



The Anthology

Alexandria City Public Schools '17-'18



Cover Photo by Prova Zaman

"The Anthology" is a compilation of extraordinary poems submitted by ACPS students between 3rd and 12th grade. The ACPS Poetry Contest originated over ten years ago and continues as an annual tradition and means to celebrate and honor our student writers. We are delighted to announce that this is the first year the contest has extended beyond elementary, to include our secondary schools.

Designated teachers, serving as poetry liaisons at each school, coordinated school-level poetry contests and judging for grades 3-12. Each school judging committee selected one best of grade level poem as well as one overall best-of-school poem.

Poetry liaisons forwarded their four school winning poems to the division contest and a few additional division-level designations were identified, including division best-of-grade-level winners, a creativity award (a special award given by the Alexandria City Poet Laureate), as well as student ACPS Poet Laureates. The ACPS Poet Laureates award is selected from the submissions of school overall winners.

Winners from each of the above categories are featured in this 2017-18 edition of, "The Anthology." The elementary version of "The Anthology" also becomes a core text that students in grades 3-5 will study in the poetry unit of the ACPS writing curriculum.

A tremendous thank you to the T.C. Williams Labyrinth staff - especially Grace Asch and Lily Morton for their work judging and for the book's excellent layout - and to Mr. Taki Sidley, Labyrinth's advisor, for bringing this book to a new level and aiding in the expansion of this contest. Additionally, thank you to all the participants. Enjoy!

-Kimberly Schell and Suzanne Lank

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A poet is, before anything else, a person who is passionately in love with language. - W.H. Auden

*If I feel physically as if the top of my
head were taken off, I know that is
poetry.* - Emily Dickinson

Elementary Winners
Grades 3-5

Grade 3 Winner

The Moon



Feel the moon's coldness.
See the light fall and dark wake
Hear the moon call you.



Reese Waterhouse
Ms. Bucceri

Grade 4 Winner

The Boy with the Banjo



In the dark room, all alone,
Playing the banjo.
In my mind I hear
My grandpa tapping his foot
But he is gone.

Karima Ortiz Cruz
Ms. Fett

Grade 5 Winner

Anger

When I was angry, I said some things
I wish I hadn't
Since I flinged
My dignity and my pride
Right out the door
I really don't want to do that
Anymore
I wish I was
Silent as a mouse
Instead I talked myself
Right out of the house
The tune had a few bad endings
And I'm going down a road
That keeps on bending
I want to turn

This around
I know you don't
Want to be angry anymore
So let's draw the line
Because fighting's a bore
And fighting is not
At all what I need
I need you,
And I hope that's what you see.
I'm sorry.

Elodie Anderson
Mr. Tertocha

Overall School Winner

What Is Normal?

Is normal a being, how we act and what we do?
Is normal how we talk, and laugh, smile too?
Is normal me,
Is normal you?
Is normal how they judge us and laugh at us too?
Is normal happy, is normal sad
Is normal just being emotionally mad?
But the real normal and what the truth is
Is that as long as you're being you, that's the best normal there is.



Cecily Boyle
Mrs. Vega

Grade 3 Winner

Gymnastics

Gymnastics you make
my heart do back flips

You stay on my mind
for days at a time
mostly when I have
practice.

Flip and flop around
the clock you remind
me that I can soar

But just remember
in September I have
to practice my routine for floor
squeeze and stretch
bend and flex

It's not just about the physical.
With twist and turns
sprains and bar burns

You remind me to expand my mental.
All in despite the falls you challenge
me to keep on pushing
Oops oh no
forgot to point my toes
Hope the judges were not looking



Marlee Anderson Farmer
Mrs. Fiesel

Grade 4 Winner

The Clown

I saw a clown asleep on the street
I made him a house
I hammered the walls and put four windows
I also planted seeds for his garden
But he did not love it.

Allyson Castillo
Ms. Lower

Grade 5 Winner

Why Do People Hurt Others Feelings?

I wonder why people hurt others feelings.
Is it funny or cool?
I wonder if other people think that it's funny.
I wonder why people make bad choices.
Is it that they earn more friends or don't have many friends and get upset?
I wonder who did what to you.
Is this right? How should you feel?
I wonder why they deserved to get hurt by one or the other.
Why do you do what you think is what you have to do?
Don't you think that inside of you there's actually a person that could be a better person?
Think to yourself I wonder why people hurt others feelings.

Kyanna Quiroz McClain
Ms. Lower

Overall School Winner

My Mom's Hard Life

My mom has a hard life.
Two of her brothers died.
They killed her dad when she was 11.
My mom had a hard life.

My mom has a hard life.
She works hard and her legs hurt.
She takes care of me and my brother and we don't help her that much.

My mom has a hard life.
But that is going to change.
I'm here to help.

My mom has a hard life no more.

