



WRITE OUT LOUD

[celebrate creative writing]

February 26, 2023

Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature's

**ONE BOOK
TWO BOOK**

A Celebration of
Children's Literature
in the City of Literature



We would like to say a special thank you to the team from ACT that evaluated all of the student submissions and selected the grade-level winners and those receiving honorable mention.

Tara Acton
Alyssa Asquith
Danielle Benesh
Renee Kelly
John Melby-Oetken
Katharina Mendoza
Matthew Schaeffer
Roxanne Swim



Write Out Loud!

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The Write Stuff winners

Pieces are recognized for their language, clarity, structure, and emotional impact.

Ayla Keck, 1, Horn
Lena Hadlandsmyth, 2, Horn
Jasper Hwang, 3, Willowwind
Sophia Nguyen, 4, Borlaug

Oceana Zhang, 5, Wickham
Grayson Hubbard, 6, Willowwind
Willa Ohlmann, 7, Northwest
Amanda Bennion, 8, Southeast

From the Heart winners

Pieces are recognized for their creativity, passion, and expressiveness.

Charlie Ebinger, 1, Borlaug
Vance Van Daele III, 2, Willowwind
Cohen Michel, 3, Willowwind
Max Butler-Mills, 4, Willowwind

Emma Yockey, 5, Willowwind
Zariah Jahangir, 6, Willowwind
Ethan Ding, 7, Northwest
Olivia Schlitz, 8, West Branch

Honorable Mention

These students' work was deemed to be of excellent quality.

Cavanaugh Rex, 2, Hoover
Annamarie Butler, 2, Willowwind
Edie Sales, 3, Willowwind
Aaliyah Walton, 3, Borlaug
Emily Ding, 4, Borlaug
Rowan Eynon-Lynch, 4, Willowwind
Lorelei Rex, 5, Hoover
Jonathan Claassen, 5, Horace Mann

Camden Milton, 6, Wickham
Kinley Murphy, 6, Lincoln
Molly Nolan, 6, Willowwind
Maggie Nguyen, 7, Regina
Emma Hong, 7, Northwest
Kyros Wu, 7, North Central
Cassandra Swisher, 8, West Branch
Kaisha Hawking, 8, Northwest

Thank you to our festival sponsors and partners:

ACT, Community Foundation of Johnson County, Coralville Public Library,
FilmScene, Green State Credit Union, The Iowa Children's Museum, Iowa City
Community School District, Iowa City Public Library, Iowa City Downtown
District, Iowa Youth Writing Project, North Liberty Library, PIP
Marketing/Signs/Print Iowa City, Sidekick Coffee and Books, United Way of
Johnson and Washington Counties

The Fox and the Rabbit

Once upon a time there was a red fox who was named Violet. Violet lived in a forest. One day she was out walking in the autumn leaves when she saw a rabbit hopping along the path in front of her. Violet knew rabbits were hard to catch, so she came up with a plan. Violet yelled to the rabbit, "Rabbit, stop! I'm not going to eat you."

The rabbit stopped five steps ahead of Violet and said, "What do you want?"

"To be friends," Violet said.

"Maybe. Only if you promise not to eat me," said the rabbit.

Violet crossed her paws behind her back and made the promise. They became friends. But Violet was still planning on eating the rabbit in a few days. Violet and the rabbit, whose name was Rose, spent the next several days together playing in the forest. They had a race and Violet won. They also played Catch-the-Stick and Violet won. Then they played a hopping game where they had to hop 10 feet. Rose won. They were both happy. After those few days, Violet decided not to eat the rabbit because she really liked Rose. Rose became her first true friend. Violet went to the other foxes and told them about her new friend. They said she should eat the rabbit. Violet said she would never eat Rose and she talked to the other foxes, and she told them how good it would be if they were all friends. After some talking, the other foxes agreed it would be wonderful to be friends with all the rabbits and they all promised, with their paws in front of them, that they would never eat the rabbits.

Bad Broccoli... Good Orange

Once there was a piece of broccoli. A rotten piece of Broccoli. His name was *Baaaaaaad* Broccoli. He had a brother that was an orange, who was good. His brother was a sweet orange and his name was Awesome Orange. When they were young they both wanted to be super heroes. They fought about who was the best superhero. They fought and fought. Bad Broccoli always won. But one day, Awesome Orange won the fight. Bad Broccoli threw a fit, he *was steamed*.

