



2011 Tucson's River of Words Youth Poetry and Art Contest



The Observations

Vanessa Verdugo, age 11

Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Oliver

Grand Prize–Art–Category 3

If there is magic on the planet, it is contained in Water.
Loren Eiseley, *The Immense Journey*, 1957.

Expand your vision of water as you peruse the words and images of these young desert dwellers. This book contains the award winning selection of works submitted to Tucson's River of Words 2011 Youth Poetry and Art Contest. Through classroom lessons, guided outdoor excursions, or by independent study, students ages 5-19 learn about water in the desert landscape and express their understanding through poetry or visual art.

Tucson's River of Words 2011-2012 Traveling Exhibit Schedule

April 13 – May 30, 2011

Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center • 1660 West Ruthrauff Road

June 1 – July 19, 2011

Joel Valdez Main Library • 101 North Stone Avenue

July 21 – August 18, 2011

Agua Caliente Park – Ranch House Art Gallery • 12325 East Roger Road

August 20 – September 29, 2011

Martha Cooper Branch Library • 1377 North Catalina Avenue

October 1 – October 31, 2011

Pima County Juvenile Court • 2225 East Ajo Way

November 3, 2011 – January 2, 2012

Wheeler Taft Abbett Sr. Branch Library • 7800 North Schisler Drive

January 4 – March 18, 2012

Valencia Branch Library • 202 West Valencia Road

***This book is dedicated to Tucson's River of Words 2011
Teacher of the Year, Meg Johnson
from Agua Caliente Elementary School and all the teachers and parents
that create opportunities for children to connect with nature through
the integration of science, language and the arts.***

Animals of the Desert

Rain crashing
The animals hide
Wild pigs rolling, rolling in the mud
Coyotes burrowing in their holes
Deer running into bushes
Animals of the monsoon
Mules running crazy

Lucas Borst, age 6
Carden of Tucson • Mrs. Ram
Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 1

Gila Monster

The Gila monster
Creeping in the sand
Darkness came.

Kiara West, age 8
Desert Winds Elementary • Mrs. Nugent

Water Cycle

There I go
I'm a water molecule.
I'm in the river.
I'm in precipitation.
Then I dive up more.
Then I get through evaporation.
Then I dive some more.
Then I'm in the water cycle.
I'm like a water drip on the mountain.
The sky is blue.
The more I dive the clearer it gets.
I flow and flow up.
Then I float down.
Then I go back up.
There's a lot of little animals up there.

Nicol Urrea, age 12
Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Prince

The Rainy Day

I opened the door
and went outside
Opened my mouth
stuck my tongue out
to catch the rain

*James Marshall, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Mrs. Nugent*

River Poem

I'm a water molecule
That travels far.
First I was in a river,
Next traveled to the north.
I end up in the glaciers.
I melted, going down a mountain like
I was going two thousand miles per hour,
And then I come up to a plant,
And then I follow the pistil,
And make fruit.
I fall and I hit the sand
And go under.
I get pumped in a pipe.
I go in a human mouth.
I get out from him
And end up
Back where I started.

*Ricky Rodriguez, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Prince*

The Snow Feels Like Rain

The snow feels like rain,
The rain feels like a hammer,
Every day it makes a castle.

*Evelyn Swarts, age 6
Carden of Tucson • Mrs. Ram*

The Journey

I am water, nothing else (yet).
I'm trapped inside a glacier.
My movement is limited.
As the sun hits me,
this glacier slowly starts to melt.
Suddenly, I slide down,
down a mountain!
Wait, I'm sinking into a
fresh patch of soil.
Right now I feel like
a pipe under ground
Moving into a slow stream.
Up ahead all I hear is
the roaring of a waterfall.
I'm falling down.
CRASH!
Slowing down once again
into a river of freshwater.
Slowly, evaporating to the clouds.
I feel the surrounding of other
water molecules joining me
going up and out,
flowing with the wind and clouds.
Right when I pass by my glaciers,
I remember where I started.
My mountains are my glaciers.
My mountains are my glaciers.
Where will I go next?

*Carissa Valenzuela, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Prince*

The Secret of the Bird's Music

Before your life
the monsoon helped Mother Earth
to make the violets keep on growing
and the dewdrops cleaning the earth.
As I sleep, I dream to have a journey
as I wait for the sunshine to come.
In the grassland the hour's heart
sings a song in their footsteps.
The secret of the bird's music,
you do not want to know
in the long, long answer.
The moon is lost.
She sees the summer sand
half-open already.

