

FEATHER & QUILL

BURRIS LITERARY AND ART MAGAZINE

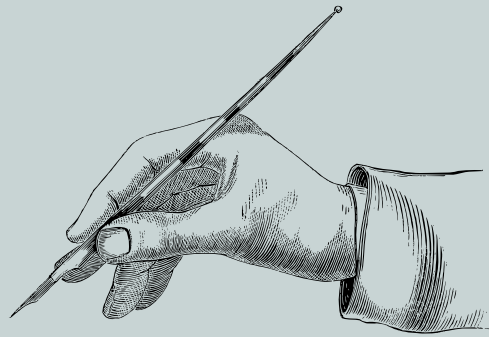


Created by the Burris Writing Center

The Burris Writing Center's purpose is to inspire and encourage a passion for writing in students of all ages, and one of the ways we do so is by collaborating to publish this Literary & Art Magazine, highlighting some of the most creative student submissions. This year, we provided students with weekly prompts, which are reflected in this year's thematic submissions.

Special thanks to the writing tutors who contributed their time and ideas, and for making the writing center what it is today. Thanks as well to everyone who submitted their work; it takes courage to share your art and writing, but we're so grateful you did!

And thank you for reading this magazine. If you have the chance, stop by room 216! We'd love to get to know you and your writing.





Editors' Note

Thank you for reading the Literary and Art Magazine! In our three years at the Burris Writing Center, we have fostered a passion for writing, reading, and art. It's been really amazing to witness the growth of the writing center and we can't wait to see the direction it will head in!

We were so happy to have collaborated on this journal. We loved reading and editing all of your wonderful submissions, and we had so much fun putting this together! We hope that you will also love this year's brilliant submissions and be inspired to submit your own work for the next issue!

Jess & Bennett

CO-EDITORS

A Million Dreams

by Anonymous Writer

My head is a storm
Full of thoughts and dreams is the norm
It seem like a mess
But when you step back it creates a dress
Full of patterns and designs
Though it makes a sign
Telling me a message
And teaches me a lesson
To pursue my dream of being a slayer
In the world of basketball players
And majoring in athletics
And also mathematics

Although my dream is far
It stands alone as it are
I lay in my bed
With a million dreams in my head
As my mom walks past the door
I say it again to believe it more
I say, "I want to be a slayer
In the world of basketball players
And major in athletics
As well in mathematics"
She tells me to keep dreaming
As my dream is dimming

Jour de Sa Vie (Day of Her Life)

by Rachel Hill, 10th Grade



Artwork

by Amelia Seitz, 11th Grade



Photographs

by Zina Starzz, 9th Grade



Perfect world

A Spoken Word Poem by Anonymous Writer

Perfect worlds do not exist
There is no Peter Pan in neverland
No fairy's here or there
No mermaids swimming in the deep
In my world it's killing
You can hear gunshots in the night
You shouldn't wish on a shooting star
Because your dream will not come true
Why wish on that bright star
Because your dream can't be real
But oh what about that neverland
I wish it was real
So I could swim in the deep shores
And steal treasure
But now Trump says "let America be great again"
Whatever the heck that means
Now there's riots and plastic in the sea
But soon maybe soon
Those things will change
So then I don't have to worry about killers
Or shooters
And other things like that
But now
For now
I have to pretend that I can fly
Until I can

Brand New Dynamite

by Bennett McKinney, 11th Grade

When the New Mexico sand
Beneath you melts
In a hot, furnace-like glow
So astonishing
That it dissolves all evidence of life
Leaving behind only shimmering, crystal glass
And no bones or exoskeletons
Of tiny, little lizards or golden, fanged scorpions

The neon, crimson cloud
Burning in the distance
Burning in your retina
Like a man-made, solar flare
You could probably see it from space
You could probably feel it all the way
In a trailer park in Idaho
Or the suburbs of New Hampshire

And that's how you'll be remembered
By that feeling
That deadly, bright light
By the inscription you carved on your own tombstone
Now, you have become death
Destroyer of worlds
Of cities, of farmlands, of cattle, of forests
Of all things good and fragile

Robert, you're a wicked man
Who loves poetry
But your mother will still pray for you
Before she too evaporates
In a wave of chemical radiance
When the lone jet flies overhead to deliver it
Afterwards, a dark cloud of fate and smoke
Lingering above

The sky lights up
Entirely ablaze, utterly awake
Your pupils dilate
Your heart fills with regret
And for a moment your blood stops moving
You never thought
That a man with good intentions
Could cause such calamity

