

J.F Atkins

Science Competition 2014

What is Life ?

Tell the story of DNA and RNA

In 1953 J.D Watson and F.H. Crick discovered the Structure of DNA and the Story begins.....

TELL THE STORY OF DNA and RNA
through an illustrated Essay/Poem



What is Life?

On the 28th of April 2013, a Sculpture designed by Charles Jencks, celebrating Life's Information with representations of DNA and RNA was opened by Dr J.D Watson at the National Botanical Gardens in Dublin. This event was a celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the discovery of DNA.

In 1953, James Watson and Francis Crick presented the structure of the DNA-helix, the molecule that carries genetic information from one generation to another. The scene was set for a future of world changing decisions which would impact on all our lives and will continue to do so.



The sculpture was accepted on behalf of the Irish people by Minister Brian Hayes T.D.

Before a large audience, beside the lily pond that lies at the heart of the Botanical Gardens, Dr J.D Watson officially opened this fine landform which celebrates true life. The double Helix, recognisable in this structure, stands proudly at the head of the path rising above the landscape. The twisting form of RNA indicates its powerful function throughout the landform.

Winners

An important highlight of this momentous event was the awarding of 'What is Life' competition prizes to Post Primary and Primary school winners by Dr J.D Watson. These students described their genetic understanding of DNA and RNA through story and poem. Their interpretations were clever, creative, imaginative and entertaining.

Post Primary Winners

- Niamh Maher, St Angela's School, Waterford
- Éabha Wall, Coláiste na Toirbhirte, Bandon, Co Cork

Primary Winners

- Milly Smith, Our Lady of Mercy NS, Bantry
- Honourable mention: Cormac Farrelly, P4 Rowandale Integrated School, Armagh



Each winner also received a copy of J.D. Watson's book "The Annotated and Illustrated Double Helix". 2012, autographed and personalised by Dr. Watson.

This competition was organised by J.F Atkins, Research Professor, Dept of Biochemistry, U.C.C. in collaboration with West Cork Education Centre. The dissemination of the project was organised by WCEC and supported by the Education Centre Network.

Why Enter?

- The winning student will receive €500.00.
- Increase your awareness of DNA & RNA and genetic understanding.
- Links to the Curriculum eg Biology and Chemistry.

***Dr Venki Ramakrishnan,
MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology,
Cambridge, 2009 Nobel laureate for his determination of
ribosome structure, will give a talk on 'Antibiotics and the
machine that reads our genes' at 3.30pm on Saturday 26th April
in the National Botanic Gardens, Dublin.***

Dr Venki Ramakrishnan will present our School winners with their prizes at this event.

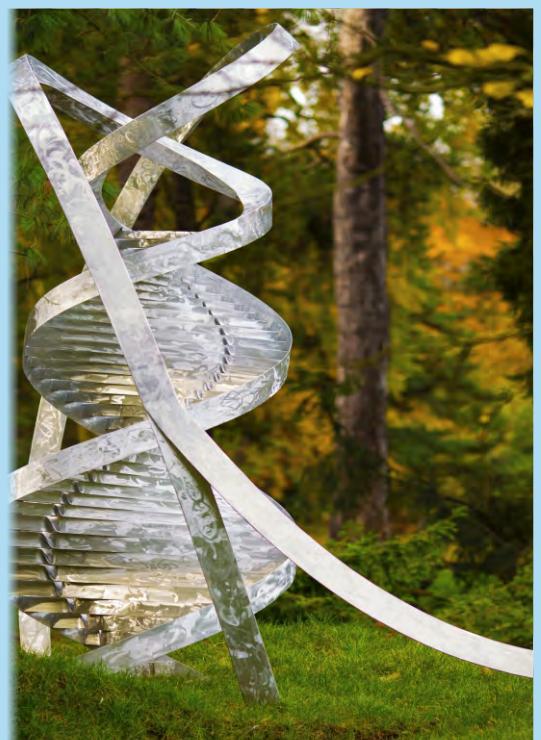
Winners will be contacted by mid-April 2014.

Education Programme

This competition has been designed to encourage students to become more aware of DNA and RNA.

This awareness raising initiative promotes the importance of DNA/RNA and in particular their relevance to research, medicine, food production, Forensics, genealogy and life.

Through this competition, students will be more aware of genetic understanding and develop a respect for its relevance to Life.



Submission Address

Completed submissions to be posted to the following address:

Science Competition, West Cork Education Centre, The Square, Dunmanway, Co Cork

no later than 28th March 2014

Terms and Conditions

1. Submissions are invited from INDIVIDUAL students, not teams or classes.
2. Deadline for submission : Friday March 28th 2014
3. To be Submitted to West Cork Education Centre, Main Street, Dunmanway, Co. Cork by post.
4. Envelopes to be clearly labelled, 'Science Competition'.
5. Entries by post must be in printed form and bound if possible.
6. Format MS Word or PDF
7. Please keep a back-up copy for reference and email to wcecentre@eircom.net as confirmation of your entry.
8. Drawings and other illustrations can be included as part of the submission.
9. The entry may be presented as an essay or poem as desired.
10. If using essay format, the total word count must not exceed 1200 words.
11. Explore the web for knowledge but plagiarism and web text will eliminate entry from the competition. **Original Work only.**
12. Material may be used on the West Cork Education Centre website www.westcorkeducationcentre.com.
13. It is a condition of entry that all rules are accepted as final and that the competitor is to abide by these rules. The decision of the judges is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Submission of an entry will be taken to mean acceptance of these terms and conditions.

The Judges for the competition are:

Noel Lowdnes, Professor, Department of Biochemistry, NUI Galway.

Tony Kavanagh, Professor, Department of Genetics, Trinity College Dublin.

Ultan Power, Dr. & Senior Lecturer in Virology, Queens University Belfast

Tom Kennedy, Editor Science Spin.

John Atkins, Research Professor, Departments of Biochemistry UCC.