

RAWK in'
Through The
Wreckage

Youth Poetry From a Year of
Pandemics, Uprisings, & Revolutions

Collected for the
Kalamazoo Poetry Festival 2021

Read and Write Kalamazoo exists to celebrate and amplify youth voices through the cultivation of reading and writing skills via **joy, creativity, equity, and access.**

In celebration of the Kalamazoo Poetry Festival, RAWK has compiled this digital publication to share the poetry we have had the honor to publish over the past year as we all learned to adapt to a new world.

Between our first virtual Summer Writing Camps and our Quarantine Anthology Project we have released four new anthologies of student writing:

- *Who Can Change the Future? Poetry & Prose from RAWK's First Virtual Summer Writing Camps 2020*
- *Shelter In Place Stories and Words from the Socially Distant Front Lines of Home*
- *Separate Together Collected Works From Isolation*
- *Questions You Can't Answer Wisdom & Antibodies From Our Heroes' Virtual Journeys*

From these publications comes a collection of poems of praise and wonder, of every day joys, of worry and pain, strength and determination, of confessions, confusions, and calls to action. Written in virtual RAWK workshops and mentoring sessions, in virtual school classrooms, and in all the places these young poets found themselves weathering the many storms of our collective existence.

RAWK's mission has always been to celebrate and amplify youth voices, but the past year has underscored why we exist and why we're going to keep working and adapting to support the young people of Kalamazoo. Now more than ever, young people need space to process and express, to explore and grow, and to step into the inherent power of their words and stories.

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The writings shared here were collected between March 25th, 2020 and March 15th, 2021

RAWK would like to thank **Anne Hensley** for the time and creative efforts spent in the editing of the four anthologies that contributed to this publication.

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Black Lives Matter

by Amani Hill, 5th grade

When I heard what was going on in the world right now,
it made me feel sick to my stomach.

Not just because I'm Black.

But because it is not right.

The news has been blowing up

I saw the video.

It was frustrating to see a person

that is equal to all

being hurt because of his skin.

I remember in AT classes, last year, learning about this

My teacher said, "Racist people still exist."

I was just thinking, "I don't know about that. I haven't
heard about it in a long time." Now I know that it is true.

Actually, I remember feeling misplaced last year
because I was the only black person in AT classes.

Think about this:

What does Target, Family Dollar, and other businesses
have to do with this?

Our world is getting changed into a warzone

Whites vs Blacks again

Why do we have to bring this back up?

How many times is this going to happen?

We have been silenced throughout the years

it's our turn to protest and say what is right

but all of a sudden

it's a problem.

I Want Things to Change

by Cecilia Puente, 5th grade

I get really mad sometimes.
Like really mad.
Like I want to yell.

I want to scream.
I want to throw a fit.
I want to break things apart.

I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE

People shouldn't be afraid of who they are
Or what they look like
Or the color of their skin

Afraid that one day they'll be killed by people
Who are being paid to protect to them

I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE

You say Black people cause more trouble?
Have more fights?

That's because you're in their neighborhoods
Watching them like a hawk.

I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE

When a White person kills a Black person, it's self
defense.

When a Black person kills a White person, it is murder.

I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE

It's like those old time movies.
People only see Black and White.
Why can't they see what actually matters?

I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE

I don't want people to look at me and just see the color of
my skin.

I want them to see me.

For who I am.

I WANT THINGS TO CHANGE

Protests Poem

by Hannah Boothby, 8th grade

I marched in the protests,
when memory fades,
I'll never forget these horrors.
I'll remember the history,
because it's my history,
'cause not so long ago,
we shouted and marched,
down through the streets,
hoping to change our world.
They had their guns,
and they had their dogs,
but we had our dreams and our hope.
Our voices were stronger
than weapons they carried,
and so the laws were changed.
I see the protests,
when we pass away,
history remembers these horrors.
The future will not
forget what we did,
oppressors and the oppressed.
So we shout and we march,
down through the streets,
tired of hate in our world.
They have their guns,
their gas and their bullets,
but we have a say in what's seen.

Our voices are stronger
than weapons they carry,
so we don't let go of our hope.

