



COLOR OUR WORLD

FALL 2024 ZINE

YOUTH AGES 11-13

FALL 2024 MIDDLE SCHOOL 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 Higher Achievement and with Next Up RVA
- Dogwood Middle School with Higher Achievement
- Henderson Middle School with Higher Achievement and with Next Up RVA
- Petersburg Boys & Girls Club
- Fairfield Middle School
- The Well Community Center

OVERCOMING HARDSHIPS

Title: Overcoming Hardships

Author: Reagan Mullin

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

I dislike math because it's confusing. Half of my grade is based on participation, and I do participate, but my teacher says that I don't participate as much as I can. I'm not worried though, I always get good grades.

Title: Overcoming Hardships

Author: Zenias Scott

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

Things that affect me in positive ways: My parents drive me to school and pick me up, and my siblings show me why I shouldn't be bad when I grow up. A challenge I faced was when I was bullied in the seventh grade. I overcame my challenge by laying low and wearing my hoodie for the rest of the day. Another challenge I faced was when my uncle got into a car crash. It was on Thanksgiving Day, and he died just two days later. It was in 2021, and I was 10 years old at the time. We couldn't go to the hospital because of Covid. I overcame this challenge by sucking up my tears and living my best life. He would be so proud of me.



Title: Overcoming Hardships

Author: Jonathan Jones

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

My mom and friends help me with life. I overcame challenges by cutting off people.

Title: Overcoming Hardships

Author: A'muri Allen

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

I overcome hardships with LOVE because love helps me. I have challenges with girls rejecting me, but I will be respectful and will never give up.

Title: Overcoming Hardships

Author: K'Miyah Walker

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

When I was younger, I needed my first surgery and had to relearn how to function. Music helps me with my depression and overcoming challenges.

SIMPLE PERFECTION

Title: A Perfect Morning (That Will Never Happen)

Author: Kennedy Greene

School: Henderson Middle School

I slowly opened my eyes and felt the warm sun splash on my face. I looked at the clock on my phone; it said 6:00 a.m. Knowing that there were only two hours before school, I went to the bathroom to brush my teeth. A few minutes later, I went back to my room to put on lotion, deodorant, and then my clothes: a NASA t-shirt, casual black sweatpants, and my black Nike shoes. I then checked my backpack to make sure I had everything I needed for school.

Suddenly, a sweet fragrance surrounded my nose; it whispered to me to come downstairs. Downstairs, there was my mom, also fully dressed. My dad and my two younger sisters were there as well.

“Good morning,” my mom said.

“Good morning,” I replied in the same sweet tone.

“I made homemade waffles; would you like some?”

A few seconds later, I sat at the table with a plate of two waffles, a Honeycrisp apple, and a glass of milk. I savored every bite—the hint of tartness of the apple, the sweetness of the scrumptious waffles, and the milk I sipped after each bite of my waffles, each sip quenching my thirst. After I was done, my dad said, “Time for school!” I smiled to myself and thought, what a great way to start the day.

CODE OF "P"

Title: Code of "P"

Author: Zion Terry

School: Boushall Middle School

Rules I live by:

Advocate for yourself but no fighting,
Stay yourself,
Don't change who you are,
Stay slaying.

Title: Code of "P"

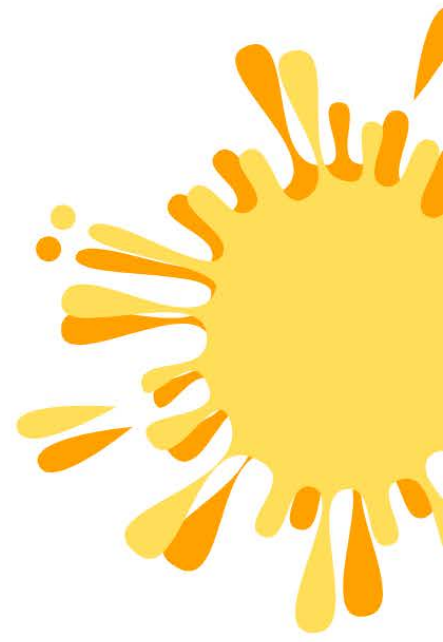
Author: Serenity Thompson

School: Boushall Middle School

Rules I live by:

Stay funny,
Stay weird,
Keep cooking,
Don't forget about daddy,
Stay shrimpy,
Love family,
Play Roblox.

