



Salmon House Writers Workshop

Student Anthology
Fall 2015

November 18, 2015

Dear Reader,

This Salmon House Writers Workshop Student Anthology is comprised of various short stories, poems, and other writing from students in the Wild Imagination elementary school writing group, and the Workshop Wednesday middle school writing group. Student authors selected the pieces included in this collection. I hope you will enjoy it! It has been a pleasure to work with this wonderful group of budding young writers.

Happy Reading,

Sallie Vandagriff

Table of Contents



Characterization	4
Setting	6
Imagery	10
More Scenes, Stories, and Poems	16

Characterization



In the first few weeks of the term students learned about how to build interesting characters. We began by characterizing a friend or family member. Later, students selected a photograph and wrote a first person scene to characterize the person in the photograph.

AJ

by Isaac Vandagrifft

AJ
His brown eyes
So calm
Laid back
A rarity is his worry

AJ
Full of confidence
Overlord of board games
Champion of his work

AJ
He hugs me
And wraps his arm
Around me as we
Rest

AJ
He shares others'
Pain and embraces
Their sorrow

Photograph of a Girl on a Tricycle

by Spencer Moffitt



This is me age 4 and 127 days. My golden locks rested on my back as I lifted up my foot, resting it on the pedal. I breathed in a long breath of air. By my left side the bushes have just sprouted small red flowers. By my right the open road is awaiting cars.

“Amiliea, are you going to go?” yells my mom from about 20 feet away.

“Too scary” I shouted back, ashamed. My cheeks burn the color of flowers.

“It’s alright honey, you don’t have to use the pedals,” she had said trying to calm me, “you can just put your feet on the ground and push.”

Slowly a smile had formed on my face. I had taken a short breath of air and had pushed on the ground. I had started moving forward slowly at first, but getting faster as I pushed harder. I had shouted out to my mom, “Mowma I did it, I did it!”

Setting



In the seventh week of the group, students learned about how to create vivid settings, and how setting can shape character development. Students wrote “Where I’m From” poems to characterize themselves.

Where I’m From

by Anika Foy

I’m from fall pines
and startled deer,
trips to Sweet Life and
Water balloon fights
Where my father always said,
“You’re just too good to beat!”
though I knew
he wasn’t trying.

I’m from pumpkin patches
and turkey dinners,
arguments ending in
“I love you” (save for my brother.)

I’m from a house of
constant commotion and noise,
angry or sad or joyous,

I’m from warm fires and
hot cocoa with tiny marshmallows
and stuffed stockings

I’m from neighborhood picnics
and friends within a three minute walk

I’m from “No one came. Take all the candy.”

I’m from Eugene

Glen Oak Drive

by Laurel Brasher

3550. Glen Oak Drive.

It's where I'll be, it's where I'm alive.

It's where I read. It's where I write.

It's where I celebrate on Christmas night.

I watch Doctor Who there, where I sleep 'til dawn.

The T.A.R.D.I.S. I like, it is amazingness.

It's where the Doctor travels with River Song.

The only one in my family born in Eugene, Or. That's me.

My music is what I love the most, Aside from that collection of
fairy tale keys.

Not to boast.

Where I'm From

by Isaac Vandagriff

I am from up on a hill in a small, invisible house.

I am from the countryside and a large garden.

I am from two homes that change and vibrate with laughter.

I am from three real teachers that understand and care for me.

I am from a strong mind and weak eyes.

I am from the friendships of the past and the present.

I am from fishing, shooting, writing, reading, and caring.

I am from two parents but I now know four

Where I'm From Poem

by Annaliese Thomas

I, am from my thoughts, some
Blurry, some new

I, am from my memories, where
hearts open, and close

I, am from my tears, trickling
drowning my frosty reflection

I, am from a family of happiness and delight.
As though while alone, I am a fearful wild cat,
shielding from the night

I, am from alone, where I can
frolic in the grey cloudy sky,
other than falling as I do most

I, am from a trail, where my
path is as mystic as my future,
and I can think to myself

I, am from my thoughts,
where I am free, and also
trapped

I am from...

by Sander Moffitt

A tight, turning hill not limited to one accident with ice trickier than the neighbors' boy that would trample our flowers with no mercy.

Not much snow but when it came late, did we have fun in the igloo our father slaved three hours to craft.

