Through Our Eyes

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Dr. Christine Cortellessa, Principal
Dr. Raymond Boccuti, Superintendent
Tangled

I try to get up and speak
But I just can’t do it, as if
I was Tangled

I want to talk
I want to say hi to my friends
But a force in front of me
Says no, I can’t

I don’t want to seem shy
In fact, I am not
It’s just this force
Doesn’t want me to get it out

I really want to say something
In fact, I try to
But right when I’m about to say it
The force activates

I am not a shy person
I can talk to others
But this force, like a net in front of me
Says no, I can’t, as if
I was tangled

Justin Fischetti
The Wonders of the White World in the Winter

As I slowly came back to Earth from the Candyland in my dreams, I could hear the sound of an unsteady beat of a drum. Now realizing that I was in my bedroom, and not in a happy place, I hauled myself out of bed. Over to the windows my feet dragged me, and reluctantly, I pulled aside my flowery, white curtains, expecting to feel a stream of sunlight hit my face and to see the green meadow beyond my reach. Instead, I felt a cold, icy rush of wind hit me. I tumbled back with a start.

Recovering and returning to the window, I wondered what had happened to me overnight. Had I gone blind? For the world looked like a white sheet of paper, with silver glitter sprinkled on top, not the grassy meadow. What could have gone wrong?

Then it hit me, hard and quick. My grassy, green meadow was still there, just hidden by unique snowflakes, or, as many say, snow!

After realizing what the white was, I scurried to get dressed in the warmest outfit I could find. Taking a quick glance at the clock, I saw that the minutes I had before I must be at the bus stop were slipping out from under me. The clock read 7:05, giving me 5 minutes to eat and get out of here!

I exited my house at 7:09. As I slid down the icy driveway, I heard my name being called from the house. “Clarice Jane! Stop this instant!” I turned, surprised to be called by my full name. “School’s cancelled for the day, honey,” said my mother. “Come inside and I’ll get you warmed up.”

I followed my mother back into the house, feeling stupid. Why didn’t I know that there was no school? Didn’t I see how hard and fast the snow was crashing down? I tried to reassure myself, thinking that it was okay. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes, don’t they?

While my mother cooked the best chocolate pancakes, I looked out the kitchen window. I thought about snow. It was the same as rain, yet different in an unexplainable way. Suddenly, a light bulb appeared above my head.

Snatching a piece of blank lined paper, I sat down and began to write a heading. Then, I created a beautiful poem.

Snow is like microscopic flakes of joy,
   Falling gently to the ground,
As a sign of the upcoming holidays that take place,
   Many enjoy creating a snow pal,
   Or riding on magic down hills,
   But the best part of snow is the feeling,
   The feeling that is ejected into you,
   When snow falls,
   Not the chills,
   But way more powerful,
   The feeling of . . .
   FREEDOM
   &
   MAGIC
   &
   HAPPINESS

(continued)
After I completed my work, I copied it twice, giving me three copies. I snuck one into my folder, planning to give it to my teacher as my season writing piece. With the other two safely in my hands, I walked briskly to the little art room down a long hallway in my house.

My art room is secluded from the rest of the house, a little escape place for me. Sitting down with my sheets of paper, I pulled out a box of crayons and began to create a scene on the paper. I made a pattern of snowflakes around the edge of the paper, and drew some of the many objects you could make with the flakes of snow. For the next 30 minutes, I was away, in a magical world, where snow poured down from the white spots in the blue roof above us.

Once finished, I glued one of my two poems on a piece of colorful construction paper and laminated it. I hung it up the other on the wall.

Closing the door behind me, I crept out of my art room and up the stairs. I tiptoed down the bedroom hallway to my mother's room. I placed the poem on her night table.

As I was in the process of being tucked into bed by my mother, she said to me the best words you could ever hear: "You are right. I feel the magic in not just the air, but in you, too."

And she kissed me goodnight.

Sarah Deussing

Claudia Koeppen

Morgan Grabarz
Spring in Tokyo

The cherry blossoms lustered in the sun as the light breeze chilled my skin. The buildings were as tall as giants comparing to all of the ant-like people. This was Tokyo, Japan.

As the elevator climbed, I could feel the butterflies begin to swarm throughout my stomach. I saw the number 10 light up on the floor panel, the doors fly open, and bam! There I was, over 1,000 feet into the sky. I swung my arms over the rail, and let go of everything, in my mind. It felt like the perfect scene.

I was speechless. As I watched over the entire city, it felt like someone had pressed a mute button. I had never realized how beautiful Japan actually was. With intricate gardens, temples, and mountains, this place was equivalent to a dream.

When it was time to leave the Tokyo Tower, I had a sense of freedom. Japan was so very vast, yet everything was so close together. It was a very strange feeling, yet it felt like the way everything was supposed to be.

As we walked through the whole city, talking to strangers, speaking an entirely different language, surprisingly we still managed to get the point across. We asked people where to go for lunch, and every single person recommended this sushi bar right across the street from a world famous fish market. When we got there, we immediately ordered our food, having absolutely no idea of what we were getting. But after we finished our delicious meal, surprisingly I didn’t feel stuffed with food like I normally did at restaurants. I felt I had just the right amount, and that what ate was healthy, and fresh.

Then, as we walked back to our lovely hotel, we came across a yoga studio. I had never done yoga before, so this was new to me. We did a few poses, and then it was time for the “headstand”. I knew that I’d get a migraine from doing this, but I thought it was worth a try. I got into position, and sprung up. My legs pointing straight to the sky, my head balancing my entire body. I got it.

When we finally returned to our room, I had the realization that, that very day, was our last. I certainly will miss it, the one and only, Japan.

Maxima Molgat
The Most Perfect Snow Day

On a cold December morning, my alarm went off and I tried to get up in darkness that filled my room at 6:00 AM. But then, as I was trying to peel my eyes open during the early hour, I heard the pleasant surprise from down the hall, that today was a SNOW DAY! All school districts in the Bucks County Area were closed due to the thick blanket of snow that awaited all the kids to play in that day.

Later in the morning, after I slept in extra late that Tuesday, I ran downstairs, to see what awaited me in the kitchen. It was a fresh stack of fluffy waffles and a plate full of crispy, maple syrup bacon, of course, made by my loving mother. Then, filing in right behind me was my two sisters and dad. Next, we all sat down for a much deserved late morning breakfast.

After our scrumptious breakfast, my mom, older sister, and I all just stayed inside, and enjoyed our day off by just relaxing. Meanwhile, my dad went out into the frigid, winter weather to snow blow the driveway, and right behind came his little helper, my younger sister. After about a few hours of us resting, and them clearing snow, inside burst my little sister begging her two older sisters to go out and sled with her.

After we finally got on all of our warm layers of clothing and accessories, we went into the garage and got the sleds. What we had forgotten was that we have not gone sledding in a long time, so the sleds were flat as a pancake. Following the one hour delay of pumping air into sleds, we leaped outside into the frozen precipitation that filled our backyard. The rest of the day was filled with cold and fun, as we sled down the little hill, which was suitable for my six year old younger sister. I could hear the sound of the white snow crunching under us as we went down, making a plowed path where we had been. We went down the small slope over and over and over again, until we began to freeze in the one digit degree weather. All was ideal for spending quality time with family in the snow.

Next, after our hours of extreme backyard snow sports, we sat by the toasty fire and drank steamy hot cocoa. The hot chocolate was made on the stove, with the sweet surprise of liquefied Hershey's kisses inside the pot, was made by my mom. I topped mine with a mountain of whipped cream and as much marshmallows that could possibly fit. As I drank, the beverage slipped down my throat, and I got a warm sensation, mixed with the richness of the cocoa, the coolness of the whipped cream, and the texture of the now melted marshmallows. That was the most perfect ending, to the most perfect snow day with my family!

Gabrielle Leonardi
Mountain Watcher

High up a mountain,
A blue beautiful stream flows,
Down a waterfall.

Larissa Borys

Ski Lift

I love bitter chills, bitter chills,
Frozen is what you are chills.
Abandoned forest with lone pines standing,
Flakes on your nose flirting,
As you’re swinging and hovering.
Frozen is what you are chills.

Teeth chattering,
The brisk air cutting,
No feeling in your feet, when covered with a showy sheet.
Swaying and rocking,
With bitter chills, bitter chills.
Frozen is what you are chills.

Maryna Chuma

Golden Lion

The golden curls shine,
Black eyes looking into souls.
Lions pride at dawn.

Maryna Chuma

Lion

Staring at the prey
Struggling without fresh meat
Pouncing straight away

Hope King
When the sun goes down
The valley is its own world
Dark as an evil soul
Rumble in the sky
Over a desert quite dry
Then the rain comes down

Connor Campbell

Danielle Herbert

I like swimming, swimming
Cool water is what you got brimming
Kids walking from pool to pool
People diving
With grace and timing
Dive off of the board days

Kids splashing
Lifeguards snapping
Swimming away, but still here to stay
Splashing and diving
With friends and family
The best swimming you got days.

Max Alberts
Summer Poem about Baseball

I like baseball days, baseball
days is what you got to play.
The crowds cheering
players and coaches excited and chanting.
Baseball days.
Bats cracking
gloves smacking
baseball days, everyday
play and play. With bright lights, loud crowds
baseball is what you got to play.

Derek Smith

Caroline Donado

Kyle Smith
Changes and Things to be Changed

There are many things that I am going to change in my life. There are things that I would like to change, and then there are things that I need to change. The one thing that I need to change is that I need to do the things that are important before the things that are fun. A lot of times I go and play a game or jump on the trampoline before I do my homework or practice piano or clarinet. Then I have to go somewhere and I’m staying up late doing my homework and I’m really tired in the morning. I have got to change my ways about that. Also a lot of times I will be so tired and not focus say, after soccer practice that I will forget to do it all together. So, this is one of the things that I have to change.

One thing that I have had to change in my life before now is being able to share a room with my sister. When we moved we had to share a room or else we each would have very small rooms. It is kind of tough just because she sleeps with a night light and bedtime music that is usually rock and roll. Sometimes she will wake up in the middle of the night and yell for me because she would have a bad dream. It has been hard to get used to, but I have, even though I do go to sleep with rock and roll every night.

One last thing that I have to change in school is that I need to remember to bring my planner wherever I go. Even though I have only been in middle school for about four weeks I still have had some experiences with not being able to get in because I didn’t have my key card which is on my planner. For example, I went outside for advisory and left my planner in the gym and when I went to go inside I couldn’t. The bell rang and I had to have somebody let me inside. Those are some of things that I have and need to change in my life.

Finn Graeff
“To be or not to be, that is the question.”

“To be or not to be, that is the question.” is a very famous quote from Shakespeare’s Hamlet. It can be applied in many different situations in common daily life. It is a question that we find ourselves mentally saying, often when we are evaluating our actions.

In my opinion this quote means, do you want to just fit in, be like everyone else, and go with the crowd, or do you want to be different, original in your own way, and go on your own path. In simpler English, I believe that it means do you want to be like everyone else or do you want not to be like everyone else.

This quote can be incredibly helpful in making decisions in middle and high school when everything socially goes crazy. People are forming groups like wildfires and if you don’t find a cluster of good friends quickly, you are going to find yourself pretty lonely. But, you may not want to be like everyone else, or you may want more than anything just to be like everyone else. This is shown very relevant in the middle and high school grades when groups of students begin to form. To me, this quote seems directly connected to peer pressure.

You could have been using this quote when you were making a decision when you were with your friends yesterday. You could have been asked to do something that you know that your parents would never let you do, but you don’t know what to do because they are pestering you to go. Most likely, you are asking yourself if you want to be like them or not to be like them. So basically, this quote helps you decide who your friends are.

You might not want to be clumped into to some group and be a part of them everywhere you go. You may want to have your own type of style in how you act, dress, and look, and you quite frankly don’t care about what others think. Or you might love being with people like you in a group. You may only care tremendously about what others think. But, whichever route you take is because of the quote, “To be or not to be, that is the question.”

Gabrielle Leonardi
“Your mission, is to infiltrate Mavop Manor, owned by Jason and Drew Mavop, and steal the Tipeat Jewels. Don’t get caught, and if you get spotted, use these” He handed me a small silver box. I opened it, and inside were a bunch of small blue glowing cylinders. “They’re called Night-night capsules. The name wasn’t my idea, by the way. Basically, you throw them at someone and they explode on contact. The explosion releases a small amount of knock-out gas, enough to knock out one person. You have 50 capsules in there, so you shouldn’t need to use all of them. If you do, somehow, manage to use all of them, use the training you received to get out of there, and you don’t need to complete your mission. Any questions?” said the Director.

“No, I understand completely. Now, am I going in alone, or do I have help?” I asked. I had heard Jason and Drew were very dangerous, and so I didn’t think they’d send me in without help. Especially because I’m kind of new to the agency. “I know it’s unusual, but we are probably going to send you in alone. It’s dangerous, but we can’t risk more than one agent. Plus, we need someone who’s small so they can crawl through vents and stuff. This is the third attempt for the Tipeat Jewels we’ve made, after all. If you really want, you can bring one agent in with you, but you’re gonna have to find a different way in than the one we’ve provided for you” replied the Director.

“And what’s the entrance provided for me?” I asked.

“You infiltrate the party he’s throwing tomorrow, as though you are one of his guests. Though I don’t know how you’d get to the jewels, that’s all I can give you” the Director sighed. “If only our intelligence department could come up with something better than that, but if you can think of something better, and if you want to bring someone, you can”.

