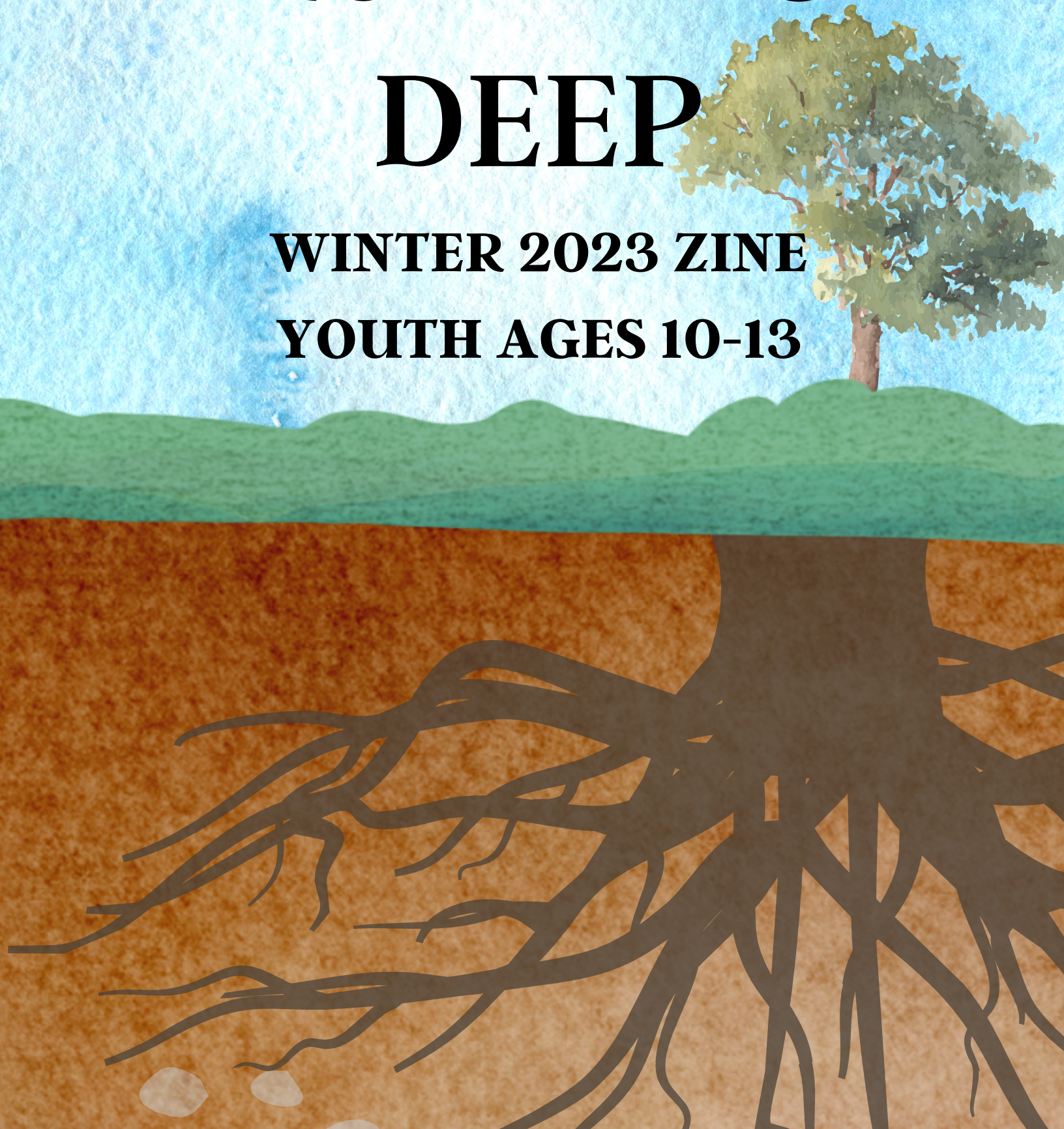


RUNNING DEEP

**WINTER 2023 ZINE
YOUTH AGES 10-13**



Winter 2023 Youth Ages 11 - 14 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:

**NextUp at Lucille Brown MS
Higher Achievement at Henderson MS
Metro Richmond Boys & Girls Club - Southside
Wilder MS
Fairfield MS**



Poetry and Prose

Enjoy creative poems and narrative storytelling from our middle school students

My Constellation

Darrell B. Jr.

