



Poetry

Competition

Children's Shortlist & Winners 2026



Ngā Puna Mātauranga o
Te Awa Kairangi ki Uta
Upper Hutt Libraries

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Children's Shortlist & Winners

(aged 5-7)

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Children's Shortlist & Winners

(aged 5-7)

1 **A Happy Day** by Jasmine Leenders

It is a crisp day
I like to go on walks
It makes me like to talk
I often sing
It makes me go "I am very, very happy"
I like to go on hikes with my family
I like to stretch my legs when I go on walks
I woke and and started to drink coke
And started to hike down
When I got to the car I started to eat a bar
Then I went to the beach
I like to go swimming then I am as cold as ice
I wrap the towel and get dressed
I hope the upper hutt library likes my poem
The end



Wilderness: Kei Roto i te Ngahere by Jon-Kyrie Hauraki-Hune

Kei roto i te ngahere, he patupaiarehe.

Ka whiua e rātou ngā kakano.

Ka puta mai ngā huarākau māku.

Deep within the forest dwell the patupaiarehe.

They scatter the seeds,

and sweet fruits spring forth for me.



Neil Armstrong Sees the Moon by Joseph Hansen

I look out the window.

No clouds, no blue in the sky,

No birds, dogs or anything.

Everywhere is rock and dry dust.

No water, no houses or trees.

I look back at Earth -

Just a tiny ball,

All swirly blue and green.

Wilderness: Kei Roto i te Ngahere

by Xeamerrah-Nora Reti-Martin

Kei roto i te ngahere, he patupaiarehe.

Kei te huna rātou.

Ka puta mai i te kohu.

Kei hea ngā patupaiarehe?

Deep within the forest dwell the patupaiarehe.

They keep themselves hidden.

They emerge from the drifting mist.

Where are the patupaiarehe?

Dying in the Wilderness

by Wesley Hauwaho

Animals may die but it's just life

Moose, Bear, Deer

Shedding their antlers year after year

Until people hunt them

They can't shed their antlers

Animals are getting eaten by other bigger animals for a snack.

Wilderness: Kei Roto i te Ngahere

by Wolfe Stevens

He ngahere tēnei.

He patupaiarehe ēnei.

Ka tāhae ngā patupaiarehe i ngā pēpi.

Ka puta i ngā kohu i te maunga.

Aue! Aue!

This is the forest.

These are the patupaiarehe.

The patupaiarehe steal away the babies.

They come forth from the mountain mists.

Alas! Alas!

Dying on the Cross

by Norah Hauwaho

God and Jesus

Is on the cross

Jesus and God.

Wilderness: Kei Roto i te Ngahere

by Apārangi Hemana-Reihana

Kei roto i te ngahere,

he patupaiarehe.

Kei te hopu ngā patupaiarehe i ngā pēpi.

Aue! Aue!

Here stands the forest.

Deep within the forest dwell the patupaiarehe.

They seize the little children.

Alas! Alas!

Wilderness: Kei Roto i te Ngahere

by Lincoln Barraud

He ngahere tēnei.

He patupaiarehe ki roto i te ngahere.

Kei te hopu ngā patupaiarehe i ngā pēpi.

He pouri i ngā mātua.

Aue!

This is the forest.

Within its depths dwell the patupaiarehe.

They seize the little children,

and the parents are left in sorrow.

Alas!

Wilderness: Kei Roto i te Ngahere

by Ngārāitekahurangi Kawe-Roes-Crown

Kei roto i te ngahere, he tūrehu.

I tāhae ngā tūrehu i ngā pēpi,

me ngā tamaiti urukehu.

I whawhai rātou i ngā tamariki.

I oma atu ngā tūrehu.

Deep within the forest dwell the tūrehu.

They stole away the babies and the fair-haired children.

The people fought to save their young.

The tūrehu fled into the shadows.

Children's Shortlist & Winners

(aged 8-11)

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Children's Shortlist & Winners

(aged 8-11)



In the Forest by Robert Bennett

In the forest, the tūi sings,
A pop of yellow kowhai rings
A kārearea, waiting for prey,
This is the way they start their day

Walking in the forest, the maze of trees,
A kea comes up and steals your keys!
The kea takes them back to its nest,
Only the kea will know the rest

Around the birds, around the terrain,
All the trees are fighting for rain
The trees will all grow, till they're at their best,
Only the trees will know the rest

If you look closely, on the forest floor,
You might see some wētā, or one hundred more
They're an insect, as you maybe have guessed,
Only the wētā will know the rest

We'll only know more about the forest when
We have explored the wildlife glen
Most of the wildlife, we've tried to express,
But only the forest will know the rest



The Hidden Wilderness by Spencer Tysoe

The wilderness hosts both good and evil;
It contains both joy and peril;
Websites are the twisted trees;
Software is the flowing breeze.

Friend requests scuttle here and there;
YouTube shorts from crevices stare;
Email addresses swoop overhead;
TikTok hunts your battery dead.

Crunching texts beneath my feet;
Sediment is 'friends' to meet;
Scammers live in hollowed oaks;
Caves - the dreadful liars who hoax.

Through a secret password door;
Lies the wilderness; oh, much more
Than I could ever estimate here
Things to like and things to fear.

The changing weather is the likes;
Sun and cloud, day and night;
Influenced by taps on screens
Scrolling, YouTube, TikTok, memes.

The rangers - teachers on the look out
Cyber safety people teaching about
The virtual wilderness taking over Earth;
Replacing naught with knowledge
Replacing that with mirth.



