

**National Poetry Day
Waipā Given Words
Competition**

National Poetry Day 2023 is on Friday 25 August.

This year's national theme is refuge.

To enter the competition you needed to write of poem of up to 120 words and the poem must feature at least 5 of the given words provided.

Gift | Sun | Leaves | Stare | Winter | Refuge

Seasonal Dance

Condensation creeps down the inside of my window,
Pirouettes of tiny drops dancing in the warmth of the morning sun.

I sit and stare at the shrivelled leaves outside,
Crumbling against the frosts lying heavily across the ground,
Tiny icicles, a translucent shroud,
As I, inside, seek refuge from the cold of winter and old age.

Aches and ailments adding to the belief,
Our existence can be brief.
This pathway we tread,
Rejoicing in the good, yet often regretting the things unsaid,
Leads us down once more
To that hidden door,
Opening to the gift of spring.

I sit and stare at electric sparks of daffodil yellow,
Slowly merging with the earth, brown - raw,
Embracing the seasonal dance,
Once more.

MA

SH4 in Winter

She hates this road, and its effects,
the kids used to call it “hilly bendy”,
a road I’d enthusiastically rally drive.

Now, roadworks and landslips every other kilometer,
colourful clutches of beehives every five.

A gift to travellers,
to bypass the original River Road,
to traverse the Parapara,
from Raetihi to Upokongaro.

The pale Winter sun stares into the windscreen
as Autumn’s leaves are flushed across the road into the Mangawhero.
Yet another 30km sign and we slow to our 4th set of traffic lights, on red!
Miles to the south, through the stream-cut hills,
the city of Whanganui doesn’t have that many.

CT

As I stare at the change in colour of the leaves of the Japanese Maple lining my street,
I take solace, that although Winter is here,
Soon the gift of the ambient warmth of the sun is not too far ahead,
Let it be said,
Waipa is home, where I am proud to be taking refuge.

LR

OUR NEIGHBOUR

John's got a jersey. Lichen-green
handknit. Gift from Raewyn for their 55th. Wears it
each winter & south-easterlies. Damn moths
got at it. Old bird at the sewing shop
offered to help

Didn't seem right.

Dines alone now. Takes refuge in his meat/3 vege (with puds!)
Occasionally flips through the leaves of Warehouse circulars, noting
the NEW jerseys
--not wool--some new-fangled fabric
His daughter doesn't knit
Lives in OZ, yet pesters him:
wear sunblock; eat less meat; lay off the piss & puds
Shift to a village, Dad

Doesn't seem right.

Raewyn used to sunbathe topless, you know
Made a damn
good roast. Knit while watching Coro, grew asparagus
yellow roses
Her rum custard was a cracker.

Seeking refuge in the fallen leaves

Winter has come to stare fair weather in the face
Even the sun is scared to shine it's gift
When faced with the stare of winter

To escape the winters wrath,
We must seek refuge
In the fallen leaves

A wave of cascading sadness
Displayed in the form of a raging storm
Winter has come to destroy us
And devour our joy and soul
Seeking refuge in the fallen winter foliage to survive

Hiding from the scavengers above
Who only pray for our deposition
After winter chews us up and spits us out
The birds will eat us for dinner

But such is the life of a worm

OB

I daydream, gazing out the coffee shop window,
watching the leaves in the park next door turn and fall for the coming winter.
I take a sip of my freshly brewed latte
ruining the heart made of foam.
I hear the bell on the door chime as I turn to face who walked in.
Round glasses framed her eyes, that were hued to be honey,
and I'm captivated.
She must have felt my stare, turning in my direction.
Sharing a smile, it was my gift from heaven.
But my own mind realises something,
To be gay and trying to find someone to date,
is always preparing for rejection.
So, I leave to take my refuge in my own home.

TO

Seeking refuge

From hard days of labor in the sun
Thinking they have won
A gift of 'freedom'
But forgetting to feed them
Seems to be an act of charity
but in reality,
its just barbarity
Going to a place that is 'fair'
but all you get are stares
From warm to fridgid
these conditions are wicked
The leaves are dead
winter has spread
You put them in a camp
the floor is damp,
there is no lamp
Claim to save a refugee
Live up to what you declare to be.

YI

Refuge

The sun gives refuge from the cold,
And winter that enemy of old,
But you can't hide from anything,
You can't hide from a stare or sting,
One day safety leaves and goes,
Then you will need refuge from your foes.

