



# Words in Action

## 2020/21 ANTHOLOGY



BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**BURNABY**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 41

# Words in Action

## 2020/21 ANTHOLOGY

### A Message from the Burnaby Board of Education

Congratulations to the 100 students whose writing was selected for publication in this year's anthology: *Words in Action*. Unique to Burnaby Schools, the Words Writing Project has annually showcased the best in student poetry and prose since 1985.

All students from Kindergarten through Grade 12 had the opportunity to enter in either English or French, along with art submissions for the anthology cover. We are proud of all their work. This anthology is both a celebration of student writing and a chance for them to explore the opportunity to become a published author. Career exploration is one of the important experiences the Burnaby School District provides students.

Reading and writing fosters creative thinking, inquiry, reflection, an appreciation for the written word, and a connection to the world beyond our own experience. One should never underestimate the power of *Words in Action*.



Jen  
Mezei  
Chair



Bill  
Brassington  
Vice-Chair



Peter  
Cech



Christine  
Cunningham



Larry  
Hayes



Ryan  
Stewart



Gary  
Wong



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# Words in Action

## WORDS Writing Project 2020-21 Anthology

This is an anthology of selected works by students from Kindergarten to Grade 12.  
Please review content to ensure it is appropriate for your child.



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# Elementary-Poetry

Kg-Grade 2



## The Snow of January

Sophia Ramos *Brantford Elementary*

Ah! The snow falls on me  
The park is white, it's cold like the snowflakes  
The wind of winter gets that  
January feel  
It goes on and on  
The kids make snowmen that  
Look up at the sky  
The moon goes up and down  
The snow lets everyone know  
That it's winter!

Yes

## GERMS GO AWAY!!

Carol Junega *Montecito Elementary*

Clean up time, clean up time  
Carol cleans her toys.  
From small to big, from cars to dolls  
Carol puts them away.

I help my mom to clean the house  
In and out every day.  
Too much work, got to do  
To keep the germs away.

I will wash my hands with the soap  
And the germs will go away.  
I will stay fit, will never get sick  
And go to school everyday.

Bye bye germs, bye bye germs  
Will never see you again!!

## Earth

By Ella Fang *Seaforth Elementary*

Earth is round  
Air helps you live  
Round earth in space  
There is lots of water  
Hot volcanoes ready to erupt.

## Crazy Pancake

Kyle Tejado *Clinton Elementary*

I baked a pancake  
It hit my face  
It hit my bat  
It hit my cat  
It hit a candy shop  
And it hit the floor  
I baked another pancake  
And I don't want anymore!  
no

## October

Bowen Leung *Forest Grove*

October is here, and leaves fall,  
Halloween spiders on the wall.

## Remembrance Day

Gemma Leong *Stoney Creek Community*

Red hearts cracked  
Eleventh day the war ended  
Men who died in war  
Endless war  
Many didn't come home  
Brave soldiers fought for peace  
Red poppies  
All those protected our land  
Never gave up hope  
Calmness didn't survive  
Eleventh day, 11<sup>th</sup> month, 11<sup>th</sup> hour

# French Immersion—Poetry

## Un beau flocon

Elyse Dong *Ecole Brantford Elementaire*

Un flocon de neige est  
Fragile comme les ailes d'un papillon  
Amusant comme le terrain de jeu  
Blanc comme un lapin de neige  
Il roule comme les billes  
Puis il tombe sur moi!

# Elementary-Prose

## Kg-Grade 2

### **Monsters**

Halo O'Donoghue *Forest Grove Elementary*

#### Chapter One

Once upon a time there was a race. The purple car was in the lead and then she won the race. But then a big monster jumped onto the racetrack. A girl called Daisy came along and she was surprised to see the monster.

#### Chapter Two

Daisy started to fight the monster. But the monster did not want to fight. He wanted to be friends. And so they became best friends. They walked together to the mall where there was a fashion show.

#### Chapter Three

Daisy and the monster went backstage and dressed up for the fashion show. They walked along the catwalk with style. After the show, they went to find something to eat. They found a sushi bar. They ordered two inari each, avocado rolls to share and a seaweed salad.

#### Chapter Four

After eating, they went outside to get some fresh air. They found a park and starting playing on the playground. The monster started to feel homesick so Daisy promised to get him back home.

#### Chapter Five

The monster told her that he came from a different planet. He lived in a cave in the Blossom Tree Mountains on the planet Unicornio. The monster called his mum with his special intergalactic phone to send a rocket and two spacesuits to Daisy's house.

#### Chapter Six

They walked to Daisy's house but got hungry on the way. So they stopped at McDoodles café for A-Z hamburgers. Then they carried on to Daisy's house. The rocket had arrived. Daisy said goodbye to her mum. They put on their spacesuits and got into the rocket.

#### Chapter Seven

They blasted off and zoomed up into space. Out of the window they saw a park planet, so they decided to land there. And then they went to the slides and played. Then they headed off to the planet Unicornio.

#### Chapter Eight

When they landed on Unicornio, the monster showed Daisy his home and his family. Daisy liked it so much she decided to live there. She wanted to be a monster.

### **Snowman**

Jamie Shon *Forest Grove Elementary*

There is a boy and a girl who built a snowman. They rolled the snow and made a snowman's head and body. They put two rocks for the snowman's eyes, and five rocks for the mouth. They put a big carrot for snowman's nose.

Snowman wears a hat and its arms are made of sticks.

At night, the snowman feels so cold and he sneezes,

"Ah-choo."

The little girl said, I can put a scarf on the snowman.



# Elementary-Prose

## KG-Grade 2

### **Me and Burnaby**

Iliyaana Sharma *Inman Elementary*

I love Burnaby. Why?

I love Burnaby because there are beautiful places like Central Park, Deer Lake and Barnet Marine Park. I could name lots more places, but there are too many to name. My favourite place in Burnaby is my school: Ecole Inman Elementary.

I love going to school in Burnaby because I get to learn in both French and English. I also love that I get to play outside with my friends, sometimes 3 times in one day!!

I love Burnaby because I get to enjoy 4 seasons. In summer I love to swim outdoors at Wesburn Park Pool. In winter I love to sled in the snow at Forglén Park. In the fall I love to jump in the crunchy pile of leaves all around my neighbourhood. In spring I love to enjoy the pretty pink cherry blossoms and fly my kite.

I love Burnaby because I get to dance ballet and modern dance at Shadbolt Center. Dancing to music is my favourite activity.

I love Burnaby because of all the different delicious foods to enjoy from around the globe. Italian, Mexican, Chinese, Indian, Canadian, Japanese, American, and so many more! Yum! Yum!

What I love the most about Burnaby is that I get to see and learn about many different cultures around me. I see different faces, hairstyles, skin colours, and dress styles. I hear different languages, accents, and cultural music. Every day at school, I thank the Coast Salish Nations of Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish on whose traditional territory we teach, learn, live and play.

Burnaby is my home, and I am glad I live in Burnaby.  
I love Burnaby and I hope Burnaby loves me too!

### **My hair runs down my back like a waterfall**

Kayla Fang *Seaforth Elementary*

My hair is as black as a raven's wing.  
My hair shines like a diamond.  
My hair is thin like silk and string.  
My hair blows in the wind like a kite soaring high.  
My hair can be long or it can be short.  
My hair can be wet or it can be dry.  
But my hair is my hair and it will always be!

### **My Community**

Winnie Chang *Taylor Park Elementary*

My community is where I work and grow and live,  
My community is where I share and play and give,  
My community is where I'll always taste new tastes,  
My community is where I'll always visit new places,  
My community is where I learn and go to school,  
My community is a place that is always cool !

### **The Wind: A Poem About Calmness and Stillness**

Elisabeth Moxam *South Slope Elementary*

The wind is howling,  
The trees shake,  
But the water is still,  
Beneath the lake.  
The fish swim,  
The crabs shake,  
But the water is still,  
Beneath the lake.  
The stones shift,  
The whales shake,  
But the water is still,  
Beneath the lake.  
The wind is howling,  
The trees shake,  
But the water is still,  
Beneath the lake.

# Elementary-Poetry

Grades 3-5



## Love

**Vivian Ng** *Armstrong Elementary*

Love shines brightest in the dark.  
When all is lost, love finds a way to bring hope and faith to the world.  
So just think, will you shine bright like love in this crazy world?

[For Mom and Dad who always loves me.]

## You Hold Me Up

Brooke Saunders *Aubrey Elementary*

You hold me up when you play with me  
When you be my friend  
When you splash in the puddle with me.  
You hold me up when you love me  
When you make a masterpiece with me  
When you cuddle me.  
You hold me up when you stand up for me  
When you run with me  
When you help me with my homework.  
Thank you for holding me up.

## Love Is

Marcus Hui *Aubrey Elementary*

Love is crying for the ones you love.  
Love is wondering.  
Love is hope.  
Love is having a friend.  
Love is giving birth to a child.  
Love is loving yourself.  
Love is a new path.

## Imagine a World

Jade Eum *Aubrey Elementary*

Imagine a world where you can see the angels flying in the sky.  
Imagine a world that had no viruses or pain.  
Imagine a world where there was only peace and everyone was kind.  
Imagine a world where there is nothing bad, only good.  
Imagine a world where there is no racism and everyone was treated equal.  
Oh, imagine a world!

## Goodbye Summer, Hello Autumn

Rachel Mullin *Aubrey Elementary*

Hello dry air! You make me hot and thirsty.  
Hello sunny sky! You make my ice cream melt when I go outside.  
Hello sun! You make me wake up early.  
Hello crows! I hate when you ruin my grass.  
Hello stellar jays! I like your singing voice.  
Hello bunnies! I like your super cute face as you're looking for dens.  
Hello wind! You mess up my hair when it hits my face.  
Hello long pants! You make my legs itch when I put you on.  
Hello leaves! I like jumping in you.  
Hello salmon going upstream where you were born!  
Goodbye summer, hello autumn.

# Elementary-Poetry

Grades 3-5

## Kindness

Amelie York *Brentwood Park Elementary*

Kindness feels like a warm hug with someone you love.  
Kindness looks like giving a friend a big bouquet of flowers.  
Kindness smells like warm cinnamon buns right from the oven.  
Kindness sounds like saying nice words to other people.  
Kindness tastes like freshly baked bread.  
Kindness is being there for others when they need help.

## War and Peace

Oscar Liang *Buckingham Elementary*

Bloodshed  
Severe, somber  
Withering, devastating, persecuting  
Clash, brawl, rainbow, clean environment  
Understanding, obliging, considering  
Soft-hearted, good-natured  
Tranquility

## Over and Under the Snow

Ysabel Carias Lopez *Aubrey Elementary*

Over the snow, I sled with my siblings.  
Into the woods, I creep through the snow.  
Over the snow, there is a woodpecker pecking at a tree.  
Under the snow, there is a tiny mouse where the leaves are its bed.  
Over the snow, the fox is listening for prey.  
Over the snow, a bear hears a beaver. It digs to get under the snow.  
Under the snow, there are animals sleeping and keeping warm.  
Over the snow, I ski with my friends.  
The woods are a magical place.  
Over the snow or under the snow, winter is a blast.

## The Personification of Paper

Nathan Chiang *Brantford Elementary*

I am from trees.  
I combine with pencil, pen, marker and crayons.  
You can draw on me, write on me and colour on me.  
If I am thrown away I must be in the recycling bin.  
If I am in the garbage I am not good for the environment.

I am loved by authors and appreciated by bookworms.  
I am also used for the making of lots of origami crafts and I will probably be around forever.  
Sometimes I give paper cuts and I'm terribly sorry.  
My mom is the tree and I am the son who has more than a million siblings.

## Itty Bitty Rain

Alicia Hou *Brantford Elementary*

I am rain,  
Itty bitty rain.  
I love to sing.  
Sometimes I sing while you sleep,  
I sleep while you sing.  
Isn't that a funny thing?  
Do you want to hear my song?  
Di di da da, da da di da.  
I am rain,  
Itty bitty rain.  
I am sorry to interrupt your thoughts with my singing  
When you do your homework.  
Remember,  
I am rain,  
Itty bitty rain.

# Elementary-Poetry

Grades 3-5

## Christmas

Nuha Beig *Buckingham Elementary*

Munching on a candy cane,  
Inside my house on Christmas Lane,  
Where snowmen aren't even there,  
Not even dogs with shaggy hair,  
Then on that very special night,  
When I'm in a dress that is all white,  
I see a man dressed all in red,  
When we're supposed to be in bed,  
He's flying on a bright red sleigh,  
With a Ho-Ho-Ho he's on his way,  
With presents loaded in the back,  
Inside a big, brown giant sack,  
With a snap of his finger, his sleigh – it just  
flies,  
It twists and it turns in the midnight sky,  
With two more words – he says,  
Goodbye!

## Twilight

Hailey Jang *Chaffey Burke Elementary*

The night sky turned a majestic shade of purple. Also, so barely perceivable was the gentle cool breeze that ruffled my dark hair. The moon glowed, an unwavering ball of light, almost like a lantern in the darkest depths of a gaping cave. The willow tree's drooping branches that sheltered me swayed gently in the wind. Shining silvery dewdrops gleamed and glistened in the soft, pale moonlight. A star glimmered. As I looked up, small bits of twinkling light were etched into the beautiful, clear heavens, shimmering on and on as long as the night lingered. Streaks of luminesce painted the gorgeous, one-of-a-kind skyline. The shooting stars blazed a trail, carrying the wishes of many other hopeful people. I made my wish, and the shooting stars flashed out of sight as quickly as they appeared. I reached my hand out, hoping to fly and skim the sparkling stars. They were nearly within reach, but that didn't matter. What mattered to me was I had witnessed the most alluring natural light shows without harmful fireworks. "It's the little things in life," they say. Nighttime is not very important to most others, as they only perceive it as bedtime or rest time. But the little secrets this peaceful time conceals are more than secrets. They are fascinating. I sigh contently as I watched more stars dot the night sky. This is twilight.

## ME

Ashlyn Rai *Clinton Elementary*

I am the only me there ever will be.  
I appear to be here, but I am actually in a phenomenal world  
where anything is possible.  
I am the only I, and I can fly very high.  
I have a lot to offer, and I'm willing to give my heart to the  
people who are in the toughest situations.  
I can fly into space, where I can remove my feelings and let go  
of who everyone wants me to be. I can let go of my stress and  
realize I am the only me there is and ever will be.  
There's nothing that stands between me and my goals. I am  
the holder for who stays and who goes. If I don't reach them, I  
can remember it's just a goal.  
To me it's a sign that I have to keep going on my journey of life  
and rise up even stronger than before. I may look like one, but I  
am actually 1001.  
The voices inside of me keep telling me, you are you out of  
the 1001.

