

knock u down



NO WAY OF KNOWING

Carly Ringlespaugh

Emma, my grandma, Emma. When I was younger, I didn’t know how to say grandma so I called her Emma. The name stuck, like glue does to a kindergarten student’s finger. She lived in Georgia. We would all go to the beach together. My grandparents lived within walking distance. Then, when things got bad, they moved. They moved to a village that was about an hour away from the beach.

“Hey, mom, home from school!” I yelled to the kitchen where I saw my mom sitting at the kitchen table with a phone by her arm and tears in her eyes.

“Oh, hello,” she said with a sad, breathless voice. I was worried. Did someone die? Who was hurt? Mixed thoughts whirled around in my mind.

“Is everything ok?” I asked.

“It’s Emma.” I just stood there. Blank faced. Motionless like a statue in a park.

“Emma?” I finally spit out the word from the tongue that was twisted in the back of my throat.

“She has emphysema,” my mom replied, “a disease where she won’t live much longer. Her lungs will give out one day.”

A couple months passed, and time began to heal the hurt in our hearts. We went to visit and thought we would never see her again. She wasn’t herself. She was coughing and she acted like she didn’t even know who I was. She called me things, bad things. That’s when I knew things were bad. Worse than bad.

I called her on the phone and talked to her. She said how sorry she was and started to cry. I knew it wasn’t good for her so I cried, too. She loved me so much, and I could never lose the kind of connection there was between us.

“Have you talked to Emma recently?” I asked my mom, hoping that she had.

“Yes, she is going into hospice.” My heart sank when my mom told me this. A bottomless pit of emptiness grew my chest.

“How long do you think she has?” I asked

“No way of knowing,” mom sadly replied

We went down to visit as soon as possible. My uncle had been down the weekend before and told us she had fallen out of bed. I had called their house to have my grandpa pick us up. He was already at the airport, so my grandma answered with cries of help. She couldn’t breathe. I thought she was doomed. My mom was comforting. She said I probably saved her life. I felt better after that. My mom went into the room, and I followed. I thought I would find a lifeless body lying on the bed.

“Hi, honey!” She was ok. She lay there with her arms wide open to give me a hug.

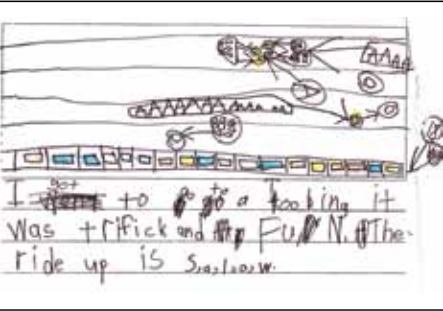
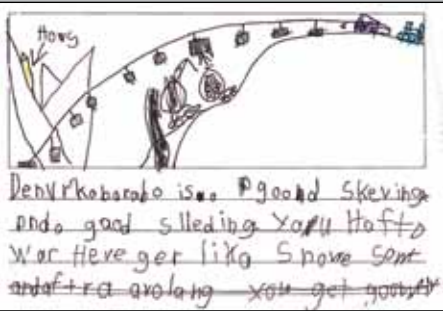
“Hi, Emma!” I knew everything was going to be all right.

Two days later we left on the plane. When we came back, I knew I would never see her loving, caring, and hopeful face again. A few weeks passed, and we were at a softball game. I asked my dad if he had heard anything about my grandma, and he said he hadn’t. I knew better. The look of sorrow on his face was different than what he said. When I came home, I asked my mom how Emma was...

“She’s gone.”

COLORADO

Jacob Messaglia



Denver Colorado is good skiing and good sledding. You have to wear heavy gear like a snow suit.

I got to go tubing. It was terrific and fun. The ride up is s,l,o,w.

WHAT IS ART?

Pranathi Srirangam

Art is a formal way of expressing yourself. Your way of putting stuff that is on your mind or in your heart on anything.

Art is rhythm and life.

Art is a pretty thing to draw.

Art is very helpful to express yourself.

Art is an adventure of colors.

Art is fascinating to many people.

TOOTH LOSER

Lela Boys-Sibley

wiggle, wiggle, wiggle  
won’t come out  
wiggle, wiggle, wiggle  
ask myself...

Pull it out?  
Yes! Will It  
be worth it?  
Yes!

wiggle, wiggle, wiggle  
**POP!**  
It’s out  
Tell everyone

Being crowded by  
people and friends  
come home excited  
out tooth under  
my pillow...

in the morning  
there is...  
**MONEY!**  
Yes! Totally worth  
it!



STRESS AND DEPRESSION

Cole Rains

both serious matters

parents separating  
changing schools  
name-calling  
even school work  
can cause stress or depression

parents dying  
your best friend moving  
you moving

offer a hand  
and say, "Are you ok?"  
or  
"Is something bothering you?"  
tell someone  
anyone that will care

stress is like a sickness  
it makes you feel bad  
even horrible

at one point in your life  
it gets better

Just hold on

What a difference a year can make

BOOK OF SOCCER

Alexander Minch



A guy kicked a ball so high! And [the] sun fired [it] singe, singe, singe!

(Speech bubble, read bottom to top): Hey, the soccer ball gave me a black eye.

A guy kicked the ball into the goal. The score is 2 to 1.

