Word Power Sound in the Classroom 2022 Anthology
Word. Sound. Power. in the Classroom is BAM’s in-school poetry residency for high school students. Each year students explore the art of poetry and spoken word through a chosen theme inspired by history and current events. Over the course of 12 sessions, these young poets found inspiration and cultivated their own love for the written and spoken word. This anthology reflects that sense of discovery and serves as a culminating document of the students’ participation in the class.
G.V. Maldonado is a proud Native New Yorker and CUNY alumnus. She has been a professional theater technician and performance artist since 2007 and a teaching artist since 2011. Providing arts education for after-school programs within New York City with various arts and community-based Organizations, she joined the BAM family in 2016 and also manages the elementary literacy programs at Cypress Hills Local Development Organization. She is the production manager at La Pirata Productions and associate producer at Danisarte Inc. Personal statement: “Theatre is a verb. Go do theatre.”

Jeesun Choi is a transnational Korean playwright, librettist, and teaching artist. Her works move through diaspora, (im)migration, and transnationalism to reveal the joy and agony of the human condition. Selected plays: BUST (Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, O’Neill NPC Finalist); Lost Coast (Playwrights Realm’s Ink’d Festival, Nashville Rep’s Ingram New Works); Manuka (EST/Youngblood Podcast); The Seekers (Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Bushwick Starr Reading Series); Untitled/Diaspora (JACK Radical Acts Festival). She is currently a Librettist Fellow at American Opera Project, a member of EST/Youngblood, and a Usual Suspect at New York Theatre Workshop. In 2020, she was awarded Artist of Exceptional Merit by Asian American Arts Alliance.

Marcus Smalls (@MarcusSmalls) is a teaching artist and writer who uses his lifelong love of hip-hop to moderate creative environments around spirituality and identity. Marcus is a teaching artist at BAM and is currently querying literary agents for his debut novel, The Divine Sinner Chronicles. Marcus is also the Chief Creative Officer at Prayer Kloset Productions and is pitching The Divine Sinner Chronicles as a stage production.

Mel House (she/her) is a New York City-based actress, comedian, and the creator of the dark comedy webseries HOT ANGRY MOM (a 2019 finalist for Sundance’s New Voices Lab). Recently she played Judy in The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time at the Arts Center of Coastal Carolina and toured internationally in Rome, Cagliari, Belgrade, Dublin, and NYC with The Baby Monitor—a new play about same-sex parenting.
She has performed in iconic works from Shakespeare to Ibsen, working Off-Broadway, regionally, and internationally, as well as originating roles for the web, film, and TV. More at www.melhouse.com and @hotangrymom.

**Najee Omar** is Black, queer, and making magic somewhere in Brooklyn. He wears many hats: poet, rapper, educator, executive director, Big Brother, godfather, etc. Among his many awards and honors, Najee finds unparalleled joy in celebrating the brilliant youth voices in his city.

**Okai Musik** Brooklyn-born and of Haitian descent, young Okai was beating on anything that he could get his hands on to help his imagination grow. His ears became infected with the hard boom bap drum loops of hip-hop and roots music from the Caribbean. Those sounds led him on a musical path to find rock, jazz, samba, salsa, rumba, and pretty much anything that involves percussion. Okai began his path of percussion on the trap set playing for various churches. He then played congas for his high school band for several years. Once he was introduced to the West African djembe, he concentrated on that for more than 10 years. A teaching artist in New York City for the past 10 years, Okai works with BAM, Carnegie Hall, Weill Music Institute, Mark Morris Dance Group, Haiti Cultural Exchange, Bombazo dance Co, and many others. Okai continues to teach at countless public schools and private schools in NYC and abroad.
2022 has marked the return of in-person programming here at BAM, and most importantly, our return to schools, working in the classrooms with the next generation of young writers. It was in this spirit that our theme for the 2022 school year—ASE!—was born. ASE is the energy that imbues all things. It is both an affirming gesture to the divine and the power to be and to create. What we hoped to share with students, and have them investigate in their words and stories, was tapping into that innate ability to create, to produce, to explore, and to ultimately manifest. We encourage understanding of the world around them through their own ability to shape, define, and imagine something for themselves and of themselves—and at the same time, greater than themselves.

ASE!

Mikal Amin Lee

Education Manager,

Cultural Academy of the Arts & Sciences

Teacher: Deirdre Deloatch
Teaching Artist: Mel House
Luis Melendez

Love Maybe Wasn’t the Best

Across the hall I see your smile
We haven’t spoken in a while
Dug a hole and pushed me in
Your heart I will never win
Wish I never fell for you
Your love for me was never true
Lied to me right through your teeth
My heart is no longer in one piece
Brought me up then knocked me down
Then left the crime scene without a sound
Took my heart right out of my chest
Then laughed at me like all the rest
Wish that we were friends once more
You’re all I ever had and still adore
I love you more than anything
But it could be you just pulling my strings
I thought our love would forever last
Now just look how I feel downcast
Athena Johnson

Overthinking

What did they mean by that? Why did they say that?! They couldn't have meant anything by it… but what if they did? Do they hate me? Did I do something wrong?!
Shit, I messed up. But how can I fix it?? The moment's already passed
Wait… it's been 5 hours since then?! That doesn't matter, I still did something that may have upset someone.
I don't wanna ask if I did anything though, It'll make me seem pathetic
I can't ask, that would be weird… Am I weird? Yeah maybe
More hours and I can't stop thinking about it, it's the next day for Pete sake
Maybe if I just shut my thoughts up it'll all stop
Or better yet, I can shut up!
No talking means no issue and no issue means I won't feel anyway!
Wow I am a genius! Ah, no nevermind there it is again.
Wait… why can't I see anything?? Where did the world go?? Why can I only see my thoughts?? Urgh...Stop it me! Stop it!
I have stuff to do I can't be in my head right now
Please just shut up!
shut up, shut up, shut up, shut up, SHUT UP!!!!!
Miracle Dalton

Reflect

Please don't cry
You don't have the right
There are dying children outside
There are people who are victims of crimes
There are people with missing limbs
But you're fully intact, am I right
No, I'm not talking about your life
Physically you have all your parts
It looks like it
So please don't cry
There are men dying in wars the government started
There are single mothers
Innocent criminals
There are men victims of abuse
You're not abused right
Well doesn't look like it
So please stop crying
Because the world doesn't revolve around you kid
There are children with cancer
And babies breathing off tubes
And women raped, molested and abused

Some want an abortion
And there are those who take that outlet and misuse
Their excuse
"Why have a kid if we all may be dead soon"
Knowing full well that there are women who need it and can't
even look at the child they produced
So don't you dare cry
Because you're not in their shoes
Your not being segregated by the laws of the government
Your not being segregated by the laws of your race
You've never had your career broken because of accused
of assault for decades and sat in a courtroom to prove your
innocence against a prevaricator, falsifier, perjurer for 42 days
You've never drank until you couldn't see the day of light
You've never had a heart attack
You've never had a stroke
You've never forgave us for our sins then died
You weren't there for the falling of the twin towers
And your father didn't leave you
Your dreams were not washed away
Your not ugly
Your not stupid

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Miracle Dalton

Your not mad at the world
And the world isn't mad at you back
So save your tears for someone who actually has a past.

Tears of an angel

I wipe my face of these tears
These tears that won't stop falling to my cheeks
This stream of tears i leak
And their not pretty
A sobbing slobbering mess
A damp pool in my pillow on my bed
And it’s so dark outside
But so quite in
Even though they sleep, they can hear
So i use my blanket to muffle my tears
The harder i try to plug the drain, the harder the water falls
These tears, these relentless tears, these ridiculous tears
It won’t stop, it wont
But do I want it too, yes…no?
Oshawn Beckford

*Song of Birth*

This is my song of birth
To be a great winner
To know I am the first
To not want to be known
I’m a true beginner
Even though I am grown
Annisabelle Jerome

*My Future*

My future sounds like it’s not far away
And it gets closer to me each and every day.

I promise my family I will pursue a career.
But I’m always getting distracted by my peers.
The things that are said seem to always get to me.
But in the future they will eventually see.

