

When Worlds Collide

Somerset Young Poets Competition 2018

Anthology



When Worlds Collide

This year we received an incredible 1,007 entries from a total of 33 schools. Workshops on the theme of When Worlds Collide were delivered at 22 schools across Somerset. Typically, for the younger age categories this included learning Christopher Logue's 'Come to the Edge' and discussing Charles Causley's 'Tell Me, Tell Me Sarah Jane' or 'In the Willow Gardens.' For the 13 – 16 year-olds, we looked at poems by Glyn Maxwell, Kate Kilalea and Ted Hughes.

To those who enjoyed the poems we looked at in the workshops, I'd like to take this opportunity to recommend Charles Causley's *Collected Poems for Children* published by Macmillan Classics. He is the pre-eminent children's poet of the last century.

The 'All Schools Prize' which reflects the best effort made by a school as a whole, and which comes with the prize of a day's free poetry teaching, was won this year by St Dunstan's who excelled in the 13-16 category.

The sheer number of poems received mean that there were many excellent poems which were nearly commended but just missed inclusion in this anthology. It could easily be twice the length without a noticeable drop in quality.

The winners will receive the spoils of journals, book tokens, pens and pizza. The winning, highly-commended and commended entries now begin a tour of libraries across the South West until summer 2019.

Congratulations to the winners, and to the schools who have thrown their support behind this opportunity for children to express themselves through writing.

Matt Bryden www.mattbryden.co.uk

Results **7 – 9 Category** 447 entries from 18 schools

1 When Two Worlds Collide	Imogen Lee (Combe St Nicholas)
2 Family	Ellie Keeble (Bishop Henderson)
3 Dolphins	Phoebe Hopkins (Ditcheat Primary)
3 Have You Ever?	Henrietta Wylde (Wemdon St George's)

Highly Commended

'Golden flowers spread...'	
People Call Me a Fish	Lola Whatley (North Newton)
If you listen closely	George Gray (North Petherton)
The city cat...	Esther Ainsworth (St John, St Francis)
The Horse Dances	Summer Debonis (St John, St Francis)
A Chicken and a Fox	Freya Bult (North Newton)

Commended

Animal Poetry	Alisha Blank (Ashcott Primary)
When Worlds Collide	Elsie Hine (Combe St Nicholas)
My Underwater Poem	Charlotte Humphries (St Peter's)
When Worlds Collide	Lance Huntley (Combe St Nicholas)
The gymnast...	Freya Hare (Ditcheat)
When Worlds Collide	Natasha Higgins (Bishop Henderson)
The Drawing	Ryan Saunders (St John and St Francis)

Winners 7 – 9 Category

What was most evident in reading these entries was the clear enjoyment the children took in storytelling and wordplay. There were all kinds of poems: acrostics, kennings and adaptations of poems we looked at together. Some poems cut through all ideas of theme to express themselves (I have in mind an entry whose opening lines of each stanza read: 'I can't get a dog', 'Please give me a dog' and 'If you give me a dog'). What the winning poems have in common is that they all tap into the imagination. There were so many wonderful entries!

First-prize winner Imogen Lee's 'When Two Worlds Collide' met the competition theme perfectly and was assured and mature, reminiscent in places of Charles Causley. The rhyme and half-rhyme are clever, and the poem has a strong sense of rhythm. Most of all, the judges liked the hopeful coming-together of opposite worlds.

Second-prize winner Ellie Keeble's 'Family' is genuine, moving and simple in a good way. The worlds of the mother and father are reconciled by the child. She knows they all love her.

Joint third-prize winner Phoebe Hopkins's 'Dolphins' is joyful, magical, mysterious and engaging with a terrific ending. Here is a genuine child's voice.

Joint third-prize winner Henrietta Wylde's 'Have you Ever?' is skillfully handled and full of surprising detail.

7 – 9 Category **First Prize**

When Two Worlds Collide Imogen Lee

I watched the waters roll,
Saw the sunshine set.
Loved the way the hailstones fell,
And trickled down my neck.

She never watched the waters roll,
Never saw the sunshine set.
She might have known the hailstones fall,
And trickle down her neck.

I knew how to build a dam,
Knew how to climb a tree.
Believed I could do anything,
If I put my trust in me.

She could build a building,
Might know how to dance.
Could even do a head spin,
But that's a lot to ask.

If I met this city girl,
I would want to know
How to do a head spin,
Over trees and grass.

If she met this country girl,
She would want to know
How to climb a tree,
Up in the skies so high.

We taught each other things
That we never used to know.
That friendships can be made
Anywhere you go.

The city and the country
Are not so far apart.
Like a pair of shoes,
We fit together well.



7 – 9 Category**Second Prize****Family**

Ellie Keeble

When I'm with my dad
I feel all the fruits of the spirit
Every Sunday my dad takes me out
The wait until Sunday is never-ending
This Sunday my dad took me swimming
But I missed my mum and little sister.

