

---

# CONNECTICUT STUDENT WRITERS

---

Volume II May 1989



SW

---

# CONNECTICUT STUDENT WRITERS

---

Volume II May 1989

A publication sponsored by:  
Connecticut Writing Project  
Connecticut Council of Teachers of English  
Watkinson School Writing Program

Special thanks to  
The Barnes Foundation

Printing and distribution of  
*Connecticut Student Writers* by  
**CIGNA Corporation**



---

# CONNECTICUT STUDENT WRITERS

---

Foreword .....	1
Michael Emmons, <i>My Mother's Cooking</i> .....	2
Shannon Lamagna, <i>Angels</i> .....	2
Jaime Jones, <i>Hats and Hats</i> .....	2
Hilary Sarneski-Hayes, <i>My Tree and Me</i> .....	3
Rosanna Sheffield Parrella, <i>My Loom</i> .....	3
Lindsay Barone, <i>My Leprechaun</i> .....	4
Katherine MacLean, <i>The Old Trunk</i> .....	5
Carissa LaVelle, <i>Shady Glade</i> .....	5
Sarah Miller, <i>Cider</i> .....	6
<b>Nichole Buswell, <i>A Shimmering Morning</i></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<i>Amy Butler, <i>Raccoons On Alert</i></i> .....	8
Ann Nguyen, <i>A Winter Scene</i> .....	9
John Kelly, <i>Tale of a Toymaker</i> .....	9
Nydia Rodriguez, <i>The Old and New Bear</i> .....	10
Kevin Snyder, <i>Summer</i> .....	11
Allison Bruneau, <i>The Fairy</i> .....	11
Elizabeth Casteen, <i>My Trip to Zulaquabec</i> .....	12
Erin Rose, <i>May</i> .....	13
Denise Schulman, <i>Snow White and the Very Same Prince Charming</i> <i>That's In All Of Those Other Fairy Tales</i> .....	14
Paul Ferreira, <i>Goodbye</i> .....	14
Monica D'Ascanio, <i>All Of My Thoughts</i> .....	15
Elizabeth Thorpe, <i>The Street Light</i> .....	16
Rebecca Skarbek, <i>The Sitting Room</i> .....	17
Jalana Lazar, <i>The First Snow</i> .....	20
Sarah Kochman, <i>Friendship</i> .....	20
Crans Baldwin, <i>Omath &amp; the Dragon</i> .....	21

---

# CONNECTICUT STUDENT WRITERS

---

Marianna Matthews, <i>Theatrics</i> .....	22
Karen Walter, <i>An Interview with John Larson</i> .....	23
Matthew Cieslukowski, <i>Escape from Moonbase (Chapter One)</i> .....	24
Kristin Fians, <i>A Grandmother's Painting</i> .....	26
Jeffrey Boyce, <i>My Huge Striper</i> .....	27
Betsy Marshall, <i>Memories of Grandma</i> .....	28
Jennifer Weber, <i>Will You Babysit?</i> .....	29
Celeste Peterson, <i>His World</i> .....	31
Rebecca Logiudice, <i>Darkness</i> .....	32
Trang Vu, <i>The Last Day in Vietnam</i> .....	32
Robin Bonato, <i>Winter Day At Sundown</i> .....	34
Stacy Metzler, <i>I Hear With My Eyes</i> .....	35
Jennie Acheson, <i>Sidewalk Art</i> .....	38
Tina Pereira, <i>Psychotic</i> .....	39
Joyce Lau, <i>Summer</i> .....	39
Saraid Higgs, <i>Africa</i> .....	41
Raye-Ann Yankauskas, <i>Cat</i> .....	42
Lawrence Cogswell III, <i>Tracks</i> .....	42
Anthony D'Orazio, <i>Wednesday</i> .....	43
Amy Wakeman, <i>Untitled</i> .....	45
Radhika Jones, <i>Life in the Fast Lane</i> .....	47
Christopher Locke, <i>Lecture</i> .....	49
Jennifer Brodeur, <i>The Final Waltz</i> .....	49
Tiffany Warchol, <i>Why?</i> .....	50
Michael Fisk, <i>Party Girl</i> .....	51
Jennifer Raikes, <i>Untitled</i> .....	53
Paul Figueiredo, <i>Untitled</i> .....	54
Bretton Enman, <i>The First Love Epiphany</i> .....	54
Elizabeth Noli, <i>Untitled</i> .....	55



*Selection Committee:*

*Anne Alpert  
Bev Anthony  
Karen Carriera  
Barbara Campbell  
Barbara Cohen  
Gail Dickau  
Carol Drescher  
Cindy Field  
Phil Freemer  
David Holdt  
Carole Jonaitis  
Penny Liu  
Mary Mackley  
Madge Manfred  
Leta Marks  
Sheila Murphy  
Mary Plummer  
Michael Reilly  
Joan Sereda  
Anne Sheffield*

*Editor:*

*Constance Aloise*

*Proofreaders:*

*Thomas Fitzsimmons, Rose Kelly, Madge Manfred*

*Logo design: Solomon Cicero, art teacher at Bloomfield Junior High School*

*This publication was produced by the Watkinson Press at Watkinson School in Hartford, using desktop publishing technology provided by the Barnes Foundation.*

*Design by:*

*Cathy Katz, Chad Rogers '89, Mark Galasieski '89, and Jon Holmes '89 of the Watkinson Press*

*Student Typists:*

*Sandy Wolf '89, Chad Rogers '89, Mark Galasieski '89, Kristen Arcari '92, Andy Ellerton '91, and Philip Lawton '93 of Watkinson School, and Jen Katz '89 of Simsbury High School.*

*Proofreaders:*

*Daniel Gallisá '90, Chad Rogers '89, and Michael Katz*

*Cover photo by:*

*Neil Robbins '90, Watkinson School*

*Permission to reprint must be obtained from individual authors.*

*Information about subscriptions and submissions can be obtained from Mary Mackley, Director of the Connecticut Writing Project, University of Connecticut, U-25, Storrs, Connecticut 06268*

## FOREWORD

"The having of wonderful ideas," Eleanor Duckworth notes in her essay of the same title, is the essence of intellectual development as well as the essence of pedagogy. Ms. Duckworth goes on to say that there are two aspects to providing occasions for wonderful ideas: accepting children's ideas and providing a setting that suggests wonderful ideas to children—"different ideas to different children—as they are caught up in intellectual problems that are real to them."

The Connecticut Council of Teachers of English and the Connecticut Writing Project believe that writing provides just such occasions for children. *Connecticut Student Writers* is published once a year to celebrate the wonderful ideas of talented authors, kindergarten through twelfth grade. These poems, short stories, and essays represent the best of over 1600 that were submitted.

We salute the teachers and parents who have provided occasions for writing. We salute the young writers whose collective voices have made us laugh, made us pause, and made us cry. We recognize, along with Ms. Duckworth, that the more we provide children with opportunities for having their wonderful ideas and to feel good about having them, the more likely it is that someday they will happen upon wonderful ideas that no one else has happened upon before.



Michael Emmons  
Kindergarten  
Nathan Hale School  
Enfield

## My Mother's Cooking

Mom burned some toast.  
She threw it out the screen door.  
I made a siren noise with my mouth.  
I was pretending to be a firetruck.  
Mom made more toast.  
She didn't burn it the next time.



Shannon Lamagna  
Kindergarten  
Nathan Hale School  
Enfield

## Angels

Angels pretty  
Fly in the sky.  
The clouds look after them.  
Angels fly in a line.



Jaime Jones  
Grade 1  
Bethany Community School  
Bethany

## Hats and Hats

Once there was a cat. The cat liked hats. The cat liked every hat he saw. But there was one hat he liked the most. That hat was blue and red with a smily-face pompom on top. The cat liked hats so much that he even slept in one. His whole room was made out of hats. When he was all grown up, he was going to make hats for other cats. The cat liked hats so much that his name was Hat and all his toys' names were Hat, too, because they all had hats on.

Hat's mom said to him, "We are going on a vacation."

"Where?" asked Hat.

"To a warm place," said his mom.

"Can I wear my favorite hat?" asked Hat.

"No!" said his mom.

"Why not?" said Hat.

"Because the place we are going is Warm," said his mom.

"Oh!" said Hat. "But I will miss my favorite hat."

"No you won't," said his mom.

"But you said I couldn't wear it."

When Hat was playing, his mom got her needle and thread and she sewed his hat into a stuffed animal. She had a reason to sew it into a stuffed animal. The reason

was Hat did not think his favorite hat was too small. But his mom knew his favorite hat was too small. So now when he was all grown up he could remember his favorite hat. Then Hat's mom hid his stuffed animal. Then she called Hat.

"Hat!" she said. "Go and start packing your things."

"But you said that I wouldn't miss my favorite hat."

"You won't," she said.

Finally Hat was all ready to go. They got on a plane. On the plane, Hat's mom said, "Why don't you make a picture?"

"I don't want to," said Hat. "I want my favorite hat."

"You will get it soon," said his mom.

The plane stopped. Hat and his mom got off. Then Hat wanted his favorite hat even more than he did on the plane.

Finally his Mom gave him his favorite hat.

"Oh! Boy!" said Hat. "My favorite hat! I will remember this day always."



### My Tree and Me

There's a branch to put  
Your feet on  
There's a branch to hold onto  
There's a branch to sit on  
In my big beautiful tree  
It smells of pine everywhere.

And I can see Larry  
Riding on his bike next door  
My tree is like  
A big tower.



### My Loom

Oh weaving, oh weaving,  
Your hair is all tangled.  
My hair is, too.  
Sometimes I think we are relatives.



*Hilary Sarneski-Hayes*  
Grade 2  
Holland Hill School  
Fairfield

*Rosanna Sheffield Parrella*  
Grade 2  
West Broad Street School  
Pawcatuck

## My Leprechaun

### Chapter 1 - How I Found My Leprechaun

One day I went up to my room and got dressed and looked out my window. There was a leprechaun. It had a pot of gold. He had magic power. If I touch him, I will turn into a leprechaun and then he'll try to get me into his rainbow. I went outside and brought the leprechaun in my room and locked the door and said to him, can you stay? Please? So I unlocked my door, and my mom came zooming in. She said to me, what is that!

### Chapter 2 - Leprechauns

My leprechaun looks like me. He feels like my baby sister. He laughs a lot. He smells pretty good. He is 6 inches long. My leprechaun gets into a lot of trouble and eats candy and fruits. My sister knows about him. I told her to keep a secret, but she would not. It has a lot of powers. It didn't have a name, so I named it Frank. I brought Frank to the kitchen. My mother screamed at me! He made me a cake. Then we went back in my room. I told him to go into my closet.

### Chapter 3 - Where Leprechaun Lives

He lives on the beach. When he goes there, I let him use my sunglasses. He said what are sunglasses? I told him they are things you wear so your eyes won't hurt. He always stays there in the morning. When he's home his favorite hiding spot is in the pots down in the kitchen and he hides under them. One day my mom opened the door, and all the pots came out and so did my leprechaun! My mom said to me come and get your leprechaun out of here!

### Chapter 4 - An Adventure With My Leprechaun

I went to the Olympics with my leprechaun. It was our turn, and we only did flips. Other people did a lot better than us, so we went home, but people said to us come in. We have to see who won. Then we heard that we won! But Leprechaun and I only got a toy for winning.

### Chapter 5 - An Ending Chapter

One day I looked all around for my leprechaun. He was not anywhere. So I looked in my mom's room and under the computer. He was not there. I looked everywhere. I looked out my window and there was a rainbow. In letters it said good bye. I will come again!

§

## The Old Trunk

When my mom went to Pennsylvania to help my grandmother move to California, she brought back an old trunk from my grandmother's attic. When we finally got to open it, I was very excited, so was my sister. I knew that because she was jumping up and down.

We opened it up in my mom's room. It was all dusty and it had an old kind of smell like it does up in the attic. There was an old shoebox. It was tannish brown. When we opened it, we found my great-grandpa's old baby clothes. There was a frilly white dress that was white, but a little yellowish on the edges and dirty. In another earring kind of box that was black and a little furry, I found my great, great, great grandfather's old fake teeth. They were kind of yellowish and the gums were kind of really light pink.

In another tall box we found an old bottle of perfume. It had a cork instead of a cap and a quarter of it was used up. My mother didn't let me open it. She said it belonged to my great-grandmother. Her name was Catherine, just like my name, but she spelled her name with a C. Then we found an old newspaper from 1816. It had all these old nursery rhymes, but they were changed around so that they would be funnier. Then my mother said, "Close up the trunk and wash your hands. It's time for lunch."

So my sister and I went downstairs, and we left the old trunk to just sit there till the next time my mom lets us look at it.



## Shady Glade

I hold my breath as I go  
underwater to be met by a  
waterworld, all to myself.

My friends sunbathe on the  
old logs that lay halfway  
across the pond.

My dog, Max, peers cautiously  
at his reflection.

Max is not a water dog.

The weeping willow trees that  
grow on the banks of the pond  
give off a sweet scent  
that reminds me of roses.



*Katherine MacLean*  
Grade 2  
Kendall School  
Norwalk

*Carissa LaVelle*  
Grade 3  
Woodstock Public School  
Woodstock Valley

## Cider

### Chapter One: Thea

It was a dark night, the middle of May. I woke up and looked across to my sick lizard, Thea's, cage. Her glowing eyes scared me, and I ran into my mother's room.

When morning came, I saw that I was in my mother's bed. I quietly slipped out of the bed, not to wake my mother, and went to see Thea. When I got there, Thea was laying on her small black rug. She wasn't only just laying there, but she was laying there dead!

### Chapter Two: A Solution

After I got home from school that day, I went upstairs, and there on my bed lay my sleepy, tired-out father. I went over to wake him up but I found that he was just reading the newspaper.

