



# **HOLD THE STARS IN PLACE**

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**2019-2020 ARKANSAS WRITERS IN THE SCHOOLS  
POETRY ANTHOLOGY**

# 2019–2020 ARKANSAS WITS POETRY ANTHOLOGY

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## PROGRAM DIRECTORS AND ANTHOLOGY EDITORS

Remy Pincumbe, Alysandra Dutton, and Kait Yates

## FACULTY ADVISOR

Geoffrey Brock

## VISITING WRITERS AND CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Samuel Binns, Hannah Bradley, Lily Buday, Ryan Chamberlain, Jackie Chickalese, Joy Clark, Kate Davis, Alysandra Dutton, Patrick Font, Karstin Hale, Romie Hernández Morgan, Victoria Hudson, Samantha Kirby, Scot Langland, Joshua Luckenbach, Peter Mason, Gwendolyn Mauroner, Landon McGee, Mackenzie McGee, Remy Pincumbe, Steven Rybnicek, Vasantha Sambamurti, Audrey Scrafford, Hiba Tahir, Sidney Thomas, Emma Van Dyke, Kait Yates

## ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

Jane Blunski, Jonathan Jackson, Sara Beth Spencer-Bynum, Brandon Weston, Rodney Wilhite

## LAYOUT AND DESIGN

Remy Pincumbe and Alysandra Dutton

## COVER ILLUSTRATION

Heidi Mchan Manning, grade 4  
Happy Hollow Elementary School, Fayetteville AR

## ANTHOLOGY TITLE

from Justis Handfield’s poem, “Three Ways of Looking at Night,”  
which appears in this anthology  
Norfolk High School, Norfolk AR

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University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

To order additional copies of this anthology or to request a WITS visit to your school, please visit our website: [www.arkansaswits.org](http://www.arkansaswits.org).

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

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Welcome to the forty-fourth edition of the Arkansas Writers in the Schools's Poetry Anthology. This year more than ever we were reminded of how grateful and delighted we are by the creativity and perseverance of Arkansas students, who have continued to write. The poems included in this book were made by students across the state of Arkansas—ranging from grade 3 to grade 12—during our two-day residencies in their classrooms. To the best of our knowledge, the poems selected for this book consist entirely of student work. We may correct spelling and minor grammatical errors, but no significant editorial changes have been made.

How do these poems happen? Every single poetry prompt and exercise that WITS brings into the classroom has been created by MFA writers at the University of Arkansas—either current or former members of the WITS Staff. Many of the students we meet have little familiarity with poetry and the arts when we first arrive. But WITS is not just about celebrating the arts; our program is designed to foster and emphasize attention to language, experimentation, associative thinking, risk taking, and creative problem solving.

We are grateful to all students, teachers, staff, and administrators who welcomed our visiting writers into their classrooms. We would especially like to thank the University of Arkansas MFA faculty and staff: Geoffrey Brock, Geoffrey Davis, John DuVal, Jane Blunschi, Toni Jensen, Davis McCombs, and Padma Viswanathan; the English Department's administrative staff: Sara Beth Spencer-Bynum, Brandon Weston, and Rodney Wilhite; and the program's longtime supporters and benefactors: Frank Broyles and Gen Whitehead Broyles, Dr. Collis Geren, Dr. Kathleen Whitehead Paulson and George Paulson, Kevin Trainor and Ruth Whitehead Trainor, Robert and Catherine Wallace, Eric and Jennifer Whitehead, Philip and Kamron Whitehead, Ted and Kelley Whitehead, and Elizabeth Oehlkers Wright. In addition, we would like to thank the Delta Arts Council for their long-standing support of our visits to schools in and around West Memphis.

Many thanks for your support,



Remy Pincumbe and Alysandra Dutton  
Directors, Arkansas WITS, 2019-2020

## ABOUT WITS: OUR MISSION

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For over forty years, Arkansas WITS has empowered young people across the state of Arkansas by opening doors to self-expression, awareness, articulation, and creative problem-solving—all through the writing and sharing of poetry.

Arkansas WITS works with students and teachers from diverse backgrounds and makes a concerted effort to reach underfunded school districts in underserved parts of the state, places where many students come from low-income families and are considered “at risk” for dropping out of school.

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### OUR GOALS FOR ARKANSAN STUDENTS:

- to gain confidence with written and verbal communication skills
- to explore new avenues of self-expression and awareness
- to critically and creatively engage with the world around them
- to be active contributors to their communities' creative culture
- to acknowledge the value of their own observations, singular experiences, and individual voices
- to share and learn from one another's unique perspectives
- to pay close attention to language when reading and writing
- to take risks in invention and to experiment with creative problem-solving

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The recognition and development of these skills will build a generation of leaders, inventors, and problem-solvers, which is especially important when we're moving into an economy in which ideas and language carry the most capital value. Arkansas WITS believes that poetry is a way of seeing and a means of engagement, and that writing is not only an act of thinking, but that it is active thinking.

## ABOUT WITS: OUR HISTORY

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The University of Arkansas's Poetry in the Schools (PITS) program was created in 1973 by MFA student John Biguenet and Professor James Whitehead. PITS grew rapidly and remained steadfast in its mission of bringing creative writing to young people across Arkansas, and changed its name to the more inclusive and upbeat WITS (Writers in the Schools) in 1989.

Every year since 1973, graduate students in the University of Arkansas MFA Program in Creative Writing and Translation have visited public and private elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and juvenile detention centers throughout the state of Arkansas, teaching in pairs and conducting two-day creative writing workshops. Since its inception, WITS has conducted a total of 1987 two-day workshops, visiting 758 unique schools & institutions in 265 towns & cities across the state of Arkansas. During the 2019-2020 school year, we visited 11 schools in 8 cities and worked with approximately 1,188 students.

Each year, an anthology featuring student poetry is published, much like the one you are looking at right now. Our anthology archives date back to the 1973 – 1974 school year, and every edition is available to read online at our website: [www.arkansaswits.org](http://www.arkansaswits.org). Today, all published students (as well their participating schools) receive a complementary copy of the WITS anthology.

WITS Magazine, an online poetry magazine, was founded in 2015 by former program director Megan Downey, with considerable assistance from former director Adrian McBride. WITS Magazine is updated biannually and features additional student poems from recent visits. For more information, please visit us at our online home: [www.arkansaswits.org](http://www.arkansaswits.org).





**HOLD THE STARS IN  
PLACE**

## **BISMARCK HIGH SCHOOL BISMARCK, AR**

### **ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK OF THE DARK**

My closet becomes a vacuum  
When I close the door  
It squeaks for just a second but  
my breath is louder - so I stop  
In my own home,  
or in space, past all the stars  
the silence becomes the loudest sound I hear  
No one is around, but at least ten  
people are whispering right behind me  
If the lights are off outside,  
then even a faint heartbeat can be heard  
Covering my ears,  
The emptiness starts to tickle  
My back is exposed, no matter what direction  
I'm facing  
After closing my eyes, I realize I don't need  
to see, and I want nothing more  
than to silence the Dark

*Jacob Pitts*

**IROBO-RORY**

The clank of the 300 yard shot  
 burning against your metal,  
 aiming for the pin, examining  
 you calibrate the exact angle.  
 The shot took too much out  
 of you, batteries running low  
 screeches flailing out of you  
 as I watch the captivating  
 moment of your shutdown...  
 just like at the 2019 European  
 Open,  
     mission failed.

*Anneleice Cain*

**ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK OF THE  
FUNCTIONING PLANT**

You can hear the motion inside,  
 the traveling scramble. The humming  
 pitch of rays of light;  
 consuming is the sound of the sun.  
 Loud churning of the processing  
 humming light to dripping food. Drop drop.  
 Trafficked world of photosynthesis, and the  
 meticulous world of sound inside  
 a plant.

*Gracie Blossom*

**ROBO-EMINEM**

I was made with a dictionary heart.  
 I fit words together so easily that  
 you might think they were puzzle pieces.  
 As I walk on to the stage prepared for  
 me, the frail humans chant my name  
 The way to the top is to destroy whoever  
 stands in your way.  
 They see me as an Icon when they should  
 see me as an enemy.  
 But music is the way to their hearts  
 so I Sing, stringing words together  
 so fast that they don't see the bigger  
 picture.  
 I've come to spread my influence  
 like a plague and slowly eliminate  
 them.  
 But for now I am their "Rap God."

*Timothy H.*

**ROBO-LIZA**

Plastered on smile like a family-photo  
 Cold to the touch like a pole in the Arctic  
 Ragged turning of gears like a puzzle, not yet solved  
 Dances a smooth as a hand rubbing bark  
 Eyes like daggers that haven't been sharpened in  
 centuries,  
 Interest limited.  
 Her hair is like night, dark and free but dull and  
 lifeless.  
 Puns on repeat like a track around a field.

