Brooklyn Reads: Poetry Anthology

Poems from students at the following high schools:

**HS Global Citizenship**
Michelle Rochon, Principal
Elizabeth Hiskey, Teacher

**Brooklyn High School of the Arts**
Margaret Lacey Berman, Principal
Janique Cambridge, Teacher

**Acorn Community High School:**
Andrea Piper, I.A. Principal
Ben Honoroff, Assistant Principal
Shana Bryce, Teacher

**Metropolitan Corporate Academy**
Lennel George, Principal
Persephone DaCosta, Teacher

**George Westinghouse High School**
Janine Kieran, Principal
Michael Clark, Teacher

**LIFE Academy HS for Film and Music**
Lisa Ferraiola, Principal
William Patterson, Teacher

**Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts**
Paula Holmes, Principal
Joanne Marciano, Teacher

**Brooklyn Bridge Academy**
Max Jean Paul, Principal
Kimberly Laboy, Assistant Principal
Erika Bogdany, Teacher

**Academy of Hospitality and Tourism**
Marcia Wiltshire, Teacher
Adam Breier, Principal

**Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies**
Alyce Barr, Principal
Stephen Simons, Teacher
Edward R. Murrow High School
Allen Barge, Principal
Sarah Covers, Teacher
John Jones, Teacher

**Clara Barton High School**
Richard A. Forman, Principal
Ellen Brody-Kirmss, Teacher
Dear Friends,

We’re thrilled to present this 2013 Brooklyn Reads Poetry Anthology, containing student work from the twenty high-school classes that participated in this year’s program.

Now in its ninth year, Brooklyn Reads is BAM’s free, highly successful literacy and arts project in reading, writing, and performing poetry. In an eleven-week residency with nationally recognized spoken word performers and professional teaching artists, these students were challenged to give voice to their ideas, feelings, and daily existence through their study of this literary art form. Facilitating the residencies were Mahogany Browne, Jennifer Armas, Mo Beasley, Samara Gaev, Najee Ritter, and Darian Dauchan—an incredible group of artists you can learn more about on the following pages.

As a resource guide, students received copies of our newly selected anthology: 180 More Extraordinary Poems for Every Day edited by Billy Collins, former poet laureate of the United States.

Along with intensive in-class workshops, students also had the opportunity to attend Poetry 2013: Expression in the Right Direction, a professional poetry and interdisciplinary arts performance at BAM. In the line-up were artists and authors who perform internationally and in some of this country’s most well-known venues—including the Nuyorican Poets Cafe and The Bowery Poetry Club—as well as world slam team competitors, and artists from Russell Simmons’ Def Poetry Jam on Broadway and Russell Simmons Presents Def Poetry.

On April 30, 2013, Brooklyn Reads students returned to BAM to present their original works for classmates, teachers, family members, and friends. For some, it was their first time in front of a large audience; for all, it was an incredible, supportive, inspiring experience.

We don’t train poets in this program. Rather, we strive to increase literacy and public-speaking skills in our borough’s youth, and to foster a lifelong appreciation for the power of language.

There are many people we have to thank for the continued success of this program: the teachers and school administrators who welcome us into their classes, the professional poets who shared their work with the students, and of course our own dedicated BAM Education staff and teaching artists.

In addition, this program would not have been possible without the support of our funders; the poetry anthologies, the BAM performance, the workshops, the culminating event—all were at no cost to the schools or the students, thanks to the generosity of BAM donors.

Ultimately, we celebrate the students who accepted this opportunity and shared themselves within the pages of this book. Their work is as diverse, passionate, and unique as they are, and we feel privileged to present it here.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Youngerman
Director, BAM Education and BAMfamily

John Foster
Education Manager
Brooklyn Reads Project Manager
Teaching Artist Biographies

**Jennifer Cendaña Armas** is an NYC performer, writer, and teacher. Her show, *skinimin12*, was featured in the Downtown Urban Theatre Festival and New York City Hip Hop Theater Festival at Public Theater. She is developing her second show, which will be workshoped at Berkeley's La Peña Cultural Center. Poetry/singing work includes: Celebration of Latin Jazz at The Binational Center of Cusco, Lincoln Center's *La Casita*, Joe's Pub's *Urban Griots*, Culture Project's *Women Center Stage Festival*, Museum of Contemporary Art and *Louder Than A Bomb* (Chicago), Esperanza Peace and Justice Center (Houston), *Ronnie Scott's* (London), *Spoken* (Black Family Channel), *Word* (FreeSpeech TV). Publications include: *We Got Issues! A Young Woman's Guide to Leading an Empowered Life*, *The Audacity of Humanity*, NYU Review for Law and Social Change, *AWOL*, *Monsoon*. Theatre: Emerging Voices Theatre Fest, co-creator/performer in Mango Tribe's *Sisters in the Smoke*, dancing in Urban Bush Women's *Are We Democracy?*, Queens Theatre in the Park's *Black Theatre Festival*. She facilitates Red tents and arts-activist workshops in schools, prisons, and community based organizations state-side and internationally, including Harvard University, Riker’s Island Prison, Ghana, and Ireland. Member of Blackout Arts Collective and graduate from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts with a degree in theatre and politics. The 2013 Brooklyn Reads residency was probably my favorite of all my years. Two great teachers, four great classes. From excitement to apprehension, stress to laughter, everyone brought it even when we didn’t feel like it. This season we looked at game changers and game-changing moments in our lives and in our world, studying work from Assata Shakur to Stevie Wonder. We looked at love, politics, and responsibility. Even amidst challenges that come with facilitating any class, it was a gift to work with the students, to see the flash in someone’s eye from spitting a piece to the class or tears come down in sharing memories onto the page. Again and again, I learned the courage and importance it takes to pick up a pen, open our mouths, and tell our stories.

**Samara Gaev** is a New York-based activist, educator, and performer. She has been working as a teaching artist and educational consultant in the New York City schools, shelters, transitional programs, and community centers for over ten years. She is honored to be invited back as the lead theater teaching artist for BAM’s Arts and Justice Program. Samara is also the Education Director for Question Bridge, a board member of Project Rhythm, Curriculum Writer for Hurricane Season, and co-director of In Transition Hip Hop Theatre Co. Her work as a performer and facilitator has taken her to Zimbabwe, Senegal, Hawaii, Brazil, Peru, and Cuba. Her active involvement in progressive social change has taken her beyond the classroom and the stage, and towards actualizing the change she wishes to see. Samara earned a BA from NYU’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study, with a degree in performance as a tool for cross-cultural education and social change, and an MA in Performance Studies from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts.
Mahogan Browne is the Nuyorican Poets Cafe Poetry Program Director and curator of their famous Friday Night Slam. She is a Cave Canem Fellow and the author of several books including *Swag & Dear Twitter: Love Letters Hashed Out On-line*, recommended by Small Press Distribution & listed on About.com’s “Best Poetry Books of 2010”. Browne has released five LPs, including the live album *Sheroshima*. As co-founder of the Off Broadway poetry production, *Jam On It*, and co-producer of NYC’s 1st Performance Poetry Festival: SoundBites Poetry Festival, she bridges the gap between lyrical poet and literary emcee. Browne has toured Germany, Amsterdam, England, Canada and recently Australia as one-third of the cultural arts exchange project Global Poetics. Her poetry has been published in literary journals *Pluck, Literary Bohemian, Bestiary Brown Girl Love* and *Up The Staircase*. She is an Urban Word NYC mentor, has been seen on HBO’s *Brave New Voices*, and facilitates performance poetry and writing workshops throughout the country. She is the publisher of Penmanship Books, a small press for performance artists and owns PoetCD.Com, an on-line marketing and distribution company for poets.

When I think of poetry I think of its many bodies. How it shapes into sonnets and villanelles, how Langston’s darkened hue and Margaret Atwood’s light silhouette both have a space for critical and creative exchange. Brooklyn Reads allows me a platform to help young writers approach the intersection of self-actualization and poetry. I write to unearth the voice of the writer, as we traverse images and ideas dissecting stereotypes and categorization through the lens of prose and poetry.

My daughter is 15 years old. She is a very large part of why I fight to write. I fight to write everyday I breathe. I fight to show others the potential change with the sound of their pens and voices. It is because of the interactions with the young writers of the Brooklyn Reads program that I am able to solidify my literary home. Lucille Clifton wrote

“A person can, I hope, enjoy the poetry without knowing that I am black or female. But it adds to their understanding if they do know it—that is, that I am black and female. To me, that I am what I am is all of it; all of what I am is relevant.”

These young writers, thinkers and spirits; my daughter—they are all parts of me. “All of what I am is relevant.” All of my bodies, all my double tongues are alive and stretching wide. Here in the Brooklyn Reads program, I find the rites of passage for my writer-self evolving, how it is reborn every February. How I am honored to receive such a task.

Mo Beasley is an award-winning performance poet, educator, author, and public speaker with over 20 years experience in sexuality, race, manhood, and arts advocacy work. He authored the poem *No Good Nigg@ Bluez*, which was later adapted into a play by the same title that premiered at the New York International Fringe Festival in 2003. Beasley has performed with legends such as Sonia Sanchez, Abiodun Oyewole of the Last Poets, Louis Reyes Rivera, Nana Camille Yarbrough, and many others. He has performed at the Blue Note (New York City), Nuyorican Poets Cafe, New Jersey Performing Arts Center, and American Museum of Natural History, among others. On the topics of manhood, sexuality, and art as action, he has been quoted, profiled, and featured on local and national media outlets, including BETJ (My Two Cents television talk show), NPR’s *News and Notes*, Fox5 News, XM Satellite Radio, Air America Radio, and many other outlets. In 2006, The *Daily News* selected Mo Beasley as one of “50 Unsung New York Heroes.” In 2007, Beasley was a featured panelist at the *Black and Male in America 3-Day National Conference*, presented by writer-activist Kevin Powell. As workshop facilitator and lecturer, Beasley counts SCO/Family Dynamics, Global Kids, New York University, Medgar Evers College at the City University of New York, Howard University, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture as some of his clients. He currently lives in Brooklyn.
Najee Omar is a writer and performance artist based out of Brooklyn, NY. As a teaching artist in Los Angeles, Najee turned classrooms into stages by conducting poetry and theatre workshops with inner city teens and at-risk youth. His readings and features include Urban Juke Joint, Avery Fisher Hall at Lincoln Center, Au Chat Noir (Paris), and Duke University. In 2012 he was awarded the Poet-in-Paris Fellowship and he currently serves as the co-creator of HigherSelf’s Artist Development Initiative in which he curates artist showcases and co-hosts a monthly Open Mic Series.

This year the workshops have solidified that I have a place in the classroom. I loved every moment I shared with my students. I was able to watch people experience breakthroughs. Students realized that they have a voice that deserves to be shared with the world. I was inspired each and every day as they spoke on subjects that dug deep to them and their life experiences. Working with the next generation of game changers was uplifting and empowering. I hope you all keep writing and sharing with the world! Someone out there needs to hear from you!

Darian Dauchan is an award winning solo performer, actor, and poet who has appeared on and off Broadway. TV credits include “Law and Order” and Nickelodeon’s “Bet the House”. He is the 2012 winner of The Jerome Foundation's Stakeholder's Choice Award and one of his most recent shows Death Boogie, A Hip Hop Poetry Musical, was the 2012 winner of two Edinburgh Fringe Festival Musical Theatre Matters Awards for Best New Music and Best Innovation of a Musical.

First off, a big thanks to Joanne Marciano at Susan S. McKinney. Thank you for letting me highjack your classes for a few sessions. And a tremendous thanks to the students for all of the work you created. Thank you for being open, for listening, for being engaged, and for sharing. I'm a better teaching artist for it, and yes, it's mushy but true, a better human being. Your stories and voices are vivid and inspiring. To see that manifested in this anthology is an honor for me, and I am happy to have been a facilitator in aiding you, to get those creative juices flowing. Please continue to write! Art is necessary! Your voices, your words, our vital! The world is waiting to hear you! I invite you to be a part of the spoken word movement, its future needs you. Peace, Progress, and Poetry.
**I BELIEVE AND I HAVE SEEN**
NEDJIE BORDENAVE
High School for Global Citizenship

I have seen too much for my age
I have seen blood and dark clouds
I believe there is a reason why we wake up every morning

I believe
Oh, I believe

I believe in my goals
I believe one day I will achieve them
I believe we are the way we act
I have seen people fall apart my whole life
I am the one that always puts the pieces together
But I have too much hate eating me inside
So how do I put this puzzle together?
I believe negative energy is poison for your body and mind

I have seen a woman screaming
Her husband trapped in a car and a house fell on top
of him
I have seen that man get help but he still died
I have seen so many tears that now
When I see people cry I laugh because it has become
a joke

I believe there is no place like home
I believe we don't say "home sweet home" for no reason
I believe justice is on its way
I believe you can make yourself a better person
I believe in living
I believe we all have our mission in this life
I believe in happy endings
I believe this world will be a better place when we come together

**CHAPTER 5: MY FIRST TIME WITH HIM**
KHALIF PHILLIPS
High School for Global Citizenship

My first time with him I'll never forget
My first time with him I'll never regret
I was at my loneliest
Sitting in the corner of a room filled with emptiness

He came to me out of thin air

Sharply pressed suit and tie
Black guy

"Hi, I'm Rasputin. How you doing?"

I didn't have the strength to talk back
But he could look at my blank
Stare
Looked inside a soulless mess
Whose body was left a total wreck

He came closer and closer, then sat down next to me
Told me what he saw in me

"Hey, I can see you are smart
A brainiac, but you keep to yourself
No one will listen (They'll probably view you
As a sociopath).
I can see in your brain
You are filled with pain
You keep these walls as to stay away
Now you're plotting suicide to leave this place
But I'm here to stop and show you don't
Have to
Because you're not alone
You have family, friends, me
And most importantly poetry
I always listen to your words when you're in the dark
Spitting your flow
I love
It is time for me to go
But know
I'll always be here for you."

I told him thank you for everything he did for me
"Don't mention it. And call me Lucifer, Rasputin doesn't really
suit me."

**PASSION**
CIARA TRIM
High School for Global Citizenship

In the midst of the passion
Two figures stand
Emerged in ecstasy
Joined hand in hand
Words unnecessary
Feelings heard
Bodies take control
Deaf to words
At this stage
I think of you
In gratitude for this joy
You have exposed me to
Each day is bright with
You as the dawn
With the collapse of each night
A strong bond is born

After the passion
I remember your kiss
I reminisce about your touch
Suddenly miss
The scent you wear
The tone of your voice

Only you can be my choice

In the midst of passion
You & me
Lost in constant
Ecstasy

I take your hand
Together we stand
Your lips on mine
Is for what I yearn
Ears deaf to words
I hear your body’s moan

Put faith in me
I have faith in you
Believe in me
I believe in you
Trust in me
I trust you

It is love
You have exposed me to
Now all I crave is
Making love to you

WHAT IS LOVE?

ANNE FENELES
High School for Global Citizenship

Love is a bag of questions and feelings
Love is confusion

Love is laughter
Love is tears

Heartbreak
Happiness
Love is strong

"True love is like a ghost.
All talk about it
Few have seen it."

WHO AM I?

AKILAH FRANCIS
High School for Global Citizenship

Who am I?
I am a girl who wants to be independent

Who am I?
I am calm and quiet
Sometimes disgusted by the world
For the littlest mistake

Who am I?
I am the beauty of a flower that blossoms on a sunny spring day

Who am I?
I am the light shining through the darkness, covering up pain that reflects itself onto the world

Who am I?
I am just a young lady
Proud to be me right now
And who has a lot coming in her future

Who am I?
I am the moments and memories that surprise you in life

LETTER TO MY FUTURE SELF

TONI VERNON
High School for Global Citizenship

Hey, Girl.

I am writing this letter at the age of 17.
Weeks away from being 18.
Yeah, the big 18...
I’m preparing to go to private school out of NY and in CT.

Meaning, I’m going to be on my own.
No Mommy to help or cry to whenever I need help.

Remember, at a young age of 12?
We had a drinking problem.
Remember, at age 4 being abandoned by our father?
Watching Mom cry at night.
Those times were hard but we got through them.

I’m writing this to say don’t give up.
We made it through.
Always remember,
We can make it through anything.
I HAVE SEEN
CODY LOPEZ
High School for Global Citizenship

I have seen people laugh
I have seen people cry
I have seen people die
I just don't know why

I have seen black people get pushed back
I have seen through that stormy day
I have seen good people starve
I have seen my family shot

I have seen war break loose
I have seen loved ones happy in front of my dreamy eyes
I have seen a person fall on the tracks
I have seen an old lady break her back
I have seen myself with torn shoes
I have seen my eyes black and blue
I have seen myself with you as dream come true
I have seen myself as a leader
I have seen myself as a team player

Now my question is…
What have you seen?

I HAVE SEEN
MARYANN JACKSON
High School For Global Citizenship

I have seen the hurt of those who have lost loved ones
I have seen guilt, pain, and sadness
I have heard "...should have known to pray"

I have heard fear of waking up without a place to lay heads
I have seen the struggle to keep going
I have seen self-hatred

The worries of life
The multitude of laughter

The whispering lips

The cry of the saints
The down faces of the poor and mournful
The waiting for someone to hear the moans of their hearts

WHAT IS LEFT?
DERON JOSEPH
High School for Global Citizenship

Grew up in St. Lucia
Where people got together for fun
Came to America where gangs get together
What is left?

I saw black males selling drugs
I have seen children get in trouble with the law
I have seen the struggle
I have seen people getting caught up in the crossfire
Not what I expected
What is left?

