

FANTASIES OF THE MIND



FERRARIO

Spring 2025



We would like to say a very special thank you to Ms. Harner for the inspiration and to her students for their talent. It is those students who have provided the illustrations for this year's book.

Welcome to the 2025 edition of the Richard M. Teitelman's *Fantasies of the Mind*. Once again we have solicited original student writings to entertain you, and once again students have responded to the call. On the following pages you will find writings inspired by topics like advice, seasons, and emotions. Students tackled the tasks of writing creatively as well as demonstrating the knowledge they have gained this year. The students who helped to compile these creative writings worked hard and found their inspiration in many ways and in many classrooms throughout this school year.

Good writing both entertains and provokes thought. We hope that you will read each of the entries in this literary magazine. Enjoy them. Take your time and **think** about each of the writings, and you may find more than what is written on the printed page.

No one ever said that writing is an easy thing to do. To share personal writing with others is always somewhat dangerous; one becomes vulnerable. We want to thank those students who took the time to write and had the courage to share their personal thoughts. You see, the writings were not originally for publication, but only *fantasies of the mind*.

Falling Into Fall

Summer grows weary and ill,
collapsing and soon falling into fall.
From shaded, shiny, shimmery rays of mellow sun,
to the kind, crisp atmosphere
of early autumn days
The lush, verdant bushes shrivel and scorch
like raisins, the trees grow bony and tall.
Leaves curl tawny and fragile,
like a snake shedding its skin,
the atmosphere fades into a haze
Cool air swirls and glides over our heads,
some missed the cold, some not at all.
I sometimes miss the sultry summer air,
but not the stifling blaze
I hate the heat, the mosquitoes,
so I'm glad the cold has taken its toll.
It seemed years before it would come,
but now it's back in its ways
Now it's the time for hats and sweaters,
bundling up like a doll.
Pumpkins stack up, next to piles of leaves
and rows of hay
Squirrels flutter from their dens,
squealing in a brawl.
We can go for a hayride,
maybe through a corn maze
Pulling on our boots, scrambling down the hall.
A black cat wanders through the streets,
with some other strays

Apricot-colored leaves flutter to the ground,
big and small.
It's been so long, but now it's too cold for bays
Though the flourishing summer is over,
a brittle autumn lays over the sky like a shawl.
It won't pass too quickly, at least I hope it stays
The night gets cooler as the moon starts to crawl.
We'll wake up tomorrow to a gloomy fall day,
the moon and night lays
I find it really nice when summer falls into fall.

By: Lyla Garrabrant



The Leaves

The leaves fall, fascinating, festive, and fabled
They darken the sky with their orange and red hues
They signal the end of summer and the start of the fall
Even though some people don't want fall to start at all
They hide in their homes like crabs with their shell
But the leaves don't care they just continue to sink
Down to the ground, they pile in the streets
Cars slow down and watch the scene
The trees become bare and animals begin their long sleeps
Some leaves are as orange as a pumpkin
Others are purple like lilacs
No matter how different they all fall the same
With beauty and grace, softness and lovely
Soon the kids will come out
In all types of costumes
They will roam the streets,
Collecting a million treats,
And playing in the leaves
All because the trees started to bawl
Signifying the end of fall

By: Ariya Formento





in the fall
you can see the colorful leaves
dancing in the wind and hit the ground
in the fall
you can hear the trees swaying in the wind
as the birds chirp
in the fall
you can feel the chill of the cold air
brush against your face
in the fall
you can taste all the delicious snacks
and the foods people make
in the fall
you can smell cinnamon and pumpkin spice
flowing through the breeze

By Abigale Gilmore

Fall is Near

As the summer hue leaves the air,
And the heat disappears into despair,
We all know,
Fall is near.

Now that the air is filled with change
And the sun begins to fade away
We all are aware,
Fall is near.

The trees stand bare, blank, but beautiful.
Colors change from shimmering green
to golden brown.
The leaves crunching underfoot,
Just like the crunch of a fresh apple.

A million migrating birds fill the skies,
Searching for warmer lives.
Just as the scent of pecan pie fills up the air,
The earth prepares for its winter nap,
Hoping to make this one last.

With the days growing shorter,
And the nights longer,
We all know,
Fall is near.

By: Abby Simpkins



Fall Leaves

by Taylor Crandley

Falling from trees
Autumn is here
Leaves are colorful
Leaves are crunchy
Leaves are dying
Every leaf is changing colors
Almost all have fallen
Very gently
Everything is bare
Simply wooden branches



“Trick or treat!” is all you hear
On this special time of year.
Costumes, candy, cobwebs and more
You'll find it knocking on your neighbor's door.
Running back and forth
on your neighborhood streets
You get rewarded by your
well-earned sweet treats.
There's spooky things you'll find, don't be afraid
You're almost done your candy raid.
On your way back from your Halloween night
Perhaps watch a movie, full of freight.
You choose your favorite candy, from the
millions of types
And spend time trading until you've
finished your candy heist.
You'll eat your candy, which you fought so hard for
You'll eat your candy until your parents say
“no more”.
You'll laugh and giggle, like a scary clown
Like some you'll find walking around your town.
You can take off your costume,
Take off your mask,
You've finally finished your trick or treat task.
Then lay in bed, try to sleep in a hush
Try to sleep, endure your sugar rush.

By: Leo Arroyo



The wind whispered in my ear
As I walked around the field
Catching sight of the most beautiful
and bright orange pumpkins
As orange as blooming marigolds
I chose the one I liked the best
And home I went to design it and craft...
The pumpkin of my DREAMS
I dream of silly and funny faces
Scary ghouls and dancing witches
Flying bats and oversized spiders
I finally decide on a midnight scene
with a waning crescent moon
Stars and planets floating in the cosmos
With small bats filling the air
and a fence at the bottom on a large hill
I start to create it by sawing open the top
of the pumpkin
The insides are squishy, smooshy, slimy, and strange
But the dream in my mind is starting to become
a reality
As I fine-tune the design I see all that it can be
The planets soar in the sky
The bats glide across the stars
After I was done I stepped back and took a look
It looked like the greatest artists came together
Even the ones who were no longer with us
They made one of the most magnificent pieces of art
together
I loved looking at it while my dad lit the candle inside
We shut off the lights as it beamed out
in front of our home
I had created the pumpkin of my dreams



By: Gray Grasso

OCTOBER

First day of October, already feeling breezy
Decorations are out, feeling uneasy?

In October's glow, the leaves descend,
A tapestry of colors, nature's blend.
Crisp air whispers secrets, cool as night,
As daylight fades to an amber light.

Pumpkins plump with a golden hue,
Fields of corn sway like a sea so blue.
Chill in the breeze, a hint of the night,
Harvest moons rise, casting silver light.

Sweaters snug, hot cider in hand,
Gathered 'round fires, we make our
Ghosts and goblins dance in the dark,
With laughter and stories, we leave our mark.

The scent of cinnamon fills the air,
While shadows stretch long, a bold, brave dare.
October, a canvas of warmth and thrill,
Where memories blossom like flowers on the hill.

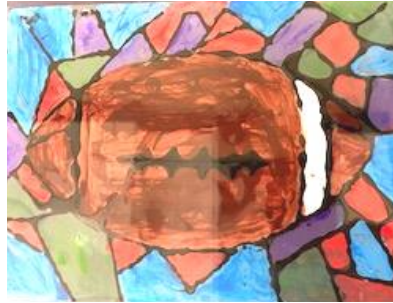
By: Anonymous 8th grader



Gratitude is being thankful for
Riding dirt bikes
And quads with my dad. I'm
Thankful for friends and family
Especially my mom. I'm thankful
For food and drinks
Unless its pineapple pizza. I don't
Like that. I am thankful

For money to buy things
Or to invest in gifts for others. I am
Really thankful.

Jesse Carawan



Turkey, Turkey, round and wide.
Soon enough, you'll be deep fried.
Juicy and tender I'd eat a whole plate.
Give me it all I just cannot wait.
I love eating turkey it tastes so amazing.
It'll taste even better with some maple glazing.
One, two, three, four.
I'd eat turkey til' there's nothing more.
No turkey left, there's nothing to spoil.
Turkey is better cooked in peanut oil.

By Mark Howard

*F*ine fall season.
*A*t last it's dinner time yay!
*L*oving all this thanksgiving food.
*L*icking the plate clean .

*S*ad to see everyone go.
*E*ek! The tryptophan is kicking in.
*A*fter that long feast I passed out.
*S*heesh! I woke up 17 hours later.
*O*n my way downstairs all I could
think about was turkey.
*N*ot again!

By Finnley Arenberg



Cape May is beyond beautiful
All the leaves are falling freely
Places and stores are starting to calmly close
Every tourist is in Cape May
My family loudly loves this coastal town
Autumn leaves are falling down
You and I are walking around
Sleeping at friends house after beach days
Evening starlit skies
Not a cautious care in the world
Anything on the bashful beach is carefree
Rays of sun come cautiously over me
Yesterday was fun

By Lilyana Nunez Roach

Flora flew five hours away to New York.

Ally arrived at the house and smelled the turkey.

Layla loved licking the ice cream off the spoon.

Lucus liked looking at the recipe for pumpkin pie.

By Savannah Turchi



The Autumn breeze begins to blow,
As amber leaves begin to glow.
The pumpkins line the garden's edge,
And fall's sweet scent is on the ledge.

The crisp air whispers soft and clear,
Knowing fall would soon be here.
The trees wear coats of red and gold,
And their season's stories start to unfold.

The harvest moon begins to rise,
Painting the stars in Autumn skies.
Fall's embrace is warm and bright,
A season wrapped in pure delight.

By Lynzee Grey



Fall is the best season of them all.
A big food haul and trees standing tall.

Get into a positive attitude
And show some gratitude.

Heave some leaves into a pile
And make that pile worth your while

Be a winner
And eat some dinner

Maybe some turkey
From New Jersey

Feel blessed
While eating that turkey breast

Happy Thanksgiving, here's to you
With love and thanks we're all renewed.

By Damian Ayala



Autumn is the place for me,
It makes me feel so right,
Even on the coldest days,
Leaves still dance through the night.

As the air gets crisp,
How I long for something nice,
A warm little treat,
Filled with pumpkin spice.

The pumpkins begin to giggle,
As we pick them one by one,
They are so excited,
For their growth is now done.

Now we stroll through the corn maze,
I feel them begin to stare,
Towering over my shoulder,
They start to raise my hair.

Autumn is the place for me,
As you may see,
Though I'm sad its ending,
I think it's time for the Christmas tree.

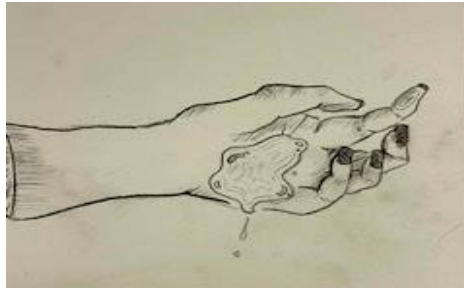
By Leila Omrod





Emotions

RMT students were given the challenge
of finding a positive and creative way
to express their feelings
through both writing and art.



