2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award Anthology
Preface

“What a strange thing! / to be alive / beneath cherry blossoms.”
So wrote the Japanese poet Kobayashi Issa, nearly three hundred years ago. He knew all about life. He lost his mother when he was three; he was sent to the city; he was robbed of his inheritance; his house burnt down; and in the space of a few years he lost three children and his wife. He wrote in another poem that everything he had loved ‘pricked like a bamble.’

The world does this. It confronts. It challenges. It hurts. It is sometimes blesses us, too. But how to respond? Issa came to the same conclusion as many other great artists over the centuries: through art.

Art is what defines us as humans. There is no other species that indulges in self-expression in the same way we do. We paint, we act, we write, we sing. Of all these art forms there is none as clean and precise and exacting as poetry. It is distilled language and feeling. It is a painting in works, a snapshot of a moment, or a chronicle covering years.

When I write there are two moments when the process is
at its most joyful: the beginning and the end. The beginning tingles with possibility; the ending is a kind of triumph. So it is with the Budding Poets’ Award. In the beginning we run workshops. Our tutors ran a variety of stimulating exercises – provoking (or perhaps a better work would be evoking) poems from the students. There is a beauty in the moment where a child who has never written before sits, writes, and then finds that they have written a poem. There is a shock and a joy – often because we suffer under the delusion that our life is normal, boring, not worth sharing for another. There is a wonder. There is sometimes and hopefully an urge to do that again. The excitement of possibility charged the autumn air.

Of the thousands of poems that are written and submitted I get to meet all the shortlisted poets and hear them read their poems in their own voices. I get to hear how they came up with their ideas, what it meant to them to be shortlisted, how they framed their language to express what they wanted to say. And this is a thrilling moment as well.

Those shortlisted poems are included in this anthology, but in a sense this is just the tip of the iceberg. Really all
the poets and teachers who took part in this process are winners. The teachers because they took time out of their high pressured schedules to devote to exciting and inspiring their students. And the students too, because to write and share a poem is to open one's self up, to express a feeling or a moment is to take a risk.

There are funny poems here, sad poems, ones that are quirky and bitter sweet. The poets here are all risk takers and their work has been recognized in this collection. But beyond this, all the poets who took part have triumphed. They have affirmed what makes us uniquely human: to feel, to laugh, to love, to express and to share it with others.

Justin Hill
Assistant Professor (2014/15)
Department of English, City University of Hong Kong
Speeches by Guests at Prize Presentation
Ceremony

Chan Pui Tin, Chief Curriculum Development Officer, Gifted Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau

Honourable Guests, Budding Poets, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to celebrate with the award winners in this ceremony of the 2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award. We hope that the learning experiences from the Budding Poets Award will culminate in our award winners’ recitals and exchanges that will follow today.

Celebrating its 10th birthday, we are glad that the Hong Kong Budding Poets Award has become a platform of demonstrating creativity in writing poetry. Speaking of poetry and creativity, let’s think about poetry with some playfulness. Please allow me to share with you a joke I read online:

There was a teacher lecturing on map reading. After
explaining about latitude, longitude, degrees and minutes the teacher asked, ‘Suppose I asked you to meet me for lunch at 23 degrees, 4 minutes north latitude and 45 degrees, 15 minutes east longitude…?’ After a silence, a voice volunteered, ‘I guess you’d be eating alone.’

Learning from the joke, I am sure that none of us would think that writing a poem is just a matter of blending theoretical poetic devices unless we expect to have a voiceless, lonely piece of work.

Poetry lives across time, not because of the techniques but because of a great range and depth of emotion it conveys in very few words, and the way it caresses our hearts.

Poetry still lives in this 21st century. This Imagination Age leads us to learn from poetry from another angle. Supposing that creation, including writing, is about researching information, utilising skills and techniques, then what becomes important is what the author decides to choose and how to use such knowledge. Success lies in knowing what to include and, more importantly, what to leave out. That is the very core of the creativity, critical thinking, communication,
collaboration, information technology literacy, personal and social responsibilities demanded in this century. The moment we throw judgment and quality out the window, we are in trouble. What kind of trouble are we talking about here? I read a poem by a 14-year-old online lately. It tells us precisely:

Our Generation

Our generation will be known for nothing.
Never will anybody say,
We were the peak of mankind.
That is wrong, the truth is
Our generation was a failure.
Thinking that
We actually succeeded
Is a waste. And we know
Living only for money and power
Is the way to go.
Being loving, respectful, and kind
Is a dumb thing to do.
Forgetting about that time,
Will not be easy, but we will try.
Changing our world for the better
Is something we never did.
Giving up
Was how we handled our problems.
   Working hard
   Was a joke.
   We knew that
People thought we couldn’t come back
   That might be true,
Unless we turn things around

So, this is how it will go if we reverse the poem from the bottom to the top:

   Unless we turn things around
   That might be true,
People thought we couldn’t come back
   We knew that
   Was a joke.
   Working hard
Was how we handled our problems.
   Giving up
   Is something we never did.
Changing our world for the better
   Will not be easy, but we will try.
   Forgetting about that time,
   Is a dumb thing to do.
   Being loving, respectful, and kind
Is the way to go.
Living only for money and power
Is a waste. And we know
We actually succeeded
Thinking that
Our generation was a failure.
That is wrong, the truth is
We were the peak of mankind.
Never will anybody say,
Our generation will be known for nothing.

A coin always has two sides, and even more. We live in an era in need of reverse thinking not only for sake of creativity, but for promoting diversity and dialogue, respecting identity and heritage among generations and cultures. We were glad to find the open-mindedness and assertiveness integral to reverse thinking from what our budding poets put in their poems, what they shared in the interviews and their improvised writing this year.

Education is seen as having a major impact on the creativeness of individuals and on the creative climate, as emphasised in the report, Design, Creativity and Innovation: A Scoreboard Approach by Maastricht University, The Netherlands in 2009. With the
concerted effort with The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education and universities such as City University of Hong Kong dedicated to unleashing the creative potential of young people, we hope that the Hong Kong Budding Poets Award will continue to be an inspiring platform for talented students in creative writing.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the judges of this year's Award and the final adjudicators for their precious feedback. I congratulate all teachers, parents and budding poets.

Stay curious in pursuit of excellence. Thank you.
Speeches by Guests at Prize Presentation Ceremony

Iris Li, Corporate Services Manager, The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education

Honourable Guests, Teachers, Students, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour and pleasure to take part in the 2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets Award Prize Presentation Ceremony this morning to share the joy and achievements of the event with all of you. It is an annual event widely recognised and warmly welcomed by primary schools, secondary schools and international schools in Hong Kong. This year, we have received over 1,400 high-quality entries; this overwhelming response demonstrates a keen interest among our students.

Looking at the poems, we are very pleased to see our students’ excellent imagination and good use of language. This competition has given students an opportunity to strive for excellence in language and literature. We are delighted to see their pursuit of meaning through writing as they thought about the
issues in this century, such as space, feelings, inventions, conservation, adventures and time. Undoubtedly, the young poets’ outstanding performances are conducive to inspiring the minds of other students and fostering the cultural atmosphere of Hong Kong.

The competition aims to provide a platform for students to think creatively, nurture their passion for poetry, and further develop their abilities. Poetry is one of the most useful and motivational media for students to discuss and listen to the language, improve their vocabulary and use of metaphor. It also allows students to play with words, expressing their own individual styles.

We should thank all those involved in the collaborative effort behind the competition. After running for ten years since 2005, this is the first year that The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education co-organised the competition with the Gifted Education Section of the Education Bureau and City University of Hong Kong.

I would like to thank all the judges who have reviewed the thousands of poems. I would also like to thank the parents who helped inspire their children to read and
engender a love of poetry. Our gratitude should also go to the school heads for their encouraging support to students, and to the dedicated teachers who act as mentors for their students. I hope that we will continue to work together to promote poetry and creativity, as well as cross-cultural friendship and harmony for a more abundant life of tomorrow.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all winners of the Hong Kong Budding Poets Award. Without your participation, the vision of the competition could not be realised. I congratulate all of you on your outstanding performances, and wish you every success in your studies and future endeavours.

Thank you.
Preliminary Adjudicators

Lam Chi Ting, Akina  King George V School
Andrew Robinson  MFA in Creative Writing,
             City University of Hong Kong
Anneli Matheson  MFA in Creative Writing,
             City University of Hong Kong
Ashley Dean  MFA in Creative Writing,
             City University of Hong Kong
Barbara LeMond  Hong Kong International School
Berry Simon  MFA in Creative Writing,
             City University of Hong Kong
Tse Tao Wah, Bonnie  Ying Wa College
Tsang Chiu Wai, Henry  BA in English Studies,
             City University of Hong Kong
Leung Mei Yee, Claire  Ying Wa Primary School
Colum Murphy  MFA in Creative Writing,
             City University of Hong Kong
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Li Wing Sze, Dorothy</td>
<td>Gifted Education Section, Education Bureau</td>
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<td>Edmund Hugh Price</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Geoffrey Miller</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Helen Wong</td>
<td>United Christian College (Kowloon East)</td>
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<td>Hung Der</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Jacinta Read</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer May Lee</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Tang Shuk Yee, Jennifer</td>
<td>TWGHs Lui Yun Choy Memorial College</td>
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<td>Lee Hoi Yee, Jeramy</td>
<td>BA in English Studies, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Chui Ka Yin, Jerry</td>
<td>Carmel Divine Grace Foundation Secondary School</td>
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<td>Chok Ching Yee, Jinny</td>
<td>The Hong Kong Chinese Women's Club Hioe Tjo Yoeng Primary School</td>
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<td>Joseph James (Joe) Holroyd</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<td>Justin Hill</td>
<td>Department of English, City University of Hong Kong, and novelist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keane Shum</td>
<td>MFA in Creative Writing, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Melody Kong</td>
<td>BA in English Studies, City University of Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael Wong</td>
<td>Heung To Middle School (Tin Shui Wai)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nina Chu</td>
<td>Diocesan Girls' Junior School</td>
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<td>Lai Wai Man, Norris</td>
<td>Ying Wa College</td>
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<td>Lee Ho Cheung, Peter</td>
<td>Ying Wa Primary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lo Pik Yee</td>
<td>S.K.H St. Peter’s Primary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramida Din</td>
<td>The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun Hon Wing, Stella</td>
<td>Ma On Shan Methodist Primary School</td>
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<td>Wong Wai Shan, Vanessa</td>
<td>Holy Angels Canossian School</td>
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Gifted Education Section,
Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau

Department of English,
City University of Hong Kong
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<th>Final Adjudicators</th>
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<tr>
<td>Collier Nogues</td>
<td>Poet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eddie Tay</td>
<td>Department of English, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and poet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Henry W. Leung</td>
<td>Department of English, City University of Hong Kong, and Fulbright Scholar</td>
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<tr>
<td>James Shea</td>
<td>Department of Humanities and Creative Writing, Hong Kong Baptist University and poet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justin Hill</td>
<td>Department of English, City University of Hong Kong, and novelist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luis Francia</td>
<td>New York University and Hunter College, poet and author</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marilyn Chin</td>
<td>San Diego State University, anthologist, poet, and novelist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Alexander</td>
<td>Editor in Chief at the Asia Literary Review</td>
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<td>Viki Holmes</td>
<td>Poet</td>
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2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award
**Primary Section**

**Champion**

*Wong Nga Tung*

*Tuen Wan Catholic Primary School*

Theme: Nonsense

**Canny Kenny**

My classmate, Kenny, is canny. He does everything spectacularly. He slaps his face suddenly. It's one of his strange acts only. He talks to himself very often. He claps his hands like a dolphin. Maybe he thinks he is an actor. He keeps changing his character. Teachers find him very naughty. 'Cos he never answers seriously. 'Why did you come to school late?' 'There was a traffic jam in space!' He doesn't care about grades really. He wanders his thoughts freely. 'Where do you live, Kenny?' 'To infinity...and beyond, Miss Lee.'