Googling how old the universe is
To realize that none of your problems really matter
That blood clot in your heart
Won't affect anything at all
And in the end
Nothing will prevent the Earth from spinning
Regardless of if your blood stops flowing or not
And when it's all over
They'll only remember you
By what they say on the TV
Yet one day, all the TVs will go static
And your remains will fully decay
Completely gone and forgotten
And even the stone overhead will be eroded

Maybe one day
There will be a blast
So immense
That even the stars
Cannot compare
In the way that they shine
And everything will end
In a grand finale
A man in a silver jumpsuit
Flying out of a canon
Does not care about the impending fall
And neither do we
Entombed in gorgeous, crystalline, nuclear waste
We will all sparkle
Like nobody before us has
And nobody after us will
Radiating an inhuman glow
Then the lights will go out
Fade into comatose black

Blackout Poetry

by Various Writers

~~Tyler was getting impatient.~~

~~When the train finally came~~ I took my seat ~~by the window and stared out at the~~
~~rainy darkness outside.~~ the train went back into the tunnel ~~and I had time to think about how~~

~~I tried not to think about how~~ but I couldn't get off my mind ~~the fact that I had been sitting all the lights from the street hit~~

~~There were~~ people dressed in nice warm coats and hats ~~getting out of their cars~~

~~first time~~ I realized we were poor ~~everybody in the class~~

~~I remember the letter~~ sat on the couch ~~got home~~

~~real tiny.~~

"If your teacher asks about it," she said, "telling the letter to the kitchen and putting
it in the trash." You tell her we don't need anybody's help, do you? Fund You tell her we
appreciate her thoughts though. You hear me, Lafayette?"

Blackout Poem by: **Anonymous**
Original text from: *Miracle's Boys* by Jacqueline Woodson

the sky is
streaked
the mountains
a thousand times
have
thought
their heart
can
reach out
the palm of her hand
making a wish

Autumn

Blackout Poem by: Autumn
Original text from: Wonder by R.J. Palacio

Let's not talk
finish your web
for a while
I'm getting sleepy
feeling of peace.
silent wings,
From across
a apple tree
bringing food
tobacco.
familiar smell
kitchen door.
loved life
loved
remembered
these sounds
be a part of the world
what the old sheep had told him.
death came to him
I don't want to die.

Wilson

Blackout Poem by: Wilson

Original text from: Charlotte's Web by E.B. White

Blackout
Original text from: Charlotte's Web

Olivia and I are sitting on her front stoop. she's helping me with my lines. it's a warm March evening, almost like summer. the sky is still bright cyan but the sun is low and the sidewalks are streaked with long shadows.

I'm reciting, yes, the sun's come up over a thousand times. summers and winters have cracked the mountains a little bit more and the rains have brought down some of the dirt. some birds that weren't even here before have been talking in angular sentences already, and a number of people who thought they were right young and spry have noticed that they can't bound up a flight of stairs like they used to, without their heart fluttering in their...

Whole my head can't remember the rest.

all that can happen in a thousand days. Olivia prompts me, reading from the script.

right, right, right, yes, shaking my head. sigh. I'm wiped, Olivia. how the heck am I going to remember all these lines?

you will, she answers confidently. she reaches out and cups her hands over a ladybug that appears out of nowhere. see? a good luck sign, she says, slowly lifting her top hand to reveal the ladybug walking on the palm of her other hand.

good luck or just the hot weather, I joke.

of course good luck, she answers, watching the ladybug crawl up her wrist. there should be a thing about making a wish on a ladybug.

Blackout Poem by: Caroline Vesson 3-5
Original text from: Wonder by R.J. Palacio

"I don't want to die."

Blackout Poem by: Lamar
Original text from: Charlotte's Web by E.B. White

Blackout Poem by: Essilee
Original text from: Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

Blackout Poem by: Jaxson
Original text from: Charlotte's Web by E.B. White

Blackout Poem by: Penelope
Original text from: Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech

Ode to MLK

by Mya Trammell, 9th Grade

Martin Luther King.

A man who told everyone his dream,
A man who stopped a racial scheme,
A man whose power was blinding.

Martin Luther King.

A man whose record wasn't clean,
A man who speaks the truth.
The black folks are dying,
The white folks aren't trying
To fight for what is right,
To share
To give
To love and care for people whose grief isn't clearly seen.

A man whose passion overtakes
The men who won't respect him,
"The boycotting will do the trick"
Their patience runs thin.

And even after everything he's done,
Racism hasn't gone.

Rosa Parks

by Bhrett, Michelle, and Brogdon, 4th Grade

Rosa Parks changed the world with refusing to give up her seat on a bus and went to jail. It was a hard life for Rosa, but she never quit. She worked hard to change the world and she did. She was one of the women to stop racism and that's how Rosa Parks changed the world!

