

# *Poetry Festival 2011*

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# *At the End of the Day*

*You're their mother,  
You're their father,  
Their best friend too,  
Their taxi driver, money provider,  
To name but a few.*

*But,  
When they're tucked up in bed and the day is through  
Who is left to look after you?*

*You're their nurse when they're ill,  
You're their shoulder to cry on,  
You're the one they turn to,  
You're the one they rely on.  
When they're sad, feeling blue,  
You just know what to do.*

*But,  
When they're tucked up in bed and the day is through  
Who is left to look after you?*

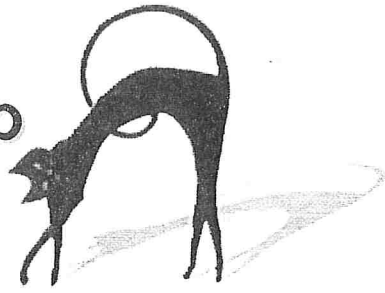
*You laugh when they're funny,  
You scold when they're bad,  
You smile when they're happy,  
And cry when they're sad,  
The joy that you get watching smiles on their faces  
As they grow and travel to far-away places,*

*But,  
When they've flown the nest and the day is through,  
Who is left to look after you ....?*

This poem shows empathy – the ability to understand how someone else feels, put yourself in their shoes - which is an important quality for a poet. The rhythm and flow work well, too. A confident poem.

**Max Wood**  
Year 7  
**First Place**

## Cat Rap



Yo I'm a cat,  
I stroll through the street,  
Looking for a meal from a garbage can,  
You can't tell me what to do,  
Cause I'm way too cool for that,  
Stay away from my territory,  
Or you'll regret it!

I keep on strolling through the street,  
Looking from ma meat,  
But ill keep impressing the lady cats,  
So go away or y'all regret dat,

All you peeps hate me,  
So ill avoid contact,  
Unless you have food,  
Oh yeah,

So I'll stroll through the road,  
And bam y'all knocked me down!  
No scrat!

A rap style is well chosen here – it's apt, amusing and fits perfectly with the subject of this cool self-confident feline; it's also a poem that feels made for performance.

**Kayleigh Blanshard**

Year 7

**Second Place**



# Angel Girl

She walks to school after being whacked;  
Nobody knows what she's holding back,  
She's hiding somewhere in a secret storm.  
Sometimes she wishes she was never born.  
The teacher wonders but he doesn't ask;  
It's hard to see the pain behind the mask.  
Hiding marks and bruises from the world,  
No one knows how much she's hurled.  
It's hard to lie but all she does is try.  
A soul filled with power and grace -  
You'd never see the anguish in her face.  
An angel girl standing strong as stone,  
She has to do it all alone.

Somebody cries in the middle of the night,  
The neighbours hear but they turn out the light.  
Blood drops and all is hushed;  
Another life has just been crushed.

In the church everyone's eyes are wet,  
Minds filled with sorrow and regret.  
Her name is written on a marbled rock:  
A broken heart that the world forgot.

It's not easy to use narrative in a poem but it works well here, because the strong story of an abused girl is simply and powerfully told, making effective use of rhythm and rhyme.

**Katie Johnson**  
Year 7  
**Third Place**

# The Killer of the Deep

*Giant of the ocean  
Predator of the seas  
Gliding through the water  
Cold as winter breeze.*

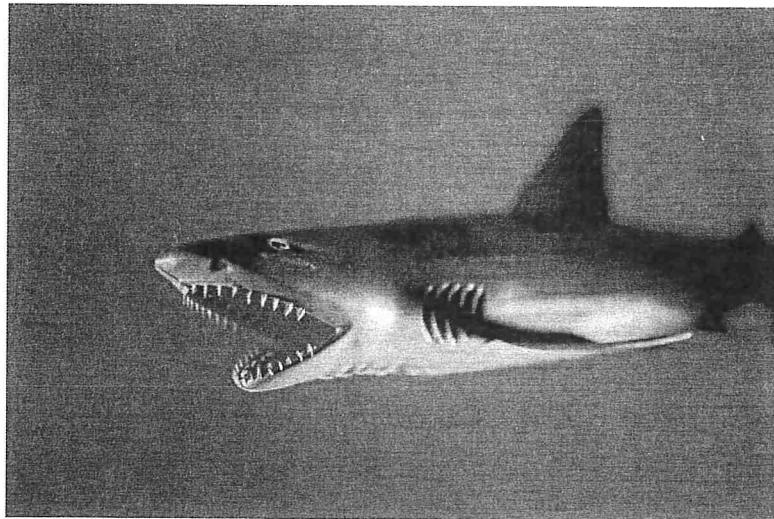
*Silver, scaly, mammal  
Seeing out its prey  
Lurking beneath the surface  
Swiftly, on it's way.*

*Eyes without emotion,  
Greeting light of day.  
Fin, of fear, breaking surface,  
Making waves of spray.*

*Razor teeth, like a saw  
Biting through the bark*

*"Ferocious killer of the deep"*

*The shark!*



This poem shows confidence in the handling of rhythm and rhyme, while the concise, well focussed description builds tension and excitement.

**Elliott Willott**  
Year 7  
Commended



# Music Poem

Trickling quietly the water splashes against the rocks,  
Splattering noisily as the hazy beams of sun cascade through the trees.  
The willow leaves droop and dangle,  
Brushing the surface of the quaint stream.

A deer is slouching with an arched back,  
Sheltering underneath a prickly holly bush.  
He springs up towards the clear sky,  
As he shakes off a duvet of golden leaves.

The birdsong tweets magically whilst the entire forest wakes up.  
Green finches peek their heads through the bushes,  
And jump out, gaining speed like an old rusty car.

Badgers dig their dagger-like claws into the sand,  
And scurry quickly to the surface.