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

I like how the poet characterizes her classmate. "He slaps his face suddenly," "He claps his hands like a dolphin." I love the cool rhymes: "often" with "dolphin," And the last couplet is brilliant: "Where do
you live, Kenny?" "To infinity...and beyond, Miss Lee."
My only question is why did the poet write this as a prose poem? One could see rhymed quatrains. However, on a second reading, yes, the paragraph makes one read the words faster, mimetic of how fast and uncanny this Canny Kenny might be.

Not sure if this prose poem structure was intentional, given the rhyme scheme, but this is an excellent poem: surprising turns, vivid imagery, playful. (But the Toy Story allusion at the end could have been more original.)
1st Runner-up

Audrey Tang

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Space

The Big Bang

The moon is below me,
I'm gonna crash!
And I fall ...
   fall ...
   and fall ...

Up above, a star explodes!
As loud as a buffalo!
And I fall ...
   fall ...
   and fall ...

Jupiter zooms here and there,
Why is it everywhere?
And I fall ...
   fall ...
   and fall ...
I whirl, twirl and swirl,
Please stop, I'm just a poor little girl!
And I fall ...
    fall ...
    and fall ...

A comet whistled past my head,
Oh, how I wished to be home in my cozy bed!
And I fall ...
    fall ...
    and fall ...

BAM!
The Big Bang!
I hit my head under the bed.

Final adjudicators’ comments:
Innovative construction and vivid imagery are the strengths of this poem. The ending is powerful and fits well with the free ranging imagination of the poet. The structure is innovative and suits the subject of the poem. The "as loud as a buffalo" line does not quite fit the rest of the poem.
I enjoy the dynamic kinetic movement of this poem. The speaker is falling in a dream, taking the universe with her. A nice witty pun in the end-- The Big Bang refers to both physics theory and a painful hit on the head, when the dreamer falls out of bed and is forced to wake up!
2nd Runner-up

Alison Mak

St. Paul’s Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Nonsense

The Unusual Shop

In the most unusual shop,
there were balloons that never pop.
People sold prunes, along with some hair,
and in a cage, there was a bear!

In there, you will see the most shocking sight,
for when it is night,
dolls as big as lions come to life,
and slit their throats with a knife.

There was a key that opens all doors,
and there were dogs sprawled on the floor.
There were cats floating in the water,
there was a child with no father.

The shop was called 'Pop Pepper'
which was famous for its nectar.
The shop owner was a gorilla,
and its favourite food was chinchillas.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This is a soundly constructed poem with good use of language/diction. The rhyme pairs mostly work (some not quite - especially in the third verse) and the rhythm is a bit hit and miss. The playful use of absurdity works well at times but is jarring at others. The overall image is consistent and striking. This is a shop that I would like to view from a safe distance!

Lively imagery, surprising turns, inventive rhymes. A fine poem given its competitors.
3rd Runner-up

Stephanie Kate Cannon
Diocesan Girls' Junior School

Theme: Nonsense

Come to Wonderland, they say,
And you’ll have lots of fun today.
Hurry, hurry, or you’ll be late,
Whoever is early doesn’t wait.

See the cheerful Yeti next door,
In magical zone number four.
The Abominable Snowman plays at the beach,
With sunburn rosy as a peach.
And if you look up very high,
There is Bigfoot, flying in the sky.

Quick, quick, there’s more to see,
No time to stop or have some tea.
Magic doesn’t come to you,
You must stick to it like glue.

This will surely make your mouth drop,
It’s the Sugar Plum Fairy, dancing hip-hop!
Now can you please look down there?
It’s Goldilocks and Papa Bear.
Ker-sploosh! A Witch dived into the water,
Sending splashes over my daughter.

Come, come, there’s no time to lose,
You might even make the news.
Don’t stop to have a bun,
Wonderland is too much fun.

Please look over here,
It’s King Kong having a beer.
And here’s Cinderella,
Stealing a pink umbrella!
If you look to the West,
You can see Goblins at their best.

The TV says it’s everything you like,
But all I ever wanted was a bike.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

Very nicely written poem with vivid images.

It is interesting to include so many characters of the fairy tales in the poem.
I like how the poet conjuring up the various fairy tale characters: Goldilocks, Sugarplum Fairy, Yeti, goblins, etc...
**Merit**

*Ryan Baum*

*St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School*

Theme: Feelings

**Fears**

A fish swims in the deep blue sea,
Though seeming mighty happy and free.
Deep down it fears,
And sheds its tears,
That in water an eye can’t see.

We all live in a big city,
Crowded, fast-paced, loud and busy,
We have our fears,
And shed our tears,
That we hide so none can see.

But hiding ourselves isn’t the way
To keep us happy through the days.
In heart we know,
But do not show.
Many things we dare not say.
So why don’t we let them all see,
That we should not be locked, not free.
Release our fears,
No need for tears,
This is how I want the world to be.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

A very strong and emotive presentation on the theme. In this poem the use of relatively plain language works well - there is no unnecessary sophistication to come between the reader and the poet's feelings and presentation of those feelings. Rhythm is good and rhyme is sound. The images are clear and compelling. The use of repetitive forms in verses 1, 2 and 4 (but not 3) is clever and helps both the flow and the creation of the intended feelings.
Merit

Yu Hiu Lam, Ashley
Diocesan Girls' Junior School

Theme: Nonsense

I sat with saliva dripping off my mouth,
The teacher went on about North, East, West, South
Bored with nothing to do in the lesson
My mind started to drift away and imagine, imagine.

Chomping noises filled the air
I turned to discover a burly brown bear
Surprised to see him without getting hurt,
I was pleased to see him eat my homework.

A doctor suddenly stood at my face
He told me to tie my loose shoelace
To keep him away, I ate an apple,
Instantly he vanished and became a pebble.

Out of the blue, a snake came out,
It was lying on an eye-catching couch.
Terrified, I picked up a razor-sharp axe
And chopped it until it “relaxed”.

It was unbelievably raining cats and dogs
I just sat there like a bump on a log
I tried hard to keep a straight face,
When the teacher was showered and trapped in a case.

Thousands of homework piled up my desk,
They became a monster and transformed into pests.
These were things that I wouldn't admire,
So I burned them with the tongue of a fire.

Stomp! A deafening sound pulled me back
The teacher looked like she wanted to whack
“What’re you doing?” she frowned adjusting her lens,
“Day dreaming…” I answered, “about nonsense.”

Final adjudicators’ comments:
Some bright moments, surprising rhymes (lesson/imagine) and inventive scenes, esp. "And chopped it until it "relaxed".
Merit

Lee Cheuk Lam

Diocesan Girls' Junior School

Theme: Healthy Habits

My New Year's Resolutions

For my New Year’s Resolution I decided I wanted to change.
I’d been on a diet for years though my goal was forever out of range.
So rather than restricting my food intake, I discovered a simpler way—
Healthy eating habits would lead directly to happy, healthy days.

So superiorly sure was I, swelling up with pride and determination.
I pledged to shake off my love of junk food and any hint of slight temptation.
This proved to be a challenge as I endured endless agonizing days.
And so I began to consider the pledge I had thoughtlessly made…
Crispy crackers, fragrant fries;
Deep-fried hot wings and tantalizing pies;
Beckoning to me from the place I stand
Mesmerized and captivated, I extend my hand…

Half driven mad with temptation, I stared at the
beckoning fries
Enticed, all former pledges forgotten, I watched them
dance before my eyes
Unknowing and unaware, I found myself staring at an
empty pack
Well, fries are really potatoes though, and after all, it was
simply a snack!

Oh, how I dreaded the colour green, mocking me
mercilessly on my plate
Remembering with remorse and ruth my decision on
that direful date
Then as if struck by lightning, the notion struck me like
a blow—
All food contained vegetables—the others just didn’t
know!

My favourite French fries were really potatoes, even
healthier than rice;
My cherished condiment ketchup was tomatoes in disguise;
My daily breakfast was a pack of pretzels, no different from fresh-baked bread;
And so I blissfully indulged myself in these healthy foods just like I’d said!

How my guilt now overwhelms me, as I’ve realized what was in store--
A flabby, frightening flood of fat staring back from the mirror on the wall;
I’d been horrifyingly healthy, hadn’t I? The world simply wasn’t fair!
I’d eaten all my vegetables with more than enough to spare!

Faced with the clearly cruel consequences of my futile former plans,
“It’s impossible!” I wail at the empty crisp packets and soda cans;
Nevertheless, I’ve come up with a superbly sufficient solution--
Surely my pledge could wait until the next year’s resolution?
Final adjudicators’ comments:
Sophisticated feelings expressed with very good command of language.
Merit

Ng Tsz Ying, Tiffany

Diocesan Girls' Junior School

Theme: Feelings

Under the Same Sky

Shadows dance on a tiny planet,
where no one wanders its barren lands.
Where the constellations are the only source of light.
Where the silhouette of a girl is shadowed upon the rough sands.

Trekking across and calling out loud in her hoarse voice,
Days and nights has she wandered this domain.
Her voice echoes everywhere, between harsh streaks of rocks, in the deep dark caves;
But never has her call been answered, all her efforts in vain.

Day by day, her voice grows weary and faint;
She realizes the sky above her is a ruthless prison, an enclosed dome.
She stands, teardrops glistening like diamonds on her cheeks;
When will I ever find home?

She paces back and forth, glances around, sees the glittering swathe of the Milky Way; She sees the planets; sees the same stars that make up the same constellations.

Everyone must live under the same sky. The stars are so close, but so far.

She digs deep into her recollections.

She remembers it all flawlessly. How the stars illuminated the night.

How sweetly the larks would call in the wood.

How the wind caressed her face.

How fearlessness became a vital part of her childhood.

She recalls her cravings to navigate the worlds beyond her home:

To ride across the galaxy on a shooting star;

To shimmy among the belts of asteroids;

To trace the constellations from afar.

Never has she felt like this.

Never felt such anguish, such agony, such yearning.

What did I do to deserve this?
The tears slide down her face; angry, scorching and burning.

She only wants to go home; the simple longing scars deep within her heart.
Oh, help me. How will I ever find home? She feels so isolated, so alone.
Desperate and muddled, never has she desired more to go home.