JH

Your love is like how the sun loves the earth
With blaring warmth and impossibility
A gift that leaves a forever burning feeling of
abundance in my stomach
Of wholeness and safety
You're a wooden decor piece painted bright orange
It reads "Welcome Home"
Glowing embers fill my heart in your presence
And in your heart is where I belong
Where my inner child dances
Where I find refuge in your stare
Hazel loving eyes that have never seen a cold winter
You are my fireplace
And your love is like the sun

LN

THE Gift of Beauty

A refugee family from Ukraine is now so gladly sitting here in NZ on this beautifully mild winter's day.

As we look about this beautiful country we take great enjoyment in the gift of freedom, and that even the late autumn leaves have that same freedom, it is a gift.

We look about at the surrounding beauty, and cannot help but stare at the blatant disregard, which is what we thought had been left behind us in Ukraine.

How is it possible for such a generous NZ people, to show such disregard for this beauty by refusing to deal sensibly with refuge?

GB

HOTEL MATARIKI

Today I'm sitting in the SUN
thoughts of WINTER flee my mind
Dried up LEAVES do scatter on the ground
as the breeze swirls them around.

This is a sheltered little spot
- a REFUGE I have found
at Hotel MATARIKI
where Peace and care abound.

Our meals are brought right to us,
Pills and drinks upon a tray,
We don't even wash the dishes,
do the laundry or pay our way!!

I've been here more than a fortnight,
perhaps it's time I got 'The Shift'
This time for my recovery has been a precious GIFT....

RD

Refuge Tree

Come stare. I dare you.
Rainbow robes reflect Autumnal glow -
Citrus orange sunrise
ruby reds dropping like blood
golden ochre, a polished crown,
falling down
spinning round
whirling and twirling
beauty unfurling.

Colourful clothing compost.
A cloak spread wide-
My gift to enrich the land.
A shelter for shell-shocked worms
squirming away as
hooked beaks and four-toed tongs
explore Earth's smorgasbord.

Scarecrow limbs outstretched
reach bare, ungloved
fingering Winters mist,
a slow burning mirage.
Loosened leaves a warm pocket -
hedgehog hibernation
hiding spikes through incubation.

Antarctic winds whip,
northern rains rage -
batter my exposed torso,
seer my wounded scars,
pound my naked bony frame
caught in changing rooms.

Look again.
A new wardrobe a-dawns.

MW

In winter's grasp, the sun's soft gift,
Through barren trees, its rays uplift,
Leaves of amber, gold, and red,
Dancing upon the wind widespread.

I stare, enchanted, at nature's play,
With Split Enz songs, memories sway,
A refuge found in melodies,
A tapestry of harmonies.

The world outside may turn to chill,
Yet here, warmth lingers, calm and still,
The music weaves a tender thread,
A symphony in heart and head.

In the fire's warm embrace, we find,
A sanctuary for heart and mind,
Where time stands still, and worries fade,
And spirits purr, with dreams conveyed.

PO (former Waipā resident)

WE WILL NEVER FORGET

A face in the window, she stares out in amazement
and almost disbelief at the vastness of the land,
the quiet of the land, the open space, the contentment
people, disorganised people in poverty, but free to make a stand.
How pleasant to watch the wind moving leaves along the ground.

It's winter and it's chilling but peaceful all around.

The sun is late this morning, as it hides behind a cloud
She's grateful for a little warmth as it peeps from behind it's shroud.

Flashes, flashes of contrast running through her mind,
where she had been, the agony of what happened in the past.

Her very young and nearby past, but now it's freedom
to have a brand new start in this new land, freedom at last.
She's found refuge in this peaceful land, it's like a gift from Heaven
Her hand moves slowly to her mouth as she eats her bread of leaven.

Flashes of barbed wire, the ache of hunger,
the sound of misery and pain, the stench of death

How different the scene outside the window
with sheep grazing on the hillside, trees and shade to sit beneath.

Involuntarily her mind goes back, to faces hungry, bony thin,
those wrecks were human beings once, now with no more will to live.

Guards, guns, electrified fences, how could they survive?
why must the Jews have suffered thus, how can they ever forgive?

Why the Jews had suffered at all, God alone can tell
they are the chosen race, but God did not intervene.

For six long years it carried on, the suffering and the hell,
For six long years trapped like animals, the torture carried on.

Six million Jews the record say, like animals put down,
six million human beings, their blood cries from the ground,

In gas chambers and furnaces, no sympathy was shown,
The Nazis with their guns; can their descendants ever live it down.

