

Words Take Flight

2011/12 ANTHOLOGY

The flying bird is separate from the book. It symbolizes words and imagination taking flight and standing alone.

~ Yuna Wang

WORDS 2012

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BURNABY
SCHOOL DISTRICT 41

"I drew a pop-up book because words have a certain 3-D quality when well written. I wanted to show more than just writing, that words can come to life.

On the back cover, the flying bird is separate from the book. It symbolizes words and imagination taking flight and standing alone."

*~ Cover art by Yuna Wang
Grade 11, Moscrop Secondary*

A Message from the Board of Education

Literacy is the foundation for all learning. Unique to Burnaby, the WORDS Writing Project is testimony to the fact that in Burnaby Schools, literacy is a priority.

For 26 years and counting, the WORDS Writing Project has encouraged students from kindergarten to grade 12, to pick up their pen and put words to paper. The growth and continued success of this writing project is a direct reflection of the dedicated teachers who nurture the writing talents of their students, supportive parents who encourage their child to do their very best, and generous community sponsors who are committed to supporting youth and literacy.

We are pleased to present you with "Words Take Flight," this year's limited edition anthology of poetry and prose. It features a collection of 97 selected works by the most talented student writers in the district. We look forward to learning where their words will take them in the years to come.

So put your chair in an upright position, fasten your seatbelt, and let the words and imaginations of our students take you soaring to new heights and destinations. We hope you enjoy your flight!



Larry
Hayes
Chair



Baljinder
Narang
Vice-Chair



Ron
Burton



Meiling
Chia



Harman
Pandher



James
Wang



Gary
Wong



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WORDS WRITING PROJECT 2011/12 ANTHOLOGY

Words Take Flight

Please be advised that this is an anthology of selected works by students from K to 12. Some content may not be suitable for younger children.

Every effort is made to showcase student works as true to their original form as possible. We apologize for any variations that may have occurred during the layout of this anthology.

To ensure students and the Burnaby School District do not contravene legal or copyright considerations, students published in this anthology and their parents/guardians have signed letters of authenticity confirming that they authored the original writing piece.

2011/12 ANTHOLOGY

WORDS WRITING PROJECT

Words Take Flight

Burnaby School District's annual **WORDS WRITING PROJECT** provides students from kindergarten to grade 12 the opportunity to become published authors. The best of student writing is chosen by a panel of judges with a background in writing and communications. They are then published in a limited edition anthology. From stories of adventure, journeys of introspection, lighthearted poetry and profound verse, this anthology offers something for everyone. We are pleased to recognize the students whose works make up the pages of the 2011/12 Anthology, *Words Take Flight*.

Ages 5-7

Poetry

Jagoda Cala	Maywood	What Am I Like?
Julie Chen	Chaffey Burke	Spring Has Blossoms
Claire Roe	Sperling	Le flocon rose
Maral Tabarmanaf	Chaffey Burke	Sleepy Tree
Alice Young	Clinton	Ice Caps

Prose

Erika Liang	Clinton	The Rainbow Fight
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Ages 8-10

Poetry

Marlon Buchanan	Clinton	Light of the Moon
Janice Chan	Nelson	Crystal Clear Blue Morning
Isabelle Cosacescu	Clinton	Harry Potter Through The Years
		What Are The Possibilities?
Simran Garcha	Clinton	Snowmen
Ava Gasiorowski	Sperling	La paix c'est
Sophia Hastings	Sperling	L'amour c'est...
Sarah Li	Brantford	Earth, My Home
Lilyann Meerkerk	Clinton	Live Aliens
		What if Peace Changed the World
Rishi Saran Vijayarajan	Marlborough	The Trip
Claire Wang	Buckingham	The Worst Teacher Ever!!

Prose

Ishan Ghimire	Stride Avenue	A Most Curious Journal
Doris Li	Stoney Creek	Chocolate Coated Apple
Clara Liu	Brentwood Park	The Man Who Fought His Fear
Andy Wu	Stride Avenue	The Baseball Finals

Ages 11+

Poetry

Chiara Bertolone
Marenda Bie
Roanna de Guzman
Celeste Han
Estelle Hemmann
Brittany Jung
Victor Lau

Windsor
Taylor Park
Cascade Heights
Chaffey Burke
Aubrey
Clinton
Stride Avenue

The Creature Within
Bubble of Life
Je pleure
Lost
Nightmare's Curse
Our Time
Embodiment of Peace
Mother
The Last
"Hope"
La Paix
We are free

Alessia Lucarelli
Ruby Pang
Li Jing Sheaves
Mahon Yousefi

Cascade Heights
Brentwood Park
Cascade Heights
Aubrey

Prose

Marenda Bie
Bushra Gabreldar
Sarah Hsu

Taylor Park
Chaffey Burke
Lakeview

A Bleary Sunset
A Voice from Birmingham
The Legend of How the Seas and
Oceans Were Created
Music in you, Music in me
Pourquoi les zèbres ont des rayures
noires?

Robert Li
Austin Ma

Montecito
Marlborough

Grade 8

Poetry

Natasha Carson
Lydia Chow
Dani Fookes
Keone Gourlay
Philip He
Jayden Maharaj
Stefanie Petrovic
Pardis Roshanzamir
Katya Suvorov

Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby North
Burnaby Central
Burnaby North
Burnaby Mountain
Alpha
Burnaby North
Cariboo Hill
Moscrop

Young Puppy Love
Seasons
At Home, One Night
Forever On
Mountain Trek
The Soccer Goalkeeper
My Home
La vie contente
Alone

Prose

Michelle Au
Solana Cheng
Justine Hansen
Emma Karlsen
Sabrina Ren
Gloria Tong
Owen Yin

Burnaby North
Burnaby North
Burnaby North
Burnaby North
Moscrop
Moscrop
Burnaby North

Wiped Out
Simple Things
Chasing the waves
Imaginary
Life within a book
Tick Tock
Le Petit Capuchon Bleu

Grades 9-10

Poetry

Shaireen Cassamali
Annice Chang
Priscilla Choi
Breyden Chong
Tamara Fleming
Kaya Kurz

Burnaby Mountain
Moscrop
Burnaby North
Burnaby North
Burnaby Mountain
Alpha

Conscienceless
Des cartes
Passing Thoughts
The Curling Rock
These Woods
Brainwashed
Wishes
Woodchuck
The Ocean
Dreamer
Battle of Thermopylae
Memories
Assez Sourd Pour Entendre
On Edge
I Just Know

Robin Lai
Jiyoung Lee
Eisha Lehal
Corey Ng
Daphne Patterson
Sarah Savic Kallesoe
Rita Wang
Nancy Yang

Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Moscrop
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby Mountain
Byrne Creek
Moscrop
Burnaby North

Prose

Tamiko Derasp
Kyara Hunter
Grace Lu
Sarah Savic Kallesoe
Si Jia Wen

Cariboo Hill
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby North
Byrne Creek
Moscrop

Reminiscence
Instinct
For Never Alone
Fallen Angel
The Neglected

Grades 11-12

Poetry

Chelsea Almadin
Monica Chen
Anthony Derrick
Maika Escol
Saige Forest-Walden
Eleanor Hoskins
Erica Lamb
Dorothy Min
Madeline Soriano
Cali Stinson
Yuna Wang
Jessica Wong
Elena Yu Hsu

Burnaby Central
Moscrop
Burnaby North
Cariboo Hill
Alpha
Burnaby North
Burnaby Mountain
Burnaby North
Alpha
Burnaby Central
Moscrop
Alpha
Burnaby South

Poetry Is
La Beauté Annulée
Eastward Rise to the Westward Set
Writer's Block
I Am
As Easy As π
Tide to Go
He Married Her a Few Days Back
The Cuckoo in Cuckoo Bird
Poetry Is
Rêver
Don't Give Up Hope
Predicaments

Prose

Latifa Abdillah
Chloe dela Merced
Destiny Hsu
Brenda Kent
Michelle Kuah
Janet Lam
Coco Lau
Joti Thandi

Cariboo Hill
Burnaby Mountain
Cariboo Hill
Moscrop
Burnaby South
Moscrop
Burnaby South
Burnaby South

Il comprendra
Empty Hands
Don't Ever Forget
Gâteau Secs au Chocolat
Balloons
Because Grandpa Loved Me
The Boy with the Crayons
The Exchange

Words Take Flight

Table of Contents

Ice Caps	Alice Young	1
Spring Has Blossoms	Julie Chen	1
Le flocon rose	Claire Roe	1
What Am I Like?	Jagoda Cala	1
Sleepy Tree	Maral Tabarmanaf	1
The Rainbow Fight	Erika Liang	2
Snowmen	Simran Garcha	2
What if Peace Changed the World	Lilyann Meerkerk	2
The <u>WORST</u> Teacher Ever!!	Claire Wang	3
What Are The Possibilities?	Isabelle Cosacescu	3
L'amour c'est ...	Sophia Hastings	3
Harry Potter Through The Years	Isabelle Cosacescu	4
Earth, My Home	Sarah Li	4
The Live <u>ALIENS</u>	Lilyann Meerkerk	4
Crystal Clear Blue Morning	Janice Chan	5
Light of the Moon	Marlow Buchanan	5
La paix c'est ...	Ava Gasiorowski	5
The Trip	Rishi Saran Vijayarajan	6
The Man Who Fought His Fear	Clara Liu	6
A Most Curious Journal	Ishan Ghimire	7
The Baseball Finals	Andy Wu	8
Chocolate Coated Apple	Doris Li	9
Lost	Celeste Han	9
The Creature Within	Chiara Bertolone	10
Je Pleure	Roanna De Guzman	11
The Last	Alessia Lucarelli	11
Nightmare's Curse	Estelle Hemmann	12
Mother	Victor Lau	13
Our Time	Brittany Jung	13
Bubble of Life	Marenda Bie	13
La Paix	Li Jing Sheaves	14

WORDS WRITING PROJECT

We Are Free	Mahon Yousefi	14
"hope"	Ruby Pang	15
Embodiment of Peace	Victor Lau	15
A Voice from Birmingham	Bushra Gabreldar	16
Music in you, Music in me	Robert Li	17
Pourquoi les zèbres ont des rayures noires?	Austin Ma	18
The Legend of How the Seas and Oceans Were Created	Sarah Hsu	19
A Bleary Sunset	Marenda Bie	20
Mountain Trek	Philip He	21
Seasons	Lydia Chow	21
Forever On	Keone Gourlay	22
At Home, One Night	Dani Fookes	22
My Home	Stefanie Petrovic	23
La vie contente	Pardis Roshanzamir	23
Young Puppy Love	Natasha Carson	23
The Soccer Goalkeeper	Jayden Maharaj	24
Alone	Katya Suvorov	24
Imaginary	Emma Karlsen	25
Tick Tock	Gloria Tong	26
Wiped Out	Michelle Au	27
Life within a book	Sabrina Ren	28
Simple Things	Solana Cheng	28
Chasing the Waves	Justine Hansen	29
Le Petit Capuchon Bleu	Owen Yin	31
The Curling Rock	Breyden Chong	32
On Edge	Rita Wang	32
Passing Thoughts	Priscilla Choi	33
Wishes	Kaya Kurz	33
These Woods	Tamara Fleming	34
I Just Know	Nancy Yang	34
Battle of Thermopylae	Corey Ng	34
Woodchuck	Robin Lai	35

WORDS WRITING PROJECT

Conscienceless	Shaireen Cassamali	36
Memories	Daphne Patterson	36
Des cartes	Annice Chang	37
Brainwashed	Kaya Kurz	37
The Ocean	Jiyoung Lee	37
Assez Sourd Pour Entendre	Sarah Savic Kallesoe	38
Dreamer	Eisha Lehal	38
For Never Alone	Grace Lu	39
Instinct	Kyara Hunter	40
Fallen Angel	Sarah Savic Kallesoe	41
Reminiscence	Tamiko Derasp	42
The Neglected	Si Jia Wen	43
Eastward Rise to the Westward Set	Anthony Derrick	44
As Easy as π	Eleanor Hoskins	44
He Married Her a Few Days Back	Dorothy Min	45
Poetry Is	Cali Stinson	45
The Cuckoo in Cuckoo Bird	Madeline Soriano	46
I Am	Saige Forest-Walden	46
La Beauté Annulée	Monica Chen	47
Predicaments	Elena Hsu	47
Tide to Go	Erica Lamb	48
Rêver	Yuna Wang	49
Writer's Block	Maika Escol	49
Don't Give Up Hope	Jessica Wong	50
Poetry Is	Chelsea Almadin	50
Empty Hands	Chloe dela Merced	51
Because Grandpa Loved Me	Janet Lam	52
The Exchange	Joti Thandi	53
Gâteaux Secs au Chocolat	Brenda Kent	54
Balloons	Michelle Kuah	55
The Boy with the Crayons	Coco Lau	56
Il comprendra	Latifa Abdillah	57
Don't ever forget	Destiny Hsu	58

2011/12 ANTHOLOGY

Words Take Flight

Ages 5-7

Ice Caps

Alice Young
Clinton Elementary

Bright, gleaming skies
Shine above snowy ice-caps.

Deep, deep water
Rumbles on to shore.

Trees stand still on
The shivering mountain slopes.

Spring Has Blossoms

Julie Chen
Chaffey-Burke Elementary

Spring has nice blossoms that fall down.
When a rain drop falls on the ground
It shines like an angel floating in the air.
A butterfly flies on.

Flowers open up and shine.
The first raindrop falls
on the light green grass.

A second butterfly goes off into the sky
twirling in circles
Going to a garden that has trees that are tall
Spring is when a flower blossoms!

Le flocon rose

Claire Roe
Sperling Elementary

Beau, Différent
De beaux bras
A de belles couleurs
Les flocons roses viennent en hiver

What Am I Like?

Jagoda Cala
Maywood Community School

Am I like a dog or cat?
I am like a dog because I like to play a lot.
Am I like a mermaid or a ghost?
I am like a mermaid because
I like to swim in the ocean.
Am I like a hula hoop or a jump rope?
I am like a hula hoop because
I am very good at twisting and turning.
Am I like a dolphin or a crocodile?
I am like a dolphin because
I have smooth skin like a dolphin.

Sleepy Tree

Maral Tabarmanaf
Chaffey-Burke Elementary

I am a tree, sleepy and resting.
Ready for the winter.
I am a tree, sleepy and resting.
All my leaves have fallen down.
I am a tree, sleepy and resting.
I am so tired.
I am a tree, sleepy and resting.

The Rainbow Fight

*Erika Liang
Clinton Elementary*

Once there was one beautiful rainbow. Whenever it rained and the sun shone, the bright sun's beams would form a rainbow. Seven colours were in charge of the rainbow. The colours were red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and heather.

One day the colours got into a big fight. Red said, "My colour is the most important colour because it has the juiciest fruit!" Orange said, "Orange is way more important. I am the colour of beautiful Fall leaves." Yellow said, "If you didn't have me there wouldn't be sunshine!" Green angrily said, "I am the colour of the plants that give us oxygen!" Blue stomped his feet in the clouds and said, "No, the sky and ocean are more important!" Indigo screamed, "Without me you would not see the stars at night!" Heather's temper rose and she yelled, "I am going to leave you guys!" She stormed off and the colours broke up and went away.

Then sadly, it began to rain. When they broke up they didn't have a lot of fun so they were really sorry. So red held hands with orange. Orange held hands with yellow. Yellow held hands with green. Green held his hands with blue. Blue held hands with indigo and indigo held hands with heather. As if by magic, the colours transformed into a rainbow.

Ages 8-10

Snowmen

*Simran Garcha
Clinton Elementary*

Snowmen
have a lonely life
stand stationary
on the thick snow

Snowmen
watch the falling snow
hit the ground
as quiet
as the gentle clouds
company for the silent trees

Snowmen
stand on guard
like soldiers
feel thankful
for their creators

What if Peace Changed the World

*Lilyann Meerkerk
Clinton Elementary*

If no one could feel
persistent persevering pain,
If nobody would have legs
that are lacking and lame,
If there was no child abuse,
or other people's public property misuse,
If no one divorced,
If no one was forced
to do bad,
or be sad,
If no one died,
and never cried,
Then this earth would have her peace!

The WORST Teacher Ever!!

*Claire Wang
Buckingham Elementary*

My teacher stares at me with
gruesome green eyes
Her face is pale from lack of sun
She lets her hair rise to the sky
A **brain** filled with no fun

Her small SHRIVELLED face looks at me
One green eye peers down
I follow her gaze to the ground
Everyone else chatter like bees

I grasp at my FAILED test
My teacher gives me an odd smile
I could have done my best
I think I'll be here for a while

In gym she screams, "*RUN, RUN, RUUUUN!!*"

Back in class we study pills
But no one tells her it's not fun
And work on very hard math drills

One day I saw her at the mall
Talking to another man
I quickly hid behind a wall
To my surprise it was *Mr. Chan!*

He used to be my teacher
Until **SHE** came to school
So school is now very boring
And she never was very **cool**

Oh no! She saw me!
I'd better get away
Suddenly she calls me;
"Dear, please do stay."

Nervously I join them
To my surprise she says;
**"She is very helpful,
She helps me every day!"**

Jaw dropping open I gape at her
While **Mr. Chan** smiles,
He may be a little better,

BUT MINE IS THE BEST TEACHER EVER!!

What Are The Possibilities?

*Isabelle Cosacescu
Clinton Elementary*

What are the possibilities
Of laughing like a clown?
What are the possibilities
Of never wearing a frown?
What are the possibilities
Of drowning someone's sorrow?
What are the possibilities
Of laughing until tomorrow?
What are the possibilities
Of never hearing a rude rumour?
What are the possibilities
Of being filled with humour?
What are the possibilities
Of joking like a joker?
What are the possibilities
Of laughing even harder?
What are the possibilities
Of cheering people up?
What are the possibilities
Of making the world laugh?

L'amour c'est ...

*Sophia Hastings
Sperling Elementary*

L'amour c'est
pour toi,
pas juste moi!
Les chocolats sont
petits comme les cerises.
Un cœur c'est
comme un nuage,
qui flotte sur moi et toi.
Une rose c'est
comme un symbole d'amour

Harry Potter Through The Years

*Isabelle Cosacescu
Clinton Elementary*

Harry Potter is going by through the years,
With so much joy, but so many tears.
The Hogwarts Express, the Philosopher's Stone
Dumbledore sitting on his great, golden throne.
There's bloody writing on the wall
Four attacks and Ginny's gone.
Now, Ginny Weasley's almost dead
Harry stabs the Basilisk in the head.
The third year has now come
Dementors suck the soul out of everyone.
Harry gets his Firebolt, new
In Hagrid's class, the Hippogriff flew.
To the Quidditch World Cup, a shoe is a portkey
with the Weasley's go Harry and Hermione.
They have fun at the Quidditch World Cup
until Death Eaters come and mess everything up.
Harry creates Dumbledore's Army
who battle Death eaters to get the prophecy.
Bellatrix Lestranger kills Sirius Black
their fifth year is over – but they'll come back.
As Potion's Master, Snape gets sacked
There's a cursed necklace and Katie Bell gets
attacked.
Now Dumbledore's dead
"Avada Kedavra", Severus said.
Hunting for Horcruxes everyday
in one place, they can never stay.
So many people have died.
Dobby's gone and Harry cried.
Snape gets killed by Nagini
The Elder Wand cannot defeat Harry.
Harry, Ron and Hermione can never get bored
killing Horcruxes with Gryffindor's sword.
Ron and Hermione, Harry and Ginny
Voldemort's gone, it was meant to be.
So, there you have it:
Harry Potter through the years
with so much joy, but so many tears.