“Got it. If you give me a copy of the building’s blueprints, I can find myself another way in. And as for bringing someone, if you can find someone who wants to help, I’ll take them” I said.

“If you want to bring someone, you’re gonna have to find them yourself. I’m not finding them for you” he called back.

“Ok, I’ll do that now” I walked out of the briefing room and started for the field agents training wing. The agency was divided into multiple wings, which all branched off from the center. There were the briefing rooms, front desk, waiting room, and the disguise office are all in the center. Our agency pretends to be a car insurance company, by the way. A few of the people working here actually do work for car insurance, and they don’t know about our other business. (We also own a few Starbucks shops, but that’s not important). Of the wings, one of the wings is for field agents, another for hackers, another for biologists and another for weapon makers. There’s a hospital wing in here somewhere, and I think there’s a wing with apartments too. There’s supposed to be some holding cells, and a vault where we keep... You aren’t supposed to know that last part... Never mind. Anyway, I was walking to the field agent’s wing when someone tapped my shoulder.

“Excuse me girl, but are you lost?” said a smiling man in a gray suit. It’s probably worth mentioning I’m 14 years old, so I get stopped at the agency a lot. The adults are probably so baffled that I’m getting called for a job. If only they could see my paycheck.
"No, I know exactly where I'm going. Thanks for asking, though" I replied politely. I'm pretty sure this is the third time I've been asked this week, and the sixth time by this guy. I kept walking, to a set of doors at the edge of the room. There were a lot of wings. This door should lead to the field agent wing. I opened it up, stifled a scream, then slammed it closed again. Hospital wing. Ugh. It's always so gross in there, and there's always someone bleeding, and I cannot stand looking at blood. Like I said, I am new. I thought. A few people looked up, including the guy in the gray suit.

"You sure you're not lost?" He asked

"Yes, I'm sure. It's that door, over there" I said. Though I have been wrong before. I thought to myself. I walked over to the other door, and opened it. I had just enough time to jump out the way before getting trampled by a rushing agent. I noticed out of the corner of my eye, the guy in the grey suit. He was giving me a look, like Are you sure you not lost? And to reply, I walked in as proudly as possible. I shot him a look right back, as if to say See? I know exactly where I'm going! Just like always, a few people looked up, wearing confused expressions, there faces reading what's a kid doing in here? And Are you lost? I walked dutifully to the front desk.

"Can I help you?" Smiled the receptionist

"Um, yes." I stood up straight and cleared my throat. I wanted to be kind of loud, but not yell. Just enough so that I could brag to the other agents, without actually bragging "I'm looking for a field agent who would be willing to go on a mission with me to Mavop Manor" the room went silent. I small scenario flashed through my brain.

"Mission? Mavop Manor? What are you talking about?" Replied the receptionist

"What do you mean?" I asked

"This is a car insurance company" she said. I look at the glass above the door. It reads (backwards, from where I'm standing, of course) "INSURANCE AGENTS" I walked into the wrong wing again! Maybe I am lost!

I snapped out of my daydream when the receptionist went over to the microphone and said.

"Anyone wanna go on a mission? Warning: it's dangerous and you could die. But it'll be fun!"

Yep, here in this agency, we do things real formal.

Chapter 2

My name is Sylvia!

"Sorry, what's your name again?" He asked. Oh my god! How many times has he asked this question!? How many times will he ask it again!? Why can't he remember my name!? But I sighed and said it again.

"It's Sylvia"

"I'll learn it this time, I promise" he said back. I'm sure you will. I thought to myself. "So, what're we doing now?" He asked. I sighed again. Why does he ask so many questions!? Especially ones I've already answered, multiple times!? It's bad enough I got stuck with a kid, but did they have to be an idiot? Well, that's a bit hypocritical. After all, I am a kid myself, but I'm much more mature then he is. I smiled. I just called myself mature. That would make most people roll on the floor laughing.
"Excuse me? You never answered my question. Now what are we doing?" He poked my shoulder. Never answered his question? Never answered his question?!? This'll be the fifth time! But I sighed and answered it, again.

"I'm telling the Director I picked a partner." I said, as we walked out of the agents wing. I had to get him from the back of the wing, since the receptionist asked via microphone and speaker system, which broadcasts throughout the whole wing. "Now, we're going through the center, so be quiet. I can't answer any questions about the agency in there. Got it?" Before he could answer, I opened the door. Then, closed it. I don't know what it is with me and doors, but I can never open the right door. But hey, this door is right next to the wing door! How was I supposed to know? Well, the wing door is gray while this door is wood. Plus, the wing door has a sign above it, while this one has a picture of a stick figure on it. I thought to myself

"Um, why are you going into the bathroom?" He asked.

"Wrong door!"

"Okay..." I walked to the other door, making sure it was the right one. I then opened it, and walked out into the center. When I walked out, the gray-suited guy was, well, almost like he was waiting. He got up from where he was sitting, confused about why there was now not just one kid, but two.

"Excuse me, but are you two-" I cut him off

"I know where I'm going. I know I messed up on the way in, but I'm not lost" I said

"-agents?" He finished. Awkward silence ensued.

"Yes" I said finally.

"Oh, good! I didn't realize someone so young could be interested in the field of car insurance!" He said. *Oh, that kind of agent.* I thought.

"Well, we have to go to a meeting, so see ya around, I guess" I said. I grabbed Ryan's (the boy who asks a million questions) arm, and rushed away. I noticed a few baffled glances from agents (both field and insurance) as we rushed to the briefing room that doubles as the Directors office. Right before I grabbed the door, I stopped. *This is the right door, right?* I thought. *I'm not walking into the wrong room again, right?* I sighed, and looked at the sign. "Meeting Room C" I knew it! This is the wrong door! I walked to the door slightly to the left. "Meeting Room A" Nope, still wrong. I looked across from me. "Meeting Room B" then, I looked at the room to the left of that. "Meeting Room D" written under that was a sign, reading "Permanently Reserved" Yep, that's the right room. I walked purposefully over to it, grabbed the handle, opened it and walked in. Papers were everywhere, on the walls, floor, tables, chairs, if it had a surface, it had a paper. I think the walls were wood, the table might be glass, the chairs should be dark grey swivel chairs, and I think the floor is a grey carpet. I haven't seen any of these things, but the other rooms look like that, so I took an educated guess. The Director sat in the only uncovered chair at the head of the table, wearing a dark grayish-black pinstriped suit.
"Ah, Sylvia, you picked a partner!" He said

"Yeah, this is Ryan..." I said

"Scotts" he said

"Yeah, yeah, this is Ryan Scotts" I said

"Alright, well, here are the blueprints you asked for" he said, holding a blue piece of rolled up paper. He threw it at me, but Ryan intercepted it. "Now, since Ryan is joining you, I'll explain the mission. Your mission, is to infiltrate Mavop Manor, owned by Jason and Drew Mavop, and steal the Tipeat Jewels. Don't get caught, and if you get spotted, Sylvia has 50 Night-Night Capsules. The name wasn't my idea. You will take a plane to an airport near the Manor, and the Manor is surrounded almost completely by a river. So, take an inflatable raft or something. That is all!"

"So, we can go on the mission now? Nothing else needs to happen?"

"Yeah, pretty much"

"Where's the plane?"

"Outside, it's waiting for you"

"Ok, see ya!" I rushed out of the room, Ryan following closely. This was my first mission, and I was very excited. Sure, it was "dangerous" and "no agent has ever returned from the Manor of Horror", but this'll be fun! Right?

"Um, one question" said Ryan as we boarded the plane. "What's your name again?"

**Chapter 3**

"Oh my god this is a long plane ride!!! How long have we been riding for?! It feels like an eternity!" Moaned Ryan

"16 minutes" I said. I actually enjoyed the ride, except Ryan kept moaning about how long the flight was and was currently sprawled out over three seats and in the aisle. I'm currently regretting sitting next to him, because one of the three seats he's sprawled over is mine. I shoved him off of me, on to the floor.

“What was that for?” he asked.

“Laying on me.” I got and walked over to a different seat, and looked out the window. It looked nice, we were flying over trees and houses. There weren't any cars driving because everyone was at school or work. We would reach our destination soon.
I grabbed my stuff and nearly jumped out of the plane. I was so done with this ride. Ryan complained the whole time, and kept moving to sit next to me. I realized too late how important headphones really are. When we landed, I ignore the buckle your seatbelts sign and sat by the door. We landed, and as soon as that door opened I was out of there. I had studied the blueprints for a little bit on the plane, even if I could barely focus, and decided the best way in was through a secret entrance by river. There was a small dock on the east side of the building, which we would row into in our inflatable raft. Wait, another vehicle with Ryan? Crap...

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After nearly 20 minutes of rowing, we were finally at the dock. It had taken forever to get here, and after blowing it up for a forever and a half I sighed as I pulled the plug and deflated it again.

"What are you doing?!" Yelled Ryan

"Shhh! Keep your voice down! They might hear us. Anyway, I'm deflating it so we can carry it" I whispered back.

"Why not we just leave it here!?" He whispered back "I am NOT inflating it again. Ever"

"Ok, I guess we can do that" I filled it back up with air, then plugged it back up. "Alright let's go inside"

After I opened multiple wrong doors and used 12 capsules, Ryan took the blueprints and the lead. He seemed to know exactly where he was going, and never seemed to look down at the blueprint. I guess he just has a good memory. As we walked through the basement, I was surprised there weren't any guards around.

"Do you know where the jewels are?" I asked

"Yes, I think so" he said. He stopped short, and I didn't notice so I walked right into him.

"What're you-

"Shhh. Over there" he said. I looked up, and saw a ladder and four guards.

"Capsules?" I asked

"Go head" he said. I opened up the box. There were currently 38 capsules left. I stood in the center of the hallway.

"Hey! Intruder!" Yelled a guard. I threw with deadly accuracy. I may not be good with doors, but I could certainly throw. They hit the ground before they could aim their guns. I closed the box and shoved it in my pocket. I made a mental note: 34 capsules left

"After you" I said to Ryan, gesturing to the ladder.

"You better go first. You're the one with the capsules and aim like Apollo and Artemis" he said back. I climbed up the ladder and opened the hatch. I startled 2 guards, who were positioned at the door. 32 capsules left. Ryan climbed out. "See! If I had gone first, then who would open doors for you?"
"Shut it, you. Now go find the door and let's get moving" it continued like that for a while. When we had walked for a few minutes, we ran into real trouble. I started leading again and I got the door wrong. I opened it up and we walked right into the room where the party was being thrown later that night. If course, it was the afternoon, so it was a bunch of people setting up the party, but it was more people then I had capsules for. Ryan quickly closed the door, but it was too late. From the other side, someone yelled "Intruder!" In a French accent. We ran, but were soon confronted by guards. I was about to throw a capsule when someone with greater accuracy then me shot just above my hand. At first I thought he had missed, but then time slowed down and I felt the capsule explode. I tried chucking the broken capsule away, but the gas was already starting to take effect. I don't remember hitting the ground.

Chapter 4
The Deal

When I woke up, I already knew I was tied to something. I didn't dare open my eyes, so they would think I was still asleep. I wasn't sure where Ryan was, after all, I was the only one who got hit with a capsule. Maybe he got away? Maybe he's captured, too? Then an awful thought hit me: They didn't shoot him, did they? No. I refused to believe I had brought him along to die. And, we had really bonded on the plane and then the raft, so it would feel like I had lost a friend. I opened my eyes. No one else was there, but it looked like someone just tied me up and threw me into the nearest closet. I couldn't see anything, but I could hear something outside the room.

"And the boy?" Asked a deep voice

"Over there. Surrendered willingly after to girl went down, Mavop, sir" said another voice. So Ryan was safe, at least.

"Anything else?" Said the deep voice, who I assumed was Jason Mavop.

"The boy wishes to speak to you, sir" said the second voice.

"Alright, I'll speak to him now. While I do that, transfer the girl somewhere more secure then the nearest closet" said Mavop. I immediately closed my eyes, pretending to still be unconscious. The owner of the second voice, who I assumed was a guard, came in and picked me up. I heard Mavop walking to another room, and I opened my eyes long enough to see him walk into a room, and through the open door I could see Ryan. When the guard walked far enough away from Mavop, I kicked him really hard in the stomach. He dropped me on the floor, and I landed on my side. In my pocket, I felt a box. The capsules! When I hit the floor, I also kicked his foot as hard as humanly possible, and so he fell himself. I then wriggled out of the poorly tied rope around my stomach and arms and the even more poorly tied rope around my wrists. And since the guards never took away my capsules, I just chucked one at him. 17 seconds. A new record! It took me a bit, but I eventually found the right door. I had used 17 capsules, so now I only had 13 capsules left. I reached the room Ryan was in, and it was locked from the outside. When I opened it, he was sitting in a corner.

"Hello there, Ryan, I can open doors just fine! Now let's go. We've been discovered, so it's probably smartest to leave while we can. So, let's go" I said

"No" he said firmly "we have to finish the mission".
"Why? They know we're here and I only have 13 capsules left. It's not safe"

"Trust me. I talked him, and I made a deal. I know where the jewels are"

"What do you mean? Did he just tell you where they were? What did you give in exchange?"

"It's nothing. Now come on, let's go!" As he lead me to where the jewels were, because it was marked on the map, we passed a clock. 3:38. The plane would leave in 3 and a half hours, at 7. We climbed back down the ladder, back into the basement. I started to wonder what the deal was about. Maybe it was money? Information? I had no clue. We ran into a lot of guards, and I now was down to 3 capsules. We were close, though, and when we finally made it to the room, he turned and said "it's your mission, you do the honors" I picked the lock and opened the door to the room where the jewels were supposed to be. And then I walked in.