I try my hardest not to feel the way I do but
Nothing can stop the feeling of
Constant worry
Over thinking things I can not change
No matter the time or the place
Something is always off
Out of nowhere
Life surprises you and you realize
All of that time you spent worrying
Beauty was passing by you because you weren't
Living in the moment
Enjoy the things around you

By Finnley Arenberg

I Hate You

I hate you.
Why did you talk to me?
So naive.
You made me believe.
So much hatred.
My heart was left vacant.
You left me feeling naked.
I felt so manipulated.
I shouldn't have trusted.
You make me feel so disgusted.
I hate you.

Amy Van Artsdalen



Wonderful feelings
Excitement for what could be

Happy every day
Always looking forward
Very interested in what's next
Even when there are struggles

Having aspirations and dreams
Optimistic
Positive thoughts
Every day !

By Myles Daly



In bed
With my cats,
Staring at the wall
As I yawn
Eyes wanna close,
Thinking about summer,
Wanting to sleep
Piled under warm blankets
Cozy
My mind drifts to sleep.

By Jessie Lynn Marley



Is it a big deal, or just a small thought?
Shouldn't occupy my mind *that much*.

It's a feeling that always creeps up...
every once in a while.
The circumstances are so strange.

What's really going to happen?
Obviously I must be over-thinking,
Right?
Remember, it just starts off as a
 teeny tiny thought.
You don't even realize it's there
 until it becomes way too big.
?

By Marisol Munoz

Hoping for the best
Of life, school and my future
Practice for the best
Everything is going perfect
Full of success and pride
Under all the tiring days
Life will be more peaceful
Later when my work is done
Yes, I will feel lighter.

By Katherine Rodriguez Dominguez

I've given you many chances
When you hurt me, my heart broke
Breathing is difficult with a broken heart

The more chances I give you,
the more my heart breaks
Even though I forgave you,
the words still haunt me
The more I try to forget,
the more memories come back

My heart aches thinking about you
Realizing we were once close,
but now we barely look at each other
I wonder if your heart aches too

Every time I realize I was a game to you,
my heart shatters
Since then I've tried to get over you
But I don't think I can

By Savannah Turchi



The light so bright, caused by the moon,
I'll take a flight, to see you soon,

I have a special place, inside my heart,
Full of grace, even when we're apart

Time is unknown, but I know you're great,
You're always alone, we should go on a date,

I'll give you roses, for you I will make a fuss,
My goal is to be your crush.

By Jose Lucero



Sadness floods back in
A linger of memories
Of when you were here

You left me broken
With emotions I can't feel
I miss you so much

Parting ways from you
Brings me distance and sorrow
You were my model

By Scotty Knoyer

We can get through
Everything that

Happens.
And we use our
Voices to help people be strong and
Empower them to keep going. There is

Hope on the
Other side that
People can
Ensure peace.

By Emma Maiorana



Annoyed

Feels sort of like anger
But less
It's tiring every time
Comes when
 I can't do something
Because I'm not allowed
I get over it quickly
Not like anger
When I'm annoyed it's milder
I don't overreact
But I'm not happy
When I'm annoyed

By Nathan Franklin



Sadness is like a game.
It will make you feel hurt and ashamed.
No matter how hard you try or where your life is at,
Your name will always be mixed in its hat.
Longing to be chosen, your life in its hands.
Knowing sooner or later you'll be more washed up
than the sand.
You hope and you pray that one day you'll be free.
But its fire roars louder, leaving no debris.
You watch the clock tick as you meet the blade's end.
"Goodbye sadness. For you were my oldest friend."

By Leila Omrod





It's like a fire that grows inside me
I try to put the fire out but it's too late
I clench my fists
I grind my teeth
I rapidly tap my foot
I want to punch something
HARD
My facial expression intensifies
I say things without thinking

By Andrew Horton

Spirit by Nolan Medford

Behold, a great spirit hath been fulfilled.
Whereas of this, we are thoroughly glad.
Rejoice greatly upon thou heart.
For now I am liberated from the cuffs that
 once had captive of me.
Be free within ye.
Therefore, one might have a great vehemence
 in thy heart.
For I saw the Spirit descend towards me,
 whose appearance was of that
 of a white dove.
And for within, hath I felt an august ease.
Who am I to have felt this sentiment?
Thus, thee shall be contented with solemn rest.

Nobody wants to mess up
 Me more than others
I wonder if I'm doing enough
 Or maybe too much

Do I care more
 Than they do?
They might think I don't care
 Do you think they mind?

I'm trying my hardest
 I tell myself at least
 I carry this fear
Maybe I don't even try

By Evan Ridgway

I laid in bed, restless, I twisted and turned in bed trying to practically sew my eyes shut. I abruptly sat up straight and clutched my heaving chest, "I need to call him..." my voice weary. I reached for the phone on my nightstand, I dialed his number more times than I could count, every single call went straight to voicemail, and each ring made my heart race even more.

Then randomly there was a knock at the door. I almost didn't hear it over the beating of worry in my heart for my brother in the military. I hesitantly got out of bed and walked out of my room and downstairs. When I reached the door I looked through the peephole and I saw an officer holding a triangular folded American flag and military uniform. My heart shattered, not even needing to open the door to know why they were here. I opened the door slowly, not wanting to accept what I was about to hear.

The officer, with a grim face, looked me in the eye and started to sob, "I'm sorry, but he's gone..." handing me his uniform and his military hat with his rank on it.

By Bailey Eagan



Your hands start sweating
A fear overcomes you
Legs start shaking
Your mind starts racing

You can't help but worry
You become tense
As it consumes you
A wave of uneasiness overcomes you

It starts to overwhelm you
Your mind goes blank
Your heart rapidly beats as
You try to control it

By Arianna Dominguez



Eyes watering up
Fearful of the near future
Thinking of the past

By Nick DeLuca

Invisible

Invisible, the feeling is inescapable
Always in the dark, quiet, sad, invisible.
In the corner.... This time an eye with a
cheerful smile.
He walked an extra mile just to get to
your heart
you hide away more than ever
But he was to clever
You love him
don't let go
Just let the feelings flow
He makes you glow
You feel like your living in a romantic show
He makes you think your as pretty as a crow
now you don't feel invisible.

Amy VanArtsdalen



So Pretty
by Amy VanArtsdalen



So pretty but she can't see.
When she's bursting out laughing
 smacking her knee
When she blushes at the boy she sees
She thinks he's out of her league
Cherry red lips smiling out in the abyss
She looks in the mirror with disgust
She thinks working out is a must
She hates herself
She just wants to melt
You say something she really felt
She cant believe what people say they see
She doesn't see
She cant keep clean of those things
What can she do she's just a teen
Your just mean
She doesn't eat, she thinks it makes her
 look neat.
She thinks if she goes on a diet she wont
 look as giant
She's perfect but doesn't seem to see
She thinks she not lean
Even one little thing can make someone
 so delicate and sweet
 crumble and need a seat
She is so pretty but doesn't see.

When I am relaxed
It's like sitting at the beach on a nice spring day
Weather is warm with nice humidity
I could sit there staring at the water
Without a care in the world
No stress
No annoying sister
No anger
No confusion
Just myself
On my boat out on the water
Completely relaxed
Calm thoughts,
Calm waves,
Calm setting
The boat calmly bouncing on the water and
Calm me



By Bryan Cossaboon

I hate you
I hate that I hate you
I hate that I don't even
Not even a little
I hate that I want to
I hate that I can't
I hate that your never here
And I hate that I care
I don't hate you
Not even a little

By Paige Popplewell

Frustration

Frustration comes at the worst times
Right when your day can't get any worse.
Unless there's a cure for this feeling
Sometimes I just want to explode
for no reason.

The time I tripped on the top step
Right after failing a test.
And the time I missed the bus
The time I lost a few bucks.

Every time I'm feeling upset
D*mn old frustrated feeling comes again.

By Zoe Pietro



Happiness Feels Like a Butterfly

By Maeve Wilson

Happiness feels like an energetic butterfly
flying around in circles
in your backyard,
Being happy is to feel gratitude,
deep satisfaction,
and vitality,
Looking at a butterfly
fluttering its stunning wings in the air,
makes me think of happiness.
When surrounding yourself
with the right people,
it also will make you feel much happier,
I wish that the feeling of happiness could last
forever.





Angry like a storm
Words hurt like thunder
Loud and painful
I sit here and rumble
Words don't express how i
feel
Getting louder and
louder
I sit here like thunder
Striking louder and louder
And getting madder and
madder
Days go by
Shouting madder and loud-
er
I sit here in pain
As the storm rages

By Brian Zunin

Mixed Emotions by Autumn Zukawski

Cuts right through my heart
Feels like a sharp piece of glass
I feel my soul ache

Sparkling flares with you
You make me feel so special
I love you a lot

Such a pretty girl
Beautiful blue sparkly eyes
Makes me so jealous

Standing behind the curtains... 2 numbers before mine. My palms are getting sweaty and I start to lose my breath. I run my dance over and over in my head until I can't anymore. The adrenaline rush makes my stomach drop to my toes. The thought that I could mess up or fall is all I can think about. What if the judges hate my dance? I have to be perfect.

Once the music starts and I step on stage that feeling goes away. Now I have butterflies in my stomach in a good way. I'm hitting everything perfectly and we're all together. The music stops and everyone walks off stage.

The giggles and smiles fill the room from all of us. I feel free now, no longer strangled by my nerves. Everyone says. Good job," and we run to get ready for our next dance... to do it all over again.

By Molly McWilliams



3 of My Feelings

By Sophia Nicoletta

The scars always stay
The pain doesn't go away
The cut always bleeds

When I think of you
Feels like walking on sunshine
You make me feel loved

You make my blood boil
The way you make fun of me
I hate you so much





Knew it was coming
but who could have known it would
Have happened this soon

It left a deep scar
So deep it would never fade
The pain was intense

By Finn Castagnoli

Calm and fluid moments
Telling a story in the music
Lyrical is my favorite
But
There are illusions

You make me angry
The fire gets much stronger
fire burns within

I cant contain it
consequences burn my heart
makes me enraged

Anger me more and
I develop more "crazy"
I burn intensely

By Emanuil Lamaj

I want time alone
From the people in my life
My isolation

By Darren Woodard



Jubilation

Joyful moments are forever imbedded in our memories
Under the sun, on the beach, riding the waves
Bright smiles shine like stars, lighting up even
the darkest corners
In every embrace, love weaves a story fo togetherness
Laughter rings out, a melody sweeter than any song
Anticipation sparkles in eager eyes, brimming with
excitement
Time pauses as happiness takes center stage,
unburdened and free
Infinite possibilities unfold in the glow of shared joy
Open hearts welcome the magic of the moment
New memories blossom, destined to be cherished
forever.

By Lynzee Grey





Mom-mom,

There is a missing piece of the puzzle.
The person I told everything is now gone. Yes, it
may have brought the family together, but that
doesn't make up for the empty chair at the table.
I try to avoid being in the living room. The
empty chair you once claimed and the urn holding
the person I once knew haunts me. I still can't wrap
my mind around the fact you are gone. You used
to be my rock— who I told everything to. But now,
I just tell it to the sky, hoping you are listening.
The person who protected me and got Ashton and
me out of trouble, now is silent— but not by choice.
When you left I was mad at the world.
I was mad at everything for taking you.