Untitled

by Sagan Barber, 16 years old

It only takes a spark,
A single flicker to ignite the poised tinder of an open mind.
As the fire spreads, so does your voice,
It becomes ignition for others' action.
A forest fire of wild thoughts,
Burning trees that whisper for the fight.
People douse us with waterlogged insults,
Sordid attempts to put us out,
They haven't realized that attempts to strangle us,
Only make us tower higher;
The unstoppable burn of active action.
Some people won't survive,
The opposers are too scared of us and smother them.
We fight for them, their deaths will never be in vain.
We fight even when the fire is smoldered,
Nothing left but embers growing dim,
But if there's even one minuscule light left,
We'll rage on again and again,
Coming back brighter and bolder than times before.

I Am Every Good Thing

by Max Bormann, 4th grade

I am as loud as a lion,
and sometimes as quiet as a mouse.
I am super fast, as fast as light.
I am artsy like my mama.
I am silly like a monkey, and sometimes serious like a
tiger.
I am snuggly like my stuffed animals.
I am proud like a cat that caught a mouse.

I Am Every Good Thing

by Harrison Bryce, 4th grade

I am a sportsman, a courts man,
I am nasty
“Slam dunk.”
I am a touchdown, a field goal,
a 90-yard running streak.
I am the kick, the
the goal, I am breaking ankles full.
I am the
reader, the leader,
the one that’s got the Knowledge.
I am right, I am wrong, but ...

My wisdom is never gone!

I Am Every Good Thing

by Kyree Whitfield, 4th grade

I am a sports player.
I am a giver not a taker.
I am a winner, not a loser.
I am a leader, not a follower.
I am a team player.

I Am Every Good Thing

by Sabrina Barrett, 4th grade

I am an artist like Vincent van Gogh.
I am as short as a sapling.
I am fun, positive, and energetic.
I am a gamer like my brother.
I am a thinker and a helper.
I am a friend like no other.
I am as cuddly as a cat and as shy as a mouse.
I am there when my friends and my family need me.

Wonderful Women

by Anna Kingston, 12 years old

Sally Ride, the first woman in space
Rosa Parks stayed seated while standing for her race
Aretha Franklin, The Queen of Soul, raised in our
state
Junko Tabei, climbing Everest was her fate

Amelia Earhart flew across the deep, blue ocean
Benazir Bhutto was a Prime Minister against all man's
notion
Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the Supreme Court Justice
who was notorious
Frida Kahlo's paintings, fighting stereotypes and
simply glorious

So many wonderful women to inspire me
When it came to their battles they did not flee
My battle has just started, I'm following their way
With their guidance I will not go astray

Love ones

by Yamilet Brito-Arevalo, 12 years old

Love ones come
love ones stay
love ones taste
love ones dance
love ones leave
love ones will come back

Questions You Can't Answer

by Eliseo Daniel Blanco, 9 years old

Are we still dreaming or Are we just a thought?
Is the future Dead or is it happy?
When we die will there be darkness or will it be family?
Is life gonna be worth living or not?
What if we never wake up?
What if there is no light ever again?
Is corona gonna end? (hopefully it does)
What would life be like if everyone was the same?
What if we had no names?
What would we call each other?
Why do we say thank you or please?
What is the reason for rewards?

Like a Star

by Tony VanStrein, 10 years old

Life is like a star Big and Bright or little and dim. We don't know which it will be but we do know that we can make the best of it. Like a star life can collapse. Like a star people can expand to become a void that sucks in everything including the light of others. Like a star people die so that there's room for others to come. Like a star if we all come together we can shine so bright that all darkness flees. Like a star.

Acrostic Poem

by Gus Roman, 4th grade

Dream of freedom for all.

Religion guided him.

Miraculous guy who changed the world.

And he made people think.

Remembered for making it so black and white people were able to do the same thing.

Trustworthy.

Ideas that are unimaginable.

Noticed by many.

Loved by many.

United people.

Truthful.

Helpful to many people.

Encouraging.

Resented by some.

Kind to others.

Integrative.

Never forgotten.

Gone forever.

Acrostic Poem

by Kendall Herrmann, 4th grade

Do you have a dream?
Rights should be equal

Maybe we could all get along
All of us together
Right here forever
Today is a change
In all of our hearts
None will be hurt

Let's all think this through, it is the right thing to do?
United, we stand
Tonight we fight, with our powerful words
Here we all are together
Everyone is getting along
Right here, right now

Kindness everywhere
In and out
Not worried
Great people, all of us here together!

