



How
We
FEEL



Fall zine 2023

Youth ages 11-13

Fall 2023 Zine

“Be yourself. Above all, let who you are, what you are, and what you believe shine through every sentence you write, every piece you finish.” – John Jakes

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

Enjoy youth pieces from Podium partners at:

**Boushall Middle School with Next Up RVA
Petersburg Boys & Girls Club
Northside Boys & Girls Club
John Rolfe Middle School
Fairfield Middle School
The Well**

Lights, Camera Action!



Special Agents

Dontae D. and Rayne G.

Northside Boys & Girls Club

When someone threatens the government:

Mercedes: "We need to get the government out of town."

Dontae the 28: "We need to call for back-up."

Mercedes: "Dontae the 28, drive the government out of town, and I will stay back and make a decoy,"

Dontae the 28: "Okay, I'm going to take the government to his secret base,"

Mercedes: "10-4, Agent Dontae,"

Dontae the 28: "Alright, I took him to his base, and he's being treated."

A Character Unraveled

George R.

Northside Boys & Girls Club

My character's name is Mercedes, or 'cedes' for short. Mercedes was born and given away at the tender age of 4-years-old, and she was forced to raise herself. From the age of 4 to the age of 20, she hated her parents, and she absolutely hated her sister Phonia too. Soon, her world would come crashing down before her eyes: Tune in to find out!

A Character Unraveled
Shaliya J.
Northside Boys & Girls Club

My character's name is Lenigh. She is 17 and from My Hero Academia. She has two quirks and is working to become a hero. Her first quirk is love. When she loves someone, she can control them. Her second quirk allows her to shapeshift into anyone. She loves cats, and her costumes often show it.

She's part elf, part human. Her favorite color is violet, and she plays the piano. She has two cats named Izz and Kee. She used to be bullied and did not have many friends, which caused her to be less distracted. She got into the hero academy because she was so focused.

Character and Storyboard
Dakota D.
The Well

CHARACTER

Name: Malike
Gender: Girl
Age: Immortal – 9,000
Favorite Food: Seasoned mud and bugs
Hobbies: Running around causing trouble
Personality Traits: Happy... mostly unknown
Strengths: Evil, immortal
Flaws: Mean



STORYBOARD: Villian Origin Story

Characters: Cockroach People, Malike, Miley Cyrus
Place: Metropolis, USA
Problem/Character Motivation: Malike becomes angered by the cockroach people and chooses evil. Malike has a hunger for power.
Solution: A transformation happens. Malike and Miley Cyrus wreak havoc on the city and become a symbol for terror.

Character and Storyboard

Tessa R.

The Well

CHARACTER

Name: Super Emma

Gender: Girl

Age: 17

Favorite Food: Pizza, mac and cheese, dino nuggets

Hobbies: Doing hair, eyelashes, and nails

Personality Traits: Funny, cute, nice

Strengths: She can't be loved by anyone!

Flaws: Long hair

STORYBOARD: Hero Origin Story

Characters: Super Emma, City's kitty cats

Place: Metropolis, USA

Problem/Character Motivation: Super Emma notices that the city's kitty cats are very hungry. She decides she is going to feed them and that they need milk. A cat comes up to Super Emma and says that someone has been shrinking humans and putting them in the milk they need to drink.

Solution: Super Emma must invent a device to save all humans and feed the kitty cats.



Once Upon a Time

Enjoy narrative storytelling from our talented middle school youth.

Princess Dina
Ma'layjah G. and Anthony D.
Petersburg Boys & Girls Club



Princess Dina wears an all-red dress with a black slit in the middle. She likes reading and helping out people who are homeless. She has four eyes because she's a werewolf. She hates bullying and being treated poorly. She is very good with kids, and she enjoys cooking. When in her wolf form, she is very good at hunting. Dina likes helping out her sick father and taking care of other people who need her help.

The Glorious Adventure of Hercules
Darrell B.
Fairfield MS

There was a glorious hero and demigod named Hercules. He was adventuring outside, when suddenly, Medusa the Gorgon popped out of the grass. Hercules closed his eyes to not look at Medusa's gaze when suddenly, Apollo came out of the bush and calmed Medusa down. Hercules said, "Thank you for saving me from her, brother."

Apollo replied, "No problem." Then, they walked up Mount Olympus to where Hercules met his father, Zeus.

Storytime (Young Love)

Taliya B.

