

EARTH LIGHT



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EARTH LIGHT

A COLLECTION OF POEMS BY
MENDOCINO COUNTY STUDENTS

2017-18

Edited by
Blake More

MENDOCINO COUNTY
CALIFORNIA POETS IN THE SCHOOLS

MENDOCINO COUNTY POET TEACHERS

Earth Light 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 2017-18 school year. The following lists the active Mendocino County California Poet Teachers and the schools they worked with this year.

Bill Churchill	West Hills School
PJ Flowers	Blosser Lane Willits High School
Hunter Gagnon	Redwood Elementary School
Jasper Henderson	Dana Gray Elementary Fort Bragg High School Mendocino High School
Dan Zev Levinson	Sanhedrin High School
Karen Lewis	Dana Gray Elementary Redwood Elementary
Blake More	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
Dan Roberts	Laytonville High School Round Valley High School
Will Staple	Yokayo Elementary

EDITOR'S NOTES

Can you believe it? The Mendocino County Office of Education has been publishing a county youth poetry anthology since the 2002-03 school year. The first title we produced was called *My Road Back Home*, and I worked with Alan & Ann Nivan (who once printed the national Magazine *Sage Woman* in downtown Point Arena) to make it happen—a gargantuan task which included hours of hand folding and glue binding with Alan! Fortunately, the advances of online publishing have made printing easier, which is a very good thing, especially when you do the math—I calculate that we have featured at least 200 Mendocino County youth poems per collection for the past 16 years, which equals well over 3000 poems!

The collection you are holding now, *Earth Light* highlights poems created during the 2017-18 school year—offering yet another awe-inspiring, wonder-filled look into the minds and hearts of our county's youth. These power-packed, high octane voices are at the frontier of culture: what is current now and where it is heading. In putting this collection together I was amazed at the insight, honesty and focus employed by so many young writers. From Kindergarten to fifth grade, there is fun, a playfulness, a hope, a love, that then turns to deeper consideration and perhaps angst in middle school, and then rounds out into a question-based, philosophical understanding of leadership and goal setting in the high school years.

Reading these poems you see “what is up” in the minds of youth, and as someone who has been in the schools for nearly 20 years, I can honestly say, never before have I read so much honesty, emotional intelligence, tolerance, courage and hope. Sure there is plenty of adolescent despair, but even with all the political battles going on, these writers seem to have a voice that is independent, positive, balanced and saying, yeah we know it is up to us to make hearts open again. Are you ready Planet Earth?!

Perhaps I say this every year, but this may be our best anthology ever—and if you want to debate me, you can always check out past titles, many of which are in PDF format for easy viewing, at our Mendocino Poets in the Schools website <https://tinyurl.com/youth-poetry>. So once again, thank you to all the youth poetry supporters and generous donors who make Mendocino Poets in the Schools and our anthologies possible, especially Kimberly Barden and the Mendocino County Office of Education; Tina Pasquinzo 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 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.

Of course, the real credit goes to the students and teachers in this book. Thank you—you are the reason poetry thrives in Mendocino County!

Blake More, Editor

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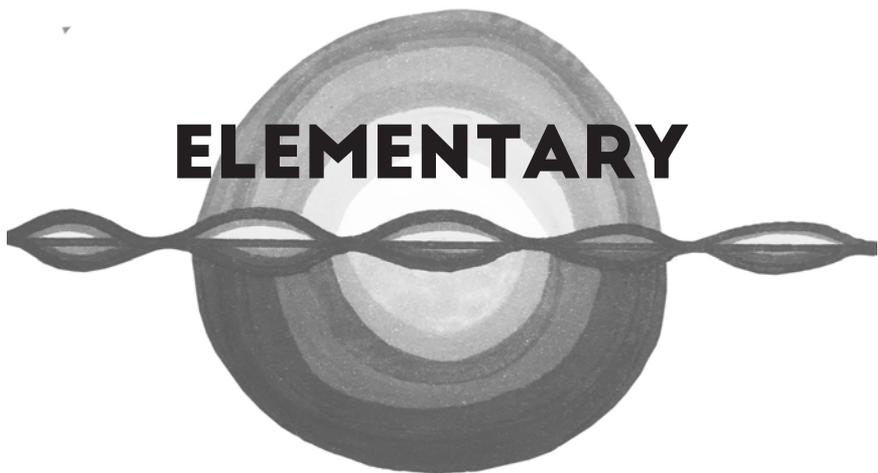
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ELEMENTARY



MY DREAM

My dream is to have a good life.
My dream is to let my friends have a good life.
My dream is to be a good friend.
My dream is to find some new friends.
My dream is to show love to the world.
My dream is to have nice friends.
My dream is to have a nice school.
My dream is to play with someone nice.
My dream is to know lots of chants.
My dream is to be a dragon.
My dream is to be someone famous.
My dream is to be an elephant.
My dream is to be a cookie.
My dream is to be a teacher.
My dream is to be kind.
My dream is to be a flower.
My dream is to be a chant.

Eva Jelen-Thiesen
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Claire Hundley, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

THE FOREST

Wind rattles the branches
Paw steps sound in the undergrowth
Fish leap in the stream
Monkey swing in the trees
The forest is filled
With sounds

Lila Wigton
Grade 2, Manchester Elementary School
Cindi Schmitz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

GRATEFUL

I am grateful
my mom is grateful
my dad is grateful
my brother is grateful
my whole family is grateful
I am lucky to have a grateful family and we are lucky to
have food
and roof over my head
and water and fun in the air
and I can go to school
and come back knowing more
and with something to say
and then knowing that my roof over my head won't fall
I want to go outside
I want to grow like a tree
or like grass in a field.

Kaiden Oliver

Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary

Lisa Mey, Classroom teacher

PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

THE MYSTICAL ADVENTURE

Once I fell asleep, then I was
in the sky, I saw an angel
and I heard the flutter of
other angels. The angel
said, "I give thee the enchantment
of poetry." Then I could speak
the language no one could
speak (except angels):
poetry

Xavier Mitchell

Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary School

Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher

Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

You

you are a shooting star
o key to my heart-
remember me when you write a poem-
you protect me from bullies
 help me when I am sad.
you, the basketball I won
the trophy I earned.
you are the jacket that keeps me warm.

*Andrew McNeal
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Mr. Olsen, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

MY LIFE

I am a basketball bouncing energetically.
I am a sunny day that never rains.
I am small as a chicken leg.
I am clever like a monkey.
I am a mouth with two tongues.
I am a bald eagle protecting my nest.
I am a bus taking kids to school.
I am a chef making spaghetti.
I am the book you read every day.

*Alberto Fuentes
Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School
Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

OH GOLD

Oh gold, oh gold, like gold treasure on a pirate ship.
Oh purple, oh purple, like a purple flower bud in spring.
Oh pink, oh pink, tastes like sweet candy.
Oh gray, oh gray, it sounds like thunder and rain.
Oh blue, oh blue, it feels like the blue ocean and waves.
Oh yellow, oh yellow, it feels like the flames of the sun.
Oh orange, oh orange, orange tastes like oranges and mandarins.
Oh green, oh green, like the bushes and trees.
Never stop dreaming colors.

Onnaleigh Center / Sowers
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Claire Hundley, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

MY HANDS ARE HELPFUL

My hands can make people turn into chameleons.
My hands can make fruit float.
My hands can make cats appear in a box from a friend.
My hands can help my friends do homework
when they have a hard time.
My hands can make people have good lives.
My hands can shape into animals to escape danger.
My hands will be what I want them to do.
My hands can change color.
My hands can be my future.

Jordan Castañeda
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Erin Smith, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

MORPHING

I am the cold white mountains in Colorado
I am the juicy guavas ready to fall from the green trees
in the deserts of Mexico
I am the screeching sound that chalk makes
when it hits the chalkboard
I am the stinky hand sanitizer that stings cuts
I am the hot gooey cheese on the pepperoni pizza
I am the pink eraser on the end of a yellow pencil
I am the leafy green lettuce in the freshly picked salad
I am the little bristles on the tiny snowflake
I am the vicious spikes on the evergreen cactus
I am the figure in the mirror looking back
at myself

Ruby Rose Dauenhauer
Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School
Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

I AM

I am a baby wolf playing in grass.
I am a puppy running.
I am a thunder beam in the night.
I am a violin playing a note.
I am playing the drums made of rain.

Remie Wilson
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Kaitlin Humphreys, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis & Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teachers

HISS OCEAN

The secret key to get in
is to be a cat, but no
one knows how to get in or
how to get out. But I went.
How, you may ask? I followed a cat . . .
It took me in, I got out not knowing
how. But I changed the rules.
Now there is no plastic in
Hiss Ocean. It sounds scary but that's
what it does to keep people
away. It was abandoned and that's
when the cats came, and you will
hear hissing a lot.

Lesly Reyna
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary School
Janice Sverko, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

MAX

Magnificent amazing excited
Apple lover
X marks the spot

Max Post
Grade 2, Manchester Elementary School
Cindi Schmitz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

IT'S RAINING RATS AND CATS

It's raining
It's raining rats and cats
It's raining cats and rats
They splash in puddles
The cats and rats
Rats and cats
The cats chase the rats in the wet, wet, world
The rats chase mice in the wet, wet world
The rats like to swim in the river of gold, and
the cats take flight to escape the endless black
hole of water
The cats and rats ride the lightning
The thunder makes an opening for
the rats and cats to swim through
The gray rats, pink rats, green rats,
and blue rats, red rats too,
blue cats, grey cats, yellow cats, green cats,
red cats, pink cats, go to their owners,
new and old,
old or young,
all have a home in the rain.

Rowan Carr
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Erin Smith, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

NO ONE

a color that is never used
a rock that no one picked up
a radio that no one has heard
a chair no one sits on
a book no one reads
a water fountain no one drinks from
a shirt no one wears
a car no one has driven
a dog that no one wants to walk
like a kid that doesn't have any friends
or an abandoned island that no one visits
the school no one goes to anymore.

Fabian Lopez
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Mr. Swift, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher

JOY

Joy is my friend because she is exciting and fun.
Fun is playing outside in the sunlight with love.
Love is where you go with happiness.
Happyness is in yours and my hearts with caring.
Caring is when you have respect.
Respect is respecting your schools, homes, teachers,
family, parents, church, guests
and friendship with trust.
Trust is trusting people and listening,
Listening is listen while others talk with Joy.

