

Who Inspires You?

125 Essay Competition



WYCOMBE
ABBEY

First Place

For our Silent Sisters

This is for every inspirational woman. Who does not have. A Wikipedia page. Every brave. Hero. Who was lost to history. The depths of. Time. And those still fighting. Whose voices. Cannot be heard. Each and every individual who has helped build. Our world today. With a little more. Peace. Each soldier. Warrior. You are all. Heroes. Yet you do not wear a cape. Or fight with superpowers. Or a gun. Each rebel. Who dared to take. A stand. Sister. Let's stand side by side. Dream on. Let us make the dreams. Reality. Sister. For every single. Silent suffering sister. Who chose. To help heal the world. Even in. The most minuscule ways. Who keeps going. You are inspirational. And this. This is for you.

Emily, LV

Second Place

Jane Goodall

As the chimpanzee reached out his hand to hold the outstretched arm of Jane's, she knew her predictions were correct. Apes were capable of emotion and human intellect. She had made observations never made before in this meticulous way, in Tanzania, Africa, alone with nature, pursuing a career in a field where women were not accepted at the time (primatology). She connected with the wild itself, understood it, cared for it, and acted upon its wellbeing, almost becoming its voice. Her powerful words, expressed in *The Book of Hope* and her speeches, inspire me to have her optimism, diligence and peaceful fortitude. Even when I'm 87 years old, I hope to be unfazed by my age, as she is now, learning and sharing knowledge daily.

Frances, LV

Third Place

Dr Wangari Maathai

In the barren lands of Kenya,
Where the sun perched high and hot,
The place where few animals dared to trot,
And where once was water, was not.

In the barren lands of Kenya,
People would walk until their legs shuddered with pain,
Until their eyes would water from strain.
Just to find the water, the falling droplets of rain.

But, one woman had an idea.
Dr. Wangari Maathai restored the area,
She was a scientist, but to the people, a saviour.
And she helped their home glisten with moisture.

She planted a seedling of hope with many other women together.
The action spread, until fifty-one million trees were planted altogether!
And with that seedling, she proved a small action could change the world forever.

Zi, WASHK

Runners Up

I am inspired by every single girl who does not have an education. In the world, we have 130 million girls who are out of school, and 15 million of them will have never set foot in a classroom. As someone who has spent most of their life in school, core memories of learning and life lessons have been created, and I know that when I am older I have the opportunity to be independent as I can always rely on my education. To have no opportunities, to have nothing except a life of dependency and no choice, even to receive a simple education is what drives me towards the future because change is essential and we, as a privileged new generation need to bring it.

Ahana, LV

Corrinne

A British-French woman,
Fearless, competitive, and athletic,
Strong and Bold
lived a merry,
childhood.

The husband died
The widow and her daughter
alone.

Became a secret agent, then,
Hid the fact from
everyone.

She trained and worked hard,
often
doing things like
fieldcraft.
weapons.
demolition.
night and day navigation.
cryptography.
uniform recognition.
communications.
escape tactics.
parachute jumping.
Broke her ankle.

Then she was
ready.

Danger.

First mission
a success,
but it was
too late to
celebrate.

Second mission.
Death.
Bad weather
German soldiers.

Interrogated,
put into forced labour,
had
her other two agents.
Finally
Executed.

She was a woman.
With no known
grave.

She was a mother,
an agent,
who sacrificed
herself
for her
country.

Her fearless
determination.
She was no other than
Violette Szabo.

Ashley, UIII

Sadako Sasaki

Hiroshima, the first atomic bomb.
City of 300,000, half of us gone.
Half of us barely clinging on.
Little boy, not so little.
Heavens of ash and cinders.
White light. Black rain.

A decade later and I'm on my
hospital bed, folding a paper crane.
They say I need one thousand, but hope
is in short supply. Medicine wrappings will do,
I expect. My fingers deftly tuck the corners
in between periods of long slumber.

