

## **The Elaine Wetterauer Writing Contest**

Announced in November 2019, Seattle Arts & Lectures' Writers in the Schools (WITS) program held a writing contest that was open to all students, grades K-12, who attended a WITS partner school in the 2019/20 school year.

Contestants submitted an original poem, story, comic or essay of 1000 words maximum, based on SAL author Min Jin Lee's novel, "Pachinko." The theme "Legacy" allowed students to explore the subjects of art, history, culture and their impacts on the world we live in and to reflect on "legacies" they carry and observe.

Two finalists and one winner were chosen from the submissions. This year's winner is ***Fenet Zeleke***. This year's finalists are ***Wren Richards*** and ***Camila Yoo***. Compiled in this chapbook are other outstanding submissions from student writers.

# They Said

*by Fenet Zeleke*

Contest Winner  
Leschi Elementary School, 5th Grade

They said you can do anything  
you like. They said drink tea  
if you're sick. They said eat when  
you're hungry. Take a deep breath  
if scared. They said you never lose,  
you're always a winner for trying.  
They said bullies are not bullies,  
they are just people that got hurt before.  
They said money is not happiness.  
They said just because we are  
not rich doesn't mean we are not rich  
of kindness and love. They did things  
I thought would hurt me  
but it was for my own good. They  
hid their feelings to keep me happy.  
They told lies to keep me safe.  
They did all they could to keep me  
healthy.

# REMEMBER

*by Wren Richards*

Honorable Mention  
McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

Remember when the waves kept you up at night;  
know they can't stop just for you.  
Remember the sand in your bed, know  
it was your feet who laid them down.  
Remember the moon when it's well past your bedtime,  
know it's your light when yours shuts off.  
Remember the poison ivy on your ankle,  
sand sticking to it, stinging the bubble.  
Remember the hum of the fridge, how it would prevent  
silence during dinner. It only still sits there out of laziness.  
Remember the Truehard family; they are your life also.  
Remember the blisters on your hands after pulling empty  
lobster cages into the boat all day. Remember your cousins,  
now too old to make the trip every summer.  
Remember floating down the creek, but the fear  
of what was in the dark water.  
Remember the joy of driving to FaFars for ice cream.  
Remember the house where you spent your summers,  
the one you won't remember.  
Please remember.

# **SELF-PORTRAIT**

*by Camila Yoo*

Honorable Mention  
Catharine Blaine K8, 6th Grade

As I look up at the dark sky,  
I feel a gust of wind.  
Which reminds me of the coldness in Korea  
and how much I would like to go there again.  
I would like to taste the wonderful food they have there  
and hear all the people speaking Korean.  
I smell the wonderful aroma of food.  
I would do anything to go to Korea again.

# L

*by Melissa Nagy*

Outstanding Teacher Submission  
Blue Heron Middle School

L...One letter, to the heart...of who I am...  
A Melissa...strewn across decades...  
Remembering goats...chewing...ravenous mouthfuls of blackberry tendrils...  
Lissa...of younger years, pleasing, peacemaking, traveling pathways to a larger self  
Often times, "Lis" wrapped in love and kindness...and laughter...  
Camping out...in neighbor's hedge...free of concrete...and noise...and rules...  
And don't forget the days of, "Swish" when little else mattered...  
but the sound...of a basketball hitting nothing but net...  
And, "Lisser Lisser" etched on the back of a jersey, ball cap reversed, long hair flowing  
Mystified by womanhood...exploring...questioning...wondering...when...will I be loved...  
And music...unwavering, pounding...a rhythm to my brain...  
Dream Weaver...and Nadia's Theme...For What It's Worth...  
Sometimes, "Melissa Margaret Helen" roaring...through my ears...breath paused...waiting...  
Always, "Melissa" to the larger world...serious, knowing, sharing, listening...  
Children's lives...imprinting...upon my soul...over and over again...  
Hiding behind, "Lis" in the technological world of songs and strums...  
Not Liz, not Mel, not "Lissy" like my namesake...  
Great Grandma Wilder...Cherokee...roaming the hills of Kentucky..."tough as nails"  
Sometimes confused...still...  
Circling back to...L...one letter, to the heart...of who I am...

