantha.

In the Esala Perahera, the whip crackers and fire balls go first and clear the path for the Buddhist flag bearers. Then comes the *Peramune Rala* riding on the first elephant, followed by the Kandyan dancers and drummers.

Then is the Tusker carrying the casket with the Tooth Relic of Lord Buddha. Then the *Diyawadana Nilame* traditionally walks behind the Tooth Relic of the Buddha that belongs to the Mahanayake monks of *Asgiri* and *Malwathu*. The duty of the *Diyawadana Nilame* is to organize the Esala Perahera. The Sri Dalada Maligawa is also known as the Temple of the Tooth.

After the completion of the Esala Perahera, the *Diyawadana Nilame* gives a letter to the President with the *Nilames* of the *Sathara Maha Devalas*, to let the President know the successful completion of the Esala Perahera. It is a huge festival that is held in Kandy.

**Ramiru Thissera (11 years)**  
D. S. Senanayake College,  
Colombo

## 13 – 15 years

### Olympic Games 2024

The Olympics is considered to be a major sporting event in which thousands of athletes participate representing countries worldwide. These Games take place every four years and originated in Olympia, Greece, leading to the first modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896.

The Olympic Games of 2024 was hosted by France, for the third time from July 26 to August 11.

The country's largest stadium, the Stade de France in Saint-Denis, Paris was utilized for this purpose.

A special feature of this year's Olympics was that the opening ceremony was held outside a stadium. The official theme song of the Paris Olympics was "Parade" and a sense of responsibility, inclusiveness and equality was conveyed by its motto, "Games Wide Open". The mascot was the Olympic Phryge, the traditional Phrygian red cloth cap of the French, symbolizing freedom.

It is estimated that around 10,500 athletes from 206 countries showcased their talents in 45 sports and 329 events. Among the four new sports

added to the 2024 Olympics, are break-dancing and surfing.

The Olympics ended on August 11 with the USA winning the most number of Gold medals. The fact that six Sri Lankan athletes also participated this year, builds up a sense of pride towards our small island.

However, what stands above all other achievements is the display of admirable qualities such as sportsmanship and fair play.

**Nadithi Kulasekera (14 years)**  
Ladies' College, Colombo

## Rugrats



From a Funday Times Young Reporter

## International Day of Charity

International Day of Charity is observed annually on September 5. This day was established by the United Nations to emphasize the importance of giving and helping others.

The date was chosen to commemorate the passing of Mother Teresa, a prominent humanitarian and founder of the Missionaries of Charity, who dedicated her life to helping the poor and needy in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), India.

### Sri Lanka's Charity Work

Sri Lanka has set up many charities dedicated to various aspects, including education, health and social welfare

Notable charities include the 'Sri Lanka Children's Foundation' and the 'Pure Water' Charity. Many organizations in Sri Lanka have worked on projects to provide relief to citizens, such as the 'Sri Lanka Red Cross Society', which has been actively involved in distributing food and essential supplies to

communities affected due to floods.

Have you ever heard this saying by Mother Teresa: "If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one."

Even if we are not able to help a large number of people, we can still make a difference in our own way.



Donating clothes, organizing fundraising activities, and even offering a glass of water to a thirsty person are small acts of charity that each of us can perform.

Let us recognize the importance of giving and implement small acts of charity that can help people. Remember, every small act leads to the achievement of a higher goal!

**Aysha Manaal (14 years)**  
Ilma Int. Girls' School



## FUNDAY TIMES Young Reporters

If you are interested in joining as a Funday Times Young Reporter please fill in the coupon given and send it in to us along with a recent report or interview not exceeding 300 words. Photographs or illustrations would enhance the report.



### Young Reporters Coupon

Name: .....

Date of Birth: .....

Address: .....

.....

Telephone: .....

School: .....

Parent's approval: ..... Date: .....

.....

Young Reporters who have already enrolled with us, please send in new reports for publication.

Or [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)



## Read-a-Book and win a voucher from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop

Read any book of your choice and write briefly about it. What we want is not just a summary of the story but your views on the book.

The best account in the three age groups will be awarded book vouchers of Rs. 500 each from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop. Three winners will be selected each month.

