

# Dyslexic Advantage

## NEWSLETTER



CONGRATULATIONS KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITER AWARD WINNERS 2023!

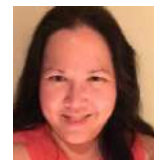


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Fernette Eide MD, Editor

### Happy March!

Congratulations to the remarkable Karina Eide Young Award Winners of 2023! We broke another record for number of submissions. Hooray!



Drs. Brock Eide and Helen Taylor Speaking at Cambridge University March 27th!

Become a **Premium Subscriber** and discover the most comprehensive resource on dyslexia in the world. You can sign up for an individual subscription or gift a school with institutional subscription. Don't forget there is a **Homeschooler's** course for parents and, for teachers, a clock hour course that provides professional development credits (**Dyslexia for Teachers**).

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The **NEUROLEARNING** Dyslexia Screening App is \$49.99 and available for children and adults 7-70 years old. iPad, iPhone, Android, and Kindle Fire.

The app may be used to identify and qualify for services such as Benetech's huge free library of e-books.

Thanks to Shelley Wear, Trish Seres, Michelle Williams, Cheryl Kahn, and Jack Martin. Thanks to Lady Grace Belarmino for design and layout and Andi and Freshea for their social media and admin help!

**PREMIUM**

Editor's Note: to make our publications easier to read, we will avoid use of italics and certain types of fonts.

Newsletters can be read online **HERE**. This issue will be available on the Joomag site for 3 months and can also be downloaded as a pdf file.



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## DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE ISSUE 87 MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER

Thank you for another record-breaking year in the history of the Karina Eide Young Writers Awards! We wouldn't have thought it possible, but we almost double the submissions compared to last year.

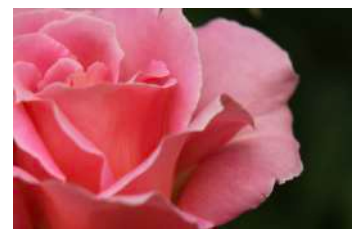
The judges were blown away by the submitted work - the rich storytelling, delightful turns of phrase, sensitivity, wonderful humor, and wisdom beyond years.

Thank you to all the students were brave to submit their work, thanks to the judges for their diligent judging and thoughtfulness, and thanks for the sponsors and donors who help make this program possible. Special thanks to Monica Banks of **Writers Studio** in NY and all the volunteer judges.

We are always amazed by the talent and writing from these young people. Bravo!

These awards are dedicated to our amazing daughter **Karina Eide** who brightened the world for us, loved spinning stories herself and inspired all who came to know her.

\*\* If you are reading these entries with a younger child, please read the selection first before deciding whether it is appropriate for your particular child. Every effort is made to make the issue family-friendly, but some works may not be well-suited for some listeners or readers.





**ADDISON, 9**

VA  
Brookewood School

Teacher: Miss  
Moynihan

I would like to  
thank my friend,  
Maria Theresa.

## Myself

My beloved family is  
Part of me  
So are my friends  
I want to be just like them  
But I am myself,  
Not them

I have glasses to see  
And I see novelty in me  
I might have trouble reading and writing  
But  
I love who I am

I go up in a cherry tree  
And want to see  
Who I am  
So I go up higher and higher  
Until I am lost  
In the tree



**ANNA, 9**

VA  
Georgia  
Connections  
Academy

Teacher: Ms.  
Holmes

My dog inspired  
this story and my  
mom typed for me  
and encouraged  
me.

## Kona and the Giant Bone

One day there was a dog named Kona. She was a long haired German Shepherd who loved to chase squirrels and she loved taking walks with her owner. That day she took a walk with her owner. During the walk, a wise old dog came by and said to Kona, "Don't you live in that house over there with the giant rocks in the front yard?"

"Yes, I do," Kona said.

"Behind the fence in your backyard there is a giant bone. I found it a long time ago when I was a pup, but I couldn't get to it. I never figured out how to get to it, so I went home. I was too young to try to get to the bone. The bone was BIG, the bone was BEAUTIFUL, the bone was Bright in the sunlight. The bone looked amazing. I still dream about that bone," the dog said.

"Why couldn't you get to it?" Kona asked.

"The challenges were too strong for one small pup," he said.

"What do you mean?" Kona asked.

"If you want to find the bone, I would recommend bringing some friends," said the wise old dog.

When Kona got back to her house, she went to get her friends. Toby, the long haired Dachshund with a mohawk, was small but mighty. Hazel, the brave Boxer with brindle stripes, was the oldest and most wise of the group. Louis, the Boston Terrier, was small but fast and totally goofy. Kona asked everyone if they wanted to find the giant bone with her and they all said yes.

When they got in the woods, they ran and ran in search of the bone. Eventually, they got thirsty and needed water. They saw a river and walked to it for a drink of water. Then Kona saw the giant bone across the river. It was big, beautiful, and it was bright in the sunlight. Kona yelled, "LOOK!!!! The BONE!"

Everyone looked up, Toby started barking, Hazel started wagging her tail so much, her whole body wagged with it, Louis stood on his hind legs and spun round and round in circles. When everyone calmed down, Louis said, "I'm having a good bone of a time." Everyone laughed!

"How will we get it?" Kona asked, "maybe we can swim across."

Hazel said, "Wait, we have to see how strong the current is first."

"Yeah," says Toby, "we should throw a stick in the river to see how strong and fast the current is."

"Okay," says Kona.

Toby grabbed a stick and tossed it in the water. The stick went out of sight in a matter of seconds. Louis said, "You won't get me to jump into there. That current is strong like a lion doing a handstand."

"I'm a strong swimmer, I can get across the pool in my backyard with no problems. I can make it," says Kona.

"Did you see how fast that stick went out of sight? It doesn't matter if you are a strong swimmer," Hazel says.

"Fine," says Kona, "How are we even going to get across then?"

Then three squirrels came out of a tree. Toby lost his mind barking his head off. When he finally stopped, the squirrels said, "we can help."

"How?" asks Kona, "If you don't give us a good way to get across, I'll chase you!"

"We know some beavers that can chop down a tree so you can get across," says the squirrels.

"Okay, let's go find the beavers," says Kona.

Kona and her friends followed the squirrels to where some of the beavers were chopping down trees. The squirrels asked one of the beavers to chop a tree so Kona and her friends could cross. The beaver agrees and says, "Move out of the way. TIIIIIMMMMBBBBEEEEERRRR!!!!"

Everyone jumped out of the way as the tree came crashing down. They drag the tree to where they first found the giant bone. They pushed it across the river and then ran across to the bone. Kona said, "I couldn't have done this without the help from the squirrels and the beaver and my friends."



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**JOHN, 9**

VA  
Laurel Ridge

Teacher: Mrs.  
Andress

I would like to  
thank my mom for  
always encouraging  
me and helping me  
get what I need to  
do my best.

## **IT'S A LOT LIKE FOOTBALL...**

Sometimes I feel like I'm always behind.  
Then I catch the ball and run down the line.

My teacher helps me learn all the sounds.  
It feels like I can get the first down.

Soon there will be a spelling test.  
The defense can tell that I am tense.

The letters move around in my brain.  
The receivers scramble and look for a lane.

I pick up the pencil and write what I know.  
The quarterback hands off the ball and watches me go.

It's hard and I struggle through the words most days.  
But I know with time and more effort I'll learn all the  
plays.





**MILES, 9**

VA  
Homeschool

Teacher: Mrs.  
Address

I would like to  
thank my mom.

## SHARKS ARE WEIRD

Sharks can smell blood half a mile away.  
 Tiger sharks are eating stuff nobody could think of today.  
 Here comes another verse,  
 The mako shark can jump 20 feet in the air, at worst!!!  
 There are only 10 unprovoked attacks from a lemon shark,  
 So you don't have to worry about them leaving a mark.  
 But the cookie cutter shark is no gingerbread,  
 If you don't watch out, it will cut a hole in your head!  
 Great white sharks change color as I speak,  
 to look black like a shadow so they can sneak.  
 Ragged tooth sharks swallow air to float,  
 Without even swimming they can almost reach a boat.  
 Did you know how far a hammerhead shark can see?  
 You won't believe it, 180 degrees!!  
 Megalodon has long been extinct,  
 But they bite off the tails of their prey, pretty scary, don't  
 you think?  
 The walking shark is called an epaulette,  
 It slows down its brain to survive on a single breath.  
 To wrap up this tail,  
 there's one final shark, but it's called a WHALE!!



**PIERCE, 9**

TX

Michael M. Boone  
Elementary

Teacher: Ms. Taylor  
Zorros

## Imaginary World

"Ahhhh, yes. It is Saturday," says Peter. He throws on his clothes and runs downstairs. His mom is waiting for him in the kitchen. And says, "No breakfast for you until you clean up your room."

"Oh no," I say. "My room has lots of piles of clothes in it." I run upstairs and grab the laundry basket and start grabbing clothes. But when I turn my back, the clothes fall on the floor again. And the laundry basket is tipped over.

I wonder who did it. Then I turn around for one second and turn back and I see my sister Leah standing in the door about to push over the basket.

"Hey! I say," and she runs away.

Then I get back to cleaning. I look in my closet and there are more piles of clothes in there. I try to pick a pile up but then I fall into the pile of clothes and I am in a different world.

I wander around and then see Leah standing in the door of a treehouse. "Where am I?" I said.

She says, "This is Imaginary World, where when you're doing chores, you come here and ghosts do your chores for you. So everybody stays here to relax while the ghosts do chores for them. But when the bell rings, everybody has to go back because that means that chore time is over."

Ring, ring.

"There's the bell," says Leah, "we've got to go now."

"How do we get back?" I say.

She says there's a secret staircase that everybody takes and at the top there's a portal that takes you back to your room. And when you get there, your whole room is clean.

Then I start running towards the staircase which magically starts to appear when I get closer. I run up the stairs and soon I am in my room.

I slide down the stair railings and run into the kitchen. I say that I have cleaned my room. And my mom walks upstairs to see. When she is done, she says, "Good job," and goes back downstairs to make breakfast.

Mom gets out the frying pan and starts making eggs. She says to go and clean up the living room while she makes breakfast. I smile and go into the living room. When I get there, I automatically switch to Imaginary World. Leah is already there because she had to clean up the dining room.

Then we both start running and then see a big castle with gates around the castle. The gates say "CG." And say "Cleaning Ghosts." Leah says she has never seen the castle before but she thinks this is where the cleaning ghosts live and the king and queen of Imaginary World. Then the gates swing open and we walk in. When we get to the doors, they swing open too.

We hear some faint music in the distance and keep walking. We get to 2 giant doors and open them. There is a ghost party and the ghosts are on break.

Leah screams, "Hey, Why aren't you cleaning our rooms?!" The ghosts stop dancing and stare. Leah slowly backs away but then the ghosts fly out and start up the staircase to clean rooms.

Ring, Ring.

Everybody starts running up the staircase to see if the rooms are done. But when I get there, the living room is still messy. Leah comes running in and says, "The dining room isn't clean."

"The living room isn't clean either," I say.

Leah says, "I think it's because the ghosts were partying and not cleaning."

"That must be it," I say.

In the corner of my eye, I can see faint, white people starting to clean. Leah runs over there and says, "Why didn't you clean earlier?"

The ghosts just keep cleaning and soon the rooms are done.

And then, mom screams, "What do you want to drink? And did you finish cleaning?"

We both scream, "Chocolate milk, and yes!"

She says, "Breakfast will be ready in a minute."

We sit in silence and then run towards the kitchen. We sit down and eat breakfast.

What a good day we had!

**OLIVIA, 9**

IA  
Winsor Elementary

Teacher: Mrs. Bolte

I would like to  
thank my sisters  
who build  
cardboard dream  
houses with me.