I’m smart but sometimes I refrain from using my brain.
If I don’t decide now, I will go insane.
My future is like an adventure I learn to explore..
A puzzle I desire to put together more

As I’m writing I’m thinking about my life
This future tells me to keep my dreams free of strife
So I better make up my mind
And prepare for my future designed
Destiny Gilbert

Our Forever Love

I thought I'd forever love-honey
Even though you probably never loved me
To keep on going past all the times you failed me
Like I was being stabbed multiple times
Failed love, love, It's very weak they think
First we stand in our minds
Then move furniture to furniture
Soon we're walking away from each other
Then the house and lands
And finally the memories
A love like ours always
Dies
I curve up in the corner of my bed
With my favorite snack and my pillow at my head
Staring silently as I watch my tv arise
With its bright light nearly blinding my eyes
The room so dark you can only see blackness
Like how my heart desires some peace and quietness
I type in my favorite show
I start to laugh and my face glows
This is the life I desire
With no problem of flame, heat and fire
Julia Garcia

This Country

In my world there is celebration,
Like one big youtube collaboration
In my world we dance and sing like no one is watching
In my world I believe I am free,
Living life without a fee
Except there is a fee and I am not really free
I am bound by rules,
Tied by regulations
Tired of America in which after free, comes ‘unless’,
In which high status and money means over confident
government officials,
God bless
In which no body is ever safe from harm,
Where many tragic happenings occur
I feel as if it was karma, me being born in this country
I feel like I am not good enough
And for that reason i was planted here

As a punishment for my small wrongs
So in this world I am not as free as i thought,
Especially form my own mishaps in my thoughts
I am not free from this country
This country born from uncolored people
Tishanna P. Fordyce

ALIVE

To live is to breathe air
and be happy
To live is to sing songs
and be glad
To live is to rise at dawn and rest at dusk
But is that really being alive?

To be alive is to be revived and
Live a life that is so divine
Life steps outside to show her pride
That has not yet died
To travel far and wide to seize the life
which she was once denied

To be a girl that lives in a world
Where she is not yet heard
To show her curls and pretty pearls
She flees to the beach to answer her call to the sea
Ruffled sand beneath her feet
Cool breeze against her cheek and a whisper
You are free.
Zackery Grant

My Reflection

I'm nobody! Who are you?
Are you-Nobody-too?
I keep running after a voice I don't recognize
I call out to it, but the only words I hear
come from a disembodied echo of an unfamiliar character
that parallels my own Speaking words
that don't come from my mouth,
seeing sights that aren't seen by my eyes,
even writing sentences that sooner or later have no trace of my
imprint
So, I'll say it again.
I'm Nobody! Who are you?
Is it myself that I'm talking to!
Central Park East High School

Teachers:
Ms. Torres
Ms. Lembiro

Teaching Artist:
Marcus Smalls
Najee Ritter
Living in New York City is like an obstacle you tried to get past everyday. New York City can be a harmful or wonderful environment to live in sometimes.

I like drawing because I feel that I'm a good artist and also I'm into sports like football and basketball. I like playing video games which help me gain confidence and lead me doing the best of my ability. I believe I can succeed with any circumstance that I'm dealing with
Sports

Sports, Sports, Sports
Any sports, All the sports
Soccer, basketball, football, it don't matter
Cause all i'm trying to prove is that I ain't no slacker
I run so fast cause i'm having a blast
An there's no stopping me cause i'm never last
People look in awe cause i'm so amazing
All i'm saying, is keep on praising
Chasing my dreams one step at a time
Is making me see that being in a team is
making me feel seen
Run fast, shoot hard, stay classy
All this does is make me feel happy

Expectations

Do this! Do that!
It's like I can't have a mind of my own
Get good grades they say
Well what if I can't get good grades
You need to do more
You need to do better
You need to succeed
Well guess what
I'm tired of what you need
What about me
Can't you see
What I need
Isn't what you need
Andy Rodriguez
9th Grade

The meaning of power

To some power is expressed through violence
To some power is expressed through their actions
To some power is expressed through music
To some power is expressed through their voice
To some power is expressed through money
To some power is expressed through their lifestyle
To some power is expressed through writing
To some power is expressed through their skills
To some power is expressed through thoughts
To some power is expressed through their ideas
To me power is expressed through knowledge
To me power is expressed through my understanding

Power

Power is weakening
Power is strengthening
Power is present in everyone
But no everyone knows they have it
The who know they have it
Use if for their own benefit
But know for the benefit of everyone
They take advantage of those
With powers thats low
To make there own grow
Power is damaging
But they don't seem to know
Time

As I write this I reminisce on the days I needed power
Where power was the only thing I wanted
When power could have saved me
Having power means that you can control people
All my life I have been controlled
If you don’t control others they control you
I have learned that first hand
In those days I had to fight power, I wanted to go back in time
and stop it.
Just to sit in that setting and find where I went wrong
What my mistake was
But in reality going back in time and pausing it is unachievable
And the only thing I can do now is move forward
because that is all I have left
Time goes by in an instant, why couldn’t time stop
just once for me?

When I am Myself

I enjoy the moments in life where I could just be myself
When life doesn’t feel as corrupt and destructive as it usually is
Where I can just be me with no regulations
The time I spend at home is where I can truly be myself
Maybe that’s why I prefer to stay home
then to leave my safe space
I like when I am myself
When I don’t have to alter who I am for others to accept me
When at home I can think and breathe on my own
When I am able to be my true self is when I am most happiest
Because I don’t have someone constantly next to my ear
saying to change
I have come to the conclusion that change is inevitable
But I have decided over the years that I will change on my own
terms, not because someone wants me to
I have changed from the past and I no longer care what people
think about me
I think that is truly the best part of me
I have learned to prioritize my opinion over others
Because no one knows me better than me
Hidden gems

everyone has those things that they never want to change about themselves not because people tell them not to change them but because they're our hidden gems

it's very easy to condemn things that we can't make amends with but here are somethings that you should have already make admens with because these are your hidden gems

that smile of yours can make someone's day worthwhile not the fake one the real one that others can really feel

to conceal the deal let's talk about that laugh that sound that can put a smile on peoples faces so don't try and stop that embrace

next up don’t stop embracing that kindness it makes you shine in ways that other people only dream of it makes you gleam ands so don’t make it something that people rarely see

don’t hide your hidden gems you have so many more that you think so don’t let them disappear in a blink
Words that see you

Everytime you open me, 
Everytime you flip one of my 223 pages 
I see the anxiousness glisten in your eyes 
Small sparks of joy fill up your hands, 
Eager to hold me open. 
Ready to dissect every sentence

Hints of red on your cheeks 
A smile that imitates the crescent moon 
With those eyes that follow, 
All because you read a sweet page that 
fulfilled your hopeless romantic needs. 
The way your hair swifts 
As it effortlessly falls on each page you flip

Or when you’ve had enough of your hair falling on each page 
And the only thing that seems to be present is the love that you have for me.

Walking

“She’s such a whore” 
“She can be passed around” 
“Hey mami can I get you something real quick”

Million things running through our mind 
Do I run or do I hide? 
As soon as we step foot outside 
We look left and right 
“Should I tuck my boobs inside?”
I tuck them inside but you’re still a manwhore 
“No I’m not you are the one that’s showing too much, you’re asking for it at this point.”And this was our school morning
Power is the ability to do something
Power is the ability to have control over something

With power, you could do something that other people couldn't do
With power, you could do something that other people get punished for
With power, you could make decisions that other people couldn't make
With power, you could impact other people without leaving anything on yourself

But what is real power?

I like everything about you
I like it when you fail, and when you succeed
I like it when you learn, and when you forget
I like it when you like yourself, and when you hate yourself

I like it when you try your best
I like it when you don't try at all
I like it when you think you're not enough
I like it when you think you are too much

I like when you compliment yourself
I like it when you dunk on yourself
I like it when you like something
I like it when you hate something

I like it when you don't care about yourself, and when you think too much about yourself

I like it when you do anything
I like everything about you
Especially when you are
You
Self-love

I like how shy and quiet I am, even though it is the cause of most of my problems
I like how energetic and loud I can be with the people I am most close with even though I wish I can be like this everyday no matter the people around me
I love my height even if I wish I could be a little more taller
I like how compassionate and well-driven I am for the most important things in life
I like how I can be serious in one moment but then completely change moods and act as if nothing matters
I like watching serial killer documentaries and true crime videos
I love sitting at home, all alone, driven by the thoughts and my imagination
I love escaping from the outside world that can be so cruel and judgmental as a woman in today’s society
I love making fake scenarios in my head as a way to escape reality
I thrive for the adventure and risks, Even if I know about the consequences

You need to…

You need to learn to cook
but not from a book, but from your roots
you need to get a husband
to please his wants
You need to learn to clean
but not from a machine, but from your roots
You need to listen to your husband
so he will give you kids and not leave you for a higher bid
you need to learn how to be a proper lady
so they don’t view you as shady
You need to learn how to sit properly in a room full of guests
so they don’t view you as a slut
You need to keep your legs closed or you might be viewed as a whore
You have to make your parents proud so if that means learning how to cook, clean, sit, listen and be quiet
Yes, negative things/experiences serve a purpose because those negative things can change your life. I will define my experiences as good/bad times. I think my experiences define who I am because those experiences that I go through will shape me. Others have labeled my experiences because people attach to us and reflect and affect how others think about our identities as well as how we see ourselves.