Anika Burns, age 8
Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Ratajczak

Rainy Day

Mild and damp beauty
Puddles all around
Everyone is playing
Before it soaks the ground

Lands on the earth
Pops when it hits
Picked up by car tires
All around town

Seeps into gravel
Filters underground
Other drops evaporate
Go up to the clouds

Sam Lolwing, age 10
Satori Charter School • Mrs. Gringrich
Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 3

The Journey

Sound is finding branches
and a lake that is half-open.
I hear voices on the pathway.
There is more to the journey
to the clean lake where the fish are.

Dylan Nye, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Ratajczak

The Beauty of the Stream

Let me be free upon your palm.
Let me chirp upon some rocks.
Let me be clear and blue.
Let me be smooth under water with you.
Let me wander all around the world.
Let me look at the beauty of the fish.

Noah Vigileos, age 9
Mesquite Elementary • Mrs. Urbalejo

Summer

In the summer,
the rattlesnake's
half-open mouth
is ready to strike.
Star's splash
in dew-drop whispers.

Adrian Vasquez, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Ratajczak



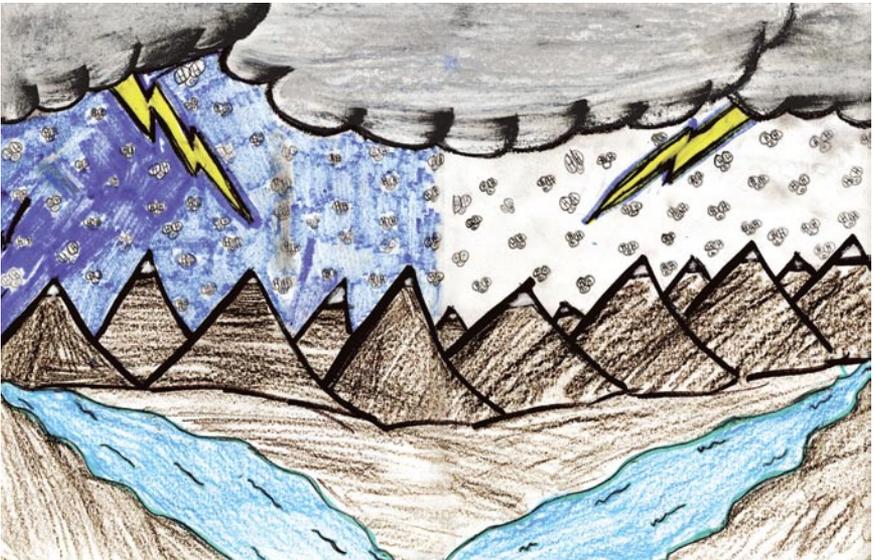
Untitled

*Cassandra Gonzalez, age 7
Gallego Basic Elementary • Mrs. Valentine*



Animal Water

*Christopher Bradford, age 7
DeGrazia Elementary • Mrs. Northrop*



The Water Life

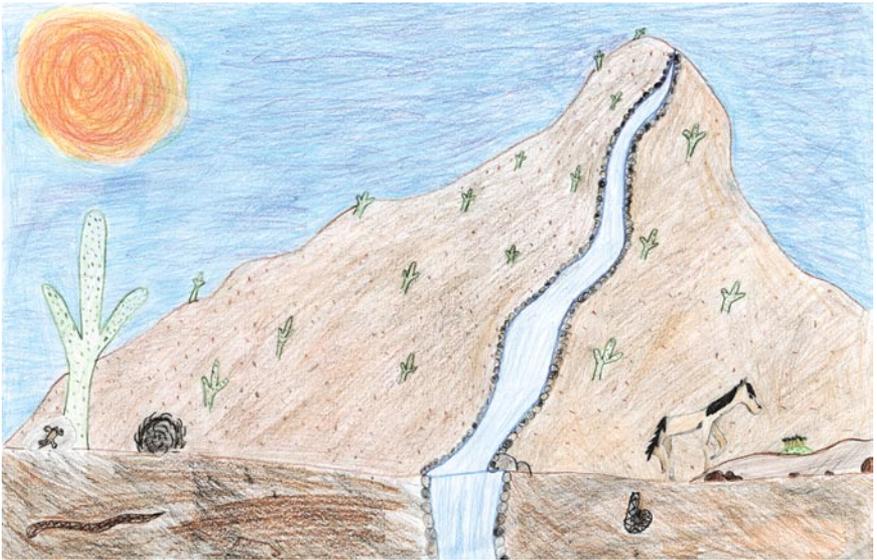
*Daizette Carrillo, age 12
Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Oliver*



