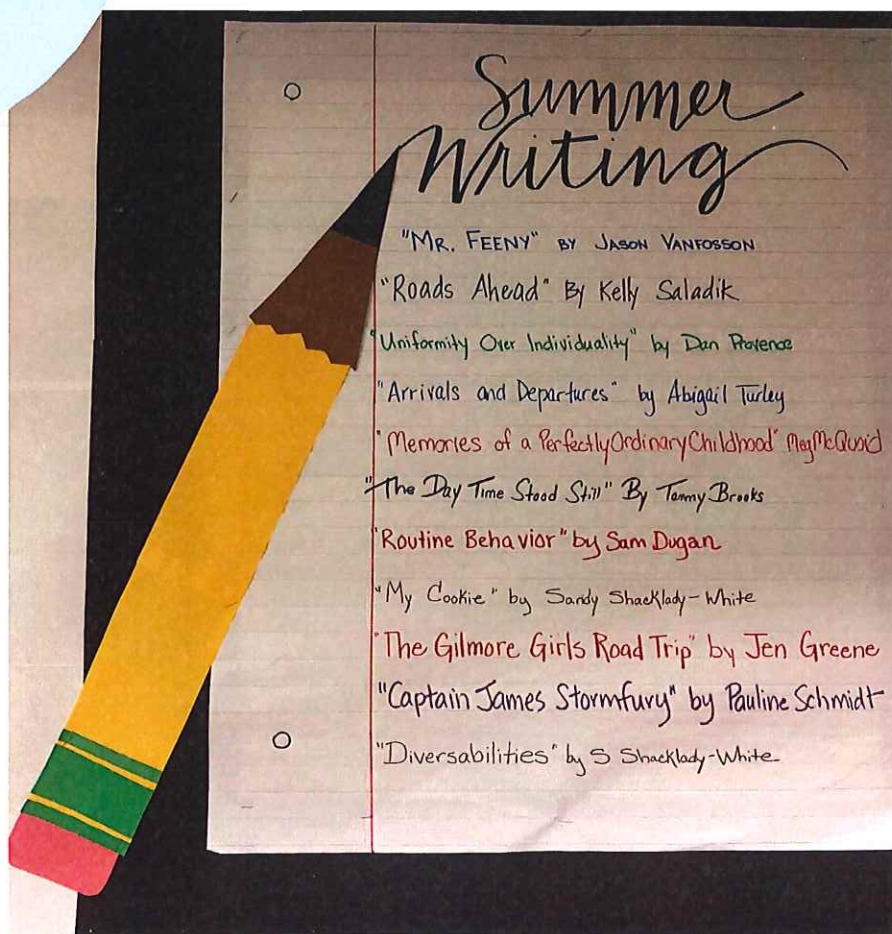
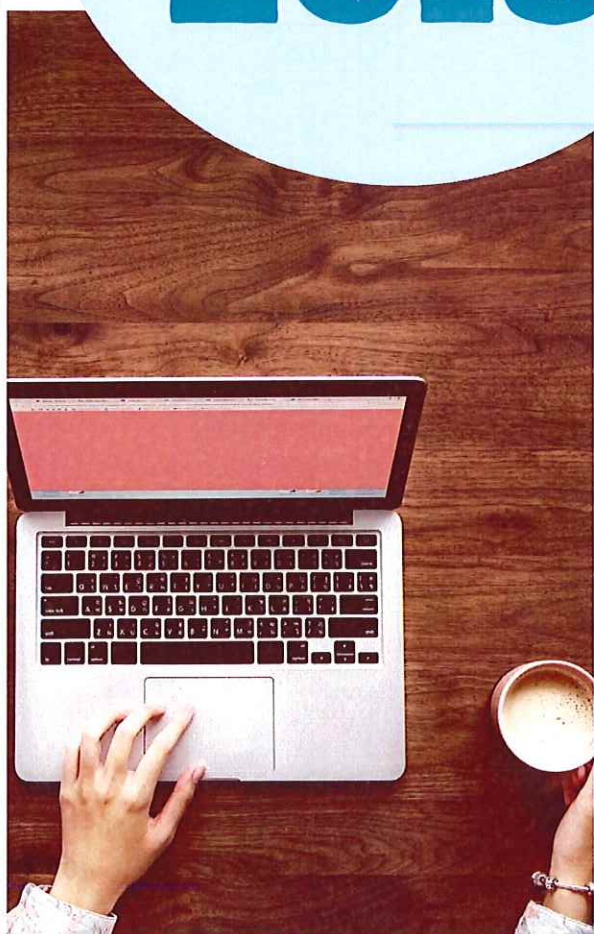


PAWLP SUMMER INSTITUTE 2019





Dear Creative Crickets,

What a quietly creative summer it has been! Perhaps, we did this to ourselves by using the metaphor of "Campfire", "Cave", "Watering Hole", and "Ranger Station". Within the silence, clearly a lot of thinking was happening. Your demo lessons, book talks, and writing pieces show the level of excellence from this dedicated group of teachers. Our days were spent learning, sharing, growing, and wondering exactly just what *did* happen with that opossum in the hot tub? Many books were read, amazing stories written, and we exploited all of Kelly's artistic talents with a phenomenal bulletin board. Each day of our experience required us to change our style, just like we change our pants.

Thank you for taking this journey with us and allowing us to learn and grow with you.

- Pauline and Jen

Tammy Brooks
PAWLP Institute 2019
Narrative
July 2, 2019

The Day Time Stood Still

He came into this world four pounds five ounces, emaciated and jaundiced. The umbilical cord was wrapped around his neck twice. Placed on my chest not breathing and blue in color. I never heard an infant's first cry that is typically heard at birth. For my only son, Daniel, was born not breathing. Resuscitated by an in hospital EMT from the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) with what appeared to be mini newborn defibrillators. He gasped for breath in his small newborn body and the EMT got a pulse. My feet still up in the stirrups, exhausted and in pain after enduring the excruciating and rigors of childbirth. My only son Daniel was whisked away from my bedside quickly as I screamed in terror, he's not breathing! And as I wept and whimpered, I mustered up enough strength to say with all the force I had left in me, "Oh God, let him live." This all happened so quickly and simultaneously. I believe to this day that my words suddenly changed the course of fate and caused my only son to live. "Gotta go Mom," said the EMT hurriedly to me in a babylike voice. For Daniel came into this world in crisis but he survived. In fact, our life together has been full of crises, but we survived, and we survived together, Mom and son.