I have African-American guy’s pants hanging
I see teenagers making kids
That’s not a dream
Not what Dr. King wanted
Think about the future
What is left?

I HAVE SEEN
KIMBERLY HARRY
High School for Global Citizenship

I have seen
My friends act funny around other people
I have seen
Little girls turn tricks to make quick money just to look cute
What is left?

I have seen
Boys I care for play me for tricks and birds
I have seen homeless people sleep on trains
Because they don’t have anywhere to go
I have seen black on black fights
What is left?

Dumb things that get you
Killed or hurt

What is left?

Love

TONI-ANN FRANCIS
High School for Global Citizenship

Roses are red
Violets are blue
That’s how all love poems start
But in love this isn’t even a clue
I MATTER
BETH HISKEY
High School for Global Citizenship

I matter.

I matter when you tell me I do.
But you don't.
I matter when I call your mother.
But only then?
I matter when you explode with passion
When your words could wipe the page with me.
I matter when your paper glows with promise.
I matter.

I matter when you don't want me to.
I matter when I care.
And when you don't.
When I ask questions you won't answer.
I matter when you think, and even more when you don't.
I matter when fists pop like fireworks and when bullets fly like
lost hopes
But you're at home because “You give mad work, Miss.”
I matter.

I matter when you curse at me
When you crumple my papers and drop them on the floor
My time being wrinkled between your fingertips
And tossed aside with my tears.

I matter.
I STILL matter.
But we don't talk about that.

Misconception of the movies
What is left?

I mean
After the kisses from my son
What is left?
No one to say I love you
No one to see my pain
No one to hear my cries
No one to feel my eye
No one to taste the blood

Why can't I just be loved?

What is left?

I am STRONG
I am BLACK
I am an ACHIEVER
I am LIVING FACTS

I wear hoodies to hide the track
Glasses to hide my eyes
I have testified
So now...

What is left?

WHAT IS LEFT?
NYIESHA MCDONALD
High School for Global Citizenship

After the tears I shed
The rape and abuse
The I love yous
What is left?

I mean
After relationships misleading and
The pain of breastfeeding
After the nickels and dimes
The “I will testify”
The project hallways
And the piss in the stairways
What is left?

I mean
Where is the love?
I used the needle and drugs
Makeup to hide the bruises

I am what's left

I HAVE SEEN WHAT IS LEFT?
KRystAL nATT
High School for Global Citizenship

What is left?
I have seen loyal friends
Transform into enemies

What is left?
I have seen young kids
Taken from their families

What is left?
I have seen loved ones shot
Left in their own blood

What is left?
After blizzards and rainstorms
After pain and sorrow
After everything is gone
I have seen everyone disappear, too

All I have is myself

I am what's left
REMEMBER WHEN
SHONTOL MCKENZIE
High School for Global Citizenship

Give me a moment to remind you of what we had

Remember when you asked me to be your girl
You were too shy (so you wrote it in a letter)
Remember when the night was cold
You gave me your sweater
Remember when you told me you loved me
You had that cute smile on your face

Remember when I cried
You wiped away my tears and said everything would be okay
Remember when you said I was your heartbeat
You were too shy (so you wrote it in a message)
Remember when you broke my heart
Remember when I told you I was leaving
You pretended you cared
Remember when I was packed
Ready to go

All you did was cry

Remember you saw me happy
You wished it were you
But nothing is left

Remember
All our memories
Are gone

STRONG BLACK WOMAN NEEDED
SABRINA SMITH
High School for Global Citizenship

Every man needs a faithful lady by his side
Until the day he dies
A real strong, black woman

She doesn't need to show skin
Nor "make that ass shake"
He wants a beautiful, all natural girl
Smart, brave, and strong
Can cook and clean
One that pleases him and him alone
Someone he can lean on
Amazing mother
He wants a soul mate
That will last a lifetime

So, wifey, take your place
Little girls stay away
Strong black woman needed

WHAT IS LOVE?
MASHANA KELLMAN
High School for Global Citizenship

Is love a story?
Is love a movie?
Is love a song?

It is music to my ears
Everywhere the breeze blows
It struck me

I am getting to hate love
It's a too much
Used phrase
Not coming from the heart

What is love?

WHAT IS LEFT?
RANDY BERTRAND
High School for Global Citizenship

I have seen kids cry
I have seen parents look at their kids like garbage
After the rough treatment and lack of care
What is left?

Social media captures souls with lies
Turn them against the world
I have seen kids on Facebook crave for likes more than love itself
After kids turn into bullies gang members, killed because love wasn’t there
What is left?

I have seen cuts and bruises
As if day suddenly turns into night
Unmoved hearts turn into the devil’s playground
After the pain and careless trust
What is left?

And I wonder
What is life?
What is left?
LOVE IS AN ILLUSION
ALONDRA ESTEVEZ
High School for Global Citizenship

Love at first sight:
The magic and fantasy felt in the heart
The sensation shivering through your body
Leaving behind the true colors
The look in one’s eyes
You feel the heat

Love is an illusion

WHAT IS LOVE?
DASHAAN DUNN
High School for Global Citizenship

Love is an emotion that can’t be expressed through media
It is being on the phone and listening
It’s a surge of happiness that never fades
It’s spending the rest of your life with the one object with no regrets

True love can be achieved through pain and sorrow
It will never be destroyed
It is not a random occurrence
It has to happen

BUTTERFLIES
GOLDIE LEMORIN
High School for Global Citizenship

I find myself nervous

Is it your smile?
Your cool personality?
Beautiful eyes?
Am I weird?
Too short?
Not skinny enough?
Why won’t you talk to me?

I see you
I don’t know why
Butterflies spread their wings in my stomach

JEALOUSY
CHRISTOPHER ETIENNE
High School for Global Citizenship

I’m so jealous!
He’s wack in ball but still gets picked
Scores 4 points and that’s it
And guess what…he still gets the chicks

I’m so jealous!
They call him Casanova
Hits homeruns with girls, like Sammy Sosa
I call him a Celtic ‘cause he’s a lucky clover

I’m so jealous!
It’s 2017 and he creates his own games
Made the Hall of Fame
Now everybody knows his name

He’s so jealous!
He wants to switch places
Little did he know that I’m just doing the basics
But I always wondered how 2nd place tastes

I BELIEVE
TABITHA RODRIGUEZ
High School for Global Citizenship

I have witnessed promises being made just to be broken
I believe in second chances
I believe in learning from your mistakes
Not only do I believe
I have seen

I have witnessed smiles that cover pain
The sun may cover rain
I believe it is possible to
Be in the light and feel as if you’re in the dark
Be surrounded by people and still feel alone
But I don’t believe in letting things free
When things aren’t going right

I have believed

I BELIEVE/I HAVE SEEN
TANIYA AKTER
High School for Global Citizenship

I believe someone’s personality can be really important
I believe a person can be really daring and truthful
I have seen many people not believing who they are
I have seen the vision of reality can be as one
I believe that without my family I can’t live
I believe every human being is as one family
I have seen my family as one.

Once upon a time
There was a new girl in town
She had family
Lots of happiness and goals and pressure

---

I BELIEVE
IVONNA HEATH
High School for Global Citizenship

I believe society has not given us a chance
To choose our path
We are judged by our skin color
Or the way we walk
Talk
Dress

But
Nothing should stop one
From their dreams:
Neither family nor society

I believe in a dream:
Everyone has the right to dream

I believe in true love:
One day we will all find that special one

I believe in education:
That is the key to your success

I believe in freedom:
Living life as we please

---

DOES IT MATTER?
GARY SYDNEY & RANDELLE TUDOR
High School for Global Citizenship

Does it matter what my size is?
Does it matter that I sag my pants?
Does it matter where I’m from?
Does it matter what my skin color is?
Does it matter that my teacher doesn’t like me?
Does it matter what my background is?
Does it matter what I did in the past?
Does it matter if I’m poor?
Does it matter if I defend myself?
Does it matter if the police don’t like me?
Does it matter what I see?

Does it matter what I want to be?
What really matters?

---

CONCRETE JUNGLE
DELROY MANNING
High School for Global Citizenship

Seeing bodies on the ground
Became the norm
It didn’t matter, though
’cause the brother told me, “after every storm is a calm”

It’s scary losing people you’ve seen every day
It’s hard that life has to go on this way
It’s okay, though, ’cause we’re all going one day

These things really have me thinking maybe death is a reward for living
This life full of senseless killing
Life was hard, too many people crying
Mom, Dad, boy, girl, even babies dying

Life seems harder
Woke one morning and lost my brother
I hope my Mom understands
I work so hard to be a better man

A dog eats dog world
You have to be rough
To survive in this place
You have to look tough

I see success in my path
And I’m going for it

---

LOVE
YENESIS ORTEGA
High School for Global Citizenship

Love is such a strong word
Thrown around like nothing
Those that really mean it
Don’t get appreciated
Everyone thinks they’re lying
So many times that it means nothing
I’m one of those that don’t believe
Have had that word thrown at me

I’m sure of the love I feel for my parents

Everybody else is temporary
I MATTER
ANNMARIA PATTERSON
High School for Global Citizenship

I am the face that broke the statistic
The one who decided that beauty is determined by lipstick
The one who decided not to follow the path
And decided to go to math
The girl who’ll leave a legacy
Not be blinded by romance, but open my eyes and see

I am the face of
Black is beautiful
And stop putting up with the bull
I am the one who walked away
Stayed focused even though at times I went astray

I will lie to protect the truth
Remembering the days of Sugar Daddy and Baby Ruths
Jersey dresses with uptown
Universoul circus with actual clowns
Big Pun ‘cause “I don’t wanna be a `playa no mo’”
And “Mom, can I get 50 cents to go to the store?”

I matter because I’m authentic
A true genetic
I matter to this borough, city, state, and nation
I’m the last breath of the pure generation!

WHY DO I MATTER?
ERICK SANCHEZ
High School for Global Citizenship

Why am I here?
Here in this moment?

I believe I matter because in this world I’m a little fish
Swimming in the waters of the great white shark
I matter because every day I spend with the sharks,
I grow bigger and bigger with experience

I matter because I’m cute, nice, smart, funny
And dangerous
I matter because I know where I started
And because I don’t know where I will end

I matter because where I end
Won’t be a wasteland
I will be remembered with the fingerprints I left on people

I HAVE SEEN
VIC JOHNNY
High School for Global Citizenship

I have seen people die
For their rights and wrongs
In my community
I have seen it all

I believe in justice
I have seen love from year to year…
I believe in the sunshine of others

And I believe for every justice there is something
And for every something there is someone

I have seen

ANGRY POEM
CLARA PERALTA
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I am a black, nasty raven eating dead, unclean meat
I am a volcano
I am a bull that will fight back or explode
I am angry that I want to punch something
I could scream into space
I am a prisoner

My teachers help calm me
Without them, who will help me?

I want to cool my anger with happiness and laughter
I want to be a pure dove eating clean seeds
I want to be free
I want to help others
I want to be close to God
I want to make things right
I want to be free
With courage and obedience

I will be free

AS I WALK
LUIS GARCIA
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I walk down the street
I see society
Different races, personalities, genders
The normal, the popular, the trenders (and also the pretenders)
Fakeness throughout the world
Liars throughout our homes
Realness throughout our hearts
Terrors have flown in
We are here to live until we see
The light with that gate or door
We have our wrongs and rights
But when we come together
You bet we’ll fight

People are special
One of a kind
One way or another
Peace we will find

I BELIEVE
KYLAH WATERS
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I believe others die but we still live
People walk away and come back
Just to make their own hands heavier

I have seen blood in our veins turn to water
I have seen water imitate blood
But it isn’t the same

I can only give what I receive

LETTER TO 25
SUDAN SALAWE
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Dear Me:

You have these dreams
You want to become a music artist on stage and performing
You want people to join your creativity

You have these dreams
You’re very passionate
But you feel like there’s no chance
There’s no time
Indeed there is a struggle

But you have these dreams ready to achieve
There’s still a chance
You can still do it
Look to the future
Not ever is it too late to do what we love

Remember that…

I BELIEVE
GERSON CHANDLER
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I believe love is beautiful
I believe it because it gives everything a human would want
It makes you feel like you could fly
Like you could make a shot every minute in a basketball game

Love is everything

I believe love exists
I believe it because it’s true

I believe it because it happened to me

I Believe
JUSTIN JOACHIN
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I believe in my soul
I have grown from a little boy to a grown man
I believe in pain

I have seen lives giving
I believe in doing better
I have seen lives taking

But

I believe in love.

GROWING UP
PAUL STEPHENSON
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Now I’m next to nine years old
And crying’s not for me
But if I touch my mother’s hand
Perhaps no one will see

I’m Just One

IYISHIA PETERS
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Billions of people in the world
I’m just one
Do I matter?

If someone feels like I don’t matter
It doesn’t matter
To a stranger, I’m a stranger
You only matter when something bad happens
I was born alone
I'll die alone
I matter
Because I’m the only one who has my back

I
ALEXANDRIA HECKER
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I matter because
My mother loves me
I matter because
I was born into this world
I matter because
People care about me
I matter because
Friends always want me around

I wouldn't be alive
If I didn't matter

I MATTER
JOSHUA DIAZ
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I am important
I am who I am meant to be
There are people who care about me
I make a difference

I matter
Because I say I matter

I MATTER LIKE
SHYVON DONTCH
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I matter like trees and the nice cool breeze
I matter like cake
I matter like the sky
I matter like you

I matter to God

And if I left
I would matter even more

*#1%
LARRY MORALES
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I don't matter because
I don't matter because

I don't matter because
I don't matter because

I don't matter because
I don't matter because

I don't matter because
I don't matter because

I HAVE NO ----

FOR ME, NOT FOR YOU
REBECCA FLORES
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

My family loves me
I love them
I matter

My friends are there for me
I am there for them
I matter

Because I help people
And they help me
For me
Not for you

I live
I love
I dream
I matter
I MATTER BECAUSE
KENYA PRIMUS
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

I matter
Because I am the first daughter of
Georgina Bookard

I matter
Because I am the eldest grandchild of
Francine Bookard

I matter
Because my name in the government system—a president's letter in the mail
Kenya Zakiya Primus

I matter
Because I bring something extra
And
Because
Allah
Above
Said So

I MATTER
LESLIE LUNA
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Being me is a blessing
Being you is a joke

I'm me
You don't know my story

My true colors are real
Not fake like red being blue

Burning every obstacle
I'm orange like flames

Yellow because I'm bright
Bright like the sun's light

I'm me
Being you is a joke

DON'T JUDGE MY COVER
CRYSTAL SANTIAGO
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Read my pages
I am a story
   Turn my pages
My cover…

Behind that
I have a fake smile
   It's been me
I've been crying for awhile

I bite my lip
Hold back screams
   No one was there
To wipe down my streams

The cuts
Never go deep
   Just below the surface
Is where the pain keeps

You're watching my pain
Eat me alive
   Why should I keep
Trying to strive?

I never asked to do or die
Guess what?
   My whole
Life's a lie

LOVE
MICHAELA DAVIS
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Love
A four-letter word

He smiled
He said he loved me

We shared laughs
We shared hugs

His touch was warm
Too bad it had to end

He was my reality
But now in my dreams

Love
Just a four-letter word
Don’t judge my cover
Read my pages
I am a story
Just turn my pages

THAT PERSON MAY NOT BE YOU
ANNMARIE BONANNO
Life Academy High School for Film and Music
Someone appreciates something about me
Someone appreciates my personality, humor, and interests
And that person may not be you
That person may not be you

I matter to my friends
I matter to my family
I might not matter to you
But I matter to someone

I MATTER
ANTHONY DALEY
Life Academy High School for Film and Music
People say
I matter in life

I know

The world needs me

REASONS
SABRINA SEMENDOFF
Life Academy High School for Film and Music
I'm alive
I matter

She had me at a young age
I matter

I am safe while he rots in jail
I matter

Anything I do is my decision
I matter

I am here
I matter

I am myself
And that's what matters to me

THE WINDOW
MYA RODRIGUEZ
Life Academy High School for Film and Music
I look out and see
Grass
Land
People
Blue sky
I see peace

I want it

Open the window
Open it wide and look down

I see pain going away
I see peace

I close my eyes
Say a prayer
"I just wanna be happy again"

Stick my head out
Stand on the ledge
Just
Let
Go

I am
Falling
I feel the pain
In my heart
Go away

Hit ground
Body can't move
I am breathing
I cry
I thought I was going to be happy

I just made the pain worse

FOR A PURPOSE
LAELE PAGANO
Life Academy High School for Film and Music
To live in this world
To live and explore
To try new opportunities
I want to see how much I matter with what I can do

The Lord made me
I just don't know why
But I have faith that I matter
Somehow
I live
To experience
To breathe
To feel
To love
And to believe
For a purpose

NOT REALLY SURE
DOMINIQUE HOSKEY
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

What would I have to do to matter to family?
Gain someone else’s trust to get that same feeling back?
Loved ones always stab you in the back
Do I matter in this world?
Not really sure

LOVE
MARISSA PAGAN
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

Love is a figment of the imagination
I don't really love anything
I never had love
Never had
Never will
Being alone I feel amazing
Then sad
I'm alone

WE FIGHT/WE LOVE
SONIA SEHOR
Life Academy High School for Film and Music

We fight ‘til the day we die
We hurt each other but never apologize
Didn’t realize until you caught my eye
Got shocked and surprised
You said you love me but it was all a lie

Even skies tried to warn me of your cries
I was blinded
We were high until it all died

You said you loved me
That was a disguise

Ended up broken hearted
 Came out hardened
But in every mistake there's a lesson
Next time I'll try to be wise

I COME FROM A PLACE
IMANI ALLEYNE
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

I come from a place where each day is a hustle and bustle.
Where you can stand on the corner and hear the horns blow
and traffic jam.
Where music is history and lyrics are deep like an ocean.

