



# Capitol Cadences

A Collection from Young Washington Poets | 2018 Edition



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF  
**WASHINGTON**

# Welcome!



On behalf of the Junior League of Washington, we are pleased to host the 19th Annual Youth Poetry Contest for DC 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 JLN's focus on helping children develop and improve their literacy skills, it truly is 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,  
Poetry Contest Staff  
Community Outreach Committee  
Junior League of Washington

# Contents

3	<b>News</b>
4	Resilience
5	Untitled
6	(-: feelings )-:
7	Fighting
8	<b>Lonely</b>
9	Thoughts of my Father
11	Survive
12	Just Because I'm
14	Depression
16	<b>Silence</b>
20	<b>You Str8</b>

# News

Abel Woldeyesus, 4th grade  
Barnard Elementary School

I had the blues,  
As I had watched the news.  
The news made me feel like I had many flues.  
It made people mad.  
It made me feel very sad.  
The school shooting,  
It made me feel very unsuiting.  
What could I do?  
Should I just be blue?  
The sad school shooting,  
It was something I wish the person were not doing.  
I couldn't let it go off my head,  
As I saw the people  
Who were dead.

# Resilience

Sitara Mazumdar, 4th grade  
Stoddert Elementary

**BULLIES!**

Maimed  
Framed  
Tortured  
by

**BULLIES!**

Hurt  
Picked  
Hated  
by

**BULLIES!**

Beaten  
Broken  
Shaken  
by

**BULLIES!**

Stand up  
Speak up  
Rise up  
to  
Bullies  
and  
Make them  
**Kind** again!

# Untitled

Iker Diaz, 4th grade  
Barnard Elementary School

When you go outside  
You see a lot of junk  
When you see a lot of junk  
The world is a dump

When the world is a dump  
You want to help  
When you want to help  
The world is not a dump

The world is not a dump  
The world is clean  
The world is neat  
The world is not a dump

When the world is not a dump  
You hope the world is never a dump  
As long as you live!

# (-: *Feelings* :-)

Christopher Maltas, 4th grade  
Horace Mann Elementary

Sadness, it's something everyone's had.

Sadness, it makes everyone sad.

Sadness, it can make you cry.

Sadness, it does not quickly fly by.

Sadness does not need to be hated,  
'cause to happiness, it will be traded.

Oh happiness!

It smells like fresh cookies in the oven.

It feels like it couldn't be taken.

Feeling it, just feels so good.

It puts smiles on faces, when it should.

But around the corner is anger!

Anger is mostly bad.

Anger makes others sad.

Anger is one of my feelings,

Of sad, happy, and mad.

# *Fighting*

Brian Perez, 4th grade  
Barnard Elementary School

Fear that this will not ever stop.

I FEEL SICK because they aren't going  
to drop the fight.

My guts is telling me to do something,  
so they will stop.

Must do something before it gets worse.

Tell me how to ignore this pain and frustration.

I don't want any more of this  
please don't let me suffer.

No more of this I just want to be happy.

Get rid of this no more fighting I want peace,  
happiness and respect for the rest of my life.



# Lonely

Rae Marzilli, 5th grade  
Murch Elementary School

You're by yourself,  
With them all around you.  
If you walk up to them,  
They will say "Go Away!"  
But you don't know how to  
make friends any other way.

They won't talk  
to you.  
They won't walk  
with you.  
"Go away!"  
Is all they ever say.

You feel all by yourself.  
Like you're the only person  
in the whole wide world.  
But that isn't true,  
There will always be someone  
here for you.

Be kind and true.  
Allow your personality  
to shine through.  
You will find someone  
who is kind to you.  
And all you have to do  
Is let yourself shine through.

# Thoughts of My Father

Nardos Jebril, 5th grade  
Whittier Elementary School

My father's halfway around the world  
Surrounding other boys and girls  
Teaching the dream  
Without my mother and me

Does he have another family?  
Does he have other children?  
Does he even remember me?  
I'll just let him be

My mother works very hard,  
For her, and I  
So we can get whatever we want  
In a blink of an eye

Don't care about that man,  
Trying to do whatever he can  
No messages, no calls  
Tears coming down like little balls

I don't want him here,  
He can stay where he is  
Don't need to be near  
I have no fear

We're good on our own  
Doing just fine  
Don't need him to set the tone  
He can stay a lonely guy

He has no affinity for me,  
I have none for him  
We have a weird relationship  
It will go on for ever and ever again.

My mother is a single mother  
Doing what she can  
I wonder if she knows I love her,  
From the moon and back again

# Survive

Sophia Posner Brown, 5th grade  
Horace Mann Elementary School

I survive through wows and ows  
I survive in rain and shine  
I must be strong in surgeries but it's hard to stay strong  
when all you want to do is cry  
Where is the survivor in that?  
Why does it hurt to need them and hate them?  
I need all these doctors to survive, but who will I be when  
this journey all ends?  
Will I no longer be SophieBear? Will I be weak? Or break?  
I must keep strong-- I can not be weak.  
I guess I must wait to see  
And until then **I Must Survive**

# *Just Because I'm...*

Jordan Williams, 5th grade  
Hearst Elementary

Sometimes people get really judgey, so I repeat this poem to stop myself from getting really trudgey....

