

Week 28: Writing prompts — “Mannerisms” and “waiting”

Waiting

By BRANDEN TAYLOR
Mount St. Joseph Academy, Grade 9
You tap your foot.
You twiddle your thumbs.
You whistle and you think.
You even make a mess on the table with pen ink.
Nothing to do and no one to see,
All you are doing is waiting.
Waiting for the chance to be in,
Waiting to be the next goal made.
You know today is the day.
As the game comes to an end your coach puts you in.
As you make a goal one thing is on your mind.
From the waiting came a chance,
And with that chance you have won.
And by winning you will wait.
Not to play again,
But for the next game.

Acceptance/rejection

By LIANA JOHNSON
Mount Mansfield Union High School, Grade 12

Trotting
On the icy driveway
In oversized, clunky, untied boots
Hair whipping
From the force of the wind
Head bowed
But always looking
Toward the destination.

The mailbox.
The envelope.
The letter.
Let it be today.
I arrive at the mailbox.
I stare it down.
Slowly
Savoring the moment
I open the door with a drawn out
Creak.

Empty.
No!
Trot back inside
To wait by the window
Rocking furiously in a chair.

It's on my mind
Nothing else
Can't think
My future
Determined
By letters
Of acceptance
Or rejection.
Stop rocking.
Stand up.
Out the window
There he is
The one I've been
Waiting for.
The mailman.

Back into my clunky boots
Out the front door
Don't slip!
I reach the mailbox
And remove all its contents.
Back inside, shuffling through
Bills
Magazines
Junk mail
Everything
Except my letter!

I sigh and flop dejectedly
Into a nearby chair.
Maybe it'll come tomorrow.

Miss Annoying

By HAYLEY HANCOCK
Edmunds Elementary School, Grade 4
In the morning I have a living alarm clock. She rubs her head against mine very harshly. She uses her prickly tongue to lick my cheeks. She meows in my ear as loud as a tiger. She has long gray whiskers that tickle my morning face. She pounces on my back digging her sharp claws into me. I open my eyes and there she is waiting for me to get up.

GENERAL SUBMISSIONS

Unstoppable

By RACHAEL DUBOIS
Benson Village School, Grade 8

I lay in the sand
Happy
As the sun smiles down on me
Everything is how it should be
But then you turn on me
Dragging me across the beach
Into a whole new place
One I don't want to be in.
It surrounds me.
Fills my lungs
Invades my thoughts
As you pull me under
And I go down.
My mind drifts
As I'm pulled
Deeper
Deeper
Down I go.
But then you drag me
Until I reach the surface.
To take one last breath
Enough to keep living
Before pushing me
Back under
And I struggle to get air
But your hand holds me
In this ocean of hate
The one you're drowning me in.
Why can't I stop you?

GLASS TIMES AT WACKY HIGH



Loryn Lees, an Essex High School student, writes this about her photography project: “My photos display a day in the life at a non-sensical high school. The world where the school tips to the right, you can see the reflection of your friends sans accessories in their sunglasses, and your friends can conjure a genie that resembles a friend in their palms. Tying all these photos together are the school issued uniform sunglasses. I decided to have fun with the more imaginative side of photography and take advantage of Photoshop to open all sorts of possibilities. In my life I try to have as much fun as possible and my photo assignments are no different. I love it when someone looks at a piece I have done and just stares; it doesn't matter to me whether it is liked or not so long as it is noticed by all.”

The photograph of the man in uniform

By CAITLIN BERNARD
Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

This morning seems foolishly brightened by the light of the buoyant sun. Her feet sweep the floor in a distant agony that fills every space in her soul. She wanders to the kitchen table; dark and faceless like the tormented glass of her eyes. This is her endless mist, her ceaseless fog that feels unreal and lost. The photograph on the table is faded and ashen, but it's her only inception of color in this world. This is the hope that she holds in her damaged hands and sings softly to everyday. She stares at the picture of the man in uniform and convinces herself that he will come back to her. She has convinced herself to wait for the only light that has burnt out and made her heart dark. This broken promise, her diluted injustice, her depleted fate will never become tangible and conscious in her eyes. She has nothing left but her hopelessness, so she waits. This faded photograph has become her faded reality inside of a hollow soul that would give anything to be filled again. And here she waits; waits for the unreality.

