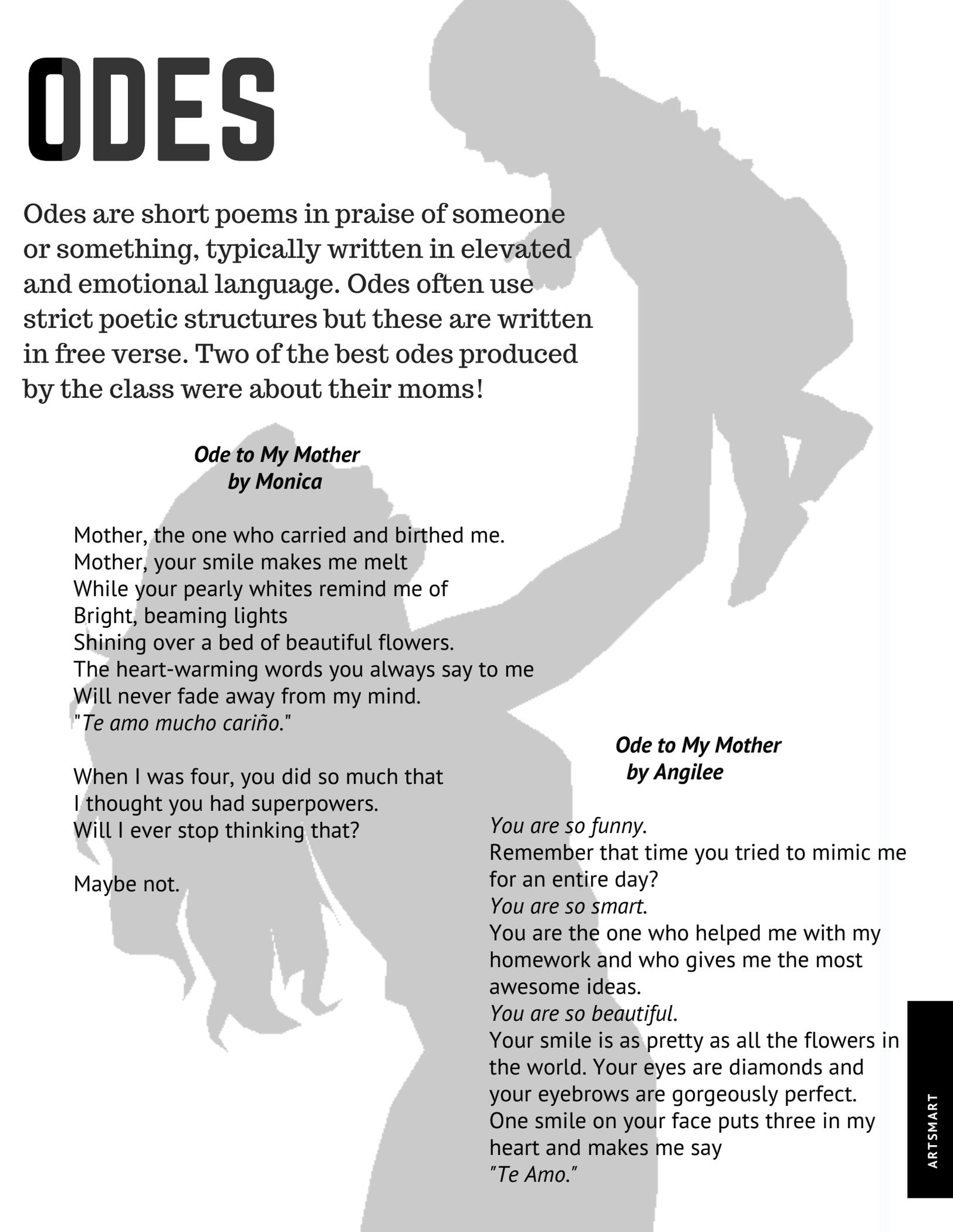


ART SMART

A LITERARY JOURNAL
BY BASD STUDENTS
ARTSQUEST
FALL/WINTER 2017
VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 1



ODES



Odes are short poems in praise of someone or something, typically written in elevated and emotional language. Odes often use strict poetic structures but these are written in free verse. Two of the best odes produced by the class were about their moms!