A Lovely Day with Birds by Mia Skaria

See the majestic eagle,
Swooping up in the air.
See the graceful ducks,
Diving down in the lake.
See the clumsy kereru,
Gorging on the berries.
See the melodious korimako,
Chiming in the trees.
See the boisterous tui,
Chirping from the branch above.
See the proud peacock,
Strutting in the woods below.
The diverse array of birds,
Bringing life and color to the whispering trees.
What a lovely day!

Whispering Willows

by Emily Ginnane

Everyone loves the computers, screens and
cars.

But sometimes you get
bored
and need more
imagination.

When you are in the dark
and quiet,
and if you listen right,
you may hear a
noise

whispering for you to find
it.

As you leave your
home,
you may wonder
what called you out
there.

The whispering gets louder.
You see a light
blue glow.

And realize you are in a willow
meadow.

Then you see where the glowing
is coming from.

One tree is larger than the
rest.

Her beam of light spreads across
the land.

And her branches hang
Down,
sheltering creatures on the
ground.

Some say that the
Whispering Willows were just a dream.

But now I know the truth.

The Mountain, the River and Me

by Cara Hagen

The
Mountain
Carried a cloak
Of snow on his black
Hiking track, Mia the
massive Mountain monitors
The passing kids on their way
To school with A pack on their back,
those kids were Just about as crazy as me
With a mutt about to say cut

Ruby
The
Rushing
River
Ran
Left
To
Right
Through
The
Rapids
Splashing
The
People
In
Water
She
Experienced

Many
flashing
Floods
Causing
A
mountain
Of
Rubbish
To
Flow
in
To
Her
Waters

The Colourful Forest

by Nayeli Daldeniya

When I go through the colourful forest, I feel the wind brushes my face
I wander deeper into the woods,

I see the chirping birds,
I see the beautiful butterflies bouncing on towers of flowers,
I see the fish gliding through clear water,
I see the frog leap on to the log,
I see the snake slithering pass the tall big tree,

What a Wonderful **"Wilderness"**

If Trees Could Talk

by Maeve Weir

"You took my friend, this is the end now I can't play today!"

"We just want your food don't get into a bad mood"

"But I've given you all I got and that's quite a lot"

"Well that's not enough and stop that huff and puff"

"If you want my two you'll have to chew like you never do"

"Fine how about nine"

"Hmmm nine times, now take those seeds and plant more trees"

"I miss my friends so much this will help a bunch"

"Then what?"

"Now you must feed the seeds with water and sun then you've begun"

"Begun what?!"

"A whole lot"

Nature is All Around Me

by Stella Meadows-Miller

I walk around the shady trees but still light shines through.

I climb a tree with shaggy leaves and branches that stick out too.

When I get to the top of the tree I look up at the sky.

I look up at the clouds and see them go by.

A flower, a bug, a stick in the mud and, so so much more.

When I come down I put my feet on the ground and I take a little tour.

I walk around the lake and I step into the shallows

I feel the sun across my skin and in the water I see a shadow.

The shadow was big but yet so small

Then something came out of the water and it was the most pretty thing of all.

A fish with scales like a sunset and eyes like the moon.

And suddenly that day...

was the best day...

I'll surely be back soon.

Wild Feather

by Hazel MacKinnon

Nature gives many creatures
But I like birds
The tui bird in its kowhai tree
It sings a sweet melody
As it sits in serenity.
Or the piwakawaka with its fluttering tail
A tiny creature with an amazing feature .
Pukekos with their striking
Red beak I do wonder what secrets they keep.
In New Zealand birds are all around!
Now let's see which ones you have found.
They all come from nature
So let us all thank mother earth
for letting them on her turf.

The Dance of Life

by Lucy Tregaskis

Seasons change, Life grows.

Every year, again and again.

Summer, Autumn, Winter, Spring.

Spring brings new growth, after trees stripped bare, buds and flowers and dewdrops.

Crisp cold mornings, baby deer testing their legs.

Little bunnies hopping through new Life.

Birds singing, in the morning, in the evening.

Babbling brooks, rain and Life.

This is the dance of Spring.

Cool dawns become warm evenings, as Summer arrives.

Birds gathering food in the cool of the dawn, little silv ereyes resting in the heat of the day.

Fish swimming in warm waters.

Sandy shores, lush forests.

Deer finding shelter from the heat in quiet glades, licking dewdrops off morning leaves.

This is the dance of Summer.

Leaves transfer to blazing murals.

The trees burn with bright colours, orange, red, yellow.

This is Autumn.

As bunnies hop through forests, their paws crunch on dead leaves.

Crunch, crunch, crunch.

Chipmunks and squirrels bury nuts, preparing for cold days.

Life takes the last of Summer's berries.

This is the dance of Autumn.

Cool days go to freezing nights, Life is resting.
As it sleeps, the world forms a lovely blanket of snow, wishing sweet dreams.
When the first snowflake falls, it is Winter.
Streams form ice, and fish sleep as well.
The whole world sleeps.
Bears in quiet caves, squirrels in cozy tree hollows, Life is given a break.
This is the dance of Winter.

They are all separate, each beautiful.
Cool Spring, hot Summer, warm Autumn, cold Winter.
They each do things a different way, some bring Life, some bring rest.
Some bring heat, some bring death.
But they are still connected, forever and true.
This is the dance of Life, of Wild, and of Seasons.



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