

Introduction

The Write Touch is published annually by the Council Bluffs Community Schools in cooperation with the Optimist Club of Council Bluffs, Iowa. Council Bluffs Community Schools, Lewis Central Community Schools, and Iowa School for the Deaf are invited to submit entries.

Credits include:

Title by Wendi Miller, Abraham Lincoln High School Alumnus

The Council Bluffs Community School District, the Lewis Central Community School District and Iowa School for the Deaf provide instruction and encouragement to young writers. It is our desire to share their work **(as it is originally written, with minor editing)** through this magazine with school patrons and citizens of Council Bluffs.

The selection of writings to be published is determined each year by a panel of judges from the Optimist Club of Council Bluffs. In addition to selecting the writers to include in this journal, the Optimists also honor these authors by holding a breakfast in their honor in May of each year. The students who are published are honored by receiving a plaque of recognition at the breakfast. Parents and teachers of the students are recognized as well.

We hope that you enjoy these works by our young authors and that you remember the citizens of this community who have made this magazine possible.

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The Write Touch can be accessed on line at the Council Bluffs Community Schools Web Site (URL) at www.cbcsd.org, then select The Write Touch button.

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“I Used to Be”

By Olivia Burgher

7th Grade, Fran Shorey, Kirn Junior High School

I used to be like a galaxy
Seeing points of light and direction
But never going for my dreams.
In truth I am now like the universe
Watching a meteor light up my sky
Following it forever through dawn and dusk.

I used to be a gloomy December morning
Never seeing the wonder and beauty of itself
Until spring comes.
I am now like an autumn afternoon
Watching the glorious leaves fall
A blind man seeing for the first time.

I used to be like a thread
Not able to handle situations
A weak and fragile element.
Now I am like ribbon
Withstanding the shears trying to split me
Strength and wisdom tied into a single strand.

“The Story of Bonnie and Clyde”

By Briana Siegert

11th Grade, Rod Cameron, Abraham Lincoln High School

There once was girl named Bonnie who met a boy named Clyde. She fell in love with him fast and she liked it. They were happy with each other all the time. He made her feel free and she loved that. Freedom . . . it was a beautiful word. There was nothing she couldn't do with him. As they say, “The sky's the limit . . .” Their love was coated in gold and everybody could see it. She didn't care how everything about him screamed wrong, wrong, wrong . . . so was she . . . they were perfect. She wanted to share absolutely everything with him, even the things that would eventually tear them apart. Their love was a little boy on Christmas; alive and full of excitement, but it didn't last long. They soon got bored. He was on to harder, more dangerous things; she was being left behind. “I don't want a line . . . I want to do it your way this time,” that's what she said the moment she knew she couldn't take back. She figured if they started together they could quit together. He hesitated when she asked but quickly gave in. He never dreamed that he'd be the one to show her how to shoot that needle into her vein. She didn't think it would be so breathtaking. Bonnie later realized it's only like that the first time. She always thought Clyde was her only love, but that wasn't the case anymore. Soon she loved the drugs more than him. She could've stopped but didn't want to, and when she wanted to stop, she couldn't. How could this have happened to them? She desperately wanted to love him like before. She wanted to feel the fire that he placed in her heart every time they touched. But their love was hanging by a thread, and once that thread broke, all that was left was the drugs.

“Grandpa’s Little Girl”

By Elysha Wickman

12th Grade, Diane VanNordstrand, Kaneshville Alternative Learning Center

From fishing trips to movie nights,
From foolish tricks to snow ball fights,
There was no doubt about it, I know this for sure,
I was Grandpa’s little girl.

We would play for hours everyday
In the backyard, our favorite hide-a-way.
We would search for treasures, jewels and pearls,
I will always be Grandpa’s little girl.

As time passed it became clearer to see,
That we couldn’t play forever, that was how it had to be.
Without a warning he was taken at dawn,
Never to return, my grandpa was gone.