Acrostic Poem

by Jack Stefanick, 4th grade

Dreams he dreamed changed the world
Rallying people toward a cause

Marching for freedom
Across the nation
Rule breaker because they weren't fair for all
Tireless in his fight for civil rights
In a time of segregation
Never giving up

Lightning only makes sound if it strikes
Us with the power of bravery
Thoughts towering in his mind
Helping Black lives
Even if he faced the consequences
Resistance was his daily fight

King of protecting lives
In a plague of segregation
Niagara Falls isn't as powerful as his heart, even
though many tried to break it
Giving peace to the world is his legacy

Poem

by Mara Boyea, 4th grade

We can do anything we want Unless it is
bad
So set goals and do them
You be you
 Try new things
 Live life

My Smile

by Regina Castillo-Castaneda, 13 years old

My smile is a crescent moon.
My smile feels like a beam of moonlight;
It is simple, sparkly, subtle.

My smile protects me.
It makes me feel joyful, beautiful, and calm.
But I wonder if my smile is a gift to cover my pain.

I wonder why you were born, my smile.
Was it to protect me?
Are you a wall to keep my pain hidden?
Are you meant to share with people who fill my days?

But what I wonder the most is ...
Could you share your gift with me, like you do with
others?

The True Future Of Me

by Elizabeth Bippley, 12 years old

Doing the impossible.
Daring to break.
Break all those barriers for once and for all.
Doing the thing that some think you shouldn't, just
because you are a girl.
Doing more than one thing.
Helping millions upon millions through your dream.
Speaking truth.
Helping others.
Doing math and physics.
Daring to do what you want.
President of the United States.
Astronautical Engineer.
Anything ...

The Future.

By Masha Canfield, 12 years old

When I look into the future,
I'm still not sure what the fates hold in hand for me.
I still see myself spreading love,
And understanding those with their own path,
So I can help carry them through life's wonders,
Like a road filled with endless potholes and bumps,
But also intersections,
Crossing with the promise of possibilities.
For then I can share the knowledge,
That I've gained throughout the unfaltering sea called
life.
And for the others I meet,
They shall choose to pass it on too,
For then the truths of the world will be met with
courage,
Not fear of the unknown.
Like knights we'll rise,
Full of the quake and pride of tomorrow,
Strong as the hope we carry.
For we shall strive to build a better place,
A future full of love and honesty.

The future.

And as we stand tall,
On the shoulders of giants,
The ones that have pushed us to climb this high.

We must not let them down.
For we must leave behind a better past,
Than the pasts before us.
And as we stand resilient,
In the ashes,
That still rings from the memories,
Not forgotten.
From those who extinguished the fire,
Still burning,
From the ashes we build and always will.
And as we stand proud,
Meeting the right and wrongs of us as a people,
Still carrying the bright burning torch of before, now,
and later.
We stand with the brilliant smiles given to us,
Gracing the faces of tomorrow,
Our unwavering perseverance,
Made from the strength we've found,
Molding a path we'll take.
Together we will overcome the new dawn.

The future.

I will surround myself with those whom I love,
The pulling of my needs,
Warmth, kindness, understanding,
They will build the future.
For some shall deny the future.
But I shall meet it towering over my past mistakes,
Proud and strong.
From the ones that have taught me to vanquish my
fears,

Back to the pit of darkness and demons.
Hoping,
That one day someone will learn to feed the light to
the monsters too,
Just like I will.

The future.
And the present will be made,
Shaped by the ones who scale the mountains,
Of doubt and uncertainty.
Marked by the ones who open the veil of possibilities
to others,
Educating to bring light to our woes.
Decorated by the ones who bring the small smile of
the sun,
And help drive away the cloud of anger and misery.
Painted by the ones who soothe the mistakes and
doubts of others,
Like angry splats of ink on thick white paper of
vulnerability,
Accompanied by the same array of messes showing,
For we are all the same,
But unique.
Tomorrow will be shaped,
By the ones like you.

The future.
Our future.

For some shall deny the future. But the future shall
not deny me.

Once Upon a Time ...

by Giuliana Bush, 13 years old

How about we write a story
This is a story about a little girl.
A little girl who loves school.
She loves school because she loves to learn.
And she knows education is how she's going to
change the world.
So in the first chapter,
This little girl walks into school one day,
When she is told by her teacher
To stop speaking her home language.
Fala sério, professora.
The very language that rolls off her tongue like a
rhythm
Or a sweet song
Her language is ugly.
Her language makes her dumb.
Her language ma —

Wait, no.
Back up. Rewind.
This is a story. That's not right.
Let's start over.
In this story, everything is different
In this story, societies stop oppressing
communities of color
Those who come from nothing and everything
Who are trying to get an education.