## I am Grateful

Stella Sharma *Gilmore Elementary*

I run and play with my dog, I am grateful for friendship.  
I play and have fun, I am grateful for my kind, positive friends.  
I climb and play on the trees, I am grateful for nature.  
I paint and craft, I am grateful for creativity.

# Elementary-Poetry

## Grades 3-5

### **Solid**

Sarah Cruz *Maywood Community*

I am a solid  
As hard as a stone  
Stuck inside the problems and the regrets of  
mine  
I wish to be a liquid so I can peacefully float  
away or a gas so I can fly away from it  
But the solid mind of mine traps me as I try  
to escape, and it crushes me into pieces as I  
try to find a way.

### **Plastic**

Himat Singh Klair *Gilpin Elementary*

Plastic, it's a problem all around us  
One that has made a lot of fuss  
But do we try to stop it? No, we don't  
Because we're humans, we're lazy, so we won't  
So stand up, and look at your hands  
The most we do with them is tie rubber bands  
But they were made, for so much more  
Like cleaning beaches and cleaning shores  
To rid us of a mistake we made  
A price, that can never be paid  
I believe, there is still hope  
This might be a problem, that with we can cope  
But hope is a two-sided thing  
Action is also needed to ring  
So think, what have we done?  
Because during all the games and fun  
We forgot to save what matters most  
This lovely Earth we like to host  
People say they love creatures  
All their cool skills and features  
But now on their delicate, gorgeous fur, how fantastic  
That there it is, covered in plastic

### **Go Paddling!**

Matteo Iuzzolino *Gilpin Elementary*

When I go paddling I learn! I learn how to move, steer and keep balanced on amazing boats such as dragon boats, canoes, row boats, paddle boards, and kayaks. I learn how to take care of my boat, how to use my paddle and lifejacket, and how to get back in my boat if I fall into the icy cold water.  
When I go paddling I meet friends! I meet other paddlers and instructors and after I paddle with them they become my friends. I feel excited when I get to chat, paddle, and play games with them.  
When I go paddling I exercise! I get exercise when I warm up by stretching and strengthening my body. I get exercise when I paddle. Paddling makes me strong and fit.  
When I go paddling I race! I learn how to compete in challenging competitions and train to paddle efficiently so I can move faster. I learn about racing lanes and all the rules. I learn how to communicate and cooperate when racing in a boat and competing with and against my teammates.  
When I go paddling I SEE NATURE! I see nature and as I travel through curvy rivers, wavy oceans, and swirly lakes. I see seagulls flying above me, seaweed and ducks beside me, and fish under me.

When I go paddling, I dream! I become an explorer searching for lost civilizations and missing treasure. I also dream I am an Olympic racer winning medals and trophies, or a time traveller who goes back in time on epic adventures.  
When I go paddling, I feel good! I feel great when I ride on waves, and smell the fresh lake and river air, and the salty ocean air. I feel excited when I compete in a race. I feel relaxed when I see raindrops sprinkle on the water surface, and my reflection smiling at me in the water and telling me to go paddling!

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### The Epic Snowball Fight

Devin Moh *Clinton Elementary*

When the epic snowball fight started, everything was just chaos. Determined Fred Mclean was trying to aim the multicolored snowball at scared John Wong. Meanwhile giggling Harry Yew got hit by a cold, small snowball on his skinny right leg. Then he got angry and threw his gigantic snowball at the not-so-careful Nick Lee, narrowly missing his eye. Nick was not very shocked because we all used to throw cold snowballs at him at the end of our lessons. Whoosh! Thud! Then suddenly, a couple of yellow snowballs hit me in the face. Smack! I felt another big hit and then I noticed a bright, white flash. It was a superfast snowball like a stony meteorite crashing into enormous Earth. The small but fast snowball hit our enormous white flag. I wonder how that snowball hit our polyester flag hanging on a wooden broomstick? I felt a huge wave of disappointment settle over me. I felt like it was the end of the world! Next time I would come up with the best strategy I could come up with to win!

### The Mystic Being

Natalie Ydenberg *Forest Grove Elementary*

It all happened like this. A recent fire (accidental, a chimney mishap) had caused Adelaide, the maid, to run away from the now blazing village. When she had evacuated to the edge of Crystal Canyons, Adelaide glimpsed a flicker of red light. "Fire down there?" she asked herself. "No one lives there anymore. The crystal's been banned from trading purposes." Using her unusually strong arms, Adelaide hoisted herself down a cliff. When she got to the bottom, Adelaide spotted the glowing cave and entered.

No sooner had she set foot inside, than her whole body jerked up, then fell down. "What now?" Adelaide groaned. As she got to her feet, Adelaide saw a great ruby before her, carved like a winged lion and engraved with runes. Adelaide ran her fingers over the markings but jumped back just in time. The ruby splintered, revealing a real winged lion.

Recovering from the shock, Adelaide drew up her fists, prepared to fight. The lion looked her over, and to Adelaide's great surprise, the winged beast turned into an ugly, howling figure of air.

*By now you will have questions. I will answer them, as the author.* The being Adelaide encountered is a shapeshifter; the winged lion is its true form. It lures in the curious with its false, gleaming ruby coating, then shapeshifts to kill them and later feeds on their flesh. It has much power, enough to hypnotize a person who doesn't want to be hypnotized. And the villagers just thought the disappearing people were foolish... mountaineer accidents...back to the story.

"I can't destroy air," thought Adelaide. "What-?" Adelaide felt a sudden chill. "Fear," she said out loud. Which, of course, only increased her fear. "This thing kills you with your fear!" Her first thought was to panic, but, of course, that would mean more fear. "So," Adelaide muttered, "if I won't give it fear, it'll have to shapeshift!" Adelaide turned on the air figure.

"FEAR ME!" she cried and pounced upon its air. Except it wasn't air anymore. Adelaide's plan had worked! But now she was dealing with a skinny banshee. The banshee shrieked and placed its grimy hands around Adelaide's neck. But Adelaide was faster. Using those marvellously strong hands we mentioned earlier, Adelaide wrung the banshee's neck. Adelaide had killed the beast!

And to this day, she is thought the greatest hero that ever lived.

### My Wish

Chloe Song *Brentwood Park Elementary*

I stagger toward my bed feeling like a car with no gas left. Not even a little. Suddenly I hear my big, bossy know-it-all sister hollering. "Sophia! Come help me with the dishes!". That's it. I can't take it anymore. Tears stream down my face. I go downstairs to find mom. As usual she's working in her office. Her face is lit by the computer screen. I rub my red eyes and go to my (special) closet. I always go there when I'm upset because there are pictures of my grandma there. I miss her soothing voice and her vanilla scent. I miss her warm hugs and inviting smile. I wish.....I wish she was here right now.

### Rejected

Luke Zhang *Brentwood Park Elementary*

I slowly walk to the place I asked her to meet me. When she arrives, my mouth opens slowly and says, "will you be my girlfriend?" Then the moment I have wanted, her response... but she simply says "no" and walks away. I stand there for a split second. Then my heart drops and shatters like glass. Tears start streaming down my cheeks as she walks away. I start walking in the opposite direction with my eyes glued to the ground and tears dripping continuously. I walk home hoping my heart will heal fast knowing it will take some time.

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### The New Girl

Nolwen Escobar-Bossavit *Forest Grove Elementary*

"Are you ready?" asks Ms. Desboulots, my new class teacher. I nod. She turns the doorknob and enters the class before me. I take a deep breath and enter right behind her. "Class, I present you Nolwen, your new classmate!" says Ms. Desboulots. And then starts one of the hardest days of my life.

I must introduce myself and then Ms. Desboulots tells me to go sit next to a girl named Melissa. I feel the whole class's eyes looking at me.

Melissa waves to me and I go sit down next to her. "Hi, I'm Melissa!" "Hi, what made you move to France from Canada?" she asks. "My mom was born here." I answer shyly. "Nice to meet you!" Melissa says smiling. I'm about to continue the conversation when Ms. Desboulots tells the whole class to bring out their workbook and go to page 204. That's when I know my first day is going to be really hard.

It becomes even worse when I must read a book in French and write about it in cursive! I start to cry at one point. "Such a bad first impression!" I think to myself.

The morning goes by quickly, and soon it is recess. I follow the class outside. Ms. Desboulots tells us to go and have fun, and I ask her why we have not eaten snack yet. She tells me that we don't eat snacks in school here, so I just go and play. I make friends with two older nice kids, Claire, and Merrie.

Later, when I'm playing tag with them, I tag another girl. Then she starts complaining that I hurt her, although I just lightly tapped her!

She tells Claire, Merrie and everyone else playing with us: "Guys, why don't we just not play with Nolwen?" "Well, if she's not playing then I'm not playing!" Claire says. "Same!" says Merrie. "Me too!" "And me!" I cannot believe my ears! The mean girl stomps away angrily. I think she was probably jealous because I was getting all the attention, and I did not mean to get her mad. But still. "Th-thanks!" I speak. Claire nods.

At the end of school, I talk a bit with Melissa, and when I see my grandpa coming, we say goodbye to each other. But when I start walking home with my grandpa, Melissa follows me. "Why are you following me?" I ask. "I'm not, you are" she says. When I arrive at my house, the thought suddenly hits me. "Do you live there?" I point to the houses in front of mine. She nods. "Do you... live there too?" she asks. I shake my head. "But I live right in front!" I squeal. She also squeals. "Do you want to come to my house?" she asks. "Yes!"

And we race to her house with big, wide smiles on our faces.

The end! or shall I say...

The beginning!

### Hunting Scene in the Life of a Wolf

Alma Hille *Gilmore Elementary*

Warm dirt exploded beneath my paws as I raced in front of my hunting group. Adrenaline pumped through my veins and, keeping my eyes on the plump buck darting in front of me, I lead my group through the lush forest. Sharp thorns and pokey branches clawed at my sides, despite the pain I continued forward. The dense forest thinned out a little as our territory ended and I could hear the thundering river as we galloped onward. The buck sprinted toward the rushing river and sailed over it, landing on the other side. White foam on top of the water rushed below me as I lead my group after our prey. Landing with a soft thump on the other side, I sped forward. Weaving in and out of vines and trees, I gained on the deer, my pack howling eerily behind me.

The frightened creature followed our plan exactly stopping abruptly at the canyon that loomed in front of us. The forest blocked him in making sure he couldn't escape. I stalked forward, the hunters spreading out behind me, awaiting my order. Fear shone over the buck's eyes as he realized what was coming. "Now" I barked commandingly and we went in for the kill. A moment later the deer lay still. We dragged the deer toward our territory knowing that the pack was hungrily awaiting our return. The cycle of life continues as the day ends.

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### **Stranded in a Snowstorm**

Olivia Helland *Gilmore Community*

The penguin colony huddled for warmth, the wind howling at their backs, as the blizzard raged. Snow beat down heavily, coating everything in white.

"Mama!" a chick chirped, pressing herself against her mother's body. "I'm cold!"

"Igloo, Everyone's cold." Igloo's mother replied sadly.

Igloo was a chick, a couple moons old. She was a unique penguin because she was entirely white unlike other penguins. Her mother and father loved their offspring's whiteness, but every other penguin teased her, and made Igloo's life a misery.

The storm kept on raging, never relenting. The whole colony was freezing, despite its attempts to keep warm. "Hey, fish-face!" jeered an older penguin to Igloo. "You're so white, you look like a dumb snow pile!"

Igloo's father said "Don't listen to him. He's just jealous."

"I won't." Igloo lied. Igloo took all the other penguin's taunts to heart. She hated herself for having white feathers. The storm was starting to settle a little, and all the penguins who could fish started to head out for food.

"Take that excuse for a penguin fishing." said another penguin scathingly to Igloo's mother. Igloo stifled a chirp of protest. I'm not an excuse! She thought, outraged. I'll show them!

"Mama, can I go and slide in the snow with the other chicks?" Igloo inquired. "You sure?" asked her mother. "Yes!" Igloo insisted. "Okay" Igloo's mother sighed.

Igloo waddled off to play with the other chicks. The chicks did not enjoy playing with Igloo. They were always trying to get rid of her. She tried everything; telling funny stories, even making fun of herself, but it was no use. By sunset Igloo had had enough.

The storm was still howling. Igloo thought it would never disappear. She wandered around lost in thoughts of misery and anger. Igloo didn't notice she had strayed far from the colony, lost in thoughts as she was.

When Igloo finally paid attention to where she was it was too late. The colony was lost from view. She was desperately lost. "Mama!" she wailed, realizing she was lost. "Papa!" there was no answer.

Then Igloo heard another voice. "I'm cold! Mama!!" the feeble voice cried out. Igloo hopefully waddled towards the voice, hoping it could help her. When she reached the source of the cry she saw a baby chick, much younger than herself.

She cradled the chick in her wings. "It's going to be alright." she murmured. Suddenly, Igloo heard something that lifted her spirits. "Igloooooo! Sllleeeeeeet!" The penguins were looking for her and the baby! Igloo galloped towards the sound, the snow obscuring her vision.

She collided with another penguin. Expecting to be punished, she retreated back. "Igloo!" the penguin said happily. "Thank goodness you're safe!" As more penguins greeted her, a tearful female penguin said. "Thank you for bringing my son home!" She held the baby penguin close. From that moment on Igloo was welcomed in the colony.

### **A World of Colours**

Joy Ann Luu Hernandez Dominguez *Lochdale Community*

*When the sun brings the light of day, colours dance and colours play. The colours are there for all to see, colours prance and colours bleed. Colours soar and colours fly, blue gives colour to the sky. Blue is the ocean, green is the trees, when the sun rises colours flee. The rainbows here now colours fly attempting to reach and touch the sky. Red, orange, yellow, green and any colour in-between. Blue, indigo, purple, violet light the scene when the colours fit. Evening comes and blackens the sky, when night falls the colours die.*



# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### A Tale of Two Stars

Aira Saini *Maywood Community*

You've heard of the Sun. The big, bright star that warms our planet every day. But, would you believe me, if I told you the Sun has a wife?

