



## Poems by Past Teen Poetry Winners

For details and registration, visit [www.yorklibraries.org/library-services-programs/poetry/](http://www.yorklibraries.org/library-services-programs/poetry/)  
Deadline to register is January 19, 2024



“Bittersweet” by Avery Yoder – 1<sup>st</sup> Place 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> gr.

The last few days of May,  
When all your fears and worries go away,  
School starts getting a little too easy,  
While the weather becomes warm and breezy,  
No more quizzes, no more tests,  
Just my life at its best,  
Always craving the summertime heat,  
But in the end it’s bittersweet,  
I will miss my teachers,  
I will miss my friends,  
Though I hope summer never ends.



**“We the Pigs” by Ella Gladfelter – 1<sup>st</sup> Place 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> gr.**

**The beasts with skin so thick  
With hair so coarse  
Not a comb could touch  
With flesh so pink  
Yet infested with bugs  
They lathered themselves  
In thick gooey mud  
Bathing in the putrid scents  
Their eyes bulged  
From their heads, not a care  
They ate their scraps  
They ate the grass  
They ate anything in their path  
They pushed each other around  
Squealing in delight  
Always hungry for another bite  
Selfish and greedy they oinked  
And they oinked  
More, more, for their likes  
They rolled in their filth,  
Their feces and laughed hysterically  
Eating and eating  
One fell dead  
Plunging into the muddy mess  
Its carcass still warm  
Another beast took upon itself**

To clean the mess  
Blood spilled into the pen  
As the beast tore into the body  
Others joined  
Ripping apart the cold flesh  
And devouring it  
With ever-hungry mouths  
Squealing and squealing they laughed  
With a delight  
Until every drop was gone  
They feasted on what might've been  
A brother or sister  
In some other life.



“A Formal Apology to Her Majesty, the Moon” by Annika Swenson  
– First Place 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> gr.

My dearest Moon,  
Queen of the Night  
My gosh, it's been too long –  
I owe you an explanation  
as to why my gaze's been gone.

Your platinum surface,  
staring back at me  
I find myself taken  
from Her Majesty

Instead, my mind lies elsewhere,  
on a set of copper eyes;

Miles made to millimeters  
Over which my mind does fly.

A puzzle of perplexities,  
hours, poorly paced,  
Visions, Instructions, Curiosities,  
across a sunset-mirrored face.

Vivacious whimsy; riveting endearment,  
lightning crackles, blood in sparks,  
tempest of emotions, weathered  
this hurricane I battle in times apart.

Am I not to feel that element embrace  
only to kiss the shores of seas unknown?  
But my, that eye is sickly sweet  
before the tides, the winds, are thrown.

And if I decide to return from my journey  
back from such tropical hell  
my mind, in absence of heart,  
my soul does fail to quell.

His complexities exceed my musings,  
a puzzle poised to pair;  
and so you see, dear Moon,  
that's why my gaze lies elsewhere.



## Top Ten Poetry Writing Tips

(adapted from <https://www.writingforward.com/poetry-writing/poetry-writing-tips>)

1. Find inspiration in the seasons, weather, animals, relationships, travel, joy, grief, loss, love, anger, fear, humor, school, your family.
2. Write with honesty. Don't back away from your thoughts or feelings. Express them!
3. Read lots of poetry. Notice what makes others' poetry memorable. Capture it, mix it up, and make it your own.
4. Try writing in different forms (sonnets, haiku, etc.).
5. Use imagery.
6. Embrace metaphors and stay away from clichés.
7. Stretch your vocabulary to find the best words to get your point across.
8. Use poetry prompts when you're stuck.
9. Revise and rewrite your poems to make them stronger and more compelling. Eliminate all unnecessary words, phrases, and lines. Make every word count.
10. Use language that people can understand.



## Top Ten Writing Prompts to Get You Started

(adapted from [www.lovetoknow.com/parenting/teens/40-poetry-prompts-high-school](http://www.lovetoknow.com/parenting/teens/40-poetry-prompts-high-school) )

1. Write about how you have changed from elementary school to now.
2. Write a poem about your favorite anything – musician, actor/actress, movie, food, season, holiday, piece of clothing, art supply, sport, etc.
3. Write about how a friend become an enemy or how an enemy becoming a friend. What happened? How did it change you?
4. Write a poem about your pet from its perspective.
5. Write a poem about the first great loss that you've experienced. This might be the loss of a pet, friend, or family member.
6. Pick an image that captures your imagination and create a poem based off the image.
7. Delve into a moment where you felt embarrassed.
8. Write about the relationship with your parent(s), grandparent(s), sibling(s) or friend(s).
9. Write a poem about a school, social, environmental, or political issue that you really care about.
10. Examine the fear that comes with the unknown.

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