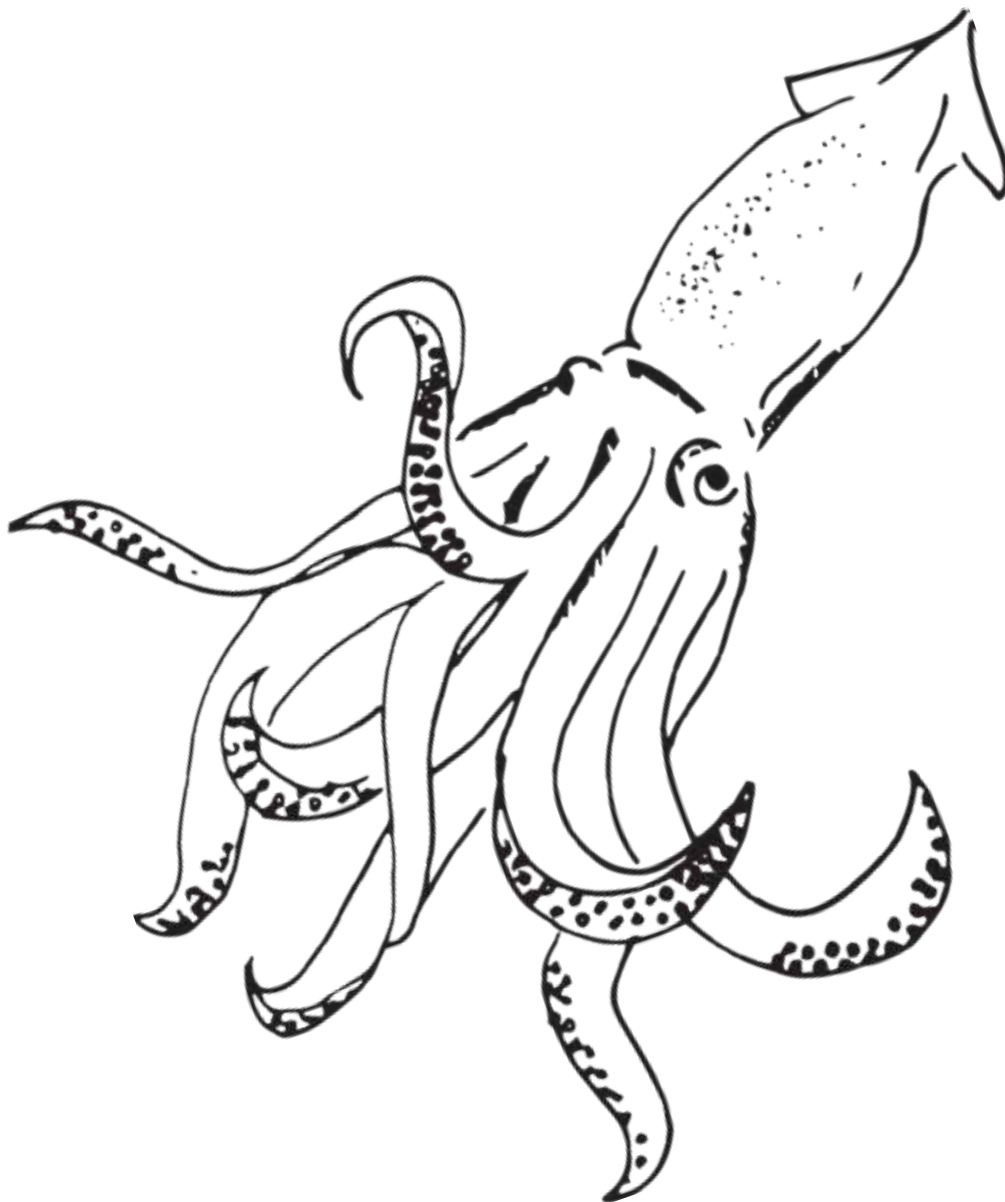


The Anthology

Alexandria City Public Schools '18-'19

The Anthology

Alexandria City Public Schools '18-'19



Cover Photo by Prova Zaman

Illustrations by Kalista Diamantopoulos and Sebastian Ahumada

“The Anthology” is a compilation of extraordinary poems submitted by ACPS students between 3rd and 12th grade. The ACPS Poetry Contest originated over 11 years ago and continues as an annual tradition and means to celebrate and honor our student writers. We are delighted that this is the second 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 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 Labyrinth Staff), as well as elementary and secondary student ACPS Poet Laureates. The ACPS Poet Laureate award is selected from the submissions of school overall winners.

Winners from each of the above categories are featured in this 2018-2019 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 Mimi Waller for her 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!

Ms. Kimberly Schell
ACPS Secondary Literacy Curriculum
and Instruction Specialist

Table of Contents

Elementary Winners

Charles Barrett	Lyles-Crouch
Grade 3.....8	Grade 3.....35
Grade 4.....9	Grade 4.....36
Grade 5.....10	Grade 5.....37
Overall.....11	Overall.....38
Cora Kelly	Matthew Maury
Grade 3.....12	Grade 3.....39
Grade 4.....13	Grade 4.....40
Grade 5.....14	Grade 5.....41
Overall.....15	Overall.....42
Douglas MacArthur	Mount Vernon
Grade 3.....16	Grade 3.....43
Grade 4.....17	Grade 4.....44
Grade 5.....18	Grade 5.....45
Overall.....19	Overall.....46
Ferdinand T. Day	Patrick Henry
Grade 3.....20	Grade 3.....47
Grade 4.....21	Grade 4.....48
Overall.....22	Grade 5.....49
George Mason	Overall.....50
Grade 3.....23	William Ramsay
Grade 4.....24	Grade 3.....51
Grade 5.....25	Grade 4.....52
Overall.....26	Grade 5.....53
James K. Polk	Overall.....54
Grade 3.....27	
Grade 4.....28	
Grade 5.....29	
Overall.....30	
John Adams	
Grade 3.....31	
Grade 4.....32	
Grade 5.....33	
Overall.....34	



Secondary School Winners

Patrick Henry

Grade 6.....	57
Grade 7.....	58
Overall.....	59

Jefferson-Houston

Grade 6.....	60
Grade 7.....	61
Overall.....	62

George Washington

Grade 6.....	63
Grade 7.....	64
Grade 8.....	65
Overall.....	66

Francis Hammond

Grade 7.....	67
Grade 8.....	68
Overall.....	69-70

T.C. Williams

Grade 9.....	71
Grade 10.....	72
Grade 11.....	73
Grade 12.....	74
Overall.....	75

Special Awards

Elementary Poet Laureate.....	77-78
-------------------------------	-------

Secondary Poet Laureate.....	79
------------------------------	----

Creativity Award.....	80
-----------------------	----

Acknowledgements.....	81
-----------------------	----

*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

Water Droplets

Water droplets gracefully fall from the sky
Hear the droplets on the window
Plink, plink, plink
Listen to the relaxing sound
The amazing crystals float through the sky
The clear drops of water gently fall
Plop, plop, plop
They carefully form a puddle
Millions of droplets fall from the sky
Watch the show they quietly perform
Spins, hops, gliding
Water droplets dancing through the sky
When it rains, quietly they float by.



