

## Second Place Entry: Junior High School

"ODE TO A PENCIL" BY GEORGIA ATKIN

Long, thin stick.  
Or at least, it used to be.

Born as a tree, roots  
twining through earth and grass.  
Grew to the sky,  
reaching branches and  
green stained glass  
to the  
    sun,  
the blue space above,  
the stars at night.

Then  
suddenly  
it's cut off all a' once,  
    trimmed, flattened  
curled 'round a stick of  
something new  
    yet so much older.  
Black stuff, lead found  
deep in earth, stone  
reaching like tree roots  
    now thin within wood.  
Fairly useless there,

    'til a hand picks it up

and touches it's point to a piece of paper.

And from the mind  
    to the hand  
        to the paper now springs lines-

Letters, pictures, poems  
symbols, cursive, rhythms,  
    printing, songs, secrets,  
sounds, records  
    and stories.

And now,  
not even the sky's the limit.