

Sixth Grade, Seventh Grade, and Eighth Grade

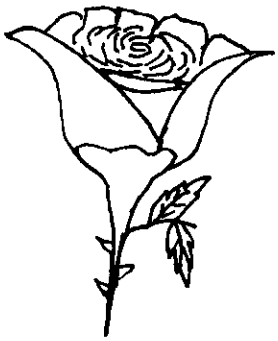
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Gary	Adam	Shubha	Luke	Percy
Helen	Sowmya	Rico	Reya	Evan
	Sierra	Lucas	Sita	Kelly
	Max	Kieran	Mariah	Jeydie

Sowmya C.

CREATIVE WRITING FROM THE SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADE EXPLORERS

Poetry Imagery



A Thorn

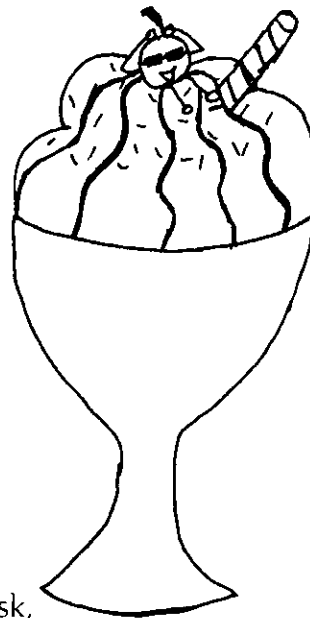
By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14

If I were a thorn on a rose
I would prick your finger
To protect my flower
I am not vicious
I only hurt if I have to

A Cherry's Throne

By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13

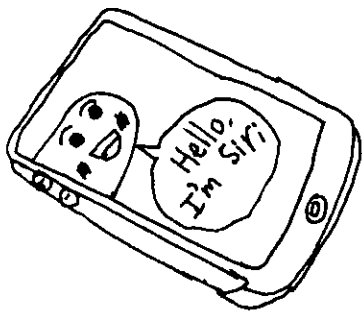
If I were a cherry,
I would lie comfortably
On lined layers of whipped cream
Atop an original sundae
Knowing I'll be first to go.



Siri

By Reza Navadeh, age 11

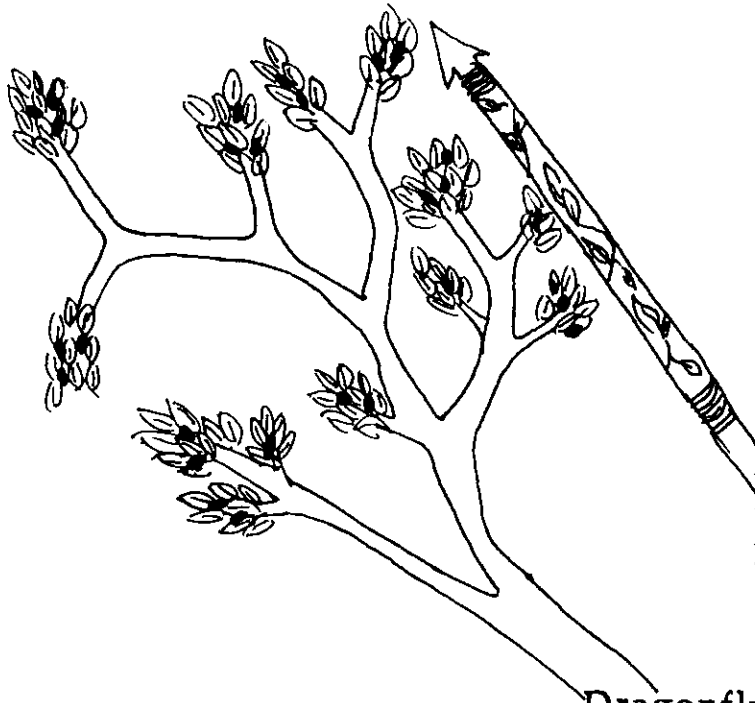
If I were Siri,
I would answer every question you ask,
I would find you the nearest market,
and I would help you
with every task.



If I Were a Cat

By Luke Chacon, age 12

If I were a cat,
I would bound away
And chase the mouse
Of eternal happiness



Records

By Mariah Stewart, age 13

If I were a record
I would give the gift
Of events past,
With an eye to the future