In this story, I don't wake up everyday with the weight
on my shoulders
Of the worry
Of my friends getting shot.
In this story, nobody gets left behind.
Nobody gets killed by a gun.
In this story, there are no bombs.
There are no walls.
In this story, my country stops killing black and brown
people.
In their own backyard and abroad.
In this story, none of my classmates get called
criminals.

No bullet holes in the protagonist
No blood coming off the hero
In this story, those in power start caring!
And in this story, there are no saviors
Because communities empower themselves
Through their own stories
Told in their own language
In this story, nobody is treated differently,
For having caramel or ebony skin
Because yours is as pale as the headlights on your
police car
And in this story, no one is hated for living outside
your boxes
No one is shot for having a dream
And nobody is arrested for challenging
The demoralizing ways
Of white America

In this story, cultures don't become costumes
In this story we are treated as fully human.
And in this story, our language is rich.

It makes us beautiful.
And it is respected.
Empowering.
Ancestral.

Because this is really just a story
For the little girl
Who could feel her dreams so near

So real.
Possible.
Alive.
So close.

Right ... there.

In this story, a little girl loves herself.
Her body, her skin
Her mind, her hair
She loves her neighborhood.
And her people.
Her land and her language.
And most of all, her future.

Rise Above

by Kailah Gaines-Harris, 12 years old

In Memory of Maya Angelou

They may try to put you down
Because you're not like them
But you don't need to be like them
No matter how hard they're trying to change you
You rise above.

It doesn't matter if you don't look like them
Or if you don't like the same things as them
Because you were born your own way
And they were born their own way.

They're going to try to make you upset
And make you turn against your own thoughts
But you need to support yourself
Don't let them stomp all over you
Instead what you do is
You rise above.

Keep doing what you do best
Don't stop and fall
Work very hard
And be the sun rising above them all.

When you start losing confidence in yourself
Rise.
When you feel like you won't make it

Rise.
When things get hard
Rise.

Rise against all those voices in your head
And those people
Who made you feel like you were behind
And they were ahead.
Rise above
Rise above
Rise above.

Troubled Treadmill

by Johanna VanLandegent, 15 years old

Last year you said you were done
That you were too busy to run
So what's happened now?
You came back somehow
Since when has running been fun?

Don't get me wrong, it's been grand
To finally be in demand
But your poor treadmill's tired
Would you check my wires?
All this use is just too much to stand

You've been talking about a disease
That quarantine helps to appease
But you're losing your mind
Stuck quarantined
I guess running helps your unease

I think I at last understand
I'm happy to lend you a hand
As scary as this seems,
When we work as a team
There's nothing that we can't withstand

In My Garden

by Ingrid Aardema, 6 years old

I'd plant roses in my garden.
Roses can be different shades,
Such as pink or red.
There's always something special because there is
love in their stems.
That goes all the way to its middle and then to all of
the petals.
All of the petals shine love into your mouth and then
the love goes into your heart.
The heart is so special and shares its love with
everyone.
You will always be my friend.
Love, Ingrid

Eraser Poem

by Olivia Brooks, 5th grade

Erase my mistakes
Fix my problems
But I'm on the bottom
The tiniest of all everyone else is tall
Bigger than me
Happy with glee
Still me at the bottom
With lots of problems
But then the shortest of girl picks me up
And erases it all

Headphones Haiku

Written by Jack Stefanick, 4th grade

Cover up my ears
Soft cushioning for my head
Lets me hear my class

Enchanted Dragon

by Taegan Rademacher, 4th grade

The enchanted dragon
spread her enormous, spiked wings.
Purple, blue, red, and black flashed
through the swirling snow —
falling silently to the ground

Humans have never fully gazed upon or known her
beauty
aside from the spectacular color in the sky
She appears,
then disappears in the blink of an eye
It is only in the quiet of the white snow
that a human is lucky enough to see
her magnificent colors show
Legends say if you get a glimpse of her
you will be lucky
forever

Horchata

by Jose Luis and Amaya Olivo, 7 and 9 years old

Water first, put it inside the cup
then this — the powder
you need a spoon
mix the water and the powder together
then add the sugar and mix it up
and we're done
Boom — horchata
try it now
1-2-3
Mmm! It's good

Random Stuff

by Salvador Blanco, 8 years old

Can you see into my head?
I can see the future through your forehead.
Dow now now now
da na nowww

when you fart and what's going on in your head
ha I farted
or
I hope no one heard
or
ya someone better smell it then they'll be the one
who dealt it