Howling Wolf

Alexis Mohler, age 9

Great Expectations Academy • Mrs. Hunt



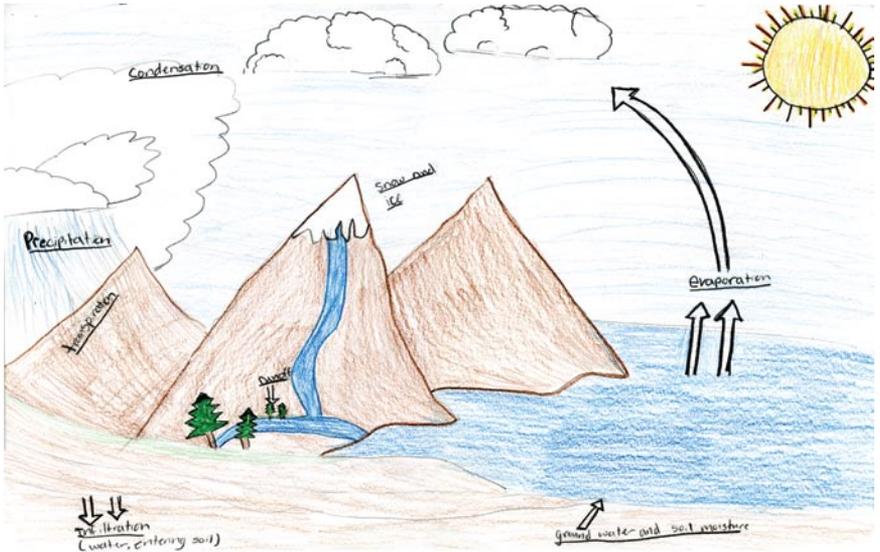
The Water

Leisey Trevillyan, age 11
Satori Charter School • Mrs. Dudas

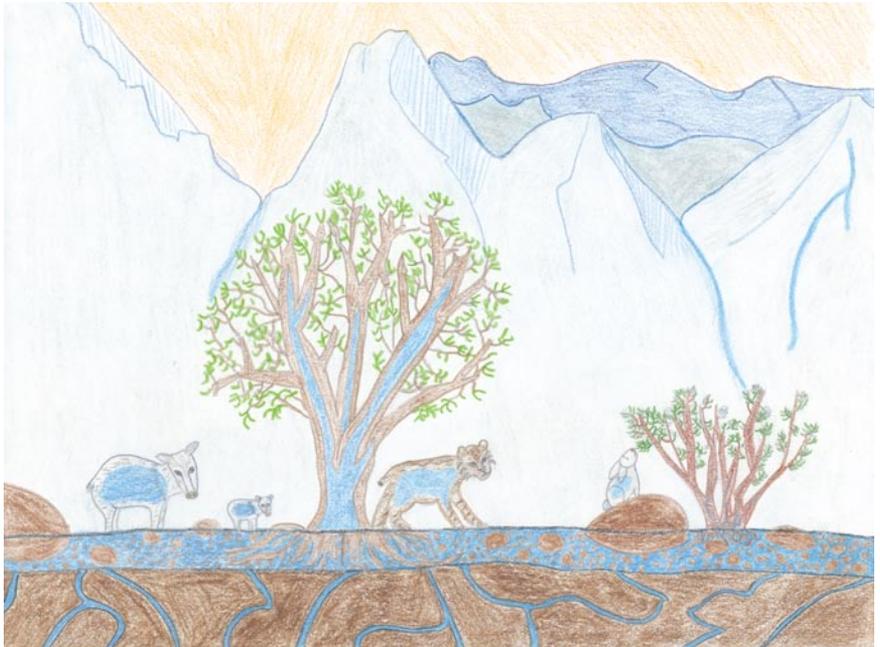


The Rainy Desert

Andres Valdez, age 7
Gallego Basic Elementary • Mrs. Valentine



The Water Cycle
 Bryon Laplander, age 11
 Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Oliver



The Stream of Life
 Cassie Everly, age 15
 Independent Entry
 Grand Prize-Art- Category 4