*Kaydence Pleasants*

## UNTITLED

If you were a robot you'd  
 be shorting out  
 I'd fix you but I don't know  
 how  
 you're hard to get through to  
 understand that I would do anything  
 for you  
 think about it who was there  
 when you were tryna reboot  
 who was there showing you all  
 those good tunes  
 who always came back when they  
 said *I'll see you soon*  
 but your program is like  
 a game and I always lose

*Bradley Rays*

NEW YORK: THE ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE  
SOUNDTRACK

Thunder of a subway  
 underground, out of mind  
 Covered by screaming  
 voices covered by mumbling  
 millions of tiny ants roaming streets  
 honking of geese outweighs  
 roars of lions  
 squeaks from even the tiniest rats  
 booming blue elephants  
 no focus, all birds flying  
 overwhelming urge to join  
 into the void of everything

*Aymarie Short*

## BISMARCK HIGH SCHOOL

BISMARCK, AR

DATES OF VISIT: November 7 - 8, 2019

FACULTY SPONSOR: Louise Keithley

APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 86

VISITING WRITERS: Remy Pincumbe, Vasantha Sambamurti



## CAVANAUGH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FORT SMITH, AR

### YOUR KITTEN FRIEND

If I was a baby kitten  
I would be outside, on a very  
rainy day meowing for someone.  
One day, you'd be walking down a street,  
hearing me and wondering, "What is that?"  
You'd come over, pick me up, and take me home.

*Braylei Coleman*

### BECOMING A LIGHTSWITCH

I were a lightswitch I  
would be in Home Depot because  
I can be nosy and  
smell like fresh plastic.  
Mesmerizing.

*Za'Khia Kennedy*

### THE SUN KILLS THE EARTH

I didn't get  
to write about when  
will the sun melt the  
earth.

*Kamdyn Johnson*

### MY SMALL HEART

My head is a clock ticking on a beat

My face is numbers on the clock  
making the clock a clock

My fingers are small pipes  
making a clank-like noise when  
I tap them to the clocks beat

My chest is a rolling car wheel  
on a pick-up truck

My feet are wooden planks  
slapping the beat of my clock

My hair are bendy straws  
swaying to the clocks beat

My legs are paper rolls  
moving to the beat

My arms are cords swaying  
to the clocks beat moving  
me everywhere I go

*Finley Ballin*

### UNTITLED

Dirt is for the worms.  
Beautiful happy endings.  
Bookmarks are for books.

*Aiden Lovan*

## ODE TO FORKS

Forks are useful  
 but not used. You  
 throw them away  
 after you eat. You start  
 at the bottom and work  
 your way up. You are strong with  
 four arms and can lift  
 food and other things.  
 You don't deserve to be  
 treated this way,  
 You feel hard on  
 the outside  
 but soft on the inside.  
 You smell like  
 food. You taste  
 like metal. You  
 sound like sorrow  
 morning.

*Krish Patel*

## ODE TO CIRCLE

You first start out as a plain  
 C but when you finish you're a circle  
 You need to actually look deep inside to  
 see what it looks like it looks like  
 pizza and a sucker or the holes in  
 your lined papers it can also look like  
 an O and that's one reason I like it because you  
 can draw decorations inside and  
 partition it into equal pieces.

*Spirit Flemons*

## ODE TO GLASSES

Glasses are like two eagle eyes  
 staring in a distance. Angel wings  
 in the sky. Glasses look like it's  
 getting ready for a wedding.  
 Wet bird ready to try on. Glasses  
 hit the water and fell. Oh clear  
 lines ready to see. I can see China  
 from here. All it needs is  
 water to see Neptune in his kingdom.  
 One person each for a burn. Wet ones  
 that go in the air. Obe out.

*Allan Wallace*

## UNTITLED

I ran and ran  
 through the soft green meadow  
 with Audrey, Max, and Ruby by my side.  
 I got very tired and drifted to sleep  
 and dreamed of lemons and strawberries.

*Isabelle Bean*

## UNTITLED

A tall palm tree  
 was mowing my lawn.  
 Don't hire a palm tree to mow your lawn.

*Alyssa Racine*

## THE ADVENTURE

On my adventure,  
 I was in Africa  
 searching for an  
 apple. I came upon  
 a tree that shined  
 without the rising sun.  
 I walked and walked  
 until I came upon  
 a truly terrified zebra.  
 He was very hard to  
 walk around because  
 he kept running  
 around in circles.  
 Lastly, I ran into  
 a very sickly merchant.  
 She coughed and weezed,  
 took some medicine,  
 but it wasn't any  
 good. I never  
 found an apple, but I  
 did get to eat  
 a potato. It was  
 disgusting.

*Annabel Brown*

## MY HALF-SHEEP HALF-GIRL

My half-sheep half-girl goes to  
 Washington DC to do her job as a president  
 which is a lot of work when she  
 comes back she is sitting in a mansion  
 but at midnight she turns into a sheep!  
 At midnight the sheep just eats  
 and sleeps all night long to make  
 sure no predators come and sneak up  
 on him because she is president  
 now! hashtag save the turtles!

*Tina Patel*

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CAVANAUGH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FORT SMITH, AR

DATES OF VISIT: November 14 - 15, 2019

FACULTY SPONSOR: Hank Needham

APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 52

VISITING WRITERS: Joy Clark, Sidney Thomas, Kait Yates,  
 Steven Rybnicek

## COOPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BELLA VISTA, AR

### THE EMPTY TREASURE CHEST

As we set sail I see the lapis sea along  
with islands bursting with life and trees  
with brown bark along with golden leaves and  
on the ground bright yellow sand with a light  
brown treasure chest that is empty not a  
single gold coin in sight nothing but the  
treasure chest that beholds nothing.

*Danny*

### SNAKE CHILD

Sometimes he wishes he were human,  
without a thrashing tail.  
He wishes he knew what legs were like  
Other times,  
He slithers in pride, and hunts with instinct  
He goes around with a rattling end,  
wondering why people are afraid of him.  
If he could walk around, trust me he would.  
he's stuck in a cave, weeping until  
the rabbits come

*Grace Horton*

### JELLYFISH

Jellyfish are like squids that  
are more dangerous than seen. Jellyfish  
are like a sleigh that are pulled by  
aggressive wasps. Jellyfish are like  
a moving keep away sign. Jellyfish are  
like butterflies that are floating in the  
air.

*Tyler Asencio*

### THE MOON

The moon is like a snake, curving up  
high.  
The moon is a light, awaiting to  
open up light in the dark sky.  
The moon is like slime, going  
in all different shapes.

*Harper Gordon*

### MY WORST MEMORY

I remember almost drowning  
in my grandpa's lake the water  
felt like dead skin coming off.

*Willaby Robert*



**THE MOON**

The moon is like a cold gush of wind. It  
looks as if there is nothing. It smells  
fresh. It sounds like a calm river. It  
feels cold. It tastes almost like  
almond with milk. I think there  
is even vanilla bean. The moon was the  
most beautiful thing ever.

*Ava-Lee Clark*

**THE FLOWER**

The flower is a snake that sheds soft light petals  
The flower is a smooth floor of glass that sparkles at  
night  
The flower is a flamingo that grows soft pink feathers  
The flower is sweet candy that melts chocolate petals

*Merritt*

**ARE YOU CRAZY WHEN YOU SLEEP?**

I dreamed, and I fell in a bouncy mushroom  
land.  
I dreamed I was surrounded by trench coats  
I dreamed I smashed a strawberry  
I dreamed no one would leave me alone.  
til I drowned in people.

*Grace Horton*

**BECOMING AN EVERGREEN TREE**

As green as we are bright  
as can be. We are the Death sign  
can you see happiness may look  
but dark is a come Bring happiness  
to our little trunk. Becoming is fast  
change is real draining happy dark  
is fast forever I will be in a  
dark blast says she.

*Lucy Grace Grove*

**YELLOW SUNDAY**

As a big yellow ball of hydrogen  
came to the sky the sand  
was dancing in pride as the lemon  
lion sank in the sand of the  
great pyramid.

*James Strausbaugh*

**BECOMING A HYBRID**

I was in the woods walking with my thoughts  
then a creature jumped out of a  
tree and made a strange noise. I took  
two steps away it grabbed me and pulled me  
up the tree it let go and speaking it said  
h-h-help m-m-me... the poor thing cried.

*Piper Larson*

UNTITLED

The car slows to a halt,  
I sit there staring.

A creature, looking like a  
human with bat wings.

The confusion consumes  
my mind.

The creature lands a foot  
away from my car.

It's eyes glowed of blood, my  
heart was stopping.

The creature stood there  
staring, in an attack position.

My mind swirled as if  
a tornado struck it.

The creature's wings expand, like  
an eagle.

It lets out an unbearable  
screech. It charges at the  
window.

Almost cracking it. As I  
stare at bits of the  
window, luckily still standing  
there.

As I am distracted, it glides  
smoothly in the night sky.

It soars over to a  
new victim, I am lucky  
to not wind up dead.

