You cannot be a writer unless you see yourself as one. Each middle school program begins with an exploration of ourselves as writers, creators, and communicators. Some work is created by the individual, and some work is a collaborative effort among several people.

Enjoy youth pieces from Podium’s partner locations:

Elkhart Thompson MS
Henderson MS
Lucille Brown MS

For printed copies, please contact us at:
info@thepodiumfoundation.org
Identity and Communication

A Collaboration: Be Inspirational
Ti’elle Y.
Lucille Brown MS

Have you ever wondered why you live life the way you do? If you could, would you change something from your past? I know I would.

There are some things in life that you can’t change. You can’t take those back, so while you are in the present, be your best. Live your life the best way. Life may knock you down and slap you in the face, but make the best of it. Embrace yourself. Sometimes, you need a metaphorical slap in the face to come back to reality.

YOU ARE THE BEST! You are wonderful and amazing. No matter what, you radiate with the good, so take life by the reins and live.
Learning Together
Herbert B. and Rodney P. Lucille Brown MS

In Project Write Now, we learn how to be supportive and understanding. It helps us connect with different people and teaches us different skills.

What is Art?
Marzell W. Jr., Torron W., and Matthieu M. Henderson MS

Art is anything that is created with a purpose. I draw what I think about. My definition of art is something where someone puts their passion and effort into it. And I think art is something you do to show who are in a drawing when you’re not able to say it. I use art to draw when I’m bored.

Coming Out of My Shell Through Art
Adaviyah A. Henderson MS

Art is the reason I grew out of my shell. It makes me happy and different from everybody else. It makes me feel like I can do anything. Art is my pride and my joy, and when I see it, I cry. To expand my creativity is my objective in life: to live and to be creative and unique.
We Help
A’ne T.
Lucille Brown MS

Do you wake up outside? If you sleep outside, you can pray for help. Some people are not helpful. Some people who are not good tend to sleep outside, and bad things happen to people for a reason. If you sleep outside, don’t feel that the world hates you. If you are good at heart, good will eventually come to you. Just keep an open mind. Bad circumstances happen to good people to show how good they are. If you’re good, the light will shine through. If you are one who does not have anything, you can help ones that don’t have anything as well.

We Care
Ameena P.
Lucille Brown MS

Do you wake up in bed thinking you’re all alone? Well, you’re not. People in the world are worried about how you feel. Do you wake up in bed feeling scared? Well don’t be, you are not alone. If you feel like a small fish in a seed of confusion, talk to someone. Never feel like you have to be concerned or like you have to be by yourself. You will always have someone in your corner.

For me, that is my mom. Keep that one person you can trust because you never know when you may need them. Some people have nothing to sleep on, and some of them do. Some of us help people who do not have anything. Let’s take action and let people know who we are. We care.
A Collaboration: Love?
Keren G.
Elkhart Thompson MS

Mind and heart. Isn’t it awesome how the mind is so small, but has so much power and control over you? It’s also awesome how the heart is the boss of your body. A person owns my heart. It makes my life so much better to have the kind of soul everyone would loves.

I love that human so much, and that person has my whole heart. That human is so beautiful. Nobody is perfect, and you don’t have to worry about how you look. What matters is who you are on the inside and how you two feel. We shouldn’t worry what others have to say. We should all live happy, like I will one day with that ‘human.’

A Collaboration: Be Anything
Herbert B.
Lucille Brown MS

You can be a firefighter, or you can be a mayor. You are the best version of you. That spark inside you is beautiful, so be yourself. Never let words dictate how you feel about yourself. People will always tell you can’t do something, either because you are too small, too tall, or anything in between. People say they are smarter than you, but don’t let that bring you down.

When I was little, I wanted to be the president, but someone told me I couldn’t. That doesn’t matter! I can be whatever I want to be, and you can too. No one can stop me. If you stay true to yourself, you can be anything.

Art is to...
Trevonte A.
Henderson Middle School

Art is paint. Art is to color.
Art
I’yonna H.
Henderson MS

Art is basically everything. Like a little grass elephant can be art. Art doesn’t just have to just be a painting or drawing. We can create stuff to share with other people.