I miss him more and more everyday,
Sometimes I feel I’ve lost my way.
His love was strong and oh so pure,
I miss being his little girl.

He told me to dream big and never hold back,
Have trust in myself and don’t forget to laugh.
I can do anything in the world,
I am still Grandpa’s girl.

“War”

By Clayton Gault

11th Grade, Elizabeth Busch, Thomas Jefferson High School

Bombs destroy the land
Planes and bullets destroy skies
You kill or be killed

Mothers lose their sons
Just pawns killing on command
There is no victor

Lands covered in death
Bodies strewn across the ground
Blood paints a message

“Inside Composition”

By Olivia Leisinger

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

Sitting at a desk.
A dry bottle of ideas,
For a piece of writing.
Thinking atop the mountains of a mind.
War is an indecision of which word to choose.
Ropes of doubt wrap around the possibilities of my thoughts.
Shears of faith sever through my ropes of doubt,
And center on the perfect proposal of my imagination.
Preparing a paper of parchment,
Dipping my pen into the heart of an inkwell,
Hands are messengers.

“A Little Piece of Heaven”

By Sidnie Lewis

7th Grade, Fran Shorey, Kirn Junior High School

A dirt road surrounded by trees, leading into a timber, a beautiful, magical place. A clearing, quiet and away from the world, remotely tucked into a corner of the timber. A stream, wrapping around a corner of the clearing and running along the dirt road before it winds back into the trees.

Along both sides of the dirt road, trees create a barrier, like a wall, hiding me away from the outside world. The soft wind in my hair is like a refreshing rain shower, washing away all my worries.

I walk barefoot over the slightly moist earth. The ground feeling quite familiar, in the sense that I have been here many times before. I can smell that familiar outdoorsy smell that is quite impossible to describe. The scent of pine and flowers dance through the air, carried on the wind. The fresh scent of moving water fills the air with every gust of wind that gently brushes past me as I near the stream.

When the dirt road winds through the trees, I follow it, absentmindedly. My subconscious mind knows the way, while my conscious mind admires my surroundings. I can hear the blue-green water of the stream trickling over the rocks. Every now and then, I hear a splash in the water, probably a deer, drinking from its creator's hand.

As I look out across the clearing, I spot a tree. A hundred year old cottonwood looms in the corner, just yards away from the animal abundant stream. I make my way through the long grass as it billows in the soft breeze. It tickles my feet, the warmth so different from the cool soil on the dirt road.

I sit beneath the cottonwood and lean against its gigantic trunk. I relax in the shade, popping open one of my favorite books. One of which I've read many times before, yet never seem to find boredom within it.

This place, nothing but pure nature, is a place where I can relax. Where serenity easily finds my mind and soul. It is nature's wisest creation, a home away from home. I'm surrounded by trees, plants, and animals, in a clearing, by a stream, along a dirt road, where it's peaceful and quiet. I love it here.

“Rubber bands”

By Kristin Molgaard

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

I am a playful monkey,
Hoping for something to happen,
Waiting for the one day,
When all of us snap,
Just like rubber bands,
When they are stretched to,
Their elastic limit.

“Importance”

By Jacob Ragland

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

Sun,
The heart of the galaxy.

Day,
A warm blanket.

Awake,
Seeing all life.

Moon,
A remote control.

Night,
Is a dark getaway.

Sleep,
An oasis of dreams.

“Nora”

By Emma Preston

7th Grade, Fran Shorey, Kirn Junior High School

As I enter the living room, the first thing I see is a slim and tall four-year-old with a swimsuit and cowgirl boots on and a large grin on her face. She is dancing very precisely with wild arm movements and donkey kicks. She is also singing a song, not incredibly on tune, but totally and completely from the heart. When she sees me, she instantly stops what she is doing and runs up to me to give me a hug.

“Hi, Nora! How was your day at school? What did you do?”