Living in NYC can be both easy and challenging because some things can be intense like with the streets. Many people worry about the outside world because of what is going on nowadays like shootings, robberies, kidnapping and much more. But living in NYC can give us chances by getting ourselves new jobs, having new opportunities, living a better life and making what you dream.
Xavier Boncalos
9th Grade

The Future

The fear and endless opportunities of the future
Always makes me wonder on the computer
I get the feeling of anxiety and mystery
What I will do next will be my history
The past will largely be considered fast
I hope I don’t go to an unwanted path
Where my life won’t last
I don’t wanna go
Please no
But at the same time
take me home
To where the future might hold

The chase of a dream

Dreams are chased or followed
Whether you face it
or let it become shallow
Dream on the pillow
Unless the dream becomes real
A goal that is meaningful
A life that is in control
One free of emotional toll
To chase a dream
Or let it go to waste
To follow a dream
or die trying
Yifei Qin
9th Grade

My little brother

It was 2014/5/31.
I was 7 years old.
And that day a boy was born.
Yes, he is my little brother.
When he was born.
I heard the crying.
And I walk to the room.
I saw him.
That was the first time I saw him.
He was very small and white.
Dry and cute.
After that day,
"Us " doesn't mean 3, it means 4.
I love my family

Power

I think power is that something interesting.
it's can let you pick up something.
Heavy, it's can control other,
it's can help you done something you couldn't done with power.
If I have power I will fly to the sky like a bird to be free.
Powerless

While others are in control and privileged,
others are left powerless
Our identities shape the power we have
White, cis, straight male—a representation of power
Everyone else is powerless to them
When we are born, we are powerless
No control over our lives and fate
Girls are powerless
Children are powerless
Poor people are powerless
People of color are powerless
We are powerless

Me?

Who am I?
A question that for years was left unanswered
I mean, I like books
And trees
And flowers
And the sky
But does that answer who I am?
I mean, I’m nice
I’m Mexican
I’m a dog-lover
But is that who I am?
I don’t know, honestly
But that’s okay because
there is no reason to explain why I am me
I will simply be
Ixchel Mateos
9th Grade

An Ode to What I Like:

I like to paint
I like to paint what I see
I like to paint the colors that I like
I like how I am able to do this

I like to create things
I like to use my creativity to make something pretty
I like how I can make myself smile with the things that I make

I like how I can make others smile
I like how I can make others laugh
I like what I make and I like what I do
Why do some see this glamorous city,
Instead of a series of dark alleys looked down on with pity,
These old streets in which I walk,
The people loud for how they do talk,
And scream and shout and honk their horn,
People lining up to get their coffee in the morn',
How do I only see these piss-stained streets,
While others see a beautiful city of delicately cured meats,
This city that seems like it's almost fake,
Holds up a facade for which I wish people would wake.

Ode to the mini-man

He is not so mini anymore, at least not as much as when I first came around,
When he isn't busy he walks me all over town.
Sometimes he gets down and plays with me on the ground.
If you can't tell I am not like them, they call me a puppy, a fluffy, a waggy-tailed dog.
In my early days, my walks he did log.
I may be small but I watched as he grew, and caught up to the bigger man, now he fits in his shoe,
He is mostly the same but as of recent, there's something new.
A sense of motivation and drive, something I wish I had too,
But that's too much thinking for a shaggy old dog,
So I will continue to lay here and chew on his shoe.
Janiya Young  
9th Grade

Make a change

Life is hard
It's hard keeping up with the new trends
It's hard to fit in and not seem like a follower
It's hard to let go of old habits because they aren't cool
It's hard to try and fit the beauty standards society has made for us
It's hard being black and trying to stay alive
It's hard being different and constantly penalize
It's hard to be yourself so you change
We change to mean something and be heard
We learn that being yourself means being nothing
Society ruins our ability to be something other than ordinary
We can choose to continue to allow it or make a change

Motivation

Motivation is hard to find especially when it's timed
I have until 11:59 to find something that motivates me to write
I have a limited amount of time to figure out what motivates me to be better
What if nothing motivates me?
What if I'm looking for motivation in the wrong place?
How would I know?
I sat for hours trying to think of what to say as my mind continued to wander and I came up with nothing
Motivation takes time and time is one thing I don't have so is motivation really worth finding?
Power to Change

I have the power to change,
I have the power to oppress,
I have the power to bring people down,
I have the power to bring people up,
I have the power to fulfill my dreams,
I have the power to love

Ode to myself

I like basketball, I like video games, I like my family, I like rap and R&B, I like my neighborhood, I like the friends I have, I like being Bengali, I love myself, I like playing sports, watching Netflix.
I love myself. Even if we are all different, even if I'm not perfect, I still love myself.
Joshua Mejia
9th Grade

Untitled

I like my local sandwiches
I like my local pizza
I like my local parks
All these interests bring out in natural joy
I love how the city can be explored
I love how the city is alive at night
I love how the city works together as one
But more importantly, the joy comes with music to me
I enjoy the natural flow of artists like Kendrick Lamar and J Cole
I enjoy listening to future incoming with a Drake feature
I enjoy getting hype to some Uzi or Carti
Get up in the day with music starting
At the end of the day
Being me is just a me thing.
Justin Britton  
9th Grade

ONE MORE DAY

Looking at the ceiling from my bed
I start to get a feeling of dread
My desk is full of paper
My feeling start to waver
Now or later, that is the question...
If only I had one more day

I wake up from a stressful sleep
And I feel my future starts to go meek
Preparing for what be my final week
In what I call paradise
The end is coming soon
If only I had one more day

I look around and everyone cheers
Although they couldn't imagine my fears
Standing at the podium holding back my tears
The I step off
Going back to the solitary I once knew
Surprisingly it's not inside my room

If only I had one more day

WHAT IS POWER?

What is power?
Power is what I use to help my people
To give them light in a time of dark
To give them hope when situations seem stark
To lead them further when everything stops
But is that all there is?

WHAT IS POWER?

Power is what's to used oppress my people
To keep them lower and act devout
To keep them down and disregard their amount
To kill them off like we're their subcount
I think that's all there is to it

Still... What is power?
Dysphoria

In a far and distant reflection
I study and analyze my imperfections
A pair of eyes look back at me
He walks and talks and looks like me
But different since he’s not she.
He sits around inside his house
From room to room he moves about
Fills his life with pointless things
Feeding lies into his brain
Fear that people will complain
They won’t accept, so she remains.

What is Power?

Power is money
Power is time
Power is control
Power is the sum of these resources
The patrol of police forces
Power is a patrol of cops loaning
The Streets to shutdown rebellion

Power is the voice of thousands
Those who might disagree
A hundred voices from a hundred lands
Trying to break free.
Kevin Gonzalez
9th Grade

*Ode to Myself*

I love myself very much
I love the neighborhood that I'm growing up in
even though it's a little crazy
I love the people my life
I love my determination and willpower
Although I'm not perfect, there is no one like me
There is no one who sounds like me,
or talks like me, looks like me
I love my taste in music
I love my culture
I love my flag
I have lots of love towards myself
And I have lots of love to give back
I love that I'm not perfect
I love myself
Who I am

Confidence
Confidence is very important
To show the world who you truly are
Confidence is all you need
Sports
Sports are a big part of my life
Soccer, basketball, football
I believe staying active is the key
To staying happy
Friendship
Friendships solve problems of loneliness
They tell you things
You may not want to hear
All of these things are a part of my life
And make me who I am
Confidence, sports, friends
Me.

The Paper Ode

Used everyday,
Graphite turning it grey
Often taken for granted,
Pen against paper,
Hand slanted

Used for work and school
It is a writer's greatest tool
Without it, no one could draw, write, or read
So whoever invented paper,
We thank you for your deed
Priscilla Saldivar
9th Grade

Where does my time go?