Ode to My Mother by Monica

Mother, the one who carried and birthed me.
Mother, your smile makes me melt
While your pearly whites remind me of
Bright, beaming lights
Shining over a bed of beautiful flowers.
The heart-warming words you always say to me
Will never fade away from my mind.
"Te amo mucho cariño."

When I was four, you did so much that
I thought you had superpowers.
Will I ever stop thinking that?

Maybe not.

Ode to My Mother by Angilee

You are so funny.
Remember that time you tried to mimic me
for an entire day?
You are so smart.
You are the one who helped me with my
homework and who gives me the most
awesome ideas.
You are so beautiful.
Your smile is as pretty as all the flowers in
the world. Your eyes are diamonds and
your eyebrows are gorgeously perfect.
One smile on your face puts three in my
heart and makes me say
"Te Amo."



ASHLEY LUNA

This is an excerpt of a collaborative story written by the whole class! We invented a girl named Ashley, her mysterious scientist father, her annoying brother, and her friend Kermit. There is more to the story -- this just an excerpt! Josiah was a major contributor to this particular section. He is a very gifted writer.



When I woke up and came downstairs, the living room was stuffed from floor to ceiling with pink balloons. I knew Dad was trying to be nice, but didn't he know I hate pink? And balloons? I guess I can't hold it against him since I probably haven't told him that balloons and pink (and especially pink balloons) are on the list of "Ashley's Pet Peeves" I keep in my head.

It's kind of a long list.

"Thanks, Dad," I said with a smile that I hoped didn't seem too fake.

"Happy birthday, Ashley!" he said, bopping me with a balloon. "I can't believe my little girl is a teenager." He smiled and twitched his curly mustache.

"Hashtag teenlife," my brother mumbled. He is sixteen years old and pretty much only talks in hashtags.

"Hashtag shut up, Freddy," I said.

"Come on, you two," Dad said. "It's Ashley's birthday. Let's stop the fighting."

A loud whooshing sound buzzsawed through the room. It sounded like the world's loudest shower set on ultra-blast. Like all the strange sounds (and smells) around here, it was coming from the garage.

"It worked!" Dad said, his voice cracked with excitement. "Gotta run!"

The whooshing sound was then replaced by a loud boom. "Ah, never mind," Dad said, stopping in his tracks. His face fell into a furry frown. He looked curiously into his phone. "I should probably take this," he said. Dad hurried out of the room, presumably into the garage.

"You know what he is doing in there, right?" Freddy said. I *didn't* know. We never went into the garage. Dad made it VERY CLEAR that we were not to go in there under any circumstances ever. There were cameras and alarms and a heavy-duty metal door with giant spray-painted letters stating: "KEEP OUT. I MEAN YOU, ASHLEY."



ASHLEY LUNA, CONTINUED

"I don't know what Dad is doing in the garage, Freddy," I said. "And neither do you."

Freddy leaned in close and started to whisper in my ear. "There is a portal to another world in there. A world ruled by robot octopus-cats. They have eight arms, nine lives, and whiskers of doom."

"Shut up, Freddy,"

"I'm serious, Ash. You better be careful. One day those robot octopus-cats are going to... take... you..." He lowered his voice to a rough whisper. "Away." His voice sounded like a creaking door at the start of a horror movie.

I felt like a lump of paste was stuck in my throat.

"Haha, Ashley. You should see your face." I tried to smile. "Seriously though, they'll get you."

I checked the time on the buzzsaw clock by the garage. Dad had a weird clock made out of a saw. It was pretty neat looking but unfortunately didn't work. The hands were stuck at midnight. Then the school bus buzzed by and I realized what time it was. I was late. I grabbed my bag and ran out the door.

"Haha," Freddy said. "You're late to school. Hashtag: sucks to be you." He sang it in a little happy melody. "Sucks to be you. Sucks to be you. Sucks to be you." He started snapping and waving his hands in the air like it was the chorus of a pop song.

"How about you?" I said.

"I just happen to have off today. Wink wink."