With my mum and my little sister
Normally we catch the giggles
Whilst eating spaghetti
Then we do a fairy puzzle
I think I am best
My sister does as well.

When I'm on my own at trampolining
I feel lonely I want to see my family
But my mum is working in the café
My sister is at Beavers
My dad's walking the dog
So I'm all alone
Now it is my turn on a trampoline
Wish me luck!
See you soon.

With my whole family
I feel happy and brave
Especially at my competition
At the competition
Everyone is cheering for me
My family watches me
I do my best
I get a low score
And my family still loves me!

7 – 9 Category

Joint Third Prize

Dolphins

Phoebe Hopkins

When I jump into the sea
I feel a change inside me
so I look behind
and I watch my feet

I see my hands turn into fins
and I feel a smile appear on my face
so I look back at my tail
and I see my legs turn into a dolphin's back

I meet some other dolphins
and do tricks all over the waves
some of them were the same as me
it was a great day that day

When I got home my mother said
'You smell like the sea' I blushed
and went to bed but I didn't
I stared out the window... and thought
tomorrow is another day.



7 – 9 Category

Joint Third Prize

Have You Ever... Henrietta Wylde

Have you ever had a mischievous
dog nick food off your plate?

Have you heard the maggots squirming in
the food bin?

Have you seen the naughty slugs eating
your plants?

Have you touched hundreds of dead
jelly fish lying on the sand?

Have you smelled the strong smelling wee
of your hamster on your lap?

Have you ever driven home and spotted
hundreds of toads all over the road?

Have you felt the false widow tickle
your hand?

Have you listened to the pleasant tweeting
of a goldfinch on your bird table?

Have you watched the rocks falling down and blocking
your way?

I have!

Have you?

Highly Commended Poems

'Golden flowers spread across...'

Golden flowers spread across
the emerald field and sapphire
dolphins dive into grass.

Jellyfish hover over the flowers
and dark blue whales lie beneath
the grass.

Ruby fishes swim between
the trees and sharks chomp along
the branches of the trees.

Red crabs snip the stalks of flowers
and coral withers in the leaves.

Sea shells lay on the rocks
and sea oysters are still
on the rocks.

Cheetahs run along
the sea floor and lions sleep
on the rocks.

Frogs leap into rock
pools and toucans fly
above the rest.

Tigers pounce at the waves
and anteaters suck up all
the sand.

Owls hoot on top of rocks
and lizards hide beneath the sand.

Snakes slither between
the shells and horses trot
along the pebbles.

People Call Me a Fish

Lola Whatley

People call me a fish
but if I am a fish
I'm not an ocean fish
so I must be a swimming pool fish

but I don't eat fish food
and people don't eat me
or I hope not
and I don't go too far out to sea

people call me a fish
I don't have scaly skin
nor do I have fins
but once I'm in the pool
I never want to get out

I love to swim
it's always been my thing
but I can't go too deep
I love to swim

If you listen closely

George Gray

If you listen closely, in the dead of night,
you might be able to hear it, that roar in the silence.

The clouds are calling,

Where is it happening? I hear you ask, about this assault on your
ears,

the sadistic snigger after the electrical zap.

There's a scream, the same laugh follows,

the laugh is sinister, evil and vile.

It almost seems this laugh isn't human.

Some eerie things are happening when the zap occurs,
there's a small blue flash of light!

Then, for the first time you can catch a glimpse of who is causing
this commotion.

A blue creature is falling to the ground,
then when it is about 2 feet from the floor it stopped falling
and started bouncing.

After a couple of seconds it started to fly back into the sky.



The city cat and the country mouse

Esther Ainsworth

A city cat walked up to a country mouse.
The mouse saw the cat's sharp claws,
Then the mouse quickly scurried away.
Why don't you want to play? asked the cat.

The city cat came up to the country mouse
And gave the mouse some flowers.
Then the mouse saw the cat's pointy teeth
And quickly ran away leaving the flowers all alone.
Why don't you want to play? asked the cat.

The same city cat came up to the same country mouse
And gave the mouse an invitation that said
Come to my place, I've made mouse-holes.
So the mouse came and country turned to a city mouse.

The city cat went up to the city mouse
And the mouse hid.
Why don't you want to play? asked the cat.

The cat sulked on the counter.
Why don't you want to play? mumbled the cat sadly.
Then the cat knocked something,
There was a bang,
The mouse came up to see.
It was cheese.
They ate the cheese.

And the city mouse loved the city cat
And learned there were benefits of having a cat around.
They played and played together forever.

The Horse Dances

Summer Debonis

Horses glide across the green, glossy field,
Or in a massive stable sleeping peacefully.
Horses can bond with their owner
Or not like them, but even if the horse doesn't like
the owner, the owner always does.

But at night when the owner is asleep,
The horse dances on his two back legs like a human.
No one sees this only the stars.
You may think this is strange,
But it's not to the horse.

