

**Young Poets of Delaware County
Contest Winners, 2021
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**Rishwita Bhavirisetti
Grade 1
Primos Elementary School
Upper Darby School District
First Place**

My Brother

Oh my brother
You are the cutest one ever
Becoming sweet year by year
Never be fear
I will always be here
To make you cheer
I might be far or near
But One thing is clear
You are always my dear
Forever and ever

**Hannah Rose Davis
Grade 1
Swarthmore Rutledge School
Wallingford Swarthmore S.D.
Second Place**

Spring

As the flowers bloom in spring
all the birds begin to sing,
with a tree singing too
all the words make sense to you,
while we all have a blast
Spring has come at last!

**Rosalie Kerr
Grade 1
Radnor Elementary School
Radnor School District
Third Place**

Come see the beauty

I love Chanticleer because

as I walk through the entrance

the flowers put on perfume for their greatest show

at the same time the cherry blossoms flutter down like rain,

the vegetable garden is crawling with yummy food to make a stew

**Caroline Bigelow
Grade 2
Pennell Elementary School
Penn-Delco School District
First Place**

Covid

Covid is annoying.

Covid is sad.

Covid is unhappy.

Covid is mad.

Covid with masks.

Covid is a sickness.

Covid with stores closed.

Covid is a disease.

Covid is annoying, sad, unhappy, mad, masks, sickness and stores closed.

Covid is a disease.

Covid made the whole world close.

Covid did that.

**John McManus
Grade 2
Worrall Elementary School
Marple Newtown S.D.
Second Place**

Pizza

Cheese and tomato sauce

Pepperoni and more

Before I have it, my tummy starts to roar

I love pizza so much

I would have it a bunch

All flavors, all around

It's the most popular food in town!

**William Carboni
Grade 2
Scenic Hills Elementary School
Springfield School District
Third Place**

Elements of Life

Fire keeps people warm

Ice lets us cool

Water cleanses our bodies

Terra is the earth where we grow crops

Nature gives us beauty

Lightness offers a new day

Darkness tells us it's time to rest

The elements give us a place to call home, our Earth.

**Adrianna Ho
Grade 3
Wallingford Elementary
Wallingford Swarthmore S.D.
First Place**

Pasta Sandwiches in Quarantine

1.

In quarantine
I missed my uncle's wedding
because it was cancelled in May,

And Take Your Child to Work Day:
I was going to meet my mom's coworkers and friends
and join her meetings.

I missed Field Day with games, and May Day with
carnival games. Mr. C., my gym teacher, had planned it,
and you could get half a lemon with a candy straw!

I miss going to school.
I miss having sleepovers: one in the beginning of summer
and one at the end.

Some of my friends couldn't come
to my birthday party. The magician
couldn't come.

Before quarantine, I had plans
with my good friend who moved to Boston
to get together and sell all the leftover candies
and save every penny.

2.

In quarantine
I turned 8
and learned to ride a bike

I learned that daddy makes yummy sandwiches
and mommy makes good pasta.
Pasta sandwiches for lunch!

I can still see
my ballet friends
and my classmates right online.

I still pick flowers on nature walks
and walk on the rocks
to get over the streams.

In quarantine, I grew half an inch.
I learned how to feed my dog Rusty
and take him outside.

I learned how to type without looking at the keyboard
and how to make
peanut butter sandwiches when daddy is busy, and

that our school nurse is a good yoga instructor
and our second grade teacher reminds me
that if I believe I can, I can.

I learned that I don't have to go out to the theater
because I can watch movies at my house
cuddling, eating snacks, and petting Rusty.

I learned I can relax anytime and anywhere,
I close my eyes, I take deep breaths
A couple of minutes later I open my eyes

and put my hands on my heart, and Namaste.
I learned to read chapter books: *Harry Potter*,
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, oh! And don't forget

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory!
I learned to organize my closet, to keep it clean.
I grew to wear my big sister's clothes while in quarantine.

I learned that the crown-shaped virus is the Coronavirus.
If I could talk to the Coronavirus,
I'd say, "The Heat Is On! I Know

The Heat Can Stop You From Spreading."

**Eve Wimmer
Grade 3
Perelman Jewish Day School
Second Place**

Me Myself and I

I am a flamingo wearing pink and eating shrimp.
Like a star bright and beautiful.
I am a flute, weird and whimsical.
White as a canvas

ready for new and endless possibilities.
Like glue
I stick with my friends forever.
I am like a jet flying through my thoughts.