## My Dream Cardboard House

I found a 200-inch box.  
Flattened, it was about to be recycled.  
I saved it instead.  
First, I plopped it back up.  
Then I got my materials: hot glue, scissors, sequins, and more.  
Curtains made of old fabric, chandeliers made with Q-tips and gems. A shoebox bed with layers of cardboard for blankets. Oh, so cozy!  
Walls painted with water colors and stickers.  
A rug in the entrance made from a bright pink sticky note that says "Welcome."  
This is what cardboard house dreams are made of!

**LEVI, 10**

IA

Prairie Quest

Teacher: Katie  
Brown

I would like to  
thank  
Mom, Ms. Mary Kat-  
e, Toby, Smudge,  
and mom's  
slippers.

## The Case of the Missing Slippers

Once upon a time, Detective Pajama was in Iowa. It was about mid-morning. And then a minute after he ate his breakfast, he got an urgent call. "Yes, somebody took my slippers yesterday, can you come over?" "Yes, where do you live?" "In Florida."

Detective Pajama had to get tickets quick. Two days later he hops on the plane. When the plane lands he hops in his detective car. And then he drives to the persons location. They start talking about where the slippers could possibly be. Then Detective Pajama asks his sidekick Detective Clothes to check the house.

About 30 minutes after there's no sign of the slippers anywhere. Then Detective Pajama asks who all lives in the house. Then she says, "a dog, a cat, and my husband." Then Detective Pajama asks who all has slippers in the house. "Just my husband." Then they ask her where's the last place you put them and what do they look like? "In the living room and red near ankle and purple and pink. So then Dectective Pajama asks who has access to living room besides your husband. "Just the cat and the dog."

It's mid-afternoon so they go to a hotel and come back tomorrow. It's the next day. They head back to the house and check near the dogs kennel. They all suspect the dog stole the slippers. But, there's nothing. And then, they saw the cat and check the cats bed. They didn't find anything except cat fur. They hear something near the dogs zone. They see the cat running up the stairs. They go rushing to the dog kennel, the dog is rushing out and there lays one slipper.

Then they take the dog downtown to the police

**TOP KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS**

The dog just ruffs and says I didn't do it. But, they still suspect the dog because all dogs steal slippers. They take him home, but the slipper goes missing from the kennel. But nobody suspects the cat because it was sitting near his water bowl having kittens. They decide to search the entire house.

Then they find the slipper, it was under the bed full of slobber. So they decide to take the slipper downtown before it's stolen again. When they get there, it's all dog slobber, but footprints of the cat. So they head back to the house and take the cat and kittens. Then they question the cat and the kittens one by one. The cat said I didn't do it. Then the kittens say I don't know what you're talking about.

Then, they get a call again, there's a note saying the cat did it. They immediately head back and arrest the dog and return the slipper to the owner. Then when they were putting the dog behind bars the slipper went missing with a note saying the dog did it. They immediately arrest the cat and then they find the other slipper. But before they are leaving they hear a loud bang coming from the side of the house. It was just a raccoon. They head back to the car but the cats no where to be seen. Then, they see the kitty door shut closed. They head back into the house and pull out their weapon, the spray bottle, but it's too late the cat was hitting them with kitty litter. They finally arrest the cat. He was sentenced to cat jail for two weeks for slipper stealing.

Case closed and they enjoy the Florida beach. The End.

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**LIV, 10**

Washington DC  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

I would like to  
thank my sisters  
who build  
cardboard dream  
houses with me.

## Alone in the Quiet

I am alone in the quiet.  
It lifts me. It rides me.  
It tempts me to be much  
more than me.  
And so it scares me in a way I can't endure.  
I am alone in the quiet.  
With each movement I make,  
it waits  
whistling near my ears,  
my mouth, my eyes.  
I am alone in the quiet  
and so are you,  
muted in this quiet realm.





**EMILY, 11**

IL  
Woodland Middle

Teacher: Sherry  
Grobe and Smita  
Chatlani

I would like to  
thank Neo, my cat.

## The Girl with a Dream

One day there was a girl named Simantha who always had nightmares. She was up all night because she was so scared to go to bed because she knew she would have a nightmare. Simantha's mom noticed her not going to bed so she got her a dream catcher. At first Simantha was not so convinced she thought that dream catchers were for babies but her mom wanted her to give it a shot. That night she put the dream catcher in her bedroom and surprisingly went to sleep, and about an hour later then a unicorn popped out of the dream catcher -a very friendly unicorn with two horns - whose name was Lovely and when all the people were asleep she would pop in and out of dream catchers giving every one great dreams. Lovely noticed there was a new girl with a dream catcher. That girl was Simantha. Lovely popped out of her dream catcher and went on Simantha's pillow and with her two horns she saw what Simantha was dreaming about, two people fighting about something, she also saw Simantha shivering in fear.

Lovely quickly changed her nightmare to a dream about cats, Simantha's favorite animal. Lovely went on to other people dreams and making dreams happy but she kept thinking about Simantha and how she wanted to help more. Lovely went back to Simantha's house and saw her awaken very happy, Simantha yelled to her mom "Mom just had the best dream ever!" Lovely felt so good in that moment she made Simantha happy, she was also really scared because Simantha was awake and Lovely has a deadline when she needs to be home or else she won't have enough magic to get home since she can only use magic at night and it was already 8:30 a.m.! She quickly used her magic to get in the dream catcher, but it was too late. All of her magic was

**TOP KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS**

use magic at night and it was already 8:30 a.m.! She quickly used her magic to get in the dream catcher, but it was too late. All of her magic was gone. She started panicking....could she wait to get her magic back but she would never get it because a unicorn has to charge up their magic at Uniland and they only have 6 hours to use it before they need to go back to get charged up again.

All of a sudden she remembered what they told her in school that if this ever happens you need to get the girl's or boy's attention so they can get you in the dream catcher and they can bring you to the Uniland. Lovely knew what she had to do, she got on top of Simantha's nightstand and yelled "Simantha, Simantha!" Lovely got Simantha's attention and got Simantha to shrink to her size and they went thru the dream catcher portal to see a beautiful galaxy with stars and cats and love. They saw all kinds of different planets, Lovely and Simantha became very good friends and at last they saw Uniland! Lovely told Simantha it was Uniland and they went in and saw cotton candy and gingerbread homes and so many unicorns. Lovely thanked Simantha for all her help. But there was one more problem - how to get Simantha home? Once Lovely got charged with magic she took Simantha home and Lovely and Simantha became the best of friends. After that day they have hangouts, sleepovers and Simantha started to help Lovely make other peoples dreams happy too.

The End.



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**ALINA, 12**

IL  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

## ~River Song~

Dreams through reality

Snake-like mirrors

Life blooming through it like a flower

Graceful elegant tides carrying you through the reflection

Ancient stones lined like a library

Ice streaming through sunlit currents

Voices consumed in the river song

Memories. Soft, cold, smooth

stories. Laughter. Games. Tucked away in the midst of the water.

History.

Motion.

Life.

All in the river's song.



**LIAM, 14**

NY  
Columbia High

Teacher: Mrs.  
Cirinclione

I would like to  
thank my Dad.

## Sounds

Fuzz  
Static  
Muffled

It's as if what you hear is blurry.

Sometimes I wonder if we all hear the same sounds.

What if what I hear is completely different from what  
somewhat else hears?

What if that's why it's so hard to learn?

What if our brains are so different from each other that  
something as simple as sounds can be easy for some people  
but others have a hard time?

Sounds.

If you think about it, they are all just waves and vibrations  
in the air, so we can hear all these different things, but  
what are they really?

Sometimes I go days and weeks without any problems,  
but other times, although I can hear; it just doesn't click.

Some days I sit there staring off into space, not because  
I'm distracted, but because I'm trying to make sense of all  
the sounds in the room.

What sounds do animals hear?

Do animals have things like ADHD, dyslexia or APD?  
Sometimes I wonder how complicated sounds can really be.

**DYSLEXIC MIND STRENGTHS**

**MATERIAL REASONING**  
SPATIAL THINKING • VISUAL THINKING • NAVIGATION

**INTERCONNECTED REASONING**  
INTERCONNECTED THINKING • PATTERN DETECTION • BIG PICTURE

**NARRATIVE REASONING**  
STORY TELLER • PERSONAL MEMORY • SCENE CREATION

**DYNAMIC REASONING**  
GOAL DIRECTED • FUTURE PREDICTION • COMPLEX SYSTEMS

**Material Reasoning:** If you have Material Reasoning skills you excel at 3-dimensional spatial reasoning and can visualize objects and places, manipulating them in your mind.

**Interconnected Reasoning:** If you have Interconnected Reasoning skills, you think, remember, and express your ideas in stories.

**Narrative Reasoning:** If you have Narrative Reasoning skills, you think, remember, and express your ideas in stories.

**Dynamic Reasoning:** If you have Dynamic Reasoning skills, you are good at mental simulation and predicting future events. You thrive in complex, ever-changing environments.

**DYSLEXIC MINDSTRENGTHS**

**INTERCONNECTED REASONING**  
BIG PICTURE • PATTERN DETECTION  
INTERCONNECTED THINKING

**MATERIAL REASONING**  
SPATIAL & VISUAL THINKING  
NAVIGATION

**NARRATIVE REASONING**  
STORY TELLER • PERSONAL MEMORY  
SCENE CREATION

**DYNAMIC REASONING**  
GOAL DIRECTED • COMPLEX SYSTEMS  
FUTURE PREDICTION

**Interconnected Reasoning:** If you have Interconnected Reasoning skills you are good at spotting the connections between different ideas, objects and points of view.

**Material Reasoning:** If you have Material Reasoning skills you excel at 3-dimensional spatial reasoning and can visualize objects and places, manipulating them in your mind.

**Narrative Reasoning:** If you have Narrative Reasoning skills, you think, remember, and express your ideas in stories.

**Dynamic Reasoning:** If you have Dynamic Reasoning skills, you are good at mental simulation and predicting future events. You thrive in complex, ever-changing environments.

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**PENELOPE, 14**

WA

University Prep  
Teacher: Shannon  
Salverda

I would like to  
thank friends.

## The Dragon in Me

I may look a little different  
And maybe I am  
But certainly if anyone can learn how to read  
Surely I can

I've practiced everyday  
The words now pile  
I'm ready to go to school  
I'm fully beguiled

I walk into the classroom  
Knocking over papers and books  
They flip the page  
I can't make myself look

Do not feel bad for me  
I am just different  
Should I be pitied  
Or should I be magnificent

My tail  
It flips and it flaps  
I cannot sit still  
Maybe I should tape it down perhaps

The students are so peaceful  
While I am there  
I can smell the rumors  
Lingering in the air

They take the elevator  
I take the stairs  
I do not need pity  
Your views are different than mine when compared

meet new people  
The paintings all shimmer  
Your elevator music is cool  
But I am different than him or her

Different  
Meaning not better or bad  
Simply different  
So there is no need to be sad

# TOP KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

I fear that I cannot stay here  
 But I just love to read  
 I am afraid of me  
 Such a troubled little dragon indeed

I may look big  
 Hitting the ceiling  
 But I feel so small  
 With all my feelings

Should I be emotional  
 Or like the other, all tough  
 I cannot hide who I am  
 No one believes my bluff

Feared but hidden  
 Hidden until the light  
 Is shown through the rumors  
 For nothing but a fight

I can appreciate my climb  
 One step then the other  
 You got there before me  
 But I understand the colors

My colors are vibrant  
 Yours are shades of gray  
 To diminish me  
 Is to put you on display

To be studied  
 And covered  
 I may be mythical  
 But I am not like the others

They say I take up  
 Too much space  
 Mentally challenged  
 Is just a disgrace

The books I ruined  
 Sit and burn  
 The fire I breathe  
 Cannot learn

Learn to be hidden  
 Just sit in the corner  
 At least until my body is taken  
 By the coroner

I am powerful  
 In a way  
 Territorial  
 And never put away

Powerful enough  
 For my voice to be heard  
 I will say these rhymes  
 Until I find my herd

And Oh how hard it is to be different  
 Condemned to be mentally limping  
 Practice can help  
 But always slipping

Nevertheless  
 I am here to tell you  
 That not only the outside can be seen  
 But the inside too

Being a dragon is cool  
 I guess  
 I breathe fire on enemies  
 But no one ever talks about the mental mess

The dragon in Me  
 Figuratively  
 Grows with passion  
 Stops me from being anything

I fear my presence is disrupting  
 I am a distraction  
 I will take my leave here  
 Not to cause any dissatisfaction





**ADDISON, 15**

NC  
South Mecklenburg  
High

Teacher: Elizabeth  
Kennedy

I would like to thank my parents for finding me help when I was struggling the most with my dyslexia, and my tutor Jennie Creason for teaching me how to read and write. Also my dog who I wrote this poem about.