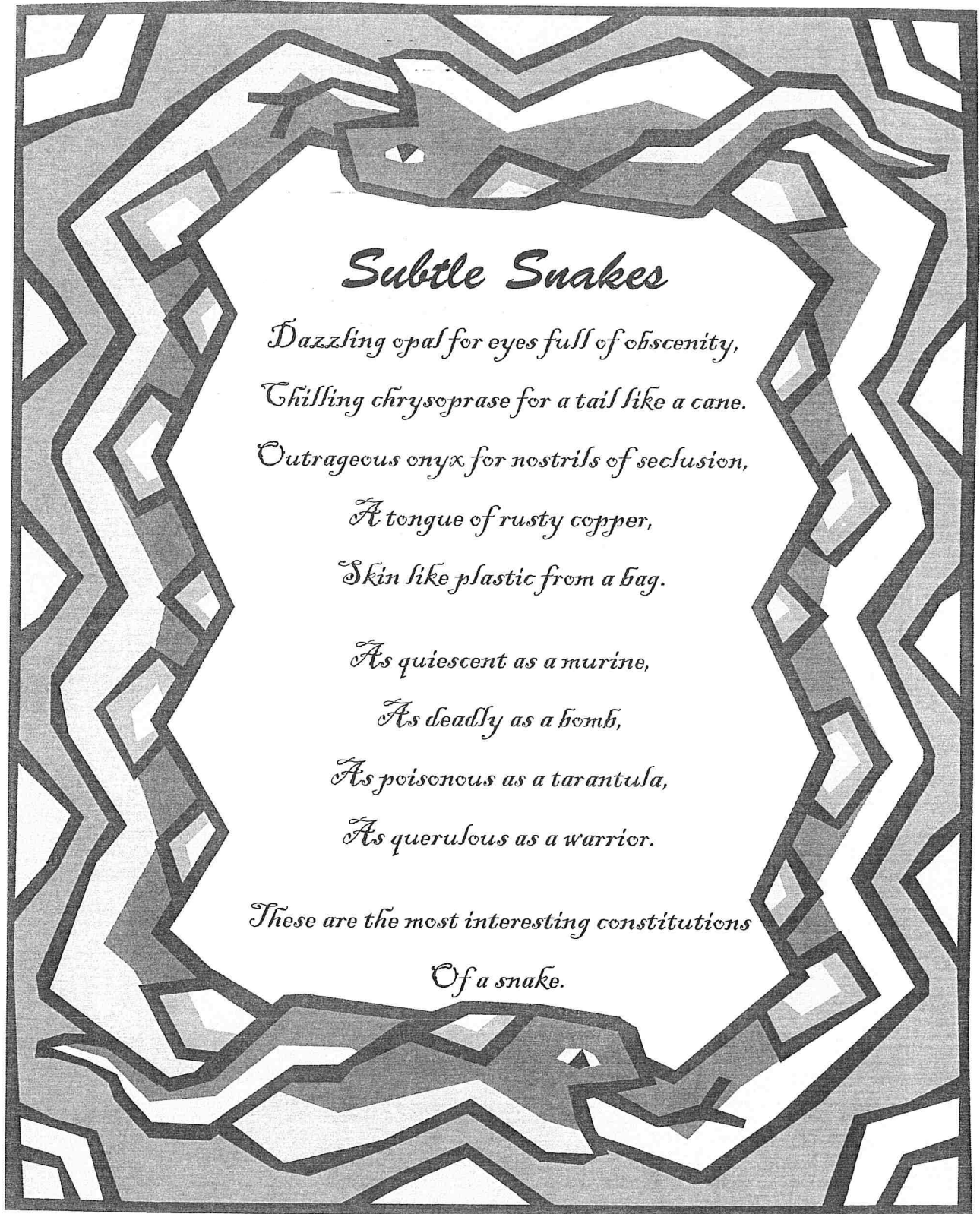
The trees sway in the breeze as if they are stretching out the branches and  
yawning.

The intertwining twigs unravel and the tree opens up to the world.  
Another day passes in the forest,  
Animals die, and some give birth.

The moon slowly drops in place of the sun with nobody noticing.  
Millions of eyes close and millions of branches fold up for the night.  
Everything comes to a slow halt as the forest goes to sleep.

I like the effective language of this poem, with occasional striking images and a strong sense of sound – alliteration and assonance are used very well.

**Jai Woolford**  
Year 7  
Commended



## *Subtle Snakes*

*Dazzling opal for eyes full of obscenity,  
Thilling chrysoprase for a tail like a cane.  
Outrageous onyx for nostrils of seclusion,  
A tongue of rusty copper,  
Skin like plastic from a bag.  
  
As quiescent as a murine,  
As deadly as a bomb,  
As poisonous as a tarantula,  
As querulous as a warrior.  
  
These are the most interesting constitutions  
Of a snake.*

This poem shows a real fascination with words, but also a (mostly) very telling use of them conjuring up some original and surprising images.

**Robert Darby**  
Year 7  
Commended

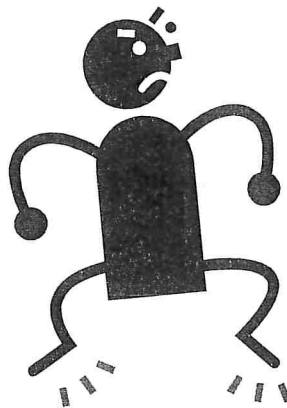


# The Anger Haiku Poem

I'm full of anger,  
My face turns as red as raw,  
I'm all jumbled up.

My mind is spinning  
Everyone ignores me  
I feel like a wall.

I'm just a creature  
Everyone thinks I'm a ghost  
That's the end of me.



Very good use of the haiku form, the ideas and images neatly compressed. I was particularly struck by the simple and thought-provoking line: "I feel like a wall".

**Samuel Buckley**  
Year 7  
Commended

# Spellbound

I positively remember,  
The 6<sup>th</sup> of September,  
Opening the mysterious door,  
And seeing all the glorious things that I saw,  
It left me spellbound,  
To see what I found.....

Sapphire clams, with legs and arms,  
A gigantic bottle full of charms,  
A snake and a swan, playing chess,  
My mother's cooking, (what a mess),  
An ancient owl wears a wig,  
A dinosaur rides a pig,  
A shark swimming in the air,  
A teacher being bullied, but does he care?  
A cat with a beard but no hair,  
A cheater, who is playing fair,  
An elephant elegantly does ballet,  
Whilst a slug, feebly plays croquet,  
A rainbow, wrapped in a frown,  
A wimpy kid wears a crown,  
These are some of the things that left me spellbound.

"Amie, Amie pay attention  
Or else you'll get a detention."

The rich and surprising use of images in this poem – some of them startling, spellbinding – shows a powerful imagination at work. The middle stanza reminds me of Lewis Carroll.

**Amie Bell**  
Year 7  
Commended

# BMX

Beads of perspiration on my face like jewels sparkling in the sun  
Eyeing up the half pipe to work out my stunt  
Speed and distance, all up front  
Got to make that judgement call  
So they don't laugh if I miss and take a fall  
Wow, feel the adrenaline rush  
Racing through my veins causing my face to burn, then flush  
I did it, they raved and yelled and I feel great,  
Pulling that awesome stunt, BMXing is definitely my fate.



