



2021 Valentine's Day Poetry Winners

For Kids 3rd through 8th Grade

5th to 6th Grade Winner

- **Madeline Male**
- 6th grade, home schooled, Fairway, KS

I Love Flowers

I love my roses, bold and bright:
in any park they'll make a sight.

I love the daffodils refined:
they're beautiful in rain or shine.

I love hydrangeas fluffy, full:
in sun or shade they won't look dull.

I love a field of sunflowers brown,
displayed simply, and topped with crown.

I love small daisies, smooth and white:
I think of peace and shining light.

I love all tulips: here is spring,
around a fountain in a ring!

I love majestic flowers, nature's art:
they hold a blissful place in my heart.

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

All our aspiring poets are required to use the word "rose" in their entry.

Madeline exuberantly captures the abundance of spring by celebrating all her favorite flowers and giving us a rainbow of color. She adds a fountain, too, which also makes us think of Loose Park.

With "bold and bright" and "fluffy, full," Madeline demonstrates the power of alliteration without going overboard. Besides, could there be a better description for hydrangeas than "fluffy, full"?

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7th to 8th Grade Winner

- **Mason Renner**
- 8th grade, home school, KCMO

War of the Roses

I hear you have a rabbit problem, sit down and have some tea.
I'll tell you how the same thing happened to me.
Listen to my story and maybe you'll see,
Rabbits aren't as bad as they seem to be.

One day in my garden, an awful sight met my eyes –
Rabbit noses in my roses, the whole world heard my cries.
I scared them away, but the damage would stay,
I yelled, "My garden is not a buffet!"
I set up a trap, and then took a nap, but I only had horrible dreams.
A big, evil hare, taking more than his share – I woke myself up
with my screams!

I ran to the window and choked on my tea,
Why did all of this happen to me?
I couldn't believe the sight that was there –
In the trap there wasn't a single hare,
But my garden they were stripping bare.

I made up my mind and got in my car.
I knew where to go, it wasn't that far,
To buy rabbit repellent, rabbit traps, rabbit spray.
I said to myself, "Those rabbits can't stay!"
I promised that I would end this today.

When I got back to my house, I was slightly unsure,
I thought, "What am I doing?" as I closed the car door.
But then I saw it, and my face went slack,
A rabbit having a little snack.
It was the straw that broke the camel's back.

I set up my traps, my wire, my fence,
and I haven't seen a rabbit since.
So what if those pesky neighbors stare
If I never see another hare?
So what if my garden doesn't look the same?
I beat those rodents at their own little game!
I guess I won, but something feels wrong,
Were the rabbits right all along?
They never really took more than they need,
I guess I was stingy and full of greed.
I took down my fence, the wire, the wall,
I tried my best animal call,
And I welcomed the rabbits, big and small.

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Now we live as friends, not foes,
And I smile when I see a little nose.
They eat the weeds and trim the roses.
I no longer spray them with my hoses.
They help me out. I help them, too,
And that's how my garden grew and grew.

So, you say that the rabbits are after your flowers,
The ones that you've nurtured for hours and hours.
Then maybe try working with them, and you'll see
That nature is your friend, not your enemy.

Why the judges awarded the prize to Mason's poem:

Mason received an Honorable Mention in 2019 before winning two years in a row.

How? By showing off his incredible mastery of long, narrative poetry that is also rhymed. It looks like we have a professional writer in the making, possibly a novelist as well as a poet – maybe a negotiator as well.

Few of us have conversations in verse, but Mason manages to make the monologue sound natural despite that, and his use of repetition was particularly deft. Doesn't repeating *my, my, my* and *rabbit, rabbit, rabbit* show that the speaker was losing control, almost rabid? "To buy rabbit repellent, rabbit traps, rabbit spray"; "I set up my traps, my wire, my fence." Brilliant!