

## Dover Public Library's 22nd Annual Poetry Contest May 2024

We received 312 entries in this year's contest and this booklet contains the winning poems. Poems were judged in seven categories: grades K-2, 3 & 4, 5 & 6, 7 & 8, 9 & 10, 11 & 12, and adults ages 18 and older.

We would like to thank our judges for 2024:

Janice Alberghene  
John Michael Albert  
Marcia Goodnow  
Donna McAdam  
Jessica Purdy  
Lauren Vermette

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Adrianna Morganella, Grade 8  
Everly Neri, Grade 8  
Emily Sinkewich, Grade 8



Kaira Katoppo, Grade 8



Elijah Tappin, Grade 5

## RAINBOW POEM

Red is the color of cherries.

The color of roses, apples, and hearts.

Red tastes like apples from a tree.

Red looks like roses from a plant.

Red feels like smooth falling leaves from the trees.

Red smells like lobster cooking in the oven.

Red is the color of cherries.

The color of roses, apples and hearts.

Orange is the color of oranges.

The color of carrots, pumpkins, and construction cones.

Orange tastes like sweet orange peppers in a salad.

Orange looks like goldfish swimming in a tank.

Orange feels like squishy squash on Thanksgiving.

Orange sounds like leaves crunching under my feet.

Orange smells like a gross rotting jack-o-lantern.

Orange is the color of oranges.

The color of carrots, pumpkins, and construction cones.

Yellow is the color of daffodils.

The color of corn, cheese, and butter.

Yellow tastes like sour lemons and sweet lemonade.

Yellow looks like scrambled eggs for breakfast.

Yellow feels like the hot sun burning me at the beach.

Yellow sounds like ducklings quacking in the pond.

Yellow smells like dandelions growing in our yard.

Yellow is the color of daffodils.

The color of corn, cheese, and butter.



Angelys Lora De Leon, Grade 7



Cora Engelman, Grade 7





Emily Pomerleau, Grade 7



Matthew Amburg, Grade 6

Green is the color of grass.  
The color of limes, leaves, and avocado.  
Green tastes like lettuce from a garden.  
Green looks like a flower's stem.  
Green feels like prickly pine needles that I touch.  
Green sounds like leaves rustling in a tree.  
Green smells like brussel sprouts cooking in a pan.  
Green is the color of grass.  
The color of limes, leaves, and avocado.

Blue is the color of robin eggs.  
The color of blue crabs, waterfalls, and sapphires.  
Blue tastes like blueberries from a bush.  
Blue looks like the sky on a clear sunny day.  
Blue feels like the warm ocean on a hot summer day.  
Blue sounds like a blue jay singing in a tree.  
Blue smells like chlorine water in a pool.  
Blue is the color of robin eggs.  
The color of blue crabs, waterfalls, and sapphires.


Purple is the color of purple cabbage,  
The color of plums, beets, and eggplant.  
Purple tastes like blackberries fresh from the bush.  
Purple looks like pansies from the garden.  
Purple feels like smooth amethyst,  
Purple sounds like grapes crunching in my mouth.  
Purple smells like lilacs in the spring.  
Purple is the color of purple cabbage.  
The color of plums, beets, and eggplant.

Ricky Mack, 1st place  
Category K-2, Grade 1

Pig, Spider, Rat

# Riddle Poem

A Stubbull rat, a pig  
thats fat a spider that  
can write and type  
all over that. The rat  
gets fat the pig gets  
sold the spider dies  
what else to be told?



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Mila Christie, 2nd place  
Category K-2, Grade 2



Jack Bonello, Grade 8





Lucas Reny, Grade 6



Reid Schuman, Grade 6

## The Four Seasons

I love all the seasons. I love them all.  
Winter, spring, summer, and fall.  
In winter it obvious, that I love to ski.  
In spring look at the animal babies.  
In fall I love to jump and rake leaves  
but my sister comes out and jumps on me.  
In summer I'll tell you finally.  
I swim in the pool with my family.  
My favorite you ask?  
I don't know yet  
but ask me again and I'll know I bet.

