



Arkbound's 2025 National Writing Competition for prisoners and people with experience of incarceration

**TASK: submit a story or a poem, up to
1000 words, on the theme "Belonging" to:
waltraud@arkfound.org or by post to
Arkbound, 9 Saltmarsh Drive, BS11 0NH**



Please submit an entry up to 1000 words, of your story or poem on the theme of "Belonging"

1. We appreciate everyone entering the competition. Any questions, please get in touch.
2. Your stories will reach people who understand, care and listen. Our panel who selects the winning entries includes people with lived experience of the criminal justice system.
3. The top 50 selected entries will get published in our upcoming book "Belonging" in 2026
4. The top three entries receive a cash prize of £30.- or accredited to their HMP accounts
5. The next five top scoring entries will receive £15.- in the same way
6. Every entry will receive a 'thank you' certificate from Arkbound Foundation
7. Everyone participating can apply to join our Writers Within Walls free mentorship programme
8. Winning entries will receive a free copy of the publication, featuring them as author.
9. Participating HMP will receive the book to display in their libraries.

Entry conditions:

1. Please submit a story, poem, fiction, cartoon... on what comes into your mind when you hear the word "Belonging", or what it means to you, and submit it before 31.12.2025
2. The theme "Belonging" was chosen by prisoners from GRT (Gypsy, Romany and Travellers) backgrounds.
 - We believe that nobody 'belongs' to prison, while connecting to where you 'really belong to' could help you 'touch ground' and path a way towards a better future.
 - Please put down what you personally feel or associate with "Belonging".
3. The wordcount of the submission should be up to 1000, while a few graphics or images are accepted as supplements or additions.
4. Handwritten stories should be readable, while spelling mistakes don't matter.
5. The deadline for submitting entries is the 31st of December 2025
6. Support from writing mentors or probation officers is accepted, while it should be indicated in the submission. In case AI is used, please let us know in which way. We usually can only allow it for entrants with accessibility needs.
7. You are free to choose a penname. Arkbound will respect your privacy.