



St Bede's School

Year 7

Poetry Competition



## St. Bede's Year 7 Poetry Anthology 2019

### Foreword

Writing poems is hard, I'm not going to lie – it's hard, frustrating, unsettling, lonely, time-consuming and spectacularly badly paid! But it is also exciting, enthralling, satisfying, expansive and more often than not incredibly moving. For all of these reasons, I want to applaud your children for being willing to put themselves through such a process in order to produce the poems selected for this anthology.

'Working consciously on a poem can be like when a name is on the tip of your tongue; the more you search, the further you push it down your throat'. This is what Peter Sansom says of his experience of being a poet, and from my own experience, I agree. There's a particular tic a poet has, fleetingly at first, that they then go onto develop into a talent over a number of years of throwing balled up drafts into the wastepaper basket (and usually missing); something about not looking at an idea for a poem directly, but being aware of it flickering just on the edge of vision, allowing it time to gather and brew until one is certain it is ready for words. With all five winning poems, I felt the poets had fully considered the ideas they wanted to develop into poems. It was evident that they had been open to the possibility of a collaboration with their own imaginations and had also risked failure, as well as the not-knowing where their endeavours might take them. This is an uncomfortable but necessary aspect of being a writer 'Because to write is to take risks, and it is only by taking risks that we know we are alive', says Margaret Atwood.

In 1<sup>st</sup> place, Jamella Valdez's 'How to Eat a Book' is a deliciously witty poem that made me gasp at its opening injunction to 'crack the spine'. The poem is both playful and assured, as well as being incredibly inventive with form. In 2<sup>nd</sup> place, Bethanie Ayres' beautiful, visual and atmospheric 'The People of My Village' is evidence of our deep attachment to place. In 3<sup>rd</sup> place, Abigail Bruins' 'Snow Girl' is both confident and accomplished with a sure use of language that I would associate with somebody much, much older. 4<sup>th</sup> place goes to Harry Grove's for his poem 'My Brother' which is a moving testament to the many facets of the filial relationship. In 5<sup>th</sup> place, Marcos Rodriguez-Montano's 'My Solitary Days' is an evocative and mournful poem that made me cry.

Even today, archaic misunderstandings about what a poet is and what poetry is for persist. It would be such a shame if our children grew up believing (as I did for many years) that a poet could only be an old white man with a posh voice and an expensive education who uses perplexing words and wants everything to rhyme. This couldn't be further from the truth.

Poets don't look like this anymore:



Alfred Lord Tennyson

In 2019, poets look like this:



Helen Mort



Raymond Antrobus



Franny Choi



Wayne Holloway-Smith



Tishani Doshi



Danez Smith



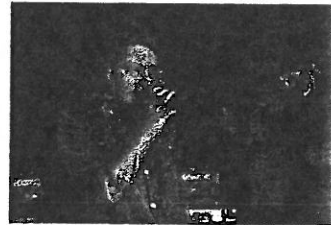
Kaveh Akbar



Emily Berry



Luke Wright



Kate Tempest

The function of poetry, now more than ever before, is to say the difficult thing, to express the difficult feeling, to reflect the culture and society we live in warts and all by exploring what it is to be a complex human being right here and right now in 2019. In these times of over-exposure to screens, toxins and politics, I urge you to expose your children to poetry. Watch these poets on YouTube, buy their books, read their poems alone and then aloud to one another, follow them on Twitter and Instagram, find out when and where they are reading, go to festivals to see them perform, let their work inhabit your families, and most of all encourage your children to express themselves freely and boldly using the best possible words in the best possible order.

Congratulations to everybody who participated in this year's competition, I am, once again, assured that the future of poetry (and indeed the planet) is in very safe hands.

Kaddy Benyon, April 2019  
Cambridge

LIGHTNING GIRL  
 Swiftly  
 the lightning  
 slenderly  
 bodied with  
 her arms  
 close to her body.  
 is speeding  
 towards you.  
 Her yellow  
 lace coat is  
 flapping in  
 the wind.

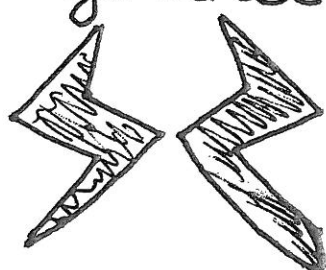


She is running and running,  
 searching and searching, hurding and  
 hunting. Her



arms stretched  
 out with her  
 fingertips touching  
 the clouds.

Searching,  
 searching,  
 found...



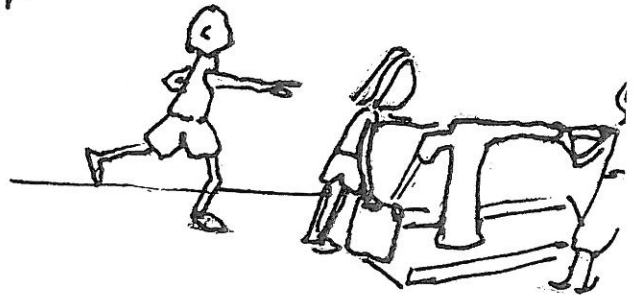


# The people of my village

The women in bright coloured clothes  
huddled by the fire  
cooking kiswa for their family  
they never seem to tire

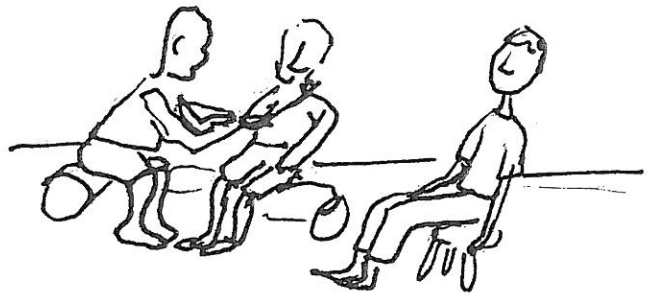


The children running wild  
cross the dusty space  
their laughter ringing through the air  
their smiles filling their face



The men whittling wood  
talking as they go

the humming of their chatter  
sharing what they know



And when night starts to fall  
they all gather round  
sharing what they made  
most seated on the ground

to their mud huts they go  
to their bed they lay  
dreaming of many things  
by after day.