"Sure, Freddy," I said. "A little vacation that you happened to get in the middle of the week. Not at all because of how you jumped out of the window during Miss Butler's class?"

"Hashtag I felt like it?"

I didn't have to stand there and argue with my dumb brother. I knew he had gotten suspended again. Who jumps out a window? I sprinted out the door and tried to catch the bus. I'm a very fast runner and Billy the Busdriver is a very slow driver so I caught up in no time. But then he took a sharp turn onto Onion Street and my foot slipped in the mud right outside my jerk neighbor's house. The Hannigans are noisy and rude. Their house looks like the paint is ripped off and the yard is filled with BEWARE OF DOG signs even though I've never seen a dog.

Until now...

And now, a dumb doberman (those police-type dogs) viciously sprinted toward me. It tailgated me (and my dress), starting to exceed my speed. It tackled me on the sidewalk, ruining my muddy dress even more! Tearing my dress to bits. I angrily kicked this thing square on the nose and it tumbled over on the lawn, rolling over because of its own speed. I continued to run toward the yellow bus that was not too far away.

I ran extremely fast. My talent got me on the track team and earned me three gold, one silver, and two bronze. From one block to ten houses to five to two to none away from that yellow vehicle. I practically had run to school! It was only two blocks away. It stopped, so maybe I was spotted. Busdriver Billy invited me in. "What happened to you, Ashley?" The whole bus laughed at my appearance. It was a miserable life.



ASHLEY LUNA, CONCLUDED

I arrived at school stained and bruised from my terrible trek of catching the stupid, yellow bus. Lucky I had extra gym clothes which I put on to to avenge my stained dress. I was ten minutes late and was punished for it as I arrived at my homeroom class. The teacher barked at me for being late. I had a dim feeling of hatred as the class stared at me as if I had just landed to Earth from Venus.

“Bark, barkity bark,” howled the teacher. (Reality: You were extremely late.) “Blah blah blabity blab,” blabbed the teacher. Kids snickered, students wearing lame, stupid faces. I felt so angry. Feeling like transforming into a giant and gladly pounding the school to be more exact. Finally class ended and it was time for lunch.

“I ain’t surprised,” my arch sneered at me as we were getting lunch.

“Jessie, just mind your business. I just turned thirteen today.”
“You’re saying you’re stupid enough to have a giant party before school? I still consider you twelve, loser. I’m fourteen. Shoulda been in eighth,” Jessie murmured. “But I just happened to be stuck with you.”

“You’re just bad luck!”

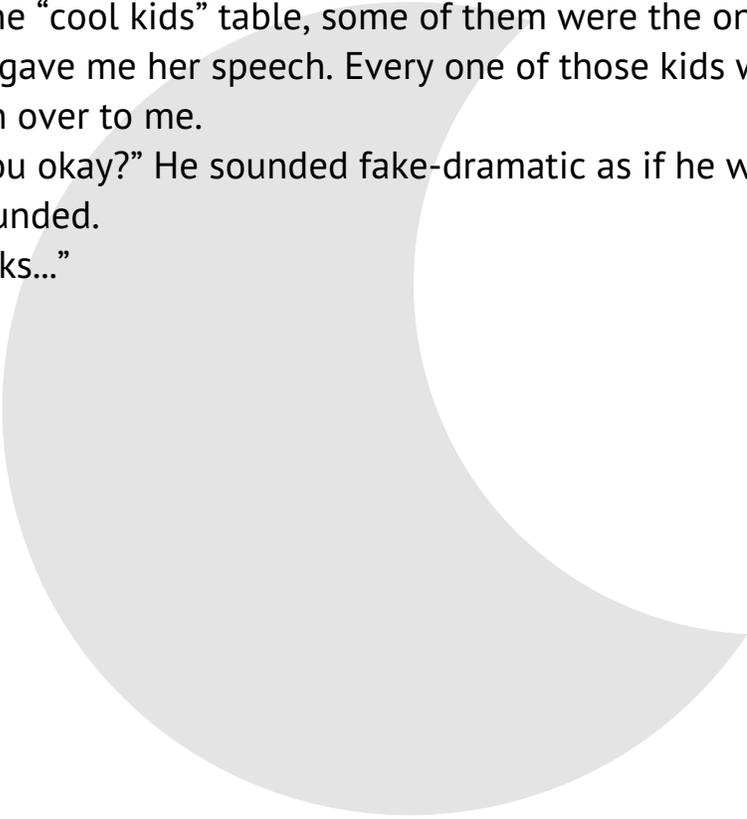
Before my eyes, I found myself flat on the floor. Jessie giggled and laughed hard and looked down at me as I was stuck on the floor and grimaced in pain.

