A Collection of Poems
From the Students at Academy of the Canyons High School

2012

Just remember you are in our minds as well as our hearts.
“If” by Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you.
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat these two impostors just the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings - nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man, my son!

Words:

**Triumph**- an act or occasion of winning, being victorious, or overcoming something

**Imposters**- a person who practices deception

**Knaves**- a man who is considered dishonest and deceitful

**Sinew**- strength, power, or resilience

**Virtue**- personal values and moral beliefs

Questions:

1. What is Rudyard Kipling trying to accomplish through this poem?
2. What is Rudyard Kipling’s idea of what characteristics a man can have?
3. How can you apply some of Rudyard Kipling’s characteristics of a man to your everyday life?

About Rudyard Kipling:
(30 December 1865 – 18 January 1936)
Kipling was one of the most popular writers in England, in both prose and verse, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
“It Couldn't be Done” by Edgar Guest

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
But, he with a chuckle replied
That "maybe it couldn't" but he would be one
Who wouldn't say so till he'd tried.

So he buckled right in with the trace of a grin
On his face. If he worried he hid it.
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, as he did it.

Somebody scoffed: "Oh, you'll never do that;
At least no one we know has done it'';
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,
And the first thing we knew he'd begun it.

With a lift of his chin and a bit of a grin,
Without any doubting or quiddit,
He started to sing as he tackled the thing
That couldn't be done, and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,
There are thousands to prophesy failure;
There are thousands to point out to you,
one by one,
The dangers that wait to assail you.

But just buckle right in with a bit of a grin,
Just take off your coat and go to it;
Just start to sing as you tackle the thing
That cannot be done, and you'll do it

About Edgar Guest:
(1881–1959)
English-born American poet who was popular in the first half of the 20th century and became known as the People's Poet. From his first published work in the Detroit Free Press until his death in 1959, Guest penned some 11,000 poems which were syndicated in some 300 newspapers and collected in more than 20 books.
**Words:**

- **Prophesy** - supposedly reveal the will of a deity in predicting a future event
- **Assail** - to attack somebody vigorously with words or actions
- **Scoffed** - to express derision or scorn about somebody or something
- **Quiddit** - something small and insignificant

**Questions:**

1. What does Edgar Guest mean by it couldn’t be done?
2. What actions should you take if someone discourages you?
3. Can you come up with a situation where you have done
“A Smile”

Author Unknown

A smile costs nothing, but gives much-
It takes but a moment, but the memory of it usually lasts forever. 
None are so rich that can get along without it-
And none are so poor but that can be made rich by it.

It enriches those who receive, without making poor those who give-
It creates sunshine in the home,
Fosters good will in business,
And is the best antidote for trouble-
And yet it cannot be begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is of no value
Unless it is given away.

Some people are too busy to give you a smile-
Give them one of yours-
For the good knows that no one needs a smile so badly
As he or she who has no more smiles left to give.

Words:

Enriches- to improve the quality of something, usually by adding something else to it
Antidote- a substance that counteracts the effects of a toxin
Unknown- not identified

Questions:

1. Why does the author want the reader to smile?
2. Why is it beneficial to smile?
3. Why can’t a smile be begged, borrowed, or stolen?
4. Why must a smile be given away?
“If You Think You Are Beaten”
by Walter D. Wintle

If you think you are beaten, you are.
If you think you dare not, you don't.
If you'd like to win but think you can't,
It's almost certain you won't.
Life's battles don't always go
To the stronger or faster man,
But sooner or later, the man who wins
Is the man who thinks he can.

About Walter D. Wintle: Little is known about Walter D. Wintle except that he was a poet who lived in the late 19th and early 20th century. Nothing is known of the details of his life and indeed the name may in fact be a pseudonym.

Words:

**Pseudonym**- a name that is not somebody's original name, especially one used by an author in publications

Questions:

1. What is the theme of this poem?
2. Why is a person more likely to fail if he or she does not believe in him or herself?
3. Why is it important to think positively?
"If I Knew You and You Knew Me"
Nixon Waterman

If I knew you and you knew me,
If both of us could clearly see,
And with an inner sight divine,
The meaning of your heart and mine,
I'm sure that we would differ less,
And clasp our hands in friendliness;
Our thoughts would pleasantly agree,
If I knew you and you knew me.

About Nixon Waterman: Born in 1859 in Newark, Illinois, Waterman was the son of Lyman and Elizabeth Waterman. Lyman Waterman was an industrious individual who was in the truest sense a pioneer.