I come from a place where each day is a new beginning.
I was one who never spoke unless it empowered silence.
Tell them I am what I am.
I am righteous, intelligent, beautiful—
But never perfect.

Speak of me as if I was worth a million dollars.
I was one who never held back.
Was ready to take on whatever the world had to offer.
When I speak, my words are worth listening to.
For the times I just stood there, waiting for the ocean to pass
through my feet,
I remained nameless.

MY PEOPLE
ZACHIA BRITTON
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

My people see the world with open eyes
My people see the world with closed eyes

The bright sun illuminating the way
And the moon keeps the bad spirits away

My people see the world with open eyes
My people see the world with closed eyes

We dare to dream aloud
We cuddle up in the insecurities
And use that cloud that takes control of our mind
The force that controls us is both night and day

The strength we are given
Forms the dragon that roars like a million fireflies
Illuminating the clearance that led us back to what we are and
who we are

My people see the world with open eyes
My people see the world with closed eyes
Our people see the world together
IF I...
KAHLIYAH BROWN
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

If I were more outspoken, confident and not broken
Maybe if I were cool…
If I were ordinary like the girls in high school
With green hair, pretty eyes, and thick thighs
If I were your slave and did everything you said,
Would we still be together today?

I loved you
But I know after today, me and you will never be the same

There was him, there was you, her, and then there was me
You wore down my heart
Split it into broken parts, even though my friends told me from the start
I want you to know that
Love comes and it sure enough goes,
But another me will never be so…

If I were taller, more mature, and didn't laugh at things that were immature
Would you still be here?
If I didn't cry all the time would you still be here?
If I didn't hide my eyes in the pictures, would you try?
If I had longer hair, didn't sweet things I heard with my own ears,
Would you still be here?
If you got a call that I died tomorrow,
Would you still be here?
If you heard I took my last breath, Would you still be here?
NO!
But I would be there...

GAME CHANGER
CHRISTINA FELIX
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

Everything changed when my close friend was hurt
Why?
That is my question . . .Why?
Why must us girls sit here and give our all to a guy
A guy who has potential to be a game changer
And have some kind of fame
But instead he'd rather play the game
Alright, so here's how they play:
They tell you “I love you” on one day
Then you trip and fall so hard
You get bruised and scarred
Then they say “I want you to be my wife”
But by then you’re so hurt
And ready to stab him with a knife
That was only day two
So here's day three:

“Baby girl, will you give your all to me?”
You say yes
When you were supposed to say no
By day four you’re screaming
“Baby don’t leave me”
But guess what, baby girl...he's all GONE
That's how he plays
You’re screaming “he took my innocence away”
While in his head he's ready to play the game all over again
But wait, it's not over
He comes and wants you back
You being foolish, you take him back.
The difference is now you’ve learned how to play
So you don’t believe all the lies he says
Now that you know the rules,
You play the game
And he’s mad because you took his title away
He was nothing but a player
Who got played
Which makes you a game changer in every way.

ME!
WADE FLEMMING
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

Tell them that I was one with guts.
I was one with the light on me.
I was one who knew the depths of the oceans like the structure of a person.
I beg of you to speak of me, OF ME, only as my heart feels it should be spoken of.

I was in the captivity of Darkness until God himself brought me to the light.
The light of which I joined the surrounding people.
A future to look upon as I soar up to new heights.
Heights that could only be achieved by my imagination.
I was one with the power in my soul to say “THIS IS ME”!
I was one who had the courage to scream to the world and say that I AM POWERFUL!
I am not a washed up seashell by the seashore.
I am a living person.

Tell them that I make mistakes, but that only justifies the fact that I am 100% human.
Tell them that I felt like nobody, but I became one who was somebody, an important little piece to the world along with the other billion that do matter, such as each and every one of you.
So, tell them that I hold power like everyone else.
Tell them that I am human.
Tell them that I am special.
Tell them that I AM ME!
MY PEOPLE
SHANIA GABBURT
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

My people let their insecurities drown the hope they need to survive
What is there to life if all we do is keep secrets to make our image stay alive?
My people lie to those they love the most
All you’re doing is leaving your self worth out in the fire to burn and roast
My people do wrong in the shadows but that soon comes out in the light
Where is our discipline our ability to fight?
To fight against the wrong, to live our truth
Instead of being themselves, my people follow the kids of their youth
My people are overly conceited but somehow insecure
These girls giving their bodies and souls to boys that only want more
My people tell these boys they’ll do whatever it takes
But not realizing the bigger picture, their lives are at stake
My people want to be respected,
But walk up in the house at 4 am
Their parent’s rules are being neglected
Friday and Saturday evenings, my people party and dance till they’re sore
But still wake up at 7 am on Sunday morning
To walk through that church door
I guess what I’m saying is
My people allow themselves to get caught up in the mix
Making so many bad decisions, there is so much damage to fix

IF I COULD TALK TO GOD
DATHAN GREENIDGE
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

If I could talk to God, I would ask him one thing:
Can I see my dad again?
It's hard living with a mom who's trying her best
To keep a roof over my head and keep me safe.
I fail classes, I curse at teachers,
And when they say "I'm going to tell your parents" I just look at them and smile,
'Cause I know something will happen but it won't last for long.
PTA meetings come, she goes to my teachers, they tell her the bad things I do...
She cries on the inside and she shows a face
A face I remember,
The same face she made when the doctor came out the room
And told us the devastating news:
That my dad just died from a heart attack.
I want to tell my mom, “You can expect more from me, and it won't happen again”
I want to tell my mom “I Am Sorry”.

HER TEACHER TOLD HER
CHAVALI GUANCE
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

Her teacher said to go home and write a page
And that whatever comes out is true
But if she pours her heart out on this page
What would it leave her?
How would it show her?
She'd just be an emotional person
Scared of the words that define her
Scared of who she's gonna be
Who she's gonna turn into
Secretly broken
Caring about others’ words
But not showing it

Hiding
Hiding every little thing
That's on the she's gone
Hiding every emotion
Using music to hide her inner thoughts
To hide the acting she wants to pull
Using music as her muse
But when there's no music
Music to calm her soul
To help hide her actions words thoughts
Her vicious attitude
What would it leave her as?

Leaving her as a ticking time bomb
Just waiting to go off the bus out scream at the word
And lose it cause she can no longer keep anything in
'Cause she can't take anymore
She can't hold back
The hatred, the sorrow, the love, the pain, the hurt, the stress, the lies,
The secrets she's been through that she just wants to take it all away

But she can't
And she doesn't need you to give her those labels
'Cause you know what?
YOU CAN'T DEFINE ME

ONE SECOND
KAIA HAWKINS
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

One second can change your life forever.
The loudest noise rings in my ears.
So much dust burns my eyes as I look out the dirty mirror.
People are screaming and scared out of their minds as the blood drips from innocent people.
As the buildings slowly crumble down the fire gleaming out of the burning windows.
Smoke so gray you could hardly see or find anyone.
You feel lost and don't know where to turn as my eyes are burning trying to find my way out.
I scream and shout...no one hears me.
What about me?
Can anyone see me?
One second that's all it took one second to change my life forever.

MY GAME CHANGER
SEMIRA HIRSAWA
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

I'm not the most confident person around, but I am always determined.

I saw others doing what they had to do to strive to their goal.
This showed me that I can do whatever I want so I gave confidence to my soul.
This game changer showed me the way of reaching my goal in just one day.
Doing something I can't even say to do, but the person that pushed me is you.

You, the voice I hear that makes me overwhelmed and happy.
You are the secret to my confidence.
Without you I wouldn't have the stamina to do what I love to.
So thank you for helping me find my talent
My game changer is now complete.

MY ABILITY
TIARRA JORGE LOZADA
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

If I was able to go back in time,
I would give the wounded a bulletproof vest
Take away the ropes
Of kids who once hung themselves
Drain the pills
That once belonged to the ones who overdosed

If I had the power to control everything,
I would dispose of the cruel and wicked like leftover food down a sink drain

If there was a huge button reading “purify this earth”,
I would press it in a heartbeat

Because at this moment, that's exactly what this earth needs
Inspired by Others
SHANNOON MARS
Brooklyn High School of the Arts
I'm an empty vessel

I have no face
Laid out in the fields of questions
I'll wonder, unbroken by uncertainty
I'll rise a new me.
Tell them I'll keep it real
Ain't no walk in the park ever faced without obstacles
I'll turn my fist to a pistol in the sight of danger
Let the blood leeching demons and goblins speak of fear
In the presence of the new me
Ain't no one going to tell me I can't.
I'm 6 ft. beneath the soil
Let my pain look like grace
I'll remain nameless

SCARS DON'T HEAL
(A POEM FOR ALLISON JACLYN PARKER)
TABITHA MEHL
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

The pain... the abuse...
Everything my life has been through...
It's still nothing compared to what you did...

The tears I’ve cried,
the scars you left...
Still nothing compared to what you said...

So the question still remains…
‘If I die… where will you be…?’

My heart has spilled and split into two…
Each half cut...scraped...
Blood dripping down scarred arms,
And sliding across broken pieces...

All because of you...
You just don't know that I'm not as strong as I used to be...
Nobody cares anymore...

So I’ll just let you know...
SCARS DON'T HEAL... THEY FADE...
BUT THE PAIN YOU CAUSED WILL...
NEVER... GO... AWAY...

LOVE IS A GAME CHANGER
CHRISTERFFUR MORRISON
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

Love is a game changer.
When we kissed, it was everything,
But when we argued, I got confused.
Hate came into the picture
And when she was leaving me,
I cried and sang old time blues.
I admit it, I wasn’t a real man.
All I wanted to do was get in your pants.
Yeah, I drink, I smoke, I had everything
Until the best thing that ever happened to me, left my life.
I used to say to myself, “I’d rather die”,
But to take away the pain, I’d just sit at the beach and cry.

But love took over.
I stopped everything I used to do
Because love changed my life.
I saw her the other day, and I got on one knee
And she said yes.
I know love is a game changer
Because the best thing that ever happened to me
Gave me another chance.

And I learned the true meaning of love
So now I’m alone all alone.
I don’t need no one but myself

Tell them that I’m a mistake, just like other people
That I’m not perfection
But a lesson learned on earth.
I can’t breathe anymore
I can’t feel
I’m hurt in the inside and my scars are healing, they’re bleeding out

Tell them that I’m not ready to leave this world yet
That I will take my last breathe when I’m happy and feel proud
Of what I’ve accomplished
Tell them I’m not yet dead

---

**I SEE HER, YOU DON'T**

LESLIE PAGAN
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

You see her smiling
You see her happy
It turns out that her life is crappy
She smiles to hide her pain inside

Because showing your pain means questions
Questions but she does not know the answer

You see her smiling
Then she turns her head and starts crying
Everything changed when I saw her turn and cry
All she presented herself as was a lie

You see her, she’s smiling
I see her tears fall from her eyes
Her tears are soft and quiet
Like the way she really is
Yet to others she shows herself as someone she isn’t

You see her, she’s smiling
I see her she’s falling apart

**THE KIND OF LOVE**

KEISHA PRUITT
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

Everyone wants love.
You know what I want?
I want the kind of love that doesn't need to be said out loud,
The kind of love where you could see it in my eyes,
The kind I can brag about
The kind of love where I just look at you and smile for no apparent reason,

I want the kind of love where you call me in the middle of class
Just to hear my voice kind of love.
The kind of love where you repay me in bear tight hugs and heartwarming smiles
Honey dipped kisses and insert imagination here kind of love,
The kind of love where if I recite a poem about it,
Each one of you won't conclude that it's a male!
The kind of love where society doesn't tear us to shreds
With the claws that we call words.
The kind of love where all our friends can say “Yassss”.
The kind of love where even Rick Ross doesn't say “Uhhh”,
He does the hand movement along with the rest of us.
The kind of love where “If I Ain’t got Nothing, I Got You” kind of love,
The kind of love where we’re on the phone for hours saying absolutely nothing,
The kind of love where I wake up and you’re next to me, kind of love.
You know what I want?

I Want A Real Love.
Just like everybody else.

---

**TELL THEM**

DIANA PINA
Brooklyn High School of the Arts

Tell them I was once alive in this world
That I breathed in the air
I was a living creature roaming around
Searching for her destination
But never got there
Because I was so naïve and I fell in love with the meaning of in love

But I fell
And I got hurt
TIRED
TRENELL WATTS
Brooklyn High School of the Arts
I'm tired of trying to be happy, it's exhausting.
I'm tired of breaking down in tears for the smallest things
I'm tired of hating myself
I'm tired of pretending
I'm tired of missing people.

I'm tired of wishing I could start over
I'm tired of feeling empty inside
I'm tired of remembering
I'm tired of needing help
I'm tired of feeling insane
I'm tired of feeling worthless
I'm tired of crying

I'm tired of dreaming of a life I know I will never have
I'm tired of waiting for the best day of my life to happen
I'm tired of having high expectations, they always lead to
disappointments

I'm tired of wishing for things
I'm tired of waking up in the morning
I'm tired of feeling angry
I'm tired of feeling stuck
But most of all, I'm tired of being tired.

SILENCE IS POWER
IRIS ATERLEY
ACORN Community High School
I’d rather be left alone
To be quiet.
A time for me to think and relax.
I don’t understand
Why people bother me and hurt me
I can’t understand
Why I’m the victim of their hurt and pain.

I am not David
I can not be the giant
I threw my stones
and he crushed my soul.
I am not a mirror.
You see you
Not me.

I am breakable and can crack if you hit me hard.

Silence is my power.
It tells you I will not answer or attack
Your questions, comments, and threats.
I am silent for a reason.
My power is greater and stronger than you will ever be.

WHO AM I
UTON POWELL
ACORN Community High School
I am hot like a heat wave hot
I am cold hearted, like a winter blizzard
But smooth like a smoothie
I am bright like the sun
But don’t shine like a diamond

I am a man
I am myself; no one else can be me
I am smart like a scientist, with the memory of an elephant
I am a man—
A man made not by choice
I am a man—
A man of my word

I am undefined like the unknown
I am one of a kind like a lucky coin
I am at the top of them all, slowly taking steps down

Is it because I pay more attention to irrelevant things than important stuff?
Or is it because I need to take a break...
a break from stress.

I am a Man.

UNTITLED...
MONEEAMA MILES
ACORN Community High School
The sadness and the pain you bring upon me make me hate you more
The way I cry and have no shoulder to lean on makes me hate you more
The way you expect me to have a big smile on my face
After losing not one but two family members makes me hate you more
The way you start yelling and I simply look at you dumbfounded
And ask you who you talking to...

I am trying to overcome the sadness of two deaths
Bodies lying restless in caskets
Put me to test

Should I cry or act like it never happened?
Does crying show how much I care?
Or should I say cared...

Lying down thinking of things I do and don’t care for
When you start to lose important people to your left and right,
You have fewer things to care about
Does it sound like I'm implying that I don't care for anything?
My heart once pumped thick red blood, but as I get conceited
and careless,
A heart that was once red begins to turn black
Heartless is what they are soon bound to call me

Waiting for the man above to give me my healing
This may take days... months... maybe even years
Years before I could forget about all this simple stuff that an-
noys me
Months before I actually start caring about the things I need to
care for
And days before all those motives are put into action

The way you smile while I shed tears makes me hate you more
The way you cut me off before I could finish my thought
makes me hate you more
The way you walk with your head held high while mine is
down
While you're all smiles and I'm all frowns
The way you hug me when I don't want to be touched
The way you secretly make me cry behind closed doors
All that stuff makes me hate you... more

The stress and the aggravation is building up
Praying...
It's something that I only do when I feel like I'm about to get in
too deep
Maybe if I started doing it everyday,
The pain, aggravation, and stress would not be this high

Their identities identify the independent intelligent important
things in life
Their identities identify the strong solid sturdy things in life
My identity reflects on all those who put me to test
Thinking I cannot overcome this downfall

But this time I ain't falling apart
I'm gonna pick up my pieces and move along
And when I come back
I'll be twice as strong

Wanna fight me?
Good
'Cuz I'm ready
The feelings that used to weigh me down
Aren't so heavy
I promise not to cry
I'll keep my head up high

You are no longer a distraction
I won't give you the satisfaction
Try!
Try and break me
I promise it won't faze me

I'm gonna laugh in your face
And fill your mouth with distaste
You find me funny?
I hope you know that bright isn't always sunny

In fact I prefer the dark
In my definition it's cruel realistic art
Is that what I heard?
You think I'm absurd?

I'm tired of hiding
Sick of trying
Screw them all—
I will overcome my downfalls!

I'm better alone
Don't need any lifeless mindless clones
I'm good with me
That's all I need

Wanna join me?
That's just too bad
I travel alone
That's all I've ever had

No more crying, lying, or trying
I'm gonna do me
I'm gonna be free
Be what may be
Mostly, breathe

DISTASTE
MIANA VEGA
ACORN Community High School

I put my hands up 'cuz I'm ready to fight
No more playing
It all ends tonight
Only two options: fight or flight
It's my perspective, my choice, my sight

I'm tired I'm worn
But I refuse to be torn
You can ignore me like I'm not there
But by my stance I show no fear

You can't own me anymore
And of this I'm sure
I'll raise my voice and scream NO MORE!!

