

Broken glass eyes

By Lydia Pierce

BERLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADE 6

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)

It was one of those really cold days, about ten below. I stepped out into the dangerous cold. Most of my body was covered up; the only thing showing was my face. I struggled against the blustering winds and the slippery ice while walking to the bus stop. Snow stung my face like a million bees. The load I was carrying was heavy, which didn't help me in my battle with the weather. I finally made it to the stop five agony-filled minutes later. I sat on the snow-covered bench, rubbed my hands together and breathed on them. The minutes felt like hours waiting for the yellow vehicle. Finally, a humongous school bus slowly pattered to the stop. The doors opened slowly. I could hear ice being crushed between the hinges.

I sat down on the brown, leather seats in the third row and took off my backpack. The warm air felt better than anything in the world. My face slowly got its feeling back. My fingers regained sensitivity and my hair crystals slowly melted and dripped on the floor. The bus began to fill with kids, all of them with glossy eyes and frozen fingertips.

We were driving along the interstate when I suddenly heard my bus driver breathing hard. ...

Bus

By Hunter Upmal

BERLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADE 6

When I was little I rode the bus. It was very annoying so I made a fuss. The bus was covered in rust. And everyone on that bus cussed. The floor was covered in dust. I just wanted to bust that bus. Most of all I just want to relax. This is why I don't ride the bus.

Next Prompts

Sibling rivalry. Write a story about how you compete with a brother or sister. Or write about what it's like to be the lone child. *Alternate:* **Anger.** Rant about something that really ticks you off. **Due Friday.**

Winter Tales. Tell a story about winter — the season or the holidays, the weather, or the emotions. Top selections will be given dramatic presentation by Vermont Stage Company in early Dec. **Due: Nov. 13.**

Submit at:

youngwritersproject.org

Clothes

By Georgia Parke | STOWE HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

My shoes are all worn down. The laces unraveled a few days ago. The soles are pretty much molded to my feet, and a few other people's too. Of course, there are drawings along the inner edge that are carelessly smudged and hidden by dirt. I've tried to make the rubber whiter using toothpaste, which only sort of worked. There are various marks on the canvas from food, grass and a intentional-looking marker streak that pulses of subtle revenge.

My sweater's all worn down. The sleeves are all stretched out from switching from person to person too much. The pocket's a little looser than normal from the weight of my iPod. The zipper gets stuck pretty often. And some threads are loose too. Dog hairs are now woven into the rest of it. I wore it about four days in a row at some point, but I'd rather not talk about that. The whole thing's shrunk a bit, and it smells a little like someone I used to know.

My jeans are all worn down, too. They are a bit shorter than I'd like, and the cuffs are predictably frayed. You can see the creases from where I rolled them up during the summer when I was too lazy to change. They're terribly faded, and have several pen marks on them. Holes are brewing at the knees and at the outer seams. It's weird, but I trust them more than I do some people. And maybe they're even lucky. At least they've become beautifully soft and familiar. I'm used to leaving them and losing them and just as suddenly finding them again.

Sure, I've danced in all these. I've daydreamed while wearing them, too. Written. Slept. Cried. Loved. Breathed. I'm exhausted and so are my clothes. They'll still take me places, though. They're always happy to hold more memories. And I'll always remember it all, I promise.

Baseball games

By Lucas Russell

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)

I take my glove out of my blue Under Armour bag to warm up. I slip it on and slam my fist against the soft, smooth Nike sign deep in my palm. Dylan and I walk over to the sideline to warm up our arms. “Pop!” goes my glove as the small white sphere makes contact with the brown leather on my hand. I take the ball out of my glove and look at it; it has a few small scuff marks from batting practice but otherwise looks brand new. I throw the ball back and it strikes Dylan's glove with another loud “pop.”

We finish throwing and walk over to the dugout to get helmets for toss hitting. I pick up my bat bag and unzip the half circle at the top. I peer inside at the four bats deep within, then take out the red Easton Synergy, my favorite. I also take out the blue-striped batting gloves. The palms of both gloves are caked with dirt from much use.

I walk out of the dugout into the bright sunlight and face the rusty fence behind the plate. Dylan tosses me about 30 pitches that I continuously slam into the fence with a loud “ping,” then I get down onto one knee on the wet grass and toss him his pitches. We run back into the dugout and put our helmets on the small rack and place our bats on the metal holder. ...

My iPod

By Molly Mitchell

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

I could not live without music and my iPod. I have a nano, the one you can watch videos on. I take it everywhere! When I am not in school you can find me listening to it, and you wouldn't be able to talk to me because I can't hear you; I'm blasting music in my ears. You won't find me without my iPod, except during school.

I guess it is important to me because I love to sing and I love music. Plus I can relate to a lot of the songs. However, my parents get mad at me because when they try to talk to me I can't hear them.

My pointe shoes

By Emma Rivers

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

“Ow!” my feet are screaming. “Take the shoes off!” I know I'm killing my feet, but the feeling of flying across the stage, nailing every position, is worth all the pain of numb toes, cramped arches and bloody toenail loss. I fly, I leap, I turn; everything I do on stage feels so right. I feel my toenail become loose, I'll regret this turn later, “OW!” My toes scream. The routine continues and I keep the cheesy smile plastered across my face. My brain is cranking commands: Turn right, leap left, turn left, leap right. I love every moment of the spotlight, choreography and pain.



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; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback and builds Digital Writing Classrooms for schools and afterschool programs. For more go to: ywpschools.net.

THANKS: YWP depends on business, foundation and individual support to keep going. Thanks to:

FAIRPOINT COMMUNICATIONS

Little black thing

By Jill Rathke

CROSSETT BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)

... I always lose my mouth guard. It falls out of my backpack, my soccer bag, my sports bra strap and sometimes even my mouth. I always chew on it and bite it. It literally looks like something my dog has spent a week chewing. It might look utterly disgusting to someone who doesn't play sports, but to me it looks perfectly normal. Everyone's mouth guard looks like that. Well at least everyone on my team. ...

And another annoying thing about mouth guards? No one can ever understand you when you talk. It sounds like your tongue is tied in a knot. You try to yell a tip to someone across the soccer field and all they hear are warbled noises coming from your mouth. Nothing ever sounds right when you talk with a mouth guard in. It's that stupid ugly mouth guard. But without it, I can't play soccer. So, I just wear it without complaints — well, sometimes just a little grumble. The mouth guard tastes bad, smells bad and everyone hates it. But we need it, so we just have to deal. ...