

# FIRST PRIZE

## Nature

In the forest, a peaceful place,  
no electronics or problems to face.  
Just you and me and animals and trees  
is how it should always be.  
A relaxing silence comes over you  
as you start to feel as if you are brand new.  
The air and sky wash over you and me  
as we walk along the path.  
As the forest washes our souls,  
it patches all the holes we didn't know we had.  
Nature is free of stress and work,  
walking through sure won't hurt.  
Just forget about the painful things  
and leave yourself raw; this is what nature brings.  
If you are feeling worried, anxious, or stressed,  
come to the forest awhile and rest.

*by Stone Leman* (Grade Six)  
Martin Morigeau Elementary School  
Canal Flats, British Columbia

# FIRST PRIZE

## **A Second Can Be Life Changing**

Toes burrow into warm sand,  
Seagulls caw above,  
And wind tosses hair over our heads.

The laughter of small children fills the air  
As the tide comes in and buries sandcastles.  
Fish dart through the coral,  
While kites dip and spin in the breeze.

Surfers yell with joy,  
Basking in the sunshine that glints off the waves.  
The water ripples from skipping stones.

A dark cave with glittering, malevolent eyes, silently waiting.  
Screams pierce the air,  
Sirens in the distance.  
Black.

An abandoned beach, towels still on the ground,  
Kites drifting away with the wake.

Tears stream down my face,  
I lift my head,  
But I will never walk again.

*by Talulla Cox* (Grade Seven)  
Mulgrave School  
West Vancouver, British Columbia

# FIRST PRIZE

## Fin de L'été

The wind blows,  
Clouds the colour of snow sail across the sky.  
Trees quiver.  
Ink rolls over the crisp edges of paper, sitting and staring,  
Eyes smiling.  
Orange, red, and green  
Brittle leaves dance across the grass.  
The world so serene,  
They walk past.  
Dandelions lean.

Bright blue up above us, lines the world  
Storm grey drizzle,  
Thoughts sizzle in the quiet.  
Footprints in the soft mud—  
Wonder, *Who was there? When and where?*  
I don't care.

Hollow ponds, dirt filled with rain.  
A late summer breeze blows away the pain.  
It beckons, guides, pushes.

Berries, red as autumn,  
Decorate the boughs.  
Scarlet pops against the bark, in the place of spring blossoms  
Twirling, in the shadow of a forest,  
A cherished home, hidden from everything but the roaming leaves.  
I can't wait to be free.

Green, blue, white  
Dotted in light,  
Rolls across the black.  
Stars flicker  
Up there.  
Who would dare?  
I stay here, with the leaves and the trees.

*by Ariana Hafezi* (Grade Eight)  
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Vancouver, British Columbia

# SECOND PRIZE

## Terror of the Sea

A young boy stands solemnly, hand to heart,  
His shuffling stance betraying him.  
Glancing back towards his mother,  
He glimpses a tear, shimmering on her cheek,  
Enough to shatter her regal composure.

Staring straight ahead, gazing into darkness,  
They both stare towards the ominous sky,  
Listening to the explosion of the waves,  
Feeling the pressure of the wind whipping against them,  
Searching for a sign, any sign of *The Dauntless*.

Both are aware of the numerous ships who never return,  
The men who remain, forever, spirits of the sea.  
Each time Father leaves, they are aware of the possibility,  
The price that is sometimes paid,  
When one chooses the life of a sailor.

A small speck in the distance,  
Eyes straining into the darkness,  
A flash of lightning illuminating a ship.  
Mother and son take a sigh,  
Relief in their hearts.

by **Matthew Ferrier-McCaffrey** (Grade Six)  
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# SECOND PRIZE

## **To Escape the End**

The fluorescent blades of grass peek through where my toes part,  
leaving soft indents behind me wherever I step.  
The sunlight fights to get through the thick wall of leaves,  
illuminating the path before me, leading the way.  
A large branch above me creaks,  
giving in to the mighty power of the wind—and old age.  
In the distance, water in the stream crashes,  
racing to the edge of oblivion.  
I look up, and the vibrant colour explodes in my eyes,  
blinding me from the worries of the world.  
The sweet smell of a fresh rain tickles my nose,  
enveloping everything I have come to know.  
A squirrel takes refuge in a tree as I come closer,  
its cheeks bulging with a wondrous feast.  
As the path begins to slip into nothing,  
I see that everything around me is connected as one  
by the sweet bond of life.  
In this world of corruption,  
this is the escape from the hate.