Poem 2 Bethanie Agnes

71 MAD

# Midnight

(

ok.

With a single sweep of its icy black hand,  
like nothing you've seen before, the darkness  
overs everything.

Its cold sheet of blackness drapes over the  
earth, devouring and swallowing every last  
blink of light.

Nothing.

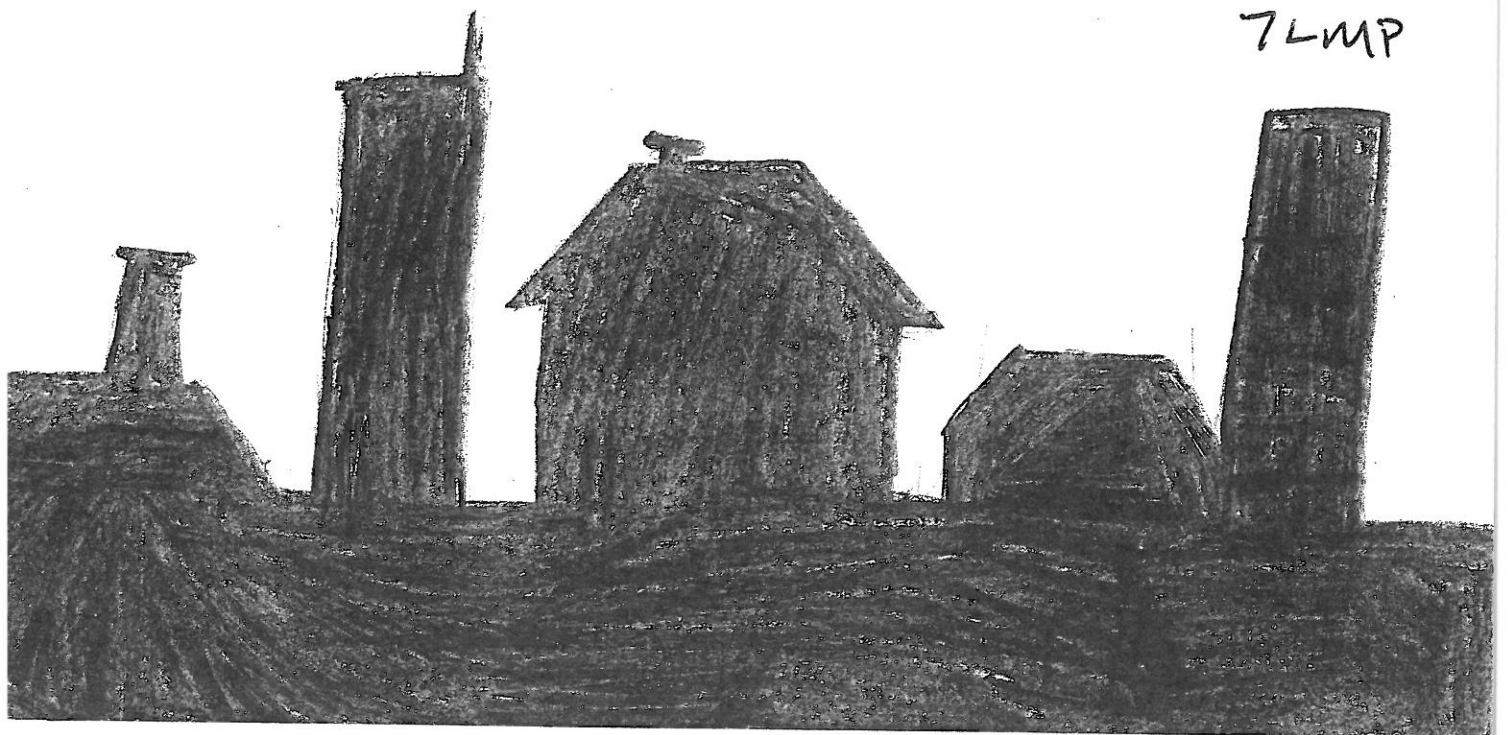
Can.

Escape.

Poem 3

Sophie Bickerstaff

7LMP



Poem 4 7AB

The Night

Madeleine

Munnally

The night tip-toed,  
He creped around the tower,  
Silently, no sound,  
He wiped his ash-black hand,  
Stealing the light away.

The night jumped,  
He played with the moon,  
Rolling it in his fingers,  
He through it in the air,  
And burst it into a million stars.

The night strolled,  
He ran his fingers through the stars,  
And hid ~~them~~ within them,  
He watched the animals,  
And engulfed them into the darkness.

The night ran,  
He ran from the sun,  
Wishing to still be able to roam around,  
He hid behind the moon,  
Waiting to ~~chase~~ chase the sun away.

A WEEK OF

# AUTUMN

weather

Poem 5 Louisa Howe

7RW

In Monday the trees all set alight,  
Leaves of red and orange all shining bright.

In Tuesday the wind whips against the  
roofs, whistling and wailing as it swiftly moves

On Wednesday the cold begins to  
creep in, hanging on to you like a guilty sin.

On Thursday the animals all enter their  
slumber, to hide from the cold rain and the  
thunder

On Friday the leaves began to fall  
the air turns crisp and fresh  
and cool.

