

# Walking toward a new beginning

By Nikke Froebel  
*BFA Fairfax, Grade 8*

Billy and Willy were walking down a road. They looked behind them and saw a little, young puppy all beat up. Billy opened his bag and took out his water bottle. He gave the puppy some water and some food, too. Billy was walking away from the puppy, but the puppy kept following them.

Willy stopped to pet the dog and said, "Maybe we should keep the puppy."

"Willy, we can't keep the puppy. It's not ours; plus we don't know where the young puppy came from and who his owner is."

Willy said, "That's the point. The puppy is out here in the middle of nowhere."

Billy just kept on walking, but the dog walked with Billy while Willy just laughed and walked with them. They walked and walked and walked. The dog stopped and looked at Billy and then went up to him and poked his bag.

"What?" Billy said. The dog got up and poked the bag again.

Willy open Billy's bag and got out the water bottle and grabbed the chips; the dog started to jump up and down and wag his tail.

Willy gave the dog chips and some water. "The dog is happy now, Billy"

"I see, Willy. Let's sit down and take a rest."

"OK."

They went over to a meadow and sat down near a tree; the dog came over and sat next to them.

"I think he thinks that we are his owners," Billy said. "Maybe we can keep him because nobody is calling for him and he doesn't care about his owners. He doesn't seem to have a person who cares about him beside us."

"Maybe we are his angels," Willy said.

They got up and walked on, walking and walking until they reached a new place to start their lives over again: Los Angeles, 1937.

## Heading to Los Angeles

By Noah Keogh  
*BFA Fairfax, Grade 8*

A dusty old road and two suitcases, worn-out jeans and shoes with no laces, long miles and endless sky, time after time he wonders why he got this idea of traveling far, without boat or plane or train or car. In retrospect he should've guessed just what would have come to pass back then his life was clear as a looking glass. Looking 'round to see great places from seeing his friends' faces on postcards with friendly notes, sent to him from trains and boats, planes and cars he'd wished and wished on every star

His face was long depressed at best his heart was heavy, a trapped bird in his chest he started to think he started to see the things he would do the places he'd be.

He asked his friend, "Come with me" telling him of things they would see, the places they'd go, The things they'd do.

His friend agreed, "I'll go with you" But now they walk down this road wishing they had a lighter load than the things they packed, or the train they boarded on that fateful day they thought they afforded two tickets now ripped and shredded with the name of the great place where they now were headed. They're going toward Los Angeles.

# YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT

building a generation of better writers

Welcome to the second weekly installment of great writing by area students as part of a partnership between the *St. Albans Messenger*, the Young Writers Project, area schools and the many talented young writers in our communities. Each week the *Messenger* will feature work from students in Franklin and Grand Isle counties.

Young Writers Project is a Vermont nonprofit dedicated to helping students improve their writing. Students submit work each week — responses to YWP prompts or general writing — and YWP selects the best for publication. YWP maintains a safe, civil Web site for students at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) (where all work is submitted). And it builds private Digital Writing Classrooms for schools to use as part of the curriculum. Thanks to support from FairPoint Communications, digital classrooms are operating at Enosburg Falls Middle School, St. Albans Town Educational Center and Grand Isle School.

Today's entries were chosen from many submissions in response to the photo below. The photo, *Toward Los Angeles* was created in 1937 by Dorothea Lange.



## Home

By Jordan Hoffman  
*BFA Fairfax, Grade 8*

As I walk down the road I know so well and feel the wind on my cheeks  
The sagging shoulder of my brother leaning on me  
The gravel between the worn soles of my shoes  
I tell him, "We're almost there."

We pass the sign, and I think of its irony  
"Next time take the train... relax."

We had walked 50 miles to get back home  
We didn't have the money to take the train  
So we walked.

He starts to cry, saying it's not worth it  
I can't believe him! We have gone this far  
Home is just around the corner

Sweet home with our wives and light blue curtains  
The sweet smell of grass always in the air

We walk in the old, splintered door and I can feel the smooth floor under my feet.  
I look around ... it has been so long

Since I considered fixing the table with the uneven legs

I look at my bed with a longing to fall onto it and cry

Sit on my favorite overstuffed chair and just breathe

I look into the eyes of my brother and see the joy

The color returns to his cheeks and his teary eyes crinkle into the smile I was looking for  
We finally made it home.