Justin Zapanta
Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary
Margo Singleton, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

THE MOUNTAIN

My hair is like camels running across the desert
Eyes like a bunch of logs stacked atop each other
Seeing a boat going so fast across the ocean

In a dark room
I smell coconuts

My mouth is a big juicy orange

I am a mountain
Big and steep
Wanting it to rain

Isaac Castro
Grade 3, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

MY DREAM

A clock-slaver
A time-taker
A book-reader
An over-looker
An out-of-the-box-seer
A money-maker
A basketball-shooter
A dream-seeker
A truck-runner
A sports-player
A joke-teller

Ivan Bermudez
Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School
Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

MY SECRET IDENTITY

My eyes are eggshells
(maybe from dragons)
My head is random objects
(I like to collect—some people call it junk)
My nose is a gem
(beautiful like me)
My hair is purple with different colored strands
(crazy and wild just like me)
My smile is a plate full of delicious food
(I bet when you see it
you will probably want some yourself)

Addison Clark

Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School

Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE HAIR TREE

One day my cousin and I
were outside then we ran
into the ancient hair tree.
He said to us, “You shall be
cursed
with never-ending hair.” So that
night my hair grew, grew, grew until
my room was no more. Then I
went outside unwisely and my
hair grew so much the earth
was no more. DA DA DA!

Kobi Quevedo

Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary School

Lynette May, Classroom Teacher

Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

IF I WERE AN ANIMAL

If I were a commander whale,
I would tell the sharks to leave my whale friends alone.

If I were boss of dolphins,
I would lead my dolphin friends away from danger.

If I were the chief of salamanders,
I would say to the crocodiles:
leave us be.

*Summer Hurst
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

SUMMER VIBES

Green loving eyes
With a piercing look
That will sting you
My glittery holographic lip-gloss hair
Blueberry banana smoothie body
Feels like gummy bear skin
Red juicy plum watermelon lips
That taste like summer wind
As fresh as an avocado
Wanting relax all day

*Belen Vazquez
Grade 5, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

COLORFUL RAINFOREST

I am like a soft shirt
Ears like a pile of leaves
Hearing a train moving
Eyes like chocolate cake
Seeing cookies fall from the shelf
And some fresh bought bread
Nose smelling vanilla ice cream
Melting in my hand
My life is writing in a book
Tasting the blue sky
Clouds moving
I am a colorful rainforest

Alicia Fuentes
Grade 4, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

I EAT SHRIMP

I am a bright pink flamingo
I see shrimp in the water
I feel the cold water on my legs
I hear the blowing wind on my feathers
I smell the moist moss
I taste the salty plankton
I want to tell you
Life is about balance
I ask you not to disturb us
When we are sleeping

Sal Steckler
2nd Grade, Pacific Community Charter School
Todd Orenick, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

DRAGON KINGDOM

In my perfect world
a redwood will guide me.
In my perfect world
an octopus will soar me through the water.
In my perfect world
I will eat cake with my animal friends.
In my perfect world
I will dive down and see the emperor jellyfish.
In my perfect world, if I was a dragon,
I would soar through the sky.

Rusty Fisher
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Holli Williamson, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

THE WAY I AM

My whole self travels places
Many places
Round and round
Eyes the color of sky
So spicy they make me cry
Nose as hard as a rock
Eroded by the wind
My mouth a sweet strawberry
Hair that takes me to places
That don't exist
Skin umbrella of my feelings
I am unique
The way I am

Hattie Piper
Grade 5, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE WEIRD UNIVERSE

I am the colorblind girl
who can only see green
the sky is green
the sun is green
and everything is green

but one day I heard
a bird
and it was not
green
it was blue
I studied birds and
that one was a blue jay

and now me and the
blue jay are friends

*Jazmin Renteria
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary School
Lynette May, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

BEST FRIEND

A best friend is the one to keep a secret
A person to protect who will protect you too.
A best friend will be there kind and loving
who will play with you
who will stay over at you house
who will make you smile.
A best friend will stop the bullying.

*Gwenievere Yokoy
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Mr. Olsen, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

ANGELS

I am the voice in your head that helps you make decisions
I am the best friend who is always there when you need help
I am an angel who gives you confidence
I am as free as a hawk flying wild
I am a fierce fox protecting its food
I am a lovable puppy rolling down a grassy hill
I am a curious kitten playing with shoelaces
I am a stubborn mule trying to cross a river
I am a volcano ready to blow
I am as happy as a student on a Friday afternoon
I am as bossy as a horse that has not been broke
I am as shy as a mouse trying to sneak a snack
I am everything

Lillian Ulrich

Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School

Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

I AM

I am a wolf pouncing in the frost.
I am a sea otter swimming in the ocean.
My soul is a shadow.
I have wings.
I'm invisible.
I love my dog and he is jumping.

James Hundley

Grade 2, Redwood Elementary

Lorie Wardlaw, Classroom Teacher

Karen Lewis and Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teachers

BE YOURSELF ON THE INSIDE

I see myself from the inside
A red helpful heart
I taste the rain
Smelling sweet flowers blooming
Excited birds singing around me
Fluffy velvet tulips falling down
Saying positive words
Fresh gold strawberries slipping down my hair
A blue and silver crown sparkles
Making me the queen
Of faith, hope, strength
Tasting a crunchy chocolate cookie
I imagine being free in the ocean
Where I see all my friends

Estrella Fuentes
Grade 5, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE POWER PLANET AND STAR

The planet looks like it is pushing the star
and it sounds like a twinkling star
and it looks like a magic circle
and when it is upside down
it looks like the magic circle is falling on you
and it feels like an invisible pancake
and sticky and squishy.

Garret Salyer
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

IT'S RAINING VERY HARD

It's raining nickels and pickles
It's raining chicks and bricks
It's raining seagulls and beagles
It's raining fire and tires
It's raining tomatoes and potatoes
It's raining vans and cans
It's raining boxes and foxes
It's raining chairs and bears
It's raining on me and my friends

Emily Silva
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Erin Smith, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

ME AND I

My hair is made of buildings in the dark city sky
locks of blues, grays, blacks in disguise
my lips are grains of rice
different colors
oh the cake of my lips
so nice
my eyes see a delicious cloudy cookie
named Oreo, so yummy to eat
my nose is a scoop of ice cream
what a treat!
my head surrounded by food,
such an exciting sight
and what you see in this poem
is me

Aiyana Valley
Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School
Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

LONELY

I am the dark shadow drifting through the quiet forest
I am the fierce gray wolf dashing for its prey
I am the lost treasure in the wet sand waiting to be found
I am the fresh scent of a beautiful rose longing to be smelled
I am the large mountain you never thought of hiking
I am the squeaky stairs you wouldn't ever clime

Lily Koeppe
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Mr. Olsen, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher

BE MYSELF

A flan-eater
A cake-maker
A makeup-lover
A poem-writer
A time-processor
A swimming-diver
A squishy-squisher
A music-listener
A box-hitter
A ball-kicker
A sports-player
A book-reader
A dream-speaker

Millie Carbajal
Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School
Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

FREE

My face is a book's pages
Rustling in the breeze
Read
about cookies
Shining bright in my eyes
Listen
To the flowers on my chest
Dancing in the wind
Feel
The cool water of my hair
Smell
My sweet, ripe plum lips
My nose a crouton ready
To be eaten
My heart wants to be free
Like a hawk in the blue cottony sky
I wonder when
I will have freedom...

*Adelaide Montagnino
Grade 4, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

WHAT IS MAD?

I'm a phone ringing and
People pick me up and punch my buttons and
I listen to people's arguments or
sometimes I just lay down and get charged.
What is mad?
Mad is not happy.

*Marco Nieto Sanchez
Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary
Amy Grooms, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

WHO I AM IN MY LIFE

I am Albert Einstein changing the world with science
I am a nerd who has read every book ever written
I am a soccer player who has kicked the ball my whole life
I am an artist who carries a box of paints all around the world

I am a kangaroo with a place to go
I am a monkey that climbs a tree that never stops growing
I am the kid who always gets an A+ on his tests
I am the runner who always wins the marathon
I am the clown who keeps making kids laugh

Jael Orsini

Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School

Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE WONDERFUL WAYS I WILL GO

My hands are wild in their own way.
My hands will go far.
My hands know how to row a boat
all the way to the end of the rainbow.
My hands will open a door to adventure.
My hands will reach the stars.
Your hands will too.

Vivian Loretz

Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary

Katy Brickey, Classroom Teacher

Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

MY MASK

My mask helps my feeling go up
but brings them down.
My mask is like a shield fighting a dragon
helps me fight back.
It brings the devil out when I don't try to.
It put itself on me sometimes;
I try to share my feelings but
they can't come out sometimes.
I don't wear my mask often
only when I am really sad.
I put my mask on this morning but
seeing my friends took it off.

Nolani Larson
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Ms. Swift, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher

ALL ABOUT ME

A dream-catcher
A soccer-player
A book-reader
A friend-haver
A long-kicker
A poem-writer
A horse-rider
An out-of-the-box-seer
A Mexican-dancer
A collage-maker
A book-warmer

Gabriela Aguilar
Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School
Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

LIFE LIKE A TREE

I breathe in the lighting and rain
I breathe out sunshine and blue skies

I breathe in poisons
I breathe out rainbows

I breathe in bullying at school
I breathe out smiles in the hallway

I breathe in family members dying
I breathe out everyone living forever

I breathe in broken bones
I breathe out a cast-free life

I breathe in depression
I breathe out happiness for the world

I breathe in racism
I breathe out people appreciating each other

I breathe in disgusting pig feet stew
I breathe out strawberries

Shanti MacKay
Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School
Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

LEARNING THROUGH TOUCH

With these hands, I can hold a dog when it's hurt.
With these hands, we can help each other.
With these hands, I can touch the blue ocean.
With these hands, I can learn through touch.

Autumn Van Horn
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Claire Hundley, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

STUFF THAT'S HARD FOR ME

I remember when you said I would stay with you.
I remember when you said go
go away and never come back
ever again.
I remember when I said what can I believe now?
I remember when someone came to me and said
do you have a home?
If you don't have a home you can stay with me
if you want.
I wonder what will happen next in my life.