With tears and love ,

Abbey

My Dearest Mom

My dearest Mom, a heart of gold,
a story of love, beautifully told.
Through laughter, tears, and joyful days,
your presence shines in countless ways.
Your gentle hands, a guiding light,
have seen me through the darkest nights.
Your voice, a comfort, soft and warm,
a haven safe from any storm.
Your love, a tapestry so bright,
woven with colors pure and white.
A bond unbreakable, strong, and true.
My dearest Mom, I love you.<3

By: Gemma Brown



My Mom

By: Jaliyah Knight

My mother is like a joke that makes me laugh
every day.
Mom, you're like a friend, a partner in crime.
My mom is a fire ready to spark.
My mother will always be in my heart.

My MOM

My Mom shows kindness by being helpful to people.
Mom, you are beautiful like a Rose.
My Mom is Protective like a bear protecting their cub.
Mom, you're a Hard worker for cooking us all dinner.
Mom, you are supportive when I want to do
certain things.
My Mom is gentle when she hugs me.

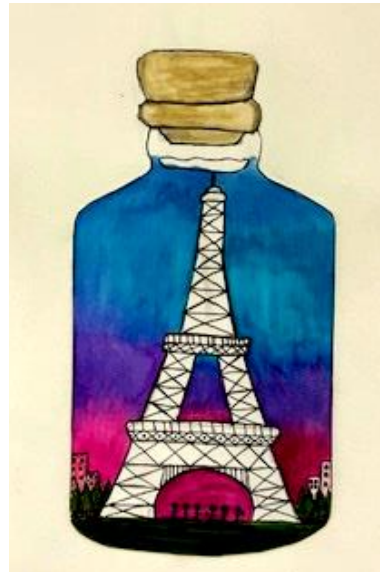
By: Taylor Owens

My Mom

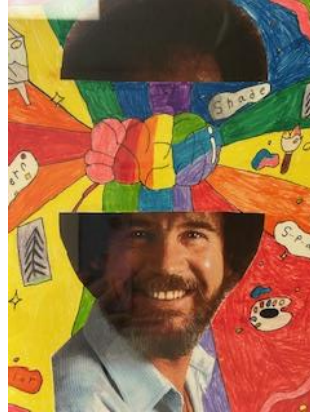
My mom is like a shining sunflower
Her eyes are very bright.
My mom's warm hugs bring me comfort.
Her smile is like a bright sun on a warm day.
She has a bright personality.

By: Julianna Hilvert





2025



It was a good year
Goodbye twenty-twenty four
I had a great time

By Keegan Tomes

I am the new year.
I am smart, humble, hard-working,
I am a gift that is wrapped.
I am like a strong & sturdy tree.
All the good will come,
And all the bad will run,
All that you dream of is near.
All that you hope for is right there.
I am not stationary.
I won't be still.
I am your opportunity to achieve your dreams.
I am the new year.

By an Anonymous 8th Grader

I am the New Year
I am happy, eager, and brave
I am like a roller coaster full of ups and downs
I am as easy as the ABCs
All the good days
All of the bad days
All that you dream of doing well at school
All that you hope for,
 like making the volleyball team
I am not going to slack
I won't be quitting
I am your opportunity to do well
I am the New Year, so I am a new me



I want this year to go well
I will be happy
I plan on listening
I would like to focus more
I am not going to procrastinate

I need to be helpful
I should be open minded
I used to not think before doing something
I shouldn't be scared of failure
I won't be too hard on myself

I'd rather look on the bright side
I resolve to be thankful
I intend to show gratitude
I promise to cooperate
I hope this year is good.

By E'leyna Koerner



I am the new year
I am a fresh start, kind and helpful
I am going to protect you in this unknown
I am like the gift you have always wanted

All the good you want, I will give you
All the bad, I will try to keep in the past
All that you dream of I will push you towards
All that you hope for, I will help you achieve

By Brian Johnson

I was not that good
at field hockey
I did not score
I tried to quit
I am a field hockey player

I wanted to try it
I sought a fall sport
I felt I would be good
I am a field hockey player

I will be good this year
I will do better at scoring goals
I will try to be at every practice
I am a field hockey player

I will want to be better at it
I will seek to be better than last year
I will feel better with myself to try again
I am a field hockey player

By Brooklyn Bartle



I am the new year
I am excited, beneficial, and unpredictable
I am a blank piece of paper waiting to be filled
I am like a mystery that hasn't been solved
All the good clues
All the bad leads
All that I dream of in a mystery
All that I hope for is the case to be solved
I am not impossible to solve
I won't be a short speedy case
I am your opportunity to learn patience
I am the new year
I want to have fun
I will not let fear stop me
That is my mission

By Abbey Murphy

I Am the New Year

by Darren Woodard

I am the new year
I am kind, silent and thoughtful
I am as quiet as the evening
I am as deep as the ocean

All the good is coming near
All the bad was last year
All that I dream of is to have no fear
All that I hope for is to feel some cheer



I want to succeed
I will make good decisions
I plan on working harder
I would like to pass all my classes
I am going to try to get my work done

I need to plan more
I should build opportunities
I used to have plans and good grades
I shouldn't be failing right now
I want to forget to make plans

I'd rather try harder than ever
I will resolve problems by asking questions
I intend to make my grades skyrocket
I promise to become a star
I hope I can work harder

By George Bowling



New Year's Poem

by Marisol Munoz

I was content with life
I did my best
I tried my hardest
I am unique like a petal.

I wanted to wish upon a star
I sought to just do nothing and relax
I felt fine
I am not motivated at times.

I will be amazing
I will do the best I can ever do
I will try to have more hope... its quite nice
I am strong willed

I will want to succeed
I will seek to make the most out of my happy life
I will feel good with my loved ones
I am enough.

Practicing for sports
Will improve my body and
Help me make the team

By Myles Daly



I was lost.
I did everything I could to find my way.
I tried to climb a mountain of shadows.
I am a work in progress.

I wanted to make a difference.
I sought peace in the chaos.
I felt hope hold me tight.
I am resilient.

I will be stronger than before.
I will seek wisdom and clarity.
I will feel like the sun after a storm.
I am becoming who
 I was always meant to be.

By Lynzee Grey





I was not confident
I did anything to try to love myself
I tried eating less to make me skinny, now
I am confident

I wanted real friends
I sought help, asking if I needed it
I felt like I wasn't a good friend, now
I am lovable

I will be brave
I will do what I set out to do
I will try my best, now
I am courageous

I will want happiness
I will continue to seek help when I need it
I will feel better about myself, now
I am worth it!

An Anonymous 8th Grader

2025 poem

I want to get more involved in my religion
I will start studying the Bible
I plan on getting my confirmation
I would like to build my relationship with God
I am going to confess my sins

By Rosy Huerta Romero



“New year is coming
It will bring new challenges
And brand new changes.”

Anonymous-

**Poems Written in Response
to Reading the Novel
*To Be a Slave***

I am a middle school teacher
teaching about slavery
I wonder if I will be able to
do this subject justice
I hear students murmur their reactions
as we read
I see the emotion on their faces
I want them to feel this pain
in order to understand it
I am a middle school teacher
teaching about slavery

I pretend to fully understand- but I don't
I can't
I feel anger, sadness, confusion, guilt
I touch the cover of Julius Lester's book
I worry whether I have said enough
I cry reading tales of ex-slaves suffering
I am a middle school teacher
teaching about slavery

I understand that reading a book
 isn't the same as
 living the experience
I say we need to learn from the past
I dream of a time when all people
 treat each other better
I try to help them
 connect the past to *their* present
I hope lessons taught through this book
 stick with them
I am a middle school teacher
 teaching about slavery

By Mrs. Dolinsky

Resentment for you
The harsh way you abused me
I'll never forget

By Marisol Munoz

Who's getting hurt now
High scale pain
Ignorant treatment
"Paddy Rollers" everywhere
Prancing and yelling
In a devastating state
Now I have scars
God, help me to survive

By Myles Daly



Fear of the master
Eyes full of fear
Abusive masters
Raced determined our worth
Full of sorrow
Useful slaves that work hard are still
Living in constant fear

By Scotty Knoyer



I am a fearful slave
I wonder if I will ever be free
I hear slaves singing "Steal Away to Jesus"
I see a whip in the overseer's hand
I want to go to the religious meeting tonight
I am a fearful slave

I pretend I am sick to get out of work
I feel exhausted from working every day
I touch the soft cotton
I worry when Master comes around
I cry at night
I am a fearful slave

I understand that I am valued less than whites
I say with passion, "Let me be free"
I dream of parties and dancing in the woods
I try not to get caught when I sneak away
I hope the paddy roller doesn't catch me
I am a fearful slave

By Cooper Heathcote

Sound of whips cracking
Anger at my master
Despair for my beaten friend
Negroes being punished
Every day gets worse
Sound of slaves crying
Sound of slaves dying

By Mark Howard

**All eyes looking
Up at the slaves
Chains rattling and
Time is running out for them
In the air there is cruel fate
Once someone speaks
Now is when we are bought**

**Broken are some of them
Loving the children that were sold away
Off to a plantation where they
Can not see each other
Keeps them going for hope to see them**

**Again but they will
Never be far from their hearts
Going through the pain—they can hear
Echoes from the other slaves
Resistance against the masters**

By Emma Maiorana



Big house...
It's very scary
Guys go in and never come out

House slaves like it in there
Often being treated nicer than us field slaves
Uncle Tom says we aren't working hard enough
Slave traders always coming to take us away
Everyone knows the big house

Every man want to be free
Many of us don't make it
A slave could spend his while life as a captive
No one knows where the freed ones go
Carrying nothing but hope
In the night, they flee the planation
Perhaps they go north
Away to freedom, leaving us behind
They say they'll come back for us
I haven't seen them come back tho'
On that note... I must go
No I need my own emancipation

By Zoey Pietro

I am the Driver of the planation
I wonder what other slaves think of me
I hear chattering amongst then when I walk by
I see them scurry when I am near
I want so deeply, freedom for all

I pretend to obey the Overseer
I feel sympathy for others
I touch the bands of my whip
I worry that we may not be liberated
I cry internally when I am forced to beat my brethren
I am the Driver of the planation

I understand what I am trying to achieve
I say my vows to help others
I dream of a free world
I try so desperately to become emancipated
I hope that my efforts won't be in vain
I am the Driver of the planation

By Nolan Medford



A slave must
Never break any rules so that them
Getting sold doesn't
Ever become a
Regretful option for them

By Maeve Wilson



Blackout Poetry

Students created
BLACKOUT-POETRY
using pages from old,
damaged books,
giving them new life.
They had to
destroy something
in order to
create something new.
Thank you Mrs. Utsch
for introducing us to
this poetic form.



Hours

In the dim twilight

Nights

Noise knew no silence

By Darren Woodard



The world had

A

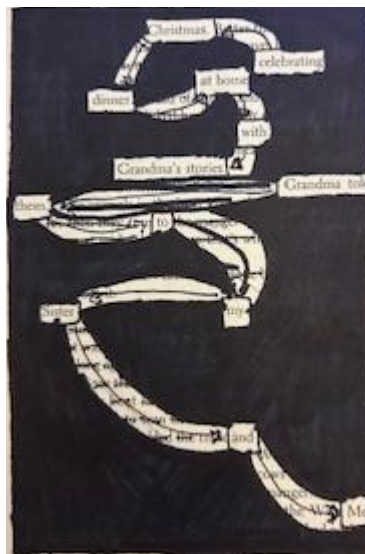
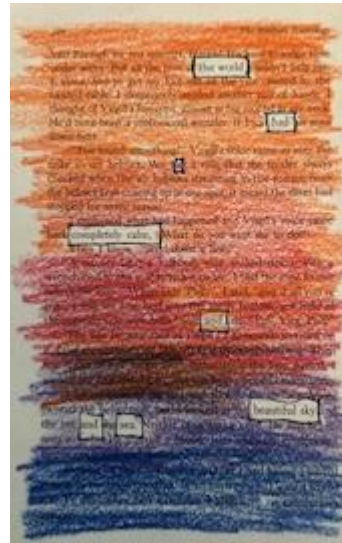
Completely calm

And

Beautiful

Sky and sea

By Peter Hood



Christmas

Celebrating at home

Dinner with Grandma's
stories

Grandma told them

To my sister and me

By Brooklyn Bartle

How many ships...

