

# A Mirror Stretched Beneath The Sky

**an anthology of poems  
written by Year 6 students  
Australian International School  
Singapore, 2026**

## About This Flipbook

Enjoy exploring  
(reading and *listening to*)  
these 44 poems by Year 6 students  
of the Australian International School  
(Singapore)

The writers display a remarkable range  
of talents. By turns their writing  
is personal, puzzled, playful,  
positively philosophical  
and pleasantly unpredictable!

The Poetry Unit of Inquiry  
has given them an opportunity  
to either look inside themselves  
or to gaze outward to observe  
the world around them.

Their poems surprise  
with their freshness and honesty  
and give insight  
into the hearts, hopes and minds  
of our 11-12 year olds.



## TEACHERS

Chloe Beale — 6V and 6W

Nicholas Broome — 6Z

Najip Madina — 6T and 6U

Emma Titley – 6Y and 6X



Anthology  
compiled/edited by  
Roger Jenkins



## Pathfinders – Jack, 6Z

Lighthouses:  
Pathfinders they are,  
In the darkest of nights,  
A beam of hope lights the way.

Lighthouses:  
In the stormiest nights  
Their light shines bright.  
And steers you away  
from the blade-like rocks.

Lighthouses:  
When danger lurks  
The Lighthouse reveals  
the peril of the ocean.

If you're lucky in life,  
You will have a lighthouse  
That shines a light  
And never goes out.

## FOREWORD by the Year 6 English Team

Poetry begins with a spark,  
A sound, a thought, a feeling.  
It grows as we play with ideas,  
Finding patterns, rhythm, and meaning.  
These poems are our students' sparks,  
Each one a glimpse into imagination at work,  
A celebration of what words can do,  
And a reminder of how joyful it is to create.



## Dear Parents (and readers not in Year 6!)

These students have seized the opportunity to write something highly personal drawing on their own experience. When they write about siblings, their room, their dreams and fears — they do so confidently, for it is something they know well.

Poetry is probably the briefest form of writing students are tasked to do, so they've had time to choose their words carefully. Why use 'go' when *trudge*, *leap*, or *plunge* all convey so much more, visually and emotionally?

Poetry is, by nature, highly adaptable. Unlike this page, which looks very similar to the next, no two pages in this Anthology look alike, for there's no prescribed length (of line or verse) and a poem's form is infinitely variable. So poetry caters to the diversity of the Year 6 cohort, which is reflected in their choice of subject and their tone, which is, by turns, serious, comic, reflective and passionate. *Enjoy!*

Roger Jenkins, May 2026  
Singapore Literature Prize 1995 winner

## Dear Year Six,

In making this personal selection, I selected poems which appealed to me and made me think, 'I want to read that again!' While some have a strong sense of structure, others spoke to me with their thoughtful or vivid writing, or how the writer honestly expressed their feelings. Some poems made me laugh, some made me wince (did I make my son feel like that?) Several made me think 'Gosh — I wish I could write a line as memorable as that!'

At our first session, I said the advantage of writing poetry is that, as it is briefer than almost any other writing you do in school, you have time to choose your words more carefully and effectively. As a result, it is possible for you to write a memorable phrase or line that even an adult would be proud to call their own. You have proved me right as striking similes leap off almost every page.

No one expects a brief unit on poetry to produce polished poets — though I think several of your classmates have the potential to become one. However, the unit has prompted many of you to be more empathetic — to see things from another point of view — as well as to be observant, while using words more carefully and creatively, concisely and precisely, to say what you want to say.

I want to highlight the valuable lessons you have learnt from re-writing a second draft (and even a third) in response to my feedback. Seeing how small changes can make a big difference — a stronger verb, a precise adjective, or a change in word order — is a valuable lesson in itself.

This is my fourth anthology of Year 6 poems by AIS students. In 2024 I discovered how to publish the anthology as an interactive flipbook, instead of a static pdf document. What makes a flipbook so appealing is the opportunity to add audio, so you can read *and hear* almost all of the poems read by their authors!

I hope reading (and listening to!) this collection of poems by your friends and classmates gives you as much pleasure as it does me.

Roger Jenkins, May 2026  
*Singapore Literature Prize 1995*

# ***A Mirror Stretched Beneath The Sky***

## **C O N T E N T S**

|                        |               |    |                           |                |    |
|------------------------|---------------|----|---------------------------|----------------|----|
| Pathfinders            | Jack, 6Z      | 2  | The Relentless Ride       | Ayaansh, 6T    | 19 |
| How You See Me         | Heliena, 6W   | 7  | Roller-coaster            | Lucas, 6X      | 20 |
| Going on a Journey     | Myah, 6W      | 8  | Horribly Amazing          | Remy, 6V       | 21 |
| Lost In a Strange Land | Alvin, 6Z     | 9  | Storm                     | Harvey, 6U     | 22 |
| My Brothers & I        | Ava, 6T       | 10 | Wild, Windy Day           | Xavier, 6Y     | 23 |
| Two Versus One         | Leila, 6W     | 12 | Mask Me, Mask Me Not      | Seline, 6Y     | 23 |
| The Key to Success     | Matan, 6U     | 13 | My Light Beacons          | Ella, 6Y       | 24 |
| The Audition           | Isla, 6T      | 14 | The Lighthouse by the Bay | Flynn, 6W      | 25 |
| The Animal inside Me   | Doyun, 6U     | 15 | Challenge of Nothingness  | Phoebe, 6Y     | 26 |
| Scorpion               | Steven, 6U    | 15 | My Room to Me             | Ben, 6V        | 27 |
| The Midnight Beast     | Archie, 6X    | 16 | Inside/Outside            | Constantin, 6Z | 27 |
| Water Ways             | Catherine, 6W | 17 | One Small Paradise        | Rachel, 6V     | 28 |
| As Free As The Sea     | Gabriel, 6X   | 17 | I Dream A World           | Alexa, 6V      | 29 |
| Mirror beneath the sky | Rose, 6Y      | 18 | Dream Of Home             | Natalie, 6Z    | 30 |