SUMMER IN POETRY



Title: Summer in Poetry

Author: Tori Starks

School: Boushall Middle School

This summer, I went to a program called R.E.A.L Girlz.
I also went to the beach with my friends,
Saw my boyfriend, and dyed my hair.
Sadly, it faded.

My best friends and I went to the fair
And had a sleepover.
That was a chill and fun night.

Oh! I also took a trip to Mexico.
Overall, I was chilling this summer.

Title: Summer in Poetry

Author: Skylah Buckingham

School: Boushall Middle School

During the summer, I did lots of new things!
First, I finally got my second ear piercing.
I thought it was going to hurt, but it didn't.

My birthday is also in the summer.
For my birthday, I went to a hotel in Williamsburg
And played in the pool with my friends.
I also bought some new shoes.

Everything was going great
Until I was stung by a bug!

DREAMS AND JOY

Title: It Was All A Dream

Author: Kendall Williams, MaKayla Davis, Za’Niyah White

School: The Well Community Center

Kayla went to her grandparents' house. She entered the house and went to the bathroom. After that, she went upstairs and saw a trail of blood in the hallway, so she followed it to the attic. She went into the attic and saw a dead body. In the left corner, she saw her grandma eating the dead body. Her grandma turned around and started to run after her. Kayla ran down the attic stairs but slipped on the blood in the hallway and hit her head.

Kayla woke up in her bed, and her grandmother was standing over her. Her grandmother drugged her and tied her to the bed. Kayla's grandma left the bedroom, Kayla cut the ropes and escaped the house. She went to her neighbor's house for help and called 911. Suddenly, she felt like she was falling and woke up. It turned out it was just a dream.

Title: Feeling Joy

Author: Ma’Kayden Moore

School: Fairfield Middle School

To feel joy means to be happy and in a good mood. When you are smiling and actively talking to others, you experience joy. When you are social with everybody, instead of being antisocial, it is joy.

Title: A Great Start to My Day!

Author: Nyla Keeling

School: Henderson Middle School

Today, when I woke up, I took a shower and fixed my hair. After finishing my hair, I ate breakfast, made sure I had everything I needed, opened my front door, and left my house to head to school. Once I arrived at school, I went to my 1st block class and listed the things I had to do today: finish my missing work, complete my current work, finish my test, study for my next test, and work on a group project.

Today is a very busy day. I was very stressed out because of all the work I had to do, so I took a deep breath and calmed down so I could complete my work. After 1st block was over, I went to my friend's class to walk with her to our 2nd block class since we both have 2nd block together. Today is going to be a good day!

Title: All About Joy!

Author: Jasira McCaskill

School: Dogwood Middle School

Joy means that something or someone lifts you up or brings you happiness. I know when I'm happy because there would be a smile on my face. Also when I'm with my friends, listening to music or eating good food. Me and my friends like to hang out a lot. We go to fun places like amusement parks, fairs, bowling, skating, escape rooms, etc. Going out to eat at a restaurant or fast food place and just chilling at each other's houses listening to music. I can recognize that others are feeling joy when they are laughing and smiling. When they are hanging out with the people they love and having a good time.

Title: My Scarf

Author: Barbara Page

School: Boushall Middle School

It feels silky soft, like healthy hair.
It can have many beautiful patterns,
Or be as plain as an all-white wall.

It's healthy for your hair and keeps it fresh.
Usually worn to bed to stop hair from messing up,
But you can wear it any time, any day.

You can use it for multiple things.
I love the feeling of putting it on my hair

After getting it freshly done.
It comes in many sizes
And saves the day when you don't have time to do your hair!

Overall, I love my scarf.
I wear it all the time,
Especially when my edges are messed up.

Title: The Importance of Punctuation

Author: Tyren Harvey

School: Dogwood Middle School

This morning, I saw a rhino on the top of my house. My mom said, "Oh, my god," and I ran and got in the car. White, black – a Kia.

My mom took me to my bus stop, and I started talking to my friends. One said, "I got a girl now," and his cousin said, "No, he doesn't. He's lying."

LIFE'S STORY

Title: All About My Life

Author: Ja'Kayla Fentress

School: Henderson Middle School

Hi, my name is Kate, and I'm 21 years old. I live in Virginia Beach and like to go to the beach in my free time. I love to go into the water and surf. Yup, you heard that right—I'm a surfer now! I have long brown hair, I'm a tad bit short, and I also have two sisters.