But he had some news that he didn't find in the newspaper, or the TV, or the radio, but from his work. My father told a woman named Pat at his work about Thea's death. Then she felt sorry for me and told my father that she was willing to give me a parrot named Cider.

When my father told me, I didn't know if I should be happy and cry or be sad and cry, for Thea was a pet that could never be replaced.

### Chapter Three: Goodbye

That night we had dinner guests. We were talking about the parrot. I don't know how it happened, but it just sorta slipped. I said, "I get anything I want!" And that makes my parents furious! Then my mom gave me a look, and up I went to my room.

My mom followed me up and said that Cider was no longer a subject that could be discussed. Then my mom left the room and closed the door. I sat on my bed for a few minutes. I didn't know how to feel. First Thea died, then I lost my chance for another pet. And this time it could have been a bird. Maybe I wouldn't have another chance. Then I just laid on my bed and cried, trying to think of something to do.

### Chapter Four: "Darn It!"

Summer came, and Cider went out of my mind. But slowly, as fall settled in, I started thinking about all my pets and how very much I wanted another one. Then, one night at dinner, I made an announcement. "I would do anything, if you just would let me off and allow me," I stopped.

"Allow you what?" asked my mother.

I looked around to my father, then my sister, and then I got back to my mother. "To wear hot pink socks tomorrow," I said with a crack of a smile.

Then my mom gave me a look, and we all laughed! That night, I sat on my bed for a moment. I had to ask them for Cider sometime! Then it came to me. I would ask her the next time I got sick.

#### Chapter Five: Trouble With A Happy Ending

Soon school started, and it started feeling a bit like winter. Well, I had been in school for about a month and a half and already I had found many new friends. Well, it was a Wednesday and it was also "choice" at school. All day I had felt absolutely horrid in my throat. I asked my teacher if I could see the nurse. She said "yes." My best friend Gracie and I walked down to the nurse.

The nurse said I might need a culture. When I came home, my mom looked down my throat, and she saw tons of pus. She immediately said that she was getting an appointment with the doctor that night. So a few minutes after that my mom brought me to Dr. Speizel's office. He gave me a throat culture. Then we went into a small room and tested if I had strep throat. And then I asked my mom, "Mom, are you still mad at me, or can I get Cider?" I asked a little shakily.

"I guess so!" said my mom with a smile. My face blushed and I went back to sleep.

That night my father went with me to see if I had another disease called "Mono." I did. That night I was watching TV, and a gust of wind blew through the house. Then I heard the door shut. "Mom?" I asked as I walked into the living room. My mom held a brown blanket over something that looked like a pillow. "The parrot!" my sister screamed as she and my dad trampled down the stairs. My mom took off the blanket, and there it was. Cider! I had finally gotten my pet!

#### Chapter Six: Reactions

The day after that I was feeling fine. Cider seemed to make me feel better. Though he was noisy at night, we found that you can simply place a blanket over his cage before you go to sleep and he'll hush up his big fat beak. We also found that he is easily held.

There is only one person in my family who is bothered by the squawking that is occasionally made. Her name is Jacquie. Whenever she sees Cider she sticks out her tongue and makes faces at him. Cider just stares at her. He seems to like it. My sister, Laura, seems to copy me. In the daytime Cider has the right to squawk. When it's too loud, I yell at him. But my sister always yells at the wrong time. My parents complain a little bit, but I think he's at least trying to be good.

#### Chapter Seven: Dream

One night I couldn't go to sleep. I sat up and looked at Cider's cage. He made a small chirping sound, so he could barely be heard. I nodded my head in a yes, and he picked up a peanut and chewed it up. I laid down and went into dreamland.

That night it seemed that the horror came back, the horror of Thea's death. Then I heard a squawk and I smiled. Only a small horror remained. I heard the squawk again, and it awoke me. I had forgotten to cover Cider's cage. He stopped squawking, and I went back to dreamland.

This time it was a happy dreamland. The dreamland with Cider. I had finally gotten my bird, and a brand new friend! THE END!!!

Nicole Buswell  
Grade 3  
Holland Hill School  
Fairfield

## A Shimmering Morning

The bushes are wrapped in a layer of white tissue  
Like presents for a bride  
Winds whistling lazy tunes  
Awakening the world to a shivering,  
Shimmering morning  
Trees snuggle in a soft, white blanket  
And cars look like silver dragons throwing a flame of frost  
Chimneys let out a cloud of swirling smoke  
Winter is here again.



Amy Butler  
Grade 3  
West Hills Follow Through  
New Haven

## Raccoons on Alert

One day when we were walking out of the door of our house, our neighbors, the Burgs, told us that they saw three raccoons in our tree. My sister, Becky, got scared because she had never seen raccoons before in her life. Then we saw those wild animals. It looked like our tree was a hotel for raccoons. One of the raccoons was lying on a low branch. The second one, who was scampering all about, looked like he lost his suntan lotion. We didn't see the third one.

All of a sudden they started running down the tree. They were after us. Then the raccoons catapulted toward us. Becky started crying. Mom and I ran while Becky tagged along after us. Becky was crying louder by then, and we were running fast across our little lawn. We ran onto the sidewalk. They passed us and jumped into the sewer. We jumped into our car, and Mom drove up to the sewer. Then we looked at them. They were so cute. The raccoons were poking their little paws and heads out. Then we drove away. We were going to Stop & Shop. When we got to Stop & Shop, we got what we needed.

After we paid, we left and drove back home again. When we got home, we told our father about the raccoons. Our parents didn't let us go near the sewer again until the raccoons were gone. Then, sadly, we never saw those raccoons in their sewer home again. But we thought that the raccoons were probably back where they belonged, back wild and free for life!



## A Winter Scene

There is a lonely little house  
in the middle of a big valley,  
away from the noisy, slippery city.

The sun slowly rises out of the  
mist of the Earth, while the thick  
blanket of snow gets thicker.

The whole city was already  
awakened by the big clock at the  
edge of the snowy hill.

The cozy little house is always  
very quiet because the little boy  
and the little girl that live there  
don't have anyone to play with.



## Tale of a Toymaker

### One: Sorrow

'Twas a dark, gloomy night. A hazy glow rose over the muddy ground. The moon lit up the starry sky. I was whittling a rocking horse out of mild soap. It was quieter than cat's paw while I worked. A pretty dignified toymaker, I was always working away.

My popularity kept growing and growing. This kept up for fifty years. Then, at eighty years old, I rested my soul in the peace of heaven.

People of my town mourned at my death, for I was a helpful man with one dream: Peace.

### Two: Amazing Grace

Heaven is a wonderful place. I was able to make huge soap sculptures and have St. Nick drop them off until that glorious, wonderful day. I was sleeping in soft clouds when I started falling at tremendous speed. Then I landed. In my shop! I had been regiven life! I cried, "Amazing Grace! How sweet it is!"

### Three: The Legend

Soon, the people saw me. They praised me and said; "Thank the Lord, Jesus! Our friend has returned!" I was their legend, and that fact will never change.



*Ann Nguyen*  
Grade 3  
Lewin G. Joel Elementary  
Clinton

*John Kelly*  
Grade 4  
Charles Wright School  
Wethersfield

## The Old and New Bear

Once upon a time there was a girl that had a bear. She loved it very much. The only problem with this bear was it was getting very old. The arm was falling off the bear, and holes were seen all over his fur and body. The girl gave the bear all the love he wanted. This bear was very special to the girl, and she took good care of it, except when she would get very angry with the bear. One day she kicked, punched, and hit the bear so hard she heard the bear crying at night. This made the girl very sad and angry at herself. So she fixed the bear up by putting bandages on it. Soon the bear was perfect.

In a few days it was going to be the girl's birthday. She was hoping for a bike so she could ride the old bear on it all day long. Before the day came everyone helped set up for the birthday party. The bear was very helpful putting up the decorations and bows.

Finally the day came, and everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to the girl. She then opened up her presents. She was very surprised at the present she received from her parents. It was a brand new bear. The old bear seemed to be O.K., but it looked puzzled and had a thought. His thought was that the girl would kick, hit, punch, or smack him. He also thought that he would lose all of his insides to her room. She hugged the bear tightly, and she locked herself up in her room. The girl had a talk with the bear. She told the bear that she loved him very, very, much even though she was mean to him. She said, "No one could ever replace you." Then she took the bear and ran downstairs to talk to her parents. She told them no new bear could ever replace her old bear. Her parents convinced the girl that everything would be the same if she threw out the old bear. She agreed with them! It was only after the old bear was asleep would she leave him outside. It was very hard for the girl to leave her bear outside since it was raining. The girl began to cry when she heard her old bear crying outside. Then the new bear tried to calm the girl down, but she cried louder and harder. The new bear then began to cry too. This girl then realized that her new bear was not as bad as she thought. She gave the bear a hug and kissed it.

Even though the girl loved the new bear she knew she had to save the old bear. She found the bear crying his eyes out. She gave him a big hug. The bear asked the girl, "Why did you come and get me? You probably don't want me any more, so just leave me alone to die." The girl told the old bear she loved him very much and would never do any harm to him again if he would forgive her. The bear forgave the little girl.

Then the girl went inside to see her parents with the old bear. She told her parents that she loved the bear very much and wanted to keep it.

"What will you do with your new bear?"

The girl said, "I can keep both bears because I know they will get along."

"How do you know they will get along? How do you know they will be best friends?" asked her parents.

The girl answered, "It was the new bear who helped me realize how much I

missed the old bear. Both bears are friends of mine, and both will be best friends with each other." Her parents thought very hard and decided to agree with their daughter. "Two is definitely better than one!" shouted the girl.



## Summer

Dear Summer,

I am writing this letter to tell you that I'm unhappy about you leaving. Gone are the mouthwatering scents of pork chops on the grill at barbecue parties. If you would've stayed, I could've swum in the cool water of a deep pool. I will also miss the sweet scents of my mother's berry red roses. If you were still here, I would still have the relaxed feeling of just doing nothing. Goodbye to the wonderful compliments on my dark brown tan. I'm looking forward to having a magnificent summer next year.

Your summer friend,  
Kevin Snyder



## The Fairy

"Allison," my mom called to me. "Can you go to Wawa's and buy a box of Bran Flakes, a loaf of Italian bread and twelve rolls?"

"Sure," I said. "I'd love to. Especially if we need the rolls for grinders."

"I'm giving you twenty dollars. There will be some money left, and you can buy a treat for yourself," she said.

"Thanks a bunch," I called as I hopped on my bike and rode down the driveway.

When I got to Wawa's, I realized that I forgot my bicycle chain. "I'll just have to hope nobody takes my bike," I said quietly to myself.

When I finished getting the things my mom asked me to get, I went down the candy aisle. I wanted to get a big box of Kit-Kats. I was looking at the price of one of the boxes when another box fell off the shelf. I looked into the space the box fell from to see what made the box fall, and I saw a little thing looking up at me. It looked like a little fairy. It had long, blonde hair, and I figured it was a girl. The fairy was wearing a turquoise blue dress and a sky blue crown. She had a stern look on her face.

Finally the little fairy said, "Well, don't just stand there looking at me; ask me what I'm doing here."

*Kevin Snyder  
Grade 4  
Gainfield Elementary School  
Southbury*

*Allison Bruneau  
Grade 4  
Charles Wright School  
Wethersfield*

"Well, what are you doing here?" I asked quite confusedly.

"The store manager found me and put me here. He told me to stay here till someone bought this box of Kit-Kats. Buy it so I can get out of here," she commanded.

"What will you give me?" I asked, angry with her behavior.

"I'll give you three wishes," she answered in her squeaky voice.

"Fine with me," I said happily. So we went over to the manager and got her free. We also paid for the food.

When we went outside, I noticed that my bike wasn't there. I decided that I'd have to use my first wish to get my bike back. The fairy agreed with my idea. Almost immediately my bike came back, just the way I'd left it. I rode home very quickly so my mom wouldn't worry about me.

The rest of the day went by normally. When I went to bed I got the fairy out of my jewelry box to make my second wish. My wish was that I was rich and I lived in a mansion.

When I woke up the next morning, I was in a huge room. I went to the closet to get some clothes to wear. I went outside, and, believe it or not, my wish had come true. My parents were very happy.

The days went by, and things were going badly. My friends became ex-friends. They were obviously jealous. One night I was thinking about what had been happening. My new life was making me very unhappy. I remembered I had one wish left. I got up and went to the jewelry box to get the fairy. I told her that I wanted to make my third wish.

"It's about time," she said. "I was getting sick and tired of that stuffy box."

"My third wish is that I go back to my normal life. I have been very sad lately."

"O.K.," she said. "I think that is a very wise decision."

When I woke up the next morning, my house was the house I had lived in before the horrible life I had when I was rich. At school everything was fine.

I have a feeling the fairy came to me on purpose. She wanted me to learn the lesson I learned. I'm very glad she did that.



*Elizabeth Casteen*  
*Grade 4*  
*Northwest Elementary School*  
*Storrs*

## My Trip to Zulaquabec

One day as I was walking home from school, a flying saucer flew by. Everything happened so quickly I didn't have time to be surprised.

A man poked his head out of the bottom of the saucer and said, "Hello there, Jennifer, could you do something for me?" Before I knew what I was doing, he was helping me on board the flying saucer and explaining everything to me. "Our planet Zulaquabec needs an earthling to show visitors from other planets around our planet."

"But why can't you do it yourselves?" I asked.

"Because people from different planets speak different languages, and English is the only language they can both speak and understand, but we cannot speak it to each other."

I didn't understand, and there were at least half a dozen more questions I could have asked him. But I decided not to. And now we were at Zulaquabec.

When we got out of the flying saucer, he said to me, "We will give you three weeks to look around our five mile long planet. Then you will begin working."

I began to look around the planet and saw that they had many interesting things on this planet, such as rainbow striped houses, purple trees, red, pink, and yellow houses, and deep ravines full of blue fire.