Cookbook

by Amaya Olivo, 9 years old

the first ingredient is a cup
second ingredient is water
third ingredient is powder
fourth ingredient is sugar
fifth ingredient is a spoon
ingredient six is mixing it up

Transformer Instructions

by Adahy Garcia, 9 years old

open the doors to put them back
then take this arm out
then flip it this way
then turn the body
put these arms down when it's closed
open these legs
then boom
yup

Transformer Instructions Continued

by Adahy Garcia, 9 years old

I put both feet to the back
connect both feet which connects the legs kind of
then flip it up
just put the arms up
then put these back and then — hold up
flip these double legs, the tires
then put the arm with the big sword inside the
window, there's a hole in it
and then ... now it's a car

Stripes

by Zanaya Wilson, 10 years old

A Tiger drinks water
A Tiger eats all the meat
A Tiger is ferocious

StrongWind

by Zanaya Wilson, 10 years old

I am Strongwind
I blow hats off of people
no one can catch me
no net will not do it
no jar will not do it
I am the wind

An Ode to Pizza

by Darek J. Roberts, 6th grade

Pizza, oh, pizza
Your warm embrace keeps me alive and calm
I want to have it everyday and every night
You keep me happy and make me think about life
Pizza, oh, pizza you fill me with delight
Delivery, frozen oven baked
Fresh — just right!

List Poem

By Jeydon White, 4th grade

I live in a house
not a hotel
not an apartment
a house
4 bathrooms
2 kitchens
2 refrigerators
3 showers
2 man caves
4 bedrooms
1 washer
1 dryer
2 cars
2 tvs
0 dogs
0 cats
and 1 microwave
3 stories
1 porch
1 balcony
4 sinks
1 dishwasher
1 fireplace
and 8 loved ones
In 1 big house

Virtual Snow Day

by Adam Justa, 4th grade

Snow, snow, you're so cool
when there's too much
we can't go to school!
In virtual school, when it's snowing
the snow doesn't bother us
we keep the learning, going
by video, ice fishing with our teacher in a shanty!
class must go on all day
we just do it the virtual way.

Metaphor Me

by Moira Springsteen, 4th grade

Moira is an open book
her life is a story
she is the main character
navigating an interesting plot
can't wait to see what happens next

Bittersweet

by Caleb Meskin, 4th grade

Holiday break was super fun
I got lots of winter activities done
we went to Bittersweet's powdery slopes
my favorite thing was riding the tow ropes

some like to ski but I like snowboarding

I took a break to sip a cocoa drink
Hot and thick as a chocolate lava lake I think
It was finally time to get back out and ride
I whooshed down the wintery mountainside
my board flies gracefully on to the rails
I'm admired by all the teenage males

At Bittersweet

The Poem About Nature

by Mackenzie Lepisto, 7 years old

Flowers blooming, birds chirping.
Nature is beautiful!
I hope that summer will come again so we can play
outside
Because we are sick of inside.
Because it is winter and I'm sad because we are inside.
Yay! Yay! Yay!
Finally it is summer, yay!
We get to play outside
It is fun when it is summer!
Because it is the best thing in the world.
So let's play outside!
Yay! Yay! Yay!
Let's go and play.

Ice Skating Poem

by Olivia Brooks, 4th grade

Tie me quick.
Hurry up!
There's no time to be stuck up

Just let me get onto the ice
You don't want to see me get into a fight
Sign in, request a song, it's time to get your boogie on

Scratch ... Scratch

don't crash
Spin around, touch the ground
Be careful with your kick
you could knock someone down

Get off the rink
get a drink
Dry your skates and finish up
That was a successful day without being stuck up.

An Ode to Snow

by Kendall Herrmann, 4th grade

Oh snow, Oh snow, you have only made it to my toes
Oh shmicums, Oh shmanckles, now you're up to my
ankles!
Oh shoot, Oh shoot, now you're up to the top of my
boots:(
Oh my, Oh me, now you are up to my knees!
Why, Why, now you're up to my thighs
Oh bummer, Oh shmutton, now you are up to my
belly button!
Oh no, Oh heck, now you're up to my neck!
Oh, now I can't smell a rose, 'cause you're up to my
nose!
Don't you dare, Oh great, now you're up to my hair:(