Bring Back Martin Luther King Jr.’s History
Christopher B.
Lucille Brown MS

Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream for black and white children to play together. He had a dream, and said we can do it! Make sure to have confidence in your dreams and help others. Even if you are at risk of things, do it anyways! Follow your dreams.

A Collaboration:
Be Happy
Zion D.
Lucille Brown MS

Be yourself. Be kind and make sure to try your best. Always look around and make sure you have real friends. Make sure your friends are those who are true to themselves. True friends and family stick with you and have your back. They also love you and will help you through anything. Don’t follow other people’s steps if you don’t know them. One day, they might try to use you as prey. Always pray for someone and be happy!
A Conversation: Love of Drawing
Michelle V. and David M. Elkhardt Thompson MS

“I love drawing.”
“Okay, I like drawing too.”
“OMG! Me too! I love drawing. It’s a hobby for me.”
“Drawing is the best.”
“I love drawing anime and realistic objects like people and animals.”
“What about when you don’t know what to draw? I mean, Michelle, you’re good at it…”
“Yeah, thanks!”

A Collaboration: Believe and You Will Receive
Adriana K. Lucille Brown MS

Believe and be the best you can be because no one else can do it for you. Don’t follow what someone else is doing. Do your own thing. Love yourself, and don’t let people bully or judge you. People will talk about you forever, so suck it up and live your life.

Follow your passion and be yourself. If you don’t, other people will try to make you look bad, so you can become one of them. You can do things you set your mind to. Whatever inspires you or makes you happy, do it! Everyone is different, and that is what is unique about you. You may have millions of no’s, but you can still have that one yes and keep it going!
The Frog
Adaviyah A. Henderson MS

“Ribbit, ribbit, frog
KAEPLOOSH, bling, bling,“
Said the frog,
As he ribbit ribbited
Through the pond.
Then, BANG! And
He’s dead.
SPLOOSH splash,
He fell in the pond.
CLAM and CLANG of
footsteps came
To revive the ribbit, ribbit frog.
He’s mean, he’s bad,
And he smells really bad
Like my dad.
“SHHH,” said the kid,

“Before we end up dead like
the ribbit, ribbit frog.”
Panda and Angel met each other in a forest. The panda would stare at the Angel but never say anything. Then one day, he became bold and talked to her. They became friends and realized that they had a lot in common, even though he was a Panda and she was an Angel. They thought that they could never be together. It did not matter because it was true love, so Panda proposed to Angel. Angel was so happy she burst into tears and cried, “Yes!” Two months later, they got married, and people from heaven came down and blessed them. Three months later, they had a Pangel.

Project: Summer Write Now!  
Alannah B. and Adaviyah A. Henderson MS

The ‘Project Write Now’ crew went to Camp Silent Hills this summer. When walking in the woods, some of us saw a saggy old lady cutting wood in the distance. Earlier that day, we saw on the news that there was a murderer on the loose. We turned the other way and saw a creepy old man. Suddenly, the old man started chasing us, and the old lady yelled, “Come on in here kids and have some cookies!” When we got into the cabin, we killed the old lady and took her to the river. When the police asked us why, we told them it was because she didn’t have Wi-Fi and put raisins in the cookies. We celebrated our escape by going to McDonalds.

BAM  
Laila L.  
Lucille Brown MS

BAM! My brother slid into my room and dabbed so hard, he almost hit the floor.
Batman vs. Superman
Javon K.
Elkhhardt Thompson MS

It started on top of a building. Batman and Superman were looking at each other face-to-face. Batman pulled out his gun, but before he can do that. Superman went after him. Batman shot Superman, but Superman knocked the gun out of his hand. Then, he started dragging Batman, but Batman used his grappler on Superman. They landed and the fight started.

Superman was beating Batman up and used objects around him to knock him down. Superman hit Batman hard, and he went down. When Superman went up to Batman. Superman was ready to laser him with his eyes, but before he could do that, his girlfriend showed up. Superman stopped and went to his girl. He looked back at Batman and flew away with his girl. Batman looked up at the sky and said, “This is not over.”

To be continued...