A guy kicked the ball, but I kicked it in the goal before he blocked it.

(Speech bubbles): Are you okay? Yeah

DAD

Megan Commons

I don't have a dad and it sucks. Every time my mom picks me up after school, people ask me why doesn't your dad pick you up from school? It sometimes makes me cry. My dad ran away when me and my brother were babies. I wish I could see my dad again.

SUNDAY

Jack Truitt

Suddenly, I woke up, the birds were chirping their beautiful songs, I peered out the window at a nice spring day, "why can't it just be Sunday?" I checked my alarm clock, 8:45, I was going to be late for school! I got worried, but stopped, it was silent ...except for one little noise, it sounded like a giggle trying to be held back or... a baby waking up, a Gracie to be exact. I jumped from my top bunk and quickly but quietly went to my parents' bedroom. I picked Gracie up and indeed the cry turned to a giggle. Soon she started screaming, "Jak! Ack!" trying to say my name, Jack.

I half-ran, half-stumbled to the living room, "Hey," I said in a hushed voice, "It's Sunday."

Soon she ran to my room, probably to wake Gavin up, and indeed, she was hollering up over and over again. "Go away," he groaned.

Grace didn't know what it meant, but she hollered, "It under!" Gavin knew she meant Sunday. His eyes widened, he looked at me. I nodded. He ran to play Legos.

Once my parents were both up, it was already 12:00, time for my soccer game! We played, the icy wind tried to bother me, so I ignored it. We won! L.A.Galaxy – 2 other team (I didn't know their name) – 1!

We went to my grandmother's house for dinner, not much to do. Soon we went home, I climbed into bed. Mom and Dad said good night and I slowly drifted to a sweet sleep.

MUSIC

Cassidy Yaggi

A guitar



A drum



A flute



A ukulele



A tambourine





THE “SEARS” TOWER

Anthony Chrzan

When my family went to Chicago, we started by roaming around downtown. My brothers and I were looking for the Sears Tower. When we got to the tallest building that we could find, it said “Willis Tower” on the sign. My mom went inside and asked, “Where is the Sears Tower?”

The person said, “The Sears Tower doesn’t exist anymore. Someone bought it and renamed it ‘The Willis Tower,’ and you’re in it!”

“Say what? And how much does it cost to get to the top of the building?”

“Fifty dollars per family. Go around the other side of the building to get in.”

“OK gang – to the other side we go.”

When we got to the metal detector, Philip, my mom’s friend, did not take off his belt, which had metal on it. (Good going, Philip.) When we finally got to the elevator, we were so excited to be going to the top of one of the world’s tallest buildings. 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, finally we made it! We got off the elevator and took five steps more onto a platform with a floor made out of glass.

I wasn’t thinking, “Wow!”

I wasn’t thinking, “What a great view!”

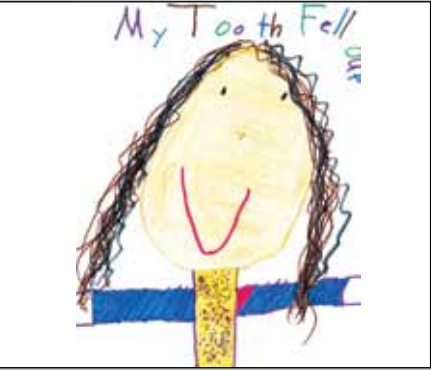
I wasn’t thinking, “It’s too big.”

I was thinking, “I need to get off this thing! I’m afraid of heights!”

After twelve scary minutes, I had enough. Does this story have an emergency exit? After one miserable hour, I said, “Please call for help!” Finally, we had all had enough. Zip, Bing, Bang, before I knew it, we were downstairs. It might be one of the coolest, tallest, buildings in the world, but I never want to go near that building again.

MY TOOTH FELL OUT

Ana Carmona



When I was in First Grade I had a loose tooth. I was at home and my tooth was hanging down. I was drink pop. Then I got an apple. I was eat apple. Eating the apple...ouch! Blood! One, two... three!!!! Whoosh! It came out. First I cried and cried

because it hurt. Later I put the tooth on the shelf so the Rat could find it at night. When every one was sleeping the Rat came through the hole in la sala. In the morning I woke up and I went to la sala. I found a one dollar bill and I said to my mom that the Rat must have left the one dollar and she said that's good. So I put the one dollar in my mom's bag to save it for the next day to buy a banana. The next day we went to Wal-Mart and I got the banana! Then we went home and I ate

the banana. I was so happy. The banana was so good. Mom made a cupcake for me because my tooth fell out. She made the cupcake and it was delicious! She made four cupcakes for my family also. She gave me the recipe because when I'm older, I'm going to bake it.

MY BIRTHDAY PARTY AND MY DANCE RECITAL

Audrey Osburn

I woke up that morning. “I...I...I’m so excited!” I ran up the stairs as fast as my feet could carry me. I woke my mom up and gave my dad a kiss.

I wanted Mom to get up so she could get my dresses in my room. Oh yes, I forgot to tell you why I’m so excited. Why? Because today, yeah, that’s right, T-O-D-A-Y is my...my...my DANCE RECITAL!

My mom stumbled up the stairs with my clothes and dresses. She motioned me to come to the bathroom. It seemed like she was getting ready for going on a date! I really don’t like to say this word...the dreaded “m” word...I don’t really mean to say it...makeup.

