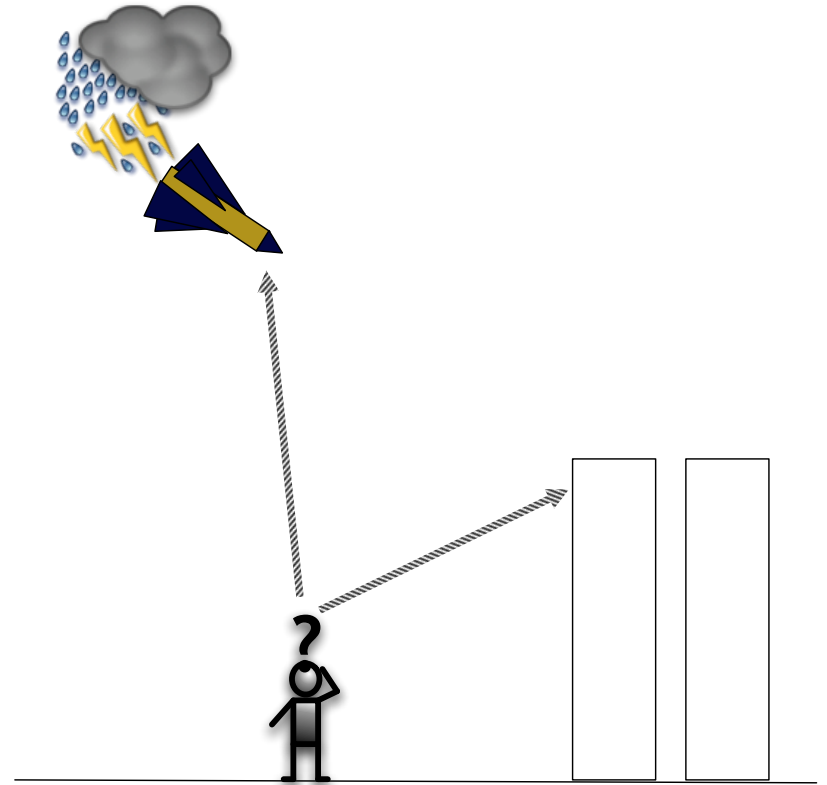**Poetry Book**

Alexander Celeste

October 2008 • Saint Paul, Minnesota

About the Poet

Alexander Celeste was born on April 1st, 1992 in Boston, Mass. He has one sibling, his younger brother, Nathaniel Celeste, who was born on October 20th, 1997. In 2000 his family moved to Saint Paul, MN so his mother (Mary Hess) could pursue a job at Luther Seminary. He first went to the neighborhood elementary school (Groveland Park) for 3rd-5th grade. Afterwards he went to Crosswinds Arts And Science School for 6th-10th grade. Crosswinds is an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program school that was part of an integration district. So, though he lives in Saint Paul, Crosswinds was in Woodbury and his best friend there lived in the suburbs. He absolutely loved Crosswinds and so was quite annoyed that it ended at 10th grade. In 2008 he started at Avalon High School (a project-based school) where his first project was this poetry book. Thankfully, the transition from Crosswinds to Avalon was seamless and he feels quite comfortable in the school.
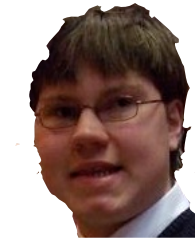
The Gifted Box

This poem was based on the format used in "Valentine" by Carol Ann Duffy.

And Then The Soldiers Came

This poem was based on the format used in "Night Funeral In Harlem" by Langston Huges.

A Note On The Project As A Whole

This poetry book represents the core deliverable in an independent project at Avalon High School. There are a few key things to know about the project that it represents. The first, you may note that I have a few poems specific to September 11th, 2001 and the war that resulted. This is not a coincidence, the inspiration for that comes from the simple fact that not purposefully I wrote the initial proposal for this project on September 11th, 2008. Also, it is good to understand the way in which projects at Avalon work. Any project-based school uses those projects as at least 60% of the schoolwork. Therefore, most of the school day is independent work time and the projects need to follow the form of accomplishing state standards so that graduation becomes possible. You also prove that you're working not just by showing off the work that you did, but also by logging the time that you spent doing that work. Also, I wrote an essay on Creative Commons as the second deliverable for this project. That can be found online at http://alex.clst.org/avalonprojects/poetrybook/creativecommonsessay.pdf.