Earth, My Home

*Sarah Li
Brantford Elementary*

The Earth has been a home for four billion years.
The soil we stand on tells of tales from our past,
The water we drain belongs to our tears,
The treacherous winds,
blow through our soul fast.
Clouds of happiness stand puffed in the air.
The world's misery lies perished below.
Love is a touch of kindness you can't bear.
Life stands no more at the oceans low.
Education is the touch in our brain.
Peace is the thing our world is in need of.
We all cry in sorrow when we feel pain,
We come together when we all feel loved,
Everyone lives on earth for a reason,
No matter what year, what month, season...
... WE LIVE!

The Live ALIENS

*Lilyann Meerkerk
Clinton Elementary*

Aliens wear suits of ugly green,
They are creepy, cruel, crazy and mean.
They carefully search for you and me,
Like innocent cats chased up a tree.
There is nothing glorious about them,
Nor even a tiny bit of good.
When you look at them you seem to fall
you ought to just not look at all.
If you are brave, bold, brazen and **BIG**,
you attack and get zapped by a laser stick.
They swim like sharks lurking around,
catching and eating the prey that they found.
The dry, dusty desert is their habitat,
Wide awake in the night just like a bat.
STAY AWAY, go away stay up on high,
for these aliens absolutely cannot climb.

Crystal Clear Blue Morning

*Janice Chan
Nelson Elementary*

In the crystal clear blue morning,
there is bright white snow,
In the crystal clear blue morning,
the snowflakes flow.
In the crystal clear blue morning,
I find my way out,
The delicate lovely snowflakes out and about.

Twisting, turning, and twirling,
they fall on my eyelashes,
Turn to little bits, just like ashes.
Then they turn to water, just like rain,
In the crystal clear blue morning....

Light of the Moon

*Marlow Buchanan
Clinton Elementary*

Light of the moon
I'll see you so soon.
Shining brightly in the night
So people can see revealing light.

Up comes the moon
Down goes the sun.
As children stop playing
And there is no fun.

When kids go to bed
Parents say goodnight.
So the moon can just hear
That everything is right.

Everyone's sleeping so silent and calm
Someone wakes up then something is wrong.
Bats and creatures hunt in the night
So they can get food before it gets bright.

La paix c'est ...

*Ava Gasiorowski
Sperling Elementary*

La paix c'est voir ...
les personnes porter les coquelicots.
les personnes tranquilles et contentes.
voir les bébés nouveaux – nés.
voir un bébé apprendre.
voir les soldats revenir.
c'est voir les chiots grandir.

La paix c'est entendre ...
le chant des oiseaux.
les personnes qui s'amuse et rient.
les chiots qui jouent ensemble.
les personnes tranquilles.
les personnes qui se marient.

La paix c'est sentir ...
les fleurs.
ma nourriture préférée.
l'air frais.
la fourrure de mon chien.
la neige.
les bonbons.

La paix c'est touché ...
ma maman.
mon papa.
les coquelicots.
ma famille.
la neige.
les océans et rivières frais.
le beau gazon vert.

J'aime la paix!

The Trip

Rishi Saran Vijayarajan
Marlborough Elementary

It started when I asked for a trip to a mountain
Instead all I got was a trip to the planets
So my dad drove the car really really high
So high that it touched the sky
The car left earth because it was too high
It continued to Mars when I started to cry
We were out of gas on the Martian sky
I went to buy some gas at an intergalactic price

When I came back the can was full
I poured it into the car and watched the show
The car just zoomed at the first taste of gas
It went so fast that it turned back at last
Back to earth the car flew back
In less than 1 second I was home in a snap
But the car crashed into my backyard
My mom yelled at us for destroying the lawn
At the end of the day I was tired anyway
So I gazed at the stars and slept the night away

The Man Who Fought His Fear

Clara Liu
Brentwood Park Elementary

Once upon a time there was a man named Mr. Jones. He was very rich and fancy. He lived in a mansion and his things were very worthy. He would always worry that his house was going to crash, a window was going to break or when he walked downstairs they were all going to fall down (so he has never been downstairs). Mr. Jones had workers to fix everything in his life except for his worrying. Mr. Jones walked into his bedroom muttering to himself everything that worried him when he went to his bedroom. "Mirror falls down and breaks and I get cut with glass. Blankets on bed attack me. My clothes turn into monsters." On and on he went. I think you get the point. Finally Mr. Jones got to his bedroom, held his breath and opened the door. AHHHHHHHHH!!! Mr. Jones screamed! The worried man stood there petrified and frozen, his hands over his eyes. Then carefully and slowly he lowered his hands. Peeking through his fingers he looked and saw it was just his own reflection in the mirror. Mr. Jones sighed a big sigh of relief. Carefully Mr. Jones stepped into his room. There on his window sill was a mouse. She was dressed in a beautiful silk dress. She had gorgeous moon shaped earrings that shone in the light of the lamp. "Hello" said the mouse quietly. Mr. Jones was too scared out of his wits to even respond. "W-h-ho said t-that", stammered Mr. Jones. "It is I the mouse of the moon. I help if people have problems", replied the mouse of the moon calmly. Then the mouse spoke again, "I know you have some worrying problems." "R-r-ight" said Mr. Jones, too shocked to think of anything else to say. The mouse looked up, her moon shaped earrings glowing like they had never shone before. "I know how to stop your worrying. All you have to do is stand still, count to 30 and open your eyes. Look around you and it will be all right." Mr. Jones said nothing but thought really hard. Why not give it a try? "OK" said Mr. Jones looking at the mouse clearly for the first time. "Very well" and with a puff the mouse of the moon was gone. ... That afternoon Mr. Jones was cleaning his house. He looked under his bed and screamed!!! Mr. Jones was getting up to run but then remembered the mouse's visit. Mr. Jones crouched there and started to count "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12" and on until he got to 30. Mr. Jones slowly opened his eyes, looked around and saw it was only his favourite teddy bear. Mr. Jones sighed a sigh of relief. From then on, when Mr. Jones worried, he would count to 30 and everything would be OK. Actually, Mr. Jones got so good at it he won a prize for the best person ever to count to 30, while the mouse of the moon would quietly giggle behind the lamp.

A Most Curious Journal

Ishan Ghimire

Stride Avenue Community School

Journal Entry #1

It has been 12 hours and 47 minutes since the Andromeda galaxy and the Milky Way galaxy have touched. I am on the planet of Vesta. I have named it Vesta after the Roman goddess of the hearth or fire. It shines like Venus in the dark space of the Andromeda galaxy, more recently called the Mameda galaxy. The Pracuto government has sent me with a companion. His name is David. He is not enthusiastic, so I wonder how I'm going to live with him for 365 days.

Journal Entry #57

David and I have just negotiated with the oolane king. He has let us see this river which is littered by a mineral I have never seen before in the universe. I am writing as I go along the river. Thousands of snake-like creatures are on the banks and one of them leaps onto the boat! I quickly threw it into the river. But then, the creatures ran away?! It looked like it ran away from something. Rooooooooooooooooo!!!!!!! We saw a huge cavern ahead of us with a large head sticking out! We had to quickly turn around.

Journal Entry #186

It has taken us 18-1/2 weeks, but we have finally slain the monster in the cavern. I am inside the cavern right now. I write fast. The river continues into the cavern and reaches a jagged rock where the rocks split and a liquid comes out. For some reason, the rocks go up into space and the liquid is sticky, so they join with other rocks and make really massive objects. I also note that they go westward on my galaxy compass. What is happening?!

Journal Entry #247

Riiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiing! My old tele-radio rang.

The person on the other end said, "Hey, something horrible is happening down here on Earth. Huge meteorite-like rocks are crashing down on the Earths! Earths #582 to 700 have been hit! Zillions of people have died. Since the Andromeda galaxy joined ours, strange things have been happening, like the galaxy's rotation spinning the other way than it usually did. Do you know anything about these huge rocks?"

I replied, "yeah, I think I know. Wait, what direction is it coming from on your galaxy compass?"

"Eastward."

"Whew, it's nothing. If it was what I was thinking about, it would be devastating because it's literally unstoppable ... Wait, if something goes westward ... then on the other side, it has to come eastward!"

There was a long pause. He understood why I paused.

Journal Entry #365

We tried to stop the river again but it didn't work. I'm getting picked up by a space ship today but it doesn't matter. I'm doomed. The universe is doomed. The rocks are going to destroy the other galaxies. We're all doomed.

The Baseball Finals

Andy Wu

Stride Avenue Community School

It was a peaceful sunny day in the town of Gatesville. The baseball finals just started. It was between the Diamond Destroyers and the Jade Jaguars. They were two of the best teams in their league.

"The Jade Jaguars are batting first" said the umpire. There happened to be a boy on the Jade Jaguars who just couldn't wait to bat. His name was Elliot and Elliot was new to baseball.

"Elliot, you're up!" his coach informed him.

"Strike one! Strike two! Strike three, you're out!" yelled the umpire. Elliot was really sad that he struck out on his first try, he hoped his team could win at the end. Now, the Diamond Destroyers were up to bat. One of their players had just hit the baseball really hard and straight to Elliot.

"Elliot, catch it!" his teammates cheered as the ball was coming to Elliot. Elliot felt as if everyone and everything was moving in slow motion. The ball came down and bounced out of Elliot's glove.

"Noooo!" exclaimed his teammates. Elliot's day just kept getting worse and worse, nothing was going his way today. He continued to miss baseballs and also continued to strike out.

"The whistle has sounded, it's time for the last inning," informed Elliot's coach. The score was seven to four and the Jade Jaguars were losing by 3 points. This inning the Jade Jaguars were up to bat and it was their last chance to catch up.

"We are so doomed," Elliot muttered to himself. Elliot's luck began to change.

"Way to go, Elliot," his teammates congratulated him as he hit another homerun. The score was now tied seven to seven. Elliot's team had two outs and it was Elliot's turn to bat. Elliot was really, really nervous but tried to focus.

"Whew, I can do this," Elliot said to himself. The crowd was cheering for him.

"Elliot! Elliot! Elliot!" the crowd changed in unison. The pitcher threw a fast pitch that narrowly avoided Elliot's bat.

"Strike one" said the umpire. Another fast pitch narrowly avoided Elliot's bat.

"Strike two" said the umpire. This was it, Elliot's last chance to win for his team. He knew his whole team was depending on him. He concentrated on the ball. It was a pitch straight down the middle. Elliot hit the ball as hard as he possibly could. The crowd got out of their seats and gasped. Did Elliot hit it hard enough for a homerun?" He opened his eyes and found out.

"You did it, Elliot!" yelled his teammates as they smothered him with hugs.

"Great job, Elliot, I knew you could do it," his coach congratulated.

"I can't believe I actually did it!" Elliot shouted. The crowd was cheering even louder than before. The umpire handed Elliot's team the big trophy. His team had never won a trophy before.

"Smile" said the cameraman as he took a picture of the Jade Jaguars with the trophy.

Chocolate Coated Apple

Doris Li

Stoney Creek Community School

As I moved towards the gleaming dark milk chocolate coated apple on a stick, I could hear the excitement of my heartbeat. "Crunch!" I bit right into the fresh and juicy apple, as a little pinch of the colourful sprinkles dropped to the ground. It was then I decided to start licking. I held on to the short, but wide and circular shaped stick, I thought "What if I dropped it?!" I just couldn't let that happen! I tightened my left hand so much that my knuckles were almost white. I loosened up a bit. My tongue touched the bumpy sprinkles, I went up towards the delightful fall coloured apple light green with streaks of darker green, dark glossy red and just a little touch of yellow among the red. Suddenly, as the warm and damp apple turned colder, a piece of the chocolate fell. It went down and down. Somehow, my hand reached out on its own and caught the piece of chocolate just in time! By that time though, it had already cracked into pieces. I gobbled it down anyway. I thought I couldn't let the chocolate incident happen again, so I chomped down the rest of the apple. It tasted marvellous because of the sweetness of the chocolate and the apple mixed together. "Plump!" went the stick down the garbage can. My memories of the apple kept replaying itself again and again.

Ages 11+

Lost

Celeste Han

Chaffey-Burke Elementary

Separated,
Lost in thoughts,
Replaying the memory,
One cloudy day,
I'm looking out my window,
Staring into the distance,
Then, I see men,
In dark dirty green
Invading the streets,
I stare at them blankly
As they barge into houses,
Coming out with
helpless people
In tow,
I cry for my mom,
But it's too late,
The men are at my door.
I hear them outside,
They break in.
I freeze.
Startled,
Eyes wide with fear

One of them
Grabs my wrist
Pulling me towards my door,
I scream,
Struggling to break free,
They bring me to a truck,
A big truck,
I see kids in the truck,
Some are crying,
Some are staring in horror,
Some are screaming
The others are clutched to
The door of the truck,
Begging for mercy
The soldiers throw me in with the others,
As I sit there,
Weeping, longing for my mom.
Now, I'm here in a camp,
Along with the others,
I'm in my barrack,
Longing for freedom,
I know the soldiers took away my
Parents
My home
And my freedom
But I know that they can't
take away my dignity.

The Creature Within

Chiara Bertolone
Windsor Elementary

The luminescent glow of the moon reflected off the ocean just a few feet away
I glared into its deep, ominous yellow eyes
It's gaze laser-hot, burning right through me
Practically slicing me open
It was the size of a pony
Its paws as huge as horse's hooves
It scraped the sand with its paw
And stamped its hind legs
Presenting a fight
It's low, menacing snarl
Evolving into a throat growl I could feel rumbling the ground beneath my legs
I start to turn
Start to run
But it's too late
I hear the barbed chains of its collar clanging threateningly
Signalling danger
Signalling a threat
It lunges at me
Knocks me down
Pounces on me
I look up to see its face angrily dripping with drool
It was the last thing I saw before my vision became blurry
And everything faded away
Leaving me in a pool of darkness
I awake in the darkness of my room
I awake in my room
The moon illuminating my surroundings
A bead of sweat dripping down the side of my cheek
A chill running through my spine
My heart hammering hard against my chest
Threatening to explode
Terrified is an understatement of how I feel right now
I am alive!

Je Pleure

Roanna De Guzman
Cascade Heights Elementary

Parfois, quand je suis seule,
Je Pleure,
Parce que je suis toute seule dans ce monde
Et la douleur est trop lourde à porter,
Je Pleure
La douleur,
C'est comme un trou noir,
Prenant, prenant, prenant,
et
rompre, brise, casse,
Et ne laissent rien,
jusqu'à ce qu'il mange toute mon âme.
Et il ne quitte jamais.
Je ne veux pas qu'il quitte,
pour

douleur

Est mieux que le vide,
Parce que, quand le vide est là,
Je ne ressens rien,
Je suis engourdie, et fragile,
comme

le

verre
Mais, parfois, il est
trop
Alors je casse,
Comme un miroir brisé
et je pleure.
Si j'ai de confiant,
une épaule sur laquelle je peux pleurer,
Je chuchote, mes souffrances
Mais ils ne comprenant pas.
Non.
Ils ne comprennent pas.
parce qu'

aucun

sait

la

douleur

la

souffrance.
Personne ne sait
Alors parfois, quand je suis seul,

Je pleure.
Mais personne ne se soucie vraiment
ou

sait

pourquoi.

The Last

Alessia Lucarelli
Cascade Heights Elementary

A creature of stories,
Never seen, but told.
A mane of silver,
A horn of gold.

A silky white coat,
And eyes of deep blue,
Heard of by many,
Believed by few.

An untameable spirit,
A heart of pure gold,
He watched the world change,
He outlived the old.

He stands on the mountain,
And for the last time,
He stares up at the moon,
As the planets align.

A slow-fading spirit,
No life in his eyes,
For unicorns live,
And unicorns die.

His spirit is dim,
And so he will fall,
And the birds will be silent,
For the last of them all.

Nightmare's Curse

Estelle Hemmann

Aubrey Elementary

The only thing I fear
In this lonely solitude, is
The dark and somber loneliness that wraps me up
And leaves everlasting scars on my heart, like a
Nightmare's Curse

I hear the rain drop silently,
On the battered roof.
Lightning strikes and thunder rolls
The grandfather clock chimes twelve
The candle's glow is dying out
I know my time is limited,
I know I don't have much time left
It's company is no surprise, yes it is a
Nightmare's Curse

I suddenly hear the door creak open
Then, the dying candle is suddenly gone,
It's glowing warmth and comfort leaving me alone,
Leaving me to fend for myself,
Dragging me down in a
Nightmare's Curse

Momentarily,
I forget about the "Visitor"
Yet as I caught a glimpse of the deathly blade that he held out,
I knew that my time had finally come
I turned around, but alas, it was too late.
I felt the sword stabbing into my chest,
Sinking deeper and deeper
Slicing through my flesh and bone and, finally,
Piercing through my heart and soul
Then, I realize that he is one and only object of fear,
That haunted and terrorized me since the day I was born; he was the
Nightmare's Curse

The "Visitor" leaves swiftly out of the door
As I lie in an ever expanding pool of dark red blood
As I uttered my last few words and prayers,
My heart stopped beating altogether.

Indescribable, surreal pain and agony filled me, and,
At that deadly moment,
I knew my destiny was to keep wandering, to be
An eternally lost soul in a web of lies and agony
Wandering even in my death, in a labyrinth of
Nightmare's Curse...

Mother

Victor Lau

Stride Avenue Community School

Her hair blows in the wind,
the grey specks as of powdered snow
Winter's cold, mysterious symbol
as if it were together in a flow.
Spring comes, new seedlings aroused
The storm has calm,
plants finally awake and doused.
Sunlight blooms,
the sweet fragrance everywhere
No more ill, lessen the burdens of care.
Dancing leaves gently loft above the ground,
The vivid colours changing,
uttering without a sound.
Yet none of thy seasons
can compete with thee,
The radiance of my mother, for me.

Our Time

Brittany Jung
Clinton Elementary

Say goodbye to your friends and teachers.
From learning to tie our sneakers,
to today when we all
have our own special features.
You can leave sad,
You can leave mad,
Just don't forget the times you had.
It's time to forgive and just forget.
Those decisions, I hope you never regret.
There will be crying but no one's dying.
It's another chapter filled with laughter.
What comes after?
Another challenge you have to chase.
Remember everything
doesn't have to be a race.
Elementary school, middle school,
high school or college ...
There is no need to fear, it's just another year.
Finally,
Our graduation is here.