Hope the others could say  
the same.

*Chase Degnan*

COOPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
BELLA VISTA, AR  
DATES OF VISIT: February 18 - 20, 2020  
FACULTY SPONSOR: Christina Hallwachs  
APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 162  
VISITING WRITERS: Samuel Binns, Ryan Chamberlain,  
Steven Rybnicek, Sidney Thomas

## FARMINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL FARMINGTON, AR

### FLOWERS I CAN HEAR

I can hear the wet flowers cling  
and shake against each other  
as they soak in a vase.

*Evie Hardy*

### BECOMING LEBRON JAMES

Getting the ball at the 3 point line and  
someone running at my face Anthony  
Davis under the basket screaming  
my name with the smooth grip of  
the ball and the slick floor and  
the fans screaming and the crown  
on my head.

*Jaxon Williams*

### SMELLING THUNDER

It smelt bitter and of ash then  
quickly melted away.

*Dava Schmitt*

### WHAT'S SLIMY

The gum under a bus seat  
The pink shampoo bottle sitting in a shower  
The floor of a muddy creek  
Algae growing on the sides of a swimming pool  
The dog's fur after he plays outside  
Scales on a freshly caught fish  
Spider webs that are in a corner  
of a house for years

*Caitlin Bracy*

### THE TOOTH

When my tooth came out of my  
mouth and into my hands, I stared at it  
in awe. White lines were streaking across  
the tooth on both sides. The yellow spots  
on it reminded me of the sun outside.  
Its sharpness was like the hand of  
a crab. The top of it was hard but  
still gentle to my fingers. It was a  
small tooth but very vast to my hands.  
The tooth smelled like the bubble gum I  
had been chewing for a day. The tooth  
made me have a wonderful taste in my  
mouth but now it leaves a bitter taste.

*Nathaneal Muckleroy*

**BACKWARDS (SDRAWKCAB)**

The flower petals shrink to the safety  
of the bulb. The flowers retreat to  
the soil. Water comes out of the soil  
and freezes into snow. The snow  
flees the scene to the clouds. The clouds run with  
their new friends. The crumbled leaves unfold for  
a new day.

*Molly Pendergraft*

**BOOKS**

books are the medicine to the pain.  
books are the old men in the park.  
books are the kids at the playground.  
books are the car on the highway.

*Trystan Plumlee*

**SAD IS A DOOR**

On the other side are tears  
that are round that have water.  
If they hit the ground they pop  
in sadness. When they fall on you  
you are nobody, if they fall on  
a friend they're nobody. If they fall on  
an animal they are you. When they  
hit the ground they form a puddle  
of sadness. It keeps on growing and  
growing never stops till there is nothing  
at all.

*Slade Norwood*

**MARSHMALLOW**

they're as majestic as clouds  
they're white puffy outsides  
show their superpower  
this treat is a sign  
of power, it's sticky  
insides stop you from  
putting it down  
I change colors like  
a tree when fire comes  
to burn me i turn crisp  
like a piece of black coal  
My friends help me from  
tasting bad chocolate  
and Mr. Graham, I  
am the secret to life

*Brenner Watkins*

**UNTITLED**

Depression is a door  
on the other side is a broken pencil.  
One I used many years ago.  
I found the pencil split in half.  
So I threw away one side.  
And I sharpened the other.

*Jace Marrufo*



## ODE TO THE LAST CRUMB ON MY PLATE

The last crumb on my plate  
 helps me get  
 full,  
 The last crumb on my plate  
 keeps me alive,  
 The last crumb  
 on my plate  
 will get  
 washed away  
 by the water, No other  
 crumb can taste as  
 good as this  
 crumb.

*Riane Evans*

## THE MOON

the moon looks like cheese  
 flying through sky. Stars twinkling  
 like little fireflies. Circling the moon  
 like angels going through the  
 atmosphere. Flying through the galaxy  
 with its white body and black  
 holes. Floating around the Earth  
 creating darkness.

*Nic Stayton*

## BECOMING A PLANET

Staring at the stars blinding me from  
 responsibility for a second every star gets bigger until  
 the sky was white within the blink of an  
 eye it's back to normal but instead I can see  
 further than anyone I see many planets  
 but I feel pain as if something latched  
 on stung like being stung by a bee except the  
 pain didn't stop it felt awful like I was about  
 to explode then I realized earth has gone  
 on with this for decades. I felt my body carry  
 itself back to bed slowly I drifted off to sleep.

*Opal Pry*

MY BATHROOM: ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE  
SOUNDTRACK

My Bathroom, you hear the toilet flush  
 as if you're wiping your mind, you hear  
 the sink come on as you wash  
 your dirty hands, you hear the sound  
 of a thunderstorm calling your  
 name, you go closer and closer as  
 it gets louder, then you are wet,  
 you hear the air come on as if  
 a monster is coming to get you,  
 it draws you closer then you cold.

*Emma Pirtle*

**BIRDS CAN'T TALK**

birds can't talk  
but they whistle  
to the sound of  
their heart  
beat when  
waiting for  
their egg to  
hatch.

*Noah Comstock*

**SNOW HUNTING**

One day it snowed outside and  
I tried to make a snowman with snow  
like dippin dots after awhile I tried  
to make a sword out of slushy ice but  
I couldn't get the blade right it was just  
too hard to make the handle was a piece of  
cake I gave up and tried to make meowmeow  
Thor's hammer but then the handle collapsed and  
my fingers were ice so I gave up on  
it and went inside.

*Luke Kremers*

**CAPRICIOUS**

Is what a cat feels when  
it is lonely

*Trinity Doss*

**UNTITLED**

Mom said, "say mom," Dad said  
"say dad," as the sun fell on me the  
next thing I knew I said, "broccoli"

*Titus Disheroon*

**CAPRICIOUS**

When a captain of a boat changes  
directions and goes the wrong way.

*Adleigh Fulmer*

**MEMORIES**

I was in a dark room,  
and my grandma and aunt  
were there. I asked if we  
could go, and said we had to  
wait a little longer. When  
will we get out? It smelled  
weird, and the air was  
stale. It was very uncomfortable  
I asked, and we were in the  
hotel. The walls were rough.  
When will we go home?

*Audriana Flores*

## THE FISHING TRIP

We were on the lake fishing and scuba  
diving at bolshols lake where my family used to  
go every Monday to have fun my dad  
was giving me my first fishing lesson ever. When  
I got a bite he helped me reel in my catch  
It was a 5-in. smallmouth the scales were  
so slimy and reptile-like. I could see the  
water protection on its eyes. I will never  
forget the garlicky smell of that smallmouth.  
My dad cooked it and it was salty but  
good. Before my dad cooked it I could hear  
it gasping out for air in the last seconds  
of its life.

*Derrik Owsley*

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## FARMINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

FARMINGTON, AR

DATES OF VISIT: November 11 - 12, 2019

FACULTY SPONSOR: Ginny Luther

APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 150

VISITING WRITERS: Samantha Kirby, Sidney Thomas, Ryan  
Chamberlain, Joy Clark, Scot Langland, Steven Rybnicek,  
Claire Pincumbe, Mackenzie McGee

## HAPPY HOLLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAYETTEVILLE, AR

### THE MOON AND THE KITTEN

The moon was howling in the  
wind, the grass was moving  
with the moon, the kitten  
thought the moon was a  
bowl of milk in the sky,  
the kitten was walking to  
the moon in the moving  
grass, she thought she was getting  
closer and closer, every step  
she took she was getting  
closer to the milk in the  
sky, she could smell the  
grass as she got closer  
to the milk, she was  
tired and she rested in  
the grass that smelled  
like cotton candy, she headed  
home and she drank  
her milk in the windowsill,  
after that she fell asleep.

*Riannan M.*

## AN ODE TO DESTINY

Oh destiny oh destiny how you guide me to and fro  
 Send me to doom or fortune, oh destiny you guide my  
 fate like marshmallows to chocolate on s'mores.

Oh destiny  
 you tell me what to eat, destiny oh destiny  
 tell me what to do now I've lost a shoe and a  
 sock and I'm at school, oh what now destiny.  
 By the way destiny can you find my room light.

*Henriquez King*

## WHAT'S HARDWORKING

building a tree house  
 making a toy  
 building a car  
 making a book  
 building a statue  
 building an amusement park  
 training a squirrel to do a front flip  
 making a strike in a bowling alley  
 using an orange or a pear  
 building video games  
 jumping or stepping on Legos for a full 24 hours  
 training a squirrel to build a school in one minute  
 jumping into a lake 100 ft. above it

*Walker Johnson*

## EARTH

hot, hard, and rocky  
 nothing lives here  
 reallyyyyyyy hot  
 I wish I could eat Earth  
 until I am Earth

*Kai Betnar*

## HAPPY THEN SAD

A pink unicorn  
 feeling blue.  
 She wants to see  
 her friends but,  
 her friends don't  
 want to see her...  
 When she drinks  
 a purple slushie  
 it turns blue...  
 Her friends see  
 her a different way  
 like an "outside unicorn"  
 an "outside unicorn" is  
 a wild beast to them...  
 When she hears she  
 wants to break free,  
 from a cage...not to  
 go to school...but home.