Desert

*Daniel Ramos, age 7
DeGrazia Elementary • Mrs. Northrop*



Desert Animals

Iman Lloyd, age 7

Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Johnson



Spring Day in the Desert

Celeste Angelina Alvarez, age 8

Desert Winds Elementary • Mrs. Nugent



South West

David-Ray Prax, age 8

Fort Lowell/Townsend K-8 • Mrs. Metzler



The Desert With Animals

Davina Pham, age 7

Gallego Basic Elementary • Mrs. Posadas



Conserving Water

Jaqueline Acuña, age 9

Fort Lowell/Townsend K-8 • Mrs. Himes



Thirsty Desert
Elijah Schiff, age 6
Independent Entry
Grand Prize–Art–Category 1



Lightning, Rain, Monsoon Storm

Hailey Flood, age 7

Desert Winds Elementary • Mrs. Nugent



The Sonoran Desert

Gabriella Corona, age 8
Gallego Basic Elementary • Mrs. Posadas



Little Green City

Patrick McGhie, age 9
Manzanita School • Mrs. Hollm



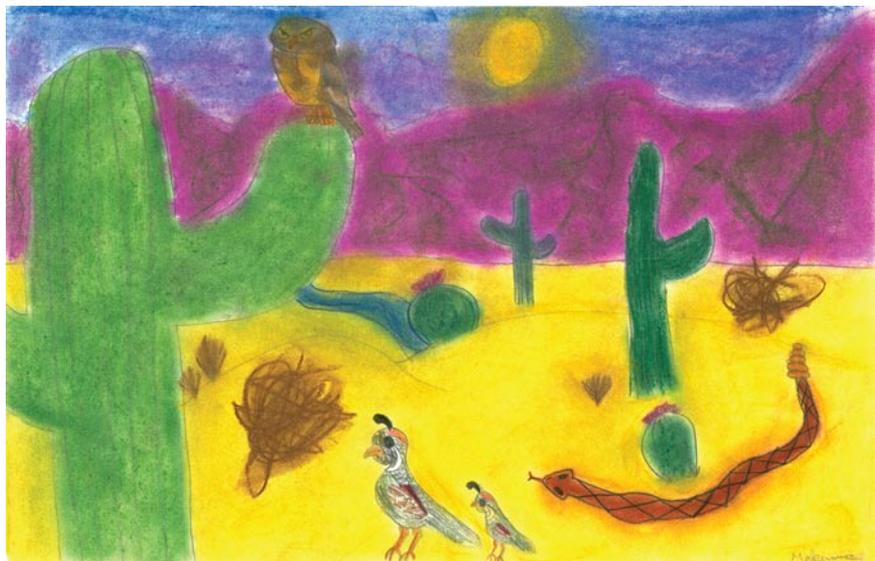
Harvesting the Water

*Keeley Venegas, age 10
Fort Lowell/Townsend K-8 • Mrs. Corcoran*



The Desert

Karla Togawa, age 7
Gallego Basic Elementary • Mrs. Posadas
Grand Prize–Art–Category 2



Life in the Desert

Makenna Anderson, age 10
Harelson Elementary • Mrs. Koopman



Dirty Desert

*Savannah Register, age 8
Borman Elementary • Mrs. Rhudy*



Sonoran Cactus Garden

*Juan Flores, age 9
Mesquite Elementary • Mrs. Flora*



Sabino Falls

Logan Radomsky, age 8

Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Johnson



Light

*Surprise Dowayee, age 8
Fort Lowell/Townsend K-8 • Mrs. Fleck*

Untitled

Frozen sunset
Set still in time
No breeze
No breath of calm
Locked in iron grip
Everything awaits
Hardly daring to break silence
Somber grey, purple, blue, black
Nothing shifting
Tension settling upon skin
Breathe in
Twisting branches with confused minds
Swaying, whipping, bending, snapping
Tension snaps like a broken string
Silence no longer remembered
Anticipation
It's almost here
Long mourning finally let go
The sky explodes
Letting the past soak into the ground
It's a new start
The beginning of the beginning
Every drop containing a concealing secret
But alas no one will know, forever untold
All the sorrow swept away by the persistent water
Not giving up until every last thing is cleansed of
All oppressing weights.

*Nakaia Kristof, age 14
City High School • Ms. Rude
Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 4*

The Wind

Feel the wind in the sky
Feel the wind when it moves
the water in the river
Hear the wind in the big blue sky
The wind makes you feel calm
The wind makes you get
one tear fall on your cheek
Most of all it is the wind

Sarah Donlan, age 8
Carden of Tucson Charter School • Mrs. Yecies

Anything But Me

I want to drop with a thunderous sound
from a dark, blue cloud.

I want to be as large as
a blueberry pancake twirling
through the sky.

I want to travel like lightning as
I fall through the upper atmosphere.

I want to not hurt people as
they dash to their destination.

I want glisten and twinkle
in the brilliant sunshine.

I want to be anything but myself.

I am just one itsy-bitsy raindrop
in a powerful, intense monsoon.