Untitled

by Anonymous Writer

A long time ago when people were in a fight they said "I will do it when pigs fly." Well now 20 years later scientists figure out how to make pigs fly! But now the pigs have taken over the world and the pigs are spreading a bunch of viruses. People are dying like flies. We need your help. THE people need your help please.

Change

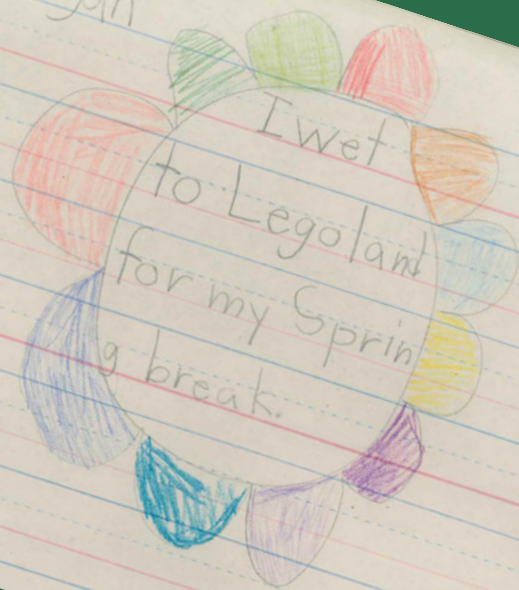
by Anonymous Writer

There are many words for change.
Like change in my pocket
or change from house to house.
Well maybe not so many words for change.
But these are the ones I came up with.

Shape Poems

by Various Writers

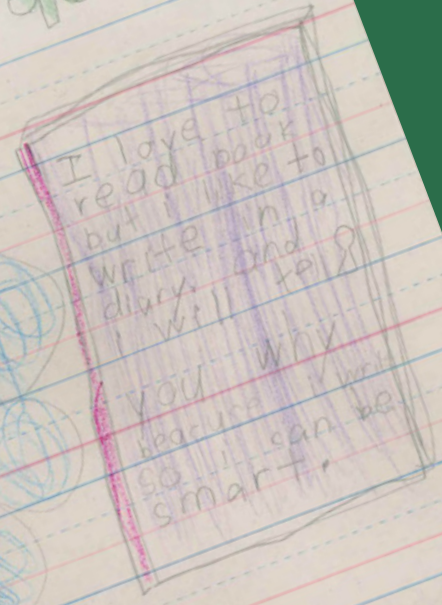
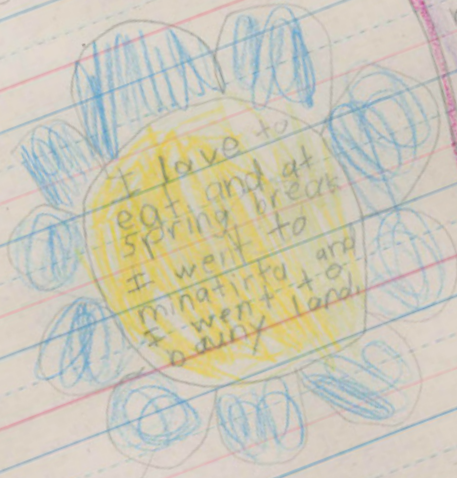
Sagan



Gnani



Sarah



Natalie W.

There was a dog who wore a coat on a boat with a goat in a big moat. Then there was a dog in a car in a jar. And a mouse in a house with a dog in a hat. Next a dog with a cat and a rat. Last a dog who loves to bake a cake.

The End
dog

Adi

So Boring School is
fun and reading

Gwen



I have a turtle tag.
I like turtles very much.
I have a turtle named Turtletag.
I like turtles very much.
I have a turtle named Turtletag.
I like turtles very much.
I have a turtle named Turtletag.
I like turtles very much.
I have a turtle named Turtletag.
I like turtles very much.

Changes

by Rees Cook, 9th Grade

Once upon a time, there was a young boy named David who loved playing basketball. Every day, he would spend hours practicing his dribbling, shooting, and passing skills in the local park. He dreamed of one day becoming a famous basketball player and playing in the NBA.

However, despite his passion and dedication, David struggled to keep up with the other players in his neighborhood. They were taller, faster, and stronger than him, and he often felt discouraged and defeated after playing against them. David knew that if he wanted to improve his game, he needed to make some changes.

One day, while browsing online, David came across a new basketball training program that promised to help players like him reach their full potential. The program was designed by a retired NBA player who had struggled with the same challenges as David in his early career.

Without hesitation, David signed up for the program and began following the rigorous training regimen. The workouts were intense and challenging, but David was determined to succeed. Slowly but surely, he began to see improvements in his game. His shots became more accurate, his passes more precise, and his dribbling more controlled.