Time runs, but I’m too slow to catch up
Minute by minute
Day by day
It’s already been a year?!
Where does my time go?
Everything revolves around time.
They say,
“El tiempo dirá,” time will tell,
“El tiempo vuela,” time flies.
We all change,
Change over time.
We all grow up,
Grow over time.
It’s always about what I should’ve done back then,
Or what I should do later on.
My past filled with regrets,
And my future filled with hopes.
Time, so uncontrollable,
More powerful than I think.
Do I truly waste it?

Can I do so much more in my life?
I am powerless against my fate,
All I can do is endure.

Ode to Joy… Of Being Me

I love my family,
My culture,
My Mexican roots,
All the beauty in the world,
And the way I see it,
The Earth and everything that lives in it.
I love my unique perspectives,
And the way I try to find the beauty in everything,
My unique personality
I don’t want to be a victim of conformity.
I am a blend of different colors,
Different and distinct interests.
I love the way I endure my challenges,
The way I live my life and try to make the most of it.
I love being me.
Renee Carrasquillo
9th Grade

She’d say

I think about what I might say to my younger self, but not what my older self might say to me

and in the latter prompt, there’s obviously not as much certainty

I’m hoping she’d say
“I know that sometimes you get really sad.
And don’t know how to keep yourself sane
but keep your mind open,
and trust that ahead of you there is so much light.”

And maybe she’d add
“some of those stages you are tempted to rush through are stages that I miss.
And I promise that these stages are not as bad
some of them benefit from a bit of perspective,

but some of them ask you just to slow down and notice.
Notice the world around you
Notice the way you interact with others
Notice the way you interact with yourself

Because these things that you go through
Are things that will shape you “

“There are so many people who will love you
and whom you will love so deeply in return.
there are sunsets and mountains and waterfalls to see.
there are stories to share and lyrics to learn.

I know it isn’t all golden and good and beautiful
but you’d be surprised by how much of it really is
be kind, have patience.
rest and live in this uncertainty and openness
If I had to tell you one thing
Please just remember to believe

Believe that that lost puzzle piece will fit together one day
Believe in tomorrow and what it might bring
And believe in the rainfall of the season of spring
Believe in the pain
Because from that pain, you will gain
So so so much.
Please just believe
because I believe in you”
Renee Carrasquillo

Beginning

I'm beginning to love myself, beyond those inspirational posts
I'm beginning to love myself, and who I love the most
I'm beginning to love myself, and the woman that I am becoming
I'm beginning to love myself, and I no longer have that dark feeling of running

From the person that I am, from that person that I was, from that person that I will be
I am no longer feeling overwhelmed with that feeling,
That feeling of self-pity
I'm beginning to love myself with vulnerability and authenticity.

I have realized in this world full of danger, darkness, and sadness
I cannot be my worst enemy
I cannot hate myself for the things I cannot change
Because I am my own identity
My soul, who I really am at my core is here to stay
I can't change me
But I can change my perspective
So that I will no longer want to change
And just be happy that I am me.
Being a woman

Slut, hoe, bitch, whore
All the words that are chose to define a woman while
simultaneously saying to be
Refined
Polite
Well-spoken
Classy
While saying to
Clean
Keep your legs closed
Not slouch
And not dress like that
Over and Over
Critique after Critique to become a woman
“Why cant you be a lady”
“How hard is it to be a lady”
Why must we live up to society’s expectations to be a woman

Untitled

Each day I change and grow
I don’t always realize but after some time, the old me seems like
its a lifetime away
Now just a distant memory, that part of me is just now a small
piece of who I am
All the small things, aren’t the end of the world
And the bigger things are now just accomplishments and bad
memories
Im better now
I’m more confident
Im smarter
I’m more responsible
I’m more secure
Even when things feel bad again I know that i’m better, and after
everything is said and done I will grow further
Dear me,

I’ve been thinking of me, of us. I don’t think it’s going to work. I like bright colors, you’re always in all black. I like going out to cafes and exploring the world, you stay in your room all day staring at a screen. I like dressing up and meeting new people. You say you’re an introvert and use that as an excuse to avoid people. We are just too incompatible. It won’t work.

I want to adopt a cat and give it love, I want to get a job at a cafe and get all those delicious sweets for free. You just want to waste away in that room. I want to talk about different problems with the world and I want to have the motivation drive and ability to fix it. You just want to accept the world the way it is, and make no effort to better it, for yourself, and for your future. We are too incompatible. It’s not me, it’s you. Maybe in a different world at a different time we could’ve worked. I’ve outgrown you, I hope that you find it in yourself to grow up too. I’m moving towards better things, bigger things, and I think it’s time that we end things…

Sincerely, Troyina

---

I More Day

I wish I had one more day, one more day spent lazing around, one more day spent on the playground, one more day spent in the sun, instead of spending my days hiding from everyone. My essay’s not done, my homework isn’t finished, I wish I could run, but I’ll be okay-ish. I’ll do what I can, a grade is a grade, but damn I wish I started sooner. I did this to myself. I really got played.
One More Day

If I had one more day
A little more time
I'd actually be something
Or know how to rhyme

I'd have a name
That feels like mine
One overarching claim
Profoundly summing up every line

I'll blame it all
On a too-fast clock
A shouldn't-be-rolling ball
That from afar, I stalk

I like you

I like that my hands are ice
Because yours always feel warm
I like memorizing songs I've only heard twice
Because together, our voices swell and swarm

I like playing Hangman
Because for some reason that's how I chose to come out to you
I like to have a plan
Because you'd look at a minefield and run straight through

I like sunflowers
Because they remind me of you
I like getting nicknames
Because they came from you

I like that you like me
Because you are you
I like you
Because you are you
Nova Alam
9th Grade

Poem 1: People

People are influencers
People are role models
Some people can impact others negatively
Some people can impact others positively
But remember, people are powerful
You are one of those people that have power

Poem 2: Power

Power can be misused by controlling people in a way that it frightens them
Power can be used to make change
When you use power, be wise on what you use it for
Christina Adja
9th Grade

An Ode to the Subway

An ode to the subway
From the piss-stained corners to the talkative crackheads,
You can find everything in a NYC subway
Every true New Yorker knows that the center of entertainment is not Times Square,
It is the subway
The tranquil silence when there is no one in the train but you
Leaving you with your own self-destructive and analytical thoughts
The shift in the air once you exit the train and step onto the platform like it’s the portal to a whole new world
One filled with the noise of people banging on drums and garbage cans,
Babies crying in the warm arms of their mothers,
Laughter filling the air and
People fighting for the spaces on dirty wooden benches
But at the end of the day,
There is no place like the NYC subway

An Ode to Myself

An ode to myself
My lazy and bossy self
Your struggle to ask for the help you need is quite pathetic
And so is your habit of putting the needs of others before your own to quell your loneliness
But I should give you your credit
You are quite funny
You are very intelligent and outspoken
Your ability to go against any adult that stands in your way is quite brave
I must admit that you are pretty impressive
So you should be proud of yourself
Always love yourself and take care of yourself in every possible way

Sincerely, Christina
Ode To The Wildwood Beach by Kaleb Torres-Zoha

The blazing yellow sun, calm but violent waves, clear blue sky, the hot scorching sand are all things that make up a beach. Some people hate those things but they mean a lot to me. However those aren't the only things that make up a beach, it is also the people who are there with their family and friends laughing and playing just like me. I get so excited to go but so sad to leave. Why can't I just stay? I wanna stay in the water, I wanna play with the other kids, I wanna jump through the waves, I wanna make sand castles, I wanna find sea animals but it can't last forever. I cherish every moment when I am at the beach. I love the beach and the beach loves me.

Poem About Power by Kaleb Torres-Zoha

Power is something that almost everyone wants but almost everyone doesn't have a lot of it. Unfortunately in our world the people with power are the people with the most money, they can be greedy, stubborn and vile but they still have so much. There are so many who work day and night nonstop just to get a small fraction of power because money is power and power is money. However, power is so much more than simply just money. It can simply be relaxing peacefully on a day that is sunny. It can simply be laughing with no stress while hanging out with friends and family. Power is a false concept created by those with greed but you can still feel so powerful and times but so powerless too. Power is nowhere but everywhere at the same time. Power can be hard to see by the regular eye.
Maria Llemas
9th Grade

Expectations

I tell myself what I must be
I have to be
A good daughter
A good student
A good friend
A good sister
A good student
A good person
A good woman
I have to be this and so much more
Focus on my grades, be respectful, smile, and laugh
Put other’s needs before my own
Learn to cook and clean
I am a victim of expectations
But I will be more than those things expected of me
An Ode to Nicholle

Dear future Nicholle
You’ve always focused on what was wrong with you
Whether reasonable, unreasonable, real or not
You don’t remember how much you’ve achieved
So let me tell you, since you always forgot
You’ve achieved so many of your 2022 goals
Use faced more fears and you’ve ever done before
You’ve tried something new almost every day.
You learned great lessons and so much more
You’ve changed so much as time has gone by
You’ve been making new decisions on your own
You’ve helped your friends and your family
Overall, I’m so proud of you because you’ve grown.

