

## 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Cambridge Public Library and Cambridge Tree Project Poetry Awards May 21, 2014

Each year the Cambridge Public Library, in partnership with the Cambridge Tree Projects invites students from Kindergarten through Grade 8 who live or attend school in Cambridge to submit their poems for our annual competition during the month of April, National Poetry Month. In 2014 we received 894 entries. We recognized 64 poets for their outstanding work at our reading and awards ceremony on May 21.

The poems that follow are presented in order of our program. For those looking for their favorite poet's piece, a table of contents organized by first name starts on the next page.

Thanks to this year's winning poets, their teachers and families, and to all who submitted poems this year. We hope you will keep writing and look forward to great works from you all!

Karen Carmean  
Cambridge Tree Project

and

Amanda Gazin  
Cambridge Public Library



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## Stuck

Stuck like cheese on pizza

Stuck like honey mixed with tea

Stuck like pasta in the box

Stuck like rocks in the ground

Stuck like super glue

Stuck like nachos with cheese

Stuck like tape

Stuck like muck

Stuck like you can't think of...

a poem to...

write

Help!

*Emma Canale-Parola*  
*First Place, First Grade*  
*Morse School*



## Books

I love books

It will open wide

to show the pictures

that are inside

new words

new pictures

oh

I sigh

*Leena Hemet*

*Third Place, First Grade*

*Morse School*

## Smart Dr. Seuss

Dr. Seuss, Dr. Seuss

He is smart.

He came, he came

with an idea.

He wrote, he wrote

a rhyming book.

So great, so great

Cat in the Hat.

*Yamirah Trinidad*

*Third Place, First Grade*

*Kennedy-Longfellow School*

## Launch!

Launch!  
From your wooden swing  
Launch!  
Into the arms of a giant oak  
Launch!  
On to the rooftops  
Launch!  
Into the ocean  
On to a distant island  
Into the sky  
Launch!  
To a land where anything can be true  
It will be up to you  
Launch!  
And close your eyes  
And hold on tight so you don't fall  
Halfway  
Let your imagination push you  
And your creativity catch you  
Before reality can pull you back to Earth.

*Claire Emison  
First Place, Fourth Grade  
Baldwin School*



## Trees

Trees trees

How they sway in the summer breeze

Sway sway sway all through the day

Go fast

Go slow

I am the girl who loves nature for the flowers and the birds

I see a tree or two

Maybe you love it too

But I see more there and here

I see a butterfly near

That tree

Oh I see a cute bunny and some babies

And I love it all.

*Sophia Sykes-Finkelstein  
First Place, Kindergarten  
Baldwin School*



## Trees

Outside you survive harsh winds,  
the sleeting rain, the coldest snows,  
but you just stand there, the survivor,  
you take on your enemies, you win,  
and now you just stand unharmed,  
waiting and ready for your next enemy.

*Lily Weinstein*  
*Third Place, Third Grade*  
*Shady Hill School*



## The Mountains Say Good Morning

The mountains say “good morning”  
to the sun.

The water is drinking the sky.



*Shruti Shil*  
*Third Place, Kindergarten*  
*Tobin Montessori School*

## Sorry

Dear Mom,

I'm truly sorry  
for spilling the whole  
box of Cheerios, and to  
top it off, the whole  
jug of milk. All I was  
really just trying to  
do was try to make  
breakfast.



I was only one or two but  
I remember it like yesterday.  
I can still remember the  
kitchen becoming a white  
sea and the Cheerios  
turning into seaweed.  
I feel terrible and should have  
known better. I wish it never happened.

Sorry.

Sincerely,  
MM

*Melaku Mohammed*  
*Third Place, Fifth Grade*  
*King Open School*

## I Wish I Stayed in Bed This Orange

I wish I stayed in bed this orange.  
See nothing sense make.  
You I told right something not is.  
Bed must I sleep to in.  
Oh I wish I stayed in bed this orange.  
Oh I am navy blue.  
I going back bed to till orange next.  
What but I do tomorrow...



*Amaan Khwaja*  
*Honorable Mention, Fourth Grade*  
*Cambridge Friends School*

## **Bad Pizza**

I had bad pizza for dinner  
Now it's the thing I threw  
I had bad pizza for dinner  
And now it's on my shoe

*Alex Nolan  
Kennedy-Longfellow School  
Honorable Mention, Third Grade*



## Motorcycle Bike

My bike is like a motorcycle

I ride it so fast

I rub the handle and say

**ROOM ROOM**

It's so fast my clothes blow

Wooooooooooooooooosh

I wear a sweater and the wind blows.

The sweater is like a cape blowing

in the wind.

**ROOM ROOM**

I race ahead!!!

*Marquis Fadel Maxwell*

*Honorable Mention, First Grade*

*Tobin Montessori School*

## The Hedgehog, The Big Guy...and the ?

There was a hedgehog who found a ?  
He had fun with it, the ?  
'Til a big guy came and took the ?  
But, the hedgehog was clever  
He tied a rope around a tree  
The big guy came  
The hedgehog pulled  
The tree came toppling over  
You-know-what came out of you-know-who's hand  
"I wasn't expecting that!" said the hedgehog  
He took it home...  
Wherever that was.

*Zeki Ozay*  
*Second Place, Kindergarten*  
*Tobin Montessori School*

## Library



I sit in a hard,  
wooden chair  
with the sunlight  
SEEPING  
through the blinds.

Stories,  
information,  
legends and tales.  
They magically wisp around me,  
knitting a shawl for  
me.  
In the library.

