

CrossCurrents

Spring 2026





Iker Grijalba-Hernandez

Pg1

Poppy Flowers

By Rae Groth

**On a gloomy day you light up the fields
with your dashing red color.**

**You stand tall beneath the quiet sky
as if you know how glamorous you are,
unbothered by the dull grey around you.**

**Your petals shimmer like silk in the sunlight,
soft yet bold
turning an ordinary field
into stunning art.**

**You are a radiant flame,
a symbol of beauty and confidence
burning brightly without fear.**

**Bloom,
Bloom,
Bloom**

**You prove that elegance and color
can transform even the bleakest of days**

**O poppy,
Your beauty does not ask for attention
It simply exists,
Bold, radiant, and unforgettable.**

**Your beauty lives beyond the
Bloom.**

The Biggest YouTuber and his Chocolate

By Logan Farr

Feastables

Chocolate, tastes creamy

Favorite flavors

**Milk chocolate peanut butter, cookies
and cream**

From Seven Eleven

Least favorite flavors

Almond, milk crunch, sea salt

Made by Mr Beast, the best youtuber.

Favorite video: the tag game on a

Nascar stadium.

at Bristol stadium

Which also had a baseball event

Favorite baseball team LA Dodgers

Ode to Cherry Coke

By Morgan Bitterolf

Cherry Coke, my cold afternoon refresher

The hot summer essential

**Who knew that you could constitute something
so meaningful?**

**The flavor is so nostalgic, like something from
your childhood that is old, or a story that you
remembered being told**

**Grab one from a vending machine and you'll
notice how much of an upgrade it is from the
original.**

**Crack the can open, and the bubbles will make a
POP!**

**If only you had my perspective, you could think
that the world gets more colorful once you have
some of your drink.**

Ode to a Poem

By Koa Entsminger

In school I was told
To type a story about something I hold dear,
This was a very hard task and I was frantic to finish

I was drawing a blank until something crossed my mind
A glamorous idea to put on a document
To save my grade from going six feet under

The words appearing on the page like magic
From the click clack of the keyboard
The words popping out from my mind
Like popcorn.

I was told to go “line by line”
And “there was no need to rhyme”
However this poem is amazing
And this poem is mine

From the desktop
To the browser
To the website
To the page
This is where the magic happens

My fingers were moving
Like swimmers through water
The rhythm of the keys
Could be a hit song

With the last taps on the computer
And the last words typed
I finished my assignment
With time to spare

And this is the story
Of how I completed
My poem of choice
With the limit exceeded

Ode to the Classroom Clock

By Alaina Perez

**O classroom clock you watch us all day long
Tick-tock, tick-tock your sound is strong
You move like a runner in a race
Always moving, never in one place
You are a boss of time, strict and true
Telling us what we have to do
You go so fast it feels faster than lightning
But slow during tests it's so frightening
Your ticking taps the walls and floor
Click-clack sounds we can't ignore
The noise spreads through the room
Boom, tick, boom ending soon
The day starts here and ends with you
Morning bell to afternoon
You tick in the middle of class right on time
Keeping us moving line by line
You teach discipline, focus, and structure
A symbol of school culture
O clock, you help us learn and grow
Even when we wish time would go slow**



Simona Ciproso

Pg7

Ode to The River

By Emma Sethi

Just a stream, a mere trickle
Or a rushing, cascading waterfall.

Brilliant bright blue water,
shimmers in the bright sunlight.

Her shores a beauty to the naive,
yet those who know, see the devious
depths.

A dreamland of memories,
captured in the deep.

Divided of light, the water's deep
depths hide,
secrets.

A legend of lore,
she has seen many a lives,
in a never ending lifetime,

She wishes to be free.

So many have seen her,
yet none know who she longs to be.
Through thick and thin she brings life.

For those who wish to see,
she shows them,

who they used to be,

some are Shadows, following their past
with longing,

some are Echos, a faded shell of their
past,

and some are stars, burning brighter
than before, but fading all the faster.

Deep violet, light sea green, sky blue, all
colours of her water.

Many can say they've seen,
but few can see the truth,

for it is deep,

deep under her glimmering surface,
where the secrets lie.

Ode to Goggles

By Charlie Rosenfeld

Goggles help me see

They help guide me in the water

They enhance my perception of the chlorinated pool

They assert their single purpose effectively

Click! They suction to my face like a starfish to a rock

As I swim through the water they are aloof resting on my head

They seem as if to enhance my ability to glide in the water.

They increase my speed and visibility

They are only there to help

When they are on they never fail

When they are off the pool looks empty

Like an ocean with no fish

Like a classroom with no kids

There is nothing in the pool without goggles

They bring vision to the pool.

They remove the blindness and franticness.

They serve their one purpose

And always help.

