

# NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION



## 2010 SUPPLEMENT



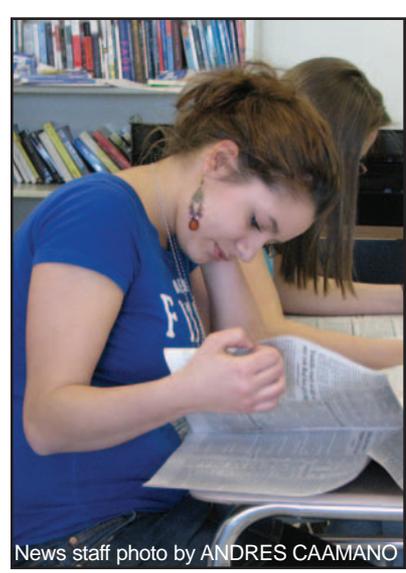
**35 local schools participated this year!**

**151 students recognized in all!**

**Friday, March 26, 2010**

**Student work in the Design-An-Ad, Editorial Cartoon, Feature Photo, My Favorite Storybook Character, Original Artwork and Student Essay contests**

# Teachers of NIE winners

 <b>Alan Dermalowicz</b> Gardner Middle School 8 winners p7a, Gaudet; p8a, St. John; p9a, Tyler; p16a, Galvan; p22a, LeBlanc; p25a, Knoll; p28a, Tyler.	 <b>Mark Kobel</b> Gardner High School 7 winners p8a, Vazquez; p16a, McNeley; p17a, Dunn; p23a, Colon; p23a, Richard; p24a, Parsons; p26a, Perez.	 <b>Kerry Bart-Raber</b> Hubbardston Center School 7 winners p5a, Keagle; p12a, Rhinhart; p13a, Blomquist; p20a, Gregson-Pareago; p20a, Kinneary; p22a, Aubuchon; p28a, See.	 <b>Mandy Flis</b> Narragansett Regional High School 6 winners p9a, Lepkowski; p11a, Heck; p15a, Deschenes; p16a, Wheeler; p27a, Everett; p27a, Rader.	 <b>Mike Fontaine</b> Murdock Middle High School 5 winners p5a, Goodwin; p11a, Provencial; p14a, Chalke; p18a, Hickey; p25a, LaPlante.	 <b>Lynn Murray</b> Toy Town Elementary Sch. 5 winners p8a, Summers-Swanson; p9a, Smith; p12a, Provost; p24a, Robichaud; p25a, Emery.	 <b>William Hulette</b> Holy Rosary School 4 winners p18a, Bonneau; p21a, L'O'Neill; p26a, Moschetti; p28a, Richard.	 <b>Ellen Softic</b> Mahar Regional School 4 winners p14a, Corcoran; p15a, LeBlanc; p17a, Daly; p26a, Moore.	 <b>Patricia Feeley</b> Sacred Heart School 4 winners p13a, Hartin; p21a, Grammel; p22a, Webb; p25a, Lenthal.	 <b>Mike Fitzgerald</b> Westminster Elementary Sch. 4 winners p7a, Russ; p8a, Buchanan; p19a, Buchanan; p27a, Draeger.	 <b>Donna Murphy</b> Elm Street School 3 winners p10a, Hannula; p11a, Ellis; p23a, Lore.	 <b>Noelle Short</b> Gardner Middle School 3 winners p14a, Pellechia; p20a, Clark; p20a, Jalbert.	 <b>Donna Bresnahan</b> Holy Rosary School 3 winners p7a, Wong; p13a, Richard; p26a, J.O'Neill.	 <b>Joyce LaBonte</b> Holy Rosary School 3 winners p9a, Fisher; p15a, E.Frusher; p24a, Bradshaw.	 <b>Linda Ganson</b> Mahar Regional School 3 winners p11a, Colburn; p17a, Andrews; p22a, Chandler.	 <b>Janet Dupuis</b> Narragansett Middle School 3 winners p10a, Campbell; p11a, de Horsey; p12a, Bodkin.	 <b>Greg Barry</b> Oakmont Reg. High School 3 winners p5a, Perkins; p12a, Labowicz; p25a, Porpora.	 <b>Brian Beaudoin</b> Overlook Middle School 3 winners p7a, Jackson; p10a, Michael; p14a, Barry.	 <b>Susan Guartafierro</b> Sacred Heart School 3 winners p7a, Raymond; p15a, Croes; p17a, Fay.	 <b>Ruth Suyenaga</b> Waterford Elementary Sch. 3 winners p5a, Zollo; p6a, Liang; p26, Ackles.	 <b>Robert Myette</b> Westminster Elementary Sch. 3 winners p5a, Sugar; p20a, Reitz; p20a, Arsenault.	 <b>Beth Gospodarek</b> Athol-Royalston Middle School 2 winners p13a, Wang; p28a, Serratos.	 <b>Sue Gallagher</b> Gardner High School 2 winners p13a, Safford; p23a, Cerasale.	 <b>Maria Murphy</b> Gardner High School 2 winners p14a, Palma; p27a, Kelley.	 <b>Dottie Omilanowicz</b> Hardwick Elementary 2 winners p19a, Garrity; p21a, Perry.	 <b>Ruth Suyenaga</b> Helen Mae Sauter School 2 winners p13a, O'Brien; p26a, Mailman.	 <b>Jackey Antonian</b> Holy Rosary School 2 winners p21a, Nicholson; p28a, Laderoute.	 <b>Lynn Morrissey</b> Holy Rosary School 2 winners p12a, S.Frusher; p16a, Lee.	 <b>Jan St. Jean</b> Hubbardston Center School 2 winners p6a, Thraser; p20a, Marcinkiewicz.	 <b>Lynne LaRoche</b> J.R. Briggs Elementary 2 winners p27a, Sticar; p27a, Robuccio.	 <b>Linda Qualters</b> Phillipston Memorial School 2 winners p11a, Vaillancourt; p19a, Vaillancourt.	 <b>Julia Markoff</b> Mahar Regional School 2 winners p10a, Harris; p22a, Moshier.	 <b>Stephanie Rondeau</b> Murdock Middle High School 2 winners p17a, Torres Pagan; p21, Patel.	 <b>Dottie Omilanowicz</b> Oakham Center School 2 winners p15a, Ingram; p23a, Chionchio/Gould/Harnois.	 <b>Mark Nevard</b> Oakmont Reg. High School 2 winners p18a, Pultorak; p23a, Peters.	 <b>William Simons</b> Quabbin Reg. High School 2 winners p24a, Kajala; p26a, Davis.	 <b>Brian Snell</b> Royalston Community Sch. 2 winners p16a, Persson; p28a, Fletcher.	 <b>Donna Carrier</b> Sacred Heart School 2 winners p6a, Morin; p27a, Buckler.	 <b>Susan Alario</b> Westminster Elementary 2 winners p8a, Marble; p27a, Marble.	 <b>Eric Sifert</b> Westminster Elementary Sch. 2 winners p25a, Thorp; p26a, Parker.	 <b>Jessica Verock</b> Athol High School 1 winner p24a, Bousquet.	 <b>Debbie Miller</b> Baldwinville Elementary 1 winner p15a, Dunn.	 <b>Greg Smith</b> Butterfield Elementary 1 winner p21a, Ward.	 <b>Danielle Lynch</b> East Templeton Elementary 1 winner p25a, Goguen.	 <b>Ann Marie Ouellet</b> Elm Street School 1 winner p6a, Franco.	 <b>Heather Boylan</b> Helen Mae Sauter School 1 winner p18a, Jalliet.	 <b>Carolyn Gleason</b> Holy Rosary School 1 winner p12a, Burpee.	 <b>Mary Beth Sekurski</b> Holy Rosary School 1 winner p27a, Beddia.	 <b>Tracey McDonald</b> Hubbardston Center School 1 winner p12a, Varteresian.	 <b>Cynthia Whittington</b> J.R. Briggs Elementary School 1 winner p11a, Plotkin.	 <b>Heather Piccarillo</b> Johnny Appleseed School 1 winner p19a, Nevard.	 <b>Beth Foster</b> Meetinghouse School 1 winner p19a, Sugar.	 <b>Dan Starr</b> Montachusett Reg. Vocational Sch. 1 winner p24a, Puchlerz.	 <b>Judy Moriarty</b> Murdock Middle High School 1 winner p22a, LaBrack.	 <b>Mark Nardini</b> Murdock Middle High School 1 winner p18a, Santonastaso.	 <b>Ellen Schneeflock</b> Murdock Middle High School 1 winner p22a, Spady.	 <b>Jessica McLaughlin</b> Narragansett Middle School 1 winner p28a, Lyons.	 <b>Cheryl Cebula</b> Northwest Developmental 1 winner p27a, Nevard.	 <b>Theresa Barry</b> Oakmont Reg. High School 1 winner p25a, Steves.	 <b>Dena Hengst</b> Quabbin Reg. Middle School 1 winner p26a, Cornelissen.	 <b>Tracy Salem</b> Sacred Heart School 1 winner p26a, Trick.	 <b>Kathie Huhtala</b> Templeton Center School 1 winner p26a, Strom.	 <b>Shannon Johnson</b> Village School 1 winner p27a, White/Walton.	 <b>Kendra Bisson</b> Wachusett Hills Christian School 1 winner p6a, Oliveira.	 News staff photo by ANDRES CAAMANO
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## Other participating teachers