Fairfield MS

When there is art, there is love and peace.
Darrell is the God of art, love, and monsters.
When he died in the forest, he was seen in the stars.
He can be seen in the dark when there is a rainbow.
He made peace with monsters, animals, mortals, and gods.
When he died, mortals called this constellation, "Darrell."

1985

Ayden P.

Wilder MS

The kids have grown up and are shopping at the mall, while there's a secret Soviet Union base underneath it. They use a radio to talk to an imaginary girlfriend, but instead hear a secret Russian code. Specifically highlighting "blue meets yellow in the west."

Lily

Kor'lasia H.

Lucille Brown MS

Lily is trapped in a mall full of goblins. She's been in there for a week. Every day she goes out of the one room she has been staying in to set traps and to get food, water, and clothes. When she runs out of food and water, she goes to get more. One day, she finds another survivor hiding. She helps the survivor by giving her things that she needs.



Medusa
Niya S.
Fairfield MS

Medusa turned me into a statue. Medusa and I were arguing, then I broke the spell, and helped other people to break the spell too. I prayed to God to break the spell, and then I poured lava on Medusa.

Need
Dakota L.
Lucille Brown MS

One day, this boy was in the woods with his parents. While there, the little boy lost his parents. He did not have what he needed, but when he said, "I wish I had what I needed to be out here alone," out of nowhere, he got what he needed. So, his parents didn't know where he was in the woods, and they didn't know that he was fine.

Last of Us
Shelby S.
Wilder MS

In the year 2003, when the world began to get warmer, an interesting and aggressive fungus known as Cordyceps began to mutate. Originally, Cordyceps could not survive in the human body, but due to global warming, it became entirely possible that it now could, and it did. Reaching into the human brain, it slowly devours its host. It tells them what to do and how to act, turning them into mindless zombies. The end of the world as we know it has come, though this is only the beginning.

We are the only ones left. We are the last of us.



The Multiverse

Darrell B. Jr.

Fairfield MS

A man went into a spacecraft that traveled as fast as lightspeed. The man launched into space where he saw Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Then he saw a spaceship, and with it, he went outside of the universe.

The man's ship moved so fast that he traveled back in time. The man went back to the year 200,000,000 BC, the last year of the dinosaurs. He saw the meteor hit earth and kill the dinosaurs. That made the man sad, so he drove his spacecraft back to the present. When he came back, he landed back on the space station, and everyone was so happy that he went back in time. The moral of the story is that there are infinite universes, and we should explore more of these growing universes.