The Sun and Proxima Centauri (the second closest star to Earth) were a happy couple in the Milky Way. Yet, there lived a rather wicked and powerful star because he happened to be the President of the Galaxy, and he was strongly against the feeling of love. Why, you ask me? Well, he felt that love was a waste of time, and that you should focus on other stuff.

One day, the President summoned the couple to the courtroom.

Once they were at the court, the President said, "Mr. Sun and Mrs. Proxima Centauri, I have some information that both of you have been quite close. You have been seen orbiting each other just one light year apart!!!" (That's 9.5 trillion kilometers for you Earth folk.)

Everyone in the room gave a big gasp, and then burst out into chatter.

Sun and Proxima tried to explain themselves, but the President would not listen.

"We should vote now whether this is acceptable." said the President. "All in favor, say aye!"

A chorus of ayes exploded across the room.

"Not in favor, say nay!"

A few nays were sounded.

"Well, it's settled then, the punishment for this couple is to separate them, at least 4 light years apart" the President said.

"What! You can't do that!" said the Sun.

"Sorry, but it's final. Case closed" said the President.

So now that they were alone, the Sun and Proxima decided to take some planets and make their own solar systems. They talked to everybody, but you could always hear that tinge of sadness, dripping from their words. Even the planets noticed that. In order to make them happy, they decided to help the Sun and Proxima by setting up a way to help them communicate.

They decided to test their plan.

Mercury passed on a test message, "Hello" to Venus, and then Venus passed it to Earth, and then Earth to Mars, and so on till finally it reached Pluto (it took 5 years), but then Pluto EXPLODED because he screamed too loud! Now, Jupiter had to scream louder to pass the messages, but don't you worry my dear reader, he is a gas giant so he would never burst.

Later, when the couple realized what the planets were doing, they were surprised and worried at the same time. If the President figured out, they would be in deep trouble. That's when they realized that the President never said they couldn't talk to each other!

After that, they talked all the time, all because of some smarty-pants planets.

*Next time when you hear the tides rising, the winds blowing or thunder rumbling, that's our Earth passing the messages between the Sun and Proxima!*

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### One Word 2021: Mindset

Rasul Khanmammadov *Gilmore Community*

I chose this one word for 2021 because I always have a growth mindset and it helps me a lot. A growth mindset could help you so much because if you give up, you quit, and you don't have the ability to do the thing you are doing anymore. If you keep doing it and not giving up it will work.

Mind what you are saying

Inspire yourself

Never give up

Don't quit

Say positive things

Exhale fear, inhale courage

Think before you do

Mind what you are saying

Always mind what you are saying. Say things that will help you get in your stretch zone. Say that you can make this work, I won't give up, keep trying and I can do this. Always be positive. Saying positive things will always help you learn better and get you in your stretch zone. Believe in yourself. Don't say things like I quit, this is impossible, I can't do this, and I give up.

Inspire yourself

Inspire yourself by getting in your stretch zone. Try not to get into your comfort or panic zone. Your stretch zone is the best zone to be in. If you find something hard then don't give up and keep trying. But if it's the opposite then think how can you make it more challenging? Maybe try practicing hard ones or do more of what you are doing. Inspire yourself by getting in your stretch zone.

Never give up

If you find something hard to do, then don't give up. This is one of the things you could say to get a positive mindset. There might be some things you are not good at or you can't do. Just keep trying and don't give up because if you give up it won't work. If you keep trying it will work.

Don't quit

This one is kind of like not giving up, but it is also another thing you could say to get a better mindset. The thing you must remind yourself when you think something is impossible is that there is always a way for everything. If you remind yourself then you will not want to quit anymore.

Say positive things

Saying things to yourself can give you a growth mindset. You can say to yourself that you can do this, don't give up and it's ok if you are not good at everything.

Exhale fear inhale courage

If you feel like you cannot do something, then just inhale courage and exhale fear. After you do that you will start feeling better. The more you do that the less nervous you will feel. When you are ready then go for it.

Think before you do

The best way to remember think before you do is measure seven times cut once. If you don't think before you do you might not get it in the first try.

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### Good Things That Came Out of Lockdown

Marcus Collins *Nelson Elementary*

What happened to you during the Coronavirus lockdown? In the middle of March 2020, a worldwide pandemic was declared and British Columbia went into lockdown. I was only 9 years old at the time and I didn't quite understand what was happening. There were so many changes and everything was happening very fast. But, now that I look at it, the coronavirus lockdown wasn't actually that bad. You might think I am cuckoo in the brain, but hear me out. During the lockdown, I learned the importance of family and friends, to always be grateful, and to enjoy the outdoors.

The best part of lockdown was that it brought my family and friends closer. I was able to play online games with my friends such as Roblox and Among Us, which was a great opportunity to get to know them better. My family cooked more together and ate more together. We made tacos, pancakes, cheesecake, pineapple upside down cakes...you get my drift, lots of cakes, and then more cakes. We learned a lot of new recipes together. Because of lockdown, my Mom's office was shut down, so she couldn't work. At first, I was sad, but when she told me we would get to spend a lot more time together, that changed everything. We ran together, laughed together and made a mess in the kitchen together. I will always remember the batter on the ceiling, cake burning, sirens of the smoke alarm, but loads of laughter.

Secondly, I became more grateful for everything I had. I was more thankful that all of my family and friends were healthy and alive. I also realized how lucky I had been to play sports like basketball, soccer and track. I had taken so many things for granted in the past. Lastly, I was able to play outside more. Since I wasn't able to do many of the things I would normally do before the lockdown, I went outside more often for bike rides, runs and hikes in the forest. I invited some of my friends to come play in my pool because it was a lot safer than being inside, and we had a blast! Fortunately, it was very sunny most of the time and this made our outdoor activities super fun!

Lockdown wasn't all that bad for me. I learned many new things like how I actually like to bake cakes but don't like to clean up, and most importantly to appreciate friends, family and what I already have. Most things have at least one positive thing, but lockdown had many for me. I hope you don't think I am cuckoo anymore if you ever thought I was.

### All About Me

Srikrishna Vijayanarayanan  
*Buckingham Elementary*

On the outside of me I have brown eyes which have good vision and I don't need glasses. I also have strong legs which help me run fast and I have short black hair. Inside me I am funny because I get jokes from TV and I say them to my family. I am also friendly because I rarely fight, and I am an animal fan. I can solve mystery games after a while of thinking. I also know percentage in math a little, and I can speak Tamil nicely, and I also love reading animal books and I would say that it is my favourite kind of books. This is what you need to know about me and I feel proud that I have all of this.

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 3-5

### Cornflower

Stephanie Qian *Suncrest Elementary*

"Wake up, Timothy! Wake up!" a cheerful voice cried. I yelped and snapped awake. I was sitting against an oak tree, surrounded by swathes of autumn leaves. "Who-," I wondered, and then caught sight of a girl, about a year younger than I was, playing in the leaves. "Oh. Chloe. What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be at home?" I asked my sister. Chloe paused and turned around without replying, silently watching me. I stared back, a shiver passing down my back. There was something important I couldn't remember. What was it? Something to do with Chloe. I stopped gazing and gasped as a leaf fluttered down and floated through her chest, gently landing on the ground. "Chloe!" I yelled frantically. Again, Chloe didn't reply, but this time something had changed. Chloe wasn't there. She had... disappeared. I scrambled to my feet and tentatively stretched my hand out to where my sister had stood. All I felt was the chilling fall air brushing against my palm. It had just been a dream. Now that I thought about it, I didn't know where I was. Strangely, I didn't remember why I came to this place. I couldn't even remember what I was doing before I was here. All I could remember was a hazy memory of Chloe running around in the leaves when I was twelve. That would make it... four years ago? No, five years. Why couldn't I even remember how old Chloe was? It was true that I hadn't seen her in a while. I hadn't called her for a few months now. Guiltily, I looked down at my hands and tilted my head to the side in surprise. In my left hand was a single purple flower. What were they called again? "Cornflowers, silly. They're called cornflowers," Chloe laughed, suddenly appearing behind me. "Cornflowers... Yes. Cornflowers. They are your favourite, aren't they?" I asked, running my thumb over the stem of the plant. "Chloe?" When I turned around, there was nobody there. Sighing, I looked around. Dozens of graves surrounded me, the vibrant colours of flowers standing out around the dull grey of the gravestones. One of the stones sat bleak and unwelcoming, without any flowers around it. I sat down in front of it and exhaled. "Lonely. You and I are lonely," I murmured. Why was I lonely? I didn't remember. I never remembered anything. Graves? Flowers? Chloe. "Isn't it obvious?" She asked, surprised. "It never is," I mumbled. I didn't have to look to know that Chloe had disappeared. Disappeared? No, that wasn't the right word. What was it? What was the word? Oh. Died. That was the word. Chloe had died. I gently placed the cornflower in front of the gravestone. "They were your favourite," I whispered. "Your favourite," I said louder. I remembered. I didn't even notice when tears began to run down my face, blurring my view. Remembering was hard. That's why I wanted to forget. But it was nice to remember.

# Elementary-Poetry

Grades 6-7



## Watch Me

Bella Quinto *Brantford Elementary*

Watch Me learn to love  
Watch Me see a world I'm proud of

Watch me realize this is my reality  
Watch me sculpt my personality

Watch me come out of my shell  
Watch me speak for myself

Watch Me follow my dreams  
Watch Me build my self esteem

Watch Me strive for perfection  
Watch Me find new directions

Watch Me struggle when times are tough  
Watch Me feel like I was never enough

Watch Me take refuge in my family  
Watch Me learn about my ancestry

Watch Me face every challenge  
Watch me pursue my talents

Watch Me fight with my friends  
Watch Me understand to make amends

Watch Me go from seed to tree  
Watch Me embrace just being me

## I Remember

Kaira Jung *Brentwood Park Elementary*

The blinding light dances along the blood- stained red petals of the poppy pinned to my jacket  
The music of the bagpipe fills my ears  
Two minutes of silence for those who fought  
Risked their lives to protect  
Left with a promise, committed to their job  
Loved ones crying, praying for the lives of the soldiers  
Wishing they were safely wrapped in their arms  
Survivors with scarred hearts can never be healed  
Families of the soldiers that never made it, forever missing a piece  
Trauma in their souls cannot be erased  
Veterans pass on their stories, their experiences  
Memories shall not be forgotten, shall not be silenced  
Giving all my thanks to these brave souls  
I honour their legacy today, Remembrance Day

## A Journey

KaraLynn M. (K.M) *Aubrey Elementary*

Exquisite, like child hands  
Bonny, like colourful, divine dresses  
Flourishing from their cubby  
Daffodils first  
Roses next  
Moonflowers bringing up the rear  
Observing...

The content sun rises  
Those who are a butterscotch become  
a mellow yellow  
The day comes and clouds sob  
Those who caught water droop earnestly  
Feeling...

The afternoon adagio swallows the morning and the sun  
peaks as if it were a playful child  
Those who are a healthy pink look like  
soft velvety fabric  
The vicious wind picks up  
Those who  
guard the inside flowers are pelted by pebbles  
Protecting...

Gentle sunset tails the hectic day  
Those who are an ivory white turn a shade  
of lightly roasted marshmallows  
Night paints the sky and burning stars pierce through  
Those who have had their day, close  
Slumbering...  
A burst of starlight flies across the hushed night  
Only the Moonflower observes  
Intensely perceiving...

# Elementary-Poetry

## Grades 6-7

### Somnambulist

Sophie McGowan *Chaffey Burke Elementary*

Thousands of cardboard boxes.  
Thousands of rows  
of thousands of boxes.  
Perfect boxes.  
You faintly smell something.  
Flowers, maybe?  
You walk towards the nearest box  
and open it.  
You smile as you observe  
the contents of the box.  
It is filled to the top with  
glistening, red  
viscera.  
You do not know if it is animal  
or human.  
You are terrified.  
But you smile anyways.  
You close the box,  
step back  
and breathe in the fresh scent  
of flowers.

### You

Ophelia Schif *Confederation Park*

Take that chance  
Shine bright  
Show people that you have rights  
Don't care what people think  
Be like that kid who wore pink  
Show people that you are unique, different,  
special, and smart too  
You are a person of colour  
Black, white, red, yellow, brown, or blue  
You are LGBTQ  
You are you

### OAK

Mia Uken *Confederation Park*

Deep  
old  
pebbled  
bark  
flowing like magma against  
its bare  
trunk  
catching droplets  
of sunlight  
off  
its blunt, supple leaves  
waving to the  
crisp morning wind  
while the  
sweet, mellow  
song of birds  
sing upon its twigs.  
Its dark  
rich  
roots navigate  
throughout  
the soil  
finding their way  
throughout  
the deep  
underground

### Nature's Silence

Emile Mahseredjian *Confederation Park*

First glance.  
Silent,  
still,  
deep breath!  
Slowly,  
carefully, listen.  
Realize.  
The  
crunch of leaves,  
trickling of a stream  
and the  
song of birds.  
Watch the  
worm inch across the ground  
and the  
doe sip from the stream.  
You have just encountered  
nature's silence.

# Elementary-Poetry

## Grades 6-7

### **3 Views**

Matthew Nicholas *Forest Grove Elementary*

Two boys stand side by side.  
They are both looking at the same thing.  
They are about the same age.  
They are very good friends,  
but they have contrasting views on what happens around them.  
The thing that stands before them is...a single wooden plank. It is very peculiar.  
They were taking a walk and came across it.  
They stopped for a second to take a look, but they do not know just what it will reveal.  
The first boy looks at this plank and sees endless possibilities.  
A treehouse.  
A bridge.  
A grand mansion with greatness beyond his imagination.  
He sees something, that with his optimism and imagination, can turn into something that can change the world.  
His words, not mine.  
But this is not the case with the other boy.  
He sees...nothing.  
Just a plank.  
Just a piece of wood.  
Just an object with no significance in his mind.  
He is a very calculating boy, if you will.  
He sees something that is not worth his time or energy, something to look at, and nothing more.

A girl walks by.  
She is their friend.  
She is about the same age.  
She is looking at the very same thing that the two boys are looking at.  
"I am looking at this wood plank, and I am thinking about what it could be," says the first boy.  
"As am I," says the second boy, "but I do not see anything."

"What do you see?" the first boy asks the girl.  
She stops to think.  
She sees something that is not significant.  
Something that is part of something bigger than itself.  
But, in that something, it is significant. Because without it, the thing would not be possible.  
The first boy steals a glance at the girl. "So?" he asks.  
She tells them what she sees.  
The first boy nods.  
"Hmm." says the second boy.  
Then they look. They stand silently. Looking at the plank. The plank that revealed so much.  
This is how it should be.  
Different views, accepted by everyone else, everybody just fine with everybody else's views on...everything.

