

# Stomping Ground

2015

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Edited by Darolyn "Lyn" Jones and Lauryn Wiseman

Illustrated by Sydney Hellgeth

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# Stomping Ground

2015

Edited by

Darolyn "Lyn" Jones and Lauryn Wiseman

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# Grab a Shovel – Introduction

## Welcome to our Stomping Ground

Dr. Darolyn “Lyn” Jones

A stomping ground is a familiar territory, a hangout, a homage. And that’s exactly how we want you to feel when you read this collection. We want the words to ring true, to make you feel like you are at home.

Some background on how this collection came to press...

The Creative Writing in the Community is a course at Ball State University. An immersive, service learning opportunity, English 409 students meet with young writers in the community to teach creative writing techniques and to write and create a collaborative text. These young community partners are in various schools throughout the greater Muncie community, including Burriss Laboratory School, Daleville Elementary, Longfellow Elementary School, Royerton Elementary School, and Storer Elementary.

The objectives of the project and course include the enrichment of the creative writing major, through:

- engagement in the local community;
- through the scholarly study of a creative genre (memoir);
- through relevant essays about creative narrative nonfiction writing pedagogy;
- through scholarly study about community engagement models; and
- through the use of critical and creative examinations of the student’s own and collaborative work created for the class.

The end product of these objectives results in a published anthology and celebration of the writing generated by both the university student and the young community writers in the greater Muncie community.

This semester, the students also engaged in the book publishing process, learning design, layout, and editing. We have created a new press for the course, 409 Press. And it is our hope that each year, additional volumes will be added. Our essential and guiding element was that it is an honor to be trusted with someone's story. And our role was to honor our young community writer's voices so the rest of the world can hear the poignant, humorous, and brilliant wisdom that only young writers possess.

A discovery my Ball State students and I made during this semester is that young writers haven't learned to filter. They don't yet know what society teaches us about not sharing or revealing too much about ourselves. You ask them a question, and they will answer it with brutal honesty. You ask them to create, and they will conjure worlds and images we can't imagine. You ask them to tell you a story, and they will paint every sensory detail with their words.

It's beautiful. It's the thing we writers *try* to do. It's the thing we writing instructors *want* all of our students to do. Yet, with little coaching and little time for revision, our young community writers were able to achieve this. Ball State students only met with their individual writers for five or six short writing sessions, so the Ball State students had to quickly gain their young community writing partner's trust and design and deliver a prompt that the writers couldn't wait to write to.

And then we had the task of selecting and editing their work and revealing their published work in a final community ceremony.

The book's theme is based around a beautiful metaphor designed by Niki Wilkes, a student in the course. I can't wait for you to read more about how our writers learned to break ground, dig deep, and find treasure. Not only will you read works from the young community writers, but also responses and reflections from the Ball State Creative writing students who participated in the course.

A semester is a very short amount of time to study, write, teach, and publish a book. Many thanks need to go out to first the young community writers who were brave enough to tell us their stories, to Kim Beard, Ingrid Grubb, and Ball State faculty parents for sharing your students with us, to the Ball State students in the course, many busy seniors, who worked overtime to make sure the book was a success, to my assistant student editor, Lauryn Wiseman for her keen design and editing eye, to our illustrator, Sydney Helgeth, for her inspirational images that help us tell the story, to the English department at Ball State who has been incredibly supportive, particularly, Sean Lovelace for believing in my work and allowing me to teach a course he loves and has helped develop, to Dean Maggiotto for funding and encouraging the project.

And finally to Marjorie Hiner, an English Alumna from Ball State University, and her husband, Homer, who continue to fund the publication of this collection and support events associated with the project. Their vision made this book possible.

And, now dig in.

# A Letter from the Editor

Lauryn Wiseman

I began writing stories the moment my little mind figured out how to write more words than one. Prior to that moment, my desire to write was so strong that I wrote my name on everything I could put a pen to. It was never to show ownership; I by no means owned the front door of my grandpa's house or any piece of my older brother's homework, I only wanted to write. Whatever I could, whenever I could, wherever I could. My favourite story to tell in relation to writing occurred at a particular point in time when "whatever I could" consisted only of my first name (although the letters varied, some forward, some backward, some uppercase, others lowercase). I could only write that single word, but it meant more to me than anything else at that point. I was new to my fourth year of life and I loved the way the pen felt in my hand, the magical way the letters combined to form something more meaningful than the letters standing alone. My mother caught me scrawling my name on the front door of my grandpa's house and was appalled. My grandpa didn't mind, he was proud of me. He used to joke that his front door would be worth something some day, until an unsuspecting neighbour kid went about trying to perform a good deed and painted over it. That was the stem of my love for writing.

When I learned how to form sentences, I wrote short stories accompanied by stick-figure illustrations. Many of these stories were shaped by events in my own young life: the fights with my older brother, the birth of my younger half-sister, or what was happening at school. From there, my love of writing flourished. Of course I was told the typical things young writers are always told, that writing is impractical and won't earn you a living. In part, that is correct. There are very few authors who get by on writing



alone, but writing is a practical skill that many people lack. I was also lucky that I had people in my life, such as my grandpa, who encouraged my writing. I'm glad of that, because if not for writing, I'm not sure I would be the person I am today.

From those early days onward, I utilized my writing as a tool to overcome the challenges of everyday life. I was not popular in school, I was picked on quite a bit, and then I would go home and continue to be picked on by my older brother (don't worry, he's nicer now, it gets better). On my journey toward self-discovery and overcoming challenges, I have filled numerous journal pages, several megabytes of hard drive space, and my fair share of paper napkins for those moments when inspiration strikes and there is nothing else to fill. There is no sure-fire formula to writing; the best thing to do is to write. And, to reiterate what I've been told many times throughout my education, write what you love. I don't mean a gushy sort of Disney movie happily-ever-after love, but a genuine interest, an immersion in the topic. I believe this is why I am drawn to memoir writing specifically—there is no one closer to his or her topic than the memoirist.

Despite the phrase uttered so often in sappy romance movies and love songs, “you know me better than I know myself,” that simply is not true for the memoirist. In fact, in writing memoir, the writer comes to know him or herself better. I have personally discovered an intimate link between heart, mind, and hand through writing down my life experiences. Even though I am a mere twenty-two years old, I have found there are a multitude of experiences for me to write about. No matter your age, seven, twelve, twenty-two, fifty-four, even those over ninety-eight, we all have stories to tell. No one has proved that more than this group of kids. Kids of varying ages with varying backgrounds; their writing traverses many emotions. Some inspire laughter, others

melancholy, but each piece of writing details a part of a young life. Even those pieces that stray away from memoir, dipping into fiction, reveal a youthfulness I had personally lost touch with. These stories took me back to my own story of scrawling my name on my grandpa's front door, of wanting so badly to write anything I would write anywhere. These kids are an inspiration and taught English 409 students every bit as much, if not more than 409 students taught them.

The variety of stories enclosed in this anthology are those of creative minds told they were free to wander, told their stories matter and their voices should be heard. Never allow anyone to tell you that your life experiences do not matter, because they do. They could matter so much more than you or I may ever know, but someone out there could be feeling the exact same way you are while experiencing eerily similar experiences. My hope is that these stories remind you of something you have lost touch with, and that they help you to reconnect with your inner child as they did with me.

# Digging a Hole, a Metaphor

Niki Wilkes

1. Grab a shovel: Besides getting any writing material, such as pen, paper, computer, you also need any materials that you might use, such as photos, drawings, object, prompts, etc...
2. Scout for a site to dig: Before you start writing, you have to decide where you want to explore. So if your backyard is your entire life, you might decide to “dig” by the tree, which could encompass all of the vacations you’ve ever been on.
3. Break the ground: You start the exploration by breaking the surface, which is the point of brainstorming. Some ground is harder to crack than others, just as some subjects take more energy to start.
4. Start digging: This is the writing part. You might not know how deep or wide you will go or what you will find, but you can only find out the more you write.
5. Extract treasure: Sometimes you are looking for the gems of your memory. Other times you’ll find things you thought lost or entirely forgot about. These details are extracted and examined thoroughly before you can continue writing.
6. Look at the pile: Once you have determined to stop writing, either because you have found what you were looking for, or the perimeters of your prompt have been met, look at just how much you wrote. You always be surprised by how much you dug up

and marvel at the fact that that amount of memory and meaning could fit in such a tiny moment.

7. Fill the Hole: This is the part where you choose what to do with all the work you just did. Maybe take any treasure you found and rebury it for safe keeping, such as keeping a journal. Maybe bury something else precious for future generations to find, such as writing a family history. Perhaps repurpose the hole and decide to plant a tree to give that digger a more public purpose, such as attempting to write for publication. It is up to you what you do with your work.

### **A Student Breaking Ground Example:**

Remember, the purpose of Breaking Ground is to start chipping away at memories and seeing what comes flying up. In the piece below, Marisa was given an exercise called “I remember” where she was asked to write different memories starting with “I remember.” It is a wonderful brainstorming exercise that is the epitome of breaking ground.

#### *"I Remember" by Marisa*

*I remember the time when my Grandma's cat attacked me. I remember when my cousin and I broke a bed when we were jumping on it. I remember going to a carnival with my friend and I got hit in the face with a hacky-sack. I remember when my friend and I fell off our beds. I remember when my dog ate my pie.*

*I remember when my cousin and I fell into a river.*

*Holly ran into a tree. We were playing a game with werewolves and vampires. We were running from Josh and she ran into a tree, and I tried to help her and we fell into a river.*

(Originally, the section highlighted above was not separate, but to show how Breaking Ground can move into a bigger piece, we can examine how Marisa lingered and expanded on a particular “I remember.”)

*I remember when I got my haircut. I remember when my sister stepped on my face. I remember when I broke a perfume bottle and the floor smelled like flowers for weeks. I remember when I wrote my first book. I remember when my sister and I played Just Dance. I remember how I lost my first tooth. I remember when I ripped my homework on accident. I remember when I got locked outside. I remember when I rode my first bike. I remember when I fell down my bunk bed stairs. I remember when my friend and I went to the movies and we saw the wrong movie. I remember when I got left at my house on accident. I remember when I fell on my face on the last day of school. I remember when my cousin locked me in a closet.*

### **Start Digging Example:**

After chipping at memories through the brainstorming exercise, Marisa was then encouraged to take one of the “I Remember” and dig at it for more details. This part of the writing process moved into Start Digging and produced the piece below.

*"Vampire- Werewolves" by Marisa*

*My cousin Holly and I went into the woods to talk about scary memories and scary stories. My sisters, Mallory and Mary, followed us with Holly's brother, Josh. We decided to play a game instead. Mary, Mallory, and Josh were vampire-werewolves trying to kill Holly and I. We ran through trees, climbing up and down. Josh caught sight of us. He began to run down the hill. Holly was going too fast and ran into a small but thick tree. We were so close to jumping over the river, and I tried to grab her hand. But I tripped and fell with her into a small river.*

# Breaking Ground



## Writing Is...

### Writing is...

the Daleville Community

- ...something you do before you eat cheese dip.
- ...when you write things on your paper
- ...creativity and knowledge used on paper
- ...writing is your own world
- ...like releasing the voice you didn't think you had
- ...putting my feelings on paper so I don't burst
- ...when you express yourself and how you feel
- ...your view of memories and experiences, and how you want them
- ...giving yourself and others a voice
- ...staining a thought for the eyes to see
- ...memories and other things written down on pieces of paper
- ...your kingdom of personality and thought



## Why Write?

Jackson

I think writing is important because the more you write, the more you may learn about the history of stuff, like 1918 Northern France and World War I.

It's important because you have to know how to write because you do a lot of it in higher grades to know all you need to know.

## Why Writing is Important

Alexis

1. it could help you with spelling
2. help you read
3. you could go to the library
4. helps you in school
5. read more books

## What is Writing?

Madison

Writing is creative.

Writing is awesome.

Writing is sad.

Writing is happy.

Writing is fun.

Writing is creative.

## Writing is...

Bryson

Writing is what I'm doing now

Writing is the art of the story

Writing is a long, long time

Writing is icky slime

Writing doesn't have to rhyme

I am Theo

Theo

I am Theo

I am a god

I am in a writing class

I am cool

I am a basketball player

I am Zishan

Zishan

I'm Zishan

I'm active

I'm upset

I'm a scaredy cat

I'm in creative writing class

I'm going to Indianapolis

I'm kind of cool

I'm going to draw

I'm breathing

I'm blinking

I'm 7

I'm awesome

I'm going to school

I'm in the library  
I'm in the 2nd grade  
I'm going to be excited  
I'm going to violin class  
I'm crazy  
I'm best friends with Eli  
I'm bored

## I am Alexis

Alexis

1. I like bunnies. My friend has a bunny.
2. My family is a cool family.
3. I like to play outside.
4. There is snow outside.
5. My friends are awesome.
6. School is really cool.
7. I like nights. It is really dark.
8. I love clothes. I go shopping every day.
9. I love Pizza King. It is the best!
10. Teachers are cool
11. Sara is really cool. I think she will be a good teacher some day.
12. I love candy. It taste so good.
13. All I do at home is eat food.
14. Chips are my favorite food.

# I am Caleb

Caleb

I am...

I am tall.

My nickname is KK.

I have a brother and two sisters.

Their names are Cayden, Aeriana, and McKensy.

I like to play football and basketball.

I have brown hair, blue eyes.

I am in the fifth grade.

I like to travel.

I have lots of friends.

I have a friend that lives down the road.

I am 11 years old.

I'm in a library.

I don't like to read.

I am good at spelling.

But I like to read sports books.

I am awesome.

## I am Natalee (A Response to Caleb)

Natalee Bird

I am short

My nickname is Nat.

I have a half sister, a full brother, and four step-siblings.

Their names are Gretchen, Nick, Emily, Allison, Jacob, and Madison.

I like to read and write.

I have brown hair and blue eyes.

I am a sophomore at Ball State University.

I like to be at home with my family.

I have some good friends.

My friends all live pretty far away.

I am 20 years old.

I am in my room.

I like to read, but don't have a lot of time to do so.

I am the worst speller of all thyme.

I still try to use big words.

I am who I am.

Caleb's confidence is one aspect I greatly envy in this piece. He says he is good at something, spelling, he also says that he has a lot of friends. These are two things I would never be able to claim. I wish I still had his confidence, that I hadn't had those negative voices win me over in telling me I can't do something well. As far as saying I have a lot of friends, after high school I think most people really find that as time goes on people you thought were your friends get busier and they drift away or go to

another college and you aren't left with a big group of friends like you thought you once had.

His ending is my favorite by far. Ending a piece of writing and saying you're awesome could be taken a thousand different ways. Being only eleven though, he may have just been proud of the work, and the words he was able to get down on the page. Personally I would have thought that, hey my life isn't nearly as bad as I act like it is. I am awesome because I choose to be awesome and keep doing the best that I can. He does a great job of repeating the "I" but lets go of the whole phrase... "I am". I think what he didn't incorporate, "I am" speaks volumes. He did not say: I am white, my family is rich, I am smart, I am better than so and so. He was honest, yet humble. In his mind he was telling nothing but the truth and his own thoughts. These facts flowed and you are unable to question that he is good at spelling or that he is awesome. I like the overall simplicity and the brief although awesome explanation of the aspects he wanted not only me to know but also the readers. The simplicity was key because he just wrote from what he knows and thinks. After reading this I knew him better than any of his other pieces. I was so proud that he not only shared more about himself, but that he may have gotten out of his comfort zone by going a step deeper in his writing. He is an excellent student and I know for a fact that he is really awesome, his principal was sure to tell me that herself.

## Memories Are...

Memories are...

The Daleville Community

- ... fun times with your family.
- ... good cheese dip and sports.
- ... events in the past that you remember, whether they are fond memories or not.
- ... memories and point blank.
- ... little creatures in a cave. The deeper you go, the more light you need to find them.
- ... from your past.
- ... things that open your soul from unhappiness and open the door to things that you loved and cherished.
- ... the things that make me the person I am.
- ... cherished moments that you will remember, whether they are good or bad.
- ... feelings made into experiences.
- ... what makes me want to keep and let go.
- ... the photos in the album of my mind.
- ... the most interesting scenes of our life.
- ... things I don't want to lose.