The people also had a strange way of living. They cooked what looked like pot roast over the ravines of fire. The children played hopscotch over the ravines of fire; they leaped the twenty feet across time and time again. They could also talk to the animals.

I learned the names of the different plants, animals, and ravines. I showed the people around and told them the names of everything.

One day, after a year had passed, the man came to me and said that it was time for me to go home. I jumped into the flying saucer, and soon we were home. I ran into the kitchen and told my mother I was sorry I was late. And she said, "Why, you're not at all late!"



## May

My favorite month is May.  
The best thing about May  
Is new cubs are born  
And flowers are blooming.  
I feel as wonderful  
As a baby coming to life.  
I see beauty in the world.  
It looks as beautiful  
As a wedding dress.  
I hear birds chirping away  
And frogs singing in the pond.  
I taste sour lemonade,  
Just as sour as lemon and lime together.  
I smell flowers as beautiful  
As the sky.



*Erin Rose*

*Grade 4*

*Jack Jackter Elementary School  
Colchester*

Denise Schulman  
Grade 5  
Columbus Magnet School  
Norwalk

## Snow White and The Very Same Prince Charming That's In All Of Those Other Fairy Tales

Once upon a time there was a girl named Snow White, and she found the seven dwarfs. You know the story. But you know how Prince Charming and Snow White supposedly lived happily ever after? That's just what the book said happened. But really ten years later, this is what happened.

"You know, Charming?"

"Yes, Snow dear?"

"I hate your guts, and I don't know why I ever married you!"

"It's because I brought you back to life by kissing you."

"You weren't my true love! But you sure give wet kisses!"

"Well, anyway, Snow, you know that I am madly in love with you!" Under his breath he said, "And Beauty, and Cindy, and Sleeping Beauty, and Ro..."

His voice trailed off as Snow White said, "I heard that, Prince Jerk the First! You know, I cook, and I clean, and I wait on you hand and foot, and this is the thanks I get!? Not even one maid?! Well!" And with that she left in a huff.

The first thing that Snow White did was go to Cinderella. She said, "Congrats, Cindy! I heard you got married. Who's the lucky guy?"

"None other than the handsome Prince Charming!"

"Why, what a coincidence! I'm married to him, too!"

"What! Why that dirty two-timing rat!"

So Snow White told her the whole story from beginning to end, and so it went. They would go from girl to girl, telling each one that they, too, were married to Prince Charming. The crowd grew bigger and bigger as more girls from different fairy tales joined until, at last, every girl in every fairy tale was in the group and they went back to Snow White's castle. They got the Evil Witch who was really very nice, and the witch said, "Oh good! I always hated the prince! I was only trying to save you from him before. I know! Now that I'm the good guy and he's the bad guy I'll turn him back into a frog, and you will get all of his money!"

"That would be great!" all the girls cheered.

So that's what the witch did. The king was so happy that his son was dead that he jumped for joy and married the witch. And then, finally, everybody lived happily ever after! I think.



Paul Ferreira  
Grade 5  
Madison Middle School  
Trumbull

### Goodbye

Sit down, boy.  
Let me tell you my story.

Before man came, I was pure blue.  
The fish were healthy,  
The animals could live in peace.  
How they played in me!

Then man came,  
And so did machines.  
Smoke filled the sky.

I was once blue.  
Why am I black now?  
Oil spills.  
"Drill, man, drill!"  
That's all they can say.

I thought man cared for me,  
But they continue to spill  
Their poison into my water.

Did you know, boy,  
That I was once great and blue and clean?  
Now I am sick and full of waste.  
I am dying, boy.  
Only your generation can help.  
Goodbye, boy,  
Goodbye.

### All Of My Thoughts

I am curious and friendly.  
I wonder if there is such a thing  
as a world over the rainbow.  
I hear little people laughing and having  
a party.  
I see the sky pass me by, as the earth  
spins around.  
I am curious and friendly.

I pretend I'm flying  
I feel my horses come alive at night

*Monica D'Ascanio*  
Grade 5  
Spring Glen School  
Hamden

when I'm asleep.  
I touch and grasp the hand of a  
creature from space.  
I worry the earth will perish.  
I cry when I hear about war.  
I am curious and friendly.

I understand that some dreams you  
hope for can't come true.  
I say when someone dies their love will  
always be there.  
I dream about being a person someone looks up to  
I hope to become the first lady President  
I am friendly and curious.

§

*Elizabeth Thorpe*  
Grade 5  
Montowese School  
North Haven

### The Street Light

The street light clicks on,  
my light clicks off,  
darkness covers my room.  
Bedtime.  
Mother calls.  
I snuggle down,  
My room is dark as night,  
except for the shaft of moonlight  
shining boldly through my window.  
He must love me for he visits every night,  
always punctual, always bright,  
never failing to lift my spirits.  
How I enjoy his company.  
Does he enjoy mine?  
I ask this to him every night,  
and every night he answers...  
by being there.

§

## The Sitting Room

Rebecca Skarbek  
Grade 6  
Alfred W. Hammer School  
Wethersfield

"Come on, Alyssa, I want to go explore the new house!" Jaime Simon impatiently called to her older sister Alyssa, who pulled a carpet bag and a black leather suitcase from the trunk of their tan Honda.

"I am coming; you go on ahead. I'm going to help mom and dad unpack the car." Alyssa reached into the trunk and grabbed a blue pillow and a teddy bear, then walked into the gray and white Victorian mansion which stood on the northern tip of Linden Island, just off the west coast of Canada.

"Mom, I am going to bring this inside, do you need any more help?" asked Alyssa, shifting her weight to the left side, standing at the edge of the doorway.

"No, that's okay. Just keep an eye on Jaime," answered Mrs. Simon, while she turned on her heel in the gravel driveway and looked to see how much garden space there was to plant her favorite flowers.

Alyssa entered through the brown oak doors. She dropped the luggage in the middle of the oriental rug-covered front hall. She gazed around at her new surroundings.

Directly above her hung a large crystal chandelier that gleamed in the sunlight. To her left stood a marble staircase covered with a velvet maroon rug, on every stair. At the end of the hall were two double doors, painted off-white. To her right stood another set of double doors of the same color.

"Jaime, where are you?" called Alyssa, wondering where her fair-haired, blue-eyed sister had disappeared.

"Jaime!" she called once more.

Alyssa heard footsteps from upstairs. Her emerald green eyes twinkled.

"Boo!" cried Jaime, jumping at her from behind.

Alyssa's head twirled around and her strawberry blonde ponytail swished around after it.

"Jaime! Don't ever do that again. You scared me half to death!" shouted Alyssa, fiercely.

"I am sorry." Jaime turned on her "I am only a child and I don't know better" look.

"Just don't do that again. By the way, have you been upstairs yet? I thought I heard footsteps," inquired Alyssa with a puzzled look on her face.

"No," replied Jaime as she turned and skipped outside to find her bags in the car.

Alyssa picked up her bags and started up the marble staircase. When she reached her new room, Alyssa put her luggage on her light green canopy bed that had been left by the first owners of the house. She looked around. There stood a white built-in dresser, which was also a desk. Beside the bed stood a brown, oak night table, bare as a beach before sun-up. In the corner of her room, there was a large closet; the type that you can walk into to find your clothes. Alyssa then decided she would go and explore the house.

"Wow! This place sure is huge," declared Alyssa after she had explored six bedrooms (including her own), two kitchens, a living room, a study, a dining room,

and slave quarters that were used in the 1800's. She now found herself in a room which her mother called the sitting room.

"This is a great place to play hide and seek in. I better not tell Jaime or I'll be playing every day," Alyssa chuckled quietly to herself.

A quick survey of the room showed her that the room contained two recliner chairs, an old-fashioned oak rolltop desk, a table used to play cards on with a couple of straight-backed chairs, some end tables, and a red oriental carpet.

"Alyssa! Time for dinner!" called Mrs. Simon from the bottom of the stairs. Alyssa hurried down, hungry after their long car trip.

After a filling meal of ham, peas, and a garden salad, Alyssa decided to go to sleep. That night, around 4 o'clock in the morning, Alyssa heard voices calling her name.

"Alyssa, Alyssa, help us. We need your help," whispered the faint and ghostly sounding voices.

Alyssa rose from her feather bed and followed the voices to the sitting room. When Alyssa arrived in the sitting room, there sat two ghosts, each in a chair at the card table.

"Who are you?" stammered Alyssa, who looked more intrigued than scared.

"We are Mr. and Mrs. O'Hara. We lived here before you did. We both need your help to protect our mansion," explained Mrs. O'Hara, her silvery hair pulled back in a tight bun at the nape of her neck gleaming in the moonlight.

"I don't even know you. Why should I help you? What is your problem? How do you know I'll be able to help you?" questioned Alyssa with a puzzled look on her face.

"You have to trust us, Alyssa, and we really need your help. You see, there is an evil spirit lurking in the attic in this mansion. His name is Vincent, and he has always loved this house and wanted it for his own. He was killed in a barn fire, and now Vincent is returning to take the house back for himself. To help, you have to put him to rest before the full moon in two days." By the time he was finished talking, Mr. O'Hara was almost out of breath.

Alyssa looked at the O'Haras and still felt puzzled about her task.

"How do I put him to rest?" inquired Alyssa, staring into Mrs. O'Hara's faint blue eyes.

"Well, my dear, you must sing him a lullaby, but you must find him first. Finding him shouldn't be hard, for he always stays in the attic." As she finished, both their bodies faded away slowly.

"Great, just great!" Alyssa mumbled sarcastically as she walked back to her bedroom.

When Alyssa awoke in the morning, she showered, dressed in jeans and her favorite pink sweater, then walked down the marble winding staircase to a pancake breakfast waiting for her in the dining room.

Alyssa ate vigorously, for she wanted to get started on her search for Vincent. Alyssa climbed up three flights of stairs where she found an old battered wooden

door with an old-fashioned lock. She pushed down on the hook and slowly the door creaked open. Step by step, Alyssa eased her way up the tattered and torn wooden steps.

"Vincent, I know you're up here. Come out, I need to talk with you," whispered Alyssa.

"What do you want from me? Are you trying to take this house from my grasp, just like those gruesome O'Haras?" asked a voice from behind a bookcase.

"Lullaby, say goodnight," sang Alyssa sweetly.

"That song won't work on me, little lady. I have earmuffs on. NOW GO AWAY!" shouted Vincent.

Frightened, Alyssa shot down the stairs like a roller coaster. Alyssa tossed and turned all that night thinking about Vincent, the O'Haras, and the lullaby.

"What should I do?" Alyssa asked herself. "I owe it to the O'Haras to get rid of Vincent, but how do I do it?" Alyssa's eyes closed, and she fell into a deep slumber, still troubled about Vincent.

When morning came, Alyssa had no spare time to trouble herself about her task. Her mother made her mow the lawn that was more like a sea of grass than a lawn, for it was so large. After the lawn, the garden needed weeding, the kitchen floor needed to be waxed, and on top of all that, Alyssa had to go grocery shopping with her mother on the mainland.

After all her work had been completed, Alyssa dragged her feet home, weary from the events of the day and the night before.

"Are you okay, dear?" questioned Alyssa's mother.

"I'll be all right, once I take a shower," mumbled Alyssa, yawning slightly.

Alyssa took a warm shower and snuck in a half-hour nap.

After she ate dinner, Alyssa decided to go to her room; to her surprise, she fell asleep for two hours. When her green eyes opened again, Alyssa looked at her digital clock.

"Oh no, it's 11:30! I only have half an hour to stop Vincent," cried Alyssa, while she slipped on her fluffy bunny slippers. Panic stricken, Alyssa bolted up to the attic. Opening the tattered door as silently as possible, she tiptoed up-stairs, hoping to sneak up on Vincent and catch him unawares with her lullaby.

"Lullaby and good night, go to sleep my baby, mm, mm, mm, mm." When Alyssa's sweet lullaby was over, snoring could be heard throughout the attic.

"I did it, he fell asleep like a little baby!" Alyssa's eyes twinkled with triumph and Vincent's figure slowly disappeared. Alyssa trampled downstairs to the sitting room. Once again, Mr. and Mrs. O'Hara sat at the card table chatting.

"Thank you, my dear. The house is saved. We'll never forget this," cheered Mrs. O'Hara.

"You're welcome. Will I ever see you again?" inquired Alyssa, hoping to see her friends once again.

"Of course. We must stay and make sure no harm comes to our mansion. But only you can see us, remember that," replied Mr. O'Hara, smiling from ear to ear.

"I'm so glad. I have to go now. See you guys tomorrow. Bye." Alyssa skipped out of the sitting room with extra bounce in her step. Joy filled her smile, her voice, and her heart, for she knew that not only did her triumphant work save the O'Haras' lives, but her whole family and home were saved by her great win against the evil spirit, Vincent, living in the dusty attic on the fourth floor.



*Jalana Lazar*  
Grade 6  
Cornwall Consolidated School  
Cornwall

### The First Snow

The mountain stands tall, dark  
and covered by trees.  
Powdery snow  
lies like confectionary sugar  
on pines,  
swaying in the breeze,  
smiling and shivering,  
softly caressed  
by the wet fingers of winter.  
Brave and still the pines stand.  
The first snow makes them queens  
in a magical world.



*Sarah Kochman*  
Grade 6  
Cornwall Consolidated School  
Cornwall

### Friendship

Let me tell you about friendship.  
I have felt the hot beating sun  
Rays  
The ocean running down my face  
Two buttons buttoned together  
The ferris wheel going round and  
Round.

Yet the friendship I remember  
Most left me sitting in a dark  
Room feeling pain over and over  
Again  
Knowing that it will stop.