**Baldwinville Elementary School**  
Sue Wilta  
Kristine Boudreau

**East Templeton Elementary School**  
Kathy Carruth

**Elm Street School**  
Melissa Coviello  
Anthony Renzi

**Gardner High School**  
Maria Murphy

**Gardner Middle School**  
Brent Robichaud  
Kristina Wood

**Holy Rosary School**  
Barbara Wade

**Hubbardston Center Street School**  
Tricia Anderson  
Jane Appleton  
Bernie Audette  
Danielle Beaudry

Eileen Bohigan  
Wendy Castriotta  
Jen Churchill  
Kristen Coons  
Barbara Dietrich  
Kim Doyle  
Jane Gregoriou  
Gita Haddad  
Sue LaRose  
Julie Mankowsky  
Ted Newton  
Shannon Ortolino

**Murdock High School**  
Eva Eaton

**Oakmont Regional High School**  
Donna Larson

**Overlook Middle School**  
Jane Clabaugh

**Phillipston Memorial School**  
Suzanne Walker  
Leanne Wetzel

**Quabbin Regional High School**  
Cheryl Adams  
Morgan Watkins

**Ralph C. Mahar Regional School**  
Nina Belanger

**Sacred Heart School**  
Jan Gleason  
Nicole LeBlanc

**Toy Town Elementary School**  
Chris Daigle  
Anne McDonald

**Village School**  
Renee Malowitz

**Waterford Elementary School**  
Mary Burpee

**Westminster Elementary**  
Caron Goodwin

### Cover photos:

(starting from upper left, left to right):  
Stacy Antilla leans back while reading the newspaper in Lynn Murray's class at Toy Town Elementary School in Winchendon earlier this month; Rachel Rose looks closely at The Gardner News laid out on her desk while working with the newspaper in Alan Dermalowicz's class at Gardner Middle School earlier this month; Sam Poulin takes a look at the Monday newspaper earlier this month during Heather Boylan's class at Helen Mae Sauter School in Gardner; Derek Clark glances over the newspaper in Heather Boylan's class at Helen Mae Sauter School in early March; Narragansett Regional High School students Chris Colella, left and Tom Beaulieu take a look over the Tuesday edition of The Gardner News in Mandy Flis' class earlier this month; Justin Eddy, a student at Toy Town Elementary School in Winchendon looks over the Sports section during Lynn Murray's class earlier this month; Narragansett Regional High School student Wes Gagnon reviews a section of the newspaper in Mandy Flis' class recently during a reading exercise; eighth grade student Rebecca Jalbert scans The Gardner News during Noelle Short's class at Gardner Middle School a couple of weeks ago; Murdock Middle High School teacher Eva Eaton points to a section of the newspaper during her class to one of her students, Alexis Shelly, in Winchendon recently.  
News photos by ANDRES CAAMANO and STEVE NYBERG

Dear readers,

For a sixth consecutive year, I am proud to announce that participation in the *Newspaper In Education* supplement has increased once again. Historically, NIE is considered something solely for elementary schools to participate in, but in the past five years, there has been an increased recognition toward middle and high school students in the Greater Gardner area.

Four years ago was the first year where there was any high school participation in the supplement, as Gardner High School participated in the Feature Photo contest, which was added to five other contests in that year's supplement. This year, students from Gardner High, along with Oakmont Regional High School, Murdock Middle High School, Quabbin Regional High School and Mahar Regional School participated, along with 30 other schools this year — 35 in all, along with a homeschool student.

By turning page after page of this supplement, you will see the writing, drawing and photographic talents of many talented young people in Greater Gardner. As the *Newspaper In Education* program at *The Gardner News* grows, to where more than 1,600 students each week during the school year benefit, it becomes ever more apparent that our area schools are filled with exceptional young minds ready to lead us into tomorrow.

This year's winners and honorable mentions were, as usual, difficult to judge. All of the students should be commended for a job well done. A special thank you goes out to every single teacher and administrator, of which there were 104 this year, who helped make this year's supplement a success. In recognizing that detail, we not only are including a photo of every student that has a submission in this supplement, but also of each and every one of their corresponding teachers that submitted an entry to *The Gardner News* for this supplement. This is just a glimpse at what is possible when newspapers are used in the classroom, of which there have been 82 teachers thus far who have utilized *The Gardner News* this year.

NIE is a worldwide effort that connects teachers, students and local newspapers by providing stimulating teaching materials to facilitate learning. Whether the subject matter is the ABC's for primary grades, or real life learning (exercises in finding a job through the classified section) the newspaper offers something for every subject and grade level.

Students who learn how to read, enjoy, understand and use newspapers are equipped with a lifelong learning resource.

*The Gardner News* is proud to offer our very own NIE program to Greater Gardner schools, and your support is very much appreciated. Parents, businesses and other organizations can help students at any point during the school year. For a surprisingly small donation, you can help pay for the educational services we provide.

Once again, congratulations to each of our 151 winners and a hearty thank you to everyone who participated in *The Gardner News 2010 Newspaper In Education Supplement*.

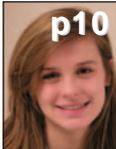
Sincerely,



Andrés Caamaño  
NIE Director

# NIE Contest Winners

## First Place

 p6 Aaliyah Franco Elm Street Elementary School Original Artwork K-3	 p7 Jonathan Raymond Sacred Heart School Original Artwork 4-6	 p7 Brielle Jackson Overlook Middle School Original Artwork 7-9	 p5 Meghan Perkins Oakmont Reg. High School Original Artwork 10-12	 p9 Savannah A.A. Smith Toy Town Elementary School Editorial Cartoon 4-6	 p9 Robert Tyler Gardner Middle School Editorial Cartoon 7-9	 p16 Kellie Wheeler Narragansett Reg. High School Editorial Cartoon 10-12	 p6 Madelyn Thrasher Hubbardston Center School Student Essay K-3	 p6 Olivia Jordan Oliveira Wachusett Hills Christian School Student Essay 4-6	 p6 Jonathan Morin Sacred Heart School Student Essay 7-9
 p10 Chelsea Harris Mahar Regional School Student Essay 10-12	 p7 Lindsey Russ Westminster Elementary School Feature Photo 4-6	 p7 Calvin Wong Holy Rosary School Feature Photo 7-9	 p5 Stephanie Goodwin Murdock Middle High School Feature Photo 10-12	 p11 Sofi Plotkin J.R. Briggs Elementary School Storybook Character K-1	 p5 Abigail Keagle Hubbardston Center School Storybook Character 2-3	 p5 Cory Zollo Waterford Street School Design-An-Ad K-3	 p5 Clarisse Sugar Westminster Elementary School Design-An-Ad 4-6	 p14 Josh Pellechia Gardner Middle School Design-An-Ad 7-9	 p14 Scarlett Palma Gardner High School Design-An-Ad 10-12