Like a sour patch
sweet and sour at the same time. Like a violin
I am
light on my feet. I am a sunflower happy
and joyful. I can be a drum
booming
at a concert. I am a camel not drinking
much water. I am the day

peaceful
and busy.
I am like a butterfly flying
from project to project.

**Lilly Costello
Grade 3
OLA Regional
Third Place**

The Beach

Sun shining on me
Relax on the hot, hot sand
Enjoy an ice cream

**Avia Fasciocco
Grade 4
Worrall Elementary School
Marple Newtown School District
First Place**

Talent

I'm feeling so alone
My talent will never be shown
I've tried soccer but that net is so far out of my aim
Because when I take a shot I feel so much shame
I've tried dancing but when I twirl
I feel like vanilla and chocolate swirl
I've tried baking and sports and this and that
But my potential just did a splat
I give up I say
All I feel is true dismay
So I rush through the door
And oh how my tears pour
So I start to write a sentence then two then 3
And before I know it I'm on a word shopping spree
My talent is writing I yell and I scream
I shot a big smile and ear to ear I beam
When I start writing it all begins to show
When I put pen to paper it all just seems to flow
So don't give up if you can't find your talent super fast
You'll find it one day and doing it will be such a blast
Everybody has a talent it can be anything
Dance, soccer, sports, baking, or maybe you can sing sing sing
But never give up, you do have a talent deep deep in

**Devon Miller
Grade 4
Worrall Elementary School
Marple Newtown School District
Second Place**

Turning Ten

This past year I turned ten.

Turning ten this year should have meant having fun with friends with sleepovers and movie nights.

Turning ten this year should have been camping with scouts.

Turning ten this year should have been a vacation at the beach.

But...

Turning ten this year meant not leaving our house for days.

Turning ten this year meant wearing masks all day.

Turning ten this year meant not being able to go to school.

Turning ten this year meant no more family parties.

But...

Turning ten this year allowed me to have more time with my parents.

Turning ten this year taught me to not fight with my brothers as much.

Turning ten this year let me learn outside and explore.

Turning ten this year meant I made so much slime I didn't have any more containers!

Turning ten this year meant I got to watch all the new shows on Netflix!

Turning eleven will happen this year too, and I hope it will be just as good as being ten.

**Gemma Hope Armstrong Hoffman
Grade 4
Chatham Park Elementary School
Haverford Township S.D.
Third Place**

Grief

Darkness consumes me

As dark as a night with no stars

No moon

I think of everyone that's left on the way

Everyone who I will never be able to see

Even just for another day

A heart snapped into fragments

One piece gone forever

Another gone forever

Two little, seemingly insignificant pieces

Can make all the difference

**Greta Reilly
Grade 5
Wayne Elementary School
Radnor Township School District
First Place**

A Magical Place

From the bulky brown roots to the high tips of the large maple tree are homes,
Bird homes,
Squirrel homes,
And my home.
When I am at the tips of the treetops,
I am a mother bird searching for wiggly squiggly worms fresh for my morning meal.
When I am relaxing at the shady base of the tree,
I am a young squirrel nibbling on my small round acorn for a munchy crunchy lunch.
When I am in the middle of the tree
I am me watching, feeling and breathing in life.
I look down with my eagle eye and see a fresh blanket of green
The dull red leaves shielding my happy face from the bright shimmering sun.
I play
I climb
I swing
I relax
All on that one living figure.
I have memorized every inch of the smooth brown bark.
I have a heart in this tree.
I love this magical place.

**Lilyana Lane
Grade 5
Ardmore Avenue Elementary
William Penn School District
Second Place**

Seasons

Silver snowflakes
Skating on lakes
Snowmen that stand in a snowy white land
Blue jays that feed on sunflower seeds
Angels that pose in wintertime clothes,
Winter

The dainty blue skies above me
The feeling of moist grass below my bare feet
The sounds of a free running stream
The warmth of the sun on my face
The sight of a meadow filled with flowers
The taste of fresh picked raspberries
Spring

Light colored tops
Flip flops
4th of July parade
Hot nights
Bright baseball lights
Bathing suits
Shooting hoops
Water spout
Schools out
Summer

The leaves are
falling one by one
The sunny days
will soon be gone
Yellow, orange, brown, and green
The colors of autumn can be seen

The wind, the rain, the sun shines through
It's colder now for me and you
Autumn

**Griffin Reach
Grade 5
Wallingford Elementary School
Wallingford Swarthmore S.D.
Third Place**

The Ballad of Boredom and Burnt Bacon

I'm here, sitting binded to the horrors

The horrors of being bored

feeling like a piece of burnt bacon

Because who likes burnt bacon

their bacony lives wasted

They are just sitting there

waiting to be tasted

Like burnt bacon I am because

Of the fifth wheel I've become

Trapped forever in boredom,

Like being in the oven too long

Am I even sane

Comparing myself to that thing,

That disgusting monstrosity

That people call food

Why am I like this?