Where is Home?
Julia H.P.
Lucille Brown MS

Where is home?
Some would say “where you live.”
Some might say it’s where you pay the bills.
I say, home is where your family is.
Where you don’t feel judged.
Where you can be yourself.
Where you can live.
Where you can laugh.
Where you can live.
Ultimately, home is where your heart lies.
All of the children went to the cornfield,
But they were scared and did not want to stay too long.
Cali was the biggest girl in the school.
Donald dared Cali to enter the corn field until dawn.
Everyone oh’d and ah’d as if Cali couldn’t do it.
Fearlessly, she entered the corn field alone.
Gail said, “Cali is not going to make it.”
“Hello? Is anyone out there?” said Cali.
Isabella called out for help, but there was no reply.
Jack-o-lanterns lit up as Cali walked past.
“Killer ahead, killer ahead,” said the lanterns.
“Leave me alone!” said Cali.
Mini faces started to appear in the darkness.
Nobody knew where they were coming from.
“Oh no! I better get out of here!
Please, please! Leave me alone!” said Cali.
Queen of the cornfield went down to have a talk with Cali.
Raging with anger, the Queen yelled, “You have five minutes to get out!”
Slowly, the Queen disappeared.
Turning around, Cali realized there was nothing behind her.
Unconsciously, she closed her eyes, then
Very slowly, Cali opened them up wide.
“What am I going to do?” she sobbed.
Xylophone sounds were used to count down her time.
Yelling out for help and running, she ran out to the cornfield.
ZOOM!
A girls’ night happens on a very dark night.
But, it isn’t just a normal girls night be-
‘Cause we invited the boys to come over. We told them
Don’t start anything because they always argue.
Every time we do something, they argue a lot.
Frankie always ends up crying because they argue.
Gina stops Frankie from crying by comforting him.
How does she do it? We don’t know.
“I know!” Mary says.
Just tell her how it is, but don’t hurt her.
Kayla yells, “Everyone shut up!
Let’s have some fun, it’s boring now.”
“Maybe we could go out to eat?”
“Not paying,” Kayla says to Jake, and he laughs.
“Of course you’re not,” Jake says.
Paige yells out, “I’ll pay for everyone I guess.”
Quietly, they get dressed and leave towards the
Restaurant, but it gave them a bad, creepy vibe.
Susie said, “I don’t think this is a good place.”
To everybody, Frankie said, “I agree.”
Under peer pressure, the group decided to leave.
Vicki said, “What’s that shadow?”
“ Weird, What shadow?”
Xavier said, “You’re joking!
You’re just trying to scare us.”
Zoey said, “Wait, where’s Jake?!”
La Vida
Dayana G.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

Color de rosa no es la vida.
Tu enemigo es el que te cuida.
Pero a muchos se le olvida y
Le muerde la mano a tonto que
El dio comida.

I feel happy because not everything in life is rosy.

BEAST INSTINCT
Omarion G.
Lucille Brown MS

AKA: A Devil’s breath. It turns you into a beast by eating food, competing at competitions, and by playing sports. If you want to turn back to normal, you must jump up and down three times in a row. It can make you youthful again, like in your 20’s. It can make you have superhuman strength. Ingredients: a devil’s horn, 1 million Scoville hot sauce, and Bedrock.

Basketball
Matthieu M.
Henderson MS

“Basketball is a very fun sport. The first time you play, you already become hooked to it. You keep on playing. Basketball is the best sport.”

“Please, no. I was just joking. You really want to know what’s fun? Carnivals!”

“What happened that day was not so fun.”

“I am not a fan of basketball.”
There was a kid who was bullied and thought he was scared of everyone. He started being mean to people and got mad very fast. When bullies came up to him, he killed them.

He was not overly mean; though, he was nice too. He tried to make the world better, but a lot of people thought he was mean. He felt alone and did not know how to look like a normal person.

People called him “Kid Monster.” Someone felt like he would be a nice person, so they became friends. As best friends, they understood each other. They killed people together. They lived together. More and more, people started to become scared of them. But, they also made friends with more people. They ended up killing 31 people. One of them betrayed them and tried to kill the Kid Monster. His best friend killed the person who betrayed them and they buried the betrayer and put a sign that said “I betrayed, so I died” on top of his casket. Then, they all ruled the world together.

