

# Week 35: Writing prompts — “The Prom” & “Graduation”

## Four years

By Bridget Iverson

MOUNT MANSFIELD UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 9

It wasn't an end so much as  
a moving on.  
The plastic chairs in the gym used to fit her  
in fifth grade but now  
her knees stuck up too high  
and the plastic surface  
clung to the fabric of her skirt.  
The principal congratulated the music award winners.  
She stared at the foam balls caught in the ceiling fans  
and heard years-old P.E. classes  
echo in the applause around her.  
She wasn't sad to leave.  
In high school she could  
maybe start better than she did  
when she was 10,  
better now that she had four more years  
of life.  
Four years of homework  
and teachers  
and purple-carpeted floors with  
bits of crumbs the janitors never caught.  
Four years of walking the halls  
with friends, and sometimes  
walking alone and wishing someone was with her.  
Four years of possibilities  
that were never quite possible  
for her.  
Four years of life.  
Four years she was leaving  
behind.

## Oh, good, prom

By Karlie Kauffeld

LELAND AND GRAY UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11

So, here I am. Two weeks until prom, and dateless. Very, very dateless. The world has clouded over for me. All talk is of the prom; all announcements are about the prom, all the posters on the walls and the telephone conversations: PROM. And you know what? Every other girl seems to have a date! Why me? I am a perfectly able dancer, I have mildly style-able hair, and I'm sure I could find a dress that would flatter me. But do I get to prove any of those things? NO. While one might argue that you needn't have a date to attend the annual junior/senior prom, the dateless attendee would reply that after dozens of pitiful glances cast in her direction, and after standing near the table piled with cheese and crackers making small talk with her English teacher who's chaperoning, a date is absolutely necessary.

Here, allow me to paint a picture of the so frequently dreamed of night. You enter the enormous hall, white lights are strung about and a quiet, constant murmur wafts through. Some friends are huddled, giggling and poking at their boyfriend's suits, remarking that they "still can't believe I got you into this tux!" The group you came with, perfectly matched girls and boys, hang their coats and join the "fun." You are left standing alone. You make your way clumsily, in the heels that you hate but that your mother made you buy, over to the wall where you find a chair just begging to be sat in. After a while you kick off the heels and join the gang for some nice bopping around. Soon, though, the music changes dramatically. The first few slow chords weave their way through the couples quickly gravitating toward one another. "Maybe someone will ask me to dance," you think silently. You pretend not to look too eager, while your eyes dance around the room, stopping momentarily on each boy until he grabs up his "gal." It's not that you're boy-crazy ... it's just that once in a while ... it might be nice ...

Then comes a crisp tuxedo headed straight for you. You know you're blushing. Do you look at him or pretend not to notice? You automatically become fascinated with the tie hanging lazily off your so-carefully-picked dress, and you realize he's walking by you. Instantly you feel stupid. So, so stupid. You glance behind you and realize that you're standing right in front of the bathrooms. "Wonderful. The best place to pick up guys," you think sarcastically. Yep, I can see it now. That's where I'll be, chatting up Ms. Scuttlebop while she flails her pink nails and wipes tears from her eyes whimpering, "Oh, they are just darling out there!"

I have to find a date. I can't go to the prom alone ... I simply cannot. My friends attack me with words of wisdom such as, "Just because you are tall doesn't mean you can't ask a short boy" and "Oh, the difference between a senior and a freshman isn't that much. You should ask one of them." Just once, I want to go with someone my height and my age. Just once, I want to be asked, not do the asking. I don't care how anti-feminist of me it is, but I WANT TO BE THE GIRL!

The prom has taken over my life. It has caught me in its taffeta and crinoline-covered arms and is shaking me about to its groovy dance song. Gosh, just please, somebody ask me!!

*(Editor's note: In the end, she was asked and was planning to go to the prom with a date.)*

## One last chance

By Eden Hubert

DOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADE 5

The walk down the aisle is terrifying. She hates it. All the way through. Everybody stares at her. Some shouting. Others keeping silent, wishing she was their stunning daughter, gorgeously dressed from head to toe in white.

Cameras flash at her, but she can't tell. She is too busy trying to walk correctly. This foot then that one, then this one. The music makes her even more nervous.

When she finally meets the rest of her class, she realizes this is it. One last chance to say goodbye to her friends. One last chance to look through the lost and found. One last look at her school. One last time to stand up to the school bully. She wishes she were brave enough to do all of these things, but she's not. And she doesn't.