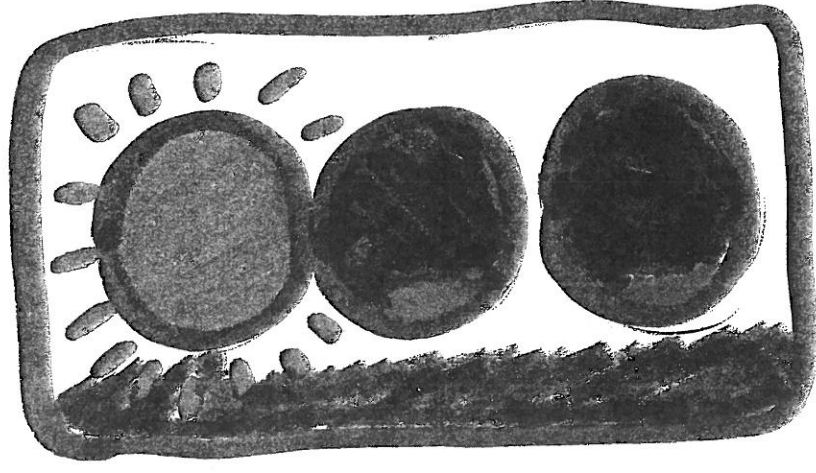
On Saturday the farmer harvests his crops,  
pumpkins and carrots, all of the lot

In Sunday the leaves are all left bare,

With a beep of a Horn,  
 And the screech of the wheels,  
 The car drivers yell,  
 While they're waiting in line.

The young children chatter,  
 Oh, how boring this is!  
 As the car horns are honking,  
 While they're waiting in line.

The engines start rustling,  
 And the cars start to move.  
 Here's a loud scream of joy,  
 After waiting in line.



Poem 7

Ingrid Willis  
7AHO

## A week of spring weather

On Monday sun shone on my face  
putting the wind out of place.

On Tuesday torrential rain fell down  
and drenched people all over town.

Wednesday was cold and grey,  
no one knew the time of day.

Thursday's gales were wet and cold  
the bathrooms covered in damp and mold.

Friday's grass glistening with dew  
reflected the sky of china blue.

Saturday's weather was crisp  
winds blew like willow the wisp.

On Sunday it was wind yet again  
soon it will be warm, but when?



## Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn

76P

Winter holds his icy grasp,  
His iron grip strong and firm,  
He freezes them all,  
But they know he will fall,  
Then there will be Spring again.

Spring brings her flowery aroma,  
Cool and soft and welcome,  
The newborn animals frolic and play,  
They will definitely enjoy this glorios day,  
Spring packs her bags and bids them farewell.

Summer bounds in happy and warm,  
His cheeky grin brightening the world,  
The children smile with the fun to be had,  
They are happy and rushing off to the yard  
and he smiles and bids them farewell and then he's away with the wind.

Autumn is red, gold, orange and brown,  
With leaves all over the floor,  
Everyone laughs there are pumpkins to carve,  
Then there is Halloween candy to have,  
But Autumn knows she must go.

Winter sighs and brings the snow,  
His tears freezing on the ground,  
No-one likes Winter,  
His heart starts to splinter,  
Until he sees them smile.

How To Read Someone's  
Mind...?!

Poem 9  
Gamin Han  
7LMP  
Rebecca  
John  
7LMP

The outside is a disguise

A mask to cover up

The unknown flaws

The scars of the claws

The Mind is the same

One's thoughts cannot be erased

They travel through the brain

Bad thoughts equal to pain

To read someone's mind

Requires powers and strengths

To search beneath the surface

Invisible on the face

There could be walls

There could be traps

For thoughts crawl deep

And they remain steep

(S the season friend or foe?

Unless I get up, I will not know  
Now spring is a sleeping bear

Slowly, slowly drifting into a dream  
without a care...

