Indigo Blue
Alaura Millet, age 12
Great Expectations Academy • Mrs. Mohler
Grand Prize–Art–Category 4
Water is the driver of Nature. ~Leonardo da Vinci

Experience the youthful observations, natural intrigue and wild imaginations within this collection of Tucson’s River of Words 2010 Award Winning Youth Poetry and Art. The rhythms of words and colorful works of art presented by these youthful desert dwellers, ages 5-17, paint a picture of local places and rich experiences while expressing the concepts of watershed, water cycle, and an ethic of conservation.

**Tucson’s River of Words 2010-2011 Traveling Exhibit Schedule**

- **April 14 – May 28**
  Tucson Children’s Museum
  200 South 6th Avenue

- **June 1 – July 7**
  Joel Valdez Main Library
  101 North Stone Avenue

- **July 8 – August 19**
  Agua Caliente Park – Ranch House Art Gallery
  12325 East Roger Road

- **August 23 – September 8**
  Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center
  1660 West Ruthrauff Road

- **September 8 – October 7**
  Martha Cooper Branch Library
  1377 North Catalina Avenue

- **October 8 – November 30**
  Pima County Juvenile Court
  2225 East Ajo Way

- **December 1 – January 7**
  Woods Memorial Branch Library
  3455 North First Avenue

- **January 7 – February 14**
  Wheeler Taft Abbett Sr. Branch Library
  7800 North Schisler Drive

- **February 15 – March 21**
  Valencia Branch Library
  202 West Valencia Road
Desert Streams in the Moonlight Rain

Free universe forever.
In the sky, years, life changing.
Blue rivers, black night
on the water’s surface.
Blue clouds, clean oceans,
starlight world is long
and distant and wide
as a heart and a smooth soul.
Desert streams in the moonlight rain.

Aaron Embry, age 8
Hudlow Elementary • Mrs. Barnes
Grand Prize—Poetry—Category 2

Animals of the Desert

While the sun sets,
The coyotes howl
Snakes slither into their holes
Javelinas amble around the washes
Quail families scamper across roads,
Always traveling.
Scorpions get ready to sting their prey
Rabbits jump around
Turtles saunter all over the desert
Bobcats roam the mountains
Geckos cling to the side of the houses
Last but not least,
Owls hoot all night.
These are the animals of Arizona.

Brayden Miller, age 10
Manzanita Elementary • Ms. Hollm
**Ode to Rain: Monsoons**

Lie on couch  
Watching television  
Hear pounding  
On ceiling  
Wind blowing  
Strong force  
Chairs jumping  
Toward the pool  
Rattling rain outside  
My window  
Like a rattlesnake  
Monsoon!  
Puppies run  
Hiding underneath my bed  
Hours of rain  
I dash to mother  
Rain pounding on  
My back like  
Needles plunging  
From the sky  
Rain ceases and  
Reveals sunlight

*Amorettte L. Flores, age 11*  
*Hudlow Elementary • Mrs. Del Casale*

**The River**

Cry, blue flower, valley of trees.  
River, I have a dream about you and the river grass and the blue flower in the wind.

*Brandon Stewart, age 7*  
*Desert Winds Elementary • Ms. McKeen*
The Cycle

Down, down, down I go.
Up and down.
Circle and back.
I am going through the water cycle.
Faster I'm going down
like a drop on a mountain.
Going down fast I'm hitting roots.
I'm on a plant.
The sky is blue.
The grass is green.
The sun hit me.
I pop open going up and up.
Then sunlight is making me pop.
I am going to pop into a river.
It's blue.
I am picking up dirt.
Going to the sea
the more you dive the cleaner it gets.
It’s hot in the water.
Then it's in the river.
When I’m done going to the lakes,
then I go to the river and sea.
The person that looks at it, they will be safe.