But the biggest change came in David's mindset. He had always been a shy and introverted person, and his lack of confidence on the court had held him back. However, through the training program, David learned to believe in himself and his abilities. He realized that he had the potential to be a great basketball player, and he began to play with more courage and determination than ever before.

One day, David's hard work and dedication paid off. He was invited to try out for a local basketball team, and to his delight, he made the cut. As he played alongside his new teammates, David felt a sense of belonging and pride that he had never experienced before. He was no longer the shy, timid player he had once been. He was a confident, skilled basketball player who had overcome his challenges and achieved his dreams.

From that day forward, David continued to push himself to be the best he could be. He played in countless games, won championships, and inspired other young players to believe in themselves and their abilities. And as he looked back on his journey, he realized that the greatest change of all had come from within himself.

He had learned that with hard work, dedication, and a positive attitude, anything was possible.

Artwork

by Noah Smith



Artwork

by Zoey Durall, 7th grade



Artwork

by Wyatt Merrill, 7th Grade



king cake anthem

by Layliana Eldeeb, 10th Grade

my name's king cake
and my crown ain't fake
you may not know it
but i'm secretly a poet

[john cena theme on recorder through nose]

i love to eat
you know, 24/7
when i get meat,
you know i'm in heavennnnn

[john cena theme on recorder through nose]

people say i can't rap
well i guess they're right
imma take a nap
so that means
GOODNIGHTTTTT

[john cena theme on recorder through nose]

stream on youtube "king cake anthem" under cassie aly

Artwork

by Anonymous Artists



My Favorite Season

by Various Writers

Spring

My favorite season is Spring. I like the flowers spring up from the ground and the trees are growing leaves and it's warm and getting hot and my birthday is in Spring that's why.

Lena
cooper



My favorite season is summer

Warm air
fresh plants
sun rays
beautiful flowers
and the warm summer spirit.

Layla Lopez



Kohen
I like

Fall

because

on

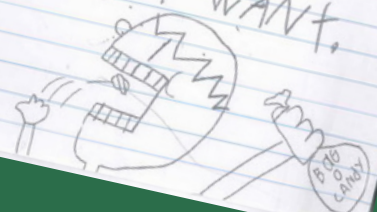
Halloween

I get to

dress up and

eat all the

candy I want.



Winter

My favorite season is winter. In winter, I can go sledding, build a snowman, have a snowball fight, take a walk in the woods, go ice skating, and drink hot chocolate. Christmas is in winter! I can open presents, and eat delicious food!!!



My favorite season

My favorite season is
summer when it is sunny
and warm. I like summer because
it is warm. I like to drink
lemonade and run in the grass.



Adaption of a Chinese Mythology Story: How Nüwa and the Little Phoenix Saved Humanity

by Helen Fan, 3rd Grade

One day, Nüwa was born as the descendant of the great god Pangu. She was thin and tall, with straight black hair, elegant as any goddess should be. She looked around and saw nature, consisting of lush green valleys in which she laid down, crystal clear rivers in which she swam, and huge imposing mountains. Nüwa felt blessed by all of the beauty of nature, but she was also alone. That night, she made a wish. She wished to be no longer lonely anymore. Believing that her wish would never come true, she fell soundly asleep.

The next morning, she was awakened by a frightening and frantic scream. She opened her eyes and found an ugly-looking bird stuck in the tree she was sleeping under for the night. Without hurting the creature, she quickly untangled the knotted and twisted tree branches that had ensnared the bird. She lifted the bird into the sky, and suddenly its feathers began to change colors! They changed from dull gray to all the colors of the rainbow, dusted by metallic glitters. Nüwa gasped and exclaimed, “You are a magical bird!” The bird answered, “Oh yes, I am magical and mystical, as I am a phoenix.” Now, Nüwa was a fine young woman with a beautiful phoenix accompanying her.

One day, Nüwa pondered, “I wonder if I can create something alive.” “I believe this is a task bestowed upon you.” The phoenix replied, hearing Nüwa’s thoughts. Nüwa looked around for materials to make a living creature. Then, she saw clay on the ground. Nüwa made a tiny clay statue that looked like her. She expected it to be lifeless and motionless when she set it on the ground, but the moment the statue’s feet touched the ground, it became alive! Nüwa was thrilled. Nüwa created more of these little statues and put many of them on the ground. They all became alive and formed a community.

Nüwa named them *humans*. She wanted to create more but realized that the process was time-consuming. Hence, she dragged a vine through the mud and whipped it up into the air. Mud specks flew in every direction and turned into humans. To have the humans reproduce independently, she created males and females. She bonded them together and allowed them to reproduce. The males got together and decided to plant crops, and the females stayed at home to sew and knit clothes and blankets.

