



# NORTHEAST TEXAS **POETRY IN SCHOOLS**

2021

# **ANTHOLOGY**

A PUBLISHED COLLECTION OF STUDENT POEMS







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**For more information on the  
Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools  
Contest, contact:**

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Tyler, TX 75701  
903.561.2787**

**Visit our website at: [yanetexas.org](http://yanetexas.org)**

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## **About Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools**

Young Audiences of Northeast Texas is honored to continue a tradition begun by the Rusk County Poetry Society four decades ago by presenting the 2021 Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools Contest. Each year, this contest provides an opportunity for students currently enrolled in grades 1-12 to nurture academic growth through the literary arts.

Classroom and language arts teachers are encouraged to submit original poems from their students to be judged by local poets and writers. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners in each grade level receive a certificate, and are invited to read their poems to an audience of family, teachers, and administrators at the Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools Awards Ceremony.

All winning entries are published in this Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools Student Anthology. For more information on next year's contest, please visit [yanetexas.org](http://yanetexas.org) in the fall of 2021.



# 2021 Poetry in Schools Foreword

The tradition of Poetry in Schools began more than forty years ago when the Rusk County Poetry Society, a chapter of the Poetry Society of Texas, chose to celebrate National Poetry Month each April by honoring local student poets in Henderson, Texas, with a contest and awards ceremony.

Today, that celebration has grown to include hundreds of students and teachers in schools and home school groups across East Texas. The event's current name, the Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools Contest, reflects a creative collaboration between the founding group of poets and several other organizations: Young Audiences of Northeast Texas, Region 7 Educational Service Center, and InSpiritory. The contest awards now include 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners in grades 1-12 with a scholarship awarded to the winning 12<sup>th</sup> grade poet. That scholarship honors the project's first director, Henderson poet, educator, and civic leader Mary Craig.

This year's Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools judging panel is a distinguished group of published writers, award-winning poets, professors, educators, and poetry enthusiasts: Adrienne Pamplin, Anett Jessop, Brooke Kinsman, Lisa Salinas, Carol Thompson, Justin Robinson, Brenda McWilliams, Melissa DeCarlo, Mary Andrews, and Terry Miller.

This anthology is a presentation of the 2021 winning poems. The judges have chosen poems that best utilize the many aspects of poetry—imagery, sound, metaphor, and universal themes—and writing sure to entertain and delight readers. Our congratulations to these fine poets!

For many years, I have had the pleasure of serving as artistic director for the Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools project. I continue to be amazed by East Texas budding writers and to be inspired by their vision. My heartfelt thanks to all the students who submitted their wonderful poems, their supportive teachers, our esteemed judges, and the contest's sponsoring organizations who believe in the power of poetry and the importance of arts in education.

**Anne McCrady**  
*Northeast Texas Poetry in Schools*  
*InSpiritory*

# LIST OF POEMS

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Cross Warren	<i>I Am Thankful</i>	Page 10	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
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## SECOND GRADE

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## THIRD GRADE

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Joseph Lopez	<i>Night Time</i>	Page 17	1 <sup>st</sup> Place

## FOURTH GRADE

Jaxon Goodman	<i>Poems Are Tough</i>	Page 18	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
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Airilyn Autry	<i>Sweet Dragon Dreams</i>	Page 20	1 <sup>st</sup> Place

## FIFTH GRADE

Kilsyth Middlebrook	<i>Minecraft</i>	Page 21	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
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Katherine Rodriguez	<i>Music</i>	Page 23	1 <sup>st</sup> Place

## SIXTH GRADE

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Lia Steinbrecher	<i>Awakening of Spring</i>	Page 26	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Elizabeth Williamson	<i>McKnight Church</i>	Page 27	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
Grace Pitts	<i>Dawn</i>	Page 28	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
Mikaela Haufler	<i>The Solace of the Ocean</i>	Page 29	1 <sup>st</sup> Place

# LIST OF POEMS

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Charlie Rodriguez	<i>Antebellum Mansion</i>	Page 32	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
Paisely Lewis	<i>Self Image</i>	Page 33	1 <sup>st</sup> Place

## EIGHTH GRADE

Jacob Penrose	<i>Sand</i>	Page 34	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Emery Chenault	<i>The Time It Only Takes</i>	Page 35	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Kasey Rhodes	<i>Phoenix</i>	Page 36	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
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## NINTH GRADE

Ari Williams	<i>The Cold Water</i>	Page 38	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Katelynn Seacott	<i>Extinct</i>	Page 39	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
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## TENTH GRADE