**Emily Lournng
Grade 6
Haverford Middle School
Haverford Township S.D.
First Place**

Koi Garden

A girl ran to the garden with tears flooding in her eyes,
She clutched her chest while listening to the hum of small dragonflies and ladybugs,
And found herself wandering around for hours, a clock ticking of an unsettling silence,
She stopped at her pond of Koi, full blooming flowers,
And heard a soft Koto playing in the distance,

The girl thought of her mother and covered her ears,
She was used to this lonesome feeling,
And had felt it a million times before,
She glanced back at the garden,

The girl noticed the Ajisai and Tsubaki bursting between the roofs of shrubs,
She watched as the moonlight perfectly caught her brother's glass furin wind chimes,
And the moonlight cascaded across the grass in vivid colors,
A whimsical glow that luminated her whole life,
It was her favorite thing he left behind,

The girl latched her focus on the Koi pond,
She observed as the lily pads mingled with the blushing lotus,
And the Koi seemed to swirl around in a slow path of orange and black, clumped
together,
Their presence brought the girl a sense of wonder,

For how do the Koi fish live so long,
How can they stand singing the same song,
And living in the same small pond,
Stuck in something never changing,

The girl let go of her ears,
She let her tears flow,
She listened to the sweet Koto from over the fence,
She sat and entered a world full of memories and thoughts,
For how many nights have I spent sweeping broken shards from my father's broken
bottles on the floor,

How can I stand lying in my own garden,
Her own pond,
My own prison,

The girl took the instrument she never could play,
She took one koi fish from her pond, the brightest one who could shine brighter than a
thousand diamonds,
And played her mother's Koto until the sun peeked from the snowcapped mountains in
the North,
She put her fish in a jar made from the old broken glass shards of her father and
brother,
And waited in her garden for the new day

**Jack Ertel
Grade 6
Radnor Middle School
Radnor Township School District
Second Place**

Where You Are

This is where you are.
Please note.
You are reading this poem.
Now get up.
Walk to a space with a desk,
And draw a person.
Use only a pencil.
Notice the detail.
Now draw that same person with color.
Observe the blank space around the person.
Now draw the sun.
And some grass.
And the sky.
Think about the effect that color has on drawing.
How would you describe it?
What is the difference
Between this and this?
Please take note.
Of where you are.
Did you really draw that person?
Did you really draw the sun, and grass, and the sky?
You are still reading this poem, which will end.
You aren't there yet, but you are close.
Now explain what the point of all this is.

**Ella Sanders
Grade 6
Garnet Valley Middle School
Garnet Valley School District
Third Place**

The Charts

Average
That's what the charts say
Average height, Average weight
Average vision, Average hearing
That's what the charts say
I'm an average 12 year old girl
That's what the charts say
The charts can tell me how tall I'll be or if I need glasses
But the charts
Can't tell me who I am

I wander through life
Asking questions about everything I pass
"How is it doing that?"
"Why did you use those parts?"
I wander through life
Trying to find the right path
Because sometimes
The path for me is the path untaken
Unwalked
Unexplored
I wander through life
Trying, to find my way

I'm a blurred image
 A mix of everything
I'm a gorilla
 smart and fierce
I'm a shapeshifter
 Confused on who I am
 And at the same time
 Becoming my own thing

I'm a squirrel
always exploring
finding new things to ponder

I'm a diamond
The process is long and messy
But the result is beautiful and unique

I'm potatoes, and spaghetti and meatballs
for my Irish and Italian roots

I'm a sunflower yellow
Giggling, Smiling, Happy

I'm a peach
My skin a light yellow, orange

I'm a penguin
I love to ski

But you know what I'm not
I'm not
a line
on a chart

Kaitlyn Ho
Grade 7
Strath Haven Middle School
Wallingford-Swarthmore S.D.
First Place

Then and Now

If I knew then what I know now
I would have prepared for house arrest
because of those crown-shaped bacteria
those wrecking balls

I would have told myself to enjoy
every bit of food at our last restaurant
to savor the laughter and spring clothes
that I would get at the last mall

But they felt like normal days
the astonishing days full of surprises
the days I took for granted
when I could wonder
What will happen next?