# Grandfather's Mountain

*by Sarah Pattison*

Outstanding Teacher Submission  
McClure Middle School

*Written on 2 July 2019 in Taos, New Mexico, at my father's kitchen table.*

Low clouds threaten rain,  
dragging their bellies  
across the great mountains.  
An itch that begs relief.  
Grandfather's might.  
Earthly inheritance.

I long to make myself  
very large  
and sit next  
to the towering topography.  
On my hip,  
I imagine leaning  
into the pine velvet  
of its back  
to take a rest.

With the fortitude  
of a lion tamer,  
I'd lay my head gingerly  
on a shoulder  
and fall asleep  
to the slow  
rise and fall  
of the earth breathing.

# Gifts

*by Doug Sylber*

Outstanding Teacher Submission  
Nathan Hale High School

My father  
just before checking out  
of his apartment  
and into  
the hospital  
for good  
with two fans  
one on each side  
of his favorite chair  
and somehow  
seeing my need  
offering me one  
unclear where the other was going  
the first  
old and dust  
rust-ridden  
the second  
new, all white  
I'll take that one  
thank you  
nodding to  
the clean one  
the white one  
I still clearly see  
my father's face giving  
some twenty odd years ago  
the familiar look  
of disappointment.

Six months later  
on his death bed  
my father  
with two watches  
one on each wrist  
between colored wires  
and clear plastic tubes  
and somehow  
seeing me late

offering me one  
unclear where the other was going  
the first  
not quite a Rolex  
but nice  
at least by  
my then standards  
of nice  
the other  
a Timex  
plated in fake gold  
band and all  
square-faced  
numerical  
and yellowing like him  
I'll take that one  
thank you  
nodding to that one  
the yellowing one  
my father's face  
on his death-bed  
giving me nothing  
I can now clearly see.

I've replaced the battery  
in that one  
three times over  
some twenty odd years now  
knowing full well  
each one  
costs more than the watch  
itself and  
knowing full well  
we often lose  
what we look at least  
the band will break  
before the watch.

With brutal arms the morning glory  
grips the delicate necks of the bridal bush  
a wedding gift from my father  
some twenty-five odd years ago  
blossoming  
every year



more or less  
on our anniversary  
appreciative still  
I pinch it back  
this stranger strangler  
mid-stream  
to keep it  
from taking away  
yet another gift given  
so long ago  
that should be  
by now  
long dead  
that could be  
by now  
long forgotten  
yet this too still's  
and this too stills  
another  
remembering.

## **Stand-Out Contest Submissions**

# Sweet Honeysuckles

*by Lilah Baranowski*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

The way you made me feel  
it washes over me  
with a new sting  
it's the sting of regret  
I've felt it  
I've felt it before  
but this time  
It roars  
Its roars in my hollow chest  
like a lost lion that lost its pride  
The smell of the sweet honeysuckles  
The infinite sky  
at least  
at least that's how I felt when I was with you  
now time has passed  
too much  
but the sting of regret  
It follows  
like a cloud high in the sky  
you always know its there  
It may never leave  
but maybe  
but maybe I'm ok with that.

