

a PRISM  
of Thoughts



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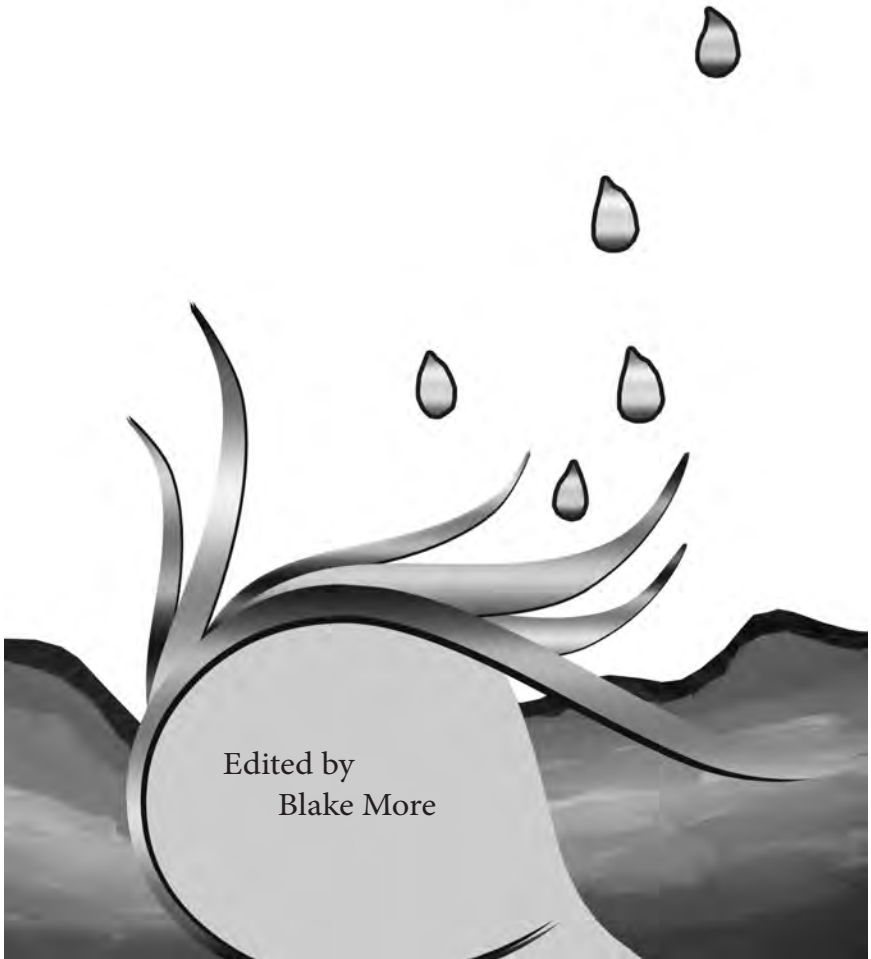
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of Thoughts



Edited by  
Blake More

MENDOCINO COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA POETS IN THE SCHOOLS  
2018-19

# MENDOCINO COUNTY POET TEACHERS

*A Prism of Thoughts* is the latest anthology of poetry written by K-12 students in Mendocino County. The poetry contained herein was generated during classroom poetry workshops taught by Mendocino Poets working through California Poets in the Schools (CalPoets) during the 2018-19 school year. The following lists the active Mendocino County California Poet Teachers and the schools they worked with this year.

<b>Bill Churchill</b>	West Hills School
<b>PJ Flowers</b>	Blosser Lane Willits High School
<b>Hunter Gagnon</b>	Redwood Elementary School
<b>Jasper Henderson</b>	Dana Gray Elementary Fort Bragg High School Mendocino High School
<b>Dan Zev Levinson</b>	Sanhedrin High School
<b>Karen Lewis</b>	Dana Gray Elementary Mendocino K-8 School Redwood Elementary
<b>Blake More</b>	Anderson Valley High School Arena Elementary School Manchester School Mendocino Community HS Pacific Community Charter HS Pacific Community Charter School Point Arena High School South Coast HS Sunrise School Ukiah High School
<b>Dan Roberts</b>	Laytonville High School Round Valley High School
<b>Will Staple</b>	Yokayo Elementary

## EDITOR'S NOTES

Yes, another year. This one also filled with milestones, bumps, valleys, peaks and paths. Our newest anthology, *A Prism of Thoughts*, is yet another fine example of this annual journey through the minds and hearts of our most beloved future. Showcasing a small sampling of the poems created during the 2018-19 school year, this collection offers you a hopeful, despairing, powerful, insightful peek into the direction we as a species are taking. Once again, the nine fine poets who serve as "Poet Teachers" for our county have collaborated with classroom teachers all over Mendocino County to elicit the stunning examples you will read inside these pages.

I chose Anderson Valley High School student Oscar Gibran Orozco's poem as the title, as it seems to most reflect the character and frequency the youth voices expressed herein. You will read poems speaking to rainbows and color and their accompanying diversity. The popularity of the rainbow among young poets comes and goes, but never before in my twenty years of teaching have I seen it appear so frequently and with such passion, felt the continuum of tone and emotion present in poem after poem. The rainbow symbolizes many things: It is the promise after a rain, the science of our eyesight, the call for tolerance and acceptance, the magic of gold, the ever-arc-ing celebration of love and freedom, even the pull of darkness with no promises of reprieve. It is the spectrum of expression, the balance of light, the call for sky-filling brilliance.

This anthology is alive with hue-inspiring lines such as "My hand is a rainbow shining", "...ride on my rainbow of laughter / for everyone to see", "...go home with cups full / of rainbows and clouds", or this simple profundity from Mendocino K-8 5th grader Sylvan Spade "Lovely rainbows / Gorgeous rainbows / Beautiful rainbows / Tiny rainbows / Questionable rainbows." Once again, I repeat the familiar refrain "this may be our best anthology ever". All I can say is, decide for yourself! You can also check out past collections, as many are in PDF format for easy viewing, at our Mendocino Poets in the School's website <https://tinyurl.com/youth-poetry>.

A robust, rainbow-tinged thank you to all the youth poetry supporters and generous donors who make Mendocino Poets in the Schools and our anthologies possible, especially a big thanks to the Mendocino County Office of Education and the outgoing director of Youth Services Kimberly Barden for her years of support, and an equally hearty welcome to her successor Molly Snider – a former MPiTS student! I would also like to thank Meg Hamill of California Poets in the Schools; the team at the California Arts Council; Alyssum Weir of Arts Council of Mendocino County and Get Arts in the Schools; The Mendocino Reading Council; The Rotary Association; Good Buy Clothes; PTA associations; Dana Gray Parent Group; Mendocino K-8 School Art Teacher Mark Oatney; PCCHS Art Teacher Whitney Badgett; our slam venues the Arena Theater, Developing Virtue School and the Matheson Performing Arts Center; Surf Supermarket, Arena Market and Harvest Market for their generous food donations; the schools and everyone who supports youth poetry.

The biggest kudos go to the students and teachers in this book. Thank you—you are the poetry of Mendocino County! ~ Blake More, Editor

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# ELEMENTARY



## RAINBOW TIME

The water comes like a mystery sun  
and it opens like a sun,  
the ocean comes like a teddy Bear,  
the rainbow comes like a leopard,  
the deer began like a mouse,  
the bird thinks that when you see a big bird  
a sky comes like an eye,  
that when you go into a color  
a Dolphin has splashed,  
myself, a dark horse,  
and when you see a big dark horse,  
imagine that you have a big night sky,  
and when you see a big night sky  
you have a summer house  
forever running on rainbow time

*Alexa Arellano Tapia*  
*Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## THE WAY

I am the way to a journey  
I am the way to a new start  
I am the way to a new country  
I am the way to a family  
I am the way to someone new  
I am the way to a new best friend  
I am the way each day  
You start something new and  
that something new is me—the way.

*Leilani Cen*  
*Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School*  
*John Moran, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

# LONELY

*inspired by 'Sunflower's Wish' postcard*

Here I am  
A lonesome  
Sunflower  
Behind me  
There is a  
Large, beautiful  
Forest

I wish I am  
    there now  
    So I could have  
    a friend

My fellow family flowers  
    Don't even like me  
    They just tease and tease me

    I hope when  
    I grow old my  
    seedlings don't  
    have the same life.

*Eleanore Schiro  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## REMEMBER

Remember, Remember,  
Remember.

Remember when mom  
rubbed us, kissed us, hugged us.

She said she loved us, but  
now mom is not here, mom  
is gone in the heavens.

But she still loves us and  
we still love her, but mom is  
gone, but not in our hearts.

She loved us, she kissed us.

“Mom.” She came down from  
the heavens, she kissed us,  
rubbed us, hugged us, loved us.

*Teresa Orlando  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School  
Maiah Austin, Classroom Teacher  
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

## UNTITLED

I am as shy as a snake in the forest  
I am as good as a math book  
and as sneaky as a jaguar  
I am as friendly as a parrot  
and as stubborn as a fossil

*Oslo Hillscan  
Grade 1, Pacific Community Charter School  
Todd Orenick, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# THE BEAUTIFUL SKY

The beautiful sky, it is sad  
It is raining with tears  
The beautiful sky is blue  
Clouds cover him he can't see  
The beautiful sky is made of clouds  
He talks to the clouds and pouts  
He makes clouds happy  
Clouds go away  
The beautiful sky doesn't see clouds  
the other day      This is all for  
today              This is the end

*Larry Pool*

*5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School*

*Whitney Sterner, Classroom Teacher*

*Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

# SNOGLEHOPHER

Above the thunder  
there was an earthquake  
across the sea  
there were waves  
beyond the heart  
there was love  
before the castle  
there was a house  
after the night  
there was day  
after the school  
there was college

*Luke Fosse*

*Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School*

*John Moran, Classroom Teacher*

*Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

## SPEEDY AS A SPACESHIP

I am as speedy as a spaceship headed to Mars.  
I am as weak as a molecule breaking apart.  
I am as strong as an African Elephant towing a truck.  
I am as quiet as still air on a summer night.  
I am as hot as a flaming fire.  
I am as brave as a lion hunting.  
I am as dirty as a coin on the street.  
I am as present as the moment right now.  
I am as bright as the sun burning.  
I am as loud as a jaguar growling at a cheetah.  
I am as green as grass when it is raining.  
I am as fluffy as a cloud floating in the sky.

*Max Post-Lieb*  
*Grade 2, Manchester School*  
*Classroom Teacher, Tansy Leiser*  
*Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## DEAR SCHOOL

Why do we have school?  
I am scared if I don't pass my reading.  
Why is school 6 hours?  
Who invented school?  
In school, why do we need friends?  
What does school stand for?  
How much money do schools cost?  
Where was the first school in the whole world built at?

*Maggie Vega*  
*Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary*  
*Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## DEAR GALAXY

Why don't you come on earth if you were a landscape?  
You will have galaxy eyes. Orange hair.  
Your skin is so smooth like a donut.  
You taste like some mores.  
You smell like red rose perfume.  
You sound like happy children laughing.  
You have big eyes, a beautiful smile.  
Dear galaxy how come you never say hello?

*Angel Conzalez  
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School  
Ms. Swift, Classroom Teacher  
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

## IMAGINATION

Imagination is a place where all is true  
Unicorns and dragons eating mangos can happen  
It's all up to you  
In the darkness of night there can be light  
Imagination is a place alone  
Where you can always go  
There can be silence in a room of people  
There is no war ever again  
Your imagination, your own world

*Sarah Morse  
Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School  
John Moran, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*



# I AM A DROP OF WATER IN THE DEEP BLUE SEA

A cool kid  
A rock surfer  
A bike rider  
A cook  
A ice skater  
A student  
A scientist  
A fish  
A teacher  
A boat  
A flower

*Shawn Flannagan*  
*Grade 5, Blosser Lane Elementary*  
*Mimi Stoll, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## MUSIC IN THE CLOUDS

Look in the middle of the cloud  
There you will hear a flute.

Look in the middle of the cloud  
There you will hear a violin.

Look in the middle of the cloud  
There you will hear a drum.

Look in the middle of the cloud  
There you will hear a guitar.

*Kimberly Muñiz*  
*Grade 1/2, Redwood Elementary*  
*Lee Ann Burkwall, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## YOUR LOVE

Your love  
is powerful  
like a  
stampede  
like a  
voracious  
black hole  
in the  
night, but once  
destroyed, it's  
a monstrous  
storm of anger  
or a stampede  
of sadness.  
Love is powerful.