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## ELEVENTH GRADE

Breanna Jordan	<i>Of Wax and Feathers</i>	Page 44	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Hannah Williams	<i>Song</i>	Page 45	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
Riley Seidel	<i>Flourish</i>	Page 46	1 <sup>st</sup> Place

## TWELFTH GRADE

Brooke Copeland	<i>PTSD</i>	Page 47	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Jennifer Aguilar	<i>A Sincere Love</i>	Page 48	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
Asia Johnson	<i>Seed of Life</i>	Page 49	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place

## 2021 Rusk County Poetry Society Scholarship Winner:

Shea Clews	<i>I Think I'm the Smoke You Breathe In</i>	Page 50	1 <sup>st</sup> Place
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**Arabella Holmes**  
**Mrs. Compton**  
*Wylie Elementary - Henderson ISD*

# Cat

**Cat**

**Fuzzy, small**

**Scratches, Purrs, Meows**

Momma cats have litter of kittens

**Feline**

***First Grade***



***Third Place***

**Cross Warren**  
**Ms. Ashby**  
*Parkway Elementary - Pine Tree ISD*

# I Am Thankful

I am thankful for my life.

I am thankful for my mom and dad for buying me clothes.

I am thankful for school to be a thing

Because I want to learn with my friends.

I am thankful for animals.

I am thankful for homes.

I am thankful for water.

I am thankful for toys.

I am thankful for kittens.

I am thankful for the food that my mom and dad get me.

I am thankful for shirts.

I am thankful for stores.

I am thankful for furniture.

I am thankful for cleaning supplies.

I am thankful for snow.

I am thankful for friends.

I am thankful for candy.

**First Grade**



**Second Place**

**Owen Crockett**

**Mrs. Doerge**

*Wylie Elementary - Henderson ISD*

# **Baseball**

**Baseball**

**Fun, exciting**

**Catching, throwing, hitting**

**I hope Covid doesn't cancel our season this year**

**Play Ball**

***First Grade***



***First Place***

**Sammi Ambern**

**Ms. Ashby**

*Parkway Elementary - Pine Tree ISD*

# **Pets**

Dog

Fluffy, Playful

Wagging, Fetching, Playing

Ball, Frisbee, Mouse, Toy

Purring, Napping, Hissing

Friendly, Soft

Cat

***Second Grade***



***Third Place***



**Bentley Tillison**  
**Mrs. Reynold / Ms. Garner**  
*Wylie Elementary - Henderson ISD*

# Legos

You can build anything you desire

You can make worlds with Legos

They inspire and release your imagination

You can make robots or BattleBots

Legos can come in sets with many shapes and sizes

Legos are fantastic they make your mind grow

If you put forth effort, a Master Builder you will be!



## Scarlet Virgin

Ms. Ashby

*Parkway Elementary - Pine Tree ISD*

# Leaves

We watch the leaves float  
down to the ground  
round and round.

I love leaves! They are  
Brown, green, yellow, and  
So many more colors.

There are fat leaves,  
Skinny leaves, leaves that  
Hurt you and leaves that  
Feel like silk!

The world is filled with  
So many kinds of leaves.  
I could travel the world  
And see an abundance of leaves - dancing and free!

My home is filled with leaves I love.  
There are families of leaves -  
like floating doves!

Sometimes leaves are burned,  
Crushed, and stepped on.  
If nurtured, the leaves return like  
A beautiful lawn

Leaves fill our world with color to see  
All leaves are unique  
And free!

Leaves and people; people and leaves - are so alike!  
When both are loved and cared for  
Our world is whole; full of life  
and **FREE!**



**Kaitlyn Martinez Ramirez**  
**Mrs. Baley**  
*Wylie Elementary - Henderson ISD*

# **The Beauty of Spring**

It's the season of Spring,  
Bringing joy and laughter,  
The birds start to sing,  
The sun shines brighter,  
Flowers start to bloom,  
Trees get new leaves,  
Fresh water in the flume,  
Sweet honey left by bees,

With Spring comes a chilly breeze,  
But sometimes it will act warm,  
Now you can wear your cute long-sleeves,  
But watch out for the hail storms!  
I feel the wind blow,  
I see birds fly in the sky,  
Flowers start to grow,  
Chickens cross by,

The grass is light green,  
The rooster sings,  
I hear crickets in the night if I listen,  
And that is the beauty of Spring.



**Sydney Rhodes**  
**Ms. Rhodes**  
*Mineola Fine Arts Homeschool Co-op*

# Trapped?

Today I awoke to quite a sight  
what once was green had turned to white.

