

2010 - 2020



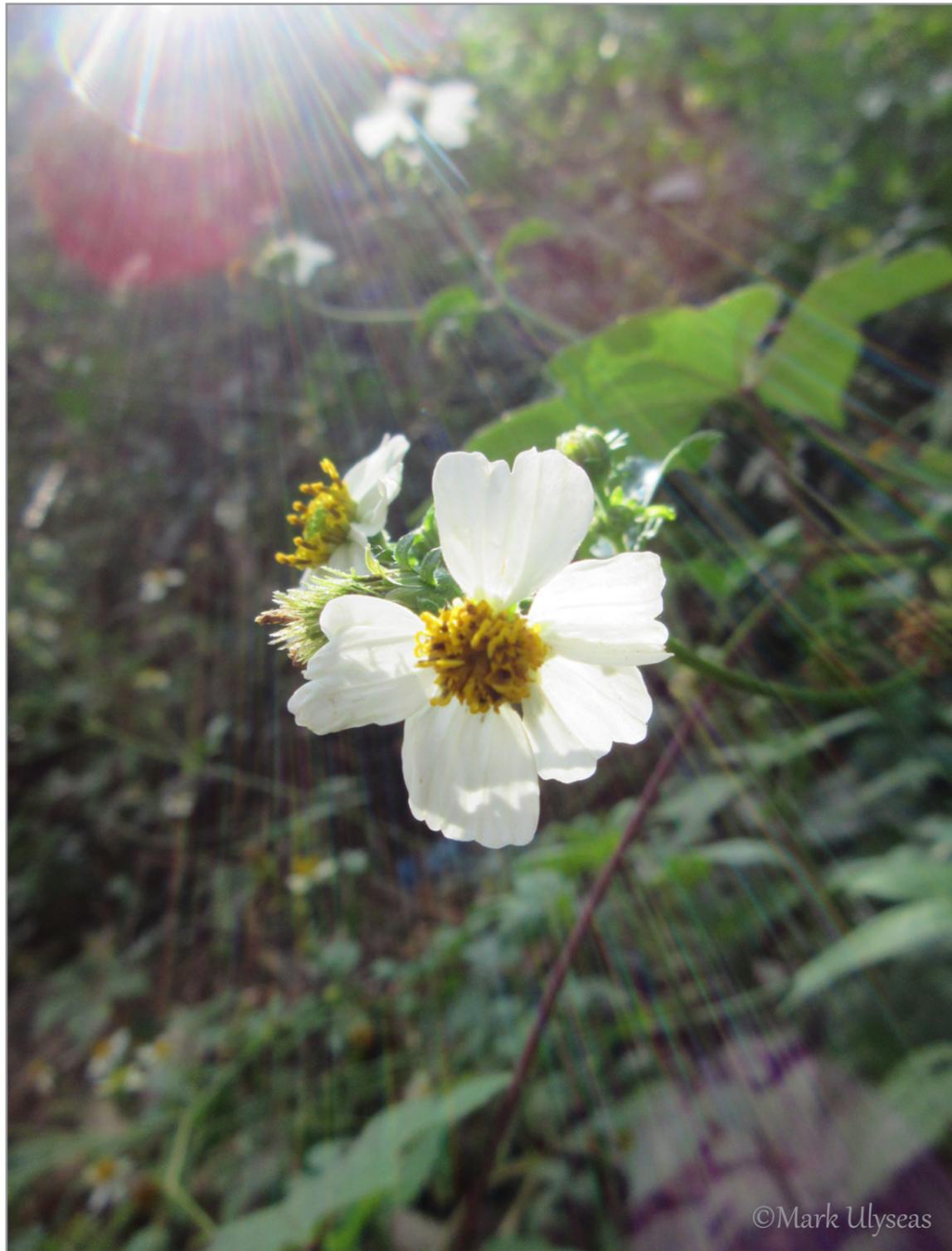
Live encounters

YOUNG POETS & WRITERS

FREE ONLINE MAGAZINE FROM VILLAGE EARTH
MARCH 2021

GERALDINE MILLS
Words in the time of Covid

COVER ARTWORK BY IRISH ARTIST EMMA BARONE



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Live Encounters Magazine (2010), Live Encounters Poetry & Writing (2016), Live Encounters Young Poets & Writers (2019) and now, Live Encounters Books (August 2020).

