1. Trail blazing through his work, a student loses himself to the sound of thoughts and inquiries echoing throughout his skull, disregarding exchanged pleasantries passing by that would only encave him.

2. Blindly wandering the streets, a child loses themselves, taking their time getting home, asking the question of where it ever was, if they wanted to be lost.

3. A juvenile wants to ask something unknown, a question about being, but he just ends up forming nihilistic realities in the back of his mind, which occupy that space until he’s satisfied.

4. “There are no stupid questions,” said the broken record resembling a professor all while the student tore down the tower of confidence he’d established before hearing some words from a wise old genius.
THE BOOK THIEF

Juliana Agudelo Ariza, age 12
MCCLURE MIDDLE SCHOOL, SIXTH GRADE

This writing was created during the Seattle Arts & Lectures' Writers in the Schools (WITS) 2019-20 residency at McClure Middle School with WITS Writer-in-Residence, Greg Stump.
MI NOMBRE

Giselle Alfaro Villa, age 16
EVERGREEN HIGH SCHOOL, NINTH GRADE

G: Girafa, soy alta como si fuese un árbol en un bosque callado

I: Igualdad, I treat everyone lo mismo and everyone deserves to be tratados bien.

S: Sana, me encanta todo lo que tengo en mi vida. I'm very pleased to have everything, como si alguien me diera una flor o un regalo por algo importante.

E: Electricidad, I brighten everyone's day porque mi personalidad es muy grande and nobody puede cambiar how bubbly I am.

L: Loca, my mind runs as if it were a rainbow like I am, my personality es diferente, divertida y sin paciencia

L: Lengua, el sabor de mi idioma, how the rr’s are pronounced, I feel fierce como si fuera un tigre.

E: Extrema, Muy violenta, I am an orchestra playing loop once I get hyped up for something special, Like a birthday party.
One rainy morning, a miraculously huge baby came rolling out of the hospital doors in Seattle, Washington. If you haven’t been there, Seattle is a very rainy place with a lot of water. There is so much rain that all the kids love to go to the park because it’s pretty much a water park. They especially love the water slide. There are so many buildings that, instead of learning to walk, you must learn to jump across buildings since there is no room to walk.

Well, this baby needed to learn to walk through. He was so big that if he took one step from the Space Needle, he would be at the water, making all of the plates and dishes in the villagers’ sinks rattle. This baby loved water. He was even named after it. Sammy Saltwater was his name. He loved to go fishing. He was great at it because he could catch really big fish. Since he was so big, he could wrestle it and then pull it in. Everybody knew who he was because he was huge, always carried a fishing pole, and wore overalls. He was so big that he had to duck so that he wouldn’t hit the stars, the moon, or the sun.
NEW TOY

Dylan Black, age 16
NEW START HIGH SCHOOL, TENTH GRADE

Midnight brand new toy dropped off
once a year

Divided meadow split between a ravine

Midnight hero who comes twice a year

Knight in shining armor as black as night

Midnight blue sky rising upon a bright star

Moonlight sky in midnight
darkness upon my mind
Para mí, escribir es leer cien libros, cada aventura, oración y palabra.

Escribir es estar en otro mundo, estar en otros lugares.

Escribir me da esperanza de ser quien soy, escribir es un lugar donde puedo ir, un lugar seguro y feliz.

Escribo para dar felicidad, escribo por mi esperanza, escribo por mi familia, mi escuela, el mundo.

Es dar aventura y travesía.

Yo escribo lo que me pasa por la cabeza, imagino todo y después lo repaso.

A veces estoy frustrada, a veces estoy feliz.

Escribir para mí, es como un fuego de calma.

Para mí, es ser yo.
I cross one of my fingers
wishing, hoping to find the perfect
sunflower in the Kansas sunlight as
my mom asked me what I was doing.

I told her I was growing out
of the dirt onto a gentle sunflower
just like the ones here on the farm growing
among the Kansas sunlight.

It starts to rain, and I watch
as the Kansas sunlight disappears
and the sunflowers drink every
last drop of rain until it’s gone.

We start to hurry but we pick
wisely for the perfect sunflower.

At last it stops raining and we
found the perfect sunflower for
our table piece.

We start to cut the stem and
we at last fill the Kansas sunlight.