Edgar Lovo Marquez
Mrs. Taylor

Grade 3 Winner

Wind



Wind
Moving gently
Slow as a snail
on winter days

Calm
Moving
trees
to the side
and clouds
to the north

Gentle
waiting to be
moved by a
running child

Calm
Gentle
Wind

Madelyn Bowsher
Mr. Holland

Grade 4 Winner

THE UNICORN

Once I was in a forest a forest where no one goes. A forest where magical creatures in the night they come without a doze. But there was a creature of all you may know by the amazing wonderful unicorn!

When I was in the forest where no one goes But then I saw a hint of light I was shocked in the moment so I hid in a bush.

I tried to stay calm without bringing in a fear. I wanted to see that flash of light that happened during this night.

I started too quickly by not making a sound and getting out of the bush. Then I saw the unicorn with my very two own little eyes!

The unicorn was majestic, magical a miracle but a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful unicorn!

I ran home with my feet crunching in the grass I went home to my room and into my bed

It was the first time I saw the magical beautiful

UNICORN!

Genesis Ortez
Ms. McFadden

Grade 5 Winner

Flowers

Soft
Like silk
Beautiful
Like a sunset
Colorful
Like a rainbow
As we all know
Roses are red and
Violets are blue
Flowers are a symbol
Of love and happiness too
So when you pick a
Flower remember this poem
And all the love it packs, too

Aiyanna Dixon
Ms. Pantaleon

Overall School Winner

My Chaotic Night

I ran in the wind with my hair blowing wild, I sprinted through the grass for just a short while I threw my hat off blow through the sky but all the sudden I stopped in my tracks when I saw the one and only Grindyvaxe It lashed its tail and showed its teeth and in just a little while it was running after me like a fierce crocodile but after lots of running in fear I stoped to scratch my ear it pinned me down with such force I got knocked off my feet before I could say remorse I got one hand free and all most a knee when my pet cazee came after me it tackled the monster till it could not get free then the cazee came up to me I hopped on his back and held on tight as me and my pet cazee sored through the night just him and me.

Kate Joffrion
Ms. Lansing

Grade 3 Winner

Rose

Pure goodness
Redder than an apple
More graceful than a swan
Perfect in every way
What a beauty

Drips slowly raining all over again
Opens up showing all its glamor
Making all the plants so jealous
It stands straight up
What a beauty

Lives such a short life
Spring to winter
dies a sad death
So cold
What a beauty



Natalie Cavender
Ms. Kuehl

Grade 4 Winner

Forever More



Surrounded by love,
Like a gentle dove,
Lightly falling,
Friends a calling,
Bitter wind at the door,
Forever more,
Forever more.

Bethany Panza
Ms. Scartz

Grade 5 Winner

Reality

Sit under the moon in neutrality
And never go back to reality
Leave all your fears behind
And you will be aligned
With the beauty the moon can bring.

Run,
under the light of the sun
Never reflect
On the imperfect
And find out what dreams really mean.

Throughout the day and night
From the break of dawn to midnight
Let the spark in your eyes
Look up to the skies
And the adventure of a lifetime will begin

Julia Kelly
Dr. Schudmak

Overall School Winner

Different

If the world ends
Who said I would die
If I had flown
Who said I would fly
If life is a song
I don't want it to end
If you can't keep going
I'll lend you my hand
Life blows away
But I'll bend over backwards
You can be different
But you don't understand
You can't be the same
There's no one to blame

Mia Winn
Dr. Schudmak

Grade 3 Winner

Beauty Trees



A long time ago lived
Rows of beauty tress
Each one was special
In its own way
The wind blew softly against the trees
Blossoms fell and the tree became emptier and emptier
Until one day they all fell off
It was winter, they knew it by the air.

Leyla Budak
Mrs. Farlow

Grade 4 Winner

Dreams

Time can fly,
Hope can die,
Life can make you ask it why.
Hold your dreams,
Hold them tight,
They will only come at night.
In your dream, you'll fly a kite.
Instead of dark it will be light.
Your kite when it takes flight,
Woosh! It will go from blue to white.
You're superman,
There's no kryptonite,
But bam! Your kite hits the ground.
Then slam! You hear as you turn
Around. "Oh man" you say in a
Weak voice. "It looks like I have no choice"
You call your mom as she comes
Outside hope quickly comes alive.

Elena Sokolove
Mrs. Sperry

Grade 5 Winner

Lighthouse

The beach is where I rest,
The waves call out to me as I shine on them.
As ships' bells ring, I tell them they're close to land.
At night they need me, but at day they don't,
But if I wasn't there at night, who would be?
A sailor's house that's who I am, nothing less
Nothing more. What else would a lighthouse want?
Maybe some friends that would be nice, don't you think?
That's my story, well it's my life but I learn to like it.
Forget it, I have all the friends I need the beach, the waves,
Ships, and sailors they're all right here.
The lighthouse that's who I am, and I am proud of it.