1 capsule left

From behind the door, which opened inward, someone grabbed my right arm, my throwing arm. He also reached in my pocket and took the capsules. I recognized him, the guard who Mavop was talking to earlier. The one who tried to move me to a cell and I kicked a bunch. Laughter filled the room. Mavop's laughter. Mavop walked in, followed by Ryan, who was looking down at his feet. What was going on?! Did he betray me?!

"I see you really are a man of your word" laughed Mavop. "You got me the capsules, plus another agent"

"I did what you asked! Now give me back my brother!" He yelled. His brother? Was he one of the agents who was captured? Was this an exchange?

"See, although you are an honorable man, I am not" he walked over to the jewels, picked up a medium sized diamond, and tossed it to Ryan, who caught it. "I'm not going to simply give up a captive. So you can have that, and you can go free. Take a canoe, I'll have one set up for you. Your raft was popped an hour ago, so you can't use that. Now shoo, I have important things to attend to" he said. A guard shoved him out of the room, while Ryan yelled

"This isn't what I agreed to! Take your stupid diamond! I want my brother! I want Sylvia! I don't need this stupid rock!!" But he was gone. If he was smart, he'd leave. If he was sorry, he'd come to help me. If he was stupid, he'd give back the diamond in an attempt to get his brother. And currently, I figured he was the biggest idiot I'll ever meet. Who turns in their mission partner? Was that why he asked to come along? To eventually betray me? I was so mad, I didn't even resist. I let them take me to whatever cell they decided to put me in. But, as if to rub salt in the wound, it was the same room Ryan was locked in when he made the deal to turn me in. That was kind of uncalled for. But I didn't care. I now decided to stop drowning in self-pity and actually do something. I walked over to the door, and messed with the lock a little. This was a cell whose lock was already broken once today. If I could just... Click! It opened just a crack. I slipped through, and started running. I didn't have the faintest idea of where I was going, but when I was running, I ran smack into a guard. The same guard who had help Mavop twice today. The one I kicked a bunch. The one who has my capsules. Since I ran into him, we both fell over. I reached into his pocket before he could do anything, taking the familiar silver box. I opened it quickly, throwing a capsule at him. 2 capsules left. One for Mavop, and one for the traitor. But, my perfect set up was destroyed when I ran into one other guard. 1 capsule left. I remembered something the Director said. You have 50 capsules in there, so you shouldn't need to use all of them, he had said. Oops.
I was running aimlessly through the basement, where almost everything had happened. I wished I hadn't brought him. I wished I had gone alone. I wished I knew the time. I wished I knew where I was going. I wished and wished for all sorts of things, and I ran right into... Ryan.

I considered throwing my final capsule at him, but I didn't.

"Look, Sylvia, I-"

"Don't" I said. I noticed the blueprints and the diamond were in his hands. I grabbed them both. "Where are we?" I yelled, shoving it in his face

"Here. The exit, is here" he said, pointing to two places on the blueprint.

"Great, thanks" I said. I shoved him out of the way and started walking

"Hey, wait! I'm sorry, ok? I, uh... My brother, he's, uh... Hey!" He yelled. I was ignoring him. I was walking to the exit.

"If you wanted to find your brother, there are at least 12 different ways I can think of to get him without betraying me. You could've told me about him. You could've explained the deal. I would've helped you get him free. I could've played along with the bargain. We could've done so many other things! But you decided to turn me in! Where you planning to turn me in the whole time? Is that why you came here? Did you know when you walked in here that I wouldn't come out with you!?!"

"No, I didn't. I didn't know any of this would happen"

"Just go away. Stay here and look for your brother or something. Leave me alone!" And with that, I ran off, towards the exit.

"Wait!"

"No!"

"I'm sorry!"

"Συγγνώμη απορρίπτεται!"

"What?!"

"It's Greek. It means 'Apology rejected!'"

I was close to the exit. Ryan was still following me. I hadn't seen any guards. I burst through the door the the dock (I had the door right for once). I was about to hop into the canoe when I spotted that same gaurd out of the corner of my eye, who was holding a tranquilizer gun, which was already aimed. At me.

"That canoe is not for you" he said.

"Well, it is now"

"Go on, get in, I dare you" he said

"Um, I'll, uh..." I said. I stepped towards the canoe, my hand creeping towards my pocket

"If you try it..." He left the threat in the air

"Uh..." I didn't know what to do. I looked at the canoe. Escape... So close, yet so far... He caught me off guard and fired. Time slowed down again. I thought it was over, that I'd never leave this place. When Ryan jumped in front. It shocked both me and the guard, which gave me enough time to pull out the final capsule and throw it at the guard. After the guard was out cold, I went over to Ryan.

"Συγγνώμη δεκτή" I said

"Wha..." He trailed off. He was starting to lose consciousness due to the tranquilizer in his shoulder.

"It's Greek. It means apology accepted" I smiled at him.
Chapter 7

It took a while, but I managed to drag Ryan, who was completely unconscious, into the canoe. With him laying on the floor, I started rowing towards land. The sun was setting, and as I looked out at all pinks and oranges in the sky and reflected on the water, I decided we would go back in there one day. The Mavop manor, which looked, almost purple in the lighting, whose shadow I was currently rowing in. We would go back in there. We would find the jewels and Ryan's brother, along with all the other captives. And I, I decided, as I stared at the beautiful pinks, oranges, blues and yellows reflected in the water, and the yellows and pinks in the sky, I would need a lot more than 50 capsules.

Lauren Walinski

Spring Days

I would die for spring days spring days
Sun is always out days
Freely pick the fragile flowers of spring
days spring days
The smell of fresh cut grass stays
Oh, I would do anything for spring days
spring days
Never ending glasses of freshly squeezed
lemonade
Can you please make these spring days
stay?
Adults laughing, children napping
People going here, there, and everywhere
Lots of fun days fun days
I dream of eating ice cream on those hot
spring days spring days
I stood on the road and cried
Because the thought of spring days still
being one month away...
wouldn’t die.

Hannah DeVito

At the age old pond
A frog leaps into the water
A deep resonance

Morgan Schroeder

Perched on a tree
The owl drew eyes
Through the green leaf ties

Jack Gawason

The golden sky shined,
laying on the big wide earth.

Giant trees stood tall.

Katie Mardirossian
Summer Poem

I enjoy summertime, summertime
Fun is what you got in the sun.
Waver crashing fireworks flashing
Sand flying
Sun and fun
Ice cream eating fun days
Memories born fires burn
Summer is no bummer
It flies in a breeze, time doesn’t freeze
Tanning and sailing.
With summer time, summer time
Fun is what you got in the sun.

Rachel Markley

Summer

I love summer days, summer days
Hot is what you got days.
Water is pitter patterning
Air on
Fun and games
You hang with your friends days

Birds chirping
Ice cream melting
Pretty showers, bring flowers
Dancing and prancing
Of summer days, summer days
Hot it what you got days

Nicole Hauch

Beach

The waves are crashing.
Water laps on to the sandy shore.
The beach is welcoming me.

Krupa Shah
“Unremarkable” was the only word my mind could fathom when Max’s objects were presented to me. A water bottle, a magnet, and a small metallic ball were my selection. I came to the conclusion that the metallic ball would be the most interesting of the three to do the project on, even though I would still be smothered in a blanket of boredom any time an assignment was presented to me. I was completely wrong. I soon realized why Max had brought this object, even though it seemed extremely plain to the eye: there was a story behind it, one that Max would recount to me several times over the course of the next four weeks.

When I first asked Max how he had obtained the ball, he pondered the question for a moment; his eyes fixated on the metal object, and then replied. He told an elaborate tale of a rescue mission, how he saved the ball from the dirty feet of hundreds of teenagers. He saw it glinting in the dim and flickering hallway light on the gray and white tiles. He made a spur-of-the-moment decision to pick it up and put it in his locker. It stuck to the light blue metal, showing instantly that it was magnetic. At this point he had come to the realization that it was a “Buckyball,” a popular toy among today’s youth. He had several others of these shiny spheres, but this one was significant because it was lost by an unworthy owner and stumbled into his path, a play of fate. He revealed to me that he gets stressed easily, and was especially full of this emotion when he found it. For a long time, he would grip this object when he was feeling overwhelmed and it would slightly calm him. In a way, they saved each other.

The Buckyball is about half the size of a small piece of gravel and is reflective all around it’s surface. It seems to be free of flaws on the metallic surface, but upon further investigation, many scratches can be seen, giving it more of a matte shine. It is completely spherical except for two small indentations on opposing sides. It is not magnetic all over, only when placed on these two indentations will it stick to a metal surface. It is so light that it is almost impossible to acknowledge it’s existence when holding it in in a closed fist. There are many signs of wear and tear on the surface, such as the scratches and chips in the metal.

The Buckyball’s history is quite interesting in that it was named for Richard Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller, a sometimes deeply depressed architect known for inventing the geodesic dome, which is the principle on which Buckyballs are designed. Fuller was a very complex person, as is Max, and his many layers cannot be seen unless you take the time to pull them back. But even more interesting still is the fact that production of the Buckyball is now illegal in the United States, due to its high choking hazard and strong magnets. When revealing this information to Max, he seemed genuinely offended, even slightly sad, like someone had hurt his friend. He strongly believes that connection is very important in society, and his object is a perfect example of that, so when I told him that no more Buckyballs would ever be made, he was disappointed to find out that his ball would not find more objects to connect to. Max thinks that the recall of these Neodymium magnet toys is unfair, as do many others, because they are meant to be a fun and easy way to control stress. There have been less than two dozen misuse cases, “while balloons-which were previously determined to be a health hazard-are allowed to be sold as long as they come with an advisory warning,” (Castillo, 2).
One question that immediately crossed my mind when choosing the object was how Max had kept it for so long, considering its almost miniscule size. He simply replied with, “I don’t know, it’s always just kind of stayed with me.” I found this very interesting in that although he does not take the object with him everywhere, he still feels that it is always with him in spirit, and because of these thoughts and his constant worry about it’s whereabouts, he has managed to keep it in his possession and never lose track of it. Now if I, on the other hand, had discovered an object of this size, I would have lost it in the blink of an eye, not worrying about whether it was in my locker, or had ended up on the floor again. I have learned that this is definitely something I need to work on and I am inspired by Max’s natural ability to perform this task.

Max and I are very different. When I first chose this object, thoughts of what the ball symbolically meant filled my head. I had some theories, but when I presented them to Max, he seemed surprised that I had put so much thought into it, because to him it is just a ball. Although this may have been the case for Max, to me it had so much hiding under the surface. It is easy to see when examining the object closely that the once pristine, shiny surface had been tarnished with scratches and chips from experiences that no one can even begin to know. I am a perfect example of a living Buckyball. I do not like sharing the experiences that have left physical and metaphorical scars on me, and even though I have had these experiences, I continue to act the same, just as the ball continues to be magnetic even though it does not have the luster of it’s former state. I did not really even know this about myself before this project, and therefore it has changed me for the better.

In conclusion, the past four weeks have been a whirlwind of emotion for both Max and I. While learning about him, I uncovered a part of myself that I never knew existed. I found that I have a warped view of the world in the way that I immediately assume that plain things have no meaning at all, when really they could have helped someone in ways that I can’t even imagine. Although Max and I aren’t usually the best of friends, I believe that we have obtained a special connection through this project.
The Adventures of Thomas and the Flat Cap

By Quinn Reinert

Three objects: a dog collar, a book of programming, and a flat cap. After looking at the collar, I could easily figure out the “amazing” story of a boy and his dog and decided it was not the most interesting in the group; onto the book of programming. I already knew that Thomas was into programming electronics, knew that his dad was a chemist, and was also the reason he was interested in programming in the first place, so there was nothing noticeable I could get out of that. Then I looked to the hat. Though it was dull, worn, and not the most stunning object of the three, it had a quality the others did not—mystery. Hopefully, that mystery would be carried out until the last interview, the last audit, until all the pieces clicked and I finally understood why this hat was on the table, and not something else.

When I first observed the hat I concluded that it was brown and green, and made of a fake leather on the outside, with cotton on the inside. One distinct feature is that on the brim of the hat, there is a button. If you undo the button then the hat can get larger and change shape. When I mentioned this to him, he said that he had noticed, but he didn't wear it like that because he preferred the original style. That statement had me wondering what influences caused him to think like this, so in my first interview I asked him. I was then informed that he got it from his grandfather when he died, because his grandfather liked that style of hat and had a few to give away. I also learned that every school day since then that hats were allowed, he has worn it. I found out that in his room, he has a special place where he keeps the hat as to never forget where it is. When I asked him what he thought of his grandfather, he replied with- "I always looked up to him and thought he was a great guy... I try to be like him a lot."

Now noticing the true importance of the hat to Thomas, I knew I had to dig deeper to understand the bond between Thomas and his grandfather. To start, I researched the history of flat caps to see how it corresponded with Thomas’s history. From "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flat_cap" I learned that the flat cap was brought over to America from England and Ireland, and that Thomas’s family originated from both of these places. I also found out from "http://www.dadshats.com/ivycap.html" that the flat cap was a popular style for working class men until the 1940s which was around the time that Thomas’s grandfather started his own convenience store.

This researched proved to me that the hat and his grandfather had a lot in common and that perhaps, Thomas likes it so much because it reminds him of his grandfather so if he keeps it, it will help him to remember all the great memories of him and hold the bond that they once had. Thomas’s main bond to his grandfather was through his stories. As a child, Thomas was fascinated by the tales of knights and vicious beasts and loved to hear them whenever he would visit. Thomas had described the stories as one of the many fun things that he had done with his grandfather, however it was one of the most memorable.