But that's gone now
I know that things will never be the same
That even after there are less cases
and they find a vaccine
No one will be willing to jump into ball pits anymore

If this never happened
now I would be shopping for summer dresses
dancing with joy because my PSSAs are over
and because I survived my first year at middle school
I would be eating lots of ice cream
Maybe I wouldn't have discovered
frozen grapes
without with the help of house arrest

If I was able to tell my past self
to savor every colorful memory
maybe then those memories like fluttering birds
could have left me with some feathers of feeling

licking gelato on the streets of Rome
cool sweet gelato melting on my tongue
washing away the heat
like gentle rain on an aching body
The memory of diving
into the almost deep end of the pool
calm swirling beams of light
twisting through the blue water
in contrast to the shaking inside
That is how I remember

If I knew then what I know now
slammed
behind the walls
that were once my sanctuary
I would prepare myself for the walks
that remind me there is more than my house
walking five miles
the long walk in the woods
lush greens grit and walking across clear rivers
The neighborhood walk
that isn't even that long
Crisp, cool air and dying petals
falling like our voices on the silent streets
The stripes of dirt on pink bike tires
Walking isn't just walking anymore

Maybe
if the me in the future
came up to me right now
and told me what was going to happen
to this mess

Perhaps
I could know
when this will all be over

Nalia Diaz
Grade 7
Chester Eastside
Second Place

Together, We'll Rise

Today might knock us down
Push us to the ground
But, like butterflies
We'll rise.
The coronavirus might be in our way
Turning us weaker everyday
Hope may have not yet been found
But that doesn't mean it's not around
It's in you at all times
It's just that you can't see it fine
You can't do anything alone
No one can do it on their own.
For starters
Look at the doctors
They are caring for patients
Not themselves
Despite the damages
Despite the challenges
They still stand
Like a hard-solid bronze statue,
Like statues, they need to be polished
Friends like us wipe their bruises away
We cheer them on
Because our hope for them is never gone
Our cheering helps them shine like a gem
So they see we are here for them.
We may not have our normal lives
But we have something powerful
And no one can take it away
Not the virus
Not bosses
Not bad leaders
Not fears
Not racism
Not stress's mess
Not quarantine
Not tears

Not problems
Not toxins
Not bullies
Not this dreadful year,

It's us.

We are connected
Like tree branches
And together,
We'll rise.
Life won't look perfect
But that doesn't mean
Life is ugly
No one
Can face their problems alone
We
Need
To
Do
This

 Together
Whether we see it or not
Whether we hear it or not
Whether we feel it or not
Together, we'll rise.

We will never surrender to evilness
We will strive for what is right
Once a problem shows its hideous head
We

 Will

 Face

 It

 Together like parakeets
We will fly in harmony, stick together like glue
our smooth wings will never separate from us, we won't stop
We'll be together, when fear doesn't budge, or when darkness
Grabs us, our white bird selves will fly for eternity.
 Together, we'll rise.

**Anthony Dandrea
Grade 7
E.T. Richardson Middle School
Springfield School District
Third Place**

“The Lawn Mower”

The lawn mower

It approaches me quickly

My impending doom

**Adam Bishop
Grade 8
Chichester Middle School
Chichester School District
First Place**

Fourteen

Fourteen is a peculiar age.
Being fourteen means my body doesn't fit me.
Lanky limbs, floppy feet,
Standing tall above my classmates.
I am a Colossus of the Hallway.
Constantly feeling ravenous.
Wanting to fill my stomach and my mind,
But without being awkward about it.
Will I ever grow into myself?

Fourteen is a puzzling age.
Being fourteen means keeping alert.
Aware of what I say. Aware of what I do.
It is hard to stay unnoticed when I am the largest person in the room,
And all I want to do is stay under the radar, so I am not accused of causing trouble.
But I can't always go ninja, because my sibling casts a long shadow...
That I can't always escape and am forced to live up to, even though they say I don't have to.
I feel the responsibility.

Fourteen is a transient age.
Being fourteen means so many ambiguities, so many questions.
Changes lie ahead of me.
New age brackets, friends, and school.
New expectations.
Can I meet them?