In the morning,
Everything is back to normal,
And the owner suspects nothing.
It's quite amazing,
And the horse does it every night after.

A Chicken and a Fox

Freya Bult

A white Bantam called Snowy
her house was huge
But a fox had an eye on her
gap in the garden fence
that the skinny grey fox got through
cluck cluck but Snowy had something
it was her secret weapon
until now

Commended Poems

Animal Poetry

Alisha Blank

It was all normal
The animals slept
The peace and quiet filled the air
Then a moan disrupted the sleep
A baby was coming and waiting to see

All the animals hated poetry
But this baby was up to the challenge
When the baby grew he wrote about poetry
And in the night when everyone was snoozing
He would be writing in his poetry journal

Then the baby's mother asked
What have you been doing this night past?
Oh mum I've been writing poetry because I like it
No dear you shouldn't have done it
But mother I like it so much I don't want to stop

So I convinced my friends and everyone I knew
And they said yes to help me with poetry
Then when time passed everyone knew what happened
Now it's all over the nation and we all know...
That poetry is the best!

When Worlds Collide

Elsie Hine

On an ordinary day,
I was in an ordinary car
On the way to Cornwall,
I love going to Cornwall.

I heard an ordinary car
Go past my window
I even heard an ordinary bird,
Out the window,
I had the window open.

The car music was turned on,
It was smooth,
It was slow like horses riding over jumps,
I was moving to the beat,
Moving to the rhythm,
To the song.

A ruby red bird landed on my arm,
It was amazing,
I loved it.
Would it stay or fly away before we got there?

My Underwater Poem

Charlotte Humphries

Underwater, underwater
The oysters make their precious pearl
Underwater, underwater
While the waves curl!

Underwater, underwater
Mermaids play in the afternoon
Underwater, underwater
And go to bed at moon!

Underwater, underwater
There are some ships
Underwater, underwater
While the sea meets the lips!

Underwater, underwater
Fish have gills and a pectoral pin
Underwater, underwater
Also some scales and a caudal fin

Underwater, underwater
Dolphins leaping out of the sea
Underwater, underwater
While the sharks are hunting for their teal!

Underwater, underwater
Land and sea combining together
Underwater, underwater
Wanting to be by the sea forever!

Underwater, underwater
In the sea there are seahorses
Underwater, underwater
On land there are horses!

Underwater, underwater
Colourful coral growing
Underwater, underwater
While the sea is flowing!

Underwater, underwater
The animals big and small
Underwater, underwater
I WISH I could be them all!



When Worlds Collide

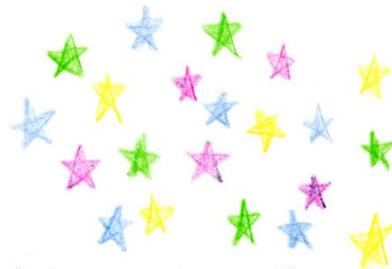
Lance Huntley

Sat on a green hill,
Grass as green as a lily pad,
Golden flowers as shiny as silver,
White cherries as white as paper,
Kids running all around.

A golden pencil abandoned on the ground,
Shining in the sun.
I pick it up and feel dizzy,
The green hill turns into a mountain range.

Golden jet birds flying high,
A bear approaches flecked with green.
Flying foxes as high as the sun,
And bright red bees catching my net.

This is the land of my escape,
Free, free, free.
A dancing kite or swooping hawk,
A place for my heart to sing.



The gymnast and the ballet dancer

Freya Hare

Flipping in the air like a bird flying,
Swinging on the bars like a monkey.
When I'm on the beam it feels
I'm in a circus on a tight rope.

Swishing my feet and pointing my toes,
I feel so graceful.
Swirling and swirling like a tornado.
Cart-wheeling around the floor.

I feel like more birds are coming.

When Worlds Collide

Natasha Higgins

School is hard to see
Home is easy, fun and easy to see

School has too much work and equations to do
Home has no equations to do

School has no tablets
Home has tablets no need to worry

School has bullies that are mean and nasty
Home has no bullies just friendship and fun

That is why it is opaque in school
And transparent at home

The Drawing

Ryan Saunders

The pencil was short
the end was pointy,
the boy was sat,
the room was still,
the boy took a glimpse.

And got an idea,
of a man with a beard,
so he drew and drew and drew,
until his pencil was blunt,
so he ran and ran and ran

to the sharpener,
he grabbed it in a rush,
the teacher said hush,
and he sharpened his pencil
everything was special.