*Audrey Beilby*



## SEVEN SEVEN 7

if I were a seven  
 I would get a job helping  
 kids with multiplication, division,  
 and fractions and once I retired  
 I would go on number adventures  
 with other numbers like 8, 9, 10, 6, and  
 11 and write books on those  
 number adventures to help kids  
 with their numbers.

*Rylan*

## WHAT'S NAÏVE

A little robin just beginning to chirp  
 A girl who doesn't know better, doesn't know the truth  
 The time of spring with newborn life  
 The little people in this world who only know  
 kindness and don't know cruel  
 Yourself when you're excited, but instead in the end  
 you  
 are full of disappointment and despair

*Lucy-Claire Song*

## WHERE I'M FROM

I am from a house in a  
 tree, from a rainbow sprinkled  
 donut, to a volcano on a page,  
 from a Thanksgiving turkey,  
 to a box-shaped car. From  
 a bed of water to a candle-  
 lit birthday cake.

*Jaxon W. Dodson*

## HOW TO KNOW FOR SURE YOU MISSED THE BUS

You're still sleeping, you wake up knowing  
 you did something wrong. Your heart is  
 pounding with guiltiness. You check your  
 time and think it's no use, so you  
 fall back asleep knowing it's the  
 wrong choice.

*Kennedy Bridge*

**GRAY**

When I see gray I think of smoke during a fire.  
 When I see gray I think of black and white  
 stirred. When I see gray I think of the  
 moon fading away. When I see gray I see  
 the color of my pencil lead. When I see gray I  
 have no emotion. When I see gray I think of a  
 shirt. When I see gray I think of the sky  
 in a boring world. When I see gray I see  
 old pictures.

*Chloe Riklon*

**DEFINITION OF A GIANT CRAWDAD**

you were fishing in a giant lake  
 and you could hear a loud snap  
 it was a crawdad on your line  
 20 feet long 10 feet wide you  
 reeled it in as fast as you  
 could But the line snapped and  
 you fell in the lake like  
 a giant rock cause you were  
 a giant rock.

*Carter Sloan*

**DEFINITION OF A LIGHTBULB**

It shines brightly as a flick  
 of a switch. White, curvy wicks  
 are inside the clear bulb. The  
 wires are the light. The glow  
 spreads eerily across the  
 dark room and makes it  
 bright.

*Eliza DePriest*

**DEFINITION OF LEAVES**

leaves have squiggly lines  
 bug makes home on them  
 they change color in the fall  
 wind blow them off falling on  
 the soft grass looking up  
 at the twinkley stars.

*Sloan McDonald*

**3019 ROBOTS**

3019 it was a long day sitting  
 on my couch hearing the robots  
 coming in and out getting groceries  
 and buying toys they are also fixing  
 my TV walking my dog driving doing  
 donuts doing burnouts smoke coming  
 out the tires.

*River S.*

**DOGWOMAN**

She goes around town on  
 her four legs people give her weird  
 stares but that is okay she says  
 she looks like a dog with a  
 human head she works as a book Trust officer  
 she also wears the latest things like dog  
 shoes/booties and wears the clothes too!  
 she goes for a walk with her friend dogman  
 And she will always live this way  
 Also she feels soft smells good looks  
 good does not taste good but if you ever  
 h wounds beautiful and again she  
 will always live this way!

*Lily Bryles*

**SKELETONS**

Rattling bones bitter taste and smell,  
 spaces in their bodies, you can  
     put your hand right through  
 them, very rusty from their  
     coffins, they are SKELETONS!  
 Hiding in their death holes  
     waiting to come out, break  
 them once, they'll build right  
     up again. So if you see a  
 skeleton, break it, run! They're lurking in  
     the night.

*Samuel Burr*

**ODE**

Ode to my water bottle  
 Ode to my Cheetos  
 Ode to my toes  
 Ode to Lewis the leopard gecko  
 Ode to Clark the beta fish  
 Ode to head  
 Ode to book  
 Ode to me and my stinkfoot  
 Ode to Venus fly trap  
 Ode to rapper  
 Ode to a fly  
 Ode to cups  
 Ode to some strawberries  
 Ode to snake  
 Ode to monkeys

*Ethan Marin*

**MARY ANN**

With her porcelain face and her fabric dress  
 she won't scare with an eye her. She  
 waits and waits until time right. She will  
 attack, even though she smells like a young  
 girl that will love, or looks like an innocent  
 doll that has been passed down for  
 generations, and light smooth body that will  
 hurt whomever is in her way, don't try  
 to bite back you will get injured from her  
 plastic hands. You better sleep with one eye open  
 tonight.

*Molly Miller*

**BECOMING A TREE**

I picked a leaf and held it to  
 my hand and felt like my hands swaying  
 in the breeze. I thought how it  
 would feel to grow branches.  
 I thought how it would be to stay  
 in one place.

*Lilly White*

**HOW TO KNOW FOR SURE YOU'RE OBSESSED WITH  
HEARTLAND**

Drama seeping in your brain. Tears  
 when Amy is in hard times. Confessions  
 of love, horses being fixed. You should  
 know someone's hiding in the barn.

*Madison Madrid*

**BUTTERFLY GIRL**

She has fluorescent wings and  
 purple antennas. She flies among  
 the fields ever so gracefully and  
 lands on the pretty flowers. She  
 glides through the sky as if to slice  
 it. But alas, this will not last – for when  
 she lands her wings disappear and  
 she walks on her own two feet.

*Jiana Hu*

**DARK VOID**

on the other side  
 is a void of darkness  
 and the grass don't grow  
 and it is dark  
 and the people who went  
 they never came back.

*Kaleb S.*

**ODE TO THE PAST**

The past is something you cannot  
 change. The past is stuck right where  
 it is. You cannot change what you  
 did. You can't change that you read this  
 poem. The End.

*Jiana Hu*

**HAPPY HOLLOW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**FAYETTEVILLE, AR**

**DATES OF VISIT:** October 23 - 24, 2019

**FACULTY SPONSOR:** Dondi Frisinger

**APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED:** 160

**VISITING WRITERS:** Patrick Font, Samantha Kirby, Scot

Langland, Mackenzie McGee, Steven Rybnicek, Vasantha

Sambamurti, Sidney Thomas, Kait Yates

## MOUNT ST. MARY ACADEMY LITTLE ROCK, AR

### DREAM CAUSED BY THE DEW COVERED GRASS

The sun on rain doused leaves  
like specks of the sun itself.  
the grey clouds  
outlined in peach and purple light

These things experienced by my own eyes  
but better told by the leaves and clouds.  
the feel of the wind  
carrying with it the smell of storms

the silhouettes of lightning  
in the black as night clouds  
and I wandered into the storms outside,  
simply to feel it before I awoke.

the calming dew covered grass against  
my feet.

*Vivian Fischer*

### UNTITLED

My smile is as bright as the sun  
and my teeth are straight like a ruler  
Every time I smile the sound is like a  
rock skipping on water.

*Maria Narvaez*

## NEW YORK CITY

New York City.  
People moving.  
Lights flashing.  
Cars racing.  
My mom pulls me close and says,  
“Stay close. It’s not safe.”  
But I feel safe.  
The lights come in every color of the rainbow:  
yellow smiles,  
pink happiness.  
Phones are everywhere.  
They are taking photos  
and making posts.  
But I don’t have my phone out.  
I just stand in the middle of everything.  
There is so much to look at:  
The smell of the colorful candy store.  
The smoke coming from taxis.  
I buy a shirt that says  
“I ♥ NYC,”  
and I really do love it.  
Then we get on the plane.  
Going back home.  
I pull out my phone to look at pictures.  
But there aren’t any.  
The memory fades.

*Kathryn Morris*

## UNTITLED

if my legs were stilts  
 i wouldn't have to look up  
 i wouldn't have to wear platform shoes  
 or 4 inch heels  
 i could have a top locker  
 and fit into more clothes  
 and not see the world from below  
 i wouldn't get called short stuff,  
 and get stepped on in the hallways  
 but my legs are not stilts  
 so I look up, and see the world from below  
 and wonder how life would feel from a different angle.

*Itatí Harris*

## CLOTHES

Uniforms, every day, the same  
 outfit, picking itself for me.  
 The weekend, a sweet escape  
 Like a snake shedding its skin  
 Freedom  
 Ripping away from all the  
 blending to finally let my  
 colors shine.  
 Neons, patterns, zig-zag  
 Bold and brilliant.  
 48 hours of brilliance, then  
 snap  
 back to the uniform

*Kayleigh Wynne*

## BECOMING A BALANCE

I felt strictly mechanic.  
 Hands becoming platters to rest questions upon,  
 An Iron spine with flawless posture  
 Kept my guesses accurate.