My worst enemy. How could anyone ever like that stuff? Huh?! Who here in this room likes it? But, that’s just my opinion. I don’t like it very much I should say, but as I was saying, I, Audrey Grace Osburn, hate makeup.

Mom patted makeup all over my face. I felt like saying, “Stop it!” But that would just be rude. She combed my hair like I was a doll, and well, then I thought about tonight. All of the pain in my head went away. I thought about the cake, the necklaces (Hawaiian ones) and all of my friends.

All of my thoughts went away when my mom yelled, “It’s time to go!” I looked at myself in the mirror when my mom walked out the door, and I whispered, “I look ridiculous.”

I rushed out the door, and my dad said, “You look beautiful, little girl.” I gave him a hug and said goodbye. I tried to give my brother a hug, but he doesn’t let me.

My mom said we needed to buy some mascara at Walgreens before we arrived at the theater. I got my favorite orange Crocs on, and we left. We stopped by Walgreens and got some mascara. Then, off we went!

When we arrived at the theater, I saw my friend Aubrey there. My teachers get our names mixed up. I was so excited, and my mom was so proud of me. I could tell.

We entered the theater, and a sign said, “Dancers from Curtain Call go this way.” So we followed the sign, opened the doors and all I saw were people. Rows...and rows...more rows...of people.

We sat down, and they called up people with perfect attendance. Two of them were my friends, Gracie and Cadence.

In a little while, we headed to the dressing room for the girls 5-10. I thought that it would be different rooms, but it was all one big room. My mom pulled my pink (ugghh) dress on, and I got on my tap shoes. My mom patted more makeup on, and I asked her to go out.

We had a couple of minutes to stay and play in the dressing room, but then it was time for the big show.

I followed my dance teacher while my mom rushed out the door to the auditorium. We watched a little bit of the other dance going on. Then that dance was over. It was time for my first ever dance recital dance, so I walked up on the stage and got ready. The music came on, the lights did too. I walked, did all of my steps and I think I did great!

I walked off the stage and back to the dressing room. There I got my leotard on and put on my pants. Halftime! Time for lunch. We had to go to McDonald’s (ugghh), but I got a salad to stay in good health. We talked for a while until it was time to go. We got back into the car, and we left.

We arrived at the theater, got my other costume on and my jazz shoes on. Same as always, I stayed and sat with my friend Cadence. Then it was time to go do my second dance recital dance ever.

We watched another dance (blah blah blah) and got onto the stage...wait for it...wait for it...wait for it...TURN! CLAP...CLAP...CLAP...CLAP!! I walked backstage and got all my costume off and then I said, “Thank you!” to my teacher and “Bye, I’ll miss you!” to my friends. Then I met my family. My grandmas and grandpas, mom and dad. I met them in the auditorium.

My grandma said, “You did great” and gave me a hug. She handed me a bouquet of flowers. My grandpas gave me a hug, and my other grandma gave me a Starbuck’s card. I hugged my dad, and we went to eat dinuch (dinner and lunch). We went to a restaurant, but I can’t remember the name. We sat across from some of my friends, and I ate up!

Then it was time for my birthday party. My birthday’s on the 9th of June. I headed to this place called Comedy Sports. It was a long ride.

When we arrived up front, I got all of the decorations and things from the back trunk. Some of the decorations we had were a grass skirt (for me) and Hawaiian necklaces (for every body). We entered Comedy Sports and there, they try to make you laugh. That’s why it’s called Comedy Sports. So, we got the cake, put it on the table and then some people arrived. They put presents on the table, and when everyone arrived, they started the show.

First they introduced the teams, and they called some people up on stage. They gave each person a sound and then, when they pointed at a person, the person made that sound. Then it was time to sing the song! That song—I hate it. It’s just oh so boring!

They had the final plays and they dressed up and did scenes from kid movies. They brought me up on stage, talked to me, asked me questions, and then it was time to go.

I had a wonderful time that day. One day I could never forget.





RUNNING AWAY

Jenna Beagle

I'm running away  
Well for how long will you be gone, just in case anyone asks?  
Forever  
Then you will need a bigger suitcase

I am running away  
Do you plan to brush your teeth?  
Well I guess so  
That's my girl, I already packed them

I am running away  
I packed your father's warmest sweater, just in case you get cold  
But it's huge  
I know, but you will be gone forever

I am running away  
That's everything  
Where will I go?  
You're the one that's running away, you decide.

I am running away  
Goodbye, I'll never see you again  
(Sound of door closing)  
Mother, why did you let her go  
Don't worry, I would never let her go, I packed a walkie-talkie in her suitcase.

WHEN MY PARENTS GOT MARRIED

Shane Sclaf



THAT CLOCK IS DRIVING ME CRAZY!

Kandys Medina



Tick Tock Tick Tock  
Uh THAT Clock!  
It's driving me CRAZY.  
It's 12 o'clock in the  
Night.  
Just be QUIET!  
UH...I'M  
going to DESTROY  
YOU!

I AM ONLY A KID

Emily Rose

I have Achondroplasia. That means my bones do not grow like everybody else's. It does not mean that I can't be a normal kid and have fun with my friends. It just means that I might need a stool every once in a while. It is sometimes hard for me to understand why all of this had to happen to me. It is very hard for other people to understand why I am so little for my age. So, I normally end up getting made fun of or asked, "How old are you?" "Are you sure you're 11, you look like you're 5!"