Bubble of Life

Marenda Bie
Taylor Park Elementary

An orb of spectrum, blithe and free,
Bouncing through the sunshine's glee
With radiant colours shown in flight
Purifying joy's insights

But, still with valour, noble-bound;
Pride and justice stay profound
Their journeys through the grounds and seas,
Use solid shields; audacity

This bubble soars ~ above them all
The newborn idol joins the call
To ride the wind, and wherever it goes
Comes the medal – silver and gold

With perseverance and perchance
Some strength, some grace,
and at first glance;
Invincible and born to win
This tragic war, this holy game

But victory is hence short-lived
So suddenly, the momentum shifts
'Cause past the climax is the end
Spirit weak; thirst now quenched

In painful hours, torture reigns
Fatigued and raw, serenity gained
But time creeps by until ~ the shame
The bubble bursts; to end the game

La Paix

Li Jing Sheaves
Cascade Heights Elementary

La paix est tranquille
La paix est calme
Douce, mais grande

La paix est le silence
Sur le champ de bataille
Les fleurs au lieu des guerres
Le gazon au lieu du sang

La paix est le bonheur familial
Entre les frères, entre les sœurs
De l'amour, les bijoux
De la gentillesse, des caresses

La paix est un miracle du monde
Importante et spéciale
L'inspiration pour tous
Petite, mais visible

La paix est un arc-en-ciel
Qui brille come un étoile
Rouge, orange, jaune
Vert, bleu, violet

La paix est la bonne
La paix est de l'harmonie
Silencieuse, mais forte

We Are Free

Mahon Yousefi
Aubrey Elementary

In the darkest hour
Light will shine
On the smallest flower
It is a sign

A ray of hope
The end of war

A kaleidoscope
We will adore

Hope this lasts one hundred years
We have been freed
Hear our cheers
We no longer bleed
We have our hope
In this small flower
We shall now cope
We no longer cower
We are free

“hope”

Ruby Pang

Brentwood Park Elementary

he says he'll come home soon
yet I just can't help but doubt
the clatter of his fingertips
 all his fingertips
on the keyboard
relaxes my beating **heart**
'it's late, get some rest'
'it's night where you are'
'I'll be fine in battle tomorrow'
but I refuse
 and resume
 crying
 laughing
 and hoping
with this person I love so dearly
he laughs at my tear-stained cheeks
 "you can't cry, Kirkland"
 "it's not like you at all"
and I can almost feel the warmth of his smile
like the sun released from behind a cloud
blazing over
mountains,
 valleys,
riverbanks,
 oceans
in an attempt to reach my **heart**.
I take just a moment to listen for his
 precious laugh
m a y b e tomorrow I'll see him once again
m a y b e tomorrow he'll come home
m a y b e, just maybe, tomorrow I'll hold his
hand once again
but his e y e s can hold me
his l a u g h console me
and his s m i l e relax me
 but, until then
he says he'll come home soon
 yet I just can't help but doubt
 but maybe, *just this once*
"I miss you, Jones"

Embodiment of Peace

Victor Lau

Stride Avenue Community School

Blue is like a soothing wave,
gently washing out seashells,
a distant hum in the gentle oceans.

A buzzing dragonfly flies across a marshland,
its aquamarine wing fluttering
as if it were gliding.

Below, a whale swims beneath the waters,
alongside a wonderful presence.
Fish silently swim around in safety,
above the roots of sapphire corals.

Outside, a blue jay roosts,
relief in its eyes as it tends to its child.
Today, no eagle eyes are watching,
 only the light chirping
of grasshoppers are heard.

Farther beyond the bird is a beach,
where the serene wave drifts.
It quietly rocks in a gentle beat,
 slowly evaporating.

Beyond, a peacock stumbles
in amazement and joy
to see its home;
its indicolite wings
dimly reflecting the sunlight ...

A Voice from Birmingham

Bushra Gabreldar
Chaffey-Burke Elementary

"...Together we can work for our freedom and finally achieve justice for all. Thank you and God bless the United States of America," said Martin Luther King as he stared into the audience. A tense moment of silence preceded the applause and chants. As Dr. King proceeded down the stairs, the host of the event led another round of applause for him. Amidst the applause and cheers, the wailing of sirens sliced through the cool night air. The noise of the crowd immediately died and was replaced by quiet chatter.

"Now, now I'm sure it's nothing to worry about ..." just then the screech of tires and the barking of dogs sent panic coursing through the crowd. Dozens of state troopers emerged from behind the tall oak trees. They held dogs on leashes and riot guns. The audience members immediately fled the scene as police released dogs and fired tear gas into the crowd. Martin Luther King Jr. was immediately identified and then arrested.

The police officer pushed him down, handcuffed him, hoisted him off the ground and escorted him to a squad car. Dr. King watched helplessly as hundreds of civilians were brutalized by State troopers for participating in his demonstration. He saw the Fire Department shooting water from their high-pressure hoses to disperse the crowd. Police beat the demonstrators mercilessly with their batons. Tear gas and cries of pain filled the night. Gut-wrenching anger bubbled at the pit of Dr. King's stomach, but as in his early days at Crozer Theological Seminary, he learned to control that anger.

The police officer floored the gas pedal and they sped off quickly. As the city of Birmingham blurred by rapidly, Dr. King saw why this city was labelled as "the most segregated city in America". He saw an African American person being thrown off the bus because a white person was waiting for a seat. Signs and posters outside of shops depicted racist and segregated messages.

They drove on for 20 minutes and the squad car pulled to a stop in the parking lot of Birmingham police station and county jail. The jailhouse was not very big but it certainly held many people. The processing line was so packed it would have taken Dr. King an hour to get through. He was heaved by the officer out of the car and rushed to the double doors. There, he was brought through the rows of cells and finally pushed into a cell of his own. An African American man acknowledged him and continued staring at the ceiling.

"Enjoy your new home," the officer said mockingly as he removed the cuffs from Dr. King's wrists.

Dr. King normally would have approached his cellmate but he decided to first look outside the moonlit window and gather his thoughts. He stared outside at the courtyard as he recounted the events that took place that night. He thought of the demonstrators, beaten and brutalized for supporting the cause of freedom and equality. He thought of the injustice of it all, the way people were oppressed because they aspired for change just to be treated with dignity and fairness. Dr. King thought for a long time, until the sky was tinged with red.

"What are you in for?" said a deep masculine voice.

He turned and saw his cellmate sitting on the top of the bunk bed.

"Fighting against injustice and encouraging the people to work for their own freedom. What are you in for?" Dr. King asked curiously.

"Are you sure you wanna know?" he asked.

"Well we might as well get to know each other. Who knows how long we'll be in here," Dr. King said encouragingly.

"Okay well it all started here in Birmingham. I had heard about this great restaurant that opened a few weeks earlier and I wanted to go check it out for myself. So, I went in and everyone in the restaurant turned and stared at me. The owner walked out to see what was going on and he took one look at me and said "*Get outta here, no Negroes allowed*". Naturally, I asked why and he said that his food was too

good to be wasted on a Negro. He warned me again to get out and he threatened to call the police, but I stood my ground and refused to leave. And I guess the rest is history.” He gestured around at the cell.

A few moments of silence passed and then a loud metal-hitting-metal noise filled the hallways. A small stout red-faced man walked up and down the rows of cells banging his baton against the cell bars. As he passed Dr. King’s cell, he read the gold nametag on his uniform, *Warden James Jackson*.

“Oh don’t mind the warden, if you stay quiet and behave well he won’t notice you. And believe me; you don’t want him to notice you.”

“Forget about the warden, I want to know why you stood your ground like that while you knew the risks?” asked Martin Luther King Jr.

“My pappy, God rest his soul, taught me from when I was just a kid that a man cannot ride you unless your back is bent.”

“Your father must be a very proud man,” Dr. King said.

The days sped by and Martin Luther King Jr. was responding to criticisms from white clergymen. He spent day after day and night writing down a response. He lost track of time writing words of encouragement and hope onto whatever scrap paper he could find. He did not talk to his cellmate.

One day, the warden, James Jackson, came and opened up the cell door. He gestured for Dr. King to come forward.

“Alright you’re free,” he said in a deep southern accent.

The warden escorted Dr. King to the exit. As he was being escorted, he yelled “Wait I didn’t even get your name!”

Before the cellmate could respond, Dr. King was thrown out of the jailhouse and picked up by a black four-door Ford. Inside the Ford was his good friend Fred Shuttlesworth.

“How was your time in the slammer?” Fred asked.

“I definitely learned something. We need to keep rallying and fighting for our freedom.”

Fred Shuttlesworth and Martin Luther King Jr. rode off in their Ford to fight for justice, but this time with a stronger resolve.

Note: The events told in this story are based on true events. However, not all of the components of the story are true.

There was a demonstration where Martin Luther King Jr., a leading Civil Rights activist, was arrested but he was arrested because the demonstration did not have a permit. He did go to jail in Birmingham, Alabama where he drafted his famous work “Letter from Birmingham, Alabama Jail”. The letter was actually a response to white clergymen who called the demonstration “...unwise...” and “...untimely...” the letter included the famous quote “Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability but comes through continuous struggle. And so we must straighten our backs and work for our freedom. A man can’t ride you unless your back is bent.” I pretended that his cellmate in the story inspired him to write the quote.

Music in you, Music in me

Robert Li, Montecito Elementary

I heard the judge call out Diana Elfin, “Diana Elfin” she repeated. As usual it was me. It was my turn to perform. I was watching the crowd to see if my brother, Kevin, had made it. He promised to make it to the piano competition to watch me play. Everyone in the crowd was silent; no sound was made except a cough from a man. As I started playing, lights shone on the stage, the sounds from the piano echoed in the theatre. As I stopped my hand from moving, the audience gave applause. I stood and bowed to the crowd. After that the contestants stood on the stage waiting for the judges to get their results. The judge started to speak, “third place is Andy Bane, in second place was Mandy Kiang”. The judge started to announce the first place winner. “And in first place is ... Dana Galas.” I was really surprised that I hadn’t won but I was happy for those who did. “Thank you to all who competed,” the judge announced.

I packed up my things and I called a taxi to take me home. When I got to my apartment the phone was ringing. I took off my shoes and hung my coat while walking to the fridge. I picked up the phone as I got some milk. It was my mom. I said hello, but she interrupted and asked how I did at my competition. She sighed when I told her and said that I did my best. I was about to talk more but she cut me off. My mom said that my brother, Kevin, couldn't make it to the recital because ... I heard her stutter, and then ... she paused. "While your brother was driving to the theatre, he got in an accident. A drunk driver in a truck came through a red light. While Kevin was driving through it, he got hit. He was taken to the hospital and the doctors did their best to save him, but he didn't make it." My mom said sorry but I hung up the phone. Tears started coming down my face. I ran into my room and took out my music book. I started ripping every page that I wrote in. More tears started pouring out as I finished ripping the book.

The next week I visited my parents. As I unpacked my bags I opened the closet to put my clothes in. On the floor I found a piece of paper. It was the first piece of music I wrote with my brother. I picked it up and thought about playing this at my next piano recital.

This is a song I wrote with my brother, Kevin. This song is called: Music in you, Music in me. For the next three minutes the audience heard soulful music that entered their hearts and souls. The audience gave a thunderous clap and as I bowed I smiled gratefully. My new life has just begun.

Pourquoi les zèbres ont des rayures noires?

Austin Ma

Marlborough Elementary

Il y a très longtemps, dans une savane humide, près d'une forêt tropicale vivait un zèbre tout blanc qui s'appelait Pelagos. Il était un petit zèbre qui était toujours moqué par des carnivores parce qu'il était pâle et il n'avait pas de couleur. Les seuls détails qu'il avait étaient son nez, sa bouche, sa queue, ses yeux et ses oreilles. Son seul ami était un faucon gentil nommé Tota.

Un jour, les lions et les autres carnivores ont fait un grand cercle autour de Pelagos et ils racontaient des blagues à propos de lui. Pelagos était très contrarié et fâché mais il ne voulait pas commencer les chamailleries car ça lui rendait triste. Alors, il a juste resté dans le cercle, avec l'air gêné. Les carnivores se moquaient encore de Pelagos, alors il a décidé qu'il allait demander quoi faire à son ami, Tota. Tota vivait dans la forêt tropicale. Pelagos l'a cherché partout et finalement, il l'a trouvé sur un immense arbre avec beaucoup de singes qui mangeaient des bananes. Il a crié « Tota! » « Oui? » Tota a répondu. « J'ai besoin de ton aide! » a exclamé Pelagos. Pelagos a expliqué qu'il voulait avoir des couleurs pour se camoufler des méchants animaux.

Tota avait une idée de comment l'aider. Il a fait un mélange d'un type de sirop et du charbon. Il a utilisé son bec pour faire des rayures sur le corps de Pelagos. Après, Pelagos a expliqué aux autres zèbres que s'ils ont des rayures aussi, ils pouvaient se camoufler des animaux carnivores. Alors, tous les zèbres ont décidé qu'ils voulaient avoir des rayures noires pour sentir plus en sécurité. Tout le monde a pensé que c'était une excellente idée alors ils ont fait un mélange noir pour peindre leurs corps.

Et ça c'est pourquoi les zèbres ont des rayures noires.

The Legend of How the Seas and Oceans Were Created

Sarah Hsu

Lakeview Elementary

A long time ago, there was only one place on earth with water and it was covered in a thick sheet of ice.

People at that time had never known that something was beneath the thick ice because the ice wasn't clear to people. But a fierce sea dragon lived beneath the ice in the water. The sea dragon made the ice to shelter her from people trying to slay her and to test the people by seeing what they do with the ice. But the people that lived on earth at that time had no idea the ice was a test. They discovered that ice could be broken off in big chunks to be used for cleaning and for drinking.

At first, the sea dragon was fine with that because she thought the other ice was being shared or reused, but the people weren't actually reusing or sharing. They were using the ice and chucking out leftovers onto plains where they melted and were wasted. So there wasn't much of the ice left, which meant they were probably going to fail the test.

On the final day of the test, the people dug up the last of the ice. Then the sea dragon woke up to assess them. She saw the scattered ice all over the plains and angrily gave them the mark on the assessment. THEY HAD FAILED.

The punishment for failing the test occurred when the sea dragon whipped her tail. Giant waves and tsunamis charged out of the lake and went everywhere, ice pelted the mountains and hills, destroying everything they hit. Finally the ice and tsunamis stopped, but all that was left were broken mountains, hills and high places and the rest of the low lands were flooded and destroyed, becoming oceans. All the houses were destroyed by the rain of ice.

Most of the animals at that time were drowning so the sea dragon gave those animals tail fins, gills or the ability to stay underwater for a long time but still needing air.

Then the people who were hiding in small caves came out and realized their mistake and that they were being tested at the time when the ice first appeared. They rebuilt their houses. They were more careful about using and reusing resources. They taught their children and their children taught their children about reusing through the story of their mistake; for they fear their children will make the same mistake and be punished again.

The people knew the sea dragon was constantly watching, ready to punish again.

A Bleary Sunset

Marenda Bie

Taylor Park Elementary

Lizzie gawped despondently at the waning sun slowly crawling beneath the curve of the luminous horizon, and as the Sun sank, along went her heart. Her eyes burned with the urge to blink, but she didn't want her only hope to fall off the edge of the Earth, and nor did she wish to part with it momentarily, either. So, Lizzie held her breath, wishing to run, to chase the light, to embrace it and to bring it back home, but her paralyzed soul would not let her. As something malevolent dragged the sun out of sight, a lump formed in Lizzie's throat. She scrubbed at her eyes, concluding that she had now just entered the more bleak side of the world.

And so she sat, depressed and absorbed in her envisions, when a blurry shape caught her attention from the corner of her eyes. After blinking back the moist, Lizzie found herself staring at the elderly pine planted in her backyard. The tree was certainly a sight for a sore eye: blemished, scratched and worn: no one could help ignoring the poor thing, never presenting it with a second glance. But there sat Lizzie, miserable and forlorn, giving it her best and fullest attention, for perched intently on the old tree was a diminutive chickadee, so nicely camouflaged that one must have missed it if not for a careful inspection.

Hit by a sudden wave of curiosity, Lizzie perked up to acknowledge the bird. And the chickadee, concluding that Lizzie was one to trust, retreated further into the branches and led back a newborn into view: such a small thing, with snow-white fur on his breast, two pebble eyes and miniscule beak, but Lizzie could not help feeling an inkling of profound admiration. The baby chick glanced frantically at its surroundings, unsure and nervous. His head darted in every direction, as if conducting a set of calculations. Then, after receiving an irritated chirp from his mother, he kicked off his legs, wings a-blur, and began his journey through the air. Lizzie gaped dumbfounded at the baby bird as he circled the yard, both overcome by a sense of immense awe and ecstasy. Though still immobilized, Lizzie felt her heart flying alongside the bird, in a world of wonder and surprises. She had been set free.

As Lizzie set her head down to bed at night, she took some time to reminisce the sequel of events. Like the Ying Yang, light would always be accompanied by dark, and darkness would always be with the light. Because every cloud has a silver lining, all it takes is to avert your eyes from the blinding thunderstorm and just appreciate the cloud.

Grade 8

Mountain Trek

*Philip He
Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

The bright sunlight washes over my face,
And I slowly open my eyes, my body aching
With soreness and muscle fatigue.
The jagged cut from last night's fall
On the rough, rugged terrain,
Is still visible across my knee.
I'm standing three thousand feet
Above the mountain's base,
Surveying the vast,
snowcapped landscape.
I look at my own footprints that disappear
Twenty feet down, and question myself,
Did I make the wrong choice?
Is this even what I really want to do?
Have I been lying to myself all along?
The doubts start flooding into my mind,
Oh, I am so young and naïve,
Trying so hard to convince
that this was possible.
I think about giving up,
and accepting defeat.
Perhaps this was not meant for me.
A gust of wind blows by me,
I shiver and place my hands
Deep into the pockets of my jacket.
I feel something against my hand;
It's a piece of paper
with my sister's handwriting,
"Never give up, it's not the end.
As long as there's still a chance,
No matter how small,
That's more than enough
To prove to yourself that yesterday
Was simply just a stumble."

Seasons

*Lydia Chow
Burnaby North Secondary*

Winter pushes Fall away,
opening its great, unfathomable abyss of
darkness and cold, swallowing it up.
Brilliant, glittering flashes of ruby and amber,
disappears into the ominous darkness.
Cold creeps in silently, accompanied by
powdery white sheets that settle precariously
on tree branches.
Small flakes fall gently to the ground and are
illuminated by the pale glow of street lamps.
In the houses, trees sparkle with shiny
ornaments and neatly wrapped presents sit,
waiting to be opened. The sharp, delicious
scent of gingerbread fills the air, along with
laughter and excitement.
Then Winter sighs and falls asleep,
exhausted.
Spring stretches its tired arms,
finally awakening.
Flowers suddenly erupt, colourful bursts
dotting the vivid green of the grass.
The air crisp and clean,
the warm sun playing hide-and-seek
with the clouds.
The sweet aroma of cherry blossoms,
pale pink petals drifting to the ground.
Birds twirling happily in the air,
thrilled to be free and outside again.
Summer rises, blazing hot and scorching,
as Spring withers to the ground.
Summer; A promising sign of sleep-ins
and visits to the beach.
Silky sand tickling feet,
sticky hands from melted popsicles,
and coconut scented sunscreen.
The sun shows off its bright rays confidently
as the clouds run away.
A comforting light blue blanket
envelopes the city, day by day.
Now Fall is back. The cold settles back in.
The other Seasons wait patiently for their
turn once again.