## **A Mirror Stretched Beneath The Sky**

# CONTENTS

|   |   |          |
|---|---|----------|
| Trouble is Everywhere   | Frank, 6Z   | 30       |
| Oops!   | Joel, 6Z  | 31       |
| Museum Mayhem   | Jamie , 6X  | 32       |
| The Man and the Bird  | Leon, 6Z  | 33       |
| What is Life?   | Chloe, 6W   | 34       |
| The Wondering Minds   | Alice, 6X   | 35       |
| Boredom Is An Empty Room  | Leanna, 6T  | 36       |
| Where I Belong  | Agam, 6W  | 36       |
| I am a Smile  | Jessica, 6X   | 37       |
| The Key To All Minds  | Isra, 6X  | 37       |
| You Never Know  | Lannah, 6V  | 38       |
| Honourable Mentions<br>( <i>extracts</i> ):   | Ollie 6Y,<br>Yi Jie 6Z,<br>Andre 6U<br>Korema 6U<br>Maxi 6W | 39<br>40 |
| The Poetry Incursion  |   | 41       |
| Sample poetry prompt  |   | 42       |
| YOUR FEEDBACK FORM<br>How to download the flipbook<br><i>and still listen to the audio!</i> |   | 43       |

## *How You See Me – Heliena, 6W*

My friends see me,  
Happy and free,  
Like a ballerina doing a saute

My grandparents see me,  
Charismatic yet daring,  
Like a queen heading out for war.

My parents see me,  
Smart and diligent,  
Like a scientist  
improving her latest innovation.

My sister sees me,  
Annoying yet savage,  
Like a pest with passion.

My cousins see me,  
Older yet naive  
Like a police officer breaking rules

My coach sees me,  
Powerful yet drained,  
Like a battery with no charge.

Sometimes I wish,  
I could lend them my eyes.

How I see me —  
That is something only I perceive.



*I am going on a journey - Myah, 6W*

I am going on a journey,  
I don't know if it will end.  
I am going on a journey,  
To find the light within.

I will travel the world,  
The seven seas to find it.  
Across ocean, land, sky, space  
— My journey starts here.

My eyes follow a trail of white,  
The sails of a magnificent catamaran,  
The tears of Mother Earth  
toss me around,  
Until I hit the shore of an island,  
In a glittering archipelago.

Leaves crunch under my feet,  
Like fireworks crackling in the sky,  
My hair flows freely behind me,  
I glance up, towering over me,  
the peak of a magnificent mountain.

I start my trek,  
one foot in front of the other,  
All the way up, rugged and uneven.  
My chest heaving  
by the time I reached the top,  
Upon the windswept aiguille:  
a yellow hot-air balloon.

Flying into the sky and higher,  
The sun watches over me as I soar,  
The green hills turn microscopic,  
And birds become my companions.

I drift so high I reach the galaxies,  
The stars like little bulbs bringing  
brightness to me,  
The sun up close is like a fire,  
I thought it was the light I sought —  
but my balloon ruptured,  
Sending me spiraling downwards,  
into the twilight sky.

The stars faded into clouds,  
my brain turned into mush,  
And the ground seemed  
a million miles away.

But I did not give up,  
I wasn't going to die,  
I grabbed the yellow balloon fabric,  
Twisting it into a parachute  
And floated down to Earth,  
And as I did, I felt different, changed,  
As if something inside me lit up,  
glowing with a new fire.

I realised that the "light within"  
is Courage.  
Something I didn't know I had before,  
Something I'm glad I found.

## *Lost In A Strange Land – Alvin, 62*



This poem's prompt image

As the sun sank onto the horizon,  
the moon replaced the shiny sun.  
I am lost in an endless forest.

As I look up at the sign, the language I don't know.  
Where am I?  
I am lost.

I feel my life slipping through my hand.

Night has fallen,  
I open the map, hoping it can show me  
how to get out of here.

Unfamiliar words cover the whole map  
I walk slowly to the border of an unknown country.

Wondering where I am going.  
Longing to see, smell, taste something familiar.



*AI generated image: no actual students or siblings are represented!*

## *My Brothers And I – Ava, 6T*

My brothers and I don't see eye to eye,

What I would see as plastic on the floor,  
They would see an entire kingdom filled of dinosaurs  
What they would see as smelly water in a bottle,  
I would see as my lovely perfumes.

Their homework is finger painting or reading Dr Suess!  
While mine is pages and pages of never-ending work.

They want to watch *Pokémon* or *Jurassic park*,  
While I want *Young Sheldon* or *Stranger Things*.

We are like cats and dogs,  
Constantly fighting over nothing.  
We are three magnets with the same polarity:  
We can be on the same table but  
the closer they come, the more I repel!

We share a family, a culture and a last name —  
But my brothers and I don't see eye to eye.



This image is the prompt for Leila's poem on the next page

## Two Versus One – Leila, 6W

Deep down in the billabong, three boys play.  
Laughing so hard my head could fall off!  
Screaming like I'm cheering at a basketball game  
Shouting at my brothers 'more water' 'stop crying'

I'm throwing buckets, buckets of water on my brother  
Squealing as I drench Dylan with gallons of water  
Yelling at me to stop, his voice like a lion,  
demanding I put the buckets down.

My bright orange shorts look wetter than the ocean,  
Loud as a trumpet in a marching band  
It's as fun as a water-park on a summer's day.  
Exciting as if I'm about to win a medal  
Thrilling like riding a roller coaster.