They called themselves the master race, barbaric were their ways
the world cannot forget their acts, both young and old they slayed.

In all that's history, this is the worst, the murders they did plan,
It shows the very core of man's inhumanity to man.

Winter Refuge

The sun stares down
upon the frozen world
Beneath its stare,
Life lies sleeping.
The ferns and leaves of plants lie curled
From the oak
to willows weeping.

A small shoot emerges in the frost
The timing is too early
Without refuge, the battle is lost
Life dead amongst white, pearly
Nestled in amongst big roots
Lie more lives trying to stay
The gift of refuge to these shoots
Keeps them from becoming prey
To the winter,
harsh and cold.

Tree shelters forever more
Strong and sturdy,
ages old
Warmth lives inside its core

Refuge

We must open our homes,
hands,
and hearts,
it is a gift,
They tear through the wrapping paper,
Hands grasping forward,
They know they are
 almost
 there

For the sun has turned its back,
Leaving them in an endless winter.
They must not go back,
They must not go back.
So they venture to this new place,
Journeying into the unknown,
With trees full of leaves
And surrounded by water,
Surely, they can claim refuge.

SB

THERE

We sat there on the beach in winter
I saw the light of the moon
You saw the dark of the night
But we were there
We watched the leaves fall
I saw the sun
You would only stare at the sight
But we were there
We were in the birthing ward
I saw the gift of my life
You saw the pain and the end
But we were there
We were from different backgrounds
I saw the future together
You saw the future apart
There we were
We went on alternate paths
I found joy in my life
You grew old and alone
There we are.....

RA

Seeking Refuge

We seek refuge from
Winters icy stare

We seek refuge from
The Sun and it's blinding
Glare

We seek the love
Love we used to share

Now ever searching, hunting
No more talking
Just midnight hallway stalking

Flat footed, ever digging through
The leaves left
A heap of thoughts

A gift, of springtime love
Now turned into an
Autumn of decay

So

On and on seeking refuge from
Winters icy stare
Seeking refuge from the Sun
And it's blinding glare

Seeking love
Seeking you really

Seeking refuge from me

Maybe.

JM

Resting

I lay swinging slowly,
Soaking up the winter sun
The birds competed with the traffic
Dried leaves gathered in forlorn groups
Spring hovered.
The sun stroked my face.
The swing chair rocked gently to its lullaby.
Winter was giving way to the promise of warmer days
I was in a gentle space Rocking, resting.
A refuge of calm
The gift of another day.

JB

Just Life

When winter comes it bears the gift of the cold and we face it eye to eye.

The cold stares deep into our soul leaving a shiver through our spine.

Soon we grieve the refuge of the warm sun and wonder why we ever wished summer away.

The flower of summer soon blooms, and we say goodbye to the cold.

When summer comes it brings the gift of warmth and we soon are relieved of discomfort, but no gift is free, as the heat starts to overwhelm us.

We soon realize that we will never be truly satisfied whether it be the season or “just life” so we must appreciate everything we have while it lasts.

KM

One Last Winter

A solitary being fleeing from home.
Watch the kids skiing in the winter alone.
Scrapes drape my face as I go off and roam.
Escape from the hurt and reach the unknown.
Run from the past, let the sun ease the cuts.
With no one around, come refuge near.
The leaves that fall, remind of all doors shut.
The scars maul her body, shaking from fear.
Blood cakes her heart as she may wish for a gift.
She breaks down and stares in the distance for hope.
She drags her tired body as she feels the wind shift.
A journey so long yet now a place to cope.

ML

The Gift You Gave

Cold as a winter night
You turn and leave
The light taken with you
A soul left to grieve

My life gripped by darkness
I stumble and crawl
Craving a way forward
Though I see nothing at all

As tall trees stand bare
Leaves blanket the ground
A hand reaches down to me
In the depths I am found

Before me, a sun so bright
I stare in awe
Light seeping through new cracks
Heart longing for more

Frightened to move beyond
This refuge, this home
Revived, I stand strong
No longer alone

The gift you gave
May you never know it's worth
Because of you
I dance on this Earth

SP

Untitled

A warmonger's winter stare
holds dominance in frozen stance
like a prize, oddly its heart beats
but coldly, no conjure of warmth,
it survives

while mountain water flows
clear above the waste and the
loss of limb by weaponry,
and far from where the tears run
in depths

is the space
where birds find refuge and in the
canopy of leaves, swiftly,
like joy,
their wings catching the light

from the sun
a flower is given life like a cherished thing
not indifferent to the wind, is like the gift of
strength in gentleness, that holds power in its
aspiring.