*Iman Ibrahim  
Third Place, Fourth Grade  
Morse School*

## The Wind

The wind is blowing and  
Faster, faster  
A howling cry and  
Faster, faster  
A deafening shriek and  
Everything is still  
Absolutely still.

*Mia Hower*  
*Third Place, Third Grade*  
*Shady Hill School*



## I Am a Bird

I see the sights no human will see,  
like the mountain tops and the tops of the trees.  
I taste the things no human will taste,  
like bugs and worms.  
I hear the things no human will hear up close, like my baby chicks  
babbling.  
I feel the things no human will want to feel, like slimy worms.  
I smell the things no human will smell from the top.  
Then I yell out  
“I AM A BIRD!”  
I am a bird.

*Edlawit Zewde*  
*First Place, Second Grade*  
*Fletcher Maynard Academy*



## Summer's Day

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?  
No, you do not deserve such a compliment.  
I shall compare you to a summer's night,  
Or maybe evening,  
But a summer's day?  
I'm saving *that* for myself.

*May Cort  
Honorable Mention, Fourth Grade  
Cambridge Friends School*



## Clap

Round of applause for  
The Happiness  
in this world.  
Don't bring the violence  
in this community  
Laugh with  
your Friends  
and make sure  
your Families are Awake  
Dance with Love  
and Clap  
for People.

*Emma Urena  
Third Place, Second Grade  
Fletcher Maynard Academy*



## Ode to Autism

My friends  
with Autsim  
are so  
nice and  
beautiful  
like a butterfly  
in a  
cocoon  
then it comes  
out  
ready to fly.



*Nevaeh Dottin*  
*Honorable Mention, Second Grade*  
*Fletcher Maynard Academy*

## Flower

A flower is just a flower  
Until you look at it  
Another way.  
So you may say it looks  
Like a tree,  
Or a broom,  
Or a bush,  
Or even a reindeer antler.

*Celia Walsh*  
*First Place, First Grade*  
*Morse School*



## Tale of Tutu

I'm Tutu the tulip,  
yellow, green, and red

I grew from a bulb planted  
in a flower bed

I looked like an onion  
but now I've grown  
tall

I've grown a baby bulb  
and my bulb has  
shrunk small

My roots help me  
stand and absorb  
dissolved food  
My leaves catch the sunlight,  
and I'm a tulip dude!

*Diane Griggs's Class  
Second Place, First Grade  
Cambridgeport School*



## Pond

Ripples, very small

a big pond of blue

Ripples, very small

pushing sailboats

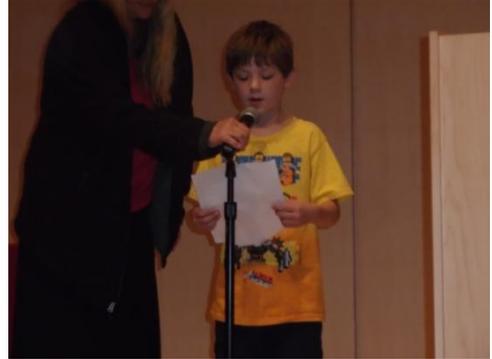
a little breeze

no waves at all

Ripples, very small

Ripples, very small

*Jackson Beckfeild  
Second Place, First Grade  
Fletcher Maynard Academy*



the sea

waves from the sea  
crushed against rocks  
waves  
like dancing water  
rain  
like crying skies  
into the sea

*Jalen Chu  
First Place, Second Grade  
Peabody School*



## Four Wishes

Forsythia bloom  
Sudden snowstorm endangers all  
I yearn for summer

Swimming, hiking-fun!  
Humid, mosquitoes to steal blood  
I yearn for autumn

Corn maze, pumpkin patch  
Witches, fly dust in my eyes  
Let winter come quick

Ski, sled-merry time!  
Frozen branches, hibernate  
Now I yearn for spring.

*Ning-Er Lei*  
*First Place, Fifth Grade*  
*Haggerty School*



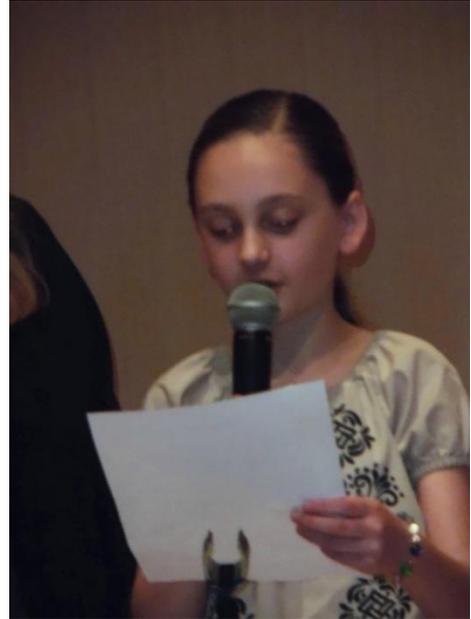
## The Seasons Come

Winter comes  
Cold white fluff  
Falls on my arms  
My fingers are long gone

Spring comes  
My fingers grow  
And get green  
Life comes back  
My arms get  
Even longer  
Those little drops  
Of cool water  
Fall on me

Summer comes  
My fingers get dark green  
That bright ball of gas  
Shines down on me  
Like a hot oven

Fall comes  
That gust of wind is bothering me  
My fingers go from green  
To orange



To red and yellow

They are falling

falling

falling

down

*Jade Buckwalter*

*Third Place, Fourth Grade*

*Martin Luther King Jr School*

## The Winter

I am a soldier

Traveling to other countries  
with my army,  
overpowering them.  
No predicting what we will do.

