



Primary School Poetry Category

Judge's Report - Ozlem Baro

I knew that when I received the poetry entries this year, I would be confronted with something very far away from my day to day reality. The children in my world live in an overcrowded refugee camp that is violent and volatile, they have no access to education and their basic needs are not met. The children writing the poems live in a world that is peaceful and stable, they have access to education and their basic needs are met. This contrast is strange because even though the landscapes are completely different, the children themselves are much the same. Children everywhere are much the same – they all want to play, learn, feel safe and be loved. Perhaps one day the children of the refugee camp will have the same opportunities as those from Glen Eira... I hope so.

Reading the 2019 poetry entries was a particularly enjoyable task this year. Some new themes emerged and I wondered what subjects had been taught at school to influence the children's creative writing. There were a few political poems that referred to the Stolen Generation, as well

as poems that focussed on environmental concerns. As in previous years, the children observed the world around them and tried to make sense of what was happening through interpretation and the use of similes. Topics such as friendship and bullying also appeared, and these were sensitively expressed with relatively sophisticated language. Many children wrote poems about tangible things and personal experiences because these were obviously meaningful and familiar to them. I was really impressed with the variety of poems and styles, and would encourage all the poets to keep writing.

Commended

Friendship by Isabella Schneider

A Monster in Disguise by Yarden Kantor

The Silent Killer by Mahathi Mahesh

First Prize

The Lonley Mountain by Beatrix Scott

The winning poem stood out for me because it was simple, beautiful and evocative. I initially thought it was going to be a sad poem but soon realised that it was more about being quiet, thoughtful and calm in nature. This positive shift occurs ever so gently towards the end, by which time the reader is already lulled by the gentle rhythm. A beautiful, self-reflective journey and a pleasure to read.

Primary School Poetry – *First Prize*

The Lonely Mountain

by Beatrix Scott

Up the lonely mountain, my bare feet softly tread,
Walking through the pinecones,
As the possums go to bed.
The trees stand tall, reaching towards the sky,
Rustling gently in the clouds,
As the wind comes passing by.
Tiny furry feet scurry through damp twigs and leaves,
No man-made things there,
Or none that I can see.
Life is quiet here.

Primary School Poetry – *Commended*

Friendship

by Isabella Schneider

After you **F**ind your very best friend,
Adventures and laughte **R** will never end.
You realise the possibilit **I** es life can hold,
And fe **E** l bonded until you grow old.
Fights a **N** d rows you'll have to go through,
Nobo **D** y and nothing will separate you.
Even on the **S** adest days your friend will be there,
Lifting you **H** igh up in the air.
Friendship is a g **I** ft, like a four leaf clover,
It's the beginning, the **P** resent, it'll never be over.

Primary School Poetry – *Commended*

A Monster In Disguise

by Yarden Kantor

His face was dark

His eyes filled with rage

I was scared of him,

Though he was young in age.

He pulled up his prey,

A short and slim boy struggling in pain,

It was like a movie being played in front of my eyes.

Not a good one, but one filled with pain and lies.

He dropped the boy and looked into my eyes,

He was not the friend I knew, but a monster in disguise.

Primary School Poetry – *Commended*

The Silent Killer

by Mahathi Mahesh

A sign of life,

Bubbles erupting on the surface of the sea.

A graceful gliding motion,

Drastically halted as the turtle tries to flee.

His nightmare is becoming tragically palpable,

The turtle tries to abscond from the jaws of death.

Thrashing wildly as his predator finally seizes the creature,

Frantically flailing around, hoping this is not his last breath.

The plastic net bobs around, leisurely savouring its prey.

It's the twenty first century, we have a new killer to slay.