John Rolfe MS

May was a girl but not a regular girl. She was the daughter of an overprotective mafia boss who would get mad whenever she got a boyfriend. One day, she found out that her boyfriend was using her, and when her father found out, he killed him. Later, May got a job and fell in love with her co-worker, but he had a girlfriend. May's mother came back to town, and she was happy about the news her daughter gave her. But when her father found out, he got angry and told her that she couldn't have a boyfriend. She ran to her room crying.



Rihanna's Mystery

Anonymous

John Rolfe MS

Rihanna Green was her name. "Who is that?" my friend asked.

"Just pay attention and hush up."

Rihanna was a shy and quiet girl in high school. She had to go through harassment every day by two popular girls, but then one day, people looked at her and whispered, "Is that her?" Those words were all she heard that day. She hadn't gotten bullied at all, and it made her wonder why.

The Boy Who Got His Payback

Keyaka H.

John Rolfe MS

When I was in class, my friends and I were all talking and playing before whacking my friend in the back of his head. Then, he got his payback when he started making jokes about us. He got us all really scared.



A New Life

Ta'Ziyah M.

The Well

I am a dog who died when a car hit me. I was 5 years old, and my mom let me outside by myself. She never came back to get me. It was dark outside, and I ran away to find a new home. When I was on the road, there was a car coming. I was not fast enough to get to the other side, and it hit me. Now I live in heaven as a butterfly, and I love it.

Halloween

Alana T.S.

Boushall MS

Michelle and Daniella are best friends. Michelle is very brave and upfront, while Daniella is introverted and quiet. They planned to go trick-or-treating on Halloween, but Michelle got sick and couldn't go out. Daniella went over to Michelle's house and took care of her instead.

Snap for the Poets!

Youth explore voice and identity through poetry.

Jack
Darrell B.
Fairfield MS

There was a pumpkin named Jack,
And he had a sack.

He was standing on a spot
Where a witch was cooking in a pot

Then Jack did a hop
Where a wolf was on top.

The wolf fell.
The wolf also had a bell.

The witch got sad,
Then later got mad.

The witch started to chase,
And Jack was now in a race.

Jack saw a cat,
So he hid in a hat.

The witch was lost
And ended up paying a cost.

Jack got a win
Before falling into a den.

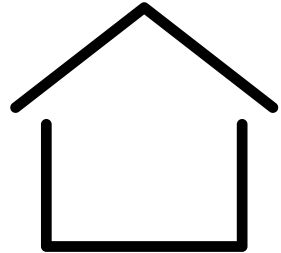


Make it Rhyme
Kierstan B.
Fairfield MS

Make it rhyme
While eating a lime.
Can you check the time?
A lot of people work in their prime,
And my friend stopped committing that crime.
Don't touch my slime.
Go get your dime.

Similes & Metaphors of My House
Amy R.
John Rolfe MS

My house is clean like a doctor's office.
My house is as clean as a fresh load of laundry.
My house is fun like a birthday party.
My house is loud like a classroom.
My house smells like Thanksgiving.

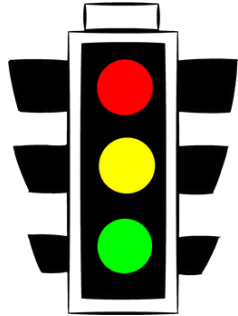


Express Your Emotions
Zyearah S.
Boushall MS

I'm the one who saved the day.
I'm the one that you called on.
But now you feel far away,
Believing I did you all wrong.
So deep in love,
She's the one I was rolling with.

Stoplights
Adrienne B.
Fairfield MS

Stoplights represent something.
Red for bad.
Yellow for okay.
Green for good.
Most days, I feel yellow.
My friends and family are what heal me.
Every time I'm around them, I feel alive.
I love seeing my family.
It makes me feel good.
Stoplights remind me of how I feel.



Present & Future
Anonymous
The Well

Present

Why didn't I leave before you?
Why can't I be happy?
Am I enough?
Can I talk about my pain?
Are things going to get better?

Future

I am a nurse in a hospital.
I have a big kitchen, a big living room, and a big bed.
Marble floors, an all-pink bathroom,
A BMW, dark silver with a pink leather interior,
And a baby teacup.

Real Friends
Chrishon W.
Boushall MS

Sometimes, when I feel like crying,
Or am crying, my friends comfort me.
24 by 7.
And they can trust me.
That's what real friends are.

Learn
Anonymous
Boushall MS

Summer awaits,
Kids with traits.
School is back in session,
So learn a lesson.