### **Climbing A Tree**

Livia Preda *Marlborough Elementary*

I admire your rich leaves  
That emit imposing hues of green.  
I walk up to your ragged trunk,  
Ever so keen.  
As I start to climb,  
I can feel the rough bark,  
Enveloping your branches,  
And keeping them in the dark.  
When I reach the top,  
I praise the view.  
The splendor of the greenery,  
The shimmer of the waters,  
The distant birds,  
And the sky,  
The lovely sky,  
Brushed with light blue!  
The golden sunset shines through your branches,  
And I smile at the sun,  
As it smiles back.  
The crisp breeze flows through my hair,  
And all worries burn like matches.  
I close my eyes,  
As I feel your embrace,  
And I think to myself:  
*This is my happy place!*

# Elementary-Poetry

## Grades 6-7

### The All-Seeing Eye

Jay Li *Parkcrest Elementary*

I am the all-seeing eye.  
The power of my view is inescapable, even if you try.  
Only capable of seeing, unlike any human being.  
People think I'm superior,  
But the truth is, I'm inferior.  
Staring is what I do.  
It's a strange thing to do, and I know it's true.  
Stalking, isn't the word I would use,  
And talking, isn't something I would care to lose.  
Because when you're an eye that stares all day,  
Things get boring, and it'll stay this way.

### I Dream of

Joone Li *Suncrest Elementary*

i dream of running  
running towards light  
running towards life  
running towards everything  
running towards nothing

but i will run  
run 'til i can touch the clouds  
run 'til i get to the horizon  
run 'til i find myself in a rye field with everything  
and nothing with me

i'll never stop 'til i can drink the moon and the stars  
never stop 'til i can fly in the blue blue sky  
never stop 'til there is a place where time ceases to exist  
'til i'm alone forever

and i vow to myself i'll keep running 'til i can smile  
a true smile filled with tears and be happy  
'til i can find something that's mine and  
'til i run to my dream

### The Athenaeum

Sasha Nefedov *Suncrest Elementary*

Libraries, sacred places,  
They hold memories,  
Among their many bookcases,  
And we all sit there dreaming fantasies.

We can get lost inside their stories,  
Morbid, hilarious, and sorrowful,  
And when we show up in all our glory,  
We see all things categorical.

The books and poems twist our souls,  
They make us achieve amazing things,  
We trot among them, like newborn foals,  
Not noticing their evil kings.

Like songbirds, each book can sing,  
Like the stars, they are not endless,  
And when our ears begin to ring,  
The silence leaves us senseless.

The knowledge of the world,  
Starts to disappear,  
And when all our books are hurled,  
The bad instils fear.

A beautiful memory,  
The peace of reading a book,  
But even if we see revelry,  
We won't get off the hook.

When people crawl into the safety,  
Of a winding book,  
Their minds might think quite hasty.  
But they're stuck in a nook.

Within books are dreams,  
That forever stay with us,  
And when we're broken at the seams,  
It's only fair to cuss.

As humankind prevails,  
Our books are getting lost,  
Among the ghastly hail,  
But all comes at a cost.

And now that the story's told,  
We shall proceed alone,  
And as we watch the future unfold,  
The darkness starts to clone.



# Elementary-Poetry

Grades 6-7

## I am From

Pei Yao *Windsor Elementary*

I am from economy class seats and pictures of the sky,  
I am from neatly packed luggages and tearful goodbyes,  
I am from high-rise apartments in buzzing industrial zones  
I am from night time city lights casting off a colorful glow  
I am from artistic endeavors, vibrant acrylic canvases  
I am from cozy pillow forts housed by a dozen stuffed animals  
I am from fantasy novels and science fiction books  
I am from street vendors selling delicious steamed food  
I am from pins on a map across the whole globe,  
I am from being the new student, starting fresh with hope,  
I am from the nature in Thailand and the suburbs of Singapore,  
I am from pieces of countries and places, a landscape waiting to be explored  
That was the past- the memories, the history  
And now I'm watching the city lights glowing brightly, wondering what I will be

## Sunrise

Bronwyn Lee *Brantford Elementary*

Exquisite beauty hovering just above the eastern horizon  
Bringing up questions on the deepest plane of thought  
If love, friendship and hope were ever embodied in a moment  
That time would be now

Glorious rays of light piercing the dark haze of dawn  
The first notes of birdsong echo pure, unobstructed, through the  
silence  
If there ever were a time of peace and reconciliation  
That time would be now

Enter this solemn place of beauty and majesty  
That we know and have always known brings the sadness and  
deprivation of our daylight world  
If only it would bring joy and peace in its stead  
We must create that scene, now

## What Friends Should Be

Amber Lau *Marlborough Elementary*

We stand ready to hold you up  
In case you stumble upon a bad day,  
We stand ready to face your fears  
In case you long for extra courage,

While we go through storms together  
We always come out much better  
No matter how much we fight,  
We can always find light,  
For we are like Salt & Pepper  
That collaborate and cooperate

But the best of all friendships  
Never sink like broke ships,  
Never wither like dying petals,  
And never hurt to cry a river.

# French Immersion—Poetry

## Grades 6-7

### Pour tous les Canadiens

Bronwyn Lee *Ecole Brantford Elementaire*

Qui croient que nous sommes meilleurs  
Que les Américains  
J'y vais vous dire qu'à l'heure  
On va se voir  
Que nous avons nos propres déboires  
Comme le débat d'égalité  
Hommes aux femmes  
Blancs aux noirs  
Nous devons trouver  
Au moins un peu d'espoir  
Que le soleil va finalement lever  
L'oiseau va finalement voler  
Qu'on va remonter  
Pour faire face aux besoins  
De nos propres citoyens  
Des Asiatiques, et Indigènes  
Des Africains, et aussi les femmes  
On doit chercher au fond  
D'histoire Canadien  
Pour trouver des injustices  
Les tiens et les miens  
Qui affectent  
Chaque jour de nos vies  
Notre éducation  
Les préjugés et stéréotypes  
Envers les opprimés  
Au gauche et au droit  
Nous sommes tous ignorants  
Des désastres qui avaient lieu  
Sur le sol canadien  
Mais on vient à rendre compte peu à peu  
Des défauts en société  
Bâti dans l'infrastructure  
Et nos esprits aussi  
Mais ici nous sommes, debout  
Durant un temps de changement  
Peut-être qu'on peut changer  
Nos tendances  
De rejeter  
Ce qu'on ne comprend pas  
Et annuler nos pensées  
De ségrégation et de race  
On ne peut pas effacer  
L'histoire du passé  
Mais du présent au futur  
Nous pouvons allumer notre four  
Et sculpter notre argile  
Pour décider

Ce qu'on peut améliorer  
Dans nos mentalités  
Dans la société  
Dans la gouvernement  
Ou on va s'effondrer  
Devenir un désordre primitif  
Alors je vous demande maintenant et ici  
Est-ce que nous sommes vraiment meilleurs  
Que nos cousins Américains  
Ou est-ce qu'on a tous du travail à faire  
Pour créer un société  
Inclusif, juste et sain

### Comment vaincre tes peurs

Anjie Chen *Ecole Brantford Elementaire*

Tu as souffert de cauchemars,  
Tu as porté un poids invisible sur tes épaules,  
Tu étais piégé dans tes pensées effrayées.

Les araignées, les hauteurs, les clowns, l'obscurité,  
Tes peurs t'enveloppent dans une étreinte de terreur,  
Tout seul dans le noir de tes pensées.

Tu as sauté dans les eaux froides du malheur,  
Tu as nagé dans les océans de l'effroi,  
Et tu as presque s'enfoncer dans les profondeurs de la mer.

Mais c'est juste ton imagination,  
Les hallucinations qui danse dans ton cerveau,  
Et tu peux les vaincre.

Ferme tes yeux et prends une inspiration profonde,  
Imagine que tout tes peurs se noient dans un lac de bonheur,  
Contrôle tes émotions, ton imagination, tes peurs.

Maintenant tu peux être plus fort,  
Tu as soulevé le poids qui était sur tes épaules pour si longtemps,  
Tu as gagné contre tes peurs.

# Elementary-Poetry

Grades 6-7

## Peace

Sherman Yee *Suncrest Elementary*

Peace is a question  
Awaiting an answer  
Peace is a story  
Its ending not written  
Peace is a seed  
Waiting to sprout

The whole world is trying to find it  
The one secret key  
That opens the door  
To find world peace

It's the final piece  
To the world puzzle  
Finding it might make our world  
A truly complete perfect world

We love the idea of being all equal  
No conflict  
Always feeling safe  
Having freedom and happiness

We live to find this elusive treasure  
And maybe, if we search hard  
enough  
We will find this treasure  
To use for generations to come

# French Immersion—Poetry

Grades 6-7

## La tornade

Amery Gardner *Ecole Westridge Elementaire*

Je marche dans le parc  
Il fait très beau  
Le soleil qui réchauffe ma peau  
La brise qui me calme  
Je vois des enfants qui jouent  
Leur sourire et cris joyeux  
Le ciel clair et bleu  
Deviens gris et sombre

## I am From

Raniel Villavicente *Windsor Elementary*

I am from a place where an old and quaint electric fire-place differing without the flare, a container with old and unused pennies, and a computer that still stands up fragile but stays as a gifted pleasure.

I am from a place with a fine balcony, a solar powered lamp that blooms light, and an elegant elementary school I go to lying around behind.

I am from a place with fine three restaurants, a useful gas station that has cool slushies and snacks, and a market which holds up quaint.

I am from a place with my family, mainly my lazy but hilarious dad, a slightly strict but delightful mom, and a brother I mess with but is a faithful one.

I am from an area with our wonderful mom who cooks our traditional food, our tasty Adobo, our delicious sinigang, and our yummy and sweet puto which all are immensely superb.

I am from a place where the rails creak and occurring screams of joy, a playland for amusement, a mall I haven't been to for a long time but still stays a good memory for an unknown reason, and a cool border between the USA and Canada.

## The Book Bakery

Eric McAlpine *Westridge Elementary*

Fresh books for sale!  
Fresh books for sale!  
All the nice smells tell their own tale.  
Taste all the flavors, mystery, romance.  
All the great books will leave you in a trance.  
Fresh books for sale!  
Fresh books for sale!  
All the action and adventure will leave you pale.  
Fresh books for sale

La brise commence à prendre la vitesse  
Elle forme une tornade grande et grosse  
Elle tourne si vite, c'est hypnotique  
Elle vient me chercher, je cours pour ma vie  
La tornade me mange, c'est une sensation bizarre  
A l'intérieur c'est lent et calme  
"C'est le temps pour l'école", maman me lève  
Mais quoi, en fait c'était tout un rêve.

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 6-7

### **Mask**

Isabella Kanik *Brantford Elementary*

People are only thinking about themselves; I mean with COVID-19 and everything, people are wearing masks EVERYWHERE because it protects them from it, but why doesn't anyone think about masks their feelings.

To introduce myself, I'm a medical mask, used by old woman trying to protect herself from the virus. Don't get me wrong I like being what my owner said, "a life saver", but I would much rather be something else. Like a social distancing sticker on the ground, it still keeps everyone safe, but doesn't get spat on all day.

One reason why I would rather be something else is the old woman who uses me always wears bright red lipstick which gets all over me when she talks, it's so gross. She also likes to lip synch or whisper things that are pretty rude to me about someone that annoys her. So basically, I hear all the gossip. And on that topic, she sometimes coughs and sneezes into me, which is totally grosser than the lipstick thing, I mean would you like to be coughed and sneezed into? Yeah, I didn't think so. Come to think of it, I don't really know why that old lady chose me, I mean I'm just a basic medical mask, every day I see all these cool pattern masks, yesterday I saw a mask with flowers on it and one with dogs and cats all over it, I wish I could ask her because I am very confused.

Even though I've been saying all these bad things they're good things about being a mask. For one I'm preventing everyone from getting COVID-19, I mean that's pretty cool to think of. Another would be, well, maybe that's all. But it's still awesome to be a face mask just sometimes a little annoying.

So even though I just said that being a face mask is awesome, maybe think next time about your mask's feelings and not cough into them or gossip to them whenever you please.

### **The Peace of Paper**

Marie Rusak *Forest Grove Elementary*

If you are a true writer, your heart will pump waves of affection for this art. It will be sent through your hands and pens and pour infinitely onto the paper. Soon, words will be perfected and become part of an intricate story. Affection transforms into pride that rushes through your veins. You know you have finished a masterpiece, but it doesn't seem to be your own anymore. As you read your story, you realize you are now a different person than before you began.

### Peristeropod

Cannon Rowe *Forest Grove Elementary*

Salutations, my name is Cannon, nevertheless that is floccinaucinihilipilification. Currently if you possess hippomonstrosesquippedaliophobia you should withdraw, considering I am going to persist on being an incomprehensible wordsmith.

My contemporaneous intention is to generate annoyance through this document. Whereas this testament is forthwith an abandonment on jouissance. Notwithstanding, my aspiration is to alleviate your hexakosioihexekontahexaphobia or alektorophobia through the extensive use of my brobdingnagian terminology.

Henceforth I shall perpetuate my descent into a preposterous lexicon.

Previous to this I witnessed a peristeropod striking its capitulum repetitively against a potassicmagnesiumfluoroarfvedsonite, it was ludicrously foolish. My vociferous cachinnating increased when a subsequent peristeropod happened on the scene and mimicked its cohort's behaviour. When none of the post-Jurassic feathered fowl shattered their cranium, I was astonished.

I am positive you were anticipating that I was going to articulate something profound and sophisticated... nope, it's about pigeons.

### The Bird

Nina Colijin-Rattan *Gilmore Community*

I now regretted my decision to run away. I knew I was needed in the group, but I just couldn't stand it. The whispering, the overprotectiveness, I just felt so trapped. I cared not about them, but how I was feeling. When I had escaped, I felt so free. I enjoyed being able to just live, and not have to listen to anyone else. Now, because of my stupidity and selfishness, I was being chased by wolves.

I ran for my life, feeling scared and alone. I could hear the wolves' paws receding into the distance, but I kept going. I stumbled into a clearing and slowed down. I shouldn't go out there, I thought. Anything could see me, all in the open. I began inspecting my wounds – nothing too urgent. Even so, I needed get to safety.