After hearing all the great times that Thomas has had with his grandfather, I realized that the connection he had was an important thing not just for him, but for all kids. Everybody needs to have bonds with their family members and I know now that I need to strengthen those bonds with my own family members in order to be happier later in life.
In conclusion, although the cap seems boring and bland, its history is rich and the key to understanding why it is so important to him. It may seem small at first, but it can leave an impression that is much larger. He obviously cared about his grandfather as his grandfather cared about him, and his hat was a way to keep on caring while also feeling a connection to him by wearing it.

Quinn Reinert

**Math Teacher**

I love my math teacher,  
math teacher  
learning is what you got  
in math.  
Kids talking, Petzak walking,  
kind, funny,  
supportive and friendly  
Homework is what you got  
math days.

Kids reaching, Petzak teaching  
Binders filling, papers missing,  
beaming and screaming.  
With Mr. Petzak learning is  
what you got in math.

Olivia Grace Ely

*Every time you think of something*  
You might think of a bad memory  
Me...  
I try to find the best of things  
I think of all the nice things that happened in a situation to me  
Even if it didn’t turn out the best for me  
There are so many sides of people  
And emotions  
You can’t look at the world so negatively  
You have to find the little bit of light  
That’s the kind of person I am.*

Michaela Park
A Dark and Mysterious Garden

By Chloe Miller

When I first took a look at the three objects my partner Chloe brought in, a small book, a necklace, and a book of sheet music, I had a decision to make because I was instructed to choose one. At first sight, none of the objects were very interesting to me. I never even heard of the small book my partner brought in, the necklace didn’t remind me of anything, and I know nothing about reading musical notes. Recalling what my teacher said at the beginning of this project, that things wouldn’t make sense at first and things weren’t going to work out perfectly, but that we should just go with the flow, I decided to do that. I selected the object that I thought was the most personal to my partner. I didn’t know much about Chloe besides that she was a singer and actress in all the school plays, a good student, and a nice person to talk to. I decided to choose the sheet music book because I identified at least one way it was connected to Chloe and that was her musical talent.

The first exercise we did in class involving the objects we selected was an observational sketch assignment. During this task, we wrote every observation we had about the object we chose. This provided me with a chance to examine the physical attributes of this collection of sheet music. It read “The Secret Garden” at the top, which I now know is a musical. I observed the black seventy five page book carefully. I inspected the cover, which had a very unique design on it. I had never seen anything like the soft image displayed on the cover, with pink flowers and floating human heads. There were snakes coming out of the picture; they looked so vicious, as if they were ready to eat the next page. The top right hand corner of the book with the words “Vocal Selections” hinted to me it was a book mostly for singing, rather than sheet music designed for instruments. I also noticed how smooth the cover and back of the book were, so glossy like it almost felt cold. The spine of the book had a few rips and tears, showing it has been put to good use or has been around for a while. Either way, I knew it was being used in some way whether it was continuous practicing of the songs in the book or being shoved in the back of a drawer, and I wanted to explore the history and life of this object.

I began the second activity still feeling extremely confused about the project. This activity was an interview where I asked my partner questions to learn more about the artifact. The interview proved to be
personal to my partner. I didn’t know much about Chloe besides that she was a singer and actress in all the school plays, a good student, and a nice person to talk to. I decided to choose the sheet music book because I identified at least one way it was connected to Chloe and that was her musical talent.

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I began the second activity still feeling extremely confused about the project. This activity was an interview where I asked my partner questions to learn more about the artifact. The interview proved to be very helpful to me because before this exercise, I knew nothing positively factual, just my assumptions relating to the object. During this time, I learned that Chloe did not buy this book. She had been looking for it for a while at many music stores, but could not find it. She became familiar with this book when her voice teacher introduced it to her and had her practice singing songs from it. Her teacher knew how much she loved it and before her voice teacher left America for Germany, she had one last meeting with Chloe. At the end of that meeting, Chloe discovered something after saying her final goodbyes to her teacher. She found the book she had been looking for sitting in her home, left by her teacher. Not sure if the teacher left it by accident, Chloe emailed her to tell her she had left the book at her house. Her voice teacher did not receive this email until she was already at her new home in Germany. The response to Chloe thanked her for letting her know and told her that she could keep the book. Chloe thought this was because her teacher knew she would never use it or appreciate it as much as Chloe would.

What happened that day seems like an accident, that Chloe received the book by a simple misplacement of her teacher’s things. However, in my opinion, it was not an accident. I believe that her teacher planned this since the first time she realized how much Chloe truly cherished this book. I can picture in my mind Chloe’s singing teacher witnessing her student’s smile widen with pure joy while singing and dancing to the lyrics and notes contained in this book, thinking she had to gift it to her someday. After learning that Chloe’s teacher was aware of how she was searching for this item everywhere and how much she adored it, it became obvious to me that when she left it at Chloe’s house it wasn’t an accident. Nevertheless, this situation could still have been a complete and utter mishap that worked out in Chloe’s favor. Whether it had been on purpose or just plain fate, the fact that my partner’s singing teacher left Chloe’s house without this book in her hands that day has influenced Chloe in many positive ways.
Since that day, Chloe has used this book to audition for plays and shows. She explained to me that she loves performing the songs contained in this book for auditions because they are unique. I learned not many people use them or hear these songs from this particular musical often, and Chloe chose them because loves to stand out. Chloe told me that she thinks the play relates to her, and that the dark theme and subject matter remind her of herself in many ways. Since she described to me that she sees a connection between her and the plot of the musical, I researched the storyline and looked into this Tony Award winning musical. Chloe describes herself as dark and hidden, just like themes in *The Secret Garden*. After all, it is about a girl whose parents have both died finding a “secret garden” and exploring the mystery and hidden secrets locked inside of it. I would not have thought that Chloe would see herself in this way, and I still don’t know why she does. Yet, for some reason, she connects to these themes of darkness and mystery.

Hearing how Chloe described herself made me view this project in a completely different way from how I originally saw it. In life, everyone views everyone differently. People can be judgmental, make false assumptions, and not bother to take the time to learn how great of a person they may be. Everyone is always viewing others from the outside. However, one rarely gets the opportunity to uncover how someone views themselves, which is exactly what I got to explore during this project. This new experience was eye-opening for me. An ordinary sheet music book became a key clue into Chloe’s inner emotions.

Chloe Miller
Writing Was Never Lost

When I first took a look at the pen, I did not know whether it was extremely important to Grace, or just an ordinary pen. I had the choice of this pen, a pair of earphones, and a magnet with a quote printed on to it. I knew that the quote must be special to her but I did not think too much about it. If I'd have known the whole guidelines of the project, then I probably would have chosen it. Now, the earphones; they were pink and rubberized and I believe they just symbolized music. I chose the pen because I figured there might be an interesting story behind it...and I was right.

The object is a black ballpoint pen, about 6 inches long. The pen is manufactured by a European company called Bic. It usually comes in a pack of 10 and is about 5 dollars at most office supply stores. Although it is a common pen, it stands out from others because there is one button to push out the tip and another one on the side to retract it. Grace says that the pen has been hers for about three years now. It was purchased at Staples before the beginning of 6th grade in a pack that contained more of the same ones. All of her pens started out at home but over time, they were used and lost at school. Grace says: “This is the one pen that I never lost.” She has used this pen for many hobbies including writing stories, poems, and songs.

Even though the pen does not work anymore, it stands as a strong symbol of how writing has helped Grace throughout her life. Grace says she has always been a writer. She told me about how she likes writing poems, stories, and songs. In fact, she even has a song she wrote on iTunes.

She purchased it when school supply shopping before sixth grade. Although now it has ran out of ink, Grace and her pen have shared special moments writing together and escaping reality (sometimes even during class). A week ago, in one of my classes, I saw Grace writing a story in her notebook. This made me realize how much writing means to her and that her pen symbolizes how important writing is to her.

I feel that I can relate to the pen because of my love for scribbling and doodling on my class work and sketching pictures in my free time. Also, I understand that even though the pen is not functional anymore, she still keeps it to symbolize her love for writing and that she is sentimental about her pen. About three years ago, I moved from this school to Saint Martin's Catholic School. It was tough being new again and having to make new friends. A year later, the school closed and I had to leave my newly made friends to go back to this school. I relied on music to help me and I have my favorite CD that I used to always listen to. I too, still keep the object as a reminder of how music has helped me. Grace and I have both experienced the loss of friends and both relied on a simple object to save us.

It was fun learning about the huge story behind a small, plastic, ballpoint pen. It has assisted Grace in writing, and not only did it flow ink onto the paper, it flowed Grace's creative thoughts onto paper. I can relate Grace to Batman; her writing is like Batman saving people, and her pen is her sidekick, or Robin. Unlike Batman though, she unveils her identity through writing. Yes, she may have gone through troubles and lost some friends just like her other writing utensils, but just like her pen, writing was never lost.

Grant Cheung
An Eraser, Some Mistakes, and Bad Memories

Blank, featureless, and dull. Who would have thought that a rectangular white eraser could possibly be sentimental to someone? With a laugh, Logan admitted that my choices were unimpressive, but that only made me think more about the decision. The small rubber object had been selected from the choices of a standard number 2 pencil and a weakly held together chain of colorful paper clips that did not quite grasp my interest. Just looking at these 3 parts of Logan’s life made it clear that schoolwork and art played a major role in her life. I realized the physical aspect of the eraser meant nothing to Logan, what really mattered was that it stood for significant pieces of her life. Through my contemplation of Logan’s answers I came to the conclusion that the eraser has served as a symbol of the ability to fix her mistakes and a reminder of past times.

Logan told the eraser’s story as if it were a torturous nightmare. Endless hours of unnecessary vocab study forced upon her by her own mother. That damn eraser was with her in times that she least wanted it. Through all of this, she loved and cared for her mother and family. This story taught me her family was extremely close and helped each other out when in need. In fact, the eraser was given to Logan as a “gift” from her mother 2 years ago. Knowing that summer was coming to an end and sixth grade was approaching, her Mom returned from back to school shopping having purchased the stereotypical classroom necessity. At the time, Logan pictured it as just another boring eraser.

Over the past 2 years, the eraser has been accompanying Logan Fitzsimons on the daily commute to and from New Hope Solebury Middle School. It has been with her whenever a mistake needed fixing or an amazing drawing required perfection. Assisting her by removing unwanted graphite marks, the eraser became a routine object of Logan’s school day. While studying, she gained strong grades and a love for art. From small
doodles on the desk to larger works on canvas, her creative character shined and brought the pencil marks to life. Love and appreciation do not just come at first sight, it takes time and usage to build up a strong relationship. This describes Logan’s bond with her eraser. Being a young, naturally talented girl, that beaten up eraser has truly assisted her in the creation of masterpieces.

The fact that the eraser is old was no mystery to me. Years of scrubbing and dragging have left a mark on the eraser’s appearance; giving an old, run down look to it. The surface is littered with scuffs of black and grey pencil marks. The corners have been rounded so much that it barely resembles a rectangle anymore, although if I could compliment its body, I would. That aged appearance lets everyone know that it is not an ordinary eraser straight out of Staples. It lets them know the eraser has value; value to Logan and anyone else who is aware of how old it is.

My project taught me erasers are not all about removing pencil marks and serving as collectable accessories. The owner of the eraser may not know this, but they tend to fix the mistakes they make, resolve the problems that they cause; in little ways they are perfectionists. I had never thought of Logan this way until our internet research day, when I found a quote online. It read: “Erasers are for people who make mistakes, no, erasers are for people who fix their mistakes.” This quote really grew the roots of my project, deepening the idea that Logan is a person who fixes her mistakes.

Logan has developed a close relationship with her mother and found her inner passion for art. I feel that Logan and I share the similar qualities of being a part of a bonded family, possessing artistic talent and love of writing. I understand what it is like to own something that seems like you’ve had it forever. She obviously realizes that her little eraser is not as functional as it once was, but since it’s not completely worn down, Logan doesn’t see a reason to throw it away. As she said in our interview, “Well, if I had the choice between this little eraser and a brand new one, there would be no question that I would keep my eraser. What’s the point of replacing it if there’s no reason for replacement?”

Logan and her trusty eraser have been through quite a lot together. She has told me all about it’s past and has answered all of my questions. The only thing she has had trouble putting into words is what she thinks about when she looks at the eraser. Not happiness, not hatred, she just can not describe it. I can relate to this. An old object of mine does not bring memories or thoughts. Only an idea of age and reliability. That’s what makes the eraser special to Logan. It has always been with her, and will continue that job until she feels that she no longer needs it. Until that day arrives, Logan is stuck with that dirty, scuffed, worn down eraser.

Ryan Meyers
The Perks Of Summer
The sun is browning my skin every day, every day
Running through the breeze like a bird
Diving and smiling, not having a care
Birds are chirping, tweeting from every which way
Laying and saying, “Glad it’s not raining”

Every day, every day is filled with joy
Waves are splashing, crashing on shore
Happiness is written on my face, but I want so much more
Trying to fill every day, every day with memories for time’s sake
We shall make this summer the best it could ever be
We’ll go running in to the sunset,
Running through the breeze like a bird

“Jump in” it whispers,
The ocean’s breeze taunts me,
Crashing one and all

Emily Madara
Summer Nights

I adore summer nights, summer nights
s’mores is what you got nights.
Popping fire, sticky fingers
water balloons splashing
running and laughing
stay up ‘til twelve nights.