“Well,” she says, going back to her dancing, “Today we made snowflakes,” (now she’s climbing onto the edge of the chair), “and we sang a song about frogs” (now she is teetering dangerously on the chair). “Aaahhh! Save me! Save me! Help! I’m falling! The killer whales are going to eat me!”

I gently scoop her up off the chair and toss her lightly on the couch. Safe from the killer whales, she is now pretending to breathe deeply and slowly.

Then just like that, she says, “And after we sang a song about frogs, we read stories.”

“What stories did you read, Nora?” my mom says as she walks in.

“Well,” Nora says, as she makes a slight clicking sound and large hand gestures. “First, we read about Officer Buckle and Gloria. Emma, the dog, can wave at people (snort!)” At this she erupts into loud laughter.

“Let’s do a puzzle, Emma!” she is saying, dragging a 30-piece tropical fish puzzle out from under the table.

“Okay, Nora. Hang on, though. I have homework.”

Five minutes later she screams, “Emma! Emma, hurry!”

“One second, Nora, I’ll be there in a moment.”

By the time I get there, she has managed to change her outfit into a mismatched princess costume from the dress-up bin, complete with a feathery fairy wand. She has also finished her puzzle.

I walk in, and she says, “Emma, dance with me!”

“Okay, Nora. Let’s dance.”

“Wrestling”

By Jacob Bahr

7th Grade, Fred Baker, Kirn Junior High School

As the mat unrolls

We both walk on the mat

We shake hands

Then there’s a whistle

First period

The one with the best technique will score points

Second period

The one in the best shape will escape

Third period

The one with the biggest heart will win

“I Am Free”

By Ella Etchison

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

I am a rose,

Beautiful and open.

Like the sun,

Happy and cheerful.

Like a bunny,

Scared and shy.

Like glass,

Very fragile and will break

easily.

But, yet like water,

Free.

“The Elf of the Day”

By Ben Bosley

8th Grade, Carrie Nepple, Wilson Junior High School

It was a sunny day some time ago in early May. We just moved into our new house. It was a one story home with sky blue paneling on the outside and with sand brown shingles. I then began exploring, and the first place I looked was the basement. As soon as I had reached the end of the stairs I saw it. It was a magenta door which was about 3 by 3 in size. I hunched down to turn the doorknob, but the door appeared to be stuck. As soon as I had started walking up the stairs I heard the handle creak open. I snapped around and saw it again. My heart was pounding. I was sure I had seen the doorknob turn. I made sure of myself that it was just my imagination and went back upstairs. I went upstairs to tell my parents. As I told my parents of the door downstairs they were curious as to the door because it had never been there before. We began trying to pry open the door, but neither of my parents were able to pry it open so we all figured that it must have been some sort of time chest that had been locked and will never be opened. Just as my parents had walked upstairs the doorknob began to turn again. Then a scrawny little elf popped out and landed onto the concrete floor at full force, landing about a foot way from my feet.

“How did you get here?” I asked.

“I seem to have come through that door,” said the elf. “My name is Yani. By the way, what is this place?”

“You’re in my house,” I exclaimed.

“I need to get out of here,” shrieked the shocked elf.

“Well, if you got here through the door, just go back that way,” I suggested.

Yani then approached the door and turned the knob. The door was stuck again. “I do know how to get back through. I just need you to collect five burnt leaves and two containers of Tabasco sauce.”

“I’ll see what I can find.” When I went back downstairs I brought five burnt leaves and two containers of Tabasco sauce. As he arranged them in a pile he said some words that were in a foreign language. As the smoke rose he disappeared, and I never saw him again.

“Don’t”

By Tylar Cornelius

11th Grade, Rod Cameron, Abraham Lincoln High School

I don’t want to think, I don’t

Want to care. I don’t want to

Know what it feels like if

You’re no longer there.

You’re my life, you’re my air I breathe.