Every year, we'd cuddle together by the dying pine we worked so hard to get into our house and pray for the white flakes to fall for tomorrow. Frost that melted with daybreak is the best we ever got for Christmas.

Summers spent giggling and running in the loping field up the hill, blackberries staining lips. After three years the little sister I'd wanted so much arrived with the crack of dawn. The first time I held her she, she peed through the blanket. The second, she looked up to me with those wondering eyes and held my finger like a lifeline. I will never let her go.

A nanny with chameleon hair kept us out of the thorn bushes and guided us to lavender rather than restricting access altogether. Our promenades around the block met with scraped knees and wet faces more often than not. Band-aids were our candy. Outdoors memories were our childhood. Inside, the rooms would smell of clothespin people inside a doll house, or remnants of the adventures of the magical caterpillar and princess. Ten years later, the visuals of home have shifted, but not the forever personality.

Imagery



In week 4 of the Workshop Wednesday group we talked about Imagery and examined the art of Nikki McClure. McClure uses strong images to embody the meaning of a single word. In our writing exercise, we viewed McClure's print, "Befriend" (see below). The title word was obscured so that students may choose their own word. The word they assigned to the image became the title for a scene they wrote based on the image.



"Befriend" by Nikki McClure

Ripple

by Anika Foy

I look down at my feet, clear cold water washing over them. I wiggle my toes and watch the grey blue stones around them tumble in the swirling liquid. I hear no birds chirping on this dark black night, illuminated solely by fireflies and the stars in the velvety sky. I hear crickets create a beautiful, soothing melody that is surprisingly strong. The little ripples of water that I had created are gone now, allowing me to see the tiny fish skirting around my ankles. Somewhere in the distance a lonely frog croaks. Calm but tired, I step out onto the bank of the tiny shallow pond and dry my ankles and below with grass, kneading it with grass until the patch is completely flat and I am completely dry. I lay down, the fresh scent of pine in the air, and brush a string of my silvery hair out of my eyes. The hundreds of stars above shine with an unearthly light, and the silhouette of a small eagle is the last thing I see before I drift off into a peaceful sleep, the fronds of fern tickling my face.

What I assume had been morning silence is broken by a rusty old voice, presumably a male's, yelling, "Hey, you!" I open my eyes to see a grizzled old man standing over me. As my eyes grow used to the light, I am able to focus on his face. Brown eyes peek out at me, lodged between bristly grey eyebrows and beard. He's dressed shabbily in a faded Beatles shirt and dusty brown jeans. He doesn't have any socks on but for some reason he has a fresh white pair of Nikes on. His pock marked face squints at me. "What's a young'un like you doin' here?" he questions.

Untitled

by Spencer Moffitt

The cold, icy stones feel smooth on my feet. The air around me feels stiff. The water below is full of mysteries and secrets. It bubbled slightly to try to conceal the secrets deep under its waves. Stepping closer I take a breath of the stiff air and slip one foot under the silky water. Cold runs through my body. The waves wrap around my foot as to seal it in an icy prison. A small crinkle forms around my lips. The cold wind whips by, sending a shiver down my body. The wave slips back into the ocean, releasing my foot. I take a step back, staring at the dark sky filled with thousands of lights and one big glow.

The Water

by Annaliese Thomas

I can smell the blood on my feet as I run all the way up the hill. A scarlet trail is left behind me and I can still hear the begging barks of my pursuers.

“Help!” I yell desperately as the undergrowth trips me. The teeth of the dogs rip into my flesh and the blood instantly spatters across the ferns. Still struggling for life, I grab a nearby stick and start stabbing at the dogs. Their breath washes over me and I can smell the blood thirsty odor as I continue to fight. Finally the dog’s chest rips open from my desperate force. The dogs back off, my blood covering their jaws as they slowly retreat. The dead dog lays motionless beside me and I can feel exhaustion flow over me like a tarp.

NO, I say, NOT HERE. I crawl. Like a sick baby, I try my hardest to get somewhere else. Leaving behind a trail of blood, I find a stream. I ACCEPT MY FATE; I'M GONNA DIE HERE. I pull my body into the water and relax.
IT WAS A GOOD LIFE.