Forever On

*Keone Gourlay
Burnaby North Secondary*

Each day there is given to this world
 new Life.
Each day death takes another,
Reaping the body of thought and emotion.
 But still, those of us left,
 move on, live on, dream on
Each year, each day, each second we age.
 Growing taller, stronger, wiser,
 Growing closer to the reaping
 But still, those of us left,
 move on, live on, dream on
 Each season brings with it
 its own ups and downs,
 Spring for regrowth and flood,
 Summer for warmth and drought,
 Autumn for harvesting and winds,
 Winter for greeting and snow
 But still, those of us left,
 move on, live on, dream on
Each time we see a long lost friend,
 We share our experiences,
 our gains, our losses.
And then they leave and in time forget
 But still, those of us left,
 move on, live on, dream on.
Each one that you loved mourns for you,
 But in the end,
 you'll leave for the world beyond,
 and, only then,
 Will we move Forever On.

At Home, One Night

*Dani Fookes
Burnaby Central Secondary*

I was lying on the couch,
when suddenly;
claws emerged from my fingertips;
fang-like teeth sprouted from my gums.
my legs were now thick with muscle.
and the stench,
flowed through my nostrils
encircling me.
My house became the forest floor,
plastered in pine needles.
A chair now a tree stump,
my bed now a stone.
I rose on my hind legs and roared;
a bear protecting his deep cave.
But I was sleepy,
my new fur keeping me warm;
so I lay down.
My eyes drooped closed
and I fell into a deep slumber.
 until the spring

My Home

Stefanie Petrovic, Burnaby North Secondary

I am from blue
 The bright sky
 Looking upon everyone
 Holding the clouds with tears in them
 Gleaming with bright personalities
 And bringing life to everyone's soul

I am from white
 The old buildings all around
 Snow falling and icicles forming
 Children laughing with joy
 Blizzards blowing vigorously
 White flakes sticking to mittens

I am from pink and red
 Cherry blossoms growing
 Blooming and making a beautiful spring
 Petals of flowers gliding through the sky
 Crimson roses shining bold
 Leaving memories of the days you ran
 through the bed of flowers

I am from orange and yellow
 Sunset shining in the evening
 The sunrise giving you a
 head start in the morning
 The warm sun reflecting from the water
 Eyes glimmering as they stare at the sun
 Frowns turning into smiles

I am from green
 Trees dancing to the rhythm of wind
 Ferns healthy and moist
 Welcoming glistening lakes
 Moss growing on the oak's bark
 Grass soaked from autumn rain

I am from peach
 Sand sparkling
 Waves crashing against the shoreline
 Feet sinking into thin grains
 People running across the beach
 Written words washing away in the ocean

I am from every colour
 Clothes that people wear
 Different foods being eaten
 Cities full of happy people
 Mountains hiding in the mist
 Anything that anyone can think of,
 is where I am from

La vie contente

*Pardis Roshanzamir
 Cariboo Hill Secondary*

Si vous pouvez donner l'amour
 puis le recevoir,
 Si vous pouvez partager au lieu de garder,
 Si vous pouvez adorer et ne jamais détester,
 Si vous pouvez donner
 une deuxième chance,
 Si vous pouvez croire même
 si les autres ne peuvent pas,
 Si vous pouvez faire ce que vous aimez,
 Si vous pouvez aider les autres
 jusqu'à ce qu'ils comprennent,
 Si vous pouvez le faire,
 même si vous êtes mise en doute,
 Si vous pouvez être reconnaissante
 quand vous n'avez rien,
 Si vous pouvez rire quand
 vous êtes fâchée ou triste,
 Si vous pouvez dire la vérité
 au lieu de mentir,
 C'est là où vous pouvez être
 vraiment contente.

Young Puppy Love

*Natasha Carson
 Burnaby Mountain Secondary*

The day we met, his eyes were upon me.
 For it was young love; he couldn't help it,
 And nor could I,
 but his sweet eyes brought plea,
 So "us" began; the first time my heart lit.

The first night, my mind was blown like a gun.
 He fed me hope; he was my trusty steed.
 His lips met mine so softly, my head spun,
 But I was a fool; he made my heart bleed.

One day with me, one day with the other.
 Her name was Anne; quite prettier than me.
 That was it; she became his new lover,
 As I watched from behind the lonely tree.

So that's how it ends; with a mourning dove,
 But now you know about young puppy love.

The Soccer Goalkeeper

*Jayden Maharaj
Alpha Secondary*

We're not the crowd favourites,
 we're the unsung heroes,
 we're the architects of all,
 hard fought one-zeros.
 we're the saviours,
 that nobody sees,
 yet one mistake
 has you all on your knees.
 We are at the core,
 of every good team,
 to carry the burden,
 to secure all the dreams,
 to catch nothing but flak,
 to be targets for abuse,
 any time we concede,
 you'll claim we're no use.
 But as well as good hands,
 we have very thick skin,

and that pure determination
 to let nothing in.

Are we bothered? Not us,
 we're the ever-present great,
 bouncing back every game,
 never mind how you berate.

We don't score the goals
 but put ourselves on the line,
 consistently making
 saves so sublime.

We don't score the goals,
 but we'll win you the game,
 and we don't need the crowd,
 to chant our name,
 we're the one at the back,
 who just gets the job done,
 and that, my friends,
 is why we're number one.

Alone

*Katya Suvorov
Moscrop Secondary*

ALONE
 LONE
 ONE
 ON
 O

Unbearable solitude
 All by my self
 No one but me
 Atop a mountain of despair
 Nothing to listen to but my own mooooooooooaning

Imaginary

Emma Karlsen, Burnaby North Secondary

"Yay! You're here!" I call to my best friends, Mila and Michael.

"Of course we're here," replies Mila, "We're always here when you want to play." She's right. Mila and Michael are always there when I want them. "What should we play?" she asks.

"Tag! Michael's it!" I cry and run outside. Michael's the fastest runner because he's the oldest. He's six and Mila and I are only four. Michael's kind of mean sometimes and always getting in trouble, but he's funny so Mila and I like him anyways.

"Tag you're it!" Michael calls as he tags Mila. He tags her a little too hard though, because she falls over.

"Ahhhh!" Mila screams, but she's okay. She's tough because Michael always "accidentally" pushes her. Mila says it's okay because brothers and sisters always do that. I thought you were never allowed to hit anyone, because that's what my mom said. But I don't have any brothers or sisters, so I don't know the rules.

We play tag and hide and seek for hours and hours. I love playing with Michael and Mila. They always let me choose what we play. And they always play by my rules except when we play Barbies. Michael always complains and makes his Barbie be silly.

"Emma!" Mom calls, "Dinnertime!" That means Mila and Michael have to go home. I don't want them to go yet, but I'm really hungry. We say goodbye and I go down for dinner.

"Are you excited to start kindergarten tomorrow?" Mom asks me as we eat our grilled cheese.

"Yeah, but I'm kind of scared too," I reply.

"It will be fun!" Mom says enthusiastically, "You'll make tons of new friends." I don't want to make new friends though. I'm happy with just Mila and Michael. They're the only friends I need.

"Mom, can Mila and Michael come to kindergarten with me tomorrow?" I ask. Mom does a little humph and makes a funny face at me.

"I guess you can bring them tomorrow, but that's it." Mom answers, but she's still making the weird face. "You better go to bed, Hon. You have a big day tomorrow."

"Welcome to kindergarten" says my new teacher, Ms. Herman, "We're going have a great year. Let's start by taking attendance." She calls everyone's name, except for Mila and Michael's. I ask them why, and they say it's because they're just visiting.

"Let's play centers to start the day." Ms. Herman says.

I see a girl playing at the sandbox. She looks nice so I go play with her. We say hi and play quietly for a while.

"Guess what?" I ask her. She looks at me expectantly so I say, "These are my friends, Mila and Michael."

"Where?" she asks

"Right here," I point right at them

"I don't see anything. They must be fake."

I start to get angry, "They aren't fake! They're right here! I can see them!" She looks straight at Mila and Michael for a minute and shakes her head.

I'm so mad; I start crying and yelling, because Mila and Michael are there. I know and Mom knows, but this girl doesn't believe me.

Ms. Herman sees me and takes me outside. She says I should just calm down.

"Michael, why couldn't the girl see you?" I cry.

He looks sadly at Mila and she says, "I think it's time Michael and I go"

I cry as I watch my best friends wave goodbye as they walk away.

Tick Tock

Gloria Tong, Moscrop Secondary

It was 11:51. Karen was thirsty.

She paced around her bedroom, on the second floor of her cozy home on Rosewood Lane. She stuck her head outside her chamber. Satisfied that she was not going to reach a long and painful end tonight, Karen left her room.

Despite that there was a lovely three quarters moon out tonight, the hallway was still dark thanks to a multitude of thick doors. Had the corridor been illuminated, you would have been able to see Karen, a tall, pale and fidgety 11 year-old girl, thudding down the hall. If the loud snoring of her parents couldn't wake them up, her heavy footsteps wouldn't.

The kitchen, in contrast to the hallway, had many windows, allowing the clean surfaces to shine. Karen did not turn on the light, but instead, advanced straight to the cabinet that held the cups. Her steps matched the gentle ticking of the snow-white clock by the entrance of the kitchen.

Karen opened the cupboard door, quickly finding her favorite mug, when a thwack from behind startled her. She froze, hugging the cup as if it were a lifeline. Assuring herself it was nothing, though the grip on her mug didn't quite believe it, she turned around.

It was 11:52. At first she didn't see anything, confirming what she thought. Slowly though, her eyes were drawn downwards by a very slight movement. There was a featureless white glob, about the size of Karen's hand, directly below the clock with the silver hands, shuddering. It wasn't featureless though. The thing was standing on four short legs. It was watching her with two small and shiny black eyes.

Karen's thoughts had come to a complete standstill. For a second, she ludicrously imagined they were trapped in a staring contest, neither of them budging an inch. Suddenly, her eyes darted up to the clock.

It was shivering.

The shivering stopped abruptly however, when another creature dropped out. It was more of a thwap sound this time, as the second monster had dropped on the first. It was then that the third feature of the globs was revealed.

The second creature from the clock scrambled off the first, and seemed to split open horizontally, showing off a mouth of long, needle-like teeth. It bit into the first monster, its' sharp fangs slicing through the slime like butter. With a violent shake, the first creature was ripped apart, disintegrating and disappearing into the cracks of the kitchen tiles.

Karen gasped, horrified. She scrambled up onto the counter, swinging her legs up quickly. Breathing quickly, she looked around for some sort of escape from this nightmare.

Thwack.

Thwack.

The awful noise repeated itself faster and faster, like rain.

Karen cast her eyes downward to the floor and screamed, dropping her mug on the floor. Hundreds of bright white beasts carpeted the kitchen, all looking directly at her. Sharp pieces from her cup flew at them like shrapnel.

It was 11:55. As if they were one creature, all the monsters charged at her. They easily leaped onto the counter, or scrambled up the cabinets.

Karen shrieked as they dug their long teeth into her flesh, jaws clamping down like vises. She tried shaking them off, flailing madly and falling off the counter.

Down the hall, a million miles away, her parents slept on peacefully.

The clock in the kitchen ticked quietly over to midnight. Despite the fact that there was no way for the beasts to hear the quiet sound, almost all of them paused. The few that kept moving were only finishing their meal, enough to keep all of them sustained for months. At 12:01, they turned as one and ran to the clock, scuttling up the wall as if gravity held no bound over them.

By 12:02, it was a complete rewind. The only sign that Karen had ever been there, that the creatures had ever been there, was the broken china on the floor.

Wiped Out

Michelle Au, Burnaby North Secondary

Gooo! Gooo! Owls break the silence, wailing proudly to show their sovereignty over the darkness. Cool, yet sharp, breezes are a biting slap against my face, a constant reminder of my peril. Dark, tall shadows of trees tower above me under the gleaming mysterious moonlight. The hollow endless sky suffocates me in a starry blanket. Desperation and hopelessness seep through my pores. It had been forever since I had got lost in the mountain. Haunted sounds of the wood's inhabitants echo through the darkening sky, just as a murder of crows soar phantom like through the sky.

"Not good, not good," I murmur to myself. Suddenly, "thump, thump, thump," staccato sounds of footsteps approach. Closer and closer, ominous thuds seem to scream, "Look out!" "A monster? A ghost?" I think in paranoid disbelief. Cold sweat runs down my neck. Tingling fingers creep up my spine. I close my eyes and silently wait.

Nicole and I had skied down the mountain many times before. As always, our rhythm was attuned to the whistle of the wind. Only today, something was a little different.

"Quickly! It's almost dark and we have to get down the mountain before dinner!" Nicole yelled, caution in her voice. Although she kept her tone light, I could still sense apprehension in her tone. Nicole began to rush down the mountain, and she slowly faded into a small black shadow that bobbed in pristine whiteness. I had no idea where she was heading or what path she was taking. All I knew was that we were heading deeper into unsafe territory. I realized then that we had made a foolish decision to challenge ourselves. Too late for regrets though.

We skied down a bumpy narrow path. I could hear my heart beating with every jaw jarring bump. My skis clicked and cracked like an accompanying orchestra.

"Can we slow down? I'm..." I screamed. Before I finished my sentence, my poles got caught by a low lying branch. I soared in mid air, spinning out of control. I landed on a puddle of floury poofy snow. Soaked and cold, I looked pleadingly around. Where was Nicole? "NICOLE!" There was no sign of her. "I can get out of this. There's nothing to be scared of," I unsuccessfully tried to convince myself.

Icy cold snow was stuck on every inch of my body like I was a frozen popsicle. My skis were buried deep in the pile of snow. Furiously, I began digging with my bare hands. "Ouch!" I yelped. The pointy tip of the pole was a sharp needle jabbing through layers of my skin but I pressed on.

Sunset approached, bringing with it a sprinkle of orange and yellow against blackness. The sun hid behind the mesmerizing streaks of thin sparse clouds. Night was on the way. Unfortunately, I was too frightened to appreciate its magical beauty. I only cared about the present.

"Thump, thump." Again, the footsteps. My body tenses and my heart races. Goosebumps envelope me. I grit my teeth and clench my fists into knots, listening for clues about where I am and what to do. I stand still. The gurgling of rushing waterfalls. The rustle of dry crumbled twigs. Vibrations that grow stronger and stronger along the ground. Something or someone approaches from behind. I freeze, too terrified to move or even think.

"Michelle!" A hoarse yet high pitched shriek peals through my fragile ears.

"Ahhhhh!" I spin around. "Who are you?" I question. A familiar scent flows into my nose. A smell of home. A smell of safety. A smell of dinner. But mostly, a smell of love.

The fear and pressure inside me vanishes. "Where were you? Do you have any idea how scared I was?" I clamor in reproach. Blissful tears roll down my cheeks and on the ground that melted the snow. I smile. Home.

Life within a book

Sabrina Ren, Moscrop Secondary

I know the cover would either be a highlighter pink or a solemn grey. Filled with absolutely countless pages, the writing would be messy, unorganized, and confusing. There'd be a bookmark, wondering if its owner would ever return. And the awkward yet reassuring title would scream – "LIFE STORY."

Sometime, somewhere, I was imagining that book. It's like a solitary, tiny universe that held all my thoughts. I opened it without hesitation, but my hands trembled. It felt overwhelming somehow; the kind of thrill that wraps around you like a bear hug and you couldn't breathe.

On the first page, there's going to be the small photograph of me as a baby. Not knowing whether the world is cruel or astonishing. Simple, but fascinating. The girl was red; I could almost hear her crying, shrieking, and hurting. She didn't know that her future was going to be radiant, waiting for her to be a part of it. With a strange feeling, I turned the page.

The second, the third, and the fourth page would hold my first artworks. The colours splashed across the pages, expressing ecstasy, delight, and glee. I blushed. Joy circled me like wind. I beamed at the endless amount of pictures that I drew, of children, animals, plants, and nature. I laughed when I saw the portrait that I made of myself when I was four, the oversized eyes, the sophisticated high heels, the crooked smile... I simply knew art was created to make people smile, and that includes the artists themselves.

I couldn't help grinning when I saw the entries of first times. The first time was always the roughest but the supreme. Like the first time I went tobogganing on a snowy day, the first time I went on a rollercoaster and betting that I could keep myself from screaming, the first time I went to the beach with my friends... So many I can't even list. I remembered the thrill, the sound of my racing heartbeat, and the sensation I felt when I reached my goal.

On the following pages, there'd be a copy of one of my math homework, and my shambolic scribbles of wrong answers. I know there'd definitely be a myriad of photos that I took of my friends and the ones that they took of me. We know how to live with enthusiasm, and that's the key to a jovial life.

The book is everlasting. I couldn't possibly predict what will happen next, but I look forward to it. I can't live without drama, sometimes it felt like weeks, months, even years. But I'd want to appreciate every single moment. Life with books is called an ideal life, life within a book is called memories.

Simple Things

Solana Cheng, Burnaby North Secondary

I looked up at the never-ending bars of twisting metal towering above me. Colours of bright blue, red and yellow flashed in the afternoon sun. I've seen so many kids climb it before, making it seem like another simple thing, climbing. I felt so small compared to the jungle gym, soaring high above me. The metal bars of vivid primary colours beckoned me on, climb on and start a new adventure. By now, every student was gone; probably stuffing their faces in various cookies. I cast a glance at my mum, smiling at me; silently encouraging me to climb then continued reading her book.

I put my hand on the bar closest to me, feeling the cool metal under the brilliant paint, the bar felt reassuring and strong. I put my feet on another bar, swinging side to side,

experimenting if the reassurance was a cruel tale. Slowly, cautiously, I placed both my feet on the bar, my left hand reaching for another.

Gradually, I got the momentum; left foot, right foot, right hand, left hand. As I climbed the seemingly never-ending bars, a new feeling bubbled inside me; as if nothing could ever stop me from reaching the top. I climbed higher and faster than ever before, which was pretty high since I have never even thought about going up before. Finally at around halfway to the top, I looked down and nearly letting go of the bar I was clutching to. I felt like I was twenty feet in the air, dangling from the hollow metal I was now grasping onto with clammy hands. I forced my head up and focused my eyes and mind on the bars above me. Little by little, I began to regain my speed and my fear of heights slowly began crawling to the back of my mind again.

I stopped for a break about three quarters up the jungle gym. I sat on a bar, facing the inside of the mass of coloured metal. A thought came to my mind. "What if I can't get down?" I whispered, my own words echoing in my ears. Quickly, my fear recovered from cradling in a forgotten corner of my mind and crept into the spotlight, basking in the glory of my terror.

I didn't like getting laughed at, and that was exactly what my fear did. It cackled in my mind, taunting me that I wouldn't be able to reach the top. Telling me I was going to result in crying for my mum to help me down. Still angry, I stood up on my bar and shoved my fear aside, determined to reach the top.

Blue, yellow, red. The colours continuously flickered as I climbed to the top where all the bars met, creating a welcoming seat. Three bars left. My body shook with anticipation. Two bars left. My feet scrambled up two bars, aching to reach the top. I looked up; I could see the last bar. I concentrated on it, making sure I would not fall now. I was at the top.

Cautiously, I eased myself onto the seat made of metal where three colours of blue, red and yellow clashed together. The sky was so close; I could see every detail of the cloud drifting above me. Treetops of newly planted elm trees I thought to be impossible to reach, gently brushed against my sneaker. Yet hiding in my victory, my fear sat still in my mind, not accepting its defeat. Without a second thought, I pushed my fear of heights off, letting it tumble to the ground and melt into the pebbles below. Unnoticed, an odd feeling occurred in my hands and before I realized, I was falling to the ground.