Vividly, I remember the card my father gave me as if it were only yesterday. It read, "Footprints in the sand. Little footprints will now follow you forever and I you will never be alone." My father wheeled me down the hall to the NICU to see my newborn son Daniel. There

he was incased in a glass incubator. Tubes to his chest and mouth. Lights flickering to monitor his breathing and progress in the incubator. He was in critical care, but he was so gosh darn beautiful! He was my Beusoleil. My beautiful son. My father said these simple words, to encourage me as a new mother, "you did good." Amazed that I gave birth to such a beautiful son in my heart I silently agreed. But, felt a twinge of pain seeing Daniel in critical care. Yet on this day, time stood still, and I knew my life had now changed. I was in an instant changed forever! Daniel nicknamed Be usoleil (Caribbean French for beautiful sun/son) was about to cause my life to take a different turn and for a moment in time I felt earth had literally stopped revolving on its axis and all that mattered was this tiny life Creator had now entrusted to my care.

Seed Idea

Blank page

Distress.

Blank page

Recollection, Rumination, Rumbling

Blank page

Rumbling in the soul

Stirring in the heart

Blank page

Passion, illumination

Spirit takes flight

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Seed Idea

Seed appears

Identified, Examined...

Found to have value, worth-

Planted, Watered

Seed- Seed Idea

Mysterious, unknown seed

Blown by the wind-

Exertion and force of brain cells and matter...

Seed Idea, more poignant and powerful in mystery guised

Streams of consciousness

Streams of ideas rendering life- art, writing, the work.

-By Tammy Brooks

“Fatal Attraction”

By: Sam Dugan

It was the end of another productive yet exhausting day at school, but the beginning of what has become my favorite part of the day. Right on cue, in shuffles Allison, a socially awkward Junior who desperately owes me new dry erase markers. Every day she walks into my room and starts drawing a variety of random characters of her own creation all over my white boards. Throughout the school year, I have had sailors, wizards, school girls, vampires, girls with deer antlers and all sorts of fictitious characters adorning my boards. She experiments with color and challenges norms, but proportions always have to be perfect.

Claire, a tall Guinean girl from my French class, enters the room. She always comes in around this time to return a chrome book that she had borrowed from me earlier that day. Allison quietly observes my conversation with Claire, and then comments on how much she hates my chrome books because they are the oldest ones in the school. “They’re too slow, some of the screens are cracked, and half of them won’t even turn on.” Claire and I laugh at Allie’s honest remarks, exchange a few quick words alternating between French and English, and then she leaves to pack up for the day.

I look over to see the newest addition to the cast of characters on my board. Allie has drawn a tall man with a tool belt sporting overalls. He resembles Bob the Builder but lankier. I’m reminded of the first time I met Allison the previous September when we had constructed two bookshelves together. I had come in that day to help decorate one of the rooms that we would be using for the after school program. Allison and I were tasked with building two IKEA bookshelves. She had not spoken more than two words to me the whole time we were there, and I remember thinking how bizarre it was that the only thing she ever seemed to say was “Okay” in a deep, almost forced monotone. Our relationship had certainly come a long way since then.

Just as Claire is leaving, Max and Finn enter the room (or as Allison refers to them, the blond one and the one who drinks La Croix). They kindly greet Allie, who responds with a brief greeting in her usual monotone. Before heading off to go to whatever after school activity they are involved in that day, Max and Finn will usually share with me their most recent finds at Nordstrom’s Rack or which stores are having a sale that weekend. As we are discussing fashion, a gaggle of Freshmen, whom Allie has playfully dubbed “the Greenies”, awkwardly stand outside the entrance to the room, as one of their friends comes in to ask a question about a due date. They are clearly intimidated by Max and Finn because, according to them, “Seniors are really scary”.

As the Freshmen leave, Max and Finn also make their exit. Finally, Allison, who has been waiting for a window to speak, comes over from her place at the board to talk to me about anything and everything that is on her mind. Literally, everything that she has been holding in all day. As she sits in the chair next to my desk, I look up at the drawing of Harry, Ron, and Hermione that hangs above her head: a gift she had

given me for my birthday. It will always be one of the most meaningful gifts I've ever received. Allison's not exactly the most sentimental person, but that day she had truly surprised me. I hadn't even remembered telling her my birthday, but not only had she committed it to memory, but she had taken the time to draw something that she knew I would like. Furthermore, this was one of the few times that she had not expected anything in return. That had made all the difference.

Today, Allison wants to talk about something she observed during the school day, this is usually what sparks our discussions. She has an unparalleled natural curiosity about the world, most people don't know that about her. Today she asks, "Why do people sign each other's yearbooks? What's even the point? What do they get out of it?" For her, everything in life is some sort of transaction, so that is how I have to explain things. "Because, over the years, people like to go back and read the little messages left by their friends. It gives them that warm nostalgic feeling. It's like a trade-off, they provide that sensation for one another." Allison squints her eyes in a state of confusion and shakes her head critically. "That doesn't seem good enough," she says, speaking more to herself than to anyone in particular. Clearly, the transaction is not quite worth it to her.

Just then, she looks at the cat, which is still on my desk from the Halloween season, with complete disgust. I know what she's thinking. She never fails to remind me how much she hates that cat. After she had first expressed her distaste for the stuffed animal back in October, Tiffany, one of the Sophomores, had teasingly named it "Little Allie". Upon hearing this, Allie responded, "Little Allie can go jump off a cliff." Even though she pretends to be annoyed when we tease her about "Little Allie", I know she secretly enjoys feeling like she is a part of something.

Allison gets up off the chair to walk around and stretch her legs before asking, "Ya got any tissues?"

"Nah, sorry, I'm all out." I really needed to replenish my supply. I had used up my last box the one and only time that I saw Allie cry.

We were all together at the after school program, and Allie was asked to participate in an activity. My supervisor, Jo, was telling Allie that she needed to stop playing games on her phone and actually cooperate. Video games were Allie's way of unwinding, and since she had recently been forced to give her computer to her older sister, her phone was the only way she could have access to her games.

That day, we had visitors working with the girls on a career skill building activity. Jo, with the best of intentions, wanted Allie to take part in the activity, knowing that it would be good for her. "Allie, you're not allowed to just sit here, you have to actually participate."