Jaylin Arens
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Ms. Kivett, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher

TAYLOR

Turtle lover
Artistic student
Yo-yo
Loves curing up into a ball and jumping
into the hot tub
Owl girl
Rock out

Taylor Thorpe
Grade 1, Manchester Elementary School
Cindi Schmitz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE GARDEN

Growing plants in the garden
I can see a caterpillar on the petal
of a flower. Daylight shines from over
the garden fence making the morning
dew fall off the flower petals. In the
apple tree birds sing and red
apples fall off the tree. Eat as much
as you want, it is all ripe in the garden.
In the spring the bees come to collect
nectar from the flowers to make sweet
honey in the garden.

*Neelah Garrison
Grade 5, Dana Gray Elementary School
Sarah Magee, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

I SEE THE TWINKLE

I see the twinkle from the moon in my horse's eye.
My horse is on a cliff with his head up and the twinkle
of the moon in his eye.
I see two moons.

*Julian Ramirez
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Kaitlin Humphreys, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher*

IT LOOKS BEAUTIFUL

It looks beautiful.
It sounds like lightning.
Maybe it's feeling sad.
But it's still beautiful.
I will love it so much and will never ever stop loving it.
It's part of my heart.

Eliza Cabrera
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

VAST SHADOW

I am the person who looks at you at night
I am the sun who wakes you up
I am the yeti you see in the mountains
I am the pencil tip you write with
I am the addiction that you love
I am the person in your basement
I am the basketball you shoot
I am the playground you play on
I am the owl hooting at dawn
I am clocks that ticks
And tells you
it's time to go to recess

Cody Chavez
Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School
Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

SHELL

As the color fades into
white from purple

The shell I hold in my hand
looks like skeleton bones

The bones roam back
into their homes

It turns into a clam
to hold a beautiful pearl in its hand

Sounds like an ocean
breeze at night

Tastes sweet, like a
rose with sugar and salt

Feels smooth in my hand
like a pebble in the water

Violet Moon
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Katy Brickey, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

MYSELF MASK

Hair like spaghetti
all long and messy
eyes reminding me of food
like a hamburger or two
and my mouth grabbing words out of the air
and putting them into poems

Joaquin Faiella
Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School
Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

CANDY MOON

My moon is the candy moon.
My moon brings candy to kids who are feeling sad.
My moon makes kids feel better.
My moon is called Candy Moon.
My moon brings mermaids and narwhals to the shore
for people to come together.
My moon is called Candy Moon.

Aranza Montezuma
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Nancy Swithenbank, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

WATER ANIMALS

I am a dolphin
I see water splashing after I dive
I feel jelly fish stinging me
I hear all the sharks chomping
I smell the fresh air when bursting from the sea
I taste the fish that swim freely
I want to tell you
To stop throwing trash at us
I ask you to respect our ocean home

Melea Garner
2nd Grade, Pacific Community Charter School
Todd Orenick, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE HANDS THAT COULD DO LOTS

My hands can touch a little puppy's paw.

With these hands I can touch the raging river.

My hands are like a wolf's paw
touching the freshly fallen
snow, padding down the ice path
to its pack which it very well knows.

My hand is like a honeybee
collecting nectar from a sweet tulip.

My hands will move with the wind
as the spring air blows through the trees.

Calypso Olstad
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Susan Garratt, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

MY WORLD

In my perfect world
there is no trash
no gas no guns.
Where is my world?
It's the ocean. I'm a dolphin,
I'm the pet of a mermaid, she is the...
princess,
It's always sunny.

Sierra Salo
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Katy Brickey, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

THE FUNNY HAPPENING IN THE SKY

I am a blue rat dancing in the sky.
I am a moray eel 10 feet long.
I am a bat making a cumulonimbus cloud.
What a funny happening in the sky.
I am a bat pulling a 10 foot rat to the sky.
I am a moray eel in a cumulonimbus cloud.
I am a cumulonimbus cloud dropping everything in me.
What a funny happening in the sky.

Amari Fishman
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Renee Pyorre, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

ENCHANTED

Endings of books are good like your soul
Nothing can turn your soul to a bad one.
Can anything make you happier than a poem?
Hate is the only thing you'll regret,
And the only cure for hate is love.
Nothing is more beautiful than a sunset,
except for
The wind that is enchanted.
Everyone freaks out for dumb things but
Drama is not the answer.

Eduardo Najera Estrella
Grade 5, Dana Gray Elementary School
Ed Dowling, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

FIRE

Orange is like the belly of a robin.
Orange is like a nice hot fire.
Orange is the color of an orange.
Orange is the color of the sunset.
Orange is like the flames on a boiling sun.
Orange is like the burning flames on a Phoenix.
Orange is the color of a lizard sitting under the sun.

Nico Nelepovitz

Grade 2, Redwood Elementary

Kaitlin Humphreys, Classroom Teacher

Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

THE OCEAN

Fun is the ocean streaming in the wind that
never fails to be seen.
When I go to the beach I always feel
the sand on my feet.
My soul gets stronger only in the summer breeze
The beach listens to you only if you believe
Believing is its thing- that's why it listens to me.

Gage Chavon

Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary

Margo Singleton, Classroom Teacher

PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

ALL OF ME

I am a volcano about to erupt
I am a tree dancing in the wind
I am the color pink on Valentine's Day
I am a stork as tall as a palm tree
I am a baseball game on a summer afternoon
I am mountains and valleys as one
I am in a pickle and cannot escape
I am a city lit up at night
I am a bossy teacher on a Monday morning
I am a pencil writing away
I am mosquitos always bothering you
I am your best friend forever by your side
I am your sister who has a big imagination
I am the cuts after a bicycle crash
I am the doctor who makes you feel better
I am the sun on a midwinter day
I am the get well soon card when you are sick
I am the hermit crab that tries to pinch you
I am a monkey swinging on vines
I am everything that makes us alive.

*Andrea Spangler
Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School
Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

MY HEART IS THE STAR

My heart is the star in the sky
that lights up the night.
I like watching the thunder
and dancing in the rain.

*Olive McNulty
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Lorie Wardlaw, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

MOONS OF THE ANIMALS

The wolves howl at the full moon.
The eagles fly across the half moon.
The dolphins do tricks across the moon of popping trees.
The bears are waking from hibernation.
The rabbits start to go to bed when there's no moon.
I like to see all the different moons.

Benet Richelson

Grade 2, Redwood Elementary

Nancy Swithenbank, Classroom Teacher

Karen Lewis & Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teachers

ALL ABOUT ME

Eyes of a jumper, making me go higher
Nose of a rock, being bold
Body as a train, going faster and faster
Arms as grass, growing longer and longer
Face of a statue, silent but beautiful
Hair as weeds, getting shorter and shorter
Glasses as an electric line
discovering new ideas every time

Lillyanna Zavala

Grade 4, Arena Union Elementary School

Daniel Jimerson, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

I AM ME AND YOU ARE YOU

I am the sea monster that swims above the trench.
I am the clouds that float over our earth.
I am the hippogriff that flies over the sky.
I am the hail that hits the ground.
I am the peace that we can bring back to this earth.

Sphyra Stone Elm
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Holli Williamson, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

BOREDOM

Boredom is with me everywhere,
at school, in the shower,
it's like it is my superpower,
but every day, night, evening, afternoon and morning,
when it comes to visit,
I RUN!!!

Kael Casey
Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary
Margo Singleton, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

OCEAN

The ocean is a very amazing and pretty
place to be
To help get rid of anger
To calm down
For it is endless
It rules the world
I love the blue beauty
That's why I love the waves
They are
Leaders
They lead one another
To the next season
I am grateful for the ocean

Shaili Campbell
Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary
Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

POETRY IS A BLUE-EYED CAT

Poetry comes to me with
the form of a neon blue eye
with the fur of darkness, poetry
led me to a piano
under a white tree
surrounded with white petals.
Poetry hit a note on
a piano and everything
sparkled, poetry laid upon the
piano peacefully saying, "Don't
give up on hopes and dreams."

Helene Zaw
Grade 4, Dana Gray Elementary School
Marlena Nye, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

COLORS OF FEELING

I breathe in the blue depression of death,
I breathe out the pink joy of a new sister

I breathe in the red fury of deforestation,
I breathe out the green relief of nature reserves

I breathe in the black fear of the dark,
I breathe out the golden safety of my house

I breathe in the white shock of a gun shot,
I breathe out the silver sight of a police car

I breathe in the gray knowledge of slavery,
I breathe out the orange transformation of Abe's help

I breathe in the magenta violence of war,
I breathe out the turquoise sound of peace

Jordan Garner

Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School

Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

WITH THESE HANDS I CAN TOUCH AND HOLD

With these hands I can fly.
With these hands I can hold a gem.
With these hands I can hold a rabbit
that's holding a carrot.
With my eyes I can see gems in my mind.

Ruby Douglas

Grade 2, Redwood Elementary

Monica Lima, Classroom Teacher

Karen Lewis & Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teachers

YOU ARE

You are like dull pencil and I am your sharpener.
You are like a surfboard and I am your wave.
You are like a rose and but a pedal.
You are my moon and I am your sun.
You are my hoop and I your basketball.
Sometimes in my heart I feel like I'm walking
on a stair case that will never end.
Sometimes I feel like I am a rose that's loosing its pedals.
I feel like my heart is molding into a little rock.
Life is having to let someone go.

*Lillianne Thies
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Mr. Olsen, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher*

THIS IS ME

I am a dog.
Playful, but territorial.
I am a song.
Annoying or likable.
I am an overcharged UFO.
Exploding with energy.
I am smarter than a old man
I am slyer than a fox.
I am Willy Wonka, friendly and rich.
I am a bomb ready to explode on the instant
touch of a flame.

*Beckett Rasmusen
Grade 5, Arena Union Elementary School
Rebecca Willhoit, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF “DON’T BE A BULLY, BE A BUDDY”

I have nothing
But I have something
Called a poem.
I don’t know if mine make sense
But I tried
“Never give up”

*Natalie Hernandez
Grade 4, Blosser Lane Elementary
Lisa Mey, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

THE EARTH LIGHT

night time
day time
night time
day time
I am the sun who
laughs and laughs
night time
day time
night time

*Eva Rose Barnett-Vance
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary
Kathleen Murray, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher*

I AM THE SUN OF RUBIES

I am the Sun of Rubies and I have a best friend
named the Dog of Sadness.

We both live in the sky made of rubies.
Sometimes all the rubies start to fall
down on the earth.

What is cool is that more rubies form
after a few more days.