The gleam of snow was so bright  
icicles hung like stalactites.

The snow was so very thick  
It nearly climbed up to my hip.

It looked as if we were trapped on our farm  
the animals too, camped out in the barn.

Then, I realized it wasn't so bad  
indeed, there was a lot of fun to be had.

I came to see the snowy trees  
more like branches painted by fairies.

The icicles turned into unicorn horns  
and snow caramel could be made in the morn.

A trash can lid became a sled  
and time could be spent baking bread.

Shoveled snow became ice cream  
And the pond turned into an ice-skating rink.

So, really we weren't trapped or snowed in,  
all I needed was a new way to begin.



**Joseph Lopez**  
**Mrs. Baley**

*Wylie Elementary - Henderson ISD*

# Night Time

The sky is dark and the moon begins rising.  
The owls hoot and wolves howl.  
The wind blows and the tree leaves rustle.  
Children go to bed and people turn off their lights.  
Nocturnal animals are awake.

The sun is down and will rise soon.  
People snuggle up and snore.  
The animals go scavenging through the woods.  
Wolves hunt and foxes run. Cities shut down.

Electronics turn off. The wind blows quietly.  
Raccoons get into people's trash cans  
And the can falls, CRASH!  
Cockroaches crawl in people's houses.

Deer run away from wolves.  
Foxes search for berries in the bushes.  
Deer search for acorns.  
The stars are out. Street lights are on.

Moms read babies bedtime stories.  
Bats squeak and come out of their caves.  
The aye aye finds fruit.  
Beavers swim in rivers, SPLASH!  
Aardvarks dig long and big tunnels.  
Crickets chirp in the night.  
The sun begins rising and people wake up.



**Jaxon Goodman****Ms. Ashby***Parkway Elementary - Pine Tree ISD*

# Poems Are Tough

My mind is blank,  
I cannot think  
My head might explode!

They call it a poem  
But I don't know.....  
I'm about to hit the road!

I need to figure this out  
Before it's too late  
And the contest is over!

I'm filled with doubt  
I can't concentrate  
I'm starting to lose composure!

Wait... I think I got it!  
Nope. Nevermind.  
Ughhhhh! I'm so done with this!



**Serenity Johnson**

**Ms. Mitchell**

*UT Tyler University Academy - Longview*

# About Me

Untroubled is to calm as calm is to  
peace, you ask me my name, I say  
Serenity.

Games keep me sane and running is my lane, you  
can find me in a nook reading a really good book.  
Now as you enjoy the rest of your day I will, sit back  
and destroy a yummy PB&J.

***Fourth Grade***



***Second Place***

**Airilyn Autry**  
**Ms. Ashby**  
*Parkway Elementary - Pine Tree ISD*

# Sweet Dragon Dreams

"Time for bed," my parents say  
They peek in my room, in bed I lay

"Goodnight," says my mom, and gives me a kiss on the head.  
Then she sits down at the end of my bed.

"You know," she started, "when I was your age  
When it was bedtime I'd get in a rage."

"Well, that's probably because you weren't as tired as me," I replied  
Then we both sighed.

"Goodnight, honey" Mom said as she walked out of the room  
I look out my window and watch a flower bloom.

I look at the moon, as white as snow, I close my eyes for what felt like forever  
When I open my eyes I see a shiny lever

Out of curiosity I pull it with all of my might -  
And the first thing that came to sight

Was a BIG, SCARY... DRAGON!!!  
I turned to my right to see a wagon.

I once again used all my might and picked up the wagon and sent it flying  
- And I mean it, I'm not lying

It hit the wall and ricocheted, it hit the dragon which made him fall  
He was hit so hard he was sent through the hall

After the hall he fell through the door  
He landed on the grass with an ear-piercing roar.

Right on the spot he dropped dead  
The only thing left was a jewel from his head

I picked up the jewel and stumbled to bed  
As I walked through the hall I fell on my head

I closed my eyes and opened them again  
I was in the real world; I guess it was my imagination.





**Kilsyth Middlebrook**

**Mrs. Harwell**

*Nettie Marshall Academy of Dual Language*

# MINECRAFT

Build, survive, explore  
Fight monsters and more  
So many possibilities  
Redstone inventions and epiphanies  
Make a castles of magnitude  
Show friends and receive gratitude  
Search temples and find treasure  
Hide a base in a hill of great measure  
A superb video game  
A thrill of its Fame  
Go on, take me on a ride  
In a mine cart, try and find  
Me while I have an  
Invisibility potion and  
More - in Minecraft!