The Devil's Triangle

Shipping firms and

Insurance brokers

Had ships vanishing

Disappeared

Strange

Off the Atlantic Coast

By Jose Lucerno



Uncharted land

Discovery lasted into
the 1600s

Columbus's voyage to

The New World

It was the Atlantic Ocean

That was on
Columbus' maps

By Abby Budd

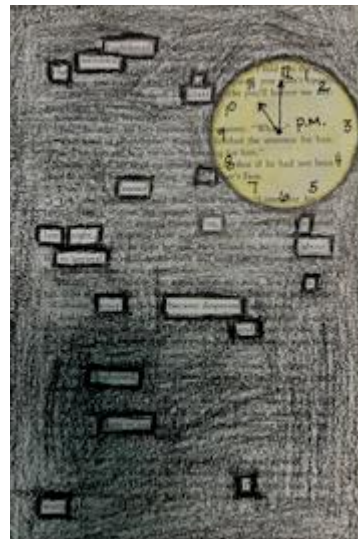
The sunshine on the shore
 Opened a torrent of events
 Like rapids
 The paradise moved fast
 With a mournful screech

By Brian Johnson



Englishman trembled
 He is crazy
 The enemy on a late night
 About to unravel
 A voice became
 Desperate and frightened
 Sane or not
 I worry

By Copper Heathcote



Gnarled witches

Haggard

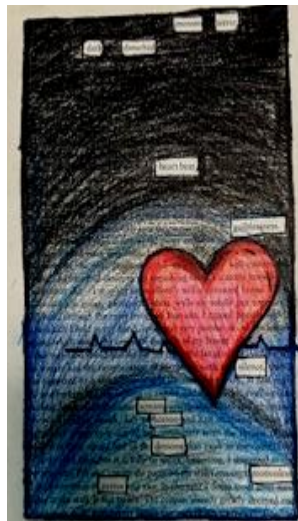
Performing a dance of death

“Devil’s Promenade”
locals call this

Have you seen “Spook Light” or

“The Devil’s Jack-O-Lantern” ?

By Michael Parker



Monster terror

Dark disturbed heartbeat

Guiltlessness

Silence

Scream

Horror

Demons

Motionless terror

By Arianna Dominguez

Graves for the dead

Gathered around

Zombies

The poor dead creatures

Alone

But always remained zombies

This continued until morning dawned

By Scotty Knoyer



Nightmare

Shock to heart

No safety

Constantly alert

Not the victim though

No warning

A flash

Ripped open

Strike and silent

By Brianna Knights



He would fight to victory

The troops

Exhausted

Leaving

Celebrated the triumph

By Nick DeLuca

The young soldier
Saying goodbye
Painfully
Missed
Being drawn away
His eyes turning away
Mother and sister cry
Gone away

By Finn Castagnoli



Haunted night
Was overshadowed
A Darkness
Or rather Shadow
Intense cold
It was cold fear
Of utter inadequacy
Terrible



By Bryan Cossaboon

They
The snake
Nocturnal
Overtake their victim
Hypnotize their prey

By Mark Howard



Depictions of Jesus

An idea marked by light

Though history

Christ

By Jacob D'Onofrio



Injury

He had been beaten

His beatings appear swollen

Marked with

Cuts

Bruises

His death falling

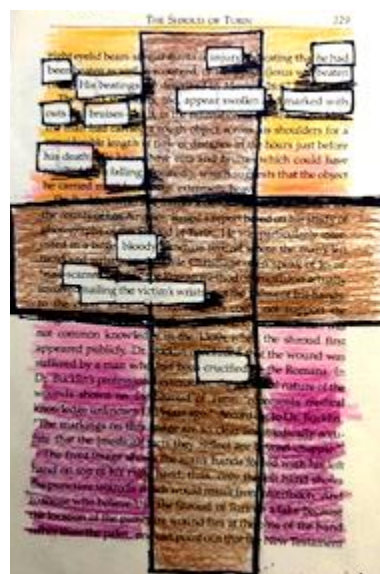
Bloody

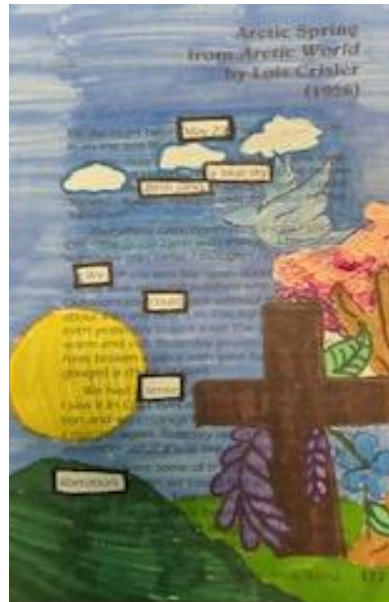
Scarred

Nailing the victim's wrist

Crucified

By Maeve Wilson





May 23rd

A blue sky

Birds sang

We could sense

Liberation

By Zoey Pietro

Knowledge is perceived

Genuine enthusiasm

Is valuable

As a star

By Nolan Medford



Water
swept away the village
The land drowned
The flood was a
Disaster

By Abbey Murphy



Abruptly hurled
And terrified
Crashing walls of water
Moreover
Panicked
In fate
glory won at sea

By Emma Maiorana

That night stars overhead

Turned to you

Cold to the one

Swear

I need to see you

By Evan Ridgway



The moment he smiled back

This meant he would

Kiss me

I saw him coming

Something happened

By Savannah Turchi



Chicago Fire
 The fire started by a lantern
 Was determined
 It was late night
 The blaze
 Killed people
 And
 Destroyed buildings

By Paige Popplewell



The Unknown

The UFO
 Witnesses
 Beam aboard the spacecraft
 ... may have existed
 And Death is one such unknown
 We die and what then?
 Ghosts are another such unknown
 Reside among the living
 The possibility is real

By Ryan Allay



No hope
 Were they
 Badly torn
 While some were
 Good-natured
 Bad temper
 Through lashings
 Escape from madness
 and still ill
 Struggling painfully



By Marisol Munoz



Strange fantastic horrors
 Are grotesque spirits
 Once believed to haunt
 them
 Further into history
 We must understand
 Fellow creatures
 The popular devil was
 A large hairy sprite
 He constantly brought on
 Their early Mysteries

By Nathan Franklin

She had suffered pain daily
 She danced with death
 She saw the flood
 As the wave cut
 She has a knife
 See it is very sharp
 Before the sun rises
 You plunge it into her heart
 Warm blood falls upon you
 You moan from sorrow
 The scissors kill
 The mermaid

By Leila Omrod



Beautiful
 Recklessly
 Love remains a secret
 Lover
 Promise
 Gracious
 Faith
 Positive

By Konrad Klineburger



The mermaid deeply shed tears

While by him, I love him

Very soon the daughter intended to visit

The king went to see the mermaid

He said "I love you"

If to choose...I choose you

He kissed her and laid on her

By Makayla Leaming

A Tribute to Call of the Wild

by Jack London

Buck and brother
run through
the wide forest
Once again
wandering
in the woods
But brother
came no more
Buck began seeking his brother
And two days later found a black bear
Helpless and terrible
He a killer
That preyed on only the physical being

By Damian Ayala



The dominant beast
Was fierce and bitter
Because of death
In an unwonted accident
Like a white-hot knife
Darkness
Spread in them

By E'leyana Koerner

A Tribute to The Giver
by Lois Lowery

You slept soundly
No dreams ?
I slept very soundly he said
With blank eyes
At night
Upon awakening
The feeling was good
It was significant

By Emanuil Lamaj



The Giver
It's the life that was
created for them

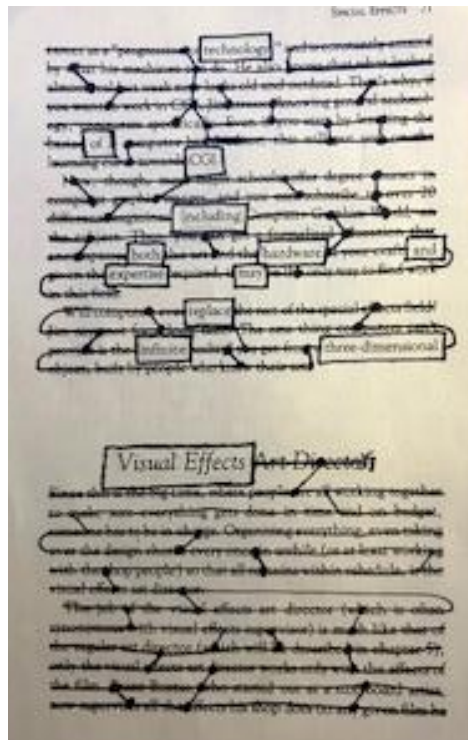
The Giver
People who break the rules...

The Giver
Very efficient

Feelings are not part
of the life she's learned

By Lilyanna Nunez-Roach

Technology
Of CGI
Including both
Hardware and expertise
May replace
Infinite
Three-dimensional
Visual effects
By Jesse Carawan



Bad Breath

The role of bacteria
Decomposing to destroy
Bad Breath
Bacteria in the mouth
Causes odors
Exhaled
Tooth decay
Gum problems
Infection spreads
By Emma Smith



Marathons races
Originated from Greece
Marathon
Games
Olympics
Event had only
One short race
Marathon is 25 miles
By Crystal Herrera Gonzalez



Testing Poems

NJSLA has to be the most overrated thing
In the history of testing
Teachers make it seem like
If you don't focus on the test
You'll never see the outside world again.

It really is such an easy test.

Students are being told things like "Sleep well"
And Eat a good breakfast"...
Because it might be your last
If you don't charge your laptop
Teachers make it seem like
We have 90 minutes to do this test
And if we don't
We'll never make it to high school
While testing it's way too quiet.
It's so quiet
There is too much room for my thoughts
Which means I am not thinking about the test

Sill if you ask me

By Zoey Pietro





I hear the test bell
when we check the headphone sound
We're about to begin

By Cooper Heathcote



Testing is boring
The clock is laughing at me
Just me and my thoughts

By E'leyna Koerner

I don't lie it
I'm bored
We have nothing to do
After the test
During the test
people were typing
The AC was loud
People whispered
Teac hers talked
Afterwards...silence.

By Jesse Carawan



During the test I was trying my hardest to
Understand some things. I kept
Re-reading the stories to answer the questions.
In some parts of the test I took a long time.
Now that I look back, I realize I did a
Good job on answering some questions.