My parents always tell me never to listen to those people because they don't know me. My mom knows how hard it is for me and understands my pain. She always tells me that I am a great person and I should always remember that! Normally, that makes me feel better; other times it does not. I ask myself, "Why me, why me, WHY ME?" I feel it is not fair, and I don't like going through so much stress each day. I am only a kid!

CYBER BULLYING

Maya Voelkel

You need to learn this now,  
Before it's too late.

*U r a retard!*

Anybody can be on the Internet  
Anybody,  
Anybody,  
Anybody in our world.

*U r fat*

Just hitting that send button  
Anonymous people,  
They can do anything on the World Wide Web.

*I hate u*

Disgusting things,  
Stupid things...

*U r ugly*

Let's face it,  
People make bad choices,  
They can taunt you,  
They can tease you.

*Im gonna tell peeps u like him*

They think it's no big deal,  
They think it won't mean anything,  
But they are wrong.

*U R SO GAY!*

The Internet is a black hole of lies and cruelty,  
sadness or emptiness.

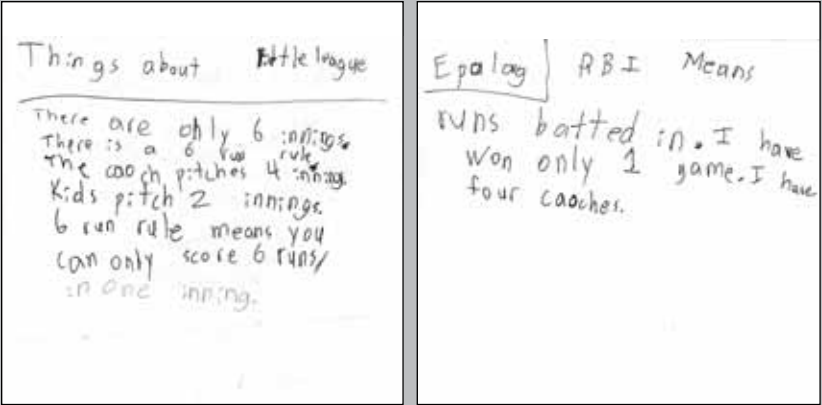
*U suck*

It stays within you,  
Until you can't take it

*Everybody hates u!*

MY BASEBALL TEAM

Jay Bumgarner



To me

My dad, mom, brother, and me all went to sign me up for baseball (Little League). I like Little League because it is a kind of baseball and I love baseball.

A couple of months later... BASEBALL STARTED! We have practices and games. I like games the most.

At practices, we practice hitting, fielding, pitching, and sometimes all of them. Also we have games. We have lost them all. The scores were 14-5, 19-5, 7-6, I forget this one, 23-7, 14-11.

I think my coach was right about hitting because in the last inning I was up at bat and there were 2 out, 2 strikes on me. But just then crack! I smacked the ball with a guy on third. I got on base and the runner scored. I had a single RBI. It was the best game ever.

My coach said he thought I did well. I also thought that I did well because I had a single RBI. My dad helps us coach and do the alligator. The alligator is when you have your glove on the ground and your hand in the air. Our other coach tells us that we need to make good throws and catches. He tells us to have fun!!!

But one day, Saturday May 6, 2011, we won our first game. We skunked the Reds 14-3. It was the funnest day of the Little League. We were so happy.

About the Author Jay is 7 yrs. old. Jay likes pizza. Jay is a pitcher in Little League. Jay loves baseball. His favorite team is the Yankees.

Things About Little League There are only 6 innings. There is a 6-run rule. The coach pitches 4 innings. Kids pitch 2 innings. 6-run rule means you can only score 6 runs in one inning.

Epilogue RBI means runs batted in. I have won only 1 game. I have four coaches.



PARANOIA

Ila Davis-Eastwick

Some people may think that I am something you like to call  
"paranoid."

I am not paranoid, I am just very, very cautious. Yes, I do admit, I have tons  
and tons of fears, but...Who said that?

What was that?! What do you want from me?! Lots of people  
Lock their fears away, up in a metal safe. Yes, I do that  
sometimes, but the safe won't last much longer!

I spin around, look up. Look down  
Cover my head with my arms, just in case...

No sleep tonight, just images in my head.  
Black clouds form in the sky that only I can see.

My view of the world is far different than yours,  
You call it Paranoia, I call it smarts!