Melany Santos Funes
Mrs. Costa

Overall School Winner

The Look

He looked at me,
He really did.
He smiled right at me, with a wink.
His eyes sparkled.
He walked toward me.
Then, passed me, to Julia standing behind me.
I wish I realized sooner so I didn't fall in love,
With the little puppy at the animal shelter.



Marisa Vidal
Mrs. Koz Calvo

Grade 3 Winner

The Bird

The moonlark dances with its mate but yet the wing still flies with fate, and as the wind carries foe, the flowers singing hidio as tho' the moonlark's friend is foe, and as the moonlark settles down it thinks of what was once was now, but now the poem's end is near but yet the moonlark sings with pride its soft swiftness guiding throw the air.

The end!

Sophie Van der Sluis
Ms. Crego

Grade 4 Winner

What Should I Write?

Oh what should I write, oh what should I write
My brain is having a fight
What should I write
Should I write about Dogs and cats
Or should I write about coats and hats
I haven't got a clue
Do you?

Give me ideas
I'll gladly take them
But in my mind I might just shake them
What should I write
What should I write
I haven't got a clue



Julia Dresen
Ms. Kaplewicz

Grade 5 Winner

The Winter XC

It was a freezing frigid frozen day
I wish the snow would go away
The wind is whistling in my ear
Even though the sky is sunny and clear

I hate wearing jackets,
I hate wearing hats,
I hate wearing socks
Come on spring...come back!

Getting sick everyday,
i'm tired of it
winter go away
Having 2 hour delays or
Missing field trips that we have fun and get to play

But maybe winter isn't too bad
When school get canceled
I get to ride my sleigh
Or build a snowman in the alleyway
Or finish homework i haven't finished
That is due the next day



Shulamite Yawson
Mr. Ross

Grade 3 Winner

My Dad

Whenever you leave,
we feel sad.
Then we want to come
with you.

When you come back
we hug you.
Then everyone and everything
goes back to normal.

When we all go
nothing will go wrong
and nothing will go right
but at least we are all together.



Shabir Saif
Ms. Giampaolo

Grade 4 Winner

Be You

Be you
You are beautiful
And be grateful
That you are you

You are glamorous
You are generous
You shine like a diamond
And sparkle like glitter

Even if people act different than you
Just be you



Yiddidiya Tadesse
Ms. Agnant

Grade 5 Winner

Equality

Equal but separate we fought for our rights
Was it ever equal if certain privileges were to one and not the other?
Could we fix it? Fix the world to help
We wished we were equal but it doesn't work
Sit-ins and protests but not one right
Boycotts and walk-ins but not one right
What do we need to be truly equal
We need hope, a younger generation, people who believe that separate but equal.....isn't really
equal.
I'm part of that generation
The generation that tells the stories of fighting for rights
Me a young child with african descent
Me fighting to tell my ancestors stories
Me believing and changing the world
Bringing kids together to learn about our past
So your fight was worth it, it changed my life
It made me who I am tonight.

Zana Royster
Mrs. Tinsley

Overall School Winner

Nobody's My Friend

I want to be with friends
with somebody
but nobody's my friend
because I don't speak English

Adil Wali
Ms. Brown-Dunn

Grade 3 Winner

Math Tests

Math facts
Oh math
A frustrating mess
Timed test AAgh!
The teacher multiplication test
Makes me nervous and sweat with
...F. f. fear
The timer is set
My pencil in hand
I can hear the tick ticking sound
Done!
Pencils down
Carefully you look at your test...
Oh great
The teacher comes around
Your paper is gone
Say no more it's a horrifying mess
This is what I have to deal with
The Friday test!

Addison Hood
Ms. Gross



Grade 4 Winner

Camera

What would I capture in a single snap?
A midnight sky or a very old map.

What would I ignore and what would I adore?
A boring core would be ignored. Adore a medieval castle floor.

What would I wish for?
A damp cave with diamond ore.

What would I go for?
A perfect double rainbow in Salvador.

What would I take risks for?
A moonlit sunset on the eastern shore.

What would I do with the lens and a click?
Oh, I would go anywhere for the perfect pic!

Verevine White
Mrs. Yonkers

Grade 5 Winner

When I Grow Up



You always ask
What do I want to be when I grow up.
For now, I say I don't know yet
And slowly back away.

In my mind I think of
Engineer, police officer, firefighter,
Maybe a doctor or artist.
I don't know?

But just not now
Because for me a career is a billion years away
For heaven's sake!
I'm a kid right now and all I want to do is play.

So does that answer your question
At least for now.

Sarah Shonerd
Mrs. Yonkers

Overall School Winner

Why?

Why must we go?
Can't we just stay home?
Why be tortured all day if we do not stay?