By Arianna Dominguez



Testing gives me stress
But I do try very hard
And I get it done

By Rosey Huerta

The sound of the bell
How relieved am I to hear
O'. The last state test

Goodbye, o' testing!
At last, are we done with you?
For now . I can rest

By Nolan Medford

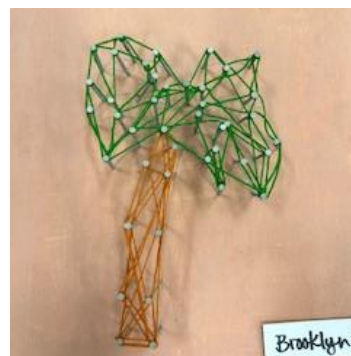




Testing week, here it is at once
Everyone wishing to get it over with
Suddenly , my stomach feels queasy
The little bell noise drives me insane
In the test, reading every question
Never moving out of my seat
Giant essays or explanations I have to write

Gagging at the heavy air around
Ultimately, I'm bored and tired
Times up, now it is finally over
Suddenly my stomach doesn't hurt any more.

By Marisol Munoz





**POEMS WRITTEN BY PARTNERS,
REFLECTING THINGS THEY THINK
WE NEED MORE OF IN THIS WORLD.**

Kindness by Marisol Munoz

Kindness, a sweet as candy as sugary.
Its a wonderful thing to share with people.
Necessary to make friendships grow,
Dainty and darling like a Daffodil.
Needing and yearning for a hint of it,
Everyone is always as happy as a beaming rainbow.
Swelling happy hearts like balloons rising,
Seeds of kindness are blooming everywhere.
Another thing that keeps the world going,
Neatly like a heartwarming letter.
Dedicated to a special someone.
Love is a wonderful but strange joy.
Overwhelming like a huge stack of papers,
Various words and feelings pouring out,
Everyone deserves to feel a little bit of love.



Really need this in our world
Everyone deserves to be treated with respect
Serving people with great kindness
Personal and honest
Everybody needs it
Certainly an important aspect
Tolerance is key

By Myles Daly and Marisol Munoz



Giving kindness
Over any grudge
Other than just being nice
Do a favor for someone
Wish somebody a good day
In every possible way
Laugh with loved ones
Live life to the fullest and fill it with goodwill

By Maria DelQuadro & Nick Gallagher

Respect by Scotty Knoyer & Lynzee Grey

Respect flows like a river
Everyone matters
Spread kindness
People should be more kind to each other
Everyone is worthy
Count everyone in
Treat everyone with respect



KeeP being a good person
It's good to be nice
Never be mean
Don't judge people before you get to know them
Nice actions lead to great results
Enjoy being kind
Spread kindness like peanut butter
Smile at strangers

By Emanuil Lamaj & Molly McWilliams

Kindness is as warm as a hug
I respect people who are kind
Never be anything but kind
Distance yourself from mean people
Not causing harm to others is important
Encourage others to be kind too
Sympathy is just as important
Show others you care

By Cooper Heathcote & E'leya Koerner

Respect is something that
Everyone should have and give.
Someone you should give respect to is
People you think really need it.
Every time you show respect I shows that someone
Cares. That is why you should
Treat others with respect.

By Abby Budd & Jesse Carawan



Recognize the worth of all human-beings
Eliminate derogatory words and phrases
from your vocabulary
Speak with others
Practice empathy
Earn respect
Consider the feelings of others
Treat people the way you want to be treated

By Ethan Karvounis



Kindness spreads
I think you should always be
Nice to everybody
Don't be rude to others
Never judge somebody
Everybody should be kind to one another
Spread kindness
Spread positivity

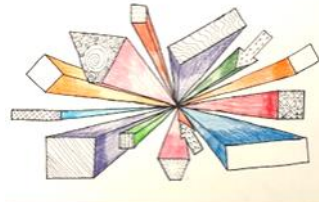
By Jessie Lynn Markley & Brian Zunin

Kindness is important to the world
In every place you go, use it all around
Nothing is better than treating people with respect
Don't be afraid
No actions are better or more important
Everyone shall grow their goodwill
So like a blooming flower,
Share it all around

By Nolan Medford & Emma Gibson



**“In spite of everything,
people are good at heart.”**



Anne Frank said, “In spite of everything, people are good at heart.” This means even though there is a lot of bad in the world, there are still good people out there. Anne lived during World War 2, and it was very tragic for her because she lived her life in fear every day for over two years. Jewish people were being taken to concentration camps by the Nazi’s. However, she still found a way to find things that would make her and other people happy, despite what was happening outside. For example, Anne gave everyone gifts on Hanukkah when she really didn't have to. Mr. Frank took in the Vann Dann’s because they had nowhere to go, and the same with Mr. Dussel. Mr. Frank risked his food and shelter for another person, Mr. Dussel, who he had never even met before. Another example of kindness is when Anne and Peter started to like each other. In the beginning, they didn’t, but when they grew up, they started talking to each other more, and Anne was kind to him. She tried to make him feel better when he was upset, saying, “Look at the sky, isn't it beautiful?” She also talked to him about religion. She wanted him to have faith, so he wouldn't be so down all the time.

I agree with Anne's quote because even though there are these bad fires in California, there are still people helping others to keep their houses and their land. Another reason I agree with Anne's quote is that there are a lot of people who help the homeless or people in need. Another example is when my grandmother got 16 people in need of Christmas presents. This family was going through a hard time, and she decided to help them.

In conclusion, I do agree with Anne's quote because even though there is bad in the world, you can always find something good that will brighten your day!

By: Sophia Rodriguez



Advice Poems

You cant let people
Pull you away from the things
You love to live for

Don't take things for granted
Be grateful
Because a lot of people don't have as much
I have food to eat
I am able to o on vacations
And I have a roof over me head
I am very grateful for it all
I feel lucky like a four leaf clover
I appreciate all I have
I don't' take thing for granted

By Taylor Crandley

It's okay to be
Not okay
Because sometimes
You can express your emotions
And if you are alone you can cry
That's not a problem

By Cristal Herrera Gonzalez



You're responsible
For your very own actions
So don't blame others

At the end of the day you
Can't blame others for
The way you act even
If they were with you
Only you are responsible
for yourself
Never let others
Say you made them do
something



they didn't want to

By Kali Gushue

Keep trying
Even when you're on your last straw
Even when you feel as though you can't
Please don't give up

Going forward is the
Only thing to do
I have felt like giving up, but neither did I stop
Nor did I give up

Give our one hundred
You should do this all the time
You can not give up

By Paige Popplewell

Forgive but never forget
You can be understanding
Be forgiving
But you can't
Ever be a fool
By forgetting, you're like an ostrich
With your head in the sand
Be aware
Always remember things that have affected you

Don't forget
A Lot of the time
Realizing the light comes from
Knowing the darkness
Not knowing the darkness
Ever so slightly
Slows down the progress of
Seeing the light

By Molly McWilliams

Taylor Swift taught me
a Life lesson
"Someone told me
There's no such thing
As bad thoughts
Only your actions talk"
My feelings can't stop me
When I focus
My actions are like a loud voice
Speaking for me

by Lilyanna Nunez Roach



Laziness won't get you anywhere
Achievements come from hard work and
Zeal
You have to put in the effort to get what you desire

By Scotty Knoyer

Think outside the box
Go out of your comfort zone
Never doubt yourself

Please keep going
Rely on yourself
Outstanding behavior is the way
Unacceptable behavior isn't
Decide, through hard work you've got this

By Emma Smith



Do not stop trying
No matter how hard it gets
It will get better

By Nick Gallagher

Steps Not Statues

Every step I take is like a thread in a blanket
A little messy, but still holding me together
I move like a finding its way
Not always straight, but still going forward

The mirror point out what's not perfect
But I don't stop to argue with it
Perfection is like a frozen statue
I'd rather be growing

Even the moon isn't always full
and that never makes it any less the moon

Comparing yourself steals the joy of your own journey
Honor where you are, even if it feels like a slow start
All stories start differently, some with storms and some
in sunlight
Patience is power when growth takes time
Turn your focus inward, that's where the real progress lives
Every experts was once a beginner, fumbling through page 1
Remember, your chapter one holds the seeds of something
great

By Lynzee Grey



Trade time for money
Get a job to make more cash
Then save your money

By Jacob D'Onofrio

Start strong end stronger
This means that even if you
Are strong you can still
Reach a higher goal. You have to
Try to put in the hard work

Strength comes
Through hard work
Remember to try your hardest
Or you won't come out stronger
Now...
Go and get it done

By Andrew Horton



Don't procrastinate
Your work will start to pile up
And your grades will suffer

By Nathan Franklin



People in life will
Always have something to say
So always be you
By Maria DelQuadro

Forgive not for them
Forgive but don't forget it
Forgive for yourself

People come into your life for a reason
Some for good, some for bad
There are two main reasons they are put in our lives
just like there are two main reason for using
a screwdriver
Screwdriver screw or unscrew things
They are there for two opposite reasons
Both— in a way— help you
But they help you in different ways
One helps by teaching you a lesson
The other one by giving you a blessing

By Abby Murphy



Stop and be yourself
Don't worry about others
Just focus on you

Stop, just be yourself
Do not be a follower
But be a leader

Stop, take a moment
Do things that make you happy
Stop and be yourself

By Makayla Leaming

Life's not about how hard of a hit you can give
It's about how many you can take
And still move forward
Like how many hours you put in
toward what you want to get in life
Life is to pursue
Not waste by sitting down all day
If I could give any advice
It is to never give up
Follow your dreams
Push forward no matter how hard it may get



By Ryan Allay

Dreaming of my goals
I want to be famous, Mom
I am a rock star

Dreaming is fun
Like a roller coaster
Thinking you're going
To do something
You may never do
Always keep dreaming
And never give up

By Lincoln Perkins



Your hard work pays off
When you try you'll become great
Try your best always

Do your best
Every time
Count your successes
If you fail, don't falter
Stand up and try again
It works out how it's supposed to
Of course it hurts
Nothing doesn't
Still Get up and try again

By Michael Parker



Words
Painful, Hurtful
Bruising, Crying, Dying
Words can hurt someone
Marking, Sobbing, Killing
Upsetting, Cruel
Vocab

Harmful words
Used everyday
Random people say them
They sting like a paper cut
Full of hate
Usually directed at me
Losing hope for the world

Make sure to be kind
Someone can be hurt inside
and hide it with a smile

By Autumn Zukawski



Don't look at the past
You will never move forward
Explore your future

Confidence
Courageous, Hopeful
Believing, Achieving, Accomplishing
Never, ever doubt yourself
Doubting, Hesitating, Overthinking
Insecure, Shy
Weakness

By E'leyna Koerner

You should try
On everything because
Usually when you try, you are
Ready for the

Hardest things
And when you are
Ready you will
Do your best
Even if you are not
Super confident in
The things you have to do



By Emma Maiorana

People will hurt you
Just focus on your own life
Their words don't matter

By Nick DeLuca

Integrity
Honest, Courteous
Acknowledging, Fixing, Learning
You should try integrity
Ignoring, Damaging, Lacking
Dishonest, Unmannerly
Ignorance

Integrity means taking honest responsibility
Nobody can do it for you
The only one that can do it is you
Everybody takes care of themselves
Good thing is that it's easy
Responsibility is key
Integrity will follow
The rest just flows from there
You will appreciate integrity

By Mark Howard



You have said goodbye to many and
Hello to more
You have lost some friends
But made more
You have fallen in love and
Been through heart break
You will say goodbye
To the ones you hold dear
So hold on tight to them
Like you were falling off the side of a cliff

Rowing my boat to
Open ocean to
Capture one
Keeper old
Images so I will
Never forget the, as I
Grow up

Waves
Act like the
Violent people who will
Emotionally
Scar you, but the old memories will get you
through it

By Finn Castagnoli



The ones who hurt you
Are the ones who make you strong
Pain is what strengthens

People cause pain
Their words stab you like a knife
Dealing with them can be a strain
Little do you know, there might be something going on
in their life

Love is what gets you through life
Intelligence is what you need to live
Fear is what keeps you alive
Eternity is what it feels like
By Christian Burlette-Rhodes

Looks do not matter
Love someone for who they are
Not for how they look

By Damian Ayala



Don't dwell on the past
It's something you can't fix now

Look to the future

By Finnley Arenberg



Work Over Wish By Leila Omrod

Some people choose to dream

All day long

They sit and think about the possibilities

Of who they can be

When I was young I was told

I could do anything I put my mind to

But that simply couldn't be further from the truth

One day my dad told me

"If you want something you can't just think about it

And hop it happens on its own

You have to try and work hard."