Play with me, play with my heart
I saw the rubric for this show
I thought it was crazy
Just maybe
I'm about to tell the D.O.E something crazy
Your logistics got me twisted
Y'all told me I had to keep a 3.5 GPA
So I wouldn't become a statistic

Y'all told me to use big words like condensation and solaration
And don't forget the abbreviation
I bet I got half of y'all contemplating
I'm 15 but never an understatement
At times I wish I could escape
From the thought of an underdog
In history we weren't allowed to read
Now you see me in this prologue

This is to the people who told me I was nothing
Look at me now
I'm on stage preaching something
I want to state that not only did I create
But I can relate.
I just want to know who told you
To tell me who to be?
And if so they must not have a degree
'Cause damn, they don't even know me

Don't judge a book by its cover
Because there are things yet to be discovered
Don't cut class to watch the time pass
Sit your butt in a seat and watch the teacher teach
Watch yourself reach your highest peak

Sit down and open a book
Don't be overlooked
Knowledge is a sacrifice that comes at a high price
Otherwise you will prove them right
You're just a statistic with no logistic

Now capture this picture like a bible scripture
As I walk off stage remember I was not a statistic
But I am someone realistic

'B.Cause it seems to these, a gun has to be shown
They're accident prone, they'll break your bones
Have you asking where are their homes

It's not their fault it's their parents you see
They're the ones who frequently create these menaces of society
They say the menace uses that piece of crap of a gun
People scared to not wake up and see the next day's sun

See those Brook and Lyn kids, they weren't known
Since no one knew the parents and no one knew they were even grown
No one loved them, but people didn't know
They were hurting deep, but their pain didn't show
They cover their pain with the use of a gun
The weapon that took a mother & father from daughter & son

See what police do, they save us and kill us
Said the one whose pain couldn't affect us
I used the same word because the pain is so true
They claim to help us, but then cause an emotional bruise
What the hell is police gun violence?

Is it a way to keep us in silence?

Brook & Lyn were a part of that
Dealing with pain because of that gun violence crap
Thought I was done? Not at all!
Why does everyone think it's not a big deal, something so small

Brook, Lyn known for their arrival, unexpected
It's not their fault they were tested, suspected
Tested how? To use a gun
I guess they thought it was fun
It's sad they're known because of gun violence
Police thinking it's all a hazardous environment

Brook, Lyn menace of society causing pain off their pain
Running around hitting, hurting people who never hurt them
Their mind, their heart, pain.

Sadly how is this their fault?

It's also the fault of the police
Everyday somebody's dead
And there's no one to blame
Every time same problems, just a different day
People will never change; it will always be the same.
Not to pick one person to blame
But they lived life, when they were younger probably did the same
Didn't get shot though

So why shoot the one you know you see yourself within?
Why shoot the ones you can believe in?
I guess that police gun violence for you,
Brooklyn

Felt that way, died on the inside due to pain
Grew up to be about that life and step up they’re game up
Avenge a death with blood split all over the innocent floor
All to break the pain away

The menace of society, hurting society to show their true pain of their past
That’s how Brooklyn was known

WHO AM I?
EBUN ADESANYA
ACORN Community High School

“Who are you?”
“Who are you?” they say.
“Life is about knowing yourself.
Not trying to be somebody else.”

Hmm….Who am I?

I guess I should start off saying my name.
But wait—does that make me who I am?
If I called you a loser or a user
Would I be right?

Maybe the real question is what makes you who you are?
Is it your best qualities or your worst?
Is it your looks, intelligence, honesty
Or selfishness, arrogance, and jealously.
I think it’s both.

It’s too hard to figure out the “real me”.
I should just be who I want to be.

I want to be creative, self-confident, and smart.
I want to be significant,
To have my own part to play,
To be worthy of doing my bit,
To be recognized and to have my say.

Being who you want to be makes you who you are.

I told it to the last girl I didn’t want no more
But as time goes on I say I don’t care

But I look at myself
Do I really care? Wait, stop!
Do I really care?
Keep calm and stress no one, my best friend told me
I laughed and said, “how can you not stress someone you love, If you love what you see?”
How can they keep calm?
Wait stop!

I am me
When I say it I mean it ‘cause I really don’t care
Forget what I said or how I say it.
Forget me and I shall never hurt again.
Wait, stop!
No, goodbye!
Bye I say Bye.
WAIT STOP!

I try to forget
But I never forget the times we shared
The times we spent
I do love you but don’t trust you
Or I do trust but have no love
What is love with no trust?
It’s no love at all
Trust with no love
Is no trust at all

Tell me why I try so hard
Tell me why I care so much
Tell me
I hope they’re happy making me mad
But not for long
WAIT STOP!!!
Come back to me…. 

RELEASE
BRITANI FRASER
ACORN Community High School

Release my mind from your grip
Release my name from your lips
Fathers hold your daughters
I will hold myself instead
Stole my innocence we’ll just take it
Possess my body and I still taste it.
But I will not be tainted.
I will release you.
ROMEO AND JULIET
JUSTIN GIBSON
ACORN Community High School

Lemme tell you a story 'bout Romeo and Juliet
Juliet was madly in love
She acted foolish
But Romeo had love for her
It was the truest
Juliet was diggin’ his style
He was the coolest

Now I define romance as being one and holding hands
But they were more than that

They always kissed like they were from France
But this story ain’t always good
I hate to burst your bubble—

Some murders went down and Romeo got into trouble
Tybalt killed Mercutio… Romeo killed Tybalt
Then he drink up the poison and perished
Juliet found out that Romeo killed himself
She lost the one she loved so imagined how she felt
She went and took his dagger started stabbing at herself
Knife piercing through her flesh… so imagine how she felt

TELL THEM
TANGENIEQUA EDWARDS
ACORN Community High School

Tell them…
Tell them to speak of me and only me
Tell them not to judge me
For the way I act
Tell them I am different
Trying to stand out
Tell them I come correct
Tell them I may look harmless
But I can do some damage
Tell them to speak of me and only me
Tell them to know my past and what
I have been through
Tell them I’m not perfect
I make mistakes
Tell them I am still confident
Tell them I don’t care
Tell them, just tell them
I’m Tangeniequa Edwards

MY IDENTITY
KASEY HARVEY
ACORN Community High School

Who am I?
Well that’s simple
I’m a body made of blood and bones
That’s bound to end up in a casket

I come from a place where joy and torture intertwine
Where not all bruises heal with strength or time
My roots come from slavery
The dominance of white over black
Where we look up toward the mountain peak
Seeking healing prosper from God the savior

A life where sadness and disappointment
Are emotions that we all try to overlook?
Where the joy that comes from our families
Is the only happiness that can cure some of these bruises?
Maybe

But who am I?
I’m just another spirit that has to face enemies
Before death

TELL THEM...
SHAMIEK EDMOND
ACORN Community High School

Tell them that I cared.
Tell them that I tried my hardest,
Speak of the times I had to do things I didn’t want to
Speak of the demons I had in my soul.
Tell them I wasn’t perfect.
Speak of the times when I wanted to die but told myself to stay strong
And that everything would be alright when I knew it would not.
Speak of when my bones shattered
Trying to put food on the table.
Tell them I will always care and never will forget about you.

HEART AND SOUL
RASHARD ISAAC
ACORN Community High School

Who am I, am I darkness?
My identity once golden
Now a hole of depression and pain.
My body a mess of bruises and blood
The voices eating away at my sanity
While I scream
Please help me!
What will this torture bring?
Hope, happiness, love, or joy?
For now all I see is the darkness
Of this tunnel, this mountain overlooking me
The other side could hold the old me
So I endure and head for the peak
No this hope
I should abandon and drop myself from this place
After all, a casket awaits.

But my soul is bright
Bright like a star bright.
I blind you with my light
So you try not to
See me for who I am
So you close me out and try to banish me
But I am the hope.
Hope that makes you rise when you have nothing left
You need me to survive.

I am rude? I am ugly? I am dumb?
No. I am who I say I am.

I am human, but I’m kind of different.
Like one beautiful butterfly flying with a group of birds, different.
Most importantly,
I am me,
There’s nothing I can compare this one to.
I am simply, magnificently, Caroline.

TELL THEM
NATHANIEL JAMES
ACORN Community High School

Before my body is worn out
Laying in a casket,
Tell them about how great of a person I was.
Tell them that I was loyal and understanding.
Tell them that I always learned from my mistakes.
Tell that I was generous.
Speak of me as I was—a wise man.
Speak of me as the coolest person you have ever met.
Before my body is worn out laying in a casket,
Tell them about how great of a person I was

I am sweet
Like the very first suck of the greenest sugarcane, sweet
It hurts
Like the feeling of an alive chicken’s head being chopped off, hurt
My heart burns
Like a step on the concrete on a 120° summer day, burn

Though my soul still urges to care.

I am caring
You would have thought I was a “LifeCare”
I am precious
Like a first born baby, precious
I am loving
Like a bird protecting their chick, loving.

THIS “THING”
JULISSA MARTINEZ
ACORN Community High School

I’m something
Can you guess what it is?
It’s just 3 letters
People don’t express themselves being this “thing”
Because they are afraid of what others might say
They view me differently when I tell them I’m this “thing”
Because they expect better from me

Walking down the aisle with a woman by my side is not what they expect from me
People judge and discriminate me when I tell them I’m this “thing”
Because they think I’m too beautiful to be this thing
Baby, beauty is nothing but a disguise
The things people say to me paints me in shackles and chains
Just because I’m this way doesn’t mean I’m any different
I’m the same loveable, sweet girl everyone knows but … I’m still this “thing”

My family doesn’t accept me
Because they believe I’m not this “thing”
They remember my innocence when I was just a little girl
Running into my momma’s arms telling me “I’ll always be her little girl”
Mama, will I always be your little girl?

I may be young but I know who I am
Because of the way she makes me feel inside
No other man nor women has ever made me feel this way
Not you or anyone else

This “thing” is my sexuality
Because I’m gay
Because I’m Human
SAVE THE GENERATION!
JASMINE MARIE CASTELLANO
ACORN Community High School

A sixth grader has been raped.
Look around,
Isn't our system just great?
Who isn't faded these days?

Our youth are posting half-naked pictures for some Instagram followers
Putting up pictures of their ass to get a Facebook like
Teens are sending nudes
Kids getting a little too rude
Young ones cutting class
Then wondering why they're not passing

A young teen just killed herself
And nobody seems to care
No calls for help can be heard
It's all just so repulsive

But my people just don't realize...
They can be so much more than what they're showing.
There is no need to be known as the generation
That was brought up wrong

So put on some clothes, get your face out your damn phone
And show the world that this generation is not so bad
As they think they know
This World is so broken
It's time that all of our words be spoken

YOU SOULLESS MONSTER
BUT ALTHOUGH I LIKE YOU,
I KNOW I FREED MYSELF
FROM DESTRUCTION OF A SEX HUNGRY BEAST. </3

I WANT A POEM LIKE...
LANELLE HARRIS
ACORN Community High School

I want a poem like Hip-Hop
Dope at the beginning
Then sucks at the end
I WANT A POWERFUL POEM!

But what is power?

I want that one that I can spit
Off the top of the dome poem
That dope poem
A poem about where I am from.

BROOKLYN!!

But then they're gonna judge me
Hell, maybe even call me a n*gger.
Hmmm... A n*gger poem...
Maybe a NEGUS poem
No one knows what it is
to be NEGUS

I want a poem.
HELL
One good enough to perform at BAM.
I want poem

HEARTBREAK STORY </3
CHRISTOPHER FULCHER
ACORN Community High School

HATRED IS THE FEELING
THE FEELING I HAVE FOR YOU
ALONG WITH OTHERS ROAMING THROUGH ME
IT HURTS BECAUSE I LIKED YOU A LOT
FOR YOU TO SAY THOSE HURTFUL THINGS REALLY BROKE ME

I SAW YOU AS A KIND HEARTED FRIEND
BUT YOU SAW ME AS A PIECE OF MEAT
TO FEED YOUR HUNGER FOR SEX, JUST LIKE THE REST
I REMEMBER YOU WERE SO QUIET,
THAT'S WHY I CONSTANTLY TRIED.
FROM THAT HORRID NIGHT ON
YOUR WORDS "DIE SLOW" FOREVER GO THROUGH MY MIND
I GUESS I STILL CARE
BECAUSE I'M MISSING YOU & I STILL THINK ABOUT YOU,
BUT I KNOW YOU HAVE ALREADY FORGOTTEN ABOUT ME
SO GO LIVE YOUR LIFE,

I WANT A POEM LIKE...
LANELLE HARRIS
ACORN Community High School

I want a poem like Hip-Hop
Dope at the beginning
Then sucks at the end
I WANT A POWERFUL POEM!

But what is power?

I want that one that I can spit
Off the top of the dome poem
That dope poem
A poem about where I am from.

BROOKLYN!!

But then they're gonna judge me
Hell, maybe even call me a n*gger.
Hmmm... A n*gger poem...
Maybe a NEGUS poem
No one knows what it is
to be NEGUS

I want a poem.
HELL
One good enough to perform at BAM.
I want poem

5 YEARS
RONNIT HOLDER
ACORN Community High School

My words be love
But what is love?
Is it this feeling I can't shake?
Over a boy who sometimes I hate
Can't ever get enough
But ohhhhh how he fills my heart with love
My words be tears
Yes tears that sometimes I still shed after all these years
Does he care?
I doubt it because I still cry and wonder why
I mean I can't blame him he tries
My words be fear
That maybe after all these years he doesn't choose me
My words be gentle
Because I know he can only take so much
My words be confused
Because some days he shows me he cares but other days...
It’s just not there
My words be strength....
That I have because I know there’s still hope!
My words be the day I first meet you and I liked you from then but
Right now....
My words be fighting
But I don’t like to with him
Sometimes I wonder what my words mean
Because I know I can never express this to him

I want to achieve, be great
Not let the shadow be the reason why I hate
I want everything life can give me
I want to go to college
To get in with a scholarship and come out with better knowl-
edge
To find love
Not be one of the girls on the corner saying “blow $50”

That shadow wants me to be a girl that will do anything to feel
good
From sex, to naked pictures, to saying I get more boys than you
Yea you get boys, boys that will give you everything in the medical book
Hell even say HIV + Herpes= goodtime
Hell no

Cross my heart and hope to die
I will stay clean
The shadow tried to make me give in so many times
But I will never
I have too many things I want to happen
And no way is that shadow going to happen
Because I want to be great

My people be on the basketball court
Puffing clouds on the side
We too proud to snort
to white people, we are aero dynamic
And we all look the same

But shooting hoops
In some shorts just a part of the game

Black Girls, weave shedding on the train
To ratchet to look natural
Got hip-hop to blame

Black on Black crime
Man that’s just a shame

But when a white kills a brother
He’s automatically insane
He’ll get parole and maybe some community service

Justice system turns their eye
I can’t believe they just swerved this

This is my message to my people
Get education in your head
Instead of lucky charms on your clothes
True Religion

My people be on the basketball court
Puffing clouds on the side
We too proud to snort
to white people, we are aero dynamic
And we all look the same

But shooting hoops
In some shorts just a part of the game

Black Girls, weave shedding on the train
To ratchet to look natural
Got hip-hop to blame

Black on Black crime
Man that’s just a shame

But when a white kills a brother
He’s automatically insane
He’ll get parole and maybe some community service

Justice system turns their eye
I can’t believe they just swerved this

This is my message to my people
Get education in your head
Instead of lucky charms on your clothes
True Religion

But now you got people on their steps

Just listening to the pitter-patter of your footstep while you’re running down the street
Hearing your heartbeat against the hard concrete

Only walking into a house of people on the old couch full of tears with only the smell of doubles in the air

Now this is where I came from a family of pain only
Hugging their children trying not to show their veins
Dear Mother AKA King,
May be the day I get a spot in heaven
Three strokes
Yea that happened to mama
I ask myself
How she's still here
Oh yea, I forgot
You can do anything
Drama
In my life
It's like I don't have none
No hate in my heart
Nothing but love
Got that from the Senior
I know when I die
I will live to see
Another day

I'm so proud of you
I would buy a house for you
It was hard not to get away from you
When I had to go to school
I felt like I was 18, finally
Leaving but I came back because I was homesick
Without you
I was like a fish out of water
Your fried cooking was so good
I thought I was in heaven
Your smile
Blinds me like looking at the sun
I can't stop
Your jokes have me weak
I could finally see you're funnier than me
But no one will ever see
What I see
When I look at you

I believe there was no reason to kill
I demand justice
When will they stop?
I am not bullets, guns, or even a weapon
I am a human. He was a human.
We are Kimani Gray.

We pay them, they murder us.
I demand the real story
But we shall never know the story
Because... He will never tell us.
He is not going to tell us.
I am not them! I am not them!
I am #ForeverKiki

To that person who is
Trying to find their way
In the world, to that
Person who thinks
Everyone gave up on
Them, to that person
Who is always getting
Compared to everyone
In their life

To that person who
Has found the courage to
Find their way but got
Shot down by everyone in
Their life, but every time they messed up
That's when they start to care.
To that person who messed up
And is now looking around to find
A person to look to,
Feels like you’re in a dark room by your self
Try to find your way out.