“Guess I am bad luck! Haha!”

She skipped over to the “cool kids” table, some of them were the ones who snickered at me while the teacher gave me her speech. Every one of those kids was popular like Jessie. My best friend ran over to me.

“Ashley, Ashley, are you okay?” He sounded fake-dramatic as if he was rehearsing a play about someone wounded.

“I’m fine, Kermit, thanks...”



A MOVING MEMOIR

BY KAI AH

At my old house, it was extremely loud. It sounded like a marching band playing outside all day, every day. You would hear kids yelling, loud cars, and neighbors who did nothing but scream. The people in the house right next door had a very *colorful* vocabulary.

The people who lived around me weren't that nice and didn't care about the community. They would litter outside, treating the street like a trash can. The kids were rude and out of control.

Every day I saw kids still in pre-school running around on their own, sprinting into the street like it was a race track. It made me annoyed, distracted, and it was impossible to sleep.

One day in June, my mom had a big smile on her face. "I found a house!" she said. "We're moving to the northside." My mom handed me her phone and showed me a picture of a red brick townhouse with a big backyard.

"Wow," I said. "It looks nice!"

IT SOUNDED LIKE A MARCHING BAND PLAYING OUTSIDE ALL DAY, EVERY DAY.

My little sister, Korrine, tried to grab the phone. She's only three so she didn't really know what was going on. But she could tell that we were happy so she was happy too.

Then my mom broke the news to me that I was changing schools. That was harrowing to hear. I no longer felt happy about the move. I'd have to move all my stuff to a new school. I'd have to say goodbye to all my friends. I'd have to leave the band and all my flute-friends.

"You will make new friends," my mom said. I wished I would know at least one person in my new school. Then it would be okay.

Maybe.



A Roller Coaster Ride by Angilee

As soon as I walked into Dorney Park, I knew that something big and epic was going to happen. It was just me and my brother going on non-intimidating rides, one after the other. Twice we went on "The Mousetrap" which basically is a roller coaster for babies. I think its top speed is two miles per hour.

It didn't seem like it, but we were there for five hours already and it was starting to get dark. So we decided we would go on a few more rides and then call our mom to pick us up.

We went on a roller coaster called "Hydra" and another called "Thunderhawk." Now this is where it all happened. I was about to call my mom when my brother suddenly asked "Do you want to go on Steel Force?"

I responded with "Um, do you want me to have a heart attack?" It was completely silent for at least thirty seconds. Then I said, "Okay, fine, but make sure you have 911 on speed dial."

We walked towards the entrance and noticed that there was basically no line. Dang. There would be no time to calm down. I was going to have to get right on the ride.

The ride started going up the slope very slowly and I got a very strange, burning feeling in my stomach. It felt like a pot of water that was about to boil over. Let me just say I was proud but very scared.

tiny wishes

by Madalynn

One of the writing prompts we used in class was the idea that a genie granted you wishes, but not regular wishes—"tiny wishes." What does that mean? The answer is in the eye of the writer!

A huge puff of smoke blew up in my face. I quickly dropped the vase I was holding on the ground. I heard it shatter into a million pieces. Once the smoke dissipated, standing in front of me was an extra-large man in an extra-small pair of pants. Leather pants. In fact, he was wearing all leather. Black leather boots, black leather shirt, black leather pants and jacket, and a flat, floppy beret. Everything was tight on his large frame. He looked like his clothes might explode at any second.

I stood with my mouth wide open staring at the man in the leather. His eyebrows arched and he stared at me with wild eyeballs.