"I don't want to," she continued staring at the screen, completely immersed in her virtual escape. Jo stared at Allie with the look she always gave her when she meant business.

"If you're not going to do anything for school, then you have to do something somewhat productive."

"But, I don't see how...how...this is going to benefit me at all."

"Allie, if I have to ask you one more time, I'm going to have to take your phone. The purpose of OST is not for you to be on your phone the whole time."

"That's groooooooss...." she complained.

"Give me the phone." Allie reluctantly handed it over to her and went to go sit with the other girls participating in the computer coding activity. One of the visiting adults running the activity cheerfully greeted Allie.

"Hi Allison! Do you want to keep working on the same project you were working on before?"

"I guuuueess...." she said, not even trying to hide her annoyance.

"You could start a new project if you would rather do that instead!"

"Fine," Allie snapped.

Jo turned around as soon as she heard this interaction. "Allison, I need to talk to you outside for a minute." Jo took Allie out in the hallway and gave her a very stern talk. Jo later expressed her frustration to me. She knew Allie very well and was no stranger to her personality, but she was getting really irritated with her lack of sensitivity when it came to communicating with adults who were trying to help her. I knew how hard Jo tried with Allie, and it also frustrated me to see her act like this. I told Jo that I would talk to her the next day.

The next day came and Allie came into my room after school like she always did. I had decided the best way to approach this was to be straightforward with her.

"Hey, can I talk to you about something?" I asked.

"Oh no, is it about yesterday in OST?"

"Yes, it's about yesterday in OST," I responded firmly. "What were you thinking? You know better than to be rude to people. Ms. Jo and those nice women didn't deserve that."

As I continued to chastise her, I saw something I had never seen before. Her eyes began to gloss over, and before I knew it, she began sobbing. Right then and there I knew I had made a mistake. "Everyone expects too much from me. I'm not like every other kid, and nobody seems to care. I'm just not moving fast enough!" At this point she was almost shouting. She continued, "Does anybody realize that I'm trying to figure out social stuff? I'm really trying, but it's never good enough for all of you!" She buried her face in her hands and turned her back towards me.

I was stunned into silence for a good minute, and then I attempted to speak, "Oh God, Allie. Allie.....I'm so sorry."

Before I knew it, I was crying too. I grabbed my last tissue box, which I gave to her after grabbing a few tissues for myself. I began apologizing over and over again, and telling her how proud I was of all the progress she had made in the past year, as we both sobbed. It was in that moment that I realized just how far she had come from when I first met her. Instead of acknowledging her accomplishments, I had focused on

her failings. If there was anyone who needed to be built up with confidence it was her; and, in that moment, I had failed her. Since that day, I have constantly told her how proud I am of her and how much she has grown. Her response is always, "Yeah, yeah, yeah..." but I know that it is something she needs to hear.

I prompted Allie to go ask Mrs. McQuoid next door for tissues. While she was gone, I thought about all she had taught me in that moment. Over the last few years, I had seen her grow from a girl who almost never spoke, to someone who was now learning to hold conversations and crack jokes with her peers. Where she had once been the girl with the blank stare, she had come to prove that she was animated, funny, and vulnerable. She had learned how to advocate for herself, ask for help, and share her thoughts and opinions. She had started to blossom and made so much progress. But, with those few words of disapproval, I had dismissed all of it. I had gone from being one of her biggest cheerleaders, to making her think that I didn't believe in her. This led me to reflect on how often I focus on what my students can't do, instead of what they can. What they're not understanding, instead of what they know. As a teacher it is my job to encourage students and celebrate their successes. I'm forever grateful to Allison for this lesson, one of many she has taught me since I've known her. After she came back, I ask her if she's ready to go. She nods and together we walk down to the after school program like we do every day.

The Last Kiss

By: Sam Dugan

As I pulled back the white sheet and folded it back right below her collarbone, I couldn't hold back my repulsion. The flesh of her nose had been torn almost clean off, her cheekbones were exposed with flaps of skin and torn muscle cascading down the left side of her face like a grotesque waterfall. Her right eyelid was slashed open and a pool of dried blood sat in the cavity that was once an eye socket. I couldn't stop thinking why the hell her family wanted an open casket. I had my work cut out for me.

Patricia was a good person, or so I had been told, but she had also been stupid. She cared so much about the world and was an avid animal rights' activist. She bought all cruelty-free makeup, ate a strict vegetarian diet, the whole nine yards. It was an admirable lifestyle, but then she pulled that stunt.

As part of a campaign against poaching, she wanted to do something memorable, something that would stun the world. She decided to find an African lion and give it a big kiss on the lips. Well, you see where that got her.

The Gilmore Girls Road Trip
By: Jen Greene

"There's a refrigerator in here!" she exclaimed incredulously.

"There always is. You sound like a prisoner reintegrating back into society," I replied.

And in a way, she was. For the large majority of her life, my mother had been responsible for caring for someone else. For putting someone else's needs above her own. Her children, her parents, her husband.... She had never been free to just go away for a weekend without any responsibility. To delight in the little things in life- like a hotel refrigerator. This was her chance to be free to be.

The circumstances that brought about this moment were traumatic and unwelcomed. We had just lost my father. Then we suddenly lost the dog in a freak accident. So much loss in such a short spanse of time. Huge loss that you don't recover from. I had to lay on top of my mother to get her to stop screaming and that is when I knew we needed to get away. Far away from the silence and the stillness and the suffocating feeling of what was no longer.

We packed a bag and got in the car- the therapeutic, much-needed Gilmore Girls Road Trip. Headed to the Elephant's Trunk Flea Market in New Milford, CT to pretend we were contestants on Flea Market Flip. Along the way we stopped to do whatever struck our fancy- a luxury my mom hadn't been able to afford in 60+ years.

We stopped at a Dottie's Diner (our version of Luke's) and drank an unhealthy amount of coffee.

We saw a sign for a state agriculture fair and decided to stop and wander.

By the time we stopped at Yale, we were Lorelei and Rory.

Whatever we wanted to do, we did.

We tried to forget that when we got home the house would be empty and still and did our best to fill in the silences that seemed to drip slowly into the air. Instead, we focused on not thinking and just doing.