Texture

by Sander Moffitt

Texture. The smooth, silky, even feeling of cool water lapping onto rough, sun-darkened feet. Sharp bursts from diverse pebbles on baby-soft underfeet. The chill breeze on flesh exposed by the swimsuit and through long, dark locks, tangling them. The goose-bumps said breeze procures.

This is what comes to mind when I think of that day on the beach, that day when everything changed. Massive waves struck the dense sand, dead fish and crabs washed further up than in years. Shutters had been boarded, doors barred, stockpiles entered and emptied. Long nights of hungry moons and longer days of silence. The raging storm finally let up two horrible months later. The town woke like a hibernating animal.

We slowly rebuilt ourselves, the breeze slowly picked back up; carrying the briny scent of the sea back to earth. The clouds reparted, giving way to a chill, crystal-clear sky. The tide settled back into its usual drowsy lap. Small stones tumbled back from the hills upon which they'd been washed. We went from musk and too much breath in the air to clear lungs once more as we skipped back onto that horrible, wonderful, terrible but beautiful coast.

Showing and Telling: Scene vs. Summary



In week 5 the Wild Imagination group and the Workshop Wednesday group discussed the differences between summary and scene. We talked about when to use each in a story, and ways to “zoom in” with their writing to add detail that will interest their readers. Each student was given a 1-2 sentence summary that they were asked to turn into a detailed scene.

The Hermit Crabs

by Annaliese Thomas

Summary Prompt: For her birthday, Auntie gave her a stinky bowl of hermit crabs. It was the worst thing that happened to her all year.

The worst thing that happened to me all year was when my aunt got me an entire bucket of hermit crabs. There were SO many! It was really ridiculous though; the smell was revolting and there were literally like 53 of them. I had to get rid of these things. I woke up the next morning and screamed. The only things that I saw were hermit crabs strewn across my bed. I thrashed my arms repetitively as I bolted into the bathroom. The smell of the hermit crabs seemed to stick to me. I could feel the tiny pinches of those devils still throbbing all over me.

That's it.

I threw on my favorite pair of sweat pants fresh from our tiny laundry room; swiped my baggy sweat shirt from my silver door knob, and hauled that stinky bucket all the way up the stairs. I didn't even say “Bye,” to anyone. I seriously almost vomited as some hermit crab essence rubbed on my cheek as I trudged through the icy snow in my bare feet. I stubbed my toe on a rock in our driveway and that's when I lost it. I BARFED. EVERYWHERE. I'm not even sure if the “snow” around

me was snow anymore. But I didn't let that stop me. I kept going, all the way down the steep hill and got to the dumpster. In the state of mind that I was in, making it to the dumpster was a major accomplishment. I could feel a blood shot, wrinkly smile stretch across my face as I looked into the revolting bucket. But something made me pause. They were all huddling together in their little shell homes. All except for one. It had an orange spiral circled on it, and its eyes were a sort of ocean blue, like a bright cloudless sky.

And I never threw them away.

I ended up thanking my aunt, and taking care of them was something I really loved to do. I learned all about them and started a hermit-club. In the end my hermit crabs were pretty neat.

But something was amiss. It had been around three weeks since I had started caring for my hermit crabs but something wasn't quite right.

THEY WERE GETTING LARGER.

Summer had just ended, leaving the air crisp with change, and the sky grey with clouds. It was 3:04 in the morning and I was awakened by a sharp noise in the corner of my room where I kept the hermits. I sat bolt upright. My head was spinning with confusion and with fright I swiped my gaze to the corner of the room.

FLOOD!

That's what happened. Hermit crabs were swarming out of their aquarium.

"NOOOO!" I yelled and grabbed my purple and yellow broom from my bedside, brooming my pets into the shattered aquarium. My arms were moving without my consent from tiredness. The smell was flowing into my nostrils like flying spears and I tried to fight the urge to throw up.

Then I couldn't believe my ears but I'm pretty sure that a deep voice yelled, "Attack!"

TO BE CONTINUED

More Scenes, Stories, and Poems



The Princess

by Ezze Knight

The princess was always very lonely and bored by one day on a solitary walk she met a talking unicorn who wanted to have a friend. The unicorn wasn't a very unicorn-y unicorn. The unicorn had a Clash T-shirt on and the princess also had a Clash T-shirt on. That's how they noticed each other. The unicorn noticed her because the princess was reading a really good book, it was very tragic. This is going to sound weird...it is a teddy bear love story. The unicorn wanted to get the princesses attention and didn't know how. The unicorn ran up and, without the princess noticing, she took it! The unicorn took her book!

