**SPEECH OF HONOURABLE MINISTER**

**Young Journalist of the year Competition**

**Monday 26 May 2014**

**Mr Meettook, Permanent Secretary,**

**Mrs Dawn Long, Country Director, British Council, Mauritius**

**Mr Kiran Ramsahye, Executive Director, Le Matinal**

**Directors, Assistant Directors, Administrators, Rectors,**

**Ladies and gentlemen and distinguished guests**

It is with immense pleasure that I note the enthusiasm for creative writing among our students, despite daunting challenges of this technology-driven world.

Creative writing is as old as the cave man. It is likely that writing had its origins in oral and pictorial storytelling.

Through the ages storytelling has served many purposes. Over centuries stories, have helped to shape moral, ethical and cultural codes of conduct.  They provide entertainment and pass on personal and social history.

In this electronic age, with the emergence of television and video games, storytelling has been displaced. However, writing continues **to be a powerful force for social and individual growth.**

And, in a strange way, the electronic age has the potential to re-invent the written word and creative expression in various ways. Creative expression through writing serves to expand the imagination of our children.

No one can be more creative than children.  They constantly stretch their imagination.  They could spend hours upon hours listening to stories, then to expressing them in the form of reading.

We should encourage children to tell their own stories, and as early as possible, we should introduce them to creative writing which will later on, bring to the fore their hidden creative qualities.

Nowadays, though we have noticed a change with the digital culture, *yet writing continues to be one of the most important form of expression.*

*What each of us creates is unique. And this requires hard work, self-reflection, risk taking and support.*

*W*e should offer to our students, a platform for creative expression. There are numerous opportunities that may push them not only in the craft of writing, but push them to express their inner feelings into words.

[**William Wordsworth**](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/64845.William_Wordsworth) said:

. “Fill your paper with the breathings of your heart.”

Creative writing is a means of self-expression that can instill a sense of self-achievement and boost up self-esteem. At our Ministry’s level we have several activities and competitions to encourage students demonstrate their writing skills. Even at primary level, “Budding Writers” is a competition which initiates our pupils to express themselves in writing.

We focus on the importance of co and extra-curricular activities which provide our youth with a holistic development and open new avenues for them in life.

It was an honour and privilege for our country to be represented by our two winners of the ‘Young Journalists Award of the year’ in an International Conference where they have met young people from different parts of the world. It was indeed, a unique opportunity for the growing-up as this exposure to the outside world should have given them numerous opportunities for networking and for establishing bonds.

It is essential to prepare our students to become global citizens. Despite the fast-changing environment, we endeavour to provide the best conditions for teaching and learning to take place: all aspects of the learners are developed.

I would like to thank British Council and ‘Le Matinal’ for having given such a platform for expression to our students. I have been informed that you had to write **on the hero who inspires you**. I sincerely hope that this hero of yours, will be your role model and will continue to inspire you and to boost up your creativity and push you to climb higher and higher on the ladder of success.

I take this opportunity to congratulate all participants and winners for having engaged in this journey. I would also congratulate Heads of schools, Educators and parents for your encouragement and support. Congratulations to British Council and Le Matinal for such a laudable initiative!

Thank you for your attention.