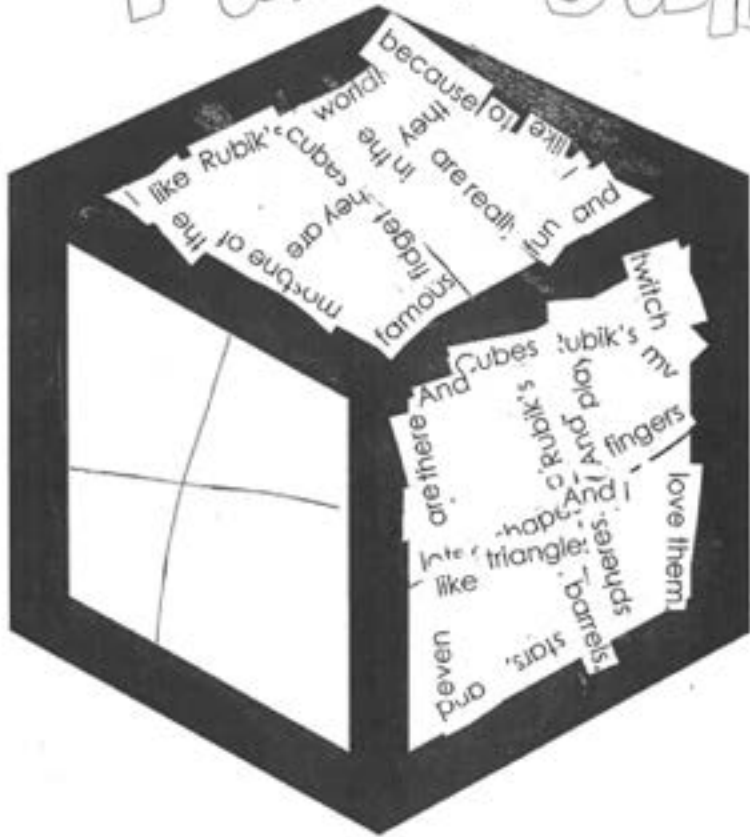
Elisa Gomez Rios, 3rd place  
Category K-2, Grade 2



Novie Moll, Grade 7

# The Rubik's Cube

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Alex Amaro, Honorable Mention  
Category K-2, Grade 2



Dover Middle School Student



Ashlyn Callaghan, Grade 5





Norah, Grade 6



Steven Chaparro-Otero, Grade 8

## SNOWFALL

CRUNCH,  
CRUNCH,  
CRUNCH,

OUR FEET TALK AS  
WE TREK ACROSS THE GRASSES' WHITE BLANKET

I LOOK UP TO SEE THE SUN - A SHIMMERING  
YELLOW SEQUIN

SHIVERING, THE FIERCE WIND BITES AT MY CHEEK,  
BECKONING ME TO WALK FARTHER INTO  
THE WOODS

LIKE ME, THE TREES ARE COLD AND WEAR  
GLITTERING SNOWY COATS.

EVEN MORE,  
WE MARCH

Caleigh Kirk, 1st place  
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4

## The Wolves Lullaby

They stretch their heads up to the sky,  
Open their mouths and sing a lullaby.  
The moon shines bright,  
And the wind answers back.  
Good night to you wolves, good night to the pack.  
I'll see you tomorrow evening when you come back.

Hunter Dornsife, 2nd place  
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4



Oliver Brown, Grade 5



Aubrey Furina, Grade 7



Victoria Mastrobattista, Grade 6





Mason Shaw, Grade 6



Reese Billings, Grade 7

Declan Hourihane, Grade 6



**Seagull**  
**A haiku**

Calm day at the beach  
Then the thief came down and stole  
The chase is now on

Israella Fry, 3rd Place  
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4

## Basketball

I feel the ball fill my hands with excitement.

I feel the sweat dropping down my face hitting the ball.

I feel the rhythm of the ball hit the ground like thunder.

I feel the whistle hit my ear like the squeak of someone putting their shoe on to a wet floor.

I feel the swish of the basketball going into the hoop like someone clapping softly.

I feel the ground as I jump in the air and take a shot.

I feel the sport fill my heart up with joy and happiness.

I love basketball.

Finbar Henry Licata, Honorable Mention  
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4



Tucker Lewis, Grade 5



Bella Lynch, Grade 8



Luiz Arthur Fagundes, Grade 8





Cat Dueñas, Grade 8



Audrey Rouillard, Grade 8

## Tiger

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Fast and stripy, orange and black,  
Almost gave me a heart attack!  
Started to growl, then to pace,  
And pounced on me with speed and grace:  
I screamed and jumped, and tried to get away  
It seemed that tiger did not want to play,  
It wanted to stay!  
Suddenly my mom grabbed me and  
dragged me away. She was in rage as  
she pulled me out of that tiger cage.