## Omath & The Dragon

*Crans Baldwin  
Grade 6  
Middlesex Middle School  
Darien*

Omath silently crept into the cave. A snoring sound floated out of the opening on the high treacherous cliff. Since it was so dark, he could not see past his own nose. The young sorcerer swallowed the frightened feeling in his throat and took a few steps forward. He had come too far, and the lives of all the innocent peasants were in his hands, since the Dragon killed all the people that were near him when he rampaged across the land of Gyro. Omath walked further and soon he could see the Dragon. Even in the dim, musty light, the Dragon's scales glittered. Just one of those gold plates would be worth millions; that is, if you could get it off the Dragon. While the Dragon was sleeping, small rings of smoke drifted out of his nostrils. With one charge of blazing courage, Omath exclaimed,

"Mighty Gold Dragon, I, Omath, have come to recapture the Red Wizards' Ruby, and to slay your hulking self."

The Dragon's head flew up in a mountain of rage. Smoke was pouring out of his snout along with small fiery whispers. The beast's emerald eyes showed a vision of hate.

"You, a puny boy, have come to kill me, the King of all beasts!" roared the Dragon, "I doubt you are even an apprentice to a sorcerer. But you would make a nice roasted morsel."

Like a blazing comet silhouetted against a midnight sky, a burst of flame flew from the Dragon's gigantic jaws. But Omath knew how to deal with Dragon fire.

"Kensara, Fojo, Wetaso!" he screamed.

Within tenths of a second, a frigid iceball, colder than the Arctic Sea, formed in his hand. He flung it directly at the Dragon's flame. A loud hissing, like a cobra's death call, erupted from the beast's gaping jaws. Steam filled the top of the cavern, like bees swarming out of a hive. The Dragon's temper exploded like a mushroom cloud. His razor-sharp talons swept out from under his stomach and tore across Omath's right arm. Omath collapsed under the pain. He grasped at his blood-stained arm. He slowly got up and tried to reach for the magical sword that the Red Wizards had given him. The Dragon saw this, and his tail hit Omath on the backside of his knees, sending Omath to the ground once more.

"Eating you cooked is too much of a bother! Eating you raw is much simpler," the Dragon said with a gleam in his eyes.

The Dragon lowered his head and showed his diamond-sharp teeth to Omath. Just when he was about to rip Omath to shreds, Omath shoved his sword into the Dragon's upper neck. The screams of agony were unbearable. He swung his neck around trying to get out the sword, but suddenly he collapsed. The dreaded Dragon was dead. Omath felt a sense of pride since he had saved the lives of hundreds of people. He cautiously stepped over the Dragon and walked to the end of the cave. There, on the top of an immense treasure pile, lay the Red Ruby.



## Theatrics

Anne finished brushing her hair and looked into the mirror in the girls' bathroom, admiring the red hair that fell in soft waves to her shoulders. Then she put the brush back in her purse and started to homeroom. When she got there, she ignored the little clusters of chatting eighth graders, gathered her books and left unnoticed. Anne ran down the hall, slowing down as she passed the principal's office, and ducked into an empty classroom.

Skipping classes wasn't something Anne normally did, but today was different. Yesterday, she had been embarrassed in front of the whole class for not getting her homework in, and she didn't want to go through that again, especially since Mr. Tremain had threatened to keep her after school if she didn't have her homework. Lately, forgetting her homework had become a real problem. At night she played with her cat and daydreamed about being a famous actress.

The bell rang, bringing Anne to reality with a start. Realizing how late it must be, she jumped up, grabbed her books, and started out the door. On the way, she bumped into Mr. Green, her social studies teacher. "Anne," he said. "Aren't you supposed to be in math?"

Anne mumbled something about being sorry. Then, when he showed no sign of letting her pass into the hall, she began to cry silently. Tears ran down her cheek. "I'm sorry," she said, "but I just wanted to be alone." Anne started to cry a little harder. "Since my parents got divorced..." Anne stopped there, hoping she hadn't already gone too far. She saw a look of concern cross Mr. Green's face.

"If you want to, see the counselor?" he added in a softer tone.

"No thanks," Anne mumbled. She stumbled into the hall and began to run down the corridor. When she turned the corner and was out of Mr. Green's sight she stopped, wiped her face, smiled, and continued on. Her parents had gotten divorced nine years ago. She was over it now. She couldn't even remember her father.

Anne laughed to herself and pushed away the shadow of guilt that was slowly creeping into her mind. It wasn't her fault that Mr. Green was so easily tricked. Still, that little trickle of guilt would not leave. With a sigh Anne pushed it to the back of her mind. Just then her friend Shelby came up to her.

"What did Mr. Green want?" asked Shelby.

"Nothing much. He just complimented me on my behavior in class." Anne lied coolly. Then she turned around and started at a brisk pace toward the auditorium for her theater class.



## An Interview with Representative John Larson

It was November 22, 1988, the 25th anniversary of the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy. My friend, Marisha Camp, and I had attended a vigil for him at the Legislative Offices Building in Hartford, and we were just about to leave when we spotted an elegant dining hall—open to visitors of the building. Since we had been snapping pictures and taking notes all night (not to mention a Channel 8 television interview and watching a lengthy film about J.F.K., as we had come to call him), it was only natural that we wanted to stay a while longer so that we could recharge.

I was busy taking pictures of one of Kennedy's 1960 campaign posters in the room when I heard Marisha gasp. Rushing over, I was just about to inquire what was wrong, when I saw that we were standing in front of an open door that read, PRIVATE DINING ROOM. Peeking in, I saw that John Larson, one of the people we had previously tried to interview, was seated inside at a nearby table. He had briefly talked to us before ("Find me later"), and I wondered if he would remember us. Personally, I strongly doubted it. I mean, politicians already have to answer so many questions from REAL journalists. Why would he take time for a couple of kids he didn't even know, much less remember them? Just then he turned and saw us.

"Oh, I was supposed to talk to you!" he exclaimed. "Come and sit down." Speechless, Marisha and I walked over, introduced ourselves, and stated our interview purpose, research for Regional History Day. Then he asked us what school we attended.

"Granby Memorial Middle," we chorused.

"Well, what's the first question?" he asked casually. Now, I'll be frank with you. Since Marisha and I had not known if we would get an interview at all, much less who it would be with, we had not been able to prepare any questions. Marisha gave me a frantically horrified look behind Larson's face, and I asked the most obvious question. Masking my horror with a smile, I inquired, "Could you tell us what John F. Kennedy meant to you?" Larson thought briefly then spoke.

"I was in the sixth grade when Senator Kennedy was running for President, and, next to my father, to me he was the most inspirational leader of the century...J.F.K. gave the nation vigor, vision, and the ability to dream...it's too bad he didn't live to fulfill his promise...Kennedy was a man who respected poetry as much as he respected football...he had spontaneous humor and a quick wit. He was a wonderful father to Caroline and John-John." Then, drawing on the little reading I had managed to get done, I asked, "What do you think of the way Kennedy handled the Cuban Missile crisis?"

"I think Kennedy showed exemplary courage...he looked the Russians in the eye, and they blinked." Finally, Marisha couldn't resist asking, "What do you think of all the gossip calling Kennedy a 'brazen womanizer'?"

"Well, I think it's a shame that Kennedy isn't here to defend himself from the

*Karen Walter*

*Grade 7*

*Granby Memorial Middle School*

*Granby*

critics...he didn't live long enough to finish what he started, but he opposed segregation and discrimination, and encouraged equality, although at the time it was unpopular for him to do so. In all literature, no one demands as much attention as President John Fitzgerald Kennedy...He is still the standard by which all elected officials are judged today. His courage, integrity, wit, and personality made the world appreciate anew the meaning of the word 'charisma.' He was no myth—he was real. And tonight, the proof of that was written on the audience's faces and carried in their hearts."

After that interview, Marisha and I left. But Rep. John Larson had proved to us that Kennedy was not the only politician willing to talk with teenagers seriously. That, along with Larson's extraordinarily COMPLETE loyalty to the remarkably courageous John Fitzgerald Kennedy makes him a special political figure for seventh graders to look up to.

But maybe Larson's most unusually distinguishing characteristics are his looks. He could almost be Kennedy's twin! Larson has the same thick, brown hair, dark hazel eyes, and tall, sturdy figure. In fact, two of our teachers, Mrs. Ploski and Mrs. Brown, remarked this of the recently developed pictures that Marisha and I took at the vigil: "Who IS this person? It looks like Kennedy came back to life!" And they're right.



*Matthew Cieslukowski*  
*Grade 7*  
*Teachers Memorial Junior High*  
*Norwich*

## Escape From Moonbase

### Chapter 1: A Special Hiding Place

The sparks of the blast bounced off the wall as I ran down the narrow passageway. The sound of another shot being fired echoed off the tunnel walls. "It's just up ahead," I thought as my pace grew faster. When the second burst of light flew over my head, I fell and skidded across the floor. I turned and saw the pirate come around the corner of the work shaft. I reached down and unbuckled the strap holding down my blaster. I pulled it out and fired a few small bursts down the tunnel.

When I stood up, the space pirate was on the ground. The skin was melting and revealed a metal skeleton. "An android," I said to myself as I turned and slowly continued toward the tunnel junction where I would meet my friend.

As I turned the final corner, the light from the junction was almost blinding. I couldn't remember the last time I saw a bright light. The tunnels under a moonbase usually aren't lit.

Then I lowered myself into the connector and looked up. The lighting panels surrounded the circular shaft and black ports marked the beginning of new tunnels.

Soon I heard a small noise from one of the tubes. I pulled out my gun, but when I saw it was Jerid, my old friend, I put it back into my holster. "Dirk, is that you?" Jerid asked.

"Yea, come on down. It's sure nice to see you, but I got to tell ye something," I replied.

"So do I, so let me start. The supplies are running out, and David says we only got a couple of weeks left. Plus, when Paul went up through the ventilation ducts he heard them talking about us. When we went to get more food, the freezers were heavily guarded," concluded Jerid.

"Well, that's not all. Down that tunnel," I pointed down the tunnel I just came from, "an android security robot was using me for target practice. Luckily I got him before he got me! Looks like time's running out."

"Dirk, do you remember how it all started?" Jerid asked.

"How could I forget! When that shuttle with the pirates landed, our parents didn't have much of a chance. Once security found out what was going on, they sent all the kids into the service tunnels. Some kids saw their parents melted down in front of 'em. I was only twelve, now I'm fifteen, and these tunnels are my home. I'm not going to have my home, and my new family, stripped from me again. I'll tell ye that much, Jerid."

"Listen," Jerid began, "because these are only rumors. I can arrange for Paul, our guide, to take us into the ventilation duct. The pirates have a meeting around seven every night."

"Fine, I'll contact my people and I'll meet ye back here, okay, Jerid?"

"Sounds fine with me, so I'll see ye then and be careful."

We shook hands and he patted me on the shoulder, then he left.

At seven o'clock I was back in the junction. The lights were off now (at night all tunnel lights automatically turned off). The features that I saw before couldn't be seen without a flashlight. I had gone back to the cargo hold where twelve of my friends and I lived. We called ourselves the "Southern Survivors" because we lived in the most southern cargo hold.

Just then I heard a sliding in the tunnel above me. I pushed myself up against the wall, so whoever was coming wouldn't see me. When I saw Jerid's ripped blue pants, I relaxed.

He lowered himself to the floor, then helped a smaller kid down. "Nice to see you safe," Jerid whispered.

I nodded and said, "Well, it's good to see ye too. So who's he?"

"Oh, this is Paul, I mentioned him before. He knows these tunnels better than anyone. So, how about we get started?" Jerid asked.

"Let's go," I replied.

Paul felt along the wall until he found rungs we used as a ladder. He started moving upwards with his mini light in his mouth. Jerid followed, and after he was up six or seven rungs, I started up.

We climbed awhile, then I saw Jerid pull himself into a large shaft. He motioned me to be quiet and to shut off my light. We moved along until we came to a grid. In the room behind the grid there were many pirates talking and laughing. I checked my time calculator and saw that it was only seven-thirty.

I moved myself in front of the grid, and I began to listen. They were talking about the last time the United Alliance made an attempt to regain the moonbase before they gave up. Then a door opened, and Frederick, one of the people in my "Southern Survivors," walked in unguarded. I thought he'd been captured so I grabbed my gun, but Jerid stopped me from firing.

He walked over and sat down next to one of the pirates. He began to speak and everyone stopped their individual conversations. "I've only heard a couple of things lately. First, junction number three seems to be the new meeting place." I grew extremely angry, and I wanted to shoot him dead right there, but he continued. "Secondly, a group of them are watching this meeting." He stood up and pointed to the vent we were watching from.

Paul took off down the shaft and Jerid followed, but I couldn't move. I just sat there looking at Fred.

A pirate slowly approached, and when I realized it was too late to run, I kicked the vent out at the approaching pirate. It hit him and he fell. I jumped out of the vent and ran behind an unused desk. I withdrew my blaster and fired a shot at another pirate. When I was going to fire again, someone pulled me down and put something very cold and sharp on the back of my neck. The person holding it said, "Get ready to die, fool!"



## A Grandmother's Painting

Sweep

A brush glides across the page

Colors exploding

Then a tedious hand etches

A fisherman

A signature

Or something of little importance

To make a picture wonderful

She purses her lips

And sharp criticism rises from her lips

And the painting is tossed into a corner

Or to me who treasures

A grandmother's painting



*Kristin Fians*  
Grade 7  
Madison Middle School  
Trumbull

## My Huge Striper

6:15 a.m.

A blue pickup truck pulls into the dirt parking lot of a Stonington, Connecticut marina. I hopped out and sat on a boulder. As I drank my hot chocolate, I watched a beautiful sunrise over the horizon.

"That would make a great picture someday," I thought to myself.

"Ready to go?" my father questioned.

"Ugh-huh," I replied while dumping my cold chocolate into the water.