We are appealing for donations to pay for the administrative and technical aspects of the publication. **Please help by donating any amount for this just cause as events are threatening the very future of Live Encounters.**

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om

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Luang Prabang, Laos, photograph by Mark Ulyseas.



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A native of Galway, Ireland Geraldine Mills is a poet and fiction writer. She has published five collections of poetry, three of short stories and a children's novel. She has won numerous awards for her fiction and poetry, including The Hennessy New Irish Writer Award, a Katherine Kavanagh Fellowship and has been awarded three Arts Council bursaries, the most recent being in 2020 to work on her second children's novel. Her fiction and poetry are taught on Contemporary Irish Literature courses in the USA. She is a member of Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools' Scheme. Her poetry collection, *Bone Road in Word and Image* (Arlen House, 2020) and some of her other titles are now available from: <https://www.kennys.ie/results/?q=Geraldine+Mills> <https://www.bookdepository.com/search?searchTerm=Geraldine+Mills&search=Find+book>



GERALDINE MILLS

Words in the time of Covid.

No one knows how language began, but from the dawning of our existence there has been the need to communicate. To put names to objects, ideas or actions. To make ourselves heard. To enunciate our needs. Children listened, learned from the language around them, the tongue of their people. And carried that on.

Some years ago, when my granddaughter was only two, we were coming back from a trip away. From her secure seat at the back of the car, she began to call out the names of the houses as their familiarity came into view. Her little petal mouth could barely form the words, but she made a valiant attempt at Mum's house, Tony's house, Pheasant Farm, Nina's house, Poppy's House, Home. Already she knew the difference between house and home, the word for that safe place where she could go when the world was too big for her and she just wanted to be held close to her father, her mother. She sang the names again, her two-year old voice doing its level best to push out words from somewhere, words she didn't know the day before. Rainbow, dreams, stars, were part of her song, as she demanded me to sing with her, – my squeaky, granny voice out of tune– while she grabbed onto her new vowel sounds: O in rainbow, U in blue; I in fly.

Geraldine Mills



Credit: The Broighter hoard (National Museum of Ireland)

Now five years later, she is writing those words down on windowpanes, mirrors, paper. Anywhere she finds a clear space, while her two and a half-year-old brother is at the same stage of finding the sounds that help define his language. Every day he successfully loops words together, being listened to in the art of communication. No matter the size of the word, – bat or brontosaurus– his little mind will search for the sounds and find a way of getting them out. Now when we chat with him across the miles, he has a conversation with us about the salamander he has seen on his way to the beach, the turtle his dad found abandoned in the wilderness, or his favourite dinosaur.

And words need children. Words need them to read the books whose pages they fill. They need them to bring the stories they create into their own existence as this new language seeps into them, so clean, so without criticism. They need them to continue to do this throughout their lives so that they can bring themselves to exciting worlds of the imagination.

In this time of Covid, children and adults alike are finding a world full of challenges. For children it is more important than ever that they read and write themselves out of this world crisis. To this end, Ireland held a day of reading on 25th February to encourage young and old alike to ‘Squeeze in a Read’ in order to encourage relaxation and wellbeing. Ireland Reads is a public libraries initiative, in partnership with publishers, booksellers, authors and others under the Government’s ‘Keep Well’ campaign. In this way we endorse the life-enhancing importance of books.

Normally, I would be visiting schools as part of the Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools’ Scheme. But that has been on hold for a year now. Yet teachers are still encouraging children to express themselves, to put shape on the world they are now living through as you will read in this edition, whether it is the love of horses, heroes or noses. Others explain their difficulty in lockdown.