Honourable Mentions:

Herb's War	Jayjay Hancock (North Newton)
My Farm Life	Max McMillan (North Newton)
It's Raining Tacos	Callum Little (North Newton)
The Metal Panther	Oliver Messom (Combe St Nicholas)
Stop Making Pollution	Jasmine Adcock (Ashcott Primary)
This is what we are doing	Emily Davis (Bishop Henderson)
Dance Poem	Madihah Hussain (St Peter's First)
I work with horses	Connor Legresley (Ditcheat Primary)
The Old and New Trees	Nathaniel Foster (Bishop Henderson)
What is it like to be a tomboy?	Laura Shaw (North Newton)
The Animal Centre	Lydia Lambert (Bishop Henderson)
Swimming	Poppy Taylor (St Peter's First School)
Cheerleading	Kekoa Norman (St Peter's First)
The Gymnastic Unicorn, Bird	Sophie Meader (Ditcheat Primary)
Life of a Pig	Henry Hurstwaite (Ditcheat Primary)
The Trip to Mars Aliens Port	Parsa Khawaja (Parkfield)
Volcanoes and Water Haiku	Jessica Johnson (Bishop Henderson)
Ice and Fire	Isla Margett (Bishop Henderson)
The Night Shift	Hannah Dray (Bishop Henderson)
Roxy the Staffy Queen	Lily Solomons (Elmhurst Junior)
Bat vs Ball	Sam Harvey-Knight (Sampford Arundel)

10 – 12 Category

We were drawn to the strong emotional story in the first-prize winning 'Fostering Poem' by Chloe Allonby which is told with great economy and simplicity.

Evie Horsfall's 'The Wonders of Dance' is personal and real. It has good sensory details and captures the co-existence of the world of the dancer and the world of the audience.

The third-prize winner 'Lemon and Lime Tree' reads beautifully, with some wonderful lines. It has a ballad feel, and the repeated opening line is effective.

Winners 10 – 12 Category 523 entries from 20 schools

10 – 12 Category

First Prize	Fostering Poem	Chloe Allonby (Huish Primary)
Second Prize	The Wonders of Dance	Evie Horsfall (North Petherton)
Third Prize	Lemon and Lime Tree	Lyra Evans (Bishop Henderson)

Highly Commended

The Hunt	Harry
When Worlds Collide	Evie Titley (Creech St Michael)
Loss	Leo Sumner (Priorswood)
My School Blazer	Emil Thomas (St Gregory's)
Puffin Hunting	Isabelle Rennie (Huish Primary)
Rich or Poor	Emily Wellman (Bishop Henderson)
The Experience	Teagan Tudor (West Monkton)

Commended Poems

Sharing goes deeper...	Grace Maddrell (Homeschooled)
I Could Be...	Abi Casey (Huish Primary)

10 – 12 Category First Prize

Fostering Poem

Chloe Allonby

When she arrived
I was very surprised
In confusion and in a muddle
She needed a cuddle
Tears ran down her face
She hadn't won the race
She ran away
But she came back the next day
She decided to smoke
And she never spoke
After a while
She started to smile.

Now I can see
Who she can really be
She is part of my family!

10 – 12 Category Second Prize

The Wonders of Dance

Evie Horsfall

I feel the music in my bones,
I feel the floor against my shoes,
I hear the taps behind my back,
I can see the other dancers synchronised with me.

I hear the hush of the audience,
I feel the spotlight shining on me,
I feel the excitement within my friends,
I see the shimmer of the polished stage.

I feel the music ringing in my head,
I see performers waiting for their dance,
I hear the chatter of the audience,
I feel the shiver from the refreshing air-con down my back.

I hear the pulse of my beating heart which is as fast as my feet,
I see my parents' eyes following me across the stage,
I feel the soft clothes against my skin,
I listen to the whoops and cheers through my ears.

10 – 12 Category Third Prize

Lemon and Lime Tree

Lyra Evans

The lemon and lime tree,
It should not go to waste,
Though it holds opposites,
They have a similar taste.

The lemon and lime tree
Holds neither sweetness or sour,
It holds the sky and stars,
They change hour by hour.

The lemon and lime tree
Controls life and loss,
While life is the fruit,
Death is the moss.

The lemon and lime tree,
Sitting on the land,
Overlooks the beach,
The sea and the sand.

The lemon and lime tree,
Neither black nor white,
Protects the balance
Of dark and light.

The lemon and lime tree
Holds life on its shoulders,
It likes neither damp nor dry
But the moon's silver boulders.

Highly Commended Poems

The Hunt

Harry

When I walk to church
I sometimes see
An incredible search
Right in front of me.

The seeker sits on its perch
Relying on its beady eyes
Then you see its sudden lurch
And it swoops; and it flies!

Fifty, a hundred, two hundred miles an hour!
Towards that mouse
Hiding behind that flower
In the garden of a house.

The Peregrine Falcon
With talons outstretched
Killed its prey then
And ate what it fetched.

But without humanity
I wouldn't be able to hear
Let alone see
The hunt so close, so near.

The Peregrine Falcon
Used the church as a perch
The mouse used the garden
To hide from the Falcon's search.

When Worlds Collide

I see the silver moon every night,
 Circling round our planet.
The peaceful stars of the night
 Twinkle down on it.

 Suddenly one night,
When I look through my telescope
 It looks like he is getting closer,
Reaching his arms out for a big hug.