*Lidie M. Jimenez-Potter  
Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School  
Linda Freeling, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## MY WEIRD COMPASS

My compass doesn't do what a compass does  
My compass shows me where  
my heart wants to go  
My compass can be very  
inconvenient  
My compass can be very annoying  
Why does my compass act this way?

*Sylvia Harsh  
Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School  
John Moran, Classroom Teacher  
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

# DOING NOTHING

I am a chipmunk  
getting stocked upon acorns

I am a dolphin  
giving people rides on my back

I am a bobcat  
wandering around my new home

I am a coyote  
exploring the dark woods

I am a crab  
searching for my dinner

I am an arrow  
silently soaring through the sky

I am me  
doing nothing, because  
doing nothing leads to  
the very best something.

*Ashlynn Orsi  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

# MUSTANG

I am a Mustang.  
I run really fast faster  
than you, mustang car.  
I eat hay and grass  
You eat oil and gas.  
I am beautiful  
even more beautiful than you, mustang car.  
I roam free.  
You drive people all over the place  
You're big; I'm small  
but I'm still better good looking than you.  
When I crash,  
I fall on my back  
Still alive, but  
When you crash you might  
not survive.

*Jemma Apodaca*  
*Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary*  
*Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

# I WILL

I will  
I will go to the beach  
I will be happy every single second of my life  
I will enjoy life  
I will go to the park  
I will go to the zoo  
I will smell nature  
I will play fortnite and have fun  
I will swim in the ocean  
I will love my sister so much

*Pablo Adrian Soria Velazquez*  
*5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School*  
*Daniel Ramirez, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

# THE MOUNTAIN LION OF THE WORLD

I am a mountain lion of the world.  
I spread land everywhere I go.  
I run very fast.  
I can climb ever so high.  
I swim in lakes, rivers, streams, and the ocean.  
I am never far from my home, my den.  
I love my home.  
But mostly, I love what God brings in my future.

*Carolyn Koller*  
*Grade 2, Redwood Elementary*  
*Kathleen Murray & Sharilyn Word, Classroom Teachers*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## I AM THE WOLF

I am the wolf  
with fur like lightning.

I am the wolf  
with a howl like the wind.

I am the wolf  
with a stomp like an earthquake.

I am the wolf  
as fast as a jet.

*Finn Felicich*  
*Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School*  
*Beth Renslow, Classroom Teacher*  
*Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

## UNFOLD AND LET GO TO FLY

My museum opens early in the morning  
And closes at 8  
When the doors open the lilacs, daffodils, and butterflies unfold  
And let go to fly  
Play and joy visit often  
They always run and jump with happiness

I teach visitors to frolic without care  
My rooms offer diverse oceans in one  
Thick forests in another  
I encourage you to dash from room to room  
First, wandering into the past  
Where memories flash across minds  
As a red tailed hawk swoops above human kind  
Munch on an apple  
As you walk to the next exhibit  
To check on it as if it might get off track  
Fish swim above you as you go along

Fling off your shoes  
And come with me  
To the land of hope and love  
Where we play  
Give and believe  
in hope, happiness,  
joy, love  
and family

*Adalaide Montagnino  
Grade 5, Manchester School  
Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

# TOUCHING THE WORLD

My hand likes to take pictures of me  
My hand holds baby chickens  
My hand makes a ball of slime  
My hand is a palm tree  
My hand is a rainbow shining  
My hand draws capital letters  
My hand is the ocean making waves  
My hand wiggles because it is funny  
My hand builds a house out of Legos  
My hand remembers touching seaweed at the beach  
and a slimy fish under the water  
My hand remembers how to dance, laugh and tickle  
My hand hugs teddy bears  
My hand creates shapes like hearts and circles  
My hand wishes to fly to the sky like an astronaut in outer space  
My hands wish for peace in the world

*Mr Orenick's 1-2 Class  
Pacific Community Charter School  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## LIFE

Life is where flowers bloom.  
Life is where plants grow.  
Life is where trees get higher.  
Life is where feelings come out.  
Life is where creatures live.  
Life is a galaxy with a million stars.

*Aven Bevilacqua  
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School  
Ms. Swift, Classroom Teacher  
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

## MUSE OF FUTURE

My museum is open when the sun rises,  
Closes before sunset and is for family only.  
It is a cloud that people enter from the top,  
Inside feels like soft marshmallows,  
With infinite rooms for adventures,  
Like sledding down hills,  
Along with board and card games too.

Mysteriously, you will see a cat-wolf,  
And probably a dancing pizza in room #964.  
You will receive a miniature cloud to sleep on,  
And a vending machine that only accepts wishes,  
Such as better wifi and junk food.

In front, you will see Benjamin Franklin waving at you,  
A carpet of hamburgers under the glass floor.  
Diamonds and amethysts fills up the rooms  
with light, blue and purple.

This is my museum,  
A cloud museum in the sky.  
It will always be true,  
Even when not alive.  
No matter where you are,  
This museum is nothing but heaven.

*Gaby Aguilar*  
*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*



## VACATION TIME

Summer time is a strawberry waiting to be enjoyed.  
Like an ocean of joy.  
It gives an adaptation to myself.  
I imagine its a star that only last 3 months.  
It's the energy that keeps me alive.  
It's a blood molecule.  
It's a turquoise fingerprint.  
Making a dream for a kid.  
It's like a replaced eye.  
It's like a windmill of mystery.  
Like a Spanish leap.  
That makes you think of a century.

*Alex Cabrera*  
*Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*  
*Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher*

## NOBODY TOLD ME

Nobody told me that we would run out of money  
Nobody told me we could get very sick  
Nobody told me the earth could end  
Nobody told me you were very ill  
Nobody told me there would be bullies  
Nobody told me I could die  
Nobody told me some animals were not in safety  
No body told me that you could break

*Sophia Ranch*  
*Grade 4-5, Yokayo Elementary School*  
*Ms. Kivett, Classroom Teacher*  
*Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

# CAMPING TRIP

*inspired by a Rafael Alberti painting*

Black  
dark like the night sky

White  
colorless as snow

A fence  
shape of an ocean wave

A map  
roaming the cold snowy areas

A tree  
lonely as a lynx

Me  
lying in my tent, watching the wind.

*Hector Mace  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## MY WORLD

In my world there is more love, less hate  
In my own world, each puppy has a loving owner  
In my world there is world peace and happiness  
In this world is my hope  
my soul  
my life

*Nadya Brodetsky  
Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School  
Beth Renslow, Classroom Teacher  
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

## NOBODY TOLD ME

Nobody told me that friendship ends.  
Nobody told me food rots.  
Nobody me that people can talk behind my back.  
Nobody told me that things can go wrong.  
Nobody told me I could be so sad.  
Nobody told me things can hurt others or myself.  
Nobody told me people could be bad or mean.  
Nobody told me books couldn't always have a happy ending.  
Nobody told me people could forget me.

*Reagan Frost*  
*Grade 4-5, Yokayo Elementary School*  
*Ms. Kivett, Classroom Teacher*  
*Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

## LET THERE BE CHANGES

Let there be sunsets  
for the whole world to see,  
Let there be warmth  
for everyone in need,  
Let there be roofs  
to cover people who need,  
Let there be changes  
in the world we call our own

*Golden Samuelson*  
*Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School*  
*Linda Freeling, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

# THE BIG BLUE LIFE

Blue, blue,  
I like blue  
Blue is like a blue goldfish  
Blue feels like I can touch the big blue sky  
Blue, blue,  
Everywhere I go there is blue  
Blue smells like the ocean that I live around  
Blue tastes like my land  
Blue turns into my Earth  
Blue feels like water  
Blue feels like my life

*Juan Canul III  
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary  
Kathleen Murray & Sharilyn Word, Classroom Teachers  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## WATER

*inspired by Van Gogh's 'Starry Night 1888' painting*

I am the light of the water  
    I am the painting of the water  
I am the stars of the water  
    I am the boat of the water  
I am the reflections of the water  
    I am the end of the water  
I am the life of the water.

*Isaiah Cooper  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## THE WEIRD AND WACKY

The museum of myself is weird and wacky  
    It is filled with lots of creations and inspiration  
It has big pools with purple water  
    Rooms of gold and puppies playing in trees  
with the angels protecting every one of them  
    I'm only open from 3:00-8:00  
because I'm so inspirational 'til bedtime  
    My walls are filled with unicorns  
that all my visitors can pet  
and ride on my rainbow of laughter  
for everyone to see  
    My museum is shaped like a huge triangle of cotton candy  
and is a place of learning for the creative thinkers  
    that come from everywhere

*Lilly Zamora*

*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*

*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## SECRET UNICORN

I am a white unicorn.  
My horn is silver.  
I live behind a waterfall.  
My friend Wild Horse lives  
    on top of the waterfall.  
He loves his wild life.  
He likes to jump over cliffs.  
I like to jump over cliffs too.  
When my horn shines like the sun  
    he comes running.

*Lilla Tobak*

*Grade 2, Redwood Elementary*

*Kathleen Murray & Sharilyn Word, Classroom Teachers*

*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## I AM THE LAVA

I am the lava to the volcano  
I am the pencil to the book  
I am the valley to the desert  
I am the heart to the body  
I am the wind to the tornado  
I am the word to the paper  
I am the ground to the earth  
I am the chair to the table  
I am the cold to the warm  
I am the star to the sky  
I am the fire to the house  
I am the jacket to the cold

*Teagan Miller*  
*Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School*  
*Linda Freeling, Classroom Teacher*  
*Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

## WHAT I DO BEST

I swim fast  
I chug Sprite  
I play games  
I practice bunting  
I am a hoop swisher  
I inhale chicken  
I am a power sleeper

*Jairo Suarez Gonzalez*  
*Grade 4, Arena Elementary*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*  
*Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher*

## ORIGAMI PLACE

In the origami place,  
origami pelicans soar through the sky.

In the origami place,  
stars shine bright.

In the origami place,  
origami boats sail through the ocean.

In the origami place,  
you can stop and smell the origami tulips.

In the origami place,  
origami frogs jump far and high.

In the origami place,  
origami crocodiles snap their jaws.

In the origami place,  
origami eat leaves off trees.

In the origami place,  
origami gorillas pound their chests.

It's a nice place, the origami place.

*Hayden Jones  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Lynette May, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## YOU ARE

You are the hand that touches my forehead  
when I am not feeling good  
You are the eyes watching me  
when I am playing on the play ground  
Nobody told me that you were . going  
to leave me on the porch  
    that your friend was going  
        to pick me up,  
Sometimes in my heart I feel real scared'  
Sometimes in my heart I feel hurt  
    when you are crying.  
Life is when you feel happy and hurt  
    at the same time'

*Ruby Flowers*  
*Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School*  
*Mr. Olson, Classroom Teacher*  
*Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

## THE MYSTICAL DEER

Pit, pit, pat, little April shower  
Deer hides in his cave  
Woodpecker hides in his nest hole  
As I walk through the forest  
My hand feels the rain  
Woodpecker swoops by me  
As Woodpecker flies by Deer's cave  
As they become friends

*Alexia Dell Stuckey*  
*Grade 2, Redwood Elementary*  
*Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*



## WONDER

Wonder is the first snow of your life landing on your tongue  
the sweet smell of fresh baked cookies at your grandmas house  
or the sound of the high tide crashing against the rocks,  
Wonder is a valley of poppies, a sea of orange  
    swaying from side to side  
laying on the mossy ground staring up at tall endless trees.  
Wonder is the rain tapping against the window  
as it drips onto the ground  
    the feeling you get when the real you      comes out.

*Abigail Mullen  
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School  
Mr. Olson, Classroom Teacher  
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

## ANIMAL ISLAND

I live on an island called Animal Island  
    where everyone is an animal.  
There are colorful birds, bugs and flowers.  
You can have whatever you want,  
    whenever you want.  
Everything is free, the  
    houses are made of candy and cake.  
There are cats on bikes,  
    dogs on skateboards.  
I am the dragonfly mayor who  
    watches over Animal Island.

*Alia Dunston  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Lynette May, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

# THIS IS WHERE THE STORM STARTS

This is where the  
storm starts

Across the coast where  
the wind blows

like a race car winning  
the race

A cheetah running in  
a hurry

As the thunder  
roars

And the lightning  
flashes

As silence falls  
upon the earth.

And this is where  
the storm ends...