# Singing Hyenas

*by Evelyn Casey*

Alki Elementary School, 5th Grade

12:00 a.m. Must go to sleep  
or my mom will unleash the beast.  
As me and my sister rush into our beds,  
pretend to snore, pulling blankets  
over our heads.  
My mom comes, knowing we are not asleep.  
Ebua shae shae ebua and shae shae  
There is no curse. She laughs and smiles.  
The spiders on my back and serpents  
in my throat crawl and slither away.  
I love her stories, especially this one.  
Every time I hear it. It's like a tape  
of laughing hyenas playing over and over  
like the music tape in her store. The pranks  
she did that grew from a tape in a history  
class from her fun-filled freshman year.  
On her back she carries a day of laughter, joy,  
and no regrets. The anger of her teacher  
of the music playing over and over.  
As I taught her to tune a trumpet she told  
me of the fun, joy, happiness and danger.  
And I just hope her trickiness, danger  
and laughs are humming my way.  
Like the laughs on that day.

# Dear Future Self

*by Hanae Della Nave*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

Remember the tinkle of laughter made when you make a joke;  
know that you will hear it where every you go.  
Remember your school friends; know they will always be with you.  
Remember the songs we sang; that is the strongest way to bond.  
Remember the books, how you read them again and again.  
You are evidence of those books and many more.  
Remember your family. They are your life also.  
Remember the copyright cards, made with tons of giggles.  
Remember the Greek part inside of you.  
Remember the revenge plots you formed with her.  
Remember your goal of learning many languages.  
Remember they will always be in your heart.  
Remember.

Sincerely,

Your 12-year-old self

--After Joy Harjo

# Mirror on the Wall

*by Marcella Doan*

Nathan Hale High School, 11th Grade

A mirror stands along the wall  
it's five years old and six feet tall  
another me stands in its shine  
the other me displaced in time

Her hair is blonde, her eyes are blue  
smile crooked, notebooks new  
but desperation wraps round her frame  
this other me is not okay

She's young, she's foolish, she's brave;  
she's managed to drive what's important away  
the girl who treats her pencil as a blade  
cuts words on paper in a red-tinged haze

This little one not quite thirteen  
who hates that I no longer see  
would pay her vengeance in scarlet paint  
a picture as violent as it would be quaint

The other me doesn't understand  
she had the world in the palm of her hand,  
yet to realize it was made of sand

She held in her a smoldering coal  
a rotten apple encased in gold  
protected against the harm she caused  
oblivious to where in life she was

When her face slipped from her mask  
when grains began to slip through her grasp  
she tried to catch it too hard, too fast  
and sealed herself within the glass

I was born from her remains  
stuck at the end of her sadistic games

my hands were scarred with hooks and lures  
now I find them empty and unsure

I understand why she was who she was  
how the life she lived carved that blood-soaked dove;  
why she created all that twisted love

The one that's me, just seventeen  
has not the heart to resent what I see  
repents for her like an ocean wave  
smoothing the edges of old hurts away

I am older, smarter, cautious  
I perfect my image until it's flawless  
my pen is nothing less than precision  
every book a carefully crafted vision

My hair is brown, my eyes are gray  
my smile pleasant, my stories gay  
there will be no reason to run from me  
I am the vision of serenity

A mirror stands along the wall  
it's five years old and six feet tall  
another me stands in its shine

I break the mirror

# REMEMBER THE WARMTH

*by Sylvie Errichetti*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

--after Joy Harjo

Remember the warmth of the sun  
Something so wonderful  
can be so dangerous as well  
Remember the colors of the sky  
BLACK sky smoke sky WHITE sky blue sky  
PINK sky and, of course, \*Twilight\*  
Remember the wry smile of the curved crescent moon,  
slender and sly  
Remember the dapple of morning sunlight  
turning your room the color of GOLDEN WARMTH  
Remember the perfect BLENDING of sundown  
how hard it is to replicate  
YOU are evidence of NURTURE overpowering  
NATURE

REMEMBER...