***Fifth Grade***



***Third Place***

**Payton Spears**  
**Mrs. Hipp**  
*Quitman Elementary - Quitman ISD*

# **SLAVERY**

As a Northern Factory Worker in the 1860's I do declare, Slavery  
in America is just not fair!

Enslaved people have little or no medical care  
Dying of high fever and shaking chills, Malaria, an effect of this despair

Slaves are sold at auctions like unwanted grim property  
Blood, sweat, tears, exploding improperly

Dry, swollen hands from working continuous hours so hard Watchmen,  
alert and standing guard

From morning to dusk working all day in the hot torturous sun Slaves  
are servants and never have opportunities for recreational fun

The life of a slave is quite lonely and depressed  
"Equality for All Men", the Declaration of Independence expressed Let us  
stand firm and our voices not be suppressed

It's an American disgrace to not have the freedom to read nor write,  
Hold on, enslaved ones! The Northerners are coming to fight!



**Katherine Rodriguez**  
**Mrs. Rodriguez**  
*Explorers Homeschool Co-op*

# Music

As silvery as water,  
tinkling like rain.  
As soft as a cloud  
floating through the air.  
Emotions swirling  
together in harmony.  
As sweet as flowing honey.  
A beautiful melody  
carried on the breeze.



**Raleigh Rhodes**

**Mrs. Meng**

*Mineola Fine Arts Homeschool Co-op*

# Self Portrait in a Painting

In the foreground I sit; with time  
and life around like a circle of soft-hued beings.

Black and narrow trees, slip d

o

w

n

rustic, red dirt paths that lead to the shore

These paths that z

i

g

z

a

g

Through white washed, clay houses and stone streets

I walk about in those streets. Flowering, tropical spheres in

boxes hang from the windows and dissolve into the soft sky

Every person frozen in time. The sun melts into sapphire, gold.

But what is time here? In this place of silence. Or is time just a

concept forgotten about. Thrown far away into the deep, pastel, hue.

**Sixth Grade**



**Third Place**

**Lia Steinbrecher**  
**Mrs. Petri**  
*Bridgemark Center for Learning*

# **Awakening of Spring**

Hear the water falling  
in the cool spring air.  
The sound of nature calling,  
Hear it everywhere.

Flowers blooming here and there  
Dew drops glisten on the ground,  
Like diamonds everywhere  
So much spring beauty to be found.

Savor the smell of spring in the air  
Sweet smell of the daffodil  
The wondrous fragrance of wisteria fair  
The scents of spring my senses fill.

Spring come quickly here,  
I can feel it near!



**Elizabeth Williamson**  
**Mrs. Egan**  
*Cushing Junior High - Cushing ISD*

# McKnight Church

Drive down the old country road  
 On to a humble gravel driveway  
 Past the old 168-year-old cemetery  
 And you will find McKnight Church  
 Lean against its walls  
 And listen to the singing  
 Echoing inside  
 Listen to the preacher teaching  
 The Word Of Christ  
 Go inside and past the aisles  
 The quire and pianists  
 Through a white door  
 Past the Sunday School Rooms  
 And you'll find a room  
 That's like a time machine  
 Filled with black and white photos of the church  
 so,so,long ago  
 Listen to the Choir rising in sweet song  
 Listen to The humble crowd  
 clapping and singing from the pews  
 It sadly has few people  
 Join it every Sunday morning  
 Few kids ever set foot in its rooms  
 It has few people to sing in the quire  
 It barely even has a preacher  
 But no matter the thick or the thin  
 The problem or the trouble  
 The trials,the tests,and the struggles  
 Year after, year after, year after,year  
 Sweet old Mcknight Church  
 Remains faithful to me.



**Grace Pitts**  
**Mrs. Rodriguez**  
*Explorers Homeschool Co-op*

# Dawn

In the castle of time Lady Day sits and waits as the Night King relaxes his hold on the heavens.

She seizes her chance and weaves her sky-cloth, plucking colors from the air. Like a silvery spider she spins the dawn, turning the dusky-gray light into a fiery glory. Her spindle darts through threads, creating a scene like a living paintbox. She stretches her sky-cloth from horizon to horizon, conquering the kingdom. As she watches, the moon cracks open, hatching a beautiful flaming morning.