By

Sumin Han and Rebekah John

Poem 10 Hannah  
White  
and Kalina  
Mikolajczuk

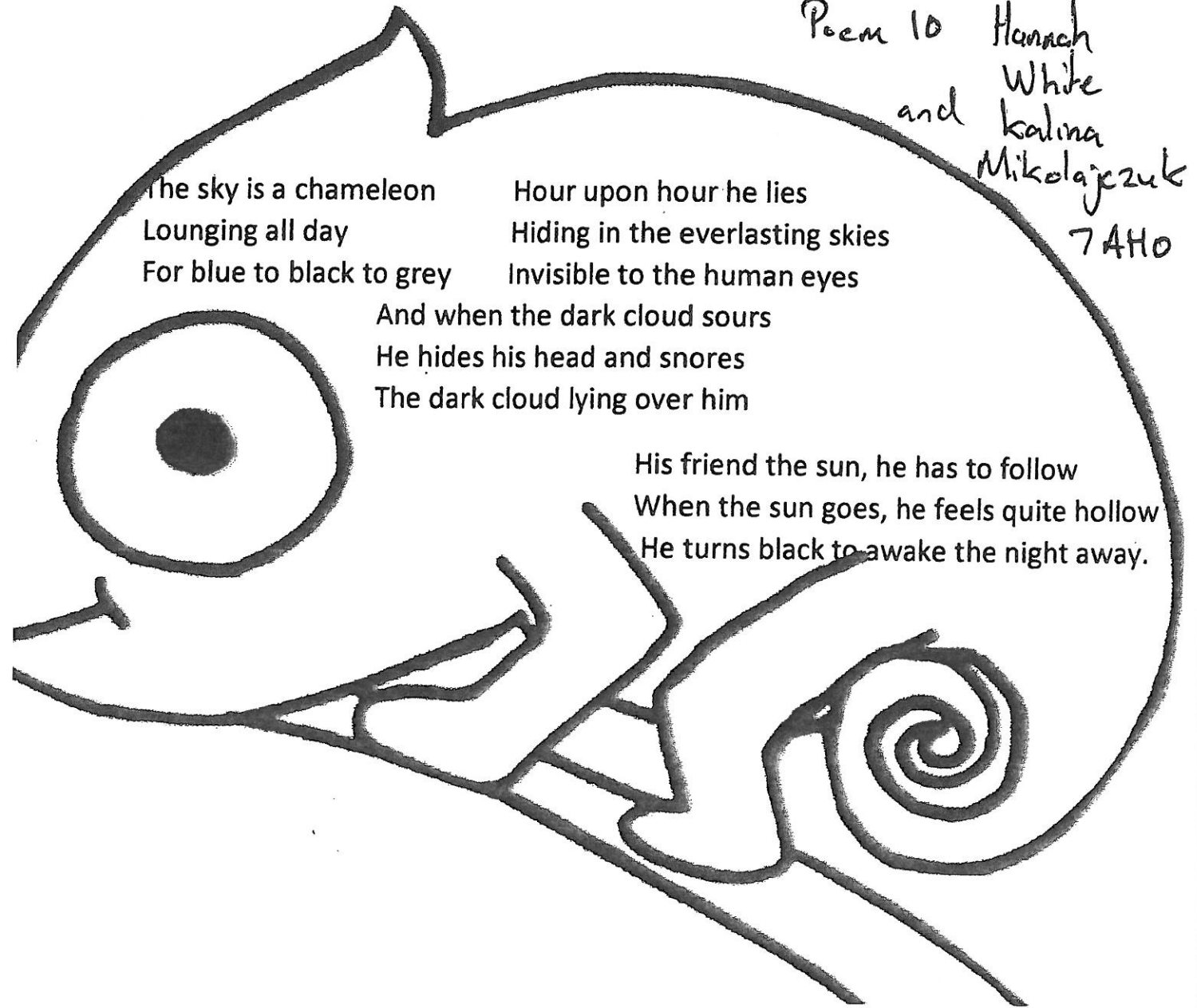
7410

The sky is a chameleon  
Lounging all day  
For blue to black to grey

Hour upon hour he lies  
Hiding in the everlasting skies  
Invisible to the human eyes

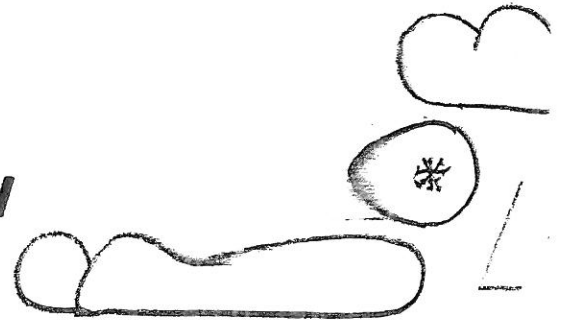
And when the dark cloud sours  
He hides his head and snores  
The dark cloud lying over him

His friend the sun, he has to follow  
When the sun goes, he feels quite hollow  
He turns black to awake the night away.