But watch out as we come closer.

As we launch our first attack on you,  
we throw soft white pebbles,  
as many pebbles as we can.  
Then the kids are delighted.

But the kids have misunderstood us.

Then we strike again!  
White bullets come down to the ground.  
The kids still don't understand,  
but the parents start to worry.

But we get angrier.

Then,  
**BOOM!**  
Our explosives cover the ground,  
with white.

Kids and parents,  
Fleeing to go back inside.  
Then I know I've won.  
I've won this battle.



**I am winter!**

But we get angrier!

I see people trying to  
Escape our cold.  
Some people protect themselves,  
with jackets and coats.

Then we'll just attack again.

But they got lucky.

Our enemy had arrived.  
We were scared,  
We all wanted to run away.  
Spring was attacking.

We all shot our weapons,  
but they just melted like butter.  
Half the army ran away,  
We were outnumbered.

We were fading away,  
spring was winning, then

**Whoosh!**

We escaped

**But we will come back!**

**Next year.**

*Labeeb Alam*  
*Second Place, Fifth Grade*  
*Kennedy Longfellow School*

## Icicles

Icicles like upside down ice cream cones

that winter owns

the wind shall blow

as they fall in the fluffy snow

they will fall

might pop a ball

*Zack Perman  
Third Place, Third Grade  
Haggerty School*



**Will it never end?**

Storm  
Dark, Angry  
Blows, Howls, Crashes  
Will it Never end?  
Nature's rage

Lightning  
Loud, Scary  
Booms, Thunders, Electrocutes  
Will it never end?  
Nature's screams

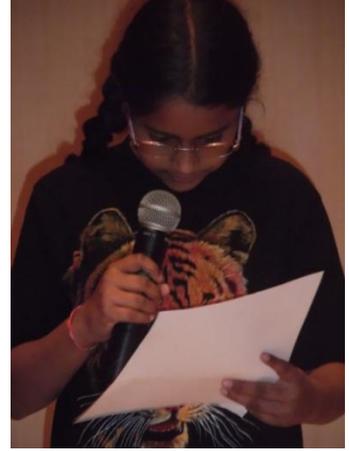
Rain  
Wet, Pleasant  
Pouring, Falling, Dropping  
Will it never end?  
Nature's Cries

Clouds  
Black, Slow  
Raining, Lightning, Thundering  
Will it never end?  
Nature's Tantrum

*Augustin David Donaldson-Gaul  
First Place, Fourth Grade  
Peabody School*

## Night

Moon glitters, lights sky  
Fireflies light dark forest  
Wind ruffles leaves, tree



## Winter

Soft flakes gently fall  
Frosty wind blowing leaves, twigs  
Leaves changing color.

## Spring

Flowers blossoming  
Pink, Purple, Yellow petals  
Sun shining warm, gold.

*Advika Agrawal*  
*Second Place, Third Grade*  
*Cambridge Friends School*

## Dreams

### Intro

Dreams are crazy, you can have them any way you want.

You can fly, sail to an island or go to space.

What if dreams were real? What would you do?

Be a Super Hero and save the day!

I would have super powers and look cool!

Dreams are like fairy tales.

### Haiku Poem

Dreams are so awesome.

You can do what ever you want.

But they are not real.

*Abdullah Tiahi*  
*Second Place, Second Grade*  
*Kennedy-Longfellow School*



## Haiku

Haikus are so bad  
Sometimes you don't get to say  
Everything that

*Rhylan Buxton*  
*Honorable Mention, Fifth Grade*  
*Fayerweather Street School*



Cat

Cat

Short, fluffy

Sleeping, playing, meowing

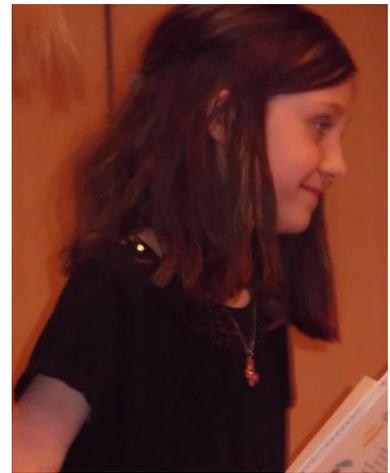
Always yawning

Razzy

*Ella Lebrich*

*Honorable Mention, Second Grade*

*Peabody School*



## Dwarf Hamster

A Dwarf Hamster bundled in her  
loaf of  
woodchips.

Burrowing for the night,  
running on the wheel for the  
day.

Stuffing her  
soft  
cheeks  
with food.

Watching over the classroom  
minute after  
minute after  
minute.

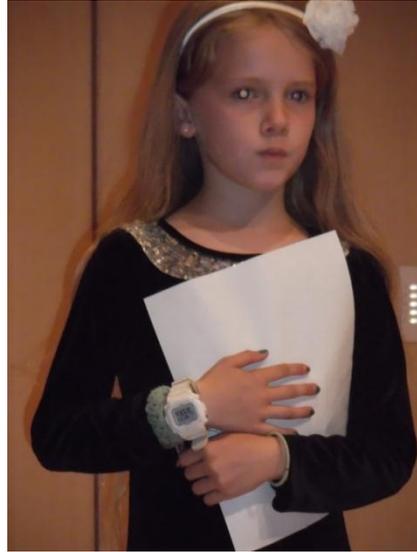
I wonder if time flies,  
  
in her mind.