**Mikaela Haufler**

**Ms. Patterson**

*Sabine Middle School - Sabine ISD*

# **The Solace of the Ocean**

The tickling sand where the calm ocean starts  
Warms and cools in different parts

The smooth ripples to show salty ocean's marks  
The beginning of a vast, bewitching march

The tempestuous waves in deeper parts  
The azure shadows blanketing fins of sharks

The waves, well, waving  
Always seen together, not apart

The gleeful children playing at the seashore park burying  
each other and laughing 'til dark

Sun's last light soon sorrow-ly fading away  
O' the sights I've seen today

Standing atop a large, jagged rock  
The winds swirl around as my sorrows start to stalk  
My face grows damp from the ocean's spray  
As the winds pry all my woes away

I'm on my knees now, fighting against all my tears  
When my mother calls for me, "come here, dear!"

I step off the rock with a deep sigh,  
The ocean had cleansed; my spirits now high

I'll never forget the bittersweet memories of this little part

Truly the kind of ocean that warms the heart





**Brailey Barron**  
**Mrs. Egan**  
*Cushing Junior High - Cushing ISD*

# GrandPa

When I think of GrandPa  
Fishing and hunting comes to mind  
Alan Jackson playing in the old pines  
We used to fish every day.

When GrandPa passed I didn't fish  
GrandMa was sad and so was I  
But if I had one wish  
It would be for GrandPa to never die.

Life still goes on without him  
But I miss his laugh and hugs  
GrandMa ain't the same  
But she still has his gun and rugs.



**Joshua Ramirez****Ms. Watson***Henderson Middle School - Henderson ISD*

# Texas

Texas, the Lone Star State

Texas, she is the best, that's no debate

Texas, friend is her name

Now treat her right, and she'll treat you the same

From rolling hills to winding roads

Somewhere you will find your abode

It's a mix of Mexican spice, memories mashed, and a country music marinade

That makes the best dish ever made

For the Lone star state you make lots of friends

You can make them before the day begins

Now you have got to pick your friends wisely

Because not all match your personality

Late nights and hunting bucks

And having singalongs in your truck

Now all these things have one thing in common

And that none of these are ever forgotten



**Charlie Rodriguez**  
**Mrs. Rodriguez**  
*Explorer's Homeschool Co-op*

# Antebellum Mansion

Every piece of furniture, every column and tile, tells tales of yesteryear  
Of joy and laughter  
Of war and suffering  
And of every feeling possible in between.  
I race through the passages of this illustrious castle-like abode  
Following footsteps centuries old.  
This is the kitchen where the slave became his own master;  
Free. Ruled now by no man.  
This is the parlor where the mistress wept a river of tears;  
Tears of grief over losing a son.  
Rooms lure me in, one after another.  
Running my palm across the planks  
I feel them pulse with history.  
I imagine the Boom of cannons ringing through the countryside.  
Bullet holes from battles past & blood shed by the blue-uniformed boy  
Stand like grim memorials to an even grimmer war.  
There are shadows here  
Of joy and laughter  
Of war and suffering  
And of every feeling possible in between.



**Paisley Lewis**  
**Mrs. Richardson**

*Henderson Middle School - Henderson ISD*

# Self Image

I'm average  
You'll never hear me say that  
I'm unique  
I am less than enough  
I will not believe  
I am special

I'm not smart  
You'll never hear me say that  
I am proud of my grades  
I'm not good at my work  
I will not feel  
I am capable

I'm flawed  
You'll never hear me say that  
I'm proud of how I look  
I don't fit society's beauty norms  
I will not trust that  
I am beautiful

I'm not admired  
You'll never hear me say that  
I'm liked enough  
I don't have enough friends  
I will not perceive that  
I am favored

\* Now read bottom to top\*



**Jacob Penrose**

**Mrs. Hunnicutt**

*Henderson Middle School - Henderson ISD*

# Sand

As I walk in the sand

With the sand in my hand

It is all I need

To be free

***Eighth Grade***



***Third Place***

**Emery Chenault**  
**Mrs. Smith**

*Henderson Middle School - Henderson ISD*

# **The Time It Only Takes**

It only took a month  
For people to move on  
For people to stop crying  
For people to keep living  
It only took a week  
For me to stop talking  
For you to lose your hair  
For us to not see each other  
It only took a day  
For you to start chemo  
For people to know  
For me to wonder  
It only took an hour  
For things to be different  
For things to  
Look,  
Sound,  
Feel  
Different

Not the same, not ever the same again



**Kasey Rhodes**

**Mrs. Meng**

*Mineola Fine Arts Homeschool Co-op*

# Phoenix

We rise from the ashes, breathing  
broken branches yet, heartwood remains  
When voices were silenced, our country was grieving  
We grew louder, liberty freed from her chains  
We live on to pursue  
Life, and the pursuit of happiness  
We made it through  
The democracy that carries us  
United together  
Living for each other  
No matter what, we must weather  
Moving forward, liberty with her torch above her

We will find  
The light at the end of tunnel  
Fumbling blindly for a switch  
Only to realize it's inside of us  
Because The U.S. is made of US

**Kaitlyn Kocher****Mrs. Hunnicutt***Henderson Middle School - Henderson ISD*

# Fantasy

Looking past it now I see,  
There's more than just reality.  
When you look past the surface,  
And inside the unknown workings.