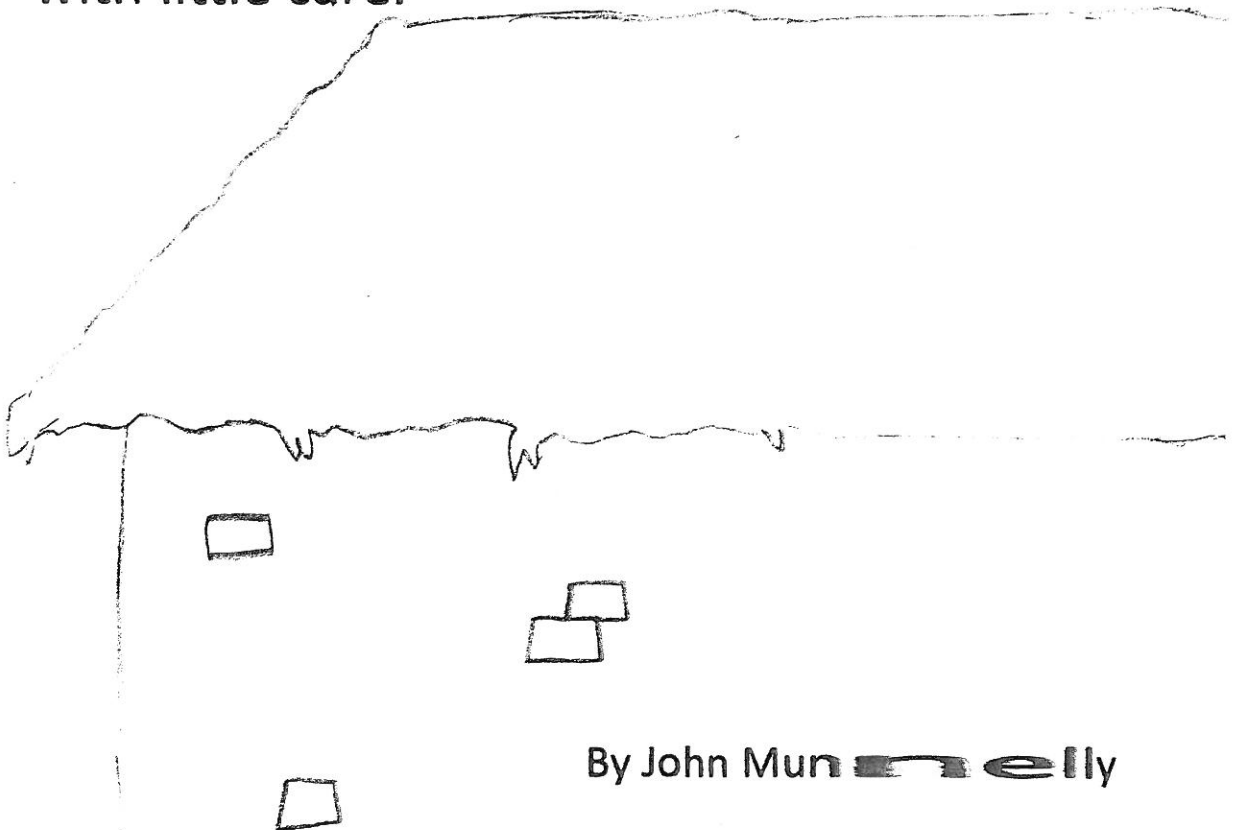


Poem 11  
John Munnally  
76P

## Wanted: The Snow



He arrives in the night  
when the street is still  
He dances on the rooftops  
and somersaults round my school  
His freezing cold fingers  
spread across my garden  
Settling on the swings  
and whispering through the bushes  
Children love his icy hair  
slipping, sliding  
with little care.



By John Munnally

# A WEEK OF SPRING WEATHER



In Monday a gale was brought to life  
it sliced through the air like a knife.

Tuesday's storm brought sorrow and regret;  
a blast of tragedy, an action of threat.

On Wednesday bursts of rain and wind;  
drops of water left a print.

Thursday snarled ghastly and vile  
but sunbeams fell and warmed my smile.

Friday's gloom that darkened your mood  
was bad enough to make me feel rude.

Saturday's wind caught in the clouds;  
Rain drenched all the busy crowds.

Easter was Sunday and  
chocolate smelt like heaven in my  
hands.

Poem 12

Sumin Han

7LMP



# How to read a friend

Don't judge it.

Read every word before deciding to like it or not.

Make sure to look at every detail.

Read the blurb first;

do not skip straight to the end.

Judge the title to decide whether

you are interested.

Every word has a meaning,

think about them carefully.

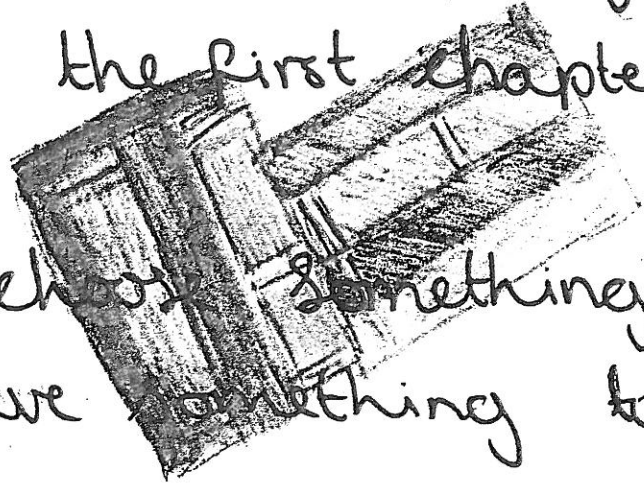
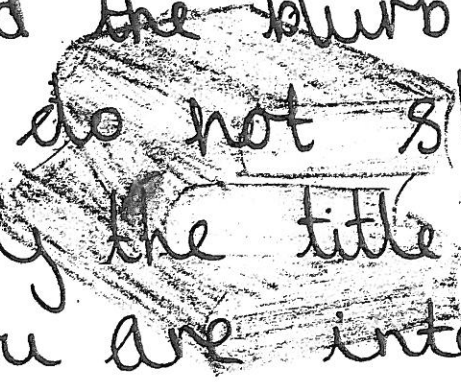
If you like the first chapter,

read on,

if you can choose something else.

Then you'll have something to treasure,

to read again and again and again.



# Bunnies

Poem 14

Lucy Humphreys

7AHO

love bunnies because

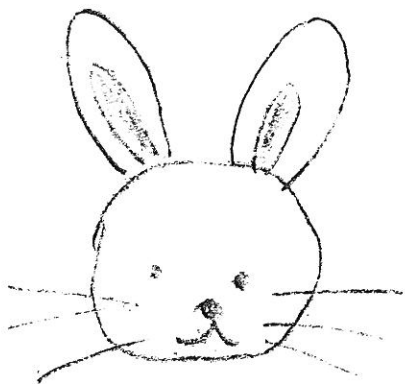
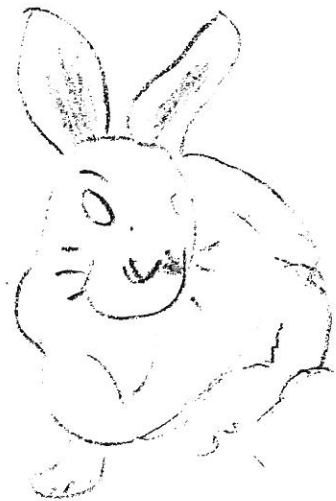
they are as fluffy as a thick furry blanket, that keeps you warm.

They hop around the garden like a cute puppy chasing a ball.

They have a mini pink nose and delicate thin whiskers.

Their tail is a great big ball of candy floss, it is so soft, light and fluffy.

And their eyes are shiny, big, black bones that shimmer in the sunlight.



Poem 15

Sofia Slocombe

7440

# Wind

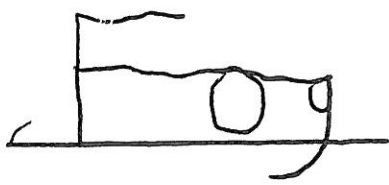
The wind is a girl calling  
your name. you turn  
around : NO ONES there.

The wind is a thief tapping  
you on the shoulder. you turn  
around : NO ONES there.

The wind is a ghost  
screaming for help. you  
turn around : NO ONES there.

The wind is your mind going  
crazy with sounds and thought-  
ITS : you turn around : NO  
ONES there.





