

Things I avoid

By **MAGGIE NOWLAN**

Main Street Middle School, Grade 6

I avoid pistachio ice cream
I avoid gummy peanuts
I avoid the creeps in front of the supermarket
I avoid waking up
Then I avoid going to bed
I avoid pretentious people
I avoid cliques, posesses, packs and anything related
I avoid truth
I avoid lies
I avoid wet socks
I avoid bad haircuts
I avoid crowds
I avoid ax murderers
I avoid cafeteria food
And I avoid bratty toddlers
I avoid the mafia
I avoid killer whales
And I avoid sharks
I avoid boy bands
I avoid fake bacon bits
I avoid entitled people
I avoid racism
But if there's one thing I don't avoid
It's avoidance.

Busted!

By **KIERSTIN DAWLEY**

Shrewsbury Mountain School, Grade 5

(Excerpt: Full story at youngwritersproject.org)

"Time to put away your reading and take out your writing notebooks," Mr. Morrison said cheerfully. I let out a humongous sigh and slumped in my chair. All I could think was, *I don't want to write.*

Mr. Morrison gave us our assignment. We had to write at least 100 words about avoidance. I hate writing. I have a hard time figuring out what I should write and writing hurts my hand.

First I tried to find a way to avoid writing. I walked over to my bin to find my writing notebook. In order to find my writing notebook, I had to take out all of my books, folders, pens, pencils and papers. Once I found my notebook I had to put everything back in my bin. This took me forever (wink, wink). I gradually walked back to the table with my notebook and pencil. I sat down to write and suddenly my pencil broke (I may have accidentally been pushing too hard on purpose).

I slowly walked to the pencil sharpener, and started sharpening ...



THIS WEEK: "Avoidance" & "Intolerance"

Each week Young Writers Project selects best work from students throughout Vermont. Students respond to prompts provided by YWP or send their best "general" work. A team of students helps select work for publication in this and eight other newspapers. For more go to youngwritersproject.org, a civil community of young writers.

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; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback; and works directly with teachers through **The Schools Project**, a comprehensive digital writing and training program. For more go to ywpschools.net.

YWP NEWS

Vermont Humanities Council has given a grant to YWP to hold in-person and online workshops with Vermont authors. NEXT UP:

Phoebe Stone, author of "All the Blue Moons at the Wallace Hotel," will be at YWP's headquarters, **Saturday, May 15. SIGN UP at youngwritersproject.org**. She will continue providing feedback online for several weeks following.

Intolerance

By **KELSEY SMITH**

Richmond Middle School, Grade 7

Not everything is as it seems
Masked by appearances.
Judging is correct
Differences denied.
If not the mere image
Of all the others
Something is wrong.
They are afraid to accept the other because of different skin color
Varied thoughts, different hair, changing smell
Shunned and sent away
Why are there wars?
Inability to accept the other
Denying rights because of change
Some say the inability to believe, respect, and love another
Is finally gone.
False.
It is all around us.
It is us.
We are intolerance.

NEXT PROMPT

General. Send us your best writing about anything. **Due Friday.**

Farming. Do you farm? Have you ever worked on a farm? Visited one? Tell a story that describes the reality of farming today. **Deadline: Apr. 23.**

Submit at:

youngwritersproject.org

Homework

By **CONNER RENEE LAFROMBROISE**

Chelsea Public School, Grade 10

What do I avoid? Homework! I dread it, loathe it, even just the thought of writing a paper or a list of math problems makes me irritable. I put off every assignment until the last minute and try to finish them as quickly as possible.

I don't really mind doing work in school, but when they make you take stuff home and think critically on your own free time; to me that is the worst. We're already at school nearly seven hours five days a week! Teachers really expect more? But everyone has to go through it, and education is important, so I guess I'll have to stick it out until I graduate.

New kid

By **SHANNON EDSON**

Richmond Middle School, Grade 7

I walk into school the first day
The popular girl walks up
Looks me up and down
Does she know?
Does she know I shop at Walmart?
That I don't have a summer home?
About my background, my father?
Her lip curls up in a grimace
And I know she does
She can tell, and I give up hope
Of sitting at the popular table,
Being invited to parties,
Having lots of friends
Even before I get to homeroom

Up high

By **NAOMI PITT**

Main Street Middle School, Grade 6

I avoid heights.
Being up high is a wonderful, yet horrible thing.
You are closer to the sky than when you are on the ground but you can fall and get surrounded by pain.
Sometimes you can't help but be frightened by the sight in front of you when you're up high.
But it is also very beautiful.
On top of the Empire State Building you feel inspired.
The sight of New York City is amazing
It's one of the things that show how height is a wonderful yet horrible thing

MORE GREAT STUDENT WRITING AT
YOUNGWRITERSPROJECT.ORG

Inside us

By **CHRISTINA HAYS**

Spaulding High School, Grade 11

Do you ever wonder what
Is beyond your looks?
For some it's more beauty
For others they're not
As fortunate.
I admit to trying to
Be somebody I'm not.
High school makes it hard
To be yourself.
I don't like pretending to be
Someone I'm not
But I don't like who I've become.
I wouldn't say I'm a monster, no.
But I'm not like her.
I try to be pretty, hoping to hide my ugly
But no amount of hairspray
No amount of eye shadow
Or tanning will change who I am.
I am a victim,
Of what I don't dare say.
Inside of me is a horrible past
But I have learned to
Make the best of it.
No matter how hard
I try to change I am still
Me. My life has never and never will
Be perfect. You may be pretty on
The outside
But inside you will always be you.
Your past is what makes up your
Present and the present
Makes your future!