 There he is,
 Coming, coming.
I can see his great round craters
And his knobbed grey surface.

I can reach out and touch him,
 Only an hour until we hit.
My whole town is about to evacuate
 And leave me behind.

 Only a minute to go now.
 I'm far away from home.
And suddenly I hear and feel
 A great big crash at home.

Rocks twinkle down upon us,
 We are surrounded by them.
 Our planet becomes famous
because of our beautiful, colourful rings.

Evie Titley

Loss

Leo Sumner

Come quickly come quickly
but I'm scared.
Come quickly come quickly
It's too far.
So she ran, as fast as her little legs could go
And she fell.

The sniper lifted his gun.
No one else was moving.
Some rabbits in the snow,
running from a shot.
The sniper grabs a coffee
and reloads his gun.

Shall I go to see if she's ok?
Is she alive?
I can hear her crying,
Come quickly come quickly
but I'm hurt.
Come quickly come quickly
I can't.

My School Blazer

Emil Thomas

My school blazer smells of curry and spices.
It smells like the great outdoors.
It smells like Lenor fabric softener.

It is as green as alligator skin,
as green as swampy moss,
as green as tree leaves,
as green as jungle vines,
as green as slimy seaweed.

It is bumpy as pebbles on the beach,
as wrinkly as elephant skin.

It sounds like a cloth
rubbing against a balloon.
It sounds like foam beads
being moved around
inside a teddy.
It sounds like radio static.

It tastes like nothingness.
There is a slight hint
of cardboard and spices.

Puffin Hunting

Isabelle Rennie

I lay in my nest of twigs
Making a list of pros and cons
And debating with myself whether I should go
To dive for fish and collect tons

I would only be gone a few hours
I would be back whilst they were still asleep
But if they found that I was missing
All they would do is weep

I stood at the edge of my home
And looked at the stars in the sky
And my mind was set on one thing
And that thing was... "FLY!"

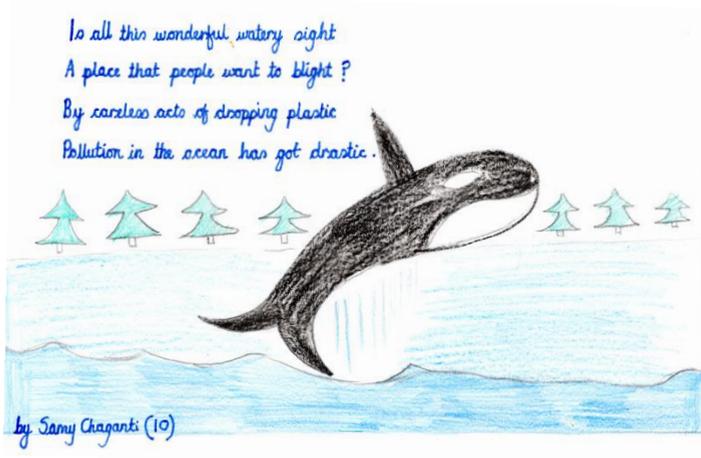
The breeze underneath my wings was refreshing
And the sky was a midnight blue
The lake was quiet and calm
"What a wonderful view!"

The trees were as green as the fields below
The houses were encased in black
Only a few had their lights on
Just like the colour on my sleek back

I pointed my beak downwards
And I landed amongst the reeds
I had a quick look-around
But a rifle was the only thing I could see

I panicked and let out a terrifying squark
But the murderer had pulled the trigger
I saw the bullet hurtling towards me
I should have been quicker

The family woke up the next morning
Wondering where their son was to be
The father went out and searched
Until he found him lying next to the sea



Rich or Poor

Emily Wellman

Elegant ladies swish their skirts,
Poor servant girls do not,
Elegant ladies weren't served their tea,
A poor servant girl forgot.

Riders discard horses to stables,
Young boys want to ride, they're not able,
Riders order repairs in their hats,
Young boys only know how to sew a mat.

Immature children demand everything,
Old nursery maids feel like they'll go ping,
Immature children throw away their food,
Old nursery maids think them ungrateful and rude.

Bossy lords order new shirts from London,
Loyal valets collect it for them,
Bossy lords slip down the stairs,
Loyal valets say to themselves "He really is a bit dim."



The Experience

Teagan Tudor

She was different,
She was weird,
She was talented,
She was absurd,
She was odd,
She was special,
She is gone,
Sammy is gone.

We were best of friends until IT happened,
IT was sad,
Sammy is gone
IT was devastating,
Sammy is gone,
IT took her,
Sammy is gone.

Sammy was always cool,
She would walk with me to school,
we thought she was crazy,
we knew she wasn't lazy,
Sammy was fun,
She was always our friend No. 1,
But for me she was my saviour.

Now Sammy is gone
I ought to forget,
But I just won't,
She was my best friend,
Now Sammy is gone.

You probably want to know,
'What is IT?'
Well here we go...