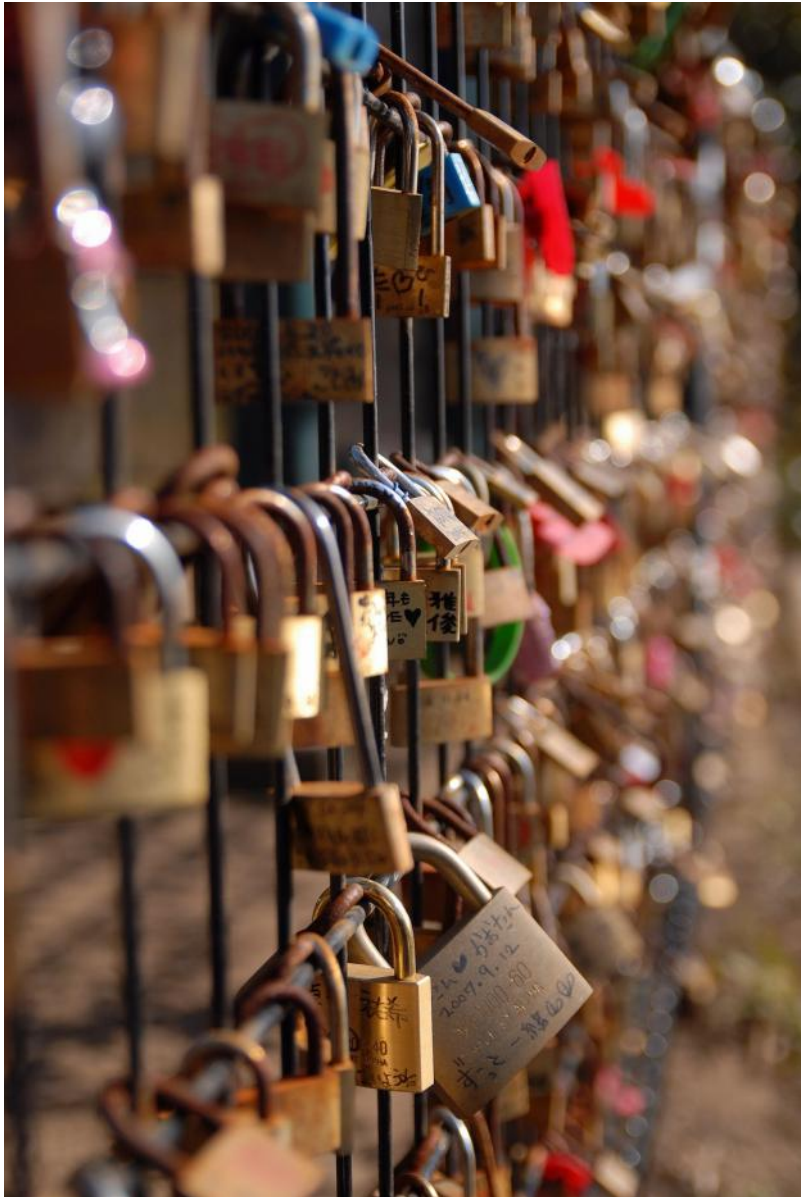
My grey shorts are saturated.  
Laughter erupts, like at a good joke,  
The riverbed, slippery as a water-slide  
Dylan screams, deafening like speakers on high volume

The monster inside me begins to emerge.  
Drenched, as if I'm drowning in the ocean,  
Eager like a kangaroo in a boxing fight,  
Determined to make my brothers pay

My brothers are laughing, I'm screaming.  
Crying so hard my eyes are swollen shut  
Angry at my brothers for teasing me  
Every time I open my eyes there's water,  
I'm wiping my eyes over and over again  
Exhausted like I'm running a marathon  
Hard to see, hard to breathe  
Rough like I'm playing rugby

Helplessly crouching covering my eyes with my hands.  
Scared for what about the happen  
Desperate for them to stop,  
I'm thinking: *when will this end?*

## The Key To Success – Matan, 6U



I pondered the question: *what is the key to success?*

I asked my father for his advice.

He answered, "Persevere and do your best,  
It drives me to excellence which brings us more money!"

My mother, ever so smart, responded:

It starts with confidence that is quiet not loud,  
It makes you feel smarter and very proud."

I asked my brother for his helpful words.

He panted, "Make it a habit' when you work out.  
You'll grow fitter and stronger without a doubt."

I asked my AFL coach, what is the key to winning?

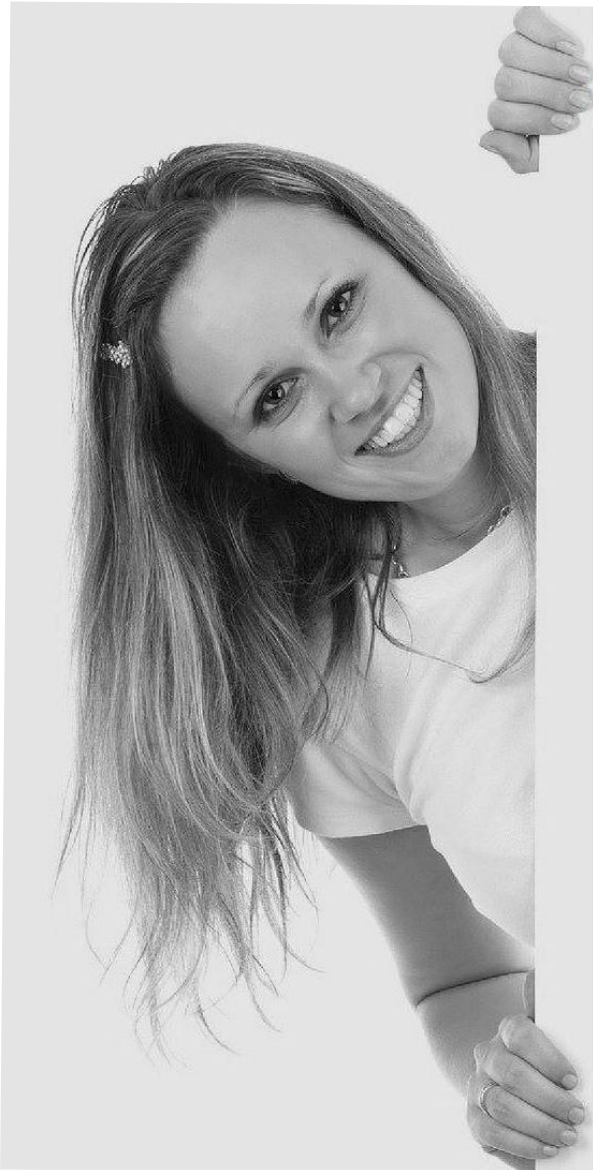
He barked, "The key, Matan? Practice, practice! When you train  
You develop new skills, so you'll feel less pain."

One question, so many answers,

Different locks need different keys.

My key is a special one and it starts with "Please?"

## The Audition – Isla, 6T



*This is a stock image of a model*

Two actresses,  
One part  
My heart beating loudly  
Can she hear?  
I do not know.

Two hopeful hearts  
One part  
She is going to get it,  
I am sure!

Two marvellous minds  
One part  
My fidgety feet betray me  
Tap-tap on the carpet

Her confidence—  
clear, unmistakable.  
She wears the role  
as if it's already hers.