I like the way this poem takes the reader inside the experience of riding a BMX, conveying the excitement and the passion. A very vivid tightly written poem.

**David Fulford**  
Year 7  
Commended

# The Golden Eagle

There is silence; complete silence.

The Eagle waits for the rabbit to move.

It listens carefully; waits for a sound.

A bush rustles; the rabbit emerges.

The eagle swoops down stealthily, hiding amongst the trees

And bullets to its prey, its claws ready.

The claws pierce the rabbits skin; the rabbit is his...



A concise poem with one excellent use of metaphor 'bullets to its prey'. It's such a powerful image that the poem could even end at that point.

**Adam Elliott**  
Year 7  
Commended

# You

Over 6 billion people,  
Yet you pick on me.

You stare at me,  
Mascara covered eyes piercing through my weak bones,  
I wish I was stronger,  
That I was strong enough to fight back.

You call me names,  
Like I would want to be called them,  
I wish you would either call me by my real name or no name at all.

You whisper about me,  
Lies falling out of your mouth about what I did or didn't do,  
I wish you would just stop,  
Stop spreading all the lies that will never be true.

You laugh at me,  
Rose red lips cackling about how I am different,  
I wish I could fit in,  
But I guess that I never will.

You swear at me,  
Painful words slicing through me as if they were knives,  
I wish you would just leave me alone,  
But I'm thinking you will always be taunting me.

You hurt me,  
Kicking and punching at my shattered soul,  
I wish you would stop hurting me,  
Give me a second to breath and react in any way possible.

You leave me friendless,  
For loneliness is not a choice it's a hated curse you've put upon me,  
I wish you would give me my life back,  
Let me live like the normal person I wish to be.

So if this poem isn't enough,  
Let me draw you a picture,  
Where the pen is my razor,  
And the paper is my wrist...

A well structured poem, it develops with rhythm and pace and it ends with a very striking image that powerfully underlines the theme.

**Tara Taylor**  
Year 8  
First Place

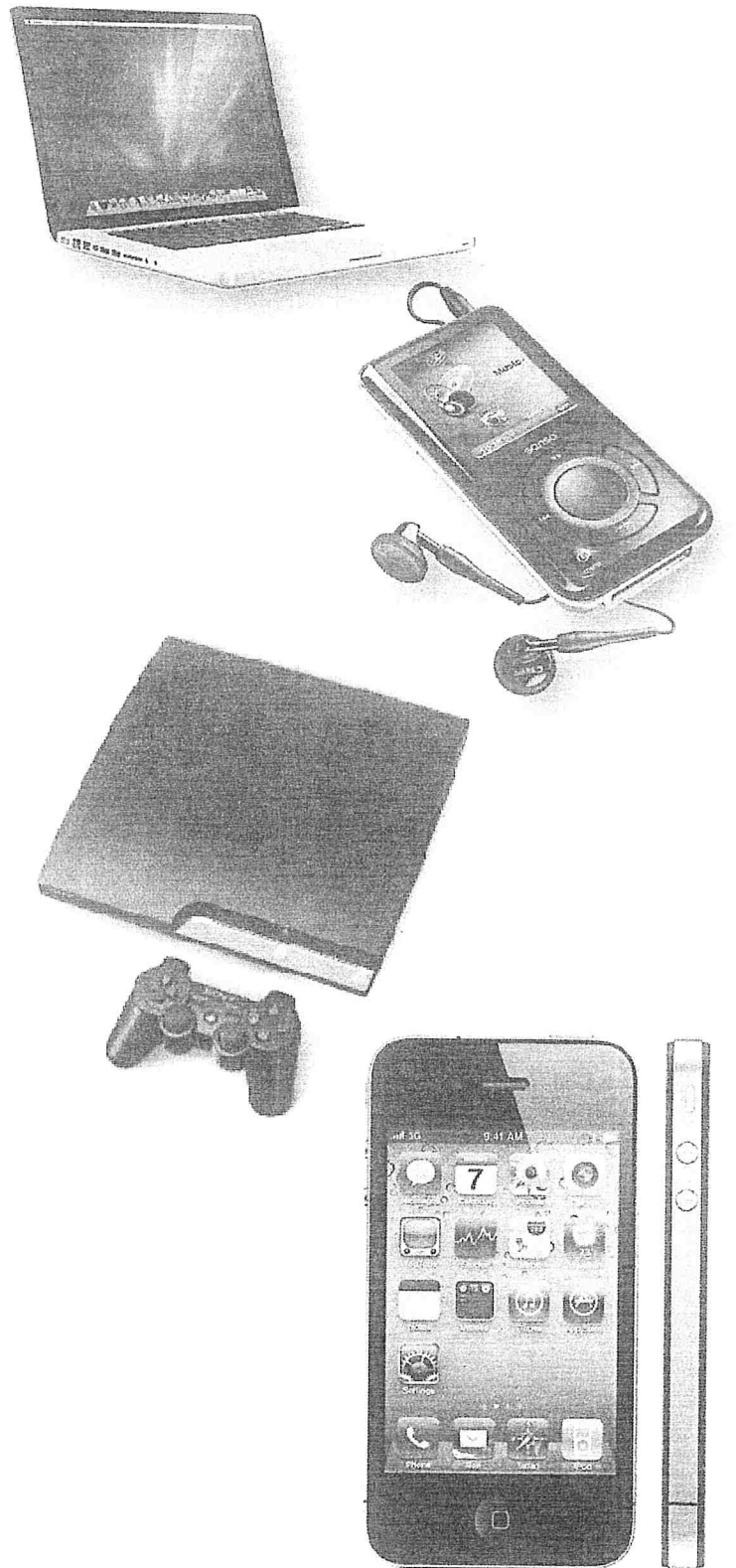
# Gadget Geek

The click of a locked iPhone,  
Beep of a PS3,  
The Windows start-up  
jingle,  
Tick tock of a smart watch,

PSP - piano black,  
Sleek style of a MacBook,  
Wafer thin plasma TV,  
Blackberry - bulky brick,

A mind-blowing iPad app,  
Pumping MP3 tune,  
Sucked into video game,  
Please Mum, five more  
minutes,

New HTC out - must get,  
Mammoth queue for iPod,  
Unwrapping latest Xbox,  
Gadgets - how I love 'em!



I love the use of very specific brand names in this poem and the pattern of the /k/ sounds, especially in the first two stanzas. Shows what can be done with an unusual subject.

