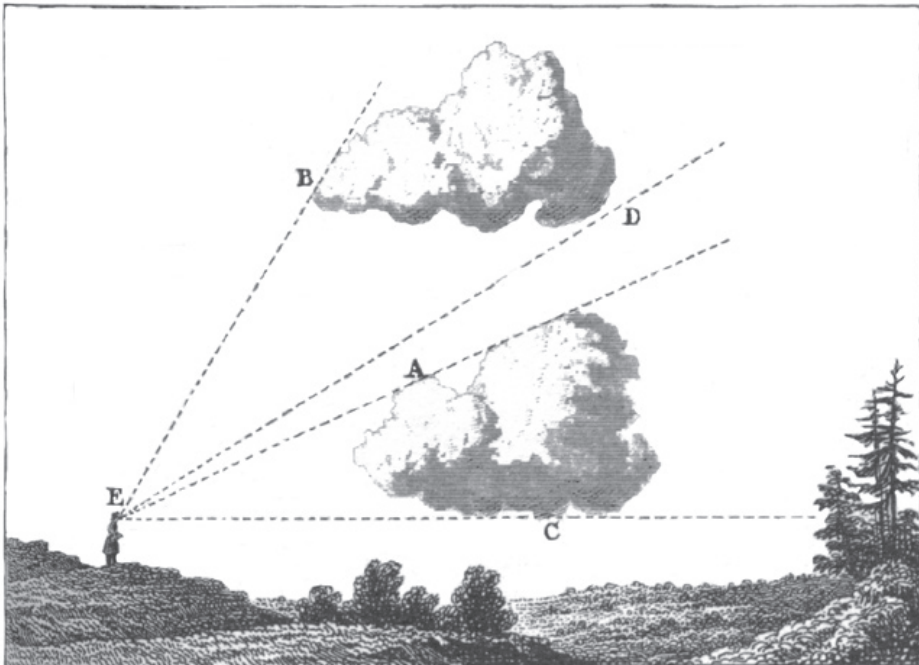


# Tattered Cover Young Poet's Writing Challenge 2006 Winners



# 2006 Winners Tattered Cover Young Poet's Writing Challenge

## Grades 1 and 2

<i>What Is Orange?</i> — Jack Detmer .....	3
<i>Winter Fingers</i> — Audrey Homlar .....	4
<i>The Ocean</i> — Olivia Rue .....	5

## Grades 3 and 4

<i>Garden</i> — Oliver Leckenby .....	6
<i>Night</i> — Alfredo Pasillas .....	7
<i>Hockey</i> — Enzo Peters .....	8

## Grades 5 and 6

<i>Trees</i> — Ashlyn Dorsey .....	9
<i>Untitled</i> — Hava Rosenberg .....	10
<i>The Tragedy of English Grammar</i> — Catherine Dewerd .....	12

## Grades 7 and 8

<i>How I Feel Now</i> — Maili Lim .....	13
<i>Hedwig's Translucent Frankenstein</i> — Desanka Beslic .....	15
<i>Locked Up</i> — Brendan Craine .....	17

## Grades 9 and 10

<i>The Word of a Fifteen-Year-Old</i> — Erin Fisher .....	18
<i>Untitled</i> — Tessa Thomas .....	19
<i>The Nothing Color</i> — Stephen Sturm .....	20

## Grades 11 and 12

<i>My Father Says He Hates Poetry</i> — Ryan Brown .....	21
<i>Untitled</i> — Emily Raymundo .....	24
<i>I Have Never Been to Auschwitz</i> — Abigail Fine .....	25



**Jack Detmer**  
**Glacier Peak Elementary**  
**First and Second Grade**

## **What Is Orange?**

Orange is a bug squished on the sidewalk.

It looks like a fox lost in the woods.

Orange is a fish swimming in the sea or  
Maybe a monkey tangled in the vines.

It smells like a penny after it is sitting in a blaze.

Orange is a pumpkin seed resting in a pumpkin.

Or candy in the candy shop.

It sounds like air over the sea.

That's what orange is...

**Audrey Homlar**  
**Steele Elementary**  
**First and Second Grade**

**Winter Fingers**

Why the old man  
whispers closely  
into my ear  
something I never knew  
“winter fingers,” I think closely  
I say it  
a few times to get it right  
I turn around  
but he’s gone away from me.

**Olivia Rue**  
**Carl Sandburg**  
**First and Second Grade**

**The Ocean**

The ocean loves to roar  
You sit and listen to the rushing  
Water  
You feel sand in between  
Your feet squishing  
Your eyes see the sun  
You imagine it is a giant  
lollipop  
You imagine the umbrellas as  
a roller coaster spinning faster  
and faster  
you think to yourself and say  
the waves are like little birds  
waving softly

**Oliver Leckenby**  
**Steele Elementary**  
**Third and Fourth Grade**

**Garden**

The garden  
perishes  
under  
the noise of  
booming  
cars and  
wailing  
sirens  
screaming cats  
and  
kids  
everywhere  
and  
nowhere.