I heard a boom.
When I saw it,
there were pieces of rubies everywhere.

Then we left
as fast as we could
and we were never seen again.

Tanner Nagy
Grade 3, Dana Gray Elementary
Susan Garratt, Classroom Teacher
Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

I AM A RED BIRD

I am a red bird high in the sky.
My name is like the fiddle that plays for you.
My soul is on the rainbow that you see.
I am the starfish in the ocean.
I am the kitten that plays with the ball of yarn.
I am the star in the night sky.
I am the snow you play with.
I am the rainbow clay that you play with.

Cheyenne Thurman
Grade 2, Redwood Elementary School
Lorie Wardlaw, Classroom Teacher
Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

THE BEAUTIFUL WINTER

I am a god in the heavens of snow
My hair flows from a ferocious animal
Waiting to pounce on every move
My eyes are camera lenses
Snapping photos of winter
My ears are fuzz balls
Keeping me warm
My nose is a chandelier
Waiting to light up somebody's life
My mouth is a bicycle wheelie
Wanting to roll away

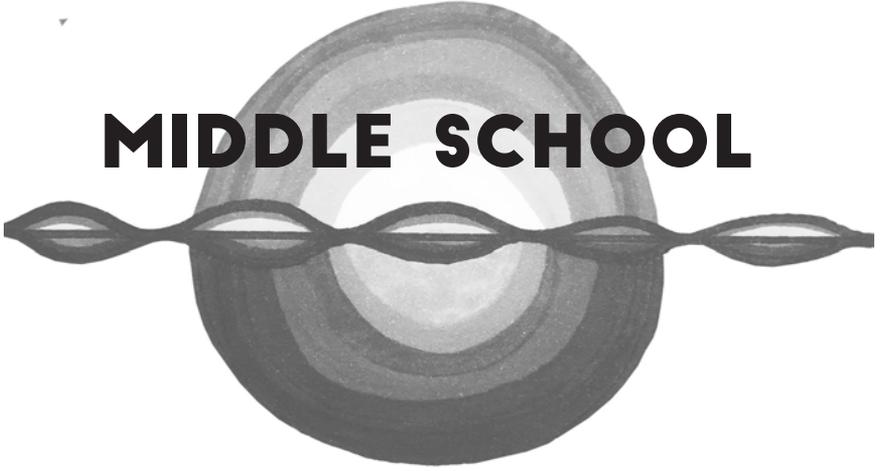
Mason Stornetta
Grade 4, Manchester Elementary School
Avis Anderson, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

SOMETIMES

Sometimes I feel alone in a very dark room
But not right now
Sometimes I am bored
Not now, I am very excited
I'm going to the snow
I am perky
I am somber
Sometimes I am anxious
or weird
I will remember this moment

Gavelli Walsh
Grade 4, Yokayo Elementary School
Ms. Swift, Classroom Teacher
Will Staple, Poet Teacher

MIDDLE SCHOOL



WHERE DO I STAND

I am STRONG
I wonder why I feel overwhelmed
I hear a voice inside putting me down
I see hope deep down in my heart
I want to be accepted
I am STRONG
I pretend to be someone else
I feel confused about my place in the world & where I fit in
I touch anger at our disloyal politicians
And worry about the safety of my family
I cry because I feel unheard, and ignored
I am STRONG
I understand people might lie
I say we speak our minds and make a change
I dream about justice and freedom to all the living
I try to make a difference
I hope I'll make a change
I AM STRONG

*Nayeli Orozco
Grade 7, Manchester School
Aimee Frederick, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

THOUGHTS

I am the flame in the darkness
I am the darkness filling the sky
I am the sky bottling the stars
I am the stars gathering around the moon
I am the moon calling out the wolves
I am the wolves howling back
I am time messing with your head
I am your head facing the clock
I am the clock spinning my hands around and around
Till you break me down into a million thoughts

Emma Walrvaren

Grade 6, Pacific Community Charter School

Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

HUMAN

I am a person
A person who overthinks
for no reason
A person who gets jealous
over nothing
A person who feels left out
when I'm not
A person who gets overprotective
Of what isn't mine
But that's just human
That's me

Oliana Marzoratti

Grade 6, Pacific Community Charter School

Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

HOODIE DAYS

I am the hoodie you wear day after day
I am the earbuds you use to escape
I am the monotonous view out the window
I am the nightmare you have in class when you pass out
I am the question you can't answer on paper
I am the bus with the ripped seats you ride every day
I am the chair you throw your backpack on
I am the song you listen to over and over again
I am the distraction that makes you forget your homework
I am the bed you cry in
I am the tissue you run downstairs to get
I am the monster that chases you back up the stairs
I am the endless school year
I am the day the hoodie rips.

Zane Plesa

Grade 6, Pacific Community Charter School

Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

HOT SUMMER DAYS AND SILENCE

The rough roads to the future
Remind me of a honey bee
The yellow and black long curving roads
Bringing me to the future
I wonder what it will be like?
I can feel the summer heat
I can taste the fresh watermelon
I can hear the birds chirping
I wonder what the day will be like
The future is silence driving through the wind
As quiet as a candle burning
The wax dripping
Sounding like a forest fire on the east coast
The future is unknown
Soon to be discovered
But until then
I wonder what it will be like
In the future.

Kadence Beattie
Grade 8, Pacific Community Charter School
Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE STORM IN THE SCORCH

Walking downhill
Putting one foot in front of the other
Legs aching
The storm approaching
Dark clouds close
We were in love
You say you're sorry
It sounds genuine
Am I just paranoid?
But when you join me
I feel nothing
All the butterflies have flown away
Toward the burning sun

*Avril Okubo
Grade 7-8, Pacific Community Charter School
Dana Beer, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

UNTITLED

I am that one annoying friend who never stops talking
I am the alarm clock that will keep yelling at you
until you want to scream
I am the game over sound in the video game
That makes you rage
I am your mom telling you to go to bed
When you are mad, that is usually me
I am the downtime on all the servers
Of your favorite video game

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

HAPPY ALWAYS

I am a horse looking for a true owner
I wonder why the sun is so bright and yellow
I hear laughter from the forest of hope
I see love from the good people around me
I want peace in all of the kingdoms
I am a horse looking for a true owner
I pretend to fit in but know how amazingly different I already am
I feel happy and cheerful always
I touch the soft hair of my sweet and loved Yorkie
And wonder how much time I have left with him
I cry about the horse I know and love
and think that I will never see him again
I am a horse that is looking for a true owner
I understand that my opinion is right to me
I say give me a break, I'm young
I dream of a waterfall, giving me a shower of relief
I try to make everyone around me joyful
I hope that I am successful in my extraordinary generation
I am a horse looking for a true owner

*Kadance Nelson
Grade 6, Manchester School
Aimee Frederick, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

HIGH SCHOOL



SUNSHINE

light flows within you
and flowers grow
vines, intertwine
ribbons and rhymes
this is sunshine
in and out; you'll scream and shout
darling dear—this is your time
to find your crevice
and bide
in the condensation of your mind
wipe your cry and demand your climb
because darling dear—this is your
time
let loose, feel fine
this
is
sunshine

Olivia Tobar
Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher

WE ARE DREAMERS TOO

Red white and blue,
“We are dreamers too.”
Step out of line, we won’t hesitate to shoot.
Build a wall, kick you out our schools.
We don’t care for your kids they’re all rapist and fools.
All hail president trump!
To hell we go, as we treat everyone different like chumps,
We hate the browns and the blacks
Red white and blue,
Click clack,
Leave you dead,
Forget a coffin all you get is a trash bag.
Hold up a minute how ridiculous is that?
You care more about an alley dog than separating a family,
that’s a full load of crap.
Human anatomy
Brains,
Hearth,
Some of the many parts that you lack
Can’t forget sympathy,
You’re backwards way of thinking is all out of whack.
We the dreamers so stop protesting against our act.
Black lives matter better not change the context of that.
The protest won’t stop till it’s
Red, white, blue, brown, yellow, green and black!

Ernesto Macias
Grade 12, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

BOUNDARIES DON'T EXIST

boundaries don't exist
they are a figment of
our own imaginations
created by others , or ourselves
a dandelion
still grows through
the concrete border
a European ant
crosses into America
with no penalties
sunlight
still manages to penetrate
the glass window

Madison Watson
Grade 11 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

A QUESTIONING OF THE UNIVERSE

my knee clicks as i walk and i wonder who has walked with them before. did they know the feeling of carpet between their toes or the smell of a good book? did they even exist at all, or are they just a figment of my imagination? maybe that would explain the ringing in my ears. why do i ask myself questions that have no definite answer? i think, therefore i am. i think, therefore i am. rain patters down against the tin roof of the patio and the cats whine and the birds are silent and i enjoy the symphony. they call me strange and, to be honest, there's a bit of truth to that because i recite words in my sleep and eat punctuation for breakfast and i think i've told this story before. i tuck my unfinished manuscripts under the soles of my shoes because no human will ever read them. one day, they will be nothing more than another speck of dust on a larger speck of dust that is for sure falling into the sun. only then will i ever share them with another.

Amanda Bednar
Grade 10 , Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

FAILING FATE

The greatest fear every known to mankind is the unknown
Pondering the whats and the hows
Staring into a mirror for too long, long enough
to frantically try to recognize the reflection
Feeling my chest constrict and my palms sweat
as I try to separate state of being and the physical world
Never knowing if I am fulfilling my destiny or just failing fate
Wondering if there is ever an end
A gate to push through
Or even a break, a moment to breathe
But we continue on, never knowing if we leave in an unknown

Caruna Gillespie
Grade 10 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

UNTITLED

I fear this is the way it will stay
This is the way it will go
That we will stay in the safe
And never look down below
We'll never do anything without approval
Scared to be scheduled for removal
But it doesn't need to stay this way
Where we're all so scared to go out side
That we never see the light of day
If we work together
It won't be long
If we stand together
We stand strong

Mija Biggie
Grade 10, Mendocino Community HS
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

HOW TO MAKE ART

Choose a thing
could be paper
a wall
a house
a tree
an article of clothing
a person
this will be your canvas

find an apparatus through which
you can channel your creative inspiration
could be a paintbrush
a pen, a large knife, a flower, a bottle of ink
this will be your canvas

crack open your ribcage
hold your apparatus of choice in one hand
plunge it into your heart
remove the “h” and the “e”
(you will find these small black letters
inside the right aorta)

remove the pulsing lump of muscle
tape it onto your canvas
congratulations
you have made ART

Cozette Ellis
Grade 12, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE MEMORY OF HANDS

Constant ache from constant transmission
of thoughts, from my conscious unto the physical state
Reaching out for something I will never touch
a missed high five from an idol as he ran by
or a wave to say hello
or only just to feel close to something distant
Chipped nails, scars, lumps
signifying our place in life
I appear cold and void
but my hands are warm
and truly intend to comfort
Only being able to communicate with my best friend through text
My hands continue to move as I grow weary
not knowing if I'll use them again
The ability to break something fragile
but the tenderness and knowledge not to
Ink stained and imperfect
bleeding cuticles from nervous reaction
To feel is to know and understand
I only have trust
in the memory of hands

Haley Whitcomb
Grade 9 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

UNTITLED

My shadow lingers with me
lingers through everything
forcing me to face it, with every turn.
Every painful mimic
plunges toxic thoughts,
constantly pushing onto me
invading and indulging
like ink expanding
slowly draining out all color
till the soft void
unfolds, and the shadow
seeps around your vulnerability
blinding the truth.