One actress  
One part  
I had a dream  
and I made it happen!



And even if it was terrifying  
— I will go back again!

## *The Animal Inside Me – Doyun, 6U*

I'm like a hamster running on a wheel,  
Rolling on and on until I find peace.  
I may be small but I'm hard as steel.  
I am strong like a gorilla and as determined as a seed.  
I'm like a chimpanzee climbing a tree,  
I am a seagull whooshing over the sea  
I am a resourceful little eagle  
I see a colourful fish gliding through crystal blue water  
The fish as free as a bird.  
I also see a duck in the water  
Struggling to swim.

I am big, I am small,  
and I am different from you all.

## *Scorpion – Steven, 6U*

Silent crawlers through the shadows deep,  
Curved tail where the venom is asleep.  
Outstretched claws, poised to pinch.  
Rough armour, scary and spikey,  
Prey paralyzed in a sudden strike,  
In the desert, there's nothing alike.  
Over the sand, a dust-etched scar —  
Nature's stalkers that everyone fears!



## *The Midnight Beast – Archie, 6X*

A monster,  
Carrying the smell of blood  
And the form of a deer.  
A dangerous beast that delivers fear...

It will disguise itself  
As someone you love  
To trick you  
And bring your end.

Claws like daggers  
As brown as the earth.  
A massive being  
Eyes that glow red with rage.

Stalks you in the day,  
And comes in the night.  
When you feel its breath,  
along comes your death.

This is the wendigo...



*This is a photo of the wendigo gone?  
I wonder where the wendigo went?*

## *SPLASH! – Catherine, 6W*

Riding waves on the surface of the salty ocean,  
Fish school the water beneath,  
The sun slowly smiled at me,  
A splash of happiness shot through me.

Sipping from my big, blue bottle,  
Ice in my water slowly melts,  
Its temperature a touch of Antarctica,  
A splash of joy shot through me.

Swimming in the deep pool,  
Forgotten goggles discarded on the deck,  
The chlorine, like a bee, makes my eyes sting,  
A splash of pain shot through me.

Showering with hot water,  
Steam quickly fills the shower,  
Shampoo rushes down my body,  
A splash of calmness shot through me.

Every week, everyday, every hour,  
It's significant how many ways we use water!

## *As Free As The Sea – Gabriel, 6W*

Going to the sea is like being free.

If you go deep,  
it is like you are facing a challenge,  
a work test, essay or chore  
but if you stay at the shore,  
it is like another normal day with friends.

If you are drowning,  
you are going too hard on yourself.

If you are floating,  
you are letting yourself be free.

If a wave hits you, don't be scared,



*A Mirror Stretched Beneath The Sky – Rose, 6Y*

A mirror stretched beneath the sky  
holding secrets never to be found,  
mythical creatures never to be discovered,  
priceless treasure never to be spent.

Birds sailed over it,  
Unbeknownst to the danger lurking below.  
The wind brushed its face  
and it shivered into dunes.

Lightning strikes it once  
and the whole world blinks,  
boats skim the surface,  
and the layer of blue finally shatters.

Then darkness,  
and the world is still —  
as if the kingdom below  
was never even there



***The Relentless Ride***  
***– Ayaansh 6T***

The coaster climbs, cautious and slow,  
with clicking chains like fears we know.  
It murmurs low in restless air,  
like hidden fears not often shared.

Then suddenly  
it plunges, a risky,  
breathless fall.  
My heart plunges  
and is a shattered stone,  
as gravity grips and governs all.

The track twists like trials we face,  
and loops like lessons we repeat,  
each turn a test of will and strength,  
each rise and fall  
the highs and lows we've known.

At last it slows, the chaos clears,  
I stand with a steadier soul once more  
life like this relentless ride,  
is shaped by the courage we have.

A roller coaster train is shown on a steep orange track, ascending a tall green support structure. The train consists of several white and grey cars with red and black accents, carrying passengers. The background is a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The roller coaster is the central focus of the image, with the text overlaid on the left and right sides.

## *Rollercoaster – Lucas, 6X*

I was shaking hard  
like a leaf in stormy weather,  
In a cold sweat,  
Stunned like a block of ice,  
It's like the end of my days,  
a never-ending, no exit,  
Roller-coaster ride.

Wondering in the beginning  
Did I make the right decision or not?  
Silence slowly becomes  
a fearful scream  
At the top of my lungs;  
It was as if I was in an apocalypse.

I started to slowly think again  
Did I make the right decision —  
or not?

this terrifying drop that plummets  
at hypersonic speed.

My heart began to pound fast  
As if I had a heart attack.

We were ready for blast off,  
"WHOOOOSH!"

As we drop down,  
my body lurches from left to right.

As we inch forward to the starting point,  
I was still petrified.

## *Horribly Amazing – Remy, 6Y*



Slowly getting on,  
Knowing what's next,  
Click... it takes off,  
my head thrown back,  
heart skips a beat,  
Death gripping the handles.  
The track is twisting and twirling  
all around the park,  
I'm seconds away from passing out,  
Screaming louder than a siren,  
the whooshing of the mechanical motor,  
louder than ever,  
adrenaline shoots through my body like a bullet,  
eyes are dry as a desert,  
silent cries for help as I go around and around —  
  
It was horribly amazing; do I dare to go again?

## *Storm – Harvey, 6U*

The enraged storm suddenly arrived,  
Nothing in the treacherous tumbling storm  
could thrive,

Rain hammered on the roof  
like a gorilla beating its chest,

Then I heard a giant "SMASH!"

Shattered crystal glass  
scuttled across the wooden floor.

Walls shook when thunder cracked all around,

Doors wrenched of their hinges.

Huge trees cower before the storm's fury.

Wind howled like wolves in the moonlight,

The storm soaked the vast highway.

At last, the storm charged away,  
leaving the trees splintered to smithereens.

## *Wild, Windy Day – Xavier, 6Y*

It was a wild windy day  
a wild windy day it was, in my little WA.  
The waves loomed large as large as they could roll.  
It was a wild windy day in my little WA.

You could feel the rocking and turning,  
the tipping and churning,  
tugging and pushing,  
pulling and rushing,  
The sea spray spitting on your face.