On our way to school,
Both playing around,
She fell to the ground.

Picked her up,
And we moved on,
Something was different,
Something was wrong,
Sammy was gone.

Where had she gone,
Did not know,
But her spirit was dead.

She walked on,
Gazing blankly ,
Ignoring reassurance,
Wandered through the gate.
Straight to class,
Teacher asked,
'Are you alright?'
No reply.

The world
A new world
Where am I?
I looked around
To hear what?
No sound,
Oh wait,
The sound of cries...
A hectic child!

Commended Poems

Sharing goes deeper than Infant Classes Grace Maddrell

We were told when we were little
that sharing was always the best
but sharing goes deeper than Infant School,
for humans share this planet with all the rest:
dogs, cats and worse by far; the sea and wind and sand.

Sometimes this sharing is welcome – when a cat curls up
on your lap – sometimes you wish it were otherwise –
when a seagull steals your chips from their bap.

But whether a cat or seagull, amazing this
whole planet is, and we'll never get by if we can't
get along, 'cos though we're the ones destroying the world,
do the animals tell us we're wrong?

For we are the ones who complain, when a dog
bites or a bird gets in the way of our car, yet we are the
ones we should complain about – for we are the
worst by far!

Try to stay on good terms with all life,
and you'll find that you can't be blamed,
for you've done nothing to destroy the Earth,
the others should feel ashamed!

We were told when we were little
that sharing was always the best,
but sharing goes deeper than Infant School,
if you share when you die you can rest!

I Could Be...

Abi Casey

I could be Rapunzel,
With long and golden hair.
I'd paint my walls with wonder,
Without a knowing care.

I could be Cinderella,
Working hard each day,
But then I'd marry a prince,
And I'd always have my way.

I could be Sleeping Beauty,
Asleep all day long.
I'd wake up to a prince,
And my past would be long gone.

I could be Snow White,
With dwarves by my side.
And soon I'd be rescued,
And be the prince's bride.

I could be Giselle
And change to human life
I'd be waiting for my prince
As I intended to be his wife.

I could be all these things,
But I'd prefer to be me.

Honourable Mentions

My Dancing Dream	Hannah Gauntlett (North Petherton)
Why Can't I Know?	Harri Barclay (West Monkton)
When Worlds Collide	Jessica Eastwell
World War III	Pola Kajawska (Bishop Henderson)
When Worlds Collide	Matilda Hopper-Young
Any Life Beneath	William Irish (North Newton)
The Meteor Factory	Archie Causley (Heathfield C.)
I want to find diamonds	Richard Robertson (North Newton)
English Math	Oliver Hodder (Huish Primary)
The Mix	Namu Gurushankar (Parkfield)
The Monster	Evie Owens Burge (Bishop Henderson)
Horse	Georgiana Bailey (Sampford Arundel)
Wellington Majorettes	Abbie Skinner (Sampford Arundel)
Our World	Dylan Tudor (Parkfield)
The Fighting Would Have to Stop	Joe Mannari (Parkfield)
Lost in my Dream	Olivia Sarga (Huish)
Varadero	Louis Shehu-Jezzard (West Monkton)
The Sun and the Moon	Le'Nita Zhang (Bishop Henderson)
The Sardine and the Seagull	George Munns (St Benedict's)
A Small Invasion	Ivy Silver (St Benedict's C of E)
My Bedroom	Leon Sulmina
Into the Willow of the Night	Mia French (Huish Primary)
War is a Form of Torture	Edward Mager (Bishop Henderson)
Get Out of Our Land	Beth Ridgley (North Newton)
When Worlds Collide	Tegan Jackson (Creech St Michael)
The Nightly 3 Hours	Maria Gilroy-Toscano (St John and St Francis)

Winners 13 – 16 Category

37 entries from 7 schools

1 st Prize Winner	The Ripple Effect	Natasha Hodge (St Dunstan's)
2 nd Prize Winner	Life and Death...	Chantell Aston (St Dunstan's)
3 rd Prize Winners	Photography	Amy Lawton (St Dunstan's)
	For Seb	Hannah Johnson (Heathfield)

Highly Commended

The Pros and Cons	Fin McCarty (St Dunstan's)
Stronghold	Liang Liang (Taunton International School)
'He raised his hand...'	Liang Liang (Taunton International School)
Love Story	Henry Duncan (St Dunstan's)

Commended

Sunset Skies	Megan Curtis (St Dunstan's)
Transition	Sam Budd (St Dunstan's)
Nothing Made Sense	Amelia Fellows (St Dunstan's)

Honourable Mentions

Nictotine	Leila Sparks (St Dunstan's)
Samantha	Chris Wedloc (St Dunstan's)
Diplobang	Jordan Nelson (Heathfield)
Calculator	Niall O'Brien (St Gregory's)
A Battle of the Ages	Jack James (Heathfield)
Black and White...	Azzurra Forlani (Taunton International)

It is always more difficult to involve schools at this level, distracted by examinations in one form or another. However, students at this age are often really keen to explore things in writing, and respond positively to the opportunity to go off with their thoughts for a while. So it is always a hotly-contested age-category. A number of entries contained strong passages but ideas which either weren't quite developed or clear, or didn't go far enough. The winning poems tended, like ice-cubes, to ride their own melting (to steal an image from Robert Frost), appearing both effortless and the perfect length.