Christina Davila, age 9
Mesquite Elementary • Mrs. Flora

Spirit of the Turtles

So much depends
Upon
The spirit of
Turtles
Beside the green
Turtles
Glazed with the
Sun
On their
Shells
Eating the
Fish.

*Nicky Wayne, age 6
Steele Elementary School • Mr. Scalise*

Water Cycle

Crash, crash go the waves
I got lost looking at the sun
The clouds started to come in
I start to drift in the air
Slowly I feel hotter and hotter
Suddenly I'm in a white mist
I am in a cloud
I can feel a cold breeze
Boom, crash I fall hard
I fall on a plant
Slowly I slip into the roots
And get soaked in.

*Savannah Imes, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Oliver*

I am the Monsoon

My clouds are like big stones.
My rain is like a good drink
for the cactus and trees.
My lightning is like big bolts of electricity.
But my rain to houses is like big
boulders hitting the ground.
But when my lightening hits houses
it gives it electricity and
when I go to town
I am the boss of the town.

Aidan Huber, age 8
Castlehill Country Day School • Mrs. Meyer

Dry River

Just a little water
Runs down me, just
Enough to save a tree
Dry river flow past me
As fast as a bumble bee
Dry river be cool
And make me shiver
Dry river, the water giver
Dry river
I watch you glimmer

Brian Watson Johnson, age 10
Satori Charter School • Mrs. Dudas

Slip of Gold

Toss time in
to this small wide world.
The sky is blowing
the grass is green.
A slip of gold
off the sun.

Jack Collins, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Ratajczak
Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 2

The Desert

Hot, dry heat
Sun on my face
Ouch! Sunburn

*Mackenzie Powers, age 7
DeGrazia Elementary • Mrs. Northrop*

Water

Deep clouds surrounding us with smooth liquid
Warm in the sunshine
Tide pools dark and moody
Like music of water
Come and enjoy my beauty and stream
Edible always in nature

*Jake Vogt-Martinez, age 9
Satori Charter School - Mrs. Dudas*

The Move

I'm hanging to the edge of a leaf
I fall to the ground
The sun's rays burn me
I start to float in the air
More water molecules appear
The clouds are marshmallows
Other water molecules cling to me
We fall to the ground
SPLAT! I hit the ground
I drink through and hit roots
I pop out into a lake
I'm adrift floating around
I'm caught in a current
I'm pulled toward a river
I land in an ocean
Where to next?

*Alex Frisby, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Mrs. Oliver*

Tucson Summers

The baked days drag on
The ground sobs
"Bring on the rain"

Then, it hits
You step out
Into the blue
Grasp of the morning
And you listen

A melody of
Drips, Drops
Pitters, Patters
High, staccato, sharp
It seems like the whole world
Is holding its breath
The leaves tremble
The sky cries "Don't let go"
But then it does
But then it does

The rain comes down
In torrents pounding
On the cracked asphalt
Enveloping the dry, broken desert
In a misty embrace

*Annamae Beeler Sax, age 14
City High School • Ms. Rude*

Desert

Dry
Everywhere,
Sunny
Everywhere,
Riverbeds
Thirst.

*Moriah Newhouse, age 13
Independent Entry • Mrs. Newhouse*

Tucson's River of Words is a community collaboration made possible with support from Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation, Tucson-Pima Arts Council, and Pima County Public Library.

Many thanks to the 2011 Tucson's River of Words coordinators, educators, poetry and art judges, graphic designers, and volunteers: Wendy Burroughs, Yajaira Gray, Leia Maahs, Axhel Muñoz, Steve Russell, Elizabeth Quinn-Worrall, Gavin Troy, Kimi Eisele, Candace Greenburg, Christina Vega-Westhoff, Neil Diamente, Lisa Bowden, Drew Burk, Renee Angel, Karen Greene, Joy Mehulka, Edie Price, Helen Gardner, Linda Howard, Eudene Lupino, Jack Monahan, Amanda Webster, and Liz Harrison.



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Pima County Natural Resources,
Parks and Recreation
3500 West River Road
Tucson, AZ 85741
520-877-6000
www.pima.gov/nrpr



What is it?

Children ages 5 to 19 explore nature to learn about watersheds and life cycles and express understandings with original creations of poetry and visual art.

When is the contest?

Entries are accepted anytime. The submission deadline for the 2012 contest is February 1, 2012.

How do I enter?

Additional information and entry forms are available at Pima County Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation office.

3500 W. River Rd.

Tucson, AZ 85741

(520) 615-7855

education@pima.gov

Online entry forms available at

www.pima.gov/nrpr

www.tucsonpimaartscouncil.org

