

Kindergarten: 1st Place

Spring

S un comes out a lot

P erfect flowers are blooming

R oses are blooming fast

I nsects are buzzing tree to tree

N ow flowers are blowing everywhere

G reen grass is growing everywhere!

-Xavier Bingham: Manzanita

Teacher: Fetzner

1st Grade: 1st Place

Micah

My brother hugs me every day
He snuggles me and wants to play
We ride our bikes and go explore
We have some fun in the great outdoors
We have dance parties and sing some songs
Oh what fun when we get along
I hope we can continue to be best friends
I know our love for each other
will never end

- Mara Chan: Sunrise Drive
Teacher: Duong

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2nd Grade: 1st Place

Pink

Pink is the opening
of a friendship
Birds chirping on a summer day
Pink is the calming rustle of trees
Blowing in the wind
Pink is the soothing
sound of music
Pink is love when they first met
Pink is petals blossoming
Pink is friendship
Pink is love
Pink is where
I belong

- Abby Vanwinkle: Manzanita
Teacher: Barrett

3rd Grade: 1st Place

Constellation

Curiously pretty, you are full of light
Only are you visible at night
Never can you be touched
Soaring past you are comets and rays of sunlight
Touched only by the heart of someone special
Endless amounts of thoughts and love
Light like no others
Loved by many soaring minds
Always and forever lasting
Thought of your beautiful rays
Irreplaceable to me
Only my heart touches you
Notice our love for you, constellations

- Lilah Winter: Manzanita
Teacher: Grilli

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4th Grade: 1st Place

The Wild Life

When I'm riding on your back
My seat in your saddle
The wind rushing through my hair
While chasing after cattle

Listen to my heart
The way that it beats
It'll sound like music
When we race through the street

The spiky green grass
While we graze on the hillside
We're taking steps gently
I wish I had you to call mine

Every color from white to black
Every size from little to tall
Every day from yesterday to tomorrow
I will love you through them all

No matter what happens in future we have
We will face it together and be just fine
Because we have each other
And forever we shine

-Reese Lewis: Ventana Vista
Teacher: Martinez

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5th Grade: 1st Place

Rain Dance

Listen

Listen to the pattering of the rain on the roof

Rain is a complicated thing

It can be smooth, like a spill of milk

It can be harsh, like a lion's roar

But it is calming

Feel the rain's calmness

It spreads through you like a grape juice stain on the carpet

Let it fill you

The rain dances

It twirls

Whisked around by its partner, the wind

It dips

It dives

It falls

It keeps going on an endless journey

Don't be scared of the rain

Look at it as a calming source, a beckoning drop of liquid

So next time it rains

Don't hide in your room

Go and dance

Dance with the rain

-Robyn Burguillo Meyen: Ventana Vista

Teacher: Clark

6th Grade: 1st Place

Peace

While the world is at its weakest
The force of vile has rained upon you

Don't feel the need to hate

Don't force

Don't sting

For to despise, is to put a barrier between you and the world

But in your darkest moment

When all seems wrong

Choose to love

Choose to break away from the chains that bind you

Choose to soar above it all

Reach into your soul

Choose peace

-Emma McNulty: Esperero Canyon

Teacher: Martell

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7th Grade: 1st Place

Fading Memories

She rises from the frayed recliner,
Setting down her half-knitted blanket.
Welcoming arms beckon,
Like a lighthouse to the wandering ship.

Rosewater vapors blanket the room,
Soft, wrinkled hands gripped with worry,
Like tissue paper,
Protecting a precious vase.

Although she smiles with familiarity,
There is something behind the chocolate irises.
If I look too closely, it lures me in,
An abyss of confusion and lost time.

Her creaking voice scolds me,
Tells me I've been away too long.
Her mind lies to her,
Like a cheating lover.

A half-done puzzle calls out for attention,
An abandoned plaything
In a forgotten nursery,
Heard but not remembered.
Repeated questions with no answers,
The same movie on repeat.

Moments pass through like trains in a station,
Each collecting new passengers for unique journeys.

Her mind a near-empty canvas,
Stretched upon a foundation of toothpicks.
Pencil tracings hint at outlines of the past,
Yet the finished painting remains elusive.

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Comforting and calm,
Like a fireside nap,
Her warmth spills over me
A waterfall of love.

Her 85 years of existence,
Now diminished to a few books and puzzles,
I marvel at all she has seen
And cannot retain.

Her eyes flicker briefly with familiarity,
Candlelight dancing in the breeze.
She holds her withering hand to my cheek
Asking, "Who are you again?"