In Natasha Hodge's first-prize winner, we liked the formal step-by-step way this poem develops, without strain, and the sustained image of the sea; as well as the way the last line slips into the immediate present tense.

In Chantell Aston's poem, placed second, we liked the slippage of the 'I', how it becomes unstable and ends as a monologue to oneself. The lack of question marks works really well in the early sections, suggesting questions drifting over someone's head which they don't feel compelled – or perhaps able – to answer.

Amy Lawton's joint third-prize winner contains a wonderfully surprising image – 'Varnishing it like new wood / fresh from the forest' – as if photography were creating the world anew. The poem itself is interestingly two-minded about photography itself. Can it make a difference in the word, or just distract us from it?

Hannah Johnson submitted two poems which both examine life around her and her peers. This is the clincher though, for its forceful message which begins in a general address but then lets the 'I' emerge. In particular, the ellipsis after the mention of Seb's eyes, and the stress that falls on the word 'rifts' are powerful moments – *le mot juste* as some of us like to say.

The Ripple Effect Natasha Hodge

It was safe, shallow waters
that reached out to her,
from the first moment that
she was pulled in.

Low tides collected her
each fragment of a piece at a time
like broken seashells, she was fooled,
to think he'd put her back together.

As she drifted along beside him,
his waves began to lose
their grip, for right when she
was one piece again, he let go.

The ripple effect had begun
for once a wave had formed more followed,
and when she was so close he
pushed her away.

Fighting the current was more of a struggle,
after he decided he didn't want her anymore.
Distance placed itself between them and she started
to notice her outer shell crumble.

Before they knew it they were
losing everything they'd created,
memories trapped in a bottle and left to float,
pieces of her and him sprawled like sand and
there's nothing left but broken shells.

Life and Death in the Eyes of Dementia

Chantell Aston

She's talking to me.
She's asking questions like 'am I ok,' 'what's wrong.'
She's shouting at me.
She's telling me things like 'wake up,' 'stay with me.'
I'm trying to listen, I'm trying.
But her voice is getting quieter and quieter.
As if she's becoming further and further away.

She's gone...
She's not shouting nor asking questions.
She's disappeared, along with everyone else.
Everything's quiet...

I'm no longer in my room.
I'm by the sea, on a beach somewhere,
I'm by myself.
There's no-one to help me.

I hear someone.
She calls my name, I've never met her before.
She still knows me somehow though.

She says something. 4 words I think.
I don't know what, but I feel it's not good.
She repeats it, then I know.
Her words are 'you're dead... I'm sorry.'

I panic.
I don't feel dead.
I remember... her shouting and
I remember my life story, which shouldn't happen.

I'm really confused.
I have dementia.

I woke up, I'm in a comfy & warm bed.
I look around, I'm back in my room.
I look up, she's standing there.

She's talking to me, gently.
She's saying 'good morning.'
She's asking questions again.
'Are you ok,' 'what's wrong'

I try to tell her.
I want to shout it out.
I keep trying.
My words aren't coming out.

I'm going to die, aren't I?
I'm going to wake up in a completely different place.
I'm going to be with completely different people and...
I'm going to remember.



13 – 16 Category

Joint Third Prize

Photography

Amy Lawton

From Digital to Bridge to DSLR.
Step by Step by Step.
A form of art,
an expression of our inner curiosity,
captured like a net full of stars.

Sunsets and stars lead to
sunrise and sunshine.
Sorting the settings and
releasing the Click.
Turning reality into something truly beautiful,
hiding the horrors of this world.

Then comes the next stage;
improving the piece
and making it your own.
Adding filters and adding colour,
painting over blemishes and creating
The Perfect Image, an illusion.
Varnishing it like new wood,
fresh from the forest.

But no matter how much you
edit it,
frame it,
compete with it,
it will never be perfect nor will it ever be finished.
The process is infinite.
Because it's in this world,
it's just me
and my camera.

13 – 16 Category

Joint Third Prize

For Seb

Hannah Johnson

The language of love and kindness is one we must all learn,
For in life we all have our turn,
Where the heavens split open and unleash cascades of pain,
But we're taught we must survive in impending rain;
In silence, no matter how weak,
Because otherwise we'll be branded and scarred with "attention
seek"

So why do we need to be at The Last Resort
Before we're permitted to ask for support?
How much more love needs to be lost,
Because getting help these days comes at a cost,
I wish I had known
What you were fighting alone;
Perhaps I wouldn't be sat at your burial cross,
shoulders shaking, crying with heart-rending loss.
I shall never forget your radiant smile,
That made anybody's day worth the while,
And those beautiful blue eyes...
Why couldn't I see behind that jovial disguise?
Laughing in fields and dancing through town,
There's no one I'd rather do that with now,
So every night I'll look up at the stars,
Hoping and praying that you're happier now – wherever you are
So Please. Can we prevent these mental rifts?
Because my world should never have collided with –
what if.