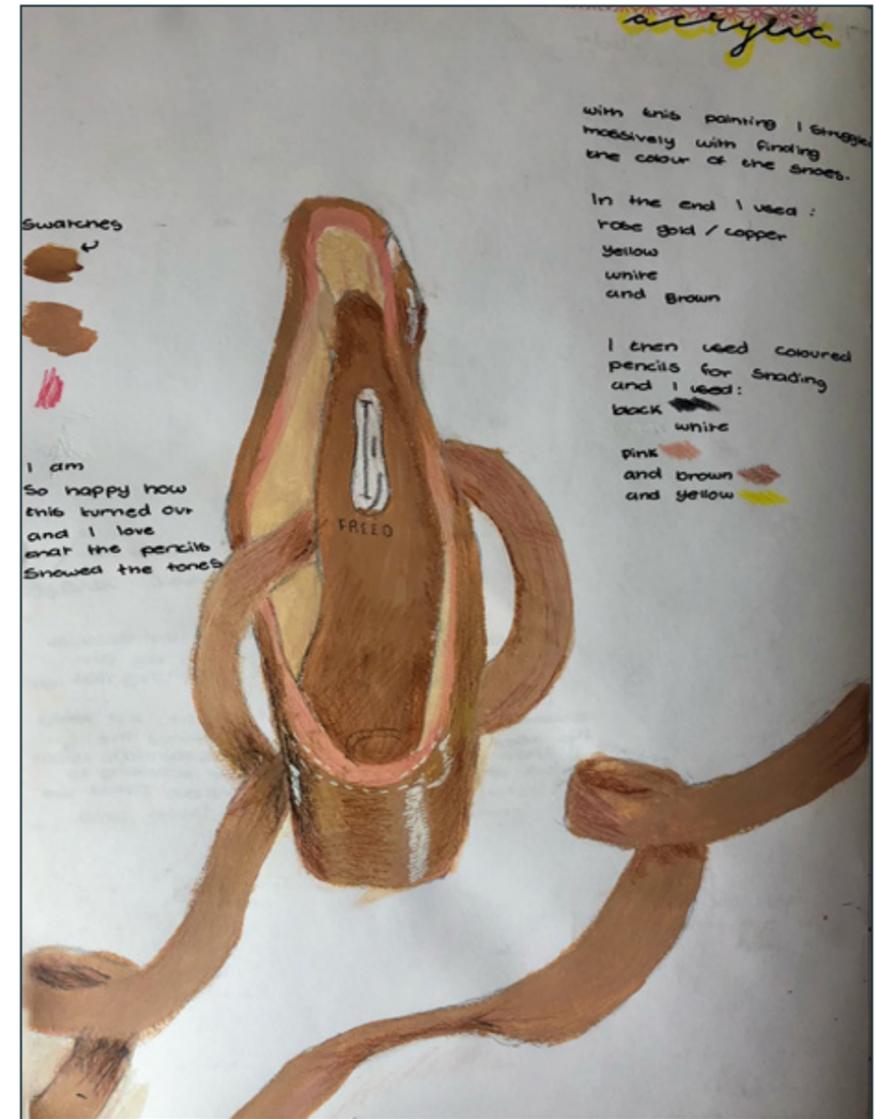
One of the cultural outings I miss most about being unable to travel, is my annual visit to the treasury section of the National Museum of Ireland. This is one of the rooms dedicated to some of our most precious and holy artefacts. On display is the great treasure of the early Irish Church, the 8th Century Ardagh Chalice, with its spun

silver, decorated with gold, amber and jewels. This was found by a boy at Ardagh in Co Limerick in 1868 when he was digging for potatoes. There is the Fadden More psalter, full of poems and psalms, written by monks about 900AD, found in a bog in 2006 when farmers cutting turf unearthed it and identified its calfskin leather, its papyrus inner page that showed their connection with the Coptic church in the east. There is the Tara Brooch, the Loughnashade Horn, the Cross of Cong. The museum has produced a trail guide for children which poses different questions challenging their observation of the intricacies of the craftsmanship and myths attached. The last question asks the participant to choose their favourite object from the selection on display.