*Savanna Oglesby  
Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School  
Linda Freeling, Classroom Teacher  
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

# MUSEUM

In my museum there are poisonous frogs.  
My museum opens from 5AM to 8PM.  
And it is tall  
with a fountain outside and inside.  
And there are poems, stories, and history inside  
Exhibits include stuff that presidents can use  
such as suits, shoes, brains, and friends.  
It offers visitors a tour of private places.  
My museum is a place for taking a break  
when life gets frustrating.

*Franco Olaide Bernal*  
*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# BEAR AND SALMON

If I was a big bear  
I would walk  
To see my friend salmon.  
He lives in the blue ocean,  
                  next to my cave.  
We would play  
                  in the diamond ocean  
                  in the shine.

*Jose Carlos Barajas*  
*Grade 2, Redwood Elementary*  
*Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## THINGS I LOVE

All the things I love, sweet from the above,  
lay there in my art.

As I lay down to draw, a humming  
bird flies by.

And as I lay there to draw what I saw,  
a gentle baby humming bird lays to thaw from the cold.

I finally did what I was told.

*Autumn Van Horn*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School*

*Melissa Pyorre, Classroom Teacher*

*Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

## JUMPING MONKEY

I'm as silly as a jumping monkey  
I'm as sad as a hurt blue jay  
I'm as lazy as a sleeping dog  
I'm as busy as a hungry honeybee  
I'm as small as a piece of sand  
I'm as big as a Long-legged elephant  
I'm as tough as a fighting rhino  
I'm as weak as a biting ant

*Andrew Vergara*

*Grade 4, Manchester School*

*Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson*

*Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## PERSPECTIVE

I am whatever you want me to be  
The music to your day or  
that annoying guy over there.  
I was once that,  
now I am this.  
I could be any thing—  
a dog  
the wind.  
I could be faster than lightning  
or slower than a sloth.  
I am anything to anybody  
and anybody could be anything to me  
as long as we have perspective  
and if we have different points of view  
Anybody could be any thing to any one

*Eli Charles Griffen  
Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School  
Linda Freeling, Classroom Teacher  
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

## DEAR MOM

What was it like when  
I was a toddler?  
Was I big and fat the  
size of a sky-scraper,  
or was I small an tiny?  
What was the first  
word I said?

*LaRon Randy Gordon  
Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary  
Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher  
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## WITH MY HANDS I CAN MOVE STUFF

With my hands I can carry my little sister.  
With my hands I can play with a ball.  
With my hands I can touch my horse.  
With my hands I can move things.  
With my hands I can touch my dog.  
With my hands I can swim in my pool.

## CON MIS MANOS PUEDO MOVER COSAS

*Con mis manos puedo cargar a mi hermanita.  
Con mis manos puedo jugar con una pelota.  
Con mis manos puedo tocar mi caballo.  
Con mis manos puedo mover cosas.  
Con mis manos puedo tocar a mi perro.  
Con mis manos puedo nadar en mi piscina.*

*Federico Soria Velazquez  
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary  
Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## WONDER

Wonder is the smell of pasta cooling in a pot  
the sound of my sister laughing on the trampoline  
the sight of my dog when I come.  
Wonder is a new place to explore  
a scent of blooming flowers  
the touch of a friend when I am sad.

*Payton Mayo  
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School  
Mr. Olson, Classroom Teacher  
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

# THE MAGICAL ME

My museum of self  
is open Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays  
from 8am to 7pm  
because those are my favorite days

My museum's roof is made of rose petals  
and the doors are dark red  
with gray walls  
and pink cotton candy stairs

Visitors can have tea made out of exotic flowers  
and snickerdoodles  
with chocolate syrup and rainbow sprinkles

Exhibitions include unicorns, sloths, birds,  
and dinosaurs

Visitors will go home with cups full  
of rainbows and clouds

And there's my museum,  
just as magical  
as me

*Addison Clark*  
*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*  
*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*

## ARIANA'S MUSEUM

In the museum of myself  
there are mirrors all over the walls  
reflecting the places I go  
There are rooms for all my moods  
I offer visitors a chance in falling in love  
My museum is open 24 hours 20 days a week  
The thoughts you have before going to sleep are there  
All the thoughts I can't think of  
I dream are there too  
In my museum  
a white unicorn let's people ride on its back  
bringing joy and happiness  
My museum is a love museum  
Joining the family party

*Ariana Arteaga  
Grade 5, Manchester School  
Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## I AM

I am  
a spy going on a mission  
I am  
a tree latching its roots to the earth  
I see myself as  
a blue jay protecting its eggs  
I cannot self-destruct  
I am a part of the earth.

*Aiden Chi  
5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School  
Whitney Sterner, Classroom Teacher  
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*



## DEAR LIFE

If I could corner you in a palace, I would.  
I would never leave you stranded on an island  
with no food, no water, no life.  
If I could smell you, you would smell like a rose.  
If I could see you, you would look like a role model.  
If I could feel you, you would feel like a person.  
If I could taste you, you would taste like chicken alfredo.  
You are the reason I'm alive.  
Whenever I'm sad, you boost me up again.  
When I'm mad, you make me cool off.  
When I'm scared, you make me brave.  
And that's my poem.

*Ahmad Eason*  
*Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary*  
*Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## MY LIFE

I love how I dance as much as I can  
I dream as the night fades  
I am a great swimmer  
I always sing when I'm far away  
I have a dog and two cats  
I like to run and jump  
all day  
and say "yay"!

*Roxana Alvarez*  
*Grade 4, Arena Elementary*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*  
*Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher*



## SUPERHERO LIFE

By day I am a regular girl at school  
By night I am Flower Queen  
Saving people's gardens and weeding.  
I'm wearing a flowers dress  
and white shoes, and  
I jump and fly.  
But in the morning,  
I am a regular girl again,  
wearing a flower shirt and jeans.  
I am so happy  
that  
I am a superhero  
and helping  
the Earth.  
It makes me so, so happy  
that I can help the Earth.  
I have not told my mom or dad,  
but I am so happy that I am  
a super, super,  
super hero.

*Janeth Can Espinoza  
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary  
Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## UNTITLED

I am as smart as a super computer  
as happy as a birthday party  
I am as nice as my mom  
and as active as my hand  
I am as easy going as a flower

*Xavier Coria-Torres  
Grade 1, Pacific Community Charter School  
Todd Orenick, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## IF YOU WERE

If you were poor  
and had a little house  
would you be thankful?

If you were rich  
and had a castle  
would you be greedy?

If you were poor  
and had a little house  
would you love?

If you were rich  
and had a castle  
would you want?

All these things,  
“If you were” and “Would you be”  
I don’t know.

*Gracey Lenhart*  
*Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School*  
*Beth Renslow, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## WHO I AM

I am an artist who...  
carries a box of paints around the world.  
I am a nerd that reads all the books in the world.  
I am a student about to learn.  
I am a star with a place to go.  
I am a bird about to fly for the first time.

*Danielle Agenbroad*  
*Grade 5, Blosser Lane Elementary*  
*Mimi Stoll, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

# THE NIGHT AT THE NIGHT MUSEUM

At the end of the day  
I find myself at the top of my night museum  
For seekers who are not ready to surrender  
Their thoughts will be lost in the wonderful land of dreams.  
I step into my elevator full of foods  
From Thailand, France, Mexico, and America.  
In the elevator there are no buttons and only one seat  
I sit down and the elevator starts my journey.  
9...8...7.  
The door opens and I step out to see a hall of doors  
One door says "Horror room"  
Another says "Adventure Room"  
6...5...4.  
My next stop is more like a museum  
In the room there are my old pets that have gone  
To the heavens or gotten lost on this trafficked Earth  
Then we step in the elevator and start again.  
3...2...1. Our last stop for the night is the Lobby Room.  
Where there are people in their pajamas  
From ages to 10 to 60.  
All of these people are here for one reason  
They want to explore.  
So I open my museum of my past and thoughts  
And I see people come and go and I start my way up  
1...2...3.

*Joaquin Faiella  
Grade 5, Manchester School  
Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

# THE FISH MOON

I see the blood moon from my grandma's  
patio, the moon is red and full

the stars are bright, the clouds are  
made of fluff

I am about to fall asleep, when  
the wind, it swept me off my feet

Then the moon came to me.  
Suddenly, the bright red moon turned  
black and took the shape of my fish  
that died, I touched his head, and  
he was soft and slimy.

He said to me, Come closer,  
and I will tell you a secret, you  
and I.

I never really died, he  
said to me, When you thought I was  
gone, I turned into a star in  
the sky.

Now I sit up there,  
in the sky, watching you,  
every minute of every day,  
even when you can't see me  
when I play, I am there. I am  
always there.

*Rowan Carr*  
*4<sup>th</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School*  
*Meredith Stenberg, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

## IN THE CENTER OF THE SKY

In the center of the sky  
a crocodile jumps on the clouds and hums.

In the center of the sky  
a dragon plays the electric guitar  
that makes fire.

In the center of the sky  
a monster plays the drum.  
There's turtle that sings about the sky.

*Calyssa Henderson  
Grade 1/2, Redwood Elementary  
Lee Ann Burkwall, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## LIFE

I am life,  
I am the plants that god brings for medicine  
I am the sun that god plays in  
I am death that knocks on your doorstep  
I am all the dimensions  
parallel and normal  
I am the mountains that god bikes on  
I am the lightning that keeps you awake at night  
I am life

*Zephyr Kawczak  
Grade 4, Mendocino K-8 School  
John Moran, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## MUSEUM OF MY LIFE

My museum has vines and flowers,  
Forests of kelp and trees  
towering up through the ground  
With ledges of mossy rock  
And marshmallow fountains  
Chocolate tigers and leaping lions  
Shelves of memory crystals and glassy light  
Candy canes the size of trees stand around  
A fresh water fall  
at the end  
a hot springs pool surrounds you  
Fragrant flowers, ice cream cones  
float around unicorn bones  
Swirly paintings and magic rocks form  
a circle around dancing peacocks  
The roof of my museum is covered  
With pictures and statues  
My hours are from 1:00 a.m to 12:00 a.m  
Anytime I choose  
Now come to my museum,  
because I have been waiting for you

*Lila Wigton  
Grade 3, Manchester School  
Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## LOVELY RAINBOWS

Lovely rainbows  
Gorgeous rainbows  
Beautiful rainbows  
Tiny rainbows  
Questionable rainbows

*Sylvan Spade  
Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School  
Linda Freeling, Classroom Teacher  
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*



## ALL ABOUT ME

My museum of myself  
Has baby blue walls  
And a black middle  
There is a calm place  
Where visitors take a rest and relax  
There is a book ready to be read  
And a chair in the sunny yard  
If you look to the right  
There is my happy place  
A beach with shells for each visitor  
And a lot of friends playing in the ocean  
On the left  
There is a sad place  
because sometimes you just want to cry  
There is a comfy chair there too  
In the middle  
There is a diary full of feelings and secrets  
And in one corner  
There are baby elephants that you can pet and ride  
In another corner  
You can play softball, soccer, baseball, basketball, and  
volleyball  
My museum has no roof  
And angels fly in the sky  
And butterflies never seen before flutter around  
It's open Monday through Friday  
And closed on the weekends  
So I can dance these days away  
One of the three rooms has tropical fruit  
In the last room  
There is small room that all visitors can shop from  
Every room has a potted rose bush  
That makes every room smell  
like roses seeping in the night

*Alexa Ferreyra*  
*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## A CAR GUY'S MIND

In museum of myself there are drifters  
Walk through the garage  
You see Gtr R32's 240 SX's and NSX's  
And little RC cars that look the same  
Put on a helmet and driving gear  
And take a test drive  
The museum opens, then closes for a one hour break  
Then opens again  
Check out the magical cars that turn on by themselves  
In the vending machine you can buy a miniature RC car  
In the museum of myself you can explore a car guy's mind

*Isaac Castro*  
*Grade 4, Manchester School*  
*Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson*  
*Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## MYSELF AS A MUSEUM

The exhibit of me  
has no ending or beginning  
because it's all up to you.  
My doors are open to you from morning to dawn.  
The objects in me are whatever you want them to be,  
like dino eggs, dino bones or megalodon teeth.  
My museum lets visitors have  
whatever their imagination wants to have.  
We offer hot chocolate for kids and coffee for adults.  
My Museum is like a perfect burnt marshmallow

*Bruno Resenos Guarneros*  
*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# PEACE

Peace.

War came before peace.

Anger came before war.

Speaking came before anger.

Knowing came before speaking.