Fourteen is a fickle age.
Being fourteen means I am young enough to whittle my summer days away by hanging out with friends,
But I can't because of the virus.
For I have been cheated out of a year or two of my youth.
My fourteen sometimes feels like twelve.
Being fourteen means feeling like I don't ever want to grow up,
I cannot be old enough to grow up.
I am not prepared to grow up yet.

I want to capture this firefly moment and put it in a mason jar,
On the summer night of fourteen.
Being fourteen also means that the world is out there waiting for me,
Arms outstretched, spreading out its cornucopia of bounty,
And I cannot wait to sample it.
If only I could overcome my fear of starting.

Fourteen is an innocent age,
Teetering on the cusp of young adulthood.
For now, I am trying desperately to hold onto everything I know from fourteen,
Because fifteen is coming up quickly,
And I have a feeling I am going to miss being fourteen.

**Keyarra Barley
Grade 8
Darby Township School
Southeast Delco School District
Second Place**

Dear Dad

They say that time heals all wounds, does it?
Will I feel better today or tomorrow afternoon?

Confused, hurt, and scared,
How could your judgement be so impaired?

You left my sister, my mother, and me.
The night you went to prison, you became an absentee.

An absentee father, an absentee husband,
Mom rose up, we were able to adjust and

We figured it out, but it was hard.
I'm okay on the outside, but inside I'm scarred.

I'm scarred because at 13, I'm angry.
I'm angry because honestly and quite frankly,

I love you so much and I question your love for me.
If you love me, why did you flee?

I never got that answer from you, you never thought to explain.
I guess you never wanted to realize the extent of my pain.

Or my sadness and despair
When girls were going to father/daughter dances, and I had no one there.

And so, the cycle continues daily.
I'm sad and I'm angry and sometimes I even blame me.

You come home soon; 8 years have passed.
I honestly hope we can forge a relationship that will last.

Time is not a healer, time does not heal all wounds,
Time has made me wonder and made me conclude.

That I am not sure if I can ever forgive you, and I know I can never forget.
I just hope in the long run, I have no regret.

Ava Martyn
Grade 8
E.T. Richardson Middle School
Springfield School District
Third Place

Error: 403

PLEASE ENTER A SERIES OF PASSCODES TO PROCEED:

I am a female.

ACCESS GRANTED.

I can fend for myself.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I am weak and always rely on men?

ACCESS GRANTED.

I am strong, confident, and can handle pain.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I am always emotional and overdramatic?

ACCESS GRANTED

I can hold a position of authority.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I can only work under others who will direct me?

ACCESS GRANTED

I can be the breadwinner in my family.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I can only be the mother and the caretaker?

ACCESS GRANTED

I can have a varied wardrobe, and I may present myself in a natural way.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I always wear dresses and make-up?

ACCESS GRANTED

My body is beautiful, and everyone's body is different.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I am and need to be skinny and dainty?

ACCESS GRANTED

I can have moments to speak up and/or say what I want.

ACCESS DENIED. PLEASE TRY AGAIN.

I must be polite and let everyone else speak?

ACCESS GRANTED

I am sick of the stereotypes.

ERROR: 403

I can have my own individuality.

ERROR: 403

I will speak up.

ERROR: 403

ERROR: 403

ERROR: 403

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ERROR: 403

SYSTEM BREACHED.

ALL ACCESS GRANTED.

**Aaron Tang
Grade 9
Episcopal Academy
First Place**

Ode To My Jordans

A doorbell gave me
two
new
shoes,
in front of my eyes,
all the way
from an
industrial
factory
13 hours away
in China.
I lifted them to my
eyes and
laced my finger
through the cushioned,
mesh foam.
I would not try them on;
they were
too beautiful
to wear out.
Prized shoes,
my feet were
unfit cardboard
boxes with tree
branch nails
and rusty bones.
They were a coal
miner's suit,
a fisherman's
tie, but they were mine.
They were so polished
and shiny,
my feet seemed so
rejectable,
like two corrupt
judges, judges
unworthy of

deciding the fate
of a man's life.
Nevertheless,
I resisted
the promising temptation
to strut around
the schoolyard
with these superior shoes,
as models
do on runways,
as gamblers flaunt
their money.
I resisted
the nagging impulse
to set them
free from
their cage,
and let mother
earth take its
course
every day.
Like a scientist
who had found
a dinosaur
egg to
keep and
examine
for himself,
I took my
last gaze,
fixed the
shoe's tissue
paper, closed
the box, and
stored them
away
for the
season.
They were scuffed
in my first
game.