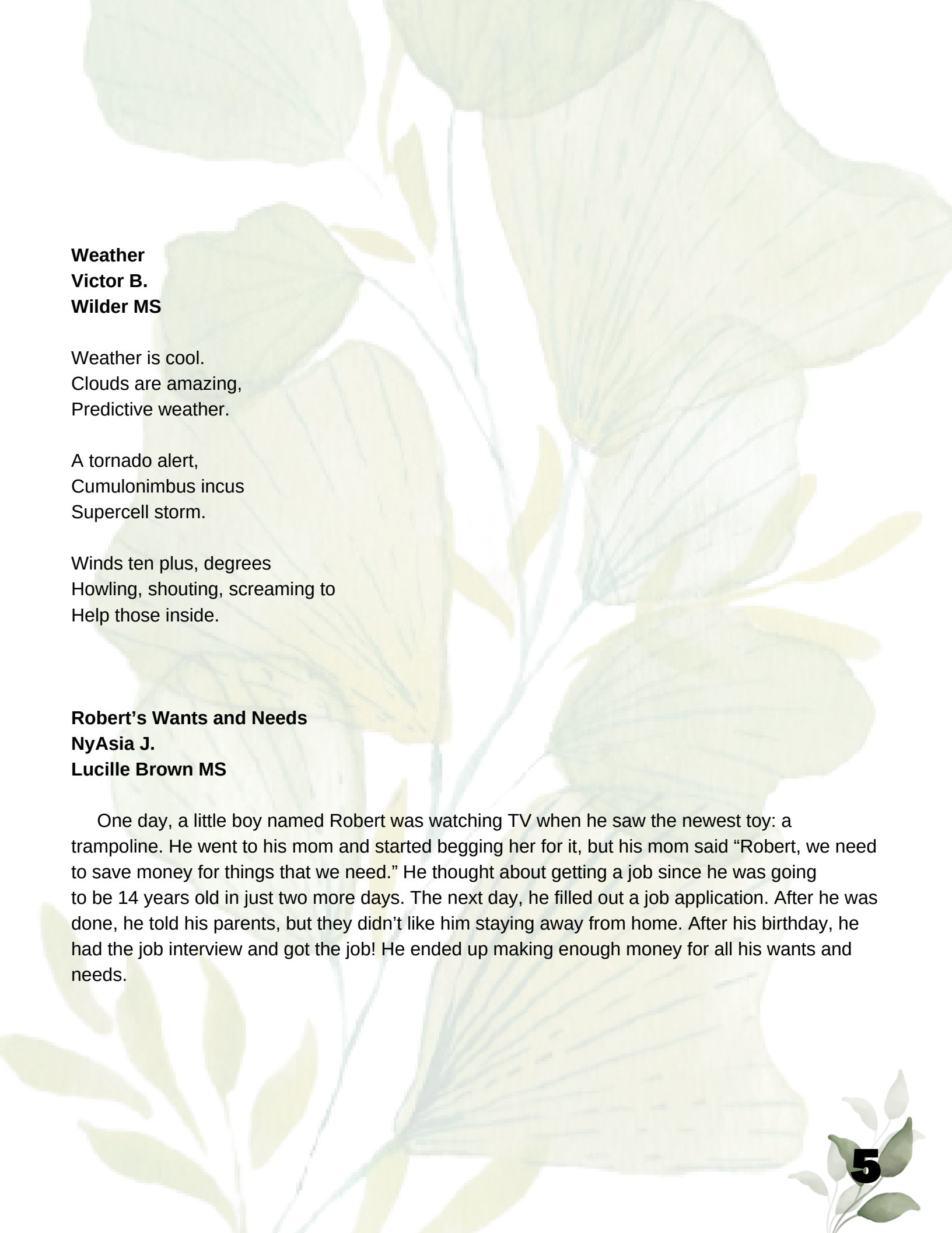
The Fight for AirPods on the Moon

Jay'Asia E.

Fairfield MS

Two people wanted Air Pods, so they went to the moon, but there was a problem. They had to fight aliens. Then, there were two problems: they spotted eight moons, so if either one did something wrong like kill the wrong person, they would go to one of the other moons. But they wanted their Air Pods. They really, really wanted those Air Pods.

While they were fighting the aliens, these people came out of nowhere to help them fight the aliens. But the new people did not know that if you messed up, you would go to another moon. They messed up one time. They fought the aliens and won, and they all got Air Pods, but no one knew they were fake.