Grace Carter
Ms. Bucceri

Grade 4 Winner

Colors

Red is the color of anger when I study so much for a test, but fail.

Orange is the color of when I go to the beach at 7:30 am.

Yellow is the color of my icy, cold lemonade when I am on a vacation.

Green is the color of freshly cut grass.

Blue is the color of the night sky with beautiful stars.

Purple is the color of my soft stuffed animal that I snuggle at night to keep my nightmares away.

This is colors!

Aya Idrissi Taфраouti

Mrs. Landis

Grade 5 Winner

A Change

We all play sports and think it's fair
But is that fairness really there?
In between male and female
Various prices are paid
Also more time on the news
A difference should be made!
Watch and watch as the difference grows
The inequality of those
This is wrong
More needs to be done
Because when we play sports
We have fun

Women don't get their stories in the news

But others do.
And that huge pay gap
Like males get 50 thousand
And females get less than half of that
But that can be changed
Another difference can be made
A fairness to all
All that want change.

Grace Redican
Ms. Yeager

Overall School Winner

A Lake in the Moonlight

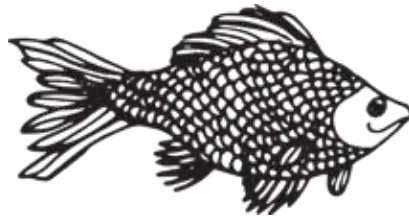
A lake in the moonlight shimmering

Glowing white pebbles outline

Mountains overhead with a soft breeze

Standing barefoot, light young, a girl

A lake in the moonlight shimmer



Addie Rahn
Ms. Feld

Grade 3 Winner

Baby Don't Cry

Baby don't cry
Mama's gonna keep you safe
Look at your tree
Give it the love I give you

Baby don't cry
That tree loves you
I do too
Baby don't cry
That tree is yours



Arianna Garcia
Ms. Andonyadis

Grade 4 Winner

It's Time for Slime Time!

It's time for all the slime
It's time for all the slime

It's time for all the crunchy-ness
And time for all the bubbling
It's time for all the fluffy-ness
And time for all the tumbling.

It's time for everything.
SLIME

Different textures different kinds
Different feels at different times.
It's time for all the slime
It's time for all the

SLIME

Jaiden Alani Cannon
Ms. Ridley

Grade 5 Winner

Dreams

Dreams, Dreams, Dreams

Every night i dream about all the things
I could be, the things i want to be

Every night i dream about
Kindness, love not hate, and envy

Every night i dream about friendship not
Betrayal

Every night i dream about
Peace not war

But when i wake up and my dreams
Are not there

I say "someday, someday i wish
My dreams would come true"

Megan Valentina Alvarenga
Ms. Baker

Overall School Winner

My Hero

My dad is my hero
Because he works
In the mechanica.
And he works
Two jobs

My dad and me
Ride bikes
To the shop to
Get food.

My mom is my hero
Because she picks up trash
From the ground
for her job

And we like to eat
Chocolate and Gatorade.
And we like to play
With my little niece

My dad is my hero
Because he spends
Time with me in my home.

My dad is funny
And he goes to church on saturday
And sunday

My dad watches soccer
Every day

My dad likes to
Play with me.
And he likes to
Play soccer with me.

Me and my dad
Like drinking hot cocoa
On Saturday and Sunday

We like to eat tacos too

In summer we go to the
Playground to play on
The swings and went to

McDonald's too

Jaime Umanzor
Ms. Baker

Grade 3 Winner

Kind of a Copy-Cat



She's kind of a copy-cat,
Because when I do this she does that.

And when I go up, she goes down.
And when I go square, she goes round.

And when I go thin, she goes fat.
That's why she's kind of a Copy-Cat.

Because when I go day, she goes night.
And when I go black, she goes white.

When I'm a superhero, she's a villain.
And when I'm at work, she's chillan'.

When I turn tiny, she turns tall...
But maybe she's not a copy-cat
at all!

Hailey Kerr
Ms. Lansing

Grade 4 Winner

Love Alley

Down in the alley, in the deep dark
There is a small light, a tiny spark
A place long forgotten, where the alley glows
I went to the wise man, who said that he knows
He said that he called forth the ones up above
To tell me 'bout the alley, the alley of love
Where you can see a long-lost wish
Like your relative, or your old pet fish
Where you can see them with your own eyes
Down in the alley that never lies
Now the alley isn't here anymore
But it's still in my heart, my center, my core

Liam Cannon
Mrs. Leigh Dugan



Grade 5 Winner

The Egg

The egg
Sitting and still
Waiting to hatch
Wriggling, on the
Brink of true life
Still enclosed, still
Just waiting to
Break free of
Itself

Ariya Harrington
Mrs. Leigh Dugan

Overall School Winner

Wheelchair

I want to run.
To dance, to jump.
I want something more than pointing fingers and mean
remarks.
I see them on the turf field.
Where they run and jump and dance.

I try to catch up.
They run faster, teasing the lack of life and energy in
my legs.
Then I see another like me.
Crutches, she calls them. It's temporary.
A new friend.

I can't run.
I can't dance, can't jump.
But now I feel like I can.
Because with a friend,
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE.

Julia Mickelsen
Ms. Bousquet

Grade 3 Winner

Where I'm From

I come from Earth,
where my mom gave birth.
I come from Africa,
where I started to see what life was worth.
I come from Assinngresi,
where some speak Gha.
I come from Tema,
where I said “Ma.”

I come from the beach,
that has seashells to see.
I come from a plane,
where I saw roads and trees.
I come from the U.S. that has
perfect friends who help me every time
I do a good deed.

I come from Valentine's Day,
when “Happy Valentine's” is all I say.
I come from Christmas with
family and friends under the Christmas
Tree, where presents lay.
I come from the 4th of July,
when there are noisy fireworks. Hooray!
That's all I say.

I come from the dream to pass the
S.O.L.
I come from the hope to have an
L.O.L.
I come from the dream to be in history.
I come from the hope for my death
not to be a mystery.

Audrey Abbam
Ms. Thompson

Grade 4 Winner

The Beach

I enjoy swimming around,
listening to the peaceful sound.
I wonder why I can't go too far.
It makes me think so long.

I wonder and wonder,
I think so hard. I will do it.
I said if I drown,
it will not be cool,
so I tried and I was a fool.
But I was lucky and
my cousin saved me.
Then I slept by a tree

and woke up at 3.
And we left at 4.
I took a nap in the
car. It was a four-hour
drive. It's pretty far.