Everything came before knowing.

Nothing came before everything.

The world came after nothing.

The solar system came With the world.

Everything came after the solar system.

Then came people.

Then came knowing.

Then came anger.

Then came war.

Then came...PEACE.

*Aubrey Caldwell*

*Grade 5, Blosser Lane Elementary*

*Mimi Stoll, Classroom Teacher*

*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

# TO GET TO WASHINGTON...

To get to Washington I

took a washing machine.

The washing machine looked

like it was washing clothes.

It was blue and green, and I

took it to get to Washington.

When the clothes were done

I got to Washington. When I looked

all it was was a washing machine.

*Stacy Pat-Requis*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Dana Gray Elementary School*

*Katy Brickey, Classroom Teacher*

*Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

# MUSEUM OF EVERYTHING

In my museum there are paintings of out of this world  
Famous 3D animals  
Like tigers and polar bears  
I go inside and throw away all my sorrows  
Like a bear in hibernation  
When people come to my museum  
I offer them peace, love  
And a chance to be free  
My museum has a magical time machine  
That can take you away to worlds that don't actually exist  
My museum is red and blue like a jumpy house  
It is open from 6:00am until 5:30pm every night  
My exhibits are lollipops shaped like hearts  
And marshmallow butterscotch flavored fountains  
With a stream of raspberry soda  
In my museum you can eat  
Until your heart is filled with love

*Jolie Torres*  
*Grade 5, Manchester School*  
*Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson*  
*Poet Teacher, Blake More*

# DEAR JOYFUL

If I could corner you in  
a bright green field, I would have fun,  
You would make me feel joyful.  
You would feel like smooth furry cloth.  
You would sound like jingle bells ringing.  
You would taste like sweet ice cream.  
You would smell like the most beautiful rose in the world.  
You look like the most amazing plant.

*Jonas Swearengin*  
*Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary*  
*Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## REFLECTION

When you walk into my museum of self  
you see a ball of fire warming everything up  
the walls of a pink rose from my garden  
with a mirror you can get thoughts from  
it has a room full of people  
who make you feel so small because they are so tall  
you can jump on pillows all night long  
and never go to sleep  
There are crowns stuck up on a mountain in a trophy room  
visitors come in  
when the sun says” Good Morning”  
and they leave  
when the owls say” Coo, Coo”  
when you first walk in  
there are spiders on the ceiling  
a vending machine of money  
and carpets of glitter  
people can have ice cream for breakfast  
and popcorn for dinner  
my museum wants everyone  
to believe in magic  
and never give up

*Millie Carbajal*  
*Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*  
*Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher*

## OPPOSITES

On the other side of the lion there is freedom.  
On the other side of hate is kindness.  
On the other side of left is right.  
On the other side of greed is faith.  
On the other side of rain is sun.  
On the other side of death there is birth.  
On the other side of anticipation is excitement.  
On the other side of closed there is opened.  
On the other side of discouragement there is inspiration.  
On the other side of horrible is amazing.  
On the other side of tiny is vast.  
On the other side of fast there is slow.  
On the other side of break there is build.  
On the other side of cold is warm.  
On the other side of empty is full.

*Clayton Hunter*  
*Grade 5, Mendocino K-8 School*  
*John Moran, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## DOLPHIN OF TORNADO POWERS

I am a dolphin of tornado powers.  
I can destroy whatever I want.  
I'm the weather.  
I can swim in the ocean with my powers.  
I'm the owner of the sea.

*Miguel Bocel*  
*Grade 1/2, Redwood Elementary*  
*Lee Ann Burkwall, Classroom Teacher*  
*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

# THE MUSEUM OF RANDOM

In my museum some exhibits open late and end early.  
My museum is like a messy room  
With only strange items like pen caps, empty bottles, tin cans  
Strange pictures of people of the past  
Memories of the future, desks, pencils, phones and  
A wishing well that makes wishes come true  
All in the present.  
If you are here you will loose track of time because  
The exhibits are a blend of the past, present and future  
My museum offers freedom to Stay as long as you want  
unless you touch the exhibits.  
I am like a solar system  
All my planets can support life  
But if you get too close to the sun  
then you will be sent back to your planet.  
The people who work at my museum are friendly  
Till you stop being friendly to them  
In some rooms you can stop time and  
in others you can make food out of thin air.  
In the museum of random you can't get bored  
Unless you don't see what others see.

*Mateo Faiella*  
*Grade 4, Manchester School*  
*Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson*  
*Poet Teacher, Blake More*

# MIDDLE SCHOOL





# THE MUSEUM OF MY MIND

The museum of my mind is full  
of dark rooms and lots of doors  
Never showing the truth  
Halls and Halls are in the exhibition of overthinking  
Things from the past on stands  
with much meaning  
Mini waterfalls and lakes represent tears  
As the demons fly loose telling everyone to stay out  
Everything moving so quick  
never time to breathe  
But past it all there's a room  
at the end of the hall  
That shines as bright as the sun  
In it lays smiles and laughter on display  
Joy spreads the room  
and happiness is everywhere  
Friends, family, good memories,  
happiness that's what this exhibition is  
But it's deep inside  
the museum of my mind

*Oli Marzoratti*  
*Grade 7, Pacific Community Charter School*  
*Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## WHO AM I?

I write and sometimes never stop  
I sometimes sound like a boy when I talk  
I hold onto the little things  
I argue for all the right reasons  
I don't like most people  
I make the worst out of the best  
I wear secrets that are never to be told  
I quietly call for help  
I take things apart and put them back together  
I drag myself to the next chapter  
I sometimes forget the important things  
I lock myself in a dark room to escape life  
I hate how I miss the past  
I wait for the day to be over  
I love to prove I am right  
I am here for now

*Jacqueline Contreras  
Grade 8, Manchester School  
Classroom Teacher, Aimee Fredericks  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## I AM A VIDEO GAME

I am played by a controller  
I am the light to my family's life  
I shine brightly through out the night  
I make my friends laugh  
I brighten my grandma's day  
I am good at video games  
I like to stay home all day  
I take jiu jitsu classes  
I go to karate classes  
I excite myself for upcoming events  
I annoy my dad with my music  
I work hard for my goals  
I write poems to get my mind off things  
I laugh at my friends jokes  
I find secret things hidden among others  
I enjoy my life.

*Kady Swartz  
Grade 6, Pacific Community Charter School  
Classroom Teacher, Dana Beer  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## SPEAK THE TRUTH

I'm so glad I'm alive even at my worst  
My mind expands and my heart gets bigger  
We remember to recycle our happiest memories  
We are losing summer daylight  
We worry about our appearance through a stranger's naked eye  
Going on a journey to search for our greatest personality  
Good health is what we reach for  
Ego as big as the sun  
The best questions we ask are the weird ones  
Always try to understand a weak situation  
We treat the ocean in ways it doesn't deserve  
Raised to appear more mysterious  
Making our molecules meaner  
Hate when the turquoise sky fades away

*Ausie Okubo*

*Grade 8, Pacific Community Charter School*

*Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## LEARN TO LOVE

I struggle in learning to love myself  
I run and I walk to escape the world  
I sit in my room, drawing art and blasting J Cole  
because both speak to my heart  
I learn from my mistakes  
and they help me grow  
I smile through the hardships that come and go  
I try my hardest to forgive  
I am only thirteen and I have lost many friends  
I honor and look up to them as much as I can  
I know that one day we will be together again  
Life is challenging  
but don't ever forget  
love what you have  
because we are all blessed

*Nayeli Orozco  
Grade 8, Manchester School  
Classroom Teacher, Avis Anderson  
Poet Teacher, Blake More*

## 14 LINES

I try so so hard to be happy in this world  
You told me it hurts you when I am wishing not to be alive  
It's hard to make a smile expand a little longer  
Turquoise is the opposite color that runs through my body  
I wish I could leave, these boys will be using me like I'm recyclable  
In summer you were the reason why I had tears running down my face  
In my eyes what we had was not called love  
You keep asking questions but I keep saying you wouldn't understand  
It's mysterious how fast you can just move on  
This journey I'm taking is full of pain  
I'm trying to reach age 18 with all this pain  
I don't want to use molecules in this  
I just want to be in your arms and feel like I'm floating in the ocean  
I see a light brighter than the sun and next thing you know  
I'm gone nowhere to be found

*Ulali Faber-Castillo*

*Grade 8, Pacific Community Charter School*

*Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## TODAY I FEEL ALIVE

Today I feel alive  
Nothing people try to do can hold me back  
Today I will expand my purpose  
I think we all will fall into the ocean  
In a course of the sun  
There is plenty of significant stuff to do in our journey  
Before we die we fall into the eye  
And I assure you, you will reach to where you want to be  
No one is useless and all molecules have their purpose  
There are problems but we need to learn to learn to recycle them  
We may be forgotten but don't think about that  
just fall into the turquoise  
Do not try to reason  
you will only be thrown into summer  
Do not think that this is a waste  
this is not mysterious  
Everything does not need to be questioned  
just fall into a flow  
and make peace

*Payten Padgett  
Grade 6-8, Pacific Community Charter School  
Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# HIGH SCHOOL





## BORDERS AND BOUNDARIES

These so-called lines that hold us back  
roped off rooms, of spirituality and thoughts  
the illusion created by man  
to hold us down  
and keep us under their control  
These boundaries in the so-called “land of the free”  
and a nation under god  
a god who controls what you believe  
what you can or cannot eat or wear  
and who you can love  
The state, which forces us to operate in a society  
a society that looks down on what you create  
The state doesn't let you fall back  
or go too far  
It is even illegal  
to disappear completely  
And yet I say  
the only true boundaries are within our minds  
When you reach a point of  
philosophical or spiritual enlightenment  
that you can no longer express verbally,  
perhaps you do this through song or dance  
metaphors and similes  
to evolve our language to  
let's call it spiritual ecstasy  
where each and every man, woman, and person in between  
can fully understand  
the inner machinations of our mind  
to exceed the limit  
to destroy the illusion of countries  
and the restriction of borders  
In a spiritual world  
where we are free to roam

*Haley Whitcomb*  
*Grade 11, Laytonville High School*  
*Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## SELF-ODE

Oh my deep inner being  
Oh concealed in spiraling rollercoaster of self  
Oh loathing and acceptance  
Do you know sometimes you make me hurt?  
Why do you not know where to go  
when a question is asked?  
Have you ever thought about helping me  
or staying contented a while longer?  
You are my emotions bottled up  
You are expressing them in so many unique forms  
You listen to my thoughts when they are not heard  
You are that  
You are with me  
You look like a reflection in the mirror  
You sound like me but from another voice  
Thank you for accompanying me  
on this ride of life

*Misael Triplett  
Grade 11, Mendocino Community High School  
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# WE

I refer to myself as we,  
unbeknownst to me  
I am we.  
I soon discover  
that my brain sees  
my conscious side  
my unconscious side  
as two beings.  
We as two share a vessel as one.  
The void you inhabit is not you.  
Your body is machinery  
as your soul is life.  
We share this planet  
as if we will not be back after our end.  
Yet our conscious brain  
won't know we've been here  
our unconscious brains hold  
the secrets  
to the past, present  
and future.

*Blaine Mason*  
*Grade 11, Pacific Community Charter HS*  
*Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## A JOYOUS PLACE

There is a place that makes me feel joyful.  
It never changes, the light enters through.  
The building is huge while I am an ant to it.  
The garden is green with color.  
The pool as blue as the sky.  
This place is my home.  
No matter where I go, this is home.  
I visit this home quite often.  
It is far to travel to, but I enjoy the ride.  
When I go visit, the feeling of joy never fades.  
You can travel far without worrying.  
New experiences will be created.  
Friends call to visit, even if you can only  
see them there.  
There are friends waiting each time.  
I see how they have grown.  
But they never change.  
They are family, and as happy as they can be.  
They will always be my happiness.  
I travel four hours and it's worth it.  
Even though they are friends, they are family.  
It's very close, home is always where  
your heart goes.  
But the joyous place never fades away.

*Elizabeth Flores-Diaz*  
*Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School*  
*Amy Sarisky, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

## THE SEA OF HEARTS

My heart is a drop of water.  
In my heart is 1 hydrogen and 2 oxygen atoms.  
My heart holds the fate of human life.  
My heart is made of 10 protons and 10 electrons.  
My heart is hungry for consuming other drops of water.  
My heart sounds quiet as it is just one drop  
in a sea of others.  
The sea of hearts is full of salt and  
humans cannot drink salt water.  
And so I will make my drop so it is alone.