I hit the grey pebbles with a shattering thud. My mum rushed over and dabbed my chin with a napkin, creating spots of blood on the soft white fabric. Hurriedly, my mum walked out of view, coming back with a cup in her hand. My fogged mind began to wonder what it was before she wrapped my hands around it. Coldness soaked through my pain, and gingerly I started to drink the slurpie hiding under the lid of the cup. And there I sat, draining the cup and marveling at how things so simple could brighten a day.

Chasing the Waves

Justine Hansen, Burnaby North Secondary

The water rushed vividly to the shore, then backed away swiftly. It made the famous water sounds, reminding me of crashing cymbals in a band. We were in California, my family and I, watching the waves out of the fogged up and dirty Jeep window. The sun was setting, the sky a pinkish orangish colour, as if an angel-cat had vomited salmon all over the heavens.

Dad stopped the Jeep, parking it on the beach. Here in California, people always drove around the beach, making soft tire tracks in the sand. My younger brother jumped out of the car instantly, and ran towards the water. Being five, I laughed to myself, I guess he couldn't help it. I ran out too, a smile almost jumping off my face. I followed my younger brother to the shore and slipped off my shoes. The sand so soft around my toes, warm and comfortable.

My little brother started to chase the waves. He would run in, as the waves retreated, and run away, and the waves raced back. Almost like a tug-of-war game. I joined my younger brother, rolling my eyes at the juvenile and ludicrous thought of chasing the waves, but I continued anyway, the wind encircling my face.

I suddenly wondered, what it would be like to be taken away with the waves. What it would be like, being rushed away from your world, swept off your feet by the dangerous waters. I imagined my little brother being taken away, and almost, *almost* called out to him to be careful. His face shone, smiling, lighting the world. He was having so much fun, and was so cheerful, being able to chase the waves, back and forth, no one telling him “No.” So how could I? How could I tell my younger brother to stop having fun, to stop racing the water? So I kept my mouth shut, watched him laugh out loud and extend his arms pretending to be flying.

I chased with my little brother, laughing, smiling. I closed my eyes and enjoyed the relaxing moment. What I didn’t notice was the gigantic wave approaching. In my mind, it happened slowly, every detail a flashing pixel. It must have happened quickly though. Water surrounded my feet. Water? That wasn’t right. I wasn’t supposed to get wet. Suddenly, blue covered my vision, then black. I don’t remember getting wet, but I couldn’t breathe. The water rushed vividly, pulling me into the sea. My clothes weighed me down, grabbing at me. Kicking ferociously, I finally pushed myself forward and up, as I reached the air. I took the biggest breath, my lungs exploding with pain. The water fought with me, trying to pull me under. But I was stronger. I kicked and swam, getting closer to shore, pushing my way through the water.

My hand touched something soft. Something small, but moving fiercely. A hand. My younger brother’s hand. Being so little, the wave had completely swallowed him under its force. He was completely under the water, being taken away. I jumped into the water and grabbed his hand, pulling him forth. The waves crashed in my ears as I sunk underwater, completely breathless. I could feel myself being pulled in by my little brother, and I tried to grab him and keep him with me. But the waves took him. The water’s arms surrounded my younger brother, his smiling, laughing, innocent, fragile face disappearing forever.

I let go.

My face purple, eyes swollen, chest panting. Without the weight of my younger brother, I had been thrown above the waters surface. I watched him disappear under the waves and be taken away by the water. I let out a sob. Tears came running out of my eyes, like salty waterfalls, forming a puddle in my mouth. The taste was salty and bitter, usually something that didn’t bother me, but now I hated it. I couldn’t see anything, my vision blurred by my tears. I cried and cried. The water was still up to my shins, now calm and silent. I was still sobbing, but all my tears had been used up. My sob turned into a disgusting choking cough, carbon dioxide leaving my body faster than I could take oxygen in. My eyelashes stuck to my face, as I thought about what had just happened. My younger brother was dead. As if he had never existed, he was gone forever. Forever is a long time. Forever is past, present, and future. I make the wheezy cough-like horrible sound again. Dead, I say to myself. I say it again. Dead. Who is Death, anyway, I think angrily. Death is a horrible, nasty, evil thing that takes away the one you love in the most horrible way.

No. Death is a wonderful thing, I realize. Death stops you from suffering, takes you away, nice and easy. Death doesn’t control how you die; he controls *when* you die. I laugh to myself, not really knowing why. Dried tears still stuck to my face, my eyes still swollen. I wonder where my parents went. I shrug the thought off. Must’ve taken a walk, I decide. I laugh again, smiling on the inside as I realize the truth: my younger brother was never chasing the waves. The waves were chasing him, and I guess they finally caught him.

Le Petit Capuchon Bleu

Owen Yin, Burnaby North Secondary

Avez-vous jamais entendu des Thinsations? Si non, ils sont des petites collations qui ont seulement 100 calories par portion. Si vous n'avez jamais entendu du petit capuchon bleu il est le fils du petit chaperon rouge (qui a maintenant 25 ans). Comment sont-ils reliés? Lisez...

Le petit capuchon bleu habite avec sa mère en Manhattan. Un jour, il était en train de jouer avec son Wii quand sa mère est entrée avec un panier rempli avec des biscuits.

« Peux-tu les apporté à grand-mère? » demande-t-elle.

« Mais je suis dans le milieu de ce jeux! » il proteste. « Et les biscuits? Ce sont si démodé! »

« Pas question! » crie sa mère, «Je vais remplacer les biscuits avec des Thinsations, mais c'est tout! Comprendo? »

« Bon, d'accord, » soupire le petit capuchon bleu, «Je prends le métro.» Il se lève et il part.

« Fais attention! Ne se perde pas! Et surtout, NE PARLE PAS AU LOUP! » Mais il est déjà parti.

En marchant, le petit capuchon bleu s'est mis à jouer Angry Birds sur son iPhone. Il était si concentré qu'il n'a même pas vu le loup qui marche vers lui. Le loup a vu le panier.

« Miam, les biscuits! Ça fait longtemps que j'ai eu la chance de manger les biscuits! » Pense-il. Il sourit au garçon. « Capuchon! Ca fait longtemps que je t'ai vu! »

« Qui es-tu? »

« Tu ne me connasse pas? Je suis de ta famille, moi! »

« Je suis un personne. Toi, tu es un loup. »

« Euh, bien, oui...C'est vrai... Mais moi et ton arrière-grand-mère, nous nous se connaît depuis longtemps! »

« Vraiment. »

« Oui, c'est vrai! Donc, tu as l'air fatigué. Veux-tu que je prends ce panier pour toi? Je sais où elle habite aussi! »

Le petit capuchon bleu a pensé. Finalement, il a dit,

« Oui, pourquoi pas? J'aurais plus de temps de jouer Angry Birds. » Il lance le panier au loup, se tourne, et commence à marcher vers sa maison.

« Yes! » crie le loup. « Des biscuits! Oh, loup, comme tu es intelligent! » Il ouvre le panier.

Le petit capuchon bleu était en traîne d'ouvrir la porte quand il a entendu une voix agacée.

« Non!! Je déteste les Thinsations! »

Grades 9-10

The Curling Rock

Breyden Chong, Burnaby North Secondary

Born in Scotland.
 Forty pounds of glistening granite.
 Ready to slide against the pebbled ice,
 radiating with determination.

My handle is held with a strong grip
 as I see my destination held by the broom.
 A takeout through a small gap,
 just enough space for me to get through.

The final shot determining win or lose.
 Adrenaline pumping.
 Nervousness and courage
 striking like black and white.

I'm fired out of the hack
 undergoing the final release.
 The skip makes the call,
 "Hurry! Hurry!"

Brooms immediately set down
 with the rhythm of brush strokes, back and forth.

The crowd stand on their feet
 with increasing pace and anticipation.

Only meters away,
 tension reaching unthinkable heights.
 This is it...
 Any moment now.

I barely get by.
 BANG!
 I make direct contact
 with an unthinkable shot,
 executed perfectly.
 I rest peacefully in the rings.

Crowds burst with a thunderous cheer
 as the curlers hug in their glory.
 Olympic gold medals.
 The team ecstatic and jubilant.

I made the difference
 contributing to well-deserved athletes.
 The feeling of success,
 with the taste of victory.

On Edge

Rita Wang, Moscrop Secondary

enter the girl who pushes
 open the door with such
 timidity it's a wonder
 how she gets up in the morning
 puts on shoes steps into the
 world and exists

her eyes they dance
 an agitated dance
 not daring to stay one place
 too long because who knows how long
 they'll be allowed to remain?

she searches without finding
 but who doesn't
 in this world of questions without
 answers and answers with no
 questions to ask and the
 askers have exited the building searching
 for
 something greater because
 their minds they dance
 an agitated dance
 as well and maybe the
 world it dances a collective
 waltz on tiptoes
 heels not daring to strike
 ground

the girl her feet carry her closer and
 up comes a finger on an
 invisible trigger
 and she shoots
 what I assume is an accusing look
 for my mind my eyes my being
 they all dance on the edge
 of the page
 out of step and out of line and
 I have no need for
 eyes any longer in this
 world of agitated dancers

Passing Thoughts

*Priscilla Choi,
Burnaby North Secondary*

The girl in the back stands up,
Takes a deep breath.
"To love, or not to love.
A valid question."

"Better to never know what you're missing,
Or have loved and lost?
Is love only a passing infatuation?"
Her gaze lingers over over-loved girls,
Second row,
Flirting, examining their nails.
Perfect.

"Does love come instantly,
Or slowly, with time?"
The quiet girls up front,
Sneaking peeks at their
Oblivious, silent counterparts.

"Is love a game?
Used in vain?
Controllable?"
Eyes flitter over jocks,
Players,
Ice queens.

"Does love mean the world to you?
Do you chase love?
Do you realize you have it only when it's
gone?"
The girl next door taps her best friend
On his shoulder,
Sharing a secret to make him smile.

"Overrated? Underrated?"
The cynics and the romantics
Eye each other from
Across the room.

"Now who do you think of
When I say love?"
Blushes, giggles, snickers
Rebound against each other's smiles.

"You're wrong."
Silence.

"The one you love should be
Yourself.

The only person's opinion that matters
should be

Yours.

How do you love others,
How do others love you,
If you don't even love yourself?"

Confused looks are traded.
Wise, albeit misguided, nods
Are thrown in competitors faces.
Pencils scribble down notes.

She sighs.

Sits down.

Stares at the window in vain,
Hoping to see her reflection.
Then resignedly checks off
Yet another item off her bucket list.

Wishes

*Kaya Kurz
Alpha Secondary*

I feel as though I'm continually watched.
Not in a paranoid way, simply –
judged
evaluated
scored

Disassembled piece by piece
until all that remains are my flaws.

Flaws that coagulate into what
I think people see when they see me.

Oh, the curses of an overactive imagination
coupled with teenage insecurity.

Is it wrong to think this way?
Unusual?

Bad?

Or is it just the normal insanity
that every person encounters

No matter what the answer,

I wish I could stop thinking this way.

I wish I could stop.

I wish.

These Woods

Tamara Fleming, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

These woods are bare and as
 The icy February winds blow through
 Those skeleton trees,
 they shake like rattling bones.
 These woods are empty
 No one dare set a foot outside
 On such a cold and dreary day
 The snow is deep, and nothing lives here
 For these woods are bare
 and always will be
 So long since a bird had sung a sweet tune
 Or a sly fox slunk through these trees
 These woods remain bare, void of life
 Burned to a frail skeletal in a war
 That was not their own

I Just Know

Nancy Yang, Burnaby North Secondary

When I walk under the
 bare cherry blossom tree,
 Memories of the past refresh in my mind,
 I sit there in the bench alone under the tree,
 I watch the birds fly by and the ships sail past,
 All bare, like July without sun,
 It's just different without you,
 When you climbed onto the plane
 we said our goodbyes,
 I was glum and flavourless
 like meat without salt,
 Words cannot explain
 my love for you grandmother,
 You were the one who peeled my bananas,
 Told me that there wasn't a mountain
 that couldn't be climbed,
 And the one who wiped my tears
 when I cried,
 Now I watch the birds fly by
 and the ships sail past,
 But,
 But,
 But,
 Nothing is the same without you,
 Was five years that short?
 You were my teacher

My best friend,
 My person of wisdom
 And my advice giver,
 Now our lives have drifted apart,
 But memories of the past will never part,
 Now I sit all alone on the bench awaiting for
 that special someone,
 I know you're beside me grandmother,
 I just know.

Battle of Thermopylae

Corey Ng, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

The white like the creamy milk,
 Then the black like the dark night
 Death stands beside me as I remember
 I look down to see it, the red passage
 No longer did men fill it, only corpses
 Leaving the vile stench of rotting skin
 And a gruesome image
 My friends, who once laughed with me
 Now only leave the whistling wind and
 The running red river
 We were three hundred strong
 But we faced a force with
 A thousand times our strength
 Blades had clashed, bodies slashed,
 Blood had spilled, men were killed
 Cries were heard, but however absurd
 We held our own against the
 Giant that stormed our lands
 So what killed us? Oh, yes
 Him. The Traitor
 The lifeless faces of my friends
 He did that
 The splash of their blood
 flowing with no end
 He did that
 The stench of their rotting skin
 He did that
 But the one who turned him against his kin
 War did that
 Could I have been his friend
 If war had not grasped his will and bend?

Woodchuck

Robin Lai,
Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Today was the day.

The day he would prove them all wrong.

They had always questioned his abilities,
mocked his work.

T'was not a single day of his life
where a neighbourly
"Have a good day at work, Chuck"
wasn't followed by
a smirk
a scoff
a wink
of playful skepticism
mockery.

At dinner parties,
just
as he settled into a comfortable
conversation
"So, what do you do for a living?"
would raise its simper head.
Unease.
As he explained
an amused expression
dusted with patronizing flakes
would slither onto his listener's face
a weak dam holding back a wave of laughs.

The doubt they had been serving to him
day after day after day,
he was sick of it.

His gut churned
with unsettlement
simmering frustration
and when
"Chuck, you're a *groundhog*,
stop playing around with trees.
You should get a real job."
came from his very own mother,
eruption.

Agitation
chagrin
dash of vengeance
finally boiled down to a solid cake of
I'LL SHOW YOU.

He immediately called up his
friends
neighbours
family members
to his home
where he showed them
exactly
what he did for work.

He rolled a log out in front of them
raised eyebrows spread like the Plague
and Chuck took that
as a cue to begin his
chucking.

Chuckchuckchuckchuck
chuckchuckchuckchuck
chuckchuckchuckchuck
chuckchuckchuckchuck
dubious eyebrows were soon replaced with
bewildered eyes
dropped jaws and
clear views of everyone's uvula.

And so,
no longer
would this dubiety plague him.

He had finally answered the timeless
question:

"How much wood can a wood chuck chuck
if a wood chuck could chuck wood?"

Conscienceless

Shaireen Cassamali
Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Today he greeted me with a simple hello
And he asked,
Where would you like to go?
Last night,
He told me to dream of a world so sweet.
But when the sun broke out,
I thought of nothing but grief
While my brain commands to me one thing,
He will whisper the opposite
So I tell him, leave me be.
Please,
Stop confusing me!
But he acts,
As an unresponsive rock.
No yelling,
No talk.
While my brain commands to me one thing
He will whisper the opposite
A mountainous voice,
That,
Gives me no choice.
Deep inside of me:
Regret, does he give you
But only after you have wronged
Because at the moment, I feel anew
While my brain commands to me one thing
He will whisper, just the opposite
Today he is at ease.
I changed my ways,
Feeling good, and enjoying the breeze.
“*Sorry,*”
I said.
To whom I have wronged.
Relieved, since there’s nothing to dread
This time, my heart beats to me one thing
And he whispers, nothing but the same.
The melody of my breathing
Is as kind as can be.
Nobody knows
The kind of mess we’d be in
If we were all
Conscienceless beings.

Memories

Daphne Patterson
Burnaby Mountain Secondary

I was her constant companion.

She’d hold me
in her tiny palm
and lovingly run soft,
uncallused fingers
over my bumps
and ridges.
“Rocky,”
She’d coo
(this was before her father
dragged her through
the Sylvester Stallone saga).
Everyone
thought it was so *cute*
that this sweet little girl,
with the two curly pigtails,
had a pet rock.
A small piece of aggregate
who she *in-sis-ted*
looked like a flower.
“He does too!”
she’d declare stoutly,
eyes blazing with fierce loyalty,
to anyone,
anyone,
who dared suggest otherwise.
That was then.
This is now.
Lying forgotten
in the farthest corner of the playground.
Waiting for another little friend
to take me home.

Des cartes

Annice Chang, Moscrop Secondary

Pendant les années,
je détestais crayonner des cartes
Je n'aimais pas colorier
les pays, les lacs, les rivières
Et puis aujourd'hui
il y a plus entre nous qu'un écart
Le sens de communauté, de repos c'était hier

Je deviens de plus en plus vieux,
de plus en plus
Au lieu de voir les terres oranges
et des frontières noires
La seule image qui forme dans ma tête
est un blocus
Qui empêche des aventures
et encourage le brouillard

Imaginez une carte
avec seulement deux teints
Un pour les terres
Un pour les eaux
Le monde sans frontières, le monde enfantin

Les cartes qu'on a maintenant
Il y en a trop de nuances
C'est presque discriminant
La raison pour laquelle
je ne les dessinais pas avec obéissance.

Brainwashed

Kaya Kurz, Alpha Secondary

She's sitting in the bathroom
Trying to ignore the stink
of what it takes to be beautiful.

*"Just a few more pounds
until I'm pretty"*

With a hairbrush and some makeup
she'd be acceptable.
With an airbrush and some surgery
she'd be 'perfect'.

Standards are set
in magazines
on television
online

And standards are never met.
(Unless you sell your soul, that is.)

Which only serves to prove how
unreasonable they are.

But still, she lusts after false perfection.

Who needs to eat, anyways?

Why eat when you could be skinny?

Nothing matters to her –
Except for the numbers
that keep dropping farther into double digits
Until she melts away.

The Ocean

Jiyoung Lee, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

The magnificent swirls of the deep cerulean
waves; mesmerizing when stared into,
enough to capture and seize
the inner core of the mind

The icy, bitter breeze
on the spread arms and hands;
the serene winds ever so gentle,
yet so bitter and cold,
that the heart and soul may shiver.

The rumbling and roaring crashes,
as the waves attack the rocky cliffs;
listening to the thundering from his trident as
the rage of Poseidon spreads like an inferno.

The tart, saline scent,
from the endless body of deep blue;
the aroma so calming,
the whole body shudders,
as if a warm breathy whisper kisses the ears

The peacefulness on the tip of the tongue,
with the flavours of the majestic ocean
whirling in the mouth

The open space of the body of water,
so scarce, so precious,
yet so chilling and mystical

Having a silent moment with one another,
with silent tears down the face,
the person reaches and falls
towards the dark, cajoling hands,
and into the water

Assez Sourd Pour Entendre

Sarah Savic Kallesoe
Byrne Creek Secondary

La langue plus difficile à comprendre,
n'est pas celle que nous parlons, pourtant qui se
c a c h e Je suis bien... e n t r e Vraiment... l e s Ne t'en fais pas. p a r o l e s.
Nos oreilles sont sourdes,
et écoutent les simples phrases superficielles.
Nous oublions de regarder au-delà des coquilles fragiles de mots,
et aux significations qui les remplissent.
Des mots de complicité qui remuent l'âme,
et apaisent nos oreilles calleuses.
On crie et on supplie pour quelqu'un de *vraiment* écouter,
mais pour l'un et l'autre,
des mots insondables posent bruyamment sur nos tympanes comme des jouets.
Quelques fois, nous parlons, pourtant nous ne sommes pas entendus.