## Basketball Season

Aden

It's basketball season, my favorite time of the year. The first school basketball team I tried out for was the fifth grade team and I made it. Our coach, Jerry Mendenhall (Mr. Mendenhall), did a great job coaching us. We won some games, but overall it was a bad season. Next at the YMCA, we were stacked. We are 2-1 and are extremely good. I really like our coach. He'll lead us to a great season. I love basketball!

## Christmas

Theo

I like Christmas, because it's when you get to open presents and you get to suck on candy. I also like to get things out of boxes to put up for Christmas, like lights. I also like to watch *A Christmas Carol* and *The Grinch*. I like the songs, too. I think the Grinch looks cool but not the best. I like the show *Frosty the Snowman*. I also like the song "Santa Claus."

Not to be mean, but he's kind of big. I think he eats too many cookies. I wonder how he gets in the chimneys. I like that he brings us presents. The winter has lots of snow. I like to make snowmen and have snowball fights because you get snow on your face. The winter might be cold, but it's fun.

## Describing and Knowing Sadie (Sarah)

Jessica

Sadie and I met in kindergarten. Wait, we met before that. OK, we met when we were babies. We couldn't even lift our heads up. I have a picture to prove it.

Fun fact: She holds grudges. Against me. Like, every day. And she doesn't like to put rulers away. Neither do I. So she holds a grudge against me if I don't pick it up, but she doesn't pick it up either. So I say, "I'll do whatever you want in reading if YOU pick the ruler up." That seemed to work well.

But she likes saying, "Bow down to me." A lot. So I look like a chicken pecking food. We used to have a book club called, "The Candy Kittens" with another girl named Arya, but she moved to Michigan.

## Football Season

Blake

When I saw that the Patriots won, I was really mad. The reason I wanted the Seahawks to win was because the quarterback started one year in the NFL. So I will never like the Patriots because they cheated. My favorite was the Dallas Cowboys, because of the quarterback, Tony Romo. The other teams I liked were the Broncos because they have Manning on their team. The next one I like was the Colts because they have Luck on their team, and they are the home team. The other one I like is Ohio State because my step-brother, Colton, his step-dad, and Casson were on the team and I forgot his last name.

# Favorite Holiday

Bennett

My favorite holiday is my birthday,  
because I get presents  
and it is my own holiday.  
One birthday  
my family and I went to North Carolina.  
Once,  
we went to the zoo.  
My favorite holiday is my birthday  
because I get presents  
and it is my own holiday.

Wrapping paper flies around,  
everyone watching with wide eyes.  
Wow nice!  
The best present ever  
was going to North Carolina.  
When we arrived  
we found our rental house.  
The most beautiful place I've been  
is the North Carolina beach. It was super fun!  
I loved going to North Carolina.  
It's so beautiful at the beach.  
It's the beautifulest place in the world.

I saw so much cool things, and so much beautiful things!  
I found a ghost crab in the day.  
They're hard to find in the day.

## I Remember the thing that made me laugh...hard or worse

Maddie

The thing that made me laugh...hard or worse was really nothing. My friend came back laughing, and then some of us giggled. Then we all just burst out laughing. We all thought it was hilarious. It was my friends Katie, Emma, Gracie, Lily, and me. We couldn't stop laughing. We were told to quiet down or be separated. We stopped laughing, but then we started laughing again. Everyone finally went into the room and had fun for the rest of the day.

## Last Writing Day

Madison

On my last writing day I had a cupcake (it was Vanilla bread with strawberry icing and whipped cream, Yum!) and while I ate my cupcake I was doing brainstorm exercises. For example, I had to say "writing is..." and write what I think it is. A few minutes later I passed out tic-tacs (these were orange flavored!) to everyone in the writing class. And I've been writing in the times between those things. Then I drew Mickey Mouse for absolutely no reason. And I tried forever to get my iPod so I could look up Pluto the dog for Mickey. Siri has horrible hearing.

# I Remember

Marisa

I remember the time when my Grandma's cat attacked me. I remember when my cousin and I broke a bed when we were jumping on it. I remember going to a carnival with my friend and I got hit in the face with a hacky-sack. I remember when my friend and I fell off our beds. I remember when my dog ate my pie.

I remember when my cousin and I fell into a river...

*Holly ran into a tree. We were playing a game with werewolves and vampires. We were running from Josh and she ran into a tree, and I tried to help her and we fell into a river.*

I remember when I got my haircut. I remember when my sister stepped on my face. I remember when I broke a perfume bottle and the floor smelled like flowers for weeks. I remember when I wrote my first book. I remember when my sister and I played *Just Dance*. I remember how I lost my first tooth. I remember when I ripped my homework on accident. I remember when I got locked outside. I remember when I rode my first bike. I remember when I fell down my bunk bed stairs. I remember when my friend and I went to the movies and we saw the wrong movie. I remember when I got left at my house on accident. I remember when I fell on my face on the last day of school. I remember when my cousin locked me in a closet.

# The Beginning, The End, and The In-between

Kaylin

I remember when my little brother was born.  
I remember when my best friend got hospitalized.  
I remember writing my first book.  
I remember when my grandma died.  
I remember when I got a bulldog.  
I remember when my friend Caroline died. RIP 1-2-15  
I remember when I got picked to do creative writing class.  
I remember when I sprained my knee in gymnastics.  
I remember when I quit gymnastics, and did volleyball.  
I remember when I got my first phone. iPhone 5C, pink  
I remember being left alone for the first time.  
I remember my 10th birthday  
I remember my favorite teacher.  
I remember when my grandpa died.  
I remember when I was in 5th grade.  
I remember getting my own skates.  
I remember getting into Daleville where I met Kaleigh & Jordyne.  
I remember getting stitches when I was 7.  
I remember getting my first cat. Cleo.

# I Remember

Sara

I remember when I almost fell into a tree trunk sledding.

I remember when I "accidentally" slapped my brother.

I remember when I got my crazy new boxer.

I remember when my grandpa would put wax paper on our slide to make us go down faster.

I remember when my friend and I went to the Mockingjay movie and she was hitting me the whole time.

I remember when the creepy Jack-in-the-box elves were at our mall.

I remember when my dad's friend wanted to use my sister's Dora plate.

I remember when my brother dropped a bowling ball on my foot.

I remember when my volleyball team and I won our first scrimmage.

I remember when I scored a soccer goal in the mud.

I remember when I beat my great-grandpa at ping-pong.

## Earliest Memory

Theo

When I was 5, I saw my first Jurassic Park movie. I was scared at first but I thought it was pretty cool. When I was 6, I saw The Lost World. It was pretty cool too. I also thought it was scary. I was having my birthday and the theme was dinosaurs, I liked it a lot. I like dinosaurs so much. I even had a dinosaur cake. I like the scene where the kids were in the kitchen. It looked real. They looked like giant lizards and it was amazing. I also like the T-Rex. He was cool and so big and so scary. It was like he was coming towards me. I was wearing 3D glasses.

## I Remember Soarin'

Spencer

When we went to Disney World,  
it was a BLAST.  
There we went on lots and  
lots and lots of rides. My favorite ride  
was this ride called Soarin'.  
The people who control it  
have big fans behind it.  
We were raised up on this long row  
of seats. There was a film in front of us.  
The end.



# I Remember Falling Down the Stairs

Zishan

One time I fell  
down the stairs. It  
really really really hurt.  
We had to go to the  
emergency room I did  
a back flip when I fell down our  
12 stair steps. It  
happened at a  
party. I was 5 or 4.  
It wasn't fun.

# I Remember

Marisa

I remember my last summer vacation. I remember the long, sweaty, hot car trip to Ohio and the tension of getting to the water park. I remember seeing kids slide and scream in the indoor water park while we unpacked in our large, camp-like room.

I remember when we stepped onto the cold, smooth floor of the water park that we would be having so much fun.

I remember the anxiousness when I sat on the wobbly, slippery tube and was pushed onto the blue tube, swishing and sliding back and forth.

I remember falling onto my soft bed and laying my excited head onto the white puffy pillow and instantly falling asleep.

## Stories Are...

### Stories Are...

The Daleville Community

- ... adventures written on paper.
- ... shards of life, wrapped nicely and given as a gift.
- ... memories or fantasy things that inspire people to make their own.
- ... what give my life meaning.
- ... adventures or fun that are read to give joy and sadness.
- ... lessons that teach you and help you through life situations.
- ... all around us, what we see outside can be world telling to other people.
- ... something that makes my life entertaining and doubtful and things.
- ... enjoyable and exciting like cheese dip.
- ... passed down and gives insight to who you are as a person.
- ... your imagination mixed with reality.
- ... paper and pencils.
- ... gripping and catch interest.
- ... fun and awesome things.

## The Screamer

Alexis

I am afraid of heights because they are really high and I feel like I am going to fall. This one time I went on the Screamer and it went up really high. We were upside down and it stopped. It felt like I was going to fall and I was so scared so I never went on that ride again.

## Injured

Thomas

"Rebound the ball or I'm going to have you runnin' laps," informed Coach Coffman in a non-threatening tone. "Be more aggressive!" So I took his warning and put it to use. Apparently, I took his notification to harshly, and the next thing I knew, the ball shot up to the backboard, bounced once, and descended to the court.

## One Hot Day

Harley

One hot day my dad asked me to take some long rectangular pieces of metal onto the trailer. So I went and picked one up, and dragged it to the trailer and lifted it to the edge. I started to get on the trailer and then the pieces of metal slipped. They hit my leg. Then they slid diagonally down my leg! It started to gush out blood! Then I went inside. I let it bleed until it stopped. I put on some Neosporin.

## In My Room

Alexis

I am going to write about my nightlight because it is my favorite light in my room. It is colorful and it goes on the wall. There are stars on my wall like I am outside. That is how I fall asleep, because I feel like I am outside.

## The Grandparents

Olivia

### **The Bates**

My grandparents are the best. They are sweet and special. They are special to me because they know me and love me so much. They go to church with me. They sometimes babysit my siblings and me. I love going to their house because they have the best macaroni and cheese. My grandparents and I love IU basketball. We also like bologna. That is why I love the Bates.

### **The Bensons**

The Bensons are my grandparents. They travel a lot. We go to Dale Hollow Lake with them every summer, they own a really pretty houseboat and speedboat. They are a lot of fun. They have a pool and we come over and swim. They taught me how to swim. They come watch me cheer and play basketball. We like going to dinner with each other. I love the Bensons.

## The Russells

The Russells are my grandparents. They take us to Florida and we have fun together. We have Christmas together. We have dinner together sometimes. We also have most of our holidays together. My nana is small like me and my grandpa is tall like my sister. My grandpa is my mom's dad and my nana is my mom's step-mom. So that's the Russells.

## Lucas Oil Stadium

Maddie

Today, I went to Lucas Oil Stadium. It was AWESOME! We went on to the field and into the quarterbacks' suite. The place was so cool. We went in the locker rooms. I saw Peyton Manning and Andrew Luck's lockers. I even got autographs from two of the cheerleaders. My friend got her shirt signed! Today was awesome to me!

## A Hard Choice

Alexis

The time I had to make a hard choice was when I had to pick who my partner was. Two people wanted to be my partner and I had to choose between both of them. I could not choose but I had to. I asked my teacher if I could have both of them as my partner and she said yes. That is how I solved my problem and they both were my partners.

## Ordinary Boy

Thomas

I glanced up at the digital clock. 5:30, it read.

“Can I read the remaining pages in that amount of time?” I asked myself, careful not to wake my dazing brother above my head. For the past day-and-a-half, I had been reading a book that I could not put down. It was about a youth living in a city where everyone had a superpower, except him. He was known as Ordinary Boy.

As I mentioned earlier, I couldn’t put the book down. So, the only thing that I did all morning was read the superhero story to catch up on the AR program, and for fun.

## Not Just an Ordinary Boy

Paige Ziegler

He’s aggressive.

A baller.

A youth with great power.

He’s intelligent.

A reader.

Not just an Ordinary Boy.

He’s kind.

A listener.

A master speller.

He’s a giver.

A helper.  
A graham cracker eater.  
He's loyal.  
A friend.  
A human to his pup, Indy.  
He's quiet.  
A soft-speaker.  
A valuable sheep.  
He's imaginative.  
A dreamer.  
The Invisiboy!  
He's Thomas.  
A fifth grader.  
A creative writer.



# Buddy!!!!

Jasiah

I have a dog named Buddy and I want to tell you the story of Buddy. When I was in Kindergarten, in summer, I was outside with my parents. Then my grandma came over with a box.

"What's in the box?" I asked. She showed me the box and there were ten newborn puppies. They were so cute I almost cried.

"Do you want one," she smiled.

I looked at my mom and dad.

"We should get a dog," dad said.

"Take a pick, Jasi," grandma said.

I looked. They were all big. Then I saw one in the corner. It was the smallest one. "I want that one."

"That's the runt. Are you sure you want at one?" my grandma said.

"Yes I do."

Four years later I was older, and so was Buddy. But before we named him Buddy we couldn't name him. Then my cousin BJ kept calling him Buddy, so we named him Buddy. He is healthy and strong right now.

## Traveling Stories

Zishan

I like cold weather because I don't get all sweaty like in the summer. And there's a bunch of snow so I could go sledding or skiing. I also like winter because winter has Christmas and Winter Break. I went sledding this winter and last winter. I went down this pretty tall hill. It went pretty fast. The hill was kind of steep. For Winter Break I went to Florida, USA. We went to LegoLand and Magic Kingdom. At LegoLand I bought Legos. We went on a lot of rides. After the rides we saw cool fireworks. At Magic Kingdom I went on Splash Mountain. It was very fun. I had a turkey leg for lunch, and then we saw fireworks. After all that we went back to our hotel to sleep. When we woke up we got in the car and drove to Atlanta, Georgia. We stopped there to see my dad's friend. We gave a Lego set from LegoLand to my dad's friend's son. Then we went home.

## When I Did a Backbend

Maddie

One word. Two syllables. Backbend. I love doing gymnastics, no matter what. I can do cartwheels, handstands, and lots of others. But the one thing that I used to do was a backbend. Whenever I try I fall. I probably won't do it for a while. That's what I used to be able to do, but can't do now.

# Creativity Is...

## Creativity is...

The Daleville Community

- ... all of one's imagination summed into one thought.
- ... having fun and completing what's in your mind.
- ... using your noggin to come up with a good idea. P.S. eat cheese dip.
- ... imagining things.
- ... the glue that holds ideas together.
- ... an expression of how you feel.
- ... thoughts put into your mind and put into amazing things on pieces of paper to anything in the world.
- ... living without fear of other people thinking you're silly or wrong.
- ... making new things and having an open mind and believing that anything could happen (ex. unicorn).
- ... every shape, color, sound, smell, and feel in the world.
- ... inventing something new.
- ... freedom to explore a new world.

## I Am Powerful

Sara

I am powerful. I am sweet. I am TIRED!!! I am loved. I am smart. I love sleeping. I enjoy friendship. I am astounding. I am athletic. I NEED sleep! I am funny.

## I Don't Want to Be a Princess

My name is Sara. My name means princess. My name meaning reminds me of royalty. My name reminds me of the colors blue, purple, gold, silver, and pink for royalty. My name means princess, but I don't want to be one. It would be too much responsibility and I don't like to wear dresses. I only wear them for special occasions, like church, Easter, and funerals. My name is Sara so I really didn't have a nickname until a boy called me, "Saramist".

## Let Me Introduce Myself

Sadie (Sarah)

My name is Sarah. Most people call me Sadie, though. My favorite color is aqua. I am nine years old and in third grade. My favorite domestic animal is a dog, but my favorite wild animal is a sea turtle. I like to swim, and make any kind of bracelet. I also like to draw and read. My favorite book is Harry Potter. I also like to play video games. My favorites are Mario Kart and Minecraft. I play violin. My favorite food is pizza. I also like ice-cream, candy, and chocolate. At my house I have a dog and four fish. I like to color in coloring books too. I have a lot of colored pencils.

## Positivity: To Sadie (Sarah)

Colin Noll

The coronet of daybreak rests upon your head,  
Its gold and platinum threads embroidered with gemstones.  
Herald the radiant aura, young princess,  
Into a world which needs hope the most.  
Beat the drum upwards as you always do,  
And keep the joyous chorus in full attendance with  
The warm love of your friends  
And everything you do.  
Even in your fleeting moments,  
Shine brightly into the night,  
Keeping one last twinkle of summer throughout  
The chilling breath of winter.  
So skip it up, punk. Break all of the shells  
Touch the lives of the lonely  
And show them the love found  
In writing, and friendship.

