

Siblings

By ALYSSA HALE

Berlin Elementary School, Grade 6
Sometimes my sister gets on my nerves
But other times our friendship curves
What I mean by that
Is that she will give me a pat on the back
She will be proud one minute
And the next she goes over the limit
I love her no matter what
But sometimes I mess up
I get her in trouble
And then I get into a bubble
That's what happens to me
When I don't listen to mom, as you can see
Then I get mad at her
But that's how people learn.
No matter how much we fight
I will always feel that our friendship will
fly away into the night
Friends and relatives always have their days
But most of the time it pays
Meaning that no matter what happens to
me and my family
I will always appreciate what they do for me.

The futility of life

By EMILY CAMPBELL

Main Street Middle School, Grade 8
I often stop and ask the sky
To tell me what comes when we die
The clouds don't seem to understand
The problem that I have at hand
They drift across the cerulean
That stretches past the lofty green
Of mountains rising up to meet
The puffs of wind so soft and sweet
But behind all the endless blue
I know there's a darker hue
Engulfing black with little white
Forget any celestial light
It's just a gaping emptiness
Devoid of air and life and yes
It seems that we aren't anywhere
Or if we were, no one would care
They've better things to ponder on
All the ones that too are gone
Because they don't exist as well
And none of them have thoughts to tell
No lives to live, no deaths to die
Just little specks beyond the sky.

Cell phones?

By OMEED FALLAHI

Union Elementary School, Grade 4
I don't have a cell phone and don't really
need one yet. I really don't mind if other
people use cell phones in class, as long as
they don't make me jealous. Personally, I
wouldn't want a phone ringing or vibrating
in my pocket while I'm doing a math test.
And who are you going to call anyway? All
your friends are at school so you could just
talk to them. I've seen people texting each
other in the same room! What is the world
coming to with all this technology? Not
that I don't like it. I don't care if people use
phones in class. Either way, I can't.

THIS WEEK: General writing



Each week, Young Writers Project receives submissions from students all over the state. We select the best for publication here and in eight other newspapers. This week, students submitted general writing. For more go to youngwritersproject.org, a safe, civil online 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.

YWP runs youngwritersproject.org and **The Schools Project**, a comprehensive online classroom and training solution for teachers to integrate digital technology into their curriculum. **Teachers interested in signing up or renewing**, go to ywpschools.net or contact YWP at 802-324-9537.

TEACHERS NOTE

Sign-up is underway for **2010/2011 Schools Project writing program**: Digital training, classroom Web site, ongoing mentoring, lesson plans. Spaces limited. Contact Geoffrey Gevalt, 324-9537.

Summer Master's Course: YWP and National Writing Project offering a digital writing course in late June.

YWP Master's Practicum: Year-long Digital Learning course (St. Michael's credits).

See digitalteachers.net for both.

Stupid, miserable winter

By MAX BAIRD | Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 7

I wake up. Take a shower. Eat breakfast. Get dressed and start shoveling. I don't know why my dad insists on using a shovel. Why can't we get a snow blower like a normal family? Well, while I'm shoveling, the stupid, little neighborhood kids (led by my brother) start throwing their first volley of snowballs at me. *Ptf, ptf, ptf.*

I yell, "Scram, you little pests." Those little demons scurry to safety behind their forts. Those guys have the whole street of forts connected via tunnels. It is very impressive. I go back to shoveling. Then the attack starts again. The snowballs shower upon me like rain. I think one has dog poop in it (courtesy of my brother's friend).

Three words: This... means... war! But I need some help. So I go to my friend Johnny's house for some backup. He is one of the funniest people I know. Johnny agrees to help me fend off the little monsters. So Johnny and I start walking toward my house. We walk into an ambush! At least six people attack us from the sides. That is pretty weird — there are not that many kids on the street. Then I recognize some kids from Elm Street. We are totally overwhelmed. It is time we get more help.

We run for it. We arrive back at Johnny's house to ask his sister for help. Of course she says no. Johnny and I run for my house. The kids throw snowballs at us and we return fire with shovels full of snow. It goes on like this for hours until I hear my mom call for hot chocolate. I say goodbye to Johnny and hurry inside with my brother.

Once we sit down my mom asks why I haven't finished the driveway. My brother and I look at each other and say at the same time, "His fault!"

Unfold

By ASHLEY HEANEY | Northfield Middle School, Grade 8

A broken past, a heavy heart, tied together but falling apart
Glued with sorrow, painted with lies, looks a lot better to foreign eyes
You tell her you love her every day, yet everything but love remains the same.
Even though my feet are trembling and every word I say comes stumbling,
I will bear it all.
No doubt, scream or shout, no one will ever hear my case.
And I tried and tried, a latchkey child with a decent life
Second page, same story, all the work and none of the glory
I tried and tried.

Dear Readers,

We hope you've enjoyed reading of students' hopes, fears and opinions on this space during the school year. Today marks the end of this year's Young Writers Project Newspaper Series in which we published the work of 1,000 students whose work was selected from a total of 7,500 submissions.

Thanks to the published students; their effort added to our lives. We know how much it meant; as one teacher wrote us:

"My student is more than thrilled to have her piece published in a newspaper. This was a goal she set back in September of this school year and how great to have her dream come true! ... This is a powerful way to invest in students in our state."

Thanks to students who weren't published but kept trying. Success never comes easy; strong writing skills will help you gain confidence, learn and succeed.

Thanks to this newspaper and the other eight papers that recognize the importance of giving voice to young people by publishing student work each week.

Thanks to those who generously supported YWP's work: We are a small nonprofit that depends on individuals, corporations and foundations. (To donate go to youngwritersproject.org and click "Support" for more info.)

Special thanks to major donors including: FairPoint Communications, Physician's Computer Company, Northfield Savings Bank, KeyBank, TagNewMedia, Chittenden Bank, Darkside Snowboards; foundations that include A.D. Henderson, Bay and Paul, Metz Family, Admiral Nelson and Vermont Humanities Council; and individuals such as John Canning, Stephen Kiernan, Dave Demers, Susan Cross, Chris Bohjalian and many others.

YWP is indebted to students at Castleton State College and UVM who provided feedback to many young writers.

Thanks to the teachers; each community school has many dedicated, talented teachers who do so much for students.

Thanks to our partners in The Schools Project, a comprehensive writing program that mentors teachers and provides private online classrooms to be used as part of the regular curriculum. This program is having a tremendous impact.

Over the summer, check out YWP's main Web sites: youngwritersproject.org, ywpschools.net and digitalteachers.net to learn more about our work and to see more student writing. Thanks again, readers, for being the audience that so validates these kids' ideas.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey Gevalt, YWP founder and director

Lee McIsaac, Newspaper Series coordinator