

## Literary Fair

### **Literary Fair Interpretive Categories**

**Poetry Interpretation Poster** - Poetry Interpretation Posters utilize original student artwork to convey the meaning of a professionally published poem. Students select a poem from the poet of their choice and design a poster that serves as an interpretation of the text. The poster must include the title and author of the poem. Illustrations must be the original design of the student; they can be drawn by hand or on a computer. Students should not use patented characters (i.e. Donald Duck) or computer generated/clip art.

- Poster is to be submitted electronically as a PDF version of either a photo, scanned document, or a PowerPoint slide.

### **POEM: Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein**

The poem titled "Where the Sidewalk Ends" by Shel Silverstein's is about the journey of escaping the confines of a world where "the smoke blows black and the dark street winds and bends", symbolizing the restrictions and responsibilities of city life or adulthood. The poem encourages readers to rediscover a childlike sense of wonder and imagination, embracing a realm of "soft white grass" and "peppermint wind" where joy and freedom reign. The call to "*leave this place where the smoke blows black,*" emphasizes the transition from a bleak, restrictive environment to one filled with wonder and light. Through sensory imagery like "peppermint wind" that evokes a sense of innocence, the poem evokes innocence, purity, and freedom.

In my illustration, I aimed to capture the poem's essence by depicting a contrasting journey from the smoky confines of city life to a world of vibrant, childlike wonder. The sidewalk cuts a stark line between two worlds: the vibrant realm of childhood imagination, bursting with color and light, and the shadowy world of adulthood, filled with restriction and fear. This sharp division emphasizes the poem's core message, the need to break free from the confines of responsibility and rediscover the joy of innocence. The side lying ahead, is bright and joyful, surrounded by the beauty of nature, while the other, fading into the background, is dark, smoky, and gloomy, confined within the harshness of a city. The gloomy side recedes, illustrating its diminishing influence. The sidewalk is winding and twisting to show the complexities of life. The title of the poem is integrated into the sidewalk itself. On the darker side of the sidewalk, I integrated text that merges with the environment, using a darker palette to enhance the feeling of being overshadowed by the city. The text, "leave this place where the smoke blows black," is designed to appear as if it is part of the smoky air, using a stylized font that resonates with the gloomy atmosphere. This choice reflects the poem's theme of moving away from darkness, and the text's integration is meant to be discovered, not immediately obvious, inviting a closer inspection and deeper engagement with the image.

While the vibrant left side of the illustration captures attention with its brightness and detail, the right side is not devoid of interest. I incorporated dim, distant lights within the cityscape, suggesting that even in the darkest places, there are points of light and hope. These elements are subtle, ensuring they do not detract from the overarching theme but rather complement the narrative of hidden depths and overlooked beauties.

The gradual transition of light along the path where the sidewalk bends significantly symbolizes the journey from the oppressive environment to one of joyful rediscovery. This

transition is marked not only by changes in color and light but also by the introduction of whimsical elements like small, playful designs that become more visible as one approaches the vibrant end of the sidewalk. These designs are natural extensions of the environment, symbolizing the reawakening of wonder and imagination.

The drawing features two figures, a child and an adult, to illustrate the contrasting perspectives of hope and struggle. The child, tall, confident, and cheerful, leads the way toward the vibrant, natural side. The straight posture and uplifted head of the child represents innocence, optimism, and hope. In contrast, the adult follows behind, looking back toward the gloomy, dark city. With a hunched posture and a sorrowful expression, the adult represents the burdens and restrictions of adult life and the stress of city life. While the adult is trapped in sorrow, the child, gleeful and cheerful, confidently walks toward the future.

Inspirational and relevant lines from the poem are faintly scattered across the skies and placed subtly throughout the drawing. These lines articulate the poem's themes while adding a sense of wonder and creativity to the illustration.

*Journey Beyond the Sidewalk: An Ode to Hope, Wonder, and Imagination*