Going to the Library

I'm walking down the street with a bag on my shoulders
filled with books that weigh like boulders.

The sun is peeking from behind a cloud,
I pass the playground and hear screams and shouts.

I open the library's heavy door
to enter the silence once more.
I had escaped from the winter's wind
and dancing leaves
where if you want to get a cold you might actually
succeed.

I return the old books that all the words
with great pleasure I've devoured,
and stare up at the shelves wondering if
I'll find some tales with elves.

Choosing them carefully one by one
I put them in my bag
that when I come back
will be returned once more.

Picking-up my bag I close my eyes and think,
what a gifted day I've had!

Tree town

There's a little town called Cambridge,
our town is know for tree's.

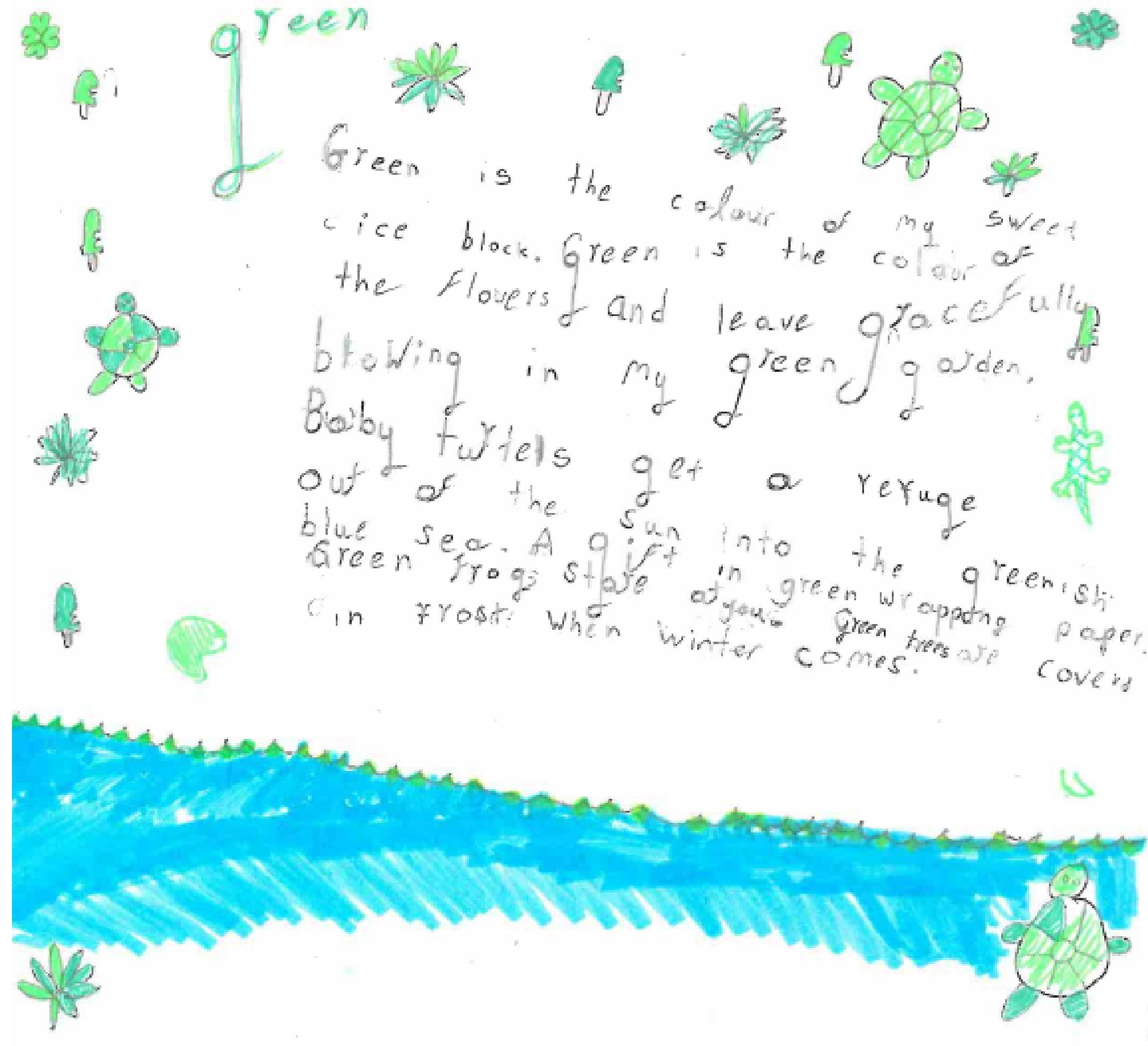
In winter tree's are pale,
when it's autumn leave's are bright, to stare.
The ^{Sun}↓ shine's brightly on the leave's
on the Dark brown branch's of the tree's
we refuge under the tree's
and our multi-coloured leave's.

