



PNA World Tuna Day Art & Talent Quest

FIRST PRIZE WINNING ENTRY

Teach Your Children

By Jasmine Mendiola (Federated States of Micronesia)

The ocean was flickering
From the light of the sun
As a father headed to sea
On a boat with his son.
“Let’s go fishing!”
He yelled and sat on his seat
Excited to join his dad
To bring home some food to eat.

They went out and far
And even further more
Searching for those birds
To direct to their score.
They spotted a school
And soon began to troll
With only a handline
Islanders used no pole.

Suddenly, the boy’s line,
Caught a big bite
So he pulled and pulled
With all his might.
There was a big struggle
With the strength of the fish
But he kept up with the fight
“I’ve got this, I’ve got this!”

His face lit up
With such great joy
As his dad picked up the fish
And yelled “Tuna! Good job boy!”
He wanted to troll some more
Oh how he couldn’t wait!
He quickly set up his line
Along with his lure and bait.

His father shouted, “look there!”

Do you see the dolphin?
It means we're in luck, son
For some real good yellowfin!"
Stoked even more
He could not stay calm
Readily gripping
His line in his palm.

And again he felt
Another big bite
So he pulled and pulled
With all his might.

What a day for this lad
Indeed the best yet!
But then his father spoke
Of something he'd not forget.

He said, "I'm sorry son
But we have to let it go."
What was the reason?
He just didn't know.

"But why?" he asked
"We've only caught two
We need more fish
For the rest of the family too."
His father smiled and said,
"No, this one is too small
A fish this size is young
So you can't take it at all.

I know you don't want to
But we must let it go
To give it another chance
Another chance to grow. "
The boy hung his head
He didn't understand
Why they'd catch a fish
Then release it again.

The father went on
To show and explain
The importance of fish
And how they're sustained.

“Fish must mature
In order to reproduce,
And produce more fish
And abundance won't reduce.
If we take any and take all
Over time, they will be gone.
And none will be left
For future generations to live on.

So it is up to us
To take responsibility
Of what we have today
And pass it on with certainty.
So you teach others
As I have taught you today
The importance of conservation
In this very way.

I will teach my children
And my children's children too
That conservation starts here,
It starts with me and you.

Even a single drop
Can start a big ripple
And in time its effects
Will become multiple.
So teach your children
And your children's children too
What you have learned today
A lesson from me to you.”

Twenty years have passed
The little boy had grown
Into a fine young man
With a family of his own.

Then on one faithful day
Out fishing with his son and daughter
They caught very few fish
Which reminded him of his father.

The fish were smaller and fewer
Than in his father's prime,
This made him realize the changes
That occurred in such a short time.

So he picked up the fish and said
“See here kids what we have landed
Is what happens to things
When we take them for granted.”

So that day he told his children
“Teach your children too
That conservation starts here
It starts with me and you.
Even if it’s minor
Even if it’s small
An effort to make a difference
Is better than nothing at all.”

So go out and tell your family
And tell your friends too
Tell the world that
“Conservation, starts with me and you.”
Lead by example
And soon others will follow
To conserve our natural heritage
For the people of tomorrow.

So YOU teach your children
And their children’s children too
That CONSERVATION STARTS HERE,
IT STARTS WITH ME AND YOU.