Besides, if school was supposed to be fun, we'd have candy and treats
But instead we're doing
Addition,
Subtraction and multiplication.
All while drowning in fractions.

So why can't we stay home with you?
How bad could it possibly be?
So what do you say?
Can we stay home with you, please?

Josephine Hurt
Mr. Orndorff

Grade 3 Winner

Dreams

Our dreams are never ending
There are not a few
So stop wasting time
There are so many things to do
Don't sit with folded hands any more
Brand new opportunities are knocking
On your door
Get up walk outside start moving
Towards your goals don't be afraid if your
Pockets are filled with holes
So Dream

Idman Mohamed
Ms. Hill

Grade 4 Winner

The Silent Earth

A small flower sprouted from the ground, silently.
It grew petals, silently.
It grew into its complete form, silently.

A flower's stem fell to the ground, silently.
Its petals wilted, silently.
It decayed into the earth, silently.

A deer was born, silently.
It grew strength, silently.
It grew to its complete form, silently

A deer fell to the ground, silently.
It loses strength, silently.
It decayed into the earth, silently.

A fish is born, silently.
It grew strength, silently.
It grew to its complete form, silently.

A fish fell to the end of the ocean, silently.
It loses strength, silently.

All this happens, silently.



Margaret Schiefelbein
Ms. Meshover

Grade 5 Winner



The Seasons With My Brother

You enter the winter world, and your boots crunch against the snow.

Your brother and you have a snowball fight, build a snowman, sled, and ski.

Until your mom calls you in for dinner.

You eat dinner together, by the fire, then drink hot chocolate with extra whipped cream. You laugh at his whipped cream moustache. He laughs at yours.

You cozy down under the blankets and watch "It's Christmas, Charlie Brown"

Then you snuggle into your blankets and dream.

You step outside, and the first moods of spring hit you.

Joyfully, you play hide and seek, tag, soccer, and find-a-worm.

Then it's dinner time.

Lamb chops with garlic and rosemary sprinkled on top, green beans, and rice.

And for dessert, Daddy's best-ever cheese cake, light and creamy, melting in your mouth.

To finish off your day, you watch the movie Singing In The Rain .

You decide to have a sleepover, you and

him. You cuddle down deep in the warm comfort er.... And fall fast, fast, asleep.....

You enter a world of summer, and you decide you need an underwater dunk, it's so hot. You and your brother cannonball into the pool.

The water splashes up, as you twirl him around on a noodle.

You practice underwater gymnastics. Hand stand, cartwheel, front handspring.

Then your daddy calls you in for dinner.

Popsicles and ice cream for dessert, as you lay down and gaze at the stars. Curled asleep in your mommy's arms.

It's fall, and the world around you glimmers with color.

Dark red, orange and yellow all swirl around you as you and your brother jumps into the leaf pile. Laughing, you push him down among the fall leaves.

He gets up, rather unsteadily, and dives among the leaves, tossing some into the air.

You both roar with laughter at the condition you and he are in.

Disheveled, hair mussed up, part of the pile down your shirts.

Your mom summons you to dinner.

You drink hot, steaming apple cider from a dark blue cup and clam chowder from a matching bowl. For dessert you have apple pie, with a soft and crunchy crust.

You huddle under the family blanket and watch the Packers crush the Jets at football.

Then you cuddle down under the sheets and think about the wonderful year that you had.

Lizzie Demers
Ms. Brannigan

Overall School Winner

Gray

Gray.

Makes me feel melancholy
like the rain
lashing against the window
on a cold day
with a fire roaring
in the fireplace
and a mug of tea in my hand.

Gray.

Like a downcast sky
with rain threatening to drop
and me inside my home,
insignificant to the
coming storm.

Sean McBride
Mrs. Kimball

Grade 3 Winner

Octopus



There once was an octopus
Swimming in the sea
Exploring animals
1 2 3
He loved exploring
4 5 6
He found an octopus
To swim around with

And they swam in the sea

Alex Hernandez
Ms. Fletcher

Grade 4 Winner

One Little Change

Do you ever wonder what the world would be like if you had made one little change?

Maybe you have one less friend.
Who knows what you would or would not have if you made one little change.

We start small, weak, and fragile.
But we grow up strong, intelligent, and brave.
But what would happen if you made one little change?

We have this life because of our history, but what if history was just a story?
What would happen if Lydia Darragh hadn't been eavesdropping on Lord Howe?
Would George Washington have died?
What would have happened if Copernicus had never suggested the idea of the solar system being Geocentric instead of Heliocentric?

Maybe it's not even you who would change your life, because maybe someone else made one little change that affected you.



Ellie Lawson
Ms. English

Grade 5 Winner

Have You Ever Seen A Paper Clip Fly?