*Axelle Yanakakis-Carroll  
First Place, Third Grade  
Morse School*



## Zebra

I see you  
your stripes  
your  
black  
yet  
white  
your  
stripes show in  
the morning  
light  
you disappear  
but you left  
your stripes  
behind in  
my mind  
zebra



*Nora Malone  
Honorable Mention, Third Grade  
Cambridgeport School*

**crows**



lots of black, black, black!

black legs

bill

feet

eyes

and tail.

glossy gleaming black feathers

social

straight flying fast flying

riding along in the air

nuts, shellfish, bugs

other egg eating predator

mysterious carrion munching

strange and wonderful crows.

*William Speight  
Second Place, Second Grade  
Peabody School*



## Goodbye

I place you there,  
in the grimy water of the Charles River.  
Your body,  
lifeless and still,  
sequined in gold scales.  
At least now  
you have broken through  
the glass walls that held you captive.  
The water gently caresses your fins,  
as if saying,  
“come with me.”  
Goodbye,  
my dear Harpo,  
Goodbye.

*Maria Montalvo  
Amigos School  
Third Place, Sixth Grade*

## Root and Bark

my life revolves around my roots  
that feed and nourish my soul  
my trunk  
who brings the dewy liquid through my body

and my branches  
bringing liveliness to me  
my leaves  
which take what I have given them  
and sculpt  
my  
energy

then my bark  
who surrounds me with its protection  
being my armor  
and warding off  
all harm  
and together

we survive

*Alma Kent*  
*Third Place, Sixth Grade*  
*Cambridge Street Upper School*

## Anxious Leaf

You are rough  
and tough  
stubborn and overprotective  
but in the fall I can finally see  
what will happen to me  
I squiggle and wiggle  
but wait!  
Won't I die?  
But then I remember  
I will just fly  
But why?



I seek the adventure  
I must go to  
Smoothly and swiftly  
I will get through  
I jump up and  
down  
high and  
low  
but not too  
slow in the great wild  
while I  
go go go

*Herani Hiruy  
First Place, Fourth Grade  
Martin Luther King Jr School*



## New York City

The sun sets over the tops of towering buildings,  
Shining golden, red, purple, mahogany, all the colors of sun set

As I am jostled through Times Square,  
The lights blare into my soft hazel eyes,  
Putrid smells of rotting fruit, hot dogs, plastic  
Contrasting with the aromas of ladies' perfume, and the faint  
smells  
    of various laundry detergents

Linen handbags and leather briefcases swing above my head,  
My mother and I are one with the crowd,  
Going both with and against the flow of people, there is no proper  
    way to go

My fear comes in and out like the ocean, but I know I am safe,  
With my small little hand grasped tightly in my mother's.

For some people it is a sea of heads,  
But for me,  
A four-year-old in New York City,  
It is a sea of shoes.

*Willa Frank*  
*Second Place, Sixth Grade*  
*Shady Hill School*



## Ice Skates

Below my soles  
are razor sharp blades.  
They are what make me  
me.

I move  
thanks to those,  
who put me  
on  
and when they do,  
not only  
do I  
change location.

I soar across the ice,  
dancing,  
drawing loops and swirls  
all over  
this crystalline solid.

I gracefully glide through the rink,  
swiveling,  
slicing the frozen water  
below me.

I dash as the spotlight  
chases me,  
twirling,  
turning  
towards every direction  
imaginable.



But no one  
is truly proud.  
They only  
observe  
the skater  
who wears me.  
To them,  
I never danced  
or drew.  
I never swiveled  
or sliced.  
I never twirled  
or turned.  
I am just  
a pair  
of sharp,  
ragged shoes.  
Waiting  
for attention,  
credit,  
recognition.

I don't want to be  
just a shadow  
that scars  
the ice.

*Micaela Leon Perdomo*  
*Third Place, Seventh Grade*  
*Amigos School*

## Flute Friend

Her cool gold embouchure plate  
sits comfortably on my lips.  
Her long, thin tube  
fits perfectly into my hands.  
Her reflective silver coating  
gleams with joy.  
Her melodious, dark tune,  
or even bright cheery one  
causes muscles to loosen  
as those vibrations reach the ear.  
I, a bachelor,  
have her as my wife.

For she is my soulmate  
Just picking her up  
elates me.

She does anything I want  
within her ability  
when I request  
without a moment's hesitation.

At times she makes me shed  
salt water droplets  
to cleanse my natural lenses  
a little excessively.

For occasionally pure frustration  
from my inability  
to behave properly with her  
infuriates me.



There are times  
when I feel like boarding the ISS  
and tossing her out,  
but then I realize the problem  
is in me, not her,  
so I jump out too  
to save her.

I can express myself through her,  
being fun and lively,  
bringing joy to people,  
energizing them.  
Or be deep and sentimental  
and please one's inner being.

But when I mess up  
she can make people cringe  
at the sounds that come out of her mouth  
yet it is all my fault.

She helps me along  
pushes me forward  
through difficulties.  
Makes me persevere.

As I increase the metronome  
one interval a time  
she makes me slow down  
makes me take a closer look at things  
to understand things completely.  
She teaches me patience,

I love being around her  
when things work out  
I try to replicate the circumstances.  
I lose track of my environment,  
I am put in a labyrinth  
which the only exits are  
mad parents, guilt, and weariness.

Our developing relationship  
is a slow, steady process  
improving with every passing day.  
Her sound fills my universe.  
I love my flute.