## My Name

Olivia

My name means the food Olive. My name means sweet. My name means cool and awesome. My name means special. My name means nice. My name is Olivia. I have six letters in it. I have a lot of nicknames from my friends and family. I have Oli and Olive.

## Learning to Trust: Olivia

Paige Ziegler

I am not a confident writer. I get intimidated and often times embarrassed with what I write. I have a hard time trusting an audience to hold the information that I have written. Through Daleville I found I had to filter my level of adult material in the memoirs I wrote along with the kids. There couldn't be cursing or references to inappropriate substances. I had to PG my work for my audience, but even then for some reason I still felt nervous. I felt like I was a middle school student afraid to share with the class.

These kids knew that we were college students, only there for 7 short weeks, and that we were there to hear their stories; yet they found trust in us. There were things they would write about and wouldn't write about, and I would always try to push them to write about what they were afraid to write about, not for the book, but for themselves.

During one session, Olivia Reed walked into class looking disgruntled and complaining of a bad day at school. She didn't want to say much, so I encouraged her to write about it. She very quickly shot that down thinking it would be published in a book for

her classmates to all see. I quickly remembered that my day too hadn't been so sharp. I had locked myself out of my house and was forced to run across campus to get my roommates' house key, so I could drive my car out to the Elementary school. Not the worst day ever, but not the best. I decided that maybe I could challenge her to compare our bad days. She looked apprehensive and kept saying how hers was so much worse, and I did the same. We eventually got pen to paper and wrote about all the details of our unfortunate days. When finished we swapped papers and read each other's pieces. And what happened? She told me hers was still worse, and it might have been, as far as a middle school day goes. I had to give it to her though, she trusted me with her story and I felt honored to have read it. No one else could read it besides the other college student with me, Paige, who voted that Olivia had been met with a worse day than I had.

Every session following her bad day, she wanted reassurance that her "Bad Day" piece wouldn't go into the book. I marked an "X" in the top corner so that she knew it wouldn't. I earned the trust of someone much younger, and at an age when trust is everything.

I started to think, why do I have such a hard time trusting others with my work? There was confidentiality that I wanted myself, but to even open that up to one person means so much. It made me realize that if I write just one thing I should write my work to share and even if that means including things I find private.

Olivia taught me that writers become open books as they spill their hidden lives onto pages. If I want to be a writer, I need to form trust within a writing community, just as my friend Olivia trusted in me.

# Girl Scout Cookies, Fish, and Seuss

Kennedy

I am a Girl Scout. I like to sell Girl Scout cookies. I like to catch fish.  
I see dogs everywhere. I don't know if the dogs like me. Maybe I love dogs!  
Maybe I am a cat. What I am a cat?  
My mom is allergic to cats. I am not allergic to cats.  
I am scared to see ghosts.  
My teacher is named Mr. Hall. He is fun when you are with him.  
I like Dr. Seuss. My favorite Dr. Seuss book is I'll Teach my Dog a Lot of Words.

I like the zoo!  
There are so many!  
The zoo is pretty.  
I like the Children's Museum. It is pretty.

AAHHHHHHH Tornado!

Today I have a dog.  
I like to ride a bike. A bike is sometimes hard to ride.

WHHEEE!



## My Bed

Brayden

My bed is a haunted creep.  
It makes me itch and it makes me sleep.  
I hate my bed so much.  
That is why I sleep on a mattress on the weekends.

## Picture in the Closet

Campbell

At night, I see pictures in my closet. Sometimes I see other people there. I get scared to death sometimes. It scares me. Sometimes I go to bed and close my eyes to keep my eyes from seeing people in my closet. One time, I saw my Grandma Sarah. So that's what I was scared of.

## Everlasting Giggles and Peanut Butter Cups (Response to Campbell)

Ashley Price

When I was Campbell's age, I too lost my grandmother and just like him, I was more than just a grandchild: I was her best friend.

I remember the first time Campbell talked about her. His eyes lit up as he told me about their days together. They baked snacks in the kitchen, and spent their afternoons watching cartoons. He loved going to her house more than anything in the world because she *loved* him more than anything in the world. I didn't need to ever meet her to know that. The smile on his face said it all.

I remember spending days with my grandma, or Memaw, would you rather? We spent our time playing Barbie's, eating Reece's Cups, and making "coffee" in my toy coffee maker. I loved going to her house because she loved me more than a bee loves a flower. She was the only one that could make me smile big enough for my lone left dimple to sink deep into my chubby cheek.

Because of her, I am the confident and hard-working woman I am today, and it's no secret to me, that the soft spoken and kind-hearted demeanor of Campbell was learned from *his* grandma as well.

Never have I met a kid who didn't complain. And when I say that, I mean he didn't complain about a single thing *ever*. I could have told him to eat a bug and he would probably have smiled and giggled and went along with it anyway!

It took awhile for him to come out of his shell, though. The first day we worked together, he barely looked up from his paper as his pencil danced across the page. But even after weeks of writing together, I still feel like I never got to fully meet Campbell. He kept his true feelings deep down inside, but that's what made him such a beautiful soul. For, I've never met someone so young, with such exquisite words, and an ability to let all those hidden feelings, flow so freely and effortlessly onto paper. Campbell, if you're reading this, I want you to know that you have an amazing gift. Not the ability to write, but the ability to express who you truly are, for most adults aren't even able to do this. You were blessed with such a kind soul, and I hope that one-day as you're reading this as an adult, you realize just how special of a person you truly are, and all because of what your Grandma Sara taught you. I hope you carry those memories with you forever, because they are what will continue to shape you, as you grow into a spectacular and successful young adult. But most importantly Campbell, I want you to remember to never stop writing, and stay true to those feelings inside you, because that's who your Grandma Sara wants you to be; A best friend... to everyone.

## Cat in a Tutu

Jessica

Hi, I'm Jessica. I love pie. I know, it's a pretty bad way to start a story, but it's true. I'm famous in my class for pie. I go to Burris, and I am NOT willing to move. My favorite animal is a cat. I don't have any pets, and that's probably a good thing because I can't even take care of my own hair. I have a fairly annoying younger brother who is crazy about Cheerios and hates iced water. I like to think of myself as a calm, patient person. The only problem is that that's not quite true. I scream at people. I am possessive about my art supplies. GRR... You're touching my marker.

I've won 1st place in the Kindergarten PBS Kids Go contest, but I have to admit, maybe some details weren't too necessary (I included blood and guts. REALLY long story). I like the color sky blue because it reminds me of flying. I like to read books but *only* fiction.

Some people call me weird, and let me tell you, that's entirely true. I have thousands of stuffed animals, and I sleep with five of them- a dolphin, a white cat, a pink poodle, a tiny golden retriever, and a turtle ball. Seriously. This turtle is actually a sphere. I play the violin and had a recital last night.

I used to do ballet, but that activity was disastrous. Times I Ran Into A Wall: Too many to count.

## My Family

Alexis

My family is really crazy. They like to yell. My mom is dating a man named Mose and they say all the time that they are married and she has a lot on her hands. LOL. Wow, let me talk about my big sister, Sierra. People say she and I look alike and we think so too. She has a baby named Nakyla and 3 middle names, wow, and then a last name. Her nickname is "Fat Fat". LOL. Well I think she is growing out of it and so does everybody else. Triston is my little brother. He likes to fight and he is very bad, just like some little girls that I'm about to talk about. The twins are Mozay and Monay. I think they do not look alike but some people can not tell them apart, also let me talk about my big brother...

## I Love...

Marisa

I love elephants. I have lots of friends. I love to read. I hate pain. I was stressed. I am relaxed. I am tired. I love ice cream. I love to write. I love basketball. I love the beach. I hate worrying. I love soft, green grass. I hate ants. I love lily pads. I love rivers, ponds, and lakes. I love the woods. I love spring. I love trees. I love nature with no surrounding buildings. I love bubbles. I love playing outside. I hate tight pants. I love to draw. I love to be happy. I wish I would never have homework ever in my life again.

# Frog Tank

Kennedy

I like climbing. Do you like climbing? Climbing is fun when you have a bear! I want to be a mouse. One time I went to a birthday party!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I like mazes, but I always get lost. One time I broke a fence. I don't like it. I am writing a book at home. I am reading Stuart Little. My favorite animal is a frog. First I had a fish, 5 fish. One time I stole a bunny. I like to count. Writing is fun because... because it is fun. Being a kid is... hard. But you can go to school. Being a kid is sometimes hard. My writing teacher is named Carmen. A cat is a real good pet. A cat is not better than a dog and some are fluffy. If I were a butterfly I would have frog images on my wings. I would live in a flower. If I were a grown-up I would try for a day. My dad is nice. I like him a lot. He plays with me. If I were in the army I would lose. If I was in an army of frogs, I would win! If I had a unicorn I would freak. A frog unicorn.

## Frogs Galore! (To Kennedy)

Colin Noll

You speak your mind, and that's ok  
I hope that speech is here to stay  
You helped me break through a troubling fog  
With your eternal love of frogs  
And all of that hoodley-doo of funny things  
That working with you girls brings  
Especially you, faithful Kennedy,  
Who attended the whole time despite many snowy days.  
I loved the way to were unafraid  
I love the word and story choices you made  
I'll remember the right way to draw frogs  
Just to make sure I remember you.  
I know you like Minecraft, and fishes and cats,  
And I know you're one of the more creative types  
As such, I'll make sure your voice holds firm  
Throughout time, now that you are immortal.  
Like the mystical elven or faerie queens  
And their armies of loyal amphibians  
You shall shine as a light through time  
For all little girls' imaginations to follow.

## My Name

Zishan

Zany

Insane

Scared

Handsome

Active

**(and sometimes) Normal**

## Invisiboy

Thomas

Invisibility, Flight

To have a look at life without others acknowledging my distinct presence, to observe their true feelings toward certain opinions, or even the fun of spying without being noticed, would give me unimaginable joy.

All of these ideas become possible with the power of invisibility.

Dad - Super Strength (Bulk)

Mom - Gift of Super Wisdom and Knowledge (Thunder Woman)

Leah - Flight (Flying Spiker)

Isaac - Cyber- Tech Iron (Cyber-Kid)

Indy - Super Cuteness to taze bad guys (PowerPup)

Super Bark and Super Bite



## Snow Wolf

Harley

If I were an animal, I would be a snow wolf because they're good with camouflage and I am, too. They are good at staying alive. I am, too, because I practice in my backyard. I am very good at doing wolf instincts, especially at night.

## A Point Blank Boy (Response to Harley)

Paige Ziegler

He's instinctive.

A thinker.

A snow wolf in disguise.

He's a builder.

A collector.

A Lego Designer.

He's intelligent.

A bidder.

A news watcher.

He's shy.

A quiet being.

A listener to all.

He's artistic.

A keen eye.

A drawing master.

He's a thinker.

A dreamer.  
A car chaser.  
He's funny.  
A clown.  
A point-blank boy.  
He's Harley.  
A fourth grader.  
A creative writer.

## Iris

Iris

Iris, not a name you hear very often. Whenever someone calls my name, I think of everything musical. Iris Dement, a singer. I've always connected with rainbows. Greek goddesses, how majestic. Musical rainbows dancing in the rain whispering out the name: Iris.

### **Songs that are Me:**

*Just Give Me a Reason* - (Pink and Nate Ruess) chills; riffs

*Iris* - Goo Goo Dolls - (Sleeping with the Sirens) peaceful; soothing

*If I Die Young* - (The Band Perry) sentimental

*Rainbow Song* - (Kermit the Frog)

*Imagine* - (John Lennon) meaning; tune

*Team* - (Lorde) love the meaning

## My Thoughts on the Universe:

Imagine this, a rocket shooting up into the sky, nothing but clouds, which are no longer fluffy marshmallows, floating in the sky. A chill shoots up in the back of your mind. Science, something you learned about in fourth grade, means something a bit more now. The thought of the universe, millions of stars, thousands of galaxies, and even more.

## Colors

Zishan

The sheets of paper  
are as white  
as the clouds. The clouds  
look like they will taste like  
puff balls.

A rainbow would look  
red, blue, green, purple, yellow,  
orange. The air would  
smell crisp and breezy

# Pizza Lost Forever

Madison

Purple dog cat Mary Jane  
Blue sad tragedy crying  
Questions investigation search  
Never found  
Pizza Lost forever  
Sour Cream & onion chips  
Heart broken feels like betrayal  
Hope never relieved only  
5 /6 years old maybe 7ish  
Worried thief- maybe dobish  
Runaway stray Fugitive  
Rain thunder lightning  
Shoots pink & Black Pawpa  
Mamaw mom Tony Dad Aunt-  
Jane Josh Family Friends  
Ocelot leopard lion tiger teen titans  
Raven Beast Boy Robin Cyborg  
Starfire computer electronics  
Drawing Blackfire wildfire  
Batman joker Green lantern

# Start Digging



# Creatures Great and Small

## Survival

Bryson

If I was trapped in  
A desert, I would struggle... struggle  
For water. Barely... sur...vive...  
I would climb. Climb with the animals (not the beehives)  
Hopefully I'll make it and not... just...die...  
And the animals. They gave me food  
To survive!

## Poet Who Didn't Know It

Natalee Bird

In the beginning working with Bryson was a bit difficult. It was hard to get him to write about more than a video game, but the first time he suggested doing poetry, my eyes lit up. He is my favorite poet of all time. I was always excited to read what he had written, and I know he was extremely proud that he found a writing style he excelled at. He improved so much over just the few sessions we had together. It was a pleasure to work with this bright poet who I hope will continue to write and show the world what he is truly capable of, I can only see amazing things in his future. Thank you, Bryson.

## Aden the Eagle

Aden

If I were an animal I would be a bald eagle! The reason I would be and eagle is because they can fly. Flying seems really fun, plus eagles are predators. If I were an animal I would definitely be a predator. Eagles are the bird of America; talk about cool. Eagles are beautiful with balck bodies and a white head blended perfectly. Eagles are stealthy and rarely seen. Also, they can't be hunted; the perfect animal for me. P.S. No school!

## Jessica the Iguana

Jessica

Jumpy

Earway

Sitson

Spit

In

Cats

Angry

Every  
Little  
Iguana  
Zoo  
As  
Big  
Ears  
Tear  
Hats

Large  
Iguanas  
Tape  
Tiny  
Little  
Eggs  
Find  
Orange  
Radishes  
Die



## Getting my First Dog, Diamond

Maddie

One of my best days ever was when I got 1st dog, Diamond. My mom's work friend, Kevin Turnbow, brought me my dog. She was tiny and adorable! She looked so helpless! My mom gave me her collar and I slipped it on her. After that, the kids (me, Kade Turnbow and my cousin, Julie) and the grownups started talking. A few minutes later, we all smelled something. I looked at the dog position.

"Eww..." I screamed.

We ran to my room and shut the door. It still smelled. After a few minutes, the smell was pretty much gone. We walked back in and my mom told me I should go walk my new dog. We slipped a dress on her before we started walking and then we set out.

"Come on Diamond!" I said pulling the leash.

"Maddie, look at what she's doing," my dad said, messing with his fishing stuff.

I turned around. She was pooping. Again. Once she was done, we started walking. We walked around the whole Hill Lake. Once we got back, my dad was sleeping in a blue chair inside. We went to my room for awhile.

"Maddie, come look at your dad," my mom yelled.

We ran in there and Diamond had pooped on my dad's sweatshirt and he was still asleep! Well, we woke him up and he changed. Afterward, we just did normal things like swim, play tag, and playing in my room. So that's the story of when I got my first dog. She is 3 now and still adorable.

## Frogs

Kennedy

Hi, my name is Kennedy. I like frogs. Frogs look cool. Frogs like flies. Frogs jump. Frogs and toads like jumping. Toads like to eat. Tree frogs wait. A lot of tree frogs were on my porch. I have a dog. It's name is Mia. I have seven fish my family owns. The fish that is mine specifically is named Ribbit, even if it's a silly name. My brother, he shoots me with a dart gun sometimes. I don't like him. I like gymnastics. One time I read a book. I like books. If you tell me how to read a book, I'm on it! My biggest dream is to go to the moon in a pink rocket. Now, don't tell people my favorite color (she told me her favorite colors but I will keep my promise not to tell). I like my dog. What are we still doing here? This isn't over but you like me but I...