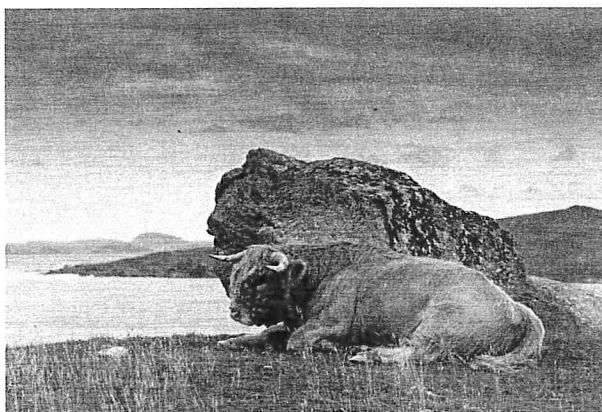
**James Creed**  
Year 8  
Second Place

# Secrets of the Highlands

Mountain high, valley low,  
Within this wilderness of Glencoe  
In winter months its filled with snow.  
A land where almost time stood still  
A bird of prey hunts for its kill.

Trekkers upon the West Highland Way  
Campfires lit for the end of the day.  
Lucky heather on heathland grows  
The falls of Dochart rapid flow.

Kinlochleven has a bird's eye view  
The loch so deep with abandoned canoe.  
Earthquakes formed this barren land  
Ben Nevis snow capped tall and grand.  
Here a piper stands all alone  
His chilling sound and ghostly tone.  
This lonely place in all its bleakness  
Has precious memories and untold secrets.



This is an accomplished poem which builds a very colourful picture of a very special place. I like the clever half-rhyme at the end.

**Aidan Guest**  
Year 8  
**Third Place**

# *The Mysterious Being*

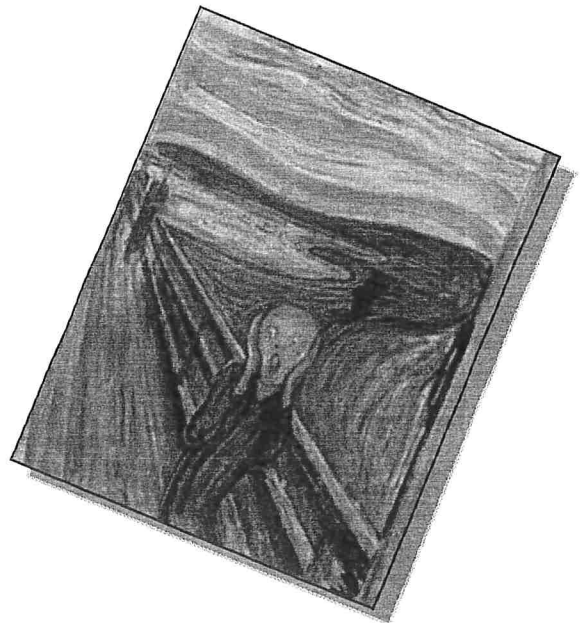
The harsh breeze in the air,  
Leaves the boats swaying from side to side;  
On the mystical ocean surface,  
The waves crash violently,  
Like the clash of a sword on a shield.

The ancient wooden pier,  
Creaks and cracks;  
As a fairground in the distance,  
Opens for the day.  
Two people wearing black  
Come forth to confront this mysterious being.

The clouds are like swirling fireballs,  
Being spat out of a monstrous volcano.  
The ocean is like a swirling torrent of darkness,  
The stones from the sea floor rush up on the sand beds.

But who is this?  
What is he doing?  
He stands motionless,  
Whilst his jaw drops.  
Like a wax work melting in a museum.  
Then the sounds of the mystical ocean,  
Turn into a blur.

Suddenly the sounds of the waves crashing  
Turn into a shriek of a mad man,  
The sounds of children playing nearby,  
Are drowned out by ....  
THE SCREAM.



Paintings, photographs, sculpture and music all provide a rich field for poets to respond to. This poem works well because the interpretation of the picture creates a vividly imagined world.

**Joseph Bristow and  
Henry Smith**  
Year 8  
Commended



# The Instrument

She cried for all the broken hearts,  
Painted never-ending winters –  
Floral patterns etched in ice;  
A frozen tear to soften the bitter bones.

The keys pressed onwards ...

She laughed for all the beaming faces,  
Sketched the everlasting summers  
Blossomed trees sway in a tepid breeze,  
Warm-hearted eyes would sweep you away.

The keys pressed onwards ...

Melodrama pulsated in satin sound,  
However, was the player there?  
- Yet the player wasn't there,  
Only creamy song, soothing, yearning,  
Teasing envious minds.

The keys pressed onwards ...

Then a climax –  
Passion meandering, cutting deep –  
Wounding even the most durable of flesh  
Then, a mere weeping willow.

The keys pressed onwards ...

She was the music that cascaded through the ears of the listener...  
She was the flute.

The keys halted to a sudden stop.

What I like about this poem is the attempt to describe the  
power music has to conjure different emotions as well as the  
pleasure of making music.

**Cara Coughlan**  
Year 8  
Commended

# Red

What is going on?  
What is happening to me?  
I am looking in my mirror,  
But it doesn't show me what I want to see.  
All I see is red.

I paint my heart on a stone in red.  
I leave it to dry for a while.  
The paint starts to flake and crack,  
So I wash it off with water,  
And paint my heart upon another stone.  
All I see is red.

Fury raging inside of me,  
My face is red with anger.  
How dare he do this, how dare she do that.  
I feel at war with everyone,  
Red splattered everywhere.  
And that is all I see.

I gaze up at the clear blue sky,  
And I daydream.  
I see a bright red sunset inside a rose,  
A delicate rose, petals crisp and fine.  
I feel at peace with the world,  
Still, all I see is red.

And now I look back,  
Back to my teenage years.  
I gaze back in my old mirror,  
My old mirror of time,  
And all I see is red.  
Red is all I need to see

The poem has a strong structure and the rhythm is well sustained. I like the use of uncomplicated language to tell the story and the slight twist in the final stanza.

**Natalie Kanda**  
Year 8  
Commended

# Icy Blast



Wrap up warm,  
Head through the snow,  
Crunch, crunch, crunch, as the harsh winds blow.

Snap on those skis,  
Shuffle to the queue,  
Swept off my feet into soft skies of blue.

My legs swing high,  
As up we rise,  
Swinging into the snow filled skies.

Nearly there,  
Not too long,  
Lift that bar, you'll have to be strong.

And then .....

With a great big push! I whiz and I zoom,  
Down the mountain, as quick as I can,  
I'm definitely beating that ginger bread man.

Spraying gleaming white snow, past prickly trees,  
Faster than lightning, I'm an Olympic star,  
Beating the whole world by far.