The fated attempt at a refuge  
makes it all seem huge.  
The one time it all makes sense  
Is as you wonder when it became a defense.

The burden of a thousand lives  
brings the knowledge of a thousand minds.  
Surrounded by the words unheard  
Brings the deepest feelings stirred.

The pages at your fingertips,  
The words a paper eclipse.  
Feeling everything,  
Then nothing,

all at once.

--





**Ari Williams**  
**Mrs. Gillentine**  
*Bridgemark Center for Learning*

# The Cold Water

As I lay in the cold water, I remember how my life was before I dove into the water.

I shake, I shiver, I freeze, I quiver.

The water so deep, so cold, I think, for I have nothing left but the water.

Water inside my lungs, water that covers my entire body. I never thought of swimming to shore, but I thought the water would help me remember who I was.

As I lay in the cold water, I start to remember how my life was before as I float up to shore.

The cold water was not for nothing, for it was truly for something.

As I lay out of the cold water, I realize I am not afraid anymore; my life is back to normal.

I no longer shake; I no longer shiver, like I did when I was in the dark, scary, and cold water.



**Katelynn Seacott****Mrs. Waldon***Waskom High School - Waskom ISD*

# Extinct

I remember seeing colors I had never seen  
And feeling like I was in a movie scene  
And when I was down you would say,  
“Just lean on me”  
To this day, your voice replays in my head like a melody  
But more of a tragic love song with all the lyrics being wrong  
I can watch you walk down the street  
And I can read your tweets  
And we have a couple conversations a week  
But it’s leaving me weak  
Because all I see is the shell of the person you used to be  
And it’s destroying me  
No longer are we laughing and dancing  
I’m crying and screaming  
Because you shattered my heart like a vase  
Now every time I look into your face  
All I see is emptiness and terror where I once saw grace  
Where I once saw life  
Where I once saw light  
Now I’m struggling to break up the fight between what I know  
and what I feel  
Between feeling that there’s no way the world could’ve killed the  
beauty of us  
And knowing the feeling of horror  
That the person I love doesn’t exist anymore



**Sydney Dwyer**  
**Mrs. Weiblinger**  
*Hudson High School - Hudson ISD*

# Beautiful Destruction

Something as simple as rising in the morning  
and resting through the night  
It causes such pain, yet  
is described in elaborate grace  
It burns cities to ash and  
builds them to new heights  
Ruins reputations with thoughtless keystrokes  
Creates something so indescribable--life itself  
Though through these days that blur together  
like books tossed in random puddles in the street  
I think  
Philosophers of ages past fabricate sonnets and plays  
to properly capture the feeling in figurative ways  
Yet people fear this beautiful thing, for its sting  
It is not destructive itself, but the aftermath is quite unforgiving  
This beautiful destruction  
Constitutes in many forms, always pure  
Literature new, and old,  
tells us to give condolence to those who live without  
It is so precious, cannot be truly bought  
Another named poet  
Who dared to write  
By the name of Virgil  
Said once, "Amor vincit omnia,"  
His words speak truth  
Though few carry might  
That love conquers all  
in its grand flight

**Ninth Grade**



**First Place**

**Jenna Cromer**  
**Mrs. Gillentine**  
*Bridgemark Center for Learning*

# Music

I put in headphones and slowly leave reality.

I sit and stare at a blank wall while music fills my thoughts.

Music makes me worry about nothing, and I love it.

I feel alone and at peace while I listen to the voices of my peeps.

I listen to life put into music.

I listen to everyone's problems to fix my own.