I slid into our twenty-foot boat while my dad cranked the outboard motor. In a puff of blue smoke, we were off. I took the wheel while he rigged the rods and checked the line. After driving for about ten minutes, I rounded the point of land and saw the ocean. It was an unusually clear and calm day.

"Should I try Sugar Reef first?" I asked.

"Yup," my father said.

The roar of the motor became increasingly louder as I sped up. I began to slow the motor as I neared the front of the reef where we sometimes fish.

"Birds on the starboard side!" I yelled.

I wheeled the boat around and drove up to where the birds were. There must have been hundreds of birds diving all around us (birds - usually gulls and terns - diving into the water and catching small bait-fish means that there are big fish around, too). I grabbed my rod and cast out my line.

"Got one!" my father exclaimed.

I put down my rod and grabbed the pliers and the special glove to hold the fish with because bluefish have very sharp teeth that can easily bite a finger off.

"Medium-sized bluefish," he shouted. "Probably six or seven pounds."

I cast out my lure again and started to retrieve it when I saw a swirl behind my plug. The line began to stretch.

"I think, I think I've got one!" I exclaimed.

The pull loosened.

"Scratch that," I moaned.

Suddenly, the swirl was there again and this time I had him!

"Got him again and now he's really taking line!" I cried.

My poor rod was bending from the butt to the tip.

"I'll move you in on him," my father offered.

He idled the boat over toward the fish, and I started to gain line. It jumped and cleared the water.

"It's a huge striped bass!" I shrieked.

"You're tellin' me!" my father yelled.

Finally, I tired the fish somewhat and brought it up near the boat. My dad tried to grab him, but he thrashed like crazy. My heart was beating like thunder. I couldn't lose him now; I just couldn't!

"Still got some fight left in him," he commented.

He finally slipped his thumb in the fish's mouth, which paralyzes the fish.

Jeffrey Boyce

Grade 7

Granby Memorial Middle School

Granby

"I can just barely lift him," my dad cried.

"Whoa," was all I could get out of my mouth.

I grabbed the camera, focused, and shot. We released the fish. After a half of an hour of fighting the fish, my arms really throbbed. But one thing I knew, I had tasted the desire that is in every true fisherman's heart, I had caught the big one.



*Betsy Marshall*  
Grade 7  
Horace W. Porter School  
Columbia

## Memories of Grandma

In the beginning, she was strong—strong and proud, and very much alone. Grandma came to live with us that summer of 1987. She was too old to live alone anymore (or so my father thought). So she came to us. I had mixed feelings about the whole process. Part of me wondered about the Grandmother I had never really known. Another part felt that she was intruding in my little world. I'll never forget the first thing that she said to me as she stepped from the car that first morning.

"You look like me, Elizabeth, too much like me."

The next day her boxes came, and she showed me a picture of herself at my age, taken almost 80 years before. I did look like her, uncannily like her.

She insisted on cooking our meals every night, and I was recruited to help her. At first I dreaded that part of the day, and when it did come, I did the simple tasks she gave me as quickly as possible. This went on until two weeks later when suddenly she said,

"I don't blame you for being afraid of me, Elizabeth."

Caught off guard, I stuttered, "I-I-I'm not afraid of you Grandma."

"Yes you are, and you know it," she stated firmly. "You feel like I'm intruding in your life, and I don't blame you."

That was exactly how I had felt.

That evening we went for a walk on the beach in front of the house. She told me about the grandfather I had never known.

"I felt so awful when he died," she told me.

"How did you ever get over it?" I enquired sympathetically.

"You just remember the good times," she told me. "You just remember the good times."

In the weeks that followed, we were almost inseparable. From the moment I woke up until the moment I went to sleep, I was at her side. She taught me so much in those weeks—how to make cookies, how to care for a wounded bird we found in the meadow, how to arrange wild flowers in a vase, and much more. She taught me to love and respect nature and all it had to offer, to learn and care about the past as well as the present.

One evening when we were walking on the beach, she said suddenly, "Don't cry for me when I go, Elizabeth. Promise me you won't."

"I promise, Grandma, but you're going to be with us for a long time yet."

That night we stayed up late looking at old photos of her and my grandpa. As I left the room she said softly, "These past weeks have been very special to me, Elizabeth."

"I really enjoyed getting to know you, Grandma, and I love you."

"Good-night," she said lovingly.

The next morning, I went to wake her. The minute my fingers touched the doorknob, I knew something was wrong. She was lying on her bed in her nightgown. Anyone would have thought she was asleep. But I knew she was dead. The only way I can explain that feeling was that, whenever you were around her, there was always a feeling of a strange and wonderful presence. Today, that feeling was gone.

My father came up to see why we were taking so long. After taking her pulse, his words only confirmed my thoughts. I left my father alone with her and went up to the attic where Grandma and I had spent many happy days.

I had promised her I wouldn't cry. I didn't know how I would get over losing her. Suddenly I remembered something she had once said to me. As I watched the stormy waves break against the beach, I smiled as I began remembering the good times.



### Will You Babysit?

"Dawn, stop it!" I yelled hopelessly. I was babysitting for the Gillins who left me in charge of three little terrors for one week. The names and ages of the kids are: Dawn who was five, Sue who was eight, and Jim who was ten. I was sure that they all had criminal records for disrupting the peace. Mr. Gillin left with Mrs. Gillin four days ago to go to "Paradise Island." Some paradise for me. I only had to last through three more days. This was my first overnight job, since I was only sixteen years old.

We just started summer vacation two weeks ago. My parents said that they were worried and that they didn't want me to take the job but I wanted to, so I did.

Mrs. Gillin left me with the schedule of the kids:

From the desk of:  
Sally Gillin

This is the schedule of Dawn, Sue and Jim please follow it—

8:30 is breakfast

11:00 is midmorning snack

swim lessons are between 11:30-12:15

*Jennifer Weber*  
Grade 7  
East Ridge Middle School  
Ridgefield

12:30 is lunch time  
1:15-3:00 is independent playtime  
3:05-4:15 library time  
4:20 is mid-afternoon snack  
4:45 is rest time  
5:30 is dinner time  
6:15 is bathtime  
7:00 is storytime  
7:15 is bedtime (except for Jim who can watch T.V. from 7:15-8:00 and in bed by 8:15)

Thank you,  
Good luck,

Sally Gillin

Now we were up to independent playtime. Dawn was flushing the toilet violently without a stop. Sue was ripping up her mother's magazines, and Jim was pounding on the computer. "O.K. playtime is over it is time to go to the library," I yelled. "Let's go!" Nothing too bad could happen at the library I thought.

When I got to the library, I realized that I was wrong by assuming that nothing too bad would happen. First Dawn was throwing the books all over the place; Sue was screaming "Fire, Fire," to anyone that was alive, and Jim was making copies of his hand on the copy machine, and I would have to pay for them. I ran to grab them to make them stop when an old lady asked me to control my sisters and brother. As soon as I grabbed them, I dragged them out. "We are going to skip the rest of library time and go right into snack time." I announced.

"What is for snack?" Jim asked.

"Peanut butter on apples," I answered.

"Yum," they shouted.

We made it home without any major catastrophes. Then I had to make a snack. I didn't realize what peanut butter did to kids, but before I realized they were taking the peanut butter off the apples and smearing it all over each other's faces.

"Stop it, Stop it! I, I, don't understand why you are making this such a test for me." I screamed almost crying. "Now you all get over here, and I am going to wash your faces; and then you are going to go to your rooms and stay there until I tell you to come out and I don't want any funny stuff happening while you are up there. GO!" I was almost crying. I tried to make dinner and I ended up making soup from a can. I called them down for dinner and I stuck them in the tub while I picked a book for storytime. I got them out of the tub and ready for storytime. When I started to read to them, Sue pulled the book away from me and Jim ran to the light switch and flicked the lights off. I felt my way around the room to try to find the light switch. I finally did and put Dawn and Sue to bed and let Jim sit in front of the T.V. until 8:00 and put him to bed at 8:15. I finally got to bed at 10:30. I was

awakened by a shrill laugh. I saw Sue in my closet squeezing toothpaste all over my clothes. "Stop!" I desperately cried. I grabbed the tube of toothpaste out of Sue's hand and marched her to her bed. I started to clean up the mess she made. When I finished, I heard a door open and someone yelled "Hello."

"Who is it?" I asked.

"It's us, the Gillins." Mrs. Gillin answered.

I ran out to greet them. "But why are you home early?" I questioned.

"We got worried about leaving you here with the three terrors." Mr. Gillin answered.

"Enough about us. How did it go with them?" Mrs. Gillin asked.

"Oh, just fine," I answered.



## His World

I tolt\* over the lava mound  
on my sure-footed Icelandic pony.  
A lonely wind haunts me.  
I glance over a forlorn and stark landscape:  
obsidian mountains rise from the hardened earth,  
fields of black hard grapes born in fire.

My gaze stops at Mount Hekla  
smouldering in snow.  
Then I spot Torbjorn.  
A seven-year-old boy  
a spirit of a polar bear.  
A flashing silver fish shoots out of the water  
and flops onto the smoky black ground.  
Torbjorn tosses his fish into the air  
like my cat with a mole.  
This is his world, I thought:  
the mountains, the ice, the fish  
are his life.

I turn away.  
A week from now  
I will be walking the streets of New York.

\*single-foot (gait)



Celeste Peterson  
Grade 7  
The Independent Day School  
Middlefield

Rebecca Logiudice  
Grade 8  
Bennet Junior High School  
Manchester

## Darkness

Lying in the darkness  
Nothing has color  
The empty aura of my room  
Frightens me  
Everything has changed  
Things that were once  
Just articles  
Of clothing on my chair  
Are now ebony soldiers  
Of the nightmare army  
Awaiting my arrival  
In their terrifying world



Trang Vu  
Grade 8  
Timothy Edwards Middle School  
South Windsor

## The Last Day in Vietnam

Since our family moved to live with our grandfather, things became different. My mom and my aunt worked really hard to buy oil and sell it to other people. My cousins, my brothers and I helped my grandfather work on the farm in the mountains. It was fun working with my grandfather. He told us about Chinese history, and how in the 20th century the Chinese men left their hair long, and how the Kung Fu became famous for centuries and now, too. He said, "When the Communist came to China, they forced us to leave. So your grandmother and I headed to Vietnam with a lot of other people. Then we bought this house and started to become farmers. We worked really hard for today."

"Did you cut your hair when you came to Vietnam, Grandpap?" we wondered.

"Well, yes. If we didn't, they brought us to jail for two or three days, and then they cut it for us," he told us.

"Grandpap, by that time, did you and Grandma have any children yet?" I asked.

"No, we decided that if we had a baby, it would be hard for us. Your Grandma and I thought that we'd first settle down on our farm, and we thought that maybe in two or three years, we would have a child," he told us.

"Grandpap, we better head back home now. I think Grandma and Mom are probably wondering where we are now," I told him.

"Ya, we better go. Your Grandma goes nuts when I come home late," he said while laughing.

When we got home, my grandma told us to wash ourselves up. While we cleaned ourselves up, we threw the water at each other and into the air. It poured down on us like rain water. It was so exciting. We wanted to stay there for the rest

of the night. The sky looked beautiful. The twinkling of the stars was so bright. It made the sky look like the stars were in heaven. Nothing can destroy all those stars. They protect us and make the world look happy.

We didn't want to go in, but my grandmother came and screamed at us. After we had finished taking the shower, we went for dinner.

"Where is Aunt Dien and Mom, Grandma?" we asked.

"Your aunt and your mom are probably on their way home. Now just finish your dinner," she told us.

"Grandma, would you let me wash the dishes after we finish eating?" I asked. She nodded yes.

It was around ten o'clock when we all went to bed. While I was lying on my bed, I heard my mom's and my aunt's voices. I wanted to go downstairs and say "hi" to them, but I thought they might be discussing their work and buying other gallons of oil and selling it. So I tried to close my eyes and go to bed. The next day, it rained. It didn't start out as heavy rain, and I awoke to the smell of it rather than the sound. I lay in bed with my eyes closed, breathing in the dampness, and I knew, without looking, that the sky was thick and low; and the leaves on the trees in the backyard were glistening with drops of silver. Would it be an all-day drizzle, the kind that keeps you disconcerted?

I went to school with my brothers and my cousins. At the last moment, I tucked a rain scarf in my pocket, and I was later glad that I had. By the time I had reached the school, the soft, glowing, mother-of-pearl day had dulled and darkened, and the rain had begun to fall again. Huddled close to the side of the school building under the protection of an overhang, I tied the scarf over my hair not to get it wet.

By the time we got out of the school, the sky started to look shiny and bright. The dark cloud disappeared and the sun began to shine again. When we reached the house, my mother told us to wear warm clothes.

"Mom, what is going on here? Why are we dressing in warm clothes? It's hot outside right now," I told her.

"Honey, could you just help your brothers put on their clothes and you, too. I don't have time to tell you now. I have to get the food ready, too," she spoke hurriedly.

At midnight, some of my uncles helped my aunt and my mother carry suitcases down to our grandfather's boat. When we got there, I didn't know where to go. So I stood in the middle of the ocean. The water reached up to my ears. I was scared. The only thing I saw that was surrounding me was darkness and emptiness. Suddenly I heard someone call my name. I turned around. It was my mother.

"Mom, I'm over here," I screamed.

"I'm coming, Honey, just stay there. Don't go anywhere," she called back.

"O.K., Mom, I'll try," I murmured.

By the time my mother grabbed my hand, I thought that I would sink down. When we got to our grandfather's boat, there were a lot of passengers on it. My mother told my uncles to get off the boat and give it a push because it was too heavy,

and the engine wouldn't start. When we reached a big ship, we all climbed aboard. My mother was crying. My grandfather told my mother to take care of us and be careful. When I climbed on board, I almost fell off. Then my aunt took my hand. As I looked around, all I saw was water that was rough and wavy.