Words:

Divine- pleasing, attractive, or well performed

Clasp- to hold somebody or something tightly with the hands or arms

Pioneer- a person or group that is the first to do something or that leads in developing something new

Questions:

1. What is the theme of the poem If I Knew You & You Know me?
2. How can being friendly to other people help you in the future?
3. How can you be a pioneer in your everyday life?
“Anything Can Happen”

Shel Silverstein

Listen to the Mustn'ts, child,
Listen to the Don'ts
Listen to the Shouldn'ts
The **Impossibles**, the Won'ts
Listen to the Never Haves,
Then listen close to me --
Anything can happen, child,
Anything can be.

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**About Shel Silverstein:** American poet, singer-songwriter, musician, composer, cartoonist, screenwriter and author of children's books. Silverstein said that he never studied the poetry of others and therefore developed his own quirky style.

**Words:**

- **Impossibles** - very difficult to deal with and apparently without a solution
- **Composer** - a creator of something, especially of music
- **Screenwriter** - the writer of a script that is intended to be filmed

**Questions:**

1. Why should you listen to things people say?
2. What is the point of listening to an opposition?
3. Why should you think positively?
“You Can Be Whatever You Want To Be!”
by Donna Levine

There is inside you
All of the **potential**
To be whatever you want to be;
All of the **energy**
To do whatever you want to do.
Imagine yourself as you would like to be,
Doing what you want to do,
And each day, take one step
Towards your dream.
And though at times it may seem too
difficult to continue,
Hold on to your dream.
One morning you will awake to find
That you are the person you dreamed of,
Doing what you wanted to do,
Simply because you had the **courage**
To believe in your potential
And to hold on to your dream.

**Words:**
- **Potential**- having a latent possibility or likelihood of occurring, or of doing or becoming something
- **Courage**- the ability to face danger, difficulty, uncertainty, or pain without being overcome by fear or being deflected from a chosen course of action
- **Energy**- the ability or power to work or make an effort

**Questions:**
1. What is the importance of an imagination?
2. Why are dreams important?
3. When has courage helped you in a situation?
4. What is the theme of this poem, You Can Be Whatever You Want To Be.
“Change Your World”
By Brian Tracy

You cannot change the world,
But you can present the world with one improved person - Yourself.
You can go to work on yourself
to make yourself
Into the kind of person you admire and respect.
You can become a role model and set a standard for others.
You can control and discipline yourself to resist acting
Or speaking in a negative way
Toward anyone for any reason.
You can insist upon always doing things the loving way,
Rather than the hurtful way.
By doing these things each day,
You can continue on your journey
Toward becoming an exceptional human being.

About Brian Tracy: Brian Tracy is a self-help author and motivational speaker. He serves as Chairman of Brian Tracy International, a human resource company based in Solana Beach, California, with affiliates throughout the United States and thirty-one other countries

Words:
Exceptional- having or showing intelligence or ability well above average
Admire- to regard somebody or something with approval, appreciation, or respect
Affiliates- bring a person or group, into a close relationship with another, usually larger group

Questions:
1. Why should you change yourself before taking on bigger tasks?
2. What is the overall goal of the poem?
3. What characteristics do you value in a human being?
“Success”
By: Ralph Waldo Emerson

To laugh often and much;
To win the respect of intelligent people
and the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics
and endure the betrayal of false friends;
To appreciate beauty,
To find the best in others,
To leave the world a bit better,
whether by a healthy child,
A garden patch or a redeemed social condition;
To know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived.
This is to have succeeded.

About Ralph Waldo Emerson: He was seen as a champion of individualism
and a prescient critic of the countervailing pressures of society, and he
disseminated his thoughts through dozens of published essays and more than
1,500 public lectures across the United States.

Words:
Honest- expressing or embodying the truth
Condition- a general state or mode of existence, especially one
characterized by hardship or suffering
Individualism- the belief that society exists for the benefit of individual
people, who must not be constrained by government interventions or made
subordinate to collective interests
Prescient- having or showing knowledge of actions or events before they
take place

Questions:
1. How is success defined by Ralph Emerson?
2. How do you define success?
3. What traits from this poem can you apply in your everyday life?
Follow Your Dream
By: Amanda Bradley

Follow your dream.
Take one step at a time and don't settle for less,
Just continue to climb.
Follow your dream.
If you **stumble,**
don't stop and lose sight of your goal
Press to the top.
For only on top can we see the whole view,
Can we see what we've done and what we can do;
Can we then have the vision to **seek** something new,
Press on. Follow your dream.

**About Amanda Bradley:** She recently graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a PhD in English and American Literature. She teaches and tutors at Yeshiva University and has attended **conferences** to present both literary critical work and poetry.

**Words:**
- **Stumble**- to trip when walking or running
- **Seek**- strive for something
- **Conferences**- a meeting, sometimes lasting for several days, in which people with a common interest participates in discussions or listen to lectures to obtain information

**Questions:**
1. Why do you think following your dreams is important?
2. How are goals applicable to your life?
3. Why should anyone “press on” for their dream?