Jonathan Lopez
Ms. Moquin

Overall School Winner

Where I'm From

I come from the blue planet
Earth.
I come from the continents Africa and
North America.
I come from Somalia and
dino-shaped Virginia.
I come from Alexandria and Hareyesa.
I come from Seminary Road.

I come from my mom's Arabic
books. She is good at Arabic.
I come from my dad's algebra. He is
good at algebra.
I come from my brother's toy cars.
He knows how to play.

I come from yummy biries, yummy
rice and meat.
I come from great sambosa. Come
and have a seat.
I come from the best mandazie. It does
not have meat.

I come from the happy Masjid every
Eid night.
I come from a nice place that is
called Flight.
I come from my aunt's house every
Tuesday night.

I come from Eid al-Adha. Chuck-E-
Cheese is where we play.
I come from Ramadan, when
we don't eat for one day.
I come from Eid al-Jumaca, where
we go to Hajj.

I hope to go on a plane to go to
my country.
I hope to be a high schooler who
is very smart.
I hope to be a scientist who studies
astronomy.

Amal Daud
Ms. Hunter

Grade 3 Winner

The Day My Mom Died

One day she was here and the next she was gone
The day was so bold, so bad, so mold
I wish she could be back in the world super fast with us together as together as one.
My dad said she was sweet, so kind, so unique, so fearless and bold

Kira Rosenburg
Mr. Hersburger

Grade 4 Winner

Stars

Like tiny specks
Of fractured heaven.
Invisible in the day,
BUT THERE.
And roaring out a melodious
Song
of
Silence.
Diamonds in the sky

Ruthie Robertson
Mrs. Ragucci

Grade 5 Winner

I Am

I am artistic and creative
I wonder what it will look like when finished
I hear the brush moving around the paper
I see a hand touching that paints
I want a successful future
I am artistic and creative

I pretend to be as good as others
I feel potential happening
I touch my different supplies
I worry I will mess up
I cry of losing something I worked hard on
I am artistic and creative

I understand things will not always be perfect
I say what I think about things
I dream of seeing pretty pictures
I try the best I can do
I hope to accomplish things
I am artistic and creative



Allison Kleeblatt
Ms. Scartz

Overall School Winner

Streets

Gloomy.

Dark.

Terror.

All alone on the Streets.

Strangers roam.

I'm scared and alone.

All alone on the Streets.

Lights flicker.

I feel sicker.

All alone on the Streets.

Feeble and weak,

Cold and meak,

All alone on the Streets

No place to eat,

No shoes on my feet,

All alone on the Streets.

All alone on the Streets.

Elsa Naef
Mrs. Rutherford

Grade 3 Winner

Camping

Roasting Marshmallows at the campfire,
Don't desire.

Mad when someone made you fall while setting up a tent,
Don't resent.

When sleeping on a tire,
Make sure there's no chemical before it turns to a fire.

When you go camping your time is spent,
Better stand up to represent.

When singing at a campfire and off key don't be a liar,
It's like tripping over a wire.

When you're leaving the camp make sure there's no fire to prevent.
When your reservations are finished say goodbye and you'll probably lament.

Khadija Jalloh
Ms. Smith

Grade 4 Winner

NATURE

The sky is as blue as a baby's blanket
The clouds tumble through it
The trees sway in the wind like they're dancing
The green grass covered in the morning dew

Flapping through the sky
Birds go flying by
Down in the earth
The moles dig for worms

In the dark of the night
An owl starts to hoot
Then the wolves walk away
In the early morning light
A rooster wakes up and calls

These are the beautiful things about nature



Parker Lee
Ms. Koz Calvo

Grade 5 Winner

We Are All Equal

Roses are red.
Violets are Blue. That kid at school looks like us too.
Though he acts a little strange but we have
Nothing to do.

He was born that way we need to accept that too. No
Bullying
No judging because bad things could come to you.

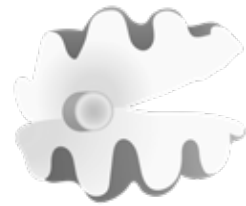
Kids at school just think he is a fool but he is nice,
Peaceful
And never cruel. I just wish people could understand and
not act a fool. I hope people can learn to respect even if
It's not you.

Jasmine Skye Layton
Mrs. Batson

Overall School Winner

The Voice

The thundering voice roars.
The peaceful voice gives it's most powerful speech,
The thundering voice stops to listen to the peaceful voice's speech.
The thundering voice stares,
The peaceful voice stops to listen to
The thundering voice.
The thunder has stopped.
The thunder understands the
Peaceful voice's speech.
The thunder now knows, to treat all
Equally



Victoria Perman
Mrs. Sperry

Grade 3 Winner

Sad

A crying mint-green emoji
A high-pitched piano
It smells like air
It feels like water drops
It tastes like salt
It is in your eyes.

Yaser Nabi
Ms. Giampaolo

Grade 4 Winner

My Family's Love

My family may be big,
And I may be small.

But they love me all day long,
Day to night, year to year.

Their whole lives to my whole life.
Forever and ever, we love each other.

Liza Murphy
Ms. Whori

Grade 5 Winner

Home Sweet Home

I am from the smell of onions and playing at the creek
I'm also from eating injera and playing with my baby sister Edlam
I am from being told to ask my dad for things and from always getting in trouble
That is where I'm from.

I am from swimming with my friends (although our nights would never end)
From laughing and crying- to me it's all the same
That is where I'm from.

From helping out my mother and yelling at my brother
We all think about each other
That is where I'm from.

I am from keeping our amazing memories in a small pink box that contains my dreams.
This is where I come from.



Tsehay Dawit
Ms. Makin

Overall School Winner

The Binder...

I am from Golden Sunsets
and my first baseball.

I am from Zolzaya,
who is ready to play, clumsy, and adorable.

From the intelligent Nyam
and the caring Khali.

From dinners with the people
I care about most.

I am from beef stroganoff, the Mongolian New Year,
and trips to Mongolia.

I am from a thick, white binder
with faces of people who I have not met.

Zolo Nyamochir
Ms. Makin

Grade 3 Winner

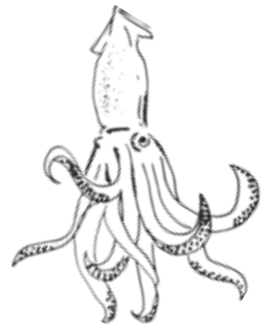
The Sunset

The sunset over the mountains is like a world of mosaics or a dream dreamed by the most creative person.

Colors flow down the landscape as someone could be having an evening stroll on the darkening grass.

The bright pinks and reds of the sunset slowly fade away while sleep washes over everyone.

The most imaginative human falls asleep again, to have another beautiful dream.