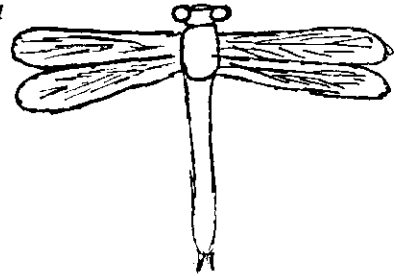
~~~

I would give golden treasures  
From Greeks to Romans  
Their olives and spears  
From British tyranny  
To Yankee independence  
From Trojan horse  
To the Crusades  
I would fill minds with past splendors,  
Promises, and inspirations

## **Dragonfly**

*By Kelly Olivier, age 14*

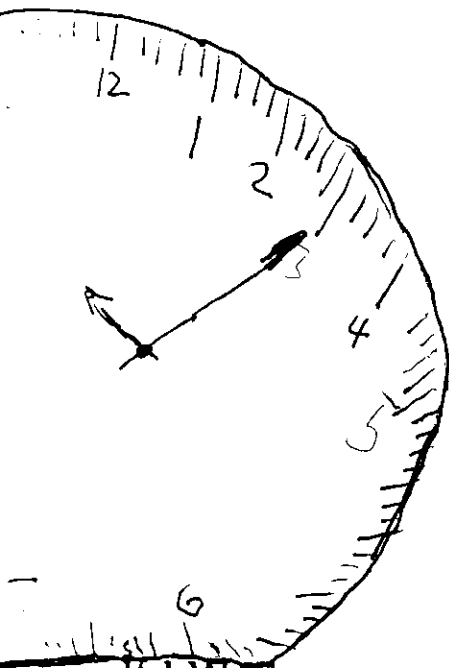
If I were a dragonfly  
I would dart and zoom  
Over fields and flowers  
And the wind would  
Whisk away my worries  
So that I can fly free



## **Santa Cruz**

*By Adam Larrimore, age 14*

Sand everywhere, itching, irritating  
...must dig  
Clouds gently make their way to and fro  
Along the boardwalk  
Hot, noisy, bustling...  
Smell of funnel cakes and corn dogs, cotton candy,  
Sweet and abundant in the air  
Blurs of people walking by...groups  
Which group am I?  
Waves crash. Girls screech. Boys loiter.  
Kaw, kaw, kaw...Pelicans in the air.  
Blaring barker, "Step right up, folks...toy...  
Then home again.



### If I Were a Clock

By Lucas Washburn, age 12

If I were a clock  
I would go tick tock  
They pulled out my batteries  
So I shall stop.

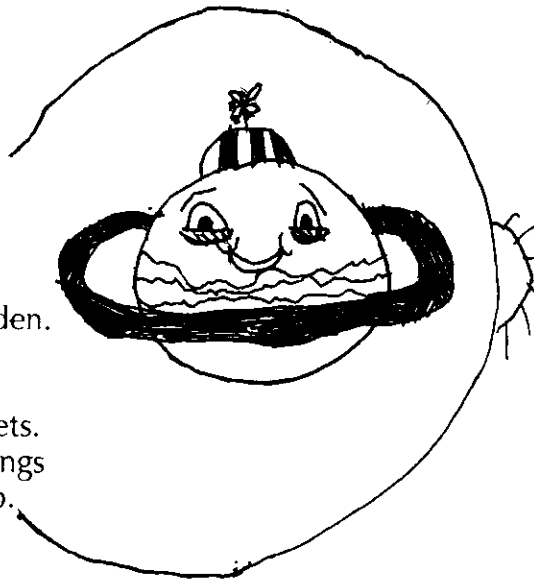
Kick tock tick tock  
ti-



### If I Were...

By Kieran Rege, age 14

If I were a planet  
I would have rings  
Radiant and glowing golden.  
I would drift in space,  
Endlessly going in circles  
Bound to find more planets.  
Then I would shine my rings  
And know true friendship.



### If I Were a Shadow

By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13

If I were a shadow...  
I'd follow you around  
I'd mime your moves  
But never make a sound  
I'd chase you 'round  
Wherever you move  
And on the sly  
I'd mock your groove.



## Simile and Metaphor Poems

### What Will Become?

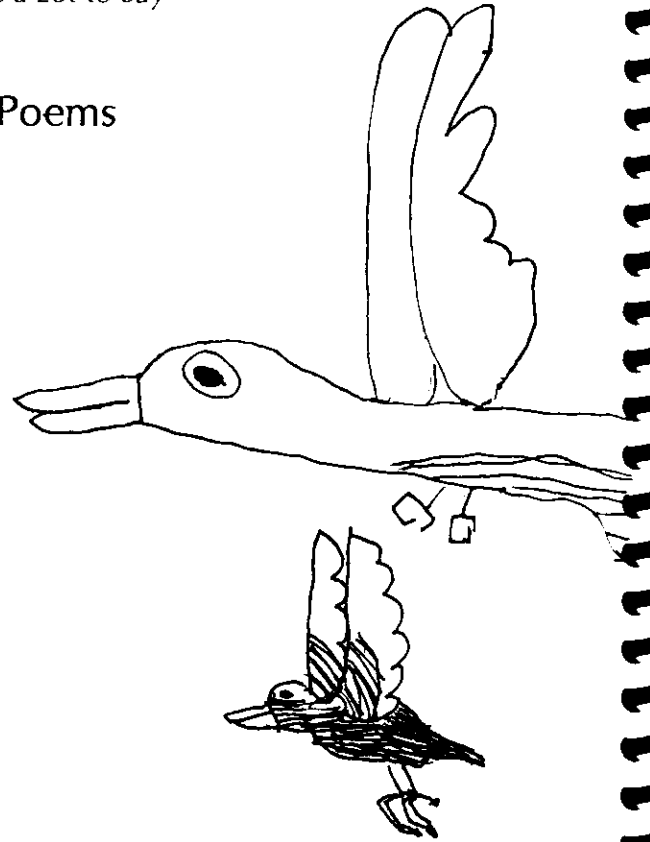
*By Kieran Rege, age 14*

Could Earth be God's experiment  
Product of a heavenly science class  
Of such inspiration and clarity  
He made his own world?

Poured some water for life to grow  
Shined a sunlamp to balance an ecosystem  
And a nightlight to pierce the darkness  
And developed a presmatique spectacle?

If so...then came a curse  
A mold, claiming everything in its path  
Our of control His people are,  
Taking advantage of their disposables

God watches over them, worrying  
Unsure of what their future holds  
And if He doesn't know what will happen,  
How can we?



### Sun Flowers

*By Jeydie Pondler, age 12*

Sunflowers light up my life.  
High fashion little girls,  
They grab my attention  
With their bright bonnets.

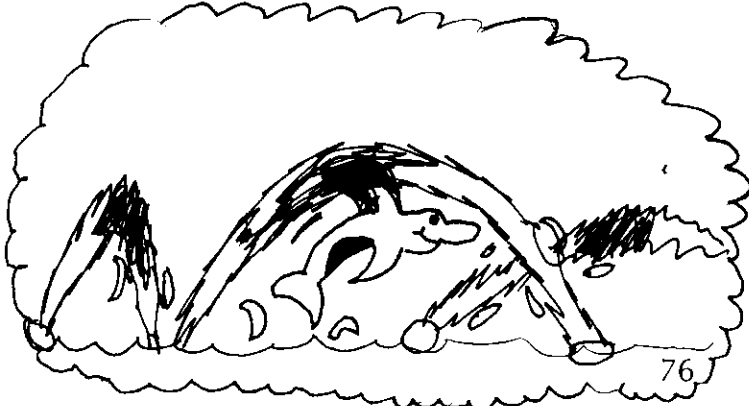
Sunflowers light up my life.  
On days when I'm feeling sad  
My bright yellow jacket  
Makes me feel like a sunflower.

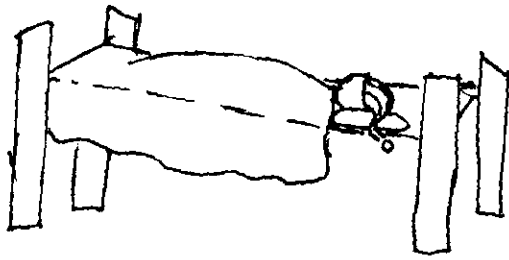


### The Shooting Fountain

*By Reza Navadeh, age 11*

A shooting fountain,  
Like a dolphin,  
Hovering high in the air,  
With a few milliseconds,  
To take a breath  
And dive back again.





### God's Eye

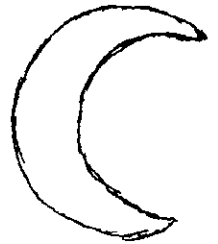
By Sierra Sholes, age 13

The moon is God's eye  
Which he uses to spy  
On little children tucked away  
Under covers 'til the day

### A Child's Ball

By Kelly Olivier, age 14

Each night before I go to sleep  
I look out my window at the moon.  
Rolling across the sky,  
Night after night, it slowly deflates,  
A child's ball with a hole in it,  
Until only a sliver remains.  
Then patched like new, it re-inflates.



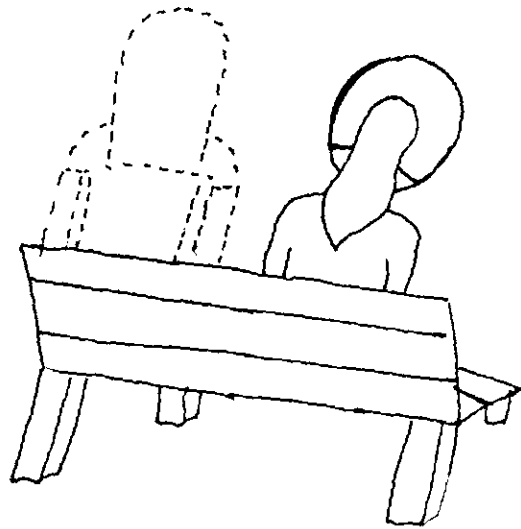
### Who is Poetry?

By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 12

Poetry is a true companion.  
You can tell her anything.  
And when you ask for secrecy  
She'll veil your heart with words.

But she can be quite open, too  
With feelings and emotions  
She'll cry with worry, cheer with joy  
The result can be very moody

Poetry is sure to inspire you  
She sometimes tells great stories  
Her words so expressive, alluring  
You'll know you've found a friend



### Diamond

By Evan Rose, age 12

A diamond is shiny and sharp  
Pretty and hard  
Diamonds are rare and valuable  
Reflective and clear  
Like a thousand mirrors  
Diamonds are the Earth's beauty



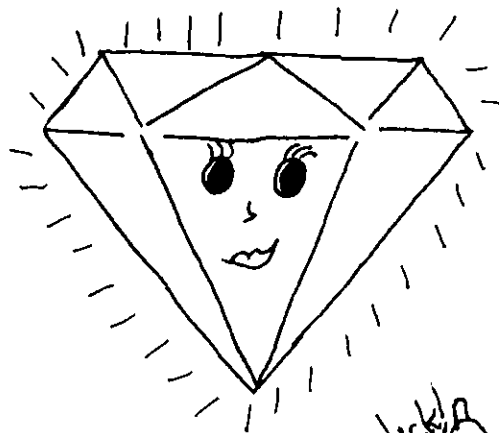
## Personification Poems

### Little Miss Diamond

By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13

Little Miss Diamond's a bit of a pig  
She poses and preens  
She doesn't give a fig  
Truth be told, she's a stuck up queen

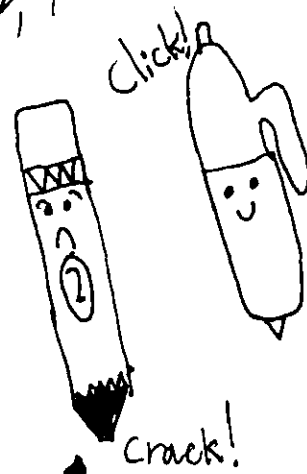
She shines great flashes  
She thinks she's the chief  
She bats her pretty lashes  
As we plastic rings watch in grief



### The Sad Pencil

By Reza Navadeh age 11

Pencil was sad and out of joint  
He had broken his lead and lost his point.  
Instead—how sad! He was replaced by Pen.

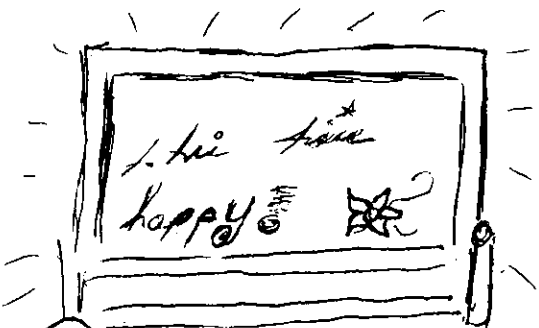


### The White Board

By Jeydie Pondler, age 12

Her clothing is all white.  
You can write on her  
Whenever you like.

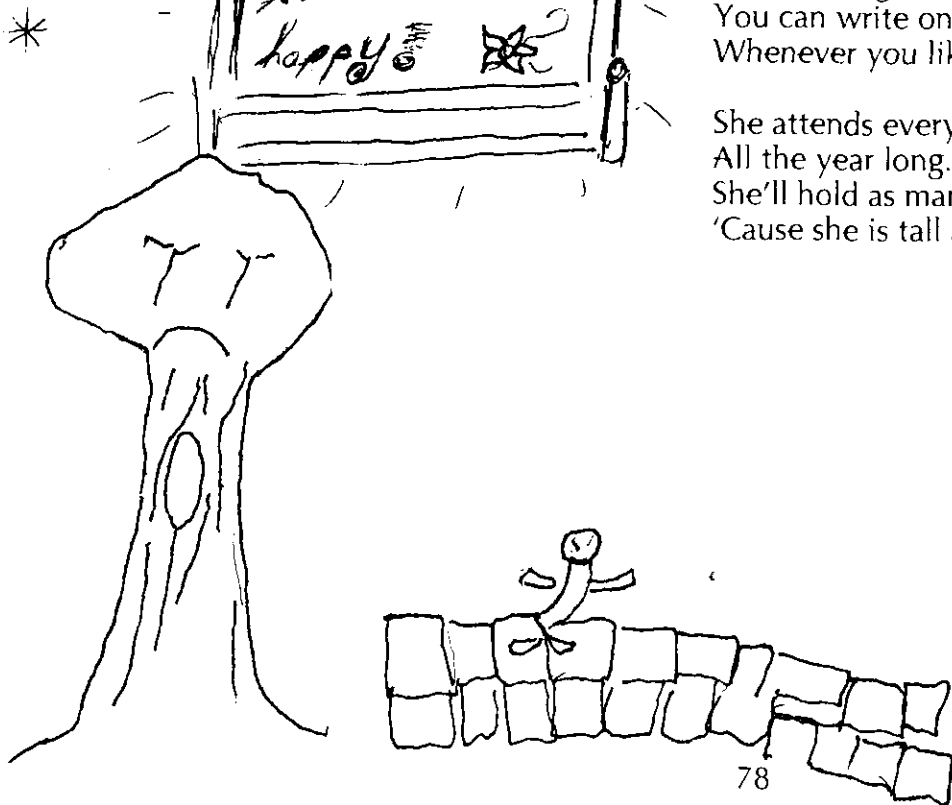
She attends every class  
All the year long.  
She'll hold as many words as you like  
'Cause she is tall and strong.



### Trees

By Lucas Washburn, age 12

Trees are hardy  
Slow and tardy  
If a tree asks for a race  
Don't be nervous  
For it will take him years  
To match your pace



## Two Perspectives

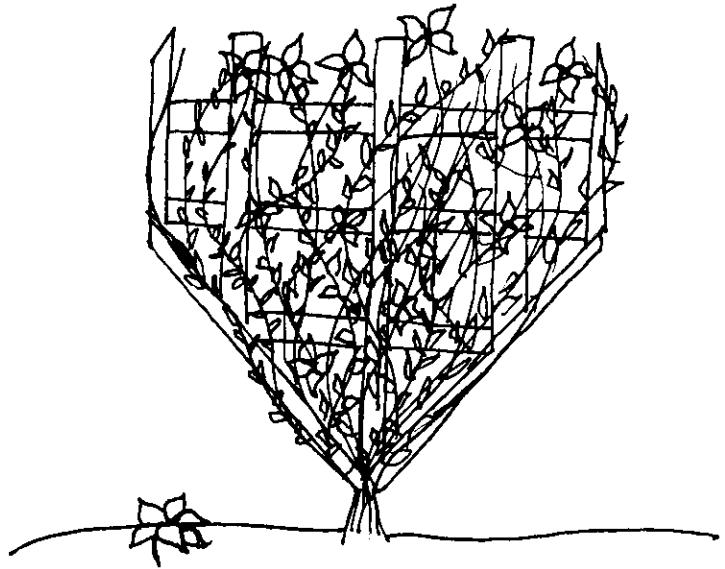
*By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14*

A Gardener's Thanks...

The trellis lends a helping hand  
To her friend, the beautiful vine.  
She holds the flowers way up high  
To the generous, blue, blue sky.

The Vine's View...

My trellis is a helping friend.  
Through rain and shine, 'til season's end  
She never lets me hang too low.  
She helps me bloom; she helps me grow.



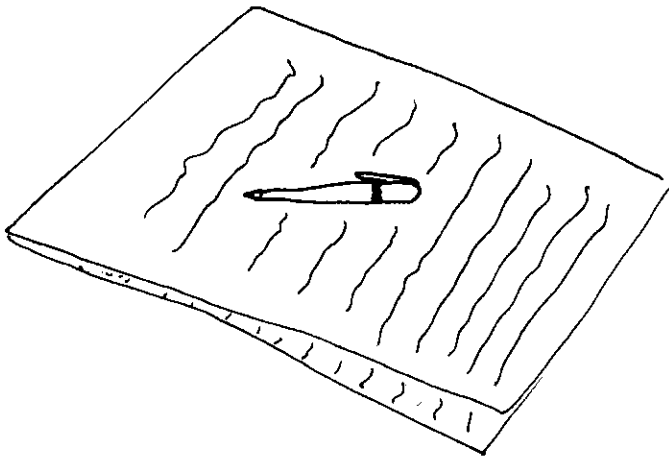
## Pens

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

Pens can be sly  
As they cross the page  
Pens on the fly  
As they take the stage

Pens on the run  
Get the words out fast  
Pencils aren't **fun**  
They don't even last.

Pencil never  
Will outdo the pen  
By being clever  
Not now, not then



## Mosquito

*By Percy Jiang, age 14*

"I need blood! I'm starving!"

Says the little mosquito with an empty stomach  
He knows humans hate him,  
But he is thirsty, more than sorry.  
He sits on a little boy, imperceptibly  
Hesitating for one crucial second.  
"Should I rob his blood?"

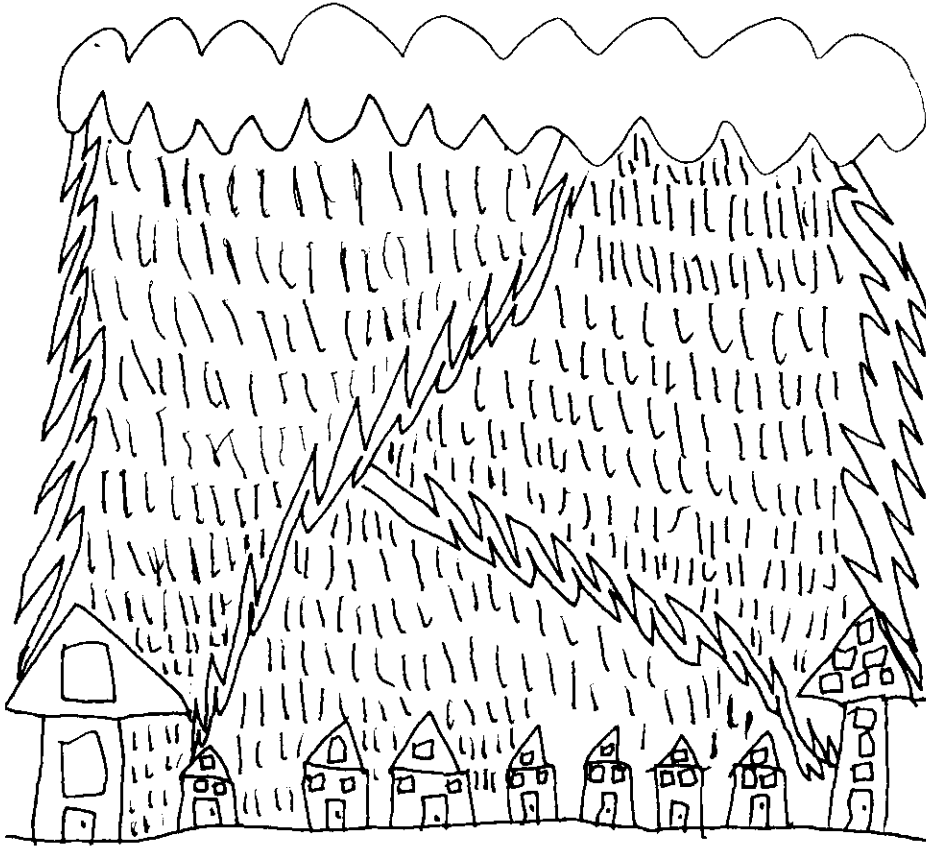
Bang!

The boy sees him first.





## Alliteration and Onomatopoeia Poems



### Thunder Storm

By Luke Chacon, age 12

Thunder booms and  
Lightning crashes through the  
Air as the storm moves  
Toward the city.

Tornados howl, and  
Rain pitches from the sky.  
The cold wind moans and groans,  
And houses creak.

Slowly but surely  
Lightning and thunder  