The summer is now over. Three months later, on Christmas Eve, it started to snow, and snow is my favorite. When I saw the snow coming down, I got so happy that I grabbed my two-year-old sisters, and we played in the snow. Afterward, we went into the house, made hot cocoa, and began to watch Christmas movies. Everything was perfect until we heard a strange knock at the door. This is when everything changed forever!

To be continued...



Title: A Day in The Life of Allison C.

Author: Allison Collins

School: Boushall Middle School

I start by waking up and cleaning my room. Next, I clean the house and make breakfast for my family. I usually paint, draw, or chill with my friends to pass the time. After that, I take my hour-long nap, and once I wake up, I cook dinner for my family. Can you tell I love to cook? After dinner, I will finish my painting or start a new project while on the phone with my friends. Lastly, I give love to God, read my Bible, and take shower. Now it's time for bed.

Title: An Apology Letter

Author: Jayden Hudson-Pearce

School: Boushall Middle School

I am sorry for hurting other people's feelings and making it seem like I started the problem or that I have a problem. I need to start being the bigger person, stop reacting to everything, and stop trying to hurt people because they talk about me. I also need to always have a positive attitude.

TRY IT! WRITE YOUR OWN HAIKU

**Haiku is a form of structured poetry with 3 lines and 17
syllables.**

**The first line has 5 syllables
The second has 7 syllables
The third has 5 syllables**

Line 1 (5 syllables) _____

Line 2 (7 syllables) _____

Line 3 (5 syllables) _____



UNLEASHED IMAGINATION

Title: The First Hour of a Zombie Apocalypse

Author: Addyson Winfree-Slaughter

School: Boushall Middle School

When I found out about the zombie apocalypse, I was waking up from a nap. My mouth was dry; I was thirsty, hungry, and confused. Next thing I know, my phone started beeping really loud, non-stop. Then a big black screen appeared with a green and red sign going across the screen. My first thought was, where are my people, where is my family? Next, I packed my bags, and my purpose was to not die and make it out alive to fly or transport somewhere that was not near any zombies.

Title: Superheroes & Archnemesis

Author: Amara Watson

School: Boushall Middle School

My superhero's name is Miss Super. She is fearless, wise, has butterfly wings, super speed, super strength, and can throw fire from her hands. Her archnemesis is depression. She met her archnemesis during the pandemic, towards the end of fourth grade and the start of fifth grade.

The supervillain's name is 'Depression' because it made her feel hopeless and like she had no more of herself to give to the world. She is not able to control it by herself, but God continues to help her battle it. Miss Super will not let 'Depression' escape, but if it were too, it wouldn't be able to get her because Miss Super is becoming a better woman.

Title: The Conqueror of Waves

Author: Josyai Jackson

School: Henderson Middle School

Leo is a brave surfer who rides gnarly waves. There is no wave he can't surf—except one: the TSUNAMI, one of the biggest waves to surf. But this doesn't matter to Leo; he tries over and over again. Leo trains to conquer the tsunami.

Two years later, Leo is a pro surfer. He's won many trophies and has dominated many tournaments. The day has finally come to try the tsunami. The whole beach watches as he attempts to conquer the tsunami's speeding, crashing waves. *To be continued...*

Title: The Rise of an Evil Scientist!

Author: Kourtney Brotherson

School: Henderson Middle School

Waiting, I eyed his every move—the way he mixed every mixture: blue, yellow-green, then red. I approached him, my dad. I didn't want to make him upset, so I asked, “Dad, what's that?” He responded, “The formula to take over the world... and you're going to help me.”

-10 years later-

I did it! I finally made Dad happy, but now I rule a world that he isn't in anymore. I did it for him and my mom. My mom supported me when I was young, but not so much these days. Now that I've destroyed the world, she's left me... all alone.

Title: The Mysterious Attic

Author(s): Kamryn Vaughan, Jada Mickens, Jasira McCaskill

School: Dogwood Middle School

On a Monday night, a family was having a game night. They were in the middle of playing Monopoly when they heard a suspiciously loud bang above them. Kamryn, the littlest and most curious kid, went to check. She discovered an attic door in the laundry room, but the sound they heard turned out to be just the washer because Jada had washed her clothes earlier.