*Kailash Nakagawa*  
*First Place, Seventh Grade*  
*Amigos School*

## Leap Leap Leap

Sometimes people ask me why I never wear a dress to school usually I don't answer.

The other day Gretchen asked me why

Here's the truth of an answer.

I'm not one of those people who takes a lot of little steps

when I run or sprint, I go

step LEAP, step LEAP, step LEAP, step LEAP

with pants, the pant legs go where you go.

That's why I always wear pants to school.

*Zoe Siegelnickel*

*Second Place, Third Grade*

*Amigos School*

## ME!



I am  
Arav Hak  
Cool and fun  
Arav Hak

I am  
Who is  
Faster than a cheetah  
Stronger than the Hulk  
Bigger than a giant  
Yet tinier than an atom  
Heavier than an elephant  
But lighter than a feather  
I have lived forever  
Even before you

I am  
AWESOME  
AWESOMER  
AWESOMEST

I would I am the  
Give you leader  
Myself of all  
If you leaders  
Do not kings of  
Know kings

That is all I will say because I am Arav!

*Arav Hak  
Honorable Mention, Fourth Grade  
Cambridge Friends School*



## Getting Back on Top

Letting go,  
to a new place,  
what's better for them  
might not be better for us.  
a gap in the road of life,  
a bright light in our lives,  
turned off,  
a place in our hearts,  
coming out through racing tears,  
the memories waiting to be shared,  
though life might be better with them.  
We as a family can make our life great  
even if we lost one of the amazing flowers in our garden.  
We sunk to the bottom so we can get back on top.



*Henry Needham*  
*Second Place, Fourth Grade*  
*Cambridge Friends School*

## Drumming!

Drumming is as loud as a lion's ROAR  
the sound dances on my feet  
that are on the floor.

Exciting! Vibration

Tingles

to my

hands,

Can't stop now

It just began!

Drumming, Drumming

It's so fun!

Let's start

together

All over again!



*Marika Hollister  
Third Place, Second Grade  
Haggerty School*

## Athena has a violin

A violin  
A violin  
Athena has a violin  
A big one that's chestnut brown  
Beautiful strings.  
She plays it in the evening,  
when the sun is going down.  
She plays it on windy days,  
when the winds are howling.  
It gleams, it glimmers.  
It sings like a nightingale.  
It rumbles like a lion.  
With a beautiful shower of notes.  
Her parents say it's lovely,  
oh really simply lovely.  
And  
Athena says she likes it.  
It's such a unique violin.  
When she is through with violins,  
she is going to buy a harp.

*Athena Aloupis*  
*Second Place, Third Grade*  
*Martin Luther King Jr School*



**Splattered Paint**  
**The story of my life**



My life  
Is like tie dye  
A chaotic  
Unpredictable array

A strange compilation  
Of twists, bumps  
Swerves and sways

Not knowing  
One bit  
How it  
Will turn out

My life  
is like tie dye  
A colorful  
Exciting array

*Ruby Russell*  
*Honorable Mention, Sixth Grade*  
*Fayerweather Street School*

## Weeping Willow

I am a lonely weeping willow tree.  
Come, children, climb on my branches.  
Or read your favorite books here.  
Braid my limp leaves  
Feel safe on my hard beaten trunk.  
When it's raining, I'll shelter you  
When it's sunny, I'll shade you  
And we won't be lonely.

Come, roll on the grass next to me.  
Or rest against my tired trunk.  
Tell me your sorrows, fears, loves  
Because I will keep your secrets.

*Calla Walsh*  
*Second Place, Fourth Grade*  
*Morse School*



## Pernicious

Flecks.

Sheets and sheets of ever falling, snow like spores  
descend, delivering death.  
granules hug humongous hills,  
on the once fertile ground.  
Delivering dreadful detrimental gifts,  
and hushing howling hounds.  
With wandering wishful wafts.  
Never bound, to the ground.

Windswept drifts, from mephitic mushrooms clouds,  
distributing the deceased.  
transferring the grim reapers terrible tomb,  
of mortality,  
lustrous living no match for these,  
silent seeds of toxicity.

A startling, sparkling, surprise,  
meets my eye.  
Realizing the impact of this deadly dust,  
determined to conquer the Earth.  
As I breathe in the virulent specks,  
there will be no rebirth.  
The harmful hum of death awaits.

*Connor Wall*  
*Second Place, Seventh Grade*  
*Amigos School*



## The White Fox

This sly animal jumping  
behind every bush,  
climbing up every tree,  
paws as quiet as the  
falling snow, hunting  
in the night, waiting  
for the kill, its keen  
eyes searching every  
bush and tree looking  
in the snow, waiting.

A cold breeze  
ruffles its fur,  
then it spots movement.  
A white rabbit hops into  
view, the chase is on.  
Then the fox jumps on  
the prey and makes  
the final kill.  
It takes the prey  
in its jaws and runs  
into the forest.

*Ford Legg*  
*First Place, Third Grade*  
*Shady Hill School*



**\*If I Should Die in the Clouds Above**

If I should die in the clouds above  
I really love my family so.  
If I die flying like a dove,  
comfort my family as they woe.

What will tear me apart,  
what will destroy my soul,  
is the pain I have in my heart,  
is that I can't be there to console.

This job is never what I wanted.  
I enlisted solely on impulse.  
The thought of Death always haunted  
The thought of Death is something I would repulse.

O God forgive my sins.  
But I do not accept your kingdom.  
For I am the man who always wins,  
I will always deny Elysium.