I staggered across the clearing, tearing a piece of cloth off my shirt for a bandage. I heard a cry from above. I looked around. There was a bird stuck in the tree. It was a dazzling gold, with a dark red underbelly, and its tail was a warm, elegant orange that shone brightly even in the shade. It was breathtaking. I couldn't leave it out here alone. It looked so helpless and sad. I walked over to it, moving too slowly, and I started to climb the tree.

I reached out to untangle the bird from the branches, and its body radiated warmth. It spread through my arms, and I felt a sense of relief, like the sun on a shady day. I don't know why, but its name had to be Flame. I discovered that his wing was badly hurt. It was bent in an odd angle, and it was clear Flame wouldn't be able to fly. I brought him down and collapsed. I hadn't noticed he was so heavy. I got to work fixing his wing, and I realized something. Flame was a phoenix. It made sense now. Flame had to be a phoenix.

I felt a sudden pain in my leg and looked down. The cut had worsened, and I was bleeding considerably more. It must've gotten caught on a branch while I was climbing, but that didn't matter right now. I had to save Flame. For hours I tended to him, feeding him berries that I found in nearby bushes. Every so often I replaced the makeshift bandage on my leg, but I was bleeding more now, and ignoring how bad the cut was getting was a problem. The cut was now filled with dirt and I knew it was going to get infected.

After about 20 minutes of poking at it, I was close to losing consciousness. I was bleeding so much, and I didn't even bother replacing the bandage. I lay down, hoping that something would save me, and the last thing I saw was Flame's wing brush my face.

# Elementary-Prose

## Grades 6-7

### The Wood of Ghosts and Mist

Sophie Liksutin *Marlborough Elementary*

Follow a narrow, winding trail into the heart of Smoke Forest, by ancient trees no single man could embrace, no axe could fell but nature's winds or quakes. The few that were torn from the earth by a gale of wind rest supported by their brothers and sisters, giving back the life that was bestowed upon them to the earth, now blanketed by softest and greenest moss, the tendrils stretching out across those lifeless, rotting logs.

A shrouding silver mist weaves around these awe-inspiring giants, a mist that obscures anything more than a few steps before you, so thick and grey it looks like smoke. Watch your step, for the tree roots seem to vanish in the wake of the mist, and the dimly sparkling stream in front hides behind a veil of whispering smoke-mist. Standing on the bank of the creek, it seems to reflect a ray of light, whether that of the sun or the moon, but the canopy above does not have a gap through which it could have passed.

It appears as if flickers of movement happen in the corner of your vision, but when you turn your head, there is nothing there but a branch swaying on a phantom breeze, a small circle of dented grass. A prickle on your neck warns you that you are being watched, but no eyes follow you.

"To-who, to-who..." The melancholy wavering song of an owl passes by you, and on your left, you indeed see the round truthful eyes of an owl, perched high above. It screams one last time and swoops down on snow-white wings. You can feel the breeze that comes from its silent flight.

The deeper you go into the mysterious wood, the darker and more shadowed it becomes, the ever-present swirling mist erasing the path and your footprints. You can almost hear a heartbeat, breathing, all around you, and sometimes eyes shine from the shadows beyond the flickering light of your torch.

It becomes lighter, the sun is rising, but the exact time is impossible to know, the cover of mist still overhanging the trees and ground. The rocky trail steepens, and you are now climbing. The path narrows even more, sharp, finger-like branches grabbing at your clothes, as if trying to stop you, slow you down...

At the very top, the mist falls away, and the forest is laid out before you, a carpet of dark, colorless treetops. It is dawn. The mist rises and the canopy seems to flow, and you feel the sadness and pride of the Wood of Ghosts and Mist.

### A Salmon's Journey

Carolyn Jia *Marlborough Elementary*

Gazing warily at the waterfall, I could feel the strong current even from a distance, where a few of us were pausing to regain our strength. We were the only survivors of the thousands making the return trip back to our birthplace. We had come too far to give up now! Again, we leaped into the raging water. Immediately, the current pushed us back. Blood was seeping from a gash where a bear clawed me, and my body ached all over. I summoned all the strength left in me and leaped upwards again and again. I was almost at the top. Just more leap, one more small burst of energy, and I'll make it! Through the pain, I remembered how we got here.

We were *born* as alevins in a small, clear stream. For protection, we hid in the gravel, with our yolk sacs providing enough nutrients to last a few months. I still remember the terror as birds and fish picked us out one by one. A few lucky ones survived. When our yolk sacs shrank, we began our voyage downstream to the sea. There, we grew big and strong. After several years, I sensed an insistent calling and joined my siblings to journey back to our birthplace. We crossed hundreds of miles of open ocean, never losing our direction and determination. Our numbers dwindled as we made our way inland. Some were caught by bears and humans; others were too tired to continue.

The sudden flashback gave me an extra boost and helped me clear the waterfall. My body ached from the exertion. In front of me, there were no more waterfalls, fish ladders, or dams. Instead, I entered a small, clear stream with a gravel bottom. I couldn't believe my eyes. I had returned home! I dug a hole in the ground with my tail and laid my eggs. As my eyes closed and the eternal darkness came over me, I could see the birth of my children in the coming spring.

*May they stay strong in their journey.*

# Elementary-Prose

Grades 6-7

## In The Late Hours

Julia Iligan *Sperling Elementary*

"Hey, what are you doing up so late?" I asked, coming into the kitchen and making my way over to Ollie.

Ollie was sitting cross-legged on the counter. They looked up to face me. The dark circles under their eyes were quite evident, even in the dim light from the stove. "Oh, Arson. Fancy meeting you here at 2 am. I never would have guessed that you were a night owl," they said.

"I can't sleep."

"Ah, college stress, is it?" they replied in a knowing tone.

"Yeah, I guess." I leaned against the counter next to Ollie and asked again, "Why are you up this late?"

They stayed silent for a bit, then answered, "Can't sleep either." There was a pause before Ollie continued. "I'm an insomniac, I have a lot of trouble sleeping. Tonight, in particular, is more difficult than usual." Their face got darker as their voice trailed off. After a short silence, they resumed. "I spoke with my mom on the phone earlier in the evening. I had thought that we had reached an understanding, but I was wrong. She still doesn't accept me for who I am. She said that me being non-binary is just a silly phase and I'm only trying to be 'trendy', that I'll grow out of it.

"My old man is even worse than my mom. He thinks I'm abnormal, an alien of the grotesque kind. Now, I can't stop thinking about how to connect to others. Maybe I shouldn't come out to other people, like my boss and my friends. Some people might be supportive of me, like you were, but I won't know until I've exposed myself. I'm afraid that they'll single me out, call me names or worse: have the same reaction as my parents." Ollie drew their knees close to their chest, folded their arms over their knees and buried their head in their arms.

A moment of silence ensued. Listening to Ollie's story made me feel more grateful for the love and support I had received from my loved ones when I had come out. No person should have to be the victim of hate because of how they identify or who they love. It's outrageous that Ollie's parents think that way, but sadly, they aren't the only ones who regard people like Ollie and me with prejudice and bigotry.

I hopped up on the counter beside Ollie and gently placed my hand on their shoulder. They looked up once again, glistening teardrops adorning their hazel eyes.

"Do you want to talk about it some more?" I asked softly.

Ollie nodded. With a dash of reluctance, they said, "Yeah, I would like that."

# Secondary-Poetry

## Grade 8



### **Words Are All I Have**

Satvika Suresha *Alpha Secondary*

The screaming and shouting  
The endless arguments  
Drift in and out of my ears  
Too young to comprehend,  
But old enough to speak out  
Words are all I have.  
Shoved into a locker  
I'm already bruising like a peach?  
Trying to fight back, with my noodle arms and stick  
legs and non-existent strength  
Laughter circles around me, a cacophony of torment  
and taunt  
I have no allies or friends in this war of dominance.  
Words are all I have.  
Waiting and watching and wandering and wonder-  
ing  
Can words be weapons?  
What do I have to lose? My reputation? My dignity?  
When words are all I have.  
I open my mouth and words spill out  
Twisting and turning into a blood red rose with fine,  
sharp thorns  
To be gifted to my victim  
'A ring, a ring o' roses, a pocket-full o' posies  
Ashes, ashes we all fall down.'  
Don't we all fall to the power of words?  
And 'Power is a Potent Poison'  
I don't have poison, but I do have words.  
And words are all I have.  
My words work slowly, carefully planting tiny seeds  
Of sweet-tasting, lovely-smelling, soft-feeling, pretty-  
looking, musically-sounding  
Lies.  
They weave in and out, go up and down, corrupting a  
pure soul,  
Making little fractures in a sophisticated structure of  
integrity and trust  
Slowly collapsing it to the ground.  
'Tell me all your sweet, sweet little lies'  
Who can tell me?  
I have no one.  
Words are all I have.  
Sometimes I wonder  
Is what I am doing right?  
But even if it isn't,  
It isn't my fault.  
Blame the people around me  
Whose words hurt more than their actions

Whose words shaped me into the person I am,  
rather than DNA  
Whose silence made me whisper.  
Made me whisper lies and promises and sweet  
nothings and  
Words, words, words.  
But, could you blame me?  
How else was I supposed to defend myself?  
I have no strength, no speed, and no beauty  
whatsoever.  
I only have my words.  
My strong, smart, beautiful, quick, slow, intense,  
lazy, drawling,  
Charming, misleading, poisonous, silver-  
tongued, manipulative  
Words.  
After all,  
Words are all I have.

### **Broken Heart**

Satvika Suresha *Alpha Secondary*

Heart strings getting tugged  
Eventually snaps  
Over the strength of dejection.  
The arteries and veins that encircle the heart  
Pumps with blood,  
Cold to the touch  
From the depressing emotions that flow side by side.  
Tears stream down a nameless, generic, faceless  
face  
Blood dripping down the left and right atrium  
An even tempo, now  
Stuttering.  
Rhythmic throbbing, not so much anymore, as  
Chaotic beats and a cacophony of rhythms  
Contrast the usual classic orchestra.  
The aortic and mitral valve,  
Frantically quiver  
In time of the body's own occasional  
Shiver.  
Heaving sobs rack the air,  
Fingers knotted in messy, tangled hair,  
Sorrow pulses echo across the room,  
Reflecting a poor soul's  
Broken Heart.



# Secondary-Poetry

## Grade 8

### **To Begin an End or to End a Beginning**

Lindsay Neufeld *Alpha Secondary*

Life is a galaxy, filled with unimaginable beauty and destruction  
Stars are the accomplishments and hardships, learning experiences in joy and sorrow  
The supernovas and silent explosions that make the end but only to start a new beginning  
Black holes cause us to overthink and be dragged down an abyss of melancholy  
Wonderous events happen beyond our sky, others can only see the stars not the glorious galaxy above  
the clouds  
We have only seen so much of our own galaxy and it keeps going beyond what we can only believe exists  
An endless amount of emotions and possibilities and new chapters of our lives are our planets, each one their  
own different and individual selves  
Our thoughts streak across our galaxy like asteroids, burning but ignored, filled with purpose but forgotten  
A solar storm of rage and a meteor shower of joy occur every second of everyday, unpredictable and not  
always seen  
A galaxy is filled with what feels like emptiness and nothingness but there is understanding, destruction and  
creation,  
an end to a beginning  
a beginning to an end  
Our galaxy is our own to learn from and question  
Our lives can change without a thought  
but the choice is ours to begin a new self with a whimper or a bang

### **Backyard Swing**

Ranem Al Abbas *Burnaby North Secondary*

She sometimes looks out her window  
into her backyard  
and spots the old rope  
thin  
abandoned on the ground  
bleached by the sun  
and half buried in dirt.  
It once was a swing  
she once held on tight to each side  
ready to shoot up into the sky  
to fly with the birds  
touch the clouds  
and soar higher than the sun.  
But this rope is no longer strong enough  
to carry her teenage self  
who's weighed down  
by stress and despair  
aching for something better.

She still sways on swings  
a couple of feet off the ground  
engulfed in memories  
but can no longer  
reach the stars...

# Secondary-Poetry

## Grade 8

### Time

Ella Wang *Moscrop Secondary School*

Imagine if you could control the hands of time  
What an extraordinary power it would be to possess  
But time can't be controlled  
It goes on  
never taking a break

That day you embarrassed yourself in public  
Remembering the horror of all those mocking eyes  
staring at you  
piercing through your skin  
You lay there helplessly  
Your head, red like a tomato  
and your mind dazed from mortification  
The wicked laughter erupting as you scurried away  
still stays with you  
as if tattooed on your brain  
A memory you wish you could erase  
But the past is what's behind you  
There's no way you can change it  
when you can't even turn back

Years ago when you were little  
Having the time of your life  
with your long, lost friend  
Wishing you could use a time machine  
to travel back to that summer's day  
under the hot, blazing sun  
Just you and your friend  
skipping down a paved road  
while licking off the melted ice cream

## Secondary-Prose

### Grade 8

#### The Calm Before the Storm

Lindsay Neufeld *Alpha Secondary*

I close my fantastical book, transporting myself to the wonderous world of nature that surrounds me. The still water is a mirror, reflecting the painting of swirling clouds above. Golden wisps of sunlight twirl on the depths. Mountains act as barriers, that scrape against the unreachable sky, covered in a vibrant sea of green. Rattling logs come loose underneath our well-worn wooden dock, that sends memories lined with joy through my thoughts. A curtain of rain concealing a storm devours more of the monstrous mountains and a distant grumble of thunder echoes deep in my bones. The last of the sun's kisses are whisked away by the gentle gusts of wind that sings in my ears. A shiver crawls up my spine like a spider on a web. I taste the bits of leftover pulled pork dislodged from my teeth and the unplaceable taste that is so familiar but will never be named sends my thoughts wandering. My hair is like plaster, dripping with what feels like ice. The first lighting strike screams through the distant clouds, there one second and gone the next. The sharp tang of pine stings my nose as hands of the wind make a dance out of the glorious scents of the forest. A cloud steals the sun letting

dripping down your marker-stained hands  
with bright smiles  
and faces flushed from laughter  
But time machines only exist in fiction  
and it'll just be an imaginary object  
that you dreamed of in your childhood

Trying to finish your homework at the last minute  
Wondering how the teacher will read your sloppy,  
rushed words  
when you can't even decode it yourself  
The ticking of the clock  
Slowly devouring you  
into its massive body of ticking  
That steady beat of time  
loud like a hammer in your ear  
You could plead for the ticking to slow down  
or smash your clock into pieces  
but time is very stubborn  
it'll never stop  
So the more you plead  
the more time gets thrown in the trash bin

But to truly control time  
is to think  
not on the past  
but on the future lying ahead  
To relieve old memories  
not physically  
but in your head  
To count every minute of everyday  
and to do what's most important to you  
What you love  
Whenever you can

## The Calm Before the Storm cont'd

the menacing wall of the storm edge closer. Our dock rocks in time with the waves as if it is being rocked to sleep in the water's embrace. Waves crash against the shore, pounding rocks of various sizes. Suddenly the calm waters are met by a dark line of storm that churns the lake merciless. I savor the last moments before the wrath of the storm is released on our bay and adrenaline pulses through my veins, my laughter lost in the defeating roar of wind. I open the mesmerizing book when the smoke of a distant raging fire is put out in preparation. I take one last glance of the beauty around me and dive into another world.