An Ode to Summer

Oh Summer
That season from June to September
Full of adventures, laughs, and vacations
That we hopefully all remember
It’s time to turn off that early alarm and sleep all morning instead
And as we put away the school books and packets
We’ll take out the short sleeve shirts and other bright colored clothes
Need to go back to the amusement parks.
Or maybe a beach instead.
Two places where we all play games out in the blazing sun.
Running around, taking pictures and eating
Maybe we’ll drive to a hotel, go roller skating, or just stay home
If you prefer to stay indoors, like me
Sleeping, eating, and watching shows
We’ll put the ac on, and drink an ice tea.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Nicholle Davis

Then time for back to school shopping. Maybe buy a new bag or new sneakers. Or a new jacket or hoodie.

But, I like staying home more. I don't like the heat or amusement park rides as much as I used to. And I'll be keeping my sweaters and dark colored clothes out. Summer isn't even my favorite season.

But whether you love it, like it, dislike it, or hate it. Whether you have a lot of plans, you don't have any, that's great. Relax, focus on you, your hobbies, and your health. Because every person deserves a break.
Dear Nubia,
I love how you wanted to be the first female President. I love how you would dance at every family function for everyone to see. I love how when the teacher asked who wants to be on TV you were the first to raise your hand. I love how you made music and youtube videos even though kids at school laughed at you for it. I love how you had passion, fire, confidence.

What happened?
What is Power?

Power
It is how much you own
It is the influence you have on others
It is the money in your home
Power
It can be abused
My wealthy people
Who'd prefer if it was misused
Power
Accountable Disattachment

Dusk or dawn, I’d see what my eyes see alone
Day or Night, I’d catch all the woos I’ve sown
I’ll walk the Earth - my legs will pace themselves
I’ll sleep at night - the clouds talk
Nyx wakes when Jupiter cries himself
To sleep! But I’ll wake up another day.

People see my soul but can they see through me?
I’m in a field of flowers but my friend sees me writing
an essay that’s a due a week from now
“Oh I might do homework later” but really
I’m at the library reading later.
I see stories. I read about experiences.
It’s either or. I think therefore I am.

I’m a fragment of time.
I walk the Earth.
I’m a student.
I sleep and cry
I’ll wake up tired from another dream

And I know someone will pry.
Insomnia does wonders.
I’d take pills.
Don’t accidentally take too many
Because we all know it kills.

Until my last meal.
Until the last rain shower
Until the last merit.
You’ll see me.
I’ll see me - even when I look in the mirror.
But I know I’ll always be in that field of flowers
Yes, that one I mentioned earlier.

The field of flowers is where I am.
But
Everyone sees me so obviously
I’m within the world.

I’ll Be Here
Survive the dawn and day
Survive the dusk and night
Survive what God will lay
Survive till’ the end of the fight

This is like 1984, but I’ll survive.
Manifestation of the Devil! I’ll survive.
This will be captured in history’s time, I’ll survive.
I pray for my mind and serenity. I’ll survive.

The guitar survives after its strings have been cut.
The dog survives when it’s left out in the rain.
The economy survives despite the Great Depression.
everyone survives in a way - it’s ironic really
The severity of one’s fight can go from
A papercut that you’ll survive
To the fights you have in the alleyways
next to your middle school that you’ll survive
To The stress of transitioning to adulthood
That you’ll survive too.
To getting mugged, kidnapped, or assaulted
I can’t say more but you’ll survive.
With time.

With patience.
With weakness and strength.
With heart.
You’ll survive.

But regardless of all this.

Survive what may come
Survive the battle! No matter what may come.
Survive! My soldiers rage!
Survive! Even the hero does at the end of the story.
Survive, your mind will be here.
Survive, I’ll be here too.
Anastacia Kurylo
9th Grade

Power

Power can be from status and privilege
Power can be people standing together
Power can be from followers
Power can be through fear and violence
Power can be from lies
Power can be from bribery

To whom I owe (Ode to myself):

To whom I am,
To the people who have made me, me,
The food I eat,
The things I think,
The things I say,
and the mistakes I make,
Yet I love myself anyway

The sports I love,
The hobbies I do,
I've changed and I grown,
Yet my parents have been here all the same,

My brother is waiting to play a game,

Hairs been cut,
and glasses got,
To have cuts from the metal i've shaped,
The feelings I've tried to hide inside,
The things I see,
This makes up me,

Not even sure if this an ode to myself,
But if I'm talking about what I want,
I owe this to myself,
An ode to myself
Yali Li
9th Grade

*Ode To Me*

To where I come from
To my culture
To the sorts I play
To the moments I live for
To the life I love
To the imperfections I have
To my love for being ME
Daniel Arthur
9th Grade

Ode to myself:

Ode to myself…
To completing things on time
To never being annoyingly overconfident
To being consistent with my day to day
To not quitting when things get difficult
To making sure I rarely get distracted
To trying new things no matter how weird they seem
To staying mentally positive when time are tough
To staying dedicated to being successful
To staying respectful to my family…
No matter how annoying they can be
An ode to myself.
Tiana Grace Williams
9th Grade

Ode 1:

Dear Tiana,
An ode to you,

You have have been hurt,
But you always have been loved

You have been kicked down,
But you always know how to rise up
like a phoenix from the ashes

You have sinned,
But you also have been healed by the grace of God

So I know you have been down lately
And feeling like you’re losing yourself

But remember who you are,
You’re Tiana Grace Williams

And you always what’s up as Triple B
Black,
Brilliant,
Beautiful

Love the in pain you,

Ode 2:

An ode to tradition,
The family tradition that turned me into a traditional Catholic girl
Who when in doubt, prays it out
At least that’s what the lock screen on my phone says
A thank you is required because you taught me,
No, You showed me
That even in my loneliness days and darkest nights,
I am never alone
A major ode to tradition
Anna Wang
9th grade

*Her is Me*

I am from the city that never sleeps
I am from the borough of amazing foods
And the borough that’s like a rollercoaster of excitement
Times Square, Rockefeller, The Twin Tower,
To you name it
I believe that women should have the right to think for themselves
I believe that women’s body is their choice
I believe that everyone should be treated equally
No matter of their race, identity, or simply who they are
My power comes from
The surrounding I grew up in
The people I see day by day including
My friends
My family
I am inspired by my friends to keep having fun
I am inspired by my grades to do better in school
I am inspired by the overall beauty of music to keep calm and relax
I am inspired by the smell of food to keep going

I create to paint a picture
A picture that represents
Her who’s quiet
Her who’s unique
Her who’s fragile
Her who’s me
One day I will have enough money
To travel the globe
To buy what known as “fancy”
To above all spoil myself
Anna Wang

Power

My power is it really mine?
My power, do I really have a say in it?
My power comes from the place I called home
My power comes from the people I see everyday
My power comes from the influence of friends and family
My power comes from the actions I take
My power comes from the words I say
My power comes from the places I visit
My power comes from far more places

and things that I can’t recall right now
My power comes suddenly and I tend to forget that it’s my power
My power is it really mine?
My power do I really have a say in it?

Existence
I exist in spite of those who didn’t believe in me
I exist to show her what I am capable of
If I’m really being honest I am most probably capable of many things
A list can end, but my capabilities has no ends
I exist to show hers what I am capable of

What am I capable of?
I am capable of staying up late
I am capable of taking time to relax
I am capable of walking to school alone
I am capable of far more than I think
Are you ready to show the world who you are?
Sam Levy
9th grade

My power comes from my parents who have worked hard in life to provide me with all the gifts and privileges I have. My power comes from my friends who see the good in me, my power comes from all the people who left a positive lasting impact on the world. My power comes from WITHIN ME and all who BELIEVE IN ME.
Dasha Melendez-Garcia
9th Grade

Drained

I am Dasha and I am from the Bronx
I believe that I am tired
I believe that I am fifteen years into my life and I am tired
I believe that I will burnout, soon
But I know that my power-the thing that I'm sure that I am too young to know about- comes from my will to overachieve
I am inspired by those who came before me
Those that worked too hard to be in this country
The same country that doesn't appreciate them enough
And yet I create
I create to express my thoughts, feelings and to let the creativity flow out of me
The same feelings and thoughts that no one else gets to see
But I am Dasha and I am from the Bronx
I know that I am tired
I know that I am fifteen years into my life and I am tired
I know that I will burnout, soon
And one day I will beat the odds
The odds that are stacked against me so high that they tower over me, like a New York skyscraper
Just like the ones I see on my way to school
I Haven't Met You Yet...Will I ever?