If I should die in the clouds above,  
and He decides to put me to rest,  
then I leave this world with love,  
and I am wishing I were blessed.

*\*Poem inspired by "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death" by William Butler Yeats (1919)*

*Frankie Lonergan  
Second Place, Sixth Grade  
St. Peter's School*

The boughs swaying,  
Swaying throughout the centuries,  
Resisting storm, cold, and children,  
Yet sometimes a brother or a sister is lost,

Used as swords, houses, or art,  
On occasion it will be blown away,  
And will land in a small patch of dirt,  
And then a flower, the tiniest of buds,  
Will grow, and thrive,

The bud will be fed by rain, the ground, and a pure desire to live and survive,  
It will become stronger and stronger,  
Gathering all its strength,  
And then, it will burst open,

Oh, and what a wonderful burst it will be!  
It will spread its sticky petals apart,  
Embracing the sunshine that has so long been its watcher,  
It will feel a joy at finally being able to see,  
It will take in the world, ecstasy in its every sense,

The bud, now a flower, will live like this for some good time,  
But as with all things, especially a delicate little flower, it will pass,  
It will eventually be stepped on, or eaten, or washed away,

But it might also be picked up, by a small boy,  
And given to a little girl,  
It will be worn in the girl's hair,  
And fondly remembered for years to come,

It will be proud, and happy,  
For it will have given new life, and new hope,  
It will be satisfied,  
Because it has lived a full life,  
And made the world a better place.

*Itamar Baz*  
*First Place, Fifth Grade*  
*Shady Hill School*



## No Fairy Tales (Memoir)

It was a dark night  
But not in a fairy tale or beautiful way  
The sky was covered in dark clouds and rain kissed the ground  
I walked through the rain watching it pour down the street  
The only light came from the street lights  
Beaming down on the shiny road  
I stepped on the damp grass and soaked my feet  
If it is raining this hard, I might as well get wet sooner rather than  
later

Not a star in the sky  
And I am glad  
I'm glad because I don't want it to be a fairy tale  
There is beauty in normality  
There is beauty in imperfection  
So I just let the rain pour down  
Drown out all of the world  
Wash away perfection  
Because this is what is perfect to me

*Luca Johnson*  
*Second Place, Sixth Grade*  
*Cambridge Friends School*



## The Memory Vault

Some people go back,  
deep inside the memory vault.

They search for quests  
almost  
always.

They never find what  
they search for, within the  
deep, dark, memory vault  
almost  
never.

They go for the past,  
they never return.

*Robbie Clemens  
Third Place, Fourth Grade  
Peabody School*



## The Shot

*(a perspective poem about a Native American child who lived next to the Transcontinental Railroad when it was being built.)*

I heard gunfire today.  
It shot me in the heart.

My father says it's splitting us apart,  
like a delicate piece paper,

The sound of the workers nailing down the future  
puts tears to my eyes,

My mother says we're almost at war.  
It's hard for me to think of.

Every night I cry,  
to the sound of people in my head,  
screaming.

My tribe is not doing well.  
We don't fight much, but we started.

The sadness feels like water being poured on a cut,  
or like a bee sting.  
It's a sharp feeling from inside.

I am just a girl,  
a young one,  
a girl with a family that loves me.



Everyone has lost something.  
My mom lost her sister.  
My neighbor lost her father.  
I lost my smile.

But I still have faith,  
Because the people of Pawnee tribe are strong,

The U.S Government might sent an army,  
but we have love.  
It grew stronger at the shot!

*Isla Mitchell*  
*Second Place, Fourth Grade*  
*Graham & Parks School*

## Shalom, Salaam

Shalom                      Salaam  
I'm Israeli                I'm Palestinian  
I live in a land filled with history  
A wondrous land filled with fruit  
A land that's rightfully mine  
It belongs to my ancestors  
the Jews                      the Muslims  
My people are right, they are wrong  
But we come together to learn about peace  
I start to see their perspective  
The land belongs to us both  
the Muslims      and      the Jews  
History can be changed  
If we can learn to live in peace  
Salaam                      Shalom

*John Vernaglia  
Third Place, Eighth Grade  
Cambridge Friends School*

## Hatred

The fire,  
I can see burning.  
Scorching  
The trees.  
Water  
Has become scarce.  
Your land,  
A desert.  
An oasis  
Will not appear  
When your raging sun  
Has no courtesy.  
Your respect  
Has dissipated.  
Your courtesy  
Is dissolving  
Into your anger,  
Into your hatred.  
I look down  
To escape  
From your burning heat.  
It hurts, you know.  
Your hatred hurts.

*Maya Parry  
First Place, Seventh Grade  
Putnam Avenue Upper School*

## Fault Lines

She wasn't asking for  
Anything,  
Maybe just freedom.

Did her tears tell you to  
back off?  
Or merely the everlasting cry of  
No,  
The universal sign of  
Stop.

The  
Touch  
Of your hand  
Poisoned her  
Forever.

The  
Sound  
Of your voice  
Stamped in her  
Mind.

The  
Smell  
Of your breath  
Embossed in her  
Nose.

And  
Darkness  
Everywhere  
She looks.

When she touches her OWN skin,  
It will feel filthy,  
Impure  
And polluted.

And whose fault is that?

Not hers.

*Zelda Mayer*  
*Amigos School*  
*First Place, Sixth Grade*

## Mirror Universe

Who is this person?  
Looking.  
Back.  
At me.

I do not know this girl.  
Her eyes full of pain.  
Tears falling.