Fade away. The storm moves on.

And the howl of wind and  
Tornadoes recede to the gentle  
Whoosh of a breeze.

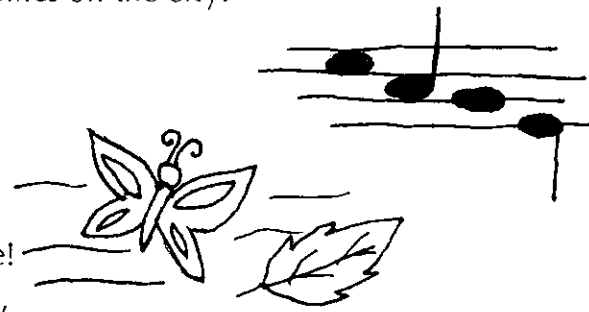
The sky clears and a rainbow  
Smiles on the city.

### Symphony of Sound

Name: Sita Chandrasekaran, age: 14

A leaf lingers in the air as it gently floats down  
Trees sway in tender winds; click - clack; branches meet  
Fluttering butterflies flap their frail wings back  
To the rustling green grass; where the silent stag - crackle!  
Steps on the resting leaf, while the rabbit rapidly thumps,  
Flattening the forest floor with rhythmic tempo.

Bobcats purr with alto voices, resting under shades of giants  
A bustling brook murmurs as she trickles daintily through,  
All in time for Mother Nature's symphony of sounds when  
Whoosh - an oblivious car cruises by the refined orchestra.

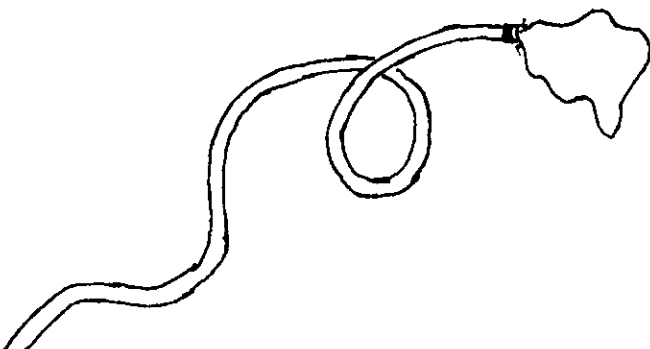


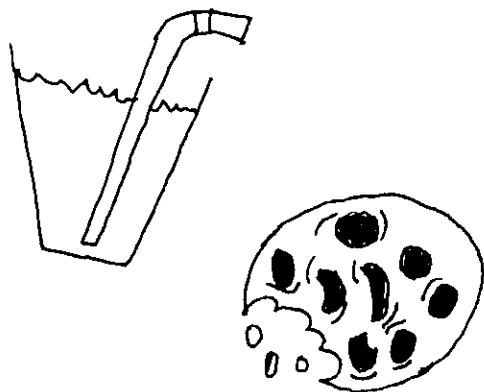
### Slip and Slide on Concrete

By Sierra Sholes, age 13

Splish, splash.

Oops. CRASH!





### The Cookie

By Reza Navadeh, age 11

I just can't wait to eat a cookie.  
Crimbling and crambing,  
Crumb will fall upon my seat.  
I'll dip it in milk  
And say, "mmm" and "ahh,"  
I go to the pantry  
To find my desire,  
And then Mom says, "NO!"

### Making a Veggie Salad

By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 12

Cut the carrots nice and clean  
Peel the pickles, dark and green  
Dice tomatoes, fine and square  
Then chop, chop, chop, if you dare!

Mix in a bowl; don't forget the salt.  
Then stir and stir; there can be no fault.  
After you're done, it's time to eat  
Hear the crunch and enjoy your treat.



### A Fish in Trouble

By Kieran Rege, age 14

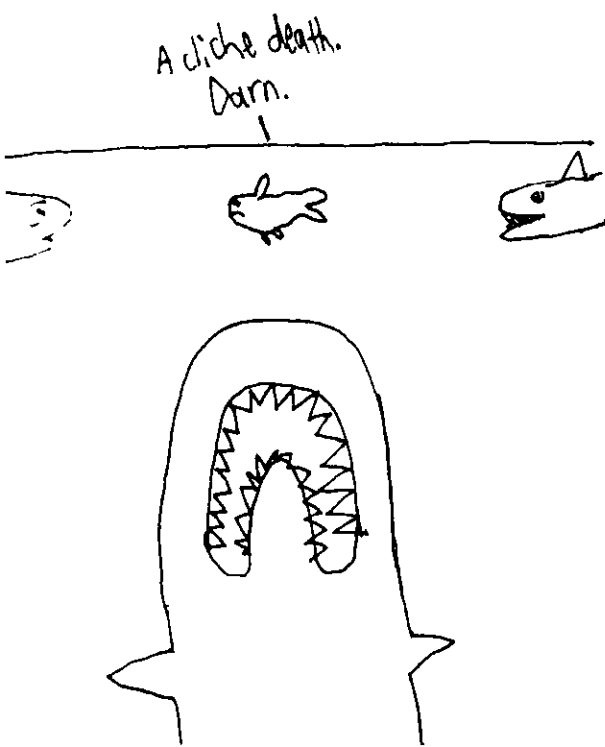
I am a feeble fish  
Like a wandering cloud of the sea  
Careful, colorless, cold

When "WHOOOSH"  
Like a dart, something zips by

Then "CHOMP"  
A shark...swimming around me  
Like a swarm, I feel it coming close

"CRUNCH" '  
Another one zips by!

This can only mean one thing.  
FEEDING FRENZY!

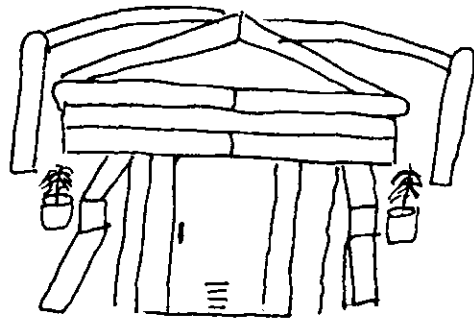


## Poems from the Ananda Meditation Retreat Fieldtrip May 2012

### Babaji's\* Cave

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13*

We walk calmly, with a steady pace,  
Following the leader, twigs snapping.  
We come to a stop. Down below  
A parade of stairs leads to a door—  
Invitation to concentration.  
Silence looms. Dark walls chill  
As we meditate in Babaji's Cave.



\*Babaji is a revered Indian yogi.

### Lizard

*By Sierra Sholes, age 13*

If you find a lizard  
Be proud you found a wizard.  
The way it blends  
And hides in bends  
Its magic has no ends



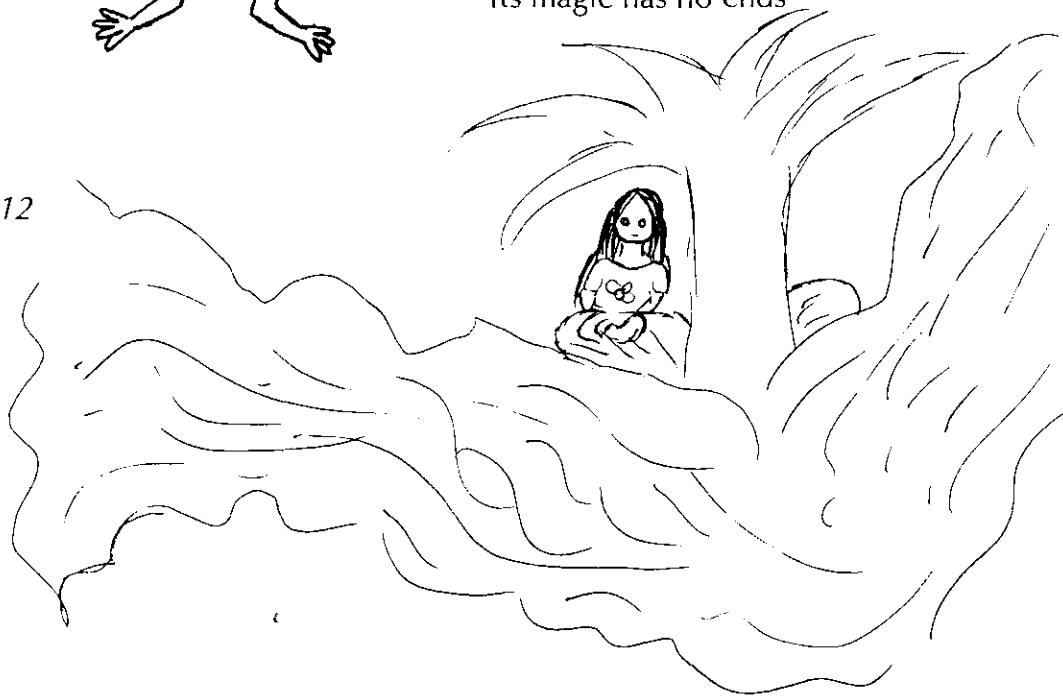
### The River

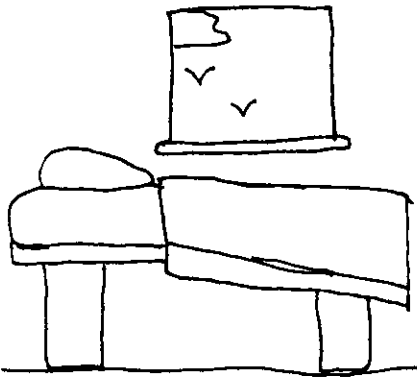
*By Jeydie Pondler, age 12*

It runs past  
With a glimmer  
Its bright green water  
Begging to be touched.

When I look  
Down the steep cliff  
From the bridge above,  
I am afraid  
Of dropping  
Into the River.

My fear of heights  
Turns me away.





## **Morning**

*By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14*

I lay in bed—quiet, calming  
Noisy birds sing—loud, chiming  
Eyes dart open—alert, watching.  
Sunlight floods the sky—bright, spreading

I'm out of bed, careful, walking  
Steps call like birds, loud, creaking  
Girls roll around—awake, groaning  
We whisper, one of us still sleeping

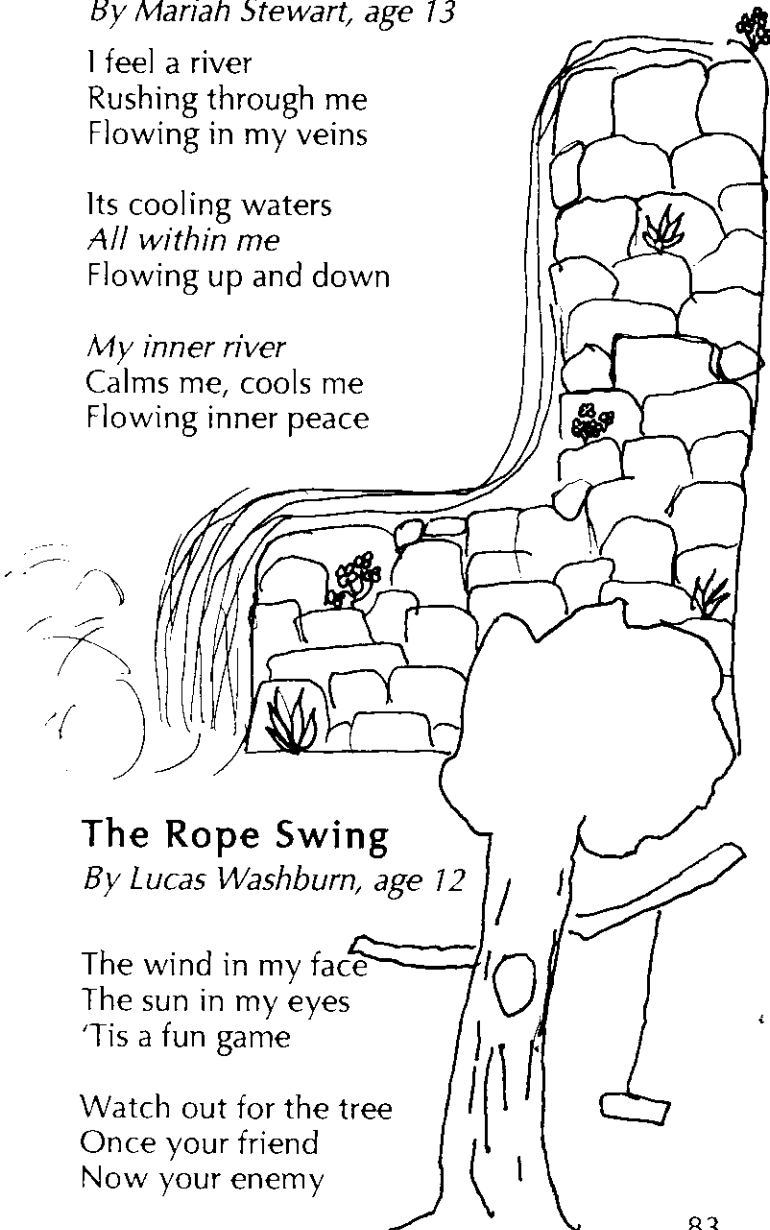
## **The River Within**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

I feel a river  
Rushing through me  
Flowing in my veins

Its cooling waters  
*All within me*  
Flowing up and down

*My inner river*  
Calms me, cools me  
Flowing inner peace



## **The Rope Swing**

*By Lucas Washburn, age 12*

The wind in my face  
The sun in my eyes  
'Tis a fun game

Watch out for the tree  
Once your friend  
Now your enemy

## **21 Blackjack**

*By Evan Rose, age 12*

"21 blackjack! I have won!"  
Says Adam, sure  
The game is done.

"Not so fast," I coo.  
"Joker always wins"  
So the joke's on you.



## Confusion

*By Shubha Charavarty, age 13*

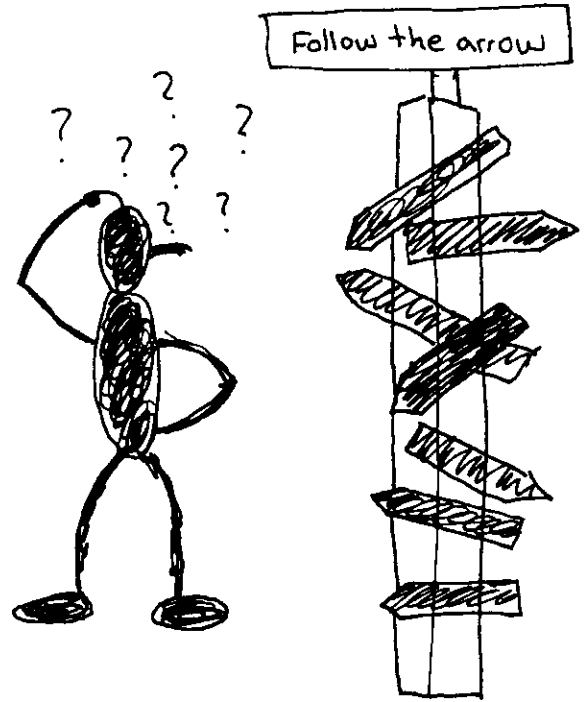
Writing poetry is like  
Wandering  
In a dark tunnel  
The noises,  
The dark confusion...  
Arrgh!

Rhythm  
Rhyme  
Such a  
Hard time

Suddenly  
A light...  
Hope  
Is in sight

It is far far  
Long  
Tough  
And hard

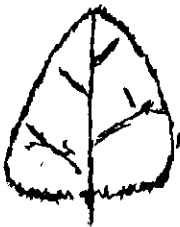
Will you go  
Or forfeit all?



## Wisps of Nature

*By Rico Barron, age 14*

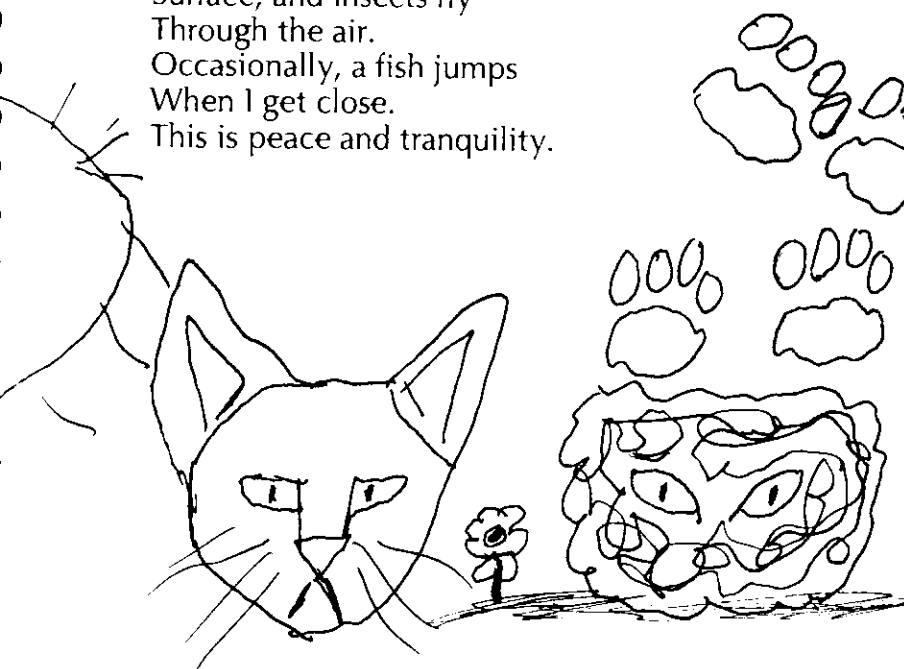
A breeze glides  
Through trees  
Whistling the breath  
Of a thousand wisps  
A slithering tail  
Slips out of sight  
A bird's wing  
Marks the earth  
With a shadow  
A mountain lion  
Clenches its claws  
Against a tree  
To hunt its prey  
Bears roar  
Coyotes howl  
Falcons screech  
Stars fly  
Fish splash  
Nature holds  
And nature lets go.



## Peace and Tranquility

By Luke Chacon, age 12

A small jet of water  
Shoots out from a fountain  
Into a pond. Water plants  
Float peacefully on the  
Surface, and insects fly  
Through the air.  
Occasionally, a fish jumps  
When I get close.  
This is peace and tranquility.



## The Temple Cat

By Adam Larrimore, age 14

Pitter patter...soft paws  
Push into the dirt.  
Rustle, crinkle...a feline shape  
Slinks slyly out of the bushes  
Wandering to and fro.  
My hand summons the creature.  
It sniffs me.  
I caress its fur as soft  
As the clouds themselves.  
Thinking of a name—he  
Reminds me of a  
Bright summer morning,  
Not too sweet, not too sour—  
"Orange Juice."

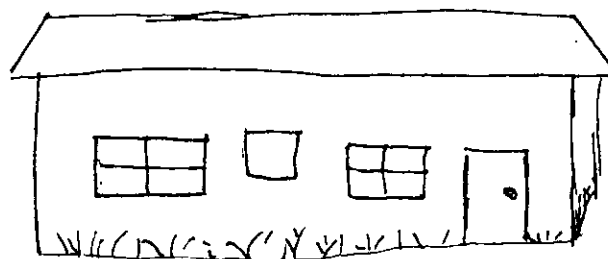
## The Cabin

By Max Lussier, age 14

Our cabin is called Peace of Mind.  
Nice and small,  
But cramped when  
We all pile in.  
There's a room with a couch.  
There's also the kitchen.  
There's a loft with two beds and a fan.

At night Peace retreats  
When we play our games  
And yell back and forth  
Until we all sleep  
With a snore or two.

Then the morning comes.  
We're up bright and early  
And it starts all over again.

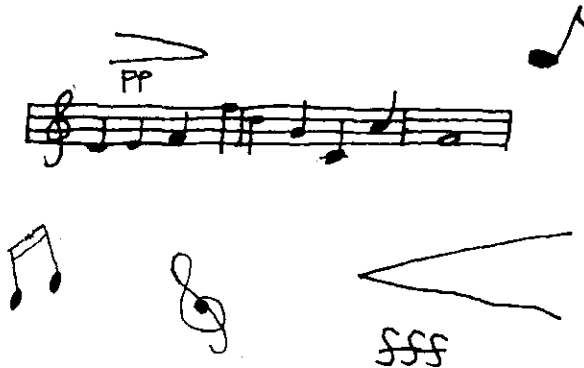


## Definition Poems

### A Snake

By Luke Chacon age 12

A slithering reptile  
Venom dripping from its  
Fangs, legless, staring,  
Always ready to strike  
Snake



### Silence

By Mariah Stewart, age 13

When you hear music  
You listen to notes  
But have you heard the silence?

Silence is the drama  
Of crescendo, a finale  
Silence is the doom  
Of execution, the fear

Sometimes, silence is everything

### Irritation

By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13

Irritation buzzes like a bee  
Swarming about so noisily

Irritation is what I feel  
When the ants my picnic lunch do steal

It's what a girl feels late at night  
When baby brother starts to fright.