Lyla Carrel, Honorable Mention  
Category 3 & 4, Grade 4

## Books Take Me

Pages flip  
Turn  
Fold  
Covers crease  
Bend  
Protect  
Books take me away  
Take me to the land far away  
Away from the blandness of life  
Away from the planeness of human  
Away from the mystery of people  
Away to the world of wonder  
To the place of dreams  
To a place so far away only few minds can fathom  
Where I find my dreams  
My worth  
My purpose  
Until I wake  
Until I return to normal life  
Until I can visit again  
Books take me

Heidi Roberge, 1st place  
Category 5 & 6, Grade 6

## The Space Between

I've taken a pickaxe  
to the walls surrounding my heart,  
chipping away at what I built to protect me.  
I thought these walls  
would fall to rubble,  
allowing my true self to shine,  
but the barrier stays there.  
The walls, as tall as ever,  
littered with the cracks of my efforts,  
still stand strong.  
Flickers of light now shine  
through the gaps,  
illuminating my heart  
like I've never seen before.  
I don't need to destroy these walls;  
I just need to redecorate.  
Paint them in shades of blues,  
greens, and violets,  
creating the technicolor mural of my soul.  
And maybe, just maybe,  
the space between where I am  
and who I want to be  
can be closed with softness  
and enough light by which to see.

Ry Friese, Honorable Mention  
Category Adult, Dover, NH



And as I stare into her glassy surface  
Eyes that mirror my own still return my gaze  
To her I whisper, "Thank you."

Miranda DiBerardinis, 3rd place  
Category Adult, Kingston, NH



Jovie Meeker, Grade 8

### The Dragon Fruit

The soft green spikes bend  
With hints of pinkish purple  
Juicy and glossy

### The Lychee

Clear like crystal glass  
Sweet like sugary jello  
Great for boba

### The Star Fruit

Yellow like the sun  
A nice tropical sweet star fruit  
Tastes like a sweet pear

Rosaleen S-Dixon, 2nd place  
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5

## Gymnastics

Gymnastics is breathtaking  
You should try it  
My teammates are awesome  
Never giving up  
Attacking the vault  
Saluting after each event  
Tumbling all day  
I absolutely love gymnastics  
Cartwheels and handsprings  
Sticking the landings

Caroline Denn, 3rd place  
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5

I wonder what it is like for water  
To engulf ships, airplanes, and submarines  
To keep seafarers and their stories hidden  
She asks me, "What is life without a little mystery?"  
A bold adventurer unlike no other  
She exists in many places in our universe  
Whether frozen, liquid, or in hazy clouds of vapor  
She has witnessed extinction, evolution, supernovas  
And so much more  
I wonder if water has seen it all  
She says "No"  
For in nature, chemistry both consumes her and reanimates her  
Thus, she'll never die  
And never experience the journey of afterlife  
Even though I envy her immortality  
She tells me not to fear senescence  
For the real adventure takes place after death

Water travels through his heart  
Touching it in ways that my hands or words never could  
She is the rain that kisses him everywhere  
Without ever tiring or gasping for air  
Something that my kisses could never do  
I wonder what it is like for water  
To be so close to someone  
Without hesitation, or their knowledge,  
Or fear of unrequited love  
Caressing my cheeks as my tears, she tells me not to cry  
And that although she is the empath,  
I am the muse  
For I construct poems and their elements  
That touch hearts in ways that she never could

Envision the lands that we call home  
Water is the humble bridge that connects them all  
Throughout time, she has heard what is native in our hearts  
A shared yearning for friendship  
Coexisting with other building blocks of nature and biology  
She is our connection, our cohesion, and our comradery



## Words of Water

I know not the face identical to mine  
When rippling waters calm  
She in fact wears numerous faces  
As man and beast stare  
Into eyes that mirror their own  
To wear the appearances of so many others  
I wonder if water ever loses her own identity  
She says "No", but like a mirror  
She "can never tell a lie"

Within the clouds, she enters a freefall  
Plummeting as rain onto the grassy fields below  
To disperse herself and be absorbed  
To quench the never-ending thirst of this world  
I wonder if water's sacrifice is ever painful  
She says that any pain is for the greater good  
To sustain us as our one true mother

Water exists as a part of all life on Earth  
And thus, she shares our every fleeting thought  
There is no secret that we can keep from water  
I wonder if it ever drives her mad  
Being an empath to the entire planet  
She says that even she has a breaking point  
Unleashing her fury with every tsunami,  
Flood, and hurricane