## Journey to the Snake Infested Swamp

Thomas

As I lifted and orange life jackets out of the out door closet, I glanced toward the tree house high above the snake infested swamp. My church group and I had gone to summer camp, and now, on Thursday afternoon, we were next to the camp's swamp. We had two options: go canoeing in a moss filled zone; or zip line into the swamp and hope you didn't get bitten by snake, or a fish or something lethal like that, like a mutant Dinoshark. This decision was made instantly due to the fact that I had never zip line that all. I left my Crocs on the grass near the life jackets wardrobe and took off around the rectangular swamp and toward the wet lip, as it was called....

AHHHH!

Aden

Snake! I jumped out of the way as its slithered past. Holy macaroni! That was scary! It was then, when I was three years old, when I was traumatized for life. My next experience with snakes when I was throwing a baseball with my dad. He threw the ball and I missed it. It rolled under a pine branch. I went down to pick it up and on that branch was a green and red snake. AHHHHHH! I ran at full speed as far away from the branches fast as possible. My most recent experience is when I opened my screen door. It was summer and I wanted some fresh air, so I opened the door and stepped outside. I heard a soft hissing noise I look to my left and saw the biggest black snake in the world. I then totally freaked out. AHHHH. I shot forward and jump off our deck it was a shortfall and as soon as I got up, I ran until the shock wore off.

## Snake

Madison

I was in my house.  
My dog barking—  
Continuously barking.  
I went outside and I saw  
A snake. So I got a rake  
And picked up the snake with the rake.  
I kept the snake for two whole days  
Until it died...

## What Animal Would I Be?

Kaylin

I would be a penguin because my favorite animal is a penguin. I would be a penguin because they are so cute and funny. They get to waddle around and slide on their bellies. Baby penguins are so cute. I would get to swim around all day. The other animal I would want to be is a snow owl. I don't know why, but I would just want to be an owl. I love them; they are so cute. I would also be a monkey because my mom calls me her "little monkey" because I'm in gymnastics. I also love climbing trees and eating bananas.

## Take a “Hike(u)” with Kaylin and Writing

Sarah Keck

My student Kaylin,  
A young writer in grade six  
She’s got things to say.

She remembers much,  
And is not afraid to write  
What is on her mind.

*I Remember*  
Kaylin has a book  
That she writes of sixth grade life.  
Two chapters? Epic.

Writing with Kaylin  
Is interesting each day  
Thanks to Author’s Chair.

After we each read  
What we wrote, we explain it.  
It’s worth listening

Though she is concise  
In her writing prompts sometimes,  
She's ready to talk.

*What Animal Would I Be?*  
Cute and furry? Yes.  
Whether by looks or actions,  
They win Kaylin's heart.

Monkey and gymnast  
Both match Kaylin's character.  
Cute, also active.

Besides animals  
Along with traits and hobbies  
Our thoughts almost match.

*Our Talk On Formal Clothes*  
We share our feelings  
And both of us understand  
We are similar.

No dresses, no shoes  
With the heels that hurt us.  
We're not that girly.

I've learned we have days  
That we do not want to write.  
I understand that.

But the more we talk,  
Kaylin and I develop  
What to write about.

*Is My Best Friend Going To Live?*

I have also learned  
That we both have memories  
We aren't keen to share.

Kaylin can write some,  
Not all, but in time she will.  
And that goes for me.

This writing is hard.  
We hate to remember pain  
Even if it's passed.

But writing helps us.  
Kaylin and I write and talk,  
So we grow with trust.

## Getting Beanie

Maddie

I got Beanie a couple of months ago. He was about 1 year old when we got him. Beanie is a black dachshund with brown eyes. The way that my mom's cousin found him wasn't so great. He was found by a trash can and left to die. He had been mistreated. This guy stole him from his girlfriend. He didn't want to sign all the papers.

He yelled, "If I have to sign all these papers I'll just go and kill the dog!"

He stormed out and dumped him by a trash can. My mom's cousin, Jim Bean, found him and took him home. He posted on Facebook, "Found a dog. He was by a trash can. If he's yours, comment on this please. If owner not found, I will give him away."

My mom commented and said, "If the owner is not found, I will take him."

After a little while he posted, "Donna Etchison, he is yours!"

I had to wait about a month 'till I got him. I couldn't wait! The day when I got Beanie, I was getting baptised. The dog, I thought, was a dog of God. We drove to Tennessee and came back with Beanie! That's the story of how I got my 2nd dog, Beanie.



# Heroes of our Lives

## Bat Jack

Jackson

If I was a superhero, I'd be Bat Jack, defender of the night! I'd be like Batman and only come out at night since, you know, I'm a bat. I'd be different than Batman though! I'd have a sense of humor since you can't be serious all of the time. I'd be supernaturally quick too, and have the ability to become invisible! I'd be in the best armor too. It would be rainbow, not invisible, and I've have a red cape and jetpack so I could quickly fly all over the world to whoever needs me! For backup, and as a failsafe in case something bad happens on a mission, I'd have my sidekick Super Sara Jean. Together as a team, we'd help the world become better and braver for a brighter future for everyone.

## Best Friends

Olivia

The first time I met my best friends Emilee and Lauren was in kindergarten. I was out playing on the monkey bars when they asked me to be friends. I said yes, of course. We have been friends for four years. Now, we do everything together. We like basketball and writing. We have sleepovers together. Playing together makes us happy. Emilee has long, brown hair and she is short like me. Lauren has long blonde hair and is tall. They are twins. My sister Abby and I are twins too. Abby has long blonde hair like Lauren; she is also tall. Emilee and I look alike. Abby and Emilee have a lot in common and Lauren and I have a lot in common. We all like Taylor Swift and 5 Seconds of Summer. We also like to cheer together.

## Loss and Gain

Campbell

I've lost a couple of people throughout my life so far, and that's made me pretty sad. I used to have a friend named Carter. We would play on the playground together throughout preschool, kindergarten, and first grade, and we had a lot of fun. We were really good friends even after he had to move away to different school. That was, until, after our first get together after he moved. We had fun then too, but I haven't gotten a chance to speak with him since. It's pretty sad we were so close but couldn't stay friends because of the distance.

More close to home, I lost my grandmother, Sarah, when I was younger too. The process of losing her was say, but especially when I had to go to the funeral. My family and I stayed together with my aunt, Kay. I don't like to talk about it all because it's very sad, so I tried to focus on food since it was something that wasn't so sad that would help me think about other things.

Thankfully, I've gained things too, which helps against losing my friend and grandmother. I've had a lot of fun playing with my friend Nathan at recess. We'd play games like Flood the City and Spaceships. I liked these games because they were both neat and fun. We've played these games from second grade all the way to fourth grade too, so we're experts now! Stuff like this has really helped move on since Campbell moved, and it's good to have fun to help stop being so sad!

## Captain Bolt!

Aden

Hey! I'm Captain Bolt and I can shoot lightning from my hands! I know, cool, right? (My real name is Aden but nobody needs to know that). My sister can shoot lasers out of her eyes and she can also turn invisible. My dad has super strength and can lift anything. Oh yeah, and I have super speed! (I wanted to build up suspense before I told you). My mom can fly and she can levitate things. If you're a superhero family or just some regular people, remember to fight crime!

## Long Lost Friend

Madison

I lost a friend many years ago, and nobody knows what happened. She just disappeared and was never to be found. She was Mary Jane, my beloved dog, also a part of the family. My hope was never to be relieved.

I felt like my property was stolen, kidnapped from me. She was my bestest friend. If I got hurt she was by my side with her white-brown-black mixed collie fur in my face.

Maybe she ran away, maybe she was stolen.

If I had her back for a day, I'd spend every hour, minute, and second with her. And I'd ask her what happened, and she'd perk her ears as if she wanted to tell.

## Norman and Mary Jane

Niki Wilkes

A Golden Line from Madison's writing is: *"I'd ask her what happened and she'd perk her ears as if she wanted to tell..."*

When we were all writing about loss and you started to talk and write about Mary Jane, it reminded me of a very similar story. I had a dog when I was younger, a toy poodle named Norman. He was still a puppy when we lost him too. We rode around the streets of our then Georgia home, looking for the tiny creature. I called out the puppies name as we rode by:

"Mormy. Mormy. Mormy." (You see, I could not hear so well, so I called him Mormy.)

It was so mournful how I called for the little fluff-ball that I had just lost after a few weeks of admitting him into my heart. At least, that's what I imagine. I was only two at the time, so I don't have a memory of my own to this event. My parents, however, filled me in on the story, talking about the heartbreaking sound of the poor dog's name coming from my lips.

We never found Norman and I too live with the mystery of wondering what happened. He would be replaced a year later, another toy poodle, named after the puppy we had lost.

I do remember this Norman. In fact, I would grow with the chubby little creature into my early teen years. I remember his cream curls and his red belly and how he would

allow other pets, like my bird and my lizard, to sit on his back and give them a ride. He always had a dazed look in his eye. For this reason, my father would give him a “happy simpleton” voice whenever he would pretend to know what Norman was thinking.

He loved his plush toys to death, ripping the squeaker out of them with a sense of accomplishment in his toothy smile. Sometime I would sew the squeaker back in and watch him pull out the stuffing with just as much satisfaction. The practice certainly saved us from buying new toys, and he was none the wiser.

We did a lot of things to that dog for our own amusement. Because he was a toy poodle, for example, we would have to shear him like a sheep to make sure he could see. One time, my father only shaved the sides of his head to give him a Mohawk. Our entire family laughed at our punk little dog, while Norman wagged his tail at our tickled joy.

After fourteen years, however, he started to wear down. His puppy energy was gone and he just stared up sweetly with his droopy eyes. The entire family knew what was going to happen if we took him to the vet, but there was only so much a person can handle those stares. The poor boy had a tumor and even if we could afford the surgery, there was really no hope of him recovering. My dad came back with the news that he would have to take our Norman in the next day.

I asked if I could keep him in my room for his last night. He usually stayed with my mom, but she let me have that last request. I remember waking up and hugging him once I recalled what day it was. I looked at him, tired but still happy. I asked him what my life would be without him. He, too, perked up his ears as if he wanted to tell.

The connection between our dogs and ourselves is just as deep as any familial connection, which makes their loss just as painful. They give us many laughs, rush to our sides, and show us devotions beyond human capacity at times. In some way too, even though they can never speak to us, they tell us a bit of who we are and what kind of person we can be. Dogs teach us how to cherish other living things in a way that humans cannot. I miss my Norman in a way similar to your Mary Jane because dogs carve little places in our hearts, no matter if we have them for a few months or fourteen years.

## Moments to Remember

### Winter, My Friend

Jessica

My favorite holiday is Christmas because of all the nice, freezing cold snow. I also like the presents, except not the that aren't for me. It's all about *me, me me!* If you're wondering why my favorite holiday isn't my birthday, it's because my birthday is in September and there is very rarely snow in September. I am a really cold person. I hate the heat, but the cold is bearable for me. I think it's really easy and fun to build stuff out of snow with *NO* adult supervision. Even if I wanted supervision, I wouldn't get any because my family hates cold weather. Okay, my brother doesn't, but he hates leaving the house for any reason at all. He doesn't even want to go to the toy store. He prefers to stay inside and stare endlessly at a map of the world.

Winter likes me because I eat the snow. I know, it doesn't sound like a huge favor to Winter., but instead of ramming into a windshield or window, the snow got a good adventure. I also am Winter's victim. I enjoy being a victim too. Here's how it works. Winter and Sky put out sleet, which changes into ice once it hits the ground. Then I clumsily walk out and slip on the ice. Winter likes to tease me. Or injure me. Whatever you want to call it. I also help scrape the car by complaining how hard it is to scrape the car. My breath is pretty warm, so I bet it will melt the car by the time Spring comes. See? I'm such a good helper to everyone. Oh, *you* need help too? Well of course you can count on me! Just keep 911 on speed-dial.



## Young Master (To Jessica)

Colin Noll

In brilliant truth you do reside, shaking the foundations of all.  
On softest snow you stride, the benevolent Yuki-Onna.  
Words flow as water from the source; the beating spring of thoughts,  
And I scry the fates across your work's deep surfaces.  
Though your time with us was fleeting, many of life's greater graces  
Flicker and flutter like combustive moths.  
So be like stone, and hold strong in your uniqueness which  
You announce to the world with the might of continents.  
Let your voice exonerate the time-honored arts of literature  
Shape the waves of words and sounds into all creative things you wish  
Craft your quintessential forces into a movement for the ages  
Because well all know one thing: you have the talent;  
You must be the one to nurture it.

## Tokyo and the Snake

Olivia

One day a while ago, my sister, Abby, and I were messing around with our phone. We were looking all around the globe and were looking at Tokyo when, all of a sudden, one of us clicked on the map and hit the spot of a Starbucks! The phone went to call the store and we were both so scared to stop it that by the time a person answered the phone, it was too late. They were speaking Japanese, so my sister and I just started laughing and hung up the call. We kept laughing for awhile, almost hoping that the person would call us back. Unfortunately, we've not gotten a call back yet.

My sister and I have been through a lot more though. One time, our brother found a snake outside and started chasing us! We ran inside and shut the door as hard as we could. We thought we were freaking out the most we could, but that was until our brother put the snake through the bottom opening of the door! We rushed over to the window and tried to open it to maybe escape the snake roaming our room, but it was impossible. So, we hid away from the snake for a while hour until our brother came and got the snake. At least he was nice enough to do that.

## My Favorite Day

Madison

My favorite day was when I drew my favorite drawing yet! My friend, Ashlynn, helped me a lot. I drew a coyote named Destiny (from the angel on her head). I made sure to add some stars below her eye to make sure she was special.

Later on that day, I had other great things happen too. I found three dollars, I got to spend the night with Ashlynn at my house, and my mom even let us have some pop! We wanted it to be special, so Ashlynn and I put our pop in the freezer for slushies. Fortunately, the slushies came out great and tasted even better! We even defended our slushies from my dog, Shy-Shy, who came up and tried to take one! The silly dog tried to play it off by lying next to us, but it was such a good day that we didn't mind.

## An Early Memory

Iris

I remember the cool breeze on my face as I got out of my car. Luggage in hand my, dad and I walked to the train station. I heard the distant sound of the train whistle and excitement bubbled up inside of me. This is my earliest memory. When I was six or seven my dad and I rode a train from Indiana all of the way to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. At the time it, was probably one of the most exciting things that I have ever done. I remember boarding into the train and staring out the window amongst the lush trees and being in awe. I don't remember much about what happened when I arrived but I do recall that I went down to the nearest park with my family, cousins, aunts uncles, grandparents, the whole deal! We had a wonderful picnic. Although I don't remember the rest of the visit, there were some pretty memorable events that happened on the trip back. We could not board the train because there was a blown down tree blocking the path! We had to stay in the waiting room and sleep on hard floors with just one blanket to keep us warm, and let me tell you, it's a little hard to sleep with everyone is cheering and yelling at the hockey game that is currently playing.

## Best Day Ever

Maddie

My best day ever was when I met my BFF, Kaytlin Shockley. We were sitting down playing with corn kernels in a box. We had shovels, buckets, plastic animals, and even a toy castle. We weren't talking much. We were just playing with the kernels, shovels, buckets, and the castle. Then I spoke up.

"What's your name?" I asked quietly.

"Kaytlin. What's your name?" she Asked.

"Maddie." I said.

"Hey." she giggled. "We're wearing the same color of blue."

"We are?" I asked while looking at my shirt. "C'mon."

I grabbed her by the hand. We showed our shirts to all of the helpers. We went back and sat down by the box afterwards.

"Wanna be friends?" I asked.

"How about best friends?" she asked.

"Yeah." I said.

We hugged and started playing again. This time, we talked a lot. So, in conclusion, I met my best friend forever by wearing the same color of turquoise while playing in a box full of kernels in Daleville Preschool. We have always been friends, even though she goes to school in Yorktown now. We've never split apart. Now we can text each other and have more fun than ever!

## Last Time I Went Swimming

Georgia

The last time I went swimming was on January 25th. I swam indoors at the downtown YMCA pool. My bathing suit is pink with a different shade of pink flower on the corner of it. I think that there was snow outside. There's no diving board there. But I don't like to dive off the diving board anyway. So I still had fun. I can do a backflip underwater. I played mermaids with my sister but we got cold in the water and left.

On summer vacation we went to Hawaii. I touched an octopus. It didn't feel like a snake, but it did feel slimy. Did you know that if you accidentally step on a sea urchin it hurts, but if you purposefully touch one it doesn't hurt. I got a seahorse to wrap on my fingers. I went snorkeling. Did you know that if you squeeze a sea cucumber too hard, you could squeeze its insides out?

