

**Write Now** is a unique talent development programme for 16–18 year olds that aims to nurture young people's creative writing abilities. Participants are supported through mentoring, workshops and networking as well as having an opportunity to take part in **The Times and The Sunday Times Cheltenham Literature Festival**.

Here's Write Now participant Claire with her poem 'Phoenix'.

Flamed wings light up the sky,  
fly left fly right  
glistening like ribboned fire.  
The moon is my guardian,  
the night my savior.

I travel from one to another,  
Searching for another to be home.  
Light spreads in all directions,  
like a rose opening her petals.  
Stars. Home.

My latest star draws nearer-  
it's you. Grey eyes hold starlight,  
skin shimmering with the moon,  
sun dulling in your presence.  
I follow promises of hope.  
I follow promises of you.

Stars stretch into a carpet,  
which we walk along together.  
Dreams come true,  
I'm with you forever-  
but now you say it's over.

I'm floating in darkness.  
Slowly I'm  
falling.  
Falling from the dulled stars.  
I feel like I'm going across the line  
searching for my star which is gone.  
A phoenix can't find a second star.

I can't try anymore.  
A phoenix should rise from the ashes,  
that you left  
but I cannot.

Blackened wings darken the sky.  
Fall left fall right.  
Stars are nothing without you.