*Chloee Sanchez
Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

HOW TO BE DECENT

It's very simple
only a few "dos" and "don'ts"
Do: Be empathetic
Don't: Adjust your underwear behind students
Do: Surround yourself with people who love you

Learn to overcome obstacles
Let go of grudges, pain
Never act in spite
Remember to learn from mistakes
Yours and others
Find a way
To love yourself

*J.T. Carlin
Grade 12, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

ABOVE THE CLOUDS

When I was a child
above the clouds,
I was with the sun,
blinded from the storm below.
As I descended,
I became earth-bound.
Everything was chaos,
yet no one made a sound.
All were trapped by fear of reality
trying to adjust to humanity.
If only I knew the concept of sanity.

*Kaidance W.
Grade 10, West Hills School
Annette Morrison, Classroom Teacher
Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

ZOMBIE SUNDAY

(Emails From God's Campaign Manager)

After Josh Bell

Dear Gentle Handed Holy Father or Whomever,
This has been a week of Thursdays.
Perhaps you've spent all the early Tuesday mornings
On some poor sad sack
Recently laid off from a good-honest-hard-working job,
But if you could spare a Wednesday evening or three,
I think we could all overlook it.

Dear GHHF or Whomever,
Please stop investing your funds in the vampires.
The mormons are nice enough,
But they can't go inside without being invited,
And canvassing is an outdated technique.
Besides, they keep getting converted by the lady with
lemonade.
They can't resist her scrabble nights.
She recently bought them all necklaces with little crosses on
them.
This did not go over well.
I trust that you know why.

Dear GHHF or Whomever,
Maybe in exchange for all the time you fed
To the bowler hats down at the pound,
You could let us borrow your new Tesla
Every other Sunday morning.
You see, I've recently been informed that
High-brow math problems count as work
And we'd sure like to save on the gas.

If you can't spare the Tesla,
At least finish fixing the roads down by the church.
It doesn't reflect well on you,
And I think all those blue-collar guys
Down at UPS are catching on
That their tax money is only really going towards your
heating bill.

Dear Genius,
I understand you must keep anonymity
When visiting the earthly realm,
But you absolutely cannot check into any more hotels
As “Josh Josephson”
It is neither subtle nor funny.
For your sake and mine,
Please stop.

Dear GHFF or Whomever,
Prayer candles are out.
I’ve taped your face to every salt lamp in the country.
Your standings among younger generations have improved greatly.
You’re welcome.

We’re still eight points behind,
Beaten only by
Some-Weird-Scientific-Coincidence-Involving-Too-Much-Rain
And
You-Know-Comma-The-Vague-Spiritual-Energy-All-Around-Us.
Consider finding more ways to get the youth involved,
Bible camp just isn’t cutting it anymore.
A smear campaign could be helpful,
I’ll contact the Buzzfeed HQ.
I think we should start by unveiling the dinosaurs,
They’re still alive today, living conspiratorially in the jungles.

Dear Josh,
The final reports are in.
The Slow Impending Flood
Isn’t due for at least fifty years;
And the Plague of March 2014 made little impact.
Do you think it would be at all possible
To speed things up a bit?
After the year(s) we’ve had,
I think we could all do with a reset.

*Taylor Bowser
Grade 10, Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

SPINNING LIKE THE LABEL IN THE CENTER

Destiny is like a record spinning on a turntable
It continues to follow the same path until it reaches the center
(the end of the record)
What's nice about destiny is you can be a DJ and scratch the
record, brining it back and letting it go ay certain times. You can
bring parts of your destiny back but it's just repeating itself, and
sometimes (in terms of vinyl scratching)
it doesn't sound so great.
Like a record rotating on a turntable
destiny follows a path
spinning like the label in the center
Destiny

Ray Leone
Grade 11 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

NO ES LA LUNA / NO MOON

No es la luna
lo que veo
de mi celda

It's not the moon
I see
looking from my cell

Luis A.
Grade 9, West Hills School
Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher
Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher

THOSE FAINT WHISPERS

My true country is the creek
The crisp smell of spring water
The shade of the willows getting taller
The trickling stream surrounds my ankles
The cooling wind as I run on the trails
The birds and animals- I feel them watching
Those faint whispers- I hear them talking

The rays of sunlight between the leaves
The stones through the water, O so clean
The mud and sand sits soft and thick
The fish rise and deep down under- I know that trick
The buzzing and whistling of little creatures
Out of sight, hidden features
In the woods by the creek is where I roam
Under the trees by the water is my home

Olivia Mitchell
Grade 9 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

TOMORROW

Why wait?
Why ask?
Why complain about all you are given as a task?
Are you lazy to confront your problems at once?
If you do something today that will better your tomorrow
You will see the world better
You will see it welcoming
You will see it and you will tell yourself that it was all worth it
That's all it really is, that's the answer to this world we live in
If you better yourself and your surroundings you will see the
beauty in this thing we call life
Why do you complain about what life brings you?
You are lucky to be breathing
To be laughing
To be loved
To see
To hear
And touch
You are lucky
You are the difference,
The difference in having the life you want
It has been given to you, now it depends on you
and whether or not you'll do something with it,
It just comes down to you
and whether or not you want to see a better tomorrow.

*Cristian Bucio
Grade 12, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

HAIKU

teapot filling on the floor
drips of rain steady rhythm
through the roof

*Hannah Nazarin
Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School
Carrie Fishman, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

REVOLUTION

No longer do
Children walk the rails of train tracks
To the destiny of the western world
We are walking down the sights of a loosely aimed gun
Streets are our gospels
Words are the firearms of our choice
Words are more than an intention
America are you listening
We are the children of this revolution
And we are calling for the integrity of our own voices
Peace is the hallmark of our banners
You've seen our blood on linoleum floors across the country
Columbine
Aztec
Red lake
Virginia
Marshall
Stoneman
Power is from the people
Power is in the youth
Open your arms to the brothers and sisters of this country
We are this country
I am talking to you
No! We are talking to you
You were founded in individuality succumbing to the ego
Forsaken in community forgotten in hostility
No longer do children walk the rails of train tracks
To the destiny of the western world
We are walking down the sights of a loosely aimed gun
There is strength in unity
There is strength in you and me
So why do I still hear gunshots in our hallways
I hear screaming in our classrooms
We are the sons and daughters of this revolution
We are dying to make a difference
We are Trying to change history
We are Trying to change our future

*Dylan Deguzman
Grade 12, Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher*

MY DANCE

My true country is all around me, inside of me. Where I stand is where my true country is. I am proud to be where I am and who I have become. My dance is my true country. My eyes and all the beautiful things I see are my true country, but the place I feel most home is our ocean. The waves, the way they build up like emotion, until it gets so big it crashes down on the sand. The wind and salty air calms my nerves as I stick my toes in the sand and watch seagulls fly. Wherever my heart is, is my true country.

Sierra Gurley
Grade 9 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

UNTITLED

Garbage in the river
Like fish in the sea
The melting caps
And the dying bee
Groups of men
Cutting down every tree
Smog in the sky
And the rising sea
American boy smiling with glee
And starving refugee forced to flee.
Too much talk and not enough change
New life must be arranged

Caleb Devine-Gomes
Grade 11, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THINKING INSIDE THE BOX

It's hard to think inside the box
because it's guarded like Fort Knox.

For us dreamers out too far,
we put the norm inside a box,
or maybe in a nice clean jar,
and we lose ourselves in crazy thoughts,

You might think we're looking at the board,
But we're probably on another world.
Reality bends at our will,
as the sea of imagination pulls us to still,
We're looking through the jar of normality,
So excuse us if our ideas are an impossibility.
For us there is no limit,
Because we make the world
as we live it.
When you're locked outside the box,
guarded like Fort Knox,
You'll understand what it means,
to see imaginatively.