I need you there when I

Graduate. You’re what motivates me.

She is no longer here so I still

Need you by my side. Don’t let go

Just yet. I don’t want to break down, I don’t want to cry.

I care about you so much,

Grandpa, I love you,

Please don’t . . .

I’m not ready

To say goodbye.

“Childhood”

By Chalondra Garrett

7th Grade, Fred Baker, Kirn Junior High School

Have you seen my childhood?

I’m searching for the world within my youth.

War, Poverty, Bombs bursting in air.

People just don’t care.

It isn’t fair.

People say I’m not okay,

“Cause I love such elementary things.

It’s been my fate to compensate,

For the childhood,

I’ve never known.

“Aliens on Maple Street?”

By Christina Greger

8th Grade, Carrie Nepple, Wilson Junior High School

My name is Raymond. I live on a quiet street called Maple Street. Like I had said before, it was a quiet neighborhood. Kind of. There’s a house across the street from me, and I swear they are much different than everyone else. They sure seem like a normal family, but they aren’t. Okay, let me tell you from the beginning.

Jimbo and I were playing some kickball. We were just messing around until . . . Jimbo decided to kick the ball too high. When it came back down it just so happened to hit our neighbor’s garbage. (This is the house me and Jimbo don’t think is normal.) If you’re wondering, yes, it was garbage day which made it even worse! So we decided to pick it up, but what we found was unbelievable!

There was a mask and a wig! When we went to go and tell our family and friends, no one believed us. Jimbo and I decided to study the house a little bit more. They seemed somewhat normal (excluding the mask and the wig) until later that day. We had seen them go into a room that we had never seen before. We rushed to go and tell our parents what we had seen, but once again, no one believed us. What was in that room was very odd. There were flashing lights, buttons, levers, and there was one particular button that I remember. It was the biggest of them all! It was a big red button in a clear case that had the words LAUNCH on it written in big white letters.

We tried to stop thinking about this strange room, the mask and wig, but something even weirder happened a couple of days later. As we were watching them, we saw them walking around the house, but . . . they had . . . no mask or wig on! Oh yeah! Believe this because this is serious, as serious as a heart attack! They were very pale, almost like a grayish white color. They were maybe about 5’6”. For their nostrils they had two little black holes. Now the eyes. Oh man, don’t even get me started on those eyes. They covered about three fourths of their face! Their bodies were very bony with little muscle. They only had three little fingers that looked like little suction cups for the finger points.

After we had given them a good look, something very bad happened. They had seen us! They looked straight at us! We shut the blinds as fast as we could, but we were too late.

Okay, now this is the time we really did try and forget about them, but a week later Jimbo just had to bring them up. The strangest thing was that night; I swore I had heard like a crash sound. The next morning I realized that I wasn't losing it because across the street, that strange house was gone. The bushes and the trees were charcoal black and half of them weren't even there. Also, right where the house was standing before there was a gaping hole. It was the perfect launch. May I add the only perfect launch . . . that I had ever seen.

“Box”

By Madison Hass

7th Grade, Fred Baker, Kirn Junior High School

I am in this box

Dark

Small

I feel trapped

Shushed

Blind

Don't know what to do

I am in this box

Help!

“Walk With Me”

By Dylan Pruett

10th Grade, Brooke Bunten, Thomas Jefferson High School

She is not noticing the way I look
Every time I'm by her my breath I hold
Her hand I would hold until I grow old
How I feel when she looks up from her book
With her gorgeous brown eyes my heart she took
I would tell her if I was just that bold
That when she's not around my heart is cold
She warms every cranny, ev'ry nook
It's her I want and not the one I'm with
It is her that I always want to see
With her forever I would want to be
If only I could muster just one kiss
If only I could think of what to say
Please walk with me, don't go another way

“You Can See Life in Objects”

By Phylicia Sales

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

A window is like life,
Half the time you can see
right through people.