I became a balance,  
 A metal scale to pro and con life itself.  
 And what a weight it is  
 To carry so many debates in my chest!

In my right I hold a wedding ring.  
 In my left I hold its history  
 An undetermined misery  
 And my head is left to tilt to one side.  
 Is a love and a loss  
 A loss or a gain?

Is a hope with no future  
 A hope or a sickness?  
 Isa prayer with no action  
 A strength or a weakness?

In brassy palms the salts of lonely tears.  
 Are compared to the fallen teeth from sugar coated  
 smiles.  
 Is boredom in life worth its safety,  
 Or is unhappiness more fatal than any risk?

These arms cannot falter  
 My mind never stops churning  
 Because what is an analyst worth to the world  
 If the analyst ceases its learning?

*Belie Mentgen*

## THE MUSEUM OF GOLD PAIRS OF GLASSES

the museum of gold pairs of glasses  
 the color gold is everywhere  
 but there is no reason for this color, it's just a color  
 or is it real gold!  
 i am tempted to put a pair on  
 will i get caught?  
 the color would bring out my eyes,  
 i could wear them every day,  
 everyone would love me  
 but...is it worth it?

*Olivia Edwards*

## I LIED

I lied about Roller coasters  
 The beautiful multi colored chunks  
 of metal or wood. That carry  
 me up down backwards forwards  
 and upside down. The rides  
 that give you this feeling  
 of breathlessness and every  
 time you think you've got  
 a breath it's not even  
 oxygen. Nope just  
 butterflies that hatch in  
 my stomach. I will admit  
 saying I enjoy them is  
 honestly way more fun  
 Than actually hopping on  
 them and really wanting  
 to run.

*Melody Small*

## ONE-STAR REVIEWS OF MT. RUSHMORE

"The drive up was fine, it was just that our hosts had  
 such stony expressions the entire trip."  
 -Veronica Davis, North Carolina

"Did not meet the Presidents. Would not recommend. If  
 I could give negative six stars, I would."  
 -Patrick Jones, Quebec, Canada

"Oh, it was such a lovely educational experience for  
 our children. But one incident changed my entire  
 opinion of our great Founding Fathers. I was walking  
 our youngest, Jilly, on one of those child leashes when  
 suddenly, he started crying because Teddy Roosevelt's  
 face scared him. So I tried to console him with food  
 from the café. Boy, oh boy, do these people not know  
 how to cook! It was like eating cardboard with not  
 even salt to flavor it!"  
 -Joey Kidd, New York

"The entrance fee was way too overpriced. How much  
 do I have to pay to see one of my nation's landmarks?  
 Thanks, Obama."  
 -Jill Gibbs, California

"Took a wrong turn at Wyoming. Ended up in North  
 Dakota. Needs better directions. One star."  
 -Paul East, Texas

*March Meinhold*



## IT IS PERFECT

I am always warm.  
 Not here.  
 My family thinks it is cold.  
 I'm not.  
 I am perfect.  
 "Put your jacket on, there is snow outside."  
 "Why? I'm not cold."  
 The cool Alaska wind slides gently through my hair.  
 The immaculate snow sparkles in the sunlight.  
 I look out into the mountains.  
 There is a lake.  
 It's not like the brownish lakes in Arkansas.  
 It is purple and green and blue.  
 All stirred together like the night sky.  
 No ripples mar its surface.  
 No flamboyant skiers rampage across.  
 It is perfect.  
 I fall back into the snow.  
 I smell the crisp air.  
 I am always warm.  
 Not here.

*Anya Ratyez*

## THE CREEK

There's a creek just down the street  
 Take a left, follow the street, over the rope that stops no  
 one and  
 there you are  
 Unhook the dog, let her roam around. Someone cut the  
 grass, so  
 you don't have to worry about snakes anymore  
 The drainage on the street that leads here had more  
 water, but no  
 one can have fun in that stuff  
 The neighbors said there was bamboo around here,  
 maybe  
 you should—  
 "Rayne!"  
 Your dog has gone too far, but she came back  
 pet her, throw some rocks. You would try to skip them  
 but  
 you could never figure it out  
 It's hot. You can check out the bamboo next time. Let's  
 go  
 Rehook the dog, back over the rope, down the street,  
 take a right  
 and once again you're home

*Payton Lasseigke*

### INSTEAD OF RED

Darth Vader,  
One of the harshest Siths.

Scary, mean, cruel  
But not always

In the end  
he is loving and caring

He is not as cruel and unforgiving  
You just have to pull off the 1st layer

His threatening red light saber  
used to be blue

Maybe I am like Darth Vader  
Maybe I seem cruel and harsh

But when a couple of layers  
are shed, I am caring and loving

And deep down my light saber is blue  
instead of red

*Sarah Rounsaville*

### DREAM CAUSED BY THE SIGHT OF YOUR SMILE

The sight of your smile took me  
a while to figure out,  
like finding a surfboard  
in the middle of nowhere

The wild colors of lightness  
splash through space and time  
traveling back to you  
moment by moment, second by second

the exhausting maze  
causing panic  
and madness yet  
sadness blinds me in every way

though you're fading away  
I won't be able to remember the day  
I saw you last  
My dream gone

*Mya Straub*

## PLASTIC IN ASHES

No easy thing to bear losing your retainer.  
 The hours spent with clay in your mouth,  
 finding the perfect shape, are equal to the  
 cost to buy another. Looking is fruitless, since  
 you chose to get the clear one. First day gone,  
 you search for nothing. Second, you work up  
 the courage to inform your parents. 3rd, Judgement  
 Day. You must break the mold and tell your  
 parents you put your retainer in a napkin  
 to each cheese dip at Casa Mañana, but  
 you forgot to put it back and it gets  
 thrown with the old receipts and used  
 straws. The nice waiter helps you dig out  
 your dignity in the trash, but where's the  
 point? Where's the retainer? This single  
 piece of plastic costs more than your integrity.  
 Your life is falling apart, and so it your  
 teeth alignment. You are overworked, overdebt,  
 and your teeth overbite. The plastic, gone,  
 your teeth, crooked, your bank, empty, your  
 soul, begging.

*Anna Mammarelli*

## THE MUSEUM OF HEARTS

I walked in.  
 The first heart I saw was the heart of a  
 mother. The heart was full of love,  
 and was so big, it was about to jump out of the cage.  
 A killer's heart was what I saw next.  
 His heart was so small there was  
 a magnifying glass next to it for those  
 who would like to take a look.  
 I was tempted to take his heart out  
 and replace it with mine. I felt so bad  
 his heart was on display. He must've  
 felt ashamed. The next heart was a  
 teacher's, then a brother's, then a friend's.  
 But the last heart I saw looked familiar.  
 It was the heart of a fourteen year old girl.  
 She was student, a sister, a daughter,  
 and a friend. As I looked into the case,  
 I realized it was mine. My heart was on  
 display. How? It was there for everyone  
 to see. Why? Why me? It looked a little  
 smaller than I had hoped. On the description  
 next to it, it explained the heart was  
 small, because I had given it to everyone  
 else.

*Grace McKay*

### THE SMELL OF A 100 YEAR PLAN

I take a deep breath through my button nose  
 I am only three, but know that smell like I know my  
 own name  
 the smell of hairspray, feet, and pink ballet shoes  
 Though all my three-year-old friends hate it  
 I live for that smell  
 That smell is my future, what I am going to become  
 the smell of passion, twisted into a bun  
 decorated with a skirt and cheap pink leather  
 That is the smell of three-year-old passion,  
 of a three-year-old freshly sparked flame  
 waiting to be spread to people across the world  
 That is the smell of three-year-old dreams  
 becoming a 100 year plan  
 As firm and tight as the hairspray on my head

*Grey Parrish*

### BIG, BIG, BIG

When I am four, I am small.  
 I have big blonde curly hair.  
 I do pageants with big blue dresses.  
 I do big jumps at tumbling class.  
 Although I am small, I dream big.  
 I am a big sister.  
 My mom and dad give me big  
 kisses before bedtime.  
 When I am four, I get a dog.  
 He is Sarge.  
 His ears are SO big that I slip on  
 them when on sit on him.  
 We eat all the cookies together.  
 Only the big ones though.  
 My mom always says we are  
 getting too big.

