

Don't leave me

By Alana Redden
Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 8

Creeping down from their midnight caves
They can hear the bloody
Screams
That echo through the house.
Hateful words get thrown
Threats get hurled
The pain and agony
Of fighting
Makes them
Sink into the walls
Of the barely lit staircase
Wanting to be anywhere else
But there.
The little girl joins her brother
Asking
"Is Daddy leaving?"
He responds
"I don't know Beccs"
I don't know.
In a broken voice she whispers
"I don't want Daddy to leave."
As if an answer to her statement
All becomes silent
The storm seeming to have passed.
Then just as quickly as it ended
The blizzard of hate
Comes back in full force.
Something shatters
A door slams
A car starts
The hum of a motor
Becomes more distant
By the second
As their father leaves them behind.
One single tear drips down
The little boy's cheek
Marking a new chapter
In a book
About a family
That was once called perfect.

Vermont

By Cole Morse
Metawee Community School, Grade 6

Sugar maples
Horse-drawn sleighs
Lonesome woods and
Rainy days

Upcoming Prompt

Get published in the *Reformer!*

General. Submit your best non-prompt general writing. **Due Friday.**

Future prompts and to submit:

youngwritersproject.org

Fireworks

By Sanderson Galen Holly Kemp
Brattleboro Area Middle School, Grade 7

You always go out with a bang
I used to be scared of you
Frightened to get out of the car
I feared your loud noise
Now I love to see you in your many shapes
Your colors
Your sizes
Your patterns
I always sit on a fleece blanket
My eyes staring up into the sky
My eyes full of delight and wonder
Beautiful colors against the pitch black of night
I stare up at you and smile
I love your power and sparkle
Your beauty and honesty
When the finale comes and everything ends
I always wish you would last longer
I slowly stand up
My legs are asleep
I can hardly feel them
Slowly as darkness encloses me
I head back to the car
Walking with my parents
I wish I could see your pretty colors
Every day at night
When darkness surrounds me
You will always be a light

Family night

By Eddie White
Newbury Elementary School, Grade 6

"I get the couch!"
"No, you always get it!"
"Mom!"
"What?"
"Fine, I get the computer!"
"No, you lost it, Heather!"
"Come on!"
"Don't you 'Come on' me!"
"I have to go to the bathroom!"
"I'm going first."
"No, Holly, let Eddie go first."
"But I really need to go, Dad."
"Go downstairs."
""Dinner's ready! Eddie! Holly! Heather!
Hannah! Get in here, kids and Ed!"
"I get to sit next to Dad!"
"I get to sit next to Mom!"
"I get to hold the dog!"
"I get to hold the cat!"
"No dogs, no cats, no cellphones!"
"Heather, wash! Holly, put that away!"
"Let's put in a new movie!"
"It's family night!"

Speed

By Drew M. Wood
Dummerston Middle School, Grade 9

In these days that I love,
With the cars with the speed.
At two hundred and twenty
Right in front of me.
Numbers. Horse power. And speed.
That's all I need
To win the race and the million dollars.
Speed. Fast. And fury.
To win. To live.
To cherish.
Win.

Crash and burn

By Kyle Champney
Brattleboro Union High School, Grade 9

As I wipe the frost from my window,
erase the fear on my face
I feel the tear on my cheek
fall to the sky,
shattering to pieces,
learning to fly.
Slowly crashing and burning,
but the clock is still turning.

My path

By Sara Engerman
Bellows Falls Union High School, Grade 10

Walking down a path
that has been patted down by my memories
taking a break
looking down the path I made
things were so clear
then issues arose but I stayed whole
helped wanderers along the way
got the back on their path
when mine crossed with another's
I was shoved off
into the dirt and stones
my wounds healed and I moved on
found a little tree growing in my path
I stopped to help it grow
as the tree continued to sprout
it picked me up and tangled me within its
branches
I found a way out and tumbled down to the
ground
got up, brushed the pain away
got back to making the rest of my path
pricker bushes bordered my path
they kept me on track... for the most part
then one day I tripped over a rock
causing me to fall into the bushes
blood dripped down my arms and stained my
path
that night I lost my way
and have been wandering ever since.



Young Writers Project is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them get better at it and connects them with authentic audiences for their best work. YWP provides writing prompts for this newspaper series; maintains youngwritersproject.org, a supportive online community for students; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback; and builds *Digital Writing Classrooms* for schools and afterschool programs. For more go to: ywpschools.net.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Vermont Writes Day 2010

Tuesday, February 9

A day for schools, teachers, students, administrators to **STOP** what they are doing and write for SEVEN minutes. For more:

youngwritersproject.org

Ode to my smile

By Lucy Pappas
Renaissance School, Grade 6

I sit in my chair, just wiggling my tooth.
My fingers take hold as I pull and pull.
My hand's in my mouth, it's feeling uncouth.
To yank this out I need the strength of a bull.
My baby tooth is ready to move on
So that a grownup tooth can take its place.
Wiggle, wiggle, wiggle, turn, POP! It's gone.
A new hole in my smile becomes my face.
I've done this before; now it's quite a cinch.
The exit of one welcomes another.
Losing teeth, getting older, inch by inch.
Growing older frightens my dear mother.
Spaces for new teeth to grow and be free.
Until that day when braces meet me!

Phantom cat

By Charlotte Rutz
Champlain Valley Union High School, Grade 9

The cat jumps from ledge to ledge without hesitation
Paws gliding softly over the snow
As she runs along the mountain ridges.
The snow is her friend
Keeping her hidden from danger
And allowing her to hide when she is hunting.
Lying perfectly still
She is unobserved by all who pass her
But ready to pounce at any moment.
Shrouded in a dappled gray coat
She is the beautiful, elusive, magical
Snow leopard.