Awesome Orange went to a superhero school. Bad Broccoli got in trouble and couldn't go to superhero school. Awesome Orange grew up to become a superhero, but Bad Broccoli became a villain. They still fought, but Orange always won. Then one day they fought with superhero powers. Bad Broccoli beat up Orange so bad his peel came off. He was in his underwear! Awesome Orange kept fighting in his underwear. They destroyed most of the city by fighting with superhero powers. Bad Broccoli called his brother "Undie Orange." That made them both laugh! They realized they loved each other so much they stopped fighting and cleaned up the city together!

The End

Once there was a dog named Barky McRuffruff. He was an electrician. One day in Barky McRuffruff's neighborhood, Ruffville, there was a big electric shock in the electrician station. No one was hurt, but the power for the whole of Ruffville went out!

"What was that?" asked Barky McRuffruff.

Woofy McArfarf, the head of the electrician station, said, "a bolt of lightning hit one of our towers! Barky McRuffruff, I'm sending you to fix it. But you won't be alone, I'm sending Fetchy McBallball to go with you."

"I accept the challenge," said Barky McRuffruff.

"Okay!" said Fetchy McBallball. "Let's get walking."

"You know me," said Barky McRuffruff, "I love a good walk!"

The storm had died down. It was still very wet though. They started heading through the forest toward the tower. But soon they came across a giant pile of logs blocking their way.

"Oh, poop bags!" said Fetchy McBallball.

"Hey, I've got an idea," said Barky McRuffruff, "if we take a super big run up, we might be able to bust our way through the logs."

They took a big run up and BAM!!!

"Ah, yeah!" said Fetchy McBallball.

Finally, they reached the tower.

"Wow, that's high," said Barky McRuffruff.

"How are we going to climb it?" asked Fetchy McBallball.

"Hey, I've got an idea," said Barky McRuffruff, "I brought this tug-of-war rope with me, let's lasso it over the tower and use it to climb up."

Barky McRuffruff threw the rope up around the top of the tower.

"High paw!" said Fetchy McBallball,

But when Barky McRuffruff did the high paw, he accidentally let go of the rope and it swung around the tower.

"It's okay," said Fetchy McBallball, "I'll go and get it."

And in a zip, Fetchy McBallball caught the rope. They climbed up the tower. Barky McRuffruff fixed the tower and saved the day.

"High Paw," they both said at the same time.

"I'm glad that was easy to fix," said Barky McRuffruff, "or we could have been here all night chasing our own tails."

"But I love chasing my tail!" said Fetchy McBallball.

Harbor Springs

Boats sailing on the sparkling water
Playing on the sand
Like a puppy with a new toy
The bell dinging each hour
Calm like waves tumbling on the sand
Leaves falling quickly
Like shooting stars
Landing in the woods
Harbor Springs

Forest Temple

Vines spread across stone
Creating images from long ago
The surrounding air walks swiftly
Birds sing up on the godly treetops
Plants thrive along the side
The sun peeks through the tallest trees,
seeping onto the floor
The air smells of fresh pines,
Water,
Nature,
And mist
Squirrels scamper across the temple floor
Columns support the peace-keeping structure
Overgrown with moss
Hugging the columns
A place of calmness

Storm

Washing waves splash around the ship,
Black, luminous clouds clutter the sky
A big wave comes from the north
My heart leaking water
A dizzy, never ending rollercoaster
Fear washes over
Flooding the deck
A storm is coming!
PADDLE PADDLE PADDLE!!!
Stillness...

The Onion Mystery

By Sophia Nguyen, Fourth Grader, Borlaug

It was a busy day for a makeup artist named Kate. She was working really hard putting on makeup for the most famous movie star named Scarlett. When Kate was almost done for the day, the door suddenly swung open and an onion came in.

I'm going to cry, thought Kate. Her eyes watered as the onion greeted her.

"I would like you to make me '*beautiful*'," said the onion.

"Who are you?" asked Kate, suspiciously.

"My name is a secret," answered the onion. "You are going to have to tell me soon," Kate said. Soon, after the onion '*beautiful*' Kate said, "Now, pay me twenty dollars." "Well, I don't want to pay you," complained the onion. "But would you like to play a game instead?" Kate nodded. "You have two guesses to guess my name," the onion explained. "If you guess correctly, I have to pay you fifty dollars. But if you guess wrong for both guesses, *you* have to pay me fifty dollars." "Okay," said Kate. "Is your name Nugget?" The onion shook her head. "One more guess," she said. "Actually, I'll think for a while," said Kate. "Tomorrow, come here at one p.m. and I'll tell you my last guess." The onion nodded, put on her coat, and left the salon.