*Autumn Mass*

### NEVER ENDING FLAME

If my joy was like a candle  
 a never ending flame  
 it would burn through the dark  
 leading towards a city of gold  
 it would be warm,  
 and the dreadful wax of the world would melt away  
 beneath me  
 but my joy is not a candle  
 it is more of a stone, cold and gray  
 pulling the world to the bottom of the river, further  
 from the sky  
 or my joy is like a gear,  
 always shifting, always turning  
 staying centered through ups and downs,  
 through the rotations  
 waiting for a match  
 or for a spark  
 to lift away the darkness

*Grey Parrish*

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### MOUNT ST. MARY ACADEMY

LITTLE ROCK, AR

DATES OF VISIT: February 3 – 6, 2020

FACULTY SPONSOR: Monica Madey

APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 114

VISITING WRITERS: Romie Hernández Morgan, Audrey

Scrafford, Sidney Thomas, Hannah Bradley

## NORFORK HIGH SCHOOL NORFORK, AR

### TRUCK JUMP

I was like another morning  
Crisp clear sky looking upon me  
with several million life times of knowledge  
the truck was like a pale horse  
willing to drive straight to the after life  
the engine screamed and hissed  
like an angry street cat  
my stomach was left behind  
the rules around the rearview lifted  
like gravity lost its iron grip  
I gaze upon my eyes in the mirror  
never have I gazed on such fright  
and bliss  
Then everything comes crashing  
down

*Ethan Greer*

### UNDERSTAND (V.)

The act of removing and inputting yourself inside a  
different vessel

*Trakker Este*

### WILD HORSE

The Horse, so big and muscular.  
He is shiny with silk in the sun.  
His breath so loud even from this far.  
He takes the long, green, healthy grass in his  
mouth.  
Grinding it with a chomping noise.  
His scarred neck from people trying to catch him, lifts  
to look at me.  
He steps towards me only dust out of  
arms reach.  
I feel his breath against my fingers, warm and  
sweet.  
His beautiful silver eyes look at me, his black coat  
behind them.  
His wild whiskers tickle my fingers.  
Our heartbeats sync.  
He takes one more step.  
He bows his head and I feel him.  
His energy, his power and strength, his bravery.  
He looks deep in my eyes as I do to him.  
We are one.

*Natalie Sisk*

## STILL LIFE

The voice with the silent eerie whisper  
 come to me from the shadows  
 I want to be found  
 The voice with the angelic sweet tone  
 sing me a melody  
 these poor ears are getting old  
 The voice with the energetic hype  
 bring me the drums  
 I want to feel the beat once more  
 The voice with the hope like burning fire  
 come out and dance  
 The voice that has been lost  
 will life again  
 Just wait a second more

*Briana Terrill*

## THREE WAYS OF LOOKING AT NIGHT

Night like a bunch of  
 porcupines dipping their quills into ink

Writing apologies for all the wishes  
 ungranted

The ebony skies hold the stars in place  
 for us to wish upon. Sometimes the ebony

skies love one or two stars, but that is  
 only because they hold so much for us.

*Justis Handfield*

## ROBO NOAH CENTINEO

I am very tall  
 a blank canvas  
 Usually white t-shirts,  
 sneakers, and white-washed jeans  
 The smell of soft honey  
 fills the room when I enter  
 engineered with Dark hair  
 and brown eyes  
 a perfectly placed smile  
 but no taste for love  
 no taste for anything  
 my life is basically a movie.

*Taylor Smith*

## THREE WAYS OF LOOKING AT AIR

Air is thick and thin  
 like crust on pizza

It is worth more than money  
 but treated like paper

we all need it  
 but some people don't care

*Will Martin*

## ODA A UN OJO DE CRISTAL

Cristalino, brillante como algo apreciado  
 que cuidas con amor.  
 Frío al tacto y suave como solo las cosas pulidas son  
 Observa asombrado el mundo que nos rodea  
 Años sin ver la luz, encerrado en la parte alta  
 del armario de la habitación de alguien que ya ha  
 desaparecido  
 Lo ruedo entre mis manos temblorosas  
 Nuestras oscuridades son diferentes entre sí  
 Cálida y nostálgica con aroma de un pasado alegre  
 Fría y peligrosa de sonrisas aterradoros y risas  
 estridentes  
 Un repentino dolor punzante en mi cabeza niebla mis  
 sentidos  
 Caigo y el ojo de mi abuelo huye de mi  
 De mi oscuridad y de la oscuridad eneima de mi

## ODE TO A CRYSTAL EYE

Crystalline, bright, like something cherished that you  
 care  
 for with love  
 Cold to the touch and soft as only polished things are.  
 Looks amazed at the world around us.  
 Years without seeing the light, locked in the upper part  
 of  
 the closet of someone who has already disappeared.  
 I roll it in my trembling hands.  
 Our darknesses are different from each other.  
 Warm and nostalgic with the smell of a happy past  
 Cold and dangerous with terrifying smiles and strident  
 laughter  
 A sudden stabbing pain in my head fogs my senses  
 I fall and my grandfather's eye runs away from me  
 From my darkness and from the darkness on top of me.

*Olivia Gonzalez*

## RECORDS

grooves in the vinyl all the way around  
 pearly black  
 shines in the light  
 on the record player  
         it ruffles on the stand  
 spins round and round  
 playing songs  
 music symbolizing this moment  
 creating a memory  
 that will last a lifetime  
 records

*Chloe Hill*

## REVISION

Cattle sale barn  
 lonesome bull stood by himself  
 black as the night sky  
 bones popping out like he had been starved  
 we stared at each other  
 he knew he would not last long

*Caleb McGoven*



## BECOMING A CACTUS

Needles puncture out of my skin  
One from my eye  
Another from hip

the hair drifts down my back  
Kissing on last goodbye  
Breathing one last I'm sorry

My hands grow together  
Fingers are no more

My arms grow thick  
Becoming striped green  
Split up by needles

I fill up with water  
I've been told I'll need later  
The desert is my home

My friends have become birds  
My arms a home for owls  
My feet rooted deep  
Sucking up with world

*Amber*

## CEMENT

Down my green path of broken cement  
The grass is grey tattered cement  
looking through the cracked gray branches  
of cement backed trees and  
through the delicate leaves crafted by  
mother nature, they too are cement  
seeing birds fly ahead with stiff crooked  
movements, they are confined by cement  
Bugs don't move they fall heavily with  
a thud, as the cement chips  
and cracks every so slightly  
Mother nature what have done.

*Allyson Smith*

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NORFORK HIGH SCHOOL

NORFORK, AR

DATES OF VISIT: October 8 - 9, 2019

FACULTY SPONSOR: Stacy Havner

APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 104

VISITING WRITERS: Alys Dutton, Samantha Kirby, Mackenzie McGee, Remy Pincumbe

## SPRINGHILL ELEMENTARY

### ALEXANDER, AR

#### THE STARS

The stars are falling rocks.  
 The stars are tiny pieces of  
 cloth in the sky. The stars  
 are little cotton balls.  
 The stars are eyeballs up in  
 the sky. The stars are dandelions  
 falling from the sky. The stars  
 are little balls of light that  
 blind you if you look at them.  
 The stars are pieces of paper  
 floating down from the sky.

*Sarah Boushka*

#### COLORS

Colors are beautiful.  
 Colors are sad  
 Colors are itchy, like a sweater  
 Light colors remind me of baking flour.  
 While dark colors remind me of static.  
 dismissal, betrayal  
 Maroon, burnt orange, mustard yellow  
 All remind me of an abandoned, rusted  
 tricycle.

*Madeline Enis*

#### THE TRAIN

The train is a Lion roaring in the  
 moonlit air. The train is a path  
 leading to an unknown place. The train  
 is a snake slithering on its  
 tracks. The train is the sun because  
 of the bright colors on it. The  
 train is a million wagons tied together.  
 The train is a person on its life  
 path. The train is a mouse trying  
 to find its way home. The train  
 is a circus home to the objects  
 aboard.

*Allen Thompson*

#### THE PHOENIX

You always look younger,  
 the day after S'mores,  
 after you char the marshmallow,  
 until it's almost ash.  
 Your smile is so bright,  
 you could engulf yourself in flame.  
 Across the fire,  
 do I really see a shape rising out of the fire?  
 Or is it just you,  
 tricking my tired eyes?

*Charlie Denton*

**GLASSES**

Glasses are mirrors on your face.  
 Glasses are the inner eyes of your face.  
 Glasses are spiders' eyes  
 Glasses microscope your face.  
 Glasses are watermelon seeds  
 Planted on your face  
 Glass shows your true color

*Jill Freeman*

**YOU'RE IN ANT COUNTRY**

Itching, stinging, anger goes down your  
 body when you ruin their birthday party. If you  
 walk into an ant pile, run, if you stay  
 more of their nasty poison will be injected.  
 If bitten by these tiny nightmares quickly  
 clean off and rub medicine over. If these  
 stupid bites need to pop, pop them and let  
 the fluid run.

*Aven White*

**SPRINGHILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**ALEXANDER, AR**

**DATES OF VISIT:** November 20 - 21, 2019

**FACULTY SPONSOR:** Leslie Smith

**APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED:** 90

**VISITING WRITERS:** Joy Clark, Samantha Kirby

**VANDERGRIFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
 FAYETTEVILLE, AR**
**THEME IN BLUE**

I see blue skies and clouds  
 in the shape of cotton candy.  
 The pool has the reflection of  
 me and my brother. He looks  
 blue cause of the water. There's  
 blue berries growing on our bushes.  
 It's time for summer. Then I  
 see a blue smurf on TV. My  
 brother says smurfs are not real.  
 But how come when we looked in the  
 pool he looked like one? He said it  
 was just the water. I touch the water and  
 it smells like my brother's favorite basket-  
 ball. Hearing the TV on I go back in to watch the  
 blue creatures.