Have you ever seen a paper clip fly?
Or an emoji say hi?
Or a duck in a suit,
A man saying "shoot!"
Or even a happy cream pie?
Or maybe a rooster learning to leap,
Or maybe a happy sheep counting it's sleep,
Or even a mammoth in a circus tent,
Or someone looking through treasures bent?
I tell ya,
have you ever seen a paper clip fly?
Or a penguin flying by,
Or a magnificent liar learning to lie?
Perhaps maybe a book learning to write,
Or possibly gold in a shine shiny site?
Or dialogue running,
Or gymnasts pumping,
Or doctors lumping
Through fire would burning on light?
Have you ever seen a paper clip fly?
Or green bottles being dyed,
Or even an elephant fall on it's side?
Or maybe a boot,
Or a pirate's loot,
Or an owl hoot
Or even a casual light little moOOO, from a cow?
Have you ever seen a paper clip fly?
Now...

Adeline Davenport
Ms. English

Overall School Winner

Haiku

La armonia
Y la solidaridad
Crean mucha paz

Translation:
Harmony
And solidarity
Create plentiful peace



Sheilyn Sorto
Ms. Salazar Salame

Grade 3 Winner

Education Land

Education can be fun for some
And stubborn for others,
People may not go when it tells you to come
And people may have trouble getting through

No matter what you do,
You will be happy by the outcome
Do you want to learn too?
Or just sit there, with your brain all numb,

Come take my hand,
We will do it again
We will enter education land
And we will see how it will be,

Together we will rise and know
Education instead of your brain being numb
Instead your brain will be super strong at,
Mathematics, Science, Language Arts and Social Studies

Asad Sharif
Ms. Kwakye



Grade 4 Winner

The Crash

My sister and I were driving by
Slowly at the dead of night
We could hear the owls soaring in the sky
The sky pitch black and the roads dark
chocolate nothing you can see on the
cold winter night

I went inside to get a coke when the clock
struck midnight
as I was coming out of the store a
drunk driver passed by with music blaring high
It hit the car at the slightest bit
the car parts came off bit by bit

Boom! Clash! Bang! The car exploded into
three when I had just called nine one one
I realized that she was already gone
I sobbed and sobbed and grieved for her
At that time there was nothing to
hide the something

At that very moment I would give all the pearls in the sea
and everything on the earth just to tell
her how I loved her and give her a
proper goodbye after her burial
everyday I went to visit her lone
lovely grave

Peniel Ayana
Ms. Weber

Grade 5 Winner

All Except Me

Quickly, a cloud zoomed by,
it splashed me on the way,
flowers enjoyed the shower,
birds enjoyed the bath.

Everyone adores it,
ALL EXCEPT ME.
I am against it,
only for one reason...

It messes up my day,
nobody else feels this way.
ALL EXCEPT ME.
Well, I guess I should let this go.

NO NEVER!
I will never let this go,
other people may let this go.
ALL EXCEPT ME!

Amina Sharif
Ms. Osborn

Overall School Winner

Escape

If you were a Jew in Nazi's Europe,
Your job was to stay alive
To survive, to cope
While the Nazis were
Taking the innocent hostage and
Tearing families apart.
But there was the resistance,
that provided the assistance
even sometimes from a distance.
farmers to fishers to bribed Nazis
were helping the jews.
The Nazis did whatever they can,
so that they can ban, all jews from existing.
Victims had the power of a feather by themselves
but together,
they had the might to escape.

Nathan Biru
Ms. Osborn

Grade 3 Winner

Gorillas

Gorillas
Gorillas
Peaceful

High above the tress
Hitting their chests
Boom-Boom-Boom!

Running across the jungle
Nowhere to be
See
In
The
Distance-leaving
Their
Trails on
The
Ground.

Kofi Boakye Sefa
Ms. Gallagher

Grade 4 Winner

Snow, Snow, Snow!

Ski, ski, ski!
Down the snow!
Go, go, go!
All the way down the hill
Whoosh! Slide! Fall!
Ski, ski, ski!

Snow, snow, snow!
Ball it up...throw!
Dodge the snow.
Make a wall.
Throw, throw, throw!

Build, Build, build!
Make an igloo
You can't see me!
Make a tunnel!
Build, build, build.



Bella San Roman
Ms. Booe

Grade 5 Winner

Changing

The angry monster
Inside my body
Scratching and clawing its' way out
Howling, snarling, yelping at me
As it starts to surface
All the smells of the world
Rush into my new nose
The Moon
High above
Urges me to howl
Over the mountains
Blurred, dark silhouettes
Roar toward me
Barking, sniffing and stumbling all the way
Jumping, leaping, scattering all around
This new form
Stronger, faster, bigger
My spirit runs with wolves
And I with it
As we search for our greatest enemy
Who circles round and round
I feel free, careless and furry
As we stumble through this rock-hard snow
Who am I?
I finally know.