I’m trying to say
There is a person out there
Don’t let the little things affect you
And don’t let people affect your dream
Because you are further than you think

DEAR MAMA
MALIK ROBINSON
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

It all started when you gave birth to me
Since that day you took care of me
There is no way I can repay you
All I can say is that I love you
You always make me happy
But I hate when you slap me
You are my heart and soul
My mama, my queen
You are worth much more than silver and gold
You are the Number 1 mother in the world
Lord, I pray each and every night
For the sunshine and my mother
There is no one like you
You are one of a kind
You will always be in my heart
That shows how much I really do love you
I am and will always be your son
I am and will always be proud to call you my mother

DEAR OLDER SELF
ANONYMOUS
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

I refuse to struggle
I refuse to accept government assistance
I refuse to be a high school dropout
I will be the best at anything I put my mind to
I am determined to be the first to graduate out of all my mother’s kids
I will live with no regrets
I will just take it all in
I will play hard, I will work hard, and I will love hard
My older self will be successful and respectful
I will be my own boss
I will do my own thing
Follow my own rules
Life is going to be what I make it
Not what they make
I will carry myself in a different light

Do what is right
I mean my younger self is great
There is nothing to dislike or hate
I refuse to be my older self
Still with my younger self’s mindset
Life is going to be what I make it
Not what they make

BELIEVE
DELVIN REYES
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

Believe your faith
Believe your words
Believe your talent
Be one with love
Trust not fear
Trust your mind

I’m a talented dancer
Why? Because I trust my mind
I trust not fear
I’m one with love
I believe in my talent
I believe in my words
I believe in faith
Just believe
In yourself

MY MOTHER
CALVIN COPPIN
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

I love your soft skin
You cooking me dinner
Even when I lost
You told me I was a winner
You love me
Even though I’m a sinner
Supplying me with everything I need
You’re my Band-Aid when I bleed
Even if I were blind
You are the only one I can see
My mom

ALWAYS STRIVING AND PROTECTING (A.S.A.P.)
JONATHAN LOUIS
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

Roses are red, violets are blue
Always thinking, never quitting
I’m from the city that never sleeps.
Look too much you’re going to end up deep
From the projects one day to Project Runway
Don't talk to me
You need to mind your own business
Before I embarrass you
Yes we that type of rude
From the neighborhood
With struggle think about it too much struggle
Can get you stronger,
Had a dream when I woke up
I was in a P.J.
I'm never procrastinating
Always proceeding.

NO ONE
ADEZNIA MALDONADO
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

Out of that trust
All you felt was lust
When I cried at night
What did you do?
You laughed
I watched that stunning
Smile fade away
Like the sun on stormy days
You stood there with that
Thing you called a woman
Was a streaming clown
My face
I pull the trigger
If I can't have you
Then
No one will

UNTITLED
RAYMOND JIMENEZ
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

High School
Same thing everyday
School, back home
Classroom cellars, teacher dictators
Just waiting for 2:50 to bail
But back to the same thing at 8
I guess I just gotta make the best of
My time here with my cellmates
High School
Because of you my board sits in my room
Collecting dust
Because of you the courts miss me
But I'm not gonna give up
I will graduate and finally
Goodbye high school

I COME FROM
ANNE P. LOUIS
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

I come from
Butt whooping, trouble making, glass breaking
Years in the making, memories made
I come from
Never give up
Learn from your mistakes
Follow your dreams
You can be whatever you want to be
Believe

From hellos and good mornings
To mothers cooking in the kitchen
Hair tied
Dressed to impress
Smell of pumpkin pies
Overwhelmed? Understatement!

Dark brown table
Grandmother’s passing
Seeing is deceiving
Misunderstood but unbroken

I’m from Disney Channel, Facebook, and Cartoon network
From Cooking Channel to “The Cinderella Story”
I’m technology based, iPod, iPhone, PC, Laptop
I come from all the places I’ve ever been; and all the things
I’ve ever done.

DEAR MOMMA
JAH-MAL GEIGER
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

I want to take you places
You’ve never been before.

You always say I got your back no matter what
I will fight for you.

I am your favorite child and the best you will find.

I remember the time I broke my arm and my finger
You were always there saying,
“It's going to be alright.”

You’re like a flower still blooming in the world.

I came from your blink, mommy.
I will always love you.
I am sorry for all of my actions.
DEAR MARIE B
ANGELINE M
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

Dear Marie B
You are everything to me
Like flowers that bloom
You’re always telling me
To be me
And be the best I can be
Working hard to provide me
With what I need
Even if it is tough

Dear Marie B
Making fried food
Smelling good and all
Hating the times
You yell at me for no reason
I try to be my best
Not settle for less

Dear Marie B
I want to buy you a mansion
And take you around the world

Dear Marie B
You did that all for me
Coming out of your womb
It’s amazing, for me
Spending time together
Eating ice cream
Watching movies
Which are the best times we had
Dear Marie B

MONEY
TAHJI CHAPPELL
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

Is it really important
Cause without it you can survive
Without it you can stay alive
It’s true with five
Of those things you call money
Isn’t it funny
With money
You can afford an Easter Bunny
With money
You can change it from rainy to sunny

GIRLS RESPECT YOURSELF
ALICHARD RICHARD
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

Girls respect yourself
Stop giving yourself away to boys
And stop feeling insecure about yourself
Be you
Let no man tell you otherwise
You are beautiful
You are amazing
God made you the way you are for a reason
You don’t want to catch a disease and just wait
Not knowing when you’re gonna die
Don’t go down the wrong path
Be a leader
Not a follower
And you will succeed
So be smart
Keep your head up high
Baby girl

MY LOVE
TIEYSHA DURRANT
Academy of Hospitality & Tourism

The fear of losing your love to the grey skies
But only being left with memories
Only remembering the soft touch
Over protective like a brother
But loving like a mother
Remembering no matter where we are
You never fail to show your love
The fear of winning
But one day losing
The fear of one day
Losing your love

SUCCESS!
JUSTÓN FORDE
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

Close your eyes and look…
Don’t you see?! The complications between those two simple letters
W and E
Combined to spell we
Oh do you mean the same we you once beat, sold, and purchased
As if nothing but a piece of meat
Ohhhhh!
You mean the we you would like to see
Do you have no shame?
You’ve whipped us, hung us, shot us, and stabbed us,
And now there is no one to blame…
So to us I say
Let's start walking toward our own destiny
To be kings and queens
Put the physical weapon down
And build a mental rifle that strikes down
All hope of our failure
Reloading with the thoughts of sweet sweet success
Over huge obstacles we might face.
No one said the journey through this unknown territory would
be easy
It might never be
But you can keep yourself occupied
With tunes that motivate you
To keep striving

UNTITLED
IONNA FERGUSON
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

Why do you feel the need to stay?
When all he wanna do is play with
Your mind, body, and soul. Don't stay
When you know you can go.

You were a person I looked up too, a
Person that I admired... He abused you
So much I know you're sick and tired. He
Beat you and brought you down. He said
You'll never amount to nothing;
But look at you NOW!

You stayed and I always wondered
Why? You said he was the one you loved.
But who knew that love meant
HURT, PAIN, and BLACK EYES
A relationship that you just couldn't get out of.

She said she she'd leave him, I admitted
She did. But instead, took him back
Every time. But that it! No more!
She deserves better! She's a woman
And she doesn't deserve this!

PAIN
ALEX COLIN
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

The chain
so full of pain
I'm standing naked
No longer a man, but not ashamed

Tears coming down my face
There's no more strength
There's no more courage
Now it's just disgrace

Things gone wrong
Everything out of shape brutally broken
until out of shape

I look up high in the sky
All I can say is why
Why can no body hear my cries?
Why can't I go back to my life?

No body answer
No body move
Now it's just me and my spirit
What more have I got to lose?

COLD WORLD, MY REALITY
AKEEM MILLER
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

This would be me the everlasting grieving
the people I see gon' wish they were never leavin'
if I saw them one last time it would be a blessin'
I rhyme this for me and God to give a message.
In my everyday life I just learn a lesson.

That these people want your downfall and only conspire
that they would forever hate
tell you burn in the fire
but Lord... I just pray
for these stubborn minds that couldn't phase through
give me words of wisdom
so one day I can change views.
But my heart is too stubborn
It would never listen.
It would care until it succeeded the specific mission.

I added all the success
I divided all the misdeeds
multiplied all of the profit
and subtracted all the mystery
and still wonder what this leads
heads always in the clouds
so my reality never missed dreams
so steadily I’m climbing the ladder in making history.
I wonder if I’m gone,
would they forever miss me?

TRI-VISION
JELANIE ANTOINE
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

They say three eyes are better than two,
why?
Because you can see more than the
Ordinary guys.

The lies, what they want you to think
how do we know “think” is called “think?”

How do we know Obama being the president is a good thing?
Yea, he’s black—half at that.

But what if that’s the decoy for my people to think we
free at last

and music, had to save that for last
with the youth today having Chief Keef on blast

the killing of our own people just to put on True Religion

this is mad

but behind every dark door, the truth lies
these real eyes
realize
real lies.

UNTITLED
CRYSTAL REYES
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

She has loved you assiduously for 19 years.
Crystal, you are 13, now.
What I am saying, hopefully, you will understand.

Y’all never had the type of mother and daughter
relationship you wished for.

As I sit down on this hard wooden cold stairway.
Across the hall from her house, I tell you this now:

Life is not no garden full of flowers
It’s a struggle.
You will cry, scream, and wish you were never born.

It gets harder and harder
I will lift your head and wipe your tears
You must repeat and believe that things will come together.
It's just a moment in time.

No fairytale life is what you make it.

Hold on tight, things are only going to get harder
Before it gets a bit easy.

You will want her
Even through the pain she caused

Mommy only loves you
Due to the money that was brought

This is just to say
It's hard to believe
You are the only one
You need

Trying to build a house with
Your bare hands.
Talking to them in a language
They don't understand.

The late train rides
Black killing black because they
Not from the same side.

Making it worse for our future generation.
Because we’re committing suicide.

Why they weren’t thinking about the boat rides?

Their chains on lock
Their gun on cock
Can someone stop
Now, till someone’s
Shot?!

I come from Brooklyn where
Girls worry about weaves
Kids with basketball dreams
Didn’t make it to school
Where rapping was cool

Everybody respect you because
You made it on the news

I’m from Brooklyn
I am Brooklyn
Where Brooklyn at?

TO ERIKA ... WITH LOVE
ERIKA BOGDANY (Classroom Teacher)
Brooklyn Bridge Academy

You’re right. You’re not who they think you are.
Stop fighting with yourself
You are right.
You are authentic.
You are beautiful.
You are intelligent.
Wise…Whew. Wise beyond your years.
You’re love.
You’re a damn good sister and an even better daughter. Don’t
be fooled.
Keep believing that you are
Right—
Authentic—
Beautiful—
Intelligent—
And damn girl, you are wise beyond your years.
You will move.
You will on..., up..., around...
You will travel...to places
You’ve never seen.
You will grow.
You will find your way…and
Yes, you will find yourself there.

THE ARTIST
CASSANDRA ROSE MEUZE
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

He splashes his thoughts down on a piece of paper
This man he stands in a cold cold world
He sees wicked but unique
Snaps in his mind
They’re permanent and cannot be defined

HIM
CYNDI VAZQUEZ
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

him
Loved me once
Or at least I thought so
Until he left for good
Never quite understood

him
Said I was his number one
Keep me close in his arms
And he would fight
Just to make everything right

I don’t see…him
Didn’t expect it
But I definitely felt it
And I cried
A little bit of me even died

him
It hurts
To know he ran away from his problems
Figured he had a head syndrome
But to me, this look didn’t fit him

him
Never grew up with one
Friends say things like
“My dad is freaking awesome,”
But I was dumb
And inside my body goes a little numb

Because of him
He ruined my life
I remember only hugging his waist
Thinking all these moments shouldn’t go to waste

him
Walked right out of my heart

Split me right apart
Hit me hard like a sharp edged dart
His role was a simple part

Couldn’t handle simple responsibilities
Never faced his reality
Moved on
To an entire whole new family
Leaving me alone questioning my own mentality
Where was his humanity?

Probably has none
Because last time I checked
“Him,”
My “Father,“
Is gone…

FLAT IRON
DARRIELLE HARVEY
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

I’m used to perfection, and my beauty
Friend is good texture, it helps
Me do my job well, while on
The other hand I don’t
Get along with all textures
Due to the “roots” they
Come from, I make colors
Shine and give dull hair life.
I’m hot and steamy and all
For one purpose, and that
Is too perfect all types of
Hair, I just wish all my hair
Would corporate with my
Hit skills and let me
Do y’all a favor

RUMOR HAS IT
DEAUNDRIA BELSON
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

They say don’t judge a book by its cover
…It’s true
When I look at you all I see is ignorance…
But is it you?
When you look at me what do you see?
A young black girl with a whole lot of weave?
When looking at someone you don’t see the truth…
Or do you…
Well have you seen what’s gone on in their youth?
No.
You assume.
That what you see defines them as a
Human being.
Well I could tell you one thing,
You can't define me.
When walking through the streets they clutch their purses.
Hoping we won't be the ones to get them carried out in hearses.
They do it because of the color of my skin.
In a situation like this, I can never win.
I brush my hair in the bathroom mirror,
wishing I couldn't hear these girls anymore clearer.
They say I think I'm better… Because I got hair.
I think they're just mad that their hair not there,
But appreciate what is… Has anyone ever walked up to you and say? “Hey you look a little Spanish kid!”
Has anyone ever told you what you're not? Because of what you have or what you got?
Make you feel like something you’re not?
People would sometimes say “You’re so shy, I’m surprised you have friends!”
Just because I walk alone and don’t gossip till the end?
I just say believe what you want,
And I'll discard what you do. Because I won’t use:
Your hair;
Your skin color;
Your ethnicity;
Your age;
Your disabilities;
Your friends;
Your likes;
Your dislikes;
Or your overall appearance;
To define YOU.

MUSIC HAIKU
DILEINA FERNANDEZ
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Music is my life
Hip-Hop and R&B music
It shows who I am

LOVE IS HARD
EVELYN FERNANDEZ
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Love is Hard
Love has scars…scars that only those who have loved can understand . . .
You see my aunt, she loved a man.
A man who caused her pain.
She stayed in a relationship. Where she had everything to lose, but nothing to gain.
Three letters took my aunt away from me, took everything she ever dreamed to be!
So you see love has scars, scars that only those who have loved can understand. . .
My mother she too loved a man, a man who raised his hand to harm her than to raise his hand to comfort her.
Love…makes you fragile. Don’t fall in it, because everything that falls…Breaks! Love is the cause of anguish…love is complex. Love can make you feel low, so low that you can feel worthless, because the person you’re with doesn’t make you feel worth it…LOVE IS HARD

BROKEN HEART
IBAZAN CUMMINGS AND WILLIAM WALLS
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

You call it the day we parted ways
I call it d-day
I call it the day darkness enveloped me
I call it the day I began to lose weight
The day I began the nauseating habit of glancing at my phone
Hope’n for a missed call, a text, a fucking sign that you were alive
And I ain’t get none of it
I even came up with another personality
You being the inspiration for it of course
She don’t sound like you though
Don’t look like you either
Don’t smell like that rosy smell when she gets close
Can’t feel her lips on my neck
Damn,
I can’t even hide the hickeys she gives me
Because she so stingy...

MY NAMES BEN
JENISELLE BOSQUÉ
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

My names Ben, aka Pen
I come in all different sizes, colors, whatever you desire
My best friend is paper, even though I press a little too hard on her, or even spill—she’s still my friend
Pencil? Pencil never liked me, he just mad cause all he writes is drafts
But me? I’m a pen and I make no mistakes- I believe in no mistakes
I want to tell people's stories, nothing boring though
I spill on the pages of people broken hearts, first times, I tell history.
And soon I will be history
My ink will slowly die on me
Then I'll soon be replaced, but not by pencil because pens make no mistakes.
IN A MINUTE
JENNIFER CAPELLAN
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

What if I said “I miss you?”
What if I said “I love you?”
What if I write about love?
I’ve found you in my world and there is only you in it,
I fell in love with you in just 1 minute.
I’ll always be in love with you,
until the stars no longer shine.
I'll be forever thankful that you’re by my side.
Always and forever I’ll be true to you, because what's you without me?
What's me without you?
It’s like night without the moon, summer with the sun, it’s like stopping a flower from blooming when it's almost done.
That's me without you.
It's like Romeo telling Juliet he doesn't care.
So imagine what we would be, if we had never met?
Baby, you’re one thing in my life I won't regret.
You’re my sun, you’re my moon, shining on me, no matter what I'm going through.
You make me so happy with just 1 touch so ask yourself.
Did you ever think a girl could love you so much?

I WILL NOT
KAYLA FRANCOIS
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

I will not...will NOT live for you.
I will not live to your standards,
because what may work for you,
may not work for me.
I will not do the things you do,
because if I was born original,
why die a copy?
I will not see what you see,
because most likely, we see things differently.
I will not be your lover, just a friend,
but I will promise to be there, for you, ‘til the very end.
Promises made, promises broken, things I should of said that were left unspoken. I will not be ready to tell you these things anytime soon, but I hope that when I am ready to be open, it won't be too late.
I will not live up to your expectations, because it's a different generation, and all the upcoming teens must make this a better nation.
So, open your eyes, and you will see, that one day, YES, I will succeed.

TRAPPED
KEAYANA COKE
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Trapped in corners
But I escaped
Beaten my words lives at stake
Abused by words and hands
I try to cry but no one hears
I swear I feel no one has ears
Hear my call for help!
Do you not see my eyes and bruises...
They finally heard my call but it was too late...too late for help...too late for any effect

BLUE MEMORIES
KHALED ALI
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Today
Today I stand divided, once again want to be guided
Waiting for my shadow to once again hollow
Thinking about her each and every day
As I fall deep asleep with a loved once to meet

Dreaming about her beauty blue eyes
As she opens them, the sky flips like a light switch
While sitting lonely, never knew which best
Like wearing a mask that scared everyone at last
Listening to her radio as she bling bling, world
Wide sing sing while I ring on her doorbell
“Pizza delivery”

As I see her, I stood still
I stood still like if she was my only pill
“Your beauty shines and your world rhymes,
I found you at last”
“Please comeback”

“I was blind”
“Take me back”
“Take me back”
“My heart is broken”
“My mystery frozen”
“I wanna call you baby not just a lady”
“I love you, Katie”
“So take me lady”
THE PEN
KIERRAH EDWARDS
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

I'm so sad when she puts me down. I sometimes think she'll never pick me up again. Is it writers block or did the infamous amnesia take over again? My thoughts wonder as I lay there lifeless next to a notebook, who's proved to be a faithful friend over the years. I need her to know that I'm the reason behind her success. It was me who put the finishing touches on that romance novel that went on to become a bestseller. I like exploring her thoughts and feeling what she feels as if I run across the smooth paper... But as I lay here motionless, I drift off into sleep... That is until she picks me up again.