Kevin's Winter Day

by Harper Petke, 4th grade

Kevin kindly, curiously kicked
snow coated leaves,
and grass kissed by winter's ice
Kevin is my brand new dog
and he sure is nice

He leaped so high
that his paws nearly touched
the shivering clouds in the sky

Slish, slosh, *sloosh* — Kevin pounces
through the mounds of melting snow
he's like a bunny bounding,
leaping wherever we go

I give him my scarf because he looks wet and cold
he shakes it off, shreds it — never doing what he's
told
it's almost time to head back inside
leave the cold, blowing winter wind
we step inside for a puppy bone
and a marshmallowy, hot chocolate blend

Spring

by Jacob Milliken, 4th grade

When winter is gone and the chills go away
the ice starts to thaw and the snowmen give way
then flowers start blooming,
scary winter storms stop looming

after the winter,
lumberjacks start chopping timber
down the mature trees go
this gives space
for new, young ones to grow

When winter is done
the best feature of spring
Is new baby birds
bringing Earth a new song to sing

Lake Michigan

By Stella Scavarda, 4th grade

Lake Michigan, Lake Michigan so much fun
The impressive big lake's so big and so wide
On the sand we run and run
I like to sit by the tide

Wind flipping my hair while I ride on my speedboat
Swim, splash, dive, and more
Looking at mountain slopes, and my dad when he
floats
The pretty crystal lake, oh galore

Sand in my toes, sand in my hair
Hiking in the preserved wilderness
Watch out for that bear!
My mom, as always, giving out kindness

Seeing many species of dogs
Watching the naturalist crew
Oh, you'll never see fog
Lake Michigan, I love you!

Noodle, My Snake

by Andrew Boertman, 4th grade

Beautiful markings
Cold blooded but warm hearted
Family member

The Woods

by L.E. Mansberger, 4th grade

Dark, quiet, isolated. A blanket of peace. Pests
and beauties alike, all united in a place we call the
woods.

Sand

by Amairany Arevalo, 10 years old

Sand — the sand tickles my feet as I'm walking on
the beach

sand feels relaxing when you play with it

sand is the thing we need when we are stressed

I'm Hopeful

by Amairany Arevalo, 10 years old

I'm hopeful everyone will be ok

I'm hopeful COVID19 will go away

I'm hopeful I will get to see my friends again

I'm hopeful I will get to step inside of RAWK again

Untitled

by Carter Tuthill, 10 years old

I built a stone giant made of Legos with a shark stuck
on his left hand
and a headless crocodile on his right.
Now, I know what you're thinking: that's not very
poetic at all!
But that's what makes this poem unique.

Untitled

by Carter Tuthill, 10 years old

The sky
with only one thing
above the blackness of space
with the pin-pricks of light
we call stars

Untitled

by Carter Tuthill, 10 years old

There's a pig on my couch
There's a pig on my couch
It poked me in the back
And I said ouch

I drove up to Maine
I drove up to Maine
My car cooks pancakes
'cause I'm not sane

Hey look there's a cat
Hey look there's a cat
Hey look there's another one
And I said scat

Question Poem

by Elizabeth Sparks, 9 years old

How do we die?
Are we actually alive?
Do we talk and for what reason?
Do we hear everything?
Why are people treated differently, because they're
different?

Haiku

by Elizabeth Sparks, 9 years old

Why do we live here?
The grass is green this morning,
The birds are singing.

Untitled

by Maddex DeGraw, 10 years old

I look up, up, up
In the sky I see a kite
I will in the light
It must be fun I know
'cause it blows

Untitled

by Margie Glynn, 10 years old

Desks, chairs, hallways, stairs,
Pencils, books, lockers with hooks,
I miss all those things,
Especially the homework and books,
I want to go back.

I want to go out and play,
Outside on a sunny day,
When the clouds are high, in the sky,
And I will never walk away.

It is perfect here.
The Earth is full of wonders.
It's so exciting.

Strengths

by Stella Tillman, 9 years old

A strength that I wish to have is being strong like my dad,
or being brave enough to ride on a roller coaster like my mom,
or not being scared of heights like my little sister.

My Community

by Stella Tillman, 9 years old

I want my community to be able to go places again,
but people need to be wearing a mask.
Wear a mask when you go to any place like a store or
a friend's house.

I'm Black

by Tony VanStrein, 10 years old

I'm strong, I'm smart,
I'm brave, I'm fast, I'm Black!