Full moon
sleep in till noon
sour lemonade, shorts are frayed
pitch dark, still one last spark
adventurous days, adventurous days
carefree is what you got days.

Jane Weinseimer

Happy Days

I dream of sun, sun
East coast has got none
Surfing and singing
Laughter ringing
Blue skies and puffy clouds
Happy Days.

Seagulls eating
Kids leaping
Better days, sadness says
Relaxation and peace
With no worries, worries
Better days are here.

Liz Donahue

Beautiful sunset
The sun is setting.
The river is underneath.
No one makes a peep

Nicole Hauch

Sunny Strolls

I love sunny strolls, sunny strolls
Excitement is what you got strolls.
Frogs leaping from lily to lily
Sunshine bursting
Dancing and prancing.
Beauteous Butterfly flying days.

Trees and bushes swaying
Grassy fields, fields of grass
Gleaming and dreaming.
Of sunny strolls, sunny strolls
If only it was then, if only it was then.

Katie Mardirossian
A Snowman’s Name

‘Pat, pat, pat’ ‘pat, pat, pat’. That was the only sound that could be heard while school children were patting and sculpting snow into three different sized snowballs at recess. Jimmy, who recently broke his leg, was making the head which was the smallest snowball, Stan, who wore a huge, big, blue jacket, was making the stomach, which was the middle sized ball, and Mr. Jamison, who the children called Mr. James, was making the largest ball, which was the bottom. Soon after they were finished, they put the pieces together.

Soon the huge, white, and sparkly figure was the monument of the school ground. All the children gathered around it and started throwing names at it like “Jimmy” or “Bob” or “Frogger”. “Frogger?” said Stan, who was first puzzled then infuriated at the lousy names that were being given to what he thought was a magnificent piece of modern architecture. “Frogger, who said that!” he said again. “I did” said a voice from somewhere in the crowd. Soon, a small figure with a purple hair net and a green jacket walked out of the crowd of children. It was Bubbles, the kid who worked in the cafeteria on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Of course his real name wasn’t Bubbles, his real name was Carter Bub, but the children called him Bubbles because of his last name, Bub, and because his favorite thing in the world were bubbles. “why?” said Stan who was half angry and half confused.

“I want to name the snowman Frogger because he has green all over him” said Bubbles. “He has green on him because some blades of grass got on him! And I do not find it funny to disrespect such a wonderful piece of artwork. I say we put this here Bubbles on trial. Are you with me people!” said Stan. Nothing. The only thing that could be heard was the beeping of cars on the street nearby. Stan took a long sigh and then said “Let’s just go inside and accuse Bubbles of disrespecting art while eating pizza”. “Yahhhhhhhhhhh!” said the children and all the other people in the crowd. Then after about 15 minutes of cheering, all the children went inside.

“Who thinks that Bubbles should be suspended for disrespecting our snowman?” said Stan, standing at the class podium with a white puffy wig and a wooden hammer. Shortly after the long silence after Stan’s question, one kid stuck his hand in the air and said “Can I have seconds on pizza, wait no, no, can I have a happy meal and an order of curly fries as well? Yes, yes ok, ok just a second-” Stan took the phone off his ear and asked “What toy do you want with that?”. The kid who wanted a happy meal said “The purple octopus, wait no, can I have the dragon, because that’s the only one I don’t have”. Stan put the phone to his ear again and said “I’ll have the toy dragon please, thank you”. Then Stan put down the phone and walked out of room to the front of the school and met the McDonald’s delivery guy there. Stan took the happy meal, bowl of curly fries, and the dragon toy out of his hands and then the delivery man said “Thanks for your business, oh wait, I need my money, that will be $12.27 please”. Stan looked at the man, smiled for a little and started to chuckle and said “Sorry, but I don’t have any money so how about I give you half the curly fries and this white wig I have on?”. The delivery man first stood there puzzled, but then said “Hand over ALL of the curly fries and the white wig” “Fine”, said Stan. He gave the man the curly fries and the wig and then left. When walking down to the classroom where the trial was being held, he could still hear the delivery man laughing and talking with a British accent with the wig on his head.

When Stan got to the classroom, all the children were playing what looked like a game of dodgeball with the gym medicine balls. Jimmy was chucking a 5 pound ball. Luke, Jimmy’s friend, was throwing a 7 pound ball, and Bob Morrison, the biggest kid in the whole school was throwing what looked like, no, it couldn’t be. Bob Morrison was throwing the Gym TEACHER on the opposite side. Soon all you could hear was “Jimmy!” from the right side of the room, and “Bob!” on the other side. And then of course there was little Bubbles who was standing on the teachers desk to make himself heard, was screaming “Frogger!” “Frogger!” Suddenly, Bob Morrison stopped everybody and yelled “Hey, let’s throw things at Bubbles for disgracing art!” in his Football Player voice. All Stan could see at this point were a bunch of medicine balls, and, the Gym teacher all coming straight towards Bubbles.
“Stop!” yelled Stan. Then everyone turned to him. He walked over to Bubbles who was covered in a mountain of medicine balls. Then he said “Everyone! First, I need you to help me unbury Bubbles, then I need to tell you something!”. Soon everyone was picking up medicine balls, including Stan. All Stan could find was medicine ball after medicine ball after medicine ball after medicine ball after medicine ball after medicine ball after the Gym teacher after medicine ball after medicine ball after medicine ball after medicine ball, until they finally found Bubbles at the very bottom of the mountain. “Bubbles?” asked Stan with tears in his eyes as he looked at the peaceful Bubbles resting on the ground. Then they heard murmurs of “mmm, meatloaf... no, No, NO! Not the blender! mmmm no. macaroni, mmmmmm”. “he must be dreaming. He’s only asleep!” Yay he’s not dead!” said Stan, relieved that he didn’t lose his friend. “Wait” said Bob Morison “if he’s only sleeping, LET’S THROW MORE BALLS AT HIM”. “Yah!” came the cheering of the other children. Jimmy tried to throw a ball, but then Stan stepped in front of him and caught it. “You’ve Crossed The Line” he said in a deep, dark voice. “We will name this snowman, and we will do so in a CIVILIZED MANNER!” he said. “We shall name the snowman ‘beat up our friends for no reason’ because that’s what we seem to like to do” he said. After a long time of silence, one kid said “that’s totally lame!” and soon all of the children were screaming “booooooo! boooooo!”. “Then what are we going to name it?” said Stan in his regular voice. “Let’s name it something we all agree on” said one kid. “Yah” said Stan, followed by the other children. “How ‘bout we compromise and combine our names” said the same kid. “Yah! Let’s do that!” said Stan, finally feeling relaxed and happy that everything was going well. “How about since we like the names ‘Jimmy’ and ‘Bob’ and ‘Frogger’, we’ll combine them”. Once again there was silence, until Jimmy, followed by the other kids said “Nah, not Frogger, but the other ones will work”.

Soon everyone had agreed on the name Ji-Bob as the snowman’s name. By the time Bubbles had woken up, all the kids were outside making name tags and dressing up the snowman. Once Bubbles got outside, he said “so we finally agreed on naming the snowman Frogger?”. The other kids didn’t feel like arguing about if they were going to use the name ‘Frogger’ or ‘Ji-Bob’ so they just said “Yeah” simultaneously, and walked away happily.

The school year continued, and soon winter became spring, and spring became summer, and Frogger was soon just a puddle in the schoolyard, and Bubbles moved to Canada and got a part-time job as a hot dog maker, and everything was fine.
Campfire
Bright flames light the sky
Marshmallows are everywhere
Laughter fills the air

Audra Moore

Beach Days
I love beach days, beach days
Sunburns are what you get on a hot beach day
Beating and meeting some new cousins
Salty water
Tanning and Fanning.
Staying all night beach days

Cousins Buzzing
Sandcastles between your toes
Crazy wet hair, I don’t care
Dreaming and Eating.
With a beach day, beach day
Sunburns are what you get on a hot beach day.

Hope King

Snowy Owl
Perched on the small branch
The owl waits with watchful eyes
To catch its next meal

Audra Moore
The Forest Fire

Hoping for their home
The deer stayed still in the stream
Watching their lives burn

Charlotte Bramich

Flames
Glowing of brightness,
Fire racing through the trees,
Flames eating away.

Larissa Borys
Bigger is Not Always Better

Thinking. Thinking about the next move I should make. My dad had blocked me and he was going to beat me, again. I always lost at this board game, especially against my dad. He was older and wiser and had more experience at the game. I could never seem to get to the other end of the board before him without getting blocked by a wall that he placed. I had to outsmart him. The problem was, he was smarter. I would still play until I won. He said to give up, but I never would. I would just keep playing over and over. I would keep losing. I had to go to bed, as it was getting late. I thought to myself what if there was someone else that I could beat with the skills that my dad has taught me. I was going to a birthday party the next day. We were going to play manhunt and everybody thinks you have to be big and fast to win. I think other wise. I am going to show them what a little brains can accomplish.

I was tense on the way to the party. I wondered if confidence and some brains could really beat bigger stronger kids. When I got there some other kids had already arrived. We played board games, made candied apples, and ate cake. We were having so much fun. Then someone called out “time for manhunt!” I was excited. The teams had been set up and we were going to play soon. I had been picked almost last, again. All of the bigger, stronger, “jocks” always thought that I would do nothing for their team. The game started and we were hiding. The first advantage that I had was that I was small and could hide in better places without being seen. I found a gopher hole in the ground and climbed inside. It was dark and damp but I still sat. After a while somebody walked by. I shifted. “Hey, think I hear somebody,” someone from the other team said. I curled up and they did not see me. Then I heard a different voice. “Help, help us!”, one of my teammates said. Now I could show them how useful I actually was.

I crept out of the hole and slowly sneaked towards the jail. All of my teammates saw me. There was somebody guarding the jail. I saw my advantages. I could use the fence to block him and lead him around then he would be behind me and it would be a foot race to the jail, just like the game. This time I would win. I sneaked up behind him and whispered “right here”. I bolted, and he spun around and followed me but I wasn’t sure he saw me. I was behind the fence and he was on the other side. I called “over here”. He followed my voice down the fence and then he saw the end, ran around it, and saw me running straight for the jail. “Jail break!” I called. Everybody ran for their lives. Nobody stopped to look back. I had outsmarted somebody and the brains had beaten the brawn of somebody else.

I had heard of other experiences like this but in different ways. For example, my friend was getting bullied in the recess yard. He was being made fun of when he came up with a funny comment that was not mean but made everybody laugh and the bully just stand there looking blankly at him. He was not picked on after that. The kid had not expected anybody to say that to a kid of his size. So, he just went and picked on somebody else. The bully never picked on anybody who had brains ever again out of fear of him saying some funny comment. Whether it’s confronting a bully or outsmarting a bigger kid in an outdoors game. In the war between brains vs brawn, brains will usually win if they use it the right way. But in my case I did and even though the “jocks” don’t care what I did, I proved to myself that I could do it and that is all that matters to me.

Finn Graeff
The Perfect Sight

As I walk the streets of Manhattan,
my own eyes sight the swarms of strangers
who dart the same surface as me.

Strangers to me are the honey-bees feeding the spring
air,
stars shining bright onto the curve of moon
which stands over roofs in the night.

Boatmen standing by the motion of waves
with naked feet along the line of beach
which figures my eyes on the perfect sight.

Just like a miracle,
the one I love stands opposite of me.

Found poem taken from Walt Whitman’s “Miracles”

Mina Shokoufandeh

London

I love London, London.
Fresh smell of rain is what you got days.
Ravishing red telephone booths rambling.
Union Jack flags, checkered bags.
Smiling and snogging.
Twinkling lights of the London Eye nights.

Trips over the river, though you may shiver.
Busy buses taking travelers.
Paul is here, Harry is there.
Dreaming and believing,
of never leaving.
Oh, how I love London, London.

Kelli Schlussel
In the bland English classroom, the projector light being the only thing illuminating the dark room, I sat in the corner in a desk next to my partner, Grant. As soon as I saw all of Grant’s objects, I was immediately drawn to his PlayStation 3 game controller. It could be simply that it was big and had a bright color, therefore it was easy for the eye to catch. But after observing it closer, I noticed that the paint was chipped, which shows that it had been used a lot. That was the only thing that made me wonder if there was a deeper connection to Grant and the controller. I figured that, since the paint was chipped, he must have used it often and may have some memories with it. For this reason, I chose the PS3 game controller.

The controller is a deep grassy green. The buttons are also painted the same color green, except for the finger controllers. One of the buttons in the center is black, yet has a dab of gold paint on it, not covering the surface of the button. It is clearly not a newly bought controller because the paint is chipped in several areas. Also, the buttons are worn in some areas.

Personally, I have grown up playing video games. I remember playing many Nintendo games at a young age, and throughout my childhood. I think that was another reason I was so drawn to the game controller. I never had many large gaming systems until I was at least 9 or 10, and I was fascinated with them from a young age. When I lived in a country house in rainy and grassy England, I spent rainy days playing my Nintendo. When I told Grant that I also played video games, he seemed a bit surprised. I think that is one of the main themes of my project; you can’t judge with a naked eye. At a first glance, I saw the PS3 controller as a simple gaming device. But when I learned more, I realized it had much more to it than I first observed. Without really talking to me much, Grant would have never known that I grew up playing video games, which is something we have in common. On the first day of the project when I saw that he had a video game controller, I became excited because I knew we could relate to something.