If I were filling it in, I would say without hesitation that the one that never fails to fill me with wonder is the Broighter Hoard. This was discovered in a field near Lough Foyle in February 1886 when two men were ploughing. Lough Foyle has always been connected to Manannán the sea god and this is quite possibly an offering to the god. The golden hoard consists of two chain necklaces, a small bowl or cauldron and a torc or gold collar. For me, the star of the piece is a miniature boat. It is an extraordinary piece of art that measures 18.4cm by 7.6cm and weighs a mere 85g. It has benches, rowlocks, two rows of nine perfectly shaped oars, a paddle rudder for steering and mast yard, all exquisitely crafted from gold. Looking at it I try to imagine the craftsman shaping the vessel, the world he came from, the need to create something beautiful.

Our young people are our lives best treasures. Like the Broighter Hoard, their creativity must be protected. Their jewels of words, their spun gold and silver of sentences, the intricacy of their artwork need to be safeguarded in the storehouse of books and journals, such as *Live Encounters*, where they will not be locked down, merely held in safe keeping for future readers.

Molly Woodman-Joyce, Third Year, Kilkenny College, Kilkenny, Ireland.



Swatches

I am
so happy
this turned out
and I love
that the pencils
showed the tones

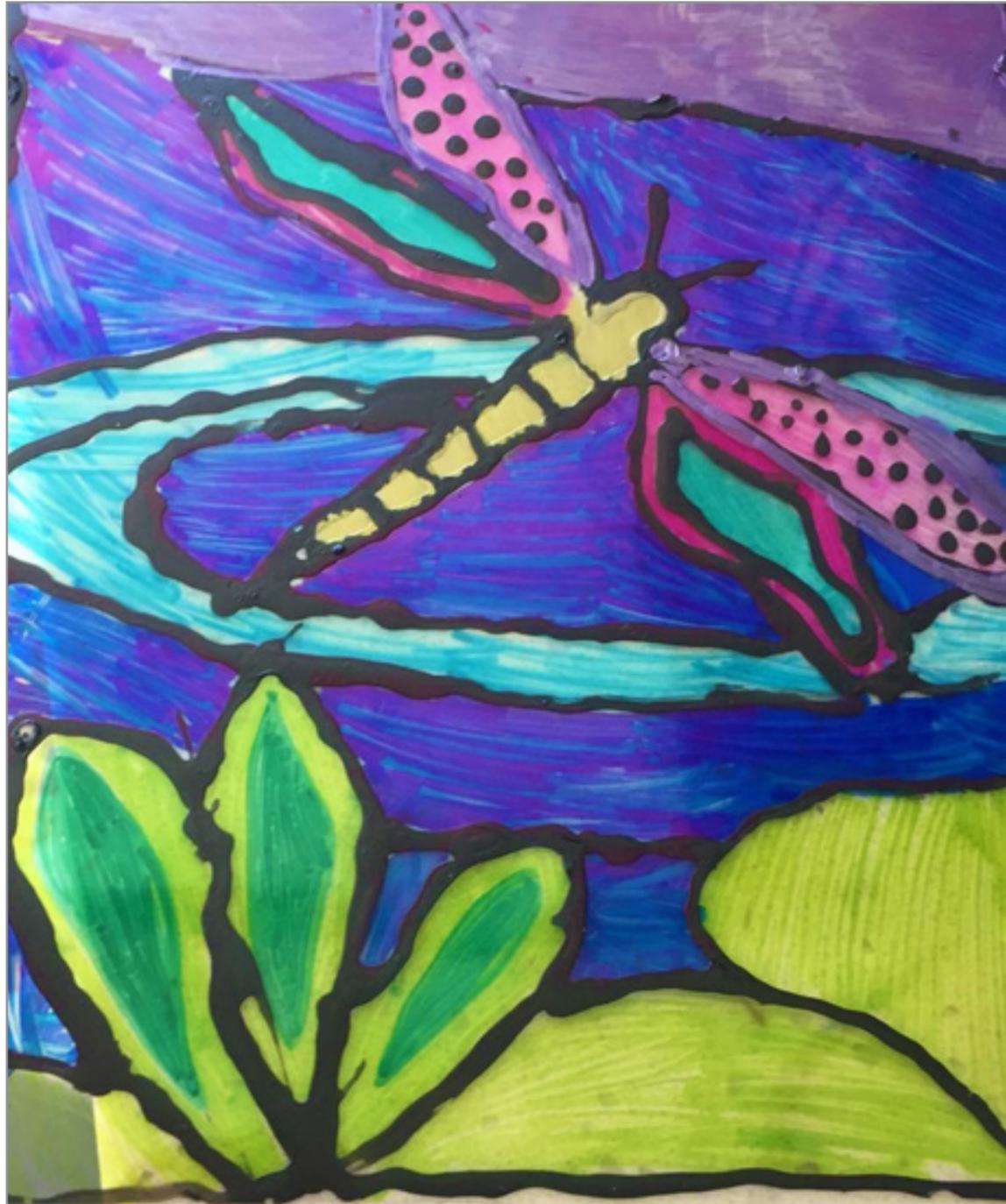
With this painting I struggled
massively with finding
the colour of the shoes.