Eva Pollard
Mr. Wise



Grade 4 Winner

Defense

Standing in a box,
I look different than everyone else.
Always moving, jumping, diving.
My hands are my weapon.
I'm shaking, sweating, waiting for the charge.

What if I get hurt?

Then, a spinning blue and white meteor flies,
I follow with my eyes, reach out and my fingers connect.

Blocked!
Everyone shouts, excited.
I'm relieved and proud.

Nuuh Mohammed
Ms. Vega

Grade 5 Winner

Untitled

As I am born into the world, light and shape and color
Can be created and shaped and curled and turned into another
And then I learn about math and history I didn't know before
And languages and organisms so I can learn more
I smell and see and feel and taste and learn more then
I think about the future because knowledge is my friend
Thinking, growing, getting older so that I can see
A greater, better unknown world made for you and me
And as the grass blows, the trees outgrow their moss
And all who feed and all who need can one day have their loss
The predator becomes the prey, the lion is the mouse
And no matter how strong you are, the rules can still reroute
Year by year three sixty-five older by the day
The moon will stop its orbit, an eclipse will come to play
But I am still living my life I'll wait until it's done
You cannot stop ones' destiny or try to make it yours
Time is like a hallway but doesn't have a door
All things start and all things end No one is immortal
And all can be slow learners but none cannot learn morals
And whether man or beast, enemy or friend

All things that are living must one day meet their end
So with the time I have on earth I want to have some fun
It is only appropriate before my life is done
So I want to grow and learn and play and help the human race
And end all of their hardships with a smile on my face
I do not want to say goodbye but I know that is life
We all must meet our end at the reapers mighty scythe
Where heaven's gates may open and god shall let us in
I want to keep the world intact and rid it of its sins.
I want to work with others and save the earth we live
I don't think getting is required when we could instead give
The sparkling wavy ocean and the sky a bright light blue
Reflect into the sea transparent with no color true
As the fiery red hot sun shines light into the liquid crowd
The water lifts into the air and turns into a cloud
Its white floating appearance gives rain and snow and hail
And comes down on the fields and plants so that they do not fail
And I must finally end this and come to a conclusion
When your eyes are open, there is no illusion.



David Ferrell
Mrs. Murphy

Overall School Winner

The Sky

Blue as the ocean,
Gray as cement,
Winds passing through her arms with a WHOOSH,
If she concentrates,
She can burn wood with her eye,
The fire goes CRACKLE CRACKLE,

In the winter it is cold
She clothes herself heavily with clouds,
Snowing all over,
CRUNCH CRUNCH as you step in it,
In the spring she is shedding her winter clothes,
It falls to the ground in the form of rain,
SPLISH SPLOSH,
In the summer she wears light clothes,
Her eye watches over us,
PANT PANT,

In the night her clothes shine like diamonds,
TWINKLE TWINKLE,
Her other eye is bright but gently,
Her hair is like a great palette,
Its colors mixed up,
So beautiful



St. Julian Pollard
Mrs. Yonkers

Grade 3 Winner

Color Poem

Black is the night's sky
Black is the color of my hair
Black is the thing that tells me to go to sleep
Black is the pen writing
Black tastes like black food coloring
Black smells like charcoal
Black sounds like burning wood
Black feels like coal
Black looks like my lunchbox
Black makes me feel calm
Black is a wonderful color.

Cooper Vasilic
Ms. Kimball

Grade 4 Winner

A Dog Under a Maple Tree

A dog under a maple tree
Watches the leaves fall,
Wagging his tail
When a fly buzzes near him,
He shakes his fur
Rests his eyes,
A leaf falls on his back,
The smell of syrup
Floats through the air,
And a soft, cold breeze
Makes the dog shiver

Wesley Anderson
Ms. Bell

Grade 5 Winner

ACCOMPLISHED



Out of all the years, this year I feel accomplished
Out of all the years, this year is the hardest
Out of all the years, this year is the one not to forget

Throughout all the years, we have flourished
Throughout all the year, we have learned
Throughout all the years, we have conquered

Out of all the years, this year I feel accomplished.

Peyton Turnbull
Ms. Carrico

Overall School Winner

If I were a Bird

If I were a bird
With wings strong and wide
I would take flight
And go for a ride

I would fly all night long
Above buildings up high
Past all the stars
That cover the sky

I would fly far away
From the predators down below
I have to get away
So up I would go

If I were a lion
I would stand strong and tall
Not at all afraid
That someday I'd fall

It was easier to not care
Then to be afraid
Instead of the weak one I was before
I would be tough and brave

If I were a fish
With a fin and some scales
In an ocean where everyone was different
With features from flippers to tails!

I would swim all I want
I could travel the ocean!
No one to tell me to stop
Or to end the commotion

So of course I know that
If I were a bird I could soar
A fish I could glide
And a lion I could roar

But between all the cool
Things I could be
I would have to choose
The perfectly imperfect me



Julia Gwin
Ms. Carrico



Grade 3 Winner

An Acrostic Storm

H Hurling through the clouds of grey
U Uprooting trees and plants all day
R Raging as a everlasting storm
R Resting down, in a funnel form
I Icy hail, rain, and thunder
C Can never compare to this windy wonder
A Amazingly whooshing in the dead of night
N Never stopping, in a super flight
E Ending now, as it stops it's roar
S Silence now, as it is no more

Kai Salo
Ms. Fletcher

Grade 4 Winner

Death

I was feeling sleepy
So i shut my eyes
The next moment
My mom was by
So i said hi but she didn't respond
Then i asked everyone what's this
Horrible commotion about
But then i looked to my side
A mirror right there but
I was nowhere around

Quinton Rinehart
Ms. English

Grade 5 Winner

Races

It's okay if we come from different places,
 We are all just different races.
People say we're all bad, but they are all wrong.
We need to stay together so we can be strong.
Show compassion and kindness not hate,
If we do that together we can all be great.
People say we're dumb because of where we're from,
But we need to show them, that we are not scum.
We need to work together, be kind to one another,
And treat everyone like a sister or brother.
 It's okay if we have different faces
 We are all just different races.

Miles Quini
Ms. English

Overall School Winner

The Greatest Inventor

Some people think that a mistake is bad,
But it's sort of like a big launching pad,
All sorts of things were created by failure
It's like if your brain's a bicycle, mistake is a derailleur
And that's why we know that mistake is the greatest inventor.
The chocolate chip cookie, and Post-it notes
Mistakes can change ANYTHING (even springs for boats)
A lot of inventions were created by failure
Sometimes it might seem like your savior
The inventors that failed,
Almost bailed, but stuck with it
Not what they wanted but maybe better
Mistake is warm and cozy like a great sweater
The inventors that tried
They dried their eyes and found a different use
Because mistake is the greatest inventor
Saved last of all,
two more mistakes
Potato chips and crunchy corn flakes
These innovations were big flops and fails
At first it seemed like a chalkboard on nails
But mistake is the greatest inventor.