Highly Commended Poems

The Pros and Cons

Fin McCarty

I remember the smell when I got off the plane.
The transition from rain, coldness and the colour grey
to sun, hotness and the colour blue.

I remember walking down the dusty worn street
seeing little kids just under the age of 10 trying to help their
families.

They get rejected over and over
for what?
It's what they do for a living.
They know nothing different.

I remember seeing the intelligent exotic animals climbing on the
rooftops.

Cows, dogs, cats –
normal house pets for us
wild animals for them.
The people there
kind, thoughtful, innocent
they need help
but they can't tell us
people use their land
their resources
and they get nothing from it.

It's time to change.

Stronghold

Liang Liang

We all gather here.
An invisible place, full of our emotions.
It doesn't matter where you are.
You can be yourself here.

Here is another world.
Life and emotions become texts,
Greetings and communications become comments.
If you can click 'like', I would be grateful.

I have made an invisible castle to stay away from people.
The castle is very safe, and I'm comfortable to be in it.
I get confidence, love and friendship
Until I find everything is fake in the castle.

When I wake up, a difficult world still exists.
It might be a better choice to escape.
I don't know which world is true.
I would rather stay in my own reality.

'He raised his hand...'

Liang Liang

He raised his hand and he changed the world.
Money and status are his friends.
No matter how evil you are, it ends with how rich you are.
Looking at the high society! There are so many dead bodies below.
Who will be the next victim of his desire?
He raised his hand.
He will raise his hand again, and again.

Love Story

Henry Duncan

His neck was her neck,
His hand was her hand,
His body was her body.

His touch was her confidence,
His voice was her reassurance,
His answer was her echo,
His eyes reflect her eyes.

Her voice became isolated,
Her neck became original,
Her confidence washed away,
Her eyes became blind,
Her imagination turned to reality.

His world changed but he adapted,
She never adjusted,
His neck became someone else's
His touch became someone else's.

Her neck stayed her neck,
She built up confidence ready to be taken away,
She never learnt.

Commended Poems

Sunset Skies

Megan Curtis

The sky went black,
he left.
He was cold, stiff,
in a hurry his words rushed through me
stilling, silencing me.
I knew, he wasn't coming back to me,
like the snap of an elastic band our
connection had broke.

Though when the sky was red,
he would bring me roses,
my kisses stained on his skin,
his hand, his touch, carried the infinite
bond between us

Transition

Sam Budd

My boots clunked heavily in the silence,
Rocks crumbled from the edge of the cliff under me,
The air thick with fog and mustiness,
Sights of destruction around me.

*The fields of green,
Everyone free, filled with joy,
Behind me, a technicolour array of foliage,
Warmth and laughs and screams.*

Creaking chains encrusted in a shell of rust and blood,
Burning chemicals pollute the toxic atmosphere,
Disfigured seats and chipped paint,
The eeriness of dilapidation.

*The black seats scorching,
But the longing to be on the swings greater,
A warm summer breeze,
Warm on my neck.*

Gunshots blaring in my ears and corrupting the air,
Tank engines on every street corner, a thick roar,
Screams of terror and confusion, bitter commands,
The pavements and walls laden with holes.

*Market stalls and hot coffee,
A floral scent,
Leaving a freshness in the air
Ice-cold lemonade in my hands.*

Nothing Made Sense

Amelia Fellows

Nothing made sense.
His whole world was collapsing, crumbling into dust
like it never existed
there was no light in his life

She was a light that shone like a star
she never frowned
constantly putting others first
No one saw the pain behind her smile

He saw demons in her eyes
and the wounds they had created
she saw a spark in him
that no one had ever seen

He showed her her demons
for one last time
for all the scars they had left behind
She had never shone so bright

She helped him see
everything bright
as a spark turned to a flame
he lit up inside

Together they stayed
a burning light
never had anyone seen
two lights shine so bright

An anthology of 42 poems from over 1,000 entries and 33 schools:

Combe St Nicholas, Priorswood, Minehead Middle, North Newton, Huish Primary, Danesfield, St Gregory's, St John and St Francis Church School, North Petherton, Heathfield, Sampford Arundel, St Dunstan's, SAF Steiner Academy, Parkfield, Creech St Michael, Ashcott Primary, Greenfylde First, Selwood Academy, Queens College, Swanmead, Taunton International, Wemdon St George, Westover Green, Bucklers Mead, Ditcheat, West Monkton, Bishop Henderson, St Peters, Elmhurst Junior, St Benedict's, West Coker, Shepton Mallet and Willows

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