Power

What is power?
I wouldn't know
I wasn't given the privilege to meet power
I wasn't given the privilege to feel power
I don't know power, it wasn't given to me
Power was given to the wealthy
And as you might guess, I am not wealthy
Power was given to the fortunate
But I wasn't born fortunate

Power was given to the men of the world-
To the people born with the ‘right’ genitals

And lucky me, I am not a man
Not born with the ‘right’ thing in between my legs
I am not a man, so I don't know strength
I don't know authority
I don't know power
I am perceived as a walking object
I talk and breathe and grow and think

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Dasha Melendez-Garcia

But I’m not seen as a human being, just a woman
I don’t even have fundamental human rights but
I’m expected to know what power is
All this power in the world
Yet none was left to spare for people like me
It’s almost like—It’s almost like
I wasn’t there when it was given out in the heavens up above
“BE GRATEFUL, DESGRACIADA” they say
But they don’t know what it’s like to feel powerless
They’re all older
They’ve at least had the opportunity to be powerful
So once again,
Power

What is power?
I still don’t know
Emily
9th Grade

Running around as a little kid
Falling and getting back up
Having drama with my friends
Speaking up for myself to resolve the problem
From that point on I realized I had POWER
I am a basketball player
I am a dancer
I am a football player
I am a person who learns from mistakes
I am a young women
I am Emily and can do anything I put my mind to
Even when there are downfalls
I will still stand up tall
I look at my parents and they are great
But I will try to do better
I know my younger self would be proud
But without all the mistakes I wouldn’t be where I am right now
But this is what I will allow
Look to the future not the past
Now you and your power would increase fast

Poem 2:

I have a purpose I just need to show it
You have your goals to express your strength
If i’m really being honest your strength can make anything possible
If it’s possible I want my strength to be anything but a weakness
You have your goals to express your strength
What fuels strength?
Jose Osorio
9th Grade

The Power I resign

We are the power
We are the power we earn
We are the power we take
We are the power we create
We are the power to who we are
We are the power to control the decisions we make
We can make a change
We can change who we are
We can change the people
We can change the world
Tell them we are the power to change the world
Tell them we are who we are
Tell them we can make the decisions we want
Tell them that we are the people
And tell them that we are the power.
Kristi Jiang
9th Grade

Where does power come from?

Where does power come from?
Power comes from everywhere.

It can come from nature,
From the sun brightening the Earth,
from the wind that turns the wind turbines.
From the gas that charges the car.

It can come from society.
From The words of others,
From the rules of the community,
From the ability to influence other people.

It can come from yourself,
From the cloth you wear,
From the confident you have,
From the things you stand up for.
It's from the inside of the world to the outside,
It can even come from you!

Why am I here?

5second, 4second, 3second, 2second, 1second—1 came to this world.
Without my permission, i came to this world
Why? Some may say
Because this how the world play
5second,4second,3second,2second, 1second—
1 came to this world.
Why did I come to this world?
I'm not very sure
Maybe I came to give great achievements,
Like a white angel who gives treatments.
Or came here to be as brave a lion, as smart as a fox Like a
d butterfly who can freely flying around
But who knows?
5second,4second,3second,2second, 1 second— 1 came to this world.
Maybe because someone needed me to be here
Maybe not now right
Maybe not 100 years after
But at a right time, at the right moment,
Don't who it's
But it might be the reason why I'm here.
Kimberly Serapio  
9th Grade

My Power

My power it comes from many things

My power comes from doing things I love to do

My power comes from my motivation

It comes from having people who support me

My power it comes from listening to music

It comes from my encouragements from others

It comes from having my cats with me

It comes from many thing

Many things too much too name

It comes from my friends

My power it comes from many things

Accomplishments

I exist because I want to accomplish certain things that I haven't yet accomplished.

Through my life I'll shoot my shot and maybe I'll miss

Not everything will go right but…

You need to miss in order to bliss

Through my life I'll shoot my shot and maybe I'll miss

Maybe I start giving up

But not fully give up on it

Not yet

Have I accomplished?
WHERE DOES MY POWER COME FROM?

My power comes from my strength.
My power comes from others around me.
My power may keep myself and others strengthened
My power helps contribute to others
My power contributes to the world being alive
My power lure in others
My power is one others want to take from me
My power never leaves me and yet betrays me
My power is both my gift and my curse
My power never leaves me to fight for myself
My power may make mistakes but
My power and I will fix it together
Darianni Cruz
9th Grade

Fine Print

I am Darianni Cruz
I come from the trenches of the Dominican republic,
Soy cibaena y dentro de mi llevo mi quisqueya
I believe that you should stay true to who you are even when that
means you’re standing alone
My power comes from la negra mas bella de mi vida
Mi abuela who always told me “Se independiente y no dependas
de nadie, que no todo el mundo es tu amigo no sabes lo que
pasa cuando no estas”
Im inspired by those that [like me] came from nothing
I create to poetry as a way of expressing myself and breaking
down barriers
One day I’ll see myself at the top of the hierarchy

Las Chicas Independiente Bailan Solas

Where does power come from

Where does power come from
Where does power come from
Everytime I think I bout the question I think of hundreds of
possibilities
My power come from those that came before me los tainos y los
esclavo that we try so hard to forget
My power comes from being the black sheep of the family
Porque yo no dejo que falten el respeto mami siempre me dice
One of these days you’ll find your match
THAT SMART MOUTH OF YOURS WON’T GET YOU VERY FAR
That smart mouth of yours is not gonna get you very far
Got me thinking to myself is mami really trying to protect me
Oh Ella quiere que yo sea como todo los de más
“Submissive and let my peers talk Down on me”
She hate the way I am pero she forgets Que yo so la réplica de
da ella She teaches me to fight for myself
Pero when she the one that I’m fighting back against
Yo soy una malcria que no respeta a nadie

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Darianni Cruz

My power comes from being who I am even if that makes me a malcriada. My power comes from my mental health.
En el pueblo mio no se crea en eso.
Let it be that you tell mami you are depressed.
Let it be you let her see your weakness.
Por aye viene todo el mundo.
Mira mucha tu sabe lo que es eso.
Usted no tiene nada vaya y resale a Dios.
My power comes from all my weaknesses.
What you see as weakness I see as motivation because yes I am a prieta que viene de la pobreza pero eso nunca detuvo a mis ancestro. Y con me go tampoco podrá.
My power comes from oppression.
My power comes from colorism.
My power comes for all that makes me imperfect.
All these ways of where my power comes from and yet I wonder.
Where does my power come from?

Mischievous Cycle

I exist to carry on the vicious cycle of life. For the cycle continues until I stop.
If I’m really being honest the fault is in the cycle.
If I’m really being honest this cycle is our fault.
For the cycle continues until I stop.
So the question is.
Do you Wanna go on?
Katherine
9th Grade

*My power comes from:*

Where does my power come from?
My power comes from my achievements
My power comes from my parents and everything they do for me and because they love me for who I am
My power comes from my parents power
Their power bring me power
My power sees past all struggles and problems
Collaborative ideas in one
I exist to do good things or to make a good change in the world.
It is this purpose which all my actions hatch out of. If I'm really being honest, schools don't help us in any way that is useful and state tests/regents are useless. All of these exams are leaving me stressed all the prep work leaving me clueless.
It is this purpose which all of my actions hatch out of. Why trust power?
Poem 1: Power through time

As days pass by
The clock ticking and ticking
Every second
Waiting for the days
When we are all grown up
Waiting for the days
When we finally succeed
My power comes from age
My power comes from mindset
My power comes from experience
My power comes from the years that I’ve dreamt of succession
My power comes from my wisdom
The knowledge that I’ve obtained
Throughout the long, long years
My power comes from my ability
To be capable of doing
Anything that I’m willing to do
My power comes from dreaming
Of succession

Poem 2: Existence

I exist to contribute to this world
I exist to inspire others
I exist to face the world
If I’m really being honest, the world is a fearful face of pain and trust
Where trust is a must
For us to have faith in each other
Throughout our years of existence
I exist to inspire others
Lead their path by ending mine
Offering a pathway of courage
To people I may not even know
To people who may not know me
Who am I?
Power

Power comes from within yourself
Power come from our thought
Our inspirations
Power comes from family
Power comes from our actions
Our choices
What we wanna change
Power comes from our voice
What we advocate
Power is something that
Everyone has.