Take me home, take me home, take me home.

Then she glances up, momentarily forgetting her fears; mesmerized, in awe of the endless beauty of the galaxies beyond… but the stars look like home.

For I was once engulfed by shadows, but I am now wreathed in light.
Shooting past in golden sparks, filling the ever sky where they roam.

Final adjudicators’ comments:
A sophisticated way to express 'feelings' in an imagined story.
Great line: "To shimmy among the belts of asteroids;"
Rather melodramatic sentiment, but the poem has inventive language; it feels ambitious.
Merit

Hilary Tang

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Nonsense

School's Cancelled!!

Revision and homework are not fun,
so in this school, no more studies will be done!

Good marks and straight A's might be pleasing,
But reports and essays will leave you wheezing.
So in this school we are pleased to declare,
We will rid you of all despair!
Homework and Revision will be banned,
No more projects will be planned,
From now on, this school will be found,
As a fun, happy, children playground!

The children will be free,
To play, run and flee.
The teachers'll be fired,
The clowns'll be hired,
To entertain and laugh and play,
Lessons will be replaced by field day.

2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award
You can do as you wish,
Dip fingers in the butter dish,
And pick your clothes till they fray.
The sound of laughing will fill the school,
Nobody cares if you are a fool,
In this wonderful school which is cool!

Students swinging from the tree,
Acting as though they are three,
Is commonly seen,
As normal behaviour for a kid of thirteen.
The children pull faces,
And have fun chases,
In this monkey house of a school.

Then to my delight,
A truck of enormous height,
sped into my sight.
Ice-cream settled into our grounds,
Candy and chocolate was soon found.
The school is now officially,
The best school up the hill from Admiralty.
Final adjudicators’ comments:
Clever, vivid, and irreverent. A terrific poem.

This is a well crafted poem which makes good use of language/diction. The rhyming general works well but the rhythm is uneven. The poem forms a vivid and cohesive image of children running amok with a skilful use of the absurd to convey the idea of playful fun.
Merit

Yip Yu Yan
Tsung Tsin Primary School and Kindergarten

Theme: Space

A trip in the galaxy

First, a few years' research
and a thousand days' machinery work.
Then, when all the work is done,
I see the rocket that was so big it made me lurk.

When it was time to leave the Earth,
I shuddered, looking like a dork,
then the other astronauts came, and then here we go!
While we were on the spaceship, we almost hit a stork.

In the spaceship,
I told a joke, and everyone laughed like a fool.
When we left the Earth's atmosphere,
we all shouted together, "Space is really cool!"

First we went to Venus.
It was boiling hot!
Suddenly, at night
the temperature dropped a lot!

Then we went to Jupiter.
We went to the Great Red Spot.
We saw a 300-year old hurricane,
and we went away. It looked like a dot!

At last, we went to Saturn.
The rings there made me dizzy!
I was like dreaming,
and the others said I was crazy.

The space is so fascinating,
I really want to go back there, that's true.
I think it's interesting,
I really do -- how about you?

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
A well constructed poem. Good use of well-known scientific facts. Language/diction is sound. Rhythm and rhyme are good - the poem flows nicely - but a little forced in a couple of places. The image is striking and the expression of the theme is good. Language conventions are sound and the form is good.
Despite predictable rhymes, there are some wonderful moments: "While we were on the spaceship, we almost hit a stork"; "We saw a 300-year old hurricane".
Commendation

Cheng Ching Nam, Rainis
Tsung Tsin Primary School and Kindergarten

Theme: Nonsense

Nonsense! Just NONSENSE!

I ran to warn
Dad one early morn,
'The dog chewed all the plants, honest!
Through the window came an elf,
just go, and see for yourself.'

But Dad chuckled, 'Nonsense! Just nonsense!'

I rushed to the right
for Mum on a late night
'Our pots flew away, really, promise!
The hamster wrote an expensive cheque.
Believe me, or just go and check!'

But Mum scoffed, 'Nonsense! Just nonsense!'

I sped to bring
Auntie bad news in the morning,
'Cousin Janet's compositions make no sense,
Cousin Jim just got arrested,
Come and see, for you've just rested.'
But Auntie laughed, 'Nonsense! Just nonsense!'

I took off to say

to Uncle one day,

'Your driving licence, your licence expired!
cats are tearing up your favourite book!
I'll show you, come and take a look!'
But Uncle snorted, 'Nonsense! Just nonsense!'

Nonsense, nonsense,
Nonsense, nonsense.
That's all they say.
I'm not pulling your tooth,
Just telling the truth!
We all simply need a holiday...

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
A very well constructed poem. Good use of language/diction. Rhythm and rhyme and all the components of a good poem are executed well. The image is clear and a sense of fun is well conveyed. The theme is strongly represented.
A good poem; best moment: "The hamster wrote an expensive cheque."
Commendation

Chan Chung Man
S.K.H. Lee Shiu Keung Primary School

Theme: Inventions

My new invention

I am a brilliant inventor
Who invented a time-flyer.
Everyone will be surprised,
And open the mouth wide.

Just press a button, you can go anywhere you like.
Wonderland where you can play with sea animals happily.
Dreamland where you can meet the cartoon characters merrily.
Space where you can see the planets and stars dancing joyfully.
How amazing they are!

Just press a button, you can meet anyone you like.
An ugly alien who has lots of arms and a sharp tooth.
A silly mummy who walks around and scares you.
A scary ghost who flies around the haunted house through.
How horrible they are!

Just press a button, you can have a ride anytime you like.
An unforgettable experience you have ever tried.
An exciting moment you have ever got.
A joyful time you have ever had.
How wonderful it is!

Although it might be terrible,
It is adventurous and enjoyable.
Come and try my new invention at once,
You would have a great fun!

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
Fantastic details in the third stanza (ugly alien, silly mummy); an inventive poem.

The strength of this poem lies in the power of its imagery. Not only is the wide-ranging imagination of the poet well presented, but an impression of infectious fun, or possibly anarchy, is discernible. Figures of
speech are used frequently and usually to good effect. The rhythm and rhyme are slightly erratic - note (in particular) the uneven line lengths. Structurally, the final lines of verses 2, 3 and 4 work well.
Commendation

Wong Yin Chi, Jade
Diocesan Girls' Junior School

Theme: Feelings

A Funeral

In the centre of a sea of chrysanthemums,
A coffin lay unmoved, under a single rose.
Tears spilling down my mother’s bloodshot eyes,
As my grandmother’s life drew to a close.

I observed my mother, a sobbing mess,
Wailing as if she could never cry again
Her dearest mother had bid her goodbye
I knew I could never understand her pain.

I stared out the meadow, a blanket of daisies
A refreshing spring breeze caressed my cheek.
How varying, how contrasting it was
To the plain wooden coffin that lay down so meek!

I remember the evenings
when my grandmother lay,
on the spotless, white bed sheets

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on a warm and cloudless day.

It was as if I caught a glimpse
Of my mother’s desperate begging
Pleading my grandmother to fight
Never be seen surrendering.

I was sure I could never know,
Never understand, never feel
My mother’s pure agony,
That could never truly heal.

Looking at the coffin that lay so gently,
Staring at my mother being so distressing
My eyes watered, a river of tears formed
I’ve never experienced anything so agonizing.

We can never control fate,
and when someone goes, they never return.
You can never decide their lifespan
And their destiny will never turn.

Cherish the moments with your family and friends
Express empathy, forgive freely
Because time never spares anyone
No soul has gone through immortality.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
It conveys the author's grievous feelings. A very moving poem.
Commendation

Ashley Tam
St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Nonsense

The Faraway Tree

In the land of the Faraway Tree,
The elves are as busy as bees.
They only wear hats,
when cuddling the cats,
or breeding the Bumblebee Bats.

In the land of the Faraway Tree,
The snakes like to swim in the sea.
Then with a twirl,
And a small swirl,
They dive down to find the pink pearls.

Final adjudicators’ comments:
A very well constructed poem that strongly reflects the theme of nonsense. Language/diction is good. Rhythm and rhyme are excellent as are language conventions. Some very vivid images compressed into a short poem. Reminded of Dr Seuss.
Commendation

Lou Nei Ching

Farm Road Government Primary School

Theme: Healthy Habits

The Body Battle

Do you want to lead your body
to defeat the “Germs Army”?

Sleeping and waking up is right
because you should be ready for every fight.

Eight cups of water
makes an army of “Germs Killer”.

Chew healthily and slowly,
or your stomach’ll be sabotaged seriously.

Ice-cream seems so yummy
but it silently invades and freezes your tummy.

How to beat enemies?
Working out every day surely is the way.
Take a shower before you sleep.
“Wash your hands!” – a drill you should keep.

Don’t shed tears.
Blast yourself with cheers.

Stress is toxic.
Defend yourself with music.

Follow these orders,
Germs say “We surrender!”
Commendation

Angela Yu
St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Inventions

Necessity

Without our inventions, where would we be?
Slaves were hired to build tombs of pyramids.
No one liked the work 'cause it was tough.
The pharaoh figured productivity was waning.
So he made rollers for the work to be less tough.

Over to the east in China,
Everyone always got lost
Wo Wang Xu invented a compass,
the four directions on which it was embossed.

Before the age of Apple,
People never had much time to talk.
Then Steve Jobs invented the iPhone and Macintosh,
People could use siri even when they walk.

The biggest pen companies are in Japan,
You might even count the US of A.
But the biro brothers were from Argentina,
The patent lapsed quickly, or so they say.

Silver Spencer created some not – so – sticky glue,
He put it on paper, called it press n peel.
Everyone used it for work and school,
3M thought it might be a big deal.

Without these inventions we would be doomed.
It might leave a gaping hole in our cultures,
Because of it humans would be illiterate,
We wouldn't even have more brains than vultures.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
I like the descriptions of various inventors. I learned from this list. Who knew that Wo Wang Xu invented the compass! And a guy named Spencer invented glue.
Commendation

Matthew Kwok

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Space

Space Escape

You will need a lot of grace,
to move yourself through endless space.
The vastness of the floating stars,
are bigger than a thousand cars.
A planet starts to pull you close,
make sure you don't strike a pose.

The planet's surface just has sand,
the winds blow you right off the land.
A sudden force dragged you away,
you flip around as you start to pray.
What is this thing pulling me?
What oh what oh what could it be?

You start to yell as you see something slide,
a blacked out hole with nothing inside.
You realise as you look at the sky,
a real life black hole in front of your eyes.
Frantically waving your arm,
you won't stop until you're out of harm.
A waving arm just hit your suit,
and luckily enabled the parachute.
The burning wind from the nearby sun,
sent you flying as the black hole spun.

You let out a breath as the parachute broke,
now you've got a tale to tell your folk.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
A very well constructed poem. Language/diction are good. Rhythm and rhyme are good and mostly consistent. Image quality is good (quite vivid) and reflects the theme well, language conventions are sound and form is good.
Commendation

Nathan Ng

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

Theme: Space

I am Inquisitive and Imaginative

I am inquisitive and imaginative.
I wonder how enormous the universe is.
I feel the wonderful earth moving.
I hear the magnificent sound of a rocket landing.
I see the beautiful stars exploding.
I smell the rose in little prince’s planet is in bloom.