"Take care, all of you," and my grandfather's voice trailed off. I didn't know what to say. The only words I could scream back were, "Good-bye, Grandpa." I just kept looking at him until his boat disappeared into the darkness. At that moment the captain told us to go below the deck. My whole family and my aunt's family sat together. The ship was carrying two hundred thirty people.

"What's going to happen to the ship? How can it survive in the ocean? Is the ship going to sink or float?" Questions just kept popping in my mind.

"What's going to happen to my grandfather? Are the communists going to put him in jail or release him? He is too old to be put in jail. I guess they're not going to harm him. I wish things didn't have to happen like this," I continued.

I pressed myself against the heavy wood wall and thought, "Will I see Vietnam again? How many more years before our country can have peace and freedom?" More questions kept circling around in my brain.

The next morning when I awoke, the sun was blocking my eyes. I went on deck. I stretched my whole body. It felt good. The ship was right in the middle of the ocean, bouncing back and forth. It made me want to throw up. The sky, a silvery blue, looked beautiful. The sun looked golden yellow. I couldn't believe that we were on our way to America.

§

*Robin Bonato*  
Grade 8  
Irving A. Robbins Middle School  
Farmington

### Winter Day At Sundown

A purple-blue mist  
Shadowed by gray fog  
Tinted by a pale ball of light  
Sharp, dark darts  
Jittering to and fro  
Cause a desolate hum  
In the protected ears  
Of a dreamer.

§

## I Hear With My Eyes

I remember the day as if it were yesterday. All I could see from my spot in the back seat of our car was a house, or maybe a castle, on a hill. As we drove up the long drive, the castle was quickly reduced to a small stone cabin in comparison to the dark blue hospital that was situated off to the side. I looked at the once beautiful, once inviting castle and felt cold and scared. I had never been to this place before, and I didn't think I wanted to be there now. I had no idea what took place there.

The shiny sign said, "Newington Children's Hospital." We pulled into a parking spot, and the soft hum of the car stopped with sudden silence.

"Well, we're here," said Mom, and we stepped out. The walk to the door was almost as long as the drive up the hill. When my feet finally brought me to a very large door, we entered. We were at Newington Children's Hospital, all right. No one had to tell me that. I knew why I was there, but not what would happen while I was a resident.

After some initial questions, the lady at the desk said, "Follow the blue line please."

The blue line, what a funny way to get you where you were going. To follow a line was probably a funny game for many of the children who came here, but I was not ready to play a game. I had already made up my mind to complain and protest, to scream and yell if necessary.

"I don't have to do this if I don't want to; I don't, I don't, I don't."

My thoughts were interrupted suddenly when my mother poked me to say it was my turn to see the doctor. That was quick.

"Dorrie, the doctor will see you now," repeated a lady.

The words echoed in my ears louder than any noise I'd ever heard before, ever. And as I heard them, I remembered all the times I couldn't hear them at all.

"Dorrie," my mother called.

"Dorrie," she called again.

"Dorrie!" She must have been screaming now.

"Dorrie, your mother is calling you," screamed all the kids I had been playing with, and they pointed to where she was standing on the other side of my yard.

It seemed as though I could never hear my mom, that I just couldn't hear her if we were more than thirty feet apart.

That night my parents were talking.

"She never hears," my mom said. "Never, never hears me."

And I never did.

"It was as if she were in her own little world." I would hear that said of me for many years to come. Nobody could get through to me. I remember when I was in the first grade and Sara wanted me to pass a note for her to Lynn who sat on the other side of me. Sara tried to get my attention, I guess, but I never knew until we all were in trouble and the teacher was glaring at us.

There were other instances too, like the time I didn't know there was to be an

Stacy Metzler  
Grade 8  
John F. Kennedy Junior High  
Southington

award dinner on the fourth of February, or the times I wouldn't know to bring my book money, or my flute for an extra practice. I was always missing the announcements that everyone else heard. If it weren't written on a printed notice, I was lost; only I didn't know I was missing anything.

So my teachers, parents, and finally I knew there was something wrong, and that brought me here, to the fear infested within the walls of the place with the blue lines and the big door.

As it turned out, everyone was quite nice, and I never had to scream. The hearing test consisted of several parts, the scariest of which was the test in the sound proof booth. Sounds were played into headphones which were placed over my ears. If I heard a sound, I raised my hand, and the doctor could determine the level of my hearing.

The test was a long one, and I was glad when finally I was told I could go to the playroom to wait. This will always be remembered as my favorite part of my ordeal, for the playroom was a child's fantasy room filled with hundreds of four foot tall stuffed animals. I nearly forgot the reason we were there.

On the way home, my parents explained to me that I had a thirty percent hearing loss; I was really too young to understand that I heard thirty percent less than everybody else. An operation was scheduled, and I was to have tubes inserted in my ears to drain the excess fluid with the hope that this was the cause of my problems.

Looking back on those days now, I know that operation and the one that would follow it four years later, were very hard on my parents. They wanted their daughter to have a normal life, and the failure of both operations was probably harder on them than on me, for I had my childhood distractions to camouflage the reality.

It was when I was older that the reality hit me.

"So Dorrie, do you want to go to the movies today?" said Sue.

"What?" I said.

"Want to go to the movies?" Sue said again.

"Sorry, I can't hear you," I said.

"Oh, just forget it." A frustrated Sue gave up.

Many of my friends gave up on me, or perhaps they weren't friends after all but merely acquaintances. I didn't have any real friends, I thought, friends with the patience to really let me be me.

But in junior high school that changed. Although my hearing became more of a problem for me, I had more friends and a higher self-esteem. I hardly ever thought about my hearing problem. But then there was one incident that occurred in the spring of my seventh grade year that sparked an eye-burning sadness about my problem.

I was talking with my friends one day in art class. I had left my paints out and my art teacher, a rather short-tempered lady, was calling me.

"Dorrie," she had called and apparently repeated several times. I didn't hear her, several times! Finally she became so angry that she screamed.

"Dorrie, what is wrong with you? Do you have a hearing problem or

something?"

Everything froze in my mind. My friends knew of my hearing problem, and backed me 100 percent whenever anyone made fun of my occasional "What's," "Huh's," and "Sorry I didn't hear you's."

I answered Mrs. Ross.

"Yes, I do." And I sat down. Total silence filled the room. Everyone felt a hatred for Mrs. Ross for what she had unintentionally said to me.

I realized it then. People were really starting to understand my problem. But only sometimes.

"Dorrie, Mike Jacobs likes you."

"What?"

"Mike Jacobs **likes** you!"

"Huh?"

"Oh, forget it!"

I guess that's the way it's going to be. I can hear, but not enough. And it was the "enough" that counted. My mom and dad understood. We even had a joke we shared. One time my mom had said,

"Give Mrs. Cross this spool of thread," and I thought she said,

"Go across the street with a loaf of bread."

Some of my friends understood sometimes. And I had one special friend, Beth. She knew more than the others how I felt because her little brother was partially deaf too. She couldn't stand it when people stared at him. We had a lot in common, especially our love of singing. We sang everything, Beth telling me the words when I couldn't hear them. On the radio, there were no lips for me to read, a practice I was getting quite good at. I had learned to hear with my eyes. And because I was always watching people's faces, I became very adept at telling what people were feeling. I was usually the first one to know if a friend was upset, and I could always tell when someone's words hurt another person. I guess, in a way, that's an advantage to my hearing problem.

I'm really adjusting to things now. Beth and I went to a school dance the other night. Her hair was a mess so we went to fix it. A boy I liked, Mike, said, "Hi." I kept walking because I didn't hear him. But Beth did, and together she and I mustered up the courage to approach Mike. And guess what? He understood, and we're close friends now. In fact, we're going out. And Beth promises to always tell me things I don't hear.

But the best thing is I have two really good friends now, Mike and Beth, friends who understand and care. And who knows? This could lead to more understanding from everyone, so I won't have to hear with my eyes any more.



Jennie Acheson  
Grade 8  
The Independent Day School  
Middlefield

## Sidewalk Art

There is a woman lying on the  
walk,  
Or at least the top half of a woman.  
She is wearing a veil  
and a blue cloak.  
Her head is illuminated,  
and in her hand she holds a cross.  
The woman is very peaceful  
and happy, even though  
there is still a scraggly man  
drawing highlights  
in her clothing.  
Neither of them seems to notice  
the crowd they have drawn,  
nor that the hat lying upturned nearby  
is nearly full of dollars.  
Finally, the woman is finished.  
The man stands up, steps back,  
and surveys his work appreciatively.  
Then he empties the hat's contents  
into his pocket, and puts the hat on.  
He looks up at the cloudy sky  
as if in supplication.  
On his dark glasses, suddenly,  
there is a drop of water,  
then another on someone's upturned palm.  
Now the sky is full of tiny splashes  
of water. And the woman cries.  
First her eyes, then her mouth, then her  
entire shining head runs down her  
dress and into the sewer.  
No one notices the man. They are too  
busy, now that the woman is gone.  
No one sees that the man is crying,  
along with his creation.

§

## Psychotic

Cowboy boots,  
skin tight, black leather pants,  
thick, black belt.  
Tee shirt.  
Strings, chains, beads about his neck.  
Leather and leopard vest on.  
Arms decorated with five tatoos,  
tipped with bracelets, rings, and a  
Mickey Mouse watch.  
Long hair,  
the hue of amber aurum,  
covered by a blue and white bandana.  
A skeleton's face,  
eyes hidden by sunglasses.  
Hand holds a Nighthtrain Express.  
Mouth supports a Marlboro.



## Summer

The smell of fresh cut grass,  
The pounding of a heartbeat,  
As I stopped  
To catch my breath,  
Trembling,  
Hiding under the cellar door  
In the dark shadows,  
To beat the others in a game  
So important that distant summer.  
Hearing carefully placed footsteps,  
And the crunch of a pine cone,  
I sprang up to run.  
Stopped by a hand on my shoulder  
And the proud smile of the victor.

The feeling of the hard sun  
On our faces,  
And the musky summer air  
Drove us onto the front porch

*Tina Pereira*  
Grade 8  
Timothy Edwards Middle School  
South Windsor

*Joyce Lau*  
Grade 9  
Simsbury High School  
Simsbury

Where we'd stop for a treat.  
Sweet popsicles,  
Cold and wet on our tongues,  
Sticking to our hands, our faces.

And then we would run to the swings.  
Clutching the ragged rope,  
We climbed up onto the picnic table,  
To jump off from an unmeasurable height  
And bravely soar  
Into the sky.

To reach the top of the arch  
And then to be pulled back,  
The hair blowing in my face.  
Flying back and forth,  
Until feet were shuffled  
In the dusty hole in the grass,  
To slow the pendulum  
And to run off.

...To the secret base across the street,  
...To the forbidden treehouse  
In the woods.  
And if we didn't hear the distant call  
Of an intruding adult,  
We would end up running back,  
Giggling in excited fear.

Bright yellow dandelions,  
Our elegant red roses,  
As we fought battles and wars  
With rubber bands,  
Leaves and sticks.

Leaving the security of our house,  
To go on gallant adventures on bikes:  
Working our way up a treacherous hill  
Of strange dogs and people.  
We glided in full speed  
Down the curved slope,  
Flying faster and faster  
Hardly daring to let go of the handles,  
The wind slapping our faces.  
With no sounds

Other than the throbbing of our hearts  
And the whizzing of the wheels,  
Just to glide home  
And to the start again.

The day went on forever,  
And when we returned  
We'd begin again—  
Another game of tag.  
Oblivious to the falling darkness  
Until we were called back,  
Into the warm, yellow glow  
of the living room.



### Africa

Africa is in my blood, running free  
like a panther black and mysterious.  
Africa is a picture painted on  
a wall.  
Different and rare, is it there?  
Maybe.  
There stands a tree with a face  
carved in the wood.  
The face is a man that I can see.  
Like a seashell he talks to me  
If I listen.  
I listen always to the animals I  
can understand.  
They tell me about Africa, my home,  
the fields of gold, the color of butter,  
the sun high in the sky.  
Watching everything, making sure  
nothing goes wrong,  
like a lion, the sun is the king.  
That's what I want to be, the  
queen of Africa, my home,  
that runs free in my blood.



*Saraid Higgs*  
*Grade 9*  
*Granby Memorial High School*  
*Granby*

*Raye-Ann Yankauskas*  
Grade 10  
Granby Memorial High School  
Granby

## Cat

The cat  
sleek, black, and grey  
with graceful movement about the room  
in an eerie way  
each foot, of four, cautiously placed onto  
the tile floor.  
Toward the table near the window  
where the plants are collecting sun  
with a muscle ripple the cat prepares  
itself to launch.  
Surely a plant would break or fall  
but as graceful as silence, the cat lands  
among the plants not rattling but one leaf  
and then makes itself comfortable on the sill,  
for it too wanted to bask in the sun.



*Lawrence Cogswell III*  
Grade 11  
Glastonbury High School  
Glastonbury

## Tracks

It was a warm summer day in the back woods of Maine. The morning sun streaked through the upper branches of towering pines and settled on my shoulders as I collected wood for the fire. In the distance, its rays glittered on the frothy crests of waves that spread over the surface of Green Lake. Beyond the valley in which we were nestled, a band of rolling hills rose to meet the sky. During the summer, the radiant sun would cast its fiery eye through a breach in these little mountains, and many times when I was young, I would arise early to catch a glimpse of this awakening. From under the shroud of nightfall, birds would begin to chirp, and the dew disappeared from the lush green leaves and needles of forest plants. This was a special time for me.