## Silas Elegy

You used to be so alive  
Full of happiness and joy  
What happened?  
I don't know how to live without you  
You've been a constant in my life  
I don't remember you not being there Licking away my  
tears when I would cry  
The way you would come running when you heard the  
door open  
And curl up in a little ball next to me when you were  
cold  
You would get scared of everything  
I'm gonna miss your ear piercing bark  
Your awful farts It was all so perfect  
And now you're almost nothing  
Losing so much weight  
You are always shaking  
You aren't eating  
Barely moving  
You're almost gone  
You helped raise me 13 years of you and its still not  
enough  
Please don't leave me



**LILY, 15**

TX  
Prosper High

Teacher: Jessica  
Carr

I would like to shout out to my dyslexia specialist because she changed my life for the better, Thank you Mrs. Gerths.

## Burning: A Dyslexic Poem

Keeping it in my hand makes it burn, it's small at first though the longer it sits the hotter it gets. Wherever I throw the burning yellow ball decides everything. These seconds will decide years of my life. One choice thousands of out comes. No one is telling me what to do now. Maybe they are, though it falls on deaf ears. Maybe the fans are roaring. Maybe everyone is silent. I have one thing in my mind

Make.  
The.  
Out.

Should I throw it first, no that's out of the question. So second, that's even worse. I knew where I was going to throw it before the girl hit it. So where is it? Why do I forget where I need to go right before I have to do it? It's not that this happens often, I'm just scared. Scared that I'll mess up and it will affect me forever. It haunts me even before it has happened.

Home.  
I will throw it home.

It's only 137 feet away, I can do it. I've done it in practice, I've done it in my dreams. This is a dream. This is my dream. The ball burns in my hands as I take the steps forward. All the work I have done pushing myself to the limits has been for this. I can do it. I will do it.

It.  
Will.  
Get.  
There.

My arm flies back reaching toward the fence, before I flick my wrist. I feel the burns cool slowly. And right as it leaves my finger tips, I hope. I hope all the work was worth it. I hope all the money

was worth it. I hope I win. Maybe not the game, but just this play. Though if I mess up that is a game we lose. If I win, everyone else wins.

Please.  
Say.  
The.  
Work.  
Was.  
For.  
Something.

The burning ball of yellow flies like the sparrows in the clear sky. I feel a drop of sweat fall from my cheek down my chin, as if it were a tear. I blink if only for a second. I never want to open my eyes. Never to know if I failed. If I had failed, everything I did was wasted. Memories with friends never to have been, just for me to have failed. If I don't make it I'm worthless. Then I hear it, something that I can finally hear. Something so calming and wonderful, so angelic. Its the feels like the voices of an angels choir. The snap of a glove. My eyes flicker to light. Now I can see the girl she thought she could succeed against me. Though in my heart I know she is going through the same thing. Though I guess I wanted it more.

I.  
Know.  
I.  
Wanted.  
It.  
MORE.

She never even touched the plate. This girl never had a chance. In this game there is no way where everyone wins. 'Cause in this game of softball you have to want it more to win. And I will win.

One.  
Play.  
At.  
A.  
Time.



**ANNIKA, 16**

WI  
Laurel High

Teacher: Renee  
Baker

I would like to  
thank my teacher,  
Dawn Philbin--she  
saw my  
strengths when  
others only saw  
weaknesses

## Holiday Scents Haiku

### Frasier Fir

Christmas trees only  
smell fragrant in the holy  
space of sky and air.

### Gingerbread

Root, bark, seed, and pod:  
Why do you leave field and tree  
chasing cookie dreams?

### Peppermint Extract

Fresh air and sunshine  
bottled to save for a dark  
day requiring joy.

### Frankincense & Myrrh

Ancient forests smell  
like church. My soul serenely  
soars, embraces ground.

### Frankincense & Myrrh, part 2

Who brings embalming  
resins from far-flung lands, gifts  
for an infant king?

### Macabees, or Beeswax

You braved life and wing  
to keep the flame alight in  
dark and troubled times.



**JACK, 16**

CO  
Fort Collins High

Teacher: Jason  
Cunningham

I would like to  
thank my mom.

## Head Space

nothing  
but everything  
like if you zoom  
out on the universe  
you see nothing  
but there is everything

even when there is darkness  
there is light  
they come together in a pair  
there is hope around every despair

*“Summit Center helped  
me find out I am both  
dyslexic -- and smart.  
I just think differently.  
Now I like school, and  
I have the tools I need  
to succeed.”*

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**LUCy, 16**

WA  
Garfield High

Teacher: Tyson  
Koyano

## Start Here

easy not It's  
backward reading  
.forward reading is everyone when  
fun not It's  
interpret to have to  
.code from everything



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**ABIGAIL, 17**

IL  
Homeschool

Teacher: Jason  
Cunningham

I  
would like to acknow-  
ledg  
e my friend Joey,  
who inspired this s-  
tory.

## I Laugh Like Me Again

Dear Mama,

Rose encouraged me to write you a letter to help with the loss, and I agreed. It's been a few months since I returned from war. The air is so different here. It reminds me of the many springs we shared as a family, the flowers bursting to color around us. During the dark hours that I rest, I can hear the notes of your presence echoing inside my head, singing sweet music at all hours. I hear this simple melody whenever I think of you.

Some nights I awake to vivid dreams where I can taste the blood that invades my senses on the battlefield. Oddly in my dreams, it tastes sweet, like cherry wine. I must tell my heart to be still when I wake in the dead of night, the quiet melody escaping me. Rose and Bonnie struggle most nights and are there to sit with me, their own melodies adding to your simple notes. I can tell they burn with their own misery over your absence. My heart aches at the very thought of you and the weather changes behind my eyes, raining down my cheeks. At times, I still hear your voice's sweet music playing in the darkness of me. It gives me peace, a sort of tranquility you only find in lullabies.

The war was messy, leaving ugly scars on those of us caught in its brutal embrace. My siblings have the clean edges of those that had their mother's hugs instead of war's merciless grip. I wish you were here to tell me who I need to be, to give me your clean edges to start again. The others have sanded the worst of me to the point that Phillip thinks I've gotten some color back. Some days, I think so, too. I finally laugh like me again, because of them.

## TOP KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

Still, without you here I mostly feel like the boy I was, stuck on a train, not knowing where to go. I try to move past my compartment but I hear the calls of those I've seen die, pulling me back to my seat. They stain my heart, a stain I am unsure how to remove. You used to wash away all the stains I made on my clothes when I was young, you are not here to do so anymore.

Bonnie has your smile, I see it when she runs toward me. It breaks across her face like an egg over a bowl. She's still wrapped in colors, choosing to revel in the brightness of childhood. You'd forget that she's seen darkness and hunger in the streets. She saw what war does to people and amazingly she still smiles. But on occasion, her anger gets the best of her, it's hard and fast, and she resorts to an open hand or closed fist to resolve it. I don't fault her for that, she's still learning to breathe when confronted with the sister emotions of anger and ignorance.

Phillip is the opposite. He keeps to himself, head in a book on most days, an ever-present journal next to him so he can write down the lines that ignite his imagination. He's very smart, Mama. I bet that he will get into a fancy University when he's older. It saddens us that you will miss it, maybe I will as well. I don't know if the battle will catch up with me by then. Phillip needs reassurance that I'm not still stuck in the mud in no man's land most nights. Sometimes, I too need reminding that the mud on my boots is just from the change of weather.

Rose has become you, mothering us and whatnot. I guess it's her way of holding onto you, and us. She's weighted, her shoulders not built like atlas's. We've had a few rows over the months, mostly over silly things like interrupting the pattern of care she's created in my absence. Usually, our arguments end with her asleep in an armchair and me in the kitchen shouldering her burden. I see you in her the most, taking on the world's burdens. I miss you, Mama. With My Love, James



**CARLY, 17**

NH

Proctor Academy

## Euphoria

Euphoria.  
 A place of serenity,  
 The atmosphere shines bright  
 A place that will last forever,  
 Scintillating glimmers of light

But the truest form of hope  
 Is a manipulation of the mind.  
 Like the patter of two feet  
 That jumped up and learned to fly.  
 Euphoria is where reality goes to die.

A world thick with joy,  
 Viscous and swirling  
 It's a noxious gas, that tastes so sweet  
 As it wraps its fingers round your mind

Surrounding you it suffocates  
 You're blinded by a lie,



**ANNIKA, 11**

UT  
Trailside  
Elementary

Teacher: Krepela

## Moose Encounter

I look at the clock. 10 minutes left of school. I can't wait to get home to go mushing with the dogs. I look down at my paper-15 questions left. If I don't finish, I'll have homework and I'll have less time to mush. I need to hurry. School is not my strong side if you couldn't tell. It takes me hours to write a few paragraphs. Wait, what is  $4 \times 15$ -well let's see  $4 \times 5$  is 20 so  $4 \times 15$  is 120. "OK class. Time to pack up," Miss Litten said. I grab my bag realizing I still have 10 questions. Two minutes till the bell rings. I'll just ask Alexa to answer my questions when I get home. The bell rings. I run to the bus hoping to get the back seat. I'll have to be fast to get there. Yes! I got the backseat. It's empty so I sit down. Then I see the Meck twins strolling down the aisle. They stop and ask me, "What are you doing in our seat". "It's not yours," I say. They say, "Did you talk back to us. Now you've done it kid". They yank my shirt and drag me to a front seat. "This is your seat now," they yell. Finally, we reach my bus stop. I hop out and run straight to the dog's kennels and harness my eight favorites - Peaches, Charlie, Mountain, Snow, Forest, Bucket, Chicken, and Fish. After I hook them on the game line I yell, "hike" which means go. Then I remember homework. So we climb the mountain stopping at a table. I do some homework and head back out again. When we reach flat ground I see moose tracks in the snow.

Moose are a musher's worst enemy. I told the dogs "On by" to keep them going. I thought we cleared the moose footprints, until I see a big fat brown moose with huge antlers in the bushes. Before I can think the moose charges us. I fear being killed. I tell myself it is all going to be all right just outrun the moose. I yell "hike up" so the dogs go faster to escape trouble. The moose is charging and

grumbling loudly. I feel scared and anxious. "This is bad," I tell myself. My dogs whine telling me they are frightened too. We keep running miles as the moose chases with loud stomping feet! I zigzag the sled hoping to escape. He is too fast. My head is lost. I'm shaking and trembling. I need help but I have no hope. We need to go faster but the team is tired. This might be the end for me and my dogs. The moose is barely four feet away from us then is on the back of the sled. I'm barely holding on and then I fall. This is the last of me. I say to myself "goodbye world it was fun knowing ya." Right when the moose is about to trample me I see a large rock falling our way. Distracted the moose moves back. I jump on the sled and bolt away. "We did it," I yell, but going downhill I realize we are lost. My phone has no signal. "Help! I yell." No one comes. We keep moving for miles-still no one. Later I check my phone - a signal! I call my parents and tell them I am near Road 57. While waiting, I told my dogs how well they did today. Happy to see the truck, the dogs loaded. Home was a welcome sight.