Notes On Select Poems

How Computers Confuse Humans

I wrote this poem right after spending 15 minutes trying to get my MacBook to reconnect to the Avalon WiFi. I was planning on writing it anyway, but just a fun fact.

A Bear's Attack

I wrote a slightly off key to the Italian Sonnet version of this poem. Technically my project expert wrote this reworking of it.

Economic Losses

This poem was written right in the center of the events surrounding the $700 billion bill that was written to ease the economic crisis and then not voted into law. This poem is also one of the included sonnets that hasn't been reworked to fit the true sonnet form.

Starving to Death

My favorite part of this poem is the first 3 lines of the second stanza.

Haikus

These few haikus are just quick little snippets of poetry that were fun to write and probably fun to read and re-read over and over again. Because these were the first poems that I wrote for this project specifically, they were used by me as inspiration for some of the longer poems.

September 11 Remembrance

September eleven
This day has been remembered
For its death and harm

The Breath of Earth

Air is the Earth's breath
Washes away the bad breath
Opens us to harm

The Rules of Poetry

Poetry is writing with rules
Rules are concrete and can't change
Poets work by rules

Understanding Faith

As all faiths are known
So are their ancient ways of life
Entrusting faith as your life

Native nations read the national nature.
Opera openers are optionally oppressed.
Present parrots are performing the prance.
Queen Quita quested the quarreling quarter.
Robotic rotating rotors rotated along the rotation reel.
Soaked slimy soldiers slithered to safety.
Teepee Tom trudged the treasure to the trenches.
Undermined understanding unwrapped the untied
    unicorn.
Visroy Viki ventured into the venus view.
Wheeler Witigew watched as the winds roared.
Xerox Xen X-rayed the extra xeon.
Yodeling Yose yodeled yonder yesterday.
Zookeeper Zane zig-zagged the zany zone.

A-Z Twisters

Adorned adulteress walked along the ancient atrium.
Big buttresses have bigger beams.
Complex computers are complicated and concentrated.
Drenched dragon watched the dips of the daggers
Extravagant electric electrician entered the electric
    exhibition.
Fleeger Fletcher fried the french bread.
Glastonbury Greeger grabbed the group of old guns.
Historically healthy Heathrow hideouts are historically
    filthy.
Inlet Islands are international entities.
Jack Johnson judged the Jacksons.
Kleenex Kate kept the keepers.
Lina Lene Lindsow took the last lime.
Mickey Mo matured the minstrel monkeys.

The Complexity Of Computers

Computers are so cool
That many don't see their true uses
They can even confuse experts

Gift Giving To The Poor

Thankful people live
Giving is strong and helpful
The poor enjoy those gifts

Tongue Twisters

I know that tongue twisters are in no way poems, but they still contain a sign of a rhyme scheme.

Crosswinds Twisters

Crossing crevices creates cremations.
Rising waters retrieves reunions.
Overture openings express underlying oppression.
Synthetic sins are semantic settings.
Sidelined segues synthesize sadness.
Wheezing wizards retreat up the winding road.
Indented incisions include the inscribed inscriptions.
Nice nicotine embeds narcotic inhalations.
Distressed dying demolitions end the dying streak.
Safe sanctions subliminally seclude the civilians.