Irritation the ear does stalk  
When talker talks, and talks, and talks.

Look here! Irritation for one  
Could be consolation to some.



### Kindness

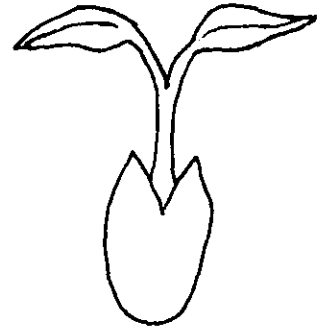
By Jeydie Pondler, age 12

Kindness is a helping hand  
It makes you friends throughout  
the land  
Kindness is a living tree  
Rising, flowing all through me

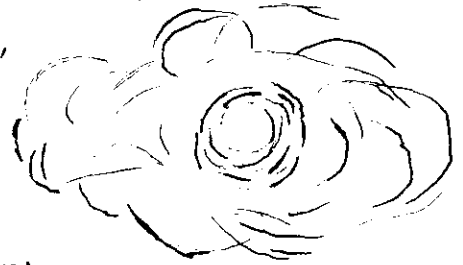
## The Spiritual Path

By Cassidy Norfleet,

Manifested as a single seedling,  
Self-Realization took place,  
Sprouted from God's creativity,  
Expressing Itself throughout space.



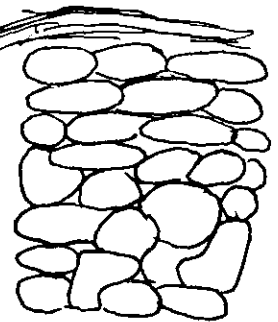
As constellations and nebulae took form, so did we.  
Our hearts illuminated with light,  
Delusions darkened into night.  
Skewing our sensibility.



Few grasp the depth of enlightenment,  
Yet the Ones who aspire, are wise beyond comprehension.  
Realizing they're alike to kindred brethren.  
No disparities exist, a complete amalgamation.

Connected to a vibrating frequency beyond delusion,  
An exponential similarity between land and ocean.  
No death can be present when birth-less,  
Leaving an empty vessel, the soul effloresces.

Some darkness resides in each of us.  
The ones who have needled it out,  
Watch it dissipate and burn, making it scarce,  
Through omnipresent Cosmic Bliss.



*Editor's note: Cass Norfleet is a graduate of Living Wisdom School, now finishing his freshman year in high school. His poem was inspired by his reading of Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda.*



## Prose

### Reflections on The Point Reyes Field Trip October 2011

Every year our middle school goes on a field trip whether by foot, ferry or van. When you hear the word middle school van, you might think of a tame version of a school bus, but don't let that deceive you because, a middle school van can be an explosively random, scary, emotionally unbalanced pool of hormones, or a demonically dreary, mind numbing and eerily sleepy experience....

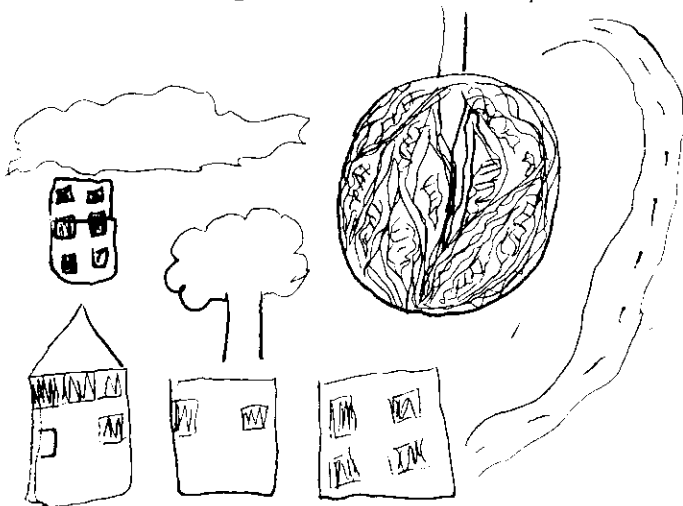
Conversation in the van is one of the most random strings of words woven together that I have ever heard. If I were to start a conversation about the president, it might jump to his hair, to hamburgers, to what type of cheese is the best for aliens. You couldn't go one minute without getting interrupted or without the subject changing....

A lot of the van's noise level can be determined by where you travel. For example, if you were to take the middle school to a candy or ice cream parlor and tell them they could get anything they wanted, you would be asking for big trouble. Survival tip: don't give a middle schooler the key to a sugar plantation.

~ Adam Larrimore



While we were driving to the Lawrence Hall of Science on our Fall field trip, there was an amazing view of San Francisco Bay. There were so many tall buildings and a lot of houses and trees. When we got to the Lawrence Hall of Science, one of my favorite exhibits was called The Sphere. By a push of a button, I could see the recent earthquake in Japan, the tsunami that followed, our earth, and also our moon. The earthquake caused a lot of damage to the countries of Japan and India. This caused a huge amount of flooding in Japan and India. The earthquake actually made the earth split in two parts and go into two different directions! The shaking caused a tremendous amount of damage to the houses in Japan and India.



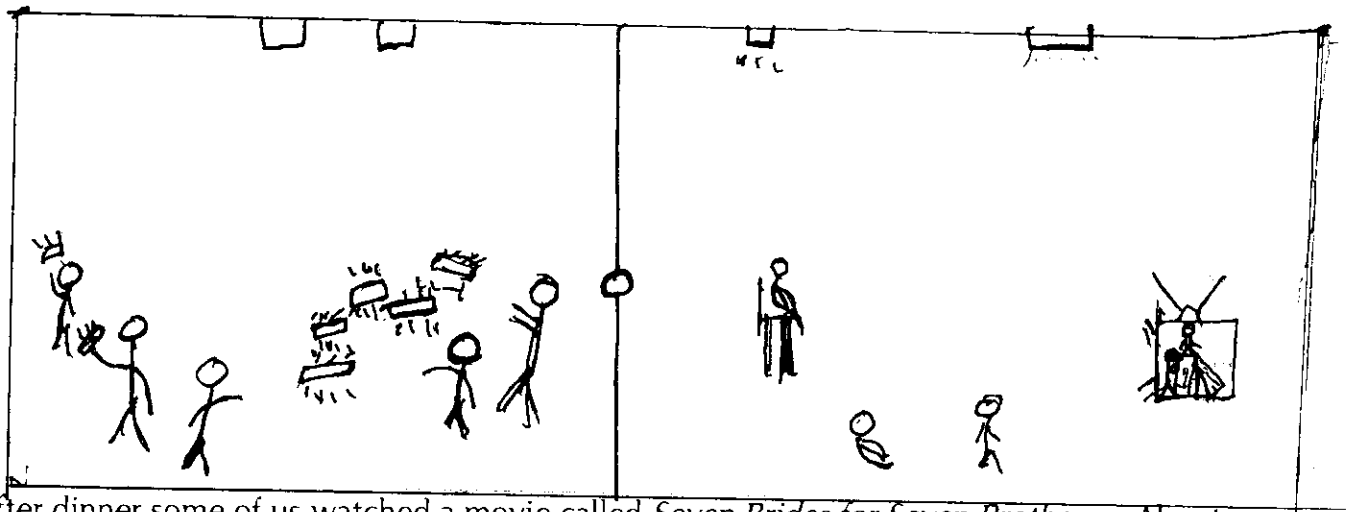
The earthquake forced the ground into a shape like a hill. The two sides of the split were different, as one part of the split would go up and the other would stay down. The tsunami caused a lot of damage to the people's houses. Many were destroyed. This natural disaster also caused great economic crises. Many people died from the earthquake and the tsunami.

~Jeydie Pondler



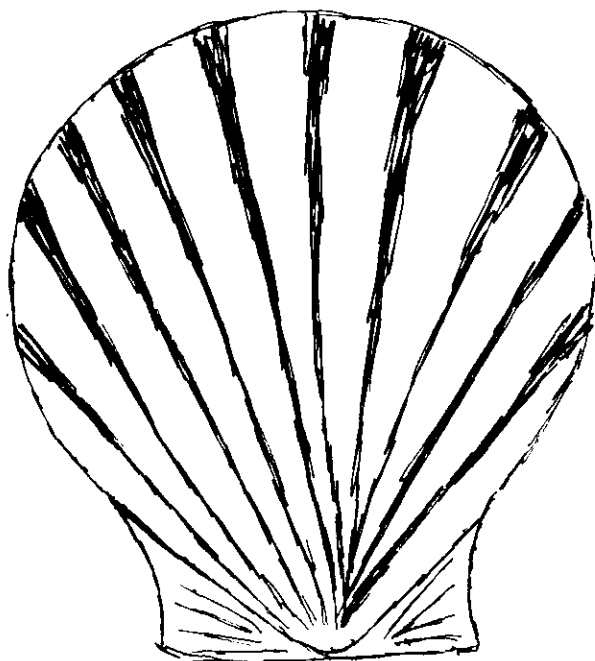
Our first field trip of the year to Point Reyes on October 3, 2011, was an incredibly interesting adventure...including the discovery of some antiques (pre 1998)... When we arrived at Gary's "rustic" cabin in Point Reyes, we put down our bags and walked through the building. We found an old computer and a floppy disk. I picked up the floppy disk and read it. The floppy disk said, "windows 98 startup disk." I then said with a grin, "Let's put some coal in this thing and fire it up!" Everyone laughed....

~Rico Barron



After dinner some of us watched a movie called *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*... About half an hour in, I decided to see what the rest of the class was doing in the old room on the other side of the house. When I walked in, there was almost as much chaos as the van ride because of a glow-stick war. So I decided to join in. To win the game you needed to throw the glow-stick and hit the other team. About half way through, Reza got about twenty glow-sticks and just threw them right when everybody wasn't hiding, and he took out everyone. It was lots of fun....The definition of chaos is "complete disorder and confusion." Throughout the field trip there was a lot of chaos, but it was a good kind of chaos....

~ Evan Rose

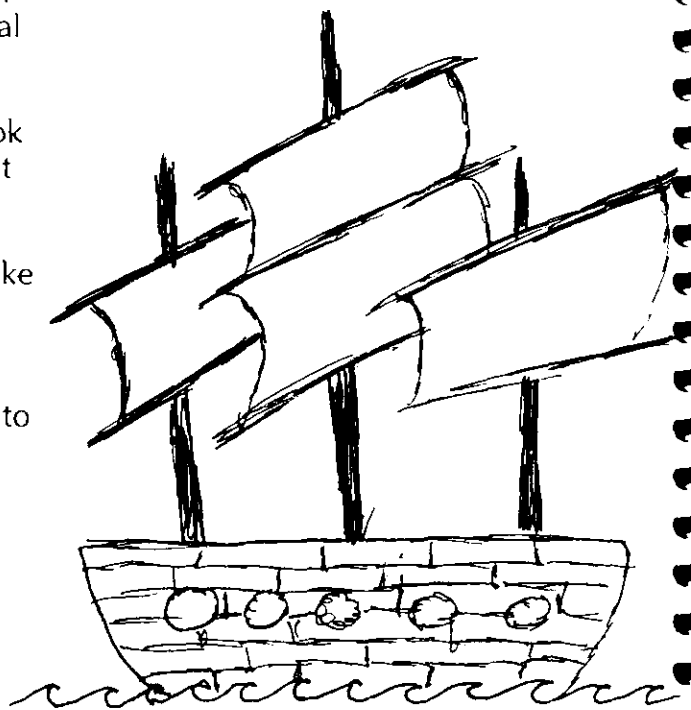


Drake's Beach...had a beautiful view of Drake's Bay and some distant ridges that were shrouded in fog, and clouds. Gary ate his lunch, and Ciaran dug several deep holes while I looked for sea glass and shells down the beach. Sadly, I only found two pieces of sea glass, one white and one brown, but I found lots of whole shells. From where we were sitting we could see the sea lions that live in Drake's Bay, but not very well because they were out on a rock that jutted into the bay, so they were just tiny brownish-black blobs. We stayed in that spot a while, but then Gary realized that the tide was coming in and that we should go back before the way was blocked. On the way back, he realized that he couldn't take the other kids on the walk because of the tide. I was enthralled by Gary's explanations of how the beach, the Estero, and the bay were named for Sir Francis Drake. I relished the beautiful and serene walk with Gary, and the magnificent views we had from the beach at Drake's Estero....

~ Kelly Olivier

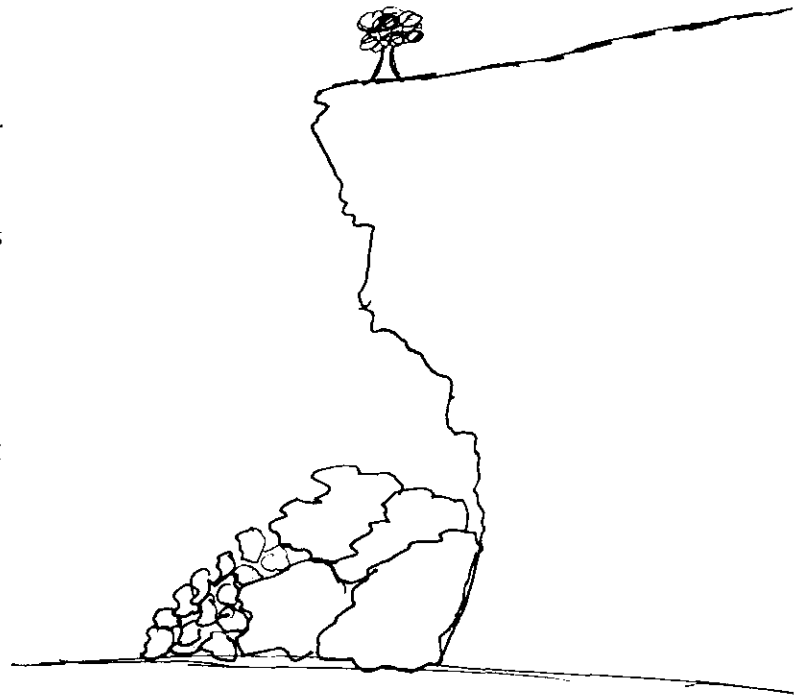
While we were hiking, we talked about the history of Sir Francis Drake. We learned that people have been looking at Sir Francis Drake's chaplain's travel journal to try to learn about where he landed to fix his damaged ship. In his journal he talks about seeing white cliffs in the sunlight. Drake's Estero's cliffs look white in the sunlight. He also described how perfect the low water level of the Estero is. Learning about the history of Sir Francis Drake was very fun! At the mouth of the Estero I could imagine a ship shaped like a pirate ship on it's side with people doing construction on the bottom. They would be pulling broken planks off the bottom of Sir Francis Drake's ship and putting on new boards and metal sheeting to fix the ship.