But I still had homework. My parents were watching so no Alexa, My brother was playing video games. All was normal again. I don't ever wanna get lost again. And I especially don't ever wanna encounter a moose again.

FYI: This may not be entirely true.



**ARI, 11**

VA  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

## **Ode to the Banana**

Banana, you can take me anywhere in the world.

I like to eat you every day.

Your crescent shape is like the dog in the hot dog and a sausage.

You are yellow like any type of eggs, all lemons, and French Toast.

Sadly, the brown part on you tastes like disgusting mud.



**TATE, 13**

IA  
Johnston Middle

Teacher: Sarah  
Bertog

I would like to  
thank my teacher,  
Laura Olson

## **Intro to lake life**

As we glide across the water in the boat  
 you can see the wave it leaves in the wake.  
 you see the light glinting on the water  
 and seeing the still of the water reflecting it.  
 As you turn the key of the boat the engine ruining the quiet  
 As the boat fly's through the water you feel a high as if  
 you're on top of the world  
 The air running through your hair, the power behind the  
 wheel  
 But as you approach your final destination the high falls  
 You no longer have any high, the power fades  
 But once again the still in the water, the light reflecting off  
 the water returns giving the once again calming feeling.



**ADELYN, 14**

IA  
Center Point  
Urbana

Teacher: Mr. Arends

## Where I am From

I am from the home where there is always a soccer ball in sight, dishes in the sink even though they were done 20 minutes ago, sports bags scattered throughout the kitchen, and a full size cleat rack in the garage.

I am from a home where there is a soccer rebounder in the backyard, a basketball hoop in the front, and using old chewed up dog toys as defenders. The home that loves the smell of freshly cut grass, the home that has four crazy kids and an even crazier dog who is always chasing cars behind the tree we named Charlie.

I am from the neighborhood where everyone knows everyone. The home a mile and a half away from Casey's, and across the street from Bruce's old blue Ford pickup. I am from Theodore and Charlotte Schutt, DeLoye and Beula Thompson, Chuck and Evelyn Jones and Carl and Agnes Boyd.

I am from and raised on the quotes "no hugging in the pickle aisle, the second one always gets caught, just be grateful you have the opportunity to Live Today, you will never find a man as good as me (Grandpa Bill), live life to the fullest, you know your friends will change but your family never will, everyone could use a little more Jesus, what made you smile today," and lots and lots of "I love you".

I am from the family that always brings the jello to the family gatherings, always has at least two boxes of the same cereal open, three different types of milk, seven different pasta noodles, 7 cheeses, 4 butters and have mastered 5 main meals.

I am from memories and boxes, baby books, and lots and lots of pictures.

That is where I am from.



**LIAM, 18**

NJ  
Chatham High

Mrs. Leshiewski (Tutor)

I would like to  
thank

Mrs. Leshiewski - F-  
or helping me  
find my voice

## Seeds Of Freedom

Storm clouds gather in the North  
A hurricane approaches from the East  
In the middle, a flag of sky blue over gold  
Stands stiff in the wind, full of resolve

The world's lens focuses on the steppes  
Telling a story that shows trauma like a play  
Or a show released in daily episodes  
Humanity witnesses a flag  
Blue and gold atop a building reduced to rubble

Smoke rises over a blue sky  
Underlined by a sea of suns  
Flowers hold the seeds of freedom

This land was once fertile  
Feeding the world  
Fields once golden, lay unplowed  
Above the smoke, blue skies hide

Wrapped by an old woman,  
in cloth of blue and gold  
Tomorrow's seeds of freedom  
Lay, waiting to triumph  
In a dead soldier's pocket

Frozen in time  
The golden ferris wheel motionless  
The ground is poisoned  
The blue sky turned gray  
But the troops still dig in  
Those who don't are killed

## HIGH HONORS KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

Less than 100 miles away  
The citizens dig in  
Burying the dead that they can  
But there are too many

Gold armbands and blue helmets  
The defending army is not the target  
Not the ones who fight back  
But all the civilians were killed

Failure claimed as success  
By a Godless Soviet oppressor  
It all went to plan  
New generals arrive  
While Russia's mothers pray for their  
sons' return  
The flag still stands strong

Posted at a crossroads  
On the other side of the world  
Scrawled on wood  
In blue and gold, a message  
A good man sighs, a child dies

Donations flood in  
Yellow coats, blue shoes, warm soup  
A soup can won't stop a bullet

The seed sprouts  
A single golden sunflower  
Rising from the ashes and rubble  
Ready to prosper again

The man in the green shirt  
Stands in front of the nation's flag  
Asking the world for Justice  
When good men do nothing  
Neutrality favors the oppressors  
At the center of the Universe  
We must take sides



**HENRYK, 7**

VA  
Moorefield Station  
Elementary

## James and His Dragon

Once, there was a little boy named James. He was walking in the woods, then he saw a dragon. He was freaked out. The dragon said, "Come on my back."

James was like, "Why?"

"Cuz I want to be your friend," the dragon said.

James said, "Fine." The dragon flew him home.

James asked his dad, "May I have this dragon as a pet?"

The dragon blew fire and had green eyes.

James went to go tell his friends he has a dragon. But he was not afraid, because his friends had a dragon, too. He asked his friends, "do you want to take our dragons for a race?"

They raced and he won.

Then he and the dragon went home, then went to bed. The next morning, he and his dad went to the store to get meat to feed his dragon. His dragon was asleep so he left it there for his dragon to eat when he woke up. James walked back inside and told his mom, "I'm ready for lunch now." He ate kielbasa and ate some old cookies from his birthday and then he went to go and check if his dragon was awake. The dragon was already eating. And then he went back inside and waited for his dragon to be finished and then take the bowl. Then his dragon took him to school. He did his math work and his morning work and Science and PE, and all his things that he had to do at school.

Then his dragon took him home. He played with his dragon. His dragon blew fire at rocks for him. He loved his dragon. Then he went back inside and ate dinner and went to bed.

The next morning it was a home day, no school. He went to go and feed his Dragon, then he went to go and eat his breakfast like every morning he's told to do. This time the dragon was awake so he fed the dragon food then he went inside and got his food. Then they went to go and play together.

More dragons came then they started to fight. James dragon was about to get hurt but he didn't get hurt. He was still fighting, because he was fighting for his life. He was so mad, he roared so loud!

Then James ran inside his house and told his mom, "My dragon is waiting outside." And then James' whole family went on the dragon and then the dragon flew them away to a safe place. Then the dragon flew all the way back and went to protect James' home. Then when the family was at the other house, James found something on the floor. It was dark in the house, but he could see it was a piece of an old dragon. But they didn't know what kind of piece.

His mom and dad were right next to him. Then the dragon came back and took them home after the battle finished. Then it was very dark and the dragon went to bed with James.

The End



**LAITH, 7**

Level Creek  
Elementary

Teacher: Amy Norris

I would like to  
thank my mom.

## **Bully Taco**

"Man, do I have a story to tell." One day at Taco Bell there was a super rude bully taco. He was ruder than the spiciest taco ever. And then there was a super nice taco. He was so nice that he cheered everyone up and when he came around everyone got a big smile on their face.

The nice taco was walking with his friend the cheese quesadilla and then the super rude taco came up and started picking away at the nice taco's shell. The nice taco said "please stop!" The bully taco didn't listen. No one did anything because the bully was so strong and they were so scared. Then a new taco from the back of taco bell who had just been made came in and said "you are being rude to this nice little taco." He went and told the manager that there was a rude bully picking a taco's shell off. Then the manager came and said to the rude taco "Hey, you are going to the serving area because you were picking this nice taco's shell off." Then everybody was happy because the bully taco went to the serving area and he was served to Bob. From that day on everyone stood up for every single taco and the taco bell never let one rude taco bully anybody.

The End

**KENAN, 10**

DC  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

## The Ash Weasel

Well, I was out in the forest in the morning. I came across a shed. I went inside. Then I saw a pile of ash. That pile of ash turned into a weasel. "Is this really an ash weasel?" I asked myself. Yes, it was an ash weasel, because it had a white body and red and black dots on its back. "This is crazy," I thought. "Nobody has seen one of these in centuries. One man said he saw one, but no one believed him. It was real.

These animals have serrated teeth. They can make venom in two seconds. They can choose if they want to poison their prey. They travel in packs. Eagles are afraid of these packs. The ash weasel's neck bone is too strong to break. They also don't die, because they turn to ash and get reborn. Their skin is impenetrable. A 50 cal. will knock them back and get them angry, but do nothing. They prefer the cold but are not picky; they eat everything. One drop of that venom of theirs can kill ten honey badgers. These creatures are very intelligent and are calm but when angry, vicious.

Right then it ran away. I followed it. It went to its pack and they played a lot. Then I became good friends with the pack and helped when needed. All this time they were on my property!

They became my pets, pretty much. We were so close. I started to explore these very smart creatures. I taught them how to read and write and they taught me their language—reading and writing. Their language is squeaks and motions. One of them became my personal pet. This one's tail was different. Instead of it having a white tail with a black tip, it has a red tip and can teleport and jump five feet and can burrow crazy fast, like a ten-foot tunnel in three minutes.

The reason I got this creature is someone was torturing the leader and I helped him, so he gave this great weasel as a gift. He is so nice and calm. We go everywhere with each other. We are best friends and I meet the pack each week. They also have a cave that I helped them build. My weasel is named Frostbite. We will never leave each other behind. We are like a family that likes each other and gets along well.

These weasels have branched off from sea otters. They play a lot, swim a lot, and are friendly. But do not get on their bad side. They have a great memory. If you are bad to them and if they get your scent, and if you come back they will kill you if you get too close to them. They are also great at sneak attacks on mice, rats, rabbits, and other rodents who are on their dinner menus. Their bones are incredible. They can heal wounds in seconds because their bones create ten times our white, red, and blue blood cells. Their bones are like bird bones. They are hollow but have a fluid inside that makes blood cells in seconds. They have the IQ of humans and two hearts. That's incredible! Compare the ash weasel to a human and they have the strength to carry nine times their weight and they just weigh five pounds. They can carry 45 pounds.

That means these ash weasels are like superheroes almost. So my pet is pretty much a super animal. DANGER! Do not try to do scientific tests on an ash weasel. It will kill you. Do not touch their mouth. They do not like that. Do not search for these creatures.

Love, Kenan and the weasels.



**PATRICK, 10**

MD  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

I would like to  
thank my teacher,  
Amy Young.

## THE LOST CROWN OF PEEPTOPIA

### PROLOGUE

The year was 922 and the Kingdom of Peeps Ville had just been founded over a month earlier. The forging of a crown was decided, the crown of the king of this new land. For a few hundred years the kingdom thrived but then they realized they weren't the only island in the sea. The start of colonization began. The Kingdom of Peeps Ville became the Peeptopian Empire. The emperor of this great empire was very happy with his crown and the crown was happy to be on his head and to be the most valuable item in the empire.

The empire continued expanding its borders. All was happy until they found the Bigs. The year was 1647 and the Bigs declared war. The Bigs were more technologically advanced. They had rifles, cannons and so on. The Peeps did not stand a chance.

They tried to negotiate but nothing worked. Within a week the Peeptopian Empire was nothing but conquered. All of its colonies still stood strong, but with no emperor they decided to become their own countries. They were never as powerful as they used to be. The Peeps eventually moved to a different planet. The crown, falling into mystery, had its own journey. The date was January 11th 1648 (3 weeks after the Bigs had declared war). The Bigs had landed on the shores of Peeptopia one day earlier, but they were already at the capital. A siege that lasted only 3 days started. On the first day the Peeps held the walls strong but on the second day the Bigs broke through. The Peeps retreated to the keep, but all hope was lost. On the third day the emperor of the Peeptopian Emperor stood his ground and stood in front of the doors of the throne room. Peeps were holding down the door. Bigs were banging against them. Eventually the Bigs



broke through, charging. The emperor struck down 3 and yelled fire! The boom of gun fire started. For a moment they werewinning. He picked up a dagger from a fallen Peep but he was killed by a Big officer and was never seen again. The crown fell to the floor banging as it hit it. The officer who had killed the king put down his sword and picked up the crown and yelled VICTORY! The empire was forever lost to the blackness of history.