I was always the closest with my father. Not that my mom and I didn't get along, except maybe for a few angsty teen years, but my dad was my best friend. We did so many things together, that were our things- diner brunches, craft shows, holiday shopping, watching golf. This was the first time that I'd really spent time with my mom doing something other than shopping or wringing out hands in a hospital waiting room.

I saw my mom in a different light- realizing all the things she didn't know were normal, because in her world they weren't. In addition to the shock of a hotel refrigerator, she didn't know how to pay for a meal using a gift card that her colleagues had given her. She was unaccustomed to using Google maps or Waze because she didn't drive anywhere she didn't already know the way to. There was a lot she was going to have to learn, now that she could go wherever and do whatever she wanted. The experience was eye-opening for me and helped me to understand my mom in a way that I hadn't before.

A Fly on the Wall of the PAWLP Institute
By: Jen Greene

There is this group

of people

who come here every day. They are teachers.

And learners. And thinkers.

They bring food! Hurray!

I watch them from my spot on the wall. Waiting for the food table to be empty. It never is.

and so I observe.

These teachers....they write. A lot.

They talk. In small gatherings. And then there is

Silence.

Reflecting.

working ~ thinking ~ sharing.

I've flown into many rooms.

Landed on many walls.

Walked across many snack tables.

But none like this.

So full of....

Possibility and passion and intent and hope.

I am glad I landed here.

Memories of a Perfectly Ordinary Childhood

By: Meg McQuoid

While my childhood certainly wasn't all rainbows and unicorns, even things that could have caused problems just didn't. My parents were divorced before I was three years old; it was fine. I spent every weekend at my grandparent's house with two uncles who were addicts; also, it was fine. Anything else that wasn't perfect; still fine. Of course, this is all because of the solid consistency of my mother. My mom never expected to be a single mother, and she never expected to have to go back to work with two young daughters at home, but she did. Life as a single, working mother must have been full of stress and worry and, certainly exhaustion, but I was shielded from those adult problems and able to simply be a child.

All of my childhood memories include my younger sister, Kathy, my sidekick, number one playmate, and best friend (even though I would *not* have called her that at the time). She was the Cindy to my Marcia. From riding our bikes in the driveway behind our house to recreating the choreography of the Solid Gold Dancers on our imaginary stage (aka the kitchen) with our collection of 45 records to creating elaborate soap opera-like storylines for our Barbies, we had simple, but wonderful adventures. We never went on exotic vacations, but we loved the tradition of having the same vacation in Wildwood, NJ year after year. We lived in a simple row house in Mayfair, a typical middle-class Northeast Philadelphia neighborhood. Nothing in our house was ever fancy, but our house was always filled with a sense of peace, happiness, and love.

For a special treat on Sunday evenings, my mom would take us to McDonald's for dinner. The McDonald's food itself was the same as it always has been and will be, but the magical part of this McDonald's was the best playland that was ever constructed in a fast food establishment. It was a large wooden slide structure with multiple steps and levels, slides and steering wheels. Obviously, as a child,

every play structure made of wood became a pirate ship. We would sail around, climbing and sliding, for what seemed like hours on our ship. My sister and I were imaginative, but never wild, and we never bickered like some siblings do. Kathy was always a good first mate who went along with my plans. I'm sure that my mother appreciated our ability to entertain ourselves; after three consecutive nights shifts working as a nurse, she could unwind, drink her coffee, and read the newspaper. I realized when I became a parent myself what a brilliant idea this was.

Hot summer afternoons were spent visiting the local "swimmo" (or public swimming pool, for people who don't know my mom's quirky colloquialisms). As each year went by, it became an exciting challenge to see how much further we could swim across the pool with stopping or how much further we could venture into the deep water before we could only stand on our tippy toes. Kathy, a year younger than me, was more tentative and clung to mom's arms, but I was somewhat braver and liked to see how far I could go. Sometimes, for a change of pace, we would drive to a different pool in another neighborhood because that pool went up to 8 feet deep and we could practice our diving. We always did enjoy when we were invited to someone's house who had a pool in their yard; it amazed me that someone could be that rich! I know my mom fantasized about joining a swim club, but, honestly, we had just as much fun at the swimmo.

In the winter on weekend afternoons, we went to the local roller rink, wheeling around in endless circles singing along with Prince, Madonna, and Michael Jackson while the colored lights transformed the ordinary wood-floored oval into something magical. My favorite parts of the afternoon, though, was when it was time for races; the races were always divided by age and gender, by forward skate and backward skate. I eagerly got in line with the other girls under 10 every week, and I'm pretty sure I was one of the last people to finish each time (I have since come to terms with my total lack of athletic ability). The last race was always the most exciting, though, the older boys and

one single girl who always beat them. I idolized her Pat Benatar hair and lightning quick speed as she dominated the race week after week. Looking back, I realize this nameless teenage girl was my first feminist icon.

Though my mother was the central adult throughout my life, we did have lots of other great adventures with the quirky cast of characters who we lived with during weekends at my grandmom's house. While mom was sleeping before or after her 11 to 7 shift at the hospital, Kathy and I were always busy with someone to entertain us. There were Saturday afternoon walks to K-Mart with grandmom, where our Barbies always got some stylish new outfit that we could tear open when we got home. We had outings to the "wooden slide playground" (another pirate ship), then to the Delaware River to throw stale bread to the geese with poppy. Uncle Billy stopped at the bar on the way home from the playground where we got to drink Shirley Temples from a glass-glass with a cherry while he had his first beer of the afternoon, Uncle Ed hid our dolls above the living room curtains where we couldn't possibly reach them, and Uncle John took us to the pool and threw us so high into the air that we felt like we were flying. And, of course, there were dinners out at various restaurants with our octogenarian great grandpop (who couldn't hear and cursed often) great aunt (who reapplied her bright red lipstick frequently before, during, and after dinner).

I often tell people that my life has been boring, but when I actually reflect, my life has been simple, but perfect. I did not think much about my happy childhood memories until I became a parent myself, and now watch my children have similar everyday adventures. I may not share my children's love of K-pop, but I do enjoy watching them copy the intricate choreography. I do share their love of all things Harry Potter, but I must put my foot down when they start casting spells on each other. My children will grow up having the same memories that I have, with siblings as their best friends, close

relationships with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Most importantly, they are lucky enough to have the same steady, loving constant in their lives that I had -- my mom.