## Second Place

 p15 Miranda Ingram Oakham Center School Original Artwork K-3	 p14 Greg Barry Overlook Middle School Original Artwork 4-6	 p10 Peri Michael Overlook Middle School Original Artwork 7-9	 p12 Christina Labowicz Oakmont Reg. High School Original Artwork 10-12	 p17 Jack Fay Sacred Heart School Editorial Cartoon 4-6	 p13 Grace Hartin Sacred Heart School Editorial Cartoon 7-9	 p11 Raegan Heck Narragansett Reg. High School Editorial Cartoon 10-12	 p12 Bailey Burpee Holy Rosary School Student Essay K-3	 p12 Sophie Frushell Holy Rosary School Student Essay 4-6	 p6 Thomas Rose Homeschool Student Essay 7-9
 p18 Jessi Pultorak Oakmont Reg. High School Student Essay 10-12	 p15 Photo unavailable	 p13 Brandi Richard Holy Rosary School Feature Photo 7-9	 p15 Rachel LeBlanc Mahar Regional School Feature Photo 10-12	 p13 Maija Blomquist Hubbardston Center School Storybook Character K-1	 p11 Denver Vaillancourt Phillipston Memorial School Storybook Character 2-3	 p6 Jyy Rose-Liang Waterford Street School Design-An-Ad K-3	 p8 Rachel Marble Westminster Elementary School Design-An-Ad 4-6	 p8 Jessica St. John Gardner Middle School Design-An-Ad 7-9	 p11 Megan Provencial Murdock Middle High School Design-An-Ad 10-12

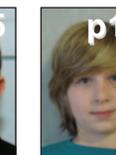
## Third Place

 p15 Kristen Dunn Baldwinville Elementary School Original Artwork K-3	 p15 Jenna Croes Sacred Heart School Original Artwork 4-6	 p14 Madison Corcoran Mahar Regional School Original Artwork 7-9	 p13 Dylan Safford Gardner High School Original Artwork 10-12	 p25 Autumn Emery Toy Town Elementary School Editorial Cartoon 4-6	 p13 William Wang Athol-Royalston Middle School Editorial Cartoon 7-9	 p12 Emma Varteresian Hubbardston Center School Student Essay K-3	 p8 C. Summers-Swanson Toy Town Elementary School Student Essay 4-6	 p17 Bronte Torres Pagan Murdock Middle High School Student Essay 7-9	 p18 Nicole Santonastaso Murdock Middle High School Student Essay 10-12
 p8 Emily Buchanan Westminster Elementary School Feature Photo 4-6	 p7 Photo unavailable	 p15 Alex Deschenes Narragansett Reg. High School Feature Photo 10-12	 p20 M. Gregson-Pareago Hubbardston Center School Storybook Character K-1	 p13 Andrew O'Brien Helen Mae Sauter Elementary School Storybook Character 2-3	 p10 Chloe Hannula Elm Street Elementary School Design-An-Ad 4-6	 p10 Hannah Campbell Narragansett Middle School Design-An-Ad 7-9	 p8 Wyljenny Vazquez Gardner High School Design-An-Ad 10-12		

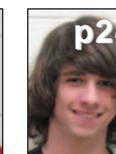
Turn to next page for  
Honorable mentions