It was a wild windy day  
a wild windy day it was, in my little WA!

## Mask Me, Mask-Me-Not – Seline, 6Y

I put my 'happy mask' on.  
Who will like me without my mask on?  
No one.  
With my big smile, I enter school,  
    putting my phone away.  
I walk, and walk,  
    trying to look as happy as I can.  
My big, fake smile embraces my  
    friends.  
The classroom is a meter away;  
    I head to my locker.  
"BANG!"  
Bumped into Kylie,  
    like a plane hitting a bird.  
My head hurts.  
I touch my forehead — is there blood?  
Everyone's eyes stare at me: tons of pressure.  
My head tilts down like a bent straw,  
My face blazing redder like a chili pepper.  
Is it my fault? No, Kylie was not looking up.  
It is all her fault. She made me hurt.  
My mask slips off.



Millions of emotions  
    strike me like a tsunami.  
I look up like a mad bull.  
A worried face  
    trying to make sure I am fine.  
She asks me: am I okay?  
And then apologises to me.  
I spot a red swell on her cheek.  
It must be painful.  
With a worried voice, I gently apologize.  
My feelings are hot chocolate  
    slowly cooling down.  
Have I ever had a time like this?  
I would have said no before.  
But, I can say 'Yes' now.

Maybe it's okay to take the mask off?  
Getting rid of my happy mask, I won't miss it.  
Who will like me without my mask on?  
Probably not everyone, but that is fine.

With my big, genuine smile, I enter the classroom.



*My Light Beacons – Ella, 6Y*

Whenever I am lost at sea  
Storm-tossed and in great difficulty  
They're planted sturdy on the charcoal rock  
My home, my harbour, my dock.

The waves rear tall and snap at my feet  
I'm tired of fighting the wind and the heat  
The world is a blur of wild, blinding spray  
And I can't find the stars to lead the way

With arms out-stretched, their embrace is warm  
A safe shelter away from the storm  
The ocean's roar begins to fade,  
In the steady shelter that has been made .

When the sky turns grey and thunder rolls  
Like a life-vest, their love buoys my soul.  
The salt-sting fades, through the surge and foam  
The beacon's lights steer me safely home.



*The Lighthouse by the Bay – Flynn 6W*

The lighthouse by the bay  
has a glittering swirl of red and white  
spiraling up its body,  
and overlooks a shining, sapphire sea,

On a rocky ledge, surrounded by tall, bronze grass  
and a whiff of sea salt stands:

The lighthouse by the bay  
It's eerie when the sun goes down  
and you're usually never alone.

The night is a black, felt blanket hugging the world  
It's cold and cramped like a house full of ghosts.

Everything is dark  
with the fog arising with a sinister smile,  
But only one thing stands its ground,  
The lighthouse by the bay,  
Guiding ships to safety away  
from the dagger-like, demonic rocks.

It embraces you with its light,  
It is a guiding star pointing out the way.  
The jagged rocks glitter and sharply shine  
when the lighthouse looks at them,  
The hard-shelled crabs soften and are  
drawn to the light like moths to a lamp,  
As the sun waves hello, the lighthouse goes  
to bed,  
But all I know is the only thing between me  
and darkness is:  
The lighthouse by the bay. ,

***The Challenge of Nothingness***  
***– Phoebe, 6Y***

**Stuck**

**Like a puck not hit,**

**A lightbulb not lit**

**What now?**

**Do I look for the way out?**

**But how?**

**Lost**

**Like a present with no box,**

**A key without a lock**

**Where's the way out?**

**Empty**

**Like batteries drained of charge,**

**My mind so big-**

**Yet nothing sparks.**

**Thoughts gone,**

**Like a lawn with nothing grown**

**Where's the water to fill the pots?**

**Or the paint to fill the palette?**

**But where's the thoughts to fill my mind —**

**and the excitement to fill my time?**

## *My Room To Me – Ben, 6V*

My room will never be your room,  
Your room will never be my room.  
My room might seem small to you,  
But to me, it's an endless journey!  
My bed is my pirate ship, the floor the sea.  
My bookshelf holds my treasure —  
Treasures too priceless to sell.  
My room might be too cluttered for you,  
But everything here has a story to tell.  
“Why don't you get rid of your crinkly caps  
or your trashy toys?” you ask.  
If I gave them away, how stale,  
how utterly bare, my room would be!  
“Well, you organise your cupboard messily —  
like scattered leaves fallen from a tree.”  
That is my room to you, but it's not my room to me.  
My room holds spills of emotions,  
Drops of passion, pours of comfort,  
And streams of memories.  
They will last for centuries.  
My room will never be your room,  
Your room will never be my room.

## *Inside / Outside – Constantin, 6Z*

Ponk, ponk  
The smell of tennis balls  
Posters hanging,  
Broken racquets dangling  
from the wall.

Tick tock  
Goes the clock on my desk.  
The hands spin around  
The clock sounds every hour

Flip, flap  
The books turn as I read a bedtime story  
The sight of familiar pages.  
Remembered stories.

Gurgle gurgle,  
The fountain at the balcony goes  
The smell of leafy greens around it  
as I step on the balcony:  
Peace and calmness .