Don't Don't Don't! At first the princess was mad and then scared. The unicorn was shy. The unicorn slowly said, "It's ok. I will not hurt you. I'm a unicorn." And gave her book back and from that day they were best friends. Because that's how all fairy tales always end.

Deadly Encounter

by Harrison Thomas

“Ah!” Cliff yelled as his eyes turned all white. The poison had gone to his head. Bob and Joe looked at each other and cocked their rifles.

“We need to kill that snake,” Bob said under his breath. Joe saw the snake and shot its long, hard rattle on the end of its long tail. The snake stopped moving and blood pooled over its long body.

(To, probably not, be continued)

The Gnome

by Molly Jett

The gnome freaked out when he saw the kids. He quickly climbed down from the table and under Jesse’s bed. It smelled like peppermint. The carpet felt like warm socks and last of all, it was dark. Very dark. Pitch black.

The kids didn’t know what they saw, so they said goodnight and went to their beds. That night Jesse heard strange sounds like shooting and screaming going on beneath his bed. Turns out, the gnome found another girl gnome living under Jesse’s bed. The girl gnome was named Cherry. She had brown curly hair and bright red eyes. She lived under a piece of cloth and had a piece of fluff for her bed.

(To be continued)

Bob the Cat

by Jesse Vandagriff

Hi, I'm Bob, I'm a cat. Life is boring because my owner barely ever feeds me, so I ate him.

Then I thought, "What would make me happy? I like exciting books. And if I could taste like caramel, I'd be happy. What I look for in a friend who is nice, unlike my owner?"

Then I met this cat who was so beautiful it made me purr. She felt the same. We went on 20 dates and then got married and had 20 kittens.

The End

The Land in the Clouds

by Mayson Platt

Mayson had to decide: should she tell her mom that when her friend jumped high on the trampoline and never came down, or should she go find her? That's when the adventure started! She climbed on and started jumping. She got higher and higher and higher! Then she said to herself why do I do this? I'm afraid of heights. Aaaaah! She screamed, then closed her eyes and said out loud, "It's over!" Then, a soft, loving face said "It's not over." I opened my eyes, I couldn't believe them.

(To be continued!!!)

Hampsters on Zurglon

by Hazel Rubis

“Tim!” I barked, “Get over here and get in formation!”
Tim walked over. “But come on, I’m having fun,” he complained.

“Yeah, well, naughty hamsters aren’t allowed to have fun during training hours.”

Tim trudged over to his spot next to his best friend Paul.
“Good, now I need everyone on their best behavior. The general’s coming, and we need him to see that I can do this job and he doesn’t need to fire me,” I explained while looking around my surroundings at the dank, dark, sorry excuse of a training room. The general walked in, disturbing my thoughts. The general was a tall man with close cropped brown hair. “Colonel Jeffords. I trust that you’ve whipped them all into shape.” He stared down at me from the ceiling.

Drat! I forgot about this. You see, me and the hamsters aren’t from this world. We’re from Earth and we got drafted one day to go and live and train on planet Zurglon.

“Yessir-I mean not literally whipped but they are behaved.” I mumbled nervously while glaring at Tim.

“Good! I’m bringing some of my best people to view over the hamsters new tricks.”

“New people?” I thought. What now? “Oh General, what an honor!”

“Yeah, well don’t get too excited, they aren’t the most caring people.”

“Well, they have to be more caring than YOU!” I thought. But, well, I was mistaken.

My 3AM
by Sander Moffitt

“Anytime.”

He says

In reference to calling

Truly

Anytime

“What the hell?”

He says

When woken by buzzing lights

At 3 AM

At fault of my nightmare

But is quickly soothed to acceptance

Then sympathy

“You will go places,

I promise you.

You know you can do things,

You know it,”

He says

To battle my crippling doubt

“please,”

He says

“You know I wouldn’t ask

Unless I needed it

Desperately,”

Sheepishly asking for help

On work I know he doesn’t

“of course,”

I say

And explain until

The lightbulb

Clicks on