One of the first observations I made of the controller was that it had chipped, green paint. I asked Grant in an interview if it had been used often and he told me that that particular controller was about 4 years old. When I asked him if there was any special meaning to it, he told me, “Well, I guess it’s sort of important to me because it was the first one I took apart and painted myself.” This sparked many questions that dug deeper in to the story of Grant’s personalized controllers. I learned that he looked up on YouTube how to take apart the controller, painted it with spray paint he found in his garage, and then put it back together-- all by himself. I asked if he thought of this as a chore, or more of a hobby. He told me, “I think it’s more about how I can give my own creative touch to the controllers. When I did the first one, I liked how it came out, so I did it to all my others.”
When Grant first told me about how he had taken the time to personalize each of his controllers, I was somewhat envious of his ability to perform such acts of creativity so often, because I would most likely have gotten bored and distracted within the first five minutes of trying to take apart a game controller. I asked him how often he played video games and he told me that it was only on the weekends. I think that shows how he can still have fun being creative and playing video games, whilst also using time management to be a good student.

I do believe that one of the major themes of my project in particular is that you can’t judge without knowing facts. I learned a lot about Grant; his creativity, his hobbies, and his life, just from a simple possession of his. When simply glanced at, you might say that it is just a Playstation controller that sits in his cupboard and collects dust. But with a closer look and some background information, you learn not only about the history of the object, but the type of person the owner is.
Nothing?
Who makes nothing?
I walk on roofs under trees.
My mother’s opposite.
Bees riding and feeding the wonderful sun,
So delicate among the savans.
Looking at my admirable eyes in the glass.
Every hour is a yard.
Space is a miracle.
Grass;  frames;  limbs; organs.
What concerns them?
The sea is continual.
Fishes;  rocks;  waves;  ships.
What’s stranger?
Nothing.

Maryna Chuma
From Walt Whitman’s poem “Miracles”

When I was down, you kicked me
When I was sad, you gave me no break
When I was mad
Were you glad you got a reaction?

But no more will I take it; no more will I suffer
For an Angel has saved me
When I cried, did you care?
I only had one request
For you to be you without giving me so much pain

And you failed.

Michael Moore
Little Silver Bell

By Matt Benda

A high pitched bell, with glinting curved edges. This little silver bell was so much more valuable than anyone could imagine. Out of the three objects available for me to choose; the miniature Eiffel Tower, the scarf and the bell, I chose the bell. The beautiful high pitched ring caught my attention. I thought the miniature Eiffel Tower was interesting and I thought the scarf was also intriguing, but the bell was piercing my interest more than any other object.

On a cool sunny day young Claudia Kolinchak walked into her great grandmothers house. Her great grandma was a collector of bells. One of the shiny bells caught Claudia’s eye. This bell was the shiniest one out of all the bells in the collection. The bell was about 4 inches high, silver, a high pitched tone when rang, and had a colorful inscription that reads PTL club.

The PTL club was a religious TV show that stood for Praise the Lord or people that love. It would be later called the Jim and Tammy show and in its final days it was called PTL today and Heritage Today. The PTL show was a Christian TV show hosted by evangelists Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker. Evangelists are people that seek to get people to convert to Christian faith especially by public preaching. The TV show ran from 1974 to 1989. The PTL club was one of the first shows to discuss the topic of homosexuality. This supports the fact that Claudia’s great grandma was a very religious person. I know she is a religious person because in the interview after I discovered what The PTL club is, I asked her if her great grandmother was a religious person she said yes. To be honest my whole family is very religious and I can connect to this object as well because my grandparents because they are especially religious.

This object has meant a lot to Claudia. It is one of the last things she has from her great grandmother and it has been displayed prominently in her room for the many years she has had it. But, until this project Claudia hasn’t looked at it as something of importance, she has looked at it as just an object she received from her great grandma. Now she realizes the real significance of the object and how important it is to her. However, as unfortunate as it is I regret to tell you that Claudia only a couple days ago dropped the little silver bell and broke it. Claudia was very upset about it, but she realizes that she will always cherish this item.

In one of the interviews many interviews I did with Claudia she revealed to me that this item also represents her family's history. I can relate to this because in my house I have 2 family trees: one for my mothers family and one for my dads family. Also in these family trees we have family items like this bell that have been passed down through the family.

Over the many interviews I did with Claudia and all the activities we did in class. I learned the story of Claudia’s silver bell and I learned how much it means to her. In the end of all my hours of research about this item, I have come to learn that this little silver bell obviously has a lot of sentimental value to Claudia. It represents her family and a person she loved, her great grandma. It also tells me that Claudia is a religious person who loves her family.

I can relate to this object in many ways, just like Claudia does. I can relate to this object because in my family like Claudia’s, we are very religious and we go to church very often. Another way I can relate to Claudia and her connection to this object is because I was very close to my grandma and grandpa until they passed away. But, now I have objects like the bell Claudia brought in that will always have memories; these memories I will cherish forever. That is how I relate to Claudia’s object and her connection to it.
The Snowstorm

It was a cold winter afternoon. I was walking home after school was ended do to the snow. I was pouring down in sheets. It was -20 degrees on the Bank’s thermometer which is always high. The streets were covered because the trucks failed to get out because they lost power in the night and the oil froze. My Mom was called in to the hospital because the car accident and hyperthermia patients were off the carts in her hospital. When I reached my house the lock was frozen, so I grabbed my water bottle from my backpack and dumped the water on to the lock. It opened after I tried 15 times.

When I walked into the house I called for my Dad. When there was no response, I ran to the phone. Sure enough there was a message saying my Dad sleeping overnight at work. I walked to my room to find that in my rush I didn’t realize the heat wasn’t on. I figured the solar panels wouldn’t work covered in 2 and a 1/2 feet of snow. With nothing to do but wait for my brother Jordan to come home, I skyped my friends on my laptop in my room. I should probably give you some details about my house. It’s made of 20 or so trucking containers with about 200 tons of cement as a frame. It’s implanted on a mountain overlooking a lake. It’s located in International Falls, Minnesota.

My brother was home next. He ran to our room and asked where Mom and Dad were. I laughed because he too didn’t know the heat wasn’t on because of our North Face gear and Sorel Boots. “Mom’s working and Dad is staying at work because of the road conditions and downed trees.” I replied. “Why doesn’t he use the Helicopter?” He spat back. “He said it tipped off the landing pad and was smashed to pieces as it fell.” I sighed. “Where is Marissa?” he said as he threw down his snow-covered backpack on our floor. Marissa is our pretty younger sister. “No clue.” I replied as I turned back to skype.

My brother and I are twins that came out at the same time so neither of us is older or younger. We are both 14 and our sister is 11. My computer died an hour later and I turned to Jordan. “Are you going to help me clear the solar panels or just sit there until your phone dies?” We spent an hour clearing the 3 feet of snow off our roof and went back inside. I came down to my room to find my computer with 321 skype calls in the past two or three hours. Everyone didn’t have power and I was the only one who does because of our solar panels. I invited 30 to 40 friends and their families over because our house has an underground hotel practically. The reason for this is because my house is used for most of my Dad’s companies meeting and conferences. Most of the people stay overnight because the meetings start late and run later. After all are guests were settled in their rooms the Moms started cooking for 123 hungry people. All of the Dads were trapped at work like ours. There was, however, a huge problem. Our house being in a forest meant trees and with 4 feet of heavy snow on their branches they said that standing tall is way overrated and 7 or 8 timbered. I was biting into Chang’s Mom’s crab rangoon when a tree hit the roof above me. The three story window overlooking the river came down in a waterfall of glass, but the ceiling stayed standing. When it cleared I scrambled around looking for Marissa to see if she is alright because I know Mom would kill me if she got hurt. That’s when I remembered saying no clue to Jordan. I turned to the frozen lake to see in the middle was Marissa’s bright neon jacket and a 5 foot snowman beside her.

Nick Garibaldi
Blue

Very little sun
Freezing water and mountains
Warmth never felt so good

Liz Donahue

Owl on a branch
Tired of his loneliness
When will it all end?

Jane Weinseimer

Love in Spring

Quiet in the air, birds so delicate.
Referring to the bright sundown in spring.
I walk the streets along the water.
I stand under trees, all the stars are shining.
The new moon in its place.
At night I sit in bed.
By forenoon my sight knows the one I love.

Halle Mohr

Ella Czarnecki
Day and Night
Night and Day
Sky and water
Water and Sky
Foot by foot
Foot by foot
I walk with the one I love
Honey-bees and fish, all the ones I admire
But I love the wonderfulness, unspeakable sight of his eyes
The admirable walks in the yard
Looking along the beach in the summer
Stars in the night
Every sea, every wave, every ship
Every dinner with my mother
All to me, the perfect man
I go among life loving you
All my life, loving you
You are nothing else, but a miracle.

Charlotte Bramich

Found poem from Walt Whitman’s poem “Miracles”
Imperfect Miracles

Opposite of perfect miracles,
Are exquisite darkness from the nights moon.
Strangers are eyes in glass,
Sick, dead, are the sight of imperfect miracles.
Is it the hour of light, just an edge in water?

Delicate seas concern all that can see.
A spear ever so quiet,
Swarms of waves carry them to burial.

To me miracles stand feet away.
Whether I go among them or let the best down,
I walk nothing else but miracles,
But yet they still stand opposite of me.
Why is a miracle so wonderful?

Are there honey-bees, or birds, or animals, or insects
Or is it a field of nothing?
My sight is toward the sky,
The moon,
The strangers,
Walking dark continual streets.

Why, why me?
I dart over to the sea.
What is the earth?
What is the rest of me?

As I stand under the trees
With naked feet
There is nothing else left but me.

Carina Rozycki

Walt Whitman’s poem “miracles”
The Importance of One

By Thomas Detlefsen

The items belonging to Quinn that lay on the desk were a sonic screwdriver from Doctor Who, a tennis ball and a Green Lantern ring. We were in Mr. Nord’s classroom and we had brought in our three important items for whatever reason. I had chosen my dog’s collar, my grandfather’s hat and a book. When I was initially observing one of Quinn’s items, he whispered in my ear in a scary tone “Don’t choose the screwdriver.” I knew I did not want to defy him, so I chose the ring. Later he told me that the reason he did not want me to choose the screwdriver was because he thought we were going to trade items and keep them. It turned out that the ring was more than a trinket and it was a choice I do not regret.

The ring is made entirely of opaque green plastic. Across the top it has a raised symbol of the Green Lantern which is a line on the top, a line on the bottom and a circle in the middle. It is not a perfect reproduction of the ring from the DC comic, it includes flaws, such as scratches at the edges. It has DC comics inscribed on the inside of the ring. It is also parted on the back side so that no one’s finger would be too large for the ring. I was surprised that Quinn found this particular object to be important enough to bring in for the project.

Quinn told me he took ownership of the ring when he was eleven at the time he had bought a Green Lantern comic. The ring was included as a part of a package with a comic book. He says that now he wears it whenever he needs to focus or is reading one of his favorite comics (weekly). The ring is kept on top of all his comic books in its own glory even though he admits that it is not his most important item.

When I initially researched the ring, barely any useful information turned up on the ring itself, so I decided to combine my online research with watching the Green Lantern movie. Watching the movie provided background on the comic storyline which helped me with follow-up questions and structured additional questions for my next interview with Quinn. Plus watching it was part of our family movie night.

What I did find from my initial research is that many emotions are represented by colors in the Green Lantern series. There is Red (Rage), Orange (Avarice), Yellow (Fear), Green (Willpower), Blue (Hope), Indigo (Compassion), Violet (Love), Black (Death) and White (Life) [http://greenlantern.wikia.com/wiki/Green_Lantern_Wiki]. When I asked Quinn which color of the spectrum he identifies himself as, he said Red because he is always getting annoyed by people not planning and just taking action. I also found out that there are more than one Green Lantern hero and that Quinn thinks that Hal Jordan (the original) was the best lantern from Earth.

Quinn is quite like his ring in a couple ways. On the outside, he is mainly smooth, but has a couple of scratches where I imagine sad things have happened. On the inside, there are inscriptions such as what he believes and what he stands for, along with where he is from and who he is from. I could have never imagined how Quinn was so much like his ring until I took a closer look.
When I asked Quinn the question “Why do you like the Green Lantern?” he replied “I think I like [the Green Lantern] because there are so many lanterns all just for one cause; to stop evil.” What I infer from this is that Quinn wants to be a part of something just like Hal Jordan was a part of the Green Lantern society. I believe that he wants to be part of something whether it’s a community, a civilization, or even a fan base for a comic series. I also think it lets his imagination unfold. When he wrote a letter to me from the view of his object he mentioned that it helps him concentrate because he imagines the power of the green lantern is in the ring. This is very like the Green Lantern because all the hero has is his power of imagination.

Maybe everyone has a method to find focus. Mine is just thinking of what I am able to do once my task is done. This has made me more observant on what other people’s focus methods are. On top of that I can relate to Quinn on the aspect of belonging to a cause. I am happy to be a part of communities too (Chess Club, Soccer, Video editing, Orchestra, etc.). This may be so that I can relate to others and have conversations, but also to feel like a part of something larger. This project made me think about objects I’ve received for being a part of a group; things that I hold on to. An example of this was when a librarian of mine gave me a trophy for reading many books. It is only about two inches tall and made of a cheap reflective plastic, but I still like it and keep it where I can see it.