The more I thought about it

The more I realized it was true

If a bear only dreams of a fish it will starve

If it wants to eat it has to hunt

If I were to sit in my room

Dreaming that I could be better

I would be as starved as the bear

Some people choose to dream

But, I choose to work!

You define your own life
Don't let other people
You control you life
You don't need to listen
to what other people have to say
about you or what you do
Whatever you do You can control
And you don't need to listen to other people
just to fit in
If you don't do what makes you happy
Then you'll never be truly happy
When you're following other people
And try to be like them
You won't ever be happy
So
Whatever you do
Make sure You want to do it
Just do what makes you're comfortable and happy
Follow Your heart and be Yourself

By Savannah Turchi



One horrible day does not
Equal a bad life
Just because one day
Somebody picks on you
Or maybe even talks behind your back
Or maybe you got in trouble with your mom
Just breathe
You will be okay
And your life could always be worse
Like a train wreck

When I have a bad
day I remember it wont
denote a bad life

By Maeve Wilson

Hard work will pay off
Hard work gets you good results
Extra reps matter

By Ben Paley



Success comes to you
Under great influence
Count yourself in
Control of what you do
Every day
See yourself in the future
Succeed in life

By Brian Zunin



The Spraying Skunk

Skunks, you don't wanna to cross them.
Just like people, they spray their toxins
Covering the young fighter in consequences
The only way not to get sprayed is logical
Just don't fight with a skunk it's easy
Hold your tongue and walk the other way
The skunk will spray their words
But you won't feel it no you won't
That's how you avoid the spray of the skunk
Like I said; it's very easy

What's wrong with you
Do Not fight sour skunks
You should know better

by Brian Johnson

A Trio of Advice from Marisol Munoz

Take a break for once
There's no need to stress so much
There is enough time

Don't be afraid to show some emotion
I promise you won't cause a commotion
Because when you don't put them out
They might burst through with a shout



It's okay to try your best.
Your effort is what really matters.
Don't worry too much about the word.

The result will be worth it.
If you don't put time into your work,
Then what's the point?

Your life is lie a quest.
If you want to complete it,
Then you have to work for it.

Be obsessed with your work
It will beat out talent
Talent never wins against
Getting in the extra sets
Talent can't beat
A promise you make to your grandparents
Because talent has nothing to do with
Hard work
Obsession is gonna beat talent
When talent isn't obsessed



Over doing it
Being uncomfortable
Strong difference is made when
Everything is at 100%
Show them your results
So do it any way
I will work hard
Only worry about myself
Nobody will grind harder

By Evan Ridgway



Advice by Sophia Nicoletta

Do what you can
Otherwise you'll never know what

You're capable
Of- You're not
Useless, you just can't
Rely on others

Because not
Everyone will always be there— so
Sit down
Try your best— and do it yourself





Perfect

Flawless, Accurate

Impressing, Breathtaking, Inspiring

Perfection is an overstatement

Failing, Challenging, Confusing

Flawed, Incomplete

Imperfect

You cannot give up
Don't worry about a thing
Don't stop— keep going



A Chapter of a story written by LJ Hill

Year 2, Month 4

Mommie's been gone for a long time now.

Tammie's been doing her best. She feeds me, dresses me, washes behind my ears. She smells like soft flowers and tired coffee. Her hugs are warm but never quite as tight as Mommie's were. That's okay. I don't need them tight. I just need them *there*.

Today she took me somewhere loud and colorful. She called it the "zoo." I didn't know what that meant, but it sounded like something silly—like a place made for pretend things. But everything there was real. *Too real. Some of the creatures looked like Honeysuckle. Big, loud, stripey. They stared at me like they knew something I didn't. Like they could see inside me and knew I was different.*

One of them was orange and white with black stripes. Tammie called it a *tiger*. *It looked like Honeysuckle if he was made of fire and thunder. Later, we found a little cart selling ice cream shaped like it. I bought a cone with swirls of orange, white, and black—just like the beast. It melted fast in my hand, dripping down my wrist like warm blood. Tasted sweet, but sharp.*

I asked Tammie what the flavor was. She said, "Tiger."

I laughed.

I never knew Honeysuckle's family would taste so good.

We kept walking. The sun was loud in the sky, and everything smelled like grass and popcorn. There were more animals. I saw a bird with a beak longer than its face, and a monkey who showed me its butt. It was the kind of place that made you feel small, like maybe you weren't the smartest creature after all.

At the playground, I sat in the sand and stared at a spinning wheel thing. A kid next to me cried because his snow cone dropped. Tammie got us new ones. Mine was red, with thick syrup that stained my lips like war paint. I asked what the flavor was called.

She said, "Tiger's Blood."

I blinked.
I licked it.
I smiled.



I think Honeysuckle would've liked it, too.

But the part that stayed with me—the part that clung to the inside of my brain like gum on a shoe—was the creature near the water. We were leaving when I saw him. He was giant, gray, and shaped like a sleeping potato. His ears were tiny, like forgotten thoughts. He had a huge nose, wide mouth, long teeth, and thick whiskers that twitched with purpose.

I stood still.
He looked at me.
I didn't blink.

Tammie said, “That’s a hippopotamus.”
I heard it wrong. I thought she said, *hippo potato*
moose.
That felt better. That felt right.

He looked like something out of a dream—one of the peaceful ones. He made a sound like a clogged trumpet trying to laugh. I giggled. Not because it was funny, but because it felt like he was trying to talk to me. Like maybe he *understood*.

I watched him walk around the pool, slow and heavy, like the world didn’t rush him. Everything else around me was noise and color and spinning things, but he was stillness. He was peace. He was mine.

Tammie looked down. “You like the hippo?”

“No,” I said.
“I like *my hippo*. ”

I wanted to stay longer. I wanted to sit by the water and listen to his silly sounds and maybe learn what he was trying to say. But the sun was falling asleep, and Tammie said it was time to go.

“I like him,” I whispered.

So I said goodbye to the hippo potato moose, and we went home.

And even now, when the lights are off and the

ceiling hums above me, I can still hear him. That
weird trumpet laugh. That sleepy potato walk.

I hope I see him again someday.



Story one: Girl of a Lifetime.

By Konrad Klineburger

A boy is walking in the cold night. He is taking in nature; he is at peace, finally away from the chaos of the world. He feels like he can finally breathe. He sees a girl; they look the same age. He is 15, a sophomore in high school, high school of Cape May. She sees him walking and gives him a wave. He waves back. After a bit of walking they see each other again, but this time she's crying and sitting on a bench. "Hey are you ok?" I asked.

"No, no I'm not ok, my parents are fighting and I just wanted some peace," she said through tears.

"I know we're strangers, but wanna talk about it?" I had gently asked her.

"That would be really nice, thank you," she said.

"So, what's going on?" I said with concern.

"Well they were never nice to each other and then they finally snapped because of me, I asked my dad if I could get a new phone. He said I could, but only if had done some chores, which I had agreed to. Then my mom said I don't need a phone because I'm still a kid, but I'm 15. So then they continued to fight and it just snowballed out of control,

so I left,” she vented.

“I’m sorry about that. Is there anything I can do to help?” I asked her.

“Just be her with me for a bit...please.” she pleaded, her voice barely above a whisper.

“Of course I will stay, and you said you were 15, do you go to the high school near Lafayette street?” I asked her while getting closer so I could sit down with her.

“I do, I’ve seen you in some of my classes, but never talked with you because I thought you were way too popular for a lame person who reads all day,” she said looking down.

“You’re not a lame person who reads all day you’re a person who likes to keep to themselves and read a book. I totally understand that, and I’m not that popular. I only have a few friends,” I told her, sweetly. “I don’t think I asked for your name, so what is it?” I asked.

“Sara, my name’s Sara, don’t ask why I have a stupid name. What’s your name?” she asked even more quietly than before.

“I would never judge you for a stupid name, and it’s nice. It fits your demeanor, and my name is Sam.” I told her, with a calm tone.

“Are you gonna hurt me like every other guy that says they're gonna help me?” she asked like she was used to it.

“I’m not gonna leave you here out by yourself like that, especially when you need support because of your parents. I’m not like that, I believe in helping people when they need it the most.” As I had said that she looked into my eyes, looking for some reason I was lying, but I meant everything I had said to her. She had just looked away, but I could tell she believed me. “Are you gonna go back home to your parents?” I asked her with concern in my voice.

She sensed I was being genuinely concerned she responded by saying, “I can’t go back there, they are gonna yell at me for being out this late, I have nowhere to go right now...” she told me, trying not to cry again.

“We have some classes together so you know how nice I am when it comes to things like this so if you would like you can stay with me; my mom is on a trip right now so I’m alone.” I offered.

“No, no I Can't do that, it would be way too much to ask of you,” she protested.

“Look at me, you would not burden me in any way, and I offered you a place

to stay. You don't have to, but if you need to I would let you. I have a guest room you can stay in." I told her.

"Really? Ok, I'll stay, but please don't hurt me," she asked like she was hurt before in a situation like this.

"I would never hurt you, never," I told her with a gentle tone. She hugged me and I hugged her back.

"Thank you so much Sam. You are being really sweet to a person you just met," she told me. Her voice muffled because her face was on my shoulder. After a bit more talking in the park on the snow filled bench, I showed her the way to my house and we walked there together. She clung onto my arm, she was still upset, but she wasn't crying anymore.

"Here it is, this is my house," I announced.

"This is a nice house, I like it," she had told me.

"You ok?" I asked her.

"Yeah, just thinking about stuff," she told me.

"Wanna talk about it?" I asked, hoping she would say yes so I could help her.

"I'm alright, I really don't wanna talk about this one, sorry," she said.

“Don't apologize for not wanting to talk right now, I respect that.” I told her.

“Thank you,” she hugged me again.

I smiled and said, “Whenever you need to talk or just escape life, I will only be a text/call away, I want you to know that.” I told her sincerely.

“I know you are; you're really sweet,” she said, still hugging me.

“Thank you, you really are too,” I said with affection. “Do you think we could watch a movie or something like that, I just wanna relax,” she asked.

“Yeah, that's a good idea.” I said. “Any movies in particular you wanna watch?” I asked.

“Comedy??” she asked.

I responded by saying, “Yeah, I like comedy.” I put on the movie and we laughed and had a good time, eventually about half way through the movie she started to get closer, like she wanted to cuddle or something like that. She looked at me. She was warm, she did a happy hum, and I could tell this was the start of something special. “You seem confident now, huh?” I asked jokingly.