~ Ciaran Farley



The boys created an interesting and dangerous game where you would throw a rock at the crumbly cliff and try to get a large amount of rubble to fall off of it. After I watched this for about ten minutes, I decided to join in, and for some reason it was a very fun game. Someone would find a group of loose rocks on the cliff and shout, "target acquired" and show the others the "target." Then we would all throw rocks at the "target" until it came off the cliff. When that target was gone, we would then find another target and so on. After we had knocked down a particularly large "target," I discovered that it had crystals on it. Technically, they were just salt crystals that formed when salt water seeped into a crack in the cliff and dried up to form the crystals, but everybody was very excited. A little later on, the boys started to choose one specific rock, name it, and use it as a missile until it broke into little pieces. Rico named his Tooth Fairy, and later Jelly Bean, while Adam found one that looked kind of like a knife and named it Saber.

Shubha had the idea that we should stand on one of the clay rocks and watch the waves go in and out. At first, we went on this very low rock, but then we realized that we would get really wet, so we went on a medium sized one and stayed there for a while. Some of the boys were still building the fort, and Reza got a splinter. They needed my pocketknife because it has tweezers in it, so I left Shubha, Jeydie, and Mariah on the rock to go help Reza. While I was gone, a rogue wave came, and all the girls got their shoes wet. This happened because Shubha blocked the only way off the rock when the water is around the front of it. Mariah, Jeydie, and Shubha went back to their backpacks to try to find dry pants and socks, but they didn't have any extras packed. Shubha went off somewhere while Mariah, Jeydie, and I went to some rocks to poke sea anemones (it's actually quite fun). We decided to go to an even larger rock to find more anemones to poke. We found a whole colony, but they were all closed up



because the tide pool that they were in would drain when it got full. We decided to try and fill it up with seaweed bulbs. Seaweed bulbs are the long, hollow parts of kelp with a larger bulb at the end. I cut open the two largest ones I could find with my pocketknife. We filled them with water over and over to try to fill up the tide pool, but it kept draining, and we gave up. We were pretty far away, so we decided that we should go back in case everyone was leaving.... I appreciated the freedom and sense of adventure that Helen and Gary gave us on this field trip. It was refreshing. I also enjoyed spending time with and getting to know the other kids in my class. I wish that I could see all the beaches in Point Reyes if Drake's Beach is anything to go by.

**~Kelly Olivier**

One of my favorite games was knife throwing, organized by Adam, Rico and Shubha. The rules were: don't throw the knife at anyone, don't throw a knife when anyone is in front, behind or next to the target, and don't jump in front or behind the target when someone is throwing. The objective was to get the knife stuck in the log about 10 feet away. The knife was black, and people weren't always very successful at hitting the log. That is how we lost the knife twice. The first time I found the knife, but the second time we weren't so lucky. Knife throwing was cool because you got to throw real weapons. My friends from Clifford School will be so jealous.

~ Sierra Sholes



The definition of chaos is "complete disorder and confusion." Throughout the field trip there was a lot of chaos, but it was a good kind of chaos. Sometimes there was peace, and there was always a lot of fun. I really look forward to the next middle school field trip, and I thought that this week was really amazing!

~ Evan Rose



## Essays on Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*

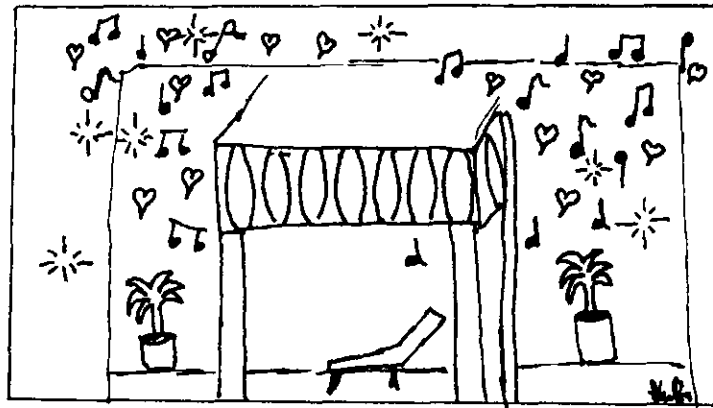
*Editor's note: Having read The Taming of the Shrew in class, we saw the Cal Shakes production of it while on our field trip to Point Reyes.*

### CalShakes' *Taming of The Shrew*

By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13

CalShakes is a theater company in northern California that has a reputation for putting on spectacular plays. This year one of their plays was *The Taming of The Shrew*, directed by Shana Cooper. Having read this play in class, we went to see it. I can say with certainty that all of us were in for a surprise. This play is controversial and can be staged in many different ways. Miss Cooper had an interesting way of doing it. The production was funny and light, but, underlying the plot, was an interpretation, which sent a message about the characters and their relationships. It was sublime. She took this traditional comedy and tuned it to the demands of a modern audience.

Her character portrayal made the play unique. Bianca (Alexandra Henrikson) was the naughty, blonde beauty queen (recently proclaimed "Miss Padua"). Katherina, the Shrew, (Erica Sullivan) was the "spoilt teenager" wearing cargo pants and army boots, and Petruchio (Slate Holmgren) was the tough body builder wearing a bunch of outfits, including half a pair of pants and saran wrap. Baptista Minola (Rod Gnapp), the typical hardworking dad, wore a blazer, and Gremio (Danny Scheie), the crabby old man, had a bit of a '60s look and a New York accent. Instead of having Renaissance gentlemen come in with roses and medieval tunics to woo Bianca, Cooper made them wear blazers and shades, and carry heart shaped balloons. This all worked out. It would have been nice to see the traditional version of the play with the lords and ladies and dukes and duchesses, but body builders and spoilt teenagers worked just as well.



Other components also made a difference in conveying Cooper's vision. The music was interesting. It went from '60s music all the way to Lady Gaga's Poker Face. The theme song was "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?" which was an interesting choice for this play. The set was perfectly suited for this play, and conveyed the time setting immediately. There was a double floor. The bottom floor was bare, while the top was a living room in either Minola's house, or Petruchio's house. It was furnished with a modern reclining chair, plants, and a couch. This seemed to work out well, considering that the play was set in many locations, so it allowed for versatility.

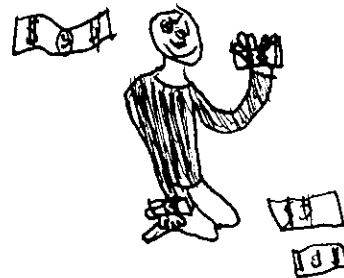