It is very interesting what you can find out about yourself and others from examining a small trinket such as a ring. Both Quinn and I like to be a part of a community, whether it’s a chess club or a fan base for green lantern. I also learned that my partner uses his ring as a tool to help his imagination and to focus. In the comic, the force of the ring allowed the hero to focus his willpower to conquer evil. In the movie I watched, if the Green Lantern had failed, the universe would have been destroyed by evil, thus the importance of one. In the end I am glad to have investigated an object to find out more on a personal level about it’s owner and I am certainly happy I did not choose the sonic screwdriver.
Unforgiving Walls

Happiness is rare within these unforgiving, cold, dark walls.
I feel myself slipping away a little every day.
I do not feel like me anymore.
They say I'm just a number.
I feel myself breaking inside and out.
I have become numb to the pain.
Hope is a rare treasure that I am not fortunate enough to have.
I hear liberation is near but I will not be here when the day comes.

Kaela Dicristofano

The Dreadful Holocaust

As I walk down I see signs saying “Halt!”
When I walk on, I see barbed wire around the camp.
When I walk into a building with wooden shoes,
I try to run out but the guards caught me.
When I walk into the bed chambers,
I see people with sad eyes and I see how skinny they are.
When I walk outside in the muddy water with mud covering our feet,
I grab my shovel and start shoveling.
I hear guards yelling at us to work harder.
I see my friends walk away with the guards and yell out my name.
I try to run after them and the guards stop me in my steps.
How dreadful the Holocaust is.

Emily Goodyear

I am now in the ghetto,
where the walls are very mellow,
where the grass is gone but the hopes are not.
The dead people lie as they die.
Hitler has death in his grip,
as he strips families apart.
The smell of death is so strong that it hurts to breathe.
Now picture a world, burning in the sky
These souls you will never meet make the fire rise.

Grayson Asplundh

For a month now,
there has been no happiness or joy,
since we were moved from our homes.
I am very sad.
All the kids are gone,
they went to the camps,
and I am the only kid left in the Ghetto.

Shea Lewis
This Goes Out To The Nameless

This goes out to the nameless, whose stories have never been told and whose identities remain unknown to even themselves

This goes out to the faceless, whose reflections are only painted by the fear of being alone

This goes out to the speechless, whose voices have never been heard to no one but the wall

This goes out to the sightless, who will never see the light from the fire that burns in every soul

This goes out to the nameless, whose stories have never been told, and who are only a step away from their identities becoming known

Sarah Orwat

Anthony Ferlazzo

Hope King

Travis Goodman

Maxima Molgat

Emma Skuban
Ghost Rock

In the summertime, Gary Ockey went to Ghost Rock. He had brown hair, and was small because he was only 10 years old. His family went there because some people go to dance at the place sometimes. The dance was for adults, so the kids go play around the rock. Gary went up Ghost Rock on a little hiking path with some of his brothers and sisters. Ghost Rock is a freeway truck stop in Utah. It was named because of a cowboy, who in the fog thought the rock was a ghost. He then named it Ghost Rock. It is 7420 feet tall with a flat plain around it.

Once they reached the end if the path, Gary told his brothers and sisters that he could climb all the way up the rock. Gary was only 10 years old, so his siblings thought there was no way he could climb all the way up Ghost Rock. They started to make fun of him saying it was impossible. Gary wanted to prove to his siblings that he could climb up the rock, so he grabbed the first ledge and brought himself up. His siblings laughed some more and then went back down the path.

Climbing up Ghost Rock was hard. It was very steep and dangerous, but Gary was very determined. After a lot of effort, he made it about 20 feet higher than the path. He noticed some small rocks fall down the rock. He watched the rocks fall, and then he noticed how far up he was.

He didn’t know that he had gotten that far up. He knew as soon as he looked at the ground that he could not make it to the top. His feet felt like rubber, and he started getting worried that he was going to fall. He leaned toward the rock and kind of laid there to get a little more protection from falling. His brothers and sisters were gone and he needed somebody to notice him. He wanted to call for help, but he couldn’t speak because he was very scared. All he could do was cry.

Even though it was only about 15 minutes of waiting for help, it felt like three years to Gary. He was very worried that he would fall and die. His body was starting to ache, and he knew he couldn’t hold on much longer. It was almost dark, and that would mean trouble. Finally his father and six other men came and saw him up on Ghost Rock. Gary was very happy. He would be saved! He knew some of the people, but he didn’t know most of them. Some of them put their hands up in the air to catch him. Then one of the men started up Ghost Rock.

The man that was climbing up the rock was short and only about 170 pounds. He was also only about 25 years old. The man was climbing with ease up the rock. He seemed to have climbing experience. He was very close to him and Gary would live. Gary was very happy that he could get off Ghost Rock. Then the man stopped climbing. Gary was wondering why he couldn’t get any closer, but then it hit him. When Gary climbed up, he noticed little rocks were loose and came off. The man couldn’t get any closer because he could grab a loose ledge and fall! Gary’s happiness of getting off the rock fizzled out like a fire.

How would Gary ever get off Ghost Rock now? Should he jump off? He was very scared as the sun started to set. Then the man said that he has to slowly slide off the rock because he would grab him. Gary did not want to do this. How could he anyway? He was scared and thinking that there was no chance he would make it if he jumped. His dad gave him encouragement and said to him that he could do it. Gary still did not want to do it, but he knew that this was the only chance. He got advice from the other men as Gary got ready to slide off the rock. They never lowered their hands getting ready for when Gary made a mistake and fell. He also got more encouragement from his father. Gary turned around from his laying position and slid.

Gary slid about 10 feet down Ghost Rock. It was a very scary experience for him, but it was quick. He didn’t know what was going to happen next, when the man grabbed his foot. Slowly Gary and the man went down the rock. The man never let go of Gary’s foot. When the man touched the ground, he brought Gary down. Everyone was relieved that Gary was safe. They all went back down the path.

Gary was still very shocked from the experience, and was also embarrassed. He was afraid of being made fun of from his brothers and sisters. Gary was so shocked that he didn’t notice many cuts and bruises on his legs until now. The pain kicked in and he couldn’t take anymore. It was dark now and all Gary could do was cry in her mother’s dress. He cried for a long time. His mother tried to make him feel better and said it was alright because he was alive and healthy. None of his siblings made fun of him and didn’t tell him that they were right and he couldn’t climb up the rock. They were just very relieved that he was okay. Gary didn’t go home right after that because he was crying for such a long time. Even when they finally decided to go home and went in the car, Gary was still very scared and embarrassed. He was also rethinking the experience and thought he was very stupid to go up Ghost Rock. What was he thinking?
How could he have done that? It was a 7420 feet tall rock, and he just thought he could climb it? Gary tried to forget about it, but even with his eyes closed, the horror stayed in his mind. Good memories are easier to forget than bad memories. Bad memories stab into your heart like knives. It was a quiet ride home, but even if there was noise, he wouldn’t have heard because he was very deep in thought.

Gary went to Ghost Rock many times after that and thought of himself climbing up it. He knew he was very stupid and mean to his siblings. He rethought the experience multiple times after that, and got nightmares about it sometimes. He made a promise to himself that he would think about what he would do before doing it, and be smart.

John Ockey

Summer stars shining
So quiet and bright
As a new moon in spring.
The mechanics, boatmen, farmers,
Opposite of me riding a car.
The sight of the perfect old man
Or perfect old woman.
Every sea is a miracle to me.
The edge of the waves is an
Admirable hour.

Dan Khouri

Found Poem from
Walt Whitman’s poem Miracles

The Book

Near the clear, blue lake
With the Brightness of the sun
I stood in great awe

Jonathan Rickert

Being in the ghetto is lonely.
I have never seen anything happy,
not a happy child playing or
someone laughing.
Praying to god that sometime soon I
would come out,
but I know
I’m never coming out of this
concentration camp,
I’m never seeing my family again.
My prayer book was gone,
that is when I realized that I
would never be happy again.

Zach Meixler
Chloe’s Case

By Max Adar

When searching for an object of Chloe’s to analyze the orbit of her camera case pulled me in. I am not sure whether it was the somewhat uniform shape, vibrant color, or something else, but it left me hoping to explore it more thoroughly. I believe that the pull was so strong, that I cannot recall any other possession she brought in. Now that I am writing this story I have actually developed some theories of why I have chosen it.

When writing my personal notes within a week of the discovery of the object, I wrote that the mesh that formed the exterior of the case reminded me of Ben-Day dots. When Ben-Day dots are seen from far away they appear to be a solid color, but when magnified up close they are specs. This type of color print is mainly used on the Sunday cartoons of the newspaper to provide color while not investing too much on ink. The person who introduced me to this concept of art was my elementary school art teacher, Mr. Mannion. This I believe shows that my artistic form took over, therefore making me gravitate towards the object. Another reason I believe that I took this object was that it was the distinct color of bubble gum pink. I know it sounds crazy, but it is true. Many people do not know that I am actually color blind, and I always draw in black and white to not mess up the color because I am a perfectionist. This piece made me feel in control of my own eyes. Also, my English classroom is a mixture of whites and dull tans, so in my point of view it added some pop.

While attempting to learn about myself I have been conducting interviews, research, reflections, and so much more to find, or discover a connection between Chloe and her object as well. The results have yielded quite well as I believe I have captured the bigger picture for both of us.

I have found that Chloe likes to capture important moments with her camera; interestingly, she also recalls events from around the times that the images were taken. One day she deleted an image on Instagram and remembered directly what occurred shortly after. I know this sounds completely random, but it is possible that these pictures evoke thoughts and memories within her. Which is actually another idea I would like to bring to the surface. By learning that she uses Instagram I noted that she uses imagery to communicate with her peers. The case is used to ensure that these pictures are protected.
I remember that in the first interview Chloe spoke about the difference between communicating with her family, and with her friends. She is the youngest of several siblings, this is in contrast to being the same age as her peers. Her more subtle and quiet approach at home is completely contrasting with her more outgoing approach at school. These many different aspects of her personality correlate with the many details of the exterior of the case, because they make up what the case is, and Chloe is made up of many of her parts. I also believe that the size, shape, and color of the case correlate with Chloe as well. Its size of 3 inches by 2 inches by 1 inch is small, and the shape is a rectangular prism. This represents her home attitude, small and uniform. But the rounded edges and pink eye catching color represent her outgoing school attitude.

Personality parts are not the only thing that creates Chloe Miller though, because she stated that experiences did that as well, with her parent’s divorce being a big definer. This is ironic coming into this interview because it was the main reason that she received the case. When Chloe went to New York one day, coming home she thought that she left her new camera somewhere in the city. Now this is absolutely sensible because New York City consists of bustling streets with yellow taxis moving as schools of fish, and the walkways are stuffed to the brink with people. With all this taken into account it can become overwhelming. Also, non locals most of the time are looking to the skyscrapers that reach the heavens, so the case would not be in the point of view.

With two alternating guardians, she was given two different responses to this event. The response from her mom was that she could not get a new camera because she revealed that she could not be responsible, by losing the first. The response from her dad was quite different as he granted her request as long as she would get a camera case to help her look after her belonging. Her mother took this decision as a sign that her father was spoiling Chloe, and of course the case had HIS number on it, showing his ownership. Shortly later, Chloe found her first camera after the new case and camera were already bought.

After all that I have uncovered between myself and Chloe, I still think that I have barely scratched the surface. Between all the stories to be told and the ideas to be passed through this camera case, I can only cover so much. I definitely believe, that I have captured the bigger picture of what the object is, and what it does for Chloe. Whether it is the representation of her personality or something else, they are intertwined.
Our 7th and 8th grade students learned about the Holocaust before meeting Mr. David Tuck, a survivor of Auschwitz. These are their poems written following discussions in Ms. Derby’s class.

Gates From Hell
Gold has been taken, silver has been robbed.
Lives have been taken, kids have been killed.
Railways that leads to death.
Why?
Gas chambers have been killing bodies faster than lightning.
Don’t try to run.
You get zapped, hung, or shot.
It is said that he has a sick mind like a dying dear on the road.
Piles of lives,
Piles of clothing,
Our lives have been taken.

Nicholas Vitelli

Dogs
For several weeks,
I haven’t seen a dog playing outside,
It’s always dark and gloomy in the ghetto,
I miss seeing my dog playing outside,
with the butterflies and playing with other dogs.
All I see is emptiness.

Happiness
For several weeks,
I haven’t seen anyone happy,
No one is playing outside,
There is a dark hollow shell in my stomach,
I wish there was happiness.

Emily Goodyear

For five days I’ve been through hell.
If only there was freedom.
I have had guns to my head,
Knives to my head,
But I’ve lived through hell.

Nick Vitelli

There were kids at first,
But then they left.
Taken to camps.
Not fun camps,
Death camps.
Moms and dads
Cry themselves to sleep,
And wonder if their kids are ok.

Olivia Kishler
If only I had Rob,  
It would have made the bad things good,  
The good things better.  
If only I had my teddy bear Rob

If I could laugh for five seconds,  
If I could be free.  
I would.  
I want to be free.  
I want to be “Happy Happy Happy,”  
I want to live.

Nick Vitelli

Poor small homes,  
Crowded with kids.  
No transportation out,  
No education.  
Taken out of our homes,  
Taken away from our families,  
No longer going to Synagogue.  
Everything we loved or cared for was gone.

Tiara Page

**Happiness**

I will never see it anymore  
Happiness  
I never see any more people being happy  
People are always upset  
Happiness will never be seen or heard again  
Life will never be happy again

Olivia Grace Ely

Flowers

Within the 2 months, 6 days and 2 hours  
I have been in here, I have never seen a flower.  
I never got to see a flower bloom,  
I never go to see a flower  
sparkle in the sunlight.  
If I could only See a flower,  
I would be happy again.

