

## Marshmallows

By August Stevens

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))

Every summer my mother went down to our summer house on the lake with her 12 cousins and siblings. They had a little schedule: wake up, eat breakfast, head down to lake with aunt, play in water, eat lunch, play more in water and then come home for dinner, which her mom made. But one summer it rained for 17 days in a row.

They were bored out of their minds and they were getting sick of each other. All they could do was either read or play cards. ...

One day, I think on the 11th day of rain, most of them were gathered in the sitting room. My mom was playing Gin with three of her cousins. Suddenly something white flew across her field of vision and hit the far wall: BAM! And then another: BAM! Her cousin Danny yelled, “Aunt Peggy went crazy!” because there my grandmother was, standing in the doorway with a bag of marshmallows in her hand, throwing them at anybody who moved. Being children, they obviously started throwing them back. Soon, it was an all-out war: those 13 kids against my grandmother.

### Next Prompts

**Stress.** What stresses you out? How do you deal with stress? Write about a time you felt stressed out, or create a story in which the characters have to deal with a stressful situation. *Alternate: My story.* Pick a memorable moment from your life. Tell a story about it. 400 words, no real names. Focus on something specific, give us detail. **Due Friday.**

Submit work at:

[youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org)

## The car crash

By Jamie Benson

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

I interviewed my dad, Eric for this prompt.

(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))

My dad was coming back from college one winter. It had been raining and the temperature was dropping quickly. He got to the top of a very steep hill, and he knew there were no snow tires on his car. So he slowed down and started down that hill. He gingerly applied the brakes but the car

## STORIES OF HOPE: A JOURNEY TO RWANDA

Since 2004, 26 high school students, five educators and parents from Harwood Union High School have traveled to Rwanda; Several have returned in subsequent trips to teach English and art. This February a group of 14 students, four educators and a parent will travel to Rwanda to deliver books, build libraries and facilitate literacy workshops at a partner school and an orphanage.

To prepare for their trip, students have met and been inspired by survivors of the 1994 genocide. Over the next few weeks we will be publishing some of the stories and poems they have written after hearing their stories.

### Imaculee

By Carly Taylor

GRADE 10

The moon shines through a second-story window;  
cheekbone defined by a single stream of light.

Determined, sunken eyes  
beside seven other Tutsi women;  
exhaustion.

Limbs tangled together in the tiny bathroom

walls become closer, each day grows longer

outside chants and rumbles draw near;  
door slams open —  
they’re back.

Bloodthirsty, drunk and hypnotized,  
air becomes tense;

vision lost;  
familiar voices call my name —  
Imaculee.

An old friend already killed the rest of my family;  
thoughts disoriented,

I hold my breath.

I’m next.  
Just through the other side of the door,  
their words make me sick.

All they want is to see me dead,  
mangled.

Destined to experience pure cruelty  
*please, God.*

didn’t slow, and he picked up speed. He didn’t know if he would make it around the corner at the bottom of the road. As he approached the curve, the road went to the right, but the car went straight. It shot across the road and slid up a steep embankment, flipped over onto the roof and came to rest on top of a drainage ditch. The passenger side window was broken, but the car was still running, upside down.

As my dad reached for the ignition to turn off the car, he had to laugh because the music that was playing on his 8-

### “Hope”

By Ashley Pitrowicki

GRADE 11

Teaching an unteachable arrangement of heart

Lessons that can’t be taught with any arrangement of words

Lessons mastered by no preacher, speaker or God

Articulate enlightenment

Generations who pushed through the dark

Leaving the young resting in the light

Children, so rare

Appreciating their proclivity

Happiness stemming from wholesome love

Rather than pieced possessions

Like a flower growing under a blanket

Captured by the shadows of the past,  
these wonders of soul are kept

From the sun

Faces etched into my mind

Eyes soft as the rays of the cold night’s moon

Smiles as sweet as a warbler’s spring tune

Left forever serenading in my ears

Never to be forgotten

Nor appreciated in entirety

Sweetly bestowed upon the earth

God we thank for looking down upon us

God we thank for a pristine demonstration

Love against hate

Hope to learn

Hope for humanity

Hope instilled by youth

Hope for future

Hope like the children of Rwanda

track tape player was “Riders on the Storm,” by The Doors. It probably is a miracle that he was not injured by the crash. However, as he crawled out of the car through the broken window, he cut his finger.

A car coming the other way saw him crawling out of the car and stopped to help. Truthfully, the passerby needed more help than my dad; he was visibly upset and shaken after seeing my dad crawl out of a car that had flipped upside down. My dad found himself comforting the man until the police and a wrecker arrived. ...



Young Writers Project is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them get better at it and finds audience for their best work.

YWP provides writing prompts; maintains a supportive online community, [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org); trains college mentors to provide students with feedback and builds Digital Writing Classrooms for schools and afterschool programs. For more go to: [ywpschools.net](http://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](http://youngwritersproject.org)

## My ivy league

By Jill Rathke

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))

I had a week until my first days as a freshman at college. One of my friends was hosting an end-of-the-summer party with an “Animal House” theme. ...

On our way to the party, we wanted to add something to our costumes. So we stopped on the side of the road across from the elementary school. It was dark and cool. The moon shone on us as we grabbed some leafy-looking stuff and hopped back into the maroon Barracuda. Barbara and I helped each other wrap the leaves into headbands. We were starting to get into the whole Greek toga theme.

Our friends welcomed us inside. My brother looked at me like I was still in elementary school and laughed. “You and Barbara have always been so smart and you are heading off to a great college. So now tell me, why is there poison ivy wrapped around your head?” We pulled it off and threw the “vines” outside. But even as we tried to scrub the itchiness off our foreheads, we knew it was hopeless.

I knew Barbara would be worse off than I because of her red hair and fair skin. Days later, when I set off to college, I knew having a bright red rash on my forehead might be a downside. My family and I joke that I may not have gone to an Ivy League college, but I sure got my fair share of ivy during that first week of college.