Stars

By Hailey Nosh

Night lowers itself
like a silk screen
over the shoulders of the Earth.
The sky is not empty
it is holding its breath.
Stars arrive without sound,
not falling,
not rising,
simply remembering where to be.

Each star a pinprick
through the dark robes of the heavens,
each one insisting
distance is a kind of tenderness.

I think of the ways where
the dead learned how to shine,
how fire learned patience.

Some stars burn with vindictiveness,
others burn apathetically,
light does not promise kindness,
only persistence.

The stars do not answer prayers,
the stars do not forgive,
The stars only continue,
which feels like mercy.

The sky before language,
before we reached up
and demanded meaning,
was just fire scattered
with deliberate care.
A map no one asked for,
but everyone follows

When a star dies,
its light keeps traveling.
Proof that endings can be delayed
without being declined.

Above me,
the stars remain unclaimed,
ancient
accurate,
and endlessly patient.
The stars watch us learn how to look back in time.

Sea Shanty

by Harrison McGee

I remember that day and night like it was last week, even over two decades later. The breeze was blowing softly, and the temperature was perfect. The lake water was cool, perfect for the fish we were trying to catch. By ‘we’, I mean myself, about to turn 7 years old, and my dad. I was having the time of my life, sitting at the bow of the boat as my father cruised around, looking for a spot where all of the bass would be hiding. Soon, we found a sunken, dead tree, the branches looking like scraggly fingers about to pull me down into the blue water. In my eyes, I swear I saw some red, staring eyes glaring from underneath the water. Slowly but surely, my heart started to pound.

“Now, you see here, Jesse, them stripers like to hide in these underwater branches. Bass like to hide in the sunken trees. And there are plenty of trees at Lincoln Lake,” he said, looking at me. I nodded, glancing down into the water again, somewhat uncertainly. My dad cut the engine of the boat, and grabbed fishing rods. He got a piece of bait, which was a chunk of bread we had for dinner last night. He cast the rod into the water, and I waited patiently for that one perfect fish to bite the bait.

Lo and behold, about five minutes in, the rod started to creak. I got up and looked at the rod, my eyes wide. A fish was biting the loaf! My father fought the fish for about two minutes, the rod bending and weaving as the bass frantically swam under the water. Then, and I’ll never forget this part, he gave the rod to young me. I was thrilled, and started to reel the rod. With my dad’s help, we raised the exhausted marine creature out of the water and into the air.

And what a creature it was! The fish was a striper, although anyone not native to the East Coast or the Midwest (Arkansas in my case) would call them a Striped Bass. It was probably about 10 pounds, and was shimmering pale white, with dark gray stripes running down its back and side. It was powerful and majestic. I was in amazement. Who knew that animals like this lived in the lake!? I had only ever seen tiny fish here, like occasional minnows that live by the dock, or a bluegill racing under the surface, so I was blown away.

My father cut the hook out of its mouth, and it fell to the deck of the boat, flopping. I saw that it couldn't breathe, and tried to help it. "Ok, Daddy, let's put the fishie back now," I said, futilely trying to lift it into the water. My father, he just shook his head.

"We're going to have this fish for dinner, ok? I'm sure it will be very yummy!" Well, as you can see, I was confused, and didn't understand. Couldn't he tell that this amazing animal was hurting. I started to whimper.

"Put it back, Daddy, please! It's dying! It's dying! Look, it's bleeding!" I wailed, starting to cry, as I pointed to the fish's gills, which had started to leak blood, spilling onto the deck. Suddenly, the day had turned from pleasant and happy to scary and melancholy. My dad, well, he did nothing. The fish tried to breathe, but couldn't. It was bleeding all over, and its eyes were staring at me. And there was one simple word that could describe that look. Why? The fish was silently screaming 'Why?'. The silence, however, was louder than any words could have been uttered.

I wept even louder, and ran to the back of the boat, hiding.

Understand that only years later had my father told me that after I had run away, he had put the fish in a cooler, but not until he had hit the fish on its head, to put it out of its misery. A small act of pity. Of grief, even. I, of course, did not know this. I doubt it would have made me feel better, but who knows?

I pushed my plate of fishsticks and peas away that night, even as my parents and all my siblings ate until they were full and happy. It looked pretty appetizing, and I do love peas, but, well, it was made out of fish.

The fish.

That night, as I drifted into sleep, I had a dream, fantastical and mystical. I was floating in an endless black space. I looked to my left, and there was the last thing I wanted to see. The fish, which was transparent, and pale. A ghost. It was flopping, whispering, "Help." The sound echoed, and seemed to reverberate when it said this. I began to panic, and flailed my limbs, trying to paddle towards it. Alas, every single time I tried to grab it, to save it, it would drift away. Every time.