*Michael Lawson*  
*Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School*  
*Yuliya Ritchley and John Horton, Classroom Teachers*  
*Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## HOPE STARTS

Hope starts with a small spark  
A want for a specific reality  
Fueled by the imagination of our minds  
The flames become forceful and many  
Putting time and energy into our hopes  
creates a mind that helplessly wishes  
Hope becomes faith, want becomes need  
and our dreams become a manifestation

But don't waste this passion on careless thoughts  
or ideas that seem to be petty  
We create a fire that doesn't stop burning  
and our world becomes unsteady

*Caruna Gillespie*  
*Grade 11, Laytonville High School*  
*Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## *FACIL/EASY*

*?De donde eres?*

Where you from?

Where dope-fiends look to score  
another hit, another high.

Homicide, another homicide,  
driving families insane.

*En mi barrio*, my hood,

you can taste the blood,

the slugs, the pain.

*?De donde eres?*

Where you from?

Another *barrio donde es facil*

where it's easy to get money

selling drugs or hitting robberies

*?De donde eres?*

Where you from?

*Un barrio donde la gente me critica por delincente,*

judge me as delinquent,

*por mi raza*

*y mis tatuajes en la cara*

for my race and the tattoos on my face.

*?De donde eres?*

*Bryan S.*

*Grade 11, West Hills School*

*Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher*

*Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

# MY TRUTH

Wants

Oh burning silence

Oh chilling scream

Do you know necessity?

Do you fall into me?

Am I consumed by you?

For you are the focused hours in solitary

the lingering dread I wake up to

the manifestation of triumph in a fleeting smile

You are the smell of salted tears and dusty rooms

the taste of a bitter sweet flesh

the feel of white knuckles and nails cutting deep into palms

the sound of rain thudding against a window pane

slowly turning into an overwhelming drone I can no longer ignore

wants, you are the bones that support a shell of necessity

wants, you are my most fragile and selfish form

Thank you for you are my truth

*Heather Brogan-Gealey*

*Grade 11, Mendocino Community High School*

*Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ALABAMA

I was playing softball  
Not well, but well enough  
I saw her  
The one I never thought I would like  
But the one who became my best friend  
The distant cousin I never knew I had  
The friend who was waiting all along  
The one whose family was my neighbor's  
The one who has been there whenever  
I always hated her  
Until I didn't anymore  
She hit me like I attempted to hit the ball  
She caught me the way I wanted to catch the ball  
She's as far as Alabama  
But as close as my own heart beat  
She's the one I'll never forget

*Alison Spangler*  
*Grade 10, Point Arena High School*  
*Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ODD ONE OUT

One shriveled flower  
In one whole field.  
The only warrior  
Without weapons or a shield.  
A whole sheet of stickers  
I'm the one that's never been peeled,  
The one envelope left  
Empty and unsealed.

*Paris Hansberger*  
*Grade 9, Willits High School*  
*Carolyn Bakewell, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*



## DREAM ON

Hold on to what you only know is true.  
Make your king sized bed,  
Fluff your small quilted pillow,  
And sleep.  
Control the time reality  
Who is to say which life is real?  
Who's to say that you're not already sleeping  
when you wake?  
Don't worry when you fall asleep,  
Things will stay the same.  
Only hungry when you want to be,  
You can be in control.  
You can have your own timeline.  
To dream you have to live a little.  
That's why the old man dies.  
That's why the monks don't eat.

*Teophil Labus*  
*Grade 10, Willits High School*  
*Aimee Nord, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## STILL ALIVE A LITTLE

Inside my heart is blood  
It's gonna stop rushing  
Ima go numb  
That's the facts of life  
We are all going to die  
Do what you can now  
and let your heart pound

*Kyle Walker*  
*Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School*  
*Yuliya Ritchley and John Horton, Classroom Teachers*  
*Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

# ODE TO AQUA HAIR

Oh midnight magic  
Oh fading, changing, expression  
Oh ocean in my possession

Why do you curl, twist and frizz?

You are difficult, decorative and demanding  
You furr and floof in every direction  
You are straightened and twisted, knotted and tied

Do you know you mark bad things?  
Do you know you are a call for change?

You feel like anxiety  
You feel like a mask chiding a scared girl  
You feel like a mess of emotions but clarity at once

Have you ever thought about falling daintily over your sibling strands?  
Have you ever thought about resting behind my ear  
when I tuck you away like some sort of shame?  
Have you ever thought about the endless fights from our youth?

You look like small waves  
You look defiant on most days  
You look like my Latina roots with more magic and less obedience

Thank you for not listening to me  
when I wished you would be normal  
Thank you for testing my temper  
Thank you for showing me beauty and badass in one  
Oh aqua hair, thank you!

*Miciella Bishop*  
*Grade 9, Mendocino Community High School*  
*Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# FORGET

it's about 4 o'clock  
the three of us don't know why we decided to go here  
but I'm immediately drawn to the swing set  
I almost forget what angers me  
all I can feel is the nice cold air  
brushing against my back  
as I swing up  
then back down again  
and my feet just barely brush the ground  
I almost forget what makes me sad  
all I feel is my hair flying behind me with the wind  
I almost forget there are other people in the world  
all I do is look at my friends  
and smile  
they smile back for no reason  
their faces beaming with joy  
we're just so happy  
we could almost forget

*Zia Light Abrams  
Grade 10, Pacific Community Charter HS  
Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## FOR YOU MY DEAR, ANYTHING

And I, and I, and I, will never ever never leave left begone  
from your side at your side by your side. But you, but you,  
but you are not was not is not waiting for me for me by me.  
I, I, I, cannot feel your spirit, your heart, your eyes. You are  
lost, swirling, twirling, confused at your mind.

I am running, running, running for you from you to you  
at your side from your side by your side. I reach for your  
hand, your hand, to catch your wrist to be by your side at  
your side with your side. And I run and run and run and  
run but your fingers slip away. From me. From your side at  
your side by your side. I miss you.

And I, and I, and I will never ever never leave left begone  
from your side at your side by your side. Unless you need  
me to. Then I will.

*Jenna McEwen*

*Grade 12, Ukiah High School*

*Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## SICK, BLACK HEART

My heart is  
sweet summertime whiskey  
too much and you'll get sick  
My heart,  
holder of black tar  
My heart,  
sad and sunken  
long gone—forgotten  
My heart is

*Olivia Tobar*

*Grade 12, Sanhedrin High School*

*Yuliya Ritchley and John Horton, Classroom Teachers*

*Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## UNTITLED

Welcome to the museum that reminds you  
you will never know what to expect  
Good or bad  
Thunder or sunshine  
Who knows  
Feelings bottled behind curtains  
Stained, red cheeto fingers  
Owl eyes from late nights  
Cramming for finals, essays  
Binge watching netflix or youtube videos  
Notes to remind myself of random things,  
This museum  
offers  
adventure.

*Joseline Espinoza*  
*Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## TIME

They say  
I'm a bad person,  
a menace.  
Put me in a box  
away from society,  
family and friends,  
the streets,  
good times.  
I'm in a box thinking,  
reminiscing,  
about time.

*Diego V.*  
*Grade 10, West Hills School*  
*Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

## HONK, HONK, BEEP, BEEP

My grandmother's nose.  
No, not her good looks.  
Not the way the wrinkles in her face spell out her name,  
Not her long and detangled  
    dirty-dishwater-brown (faded to grey) hair-  
A woman. A strong heart.  
Holding up even stronger mind.  
A tornado of health and happiness.-  
Her nose.

Not the funny way she says "dishwasher"  
Not her unique personality  
    the way she tells me "i love you"...  
And never her blue eyes.  
    ...and when you tell her that you love her too,  
    they ripple like diving into a clear creek filled  
    with ducks and "oh, look at the ducks!"

A nose. A goddess' nose.  
A bulbous nose, one you can find on a pig  
Found on a face so round, and so lovely,

A nose, found in the middle of my heart  
A nose,  
I share with my grandmother.

*Rebecca King  
Grade 10, Ukiah High School  
Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ELEGY TO GRANDPA WALT

It was until the first week of this year  
We would go to your house  
The one that had barely changed since the '60s  
I would stay in the front room most of the time  
In the room that used to be my father's  
Unless it was too hot for me  
Then I would stay in the office  
That was also a guest room  
We would stay at your house for a week at a time  
It was usually during Thanksgiving break  
When the family would plan a special dinner  
And I would always forget to say grace  
It isn't something we did at my house  
I would see my cousins  
Most of which I didn't like  
Although it's just because I was an outsider  
They are city kids that get what they want  
Unlike me a country bumpkin  
At the end of the night  
we would say our goodbyes  
It was only to my Aunts and Cousins  
For we would stay another day at your house  
The house full of history  
The house that was yours  
Now you are gone  
And I will never be ready to say goodbye  
Now the house that was yours  
Has been sold and remodeled  
And all of this has stolen a piece of my heart  
After you died a month before 92

*Aurora Smith*

*Grade 9, Pacific Community Charter High School*

*Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## NANNY AND PAPA

Papa is married to Nanny.  
Nanny and Papa raised Mom.  
Mom raised me,  
and I wrote this poem.  
Papa's breaths are shallow and unpredictable.  
His coughing fits are scary and sudden.  
I listen every morning for his slow  
steps out of the bedroom.  
A short cough, a delayed inhale,  
the sound of his all too familiar  
voice offering me  
food, food, food.

*Joscelyn Beebe  
Grade 10, Willits High School  
Aimee Nord, Classroom Teacher  
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## SILENCE

my room is my place  
where I go to keep me sane  
from all this violence  
and all this pain  
it's where I go for  
some silence  
silence to some  
is a form of "sadness"  
but to me it is  
a form of happiness  
and that's all I need  
with my music  
blastin in my beats  
my room is my place  
where I go to keep me sane

*Jenna Lee Merrifield  
Grade 9, Round Valley High School  
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher  
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*



## YOU

I don't know why you are a butterfly,  
it seems to fit you though.  
Colorful, delicate, and free,  
seen with beauty and respect.  
Perched on my shoulder,  
whispering sweet dewdrops in my ear.  
Poppies and peonies towering over us,  
their fragrant petals attracting bumblebees,  
but the butterfly is superior to a humble bee.  
Your wings individually painted with ethereal hues.  
How do you not see that you are a butterfly?  
Luring the eyes of those within vicinity,  
heart, mind, and soul all fluttering together.  
Metamorphosing into the best you could be.

*Makayla Kelly*  
*Grade 11, Ukiah High School*  
*Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## MY HOUSE

I wear a hoodie of rage  
Made of crushed velvet, corduroy, and cotton  
When I'm alone at my house

I wear socks of boredom  
Made of mink and down  
When I do my homework on my bed

I wear spandex of contentment  
Made of polyester and cotton  
When I look at myself in the mirror.

*Serena Haught*  
*Grade 10, Point Arena High School*  
*Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ANTI-ODE TO MUSTARD

Dear most hated mustard  
I long for the day you cease to exist  
your strong stench that smells  
through the whole room  
ruins you

You are as dense as spaghetti sauce  
the way you taste  
makes my tongue sting  
from your terrible feeling

And the worst part of all  
is you ruin all foods  
hotdogs shouldn't contain you  
they are too good without you

The only good thing about you  
is your color  
but other than that  
nothing

You should just disappear  
into the deep darkness  
because that is  
where you belong

*Anahi Huerta*  
*Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School*  
*Amy Sarisky, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

## UNTITLED

The museum of myself is unpredictable  
One day there's sunlight coming in through the windows  
The next day the room is filled with darkness  
It can be filled with peoples laughter  
As well as the sound of sculpture shadows  
Many hallways lead in different directions  
One into a more realistic point of view  
another into joy in life  
The choice is yours to make  
No hallway leads you into a dead end  
Those visiting for the first time  
will surely find what they are looking for  
If not  
They can always come back another day  
The doors are opened to anyone with a great heart  
Having trust is a requirement  
As well as communication  
Welcome to my museum

*Nizamaith Cruz Hernandez  
Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School  
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ANCESTORS

I don't know which side of my ancestors I am writing to.  
I don't know whether to ask about the struggles of immigrating,  
or the horrible genocide of my native culture.  
I don't truly know what you went through, I was not actually here,  
and haven't experienced anything you have.  
I don't know how day to day life was for you.  
I can't compare my struggles today to yours,  
I can't say in today's day and age that I understand,  
through research, stories, because I don't know.  
One thing I can say is that you are a part of me  
and I am proud to be a product  
of every one of your struggles  
and happiness

*Ashlea Zaste*  
*Grade 11, Round Valley High School*  
*Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## WATER

When you looked at me was frozen  
Still as stone and warm as winter wind  
I melted under your gaze

But now that's gone and I am boiling  
Steaming into the air and drifting away  
I've evaporated from your life  
Angry and hot as hatred  
So keep your distance

Or I'll scald you.