Weather
Victor B.
Wilder MS

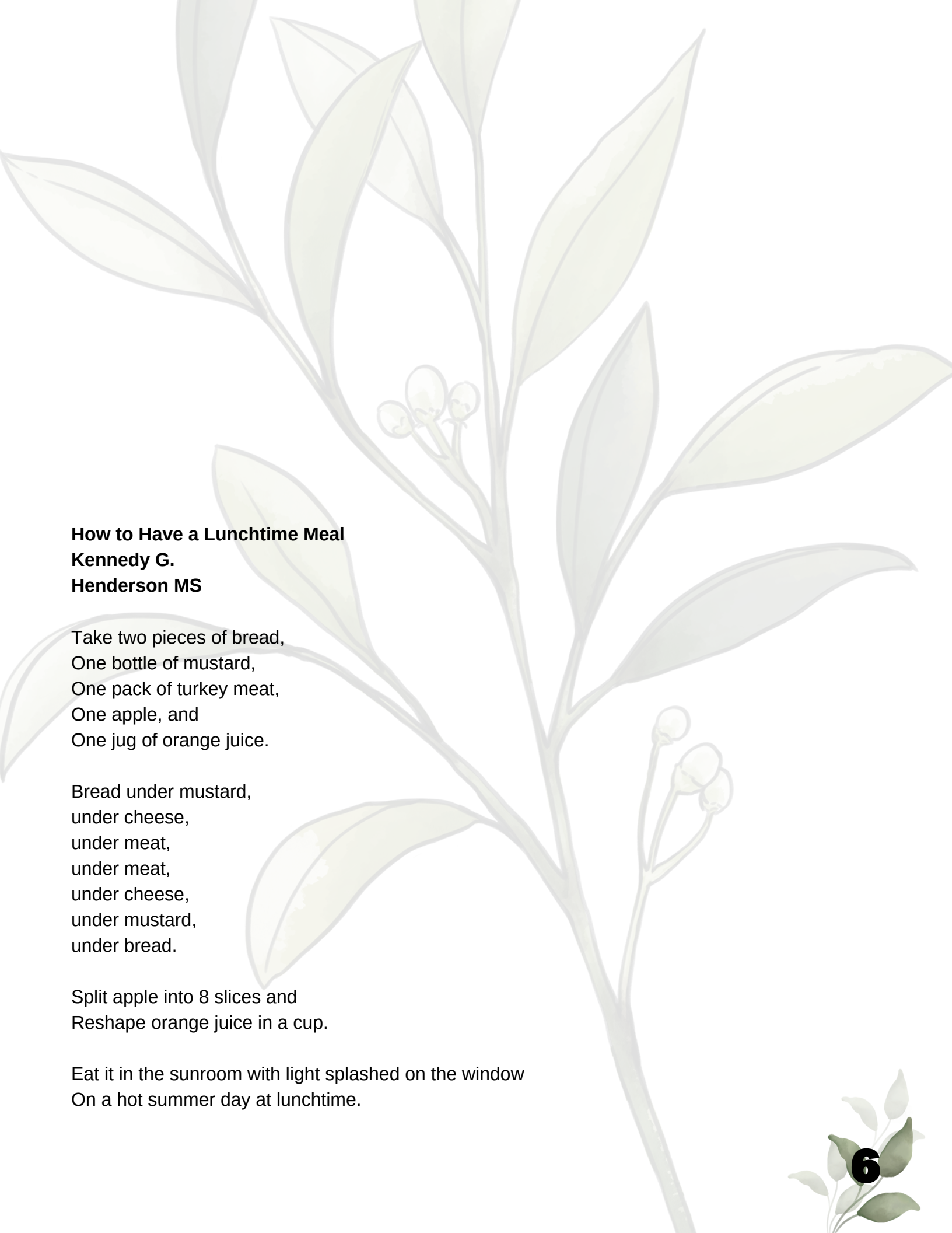
Weather is cool.
Clouds are amazing,
Predictive weather.

A tornado alert,
Cumulonimbus incus
Supercell storm.

Winds ten plus, degrees
Howling, shouting, screaming to
Help those inside.

Robert's Wants and Needs
NyAsia J.
Lucille Brown MS

One day, a little boy named Robert was watching TV when he saw the newest toy: a trampoline. He went to his mom and started begging her for it, but his mom said "Robert, we need to save money for things that we need." He thought about getting a job since he was going to be 14 years old in just two more days. The next day, he filled out a job application. After he was done, he told his parents, but they didn't like him staying away from home. After his birthday, he had the job interview and got the job! He ended up making enough money for all his wants and needs.



