

Getting my wizard's trophy

By Tyler Ballard

Poultney Elementary School, Grade 6

It was a while before I got my second math trophy, but I did it. You see, I have been doing math since I was about 3 years old. Our school has a math program from second to sixth grades. The point is to get students to do their math facts faster. In six minutes you try to do 100 problems. The program starts with addition and then subtraction. After that comes multiplication and lastly, division. If you pass those four you get a trophy as a Math Facts Master.

After that you have to reduce fractions, convert fractions to decimals, and then convert fractions to percents. If you pass those you're a Wizard and you get a Wizard's trophy.

In third grade I got my master's trophy. My family is counting on me to make money when I get out of school. Now I'm in sixth grade, the seniors of the school. It took me until two months into school, but I finally passed fractions to percents. Everyone was proud of me; I was at the pinnacle of Math Fact Masters.

... If I can keep at the rate I'm going with tests and math, I might make my family even more proud of me. Sometimes I outwit my mom. I got most of the brains from my mom's side of the family. I still get great grades. Even today, my reading teacher thinks of me as the human spell-check. And as one of the greatest students. My other homeroom teachers might've thought that as well. I still thank my friends and family for appreciating my hard work.

School

By Briana Figueroa

Mettawee Community School, Grade 6

You can find pencil shavings
On the floor.

You'll find nice teachers
And nice students.
You'll find reading students
And writing students.
Students laughing
Students crying.

You'll find teachers
Trying to get to the bottom of things.
You'll find talking students.
You'll find teachers and students
Getting together on Tuesday afternoons.
At our school
You'll find a family of friends.
And things to do
There is never a dull moment
at Mettawee.

We asked students this week to write about experiences that engaged them in school. Interestingly, we didn't get our usual deluge of responses, and many of those we received focused more on what seemed boring, meaningless, frustrating or stressful about school. Here are a few selections about some of the school experiences that students have found engaging, as well as a few of their more general reflections on school.

Purgatory

By Zachary Merriam

Benson Village School, Grade 8

Gum chewing
pencils writing
mountains of homework
and assignments
teachers yelling
for dashing in the halls
spitballs flying
girls screaming
love notes secretly passed
lunch is gross
smelly old shoes
in the lockers
History — real boring
finally time
to get on
the yellow death trap

Realization

By Leah Thomas

Woodstock Union High School, Grade 12

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)

Harris dragged his feet on the school hallway; he really didn't want to go to art. They had a sub today so that would make things a little better, but he still hated art. Harris didn't care about the techniques of famous past painters, or a correct composition, he just wanted to paint and definitely didn't want to learn how to correctly hold a paint brush or any of that baby stuff. Slowly opening the art room door he gave a shallow sigh. Well here goes nothing, he thought, and stepped inside.

But instead of finding the dull, boring, whitewashed classroom he normally was greeted by, Harris instead found himself stepping through an ancient door frame and into a true art studio. Surprised, he tried to exit by walking backwards, but found himself against a stone wall. His eyes wide with confusion Harris looked around the small studio, gazing at the half-painted portraits and finished drawings. In the middle of the room his eyes locked onto an older man who was busy with completing a painting. The painting looked familiar to Harris, he had seen the starry swirls and small village before, but couldn't put a name to it. Deciding to risk it, he took a step forward and cleared his throat, "Excuse me sir, but where am I?" he asked the man. ...

My old teacher

By Ryan Kelley

Otter Valley Union High School, Grade 9

"You don't miss something until you don't have it anymore." Well last year my teacher retired after many years of changing kid's lives.

On Tuesdays we always read the paper and looked at the Young Writers Project prompts. And he would tell us to keep submitting our work into the paper. A lot of my class mates got in and if you didn't that week he would keep telling you to keep on writing.

Well now he is retired and I hope he still reads the paper so he can see that I got in just for him. So this one is for you Mr. Fish, my old teacher.

Fall

By Torianna Greenough

Poultney High School, Grade 9

Sitting in a classroom looking out the window
Thinking about fall
The leaves are now changing
From green to orange, yellow and red
The weather is changing too
From hot to warm, and cold
The trees are losing all their leaves
And the birds are heading south
Animals are getting ready for hibernation
Lakes and ponds are now freezing cold
Hunters are getting ready for deer season and trapping
Gardeners are bringing in their flowers
The town is getting ready for winter
And kids and teens are going to school
Fall is one of the most beautiful seasons
Everything begins to change
Then at 2:25 the bell rings
I zone back in and begin to go home

School

By Grace Morey

Mettawee Community School, Grade 6

School
Fun subjects
Laughing, goofing, eating
My favorite subject is math.
Adding, decimals, expanded notation
Candy, fun
School



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.

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Literacy

By Chelsey Horner

Mettawee Community School, Grade 6

School is something that I love about life
Literacy is something I love and am good at
Write a story about a cat
Read a story about a bat
Read a story about a mystery
At the end it can be solved
Read a story about a boy, teacher, poems and a special dog
Yes, it's "Love That Dog"
My 6th grade teacher supports us for the stuff we do
And I want to thank her
I cherish every moment I have in school

Upcoming Prompts

Get published in the *Reformer!*

Lost. Tell a story or write a poem about losing something or getting lost. *Alternate:* **Utopia.** What does your utopia look like? Provide images if you'd like. **Due Friday.**

Stuck. Describe a time when you found yourself in a tight spot. Tell us how you got there and what you did to get out of it. Or write a story about someone who finds themselves in a difficult situation. *Alternate:* **India.** What images come to mind? Write them down and tell us where those images come from? Do you think the images are accurate? **Deadline: Jan. 8**

Future prompts and to submit:

youngwritersproject.org