THE STARES
KIONA MYRIE
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

The stares they give
My Johnathan
He's just different
They say, I say, well of course in everyway
The stares they give his art
The teachers tell me, “He's disturbed, crazy, violent,”
Not such at a young age
He's just different
O' the stares they give my Johnathan
He's way too young for this
To be teased
And banned like this
O' the stares, stares, the stares they give my Johnathan
I promise you, he's just different
I tell him don't worry
He's just different

MY GRANDFATHER
LANIQUE GREEN “LA Dha Great”
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Father
Things under control
When he steps in the house
Everything in the atmosphere
Shifts to something never seen before
Bishop
“You betta praise 'em”
That’s where your victory is
Makes me laugh every time I hear it
I don’t know what I would do without him
The hard worker
Dignified
Provider
My Grandfather

FLYING LOTUS
MAYA LAYNE
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

They say when you're dying your life flashes before your eyes.
What do you see before you die?
Do you remember the good things or the bad?
Happy or sad?
Do you remember that happy birthday or the first fight you ever had?
The time your mom backhanded you
For talking back
Or the way the hood held her back
While they watch you die from the gat.
Do you remember the events leading to your death or just f--- it and hope for the best.
Go into the light or fight flight
Until the day comes
I say goodnight.

ONE DAY
NASHARRA JORDAN
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

One Day I wouldn't be here, where everyone only has memories of me
One Day People will only remember the smile that was always on my face
One Day I will be nothing but a mist... A picture... A gaze away from being alive

But as long as that day HASN'T/ DOESN'T come too early

That Day I can be successful

That Day I can create songs that could make the elderly get up and dance

That Day The person I am TODAY would be someone I could say grew in more ways than one

Style... Confidence... Bravery... Looks...

That Day There will be more than pictures Films that will honor me

Just to let ALL the people AFTER me know that ONE DAY, THAT DAY, THOSE DAYS, I WAS HERE...

DEDICATION
NATHAN BRADLEY
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

He is the best player in the game,
Dust that simple, there's nothing he can't do
He will defend your best player
He will shoot from 3
He will disappoint all doubters
He is the most complete basketball player in the game today, Ball or not
He's Hollywood and cannot be out gamed
“He” is my idol Mr. Kobe Bean Bryant,
The best player in the game today, Kobe is the God of basketball,
There is so much to learn,
Instead of hating greatness, just appreciate
Who else can come into the NBA at age 17?
Straight out of high school
And eat every player up like fine food
He show up with every appearance
He hit every Milestone so stop the comparing

I had million bucks I would open my doctor's office And dance studio so I can have More than a just a million bucks But.... That's if I had a million Bucks

UNTIL QUIET COMES
NYKIA BROWN
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Let the red skies graze you
‘fore the blood leaves you
DEATH
INEVITABLE
LIFE............
TOLERABLE.

Finding a way to survive
Amidst the violence and lies
Bodies bound by feet
Dragggggged

Till those red liquid dreams drain out
Till those red liquid dreams drain out
Till those red liquid dreams drain out

Let the beat of your
Heart fizzle soft and mellow
Let that beat hatline.
Until quiet comes
Just die.

DESTINY
ONEKA CAYENNE
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

*singing* “Cause we are sisters, we stand together, we make each other stronger, that ain't never gonna change”
My sister is the light pointing to a better me. She's strong, the Hulk She's confident, Brave She's funny, Hahaha She's smart, Brainstorm She's caring, “Oh no Kai crying, I go make you feel better k” She is the fire to a cold, dark room So young, so beautiful, but so powerful and crazy

WORTH-WHILE
PYLAR TULLOCH
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

I’m tired of you taking me for granted I don’t like the feeling of being walked on. Is there a welcome sign hanging from my face? Or have you just created your own... I'm not going to be here forever... soon you’ll lose me, and it'll be your own fault. After I'm guessing you’ll want me back... you want me to take you back... but it doesn't work like that... I need some-
one to treat me like I’m special not like a door, swinging back and forth letting just anyone into their life or a wind chime so you can just breeze by into my life and leave when it’s convenient or that welcome mat you think I am where you can come when you want, or need something and wipe your insecurities and flaws on me hoping to clean yourself… or look better by comparison. NO.

WHEN THE MUSIC STOPS
RANDY ARBUJO
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

My heart stops the rhythm, my flow of my blues veins can’t be checked the nurse need the paramedics to give me a test, and electrocute my chest, cause if I can’t address my lyrics to people I swore to protect is going to be a conflict between me and them

Yes I can freestyle non-stop but how far can go if I feel a pain in my soul and see no Jazz from Philly to give me a beat to destroy, and how I have no words I close my eyes and I see Rock & Roll being controlled how I have little time to wrap things up since a minute ago

My heart became decreased hopefully I was loyal to this now society and how the word is emotionless but before this I want to give a God bless and a good luck to your success cause when the music stops, my heart beat comes to an end …

GIVEN
RAVEN GRAY
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

Why was I given…

Why was I given?
This life to live
Why was I chosen?
To tell the story
Of a young girl from Brooklyn
Struggling to make it in the world
Not only financially
But spiritually

Why was I given?
This face and body shape
Skin complexion
Dark chocolate brown
Body figure
Voice of a mouse
Eyes dark-----
Looking beyond the clouds

Hoping, wishing, praying
For a better life

Asking god why I couldn’t be rich
Living in paradise

Raised by a holy mother
That always put god first
God this
And God that
And do not curse
Because it’s unpleasant in God’s eyes

Does it look like I care?
Always being reminded
That if I don’t do things right
God will punish me
Is that right?

Being rebellious
Because I wasn’t being heard
I respected and loved God
But I have a mind too

To thing right from wrong
And to decide
Who is who?
In MY life

It’s MY choice
But lately
Things haven’t felt right

There’s emptiness in my soul
In my heart it’s cold
No love
No hate
Just a place
That holds my emotions
Of tears, of pain

All because no one can explain
Why -----
Why I was given this life
What is the purpose?
What is my goal?

Placed on this earth to be remembered
Or walked over by souls
Who don’t acknowledge my presence?
Or look me in the eyes

Just strangers that walk pass
Without even saying ----
Hi
I mean it would be nice
I know
Why I’m here

Because at times
I feel like giving up
And letting everything go
My purpose
My life
My reason
My fear ----

Is that I’ll never find my purpose
And I’ll just be another person
That was here

MY MOMMY
RAYVAUGHAN VANCOOTEN
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

My mommy is tough as if she was a bold eagle claiming it property
My mommy is a confident as if she won a prize at a vocal show
My mommy is as kind as if she was a scout girl going door to door selling cookies
My mommy is proud of be the mother of 5 beautiful kids
My mommy is protective as if she was a lion fight off a pack of wolfs for her cub
The day my mommy said “I love you and I will always be there for you no matter what”
I knew that I will always have my mommy in my life

HERE’S TO TOU
RYMESHA FASON
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

A force like no other you are
An unforgettable heartbreaker
You come in no respect and take because it’s the only thing you know
The life drainer, you not only take lives and present us with the dead but drain the living
The heartache you give no man or woman can ever touch
Never have you discriminated, you take what you can get Destroying homes, families and everything in your path
Only the strong hearted can deal with you but even they crack
Giving more tears that a sad song after a bad breakup
Seeing someone cry a river means nothing because you caused oceans
It you though that puts a clear value on things
You tell us our future because us meeting over and over again will happen
Until it’s the day you take me
Thank you though for you have taught me many things
The power of love, it’s pain you caused that showed me how much I really love
Each day is not promised, I never know who will be next and I value them now
You give the real life proof to thing we’ve been told countless times
Death you are something I came all too familiar with
But it’s you who have given me a reason to fight

HATE
SALEIMA ROMAIN
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

I hate you
Hate, nothing but a blame game.
I hate you, I hate you, I hate you, Grow up.
That boiling feeling, that tension, that pressure of one’s brain cells thumping, one’s blood cells bursting, leave it alone.
You complete me but you lack the integrity to see aside the stupidity, you are blind but that is not why I hate you.
You refuse to see, you refuse to see the demonic nature the world has become.
And because of that you’ve allowed us to walk blindly.
I hate the very sight of you, your burning eyes, your flirtatious lips, all one big lie, STOP, and be yourself.
The march of fake people must end, it’s sad, a poor loss for god to see us this way.
Fire
It penetrates the air leaving a smirk on the devil’s face. It destroys everything with or without substance. It is a non creator but can be caused by people’s stupidity. It will not stop erasing everything in its path, wiping away memories, wiping away happiness. There’s no control so break out the water. Its gas clogs my throat, killing me, making me cry, making me choke. It can take away everything I love including myself and send me breathless through the air. My body stretches across the ocean as if I never existed.

MY FRIEND
SHALIQUA ALLEYNE
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts

I’m somewhat wide with one huge eye
And there are many buttons on my clothing
My friends are named Flash and Hand
My enemies though…
I hate her! She always damages me

Although I’m wide with one huge eye
A lot of people love me!
They love the way I make them appear
But my friend, Flash, she makes me brave
She makes me see what I don’t see in the dark

My other friend Hand she’s really adventurous. We go everywhere?
I’m really shy when I’m to close to others
Especially when they’re really cute…
But I’m the most confident person you’ve ever seen

You can see all my pictures on Facebook!
Add me!
**JUST ANOTHER POEM ABOUT A DAD**  
**SHANICE BENNETT**  
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts  
My daddy, My father, My dad, you always  
stuck with me even when my attitude was bad.  
This is an ode, a praise, a thank you to my dad.  
You are the funniest  
person that I know. You might not know this but you help me  
grow.  
I love mommy too don't get it wrong. But  
there’s no praises to dad, not even a song.  
Your stronger than any boxer, any wrestler I know. Like I said  
before dad you help me grow.  
This is an ode, a praise, a thank you to my dad.  
I hope you’ll still  
be watching me because I know soon you’ll have to go. I know  
time doesn’t last forever, I wish I never knew so.  
57 looks good on you, but your greys...not really. Don’t take  
me serious Dad I’m just being silly. Dad I wish I could pay you  
back for all the things you gave me, so this poems my first  
step. I hope this makes a dent in debt.  
This is an
ode, a praise, a thank you to my dad.

---

**MY FATHER**  
**SHANTE EDWARDS**  
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts  
My Father is an amazing man.  
He lives up to his expectations,  
My father is that type of a father that speaks his mind and  
doesn’t care what nobody thinks.  
My Father is a politician, he watches politics everyday, that  
can kind of get a little annoying.  
57 looks good on you, but your greys...not really. Don’t take  
me serious Dad I’m just being silly. Dad I wish I could pay you  
back for all the things you gave me, so this poems my first  
step. I hope this makes a dent in debt.  
This is an
ode, a praise, a thank you to my dad.

---

**LIFE HAiku**  
**SHAYNA MARCELLINE**  
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts  
Life is a struggle  
All my life I had to fight  
But I won’t give up

---

**LOVE**  
**TAVIYANNA JACKSON**  
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts  
Love is a word that describes how you feel about someone  
Love is a word that means or shows how much you care for  
someone  
Love is not always the answer, sometimes people can say they  
love you just because they don’t want to hurt your feelings  
There are many ways to show you love somebody for example  
Make love, argue, fight, etc.  
Sometimes people just too quick to say they love someone and  
really don’t know the REAL definition of LOVE  
Don’t ever fall in love too fast because you will regret it  
Boys really take love for granted  
Sometimes you may think they planned it I don’t think they  
taken things serious  
But playing with somebody heart is not a game  
You just make them feel the pain.

---

**I LOVE YOU**  
**WILDLORD DOMINGUE**  
Dr. Susan S. McKinney Secondary School of the Arts  
I love you to the fact that I have to hear her voice cause I wake  
up happy knowing that you’re on my mine  
You turn my cloudy days into sunshine  
LOVE L.O.V.E is it that word that describes my emotions if love  
is a crime  
I’ll spend time in comfort knowing you love me back  
Your beauty is more than expected  
A word that describes you lovely as can be physically and  
emotionally your beauty is more than skin deep  
You’re the reason I can’t go to sleep you’re the reason why the  
song isn’t she lovely exist  
I want to complete your every thought  
I love you more than words could show if I can’t give you the  
world I’ll Die Trying …
RASHAWN ROGERS  
edward R. Murrow High School

I love you but I can’t see you with me, cause every time we’re together your mind change like weather and your heart starts to beep fast and your legs start to tremble cause you’re in love with another guy deep down inside, you keep your feelings locked up like treasures our love is deeper than the measure.

ANNA TON  
edward R. Murrow High School

I’m not the shy type  But you don’t even know me like that I’m not the shy type  But you don’t know what I been through, Haters always hating and try to put you down But I don’t let it get to me Because I know I wouldn’t get anywhere in life I’m not the shy type  I don’t care what people think of me Like why do you care what I do? Like worry about you Give yourself a check

ADOLFO JEREZ  
edward R. Murrow High School

God has blessed me with my life God has made me feel grateful God sends his angels to watch over me I feel as if anything is possible I’m blessed to be here God made me for a reason And God can take you away In a second If you not doing the thing, you were Created.

DERICK PARRALES  
edward R. Murrow High School

I can tell some people don’t like me no more But I don’t care The only person that I need to like me is me. Maybe the only Person who can like me is me because I’m so unlikeable. Where can anyone like Themselves but within a circle of their mind Where you can see yourself falling than maybe You might like yourself. Be yourself no Matter what Like I said I got me, myself, and I And a prideful family.

LEEtal BEEChor  
edward R. Murrow High School

I live in Brooklyn, a place I call home, where there are many buses, people, trains, and cars. The B49 is packed. I always sit near someone new and I always meet someone new. Everyday after school I ride. I lived in Brooklyn my whole life, I moved around so many times I have met so many different people when I had moved, everywhere I had moved I always had a corner store that was always open and never closed.

BEI SHI ZHU  
edward R. Murrow High School

Yellow skin color, short hair Black eyes, gentlemen The lover that I really care I love you but I’m not the one that you really care Yellow skin color, long hair Brown eyes, but lazy like a pig I love you but I’m not the perfect girl you want to be with I love you I love you But, how much we love each other Is how much we hurt each each I love you, but We can’t be together

CHANTE DIAZ  
edward R. Murrow High School

My writing is ugly, my writing is bad, but I am a writer, my writing is too sad, my writing hurts people, my writing makes people say I love you, but I’m a writer so my writing will give you something that you never had. But I don’t like this poem it doesn’t make any sense. They say my poems are too overwhelming that they’re too intense, but they can never, change what I’m trying to say scribble scribble scribble, time to start a new page. I only wrote a heading and now I don’t know what to write scribble scribble scribble, still nothing in sight. I start over again, I finally finished the whole page and I’m proud of this poem, I aced this test, but my biggest critic told me put away and start a new page yet again.

ABRIAnAH HARRIS  
edward R. Murrow High School

I finally learned the difference between a girl and a woman. A girl would stay after school playing games. A woman would spend time after school doing her work. A girl would run across the street. A woman would walk gracefully.
A girl wears leggings, tank top, and flip flops,
A woman would wear button down top, slacks, and shoes.
A girl would ride Kind Da Ca
A woman would take a walk on the beach.
I finally learned the difference between a boy and a man.
A boy would allow his pants to drag on the floor just to impress his friends.
A man would make sure his belt is tightened, making sure no one sees his underwear.
A boy would call a girl out of her name.
A man would give his seat to a woman.
A boy would spend his money on Jordans.
A man would spend his time building a future.

**MY LIFE LESSONS POEM**

**KIMBERLY ATTILUS**
Edward R. Murrow High School

I am learning to become a better big sister.
And I am learning to be nicer to them
And I am learning to make them listen to me more
Not yell at them
When I yell at them, they tell on me
And I am beginning to learn not to be near them all the time
And I have learned not to tell them anything personal

**ENEY GUTIERREZ**
Edward R. Murrow High School

In your childhood you really don't know who you'll be, til' you start slow. Slow slow, that's how you know you can be what you want. Wrong choices is the worst you can go. The days you grow, you start to notice you can succeed far. You are who you've been waiting for.

**EMELY OROZCO**
Edward R. Murrow High School

I love you but you messed up,
I love you but you didn't take the chance to love me well.
I love you but I just never believed you.
I love you but you say you love me but…but what?! You don't know how you feel about me?
Yes “but’ was your favorite word at the ending Of your sentence. “But I had to study’
But for your information other guys
Are taking your place!

**QUAN TING LI**
Edward R. Murrow High School

Scribble, scribble, scribble
I write down what I know and scribble it over all.
Scribble, scribble, scribble
I love to draw and write
Scribble, scribble, scribble
The paper now looks messy and I grasp and throw
Scribble, scribble, scribble
The words are hidden under the scribble.
Scribble, scribble, scribble
Maybe that is the only way I could.

**RAVEN DIGIROLAMO**
Edward R. Murrow High School

As I write this poem, I think about, wait
Scribble scribble,
I'm trying to tell you how I feel,
But the words just not coming out right
Scribble scribble,
These words don't make sense to me.
They say write how you feel... But my heart won't let it out
Scribble scribble
My mind is blank
Blanker than blank
Scribble scribble
I don't know where this is going
But I hope you like it
Scribble scribble...