It was at about that time that I began to explore the woods that surrounded our cottage, and I found a long stretch of train track nearby. I became fascinated by it, and everyday I walked down the winding path to the tracks. There was a distinctive odor about the place that I can now associate with the tar used as a preservative for the ties; and whenever I approached it, I could detect that faint smell; and my spirits would lift in anticipation of the day's adventure. Often, I would walk for miles along the tracks which shone like polished silver. Indeed, they brought me into the heart of nature. On the right, there was a bank of flowering mountain laurels and soaring pine trees, and on the left there was a low marshland, full of life. I recall that the sky seemed always blue and the sun, bright as I journeyed along, the steady hum of

beetles floating in the air. Then, in the late afternoon, before I returned home, I used to place a shiny penny on the rails. Sometimes, late at night, I would hear the melancholy whistle of the train. The call echoed lugubriously against the distant hills, and at times like those I could almost detect an air of sadness in it. Yet during the day, I thought little of its mournful call. I simply trotted eagerly toward the tracks and picked up my bright copper penny which had been compressed and elongated by the train. This became a daily ritual for me, and I was always interested to see the shape into which the little coin had been transfigured. And before I returned home from Maine that year, I placed a penny on a remote section of the tracks.

It was three years before I once again walked through those old woods. I ran down the familiar path to the tracks, eager with anticipation. Yet, as I emerged from the lush green forest, I stopped abruptly. Rusty rails and rotted ties were the remnants of this once lively stretch of tracks. Leaves and branches had collected between once shiny stretches of steel, and faded, rusty semaphores lined the route. The sky was overcast and the wind, chilling. As I ambled along, I perceived a heavy solitude and absence of life. For me, no longer did the birds sing only happily, nor was the sun always bright. Pensively, I recovered the penny I had placed on the tracks three years before. It was nearly twice the size of the small coin I had set there, and it was tarnished. Placing it in my pocket, I returned to the cottage. I awoke the next morning to watch the sun rise from the hills. With familiarity it rose, beaming upon me as always—indifferent to the passage of time.



## Wednesday

What a day!

I was cut from the basketball team.

My computer ate my history paper.

Four times.

My feet are killing me.

My dog peed on the garbage.

My shoes are too big.

My feet are too big.

My shoes are untied.

The ozone layer is rapidly deteriorating.

I had to retype my history report.

Four times.

I can't open a stapler.

I didn't get any mail.

My report came out lousy.

There is an arms race happening before our eyes.

*Anthony D'Orazio*  
Grade 11  
Enrico Fermi High School  
Enfield

The hair on my arms is too thick.  
My underwear's too tight.  
My socks are falling down.  
I've got writer's block.  
My bike's got a flat tire.  
I burned my finger in Chemistry.  
    Four times.  
Radiation is seeping into our atmosphere.  
I'm tired.  
I haven't eaten yet today.  
I'm freezing.  
My stereo destroyed one of my favorite tapes.  
The batteries in my Walkman are dead.  
We had turkey for dinner.  
    For the fourth day in a row.  
The U.S. government refuses to let Arafat speak to the UN.  
My shoes unlaced themselves and fell off my feet.  
    Four times.  
I had to read that crappy report.  
U.S. history is so boring.  
Tuesdays are too busy.  
Some cretin kneed me in the face.  
Roy Orbison is dead.  
Ultraviolet rays are zapping us.  
My shower only shoots out cold water.  
My legs ache.  
I had to take out the garbage.  
The Celtics are hurtin' without Bird.  
Analysis is so boring.  
My light-up yo-yo broke.  
My phone has not rung today.  
Gorbachev came to America and spoke to the UN.  
My glasses are falling off my face.  
Spy satellites are watching us.  
My cat jumped on my face.  
    Four times.  
My sister's turtle smells.  
My father yelled at me.  
I'm bogged down with homework.  
Our air has been polluted with toxic chemicals.  
I didn't get on the basketball team.  
    For the fourth year in a row.



## Untitled

"Was I wrong?" Scott questions timidly, unsure of how I will respond. Instead of answering, I turn my head to stare out the window at the passing scenery. Through muddy tears, the trees and bushes blend into one bright wash of color. "Did I make the right decision?" His need for reassurance and comfort is obvious, but still I refuse to answer. The car air is warm, suffocating.

I reach to turn up the volume on the radio, anything to drown out Scott's voice. "Let Sandy continue to suffer? I didn't want that and neither did you!" I concentrate on the dirt under my fingernails so that I will not have to think about Sandy's frozen corpse in our trunk. Curious to see what I look like crying, my eyes shift to the rear view mirror. My lips, chapped and raw, are swollen where I have bitten them, and dark hollows have formed below my eyes. My stepfather persists with his questioning. "He was almost like a part of the family, always loyal and obedient. . . please, Ruth. . ." His voice fades into a frantic whisper, and I decide that his words fit the situation too perfectly. Death is not supposed to be neat. Nevertheless, I grunt half-agreement. The kind, sympathetic words I know I am supposed to say are blocked by a swollen, choking mass in my throat.

Closing my eyes, I try to think about school, the beach, anything but the events of the past day. My efforts are in vain, however, and I cannot help replaying the time over and over in my mind. I think about my return home from school the day before, the leisurely stop at McDonald's for fries and cokes, the time at the mall browsing through racks of summer clothes with Molly. Climbing out of her Rabbit, later, I thanked her and promised to call that night. As I was getting out, I remember, the front door opened; and though it was only mid-afternoon, shadows silhouetted my mother there. For a few minutes I failed to notice that Sandy had not greeted me with his usual frenzied bark. In my mind, I attributed his absence to one of his many obsessions, sleeping or eating, chasing the ducks from our pond. My mother asked me how school had been, what projects I was doing, when exams were. I knew from experience that answering her questions would only lead to interrogation; and in an effort to delay the inevitable, I tried to change the subject. I asked the first question that came to mind; I asked where Sandy was.

She did not respond right away; and when she did, I was not shocked or surprised. "He's at the Animal Hospital." Her defensive tone of voice, the way she searched for things to pick up around the already neat room, the nervous smile which came and went and then came again should have told me that this time his problems were more serious than I suspected, but I was not looking for anything more serious. Sandy was often plagued by arthritis or stomach worms, afflictions which required regular trips to the Animal Hospital and the veterinarian, and I assumed that this was the case today. Not overly upset by the news, I remember only fragments of what Mom said next. ". . . kidney failure. . ." She became absorbed in her words, her hands and arms motioned frantically in the air, her body swayed up and back with the rhythm of her voice. ". . .trouble breathing. . ." She paused to make sure I had

*Amy Wakeman  
Grade 11  
Watkinson School  
Hartford*

understood. “. . .may not be as serious as we think. . .exploratory surgery. . .” The palms of her hands were worn and cracked from the hours she spent cultivating our vegetable garden. “. . .they want to put him to sleep. What do you think?” She asked the question in the same way she would have asked me what I thought of the weather or her new haircut. Without waiting for an answer, she picked up the phone to call her mother, caught up in the retelling of Sandy’s story. She did not notice when I left the room to go upstairs.

Later that night, friends of my parents came over and sat in the living room to discuss Sandy over wine and cheese. I stayed upstairs in my bedroom, listening to a record I had bought at the mall that day.

“When you were a boy you used to wish for this...” The singer’s voice and the pulsating background rhythms were powerful in their monotony. Unable to concentrate on the music, I picked up the magazine closest to me on the floor.

“...but like the cat that turns his nose up at the dish...”

The flawless faces of the models in *Elle* laughed tauntingly as I flipped through the magazine’s pages.

“...now that you have it, you want to give it away.” My parents’ voices drifted up through the floorboards as the song finished. “You wouldn’t believe the nerve of her, telling me how to teach my class!” The voice belonged to one of our guests, and my parents responded to the woman’s shocked remark with sympathetic cries of pity. Already their conversation had abandoned Sandy.

I lay down on my bed and stared up vacantly. A winged insect had made its way halfway across the unmarred white of the ceiling. It slowed, as if trying to decide which way to turn next. I paused to watch its tiny feelered legs move carefully over the stucco surface of the paint before bringing one scuffed penny loafer down on top of it. A crimson streak remained on the wall where the bug had been. I shut off the floor lamp next to my bed and lay down again in the darkness.

These scenes replay over and over again as Scott and I drive home from the Animal Hospital, Sandy’s body in a cardboard casket in the trunk. Scott’s voice draws me back into the present. “Maybe letting him live would have been better?” He says it without conviction, just to have something to break the silence.

“No,” I answer at last. Quietly, resigned to the fact of Sandy’s death, I continue. “No, what other choice did we have?” Scott appears relieved that I seem willing to accept part of the responsibility, relieved for the *we*. With bitter cynicism, I add, “...maybe it’s better this way.” Scott looks over questioningly and at any other time would have said, with mock exasperation, “Teenagers!” He remains quiet, however, sensitive to my desire for silence.

Again and again, Sandy’s limp form flashes in my mind. Scott and I had gone to the hospital; and though both of us knew it would be to see Sandy for the last time, neither of us was prepared for what we saw. The dog lying on the examining room floor that morning when we walked in was very obviously near death. His quivering chest and hot breath on my hand as I held his head up were the only signs of life remaining in him. Folds of fur swung loosely from his body as he tried to drag

himself towards the door from where Scott and I had entered. The cords connecting one paw to an IV bottle twisted around his legs, and yet Sandy continued what must have seemed like an unending struggle to reach the outside. Anguish and physical nausea swept over me as I saw what remained of our family pet. I turned my back and grasped the edge of the examining table for support. I began searching desperately for something to take me away from that room, away from its cold white walls and racks of pet care brochures. Clutching the door handle, I muttered something about going to the bathroom. Outside the room, I fell against the corridor wall and clamped my hands together. Nails pressing into my flesh, I cried for myself, not Sandy. After several seconds I looked up, embarrassed, to see if anyone had witnessed my outburst, but I was alone. Almost as quickly, I was ashamed that I felt embarrassed grieving for Sandy. When I went back into the examining room, Sandy was gone, and Scott sat with his face in his hands. Later, I refused to watch as he and the veterinarian hoisted the flimsy cardboard box holding Sandy's remains into the car.

Still staring out the window as we pull into our driveway, I am convinced that I will be able to resist Scott's timid questioning and my mother's cheery inquiries and that resisting them is the key to escaping the pain of Sandy's death. I reason that as long as I stay in my room, far away from discussions over wine and cheese below, I will be fine.



## Life in the Fast Lane

When I was younger, I loved to read because I could pretend to be the characters in my books. It always seemed to me that my life was dull and uneventful compared to the lucky kids in my books whose houses caught fire and who sheltered runaways and captured international criminals. Stability and security were no match for excitement; I used to long for something thrilling (and perhaps dangerous) to happen to me, something that I could tell my future grandchildren. I got my wish the summer before sixth grade, when I was ten years old.

It felt like we spent that whole summer in the car. My grandfather was visiting from India, and we had decided to show him the United States by driving from Cincinnati to Seattle and enjoying the view. It seemed like a good idea at the time, but when six of us and our luggage and about half a dozen bags of food were crammed into the station wagon, I began to have my doubts. Luckily, I could read without getting carsick (a skill I have since lost) so I managed to tolerate the trip there and back. Unfortunately, the day after we returned home, we had to get right back into the car and drive to New York for a wedding and then to Newport for the jazz festival. Needless to say, we weren't very pleased about more driving, but we really didn't have any choice.

*Radhika Jones*  
Grade 11  
Greenwich Academy  
Greenwich

We waited until evening to start out, because it was very hot and the air conditioning had broken down somewhere in South Dakota. Five hours of driving took us to the border of Ohio and Pennsylvania; we stopped in a town named Kent to spend the night. We were so tired (or shall I say semi-comatose) that we left all of our bags in the car, taking only a small suitcase that had our night things in it (thereby violating Travelers' Rule #1: Never leave anything in the car). I remember debating whether or not to bring in my purse, but decided to leave it after taking out my glasses. "After all," I said to myself, "it isn't as if anyone's going to steal the car!"

My grandfather has always been an early riser. He got up at about seven o'clock the next morning and took a walk around the parking lot for some fresh air. He noticed that the car was not where it had been last night, but thought that Dad must have moved it. Dad, however, had no recollection of moving the car, and swiftly deduced that he had either done it in his sleep, or some lowlife criminal had done it for him. My brother and sister and I slept late that morning, and so were unaware of the prevailing state of affairs. When I finally woke up, there were a lot of voices saying things like, "Can we have a description, please, sir?" and "What will your insurance cover?" and it gradually dawned upon me that something was amiss. I soon discovered that something was not only amiss, something was missing—namely, our Buick.

That was an exciting day. My humble family became the object of Grand-Theft-and Robbery and we all felt very important. But as the morning passed, and as I compiled a mental inventory of stolen valuables, I began to regret my wish for a dangerous and thrilling life. After all, what was the use of living in the fast lane without a car to drive in it? Not to mention the untimely loss of my favorite pink and purple striped polo shirt, my new red purse, and the first wages that I had ever earned—thirty dollars worth of babysitting money—among other things. Nalini, my sister, was luckier. She got to lose her retainer. We all had to feel most sorry for Grandpa, though. He had left his passport, all his cash, all his clothes, and all my aunt's wedding presents from India in the cartop carrier.

We spent the day in Kent, and the next morning we rented a four-door sedan and drove back to Cincinnati. The rest of the summer was sort of an anti-climax. After I called up everyone I knew and told them about our brush with the world of crime, there didn't seem to be anything to do but return to the old humdrum life. That was okay though; my thirst for excitement was quenched for at least a year, and I no longer envied the kids in my books either.

For those of you with insatiable curiosity, the car was found in Cleveland a week later. (Why was I not surprised?) The only things in it were my library card and a bag of library books that Nalini and I had brought with us, against the wishes of my mother (who had been I-told-you-so-ing steadily for a week). Aside from being relieved that I didn't have to pay any fines, I've always thought that this made a definite statement about the criminal world. Either they are all illiterates, or they just don't appreciate Louisa May Alcott. Whichever it is, they deserve to be locked up.