## ONE

The crown woke up with a jolt. First he wondered where he was. Then he remembered. The battle. The loss of the emperor. The downfall of an empire. Then he realized he had stopped moving. A Big opened up the chest that he was in. Then the crown saw its surroundings for the first time in days. It was different than he used to remember it. It was the port of Peeptopia. A ship was near the shore. The crown was brought onto the ship. The ship was named the Night Owl. It was a small fast looking ship. The ship was powered by a steam engine. Within the hour they were at sea. The crown was placed in the hold. The crown lay in the hold for days. One day the crown woke up as a wave crashed against the ship. He heard calls of alarm, then the boom of cannons. He looked through a small slit in the wood that he had discovered days ago. Then he saw a ship flying the emperor's flag. It was firing on the Night Owl! The Night Owl's crew pulled up some cannons from the hold and fired them. A battle had started. The Night Owl was faced by three more ships. In the end the Peeps sank the Night Owl. Into the deep he fell. He could still hear the booms of gunfire firing at The Bigs' lifeboats. He could still hear the reports and cracks of the rifle fire from The Lifeboats. Then, after hours of slowly sinking, it stopped...

He was woken by a fish poking at him. This is what happened for the next few hundred years until a submersible found him...

## Lost

Hi, my name is Winter. I am a gray, but mostly white cat with navy eyes. 2 years ago, today I was in my first house, small, blue, navy door, and on a farm. What I used to do was Purr on the pillow, pounce on the mice, and I snuggle on Fred and Crystal's lap (my owners.) Then On Christmas day they got a dog, a big dog with lots of black velvety fur, and his name was Mr. Pumpernickel. In the beginning I gave him a chance but he made it so hard I tried and tried to be nice but still e hated me. And what he did to me was steal the attention, wrecked the house and even blamed it on me.

### ZOE, 10

WA  
John Stanford  
International  
School

Teacher: Mr.  
Weinreib

I would like to thank Mr. W for helping me to be the best writer that I can be and my mom for trying to get me in this competition.

The next day they had to choose me or him and guess who they chose? Mr. Pumpernickel!

First Fred put me in their big navy truck and they drove about 2-4 hours. Next, Fred and I stopped in the middle of a damp and misty forest. Then Fred put me down and shouted, "Go you filthy animal!" So, I ran heartbroken into the unknown forest.

The next day there was a horrible blizzard, and the floor was white in seconds. I tried to find a cozy place to stay but there was none to be found. The blizzard came harder. I fell down because of the hard snow, but then I saw smoke. Smoke meant a fire, and fire meant a home. So, with all my strength I ran to the smoke and I saw a farm. Then I peek through the window but there were 2 dogs barking like crazy at me. I thought 1 was enough.

So, I moved away from the window and behind it I saw a big red barn. with had lots of hay, places to hide, and most of all lots of boxes. This was a lot of fun I thought, but dogs kept on barking, and the humans were getting annoyed. So, they followed the dogs and found me. I thought they were going to take me in.

But instead, they left and I heard a click and then a sizzle. I was getting worried. I put my ear on the door. When I heard a light voice say "That will do it" it got hotter and hotter in the barn. I moved back and the next thing I knew the door was on fire. I am going to survive, will survive, if I don't survive, I want to be with my family in heaven I thought with bravery, fear, and love. I ran to the window but it was locked. They locked every exit. I found a crack. I dug as fast as I could and I still didn't give up. Then a rock knocked on me out. I think I was knocked out for 1-2 hours. I don't really know.

I woke up in a black car on a leather seat. There was a person and she said in a firm voice "oh, good your awake, are you ok"

"I'm fine," I hissed

"You sure," she said in sorrow

"How can you understand me," I meow

"Oh, I can speak cat," she giggled

"Ok," I said in an awkward voice "you're not going to abandon me, are you?"

"No, I'm bringing you home,"

"To who,"

"To me, silly and I always wanted a cat. Is that ok? By the way my name is Becky, what's yours?"

"Winter"

"What a wonderful name for this time of year!"

I wonder if she knows Spanish I wonder

"¿Tu sabe español?"

"Si mis padres son de México"

"Yo Tambien" I said in excitement

"We're here, and we better go be for my daughters come they are not the best with cats" Becky said

I was so excited.

So that is my story of how I met Becky, and now I love my life.

Love

-Winter



**BARRETT, 11**

CA  
Homeschool

## Bacon!

Hmm, I want some bacon, the Wolf thought to himself. Good thing I have a postal service. It's called WPS (Wolf Postal Service). I heard the pig at the straw house bought some oink shampoo, so instead of giving it to him I will have some fun. Knock Knock Knock. "It's the WPS guy!"

"Is that my shampoo?" said the pig.

"Yes, and it's right here," the Wolf answered before snatching the pig in his teeth. "NOM NOM NOM!!! I want more bacon."

The next house is downtown, but I can take a detour to the twig house, the Wolf plotted. I'll use the same plan as before, just instead of oink shampoo, it's the new book series "Tales of the Lost Pig." Knock Knock Knock. "It's th..."

"Who's There?" said the lady pig.

"It's the WPS man!"

"Do you have the new book series I ordered from the author William Piggington the 3rd?"

"Yes, it's waiting here." Then, before the pig could grab the package, the Wolf yelled, "NOM NOM NOM!!! MORE BACON!!!" I'm going to have to read these books myself!

Anyways, to the brick house! Knock Knock Knock Knock. "It's the WPS guy. Umm hello. Anybody home?"

Meanwhile, the last pig was at the store getting some vegan ham. Eventually, the pig did come home, but by then, the Wolf was asleep. The pig quietly retrieved his package, and went inside his house. When the Wolf woke up, he saw the pig in the garden, and he pounced. He had never had this bacon before, and honestly, it tasted a little funky. What he didn't notice as he chowed down, was that the pig was looking through the window at him eating the vegan ham. The pig laughed to himself and went on to live a happy life.



**KAM, 11**

IA  
Woodbine  
Community

Teacher: Katie Blum

## The Colorful Soccer Game

I saw the ball coming towards me, the soccer game was tied! I had to stop the ball so the other team wouldn't score. I kicked the ball down the field. My friend, Kyle, got the ball and he passed it to Bob. Bob lined the ball up and kicked it. He scored a goal! Tigers win!

My name is Cameron. I am 11 years old and I love soccer. I love video games. I love sports and I love to eat sushi. What I don't love is the bullies at my school, especially, Jayden. I forgot to mention that I am a chameleon. A chameleon who can't change his colors. That is why I get made fun of by Jayden.

I have tried everything to get my colors to change. I've tried soaking in blue gatorade. I've tried coloring myself in sharpie markers. Paint, hair dye, bath bombs....I've tried it all. I even Googled how to change my colors. Google said to be patient and it will happen when you least expect it. Are 11 year olds patient??? I think not!

One day a new kid came to school. His name was Gerald. He is a chameleon like me. He can change to all the colors, but he is terrible at sports. We have a big soccer match coming up and we need one more player to play. I asked Gerald if he would save our game and he said yes. Gerald is such a nice kid and we have been practicing to make sure he is ready for the big game.

Jayden keeps making fun of Gerald. But Gerald is really trying hard. Every time Jayden misses the ball or makes a mistake, Jayden teases him.

It's the day of the big game. Gerald is as ready as he will ever be. The team plays well, but in the end it all comes down to one play. The team just can;t get it together, We lose by one point. After the game, Jayden really starts blaming our loss all on Gerald. I just can;t take it anymore, it's time to stand up for myself and for Gerald! I get so mad, I don't even realize that I am turning BLUE! GREEN! RED! PURPLE! All the colors. As I stand up for myself and my friend, my colors just start coming out. It was when I least expected it and it feels good. It wasn't a winning soccer game, but it sure was colorful.

**OLIVER, 11**

CO  
Denver Academy

Teacher: Ms. Sallie  
Mesker

I would like to  
thank my mom.

## Roll of the Dice

Panic rises in me. Something's been following me for weeks. I start to jostle through the streets. I only caught a brief glimpse of what I thought was the monster while it was pushing past some teenagers in front of a haunted house. I've seen it before. The closer it gets to Halloween, the more substantial it looks. It has huge spikes, fangs, and talons. I see it out of the corner of my eye. It was enormous—almost 7 feet tall. It senses me and starts thrusting through the crowd and moves towards me, with the single-mindedness and inevitability of death. I can hear the monster's gravelly, raspy breath and the sound of its voice. It sounds like a human's voice. I turned around and a different figure with a werewolf costume is behind me. The werewolf looks at the monster and exclaims, "Oh, that's an awesome costume! Where can I get one?" The monster makes a slow growl. In my mind, I yell at him, Get out of the way, Stupid! but I am too terrified to speak up. "That's an awesome costume, but I need to get back to my group," the werewolf said.

A rough hand on my shoulder steers me into the alley, and I suddenly realize the monster caught up with me. I can feel his warm, moist, fetid breath on my neck. It smells like rotten eggs, a bit like the trashcan beside me. I'm pretty sure you can guess my heart was beating at a double rate and my hands were shaking and cold and clammy. I felt the rush of blood in my ears and adrenaline coursing through my veins. I know you're probably thinking, "Oh, I would be so much braver than you." I know you would actually be terrified. The monster had 100 spikes and five crimson



holes on each side of its face, like the color of a fresh scab. I'm assuming those were its ears but they looked more like pockmarks. It had huge mandibles as big as my hands. It had holes in the tips of its mandibles that acted like a straw to suck food. It must have had to smash the food before inhaling it. I saw most of this two weeks ago while the monster was hunting and I was hiding behind a tree. The monster had glassy red eyes with no pupils. It had a flabby neck that could twist all the way around in an instant. It would give me nightmares for the rest of my life, at least as long as I lived it.

The shell around the monster must have weighed 100 pounds. It went from light blue to dark blue then to purple and gray. It was ash gray like a leftover fire when it all burns out. There were eight legs in four sections of its body, plus a head in front. Its tendons acted like a spring winding up and moving its legs, propelling it forward in incredibly fast bursts of movement. It shoots spikes from its body with deadly accuracy. I'm guessing there must be some sort of pressure because it was instantly shooting out spikes. Once, when I saw it hunting, it would shoot its giant spikes at the prey. The spikes must have been poisoned because as soon as they hit the prey, it fell over thrashing.

He growled and I snapped back into the present.

The gravelly voice said, "Let me explain, I come from under the crust."

"Which crust?" I said. "So where do you live? Under the Earth?"

"In the magma," he said. "We live in the earth's magma. We use a special type of poison to harden a magma shell around our village. It's a lengthy process, but it keeps us cool and safe from the molten metal. That's how we build our homes and villages. But because of YOU we don't have many homes and villages left," he snarled with a hint of disdain.

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**KAIA, 12**

WY  
Homeschool

I would like to acknowledge my mom and dad for homeschooling me.

## Day in the Life by Queen Elizabeth (The cat)

I wake up and sit at the window to watch the birds. Wouldn't it be just delicious to eat one of those feathery kamikazes? They are the ultimate aggravation!

The sun rises and spills warm yellow light over the grass. Sometimes a bird will land on the window sill just to tease me! Once I'm done watching the colorful snacks, I jump onto my human's bed and sit on their heads. Some mornings they push me off and roll over, some mornings they quickly sit up and yell that they're late for something or other, and some mornings they don't even wake up. It's entertaining to figure out what they'll do that day.

Then I jump off the bed and walk to my food bowl. I mew, saying, "feed me already". They're sooooooooooooo slow, they wouldn't survive a day in the wild. Once they finally feed me I go to my bed and lie down. It's already been such a long day. Getting your humans to do what you want is hard work.