## Secondary-Poetry

Grades 9-10

### Waterfall

Amaara Samji *Alpha Secondary*

I dream of falling.  
Rushing past rock and wood,  
Nothing will stop me.

I want to be a single rain drop.  
I want to be a part of something bigger.  
Unstoppable.

I dream of falling.  
I dream of waterfalls.

### Beast Beneath the Moonlight

Candace Lee *Burnaby Central*

Some days,  
I wonder how it feels,  
To bathe in pure moonlight.  
For I've been told I'll drown in light,  
And I should hide in darkness, away from sight.  
For dangers unknown, to appear bright.  
Under the moonlight.

Some days,  
The moonlight is my Pandora's box.  
I inch towards the light,  
Then I remember you told me that I would  
drown.  
Drown in light.  
"People who are born in the darkness do not  
deserve light nor life."  
You told me as a I cower in fright.  
I didn't dare to fight.  
But if I open the box, and bathe in light.  
Would I release dangers unknown?  
Or release a small shimmer of hope?  
Under the moonlight.

One day,  
I opened the box.  
I stood beneath the moonlight.  
I gasped,  
It was beautiful,  
The soft glow and amorous light.  
So welcoming,  
I carefully reach towards the moon,  
It embraced me.  
I smile softly beneath the moonlight.  
It seemed strange.  
For I'm the beast beneath the moonlight.

# Secondary-Poetry



Grades 9-10

## The Same But Different

Robin Rohu *Burnaby Central Secondary*

In the Winter  
Quiet  
Ground speckled with snow  
And  
The crunching sound rings through the air as we stomp  
through the grass  
The reeds stand still  
Gates frozen stiff  
We would go to the field forgetting our hats  
Gloves  
And coats  
Run back within minutes,  
Fingertips numb,  
Yet to appear there again a little while later  
The sheep hide away  
With coats full and fleecy  
And  
The color they are known by

In the Spring  
Quiet  
The reeds flowing gently,  
Gently like a river drifts alongside a bank  
All is overgrown  
Everything is different now  
Birds swooping down, low in the air  
How we would make up games  
And  
Help the lambs who were lost  
We would watch farmers and their dogs herd freshly  
sheared sheep  
We would be tired by the end of the day,  
From racing down those hills  
And happy too,  
Happy to be able to enjoy the fields

In the Summer  
Quiet  
The grass slightly dried  
The ferns are out,  
fully unfurled and waving at us  
Now the sheep run free  
They enjoy the field but still not us, as much  
We would continue to run until just before the sun  
went down  
Descending rays of light  
Coloring the grass tips red,  
The next day bright and early back to the fields  
For the rest of the day

In the Autumn  
Quiet  
As green as ever  
The rain came down  
Drops of water bend the leaves  
The sheep would stay together,  
Huddled  
Their coats grown woolly again, glistening  
Running along the well worn sheep trails  
we would slip down the hill  
Soaked from head  
to  
toe  
And look at the changing colors of the trees,  
Carpeting the ground,  
A kaleidoscope of color  
What a great place to be

# Secondary-Poetry

## Grades 9-10

### The Tree

Richard Jiang *Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

Clambering high, inch by inch,  
I clung to the branch on the top.  
Hands blistered, fingers bleeding,  
The red moon of my face bursting.  
How can it be so high?  
The ants running like demons up the branch.  
Blistered fingers, Blistered toes.  
The red moon of my face,  
brought terror to my friend below.

### Blossoms

Amy Jung *Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

The tree was like a building, supporting hundreds of beautiful  
flowers on its branches.  
Pink painted petals perfectly pose under the peaceful sun.  
The flower hung its head, dreading the summer rain.  
Every flower smelled like the first day of spring, sweet but a  
hint of sour.  
The raindrops were knives, cutting the flowers off the gentle  
tree.  
Like a silent letter, they bloomed to remind the world of  
youth, joy and innocence.  
Ever so slightly, they lifted their petals, a contrasting pink  
against a gray world.  
Swish. Delicate petals fell with the wind.  
The tree stood its ground, now immune to the dry raindrops.  
The falling leaves signaled the end of summer, the flowers  
finally bowing to the cold winter.

### The Beauty of Nature

Colin Hardjowasito *Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

The beauty of nature,  
Disconnect from our devices,  
Transition into reality.  
Look up,  
To beautiful vibrant colours in the sky,  
Sea of flowers in a garden,  
Dancing clouds on a windy summers' day  
As graceful as a majestic flying bird.  
Look out,  
To waves crashing against a sandy beach,  
The red autumn leaves.  
Listen,  
To the distinctive sound of the birds,  
The buzz of the bees  
To wind whispering to us, forming words,  
And to the crashing branches in the trees,  
Which all truly highlight,  
The beauty of nature.

### The Magic of Reading

Daphne Li *Burnaby North Secondary*

with fog clouded on her glasses  
steamy glass in hand  
she dove into another adventure  
another series of mishaps  
another lifetime

she found a new home  
a new family  
met new friends  
loathed new enemies  
she found another life

her eyes danced across the paper  
fingers gliding past a jumble of symbols  
as her ears became deaf  
and her mind emerged in a new world

she was so far from earth  
light years away in fact  
lost from real life  
as the words and letters danced and  
surrounded her  
they carried her away  
to a new paper life  
far far away from the ground

she danced with loved ones  
cried about fallen ones  
fought side by side with soldiers  
and even fell in love with souls disguised in  
letters

she felt pain and sorrow  
as the words cut through her heart  
so she used her tears to make the ink bleed  
in revenge of the pain the letters served her

but nothing would beat the pain from the  
sword the author grasped  
as the sword emerged from the last line of book  
piercing through her heart  
carving a hole  
and tearing her soul apart  
as she suddenly realized that  
it's not real

# Secondary-Poetry

Grades 9-10

## Liquid Prayers

Diane Lee *Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

once, i felt immortal.

infinite.

indescribable.

i felt

eternal

playing god in the empty space the devil carved out

(shaking and laughing with unbridled glee,

raining red from the heavens i owned by default

(my name was put

on the will, you see,

and when the gods died

it was all mine

for the taking))

(i twisted bloody sacrifices

around my head

hooked broken charms

on my ears

danced and laughed

reveling in my greed)

once, i stood above the world

looking down.

i thought myself a ruler

with victory outlining my wretched soul

and euphoria dancing through my veins

like liquid gold

untouchable by the hands of those i deemed mortal--

(quicksilver melted across my tongue

turning my words burnished and brilliant

seductive and alluring like a siren's song)

once, i seemed to be eternity—forever and every moment and the sun and the skies and the whole of space-time,

reigning over a kingdom that won't yet exist

yet has existed for as long as the moon and

yet won't ever exist

(i was a symphony of unfinished pieces

splintered and

perhaps put together wrong)

once, i was a fool (and of this i am certain)

believing and living

like I owned it all

like I could be anything more

than

me.

# Secondary-Poetry

Grades 9-10

## **The Sun and her Dress**

By Layla Wu *Moscrop Secondary*

the sun?  
i've heard of her  
i've heard of her bright eyes that blind anyone who dares to look into them  
i've heard of the dress of gold that she often wears  
i've seen how she could cry seas of tears  
and how those tears would cascade down her red cheeks to form rain  
i've seen how her dress of gold  
allowed the river of her tears to slide  
down to the world below her  
destroying everything in sight

*why do you cry so much?*  
people asked  
annoyed at how their houses  
have been washed away  
by the high tides.  
she chuckled,  
*why do i cry?*  
*i cry for the single mother who sleeps next to a picture frame of her late husband every night*  
*for the teenager in the school bathroom, vomiting up her chicken sandwich*  
*for the elderly chinese woman who was pushed down the stairs for being born the wrong colour*  
*for the young man with piercing blue eyes on the streets injecting artificial happiness into his veins*  
*i cry for the forgotten*

with that they sewed her a new dress  
made out of the cotton balls that they've grown  
from the water of her tears  
she complained  
*this won't be enough*  
as bits of water still dripped through  
when the cotton got too damp  
they had demanded with voices as cold as the surface of the moon  
*wear it as an apology to us*  
*the ones you have forgotten through your cries*  
so she did.

today,  
her dress is known as  
the clouds.

# Secondary-Poetry

## Grades 9-10

### A Conversation with the Universe

Maral Tabarmanaf *Moscrop Secondary*

I listen to the weeping sky,  
drumming soft beats against the cracking pavement,  
and I ask, "why did you choose to sing this sorrowful song  
here?"

Why does it let the crops yellow against the empty  
baskets,  
menacing the hunger-stricken faces that watch it wither  
away.

Why does it not nourish them with its lively percussion  
and each glistening drop  
it lets bounce off the hard cement?

I gaze at the jewels fixed glimmering in the overstretched  
abyss of space,  
reminding me of the planets existing,  
turning like elegant ballerinas on a dark stage,  
and I wonder how they found their place  
in such a vast solar system,  
how they continue to orbit the same sun, the same light  
steadfastly without colliding into each other.

I ask chemistry if we are all just scattered electrons,  
positioned on valences and shells,  
levels and rungs,  
determining our structure,  
our places, from birth.

I ask the universe,  
"was a weighty die rolled?  
or maybe a fateful quarter was tossed,  
maneuvering swiftly, cutting through the air.  
Or maybe sticks of different lengths were gathered,  
a bottle spun, a dart thrown.  
How did this configuration come to be?  
How was this state of peoples chosen?  
How is there more division among people between  
picket fences than between the waters that flow in  
different seas?  
Why is my life so different from hers?  
We have the same needs.  
We have the same dreams.  
We have the same hopes,  
but different sized wings.  
Why do these walls shelter me in but lock her out?  
Why have lines become sharper, borders taller,  
differences become crashing seas that flow through  
minds like violent rapids?"

I try to ask the mirror,  
"how can you reflect such a disconnected  
world?"

How could it continue to absorb the images of  
fallacy and pain?

It didn't reply.

I stood awry,  
staring into my own pupils  
drinking from the same light  
that flows onto that complacent mirror.

### The Days After You

Layla Wu *Moscrop Secondary*

yesterday,  
when i washed the dishes  
the rough bristles of the sponge pricked my fingers  
as i scrubbed my day old pasta sauce  
off the once smooth pans  
and it reminded me  
of how your long nails  
always scratched my fragile skin  
leaving strokes of red and white  
when our hands held each other

today,  
i went barefoot on the dry grass  
hoping that the blades would be sharp enough  
to pierce my skin  
instead  
they bent under me and folded over  
into matted clumps of beige  
and it reminded me  
of how i was so obedient  
to the point that i allowed you to step on me  
with the rubber soles of your  
squeaky-clean converse

tomorrow,  
i am planning to ask the sun  
if  
the scars that you left on my hands  
will fade away soon  
i know that he'll say no  
because i've figured out  
the sun is not you  
for the sun still takes an effort to rise  
on days where grey surrounds him,  
and he does not take me as a fool  
who eats up empty promises



# French Immersion—Poetry

Grades 9-10

## Le Chat et le Renard

Grace Davey *Ecole Moscrop Secondaire*

Un chat noir était assis sur un mur  
Il réfléchissait sur comment la vie était dure  
Comme tous chats noirs, il était exclu  
Car autour de lui, la malchance est prévue

-Un renard visite! Un mouton a crié en passant  
Les renards ne sont jamais venus auparavant  
Le chat a sauté du mur d'une façon agile  
Et a couru rapidement vers le centre-ville

Quand il est arrivé, il a vu une foule  
D'animaux curieux autour du renard cool  
Une grosse poule s'est tournée puis a lancé un cri  
-La malchance arrive le chat noir est ici!

La foule s'est dispersée le renard aussi  
Laisant le pauvre chat tout seul ainsi  
Le lendemain à 7 heures du matin  
Le chat a entendu un cri soudain

-Mon argent n'est plus ou je l'ai laissé!  
-Je crois qu'un voleur est venu me visiter!  
Le chat a vu le renard courir furtivement  
Vers la forêt voisine en tenant un sac d'argent  
Le chat l'a suivi prudemment de toute vitesse  
Entre les arbres et les feuilles sèches  
-Voici l'argent. Je vais en prendre du mouton prochain.  
-D'accord, merci. On se reverra demain.

C'était deux renards avec un sac d'argent  
Le chat a couru dans l'autre direction  
Il s'est arrêté et a formé un plan  
Qu'il devait suivre très soigneusement

Il a rapidement cherché un fil et des cloches  
Il a attaché le fil à des cloches et les roches  
C'était lent mais les cloches n'ont pas sonné

Et le piège était prêt quand le soir est tombé.

Le chat noir s'est caché avec son poil comme  
camouflage  
Il attendait que le renard montre son visage  
Après quelques heures les cloches ont sonné  
Et les villageois ont découvert le renard tout  
emballé

La poule est venue et a annoncé à la ville  
-Le chat noir a attrapé le voleur dans un fil!  
Après ceci les villageois ont accepté le chat  
noir  
Et le renard méchant a été chassé du territoire.

## Jamais assez

Daphne Li *Burnaby North Secondary*

tu m'as dit que tu aimes bleu  
alors je t'ai donné le ciel  
puis tu m'as dit que tu aimes jaune  
alors je t'ai donné le soleil  
puis tu m'as dit que tu aimes le marron  
alors je t'ai donné mes yeux  
puis tu m'as dit que tu aimes rouge  
alors je t'ai donné mon coeur, mais tu es parti  
sans coeur  
aveugle  
et  
dans le noir

## Shadows

Jaden Zhou *Burnaby North Secondary*

## Secondary-Prose

Grades 9-10

"My favourite colour's Blue!"