The quiet just before dawn  
The shine of the silver moon  
The paintings, admiration in every stroke  
The games we used to play  
Our night walks, talking, laughing



# My Legacy

*by Beatrice Faber-Machacha*

Leschi Elementary School, 4th Grade

I was born in the sky, so high my head  
was in the clouds.  
I invented words, so people could write.  
I met Beethoven and ate fine cheeses.  
I marched 54 miles to freedom.  
I got mad and made the Ring of Fire.  
I am a spider, eyes all around, so small  
no one can catch me.  
I made gold and diamonds, sparkling  
so bright.  
I created the world from my clay,  
the continents my dye.  
I am the greatest.  
I win all the races.  
I am so magnetic all the compasses point  
towards me.  
I am so tall I can reach Mount  
Olympus.  
My curly brown hair's so long it wraps around  
the world 10 times.  
My tears created the oceans of the world  
and the rest cleaned them.  
My ears can hear the quietest mice.  
My eyelashes created the blades  
of grass.

# **America Traps Real People: A Villanelle**

*by Ava Geary*

The Center School, 11th Grade

America traps real people  
steals those who are lost  
America feels no ripple

the less fortunate wrapped in cable  
to the lions, they are tossed  
America traps real people

Killing humans is our country's staple  
so oil will decrease in cost  
America feels no ripple

we wish for human lives to be equal  
our government wishes for a planet covered in exhaust  
America traps real people

A country that claims to be colorful  
our hearts must defrost  
America feels no ripple

so many lives not seen for what they are: beautiful  
these boundaries can never be uncrossed  
America traps real people  
America feels no ripple

# Legacies in Diptych: Dear Mother, Dear Father

*by Helena Goos*

Nathan Hale High School, 11th Grade

Dear Mother,

What do you dream for me? Do you regret that I did not inherit your tongue, though I have somehow inherited your voice?

Mother, do you regret that your grandchildren will only echo your looks, the way your tongue echoes your language: a ghost of a whisper. Do you regret that one day your traditions and ways will only be the sour taste of pickled cabbage- 김치.- in a hungry mouth?

I will do the best I can to carry on your ways, but I fear many will be lost along the way. I will do my best to pass down your loyalty and passion, your fierceness and your generosity. I can make no promises about my cooking, however.

Mother, I will do all the things that you could not; I will give my children the gift of a speech that you planted within me and never tended. I will make my own traditions, nurturing a garden of rituals; I will make my own way in the world.

I will do all this and more, if you could only tell me where I belong without you.

Dear Mother, do you know that I love you?

Dear Father,

What do you dream for me? Do you regret that I did not inherit your sex, though I somehow inherited your temperament?

Father, do you regret that your grandchildren will never learn your ways for you have none to give them? Do you regret that one day the only thing they may have to remember you by is a name?

I don't mean to offend your sense of identity, but I feel that those with skin like ours often don't have a coherent ethnic character to pass down. We pass down family pride and photographs: our own microcultures.

I will do the best I can to pass on your ways but I fear many will be lost along the way. I will do my best to pass down your level head and your patience, your care free airs and your haphazard ability to follow recipes (they're mostly "guidelines").

Father, I will do all the things that you could not; I will create a microbrew of my mother's and my father's lifeways. I will be the first white person in my family to pass down a concrete culture. I will distill it until I find exactly the right taste, and this is what I shall bathe my children in. I will make my own traditions, brew a concoction of rituals; I will make my own way in the world.

I will do all this and more, if you could only tell me where I belong without you.

Dear Father, do you know I love you?

# Remember Her

*by Vivian Gregory*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

-After Joy Harjo

Remember her soft touch on your rough skin;  
know her light words running through you.  
Remember her golden hair that sat perfectly on her shoulders.  
Know her shining smile.  
Remember that she gave you your character, your name.  
Remember that she is so affectionate that you  
sometimes push it away.  
Remember that she made you for a purpose.  
Remember how even with a bad day she would still do  
the best for you.  
Remember how she held you tight in her arms.  
Remember how she was at every sports game.  
Remember she taught you the most important lessons.  
Remember that she always loves you.