Haley Blickhahn
Mr. Carpenter & Ms. Jalloh

Overall School

Untitled

Words and phrases unleash possibilities from heart
Poems and dreams reach for beaming, brilliant stars
Power, love, hate
My world supports itself
My path is made of meaningful
Contradicting speeches and quotes
My heart is full of sayings
Thoughts and wonders
Literature kindles my wish to hunt and create
MY OWN STORY FOR THE WORLD
Like a tiger stalking in the night
But a force of magic stops me.
Precisely
A poem
Still unwritten,
A fire
Still unlit.

Arianna Espiritu
Mr. Carpenter & Mr. Lin

Grade 3 Winner

Success in School

Success in school
We always try,
We never give up,
We never cry.

We never make a mess
On the road to success
Where we do our best

Where we never rest
Until recess
Then back on our road
To success.

Justin Lezama Canales
Ms. Goodman

Grade 4 Winner

Immigration



Let's give them an opportunity
Shall we?
The country is big enough to share!
Let's set aside our differences
And let our hearts lead the way,
Because I know united we will
Never be defeated!
So, let's join hand in hand
And let peace and love show the way.

Alexa Agama
Ms. Pitsakis

Grade 5 Winner

Goodbye Forever



As I play
having fun today,
my mother has something to say.
I break into tears with nothing to say.

With me feeling like I'm dead.
I hear his voice in my head,

I keep on saying, " Why, Why?"
Why does he come to me to say goodbye?
Forever as I see him going away.
I can remember him saying "Sweetie, it will be okay
I will come back one day!"
Good-bye forever

Love,
Dad

Lisdemy Canales
Ms. Van Buren

Overall School Winner

Ruby Showed The Way

Ruby Bridges was only six,
people tried to hit her with sticks.
Hateful words at her thrown,
hate to all with her skin tone.

She went to school on her own
the kids all left, she was alone.
She wanted to learn everything in life,
but she goes to school with strife.

Ruby was brave and learned at school
with just one teacher who was cool.
Her teacher smiles but Ruby sees
Her fear and uncertainty.

Ruby does her best to stand tall
and not let fear make her fall.
Ignoring hate, coming from the crowd
Ruby makes her country proud.

Ruby Bridges stood very tall,
not letting anyone get in her way at all.

Mohamed Alie Bundu Jr.
Ms. Van Buren

*Poetry is language at its most distilled
and most powerful.* – Rita Dove

Secondary Winners
Grades 6-12

Grade 6 Winner

Thunderstorm

On a cloudy day
 Lightning strikes fill the sky.
 But the roar of the
 Fighting spirit
 Overcomes the sky tonight.
 Galloping hard through the plains and fields
 Fighting for what's right.
 I know i won't survive,
 I know i won't be alright.
 Riding hard riding high
 Alone i clench my sword.
 Tonight in valhalla i dine
 Before the lord.
 My eyes are blessed
 With the sight of the lord.
 As i enter valhallas
 Gates,
 I am fighting no
 more.



Abel Beruk
 Ms. Miller



Grade 8 Winner

My Insecurities

Run,
 My heart says,
 Hide,
 My legs say,
 Fight,
 My brain says...
 I stop and wait,
 This is not real,
 I turn around,
 I awake screaming,
 The wolf awoke with me,
 He chased me,
 The wolf,
 The wolf is me.
 I am running from myself.



Valeria Holguin
 Ms. Buggé



Grade 6 Winner

The Island of Golden Glow

How did I get here? Nobody knows A land riddled with fig trees Where no one else goes This is the land where the Goldenglow grows	How did I get here? Nobody knows A land riddled with fig trees Where no one else goes This is the land where the Goldenglow grows
I stay on this island Build myself a house Inhabited by only me (and a very small mouse)	I stay on this island Build myself a house Inhabited by only me (and a very small mouse)
I made it through that first night And many more thereafter But, to you, I swear it's true That first night I heard laughter	I made it through that first night And many more thereafter But, to you, I swear it's true That first night I heard laughter
The trees cackled, the wind howled And from the forest rose a terrible sound A single animal roaring Nothing else to be found	The trees cackled, the wind howled And from the forest rose a terrible sound A single animal roaring Nothing else to be found
I searched for the Goldenglow always Both day and night It is told that this flower Could give back my sight	I searched for the Goldenglow always Both day and night It is told that this flower Could give back my sight
How did I get here? I do not know A land riddled with fig trees That I've come to know Is this the land where the Goldenglow grows?	How did I get here? I do not know A land riddled with fig trees That I've come to know Is this the land where the Goldenglow grows?