Poem 16

James Hill

TKFL

Slowly, he emerges from his cave,  
He creeps silently along, into the city,  
his shadowy cloak billowing out behind him.

He sneaks past sleeping guard dogs

And creeps past people's doors.

He stands darkly in the city centre,  
emotionlessly watching the horizon,  
waiting for his enemy.

Brightly,

his enemy rises from his sleep and  
shines across the sky.

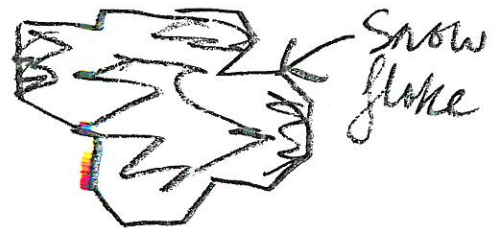
Mischievously, his enemy casts his fiery  
whip at him.

He hisses in pain and retreats to his  
dark, gloomy cave,  
waiting, waiting,

for the next moment he can sneak out,  
and creep back to the city once more.

Poem 17

# Snow Girl



One chill day, I peer out,  
Nothing to do, within or without;  
I see a girl, dull and drear,  
Yet looks bright and full of cheer.

She has pale skin, and pale cheeks,  
She has not eaten for many weeks;  
Wispny hair, white as paper,  
and I marvel at her maker:  
Who could make such tiny hands,  
Who, who, in all the lands?

Swiftly, she glides on soft white wings,  
Hurrying off to do other things;  
I gaze in wonder at the nook  
where she stayed, 'fore off she took.

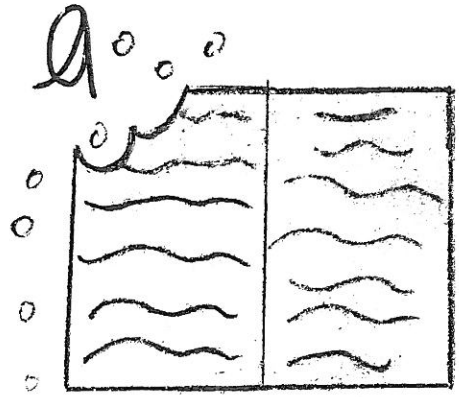
by Abigail Bruins FRW

Poem 18

Jamella Valdez  
7KFL

How to eat a

BO  
OK



Crack the

S  
P  
I  
N  
E

and rip its bones,  
no matter what you do,  
it can't stop you.

Each chapter is its soul,  
each word is its blood,  
the front is the heart,  
the back is the lung.



Break through the pages:

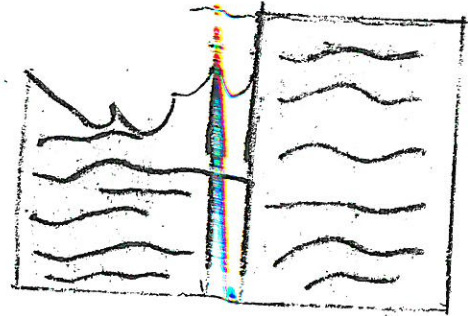
R \ P

Scrunch

te ar

don't be afraid,

enjoy this moment.



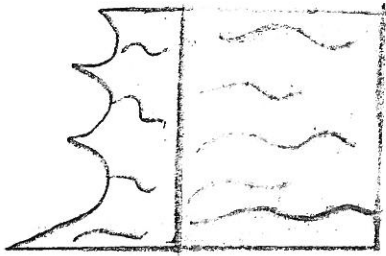
Once you have bitten through,

it will start to

bleed

just wipe it cleanly  
with your tee.

Keep on munching,  
enjoy this time,  
because once it has ended,  
nothing will ever be this  
DIVINE.



# My Solitary days

As I lay down in a field,  
 on the warmest summer day,  
 I hear my soul laying next  
 to me.

In the coldest winter night, I sit  
 besides the fire, and find my  
 soul sitting next to me.

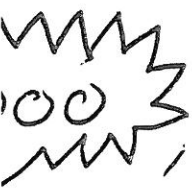
Now you're gone, I no longer lay  
 down on a field on a summer day  
 or sit by the fire on a winter  
 night, without you I'm like a  
 lost sailor in a wild wide sea

Shall wait by doorstep of  
 thy heart until you return

# A Poem About Poems

Poems are unbelievably hard,  
Harder than dropping a thin sheet of glass  
without it shattering into a shard.  
To make a poem rhyme,  
You could be sat there for a very long time

A few little lines of alliteration,  
can cause confusion & hesitation.  
Although alliteration sounds fun,  
so much of it can make you feel a little bit  
umb

