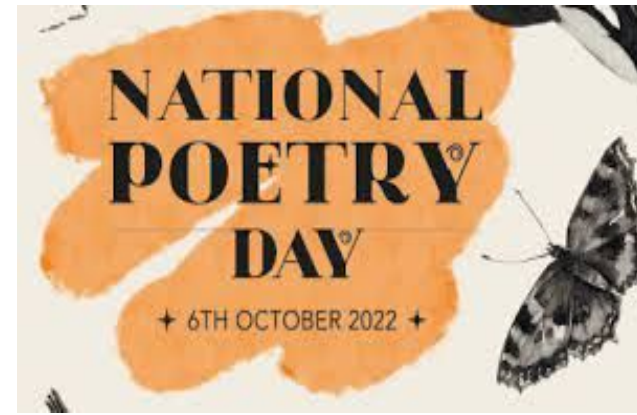




Winners of the CSG Poetry Competition



National Poetry Day Theme



THE ENVIRONMENT



Seasons by Athena, 7R

Spring: The sun opens its eyes once more
Joy leaps out of the land
The birds again now sing and soar
And darkness can lay down its head

Summer: A pointillism painting of life
Each blossom wafting sweet fragrance
As beauty finds no limit or strife
And laughter peals out like bells



Autumn: Golden light filtered through a canopy of fire
Sorrowful trees weep withered leaves as
Their green companions forsake life
Darkness steals the vulnerable land
As life prepares for its desolate sleep



Winter: Barren trees adorn with jewels of frost
The tears of the Willow freeze on the glass lake
The silence of slumber muffles the sound long-lost
As life returns to its annual stupor.

Judge's Comments: *I love the way Athena has created such a vivid picture of each season using delicate details and some brilliant imagery.*



The Lake by Ava, 8C

It is so peaceful
The lake
So peaceful
Framed by thick trees
Barely a ripple
Across the serene mirror
I'm scared
To break the peace
To shatter this perfect image
And push the kayak
Into the water
Scared to disturb the snow white
swans
Dispersed across the lake

But I do
And we noisily enter the water
The kayak leaving ripples
Behind us
Like trailing ribbons
A sense of unknown
Prickles my skin
It is so eerie
Alone on this lake
Not a human in sight
Apart from me
And my dad
The silence is so deafening
I want to turn back
But we don't

Instead we push the boat
Closer to the intimidating
Majestic beasts
The swans
I've heard they can break your arm
They are so strong
There is something so ominous
About them
As they glide towards you
Barely a ripple behind them
Like a ball rolling
On a glossy surface



You can only recognise
They are moving
From the mumbling
Babbling
Of their feet
Underwater
I hold my breath
As one drifts towards us
So close I can almost
Touch its oily, soft
feathers

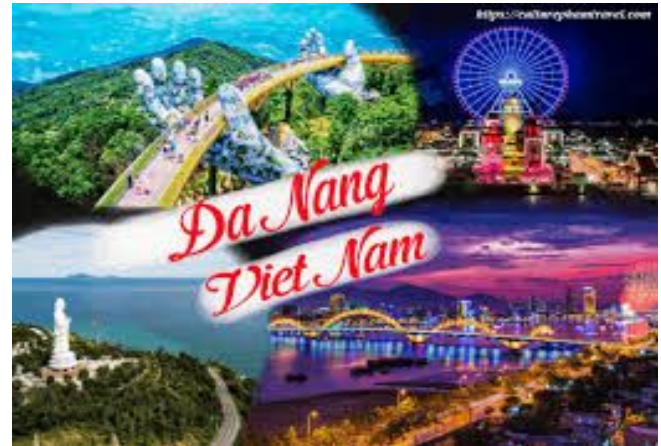
Judge's Comments: *Ava completely immerses the reader in this moment. By using carefully chosen details, she captures the wonder we can feel when we are lucky enough to come close to nature.*

Almost
Feel the water run off them
Almost
Smell the scent of algae
Rising from it
They are so beautiful
Yet terrifying
Their beautiful
Half a heart necks
The symbol of love



Afternoon Conversations with Family by Amie, 9M

In the midst of a field
Next to a childhood home
Where I lie, sole, still, whole
Is a single bee
It buzzes incessantly over my head
Lazy circles, reminiscent of a slow moving waltz
Time seems to stop here
In the hazy heat of Da Nang
As if not even seconds can surpass the red hot sun
Its reflection which dances on the sea
The crashing waves calming
In the face of an entity which slows all
Among the palm trees taller than skyscrapers
Which, as I come back each year, seem to climb higher
and higher
Their height beacons proudly what they are
A new, metropolitan era, a different world.



In my field, mere metres away from masses of
cerulean ocean
The giddy but distant squeals of a child,
The scent of my grandmothers, my cousins, aunts and
uncles
Diep, Thann, Bao, Thu, Ky, Vy and more, so many
more
They hum along to an old ballad, of which all of
Vietnam might know the tune
But none can recite more than a few words
Beyond, the roar of a moped
All this, and yet what resonates the most is a single
bee
The fuzz on its body, like the grass, like the trees
Ruffled by the slightest breeze
There is sweat on the back of my neck

Later, as I board the plane, this is what I
remember
The scent of home, of trees, of ocean brine;
the roar of a moped
The squeal of a child, the sweat on the back
of my neck - and
That single, drowsy bee, in the late evening
sunset of Da Nang.

Judge's Comments:
*This is such an
evocative poem. I
love the way Amie
has used the senses
and repetition of the
details of the place
and her memory of
it.*



The Passive Accomplice by Emily, 10T

The bristles scrub against my teeth
2 minutes, twice a day
3 months until it is replaced
500 years before its memory has vanished
6 lifetimes, will we make it that far?



My throat scratches
I thickly swallow
I gulp it down, the hollow plastic reflecting
my guilt
269,000 tons, 1.1 million turtles
How much longer until the former
outnumbers the latter?



I scrunch the paper into a compact ball
My last chance at a second chance
It slips into the general waste and I watch it fall
The trees sway mournfully outside,
Their branches droop and sag just a little more
I look away

Judge's Comments: *I love the way Emily has taken a simple topic - brushing our teeth - and powerfully shown its impact on the environment through the personification of the trees in the last 3 lines.*



Gaia Weeps No Longer by Moya, 10M

Gaia weeps no longer
Her tears were
For her children long dead! and
We stole them
We set the corpses alight we delight
With glee, with flame, dancing
In our eyes. And still
Her oil arteries we scrape open
Each tree plucked; a heartstring



So we race to raze in the heat of haste
Amnesia's heavy fog settles softly, styles
thick
We welcome it with open arms and closed
eyes
Gaia's death pyre rises far higher and
We feed the flames, pretending
That our flesh won't burn, pretending
That we can run from what we run on
And Gaia has wept
Her parched eyes gaze ; a sigh of sentiment,
but
She has no more tears to calm her fire, her
ire, and
Gaia weeps no longer
No Gaia weeps
No longer



Judge's Comments: *This poem contains an impressive use of language; the musical qualities such as internal rhyme ('pyre'/'higher' and 'fire'/'ire') create a strong feeling of lament for the damage we are doing to our earth.*