Colors of the world streaming.  
Blurring.  
Together.

The lines  
and sharp edges  
becoming hazy.  
Unfocused.

I taste salt  
and move my hand  
to brush away  
my tears.

What have I become?

Who have I become?

She moves her hand  
to brush away her tears.

Hair a knotted mess.

She brushes it out

And washes her face.

Who is she?

Frustration  
seeps  
through my pores.

I pull my hand back  
and smash it against the  
glass.

Shatter.  
Shattering.  
Glass.

Shards.  
Everywhere.

What have I become?

Blood.  
On.  
My hand.

Skin tearing  
and peeling  
away.

I grit my teeth.

I do not.  
Feel.  
Pain.

I open the tap  
and run my hand under the water.

The water.  
Once.  
Clear.

Has been tainted.  
By me.

I laugh.  
a high  
pitched  
sound.

What have I become?

I glance up,  
expecting her  
to have disappeared.

To have fled,  
from this  
beast.

But instead,  
I see a thousand of her,

I move my hair aside,  
smudging red on  
my face.

I glance up.  
There is red on her face, too.  
I wash my face  
and sink to the ground.

Soon I stand up  
and pull my hood on.

Then  
I walk out the door.

On the outside, I look fine,  
but on the inside,  
I am being torn to shreds.

The heartache is unbearable.

I stare at my bloody hand.

What have I become?

*Maha Yaqoob*  
*Third Place, Seventh Grade*  
*Putnam Avenue Upper School*

## “Typical”

I'm six feet, four inches  
Pants below my waist  
Golden chains the size for snakes  
Oversized Polos  
Fresh out the box Jordans  
Snapbacks and du-rags  
Two chunky rings on my fingers  
My left ear pierced studded with a diamond  
The regular siren of  
COPS  
A cue to hide  
Flashing red and blue lights  
Speeding down my crackhead filled street  
I look to my right  
and see crumbling brick houses and black men begging for money  
I look to my left and see  
Two white uniformed cops  
yelling and coming my way  
But I ain't do nothin'  
My hands become stapled behind my back  
I go inside a white and blue police car  
Then silence  
Confused I walk into a cramped holding cell  
The door closes and locks and My future just went out the window  
My dreams went to the grave My life is now in an inferno  
Tears fall from my eyes like hail



What I do?

I ain't steal nothin', I ain't smoke nothin', I ain't sell nothin', I ain't  
kill nothin', I ain't gang bangin', I ain't fightin'

no one

I ain't do nothin'

Years go by

Finally in these hours of Black I see White

“Get out boy. Go home”.

Why am I here?

I walk into a squalid bathroom

I turn on the water

I splash freezing water on my face

I open my eyes

Look in the dirty, cracked mirror

Then it hit me

I eye my face, my arms, and my hands

I see

BLACK

I wear

BLACK

Arrested cuz' I'm black

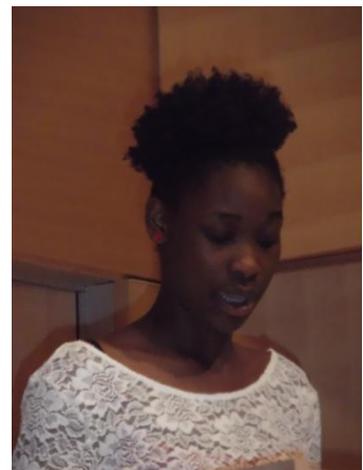
But it's alright

They say I might be back

*Cynthia Guerrier*

*Second Place, Eighth Grade*

*Community Charter School of Cambridge*



## I Feel Like...

I feel like  
I lost  
the will  
to fight.  
Lost in the corners  
of my mind.  
To the point  
that I can't  
take another step.  
Trying to fight a wall that  
I can't break.  
But I remember that I'm not  
alone.  
I have friends and family  
who will  
give me their will  
to fight,  
even when  
I lost mine.  
"United We Stand,  
Divided We Fall."  
And united we stood.

*Mohammed Shafiq  
Third Place, Seventh Grade  
Putnam Avenue Upper School*

## We Are Not Born into Fear

For the dreamers, it doesn't stop.  
Our dreams go beyond  
the safe haven of our beds.  
Although our eyes are open  
and we go to prepare for our day,  
the images still flicker past our irises.

We create  
people, worlds, and universes  
and collect them in the palm of our hands.  
You may see us in the street  
looking  
at our people, worlds, and universes  
as we try to make any kind of sense  
of them.

We are the dreamers  
and they fear us  
because their world is  
full of blank stones, decaying plants,  
lonely people, and anger.

In our world,  
Come here,  
is what I'll say to you when I see you pass by.  
Come here and sit beneath my thinking tree  
with me. Look up  
and let the sun leak some happiness on your face.

In our world,  
a pencil  
is the most powerful weapon  
and in the tips of my fingers,  
I hold a pencil of my very own  
to dream with as I please.



I will dream of star dust  
and star dust will dream of me,  
for it has already come so far  
to sit beneath my thinking tree.

In our world,  
memories are the currency  
and I will exchange mine  
of laughter and soft rugs  
and unintentional rhyme.

And in every stone  
the word 'Agape' is engraved:  
an unconditional love towards all of humanity  
that is shared between each and every person.

The dreams in the palm of my hand,  
I hide away from them  
because we are the dreamers  
and they fear us.

I am a dreamer,  
and I fear them.

Protect me.  
Because our world is big  
and I am fragile.

Tell me I'm brave.  
Because I am.  
Because in the palm of my hand,  
I hold the could be's  
and the dreams come true  
and now I must make them so.