Puppies
 playful puppies chasing balls
 hugging puppies chewing bones.
 puppies waiting to be a Christmas gift.
 playing in the sun all day long.
 Barking at squirrels yapping mailmen. Woofing
 at cat yapping at strangers.
 Furry one tiny one Big one small one
 hair one Silly ones. Staring at the winter sky
 snuggled in their arms. Big puppy + chase
 they have snuggled up in the coziness by
 were wearing socks. Puppies were wearing jumpers
 scales curly puppy wearing hats. Puppies were
 With tennis balls. Puppies with lots of rat play
 on SWR birds. Puppies on seats of rat play
 come back out to bloom as winter passes they
 play in sun.

GM

Green

Green is the colour of my sweet
ice block. Green is the colour of
the flowers and leaves gracefully
blowing in my green garden.
Baby turtles get a refuge
out of the sun into the greenish
blue sea. A gift in green wrapping paper.
Green frogs stare at you. Green trees are covered
in frost. When winter comes.



Flowers

Pink Blossom Bloom and cheery red roses.

Tulip and Sun-Flowers. Frosty Flower in Winter leaves and flowers with bright green

A Bouquet of Flower for a wedding Gift. daisy blowing in the wind with cover in sun.

Flowers don't retreat or hide they just stand in the grass.

A Shadow



A shadow of a black cat creeps past my window sill across my fence covered in leaves past were the use to be. I stare out into the winter sky but the shadow has already crept next evening I look out to see another shadow creep across to my fence. I slowly open my creaky door past my brother's room toward the back door I turn the handle. There on the door mat were two black cat fast asleep I place my hand onto the silky cat. Light filtered on I ran to my room shut my door and pretend to be asleep.

L a m b s



Small lambs grazing in paddocks.



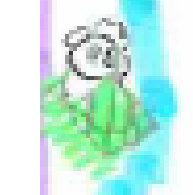
Winter lambs sucking milk leaves. Snuggling to gather.

Staring at a lamb about to be grazing in the sun. play in the fields. Frolicing at Bottery.

The wind blowing the lamb toward an apple tree. As it trots up a hill.

Under a red velvet blanket. A girl stares at a lamb with a pink nose.

Wool as white as snow and takes it home to a pretty green paddock with a cherry red barn.



🍌 Hawaii 🍌

A sweet gift in the sun would
be to go to Hawaii.



I stare out at the frosty winter day wishing I could
go.

A day in the sun would be the greatest gift.
Sipping fresh coconuts and tasty fish too.

I would love to go Hawaii yes I would a day
to refuge.

Swimming with dolphin and turtles
ukulele playing in the background, sweet tunes
floating round you'd hear.

But I'm back here in the frosty combride,
No feast coconut, no swimming with
dolphin or turtles,

in the back yard, I'm just in my frosty
house, ukulele playing

GREIF

This is the Summer bliss
As we feel the sun's kiss
As we watch the waves roll in
Like our sins
Blown away with the wind
In our boat we skimmed
The ocean as we swam
Frolicked, played and lay in the sand

This is my special gift
My smile, my happy lift
And as I watch you fly away
My refuge leaves, I no longer play
The sun's glare
Seems more like a stare

As the seagulls glide
I seem to start to slide
Into a place happy and warm
My emotions they swarm
And then I am no longer
But I am there, and I am here
So goodbye my friend, goodbye
This is the end

Grief is
the step before
forgiveness.

The step before
letting go.

And the time to restart
and try again.

Patience

It's winter now
And the delights of
Sun and leaves
Have vanished,
Their warmth and shade
Displaced
By a cruel chill instead.
It pervades my whole world
With a cold ferocity.
Yet, with patience,
It too will pass
And the summer gift of
Sun and leaves
Will return.