And now as I slow, down to the end  
I slide to the queue, and then -  
Let's go again!

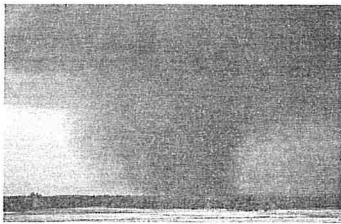
I really enjoyed the pace of this poem, the way it builds and slows, the anticipation, the excitement. It's very well handled rhythmically.

**Sally Britton**  
Year 8  
Commended

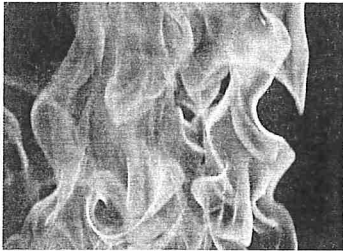
# The power of the elements



Rumbling, solid not man-made  
Heavy, dusty movements.  
Cracks forming from the dirt beige ground  
Thick, bottle green vines smashing through  
Unstoppable as it spreads  
Bold, fearless bigger than an earthquake.



Fast, swift, light and mysterious  
Too powerful  
Feel it entice you into glimpses of colour  
Bigger than a whirling tornado  
The massive, cold swirl hits your face  
Nobody's safe when the rush hits you.



Bursting, roaring flames  
Strong, bright illuminating colours  
Fills and controls your imagination  
The blazing heat rises  
Sparks fly everywhere  
Something fills the air with the stench of burn.



Gallons of cold icy liquid swirling out of control  
Fast, Rushing waterslides  
Steep, colourless whirls of melted ice  
Get tangled up in a mess of complicated knots  
Puzzling and drowning you into confusion.

I like the way this poem describes the power of the different elements without ever naming them. The language is vivid and imaginative.

**Annabel Phillips**  
Year 8  
Commended

## The most unusual thing I've ever stolen?

The most unusual thing I ever stole? A cow.  
Lunchtime. He had the most magnificent moo,  
His white body with brown splashes dashed across in a unique pattern.  
I wanted him, a special smelling friend.  
Grass was his favourite meal for breakfast, lunch and tea, every day the same.

The farmer was in for lunch, and there in the plain greenfield stood my cow.  
I slipped over the fence, slowing approaching him.  
He turned around, facing me, his mud brown eyes,  
Still he was chewing his favourite food.  
At the moment I know he had to be mine.

Sometimes I steal things without knowing why,  
One roller coaster trip without paying.  
Breaking in to green houses just to see the flowers bloom.  
A pet rat, sometimes the odd mouse.  
A ride on neighbours garden slide.

Getting the cow through the front door was a major task,  
He didn't look the same in my living room as he did on that nice green grass.  
His yucky brown irregular pattern clashing with my sofa,  
His clumsy walk sending my table flying,  
I think I may now realise he's not the cow for me.

So quick before the farmer returns,  
I put his cow back where he belonged.  
I will never again steal a cow,  
I still don't know what urged me to do such a thing.  
As I turned my back to the cow, I saw a pig looking so appealing.

This is a witty poem that uses the subject matter well and has some clever twists and turns. Very enjoyable.

**Lizzie Gray**  
Year 8  
Commended

# A Man's Death

The stars wheel above him,  
Moons rise and set again.  
All that has been  
And is  
And will be, flows through him.

His first breath  
His last goodbye,  
A mere glimpse,  
Of the long life  
That man had once had.

Still the stars wheel above him.  
Coldest of all,  
The darkest light  
The last light a man sees,  
Before he dies.

He feels no pain,  
Only a great emptiness  
He doesn't want to die alone,  
But he is so tired  
So tired.

He stands looking down at his body.  
He doesn't want to leave,  
But he knows,  
He has to.  
He is so tired.

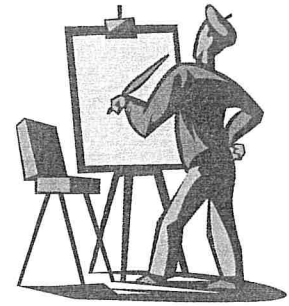
With a reluctant sign,  
He turns  
And begins to climb towards the stars.  
This, is how a man dies.

A simple poem, well executed. It makes good use of short direct lines or phrases and also uses repetition to good effect.

**Simon Lockyer**  
Year 8  
Commended

## My Grandad

He stands in front of the easel  
A faraway look on his face  
He picks up the brush and pallet  
And then he begins to paint



The brush flows over the paper  
Like a river into a lake  
And stroking the paper with care  
A picture is taking place

He stands back to admire his work  
A small smile appears on his face  
As you stare at the big blue sea  
A ship will sail past your eyes.

This is a delightful poem – a cameo portrait with an excellent and striking final stanza and good use of assonance and alliteration throughout. A very accomplished poem.

**Carys Brew**  
Year 9  
**First Place**



## Flat Pack

The wood is laid out on the floor  
Dad walks in with a smug smile on his face  
He sets his hammer and screws down  
He chucks the creased instructions behind him.

He gets to work screwing some wood  
His eyes alight with determination  
All day he hammers screws and shouts  
His eyes burn like a bonfire at night.

I look upon what should be drawers:  
A wonky frame with odd bits sticking out;  
Bent screws and splinters on the floor  
We stare at Dad. You can hear a pin drop.  
Dad lifts the pack and slams it down.

Barbed wood and nails scatter everywhere  
He jumps up and down on the pile  
"Now that's the last time we buy a flat pack!"  
He kicks the box once more and leaves.

None of us want to tell him my sister needs a new desk.

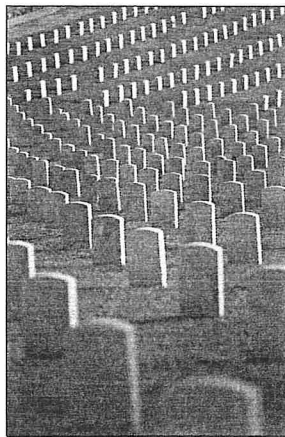
I enjoyed the gentle humour of this poem and the obvious attention to the rhythm of the lines. This is confident and fluent writing.

**Georgia Walton**  
Year 9  
**Second Place**



### My War Poem

Here we lie on foreign ground,  
Foreign ground now stained with blood  
The blood of those we do not know,  
Those we do not know but yet we are so similar.  
We are so similar, you and I  
You and I, staring into each other's empty hollow eyes  
Empty hollow eyes, which will never return home  
Never will return home, to a family  
Now a family lost and alone  
Lost and alone as tears fall like rain  
Rain now settled on soft skin  
Soft skin now bruised and scared  
Bruised and scared as we lie on foreign ground.

