



Capitol Cadences

A COLLECTION FROM YOUNG WASHINGTON POETS | 2017 EDITION



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
WASHINGTON

Welcome!



On behalf of the Junior League of Washington, we are pleased to host the 18th Annual Youth Poetry Contest for D.C. public and charter school students in grades 4 through 8.

The purpose of the contest is to encourage young authors to explore reading and writing poetry by submitting original work on any topic of personal significance. With the JLW's focus on helping children develop and improve their literacy skills, it is truly inspiring to read the collection of poems on the pages that follow.

We would like to thank all of the students and teachers who participated in the contest this year and congratulate our winners.

Best regards,
Community Outreach Committee
Junior League of Washington

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*Bold indicates first place winner

4TH GRADE

Siblings

Natalie Martinez
Stoddert Elementary

I wonder what
Siblings are like.
Do they fight
all the time?

Or get along.
There are many different
things that siblings
can do.

Soon I'll find out.
I wonder every day
what it's like...
But for now I can only imagine.

Circle of Seasons

Isabela Alves & Isabelle Posner- Brown
Horace Mann Elementary School

As I sled by winter no fire, just cinders
Parents inside, youngsters outside
And snow falling by my side
Slippy sidewalk full of ice
Creatures in their den feeling cozy and nice
That's what winter was like.

As I skip by spring
I hear birds sing
Sweet scent of flowers
Along with rain showers
Animals emerging from a long winter sleep
Skinny and hungry ready to eat
That's what I saw in spring

As I bike by summer
Windows shutter
With heatwaves coming inside
Sweating, swimming, slumbering, and sulking because of the heat
Feet in the sand, hearing a band
Ouch! The ground is hot
That's what happened this summer a lot.

As I walk by fall
The autumn leaf piles are tall
All the beautiful colors around me
That is all I see
Bears, squirrels & more
Fattening up for winter once more
Chilly sometimes then comes the heat which gives me a daze
Those were the fall days

Now I've seen them all
Winter, spring, summer, and fall

Old Oak Tree

Gia Kuyler

Horace Mann Elementary School

Old oak tree, old oak tree tell me something, speak to me.
I am just a bud , very young I'm as young as they come
You're old, you're wise maybe we can compromise?
I'm weak, you're strong you're right I'm wrong.
Now Old oak tree, Old oak tree tell me, tell me how to write a poem,
please?

Little bud, Little bud so small, so new I am not in charge of you,
Make your own poem, write something that touches my heart,
write something that's a work of art.
I am not the boss of you write a poem, a sentence or two.

Hope

Alvaro Daniel Orlove Rodriguez
Eaton Elementary School

I used to smile.
I used to walk around town with no trouble.
I loved playing with my friends.
Aleppo was such a beautiful city.

Me and my friends loved going to school,
We used to see our teachers very happy.
Aleppo was a city of peace,
Until...

“BOOM!”
Bombs are dropping down,
In my house I hear loud thumps.
The windows are shut,
I look outside and see complete ruin.
I see blood in the streets,
I hear continuously, “FIRE” Orders given by soldiers.

What is happening to my city?
We took shelter,
I couldn't go to school.
My friends started to disappear.
I felt trapped in my own home with nowhere to go.
What happened to my friends?
Where are my teachers?
My education has vanished.
I asked my parents about fleeing the war.
They answer with one simple word, "Hope."

The war continued,
Yet I remain hopeful.
Hopeful for my family,
Hopeful for my city,
Hopeful for Syria,
Hopeful for peace around the world.

So I stayed, We stayed,
And I ask myself,
Will the war ever end?

5TH GRADE

A Collection of Two Poems That Attempt to Understand the Inevitable Meaning of Life

Beatrix Stone
Stoddert Elementary

Feelings are different for each of us.
We try to understand but inside we
do not.