I am sure that during those years of my childhood, my mom felt like she was just doing what she could to get through each day. When she told me to "be a big girl" from the time I was a preschooler, she probably wasn't trying to make me a leader, but she did. When she expected my help moving furniture at nine-years old, she most likely wasn't trying to teach me to be independent, but she did. It wasn't until I was an adult and met people who did not share my happy memories that I truly appreciated my mom and the experiences that she gave me. I am grateful for her example; I treasure my memories of simple adventures and look forward to continuing these adventures as an adult, a mother, a wife, and a teacher.

Found Poems

By: Meg McQuoid

Inspired by Outlander by Diana Gabaldon

(Context - the characters marry in Book 1, are separated for 20 years, and reunite in Book 3)

Outlander, Book 1, Chapter 15

Husband, whom I scarcely knew
Forced marriage
An air of embarrassment

My hands between his own
"Are you scared of me?"

Curious.

You *are* safe.

my name

my family

my clan

my body

No romantic pledge, but promise

My hand open, he took it naturally
Dangerous territory

Hands did tremble, bent head
"Where did you learn to kiss like that?"

Constraint gone

excitement

exploring

lips meet again

body and mind

"Don't be afraid....there's two of us now"

Voyager, Book 3, Chapter 24

I would lose my nerve.
His back turned, "It's me."
He stared, a tremor

Dark blue eyes, on the verge of smiling
The lines were deeper

A hesitation, a question,

"You're real"

"So are you"

Tears spilled, I shook

The longing of twenty years.

His fingers, my hair

My fingers, his forearm

Afraid he would disappear, staring desperately

How were we to start again?

Shyness and intimacy, lips barely brushing

"May I kiss you"

"Yes"

Touching, tentatively seeking

His voice warm, I dreamed, afraid and lonely, I
needed you

My face cupped between his hands, love
glowing

"Donna be afraid...there's two of us now."

Uniformity Over Individuality

by Dan Provence

I have great memories of school at first. In kindergarten, we had an alphabet parade where each one of us dressed up like a different letter and pranced around the school, going from classroom to classroom, showing off our letter-knowing awesomeness to all of the teachers and the other students. It was fantastic.

In second grade, Mrs. Tsiaras talked all about the fuzzy fairy, a magical woman who lived in the lights. Whenever she saw us doing something good, she told Mrs. Tsiaras, and we got small fuzzies that we kept in little baggies in our desks. These fuzzies granted us access to the treasure chest, where the fuzzy fairy kept little toys and prizes for us.

After those early memories, though, my memories of happiness started to decline. Even at a young age, I felt stripped of my individuality. Desks were set up in rows, children looked forward, hands clasped together on their desks, feet flat on the floor. The boys wore brown dress shoes, grey dress pants, a white button down shirt (starched to the high-heaven), and green wool sweater vests. Girls wore plaid jumpers with button-ups underneath, the school emblem embroidered on the right side, a sign of privilege, a sign of Christianity. At a certain age, the plaid jumpers switched to skirts, a sign of maturity. Unity, order, respect. Everyone matched; “everyone’s the same in God’s eyes”--unless you’re different. And boy was I different.

When I was younger, I always gravitated towards girls rather than boys. I didn’t like sports--I didn’t want to pass the football at recess or play a game of kickball. I would have much rather played a good game of Red Rover... you know, a game where you test friendships; you always let your best friend through--when someone you didn’t like was called over, though, you

made sure you put a death grip on your partner's hand. That enemy of yours was going to the ground. They deserved it, though, even if they were only nine years old.

At any rate, my best friends became the girls in the class, Jessica and Kristy especially. The only boys I hung out with were the sons of my parents' friends.

Each day, the recess bell rang at 10:00. The boys would run into the field, getting mud all over their gray khakis and green wool sweaters, and the girls would sit in groups on the recess yard... talking, playing small games, singing. Then there was me. A clear divide occurred with the exception of one outlier--one boy, freckled face, huge smile, sitting at one of the girl's groups, participating in their childhood games.

I was content--these were the people I wanted to hang out with. I didn't have any desire to get dirty and play sports. I was a happy kid, just playing with my friends.

...

To this day, I don't know why the decision was made. Did my parents express concern that I didn't have any male friends? Did the teachers and nuns have a meeting to discuss the weird kid who preferred to play with girls? Was he going to head down the wrong road? I'll never know, and I don't think I'll ever ask.

...

Each day at 10:00, we fled to the recess yard. On this day, when I was finishing the last problem in Math, I looked up at the clock.

“Awesome!” I thought to myself. Jessica, Kristy, and I had formed a “club” and we were going to make club posters.

The school bell rang, and we were led outside in two lines. The girls followed one another, plaid jumpers moving along slowly, and each boy followed suit, everyone dressed the same.

Walking out the doors, Sister stopped us and explained that things were going to work a little differently from now on.

“Boys and girls,” she said. “Starting today, you are going to be split up for recess. The boys will play in the field, and the girls will play in the recess yard. Boys, get going! Girls, you can go right over there.”

I felt my stomach turn. Who would I hang out with? I couldn’t join the boys--I couldn’t throw a ball, I couldn’t relate--I was nothing like them. The boys ran into the field, and the girls gathered in the recess yard, and there I stood, the outlier, the weirdo, just wondering what to do.

Tears welled up in my eyes as Sister said, “Get going, Daniel! Go join the boys!”

Slowly, I made my way over to the field, a pit forming in my stomach, tears now making their way onto my cheeks.

In an effort to rebel, I made my way to the girls, hoping no one would notice or at least not say anything.

“Daniel, over there, with the boys!”

“Yes, Sister,” I managed to say.

Walking over to the boys, I saw them staring at me, talking with one another and laughing.

“Can I play with you guys?”

“Why would you want to play with us? Shouldn’t you be with the girls?”

Tears now full-fledged, I made my way over to where the grass met the concrete.

Separating the two was a log, and on that log, I sat--tears streaming down my face, girls playing in front of me, boys playing behind me, and my teachers ignoring me.

I always knew that I was different, but at that age, I didn’t know just how different I was. That day stayed with me throughout my entire childhood, and because of that moment, I vowed to keep the most important secret I had.

If you're not a Real Housewives fan...

By Dan Provence

If you're not a Real Housewives fan,
Don't be all uncool.
Fans sometimes speak in random quotes;
These ladies give us fuel.

After a very long day at work,
I don't want to think.
I want to turn on great TV
And watch Vanderpump wear pink.