The moral
of my ode is this:

Beauty is only

true beauty
when you
can do more
than just admire
and stare at
leather shoelaces and foam soles.

**Annie Curry
Grade 9
Cardinal O'Hara High School
Second Place**

Perfect Girl

A perfect girl, a wonderful life
Many would think she lived far from strife
Yet when she's alone, and left with her thoughts
Her mind starts to wander, she is left overwrought
So she'll cry a river then swim to the shore,
Whatever this is she can take it no more,
Escaping the torment of her own mind,
What's lost, will she ever be able to find,
Somehow the darkness is still brighter than light,
Though try and try as she might,
She still wears that mask, believes it all true
Dives deeper and deeper 'till she no longer knew
But deep down it's still there
Under her well-kept hair
The absence of light, no glimmer of hope
This 'perfect girl' can no longer cope

**Edwinner Bazzie
Grade 9
Cardinal O'Hara High School
Third Place**

Changes

Unforeseen, unencountered,
And unattainable changes.

Wondering when life outside will change, but they'll never face it.
Locked in a,
Downward spiral,
The repeated cycle
Of what seems like,
Definite change.

Of what really is,
Indefinite ignorance.

Who am I?
What am I?
Where do I belong?

Continue to pester my thoughts with its monotonous tone.
Accompanied by,
The ringing in my ears.
Of what seems like, a long black hole
And at the end of that tunnel I do not see light,
But hear cries of, "Rest in peace-", "Rest in power-", "Long live-", and "Justice for-".
Fragmented sentences. Unfinished.

And even though this is a spoken word,
I am still learning to speak.
Still learning to compartmentalize the essence of being me.

So I make light at the end of that tunnel,
That is what I wanna be.
All of these unforeseen, unattainable, and unencountered changes in this world
Haven't changed the spirit that lies in me.

**Sarah Persia
Grade 10
Ridley High School
Ridley School District
First Place**

Dissociated

When I close my eyes my body disconnects from my soul.
I can feel myself grasping,
Holding it under its arms,
And lifting the immeasurable weight off the ground.

I want to abandon this weight,
But I know it must follow me.
one day.
one hour.
one minute.

I will be back inside my encasement,
Ready to walk on my own feet.

But right now...
I am floating with my body acting,
As the rock that grounds me to Earth.
I am a hot air balloon.

All bodies are good for is trampling,
the grass.
the flowers.
the ants.

All they do is kill.
Yet... bodies also have brains,
And without my body, I would simply not... exist.

Maybe the body is essential,
Maybe the world has purpose,
Maybe I deserve to see,
...perhaps deserve to be?

So, although my vision is hazy,
And I am very dazey,
I still hope I will land back,
Into my body.

As my soul finally settles in,
Eyelashes uncurling from the cheek,
I can finally breathe

A breath.

Now two?

Maybe three.

Melanie Jackson
Grade 11
Cardinal O'Hara High School
First Place

Swingin' Jazz

As I put in my AirPods, Jazz floods my ears.
Soulful, smooth, and swinging.
I could listen for years and years.
It always gets me singing.

That Fascinating Rhythm makes me Jive.
Doing Kathy's Waltz with the Watermelon Man.
After breaking a sweat, I decide to Take Five,
but I went back to dancing before the next song began.

Davis, Coltrane, Fitzgerald and Monk;
the greats, the icons, the coolest cats.
Can always lift me out of my funk
unlike these new copycats.

I close my eyes and it transports me to Ipanema beach and New York streets.
Or I imagine that I'm at Mardi Gras in New Orleans instead,
any city with those fresh beats.
As the song ends and I open my eyes, I'm just sitting on my bed.

Leah Boris
Grade 11
Strath Haven High School
Wallingford-Swarthmore S. D.
Second Place

The Male Gaze

The spotlight flushes my cheeks
And illuminates the crowd
It's a full house, just like every other night
The faces are blurry--I don't really know
Who they are
I try to turn away from them, but
They're all around me
And I can feel them scrutinizing my body
One of them pulls out opera glasses,
Frowning at the hair above my lip
And on my legs
And under my arms
So I sink down on the stage,
Drawing my legs in front of me,
My hair falling in front of my face
I closed the curtain, but
I don't want to live like this forever

I can see another actress in the distance:
My grandmother, at eighty-seven years old,
Standing on a scale, the stage littered with
Anti-aging creams and neck slimmers she bought to
Quiet the boos from the lingering crowd and
I'm sick of us feeling like we have to perform
Every waking moment
So I rise up
And I talk a little too assertively
And I stand a little too confidently
And I watch as the seats empty
And I smile.

