

When the TV blows up...

The Geraldton Public Library finds some writing talents among its readers

Patricia Gallaher, the City Librarian of Geraldton has sent the results of a creative writing competition on the theme of *'The Family that reads together...'* to promote the Year of the Family—and incidentally to promote the Library. Sixty entries from a mixed field gave some interesting winners, at all levels from Primary to adult, with poetry, prose and 'one-liners'.

The winning one-liner by an adult was *'The family that reads together, discovers and explores worlds together.'* The winning story by an adult began, 'What a great idea!... the family that reads together... I don't know who thought of it, but I bet that he or she does not have a family like mine.'

'All my life I have collected books; my favourite room is my book room, my favourite view is of books, their titles and authors' names shining gold. My favourite dream is of my family spread around the book room avidly scanning softly turning pages; children on the floor on gaily coloured bean bags; the CD machine faint in the background with unobtrusive music.'

'Reality is different.' And so on, for a very witty description of the family and its dreadful reading habits: chewing page corners, correcting the text, dropping food in the pages, decorating with glue and tinsel.

David Nunn, in the Primary section, writes:

'My family has always loved to read,

Especially novel books.

Even my sister who is only three,

But of course she only looks.'

(Then, racing past the Bible, Enid Blyton and Biggles, to...)

'My family has always read together

In sun, in shine, in any kind of weather.

I'm helping to teach my little sister to read

So she can be a good reader like ME!!'

Casey Maddren, also in Primary, wrote a story about what happened when their TV blew up: 'Katy didn't like it at home with no TV at first. She used to say she was always bored all the time, then she grew used to the idea, and started to like it. As her mother had thought, the family started to do things together, like families should. The family started to play board games and the kids got their homework in on time and the family talked and played and listened to the radio, but most of the time the family read. They read magazines, books, newspapers, they read orally, silently, even in their dreams, but most importantly they read.'

Megan Grant in Year 8 contrasts the reading family with one that spends its time watching the TV commercials, and concludes,

Have you ever read a book that interrupts your thoughts with ads?

Listening to that coaxing is for idiotic lads.

People who read books often do better work at school,

And 'Live life to the max' I even use that as my rule.

If you don't believe me you can put it to the test,

But the Family that reads together

Always comes out the best.'

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