The Love of Dogs
Arianna B.
Fairfield MS

Dogs have unpredictable love. Most dogs are fun and very playful. Dogs are also super funny and cute. They roll, play all day, run, and jump. Dogs are super sweet, and sometimes in need of training, but they are still awesome best friends and like family too. Dogs come in all shapes and sizes. It might be hard choosing the right one: pugs, great Danes, poodles, and pit bulls. They love you, and you should love them too.

Dogs
Playful, Cute
Running, playing, jumping
They have unpredictable love
Canines

**Axolotl
Darrell B.
Fairfield MS**

Axolotl
Cute, Slimy
Swimming, heavy, huggable
It is so adorable
Salamander



**Story of Life
Toniah M.
Fairfield MS**

Life is a story.
Every new event in your life is a new chapter.
Remember, people are just side characters in your story.

**My Friends
Keira J.
Fairfield MS**

I met them in 6th grade.
That wasn't one of the things on my bucket list,
But what an accomplishment that was made.
Until this girl swore
She was going to catch her fade.
It's been more than half a decade now,
And I'm still curious to this day.

**My House
Liala B.
John Rolfe MS**

My house is as clean as clean laundry.
My house is as quiet as a mouse.
My house smells as good as fresh fruit.

What is Love?

**Adrienne B.
Fairfield MS**

I still don't understand love.
Love is a very strong word.
Men don't understand what we go through.
Someone can only get their heart broken so many times.
It's hard to love after love.

The Dream

**Unknown
Fairfield MS**

I looked out at the moon as I closed my eyes.
I guess I'll see you soon, and I dozed off, fast asleep!
In my dream, I only saw ten
Smiles in clouds, but I wish it was more.
Ten dogs and frogs
Laying on fluffy white logs,
Dreaming of chasing and hopping in fields all day.
Then awakened by screaming.



Love

**Anonymous
Boushall MS**

Roses are red,
Violets are blue,
Cheer is my heart,
And school is too.

The Puppy
Adrianna B.
Fairfield MS

There was a puppy, and
Her name was Guppy.

She loved to play
Every single day.

She played with her ball
All night long.

The puppy loves to eat
Lots and lots of treats.

The puppy named Guppy
Is really, really lucky.

As the years went along
The puppy grew more calm.

The puppy is now a dog,
And she lays like a log.



I Like
Trinity S.
Fairfield MS

I like puppies the most,
I don't like ghosts at all.
They don't make any sense.
I'll get a Puppo-chino at the mall.

My school is boring,
I'd rather be snoring.
My teacher talks so much,
Sometimes, I want to tell her, "Hush!"

My mother won't let me show my real hair,
And it's not fair.

Frightfully Delightful

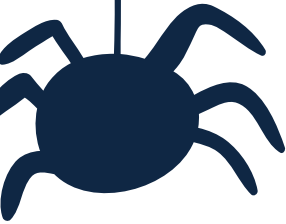
Enjoy spooky stories and horror imaginings!

Klypho

K'Niyah W.

Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

On a cold winter night, in a land far from our own, there was another kid born, but she wasn't like the others. She had horns, a devil's tail, and two different colored eyes. Her name was Klypho, and she had pronouns she/they. Her parents were an imp and a human. So of course, she was half human and half imp, with red skin and a white, seven-inch scar on their right eye. She had stitches on her mouth like the joker. With a soothing voice, their touch was frightening yet calming.



Dr. Blackman

Keyaka H. and Ja'nie W.

John Rolfe MS

Dr. Blackman used to terrorize little kids back in the day. It was during the 1820's on Halloween. People would always wonder why he did this on Halloween only. Word on the street was that, when he was a little boy, he would see his dad hit his mom. His dad would start drinking and get angry. Then, one Halloween, as he was getting ready to leave the house, he heard screaming. Returning to the living room, he saw his dad stabbing his mom. Since then, Dr. Blackman followed in his father's footsteps, and on every Halloween since, he kills kids.

Villainess Vol. 1

J'miyah G.

John Rolfe MS

Once upon a time, there was a beautiful black princess. Her name was Va'mia, and she had beautiful braids that looked like swirly clouds with gold and purple tinsel. She was the prettiest little girl in town, and everyone loved her. She was only 4 years old at the time she was stolen from her parents. It was the worst day for Queen Lizzo and King Patrick. (We all know he shouldn't be the rightful king, but we had no choice).

One day, out of nowhere, Ja'niqua and Panera Davidson appeared, and so did Greeney Robinson, who was Queen Lizzo's sister. They were all little stars, and they needed somewhere to stay because someone had just stolen all their money. Of course, she told them no and slammed the door in their faces. At night, they turned into the evil Jones sisters and spread their extremely toxic breath around the city.