Micah Stamps
Grade 10, Willits High School
Otto Coelho, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

HAIKU

on the line of scrimmage
mud underneath me
I aim for the quarterback

Cody Ferguson
Grade 9, Fort Bragg High School
Marina Cochran-Keith, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

WHY WE MARCH

Wake up and your mom screams from downstairs
 "Emma, get up it's 10 after"
Get up, stumble to the bathroom, get dressed,
 get in the car, go to school
You get out of your car and you say bye to your mom after
reminding her what time to pick you up
She says she loves you as you're walking away
 but you don't respond, you can't be late
Go to english, first period, no big deal
There's a kid getting bullied that you walk past, no big deal?
Your teacher gets angry at your class just like usual
Go to biology just the same as every day
Mid sentence- Time stops
And you flash back to your mom saying she loves you,
 "I love you mom, I love you mom, I love you"
Everyone is moving but you may as well be glued to your chair
"I love you mom, I love-"
Shot #2 Flashforward and here we are
Saying that guns don't belong in classrooms
I'm 14 years old and hell even I know that's common sense
You may love your guns but I promise, I love my classmates more
You may want that stress reliever, our well being matters more
You may simply want to protect your home, but prove to me
that is all you want from it
Flashforward again, I'm not a freshman, I'm a senior
The campus seems a little bit cleaner with cops on every
corner and I'm walking to english
Shots fired so I run and the only kid who's hurt is the one who
thought it would be soooo dope if he showed his friends that
he knew how to use their teacher's gun
Why did that teacher have a gun anyway?
Now, I've been reading a lot about the kids in Parkland,
they're the only reason I'm here doing this,
 I can hear their voices, I want to listen
So to quote Emma Gonzalez, a girl and quite possible the
most brave one I have ever seen,
"Now is the time to get on the right side of this"
With every step we take today and everyday, we will take
power, money, and credibility away from politicians who care
more about their money than our lives
The ones who care more about their sickening supporters
than the good of all of us

We are the generation that forces change until we are safe
at every concert, mall, park, and goddamn school in this country
Never again will we stand by and watch
Now is the only time to do this so on behalf of every student
-Whether they agree with me or not-
Put us before your guns
Please

Emma Dolan
Grade 9, Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

MY HANDS

The tools that help me succeed in everything I do
My hands hold countless memories
my mind doesn't remember
For the hard of hearing, hands are how they talk
and speak their minds
Always doing new things, these hands have been
through numerous hours of homework,
the past years of touching and reaching everything
The pain of my knuckles when they are bruised,
the pain of my fingertips
when i press them hard on guitar strings
Lack of abilities happen when hands are tied down
Hands help me throw a softball from catcher to 1st, 2nd,
and 3rd base to get the out
Hands help me write what I can't say,
express with physical contact what words cannot explain
Hands help me learn countless things
and remember that I am lucky enough to have them

Shobe Britton
Grade 10 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

POCHO

I was born and raised
poch
in Fort Bragg,
small town,
on the outskirts of the bay.
Million dollar homes
with views of Noyo Harbor
I will never own.
Schools,
escuelas mexicanas en mi querido rancho,
I will never attend.
Tambien soy panza verde,
green-belly,
cactus fed,
de Leon Guanajuato,
Isla de las Momias.

Carlos G.
Grade 11, West Hills School
Annette Morrison, Classroom Teacher
Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher

FALLING TODAY

Today I am falling.
Falling in mind and spirit.
Falling, but grasping onto ledges
There are fewer ledges today than yesterday
Today I am falling
Falling deeper into myself
Falling slow like impending danger
The danger is nearer today than yesterday
Today I am falling
Falling to somewhere I can't see
Falling like a dream that isn't real
This dream feels more real today
Today I am falling
I don't know when I'll stop
Catching wind faster and faster
I hit the end
Today I was falling
Falling closer to my dreams
Falling into my mind
Falling nowhere

*Briana Ferguson
Grade 9, Fort Bragg High School
Marina Cochran-Keith, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

ONE MORE IMMIGRANT

I'm one more soul walking in this planet, getting treated different. I'm one more immigrant that is told to be different. I was raised the same way my great-great-grandparents were raised, there isn't much difference on how I was born and raised. My race depends on one person to live up hype, expectations, and also accept failure. In my race we were taught to be equal to each other and treat each other as brother and sister and to make them proud. It seems so hard now because society does not think that way now. My ancestors die for me and I should die for them and their regime.

Fernando Davilla
Grade 11 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

PERFECTION

No one is so perfect,
they can fly while leaving
you tied to the ground

Alyssa Fraser
Grade 9, Willits High School
Amanda Laskovics, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?

What am I supposed to do
When people are racist
Or litter
Or bully

Should I call them out
Or help them out
Or kick them out

What am I supposed to do
When people cry
And hurt
And starve

Should I help them out
Or invite them in?

Should I?

What am I supposed to do
When I can hardly do
Anything
For
Myself

Sierra Marie
Grade 11, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

LOST KIDS

I'm a girl,
Sad past,
Some people say bad past,
But do I act bad 'cause people say that?
Most kids come to make the same mistake as their parents
Why only say that instead of showing a way to break out of
that cell that sadly their parents built them?
Why leave them there
instead of teaching them how to make a living?
So when I sit in school and all you say are statistics,
how are you trying to help them?
They feel trapped.
Most of those kids are not bad kids.
They are just lost kids.
Those lost kids need a light to show a path.
Remember, our parents choices are
not in DNA.

*Mia Jimenez
Grade 10, Willits High School
Amanda Laskovics, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

SWEAT, TEARS AND BLOOD

Warriors sweat in lodges
for bad spirits to come out.
Shed tears of joy and passing,
not in pain.
They don't feel pain.
Warriors' blood
putting in work
for new generations.

*Kody I.
Grade 12, West Hills School
Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher
Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher*

90%

warrior

guerrero

90%

survivor.

sobreviviente.

The fire you carry inside

El fuego que llevas adentro

comes from deep,

viene del fondo,

deep underground,

muy debajo de la tierra.

erupts from death,

Explota de la muerte

will show your strength.

y demuestra tu poder.

Jose P.

Grade 11, West Hills School

Diana Blundell, Classroom Teacher

Jabez W. Churchill, Poet Teacher

THE BLEEDING STREETS

Killing Blacks and browns

Innocents that been walking with their feet

Trying find the peace

A glock aimed at hitting the face

To keep us from say'n shi*

But no one can stop our ways

Let's end this

put 187 to the racist

Keep everybody awake shooting words true as an AK

Let's end this

save the day

You With me, Okay

Efrain Garcia

Grade 11, Anderson Valley HS

Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher

Blake More, Poet Teacher

BUt yOU, GEN X

Boy, were the squids wrong
Their ceaseless discharge only inspired us
to take stand and defend our culture
BuT yOU, Gen X tWeRps wIth yoUR gOop aNd YouR DooP,
yOur 5-LoKo
aNd YoUr TerRiBle mUsIc
“Back in my day it was real real lyrics meant something”
nO RoOm fOr bRagGadOcIo
No rOom FoR dRuGs oR SEX
But our jazz that came out
truly was the best
It was melodic, rhythmic, and represented realness
It was up to us to go out and catch our own good feelings
We didn't have 5-Loko,
we had tequila and vodka
and our rock was better
we had Fallout Boy and Nirvana
bUt yA HoOdLuMs
AnD YouR IdePoDs
AnD YoUr CoNdoMS
aNd yOur BathSalts
bAck iN mY dAy wE
jUsT hAd WhiPpeTs
JusT HaD KnoCKing
MaiLboXES doWn
jUsT hAd AnGel DusT
Shut up and give an up to our Culture
our idioms, give us Credit

Charles Dilks
Grade 12 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

PERSONAL MADNESS

Madness is magenta
It exists in my everyday life
It tastes like fireworks
Ever starting with a spark
Then spreads like wildfire
Its enemy is myself
My madness dresses itself with rags, chains, and shackles
She consumes my mind and sanity
She hisses for me
To let go and give in
Madness tears through me
Like a great white in a blood haze
Madness is my prison
And I, its prisoner

*Michael Morgan
Grade 12, Sanhedrin High School
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

DOUBLE-EDGED

My mind is filled with positivity and negativity
Negativity is a dangerous place I hate
I hate positivity because it leads me to negativity
Negativity and positivity are double-edged swords.
Swords of positivity and negativity can hurt you
You choose how to use a sword to fight
Fight with positivity or negativity,
It can hurt you or someone.

*Jimi Beshara
Grade 10, Willits High School
Otto Coelho, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

UNTITLED

We spill our hearts on to the pavement every day
Shadows clad in converse, lung-tipped ecstasy
We ring new bells and fade slowly
Hearts expanding
Chests growing
Our fingers are reaching, slowly, slowly
Small sticky new leaf fronds appearing
On to the forest floor we creep
Shadow-like in our small, inherited
soon-to-be-green beings
Nobody's heart races faster than the new generation
We are faulty, newly-tested, fresh wine poured
From the mouthpiece
Full of flavor
Sour, freshly squeezed
Life meant to flourish, acknowledge
Bring in thoughts and innovations
To race against addiction, separation,
We are identity, innovation
We are finding our way, each day
We are struggling, breathing, expanding
This should be our focus
Who we are
This should be our worry
What fills our nightmares, day dreams
Not whether a gun will spill our hearts
Onto the pavement

Nami Dakers-Yasskin
Grade 12, Mendocino Community HS
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE LAND

These were rolling hills that did not roll
They flowed, washing over reeds and earth
Shimmering ever downward, endlessly
Lapping at the shores of oaks and sky
Twisting in rivulets along a pond's edge
Swimming through wishful auburn grasses
As the buckeyes dropped with a splunk.

These were men that felt no pain
They nurtured, grew in rural Life
Strumming souls in midnight's charm
Dancing languid through thick slow time
Hunting boar at the edge of silence
Singing ragged and lovely moments
As I listened, brimming, lying in bed.

These were times that had no end
They tumbled down my small young back
Clacking like an idle afternoon
Scattering in sweet sultry honeysuckle stems
Shattering around wild frizzy tangle-hair
Dropping onto a weightless summer trampoline
As the tree branches cradle me and coo.

These were memories that did not last.

But I wish
They had.

Indigo Funk
Grade 12, Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

ONE, TWO, THREE...

One day, Someday, Probably on a Sunday,
I heard your voice from across the meadows,
Something so smooth
Some would say it was soft as silk,
But to me you were more than textile;
You were the sound of skipping rocks on an empty oregon lake,
You were the northern lights on a frozen alaskan sky
You were the fresh ocean spritz on this 5am sea of silver.
And all they had to say was you could sing.

A second day, Another day, Probably on a Tuesday,
As I walked through the streets of empty flower carts and empty people,
I could feel you breathe two blocks down the road.
The skies spoke of delicate sun's shining bright just for you, and
to keep
your eyes from burning, you wore a golden sun hat
because you
heard it's what the moon men do.
With so much to see, how could you not feel blinded by the
universe?
And the people thought you were blinded by your curiosity.

The Third day, the Last day, Probably on a Thursday,
I saw you sitting on the swings as you drank the moonlight rivers which
surround you.
When our eyes met, I could see the cosmos and its 12 hearts,
And when you laughed I could hear galaxies spin with joy.
When our hands met, I could feel reality shifting
to make room for you,
And when you hugged me I was left in nebula dust and wanderlust.
You whispered in my ear and all I heard were butterflies and honey
bees, so subtle like your violet tears
And I knew what love was.
So sad my universe was needed someplace beyond my fingertips.
Goddamn, did I know what love was.

