

BCTRUST AND BLANCHARD MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONTESTS

Every year the Boxborough Conservation Trust sponsors a writing contest and an art contest at the Blanchard Memorial Elementary School to encourage students to think about the natural landscapes and wildlife in their community.

WRITING CONTEST

The writing contest currently features Grade Six contestants although grades 9 - 5 were included in the past. Currently, three winners are chosen for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place, with Honorable Mentions awarded if merited. All 6th grade students are asked to write an essay or a poem about a particular theme. Past themes are listed below. Winning essays/poems are published in Common Ground (links to each below):

- 2019: This year, the theme at Blanchard is 'CommUNITY', the idea of inclusiveness and shared sense of place. Think about time spent outdoors with your friends, family, and classmates at local natural areas and write about a shared experience (fiction, non-fiction, or poetry). <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/BCT-Common-Ground-winter-2019.pdf>
- 2018: This 6th grade writing contest incorporated the themes of mindfulness and nature. Students were asked to imagine they were a falling autumn leaf and to write about their journey of exploration as they fall from their tree. https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/BCT-DEC-2018_lo-res-REVISED-for-web-FINAL.pdf
- 2017: This year's topical theme is protecting our water resources—including underground aquifers, wetlands, ponds and brooks. https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Common-Ground_Spring-2017_final.pdf
- 2016: For this year's contest, sixth grade students were asked to write a creative story, poem or essay that sends a strong message to Boxborough residents that this important issue of climate change needs our attention and we need to work together to use less energy, use alternate forms of energy that won't harm our future, and to support the preservation of nature. https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/bctrust_cg_sum2016_final_26jun.pdf
- 2015: For this year's writing contest, we asked students to visit conservation land near their home or Blanchard Elementary School and use their senses to experience the land and the plants and animals that live there. Using prose or poetry, students described what they saw, heard, smelled, touched, or tasted and how it made them feel. We challenged them to create a mental picture for the readers of Common Ground; so through their experiences and their written words, perhaps you can experience and better appreciate Boxborough's beautiful conservation and farmlands. (6th graders) <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/summer-20152.pdf>

- 2014: Global Warming is on everyone’s mind, and today’s youth want to do their part to reduce the warming trend, so the BCTrust asked students to write a persuasive essay, poem, or narrative to convince townspeople to make preserving undeveloped land, especially trees, a priority. See what our four winners had to say about how trees not only remove carbon from the atmosphere, but also benefit us in countless other ways—from providing habitat for wildlife to creating fantastic views for all to enjoy. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2014-01-summer.pdf>
- 2013: The theme of this year’s writing contest was commemorating the BCTrust’s 15 years of existence! Students were asked to tell the town, in a poem, essay, or letter, what they value about having conservation land in our community, and why it is important to have people working together in an organization like the BCTrust to accomplish an important goal to preserve as much land as possible. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2013-01-summer.pdf>
- 2012: The BCTrust wondered what our youth are thinking about Boxborough’s farming past, present, and future, so for this year’s writing contest we asked them to write a poem, essay, or narrative letting our readers know what they think is special about farming in our community. There were 140 entries submitted for consideration by students in grades 3 through 6. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2012-01-summer.pdf>
- 2011: For this year's contest students in grades 3 through 6 answered the question, “What are the “little things” that you will do to preserve and protect the environment here in Boxborough?” Three winners and four honorable mentions were selected from 142 entries, the most ever received in one year. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2011-03-summer.pdf>
- 2010: Every year the Boxborough Conservation Trust sponsors a writing contest and a design contest at Blanchard Memorial School to encourage students to think about the natural landscapes and wildlife in their community. The writing contest, now in its 8th year, is open to students in Grades 3 to 6. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2010-03-summer.pdf>
- 2009: Every year the Boxborough Conservation Trust sponsors a writing contest and a design contest at Blanchard Memorial School to encourage students to think about land conservation in their community. The writing contest is open to students in Grades 3 to 6, while the design contest is for Grade 4 students only. This year, fourth grade students took the top three prizes in the writing contest, giving Grade 4 a complete contest sweep. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2009-03-summer.pdf>
- 2008: Forty-eight students from grades 3, 4 and 5 at Blanchard Memorial Elementary School submitted essays and poems this past spring to the 7th annual BCTrust Writing Contest. In recognition of Boxborough’s 225th birthday, students were asked to write an essay or poem describing the natural landscape in Boxborough – how it may have been 225 years ago, how it is

now, or what it might be like 225 years from now. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2008-03-fall.pdf>

- 2007: Forty-seven students who attend Blanchard Memorial School in Grades 3, 4, and 5 participated in the fifth annual BCTrust Writing Contest. This year, they were asked to write an essay or poem about the beauty of Boxborough's wetlands and the importance of preserving this diverse habitat. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2007-07-jul.pdf>
- 2006: More than 90 students from grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 at Blanchard Memorial Elementary School submitted essays and poems this spring to the fourth annual BCTrust Writing Contest. For their topic this year, students were asked to explain why we all should recycle and how it benefits the environment. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2006-09-sep.pdf>
- 2005: "Students in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th grades were invited to S "share your short essay or poem with everyone in Boxborough - tell them what you enjoy most about being out-of-doors and in contact with nature . . .on conservation land or private property such as your backyard." <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2005-03-mar.pdf>
- 2004: Students were asked to write about what they find most interesting or inspiring about protecting our open land, wildlife, and natural resources. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2004-02-feb.pdf>
- 2003: Fourth-graders in Ms. Jean Oviatt's and Mrs. Lauren Grady's classes at Blanchard submitted poems and essays to the BCT for publication in Common Ground. A small BCT committee selected two entries for this edition, with thanks and honorable mention to the following students for their very thoughtful work: Darcy A., Jessica D., Karishma P. and Jasmine J. <https://bctrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/2003-05-may.pdf>

ART CONTEST

The design contest has been and is for students in Grade Four and has varied with 1st place winner's art work being used for t-shirts, tote bags and stationery. More recently, four winners have been chosen and the four entries being placed on the back of a t-shirt with the BCTrust's logo on the front of the t-shirt. Past winners and themes, if any, can be found using the links provided for the writing contest years. The art contest is now held each Spring.