

The Riverquest Experience.

A free-form poem by Willow Susens, OEMS, Mr. Froehlingsdorf, 2 pages long

A noisy bus full of busy kids, pulls up to a ship.

The whispers go quiet as loud voices shout.

Groups gather outside the boat, us getting used to being on non-solid "land."

People sway as smiles form, going up the stairs.

A kind woman with a loud voice and a warm heart talks about bacteria.

She talks of the storm sewers and drains that stain the history of Duluth.

The cold dirty water cleaned, into slippery salvation.

A microscope shows us microbiomes as the whistle blows.

A young woman with brunette hair and a smile passes out pictures.

She talks of aquatic invaders, and the threat they pose.

The poise of the poison.

Seaweed leaves green, with clams that clamp.

Cold crisp wind blows in my face as I feel the ship lurch and turn.

Climbing stairs, we get to the top.

The top of the steel, as we sail through our harbor.

Binoculars shield my eyes, as I take in the sight with a pen, drawing furiously.

2 kind hearted veterans tell us about the sheets of ice that crash into ships.

They talk of the H.E.L.P position, which helps in more ways than one.

They talk of hypothermia, adding the horrid details of it all.

My hand takes an ice bath as I grab 2 cents from the bottom, my hand going numb.

2 men who talk loudly teach us next.

They talk of PFD's, and MN standards of perfection.

They talk of floating bell peppers and sinking potatoes, using Sienna as a volunteer.

Citrus shakes and bobs, as fruit floats time, after time, again.

A sharp steel whistle shakes us as we leave.

Walking out of the ship something came wafting.

A strong stern smell.

Pork with fresh peppers, with rice on rye.

My dad's specialty.

We walk inside as 4 helpful humans teach us about erosion.

The 2018 storm did more damage than I thought, my jaw hangs open looking at dated photos.

They talk of threats, especially erosion.

A green bottle filled with green grass serves as a visual.

They send us off with knowledge of SNA's.

A man who asks questions thanks me when I answer correctly.

We all stop on a ship demo.

Iron pellets fill as reminders, as the waves we made crash down.

They talk of ships as the steel whistle blows for the 7th time that day.

A giant table filled with sand sits behind us as they talk of forests and "for sures."

They use Callum as a cumbersome example, talking of camping.

We make a study bridge, my head filling up with questions.

The words finally escaped my mouth, though the teacher had ignored me.

My friends back me up as our feet shuffle to the next.

A very enthusiastic man talks of rip currents, and how to break them.

Sienna volunteers again, only to be trampled by the force of everyone.

The teacher talks of things in metaphors, flags, and the fire department.

He keeps us longer to show us bright posters and warning signs.

A nervous worker and a reassuring friend teach us about oil spills.

They talk of the bad black ruining our bright blue waters.

They talk of Dish Soap and soaps, with cleaning supplies.

We talk of spills and ducks, and learn with a carefully constructed demo .

The sharp steel whistle blows for the last time, as we board the bus.

The bus is loud with chatter, as children chat about this and that.

The loud tunnels pound in my ears, as we go to the school.

I've found a new found appreciation for the wintery waters of lake superior.

The harrowing harbor, the beatuios blue water, the beings below.

The strong steel ships and the salties with their metal dips.

These waters hold a connection to me, that much is for certainty.

At an economic loss we would all be, if our ships stopped sailing our lakes and sea's.