It's a fanciful dream, but somewhere
inside me lies a flickering hope.
A hope I wish could be contagious.

So in spite of all they've done,
and the darkness that follows our heels,
I want to inspire. I want to heal.
And I wish for peace in this ailing world.

Catherine, WASHZ

Han Hong

Where hides true talent nowadays?
Behind superficial layers,
Masks of beauty, wealth, charisma.
We have come to disregard what
real skill, fine art, innovation is.
In a world where patience is thin,
where it's all about flash and style,
Where a pretty face will take you further
than hard work and effort.

She was different, she didn't care.
Dedicated herself to her lifelong
dreams, devoted herself to her music.
She perfected, honed her craft then
shared her works with the world.
Her voice was angelic, idyllic,
perfectly sweet as the melodies of spring
yet mature, assertive, passionate
and rich with the vibrant hues of autumn.

She had not the slim figure of other stars
or the delicate feminine features of any respectable celebrity,
but her song encapsulates beauty itself,
and compensates for any lack in appearance tenfold.
She deflects the haters and ignores the critics,
focused as always on bringing joy
to those who want to listen.

For HanHong, a Chinese singer
[A biography](#)

Cice, UIV

Maria Sibylla Merian

Before Carl Linnaeus classified organisms, before John James Audubon drew wild birds, before Charles Darwin proposed his theory of evolution, there lived a girl named Maria Sibylla Merian who loved to draw insects. With a keen eye and a deft hand, she rendered soft green caterpillars, papery-winged moths, and intricate butterflies. But drawing these captivating creatures wasn't enough for Maria; she burned to understand their mysterious lives. Where did they come from? What did they eat? And perhaps most remarkable of all, were caterpillars and butterflies connected? Maria Merian became an artist, adventurer, and scientist in seventeenth-century Europe – when women were rarely allowed responsibilities outside the home, and odd interests led to witchcraft accusations. Her intrepid fieldwork and careful observations about metamorphosis changed science forever.

Fiona, UIV

Amelia Jenks Bloomer

We have all complained about uncomfortable clothes but it is crucial to remember that the garments we wear today precede those that have inflicted pain and restricted women for centuries. Amelia Bloomer was an American women's rights activist who created the first Magazine, the Lily, written by and for women in 1849. At this time, women lecturers were considered 'unseemly' and so Bloomer expressed her feminist views in these pages, striving to promote practical yet elegant clothes that were befitting to tasks undertaken by the modern woman. Bloomer's courage to produce a magazine in a patriarchal society and to fight for equality through clothes is commendable. Her notoriety admittedly is small, but the fashion piece, the Bloomer, is associated with her and her inspirational work.

Lara, UV

A Whirlwind (Emma Radacanu)

Stark lights, vague shapes
The harsh radiance hounding down the insecure
The unfamiliar, with this baited battle of raw skill and bated breath Barbed stares, shapes of dread.
The eye-to-eye stare-down; war of perseverance despite the odds
the blisters, swollen, hard - a small price to pay
for this bittersweet victory, to last. Open wound
you've got a nasty one there, ought to be cleaned up
a scar for days of aching muscles and gruelling practises
those years of perseverance that amounted to
Serve after serve, each one hurtling through the air
bullets proportioned with accuracy and cunning
A reflection of your potential, the potential of the people
The potential product of those 13 years.
Inspirational, at the tender age of 18
Neither fully fledged, nor lacking the odd feather
Precariously balancing on the tightrope
Resistance. For pressure gnaws at your conscience
Influence of the Media have not been easy to shoulder when one is so young as you
Taking the world by storm.
Urged to brave through the most anguished moments of despair
To triumph for one's country: the call of patriotism.
Yet it is you who is the storm
The fire
The passion
The perseverance
The war-song in your heart.
Ardent in your zeal and gracious in manner.
Never bow your head in shame of defeat
There is nothing to be ashamed of.
For this your chance, your golden opportunity
To show the world that you are strong.
A true legend.

Sissie, UIII