**Cecelia McKinney
Grade 11
Ridley High School
Ridley School District
Third Place**

Cult

Temple, temptress
You invite me inside
Entranced by the beauty of your lips
I tune out your words
And never look back

Worshipper, worship
The crevasses of your mind
Your ideas
That invite me to explore
The expression of your creation

No one can resist your beauty
Because of your wisdom
And no one can resist your wisdom
Because of your beauty

You are as if Aphrodite and Athena
Melded in the fires of Hades
And ascended
With the sole purpose
Of luring me inside

You kiss me with your blood
As I kiss you with mine
And we bleed into each other
Bound by poisoned lips
Connected through knotted heartstrings

A part of me knows
That you are apathetic to my devotion
Or that you merely see me as a tool
An extension of your own divinity
But I will never mind

Temple, temptress
I am in love

**Emma Karn
Grade 12
Sacred Heart Academy
First Place**

Glory in the Fall

The sun descends the staircase of the sky
Arrayed in shining robes of molten gold.
A woman with a face too bright to see,
Yet he can hardly keep his eyes away.

The moon illumines the ballroom of the night
In gown of sterling satin, lace and tulle.
Transparent fabric gauzes the expanse.
And he would like to dance within her arms.

The laughter of the stars who toss their heads
Is hollow, like a puncture in the air.
Their hot white eyes peer out and never blink.
He thinks their edges beckoning and sharp.

Why does man desire to reach the heavens?
Their blazing grandeur is not his to touch
Unless he does consent to be consumed.
He would do better to remain on earth.

Forbidden as the apple ever was,
The universe calls only for our ears,
Helpless with discontent if we remain,
Helped to splendid doom if we ascend.

Jillian Quintiliani
Grade 12
Cardinal O'Hara High School
Second Place

Claude Monet '81

Bright colors of yellow and shadows of orange entangle me as they firmly, yet calmly twist
and turn in a never ending dream of peace
I can't help myself but to gaze back
I forget about life while my brain is transfixed on the unceasing vision of solitude,
tranquility, and satisfaction
This vastly invincible fantasy of concord has no malice, not an ounce of envy, and not a
speck of anger
I watch each vibrant yellow flower turn towards its own dreams like a sailor gallivanting
on the great sapphire seas wondering what his next destination will grant him
The petals that float on my pale teal wall transport me to another realm with no stain of
fear or worry of my newest change in progression
I find serenity in my latest perception
Paintings are forever, as are the bright tones that swirl in my direction
I listen carefully to the sunflowers flowers delectly howling your life is free and your
forthcomings are no exception

**Freddie Rollo
Grade 12
Marple Newtown High School
Marple Newtown School District
Third Place**

Secrets of Love

How does one describe something never felt?
Something so complex and so unsure
Cards that many people are not dealt
Notorious for pleasure and for gore

A swan dive off a bridge onto some rocks?
An endless expedition to find gold?
A death trap that drives lustful fools in flocks?
A warm embrace and comfort from the cold?

It's hard to say when you don't have a flame
There's so much you've been told but never known
So simple yet so hard to join the game
But maybe it gets clearer as you've grown

As sweet and innocent as a white dove
So is the anomaly known as love

1st Grade Judge

Connie Swartzman

Connie Swartzman has been published in the Schuylkill Valley Journal and won first prize in poetry at the 2019 Philadelphia Writers' Conference. She taught kindergarten classes for over thirty years. She writes memoirs and poems and participates in writing classes and critique groups.

2nd Grade Judge

Emiliano Martin

Emiliano Martín, poet and author of many poetry Chapbooks as well as nine books. His latest title is "Unforgettable Moments-Love Poems," published in 2021. For over twenty four years he has assisted as a judge to Delaware County Young Poets Poetry Contest. He is also a former Executive Director of Latin American Guild for the Arts (LAGA). Presently and since 2018 he serves as President of Pennsylvania Poetry Society.

3rd Grade Judge

Richard Bank

Richard Bank is a retired attorney who is in his eightieth journey around the sun. He likes logs, bogs and hogs. He also likes dogs but the rhyme is off. He was happy to judge the Young Poets Event and enjoyed reading the third grade poems.