**Your account should not exceed 200 words. Please indicate word count, fill in the coupon and attach it to your entry.**

### Read-a-Book Competition

Name : .....

.....

Date of birth :

.....

Address : .....

.....

.....

.....

School: .....

Tel: .....

Finished book on : .....

.....

Or [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

## Where was the Hogwarts Express this year?

September 3, 2024

**H**arry Potter fans gathered at Kings Cross Station on September 1, awaiting the annual announcement for the start of each academic year.

“Hogwarts express will depart from Platform 9 ¾ at 11am”, just as it happens in J. K. Rowling’s books.

But this year, the announcement at the London train station never came.

Disappointed fans booed on the platform at Kings Cross after they counted down to 11am.

### Network Rail apology to Potter fans over Hogwarts Express

Network Rail, who run London Kings Cross, said they made the decision because of the large crowds that the event brings to the busy train station.

Network Rail said:

“Having begun as a small number of fans coming to Kings Cross to see off the fictional train, last year’s event drew crowds of thousands, which made it challenging for us to run the station normally.

“Our priority must always be passengers who are trying to make their journeys on the railway, so regrettably this year there was no in-person celebration.”

The organisation also apologised to Potter fans. “We’re sorry some Harry Potter fans were left disappointed on Sunday because they weren’t aware of Warner Brothers’ online celebrations to wave off the Hogwarts Express, which was announced back in July.”



In previous years Kings Cross train station in London has welcomed fans like these to celebrate the occasion.



Platform 9 3/4 is a popular tourist destination for Harry Potter fans.



The day attracts Harry Potter fans of all ages to countdown to the announcement.

In July Warner Bros Discovery, who own the Harry Potter franchise, put out a statement asking fans to avoid travelling to Kings Cross.

It said: “Come 1<sup>st</sup> September, fans are strongly discouraged from travelling to Kings Cross as there will be no event, departure board or countdown at the station.

“Instead, everyone is invited to tune in and join proud Hufflepuff and king of the jungle, Sam Thompson, in a specially recorded online programme made in celebration of back to Hogwarts.”

## Five seabirds species added to conservation red list

September 3, 2024

**F**ive seabirds have been added to the UK’s ‘red list’ — this means they are at real risk of dying out — of becoming extinct.

Scientists looking at the country’s breeding populations say that the Leach’s Storm-petrel, Common Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Arctic Tern and Great Skua are among Britain’s most at risk birds.

They join another five threatened species already on the red list — the Kittiwake, Herring Gull, Roseate Tern, Arctic Skua and Puffin.

The update has been carried out by a group of the UK’s leading bird conservation organisations. It follows the recent assessment of 28 seabird species.



Five more seabird species are now on the red list.

**September 3**

# News in Pictures



**Jakarta, Indonesia**  
Pope Francis is welcomed during his arrival at Soekarno-Hatta International Airport for the first stop of a four-nation tour of the Asia-Pacific region that will be the longest of the 87-year-old's papacy.



**New York, USA**  
A woman in a costume participates in the annual West Indian American Day parade in the Brooklyn borough of New York City.



**Baras, Philippines**  
A boy carrying a plastic bag with bread and eggs, rides his bike through a flooded road after heavy rains brought by Tropical storm Yagi, locally known as Enteng, in Baras, Rizal province.

**Paris, France**  
Alexis Ramonet of France falls, during their wheelchair basketball game at the Paris 2024 Paralympics.



**New York, USA**  
Brazil's Beatriz Haddad Maia reacts during her Round of 16 Match against Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki at the US Open.

**Belgrade, Serbia**  
A drone image shows moored boats in the River Sava's inlet, where water has been covered with algae that thrive in warm and polluted environments.



**September 2**



**London, UK**  
Children hold oversized pencils bearing messages including 'rewrite our future' during a rally organised by 'Mothers Rise Up' outside parliament.



**Kathmandu, Nepal**  
People commemorate their deceased fathers at the Gokarneshwor Mahadev temple on the Bagmati River on 'Kushe Aunsi' Father's Day Festival in Nepal.



**South China Sea**  
Chinese and Philippine coastguard vessels collide near the Sabina Shoal in the disputed South China Sea.

Sources : Reuters & The Guardian