(2 Haikus)

by Tony VanStrein, 10 years old

1. The earth will explode
but we will be on the moon.
2. Will the clouds still float
in the future or not?

Untitled

by Zanaya Wilson, 10 years old

I miss all my friends
I so want to go to school
I hate coronavirus

Art is EVERYTHING

by Audrina Wellington, 12 years old

art is everything
art is color
art is shape
art is texture
art is pattern
art is Life
art is emotional
art is bossy
art is nice
art is me

Sunshine

by Audrina Wellington, 12 years old

On a bright and sunny day it will be good and full of happiness,
it will feel like a dream.
If it is a rainy day it will be dramatic and only bad things will happen.
If you really are scared then it will be a nightmare right before night falls!
You will learn that snow is great because you can get a snow day out of it.
So basically you always want it to be sunshine or snowing because it is a miracle those days.
Also when it is sunshine you can play in the water and tan — that is really a miracle!

Ode to Isolation

by Caroline Guo, 12 years old

I look out of my window
And I see nothing,
Just empty space.

It's a world of isolation
And somehow,
I've been caught up in the mist

A storm is stirring
The storm of crisis,
And a storm inside,
The storm of frustrating cries.

Sometimes I feel tempted
To try and forget
About what's going on outside
And let it all fly away

But then I remember
That we are still
Living in the mist of isolation
Where the space threatens
To swallow us up
Isolation is distance
But distance does not have to be isolation
And yet here we are
Where another step away

Makes all difference
Trivializing once important matters

Isolation can control
It will manipulate
And manifest itself
In a myriad of ways

But one thing that's common
A storm is stirring
The storm of crisis,
And a storm inside,
The storm of frustrating cries.

Summer Haikus

by Chloe Jones, 10 years old

I make sandcastles
The waves crash into the bay
My sandcastles fall
The waves have gotten my castles
Those pesky waves won

I go up and down
The waves carry me around
I get pushed to shore

We run around the backyard
The sprinkler is chasing us
We splash each other around
The grass gets lots of water too
It's a big win-win

I lie down quietly
The sand is hot on my back
The waves are really gaining
They're not getting me this time
I move far away
They keep on coming, oh no!
The water stops, good

A Summer Poem

by Chloe Jones, 10 years old

I wake up with a smile
Then I go downstairs onto the cold tile
To a window where I see
The sun beaming at me
I look at the forecast for the day
It's sunny so it's a great day to play
We blow up the inflatable pool
To keep us very cool
We make some lemonade for us to drink
Then I wear my bathing suit that is pink
We go outside and jump into the pool
That keeps us cool
We listen to music and have tons of fun
That will never be done

To: The People of 2020

by Eloise Dunfee, 13 years old

We've solved the mess you were in
And got a new leader
We're starting all over and
Trying to improve
COVID is in a history book
We're onto something new
A solution.
A solution to,
The things in our world
That are troublesome news.
Your past experiences are
Ones that can prove,
That you are now a little less
SELFISH,
For helping those who came down with the blues.
Now, finally, 2020, the least we can do
Is to raise a new generation who,
Are a little stronger, a little smarter, and a lot more
selfless than you.

Signed,
Future generations

Ode to Simple Joys

by Masha Canfield, 12 years old

The simplest joys of life we overlook,
Wearing masks for parties,
Squirting handfuls of sanitizer for fun,
Throwing sleepovers with classmates,
Hugging and playing with our friends,
Everything from going out to eat,
From just hanging out.
But things have changed,
We can longer waste toilet paper,
No longer go to school the same way.
We have to make sacrifices.
We have to change too.
In the end,
We will realize what is most important.
The simple things
That make us happy.

Six Feet

by Tessa Hawthorne, 11 years old

Six Feet,
You keep me away
You keep me alive
It's hard to appreciate
But you're needed nonetheless
It's hard
To stay away from friends and family,
But without you
I shudder at the thought

Future

by Tessa Hawthorne, 11 years old

What is my future?
Do I have one?
How is future defined?
Is tomorrow my future?
Or is my future farther away?
Are you in my future?
Or do you fade out of it?
Who can change the future?
Can we change the future?
What will I do?
Write movies or novels?
Act or sing?
Do my dreams become my future?
Or do they remain dreams?
Can you tell the future?
Or can we only pretend to know it?
Do I have a future?
What is my future?