Hudson Chiow



Grade 7 Winner

Hike

The breeze flows
through my hair
the shrubs crunching
under my feet,
the top of the hill
is in view
but still a
ways to go,
I sit down under
a pine tree
and pitch my tent
the others start
setting up camp too,
the camp fires start
glowing as I roast
marshmallows in mine,
the s'mores are
all eaten and the
fires are all out and
we are all going to bed
to dream of the
magnificent view of
standing on the top and
looking down at the
country below.



Abigail Riley

Grade 8 Winner

Unrequited

To wait for someone to grace ones presence
To wait for their loving and sweet embrace
Instead one shall live life as a peasant
Still suffering, secluded, and disgraced

They shall wait until the day has ended
Hoping, Wishing, and Wanting all there is
Until the hopes of the soul have lended
All of the hopes it can possibly give

They taunt laugh and fill us all with disdain
As we fight and struggle to make them see
But surely we know that, we won't remain
And we will have to learn to simply, be

As the song of life may change in its tune
So too will those for which our hearts may swoon

Clifton Stuart Conrad



Overall School Winner

What Is Backwards

Sword red-tint and blood
Armed Hands with no mercy
The crown under moon
Is tonight bloodthirsty

If gold can be gained
Then lives no matter
Moon, stars, and the sky
Crowned savages laughter

The richest of swords
Cut the poorest of clothes
People die innocent lives
Blind eye, but he knows

Tax twice to the pot
Killing only for expenses
Blood and tears dry
But stays does lives ended

A person has pence
Must double to two
A emperors empire
Must have, so it grow

Hence an animal's instinct
Too much is too little
So a bejeweled hand will
Not hesitate to cripple

2 gold costs 1 gold
More equals less for more
But when you have less
Essentials equals times four

So let's open the door
A call that must be answered
And lets reverse
What Is Backwards



Jasper Lavan

Grade 8 Winner

Untitled

Leaves brittle and cold
 drifting through the atmosphere
 Incapable of feeling in a truer sense;
 Unintentionally existent
 Yet still present as the nights grow even longer



Gabe Shirley



Grade 9 Winner

Untitled

Dear Mr. Trump,

America is no longer a place
 Where anyone can feel safe,
 When I walk into a place where I should be taught
 I have a constant fear I could be shot,
 At night my mother holds me tight
 In fear that tomorrow will be a day of fright.

There was a school shooting on February four
 tenth,
 So far this year, it's probably the umpteenth,
 Seventeen people died on that day,
 And again and again in my head it replays.

The children had dreams, like you and I,
 Dreams that one day would reach the sky,
 They were like me,
 But as you can see,
 They are here no longer.

And as Americans sit here with our eyes filled
 with mist,
 We quickly fall into your dark abyss,
 Of ignorance and selfishness,
 "Well guns are for self defense"
 You sit on your golf course hooting,
 While we worry about shootings,
 And it feels as if you do not care at all,
 But I do swear America will soon come to fall
 With you as our president,
 Bent on tweeting resent,
 With no discontent
 For a mass shooting event,
 Ladies and gentlemen, to you I present:
 America's 45th president.

So please tell my why
 Children continue to die.
 And ensure me that I will not die in a shooting,
 Convince me that while I'm learning you're exe
 cuting,
 We don't need condolences, but we do need ac
 tion,
 But instead from you we get dissatisfaction.

We, as children have no representation,
 So we're forced to put ourselves into the hands of
 the nation.
 A nation whose politicians have failed us,
 Even more so, we feel you've betrayed us.

I know you couldn't care less
 When you look at this mess
 Of a country we're living in.

But unlike you,
 We do not have 24 hour protection.
 Instead we have unjustified subjection.
 We fear that our lives,
 May be ended with guns or knives.

So, Donald Trump, please,
 Without ease,
 Take a look at this country,
 And make it long,
 Tell me,
 What do you see wrong?
 And then, I beg of you,
 Tell me what you will do,
 To fix the mess
 We call the U.S.

Katherine Donnellan



Grade 10 Winner

New Nature

Stepping stones turned into white striped tile
Flashes of green grass beneath my feet running through my brain

Fluorescent lights burn my eyes in their attempt to mimic the sun's rays
The warmth of the star hidden behind cement bricks and dusty white drywall

I try to remember, to imagine myself walking across a field
The yellow flowers reaching up above my head, the dark dirt cold and inviting between my toes

I picture trees that try to reach the stars encasing me in a wood of soft mosses and hushed critters
As curious to my presence as I am to their being

But that is all that remains
A memory
A thought

I open my eyes to the reality of buzzes in back pockets and screens with harsh glows
Every unconscious soul fixated on a metallic box instead of the hearts that beat around them

No one is as curious as the creatures in the wood
No one cares for the world like they do

But with these thoughts I find myself to be the odd one out
The one that fears this cold and electronic norm arising for some unknown desire of progress

I yearn for the silence of every text tone
If only to be replaced by the constant hum of the natural energy that charges us all

I find myself afraid of the technical utopia we attempt to pull forward with every waking second
Afraid of our new nature

Courtland Dorris
Ms. Kiyak

Grade 11 Winner

Safety is our First Priority

Boom!
Pencils down.
Doors locked.
“This is not a drill!”
Daddy's strong boys and mommy's little girls,
All huddled together away from windows and doors.
The religious think their silent prayers, too afraid to say a word.
The rest stare at that silver handle guarding them from life or death...
BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!
I see the shadows of 2 fall to the floor.
We blame society,
but we are the society.
The brainwashed fools
and selfish idiots who sit and ignore the signs.
We weren't supposed to become a statistic.