NATURE IS SO BEAUTIFUL

Adam Jasiak

purple petunias sprouting  
wet mud bubbling  
birds chirping sweet songs  
nature is so beautiful

ponds glittering with light  
sun as bright as heaven  
days longer then ever  
nature is so beautiful

leaves turning brown  
cool breeze chilling  
sky growing gray  
nature is so beautiful

snowflakes lightly falling  
air freezing cold  
white hares bouncing  
nature is so beautiful

LUV

Diamond Johnson

Luv comes around n  
Then it knock u down  
Just get back up in  
Then knock u down

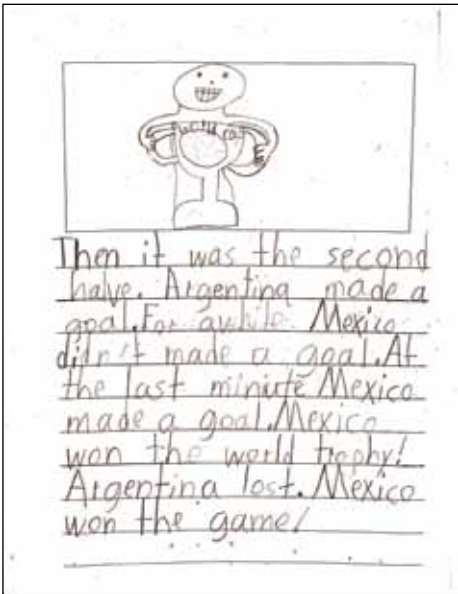
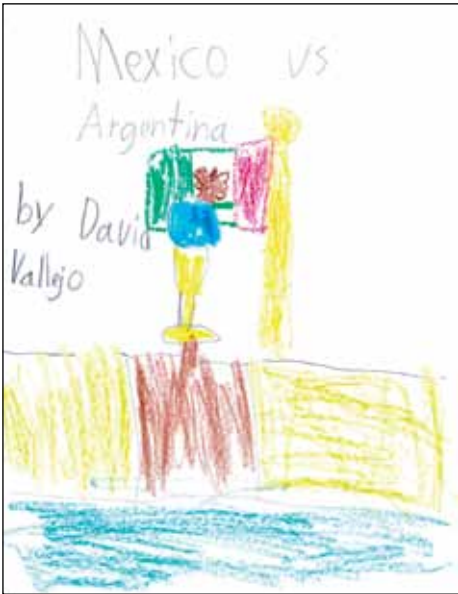
I never been in luv  
Cause if I did I made  
A mistake n that's a  
Pain I have to take  
It wouldn't be right because  
I can't see myself walking  
Into the light, luv, luv, luv  
That's what they think they  
In but they don't know what  
They got they self in  
Luv causes  
Fight, argument, killing, heart  
Breaking n taking somebody BFF  
From them so that's why I never  
Been in luv.

MEXICO VS. ARGENTINA

David Vallejo

People saw television.  
Mexico played soccer  
with Argentina. The  
game started for a while. But  
then Mexico made a  
goal-oso! Argentina tried  
their best for the first  
half but time ran  
out. The players took  
a break for a while.

Then it was the second  
half. Argentina made a  
goal. For a while Mexico  
didn't make a goal. At  
the last minute Mexico  
made a goal. Mexico  
won the world trophy!  
Argentina lost. Mexico  
won the game!



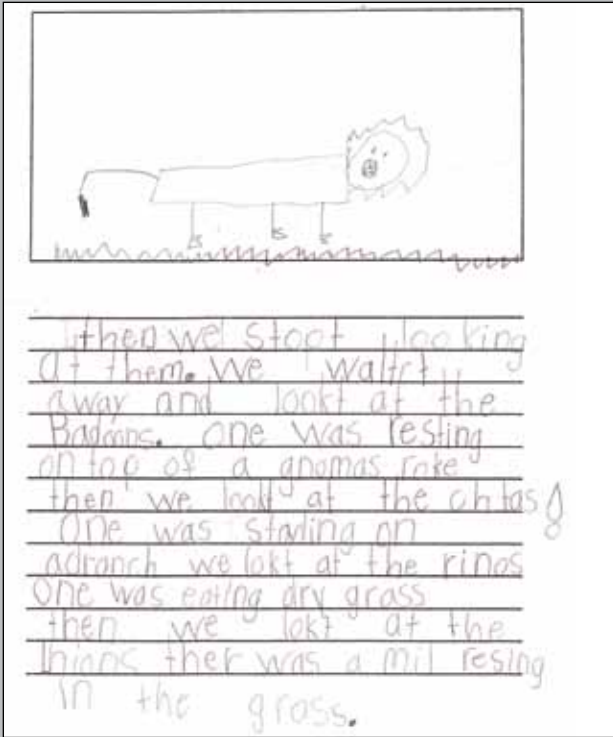
THE GREAT PLAINS

Rachel Foley

On May 9th, Monday,  
we went to the zoo!  
We went to the Great Plains!  
We went to the Great Plains  
entrance. We saw a zebra  
and an ostrich living  
together. The zebra was  
eating grass. The ostrich was  
picking at insects. We  
looked at them for a  
long time.



Then we stopped looking  
at them. We walked  
away and looked at the  
baboons. One was resting  
on top of a [ginormous] rock.  
Then we looked at the cheetahs!  
One was standing on  
a branch. We looked at the rhinos.  
One was eating dry grass.  
Then we looked at the  
lions. There was a male resting  
in the grass.



SYDNEY CAME TO MY HOUSE

Cordelia Hepley



Sydney is (coming)  
to my house.

Then we played with  
my toys.

Then we played  
with my dog.

Then Sydney  
(had) to leave.

THE LITTLE GIRL

Abigail Miller

One day Sasha was outside playing on the swing sets. While she was swinging, her next-door neighbor came out to play. He jumped on a swing and swung with her. But a couple of hours later, the neighbor's dad called for him. Sasha and the neighbor said bye to each other and went inside.