Jesus Valenzuela, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Ms. Oliver
**Ode to Monsoons**

It’s the dead of summer.  
Cacti are shriveling and animals are thirsty.  
One day, a special day,  
huge dark clouds  
start to hover over the city of Tucson.  
Animals start to get excited.  
Some jump up and down.  
It starts as a sprinkle.  
Then it got serious.  
Animals scatter all over the place.  
Bunnies, lizards, coyotes and others.  
They dig in the moistened dirt  
and others hide under brittle mesquite  
as well as rocks.  
When all of a sudden, the clouds start  
to separate.  
The sun starts to shine.  
Cacti start to absorb water.  
The trees do the same.  
The ground is soggy, turned into mud.  
The animals start to drink  
from little puddles in the ground.  
This happened twice more.  
The cacti, trees, and other things were very happy at the end of the day.

*Christopher R. Grundas, age 11*  
*DeGrazia Elementary • Mr. Mayer*

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**The Stars in the Sky**

Blue stars open,  
listen  
the rainbow river  
is free in the sun.  
Soft mountain rain sings.

*Eileen Infante, age 7*  
*Hudlow Elementary • Ms. Winter*
Peaceful Desert

I am a woodpecker helping an owl.
There’s a small drizzle and it feels good.
I encountered a bark scorpion and ate it as my energy meal.
I’m pecking at a nice soft saguaro cactus.
There’s a rhythm in my pecking.
I’m on a spiky saguaro cactus.
This brings back the memory of making my home.
I carved an ideal hole for owls.
I’m a woodpecker helping an owl.

Daniel Davila, age 10
Mesquite Elementary • Ms. Flora
Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 3

Stop Looking Sam

I’m sorry I hit you.
It felt so good to crash down, slicing the wind as I fell to the ground.
Sorry I made you jump when I announced my landing.
When I boomed through your ears.
When I got your cat wet.
Sorry I shot through the sky on that late night you had work when your lights shut off and you stubbed your toe, I bet that hurt.
Sorry your clothes never dried and I made your head hurt.
The booming is good for your heart, Burt.
I wish I could tell you how sorry I am, but I’m so full of smog I hardly can stand to even tell you my drops are so heavy.
My feet, if I had them would be red and bloody.

Ital Ironstone, age 14
City High • Ms. Rude
**Free Memory**

When history fades, believe sundown.
Dream on the mesquite tree,
the saguaro listening,
deep in the lightness of the desert.
Memory speaks inside free trees.
Mountains trust the twilight.
White rain is bound forever,
in the voice in the blue calm river,
in the rhythm that finds the rain.

*Alazae Santos, age 9*
*Hudlow Elementary • Ms. Zeltmaier*

**Falling Smiles**

I am falling, falling, falling,
through the atmosphere,
while you’re crawling, crawling, crawling,
all around the world.

And then I shatter into a million molecules
when I hit so hard,
on the different levels of your world.

When you look up at me,
falling towards your face,
I see your smiles in piles,
on the ground in different places
all mixed up on different faces.

*Eliza Liu, age 14*
*City High • Ms. Rude*
*Grand Prize–Poetry–Category 4*
Light on the River

I have always wanted a hawk.
    I like it when it is cold.
You know, I have a little sister.
    Sometimes, people say
their voice isn’t good.
    Now, for days
we have light on the river.

Harrison Chamberlain, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Mr. Hasse

Walking Along the Desert

I was walking along
the smooth desert
and the colorful snake
    was following me.
I used some string,
tied to a piece of wood
    to make a track.
A hawk flew by me.
    It was starting to get dark.

Jesus Chavira, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Mr. Hasse

Moonlight Shining

A haiku

Moonlight shining bright
Reflecting off ocean deep.
    Oh, so beautiful.

Amy L. Porter, age 9
Hudlow Elementary • Mrs. Winsberg
Calming, Waterfall
Lucinda Maryott-Moreno, age 7
Khalsa Montessori School • Ms. Hunnicutt
Raining in Tucson
Aidan Myerscough, age 8
Corbett Elementary • Ms. Gibson

Down the River
Andres Lopez, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Ms. Oliver
Desert Land 1
David Dung, age 10
Fort Lowell Elementary • Mrs. Himes

The Beautiful Night
Alexander Light, age 7
Corbett Elementary • Ms. Gibson
Monsoon Day
Kimber Tucker, age 9
Tucson Academy of Leadership • Ms. Aurand
Grand Prize—Art—Category 3