Henry Miller
Ms. English

Grade 3 Winner

Words about Justice

Judgement
United
Society
Truth
Interdependence
Community
Equal Rights

Cesar Martinez-Solano
Ms. Kwakye

Grade 4 Winner

The Day I Die

I looked at the sky in 2009 and then I saw a glimmer
My life shined before my eyes but by that time I was gone

I woke up in an area as white as winter snow
With a golden gate there was a tall guard guarding the gate
I asked him for the way home
He told me this was home
I realized my mistake
I was in heaven



Shafi Hoque
Ms. McGreevy

Grade 5 Winner

Fireworks in the Moonlight

Fireworks go boom bam!
Lots of ooohs and ahhs.
Commemorating Independence.
Lots of applause.

Fireworks of many color
Explosions like bombs east and west.
Children scream in exhilaration
People stay to enjoy the rest.

Babies whine like upset kittens.
It isn't hot like the Sun yet.
Mommy's go shhhh
And babies go silent.

Finally we end the night.
Fireworks are beginning to cease.
Families are heading to their cars.
Some people head to bars.

But at least we had fun
Watching and listening to
Whizzing whistle beaming in the colorful sky.

And, we celebrated independence.
Historic Declaration of Independence
Created an outstanding holiday.

Michelle Nketia
Ms. Thomas

Overall School Winner

I Dream

I am a brown girl dreaming
“A Negro” they say
I dream to one day set foot
On the moon

To touch the sky
To maybe fly
To win the space race
And give my taste

“Dream small” Mom says
You can’t do that they say
It’s too hard these days

But, just like the song,
I ain’t going to let nobody turn me around
It’s hard
But still
I dream
Even in 1953

Still I dream

Peniel Ayana
Ms. Thomas

Grade 3 Winner

History

Some people made mistakes
but in the inside they wanted to halt
To make things right without hesitation
And sometimes they lied it wasn't all my fault

Some people did the wrong thing
To each other they weren't nice
Most of them had fights with each other
And their heart's were as cold as ice

Some people made the right choices
They were kind to others
And even though people were mean
They always loved them like brothers

The past helps us think
About mistakes that our ancestors
Did without hesitation
And sometimes they called for protectors
In time they fell in temptation

Sarah Molina
Ms. Goodman

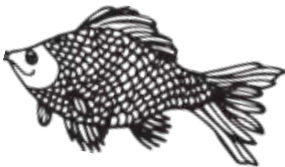
Grade 4 Winner

A Glimpse of Nature

Fresh air, pine trees, oak trees,
A rumble and a tumble
Beneath the underbrush,

A sweeping cool breeze,
Floating silvery clouds,
Robins flying overhead,
A lion chasing a deer.

Now imagine a galloping horse,
Running through the woods,
With a shadow on its back,
Experiencing oneness with nature.



Dagim Berhann
Mr. Miller

Grade 5 Winner

Lost In My Thoughts

Unfamiliar faces parade the long halls,
I'm lost in deep thoughts,
... Can't hear names being called.

My mind crowded with thoughts,
Filling up empty spaces,
As my feet lifts me to familiar places.

Recess rolls around, and the cold wind
Blows upon my cheeks,
Unfamiliar voices flows through my ears,
And my friends, I see, but cannot hear.

The day's ended and the bus draws near,
New thoughts crowd into my mind,
As unfamiliar faces parade across my eyes,
I'm lost in my thoughts,
As I sit and watch unfamiliar faces pass me by.

Jalissa Garcia
Mrs. Devine

Overall School Winner

Ocean Oh Ocean!

Ocean oh ocean,
I wish I could visit you all year long,
And have fun in the sun,
And even go for a run!

Ocean oh ocean,
Just to breath in the salty air,
And let the waves play in my hair,
And wiggle my toes in the sand all bare.

Ocean oh ocean,
I cannot wait for summer to come,
I dream of swimming in the sunlight zone,
But I dare not go to you, oh ocean, alone!

Noor Ashraf
Ms. Stevens



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

Secondary Winners

Grades 6-12



Grade 6 Winner

Another Day

'Twas another day
Another day of sunshine flooding my bedroom
A cool breeze blowing my way
And the smell of fried eggs and sausages that makes my belly rumble
Another day, just like everyone else

'Twas a normal day
Being woken by my brother
Rushing to the kitchen to meet my baby brother
Being tackled into a hug by my mother
And smiling up at my father
'Twas a normal day

'Twas another day
And I want you to know
That I hold you dear and cannot ask for more
For all I need is you, you and your love
My sweet, sweet family
Is all I can ask for
I love you from the bottom of my heart
'Twas another day

Amina Sharif
Ms. Miller

Grade 7 Winner



He Had a Dream

He had a dream that we would all have equal rights
Going against violence and any type of fights
Wanting to go make peace with every type of race
Regardless of their gender or the color of their face

He had a dream that we would all come together as one
This was definitely easier said than done
He had to believe, he had to try
It was hard to be patient or watch and stand by
No type of race should be put in a certain place
For we are all God's people, the human race

He had a dream that opportunities would knock on our doors
Everyone could be able to shop at the same stores
Freedom would ring from far and from near
For every single ear to listen and hear

To think about the difference between then and now
Many people would wonder how
We were all able to come together
Something that we will always treasure
All because of one young man
Who had a big dream and a prestigious plan

Promise Duah
Mr. Spivy

Overall School Winner

Night Time

The best time of the day is night time
Peaceful inside
No distractions
It's the best time of the day

You can do anything at that time
Night time is as peaceful as a river
It is like animals are hibernating
Night time is the best time of the day

No phone ringing
No responsibilities
Just peace to do what you want
No crying or whining
No loud outdoor sounds
No neighbors
Night time is the best time of day



Joshua Ackah-Nyanzu
Mr. Spivy

Grade 6 Winner

Poems

Poems rhyme at rhyming times
poems here, poems there
poems poems everywhere

SAD poems
MAD poems
GLAD poems
FAST poems

Poems here, poems there
poems poems everywhere

Poems near,
Poems far
poems poems good to hear
Poems fast, poems slow
Poems poems good to go

Nevaehya Frasier
Ms. Bugge'

Grade 7 Winner

A Dream Unknown

This world is confusing and hard to understand what it means; but so are dreams
the hardest thing to understand is a dream, you see it again and again or see it once
what does it mean?
is it a warning sign or is it a part of the mind? what is it and what does it mean?
but we never figure it out. Maybe it's a nightmare hiding in the shadow
like a panther watching your every move, waiting for a good moment to strike, but does it?
does it scare you enough to wake you.? Then does it makes you skeptical and wonder why do I see things like this?
then ignore it like nothing happened. Then the next night you have a dream
as adorable as a kitten or puppy you. Then you wonder where you are?
You see your family and friends and it's a nice gathering in the middle of summer, outdoors with tents,
and more and more it feels like real life.
you try to talk to your friend then it all goes white, then you wake up and wonder what it means?
dreams make you ask questions one after one and you keep on asking questions about your dream, your entire life
but you cannot describe what a nightmare feels like without comparing something;
nightmares are horrifying and feel like a jealous cat biting into your skin;
with no word or Hisss and you feel it scratching at the same time.
And a nightmare could eat you whole in a second trapping you
dreams could be something you adore or hate
honestly I think dreams are signs or warning
Will People think nightmares are truths like a warning and hide from it always staying afraid?
I just think nightmares are just a dark part of the mind trying to scare you
And lastly,
there are some dreams that are real
And could be what happens in real life,
but nobody knows.