# NIE Contest Winners

## Honorable Mentions

 Katelyn Beddia Holy Rosary School Original Artwork K-3	 Chiara Nevard Appleseed School Original Artwork K-3	 Quinn Sugar Meetinghouse Elementary School Original Artwork K-3	 Isabella Nevard Northwest Developmental Ctr. Original Artwork K-3	 Denver Vaillancourt Phillipston Memorial School Original Artwork K-3	 Preston White Village School Original Artwork K-3	 Robbie Walton Village School Original Artwork K-3	 Colleen Ward Butterfield Elementary School Original Artwork 4-6	 Cody Goguen East Templeton School Original Artwork 4-6	 Nathan Garrity Hardwick Elementary School Original Artwork 4-6	 Holly Perry Hardwick Elementary School Original Artwork 4-6	 Paige Bradshaw Holy Rosary School Original Artwork 4-6	 Maria Chionchio Oakham Center School Original Artwork 4-6	 Emelia Gould Oakham Center School Original Artwork 4-6
 Selina Harnois Oakham Center School Original Artwork 4-6	 Rachel Marble Westminster Elementary School Original Artwork 4-6	 Jennie O'Neill Holy Rosary School Original Artwork 7-9	 Laura O'Neill Holy Rosary School Original Artwork 7-9	 Hannah Moore Mahar Regional School Original Artwork 7-9	 Katelyn Conelissen Quabbin Reg. Middle School Original Artwork 7-9	 Serene Bousquet Athol High School Original Artwork 10-12	 Cotey Cerasale Gardner High School Original Artwork 10-12	 Tim Chandler Mahar Regional School Original Artwork 10-12	 Samantha Puchlerz Montachusett Reg. Voc. Tech. School Original Artwork 10-12	 Shawna Spady Murdock Middle High School Original Artwork 10-12	 Sarah Steves Oakmont Reg. High School Original Artwork 10-12	 Kevin Davis Quabbin Reg. High School Original Artwork 10-12	 Micah Kiajala Quabbin Reg. High School Original Artwork 10-12
 Colby Fisher Holy Rosary School Feature Photo 4-6	 Rhiannon Fletcher Royalston Community School Feature Photo 4-6	 Tarah Garneau Gardner Middle School Feature Photo 7-9	 Alli Laderoute Holy Rosary School Feature Photo 7-9	 McKenzie Lyons Narragansett Middle School Feature Photo 7-9	 Erika Lepkowski Narragansett Reg. High School Feature Photo 10-12	 Shannon Everett Narragansett Reg. High School Feature Photo 10-12	 Hayley Rader Narragansett Reg. High School Feature Photo 10-12	 Maegan Porpora Oakmont Reg. High School Feature Photo 10-12	 Maggie Trick Sacred Heart School Storybook Character K-1	 Trent Mailman Helen Mae Sauter School Storybook Character 2-3	 Anna See Hubbardston Center School Storybook Character 2-3	 Lauren Sicard J.R. Briggs Elementary School Storybook Character 2-3	 Angelina Robuccio J.R. Briggs Elementary School Storybook Character 2-3
 Dylan Strom Templeton Center School Character 2-3	 Courtney Ackles Waterford Street School Storybook Character 2-3	 Viridiana Serratos Athol-Royalston Middle School Editorial Cartoon 7-9	 Matthew Lenthall Sacred Heart School Editorial Cartoon 7-9	 Julia Jaiilet Helen Mae Sauter School Student Essay K-3	 Faith Marcinkiewicz Hubbardston Center School Student Essay K-3	 Lindsey Lee Holy Rosary School Student Essay 4-6	 Katherine Arsenault Westminster Elementary School Student Essay 4-6	 Mimi Reitz Westminster Elementary School Student Essay 4-6	 Hiral Patel Murdock Middle High School Student Essay 7-9	 Nicole LaBrack Murdock Middle High School Student Essay 7-9	 Beth Mosher Mahar Regional School Student Essay 10-12	 Jane Peters Oakmont Reg. High School Student Essay 10-12	

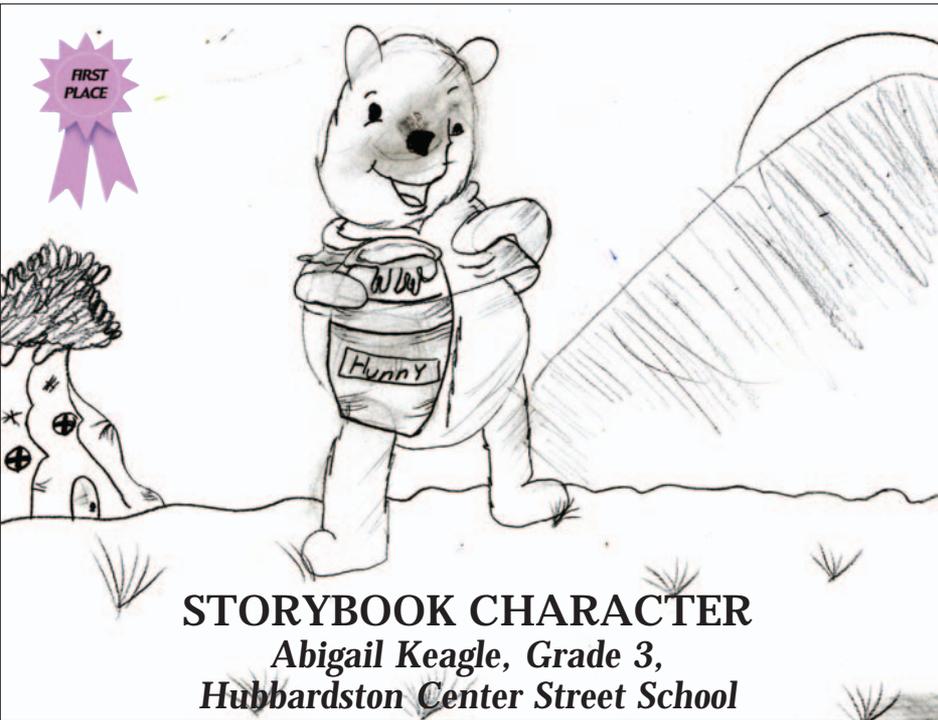
## Other Design-An-Ad winners

 Ashley Ellis Elm Street School	 Antonio Lore Elm Street School	 William McNelley Gardner High School	 Alyssa Dunn Gardner High School	 Dayanara Colon Gardner High School	 Justin Richard Gardner High School	 Adam Parsons Gardner High School	 Jose Medina Perez Gardner High School	 Chelsea Kelley Gardner High School	 Ryan Galvan Gardner Middle School	 Shayna Clark Gardner Middle School	 Rebecca Jalbert Gardner Middle School	 Emily LeBlanc Gardner Middle School	 Marissa Knoll Gardner Middle School
 Robert Tyler Gardner Middle School	 Matt Bonneau Holy Rosary School	 Jackie Nicholson Holy Rosary School	 Frank Moschetti Holy Rosary School	 Danielle Richard Holy Rosary School	 Isabelle Rhinhart Hubbardston Center School	 Jack Kinnear Hubbardston Center School	 Celine Aubuchon Hubbardston Center School	 Joel Colburn Mahar Regional School	 Justin Andrews Mahar Regional School	 Kristina Daly Mahar Regional School	 Taylour Chalke Murdock Middle High School	 Amber Hickey Murdock Middle High School	 Paul Laplante Murdock Middle High School
 Aislinn de Horsey Narragansett Middle School	 Kymberly Bodkin Narragansett Middle School	 Melissa Persson Royalston Community School	 Samantha Buckler Sacred Heart School	 Meaghan Grammel Sacred Heart School	 Anthony Webb Sacred Heart School	 Aidan Provost Toy Town Elementary School	 Max Robichaud Toy Town Elementary School	 Emily Buchanan Westminster Elementary School	 Johanna Thorp Westminster Elementary School	 Hannah Parker Westminster Elementary School	 Jake Draeger Westminster Elementary School		