How to Have a Lunchtime Meal
Kennedy G.
Henderson MS

Take two pieces of bread,
One bottle of mustard,
One pack of turkey meat,
One apple, and
One jug of orange juice.

Bread under mustard,
under cheese,
under meat,
under meat,
under cheese,
under mustard,
under bread.

Split apple into 8 slices and
Reshape orange juice in a cup.

Eat it in the sunroom with light splashed on the window
On a hot summer day at lunchtime.

Lights, Camera, Action!

Enjoy original skits and scripts created by students in our theatrics program at the Southside Boys & Girls Club.

Magic Light Show

Sasha B. and Izell C.

Southside Boys & Girls Club

Host 1: Welcome to the Magic Palace

Host 2: Yes! Welcome.

Host 2: Welcome Mr. Mike Wisoski.

Performer (in a mysterious voice): Hello everyone.

Host 1: Well, let's get this show on the road.

Hosts set up scene.

Performer: I will now go into the water. *Makes an evil laugh.*

Host 2: We will now put the sheet over the tank.

Host 1 and 2: BOOM

Host 1: Oh no! A statue.

Host 2: Look, this is him. *Host 2 walks around.*

Host 1 and 2: We can bring him back.

Host 2: Allakazam...Allakaboom!

The Performer pops back up swimming and walks out of the tank.

Performer: I hope you enjoyed the show!

Everyone makes an evil laugh.



Genesis & Tiara
Aiana J. and Sasha B.
Southside Boys & Girls Club

Genesis & Tiara are two best friends who went to the Macy's mall in Manhattan, New York.

Genesis: Hey girl!

Tiara: What up girl!

Genesis & Tiara: We haven't seen each other in a while.

Tiara: Oop, twin telepathy! *They both laugh.*

Genesis: Girl, what we doing outside? It's cold! Let's go inside.

Tiara: Agreed. *They walk inside.*

Tiara: Ooooooh, let's go in Gucci.

Genesis & Tiara walk into Gucci and spend tons of money.

Tiara: Girl, you know what I'm thinking?

Genesis: I most deff know.

Tiara & Genesis: Let's go to Louis!!!

They go inside Louis Vuitton and start looking around.

Tiara: Oooh, I like this bag.

Genesis: I like it too.

Tiara & Genesis: Let's get it.

Tiara & Genesis go to the cash register. Tiara hands the bag and her card to the salesman.

Genesis: Oooh, girl.

Salesman: Miss, your card was declined.

Tiara & Genesis: What!!

Tiara: Do it again. *Card declines again.*

Salesman: Miss, it declined again.

Tiara and Genesis walk out of the store ashamed and embarrassed.



At the Club

**Ki-govni L. and Judah S.
Southside Boys & Girls Club**

Setting: Atlanta, Georgia, at a club called “Club ATL.”

Characters: Aaliyah and Jay

Plot:

Aaliyah and Jay are at the club, and Jay offers to buy her food. They start talking and exchange digits. Then, they start hanging out, and after hanging out continuously, they go on a first date at the Bow Tie Cinema. After the movie, they go to Jay’s house up on the fifth floor. They dress up fancy, make dinner, then decide to go to Club Atlanta and party. After, they go back home to chill and play games.

When they wake up, they go get breakfast from Chick-fil-a. They become best friends, and 8 years later, they decide to get married. They have a family with 6 kids, 3 girls and 3 boys. They also have a business together and lived happily ever after.

The Mystery Egg

**Amyra H. and Andrea B.
Southside Boys & Girls Club**

Two girls are on a mystery Easter egg hunt to find the golden egg.

Trinity: Hey, Tiny! I’m excited about the Easter egg hunt. I heard that we’ll win 10,000 dollars if we find the golden egg. Should we team up?

Tiny: Okay, Trinity! When we find it, I’m going to share with you. You get \$5,000; I get \$5,000.

Trinity: Cool. The race has started. I’ll go left, and you go to the right.

Both run Off Stage. From Off Stage, someone says: Two hours later.