Why do I exist?

I exist to try and learn from my mistakes.
I exist to create and love others
If I’m really being honest I don’t know how to start
Maybe the best way to start is to eat dessert like a tart
I exist to create and love others
But why try?
Sebastien Roques
9th Grade

Power comes from life
Power comes from the pen you are given for the world to hear you
Power comes from voice
Power comes from people that wanted to see you fail
But also from the people that wanted to see you succeed
Power comes from determination
Power comes from belief
Power comes from drive
Power comes from family
Power comes from friends
Power comes from unity
Power comes from experience
Power comes from respect
Power comes from life
Power originates from the first born leader to its ancestors
Power comes from the ones who decides what we can and can't do
but power also comes from not following these set-rules
Power comes from the beauty of one's purity
but Power comes from the innocence one has lost as well

Power comes from compassion yet
Power can come from oppression
Power can come from anything you want
yet not everyone has power

I Exist

I exist in spite of the people that said I would fail
The doubt of people makes you stronger, it makes you grow…
Never forget that
If I'm really honest, the doubt of people makes you weaker if you cannot digest it
But I can digest it, they don't understand
If they try, they gonna have to drop me, or pop me, cause it ain't gonna be me
At the end, I exist to mark a point
I exist to prove people wrong
I am capable
I can do it
I will prove them wrong
The doubt of people makes you stronger, it makes you grow…
Never forget that
Javier Guante
9th Grade

What inspires me.

What inspires me to never give up
What inspires me to persevere
What inspires me to protect, and love those around me
What inspires me to have a better day than yesterday
What inspires me is the will to be a better person in society, to make a difference in the place that accepted me for who I was.
Truly, What inspires me is the love, protection and guidance God give me, and my beautiful family and friends
Ahmad Alshohatee  
9th Grade  

Power’s Origin  
Power comes from support you get and it builds up your power  
Power comes from our responsibility as humans and as siblings and as friends  
Power comes from your role in society  
Power comes from your attitude  
Power comes from your confidence  

Family’s Background  
I exist in spite of my family and our name/background  
And will remember them and keep their memory going  
If I am really being honest, family is the drive we all need but we don’t know we need it until it’s gone.  
Family ends with ily, I love you and will do anything for you.  
And will remember them and keep their memory going.
-Becoming Suzie-

I am Susana Miguel, daughter of immigrant parents
Who has shown me to be proud of my Mexican heritage
I believe in freedom of expression
In freedom to be yourself
My power comes from my roots
My upbringing
The way that I am
I am inspired by my mother
Who is a housewife
Yet she has worked hard for me to be at the level of intelligence
That I am right now
I am inspired by my father
My hero
Who overcame various obstacles
To become the boss of the kitchen
I create to overcome my sorrows
To heal the pains that I have carried through middle school
I create any type of art
From drawings to writing
One day
I would be the first one to have a title
An important title

That I plan to hand to my parents
Making them proud
And wave it in the air
For all of those who doubted me

-Empowered-

To all of those who LOVED me
To all of those who HATED me
To all of those who CARED for me
To all of those who put me in the SHADOWS
To all of those who called me PRETTY
To all of those who called me WITCH
To all of those who DOUBTED me
To all of those who BELIEVED in me
To all of those who BETRAYED me
To all of those who FOLLOWED me
To all of those who said I was ENOUGH
To all of those who said they WANTED more from me
To all of those who were GRATEFUL for me
To all of those who called me a MISTAKE
To all of those who were in my LIFE
No matter how GOOD or BAD they were
Thank you for making me POWERFUL
Teachers:
Mr. Villa
Ms.Daftani
Ms.Weyerbacher
Ms.Sanderson

Teaching Artists:
Okai Musik
Mel House
Jeessun Choi

High School for Innovations in Advertising and Media
Christine Accius
9th Grade

Untitled

I have an vibe like I’m drown
Like water like in blade in like a wind
Martine Dillihomme
9th Grade

Untitled

I get up unfolded water
I go to bed the water blooms
I am the water dilated from its depths
I am the earth that takes root and
On which everything is established
I make bubbles of sadness in the desert
Anonymous
9th Grade

*Untitled*

My vibe is as bright as the sun itself
My energy is powerful
My vibe is an Ocean
Summertime

Summertime, sometimes we want to swim and sometimes we wanna die
Summertime is a fun time
To play and jump around

Summertime is a fun time
To eat and play, to go to the bbq
And eat pork chops all day

Summertime, Summertime,
Let’s got out and play
Time for fun, and lots of sun
I love these kind of days

Summer, Summer, It’s almost here
Time for fun and swimming gear
Trips to the beach are always such fun
Time to eat and beat the heat out of the sun
Emotional connection is a distraction
It's an interaction that causes attachment
Not I thought that same interaction is what
Pushes me away.
Call it rude but I can't change what I do
Don't wear my heart on my sleeve for no one
So I don't end up hurting myself for anyone
Desire Trautman
9th Grade

Untitled

Hate, Just as contagious as any illness
Love, not shown by the majority to the majority
When talking about history
Guns, items so dangerous
yet so easy to obtain
Stop unnecessary killing
of innocent people and children
by taking these dangerous killing
Machines from the country
Wandly Charles
9th Grade

Doors beyond doors

Life is full of doors
When you are born you have access to only one door
Behind that door is a room filled with things that only have meaning to you
But as you pass beyond the doors of life more doors open up
From rooms with blood and metallic to a room with confetti and balloons
The doors you choose lead up to rooms that represent you and your choices
You live the life of doors beyond doors
Shyanne Matthews
9th Grade

Manifesto Poem

I want to live in a world where people are equal
Love isn't defined as a man and a woman,
where people never go hungry,
color doesn't define a person's personality or limitations
where being yourself isn't something to be embarrassed by
I want to live in a world where everything is true, beliefs take you
to the moon, but here's what I know.
Not everything will go the way you want, not everything could be
solved anew.
So what I know is what I believe and it's the world I want to live
in, live in the known because the unknown was probably known
but it wasn't meant to be.

A Facade

Confident lady,
She walks with her head to the sky
Grades in the A's, and outfits held to the same standard
But what happens when the curtain comes down?
You see all her scars. You see the way she thinks,
You see the way she actually feels,
Smile to hide the imperfections and complications
Help her, she wants it but won't ask for it.

S.H.Y.A.N.N.E
Smart
Humble
Youthful
Adventurous
Neat
Nice
Everloving,
Shyanne
Sheamar Coward
9th Grade

*Fathers*

Here ye, Here ye
Fathers come to the front
Your sons are in deep trouble and I'm not even gonna front.
They're in desperate need of a father in their lives
So come back for your sons and stop hiding in disguise.
Today is the day.
On this faithful friday.
Where everyone's fathers will come out and play.
Though you have a faded memory of your unwanted children.
That doesn't mean you should just up and leave them.
Your children need you, and they need you right now.
So come back for your kids, so they aren't
“Another fatherless childddddd”
You may have left but never forgotten.
The love from a father is never unwanted.
2 parent homes are key to the children's upbringing.
So come back, back, back I say love on your bald headed children any less!
Shamel Burke
9th Grade

Shameless
Harmless
Auspicious
Madness
Endless
Living
I don't know what to write, but I could write anything I want
I could write about my passion
(if I could stick to one)
I could write about my dreams
(if I can only remember them)

I don't know I just feel neutral

I was just told to write a poem
(even though I could barely get what I want on paper)
*sigh* I don't know
I guess I'll just stick to video games
I'm good at those
Here's what I know that's certain:
Hate does not have enough energy to destroy love.
When you put all your dreams together, it is not the thing that
broke you that broke you, it was that you never even thought
about the fact that you could be broken.
Always prepare for the worst case scenario.

For a diamond to be produced,
it must go through extreme intense heat
EXTREME pressure.
What makes a diamond a diamond
is the cut of it
that makes it shine.
If you wanna be a diamond,
you'll have to go through extreme heat
EXTREME pressure.
After you go through all that pressure you thought you could not
handle, then life turns on the heat.