One day, the phoenix told Nüwa that the god of water, Gong Gong, had a fight with the god of fire, Zhurong. The god of water lost the battle. He was so devastated that he banged his head on a pillar to punish himself. But this was no ordinary pillar! It was the pillar that held up the sky and the heavens. Crack! “Oh no!” cried the phoenix in fear, “The heaven is going to collapse! What shall we do?” And as he spoke, the pillar fell, and some part of the sky slumped onto the ground. “You just stay here with the humans!” said Nüwa, “They need you here! I will sort things out and take care of the sky!” Nüwa gathered stones of five colors and mixed them together into a colorful stone paste. She used the paste to mend the hole in the sky. Against her hopes, the sky kept falling down on earth. Nüwa asked the giant turtle Xuanwu to kindly sacrifice his legs. She used the turtle’s legs to support the sky in places where there used to be pillars.

On the other side of the world, wild beasts were attacking the humans, and the phoenix was very frightened. However, he acted bravely and tried to drive the scary beasts away. He did not succeed. Nüwa, having completed the mission to mend the sky, came back to rescue the humans. She fought away the wild beasts until they retreated back into the forest. Having completed many heroic tasks in one single day, Nüwa finally could have some rest. She laid down under a tree. But before she fell asleep, she wondered why the phoenix was the only one helping her and why other deities did not show up. Slowly, she and the phoenix both fell asleep.

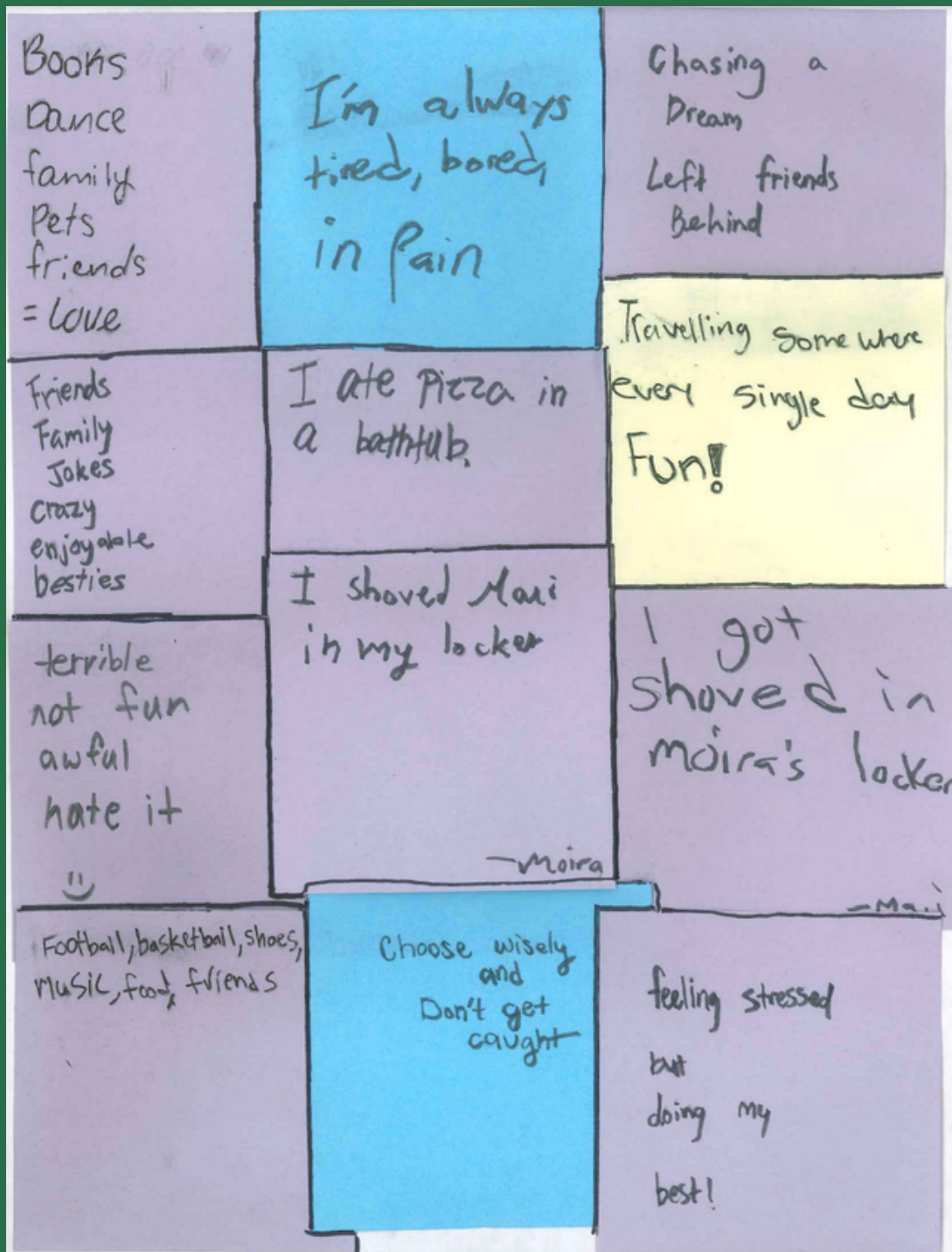
Photographs

by Emma Dotson, 8th Grade



Six Word Stories

by Various Writers



God is
good.
God is
great

My life is joyous but
hard.