4th Grade Judge

Steve Delia

Steve Delia has been a past judge for this contest for several years. He has been involved with poetry in many capacities including reading, hosting, judging and workshops. He has been with the Madpoets for over 30 years. He has done poetry readings in all kinds of venues including coffee houses, libraries, book stores and radio. He has 7 books. His latest book is called Poetry Time and can be purchased through Amazon or him personally. He loves this event and seeing all the youngsters writing poetry.

5th Grade Judge
Abbey J. Porter

Abbey J. Porter writes poetry and memoirs about people and relationships, life and loss—sometimes even with a bit of humor. A Pennsylvania native, Abbey has been writing since she was a child. She holds an MFA in creative writing from Queens University of Charlotte, an MA in liberal studies from Villanova University, and a BA in English from Gettysburg College. Abbey works in communications and lives in Cheltenham, Pa., with her two beloved dogs—who help her remember to smile, particularly during these challenging times.

6th Grade Judge
Prabha Nayak Prabhu

Prabha Nayak Prabhu is a retired language teacher. Her articles have appeared in *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *The Delaware County Daily Times*. She has been published in several journals including *The Mad Poets Review*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, *Philadelphia Poets*, *The Fox Chase Review* and the *Anthology, Selfhood: Varieties of Experience*. Her chapbook *Layers* was published by Finishing Line Press in 2019.

7th Grade Judge
Brooke Palma

Brooke Palma grew up in Philadelphia and currently lives in West Chester, Pennsylvania. Many of her poems focus on the connections between culture and identity and finding beauty in the everyday. Her work has been published in *The Mad Poets' Review*, *Moonstone Arts*, *Toho Journal*, and *E-Verse Radio* (online), and work is forthcoming in *Unbearables: A Global Anthology*. Her chapbook, *Conversations Unfinished*, was published by The Moonstone Press in August 2019. She hosts the Livin' on Luck Poetry Series at Barnaby's West Chester.

8th Grade Judge
Mike Cohen

Mike Cohen is a local performance poet. His articles on sculpture appear in the *Schuylkill Valley Journal*.

9th Grade Judge

Amy Barone

Amy Barone's latest poetry collection, *We Became Summer*, from New York Quarterly Books, was released in 2018. She wrote chapbooks *Kamikaze Dance* (Finishing Line Press) and *Views from the Driveway* (Foothills Publishing.) Her poetry has appeared in *Local Knowledge*, *New Verse News*, *Paterson Literary Review*, *Sensitive Skin*, and *Standpoint* (UK), among other publications. She spent five years as Italian correspondent in Milan for *Women's Wear Daily* and *Advertising Age*. She belongs to the Poetry Society of America and the *brevitas* online poetry community that celebrates the short poem. A native of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, Barone lives in New York City.

10th Grade Judge

Stu O'Connor

Stu O'Connor is an educator, musician, and writer who has spent his life dedicated to the power of the word, the necessity of precision in language, and the human need for story as a method of transmitting culture, ideas, and understanding. He has been published in numerous literary and online sources including the *Mad Poets Review*, *Moonstone Poetry Writers Ink* anthologies, and *Silver Sage Magazine*, as well as performing music at many Philadelphia area venues and local radio broadcasts.

11th Grade Judge

Peter Baroth

Peter Baroth, writer, artist, and musician, is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis and Temple Law School. His novel is *Long Green* (iUniverse) and his book of poetry, *Lost Autographs* (Moonstone Press). He has been published in *Philadelphia Poets*, *Red Fez*, *Schuylkill Valley Journal*, *Apiary*, *Legal Studies Forum*, and elsewhere. He won the 2009 Amy Tritesch Needle Award, the 2016 Petracca Award, was a finalist for the Joie de Vivre book prize, has been nominated for Best of the Net, and is on *Philadelphia Stories'* editorial board. He lives in Media, PA with poet and Professor Courtney Bambrick.

12th Grade Judge
Ray Greenblatt

Winning a Fourth Grade Short Story Writing Contest, Ray Greenblatt was spurred to continue writing more stories, poems, essays, plays, and even a novel. He earned a B.A. in English Literature at Eastern University and an M.A. in American Literature at the University of New Hampshire. He taught English to 7th-12th grade for over 40 years. He won the Mad Poets Annual Poetry Contest and was nominated three times for the Pushcart Prize. He has at present written 10,000 poems and recently wrote a book review for the Dylan Thomas Society.