Here's something I know for sure:
Hate does not have enough energy
to destroy love.
Kweisi Nyamekye
9th Grade

Kind
Welcoming
Energetic
Intelligent
Special
Incredible
Justin Graham
9th Grade

*Just me*

Son of a mother
Who loves music, and most importantly himself
Everyday there a conflict
Some stick, some go
Destin to see his Destiny

*Projects*

Where the crackhead rise and the fathers go bye bye
Kids wondering when their next meal is
Fathers wonder when the court day is
Sleeping in the hallway, living with the rat
Asking the roaches, where’s my father at
Monkeys

There are many different colors of monkeys in the world
Some dark, some light, in middle or unseen
And not all monkeys aren’t the same
Some hairy, some strong, some crazy, some sane
But all these monkeys have something in common

They all love to swing in trees
And love love love to enjoy sweet berry treats
And when the day is finally done
They kill each other

The Quiet Ones

The quiet kid
shall never talk
But if they’re angry
they will pull out they’re glock

Golden Woggle Fish (Flush)

Bloop Bloop Bloop
Goes the Gold Woggle Fish
His eyes split like a pair of ripped jeans
As he swims in ignorance and bliss
Small pellets of yummy bits fall for the fish
As he lives and swim swim swims every single day
The fish gets a little exhausted today
As the fish is floating on its back so tired from swimming
FLUSH a new home a new place for the fish
Ethan Henry
9th Grade

Ethan
I am 14 years old and in the 9th grade
Energetic, Goofy, Smart, and talented
Son of a hardworking woman
Who loves to play basketball and sleep
Who feels happy and tired
Who gives humor, time
Who fears death
Who would like to see Ethan in the NBA
Who lives in Brooklyn, NY
Henry
Edwin Torres
9th Grade

I believe

I believe in a peaceful world
I believe in a world where everyone is free
I believe in a world where people should not be afraid to go outside
I believe in a world where everyone is united
I believe in a world where we are all loving
I believe in a world where we are seen as equals
I believe in a world where we are free
I believe in a world where we are not to be criticized for being different
That is the world I want to live in

I believe in a world that the people are open-minded
I believe in a world where we are not judged by the color of our skin
I believe in a world where everybody is happy
I believe in a world where everyone has enough to eat
I believe in a world that is peaceful where the sun shines even on our darkest days

This is the world I can’t wait to see
Brady Pimentel
9th Grade

*The world I want*

I want to live in a world
Where I am healthy and wealthy
I want to live
Unlike a robot

Debates but no war
Where everyone can feel anything
No numbness
But pain
Should remain

I dont always want to be in the same lane
I want change
Be proud
Of my name
Do what I want
And always want something
A reason
To keep going

The world I want
Yezan Alreyashi
9th Grade

Yezan
Creative, Quiet, Thoughtful
Child of my mother
Who loves to watch anime
Who feels happy when i get home from school
Who gives kindness
Who fears being put in teams
Who would like to see peace
Who lives in New York
Alreyashi
Nassir Tye
9th Grade

Creative Nassir
Son of Denise
Builds, crafts, watches “do it yourself” videos
Is Happy
Gives love & creations
fears rats, mice and bugs
Loves his family
Lives in new york
Tye
Javon
9th Grade

Javon
cool, fun, athletic, brave
Child of the motherlands
I love my mom
I feel ok when at school
I give love
I fear Nothing
I watch anime
I live on Earth
McKnight
Anonymous

Child of angelique
Who loves basketball
Who feels great
Who gives fea
who fears nobody
What i like to see is me in the NBA
I live in brownsville brooklyn new york
My last name is hayes marshall
Eva Richards
12th Grade

We come to a place
To heal and resonate
Think about time and space
This place
Carries memories we hold dear
And thoughts we wish to clear
Life lessons to learn from
Versions of oneself to entwine as one
In the mind it can all be done
It brings great joy
Sometimes sadness
To heal will be the ultimate distraction
Zyon Mayard
12th grade

The speeches
legislation racial
Social address gathered America
Shameless conditions
Emancipation
Congress
The marchers
His prepared speech
A stirring rendition
Spiritual
Passing ice cubes to August heat
After a long day of absolute silence reverence
Precious Ekeh
12th Grade

Life
Racial
Social
Justice
Freedom
“Our”
Shameful
Race
Relation
Inheritance
Kingdom
Encouragements
Famous
Commitment
Scorned
Buked
Amen
Preach
Hope
Vision
Recognizable
Skeptic
Goodness Obadofin
12th grade

Try Again

It’s a struggle everyday
trying to determine how to go about it.
I try not to think about the past or future too much.
I need to reflect and look forward.
Constant striving to become a better version.
At times I exceed my expectations
sometimes I come up short.
How do I make the best of the situations I find myself in?
It is a journey that will never end till the day I die.
All I can do is to get better day by day
recognizing the sunny and rainy days along the way.
Revenge is sweet
Kill for kill eye for eye
Like your death it's time to die
I had one thing and you've taken it from me
A single breathe is all I ache

You can't imagine how much you're gonna pay
But now my life is in disarray
You pull my whole life away
You can't even understand the pain

You're so prepared to knock me down
But you'll pay – pay –
What a sweet release when you rest in peace
Until then you'll be in a maze
Constantly begging for your mind to be at ease
Shamel Howard
12th grade

recitation of MLK speech
Erasure by Jeesun Choi

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice sweltering with the heat of oppression will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification," one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today. I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope.

This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.

With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together to stand up for freedom together knowing that we will be free one day. This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning: "My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride. From every mountainside, let freedom ring!"
Eduardo Cristantos
10th Grade

Infinite hope

I am mexican
I am a Highschool Student
I am from New York
I am here because I have to
My power comes from inspirational quotes
“What really matters is not wether we have problems,
But how we go through them. We must keep goin on
To make it through whatever we are facing” - Rosa Parks
I use my power to succeed in life
I connect to others by feeling the same way.
Everyone is not normal but they will always be something
“If you’re always trying to be normal you will never know how
amazing you can be” - Maya Angelou
Everyone can give up but never lose hope
“We must accept infinite disappointment but never lose infinite
hope” - Martin Luther King Jr.
I see New York as it’s own planet, full of people of every ethnicity, it’s gigantic buildings stretching along blocks, and towards the sky

I see New York bigger than Earth itself, It’s buildings as huge as monsters

I see the people of New York, It’s population enormous enough to cover this planet I call New York

I see the boroughs of New York, big enough to be their own cities, their populations so massive, strong in diversity as well as their neighborhoods

I see New York as a planet too large to explore in a lifetime.
What makes A city

What makes my city
The gangers and the drug dealers
The homicides and cold cases
The secrets of the streets and street beef
At least one person aint make it
The dead bodies of mothers, sons and daughters
This is what makes my city,
What makes yours?

My Home

My home is a place where biter thrives day and night
My home is where disappointment stray along the ways
My home is where mommy issues and DADDY issues develop
My home is where hurt and betrayal rise through the halls
My home is a place where screams and crys keep you up at night
My home is where mental health gets damaged by Insiders
My home is where peace dies at the door unless your home alone
My home is where hatred never sleeps never eats never leave

Little Butterfly

Little butterfly; fly away
Leave the cocoon where you lay
Your mom will let you fly
She wishes you Goodbye
She hopes to see you again
To see your wings may you rest
Ciarra
10th Grade

A time in the past

Who is a caring person
Who was nice to their friends
Who got back stabbed
Who ended up sad

Who ended up lonely
Who stayed in their room
Who was devastated
Who wanted friends back so soon

Who name got thrown around
Who name never stayed out of people mouth
Who name was where their power comes from

I am the one who ends up lonely
I am the one who name got thrown around
I am the one who stayed in their room
I am the one who was devastated
I am the one who was so sad
That I needed my friends back so soon.

Ode to my Uncle

You made my life a living hell
You made me go to the police
You made my mental health unstable
You have traumatized me for life
You have made people believe that I am a liar
Now i have therapy to get rid of this situation
This situation has hit my mom harder than anything
It followed her to her heart and to her job
It affected her more than me.
Jonathan
10th Grade

14 Lines of Power

1) I am Puerto Rican.
2) I am 16 years old.
3) I am optimistic.
4) I am a New Yorker.
5) I am a football player.
6) I am powerful.
7) My power comes from my family, friends, and from within (inner thoughts/brains)
8) Power for others may be money, or their strength but for me it is a little different.
9) For me it is the people who motivate me.
10) For me it is the people I can look up to.
11) For me it is the people I can believe in.
12) For me it is the people who give me the courage to keep moving forward.
13) For me, it is my self who can still reach out for my goals and chase my dreams and achieve what I want when I am tired and exhausted.
14) The source of my power is incredible