Poetry Society of Colorado

“Musts & Shoulds” – and “Mays” & Examples

Open Contest – October 2022

Theme: Poems for Children

Prizes: 1st Place $30; 2nd Place, $20; 3rd Place, $10

Sponsor: Martin Postma

All submitted poems must…

* include a title.
* be suitable to be read to, or read by, children from birth to ten years of age.
* convey a message, principle, lesson, or entertaining element that is helpful to and/or appropriate for children.
* contain a rhyming scheme or alliteration.
* be no longer than 50 lines.

All submitted poems should…

* have a delightful, silly, hopeful, or contemplative tone.
* be fitting for children of a wide range of cultures.

All submitted poems may…

* contain fanciful language and/or made-up words.
* contain a deeper, more profound message that reveals itself as the child ages.

Examples:

**The Arrow and the Song**

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I shot an arrow into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight  
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,  
It fell to earth, I knew not where;  
For who has sight so keen and strong,  
That it can follow the flight of song?

Long, long afterward, in an oak  
I found the arrow, still unbroke;  
And the song, from beginning to end,  
I found again in the heart of a friend.

**Learning**

By Judith Viorst

I’m learning to say thank you.  
And I’m learning to say please.  
And I’m learning to use Kleenex,  
Not my sweater, when I sneeze.

And I’m learning not to dribble.  
And I’m learning not to slurp.  
And I’m learning (though it sometimes really hurts me)  
Not to burp.

And I’m learning to chew softer  
When I eat corn on the cob.  
And I’m learning that it’s much  
Much easier to be a slob.