Justin Bran Cabarello
Mrs. Middlebrook

Overall School Winner

Nature Can Be...

Nature can be crying for help at times.

Nature can be...

Happy, Hopeful, and Joyful but later

Be abused for our resource.

Nature has given us life to live.

Nature gives us life to strive.

Nature can be misunderstood

Until it speaks its thoughts.

The Lord has given us the environment to pick up and
respect it, but we drop it like a fresh apple growing on a tree.

Nature can be as peaceful as a flower

but later strike its lightning.

Nature can be depressed but

In the end there are...

Some people who care.



Caterinne Alfaro Rivas
Mrs. Middlebrook

Grade 6 Winner

Reminds Me Of You

The soft wind singing in my ear reminds me of you.
The blossoming flowers surrounding my feet remind me of you.
The light snowflakes kissing my cheeks are as comforting as when I am with you.
The sound of waves crashing on the sand reminds me of you.
The alluring sunset is as captivating as your smile.
The blanket of the sky covers me as you cover me as you cover me when I am inconsolable.
The leaves fall from the trees in autumn as I fell for you.
Every night I look at the face of the moon wishing it was yours.
The sun, the moon, the stars
Everything reminds me of you
I love you

Hadassah (Dassi) Dienstfrey
Mrs. Farrell

Grade 7 Winner

The Harmony of Light & Dark

When in the dark there is always light
Be it the light within,
Or the light at the end of the tunnel
The opposite is also true,
When in the light there is always dark
Be it the dark heart overwhelmed with anger and sadness
Or the kind and inviting shade on a hot day
The reason being light cannot exist without dark
And dark without light
They are one
They are peace
They are balance
They are harmony
They will always be together like Ying
Like yang

Maegan McDonald
Ms. Beaman-Bowe



Grade 8 Winner

The Battle Within

Sinking slowly, slipping silently, Deeper and deeper into despair
Drowning, Drowning, Drowning inside of my own thoughts
So, softly, so quietly no one notices how broken I am inside
I am Drowning, Drowning until I can't stand it anymore
Until acting like everything's ok is too hard for me
Unless I feel like someone feels the same
But it's too late for me maybe, maybe
Someone else can learn, maybe
Save at least one soul from

Drowning



Amelia Rose Jones
Mr. Gildee

Overall School Winner

Untitled

You are my friend Mr.O 3 ,
You make our environment pollution free
Your greatest enemy CFC,
But you mean a lot to me
On Earth you play an important role,
But we are responsible for your big hole!
To save our earth from UV rays,
We have to conserve you in many ways.
All are culprits, not only one,
Soon we'll have to bear the evil sun
But as for us, we become the only one,
To start earth's protection
In the future; things will be worse
'n' the sun will continue its curse
So friends take an oath with me,
We'll save our Mr.O 3 !!!

Arvin Gonzalez
Ms. Mata

Grade 7 Winner

Nightmare

Waking up in the middle of the night,
Looking through a small window seeing the moon light,
I sigh in relief thinking it's alright,
But I know it won't last forever.

The place where I sleep is literally hell,
I hope it will be over soon, but I can never tell,
And reality is now the only place where I can be safe,
But I know it won't last forever.

I lived like this for what seemed like years,
When I woke up, my nightmares left me in tears,
But now I see monsters everyday,

These are the creatures that made me afraid to sleep,
outside my bedroom, making the floorboards creak,
And every now and then it makes a terrifying roar, that I know that at least in this life I have
never heard before.

It sounds like someone being murdered out there,
But I can never look, because I know that i'm too scared.
And I can tell that my future seems bleak,
But now freedom is the only thing I seek.

I thought that being alive was a mistake,
And now when I leave my house, happiness is what I fake,
And I hope it won't last forever.

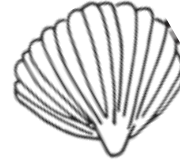
And I am preparing myself to face my fears one day,
Because maybe if I do all the creatures would go away.



Kalani Johnson
Mr. Hutson

Grade 8 Winner

Best Friend



To know that you'll walk away
To know that things won't be the same
To know that what I gave
Wasn't enough compared to the image you made
I dream all night about what I'm going to say
But everytime I see her, my mind goes blank

I let my heart get in the way of being good to you
I know it was wrong but I couldn't find another way through
But you already knew
That it was true
I couldn't get over you
At first I thought it would be soon
That I would be able to face the truth
But everytime you come around, I end up getting caught up in you

You didn't get the message, you just got the text
So i'm just waiting till my heart hits send
But I know you would've just left me on read
So I just kept what I thought in my head
Although, it's hard to pretend that I didn't take in the three years of everything we said
It seems I can only walk left
So even though this might be the end
I still wish you the best

Nathan Desta
Mrs. Jones

Overall School Winner

Princess Ideal

When it came my turn I said
I want to be a princess

The teacher most likely thought
Black
African royalty
With skin the color of ebony
hair that shoots up like an evergreen
And takes shape of a tangerine
Black Panthers Shuri
If you know what I mean

But my princess ideal was
Cinderella
White
A complexion of moonlight
With straight hair that never took flight
Because my only right
Was White

This hair of mine gave my momma a heart attack
Bending down to brush my hair she went hunchback
The brush smacked and whacked against my head
My head seemed like a rack
meant for a heavy anorak
But my mom stayed and attacked
Using all kinds of knick-knacks
I'd react by pulling back
Running away so fast, pretty sure I gained a six pack.
But Mama would always yank me back
Sit me down and brush my hair back.



I remember kneeling down beside my bed praying to
god with all my heart
Dear God
Please please, please
Make me fair
I don't wanna be this black bear
But I wanna be like Claire
I want straight hair
Rid me of this despair
Listen to my prayer
K Take care
amen.

walking home from school with my mom and I
turned to her and said ma I wish I was white

Her face showed shock
Then not

She looked me in the eye and said "Naomitu you're
beautiful just the way you are."