A Poem About Today

by Anonymous, 13 years old

Children are to be seen and not heard
We have nothing to add
Too young to talk about politics
But when did people's rights become a political
agenda
When did universal truths become controversial
Living, loving, and even using the bathroom
Are now a cause for debate
Why am I too young to speak out when
I am already sexualized
Already hold my keys as I walk home
Why do I have to explain to my friend why I quickly
put on a shirt over my bathing suit when I heard a
man's voice as we were exploring at the beach
I need to speak out
Because I have already been called a lesbian
And worse for sharing headphones or holding my
friend's hand
If my body is viewed as grown why is my mind not
Because now I am seen and not heard
What do I have to do to be heard and not seen

Death

by Yamilet Brito-Arevalo, 12 years old

Is around the corner like a stop sign. It is there but you don't always feel it.

It makes its move like a hungry tiger and takes you with it, one by one it goes, and one by one it takes, and with the more high fevers and coughs that you take, the closer it gets.

Untitled

by Jackson Atkins, 14 years old

Going through life
Gotta keep a strife
People always yelling but never want to fight
Gotta keep it nice
Smooth as the night
We need to shake hands instead of pulling out the knife
Stand up don't sit down
Walk away don't mess around
Keep the peace don't let us down
Come on now let's hear it loud
Unity, I can see it now
Peace, love, ya boy is out

Untitled

by Jackson Atkins, 14 years old

As I look out in this world I see we need a change. It may come fast or slow but us people need a break.

Money Money Money that's what you have to have. But if jobs paid more, then we could pick up on the slack.

Poverty Poverty Poverty slips in like it's welcome. People try to make it through but in the end most never do.

Politics Politics Politics that's all some talk about. Sometimes things get scary but they will try some bills out. A bill here and a bill there, but do they truly care?

Race Race Race look around there's a different face. Where skins determine most, life can get pretty gross.

Got shot, got fired, they redline but we starting fires. But keep head up, don't hang it down. They say the future will be better but they been saying that like forever.

Will Black Lives Matter?

by Layla Roberts, 16 years old

Black Lives Matter
Have you heard of that saying?
I hope so, what do you think about it?
Do you think it's unfair?
Have you seen the news?
Innocent Black people dying, but what can be done?
Do we just watch and stare?
Do we mourn in peace?
Or do we mourn with protest?
I want to know ... Do Black Lives Matter to you?
And what can YOU do to help?

Untitled

by Sagan Barber, 16 years old

Oh, how great is the distance between us all
between our hearts, our minds,
but most importantly ourselves, our bodies.
The world is amiss and we are distanced
in a time that our hearts crave closeness.
Most respect the distance, it is there for a reason,
but some find that distance requires caring for others,
and that caring for others inhibits their freedom.
Because empathy isn't an American right,
"freedom is."
These people say they'd do anything for our country,
go to war, shoot with killing intent,
but maintaining a mere distance
is too much, is inhibiting them.
It makes you wonder, where do their priorities truly
lie...
As murder is easier than empathy.

Untitled

by Sagan Barber, 16 years old

Ever since I was a kid, I've loved cramped spaces
and lots and lots of things.
I only feel semi-safe when surrounded by stuff,
A wall, or two? A blanket, or four? Two pillows, or
eight?
I am comforted by the multitudes and the magni-
tudes.
Piles of papers are safer than one,
Anything in excess is a shield from the unknown.
Small spaces filled to the brim,
Walls closing in are better off than crumbling around
you.
When everything is chaotic and lawless,
And screaming and shocking and unknown,
A small box is safer than a vast plain,
Any structure better than none.

For the Future I Want ...

*by Hanis Sommerville, RAWK Intern & Mentor, 2nd
year college student*

For the future I want to be alive.
Want to be able to move about,
I want to be able to thrive.
I want to see friends,
Want to meet new friends,
I want to be friends with my friends' new friends.
I want to be back at college,
Want to feel the struggle,
I want to be back in the K bubble.

Hesitate

*by Vivian Enriquez, RAWK Intern & Mentor, 4th year
college student*

When I am afraid
I remember, that birds too
hesitate to fly

When We Free Ourselves

*by Vivian Enriquez, RAWK Intern & Mentor, 4th year
college student*

When we free political prisoners
Free those in detention
Free everyone from prisons

We will have to start to free our minds of punishment

When we free our minds of incarceration
as a means of solving social issues
we will free the land from corporations

When we free the land we free ourselves
When we free our minds of nations
annexations
colonization

we free Palestine

When we free Palestine
we free political prisoners
free those detention
free everyone from prisons

We will have to start to free our minds of punishment.