Mais pouvons-nous être entendus sans parler?

Dreamer

Eisha Lehal
Moscrop Secondary

$Y=4x+3$
The first prime minister of Canada was John A Macdonald
Sponges were the first animals on earth
That's my life.
That is my head.
My head is my property and mine alone.
Yet we allow all of heads to be filled to the top with knowledge that pertains nothing as to what
we really want it to.
That's why I dream at night.
When my eyelids fall shut like a lightly closed door.
When the covers just brush the edge of my cheek bone.
I dream.
Sometimes that I'm a world class chef.
The aromas fill my nose even in a state of sleep.
Other times that I live on a farm.
The vision of a plump pink pig with a twisted tail
spreads itself along the backs of my closed eyelids.
It doesn't matter what you think about.
Because when you're sitting in class at 2:00
And the day makes you feel like you're pulling a wagon full of bricks.
At least you can look forward to drowning your head in the fluffiness of a pillow.
And you can dream.

For Never Alone

Grace Lu

Burnaby North Secondary

Amid the blackness, a paintbrush dipped in the matching shade of anonymity. The attic was bare save the windowsill illuminated by cold white moonlight. A canvas was set up, colours blending with that of the night. As the clock indicates the minutes of the night slipping by, the only warmth was the flickering candlelight, reduced to a stub of ashes as midnight struck. The bearer of the paintbrush, she was a part of the night, the eternal brushstrokes of semi-existence. There she sat, back to the window, moon illuminating the artwork before her. The only acquaintance she ever made was with the shadows of the night, but even then the two parties kept to themselves. The canvas started as a sheet of purity, but as the night progressed it was invaded by ink images, fated to the emotionless strokes of the absent mind.

The girl once had a past; being alive was part of that. She once gave every dimension of her heart to a man that couldn't do the same. Her soul began dying the night she witnessed a fairy tale, only she wasn't the princess to the prince of her heart. That night, the aesthetics that had plastered the walls of the attic, went up in a fury of sparks. Ever since, the ever present smile had diminished to an unwavering line, there was not a twinkle left in those once sentimental eyes. The every struggling of her soul to revive had been wrung dry.

The everlasting painting of the night went on, strokes that possessed no meaning for the creator. One night, there was a knock at the door, disturbing for the first time the familiar silence. An eternity passed since another mortal had called upon this house, but this didn't prevent her from returning to her disturbed mindless state. The door was opened with the strain of rusty bolts, heavy footsteps were approaching, and within moments she found her face to face with the boy next door. They had played in the garden before, now embedded in painful memories. What was this practical stranger doing, standing in the doorway that had long been lost in time?

He walked across the groaning floorboards, cautiously, as if fearful of triggering a bomb. Running delicate fingers over the canvas, he murmured, "So this was the invisible image, hidden in the moonlight as from my bedroom window." He was facing her now, his eyes emanating intense heat. "Why do you have to live in past memories? Clinging to your past, no matter how many times you try and restart your fate remains the same. Let's leave this place, let's paint a new picture of colour and brightness. I hate to see you this way. Shadows may be part of your past but they have no right to cloud your future."

The girl nodded. She doesn't know when she had last cried, but that night the burning tears came. Finally she realized, after all this time, she had never been alone.

Instinct

Kyara Hunter

Burnaby Mountain Secondary

The inconsistent shadow of light, diffused by trees and a carpet of brush confused the moths and night creatures who were not accustomed to such disturbances. Eddying in the forest's corners, night swept up to the fire's trembling embers, glinting like horse shoe nails hammered into the stars. Long ago the horses had fled into the valley, its grass laid rich and moist, now tossed by the granite hooves.

In their moving companionship, the great beasts rested and grazed, sliding ever so slightly westward following the sun's distant glow as it descended, littering the valley like wind tossed hay. Although the woods where the girl sat were already doused in nocturnal, the valley held the rim of the sun, only a dew drop hanging from a branch. Feeling small and concealed, the girl waited for the dark mare's head to drop, for her body to shift, for any sign of welcome. From across the grass the sorrel colt awaited the same. His silence, his careful pacing motions followed by his quick, pricked ears and bright eyes announced his worry at exclusion.

Enough time elapsed for a passing bat's wings to stir a breeze, but still the mare did not let up her barrier. The girl saw that with every move she made the colt followed slower and quieter, treading with a whisper. Then the mare would sidestep, one even movement and the red colt continued his impression, stumbling as his long legs crossed. Growing turbulent, the girl felt a change run through the herd. The mare turned, her long back to the colt, eyes releasing him, all interest appeared lost in the foal's relief held short in his clipped strides as he rejoined the herd. At once all was forgiven, learnt and recognized, no rancour held. This wordless, speechless communication consisted of a great repertoire of feeling and movements, all of which the girl seemed still deaf too.

"But I listen." She thought. "They are only nature. Horses hold no secrets from one with the patience to listen." With this she rose from the earth, warmed by the now dormant fire, and by starlight made trusting steps down the hill. With only instinct to guide her, she reached the valley, hesitating, her eyes reaching well beyond the horses as not to worry them. Farther out, the mare was repeating her process with another delinquent foal. As the light filly asked for acceptance, the mare considered, turned half away, half towards her and waited for one gesture which she could then forgive.

Even in the dark, the girl saw it. The filly stretched out her neck, clicking together her teeth, submissive as the mare was strong. With that movement the filly was again part of the herd. As the girl watched the horses, seemingly still unnoticed, the dark mare separated from the herd and stood solidly, regarding the girl with kind eyes. As she turned, the girl moved forward with the horse.

Fallen Angel

Sarah Savic Kallesoe
Byrne Creek Secondary

In the end, it wasn't because the angel decided to fall, it was the natural force of life and death. When a star is born, it doesn't live forever; It eventually fades away or falls down to Earth. That is what happens. We live and we die. That is what happened to the angel;

She

*f
e
/
/*

In a lonesome town, there's a nine-year-old named Emily. Emily isn't tall for her age, nor is she short. She isn't intellectual, nor is she imbecilic. She isn't extroverted, nor is she reserved. Emily is average. She has never experienced anything extraordinary.

Until the day she steps out into the blizzard.

The harsh wind blows ice needles against Emily. She can't see anything except vague shadows in the midst of white. She squints, attempting to peer past the blur, but trips over something large and heavy. Emily picks herself up from the wet snow, already seeping into her itchy woollen mittens, and looks down.

It's a girl! Why would anyone want to sleep in the snow in a dress!

The stranger's mouth and nose appear violaceous, her pale skin is patterned with snowflakes.

What on earth happened?

She's sprawled in the snow like falling out of bed while having a nightmare. She lies on her side with her body slightly tucked in and an arm extended in front of her, as if trying to grab hold of something.

Emily removes a mitten hesitantly, leans in, and touches the child's bare cheek. She immediately withdraws her thin fingertips from the icy chill.

Undoubtedly, Death has taken this girl under his arm.

Before turning away, Emily looks at the frozen stranger, feeling sorry she had to die so young and alone. She kneels, disregarding her pants drinking in the frigid snow, and arranges her arms across her chest. Emily's vision is obscured by brimming tears, and doesn't see that the girl possesses white wings that are ragged and beaten by the unforgiving winter. She shuts her eyes. Tears spill over and trickle down her cheeks. Emily whispers a prayer. She can almost hear the solemn ring of the funeral knell.

Emily wipes her eyes with her sleeve. She notices the wings. Emily strokes the ruffled white feathers.

She was an angel...

and I could have saved her.

Tears come back to her eyes, so she buries her face in the cadaver's icy shoulder, whispering sincere apologies. Lifting her head, Emily notices that her wings are flecked with red and gently rolls her over to see. The snow beneath is stained vermillion. Her wings are torn from her back, and large red gashes marked where they used to be. Emily is confused.

Everyone says that when you die, you become an angel and live in a place where there isn't death. Alas, here's one who fell from the heavens.

Perhaps angels are not as heavenly as people assume. Everything must come to an end. Perhaps angels aren't so invulnerable.

Maybe, they're just like us.

Reminiscence

*Tamiko Derasp
Cariboo Hill Secondary*

There she sat. The sun was starting to rise, the dawn light streaming through the windows, but she saw only dark clouds. There was no comfort left in her world. No family, no friends, nothing. She was alone. She turned her head to survey the contents of her house. The old leather sofa, her tall glass table in the center of it all, a single chair tucked neatly under it. She felt soft strands of her wispy, greying hair, brush against her cheek, falling from her usually tidy bun.

The sun was slowly starting to light up the room as it rose, higher and higher, into the now pale yellow sky. It reminded her of the dandelions that she loved throughout her childhood, and detested while an adult, battling constantly to keep them out of her lovingly tended garden, now a complete mess. The dandelions now ruled what used to belong to roses, lilies and tulips.

Oh! What she would have given to be a child again. She turned back to watch the world pass by, grey eyes flashing like fish in a stream as they caught the tender morning light, and she thought about her childhood years, innocent, carefree, and sweet.

She was old, that much she knew, and was reminded every time she looked in a mirror, and saw the wrinkles, embedded upon her skin, times signature, reminding her every day of how close she was to her end. As she gazed at her pale, gaunt face, once rosy and plump, she remembered what it felt like to be young. That feeling, now long past, of being able to conquer the world, and accomplish anything you tried. The feeling of being able to fly.

She remembered sitting on the boardwalk at the innocent age of five, the concrete beneath her warmed by the sun as she rested, watching the blue sky, that beautiful pale eggshell blue sky you only see in the middle of summer, or as you watch the sun set. She was next to the ocean, the waves crashing down, creating the most beautiful symphony she had ever heard, the gulls dancing with the strong wind that blew through her long auburn hair, lifting it away from her back, and tickling her as it whispered secrets meant for her ears alone. She had cuts on both knees, her hands scratched from falling so much, but what did it matter, with the sun warming her back and her parents watching from a bench nearby. She felt safe, and warm and happy.

She remembered looking beside her and noticing a dandelion in a crack beside her, its orange and yellow petals brushed her cheek as she leaned down for a closer look. She remembered it being as beautiful as any garden could ever be to an adult, and as she peered out at her now overrun garden, she felt a sense of security.

She no longer had anyone to look after her; all she had left was that home, and her garden of dandelions. Right then she made up her mind, and went outside, letting her long grey hair out of its tight bun, letting the wind pick it up and throw it into the air, as she lay down on the long grass, looking at the blue sky, that beautiful pale eggshell blue sky you only see in the middle of summer, or as you watch the sun set, and there she was. Once again next to the ocean, listening to the waves crash onto the beach, peaceful and serene.

The Neglected

Si Jia Wen

Moscrop Secondary

The tick of the clock hummed in the air. Papers rustled while students did work. Distant beeps of text messages rang quietly in the brightly lit classroom. I looked nervously at Camille beside me, who was busy texting her friends under her desk.

I shouldn't tell her. She might not like me. What if she abandons me? Then I'll lose my best friend, and I can't afford that. But she'll find out anyway... What should I do? Maybe –

I cut out my thoughts. My eyes turned towards Camille again. I took a deep breath.

"Camille?" I tapped her on the shoulder. "I – I have to tell you something.

"Sure," she replied, turning to face me, her blue eyes meeting mine. "What is it?"

"I –" I hesitated uncertainly. "I think I'm lesbian."

"What?" she gasped.

"I think I'm lesbian," I stated slowly. "I like girls."

"Oh my gosh." Her eyes opened wide. She covered her mouth with her hands.

"All those times you've been staring at me... Are you in love with me?!" She slid away from me, eyes wide.

"No! I'm not! I –"

"BRRRIIINNG!!!" I was cut off by the sound of the bell.

"I gotta go, see ya," Camille exclaimed quickly, picked up her bag, and sprinted hurriedly out of the room.

The other students started trickling out of the room as I sat at my desk dumbfounded. *Why did she leave like that? What did I do wrong? Does she still like me?* My thoughts buzzed in my head as I walked slowly to the cafeteria.

I herded through the crowd of students and pushed open the cafeteria door. My friends were all sitting at the table nearest to the window, the table most sought after. They were all crowded around someone, staring at her intently. I walked over to them as the sounds of the students' chattering hushed. I put my bag on the ground and started to sit down on the edge of the bench. Suddenly, a bag appeared beneath me.

"Sorry, that seat's taken."

I stood up quickly and turned towards the sound of the voice. It was Camille. Her icy blue eyes stared through mine. I looked around the table for another seat. My other friends had all taken their backpacks and placed them beside them. There was no room for me. The other girls avoided my eyes studiously.

"Maybe you should sit somewhere else."

I looked back at Camille. She sneered at me and turned back toward her friends. *My friends.* I looked at them, my eyes pleading. They avoided my gaze awkwardly.

The cafeteria was silent as every pair of eyes stared at me. I put my feet forward, one after the other, as I ran out of the room.

"Lesbo!" I heard, as I left. I ran toward the girls' bathroom, stifling my sobs. I pushed open the lavatory door and nearly crashed into somebody.

"Oof," she muttered and looked up at my face. "Oh, h-hi! I – I was just leaving." She looked at her feet and walked away quickly. I stared at her back as she left. I walked into the washroom and sat on a toilet. I cried openly, tears running down my face, as I heard the happy chatter of voices from the cafeteria.

Why does Camille hate me? Because I'm a lesbian? What about my other friends? Are they even my friends?

I muffled my thoughts as salty tears streamed down my cheeks and dripped onto my shirt. I stared into my hands and let the tears fall.

Grades 11-12

Eastward Rise to the Westward Set

*Anthony Derrick
Burnaby North Secondary*

Sunlight creeps over and blankets the shore
 Waves roll, reaching for the warmth
 I remember that day
 Our souls fell silent for a moment
 Watching our dreams
 being swept away by the tide
 I have never smelt the ocean here
 Only home
 Her fingers are cold but warm me
 Our hands always found each other, our
 fingers intertwined
 Our memories together fade like a soft sun
 behind the clouds
 Her eyes glisten off the water
 A concrete smile has set on my face
 She wanted to grow old together
 My salty eyes became weaker
 but I could still see her
 Always looking back at me
 This place will never change
 But will always be different
 She never left me but always went away
 I was left with the rhythm of the waves
 And the sound of her heartbeat
 The sun descends beyond the horizon
 This was our favourite moment together
 Another day has passed without her
 We will soon be reunited once again
 I will always be happy but it will be different
 For this is where I grew up
 And where I will be laid to rest
 In the little house by the shore

As Easy as π

*Eleanor Hoskins
Burnaby North Secondary*

The world works hard to convince us
 This should be difficult.
 Move mountains, sail seas,
 Write enough words
 to make the moon wane in shame.
 Be bold and bright and beautiful
 Swear and sweat and
 sweep away the tears—
 Maybe then my heart will be yours
 Maybe then you will have loved

Maybe they want us to learn it for ourselves:
 This is as complicated
 as you want to make it.
 Open your mind and I will open my eyes.
 Pick up a pencil and I will pick up the pieces.
 Call me up and I will calm you down.
 If you stop time for me,
 what can we hope to accomplish?
 If you pull down the stars for me,
 what will we have to look up to?

If we step forward
 and take a good, long look at things,
 we might see:
 This is ridiculously straightforward
 As simple as math and sugar and song
 As easy as the circumference of your arms
 over the diameter of my heart.
 Never quite repeating—
 irregular and irrational
 Never quite over—
 an instant of infinity.

He Married Her a Few Days Back

*Dorothy Min
Burnaby North Secondary*

He married her a few days back
When the weather was nice and warm.
Now, he puts everything in a knapsack
To drive off towards a storm.

In his sack, there hides his girl,
A docile, sweet, young thing.
He named her Cinnamon Golda Pearl;
He had given her a ring.

The ring was cursed by magicians and fools;
He had won it from a vending machine.
He'd had the choice from it, some pools,
A dancing lizard or a portable latrine.

He chose the ring with her by his side
And he placed it on her finger with joy;
She giggled and blushed, and
wounded his pride
When she called it a silly little toy.

Nevertheless, she had kept the ring
As she hides in his green knapsack;
She fingers it slowly as she sings:
"My mother and her boyfriend Jack".

He sings along in a key below that
With one hand on the wheel of the car
Hot tears stream down his cheeks
As he howls a vicious snarl:

"Cinnamon Golda Pearl, my love
I will love thee for all I live;
Therefore, may these rains and
these winds, thereof
Show the eternal passions I'll give".

Poetry Is

*Cali Stinson
Burnaby Central Secondary*

Poetry is a vast realm
Of never ending possibilities.

It is a method of expressing
Ones thoughts and feelings.

It surrounds us,
Like the air we breathe.

Poetry can be your favourite hello,
Or your hardest goodbye.

It can be so many things,
It cannot be limited to a simple dictionary
definition.

Poetry is light and beautiful;
Dark and ugly.

It is everything,
And nothing.

It is when the pen reaches the paper,
And just keeps on going.

Line
After line
After line.

May it be a personal experience,
Or a shared piece of art.

Poetry is
And always will be.
Limitless.

The Cuckoo in Cuckoo Bird

Madeline Soriano, Alpha Secondary

Sofia McAdams: Room 12C

Out of all the residents,
she is the most interesting
She is like an owl
But occasionally puts the cuckoo
in cuckoo bird.

She tells me she
has a life time of wealth
and those words pull me closer.
Her shaking gnarly hands
grasp hold of an object,
releasing the dancing dust particles
in the sunlight.

She tells me that
the overstuffed book is a bank,
holding all her riches.
A successful life is not measured
by how much money you make,
but by the moments made
with the ones around you.

With every delicate page flipped
her whole life is displayed
Seeing the raw feeling
captured in the photographs
the memories laid out before me.

Sofia shared some sort of assurance
And the comfort the pictures revealed
which to my un-known pain, it healed.

She shows me she
has love, with family and friends.

She shows me she
had adventures in her backyard
and across the world.

She shows me her
life's mistakes and lessons.

She tells me exactly when and how
she received each memory.

With my visit came gratefulness towards her
sharing her riches with me.

Now standing in the loud silence of Room 12C
Sofia McAdams was the richest person who
ever lived.

I Am

*Saige Forest-Walden
Alpha Secondary*

Born into a pool of artificial light
I am the mistake baby
The accidental child
A bastard who forced two people into a family
A baton passed back and forth
Labeled once then labeled again,
another mistake
The mundane Moses adrift the Nile

Flung into the arms of another mother
Raised by the mockingbird,
Displayed by a wolf in sheep's clothing
Ignored by a broken hearted jester
Under the magnifying glass of a dictator.

Placed in the system
that rewards drone mentality
and quashes individuality
Scrutinized, poked, prodded, and torn apart
For being a tower that saw above the fog
Cast out to doubt and dissolve
Then picked up and put back together
Like a new cover on an old book

Jolted awake to a mirror years later,
Unrecognizable to even myself
Realizing who I really am
Tearing the asphyxiating mask from my face
ascending from the popularity induced coma
and expelling the numbing medication

I am the athlete itching to hear the gun sound
The agitated animal ready to be free
The swimmer that decides
whether or not to give up or reach my goal
The one who will drive on the road or off the
cliff
I am...
I am...
I will be...