**Alfredo Pasillas**  
**Centery Elementary**  
**Third and Fourth Grade**

**Night**

The sun is leaving  
Darkness rising as light falls  
Everyone sleeping

**Enzo Peters**  
**Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning**  
**Third and Fourth Grade**

**Hockey**

Skidding across the  
freezing ice  
moving  
so fast.

I'm just a blur.

I come to a stop,  
spring

Glittering dust  
everywhere

and take a shot.

**Ashlyn Dorsey**  
**West Middle School**  
**Fifth and Sixth Grade**

**Trees**

Trees trees your leaves are all green you  
stand so tall and touch the sky you  
never move you never talk and yet  
you stand then sometimes I think  
of you like soldiers in London  
guarding a castle standing  
tall and not speaking a  
word but then in the fall  
your leaves change from  
green to lemon and they  
fall to the ground and  
when I walk on them  
they go crunch crunch  
soon the trees are  
skeletons standing  
in the open then they  
get their green leaves  
back and they are standing  
there again all tall and  
not making a move nor  
a sound trees trees

# Hava Rosenberg

## Denver School of the Arts

### Fifth and Sixth Grade

I went into  
The corner store  
And I saw it.  
Like love at first sight.  
When I picked it up,  
And gave it a blow,  
It squeaked.  
Then the second time  
I blew into it,  
It didn't do anything at all.  
Just sat there.  
Silent as a stone.

I thought it was broken, see.  
"Gee kid," said the man  
From behind the counter,  
When I looked at him,  
"You got no talent."  
He took it back,  
And put some stuff to disinfect the  
Mouth piece on it.

Then little Jimmy Nelson,  
From down the street came.  
And he blew into it,  
And made music.  
"Now, he's got talent,"  
Said the man behind the counter,  
Sweeping up for the night.

But,  
That evening,  
At six-forty-five,  
My dad bought me  
That trumpet.

And I practiced.  
And I practiced so  
Much that Dad  
Promised to give me  
Proper lessons.  
And I learned to play that  
Little old horn  
Real good.

I played and  
Played and  
Soon I quit lessons,  
And I started giving them  
To kids who want to play  
I became an adult  
And I moved away.  
Then one day, I came back  
To that little old town.  
And I walked to that corner store  
And I pulled out my horn.

And the man behind the  
Counter, well  
I perform for him.  
And he says,  
“You got talent.”  
As I stand in the dirty corner store,  
Trumpeting out my soul  
In a cloud of magic  
And dust.

**Catherine Dewerd**  
**West Middle School**  
**Fifth and Sixth Grade**

**The Tragedy of English Grammar**

Life was good,  
Grades were rosy.  
Topic sentences popped,  
Tangerines and posies.

Accelerated reading tests,  
Proved us smart and capable.  
Greek/Latin root quiz,  
Seemed like a whiz.

Capitalization,  
Characterization,  
Final punctuation,  
Letters, animation.

Fiction elements cubed.  
Paragraphs packeted.  
Reading responded to.  
We've integrated SOAPS.

In shuffles Syntax,  
Packet under arm,  
He hands one out to each of us,  
We shudder with alarm.

All had been rosy,  
All had been good,  
Until the dreaded nouns and verbs,  
Ended it because, they could.

We needed CSAP,  
We needed it for our lives,  
Need it be so painful?  
We all do surmise.

**Mali Lim**  
**Mountain Range Middle School**  
**Seventh and Eighth Grade**

## **How I Feel Now**

*Nothing lasts more than a second.*

Lying beneath neglected skies  
But atop one's own shadow  
Basking in thoughts of self-worth  
And thoughts of possibilities

Of a world well made-up  
The blue flowers are chicken flavored  
Where emotions can fly effortlessly away  
And princesses can save themselves

A way to forget what you take for granted  
Those simple Things in life  
Like how cold, moist night-time grass  
Squeezes between bare toes

When hours and minutes  
Are the only thing that matters  
Until the ticking of the clock slows  
Like the echo of an alcoholic's voice.

When plaintiveness never falls  
And being high is the only key to getting out  
Because when you've been boarded up here  
Details are left behind and forgotten

Where you can see nothing, yet everything  
Through the holes in a cardboard box  
And experience the same sights and sounds and feelings  
Not missing anything, never having to look back

And not having to risk being seen  
For being sighted is a dangerous place to be  
That Someplace between light and dark  
Fused together until there is just no difference

Come here and let me show you  
How broken fruit falls from trees  
Into unsuspecting hands- battered and bruised  
And perfectly ripe

Step into the light where there  
It is guaranteed no memories of constricting hurt  
Through wanting I have become disabled  
In those parts where suffering now slowly disintegrates

It is not flashbacks or embracing moments  
Or the fire of thought that never burns out  
It is neither happiness nor pain  
That lasts more than a second.