If you're not a Real Housewives fan,
You probably think it's trash.
But you haven't seen the episode
Where Barabra dressed like Slash.

Wow, Bethenny, wow.
I just don't understand.
What people don't like about elder broads
Getting naked wasted in their land.

Kelly Saladik

Roads Ahead

Hot air blew through the vents of my old Volvo as I turned the air conditioning on.

“Oh, shit.”

Not what you want to experience a few days before a road trip through the desert. Panicked for time, or lack thereof, I explored my options for a quick fix. In two days we’d be taking off from Philadelphia to drive across the country through Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, through the deserts of Death Valley, and finally, to the California coast. There were so many things on my mind, to-do lists out the wazoo, and I now added a fresh worry, death from overheating in Death Valley, to my fear repertoire.

Of course, the first logical thing anyone should do is call a mechanic and see how soon they can squeeze you in. Of course, as an avid DIYer, I did just the opposite. A quick Youtube search yielded hundreds of videos revealing the common AC issue and outlining a single, outrageously simple solution. Two minutes into the first video I was spitting mechanic lingo like “AC compressor clutch gap” and seconds later I was under the car attaching three zip-ties to the compressor.

Ethan happened to be working that day, and would have unquestionably certified me as a full-blown lunatic had he stood witness to this ordeal. Luckily for me, I’m only part lunatic and the other part successful mechanic. Three zip ties and thirty seconds later the AC blew ice cold and would stay that way through the hottest extremes of the desert, and still to this day. I felt a

combination of “Totally cocky about my new-found talent—I must tell everyone” and “This is weird—tell no one.” I went with the latter.

A day later, Ethan and I packed up the car, full to the brim with the necessities of a cross country move, making sure to leave enough space for Cole, our 100 lb. black lab. My '07 Volvo had the heavy responsibility of getting us to California happily, sufficiently air conditioned, and in one piece. In nine years with my Volvo, I'd experienced little to no issues. But with the recent AC fiasco, I couldn't help but fear a total breakdown in the middle of the US. Yet we left optimistic with full faith in the little silver sedan. Just as we'd hoped, prayed, and downright begged of the old Volvo, it traveled readily—slowly, cautiously, but with ease—over the following week. Our eyes widened in awe of each new destination, all witnessed through the confines of this vehicle. Its windows displayed the small towns of Tennessee and its wipers cleared the steamy fog after we weathered torrential rain in Arkansas. Its AC fought off the heat of the desert and its wheels conquered the mountains of California. Its walls held in the sounds of audiobooks, CDs, podcasts, total silence, Ethan snoring, and me snoring. Its windows rolled down to reveal the Cole's ears flapping or welcome the sounds of new places. Seven days in, we pulled into Playa Del Rey, CA and turned off the ignition in the Volvo's new home.

Three years later the old Volvo's ignition turned off—for good this time. It's a strange feeling, letting it go, because it feels like some memories are going with it. But a cheesy road trip quote that I came across on that trip, “Focus on life through the windshield, but glance at the rearview mirror” reminded me to reminisce on past experiences, celebrate them, laugh about

them, even hold on to them, but look ahead and make new ones. Thank the Volvo for the journey and its many wonderful, reliable years, but definitely buy a new car without zip ties.

Kelly Saladik

A Most Unflattering Portrait

It was the third day without sleep for both of them. The man sat upright, rigid and statuesque, with bags steadily forming under his eyes. The artist insisted, pleaded, that they take a break. She assured the man that sleeping, eating, and for God's sake using the bathroom would not affect the outcome of this portrait. The man, however, insisted otherwise. He had not flinched, except to bark commands, and would not allow either of them to budge until the portrait was complete. She had to complete this job though, and do it well, even though this subject was draining all of the unwavering bliss she usually felt each time she painted. She was a unique painter, and world renowned for her talent, but feelings of aggravation and defeat were creeping in now steadily.

In an effort to, put simply and as pleasantly as possible, get the hell out of this emotionally draining situation, the artist worked quickly and more diligently than ever. There was, though, the small hinderance that often slowed the pace of this artist's work—life as a double arm amputee. With brush in foot, the artist painted on. By the sixth day of no sleep, she had had enough. She “threw up her hands”, figuratively of course because she had none, and decided to insert some lost pleasure into this most horrid situation. She assured the man the painting was almost finished, just a few details to the face and she'd be all finished. Frustration, hunger, and sleep deprivation led the artist to a state of complete delirium and suddenly— a spark of joy. She'd made up her mind. She took the portrait, so beautifully crafted it appeared a mirror image of the man, and began to exaggerate the bags under the eyes, enlarge an ear, add a second nose, connect the eyebrows into a caterpillar-like unibrow, add a mo-hawk, and insert a giant fat lip because, why not? He'd put her through enough. It was a most unflattering portrait and what turned out to be, a most joyous endeavor for the artist.

Story created with 3 Storymatic cards:

Amputee

Third Day without sleep

Unflattering portrait

DIVERSABILITIES

Glasses
Talker
Wheelchair
Hearing aids

Tools
That help me
Be me
Along the way

Daughter
Sister
Niece
Friend

See me
For all that I am
As a whole person
To the very end



By: Sandy Shacklady-White (2019)

Abigail Turley

Arrivals and Departures

I'm early and anxious. Memorial Day weekend travel makes for a busy airport, and most of the connected vinyl and metal seats are taken. I choose an empty seat close to the huge windows so I can watch the planes land and shuttle back and forth from gate to runway to gate.

Incoming jets' paths seem to merge and meet while departing planes diverge on concrete runways. Landings and take offs become a predictably timed occurrence, strategically managed from a tower in the distance. With each plane's arrival and journey on the tarmac, I wonder about this blond-haired, blue-eyed stranger on board. This will be our first meeting in person.

Shylo is my husband's sixteen-year-old half-sister, 26 years younger than he is. A victim of abuse and neglect, Shylo had been moved to the custody of another half-sister, Casey, when she was six years old. Years later, my husband and I suspected that Shylo was no longer in her sister's care, so we began a search to find her. One call to the "kinship office" in the state of Utah confirmed what we suspected: due to some behavioral issues with Shylo, Casey had signed away her legal rights to guardianship, and Shylo was in need of a permanent home.