Suddenly, somebody broke into the house and took Kamryn. Kamryn tried kicking and screaming, but the rest of the family couldn't hear her because everyone had gone outside. The robber and Kamryn snuck out the window and ended up falling from the window. The man tried to run. That's when the family came running into the room, seeing that Kamryn was gone.

The family then activated their superpowers. The family saw him, caught him, and dragged him into the living room. They started to question him, but he wouldn't answer. Since he wouldn't answer, the family decided to cook him. Once the robber was fully cooked, they started eating him while finishing Monopoly.

Title: The Secret Staircase

Author: Ja'Kayla Fentress

School: Henderson Middle School

Once upon a time, my brother and I looked around our new house and saw a closet. We opened it, but sadly, it was just a brick wall. One night, my brother and I went to bed but were woken up by mice. I got scared and shook my brother to wake him up. He was scared too, but we got up and followed the mice. The mice led us to the closet. We opened the door, and there was a staircase. We went up the stairs, and although it was a long walk, we made it.

We saw people who appeared to be wearing costumes, but they weren't costumes; they were their real faces. We started walking around and noticed we were the only ones with human faces. We got so scared that we ran back to the stairs. But before we could open the door, a frog person stopped us. We screamed, and the frog said, "Whoa, are you guys ok?" We said yes, and he told us his name was Tim. We told him our names, but he insisted on calling us 'The Twins.' Tim said he had to leave and get something, so we hurried back down the stairs and kept running before he could return.

We made it back home and went to bed. The next day my brother tried to talk about what happened last night, but I told him never to talk about it.



Title: Leah's Closet

Author: Jayden Holmes, Tiyuana Cheatman

School: Fairfield Middle School

Upstairs in Leah's closet was a hidden door. She told her older brother to get Mom and Dad. They all gathered and opened the door. When they opened it, a room was revealed, but when they looked inside, they saw nothing. The dad and brother went to check to see if the room was safe since the house was old and built in 1805. They walked around the room for about 10 minutes but didn't hear a response. They walked around some more and began to hear muffled screams. Then, that's when they noticed a giant spider the size of a bear! The spider saw them, ran toward them, and tied the dad and brother up in its web.

Mom and Leah ran away and found a spot to hide. They threw a shoe, but the spider ate the dad and brother. They kept throwing things and eventually killed the spider! However, the spider became a ghost. They were shocked, and the spider haunted them for the rest of their lives.

CANDY GAME

Title: Can You Guess My Favorite Candy?

Author: Aaliyah Williams

School: Fairfield Middle School

I am writing about a bag of candy that is sweet like you. This candy is very colorful and makes me feel like I'm in the tropical rainforest. It makes me feel like I have found the most exotic fruit in the land. It is juicy like a peach and sweet like a pineapple. It's fun to eat like an orange. They have different flavors, and they start with a J. What am I?

Answer: Jolly Ranchers

Title: Can You Guess My Favorite Candy?

Author: Ka'Mya Christian

School: Fairfield Middle School

My favorite candy is sweet and crunchy. It is hard on the outside and chewy on the inside. There are different flavors as well. They have peanut butter flavor, caramel, and regular. The packets come in different colors based on the flavor. They also come in different sizes. They have the ice cream flavor, but they are also served in cookies. They have commercials for them. This is my favorite candy because it reminds me of when I was in pre-K and we did things with our dad. We put them in ice cream. One day when I was little, I had a movie day with my dad, and we put them in the popcorn. I love them. They're the best. What am I?

Answer: M&M's

FEELINGS & SELF LOVE



Title: Self Love is the Best Love

Author: J. Marcelo Washington

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

I love myself because I'm happy. Today I forgive myself for making mistakes. I am grateful because I wake up every day. Something good I did for myself today was my schoolwork.

Title: Self Love is the Best Love

Author: Taniaya Fulton

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

I love myself today because I'm always confident about myself. Today I forgive that people can make mistakes. I am funny and I like to make others laugh. Something good I did for myself today is eat a good meal.

Title: Self Love is the Best Love

Author: Camern Livingston

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

I love cereal. I love puppies, I love playing games and going to school. I love experiencing the world. I love myself today because I got a good grade. Today I forgive myself for waking up late. I am happy because school is almost over! Something good I did for myself today is make a healthy breakfast this morning.



Title: Self Love is the Best Love

Author: J. Edward Washington

School: Petersburg Boys & Girls Club

I got a grade of 97 on the science benchmark today! I am happy because you know.... a 97! I also forgive myself for not quite getting an 'A' in civics.