Nothing lasts more than a second.

**Desanka Beslic**  
**Denver School of the Arts**  
**Seventh and Eighth Grade**

## **Hedwig's Translucent Frankenstein**

Nobody stitches together a green skin giant  
with bolts in his neck anymore.

The musty Gothic castle on top of the hill  
has lost its many yards of silken cobwebs  
resembling drapes in the guard towers  
exposing rooms to sunlight peeking  
through the sky of broken glass.

The cold metal table is used exclusively as tanning beds,  
and diminutive girls are presumed safe now  
in their white daisy-filled gardens near the well.

The bread makers of the village below believe  
that the jarred blue eyes and oozy brains preserved  
in Victor's special goop is a brand  
of white cranberry Jell-O.

They bellow at the ancient story.

But they don't feel as dreadful as I do,  
they haven't seen or heard what I have;  
how the manufactured body parts  
weren't only used for Frankenstein  
but Michael Jackson's many plastic  
nose surgeries.

Only I see dry ice, fog, and lightning in the shape of fake veins  
surge through the moment he opens his eyes.

How his Egyptian eels scream beneath  
moon-soaked sewing needles.

The moon glowers like the devil's golden eye  
through clouds that are chalk erased from time.

Nobody believes in the green skin giant  
with bolts in his neck anymore,  
but there are days when I feel terrible,  
when my eyes feel like heavy marbles  
and my body keeps melting, melting  
that I find myself fingering my cheek  
to be sure that five jagged stitches  
aren't there.

**Many thanks to Paul Zimmer for inspiration for this poem.**

**Brendan Craine**  
**Denver School of the Arts**  
**Seventh and Eighth Grade**

## **Locked Up**

If I listen closely enough, I can still hear another heartbeat, which is locked my soul in a padded room in a hotel where you tip the bellhop with a smile that I've never been able to pay. I can never reach low enough in my own body to find what still breathes there, feeding off the tendrils of feeling I can still poke through my own skin. My mother departed and left me in my cage of a crib, chained down to a world with manacles of faith, where emotion is a sign weakness.

I can't break the bonds and run free in the pastures of my brain because it is a strange place. I only know the dim black lines that crisscross my vision and blur until they become iron bars, and I could wrench at them with my hands until my fingers bled, but I still couldn't let myself out or let a single tear fall and melt the metal, pouring my essence from the cage I built around myself until I drowned.

If I listen closely enough, I can still hear my own breathing, and the cage becomes a womb, where I've already pasted my memories on the wall like posters, hung with biting words I've been forced to keep down. I've wanted to trace the tendrils, venturing down the horrible cramped tunnels of feeling to find out what is living inside of me, but it is a one-way journey and I have been raised to like the surface, taking privacy only in the dark little room I keep badly furnished in my head, just to have somewhere I can't hear my heartbeat.

If I listen closely enough, I can still hear someone crying, Thoughts turning themselves into shining words that pour down my face in rivers that can't be heard for fear of being locked once more in the badly furnished room where I can only hear what I've kept in there, and the piece of me that still wants to crawl into bed and not wake up. If I could just curl up and cease to think maybe I could find that smile I've kept hidden under the mattress just so that I could finally check into the room where I could finally feel the warm embrace of my mother's heartbeat.

**Erin Fisher**  
**Colorado Academy**  
**Ninth and Tenth Grade**

**The Word of a Fifteen-Year-Old**

I solemnly swear...  
I will have an emotional breakdown,  
When I can't go to the party.  
I will go to school and try my best,  
But only if I'm not sitting with friends.  
I will buy expensive fashionable clothes,  
Just because everyone else has them.  
I will whine and complain  
Until I get my way,  
Because I am the center of the world.  
I will talk on the phone for hours on end,  
About absolutely nothing.  
I will listen to what my parents say,  
But I won't remember a word of it.  
I will finish my homework  
In time for class,  
Only because I get to school early.  
I will be sweet and nice and polite around your friends,  
But silly and loud and dramatic around mine.  
I will spend hours getting ready,  
For an occasion of absolutely no importance.  
And lastly,  
I swear I will do stupid things  
Just for the hell of it.

**Tessa Thomas**  
**Denver School of the Arts**  
**Ninth and Tenth Grade**

I want to believe  
(but beliefs cause wars;  
instead, I have some very good ideas.)

I have an idea about balance beams and golden scales:  
we will reach the end, but no one will judge us but ourselves;  
our experiences will leave us on the other side.

I have an idea about that expression of “love”, deeply,  
and that we’ll find whatever it is that we need  
most of all.