Just because I'm short, doesn't mean  
I'm short in other ways.

Just because I'm not rich, doesn't mean I'm poor.

Just because I'm not popular,  
doesn't mean I never will be.

Just because I don't have the latest thing,  
doesn't mean I'm lame.

I try not to listen to what they say,  
but somehow I listen anyway.

That is until my mother said, "They can talk all they want, but that won't stop you from being the best you can!" She added, "Do you have a plan?"

That is when I started to write an essay.  
An informational. A persuasive-al.  
I know; a silly word, but its not my third.

It's not finished but when it's ready, it will change the way  
some people think, it could make me turn pink.

I'm not sure how much it will help,  
but I hope it will show you how  
all the victims of bullying felt.

But, just because I'm quiet  
doesn't mean I can't speak up.

# Depression

Kelie Griffith, 5th grade  
Whittier Elementary School

I would feel abashed,  
Ashamed of myself because I was short  
As a miniature horse.

My friends were all tall,  
They looked like they were in the sky,  
All the way up high,  
I was like the flower that never sprouted.

I tried shoes and boots with a little bit of heel,  
But it still wasn't enough,  
I was still short like a cut tree trunk

All my friends had growth spurts,  
But I didn't,  
Instead . . .  
My face broke out.

My face was filled with bumps,  
I tried masks, skincare, everything,  
It had no effect on the bumps.

I put a lot of makeup on,  
When I was younger  
Because I felt like I wasn't pretty.

Once I realized I am beautiful the way I am,  
I stopped putting on heels,  
I stopped putting on makeup,  
So I could start fresh.

I am happy,  
I don't care about my looks,  
My skin is smooth,  
My friends and I play together,  
Despite our heights.



# Silence

Dahlia Perez, 7th grade  
Center City PCS Brightwood

My frenemy  
It scares me, yet it comforts me  
I ask someone for their opinion  
and I'm rewarded with Silence  
It makes me uncomfortable  
I want to know what they think  
reach into their mind  
But I'm scared  
I'm scared of what they think  
I'm fearful  
I'm insecure  
I get smaller  
I hunch my shoulders  
And stay to myself  
I Become Silence

In a room  
It's lively and full of people  
people in groups  
Pairs  
Trios  
Quartets  
I'm by myself  
In the corner away from everyone else  
My voice is gone  
In its place is silence  
I'm looking down at the ground

Or at a wall  
Maybe a window  
Comforted by the silence  
alone in my thoughts  
No need to have the constant internal conflict before I speak  
like I have gotten used to  
Silence alone doesn't judge you  
It doesn't blame you  
nor does it laugh at you  
It's just there  
You decide how to use it

In a room  
It's lively and full of people  
I'm alone deep in my thoughts  
I feel a touch on my shoulder  
Then the words come out of a mouth  
I don't know who's as I'm still staring  
down at the ground  
At a wall  
or maybe through a window  
But the words  
the words I've been dreading since I became part of the  
crowd  
they come tumbling out the mouth  
telling me  
to get out of my shell and to get to know other people  
I look at the person  
Pleading with my eyes  
Asking the source to not make me do this  
silently telling the voice  
that I do know these people  
I may not know who they are  
But I know them

They are the people that reward me with silence  
they are the people  
that use silence as a form of getting their point across  
You're not one of us  
You're confusing  
You're a loner  
You're better off by yourself  
That's what they try to say  
You're so technical  
Your ideas aren't time worthy  
You're awkward  
That's the definition of their silence  
I laugh it off  
Smile  
try to be good natured

I run away from the silence  
and go back to the shadows of silence  
Its arms stretched out  
ready to hold me tight  
ready to listen to me

Silence is two-sided  
When it's alone with me  
It raises me up  
makes me grow  
When it's with others  
It pushes me down  
makes me small  
doesn't allow me to rise up to my full height

I like being alone with silence  
that's what people don't understand  
Most people think that silence deals with

Sadness

or

loneliness

But that's because they don't have a strong one on one  
connection with silence

It's quite the opposite

At least for me it is

Silence

my frenemy

It scares me,

yet it comforts me

It's with me for better or worse

one word

one idea

It's complicated

It's silence

# *You Str8*

By Betelihem Girma, 8th grade  
Center City PCS Brightwood

You think I have an easy life  
Because I have a smile on my face  
But it's easier for me to have a smile on my face  
Than to admit it's killing me.

When I break down in front of you,  
you are speechless.  
You ask me,  
"Betty, you good, you str8?"

I am not good at handling my pain.  
I hold it up inside until it breaks me down,  
Thinking I can build myself back up again.

I have learned over the years  
that it is easier said than done.

I'm over here crying for help,  
yelling for help,  
and yet you only see a smile on my face.



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