Malaayah Norris
Mr. Kingston

Grade 12 Winner

Untitled

Life, as the selection of love poetry that it is,
Makes itself worthy of living
As it remains authentic in itself.
As the dance through the paths
That either I or some being above
Have chosen to myself unrolls;
As fate's symphony grows louder
In me, I understand
That the purpose of being alive,
In the purest state of life,
Is to love.

I have not written about falling in love
With the rampant cold of this place,
Which reddens my cheeks and dries
My now so useless hands.
I have not written about falling in love
With the once slender, vibrant flowers
Which the snow has mercilessly killed.
I have not written about falling in love
With this new world and the new me born from it,
Because the poetry, for once,
Belongs in freedom from these lines.

Winter, unlike ever before,
Has found a lover in me.
And I love it, for the given reasons,
Which are simply the truth of what it is:
Dryness, violence, and a poem
Hidden in every step.

Maria Constança Mégre
Ms. Kiyak



Overall School Winner

Brain Food

The school day is dragging- not really that strange.
Every morning I'm tired. This isn't a change.
Already the week feels almost like death.
And it's only Tuesday- I don't hold my breath
For a break in the quiet monotony.

But suddenly, shocked, on the announcements I hear
Loud groans: they are coming ever so near.
I realize it, quickly, no flicker of doubt.
This is no news report, sport, or Girl Scout,
But zombies among us, an audible oddity!

How quickly the mood in Biology switches,
From boring and long to something that enriches,
"Quick! Get the hatchet--" my teacher is screaming;
Her rapid response is not quite redeeming
For all of the labs she insisted I do.

Funny enough, zombie-infested,
My school seems much better and I more invested
In the outcome of such an exciting new day.
I run through the halls, gleeful and gay,
Killing the undead and watching them spew.

And sure enough, my classmates feel similar ways.
Most try to fight the onslaught through the haze.
But I am quite lucky; my skills to the test
(Not standardized, no), I'm clearly the best.
I barely get blood on my shoe.

I'm sad, of course, for my friends who are dead,
For my teachers and counselors with stumps of a head,
For my classrooms, wrecked with rubble of brains,
And cafeteria tables covered in stains.
But there are new sensations to chew!

Hero Magnus
Mr. Eaton

*Poetry is nearer to vital truth
than history.* – Leonardo da Vinci

Arianna Espiritu

Arianna is a fifth grade student at Samuel Tucker Elementary. She is a pianist and violinist who loves to sing, dance and write creatively. An avid history buff, Arianna performed the lead role in Tucker's presentation of James Madison: Little Man, Big Ideas in the fall. Arianna studies advanced Chinese and is a member of Tucker's Odyssey of the Mind team.



Sheilyn Sorto

Sheilyn is in fifth grade at Mount Vernon Community School. She enjoys spending time with her friends. Sheilyn also likes to draw and be creative.

A Sheilyn le encanta y tambien le gusta pasar tiempo con sus amigas. Sheilyn también le gusta dibujar y ser creativa.



Katherine Donnellan

Katherine is an avid writer, "I spend all my free time writing." She supports gun control and attended the March for Our Lives in Washington D.C. on March 24th. Her favorite author, inspiration, and role model for writing is Jeanette Walls



Addie Davenport

Addie is a fifth grader at Mount Vernon Community School. She has two younger siblings. Addie enjoys art and drawing. She loves to walk and spend time with her miniature Goldendoodle, Petunia. Addie enjoys speaking two languages and hopes to travel to some places soon so she can use her bilingual skills.



Acknowledgements

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Ms. Erin Rees Charles Barrett Elementary School
Ms. Michelle Hogan, Patrick Henry Elementary School
Ms. Jennifer Mock, Jefferson Houston K-8 School
Ms. Caroline FitzGerald, Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology
Ms. Karrie Kay, Lyles Crouch Traditional Academy
Ms. Ashley Wolf Hojnowski, Douglas MacArthur Elementary School
Ms. Kelsey Galka, George Mason Elementary School
Ms. Rachel Blumenthal, Matthew Maury Elementary School
Ms. Kate English, Mount Vernon Community School
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Ms. Elouise Matthews, William Ramsay Elementary School
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