I share the ideas about univerai, and that  
ideas are created (somewhere), and that anyone can find them:  
they just have to look around a bit.

I have an idea that everyone just needs to slow down  
once in a while,  
and relax (for crying out loud).

I dream for those weeds in the sidewalk.

I have an idea that hate is a silly thing and should be joked about as such;  
it’s a tense concept with no real use,  
and yet people seem to enjoy it so very much  
(though I’ll never understand why).

I have an idea about pain  
but that bruise will fade, and if it gets hit again,  
well, hit back.

I have that same idea that I can fix everything for everyone  
without needing anyone to fix anything for me  
(I want to be a heroine.)

The only thing that I really believe  
is that beliefs are no-good trouble-makers

(and I believe that the truth is out there).

**Stephen Sturm**  
**Colorado Academy**  
**Ninth and Tenth Grade**

**The Nothing Color**

The nothing color  
The clinking of a homeless man's cup and  
The smoke from a shot in the dark.  
The trumpet in a packed room  
Playing music that barely penetrates the smoke and  
Miles upon miles of lonely road  
Snaking its way through the desolate mountains  
Like a soldier through burning sands, or the gripping muds.  
The pungent smell of coffee and  
The tears from a broken heart.  
The memory of days gone past and  
Thoughts of life to come.  
The train whistle cutting through the night air  
Like a knife through flesh and  
The dogs bark  
At phantoms unseen.  
The rustle of wind through the fallen leaves and  
A funeral of a friend  
On a rainy day  
And the cold hard ground,  
The lowest place there is,  
Where those who fail to lay,  
Basking in their own depression.  
Esto e' the nichts couleur.

**Ryan Brown**  
**Denver School of the Arts**  
**Eleventh and Twelfth Grade**

## **My Father Says He Hates Poetry**

My father says he hates poetry,  
but I do not believe him.  
He has given himself away before he begins,  
for I see the poems within him,  
wordless and complete.

There is one-  
I am five,  
unnatural on skis as a baby doe  
on spindly birth-legs.  
We stand at the top of the world,  
point ourselves into white and white and blue,  
and he shows me how  
to find my way down,  
this man who tells me he has no poems.

I am thinking of another-  
seven years old,  
he and I  
are walking to the bus stop.  
In the early morning  
my shoes gleam black  
as the pigeons who live on our roof,  
and our hands clasp like Escher's,  
one beginning from the other  
in perfect symmetry.

At eleven,  
I am taught to capture these poems,  
to lay out my trap  
with words and lines on a single sheet of paper,  
and then to wait-  
hoping its metal jaws will bite into something  
worth holding onto  
(something worth killing).

He, the one who taught me about words,  
does not know the hunt  
and tells me only that there is  
another good novel  
he thinks I should read.

Today, I am sixteen.  
I am sixteen and still waiting  
for poems to spread before me  
as perfectly as they did  
when I was five and seven  
and too young  
to smolder them with language,

I am reminded of a butterfly  
tickling my palm-  
it must have been ten years now,  
since then-  
how my fingers touched wings  
smooth as powdered sugar,  
the way it fell,  
a feather, through the indent  
between thumb and forefinger,  
and did not fly away,  
how he said sometimes  
we must destroy something  
just to keep it.

This morning, my father  
tells me of the way,  
so many years ago,  
he told his father he loved the ballet  
and how he only laughed,  
my grandfather,  
(that heavy laugh  
I would someday inherit).

He didn't understand, my father says,  
the way limbs stretched over music,  
and caught flight between notes,  
the way they hesitated in perfection,  
and how only he could see it.

**Emily Raymundo**  
**Denver School of the Arts**  
**Eleventh and Twelfth Grade**

trapped beneath  
the intimate rustle of clothing  
we are silent,  
breathing quiet,

our knees aching, backs  
caving in with the weight of our shoulders,  
toes curling  
as we climb

through narrow streets—

it's evening,  
the light's going,  
and we are far, so incredibly far  
from the beginning  
(when we were loud and heavy with darkness).

we have unfurled as flowers do:  
bending towards sunlight,  
turning our faces to the sky.

**Abigail Fine**  
**Denver School of the Arts**  
**Eleventh and Twelfth Grade**

## **I Have Never Been to Auschwitz**

From the vast, dark lawn  
the lightning bugs evaporate  
and in the house, a woman washing the dishes  
thinks that they're reflections in the window;

when she looks behind her  
she finds nothing there.

Things fall apart  
a watch, a book, a trusty bicycle;

the boy who passed Bresson  
in the street carrying two bottles of wine  
is now dead, as is Bresson.

And there is always  
the air in Auschwitz, almost sweet,  
the grass whispering beneath wires  
with aesthetic merit whether or not  
they hum,

a woman nearby choking  
on herself, crying in a way  
that sounds like laughter,

and me standing by the fence  
remembering everything  
I've ever read.