## No School Zone

### Arcades and Legos: The Land of Florida

Landon

I remember when I went to Florida. It took a while I went from Indiana to Florida. In a car, it took us about eleven hours to get there. It was my mom, and dad, my brother, my step brother, and my sister. I first went to a hotel on the way there. We went to go eat at an expensive place. I liked it a little. It was pretty good. When we were there, we went to a hotel for 4 days. It was really cool! They had an arcade and a huge water slide inside of it, and there was a hot tub there too. The best thing I like about there was the arcade where there was a fruit ninja game. It was really cool! There was a Legoland that I had gone to two times before. Everything was made out of Legos. There were three different Lego roller coasters, all with different speeds and styles. There was a Legos swimming pool and a Lego train, and even a huge Lego store with every kind of Lego piece imaginable. There was even a massive Lego city that we went through. That's how I remember loving Florida.

## The Carolina Beach

Marisa

My favorite place that I've ever been is North Carolina. I like this place because my cousin and I had lots of fun there. We swam in the ocean. , walked around the big neighborhood, and made sand castles. I remember the soft sand and the angry waves crashing on to the beach. When the waves were low, my cousin and I buried her little brother in the sand so only his head was poking out. I remember waking up early in the beach house and watching huge waves crash onto the dark stand against the black speckled sky. I can still remember all of the fun things we did there because it was the longest time I have spent with my cousin.

## Paris Landing State Park

Aden

Every year on the 16th of July, the Aden family sets off for Paris Landing State Park in Tennessee. The hardest part of the trip is the seven hour trip in the backseat with my sister. When we arrived, we checked into the cabins. We split up the family and lived together. There was a pool, a lake (where my family fished), a tennis court, and all sorts of other things. My cousins and I catch up and trade stories. The next day, we went and swam in the lake, making sure to watch out for snakes. That evening, my Uncle James cooked his famous meat dinner. The next morning, my Aunt Jane made breakfast. Then we joked around and threw a football. We enjoyed one last lunch and departed. Ugh, another long car trip....



## The Trip to Alabama

Blake

I went to Alabama and I did a lot of cool things. I got to see some of my friends and when we pulled up into the driveway. We saw a pool and unpacked everything and then got to go in the pool. Then we could not do anything because it was a rainy day. Something terrible happened on the same day, I woke up and lost my voice. So on Wednesday morning, I saw if my voice was better, and it was not. But then, on that day, we went to the water park. Then I watched some TV and went to sleep. Then we got up again and went to the beach on Friday after we swam in the pool. All the rest of the days, up to Sunday, we just swam in our pool.

## Fun Loving Third Grader

Natalee Bird

Blake often made up his own prompts on the spot if he felt he couldn't come up with idea for the ones I provided. This fun loving third grader was such a joy to work with. He loved telling about what he had written and smiled so big because he was proud of what he had done. He was always thinking about the future, and I can see he has a bright one. He is honest and always funny. Blake is an incredible young author, and I cannot wait to see where his imagination takes him in his years to come.

## Going to Florida

Caleb

I went to Florida and my whole family went with me. I stayed at a big hotel and there was a huge pool and a hot tub. Most of the days I went to the beach. I did lots of stuff, I went boogie boarding on big waves. I also went to the pool and jumped in the pool that is like 6 feet deep. I am a really good swimmer. The main reason I go there is to eat seafood. My favorite place to eat in Florida is Bubba Gump Shrimp. I also go deep sea fishing and I caught a lot of fish, but I forget how much I caught. And my dad's best friend Jason and Neauh went with us. They really did not want to eat seafood. The main reason me and my family go to Florida is to eat seafood and play at the beach and play on the bungee jump. They have like a blow up wet slide. We also like to walk down the beach and collect neat shells and put them in a jar.

## My Boring Break

Aden

Yesterday sucked! When I got up it was 2 in the morning. I felt horrible and it took me 30 minutes to fall back asleep. My mom and dad both work on school days so I had to go to daycare. Ugh! Daycare is as boring as ISTEP on a weekend. None of my friends were at daycare, not to mention I had finished my book the night before so I had nothing to read. Luckily my dad's meeting was canceled and we got to go home early. I felt groggy the whole day. My day wasn't over yet, though. I had to go to my sister's doctor's appointment. She's getting older so I had to wait for 45 minutes in the lobby. I went home, took a shower, and tried to go to bed, Sadly it took me 2 hours to fall asleep. My last thought was, "just my luck: bad."

## Summertime

Iris

Imagine this: you walk outside to a nice summer breeze. Wind blowing through your hair, the distance sound of the nice lake water splashing and spraying into the moist sand. If you haven't already guessed, this is me summarizing my favorite season, summer. One reason that summer has always held a special place in my heart is because of a little island that part of my family owns up in Ontario. The name of the island is Hamajusyda. You may be thinking *what on earth does that name mean?* Well it's named after my grandfather's family. We go up there for about 2 weeks at a time in the summer. One of the best parts about it is that there is no electricity so it is an amazing time to just tune out of all the technology and focus on the present time. The sound of the wind, the roar of the water, and the cry of the seagulls. So if anyone ever asks me what my favorite memory of summer, is I'll know the answer right away.

A lot of my love for summer doesn't necessarily have to do with what I'm doing, but mainly just the wonderful atmosphere of everything. When I think about summer I think of my friends and family, myself included, sitting around the back porch. We don't really have any certain plans for meeting behind it but it feels good to just let go of all your stress and worries and let the summer breeze carry you away. This, my friend, is what I think summer is all about.

I know you may be wondering why I haven't mentioned this yet. Well here it is, the third reason not I love summer is that there is no school. A lot of studies show that 95 percent of the child's worry and stresses build around school. Well in the summertime you don't have to worry about the big math test coming up or if you have all A's on your report card. Summer is just a time to let go. So to wrap it up summertime is my favorite season that happens through the year.

## The Most Beautiful Place Ever

Maddie

I have gone to Florida many times, but the time I am talking about was two years ago, when I was eight. I was at the beach with my mom and my grandparents. I ran inside the gates excitedly, yelling for them to hurry up.

"Come on, mom!" I said, waiting.

"I'm coming." She said while walking up the stairs.

I ran to the shore, looking at the waves.

"Maddie!" My mom yelled.

"What?" I yelled back.

"We're going to be right there!" She yelled.

“Okay!” I yelled right back.

I looked up at the sky. It was particularly hot, but the water was really cold. I ran near my mom and started building a sandcastle. When I was done, I ran to my bag and grabbed a plastic bag. I ran to the edge of the water and picked up about five sea shells. My Mom yelled and told me to look out at the water. Dolphins were splashing out of the waves! It looked soooooooooo cool. When they disappeared, I picked up more sea shells. I put my sea shells by my mom, and then ran into the cold water and splashed around. I was soooooo cold. My mom then told me it was time to leave. I left, sadly. I slowly got into the car, wrapping in a towel. I still remember everything looking so perfect. That’s the story of the most beautiful place I have ever been.

# Hidden Treasures



## Super Girl

Alexis

If I was a superhero my name would be Super Girl and I would definitely not wear the rubber suit. I would wear a comfy suit and it would be green, my fav color, and my super power would be that I could make plants and that is why my suit would be green and fluffy. I would also work by myself because my family would just distract me.

I would use my powers to help people to grow gardens and if their plants are rotten I would make them grow again. No one would see me, they would just know I was there. I would go in the city because everybody needs help and I would go in different parts of the world. I would know people need me because I would have green grass senses. I would save everybody.

## Caring Creatures

Thomas

If I were an animal, I would be a sheep. Sheep are gentle, caring creatures. They compare to me well because my personality is much like theirs. I am a soft-hearted, loving child. Despite my massive size, I have an incredibly tender heart. Sometimes, my height and my unsolemn qualities fool others into thinking I am an uncaring giant. Obviously, sheep don't have massive, powerful bodies. Nevertheless, we both are caring souls.

## What Makes a Name

Aden

My name is a long forgotten mystery; it is a symbol of me. It is my great grandpa's names and is the base of my family, the building block of my whole generation. My name is joy and contempt. My name is also stress and restlessness. It is "fire" in Irish and "athletic" in English. My name is neat and hardworking, fun and happy, amazing and trustworthy. If I could change my name, I wouldn't, for I can't imagine a better one for me. My name means so much to me. I love my name. Four letters that define me!

## Lemonade and Chalk and Green Tea

Kaylin

Freedom smells like freshly baked cookies.  
The flavor of the moon is ripe with the taste of lemonade.  
Too much homework tastes chalky like chalk.  
Safety smells warm like a soft warm blanket.  
Here's the smell of my dad's head when I'd sit on his shoulders like green tea.  
Ripe peaches and creek sounds bring me back to the days I walked in the meadow with my grandfather.  
Loneliness includes the scent of nothing.  
A kiss near the ocean tastes like shy excitement.  
Fireflies and a moonless night smell like s'mores.  
Pine sap and burned marshmallows remind me of summer nights.  
The flavor of Monday morning is paper.  
The taste of Friday afternoon is like a bowl of ice cream.



# Dragons

Marisa

If I could be a mythical creature I would be a dragon. I would be a dragon because I could fly everywhere, soaring higher than any bird.

I love the scales of dragons; the scratchy and smooth toothlike scales following the figure of the body.

I love the eyes of the dragons because they can be light, a mixture of all the colors in the world. They are said to be the kings of magical creatures.

My mom would be a sphinx because she likes to joke and make riddles. She likes to be creative, like the sphinxes in Egypt.

My dad would be a satyr because she likes to joke and make riddles. She likes to be creative, like the sphinxes in Egypt.

My dad would be a satyr because he loves to joke and play around. He also loves to be serious at times, and loves the cold.

My youngest sister and oldest sister would be naiads. They are pretty and look like each other, but they are also really mean and argue.

My older sister would be a demon because she likes black and red and loves the dark. She watches creepy movies and draws dark things.

# Fluffy

Sara

If I could be any mythical creature, I would be Fluffy, the three headed dog from Harry Potter, because my two best friends and I are always attached at the hip. My brother and sister are very annoying. I think they are goblin-like mandrakes. They are goblin-like because they are small and weird. The mandrake part comes in because they are annoying and loud. My mom would be a cornish pixie because she is nice and sometimes mean. She likes helping animals. My dad would be a minotaur because he is big and strict and wants to be left alone.

# My Role Model

Iris

Ever since third grade, I've had one consistent role model that I have looked up to. This may sound silly, but here it is, my role model is the ever so famous Harry Potter.

These books are probably my favorite ones ever. The reason that I love this character so much is because of all that he has been through, but he still manages to do all of the heroic things that he manages to accomplish. I mean, pretty much half of his life is based around defeating the Dark Lord Voldemort.

For the first portion of his life, he was an orphan who lived with his aunt, uncle, and cousin, who did not give him the proper care for his life. Then one day, with the snap of the fingers, he was brought into this world of fantasy, and found out that he was the one who had to defeat The Dark Lord. I would say that's a little too much for an 11-year-old to handle, but he still succeeds! Throughout the book, he has to deal with loss upon loss of his closest family and friends.

Sometimes I think of how cool it would be to meet the creator of this amazing character, J.K. Rowling. I guess for now I can just keep re-reading the books of my role model, Mr. Harry Potter, and re-live his life again and again, amongst these books.

## Almost Ghost Stories

Seth

I've read  
*Ghosts*  
*of War,*

but never finished it.

It's about a guy  
named Anderson  
who meets a ghost  
named William Foxwell.

At first,  
William doesn't remember  
how he died.

He fades in and out,  
invisible and then not.

But the more he talked to Anderson,  
the more he remembers how he died--  
how he was cleaning the *USS*

Yorktown,  
how he accidentally  
gave a machine gunner

a concussion.  
How he took the flight suit,  
got on the plane,

and got shot down.

\* \* \*

One day,  
I ran four miles  
in the Indy

Marathon.  
But Mom fell  
and had to get metal in her wrist.

One of my friends asked me not  
to talk about it. he  
was disgusted by the operation.

\* \* \*

When I was still part  
of my mother's stomach  
there was something next to me.

It could have killed me,  
even.

But the people at the church  
prayed for me, and I think  
that other part is gone now.

## Dog of My Dreams

Thomas

“Oh, and please help us to find a good dog at the right time. Amen.”

I ended this prayer with the ever-so-usual conclusion of asking the Lord for a puppy. This, as you may have guessed, was the average way for my family to end a prayer. For a time too long ago for me to remember, my thirteen-year-old sister, my six-year-old brother, and of course, my ten-year-old self, had been pleading with our parents to get our whole family a dog.

They, too, would have to admit that they also wanted a smart, loyal, adorable puppy. Even some mornings at breakfast, all that we could have a conversation over was what our puppy could be like.

“What color would he be?”

“How big will she be?”

“What gender will it be?”

Those were the ongoing questions that none of us could answer.

Then, suddenly, all of the answers to those impossible questions were revealed.

“Of course, the dogs are too young and small for us to look at, let alone get one,” my dad stated on some random day, most definitely not a holiday. “The good news is that you only have to wait another four weeks or so!”

We had gathered inside our living room, and none of us could be happier. The rest of the evening was a blur of joyous chaos. We spent forever looking up pictures of Cavachons, the breed of our soon-to-be puppy. Everything we did that night had some association with us getting a dog. With this recently given information of us getting a puppy, I had something to look forward to.

About a month later, my family was parking our car in the driveway of the dog breeder’s home. The first thing that I saw were two dogs in a small, caged-in play area. Then I noted that these weren’t ordinary canines. They were, in fact, the two puppies’ parents. As we admired the “couple,” Ms. Vosburgh, the dog breeder, approached us and invited us to another part of their yard to see our two options.

“This one is John,” proclaimed Caroline Vosburgh, the breeder’s seven-year-old daughter. “And this one is Will.”

Both puppies, to my surprise, were unlike the pictures we had seen on the internet. John and Will were both black and had long, shaggy fur. They were both relatively pudgy, although Will was more than that.

Will was fat.



Both dogs had floppy ears that came down to about their necks. I scooped up John and held him to see how much he weighed.

“Surprisingly light!” I confirmed in my head.

We spent another 45 minutes in the Vosburgh’s backyard. While the moms of the two families chatted, my dad and I ran around and tested the tiny puppies. I, for one, grew to have a preference for John, rather than the purchase of Will. I could only hope that the rest of my family thought that way, too.

As it turns out, both my brother and sister preferred John over Will, as well. Even though my mother had hoped for a quiet, easygoing puppy that could watch a movie without barking and jumping all around like Will probably could, she chose John. My dad voted for John because he would most definitely become a better playmate than Will ever could. I could see the idea of choosing Will was flushing down the toilet.

One week later, we returned to the Vosburghs’ house. Only this time, we were coming to buy the puppy rather than look at them.

That afternoon, we spent an awesome time outside with our new puppy, Indy (short for Indianapolis). And even now to this day, Indy is our favorite dog of all time.

He is the dog of my dreams.

# The Flower of the Moon

Sara

Freedom smells like freshly baked cookies that come out of an oven.

The flavor of the moon is ripe lemon zest and covered in mint.

Too much homework tastes chalky like dry tree bark.

Safety smells like steamy hot chocolate.

Ripe peaches and creek sounds bring me back to mowed grass.

Loneliness includes the scent of cucumbers.

A kiss near the ocean tastes like cherries.

Fireflies and a moonless night smell like melting chocolate.

Pine sap and burned marshmallows remind me of s'mores.

The flavor of Monday morning is pickles.

The taste of Friday afternoon is like warm apple pie.

# Ribtastical

Aden

Ribs, those juicy, tasty, fall off the bone goodness. I'm gonna tell you three ribtastical things: 1 = good sides for ribs, 2 = best rib places, 3 = the amazingest of ribs.

First, good ribs sides. When I eat ribs, I get them with mashed potatoes, hold the gravy. The reason for mashed potatoes is because they taste amazing and are so creamy and delicious. Another good side is corn. I love corn! It goes perfect with ribs because it's crunchy and sweet.

Second, best rib places. My favorite rib place is Birds BBQ. It's 5 minutes from my house and is the Muncie BBQ Champion. I always order the half rack with corn, mashed potatoes, and buns.