La Beauté Annulée

Monica Chen, Moscrop Secondary

L'aube, le soleil
 Caresse mes épaules.
 Sous mes pieds, l'herbe
 a Une limace de verre
 qui glisse en bas de son côté.
 Une brise, les feuilles
 Tintent une mélodie de l'automne.
 Sur le champ, les fleurs
 Décochent les couleurs de la tombée
 du ciel de la nuit.
 Au-dessus, un dragon
 De mousse, entouré des anneaux de fumée.
 Autour, les grands et petits
 Arbres, je sens l'odeur piquante de l'écorce
 Le paysage : un rêve
 Réalisé

L'aube,
 Aussi joyeux qu'un arbre dépouillé d'hiver.
 Sous mes pieds,
 Les bourgeons frais germent
 avec l'allure d'un homme frêle
 Une brise,
 Aussi sage qu'un orage
 Sur le champ,
 Infestés par des insectes tortillés
 Au-dessus,
 Les grilles de paradis sont parsemées
 avec la cendre grise
 Autour,
 Le bourdonnement ennuyeux résonne
 dans ma tête
 Le paysage,
 Aussi calme qu'un champ de bataille

Le soleil, les rayons
 Me hypnotisent, en lentement m'aveugler
 L'herbe, L'odeur
 est Un étranger à mon nez
 Les feuilles mortes,
 Tombées comme des soldats battus
 Les fleurs, les pissenlits
 Étrangent la vie des innocents
 Un dragon, sombre et noir,
 Avec la promesse de la pluie
 Les grands et petits déchets,
 Abîment la beauté de la nature
 Un rêve,

Predicaments

Elena Hsu, Burnaby South Secondary

My smile so bright, feelings colliding in a fight.
 I'm screaming so loud, my vocals caught,
 making no sound.
 Trapped, in my body, in my mind.
 Confusion, desperation, clouding my judgments.
 The answer so clear, but yet so hard to make.
 I stand where two trails intersect.

Looking ahead, bumpier than the other,
 sunlight bouncing off, glistening.
 So new, so different,
 it's destination unpredictable.
 The trail beckons me forward,
 my feet rooted to the ground.
 Where would it lead me to?
 Something so untouchable,
 something so fragile.
 Fear runs through me
 like a wolf loose on its hunt.

The trail behind, tempting me, calling out to me.
 So dark, so dark, so familiar.
 A smooth path, its trail lighted ever so dimly
 by the moonlight.
 The memories flow back, nostalgia hits me,
 shooting me down.
 Deeper and deeper I go,
 recalling those long forgotten moments.

Time, time. Forever taking away everything.
 Tick, tick.
 Ticking away at my reluctance to move on.
 Looking forward, the future shining so bright.
 The oh, so unfamiliar future.
 One small mistake
 making it all come crashing down again.
 Again and again, so breakable.
 Do I lower my walls? Escape my memories?
 Do I strike at the chance of change?
 Do I accept and let go?
 Do I even deserve to move on?
 To never, ever regret?

Looking backwards, the moonlight lit path,
 so easy so familiar.
 Do I stay in my past?
 Dwelling on those lost happy moments?
 Those once innocent and joyful days.

My past slowly creeping up to me,
 my future quickly advancing at me.
 I glance at both and make a choice.
 Never again looking back at the other.

Tide to Go

Erica Lamb, Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Once upon a time in a faraway land,
Lived a princess so fair in a castle so grand.
Everyone loved her and her father, the king.
Sometimes they'd prove this; write letters, or sing.
The whole country had parties for no real reason,
It could be for birthdays or Glee, the new season.
They always seemed happy, content as a nation,
Even with only one radio station.

Until one day a horrible thing did occur,
The princess spilled soup on her precious fake fur.
The place was chaotic, no one knew what to do.
The soup was so icky; the faux fur brand new!
Should they scrub it by hand, or use Tide to Go?

What to do, what to use; did anyone know?
Frantically scrambling, the maids made phone calls.
They streamed through the city, maneuvering walls.
But peasants were clueless; all hope nearly gone,
When they happened upon a small boy on his lawn.
"The solution is simple," he recited quite clearly,
"This happens in my house at least 4 times yearly"
"Show me the fur, and bring me the soup.
Now, please relax, I'll get rid of this goop."

Without hesitation he whistled a tune,
And promised the work would be done before noon.
The country was breathless; no noise was made.
Could this boy actually make the horrid stain fade?

With a smile on his face and a glint in his eye,
He lifted the pot of soup way up high.

Tilting it slightly, he let the stuff drip,
Until the soupy goo covered every last bit.

Pandemonium hit; shrieks filled the air.

"Why would you do that? This coat is so rare!"

Chuckling softly, the boy shook his head.

Looking at everyone, he simply said:

"Don't you see it's all covered? What's the problem with this?"

Now there's no obvious stain to notice."

Everyone gasped, looking 'round with shock.

It was a good ten minutes before they could talk.

Then excitement burst out, people happy again.

"You genius boy, you thought of this when?"

"A celebration's in order, the faux coat is saved!"

The princess, ecstatic, looked at him and waved.

She ran from the castle and hugged the boy,

Party time was here, this one, one of joy.

Once again there was order, the country quite fine,
And the people now knew what to do the next time.

Rêver

Yuna Wang, Moscrop Secondary

C'est quoi,
Rêver?
Sais-tu
Rêver?
As-tu
Rêve?
Il était une fois,
Moi, je rêvais.
Je rêvais de la musique;
Je rêvais des clochettes en argent
Sonner dans mes oreilles
Je rêvais d'une symphonie des anges
Mélodique et douce
Une berceuse qui chasserait
Mes cauchemars
Je rêvais de la beauté
Une centaine de couleurs vives,
Brillantes
Danser devant mes yeux
Je rêvais d'ouvrir mes ailes
De survoler au-dessus des nuages
D'étendre ma main
Et toucher le visage de Dieu
Je rêvais de la joie
D'être sans souci et
De rigoler.
Est-ce étrange que
J'ai même oublié comment
Rire?
J'essaie de sourire
L'action est bizarre
Qui est-ce cet étranger souriant
dans ma Réflexion?
Ce n'est pas moi.
Mais pourras-tu
Peut-être
Me rappeler
C'est quoi le bonheur?
Pourras-tu
Me dire que
Tout ira bien?
Je rêve d'entendre ces mots
Qu'il ne faut plus m'inquiéter
Que je ne suis plus seul

Que tu resteras
Toujours
À ma côté
Non
Ne me dis pas cela
Ne me laisse pas
Croire des mensonges
Car je sais qu'à la fin
Il y aura
Seulement
Moi-même.
Je suppose qu'il était une fois,
Je rêvais.
Mais aujourd'hui,
Je me suis réveillé.

Writer's Block

Maika Escol, Cariboo Hill Secondary

We are well acquainted, It and I
I have overcome its thorns, left
To scratch my eyes with its blank
Stare and emptiness
It had beaten me in numerous
Battles, putting a boulder over my
Hands, effectively barricading its potentials
And now, as I attempt to finish,
I come across it once again
Like our previous encounters,
It leaves me in a perpetual state of
Silence, succeeding in its
pursuit of destruction,
All the while creating an immense feeling
Of utter senselessness accompanied
By blinking lines and frozen motions
As I sit and urge my brain to think, It tempts
Me to resign into defeat and
surrender to the truth
It brings; that I am tied to It irrevocably as
It is tied to me
Despite this, I force myself
to continue the flow,
Disregarding the nonsensical words
that fail to
Transcribe my thoughts and emotions
Instead I fight, determined to claim victory.

Don't Give Up Hope

*Jessica Wong
Alpha Secondary*

Warm room
sunshine coloured walls
soft sofas that
you can really sink into
Timid and afraid
I smile she doesn't smile back
given up on hope
she is like a wilting flower
"I want to die"
4 words, a fog that wisps by
words are exchanged
slowly, carefully
Lie down, close your eyes
and please tell me why
you want to die
The air smells of
perfume-fresh picked apples
and sadness
The clock ticks and tocks
Salty drops fall from her eyes
"It's hard"
Yes. It is.
The silence that follows
is deafening
These words I've heard a thousand times
she shows me her arm
seared skin, scabs, scars
The trees dance
in the summer breeze outside
More words exchanged, more falling tears
"My life is a poisoned apple"
Abuse, hurt, but it's okay
You can pull through
An hour passes
Our final one
I smile
She smiles back
No more tears
no more words
Well...maybe a few
"I want to Live"

Poetry Is

*Chelsea Almadin
Burnaby Central Secondary*

Poetry is the thump, thump,
thumping of the heart,
Sometimes steady, peaceful,
Other times quick, panicked.
It is art that conveys a myriad of emotions,
The imagining of a world
that reality cannot quell.
It is the retelling of memories
that were once forgotten,
Recapturing the essence
of a place and time,
Awakening and heightening
the senses once again,
The soul left nourished, yearning for more.
Poetry defies the boundaries
of sentences and paragraphs,
Of carefully placed punctuation
and structure lines.
It is patient, truthful, exuberant,
And at times reckless, cynical, bitter.
Poetry is a blank canvas
awaiting strokes of colour,
Bringing with it
a sense of courage and honesty.
It finds the beauty that is often overlooked,
And whispers words
as soft as a summer breeze.
Then putting to sleep
the troubles of the mind,
Poetry sings you to sleep.

Empty Hands

Chloe dela Merced
Burnaby Mountain Secondary

Elliot loved hands; especially his mother's. They were soft, warm, loving and protecting – reflecting much of his mother herself. Her slender fingers wiped away the pain and tears from his face after he fell on the asphalt of the sidewalk; her palms heating his cheeks against the bitter cold of winter that painted his ears with a light tinge of pink.

"Remember children," Elliot remembered his teacher telling her class before releasing them for the break, *"Make sure to take both of your parents' hands when you walk outside. We don't want you getting lost! You have two hands - one for each of your parents. One for 'Mom' and one for 'Dad'! That's why you have two hands after all!"*

The boy looked up to his mother. Although she seemed so far away, Elliot could still see her smiling face as she strolled around the city with her beloved offspring. He could feel the calluses of his mother's hands through their intertwined, gloveless appendages; its rough exterior engraved with her experience and knowledge of the world, against the sensitive, soft baby fat of his hands. The imperfection of her hands verified the hard work a parent puts into her family. With her hand around his, Elliot felt as if he was loved unconditionally, and protected from the cruelty and faults of the world.

Yet his other hand lay bare; vulnerable and frozen. There was no *"Dad"* to hold it, and only old man winter was willing to take the boy's offer. Under the winter's touch, his hand had turned an angry red; petrified and numb. Elliot grimaced as he pulled his jacket's sleeve over his palm. He could feel his heart fill up with a gripping, overwhelming feeling of an emotion he has yet to learn the word for. His teacher's words echoed in the deepest regions of his still developing mind: *"One for 'Mom'... One for 'Dad'... That's why you have two hands..."*

Elliot took his hand out from the hiding place of his sleeve. With a hesitant touch, the young boy gripped his barren hand on top of his mother's; his tiny hands covering both sides of hers. This time, Elliot would protect his mother, as she did for him, even if it was for something as insignificant as the sting of the sharp breeze. His mother looked at him and the corners of her lips curved upward; giving her son a kiss on the crown of his hazel coloured, sun tinted hair.

"Thank you Elliot," she whispered tenderly.

Elliot always believed his mother was a magician – reading his mind before his mouth has a chance to speak. For the first time in his short lived life, Elliot thought his teacher was wrong, with evidence to prove it. Two hands do not need to be reserved for two different people. Two hands could be reserved for just one person who deserves your love.

Because Grandpa Loved Me

Janet Lam, Moscrop Secondary

"No! I don't want to visit Grandpa," I complained as I fruitlessly attempted to pull my mother away from the entrance of the door to the gloomy bungalow. "He doesn't even care about me anymore." Those were my last words of complaint as I froze into place and immediately stopped fighting as I glimpsed a warning stare from my mother. Without further prompting, I inched forward into the house.

As I reluctantly dragged myself into the kitchen, I noticed the damaged kitchen glass was still unfixed from a stray baseball ten months ago. The broken glass was boarded up, but not replaced. Although the glass remained unchanged so much of my life had not. In the middle of the kitchen was Grandpa, confined to a wheelchair and staring blankly into space. I half expected Grandpa to stand up, toss his wheelchair aside, and greet me with his traditional hug and a Snickers bar, but he did not even notice me. It was like someone had kicked me in the stomach and then robbed all the future memories I would have with Grandpa. In fact, it was not a person, but a disease called Alzheimer's that made me realize Grandpa would never encourage me to pursue my interests again. Around the time the glass shattered, Grandpa had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

Having survived both World Wars, Grandpa became acclimatized to the tough life and valued family. His identity changed as he could no longer acknowledge the presence of his family as this debilitating illness quickly consumed his enjoyment of life. This was one fight he could not win merely by shouting, or by praying so he felt utterly helpless. All I could do was reminisce past memories of Grandpa.

"You could do anything you set your mind to" was a cliché Grandpa always preached to me.

In grade five, with Grandpa's favourite motivational quote in mind and with his encouragement, I decided to participate in my school's yearly talent show. I hated in-class presentations and even the simple act of raising my hand to participate in discussions was a challenge. I viewed performing in the talent show in front of 500 students and parents as complete torture. However, Grandpa was also going to be in the audience so I wanted to create a memory we would both cherish forever. I planned to play "Because You Loved Me" by Celine Dion on the piano. Grandpa bought me my first piano and convinced me to enjoy playing music. Using his advice, I tried my best to become proficient at the piano. By focusing on achieving individual goals such as mastering a new piano piece and with Grandpa's support, I could accomplish anything.

However, the night before the talent show, I had butterflies in my stomach. I had visions of performing so horribly causing the audience to throw rotten bananas and to splash sour milk at my face. I wanted to fake a fever by increasing my temperature, using the drink hot water trick. Although it was near midnight, I called the one person who was always there for me: Grandpa.

Ring! Ring! Ring! Ring! Finally on the fourth ring, Grandpa answered the phone. "Sorry it took me so long to answer. Is there something you want to talk about?" Unsurprisingly, Grandpa could always read my mind.

"Granddad, I think I'm gonna be sick tomorrow. There is no need to come to the talent show." I was not really lying as I felt like my ears were home to a beehive and the bees were buzzing in my ears giving me a headache and hopefully a fever.

"Love, it's okay to be nervous. Everyone performing tomorrow is gonna be nervous," as Grandpa tried to stifle a yawn. "I know I don't have the guts to perform in a talent show. Whatever happens tomorrow, I'm always proud of you. Just remember you could do anything you set your mind to."

Those last words of inspiration were all I needed as all feelings of anxiety washed away.

On the day of the talent show with Grandpa in the audience, I confidently strolled up to the microphone.

"We all know people who influenced who we are and what we do. People who sacrificed everything to make your life better. For me, this person was my Grandpa. Grandpa, I am everything I am 'because you loved me.' This song is for you."

I let the music wash over me as I played with passion. As the last notes of the song slowly faded, tears streaked down my face as I realized I had honoured Grandpa by giving back what he had given me.

As I stopped daydreaming about the past, I reached into my pocket for a Snickers bar and gave it and a hug to my Grandpa.

The Exchange

Joti Thandi

Burnaby South Secondary

I tremble, fear grasping me, as I stand in the cold and bitter wind, which blows so softly, and yet pierces like a dagger. My five year old hands are red, and numb, and my nose is the same story. I sniffle. My imaginative thoughts clash in my head like tornadoes, as terrifying as ever, and sometimes, when given the chance, swirl away into distracted images of coloured inks, and pretty princesses. I *am* five, after all.

I blink. My brain freezes for the briefest second, as my eyes focus again on the sight before me. I see a tall woman standing nearby, wildly gesturing, not quite acquainted with her job at all. She is saying to hurry, voice twisting, and her words roll off of her tongue awkwardly. I giggle. What a silly lady.

But then my tiny stomach twists into very big knots, and my giggling stops abruptly. I see Daddy looking very worried, and there is water in his eyes. It is not familiar. Daddy's eyes never sting. I scowl.

Suddenly, he kneels down in front of me, and takes me in his arms. He holds me there for a long time, and I peer curiously at the woman over his back. She is pacing back and forth, impatient, but her face softens when her gaze falls on me, and she smiles.

Daddy pulls me back, and whispers in a voice unlike him. I can't understand what he says; his mouth seems to be crippled, for his words come out in erratic shushes and choked sounds. Finally, he gives a hard smile, unexpectedly pained, and embraces me once more.

I am so afraid. I no longer believe that Daddy just has something caught in his eye. No. He is crying. What is happening? I feel terrified. Who is that lady? Has she come to take me away?

He stands up, and takes my hand, now a brave smile etched on his face. He is quiet for a moment, and finally, he says softly, "It's time. You must go to that lady over there, Anna. Follow her. She is going to take you away."

I cry. Why me? Why must I go with her? Who is she?

And then my Daddy takes my hand, and places a gift. He exchanges my fear and gives me his courage, and waves good-bye, afraid, as I use his bravery, and take the first step into the room with the woman, and welcome my very first day of school.

Gâteaux Secs au Chocolat

Brenda Kent, Moscrop Secondary

« Voyons, gamin, personne ne se rendra compte »

Yannick ébouriffe tendrement les cheveux de son petit frère. « J'ai entendu dire qu'ils mangent des petits gâteaux secs au chocolat pour le desert... »

Gino Gautier, enfant de onze ans, lèche sa lèvre inférieure. C'est inutile de le nier, il a faim.

« Mais Yan, le gendarme nous a déjà averti. Il nous a laissé partir la dernière fois, mais il n'a aucune raison pour être charitable avec nous deux encore... » Gino se tourne les pouces, et commence à jouer avec son vieux mouchoir de soie taché de terre. C'était le dernier cadeau que leur mère l'avait donné avant d'avoir fugué. Son estomac gargouille. Dans cette bataille contre la moralité, c'est la faim qui gagne.

« Uhh...Mm. Non, Yan...c'est stupide comme idée, Gino barbouille. Le buffet du Monsieur Dubois? Voyons! Ni lui ni ses invités ne sont en bons termes avec les gitans, tu sais.

- Bon, Yannick dit avec dédain, j'y vais moi. On croira que tu ne me fais pas confiance, même si je suis trois ans plus âgé que toi, petit coquin! Tu peux rester ici, alors. Mais moi, je ne dormirais pas avec l'estomac en vide »

Yannick prend son sac à dos (usé au point de multiple trous), le vide, et quitte la cachette. Gino, avec un soupir, se lève et suit son frère dans la rue pauvrement illuminée. Bien assez tôt ils sont accueillis par le bourdonnement enthousiaste de la centaine d'invités du Monsieur Dubois et les odeurs riches provenant de la cuisine – plusieurs dont ils n'avaient jamais senti auparavant.