A door is like life,
Because we can all be shut
out.

A mirror is like life,
We can see ourselves in
others.

“When One Door Closes, Open Another”

By Rachel Salts

11th Grade, Diane VanNordstrand, Kaneshville Alternative Learning Center

It’s hard to believe the changes in my life have been so heartbreaking, yet at the same time quite wonderful. I realize that everything that happens in my life changes the person I am. One incident that was very upsetting yet helped me mature at the same time was when I was 13 years old. A teenager should be concentrating on shopping at the mall, hanging out with friends, and thinking about if the boy she likes is ever going to call her, and so much more. For me, being 13 is quite a different memory.

Instead of thinking about all those things I was more focused on what’s going to happen to my family? How can I get through this? Will my little brother be okay? At first everything was happening so fast I could barely grasp the concept. The day it hit me the hardest was when I was left alone inside my empty house. I remember seeing the walls were bare, my room was empty, and everything was gone. The house had a unique smell, a smell of dust and wet paint. All I could think of was the smell of cinnamon rolls in the morning, and how that would never be a possibility again, at least not in this house. I kept seeing flashbacks in my head of all the good times we had together: waking up Christmas morning and jumping into my parents’ bed; playing soccer outside with my dad; and swimming in the backyard with my brothers. Why do these good times have to end? As I started to cry, I heard my grandma’s car pull into the driveway. I realized when I walked out of that house, I had opened and closed the door for the very last time.

At that time I did not realize that closing one door can open so many opportunities. Yes, I had to move from the only home I knew, and yes, I still miss my dad. I had to start a new school and make new friends. Despite the dramatic change, I learned who I was during this time. I overcame obstacles that I never thought I could. I am a resilient individual willing to open new doors and determined to create my own happy memories.

“American Dream”

By Logan Sanders

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

When I wake up today,
I can get something to eat,
Then I can walk to the,
Round table and take a seat.

While in Africa a child,
Screams for some food,
His parents are in a sad,
And hopeless mood.

I go outside to,
Go to school,
I think it's boring,
And not very cool.

While the same African,
Child dreams of reading,
I dream of buying games,
I think I'm needing.

When I get home I can,
Turn on the T.V.,
Seeing things the child,
Will never get to see.

I go to bed under,
A nice, sturdy roof,
As the young child suffers,
No matter his youth.

I don't really think about,
All the things I get,
But the young child,
Does, he won't forget.

“Hope”

By Courtney Waugh
8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

If *hope* was a color,
I'd make it yellow,
Something bright,
Making sad people mellow.

If *hope* was a sound,
It would be waves coming in,
The calm ones,
Making unhappy people grin.

If *hope* was an animal,
It would be birds,
Something happy,
Like a new parent,
Hearing a baby's first word.

If *hope* was a taste,
It would be a vanilla treat,
The rich vanilla,
That tastes so sweet.

If *hope* was a smell,
It would be sweet pea,
Like a wedding,
The new couple meant to be.

Hope is a feeling,
We all know,
But I wish more people would let it show.

“The End”

By Christina Rivera

7th Grade, Fran Shorey, Kirn Junior High School

As the warm, humid summer day slowly falls into a heavy sleep, after a luminous evening, nothing's left but a breath-taking view. Traces of the day's existence are left behind, along with all the worries, as the warmth of the evening comforts us into a cozy blanket, protecting us from all the nature's happenings. As the sun clenches onto the clouds it's forced to leave. As the sunset vanishes deeply into the past, leaving only specks of shimmering light, its shadows do not hide and reveals sparking gleams of fire burning in the distance, unable to touch.

Each day closes with a sunset praying to come back yet one more time. Our world is only borrowed, and there will be a day where everything must come to an end. Let's pray and hope for the best to determine our fate . . . in the dark, cloudy mist of our past or the bright eternity which lies just ahead. Choose your path every second you live because when everything disappears there's no way to turn back. Few opportunities apply, so don't get stuck in a world where night awaits, and dimness looms the corners.