The Mountains
Jacob Kraft, age 8
Khalsa Montessori School • Ms. Hunnicutt
Itzel Garfio, age 12
La Cima Middle School • Mr. Holaday
The Bird Exploring the Desert
Shelby Lowder, age 8
Corbett Elementary • Ms. Gibson
Grand Prize—Art—Category 2

The Javalina
Joseph Duarte, age 10
Tucson Academy of Leadership • Ms. Aurand
The Ladybug
Isabella Ferrea, age 7
Khalsa Montessori School • Ms. Hunnicutt
Grand Prize—Art—Category 1

Splishy, Splashy Ocean
Cole Depue, age 8
Agua Caliente Elementary • Ms. Johnson
Saving Water
Dominique Templeton, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Ms. Oliver
**Javelinas**
Jasia Cline, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Mr. Hasse

**Desert Artwork**
Piper Trujillo, age 9
Fort Lowell Elementary • Mrs. Fleck
Sunset Waterfall
Evan Cozzi, age 9
Khalsa Montessori School • Ms. Hunnicutt

Midnight Stroll
Ryan Tran, age 12
La Cima Middle School • Mr. Holaday
Juan Gradillas, age 11
Challenger Middle School • Ms. Oliver

Land of Wonder
Tayven Hirt, age 9
Fort Lowell Elementary • Mrs. Wright
Standing Out and Blending In- Egret and Turtles
Moriah Newhouse, age 13
Independent Entry • Mrs. Newhouse
Beautiful
Destiny Fuhrman, age 10
Presidio School • Ms. Sager

Spikey Lizard
Daniel Rodriguez, age 11
Tucson Academy of Leadership • Ms. Hawes
Rainstorm
April Manley, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Ms. Graham

Flowing River
Isaac Pimienta, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary • Ms. Johnson
River
River
Splashes
Splashes
Splashes
Snow
Drips
Drips
Drips
Drips

Mateo Sierra, age 6
Carden of Tucson • Mrs. Ram

Monsoons
The heavy clouds
Fill the dark night sky
Rain begins to trickle and the clouds begin to cry
The dirt turns into mud
The streets start to flood
The night turns to flashes
The thunder booms and bashes
Then it’s quiet…
Until the earth seems to crack
The lightning
And thunder is back.

Alex Stephenson, age 14
Transformational Learning Center Charter • Ms. Maakestad
Ode to Jack Rabbit

Bunny! I yelled,
Being four, seeing the
brown streak, fluffy tail.
Chasing the poor animal.
I felt the air escape from me.
Running too hard,
Bunny is already gone.
The prints are what I am following.
I slow down, Momma calls,
“Bunny escaped from the hunter?”
I reply with “Yes.”
The wash has my tiny foot prints
in the white sand.
I fall down. Dumb rock!
I yell. I stumble up and march
back to the bunny’s prints.
I follow.
Another bunny goes by hopping.
Bunny!
I yell, being four…

Phoebe Schultz-Smith, age 11
DeGrazia Elementary • Ms. Minninger

Stream of the Morning World

The dark blue sky
in the stream
of the morning world.

Adam Aldrich, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Ms. Nugent
The Lake, the Mountain and the Wolf

In the old woods of Targanthar
rain gently falls down, touching the ground,
Me, a gray wolf, vaults at a shining lake.
It’s wet and muddy, air that smells like a swamp
passes by, birds chirp calmly in the distance.
Animals run about, stepping on crunchy leaves.
Plants are glassed and as green as new
clean grass, shinning in the morning.
A faint shimmer of sunlight peeks
from the clouds into the lake.
The lake is in the shape of
Mario’s shoe, a plain old shoe.
It’s spring time, around 79° degrees,
the water lying within the lake
falls through a waterfall
into a large fresh, clear river.
Water flows, quietly and slowly.
Suddenly I spring towards a mountain touching the sky.
Leaving the old wood of Targanthar,
climbing up high, the woods are
a small ant crawling away from me.
The rain slowly stops, allowing evaporation to occur.
Little particles I can’t see rise into the sky up to the clouds,
the water cycle works its ways.
Finally the sun shines out; the soil is soggy and soaked.
Winds blow, asking the leaves to dance around.
Leftover, little raindrops travel down,
jumping off of plant leaves, plunging down into the ground.
Finally, I get to the top of the mountain.
Becoming thirsty, unavailable to any fresh water,
I must go down I thought yes, I must go down, down, down, back into the
old woods of Targanthar and
get what I need… a drink of fresh water.