## Lecture

Grabbing a pencil from my back pocket, I begin to take down the chapter notes on the front board for my Business Law class. While I am writing, I hear the teacher say, "There is to be no note passing during class."

My crisp bounce pass is low and it eludes  
the opposing guard's outstretched hand.  
Our center, Tommy Curtis, turns, fakes,  
and hits a short jumper off the glass.  
I raise my fist for victory and the horn  
signaling the end of the game blows.

Over the noise of the fire alarm, I hear Mrs. Baldracchi tell the last person leaving the room to close the door. As I am walking down the hallway, I wonder why my fist is raised!



## The Final Waltz

On East One, suite twenty, lives Mary Hanlon.  
Hello, Girlie.  
Sunlight spills on the violets sitting on the windowsill.  
Are we having tea today?

Polyester dresses and a pink knitted sweater,  
her fashion.  
I love the pretty white dresses you wear.  
The fingers gnarled and wrinkled,  
fumble while buttoning a sweater.  
I used to do assembly work in a Waterbury factory.

A fork falls to the floor.  
I just can't seem to hold on to anything today.  
Be a good girl, open your mouth and swallow the pill.  
Peggy, I'm feeling better now, please let me come home.

A soothing piano melody  
emanates from a dusty, antique radio.  
Mary, please sit still, I can't get your shoes on.  
I hate this place and you.



*Christopher Locke*  
Grade 11  
Stafford High School  
Stafford Springs

*Jennifer Brodeur*  
Grade 12  
Watertown High School  
Watertown

Mary sitting quietly picking lint from a sweater,  
humming along with the radio, I wonder.  
What were you like before the cobwebs settled in your mind?  
Mary looks my way.  
Bright blue eyes twinkling from behind a wrinkled face.  
I used to dance this waltz with my husband.  
Tucking a blanket under Mary's chin, she looks at me.  
I'm going home for Christmas.  
Of course you are, Mary.

Hands clasp the onyx and ivory rosary beads.  
Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
I walk away.  
Goodnight, Girlie.  
Goodnight, Mary.  
I turn off the lights and shut the door.

Moonlight spills on the violets sitting on the windowsill.



*Tiffany Warchol*  
Grade 12  
Stafford High School  
Stafford Springs

### Why?

Why is it  
That at the very moment  
I am lying on the white stretch of beach  
with the cool breeze of the overhanging palm trees  
and cool sparkling water ahead  
Soaking up the glorious rays  
of the golden sun  
Wondering when the bronzed lifeguard  
will notice my existence,  
Does a first class nerd  
come my way  
and kick sand into my  
Summer fantasy?



## Party Girl

"Hi Alice! How'd'ya like to, um, come to my and Jen's party next week, Friday night. Everyone's gonna be there. Dave 'n' Chad are also, um, comin'. It's gonna be real cool," smiled Liz.

Liz was the most popular girl in the seventh grade. For a nobody like Alice, who just moved here, it was like being invited to the Grammys to see all the celebrities. Liz was also very beautiful. She had incredibly white teeth and long sandy hair which highlighted her hazel eyes.

Standing behind her were her two best friends, Jen and Stacey, who also had unusually big smiles. Their arms were folded over their Benneton sweaters, mouths munching on a wad of gum, and their heads were cocked to one side to let their hair shade an eye.

Alice, flustered by the question, stammered, "S-Sure. I'd love to."

"Great. My house is 13 Woodside Road. It starts at 7:30. Oh! Almost forgot. Don't tell anyone 'bout this party. Only a few, um, are invited."

When school ended that day, Alice rushed home, ready to burst with the news of the party she was invited to. This was a big occasion for Alice because she wasn't very popular and didn't nearly have as many friends as Liz did.

Both of her parents worked. Her mom, a secretary, only came home at 4:30. She was greeted by Alice who yelled out, "Mom, guess what?"

"What is it dear?" replied her mom, wondering what all the excitement was about.

"I'm invited to a party! Liz Steele and her friend Jen invited me. A lot of people are invited. They're real popular. Can I go? I can finally meet some people. Please? . . . What's the matter? You don't seem too excited."

"I'm happy for you. But before your father and I can let you go, we must know whether her parents will be at the party."

"Mom!" whined Alice, "Please don't call. It's so embarrassing."

"O.K., then you call."

"I don't know her number."

"Then look it up in the telephone directory."

"Mom, it's so embarrassing. Do I have to?"

"Do you want to go, or not?"

Reluctantly, Alice looked up Steele in the telephone directory and dialed the number.

"Hello...Liz?"

"Yes?"

"This is Alice."

"Hey guys! It's Alice," cried Liz away from the phone. In the background, Alice could hear laughing.

"Who's there?"

"Stacey and Jen. What do ya want?"

*Michael Fisk  
Grade 12  
Staples High School  
Westport*

"Um, my parents wanted to, uh, know if your parents were going to be, um, at the party."

"Yes. My parents are going to be there," replied Liz, accompanied with giggles in the background.

"Uh, thanks."

"Sure. See ya." Click.

Alice wanted to die. She was extremely embarrassed and furious at her mom. Her parents were probably the only ones wanting to know if Liz's parents were going to be there. She hated her parents. If only she had "normal" parents. Without answering her mom's question if Liz's parents were going to be there, Alice stomped to her room and slammed the door.

Three days before the party, Alice and her mom went shopping downtown, to pick out an outfit for the party. Alice wanted to make a good impression that night. She had already picked out a stylish blue skirt, but needed a matching sweater to go with it. They visited many stores. Her mom liked a few, but Alice didn't. It had to be perfect. Her mom was becoming impatient and said they would visit only one more store. Alice, giving up hope, agreed and visited the store she wanted to go to originally but she knew it was expensive, and her mom might not want to buy something there.

Just as they walked into the store, Alice saw the sweater that would go perfectly with the skirt. She rushed to it and tried it on in the dressing room. The colors matched perfectly.

Her mom, noticing the price tag, was turned off by it. It was a ridiculously high price to pay for a sweater, but she knew how important the party was for Alice. She paid for it by credit card, telling Alice not to tell her dad about the price.

Two hours before the party would begin, Alice showered, fixed her hair and put on her new outfit. Her parents didn't allow her to put on make up, so she only had on Lip Gloss. Alice was done 40 minutes before they would have to leave. She brushed her hair a few more times and then stood around as her mother was doing the dishes. Her mother, noticing Alice just standing there, said, "Don't you have anything else to do?"

Alice then returned to her room to brush her hair a couple of times. It seemed as if the party would never come.

Finally, her mom finished the dishes, put on an overcoat, and both of them walked to the car. Alice was very nervous and fidgety, sitting in the car. She also had to go to the bathroom.

"If only I went to the bathroom before we left," she thought. "Now I'll have to make a fool of myself and ask Liz if I could use her toilet."

They had a hard time finding Liz's road because it was dark out. The sign was obscured by a bush. But they found it on the second pass. It was a short dead end road in a nice section of town.

They slowly drove down the road, counting the numbers on the mailboxes. One . . . two . . . three . . . Finally they got to mailbox number thirteen. Immediately, Alice sensed something was wrong. No lights were on in the house. They weren't too early because it was a little after 7:30. Someone should have already been there by now. They looked at the mailbox again and noticed the name Smith printed on it.

"Maybe you have the wrong address," said her mom.

"But this is the address Liz gave me," uttered Alice.

"Try next door and ask where the Steeles live."

They drove up to the next house with many lights on. Alice got out of the car, walked up the sidewalk and rang the doorbell. A few seconds later, the door opened and an old man appeared in the entrance.

"Yes? May I help you?"

"Do you know where the Steeles live?"

The old man pondered a second and then said, "I've been here thirty years, and I don't recall having a Steele family ever live here."

Alice thought she could hear Liz laughing as she sat down in the car next to her mom. She couldn't help herself; she began to sob.



## Untitled

Covenant House door bumps shut.  
Standing backwards on the Welcome mat,  
balancing baby's head  
in the bend of her right shoulder,  
its body resting heavy on her hip,  
she shifts the weight slightly  
and reaches with her other hand  
through the folds of  
her loosely fitting pants  
into the depths of the left pocket,  
where in warm darkness  
hides a tinfoil package.  
Wrinkling back the wrapper,  
the cushion of her finger  
presses into the soft, white flesh  
of bread.



*Jennifer Raikes*  
Grade 12  
Darien High School  
Darien

*Paul Figueiredo*  
Grade 12  
Bulkeley High School  
Hartford

## Untitled

I wonder if it all really matters.  
Sine, cosine, all that drivel.  
"Pay attention class! This is really important!"  
Sure. I'll use this everyday.  
I dream here. Dream to get away  
From all the numbers and symbols.  
I dream of things free of limits, ranges,  
All that mathematical garbage.  
I try to, anyway.  
The numbers catch up though  
Red hot needles stabbing into me.  
How many apples does Bob have...  
Two trains are going towards each other...  
When will they crash? Not soon I hope...  
I'm tied between them.  
Razor edged triangles swoop down  
Slicing my flesh in this Pythagorean nightmare.



*Bretton Enman*  
Grade 12  
Lyme-Old Lyme High School  
Old Lyme

## The First Love Epiphany

In "Araby," James Joyce recreates a chapter from youth with which everyone who has experienced first love can identify. The boy's foolish vanity, the solitary importance of his focus, and the eventual realization of his own idiocy are universal elements. This particular realization is one of life's more significant "epiphanies," one of the milestones, perhaps, between childhood and adulthood. Although there must be several differences between the male and female versions of the first "crush" or infatuation, they no doubt come to the same embarrassing end.

The nature of "first love" is more a childhood thing than an adult one, and therefore is looked upon with sentimentality rather than unpleasantness. The emotions which are discovered are quite real when one is experiencing them for the first time, but when viewed in hindsight after one has gained maturity, they appear to be more of a folly of childhood than true, valid adult feelings. This most likely stems from the fact that in true life, as in the story, there is little or no interaction between the boy and the object of his affections. His feelings are his own fabrications, based only on his limited view rather than on a broad, experienced one. This is the chief reason that this "first love epiphany" is so cherished. One has created for one's self, from beginning to end, the lesson: finding a focus, acting a role, creating and feeling emotions, and finally, drawing a conclusion resulting in greater self knowledge.

The boy's youth, for he can be no more than ten or twelve years old, is an endearing feature, for there is something pure and simple about him. He does not act with experience. He can have no previous feelings of bitterness or distaste; he has simply discovered a bit of himself that he hadn't noticed was there before. It's reassuring that amid the squalor of old Dublin or the modern world, such an innocent experience is unaffected by social class, nationality, or public opinion. We can learn too, from the childhood ability to completely devote one's self to an idea, to a mere concept, even when it ends with one's eyes burning and "with anguish and anger." We should have faith rather than subscribing to a pessimistic, calloused way of thought where assurances are needed. There are no assurances in life.



### Untitled

At the end of the concert  
when my insides have exploded  
and my brain is deflated  
and my mind is expanded  
I feel the crowd enveloping me  
in a writhing infinity  
I close my eyes  
and I let my body float  
into the slow rapids of  
damply crushed cotton ponchos  
with drugged denim legs  
and someone's hair moves against my face  
and the bodies all around me  
push mine along with them  
in a shuffling dream dance  
I am nothing  
but sensory and flesh  
and the complete and profound  
awareness  
of the slow friction of my blouse  
engaged in a dragging static kiss  
with a strange leather jacket.



*Elizabeth Noli*  
Grade 12  
Bulkeley High School  
Hartford

## Teachers of these Connecticut Student Writers

Lucio Almeida  
Anne Alpert  
Jane Arciero  
Kathy Bachiochi  
Bette Ann Bailey  
Valarie Botta  
Carol Brennan  
Alice Burbank  
Kathy Choquette  
Barbara Cohen  
Christine Denette  
Mr. Diner  
Patricia E. Dowling  
Cynthia Field  
Barbara Gill  
Virginia Griggs  
Lenore Grunko  
Esther Heffernan  
Patricia Hinchliff  
Valerie Kichler  
Joan Krantz  
Joseph Lieberman  
Susan Lukas  
Nancy Maertz  
Nancy R. Malley  
Arline B. March  
Geraldine Marshall  
Betsy W. Moakley  
Nola L. Mohrman  
Mary Mullen-Barnett  
Sheila Murphy  
Patricia Myette  
Joel E. Nelson  
Patricia Norman  
Starr L. O'Connor  
Judith Olson  
Paula Robinson  
Katherine Rydelek  
Jeffrey Schwartz  
Jean Marie Silverio  
Gloria Stika  
Celeste Stocking  
Reuben Teodoro  
Thomas A. West, Jr.  
Cyrilla Willis  
L. Yanowicz

Teachers Memorial Junior High School  
Columbus Magnet School  
Granby Memorial High School  
Stafford High School  
John F. Kennedy Junior High School  
Woodstock Public School  
Madison Middle School  
Lyme-Old Lyme High School  
West Broad Street School  
Granby Memorial Middle School  
Stafford High School  
Irving A. Robbins Middle School  
Kendall School  
Timothy Edwards Middle School  
Middlesex Middle School  
Cornwall Consolidated School  
Northwest Elementary School  
Enrico Fermi High School  
Westwoods School  
East Ridge Middle School  
Watertown High School  
Staples High School  
Watkinson School  
Lewis G. Joel Elementary School  
Nathan Hale School  
Granby Memorial High School  
Darien High School  
West Hills Follow Through  
Charles Wright School  
Bulkeley High School  
Glastonbury High School  
Bennet Junior High School  
Cornwall Consolidated School  
Gainfield Elementary School  
West Hills Follow Through  
Bethany Community School  
Simsbury High School  
Holland Hill School  
Greenwich Academy  
Smalley School  
Alfred W. Hanmer School  
Montowese School  
Spring Glen School  
The Independent Day School  
Horace W. Porter School  
Jack Jackter Elementary School