**Congratulations to the 151 students that appear in the 2010 Newspapers In Education Supplement!**



**ORIGINAL ARTWORK**  
Meghan Perkins, Grade 12,  
Oakmont Regional High School



**STORYBOOK CHARACTER**  
Abigail Keagle, Grade 3,  
Hubbardston Center Street School



**FEATURE PHOTO**  
Stephanie Goodwin, Grade 11,  
Murdock Middle High School



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**DESIGN-AN-AD**  
Cory Zollo, Grade 2,  
Waterford Street School



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**DESIGN-AN-AD**  
Clarisse Sugar, Grade 5,  
Westminster Elementary School

## What is your favorite season of the year?



Spring is my favorite time of the year. It is peaceful. Everyday, I hear the beautiful birds singing their beautiful songs up in the trees. I even see birds flying from tree to tree. Sometimes, I hear some woodpeckers pecking at the trees for food. In the morning, I see tiny green buds on the tree, so then I know it's springtime.

When I go outside, I see squirrels and chipmunks looking for food. When they find food, they scurry to their burrows. I even see butterflies sipping nectar from flowers.

When I go fishing in the springtime, I have to pick out the worm I want to use and put in on my fishing hook. If we have night crawlers and I hold one, it feels very flat. Or if we had Dillies, they feel a little skinnier.

During spring, I smell the sweet flowers growing nearby. Sometimes, I pick them with my mom. I also sometimes smell fish in the water at the pond or a lake. When I eat honey, I think of how bees make honey. It tastes sweet and is really good!

If I play outside, I play jump rope, basketball, wiffle ball, tag and even adventure games with my friends. If I am hungry, I'll just grab a sandwich and eat it out in the fresh spring air.

### STUDENT ESSAY

*Madelyn Thrasher, Grade 3,  
Hubbardston Center Street School*

## What is your favorite season of the year?



The cool wind blows on my face and I feel free of any worries. The beautiful reddish orange leaves flying around, forming a circle around me. As the wind whistles and shuts some screen doors, I hear God tell his story in a way only I can understand.

I hear the scratching of the little squirrel running up the trees. The sweet scent of apple crisp fills the air on the wonderful day, Thanksgiving. The simple things are my favorite and I can describe it all in one word, family. I can't even start to begin with my parents, it would go on forever.

Walks on a bike trail and the sunset shows, the purple, orange, red, yellow and pink colors glow and your shadow fades, now that is truly magical. I'm an outcast, but I don't need friends to survive. I have nature. Autumn always brings out the best in nature. I'm not sure what I would do with myself if nature disappeared, even if for one instant.

Autumn is a time to talk to God and ask him questions about his creation. During autumn, whenever I have spare time, I write songs and I perform them to family. People naturally favor summer or spring because of the warmth they bring, but autumn brings a certain type of glow that no other season brings. Autumn is my favorite season.

### STUDENT ESSAY

*Olivia Jordan Oliveira, Grade 5,  
Wachusett Hills Christian School*

## What do you think about extending the commuter rail beyond Fitchburg?



Having the commuter rail come out to Gardner would be a beneficial service to the people of the greater Gardner area. I believe that if the commuter rail service comes to Gardner, it will give the residents of Gardner, Templeton, Phillipston, Westminster, Hubbardston, and Ashburnham an alternate form of transportation to Boston and to the other cities along the way.

It is a huge step forward to making our towns "green" by saving a great deal of fuel for all those commuters going east for work. This would also reduce pollution from all the cars we could cut down on.

I know that if the commuter rail came to Gardner, I would use it to go to the mall, and to go with my friends or family into Boston to see the Aquarium or the Museum of Science. It is a great way to increase tourism, not only for Boston, but for bringing tourists out to our area of central Massachusetts.

Now, I can understand that there could be some negative aspects. The project may be expensive, but it will create new jobs, bring in shoppers and tourists to spend their dollars in our community, and reduce pollution and fuel usage. Also, a commuter parking lot could produce some income for the city. Residents near the tracks might not like the increased rail traffic, though they already deal with freight trains. Also, having an easy connection from the Fitchburg/Leominster area to Gardner could increase the crime rate, which is a real concern. Overall, though, I believe the benefits of public transportation make this a positive project.

So, when someone asks you what you think about bringing the commuter rail to Gardner, what you would choose: yes or no? I say yes!