I'm more
than a
Twin

Failing until it
all works out

There is highs,
there is lows.

Life is
great.
Life is good



I found out i was
bipolar.

Words,
potatoes,
smiles,
Jesus,
rainy nights

constantly
going through
hurdles and
obstacles

I escape life
through the
theatre

If you ain't first
you're last

Eat
Dance
Eat
Read
Sleep
Repeat

Don't Look Up

by Jonas Merrill, 9th Grade

Just look down.
Don't raise your eyes.
Don't dart them sideways.
Just look down,

And don't look up.
Curiosity killed the cat.
Never waver.
Hold strong.
You have to do this.

...

I slipped.

I cracked.
I snapped.
I failed.
I looked up.

And written forebodingly on the wall in light blue chalk
underneath a leaky pipe were the words:

Hold your friends close,
I'm coming for you.

Artwork

by Anonymous Artist



Speak of the Devil

by Mya Trammell, 9th Grade



What I am to them

by Dorothy Eads, 9th Grade

I am not a human to them.

I am not a woman to them.

I am not a soul to them.

I am an obedient slave.

I am a method of pleasure.

I am a vessel for immortality.

For I would

Bleed

and bleed

and bleed

For that, immortality

My flesh and bone would get stretched Apart for this immortality.

over and over again

until I did my job or till I was no more.

Because it was my responsibility to keep the family from dying out.

I would be shredded apart for a man's Immortality.

For they would not be mine but his.

Again and Again

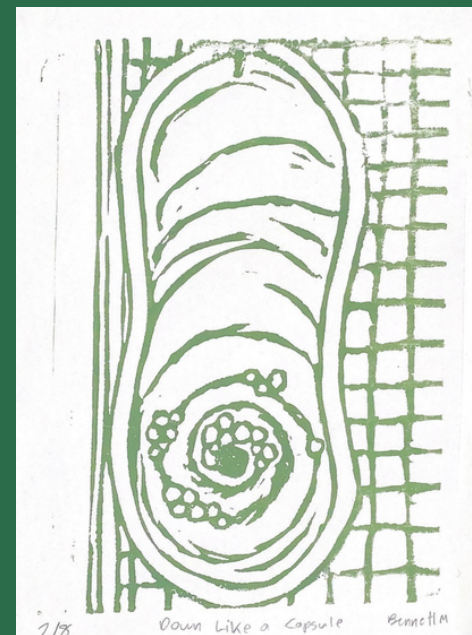
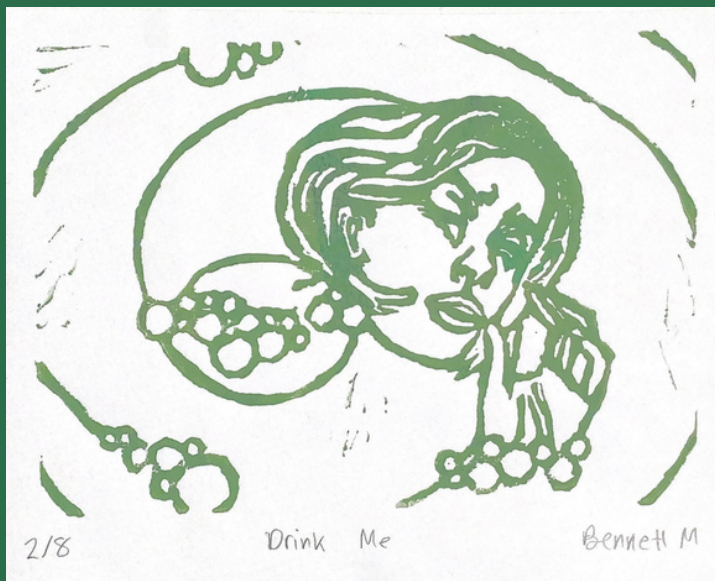
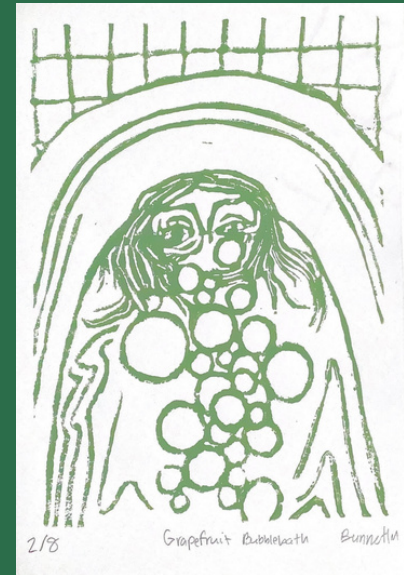
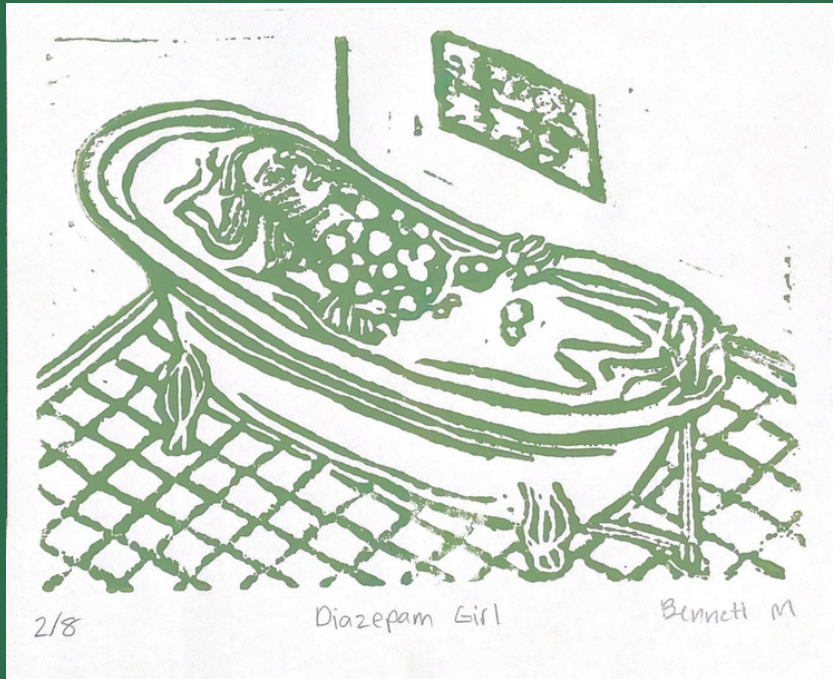
Artwork