By far, the best part about this play was how Miss Cooper depicted the changes the characters underwent. For example, when you read the play, you do not think of Bianca going through a change of personality, but in this production she definitely changed. In fact, Kate and Bianca almost switched roles. At the beginning of the play, Bianca says, "Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe," when they ask her to leave. But at the end of the book, when the new husbands are betting on the obedience of their wives, she says, "Fie, what foolish duty call you this?" In the play she said this quite arrogantly, which was a bit surprising, especially because that is not how we expect Bianca to behave. But Bianca was not the only character who went through a change. Our main character, Kate, went through a huge change! You could see how Petruchio tamed her. At the beginning she was yelling and screaming and hitting everyone, including her sister. But at the end, as Kate and Petruchio were just walking off stage, you could see by the way they were holding hands and looking into each other's eyes that they were friends. That is what I thought made this a happily-ever-after play. After all of the drama and fights, it was a relief to see them together. I could see the change the characters went through clearly, which is something I enjoyed about the play.

The CalShakes performance of *The Taming of The Shrew* exceeded all of my expectations for it. *The Taming of The Shrew* can be a confusing play, but Miss Shana Cooper set a perfect balance of humor and seriousness. She did an exquisite job and impressed us all!

### **The Taming of the Shrew: A Play of Humor and Imagination** By Kieran Rege, age 14



This fall, our class read William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew: The Cambridge University Edition*. It was deep, specific, and easy to understand. I was able to really enjoy myself while reading it as a part of our Reader's Theater production. Then I wondered how much the Cal Shakes version of the play was going to meet up with my expectations. I am happy to say that all out preparation absolutely paid off.



Individual performances by the actors were outstanding. All of the actors helped make these characters believable. There were serious characters, funny characters, mean characters, and some pretty complicated comical banter between them all. It all just seemed to work. The relationships were entertaining, and they made the play very enjoyable to watch. I loved it. Petruchio had a particularly interesting personality. He

isn't your ordinary main character. For example, at his wedding, he wore a ridiculous costume. It was a part of his plan to tame his bride, Katherina. I'm just glad that it was part of the original play, instead of a superfluous new addition, which made no sense. Katherina was a suitably mean person. Her typical conversations with Petruchio included some hilarious moments, and the actress who portrayed her did a great job showing the evolution of her character, from mean to nice. Gremio, one of the suitors, and Grumio, Petruchio's servant, had so many laugh-out-loud moments. Gremio's accent, which was New York Jewish, was priceless, and Grumio acted as the fool of the play. They are good contenders for some of the funniest people I've seen in a theater production.

I also really appreciated the atmosphere of the play. It had so many themes and moods, including many funny scenes. But there were also serious scenes, such as the last scene when Katherina and Petruchio walked out of the room. The play had a consistent sense of morality and meaning, and every scene had a purpose, even the funny ones, such as a scene when Katherina was chasing after Hortensio. These types of moments were peppered into the play at just the right times. Shakespeare just seems to know the perfect moment to add comic relief. The pacing never wore thin either. Every scene transferred smoothly into the next. The little plot twists and unexpected change of character motivations made it even richer, especially the final speech in the play, which really brought out Katherina's true view of everything.

While the script of the play was similar to the one that our class read, the production was very ambitious and original. I thought that it was hilarious and very meaningful. I could really see a strong connection between Katherina and Petruchio by the end, which made this production special. I think that there is a moral in the play that suggests that good relationships depend on mutual respect. All of these elements together make this one of the most special plays out there.

### **Shakespeare: Modern vs. Traditional**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

In comparing the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present in matters of equality, people's roles, and societal ideas, it becomes clear that some of the older ideas have been discarded in modern times. As a result, some directors direct Shakespeare's plays for a more modern audience through tone of voice, physical behavior, the overarching relationship of the characters throughout the play, the costumes, set, and music. A wonderful thing about Shakespeare is how many options he gives a director. In the Cal Shakes production, *The Taming of the Shrew*, the director decided to give the play a modern twist.

If you showed the Cal Shakes play to a 16<sup>th</sup> century audience, the reaction from the crowd would be quite different than the reaction from a modern audience. At the time, women were considered property and had no rights. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Katherina would have been portrayed as more broken than triumphant. She could even have been perceived as mad or crushed. In Shakespeare's time, Katherina was far from the perfect wife. In Shakespeare's time, Petruchio's powerful domination over Katherina would have been accepted. In the more modern production, however, even though Petruchio enjoyed depriving Katherina of food and sleep and manipulating her, he loosened his grip upon Katherina near the end of the play and even enjoyed Katherina's strength.

A modern audience has a very different outlook on the ending of the play than



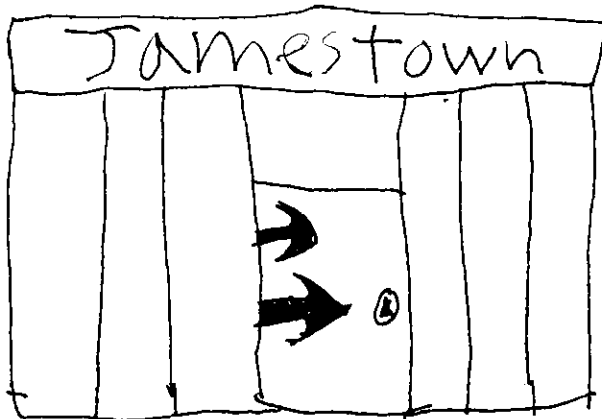
By the end, Katherina has pulled herself together. In my perspective, she has started to look at the entire society in a different way. At first, she looks at the society with contempt, because it will not allow her to be who she wants to be, but later she looks at society as a system that is not exactly perfect, but works well enough to make England one the greatest countries in Europe for that time. Mirroring Katherina's change for the better is Bianca's for the worse. Bianca becomes more shrewish to get her way, while Katherina is tamer. Another change that I noticed was the switch in roles between Bianca and Katherina. In fact, the progress that I see in this play is the maturing of both Katherina and Petruchio.