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Suddenly, a white hole ripped open in the middle of the black void, and the fish started to drift near it, being pulled. With a sick feeling in my gut, I knew that if it floated through, I would never see this poor, forgotten being ever again. As I tried to stop it, it just floated through the vortex, and disappeared. I dived after it, and was slowly sucked into the portal, too. I tried to escape this fate, but I couldn't. I felt myself, well, glitching, as the world around me flashed black and gray, and I felt myself falling. The fish was nowhere to be seen. I had failed. I had failed myself and the fish.

A second later, I was back in my room. I snapped up, and looked around me. I started to cry. I just sobbed, even louder than the day before. I thought of the fish, and the nightmare. However, after I was done crying and sniffing, I felt... better. Well, I just don't know how to describe it, but I felt, I felt more calm, and peaceful, too. That fish... it had given its life to feed us. It had taken care of us. And in some way, that fish was now a part of me, both literally and figuratively. I fell asleep again, content, and no ghouls haunted me again.

That morning, when I woke up, my father apologized to me about the fishing experience. "I didn't realize that you would take it so seriously and hard," he said, bending down close to my face, his in a melancholy frown, the one you get when you realize your Great-Aunt Dorothy just passed away.

"That's ok, Daddy, I feel better now," I replied, and frolicked off joyfully, leaving my father extremely confused. And so, on that morning, 21 and about a half of a year ago, for breakfast, we had leftover fishsticks. And boy, were those fishsticks delicious.

Ode To Steak

By Finn Callen

**Oh Steak with your mass and your
moisture red and greasy with split
grain**

**Oh Steak sizzling in the pan
liquid bubbles from the heat the
sound of teeth tearing into your tender
exterior**

**Oh Steak give me that savory
satisfaction that pure happiness happy
as a croc when it finds its prey
Oh Steak how you assert your effect on
the world**

**Oh Steak remember the first Colorado
Denver, 2023: you cooking on the grill
with my grandpa overseeing your
perfection**

**Oh Steak my dearest friend what hell
would earth be without you what
torture**

Oh Steak

Ode to Music

By Bethany Mitrovith-Garcia

**Music notes fill the entire room
Different rhythm and beats fill your head
Prepares you for what's next
Even when the day is gloomy
The music syncs to your story
Even when all you feel is frantic
Music heals all.**

**Doesn't matter the day
You'll always be able to make way
Without music I wouldn't be here today
You have a special place in my heart
Nothing will tear apart
I love you like a conductor
loves their baton
And that's my most important bond.**



Leonardo Garcia

Ode to Bagels

By Teo Mann

A bagel is a halo,
A ring gifted to me from the bakery
down the block.
It's crust a crunchy crispy delight,
Golden brown and perfectly smooth
revolution
Its tender insides a vessel for everything in the
pantry,
From butter to cream cheese to jams
In every color of the rainbow,
Made from blueberries and blackberries and
strawberries
Glamorously laid over its soft insides
To be enjoyed and devoured
And bestow upon me a great warmth
Like the sunrise over the mountains
And when they're in my home,
Every morning I wake up already awaiting
The spring emitted from the toaster as it
Industriously pops out two halves of a brown ring
Covered in poppy or sesame seeds or garlic or
maybe even all of them
A world without bagels is a world without joy
A world without the wonderful smell
Of barely burnt breakfast
Of the wonderful soft core
Of the delicious delicacy
We call the bagel

Ode To Leaves

By Julia Cadena

Like multicolored crystals
They hover just out of reach
Rustling together
Whispering frantic secrets in the wind
Bright green shade in summer
And dark reddish brown in fall
Dancing through the air
And gathering in piles on the ground
Gloomy and sparse in December
But still filling the sidewalks and streets
Crunching under winter boots
And dripping yesterday's rain in spring
No matter the season
No matter the weather
Leaves are always there



Soren Forrest

Ode to My Viola

By Drew Peterson

From the moment I lift my viola to play,
the world begins to slow down around me.

The sound spreads like a sunset moving slowly across the sky,
warm and steady in a way that changes my perception
of everything happening around me.

In that quiet moment, my thoughts become clear,
and my focus on the music feels calm and controlled.

You are a river of sound flowing through the room,
carrying away the stress of the day
and replacing it with a peaceful effect
that I can feel with every note.

Even when I make mistakes during practice,
you remain steady and patient,
helping me derive confidence
and teaching me real discipline over time.

Sometimes the strings whisper soft secrets to the air,
expressing emotions I cannot easily convey with words.

Other times the music grows so powerful
it feels like the sound could reach the clouds
and be heard from miles away.

These moments help constitute
my understanding of effort, patience, and growth.

Soft, steady, singing strings
fill the practice room with music.

The rhythm repeats, repeats, repeats,
creating a coherent pattern

that guides my hands and shapes my improvement.