But how can you feel beautiful if society doesn't deem
you so?

Age 3 playing with barbies, comparing yourself to
them trying to find the slightest similarity.
Impossible.

Watching Barney on tv telling you that all people are
beautiful, the next ad that comes on is selling you
skin lightening products. Guaranteed to make you 5
shades lighter which in translation means beautiful.
Sitting in between my momma's legs as she braids my
hair. Watching a special on Elmo about hair like mine.
As i'm waiting for the ads to finish up, one of them
catches my attention, my eyes light up I've seemed to
have found a solution to my problem
a perm.

Overall School Winner

Princess Ideal Cont.

Moments of awareness
Happen out of nowhere
That ball I've been trying to dodge since I was 4
Comes Hitting me hard on the head
My self-notions start to shed
My persona seems dead
Identity crisis in my head
I feel misled
Filled with dread of what was unsaid
I look ahead
Into a mirror near my bed
And the unsaid was said
Moments of awareness
Happen out of nowhere
Blessed.

New state of mind
Took me time to realize
That my hair and skin is mine
it's what makes me feel alive
What defines divine
Part of me like my spine
This hair is a shrine
No need to redesign
What God gave us to shine

My princess ideal is
Black
African royalty
With skin the color of ebony
No need for that sunscreen
This hair that shoots up like an evergreen
And takes shape of a tangerine
Black Panthers Shuri
If you know what I mean.

Naomi Abay
Mr. Hutson

Grade 9 Winner

Ahagandose/Drowning

La lluvia
 El viento
 El silencio
 El silencio fue lo que mató
 La primera vez -
 Habían gritos
 Habían personas que querían cambiar algo
 Había esperanza
 Pero la segunda vez -
 No había una voz
 Las personas que tenían una voz la estaban usando
 Pero se ahogaron en las políticas de nuestro país
 ¿Y que paso cuando la naranja vino y trato de hacer algo?
 Nosotros no necesitamos papel de toalla
 Nosotros no necesitamos tus promesas falsas
 Lo que nosotros necesitamos es la fuerza para regresar de lo que pasó
 Pero antes que nosotros nos podemos mudar para el frente
 Necesitamos entender lo que pasó

The rain
 The wind
 The silence
 The silence was what killed
 The first time-
 There were shouts
 There were people that wanted to change something
 There was hope
 But the second time-
 There was no voice
 The people that had a voice were attempting to use it
 But they drowned in the politics of our country
 And what happened when the president came and tried to change something?
 We don't need paper towels
 We don't need your false promises
 What we need is the strength to bounce back from what happened
 But before we can move forward
 We need to understand the past

Isabel Cruz Rivera
 Ms. Riser

Grade 10 Winner

No Matter What

When our city begins to die
And the shops decay and rust
When the woods grow quiet and somber
And the last tree goes to dust
When our happy place is abandoned
And there is nothing left
I'll still remember you

When the street lamps fizzle out
And no one even cares
When your parents sell the house
'Cause it's so beyond repair
When everybody else says nothing's
Special about this town
I'll still remember you
And never forget you

When the new buildings gleam
And all the locals have gone
When the rich man chops our tree
That once was so strong
When the skyline is replaced with
Apartments and condos
I'll still remember you
And never forget you
And never forget what was ours
Never forget you

When downtown is gentrified
And it's polished, clean, and nice
Our names will still be etched
In the sidewalk day and night
When the concrete erodes
They might tear out our words
But I'll still remember you
I'll never forget you
I'll forgive you
When you leave too
I'll never forget you
We owned this--we still do
Never forget you
Never forget you.



Kate Casper
Mr. Henry

Grade 11 Winner

To My Grandfather

For Emmett Winburn Cocke Jr.

The Fairlington Church seems to exist there on King Street like a vigilant sentinel,
standing for much, yet guarding much too.

If I should ever dare to get near it, I think I would see...

That the bricks are, in their cyclical delirium of disquietude and self-reassurance, shaking,
pressing up against one another

making sure that no one has been blown away by some gust of an unsettling wind,
much as we dig our fingernails into the palms of our hands and clench our teeth when walking
somewhere new.

That there is, behind those pallid alabaster stones, made weak and see-through by the
unremitting feigning of constancy,

an unfathomable melange of black purples and deep reds
as mysterious as that which we harbor beneath our own skin: the lifeblood of inveterate sinners
and unwavering keepers alike.

If in this contrived reverie I should prick myself on the rosebush Emmett planted in the church
garden a thousand late-October days ago,

Let my colors spill out onto those petals, that he might know the Grandson he never met.

It will be harder to stop bleeding, for I've lost my friend, who, in the old days,
would kiss my hand and take up all that scarlet and carmine and anger and love into herself,
sparing me.

But in that moment, I think Reverend Cocke would want for nothing but that I smell that pink and
red bloom's pure sweetness;

a kind of love from which I'm sure he knows I am becoming too estranged.

Townson Cocke
Mr. Zahn

Grade 12 Winner

A Christian's Phobia/Christmas Dinner

I'm going home for winter break,
To a place red and scorching and infinite,
Where those like me are said to go
By the Saints and God himself.

I'm going home for winter break,
To a place pitch black and pulsing,
Waiting to drain and ruin
Its next rainbow visitors.

I'm going home for winter break,
To non-blood siblings
Crying and begging,
Melting and reforming.

I'm going home for winter break,
To spikes and torches,
Where I'll be forced upon them
And have no complaints.

I'm going home for winter break,
Where I'll be surrounded by mirrors
Reflecting my old dead body,
Causing panic attacks and terror.

I'm going home for winter break,
And suffering in my own skin,
All because you couldn't accept
That God made a mistake.

I'm going home for winter break,
To visit a conservative family,
Exchange pleasantries,
And hide behind a straight facade.

Only to fortify a lie
About their daughter,
Their granddaughter,
Their niece,
A false "she,"
A separate persona.

Aal Richards
Mr. Renne

Overall School Winner

Red



Maybe it was the hunger that got to her
Or maybe she saw the fruit
And was curious what darkness tasted like,
A snake and an apple showed Eve the truth,
and gave her wisdom.
She knew it was wrong
But the forked tongue of the snake whispered in her ear
And she grew curious.
What great sin came from only one apple?
In the end it brought her pain
But no ignorance ever filled her belly again.
And when that pain came over and over,
cursed upon her descendants, she knew it was worth it,
For it had given her and Adam their selves,
Not perfect creatures
By any stretch, but ones
Who knew the good and evil in this world,
and could choose.