« Mmmm! Gino, on dînera comme des rois ce soir! Yannick exclame. Tu peux me croire sur parole! » D'une façon familière et naturelle, les deux frères Gautier entrent furtivement dans la maison luxueuse par la porte d'en arrière. Ils esquivent les invités minutieusement habillés et les gardes armés dans le hall. Avec des doigts habilement exercés, ils ramassent toute sorte de délicatesse : des fougasses, du pot au feu, du boudin blanc, des choux à la crème, et des madeleines, et les cachent dans leur sac avec la même facilité. Ils rôdent de table à table, plongeant leurs petits doigts dans les saucières et casseroles, tout en étouffant leurs petits rires avec leurs mains. Ils mangeraient comme des rois, effectivement.

Tout à coup, un cri perçant brise l'ambiance légère de la salle. Les deux frères se trouvent paralysés, incapables de prendre un seul pas. Une femme d'une vingtaine d'ans lève un doigt tremblant, et avec un halètement dégoûté le braque sur Gino.

« Il me semble, elle proclame d'une voix accusatrice, que nos gardes ont manqué à leurs promesses ce soir! Ils ont laissé entrer des gitans sales qui volent notre nourriture! » En une fraction de seconde, Yannick et Gino se trouvent au milieu d'une foule chaotique. Les hommes hurlent, les gardes sortent leurs armes, et les serveurs font leur mieux pour calmer aux femmes inquiètes. Yannick pousse son frère.

« Gino, court! »

Esquivant la multitude de personnes qui les poursuivent, Yannick et Gino s'en filent, tout en sautant par-dessus des chaises qui bloquent leur chemin. Pendant une seconde terrifiante, Yannick sent son cœur battre fort quand un garde lui prend au collet, mais il réussit à mordre le bras de l'homme et continue à s'échapper.

Finalement, les deux frères sortent par la porte. Yannick tirant Gino par le coude. Ils se laissent tomber derrière les buissons, protégés par l'obscurité de la nuit. Yannick ne peut même parler, il a tellement le fou rire.

« Oh, Gino! Il rit. As-tu vu ça? Personne n'a pu nous attraper, mon frère! Même pas les gros gardes! »

Gino ne dit rien. Il reste à terre, respirant irrégulièrement.

« Voyons, Gino, on dirait que t'es pas en forme! Haha! Mais regarde ici, mon gamin, j'ai réussi à voler trois gâteaux secs au choco--- » Yannick s'arrête à moitié phrase. Il pâlit en se rendant compte que Gino tien son mouchoir fermement contre son ventre. Bien qu'il fasse noir, Yannick peut clairement voir la manière dont le tissu décoloré se noie dans un ruisseau de sang écarlate.

Balloons

Michelle Kuah

Burnaby South Secondary

Once upon a time, there was a little girl. What she loved the most was balloons. She loved their colours and how they stretched out to the sky. The sun would always reflect their colours onto her face and she would laugh. Nothing made her happier than a fistful of balloons.

Her sister didn't like this.

"Why would you tie down such beautiful, independent things just so you can keep them forever? Besides, even if you do keep them, eventually they deflate. Nothing likes to be tied down. Even balloons," her sister would say.

But the girl loved her balloons too much to let them go. With her fingers curled tightly around their many ribbons, the girl had many adventures. They discovered a city of sand and an underwater palace. They made a fortress high on top of the playground and flew through the air as she slid down the slide of red plastic. It was the perfect day. But soon it was dinnertime. Steps from her gate, the girl tripped and let go of her balloons.

"Wait!" she called. "Don't go!"

But they didn't look back, floating excitedly up to the vast expanse of blue. Tears rolled down the girl's cheeks. They were gone.

"What's wrong?" her sister asked.

Then she noticed the absent balloons. And she smiled. With a hand on the girl's shoulder, she pointed up to the sky.

"Look how beautiful they look up there," she said. "They're so happy."

The girl looked up. She could still see the colours reflecting off the clouds as they flew freely. It was very beautiful.

"But I'll never see them again," the girl sniffled.

Her sister shook her head.

"I don't think so. You see, although nobody likes being tied down, they never forget those who were good to them. They remember their loved ones. I don't think they will abandon you."

The girl wiped the tears from her eyes, looking up in hopes of getting one last glimpse of her balloons. She gasped, squeezing her sister's hand.

"See? I told you so."

The balloons were nowhere to be seen, but in their place was a rainbow, its colours emblazoning the sky. Its light danced on the girl's face just as the balloons once did. And she laughed, just like she used to. Because she learned something that day- something she carried with her, even when she grew up.

No one truly goes away. Those who love and are loved by you will always find ways back to make you smile.

The Boy with the Crayons

Coco Lau, Burnaby South Secondary

In the second grade, I was new to the school and into painting. During free time, I devoted my time to that and only that. So I was surprised that someone would talk to me.

"Hi!" I jumped. "Sorry, didn't mean to scare you." A boy with a plastic bucket on his head was standing across from my table. The handle of the bucket was neatly under his chin and a red cape tied around his neck. His grey t-shirt was tucked in his bright red sweatpants, which had splattered paint all over. He was clutching a box of crayons.

He grinned at me, flashing the most noticeable dimples I've ever seen in my seven year old life. I wished more than ever for him to leave me alone.

"What are you drawing?" he asked.

"Something, it's a secret," I said, hoping he'd take the hint and leave. He didn't.

"I'm Brady and I like the colours you're using." he gestured toward my tray, "So bright!" he grinned even bigger and I automatically smiled, "Did you know that each colour means something?" I didn't think his eyes could get any bigger but they did at that.

"We; my mom has told me about each colour." He said proudly, "She's some sort of doctor that sounds like they study too much." He paused, waiting to see if I would talk. I didn't. "You looked like a white!" He whipped out a white crayon and rolled it across the table.

I reached out to stop it.

"You were new, full of goodness, curious about everything." With each adjective, the light in his eyes grew brighter. He stroked his chin, pretending to think thoughtfully.

Suddenly, Brady slammed his 64 pack of crayons on the table so hard I jumped.

"But you didn't explore much. You stuck to what you knew. You were afraid of adventure." Brady struck out into a Superman pose, one hand crunched into a fist held out, the other on his waist. I stifled a laugh.

"At that time, you turned into a black!" He took the black crayon and held it up like Rafiki did to baby Simba. He put it down and rolled it across the table.

This time, I examined it. It didn't seem to be of great significance on appearance but I tried to understand Brady anyway.

"You were afraid. You feared the unknown! 2nd grade is all about learning to charge into the vast unknown! Whoosh!" Brady ran around my circular table with his arms out. He bounced before stopping.

"I waited. And you know what I decided?"

I shook my head.

"I decided that you're a blue. It means honest and passionate. You should feel special because no one I ever see is a blue." Brady took a blue crayon out, caressing it. When he rolled the crayon to me again, I looked at the name. *Melting Blue*.

"I decided another thing." I instinctively, looked into his eyes. They were the same colour as the crayon. His eyes were warm, intense but full of enthusiasm and spirit. His eyes described himself perfectly. He leaned forward and whispered, "I like you."

I smiled because I decided something too, "I like you too."

Il comprendra

*Latifa Abdillah
Cariboo Hill Secondary*

« Et ensuite, que s'est-il passé ? » Mes yeux admirent les crevasses de son visage qui contiennent les douleurs et joies, les échecs et triomphes et les histoires de tous ses 89 ans. Mes yeux glissent maintenant sur ses mains rugueux mais agiles et j'envisonne tout ce qu'ils ont dû subir pour atteindre une telle texture. Les secrets qui y sont cachés me rendent fou. De toutes les histoires qu'il nous raconte toujours, j'en suis certaine qu'il y en a quelques-uns que nous allons jamais connaître, ni même pouvoir imaginer. Et en ce moment, assise près de l'homme que je ne vais jamais complètement connaître, je lui tiens la main qui m'a toujours tenu lors des nuits effrayantes, et je porte attention aux mouvements de ses lèvres si patients.

« Eh bien, il y a environ 60 ans, sur mon chemin à l'université locale. Non, j'oublie. Je partais pour le train de samedi pour visiter ma mère. Cela faisait plusieurs semaines qu'elle était malade, et avec toutes mes études, je trouvais ça très difficile de mettre du temps de côté pour même une courte visite. Il n'y a pas une journée qui passe que je n'y pense pas. Une seule visite les fins de semaines. Seulement une. » Je regarde attentivement à la façon dont son regard se fixe sur le plancher et je ressens les tremblements de sa main dans la mienne. J'ai de la peine à lui regarder subir une telle douleur, mais maman nous l'a déjà expliqué et, comme par commande, je rouspète « Vas-y grand-papa, continue, » et je cache le fait qu'un nœud atroce vient de se déposer dans la gorge. « Toute la semaine, je trouvais des excuses pour ne pas aller. 'Je dois étudier,' 'Il y a toujours ma sœur qui ira la voir,' 'Je dois économiser mon argent pour ce trimestre.' Les excuses, j'en avais des milliers. De toute façon, c'était elle qui m'avait encouragé à poursuivre l'université en ville, n'est-ce pas ? » On dirait qu'il essaie de trouver, dans mon regard, une réponse à toutes les pensées terribles qui tourbillonnent dans sa tête. Le nœud s'étire. Il tremble tellement fort que je frissonne, moi aussi, jusqu'à l'esprit. Mais malgré ça, je sais l'importance que tient le fait qu'il termine son histoire. C'est la seule façon dont il pourra finalement accepter le seul événement de sa vie qui lui laisse éveillé chaque soir et attristé chaque jour. Arrière grand-mère est morte il y a plus de 65 ans d'une tumeur du cerveau, mais il ne croira jamais que le décès de sa mère n'avait rien à faire avec son manque de visite. Il ne comprendra jamais qu'elle ne lui aurait peut-être même pas reconnue, ce qui aurait été encore plus traumatisant. Grand-papa n'acceptera pas ce qu'on lui raconte. Jusqu'à ce temps, nous devons endurer la même histoire à chaque samedi matin, ma main dans la sienne, ses yeux fixés sur le tapis à motifs aztèque et ma mère à ses pieds. Chaque samedi. Jusqu'à ce qu'il comprenne. Maman m'assure qu'il comprendra. Mais, en attendant, comme toujours, avec une voix casée je parviens à laisser glisser les quelques mots qui me font fondre le cœur parce que je peux presque ressentir les battements du sien dans mes veines. « Et ensuite, que s'est-il passé ? »

Don't ever forget

Destiny Hsu, Cariboo Hill Secondary

"Silence fell on the world. Darkness flitted through the incessant flood from the rolling grey mass above. The cool streams poured from her eyes; like sulphur rain they stung as she stumbled.

"No, that's not right," I mumble while I jab the delete button several dozen times. "It's not enough." The clock in the corner of my screen mocks me while I rework the story once more. Across the keyboard fly my aching fingers. More description, more detail, yet it's never enough to convey the impenetrable depth of sorrow, the heart and soul of the piece, the despair and longing and agony.

The clock must be lying. It can't possibly be this late. I feel the shadow of the deadline pressing onto my back, accompanied closely by my social studies project, my math exam, the university applications, all glaring expectantly and judgingly each time my fingers go to the delete button. They'll have to wait. This story has to be perfect. It needs sorrow, it needs tears, it needs rain, it needs to make the reader burst out crying, for goodness sake!

Slapping my palms against the desk I push away from the screen and spend a futile moment trying to decipher my scrawl on some sheets of notepaper. I toss them aside and let all the muscles in my body go limp, reflecting on the hopelessness of even trying. Rain and wind rap against the windows. Why waste the effort on such a stupid writing contest? It's not like I'll win. Even so, then what? My sad, pitiful story is published with a conglomeration of other sad, depressing stories of people dying of cancer and war and puppies being run over by cars. What's the point?

"Sis!" A howl of wind seeps into the house, right after my little sister Tammy in a raincoat so creased, crinkled and smeared with our lawn it looked like the face of an old walrus. The house shakes on its foundations with the slam of the door. Her rain boots flop against her calves as she returns with the spoils from her outdoor expedition. "Sis, sis, sis! Lookey lookey look!"

With a quick sweep of my arm I manage to save my homework from being mutilated by the armful of damp mulch Tammy deposits on the table. I fight the urge to sweep the muddy mess into the trash, seeing the smile polished with rain and traces of dirt beaming up at me. "Umm, cool! Is this, a, umm, grass pie.

The usual foot-stamp follows; the routine when I guess her treasure incorrectly. "No, no, no, look!" She cries, plucking a half-crushed dandelion from the pile, "It's a magic gold flower!" And look!" She grabs a handful of grass, "It's Mother Nature's eyelashes! And look!" She tugs at a dandelion puff, drooping and grey from a day of rain, "It's a wishing flower! When it's not wet you blow on it and the fuzz flies away and looks for what you wished for you!"

Gingerly I take the soggy plant held out to me. The smile even feels like plastic when I stretch it on my face. "Wow, neat! You found all this even in the rain?"

A hop and a spin on the spot turns Tammy right around to face the gloom outside the window. "Oh that's nothing," she rests her chin on the edge of the sill to smile up at the sooty grey clouds, "the rain just means the world is just having a sad face day, but that's okay, because when it's done having a sad face day the clouds will go away and it'll have a happy face day and smile again."

Before I know what she's doing, Tammy throws herself against the window, arms spread wide. "Tammy! What-?"

Pressing her cheek against the glass, she whispers, "Don't cry world, everyone loves you, because you love us so much to give us all these neat things.

The action, so familiar, only clicks in my brain now. She's hugging the window.

Tammy shuts her eyes, as if listening for a response on the other side of the glass. "The world is really beautiful, isn't it?"

I watch her, a girl in too-big rainboots and a crinkled raincoat, tip-toeing to the window so she can give the world a hug. I can't begin to remember the last time I called a dandelion a magic flower, or gave the world a hug, or even called the world beautiful.

I watch her some more. I throw my arms around Tammy and hold her close.

"Yes it is. Don't ever, ever, forget it is."



Rotary Club of Burnaby

The Rotary Club of Burnaby, would like to congratulate all those who participated in Burnaby School District's WORDS Writing Project. Improving literacy is an important goal of Rotary. The club has been a proud supporter of this project since 1995.

The Rotary Club of Burnaby works towards making a difference in the lives of those in its community. In this endeavour, the club supports a number of local initiatives that include:

- Bursaries for each of Burnaby School District's secondary schools
- Lunch programs for children
- Rotary Youth Leadership Award
- Adventure programs in citizenship, film, forestry & environment, technology and tourism
- Rotary Organized Adolescent Retreat (ROAR) that provides leadership development to a student from each of Burnaby's elementary schools
- And much more ...

You too can make a difference. Come join us!

Come out to one of our Friday luncheon meetings.

For more Information:

www.RotaryBurnaby.org or RotaryBurnaby@gmail.com

Facebook: Rotary Club of Burnaby / Twitter: @RotaryBurnaby

I Am From Byrne Creek

Byrne Creek Secondary School is this year's winner of the *Vision in Action: The ASCD Whole Child Award*. An international educational leadership association, the ASCD award recognizes schools that move beyond a narrow focus on academic achievement to take action for the whole child, creating learners who are knowledgeable, emotionally and physically healthy, civically active, artistically engaged, prepared for economic self-sufficiency, and ready for the world beyond formal schooling.

Byrne Creek Secondary is the first Canadian school to receive this prestigious award. In response to this recognition, three English classes collaborated on a literacy project to put into words what it means to be a student at Byrne Creek. The students each wrote a poem looking at their school as a community, or as a physical, emotional, and social context for their learning. They wrote about the places and people that matter to them at school, as well as their involvement in activities and their favourite memories. Looking at how descriptive language impacts the telling of a story, they were asked to 'show' rather than 'tell' of their experiences through imagery and powerful language.

There was one overwhelming sentiment in the more than 90 poems submitted: that Byrne Creek is an inclusive, caring, diverse, engaging, and exciting place to learn and grow. To tell their school's unique story in poetic form, various lines were pulled, edited, and combined from the individual poems to create one unified text. Entitled, *I am from Byrne Creek*, it represents the rich diversity that is valued and is the essential core of the school.

At ASCD's Annual Conference in Philadelphia, Principal Rawnsley accepted the award on behalf of the school, and visually brought the community to the stage by reading, *I am from Byrne Creek*. The response to this moving narrative was, and continues to be, overwhelming. It has been included in this year's WORDS Anthology to recognize Byrne Creek Secondary School's achievement and to once again illustrate how powerful words can be.

'I Am From Byrne Creek' was written by students in Ms Ferreira's English 9 Honours, English 10, and English 12 classes with special contributions from Mark Amores, Tiffany Lastoria, Effie Ma, Saeed Molaie, Jerome Rossler, Chazel Solamo, and (Tony) Yang Zhang.

**For more information on the
Vision in Action: The ASCD Whole Child Award visit www.ascd.org**

I am from Byrne Creek

I am from Iran, a country with scorching hot deserts, a rich history,
colourful gardens, of roses covered with unforgiving thorns.

I am from the Pearl of the Orient Seas,
where the Sun rises from the west,
vanishes before the clock strikes – to thick puffs of gray.

I am from Kinshasa:
big city, large population, huge family.
I am simply from a quiet neighbourhood nearby.

I am from Shanghai, China,
where my precious childhood memories remain.
I am from Burnaby, BC, with its temperamental weather and slush:
urban centre, heritage site, earth covered in pavement and green trees.

I am from the memory of coming to Canada,
and never forgetting the turning of a page to a brand new life.

I am from biology and art teachers, blood and paint, organs and brushes.
I am from my French teacher, who taught me to speak to the world in a different tongue,
and my Social Studies teacher, who taught me to see the world through a different lens.
I am from my math teacher, who lets me know that caring is more important than numbers.
I am from a variety of business classes,
tough lessons about the real world, but made manageable with care.
I am from my English teacher, who makes me a better writer and a better human.
I am from Mr. Davies, a teacher who passes on knowledge with great passion.
I am from Ms. Moxon, who says 'Fake it 'til you make it'.
I am from Ms. Tirling, who brought dance and happiness into my life.
I am from Ms. Hodgson, Mr. Best, Mr. Leung and Ms. O'Hare.
I am from every teacher who gave me
a fact, a thing, an idea, an emotion, a lesson,
who gave me value.

I am from "let's get started" at the beginning of all things new.
I am from dancing and drawing, sound and silence, swishing feet and pencils.
I am from the unnoticed coloured banners, the bars of safety, where I see countless new faces daily.
I am from words shouted out in excitement,
in a language that can only be understood by us.
I am from competing in track, winning districts in basketball, losing that one soccer game;
even there, I felt accomplished and proud.
I am from stay focused, explode from the start, and it's important to learn from our mistakes.
I am from green garbage bins, a greener earth, a brighter future.
I am from the silent books that speak of experience and memory.
I am from the bolted red and blue squares,
the zoo of a hall, the noise of the Atrium, and the spinning seats of the white room.
I am from the pictures taken in and out of these halls, the howls of laughter,
and from the last note of the melody they call Grade 12.
I am a part of an ongoing journey.

I am from shaping my future,
one step at a time.
I am from the 'we', eager to learn.
I am from friendship, solidarity, and intelligence.
I am from a second home, where I can put talent and passion into my work.
I am from thankfulness, a place that tells me I have someone on my side, always.
I am from a stepping stone,
where they tell me I can do anything.
I am from learning about life, society, opportunity, hope,
the values that cannot be taught in a classroom,
but are.
I am from Byrne Creek.