I wish I could fly gracefully above the planets.
I feel my unbreakable wings flapping swiftly.
I fly to the sky at sunrise.
Every planet I will spy.
I dearly wish to see at least one spectacular alien in my whole life.
I am inquisitive and imaginative.

I’ve been dreaming of roaming the black hole.
I’ve been thinking of the mysteries of space,
Keen to solve them to their base.
Even though it is hard,
Every dream I will guard.
I am inquisitive and imaginative.

I hope my dream will come true.
Every task I will do.
I want to see the gigantic skies full of funny UFOs,
A class of Astronomy I will not let go.
I hope my destination is not too far away.
I am inquisitive and imaginative.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
A very well constructed poem. Good use of language. A powerful vision of passion and imaginations. Good form etc. Language conventions are mostly good. Well done.
**Commendation**

*Leanne Jackson*

*St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School*

Theme: Feelings

**The Sound of Love**

Listen to the wind from far away,
whispering in my ear, day after day,
"I pray for you every night."

The feeling it gives me is so light,
that all I feel is love.

Like the gentle, soft nightfall.
Like the warm glow of the sun.
Like the satisfaction when I figure out a pun.
Like when I stand tall,
before those who tease me for fun.

Whenever I feel love,
I fly up high like a dove.
Knowing that love is there,
waiting for me somewhere.

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When I hear the sound of love,
my future is full of light.
Staring at me in the face,
I know that it's so bright.
And I will, for sure,
fight for the love of my life.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
Good use of language/diction. A powerful image of love and commitment. Good use of figures of speech. This is a poem that flows and lingers.
Commendation

Min Riqing, Audrey

Diocesan Girls' Junior School

Theme: A Magical Moment

I closed my eyes, mentally aware
That I was attracting a lot of stares.
I took a deep breath, exhaling slowly,
Trying in vain to face my fate calmly.
I felt my heart pounding in my chest,
Then plunged into a world where I would rest.
When I came to, my vision was blurry,
Deafening silence encased the room in a flurry.
Then… I heard the first sounds I ever heard.
The cheery chirping of the Nightingale bird.
I was once deaf, once alone,
But now I am not at all ‘deaf-prone’!
I could no longer contain my excitement,
I whooped in joy, and to my amazement,
My voice rang out like a chime from a bell:
I was finally freed from my old prison cell!
My happiness was really contagious,
And everyone’s reactions were advantageous ---
MaMa smiled until she cried;
PaPa had tears that he was trying to hide.
Auntie hugged me till I was fit to burst,
Uncle’s delighted laughter was widely dispersed.
I was so immensely pleased,
My post-surgery pain was totally eased.
What about the scar? It was just
A souvenir from my past that would fade to dust!

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
Good use of contrast to show the feelings, e.g. silence and cheery chirping.

Good use of iambic pentameter. The poet holds the secret until the end. But the reader wants to know: what kind of surgery was it? Perhaps a few lines of gory detail would help!
Secondary Section

Champion

*Mendoza Charlene Christine Ramos*

*Delia Memorial School (Broadway)*

Theme: Good and Evil

**Poems**

As I lie on the bed,
A thought comes to me:
What if poems
Are hidden knives that stab those that understand?
It is said that poems are a form of expression,
But what if they are really just depression, filled with colors?
The noise they make
Is louder than silence.
Someone is whispering
Sharp words that leave cuts.
Who is talking?
The voice inside.
Are poems evil?
As I lie on the grass,
Another thought flashes by:
What if poems
Are stars that comfort the disturbed?
The words that tremble on a piece of paper,
They speak the loudest to the open-minded.
They understand every phrase
That needs to be heard.
Poems that make them feel,
What human beings cannot,
They feel a sting on their chest,
Whispering, “This poem understands.”
Are poems good?
I am trying to think of reasons
As to why some speak our mind,
While some say what we do not want to hear.
What if the reasons cannot be found even if I keep digging.

What if it is just a matter of one's perspective?
As I lie on the bed,
As I lie on the grass,
I realize:
I cannot perceive something written in other people's hearts.
Final adjudicators’ comments:
This poem stands out for its intelligent, sophisticated engagement with its theme, and its genre--the poem. "Who is talking? / The voice inside. / Are poems evil?"
What a question! This reader was hooked. The images here are sometimes fantastic: depression full of colors, poems as stars that "comfort the disturbed." The combination of fresh imagery; surprising, mature treatment of the theme; and the sense of genuine curiosity about the self and about other people makes this poem the clear winner for me.
Champion

Chiu Yue Ching
Sing Yin Secondary School

Theme: Adventures

Apple’s Adventure

I was an apple.
When I was born, I was ordinary.
When I fell, I told Newton the secret of gravity.
When I was bitten, I became a logo of a company.
When I was swallowed, Snow White became a sleeping beauty.
When I was an apple of one’s eye, I was extraordinary.
When I bathed under sunlight,
I turned into a shiny silken ruby.
When I took off my red jacket,
I resembled golden-yellow jewellery.
When I was consigned to oblivion,
I looked like nothing but brown curry.
Once I awakened, everything was just a reverie...

Final adjudicators’ comments:
Beautiful work, you have clearly thought long and hard about this poem, and it reads beautifully as well as being visually exciting! Congratulations on playing with colour to emphasise your concrete poem! I also enjoyed the structure of the piece, so that each line becomes its own separate adventure. I liked the idea of Snow White becoming a sleeping beauty, a clever and fun idea. Congratulations!
This is a successful concrete poem, especially because of its light touch with humor. The varieties of "apple" here move fluidly from the literal fruit to multiple ways people use that fruit symbolically. Some of the images are particularly surprising and strong: "When I took off my red jacket," for example, as the image of an apple removing its own peel.
1st Runner-up

Wong Jing Man, Jessica

United Christian College (Kowloon East)

Theme: Conservation

The Ephemeral Tree

Twisted and gnarled and standing against time
Trapped within a jar for an unnamed crime
Bearing our shame, our errors and our scars
   Lasting no longer than a falling star

Darting too quickly goes the butterfly
Fleeting, fluttering, an hour too shy
Counting the seconds the sapling will last
Punished for our narcissism and our past

Yes, that hour of time’s too brief, too terse—
As our negligence remains its dire curse—
So it leaks and lays, and flutters and fleets
And drags it to wither in timely beats

And those fragile seconds—too swift, too short
Prove that trees were ne’er our last resort—
So, sickly it bleeds like sap from a jar

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Bearing our verdict through seams and scars

The fate of all things green rests in our hands
Beware your needs and the wants you demand
Take a moment’s glance back and save the eaves
Make certain they’re not ephemeral trees

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This is a well-crafted and thoughtful poem, you have used rhymes effectively and your structure is consistent. You clearly have a wide vocabulary and have put it to good use in a poem that explores the theme of conservation both figuratively and in actuality. Be careful of overloading your poem with flowery language though, what exactly do you mean by "save the eaves", and what exactly is being "dragged to wither in timely beats"? However, there is much of interest here, so congratulations on a great piece of work!

Good choice of words and metaphors.
2nd Runner-up  
Chiu Yue Ching  
Sing Yin Secondary School  

Theme: Time  

**The Eternal**  
On bare feet,  
The exquisite breeze tiptoes over the rainbow,  
Awakening the sleeping beauty in an embryo.  
Being embraced by a warm cradle,  
I look at the cruel clock from an innocent angle.  
It’s eight o’clock in the morning.  

Riding on an armored horse,  
The blazing sunlight conquers the blue sky,  
Melting everything except the eternal tick-tock lullaby.  
Wriggling out of the chrysalis and turning into a butterfly,  
I let my laughter echo around my campus and nearby.  
It’s twelve o’clock noon.  

Driving a car,  
The strong wind flashes through the yellow leaves,  
Telling them the secret of gravity.  
Putting down my textbooks and rolling up my sleeves,
I start to wipe out poverty.
It’s already five o’clock in the afternoon.

Propelled by a rocket,
The brittle snowflakes crash into the window,
Freezing everything except the quickening tick-tock recital.

With my hair as white as snow,
I stand on my three-legged shadow,
Waiting for midnight’s arrival.

Tick tock tick tock…

Where am I?
I don’t know.

But I know I will once again be in a cradle.
Because I am \textit{TIME} ——
I am eternal.

\textbf{Final adjudicators’ comments:}
Fantastic and imaginative use of language, with some beautiful and interesting images. You have shown a good understanding of structure and have balanced each stanza nicely with your starting point of movement and your endpoint of a time of day. Great use of personification, metaphor and simile. I particularly
enjoyed the rhythms and internal rhymes of "quickening tick-tock recital" and the idea of the wind telling leaves the secret of gravity. Wonderful work, very well done!

This poem's images are its strong points--wind flashing through yellow leaves, brittle snowflakes, the "tick-tock recital." Its form follows the clock hours of the day, which treats the theme directly, if conventionally. The grandness of "wiping out poverty" lifts the poem to a broader, more worldly relevance, in a worthwhile way.
3rd Runner-up

Chung Mung Tim, Steki
St. Paul's Co-educational College

Theme: Change

War

Lost lands
Dispirited skies
Incomplete sunsets
Slumbering knights
Feeding crows
Forgotten requiems

Final adjudicators’ comments:
Beautifully succinct. It takes a confident writer to understand that less sometimes is more, and you have evoked the essence of War in just twelve words, which were clearly chosen carefully. Congratulations on a poised and thoughtful piece.

This poem is a series of nouns, each with a single modifying adjective. Some of its images are great: "incomplete sunsets," in particular. While brevity can be
an advantage in poetry, there's not enough of a poem here to feel like a complete poem, to this judge.
Merit

Sun Vivian

Sacred Heart Canossian College

Theme: Time

Reminisce

I weep, I cry
For so many things, inside a part of me would die
I laugh, I smile
For how many times, I do beguile

The anger, the hatred
For the souls that I despised, my emotions gone rabid
The shock, the soft gasp of surprise
For an unexpected gift, for terror a disguise

The years that go on, by and by
The way I act, it never changes as through my life I fly.
Unravelled are my memories, the more I see
From young to old, I can never be the real me.

Buried I am, in the sand that falls
In an hourglass, no one can hear my calls.
A nightmare, hiding behind a sweet dream
Alone, from my mouth a soundless scream

Maybe this world is but an illusion,
A paradise, fooling us into delusion.
But I still look forward to the bell that shall chime
My oracle, for all of my wasted time.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
Well crafted music. Great experiment with language.

This poem's strengths are its formal quatrains and its sometimes thrilling language: "emotions gone rabid" is the best example.
Merit
*Tse Sze Wai*
*Belilios Public School*

Theme: Time

**Flamboyant**

I remember you resting under my scarlet buds, covering your face with an empty copybook. You woke up with the sweetiest smile; I knew you must have dreamt of future adventures. "I'm gonna be a warrior! A hero!" You shouted into the hollow in me. Your cheeks were red as my flowers. Your cheer filled in my emptiness, triggering hope.