Third, the amazingest of ribs. Ahh, ribs, that beautiful, tasty, awesome creation that makes me want to eat the air it smells so good. But don't take it from me, go to Birds and eat the best thing you've ever put in your mouth. I hate to break it to you, but if you haven't eaten at Birds you're OUT OF YOUR MIND!

## A Letter to Aden

Griffin Buckley

The future confuses me and I feel like I had more of a plan for myself when I was 10 years old. I could name what I wanted for my birthday, Christmas, where I wanted to go to school, what I wanted to be, the car I wanted to drive, etc. Now life in its early stages has caught up to me and left me overwhelmed.

It's amazing to interact with children of that age and hear the same hopes and dreams you once saw in yourself. It's empowering and disheartening all at the same time to hear their aspirations.

I sat across from one of my Daleville students, Aden, and he would rattle off what exactly his life goals were and I'd think *I have never met someone so young and cultured*. He can tell you the places he visits every year, how he has dreams of going to Tennessee University, how he wants to play sports professionally but he knows that it is unrealistic and would settle to be an engineer. There I sat, with my fourth and fifth majors under my belt admiring his motivation and also his ability to think realistically. I was a lost soul in a fifth grader's plan for the future. It would get me thinking about how I have wants but I need to be realistic in my approach and all because of a fifth grader, but not just any fifth grader, Aden. He's an old soul who has made an impact on my life just as I hoped to make an impact on his.

# The Scariest Moment

Iris

My scariest moment took place in the summer of 2014. My family and I were at my great aunt and uncle's cottage up by Lake Michigan.

One night, I look out of my huge window, and across the lake, there was a huge green mountain/hill that stood tall in the middle of the lake. It was looming over the lake, standing tall and proud. My Aunt Phill came up to me and said that there was this legend that she had heard of that every night, a creature comes about that mountain and watches the people of the cottages around.

Now of course, this sounds like something of another silly legend. I didn't believe it. But then, that night, when my cousin and I were sound asleep in our beds, we heard the scariest noise I had ever heard in my entire life. It sounded like a herd of dinosaurs just ran wild around the whole house! My cousin and I darted out of our beds and jumped to the window. There was a light on in one of the cottages nearby.

We looked at each other in horror, and without saying a word, we crawled back into bed. Let's just say that we didn't get much sleep that night.

Now the next morning, we all rushed downstairs and asked everyone in the house if they heard the sound that we freaked out about during the night. The scariest part about all of this, was that the rest of my relatives besides my cousin and I were not freaked out. They just went about their day like nothing had happened. After all the hubbub of the morning when my cousin and I stopped freaking out a bit and went back to our normal lives. But both her and I will never forget the scariest moment in our lives.

## If Someone I Lost was Back for a Day

Maddie

If someone I lost came back for one day, it would hopefully be my dad's parents: my granny and my grandpa. I met my granny and had fun with her. I climbed all over her walker. When she died I was three, I think. She died because she told the people who took care of her to take her off of dialysis. It hurt her and she hated it, and a couple days later she died.

If they came back for a day, I would hug her, and then meet my grandfather. I would take them to my house, and then their house, to show them what it looks like now. I would show them their sons, my dad and my uncle. I would make my parents take us to a lake my grandparents used to go to, and where we go now. Then if it was turning to night, I would kiss them both on the head and let them go.

That is what I would do if my grandparents came back for one day.

# One More Day

Niki Wilkes

A golden line from Maddie's writing: *"Then if it was turning to night, I would kiss them both on the head and let them go."*

While you and Madison were writing about lose, I wrote along with you guys about my own. I did not have a grandparent that I felt as close with as you felt with yours, but I did have my great aunt, who I called Auntie. I had her in my life until fifth grade, when her stomach cancer finally took her away. She too had asked to be taken off dialysis, for the very same reason as your grandmother. She was such a presence in my life though. I remember always being with her, or at least, that's what it seems like in my memories. I have a theory that I remember her more than even my parents at that time in my life because my brain had to keep every morsel of her that it could. It would never have her anymore, so it rations whatever it does have.

I remember a certain grace about her. She was that classical Greek woman who dripped gold jewelry. This dripping was more like a broken faucet, however, so she kept it tasteful. She had a particular, not to mention expensive, taste for life, desiring quality over quantity. I do think that I tend to romanticize her though, mostly because when she went, so did my sense of childhood. I know for a fact that she had a temper, though the only memory of this came during a car ride home. My brother and I were listening to a book on tape and began to argue about who got to hold the book. My Auntie became so fed up with our bickering, that she threw the cassette tape out the car window. I can't speak for my brother, but I know we both began to cry after it

crunched on the ground. Even in that moment, however, I still see something admirable because her regret followed so closely after her mistake.

If I had her back for one day, however, I'm fairly sure we would just talk and eat food all day. I'd treat her to a waffle breakfast, a Chicago lunch, and a Greek dinner. We'd have a tea party somewhere in there, probably around three, though I would offer her Pepsi because I know that that was her favorite.

I would talk to her about my troubles and anxieties about the future. I'd talk to her about our family and what she thinks about how we are getting along since she left. What did she think of my mother starting a new business in New Mexico? What about my brother moving to Burbank, California to pursue his film directing career? How about her own little brother, my grandfather, still in the house they used to share, only upstairs now?

I might not be as generous with her as you were though. It would be wrong to keep her to myself all day, but with everyone so far apart, somebody is going to get left out. Perhaps a phone call, though I doubt anyone would believe it. I'm also just a little bit selfish and wouldn't want a second of her given away, seeing as everyone else in the family has a larger supply of memories than me. Perhaps for one day I wouldn't mind being selfish, if only for more time with her.

I don't know why her loss was and is still so hard on me. Of all the people I have lost, I never felt an ache for their presence or anything unspoken between us. I guess I just want to talk to her as an adult though. I've grown so much, but I will never get to grow in my understanding of her. I want to see her with adult eyes, but I also want her to talk



to me like a grown up. Her opinion means the world to me and I just want her to confirm that I grew to be something special.

If I was ever awarded such a chance to see her again, and we were able to come to a happy and quiet agreement, I hope I would be able to do as you would have done with your grandparents. I hope that when "it was turning to night," that "I would kiss *her* on the head and let *her* go."

## Field Home

Marisa

The bright blue sky covers the golden sun, shining light onto the crisp, dry grass that blows in the soft, slow wind. The grass is like strings weaved together like hair, basking in the far away glowing sun. The sky is so clear and blue, it feels like a drawing from a kindergartener. There are grayish-brown rocks in the distance, the only other object in the tall golden grass. There dirt is like laying on a large brownie, soft and crumbling on top, and hot and squishy below the top. The rocks in the distance look like a cold floor to lay on, but it is warm lit a bed and smooth like a piece of paper. The sun is getting closer to the horizon of golden grass, the sky turning dark and purple. Small dots appear in the darker blue, and you know you should go back home. But you will always remember the beauty of the expanse of dry, sweet smelling grass, and it will always feel like home.

## Warmth

Sara

Some fields are scratchy and cold, yet some are soft, warm, and calming. My field is soft, warm, and calming. Wildflowers are waving in the wind while the sun barely peeks over the distant hill. The grass is soft and tall. None of the grass is brown or old. Every piece of grass is filled with life and warmth. I would be all alone in the field, while laying down and staring at the sky above. The clouds have a pink and purple tint to them as they move across the sky. The clouds are soft and filled with blue. While you are laying in the field all your worries go away. You don't have to worry about getting bee stings or sunburns.

# The Best Memory

Theo

Every year,  
me and my mom and my dad  
and my sister Marina and my other sister  
Zela and my cousins  
and my aunts  
and my uncles  
and my grandparents rent  
a house by the lake or the ocean  
for one week.

The last time we went,  
we stayed in a house by a lake.  
I don't remember the name of the lake,  
but being by the lake was like being  
on a tropical island with  
a ton of fun things to do,  
like going down to the beach,  
playing tag,  
going down to the park  
to play basketball, riding bikes  
or scooters  
around the block,  
and that's pretty much it.

|||

It's awesome.

We do that every summer.  
And sometimes we go canoeing  
and stuff like that.

But

last time I visited with my aunts  
and uncles  
and grandparents,  
my mom and dad,  
they had some things to do,  
and all of a sudden,  
we had to leave.

So we stopped at a gas station,  
and they thought it over,  
and once they thought it all the way over,  
we went all the way back.

After that, me and my mom  
and dad and uncles and aunts and grandparents,  
we were all having a happy old time,  
and then something came up.

My sister was acting really really really...  
she was acting really...

what do you call it when your sister is, like,  
a real brat?

My sister was acting like a real brat,  
so my mom and dad said, "Marina, you better stop, or you'll get in trouble."  
Then all of a sudden, Marina started to act up.  
She was  
starting to cry and whine and she got in real big trouble.

The next morning, we woke up, then we had some breakfast.  
Me and my cousin,  
we went down, we had some pancakes, some eggs,  
and then we went on a bike ride.

We went down to the harbor  
and we met our aunt down there. And we started to ride  
all the way back, and that was the  
last day  
that me and my family stayed at the  
lakehouse.

Before I went to the lakehouse  
for the last time, I saw a movie with my mom and day and sisters.  
It was called  
The Secret Life of Walter Mitty.

For Father's Day, my mom bought  
my dad the soundtrack for the movie,  
and we listened to the whole CD  
every time we got in the car  
or went to the beach  
or when we went to the book store  
or when we went to get ice cream cones.

When I think about some of the songs  
in The Secret Life of Walter Mitty soundtrack  
I think about being at the lakehouse. When I think  
about the songs, I feel like...what that  
feeling when you remember something really well?  
Almost like it's happening to you?

I think it's called nostalgia.

# Blue

Bryson

My favorite color is blue.  
I am in the library at a small table.  
I am looking at my thumb and the books.  
I have a Mohawk that I want to dye blue.  
I see Alexis, Jackson, and Sara.  
Jackson is eating a red sucker,  
Alexis is writing a lot,  
so is Jackson.  
I feel like a nerd.  
I want to go home and play  
but no.  
I hate school and I am a taco.  
What am I saying?  
Well a canoe is blue  
where am I  
I am giving the books to you now Sara,  
and do not laugh.  
What I do not want,  
To give you the book  
because I am sleeping.

## Fright on a Motor-Powered Thriller

Thomas

“Uhh...” I hesitated before following my friend’s father, his sister, and my own sister, Leah. They were rapidly approaching the most horrifying roller-coaster I had seen in my life. In my case, I had two choices: stay with my mother and watch the three have “fun,” or join the brave adventurers now in line for the coaster. I made my decision quickly. I strode over to my now companions. “At least I’ll die in a preferable place.”

We spent at least 15 minutes in line, and with every step my heartbeat increased. At last (or maybe too soon) we arrived at the front of the line. When the current riders’ ride was complete, our doom would begin. Dr. Carr, my friend’s dad, was jokingly telling me how I had been too young to die, up to the point where I almost believed him.

Unfortunately, the roller coaster’s riders finished their ride. We loaded ourselves into the seats, preparing for the horror.

As my heartbeat increased as we climbed the hill, I said a quick prayer.

I exited from the ride with incredible joy. Never judge a book by its cover, or in this case, a roller-coaster by its frightening appearance.



# Fish Hook

Ashton

1.

When I was in Indianapolis  
in the summer,  
I asked my dad if we could go fishing

and he said yes.

So we went and got the bait.  
And then we went to the pond.  
And then we unloaded.

And I caught a whole bunch of different fish,  
but they were all  
small.

Then I felt the tug,  
the  
warm sun

when I caught the bass.

2.

One time, my brother called me mean names  
and it got me mad.

I was so mad  
it was like my anger was the ocean.  
Crashing.

It only got worse. We started yelling  
at each other. The anger happened  
in waves until

we both got in trouble.

3.

My old best friend's name is Zion.  
On the first day of school,  
we rode the bus together. After

we started talking, we noticed  
we had a lot common.

A couple  
days later, I asked if I could play

at his house. But  
after Christmas,  
when we were putting in new flooring,

we found mold and  
kept on calling  
people to fix it,  
but no one could.

The mold stayed because the water  
hiding in the house wouldn't go away.  
So we had to move.

I haven't

seen Zion

since.

4.

When I grow up,  
I want to be a marine  
biologist

so I can find creatures  
of the dark, touch the shark  
with no gloves--

secretly--

make a home  
in the water  
and shout it  
out  
loudly.

## War

(Breaking Ground)

Zishan

I heard on the news that the USA and Syria are not liking each other. If things go really bad we might have WAR!!! I feel really scared because I'm afraid people will attack us. If it happens it will sound like a violent movie. I hope it doesn't happen.

## Crisis with Iraq and Syria (adapted from War)

(Hidden Treasures)

Zishan

I walked into my dad's office  
and he was staring at the TV.

He usually watches  
CNBC, but this time he was watching CNN,  
and the people on CNN said  
that the USA and Syria  
are not liking each other.

He wasn't smiling.  
He didn't say anything.

I don't know much about Syria.  
I heard that they're in a crisis. And civil war.

And Iraq is taking over land. And people are mad.  
And the USA is mad. And they don't like  
that Syria and Iraq are fighting.  
So the USA won't talk to them.

If things go really bad  
we might have WAR!!! I feel really scared  
because I'm afraid people will attack us. If it happens  
it will sound like a violent movie.

I hope it doesn't happen.

## Conqueror of Ships

Marisa

Marisa means "of the sea." My name comes from my mom's friend. My name is from good times my mom spent with her. My name comes from happiness, sadness, anger, and jealousy. My name comes from the deep blue waves that cascade onto the sandy beach. My name comes from the home of creatures that the world doesn't know about. My name is the conqueror of ships, but also a beautiful, calm place to relax.

My name reminds me of yellow and blue. My name is the setting sun on the disappearing horizon, falling into the deep blue water. My name is blue as the ocean, the color, the smell, and the taste.

## Out of the Box



# The Epic Harry Potter Round Robin

Sara, Marisa, & Sarah Hollowell

Once upon a time, Sarah and Sara went to Hogwarts, but they had the same name so they needed nicknames to tell each other apart. Their nicknames were Stars and Sugar, because Sarah likes stars and Sara's last name means sugar.

So they went to Hogwarts, and Stars was in Hufflepuff and Sugar was in Gryffindor, but they were still friends and had adventures like witnessing Draco get hit by one of Harry's spells in the girls bathroom. There was a lot of blood, and Stars doesn't like blood, so she *fainted* right to the floor. Sugar got the closest thing to a snake, Professor Snape.

Since he was a snake, he tried to measure Stars up to see if he could eat her, but she was too big and he was too full so he sighed and said, "Sugar, levitate her to the hospital wing. Also, ten points from Hufflepuff, Stars, for taking my meal."

"I don't know how to make her levitate, it's only my first year, and for your information I don't even know where the hospital wing is!"

Professor Snape glared and said, "Ten points from Gryffindor for not knowing! Potter! Take these girls to the hospital wing!"

Potter wasn't there. He mysteriously vanished. Sugar had heard stories about the Chamber of Secrets. Was he in there? Stars was waking up but her head hurt and she still needed to go see Madame Pomfrey. Sugar *had* to find the Chamber of Secrets,



and Stars would have to go with her to find Harry. Also, Draco probably needed help because of the blood, but Snape had turned into a snake and slithered away.

Sugar and Stars had heard about Hagrid, so they met with Ron and Hermione to go to Hagrid's hut to visit him and Fang. Hagrid would definitely know what to do. Sugar and Stars got a little distracted, though, because Hermione was there and they'd always wanted to meet her. After a while Hermione got annoying. Hagrid said to check the quidditch field, the Gryffindor tower, or the Forbidden Forest. They were closest to the Forbidden Forest, but that was scary.

"Let's go there last," Stars said.

So they went to the Quidditch pitch, where a game was on! They talked through the field where it was Slytherin against Hufflepuff. They weren't noticed until Stars yelled, "Go Hufflepuff!"

But they were on the Slytherin side of the pitch! Stars was jumping around, a big yellow sun in a sea of green. Sugar said,

"Stars, shut up!"

But it was too late. The Slytherins noticed and Sugar and Stars had to dodge spells as they ran away. Then they saw Harry dressed like a Slytherin. He was the guard for the Slytherin hoops. He let Hufflepuff get every quaffle through the hoops, and even told the seeker where the snitch was. The snitch wizzed past Professor Snape's head. Professor Snape grabbed the snitch and ended the game.

"Hufflepuff wins!" yelled Jordan.