Feelings are when your soul,
Pours from your heart
And fly into your eyes

But then there are feelings
When the wings falter,
And then fall into the depth of un-
knowing.
That is sadness

There is a feeling when your wings
just hover
In the to-and-fro space between
Effortless hopes of joy,
Or mourning hopes of sadness.

There is a feeling like no other.
This feeling is your feeling.
When you feel what the person
beside you cannot.
When you know that tomorrow will
be better as it always must be.

I felt this feeling.
For me.
Not for you.
But you can feel this feeling
For others
Just as they may feel this feeling
for you

Life is hard like
Blowing against the winds of time and change

Life is hard like
Picking up a phone from a weeping family

Life is hard like
Change
When that house on that street isn't there
Anymore

Life is sweet
Like lemons and
Ice
Life is sweet like
Hearing a bird in dawns
World

Life is monstrous
Like reality
As you change from boy to man and girl to woman

Life is Monstrous
Like change
And time
And reality
But then creates a monstrous hope

Life is music
But better to be listened to with the heart

Afterword:

Nobody knows the true meaning of life for others. They may not even know the meaning of life for themselves. The mirror does not even grasp the slightest concept of the person's life. I once saw a quote of utmost beauty, and I have enclosed it below:

“Life is not measured by the breaths we take but the moments that take our breath away.”

Should you give this quote some thought, you may find the true meaning. But take note, the person beside you does not have the same meaning, as it must be so.

The Light and the Dark of Love and Life

Zoe Lester and Liliana Heimbauer
Two Rivers PCS

Love, the motivation of the people who believe,
It motivates people so they don't leave

Life, the ostinato that keeps everyone in melody-
It's not a felony!

And once you choose to stay without agony-
working by the side of your partner in harmony

Positivity, is here to help you-
go down with more than just you and your crew

Darkness versus light-
will always fight through the the night

The angels and devils,
will always be on different levels

Though there are devils in the world,
there will always be more angels to make the devils unfurled

Those who look glum,
are for the rest to overcome

There is nothing to fear,
angels are always near

Life can hurt and take,
but your life is not a mistake

In life, there is no final line,
so you've got a lot of time

Days never end,
so you have more time to spend

What a better way to spend life,
than living it without strife

Life is a big circle,
there will be many dispersals

Do not defend,
you don't need to know how you end

People come around in a cycle,
but you will always remember one's arrival

There are many more that come after you,
so there is no need to cut through

This poem may be at its end,
but your life still has more to attend

Alone

Bryn Madison
Two Rivers PCS

By yourself
You call them
No one comes
You are alone

Sometimes it gets hard
You want to stop
To end it
You are alone

It's a happy moment
One to share
If only you had people to
share it with
People to laugh with you
You are alone

Life happens
It gets like that
Hard, painful
But it's life
Don't be alone

The more you hide
The less you have
The less you feel
That's being alone

Reach out
Don't be afraid
It's hard
To be alone

Impossible

D'Amonie Armstrong
Marie Reed Elementary

Impossible is a word that doesn't exist in my world.

Impossible is another word for weak and I can't do anything.

Impossible, the word itself says IT IS possible to accomplish anything.

6TH GRADE

Homeless

Arman Thornton
Charles Hart Middle School

When you're homeless
you hope someone walks by
and gives you food.
Maybe a tall light-skinned man
in a suit
will give you money.
If you're lucky, he will have
a Rolls-Royce,
white with purple trim,
just like the one I rode in
when my aunt died.

Predator

Silas Alemayehu
The New Stephen E. Kramer Middle School

In the grasslands predators live cunningly.
Some are loud while others don't make a sound.
This is where Tiger makes his nesting ground.
Tiger stalks down his prey,
Waiting for the right time
To charge and not stick around.

Only Us Two

Amirah Haynes
The New Stephen E. Kramer Middle School

We arrive at the beach
And see it's only us two.
As the sun sets we ride our canoe.
Her eyes shine like the crystal blue sea;
I ask her if she loves me.
Her response was no,
So I left the beach.
Looking over my shoulder
I watched all our memories wash away.