Tap, Tap, Tap.
The girl went tap, tap when she fell on her back.
Then made it crack.
The bird went flap, made it to her back, and made it CRACK. Then, slapped the cat.
The phone went ring, then it went bling.
I heard Ching, Ching, and she smelled like BANG, BANG pow.
I stole it from a cow but didn’t know how.
One day there was a girl named Alexis. Her family planned to have a Thanksgiving dinner. They planned to have it at 6:00 pm, but Alexis thought it was at 6:00 am and that they were having breakfast.

The next day, Alexis jumped up out of bed and forgot to fix breakfast, so she rushed to the bathroom, washed her face, and brushed her teeth. After that, she headed downstairs and started cooking eggs, bacon, turkey, orange chicken, and more. By the time 5:00 am came around, she had finished cooking and ran upstairs to get ready. It was a quarter to 6:00 am when she finished. She set the table and put the food in the middle.

Then, she sat at the table and waited. She lit the table candles while she waited. After two hours passed, she started eating the food. After she ate all of the food, she went to her room and took a nap. At 6:00 pm, she heard a knock at the door. She wondered who it was. When she opened the door, it was her family. She stuttered on her words and said, “Umm, why are you guys so late.”

They said, “What are you talking about? It started at 6:00 pm.”

“Oh!” Alexis said, “I thought it was at 6:00 am.” They all got mad at her because she ate all the food, so they went to Panda Express because they knew how much she loved orange chicken.

Story of the Monster Frog
Yenevi R.G., Teck H., and Bianca G.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

Once upon a time, there was a baby tadpole in a pond living her life and minding her business. Then, this drunk driver who was carrying toxic oil crashed into a tree and dropped that oil into the pond. He left like nothing happened. Three months later, he died because he got ran over. Years went by, and that baby tadpole became a monster. She made a lot of clones of herself and killed everyone.
Drama
David M.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

“ARGGG,” said Vicky, when she kissed her man. She then said, “OMG, I hate him! ARG ARG!”
Then, she cried. She cried because he cheated on her because she was not good to him. She married someone else to get revenge. “ARGG!”

Creek
Paris S.
Lucille Brown MS

A big blue creek, shimmering in the light.
Eagles cry in the glistening light.
An eagle sees a fish and dives.
Sploosh!
The eagle cries in delight!

Evil
Teck H. and Javon K.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

Johnny Appleseed was bullied every day. One day on Halloween, a group of kids bullied him and shoved a whole bag of apple seeds down his throat. He was sick and tired of kids putting seeds down his throat. On the next Halloween, he showed bags of apple seeds down the bullies’ throats and made them all choke to death. Every Halloween, he kills eight kids by shoving seeds down their throat and making them choke.
An Owl Sound at Night
Yenevi R.G. and Javon K.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

If you live by the woods, you must be lucky because there are owls in the woods. The owl’s sound is Whoo-Whoo! The owls are so beautiful and so calm. IF YOU DO NOT DISTURB THEM, that is. Anyway, during night time, you have owls beside you. It’s nice, then you hear those beautiful Whoo-Whoos. Most people who are liked by others are kind, and I think they would like the owl sound. It’s just so beautiful.

**Part two: The Owl’s Curse**

Hey people, I’m back. Remember when I said, “IF YOU DO NOT DISTURB THEM?” Well, if you did not know, there is an owl’s curse, and I am going to tell you all about it. There is a nonfiction story about that curse. Once upon a time, a man was walking around the woods at night. He saw an owl and immediately thought of what his grandma always told him, to not mess with them.

He started to mess with the owl. He saw a stick and started poking it, but then, they switched bodies. Years passed, and the human in the owl’s body did not know how to survive and died. The owl in the human body secretly killed and murdered people.

**Feelings**
Julia H.P.
Lucille Brown MS

Woosh, as the cool waves crash the shore.

Shiver as they hit my bare feet.

Blush as Austin’s soft hand makes contact with my cheek.

Eternal fireworks, as our lips meet.
Imagine a world without science. . .

Imagine being part of a team of scientists responsible for solving the world’s greatest problems. . .