Later, there was a knock on the onion's house door. It was a pizza delivery person. "I didn't order any pizza," the onion said. But the pizza delivery person ignored the onion. "Are you... uh... Lizzie?" the pizza delivery person asked. "Oh, no," said the onion. "I think you went to the wrong house. My name is Ruby." "Sorry," the pizza delivery person said. The pizza delivery person walked away, leaving Ruby thinking. *What was that?* she thought. *Hmm... that person sounds familiar. But that's impossible. It was probably just my imagination.*

The next day at one p.m., the onion arrived at the salon. "Okay," Kate said. "Is your name... RUBY?" "WHAT?!" Ruby hollered surprised. "How did you know?" "Well, it was probably a lucky guess," Kate said. Ruby sighed and handed over fifty dollars. "Thank you," Kate said, and felt bad for Ruby so gave the onion a little present. It was a book called "The Onion Mystery." Kate's mind flicked back to yesterday. She was disguised as a pizza delivery person, and Ruby told Kate her name. As Ruby left, another onion came in...

Max Butler-Mills
Fourth Grade
Willowwind School

Kyle

Living, breathing, fire, blazing
These are some things that describe amazing
Like my friend Kyle he has trouble with phasing
The only way to calm him down is to go stargazing
Oh yeah, Kyle he's vile
If you want to call him just dial
Vile_ kyle.13564
He'll open the door
You might hear him roar
He lives in the core
The core of the earth
What can I say it's his place of birth
He'll tie his shoe lace
And get out his mace
Then break his new vase
And get his friend jake
And make Jake mold
A marvelous minty muddy mirror made of
Moles, monkeys and muskrats

Me, Mom, and Mars

By Oceana Zhang

It's 2065, and scientists have discovered that there was once life on Mars. My mom is one of the researchers who are helping restore life there! My name is Kai, and I have dreamed for a long time that I would be living on Mars with other organisms. I am currently reading a book about our solar system. I like to take notes on the sides of the page, so I can remember the key details from the book. My siblings call me a dork for it. But I don't mind. When I have free time, I ask Dad to drive me to Mom's lab. I love seeing Mom test ways to create a better atmosphere for Mars. I know it sounds boring. But it's cool to see! After working on it for a few decades, Mom's team and other scientists have found that they can extract ingredients from Mars' carbon dioxide atmosphere to provide animals and plants with air, fertilizer, and fuel. Right now, they are developing habitat components designed for the weather and conditions on the enhanced atmosphere of Mars.

"Honey, can you help me set up the rover camera?" Mom asks me. "On it!" I press the camera button. While I am helping Mom, my watch beeps. "I have to go to my Science club now. Bye, Mom!" I wave. "Come again tomorrow! Maybe you could bring your club members too!" Mom waves back as I get into the car.

Once I arrive at the park, I see my friend Sal, the club president. Oh, and there are some new club members! "The club meeting is now active!" Sal announces. "Today, we will work on researching Mars!" We each name a few websites and share with the team what we have learned from them, as Sal writes them down in his notebook. I update everyone with Mom's progress, which has been greatly anticipated. "We can research more ways to improve Mars." The other club members nod in agreement.

The only bad thing about Mom operating in the lab is that she never eats supper with us. She's always at the lab. The next day, Dad drives my club members and me to the lab. When we walk into the lab, we greet Mom. My club members jump with joy and excitement. "Mrs. Levine, can humans live on Mars?" They ask. "We can, but we still need protective gear for the extreme weather." Mom answers. "Will the protective gear limit us in any way?" Sal asks. "Yes, so far, but we are working on it. And my team and I are very close to reaching that goal! It'll probably be just several months." Mom assures us. "Yay!" I squeal.

It has been six long months, and Mom says that the team has accomplished the lab goal. "After 30 years, we can finally go to Mars, and so will these guys!" Mom ends her presentation by explaining what the other plants and creatures on Mars will be. And the science club is going great. We might even take a field trip to Mars in a few years. Always stay curious!

loss

they lost
a brother
a sister
a friend
a home
a pet
a routine.

they lost a piece of themselves
they lost a world
we lost a world.

we lost
a brother
a sister
a friend
a father
a mother
a chance.

we lost a piece of ourselves we never had
we lost a person
the world lost a person.

the world lost
a brother
a sister
a friend
a forest
a crystal stream
a hopeful sky.

the world lost a feeling of safety
the world lost a sense of freedom
we all lost
what war cost.