### STUDENT ESSAY

*Thomas Rose, Grade 9,  
Homeschool*



### ORIGINAL ARTWORK

*Aaliyah Franco, Grade 3,  
Elm Street School*

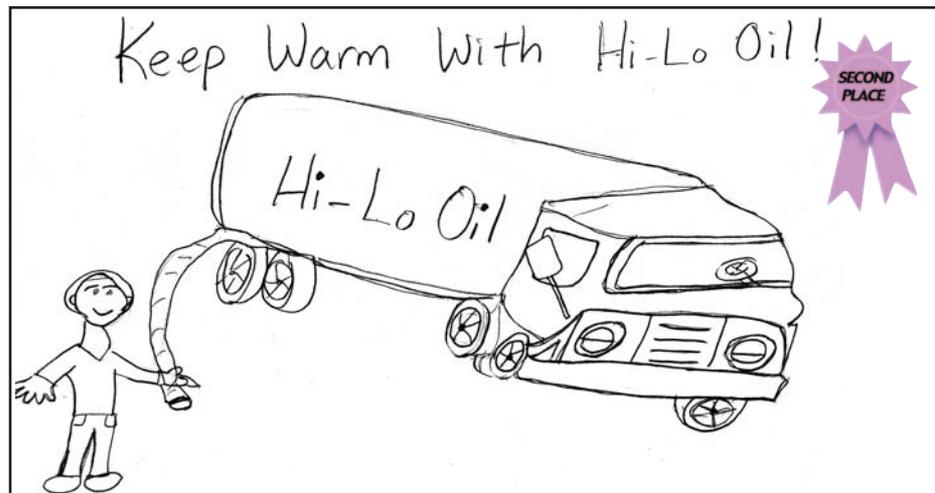
## What's your favorite pet?



The animal that I think would make the best pet is a tiger. I think it would be because it would be awesome to ride around on a tiger everywhere you go. It would scare everyone that was annoying you, like your little sister. She could be following you everywhere, and you could turn the tiger around and have it roar at her. If someone was breaking into your house, it could chase them away. If someone stole something from you, you could climb on the tiger and have him chase the person. The only bad thing about them is that they eat a lot. If you don't feed it and it got really hungry, it would probably eat you. You would also have to keep him clean. I think it is worth it though. That is why I think a tiger would make a good pet.

### STUDENT ESSAY

*Jonathan Morin, Grade 7,  
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*Jonathan Raymond, Grade 6,  
Sacred Heart School*



**FEATURE PHOTO**  
*Mikayla Gaudet, Grade 8,  
Gardner Middle School*

# What do you think should be learned from the 2008 ice storm?



The 2008 ice storm was pretty cool. We lost power, just like most people. However, our power and cable was back on within just two hours. We were not ready for this, like no food to cook without power, no flashlights with fresh batteries. We did have a small generator with just enough juice to power the refrigerator. So when the power came back on, it seemed like the whole town moved into my house. My aunt and her six kids. My parents' friends and her four kids. And another set of friends with their two kids. Also, my uncle and his three kids. And us, which makes 10 kids and three adults. That is a total of 34 people in my house and 25 kids. So we always had someone to play with. Bedtime was fun trying to find a soft place to sleep. My parents made something like 272 chicken nuggets and too many French fries to count. We went through two bottles of ketchup. And for breakfast, it wasn't any different, as we had four bags of cereal and two and a half gallons of milk. We went for a drive to see all the trees down and even in one spot, we drove under trees that were in the road. It was fun and pretty much an unexpected party. But I wish we could have taken in more people, so that they could be warm and safe like us.

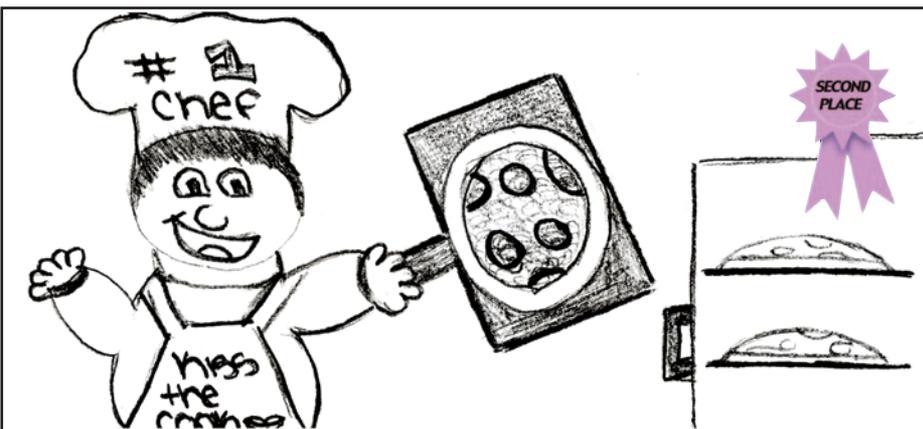
Even though my family took in a lot of people during the aftermath of the ice storm. There was still a lot of people that was still suffering. The town should have done a better job turning the power back on quicker, cleaning up the mess that the storm left, getting shelter that is warm and have generators, and open up a lot more food banks. I strongly believe that the residents of Winchendon should have gotten together, so that they can clean the town together. Which means the power could have gotten turned on faster. The residents of Winchendon should start fundraising now, so if another ice storm hits, there will be more food to go around, more supplies for the shelters, and maybe be able to get more generators. If we take these steps, then we might be able to be more prepared than during the 2008 ice storm.