“Basketball”

By Colton Tracy

7th Grade, Fred Baker, Kirn Junior High School

Basketball

Gave me a goal for the future.

Basketball

Gave me happiness in my life.

Basketball

Gave me something to look forward to.

Basketball

Gave me the power to move on.

Basketball

Gave me the passion to succeed.

“My Sacred Place”

By Ejanae Hume

8th Grade, Carrie Nepple, Wilson Junior High School

Beyond the forest, past the daffodils and over the bridge, is a pasture I like to call my sanctuary. My sanctuary is where I like to go to think things through, to dream the impossible and to imagine various worlds.

Today was different though, I could feel the change in the atmosphere floating in my mind.

As I cautiously walked across the threshold that I was certain of owning, I saw little mounds of dirt coming from the ground. It was stunning at what my eyes drew attention to.

I felt a new sensation. It wasn't a disposition of guilt, anger or even a melancholy feeling, but rather a tickle. As if fuzzy little insects were crawling up my leg almost like a “CATERPILLAR,” I yelled.

It was a caterpillar, I was sure of that, but how did the caterpillars get into my sanctuary? I had never seen one before, and these two were huge, huge enough to take up my whole hand. But, after a short while my mind wandered, not giving a care whether the caterpillars were in my sanctuary or on my hand. It was a lovely place I wouldn't blame them for wanting to intrude.

I feel more tickling on my hand, so I look down, but I was sure of hallucinating. For no caterpillar could ever spell *Hi, our names are Oscar and Alphonse*. There was more, but what more could a little caterpillar have to say. *We are here to warn you about a creature that will come and disturb your sanctuary. For you must not come to this magical place for two days, and during those two days we will stay with you. As soon as they are over and the destruction is done we will leave, do you understand?* I nodded my head, yes, of course I understood the message, but I didn't understand what this creature was going to do or what it wanted. All I sought for was answers, any answers that would help me. As I bolted for my home all I could hear was the crashing and the destruction of my sanctuary.

The two days flew past. I knew that it was time to send them back. The caterpillars softly wiggled in my hand, spelling out *goodbye . . .*

“The Best Poem Ever”

By Kyle Lebanousky

12th Grade, Brooke Bunten, Thomas Jefferson High School

To you from the best
Here comes a creation unlike the rest, come
Enter my thought process, now

Bear with me, come,
Enter from right to left,
Stop!
Take a deep breath. Now let’s

Progress
On to the last couple steps before you
Exit.
My gift to you before you

Exit, I promise this to you. You’re
Very lucky.
Everyone on this ride, forget this never.
Remember, you’ve witnessed the best poem ever.

“Gone”

By Gena McKown

11th Grade, Rod Cameron, Abraham Lincoln High School

Forever, I loved you always
You threw me away into the night,
Lost, broken, and in pain.

Same in Japanese

“Pink”

By Aurora Owens

8th Grade, Stephen Plummer, Kirn Junior High School

I woke up that morning like any other. At about seven-thirty I got up and pulled back my Disney princess blanket, stepping onto the beige carpet floor of my bedroom. The first rays of dawn crept across my room, and soon I would be running into my parents’ room down the hall to herald in the new day.

The daylight was shining on a small vase by my bed. The vase held my most prized possession, my best friend and colleague, a little brown fish that I had named Pink, months before at my birthday party. Mama and Dad told me that since five was such a big year – with the start of kindergarten in the fall and all kinds of new and exiting things – I needed some responsibility. With that note I ran screaming into my pink princess room with the pink drapes, pink blanket and me decked in pink from head to toe, to find my present.

In truth, as I look at pictures of that day now that I am older I realize that my parents must have gotten the hardiest fish they could find. It was grey-brown and lumpy, but to me it was beautiful. It was a princess, if only to me, and of course, as a princess it only could have one name, PINK.