I remember you running to me after an altercation with your parents. You squatted under my shadow, sobbing and murmuring about things I didn't know: the young man's matter. I had no sweet, scented fruit for you, but feel free to fill me with your sorrow, I would listen to it all.
I remember you wearing the black cloak
and a silly cubic hat.
"I will come back with success."
Lugging a large suitcase,
you whispered in a mature voice into me..
I saw you disappearing at the horizon,
heading towards your endeavors;
my hollow expanded.

I vividly remember your voice,
always passionate no matter when laughing or crying,
resounding in me from time to time.
But where are you now, my dear?
Seeing you growing up is great,
seeing you succeed is greater,
but I want to see you beside me,
filling our lives with laughter and tears.

Go, my child, chase for the flamboyance you dreamt.
But do come back when tired,
and remember to share your new life with me.
I will be most glad to listen.
Though my face is wrinkled,
I will still welcome you with an intimate smile,
and my old-fashioned red flowers.
**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

This poem is an extended first-person metaphor, and uses its conceit smoothly. The images and word choice are sometimes quite wonderful: "silly cubic hat," for example. The use of the word "flamboyant" to describe both the tree's flowers and the child's desires is also a strong point of this poem.

Beautiful, nice mysterious unwinding sequence.


**Merit**

*Law Chun Chi*

*Sing Yin Secondary School*

Theme: Time

**Ages**

Twenty.
Excels in university.
Enjoys his life in diversity.
Dreams.

Thirty.
Fights in the office.
Fills his savings with tiredness.
Jobs.

Forty.
Cares for his children.
Ceases his plan of expedition.
Family.

Fifty.
receives his reports.
Withdraws his trip to resorts.
Sickness.

Sixty.
Opens his old album
"Ooooh....", he sighs for his kingdom.
Tears.

**Final adjudicator’s comments:**
A very confident voice here, and your poem is structured tightly, well done. Your rhymes are interesting and do not seem forced; as every other stanza includes a rhyme, you may want to look at the Thirty stanza again to include a more obvious rhyme. But other than that, congratulations, a very interesting and well-written piece!

This poem's pairings of rhymed phrases for each age works well--sometimes especially so ("Receives his reports. / Withdraws his trip to resorts" is a stand-out). The lack of an agent in each sentence works, well, too, emphasizing the sense of the "he" having given up his agency. The poem would be more successful if it surprised in its treatment of the subject matter--it is easy to predict where this poem is going immediately.
Merit

Janna Ysabelle Dizon
HKMA David Li Kwok Po College

Theme: Good and Evil

My Mask

I fear for evil
That stays behind lurking in my soul.
Concealing the pain I feel inside,
Drowning in an endless black hole.

And every day is an endless battle,
A battle with my demon
Every scar that has been healed
Threatened to reopen

I fear that good
In my little world will never ever exist.
Disappearing within the darkness,
Just left right there unkissed.

I long for luck
To finally find the joy they see in good,
But it's hard to find that happiness
From what I have withstood.

Good and evil are completely different
But we are unaware
It's just a mask where we decide
which one we'd want to wear.

**Final adjudicator’s comments:**
Nice use of personification and some interesting figurative language. Your rhymes generally flow naturally and your lines have a similar length. Your first verse would read better, I think, if you "fear the evil" rather than "fear for evil", this makes it closer to you, and more a part of you, which I think is what your poem aims to say. As your poem is entitled "My Mask" I'd like to read more about what you are like on the outside. Your poem mostly deals with what the mask is hiding rather than what the mask is like - this would be a great opportunity to be playful and descriptive with your language. Lovely final verse, very strong, with a good sense of rhythm and rhyme. Well done!
**Merit**

*Abby Hui*

*New Life Schools Incorporation Lui Kwok Pat Fong College*

Theme: Good and Evil

**Umbrella Revolution**

Wind blows and flowers dance
There is a boy walking in a forest
Forest of darkness
Full of danger
He is walking with his weak body
But fearless heart

Wind blows and flowers are scared
There is a big bad wolf staring at the boy
His fangs are revealed
His hunger can no longer be hidden
He is sneaking up with his strong body
But shameless heart

Wind blows and flowers contend
There is a sea of people shouting for the boy
As loud as thunder in the sky
They are running to the forest
Running with their strong bodies
And fearless heart

Wind blows and flowers are worried
The wolf can’t hear the people’s voice
As his ears are stuck with desire
He gets ready and wants to eat the boy
Sneaking nearer and nearer
Running nearer and nearer
People arrive

Wind blows and flowers rejoice
People fight the wolf with umbrellas
Victory always leans to the heroes’ side
The wolf escapes with a limp
People sing with boundless joy

Wind blows and flowers dance

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This poem's repetition and variation of its anchor line (Wind blows and flowers dance) is a nice formal strategy. The images are sometimes striking: "shameless heart," ears "stuck with desire." The allegory is a little thin: wolf = CY Leung, I guess? or the police? or the PRC? I am
glad to see a political poem here, but would love to see it reflect more complexity, as the best political poems do.
Merit

Rachel Lin

Maryknoll Convent School (Secondary Section)

Theme: Good and Evil

The Descent

He is a
dreamer,
a shining beacon of
hope—
and he swears to defend
swears to shield
swears to protect
he has vowed
to be
Light.

He is a
warrior,
the very symbol of
strength—
to the lost
to the wounded
to the weak

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to all in the land
    he is
    Light.

He is a
    king,
with the appearance of
    saviour—
but his eyes fixate on gold
his hands claw at beauty
his heart sets on power
    and all begin to see
that it grows dim, the
    Light.

He is
    fallen
his wings clipped as he hurtles
    towards his demise
leaving in his wake the promise of what once was
    the despair of what is now
the obliteration of what could have been
    and it becomes apparent
that this blazing warrior is
    Light no more.
Final adjudicators’ comments:
Very good development of theme of good and evil in a fresh and unique way. * Structure of poem draws reader in and flows well. Good repetition of first and last lines of each stanza. Solid final stanza. More figures of speech, such as simile and onomatopoeia, would add another layer of depth to poem.

Lovely use of personification here, and your poem is structured nicely. I like the sequence of events as his identity shifts and falls - beautifully done. I also enjoyed how you used repetition of ideas and images in each stanza in a slightly different way: repetition of "swearing" in the first stanza, use of alliteration in the second and third stanzas (wounded/weary, hands/heart). The final stanza feels "wordier" than the others, though the use of what once was/what is now/what could have been is good. If you shift the line breaks slightly so that these three qualifiers stand out, the stanza will feel tighter. Great shift also, from the stanzas ending in Light, to the final stanza's "Light no more." Well done!
Commendation

*Saran Sarneet Kaur*

*HKMA David Li Kwok Po College*

Theme: Adventures

**I'd Much Rather Go to Heaven than Hell**

I cannot seem to forget
The day Death first came for me
She was smoking cigarettes,
While sipping a cup of tea.

Her eyes were a deep blue ocean,
Her feathered wings as black as night.
Her white face void of emotion,
She was quite a beautiful sight.

She began to walk towards me,
And then she grabbed my hand and grinned.
Now, I wish I could have foreseen,
The adventure we’d soon begin.

I didn’t have time to disagree
As she spread her wings and we took flight.
We flew over people, lands and seas.

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We flew through the day and through the night.

We arrived at a grand golden gate,
A gate made of the stars and sunlight.
It opened for Death without a wait.
And there I saw a heavenly sight.

The river had water so crystal clear,
And the lush land was a vast grassy plane.
I saw white singing angels far and near.
I wanted to do nothing but remain.

But then Death suddenly pulled me away,
And she took me to a different gate.
This one filled me with horror and dismay.
For it was made of death, darkness and hate.

The infernal gate opened to Death’s cold touch,
And at once I heard the helpless, piercing cries.
The endless torture I witnessed got too much
So I covered my ears and shut my shocked eyes.

When I opened my eyes, Death had left and gone.
And I was standing where I had been before
In utter confusion, I tried to hold on
To what had happened before it was no more

I don’t know why Death came to me
Or why she took me to the gates
But all I know is I am free
To choose which one will be my fate.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This poem has a great narrative drive and it has the feel of a traditional ballad in its form. Nice use of rhythm and for the most part your line lengths are balanced, without forced stresses. Good use of personification, and a couple of similes. Bearing in mind the fantastic nature of your subject, it would be interesting to experiment with some more creative figurative language and to be playful with some similes and metaphors. I wonder if Death would be smoking cigarettes (plural) while drinking a cup of tea (singular) - surely even Death smokes one cigarette at a time? But in general this is an effective and evocative poem, well done!
Commendation

Abbie Cheung

Diocesan Girls' School

Theme: Time

About Time

The very briskness of time
is the fleetness of a frightened deer
running swiftly from hunters.
The flow of Calypso Cascades
and a road without an end.

Time passes unwittingly
like a person passing through the crowd
silently that no one knows
just like small drops of tap water
leaking from an unfixed tap.

Happiness shortens the time
but sadness has the power that can
lengthen the time as if a
minute seemed too long enough for
you to live a hundred days.
you can't travel to the past
without such thing as a time machine.
Time is not a video
that you can rewind and rewind.
Time passes and it is gone.

**Final adjudicator’s comments:**
Excellent matching of form and content. The enjambement and manipulation of syntax throughout really conveyed the protean nature of time effectively - e.g. 'lengthen the time as if a minute seemed too long enough for...'

This poem fluidly chooses synonyms for "quickly" and "speed" according to the sound and image of each line: "briskness," "fleetness of a frightened deer," etc. Its assertive syntax and punctuation guiding the reader smoothly, which gives an assured tone to the poem overall. Its investigation of the different aspects of time's passing in each stanza does a nice job treating the theme.
Commendation
Chiu Yu Hin, Ray
Po On Commercial Association Wong Siu Ching Secondary School

Theme: Change

The Frog
Under the big cloudy lake,
two frogs clicked.
They embraced and started to mate…
Soon…
   A long chains of eggs were laid!
Yet…
   Mum and Dad left in haste
   leaving the eggs in such a poor state.
Life starts right as the yolk splits into half
It then divided into four,
   then e
      i
      g
      h
      t …
A little tadpole then appeared and looked brave
swimming joyfully in the lake.
Without legs,
   it has a LONG tail
If it takes a swimming test,
I’m sure it won’t fail.

One day, the tadpole changed
undergoing METAMORPHOSIS
Maybe this word is hard to read
It is a process for frogs to breed
The tadpole was now a four-legged frog
It started to crawl
One day later,
its tail falls.
Although it can’t roar,
it can say “Grog Grog”
Files are his delicious food
The frog thought it’s finger lickin’ good!

The frog was grown in less than 80 days
The cycle starts with no delay
He went out to find his mate
The life cycle continues
Life on earth is so wonderful!
Final adjudicators’ comments:

This poem has many bright spots, including its strong imagery and some humorous, reflective moments in the diction, as when the poet explains "metamorphosis". The poem's rhythms usually make good use of its single-syllable end rhymes. The tense shifts are a little disorienting--"are his delicious food / The frog thought.." for example. The end could be tighter, as well, perhaps making better use of the rhythmic patterns the poem sets up early on.