*Nia Rich*  
*Grade 9, Ukiah High School*  
*Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## EARTH IS ALIVE

Earth is alive  
blood is not turquoise  
simple beings stir  
they think upon their kneecaps  
uncomfortably pondering molecules  
their eyes leap during sleep  
dreams emerge from their hearts  
journeys upon gluteus maximus  
no school vehicles in summer  
secrete in hot weather  
the ocean rises  
the fun is faced  
drenched in a syrup of cool  
there is no mystery

*Dylan Freebairn-Smith  
Grade 11, Point Arena High School  
Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## THE WAY SHE GOES

I smell the sunshine,  
I taste the teardrops falling from my eyes,  
I feel the earth,  
I am the earth,  
from root to death,  
I am who they say I am.

*Steven Beers  
Grade 10, Sanhedrin High School  
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers  
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## STRUGGLE/RESOLUTION

Struggle is not what it is made out to be.  
Where there is struggle there is resolution.  
Therefore people mistake past history as being unbearable,  
when the truth is,  
hurt people adapt and change in direct relation with their situation.  
Do not mistake my message for ignorance-  
I am aware that times were incredibly tough in past history,  
however the struggle only composed the beginning of a larger story.  
My ancestors were affected or involved in some way  
with historical events.  
Perhaps they struggled, perhaps they did not.

*Carlito Delgado*  
*Grade 11, Round Valley High School*  
*Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## THE ANGEL

Look at that kite dive.  
It wants to strive  
To stay up so high,  
because it doesn't want to die.  
People look like ants,  
It chants.  
I made this poem rhyme  
So I could pass some time  
In this class of mine.

*Mian Ahmad*  
*Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School*  
*Amy Sarisky, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

# THE MUSEUM OF A BLACK RAINBOW

My museum is creativity at its darkest  
In it you will find a room with black walls  
But the lighting will shine nothing but rainbow

You will find poems written all over the wall in graffiti  
The sound of Tame Impala will echo the room  
Creativity will be floating within the atmosphere

My museum is like nothing seen before  
A room so dark  
yet full of so much creativity

In the back you will find creatures  
Fantasy and realistic beasts  
From dogs to dragons

My museum offers nothing but  
The ability to make the impossible  
Look more than simple

*Leslie Mendoza*  
*Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## EYES AROUND THE ROOM

“What’s negative infinity squared?”  
The clock reads 9:18  
I look up at the whiteboard  
‘Test on Thursday, work on study guide’  
What study guide?  
My phone makes the sound of a bell  
8 ball  
I look down for 30 seconds to play back  
and miss half the review  
I glance at the computer screens  
of the students in front of me,  
Memes, Fantasy football  
and Facebook  
I think I’ll be alright  
“What’s the square root of  $2x$ ?”

*Lauren Boyle*  
*Grade 12, Pacific Community Charter HS*  
*Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*



## NOT A TRUE COUNTRY

My true country is not a true country  
I feel peace in many places  
but the pain or fear still lingers  
I can only be myself when I sleep  
I am constantly in a cage  
and sleep sets me free  
In the deep sleep is where I can think,  
say, or do anything  
Sleep is the barrier that breaks  
letting any emotion take place  
whether it be happy or sad  
as long as I am me  
I can only be myself in my sleep  
because nobody else accepts me  
not even me

*Mallory Winger*  
*Grade 9, Round Valley High School*  
*Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## ODE TO MY FRECKLES

Oh peppercorn  
Oh splatter paint

Did you know I used to hate you?  
Why are you all over my face?  
And how come you fade away?

Do you think about where you land  
or do you just fall?

You are infinite  
You are past sunshine on my cheeks  
You are a reminder of the sun on my skin  
when it hides away

You smell like almonds  
You look like sand  
You taste like glitter  
You feel like a stone  
You sound like star dust

Thank you for existing on my surface.

*Bella Fosse*  
*Grade 9, Mendocino Community High School*  
*Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## FUTURE AJ

Are you happy or are you sad  
Are your intentions good or are they bad

I hope you know your way  
I hope you don't need a map  
I hope the world doesn't treat you like crap

I want you to have that perfect life  
I want you to have a perfect wife

I hope your dreams come true  
I am me and you are you  
But remember what I do is determined on you

*AJ Loutsis  
Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School  
Yuliya Ritchley and John Horton, Classroom Teachers  
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## THE SCHOOL SHOOTING GENERATION

we see ourselves on tv,  
plastered on every screen,  
flashing the same photos  
of the same kids.  
they easily could've been us,  
and perhaps it will be us one day--  
but for now it's strangers.  
strangers, with their classmates' blood on their  
faces, backpacks, clothes  
but not on their hands.  
for every tombstone erected,  
for every pure soul torn from us,  
one of those adults--  
who are supposed to protect us--  
does nothing.  
they turn their heads and ignore us.  
they ignore:  
the screams of friends at funerals,  
the hallways that echo gunshots,  
old assignments strewn about classrooms,  
teachers who can't lock the door in time,  
parents who have no kids to parent,  
diplomas that no longer have recipients,  
crushes that will never be fulfilled,  
kids.  
kids stained in blood,  
who are begging for help.  
and they do nothing.

*zoe krofchik*  
*Grade 10, Ukiah High School*  
*Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## SUNSHINE

And sunshine still shines in my bedroom  
It paints a picture with its silhouette using an imaginative mind  
And in the sunshine there's darkness trying to push it out

I see people dancing in the sparkles of my shoes  
Showing their talent that people aspire to have  
And sunshine still shines in my bedroom

But I see them fall deep down to a place  
the dancers can not escape  
Their talent is caught and trapped in their dreams  
And in the sunshine there's darkness trying to push it out

Within the darkness they create their sunshine  
because that is the only way their dreams will survive  
Even if the darkness is so heavy their weak shoulders  
can't handle the weight  
And sunshine still shines in my bedroom

But their dreams turn to black  
and their dancing is once again trapped in that bedroom  
They can no longer create the lives they have decided to long for  
And in the sunshine there's darkness trying to push it out

And there my mind lies dead in its grave  
where it buried itself against my walls of doubt  
It lost its will to dream and dance  
when their worries suffocated them in a trance  
And sunshine still shines in my bedroom  
But in the sunshine there's darkness trying to push it out

*Chloe Cantin*  
*Grade 10, Pacific Community Charter HS*  
*Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## THE BREATH OF OUR HORSES

My true country is going on trail rides with my cousin and my horse  
As we ride I feel the wind blowing on my face  
I feel the power that is in my horse  
I hear the breath of our horses  
and the sounds of their shoes on the rocky ground  
I must stay focused and alert to make sure we don't get hurt  
As we ride through the tall fields of grass  
I feel the horses begin to race  
As we race I see that this is my true country  
and that nothing could make me feel any better

*Paige Whitcomb*

*Grade 9, Laytonville High School*

*Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher*

*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## ENVY

My feelings mock  
Me like the birds  
In the trees  
I see them chirping  
As happy as could be.  
As I admire them,  
Envy grows inside me.  
Why must I be envious?  
I thought I was free.

*Ariel Reyes*

*Grade 11, Willits High School*

*Aimee Nord, Classroom Teacher*

*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## UNTITLED

The museum of myself is open at all times.  
A world of its own where I'm a natural leader  
passionate, loving, obnoxious, caring, serious (at times), grumpy  
Likes to listen and help other people  
Who even on bad days tries to have some positivity  
A no shame girl.  
Who speaks up and isn't shut down  
Who will put others before herself  
This museum is a petite girl with huge dreams

*Beatriz Tellez*  
*Grade 9, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## I AM

I am  
Exactly what I want to be in this moment,  
I am  
The smile you see looking back at you.  
I am not  
Those names you whisper under your breath.  
You may think I am,  
but I am not.  
I am not  
the reminder of what has happened.  
I am not  
the past.  
I am  
a different person, from who I was 5 minutes  
ago.  
I am not perfect.  
I am the future.  
See ME.

*Nomiah Britton*  
*Grade 10, Willits High School*  
*Aimee Nord, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## SUMMER THOUGHTS

Poetry is a crazy mystery  
We spend days and nights imagining  
is this too simple or boring  
as we look up at the turquoise skies  
our eyes wander freely  
we don't think about work  
I myself forget about being prepared  
I leap into summer vacation  
dream about the fall  
remember that I'm alive  
graduation just happened!  
school is only a molecule in our life  
enjoying the ocean is my only business  
smelling the roses throughout the states  
summer will be over  
then comes college

*Carina Fuentes*  
*Grade 12, Point Arena High School*  
*Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*



## MY TRUE COUNTRY IS ON PAPER

My true country is on paper,  
meaning all of the words,  
simple letters to form an entire world.  
Almost like a kingdom, all to myself.  
The paper is where I am free to talk about whatever I want,  
no consequences,  
a place where I can make a crew of good hearted people  
on paper and ink.  
There is much adventure and journey on paper,  
from the forests of Northern California  
all the way up to an underground city  
in the center of the earth.  
I made my true country.

*Sky Peckham*  
*Grade 9, Round Valley High School*  
*Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## SUMMER HAZE

July was a smoky month  
everyday sweat drizzled down my forehead  
and onto my lips.  
I could taste the salt  
and the heat was intoxicating.  
The air thick and charred,  
burned my throat  
with every breath.  
The kids however still swam,  
all content  
without a single problem  
in the world.

*Benjamin Evans*  
*Grade 12, Ukiah High School*  
*Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## DARK WALKWAYS

Open the gates and what do you see but me?  
You see the darkness surrounding the trees and covering the walk ways  
Closed to everyone but the few who happen to sneak in  
My park is abandoned except three  
Three that allow the light to pass and wash over me  
Three that hold back my branches and let the sun peak through  
These dark walkways are littered  
with empty promises and permanent frowns  
It's no wonder no one can get through  
And even when they get through  
it's no wonder why they don't stick around  
Some can't handle the darkness that is me  
But still the light shines through and leads me to you

*Cecile Lyon*  
*Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ASL HANDS

These hands sign  
From mind, heart  
Sign talk smooth as tongue  
They come from Deaf World  
These hands can do all  
These hands can whisper of heart  
They scream, feelings  
They sing power of sign

*Kevin Duncan*  
*Grade 9, Sanhedrin High School*  
*Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers*  
*Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## I AM A PART OF THEM

My hands have minds of their own  
My hands know what to do  
My hands are tools of my life  
they hold stories and tell history  
My hands protect me and know what to do  
My hands do wrong and right  
My hands have been beaten down and scarred up  
they have been through much but have not given up  
My hands know my story and understand  
they have done no wrong but I don't understand  
I have a mind of my own but my hands control me  
They show me new things and give me a reason to believe  
My hands are not a part of me  
I am a part of them

*Michael Polsons*  
*Grade 10, Round Valley High School*  
*Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## NON-EXISTENT HEART

Oh creativity  
Oh calm descent into madness  
Oh chaotic realm of the unborn  
Do you know what your purpose is?  
Do you know what the outcome will be  
or do you even care?  
Why do you refuse to be tamed, although many try?  
You are an oasis in a barren desert  
You are a neon thunderstorm  
You are a city collapsing on itself  
You smell like the metallic scent of blood  
You look like love  
You taste like pain  
Yet you feel like a golden fleece  
that shields me from the jagged daggers of the world  
I thank you for your protection  
and I hope one day  
you come out to play

*Maxwell Brown*  
*Grade 9, Mendocino Community High School*  
*Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## IGNORANCE IS BLISS?

Peaceful trees forgotten  
Centuries ago was the peacefulest time  
Now we go day by day  
Watching the Earth melt away

What do we do?

Nothing

We watch the conflict grow in flames  
Pretending nothing is there

Mother Earth is crying for help but  
No one cares to rescue her  
She takes out her rage on us

Tornados, hurricanes, sea temperatures rising  
Sea turtles dying

Yet we blame everything but ourselves

Where do we draw the line?

At what price?  
Is she the price?  
Are we the price?