Inside us, water carries our blood  
She carries our oxygen  
Apart from us, she carries all sea creatures  
In the ponds, lakes, and oceans weighed down by gravity  
I wonder if anything is ever too heavy for water  
She yields a simple "No"  
And reminds me of the synchrony  
That exists between her and other joined elements  
Found in our bodies and in the cosmos  
They work as a team; one unit  
In good times and in bad times  
If only humans could work this well together

## Soccer

I love to play soccer.  
I need to play soccer.  
I have to play soccer.  
A thing you need to know  
when playing soccer is.  
If the ball is inside the line  
The game is in time. And one more  
Once the whistle blows the goal goes.

Bradley Loomis, Honorable Mention  
Category 5 & 6, Grade 5



Desmond Kagleiry, Grade 5

tt

my mornings always began with a goodmorningg text,  
(the extra g adds meaning.)  
if it's a really good morning, sometimes i'll wake up to a "goodmorningg!"  
(mornings with exclamation points were my favorite)  
and my nights always ended with a goodnightt.

i ran off of those texts like clockwork;  
a routine that's illicit to break.  
the same goodmorningg, the same goodnightt  
every. single. day.

on late nights,  
i vigilantly waited for the familiar zzzt of my phone on the nightstand,  
fighting to keep my eyes open just to read your texts- a fight worth fighting.  
i was happy,  
you were happy too.  
we were happy.

until i noticed that you said *night* instead of your usual goodnightt.  
a change that, to some, would be "imperceptible," or "innocuous,"  
became an insidious problem,  
consuming my every thought until my head hit my wet pillow that night.

that blue bubble filled with only 5 letters,  
that hideous blue bubble became a punch to the stomach - incontrovertible  
proof that  
maybe you weren't happy.  
i thought you were, though.  
i don't mean to be petulant, but i just wanted a goodnightt text back.  
just one word,  
just one extra t as well,  
please.

and a sun, slowly spending its heat-charged yellow.  
What I cannot paint: the rush of black doves

caught in your throat. What we do not speak:  
a reconciliation weighted as a leafless tree,

or rather, the years between lives.

Tara Tooze, 2nd place  
Category Adult, Dover, NH



Johnny H., Grade 8



## Significant Spaces

### *For Jack*

This hour distends itself, a bruised, tumid fist.  
Outside, Seoul and yellow sand.

I grind stone and stick, studying *Four Gentleman*,  
their stems tangles of black bone strokes.

Painting bamboo without light, I contemplate  
how each culm is a curved finger following

folds of sky and cloud. You brother, are not  
here and do not discern the sky, blue

as a thousand celadon. I know the dreams in your  
dark: coal-washed hair framing the curves

of your mother's yellow ochre skin, her almond eyes,  
and pink lips, amid buds almost blossomed.

The light declines exponentially. I sift  
through boxed photographs bereft of blood

and notice our mother's white face, bright as  
the slivered light easing beneath my bedroom door.

I imagine painting us among chrysanthemum, orchid,  
bamboo, and plum blossom: eyes toward the sky

brooding was how my following nights were spent.  
maybe you wouldn't bother to send me another goodnight text,  
but i cling onto a shrinking fragment of hope that you will.  
without hesitation, i'll still send you the same "goodnightt" every night;  
fully typed out, with an extra t.

Shelby Cena, 1st place  
Category 7 & 8, Grade 8



Molly McMillen, Grade 7

## Second Best

From elementary to high school,  
I watched you grow into the person you became.  
My heart pounds, my stomach feels sick,  
Whenever I see you,  
I can't find the courage that's deep down to chat.  
Until, you caught a glimpse of so called beauty.  
You called me "Your goddess,"  
I became a tomato.

When you took me home,  
I washed off the mask that hid my features.  
I showed my realism.  
My skin and bone.  
You seemed surprised by me.  
As shock lingers, I feel naive.  
I thought you loved me for me, not beauty.  
Despair sets in, I waddle over next to you,  
But you run away from me.  
You made me look like a fool.

Am I a monster..?  
Do I belong in second place?  
Is it my forever title?  
Why am I never the first?  
Anger arises in me,  
You stole my youth.