“Yeah you make it easy when you try to make me happy all the time,” she

asked while chuckling. After a bit of more talking, she was getting tired. She fell asleep on me while we were cuddling. She was happy with me. "Good night Sam, sleep well," she said before sleeping.

"Goodnight Sara, sleep well too." I told her. I could have sworn I heard her say that she loved me under her breath, but I was tired and played it off as my mind playing tricks on me. For the rest of the night I made sure she was alright and that she was comfy and content in my house. I never want to see her hurt again. I will try my best to help her.

The next day I woke up before her, she woke up shortly after, she said "Good morning."

"Good morning, Sara." I responded.

"Can we talk?" she asked me in a sort of serious tone.

"Y-yeah, we can talk." I was nervous.

"I stayed here instead of going home, and now my parents are gonna be mad at me when I get home," she said.

"It's gonna be alright you can always stay here another night." I told her.

"I can't!" she exclaimed. "I have to go... I love you," she said before she left. I was left there, stunned. I was so shocked that I didn't even try to go after her.

A week passed and she showed up at my house.

“Hey, how are you?” I asked her.

“I’m ok, how about you? Are you ok?” she asked.

“I’m ok,” I told her. That night, we were sitting on the bench where we met.

“Can I tell you something?” she asked me.

“You can tell me anything,” I tell her.

“I love you, like for real.” she whispered, waiting for an answer.

“I-I love you too.” I told her. We sat there in silence for a while, just enjoying the company. I got closer. She got closer and looked at me so I did the same. We kissed. A slight breeze blew as we kissed. It was filled with passion.. Love. That is the story of *The Girl of a Lifetime*.





How Dinosaurs Were Made

By: Izzy Arrigo

There was a Goddess named Rene. She was the Goddess of Art. She could make anything with her paintbrush. She was pretty, was blind in one eye, wore thin silk clothes, and did not wear shoes. She had very long, wavy hair. She is calm, creative, and kind. The other gods loved her because she could make anything for them.

One day, she was bored and needed something to do. So, she started to paint random creatures. She made a creature with upright limbs, a unique hip structure, and scales like skin. She wanted to name the creature but she didn't know what to call it. "I think I will call it T-rex." She started to make more of them, some with feathers and some who were tall and some who were short. She made one called the Triceratops that eats plants, and Spinosaurus which is a carnivore.

As she was making more, things went wrong. The Carnivores started fighting the Herbivores. She was shocked she didn't know what to do. She couldn't fix anything since she was using paint. She was freaking out trying to fix it but it didn't work. The Carnivores were

destroying the plants and the trees, causing the herbivores to not have food.

She could only think of one thing to do. She went to the god of space. She knew that he could solve her problem. She entered his room. He was busy moving the planets, and she walked up to him and said, "Hey, could you help me with something?" He looked over at her and said.

"Why do you need something?"

She looked a little upset but she continued. "Well, I might have made a mistake when I was painting, and now I need your help." He sighed,

"Okay, what?"

She said, "Well, I need you to send an asteroid to Earth because I might have made creatures that kill and destroy the plants and trees."

The god was shocked! He didn't know what to say but he eventually did. "Fine but this better not happen again." She nodded and showed him to Earth. The plants were almost gone, and the dinosaurs were killing the others. With his powers, he sent a big asteroid down, causing all of the dinosaurs to be killed, and all of them were gone. Then he said, "The plants will grow back and everything will be fine, but don't ever make those creatures again!"

The end

I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings is an autobiography written by Maya Angelou. Maya's real name was Marguerite Johnson, but she went by Maya because her brother Bailey used to call her Maya. Maya had lots of talents and jobs. She was a best-selling author, poet, and civil rights activist. Maya Angelou's background story is sad. When she was just a young girl, she was assaulted by her mother's boyfriend. Afterwards, she found out that the guy had been caught, but was murdered. After she heard this, she thought she was the one who caused the murder with her words. She became mute for 5 years and wouldn't speak. She had lots of trauma, and I can't imagine how that must have felt.

When she was a child, Maya Angelou met a middle-aged woman she called "Mrs. Flowers." She changed Maya's life; she got her to speak.

Maya Angelou loved the store that she had with her grandmother. That store was called Wm. Johnson General Merchandise Store. They sold mash, meals, sugar, or corn, had light bulbs, coal oil for lamps (because some people didn't have electricity- only the wealthy), tobacco, thread, and salmon.

Maya had many responsibilities while working in the store, like measuring flour and corn. Of course, some customers appreciated her, and some did not. Some tell her that she is super smart, and if she miss measured, some thought that she is scamming to make a profit.

In this story, she says, " the store was my

favorite place to be. Alone and empty in the mornings, it looked like an unopened present from a stranger. Opening the front doors was pulling the ribbon off the unexpected gift.” This shows that she liked the store, and even when she walks in it's like seeing a surprise from someone. She said, “Whenever I walked into the store in the afternoon, I sensed that I was tired.” She is trying to explain that a lot of people would come in and out all day, maybe complaining about their bills, or some people just went there to hang out. People liked going there. It was a social place where people went to talk.

After reading this part of the autobiography, it's telling me that even though Maya Angelou went through really tough times, she is still happy as well. Maya Angelou's favorite place to be had many special moments and memories with her brother Bailey and her grandmother. This place was very special, with lots of different products and different customers who liked to go there to socialize. That's what made it so important to Maya. It truly shows how kind at heart people can be, even though we know what trauma she went through, she still had her good well as her bad ones.

By: Sofia Bucci





Alternate Endings

Students wrote alternate endings to the short story “Eleven” by Sandra Cisneros, about a girl’s eleventh birthday.

“I can’t stop the little animal noises from coming out of me until there aren’t any more tears in my eyes. And it’s just my body shaking like when you have the hiccups, and my whole head hurts like when you drink milk too fast,” ... and I want to turn and disappear right there in my seat, crawl under the desk and turn invisible. I am wishing for the day I vanish when suddenly Sylvia blurts out loud, like she just remembered for real this time, “Wait! That’s me sweater. I left it there last week.”

Everyone turns. Even Mrs. Price freezes, her hand half way to writing something on the board. “Are you sure Sylvia?” she asks, her voice not quite sorry— not quite anything.

Sylvia shrugs like it’s nothing and says, “Yeah. I forgot.”

Mrs. Price doesn't apologize, She just takes the sweater from my desk like it's always been Sylvia's and not a heavy thing dropped on my in front of everyone. I don't know where to look. I want her to say she's sorry. I want her to say she's sorry. I want her to say it was a mistake and that I didn't deserve that. I'm sitting there, arms crossed and cheeks burning. Being eleven doesn't feel better than being ten, nine, or even five. It feels small and stuck and loud, like when you're trying not to cry but your throat won't let you breathe right. "It's not fair," I whispered, more to myself than to anyone else.

Lily, the girl next to me, leans in and says quietly, "You should have said something louder." I don't answer. I don't want to explain that even though I'm eleven today, I still feel like a little kid who doesn't know how to make her voice heard when it matters. I just nod and stare out the window, thinking maybe being eleven is like you're not the right age for anything at all.

By Lynzee Grey



...My nose is so stuffed I'm forced to breathe out of my mouth. And just as I think things can't get any worse, "Oh my God, stop being such a baby!" Sylvia sneers. And with that I hear a low giggle ricochet through the classroom. I don't want to lift my head up. The 9 Year old inside of me is screaming with embarrassment.

Suddenly I hear Mrs. Price's heels click towards me. As she leans over I feel the fear pulse through me like when I was 5 and would get caught in my momma's make-up.

"Listen sweetie," Mrs. Price whispers, "I didn't mean to make you upset, but it's just a sweater."

Unexpectedly, my blood started to heat. "It's not my sweater," I gently, but sternly informed her.

"I didn't hear you Rachel. You need to speak up," Mrs. Price said impatiently. Now I was really mad. My blood was hot before, but now, it's boiling over the edge. "IT'S NOT MY SWEATER!"

I shouted right in her face, as I begin to rip the sweater off. I could feel the itchy material leave my skin as I ball it up and throw it. "Was that loud enough for you?" I remarked in a hostile tone.

Mrs. Price's face had dropped. I felt my heart sink as I realized what I had done. The next thing I knew she had called my mom and I was in the car on the way home.

"Why would you do that?" my mamma asked, both confused and concerned.

And with a dead expression and tone I told her, "I was getting a taste of what it feels lie to be eleven."

By Leila Omrod



... I just can't stop I try to, but my emotions keep on flowing out and out like a never-ending tsunami. It wasn't till the bell rang when I stopped crying. Eventually, the sound of everyone else running out of the room overpowered my cry. I'm still super embarrassed. How will everyone else look at me now? They'll now see me as the barely eleven girl who cried in the ugly sweater. That stupid Sylvia Sadivar... that mean Mrs. Price...that stupid, ugly embarrassing sweater... I just sat there, my thoughts consuming me until I was interrupted...

"Rachel..." Mrs. Price says as she clears her throat. "Why are you crying?"

I forgot she as standing there. Now she's asking a question as if SHE wasn't the answer. I wipe the remaining half-dry half-wet tears on my face. I slowly lift my head up, afraid that an arrow of scolding is gonna hit me in the face.

"Because..." I mutter, as if she's ever going to hear me. "Because the sweater...it's not mine. Sylvia said it was, but I swear it's not mine." Not mine, not mine, not mine- the only thing I can say, the only words I can get out. How is Mrs. Price ever going to believe me if I can't get anything else?

A deep sigh escapes Mrs. Price's mouth. "If you really insist it's not yours..." she seems very annoyed, "then I suppose you can take it off. Go to the nurse as ell. Your face is all red."

The moment I hear those words, I rush to do exactly that. Eventually, the rest of the school day passes by. I finish my work. I put my backpack on, and I'm heading to the bus.

I'm overthinking everything from the day. Suddenly I feel a small smile form on my face. I spoke out for myself. It wasn't a big step, but it was still something I didn't need anyone's help.

I really do feel eleven now. Maybe feeling eleven is letting yourself express your emotions. No matter what eleven is supposed to feel like, today I am eleven. But there's no time to dwell on that. I have my Mama, Papa, and a cake waiting for me at home. No need to worry about that red sweater anymore.

By Marisol Munoz



The following writing is not an alternate ending, instead it is written from an alternate point of view. *The True Confessions of Charlotte* Doyle is told from Charlotte's perspective. In this writing we hear from Zachariah instead.

"Zachariah!" I heard as I prepared the ship to depart from the docks. I turned to see Charlotte running up the ramp, and my heart sank a little at the sight of her.

"I've come for one last farewell!" she exclaimed, tears glimmering in her eyes. I felt for her in that moment and was relieved to see her one last time before I set sail. I leaned against the weathered railing of the Seahawk, the salty breeze whipping through my hair as I watched Charlotte prepare to leave the ship. The sunlight caught her hair, framing her face in a golden glow, and a familiar mix of pride and sorrow welled up within me.

"Are you sure about this, Charlotte" I asked, stepping closer, my voice low and steady. "The world out there can be as fierce as the storms we face at sea."

She turned to me, her expression resolute. "I have to do this, Zachariah. I can't go back to being the girl I was on the ship. I've learned too much. I've faced too much."