Rheana Romero, age 12
Challenger Middle School • Ms. Oliver
**Envy to the Rain**

Drip, drop  
The rain comes down.  
Nothing to restrain it.  
Nothing to hold it back.  
Unlike me,  
the rain comes and it goes  
as it pleases.  
It goes to different places  
that I haven’t seen  
while I’m stuck  
working in the fields.  
Other people it meets,  
while I’m here growing wheat.  
There and here  
everywhere it goes  
while on the plantation,  
it’s nothing but woes.  
One day, I wish  
to be like rain.  
Having a will of my own,  
because unlike me  
the rain is free.

Sarah Edwards, age 14  
Tranformational Learning Center Charter • Ms. Maakestad

**Calling the Rains**

The yellow sun  
is so hot.  
The mountains call  
the rains to it.

Nicholas Paxon, age 7  
Hudlow Elementary • Mrs. Edgington  
Grand Prize—Poetry—Category 1
Water
Water splashes
Water freezes
Water drips
Water rushes
Water falls
Water flows
Water flows
Water flows
Water pours
Water drops
Water evaporates

*Trey Johnson, age 7
Carden School of Tucson • Mrs. Yecies

Back to a River
Wishing a mountain calling across a moment, whispering to the mountain, to the open sea, going to a rainbow.

Whisper to a river to swim to the edge, the rain from a cloud, comes back to a river.

*Peter Granoff, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary • Ms. Johnson
Desert Trail

Trash on the ground
dead plants,
scraped ground dead bushes,
shattered prickly pears,
a smashed barrel cactus
that has the resemblance of
green play dough with flowers in it.
More crushed up sidewalk
covering scraped ground desert,
chip bags, pencils that are so old
they don’t even have color.
Flattened out balls everywhere
covering the land.
Farther than the eye can see
is the wide open desert.

Tyrus Cousineau, age 12
Great Expectations Academy • Mrs. Brinson

Starry Night

Stars, Stars,
They whisper all night
Silent night
People sleep,
Just right!
Silent night!
Stars whisper,
All night!
The moon, which is president
Does its work until two o’clock,
Silent night!
Just right!

Kayla Pierson, age 7
Agua Caliente Elementary • Mrs. Ratajczak
Lightning in the Rain

Dark cloudy
day brings flashing lights
that destroys and burns.
the thunders
that make echoes of the flood.
Smoke from the fires are so black.
Winds carrying the smell of lightning.
Then BOOM!
All the lightning strikes at once!
Making the earth shake and quake as if
it were...Afraid.
Lightning strikes
one last time
with the wind, and the fire,
and the rain pouring down
as if buckets of water
were being thrown from the sky!
All of them raging against
each other for control.
Out of nowhere there
was peace, peace.
Then sudden destruction.

Zach Duron, age 15
Transformational Learning Center Charter • Ms. Maakestad

Windy Day

The same windy day
as the other day
knows when the desert is free.
What wind is almost
is almost blowing hard
and when it was a windy day
it was a windy day.

Anthony Espriu, age 7
Desert Winds Elementary • Ms. Nugent
Tucson's River of Words is the Arizona Regional Coordinator for the River of Words program – A California based non-profit dedicated to connecting kids to their watersheds and imaginations through poetry and art. All submissions to Tucson’s River of Words Youth Poetry and Art Contest are judged at the local level before being forwarded on to River of Words national contest.

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, Central Arizona Project, Southern Arizona Environmental Management Society, Pima County Public Library, Tucson Children's Museum, and River of Words.


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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
Tucson’s River of Words
Youth Poetry and Art Contest

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 2011 contest is December 1, 2010.

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
eeducation@pima.gov
Online entry forms available at
www.pima.gov/nrpr
www.tucsonpimaarts Council.org

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