*Helen Steinman  
First Place, Eighth Grade  
Cambridge Street Upper School*

## As We Graduate From Our Childhood

In the very beginning  
When our private worlds were young  
When the days were long,  
    Lazy,  
    And full of sun.  
When the clouds were cotton  
    And silk  
When our problems flowed by  
    As sluggish brooks  
    Meandering away from us  
As our family rowed us down the creaks,  
The waters dappled by hanging willows,  
    We sighed.  
No wanton concerns, simply calm.

Now I wait and  
    wait  
For the tempest to pass  
The raging maelstrom of middle school,  
    Three  
    Whole  
    years  
of monsoon season  
With its brand new experiences,  
The directly-off-the-shelf  
    new car smell  
    of a novel,  
Contemporary  
    Identity

*Julian Baxandall*  
*First Place, Eighth Grade*  
*Amigos School*



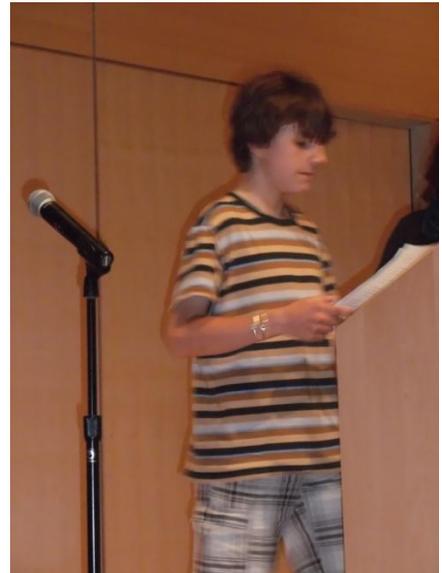
## Compose

Hypnotized,  
I could write for hours,  
delivering with care  
and attention  
Music  
to float free  
on the wind,  
that sweeps up snowdrifts,  
that hug humongous trees.

Melodies  
with different temperaments  
to mesmerize  
young children,  
to break the hush  
of the night  
with a soft  
but clear  
tune.

With the click  
of a key,  
it can be wiped from the page,  
delivered to the recycle bin,  
chucked in the trash,  
It lives on,  
in my mind,  
indelibly.

*Ezra Rudel*  
*Amigos School*  
*First Place, Seventh Grade*  
*(poem 1 of 2)*



## Gifts from Above

The new Amigos School building  
at 15 Upton Street  
is in many ways  
inferior  
to the old, mostly demolished one  
at 101 Kinnaird.  
But there is one improvement.  
The ceilings at 101 Kinnaird  
are shy  
and reluctant to share  
their wealth of knowledge.  
But the Upton Street ceilings  
are generous  
and willing to give the Answers  
to a Select Few.

The ELA ceiling  
writes long messages  
written neatly on the grid lines  
In elegant cursive  
that drone on  
and on  
and on  
that nearly lull me  
into a slumber  
like the repetitive waves  
of the ocean.

The SLA ceiling  
like a strict teacher  
says, "get on task!"  
and rarely gives advice.

The Social Studies ceiling  
wants me to do the work  
and gives short, cryptic answers  
scrawled carelessly  
across the plaster  
in English  
leaving me  
to translate.  
This ceiling enjoys  
making fun  
of Mr. Batt,  
laughing  
about all the things  
he fails to notice.

The ceiling of Science  
has quickly learned  
to give memos rarely  
and sneakily  
so as not to attract the attention  
of Ms. Ferhani.

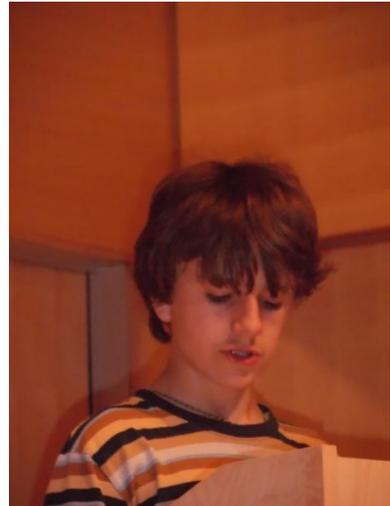
The ceiling of the Math classroom  
is sharp and pointy  
quick with its solutions  
very moody.

Other ceilings  
surprise me  
with rare messages  
when I have nothing to do.  
Even the gymnasium  
talked with me once.

I don't know  
how it's possible  
but occasionally,  
I simply have an urge  
to look up  
and there's writing  
on the ceiling,  
answers  
that will come in handy  
sometime today.

I don't know  
why no one else  
except for Kalier  
can see them,  
but all the answers  
are on the ceiling.

*Ezra Rudel*  
*Amigos School*  
*First Place, Seventh Grade*  
(poem 2 of 2)



## Ode to Words

You spill out my mouth  
As if you were trying to escape  
A monster

When I stutter  
Or stumble upon my words  
It must be because the monster got you  
Sorry

You seem to be cruel  
But also beautiful  
At the same time

You hurt  
And heal  
And make us laugh

Without you  
There wouldn't be singing  
Or poetry  
Or acting  
No movies  
No plays  
Musicals included

I'd feel so sorrowful in a world with no words  
I feel so sorrowful for those with no words



I've always wondered  
Why world and word sounded so similar  
But now I realize  
It is because words  
Are my world  
And my world  
Is  
Words

*Anna Murray*  
*Third Place, Sixth Grade*  
*Cambridge Friends School*