

Use Your Words: Capturing Water and the Environment in Poems

Here are some vivid examples, in the words of young people your age connecting their experiences to water and other elements.

So, read and then send us something that expresses your feelings or observations about water and other elements of the environment!

RAIN

Lightning dances beneath the tumbling surface
of furrowed, thunderous clouds
and suddenly, the fever breaks
droplets pour
and collect in my hands.
Of all the words in the English language
these have fallen together
to form
one small gift.

Rain

Bethany Bernard, age 18
Sugar Hill, Georgia
N. Gwinnett High School (Suwanee)
Teacher: John Bush
2004 River of Words Contest®
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River of Words® (ROW) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting literacy, creative expression and community awareness of our most critical environmental concern: water. River of Words was co-founded by U.S. Poet Laureate (1995-1997) Robert Hass and writer Pamela Michael to help young people make a personal and lasting connection to the environment. River of Words is internationally recognized for its unique watershed education model that integrates art and poetry in a place-based curriculum. Since 1995, River of Words has encouraged young people to explore and savor the watersheds where they live and has trained educators to guide them with inspiration and passion. Through educational services, traveling exhibits, publications and community programs, ROW reaches thousands of educators and young people, grades K-12, around the world.

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IF I COULD BE WATER

If I could be water
I wouldn't be a pond
Muddy and brown,
I wouldn't be an ocean
Big and alone,
I wouldn't be rain
Falling again and again,
I wouldn't be ice
Cold and frozen,
I would be a river,
Long, wide and free.

If I Could Be Water

Bailey Bystry, age 11

Glen Ellyn, Illinois

Writers' Studio

Teacher: Naazish Yarkan

2008 River of Words Contest®

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AN ENDLESS RHYTHM

Waves play a smooth song
Inky water under a full moon
A surface that shimmers
Slight waves disturb
the glassy surface
The water sighs
Never changes its rhythm
Pulls in and out
Always on time
Silence, even the gulls sleep
Only dreaming stars,
a sleepy moon,
and restless waves accompany me
My troubles pass away
Pulled into the endless sighs
Melt into the marred surface
of the water
There is nowhere else
I would rather be

An Endless Rhythm

Devan Allard, age 15

Skandia, Michigan

Gwinn Area Community Schools

Teacher: Amy Laitinen

2007 River of Words Contest®

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