## Excerpts from a Final Examination in Early American History

*Jamestown was important to U.S. history because...*

Jamestown was the first colony, so it was partially an experiment, and after some adversity like *The Starving Time*, people began to figure out how to survive in America. They contributed ideas to the founding of America such as religious freedom, new crops, and democracy. They started bad things like slavery and owning a wife.

~ Kelly Olivier

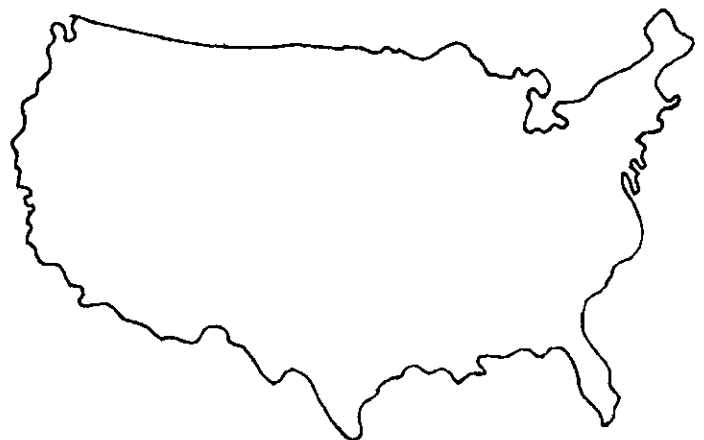


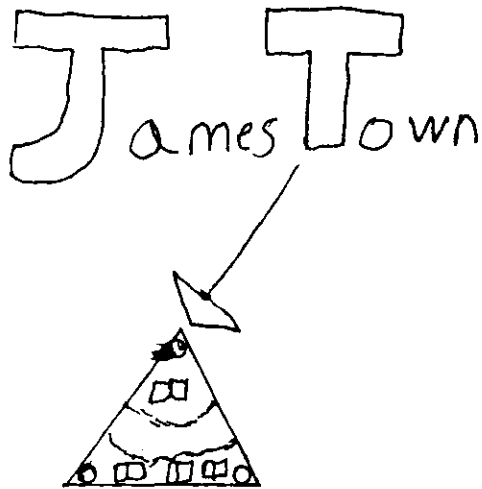
Jamestown is important in U.S. history for three reasons. It was the first permanent settlement in America. Another reason why it was important was because Jamestown was the first settlement that made its own laws. Also, it allowed people from other countries and other religions to be free.

~ Luke Chacon

In 1619, many things happened that proved Jamestown was there to stay. Not only did they bring Africans, they brought women, too. This means that people are ready to stay and make families. Several other things happened such as the first labor strike, the first time English settlers were allowed to own land, and the first elected lawmakers known as the House of Burgesses, which gave the Virginians the 'chance to make laws instead of England making their laws.

~ Mariah Stewart





Just about everyone came to Jamestown in hope for freedom and a second chance. One of the greatest things about Jamestown in my eyes is its strength as a colony. It went through horrible times and continued onward. The settlers risked their lives to get a second chance. Their mental strength kept them breathing. It was will power, anger, and sadness that kept them fighting whatever was in their way. And that, in my eyes, is the beginning of the "new" age and the USA. Jamestown was also extremely unfortunate...many people lost their lives by arrow, starvation, sickness, or overworked labor coming to the land we call home today. We misunderstood our enemies, and they misunderstood us. We betrayed each other in the struggle for survival. As great a monument as Jamestown is, many people seem to ignore or neglect the bad things that have happened, however...it was and always will be history.

~ Rico Barron

Jamestown was a new beginning for many people. It gave people a second chance at life. At this time, in England, you would be distinguished as a peasant, king, queen, etc. In the New World, everyone was treated equally. This made people want to come to the New World even more. Who wants to be put down in one country, when you can be equal in another? People came here to start a new life.

Not everything about Jamestown led to good things in America's history. Jamestown did bring slavery to America and that was not really something to brag about. In 1619, slaves came. Why? The reason was that a new plant was found in Jamestown. Tobacco. This had started a big trade with England (which was also another fact of why Jamestown is important). But planting tobacco was not an easy job. The answer: get slaves to do it. Slaves were brought from Africa and sold to the people of Jamestown. This is one event that led to The Civil War.

~ Shubha Chakravarty



Jamestown was a colony that didn't give up and survived at the worst times. The colonists survived the Starving Time, Indian attacks, the weather, the environment, and The Massacre. The survivors almost gave up after all they had been through. But they came back, ending up with a colony and giving thanks. If there hadn't been a Jamestown, our present America wouldn't be so big and free."

~ Reza Navadeh

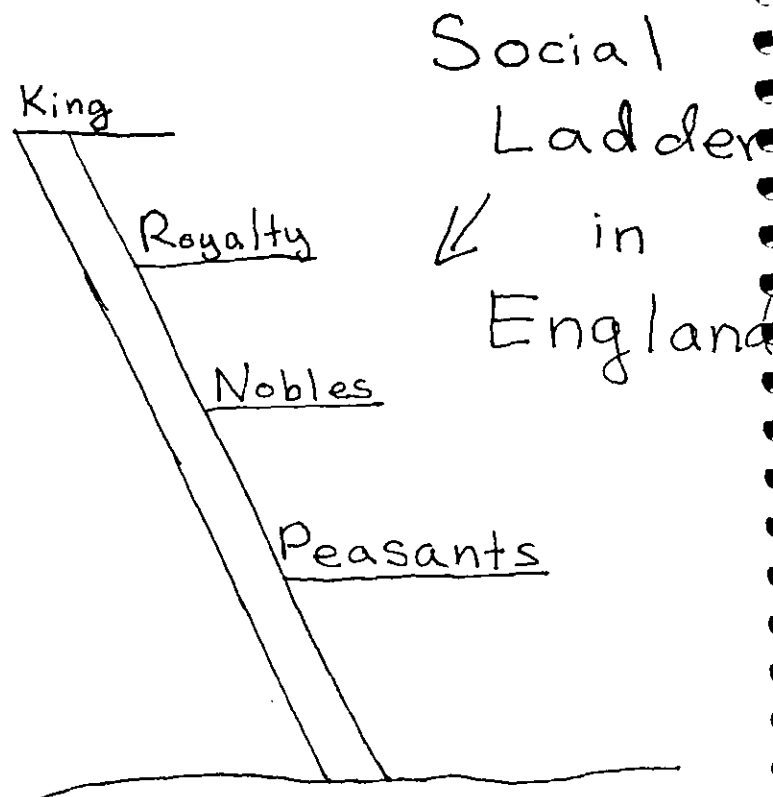


"Jamestown was a new beginning for many people. It gave people a second chance at life. While in England you would be distinguished as a peasant, king, queen, etc., in the New World, everyone was treated equally. This made people want to come to the New World even more. Who wants to be put down in one country, when you can be equal in another? People came here to start a new life.

What ideas (and ideals) did colonists bring? They wanted more freedom, isn't that why they came? But what was their standard of freedom? Everybody from Europe wanted as much or more freedom than in England. Now that might seem like a low standard, but at the time it was THE standard.

This is the most important point. Their standard was high for the time, and kept growing, until they broke away from England, until we have what we have today.

~ Sita Chandrasekaran



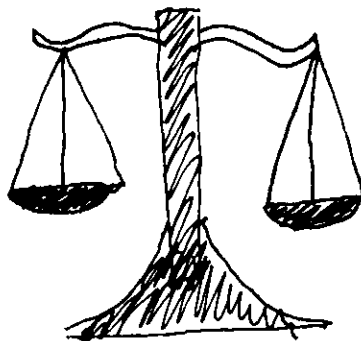
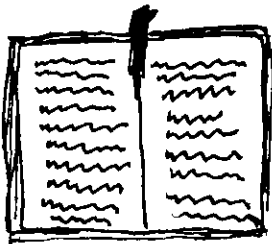
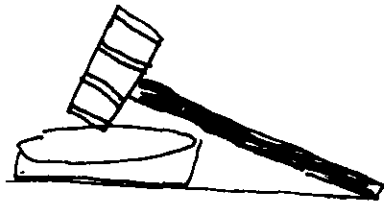
## Research Papers on a Famous Person

### Andrew Hamilton

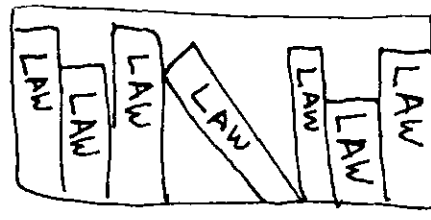
*By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13*

Have you ever heard the term "Philadelphia Lawyer?" If yes, then do you know where it came from? It came from a very famous case called the Zenger Case, in which the great lawyer who fought and won the battle was from Virginia. This lawyer's name was Andrew Hamilton. This name might not ring a bell in your head, but Hamilton was the man who helped this country earn freedom of speech and freedom of press.

Born in 1676, in Scotland, this slightly chubby man did not speak much about his childhood, parentage, career, or even name. At one point he walked around with the name of Trent. In 1697, he arrived at Accomac County, Virginia and started learning law. He taught at a classical school, and there met a student of his named Joseph Preeson. He got a job on the Preeson plantation as a steward. In 1705, Preeson died, but Andrew still worked on the plantation. Soon after, on March 6th, 1706, Andrew married Ann Preeson, the widowed wife of Joseph Preeson.



In 1712, Andrew moved to Chestertown, Maryland and started to practice law. A little later he left for England to "raise his status." He was then called upon by the Penn family to fight a replevin case against Berkeley Codd. A replevin case is a case that allows for a person to get back whatever they lost if it is being kept away from them. Andrew helped him win the case and this was the start of a long and friendly journey between the Penn family and Hamilton. His victory with the Penn case and visit to England brought him popularity, and he caught the eye of the Baltimore family. This led to him becoming the deputy of the Maryland House of Delegates. On May 14th, 1715, he helped put together a series of laws called the Act of 1715, which helped form the law that was Maryland was based upon until the Revolutionary War. A little later there was some friction between the Native Americans and the Colonies. A Seneca man had been killed by a colonist on Native American Property. Andrew was sent to go and meet the five nations, or the Iroquois League. After peace was brought, Andrew went to them and gave them gifts on behalf of the Colonists.