by Dorothy Eads, 9th Grade



Diazepam Girl

A Series of Prints by Bennett McKinney, 11th Grade



Buckies

by Drake and Shanne, 4th Grade

I was only 3 when Buckies died. He was my dog who was older than me. My parents and grandparents were there, mom and dad were going to the vet. I asked to go. It was a shared no. When he did not come back it hit me like a bus- HE WAS DEAD.

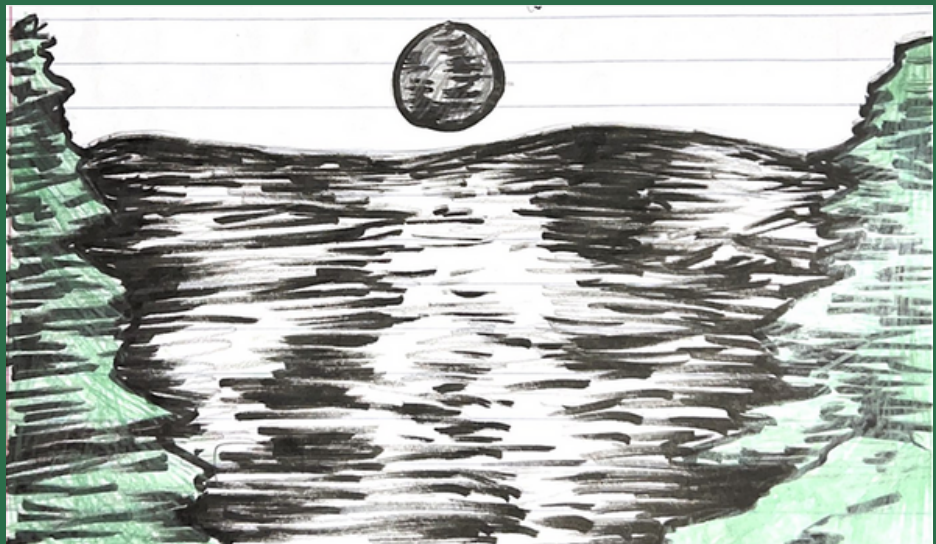
Untitled

by Sophie Schafstall, 4th Grade

When I was 9, which is how I heard news since my mom has back problems. She has lost a kidney too. The news was... she was going to be in pain forever.

