

# The elevator ride

By KATIE WESTPHALEN  
Champlain Union Valley High School,  
Grade 9

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

It's 11:38 a.m. The breakfast buffet at the Holiday Inn closes at 11:45; 7 minutes. Our room is on the 20th floor, breakfast is on the first. This feels like the longest elevator ride ever, and we're only on the 16th floor. We keep stopping, and people keep pressing the buttons to stop on other floors, ones that pick up even more people. There's no doubt I'm the hungriest person here. I'm sure that everyone else has eaten, and one man even has a hot breakfast sandwich and a steaming cup of coffee grasped tightly in his hands.

My stomach grumbles with each press of a button, each swish of the opening door. This is almost torture. I place my impatient hand on my belly, trying to obstruct the noise coming from deep within my core. I can't stand to look at my watch, for fear that my window of opportunity has already passed, but I sneak a look at the floor number. We're on the 10th floor, halfway there. Now no one but me is on the elevator. We haven't picked up anyone since the 12th floor and I'm hoping this pattern continues. Unfortunately, I'm out of luck. On the 8th floor, we stop to let on a little boy, probably about five or so. He looks sleepy.

"Hi, Hi, Hi!" he screams.

Boy was I wrong. I look down at his sticky fingers; they're covered in peanut butter. *Great*, I think as I roll my eyes, *more food to tempt my hungry stomach*.

"I'm Billy!" he shouts.

*This is gonna be fun*, I think sarcastically. He takes his filthy hands and presses every button on the wall of the elevator. ...

# My pet peeve

By SHEA FITZGERALD  
Browns River Middle School, Grade 5

Something that annoys me is my brother. Sometimes in the morning, if he gets up before me, he wakes me up to shower before him. That is kind of annoying. I don't get why can't he get up and shower first for once.

## NEXT PROMPT

**Pocket.** You find something strange in your pocket. Describe it to someone who has no sight. *Alternate: My Town.* Write about your town or city. Tell us one story or anecdote that reveals something about your community — why you like it (or don't). You can tell a historical story or base it on an interview. **Due Friday.**

Submit at:

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



# THIS WEEK: "Elevator" & "Peeves"

Each week students respond to prompts provided by Young Writers Project. Best work is submitted to [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) by students and teachers from Vermont and New Hampshire. A team of students helps select work for publication. For more student writing go to [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org). Students are welcome to join and share additional work on the site.

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

YWP is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them improve and connects them with authentic audiences for their best work.

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

## YWP NEWS

The Vermont Humanities Council is sponsoring a series of workshops with Vermont authors at YWP. For details go to: [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org).

ALSO: **Win a cash award!** YWP is partnering with Bookstock, the Green Mountain Festival of Words, to offer five \$100 awards to young writers. **Deadline: May 1.** For writing prompt and guidelines go to [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org).

# Use your turn signal!

By ISAAC POTVIN | Rice Memorial High School, Grade 12

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

... One of my biggest pet peeves is the failure of drivers to use turn signals when turning or changing lanes. It is such an easy maneuver and it dramatically helps ensure safety on the road.

Driving without using turn signals is first and foremost dangerous. Not only can it lead to the physical damage of vehicles, but also to personal injuries. Drivers who fail to

signal are constantly putting others in danger through their lack of communication. It is imperative for a driver to communicate his intentions on the road so that other vehicles can respond by either slowing down or making room in a lane. Signaling is so simple to do, and it takes only a second.

Additionally, using turn signals is a basic rule of the road, so it should be followed. ...

# Math song

By OONAGH CAVANAGH | Browns River Middle School, Grade 7

I'm sitting in math class  
drawing a graph,  
trying to find the  
"Y intercept."  
Suddenly,  
Tap, tap, tap,  
goes his pencil  
right behind my ear.  
I sigh  
and try to ignore it,  
deciding not  
to shoot him a nasty look.  
His pencil goes on tapping,  
and to my surprise,  
a girl across the room  
begins to hum along to his beat.  
Buzz, buzz, buzz  
goes her voice  
all the way in the corner.  
My eyes snap toward her,  
she is smiling.  
She's working at her math  
as if she isn't making a sound.  
I roll my eyes and get back to my graph.

A few moments later  
to my absolute horror,  
a boy in the aisle opposite mine  
begins to accompany  
the lead vocalist  
by drumming on his knees.  
Whack, whack, whack,  
goes his hand  
against his leg.  
I swing around  
to glare at him,  
but he is completely engrossed  
in the song.  
My anger softens  
at the smile of pleasure on his face.  
Soon,  
Snap, snap, snap  
go my fingers  
focusing on the beat.  
I smile at the  
pencil-tapper,  
glad he started  
this math song.

# Oh gosh!

By ELIZA THOMAS  
The Renaissance School, Grade 5

"Ding!" My sister, Caroline, and I walked into the small elevator, and I pushed the 4 button. The door started shutting slowly, with a screech that we did not like. I watched the door, and when there was about an inch left before it closed ... SLAM!

A girlish hand wiggled through the door, and it started to slowly open. As the door opened, I saw more of her. She had perfect curly-brown hair and two sparkly barrettes on each side of her head.

"Oh, sorry, I did not know people were in here, but I could NOT wait. My name is Lola... Yours?" She looked at both of us.

"I am Caroline, and she is Eliza," said my sister softly, looking at me.

"Beautiful names, both of you," she said with an excited look on her face. "I will be right back."

As she went out of the elevator, I stepped in the way of the door so it would not close. I heard high heels clacking, and there she was, with a polka-dot bag and a big smoothie.

"Thanks for waiting," said Lola.

A few moments after she had stepped in the elevator fully, the door started to close again but now, even louder, it made a screech like a car with broken brakes.

"What floor are you?" I asked her.

"I am Floor 2. What are you?"

"We're Floor 4," Caroline answered.

Lola picked up her big pink smoothie and started slurping it vigorously. I clenched my teeth together and kept a smile. If there's one thing I don't like, it's slurping.

*Oh gosh*, I said to myself with a mad tone, *now I am in an elevator with a smoothie slurper*. I rubbed my eyes to try to ignore the horrible, disgusting sound, but it was still there. "Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding..."

"What was that?" Caroline yelled. The elevator moved to a halting stop that made me trip and fall on the hard tile. Quickly, I got up and acted as if I hadn't fallen down.

*Why did the elevator stop for no reason? Is there a floor in front of us and the doors won't open? Our mom wants Caroline and me in the room at 4:00, and it's already 4:30.* All these thoughts raced through my mind.

Caroline started banging on the walls, and Lola was pressing the "open" button over and over while slurping and crying. I was terrified so I yelled for help, but no one answered.

After a few minutes, my throat hurt and I sat down and started to cry. "Oh gosh," I said, "we're never going to get out."

Suddenly the dinging started. The elevator shook a bit and started moving upward. We were all overjoyed and 'high fived' each other over and over saying, "Yes!" and "We're going to live."

Lola got off at her floor and I was relieved not to hear her slurping anymore. I do not know how or what had happened to the elevator, but now I will always take the stairs... just in case.