KF

Refuge

Winter leaves shining bright tonight I need shelter
flee or fight do I run away & find refuge there or fight
my way against the bush & stay there for the night
maybe the forest will gift me some hope as I stare across the
horizon flee or fight I think once more what will I do where
to find refuge.

Refuge in Aotearoa NZ

I stare at flakes of sun
like shattered glass
strewn across old bricks
the colour of pomegranates
and home.

Squatting in a forgotten
corner of the yard
knotted vines reach for light
and hide me
from the creaking
wooden house
that scares me
with cracking sounds
as winter sun warms wood.

Velvet snakes of emerald moss
brave wee orange tendrils
withered leaves
I lick a diamond drop
and taste
my brother's
bones.

Paradox

So, opposites attract, they say,
and yet
I've always felt
the sun seeks refuge from the gift of night,
just as the moon rejects the stare of day.
There's nothing shared, it seems, no common love,
in difference.

But hence, I must think twice.
It seems that nature has decreed
revenge will help right wrongs;
and thus;
incongruous conflation has reversed
what used to be.

As wildfire speeds to scorch poor Winter's leaves,
and storms rend clouds to flood sad Summer's streets,
what once I thought the lie does now prove true....
as opposites unite to map our fate.

HP

A Winter's Evening

The golden sun rolls down into gloomy clouds to have a
Looooooooooooonnnnnnnngggggggg peaceful rest.

The chilling winter bReEzE puts warmth to the test.

The last of the leaves tumble down to the ground leaving trees
bare.

Summer, far ahead, sits patiently and stares.

The night seems longer than the day, a nice gift from winter.

Outside, it's TOO icy to jog around even if you're a sprinter.

The BEAMING sun is finally gone, nowhere to be found,
children going to sleep, animals snoozing all around.

A peaceful winter's night.

NM

My Skunk

Once I got a gift
But what can I sniff?
I opened the box, what a whiff!
The present was a skunk, and how much it STUNK!

I made it a house of leaves, where it goes pee's
But as a skunk,
It goes wherever it please

One day when I was in the sun,
I came across someone,
He needed to to me,
One to one

He told me he had a skunk,
Taking refuge with a monk!
He told me, It stunk!

One winter, we were having stew,
Then who should come along,
You know who!!!
The skunk and his friend, who cried "Moo!"

We lived on, with lots of jobs to do!

HC

Out with the old in with the new

Brown is so last season,
Green is totally in.
Maybe even a splash of pink,
better yet, some blue!

The sun,
a pleasant gift.
A break from the clouds,
a break from the rain.
Bringing light to the shadows.

Winters grasp has loosened,
enough for the animals to escape.
Fair game now,
you snooze,
you lose.

The twigs take refuge,
under a customised green jumpsuit.
No more rough edges

If you stare for too long,
the real picture is revealed.

No more snowball fights,
no holidays in the mountains.
Herbal tea replaces hot cocoa,
slides replace slippers.

Make way for picnic dates,
dancing in the rain.
Homemade fairy houses,
strawberries straight from the garden.

Out with winter, in with spring.

AS

The prettiest place

The cold winter air plays tag,
Leaves fall from the trees in a zigzag.

Everywhere is white,
And some ducks are having a snowball fight.

There is a bear upriver,
With a stare of that bear you would shiver.

The gold sun has a big smile on,
As if she just did a rance and won.

And the best gift of this place,
Is its perfect grace.

FT

Waipa Milking Sheds

And he gets the cows
at morning
when the mist is hovering low
Woollen rugby
socks cocoon his toes
Gumboots guard
from squelch and wire
making new
footprints on the track
to the shed
His refuge from obeying
the vagaries of family life.

In this winter hour when
they sleep he is free
to think his own
thoughts and sing at the top
of his voice.
The cows stare straight ahead
Not caring
that he whistles tunelessly.

Shapes of black and white,
the chug of machines
swishing tails
white fluid cascading
radio's humanity.

A bark
Then from behind the hills,
It rises, a shot of gold,
The sun.
He leaves for home.

VM

Refuge feels safe when Mum
and Dad are protecting you.

Enjoying your refuge as big as a Star,
feeling safe when you are happy.

Fun games in winter, but when you
don't feel safe you can come home.

Using leaves to build a refuge to feel safe
and sound.

Growing a gift as you live, the gift
might be a family.

Encouraging each other to get in the
sun to feel as safe as can be.