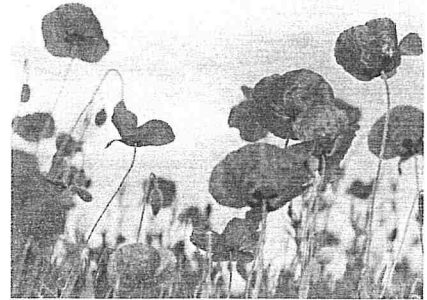


The poem stands out for its use of the device of starting a line with the final words of the previous one, a strong poetic technique which helps underline the images.

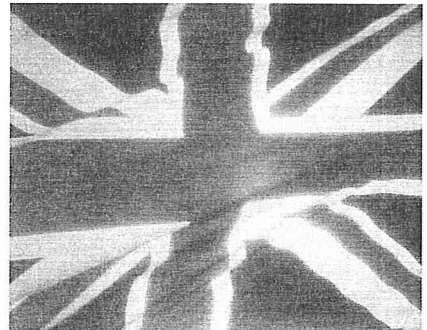
**Aimee Nicholson-Jack**  
Year 9  
**Third Place**

## A Broken World

The blades whizzed simultaneously  
Around its derelict skeleton.  
The sound rhythmic,  
Like an agitated flag,  
Slapping against the wind.



Crimson poppies  
Sheltered by a mantle of powdered earth.  
Every capillary snapped,  
Synchronised with the hearts  
Of every soldier.



The natural ceiling,  
Altered from ashen cobalt,  
To sinister slate.  
In this, dust entwined itself.  
A formation that would later shadow innocent lives.

A fairy tale they say?  
Fields pieced together with  
Khaki figurines that feel somnolent,  
Exposed through a hazy curtain ahead  
That no longer has a happy ending.



Silence is the torture that no one should suffer.

A carefully structured and thoughtful poem containing a number of strong images, vivid and original language and a mature handling of the subject.

**Sophie Wakefield**  
Year 9  
Commended

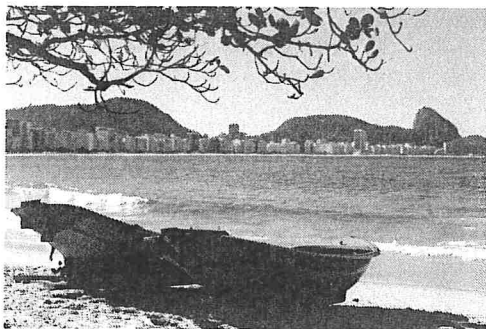
# The Street

An average street,  
Nothing special  
With people, pets, pasts and presents.  
All interwoven with walls of steel,  
Hiding stories that seem unreal  
Stories of truth  
That break the broken  
Stories of hurt  
That are never discovered  
Stories of Struggle  
That are always whispered  
And stories of lies  
That are told as truths  
Just an average street.  
  
Nothing special.



I like the structure of this poem. The different kinds of stories are imaginatively described and build a picture that contrasts well with the “nothing special”.

**Amy Clarke**  
Year 9  
Commended



## The Beach

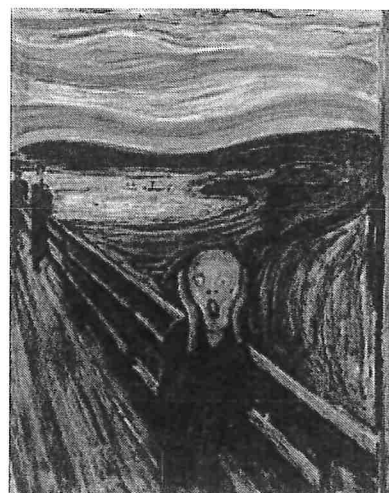
Burning sun on sand  
Foaming waves brush up the shore  
Beautiful blue beach.

This is an especially good haiku, crisp images, good alliteration. The overall effect is simple and expressive. I like the use of "brush" here.

**Ellie Sims**  
Year 9  
Commended

## The Scream Painting

A panic stricken face,  
In an unimaginable place.  
Luminous skies like blood shot eyes,  
Tear blue rivers,  
Cold wind and shivers.  
The moon creates a spotlight,  
Upon the eerie night.  
With nothing else to do but scream,  
Can somebody help me?



This works well rhythmically and shows good understanding of the way the natural setting reflects the emotion in the painting.

**Sophie Cherrett**  
Year 9  
Commended

# Another Night

Another night,  
Another bruise,  
Another reason,  
Picked from out of the blue.

A look in the wrong direction,  
A smile that's not for you,  
One foot out of line,  
Any reason will do.

A bruise,  
I will have to hide,  
Your reason:  
I shouldn't have lied.

I put on a front,  
Tell everyone I love you,  
But I could never love a man,  
Who does what you do.

A cut lip,  
A black eye,  
As long as I can hide it,  
Or cover it with a lie.

Another night,  
Another bruise,  
Another reason,  
Picked from out of the blue.

A poem with good rhythm. A strong idea conveyed in uncomplicated language – “out of the blue” works well because of its allusion to ‘black and blue’.

**Laura Barrett**  
Year 9  
Commended

# TREASURED FRIEND

I lost a treasured friend today:  
The little cat who used to lay  
His gentle head upon my knee  
And shared his silent thoughts with me

He'll come no longer to my call  
Retrieve no more that catnip ball  
A voice far greater than my own  
Has called him to his golden throne

Although my eyes are filled with tears  
I thank him for the happy years  
He let him spend down here with me  
And for his love and loyalty

When it is time for me to go  
And join him there, this much I know:  
I shall not fear the transient dark  
For he will greet me with a  
MEOW.



A skilfully written poem – the rhythm and rhyme scheme are very well handled with a nice flourish at the end.

**Sam Longmore**  
Year 9  
Commended

## “You’re beautiful because ....”

You’re beautiful because you care;  
I’m ugly because I look the other way.  
You’re beautiful because you have true colours;  
I’m ugly because I paint over mine.  
You’re beautiful because you face your fears;  
I’m ugly because I run away.  
You’re beautiful because you’re there for me;  
I’m ugly because I’m never there for you.  
You’re beautiful because you smile in the rain;  
I’m ugly because I let it wash away my happiness.  
You’re beautiful because you pick out the little things and cherish them  
with a loving heart;  
I’m ugly because I get scared, look away, and never wonder ‘what if?’

