



**WRITE
AROUND
THE 2024
MURRAY**

Barry Young River of Stories

2024

Secondary Poetry Winners



Years 7 - 8 Winner

Name: Caitlin Talbot

School: Home Educated

Poem: Australia

Australia!

Overland,
Where desolate ranges stretch,
Where red dust goes untrodden,
And old barbed fences,
Lie ruined in disrepair,
Where death once knocked,
On Burke and Wills' door,
As they suffered under the taxing sun,
Where once was a booming opal mine,
Rusted machines now tell its story,
Where scraggly mallee gums,
Struggle to survive,
Where gorges rise,
Filled with pools of water,
Stagnate with green algae,
Where dingoes run,
And brumbies gather,
Where eagles cry,
And storm clouds brew,
Where lightning strikes,
In a summer storm,
Where wild daisies bloom,
Amongst Spinifex grass upon the red sand dunes,
Where salt lakes span,

Their surfaces cracked and hardened,
Where the Murray runs,
It's winding course,
The banks crowned in red gums,
Where snow falls on high mountains tops,
And snow gums thrive,
Where Uluru sits,
In the fading sunlight,
Where the Southern Cross shines so boldly,
As we proudly raise our flag,
From salt lakes to rain forests,
From the snow to the Mallee,
From opals to eagles,
We are a magical country.

Years 7-8 Runners up

Name: Nate Kuschert

School: Trinity Anglican College

Poem: Greek God's Magic

The legend told by gods so grand and true
Where magic dwells in realms of lore
In Zeus thunderbolts and Athena's view,
Their powers wielded from Olympus' core.
Apollo's lyre sings sweet melodies,
Hermes' cunning tricks deceive the eye,
Each deity with gifts that none can seize
Their magic reigns in Earth and Sky
From Poseidon's waves to Hades' dark domain,
The Greek gods' magic flows in endless stream,
In myths and tales that evermore remain,
Their power shines like a celestial beam
So let us look at their mystic charms, For in their magic, we find
grace and arms.

Years 7-8 Runners up

Name: Carter Smith

School: Trinity Anglican College

Poem: Toy Story (Tanka Poem)

Toys are magical

They have tons of secret lives

Though no one will know

That they'll always be watching

Need us for Magical lives

Years 9 - 10 Winner

Name: Rachel Wyer

School: Trinity Anglican College

Poem: Being

Being

To the kids who are filled with magic,
to the adults whose lives are tragic.

When did life become so misleading,
wonder when did you stop believing?

Beyond our thoughts and imagination
to our exciting stories and revelations.

Cruel to the fairies who live in our mind,
our lack of fascination can leave us blind.

To the absence of the twinkle in our eye,
let the fairies in our mind fly.

Where did the angels in the snow go,
with lots of things we didn't know.

Our laughter and giggles began to run low,
our loss in our magic started to show.

To the adults whose lives are tragic,
don't forget to believe in a little magic,
it might just be life's best tactic.

Years 9 - 10 Runners up

Name: Elyse Brndusic

School: Trinity Anglican College

Poem: Magic Poem

Spinning, spiraling.

Here, There and everywhere.

Flakes and balls.

Covering the roofs of city halls.

White and gray.

During night and day.

Over the start and end.

We crawl up into bed.

Cold and frozen.

It watches the sun pass the horizon.

Trampled by stampedes.

The magic of snow fills our hearts with glee.

Years 9 - 10 Runners up

Name: Abigail Karlake

School: Albury High School

Poem: The Types of Magic We Know

Words and pages and tales from long ago
Are different types of magic we know
From a book to our heart we hold close
To our history or the tale of a ghost

Nature, animals or creatures who sing
Are different types of magical things
From a colony of ants and a tree as old as time
To a cheeky little monkey who loves to climb

Mountains and valleys and stunning landscapes
Are different types of magical escapes
From the lashes and splashes of the sea
To the sand underneath and the way I feel free

But when we hear the song
That whales bring along
We don't know what they sing about
That's the kind of magic we can't doubt

And how the wind so delicate
Can create storms so intricate
So soothing and powerful
That's the magic that's meaningful

But as man continues to use and destroy
A mission to save the environment we must employ
For we only get one Earth
That's the magic that preserving we find worth

Years 11 - 12 Winner

Name: Ollie Clayton

School: Wodonga Catholic College

Poem: The True Magic of Wildflower

The burning urge to fall into the salvation and resolution of death.