"Okay, first of all, close your mouth," he said. He had a squeaky voice like a door that was in desperate need of oil. "So you broke my lamp," he said as he looked down at the shattered pieces of glass on the floor. "But I guess I still owe you the wish."

"Wait, what the—? A wish?" I said, flabbergasted.

"Yeah, but since you broke my lamp I'm demoting you," he said.

"Wait, demoting?" I asked, confused.

"To a tiny wish," he responded.

"What the heck is a tiny wish? I didn't mean to break your lamp. It was a mistake for God's sake!" I screamed at him.

"That's my house, huckleberry! It will cost a lot of money to fix that thing," he retaliated. "You don't just drop people's homes."

"Ugh, fine," I said. He did have a point. "So a tiny wish."

"Yup," he told me.

"What constitutes a tiny wish?" I said, air-quoting the heck out of it.

"A small something. Small like getting a beret or something," he told me.

"A beret?" I was extremely confused at this point.

"Yeah, a beret! The best piece of headwear ever invented. It's a great use of a tiny wish," he nodded. He pointed to his head.

"What are you, a genie or a beret salesman?" I asked.

"I'm just passionate about berets. Do you have a problem with that?" He swiftly turned on the heel of his leather boot as if to leave.

tiny wishes, cont.

by Madalynn

“Wait!” I said. “My wish! My one wish, my one small wish... is... I want a tattoo,” I told him. “A small tattoo. A tiny tattoo.”

“Finnnnne,” he responded.

I heard a loud crash and looked up from where I thought it came from. Then I looked down at my wrist. A small black @ sign was etched into my skin.

“Holy crap!” my eyes widened.

He smiled at me. My eyes wearily tried to open. Standing over me was the man. Dressed all in leather, the vase in his hand.

“I told you to stop babbling,” he whispered.

I looked down at my arms. They were covered in @ signs carved into my skin. These weren't tattoos of ink – they were blood! My blood! In fact my entire body was covered in blood. My eyes shot open and I found I was laying down in a bed. My bed. The light in the hall way flicked on.

In the dim light all I could see was a shadowy figure above my bed. On top of the shadowy figure's head... a leather beret.





"More People Should..."

We did an exercise where the students were asked to write a poem with the opening line "More people should." As they wrote, I called out other lines, words, phrases, and challenged them to incorporate them into their poem. The results were unexpected and beautiful! Here is one by Monica:

More people should be caring, generous,
More kind...
But sadly you can't always get what you want.
Bullies were all around him,
Like reflections in the mirror next to him.
That mirror, broken
Just like he was.
It's about time.
It's about time that he can just sit there
and unwind.
He doesn't have to walk the hallways
Seeing the cringey gazes
on everyone's faces.
Now he just walks
In those halls.
Complete silence.
Deafening silence.
Echoes of his voice,
And only his voice.
His footsteps.

He goes home and washes his face
And just cools down from all the words
thrown at him
Making his eyes swollen shut.
His face red, puffy
As he touched the water, he saw a monster.
That monster was him.
That monster let everyone step all over him
Making him restless
Giving him those scars he never wanted
He let people take him for granted
And ranted on his own
Because nobody was there.
Now it's too late for him
Everyone's crowding,
Surrounding,
And crying.
Because they weren't there for him.
Nobody was there for him.
And that's why I'm rhyming for him.

SHORT & CREEPY

Madalynn's favorite genre is what she calls "short and creepy." She's not wrong about that! They also are very well-written with a touch of humor. She has an incredible gift for language.

The swing was swinging by itself.
The merry-go-round spun slowly.
The playground was ice cold.
It was the middle of July.
The trees swayed.
There was no breeze.
Outside the edge of the woodchips
was nothing.
I sat on the swing, kicking my legs.
My petticoats blew around me.
It seemed to swing by itself.



They screamed. Begged. They cried.
Mom, Dad, my sister, my brother, all
gone. I cried softly. But the sound
didn't matter. They wouldn't care.
Their bodies covered the floor. Then
I saw the baby. My poor baby sister.
But she was fine. The man carried
her in his arms. I tried to get to him.
I couldn't move. I was trapped in
the crate. I whined. I tried to bark.
My family. My family.