## Making Dinner

*For Mekeel McBride*

Let's frankenstein the shanked  
pieces of today together  
into something better. Let's boil water, add the elemental  
thunder of salt; toss in some sliced  
sunsets, minced mornings, limbs of various

afternoons; stir them together, poise our spoons.  
Let's wait. Let's stretch  
in the waiting, uncrick the creaks  
of our too-old bones, expand each  
second like a rubber band and smile  
in the horizon. Let's let

the flavors mingle, marinate, inquire  
over each other's hobbies and passions, what music  
the other likes, their favorite way to spend  
a Sunday. Let's ladle the yield  
into bowls, warm our faces over steam, breathe

the potion in through tubes and out  
over skies inside. Let's dunk those spoons  
and lift out a lake, albeit  
a small one, and raise the spiced excavation to lips. Let's unwrinkle

our brains, melt the architecture  
of our worry, drink in what once was  
angry edges, biting triangles, colorful  
excrescence peeking from underneath  
a blanket of soil. Let's cherish today before  
tomorrow--no matter how ugly.

Caleb Jagoda, 1st place  
Category Adult, Dover, NH





## Cricket

A competitive game of cricket  
A game against Australia  
At the 2023 world cup final Held in Ahmedabad India  
Some players first world cup  
And some players last world cup  
Praying to god for india to win  
The whole country Doing a puja for india's win  
But at the stadium  
Feelings were jumping around  
Will india win  
The stadium roars like a lion when india scores  
Completing silencing when Australia scores  
Jumping, screaming, when an Australian player gets out  
Sadness and worries when an Indian player gets out  
Will india win  
A new player comes in and they score the max amount of runs  
Lots of yelling  
But in the end, Australia won and India lost  
Lots of sandness, tears in people's eyes  
But at the end both teams amazing  
And there is going to be another chance in 2027

Mansi Patel, Honorable Mention  
Category 11 & 12, Grade 12

I try, everyday.  
I smell great,  
I do my hair,  
I do my make up,  
Yet I still make,  
Second best.

Kaira Katoppo, 2nd place  
Category 7 & 8, Grade 8



Liliana Mozzoni, Grade 8

All my life I have felt different and unique  
People always thought of me as a classmate not a friend  
I know inside my heart that I am truly one of a kind.  
I have beautiful dreams and I use beautiful words.  
But they will never think I am equal to them.  
My dreams lift me up into the sky like a hot air balloon and I feel free like a bird.  
I have a lot of fears that I will never be like them and that I am a bird with a broken wing that can't fly.  
When I have those thoughts I begin to shrivel up like a crumpled piece of paper.  
I am alone.  
I write and write for one day I will become known and then I will be a bird with two healed wings.  
I will fly into the sky and live freely forever.  
I dream each night that we live in a world where we are all free birds just flying away with the sunset.  
I dream and dream.  
One day these sweet dreams of mine will come true.  
I know, I know in my heart it is true.  
If you can't see it, that is truly okay.  
Never Ever, Never Ever will I feel small again.  
I am a unique Bird and that is okay.  
My clothes are different and that's okay.  
I am strong and will be a voice for change.  
I feel strong and I will scream to the Mountaintops For Equality and Change.

Aisha Khan, 3rd place  
Category 7 & 8, Grade 8

Alex Bernier, Grade 8



### HALF LOVE POEM

Disembodied displayed halfway  
You lay, tired  
I look upon you, gaze filled with wonder  
As if I've only just opened my eyes.

And sure, there's been ten times as many love poems as there are lovers.  
Love does not stop for anyone. We know this, but still, I feel it has to be said.

I speak to you as I speak to myself on the best days; with kindness, with gentle understanding.  
I know where you have been, but you are not there anymore.  
You stand free to love, free to live, now.  
Never to be hurt again.

Lover is not the exact word I would use to describe it, but it is not so far off.  
After all, what is a human connection built off of if not love? Or any connection, really.

My every moment is conscious of yours.  
We are mirrored beings, two dear souls. I knew so little before I came to know you.  
Once we were far, but we no longer are. And still, if you say it so, I will let you go.  
I have come to realize the path to the flower is just as sweet as the honey.