Stars cheered so loudly her throat hurt. Harry flew down to greet them.

"Sorry for leaving you in the bathroom," he said. "I had to make sure Slytherin lost."

"Harry!" Hermione said. "That's *cheating!* You could be *expelled!*"

"That's amazing Harry! You're lucky Filch left after his cat was strung from the torch holder. Snape is with Draco in the Hospital Wing, so he will never find out!" Ron yelled.

"Ronald!" Hermione said. "Don't encourage him."

"I thought it was cool," Stars said. "Hufflepuff hardly ever wins." She turned to Sugar. "What do we do now?"

"We could apparate to the Dursley's house. They are out of town for a month. Stars and Sugar, you two and Ron will use floo powder. Go to Hagrid's hut and you can use his fireplace."

"Okay!" Stars said. She started to leave with Ron but Sugar, who is very curious, said, "Why? What are we going to do there?"

"Are we going to party?" Ron asked.

"No," Harry said. "We have a very important mission for the Order. We'll meet a student who's already there. Her name is Joy."

"Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy," Ron repeated. "I like that name."

"She's a Ravenclaw, so she is..." Harry said.

"Smart like me," Hermione gloated.

"I'm smart, too," Stars said.

"You're a *Hufflepuff*," Sugar said.

Stars pouted. "Let's get going."

Stars and Sugar went to Hagrid's with Ron and used Floo Powder to go to the Dursleys. Harry and Hermione Apparated in soon after.

"Where's Joy?" Harry asked.

Footsteps came from the stairs as a person appeared near the group of students.

"Are you Harry?" asked Joy.

"Yes, I am Harry. Harry Potter. This is Hermione Granger. We apparated here and the other three used Floor Powder," Harry said.

"We're on a mission from the Order, but we don't know what we're supposed to do," Ron said. "Did Dumbledore tell you?"

"That's what I've been searching for. Dumbledore told me that I would know what I would need to do when I got here, but I haven't found it out yet. I haven't been to any of the Order meetings, so how do I know that you're actually Harry Potter?" Joy explained in a couple breathes.

"Well, I am the real Harry Potter! I found the sword of Gryffindor, destroyed the sorcerer's stone, watched Sirius Black die, survived Voldemort's curse, watched my parents die, and nearly killed Draco Malfoy!" Harry explained.

"Everyone knows that," Ron said.

"Joy's just being careful," Hermione said. "Which is very smart. We have to find a way to prove that you're the real deal."

"What would convince you, Joy?" Stars asked.

"I think maybe this potion would prove you aren't using poly-juice potion." Joy handed Harry a small, dragon shaped bottle. It looks centuries old, with the mouth of the dragon being the mouth piece. Harry made a sour face.

"It smells like dragon pee," he said foully.

"That's a smart idea, Joy! But I forget the name of the potion...it's, it's...something with an 's'?" Hermione said frustratedly, stamped her food and snapping her finger.

"A poly-juice potion. If Harry takes the potion recipe backwards then he will stay himself if he is the real Harry," Sugar replied. "One thing would have to be added to the potion. Mabey a certain food. I will go into the kitchen and search." Everything was silent until Sugar yelled, "Potatoes!!! Potatoes is our one and only answer."

"Are they baked?" Ron asked all dreamy eyed.

"It won't work if they're baked!" Stars said. "If you bake them, they lose their magic. They have to be added raw."

Sugar came out of the kitchen with potatoes in her hands.

"Now we can find out if he's the real Harry Potter," Sugar said.

Ron snapped out of his baked potato dreams and realized reality. "Why are we wondering if it's Harry Potter if I sleep in the same room as him?"

"Harry could've died years ago and Voldemort could've used a poly-juice potion," Sugar said in a deep dark voice while holding up a turned on flashlight to her face.

"Yes, I am scared and all but where did you get the flashlight?" Ron asked.

"I really don't know. You can find anything here. Not kidding. ANYTHING! Ohhh. I remember. I found them by the pile of spiders on your feet," Sugar said. Ron was so scared he took a big huge gulp.

"There are no spiders, Ronald," Hermione said, sighing. "Drink the potion and prove you're real, Harry."

Harry held the potion and the potato. He hesitated. "Do I have to?" he asked.

"You do if you want us to believe you," Joy said. "You are the real Harry Potter, aren't you?"

"Drink it, Harry!" Ron said.

Harry drank the potion and ate the potato. He took a big blink and stuck out his tongue and squished his face up. Nothing happened to him.

"I told you guys!" Ron yelled.

"Shhh!" said Hermione.

"Who's there?" yelled a creaky voice from outside the house. Everyone froze.

# The Transcendence of Stories

Sarah Hollowell

After weeks of nothing  
but memoir,  
I couldn't blame  
my fantasy-loving girls  
for being bored.  
At their age, my writing  
was all mysterious forests  
evil unicorns  
ghosts.

I was reading  
*Harry Potter*  
until the spines of the books  
warped and broke.  
When I was their age,  
Harry Potter was only fourteen.

They have  
seven books  
eight movies  
and Harry's ageless, eternal,  
and in some ways I envy their  
never-having-to-wait

no-cliffhanger  
privilege.  
But they didn't have  
midnight movie showings  
midnight book releases  
fan theories  
baited breath  
sitting in the attic  
two months from thirteen  
brand-new *Order of the Phoenix*  
a sign on the door:  
*DO NOT DISTURB*  
*UNLESS THE HOUSE IS ON FIRE*  
*OR TOM FELTON SHOWS UP*

What is Harry Potter  
to kids who never had that?  
who didn't grow up  
waiting?  
I wondered:  
*will they love it*  
*like I do?*



But they don't need to love it  
like I do,  
they need to love it  
like they do  
all movies watched  
two books in  
they'd still rather write  
about Harry Potter  
than themselves.

So we do  
a Harry Potter round robin  
and I try not to lead it too much  
I try not to think of the self-insert  
fanfiction I read  
and wrote  
at thirteen, fourteen  
I let them lead the way  
and see it through their eyes.

They remind me that I hated Ron  
because he wasn't brave like Harry  
or clever like Hermione  
because he was scared.  
I think —  
it's weird how I understand him now.

They remind me that I hated Snape  
because he was unfair  
to my fictional friends.  
Will these girls go through that  
almost requisite time  
where they love him? Where  
he's the tragic hero?  
Will they circle back around  
to hating him  
for calling Lily *Mudblood*  
for acting like he was owed  
her love  
for being cruel to her son  
because he has her husband's hair?

The girls write,  
*if you make Polyjuice Potion  
in reverse,  
it reveals  
the truth.*  
And I think,  
*Jeez that's clever.  
That's fanfiction-worthy  
right there.*

And there we are  
writing our fanfiction  
together, round-robin,  
joined by the certainty that  
Hogwarts  
will always be there  
to welcome us home.

## Yakster's Pants Company

Jessica

Hello there! Here's a tour of Yakster's Pants Company. Here is the huge blue tunnel that jeans come out of.

The too-tight jeans come out of this thingy.

The luxurious, soft jeans out of this first thingy. So now to the cotton pants. Those came in this.

We also produce diapers.

Oh, here comes Mr. Yakster!

I need to hide my pants!

Quick! Where should I hide them?

I'll explain later.

Oh, there! In the air vent!

*Cough. Wheeze.*

That sure is dusty!

The reason I need to hide my pants is that they're not from Yakster's Pants Company.

They're from Queen England's Dirtball Shop.

I really don't want to lose my job.

# The Universe

Theo

The universe is  
not going to stop.  
There is no end.

It is huge.  
There is another planet.  
Astronauts want  
to check it out.

There might be another  
huge planet for us  
to live on.  
It is amazing.

# My Old Self

Aden

Hey, I'm Aden and I'm 96 years old. I'm gonna tell you a story about my life. Where I went to college, my job, where I live, and my pets. Are you ready? Well, hop in the time machine and let's go.

I was 18 years old, about to walk into my first college class. I was going to Tennessee University, where both my parents went. I took a deep breath and walked into my first engineering class. I majored in engineering and minored in sports science. 4 years later... I stand on the podium and accept my diploma. I am finally an engineer.

After 4 years, I own an engineering company: Aden Engineering. I'm very wealthy. I have 2 kids, a 10-year-old boy, Jack and a 7-year-old daughter named Brianna. I have an awesome wife named Katy, a dog named Sport, and an altogether amazing life.

I get older, find a few gray hairs, and all of a sudden I have a head full of white hair. Whether my life will end tomorrow or in 10 years, I don't know. Time for my next adventure, death.

## Dream Seeker

Jessica

I am staring at a unifang. The unifang is staring intently back at me. *How in the world did I get into this humungous mess?* I think. I recall the strange memories of the past. Oh, this will take quite a lot of telling.

It all started with the school field trip to the museum. "Man, isn't this gonna be boring." My best friend Ivy slouched on the black leather school bus chair. I braided my hair thoughtfully.

"Earth to Pearl." Ivy waved her hand in front of my face. "Huh?" I snapped out of my dream.

"You did the *thing* again."

"Oops." I usually get distracted. Unless I'm drawing or painting. Somehow, I can focus when I'm drawing.

"So," Ivy said to me, "What kind of things do you think about?"

"Really, uh, well nothing." I blurted.

"Come on, Pearl. Tell me!" She scooted closer to me. "Pearl come on. If you don't tell me, you'll just doze off into one of your daydreams!"

I sigh. "Somehow, I think I forgot." I *forgot* is a really good way of saying, "I'm not going to tell you the answer. Back off please."

Ivy groans. "You've known me all your life and you *still* won't answer one simple question!" She folded her arms, frustrated.

"Ivy, you know that something feels wrong when I'm about to tell you. You can ask me anything else. But not 'What do you think about' or 'What do you dream?'" I crossed my arms.

Ivy sighed. "Fine, you win. Change of topic! How about we throw paper airplanes out the window?"

"Mom said that I am strictly forbidden to throw paper airplanes out of a vehicle's window," I replied. "But I really would like to."

"Well you can point and fold the airplanes. I'll throw." Ivy has a mischievous grin.

I nodded eagerly. I pulled out my mini point set from my pocket and ivy pulled out a sheet of paper. We threw airplane after airplane out of the window, each one different and colorful like snowflakes.

The bus screeched to a slow and steady stop in the museum parking lot. Ivy and I hopped out the door. Our teacher led us into the museum. I saw a portrait of a lady in red velvet dress with ruffles.



"Madame," she seemed to say to me. "Love your hair."

I glanced at my hair. From where I had repeatedly braided and twirled it, it had become messy brown tube-like ringlets. I somehow didn't feel like a talking painting was at all odd. I stared dreamily at her. *Thanks*. I thought.

"You're welcome." She said. Her voice was soft and ancient.

"Ivy." I tapped my friend.

"Yeah?" she asked.

"Doesn't that lady seem like she's saying stuff?"

She looked at me like I was berserk. "WHAT?" she said.

"She talked to me." I looked at Ivy.

"Pearl, paintings don't talk." She placed a hand on my forehead.

"But that one did," I reply. "Talk please," I say.

"Of course. Haven't I been talking to you all along?"

Ivy frowns at me. "Told you."

"You heard her talk!" I say to Ivy.

"She didn't say anything," Ivy insisted.

"What a sore loser," I say to the lady.

"Oh, she's a *human*. She can't hear."

In the middle of the conversation, memories and dreams whirled around me. I tried to grasp even one of them, but all floated away. Then I came back to the real world.

"Go on child," She said. "Your group is leaving."

"I can't go! You can tell me about my unknown past! Please!" I begged.

"Child, you must go. A dream-seeker is in great danger if they stay at a museum. Especially an art seeker."

"What's a seeker? I must know more!" I cried.

"Great danger, child. The dream destroyer has already found you."

"Dream destroyer?" My ears were ringing.

"Go child! I will not become a murderer."

"I won't! For years I felt I was missing something! Tell me!"

"Fine, child. But don't say I didn't warn you."

A warm mist pulled me inside the picture.

"You are a one-of-a-kind dream seeker. You are honestly the only one left."

"Me?" I asked. "Why me?"

"I don't know. You can summon pictures."

"How?" I asked.

"I don't know child! Oh dear, I sense danger! I sense the dream destroyer! Alert! Alert! You must leave immediately! Yow! He's got my foot! Now, child, now!"

"But I don't know how! Help!"

"Try your best! And don't say that no one warned you!"

# The Journey

Marisa

Mud leaks into your torn up boots  
Squishing into your sweaty hot socks.  
The smell of grass is like fresh peppers,  
blowing with butterflies and small  
baby flowers. They dance like ballet  
dancers on their big show night.  
The golden egg yolk in the  
sky spreads sweat through your  
sprained body. The clouds are a  
light haze in the humid sky, a  
cover for birds of prey. The long  
trek has weathered your strong body,  
and you just want to fall into the  
assorted types of trees, onto their  
rough, cool bark like a coat on  
the young rings of wood. The delicate  
leaves are spread through the trees,  
whistling through the light breeze,  
high above, where your body could  
never reach alone.  
Finally, when you find the end of  
the treacherous hill, a large lake in  
a big clearing appears like a

welcome home to your sore body.  
Even over your long  
trek, you sprint and leap  
into the unknown waters.  
The touch of water relaxes  
your weakened limbs, filling  
your body with new and excited  
energy. The heat disappears as  
you sink further down into the  
water. Your boots slide around  
on your sweaty, disgusting  
feet. They land onto something  
slimy and moving on the forgotten  
lake floor. Your feet slide out from  
underneath you and you begin to float  
upwards. The hazy sky begins to form  
above you in the cold murkiness. You  
inhale the beauty of the heat  
as you enter the dry world. You  
realize that this journey was worth  
walking for.

# Fill the Hole



# The Battle Between a Writer and Her Words

Taylor Wicker

Despite the fact that I'm studying creative writing in school, and have loved it unwaveringly for as long as I can remember, there are nights when I'm absolutely sure I can't write another more word. When the sentences stop stringing themselves together naturally, when the language is no longer easily molded, but hardened and unmovable, I think to myself that this is my biggest flaw: choosing a craft that, cruelly, unforgivingly, rejects my efforts.

The battle between a writer and her words is a tough one, and I'll admit that I give up fairly regularly. I close my books, turn off my computer, and begin to settle into the idea that being a writer is simply not for me. I resign myself to the fact that I have failed the thing I love most, and it's sometimes the worst feeling I can imagine.

It's almost as if the universe is always guiding me up and down this rollercoaster type love for words, because during a particularly lengthy period of time where I thought I'd made a mistake in studying writing, I found myself in a room full of kids who reminded me, without really meaning to at all, why I still love what I'm doing.

When I first got to college, I thought I'd lost any definition of home. I wandered around Muncie looking for vaguely familiar landmarks, returned to my parent's house and slept in a room that had been remodeled as an exercise area. One night, after spending a night staring at my dad's BowFlex and my mom's treadmill, I left. For hours, I drove around the city I'd grown up, finally finding myself at a playground I'd spent the

majority of my childhood memorizing. I walked around, feeling chips of mulch digging into my sandals, running my hands over the graffiti on the backside of the slide. This was home.

Not necessarily the monkey bars, which had been painted over with a shiny school bus yellow color. Not the picnic table off to the side, where our mothers had dragged us to scold us for screaming too much, or the swings that rocked us effortlessly, our legs guiding us up towards the sky one minute and then pushing us back into the unknown the next. The memories I created on this playground brought me to a peaceful place, encouraged me to return to an untainted childlike wonderment of the world that I couldn't find in my college apartment or my parents' remodeled home.

The warmth you feel when you find a happy place, when you revisit a familiar feeling, letting it hold you and guide you back to when things were easier, is what I felt every Saturday morning, surrounded by kids who reminded me all too perfectly of a younger me. Heads bent over the table, each holding their pencils in a way uniquely their own, doodles and arrows and edits surrounding each paper they shyly slid over to me, trusting me (for a reason that made my heart swell) to read over the work they're so proud of.



I have a lot to be thankful for. My department is filled with inspiring professors, and struggling and flourishing writers all feeding off each others' feedback in the most open-minded and grateful ways possible. Despite that, I needed to revisit my roots. I needed to dig my way through the clutter of a college student's life, through the deadlines and the prompts and the academic papers, through the research projects, annotating novels, rereading and editing old poetry for my portfolio. Sometimes, to fall back in love with what you do, you have to return to the beginning. And it meant so much to me that, instead of finding my way back on my own, groping blindly for meaning in the thing I fell in love with so many years ago, I was guided by kids who (although unknowingly) might've truly and honestly revived my love for the written word.