After a months long process of becoming certified foster parents, we were approved to take custody of Shylo. She would spend Memorial Day weekend with us as a trial run, and I will travel to Utah in mid-June to go before her judge and take legal guardianship of her, pack up her belongings at the group home, and fly with her back to Pennsylvania with the intent of making our home a permanent placement. I will travel by myself, because it makes sense financially, because our own children need to be cared for, and because my husband and I both agree that a "mother" is better-suited to do the hard work of helping a teenage girl through her goodbyes and transition into a new life across the country.

I watch people as they come and go. They are oblivious to my nervousness, as I am oblivious to theirs. A tearful reunion transpires where the ramp meets the waiting area to my left. Lovers reunite with hugs, kisses, and selfies. Joy and sorrow play out each minute as every person's reason for travel holds a story. At our gate, a military welcome is in the works. Volunteers carrying flags gather to recognize a veteran who is traveling on this holiday weekend.

The plane I've been waiting for rounds a corner from the tarmac, guided into place against the jetway by men in fluorescent yellow vests holding orange batons. My heart races. Her first impression of me is important. Will we hug? I'm not one for physical contact and didn't grow up in a "huggy" family. Will she recognize me from the photographs we sent?

All of the social worker's attempts to sugar coat the obvious truth about her behaviors and mental health have me on edge. Will she have held herself together on a four-hour flight? Will her anxiety have built up so much that she exhibits physical symptoms?

The group home where she lived in Provo provided a routine-driven, rules-based surrogate care environment. In the three years she spent there, she received intensive therapy, both individual and group, as well as life skills instruction and online academics. But she did not learn how to be a part of a family or how to manage downtime. Every minute of the day was scheduled and supervised by a rotating staff who kept bonded relationships at a distance. I worry about bonding with her, about being a mother to another woman's child, about seeing my sister-in-law as a "daughter," an aunt as a "sibling" to my children. It's a complicated history, and I'm feeling woefully underprepared to meet this teenager who is to become mine.

The deboarding process begins and passengers climb up the jet bridge and enter the terminal gate area. Some eager families move forward with purpose, aware of their surroundings and familiar with the directional signs pointing toward baggage claim. Others wander, bewildered, checking phone messages and the time, stumbling bleary eyed toward connecting flights. Like planes, people merge and diverge, some slowly, some hurriedly, as I

stand still, almost paralyzed in my nervousness. I anchor my feet to steady myself and shift the purse on my shoulder, my eyes watching the steady line of travelers leaving the gate.

Shylo rounds the corner and we make eye contact as she moves up the ramp into the terminal. Her slight smile betrays her - she is more excited than nervous - but awkward, defensive at the same time. I may appear the same to her: more eagerness than reservation.

But then this moment feels like a disappointment: cold and distanced with no hug, little warmth, and a stiffness that, in my memory, will become more uncomfortable and unsettling in the retelling. This greeting would have been so natural, so emotional and physical with my own children yet is so difficult for me and her, and I feel pain from this awareness of the distance between us. Any tears that were ready to form have dried up, and I sense a tightening around my heart that says, "Be cautious," and feeds my gut more instinct to protect my children, my own children. This moment will live in my memory as one of hope and fear, of love and apathy, of desire and unwillingness, of a mother and a child who will be unable to bond.

After retrieving her luggage from the baggage claim, we find our way out of the airport and head to the car. Already, conversation is hard: there is no reciprocity or banter, and all prompting comes from me. We move at 65 miles per hour away from the airport and toward home, and I am aware of my own misgivings and hesitation, that this choice was not really a choice, for how do you turn your back on a child? This is all so unfamiliar; we both long for something familiar.

Inspired

If you want to find inspiration, sit quietly.

Pay attention to the hum all around you: breathing, sighing, thinking.

If you want to find inspiration, observe openly.

Watch the movement of pens across paper, the body language of friends chatting, the energy of feet tapping.

If you want to find inspiration, listen curiously.

Ask questions of the barista, the parking lot attendant, the custodian.

If you want to find inspiration, read widely.

Devour the books you love, skim the ones you hate, identify why you feel so strongly about each.

If you want to find inspiration, speak softly.

Reveal yourself in order to empower others, build trust, nudge thinking.

Inspiration lives among us,
waiting to be found.

See it.

Inspiration lives within us.,
wanting to be recognized.

Receive it.

Inspiration lives here,
growing and thriving.

Share it.

Abigail Turley

Mr. Feeny
Jason Vanfosson

I peeked out the window suspicious of the powder blue car parked in the driveway. As an anxious thirteen-year-old with a road-facing bedroom window, I took it upon myself to become the neighborhood watch. After all, we were the first house on a dead end street, so I could watch neighbors drive to their homes or spy lost cars that would make their way down the asphalt only to return moments later. This old, driverless hatchback car resting in my driveway concerned me.

The house phone rang out in the next room. It was conveniently placed next to another window that overlooked the driveway. I scrambled to answer it and continued to watch what I suspected would be a kidnapper's escape vehicle.

"Hello," I stuttered while triple-checking the locks on the window.

"Hey, Bub. Come on down," said my dad.

"Dad, I think I am about to be kidnapped. Mom isn't home yet and there is a strange car in the driveway." He could sense the severity in my voice. I heard a smile crack on his face.

"No, Bub. C'mon down. I'm in the driveway. I have a car to show you." I was still focused on the inevitability that I was about to be abducted by the stranger-danger man from the videos at school, so I did not realize that the car my dad wanted to show me was the same car that rested in the gravel driveway.

"Oh!" I said while taking my first breath in over three minutes, "Be right down." I slipped my shoes on and sprinted down the hill to the driveway. My dad sat with a grin in the passenger seat and said, "Get in!" I crawled behind the wheel and bit down on my lip.

"Do you like it?" he asked.

"It's okay," I said.

"Push the break, pull the gearshift into drive, and head down the street to the garage." I gave him a look that screamed are-you-kidding-me-I-am-just-a-child-who-is-not-allowed-to-drive-and-that-is-a-legal-restriction-not-another-one-of-mom's-rules. With kind eyes, he reassured me, "It's okay."

I did as he said and, in slow-motion speed, released the brake and started to coast the car forward. My grip clenched on the steering wheel at ten and two, not because I knew to put my hands at ten and two but because that's how Nanny drove and old people tended to appear as safe drivers. The car lurched forward as I accelerated up the small incline of the street.

"Where do I look?" I asked.