**KELSEY LOPEZ**
Edward R. Murrow High School

Brooklyn, I could write you forever
So I can know who I'm I
I could write you forever til
My paper is covered in Brooklyn,
Brooklyn, you're my hometown so
I would respect you. Brooklyn
I could write you forever
Because you're the city that never sleeps, Brooklyn the city that makes
People dreams come true, Brooklyn

**CARMAN C.**
Edward R. Murrow High School

I love you but I don't know how to express it.
I love you but I don't want to hurt you.
I love you but I'm not the one for you.
I love you but I need to learn to love myself before loving you.
**STEPHANIE MARTINEZ**
Edward R. Murrow High School

Brooklyn, I could write you forever
Until I’m 6 feet under ground, you
Taught me how to survive this world that is full of corruption.
Brooklyn you are the place where traffic never ends,
Where the lights don’t go off, where
People know who they are.

---

**EMAD KASSIM**
Edward R. Murrow High School

Family over everything
Family over friends and definitely over money.
Family is like a flashlight
In a dark cave family guides me through it all, family keeps me safe. Family makes me reach my goals in life. Family pulls me up when I’m down
Family gives me success
In every way possible. Family over everything.

---

**SAJATUL ALAM**
Edward R. Murrow High School

You are who you’ve been waiting for
Dream of a light that’ll make you bright.
You are unique.
You are who you are.
You are who you’ve been waiting for.

You are who you’ve been waiting for.
The sun goes to sleep before the moon wakes up every day
But you are who you are.

---

**BAOYI ZHONG**
Edward R. Murrow High School

The day we walk pass by,
I see your shiny eyes.
The day we walk pass by,
I see your lovely smile.
The day we get to know each other,
I realized a horrible truth
I love you, but we ain’t working out.

---

**FARHANA PUZA**
Edward R. Murrow High School

I’m not the shy type
Sometimes it takes me time to express my feelings in front of others
Sometimes I feel nervous showing my talent to others
Sometimes I think how they (others) gonna take my talent or me
Sometimes afraid being made fun of my work OR me.
But at the end, I love to share my feeling with others and talent I don’t want to live in a cave and I wanna come out and show people how fun type of person I am.
Because I’m not shy type at all.

---

**JAMES DIUBON**
Edward R. Murrow High School

I love you but
I’m probably not the only person that tells you that
I love you but I know you’re just a human being
I think I only love you from the things that I’m seeing
You got long hair and you gotta pretty face
You gotta thin waist with a big ol’ cake
The sky is the limit but I’m only on the mountain
Them otha guys treat you like a water fountain

---

**TLANDO JOHNSON**
Edward R. Murrow High School

Scribble scribble
Dribble dribble that what you hear
Practicing and training without fear
That the Brooklyn way
Scribble scribble
Dribble dribble there’s a park on every block
That rhythm you feel when the ball hits the ground.

---

**ELLA BELOT**
Edward R. Murrow High School

You are you are, you are, you are who been waiting for. I am watching for my Grandma to get out of the hospital and get better and healthy. You are my hero Grandma, you are the one I wait for. You to rise and stand out like you were before you sick. You are you are, you are the one I been waiting, for you are you are, you are the one been waiting for to rise up from your hospital bed and live like before you were live. Live Grandma, live grandma, you are the one I am waiting for as long as it takes for you to get better and spread your wings and fly to a journey of no more sickness and healthy all the time or weakness. To be strong and there when I get married and live my life, and you see me accomplish, come alive.
BROOKLYN TO ME
REDA ODR
Edward R. Murrow High School

Brooklyn to me is a mountain that I climb, in which I sometimes lose my grip, I can always trust through the people with me, also climbing. Sometimes I move faster and other times slow but in the end I always am moving whether it be down or up.

ZAINB
Edward R. Murrow High School

Ya'll made me laugh, ya’ll made me frown, ya’ll made me tear. I thought why? Then it all seemed so clear. Brooklyn, I’ve never admired your tall and statuesque places, even in my Bay Ridge, right by the Verrazano, where I took those slow sad draggin paces. Park Slope always seemed so dope, the good kind, but it was too extravagant, for just a brown stone I’d be fined.

AMANDEEP KAUR
Edward R. Murrow High School

Brooklyn, I could write you forever
About the places there are
People are joyful and they live their life forever.
Coney Island is the good place to visit in summer.
Very crowded but rides are fun.

CAMMIE DONOHUE
Edward R. Murrow High School

You are who you’ve been waiting for
The passionate lover
Marvelous writer
I am omnipotent
Strong and bewildered
I’m not coy
But full of so much joy
I am not aloof but
Perceived to be a goof.
You are who you’ve been waiting for
A magnificent mother
Spontaneous woman.

ROCIO ILAGORRE
Edward R. Murrow High School

I’m not the shy type
Once you get to know me
I am real not like those fake
People who try and hide how
They feel.
People see right through them
Like glass
Don’t try to hide who you are
Cause you will just get lost.
I am not the shy type.

SAMUEL ST. LOUIS
Edward R. Murrow High School

I’m not the shy type
I don’t fear
I don’t lie
I am brave, never shy
I’m as confident and bold as a risk taker
I’m never nice things like a secret keeper
I’m brave like superman and can’t be stopped
Don’t like my act then go kick rocks.

ALEXA GROSBARD
Edward R. Murrow High School

Brooklyn, I could write you forever
Bronx, your communities can tell billions of stories
Queens, your neighborhoods are like raps, fast and hard to understand
Staten Island, you’re quiet but complex and full of mysteries
Manhattan, the greatest city in the world, so divine yet so dead.
Brooklyn, I could write you forever
From those first train rides to the last bus stop
Brooklyn, my home, my life, I can write you forever.

BROOKLYN
ABRAHAM CONDE CERVANTES
Edward R. Murrow High School

Brooklyn is the place where the doors are open to everyone
Brooklyn
YONG H.
Edward R. Murrow High School

I'm not the shy type.
I'm not shy.
I might look shy but I'm not.
I'm not blushing.
I'm just hot.
I'm not the shy type.
I'm just tired to talk.

GROUP PIECE
IBRAHIM, KATHY, DEVONTE, THEA,
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

We dedicate this poem
These words
And this message to you
Gone but never forgotten

Bullets don't have names, Kids do!
Today it was them, tomorrow it could be you

The death of our young soldiers
In those Brooklyn streets is a plague
They think shots before handcuffs
The reason for us to be buried by our mother
Enough is enough we got to man up!
We've been silent for too long
Cause everywhere I turn
Another one is gone

Bloody fluids constantly flowing
From this hurt mother's wound
“Don't shoot me!” & “I'm not resisting”
My child's the very life of me
Taken from the palm of a mother's soul
Shaken in a wrath of grief

Guilty eyes, bloody hands
Lifeless body once again
You stare and looks
Still in shot
He's bleeding now, grasping for air
You're panicking
They're yelling
“He had a gun!”
When does it stop?
When do we get justice?
There is no innocent, the people are guilty

Children with no confidence, no father
Around the world
Girls being raped
No protectors
That child didn't ask to be here
Being pushed into foster care
BANG!
20 innocent kids drop dead

Sandy Hook
They're picking up guns instead of books
Oh, United States of America
With all your fake freedoms
2nd Amendments: every man has the right to bear arms
But all these guns just cause harm
The ones who say “It's for justice”
Putting bullets in young lives
The shell of the 9mm
Should never be their destiny

Soaring for an answer
Looking for a revolution
We got to stop
Time to make a change
Because I have faith
There will be better days

Kimani, Darius Akeal, Keith
And so so many more young black teens
Gone!
We are here today so that your memory
Will live on!
Take heed
Don't let these kids die in vain
Put down the guns
Make the police accountable for their actions
Put money into activities for students
Before they get taken by the gangs

We can't just sit here and do nothing
You
& You
& You
Get up
Stand up
& DO SOMETHING!

GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN INNOCENT
Kamrun N.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Why the guns gotta shoot?
Places like Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn
Handcuffs, heavy boots
Police are everywhere
Killing the innocents
Fighting with the ignorants
Misunderstood love
Soaring for an answer
Looking for a change
Silent won't speak
Madness of thunder, bolting
The mourn of the silent calling
Discrimination still occurs
We gotta stop
We need help
We want peace!
**GUilty Until Proven Innocent**

DEvONTE J.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Brooklyn, a place where a gun kills, leaving people and parents with a dreadful chill. A place where handcuffs are barely used and death is from a cop's hand. A place where Darius Robinson's life was taken.

A father who feels abandoned because his child is gone. A father who lost a brother the same age as his son. All this happens on a Brooklyn street. Cops make no arrest, gunman gets away with the case.

Another innocent life taken.

**Back in the Day**

KRISTAll H.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

I used to play handball all day
But now I don't; it's boring

I used to be on my pacifier all day
But I just watch my nephew use his

I used to be shy
But now I talk without a problem
I used to cross the street holding hands
But now I cross the street alone with pride

I used to go out alone
I used to do everything alone
But now I have someone to do things with "my mother"

**Guilty? (Word Association)**

MErISA C.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Blue Water
Gun Pow
Turn Spin
Brooklyn Nets
Graduation June
Soar Fly
Loud New York
Cave Dark
Water Thirsty
Black Dirty
Search Find
Abandon Lonely
Handcuffs ---
Boot Hiking
Fight ---
Freedom ---
Stoic Still
Brother Blood
Faith Church
Thunder Rage
Change Diversity
Silence Shush
Hope ---

**Used To...**

NIa p.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

I used to say I never wanted kids
But now I'm pregnant with my first

I used to be skinny
But now I'm thick

I used to be nice
But now I'm mean

I used to be scared of people
But now I can't stand them

I used to like school
I used to love math
But now I can't wait to graduate

**There Is...**

JOSLYN S.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

... more to life
Than just living
You are put on earth
For a purpose
You can do anything
You put your mind to
Everyone can make a change in the world
AS LONG AS...
JASMINE B.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

After it's all said and done
I am going to come home
And forget what happened
Because
I belong at home
With the person I love
And I am going to feel that
We can get through
Any argument

IT DON'T MATTER
ROXANNE H.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

It don't matter what you try to do to me
What you try to say to me
Nothing you say matters

I will always come back stronger
I will always rise from it

I USED TO...
NICOLE. R.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

I used to hate school
I used to hate life

But now I am motivated
But now I am determined

I used to dislike my sister
But now I am closer than ever

I used to curse a lot like a drunken sailor
But now I watch my figure of speech

I used to cry
I used to frown
But now I laugh and smile

IT IS...
KATHY
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Love is going home to your favorite food when you are starving
Hate is having specks of redness in your eyes
Love is not crying and always in a bad mood

Ratchet is people who dress like they woke up blind and picked up the first thing they saw
Freedom is enjoying life with no worries
Family is the one who sticks with you through thick and thin
Friends be like “I love this song!”
My heart is something fragile but powerful

GUilty UNTIL PROVING INNOCENT
THEA
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Hear that loud boom
Sounds like thunder
The flash of life striking like lightening
Lighting up the sky
Families mourning over their loss
The loss of these free souls
As they fly back to where they came from
Lifeless bodies drowning in the dark
A stain on Bed Stuy grounds,
on Sandy Hook school floors

LOVe IS...
MALIK H.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Love is my mother
Taking care of her family

Hate is the dramatics – like
When a dog sees a cat

Love is not about hurting
The people you love

Ratchet is when people think
They are better than anybody

Freedom is living the life you want
Family is close to your heart
Friend be like “Let me borrow a dollar”
My heart is cold as ice

IS...
NIKO J.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Love is the thing that you put everyone before

Hate is...
Love is not brushing it off for nothing
Ratchet is...
Freed is to have no worries and go with the flow
Family is a bond that you share
Friends be like...
My heart is a delicate flower
Looking for someone to preserve it

LOV E IS...
IBREAHIM A N.
Metropolitan Corporate Academy

Love is being happy
Hate is spreading hate
Love is not being unhappy
Ratchet is unclassy
Freedom is to be who you want to be
Family is love and protection
Friend be like “change”
My heart is heavy

WHO SAYS...

DAMIAN BLOCKWOOD, KYRA CHARLES, YOBANI COHETERO, NANCY CORTEZ, AISHA DELBRUN, JASMINE EDWARDS, EVERTON FRAY, TALISSE GRAHAM, ERNESTINA HODGES, KERON JACK, CRYSTAL JARRETT, JOSEPH KELLEY-NANTON, NICHOLAS LEBRON, EBHONI LEWIS, KALVIN MEAUSA, JUSTIN ORTIZ, ASHONTI PALMER, LAKIA RAM-SAY, JOHNATHAN SANTIAGO, CLEADIS SAWYER, DARNEL SEMEXANT, MALIK SKRINE, DAVID STRAKER AND JENELLE WALLACE
Clara Barton High School

Who says I’m stupid?
Who says I’m not cool?
(They do!)

Who says I’m crazy?
Who says I’m not cute?
(They do!)

Who says I’m retarded?
Who says I’m not smart?
(They do!)

Who says I’m wrong?
Who says I’m not independent?
(They do!)

We say we’re different...just like you.
We are chicken sweet!

I AM

DAMIAN BLOCKWOOD, KYRA CHARLES, YOBANI COHETERO, NANCY CORTEZ, AISHA DELBRUN, JASMINE EDWARDS, EVERTON FRAY, TALISSE GRAHAM, ERNESTINA HODGES, KERON JACK, CRYSTAL JARRETT, JOSEPH KELLEY-NANTON, NICHOLAS LEBRON, EBHONI LEWIS, KALVIN MEAUSA, JUSTIN ORTIZ, ASHONTI PALMER, LAKIA RAM-SAY, JOHNATHAN SANTIAGO, CLEADIS SAWYER, DARNEL SEMEXANT, MALIK SKRINE, DAVID STRAKER AND JENELLE WALLACE
Clara Barton High School

I am a valley, low like negative twenty,
I am Nancy squared.
I am as bright as the full moon -
I am the best of both worlds - hell and heaven.

ZOMBIES

DAMIAN BLOCKWOOD, KYRA CHARLES, YOBANI COHETERO, NANCY CORTEZ, AISHA DELBRUN, JASMINE EDWARDS, EVERTON FRAY, TALISSE GRAHAM, ERNESTINA HODGES, KERON JACK, CRYSTAL JARRETT, JOSEPH KELLEY-NANTON, NICHOLAS LEBRON, EBHONI LEWIS, KALVIN MEAUSA, JUSTIN ORTIZ, ASHONTI PALMER, LAKIA RAM-SAY, JOHNATHAN SANTIAGO, CLEADIS SAWYER, DARNEL SEMEXANT, MALIK SKRINE, DAVID STRAKER AND JENELLE WALLACE
Clara Barton High School

Flesh so tender
Flesh so sweet
Please don't shoot me
Please don't kill me
Please don't hurt me
Please don't yell at me
I need some blood
I'll be your friend
Help me spread my wrath
Don't take me back to the underworld.
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

DAMIAN BLOCKWOOD, KYRA CHARLES, YOBANI COHETERO, NANCY CORTEZ, AISHA DELBRUN, JASMINE EDWARDS, EVERTON FRAY, TALISSE GRAHAM, ERNESTINA HODGES, KERON JACK, CRYSTAL JARRETT, JOSEPH KELLEY-NANTON, NICHOLAS LEBRON, EBHONI LEWIS, KALVIN MEUSA, JUSTIN ORTIZ, ASHONTI PALMER, LAKIA RAM-SAY, JOHNATHAN SANTIAGO, CLEADIS SAWYER, DARNEL SEMEXANT, MALIK SKRINE, DAVID STRAKER AND JENELLE WALLACE
Clara Barton High School

When I eat my mom's macaroni and cheese
It makes me want to dance!
Fried chicken tastes like heaven -
Chicken grease drips like raindrops.
You are chicken sweet!

COMMUNITY

YOBANI COHETERO
Clara Barton High School

My people live in a community
Where prejudice is at full strength.
We do not believe
That we deserve
To be treated this way!
We often ask whether to strike,
Or ask for a license,
So we can enjoy freedom.
Why can't we be as prosperous
As other ethnic groups?
Why can they not elaborate
A plan for our flourishing?
Although there is a lot at stake,
We still believe in a sparkling future!

UNCONVENTIONAL HAIKU

KYRA CHARLES
Clara Barton High School

Mindless Behavior
on a summer day
sounds of My Girl

JOSEPH KELLEY-NANTON
Clara Barton High School

The sun so bright,
so beautiful,
making winter feel jealous

DAVID STRAKER
Clara Barton High School

Sun so bright
creating angelic shadows –
summer birds

MALIK SKRINE
Clara Barton High School

I
Going to school with my eyes
closed to the sunlight,
my head hurts

II
I don't care about what,
I'm not sure.
No school on Monday
Playing games online
like that –
keeping busy

DARNEL SEMEXANT
Clara Barton High School

Always on my mind,
my love is like a summer day –
she keeps me happy!

UNTITLED
JOHNATHAN SANTIAGO
Clara Barton High School

Beauty is love deep
that everyone can feel
in their hearts and souls

ANYTHING BUT...
RASHAUNNA CAMPBELL
George Westinghouse High School

How can I be anything but a penny?
That you picked up off the floor for good luck
found in the wrong moment
I don't want to be forgotten in your back pocket
Your lungs stray scars on my lips
How can I be anything but a pigeon feather?
Riding through the wind
Like a village hen
Forgotten through time
Like sand and soil
I dance to the wind of your serenade?
How can I be anything but a two-step?