Once I am well rested again I go downstairs and try and find something interesting to do while the humans sit and make clicky sounds on their little boxes. Sometimes I chase the dog around, he's very annoying and barks a lot. Sometimes I go over and sit on their clicky box, that usually makes them pick me up and pet me. Sometimes I even climb the drapes and slide down again. They make a really satisfying ripping sound but the humans always get mad and pull me off. After that I usually go back to bed for a few hours. As I drift off to sleep again, I watch dust spin lazily in the air, like a little galaxy.

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**Michelle Lucas, M.Ed., AT**



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## HONORS KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

When I wake up I usually have to go to the litter box. Humans don't use litter boxes, instead they do their business on shiny white thrones that make swoooooosh sounds. Why do they poop on the furniture? It's disgusting (one of the great mysteries of life).

After my nap and my trip to the litter box I usually smell around and see if I can find any little fuzzy intruders! If I do catch one I bring it to the humans or leave it somewhere for them to find. Humans are terrible at catching food so I leave the intruders for them to eat. But for some reason they never do. Humans also seem to think intruders are called "mice". It's very intriguing how humans come up with all sorts of wrong names for things.

Once the humans stop making clicky sounds on their boxes they sit at a big wooden table and eat strange smelling platters that don't have any fur or feathers in sight. After that they sit around and chatter like little birds. I can usually get them to pet me at this point, sometimes I don't think they even notice they're doing it. Finally they crawl into their oversized human beds. They roll around so much they need the extra space. Then, I choose somewhere to sleep, usually I burrow under the blankets with them but sometimes I sleep under the bed instead and get some rest so I can repeat the same process again the next day.

That concludes my very long day of getting humans to do what I want and trying to understand their weird customs and habits.

Great mysteries of life:

- 1) Why do humans poop on thrones?
- 2) Why do humans get mad when I slide down the drapes?
- 3) Why do humans spend so much time typing on clicky boxes instead of sitting on them?
- 4) Why are birds so annoying?
- 5) Why is the dog so annoying?
- 6) Why do humans walk on two legs?
- 7) Why do humans have deformed paws?
- 8) Why do humans sleep on top of the bed instead of under it.
- 9) Are humans my servants? And if so, why don't they do a better job of it?
- 10) Why are humans that act like cats called queens?



**MAURA, 12**

VA  
Learning to Flourish

Teacher: Katie  
Fowler

I would like to  
thank Ms. Katie.

Maura is a US State Department Foreign Service teen. She has lived in 6 different counties with her family. She lived in Mexico, Canada, the USA, Italy, India, and Canada again. This summer, Maura will be moving to the USA for 1 year before she moves to Brazil.

## Moving away

I'm moving,  
new city, new people,  
trying to make friends all over again,  
leaving my friends,  
boxes labelled with our new address,  
reading all the goodbye letters from friends,  
the emptiness of my room,  
the echo of the house,  
the last sleepover with my friends, packing my suitcase,  
the memories, laughing uncontrollably with friends,  
late nights catching the sunset, early mornings going for a swim,  
the last day,  
the last hug,  
the last night,  
the last swim,  
the last handshake,  
the last time I'm seeing them.



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**STEFAN, 12**

WA  
Homeschool

I would like to  
thank my mom.

## The Samurai and the Dragon

Shima Sokon's arms vibrated from his wrist to his shoulder as his opponent's blade struck his own. "Again!" his master, Hojo Soun, shouted.

Shima, who had been tirelessly training throughout the day, hoped to reach the highest rank of the honorable samurai, the hatamoto. The January snow crunched beneath his feet, chilling him to the bone as he diligently battled master Hojo Soun. Suddenly, an ear splitting cry tore through the sound of clashing swords. Following the samurai code of honor and loyalty, the two men immediately rushed toward the source of the sound.

The two samurai tracked the mysterious wail to the main temple where a serpent like dragon was hovering, restlessly waiting for aid. Below the dragon, people were both running in terror and gaping in awe. Shima Sokon and his master, who were shocked to see the mythical creature in such a public area, cautiously approached the nervous beast. Because the dragon did not appear to be hostile, the two samurai decided to alert the dragon of their presence. She jerked her head in their direction and hastily snaked through the air toward the samurai.

"Honorable samurai, I would be forever grateful if you would aid me in saving my captured baby," the dragon pleaded.

Shima Sokon was inclined to aid the dragon in a rescue; however, Hojo Soun felt hesitant to help, so he decided to stay and calm the terrified people. Shima, who was adept at



riding horses, quickly clambered upon the dragon's scaly back and they took flight. As they rocketed towards the steep mountainside where the baby was being held, the brisk wind nipped at Shima's face and whipped at his hair. When the baby dragon's prison came into view, Shima realized the rescue would be more precarious than he imagined because the cage was hanging from a flimsy branch above massive jagged rocks.

Shima Sokon instructed the mother dragon to hover as close as possible to the cage and he carefully cut a hole in its side. When the opening was large enough, the overjoyed baby dragon jumped from his prison and glided to safety. Moments later the cage dropped to the rocks below and shattered with a thunderous noise. The mother dragon lovingly embraced her baby while giving the honorable samurai a thankful look before returning to the clouds with her child.



**ADAM, 13**

IL  
Mahomet Seymour  
Junior

Teacher: Andrea  
Bennett

Mrs. Bennett is a  
great  
teacher.

## Terry the Beaver isn't really eager to brush his teeth dialogue

The cold and crisp air swished around the lake, moving past animals with sparkling teeth. The sun just appeared from its resting, light going through the trees to the dam that is owned by 3 beavers.

2 of the beavers had beautiful teeth sparkling with the light, but the last one didn't. Terry's Mom told him all the time, "Wash your teeth, or it will fall out, and take really long to grow out." He still didn't brush his teeth because he despised it. Terry's Dad said silently, "If you don't brush your teeth then it will fall out and stop you from helping us build the dam." Even though he adored building his dam he still didn't listen.

Then one day he was biting a tree. All of a sudden, his teeth started to fight back. He didn't fully cut down the tree because it was painful. He ate slower, worked slower, and hurt all of his gums because of his bitterness, "Why won't it stop hurting, this has never happened to me," He said, frustrated, stopping away from the half-eaten tree.

Terry was talking to his friends at school, then started to notice that when he started to talk people started to gage, "Why are you guys gagging?" Terry asked, confused. "You smell horrible," said Peter the polar bear. Then everyone started to leave.

When Terry got home that day, he started to hop down a tree. Just after he takes a bite out of the tree. He hears a crack then he sees two yellow teeth inside of the tree. "MOM" screamed Terry "MY TEETH ARE GONE" "You need to now grow back your teeth" Terry's Mom said with a

disappointed look. Terry waited and waited for his teeth to grow back. "There has to be a way that would stop this from happening," thought Terry. "I need to start brushing my teeth," said Terry with a confident stance. Then he started brushing. Every tooth, every gum, and his teeth started to shine like if it was gold.

When his teeth grew back it didn't wiggle, and also didn't hurt. He ate trees and could do it as fast as he could chew. Terry Dad was really happy, because their dam was being built really quick because he brushed his teeth.

Terry went to school the next day. When he started to talk no one walked away from him and held their nose. They continued to talk with Terry. He finally got to have fun with his friends again.

When he got home Mom and Dad were really proud of him for doing the right thing. That day Terry learned that brushing teeth is more important than he thought before.



**CAROLINE, 13**

MD  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

## **An Ode to Nuggets**

Your textured exterior resembles linen.

Your crispy outer layer is crunchy but tender.

Your scrumptious insides remind me  
of a field of sunflowers.

While I bite into you it seems my taste buds are  
experiencing pleasure for the first time.



**ISLA, 13**

DC  
Lab School of WA

Teacher: Amy  
Young

## Nate Boyd

Nate Boyd was a troubled boy...well the whole town thought he was, with his countless absences from school, his reputation for stealing, and more. No one wanted to be around him. He was not sad about it though. He never really had friends, so he didn't know what it was like. All he had was his Ma, who was sick, and his sister who couldn't wait to leave Louisiana and left for New York, without even a note.

On a sunny hot day in the summer of 1967, he went down into town. People switched sides of the street and gawked at him. He stared at his shoes. The laces were ripped, and the sole of his boot was taped together with the topline of his shoe. He stopped to look around... the kids in their spotless shoes, their parents walking with them, he wished he had that. He turned around and there was a boy. His hair was dirty blond, his skin was tan, he had tattered shoes, and his clothes were filthy. Nate Boyd felt bad for this boy, he was probably sad. "Do you like boats?" he asked the boy, and the boy asked him the same question back. He was confused. Why did this boy say the same thing? Why did he not hear him say it? He reached out to touch the boy, but the only thing he felt was glass.

He frowned and walked away. He walked to the lake and got into his boat. The water shined from the sun, and he saw fish swimming. He looked away, turning to the trees. There was a bird. It was alone. It was a light blue instead of a gray. The other birds left him. The bird didn't seem to care though. It just looked at the sky, and flew away. It looked happy. So Nate decided not to care anymore. He want home that night and went to bed. Happy.



**GRACE, 14**

TX  
Homeschool

I would like to  
thank my teacher,  
Jennifer Talik.

## The Soap Debacle

I splish and splash, in my bath,

As I sculpt figures with the bubbles.

I must have squeezed too hard when grabbing the soap,

While I thrash and splash around, I begin to lose hope,

Of seeing that bar of soap ever again.

While the water leaves through the drain,

Looking much like a tornado,

I see the little bar of soap through the water,

And I scoop it up and put it to the side of the tub.

My towel wrapped around me, I decide to myself,

That I will tell my mother all about the soap debacle,

In hopes that instead she will get me a soap bottle.



**WILLIAM, 14**

IA  
Mater Dei

Teacher: Mrs. Wolf

## The Dreamer

It starts with nothing. Nothing but the distant sound of waves, faint, as if from something unnatural, artificial. They grow gradually louder, then, for a split moment, halts.

Then the waves become real, crashing and tumbling gently.

We come to a new figure, a boy, laying on a beach. The sand beneath him is wet. A sunset over the beach paints everything in an intense reddish-pink light.

\*\*\*

He stands. Slowly. He is now standing on the shoreline, bathing in the dying sunlight, letting the waves wash over his feet, cleansing them.

\*\*\*

Then someone speaks. It is either himself, or some unknown speaker. Perhaps both.

"You know you can't stay here forever"

Now he is sitting on the same beach, on a black leather couch overlooking the reflected red sun in the tinted pink water. He turns to see a girl beside him, presumably the speaker. She has brown hair, and brown eyes. She wears white clothes. White or red. It is hard to tell in the light. It has grown brighter and more intense. He has seen her before. He speaks.

"I know. Just for now."

Silence.

"I was so tired." She says. Or maybe it is him. It doesn't matter.

He looks back up at her. Her skin has become pale. Her eyes are bloodshot and red. He looks back down.

What's in his pocket? The thought would not normally cross his mind, but this feels different. He reaches into his pocket. He feels something. He removes it from his pocket. A small white die, its sides covered in their respective amounts of little black dots. The red light plasters it in radiant beauty. It's heavier than it looks.

He can stay, can't he? He built this place after all. No. She was right. He has to leave eventually.

\*\*\*

He looks up from the die. The girl is gone. A wind picks up, and begins blowing his hair. Unease pierces his chest. The sound of the wind combines with the distant ocean surf, a white noise, growing ever louder. He looks at the ocean. But it is no longer exactly an ocean. The entire surface is covered in the exact texture of the die in his hand. Little indents in the plastic surface painted with black dots scatter and mingle, maintaining perfect fluidity.

The wind blows harder. He is overcome by the power of the miraculous sea of dice. He is still too tired. His heart starts pounding.

And then everything begins to rattle. The world turns upside down. Sand swarms him. Hands arise from the sea and try to swallow him whole. It all collapses around him

He opens his eyes and he is no longer there.