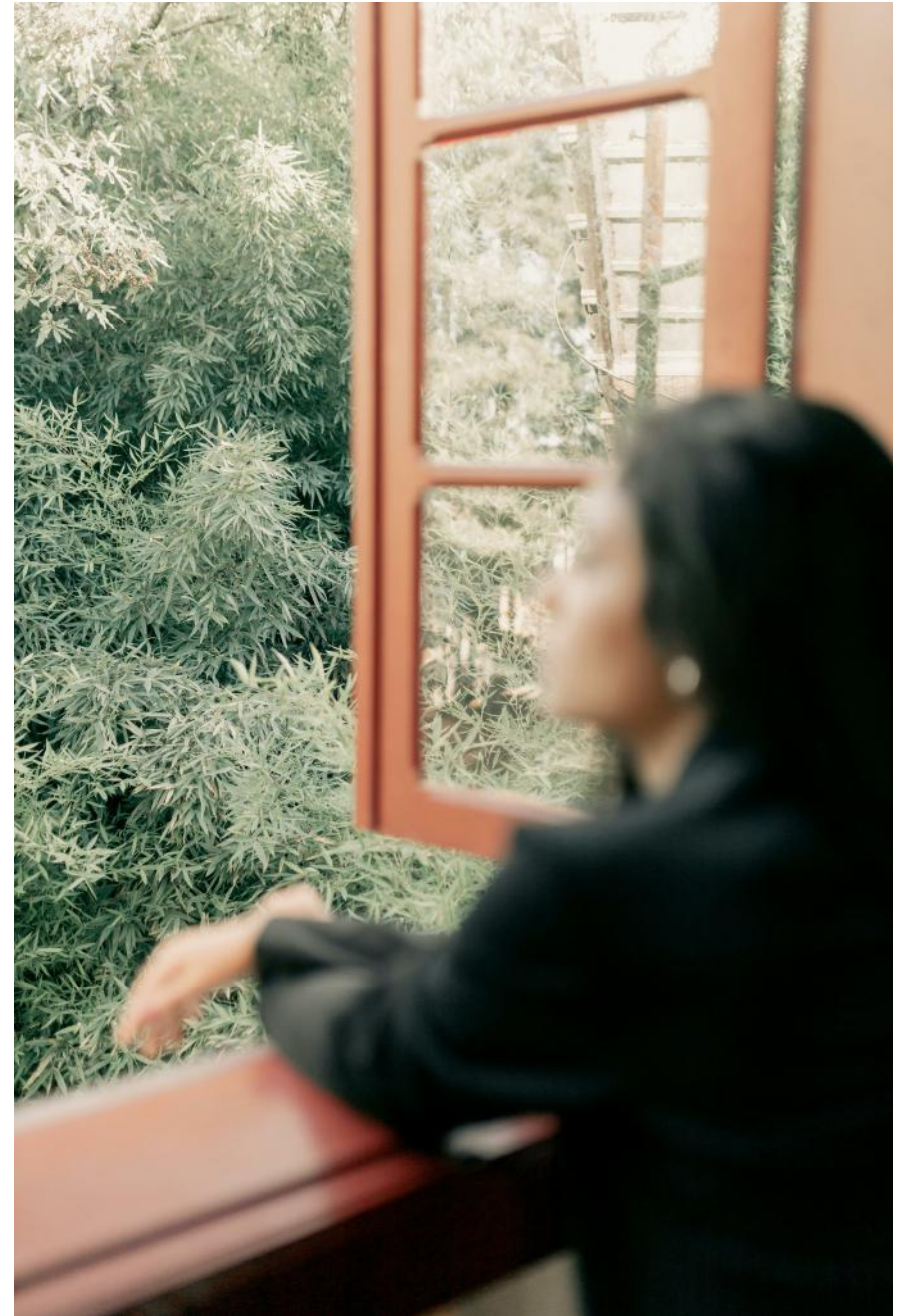
## *One Small Paradise – Rachel, 6V*

In my room, I have many different things,  
My fluffy pillow's soft as a cloud floating in the sky.  
The painting on the wall is a door to open my mind.  
A scent of sweet flowers greets me when I enter.

Some people may have a room bigger than mine —  
an enormous room, scented with fresh, forest air,  
a Christmas tree with ornaments glowing like stars.

But still my room is special and more unique to me.  
It is filled with my dreams and my memories.  
On my shelf, there's a photo of a younger me  
laughing like a monkey.

Many books on the shelves  
to study for my dream and future life.  
You may think my room is small and common  
But it will be my best room forever!  
Peaceful birdsong gently trills  
through the window to my paradise.  
My own small paradise,  
where I feel calm and comfortable.



*This is a stock image: not an actual student*

## *I Dream A World - Alexa, 6Y*

I dream a world where a girl is born,  
And instead of rushing to get ahead,  
She slows down and takes her time,  
And dreams of what she could be, can be!  
I am a girl and that girl is me.

She dreams a world where she is a dancer,  
Swaying her body like a flag,  
Blowing majestically in the wind,  
The long hours of practice slow her down,  
She is in an aeon of agonising pain,  
But she pushes through and smiles,  
Expressing her emotions through creative dance.

She dreams a world where she is an artist,  
Finding her style with colours and patterns,  
No one appreciates her work, so she tries harder,  
Becoming is the master who brings paintings to life,  
Who tells magnificent stories through her art.

She dreams a world where she is a doctor,  
Saving lives with hands like a spider,  
But she faces many challenges,  
She is overworked, drained, distressed,  
mending the injured, while becoming injured herself.

She dreams a world where she is a pilot,  
As cautious as a meerkat while flying her plane,  
Her anxiety disturbs her when turbulence hits,  
Yet she knows she must bring her passengers home  
Though she wishes she could go home herself.

I dream a world where a girl is born,  
And instead of rushing to get ahead,  
She slows down and takes her time,  
And dreams of what she could be, can be!

I am a girl — *and that girl is me!*

## *Dream Of Home – Natalie, 6W*

I dreamed I was back in Sydney  
  
Where seagulls feast,  
Where puppies frolic,  
Where cats sunbathe on their beds,  
  
Where sheep graze on grass,  
Where kangaroos hop, like a pogo stick  
Where penguins glide in their tank at the zoo,  
  
Where fish swim freely,  
waves crash onto the shore,  
the sun beams warmly,  
and stars twinkle, like tiny lanterns.  
  
Where children squeal on roller-coasters,  
Where musicians sing in the Opera house,  
Where fans chant from the stadiums,  
  
Oh, how I wish I was back in Sydney.

## *Trouble is Everywhere – Frank 6Z*

Trouble is everywhere, it is like an old friend:  
Whenever you think you're out of it,  
you become careless and it finds you again!  
You can get in trouble even from small things  
like still staying awake past your bedtime,  
To bigger things like breaking your mum's favourite vase.  
There is always a way to get into trouble.

When you're in trouble, you can feel angry.  
Anger is like a fire burning inside of you,  
If you don't control it,  
it will spread and eventually consume you.

Trouble can also leave you lonely:  
you feel the whole world is against you.

You can often get in trouble,  
and your parents will be very disappointed.  
You think they don't care about you anymore,  
But they always will forget and forgive you.



*This is a stock image*

## ***Dops! – Joel, 6Z***

One day, I accidentally broke a bowl  
and it shattered into a million tiny pieces.  
I just stood there, astonished.  
The awkward situation rang in my ears,  
Everything slowed down, making it worse.