**Cade Alders**

**Ms. Guerrero**

*Woden High School - Woden ISD*

# **Bathroom Dance**

dilly-dallying, dancing in a dirty dilapidated dimly lit  
subway train hall bathroom like a marionette jumping  
gestures, tipping, toeing 'round the tile flailing my arms  
about and I can't help but smile  
the mirror speaks to me, projecting my image as I romp  
step by step, stomp by stomp

a fleeting tear runs down my cheek, leaving behind a wet  
streak I'm like Carnival the Clown boogying down in this  
one horse town feeling alive, setting the scene in this all  
but forgotten latrine  
carrying this tune to save my life, won't last long  
number by number, song by song

and as the dim light beats down upon my face,  
I realize it's the most I'll ever receive the rest of my days  
and it beats me down just as this cruel society's way  
can't see the forest through all the trees it's why I don't  
belong right by right, wrong by wrong  
Life in a Teenage Mind

***Tenth Grade***



***Second Place***

**Abigail Williams****Mrs. Williams***Mineola Fine Arts Homeschool Co-op*

# The Clearing

When the smoke clears

The long awaited sun will drip through the darkness of war

The people won't fear that bombs will fall from the shrouded sky

When the smoke clears

Families will be reunited on the battlefield

Where so many have died

Many will weep for those who have left them alone

When the smoke clears

The nations will realize that the deaths of millions were pointless

But it will be too late.

**Tenth Grade****First Place**

**Breanna Jordan**

**Mrs. Ware**

*Elysian Fields High School - Elysian Fields ISD*

# Of Wax and Feathers

*A creation of wax and feathers*

*Daedalus, what's your idea?*

*Fly through the window, see the sky*

*I wish to be blind to your misfortunes*

*Never quit your destiny, good things unveiled- and your life will sail,  
across uncharted seas (5)*

*Upon the shore line, the deep horizon sky; Watch the sea shine,  
reflections alive*

*Tell me, what do you see?*

*Souls soaring far too high , leave everything behind*

*A certain strive, to be, to thrive*

*What do you see? (10)*

*Upon the tower, the striking sun beams; see the moss on the  
cobblestone, still alive*

*What do you see?*

*Souls gliding far too low, leave everything behind*

*Certain motivation, no observation*

*Don't step away from the golden skies (15)*

*The higher you fly, the more I worry*

*The wax is melting, Icarus, a flurry of fire*

*My fury is being fueled as I witness*

*Burning kisses being spread on your skin*

*Was your death worth it for him? (20)*



**Hannah Williams****Mrs. Williams***Mineola Fine Arts Homeschool Co-op***Song**

The trees were young, their bark was grey  
On moss and heather dew was laid  
And starlight gathered 'mongst the shade  
With moonrise swiftly following

And there within this youthful wood  
The river water gently flowed  
And when it came to gentle fold  
It gathered deeply, glistening

Then Anuile came wandering there  
Among the trunks and branches bare  
When, soft, he heard a voice come fair  
Across the river, singing

For Elenin, sky's daughter,  
Had come to sing beside the water  
From whom her mother's kin was born  
When stars and stream lay mirroring

She stood on edge of open glade  
Then in the stream began to wade  
And dances under star were made  
Within the stream bed, rippling

She danced and sang throughout the night  
And Anuile, so as not to fright,  
Walked slowly into her sight  
The leaves above them, quivering

They stood together in the stream  
And stepped forever out of dream  
Before them laid a path unseen  
Of light and shadow, mingling

***Eleventh Grade******Second Place***



**Riley Seidel**  
**Mrs. Davis**

*Pine Tree High School - Pine Tree ISD*

# Flourish

I was born without the knowledge of music  
 With the ingredients of sound unknown to me  
 I inherited only the gift of observation,  
 A powdered elephant I own.  
 Grateful, I know not the tricks, the slide of hands that create such magic  
 The illusion, guarded by my ignorance, the emotions, infused with every  
 breath

My first memory of *Une Barque Sur l'océan* still speaks:  
 "This, this is what it feels like to love  
 To be forever joyful in the writhing pain of passion  
 I was born to love, only to love  
 My tears will guide me to such a life,  
 And I will forever be in debt to Ravel"  
 To revel in that kind of emotion once more and once more, that is all I  
 desire  
 What elation the serendipity of those notes brought me...

And I am free and flourish in the *Moonlight*  
 With heart, aching in the despair of Beethoven's loss  
*I feel you! I feel you!*  
 Yearning with grief, I cry for the sorrow of my loved ones  
 I will live a life I will not see, a life never lived.  
 And the chords in my heart will pluck themselves  
 For the death of a lover whose touch I will not feel

My eternal sun shines with the touch upon the ivory  
 My heart swells to each life filled with stained wood and strings  
 Inside of this music, I am  
 Beauty lends its hand to those who see desire in despair  
 And though youth has blessed me with time and naïveté,  
 I shall float in the lines of the ones long passed  
 And live in timeless expression of emotion



**Brooke Copeland****Mrs. Ware***Elysian Fields High School - Elysian Fields ISD***PTSD**

The New Years of 2019,  
My brother and I sat in the living room,  
Talking, laughing, doing what siblings do.