It always creeps up on me.

Like a wildfire.

A small spark, dismissed, assuming it will fizzle out.

And then next thing you know, it's surrounding you, it's all you can feel, the heat lashes against your skin, and you sweat.

You can't tell if it's from the heat, or the anxiety. You look around for an escape, a gap in the firewall, but to no avail.

You just have to wait it out and hope for the best.

Hope that it doesn't get so high it covers you. Hope that burnt scraps don't pass through the air and stick to your clothes, burning you.

But they always do.

They fall on you, your clothes, boring holes you can't sew up.

So, you wait and accept the heat. Secretly praying for a release.

After a while, of doing nothing, the fire rages on, with no end in sight. You start to get curious, moving your hand closer to the flame. It singes you, and the pain is intriguing. Like a drug, the only thought is to move closer again. You touch the bright, dancing flame again and again, until blisters appear on your skin.

You need more. So, you turn around and let yourself lean backwards into the raging fire.

But then you realise. This will kill you. The suffocation of the smoke confuses you; you don't know what to do. Because all you want to do is submerge yourself in it, it seems like the only choice.

But you remember that the rain clouds will come, that the fire will die out.

So, you stop, and pull away, reminding yourself to not let it control you.

Years 11 - 12 Runners Up

Name: Charlie Pinard

School: Catholic College Wodonga

Poem: Two broken souls

There is a cool breeze,
I can smell the wetness it carries.
Taste creek water
and moss,
feel the cold air
sting my eyes.
My lips need lip balm,
I lick them every so often,
but they dry as the
breeze licks them.
Birds are calling,
but I can only hear
your voice.

We are two broken souls,
sitting on rocks.
We used to paint with ochre.
We used to laugh ourselves to tears.
I am almost too big for our little rock,
but I remember
when it used to be a struggle
to clamber up it.
I can feel the warmth of your skin,
but not the warmth of your voice.
But I remember
when warm voices
were the only ones we knew.

We are two broken souls.
You tell me about the scars,
not from scabby knees,
and grazes from concrete,
or even a slip on the side of the pool.
These scars are filled with screams for help
that no one heard.
I tell you about the pills
not fed to me when my tummy ached,
from too many lollies,
or even from
a nasty head knock on the netball court.
These pills were by the handful
and they didn't stop the pain,
I wanted to stop,

We are two broken souls,
whispering the most horrible parts of ourselves
next to the stream,
that was once our best memories.
This place is different now.
I want to take your heart
and hold it in my hands until it stops hurting,
because a hug is never good enough,
is it?

We are two broken souls,
speaking words of truth,
but not feeling a thing.

Two broken souls.
Broken by a world we were not ready for.

Years 11 - 12 Runners Up

Name: Ollie Clayton

School: Wodonga Catholic College

Poem: The Magic of the Storm

It comes back like a storm.
Light shower passes over you, but then the sun shines.
After the shower, the clouds hover.
They lurk, their evil intents waiting.

It starts raining. From rain to thunder, just a few bangs.
But then you make a blunder, and it comes crashing down.
Banging around, hitting every surface. Blowing the trees and
shaking the house.
For a moment you think it's done, finished, like a phase.
And there's silence.

And then you hear it. The crack of lightning that shatters your
hopes.
It comes down, one after another.
One hit, Two hits, Three hits. It's relentless.
Lightning doesn't have mercy, and it doesn't learn for you.
It cracks and destroys.

Sets a flame to the grass, to the trees, to the deck, it works with
ease.
No effort into its destruction.
You scream and cry. You yell and destroy.
It breaks you to your final point.

Where you're about to leave your destroyed house.
As you're packing your things and saying your goodbyes.
With broken legs and pained eyes, you lay, waiting for it to pick
you up and go.
But then it's silent.

You look around at the mess of the storm, the broken walls, the
destroyed trees, the burnt lawn, the hurting body.
You wait for the lightning to come crashing down again, tears
falling down your face.
It doesn't come.
And as you're taking in the destruction of the storm, you realize.

You were the storm.