# Were Their Tears

*by Ayana Islas*

The Center School, 10th Grade

*After Jane Wong*

Were their tears? Tears that grasp  
the fallen border papers, did you weep? Do you remember  
your own? How old was your  
son when you were deported?  
Do you miss him?  
Were you  
kind, did your words sooth  
your son to sleep—have  
him dream of our  
family? Were you tall?  
Were you tall like my dad—or short like your  
son? Do you remember  
your son? Was it ICE?  
Did they hurt you? Did they take your son away,  
or were you taken away? Were you loud?  
Did you throw loud  
parties like my grandpa  
does—not caring of  
the morning’s hangover?  
DO you remember him?  
Do you know he never  
talks of you? Was your  
memory so sweet it  
brings him to tears to  
say, or did you make  
mistakes? Were you  
like your son? Do you  
remember? The son,  
the father of my father,  
your son—does your son remember you?  
Was it his tears on the  
border papers, were there tears?

# **My Legacy!**

*by Mathilde Lagerberg*

South Shore Elementary, 3rd Grade

How I want to change the world is by...LESS garbage mountains. Making more things compostable because you can just put it in dirt. It`s also more healthy for the earth. I will put less sugar in candy because it is healthy for people. I will treat people how they want to be treated. I will make little things not that much money. I will make more homes for people and be nice to homeless people.

# From White Terror Came Us

*by Wei-Wei Lee*

Nathan Hale High School, 12th Grade

Genetics are such  
sticky things.  
The crooked way I hold my pencils,  
the one dinner on the table  
that one day back in 2006,  
the moss growing deep in my lungs now,  
slipperydampfesteringpanic -  
every little goddamn thing  
marking itself deep  
for me, my children,  
my great-grandchildren,  
and their great-grandchildren.

Don't mess with the code.  
My parents, they were born  
so many years after  
the hush-hush, the nervous looks,  
the Orwellian disappearances,  
but their parents before them,  
they were there;  
and those slippery strands of  
gossamer fear,  
it makes it way into your DNA  
and roots there,  
curls into some forgotten den  
tucked up all cozy  
for the winter  
and every winter after that.

History and I, our relationship  
is fraught with bitter understanding;  
we are cursed, for better or worse,  
to run along each other  
like competing swimmers in neighboring lanes  
or like childhood friends racing  
for the shore.  
Every stroke of my pen,  
every up-down of my ribcage

filling and deflating,  
has the coal-smudge of  
dark history  
all over it.



# MY JAPANESE SCHOOL

*by Leo Makino*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

Remember you have to wake up at 7:00 AM to get ready.  
Know that some days were exciting.

Remember sleeping in the car, know that something boring  
is about to happen.

Remember how it wasn't boring at all and you  
would be class clown.

Remember those times when you acted stupidly  
to the teacher.

Remember your friends and how they supported you.  
They are the reason you want to continue.

Remember your homework. It extended your knowledge  
from last year.

Remember your lunch and your mom waking up early  
to make it.

Remember how you showed off your skills in dodgeball.

Remember you stayed till 2 in the morning during camp.

Remember that this Japanese school is paradise.

# REMEMBER

*by Ava Merryman*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

Remember the animals and plants  
who ruled the earth?

Remember the first touch of mankind,  
the first blink, the first feeling, afraid?  
happiness? love?

Remember the first creation and the next  
person, thousands to follow?

Remember the first word and written language?

Remember the empires rising and falling  
like mountains and hills?

Remember the black death created  
by the thundering hands of darkness itself?

Remember the first voyage along the wild  
run of mother nature, the beliefs and trade?

Remember the thought of guns and weapons  
destroying the peace among our kind?

Remember the wars that crumbled our hearts?

Remember the Germans who tried to stop  
the innocent Jews?

Remember the disrespect between two colors,  
black and white?

Remember the voice that stopped the demon  
of segregation?

Remember the wave that washed away life?

Remember the greediness of burning fossil fuels,

burning pieces of the earth?

Remember the animals dying from us,  
ruining the gift of the world?

