And the winner is . . .

CHRISTINA Tregenza may be only 12 years old, but this year’s winner of the Ultimate Story competition knows enough about writing to avoid a cheesy ending.

So far, four adult authors and last year’s winner have each contributed a chapter about Jake Fleming and a mannequin store dummy come to life. Christina, who wrote the final chapter, had to determine Jake’s fate. Sadly for Jake, it is not ideal.

“I didn’t want it to end like all fairytales end,” says Christina. “I wanted it to be different. But I didn’t want something bad to happen to him. And I really wanted to tie together interesting things that the [previous authors] wrote, like the blue flash and the classical music.”

Unsurprisingly, Christina loves reading — anything from history to choose-your-own-adventure — and her favourite author is Enid Blyton. She enjoys writing both fiction and non-fiction, including speechwriting. When she found out her chapter had won, she was “really happy and a bit surprised”. “I entered the competition not to win but just to have fun and try my best,” she says.

She says she owes her love of books to her parents. “They read to me when I was little and I just got into the fantasy world and I started reading myself.” Christina, whose other main hobby is sport, is school captain at Whitehorse Primary School. “I’d like to continue writing and playing sport. And one day I’d like to publish my own book, probably non-fiction.”

Christina is invited back next year to write one of the chapters in the 2012 Ultimate Story and wins $200 worth of Penguin books. She and the other nine finalists, chosen from more than 1500 entries, will attend a workshop with author Sherryl Clark at Media House. STEPHEN CAUCHI