\*\*\*

The swelling suddenly becomes a small artificial noise, emitted from the speakers of a smart phone. Its screen emits a faint blue light. The room is otherwise dark. He is lying in bed. Not moving, but very awake. He looks around at his room, at his die, something he always keeps on his bedside.

He looks at his phone, plugged in overnight, playing ocean white noise he uses to help him sleep.

He looks at a picture, of a beach he visits every year. He lies there, in the dark, contemplating last night's dream.





**ANA, 15**

CA  
Living Wisdom High  
School

Teacher: Kashava  
Betts

I would like to thank my brother Nicky. If he had not been born, this story would not have been possible, my teacher, Keshava Betts who inspired this story, and Oliver Sacks who inspired my teacher.

## Reminiscence from Childhood

I don't quite remember how I arrived at the vast building, but I did, I was with my grandparents and my brother Chris. I'm quite sure I was wearing a white dress that went down to my shins, and it had these extraordinarily beautiful embroidered designs. Of course, I was admiring myself all day. I think I still had short hair at that time. I was always competing with Chris to see who had shorter hair, though I don't think it ever really mattered to him.

I remember my grandparents had taken us up to a room, and when they opened the door, I saw the biggest white bed I had ever seen, I barely even noticed my mom there, holding my new little brother. I immediately scrambled up it, and it was so fluffy, the white sheets almost swallowed me whole, and I was loving every minute of it. I'm quite sure Chris was also infatuated with the massive bed, but I wasn't really paying attention to him or anyone else, I was too busy having the time of my life.

Eventually, I was plucked out of my wonderland by my father, and that's when I saw it. Resting in my mother's arms was a tiny baby, much smaller than I thought it would be. Its face was red and puffy and its eyes were closed. It was swaddled very tightly and a small hat blue covered its tiny head. I immediately wanted to hold it. It was so small and cute, and it looked so peaceful, I was enamored by this small being. My father was telling us something, but I wasn't listening, all of my focus was on the baby. I stepped closer to it, until I was right next to the bed, staring directly at it. I'm sure I was getting more than a few weird looks. I felt the sudden urge to climb up the bed and be as close to it as possible. I nimbly made my way up, and sat on the right side

of my mother, just staring at the baby she held, with wide unblinking eyes. The whole world seemed to disappear, it was just me and him. I stared at him for what felt like hours but was probably just a couple of minutes. My mother's soft voice broke through my concentration with the words I longed to hear:

“Do you want to hold him?”

I instantly nodded my head and reached out my hands to grab him. My mother stopped me quickly, and gently put him in my arms. She guided my hands into the correct position and there he was, in my arms. He was light, and the most adorable thing I had ever seen. He was a bundle of pure joy, and I could feel a soft smile spreading across my lips. Nothing in this world mattered anymore, it was just me and him. I had never felt more content, more whole, in my life.



**AUDREY, 15**

SC  
Homeschool

I would like to thank my homeschool co-op teacher, Mrs. Jenny who had me write an Aha moment story. The deadline encouraged me and so did my mom!

## Aha Moment

“Hey guys! Heads up! Cliff up ahead!” Rey warned his squad as they cycled to a stop.

Zack exclaimed, “Wow! That’s a huge waterfall. We’ll have to take it easy with our bikes down this trail.”

The group slowly began their descent down the rocky trail. Sunshine burst through the trees and created a flash of light from off to their left. Rey halted to a stop, nearly causing a collision with his buddies.

Jake ran his gloved hand through his spikey blue hair, “Dude! What’s up?! We almost ran you over!”

“Bro! I thought I saw glint of light over in those trees. What is it?” wondered Rey.

They all turned to look where Rey was pointing.

“I think we need to go check it out.” Jake said. They all agreed and followed Rey toward where the light had come from. As they drew closer, suddenly birds flew off in a hurry, startling the group. They looked up and to their surprise, hidden in the vines was a lantern.

“Say what??” exclaimed Keith.

“Why is there a lantern in the middle of the woods?” asked Zack.

“Beats me. Let’s check it out!”

Carefully, the four chopped their way through the brush with machetes and found an old, elaborate, wrought iron gate. Two lanterns were posted on either side.

**HONORS KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS**

The gate had the initials "B.B." on it.

The squad glanced at each other and nodded. Rey pushed on the rusty gate, which slowly creaked open. They cautiously made their way through the gate and into a courtyard, which contained an old decorative stone water fountain. They continued on the overgrown path until they reached the door of giant mansion. Rey slowly stepped up onto the creaky porch and pushed on the front door. It was locked. They all checked around the area, looking for something to open the door with.

"Yo! I found a key!" Zack announced as he pulled a shiny object out of a nearby flower pot. He walked over to the massive door, put the key in the lock, twisted it and the door swung open.

"Woah! I didn't think that would work! Nice job finding it by the way!" Keith remarked.

Still on their guard, the four walked in. Their eyes took in the grand entryway with the wide, curving stair that split in two opposite directions half-way up. Off to the right, was an open doorway with a grand stone fireplace.

Rey was drawn to the fireplace's giant painting hanging above it. He reached up and pulled it down to get a better look. Zack noticed a small rip in the backing paper of the portrait. He pulled out a folded note. It read:

July 10, 1722

"If ye found this note, congratulations. Ye are smarter than most. However, this is only the beginning. I will not give up my treasure easily. To begin this quest, take 50 paces from the old graveyard to the lone birch tree for your next clue. Good luck, me hearties!"

~Bad Beard the Brilliant

Rey turned the painting back over. Something seemed familiar about this guy. Keith walked up, "Woah! That dude looks just like you Rey! Well, maybe not the beard, but the purple hair, green eyes, and pointy ears look the same!"

Rey stood shocked. He suddenly remembered where he had seen this guy. An identical portrait hung in his family's hunting lodge. Bad Beard the Brilliant was his great, great, great, grandfather!!!! He turned towards his friends, put his arms around their shoulders and announced, "Guys! We're going on a treasure hunt!"



**EVAN, 15**

UT  
Clearfield High

Teacher: Mrs. Zaugg

I would like to  
thank Mrs. Zaugg.

## the communities

Folk woke up at 6:30 like he always did. Today was a nice and breezy spring morning, the smell of eggs and bacon cooking on the stove. He got up, showered, brushed his teeth, and went down the stairs.

"Good morning sweetie" said Shayla, Folks' mom "big day!"

Today Folk is graduating from an extrovert high school. This made Folk uneasy. His mom was the community mayor, and he felt a lot of pressure for his future. Even when Folk was a child, he always felt displaced in his society. He always felt like his friends could always hangout forever but always loved his alone time.

"Hurry and eat your breakfast sweetie we got to go"

Folk scarfed down his eggs, grabbed his graduation uniform and ran out the door. Folk and his mom lived in a very interconnected city; everyone knew everybody. This was because everyone was very friendly, but also, they lived in a city where they built up rather than out. The Manufacturing district was on the top while the business and people lived closer together at the bottom.

Folk and his mom caught the platform and made it just in time for the graduation ceremony.

"Welcome class of 2076. I am Stacy, your student body president, and we made it!!" the crowd cheered "Let's get this thing started!!" The crowd screamed as the principal walked up to the stand and started reading the names. "Abbie Allen, Cadian Ashley..."

Eventually he got to "Folk Wade" Folk got up and collected his diploma.

"I am so proud of you sweetie, let's go and celebrate." said his mom

They went to their favorite dinner with all the other graduates. They get to the diner and the waiter comes to take their order.

"How is it going guys my name is Stee and I will be taking your order." said the waiter

"I will have todays special" said Shayla

"Mom, I don't feel like celebrating with my graduating class" said Folk "could we just celebrate at home?"

## HONORS KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS

"Honey? Are you feeling alright?" said his mom. "You know we live in an extroverted community, right?"

There was a moment of silence.

"Well, it is your night. We can go home." said his mom

They got up and started leaving the dinner when the waiter stopped Folk.

"I couldn't help but overhear your conversation." said Stee "If you ever want to learn more about your personality, just contact me. But be quick, I do not stay in one place for long."

He handed Folk a business card and left to seat more tables. Folk looked at the card  
Stee Headly

A few days passed and Folk could not stop thinking about the card. He picked up his phone and called the number on the card. The phone rang and someone eventually picked up

"Hello? Is this Stee?" said Folk

A mysterious voice answered and said, "Meet behind the diner at 12 am tonight" then phone cut out. Thoughts filled Folk's head about whether he should meet up with Stee. What would his mom think? But, he did not feel like the other people in his community. 11:30 came and Folk sneaked out. He caught the final transport to the diner and waited at the end of the alley. A few minutes passed and a mysterious shadowy figure emerged from the darkness.

"Stee?" asked Folk "Is that you?"

The shadowy figure covered Folk's face, and everything went black. He woke up with light pointed directly towards his face.

"All right thanks for meeting me." said Stee "Sorry I had to do this to you, I just wanted to make sure that you were not being followed."

"If you are sure that we aren't being followed, can you move this light out of my face?"

"Sorry sure thing." Stee moved the light.

Now with the light moved out of his face Folk quickly recognized the place to be the old railway station in the manufacturing district. Then Stee started to speak.

"When you were in the diner, I overheard your conversation with your mother." said Stee "I just want to let you know that you are not alone..."



**MAKAILA, 15**

AL  
Homeschool

I would like to  
thank my mother  
and father.

## Queens

Through the windows of the castle the entire kingdom could be seen. The houses lined up in many rows not a single piece of coal being burned even though the cold was frightening. The market devoid of people as the fruits that had been left out rotted. The forest that concealed the enemy which was in fact not the enemy of the kingdom but the enemy of the queen.

The queen did not sit on her throne but stood at the window waiting for the knights in shining armor on their powerful horses to arrive. Though she had ruled the kingdom since she was seven in recent years a secret that eluded even her came to light. It turned out that she was not the true queen. The true queen was on her way to take the throne and the queen was not going to fight over it. Let the kingdom have what it truly wanted.

Oh, how quickly all her people turned on her. Oh, how they called her a deceiver a fiend. The queen listened to their words, but she wondered could she have truly been a deceiver if she had not known the truth herself. Ever since she could remember she was called the princess and then the queen. She knew no other truth. The person they all thought she was had never been her. Though her blood was not royal she was.

She was a good queen to. The kingdom only prospered under her rule. She took the time to speak to every single one of her people. She learned about their lives. Their struggles their talents. She learned what they wanted, and she did her very best to make the kingdom the kingdom of their dreams.

The queen sighed as she saw the first horse break through the tree line. Upon the horse was the true queen her face contorted in rage. This false queen had stolen her title

The queen sighed as she saw the first horse break through the tree line. Upon the horse was the true queen her face contorted in rage. This false queen had stolen her title her kingdom her life and she was going to make her pay. How dare an imposter pose as someone of true royal blood. How dare an imposter give orders and change the kingdom her father had ruled.

The true queen rode swiftly. She was so enraged she did not even see that none of the knights of the kingdom tried to stop the parade of horses through the streets. She did not see the empty market. She did not see the houses that did not dare turn on a single light. The only thing the queen saw was the castle that should have been her home.

The false queen had unlocked the front door of the castle and now she was walking up the stairs past the throne room and into one of the towers. She made her way up higher and higher as the sunlight started to peak through the dark clouds that had loomed over the kingdom for weeks.

The true queen got off her horse at the front of the castle and pushed the door open. She smiled, the door opened for her so that meant she was meant to be there. She walked through the castle and soon made it to the throne room. There was no one in there. The only thing sitting on the throne was the crown which the true queen lifted and set upon her head.

The false queen stood at the top of the tallest tower and waited. She did not need to wait long for the true queen arrived. They stood across from each other and the false queen knew what the true queen was thinking. She wanted her kingdom which she now had. She wanted her identity which she now had. Most of all she wanted revenge which was something she couldn't have.