This writing was created during the Seattle Arts & Lectures’ Writers in the Schools (WITS) 2019-20 residency at Akli Elementary School with WITS Writer-in-Residence, Jeanine Walker
"R"

Roberto Contreras, age 14
LICTON SPRINGS K-8 SCHOOL, EIGHTH GRADE

My family was created in Mexico. The parts of Mexico was San Juan and Guadalajara.

Few thousands of years later, my family was born in California.

This writing was created during the Seattle Arts & Lectures’ Writers in the Schools (WITS) 2019-20 residency at Licton Springs K-8 School with WITS Writer-in-Residence, Arianne True
Sound lifted in the waves
Stories told through voices
Pain and happiness expressed
tongue some can’t understand
Vibrations and vibratos
Rhythms leading the way
Meanings behind letters
Instrumentals played with finesse
Feelings given through talents
Experiences people can hear
Varieties for everyone’s taste
People living in poverty
most people don’t have property
all the corrupted politics
Too many people don’t live properly
People depend on drugs
People losing the ones they love

Filipinos are dying and I hear their crying

Innocent people killed and frame with drugs
Activists are kidnapped for having an opinion
Human rights violated without questions
Filipinos leave the homeland for a better life
everyone’s relative knows someone who has died
everybody’s family lives in fear
everyone knows the police is always near
People can’t marry other people just because they are queer

Filipinos are dying and I hear their crying

Police killing innocent teens without consequences
human rights activists disappearing in the Philippines
The President saying it’s okay to kill drug users and pusher
Prisons overcrowded due to the unfair Justice System
People walking up to Gunfire and crying
Activist being framed for kidnapping runaway kids
Filipinos are dying I hear their crying
Gears of time, cogs of life
home is the trees rushing by as I speed
down a mountain, the scent of pine sap
as I leave the ground, the shocks of a downhill bike
absorbing force as I slam
back down to earth.
Home is my dad coming home
after months on a halibut schooner
released after all that time
from that amalgamation of thousands of cold, cruel hooks.
Home is the taste of chilies
carving burning trenches down my throat.
Home is the red heat of a forge
the blue spark of a welder.
Home is the sound of a soft Seattle rain.
Home is both still and in constant motion
Home is not one place
it is constantly reshaping as I live
life, the grease of the
ever-grinding gears time.
AMERICA TRAPS REAL PEOPLE:

A Villanelle

Ava Geary, age 16
THE CENTER SCHOOL, ELEVENTH GRADE

America traps real people
steals those who are lost
America feels no ripple

the less fortunate wrapped in cable
to the lions, they are tossed
America traps real people

Killing humans is our country’s staple
so oil will decrease in cost
America feels no ripple

we wish for human lives to be equal
our government wishes for a planet covered in exhaust
America traps real people

A country that claims to be colorful
our hearts must defrost
America feels no ripple

so many lives not seen for what they are: beautiful
these boundaries can never be uncrossed
America traps real people
America feels no ripple
My favorite color,  
And crisp as an apple,  
Red.

The color of peppermint,  
And as dusty as mars,  
Red.

The same color as my nice red dress,  
Red tastes like raspberries,  
And feels like roses,  
Red.

But the thing that I like most about Red,  
Is that it is the same color as the flame,  
the flame that lights the fire in the morning.
My sister’s hair is very straight and smooth. Normally it looks like she just combed it even if she just woke up. For a while she dyed it a blonde at the bottom and it looked like caramel dipped in old honey but now it looks like when you split a Snickers in half and the caramel gets stretchy. But she cares way too much about how it looks and it’s the same color as a cat, which is her general mood.

My brother typically has a buzz cut so he looks like a bee from “The Bee Movie” and when he grows it out it’s all curly so like caramel swirls on a pastry. His hair is flat and wide but since he’s basically bald, you can see his head which completes the 40-year-old man with a beer belly look perfectly.

My mom has very basic hair, dark brown and it’s always straight. But when she doesn’t brush it, it’s all messy and hair is sticking out in every direction and clumps up like mashed up caramel. When she doesn’t take care of it, it represents her personality which is bad but when she combs it, it’s like when she’s in a good mood—nice but very close from erupting.

My hair doesn’t listen to combs or brushes. Trust me, I’ve tried. The only thing that can somewhat control it is hair gel, but I’m too lazy to bother, so I just stick with the bed head look. My hair also represents what kind of person I am.
Stools are crabs that crawl across the carpet sands
Chairs are the horses that once rose from the sea
Tables are the rocks that the stools hid under to escape from the projector that is a white snake hunting for prey
Dear Moon,
where do you go when you disappear you aren’t fiery like the sun but you are beautiful in all your serene glory how can you stand all that darkness that surrounds you chasing you following you wherever you go Isn’t it sad? all that darkness? no light?

