



**Hastings-on-Hudson Public Schools**

27 Farragut Avenue

Hastings-on-Hudson, New York 10706



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**HASTINGS POETRY CHALLENGE**

*in honor of*

**NATIONAL POETRY MONTH**

**APRIL 2022**

**Presented by**

**Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Bill McKersie**

*(see 4.1.22 Weekly Community Update Letter)*

**A Compendium of Submissions follows...**



## **Ode to my pencil**

By Katie Mooney (*5<sup>th</sup> Grade*)

I found you,  
In the staples down the street,  
tucked away, hiding with packages,  
binders, pens, erasers.

This branch  
from the forest edge,  
lead jabbed in,  
now in a box of life.

A tree in a package,  
stapler, marker, tape  
surrounding,  
you only.

Were part of a tree,  
alive.

lived through winter,  
spring,  
fall,  
summer.

Only you lived through  
the worst of storms,  
just to write someone else's words.

Yet one day,  
be lost  
or thrown out,  
like all of you are.

Only you created  
stories, poems.  
others became furniture,  
homes,  
wooden planks.

Dashing rain,  
gliding wind,  
you survived,  
just to do this.

In my hand,  
leader of a forest,  
towered over flowers,  
And grass.

Only you were stuffed with lead,  
eraser glued on,  
Sprouted life,  
as green  
leaves,  
Now sprouting  
words instead.

# Soccer

By Kai Ghalib (6<sup>th</sup> Grade)

The whistle blows

*Tweeeeeeet!*

Game on

I get the ball

But I don't stall

I dribble right through

Them all

Then right as I'm about to shoot

I get kicked by someones boot

I trip

I F

A

L

L

Foul's the call

I stand back up

Shoulders high

Head tall

It's time for me to take the kick

I'm known for these

They're always slick

I take a few steps back

And then **attack**

Sprinting *hard*

As if it's track

Then pound the ball

With a whack

In terms of curve

I didn't lack

The ball's going wide  
But there's the spin  
It takes the ball  
Directly in  
Top right corner  
Short side  
It went from wide to right inside  
GOAL

# My Place in the Universe

By Jason Kass (*6<sup>th</sup> Grade; written 9.20.21*)

I am from planet Earth. A tiny speck of dust in this vast universe.

I am from New York. A small piece of plastic in the landfill that is our earth.

I am from thousands of particles of methane and gas, poisoning our atmosphere, creating global warming like sand falling through our hands.

From novas and supernovas, engulfing planets in their energy like waves engulf beaches.

From the depths of a black hole, where not even light can escape.

From the births of stars, where magic is turned into reality.

And from the small compressed point in a black void, where the universe was set free 13 billion years ago.

# History

By Ari Klugerman (*6<sup>th</sup> Grade*)

History lies upon a broken shelf, in an old room called an "Attic".

History sits patiently waiting for someone to come and see it, to read it, and see the wonders that it hides. But this history is not to whine about, it is different, it is poetry.

Raven, by Edgar Allan Poe lies on a shelf, untouched.

October Paint, by Carl Sandburg lies on that same shelf, undusted for ten years.

History, Poetry, begging to be read, to be held in someone's hands, begging to inspire.

History, Poetry holding secrets and answers in its hands, waiting for them to be taken, for them to be known. It longs for it to be seen, to be heard, it's calling out, crying, like a small hurt child. But this child has power. The power to tell, and to inspire.

History, Poetry calls out to you.

# **(Untitled)**

By Ella Tadmor (*6<sup>th</sup> Grade*)

Heights we have never reached before are introduced when we allow for hope to settle upon us

Like a ray of sunlight, it warms our hearts

Like a river of love, it washes over us

The hope in our minds, our hearts, our souls give us peace and love



# Borinquen, Island of Enchantment

Elegy poem by Kaylee Arau (*written when in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade*)

Elegy poem by Kaylee Arau

## **Borinquen, Island of Enchantment**

The sounds of the waves crashing and the smell of the sea have ceased,  
The turquoise waters and the feel of sand between my toes is gone,  
Slender, swaying palm trees and El Yunque waterfalls disappeared,  
All this is but a distant memory, so are the quaint streets of Old San Juan.

My entire life was the island, all 100x35 miles of it,  
I cried for the sun that stayed year-round,  
And for the friends I left behind,  
Will I ever hear the wonderful coqui sound?

Above all, the friendly faces greeting a warm "Buenas!",  
Diverse and beautiful each in their own way,  
Their history rich with pain, but all so resilient,  
This little island will steal your heart away.

The memories of paradise will have to do for now,  
Some songs I hear bring me back there,  
The experience of a lifetime is irreplaceable,  
I would not trade it for anything elsewhere.

## FACULTY & STAFF . . .

### Ever Curious – Our Joy

By Dr. Bill McKersie

A mystery reader – at the classroom door  
Appreciative smiles from teachers  
Quizzical looks from students  
Oh, right, we see you at drop-off  
A Superintendent and a doctor?  
Manage buildings?  
Fix my leg?  
A book beckons  
Eyes on the cover I shield  
I want the surprise.

We start  
The book is shown  
Arms shoot up in recognition – real or not  
Title and cover drawing studied  
A first “turn & talk” – What will happen?  
Loud chatter, ideas flying  
We return and share.

The reading begins  
Eyes focused as one  
Funny voices attempted  
Smiles appear (thankfully)  
Energy of many is joined  
On the words  
On the pictures.

At the cusp of a plot change  
A second “turn & talk” – What happens next?  
Pairs form fast  
More loud chatter, more ideas flying  
We return and share.

The book ends  
A final “turn & talk” – What two pages would you add?  
We return and share  
Ideas boundless  
Creativity soars  
Tidbits expand  
Big themes reappear  
No wrong answers.

Walking out, I carry  
Their Creativity  
Their Smiles  
Their Laughter  
Their Insights  
Their Curiosity  
Our Joy.