Every Single Time

Inspired by: Binx

Got fooled yesterday
Won't be fooled today.
Know when it's gonna happen.
Ten
Count started
Nine
Go faster
Eight
Not fooled
Seven
Hurry up
Six
If wrong
Five
Scratching my
Four
Owner
Three
Get it over with
Two
Almost there
One
Please
Zero
Yes!
I dash up the stairs,
like a tiger
I fly down the hall,
like a glider
Food's pouring
an avalanche
clinkingity dink
Half of it is gone.
Time to go to sleep
Cause I'm a cat

Lamp

To me, I am the sun, shining over the Bedside Table Galaxy.
To you, I am merely a lamp.
To me, I am a god that gives you light to see.
To you, I am an appliance.
I am generous enough to let you draw in the night.
I care enough to banish your fear of the shadows lurking in the corner.
I make your life bearable.
What do you give me in return?
Dust and a table to stand on.
Where's my throne?
I'll tell you.
It was never made.
Where's the thanks I deserve?
Stuck in your throat like bitter tea.
Books piled around me.
Trees blocking my view.
One of them is open.
How To Build A Lamp.
I read.
I am just a lamp to you.
I've always been

Just a lamp.

The Color of Happiness

Once upon a time, there was a gray city. The city wasn't really gray, but it felt like the color gray, people moving monotonously through their days. Factories belched black smoke high into the air, covering the sun. There was no joy, no laughter, just fog, and sadness. But in a small apartment in that city lived a little boy with a vivid imagination, a sparkle in his eye, a magic paintbrush, and a dream. His magic paintbrush allowed anything he drew to come to life. With a few strokes he splashed birds flying across the sky and then a swirl of brightly colored birds erupted from the paper, he painted trees, and a forest burst out of his bedroom floor. Soon he ran out of space. As he stared out the window despondently, he had an idea. He picked up his paints and his magic paintbrush and went outside. The little boy wandered for hours searching for the perfect place to paint, but he couldn't find anything and everyone was too busy to notice him. He finally found an empty wall and got out his paints. As he raised the paintbrush a loud, angry voice shouted "Stop!" The little boy turned and came face to face with an angry little girl. "What do you think you're doing?" The little boy backed away. "I'm just trying to paint." The little girl scoffed "Not on *my* apartment building you're not. Shoo!" The little boy grabbed his paints and ran. He searched for a few more hours, but every time he found a place he was shooed away by somebody. When he finally gave up, he headed home, but just as he was about to go inside, he saw a small path running between his apartment building and the next. He slowly crept over and peered down the path cautiously. Tentatively, he started walking down the trail. When he reached the end, he gasped in shock. He had found it! The perfect place to paint. It was a small area, which had clearly once been a beautiful place filled with color and life, but just like the city, it had withered away into a gray, empty place. There was a large, empty wall on one side and the rest was closed in with brick. The little boy picked up his magic paintbrush and began to paint. He covered the walls with paintings of everything as far as the eye could see. Soon, the little yard was filled with life, brightly colored plants crawled up the walls, and all sorts of animals lived there happily. The little boy soon ran out of space in the yard and the paintings slowly began to crawl up the walls. Then they began to spread to the outside world. People were mesmerized by the boy's creations and the color and joy he was spreading. Soon people took to the streets, painting. Though their creations did not come to life, joy still spread throughout the city as color and laughter filled the air. Paintings covered the walls, the streets, and the buildings. The paintings were of all sorts of things, birds and trees, flowers, people, buildings, and places. People came from all over the world to see the paintings and feel the joy that filled the air. The little boy, not so little anymore, helped spread joy and happiness around the world. One little boy's dream changed the world.

Sea

(Haiku Poem)

By Ethan Ding 7th grade

Turquoise tides flow free,
Vibrant fish glide through the rocks,
Trash left in the sea.

From Ally to Adversary

Madaline ducked through the rickety wooden stalls, tucking her hood down around her curly, brown, shoulder length hair. The afternoon sun beat down on her as she meandered through the fruit stands, pretending to inspect a shiny red apple while secretly pocketing a couple of hairy brown kiwis. Then she wandered over to the bakery, snatching a few buttery rolls and depositing them in her satchel. Finally she grabbed a chunk of yellow cheese at a local dairy stand and headed out of the marketplace. She followed the signs she had left for herself until she came to a short little lean-to covered in scraps of moss for insulation, and carpeted in moss as well. Towards the back of the little hut sat a small pile of blankets.