I loved Pink. I fed “her” once when I woke and again at bedtime. I spent at least an hour everyday talking and playing with my new best friend. Everything I got, Pink had to have one, too. From underwear to toys I would not let my best friend be left out.

On this day as I looked through the glass and tried to get an angle without glare, something was wrong. Even I, young as I was, could sense it. Pink floated at the top; her broad body motionless in the water. I stared petrified at the vase; unable to move, unable to think.

In my youth death seemed unrealistic. I was little and lived in the now, something that is a lesson I wish I could retake. But as I watched the lifeless body bob up and down in the vase, the body of my best friend and companion – it just seemed unreal.

I stared at the body of Pink for what felt like ages. I realized that things do end. Pink was a baby, and now she died. That all time in its self is ending. That my life like Pink’s had a beginning, and it already had its end. I realized that there was a past, present, and future and that I was a part of it all.

Soon Mama came in to see if I was okay and seeing the fish, she picked me up and smothered me in a hug. I cried as she cleaned out the vase and put Pink in a bowl. I cried as I followed her into the bathroom, but I was silent when we got to the toilet. Mama set Pink in the water, wished her goodbye and luck where she was headed. I was quiet throughout the ceremony, but as the water began to gurgle and Pink was swept out into the magical world beyond the seat, I whispered a quiet “Bye, Bye Pinky” for the last time.

“I”

By Brianna Harding
8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

I am a young girl dancing with her mom,
A cool spring breeze singing its own song,
The spirited dancer, graceful and tall,
A smiley face on paper with no sadness at all.

I am a tree in the sun growing new bark,
I stand like shining star in the dark,
I’m the purest white of your glowing smile,
A jogger ready to sprint seven miles.

I am an awkward flamingo wanting to fly,
A mouse in a corner, silent and shy,
I’m a creating keyboard; I’m a soaring kite,
I am a young girl who only wants to write.

“Song of a Cello Player”

By Samantha Emerine

11th Grade, Brooke Bunten, Thomas Jefferson High School

Rushed eighth notes and rest held too long.

Pounding headaches and one last song.

You glare at music for hours,

 but only minutes pass.

You rosin your bow.

The music stares you down.

It taunts you, dares you, frustrates you,

 laughs at you, wants you, needs you.

Without you the song cannot live.

Without you the music cannot grow.

Without you the song is lost.

You run your bow across the strings.

Sound fills the all too silent room.

The cello comes to life.

You breathe as the cello breathes.

In. Out. In. Out.

The song starts to fill the room.

The music fills your soul,

 waiting for you to play.

The music fills your head,

 as you stare at the page.

The music finds its way to your feet,

 and you begin to tap.

The music finds its way to your fingers,

 and you begin to play.

“Teenager”

By Mariah Garcia

8th Grade, Chris Maddux, Kirn Junior High School

I am wind, blowing in all directions.

A teenager, with many choices.

A deep purple, hidden in the darkness.

Humor, linking people with laughter

I am as blue as the sky in mid-day.

A pink ribbon, finding the cure.

As loyal as a dog and his master.

Dreams, getting bigger every night.

I am a pearl in the bottom of the sea.

The moon high in the sky.

A mouse, quiet and shy.

Forgiving what has been done.

I am a tree, rooted to the ground.

A cloud making a storm.

A loving sister and daughter.

I am Me.

“Even the Wicked Get Scared”

By Rachael Edenburn

8th Grade, Carrie Nepple, Wilson Junior High School

Cold darkness surrounded the petite teen. She sat all alone in the dim lit basement with her eyes closed and her hands clasped tightly together. A roughed up old carpet that was tattered and torn was what she placed herself upon. An aged oak table sat before the young lady with a ragged black sheet lying on top of it, all stained and dirty.