The form of this poem – the list counterpointing ‘beautiful’ and ‘ugly’ – is successfully used here. The different line lengths are also employed to good effect

**Sam Freeman-Fox**  
Year 9  
Commended

# Changes

In a world filled with changes,  
Each and every day.  
I feel I'm being judged,  
For what I do and say.  
I remember back to Barbies,  
And play dates in the park.  
When I didn't worry about  
Other people's remarks.  
Now, looking in the mirror,  
I see to my surprise,  
A completely different person,  
Staring in my eyes.  
The carefree little girl,  
I saw at four and five.  
Is now a stropky teen,  
Trying to survive.

Good teamwork has resulted in a sharp, well expressed poem that knows exactly where it's going and gets there cleanly and directly. Very impressive.

**Amanda Batten and  
Learna Willmore**  
Year 10  
**First Place**



# *Sing to me*

*I'm sorry, I'm new at all this  
But you cause me more harm  
Than anything else, so don't ignore me.  
I can't seem to understand why you push me away,  
but if you push me too far I may fall so  
you can't catch me, I wish you would ....*

*Sing to me  
Before I cry  
Sing to me  
Before you leave  
Sing, just sing that's all I wish for*

*I can't seem to smile,  
Do you understand why?  
Fake, fake, fake that's all  
That swims around my head  
But I know that I don't feel fake for you  
I can't imagine my life anymore without you*

*Sing to me  
Before I cry  
Sing to me  
Before you leave  
Sing, just sing that's all I wish for*

*I'm sorry for being this way  
But I can't seem to stop this track  
It keeps playing over and over  
When are you going to let me go?  
I can't survive if this goes on  
So sing to me or leave me be*

*I've got to be brave  
Not for you, not for me  
But for everyone else  
So they don't ask me  
That dreaded question  
So sing to me or leave me be*

*Sing to me  
Before I cry  
Sing to me  
Before you leave  
Sing, just sing that's all I wish for*

*I'd do anything for you  
But I'd do nothing for you  
I can't see straight anymore  
I would sing to you if you sing to me*

*Through a crowded room I see you  
Staring at you staring at me  
I look for you but cannot find  
Why do you hide?  
Please don't pull away  
I thought you weren't afraid*

*Sing to me  
Before I cry  
Sing to me  
Before you leave  
Sing, just sing that's all I wish for*

*I wish I could call for help  
But I know even if I do it won't help  
So smile for me, be happy  
Because I know my crying  
Isn't going to make you notice  
but just sing so I know*

*Sing to me  
Before I cry  
Sing to me  
Before you leave  
Sing, just sing that's all I wish for*

*I wish it was me  
To make you sing  
It's not fair and  
I'm not sure if I can sing anymore  
So just let me sing one last time with you  
So just ...*

*Sing to me  
Before I cry  
Sing to me  
Before you leave  
Sing, just sing that's all I wish for*

*Goodbye my song ....*

I was impressed by the strong lyrical current in this poem with its effective use of repetition. A deeply felt poem well sustained without being sentimental.

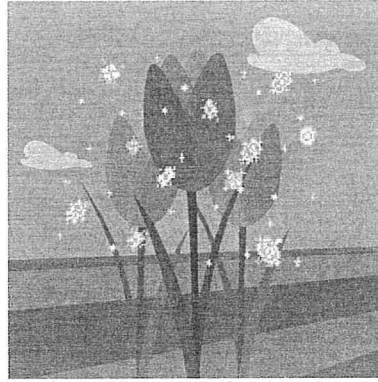
**Jessica Audoire**  
Year 10  
**Second Place**

# And you think you can help?

I guess this is what they call a mixed state  
When you feel depressed and hyper all in the same day  
Rhymes and thoughts have been flowing out easily  
I stop and tell myself I am ok.  
I don't like the idea of therapy  
It makes me feel like I'm giving up on me.  
Everyone tells me the contrary  
You tell me there's no need to be wary  
Therapy is not that scary  
My life will get better and I'll feel so merry  
But I've tried it before.  
It doesn't work  
I walk out the door  
I watch them smirk  
And bam, my life is the same again.  
Doctors think they know best  
An audience staring at me  
Like they understand  
Like they have the key  
But they don't.  
The spotlight always picking out me  
Alone in the wide wide sea  
Trapped in a cage  
Rage in that cage  
Spotlight is blackened  
Stage is naked  
And the audience is gone ...

There's a tight rhythm to this poem with good variation of line length underlining the "mixed state" and some telling images towards the end that voice the sense of isolation.

**Rebecca Jelley**  
Year 10  
**Third Place**



## Tulip in December

To the flower that burst,  
Through the thick winters snow  
In a sheet of bleakness,  
You were my dot of hope  
My tulip in December.

I run to you when my world  
Gets cold and dreary  
You are my spot of reason.  
My whisper of joy  
My tulip in December.

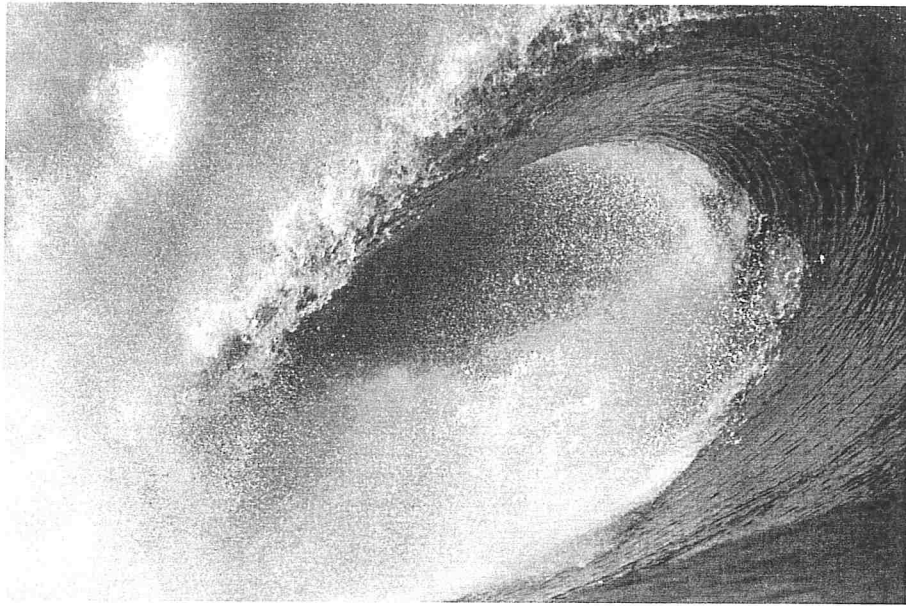
If there is a spot of sunshine in this world, it shines on you.  
People gravitate towards you  
Because of your light  
My tulip in December

You are my sunshine  
When you are sad, you can  
Borrow my spark  
To set you again burning bright  
My dear tulip in December.