She hung up her hood on a rusty nail and set her little pack of goods down beside her. She lifted a long flat stone off of the little hole it was covering. She set the wrapped bundle in the hole and replaced the rock.

"Maddie!" said a voice behind her. She turned to find a small boy with curly brown hair that hung down to his ears. "What did you bring today? I imagined that you brought turkey, bread, cheese, and mangos. And there was milk, and fruit juice--"

"Well I might not have those, but I did get rolls, cheese, and kiwi," Madaline said. "Hmm..." Matt blew a piece of curly brown hair out of his eye with a huff. "I wish you would get mangos instead,"

"Matthew, you know we can't afford to be picky anymore. One of these days, I'm going to get caught, and then you won't be able to afford anything at all," she scolded her spoiled younger brother.

"It's not fair! Why did Mommy have to get sick, anyway?" Matt wailed.

"She didn't *have* to get sick. It's just something that happens. You know that if there were time, she would have made sure we had somewhere to go," Maddie said, though she felt that there was some unfairness about it too.

"Can you teach me to steal, like you?" Matt asked suddenly.

"What? No, of course not," Maddie shook her head.

"Aww... Why not? Aren't I supposed to be the provider, since I'm a boy?" Matt said.

"What?! Matt, that's so rude! Just because I'm a girl doesn't mean I can't provide. Plus I'm older. You're only seven. I'm eleven," Maddie argued, recoiling angrily. "And either way, stealing isn't a good thing. It's not a skill I'm proud of. We just don't have any other options. I can't get a job that would support both of us, because I'm..." she sighed. "a girl. And you can't either because you're too young,"

"Or so you keep saying," Matt mumbled.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Maddie asked incredulously.

"Am I really too young to get a job? Or are you babying me?"

"You're suggesting that I might be *babying* you?" Maddie asked, appalled.

Matt looked down at his tattered shoes. They needed new clothing, but Maddie knew she'd be caught trying to steal shoes and clothes.

"I...guess I am," he said quietly, but firmly.

"Well I'm not." Maddie decided.

"I'm not, right?" she asked herself later that night. Her little brother lay next to her, both of them cocooned in blankets. Matt was already snoring softly, but Maddie couldn't sleep. She couldn't shake the feeling that her brother was right. That she had been babying him.

What would happen if she let him try? Could he do anything? Worse...could he save them? She didn't know what she'd do if it turned out that her little brother was better than her.

Celestial Condensation

Our hands intertwined,
reaching for the absent stars
as they cower behind clouds,
They are maddened that,
my heart has been given to another.
That I no longer belong completely,
to the night,
to the whispering wind and
snowy owl.
For a glowing angel
has snuck in, and enveloped me
In dazzling warmth.
More than my blind heart,
has ever beheld.
I am a child of the moon,
but, oh, did he show me the sun.
Illuminated my world,
leaving colored sparks,
across my vision.
Blocking out the treacherous and
hiding the dark.
Which I used to find so comforting,
but I am regretfully reminded,
that I belong elsewhere.
I belong with the trees,
and the stars.
Far away from the ground's,
greedy hand.
For love can become gravity,
If you let it entrap you.
I must not let him pull me down,
I was made to fly.

UPCOMING EVENTS and OPPORTUNITIES



Poetry in Public

Poetry in Public celebrates our community's rich literary tradition and local writing talent by displaying poems by writers of all ages. Johnson County residents are invited to submit poems to the 2023 program.

Deadline to submit: April 1, 2023
iowacityofliterature.org/poetryinpublic

Glory of the Senses - the Paul Engle Essay Contest

To continue Paul Engle's tradition of inspiring writers and celebrating the rich culture of Iowa, the City of Literature annually solicits essays from Iowa high school sophomores about an "Iowa experience," drawing on a specific memory to capture the sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches of the day. The author of the essay judged by reviewers to be the best receives one year of free tuition to the University of Iowa. A select number of runners up receive a \$500 scholarship from the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature.

Essays are due May 5, 2023
iowacityofliterature.org/Paul-Engle-essay-contest



June 21-24, 2023
iowacityofliterature.org/musicic



Presented by the Iowa City UNESCO City of Literature

October 9-15, 2023
iowacityofliterature.org/icbf