Ariel, a girl no older than 14 or 15, opened her bright green eyes to a loud thump on the basement floor. She let the straight, jet-black mess on her cranium dangle in front of her eyes when the noise caught her attention. Ariel looked up from her tarot cards, gazing in the direction of the basement stairs, leading to the door.

“Wonder who that is, probably Dad,” Ariel grumbled.

The vixen, all decked out in black, stood from her little séance slowly, her leather clodhoppers thumping with every single step taken. Anyone, let alone her father, never interrupted a first, Ariel, the self-proclaimed vampire, during a séance. The dark and disturbed girl was one of the few people known to understand and appreciate the deceased. She herself was a living dead girl, if you will.

Ariel, still on her way to the old, rickety stairs, stopped as soon as her thick-soled boots touched the bottom stair. Was that a fit of outrageous laughter from outside the basement door? The sound was horrid and screechy like fingernails being drug down a chalkboard. Terrified, the once so brave Ariel chortled at her stupidity. It was just her imagination.

“Stop it Ariel, you’re just being silly. There’s no one out there. Per-perhaps it was just the wind,” she stammered with her mind in a daze.

Just then, something rather odd happened. Her heart was pounding. She was sure she had seen the doorknob turn. Now, it felt as though her heart was about to jump straight out of her tiny-framed chest. With only large candles lighting up the basement, Ariel started to panic; that is, until the candles were blown out. The same shuddering laughter was heard again, and then a shrill scream.

“Just Another Day”

By Michaela Devitt

8th Grade, Rebecca Bryan, Kirn Junior High School

inhale.

the start of another day,

beep, beep, beep-alarm clock

guess I have to get up now

get ready and head off

to school again

ring, ring, ring, ring

there's the bell

we start with math

then English, science

social studies next

and finally P.E.

running, running, running

ring, ring, ring, ring

there's the final bell

school day is over

get on the bus

get off the bus

now I'm home

homework, dinner, more homework

time for bed – lie down

exhale

“Swing Sentimentality”

By Lindsey Jo McQuinn

11th Grade, Brooke Bunten, Thomas Jefferson High School

Over the
house, I am the
queen of my peers and kin
on a throne of rough plastic and
metal.

“Move it!”

Rick would cry with
a laugh and grasp at my
swing, depositing me upon
the floor.

I laugh
and scream as my
brother pushes me up,
so that I lord over my home
just once.

“Unforgettable Sunset”

By Ashley Starkey

7th Grade, Elody Kiser, Kirn Junior High School

I sat there on the soft grass
Feeling nothing but the gentle wind
Brushing my hair aside.

The sky was a radiant orange
Slowly dying into the magenta
That seemed to never end

There wasn't a cloud in the sky
All I could see were the reds
And strong yellows

Clinging onto what light was left
As the brightly colored sky fell down
To finish the day

“Untitled”

By Natalie Carlon

7th Grade, Fran Shorey, Kirn Junior High School

Desolation is a veil separating me from everything I love.

Desolation is a blindfold that hides me from the light around me.

Desolation is a perilous storm, threatening me with harsh winds and thundering
rain.

Desolation is an anchor that keeps dragging me down and down . . .

But bliss is a light that banishes all desolation.

Bliss is the rose colored glass that makes the world a perfect place to be.

Bliss gives me flight, taking me higher and higher until I feel as if I were one of the
stars.

Bliss seeps from the moments that make life worth living.

Bliss is a sunflower on a cloudy day, bringing light to distraught times.

“Together”

By Shelby Knauss

7th Grade, Elody Kiser, Kirn Junior High School

I have a dream for this nation,
standing together hand-in-hand,
all of us are equal
in the depths of our great land.

I have a dream for this town,
to share the land we own,
to meet people of many origins,
and invite them into our homes.

I have a dream for this school,
for students to listen, and learn, and care,
teachers would answer questions,
and ideas would be shared

I have a dream for this world,
that our differences would meet,
all would help each other
while our planet stood for peace.