How would you envision your world?

Our World Without Science
Isabella N., Dayana G., and Shakira B.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

Without science, life would be boring! Science can be boring if you do not explore on your phone or outside. Without science, we would not have electricity. We could not take a shower, cook food, or make clothes with sewing machines. Without science, we probably couldn't do many things. And, apes would run the world.

A Town Without Science
Teck H. and Yenevi R.G.
Elkhardt Thompson MS

If I was walking through a town with no science in the world, I would see giant dogs ruling the earth, not humans. They would keep us as pets! If they didn’t like us, they will bite our heads off. Whoever lives has to live underground like ants.
A Collaboration: Creature Origin Story
A’ne T., Ti’elle Y., Ameena P., and Paris S.
Lucille Brown MS

One day, the mad scientist, Dr. Swearengin, tried to make a human who would be able to turn into tables, chairs, and any material thing. He heard the doorbell ring, Ding-Dong. The most horrific thing happened next! He forgot to turn off the Tippity Top 2000 Machine. When he walked up to the door, no one was there, so he went back to the machine. As he walked back to the machine, a giant human-like object appeared with shells, fur, and wings on its body.

The winged turtle said, “Hi buddy! Thanks for creating me.”

Dr. Swearengin said, “Ew! Why do you look like that?”

If you don’t know what happens when you get on a winged turtle’s nerves, it will roast and eat you. It’s a girl, and that’s what girls do.

A Collaboration Story: Creature Origin Story
Rodney P. and Adriana K.
Lucille Brown MS

Lava goddess was born 15 years ago by a goddess who goes by the name of Negative Zero. Lava goddess blended in with humans, but could not adapt to the Earth’s climate. As a result, she died. 15 years later, Negative Zero created Lava Goddess again. He had to create a new identity and a secret island for the Lava Goddess. The island was made out of lava and easier for Lava Goddess to adapt to its environment. Lava Goddess was ready to come back and settle into her secret lava island. Lave Goddess was made out of a rare metal that can bend, but never melts. Her mouth and ears are metal too. Her hair is made of fire, and her ears are so pointy too! Don’t touch it!
Can You Help Save the World?

Invention: The Sun-O
Adaviyah A., Alannah B., Torron W., and Lavel H.
Henderson Middle School
- Astronomy is the study of space, planets, comets, black holes, and meteors.
- Our Problem: The sun dies.
- Invention Description: The Sun-O synthesizes molecules to create oxygen and sustain life on earth.

Invention: The Reverse App
Henderson Middle School
- Biology is the study of life, plants, animals, and people.
- Our Problem: Humans inciting violence and having negative behaviors towards all life on earth.
- Invention Description: The Reverse App changes the brain to only prefer good behaviors. There is no addiction or overdose risk. The green pill is prescribed, affordable, and covered by health insurance. It can also help in trauma therapies.
Invention: The National Nuclear Act (NNA)
A’ne T., Ti’elle Y., Sami T., Julia H.P., Christopher B. Lucille Brown MS

- Chemistry is where you use a laboratory, mixed elements and compounds, chemicals, and nuclear energy.
- Our Problem: Nuclear Warfare.
- Invention Description: The National Nuclear Act (NNA) will be a document in which leaders of every country will have to sign. The act will state that nuclear weapons cannot be used in warfare or elsewhere. Any leader found breaking this law will be charged with a war crime and punished to the full extent of the law, including execution.

Invention: Solar Panel Back Up
Javon K., Yenevi R.G., Keren G., Blanca R., Bianca E. Elkhardt Thompson MS

- Tech/Engineering is a scientific field where you create tools such as the Iphone X and other smart phones.
- Our Problem: What if technology went off? You couldn’t communicate, and infrastructure would fail.
- Invention Description: The Solar Panel Back Up harnesses energy during the day time. You must fuel it using water at night. The larger ones are more powerful than the smaller ones, so you can use more stuff. You can power your devices with the small ones, but the larger Solar Panel Back Ups can power big businesses.
IN PROJECT WRITE NOW!

Each of us has a creative voice

Happy reading!

Connect with us:
@Podiumrva

ARTWORK BY: SHAKIRA AND A'NE

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