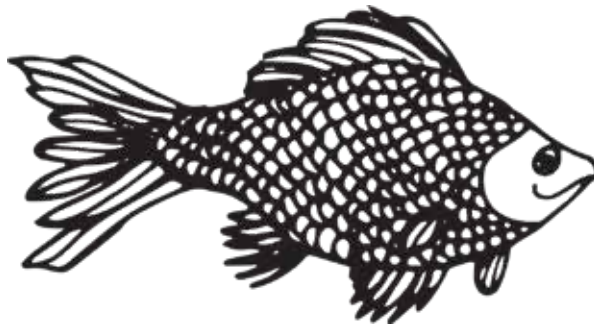
Persephone saw the pomegranate,
bursting with life in that dead garden.
There was no snake to tempt her
that she did not already have inside her.
She had been born with that,
A wrong part for every right part that made her.
She took only six seeds,
Red droplets
In her unblemished palm.
And they showed the young goddess
That the world had some darkness in it.
She did not turn away.
She held the evil with the same hand that held
her mother's hand in those long summer months
And carried them both inside her.

Emma Lally
Mr. Cunningham

Special Awards

Henry Miller

Henry is a 5th grade student at Mount Vernon Community School. Henry's favorite subject is reading class, and he was inspired by a quote to write his poem "The Greatest Inventor." Henry plays soccer for MVCS and plays the saxophone in the band. Henry loves to read in his free time, and his favorite book is Fablehaven.



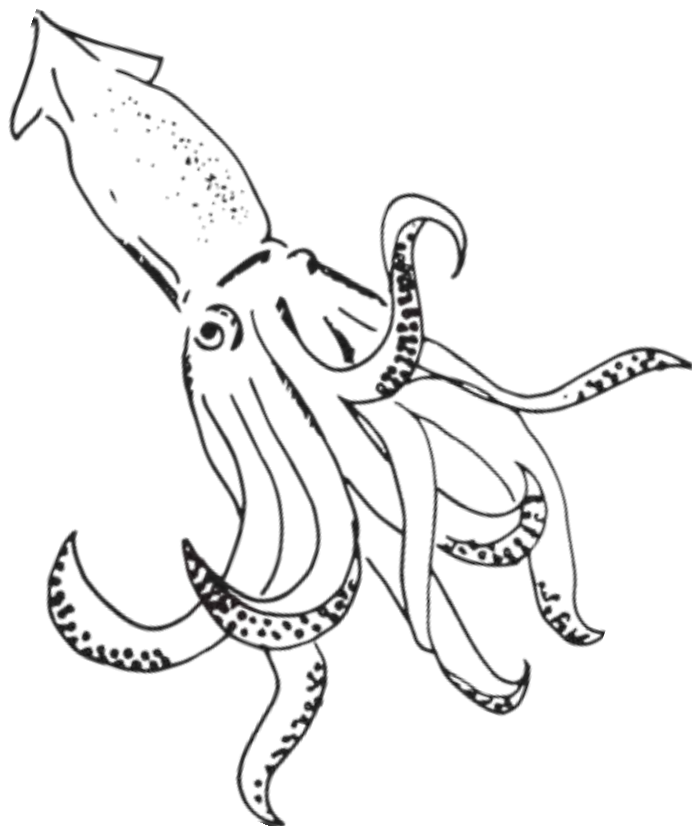
Julia Mickelsen

Julia Mickelsen is a 3rd grade student at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School where writing and science are her favorite subjects. Julia loves art, especially drawing, and she also dances ballet. Her favorite colors are pink and orange, and she loves dogs. Julia Mickelsen was inspired to write this poem because she just really loves writing poetry.



Emma Lally

Emma Lally is a 10th grade student at TC Williams High School. She loves to read and write – a passion she picked up in part from her mother, Jennifer Veech. She is a founding member of a Del Ray neighborhood book club that meets weekly and reads both fiction and poetry. She is currently reading the classic sci-fi novel *Dune* for the book club. In addition to her interest in reading and writing, Emma has been playing violin since the 4th grade and plays in the TC Chamber orchestra. She has two older siblings and a dog named Banjo.



Ariya Harrington

Ariya Harrington is a fifth grade student at Douglas MacArthur Elementary School. She loves sports and plays softball, basketball, volleyball, and tennis. Ariya's favorite subject is Language Arts. She was inspired to write her poem "The Egg" after she thought about an everyday object that might have a deeper meaning.



Acknowledgements

Elementary Poetry Liaisons

Ms. Meredith Fortner, John Adams Elementary School
Ms. Erin Rees, Charles Barrett Elementary School
Mr. Jacob Bennett, Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School
Ms. Joan Knowlin, Patrick Henry Elementary School
Ms. Kara Collins, Jefferson-Houston K-8 School
Ms. Mary Reuter, 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. Catherine Ienzi, Matthew Maury Elementary School
Ms. Kate English, Mount Vernon Community School
Ms. Celia Ochs, James Polk Elementary School
Ms. Dorothy Cocolin, Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School
Ms. Elouise Matthews, William Ramsay Elementary School

Secondary Poetry Liaisons

Mr. Kris Hutson, Francis C. Hammond Middle School
Mr. Thomas Gaffney, George Washington Middle School
Ms. Jerilyn Buggé, Jefferson-Houston K-8 School
Ms. Gaganpreet Kaur-Sharma, T. C. Williams High School- Minnie Howard Campus
Ms. Bridget Tomich, T. C. Williams High School- King Street Campus
Mr. Benjamin Renne, T. C. Williams High School- King Street Campus

Other

Dr. Gregory Hutchings, Superintendent
Dr. Terri Mozingo, Chief Academic Officer
Dr. Lisa Piehota, Executive Director of Elementary Programs
Dr. Gerald Mann, Executive Director of Secondary Programs
Secondary and Elementary ACPS Principals
Ms. Sandy Lara, ACPS Curriculum and Instruction Office
T.C. Williams High School Labyrinth Staff
Mr. Scott (Taki) Sidley, T. C. Williams High School- King Street Campus
Mrs. Suzanne Lank, ACPS English Learners Office
Ms. Renée DiPilato, Deputy Director for Alexandria Libraries
Ms. Wendi Kaplan, Alexandria City Poet Laureate
Mr. Cory Kapelski, ACPS Office of Talent Development
Mr. Andrew Watson, ACPS Curriculum and Instruction Fine Arts Specialist
Ms. Rose Henderson, T. C. Williams High School- Minnie Howard Campus
Ms. Heather Rosner, George Mason Elementary School
Ms. Rhea Butler, AVID, T. C. Williams High School- Minnie Howard Campus
AVID Student Volunteers, T. C. Williams High School- Minnie Howard Campus
Ms. LaGina Gross, T. C. Williams High School- Minnie Howard Campus
T. C. Williams- Minnie Howard Administrators
T. C. Williams- Minnie Howard Custodians

Thank you to all of our ACPS teachers who provide quality instruction in order for students to build, develop, and refine their literacy skills. That work is critical to fulfilling our ACPS Strategic Plan and our mission statement:

Every Student Succeeds: Educating lifelong learners and inspiring civic responsibility.