Juli Miller, 3rd place  
Category 11 & 12, Grade 12



## Oh Almond Blossoms

Beloved blossoms, oh let me see you grow:  
grow like a child's first steps in the grass,  
with a love for all things new.  
The eyes as steady fixed on small details.  
Show yourself in the vines that surround you,  
begin your journey, to show those who can see.  
Your colors as bright, and vibrant to the scene.  
Great blossoms, oh, show who you really are  
Don't let them take away your worth, as you  
are what's truly beautiful.  
Be calm in the wind, as you, blossoms grow.  
With the scent of pure bliss, and the color of  
true love.  
Run with the children who cry to their mothers,  
the ones who have no stress and no worries,  
for their lives have just begun.  
Intriguing blossoms, thrust yourself into the  
wind to be seen, so all who lift their eyes  
will get a glimpse of true beauty.

Jamee Pulkinen, 2nd place  
Category 11 & 12, Grade 11



When I walk through the plain wooden doors to the library, it's like the chains of reality have been lifted. I feel free and safe, a time-halting passage where I can just be. A place so beautifully filled with knowledge, I can't help but breathe in the smell of paper and power. When I touch a book, it calls to me, urging me to open the pages and be whisked away to another world, to be sucked from this broken world into one worth living for. Books hold the remote to our emotions, making us cry one minute, and laugh out loud the next.

The people who work there are booklovers, wisdom seekers, word thirsty, and ready to help and equip you for your next journey. The librarians are more than happy to share their love of books with you and give their opinion on what to read next. The library is like my second home, an environment I can thrive in and a space where I feel comfortable to be myself. The library is a haven for all people who love books, and who want to make the world a better place, one page at a time.

Novie Moll, Honorable Mention  
Category 7 & 8, Grade 7

## The Robin

On an early  
April morning  
A robin landed on my shoulder

A sleek headed  
Orange breasted  
Robin on my shoulder

He sang and chirped to celebrate  
The recent arrival of spring  
With a worm in his mouth  
And mud on his claws  
He seemed to not know a thing

It was at that moment  
He spoke to me  
In a language I once knew  
I sat on a stump and listened  
With my bare feet in the grassy dew

We sat there and discussed,  
Not about politics  
But my past life  
Something that was long forgotten  
From my years of humanly strife

## Running From This Pain

*When the doctor spoke of "Lung Cancer," it hit me like a storm,  
Everything else they mentioned lost its form  
They talked of tests and symptoms, a family history to blame,  
But it all blended into a sea of shame  
That I couldn't face*

*I'm just sixteen, it's my birthday today,  
But this news dims the sunshine in every way.  
The weight of it all, a burden so vast,  
Darkening the skies, making moments of the past.*

*At school, they sang "Happy Birthday" with cheer,  
But in my heart, there was nothing but fear.  
This Christmas, I know Santa won't appear,  
Because you're not around, and your absence is clear.*

*But After you left*

*The therapy sessions were, like a restless drum,  
Beating out a rhythm of sorrow, making me numb.  
They handed me prescriptions, words on a page,  
But all I could think of was turning the page.*

*That night,*

*I ran until I couldn't feel my legs,  
Away from the world, with its countless begs,  
To multiple therapy sessions, seeking in vain  
If there was a prescription for this type of pain.*

Beldomisa Mendes, 1st place  
Category 11 & 12, Grade 12



Here lies a sinner

Taken for

Treading on sacred ground.

A martyr of her own devotion

seldom, she sought sanctum

Always praying

"O Lord, give me strength!"

"O Lord, I cry  
for power!"

"Where are you

Lord?"

"Don't you know I need you, Lord?"

May she rest in peace  
In the hands of an angry God.

Jaden Mundung, Honorable Mention  
Category 9 & 10, Grade 10

Our conversation was quite lengthy  
It's content brought glassy tears to my eyes

All of a sudden  
His talking halted  
And he began to fly

I knew our talk was over  
He disappeared behind a tree

A robin landed on my shoulder

And no one  
Would believe me

Holden Schintzius, 1st place  
Category 9 & 10, Grade 9



Julia Long, Grade 7

Declyn Mangum, Grade 8



There's no word for when a parent loses a child.  
There are no words.  
Silent dinners,  
Forever waiting for everyone to arrive,  
Hoping to see a familiar face across the table,  
No one speaks,  
For there is a great fear,  
By talking about it that it will feel true,  
That if it's too loud,  
They might not be able to hear his footsteps retreating.

Asher Lanctot, 2nd place  
Category 9 & 10, Grade 10

## George

George is my dog  
He lived for very long  
He was always smiling  
Even when he was growling  
He had a good life  
He never liked to walk  
But he was always talking  
Even while he was barfing

Beckett Ferrell, 3rd place  
Category 9 & 10, Grade 10



Anna Jedicke, Grade 7