7TH GRADE

Epic Poem

Jaleel Rush
Charles Hart Middle School

Wandering around, whistling by the window
an old lady walks out of her vacant house
and vanishes, as a sun brings dawn
and then night.

Murmuring in the lightness,
like starving to a baby,
a bloom to a blossom and a breeze to a flower
Sunset comes.

Next will be night, ending the day with a cookie of delight
finally morning, with a fine breakfast
pouring orange juice, and then to eat a muffin
fluffy pancakes, waffles too
soon I'll have school, will learn something new.

Day and night will arrive, with time on the line
Sleeping will be like angels opening gates
for love and hate,
like a solemn poem worries
like the sky, soon we'll say goodbye.

T-Rex

Samuel Houser
Charles Hart Middle School

Beware of T-rex!
He's a violent creature.
He will viciously grasp you
with his razor-sharp claws.
I fear his teeth—
one bite and you're gone.
I stay silent because I'm nervous.
I scream in my mind.
I want to stay unseen.
Beware of the vicious, deeply
breathing mouth, the razor-sharp
teeth of the T-rex!

Trust Issues

Betelihem Girma
Center City PCS Brightwood Campus

We talk and you act like you're listening
Just because your smile is glistening
does not mean you're listening.

You push me away and wonder
where I am. You talk behind my back
and then wonder why I can't trust
You.

Sometimes I wonder why you
are in my life, to torture me
or mature me? Mature enough to
ignore you. Can't help but feed into it.

This is what we go through in Middle
School. My mom told me trust is
like glass. Once you break it you can fix
it. But you can still see the cracks in it.
I can't trust you.
Because I got trust issues.

8TH GRADE

The American Dream

Dameon Hairston
McKinley Middle School

The American Dream is nothing but a dream
And even then it is only for a few it may seem
It comes easier to those with lighter skin tones
Even if you work all the way to the bone
The American Dream

What is the point of dreaming I must ask
It seems like it would be a never ending task
I tried to dream once, just to see what it would be
I almost saw an image, just to be put back in reality
The American Dream

M.L.K. had a dream he wanted to share
But some didn't listen cause they thought the system was fair
Langston Hughes had it right beginning to end
A "Dream Deferred" is no way to win
The American Dream

The American Dream is more based on money and power
So the very few who have it can rise up the tower
Sometimes the American Dream cannot be obtained
There is something you need, something you must gain
The American Dream

I know to others this may seem a little sad
But I wanna tell you now, so in the end you don't get mad
At the system we follow, I am so appalled
Because it's harder to achieve something called
The American Dream

Oh my Oh my

Jonetta Harrisson
Center City PCS Trinidad Campus

Oh My Oh My It's A Black Woman
Dipped In Chocolate, Bronzed In Elegance
Enameled With Grace, Toasted With Beauty
Oh My Oh My It's A Black Woman
Intelligent, Intuitive and Beautiful
Sassy Without Apology
Oh My Oh My It's A Black Woman
The Queens Of The Earth, Sun kissed By The Sun
And The Mother Of Our Children
Oh My Oh My It's A Black Woman

Black Lives Matter

Serenity Talley, Fatima Blanco , Katherine Hernandez , Kalkidan Alemsaw
Raymond EC

In the memory of those whose eyes are closed

They said we were “free”
But black people can’t agree
Innocent black lives are being taken
Other black lives are lights out
BLACK LIVES MATTER! Matter! Matter!
Black families are getting shattered
The hatred needs to stop!

Others need to step up and advocate for justice
We can’t do nothing right these days
Protest peacefully
Our lives are still in DANGER
By some strangers
Who think they got power
But they are actually cowards

At the end of the day we are all equal
So, why do you treat us as if we are not?
Our mothers are crying! Our fathers are sleepless!
Why are you lying?
While we continue to live life below standards
Where is justice?



**JUNIOR LEAGUE OF
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MISSION STATEMENT

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