

6th EUSTORY competition in Finland

“Two Stories”

The Association for Teachers of History and Social Studies in Finland arranged the sixth round of the Finnish EUSTORY competition during academic year 2013-2014. The competition was open to students at the upper secondary school level (16-19 years old) and pupils at the lower secondary school level (13-16 years old).

All levels combined, 266 students and pupils with 243 competition entries took part in the competition. The number of competition entries declined during this academic year. The association for Teachers of History and Social Studies in Finland did not get any new funding and had a smaller budget to promote the competition. The organisers used the association's periodical, e-mail and newsletters and to inform teachers about the competition. The competition has found its place in the lower secondary school level, but fitting history essay into the intensive study schedule in upper secondary schools is difficult because there are no obligatory research courses in Finland.

The topic of the 6th round was "Two Stories" and it was possible to participate in Finnish, Swedish and English, either alone or in group of up to three persons. The majority of the entries were written in Finnish, but there were also some entries in Swedish and English. With a wide competition topic the organisers wanted to make sure that history teachers had many possibilities to integrate the competition in the national curriculum. It was up to the participants to define their research topic further, but the idea was to compare the chosen phenomenon from two points of view, for example the experiences of two persons. The Second World War, emigration, history of hobbies and professions were popular topics. Interviews were used as primary sources in many entries, but students also used other primary sources such as archives, magazines and autobiographies. Entries were sent in from all around the country.

The first prize in the upper secondary school level was awarded to Olivia Fokeerah from Ressu Upper secondary school in Helsinki with her essay “Congressional Response to Civil Rights Demonstrations”. The second prize went to Annina Claesson from Matliden gymnasium in Espoo, with her essay "Finland's Independence in School Books Now and Then". The third prize went to Olga Tammi from Salo's Senior Secondary School in Salo. The essay was called “The Effect of Cultural Heritage to my Life through my Great-grandmother”.

The first prize in the lower secondary school level went to Helene Nyländen from Olari's school in Espoo. Her essay was entitled “Child Caring Institutions in the Beginning of 20th Century and Today”. Second prize went to Emma Halla-aho from Rauman kari School in Kalajoki with her research “Century Changed, did Teaching Change? The Faces of two Female Teachers in my Family”. Third prize was awarded to Emilia Pihlaja for her study “Emigration from Finland to North America and Sweden during the Years 1860-1960”. In addition, Katri Haapalinna and Pinja Salo received honour awards.

Hanna Ylönen