When I was young you placed me on your feet
and we glided together
You told me that dance was the beginning
And end of every bad relationship
And it was ours
How can I be anything but a painter?
You were a painter in your prime
A prime primer to my palms
Why do you think I finger painted murals
To the canvas structure of my mother's womb?
How can I be anything but… a pattern?
A collage of mistakes
A timeline bending backwards onto itself
A circle
I don't want to give birth to a cycle

How can I be anything but a composer?
I want to know the song
That was playing in the background
As you and my mother conceived me
So I can sample its melody
Dissect each and every lyric
Insert my heart beat make it orchestrate a baby's cry
Until all you hear is like “father”

Can I be anything but a snapshot?
Quick and blurred
You gaze at pictures but can't hold a memory
Can't hold your liquor
You long to find pictures
Where you could still hold your dignity
Still hold our poster
How can I be anything but fading?
The shadow will get weaker
The sun no longer sees your face

Remember pennies lying on the floor
Remember dance floors
Remember paintings
Paint yourself an horizon
Pregnant with patterns
Remember patterns
Break yours
Break the glass

Allow the alcohol to burn
On the ground you walk on
Allow me to embrace your poison
My heart beats a pattern similar to yours
Let me bath in your blood
As if your veins were narrow passageways to a brighter day
Stand tall like trees look over your shoulder
See your son still searching for that fix of a father.
How can I still searching for that fix of a father.

BECAUSE OF YOU
TATIANA DESIR
George Westinghouse High School

I'm pushed out of you
I'm crying, I'm screaming
The lights are bright
I can't open my eyes,
Yet I'm placed in your arms
My eyes open
And you are happy to see me
As if God gave you the greatest gem

Days go by
Weeks go by
Months go by
Your mood changes
I despise you
Going to clubs was your priority
I no longer mattered to you
Am I the piece of gum
that has lost its flavor
Do I look black or white?
You put me into foster care
those thirty days were the worst
You treated me like a word
that can be erased
But you still see the print
So many birthdays go by

Because of you I had seizure
Because of you I'm taught d……
Because of you I'm separated from my siblings
Because of you I cry myself to sleep every night
Everything was because of you

Always thinking
Always dreaming
Always crying
Always wondering

WAS I EVER GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU?

---

**BROOKLYN**
DANTE WILLIAMS
George Westinghouse High School

It's time for Brooklyn to move out
Like an 18 year old moving out of mom's crib
People say nothing good comes out of Brooklyn
What about Murphy, Biggie or Jay Z?
It's time for us to move out of Manhattan's shadow

Manhattan may have the money and the tall buildings
But we have the soul, the culture
We are not some mistreated middle child
Manhattan, Queens, Bronx, don't got it like we got it
We are Brooklyn the best borough you've ever been through

---

**DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL**
JENNIFER MARTINO
George Westinghouse High School

Will there ever be that day
That we'll ever meet again,
That Lil Girl Died
At the age of ten
Her kindness and smile
That light up the room
Drowned in that hospital
When She received that bad news
She walked in a trail of tears
Knowing her dad's not coming home

*Papa Dios Cuida Mi Papi porque lo quiero con todo mi Cora-
zon*
Only if god could hear my every word
My heart wouldn't feel so empty
So shallow
And my dad will still wake up and go to sleep
And still be coming home

(-dedication to Alfredo A. Martino )

---

**DEAR SISTER**
JADA THOMAS
George Westinghouse High School

To Nareba,

Honestly, I feel put down
When Mommy and Daddy compare me to you
How can I ever be you?
We are not the same
you are fed with a gold spoon
I get the plastic

But you are my big sister
You stand high and proud
You inspire me
Although I may not like you all the time
We are sisters bonded
By blood and memories
You will always be an angel in my eyes

---

**DO YOU EVEN KNOW ME?**
STEPHANY REYES
George Westinghouse High School

How can you judge me without even knowing me?
Even if you think you know me
You'll never understand my story
Forget what you heard
Listen to what you're told

What you think you know and heard
Does not define me
Looking from the outside
No knowledge of what's inside
The truth may turn a stranger into a friend

Peel this fruit, reveal the nectar
Then you'll see the real me
Now you know
I'm not a street loving trick

I have brains
I have values
I have dignity
I have strength
I am Somebody
GHETTO STORY
MECCO “SUAVE” BARKER
George Westinghouse High School

Life is a game
Press enter if you dare
Things don’t always go your way
So just know it isn’t fair
Stay away from the fire
Don’t get burned by the flames
Of this cruel cold world

Living in this world
Life hasn’t always been the best to me
But I’m here so I guess I got a destiny
I want you to see that I was meant to be
I’ll gain the fame
Strive for the glory
Maybe not now
But soon and surely
I do it for my fam
I do it for me

The perfect end to my ghetto story

MY FATHER
AMANDA SPENCER
George Westinghouse High School

Picked up a gun and killed a cop
Picked up a pen and broke my heart
I was on my way but I guess I wasn’t worth the wait
Maybe I was your mistake
Maybe I’m fool’s gold
All shine but no soul

That love every little girl wants
I’m not gonna front
I’ll just send you to the back
Back of my mind, bottom of the mine

Will I ever dig you up?
Will I ever get that feeling I wish to find
It’s all your fault I fit a stereotype
It’s all your fault I don’t believe the hype
But I guess it’s my fault for thinking
About you every day and night.
My mind goes in circles in this down and out world
Damn! I’m a lost little girl
Rollercoaster emotions but still no thrill
No I don’t love you too
my father.
Sincerely lost girl

MY LOVE
KELLY AGUDO
George Westinghouse High School

Sun, water and food we all need
The things I need are you
Rain drops and sun grow flowers
Your love is my energy source
Your voice is soft music to my ears
Cute messages from you are sweet poems
Seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years,
Go by but my love for you grows stronger and stronger

MY SWEET OLD AMERICA
(written while gazing at the Statue of Liberty in Redhook)
DESTINY SORRENTINI
George Westinghouse High School

From where I’m sitting
I can see you, I can see...
The good, bad, and ugly sides of you

Don’t get offended though
I mean, you never learned any better
You’re supposed to symbolize knowledge and power
But all I can see are lies and deception

Standing there with your book
Representing knowledge and power
But how hypocritical are you...
That you don’t want your own people to get an equal edu-

Why?
I mean, the people you refer to as “immigrants”
Work harder than the people you call Americans
But can’t you see past your own pride
To accept that they are people, and they deserve what we have

What we have these people would die for
Day by day we take for granted what we have
Those jobs that you say the “immigrants”
Are stealing from us...

We took for granted...
You sat there and said those jobs don’t pay enough
Aren’t good enough...
And then when they have those jobs now you
Get mad and want to make a spectacle about it

I don’t get you...
I understand that sometimes
It’s human nature to be contradicting
But can’t you see past you own pride
To see that we are all “American”
And we deserve to be equal
America you are a game changer
You change the rules so you can win
And you did it by deceiving us

RETURN ADDRESS
MALAYSIA HECTOR
George Westinghouse High School

I was going through these papers
I stumbled upon an old address

I wrote a letter
But there was no reply
I wrote a letter
To express my feelings I felt inside

In this letter anger took over
"Are you really going to leave things like this?"
"How could you be so stupid?"
In this letter things were said
Things that made me cry

I shed too many tears
Now I understand why I was trying to hide
This person just meant so much
Even though he hurt me
I just wanted to hear from him so badly
Why doesn’t he write back?
Did he move on?
Why doesn’t he care at all?
If he doesn’t write back I may never know

2 weeks later I wrote another one
Damn!
That Makes SEVEN in total
Am I the only one reminiscing on the fond memories?

I stopped by his house to find all my letters on the floor of his front door
He never opened them

I wrote him a letter
But there was no reply
I didn’t know I was writing letters to a dead person who got shot 3 times

THE CHILD CALLED "IT"
LASHIEYA LIGON
George Westinghouse High School

This child was born with no meaning
labeled with a name that has been forgotten
by his mother along with the family’s shame
This boy is a nobody to his siblings
locked in his room in corners filled
with sadness and neglect

but this child gave his mother a name as well
as she is seen no longer loving, but
heartless, cold, and total waste of life
"It" calls her a "B" for her miserable life
She is seen as an enemy to her child’s eyes day and night
as "It" gets hit everyday on senseless acts his so-called mother explains as “punishment for the day”
"It" only asks for love and forgiveness, but he is trying to forgive his own mother for feeding him only leftovers from his older brothers and sisters
"It" goes to school with bruises on his face and keeps telling the nurse "I'm Okay" but "It" is pleading for someone to listen and listen and take him away from the devil he unfortunately lives with, but, "It" will get his day when someone with opened eyes look beyond the lies and thankfully takes him away

THE GAME CHANGER
BRIAN COPEMAN
George Westinghouse High School

The game changer, the one who foresees his own failure in which he finds redemption seeking his own success
Out of the crab barrel he climbs, as boundaries are broken, as he struggles through hard times, harsh words are spoken
As these words build his character, he becomes his own renaissance man of the highest caliber, but the struggle in which he struggled, and the phases he embraced, many lives were lost for this kid in which none has gone to waste.

He’s the one who decides who he becomes in society, and he engulfs himself in his high levels of notoriety, thus making him his game changer, but the game he change gave change to his name, changing bad to good and good to best the feeling of failure has gone to rest
The game he changed, gave many a surprise, the snake that pretend to be good hide in a disguise.
The game changers company that’s attracted should only be subtracted because they gave failures to be expected but my success was respected, the negative was neglected, the positive was collected and I changed my game,

I took the righteous road, so they praised my name
Out of all the things I have done, and all the things I changed, being accustomed to failure, success became strange
so changing normal to strange, I didn't turn out to be regretful because my game became successful
A girl in the darkness
chained up and can't get out
for someone to help her
where scars on her wrist tell her story
making her heart cry and break
in a million pieces
making her wanting to disappear
and hide into the darkness
where no no one can hurt her
where no one can make her cry
making her feel worthless, useless,
and not loved for what she is
thinking what did she do?
seeing if she was dead will anyone miss her
will they cry or laugh at her
until she found this light
that took all the pain away
and replaced it with happiness and love
where someone makes her feel loved
for who she is
making her heart smile so bright as the sunlight
where she got stronger and powerful

Who are you,
the loving kind caring person
you disappeared from my life and left me trapped
and stuck not knowing what to do having you in my heart and
not my life, me not knowing what I want or doubting
my ability on how to direct my future.
my own love ones - not being able to
trust or be loyal because
you're not there
who are you
I needed you, you left me in the dark

My mind racing and my thoughts running behind it.
So lost in my self conscious with no one to help me find it.
Dramatic changes within, but so afraid to let them out.
So afraid to be the kid that everyone talks about.
So mostly I just think of all the things that could be.
While wondering in my head what it was that changed me.
Was it the relationship with my mother? or maybe other things.
The more I think about it the more pain that it brings.
Though now I refuse to sit and wonder, or compare myself to others.
Now I know that I have something special that can be touched
by no other.
I am as God made me, not to resemble any other.
And now I just crack a smile when I'm looking in the mirror.
QUEEN OF SPIDERS
MAIKEL NOYER
Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies

The moon is out
I howl a strong melody
Your Power is strong
A goddess of dark energy
You paved the road for me to go
A mindless beast
Chasing my queen
You sit in your throne of diamonds and bees
And all red jelly beans

I made you a dress I want you to wear
Made of silk
Smiles
And virgin pears
Adorned with dream catchers made of horned beetles
To vanquish your fears
It’s warm because it was made to shelter the love of a Bear

I kneel
I leave and cook you a meal
Wild rice, plums, love
And fresh deer
My dear your fork is bone
Your knife is steel

My dear
Your love given to me will gladly be traded for a pound of meat
For that’s what makes my heart beat
You are my Human
I am your pet
For you are my light
And I your baphomet

MY DADDY
MADISON RIVERA
Brooklyn School for Collaborative Studies

(Born to Five)
My Daddy loves me.

My Daddy misses me.
My Daddy hugs and kisses me.
My Daddy sees me.
My Daddy listens.
My Daddy doesn’t get mad at his Kitten.
My Daddy teaches me.
My Daddy...

(Six to Nine)
My Daddy is changing.
My Daddy gets mad at me.
My Daddy doesn’t teach me anymore.

But these changes are small.
They don’t matter.
He’s still My Daddy...

(Ten to Twelve)
My Daddy is changing again.
My Daddy doesn’t see me anymore.
My Daddy looks at me.
My Daddy doesn’t listen to me anymore.
My Daddy hears me.
But these changes are kinda small.
They don’t matter...
Not that much...
He’s still My Daddy...
Right?

(Twelve to Thirteen)
My Daddy is changing again.
My Daddy hugs me,
But the hugs feel cold.
My Daddy kisses me,
But the kisses feel reluctant.
These changes are not small.
These changes do matter.
They matter a lot.
But my Daddy still loves me...
Right?

(Fourteen to Fifteen)
My Daddy is changing again.
I don’t think my Daddy loves me anymore.
I don’t feel like my Daddy loves me anymore.
This change is huge.
It matters more than anything.
But my Daddy is still my Daddy...
Right?

(July 28, 2012 to... ?)
My Daddy...
I finally realized...
My Daddy isn’t my Daddy anymore.
My Daddy is my father now.
My Daddy is Dead.

(November 28, 2012)
My Daddy wants a paternity test.
My Daddy really isn’t my Daddy anymore.
He’s not even my father now.
Now, he’s
My Mother’s Sperm Donor.
The mission of BAM Education & Humanities is to ignite imagination and ideas. Through programs that enrich the audience experience, spark conversation, and generate creative engagement, we turn the light on for curious minds.

BAM Education connects learning with creativity, engaging imagination by encouraging self-expression through theater, dance, music, opera, and film offerings for audiences of all ages; school-break workshops; and in- and after-school programs for students and teachers. Our programs include: Shakespeare Teaches Students, Shakespeare Teaches Teachers, African Dance Beat, Dancing into the Future, Young Film Critics, Young Shakespeare, Brooklyn Reads, and Arts & Justice.

BAM Family programming widens the lens of artistic discovery, offering young people and families smart, stimulating, and globally diverse dance, theater, storytelling, film, and music.

BAM Humanities is a forum for adventurous ideas, providing context for the cultural experience at BAM and beyond. Our artist talks, master classes, lecture and discussion series, and innovative literary programs facilitate engagement and discovery.

Department of Education and Humanities Staff:
Stephanie Hughley: Vice President, Education and Humanities
Suzanne Youngerman, Ph.D.: Director
John P. Tighe, DMA: Assistant Director
Violaine Huisman: Humanities Director
John S. Foster, Ph.D.: Education Manager
Gwendolyn Kelso: Program Manager
Eveline Chang: Program Manager
Shana Parker: Event Manager
Jennifer Leeson: Administrative Coordinator
Nathan Gelgud: Box Office Manager/Program Associate
Tamar MacKay: Administrative Manager
Molly Silberberg: Humanities Assistant
Rebekah Gordon: Administrative Assistant
Hannah Max: Humanities Intern
Lulu Earle: Education Intern

Photos by: Beowulf Sheehan and Lisa Smith

Major support for BAM Education programs provided by:

Goldman Sachs
Gives

Expansion of BAM’s Community and Education Programs made possible by the support of the SHS Foundation.

Leadership support for BAM Education programs is provided by Cheryl & Joe Della Rosa, The Irene Diamond Fund, The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, and The Rita and Alex Hillman Foundation.

Support for BAM’s after-school education programs provided by The David Rockefeller Fund. Additional support provided by Martha A. & Robert S. Rubin.

Support for Arts and Justice provided by the Constans Culver Foundation.

Development of new education and community initiatives in the BAM Fisher supported by The Achelis Foundation; Altman Foundation; Booth Ferris Foundation; Brooklyn Community Foundation; The Simon & Eve Colin Foundation; Ford Foundation; Lemberg Foundation; The New York Community Trust; Rockefeller Brothers Fund; The Rockefeller Foundation New York City Cultural Innovation Fund; The Skirball Foundation; and Seth Sprague Educational and Charitable Foundation.

Education programs at BAM are supported by:
Barclays Nets Community Alliance; Barker Welfare Foundation; Tiger Baron Foundation; BNY Mellon; The Bay and Paul Foundations; Constans Culver Foundation; Charles Hayden Foundation; Jaharis Family Foundation; Emily Davie and Joseph S. Komfeld Foundation; David and Susan Marcinek; Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation; National Grid; PennPAt: a program of the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation; Tony Randall Theatrical Fund; The Jerome Robbins Foundation, Inc.; May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation; Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation; Sills Family Foundation; Surdna Foundation; Michael Tuch Foundation; Turrell Fund; Joseph LeRoy and Ann C. Warner Fund.

Education programs at BAM are endowed by:
Lila Wallace-Reader’s Digest Endowment Fund for Community, Educational, & Public Affairs Programs; Martha A. and Robert S. Rubin; William Randolph Hearst Endowment for Education and Humanities Programs; Irene Diamond Fund; and The Robert and Joan Catell Fund for Education Programs.

Your tax dollars make BAM programs possible through funding from:

NYCulture
NYSCulture

BAM would like to thank the Brooklyn Delegations of the New York State Assembly, Joseph R. Lentol, Delegation Leader; and New York Senate, Senator Velmanette Montgomery, Delegation Leader. The BAM facilities are owned by the City of New York and benefit from public funds provided through the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs with support from Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg; Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin; the New York City Council including Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn, Finance Committee Chair Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., Cultural Affairs Committee Chair Jimmy Van Bramer, the Brooklyn Delegation of the Council, and Councilwoman Letitia James; and Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz.