

i think back and ask



# MY BIRTHDAY

Juan Daniel Cueva

One beautiful snowy day in the morning at 7:00 am, I asked my mom if we were going to celebrate my 8th birthday by making a snowman or snow fight! My mom said “No, because it is too windy and cold.” I was so sad.

Then suddenly...the door knob TURNED! I woke my sister. She saw the doorknob turned too.

My sister was anxious. She hid at the back of the couch because she was so scared. I said, “Good plan.” So I ran to the back of the couch with my baby sister. We were both very frightened.

The door opened...it was just my dad. My sister and I went to say hello and hug him. We always do that. My uncle woke up. Then my dad said, “We have to go to the store” so I asked if I could come too.

Everyone said, “Nooooooo!”

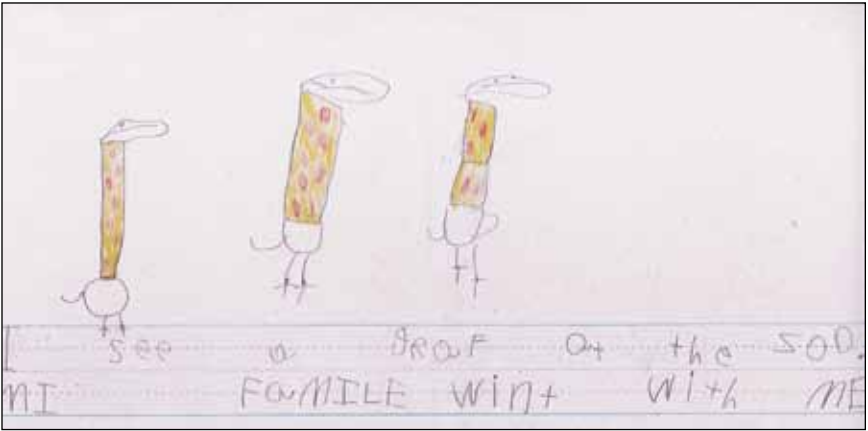
My uncle said, “Go ahead. I’ll take care of your son.” My uncle and I played video games to cheer me up.

When my mom came home, she was smiling. I did have my birthday after all...

# THE ZOO

Madalyn Marcum

I see a giraffe at the zoo.  
My family went with me.



# TOUCH DOWN

Eli Bolton

Me and my cousin, we beat my brother in football.

I took the ball from my brother.

Me and my brother were throwing the football and then my cousin came in to help me win. And we won!!!



MOST MORNINGS I WALK TO SCHOOL

Clay Catlin

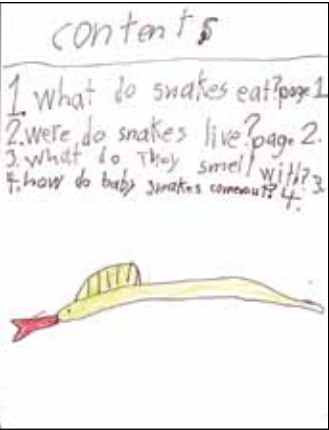
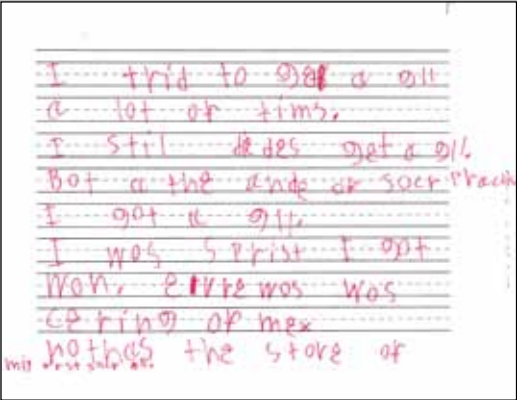
It’s about a mile walk from my house. In summer it’s freezing in the morning and like the fourth circle of Hell on the way back. In spring it’s gently cold and sometimes it rains. I like walking that way best, in the rain. Maybe it’s because I like the rain, maybe it’s because it makes the prospect of home look better. I like it best in autumn, when it’s windy and the leaves are on the ground. It reminds me of Halloween for some reason; a Colonial witch surrounded by red leaves, sitting beneath a skeletal tree stirring a black iron kettle. I like winter. I like the snow and the white sky but during that time my mom usually drives me to and from school.

MY FIRST SOCCER GOAL

Allan Williams

My mom was signing me up for soccer. My coach was Coach Ted, our neighbor. I was very little at that time, about four. I played as hard as I could. I tried to get a goal.

I tried to get a goal a lot of times. I still didn’t get a goal. But at the end of soccer practice I got a goal. I was surprised I got one. Everyone was cheering for me. Now that’s the story of my first soccer goal.



ALL ABOUT SNAKES

Angel Schecker-Garcia

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Chapter 1  
What do snakes eat?

Snakes eat frogs.  
They eat mice.  
They eat fish.  
They eat eggs.  
They eat lizards.  
They eat hummingbirds.

Chapter 2  
Where do snakes live?

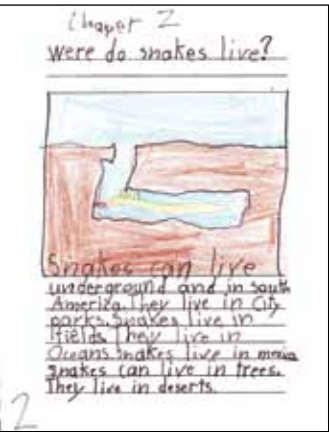
Snakes can live underground and in South America. They live in city parks. Snakes live in fields. They live in oceans. Snakes live in Mexico. Snakes can live in trees. They live in deserts.

Chapter 3  
What do they smell with?

They smell with their tongues. Snakes smell with their noses.

Chapter 4  
How do baby snakes come out?

Some snakes hatch out of eggs. Others are born.



# THE ULTIMATE WEAPON

*Jessup Ammeen*

“Heil Hitler!” — Nazi party salute of the 1930s

The human mind may be the greatest weapon on the planet. It can be used for creation and the benefit of mankind or enslaved and wasted. It has been enslaved before. In the 1930s, Adolf Hitler became the dictator of Germany and head of the Nazi political party. He controlled the minds of millions into doing his will. Josef Stalin controlled the Soviet Union and manipulated one of the greatest superpowers of his time. Both convinced a whole generation to do their bidding and serve them unconditionally. In the society in the book Anthem by Ayn Rand, individualism has been removed completely. The leaders of this society accomplished this by controlling the citizens’ minds, and thus they gained control of the ultimate weapon. Yet as the global community proved during World War II and as Equality demonstrated in Anthem, the ultimate weapon cannot be constrained forever.

The human mind is the ultimate weapon because it has no boundaries and limitless potential. Any weapon that is created can be sourced to the mind. The same goes for any technologies or remedies. How can the mind’s abilities be controlled and limited? In Anthem’s society the leaders obtained complete dominion over the populace and avoided any and all resistance by eliminating individualism and ego. But how was this accomplished? How could the generations after us surrender control over the things that are most dear to humanity? How could the world hand over the one thing that makes humanity truly great and has made it the dominant species on the planet? They perfected some of the techniques used by the most fearsome dictators in history.

After a great war the group mind stood victorious, and individualism was gone. To remain in power they raised the next generations to think of an ego as evil and to shun all scientific and philosophical progression. The leaders crushed any thoughts of self worth, creativity and uniqueness by teaching that those were sins. They stopped anyone who remained strong, steadfast and refused to be crushed by the group mind by executing them publicly and painfully to send a message to the population and prevent anyone else to think likewise.

This was a technique used by the Christian Church on the population of Europe during the Dark Ages up until the Renaissance and Reformation. The Church remained in control by controlling all education and by conducting the Inquisition, where a council of bishops decided that Europe had to be rid of all heresy by routinely sending out papal forces to interrogate and torture anyone who threatened the church’s power or beliefs. During this time, anyone who was a “heretic” was interrogated through torture until he or she confessed or died. At that point heresy had a broad definition. It applied to scientists, Jews, Muslims, Protestants and anyone else who was accused of witchcraft or held beliefs that went against the Church. By doing this the Church maintained total power until the Reformation. Ultimately the Church recognized the errors of its ways and fixed itself, even funding scientific and artistic endeavors, in contrast to the society in Anthem which did not appear to have any higher good in mind.

A more troublesome comparison is Hitler and his Nazi party. Like the leaders of Anthem’s society, he wanted total control over everything, killed those who stood in his way and gained total control by starting with the young. Hitler’s control over the youths of Nazi Germany started with his “Hitler Youth” program. At a glance it was a fun, child-friendly organization that began by offering to teach children basic outdoorsmen techniques and similar features. It started like a Boy Scouts look-alike and slowly became the Nazi Army.

When Hitler was selected as Germany’s leader, he took control of Germany’s education. He now controlled a generation. His influence and power was so great that a rebellion or revolt was quickly shut down and destroyed. No one was able to stop him until the Allied forces invaded Germany and defeated him and his Army.

But there are some fundamental differences between Hitler and other dictators. Though he still controlled the minds of the people by starting from a young age and crushing any resistance with an iron fist, he mainly controlled the population through popularity. He was loved by his people. Though he did use force at some points, the reason why his control was so absolute was no one wanted him out of power. No one wanted him to be overthrown. The people wanted him in power because he gave them the order they wanted after Germany’s economy and government had been in shambles. After he rose to power, he brainwashed the general population into doing his bidding and loving him. He controlled individuals and turned them into war machines. Thus he controlled the mind through persuasion.

There have been other dictators and rulers that have controlled the mind. These leaders have done so through fear, persuasion, hope and force, but all have fallen to the greatest, most fantastic weapon in the universe. This unstoppable force cannot be completely destroyed. It is what makes the mind so powerful. It is the individual. The only way to enslave the mind is to control the individual. Either by teaching that the mind is evil, like the leaders of Anthem, or manipulating the individual to join a larger group like Adolf Hitler and the Christian Church of the Dark Ages. You can only weaken and control the individual, but not destroy it. The individual is the ultimatum of the mind and spirit. It is the will to do what you do. It is what separates man from beast. It is the ultimate weapon.

And there, over the portals of my fort, I shall cut in the stone the word which is to be my beacon and my banner. The word that will not die, should we all perish in battle. The word that can never die on Earth, for it is the heart of it and the meaning and the glory.

The sacred word: EGO. (Rand, Ayn. Anthem. 104-105)

THE ONE WHO WEARS THE MASK

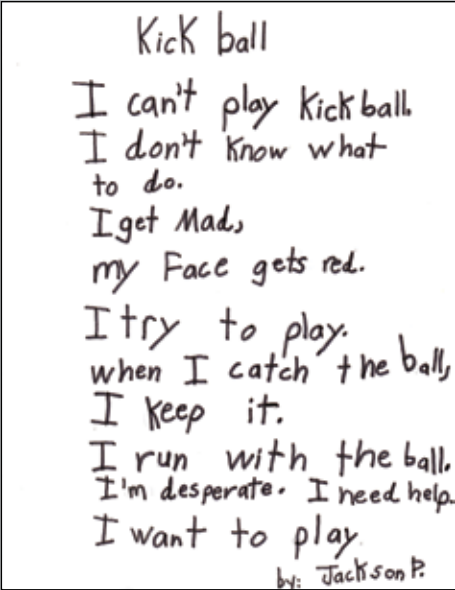
Elijah Lopez

Yeah, you can say  
I wear a mask  
But  
I'm not the only  
Because  
I know someone  
Who claims to be my friend  
But  
Time after time...again and again  
When certain people  
Come around...he starts to clown  
But  
Off his case  
Because  
No one's perfect  
When I wear my mask  
People get hurt quick  
It's like I have no control

I just let my emotions go  
If I start my day off  
With a mask  
It's all down hill  
At least that's how it feels  
Then the earth starts to shake  
And my mask falls off  
Then I think back and ask  
What  
Was  
The  
Cause?

KICKBALL

Jackson Price



THE CRASH

Whitney Richardson

I heard a noise, and I couldn't believe my eyes! I saw a car coming straight for my driveway. I was worried about my mom because she was pregnant.

She got out of the van and tried to get all of us kids out before the car hit us. When she got out, the car was already in our driveway. I was scared!

Until I actually saw who was in the car, I was wondering if she was mad or if she was trying to hurt us kids or my mom. Then, when she hit our van, I noticed that her eyes were shut.

I wanted to check on my mom, but the door was stuck. When I looked through my window, I saw that everyone on the street was staring at the van. I looked out the side window and saw my mom lying on the driveway with a cut on her stomach. My next-door neighbor helped us get out of the van. We called the police, and my mom and all the kids went to the hospital to be checked for injuries. It turned out that everyone was OK.

When we got back, we asked the police what was wrong with the lady. We were wondering why she did that. The police said that she was driving drunk.

I was scared when I was getting ready for bed because there was a big hole in the living room wall. Even though there was something covering it, it didn't make me feel any better.

MY MAMA

Henry Stein

My mama is different from other mamas.  
My mama makes us pay for books at the book fair.  
She says you should make your own lunch.  
She owns two jobs.  
That is my mama and I like the way she is.

MAX'S DESK

Max Peeples

He shoves his paper in my face  
He scratches me with a pencil  
I stand all day while he rests  
Wet wipes clean away the glue  
Soon he leaves for summer break  
Who will be my next friend?

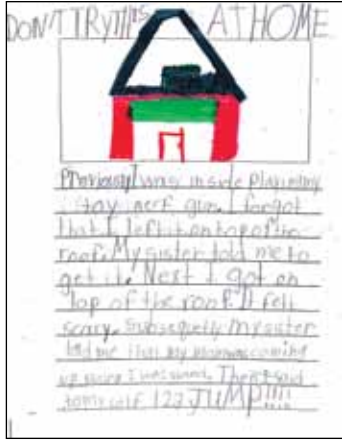
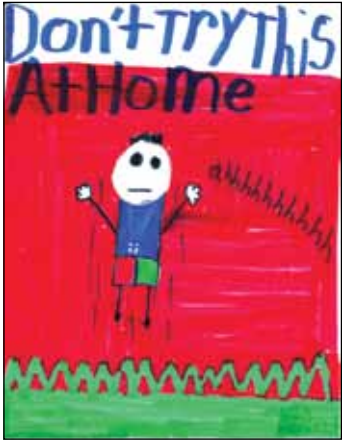
# DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME

Yovani Navarrete

Previously, I was inside playing [with] my toy NERF gun. I forgot that I left it on top of the roof. My sister told me to get it. Next I got on top of the roof. It felt scary. Subsequently, my sister told me that my mom was coming upstairs. I was scared. Then I said to myself 1,2,3 JUMP!!!

I broke my leg bone. It hurt really bad. Next my dad, José, took me to my uncle's house. I [lay] on the floor. Then my uncle put something orange on my feet so it [wouldn't] hurt. I was thrilled that my leg did not hurt anymore. I went to the house so I could get dressed and go to a party. My family got in the car. We drove and got there. I saw my cousin. He said, "What happened to your leg?" I said, "I jumped off the roof." The party

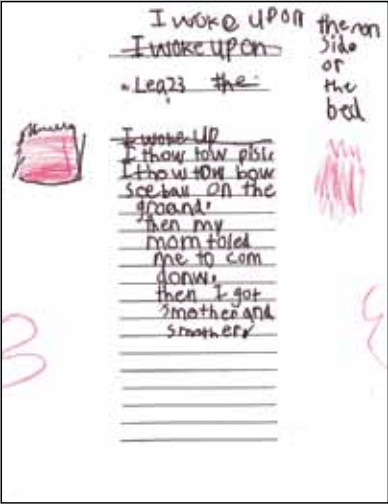
was fun but it was over. I went home and went to sleep. Then I dreamt that I [would] never jump off of the roof anymore.



# I WOKE UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED

Lea Smith

I throw two pencils. I throw two bouncy balls on the ground. Then my mom told me to calm down. Then I got smoother and smoother.



# MICHAEL, MY BROTHER

Latrell Coe

Michael is my first and only best friend. He is my best friend because we are always having fun with each other.

I met Michael at my swimming pool in my apartments and ever since that day we have been best friends. When we go to the swimming pool we always go in the 8 feet and go off the diving board.

We love to play football with each other. When we see each other we start playing or start doing stupid things. We love to drop each other.

Sometimes we get into arguments, but that doesn't stop us. Sometimes we tell on each other but we suck it up and are still best friends.

When Michael moves to Texas we might visit each other and when he gets his phone we're going to keep in touch. No matter what happens we will always be friends and we will never stop being friends.

KICSI

Lori Bowes

I hadn’t expected to be putting my dog down on Thursday, April 23rd, 2010. I’d always thought of it being much later, when I was older and mature enough to handle it. It was probably one of the saddest days of my life. I felt like I had plunged deep into a frozen pond and just stayed at the bottom, with life going on without me. We had known days earlier that Kicsi had been weak and very sick. She was staying in the garage since my dad kicked her out because she had been pooping in the house. We learned that she had Cushing’s Disease, which caused her liver to have problems. My mom had tried everything to help her.

When I was at school, it was almost as if everything was fine, like my dog wasn’t dying. Being with my friends made me forget about what was happening at home. We laughed and talked and danced around like nothing was wrong, but when I got home, my mom, my sister, and I would sit in the garage petting Kicsi and crying for hours. On that sad day, I came home, and we did the usual thing. We sat down in the garage and petted Kicsi, wondering why we were stuck in this situation. We were talking about putting her down and what time was right. I had said that we had already let this go on for too long and that we didn’t know if we were making her suffer. It was decided then that we would take her that night. My sister started crying almost violently. I had never seen her cry much before, but this was shocking. Heavy sobs released from her throat, and we all stood there thinking about if this was the right thing to do. No one really wanted it to happen, but we shouldn’t have been dragging it out so long.

I grabbed my shoes from up in my room. It was almost as if, when I was safely enveloped back in my room, my house, everything seemed okay. The mood changed. The atmosphere was warm and almost pleasant, but once I got back into the cold, gray garage, I practically broke down and started crying all over again. I could feel my cheeks getting warm as the cold, salty tears ran down my face and dripped off my chin. I looked and felt like a wreck. I wondered why life couldn’t just go on peacefully, without interruptions. I wanted Kicsi to still be well and playing in the backyard when I came home from school. I wanted to see her smile and wag her tail as if she was excited for just being part of our family. I wanted her to be the young, chipper Kicsi who I knew and loved with all my heart. My dad said, “Time to go for a ride, Kicsi.” I quivered as I started shaking and crying again. The thought of her not knowing what was going on, that she wouldn’t come back home, just broke my heart. My dad and mom had to help lift Kicsi into the back of the car. They had a cloth under her stomach and were clutching both sides. Kicsi just lay there helplessly. We all piled into the car, nervous and upset.



The car ride was silent. My mom was lying in the back with Kicsi, just petting her and crying. I wanted the car ride to last longer, but it seemed like just a few seconds. When we got to the vet, my mom and dad went in to notify the workers there. My sister and I climbed in the back and hugged Kicsi several times while we cried. I wanted to remember how it felt to hold her and hug her, how her glossy black fur streaked down her back. I wanted to remember all of it as I ran my fingers through her fur and stroked her soft ears. I could taste the salty tears as I began sobbing again just thinking about it. A nurse came out with a gurney, and they lifted her on. I remember seeing her for the very last time, looking back at us as they wheeled her through the glass doors and into a dark hallway, until I couldn’t see her anymore.

My sister and I climbed back into our seats and started to talk about things that happened at school that day and what was going on. It felt normal and comforting, but it still didn’t mend the huge hole in my heart. I could feel my cheeks all tight from the tears that had dried. I hugged in my knees and wished this whole thing was just a dream. It seemed like half an hour or so before my parents came back. I was definitely not in the mood to cry again, so when my mom started explaining what happened, I asked her politely to stop.

The car ride back was not short at all. It felt like an hour. I started counting cars that drove by to keep my mind off of it, but then stopped at about seventy. We came home and I climbed into my bed. I could feel that whole numbness in my face as my eyes started to water again. I pulled my soft covers close to my chest and then let them drop. The warm, comforting blankets pulled me to unconsciousness. I went to sleep in an instant, tired, exhausted, and glad that I didn’t cry myself to sleep.

I stayed home from school the next day, watching TV and reading to keep my mind off of it. I don’t even think I cried once that day, but I learned that instead of running away, I should’ve approached it. I didn’t think about it. I didn’t let myself cry or get sad. That was probably at the top of the list of things not to do during grief, but I did it anyway. I also learned to accept it and that it’s okay to cry. I learned the hard way and ended up breaking down every time I thought about it. Hopefully, someday in the far future, when I move out and am not patrolled by my dad, I will get a puppy and love him or her forever.

# MY FIRST DAY OF BASEBALL

Alaina Steinkamp-Bartus

Baseball is fun you know and here's a story about my first day of baseball!

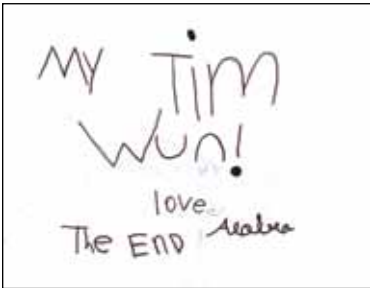
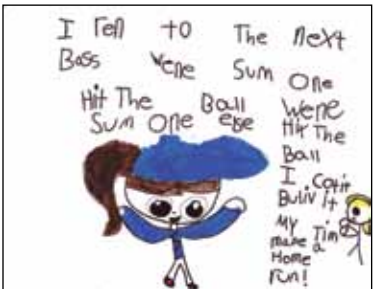
Before we practice for our game we take our pictures. I wasn't very happy about that.

I couldn't wait for our game! When it was time for our game it rained! I was nervous about hitting the ball!

"I hit it!" I cried. I ran to the next base.

I ran to the next base when someone hit the ball. When someone else hit the ball, I couldn't believe it. My team made a home run!

My team won!



# THE DIFFERENCE: A COMPARISON BETWEEN HUNTERS AND WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Nicholas SerVaas

They're there. Resting on their gnarled branches...in plain view of two different men who have made their businesses on them. How they go about their work is similar...they creep forward with the caution and skill they have developed over time and in their hands are appendices, one with a trigger and the other with but a mere button. They aim... and take their shots. It is then that the difference shows itself, although the way they go about their work is similar, the work could not differ more in the end of it all. One will find himself with a photograph, the other with his bloody game. But still, as the time hasn't come yet... they're there.



## THE WIND

Ethan Elsesser

After school I got on the school bus and I sat down on a chair and the wind blew in

my face. I laid my back against the chair. The wind blew on my face harder.

It felt cool and cold on my face. So I kept my face there and it felt even better.

# WHEN MY GRANDPA DIED IN 2009

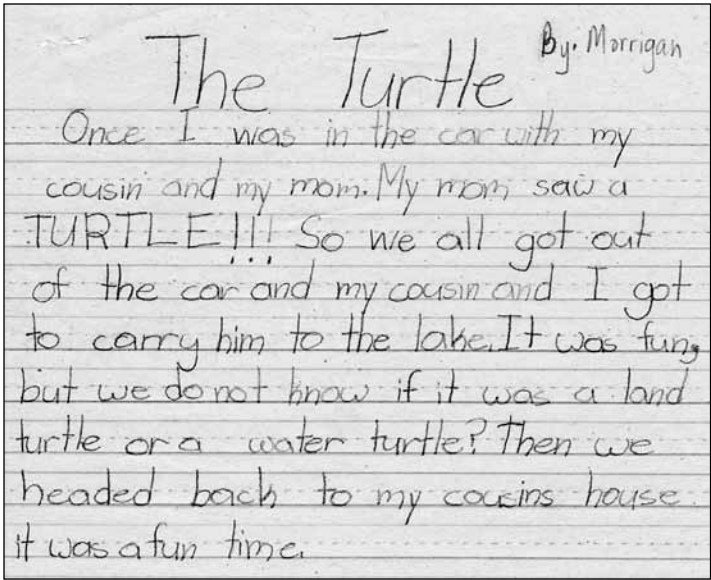
Brenna Young

One day I went to see my grandma and grandpa. But when I got there, my grandpa was already very sick. A nurse was helping take care of him. I hardly spoke the entire time I was there. I was too sad to see my mom cry.

The next time I went to see my grandpa, it was in the hospital. I was so sad. The T.V. that had those zig-zag lines—well, my grandpa’s were very very small.

A couple of weeks later my grandma called. My grandpa had died. My mom was heartbroken. I could not stand seeing so many people that I loved cry. When we were driven to the graveyard, I cried and cried. My cousins helped me calm down. I put a few flowers on his grave.

I felt heartbroken as soon as I saw my grandpa so sick!



# THE TURTLE

Morrigan Dunlap-Loomis

Once I was in the car with my cousin and my mom. My mom saw a TURTLE!!! So we all got out of the car and my cousin and I got to carry him to the lake. It was fun, but we did not know if it was a land turtle or a water turtle? Then we headed back to my cousin’s house. It was a fun time.

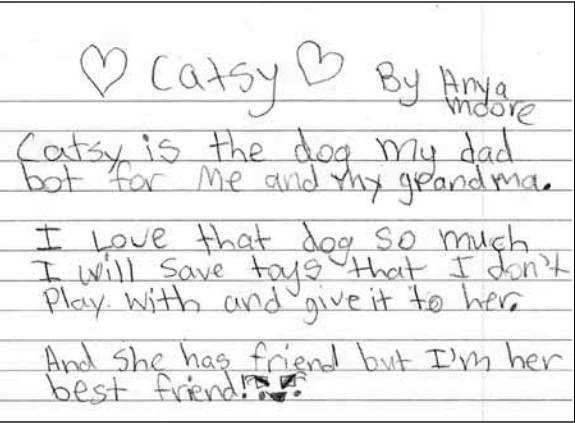
# CATSY

Anya Moore

Catsy is the dog my dad bought for me and my grandma.

I love that dog so much. I will save toys that I don’t play with and give [them] to her.

And she has friends, but I’m her best friend!



# ALMOST THERE!

Truman Boggs

I am almost there, I can see it! I always think that when I see the finish line at one of my cross country meets.

When I was ten years old, my cousin Owen talked me into doing cross country. At first I couldn’t run a quarter of a mile without stopping. But my coaches helped me, and now I can run miles without stopping.

I always get nervous when I’m about to start a race. I get tense and start breathing heavily. But once I hear that horn...I’m off!

When I run, I sometimes get pains, but I always fight through. Sometimes I don’t even feel like running, but I know I can do it.

My first year I didn’t do very well. I didn’t even get in the top 20 once, but my second year I was determined. Each of the four regular meets, I came in the top ten, and in my best meet I came in third! In the city meet I came in fifth overall. I was so proud of myself.

Soon came state. Only seven boys and seven girls from my entire team got chosen to do state, and I was one! In the meet I came in 71st out of 400 runners. This meet was for grades 5-8, and I was only in fifth grade. I couldn’t believe it!

This just shows with hard work and dedication, you can accomplish anything!

# THE BEST GIFT

Maritsa Navarro

Last summer in the afternoon, my dad asked me and my sister if we wanted a puppy. We said, “Yes!” even though my mom was not there. We went in the car to find the house with the puppies. VRRRRM!

We saw the street. Next we had to find the number. We found it! We knocked, Ding, Dong

A little boy opened the door. He called his dad. His dad came outside with the puppies. We were going to get a girl puppy because the boy puppy didn’t look right to us.

So we grabbed a girl puppy. We put her in the car. VRRRRM! The car went but there was a problem...

The puppy was crying. “She missed her family,” my dad said. We got to the house. We went in the house to get food, [but] we didn’t have food for the puppy, I told my dad. He said, “Get in the car with the puppy.”

Subsequently, we went to Family Dollar. We went to find edibles and a toy. Then all of us went to the car. Vrrmmm! We went back home.

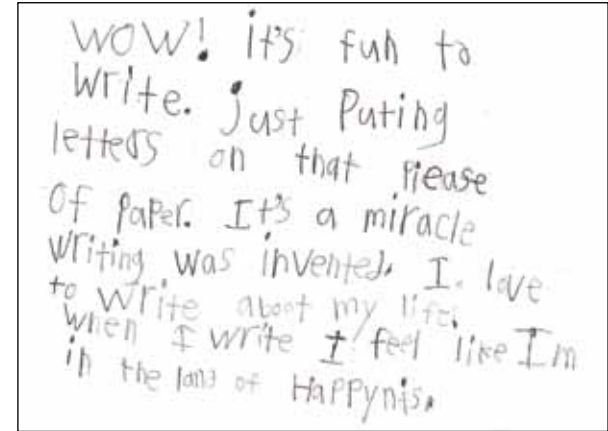
When we got back home my mom was there. She said, “The puppy is so little.” “It’s time to go to sleep,” said my mom. My puppy slept on the rug next to my bed. I was so delighted.



# GRANDPARENTS

Guadalupe Carmona

My grandparents live in Mexico, so I cannot see them here. When my sister, Ana, was a baby, my grandmother came, but then she left... so I cannot remember. Grandparents are very old. They sometimes sleep a lot... on the couch or on the bed. Grandparents are your mom’s and dad’s parents. My dad’s mom died when my dad was a baby. My great grandma once won a competition in Mexico and got a crown on her head. We still have a picture of her. She came to the United States, but she passed away when my little sister, Brisa, was only three months old. Grandparents can tell us about what happened when we were not even born.



# WRITING REFLECTION

Henry DeRyke

Wow! It’s fun to write. Just putting letters on that piece of paper. It’s a miracle writing was invented. I love to write about my life. When I write I feel like I’m in the land of happiness.

BECAUSE OF MR. WASSEN

Alicia Nygra

It happened so fast. One minute I am putting together a puzzle with my friends, and the next I am in total shock, trying to hold back the storm of tears that threatened to break through. Somehow, I knew in the back of my mind that he wouldn't make it, that he would go to a better place. But still, when I got the news, something inside of me screamed, "NO!" How could something like this happen?

My friend, Victoria, was so upset that after she got a bite to eat, she came to my house again and slept over. Somehow, it eased the pain and the grief.

Everybody in the class was talking about the tragedy of Mr. Wassen's death. I don't think that some people realize he is still here with us. Or that he had a good life that we should be celebrating. Yes, there were bad times, but there were also great times mixed in with those.

I remember when Mr. Wassen first came into our classroom. Some people were a little uneasy around him, when really he was just like every one of us. Throughout the year, we saw him at least once a week, and became close friends with Mr. Wassen. We could all go to him for advice or help. When he was in, we wouldn't even go to Mrs. Chadd for help. A lot of the time, we would confide in Mr. Wassen. He was like our second teacher. Except, he didn't teach us math, science and social studies. He taught us about life, about turning tragedy into triumph. He showed us the strength of the human spirit, and to truly love and care about others. Mr. Wassen always found someone less fortunate and helped that person in all the ways that he truly could.

Mr. Wassen taught us the true meaning of courage. He never let his situation define how he was going to live the rest of his life. So what if he was in a wheelchair? He could still live like you and me, with a little challenge thrown in there. Maybe he couldn't walk, but he could still love, care and live his life.

As I have mentioned, Mr. Wassen always found someone less fortunate than him and did all in his power to help. When we started this PupPutt fundraiser, he was not only thinking that the money would go to help him, but that it would go to help other people in wheelchairs as well. I admire him for that.

Some of the money that we raised from PupPutt last year went to Eric Green, a former Brownsburg High School student, who was paralyzed in a dirt bike accident on Memorial Day weekend a year or two ago. Knowing Mr. Wassen, he was glad that some of that money went to Eric, to help him pay for things he needed. I bet Mr. Wassen was glad he could help a young man who was paralyzed before he could really experience life.

There were two things that Mr. Wassen hated: reading and talking about himself. One of the only things that I ever saw him read and like was the book, Walking Papers by Francesco Clark. Francesco Clark was a man who became paralyzed after he dived into the shallow end of a pool on a business vacation. It tells about the struggles that he went through to gain independence.

The other thing that Mr. Wassen hates is talking about himself. When he had to write a letter to Francesco Clark asking him to come to PupPutt, here is how it originally went:

Dear Mr. Clark,  
My name is John Wassen. Please come to  
PupPutt.  
Thank you.

When we sent the letter, it said more, obviously, but we all laughed at the fact that he would never talk about himself.

I know that Mr. Wassen is upset with us for being upset, but it is so hard not to be. On Monday, there was a rainbow on Northfield Drive. Everybody in the class thought the same thing; it was from Mr. Wassen. He was telling us that he was all right; he was in a better place. He told us to wipe away our tears, and go kick butt in PupPutt. Which is exactly what we are going to do.

BLIZZARD

Elizabeth Rangel

I sit by the window while a blizzard passes by. Snow falls hard on the ground. The wind blows snow in every direction. Snow covers cars, driveways, houses, streets, and sidewalks.

My dog screeches and runs into his little house. The blizzard is strong, the strongest I've seen. You can see nothing but white. Snow twists, swirls, and flies.

The blizzard stops and the sun comes out. It gives you a feeling... a feeling that everything is going to be alright today. I watch the sun until it sets. The blizzard has stopped here but starts somewhere else. Somewhere where that blizzard will blow in every direction. Somewhere where snow covers cars, driveways, houses, streets, and sidewalks. Somewhere where snow will twist, swirl, and fly. Where that blizzard will be strong.

DOGS

Grace Sherrill

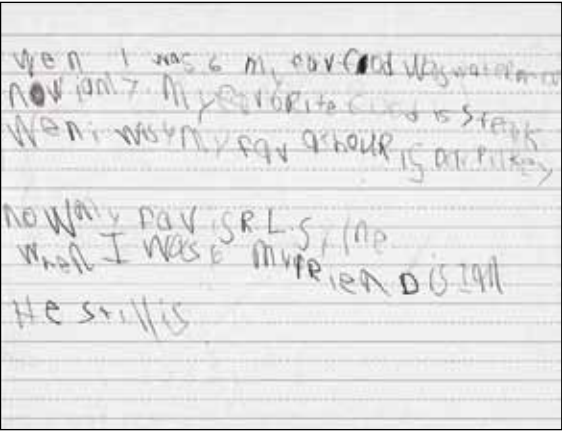
One mean  
One nice  
One scratches  
One plays  
One I stay  
away from  
One jumps  
on me and  
says play with me.



WHEN I WAS SIX

Sam Tinkle

When I was six my favorite food was watermelon.  
Now I am seven my favorite food is steak.  
When I was six my favorite author was Dav Pilkey.  
Now my favorite is R.L. Stine.  
When I was six my friend [was] Ian.  
He still is.



MY LAST HIT

Coltin Hall

It was July 3, 2010. I was up next. Jose hit a single and now all of the bases are loaded. The crowd was calling my name, "Coltin! Coltin! Coltin!"

My coach said, "Coltin, go and hit the ball." I stepped on the plate.

First pitch, too high. Next pitch, too low. Third pitch, good swing, strike. Fourth pitch, ball. Fifth and final pitch, right in the middle.

I smile and swing. I close my eyes and say in my mind, "Please a hit!" I open my eyes. Then I look up and the ball is in the air.

I run to first, second, and then third. They tell me to stop, but I run. The outfield gets the ball. Outfield throws it to short stop. Short stop throws it to the pitcher. The pitcher throws it to the catcher. I slide under the catcher.

"SAFE!"

The score is 6 to 5. We win.

I GO TO HAWAII WITH MY SISTER TARIN

Sabina Johnson

I make a sand castle  
with my sister  
Tarin.

Me and my sister play in  
the water.

Me and my sister play  
in the sand.

We play and play.

Me and my sister put  
our pajamas on.

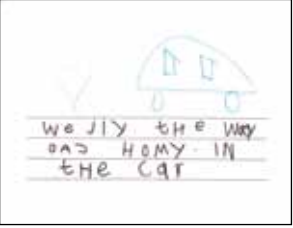
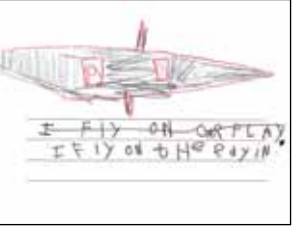
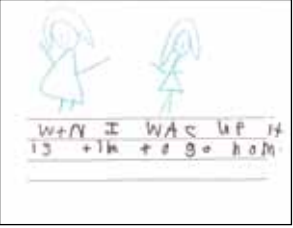
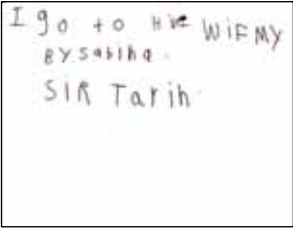
When I wake up it  
is time to go home.

I fly on the plane.

We are here.

We drive the way  
back home in  
the car.

We are home.  
I love home.



MY SISTER IS BORN!

Ben Ewer

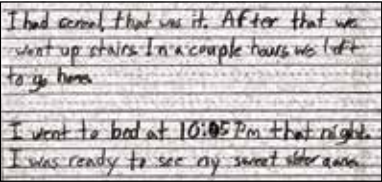
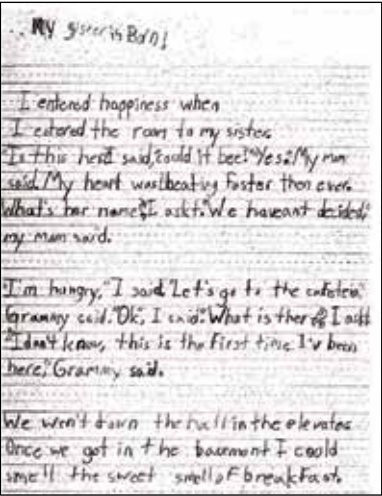
I entered happiness when  
I entered the room to my sister.  
“Is this her?” I said. “Could it be?” “Yes,” my mom  
said. My heart was beating faster than ever.  
“What’s her name?” I asked. “We haven’t decided,”  
my mom said.

“I’m hungry,” I said. “Let’s go to the cafeteria,”  
Grammy said. “OK. What is there?” I asked.  
“I don’t know. This is the first time I’ve been  
here,” Grammy said.

We went down the hall, in the elevator.  
Once we got in the basement, I could  
smell the sweet smell of breakfast.

I had cereal. That was it. After that, we  
went upstairs. In a couple of hours, we left  
to go home.

I went to bed at 10:05 p.m. that night.  
I was ready to see my sweet sister again.

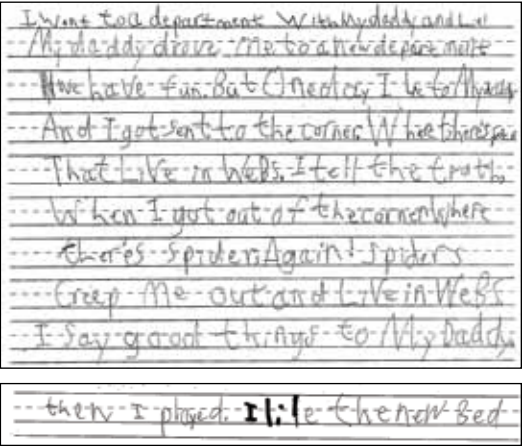


I WENT WITH MY DADDY

Chancellor Minor

I went to a department (store) with my daddy and lied!  
My daddy drove me to a new department (store).  
We had fun. But one day I lied to my daddy.  
I got sent to the corner where there are spiders  
that live in webs. I told the truth  
when I got out of the corner, where  
there (were) spiders again!  
Spiders creep me out.

I said good things to my daddy.  
Then I played. I like the new bed.



MY DAD AND ME

Joseph Finnell

It was a Saturday night when I walked in my dad’s room to ask him a question. He was watching the Colts game. It was warm. When he noticed me he said, “Hi.”

I forgot my question. I said “Hi” back. He seemed really happy because the Colts were winning by a lot. He looked at me again. He told me we were going to go to a Colts game.

“Don’t you think that will be a little much?” I asked.

“No, just me and you,” he said.

My face lit up with joy. “Really?” I said.

“Yeah,” he answered.

The next day I was waiting for my dad to come and pick me up so we could go to the game. Then he called.

He asked if I still wanted to go to the game or if I wanted to stay home and watch the game on TV. I told him I still wanted to go to the game. He said OK. Then he said he would be there in a minute. When he drove up I ran outside and jumped in the car. He asked me if I was ready. “Yeah,” I said in an excited voice.

We drove to Lucas Oil Stadium. It took us about two minutes to find a parking space, then we found one. We sat there for about 20 seconds, then we went in. We were probably the only ones without Colts shirts on. The Colts won and we were very happy. We went home, then we went to my aunt’s house for dinner. Then we went home and went to bed.

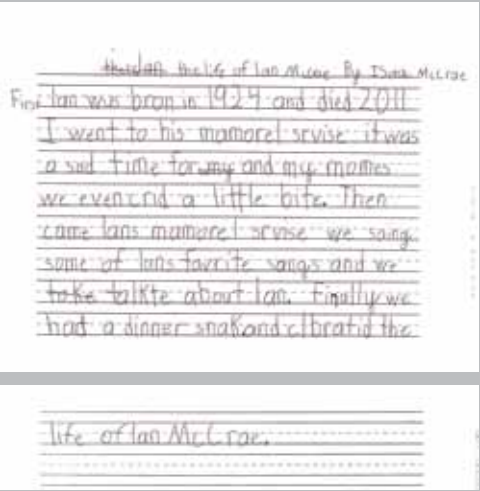
I had had more fun than you could imagine.

THE LIFE OF IAN MCCRAE

Isaac McCrae

First Ian was born in 1924 and died [in] 2011. I went to his memorial service. It was a sad time for me and my mom. We even cried a little bit. Then came Ian's memorial service. We sang some of Ian's favorite songs and we talked about Ian. Finally, we had a dinner snack and celebrated the

life of Ian McCrae.



MEDICINE

Maxwell Gerard

I have to take medicine  
And when I don't take it...  
I get crazy  
When I am not on it  
I get in trouble  
I get made fun of for taking medicine  
I hate being made fun  
I cannot help it  
I am a little bit different  
But I am not a freak  
Medicine is not bad to take  
it helps me

I LIKE SPORTS

Grady Hadar

I like to play basketball because I played basketball in a league with my friends.

I like doing grounders with my dad.

I like football because my dad sometimes plays football with me at night.

I like Frisbee because I'm good at it.

I like golf because I made a hole in one.

I like bocce because I won one hundred times.

But I don't like playing horse race because my friends cheat at it.



# WHO AM I?

Jamal Goldstein

I was just adopted. Staring out the window of my room, waiting to go outside, I think about what this family will be like and look at my birthmarks.

As I put on the jacket I just got, I see people planting and having fun. So I decide to go buy a pack of seeds, and flowers of course.

Everyday I check them and water them. I say to myself, “A family of flowers united.” And they will never be split up again; never, ever, ever again.

Who am I?

# THE MOST INTERESTING THING

Adrian Conger

The most interesting thing that I have learned at Wendell Phillips School #63 is division. When I first saw a division problem I said, “This is hard.” I was so confused. “What is the line with two dots? That other thing looks like a check mark. Why is there a number under it?” My mind had so many questions. I am so lucky, I have a teacher who understands my fears.

First, Miss Morgan wrote a problem on the board with both symbols. She explained they meant the same thing. Then she told us that the larger number was going to be broken down into smaller equal parts. She even taught us the names. The larger number this is being broken down is a dividend. The answer is the quotient.

Next we learned that you can check a division problem with multiplication. Just take the quotient and multiple it by the number parts. Your answer, the product will be the same as the dividend you started out with.

I can use division right now to make me a better person at home. Mom brings home Kentucky Fried Chicken. Because I am the oldest, she tells me to give everyone the same amount of chicken. I have one sister, and two brothers. If there are twelve pieces of chicken, I would divide 12 by 6. Mom and dad also want chicken. Each of use would get two pieces of chicken. I can make sure by multiplying  $2 \times 6 = 12$ .

Knowing division will help me be a better person in the future. If I hire more than one person to work for me and I want to pay them the same amount of money I will use division. I will count how much money there is to pay my workers. Instead of making a pile for each worker and adding a dime, a quarter, or a dollar to each pile I will make a division problem. I will take the total amount to be paid to my workers, the dividend and divided it by the number of workers. That is being fair. Being fair to my workers, they will keep working for me.

So far I have learned addition or pluses, subtraction or minus, multiplication or times, and now division or taking apart. I am sure that there are many more things I will learn in math. But so far, division is the most interesting. I know I will use it the rest of my life. Have you used division today?

# THE TREE HOUSE TRAP

Rachel Efroymsen

The sun was up, but it did nothing for the icy, chilling snow that still lay covering the fresh, vivid green grass. Nor did it help warm the frigid breeze. It was unusually quiet because my youngest sister, Sabrina, was at her friend’s house. However, oddly enough, that did not prevent the chaos from happening.

My other sister, Emily, and I were trying to entertain our dog, Lilly, which was not working. The ringing of the doorbell happily let us abandon this task. It was our neighbor Isabelle. She was trying to convince us that we should go to our tree house.

“It’s so sad. Just look at it! We haven’t been in it forever!” Isabelle exclaimed.

“Okay,” I decided. We all walked over to the tree house, which rested on the tree in the back of our yard. Isabelle began to step on the ladder, and pushed to open the door. She paused.

“What’s wrong?” Emily asked.

“It’s stuck, and it won’t open.”

One by one, each of us gave a try at opening the door. We had to use a hammer to finally get it to unlock. It must have frozen shut, because the other side of the door was coated in ice. We all entered and sat down, and I, the last person to enter, made the mistake of shutting the door. I pulled on the latch, but it was stuck again. I cannot tell you that we all had no trouble while we were in the tree house. We started to argue, and that didn’t really help. Also, we were freezing.

We were stranded in there for quite a while, doing absolutely nothing, and looking around to see if Sabrina had gotten back. All of the sudden a chirping noise came from Isabelle’s pocket.

“What’s that, Isabelle?” I asked.

“Oh, nothing.” Emily snatched a phone out of Isabelle’s pocket, which she must have been texting on. “Oh, yeah. Well, it won’t be helpful anyway, because it’s almost out of batteries now.” And, again, we began to argue. Soon enough, however, Sabrina showed up.

“Hey, guys! Let me in! I just came back from Grace’s house!” she shouted.

“We can’t. We’re stuck!” we replied.

“Guys!” Sabrina began to throw a temper tantrum. “Stop lying! If you don’t let me in, then I’ll go tell Daddy on you!”

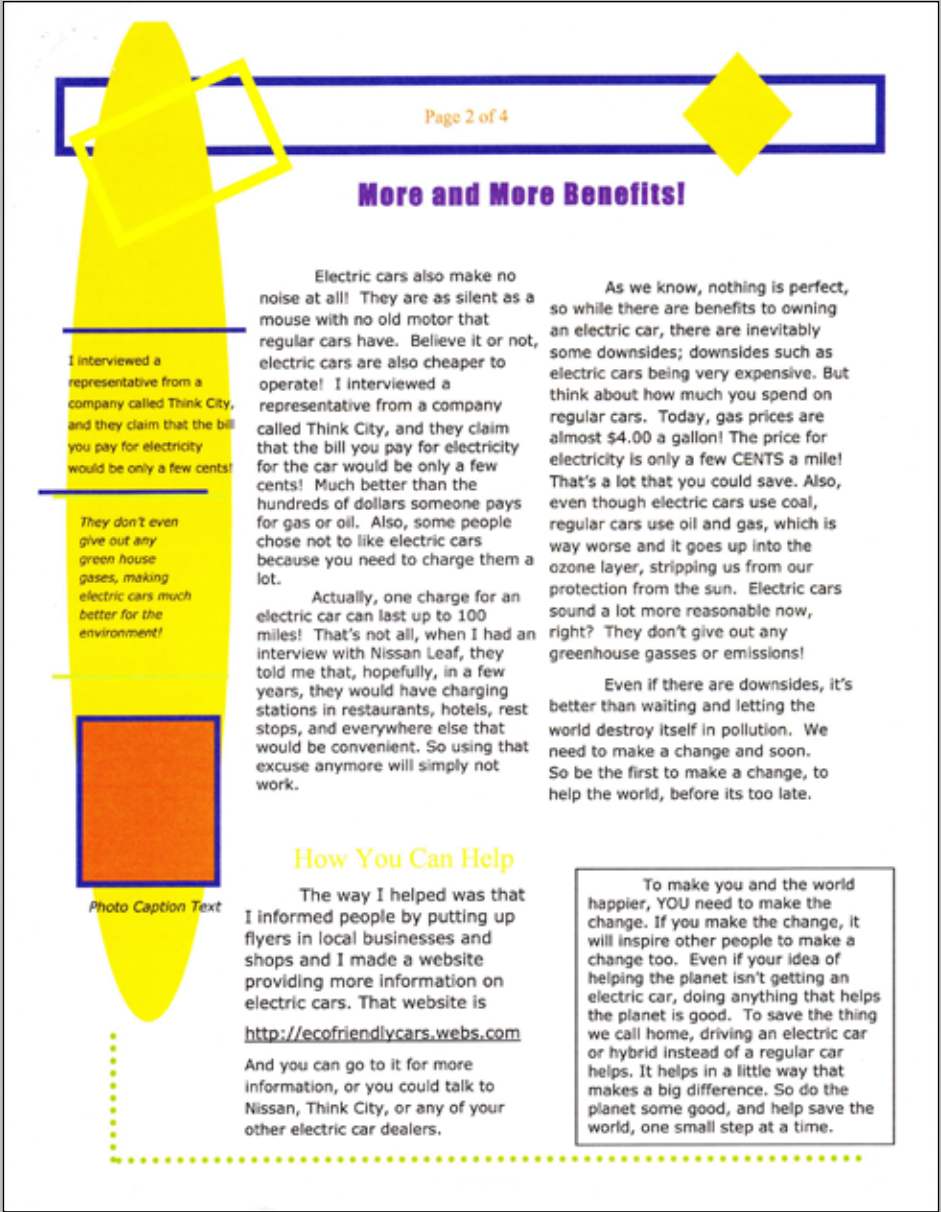
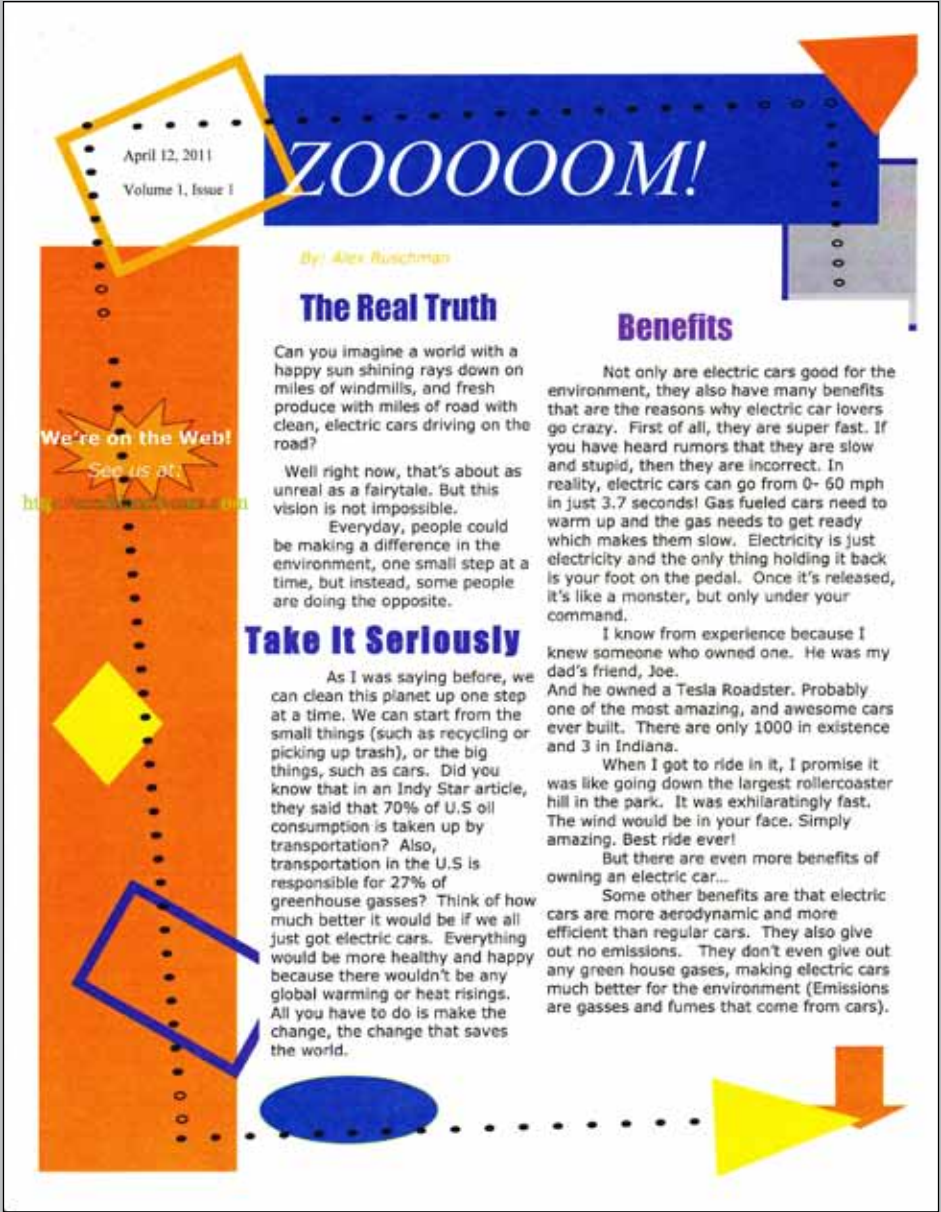
“Yes, yes! Go do that!”

Sabrina ran to the house, stomping her feet on the lawn as she went, and soon, up the steps into the house. You could hear her a mile away. Then, she came back, with my dad. My dad had to grab a hammer and bang it on the door to get us out. We burst out like a crew on a ship first touching land.

Also, we all swore never to do that again. However, I can tell you that we broke that promise.

ZOOOOOM!

Alexandria Ruschman



A COLD WAR

Damien Corley

I threw my first snowball. It hit something, but it didn’t hit David. David tried to say something, but I prevented him from saying it. I was getting very mad at him licking my hand, so I let him speak. After getting his lips wet, he started talking.

“You missed,” he announced, getting his snowball prepared.

David launched it, and it struck me like a lightning bolt. It hurt really REALY bad. It felt like a lightning bolt, too. I got provoked. I threw another snowball, but it was no good.

“Darn!” I whispered while diving behind my fort.

He tried to throw another snowball, but it missed me.“I hope he doesn’t hit me again,” I thought, getting the snowball all set. I threw that snowball as fast as a 110 MPH baseball. It finally hit him! He tumbled backwards. I stood there startled. I think I hurt him badly, I thought.

“OWWWWW!” he yelped faintly.

I came over to see if he was injured. His hands were crammed with snowballs. David tricked me! I could not believe that my best friend had just tricked me. I felt shocked, surprised, amazed, and crestfallen that David tricked me.

“Tricked ya!” David roared ferociously.

He pelted me with snowballs! I could not see. I could barely hear what he was saying. It sounded bad, so I tried not to listen. He took all of the snowballs off of me so I could see and hear clearly.

“I win, you lose, I win, you lose!” David bragged, not caring about my feelings.

I was discouraged so I ran inside and hurled into bed. I was mad too. He was still blurting it out to the world when I was in bed. I never thought that David would do such a thing!

“What is wrong?” my mother asked.

“David bragged about winning.” I replied.

“Maybe you will win next time,” my mom whispered.

She JUST solved a problem! I got out of bed and bolted outside. My mom called me a “running rocket,” so I ran even faster. I was ready to thrash David. I got a 7-foot pile of snowballs ready. After a few minutes, it was time. David had finally arrived with a cup of hot chocolate in his hand. He put it down and got ready silently. David acted as if I was not there.

“Are you ready!?!” I asked impatiently.

“You bet!” David growled.

“5,4,3,2,1!” we screamed.

I threw snowballs as fast as I could. David hit me a couple of times, but he was no match for my pile of snowballs. I pelted him! He could hardly here me! I never thought that that would happen to David.

“I win!” I screamed, trying not to brag. “Good game!” I shouted to David.

“I like the way you play. Would you like to play again some other time?” David asked.

“Sure.” I replied.

We learned a lesson that day. It was a pretty good one too. Don’t fight two fights at once. Also, we learned NO bragging. I hope David still remembers. I know I do.

WE AND THE DOG

Áine Loughran



One day I took a walk with my mom and we were walking my friend’s dog.

The my friend’s dog started pulling me around the block. Then we went home.

Then my friend’s dog ate a big dinner and then he had dessert.

Then we went to the dog store.

And we bought him a toy.

BROTHERS

Trent Richardson

Brothers are so great  
They always have your back  
And you have theirs.

You have your best, best,  
Friends but you know your brothers are the best.

People think they are lucky  
If they are the only child but  
It is better to have brothers.

You think they are mean but  
That’s just how they all act.

Brothers are great  
I would not like stuff I like now.

Like I would not be so into sports  
I would not be as good at sports if  
I did not have the three best brothers ever.

ALL GROWN UP

Abigail Hensley

No more bottles or formula  
I’m all grown up.  
Princesses and Superheroes  
I’m all grown up.  
Play-doh and Sprout  
I’m all grown up.  
Preschool and elementary  
I’m all grown up.  
Cell phones and high heels  
I don’t wanna grow up!  
Homework and finals  
I don’t wanna grow up!  
Parking tickets and taxes  
I don’t wanna grow up!  
I wish I were a kid.  
Black tux, beautiful white gown  
I think I’ll be okay.  
A nice house, happy smiling children calling me mommy  
Yes, I will be okay.



MIKE’S FIGHT FOR LIFE

Kemper Bricker

I remember going to Florida and rolling in the sand. I had so much fun there. We would have the most delicious breakfasts with my mom my sisters and my grandparents. We would have pancakes with chocolate chips and the freshest fruit. It was so much fun. We would jump on the beds and roll around. Then we would drive around for a while. We would laugh and play until we were so tired, we would just fall over asleep. I had the most fun going down for Christmas. We opened presents and played and danced and had so much fun making cookies for Santa.

My grandpa never liked to be called Grandpa, because it made him feel old, so we all called him by his first name, Mike. I remember when Mike got sick, and when my mom first found out her dad did not have much longer to live. I still think back to when I first found out we would no longer be going to Florida for my only grandpa, would not be down there to greet us. I can remember my mom crying and being so upset, so sad and hurt. My sisters were upset, too, but they did not quite understand about losing someone. They just knew that their mom was so upset, so they were upset as well.

I remember when he came to town so he could see his son and daughters. Everyone was so upset. First we all went over to where he was staying, and we all felt bad for we could see the cancer was taking him. He could tell who we were, but he was always tired and did not want to do much like before. Then it got really bad, and he could not remember or do anything. That’s when we stopped going, but my mom still did. We would stay home while my mom went to visit for just an hour at a time. We would wait and play games to pass the time. It was fun until the game was done. Then we would wait until Mom came back.

I remember when my mom stayed for hours at a time and even spent the night. Then she would come home for five or ten minutes to give us a hug and to get some clothes before she drove off again. My sisters were younger, so they would cry for what seemed like forever because their mom was gone. We would all sit by phones and wait for a call from my mom. It was hard for all of us having someone dying for one, but also because someone very close to my family was gone all the time.

I remember when she came home in tears, and we all knew it had happened. He had died. We were all so sad. No one said anything. Still to this day, I am sad. I loved him so much, and I still do. He was a great grandpa and Even though he is not with me now he will all ways be in my heart.

THE LEGO BEATLES

Jack Hodde

My brother and I made a Lego set of the world-famous Fab Four: The Beatles. I’ve got to admit, even though he annoys me sometimes, my brother did an awesome job! I made the stage, the guitars, the drum set, the bass, the whole stage, and I ordered a custom-made John Lennon Lego Beatle online. My brother made Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr characters.

In our Legoland, our own Lego characters met the four legends. The Lego Beatles went on tour and performed at the Lego Pepsi Coliseum. We made a huge screaming crowd of Lego people. They played songs that they never played on stage together, like songs from Abbey Road.

It is amazing what you can do with Legos, and this was my favorite experience!

ONE WINDOW IS ALL I NEED...

Ti’Osha Nelson

One window is all I need  
To see who’s out there for me  
Making sure that harm is out of my way  
Keeping my family from falling apart  
Keeping my heart from falling into bits of bits of pieces  
Keeping my head up for the future  
Doing what I need to do  
To accomplish and become  
What I plan to be  
One window is all I need.

THE TIME I WENT TO MY AUNT DAWN’S HOUSE

Zoe Suess

I think it was last summer [when we took] a quick trip to my Aunt Dawn’s house before camp. I went to my Aunt Dawn’s house and here’s the best part about it. Every time I go over to her house she gives me and my brother candy. My brother’s name is Max. He plays a lot with me, although he’s not as nice as he sounds. She has a bounce pool. I got smashed once in that thing and went underwater when I didn’t want to. We had mac and cheese for dinner. Then after that we walked on my uncle’s back. (He lets us walk on his back.) When it’s our bed time at 9:00, my uncle pumps our sleeping bags up.

I think I had a great time at my Aunt Dawn’s house!

WHEN I WAS GOOD WITH MY DAD

Kennedy Lynem

When I was good at my dad’s house we got to do whatever we wanted to do.

When I [am] good at my dad’s house he lets us go outside to play in the sand and we build a sand castle.

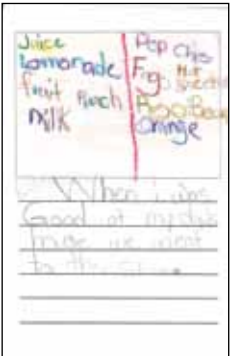
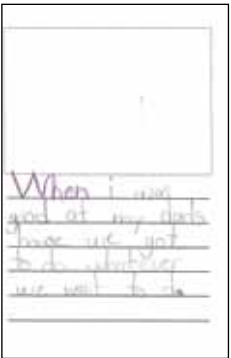
When I [am] good at my dad’s house he lets us play with our brother and his wife.

When I [am] good at my dad’s house my granny lets me do her hair.

When I was good at my dad’s house we played the Wii.

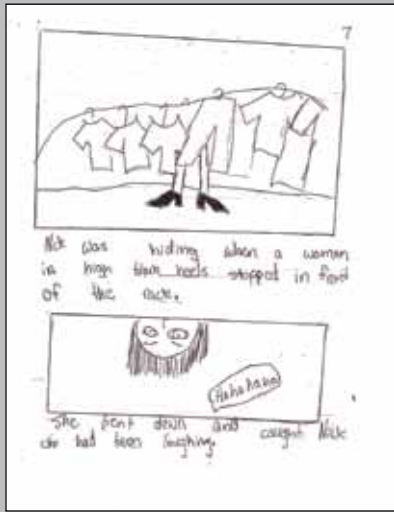
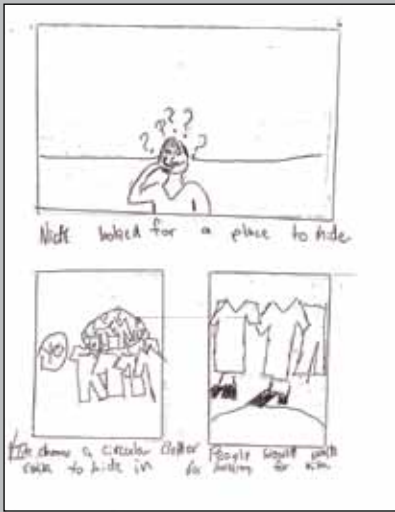
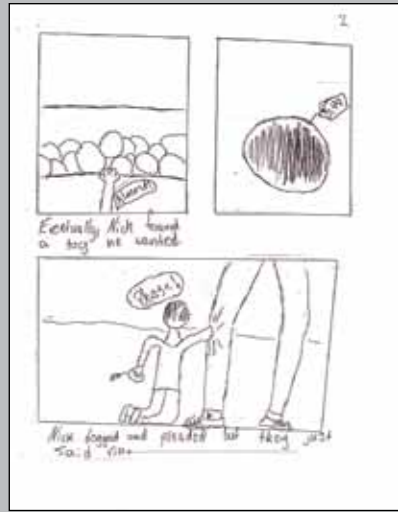
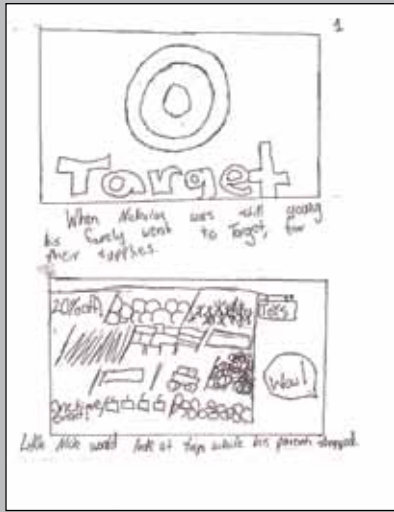
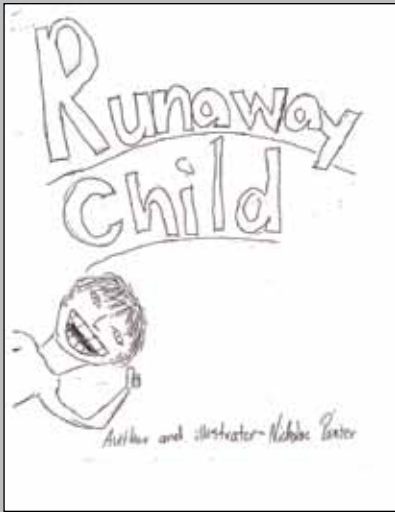
When I was good at my dad’s house we went to the store.

When I was good at my dad’s house we went to the library.



RUNAWAY CHILD

Nicholas Alexander Pointer



When Nicholas was still young, his family went to Target for their supplies. Little Nick would look at toys while his parents shopped. Eventually, Nick found a toy he wanted. Nick begged and pleaded but they just said, "No."

Suddenly, he had a fun idea. In his mind it was fun at least. When no one was looking, he slipped away.

Eventually, Nick's parents noticed Nick was gone, and they freaked. [His] name echoed throughout the store in search. Thinking [he] might have been kidnapped, security was placed at all entries and exits. The gates to the other parts of the mall were closed.

While everyone in the store searched frantically in hope, Nick continued to run and hide. Nick looked for a place to hide. Nick chose a circular clothes rack to hide in. People would walk by looking for him.

Nick was hiding when a woman in high black heels stopped in front of the rack. She bent down and caught Nick, who had been laughing. She brought Nick back to his parents.

Nick was reunited with his family and able to leave. The ride home was a little awkward.

Nick will never forget that day. And neither will his parents.

FLYING

Will Johnson

The wind rustling through my hair, the cool whip of the wind on my face, and the big smile spread across my face. I dreamed of doing it all my life and now I can fly. The feeling is great. I feel like I don’t have to listen to anyone or do anything. I can just be. I’m soaring through the clouds not being able to see anything except the white that encircles me. Then I take a dive. I just let go and fall straight through the cloud and free-fall for fifteen seconds before pulling up. And then I’m flying over a forest that surrounds a clear blue lake. Then a Peregrine Falcon comes racing up next to me. He does loops and twirls as he flies next to me. The feeling is great and I wish I could capture that moment forever; then my mom calls me from the back door, and I stop. And I remember that I’m just a little seven-year-old boy, flapping his arms around in the backyard, pretending to be a bird on a hot summer day.

INCREDIBLE PIZZA COMPANY

Joseph Mahern

The last time I went to Incredible Pizza my family and I had a blast! I rode a roller coaster, won prizes, played glow-in-the-dark putt-putt and rode the bumper cars.

In order to play the games and ride the rides you need a pizza credit card. I had twenty dollars on my card. The adults only got seventeen dollars on their cards. I had so much fun at Incredible Pizza.

The games are one of my favorite things! My sister played a game and won 1,000 tickets! I could not believe that she won so many tickets. I won a lot of tickets playing all of the different games too. My dad also won a lot of tickets. He played battle ship game that he thought was awesome. We were the first people in line for that game.

After we played games, we rode the go-carts. They go really fast! If you are driving the go-carts and crash you have to start the race over again. We then rode the bumper cars. When the bumper cars start you better watch out, I am the best! I won bumper cars. I crashed into everyone I could find!

After we played games and rode the rides, we ate. The pizza at Incredible Pizza is not really that incredible, but the ice cream is really good. I had sprinkles on my ice cream. YUM!

I got a prize when I turned in my tickets. I got a really fun Nerf toy. I was so happy that it really worked!

Soon after that, we left Incredible Pizza. I had so much fun. I hope we get to go again very soon!

THE BIG TREE MISHAP

Damion Shafer

“Be careful, Damion! Don’t take the chair out to the tree! You know it can tip over and I don’t want you to get hurt,” hollered my grandpa sternly.

It was the fall of 2005, and I was 5 years old. As a 5 year old, I was very adventurous and I loved to climb. I climbed on cars, rocks, stairs, ladders, boxes, filing cabinets, and refrigerators. I also liked to find bugs, especially butterflies. I really wanted to climb the enormous tulip tree in our backyard, but I was too short to reach the main bough of the tree. So, I used a chair to reach the branch that towered over me.

Every day I inched toward the tree carrying a chair from the back porch. I placed the chair under the strongest branch that was closest to the ground. Slowly and carefully, I climbed onto the chair and leaned forward to reach for the lowest part of the branch. I grabbed the lowest part of the branch and walked my hands backward until my arms were directly above my head. Then, I positioned my legs straight out in front of me with my feet touching the trunk of the tree. I quickly walked up the trunk and wrapped my right leg around the branch. Next, I used my small leg muscles to pull my body close the branch until I was hugging it. I used my left leg which was dangling below me to kick at the tree’s trunk until my body was turned. Finally, I was on top of the branch.

I continued to conquer that tree many times during that summer and fall. Until one day... I walked out to the back porch to pick up my usual chair. To my surprise, the chair would not budge... not even an inch! Frustrated, I walked to the next chair and tried to lift it. No luck! There were 2 more chairs, but they wouldn’t move either. I felt like Goldilocks in the three bears’ house. I couldn’t locate the chair that was “just right.” So, I went to the garage to find a bucket, but they had all been put up too high for me to reach. When almost all hope was lost I spotted a note that read, “Keep trying, don’t give up!” I assumed it was from my grandpa. So I darted to the huge tulip tree, and leaped at least two feet in the air! I wrapped my little arms around the branch, and kicked my feet up and around the main bough. I had a secret audience that applauded me, I ran and leaped into my grandpa’s arms and hugged him.

The lesson that I learned was: You never know until you try! I kept saying I can’t do it! I never tried to climb it. But when I tried I did it!

# ROOTED MEMORIES

## About my art

Consistently through life we experience events, which shape our imagination and thought processes, and these in turn create lasting memories. After reading the stories provided to me through this project, I became fascinated with the memory-making process and what the mind captures and visualizes over time – subtle details encapsulated in light and movement; ambiguity soaring through colors and shapes; symbols laying out subtle hints toward a dream-like state. In Rooted Memories, I responded to the children’s writings by looking through the pages of my own memories and experiences; glimpsing into a scene of atmospheric ambiguity and curiosity.

I was very much inspired by the sincerity and vulnerability that came across in the students’ writings. Taking into account the innocence behind the words being expressed by the children, I wanted my representation of - or rather my response to – their work to reflect my experiences of their thoughts and stories. I typically like my photographic work to be as untouched as possible, and so for this project I played only with lighting, exposures, and atmospheric qualities. In the end, this intimate image was accomplished by photographing small bonsai trees through a small, broken keyhole. Because I have always been inspired by Asian culture and symbolism – the bonsai trees represent the delicacy of a life’s process, and the lighting aesthetics captured by my lens express the timeline of such process.

# Victoria L. Son

## About me

I was born in the town of Trenton, Ontario, located in the southeastern portion of Canada to Chinese and British immigrant parents. After graduating from St. Paul Catholic Secondary School in 2003, I briefly enrolled in Purdue University’s Athletic Training program before deciding to take a three-year academic hiatus to work and travel throughout North America and Europe. In 2007, I returned to the academic world, enrolling as a photography student at Herron School of Art and Design, Indiana University Purdue University, Indianapolis. At Herron, my interests diverged to include the discussion of human interaction within cultural, social, and political settings. Having recently received my Bachelor of Fine Arts, I am now pursuing a Master of Art in International Studies at Durham University in Durham, England.