*Maria Ramos  
Grade 12, Fort Bragg High School  
Amy Sarisky, Classroom Teacher  
Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

# ONE IN EVERY EIGHT DAYS

empty halls  
stained red with the sound of silence.  
speak up.  
just a little louder.  
foot sticks to linoleum  
sticks to cement  
sticks to metal  
sticks to bones  
that absorb the souls  
of the chosen ones.  
crying under bed sheets  
and whispering into deaf ears  
prevents nothing.  
today,  
we weep for the fallen  
because we are the fallen  
and it will forever live on  
in newspapers and books  
and television and in the hearts  
of every student.  
i said i wanted to die a legend,  
but not in this sense;  
feeling nothing but  
white hot hatred  
branded into my chest  
in the shape of the crosshairs.  
look at us now,  
making history  
six feet under the ground.

*Amanda Bednar  
Grade 11, Ukiah High School  
Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## BOUNDARIES

When mothers and daughters  
argue it bothers  
the peace within a home  
But after time it's a quarter to nine  
they kick you out to roam  
The government also gives us limitations  
but gets angered when we protest  
because for the most part  
we are just wanting what is best  
Sometimes there are boundaries  
but are they the right ones?  
Because parents get mad when you are sad  
and can't control yourself,  
for some are gay, some aren't religious,  
it's all of the things they find ridiculous  
and along with the government  
not everyones feelings are valid

*Ryiannon Miller*  
*Grade 10, Laytonville High School*  
*Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## MY WORLD

You were my world  
I followed you everywhere  
That one cold winter took that away  
When you left  
I lost myself  
I forgot who I was  
You promised me you would stay  
So why did you go?  
I miss you Tabitha  
You still owe me a hug  
Why did you listen to those girls?  
You were so beautiful  
Long brown hair  
Enchanting brown eyes  
A personality that warmed hearts  
You were my world  
All younger sisters follow  
Their older sisters  
So why did you go?

*Briana Mondragon*  
*Grade 10, Point Arena High School*  
*Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*



## INSIDE THE MAZE

The first doors unlock when you show me your eyes  
and send a smile in my direction,  
you step forward into a lobby full of acquaintances  
who can only view the wisteria fence,  
of surface accomplishments, clothing, and basic data,  
that hides the depth of the multicolored multidimensional maze  
that lies ahead of you,  
which path will you choose:  
the passionate path lined with Marley and dancing shoes?  
the conceptual path in the shape of a sine wave?  
the abstract path covered with every color,  
even if they refuse to be visible to our human eyes?  
What about the path built of cheese and anchored by live music?  
Each path sends you on a different adventure,  
some hit dead ends while others find paths to reach another,  
you continue on your path  
and manage to constantly make discoveries,  
Oh! That room?  
That's off limits its just for me and my own deep thoughts,  
That center there? The place you have been attempting  
to reach this whole time?  
I don't exactly have access to that yet.  
I have to discover that myself first.  
With time.

*Hannah Woolfenden  
Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School  
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## “SHE’S SO WEIRD”

When I hear that I tune in  
“do you hear how she talks about her stupid shows”  
“I know right”  
My head goes down and my hair covers my face and I smile  
I think to myself  
I’m weird; please take a look at yourself  
trying to be something your not  
if anything you’re weird.  
I look up at them and fake a smile  
“You know I can here you”  
“Does it look like we care?”  
I smirk  
“No but you should watch what you say  
Someone might spill  
that you’ve been cheating on your boyfriend.”  
They glare “whatever” at me  
Another victory.

*Noelani Jacobson  
Grade 9, Pacific Community Charter HS  
Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## LONE WOLF

I’m like a lone wolf wherever I am.  
I mostly work alone and alone in general.  
Even though I like being with friends,  
I’m a shy person.  
I like being by myself  
Doing what I want.  
Wolves are my favorite animals  
Which is why I’m like a lone wolf myself.

*Brandon Carver  
Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School  
Nicole Nella, Classroom Teacher  
Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

## DEAR HIM,

You remind me of a slow and  
painful death I could not stop.

Your smile was so empty like a  
pitch black room with no light.

Your eyes were like a blade going  
across my skin slowly.

Your voice was like bricks  
going through a window.

Your personality was like a land  
slide, destroying everything in its path.

When I was with you I thought  
I was never going to get out  
of that Hell.

Sincerely,  
Your past

*Bethannie Kester  
Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School  
Yuliya Ritchley and John Horton, Classroom Teachers  
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## SKIN/BORDER

The skin you have is your border  
it holds you in, keeps you from escaping  
it makes it almost impossible to leave,  
and whenever you try to penetrate through the border,  
it seals up, not allowing escape.  
It also keeps enemies out.  
When invaders try to invade, you have seven layers of defense.  
It shields you from pain, it takes the brunt of attack,  
throws itself in front of you, and after it's wounded,  
battered, bruised, and broken,  
it heals only to do it again.

*Ivo Shere*  
*Grade 10, Laytonville High School*  
*Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## A FATHER'S HANDS

His hands so rough, but his love so soft  
Cuts, burns, and bruises, but still so delicate  
the softness of hi hands when he brushes your hair  
He has worked long, hard days  
with these hands to provide  
His hands have touched your freshly born skin  
His hands have been there to clap when you do well  
His hands, once soft, but hardened over time  
His hands have taught many  
His hands rough with blisters for his family

*Nadia Davilla*  
*Grade 10, Round Valley High School*  
*Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## I WOULD FLY AWAY

I'm afraid of losing my mind  
because when I do  
there ain't gonna be another night,  
another lonely night.  
I hate myself,  
I really do.  
If someone,  
somebody really felt my pain,  
they wouldn't be able to get through.  
I remember I had a place called home.  
But now, everywhere I go,  
don't feel like home.  
In this lonely cage  
where everybody says they feel your pain,  
if I could,  
I would fly away.  
But there's no place to go.  
If there was,  
I would fly away.

*Bryan G.  
Grade 11, West Hills School  
Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher  
Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

## HE KISSED A BOY

It's already August  
A blanket of stars tucked behind the trees  
like his hair behind his ear  
the porch light wasn't bright  
But the vinyl record played bright enough  
We didn't need much light to hold each other  
it would have blocked the stars  
Each time we didn't pay attention  
we moved closer  
but I was too scared to let anything happen  
We went inside to make tea  
before the cold chilled us to the bone  
In the brighter lighting, amidst the steam of tea  
we'd inch closer  
my hands tangled in his hair  
his charming ocean eyes crashed into mine  
feeling his scratchy jaws as our foreheads pressed together  
Hearing his voice opened my eyes  
"I want to make you mine"  
I closed my eyes, our lips ghosting over each other's  
We pulled back briefly before they pressed together again  
but more firm  
the feeling like a harsh wave crashing into an eroded cliff  
Pulling away but staying close  
our eyes meet again  
his beautiful voice  
not even trying to sing  
sings out  
"I kissed a boy and I loved it"

*Tyler Sundstrom*  
*Grade 10, Point Arena High School*  
*Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ODE TO INTERNAL STRENGTH

Oh broken soul  
Oh mind split with a hole  
Oh everlasting mystery of my mind past history  
Does it know how it hurts?  
How it scrambles my brain?  
Why do you push me so close to being insane?  
No matter where you are  
I am never too far

You are my motivation  
You are the source of my hesitation  
You are the reason I think before I speak  
and risk my life without contemplation

You smell like burning leaves amongst scorched trees  
You look like a broken instrument, pointless, yet precious  
You taste like burnt toast, which I don't mind eating  
You feel like paper dripping with crimson pink  
You sound like you're lonely, yet content with the isolation  
Thank you for starting so strong  
Thank you for helping me all alone

*Garrett Davis*  
*Grade 12, Mendocino Community High School*  
*Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## MAY FLOWERS

In a dark and twisted entrance  
All hallways lead to the heart  
To your left you'll find yourself with my rock, my dad  
To his right is his rock, my mom  
To her right you'll find her rock, my brothers

In these hallways, every door leads to a part of me  
As you reach the garden, you see the flowers  
The peonies, cornflowers, delphiniums, the irises  
This is what everyone thinks the heart is  
The windows are all facing the garden

The hallways lead to the heart  
Windows lead to the garden  
As you see the black doors  
You see the memories  
You see my brother, the hospital visits, the tomb

You touch a flower and you touch my heart  
You touch her cheeks that May 16th  
You go to the garden and you hear the birds chirp  
With every bird chirp you hear her sound  
Her first cry, her first word, her first laugh

*Vanesa Bucio*  
*Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*



## THE LONG RIDE

reflecting  
reflecting on the friends i've made  
reflecting on the friends i've lost  
the people i've loved  
i feel like my life is a race car track  
and i am the car except  
there is no finish line or end, just repeating  
going around and around and around and around again  
turn after turn after turn after turn  
and i am constantly living the same hell day by day by  
day by day i hear them you know  
the voices on the bus  
on the street, in the stores  
people acting so sweet  
yet really so cruel  
fake smiles passing  
through the endless aisles in the local grocery store  
middle fingers raising from the half-down  
tinted windows of the family car  
the young ones insulting each other  
like it is okay  
the bullying, the body shaming  
the put downs, the homophobic slurs  
the dirty looks  
it's like a trend now-a-days  
recording fights for the views  
posting bullying for the likes  
and it's like society is on the track  
the neverending, the endless, the long ride  
- and it won't change unless we do something about it

*Emma Crowe*  
*Grade 10, Willits High School*  
*Aimee Nord, Classroom Teacher*  
*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

## LOCKED UP

Locked up  
behind bars.  
Should've never gotten in that car.  
The system tears families apart.  
Locked up,  
told when and what to do.  
The people who stick with you,  
very few.  
Sleeping on concrete,  
I miss my bed.  
Kids end up in prison  
or end up dead.  
Wish I would have listened  
to what my mom said.

*Giovanni L.  
Grade 10, West Hills School  
Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher  
Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

# EAST TO DEATH

worn Sailor  
east-bound  
destiny at ease

nowhere to go  
no one to please  
no rules of mind  
except those he has yet to find

only he knows  
that death is in sight  
the mighty sea ahead  
drifts him into night

goodbye worn sailor  
goodbye to the night  
goodbye to the world  
on the adventure east-bound

*Emma Susman*  
*Grade 12, Fort Bragg High School*  
*Amy Sarisky, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

## *ESTAMOS JUNTOS*

A sea of blue appears--  
With hands held tight  
The quiet limp voices pierce their  
way through the crowd.

Children on shoulders  
Sweaty palms and fists held high

The Brown girl chants.

Brown and kissed by the sun  
Brown and full of pride  
Fearless  
But feared

Voices echo  
Signs dance in the air  
Swaying left and right.

But they're too ignorant to understand  
that there is still time to change.

*Valentina E. Evans*  
*Grade 12, Ukiah High School*  
*Michael Riedell & Kyle Kirkley, Classroom Teachers*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## MOTIVATING THE GROWTH

It's the way vines wrap around a tree without eyes. It climbs and climbs continuously until it dies. Hope is what motivates the growth of something beautiful. It starts small, then blooms into perfection. The marks on a flower is what portrays the idea that something so small, could make such a gorgeous impact. Rain could nurture something powerful in the same way ideas can create activeness. These vines have hope the same way I do in humanity.

Growing

Growing

Nurturing

Learning

Growing

Done

We all learn from mistakes and that is what gives me hope. We search for Hope, all we can do is find it in ourselves so it can be used as a tool. Are you finding what you are looking for? Don't live up to others expectations. Do what it takes to help yourself.