Wow! Great fun. Thoroughly enjoyed.
Commendation

Leung Yuen Lam, Janie
Po On Commercial Association Wong Sin Ching Secondary School

Theme: Adventures

The Trespasser

I was thrown into the sea
The sea painted with malachite green.
A crowd of mermaids surrounded me.
I held my breath and swam towards the surface of the sea
‘cause the sense of unfriendliness terrified me.

As I crawled onto the seashore
The King of Jungle began to roar
And out he comes, like the mad hatter
dancing weird steps. There, where the tree
was tall and safe. Pointing to a place only gods can stay.
I climbed up the tree with no delay
Unluckily, my shoe was caught
At that moment, my mind was filled with negative thoughts.

Suddenly –
Few eagles dragged me to the mellow,
I say farewell to my amigo
“Why”?
The jungle was shifting under my bare foot,
for I got an untrustworthy parachute.

For an hour, I floated and waited
from place to place while my parachute’s getting tired –
I, a perfect stranger, a trespasser
was unable to leave this maze….

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This poem's strengths are its images: "malachite green," "eagles dragged me to the mellow," for example. That last is particularly pleasing--not quite sensical, but the sound and action are strong enough to allow the reader to follow and enjoy the line. The rhymes are labored in several places, especially the final rhyme pairs of stanzas one and two. This poem would be more successful if there were more a sense of what kind of trespassing this was, and where--the diction from different realms, like "amigo" and "mad hatter", can make it difficult to feel anchored in this poem.

Really fun, great images and playful. Enjoyed.
Commendation

Yvonne Wong

St. Paul's School (Lam Tin)

Theme: Time

A Meaningful Day


6am reminded by the alarm clock.

Mum starts to walk,

And begins to talk.

‘The mathematics tutorial class
And learning of brass.

The large-scale piano contest
And the exciting chemistry test.

Revision for tomorrow’s dictation
And a public badminton competition.’

‘The whole day is reserved.
It would never be too plain.

It can never be complained,
Making full use of time is just our aim.’

I believed in her,
As an innocent sheep trusting a hungry wolf,

Until I was finally back to home wearily.

I saw my old grandma.

She was relaxing on the wicker chair,

Satisfied by her carved lime.

Only her time hasn’t been wasted.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

Your poem is structured nicely, and opens well, while some of the rhymes in the second stanza are a bit forced, I enjoyed them, it added to the feeling of being forced to fill time. "It can never be complained" is not grammatical, a more accurate phrase would be "There's no reason to complain". Talking about wolves and grandmas makes me think of the story "Little Red Riding Hood" - I wonder if you could explore this. Your image of grandma satisfied on her rocking chair is an interesting one, how does it fit in with believing the mother's directions? Do you mean that you believed your mother's commands until you saw your grandma relaxing in her chair? This could be a bit clearer, but some nice ideas, well done!

This poem is funny, and uses its humor to explore the theme of "Time" successfully. The rhyme is unpleasantly
forced in some places, especially in stanza 3, but it might be argued that the labored rhymes serve to echo the labor of the long day described here, full of tasks. The range of diction, and where the poet chooses formal ("tomorrow's dictation") versus colloquial (beep beep) is purposeful.
Commendation

Nicole Ma

St. Paul's School (Lam Tin)

Theme: Adventures

In the Woods

The freezing wind of the night
Your hair like whips against your face
The trees’ murmurs and whispers of the unknown tales
The blistering cold piercing through your skin and
penetrates straight into your soul
Making you cringe

The starless sky dark of color
The purple moon beams
Shining down a path with nothing but corpses and
thorns
Thistles crawling towards the rusted gate
Towards the castle

Warlocks with greedy smiles and gritted teeth
Fairies with sharp wings and pointy ears
Witches with long cloaks and evil laughs
Vampires with pale skin and venomous fangs
There it stands

Eyes blood red of color
Scales like a steel armor
Keen talons digging into the floor
Blazing fire burning everything down
Down to ashes

Your heart begins hammering against your chest
But you steady your breathing
Pick up your bronze sword
Lifted the burnished shield
And step forward

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

Some very imaginative use of language and imagery to create mood and atmosphere - this poem certainly feels like an adventure! You have used stanzas of five lines, though the line beginning "the blistering cold..." is much longer than the others, and would have read more easily had you broke it in two, adding to the final line of the stanza like this: the blistering cold piercing through your skin penetrates straight into your soul, making you cringe then you could keep to your five line structure while still having consistent line lengths. I love how the poem ends
with the speaker stepping forward into the adventure - great stuff!

This poem's images are vivid, but mostly familiar. Standouts are "hair like whips" and "trees' murmurs," but other images, like "starless sky," "greedy smiles," and "eyes blood red" tend toward cliché. The poem does indeed describe an adventure--perhaps a video game, or a novel? But the lack of movement outside of the general sci-fi/fantasy setting, into a particular world which matters to the poet, keeps this poem from scoring higher, for this judge.
Commendation

Wong Kwan Ting
Sacred Heart Canossian College

Theme: Adventures

A Short Walk along the River

Dancing in one shoe
Leaving the other for a clue
She hopped out of the house
With a wooden leg of the cuckoo

Her companion started to grouse
Why not head back in the house?
In such tender weather
Why hide like a mouse?

Her amber pigtails fell like feathers
Stopped by the river beside the Heathers
Surprised by the stunning scenario
The wonder of the penetrating waters

Her companion whispered,” Hush, now, go”
She marched on and sing la ti do
Yet she never noticed the unbelieving-incredibly-protracted length of its
Realizing the river is nothing but another lengthy to-do list

She toddles and heads home alone, with her wispy thin snow hair;
Holding a piece of black snowflake in the air
“Life is but a dream”
“Life is but a dream”.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This poem's use of language is, at its best, both effective and charming--rhyming "grouse" as a verb with "house" and then "mouse"; vivid, unique images like "amber pigtails fell like feathers"; the varying rhythms in stanza 4, which humorously embody the stanza's abstract subject, length.

Beautiful details in this piece. I really like this piece
Commendation

*Wong Jun Fung*

*Po Leung Kuk Laws Foundation College*

Theme: Good and Evil

**Hero or Villain**

When I was younger,
A caped crusader is good
Crimson eyes? Simple! He must be evil.
But it all changed since my first pimple.

The cape was gone, The crimson stare is missing.
Good and evil dwells around me,
Even my x-ray vision can't see through
Whether if it is reality.

I was in a desert, Totally dehydrated,
When I came across an oasis.
I can't see if it is crimson or caped.
Could it just be a mirage?

There came a sandstorm,
The mirage was shattered.
The final beam of white became weaker,
Then vanished.

A wall of black clouded my vision,
Lost in the void of darkness,
Alone and afraid.
It is a set-up, an ambush,
Yet I am unprepared for this raid.

Striking at my weakest,
Aiming at my blind spot,
The trust is now broken,
What is evil, what is good?
I am completely shaken.

I just wish there were an absolute line,
Between all this madness.
I just hope I can escape,
This ridiculous world,
Where no one ever wears a cape.
And there is no division between good and evil

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This poem shows some imaginative use of language, especially the opposition of crimson eyes and a caped
crusader to embody good and evil. Your fourth stanza, in particular, shows interesting imagery and a confidence in language that is not quite continued in the other stanzas: clear, confident and precise. Some movement between tenses makes for confusion, try to stick to a single consistent tense, either past or present but not both when writing about a single event! Your stanzas vary in length, which you may want to look at - it's great that you use stanzas to explore different ideas and events, and to provide a break in between, but even in free verse (unrhymed) then some structures can make a poem even more effective. It might be fun to take your idea further with some metaphors, similes and personification - writing about Good and Evil as superheroes.
Open Section

Champion

Joey Mok

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Change

Bach Suites

You, Somewhere,
Somehow, before,
You have heard the start,
the prelude to this song; It
is the most
famous, The
most heard,
The most known, the
suite that
is happy all
throughout. Until the second half of the
minuet. Where the inner clarkness comes
out. And your dance mood has to chance.
As these suites were written for dances.

If you have never heard
this suite,
You have
never heard
Bach speak
in more than
one way,
you must
grow, Hear,
Experience,
listen to smiles,
The happiness,
To dance to the
six parts of the
second suite,
So that you hear the glorious work which
Bach created for all of us to hear. To dance
to. And not just listen to pleasure yourself

Happiness,
Familiar as it may sound.
This suite is completely different,
Though it retains the
happy nature of
the first two
suites, It
adds a
lot more
hope. To
the point
where you
smile just
from one,
Simple,
Listen to
the prelude,
The start.
The beginning of a song where
you cannot understand
till you hear it
fully, soon...

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Final adjudicators’ comments:
This is certainly an arresting poem, with a careful and clever structure. There is some effective juxtaposition of words - suite and speak, for instance, in 2. A lot of this, however, is explanation, rather than making the reader experience the beauty of the music of your favourite composer - and mine! Nevertheless, your passion for the music is clearly conveyed, and you inform the reader effectively of how the music develops across the suites. (It's Bach's birthday on the 31st March!)
1st Runner-up

Mili McCoy

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Time

You Can Blame Ella

Every tick of my watch
feels like a bomb about to go off,
and that bomb is me.

I’m sitting in the car,
for what seems like the hundredth time,
and like every other time, she’s late.

It doesn't matter where we’re going,
to school, or a party, or a dentist appointment.
I will be late
and it’s always her fault.

In the morning, we’re late for school,
late for class
another tardy,
and it's not my fault.
In the afternoon,
we’re late to our friend’s house.
She opens the door
“T’im sorry we’re late again. You can blame Ella,” I say.

In the evening,
she’s late for dinner.
My parents become impatient.
We start without her.

I’ve tried everything I can.
I bought her a watch; I bought her an alarm clock,
I even tried making her a daily schedule,
but nothing worked.
It’s impossible,
but she still arrives late for everything!

She moves at the pace of a disabled snail
when it’s time for us to go out,
or like a bee
buzzing up and down the stairs
running to get the things she’s forgotten.

My sister’s inability to be on time
wouldn’t be my problem,
except she comes everywhere with me,
slowing me down and wasting our time.

Sometimes I think she tries to be late,
pretends she’s not ready,
just to make me wait.

How can someone who doesn’t try,
manage to never once be on time?
2nd Runner-up

Kristy Chan

Singapore International School (Hong Kong)

Theme: Change

**Colour-tinted Glasses**

fragments of colour, a sea of hues
a microscopic glance through the tinted glass
the world is flushed with brilliant colour
chapel pinks, sea-glass green, songbird blue
the delicate tinkle of glass against glass.

raise it hesitantly to hand
look at the world in another way
a blur of colours, of lavender and rose
imperceptible glasses, ever-changing
with one shake of the hand.

a navy ocean of sadness and calm
saffron fields of prosperity and wealth,
green people, a stark contrast to the usual
different, but we are all the same
our coloured sight warps our thoughts.
look at the world in different lights
dark, melancholy, gloomy, malicious
bright, cheerful, upbeat, angelic
look through the colours of the kaleidoscope
and see the world through different eyes.