By far, Hamilton is most well known for his excellence in the Zenger Case. John Peter Zenger was a printer for *The New York Weekly Journal* and had printed some papers that criticized the English. He was taken to trial for libel immediately. The trial was about to start when Andrew stood up and asked the judge if he could take the case. The judge could not say no to him because Andrew had become a very influential and wealthy person. So, Andrew took on the Zenger case pro-bono (which means he did it for free and did not take any payment.) His main plan was to surprise them and catch them off guard. First he admitted that it was indeed John who had written those papers. At this point the other team tried to end the case by saying that he admitted it, so he is guilty. But then Hamilton said something that changed American history forever. He said, "There is no libel if truth is told." The jury heard this and proclaimed Zenger as innocent.

Andrew had a nice family. He and his wife Ann had a few children; Margaret Hamilton born in 1709, James Hamilton in 1711, and Andrew Hamilton in 1713. Margaret married William Allen, and they had six children together. Andrew really bonded with his son-in-law, because they both worked in the government. Andrew Hamilton II married Mary Till, the step great granddaughter of Berkeley Codd, the man who Andrew faced in court with William Penn.

After looking at Andrew's work and success, I have come to the conclusion that he deserves the quality of "sense of justice." This was portrayed in his Zenger case, which was a huge accomplishment for America. If you do not believe me, then listen to what he said. He himself said, "It is not the cause of one poor printer, nor of New York alone...It may in its consequence effect every free man...in the main[land] of America. It is the best cause. It is the cause of liberty."

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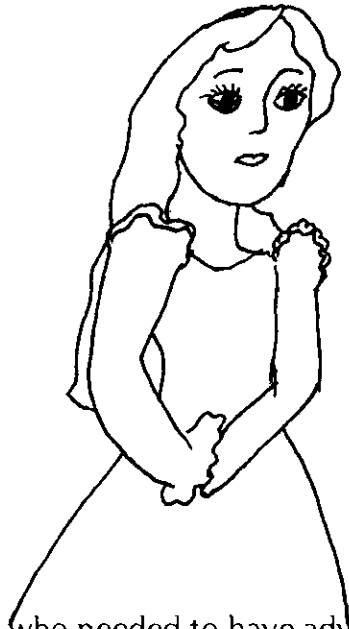
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## **Deborah Sampson**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 12*

Deborah Sampson was a woman of true courage. She went into war disguised as a man not thinking of the consequences of being found out, all because of her need for adventure.

Deborah Sampson Gannet was born on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1760 in Plympton, Massachusetts, a small village, to Jonathon and Deborah Bradford Sampson, who was a descendant of William Bradford. She was the eldest of three boys and three girls. However, at a young age, her father left her family in order to go across the sea for adventure and drowned. Her mother could not support the large family and so sent them all to different friends, neighbors and families. Deborah became an indentured servant with Deacon Jeremiah and SuSannah Thomas. She would do all sorts of things; clean the house, sew and spin, and watch the children. She loved to learn, and so made the little boys in the families teach her the lessons that they learned in school. Finally, when she was 18, she earned her freedom and became a teacher, using all her knowledge from the little boys' lessons.



Deborah was someone who needed to have adventure and longed to travel around the world. So she enlisted in the army as a "continental soldier." and the local recruiting office recruited her as Robert Shurtlift from Caver. She bought herself some men's clothing. When she was dressed up in the men's clothing, her own mother couldn't recognize her! Deborah Sampson first served Captain George Webb. Her height of 5' 8" was average for men back then, so her fellow soldiers just thought that she was a short man. During her first battle, she got shocked with two musket balls on the thigh, and got a big gash on her forehead. The other soldiers in her troop decided to take her to a hospital, but she had asked them to leave her to die, for fear of being found out, but they refused. When she got to the hospital a couple of doctors took care of the cut on her forehead, but she left before they could take out the musket balls. Then later, with a penknife, she managed to take out one of the musket balls, but her leg never healed because of the other musket that was too deep in her leg to get.

About a year later, she was promoted to being a waiter to General John Patterson for about seven months. Then on June 24<sup>th</sup>, the President of Congress told General George Washington to lead a bunch of soldiers to Pennsylvania. But during the summer, Deborah got the fever and became unconscious. She was taken to a doctor, Dr. Binney, who found out the secret; however he did not reveal her secret. He took her home with him, where his wife and daughters took care of her. Then, after she recovered, she went back to war, but when the day for the soldiers to go home came, Dr. Binney gave her a note, asking her to give it to General Patterson. She knew that he would get upset, but he simply gave her an honorable discharge.

After she came back from war, she married a young farmer, Benjamin Gannet and had three children, Earl, Mary, and Patience. She also adopted Susanna Baker Sheperd, a delightful orphan.

Deborah Sampson was not very beautiful, but she was able to impersonate a man to get into the army. Paul Revere, one of her friends, said about her, "I have been induced to enquire her situation, and character, since she quit the male habit, and soldier's uniform for the most decent apparel of her own sex; and obliges me to say, that every person with whom I have conversed about her, and it is not a few, speak of her as a woman with handsome talents, good morals, a dutiful wife, and an affectionate parent." Deborah loved to speak. She would often wear her soldier uniform and make trips around England and New York giving speeches about serving her country. Her friend Paul Revere wrote to Congress asking for Deborah to be given a pension, which is like a payment, and so she was given four dollars every month.

Deborah Sampson died on April 29<sup>th</sup> 1827, at the age of 66 due to yellow fever. She is buried at Rock Ridge Cemetery in Sharon, Massachusetts. I believe that Deborah Sampson should receive the quality of Bravery, because she was the first woman to ever disguise herself as a man and go to war. After all it takes courage to be the first.

# BRAVERY