## Writing Is a Road Trip

Sara Ganter

It was my first day of working with my community writing partners, a group of honest, smart, and witty young students who opened up to me right away. I could not get a word in; they were so interested in who I was and why I was there. So, I told them my story, but most importantly, I told them why I loved to write. I was honest with them, and made sure they knew that writing could be hard, but in the end, it would be worth it.

When we eventually got to the writing, the way they interacted with the prompts highlighted their individual personalities. There was Jackson, a boy with quick-wit who never failed to make me laugh at each and every session. He spoke his mind, and always had interesting ideas, like the time he compared the difficulties of writing to basketball.

There was Brayden, a boy whose love for video games was apparent in most of the things that he wrote. During the sessions, he was always engaged in what he was writing, but also took the time to stop and think before he wrote, a lesson that I have taken with me.

Lastly, there was Alexis, the only girl in the group, who was charming and adorably shy around the two boys who were full of chatter. While she was not always keen on reading her work aloud, she would smile as she slipped me her notebook under the table, excited to share her words with me.

All three of my community partners reaffirmed to me how important writing is, because it allows individuals to gain new insights and understandings for each other through their words. Though the children may not have realized it, they were doing just that. They were honest and they trusted me with their writing, and working with them allowed me to see how the innocence of childhood affected their work. As I told the children at one of our sessions, writing is like a road trip, it may be scary if you don't know where you are going, but it is all worth it once you arrive.

## Thoughts I Want to Share with Them

Jeff Owens

We wanted to draw the names  
from a hat, but no one had a hat.  
So we tore up the list  
into individual  
strips

and swept them into the middle of the table.

“I want the kids with cool names,” I said,  
plunging my hand into the pile.

For my first time  
tutoring children—seven, eight, twelve-year olds—  
I was almost too calm.

High school helped-- having to watch my sister's  
kids for two-and-a-half years. Most children liked me. Maybe  
it's my nature: I don't wanna stop asking questions. And I'm stubborn.  
And every cotton-orange-blue sunset still feels new.  
Tending to a seven-year-old and a one-year-old  
after getting home from track practice  
every day just conditioned me.

I opened my hand and knew

Three pieces of paper : Three names : Three people I could  
encourage/question/influence.

Zishan : Theo : Iris

\* \* \*

Zishan puts his pen down.

"I thought we were supposed to be writing stuff."

"Yeah," says Theo. "We don't even have any colored pencils."

We've only just started, and I'm already starting to doubt  
my abilities as a writing tutor.

Sure, I worked in my school's  
writing lab all of high school;  
I don't want to count  
how many personal narratives  
I've critiqued.

But this is different. Kids observe. They  
question. They can smell your fear, your lack  
of sincerity. They know your hesitation,  
and they feel the insecurity in the air between you, them,

and the words channeled from the mind  
to the pen  
to the page  
and on.

A breath.

"I'm sorry, guys. I was in a hurry this morning,  
so I only brought pens.  
I wanted to start  
with drawing today because we don't  
know each other very well, and it's not  
as much pressure as writing a prompt."

A pause.

"I don't know about you,  
but I think it's important  
to remember that all creative stuff-- writing,  
drawing, painting, even writing songs-- that  
sort of stuff is all important because it's  
expressing our thoughts and feelings through art.  
Then people can be around that art and know  
that other people are thinking the same thoughts  
or feeling the same emotions."

My hands are so sweaty they leave streaks  
on the wooden table. I just want them all

to like me, but I don't know if they stopped listening halfway through, so I use a phrase I hear my professors use a hundred times a semester:  
"Does that make sense?"

Iris, the twelve-year-old sitting across the table, nods.

When people want to make fun of someone for being immature, they ask, "What are you, twelve?" But Iris is engaged and calm. She offers reassurance.

When I ask her to write about her name, she breaks out her finest lyricism:

*Iris, not a name you here very often. Whenever someone calls my name, I think of everything musical. Iris Dement, a singer. I've always connected with rainbows. Greek goddesses, how majestic. Musical rainbows dancing in the rain whispering out the name: Iris.*

She's a natural writer, and she knows it.

I'm here to help her make the most of her talents,

but I'm also here to remind

Zishan  
and  
Theo

how important  
their words are.

\* \* \*

Zishan likes to show me how much he can write  
in one session ("See, I got two pages!"),  
but he's still practicing his public speaking skills.

So he slides his journal over to me  
and I read it out loud.

*I heard on the news that USA and Syria are not liking each other. If things go really bad we might have WAR!!! I feel really scared because I'm Afraid people will attack us. If it happens it will sound like a violent movie. I hope it doesn't happen*

Everyone is quiet for a second.



"Zishan," I say,  
"Even though this is the first  
draft and we're gonna work  
on it more, I know people are going  
to talk about this poem a lot."

"Really?" He smiles and fiddles with his pen,  
the one that he can turn blue, green, red,  
and even use as a pencil. ("I got it from Japan!")

"Yes." I turn to Theo and Iris. "People  
are going to get a lot out of reading your words.  
All of your stories are important."

I feel like a sap, like I'm being cheesy,  
but I also know I'm being genuine.  
Letting these students know  
that their words matter  
confirms that I'm  
actually making  
a difference.

\* \* \*

The keyboard clacking  
turns off and  
I tilt my head  
back.

“Finally.”  
It’s the last of the homework I have  
to do.  
At least for tonight.

It wasn’t even bad homework. Bad homework  
causes me panic-- stuff that counts for a lot of points,  
stuff that will make someone disappointed if I don’t finish it.  
Stuff that usually just makes me disappointed in myself.

Tutoring the kids is almost  
the only thing that comes together  
anymore. But the whole semester’s been a game  
of catch-up. I’m just hobbling right now.

If I can close my laptop and fall  
asleep in the next thirty minutes,  
I’ll get four hours of sleep.  
That should give me enough energy  
to drift through the next nine-hour  
trial.

When I stand to put my folders  
away, a stray  
piece of paper  
hits the carpet. I thought it  
was a page full of Theo's  
drawings at first-- a bunch of  
three-dimensional  
shapes and sunbursts,  
but there's something else:

*I like to write because when you write  
you can do whatever you want. It feels great.  
I like to do that stuff. Like write nonfiction.*

I have to put all of their writing  
in a folder online,  
but I think I'm going to keep  
this memory to myself.

## Break Ground with Us! Writing Prompts

In this section, discover the writing prompts that inspired the writing uncovered in *Stomping Ground*.

The prompts below were either replicated with permission from the Indiana Writers Centers' Build a Rainbow Memoir Project or were designed by Ball State University Creative Writing Students in the course.

Join in, and write with us! Break ground, dig deep, and find the hidden treasures in your own stories.

-----

Tell me about your best day ever.

Who do you admire? Tell me a story about that person. Why do you want to be like that person?

What scares you more than anything? Why?

If you were any animal, which one would you be and why?

What was your best and most fun time with a friend? Tell me a story about what you did.

Is there someone you miss or lost? Tell me a story about that person.

Tell me a story about your best day at recess?

Tell me about a time you were really sad and cried. Why? What happened?

Would you rather \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_? (Fill in the blanks and explain why you chose one or the other.)

Tell me a story about happened to you today.

What is your earliest memory? What did you see? What did you hear? What were you thinking and feeling?

Describe the most colorful place you've ever been. Was it a museum? A sunset? A drive in your parents' car? A movie? A vacation? Describe the scene and colors. Paint a picture so I can see it like you saw it.

Think of a time something scared you. Where were you at the time? Does it scare you because it might hurt you? Because of the way it looks or sounds? Are you still scared of this thing? Why or why not?

Tell me a story about an embarrassing memory or mishap.

Tell me a story about a favorite memory.

Write about when you came to love something: a TV show, a song, a book, a friend, an animal, a sport, etc...

Tell me about something or someone you lost. What would you do if you had it/him/her back for one day?

Tell the story of what happened when you laughed so hard your stomach hurt—or worse!

Tell the story of when you were able to do something that you were never able to do before. Describe how it felt and what you were thinking and feeling.

What are you an expert in? Tell me a story of how you became an expert.

Tell me a story about your favorite pet.

Tell the story of a day that went differently than you expected. What did you expect? What actually happened?

Describe the most beautiful place in the world. Tell me a story of something that happened there.

Tell me a story about when someone really let you down.

Tell me a story of what happened when someone made a real difference in your life.

Tell me a story of what happened when you met your best friend.

Tell me the story of what happened when you had to make a hard choice.

What's the story of your name?

Do you have a favorite food? Tell me about that food. What does it taste like, smell like, and feel like in your mouth?

If you could create your own superhero, who would you be? What would your name be? What powers would you have? Would you work alone or in a group?

Do you ever remember your dreams? Write about the best dream you have had. Who was in it? What happened?

List some objects in your room. Now pick one object and tell me a story about it.

Tell me a story about a time you played your favorite video game.

Have you ever received a trophy, a ribbon, an award, a prize, or a reward? Tell me a story about where, why, and how you received it.

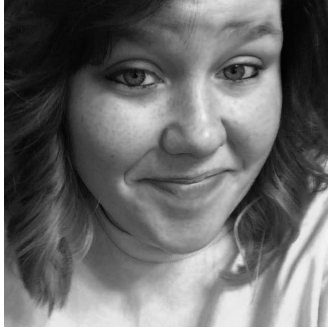
If you had a mouse in your pocket all day, what would he/she see, think, hear, learn, or find that might surprise him/her? You could substitute other animals. Give them a name. Describe the animal. Describe what they will hear, see, and do.

Make a list of things you can't stand or things that are your biggest pet peeves. Tell me a story about how one of those became your pet peeve.

Make a list of things and people you love. Tell me a story about how one of those things or people became something or someone you love.



## Bios



**Natalee Bird** is a student at Ball State University majoring in Creative Writing. She is an avid reader of any and all fiction. Natalee loves spending time with her family, especially her two nephews. She has just begun a blog titled "A Daughter's Journey for Belonging." She hopes to be able to combine two things, her past experiences and a love for writing. She aims to inspire others to allow writing to heal them as it has helped her in processing and overcoming her own family issues.



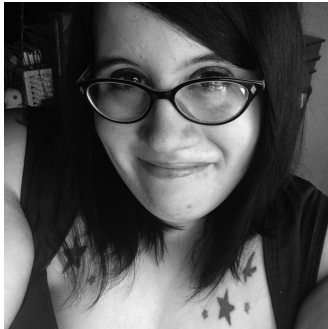
**Griffin Buckley** is working towards a degree in Journalism and Creative Writing at Ball State University. He struggles with writing witty bios and turning jumbled thoughts in to ideas. He gets tired of pop culture references that surround his name and is especially put off by loud food chewing. At the end of the day, Griffin just wants a bowl of macaroni and to find out what he's doing with his future.



**Sara Ganter** is a new graduate of Ball State University where she received her degree in English with a minor in Political Science. She is attending Valparaiso University Law School where she plans on becoming a family lawyer. In her free time, Sara enjoys spending time with her family and watching Food Network.



**Sydney Hellgeth** studies animation at Ball State University. She spends her time drawing pictures of elephants and skyping her dog, Tilly, back home in Illinois. Much of her work is done in colored pencil, though she dabbles in watercolor, marker, and digital painting. Sydney is a resident assistant in the design community at BSU, where she acts as fairy godmother with a strict side to residents of the hall.



**Sarah Hollowell** studied creative writing at Ball State University. Her personal essays have been published on *The Butter* and *The Gloss*. Her passions involve fat positivity and young adult fiction, and she blogs about both of those things at [www.sarahhollowell.com](http://www.sarahhollowell.com). She thinks mermaids and raccoons are pretty cool. She spends a lot of time watching scary movies alone late at night and talking to her cats.



**Dr. Darolyn "Lyn" Jones** is an assistant professor in the Department of English at Ball State University. Lyn is passionate about literacy, story, and disability studies and has committed her twenty-four years of professional life to those topics. She is the best selling educational author of *Painless Reading Comprehension*, the editor for an online literary magazine, *Rethinking Children's Literature*, the children's book series, the *Neon Tiki Tribe*, and the independent press, INwords

Publications. She has edited and published multiple essays and literary collections including *I Remember: Indianapolis Youth Write about Their Lives*, *Monday Coffee and Other Stories of Mothering Children with Special Needs*, and "Sitting at the Feet of my Flanner House Elders: A Lesson After Dying." She publishes scholarly narrative research about caregivers of children with special needs, including *The Joyful Experiences of Mothers of Children with Special Needs*. Besides teaching English at Ball State University, Lyn also serves as the Education Outreach Director of the Memoir Project at the Indiana Writers Center. Read more about Lyn's work and follow her blog at [www.darolynlynjones.com](http://www.darolynlynjones.com).



**Sarah Keck** is a senior at Ball State University and is currently pursuing a degree in English and creative writing. Her genres of interest consist of creative nonfiction and young adult, Christian, and realistic fiction. She is a reader, a sister, a friend, and a comedian. When not busy, Sarah will read, socialize, make punny jokes, use her last name in unique and funny ways, and walk for an hour or two, perhaps more.



**Colin Noll** is a graduate of Ball State University where he earned his degree in English with a minor in Computer Science. Using his skills in multiple forms of writing, he plans on pursuing a career in technical writing while also being an author. Colin's work has been published in the online blog, *The 494*, which is hosted by the *Ball State Daily*. In his free time, Colin enjoys writing both poetry and prose, playing video games, and spending long hours researching any number of topics ranging from the mundane to universal.



**Jeff Owens** studies creative writing at Ball State University. He likes to pretend he's more serious than he really is. He writes poetry about the moon and short stories about automatic door empires. If he could be any animal, he'd be an amoeba.



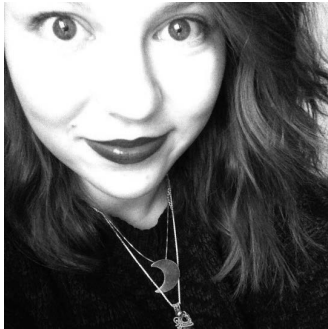
**Ashley Price** is a small town Indiana girl with big time dreams. Currently a junior at Ball State University, after graduation, she plans to escape the rural plains of Indiana to the hills of Southern California to pursue a public relations career in the motocross racing industry. She also hopes to use her minor, and true passion, of creative writing as a forerunner in her self-motivated fight to end bullying among teens. In the mean time, she keeps herself busy by being actively involved in Kappa Delta, Alpha Kappa Psi, and the Public Relations Student Society of America.



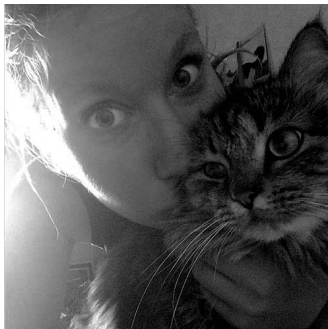
**Taylor Wicker** lives in Muncie, IN where she attends Ball State University. There, she studies creative writing, as well as the the art of late night grocery shopping in her pajamas. She loves pizza more than most things, and watches Jeopardy! every weekday (except for Wednesdays). During the day she's a student, as well as a Public Relations intern for BSU's English Department. At night, she's a wannabe chef, a game show fanatic, and an online shopping addict.



**Elisabeth (Niki) Wilkes** is a new Ball State University graduate with an undergraduate degree in English and creative writing, who is currently receiving her masters in Publishing Studies at University College London. Children literature holds a special place in her heart, with a special fondness for the zany and fantastical.



**Lauryn Wiseman** is a recent graduate of Ball State University where she majored in English creative writing and minored in English literature. Her poem, “weak coffee for weak souls” has been published in *The Mochila Review*. She also attempts to maintain a poetry blog dedicated to her writing, but often neglects to post. Her interests (other than writing) include, but are not limited to: petting cats, procuring goodwill sweaters, drinking tea, and believing Stevie Nicks is more magical than the wizarding world of Harry Potter.



**Paige Ziegler** is a new graduate of Ball State University, where she majored in creative writing and minored in film and screenwriting. She plans to venture to a place not in Indiana, hoping to become a future Emmy and/or Oscar-winning screenwriter. She also hopes to use her talents to help victims of abuse find their own voice in writing. While trying to make the world a better place, one word at a time, she enjoys spending time with her cats, posting pictures of her cats, and watching TV all day long...with her cats.

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