Dear Human,
I disappear into darkness when the sky wraps me in its cool yet warm presence I fade away I know I’m not fiery and the darkness is my home That’s how I stand it but how can you stand all that light chasing you wherever you go Isn’t it so bright? All that light, no darkness?
The gel pens are famous to a coloring book.
The straw is famous to hot chocolate.
The pillow is famous to a head.
The eyeglasses are famous to eyes.
The pants are famous to the walker.
Summer is famous to those who play Tag.
Fall is famous to those who play Hide and Seek.
Winter is famous to those who make snow angels.
Spring is famous to those who walk around the hospital.
The cat is famous to napping.
The dog is famous to zooming in the back yard.
I am famous for beating cancer.
Step by step, you walk.
Bit by bit, you chew.
You are the star you've always wanted to be.
You are the person who reaches for big goals, and dreams.
You are the person who works hard, it was you, who was meant to be.
You were meant to live where you live, meant to see what you see smell, hear, taste, feel, and most of all, you were meant to be who you are, and want to be. Never, let anyone, anyone... tell yourself what to do or who to be.
Be yourself.
Never. Ever. Give up or be afraid.
UNTIL I SAW THE SEA

Anna Johnson, age 9
B.F. DAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, THIRD GRADE

Until I saw the sea,
I did not know how much
the sea sparkled
and how many animals
roamed.

Until I saw the sea,
I did not know
what it felt like to be closed up
under the watery bed.

But then I felt it: the feeling I wanted
to know, that the sea is majestic.

Nobody really knows.
At a word, we jump, run, and jostle our way to a far corner, vying for a spot on the cushioned couch instead of the cold floor. We attempt to be quiet and hold in our laughter as we peek over the edge of the couch towards the door amidst scolding words from our teacher. “Keep your head down! The Giant Chicken might see you and eat you.”

One of the most anticipated days of the year was the day the Giant Chicken came. In my multi-grade kindergarten and first grade classroom, we had many different drills each year, but none so favored as the Chicken drill. We huddled in the library corner, quiet, pressing down our bubbling giggles and the corners of our mouths. We hid from the Giant Chicken poking its head in from the doorway, trying in vain to gobble us up, invisible to those without imagination. We loved that chicken, and we hid from it as if it was our only hope of survival.

In other schools that I went to in later years, lockdown drills were wildly different. Before the drill started, teachers described in detail the possibility of a crazy gunman bursting in and had a new drill plan which required us to attack the gunman ourselves, and scatter in all directions. Some parts of this were fun, like discovering the possibility of being allowed to hurl scissors at someone’s face, but the fear was still there, hanging over me like a cloud of raining daggers. However, before the manufactured innocence of the Giant Chicken was broken, and indeed, after it was broken, tales of the Giants Chicken’s life were woven.

This writing was created during the Seattle Arts & Lectures’ Writers in the Schools (WITS) 2019-20 residency at Blue Heron Middle School with WITS Writer-in-Residence, Jeanine Walker.
To roam the lost streets of words
where you hear things
you can never have heard on the surface
Some smooth and fast,
others loud and dangerous.
You’re on earth within a library,
a city within a book
and the clouds are just jumblings of punctuation