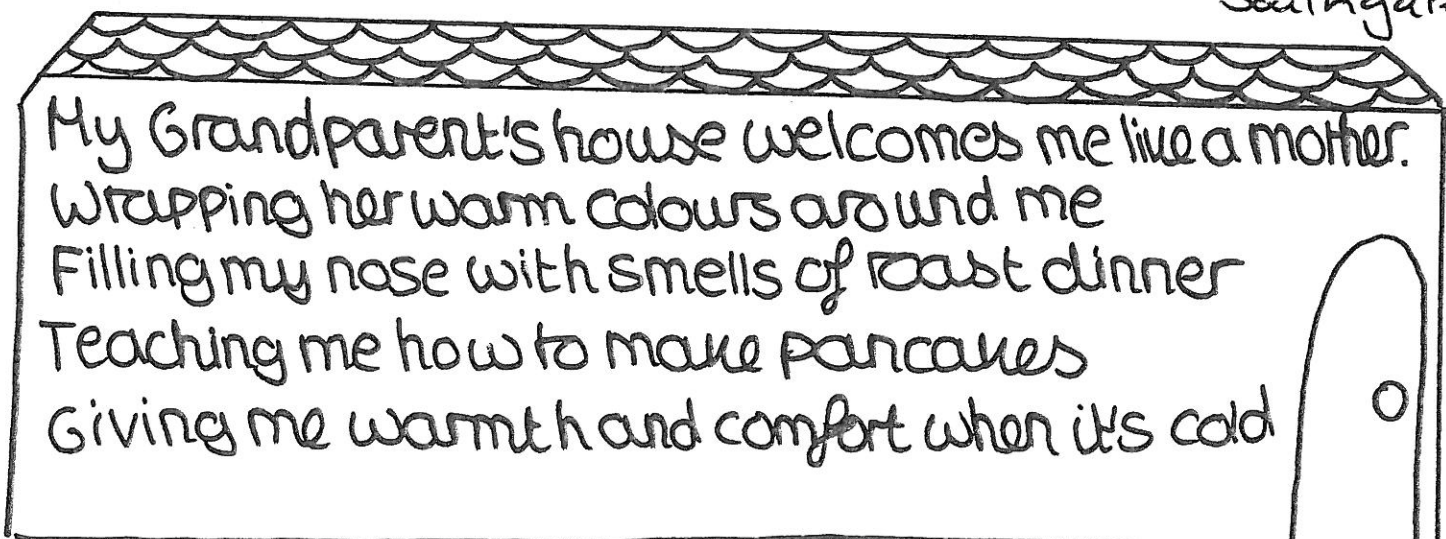

 sorry I'm a bit immature, I'm  
onomatopia,  
I'm positive I scared ya **AArrgh**, being  
chased, see ya.

Don't worry I'm personification I'll take  
over,  
I can make many objects sound like even  
a very intelligent sir.

# Norfolk


Poem 21 76P

Charlotte  
Southgate

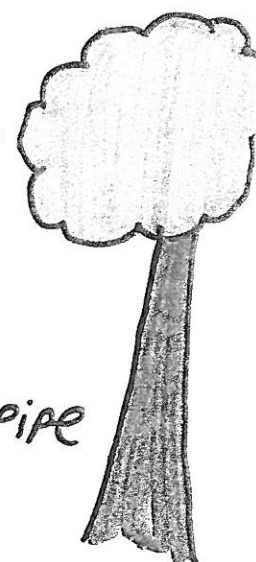


My Grandparent's house welcomes me like a mother.  
Wrapping her warm colours around me  
Filling my nose with smells of roast dinner  
Teaching me how to make pancakes  
Giving me warmth and comfort when it's cold

\* THE Christmases we had were perfect, \*  
the fire burning, Christmas trees sparkling, \*  
Roast turkey scenting the air, \*  
\* handing out presents as a family \*  
Having the most wonderful time \*



My Grandad's Garden is a fairytale  
The flowers singing and dancing everywhere  
While me and my family sit in peace  
Warm hot Summers playing with the hosepipe  
Loving and magical holidays



When we go to the seaside it welcomes me like  
an excited child, splashing its playful fingers on me.  
Going for walks along the pier its nice and calm however  
when eating fish and chips its hungry



# THE GREAT UNKNOWN

Fog, is the great unknown  
Eerie, gloomy

All you can hear is the whistling drone,  
Of the biting wind.

Fog, she is vain  
Self-loving, mysterious  
All she wants to gain,  
Is making sure all you ~~can~~ see is her.

Fog, she is sad  
depressed, woeful  
which makes her mad  
with misery.

Fog, she is enigmatic  
creepy, unnerving  
she doesn't need,  
an identity  
she is fog.



Poem 22  
Aidan Lee 76P



Poem 23

Harry Grove  
TAB.

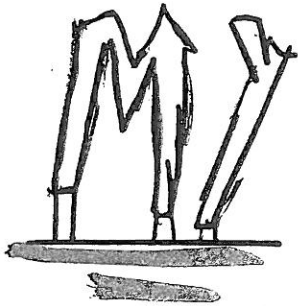
My brother

My brother is a rock  
in the middle of a stormy sea  
a haven or a hand hold  
a safe place for me

At other times the rock is slippery  
no firm grip to hold or wait  
taunting teasing annoying me  
dropping a line watching me take the bait

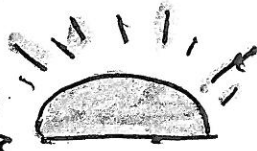
He can also be a firm rock in a calm sea  
Thomas and I we need no other  
than a bat, a ball, and a fine day  
just me and my brother

Poem 24  
Edward  
Lent  
7LMP



Special  
place

A calm summer's evening,  
I look up to the stars,  
wondering.



A rainy noon in spring  
But nevertheless protected,  
wondering.



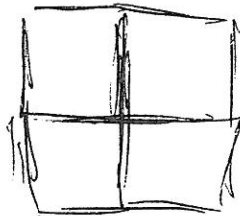
A chill, clear night,  
Lying on my back,  
wondering.



And one day my wondering  
gets too far,  
as my  
special place

is  
gone.

When I look out my window  
and see it lying  
dead on the  
ground



Poem 25

Mirella  
Smutek

TKFL

The Holiday Tree in Poland – Mirella Smutek

When I'm hopeful and cheerful

I race along with my friend

To our good time place.

Then I bounce off my feet and grasp

To the tree.

These jokes and pranks and laughs are never to beat.

When I'm down and I frown.

I melancholy walk down the street with my gloomy feet.

Up on the tree, pick the best beam

Through all the leaves my eyes peek

Up to the sky watching birds fly

And then I smile

When I'm in a rage and temper

I run to my tree and climb to the top

Lean by the trunk and stare at the leaves.

I close my eyes and listen to the wind.