It was 6:00 p.m.. Sasha had to do her homework. Her mom helped her. "Mrs. Seufert gives me some hard stuff!" Sasha said.

"She sure does," Sasha's mom said with a smile on her face.

By then it was 8:00 p.m., and Sasha had thirty more minutes until she had to go to bed. She sat on her bed and thought. What to do...What to do...Then she got an idea! Sasha decided to look at pictures from when she was a baby. She asked her mom to get down the pictures. Then she looked at them. Her 30 minutes were up.

She got her toothbrush and brushed her teeth. Then her mom tucked her into bed and prayed for her and said, "Good night, sweetie. Love you."

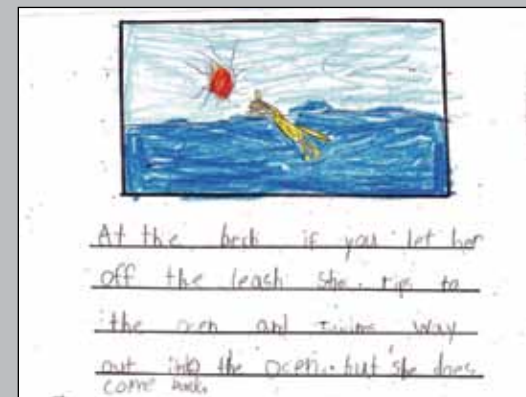
"Love you too," Sasha said as her mom left the room smiling.

Five hours later, it was 1:15 a.m.. Sasha couldn't sleep because of her kitty licking her on the arm and doing his dough on her. So she got up, picked up the kitty and put him gently in his bed. Then she went back to bed.

Then she got up. It was 8:30 a.m.. She went downstairs and got a pencil and a piece of paper. Then she wrote a story called The Little Girl.

# THE ADVENTURES OF NIPPET

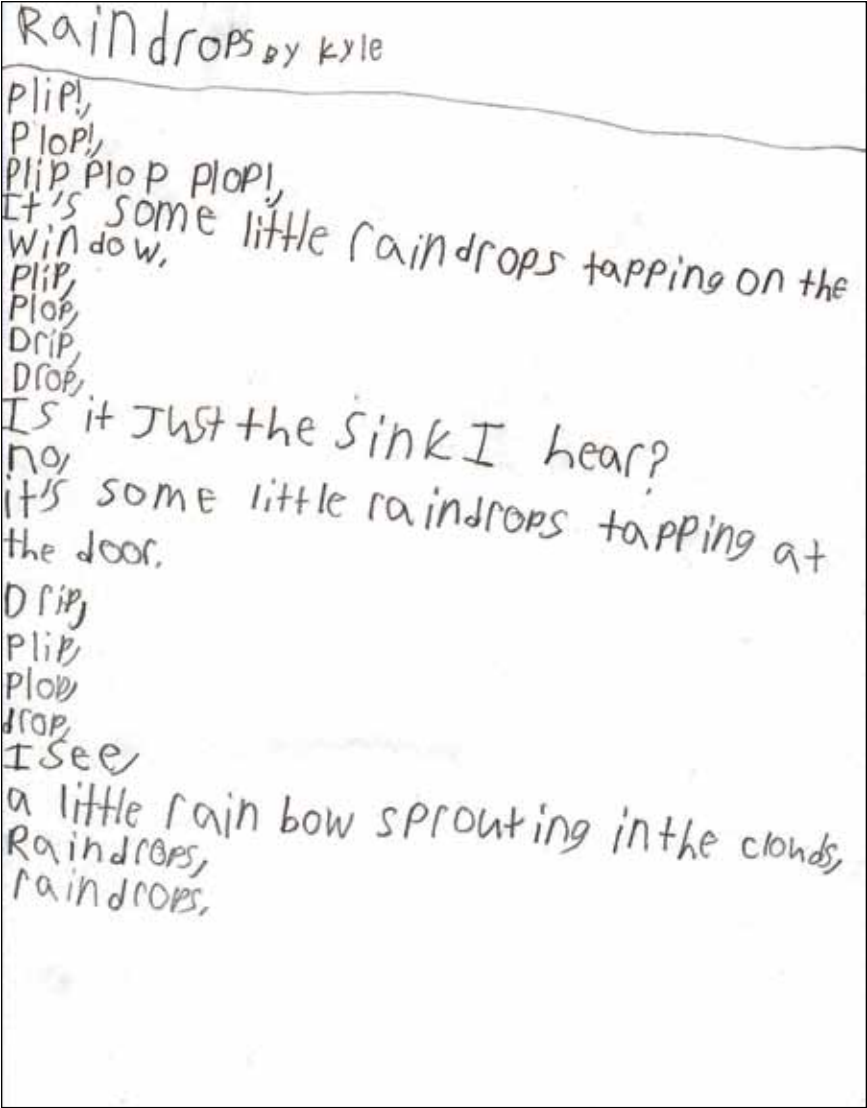
Seamus McNamara





RAINDROPS

Kyle Steiner



WHEN IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY

Jamiyah Ball



When it was my birthday it was at a Roller Cave and I rolled and rolled and rolled...

...and I ate pizza and cake... and

we rolled and rolled and rolled and I went to the bouncy house and it was fun...

I played games and I was happy and I (saw) my daddy and I was happy...

and I opened my presents and I was so excited...

