



# 2020 Valentine's Day Poetry Winners

For Kids 3rd through 8th Grade

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## 3rd to 4th Grade Winner

- **Lelah Brenchley**
- 4th grade, home school – Cottonwood School, Belton, MO

### My Back Yard

Trees are good for people  
Bugs are good for plants  
And everywhere I go I see tiny tiny ants  
Roses need the sunshine  
People need the air  
So everywhere I go in nature  
I look around and stare  
I see the bees humming on the roses galore  
And I like the trees, the birds and the bees  
For coming in my back yard.

### Why the judges awarded the prize to Lelah's poem:

Even during quarantine, Lelah's happy, bright images make us feel sunny and light. She reminds us how much joy can be found in our own backyards.

Lelah already shows an intuitive feeling for word choice and the music of poetry. When she got to "tiny ants," she realized the meter called for two more syllables. Isn't it amazing how much cuter and smaller she makes the ants with "tiny, tiny"?

Lelah could have written a simpler poem about how much she likes roses and trees, but she begins with a universal worldview that pulls readers in and makes us realize everything is connected.

[Click Here ... Watch & Listen to Lelah Read Her Poem](#) (YouTube)

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## 5th to 6th Grade Winner

- **Madeline M.**
- 5th grade, home schooled, Fairway, KS

### Oh Loose Park

O Loose Park, where ducks quack  
and joggers run the track,

O Loose Park, where people mingle  
and dog collars jingle,

O Loose Park, where roses grow  
and fountains flow,

O Loose Park, where children play  
and people picnic all day,

O Loose Park, where I have fun  
and swing under the sun!

### Why the judges awarded the prize to Madeline's poem:

Judges love to see variety, and amazingly "O Loose Park" is the only ode received this year (and may be the only one in all five years of the contest).

Madeline's word choices and short couplets make the poem very active, an invitation to the park. She just might have a bright future in advertising.

"Quack" and "jingle" use onomatopoeia to help us hear the activity in the park, and "swing" echoes the sound of mingle/jingle. We can see and hear the activity at Loose Park and wish we could be there.

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## 7th to 8th Grade Winner

- **Mason Renner**
- 7th grade, home school, KCMO

### The Rise of Rosezilla

I bought the seeds at Plants R Us  
I never thought they'd cause a fuss,  
Then I rode home on a yellow bus.

I looked at the packet to read how to plant em'  
The label read 'Instant Roses', by Phantom.

The instructions were clear, plant them two inches deep,  
Water them slightly, and at night when you sleep,  
The roses will grow, they'll bud and they'll bloom,  
And the flowers will smell like designer perfume.

I did what it asked, then went to bed,  
I fluffed up my pillow and laid down my head.  
I slept for a second, then woke with a start,  
I looked out my window, and clutched my heart.

His claws were like branches, he had thorns down his back,  
His head nearly gave me a heart attack.  
It was covered in petals, red, yellow, and pink,  
His eyes were like nectar, and I saw him blink.  
I ran without thinking and fell on my back,  
I saw him lean closer, and then all went black.

I woke up slowly and looked around,  
I saw that I was seven feet off the ground!  
I glanced up and what I saw was Rosezilla's huge smiling maw!

He let me slide down off his rough, dirty hand,  
And gave me a rusty watering can  
I filled it up and watched him drink,  
It gave me some valuable time to think.

He's not so bad, I finally thought,  
Though where I'd keep him, I knew not,  
I realized he was a little large for a pot.

He took me for a peaceful ride in the park,  
It was quite beautiful there in the dark,  
Right then in my brain, and idea did spark.

So if you ever have some time to spend,  
And you kind of want to make a friend,  
Just walk to Loose Park and admire the roses,  
And stay there looking till the city dozes,  
Then you might hear a rustle and a scuffle when  
The great Rosezilla rises again.

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## **Why the judges awarded the prize to Madeline's poem:**

It doesn't take a professional writer to know that Mason's poem is creative, funny, and well crafted.

Just the idea of Rosezilla makes us want to know more, so the title pulls us in, and the pacing is quick. Mason doesn't want us to lose interest.

A few specific, well-chosen details, like the trademark symbol, "designer perfume," and planting instructions, add realism and believability to this tall tale.

Writing a long verse, mostly in couplets, is challenging enough, but whether it was conscious or not, the stanza where we first see Rosezilla is even more amazing. Look at all those clattering k's: back, attack, pink, blink, back, black. Sounds like the Mason's teeth are chattering, doesn't it? Brilliant!