I nodded, feeling the weight of her words.
“True bravery is not just about fighting it’s about
knowing when to stand your ground and when to
walk away. You’ve found that strength here.”

A smile flickered across her face,
momentarily brightening the looming farewell. “You
taught me that. Remember when you told me about
the superstitions of the sea? How all sailors find
their own truth in the waves?”





Excerpts from Short Stories

Warning
Story contains violence and
difficult subject matter.

Ghost. By Andrew Horton
CHAPTER 9 - Incursion.

Later that night they are sitting on the couch talking about first date ideas. Then when she falls asleep the dogs growl in suspicion of something outside. Oliver stays silent and all the lights are off. It's nearly pitch black. Oliver hears something upstairs like a window sliding open and footsteps. So, he gets up and tells Sarah to stay put and he leaves his rifle there with her just in case. He has a pistol on him and quietly goes upstairs without making a sound, but while he's walking in the hallway towards the room with the sound, the floorboard creaks under him making an oddly loud creak. A man in black comes out into the hall but doesn't see Oliver because it is too dark and he is off to the side. Oliver realizes it's one of the gang members, so he sneaks up on him and hits him with the pistol handle, knocking him out. Then the other two in the room start shooting at Oliver through the wall but it doesn't hit him. They think he is dead but he turns the corner and smacks one with the pistol, then kicks in the knees of the other one. They are in pain and unable to move.

Oliver runs downstairs and sees rifle lasers pointing through the window behind the couch Sarah is on. Oliver rushes over to her yelling "Get on the floor!" They both fall on the floor while gunshots ring out throughout the house.

When the shooting stops for a minute Oliver grabs a bag next to the couch and grabs a flashbang and smoke grenade from it.

Oliver looks at Sarah and says “When I say run you need to run for that back door as fast as possible, then run for the herd of sheep. I’m going to draw them away. Lay down in the crowd of sheep till I get you.”

Sarah asks in a panic “What if you don’t get me?”

“I will, trust me.” Oliver throws a flashbang then the smoke grenade about 5 seconds after. The men are disoriented for a minute. As the smoke goes off Oliver says “3...2..run!”

When they get outside Oliver runs to the herd of cows; Sarah runs to the flock of sheep and lays down to hide.

Oliver shoots at some of the gang, killing them from a far distance. Right as he runs out of rifle ammo, more gang members come. They follow him into a corn field in the darkest time of night. They all split up, making it easier for Oliver to live up to his nickname as the Ghost. One man heard something behind him, only to see a knife in the ground. Oliver sneaks up behind him and says “Boo.” Then he chokes the man till he passes out.

Oliver makes his way over to another part of the corn field where there are three more men walking. He runs across an opening behind them then they turn around and see nothing. He makes noise to the left and right of them then comes out behind them. He kicks one man forward then smacks the other two heads together. Then he grabs a baton out of the enemies pocket, then hits the two over their head. They pass out right

after. Oliver tackles the last one into the thick wall of corn. The baton falls but Oliver doesn't need it to beat up one guy. Oliver punches the man till he is no longer awake.

The last guy comes over the radio, speaking in fear and says, "Boss this guy is like a ghost. He makes it seem like he's everywhere, I can't find the other guys I think he got them..." Oliver comes out of nowhere and incapacitates the man. He then grabs his radio and lets the man drop.

Oliver says to Walker over the radio, "You like that name? Ghost. I think it's got a ring to it. I told you if you wanted to start this fight I would be ready. I'm gonna tear your organization apart."

Walker comes on the radio angry and says "This is a fight that you shouldn't keep fighting. We don't bow down to anyone."

Oliver then demands to Walker "I'm no longer asking you to bow down politely. I'm just going to show you what happens when you don't." Oliver holds the radio up to the gang member's face so that Walker can hear him struggling to breath. Then he crushes the radio...



Warning: The following story contains violence and difficult subject matter.

Chapter One

An excerpt from a Book by Autumn Zukawski

I didn't kill her on purpose, it was because my anger took control. I loved her, she was my wife. Sometimes I wish it was a nightmare. My name is Jace and I killed my wife. My former wife, Sophia, was 27 when I murdered her. She was stunning! Chocolate brown, silky hair that was so wavy it reminded me of ocean waves. Electric blue eyes that looked like she was staring into your soul. Beautiful plumped lips, which were all natural, no filler. Perfect hourglass shaped body. If you could imagine her, she was perfect. But she had some issues with her brain. She was on anti-

crazy sometimes. But before I get ahead of myself, let me tell you why I did what I did.

It all started on the night of October 25th, 2002. I remember that day like it was yesterday. She just got back from getting us matching Halloween costumes. We both decided on peanut butter and jelly costumes. I was making dinner when she got back from shopping. I was listening to classical music on the record player, next to the entrance of the kitchen.

“Hey baby!” Sophia said with a huge smile.

“Hey sweetheart. Did you get the costumes?”

“About that... I never actually went to the costume shop. I went to the mall and I found these really cute shoes. Do you like them?”

She held up sparkly red shoes. They looked like Dorothy's shoes from Wizard of Oz. I didn't like them though. I was livid. I have anger issues that show up very unexpectedly. Right now was one of those moments.

“You’re kidding me Sophia. We had a deal that you go to the store and I will make dinner! Not that *I make dinner and you go to the mall!*”

“I'm sorry.. I thought since I still went to a store you wouldn't be as mad.”

I could tell that she looked sad at first. But then something changed in her face. She looked really pissed off all of a sudden because I yelled at her.

“You know what Jace? It's NOT my fault that I went to the mall. I asked you if you wanted

to go with me! Maybe if you actually participated in things, I would have gone to the costume shop and I would have gotten the costumes!”

I hate when she yells. It makes me so pissed. I hate it when anyone yells but me.

“You don't have the RIGHT to yell at me! I am your husband! Not your child, you *****!” I started taking steps toward Sophia. She was now standing near the dining table. She seemed kind of scared. I liked seeing her scared. I found it funny. She looked like a lost puppy dog. I lost control of my body in the fit of anger I was in and ended up grabbing a knife out of the knife block. Sophia’s eyes opened wide. She looked like she saw a ghost.

“Jace. Put the knife down.. It's not that serious. I'll go out now! I'll get the costumes now I promise! I won't ever go to the mall without your permission again! I'll never yell at you again! I promise!” Sophia was now pleading.

What she soon realized is that she backed herself up into the entrance of our kitchen, right next to the wall.

“You can promise all you want sweetheart, but let's be honest. We ALL know you are going to do it again. You're going to go to the mall again and your excuse? It's probably going to be something stupid like ‘I was bored! But I bought this cute shirt!’ Listen, I love you Sophia, but I want someone who is going to listen to me. And I don't want

you being a witness to my
anger. I have to do this. I'm
sorry.” She let out a blood
curdling scream...



Before I
knew it, she was gone. Dead as
dead could be. I realized what I
had done. *I killed my own wife!*
The person that I vowed to. For
some reason, I was happy. I felt
free for once in my life.

I had to start cleaning up now. Just in case the neighbors heard her screaming for her dear life. I started with her body. I hoisted her lifeless corpse onto my shoulder and ran as fast as I could to our, well now *my bedroom*. *I finally got there and dropped her with a thud. I started to roll her body under the bed when I heard a knock at the door. I froze on the spot. I was petrified if a neighbor happened to call the police. I quickly grabbed a blanket and covered her body, half under the bed. I sprinted to the door and opened it.*

“Hello? Who's there?” I said with a tremble in my voice.

“It's Janice, your neighbor next door. I think I heard Sophia scream and I was curious if everything was alright.”

Of course Janice was concerned. Janice was a sweet old lady, probably in her late 60s by now. She and Sophia had a really good relationship. Sophia would go to Janice's garden and help her pick the vegetables and fruit that were too low to the ground for Janice to pick up.

“Oh yeah. Everything is fine. We were watching a scary movie and Sophia got scared. That's all.”

“ Oh, okay then.” Janice took too long at the door though, just staring at something. I was confused at what she could possibly be looking at, then I looked down and realized part of my shirt and hands were blood red. Without Janice even asking the question, I whipped up a quick answer.

“Oh, I cut my hand while chopping vegetables for our dinner. I didn't realize and I touched my shirt. That reminds me to put a band-aid on. Thanks for your concern Janice but everything is a-okay!” I slammed the door shut, muttering curses to myself. ‘I should have been more careful!’ I thought...







A Study in Poetic Forms



Going to the game
To see home runs hit today
Boom! It's out of here

The joy inside me
Is shooting up to the sky
Flying out of here

I am glad I came
To this great ball game today
It was Electric



When the sun is out
I know it is a new day
So I try my best

Finn Castagnoli



Safe

Walls enclosing me.
No one's catching me today.
I cannot be seen.

Energetic

Flying off the ramp.
My gas tank is filled with fuel.
I can go to space.

Bored

Sleep is in the air.
Nothing new is happening.
Time is like a slug.

By Ethan Karvounis



This and That

By Christopher Cervantes

In the sun, warming, comforting, we are.
Little sparks of "this" and "that" everywhere
Anywhere it peeks, glaring at us.
Until dawn rises, it loses its peak.

Down, down, in the alleyways.
The gorgeous moonlight creeps. No
need to be afraid,
The light dances like a parade.

Light white speckles,
Falling on down, airy and fluffy.
Like a pillow, resting on the ground.
Moldable, fun, and at last, Calming.

Ice rains down,
So packed together.
Slight damage, don't worry,
It's just a little hail, it's not so scary!

The Beach by Nataly Nichols

Blue skies calm the soul
Pounding waves drown our worries
Warm sand lures sleep
Day and night, sun or moonshine
The beach pulses with magic



She struggles once more
Her heart is tore
Her head is sore
Trouble caught her with a lure
She felt like she was punched right in the
core
She swore
She doesn't know what this pain is for
She could talk to someone, sure
Once she was seen everyone would
ignore
Her brain made it feel like war
She just wanted her health to restore
Her heart races like she just saw gore
So much she feared for

Even a simple light
Even the baggiest shirt seems so tight
She puts up a fight
Even with her blurred sight
She still couldn't see a light
She thinks the bullies are right
So much fright
She needs to be saved by a knight
Her life feels like a car at a red light
When will my life feel right?

By Amy VanArtsdalen



The summer sun is shining
The wind is blowing
The birds are chirping
The trees are swaying
The sand is warming
The ocean is cooling
Spring is almost here
I am so glad
To be here
This time of year!

By Nicholas Gallagher

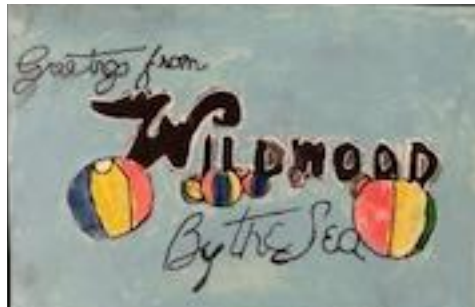


**I miss the summer time
I lie to go to the beach
It is really fun**

**I love the ocean
The ocean is beautiful
The water is cool**

**Summer time is hot
Ice cream will melt in your hand
And you'll get sticky**

By Makayla Leaming



**Love
Generous, Respectful
Talking, Giving, Sharing
Always someone for you
Bullying, Dictating, Hurting
Disrespectful, Lonely
Hate**

By Myles Daly





Thank you to all of the staff and students who have shared their inspiration and their talent, without which this magazine would not be possible.