Ear ache

By HOLLY THAYER
Rice Memorial High School, Grade 9
My lingering eyes position themselves on the hands
Of a girl, as she fiddles with her ear
Her thumb and middle finger fold the top
Then her pointer finger presses down on the crease
Joining in to what seems like constant torture
Gives the allusion that her ear
Is in fact curled.
Again and again, faster and faster
She folds and unfolds her...well
I contemplate whether it is truly her ear.
Like someone's nails on a chalkboard
My own nails clench at the pain
Like watching someone bleeding
My own blood seems to rush, and skin to sweat.
Only rage and irritation it extends to my own ear
I cringe as my mind recalls the fold and unfold
With such quickness and severity
The ear is distressed, almost red to the touch.
“Stop,” I shout with my eyes wide
Strenuously staring on her dazed expression, anything
To end the crimping and crumpling of the poor ear.
“I can't help it,” she cries pathetically
“It's a bad habit” seems to be her only reply
Alarmed with confusion and serious worry
I then immediately giggle at the unusual
Addiction to playing with an ear.
To ponder one's ear seems
Prohibited...what a common use it possesses
Why satisfy it with extra attention
And further...why must she continue to fold and unfold.
I suppose it may be a nervous gesture
Perhaps a really bad habit
Perhaps a relaxing motion
Or perhaps it is simply an annoying mannerism.

The waiting room

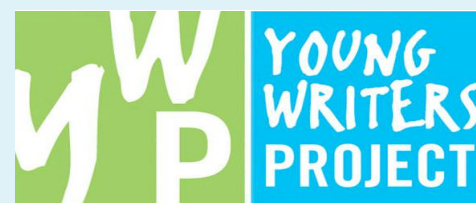
By PEYTON WILSON
Vermont Academy, Grade 9

I nearly feel sick; I wonder if you do too?
Your face is getting quite pale.
I notice we both jump when someone
passes through
So maybe I'm hitting the head of the nail:
You and I are worried sick, huh?
The hospital smell I never liked from the start
Has never seemed so bad.
But I'll sit here with you, through every part
'Cause I know it's an experience you haven't had.
Don't worry, I know how it feels.
Still, it's nerve-wracking, waiting here
Unable to help or be of use.
All we can do is keep a tight hold on our fear
And wait to hear the news.
We'll be here when she finally comes out.
You've never had a child, right?
Yeah, this must be scary.
I can tell by the way you hold my hand tight
And the way you're breathing only barely.
Relax. She's strong. She's tough.
You can't divert your thoughts at all, I know
So don't pretend to try.
The second there's a whisper or the wind blows
we'll start and nearly die.
Exactly how much can our nerves take?
It's anticipation. Our worry. Our fear
that she won't come out (this time around)
Because we know of the chances here
and there's always that one out of bounds
But we're praying with all our hearts.
She'll come out like she has before.
Just watch. Wait and see.
She'll be healthy again, and what's more
It will be the time for you and me
To finally choose a good name
and make room for one more.

Through shiny white teeth

By NINA SINGER
Edmunds Elementary School, Grade 4

Something annoying that my sister does is whistle through her shiny, white teeth. It makes me feel like hitting her. That annoying whistle through her shiny white teeth sounds like a high pitched scream. She does it when she's happy or nervous or any feeling in between. I've tried to stop her but it doesn't work.
Maybe I'll try earplugs.



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What Hunter does

By HEATHER WHITE
Fairfield Center School, Grade 7

I have a five-year-old brother named Hunter who has certain mannerisms that he does all the time. He loves to play with everyone's feet! He doesn't care whose foot it is, as long as he has one-he's fine. I think it might have something to do with his autism, because he always wants to see your feet. If you have socks on them, he'll just pull them off, and then he'll rub your feet. He'll even talk to them. He'll talk to them and he likes when you move your feet and pretend that your feet are talking back to him!

In the end, when you have to get up for something, he might get mad or sad. But, it's okay because my family and friends are used to it, and he can always find someone's feet.