"Well mine's White, like the snow, like a blank canvas."

"Oh... me too!" I say, skipping slowly, struggling to stay beside Lucy who takes her time.

Lucy. We're two years apart.

She's sugar, ice, sass, and steel.

We trudge our way home, sweaters falling off shoulders, and ring the doorbell. Vivian answers and we hurl our bags at her without warning. She stumbles, but her eyes don't widen.

Vivian. We're eleven years apart.

She's guidance, laughter, sloth, and cornucopia.

"I brought two ice-creams from work. Who wants what?" she asks, throwing our bags on the sofa.

"I want strawberry," says Lucy.

"Me too!" I whine.

"Fine, I'll have chocolate then."

"But I want that!"

"Fine, have both!"

"No!"

She rolls her eyes, snatches the chocolate, and stomps away.

Tears mix with untouched rose-coloured cream.

After a snack, I watch television. Mother walks in with a basket of laundry.

"You're wasting your time, watching cartoons," she scolds. "Your sisters are doing homework. Have you nothing to do?"

I groan and pick up a book as she leaves, then put it down as soon as the door shuts. Looking out the window, at the garden, I see three rows of beans. The first two are fruitful, leaves dense like molasses. The third one however, sits in the shadows of the other two. Seeing no daylight, it withers.

During supper, Father conducts white-breaded conversations as usual.

"What do you want to be when you grow up?"

I answer immediately.

"Dairy Queen worker!"

Father looks dumbfounded. Mother's face is a mixture of disgust and awe.

"That's my job!" says Vivian.

"I know."

"Didn't you want to compose?" asks Lucy. I shrug.

"Ice-cream seems better now, I guess..."

She gives a side-eye then continues picking at her rice.

Afterwards, Lucy and I go outside to play with the neighbour's dog. We run and play, until the retriever sinks its teeth into Lucy's forearm. She just sort of goes 'oh' and falls to the ground while I scream in her place. Mother comes rushing out.

Lucy winces as Mother gently dabs on rubbing alcohol.

"You are so brave, dear," she says.

My ears perk up.

"I want to get bitten too, Mama!"

She stops in her tracks and gives me a long, thoughtful stare, her eyes grey. Finally, she walks me home and sits me on the couch.

"Do you know, son, that your father and I are proud of you, even though you make mistakes, and aren't like your sisters?"

I shrug.

"We love and will always be here for you."

I sit there for a minute, slowly processing her words. Finally, I smile.

"Whatever, Mama," I say jokingly and cluelessly. "Thinking about it more, being a musician's probably a better job."

She smiles and gets up, heading for the counter, where a paper bowl of pink ice-cream soup lays.

She picks it up and tosses it into the trash.

Jaden.

I am innovation, fire, flexibility, and songbird.

# French Immersion—Prose

## Grades 9-10

### La fleur blanche et l'abeille

Ivy Lei *Ecole Moscrop Secondaire*

Le ciel tombe noir,  
et l'Abeille est devenue inquiète.  
Elle regardait ses mains vides,  
sans miel et sans nectar.  
Sa foi était en miettes,  
des miettes qui soufflaient en énergie frénétique.

“Qu'est-ce que je ferais”?!  
dit -elle avec incrédulité.  
Elle volait tristement dans la nuit sombre  
en secouant la tête,  
sans espoir en vue.  
Soudainement, comme un signe des nuages,  
elle est arrivée à un champ de taille énorme,  
rempli de jolies fleurs roses.

Elle ne croyait pas ses propres yeux,  
cela sentait trop beau pour être vrai.  
Elle prenait son temps,  
ses mains devenaient de plus en plus pleines de  
nectar,  
le sourire sur son visage de plus en plus vaste.

Elle a saisi le nectar  
de chacune de ces centaines de fleurs,  
si lourd qu'elle a presque brutalement effondré.  
Finalement, elle est arrivée à la dernière fleur,  
la seule petite fleur blanche.  
“Voici tout mon nectar!”  
a-t-elle dit avec un sourire fier.  
L'Abeille raillait fâcheusement;  
“Ça c'est tout? Je n'ai pas besoin de ton petit  
nectar. Je part!”  
Sans un deuxième regard, elle est partie à  
sa ruche.

Le lendemain elle est revenue au champ,  
prête à prendre plus de nectar.  
Mais étonnement, toutes les fleurs roses  
étaient mortes de chaleur.  
Sa panique montait,  
et elle espérait trouver une fleur vivante.  
La seule fleur là était la petite fleur blanche.  
Après ce jour-ci,  
l'Abeille n'avait pas  
de choix, mais de retourner tous les jours  
pour prendre le nectar de la seule petite fleur  
blanche.

Elle ne l'a jamais remercié,  
et la seule chose qu'elle pensait était  
“Pourquoi est-ce que les fleurs roses  
ne sont pas toujours vivantes? Elles ont beaucoup  
plus de valeur que cette petite fleur blanche”.

Des ans passaient lentement,  
et le corps de la fleur blanche est devenue de plus  
en plus faible.  
Elle  
ne pouvait plus soutenir les températures extrêmes,

et la chaleur est devenue trop forte pour sa tige.  
Un par un, ses pétales et feuilles se tomber,  
jusqu'à ce que la seule chose qui restait  
était le cadavre de son corps sèche.

### Masques

Renata Liu *Ecole Moscrop Secondaire*

Je faisais la faible tentative pour étouffer davan-  
tage les hurlements en poussant ma tête sous mon  
oreiller, mais ça ne servait à rien. Les murs se refer-  
maient alors que ma colère tremblait dans ma  
conscience comme une pluie légère de printemps.  
Le volcan endormi d'émotions réprimées en moi  
éclatait soudainement alors que mon esprit a at-  
teint sa limite. J'étais fatigué des mensonges. Pas  
les mensonges que les autres me disaient, mais plus  
encore les mensonges que je me disais pour nor-  
maliser la dynamique incroyablement anormale de  
ma vie. Les mensonges que je me disais en es-  
sayant de me convaincre que « tout ira mieux »,  
que ce soit entre moi et mes parents ou ce que je  
voyais dans le miroir; les fantômes qui me hantaient  
quand quelqu'un levait le bras trop vite ou le dys-  
fonctionnement constant de ma maison, je  
me convainrais que cela ira mieux. Je me disais  
qu'un jour, je pourrai enfin enlever le masque que  
j'étais obligée de porter afin de convaincre tout le  
monde, sauf moi-même, que j'étais vraiment con-  
tente et heureuse de ma vie parce que mes pa-  
rents étaient riches et que je pouvais passer mes  
sentiments en utilisant le magasinage comme thé-  
rapie. Ma colère se transformait alors en mélanco-  
lie. Une larme coulait de mon œil. Puis la larme sin-  
gulière a rapidement évolué en rivière et la rivière  
a été rapidement devenue un océan alors que

# French Immersion—Prose

Grades 9-10

## Masques... cont'd

toute ma fureur condensée bouillait jusqu'à la surface. J'ai jeté un coup d'œil au miroir à côté de mon lit et j'ai rencontré mon propre regard. Mes yeux, autrefois charismatiques, se sont retournés. Mes cheveux, plus soyeux, étaient une crinière de lion. Je touchais mon visage et grimaçais en doigté la coupure fraîche sur mon visage et de nouvelles ecchymoses qui truffaient mon cou, mes bras et mon ventre. Je ne pouvais pas appuyer de la regarder une seconde de plus. Ce que le miroir a vu n'était pas le pire – sa surface vitreuse n'avait même pas égratigné l'histoire de ma vie. Mais que pouvais-je faire? J'ai pris mon anti-cernes et mon fond de teint et j'ai lentement couvert mes blessures visibles, une par une, comme si je remettais les pièces du puzzle à leur place. J'essuyais mes larmes et me mouchais le nez, me coiffais les cheveux, tamponnais le sang et rangeais toutes les preuves que mes parents avaient même posé un seul doigt sur mon être. Je me suis forcé d'avalier ma douleur de la façon dont l'océan rétractait sa marée quand la lune brillait à son plus fort, je tournais mes lèvres vers le haut avec des yeux vitreux et je me préparais pour l'école.

## Son dernier lieu de repos

Kathleen Lac *Ecole Moscrop Secondaire*

Une boule de ciment se trouvait au fond de mon estomac. Ce jour n'aurait jamais dû arriver si tôt dans ma vie, mais la vie n'est pas un droit chemin parfait. Ma poitrine se serrant à l'approche d'elle et mes pieds étaient des poids qui rendent la progression difficile. Les funérailles de ma meilleure amie étaient petites et calmes; il y avait seulement le bruit de quelques pieds qui bougeaient et le sentiment de deuil. Nous sommes entrés dans la chambre où son cercueil était ouvert pour être vu et c'était surréaliste de la voir couchée dans le cercueil.

Sa peau était comme celle d'une poupée et pâle sans une seule imperfection, son sourire toujours heureux a été remplacé par un sourcil éternel, ses mains reposaient parfaitement sur son ventre et ses caractéristiques normales qui la rendaient différente et qui touchaient le cœur de si nombreuses personnes ont été arrachées de cette salle. Elle avait l'air si faux, sûrement, que ça ne pouvait pas être la même fille avec qui je riais encore la semaine dernière, n'est-ce pas ? Personne n'a dit un mot, c'était si silencieux que l'on pouvait entendre nos larmes tomber. Le goût du métal me remplissait la bouche à cause de la force que j'avais à me mordre les joues alors que je me trouvais aux côtés de ma meilleure amie.

La salle sentait des fleurs fraîches des douzaines de bouquets autour de son cercueil. Des images d'elle étaient scotchées contre le mur, ses trophées étaient joliment disposés autour d'elle, et une télévision jouait une vidéo de sa vie de jeune fille. Cela n'avait pas l'air réel. J'aurais pu rester à côté d'elle pendant des heures, à l'observer alors qu'elle était couchée tellement tranquillement et qu'elle devenait si belle à chaque seconde qui passait. Tout cela ressemblait à un rêve. Je lui ai dit que je l'aimais pour toujours et qu'elle était heureuse de pouvoir enfin reposer en paix.

Vole haut Ems.

**Cette prose est dédiée à ma meilleure amie.**

# French Immersion—Prose

Grades 9-10

## **L'attaque des hommes morts**

Amir Matianiu *Ecole Moscrop Secondaire*

Août 6, 1915

Ici, je me tiens avec mes camarades à la forteresse de Osowiec.

Encore une fois nous avons réussi à défendre la frontière contre les Allemands. On a perdu beaucoup de nos hommes, il ne nous reste que 900. Les couloirs étaient remplis d'hommes entassés comme des sardines, blessés et hurlant d'agonie. Ils étaient tous posés sur le ciment froid.

Notre forteresse n'était plus reconnaissable. Elle était délabrée. Les murs qui étaient autrefois là pour nous protéger n'étaient que de la poussière. L'air était rempli de cette poudre épaisse. Elle me transperçait la gorge et les yeux. La fumée épaisse et âcre, laissée par les bombardements, me brûlait les poumons quand je l'ai aspiré. Les rats et les cafards mangeaient les défunts. Mes vêtements ont absorbé la puanteur comme une éponge.

Je suis sorti du bâtiment quand un vent léger a soufflé dans ma direction. Rafraîchissant et froid, je le sentais s'enrouler autour de moi comme une douce couverture. Seulement pour voir les Allemands en route pour attaquer.

Alors que notre bataillon se préparait au combat, un nuage vert foncé s'approchait de l'horizon. Lentement, il venait avec le vent. Les arbres et l'herbe devenaient jaunes, tandis que les oiseaux plongeaient du ciel au sol comme de lourds rochers. J'entendais des cris d'angoisse de mes camarades qui me faisaient frissonner. Je transpirais nerveusement. La sueur a coulé le long de ma tête vers ma bouche, je l'ai goûté, le goût salé m'a fait grimacer. Le gaz m'a entouré. L'enfer est entré dans mon corps. L'odeur d'acide pénétrait dans mes poumons comme une flamme et brûlait tout à l'intérieur. Ma peau bavait sur mon visage comme des gouttes d'eau.

Je regardais autour de moi, mes camarades tombaient un par un. Des masses de soldats allemands émergeaient du nuage de chlore et marchaient vers nous avec leurs masques à gaz. Le nombre d'eux était trop grand pour être comptés.

La terre qui était autrefois une belle terre verte est transformée en un désert. Je ressentais de la rage. J'ai pris un chiffon, le mouillait avec mon urine et l'ai enroulé autour de mon visage. Je me suis levé de ce qui ressemblait à ma tombe. Je criais violemment, mes poumons ont craché de ma bouche et mes lèvres ont déchiré. Nos hommes sont levés.

J'ai soulevé le poing et couru vers les Allemands avec ma baïonnette collée à ma main. On courait avec tout ce que nous avions.

Nos vêtements ont adhéré avec notre peau. Chaque pas qu'on prenait déchirait notre chair. On les chassait comme des hommes morts. Je voyais la peur dans leurs yeux.

La panique émergeait des Allemands. L'ennemi s'est retiré et a trébuché sur ses propres barbelés.

Nous avons ouvert le feu. Mon corps ne pouvait plus supporter la douleur. Je suis tombé sur mes genoux.

Après sur mon ventre, avec mon visage sur le sol. Encore une fois, nous avons défendu la forteresse, mais à quel prix?

# Secondary-Poetry

Grades 11-12



## Heart on a White Platter

Jason Chan *Alpha Secondary*

This heart of mine wants to escape me.  
Not because it hates me, it only wants to be free.  
Pounding and pounding on its ivory cage I fear it will burst from my chest  
or die trying with desire coursing through its veins. To splatter upon the platter  
before me flooding it with its viscous life and unyielding warmth, gushing and  
gushing some more, the sight was entrancing like a roaring flame. Dancing  
along with every pulsation. It looked like it was having fun in the open,  
in the joy I could never give, or speak without a word. Boisterous it was,  
fearful I was, aching were we with an impulse beyond just us,  
Pride, craving, vanity looking deep within the hole of this  
broken vessel? No, not that vitriol, was I? Want, passion,  
creation it bled out to me onto the porcelain rectangles  
maybe, but nothing that coagulated in my blood. How  
cold it is to stand there as an Organ does its job in  
dying light, the sun soon left me too, how cold.  
I go to clean up the paper sheets, too heartfelt  
to toss, too messy to hang. Another for  
the gluttonous box always too full,  
and always gets fuller.

