

## Dock on Seymour Lake

By Matthew Avery

SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

My feet are dressed  
In a pair of beatup sneakers  
Trees swerving, pebbles rolling  
To the beat of my footsteps  
As I step onto the dock.  
While still worn and wooden, I feel  
A delicate softness, and I see  
A lustrous, golden glow.  
Beyond the clatter of my shoes, the dock  
creaks in strain  
Calling to me, as I make for the edge  
Down below, a boat, old and worn,  
Knocks playfully against the dock’s side  
Like an old friend, knocking on your door  
As if they haven’t seen you in ages.  
Over and over,  
Again and again.  
I reach the end.  
Standing, staring, I am the sea  
Skimming the shores, rising, falling, I feel  
A gentle softness, and I see  
The sun’s face, a golden glow,  
Reflecting off the lake’s clear curtain  
Of blue.  
No longer do I see  
A dock beneath my feet  
But, instead, the lake and the mountains  
Pointing to the skies,  
Where the moon will soon rise,  
And I’ll be walking on water.

## The old beaver pond

By Sophie E. Schwab

STOWE HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

The crinkle and crackle of ice forming.  
No more will I see my friend the beaver  
poke up his head to glance at the world  
above.  
His watery home is sealed  
by the glass of nature.  
Trees, normally so luscious and satisfying  
to the eye,  
now reach their naked limbs to the sky  
as if to cry in distress to the world.  
They are skeletons,  
quivering in the new air of the sleeping age.  
The shrieks of birds no longer fill the sky  
as they did before the musk of death came  
and scared them to a place far away  
from this eerie encompassing stillness.  
Although the grass lays limp upon the hid-  
den soil,  
and the land is vacant,  
this is the place I would rather be,  
more than any other,  
on these lifeless days before winter.

## Bad hunting joke

By Jacob Hinton

SPAULDING HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

When my dad was about my age, my  
grandfather gave him a bow and told him  
to go out and kill a deer. So he went out,  
set up a tree stand and waited. It got  
pretty cold and dark. He became drowsy  
and fell asleep. When he woke up he  
fell out of the tree stand — it wasn’t that  
far up. He saw this orange tape wrapped  
around the tree. He packed up and  
walked home. When he got back to the  
farm my grandfather laughed and asked  
him “You sleep well?”

## The hunt

By Nathan Budgor

NORTHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

It was late fall in a secluded, quiet  
Vermont valley. The trees were lifeless  
and bare, but the promise of the first  
snow was far off. A deer was drinking  
from a flowing stream. The sky was a  
perfect shade of blue, with not a cloud  
in sight. A light breeze ruffled the leaves  
and stirred the rich, green grass.  
Looking up, the deer viewed the  
scenery.

Suddenly, a twig snapped behind  
him. Spinning around, he saw a two-  
legged creature, grasping a long, thin  
stick. The beast raised the stick and a  
deafening noise flooded the valley. The  
deer needed no second warning.

He fled for his life, bounding over  
logs and through brambles. The sounds  
of pursuit faded away, and he stopped,  
panting. Silence weighed upon him like  
a protective blanket. This blanket was  
torn by a familiar deafening sound, but  
the deer never heard it.

## Redneck in Vermont

Jackson Frobel

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 7

Growing up in Vermont means  
shirts with arms off on warm summer days,  
mud on the Polaris 700 as you are hunting  
in the woods,  
wearing Georgia workboots when you are  
working on the farm.  
Growing up in Vermont means  
having a Leatherman for all uses of the day  
and taking your tractor to tractor pulls.  
Growing up in Vermont means  
going mudding with a bunch of fellow red-  
necks  
listening to country music.

## My rifle

By Aaron Roux

NORTHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12

I look through the crisp metal sights  
My heart beats rapidly  
I can see the end of the rifle bounce  
Every time my heart beats.  
I feel the pressure from the match,  
Like everybody is waiting for the one  
shot  
Making it perfect  
I line up the ring equally around the cir-  
cle in the front site  
And take the shot  
Checking to see how it turns out...  
I look through the scope to see my shot  
Bull’s eye

## Bow hunting

By Adam Lamson

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 7

I sit here waiting and waiting, in my  
tree stand in central Vermont in a thick  
forest.

Nothing comes, nothing happens.  
Then I hear something. It’s far off, but I  
can hear it. It’s coming, it’s here. Oh,  
it’s just a squirrel. Dang, I sit here  
longer and longer.

I hear something again but from a  
different direction. It’s a louder sound.  
It’s coming in — I can see it: a deer.

I ready for the shot. I pull my bow  
back. I put the sights right on the lungs  
and squeeze on the release. The arrow  
flies through the air and hits the deer  
perfectly in the lungs. I say, “What a  
deer for the first day of the season.” It’s  
a big doe that weighs 129 pounds!

I felt very proud because I was feed-  
ing the family. The next night we ate  
some of the deer. It tasted so good.

## In your eyes . . .

By Sarah Wells

U-32 HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 9

This feeling of nothing scares me more  
than anything ever has...  
When I should feel hurt... I just feel numb.  
Inside my mind the gears keep turning, pre-  
tending nothing’s wrong,  
but I know better.  
I’m afraid that something has broken.  
Broken beyond repair.  
What if it can’t be fixed?  
What if I look in your eyes...  
and feel nothing?  
What if, I become truly alone...?  
Behind this mask, that I thought would save me.



Young Writers Project is an independent non-profit 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).

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

#### FAIRPOINT COMMUNICATIONS

FairPoint is sponsoring YWP Digital Writing Classrooms in four schools this year because it recognizes the value of strong writing skills and digital learning.

## Crisp air

By Blake Duffy

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Autumn comes  
and football starts.  
You put on your  
warm cotton jackets.  
The weekly chores turn  
into raking leaves into piles,  
and the temperature drops to  
a cool, low 40s or 30s.  
Soccer comes to an end  
and every one puts away their  
cleats and grass-stained clothes.  
Odd snow flurries begin  
and the crisp fresh air freezes  
the back of your throat when you breathe.  
Green leaves turn to vibrant shades  
of orange and red,  
then the cold temperatures  
remind you of winter.  
Thoughts of snowboarding,  
and ideas of what to be  
for Halloween set in.  
Days become shorter and nights  
become longer.  
Then at the end of the day  
everybody wraps up in the warmest  
blankets and goes to bed.

### Next Prompts

School. What experiences in school have really engaged you?  
Due Friday. Submit at:

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