Alli Barlow

For six weeks I wanted to be there,  
Penred up next to my mother and father.  
But life has taken a turn,  
I am lost with no one there.  
But I see too much to forget,  
And I never saw my family again.  
My Brother was the last one to go.  
He left and I never would have known.

Michaela Park
Rubber bracelet. Dull, plain, and worn down; those were the three words that first came to mind when I saw it. Yet for some reason the band stuck out. Maybe it was its fiery red appearance, or maybe it was just the lack of quality objects; whatever the reason was that I chose the bracelet, I was determined to discover it’s meaning. When I first asked Matt what his object meant to him he told me it meant absolutely nothing. In the beginning I thought that was true, but then Matt told me that he felt incomplete without it. That made me curious, because I wondered how something could mean nothing at all, yet mean everything? So I decided to find out more about Matt himself, to help me discover a deeper connection between Matt and his bracelet, and in doing this I discovered that Matt gets attached to things easily. I wondered If his attachment to his bracelet had anything to do with it’s inspirational message.

The message had read, *I pledge to be drug free!* To most people it is common knowledge to not use drugs or abuse alcohol, and to many people that is just a fact. Matt believes in educating teens about drug usage and alcohol abuse, which is part of the reason he wears the band; to show the world that he pledges to be drug free, and maybe other people will follow his example. Even though the words on the bracelet have faded, his promise to be drug free will not.

It was Red Ribbon Week in the high school, a week in October dedicated to educating children and teens about drug and alcohol abuse. His teenage brother got the band as a giveaway for participating in the event. Somehow, in the past few months, it mysteriously traveled from his brothers possession, to where it was found by Matt in his own locker. Ever since that day Matt has worn it at home, at school, and even playing sports. He has worn it for such a long time, that it’s message has completely worn away; leaving a bare rubber bracelet that appears to hide its true story deep below its plain surface.

Matt told me a story about his uncle, and how he became an alcohol addict. He also informed me that his uncle quit his job due to his addiction. He has recovered now, though. Matt say’s this story has nothing to do with why he never takes his bracelet off. It may not be the reason Matt wears the band but it could be the reason Matt cares so much about drug and alcohol awareness.

Over the past few months the band has become a part of him. It was as if when the message faded it was absorbed by him, and spread throughout his body to the point where he is uncomfortable without it. Matt says that the bracelet will have to break before he takes it off; that says a lot about about him. It shows how much he cares about spreading it’s message, but it also shows how Matt is as a person, and how he gets attached to things easily.

I was surprised that I could find out so much from a dull, plain, and worn down red rubber bracelet. That just goes to show that little things sometimes mean the most. There is always a reason why someone owns an object. they might not even know it yet, but all they need is someone to see it from a different perspective; Matt didn’t think his object meant anything, but after I did this project I found out reasons why this bracelet may be significant to him. Like Matt, I thought my Great Grandma’s bell meant little to me, but after being questioned about it, I realized that it meant much, much, more.
This project has made me a better writer and I have now learned to look for the deeper meaning in seemingly unimportant objects. Many people won’t look twice at a small, insignificant object, but the people that do will find out that sometimes they tell can a lot about a person. The bracelet is a physical representation of the fact that Matt gets attached to things easily and it also shows how much he cares about being drug free. When he wears the bracelet he is showing the people around him that he is drug free. I realized that the connection may be as simple as that; A constant reminder to be drug free. Sometimes the meaning to things is right in front of you, you just need to be searching in the right places.

The Past Was Unwinding Before Me

Skydiving Through The Clouds

I Started Looking at The Photo Albums

Of My First Cruise To Nova Scotia

I Liked The Color Blue

The Color Of My Football Team When We Won The Championship

I Came Across The Pictures From The Past Summer

When I Hit My First Home Run

It Was A Wonderful Escape

From The Fights With My Parents

The Fragments Of My Dreams

Well Placed Together Throughout My Life

Mikey Duncan

Sydney Ives
My hope was long, 
my dreams were strong, 
but everything must come to an end.
My hope is shot, 
my dreams have been crushed. 
You have done this to me, 
You put me in this situation, 
but that’s why I thank you. 
Because you showed me people lie, 
people give pain. 
My dreams and hope, 
gone. 
My heart, 
stronger than ever.

Michael Moore

I miss the laughter of my friends, 
my family, and the strangers. 
I miss the happiness of my people. 
Will we ever be able to laugh or smile for the rest of our lives?

Alexis Olivera

As I walk through the dark night 
In the city of Arles 
I look upon the great sky 
And it lights up!
The sky was a blue as the water in the Caribbean 
With its great shapes and its meticulous swirls 
And that bright yellow moon 
Like a bright diamond lighting up the sky 
Oh it’s so alluring! 
All the white stars glowing 
Burning bright in the heavenly heights 
I could watch the night forever, the starry night.

Caleb Burrows

Pictures taken from past summers 
They change my world 
Dreams for the future 
Being successful as an adult 
These thoughts were a wonderful escape from the present 
Waterskiing and snowboarding 
The past was unwinding in front of me 
Vacations in Florida and at the beach 
These thoughts were a wonderful escape from the present 
Going to the lake with family 
I placed and replaced details upon detail 
Playing with the fragments of my dreams.

Olivia Keenan
I Don't Want The Future

I don't want to grow up
I want to spend the nights dancing around my room,
and laughing at the word pudding.
I don't want my heart broken,
and I don't want the responsibilities of a job.
I want to be young,
and silly all the time.
I want to hug all my stuffed animals,
and hold onto useless objects.
I don't want to have to impress people,
and be relied upon.
I want to blast music as loud as it will go,
and climb the tallest trees.
I don't want to be controlled by money.
I want to stay up late just thinking about everything and anything,
then spend the entire day in my pajamas.
I don't want to drive a car
and I don't want to grow old.
I want to speak in a fake British accent,
laugh uncontrollably
and not care about a single thing.
I don't want the future.
I want to stay young forever.
but that isn't possible.
So for now, I will cherish the time I have, with the ones I love while I can.
Because even though I can't be young forever,
I can still be young at heart....
The Egg of the Past

When I saw the detail oriented foreign egg I thought, “this will definitely have a interesting story.” With the worn colors, a piece chipped and older designs, I knew it was a few decades old. With my few travels to Europe I could tell that it was probably from there and with the small intricate detail I could tell that it was hand made. I immediately connected the egg to Christianity and heritage. Jesus, Mary, a cross and a church are painted around the egg showing the religious factors of the egg.

Hearing that we had to describe the object and its connections I became nervous because they’re are many components and details that are show inside and out of the egg. As I have mentioned the word ‘egg’ multiple times you imagine it to be the size of a hens egg, but it is a little larger than that. If you took a baseball and stretch it into an egg shape it would come to about the size of Justin’s egg. The egg is made out of tough wood but aging has caused it to become delicate.

The egg has three shades of reddish-brown. On the egg there are three section each section becomes lighter than the one before. Inside the sections are pictures showing the life of Jesus. Between, above and below are zig-zags, lines, and patterns with the same reddish hue. The egg has a smooth transparent gloss over top with scattered small dots that become part of the designs.

Some relations with objects are obvious in the way they look or designed, but other connections you must look deeper than the outer “shell”. Through collaborative poems and a couple of interviews I found two important details and connections that the Ukrainian egg represents, heritage and the past. In about the 1930’s-1940’s Ukraine Justin’s great-grandmother received the egg from her Catholic church Easter morning. She then gave it to her daughter as a gift as a young girl. Justin explained that when his grandmother immigrated to the US that she brought the egg with her. The egg was then given to Justin’s mom and has been in him home since. I know that the egg holds special value to Justin’s mother’s side of the family because of its long history to past generations.

If you are aware of religious figures, designs, and pictures you can tell right away that the egg shows Christianity. On the detail oriented egg, there are three painted pictures. The first one is a picture of Mary holding baby Jesus. The second picture is of Jesus as a grown man, and the third is of a church with three crosses on top. The three pictures are all important to the Christian faith and can be connected to Jesus’s life. To Justin, his faith is a lot of who he is, so to own an object that shows that is very special and valued.
In my individual research I found that not all pysankys (Ukrainian Easter eggs) are alike. The beeswax paintings can represent many different things. All the colors are connected to specific things such as purity, good health and strength. The intricate designs are also part of how the egg connects to the Christian faith. Many pysanky eggs do not have pictures but lines, swirls and shapes. These can show prosperity, life and protection. These are all things that Christians can share and value.

In my studies I found the history of the pysanky very interesting. The word ‘pysanky’ comes from the Ukrainian verb “to write”. In ancient days the art of drawing on eggs was not only used by the Ukrainians. Egyptians also used this art technique to show gods and symbolism. From there it began popular in different countries in Europe, and especially during springtime and Easter. At the beginning the pysanky eggs were made to show the earth in which Dazhboh, the ancient sun god, provided for. The idea was later adopted into the Christian faith and has been used for that ever since. With the many symbols the eggs main purpose was to show the rebirth of man and Jesus’s resurrection. The designs and pictures are painted on with dyes then covered in beeswax to give a glossy effect.

In the past weeks I have discovered more about Justin’s past and the values that we share. Justin and I both believe that our Christian faith shows a lot about who we are. Many things in Christianity can be represented in different ways. Justin uses the pysanky to show his faith. I also discovered that the egg symbolizes Justin ancestors and their story with the egg. He values this connection the egg, can not show physically, but once you go deeper into the meaning you can find it. I also enjoy connecting to the past and learning about my ancestors. I value old items from the past that help show who I am and where I came from. I think it is important that we know and cherish the connections to our past and ancestors.

Laura Nagg
Baseball
I like baseball days,
baseball days
Batter up! is what
you got days
Fresh cut grass and
catchers’ masks
Hot dogs sizzling and
spectators mingling
Gotta love baseball days

Why do people play
every day?
Because they live
and love baseball
For the big tubs of bubble
gum and the thrill of close
games
Ice towels waiting and
scouts annotating
Oh baseball days, base-
ball days
Gotta love baseball days

Connor Campbell

The Game of Baseball

Baseball, the game of attention to detail,
the dent in the wall where the ball could carom,
the smell of leather emanating from your hand,
the elevation and density of the air telling how well the ball carries,
the elbow twitch that tips off the pitch.

Baseball, the game of strength,
the ominous stance that goes along with power,
the snap after the pitch is delivered specific to a home run swing,
the swagger as you trot around the bases.

Baseball, the game of speed,
the low twitchy stance that goes along with contact,
the gappers that are turned into game changers,
the steal yet so obvious, is impossible to protect against.

Baseball, the game of experience and intelligence,
the constant change in mindset,
the constant adjustments,
the game that nobody can completely understand.

Baseball, the game of pure skill.

Kyle Smith
The scent of the moist air is almost overpowering
My dogs are playing, barking and howling
My adrenaline is pumping while I jump through
the air
I flip upside down,
almost blinded by the sun’s glare
I tumble, fall, laugh at it all
And I get up and try again

Henry Cabelus

When I first hit the ice I feel a sensational breeze
on my face from the cold air. I start skating on inch thick
blades and hear them cut into the ice. Calling for a pass
from your teammate, hearing the puck gliding across the ice
and the sound of the puck hitting your stick. Releasing the
puck from your stick, aiming at the net but unfortunately,
it hits the metal not the twine. When you give it another
good aiming again and see the puck go into the net, it is
unreal. Then you can celebrate and share that moment
with your teammates.

Vincent Vetrano

Summer
I like cat days, cat days
chasing mice is what you got days.
leaves falling, and cats mauling the mice in the grass.
The cats get fat, and full of mass,
gorging is what you got days.
Cat days, cat days
Cats build huts in many ways,
so they have shelter from the rain,
and cats then climb the food chain.
You can trade with them if you wish,
they trade for their famous foul smelling fish.

George Ashford

Katherine Costello
Love, Love cannot last
If the one you love has to pass
When the only thing you remember about that night
Was the gruesome shadows that hovered above like a kite
When the dim, lit candle burned out
And the young girl was too shocked to shout
Love, Love cannot last
If the one you love has to pass

From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable
She spent her days being accused and tried
Because the one she loved had died.
Luce’s parents were unrewarding
And sent her straight to boarding
There she would have to stay
And live out her day
From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable

From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable
When Luce pushed through the bolted school doors
There was a line of drawers
That were labeled forbidden items go here
So she dropped her phone in with a tear
Her connection to the outside world was gone
But the thought of all her knew friends egged her on
From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable
From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable
When Luce pushed through the bolted school doors
There was a line of drawers
That were labeled forbidden items go here
So she dropped her phone in with a tear
Her connection to the outside world was gone
But the thought of all her knew friends egged her on
From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable

Love, Love cannot last
If the one you love has to pass
Luce’s attention was stuck on this guy
His eyes twinkled from the light in the sky
But she got the message that he didn't feel the same feelings for her
And it made Luce very bitter
But something about him made her tingle
And it made Luce’s insides jingle
When she was with him the shadows went away
Luce knew that in his arms she wanted to stay
Love, Love cannot last
If the one you love has to pass

From then on her life was miserable
Almost at the point of unlivable
Then when her secret admirer wanted her to run away with him
There was nothing left to say
Her heart was a injured bird ripped into two
But soon enough her pain would subside because there on the horizon stood the one boy that made her feel so safe
She turned away from her secret admirer and jumped into the bitter boy’s boney arms
Love, love can last
If the one you love does not pass

Christina Hochburger
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“The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are”.

Continue reading and writing!

Ms. Neufeld