In end I used:
rose gold/copper
yellow
white
and brown

I then used coloured
pencils for shading
and I used:
black
white
pink
and brown
and yellow

Artwork by Molly Woodman-Joyce.

Lia Rose Hystad Age 7, Centro Educación Infantil Primaria, Costa Oeste, Cadiz, Spain,



THE GOOD THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR PEOPLE

Love has magic,
so always bring magic with you
and be good with other people
and they'll be good with you.

Say good things to other people,
like you are my star at night
and you are my sun in the daytime,

and you have to treat others good,
like give them cookies,
and help them

when they're lonely
and the magic in the stars
will help you.

Artwork by Lia Rose Hystad.

Mikaela Naughton / Sarah Fahy, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



THE HERO

Nelson Mandela, a fighter survivor,
hero for many but only had a penny.
His dad died
and later on, the Government lied.
They said that different races would have equal places.
It even turned worse with protesting,
arresting and not sharing a thing.

But, of course, you know the man who protested it all.
But after trying to do something right,
he got locked up in jail and it gave him a fright.
In there for 27 years was actually alright
because he studied up all night.
Made friends with prisoners' police, yah, they were tight.
The Blacks hated that they put him in jail,
were even more mad than a shark that's sad.

He came out from all his time and raised his fist in triumph.
After his years of studying, he became a lawyer as quick as a blink.
Things started to get better,
and in 1994 he became president of South Africa.
Victory for the people!

The whole world shook, life is better because of him.
So when you hear his name you should write it down.
He then retired in 1999.
Died in 2013.
Gosh, that was sad!
But now we know the amazing man...
NELSON MANDELA
Black lives matter.

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nelson-Mandela>

Jurica Banek, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



LOCKDOWNS ARE BORING

Only go outside in your back yard
Can't go anywhere
Keep Safe
Don't get infected
Older family is missed
Wash your hands
Now repeat....
L O C K D O W N