-Zen Shah: Orange Grove
Teacher: Bindschadler

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8th Grade: 1st Place

Death

I hope death
is like being carried
to your bedroom
when you were a child
and fell asleep in the car
after eating dinner
with your family

I hope you can hear laughter
and chatter from the other room

I hope you can feel the warm blankets over your body
while you tightly hold
your favorite stuffed animal
and dream about
riding bikes with
your friends,
climbing trees,
and eating ice cream

I hope death is like
seeing an old friend
for the first time
in a long time
I hope you get to feel
the excitement and relief of
seeing them
pull into your driveway
and running out of the
door to see them

I hope you can feel
your bodies collide
with so much force
that you can't breathe

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Only the feelings of
longing and joy fill you

I hope death is like
staying up late
to talk to your friends
The moonlight
creeps into your bedroom
as you quietly speak
so you don't wake your family up
I hope you can
feel your eyes get heavy
and you almost fall asleep on the phone

I hope it's like
a long road trip
The cars and scenery
pass you by
as you slowly meet your
final destination

- Riley McGuire: Orange Grove
Teacher: Bindschadler

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9th Grade: 1st Place

If I Could

I would paint the sky a million blues
Instead of only one
So you could stare at varying hues
While resting under the midday Sun

I would sketch the trees to be towers
Branches stretching as if waking anew
So you could climb for hours and hours
And at their tops enjoy the view

I'd draw the Earth's mountains and hills
With thousands of ruins to be explored
So as you adventure for days on end
You would never find yourself bored

I'd color bridges outside the lines
That bind you to this Earth
So you could hop from path to path
And fill your time with mirth

I would dye the air sun-dappled colors
To brighten up your day
So you could dance through shadowed halls
And see them in different shades

I would fill your room with galaxies
And on your ceiling scatter stars
So as you'd drift off to sleep at night
You wouldn't feel alone in the dark

And if I could

I would stand beside you everyday
Eyes tracing the lines upon your face
So I could remind you how beautiful you are
Every time you look my way

-Quin Mekkelsen: CFHS

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10th Grade: 1st Place

Wanderlust

I pick the darkest poppy
Because it reminds me of you
The swirling shiny shimmering
In the waves beneath the blue
The inside of the petals
Cry to me unspoken triumph
As our feet sink in the shore
We lay our tired heads in defiance
Our bubbles glisten in fragile threads
While in a sweep of sheer strength
The water rushes above our heads
I close my eyes and wonder
Inhaling the salt and the smell of you
If I were much younger
I would melt into the sands
Pulling blood red poppies
From the fields inside my head
We would wander hills of grasses
Just to find the waves and the water
As I pull your arm and whisper
“I have been here many times before”

- Avery Maland: CFHS

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11th Grade: 1st Place

Dear Imaginary Friends

Do you remember me?
Been so long since you faded away.
This isn't something I could foresee.
I never thought you'd leave.

You all kept my loneliness at bay.
You made a world only I could see.
You all kept me going each day.

Do you remember me?
My beating heart began to decay.
Are you truly all gone and set free?
For me, do you still grieve?

I have gone and grown up.
I left every one of you behind.
Do you check on me like I'm a pup?
Do you miss who I was?

You all stay lingering in my mind.
I hate that you are all just made-up.
I just want us to stay intertwined.

Please watch while I slip up.
Without you, I've become very blind.
I'll wait for you, sipping from my cup.
And greet you with applause.

I can remember you.
I'm so sorry that I left you all.
I'm so sorry that I couldn't stay true.
Growing up is scary.

I'm not ready.

-Adlanta Cromer: CFHS

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12th Grade: 1st Place

My Girl

You are more than I bargained for.
Yes, you were all the things I fell in love with,
But you are wicked
This world has loved you since the day you were born and you've known it
It's in the way the fabric of your skin shifts beneath the constellations of moles
And the way you carry yourself with the stature of an entire universe
and oh, how the lights adorn you,
the way it bends and curves to fit your portrait
the way it slides off your hair and shoulders like water from a creek
So how could I have not fallen for you, when even the sun did
You could have been all the medication I needed
The remedy for the rest of my life

And yet you are my tumor
Cancerous to my brain
And a heavy
heavy toll on my body
You bully and berate me
You've hit me.
Your beauty is a weapon, keeping me from looking down
Until the perfect lullaby we used to be
Became a tune that would shatter the piano keys
And I don't know when, but one day, you became a part of me
Bloody heartstrings to bloody heartstrings
I don't know if it will be more damaging to tear you out
or let you remain

Because at the end of the day you were still the girl who kissed away my tears that
gloomy evening on November 17th
You're still the girl that drove two hours across the bitter winter city to make sure I
made it through that suffocating night
And you're still the girl who picked me wildflowers on road trips,
who whispered those songs through drunken hazes,
who showed me what love -
REAL, unfiltered, embarrassing love - felt like
You were the one that showed me the kind of love
That soldiers write and poets kill for

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But that was then
And I can't find that girl in you now
I once believed you to be the love of my life
But perhaps you were destined to be the bane of it

You once told me you would show me how much you loved me if I let you
and I *trusted* you,
But your mouth held enough poison to kill a hundred men and you kissed me full on
the lips.

-Amy Cao: CFHS