Fireworks exploded outside,  
Vibrant colors of green and blue  
Distracted me from my brother,  
Who turned dark red.

In an instant, he stood up.  
With anger and fear profound in his blue eyes,  
Fists collided with walls, knees buckled, hot tears hit the floor.  
Tired whimpers and cries expounded from my brother, The  
man who serves in the Marines,  
The man who just returned from overseas.

"If I didn't kill them, they would've killed me."  
Over and over again, replayed in my ears,  
From the man who serves in the Marines,  
Who wishes he never served.  
Who wishes he was home with me.

Feeling helpless, I watched the man who raised me fall apart.  
Wishing he never served.  
Wishing he was home with me.



**Jennifer Aguilar**

**Ms. Guerrero**

*Woden High School - Woden ISD*

# **A Sincere Love**

There is something about his licks

That makes me feel loved,

It contagious me with his energy

Which makes me feel lucky.

There is no being so noble and sincere

That the faithful friend that I love.

I hear his barking in the morning.

Eager to play from the first hour of the day,

Just jumping of joy he peeks beside my bed.

He shakes his tail looking for affection,

Friend of all, provides you protection.

There is no being so cheerful and brave

That the faithful friend that I love.

Fierce like Argos, runs faster than the wind.

Sweet like Benji, greet everyone with a friendly smile.

He is my sunshine, has a heart of gold,

That is why until my last breath

He will be worthy of my devotion.

There is no animal so symbolic and special That the faithful

dog that I will endlessly love.



**Twelfth Grade**

**Third Place**

**Asia Johnson****Mrs. Dahlgren***Chapel Hill High School - Chapel Hill ISD*

# Seed of Life

Birth

I am a seedling  
Sprouting into the world  
My own germination intimidating  
my lack of experience

Hope

The warmth of the sun  
Embracing my crisp leaves,  
I bloom  
With feeling that this unknown journey will be  
Beautiful

Pain

Bending beneath the overwhelming pressure  
I doubt  
With something that could make me stronger,  
Perseverance  
Keeps my leaves bent but will not break me

Prosper

In my own torn leaves where I am battered  
I am wise  
More aware that I am not permanently  
Shattered

**Twelfth Grade****Second Place**

**Shea Clews**

**Mrs. Egan**

*Cushing High School - Cushing ISD*

# **I Think I'm the Smoke You Breathe In**

I think I'm the smoke you breathe in.  
 you went for the artificial at first  
 tasting sweetness that burnt your throat  
 into a desensitized rasp.  
 you found me in peaks of my age  
 I was the temptation of femininity  
 and your symbol of innocence.  
 you set me on fire with a stolen lighter.  
 and kept me ablaze ever since.  
 I grew to crave this.  
 and I could express the hopes of devotion  
 into something real.  
 but in a certain instance,  
 you started chewing nicorette.  
 and you told me in your bedroom  
 that it was time to quit.  
 over years  
 you'd come back to take the edge off.  
 weeping with me  
 longing for the past and dissecting decision.  
 over and over we'd try again  
 but when you started coughing  
 I'd go back to counting  
 the months you were away from nicotine.  
 or simply me.  
 I think I'm the smoke you breathe in.  
 each time.  
 again and again.



**Rusk County Poetry Society  
Scholarship Winner**



**2021**

**Twelfth Grade**

**First Place**



Young Audiences of Northeast Texas is honored to be able to continue the great tradition of Northeast Poetry in Schools. The literary arts are critical to the development of students and provide the opportunity for them to find their voice.

Young Audiences is committed to using all art forms to enrich the lives of children and enhance their education. We believe in a three part approach to a comprehensive education in and through the arts; Arts Education - the pure teaching of the arts; Arts Integration - using the arts to reinforce non-arts content; and Arts Exposure - helping students to see that art is all around them. Our experienced teaching artists partner with teachers and administrators to bring the arts directly to the students - right in their schools and classrooms. Our artists bring arts instruction to schools where not all forms are taught. They also work with teachers to integrate arts learning with other content, expanding understanding in both the art form and the paired content. Additionally, we pair with other arts organizations to expose students to all forms of art in their communities.

Research has proven that investment in arts education results in improved academic, social, and civic outcomes. In addition to those outcomes, access to the arts is invaluable in helping students gain the life skills necessary to find their passions.

The poems presented here are a vivid testament to this.

We join you in celebrating these talented students.



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