Victor DeAnthony Galarza-Guevara
Grade 9, Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

UNTITLED

We exist
In a mixed bag
A big beautiful island
It feeds the soul
But where did the real world go?
Climb into your tv screens
Into the satire and bad dreams
Progressive ideas and passion
Versus
Ignorant indifference and not enough action
We live in a country
Where men brandish needles
Stitching lips shut
Sewing us up
Embroidering flags with poison
And presence
To cover up the carnage

Cheyenne Brunner
Grade 12, Mendocino Community HS
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

WONDERING

A picture is worth a thousand words
at least that is what people tell me.
But what about their titles?
How much does a title affect the meaning?
If you saw a white rose
What would you think?
What if you add a title?
Like “The Innocent”
Would the meaning change?
Would you still say the picture is worth a thousand words?
The picture itself is worth maybe
50
30 or
100 words
The title, however, is worth so much more
A title leaves people wondering
Thinking
Creating
About what it all meant
It is funny how one small title makes a world of difference

*Lisa Arreguin
Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School
Carrie Fishman, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME

My true country is Round Valley
Tweakers and bad people are around
Missing people. Funerals are everywhere
That's how most people describe Round Valley.
They don't recognize the beauty of Round Valley
They don't see the mountains
They don't see the trees.
Marijuana growing. Drugs. Guns. Drinking.
Car wrecks.
That is how people look at our valley.
They don't see the animals
They don't see the houses
When I see Round Valley I see homes
I see friends
I see my family
I see the animals
I see the schools
There is no place like home.

B Freeman
Grade 9 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

MY PAST JOURNEY

Where I'm from?
Everyone with guitars while my heart beats upon drums.
Being in a world where people walk.
My only wish is to talk to those who walk.
My site is more than just the world I see.
I visualize how the world must be.
They say "Be the change you want to see."
I'll make sure things change because of me.
The people I grew with live through drugs and fighting.
I closely resemble,
but whenever trouble comes I mumble.
Living with the people who own lion hearts
I was the only wolf making light through dark.
Lost the father figure.
It got hard to look at the mirror.
I've learned to cope, to become stronger.
When life beats on me again
I won't be down any longer.
Coming back with my pack who are family but friends.
My mind soon realizing its complexity,
it surrenders and lives more peacefully.
It does not hide from its truth
and never lose touch of my roots.

*Jorge M. Perez Jr.
Grade 12, Sanhedrin High School
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher*

THE HOPELESS DESTROYER OF HEARTS

the picture of you
sitting on my subconscious bookshelf
is a different kind of melancholy.
i often wonder what your middle name would be
if it weren't the one written on your birth certificate.
maybe it would be
a bottle of whiskey to a recovering alcoholic
or
a fresh pack of cigarettes to already damaged lungs.
maybe even
a new set of watercolor paints to an artist with broken fingers.
something phosphorescent to something nocturnal.
a book gifted to a pyromaniac.
you are a useless masterpiece, my love.
and i am a forgotten work of art.
if only i weren't covered in gasoline,
and you weren't holding the match.

taylor jane travis
Grade 10, Ukiah High School
Michael Riedell, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

MOTHER POINT OF VIEW

No smile to see
No cry to hear
Nobody to see
No laugh to hear
The pain that goes thru my veins
To my heart
Knowing I will never get to hold you
Never gonna be able to watch you grow
The missing whole in my heart
It's no fun losing your baby you grew for 9 months

Pastteall Joveivy Fischbach
Grade 10, Willits High School
Amanda Laskovics, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

PROUD TO HAVE YOUR BLOOD

To my ancestors
What was it like?
What was it like to live the life you lived?
I ask myself everyday
What were your struggles?
What was it like before cell phones?
I live in a society where your life depends on phones,
we are lost without one.
How did you know what was going on in the world?
How did you communicate without it?
How did you know what time it was? Just how?
If you knew the consequences of a phone, would you still use one?
Your life was not the same, I know your struggles.
I read them daily. "Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee"
is just one of the many unjust acts upon my native people.
I am proud to have your blood running through my veins.

Macy Hurt
Grade 11 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

OLD GROWTH

Scratch of a beard
Hunch of a back
Oh how time sprints by
Seasons pass by
Years are only months
Months are only minutes
Minutes only seconds
Time is like water
Flowing fast

*Logan Gruys
Grade 11, Mendocino High School
Andy Wellspring, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher*

TRUE COUNTRIES

My true country is in my room
where I watch our society go to hell
I watch this through the electronics
that kill our brain cells
I watch innocent people suffer to do
good for others and hurt themselves
I watch kids get traumatized and
lose their childhoods
My true country is all in my head
where I tell myself to smile and
be like the actors and writers that
are there to tell me what to do
and how to act
I smile through the hard act of life
I smile to show no pain
My true country is in my heart
where I tell myself to stay strong
even though I've had it rough
I tell myself don't be like
the people who hurt you I tell myself to be a good role model
and show no fear
My true country is where I am
My true country is inside my soul
My true country will always be a part of me

Jade Johns
Grade 9 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

UNTITLED

This moment I feel unattached
Floating
I drift far and past
Glowing
My mind stops dwelling

My feelings of discontent
Over our state as a human race
Has no flame

How we choose
to construct possibility
Is where we should aim

Dwelling stops the mind
But the mind cannot stop dwelling
I must move forward

Move onward
Unleash
Imagine possibility

Shem Biggie
Grade 12, Mendocino Community HS
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE BOX

In a box
the box is glass perfectly see through
see the wind blowing through the trees
can't feel it
see the flowers blooming vibrantly
can't smell them
see children laughing
can't hear them
see fresh sweet juice
can't taste it
in a box, stuck....forever placed here...
we wanting you to be here
without rights
however with a conscience
the choice to stay or go
not knowing which is right
not receiving help if chosen wrong
to leave the box and take flight?
or to stay here forever long?

*Cora Fernandez-Hamilton
Grade 10 Laytonville High School
Erin Lehman, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher*

WINTER FLOWER

Winter Flower in Spring Wind
leave your petals in its wake
I will miss you, Winter Flower
although known for a short time
The pain will be there still when you leave
Why can't you stay?
Vibrant color against white snow
I will miss you when you go
I understand you can't stand the pain of the
Spring Wind.
So I don't beg you to stay
But in my head I plead you stay
But go if that will heal the wound
Winter Flower in Spring Wind
Goodbye
You've left your petals and most of
them of kindness pressed in my mind
Goodbye and thank you
Winter Flower

Cecilia Cramer
Grade 9, Willits High School
Amanda Laskovics, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

HAIKU

sucker fish on shark
feeding off bacteria on shark
clean and full

Nik McKinney
Grade 9, Fort Bragg High School
Marina Cochran-Keith, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

THE PALM

you meet people
shake their hands
see them again
wave...
when you see a dog
you want to love them up
pet them...
when people can't hear
you speak with your hands
your hands tell a story within them
use your hands
treat them right
you're going to have
them forever

Samantha Bruno
Grade 10 Round Valley High School
Susan Brady, Classroom Teacher
Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

REDWOOD MIGHT

Grace and Strength
Towering endlessly above
Growing limbs of amazing length
To capture the sun's hot love
Through fires and floods they will survive
These trees will to see another day
Through chopping and falling they will thrive
This landscape is where they will stay.

Kyle Hayes
Grade 12, Mendocino High School
Andy Wellspring, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

THANKSGIVING—GIVING THANKS

Although the door stands open
letting the chilly November air in--the kitchen is warm
Not with a physical heat but with a mental one
It is crowded with bodies
Everyone fitting into their perfect little niche in this family
Not bound by a physical bloodline but a mental one
I stand in the doorway listening to the swell of conversation
The little squabble that breaks out
over the cooking of the potatoes
The air's slightly drunken and blurred quality
I am overwhelmed by this sensation
An intense love for each and every person in this space
Every piece of this beautiful puzzle
Perfect in it's imperfection
I silently give thanks to the world
Before walking forward to take my own place
in our thanks giving scenery

Hadley Powers
Grade 9, Mendocino High School
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

CAMO

Camo
Green
Muscular and White
My dad took me out to dinner
last night
Yellow building yellow sign
we went to Denny's
we had a great time

Lilly Chesmore
Grade 11, Fort Bragg High School
Nicole Nella, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

MY MOM, MY SHIELD

For everyone of the 5,110 days I have lived,
I am able to fall asleep, cuddled in blankets, peaceful.
When I tell you the things that clutter my mind,
The things I am learning as I grow,
You have always supported me
You have made sure I know you will never stop loving me.
And mom, that is what keeps me strong,
Your love for me
Mom, my beautiful mom,
I know you have a star for a soul.
I know when I get older I will call you everyday
Because the only thing you've ever done is
Loved me, accepted me.
When I am on the edge,
When I am sad,
Your hugs are the only things that break me.
Snap my emotions like a twig
Because I know your arms are my fortress,
You will keep me safe and I can cry until
It soaks your shirt,
And still you will love me.
You are the strongest person I know,
Sassy and sweet
You are my mother
I am proud to call you that.

*Joscelyn Beebe
Grade 9, Willits High School
Amanda Samana, Classroom Teacher
PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher*

SPACE CASE PLACE

I wait on a mountain above the clouds,
Across the deep valley I recognize a familiar face,
I push aside feelings like doubt,
In an instant in the distant glowing space,
Shapes and colors are something I know about,
Round, smooth, soft, subtle, curvature of a vase,
Verbal tones vibrate from my bones I speak and spout,
Grow within me as an artist until I sprout.

Carston Butters
Grade 12, Mendocino High School
Sam Stump, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

UNTITLED

Shadows come from illuminating souls
Shadows travel with you in the dark or
in the light Shadows belong to a cold
foggy night Shadows wander
into the glistening moonlight They feed
on your happiness or bitterness
Shadows know your fears and frights
They travel to the deepness in your
heart

Alondra Vasquez
Grade 11, Sanhedrin High School
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher

JOY CREATES THANKFULNESS

Now what creates Joy
Joy is shredding the powder
Joy is rippin is wheelies in the hot summer sun
Joy is playing drums and music with my brother
Joy is going to the shooting range with my family
Joy is listening to Frank Sinatra
Joy is watching the sun set on the headlands
A lot of things create Joy
that means we are thankful for things
we don't even know about

Hardy Beak
Grade 9, Mendocino Community HS
Emily Inwood, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

OCEAN'S BARRIER

A barrier against the ocean—
a tranquil and steady juxtaposition from the roaring of the waves.
An ancient rock wall rises from the earth—
stone laying stuck in every angle—
a reminder of an event long ago that shook the land.
Fresh water drips down
through valleys of cracks a
nd creates a dripping harmony of taps and splashes.
Drops bounce off of spring green nasturtium leaves
and roll down into stagnant pools below.
Tangles of dry blackberry vines reach to the ground—
weaving through the crumbled fragments fallen from above.
The landscape littered with splintering driftwood
tossed up from the sea—
soft patches of grass poke out from the mountain of old matter.
A backdrop of old rock—
shimmering with algae—
A venerable surface to which life takes hold

Maya Brown
Grade 12, Mendocino High School
Andy Wellspring, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

THIS IS MENDO

I come from the nature of the
great outdoors.
I come from where everyone likes
to hunt and fish.
I come from a town where
everyone knows everyone.
I come from long summer nights
and huge open grape fields.
I come from redwood trees everywhere
you look.
I come from where nobody cares
about your race or culture or religion.
I come from a place where you are
seen for you.
I come from acceptance.