Hypno's Backstory

K'miyah W.

Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

Raised on the side of an unknown mountain, a lost person named Hypno saw her little sister being killed in front of her. After that, Hypno swore revenge on anyone that got in her way. She vowed to find the one who killed her family and rushed through the village with blood on her clothes and slaughtering anyone on her path.

Friendship

Khalil W.

Boushall MS

My friend has been a very good friend. When we were in a haunted house, Carter started falling out of it. Alex saved him, but then while Carter was in Alex's hands, a clown scared them, and they both fell! It was onto an old bed, and they survived.

Surviving the Teenage Years

Overcoming Hardship

Jade D.

Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

A few years ago, after I moved to Hopewell, I was cooking food while my mom was at work, and water spilled on my little brother's stomach and burned him. I didn't sleep for months, and his screams haunted my mind. I didn't even want to touch him because I was so scared that I'd hurt him again. For years, I did not cook, but now I've started cooking again. Cooking is something I enjoy, but it can still be hard at times.



Lyrics

Ken'Narah W.

Boushall MS

*What's the point of an Instagram image when you got millions for real?
Sometimes I need someone to talk to.
Sometimes this life can be confusing.
Call your friends and ask how they're doing.*

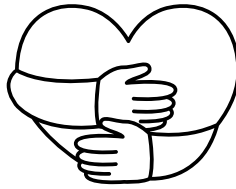
I chose this song because sometimes life can be confusing, and sometimes your friends need to be checked on. This song makes me feel like someone took my words and turned them into a song.

Comforting a Friend

Za’Naiya G.

Boushall MS

My friend came to me crying about a boy, so I told her to come to my house. We watched movies, listened to sad music, and ate good food.



Pass it Down

Shaniyah B.

Boushall MS

Penny was on the way to her grandma’s house when she found out that her grandma had suffered from a stroke and passed away. She called her grandma’s daughter, her mama, and they cried. The family went to the hospital where they were sad and grieved about Big Mama.

School

J’miyah G.

John Rolfe MS

School is our enemy. School is boring, irritating, annoying, backstabbing, and a waste of my time. We learn things that we don’t use in life. School makes me feel like I’m stuck in a jail cell, locked up forever alone. To me, school stands for, “Suck Children’s Hope Out of Life.” It’s like a walking monster or even Godzilla and will gobble us up forever. The food looks like it will eat us instead. Please send help.

Self-Love is the Best Love

K.E.I.R.A.

Keira J.

Fairfield MS

My name is my name.

K is for kind,
and kind isn't lame.

E is for evolving,
and evolving ain't no game.

I is for inspirational,
and inspirational don't mean having fame.

R is for rigorous,
and even if I'm rigorous, I stay in my lane.

A is for adventurous,
and when I go on adventures,
I'll leave the same way I came.

I matter

Self-Love

Alana S.

Boushall MS

I love my family and my dog, and two hobbies that I have are cooking and doing hair. A good quality that I have is being creative when doing hair. In the future, I want to run my own small business selling hair. Loving yourself is pushing yourself up instead of down. An example of practicing self-love is when you get a bad grade on a test. You can just say, "It's okay, I'll do better next time," instead of, "I'm so stupid."

Self-Love
Reagan M.
Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

Self-love means to love yourself like you love others.
Self-love is treating yourself with care.
Self-love is helping yourself.



A Senses Poem
Cerenity S.
Boushall MS

Cerenity is thoughtful.
Blue is her favorite color.
Blue reminds her of good weather.
She loves fluffy things, just like feathers.

Self-love
Zacharia W.
Boushall MS

Loving yourself is loving your family, you, and being positive by telling yourself that you got it. Self-love boosts your self-esteem. You can practice self-love by getting a therapist and good skin care.

Me
Madison T.
Fairfield MS

I am me.
I love me.
People like me.
I am beautiful.
I am smart.
I am curious.
I am me, and it's okay that I'm me.
I am the only thing I'll ever need.
I am enough.

Self-Love
Osirus M.
Boushall MS

I like cheerleading, singing, and cooking. I like to do nails and learn cheerleading moves from my friends. The people who are important to me are my friends and my mom. I am lazy and sometimes smart. I want to be someone who knows who they are without caring about what people have to say. Self-love is when you love yourself and when you don't allow people to break you down.

Positive Attributes
Mariyah J.
Boushall MS

M: Modest
A: Altruistic
R: Radiant
I: Inspiring
Y: Youthful
A: Affable
H: Harmonious



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