Final adjudicators’ comments:
"sea-glass green" - a lovely image. You've created something fresh here by inverting the way one would expect to sequence the words and ideas - "sea-green glass" would be unremarkable, as is "songbird blue" - it conveys the information and provides a picture, but not in the striking way of "sea-glass green". You have a lovely talent for words, and I hope you'll keep writing!
3rd Runner-up

Sophie Allen
West Island School

Theme: Change

Young Tears

Mauve noon, and we crawled up the gravel ridge.
My steady footsteps veiled the thunder in my chest,
though I knew it was too early to catch hold of you.
I prepared myself to wait.

At the base the air was tepid; on the summit it broiled
with a feverish intensity.
The stones beneath my feet glowed while I
lingered there.
A whirring of bees thrust its way to my ears,
punctuated by the trills of trapped birds.

Without warning, magma erupts from the dormant
summit;
the blazing surge submerges the mountainside.
I am buoyed up by waves sanguine as blood,
but the droplets dry rusty on my fingertips.
Swiftly, a remorseless hand releases a glacial flood that quells the glory and releases Anarchy. I am deafened by the shrieks of tortured phoenixes and malevolent wasps. Blind. Reason is drowned and I know the world is upside down because ivory waves fall on top of me. Screams sweep in with the tide, eyes throb and tears flow. Instead of crimson, a chalky sea swells around me. In this moment I think I am not only blind, I am ignorant.

I flee across the obsidian plains, but slip and plunge to the tundra below. In my delirium I imagine triumphantly catching you, but it is not so, and you continue to elude me.

I gradually become aware of an incandescence that surrounds me as if the crowded sky let loose a multitude of stars to recreate the Deity’s first empyreal masterpiece. I become a single pinprick in the constellation that burns till morning.
Grey slate afternoon and we staggered up the gravel ridge.
The clouds quivered in the sky above me.
Remnants of ashen burlap obscure the sky, but fallen stars still smoulder against the gravel. I jitter with anticipation.

Auburn morning.
I flash as bright as the stars for you.
Growling bees crown the island and icy mist seethes on the horizon.

I sit and wait to face the next day wrapped in a cocoon of uncertainty.
Merit

*Pearl Ng*

*West Island School*

Theme: Time

**Time**

Time is like a river flowing to the sea,
Never-ending, never stopping, always free.
Time is like a turning wheel,
Going forward, rarely backward, but never still.

Time is when a baby,
Stops driving their parents crazy.
And starts to grow their teeth,
Stops wetting their underneath!

Time is when that baby, becomes a young child,
So sweet, innocent and pretty, cute and mild.
Time is when that child, learns to ride a bike,
Starts to go to school, which is something they don’t like!

Time is when that young child, grows into a teen,
Cares about their looks, forgetting to be clean.
Time is when that teen, sometimes gets depressed,
Exams are coming up and they want to do their best!

Time is when that teen, grows into an adult,
Goes to college, gets a job, with a very good result.
Time is when that adult, decides to get wed,
Has children who drive them bonkers in the head!

Time is when that adult, becomes an old person,
Gets arthritis, coughs, the flu, in short their health worsens.
Time is when that old person, often has to be carried,
Then shortly after, sad to say, that old person is buried.

Time is a busy highway cars can drive across,
The cars are the people, travelling across -
Into the future or into the past,
Centuries flashing by so fast.

Time can go slow,
When you want to grow.
Time can go fast,
When you’re having a blast!
Time makes the world go round,
Everywhere time can be found.

We must learn to use time wisely,
Like I did with this poem nicely!
Merit

Molly Taylor

King George V School

Theme: Change

War of Change

We think about our allies,
We mourn upon their graves.
We think about the dreadful times,
But only the smell of poppies remains.

And in this dreary, spiteful weather,
We ponder on the reason,
Why we should kill our fellow man,
Lest be accused of treason.

We laughed, we sang but most we cried,
Grieved our friends who’d not survived.
For they were the reason we gather today,
The reason we stand in the grey of the rain.

We did not think our lives would change,
That summertime when blue the skies.
In year fourteen when lives were long,
And no one had to die.

We charged upon the enemy beside our allies,
When the air boiled and the wind told a story of the lives.
The lives of the others, the young who had been put through change,
The change of war that now seems so deranged.

We must not forget the memories of our friends,
Or enemies in battle.
And on this morning of Remembrance Day,
We look back on the lives.
For they were the reason of our gathering today,
The reason we came and smelled the poppies.
The reason for change.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This begins strongly and you have experimented successfully with a difficult topic. This line is great - "When the air boiled and the wind told a story of the lives" - but in other places the language is too vague to give the reader a clear picture of what you're talking about. You use hindsight well, and the poem of course looks back on the sacrifice of the remembered. Check,
though, that poppies actually DO smell - do they? All the ones we see on Remembrance Day are made of paper, so you might have developed the idea of sensing the fragrance of memory in the paper reflection of the real poppies.
Who am I?
I am who you wish to seek
Hush, my name you will not speak
I have lived for millennia and more
My wisdom contains all man has yet to explore
Do not attempt to measure me
Or hope that I will answer your plea
Many have tried and failed today
Foolish men and women are they
What am I, you may wish to ask
The answer for this you will never unmask
I am the dew drops on a tender bud
I am the lotuses blooming in mud
I am the skylarks taking flight
I am moon’s silvery glistening light
Too long I am for those who wait
How long I seem is up to fate
Above in heaven my presence reigns
Or in the grasslands and sweeping plains
To the blind I appear like an old, old man
To the wise my life only just began
I am hideous for those who sorrow
Know who I am are those waiting for morrow
Merit

Abigail Baker

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Conservation

Dolphin Cry

Lonely Hills,
Surround a river,
Where a treasure lies,

But no one notices,
No one listens,
To the quiet dolphin cry,

Like a whisper,
Drowning in the water,
She calls quietly to her mother,

She's lost in our world,
Where the water is swirled,
With trash and oil,

Ferries go by,
But people just sigh,
“If only we had a few more of her kind,"

But we're too busy to even care,
Though our treasure's really rare,

We are too caught up,
In our own lives,
To care about some others,

But not until her cry goes quiet,
Will we realize she's gone,
Forever.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
"Like a whisper / Drowning in the water" - this is a strong image that really conveys the pressure of death and the failure of humans to care. A whisper is hard to hear anyway, and by showing the whisper drowning you intensify the image powerfully. Don't use a comma at the end of every line - it makes the poem jerky and muddles the meaning.
Merit

Kim Min Jun

West Island School

Theme: Time

Time in its entirety

Time is present in all of us,
Keeping us going, sustaining us.
But when our clock runs out,
It ceases to exist, and stops maintaining us.

It traps us in a coffin,
If it so wishes to put us to rest.
Since we all have it,
It comes but never leaves like a pest.

Power over it,
May bring you wealth and glory,
But many die over it,
And so goes the life story.

‘Just a little more?’,
One might ask to keep their entertainment,
But what they do not understand,
Is that time is ever-going, and never lenient.

‘Just need more time!’
Another may shout with a voice that is strained.
However, she does not,
Understand that time cannot be gained.

If time had a mind,
It would not be caring or kind,
Its life would be stale,
No soul whatsoever, just a mind.

Time, in its entirety,
Is a soundtrack, looping always.
A path with more paths in it,
A corridor, with a lot more doorways.
Merit

*Ella McCoy*

*Hong Kong International School*

Theme: Change

In this race called life
Change runs right ahead
I don't want to catch up
I don't want to win the prize
all I want is to stay at this pace
and enjoy the ride

If I catch up to change
I know exactly what will happen!
She'll trip me and then I'll fall
Landing flat on my face

I didn’t want to join the volleyball team
‘Mum PLEASE don’t make me go!’ I complained
but now I’m practicing every day
I can say I’m part of a team!

Why did I have to read something new?
I loved fiction, fiction, fiction
but now I’m hooked
Mystery, nonfiction, comedy
It opened up new worlds

I didn’t need to make a new friend
but she was so easy-going and kind
I couldn’t help but smile and laugh along
Now I wouldn’t know what I’d do without her!

Now I know the only approach
Is to dive in head first
And take control

Don't wait for change
Make it your own!
Play a new instrument,
Who knew learning the Ukulele would be so rewarding?
Visit a foreign country,
Spain was absolutely fascinating!
Do something that makes you scared,
I can’t believe I zip-lined all that way!

Embrace the change
Overtake it
Get the best from it
It won’t seem scary after all!

Final adjudicators’ comments:
What makes this poem successful is the pleasant surprises that arise from risk-taking and experimenting with new and unfamiliar experiences. You convey the danger of the unknown, but present the rewards as making it all worthwhile. I like the way you have let the reader share the excitement of those rewards, and the pleasure of seeing things differently with hindsight. Some effective musical effects in places here - but also some very plain language, and that's less memorable.
Commendation

*Jonathan Han*

*King George V School*

Theme: Nonsense

**Song for the Sane**

and the funeral parlors nicely packed
and the wedding rings too loose.

tell me when a soldier folds the knee
to the hollow bugle’s call,
tell me when the sun shatters
into the thousands of stars.

pray for tired babes whose rust
waters the womb’s meadow.
pray for ink that flows on snow
that crushes some sore poppy.

so make your heroes weep.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**

Very powerful imagery indeed. I'm not sure how it matches the theme of "nonsense". In the second stanza
you very effectively focus on the minute detail of a carefully folded knee, and then go directly to the violence of a universe - a terrific contrast. The rust in the second-to-last stanza is a striking and original image. There are places where the crafting of the language is loose - "some sore poppy" - but there's a distinctive and unusual poetic voice here. Keep writing!
Commendation

Cayman Chen

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Change

For some

For some, water is still a deadly drink

Some people walk five hours
in the scorching hot sun
for water that they
are too scared to drink

I walk five seconds
in my comfortable shoes
for water that I
won’t even finish

For some, food is still a scarcity

Some people do everything they can –
work long hours, sell their bodies, give up everything –
for one meal that
barely fills them up
I don’t do anything –
don’t sell all my property, don’t overwork myself, don’t
break the law –
for one meal that I
won’t even finish

For some, life is harsh

Too many people
don’t have enough
and have to risk the chance of
being poisoned

Too many people
have too much
and take everything
for granted

In a world so unfair, why am I so privileged?

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This poem develops the idea of privilege and waste very effectively, holding back the key word until the very end. You have conveyed a sense of injustice very effectively.
Now work on making the reader see and feel more strongly - you explain a lot in the poem, rather than letting the reader come to an understanding through the images. You achieve this with "scorching hot sun" and "comfortable shoes" - now develop your skills in creating images that take the readers directly to the experience you want them to share. I like the persuasion in the poem - it's aimed at people like you and me - spoiled people! - and it would be difficult for anyone to read this without agreeing with the message you want to convey.
Commendation

Kate Zhang

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Good and Evil

Dear people of the Taliban,

Thank you.

I expect this will be met by astonished and astounded looks,
But,
you have helped me, Malala, in many ways.