## **March Snowstorm**

Sage Fleming *Alpha Secondary*

When she wrote her words,  
They tumbled to the ground,  
Snow from March skies.  
Spiralling to the sidewalks and roofs  
In crystallized beauty,  
Forcing dusty boots out of their attic boxes.

When the snow had melted, she tried once  
more.  
But her thoughts, when she shared them,  
Were pebbles on a beach of hundreds.  
Shuffling against the others,  
Grey and ordinary and plain.  
Glistening with harsh ocean spray,  
Completely forgotten.

And when she tired to sing, to let the melody  
carry her away,  
Her notes became rain droplets  
Pouring onto already flooded ground.

They splashed and spread  
Over the once desert-like plain, begging for a storm,  
And ghosts of arid travellers with panting horses.

In the torrent of rain, icy and cold  
The brightest stars were darkened  
Light eclipsed until no spark remained.  
So she lay there, washed by waves,  
Surrendering to the constant pressure,  
Voice drowned out by the roaring water.

But someday, she'll plant her roots in fresh, hopeful dirt.  
Her ashy petals, ruby and coral, will taste the spring air,  
Shiver, and straighten to twice their height.  
Far from her old place in line, in a garden of hundreds,  
Far from the break in the pavement, stepped on and invisible.  
When it comes, that luminous day, she'll smile in the sunlight,  
And feel it pour over her cracked skin.

# Secondary-Poetry

Grades 11-12

## Growing Up

Samantha Ma *Burnaby North Secondary*

I used to be so small.  
A mere sprout in a forest  
of trees. It's an unusual  
thought, a miniature me.  
I'd felt so tall, above all,  
able to to conquer any.  
Ready to learn,  
to experience,  
to believe,  
in

Now,  
I am so tall.  
Yet I am not  
ready. I'm afraid  
to fall from from this high  
if I don't stand steady.  
It's a strange thought,  
an adult me. Growing  
old, growing bold,  
living to achieve.  
She pleas to be  
free, but there  
is no fleeing.  
At least not  
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# Secondary-Poetry

Grades 11-12

## Contempt

Katelyn Teng *Burnaby North Secondary*

You are five years old.  
For the very first time, you are taken to Chinatown.  
You admire the busy storefronts and the aroma of freshly steamed *baos*,  
Taken aback by the bustling traffic going every which way.  
Merchants are talking in a language you don't understand  
But it doesn't matter, you are welcomed anyway.  
You are filled equally with wonder and pride  
For a place that aligns with your identity.

You are seven years old.  
For the very first time, you are taught by your *Poh Poh*  
How to write your name in your mother language.  
She did not leave all that she knew to seek a better chance for you,  
Leading a brave new life, only for you to forget your roots;  
but still, you are too eager to read your English books and watch your English shows.  
Your notebook, filled margin to margin with your grandmother's Chinese,  
Is neglected, collecting age-old dust  
And you never pick up its tattered covers again.

You are fifteen years old.  
For the very first time, you are bellowed at  
With words that are accompanied by a piercing glower.  
You cannot help but feel that it is because of how people that look like you  
Are portrayed in the media. Disgust sculpts a lump in your throat,  
And unease carves a pit into your stomach. Neither go away for the rest of the day.  
That night, you face yourself in the mirror,  
But the person staring back is not one you recognize. Were your features always this unsightly?

You are seventeen years old.  
For the very first time, the world has made you harshly aware  
That the resonance you once felt with your heritage  
Is now only the whisper of a feeling. Quickly you matured, but soon  
Followed the suppression of the proud child you once were,  
Unable to crawl out from beneath the myriad of doubt and shame  
That society forced upon you under the guise of welcoming arms.

For the very first time, a realization settles upon you  
Like the dust upon your Grandmother's notebook:  
Pretend as they may, in their eyes.

You will never be anything more than a virus in their home.



# Secondary-Poetry

Grades 11-12

## Seok

Alexei L. Villareal *Byrne Creek Secondary*

I'm drawn to the quiet kid  
sitting at the front of the class.  
Bowl cut, never swept back.  
Fiddling with a Rubik's Cube,  
he keeps to himself  
and my curiosity grows.

I don't know him  
aside from the light teal shirt he wears  
multiple days in a row.

When the teacher called him to speak,  
his voice was high but hardly meek.  
With a tone that no one ever shows,  
anyone could tell  
he did not recite prose,  
at least never on his own accord.

He spoke of religious concept,  
his voice resonating with sarcastic intellect.  
"I don't accept nor do I object.  
It's simply a construct of perceptual inept."

That's when I knew,  
my learning speaks to this gent.

Inching closer to his desk,  
I take a seat,  
starting off slow,  
asking for his opinion of a certain text.

Very wary and abruptly short,  
I felt like turning around,  
my brain screaming "abort!"

But it was only the beginning of class,  
we were unaware  
that we still had an hour left in there.

He raised his eyebrow in confusion,  
I stared out the window in cynical disillusion.  
Nonetheless,  
I held back a smile and could instantly see  
this quiet kid and I would get along perfectly.

For the rest of class,  
we sat there together  
conversing over theories,  
it was such a pleasure.

We chuckled in the front of the room,  
quite content for the time to slowly pass soon.  
Borrowing pencils,  
ripping pages from binder rings,  
with hangul scribbled  
on the sheets we were quietly passing.

Coming into each other's lives,  
under two hours our friendship thrives.

This quiet kid and I;  
I can't explain.  
If you had a friend like him to yourself,  
you'd hardly complain.  
How frank and blunt you'd never expect them to  
be.

Next time you see someone  
who piques your interest,  
approach them.  
For you'd be surprised to see,  
the friendship waiting to be made,  
one that will last indefinitely.

나의 가장 친한 친구 석재환에게  
("To my best friend, Jaehwan Seok")

# Secondary-Prose

Grades 11-12

## Paper Chains

Jason Chan *Alpha Secondary*

"Waaaaaaaaaah!"

I stop walking and look around, that definitely wasn't the wind. All I saw were empty driveways mucked with leaves with more on the way as the strong autumn gusts stripped the trees bare.

"Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

The screaming doesn't stop, in fact it gets even louder as the wind picks up, blowing loose newspapers and flyers through the air until finally-

"Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!!!"

-A stray leaf of paper covers my face. At this point it was like they were yelling directly into my ear. Reasonably, I scream too.

"Aaaaaaah!" "Waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah!"

I tear the page off my face into a crumpled ball in my fist. It went quiet with only the sound of my heavy breath, finally relief. That sweet feeling didn't last too long, unfortunately. Muffled sounds seemed to escape my clenched hand. Fearfully I moved my hand closer to my ear, hearing the crumpled words.

"LET-ME-GO!"

My hand started to shake to a crinkling noise until the creased ball unfurled itself onto the cement, limply pulling itself up like in horror movies. What's going on! It alive? Frozen to the horror in front of me with the piece of paper grooming itself violently with its corners to no avail.

"What are you looking at! I'll give you a thousand paper cuts!" a moderately high pitch voice ripped out of the page, swinging its tiny corners at me.

Legitimately, I was scared if this sentient piece of paper could really paper cut me to death. Fortunately, the wind solved that problem for me.

"Waaaaaaaaaah!"

A gentle breeze knocked the creased page over, dragging it slowly over the coarse cement. Maybe I should go help, stepping on the sheet to keep it from blowing away.

"Get off me!" It said, frantically scraping against my shoe.

"Only if you stop moving" I tensely said

"Alright I'll stay still so get off me already!" it whined defeatedly. Staying stamped to the sidewalk, I carefully peel the sheet off the ground, staying surprisingly smooth even after being stepped on.

"...what are you?" I ask at last.

"What does it look like, I'm an angry piece paper" a snippy remark vibrated out, flapping wildly to articulate. I should probably give it some structure, so it doesn't cut my fingers intentional or not.

"Hey what are you-?" Nimble I bend and fold him into a paper man from memory.

"Do you have a name?" probing for more information.

"Sure, I do; loose leaf, papyrus, parchment, but if you're asking for one that's only mine, no I don't." Patting himself down with his paper arms, seemingly mastered movement with limbs already.

I look at the wrinkled paper man, looking like the first one I've ever made.

"How about 'Crease'." I suggest, half expecting him to be enraged at the implication

"...ok" he surprisingly accepted. "this all somehow feels... familiar."

"Maybe you can help me find out why."

And so, we set off to learn what bonds connected us, bound together like paper chains.

# Secondary-Prose

## Grades 11-12

### **Breathless**

Hugo Zhou *Burnaby North Secondary*

I was trudging through the snow, my vision blurred by the gleaming sun. Around me, my classmates fooled around in excitement. Amidst their energetic voices and carefree laughter, I remained silent and observing. They played, throwing snowballs and calling out to each other. I felt a coldness seeping through my clothes, at the same time welling up from my chest.

I had sat on a bus, facing the window. Glittering snow and tall pines composed a tranquil scenery, and I felt almost at peace. Yet, the constant chattering in the background ruined the moment. I focused on my reflection in the glass and found two lifeless, shadowed eyes staring back. I was surprised at how lifeless I looked. Happiness was clearly out of my reach. My classmates were overjoyed at our trip to Mt.Seymour, but I was instead enduring a slow and unbearable process.

Upon arriving at the mountain top, I stepped onto snow for the first time in my life. As momentary wonder seized me, my heart fluttered. However, it was not long before my widened eyes drooped, as I lifted my eyes to seek someone with whom to share this small joy. Only then was I reminded of the language barrier isolating me.

Finally, we were free to wander around in a forest opening. I moved slowly, straining my legs to lift a pair of snowshoes. Chattering that drowned me in agitation gradually faded as I trudded up a gentle slope, searching for a place of tranquillity.

Amidst the serenity in the forest, I was relaxed. But something unexpected happened. Suddenly, a branch caught my snowshoe, and I lurched forward. Pain pervaded me as I hit concrete ice that was concealed by snow. I lost my breath. My cheek against the snow, I felt a tingling sensation in my nose, followed by a warm gush that stained the snow red.

Silence ensued. Tears welled up in my eyes, then flowed down the side of my face. The melancholy that had collected over three months also spilled out. Yet, it did nothing to ease the pain and the building anxiety of suffocation.

I struggled. I gasped for breath like a fish deprived of water, until finally, I caught my breath for what felt like the first time in forever.

The sun kept beaming as a group of skiers stopped nearby. I remained silent and unnoticed. After a while, they left, and I felt as though a string of hope slipped by. I realized how foolish I had been. It was only natural that no one helped me, as long as I remained silent. I breathed in deeply, revelling in the sensation of being able to breathe again.

# Secondary-Prose

## Grades 11-12

### **Burn Out**

Makayla Young *Burnaby North Secondary*

It's 5 pm, I'm frantically scrambling to finish my research paper for AP Capstone. Submissions are due in just 2 hours. There's a pile of overdue homework waiting to be completed, and a calculus test tomorrow that I have yet to study for. My parents are yelling at me to come down to dinner, "Just a moment!" I yell back, hoping to write the last sentence in my paper before submitting it. The rain pours down outside and loud banging against the windows, causes me to lose focus. The dog is waiting to be fed, barking loudly to let us know he is hungry. I finish the last sentence of my paper, and "submitted."

I feel a slight weight off my shoulders, but not enough to offset the work that will have to be done later tonight. I am about to turn off my computer when I hear a notification. I check my email to see that it's a response from one of the universities I'd recently applied to. "Thank You for applying" shows in the opening of the email. I hesitate to open it, beads of cold sweat form at the back of my neck. "Makayla! Dinner!" my mother yells. "I guess I'll wait until after dinner."

I run downstairs to dinner, where my family sits at the table, starting to eat. I look down at my plate and think about that email. I have no urge to eat, all I can think about is what's written in that email. Accepted? Wait-listed? Rejected? I force down my dinner and put my dishes into the sink. I run upstairs and whip open my laptop, throwing all my homework into a pile on the side. "I'll finish all that later," I try to convince myself. I click the email, the browser buffers for a few minutes before the email opens. My heart is beating out of my chest. The email reads "Thank you for applying, there has been an error in our system preventing us from approving your application, please click the link below to resubmit..." I try to resist the urge to scream, "You're kidding."

# Secondary-Prose

Grades 11-12

## **The Fig Tree**

Annie Lu *Burnaby North Secondary*

I pressed my face against the frigid bedroom window. I had always admired the view from there: the overlook of the little garden my grandmother and I cultivated. However, all that now stood in the once luscious paradise was a leafless fig tree, distorted by the gloomy blue sky and the harsh rain striking down.

...

I stood in awe in front of the different arrays of blossoming flowers. The fuchsia peonies, the bright yellow daisies and fragrant lavenders neatly lined the rows of a flower shop.

"Grandma, come here!" I hollered.

"Did you find one that you like?" My grandmother asked.

The magnificent plants had captured my attention. My grandmother had given me the honours of picking out the dear flower that would be added to our collection at home. "All the flowers are so pretty! How can I pick just one?" I whined.

"They are all so precious." My grandmother admitted. "But they also require someone who will take care of them. Otherwise, the vibrant colours may start to fade away. If we chose one for today, we can take extra great care of it."

"But you would help me take care of them, right?"

My grandmother's lips turned upwards as she combed her hand through my hair. "Of course I will. I will always be here for you." She scanned the store. "Why don't we get a fig tree? The beautiful greens and violets flourish every summer, and we would be able to enjoy the delicious fruits it produces. You would have to promise to help me-"

"I promise. You can count on me!" I ecstatically interrupted.

...

I regrettably broke that promise. The trips to the flower shop became less frequent as the years went on and my weekends were filled with dance classes and math lessons. The one day I forgot to water the flowers became two and then a week until the flowers eventually wilted away. All that could withstand my carelessness was that tree.

"Who would care for our garden now?" I sobbed as tears ran down my cheeks. "How could she leave our fragile flowers?" I asked the empty room as though I were expecting an answer.

# DO YOU LOVE TO WRITE?

Talk to your teacher about  
writing a story or poem for next year's  
**WORDS WRITING PROJECT.**

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Taylor Park  
Chaffey-Burke  
Lakeview  
Sperling  
Burnaby North  
Capitol Hill



Created using textured paper, Procreate, and Photoshop, this artwork "is intended to evoke a feeling of adventure and playfulness."

**Skye Gratton, Cover Artist**  
Grade 9, Byrne Creek Community School

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