Kaylee Novo
Grade 12, Sanhedrin High School
Yuliya Ritchley & John Horton, Classroom Teachers
Dan Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher

CONTRARIAN

Gray clouds and gray cars;
But I am yellow today.

Careening through notes and lectures;
But I saw the ocean today.

Cicadas plucking uniformly in the morning;
But they are heavenly today.

Juvenile scribbles on a thrice-returned desk;
Written by Shakespeare today.

Jake Bell
Grade 10, Fort Bragg High School
Carrie Fishman, Classroom Teacher
Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

BE YOURSELF, YOUR OWN SUPERHERO DIAMOND

Don't be a diamond
Be yourself
Be what you want to be
Don't let people pass you around
Don't let people put a price on your
Do what makes you happy
Don't change for someone
Who will just pass you around
Don't be a diamond
Be yourself
depend on yourself
Make yourself happen
Let the haters drop like rain
Be yourself
And rise like a hawk
If you're being dragged down to the ocean floor
Gather all your strength
and swim up out of the water
Dead you cannot accomplish anything
But alive you can do anything
And only alive will you be able
to be your own superhero
dead no you are no one

Christian Espinoza
Grade 11, Anderson Valley HS
Arthur Folz, Classroom Teacher
Blake More, Poet Teacher

POET TEACHERS



EVANGELIO / GOSPEL

No hay dioses cultos
ni incultos.
Ni buenos
ni malos
ni oscuros
ni claros,
solo la noche eterna y estrellada.
Su halito,
nieve y resina conifera,
destilado de la creacion,
condensado encima de parabrisas
y paragolpes igual
esperando un dedo infantil
que le trace sus nombres sinnumero
y el sol
a borrarselos.

There are no tame
no wild gods.
No good,
no bad,
no dark,
no light,
just eternal starlit night.
It's breath,
pine pitch and snow,
clear distillate of creation,
condensed frozen upon windshields
and bumpers alike,
waiting for the finger of a child,
to trace its countless names,
and the sun
to be erased.

Jabez Churchill, Poet Teacher

MY WHOLE FAMILY WON'T FIT IN THIS POEM

I have a friend; she cleans houses.
I have a friend; her hips hurt.
I have a friend; she tends the bees.
I have a friend; she does my taxes;
she does so many people's taxes.
I have a friend; she tells me the adorable words
of her two young grandsons.
I have a friend; she's almost 99, half deaf, half blind.
We play killer Scrabble.
I have a friend; she always listened so closely to
my poems, prayers and stories.
I have a friend; we walked thousands of miles together,
till Death did us part.
I have a friend; she prepared Everything for me
to be able to function alone after eye surgery.
She's the one who does taxes.
Her garden is beautiful.
She loves her husband; they dance and dance.
Her cat used to sleep on her head.
I have a friend; she paints portraits of her family.
She even painted me.
In our youth, we would always eat pizza.
Now, as elders, we seal our friendship in sushi.
She's the one whose hips hurt.
She travels and laughs and walks to fall
in love with more of Life.
23 years ago, she adopted a baby girl from China.
I have a friend; her hair is snow in the wind.
She has 4 sons, and 1 daughter.
So many rallies, and weddings, and birthdays and
new grandchildren on her agenda.
She says one of her sons doesn't like her.
She organizes and cooks and knits and sews and
dances and rides her bike.
Everywhere.
I have a friend; he does so much for me.
When he smiles, the world lights up.
I have a friend; she teaches yoga so beautifully.
She's the one who cleans houses.

PJ Flowers, Poet Teacher

THE ANTS

It happens after the rain, after the cloud has crawled
a long blue slug, to the old carpet hills,
where the Kohls and the Walmart and the Michael's and the city is
and the vans, big white mice of the electric company
emerge and waddle shining by
and the ocean between the houses is a green bell
after the rain, and the woman is singing, behind the grey fence
tickling porch ears
and the hoops of dashing children tumble neon by
and the low trees swell with dark rainbows, oildrop birds
and the kitchens are drizzled with thin poison layers
traps laid out for the many-hearted creature
while the soaked white cat folds its paw
full of lazy hunger, it happens:
bursting from dry paradise chasms
the ants enter the windows of the houses in great rivers

Hunter Gagnon, Poet Teacher

THE BIGGEST OF SEVERAL SEEPS

A rocky cliff topped with eroding sod
forms the north wall of Portuguese Beach.
Nestled in its creases I find small waterfalls,
seeps, really: water drip-dropping
out of stone, down to sea.
And the drips drip most
from a nose of wet, gray rock.
Roping droplets silver before a dark hollow
then splash upon a damp altar.

Droplets

strike twenty times a second
on the slick stone, slick
from green-brown living
murk. Droplets strike
clumps of lime-green algae
with thin waving hairs.
Splashes reach rigid, deep moss.
A slick green stalactite shivers
and drips with wet.

I

watch this as long as I can
and then try to write it down,
because here is so small a world,
small even like me, and I almost
almost feel up to the task.

Jasper Henderson, Poet Teacher

FROM SONG OF SIX RIVERS

Destroy the decades' decadence!
A chorus builds and I head south.
Dispelling ghosts with cobweb minds,
I follow salmon to the mouth.
All species singing, mountains moan
Until the earth is made anew.

With redwoods sprung from molten speech,
All trees unfurling what is true
That deer and quail receive as blessings,
A grandeur of this forest vast
Releasing crystal elixirs
Wrought unperceived in aeons past.

We sip the wisdom of John Muir
As generations of authors write
These trees limned by his fractious voice,
These trees with crowns beyond our sight.
Sequoia sempervirens tower
Along our rocky, shifting coast.

Sequoiadendra gigantea
Loom until we feel lost.
Metasequoia glyptostroboides
Transplanted from the Chinese shores
As graceful as the dawn on dew
Remind us to fling wide our doors.

Such shadow-casting ancient beings
Are as the roiling blue Pacific,
And if I grasp for any essence
Of moments flashing and specific,
I find impossible the task,
As opened moments steal my thoughts

Till I become another mote
With millions in a sunbeam caught
Who dance among these endless forms:
Sword ferns that frame scintillant whales,
A mountain lion asleep in sorrel,
Banana slugs, and foxes' trails

All leading from my brain to heart . . .

Zev Levinson, Poet Teacher

MAKE POEMS NOT WEAPONS

Upon waking, I check Twitter to see if the world has ended. Twitter says it's #Tuesday and also #NationalPoetryMonth and people are dodging bullets at #ManySchools. In my front yard, frost glitters where stars have dropped three wishes and countless icy tears. Because of problems in #Iran #Korea #Syria and the #WhiteHouse jets zoom on red alert. Birds whistle and chirp. Do bluebirds know that their silhouette sings globally? Morning breeze shimmers apple blossoms and pine cones. Missiles drop. #Dreamers hide. Anger detonates at #RandomSecretLocations. Planet Earth spins. Gray whales migrate, camouflaged offshore. At school today, I will notice new security cameras. Hundreds of students are ready to write #Poetry and to create the future. #Pencils #Quills #Language #Glitter #Paint #Imagination #Emotions #TeachingTolerance

Karen Lewis, Poet Teacher

LOVE DETECTOR

I tell the truth
unabashedly
generally with good intention
I cannot help it
this is a talent
this is a curse
people say I am stadium lighting
a crystal megaphone
translucent waves of thought
flowing like water
into the depths of your ears
witnessing with 10 thousand watts of wonder
smiling into the open eyes
of anyone brave enough
to dare expose themselves
to the x-ray dream
of purposeful vision
it isn't easy being me
people run
they hide
they throw stone eyes
and backhanded curses
but I don't stop
I fly with hummingbirds
dive into the night
pop through the sun
wake up with a handful of stars
I understand
why I am scary
it is hard to be seen
without disguises
I am not
for the faint of heart
I am for the willing

Blake More, Poet Teacher

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE DEATH OF BOREDOM

when the action slows down
we are left to our devices
smartphone, tablet, laptop
delivering the entire
three ring circus
of the million layer cake
that has no weight
and fits in the palm of your hand

youth used to proclaim
“i’m bored”
as a stage instruction
for the adults
to step up their game
and produce some thing
to fill the apparent emptiness

that void
a black hole of loss
or a white hole of opportunity
has shrunk in the digital age

that void
where einstein’s elevator
rose to a theory of relativity
once shunned as the devil’s playground
once filled with repetitious prayers
to invisible beings
to keep the light on in the darkness
to keep the mind from running
wild

and now at a precipice
the tightrope stretched
between the fabulous and the dismal
teetering on environmental collapse
for which we need new

wild answers
we keep our minds busy
with a kaleidoscope of images
of what our friends are eating
news bytes tailored to our likes
condensed ideas
all deployed on a screen
a global gateway
to the fabulous and dismal
but not new
where the feral synapse
faces extinction
as does the gray matter between ears

heed the silence
preserve the empty
praise boredom
reach out for the nothing

Dan Roberts, Poet Teacher

MY PROBLEM

My problem is I fall in love too easily
it happens so suddenly
before I know it is happening
and there I am
not like I was a few minutes before
in a world I has forgotten
would ever exist for me again.
Your slightest smile for instance
fills me with such joy I'm afraid
if it stops I will no longer be here
but in some pit of doom
left to starve with only your memory
but this is not such a small thing
your memory in me
my memory of your smile
which makes me smile
and bring me joy
even as I starve for more.

Will Staple, Poet Teacher

