

## **HKYWA Interview Response – Michelle Lo, Fiction Group 4**

**Describe how you felt when it was announced that you were the winner of Fiction Group 4?**

It was amazing to know that all my writing and hard work had paid off. I felt like I was on top of the world. In fact, I think I went into a minor state of shock. I heard my name being called, and I was like, “is this for real?” I was already grateful to be a finalist - I hadn’t expected to win the entire category! The whole situation seemed surreal; my mind only began to process it when I was going off stage, and I nearly tripped on the walk back to my seat.

**What do you think are the benefits of entering a writing competition?**

The mere word “competition” makes you want to do your best and give your all. I think that entering a writing competition gives writers that extra motivation to perfect their pieces and push the limits of their creativity. Even if you don’t win, your skill will have improved; and if you do win, then you also get recognized for your efforts.

**How did you prepare for the competition this year?**

Since the theme was based on an existing folktale, I made sure to familiarize myself with the original characters and the general storyline. I also started writing small prompts for potential stories as early as possible. After I had my plot, I just kept writing drafts over and over again, until I was confident that everything was perfect. By the end of the process, I think I had nearly 20 drafts sitting in my folder!

**Has winning your category in HKYWA 2018 encouraged you to write more fiction?**

Winning has definitely given me a boost of confidence in my writing and encouraged me to show my stories to others. I haven’t written as much as I’d like to (although, in my opinion, you can never write enough fiction) but I’ve certainly been reading a lot more.

**Are you entering this year’s competition? Do you have any creative tips for students looking to enter this year’s competition?**

I’m looking forward to entering this year’s competition. I’d encourage any students who are also entering to thoroughly research the theme, so that you’ll do the original story justice when you rewrite history into fiction. Proofreading is also super important - by slashing out as much as possible, you can condense the story down to its most fascinating parts.