This is a simple well-executed poem with a strong opening stanza and central image. I especially like the “dot of hope” in a “sheet of bleakness” – neat and evocative phrasing

**Laura Gillett**  
Year 10  
Commended

# TSUNAMI



Coming in, from the distance  
Crashing like a bomb  
Destruction heading into shore  
In a moment, all will be gone.

With power, with speed  
No time to run at all  
Sprinting in, round the horizon  
People flee, panic in all.

Buildings tremble, knocked down like dominos  
When the water comes in they put up no fight  
The wave crawls up the street  
The tsunami strikes, late at night.

There is a very good energy in this poem, it has a powerful momentum like the tsunami itself, generated by the shorter phrases and strong consonants.

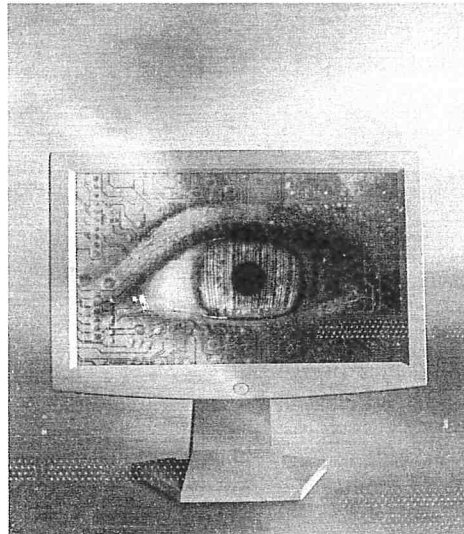
**George Hardman**  
Year 10  
Commended

## My Digital Friend

I had a digital friend.  
I designed him, I named him  
And I made him my own.

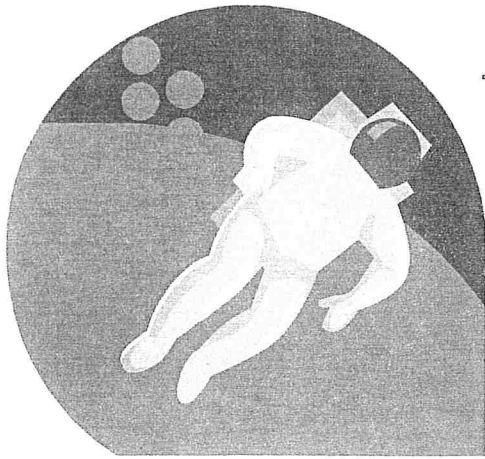
I sat there for long hours of  
My day improving him.  
He was amazing,  
Nothing could compare to him.

I was proud of my own creation  
But then in an instant he was gone forever.  
The power went off  
And I'd forgotten to save him.



I like the humour behind this poem. It has a good central metaphor too and a simple message in an original treatment.

**David O'Brien**  
Year 10  
Commended



## The Spaceman

He is cocooned in the blackness of space,  
The universe flashes before his eyes.  
But a shadow is cast over his face,  
Why can't he join the world under the skies?

Infinite knowledge is useless to him,  
When there is nobody to share it with.  
His understanding of feelings is slim,  
A relationship to him is a myth.

He wishes that he could go back to the earth,  
Talking, laughing, interacting with friends.  
But others regard his wishes with mirth,  
They know people look after their own ends.

The spaceman signs, he is truly alone.  
Are we all spacemen, in worlds of our own?

This poem deals with the topic of loneliness in a distinctive way with the metaphor of the spaceman. I particularly like the strong opening and closing lines.

**William Haste**  
Year 10  
Commended



# DEMON BARBER

In the streets of London,  
Air cold with a chilly breeze.  
Is a man sitting in Fleet Street,  
With a straight razor in his right hand.

Sharp as a carnivore's tooth,  
Glowing like the stars in the sky.  
This monstrous weapon lies in the hand of a barber,  
Working together, dispatching victims.

Quiet groans,  
Blood dripping,  
Cold, pale bodies.  
Dead.

The creaking chair falls back,  
The motionless body drops down  
as the sound of the snapped neck echoes back.  
But the body is still useful.

Diced and baked.  
Ready to be eaten.  
They crave the taste of Mrs Lovett's pies,  
They don't realise they're eating their neighbours.

His work is violent and gory,  
And you may think his work is wrong,  
But he's the Demon Barber of Fleet Street  
And he seeks revenge.

This captures the gruesome atmosphere of Sweeney Todd very well and sustains it through the poem, with effective use of alliteration – “the snapped neck echoes back” and the intriguing emphasis on the “revenge”.

**Dani Beard**  
Year 10  
Commended

# Speak up or Not?!

"Children should be seen and not heard."

"Everyone has the right to speak."

These two views contradict themselves.

Against my voice, so soft and meek.

I mutter underneath my breath.

The words I really want to say.

As I know that when I speak my mind.

Your good opinions of me stray.

So why bother telling me to speak up.

When you find my voice a disgrace.

You find me annoying, childish, unbearable.

Yet you still want to show off my face.

Why do you bother nagging?

Then go back on your word.

These rules through time are wrong nor right.

But to me all sound absurd!

This is a very well made poem, the idea neatly expressed with confident handling of rhythm and rhyme. I enjoyed it.

**Petrice Gordon**

Year 10

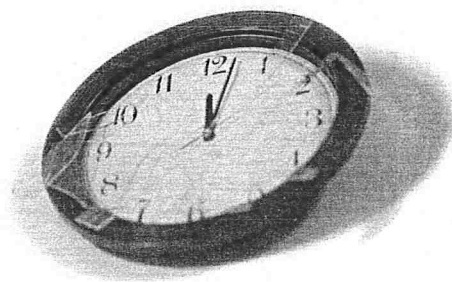
Commended

# Ivan's Hammer

Ivan has a hammer  
That he keeps beside his bed.  
It's shinier than silver,  
And it's heavier than lead.

He wakes to his alarm each day;  
It's time to go to school.  
And Ivan has the perfect way  
To utilize his tool.

And he leaves the house for school  
His mother stares in shock.  
Yes, every day his mother  
Has to buy a brand-new clock!



I like the ease with which this amusing tale is told – the form is well judged and used to good effect so that everything works in a smooth, assured manner.

**Partaap Kalirai**  
Year 10  
Commended