*by Aaron Berg* (Grade Seven)  
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# SECOND PRIZE

## Grass

I remember  
The sun-soaked evenings  
When the grass was green and smelled  
Of spring rain.

I remember  
When we chased and played  
And rolled down the hills,  
When the grass was so green and felt  
Of fall leaves.

I remember  
When we ran and ran  
Along the sandy gravel path,  
When the grass was green and sounded  
Of summer breeze.

And I'll remember  
When the evening skies were streaked with sun,  
When the grass smelled of  
Spring rain, felt of  
Fall leaves,  
And sounded of  
Summer breeze.  
I'll remember  
All those times  
Come winter,  
When the grass  
Is no longer  
So green.

*by Emily Cao* (Grade Eight)  
Bristol Road Middle School  
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# THIRD PRIZE

## **The Jaguar**

With a jade-green eye,  
she searches for a place to lie.  
And while she crouches in the lush emerald grass,  
her fur shines like polished bronze brass.  
Soon, when she starts to hunt,  
she lets out a small grunt.  
A gazelle springs to a small pasture,  
she follows in a graceful posture.  
She leaps with mighty bounds,  
the gazelle runs quickly across the ground.  
She strives while starting to sprint,  
while in front, the gazelle is starting to limp.  
Fearsome teeth draw closer, closer,  
gazelle becomes slower, slower,  
but then, the gazelle gives up its life.  
Satisfied, the wild cat starts to munch,  
while the gazelle's lifeless body starts to crunch.  
After, with a jade-green eye,  
The jaguar searches for a new place to lie.

*by Julia Jurca* (Grade Six)  
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# THIRD PRIZE

## Ready to Go

Luggage on the steps,  
your room is empty.  
I'm not ready for you to go.

We all get in the car  
to catch your flight.  
A final breakfast at the airport  
brings tears to my eyes.

Waving goodbye,  
I try to stay strong,  
aware that I won't see you for two years.  
We all know, and you do, too,  
you're ready to leave,  
  
you're ready to go.

*by Anik Sturk Lussier* (Grade Seven)  
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# THIRD PRIZE

## Beauty from Within

Warmth rushed around the wild, wandering creature.  
There was fear in her eyes and in all of her other features.  
The demon lived among the burning flames,  
No one could ever keep this inferno bottled or contained.  
The tears of God started to pour, and the wild, wandering creature lived forevermore.  
She jumped, flew, swam, and ran through the forest not touched by any man.  
The moonlight was a spotlight for the singers of the trees,  
For a moment nothing moved or screamed.  
Out of the blue, this wild, wandering creature came;  
All eyes focused on her, she drowned in a pool of shame.  
No one knew what happened, though fear lurked in her eyes.  
This wild, wandering creature mourned and said she felt like butterflies.  
She took the deepest of deep breaths and let it all out.  
All of a sudden, her inner beauty exploded like a spout.  
A clap, and then another; drop by drop, an applause started to pour.  
The wild, wandering creature laughed forevermore.  
A sprinkle of happiness and a pinch of glee,  
There was nothing else more meant to be.  
The differences that divided her melted away,  
She felt relieved, nothing more to say.  
Slowly the common creatures of the forest departed,  
Quickly towards the glimmering water she darted.  
She washed away all her fears, sorrows, and sins.  
Now, only visible was her true beauty from within.  
The sweetest sounds started humming around,  
A melodic beat also projected up through the ground.  
It was not an earthquake shaking under her feet,  
The heartbeat of the Earth was humming to the beat  
Of the musical of nature and the drama of the wild, wandering creature.  
She no longer felt separated by her different features.  
All the warmth in her heart spun around,  
The wild, wandering creature was forever safe and sound.

*by Wishva Kosgoda* (Grade Eight)  
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