By threatening me,
by shooting me,
by making my life miserable,
you beat into me resilience.
You thought you would stop me,
but,
you didn’t.

By closing down schools,
by scaring kids away,
by hurting the innocent,
you inspired me to never give up.

You crave power like an animal craves food.  
Willing to hurt, 
willing to kill, 
willing to destroy, 
people in the process.

You may seem violent,  
selfish,  
and cruel on the outside,  
but I know that  
on the inside,  
you are just as scared as we are.

Scared of pens, 
scared of paper,  
scared of books,  
scared of education,  
scared of me.
Commendation

Adrian Tang
West Island School

Theme: Time

Quartet for the End of Time

The Moon, emerging
cresting the tides of endless Night,
its dawnlit prow glinting
a brilliant arc in the gold starlight.

The clock strikes twelve; the Symphony begins.

Jupiter, at a quarter of a radian,
thundering across the Heavens, drums rumbling.
Saturn, half a second late - as always -
the malice of Mars and Uranus tumbling.

The Moon, slipping across the night sky, the lilting
violins at three bars in.

The Sun, the Conductor, ringed in steel
the clockwork heart of a thousand dawns,
guiding the octet of planets to roll
down vanes worn smooth by countless aeons.

Mars, bloodred, cymbals crashing against the brutal chant of the chorus.

A Red Giant, strings glowing scarlet with the contained fury of a chromatic scale
Frost-white asteroids, pearlescent,
wind chimes leaving a tinkling trail

Mars, bloodred, cymbals crashing against the brutal chant of the chorus.

The Moon, slipping across the night sky, the lilting violins at six bars in.

Amber. Jade. Crimson. Aquamarine. Dancing an eerie waltz in languid suspension,
worlds lost amidst the Nebula’s glow: flotsam in the loneliness of a rainbow ocean.

Dust, a painter’s grey swirls, surfs the inky cusp of a Black Hole rim,
a slow serenade into the silence of the Maw to the throb of its hollow Requiem.
The Moon, slipping across the night sky, the lilting violins at nine bars in,
-fades to a still silence.

The Moon, emerging again
the arc of brilliance, the three-quarter spin,
back into position; orbits reset, and-
the clock passes twelve; the Symphony begins.

This is the Infinite Timepiece:
metronome ratchets of elderly brass
clicking, with the precision of Fate, to
a minuet in glass

for the end of Eternity.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
A quartet? How? A really wide vocabulary here, some interesting images and the potential for excellent writing in the future. Good grasp of scale, and an ambitious range in the development of the poem. Poems about music are hard to write, but you've had such fun in embodying the energy and passion of sound in the form
of words - and it's just as much fun to read it and imagine the music that the words describe. There's some effective use of repeated sound here, and I like the way you've been sensitive to the music of words as well as to the music of instruments.
Commendation

_Iris Choi_

_Singapore International School (Hong Kong)_

Theme: Nonsense

Little Black Words

Oh no!
The Little Black Words!
They have again returned!
They show no mercy,
And neither shall I!
They raise their swords,
And race at me!
I raise mine,
And the battle commences.

The little black words,
They try and try.
But oh they seem,
to never escape!
The push and pull,
But white keeps them jailed.

I look at them,
And my tongue sticks out.  
"Oh no" I say,  
"It is my turn to slay!"
I take my stance,  
And slash them away.  
Leaving red stains, 
Every step I take.

The teacher calls my name,  
And detention comes my way.  
Oh no!  
The little black words,  
Have once again returned!

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This is one of the most energetically personal of the poems I have judged this year. There's a really strong sense of an individual voice and character, and you have created this very effectively. I've enjoyed your sense of the music of words, and you have used repeated sounds to give emphasis to your ideas. "Stance, slash, stains, step" - this is a good example of what I mean. This vivid language falters a little in lines like "white keeps them jailed"; and "the battle commences" is a stiff and formal giving of information, rather than letting the reader or
listener see and hear the battle begin. I'm sure your teacher has told you to "show, not tell" - it's always important to let your audience create the images from your words.
Commendation

Jordan Fang

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Change

My life was perfect
Until they came
Everything,
Changed.
saw my people
Drowning, burning, tortured, raped. Murdered.

One of my eyes can’t see.
Because it’s not in my head
Where is it?
Floating, in a pool, of blood.

I watch,
From the ground, as my people are taken
My house, burned
My treasures, stolen
My whole life,
Come crashing down around me
My breathing is ragged.
My face is torn
My heart
Broken.

Silence.

They are gone. And they took everything with them
But who were they?
They could have been anyone.

What do I do now?
I wait. And wait.

The Stars!
So beautiful,
I used to watch them with my daughter.
But she is gone. They are all gone.

My last eye,
Shivering in its hole.
I hear something.

What is it?
Ravens

I try to scream.
As they burrow
Into my cold
Dying,
Flesh.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This is a harrowing poem! The eye "shivering in its hole" is a vivid and cruel image. I think you should end the poem after "Ravens" - the remaining lines don't add much (and ravens don't burrow!). The reader will perfectly understand what will come next, especially if they have read the poem about the knight whose bright blue eyes are pecked out!
Commendation

Gowoon Kim
West Island School

Theme: Good and Evil

Murderer

You used to weep in tears of blood.
Your hands were puffy red. Nails cracked.
Your lips too often blue or bleeding.
You thought I didn’t know it when you cried.
But it’s hard to miss shattered screams.
Your porcelain-blue eyes froze to glass,
fingers whittled to a needle of ivory bone.
I realized then-
they clawed your heart out, devoured your blood,
drank away your soul!

I never saw you smile again.
They washed it off your brain.
The days drove past.
It seemed even time had forgotten you.
You knelt on violet knees, dressed in iron chains.
All the rain of England wept with you.
I tired watching you crumble.
On the night I left, I was sure I saw a
shadow of silver crescent ripple through my knife.
But alas! When I next looked again
the moon swimming in the reflection was crimson.
Now they point their fat fingers upon my head.
Spit on my face. Accuse me of a murder.
Weren’t they delighted to bite your bone?
Animals! Thieves!
Stale curses crawl on my closed lips.
No well-dressed words whisper my defense.
No matter.
You screamed till your throat seared and burned
but their ears have never heard.

I wish they’d stop calling me that.

“Murderer.”
I sheltered an angel the heavens orphaned.
Injected blood into your hollow veins.
Transplanted a soul to save your skin.
No. I am no murderer.
Commendation

Julia Hetherington

Hong Kong International School

Theme: Good and Evil

Your Veil

Water lily,
Absorbing the sun,
Have you ever felt
The pain of a flood?

Is your beauty an illusion?
I dare say it is.
Deep down you're demonic,
Have a thing for sin.

You've stabbed me,
Cursed me,
Shattered my shell,
Yet I flail and still cling,
To your shiny silver veil.

I've seen what lies,
Underneath the lace.
Your roots have spoilt,
Beneath the facade.

It's a flash of lightning,
Nearly forgotten,
That comes back full throttle,
Tearing old scars open.

Clouds cave in,
A slave to the wind.
Protection is torn off;
I have been skinned.

Hold up my umbrella,
Hide from my tears.
Duck away from the lily.
Show no fear.
Commendation

Eve Messervy

West Island School

Theme: Time

Time

What does it do when I am bored?
It dances and waves distractingly in front of my disinterested face,
It prances around me shouting in my ear what time it is,
It purposely makes itself go at a slower pace
Time teases and taunts me when I am bored,
It bullies me inside and out

I kept on looking at time and wishing it went faster
But every time I made that wish it would just go slower
Time had pumped me up too much that I was about to burst
I was obsessed with time I kept on looking at time
My life seemed dull and at the worst
So I decided to ignore time
I didn’t look at him and I didn’t listen to him,
He kept on waving in my face challenging my fate
But I was determined to concentrate
Soon after time had given up,
He just sat down quietly beside me
Time and I are close friends today
And I make my life interesting,
I take it step by step by not wishing my life away
With the challenging malevolent bully of time.

**Final adjudicators’ comments:**
This ends beautifully with a powerful final line, and you convey very effectively your frustration at the unpredictable pace of passing time. I like the personification of time as a naughty companion - there's the sense of an infuriating brother or sister, and a battle that goes back and forth. This is a clever device to present time in an entertaining and unexpected way, and to share in concrete terms the abstract ideas of the poem.
Commendation

Ethan Saw

West Island School

Theme: Time

The Dawn and Dusk of Time

The fresh winds of spring,
    A great awakening.
Of the things we have seen,
And the things that we have not been.
The morn of the year,
Shows death is not near.
The most joyful period,
The dawn of time.

The drenching summer rains,
The emerging depressing pains.
The midst of death and living,
    Life’s end is beginning.

The cooling breeze of autumn days,
Remind the living of death’s daze.
    Power and life,
All draining like a blunt knife.
The bitter cold winter wind,
Which blind.
The Weakness of the mortals,
As death is approaching.
Life is gone, Time is gone,
All that we make of……
Gone….
**Best Improvisers of the Year**

**Primary Section**
- Audrey Tang  
  St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School

**Secondary Section**
- Abby Hui  
  New Life Schools Incorporation Lui Kwok Pat Fong College

**Open Section**
- Gowoon Kim  
  West Island School
Poets of the School

**Primary Section**

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2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award
Leung Ka Long
Tsuen Wan Public Ho Chuen Yiu Memorial College
Open Section

Molly Taylor  King George V School
Mili McCoy  Hong Kong International School
Sophie Allen  West Island School
Kristy Chan  Singapore International School (Hong Kong)
Photo Album

2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award Prize Presentation Ceremony

Speech by Ms Iris Li, Corporate Services Manager, The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education
Speech by Mr Chan Pui Tin, Chief Curriculum Development Officer, Gifted Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, Education Bureau
Speech by Ms Xu Xi, Writer-in-Residence, City University of Hong Kong
Primary Section

Wong Nga Tung, the Champion receives the prize from Ms Xu Xi

Audrey Tang, First Runner-up
Alison Mak, Second Runner-up

Stephanie Kate Cannon, Third Runner-up
Awardees of Certificate of Merit

Awardees of Certificate of Commendation

2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award
Secondary Section

Mendoza Charlene Christine Ramos, the Champion receives the prize from Mr Wong Chung Po

Chiu Yue Ching, the Champion receives the prize from Mr Wong Chung Po
Wong Jing Man, Jessica, First Runner-up

Chiu Yue Ching, Second Runner-up
Chung Mung Tim, Steki, Third Runner-up

Awardees of Certificate of Merit
Awardees of Certificate of Commendation
Open Section

Mili McCoy, the First Runner-up receives the prize from Ms Iris Li

Kristy Chan, Second Runner-up
Sophie Allen, Third Runner-up

Awardees of Certificate of Merit

2014/15 Hong Kong Budding Poets (English) Award
Awardees of Certificate of Commendation
Best Improviser of the Year

Audrey Tang, winner of the Primary Section receives the prize from Ms Xu Xi

Abby Hui, winner of the Secondary Section
Gowoon Kim, winner of the Open Section