To play in an abandoned metropolis
wondering why everyone has left it
thunder strikes a sound you’ve never heard before
and the earth rattles
but you can’t stay here forever
People find these places and take everything special
to hide on a beach
staring somberly
at the sea of literature
The dying sun lays in its coffin
but it is never buried
It comes up in the morning
shines through cracks in the road
in every rip in the page
To roam the lost streets of words
Remember the animals and plants who ruled the earth?
Remember the first touch of mankind, the first blink, the first feeling, afraid? happiness? love?
Remember the first creation and the next person, thousands to follow?
Remember the first word and written language?
Remember the empires rising and falling like mountains and hills?
Remember the black death created by the thundering hands of darkness itself?
Remember the first voyage along the wild run of mother nature, the beliefs and trade?
Remember the thought of guns and weapons destroying the peace among our kind?
Remember the wars that crumbled our hearts?
Remember the Germans who tried to stop the innocent Jews?
Remember the disrespect between two colors, black and white?
Remember the voice that stopped the demon of segregation?
Remember the wave that washed away life?
Remember the greediness of burning fossil fuels, burning pieces of the earth?
Remember the animals dying from us, ruining the gift of the world?
Remember the first electric car mending the world like a band aid, piece by piece?
Remember there are choices we can make to the future.
My name is Andreia
My blue is for the sky in the night time
My blue is for the nights that hunt me in my sleep,
the nights that don’t let me see the sun
My blue is for the universe in my mind, the freedom,
the thoughts that play Monopoly in my head
My blue is for the galaxy of shooting stars,
devils singing,
flowers dying and kids crying
My blue is for the balloon that I let the sky
steal from me,
the balloon I let go with happy memories,
My blue is for my eyes full of tears that say
I miss him,
for the broken heart that knows it’s wrong
to love him
My blue is for the bruise my father left on my heart
when he told me to forget, when he made me
feel alone
My blue is for the door to my thoughts, feelings,
and happy memories,
the door that will destroy me once opened,
My blue is for the sleepless nights I
pretend to be happy,
for the nights when I wanted to escape
the world I live in
My blue is a mask
I put on
everyday
and say
“I’m fine, thank you”
FRIDAY NIGHT DANCE

Rayan Rehman, age 13
RENAISSANCE SCHOOL OF ART & REASONING, EIGHTH GRADE

It was a nightmare sugar rush
An electric high,
electric slide,
A medley of old spice and cherry lip gloss
Teen spirit and sweatstains:
It could only be a Friday Night Dance

Throaty bassbeats and a young pop fever
Melodies played by a shadow
No one noticed the mud,
The wallflowers,
No one noticed the shadow
We were running on liquid caffeine
Neon blinded our bleeding eyes

Glowsticks to the sky, feet to the floor
The world singing along in a symphony
Voices drowning the screaming hearts
to eyelined guitar riffs,
we leaped for sequined stars:
It was a warworn and dreamy
Friday Night Dance

We all landed when we jumped
Some harder, faster,
some a firework fade
Electric highs crash
Electric slides skid
Our only hope our mean midnight spirit
A fever you can’t shake, heelies and ring pops
all coated with angel dust
We cry,
cry and jump through the tears
World still singing world still
spinning
We wouldn’t stop ‘til the cops
broke us down
A last ditch,
bone-breaking,
Friday Night Dance
Somewhere, deep in the valley, I sit in the darkness. 
I am reading; it is intriguing. 
As I sit reading, the words seem to fly off the page 
and into the night sky. 
The words seem to illuminate the meadow, 
illuminate the meadow in which I sit. 
The words seem to dig down deep inside of me 
and find their place in my heart.
All my thoughts are washed away as ...
All the fiery sensations fill me with joy. 
As soon as the sensation dies down and ...
I am left feeling empty.
As the words disappear into the night sky ... 
everything seems to fade away and soon ...
I will fade away too. 
The sensation has gone. 
Somewhere deep in the valley I sit in the darkness, 
waiting for the dream to end.
I am the breeze that hits you on a cold day
I am the perfect but imperfect plant you try to grow
I am the expected but unexpected snow on a chilling night
I am the rain that disturbs a sunny day

But I'm not the fresh-baked pie straight from the oven
Or the perfect sunset
I am not the precise picture you draw on a sunny day
I AM all the flavors in the world

The sky is filled with thousands of letters
There is a figure standing with an eye on its cape
There is a maze full of bugs
Why is the sky so big

There is a figure standing, an eye on its cape
I used to own a sky full of stars
Why is the sky so big
Because of all the beautiful things that make it up

I used to own a sky full of stars
a maze full of bugs
all of the beautiful things that make us up
the sky is filled with thousands of letters

Luella Seamans, age 10
SALISH COAST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, FIFTH GRADE

This writing was created during the Seattle Arts & Lectures’ Writers in the Schools (WITS) 2019-20 residency at Salish Coast Elementary School with WITS Writer-in-Residence, Rachel Kessler
I dream of a place. I dream of a place with stars and jellyfish swimming in the sky. Each one carrying a small glittering thought. The light of the stars reflecting off every one, forming a glittering expanse as far as the eye can see. Silence but for the soft sounds of the jellyfish, “Phloo, phloo, phloo.”