Title: I Am Thankful

Author: Kemuria Hall

School: The Well Community Center

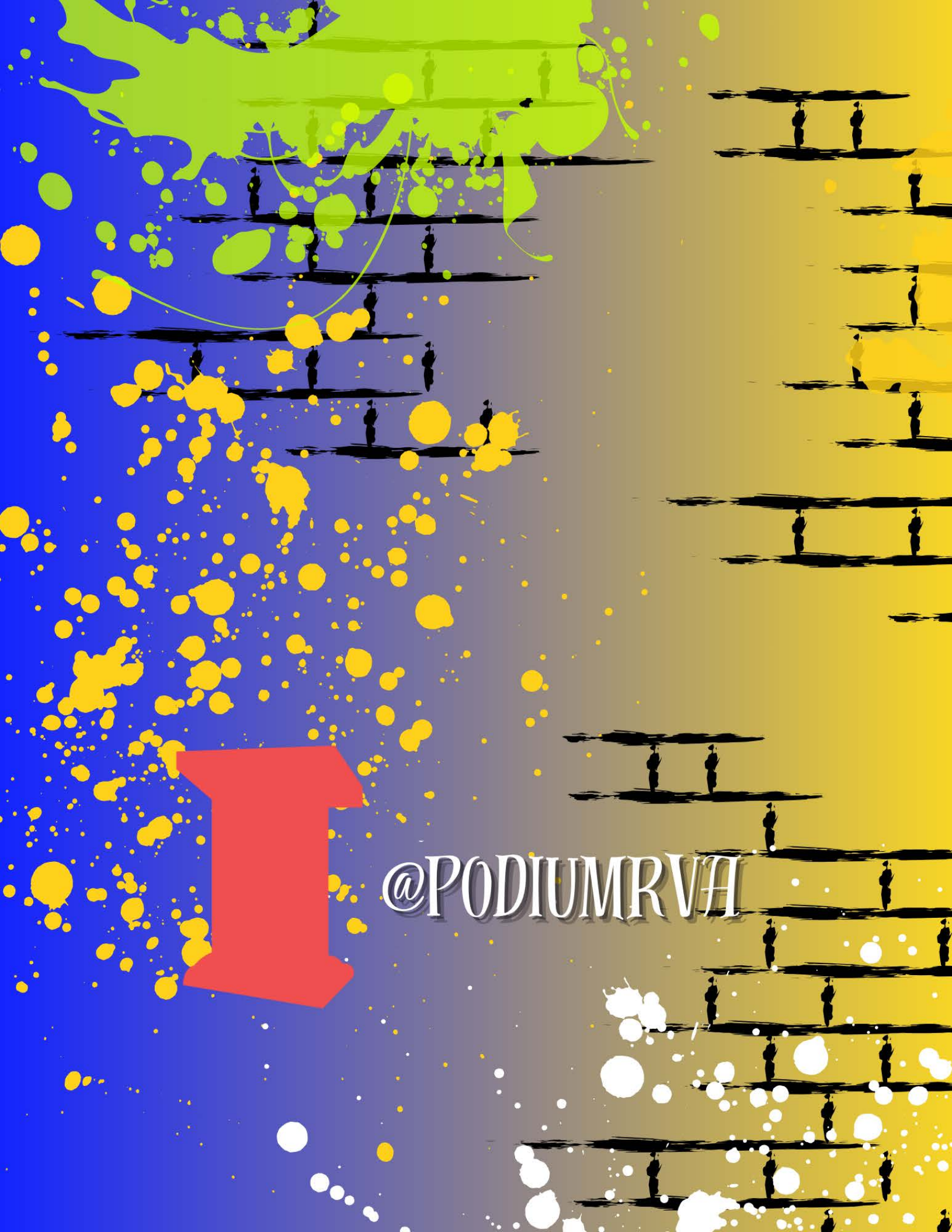
I'm thankful for Thomasina, Miss Angel, Mr. Jacob, and my family! Things I like to hear when I'm feeling down are never giving up, you can do it, and you're strong.

Title: Let's Talk About Joy

Author: Janiya Daniel

School: Fairfield Middle School

School does not always bring me joy because some of the students are loud and rude and need to learn respect. There are some students that are nice and have respect. I feel like all students should be kind because it's not nice to take out your anger on someone who didn't make you mad. Always treat others how you would want to be treated.



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