Everyone stared at me  
like they couldn't believe  
what had just happened!  
I wished I could teleport  
to somewhere nobody could see me.  
A million eyes were stabbing  
into my soul,  
In my head, I was screaming "HELP!"  
As I looked up towards the ceiling,  
a giant looked down, glaring at me  
like I did something horrendous.  
"I'm sorry!" I cried,  
tears welling up in my eyes.  
So next time, I must remember:  
When someone says Don't Touch —  
there's usually a very good reason!

**Museum Mayhem**  
— Jamie, 6X



A click and a crash  
My heart and the vase both dropped in a flash  
I captured one but broke the other  
I tried to put it back together  
But what is broken is broken forever.

I ran through the hall  
Faster and faster  
The sirens grew louder and louder  
I tried to explain —  
But what is broken is broken forever.

My face bright red  
I tried to speak but no words came out  
But then, I remembered — I could fix it!

Instead of failure,  
cracks serve as scars.  
Golden glue weaving through  
Putting it back together —  
*kintsugi!*  
I place it on the pedestal  
good as new.  
No — better than new!



*Kintsugi*  
is the Japanese art  
of repairing broken  
ceramics by joining the  
fragments with lacquer  
mixed with powdered  
gold, silver, or platinum.  
Instead of hiding the  
damage, this highlights  
the fractures, making  
them part of the  
object's history.

## The Man and the Bird - Leon, 62

The man in the woods, all alone,  
Well, almost.

A companion,  
small, but sweet, soft, but strong.  
A small bird with a big heart.

Their story started long ago  
with a small egg in the woods  
and a boy hopping tree to tree  
until he found a nest.  
He scooped the fragile egg  
and brought it home that night  
but to his dismay, he woke to see  
the egg cracked on the floor.  
He was distressed — until he saw  
a newborn bird, flapping on the tiles,  
too young to have feathers but still somehow soft.  
The boy lifted it up, sending him aloft



This poem's prompt image

At that moment, the tiny bird,  
dreaming of flight, started to flap and leapt —  
too young, too weak, the poor bird broke its wing

Time passed. That small bird learnt to fly  
but his passion wasn't flight.  
It was singing through the night!  
As the old man sat watching his pet bird sing,  
he realised the day would come  
when the old bird would fly away.  
He was sad but he did know  
he would have to let him go.

## *What is life? – Chloe, 6W*

Childhood is free as a bird and wild as a lion,  
When our minds cannot drift away  
Our paths not set in stone  
By the others who walked before us.

What is mankind, hurried and fast  
If we blame others and they blame us  
We cut and kill to get our way  
We ignore the hurt  
To get on with our day

We never stop to  
Listen, Learn and Love  
Instead, we Hurt, Hate and Harm

Sometimes I wonder...  
Who am I, standing there  
Living life without a care  
While others are losing lives  
Due to war and strife?

To those who feel hope is lost  
Know that everyone is still finding their way  
To those who convey their hurt, their hate  
Know that these things come at great cost

When you take from Earth  
Earth takes back from you

Because  
What is life  
If you don't live?

## *The Wondering Minds - Alice, 6W*

What do you do when you're bored?  
Do you play? Do you sing? Do you dance?  
Do you create something?  
Do you paint an image?  
Well, that's your choice.

But when I'm bored...  
I like to fly in my imagination.  
Dance on clouds of cotton candy.  
Breathe out yesterday's challenges,  
And breathe in today's possibilities.

When I'm bored...  
I like to try new things,  
Breathe new airs,  
Meet new people,  
Taste new foods,  
And learn new languages —

Now, what about you,  
What do *you* do when you're bored?



## *Boredom is an empty room - Leanna, 6T*

Boredom is really dull  
That awful feeling feels like  
there is nothing left in the world to do.  
It tastes like bitter,  
like a ghost stole my creativity,  
It's like being isolated.  
Boredom is an empty room:  
Nothing to see, nothing to do.

Excitement is a rush!  
Feels like I'm flying through the air  
Taste sweet like candy,  
Feels like  
a battery was installed in my body!  
It's like eating glazed doughnut  
direct from the factory.

If boredom is an empty room,  
Excitement is a candy shop —  
*That's* my kind of feeling!

## *Where I Belong – Agam 6W*

The floor is soft with velvet moss,  
I do not feel a single loss.

The air is sweet like honey gold,  
With many secrets to be told.

The ancient trees stand towery and wide,  
With leafy arms where I can hide.

The wind blows through their emerald leaves,  
And whispers secrets on the beautiful breeze.

I do not walk, I softly glide,  
Taking a magnificent ride.

The grass is made of grape-green gorgeous glass,  
As I watch the golden clouds surpass.

The tree branches reach up to the sky,  
As colourful birds go swooping by.

The bark is rough against my hand,

The ancient wonders, colossal and grand

I hear the stars beginning to hum  
Like a quiet beat on the drum.

I am a hero brave and strong,  
This is where I belong.

## *A Smile – Jessica, 6X*

I am a smile,  
So, joyful and true  
I highlight everything positive about you,

I create a chain of happiness easy to wear  
When you walk by, it shines free of care  
I transform a cloudy day with a relaxing rainbow,  
And take away that violent volcano.

One after another the ripple effect continues,  
I discover true qualities and colours that shine through,  
Loyalty, love, joy, kindness  
and a luminous heart, within you.

No matter who you are, I will brighten your day  
sprinkling rainbow colours to dispel the grey!

## *The Key to All Minds - Isra, 6W*

If only I had the key to all minds  
the world would be free from all its binds.  
If I could change how people think,  
They might realize we're all linked,

Everyone would be wanted,  
And not one excluded.  
The whole world would be free  
— if only I had the key to all minds.

In my world, we're all equal,  
No one should ever be made to feel small.  
If only I had the key to all minds,  
I could change the world for the better.

And from that day forward,  
The world would never cry  
People will live in perfect harmony  
All day the doves will fly,

Then peace would spread through all countries  
And harmony forever be shared,  
If only I had the key to all minds,  
This dream could be a reality.

But alas, I don't.

The world is what it is,  
But to all the ones who try,  
Continue,  
And maybe someday,  
The doves will fly.