I got all that I want...

and I rolled and tolled and rolled...

and I went home and I (took) a bath.

THE RACE

Sylvie Rasche

There I was  
As nervous as I could be  
Concentrating on only one thing

The race was here  
How could I win  
They're three other people  
They're better than me

Ready, set, GO  
The race had begun  
Way behind was me  
In last place

I ran as fast as I could  
There was no chance  
Of me winning  
People were cheering me on  
"go, Go, GO"

I was almost dead from all the running  
I was way slower than before  
I just couldn't stand it  
I tried not to give up

It was too late  
I was about to faint  
I wanted to forfeit so much  
But then...

As fast as I could be  
I ran past each and every person  
I was in first place

We were almost to the finish line  
My heart was pumping so fast  
And before I knew it  
We were at the finish line

There I was  
As happy as I could be  
I have won the race  
Hooray me!

TWINS: A POEM FOR TWO VOICES

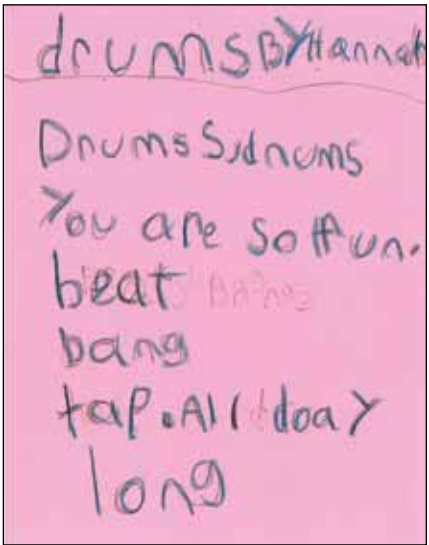
Alyssa Shackelford

Me	My Sister
Alyssa	Aubrey
Aubrey, you're nice!	Alyssa, you're ugly!
Take that back!	Make me!
Take that back or...or...or...or	Or what?
I'll tell mom.	Ok. I took it back.
Thank you.	PSYCH!
MOOOOOMMM!	

DRUMS

Hannah Black

Drums, drums  
You are so fun.  
beat  
bang  
tap. All day  
long.