## Next time, try the train

By Payton Kerkes  
*BFA Fairfax, Grade 8*

"Wow, Jon this is a long walk." Mike said as they walked along the dusty road somewhere in California. The two men had been best friends for a long time, and they walked together with all of their belongings. Hot after almost a full day of walking, they had no water because they had drunk it all. "Well, it could be worse," Jon said.

"How?" Mike asked.

"Well we could be back in the city working for that smelly old guy cutting up meat," Jon said.

"Yeah, that stunk." Mike said.

"Hey! look at that sign," Jon said.

"What does it say? You know I can't read."

"It says, 'Next Time Try the Train.

Relax.'"

"I wish I saw that closer to the train

station," Mike said.

"We have no money, how could we get on?"

"We have some money," Mike said....

(This is the introduction to a longer story.  
For the full story: [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))

## NEXT PROMPTS

**Object.** Write about one object that defines you – or someone you know. Tell a story about why it is important to you (or them). **Alternate: The bus.** Write a story that takes place on a bus. **Due: Friday**

**The kitchen table.** What happens at your kitchen table? Tell a story. Or make one up. **Alternate: Door.** Use these words in a story or poem: "I reached the door and knocked loudly ..." **Deadline: Oct. 23.**

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

# Off to Los Angeles

By Kohl Corcoran  
*BFA Fairfax, Grade 8*

My name is Joe; I am 19 years old. It's been a year since I graduated from school. I am going to tell you about the most important part of my life, which is how I decided to make the long journey to Los Angeles.

After graduation I went home and went to bed, but I could not sleep because I was thinking about what I was going to do with the rest of my life. It was 2:30 a.m. when I finally started to fall asleep, and as I slept through the night I had a dream.

When I awoke in the morning I remembered the dream. It was about Los Angeles, Calif., and I realized what I would do with the rest of my life: I would go to L.A. But after I thought about it for a while, I realized that this would be impossible because I had no money and no job. I went downstairs to the kitchen. My mother was cooking breakfast so I asked her if I should follow my dream and go to L.A. She asked me how I would get to L.A. without any money, and I told her that I would hitchhike. I then told her I would be leaving the next day.

She was not very happy with me but she told me to do what would make me happy. I went shopping for supplies I would need on the road. When I got home later that night, I called my best friend, Jake, and told him my plans. He thought that it was really cool and decided that he wanted to go with me on a fun-filled adventure.

I told him to meet me at my house early the next morning. I went to bed early because I knew I needed to get started early. I slept right though the night and woke up at 6 a.m. I rushed to get my things together. Finished, I realized that it was almost time to go. I sat on my bed and thought about the long, long trip ahead.

It was 7 a.m. as I walked down the driveway to meet Jake. When I got to the end of my drive I saw him walking towards me. We talked for a minute and then were off on our long trip to Los Angeles, Calif. We had only 499 miles to go.

## On my way to LA

By Olivia Coon  
*BFA Fairfax, Grade 8*

"Ugggh I missed the train," I said aloud to myself, "Now I have to walk all the way to L.A." I started to walk along the dirt road and heard someone whistling. I turned around and there were two men in black suits about a mile behind me. Immediately I felt nervous. I knew something was up. I started to walk faster trying to escape from their view but it was useless; it was flat and there wasn't a soul in sight. The only choice I had to escape from their view was to hide behind a billboard that said, "Next time try the train, relax."

It was the middle of the day, the sun was beating down on me, and I could barely breathe. I was nervous, and my mind was racing about the possibilities. I felt a need to run from them, and I still kept telling myself that I had to run, but I couldn't. Somewhere, my mind wouldn't let me. I looked back and they were getting closer. That's when I panicked; suddenly I started to run without even thinking. I didn't look back; I was afraid they were running, too.

As I ran down the dirt road away from the two men I heard a train; I was confused — where was it? I stopped running and looked everywhere; there was nothing. Then, suddenly, I felt the rattling of the train on the tracks and the screeching stop of the train. I woke up. I was sweating and my heart was racing a million miles an hour, and I was sitting in a coach seat. Whew, it was a dream.

Then I looked over and saw two men in black suits right beside me.