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-ireland-idUSKBN2730EZ>

Joseph Lord, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



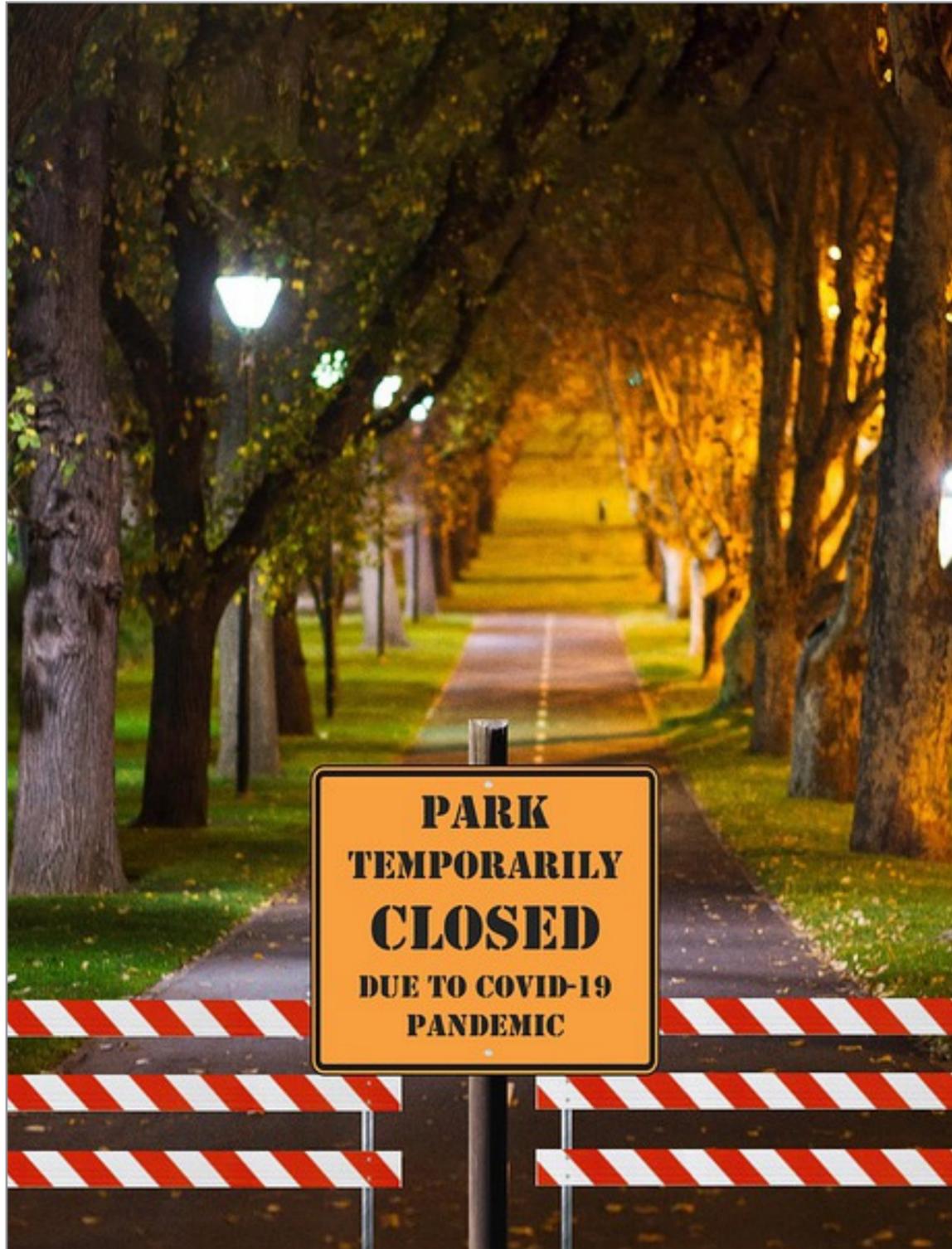
LOCKDOWN

Children playing,
Streets are full.
Everyone is running.
Jumping, prancing, dancing.
No one can believe
How fun it is to be playing.

BUT then the virus hits,
Streets are empty.
It slows right down so you can hear it hit.
People walking, walking and walking.
People cannot believe
How boring it is to be in Lockdown.

Empty city centre shopping streets are seen as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak continues, in Galway, Ireland, October 19, 2020. REUTERS/Clodagh Kilcoyne.
<https://thepeninsulaqatar.com/article/20/10/2020/Ireland-is-first-EU-country-to-re-enter-lockdown-but-keeps-schools-open>

Séan Meehan, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



LOCKDOWN 2021

Lockdown, lockdown it is very down.
There is no nothing to do when you're down.
There is no club football anymore
to play with your friends.
It is very boring in lockdown.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/park-closed-barricade-pandemic-5040260/>

Elliot McDonnell, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



LOCKDOWN

January 2021 another lockdown has begun,
February 2021 these lockdowns are not fun.
Travel limits within 5k
Let's hope it doesn't last till May.
We wait for Michéal Martin's say
Still wearing our masks day by day.

<https://pawsandclawsanimalhospital.com/coronavirus-and-your-pet/>

Aoibhinn Kirwan, Junior Cert, Ursuline Secondary School, Thurles Co. Tipperary.