## DANCERS' CROWNING MOMENT



JULIA STURGESS, *Essex High School*

Sturgess writes about her photo project: "In my theme roll I tried to catch a glimpse of the dancers backstage during a performance. I wanted to show the beauty of the costumes and the dancers' preparation. When taking my photos, I paid close attention to the lighting because I wanted to create a dramatic effect. The backstage preparation has its own magical quality and mood. My goal in this assignment was to capture the essence of that mood."

## This isn't supposed to make you cry

By Maria Burt | CASTLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

The kind of merriment my friends and I had was unthinkable. We laughed until we cried. I know we're getting ready to go to off into the world and we're just about ready for graduation, but I'll never forget these last years. The secrets we shared, the laughs we laughed, the tears we cried, the things we saw and the friendships that were made stronger.

Soon, we'll go our separate ways. I don't want this to come to an end, but it has to. We've never been closer, but it's hard to think that I may never see some of my closest friends ever again. We'll get through this year and hopefully stay in touch. Maybe we won't be this close anymore, but we still have each other somewhere in our hearts.

And with that in mind I tell you this, please don't change. I want to see you smile every time I see you. Embrace the future, have no regrets. Know that I'm only a phone call away. Happiness is not the absence of tears, but rather the knowledge that

they'll fall, and letting them anyway.

Now, let's not think of the future. We'll think about the past instead. We've had some good times and some bad, but look at where we are now. Who would have thought we'd get so far and still have one another?

The past is history; think about today, right here, right now. What are you doing with your time? Letting it fly by or cherishing every moment? From now on, every time you take a breath, I want you to do so with care. Take pride in the fact that you can. Live like there's no tomorrow – you never know when there won't be.

You all have an important place in my heart. Words last a year, pictures a decade, but memories go on forever. With that being said, thank you for every memory you've helped create. There's still plenty of time for more. Forever is never empty and never full.

### GENERAL SUBMISSIONS

## Cliffs

By Julie Curran

MAIN STREET MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 7

Facing the past  
Never see the light  
Tremble in the darkness  
Of an everlasting night.\*  
Slowly moving forward  
But never turning 'round  
Until you back up  
Into what was never found.\*  
As you fall you hear  
All the voices you ignored  
Telling you what would happen-  
But now it's just a blur.\*  
Hitting ground so hard  
Will soon make you see  
What happens  
When you replace the hole where hope should be.

## Art

By Aurora

NORTHFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADE 4

When I draw, I feel happy  
When I create, I feel great  
When I paint  
Sometimes I faint  
Isn't life great?

## One last

By Samantha Burns

FAIRFIELD CENTER SCHOOL, GRADE 8

One last walk  
Side by side  
Down the aisle  
No one talks  
One last speech  
Diploma time  
Brisk handshakes  
Smile wide  
One last hug  
After so many years  
We're freshmen now  
So cheer!

## T.H.E. P.E.R.F.E.C.T. D.R.E.S.S.

By Eli Millman

FAIRFIELD CENTER SCHOOL, GRADE 8

Time is running short!  
How will I ever find it?  
Every store is bare

Prom is just around the corner!  
Everyone has one except me ...  
Running from store to store  
Finally I come upon a treasure!  
Elegant and unique  
Colors like the setting sun  
Taffeta and silk.  
Drapes over me, fitting to a tee  
Reminiscent of spring's first bloom  
Everyone's looking at me  
Sashaying across the dance floor  
Sure I found the perfect dress!

## Prom date: 101

By Andrew Richardson

CHELSEA PUBLIC SCHOOL, GRADE 11

When I first entered high school I didn't really know who, or how, I was going to ask someone to the prom. When I asked others they said that they were going with a group of people. I didn't really want to go with a group of people so I decided to ask an upperclassman from Spaulding. At this time she was a junior and I was a freshman. I was kind of nervous but I knew her and that made everything a lot easier. So, my advice for freshmen in asking someone to be their prom date: just be yourself. Girls don't like fake guys. And when you get to the prom, be outgoing and get out there and dance. Girls also love guys who aren't afraid to dance and have a good time. If you don't do this, you might find your date dancing with someone else.



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## YWP News:

### Montpelier slam!

Hey poets! Bring two poems and sign up a little before 7 p.m. for a wild slam at Montpelier's Langdon Street Café on Wednesday, June 4. This is an ideal venue with an amazingly supportive audience, so don't be shy! All ages. Prizes!

## On the Web at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org)

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