

2014 Student Winning Poems

High School Poems

FIRST PLACE:

Changing of Times

Sunday afternoon, it's raining
again. It was a long church service today.
Mom's at work, but we made it to
Grandma's and Grandpa's afterward anyway.

Church was held outside today.
It's so warm all the cousins are playing in
the yard. Grandpa said to tell them not to
ruin the grass. Grandma rolled her eyes.

Our coats piled up on Grandma and
Grandpa's bed after church today. The uncles
were talking about hunting and politics,
and Grandma was rolling her eyes but Grandpa was quiet.

There wasn't enough room in this little house for
the whole family, but Grandpa isn't doing well and
Grandma wanted everyone to come after church
to say goodbye, just in case Christmas takes too long.

Sunday afternoon, it's raining
again. It was a long church service today.
Mom's at work, but we made it to
Grandma's afterward anyway.

—Carissa Marquardt, 12th Grade, Coleman High School, Coleman

SECOND PLACE:

Childhood Memory

Kids are never allowed to paint
They are too little and will mess it up.
I came across a gallon of pink paint
It was just sitting in the garage,
It was used to paint the four chairs by the picnic table.
And the cover was lifted up just enough.
The paint was chilly on my hands
But it was quick to warm up
With the thrill that rushed through my body.
First there was a handprint on the old fridge

That was only used to keep soda cold
Usually for when guests came over.
Then a second right next to it,
And soon it was a big blob of paint.
Then came my dad's gray Camaro that was in the garage.
Another blob on the driver door.
Then that poor innocent cat that walked by me.
It was indeed, innocent.
I went to the house to wash my hands,
Getting paint all over everything.
My mom's jaw dropped when I walked in the kitchen.
But those three masterpieces are still talked about.
I was unstoppable.

—Samantha Schaal, 12th Grade, Coleman High School, Coleman

THIRD PLACE:

Tar-Heart
Like a broken road in spring
My faults are how I sing
For everyone who passes over
Inconvenient, Ugly songs
That wake up passengers
On my long,
Lonely stretch of road
Like a patched jacket I'm sewn up
By tar, loosened, shaken apart by the heat of the day
I am a road in disrepair
Ripped apart by the weather and worn
Down by travelers who
Consistently
Fail to stay long enough to fix my
Tar-Heart

—Andrew Peterson, 11th Grade, Northwood, Minong

HONORABLE MENTION:

bug eyes open

—someday—

i
would sleep in an old-firm birch tree
and use grass as my pillow.
i would drink dew-droppy water out of a calla-lily-cup
i would move ever closer to the heavens in my dancing song
i would see a light of justice in my knothole-footrest
and find truth,

There was a sound

There was a sound
Erupted from the void
Filled with strength and heft
Thundering through the space
Devoid of matter altogether
There was no trail left behind
No trace at all
And then it disappeared completely
Like it was never there

—Elijah Kuhaupt, 11th Grade, Renaissance School for the Arts, Neenah

Middle School Winning Poems

FIRST PLACE:

Corners

You can draw in them.
Read, write, cry, yell.
Calm yourself in their darkness.

You can be trapped in them.
Blamed, hurt, insulted.
Cower to your knees
In their sudden spotlight.

You can ignore them.
Pretend your room's a circle
And let the dust collect
In their profound depths.

You can throw things in them.
Dirty clothes, toys, broken hearts.
Leave things in piles until
You're forced to clean them up.

—Emma B. Hanisko, 8th Grade, Nikolay Middle School, Cambridge

SECOND PLACE:

Dawn

There's a corner in every mind
Reserved for the place
Where nothing compares
To the heavy morning mist

And the weathered trunks
Of old giants shrouded
In crumbling, papery coats
Of bark.

—Maia Sauer, 8th Grade, EAGLE School of Madison, Madison

THIRD PLACE:

Factory Girl

CHUG-CHUG-BUZZEC
the sorter goes again
CHUG-CHUG-BUZZEC
it's dry and dim in the shut room
windows closed
CHUG-CHUG-BUZZEC
i change a string
it's sharp on my
calloused
numb fingers
CHUG-CHUG-BUZZEC
the sorter towers
over me
another string to straighten
like the girl next to me, doing the same
dirty face, red hair
no shoes
like me
CHUG-CHUG-BUZZEC
i'm awoken by
the machine
once again
CHUG-CHUG-BUZZEC

—Erin Milleville, 7th Grade, Patrick Marsh Middle School, Sun Prairie

HONORABLE MENTION:

Firefly

On a warm clear night
Fireflies blinking off and on
Disappearing in a jar
Reappearing as a nightlight

Fireflies blinking off and on
Stars hidden by daylight
Reappearing as a nightlight
Looking through my bedroom window

Stars hidden by daylight
Coming out at dusk
Looking through my bedroom window
I see a shooting star

On a warm clear night
Coming out at dusk
I see a shooting star
Disappearing in a jar

—Camryn Mead, 8th Grade, Homeschooled, Eau Claire