THE LIGHTHOUSE

The wind blows past me as I stand
The sun shines brightly throughout the land
The weather differs day-by-day, at night I
come alive and play
Brightly shining through the dark,
I guide the ships home from afar
But when the stormy weather arrives,
I find it harder to relight.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/lighthouse-ice-winter-snow-3973197/>

Anthony Gibney, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



NOSES

He had a neat, oversized, crooked nose.
It stuck out at me like a flying rose.

His runny, sharp, squashed, twisted
upturned nose, was longer than
my garden hose.

He had a prominent, fat, piggy nose,
I don't know how he got on his clothes.

It was fatter than Homer,
it made him look like a real moaner.

Oh Yeah! That's how it's done.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/dwarfs-imp-dwarf-garden-gnome-49808/>

Bevin Foley , 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



NOSES

Noses are bent
 Crooked
 Runny
 Oversized
 Elegant
 Sharp
 Freckled
 Piggy
 Neat
 Smart
 Tiny
 Gigantic
 Ugly
 PERFECT!

MY CHRISTMAS POEM

Christmas is a time for:
 Getting
 Giving
 Hugging
 Happy smiles
 Long rows
 Of cosy toes
 In front of the TV
 Eating
 Sleeping
 Long walks
 Time of year.

<https://pixabay.com/users/ryanmcguire-123690/>

Dara Kennedy, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



HORSES

With flowing manes and velvet muzzles,
sleek coats and gentle nuzzles.
Windswept tails and pounding hooves,
a rocking gait when they move.
Walk, trot, canter, gallop, foot in the stirrup,
and up you hop.
(Remember to mount on the left side).
A tap with your heels and off you ride.
After a warm-up you're ready to jump,
over a cross pole and land with a bump.

Raise the pole so it's a straight,
ride up to the fence with an even gait.
After the session it's time to groom,
while my horse munches on the flowers in bloom.
Body brush, dandy brush, rubber curry comb,
my horse looked out at the fields to roam.
There's still a lot of chores to be done,
mucking out, cleaning tack, there's more than one.

But the sun is going down, dusk is nearly here,
it's time to turn my horse out in the paddock that is near.
With flowing manes and velvet muzzles,
sleek coats and gentle nuzzles.
Windswept tails and pounding hooves,
a rocking gait when they move.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/horse-pony-animal-mane-horse-mane-1330690/>

Eilwen Davey, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



HORSES

I love horses.
I simply LOVE horses!
I love the beat of their hooves,
I love it when they move.

I love the smoothness of their coat,
I love their long slender throat.
I love it when they jump MASSIVE log lumps.
I love to groom, ride and be around them.

To me horses are a shining gem.
I simply LOVE horses.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/horse-hand-friendship-contact-5628881/>

Cianán Blackwell , 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



CHICKENS

Chickens are easy.
Chickens are fun.
Some are silly.
Some are fast.
Some are slow.
But they all know where to go.

They like to cuddle and play.
They like to just bathe all day.
Then at night they fluff up.
And are ready to play
Again the next day.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/rooster-chicken-bird-animal-5009487/>

Claire Gibney, 5th class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



LITTER

Litter is bad. It makes people mad.
It kills the turtles, that's so sad.

Instead of littering, put your rubbish in the bin,
Ruins the forest, don't listen to Boris.

<https://blogs.ntu.edu.sg/hp3203-2017-19/impacts-on-the-environment-2/>

Sarah Fahy, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



THE PERFECT SNOW DAY

The snow is falling down on my head,
just like I dreamed in my bed.

Igloos, snowballs, snowmen galore,
siblings laughing on the floor.

That's what a snow day means to me,
it makes me ever so happy.

You can barely feel the time or the chill,
while sledding down a snowy hill.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/hot-chocolate-coffee-winter-cold-2037706/>

Araan Waller, 5th Class Scoil Chumin agus Caitriona Oughterard, County Galway, Ireland.



SNOW

Snow covered
trees that
have lost their leaves,
evergreen
branches
blowing in the
breeze, the
forest frosted,
in calm and
peace.

<https://pixabay.com/photos/snow-snowy-winter-nature-landscape-4666300/>

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