Tiny and Trinity come back on stage.

Trinity: Found it yet?

Tiny: No... Can we look together?

Tiny: Look! *Points her finger.* I’ve found it! Now we can split the money.

Trinity: What are you going to buy with the money?

Tiny: I’m going to Legoland!

Trinity: Well, I’m going to save some of mine.



Stand Up!

Enjoy student pieces on advocacy and change

Advocate for My Siblings

Mandeleni W.

Wilder MS

I want to be an advocate for my siblings to not getting bullied by other people because I'm the only one who can bully them (in a good way). My siblings are very quiet and have a hard time standing up for themselves, so I'll try to speak up for them and tell bullies to ignore them. I will also advocate for Jesus. Everyone should love Jesus because he is the Son of God, and God created us all, the world that we live in, and everything that we see.

If Someone Bullied My Sister

Deon M.

Wilder MS

If someone was bullying my little sister, I would stand up for her. I would help my sister by telling the teacher. I would also confront the bully and I have a talk with them. If someone was teasing the new kid, I would stand up for them too.

And if someone banned video games, I would have a talk and a debate.

To Everyone, From Aaron

Aaron Lamar W.

Wilder MS

I want to stand up for myself because I want people to support me. I wish that people would be nice to other people and to the teachers too. I want to be the nicest person and student at Wilder Middle School and all middle schools. I don't want to hurt people; I don't do that. All I do is stay on the good side, not the bad side, and wish that people will be kind to each other and me. I want to be a better brother, a better student, and a better son.

The Willow Project

Sydney S.

Wilder MS

The Willow Project is a "project" to drill oil and gas in Alaska, and it can produce up to 180,000 barrels of oil. That is a total of 7,560,000 gallons. Most cars hold up to 12 gallons of gas, and others hold 15 or 16. That's a lot of gas for cars. In Henrico, VA, the average price for gas is \$3.15 - \$3.17.

Car exhaust from gas causes carbon pollution that will deeply affect the wildlife and the environment. That is dangerous. We need trees' help to filter air. We need air.

Dream Jobs and Money Goals

My Day as a Meteorologist

Tommy B.

Wilder MS

I would probably look at the weather in the morning. At work, I might make a weather map, and I also might send out warnings to areas.

WNBA Player

Avah J.

Lucille Brown MS

To be a WNBA player, you have to go to college and have skills first. Then, you have to try out for many teams, and if you are good, a team will ask you to come onto the team. You will get drafted, and then you will be on the team. You will play and get paid \$102,761 a year.

Medicine

Syncere S.

Wilder MS

Someday, I want to work as a doctor or nurse for kids. I will walk in and see a kid who is very sick. She might have a bad cough, and I will give her some medicine.

Money

Ne'Vaeh J.

Lucille Brown MS

How to save money: I stay out of my wallet, I don't go to the corner store unless I really need to, I don't buy anything on my phone, and I don't buy gift cards.

Professional Soccer Player

Akira S.J.

Wilder MS

If I was a soccer player, I would save money for nice looking cleats. There's a lot of practice, short warmups, and sadly, ugly uniforms. I don't think I'll be a professional, but it's a nice goal.

Lawyer

NyAsia J.

Lucille Brown MS

To become a lawyer, you have to go to college and then to law school to get your degrees. You have to search for a job and apply, then you go to the job interview. When you get the job, you have to get files on whoever you are helping. You go to court and win cases.

Actor

Arilon P.

Wilder MS

I am an actor.
I put on a mask over
my face, hiding myself in the
mask and act.
I scream.
I cry.

Five Dollars
Robert J.
Lucille Brown MS

Kelly has \$5, and she wants to buy candy, but the candy shop sells it for \$50. She wishes for the candy, and when she wakes up, she checks her phone and sees that her best friend gave her \$1,000,000,000. She was so happy, and she bought the candy. Her best friend owns the bank, and that's why she gave her lots of money.