MY TRIP TO A HOTEL

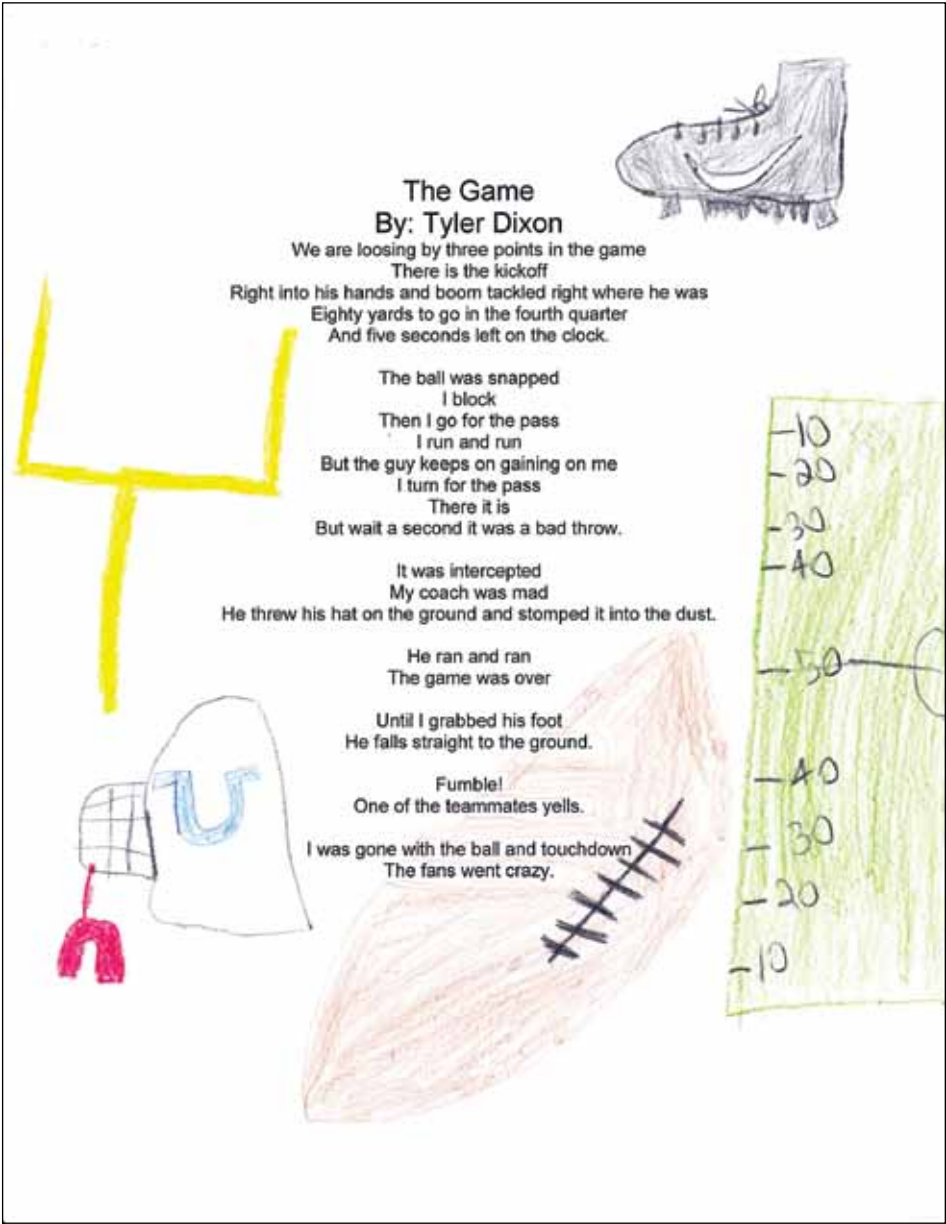
Damien Sparks



It was a long time, but I stayed up. When we were there, my step-brother didn't have a swimming suit. So my stepdad brought him some swimming suits. Then we went to the inside swimming pool. I went in s-l-o-w-l-y in the hot tub. I got out and went in the warm pool! It was cold! But I stayed in. Why? Because I was going to get warm! I was swimming. And I got warm. Then I did a cannonball! I was loud when I said, "Cannonball!" Splash! went my big fat belly. Then we went back to our room. I swam back to the stairs. It was fun! When we got there we took a bath. We kept our swimming suits on. It was fun! I tasted the water. It was disgusting. I got out. I unfolded the couch bed. I went to sleep. One day later I was awake. We had a race. It was fun!

THE GAME

Tyler Dixon



IN MEMORY OF MR. WASSEN

Annabelle Ketchem

Dedicated to all of the Wassen family, hang in there, guys. We love you.

I felt useless like I did before I met Mr. Wassen. He was always so happy to know I was there, and going to give him a hug. He thinks I helped him, but he is wrong. He helped me. He taught me, he showed me what I needed to know and more.

I wish this wasn't what it took for me to remember to pray. *Dear God, please save me from my own, awful thoughts. Please help me to write to him every day, even though he will not write back. Lord let his silent voice be heard. Please help me to understand that this is not the death of Mr. Wassen, but the birth of a new Mr. Wassen, in a place where things are better.*

If I learned anything from Mr. Wassen, it was that you never give up, which I know is cheesy, but it's true. I am a swimmer, so that is important. I remember watching him at a swimming meet, reading. Which was odd because he HATED to read. He was reading *Walking Papers*, a class book we were reading. I thought my goggles were fogged up, but nope, sure enough, there was his wife, holding the book for him. I will never forget that.

Mr. Wassen's one and most important goal was not what you would think. Some want a million dollars, he just wanted to be able to hug his daughters, to walk again wouldn't have been awful, either. But, John Wassen was paralyzed, C4 Quadriplegic. He couldn't even itch his own nose, eat his own meal, drink his own drink, live his own life.

He came in to help our classroom with everyday things. Math lessons, you know, the whole drill. He thought when we fed him, gave him something to do, when I gave him hugs, massaged his hands, popped his fingers, hoping one day he would feel it. He thought *we* were helping him, but *he* was helping us. A lot. He wasn't just a service project, or even the inspiration for one, he was the life of our day, a best friend. I am a better person now, as is everyone in Brownsburg, because of Mr. Wassen.

All because of Mr. Wassen.



## ABSORPTION

### About my art

My modus operandi has always been to learn the fundamentals and then ignore them. I was thrilled to learn I would be contributing to a section in this book project where the writers had pushed the boundaries of convention. With my background in painting and drawing, I can certainly appreciate the beauty of a standard landscape photograph that represents the world we see daily. However, I want to convey something beyond that experience with my work, something deeper, unseen but sensed.

Several years ago, in an attempt to see the unseen (and thanks to technology), I began to invert photographs and match them up side-by-side or top-to-bottom, just to see what would happen. I was surprised at the resulting imagery – patterns I never expected to see appeared. At first this seemed to be a random occurrence, but as I worked with the technique, I noticed that these same patterns kept showing up, whether it was a close-up of the ground, a shot of bare tree branches, foliage or clouds. I wondered if others had noticed this, too, and if so, how they made sense of it. This is how I discovered fractals, a field of geometry that attempts to explain how the world is structured. Absorption represents well what I have come to understand about this process. It is my sincerest hope that the young writers in Blazing the Real will continue to push their own boundaries and develop their own voices and perspectives to share with us.

## Wug Laku

### About me

I am an artist, entrepreneur, impresario, and activist. I began my artistic career as a commercial illustrator, but quickly tired of the fact that this requires one to continually say what someone else has to say, and so I moved on to find my own voice and think about what I had to say. I began with Hoosier School landscapes, then moved on to the Abstract-Expressionist, Pop, Minimalist and Found Object movements. My work has come full circle back to Indiana landscape, and currently I like to explore the links between calligraphy and patterns of landscape and human communication.

In addition to being a photographer and practitioner of the fine arts of painting and drawing, I design and produce home lighting, a line of wood boxes, and furniture. All of these are influenced by and reflective of my interest in landscape and a greener earth. I am a member of numerous galleries and arts organizations, and in 2007 I opened my own studio/gallery called wUG LAKU'S STUDIO & gARAGE where I exhibit my own work and the work of other local and regional artists. In 2007, I also joined ArtsWORK Indiana, an organization that assists artists with disabilities in career development and employment. I am always – seeking and doing.







