



## 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.