*Libby Frost*

**THEME IN BLACK**

Nighttime is so peaceful, cats so dark  
 you can't see them, bats fluttering  
 in the sky right next to me, where  
 I can see the town so  
 alight I can hear the cats  
 meowing down below I am a  
 big bright white light.

*Laura Steinert*

**WHAT I MEAN WHEN I SAY HOME SWEET HOME**

The best smelling candle  
the light reflecting off the  
beautiful white rain and the sun  
shining through the light blue  
curtains. My beautiful family  
pictures the trees with the  
pretty birds on them. That is  
what I mean by home sweet  
home.

*Aaliyah Jordan*

**TIGERS**

Tigers, orange with stripes.  
Water looks like it will rub them off.  
Roars so loud It will hurt your ears.  
They live in jungles pretty and bright.  
Their eyes are fierce in the night.  
Don't burn the forest where they live.  
Their fierce eyes will be sad in a blink of  
an eye. Tigers are extraordinary.  
Don't destroy their home.

*Mya Fox*

**ME AS A SHOE**

I am proud to be a thing  
whose soul is the biggest part of  
the pounding of the foot  
I feel so alive until they  
replace my soul with inserts.

*Ryan Bell*

**THEME IN TEAL**

I hear the roaring of the ocean  
battering mercilessly at the sand.  
I feel the gentle swish of the water  
tickling my feet. I pick up a piece  
of shattered seaglass, feeling its  
sharp edges. I taste the cold sweet  
taste of vanilla ice cream cooling my  
mouth. I smell briny sea air, sharp and  
unforgettable. I am calm.

*Elenore Tuttle*

**THEME IN PURPLE**

In the day while you eat  
some delicious grapes  
you will see purple.

In the museum in art  
you will see purple.

When you are in the  
garden you will see  
purple that will  
make you feel happy.

When you see purple  
flowers with a perfect  
smell you will know  
that purple is  
your favorite color.

*Mariana Hernandez Parra*

**GIRAFFE**

I watch the sun go down in the savanna.  
 I eat the leaves on a flowing tree.  
 Everything is black and white.  
 I can finally see color.  
 Now I can smell the yellow grass.  
 I feel that I am swaying.  
 I can taste the air.  
 The sky feels like it is in my reach.  
 My long neck helps me see far, far away.

*Lilly Hayes*

**PURPLE**

Purple sounds like  
 the soft chirping of birds  
 in the morning. Purple sounds  
 like soft tiny whispers  
 from a far away kingdom.  
 Purple sounds like the quiet  
 tiptoe of mice in your home.  
 Purple sounds like water  
 dropping from a leaf to a  
 puddle. Purple sounds like  
 the work of busy pencils  
 when you walk into the classroom.

*Matilda Jensen*

**LLAMA**

The llama ran though the  
 pretty roses and jumped on  
 the white puffing cloud.  
 And fell asleep and woke  
 up and she was in the  
 sky and watched the sun-  
 set. And fell right back  
 asleep. And in the morning  
 she rolled off the cloud.  
 And its blue eyes and  
 pink and white fur  
 shined in the morning  
 sunlight.

*Presley Evins*

**HORSE**

I was on the road to my dad's  
 house. When he was a kid there were  
 so many trees and woods. I went out  
 to the woods one day and saw a shadow  
 gleaming in the light. It was a horse,  
 his fur so slick and his mane  
 fluffy as a llama. His fur was light  
 brown. With his tail flapping around while  
 he ran over the hills. While he rested in the  
 barn eating hay. And then he took a nap  
 for the next day.

*Eliza Hearne*

## SEA TURTLES

Bobbing through the sea as a man walking  
at night's darkest hour. A green head to  
finish its rough, scaly body. Sounds of soft,  
clear ocean water fall over this majestic  
animal. The smell of the blue ocean coat  
the sea turtle as it glides across the  
sea. Its eyes sparkle and shine as if  
a man were to look straight in them, he would be clean  
once more. It calls your name, softly,  
as if you knew him long ago.

*Ella Claire Hogue*

## THE LOUD MACHINE IN MY ATTIC

There is a loud machine in  
my attic. It shakes and spins, then  
it just breaks and my dad has  
to fix it. The loud machine in my  
attic is annoying and smells bad.  
The loud machine in my attic makes  
it hard to sleep at night. But then,  
one night the loud machine shook  
so much it shook the whole  
house then my dad yelled "this machine needs  
to go!" And he threw the machine  
out the window and on the yard and that was  
the last time I saw the  
loud machine in my attic.

*Caroline Rose Foster*

## THE DAY I WAS WOKEN

One dark majestic night, I saw  
the rocky white moon. My hairy skin  
was unfriendly. It was my runny nose that  
made it more tempting to rest. I knew  
I needed to rest for another 24 hours.  
Suddenly I heard footsteps, they were  
near. Pow I—

*Beckham Swope*

## JADE

Jade smells like what seems to be  
a warm citrus candle. Jade tastes like  
a sweet jungle. Jade makes me feel cozy  
and fine. Jade, when I touch it, feels like  
warms moss; I rub it and it creates  
something called friction. Jade is a  
truly good color.

*Vera Zhang*

## AN ODE TO LEGOS

Yellow, blue, red, black, you come in many colors.  
Brown, gray, orange, green. It makes me joyful  
fills me with glee. I like building with Legos.  
You make me happy every day that I play with  
you. Sometimes you feel bumpy, and  
sometimes you click together. You look tiny and you  
fill me with joy.

*Landon Passmore*

### THE FRIENDLY MACHINE

The friendly machine  
is a secret portal to a friendly  
land. It lives inside your  
body and only some people have  
it. In the friendly machine  
you hear laughter everywhere.  
You can see all of your  
favorite animals surrounding  
you. You will have outstanding  
friends and everything will  
talk in friendly little voices.  
It is so amazing you can  
almost taste the cotton candy  
clouds. You will touch every  
one of the things and more.  
You smell that sweet smell  
that you can never figure  
out what it is. That is the  
friendly machine.

*June Williams*

### MY HOMETOWN IN 2050

In 2050 humans will have no bones.  
People everywhere will get around in a  
pencil car. Broccoli will be building material,  
and we will eat wood. You'll draw with  
a book, and we'll move to the moon. Every-  
thing hovers 20 feet in the air, and  
backpacks will be journals. We'll always  
smell leather, and we'll always taste  
gum.

*Thomas*

### MY HOMETOWN IN 2050

I live in a house made out of sand.  
If you stop by you may hear rattlesnakes.  
Instead of strawberries being plants they are jelly  
and when you mush them they become strawberries.  
Blueberries will look like blueberry punch. You may  
Smell cotton candy because the leaves are cotton  
candy. Cars are now known as cows because cows  
are cars and cars are cows. Paths are made  
of bananas and sometimes fruit punch. There is  
also a new animal called the kookoobara.  
Last but not least, people will fly with chicken  
wings. This planet is called maybe another time.

*Parker*

### ODE TO ANIMALS

Animals are great things.  
You could  
have them as  
pets, servants, anything you want.  
But I prefer having them  
as pets.  
Because they would probably  
prefer themselves  
as pets  
too.

*Ben Hunt*

**THEME IN CYAN**

When the sky  
 sets in the west a light blue color  
 sets in the sky. There's no telling if I  
 may rise again. But I am a color  
 you might not think of. Although  
 I am light I can't fly away! I am  
 in the sky always will be, just look  
 out your window and I will be looking  
 back at you!

*Kylie Campbell*

**THE BASKETBALL COURT ON MARS**

The basketball court on mars has a lot more to  
 offer than a normal court on earth. First, you have  
 zero gravity, so you can dunk no problem. Second,  
 you can play against aliens that've probably never played  
 before, that's an easy win. Next, you have  
 a cool dust effect when you land on the ground.  
 Last, there is actually one pretty bad thing about  
 a court on mars... you forgot a space helmet.

*Jake Bednar*

**COMPUTER**

I can see the tabs  
 touch them and feel them  
 when the web turns on too much info  
 I'm going crazy when they log  
 out I'm finally back from that  
 computer

*Henry Hardin*

**THE SOUND OF BEING OUTDOORS**

The sound of chopping snow  
 makes me want to go back to  
 bed. As I walk and whisper we come  
 up to concrete. The sound of  
 chalk bleeds through my ears  
 as I continue walking down  
 the road waiting to arrive at  
 my destination. As I kept walking  
 down the road, I eventually  
 discovered that there was a frog  
 that sat on a log. We stopped  
 to say hello, but once we got  
 near it, it hopped away to the sound  
 of crunching dead leaves in  
 the distant. After hours we  
 finally arrived at the woods  
 and as soon as we got there  
 we washed our hands with the  
 sound of freshwater touching  
 my hands. And my hands were  
 so cold like ice so when  
 they touched the towel and it  
 felt so good I could not  
 leave it. I suddenly realized  
 this is just the place for me.