*You Never Know - Lannah, 6V*

You never know who you have  
until they are gone.

You never know when a rapid heartbeat  
comes to a stop.

You never know when every gasp of thin air  
comes to an end.

You never know when every stride  
comes to a limp.

You never know the things you have  
until they are gone.

You never know when your last drop of water  
is no longer replenished.

You never know when your last bite of food  
will be chewed.

You never know,  
you never know.

You never know when things will happen.  
You never know when your shoulders  
feel a sudden weight.

You never know when bright skies  
turn to grey.

You never know,  
You never know.

# Honourable Mentions

In the process of writing, students often pen a simile or a single line that by itself is remarkable, even if they do not sustain their poetic spark throughout their entire poem.

Enjoy these gems mined from the seams of our Year 6's writing.

The skyscraper trees stretched  
across the valley  
Exploding lush green  
The sky was beaming  
with blue covering the sky  
Birds glided overhead  
like planes coming in to land  
Crickets chirped in the dead silence  
Bugs scuttled around  
the muddy floor like a mini city  
The sun glowed  
like a candle in a dark room

— from *Nature*, Ollie, 6Y

Crunchy leaves and hard rocks  
Sweet river water  
Rough trees  
I know it is freedom!

— Yi Jie, 6Z

from *The Day The Sky Smiled*

The sun is a spotlight on my back,  
Splashes of water glisten in the fierce sun,  
The towering beanstalk scraping the sky  
The wind roared,  
The ground shook,  
The beanstalk bent in fear.

— from *The Day The Sky Smiled*, Andre, 6U

A hedgehog moves inside my head,  
Who's pointing a dagger through my brain,  
Of sharp prickle edges  
to catch all sorts of crawly things.

from *The Warrior*, Korema, 6U

The day was young,  
leaves crunching beneath my feet,  
The sky was a flock of rainbow  
lorikeets,  
The path splits, Left, or right?  
Left, holds a big empty field,  
hot and dry.  
Right, holds towering pines,  
wet and moist.  
Going right was a bad choice...

Towering pines block the sunlight  
from penetrating through  
A graceful family of deer trots  
across the path  
Two adults and a calf  
The calf is small  
no higher than my knee  
But it stops and stares  
like it's analyzing me

— Maxi, 6W

## Background to the Poetry Incursion

As part of a unit on Poetry, the Year 6 English staff at AIS invited me to return again this year to conduct two 60-minute workshops with each class, focusing on the writing,

I highlighted various approaches to writing poetically.

Each student was given a photograph as a trigger (there's a sample on the next page) — with questions to prompt thought about possible perspectives or emotions, or how the picture might relate to their own experience. As a result of seven classes working from one set of 20 visual prompts, there are a fascinating range of responses to the same starter.

The students began writing during the workshop and continued at home and in class with their teachers over the following days. They submitted their drafts online and I gave feedback on each one — mostly encouraging more precise or powerful choices of verbs (someone 'going' when they could stride or explore, and birds 'flying' when they might soar, glide, swoop) and adjectives (replace *nice*, *awesome*) and urging the deletion of redundant words (eg 'just' and 'pretty' as qualifiers!)

Occasionally there'd be a cliché I'd ask them to rephrase, or I'd encourage the writer to look for an alternative word to avoid a lazy repetition. Some pruning of padding, or re-arranging of lines for clarity of thought, was occasionally recommended.

I was also a line of last resort when inspiration deserted a couple of authors whose title remained 'Poem for Mr Jenkins'.

This is the fourth year I have had the pleasure of conducting a poetry incursion at AIS. Each has produced some remarkable writing that encourages me to think that poetry is a unit which draws out the best of the Year Six cohort.

Roger Jenkins,  
1995 Singapore Literature Prize winner  
*From The Belly Of The Carp*

## Sample poetry prompt



Write a poem about **Courage**, or **Justice**, or **Day-dreaming**, using one of the pictures to trigger your writing.

- Who is this kid? Where are they going? Who are they going to meet — or confront? The kid seems to be pedaling fast (the horse is galloping) — why? Why does the shadow ‘change’ from a kid riding a bike to a knight on a charging horse? Do the knight and the horse (and the bike?) have names? Contrast the sounds/voices inside their head with those outside?
- Have you ever felt like a hero? Done something that required courage? Tell us about it!
- if you were going to be a hero/heroine and Save The Day, what wrong would you “take aim at”, in order to put it right? *How would you like to make the world a better place?*
- What is an unusual skill that you would like to be able to have? How would you use it? This could be an “If I had/could/was/knew . . . I would —” poem.

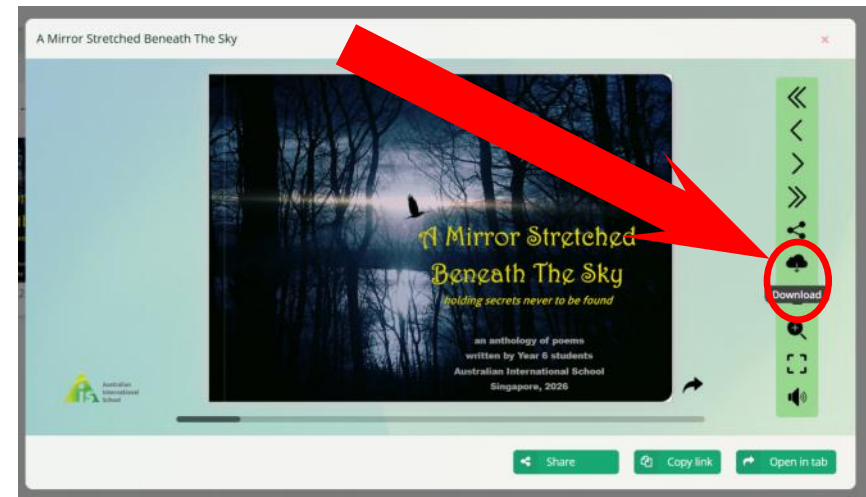
As there’s an obvious difference between the ages of these two characters, you could choose to write about how your dreams have changed as you’ve grown up?

The student poets and their teachers would love to have your feedback on this anthology of poems.

Please use this form to tell us what you liked, or what impressed you, about their writing (and their reading!) Thank you.

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