Swish goes the bow and the clear tone rings out,
marking progress that feels both small and meaningful.

Over time, practice and patience begin to synthesize
into real musical skill.

What once seemed difficult becomes more plausible,
and success feels not lucky, but valid and earned.

Through every scale, song, and challenge,
my viola remains a steady partner in learning.

So stay with me, my viola,
through wrong notes and right ones,
through slow scales and beautiful music.

You are more than an instrument
you shape my perspective,
strengthen my determination,
and prove that growth happens
one careful note at a time.

Ode To ELA Period 6 - 2025/2026

By Andrew Lee

English
Language

Arts

Is the most glamorous class ever

Period

Six

Is the best period ever

Twenty

Twenty

Five

Six

Is the best year ever

Daily Activities

The things that we do every day:

Reading

And

Writing

Even when we are not dutiful

There is a way

To Learn

Grammar

Sixteen Mini Lessons (at the time of this writing)

Practices and Quizzes

Too!!!

Grammar needs to be as perfected as math

Academic Vocabulary

Alternate

Or

Regular

The words jump around the 4 squares

Daily Slides

180 of them by the end of the year

How we know what's going to happen

No One Asked

by Alina Isaac

He was my whole world before I ever learned what the word "world" could fall apart.

He wasn't just my dad, he was the background of everything.

The noise in the house.

The silence when it got too loud.

The person I looked for in every room without even thinking about it.

And I loved him in a way I didn't know how to turn off.

Not carefully.

Not logically.

Just completely

Even when he was slipping.

Even when he wasn't fully there.

Even when I started learning what it meant to miss someone while they were still in front of you.

There were pieces of him I clung to like they were proof he was still mine to reach.

A laugh that sounded almost like safety.

A moment of clarity that felt like hope.

A promise that said I'm trying like it could hold everything together.

So I believed him.

Because I needed to.

Because when you're a daughter you don't know how to stop loving your father even when love starts to hurt you.

No one really talks about that part.

How you learn to read addiction before you learn how to read yourself.

How you start measuring your day by whether the person you love feels like someone you can recognize.

I became quiet in ways I didn't notice.

Careful in ways I didn't understand.

Always listening.

Always waiting.

Always hoping today would be different.

But it rarely was.

He kept saying he'd get better.

And I kept building my life around the version of him that might finally stay.

But hope like that doesn't sit still.

It shakes.

It breaks.

And I didn't know I was breaking with it.

It didn't feel like losing him at first.

It felt like confusion.

Like something in the world kept changing its rules and I couldn't figure out why.

One day he was there.

The next day, less.

Then less again.
Until I realized I was talking to absence and calling it love.
And then it happened.
Not slow enough to prepare for.
Not clearly enough to understand.
Just... a snap.
Like something inside my life decided to end without asking me if I was ready.
And suddenly he wasn't just slipping anymore.
He was gone.
People say grief comes after loss.
But I think I started grieving him long before I lost him
Every moment I didn't know how to reach him.
Every time I had to pretend I was okay.
Every time I told myself tomorrow might be different.
That was grief too.
Just quieter.
After he was gone there was no version of life that made sense anymore.
Everything felt slightly unreal like I was still inside something that hadn't finished
collapsing.
And I kept expecting him in the smallest ways.
In doorways.
In sounds.
In moments that looked like him.
But he never came back.
And I still loved him.
That's the part that doesn't change no matter what I learn, or understand, or survive.
I still love him in the way you love something that shaped you completely.
Even if it hurts you.
Even if it left.
Even if it never knew how deeply it was holding you while it was falling apart.
I think what hurts the most isn't just that I lost him.
It's that I lost the future I kept building around the idea that he might come back
whole one day,
That I might finally get to say "we made it through."
But that version of everything doesn't exist anymore.
Now I just carry it.
The love.
The grief
The silence after everything ended.
All of it inside me at the same time.
And no one sees it unless I tell them.
He was my everything,
And I lost him in a moment that changed everything without warning.
And I never found that version of life again.
Not once.
But I still love him.
And I think that might be the hardest part to explain.
I hate myself for letting him down.
I wish to see him again just one more time, just one more minute, just one more
second of his love.

Ode to Fish

By Aaron Wise

Fish swimming freely in the ocean
Until they hear a commotion
The fish are cooked and deep fried
To make peoples days a glee
I start dancing when I see sushi
People eat more and more
Here and there I can't afford
I would be sad if I never had sushi
Because it makes me feel very happy
Like a fish in the ocean
We are the cause of the commotion
To assume the fish are fine
We are just here to dine
A sushi place opened near by
And now I go all the time
I feel bad for the fish
But in the end they end up on my dish
This is the ode to the fish
I'm glad it lived because in the end I gave in.



Aurora Gonzalez



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