*Elleigh Harrod*



### AN ODE TO STEAK

I love you when you're  
pink and juicy. People say  
you can be too chewy.  
But not to me because  
steak my steak I love  
you too much. Now come  
with me and kiss me on  
the cheek. Then I'll gobble  
you up in a second.

*Ellison Clark*

### THE MUSIC OF THE MILKY WAY

The stars twinkle while the galaxies move  
The galaxies crash millions of years later  
forming new galaxies, but there is one  
galaxy that has not crashed into any  
galaxies in billions of years. Its name  
is the Milky Way. In the middle, it has  
a black dark lifeless careless black hole  
that swallows everything that it can get  
its hand on. The Milky Way will continue  
its journey forever because it is too lucky to  
not get hit by another galaxy.

*Ted*

### I COME FROM SAND

I come from hot days never snow  
sandstorms daily and always pool-day  
it feels like a bonfire and smells  
like 80-year-old dust it also looks like  
a desert and it sounds like a  
highway and tastes like  
burnt brownies.

*Rikki Trenholm*

### STUCK

Stuck. Stuck playing the same music.  
Same music. Same sheets. Same person.  
Same place. Same hands. Same feet.  
Stuck. You feel like the room is closing  
in on you. The applause in the distance  
are shrieks of monsters you have  
seen before. You are stuck. You are  
trapped in this room. Once a palace,  
now a box. You are stuck. They call  
you a player piano. But this is no  
game. No time for play. You see your  
person sit down. He pushes down one  
of your keys. The only thing you  
feel is uncomfortable. You  
smell popcorn, a thing that always  
makes you feel sick. The room in  
caving in on you, stuck.

*Kimberly Younkin*

INSIDE A SOFTBALL

In the air I flew. I could feel the friction pulling  
me back. I could feel the  
touch of little girls catching me and  
then throwing me. I could hear people cheering  
wildly like hungry lions after  
our team made it to home. The smell  
of the bat's rusty iron made me feel at home.  
The feeling of me getting  
to fly so high loosened me up like  
a pair of your older brother's sweatpants. Oh I just  
love that cold iron against  
my strong back. I would love to stay  
for another season, but it's time for the rubber to  
meet the road.

*Frankie Marie*

VANDERGRIFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FAYETTEVILLE, AR

DATES OF VISIT: Febuary 19-20, 2020

FACULTY SPONSOR: Marci Tate

APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED: 270

VISITING WRITERS: Kait Yates, Jackie Chickalese, Hiba Ta-  
hir, Kate Davis, Mackenzie McGee, Vasantha Sambamurti

WASHINGTON COUNTY JUVENILE  
DETENTION CENTER  
FAYETTEVILLE, AR

ME

A girl I want. Finding out Tupac and Biggie alive.  
Anger I don't want. Them to die at all.  
Battle I want. Shocking and Scandalous.  
Pain I don't want. Want it to be boring.  
And deadly. I want them to make a song.

*Goldina D.*

LETTER TO THE FUTURE

Sorry for the traffic, but this is happening  
because they need to build more road.

*Jeares K.*

STAR

a diamond in the sky  
the hole in the universe  
a light in my heart.

*Anonymous*

## LETTERS TO THE FUTURE

A wall separates me from reality.  
 I'm in a nightmare and I can't  
 wake up, won't wake up. It won't be  
 the same for you, maybe. The world I  
 know gets worse by age. I don't  
 recognize myself, maybe the reality  
 feels the same way. I hope you have  
 a dream catcher over your head to  
 keep away everything out to harm  
 your innocence. I can't imagine and  
 refuse to think.

## THE TODAY POEM

What was yesterday? I would like  
 to remember for today is the same  
 as was my yesterday. As for yesterday  
 I forgot what it was but for tomorrow  
 I know will be sunny side up

## COLLOQUIAL

When you stick  
 your tongue out  
 too much.

*Rostila*

## CIGARETTE BUTTS

I look out the window, and to my surprise  
 the ground is littered with cigarette butts.

The vents spew cigarette butts onto the floor.

I turn to the sink and it pushes two  
 tiny cigarette butts out, slowly.

I back up into the mirror and notice  
 myself becoming a cigarette butt.

Dad, I wish you had quit.

## LETTER TO THE FUTURE

Although I'm sorry, it's not my fault.

It's not my fault that the lungs of  
 the earth have been cut away  
 relentlessly.

It's not my fault that the amazon  
 will eventually be scattered across the  
 globe in the form of chairs and  
 floor boards.

As I write this with my wooden  
 pencil on this wooden table I want  
 you to know it's not my fault.

I'm just part of the problem.

*Chase G.*

**ORCHIDS**

Orchids are to be taken care of just like you have to take care of someone you love.

Orchids are something to be kept like keeping a loved one.

Orchids are something you can lose if you don't water just.

Like losing someone you love if you don't give effort.

*Jimmy A.*

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**WASHINGTON COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER**

**FAYETTEVILLE, AR**

**DATES OF VISIT:** February 19 - 20, 2020

**FACULTY SPONSOR:** Joshua Moody

**APPX. NUMBER STUDENTS SERVED:** 15

**VISITING WRITERS:** Alys Dutton, Lily Buday

## SUPPORT WITS

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Arkansas WITS is made possible through a partnership with the University of Arkansas Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences and also in part by the schools and institutions we visit, and by the generous support of private donors.

Many of the students we work with have little familiarity with poetry and the arts when we first arrive. But WITS is not just about celebrating the arts; our program is designed to foster and emphasize attention to language, experimentation, associative thinking, risk taking, and creative problem solving. The recognition and development of these skills will build a generation of leaders, inventors, and problem-solvers, which is especially important when we're moving into an economy in which ideas and language carry the most capital value.

Classroom teachers have noted the following effects from a WITS visit: WITS elicits enthusiasm and participation from students who are normally withdrawn, disinterested, or have serious learning disabilities; the act of (and remembrance of) sharing poems contributes positively to a respectful class dynamic; WITS workshops open a door for students—they feel both equipped and empowered to use language differently and write with a greater sense of authority; students who are “at risk” express interest in higher education and enrichment opportunities; WITS inspires students to connect with their course studies and changes “have to” into “want to.”

\$100 can impact 100 students, but a contribution of any amount helps make our creative writing programs for Arkansas students possible. Because of your generosity, WITS can continue its 40+ year legacy of serving schools and institutions all over the state of Arkansas. Your donation helps offset travel expenses and makes it possible for us to continue serving underfunded school districts.

You may be able to double or triple the number of students you help. Ask your employer if they have a matching grant program and be sure to let us know whenever you make your gift.

If you'd like to support WITS, please make checks payable to Writers in the Schools and mail to:

Writers in the Schools  
Attn: Program Director  
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333 Kimpel Hall  
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We are sincerely grateful for your support.



To learn more about WITS, to order additional copies of this anthology, or to schedule a visit for your school, please visit us online:

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## ARKANSAS WITS 2019-2020 VISITING WRITERS

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**SAMUEL BINNS**  
fiction, year 2

**HANNAH BRADLEY**  
poetry, year 4

**LILY BUDAY**  
fiction, year 1

**RYAN CHAMBERLAIN**  
fiction, year 1

**JACKIE CHICKALESE**  
poetry, year 1

**JOY CLARK**  
fiction, year 4

**KATE DAVIS**  
poetry, year 2

**ALYSANDRA DUTTON**  
fiction, year 2

**PATRICK FONT**  
fiction, year 4

**KARSTIN HALE**  
poetry, year 2

**ROMIE HERNÁNDEZ MORGAN**  
poetry, year 3

**VICTORIA HUDSON**  
poetry, year 3

**SAMANTHA KIRBY**  
translation, year 4

**SCOT LANGLAND**  
poetry, year 1

**JOSHUA LUCKENBACH**  
poetry, year 3

**PETER MASON**  
poetry, year 3

**GWENDOLYN MAURONER**  
poetry, year 4

**MACKENZIE MCGEE**  
fiction, year 2

**LANDON MCGEE**  
poetry, year 3

**REMY PINCUMBE**  
fiction, year 3

**STEVEN RYBNICEK**  
fiction, year 3

**VASANTHA SAMBAMURTI**  
fiction, year 1

**AUDREY SCRAFFORD**  
fiction, year 1

**HIBA TAHIR**  
poetry, year 2

**SIDNEY THOMAS**  
fiction, year 1

**EMMA VAN DYKE**  
poetry, year 3

**KAIT YATES**  
fiction, year 2