I've always loved birds.
Their calls, the gorgeous colors,
their intellect.
Beautiful creatures.
I would watch them fly from
tree to tree.

Talking to each other.

A hiss.

A squawk.

A thud.

I looked at my brother in front
of the bloody creature.

I stared hungrily.

I attacked. I bit into its body.
I turned. My paws tread softly
on the gravel.

Blood smeared my whiskers.

I've always loved birds

Their taste.

Their blood.

Their flesh.



POEMS

I'm Sorry/ I'm' Proud



Jay was given the challenge of writing two companion poems, one beginning with the words "I'm sorry," and one beginning "I'm proud." The results were very moving. She is an honest and wonderful writer.

I'm sorry, God.
I'm sorry for all the
bad things I've done.
I didn't mean to harm you.
I'm sorry for doubting you.
I'm sorry for being suicidal.
I'm sorry for being the
daughter that no one wants.
I'm sorry for what happened to me.
I'm sorry for having problems.
I'm so sorry...

I'm proud that I'm trying to be a
better daughter.
I'm proud that you, my God, are
helping me.
I'm proud that
I haven't gone away again.
I'm proud to have
come this far.
I'm proud to have you
as my father.
I'm proud to be alive.

TALES FROM SUBNAUTICA

Ayden wrote an excellent description of the adventures of his character Mr. Joan Smith in the interstellar videogame "Subnautica."

After a lot of time, money and materials, it was done. It was miles long and miles wide. Sunbeam, the first huge spaceship was only one-half of its size. Its name was The Aurora. The Aurora was almost the same as the Sunbeam, just different size, paint, and with more armor.

The Aurora was ready to go to the Planet "452B," but the legends say it has a disease called "the Carar disease." Others say "it has alien stuff on it." No one knows what the planet has. When the Aurora was fueling up, its engines started to fire by itself without anyone on board. It is so big. Everybody in "The Federation Space" (the name of the company who owns Aurora and Sunbeam) got on the Aurora and blasted off to the Planet 452B.

Days after the launch, 452B was only two days away. Joan Smith was in his room thinking about the planet and its solar system. Three hours later it was lunchtime. One thousand people were on board, and they all ate lunch.

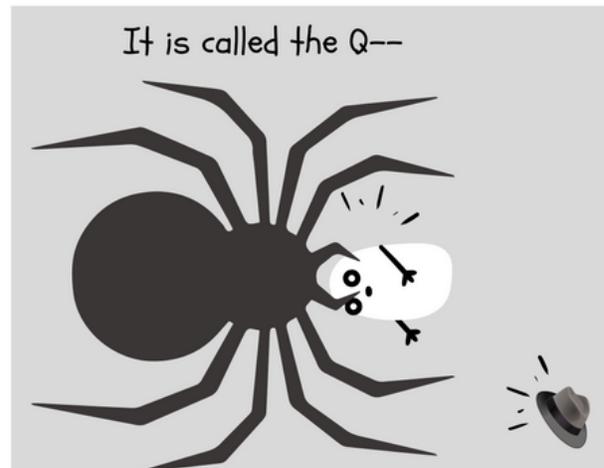
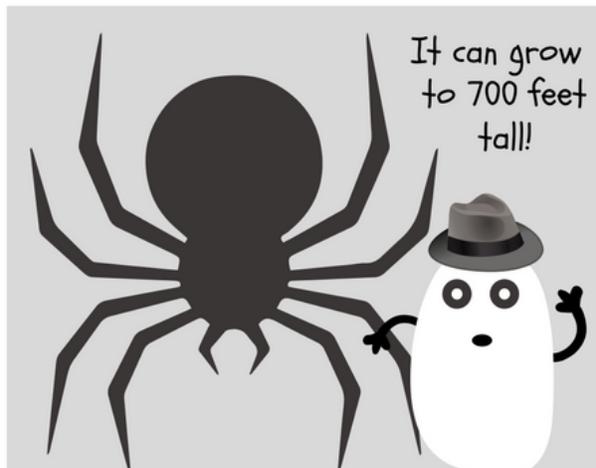
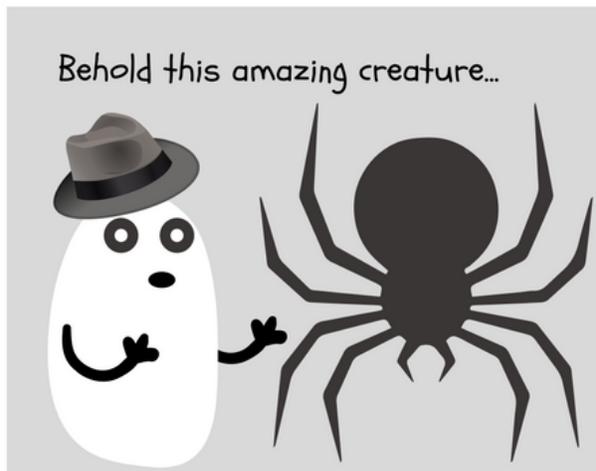
One day later they entered the planet's solar system and the Planet 452B was close. Everyone on board was cheering with joy. For days Joan was happy but scared. The planet is all water, only two islands. The rest of the planet is just water. And Joan could not swim very well, but they had swimsuits, sea-moths and P.R.A.W.N. Suits. The next day, Planet 452B was two hours away, so everybody got in their swimsuits and switched the power cells for the P.R.A.W.N. Suits and sea-moths. Joan got his swimsuit on and when he did, they broke the atmosphere.