World Cup
Mandeleni W.
Wilder MS

I imagine myself in the future practicing for a big women's world cup, playing for the Congo / DRC. I am playing the game with all my supporters cheering for me. I win the World Cup, which includes a million-dollar prize!

To be a Designer and an Actor
A'leyah R.
Lucille Brown MS

To be a designer, you have to gain hands-on experience and complete a fashion design degree program. To be an actor, you have to be educated and build up an acting resume.

Podium's Very Scary Feb. Flash Fiction Competition - 1st Place Piece

A Life's Decision

Xavier S.

I could feel the cold metal ground pressing against my face. My vision was a little bit blurry, and I felt weary. At first, I thought I couldn't hear, but I began to realize that in actuality, I couldn't understand what I was hearing. The sounds were more than foreign. I looked at my surroundings with confusion and fear.

I was in a small, bare room made of sleek metal. The light filtered in from a wide opening. I began to walk towards the exit to egress somewhere more comfortable. As if a wave, I remembered what was happening. I was a pilot of the Zeus 13, along with my brother Joseph and my friend William. As I peered out of the room with intrigue, I began to realize that this wasn't my ship.

Questions began swirling in my murky mind, but before I could spiral into an inevitable panic, the new vessel I was on began to shake, as if wiring to life. The unfathomable sounds became louder, and, in an instant, pinpoints of light illuminated the walls. I was facing a single hallway that didn't lead far. At the end of it, the lights shined brighter than the rest. I didn't know what it was, but a gaping feeling in my chest seemed to be pulling me towards it. Without much else to do, I decided to walk into the light. As I arrived the lights suddenly turned off and the doors opened without making a sound. What I saw astounded me.

It was a wide circular room with pedestals and lights. To my right, a huge window opened to the vacuum of space. The only problem was that there were asteroids and rock seemingly all around us. Though I couldn't feel it, it was apparent from the window that we were moving straight towards a huge one. "Where are we?" gasped a voice behind me. I spun around to see William looking as awestruck as I felt.

"I'm glad you're okay!" I exclaimed, "But where's Joseph?"

"I don't know, but we need to find him and get off of this ship." He said. As I was about to respond, a screen loudly turned on.

As if answering my question, Joseph was on the screen, but he was chained to the floor. The sounds became louder, almost blaring at a time but morphed into a language I could understand. Somehow, it was English.

"Make a decision." Said a voice clearly unfamiliar with English. "Save yourself from the asteroids or save your companion." With a *VRV* a pedestal shot up from the ground. Two buttons lay atop it. One had the symbol of a face, the other an asteroid.

A Life's Decision continued

Xavier S.

“John, we can’t abandon him again,” shouted William. Still perplexed by the circumstance we were in, it took me a minute to realize what he had said. Before I knew it, I said, “But if we save him, we’ll die, and we don’t even know if he’s on the ship or not!”

“If we save him, we might still crash into the asteroid and all die!” William looked enraged.

“You want to save yourself instead of him?”

He began, his voice rising. “It’s like how it was during the attack on the capital. We could’ve chosen to go back for him, but it could’ve been dangerous. You chose not to and instead knocked me out and abandoned him. It was a miracle he didn’t die!” He shouted.

“Weren’t you listening to me, we could all die!” I said, trying to make sure his words didn’t get to me.

“We’ll just have to trust whatever has us in custody!” he said. Now it was my turn to get angry. He never listened to me or to reason when it really counted. “We need to save him,” he said finally, “even if we have to die.”

“But you’ll kill you and me!” I said urgently “One life isn’t worth two!” As the last words slipped out, I immediately realized that he wasn’t being foolish. I was simply being selfish, even in a life-or-death situation like this, my selfishness could mean the death of someone I cared about.

My breath was heavy, and my palms were perspiring, but I knew what needed to be done. “Save him,” I said, my eyes on the floor. I was scared, but I could abandon my brother. Not again.

With bravery, William stepped up to the pedestal. I could almost hear his beating heart when he pressed the button. Suddenly, we felt the ship shoot forward and head straight into the asteroid.

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