"Keep your eyes looking out. You can also align the hood ornament to the side of the road if that helps," he replied.

After creeping down the street and driving up the washed-out dirt alleyway, I finally brought the car to a stop in front of the garage and returned the gearshift to park. My dad broke the silence first.

"So, what did you think?"

"It's scary," I exhaled. "And, we did not die."

"What about the car? Have you figured it out yet?" He asked with an uncharacteristically big smile that showed his two missing back teeth.

"Figured what out?"

"It's your car, Bub. I bought it for you. What do you think?"

In a single moment, this powder blue, 1981 Pontiac Phoenix that costs \$100.00 and the promise of a painted car became the most beautiful and flawless car I had ever seen.

"It's perfect," I said. "I'll call him Mr. Feeny."





Richard Two
Jason Vanfosson



Susan never considered that most cats don't love water like she does when she sold all her possessions and bought a fishing boat. Instead, she thought a fishing boat would be perfect for her ninety-two cats. After all, the *Karl-with-a-K* had been a top fishing boat that, no matter how strong the cleaner, maintained a permanent perfume of tuna. Nonetheless, Susan needed the boat to accommodate her cats as she sailed the seas searching for the shark that gave her a white, jagged scar that ran from her unstable hairline through her eye and down to her now-hidden clavicle.




She had not-so-affectionately named this shark Richard Two, after her ex-husband who watched from the beach and did nothing while the shark attacked her on August 2, 2009 at Myrtle Beach. What did she expect, though? Richard One never did anything to help her. In fact, if you asked Susan about it, she'd say that bastard paid the shark to attack her.

Now, Susan and her ninety-two cats are about to embark on the revenge journey of a lifetime. For the past ten years she has studied shark migratory patterns at the local community college in North Dakota, saved every penny, collected every cat, and taken four years of How-to-Sail-a-Fishing-Boat courses online. Now, all she has to do is find Richard Two and have the cats claw him until he has the same scar as Susan.

Institute Participant Bios Summer 2019

<p>Tammy Brooks</p> 	<p>Tammy is a 12th grade English teacher at Coatesville Area Senior High School in Coatesville, PA. She received her undergraduate degree from Millersville University and her master's degree from Penn State University. She enjoys exercise- running, swimming, and hiking in her spare time. She plans to continue her education in a doctoral program in Comparative Literature. She lives in West Chester, PA and is the mother of a 20 year old, autistic son.</p>
<p>Samantha Dugan</p> 	<p>Sam is a 9th grade English and French teacher at John W. Hallahan Catholic Girls' High School in Philadelphia. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Delaware and will be starting a master's program at Villanova University in the Fall. She has a wide variety of interests including writing poetry, reading like a maniac, listening to any and every podcast available, and hanging out with her overly anxious cat-daughter, Lucy.</p>
<p>Janice Ewing</p> 	<p>Janice is a PAWLP co-director and an instructor in Cabrini University's Reading Specialist Program. She has a husband, two adult daughters, and two five year old cats. She loves to read, write, and engage in inquiry, and to share those passions with others.</p>
<p>Jen Greene</p> 	<p>Jen is a PAWLP co-director as well as a 2nd grade teacher in the West Chester Area School District. Since she felt like that didn't take up nearly enough time, Jen is also a doctoral student at Widener University. In the tiny moments of free time she finds, Jen enjoys dancing, reading, binge watching trash TV, drinking coffee, and hanging out with her Dalmatian, Murphy.</p>

<p>Meg McQuoid</p> 	<p>Meg has been teaching English at John W. Hallahan High School in Philadelphia for 20 years. Outside of school, Meg is a wife and mother of 5 children; she can frequently be found attending shows of her 2 oldest theatrical daughters. Her hobbies include picking up toys and serving food to small people. Meg would like to thank Dr. Jolene Borgese for encouraging her to attend PAWLP.</p>
<p>Dan Provence</p> 	<p>Dan has been teaching at Garnet Valley Middle School for four years. Previously, he taught at South Western School District in York County. When not reading copious amounts of books and imbibing episodes of Real Housewives, he can be found drinking margaritas 'til closin' time.</p>
<p>Kelly Saladik</p> 	<p>Kelly teaches 4th grade at Devon Elementary in the Tredyffrin-Easttown School District. She previously taught 1st grade in both Philadelphia and Los Angeles. She is an avid arts-and-crafter and can be found cranking out Cricut projects in her spare time. She lives with her fiancé and 100 lb. mix of black lab/Newfoundland/crazy in Ardmore.</p>
<p>Pauline Schmidt</p> 	<p>In her first life, Pauline was a 9th grade English teacher and musical director. After getting her PhD at the University of Buffalo in 2008, she started teaching teachers. Now, she is an Associate Professor in English Education at West Chester University, the Director of PAWLP, and Co-Advisor of the NCTE Student Affiliate at WCU. When she is not on campus, she is reading YA Lit, writing stories, baking, & planning family vacations. She lives in West Chester with her husband Brian, her son Robert, her daughter Emma, & her mini-goldendoodle Bailey.</p>

<p>Sandy Shacklady-White</p> 	<p>Sandy has been an educator since 1989 upon her graduation from WCU with a major in special education. She received her masters degree in reading from WCU. Prior to becoming an educational consultant for PDE's Bureau of Special Education's PA Training and Technical Assistance Network in 2017, she was a special ed teacher and special ed administrator. She is active in many educational organizations such as KSLA- BVF, PA CEC, PACTESP, and ASCEND. She lives in Coatesville with her husband of 30 years and 1 furry child, a black cat named Sassy.</p>
<p>Abigail Turley</p> 	<p>Abigail is an English teacher in the West Chester Area School district preparing to begin her 21st year. Her passions include reading, planning quality professional development, and studying maps of all kinds. All pop culture references are lost on her because she does not watch TV. She lives in East Coventry with her husband, three children, and various pets.</p>
<p>Jason Vanfosson</p> 	<p>Jason Vanfosson is a marshmallow. He is a professor at West Chester University and is being hazed into the position of Associate Director of PAWLP. In his spare time he enjoys chartering yachts, wearing glittery shoes, Veronica Mars trivia, and drinking margaritas. Do not, under any circumstances ask him about that time with the possum in the hot tub. He lives in West Chester with his adorable husband, Tell. Regrettably, he has never seen an episode of Friends.</p>



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