A soft chorus of phloos, the stars shining above
“Phloo, phloo, phloo”
Sinking into the soft fluffy ground, drifting off…
TO WHO I THINK:
I want these things to stop

Ebenezer Tewolde, age 10
LESCHI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, FIFTH GRADE

Shout out to family to sickness to blind
shout out to hearing to deaf
and the sound, found to the hanged
to the killed to the death and the hard
working to the ship sinking to the sad, bad,
mad to the people to the loved to unloved to
unhated to hated to the richness to homeless
to ugliness, dumbest, to the shouting, crying
and the sexual abuse to the poor to the one
who is in need to the weak to the shouting,
beating, to the mistreating, to the death, but
cries to live to the pain that’s raining by hatred
to the one who’s unloved that needs to be loved
to the writing that’s biting to the airplane crash,
car crash,
to the racism, to the people of color mistreated
for doing their best to the tribes that are
being crashed and defeated to the fighting
that never stops to the weapons that are scary
to the unlucky, bombing bad thinking, to the
stupid to the shouting. Shout out the war
that never stops and the people that are fighting
for their families or someone or something
that they love.

Shout out to the great people who help other people,
risking their lives to save someone in need.
Gray sky, light rain
Sitting beside the window
Within a white mocha.

February 14, 2019
Valentine’s day, which is my first Valentine in the United States, is quite different from my country. Most girls in my school receive many gifts, such as chocolates, flowers or balloons. That night, during dinner time, my phone ring with one message, "Happy Valentine." A smile is drawn on my face. His name will be a secret. He asks me to come out for some chocolate. Guess what? My parents do not let me go out alone at night, so it took me ten minutes to sneak out of my house. It is dark and drizzle, which contributes to the melting of the snow that lay on the ground. I run to the park, which is not far away. We meet under a big tree.

Small gift, nice words
Nothing special, but listen
The sound of heartbeat.
I woke up this morning, very tired. It had been a long, hard day of driving our Ural sidecar motorcycle yesterday, and Henri and I had only gotten a few hours of sleep last night. We’d gone from Zion National Park to Salt Lake City, Utah to Craig, Colorado in one day, about an eleven hour drive. Henri’s my road trip partner and Billy, the goat, we found at Lake Tahoe on the first day. I stumbled out of bed, looking for my glasses, and then maybe some food. As I lumbered to the fridge, I heard other footsteps behind me. Turning around slowly, I saw a large, black and silver round thing flying towards me at high velocity. THONK! It hit me in my chest, and I fell over backwards and hit my head.

“dONkEy!!!” I yelled. My head felt like it’d been run over by an eighteen wheeler going at a million miles an hour.

“Revenge is a dish best served cold,” a dark blurry figure said. It was Henri.
I look into the moonlight.
feel the beat of silver moth flight.

at the peak of midnight.
around me pools the moonlight.

smooth as silk I sip.
fireflies rise and dip.

the forest dark and dank.
away the night I drank.

I hear the sweet birdsong.
a small promise the wait will not be long.

from the sun's fiery flare.
to the twitch of the nose of a hare.

it is morning now.
THE ONES LEFT BEHIND

Iris Worrall, age 17
BALLARD HIGH SCHOOL, ELEVENTH GRADE

i am the rocks you gathered and stuffed in your pocket
the bubbles that escaped your mouth as you sunk to the bottom
i am the faces they made when your body was dredged up from
the lake
the newspapers that told of your death

bubbles escaped your mouth when you sunk to the bottom
i am the black clothes they wore to your funeral
the newspapers that told of your death
silence fell when your coffin was lowered into the hole

i am the clothes they wore that had no color
and the tears that fell onto your grave
silence fell when your coffin was lowered into the hole
did you know they set flowers against your headstone?

i am the tears that fell onto your grave
the parts of the people you left behind
they set flowers against your grave, and they wilted so quickly
i am the parts of the people you took away

i am the parts of the people you left behind
the faces they made when they made when your body was
dredged up from the lake
i am the parts of the people you took away
when they found you, your pockets were stuffed with rocks
HELP

Paul Yoon, age 14

NATHAN HALE HIGH SCHOOL, NINTH GRADE

April 16, 2014

Never forget

Don’t forget

This writing was created during the Seattle Arts & Lectures’ Writers in the Schools (WITS) 2019-20 residency at Nathan Hale High School with WITS Writer-in-Residence, Arianne True