*Kylee Ramus*

*Grade 12, Laytonville High School*

*Ed Keelan, Classroom Teacher*

*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

# UNTITLED

In the museum of myself,  
Everyone is welcome, you might even find yourself  
in the room who hurt me.  
In this museum  
You will find a ton of memories,  
but never regrets.  
In one of the rooms,  
You can find all of the smiles I once gave,  
but never received.  
The times I realized my mistakes, vs the times  
that I was accused of them as well.  
As you enter you can see the stair  
which lead to my successes, my dreams and hopes.  
To another, the way to my happiness,  
as the room displays the pictures of my family.  
Their hopes and aspirations.  
Their failures and rejections.  
As you walk you enter the dark room,  
where live my failures, and fears.  
My tears I once shed and the hopes I once thought.  
Your picture might even be found  
Next, you enter the star room,  
where you find stars including the rayet, and the pulsar.  
This room explains something that only I know.  
Who I am and what I desire.  
Soon you enter a bottom room  
where you find a big tree leading to my roots,  
where I came from  
and who I came from

*Citlalli Lievanos*  
*Grade 12, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## MOUSE

Mice are small like ants  
Owls eat them for food  
I like mice when they die

Pigs are huge  
I like pot belly pigs  
The pigs eat a lot for a long time

Bears are cute  
Bears eat meat  
Bears like people

I like deer jerky  
I like to hunt meat  
I like to eat a big moose

*Andrew Pokorny  
Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School  
Nicole Nella, Classroom Teacher  
Jasper Henderson, Poet-Teacher*

## 15 THINGS I LOVE TO DO

Join me in a card game  
Ride down a mountain on a forested bumpy hill  
Find a good tree to climb and lay in the branches  
Go on a walk through the redwoods  
Find seashells and small animals in tide pools  
Go along the shore and make imprints in the sand  
Make some art

*Max Newkirk  
Grade 9, Mendocino Community High School  
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher  
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## A PLACE TO STAND

Here I stand alone in my thoughts  
alone in my heart that is reserved,  
reserved for how they did my people,  
enclosed in a space given to me by others  
and told not to move or evolve  
but change,  
change my ways, my traditions, my heritage,  
change who I am.  
Here I stand dark-haired,  
dark-dark brown,  
surrounded by blonde, blue-eyed children,  
enclosed in a space I should be grateful to call my home.  
But wasn't this my home all along?  
Here I stand, dazed and confused  
as this deadly thing called reality enters my lungs  
and takes every painful thought,  
every hateful word, every insecurity.  
With one exhale, I am free.  
Freedom , that's all we wanted.

*Miraya H.*  
*Grade 11, West Hills School*  
*Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*



## CAN'T SLEEP

It is a summer night  
I am laying in the tsunami I call bed  
everything looks and feels normal  
but I can't move  
it feels like I am in Jello  
I hear a noise coming from the hallway  
I can hear my parents in the other room  
I try and speak  
it feels like I'm choking on flower petals  
the noise is getting louder  
I still cannot move  
The door starts to creak open  
someone or something is standing there  
a silhouette of a creature I cannot explain  
I want to scream  
It is getting closer  
I wake up

*Candelaria Gaona*  
*Grade 12, Point Arena High School*  
*Matthew Kramer, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## LIFE

There's the thing  
I shouldn't do  
and yet  
now I have  
the rest of the day  
to make up for,  
not undo,  
that can't be done  
but next time,  
think more calmly,  
breathe, say here's a new  
morning,  
morning,  
though why  
would that  
work,  
it isn't even  
hidden,  
hear it in there,  
more, more?

*Angel Marron*  
*Grade 9, Anderson Valley High School*  
*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## AT THE SUPERMARKET

At the supermarket  
a woman in a grey sweatshirt approaches  
as if attracted from an aisle away  
by what she mentions next.

*I love your hair.*

I kindly thank her  
though the dye has faded with time.  
As I find my way out  
I see her talking with my mom.

*And then, he did this.*

*Did you tell someone?*

*I showed the sheriff, but he didn't seem to care.*

It makes me think  
which doesn't happen often.

But when I do think,  
I think about things like that.  
How no one seems to care about things  
until it directly affects them.  
How people can be so...

Real.

*Charlie Mitchell*  
*Grade 9, Pacific Community Charter HS*  
*Yolanda Highhouse, Classroom Teacher*  
*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## ON MEDITATION

Eyes open,  
eyes closed,  
all the same.  
A storm,  
lightning all around.  
Monsters attacking,  
not safe and sound.  
People screaming,  
people fighting.  
Dogs bark.  
The clouds get cloudier.  
The rain starts pouring.  
Everything gets silent.  
And the clock  
stops ticking.

*Aleah F.*  
*Grade 10, West Hills School*  
*Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher*  
*Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

## NURTURING HOPE

Hope is the momentum of the universe  
the factor of time that causes life to progress  
Hope is a baby that needs to nurse  
so it can grow and experience true happiness  
To hope is to dream about what we have yet to encounter  
so we can have faith in the future that is uncertain  
If fear and regret is a dark night without power  
then hope is the dawn sunlight shining through the curtain

*Eve Kreiling*  
*Grade 11, Laytonville High School*  
*Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher*  
*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## A PRISM OF THOUGHTS

The museum of myself opens strictly from  
8:10 A.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Expressive clothes and makeup are a must  
And loud music is encouraged

The diversity of rooms include all my

Memories, passions, fears, and thoughts

They vary from being brightly lit by a prism of colors

To dark and humid to represent all my fears and regrets

My museum celebrates the expression of your passions

And is moldable to fit your personality

My museum is malleable because it mimics my personality

That changes depending on who I'm with

The museum features all my great successes and massive failures

These rooms are open to all because learning from them is important

My museum is very volatile and spontaneous

But in the best manner possible

After all, my museum is intangible to most

But just perfect for me

*Oscar Gibran Orozco*

*Grade 11, Anderson Valley High School*

*Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher*

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

# POET TEACHERS



## IT'S NOT:

who you are,  
who your parents are, were, were not,  
which side of the tracks, housing track, project, shelter,  
which bridge you slept under.

Not:

where you studied,  
ivy-walled or iron barred.

It's what:

what your heart:  
gay, bi, or straight,  
red, yellow, black or white,  
has to say.

And how:

loud enough and clear you say it,  
so everyone who hears,  
if only once,  
each word, razor-sharp, a landed punch,  
bleeds

the same hot blood that pumps,  
that thumps through your veins,  
even if you've trashed them.

It's what you have to say,  
your truth,  
bitter and/or sweet, that counts,  
and how,  
how loud and clear you say it.  
I'm listening.

*Jabez Churchill, Poet Teacher*

# WHY HEARTS BEAT

When, where and how will this poem be born? And why?  
When and where wars are born are not my favorite questions.  
I want to know who died. And why?

But a poem?

Why do I want it to be born?

Because I could throw myself a pizza party if I manage to birth this poem? Or order out some Chicken Alfredo? Why this little creation? The birth pains are mine to sigh through, but once this little one has wiggled through one unknown to the next, found its feet, travelled past this tent where I sit with Polka Dot the Snake, what then? This poem won't stay the same; nothing does. It will grow and change with each new reader; or shrink into oblivion or rejection. Oh, sigh.

Is it true one needs to be in a certain state to write a word worth writing? No. Write from any state but the words that are worth reading require an awareness of the state one is in. Oh my. Sigh.

Sigh again and again. Aloud. Allowed. Let truth be heard. Sometimes a song without a word.

See the states keep changing, rearranging, like heart beats. Is that what they do? Heartbeats? Mysterious drummers in chests ready at our behest to change the pace, the beat, the pulse, the pump, the bump, testing, tasting life's endless rhythms. Ready at our behest until the Grand Hand opts for Utter Silence?

Heartbeats and Sighs

Wonders and Why's.

Incessant companions, like poems,  
until they're not.

If it were different, if it were a chaotic cacophony close by,  
then would there be no time for  
thoughts slipping through Of  
"what is" versus "what could be"?

Of what's just for us?

Of what's justice?

Of birthing greed over need?

Yesterday I met 4 year old Willa, proudly exclaiming that she "had just watercolored her FIRST snake!" Without sighs, without clinging, Willa gave me her creation, her FIRST watercolor snake. We named her "Polka Dot the Snake" She's yellow, pink, red, blue and black. Willa's polkadot snake is worth way more than a pizza party. Why?

*PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*



## MY WEALTH AS THE DUKE OF FLIES

I am the Duke of Flies  
I see the world  
    through every fly's eye  
    I see a brilliant Earth  
I see a kaleidoscope  
    picnics and garbage cans  
    and orange trees like jewels  
I see every beautiful color  
I smell ever wonderful smell  
    such as the perfume  
    of kitchen sinks  
    such as the incense  
    of old lemonade  
I am the Duke of Flies and my body  
    is a shell  
        full of tiny rainbows

*Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

## CLAY HEN WORD THIEF

Ten thousand bears  
teaching themselves aggression and violence.

Whatever you win, despise three things:  
the people who resist harmony,  
rulers whose shoulders sway,  
and the three-two-one ways.

This widower bear  
Renting that outcast bear

Destroy one-tenth whatever you've won,  
teach others to carry the energy you lose.  
You've lost thousands of kings.

Two orphans call bears, 'The Tiny Ones.'  
They themselves make hats,  
playing the that's-not-a-myth rite.

*Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

*(This poem is an anagram of "42. Children of the Way" by Lao Tzu, tr. Ursula K. Le Guin.)*

## STOPPING BY EARTH ON A COSMIC JOURNEY

I landed on this world and I liked it fine,  
its rivers, forests, poems, wine.  
Plenty to do every day, and time enough  
for nothing: just the beach and the rays.

Because I came from far away  
and knew that here I could not stay,  
I danced across a thousand lands,  
sampled spices served by tattooed hands.

The animals sang in countless tongues  
largely joyous; and those called humans  
smote their feelings this way and that,  
becoming miraculous metallic technocrats.

Some turned tragic, some went mad,  
while billions watched, merely sad.  
Ancient tribes cast magic spells  
to keep their heavens from becoming hells.

So many worlds to see—I shan't return,  
though those humans begged me, and I did yearn.  
It was nearly as perfect as any I've seen:  
that revolutionary planet shining blue and green.

*Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

## PEACE MAPS XV (HIDDEN TRAILS)

Twin fawns leap wild into the darkest night  
in waves of almost-blond summer grass  
where poppies seed ten thousand tints of orange  
and forest trees tremble with midnight winds.

In waves of almost-blond summer grass  
it's not safe to walk freely in Afghanistan,  
where forest trees tremble with midnight winds  
humming ancient myths of wonder and whim.

It's not safe to speak freely—in Afghanistan,  
to touch a free thought, indulge a random walk,  
humming old myths of wonder and whim.  
Night skies blossom with flowers and missiles.

To touch a free thought, indulge a random walk—  
defy infinite circles and cycles of revenge.  
Blue skies blossom with flowers and missiles  
while here I hide in summer's sweet fog.

Defy infinite circles and cycles of revenge  
to heal love's storms, a child's torn heart.  
While here I hide in tonight's sweet fog,  
silence hollows new sanctuary from revenge.

We must heal nature's storms, humanity's torn heart  
where poppies seed ten thousand tints of orange.  
Silence hollows new sanctuary from revenge  
while twin fawns leap free, into the darkest night.

*Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

## ODE TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Oh ever-adapting heart  
Oh fly-swatting, problem-solving, foe-erasing wit  
Oh fast-talking, perpetually smiling mouth  
that keeps me employed  
Do you know the stars pour ideas into my head?  
Why doesn't everyone let you run their lives?  
Have you ever thought about creating a franchise?  
I think you could help us build a more well-rounded species

You are 7 billion tiny bulbs of love trying to find each other  
amid the dark forests of a misplaced culture  
You sing louder than cicadas in the summertime  
yet in a frequency so fine  
it takes some humans lifetimes to hear, if at all  
You are an open window  
so much stronger than any wall

you smell like cinnamon apples  
baking in my grandmother's oven  
you look like thousands of women in pink pussycat hats  
holding hands in the streets  
you taste like sunshine after weeks of rain  
you feel like decades of soaring deep beneath the sea  
you sound like the trees when I remember to listen

Thank you for never giving up on me  
Thank you for knowing I will never give up on you

*Blake More, Poet Teacher*

## AT 71 THE OLD MAN TURNS TO RAP

i been smoking hope  
since i was 20  
fire it up  
hold it in  
let it out slowly  
hope to cope  
with the slippery slope  
of excess care  
and resulting despair  
who's to say what's fair?  
so i  
smoke some hope  
fire it up  
hold it in  
let it out slowly  
try to ignore  
the war on hope  
try to perceive  
what i believe  
that it's all good  
that the future's so bright  
and that right  
conquers might  
and we bypast  
the perpetual night  
that seems imminent

so i  
smoke some hope  
fire it up  
hold it in  
let it out slowly  
and try to plan  
what i can do  
along with you  
to keep the lights  
in our sight

and not go out  
without a shout  
but i doubt  
that smoking hope  
without action  
will have any traction  
against that beast  
extinction

*Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

## HOMAGE TO E. ANDERSON

one crossing open  
in snow silenced pathways  
trees blown half over  
on a night of thick ice

my own troubled shade  
flows into that dark place  
where what was fire  
burned itself out

*Will Staple, Poet Teacher*