Artwork

by Neo Whitehead, 9th Grade



Elegy

by Anonymous Writer

Dorian to innocence

When I was younger
I didn't know what was next
Then I met a friend and I felt a hunger
The only solution I had was to flex

Flex what I had, and what I could do
Not only to others but what I could do to you
Next thing I knew, you were gone for me
But you were there when others would see

I used you for bad and never for good
And it only cost me my soul
I saw what I did and I understood
And slowly I got out of control

With only the faint remembrance of you
I understood what I had to do
So with this knife I will sin one more time
And I will pay for my crimes

Artwork

by Anonymous Artist



Artwork

by Anonymous Artist



It's Over.

by Dreylen Mitchell, 9th Grade

When you've outgrown a lover,
The whole world knows but you

When it's finally over,
The end is long overdue
When he calls and says

"Hey?"

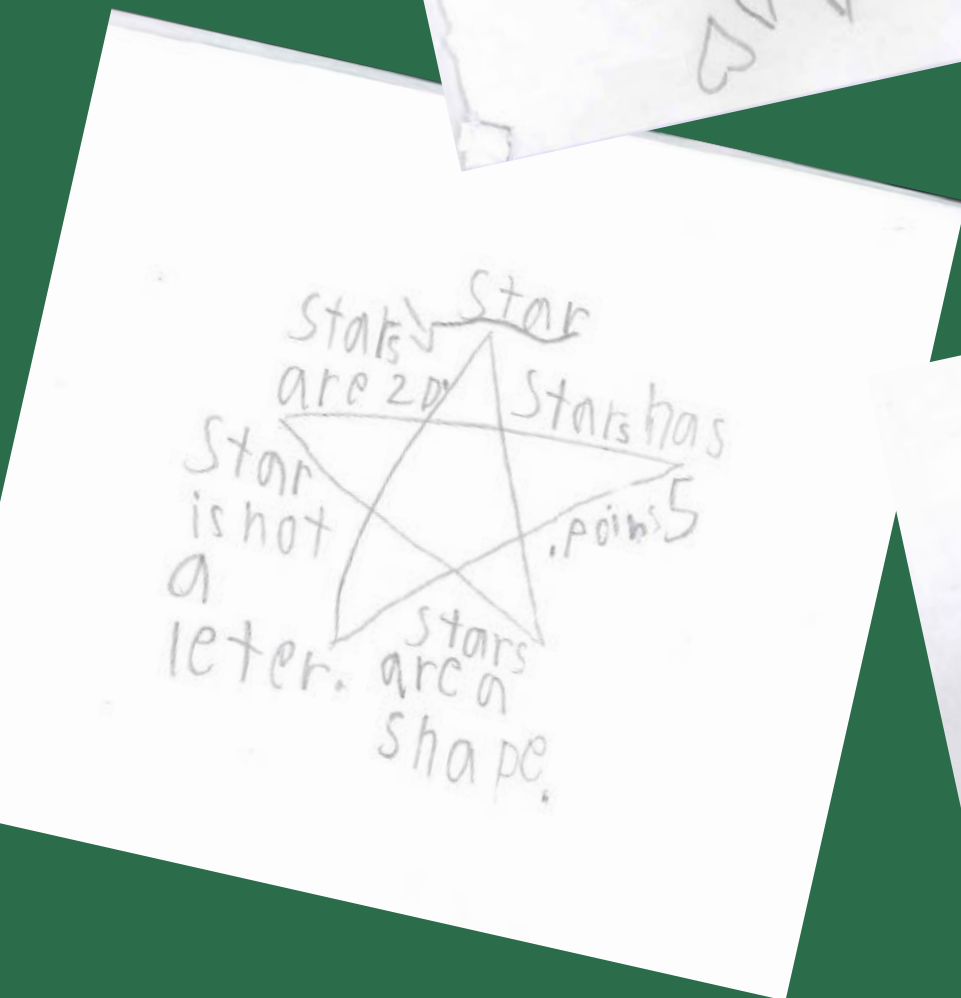
"Can we talk for a few?"

The epilogue is coming soon.

When he treats you like you don't exist,
It's time to start new
And when he says you should see new people,
There's nothing left to do

Shapes

by Various Artists



I do like to be happy
I don't like to be sad
I don't like to be angry



Reds are Red

Violent are Violent

This is



Why I Love you
I love you



Cat Art

by Various Artists



Change

by Anonymous Writer

The leaves all change
From one color to the next
In all seasons

All people change
Whether it be good or bad
We all do change

Animals change
The color of their fur
Or their shape

Places do change
Buildings fall and more are built
No place is the same

Time always changes
No time is like the last one
And that is beautiful