Remember the first electric car mending  
the world like a band aid, piece by piece?

Remember there are choices we can  
make to the future.

# Dear Baby Pheobe

*by Waylon Ryan*

Alki Elementary School, 4th Grade

Don't fall into  
the wrong hands, baby  
Phoebe. Learn to read  
the secrets of the sky.  
Don't be me, but be  
yourself. Follow your  
path, not someone else's.  
Learn to read your way  
or how you move the  
pencil. Don't focus on  
the past but think  
of right now. Learn to  
make wise choices.  
Make your writing  
not longest but make  
it short, well, powerful.  
You don't have to  
take this advice, really.  
Just be you.

# Summer Sun

*by Jack Scott*

Alki Elementary School, 4th Grade

Today in the airport all  
the planes are asleep  
our flight is delayed the  
world is suddenly at a stop  
I feel like a volcano about  
to explode! I ride my blue  
bike on the edge of the  
world. I see a beetle on  
the ground I squish it and  
my foot lets out a loud  
POUND!!! the beetle on  
the ground is squished. I  
am the president of this  
mess.

# I REMEMBER

*by Ani Snowden*

McClure Middle School, 7th Grade

I remember the smell  
of the burning wood in the furnace.  
I know I will never forget the taste  
of the mashed potatoes, gravy, and butter.  
I can see the mysterious basement,  
knowing not what I will come across.  
I remember the cold evenings watching the stars  
from my ladybug tent full of pillows and blankets.  
I know the sound of trains and the screaming  
of my nine-year-old cousin as he runs through the halls.  
I can hope you can remember the magical Christmases  
and how, no matter you try to cover it up,  
I could tell you loved your gifts and who gave them to you.  
Remember, Lucy, it is your life, too.  
Please remember how  
you lovingly scared all the grandchildren.

# Let Nature Be Nature Again

*by Ben Wrenholt*

Alki Elementary School, 5th Grade

Let the waves of the ocean crash  
rage and roar. Let the surf beat  
the ground, let the salty spray  
soar. Let the ocean suck in the  
infinite beauty of the sky above,  
let the deep world below be free.

(It will always be free.)

Let the quiet forest's roots go  
deep into the ground. Let the treasure  
of its mystery stay, never to be  
found. Let the moss and the leaves  
and the trees reach up high. Let  
them reach up in the wind, trying to see  
the sky. Let the forest be free.

(It will always be free)

Let the icy snow and the icicles  
shine bright. Let the glaciers and  
the icebergs be a towering height.  
Let the snow whip around in a  
century old blizzard. Let the  
snow scream and howl until it's  
the only one to be heard. Let the  
ice be free. Let nature be  
free.

# MAMBA

*by Amy Young*

Seattle Children's Hospital, Age 19

This is a story of a young boy  
who dreams of being humble, dreams  
of being a legend, and dreams of being  
an athlete.

See, he wasn't just a basketball player,  
he was my motivational person.  
He taught thousands of kids including his own  
to chase their dreams in the  
RIGHT WAYS through the right time.

He started playing basketball at age 3  
and the Lakers were his all time favorites!  
He even dreamed of being  
one, one day.

He is the greatest legacy.  
I've even seen my brother being an inspired  
basketball player.  
I wish I could've met him.

But times are rough and things  
are expensive to get a ticket out here  
in Seattle.

See, Seattle was the most depressing  
yet active city of Washington.  
I'm a 19 year old girl and I never  
played basketball, but Kobe said that  
doesn't matter because everything or  
anything you put your mind to,  
you could inspire anyone to do it.

I inspired my family by doing music,  
singing, dancing, doing art.

His daughter is also a legacy to him.  
He and Gigi inspired me and my dad



being closer together by watching every game on television.

Love is about bringing two pieces of a heart and bringing it back together.

This is just a story written for Kobe Bryant, the one and only Mamba!

Thank you!