It's a hot summer day

Taking all my worries away

While I jump around the branches

I look for my friends.

I rattle the leaves and swing off the tree.

Above the scene below

There's me

Finally feeling free.

St. Bede's Poetry Competition - 2019

NAME	FORM	POEM/TITLE	COMMENT	PLACE
1 Amelie Austin	7AHO	Lightning Girl	This is a great example of a concrete poem that makes good use of its two longer lines just at the point where the shape of the poem expands, only to reduce again into a fine ending.	
2 Bethanie Agnes	7LMP	The People of My Village	A beautifully visual and atmospheric poem that has a great sense of rhythm at work alongside the village routine of the days it is describing. I also loved the illustrations!	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place
3 Sophie Bickerstaff	7LMP	Midnight	A short, sharp poem that uses both concision and precision of language to great effect. I like the varied line lengths and the single-word lines that open and close the poem.	
4 Madeleine Munnelly	7AB	The Night	This is a gorgeous poem that personifies night to great effect. There is lots of wonderful imagery to enjoy in this poem, in particular night rolling the moon in his fingers.	
5 Louisa Howe	7RW	A Week of Autumn Weather	This is a lovely poem that uses the frame of a week as its structure. The poet also uses rhyme well – it never feels too heavy. I loved the way this poem was presented and illustrated.	
6 Lillian Brown	7LMP	Rush Hour	Ha! This poem really made me laugh after getting stuck in traffic for half an hour on Mill Road today. There's a lot of playful energy in this poem.	
7 Ingrid Villis	7AHO	A Week of Spring Weather	A lovely poem about the beginning of spring with some standout lines: 'the sky of china blue' & 'winds blew like willow the wisp'. The rhyme slips slightly at the end, but it doesn't matter.	

AB  
TE ✓

St. Bede's Poetry Competition - 2019

8	Anneliese Rosenstiel	7GP	Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn	This is a poem that made me think of Edward Thomas' poem 'Spring' as well as the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale <i>The Snow Queen</i> . I wonder if it would be stronger if shorter?	
9	Sumin Han & Rebekah John	7LMP	How to Read Someone's Mind	What a great collaborative poem. I know how hard it is to write as part of a pair, so well done to Sumin and Rebekah. You could cut everything after 'steep' and still have a cracking poem.	
10	Hannah White & Kalina Mikolajczuk	7AR	The Sky is a Chameleon...	I found the presentation of this poem charming. I like the way the sky and the chameleon make a metaphor. I particularly liked the line about the chameleon snoring!	
11	John Munnelly	7GP	Wanted: The Snow	A vivid and atmospheric poem with great use of imagery, especially in the line: 'he somersaults around my school'. I also loved the description of snow 'whispering through the bushes.'	
12	Sumin Han	7LMP	A Week of Spring Weather	This is an adventurous poem which manages to avoid cliché at every turn. There are many startling and bold word choices. I particularly liked how the weather made the poet feel rude!	

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13	Lucy Humphreys	7AHO	How to Read a Friend	I loved this poem as it captures exactly how I feel about books and reading. There is a fluidity to it that works alongside good word choices to create a friendly atmosphere for the reader.	
14	Lucy Humphreys	7AHO	Bunnies	Another charming poem with some wonderful descriptions: 'a mini pink nose', 'a great big ball of candy floss', 'eyes are shiny, big, black stones that shimmer in the sunlight'. Just gorgeous.	
15	Sofia Slocombe	AR	Wind	Wow! I was quite literally (and excuse the pun) blown away by this poem. It sticks to its own scheme throughout and sustains a brilliantly unsettling atmosphere until the end.	
16	James Hill	7KFL	Fog	A stunning poem that personifies Fog and creates a dense and sinister atmosphere through layers of language. This poem is proof that poets are allowed to make up words!	
17	Abigail Bruins	7RW	Snow Girl	This is an incredibly accomplished poem that makes me think of a book called The Snow Child by Eowyn Ivey. The way the poet uses the word 'chill' in the first line is perfectly judged.	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place
18	Jamella Valdez	7KFL	How to Eat a Book	Oh my! What a delicious and witty poem. Such a good example of content and form coming together to create something exceptional. I can feel the pleasure the poet had in writing it!	1 <sup>st</sup> Place
19	Marcos Rodriguez-Montono	7LMP	My Solitary Days	Wonderful, wonderful poetry – this poem made me cry. It is evocative, atmospheric, mournful and vulnerable all at once – several of the ingredients essential for the very best poetry.	5 <sup>th</sup> Place

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20	Jacopo Cannizzo	7GP	A Poem About Poems	Ha! This poem did make me laugh and it is a valiant attempt to address many perceived difficulties in poetry. There is definitely room for more playful poetry (e.g. Jack Underwood).	
21	Charlotte Southgate	7GP	Norfolk	This is a gorgeous poem that resonated with me strongly as I too have spent many holidays in Norfolk. Although I like it as a poem, I think it could be expanded into a wonderful short story.	
22	Aidan Lee	7GP	The Great Unknown	This is a beautifully illustrated poem that personifies fog in several different ways. I found this a very interesting poem and it was rewarding to re-read also.	
23	Harry Grove	7AB	My Brother	I love this poem. It is simple but incredibly authentic and affecting. The metaphor is sustained for as long as it is needed. Thomas is very lucky to have this poet as his brother.	4 <sup>th</sup> Place
24	Edward lent	7LMP	My Special Place	This is a lovely poem which feels both gentle and melancholy as it addresses the importance of connection to a certain place, and then the loss of that place.	
25	Mirella Smutek	7KFL	The Holiday Tree in Poland	I really enjoyed this poem which has such a strong sense of place. I like the way the poet describes several different moods that make the tree an appealing place to retreat to.	