When the true queen raised her sword all the clouds left the sky leaving only the bright sunlight that seemed to dispel the cold. The true queen took this as a sign that she was just and right. It however was not a sign for her but for the false queen. For when the light hit her, she sprouted wings upon her back that were pure gold. She then flew away.





**DAELA, 16**

CO  
Broomfield High

Teacher: Van der  
pol

## The oblivion project (Prologue)

Falling. She was falling, the bright sun blinding her as she looked to the sky. The memories of this life flowed through her mind like a raging rapid. This was it, this is where her story ends. Her story ends falling, the wind whistling in her ears like whispers of the ghosts that haunted her, the golden sun reflecting in her eyes, a burning orange, ear piercing screams that somehow seemed muffled, perhaps by the wind. How long has she been falling now, she couldn't tell. Everything seemed to move in slow motion as if she had been separated from her body. She felt lighter than air yet heavier than steel all at once. Not long now. She felt an icy chill as she descended into the shadow's chilling grasp, away from the sun's warm embrace. More screams of horror came from below, like a wave emerging from the sea. A feeling so strong took hold of the young child, it was like nothing she'd ever felt in her life. The intensity was painfully unbearable. She closed her eyes as a single tear fell from her eye, the bright blue sky disappearing from her sight. Then, nothing. She was thrown into a void of nothing.

"What happened? Am I dead?"

Then more screams, muffled by the ringing in her ears. She couldn't feel her body, she couldn't see anything. Sirens blaring somewhere near. Then, movement? She was moving, fast, swaying back and forth. She could hear frantic voices too far to make out. Stop, she'd stopped, but only for a moment. Noise, lots of it, but from where she couldn't tell. She felt a jolt of electricity shoot through her chest.

**HONORS KARINA EIDE YOUNG WRITERS AWARDS**

Thump Thump.

Another shock,

Thump Thump.

Another,

Thump....Thump.

Panicked voices screaming something she couldn't hear, were they talking to her?  
Another shock shot through her like a lightning strike.

Thump.....Thump.....



**TREVAN, 18**

IA  
Pella Christian High

Teacher: Mrs.  
Renaud

## **The Little Shack**

Let's go to the little shack  
To take a break and never come back  
Hidden in the forest far away  
Where I can sit on the porch all day  
With a trail heading south  
That leads you to the mouth  
Of a small and quiet creek  
That flows into the place I seek  
Ending at a pond full of life  
A place without rules or strife  
A place that's free  
A place for me

# CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our Unique Voice, Emotional Truth, and Special Recognition Award winners! Your writing is amazing!!

## UNIQUE VOICE

Jacquelyn, 8, Poem

Otillie, 9, I Hear My School Singing

Bowie, 10, Shadow in the Clock Tower

Julie, 10, The Dino Who Was Late

Elliott, 11, The Sky Was Clear

Emma, 11, Sometimes I Wish

Mark, 12, The Baby Dragon

Rowan, 14, Dystopia

Paulina, 15, The marble of the sea

Cara, 16 A Night After Training

Emma, 16, What is

Trinity, 17, Allie's Best Friend

Keirston, 18, My Little Paws

McKenna, 8, A Day at King's Dominion

Abigail, 9, Metamorphosis Day

Bella, 10, The Moving Gnome

Grace, 10, The Family Who Saves the Day

Samuel, 11, Lost

Harold, 12 Snowflake, snowflake

Eli, 14 Mankind's Super Robot

Catherine, 14, Adv. of Firefly and Batman

Sydney, 15, Winter Wonderland

Anya, 16 Sunflower Maze

Keira, 16, The Warrior Princess

Elizabeth, 16, A Trip to Walnut Hill

Mya, 18, How I Learned to Fly

Kathleen, 18, Deluge and Dent Removers

Emma, 9, My Brother is Amazing

Scarlett, 10, One Girl and the Great Fire

Ella, 12, The Greatest Cat

Nathan, 12, The Legend of the Dog

Penelope, 12, My Name

Sydney, 15, Winter Wonderland

Lily, 17, Change, Pain, and Disappointment

Parker, 18, Loving Mom

Victoria, 18, My Boxes

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Eydie, 8, Twin Baby Lynx  
 Sam, 10, Dyslexia Can't Stop You  
 Brynn, 10, The Abandoned House  
 Rachel, 10, How to Care for a Hourse  
 Peyton, 11, New Year New Me  
 Riley, 12, Covid-19

Julie, 12, Ode to Thunder  
 Noah, 12, My Journey with Dyslexia  
 Christopher, 12, How to Kill an Evil King  
 Samantha, 13, Home  
 Taelin, 13, Sorting Hat  
 Lillian, 13, The First Meet  
 Caleb, 15, Children in Sports  
 Avery, 16, A Moment

Jackson, 18, Art Appreciation

Arthur, 9, Covid 19 Experience  
 Harper, 10, Injury  
 Eunice, 10, Unforgettable Valentine's  
 Dawson, 11, Dear Deer  
 Kelly, 11, Princess in the Towe  
 Lauryn, 12, Seattle Children's Hospital  
 Ryan, 12, An Avalanche  
 Harrison, 12, Parasailing Memoir  
 Zachary, 13, Mystery of the Man in Black  
 Idan, 13, School Days  
 Samantha, 13, That's Me  
 Maxwell, 14, Love is No One Path  
 Ellie, 15, Resilience  
 Christopher, 17, The Bouncy Castle

## DYSLEXIC ADVANTAGE TALENT SHARE



We'd love to learn about it and share it with this community.

It could be anything - art and design, a building project, music, sports, volunteering, or something else. We'd love to cheer you and everyone will learn more about the talent and passions that make up this community. K-12 students (sorry, limited to the US only) will also be entered in a drawing for one of our little gifts or prizes.

Enter [HERE](#).



# GREAT TALK - You're Invited!

This public lecture with  
Drs. Brock Eide and  
Helen Taylor is free to  
attend, but seating is  
limited and pre-  
registration is required.

Cambridge University

# What's the Point of the Dyslexic Mind?



## New Research on Dyslexic Strengths

Trinity College  
Monday  
March 27th 18:00 BST  
Winstanley Lecture  
Theatre  
CB21TQ UK



**Brock Eide MD MA**  
Co-Author of The  
Dyslexic Advantage



**Helen Taylor PhD**  
University of Strathclyde  
Business School  
McDonald Institute  
Cambridge University

Pre-Register:[bit.ly/MINDSTR](http://bit.ly/MINDSTR)

DyslexicAdvantage.org  
ComplementaryCognition.co.uk



Dr. Fumiko Hoeft and colleagues are recruiting  
11-14 for a research project involving social  
and emotional issues. [Click here for more info.](#)

There is a \$50 gift card for those who fully  
completely the assessment and survey.

### University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) and University of Connecticut (UConn)

#### Volunteers Needed for Research Study

Evaluation of a measure of socio-emotional competencies in children and adolescents

The study seeks to examine socio-emotional competencies, such as appreciation, resilience, and empathy using an assessment survey. UAB and UConn are recruiting participants from across the Nation to determine how socio-emotional abilities profiles vary across diverse populations. The project's final goal is to provide evidence and insights into targeted socio-emotional intervention techniques for a more holistic perspective on student learning.

All English-speaking children from 11 to 14 years of age are eligible. Students with Specific Learning Disabilities are encouraged to participate.

	What will my student and I be asked to do?
Assessment	You shall complete a 1-hour assessment supervised by a research assistant on Wednes. In the session you and your children will only complete questions you might have about the research.
Survey	The child's main caregiver will complete a 30-min questionnaire so we can know more about your child. Your child will complete a self-rated 2-hour survey that assesses about how they think and feel about themselves and school. This survey will be completed independently online. Research assistants will be available if your child has any questions about its completion.
Compensation	Participants who fully complete the assessment and survey will be awarded a \$50 gift card.
Assessment Guide	A resource guide will be provided in the conclusion of the study which will include helpful tips on how to improve your child's socio-emotional skills.

**Registration:**  
Register TODAY by scanning the QR Code or visit [bit.ly/ucn\\_research](http://bit.ly/ucn_research)  
Participation questions can be directed to Catherine G. Barklow, Ph.D. (UAB PI) at [cbarklow@uab.edu](mailto:cbarklow@uab.edu)

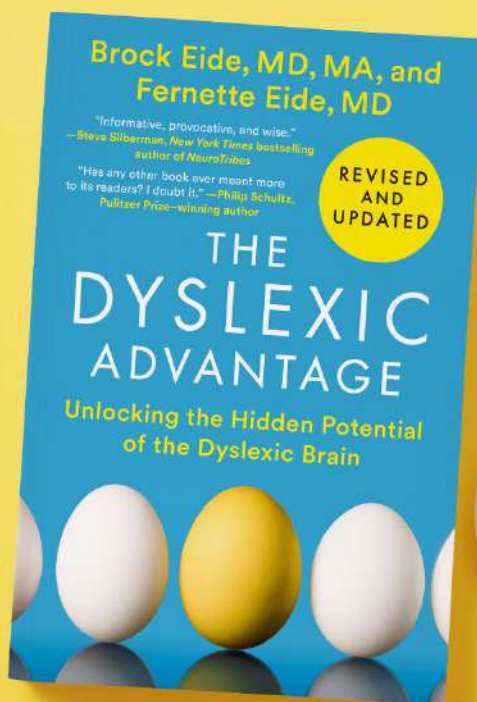


To learn more about this research, you may also contact one of the UConn principal investigators, Fumiko Hoeft, MD PhD at [hoeft@uconn.edu](mailto:hoeft@uconn.edu) or Josephine M. Chen, PhD at [jchen@uconn.edu](mailto:jchen@uconn.edu)

## It's Here!

"Simply put, the Eide's new edition is an improvement upon perfection. Think of it as a software update for the dyslexic operating system."

—Dean Bragonier,  
Founder and Executive  
Dyslexic, NoticeAbility



Learn more: <https://www.dyslexicadvantage.org/book>

Amazon US Amazon UK Audible US UK and fine booksellers everywhere

## Helping Children, Teens, Adults, and Families Realize Their Potential

assessment | consultation | treatment

Summit Center specializes in helping students with complex learning profiles and differences -- including kids who may be gifted, and those who might be both gifted and have challenges (known as twice-exceptional or 2e). We provide formal evaluations of strengths and challenges, and offer specific strategies and recommendations to guide growth and maximize potential.



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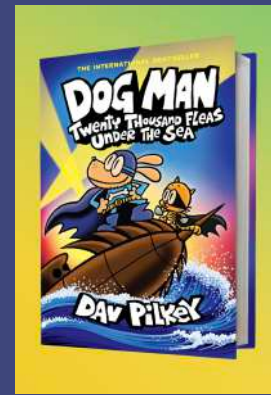
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[www.summitcenter.us](http://www.summitcenter.us)

[info@summitcenter.us](mailto:info@summitcenter.us)



*"Summit Center helped me find out I am both dyslexic -- and smart. I just think differently. Now I like school, and I have the tools I need to succeed."*



## ABOUT DAV PILKEY

When Dav Pilkey was a kid, he was diagnosed with ADHD and dyslexia. He was so disruptive in class that his teachers made him sit out in the hallway every day. Luckily, Dav loved to draw and make up stories, so he spent his time in the hallway creating his own original comic books—the very first adventures of Dog Man and Captain Underpants.

Since then, Dav has written and illustrated a number of bestselling and award-winning children's books, including the Caldecott Honor book *The Paperboy*. His Captain Underpants series and Dog Man graphic novels have sold millions of copies worldwide and have been translated into many languages.

Dav lives in the Pacific Northwest with his wife, but his writing is inspired by children and adults around the world. His stories explore universally positive themes that celebrate the triumph of the good-hearted.

"I got the power of laughter, I got to travel to crazy new worlds where anything could happen, and my imagination—which is the greatest superpower of all—grew by leaps and bounds...but one of the superpowers I am most grateful for receiving is the power of inspiration." - Dav Pilkey