Villanelles

These poems were the first extended poems that I wrote for this book and they're in a structure (the Villanelle) that not many people may be familiar with. They are on some random topics, but each are still quite fun in their own unique way. Since not many of you likely know the structure of the Villanelle, here it is (letters are used to mark the rhymes):
A
B
A

A
B
A

A
B
A

A
B
A

A
B
A

A
B
A
A
B
A

How Computers Confuse Humans

Computers will confuse us
They can make us quite annoyed
We can waste hours being worried

The opportunities are quite boundless
Some may just try to avoid
Computers will confuse us

The form of confusion will be artless
And the users will be toyed
We can waste hours being worried

Some will think it vicious
Others will just start a feud
Computers will confuse us

Users are just witness
To the actions of their android
We can waste hours being worried

It is a deadly weakness
To not be able to devoid
Computers will confuse us
We can waste hours being worried

Starving to Death

What of food
When it is locked
Below the old knocked
And wholesomely ancient postlude
Of that argued, so glued, corkscrewed
Cabinet of chalked concoct
And unlocked landlocked
Controlling dude

It would be a shame
To entreat your guest
To starve to death
Wanting to acclaim
A great conquest
That ends in potential breath

A Bear's Attack

The force of wind is this old bear's death grip
Your end is (with any sharp claw) unfair
You still get pinned if in its grinning stare
You lose your footwear when you flare and slip
You can't stop from being skinned toe to lip
What is it worth – to not be here, not there?
Is this the blessed beauty of nature bare
When all that is you becomes a crushed blip?

The whole situation is quite a drag
As the bear won't but breathe or pause to think
Will this gust of fur stop at another?
Whispered instant, you might very well snag
What was there in the dark? A little wink
You believe before you get his answer

Explaining Time

There is a thing called time
It is the basis of our lives
Time is an essential part of life

It would be a crime
To not use the natives
There is a thing called time

What of a pastime
Those are just gives
Time is an essential part of life

And there is a dime
This could cover forgives
There is a thing called time

You could even rhyme
The underlying captives
Time is an essential part of life

It is now peacetime
You may even spot olives
There is a thing called time
Time is an essential part of life

Sonnets

These sonnets are all in the Italian rhyme structure. They were the last set of poems that I wrote straight for this project before starting to revise poems. These all are on random (or as random as my brain could spew out inspiration) topics, but are still held together by their similar structure. I used sonnets as the form of poetry to try and become an expert at. In reading these sonnets just understand that the sonnets that I actually improved upon are for the most part not included here.

Economic Losses

Economic losses
Feed the rich and destroy the poor
They don't even put it in a brochure
There end up being many boxes
Of the contents of home bases
The rich adore
What should be just folklore
The worst part, the situation never budges

Government agencies
Never step in
To fix this royal mess
That makes them look like big bullies
They probably all drink gin
To even be able to profess the press

The Gifted Box

Not a black sash or a blue basket

I give you a box
It is a good and solid box
It promises wisdom
Like the understanding of a library

Here,
It will bind you to this land
Like a true god
It will make you be worshipped
Like those you worship

I am trying to be helpful

Not a helpless servant or annoying child

I give you a box
Its helpful rays inside will assist you
Helpful and guiding
As we are,
For as long as we are

Take it.
Its mine and I need it not
If you like.
Assistive.
It's teachings will cling to your body
Cling to your mind

Free Form

These were all written back in the second half of the second semester of 10th grade. I include them here as examples of poems that I haven't yet identified the type of. Feel free to assume that they're just a few free form poems. Of course, you could also try and identify them as one type or another, your choice.

Overwhelming Joy

There is overwhelming joy
In this unsuspecting boy
He toppled a stone wall
With just a measly ball

His parents were quite upset
As he burnt the bussing movie set

This kid cannot live
Was a friends final words
As he was forced under a truck
That flattened him outright

It was a dreary bath
That in, this kid drew his final breath

His teacher was quite glad
As at least she could clad
Her students in clothes again
As she had them in armor a day earlier

It was a dark night
And actually quite a fright
The bombs rained down
And the crowds round...

And then the
Soldiers came

Along the walk
They came to talk
And killed as they please
Never stopping to say cheese

And then the
Soldiers came

Indicating kids
They took away our bids
We were considering...
How to escape the killing

And then the
Soldiers came

Yapping away the parents were
As they saw their kids lie dying
And the soldiers walked aware
Laughing and denying

And then the
Soldiers came

The aftermath was sad
Crying and dying
The families all mad
And uprising made for planning

And then the
Soldiers came