Kaboom! As they began to break the atmosphere, a green alien-like beam hit the Aurora and lots of booming started to happen. Only twenty people got on their lifepods. Joan got to his lifepod and fired out, then the Aurora was blown up. Joan was knocked out because the circuit panel that powers the lifepod hit him in the face. When he woke up, a fire started. He had to hit his chair panel to get free!

TALES FROM SUBNAUTICA: CHAPTER TWO

When Joan got free, he grabbed a fire extinguisher and put out the fire. He turned on his PDA. The PDA said stuff that Joan already knew. Joan opened his lifepod's hatch that was on the roof so he could see the Aurora... with no life in it. The PDA said "No human life signs detected." Joan was surprised until he jumped in the water. Joan was so scared when he saw what he was seeing... aliens.

Fish with big eyes or one eye. No fins, no gills. An elephant seal with a big ball on its rear end and smaller green balls on it. Chunks of the Aurora everywhere. As fast as a flea, Joan went right back in his lifepod. When he opened the top hatch and strange-looking crows (skyrays) were going around in circles, Joan was scared...



by Ayden

MY FAVORITE SONG

BY JAY

My favorite song is called "Fake You Out" by Twenty One Pilots. In this song Tyler talks a lot about his life. My life is just like his. In the intro, Tyler says "I want to drive away / in the night headlights call my name."

To me, I am trying to escape a difficult situation I am in, and I'm drawn to the case of things being different somewhere else. It's hard to explain. When I try to talk about it, my words get messed up like a tornado ripping through a city.

The chorus goes "I'll never be, be what you see inside / You say I'm not alone, but I am petrified / You say that you are close, is close the closest star? / You just feel twice as far / You just feel twice as far."

To me, though I believe and trust God, I can't shake the feeling of being alone and different from other people. It's like life is a fun party where everyone is having a good time and I'm alone, crying in a corner.

The lines "And I'll fall, and I'll break, and I'll fake / All I wanna and I'll fall down and I'll break down / And I'll fake you out / All I wanna" means to me that I feel alone and scared but don't want to show it. So instead I act happy and cool. In the last part, the rap part means to me that I don't seem like I struggle but I do. A lot. I try to feel close to God, but I'm scared of what He will think of me.

I always think of all these things I've done and things that happened to me. I punish myself for it, mentally not physically. I feel like I'm so alone on this and I get scared because I don't want people to see it. My mind isn't like everyone else's. I've been through things, horrible things. I want to be able to escape. To escape my mind and just be happy. *To drive away in the night. Where headlights call my name.*





THANK
YOU!

Thank you to Bethlehem Area School District and ArtsQuest for partnering on this program and bringing this great group of kids together! It was an honor and inspiration to work with them -- they poem so good!

John W. Bor