## STUDENT ESSAY

**Courtney Simmers-Swanson, Grade 5,  
Toy Town Elementary School**



**FEATURE PHOTO**  
*Emily Buchanan, Grade 5,  
Westminster Elementary School*



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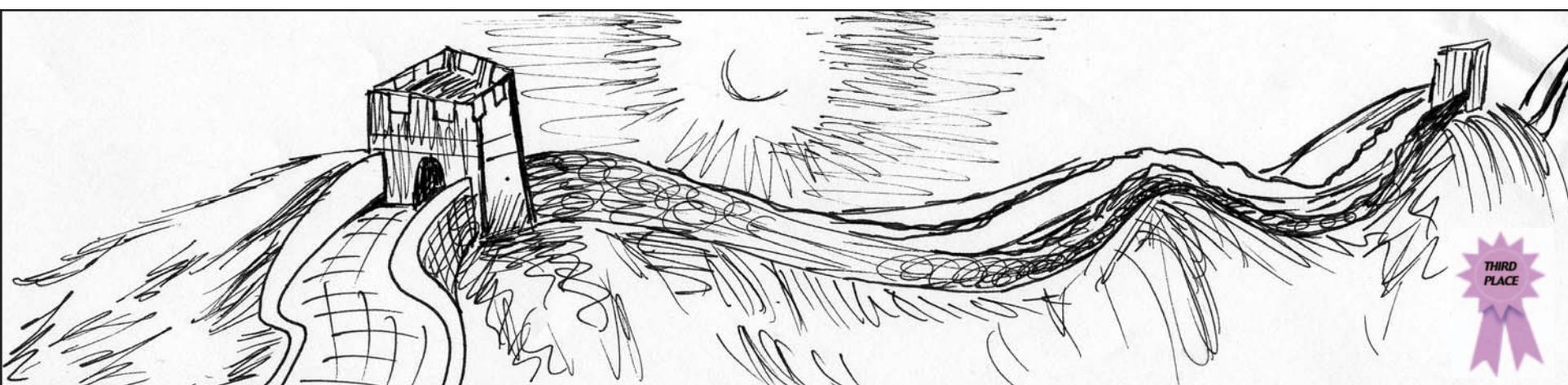
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 Erika Lepkowski, Grade 10,  
 Narragansett Regional High School



**FEATURE PHOTO**  
 Colby Fisher, Grade 6,  
 Holy Rosary School

# With college costs rising, how has that changed your mindset or plans?



For me, college is a short five months away. There is a senior prom to get all dolled up for, a graduation full of over-emotional parents and students, and a summer filled with anxiety before we go through one of the most expensive times of our lives. Have people's plans changed? Yes, considerably. You just spent twelve years of your life waking up a six o'clock to ride a cold and grungy bus to a place where you're forced to sit in a chair for seven hours, and now, upon graduation from high school, you realize that your reward just might be spending the rest of your life asking, "Do you want fries with that?"

It's true, though, that without a college education you probably won't go very far. According to the 2007 U.S. Census Bureau, average earnings for full-time workers at least 25 years old with a bachelor's degree will make about \$20,500 more than someone fresh out of high school. Which seems obvious — why else would you pay \$25,000 a year to go there in the first place? It's just that, even with financial aid, some people can't afford it. There are other opportunities, such as community college, which costs an average of \$6,000 a year compared with \$15,000. But what about those of us who have their heart set on that big dream school; the school with the golden gates and silver bricks, the place where you feel most at home, where you've always pictured yourself? I know someone personally who has that exact problem due to the cost of the school. If he did attend this dream school of his, he would find himself close to \$100,000 in debt upon the arrival of the end of his four-year education. That's a ridiculous amount of money to owe coming into the "real world." He can't really picture his life anywhere else, though, nor does he want to. But \$40,000 a year for an 18-year-old to pay on his own is unrealistic. Even with scholarships for sports or academics, it's only going to knock it down a couple thousand. And really, what's a couple grand if you're already paying that much? Students hear their guidance counselors saying, "Apply for scholarships! Apply for scholarships!" like a broken record in their head, but the reality is that there are millions of other kids out there applying for the same thing, who says you're going to end up with it?

What about the people out there who support themselves? Sometimes it's not even about the cost. It all comes down to transportation. I actually had a conversation with a girl recently and she was telling me that she would love to go to school, but that her and her boyfriend shared a car and she had no means of getting there. But the price of a car, even a used one, on top of the cost of college would be a ridiculous amount for a 19-year-old working minimum wage.

College is made to seem mandatory, that without it you can't succeed and be able to support yourself. The reality is that this is somewhat true. If you had two applicants, one with an associate's degree and a 20-year-old with a high school diploma, which would you choose? College is so expensive no that it's become more of a dream for many to go rather than an actuality. It's completely understandable why. Just last year UMass-Amherst administrators and professors made anywhere from \$200,000-\$400,000. The coaches even raked in close to \$300,000 for yelling at some 20-year-olds to pass more than give them 50 push-ups. The is where your money is going, with teachers getting paid that much the price tad for students is obviously going to rise.

I haven't been personally affected yet. But I'm waiting for that 24 grand to set in any-time. I know I have a lot more burgers to flip and pizzas to make before I get to sit in my office and make my \$100,000. When I look around and see the struggle the rest of my peers are facing I realize just how much the price of college can really impact the rest of your life.

## STUDENT ESSAY

Chelsea Harris, Grade 12,  
Ralph C. Mahar Regional School



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Peri Michael, Grade 8,  
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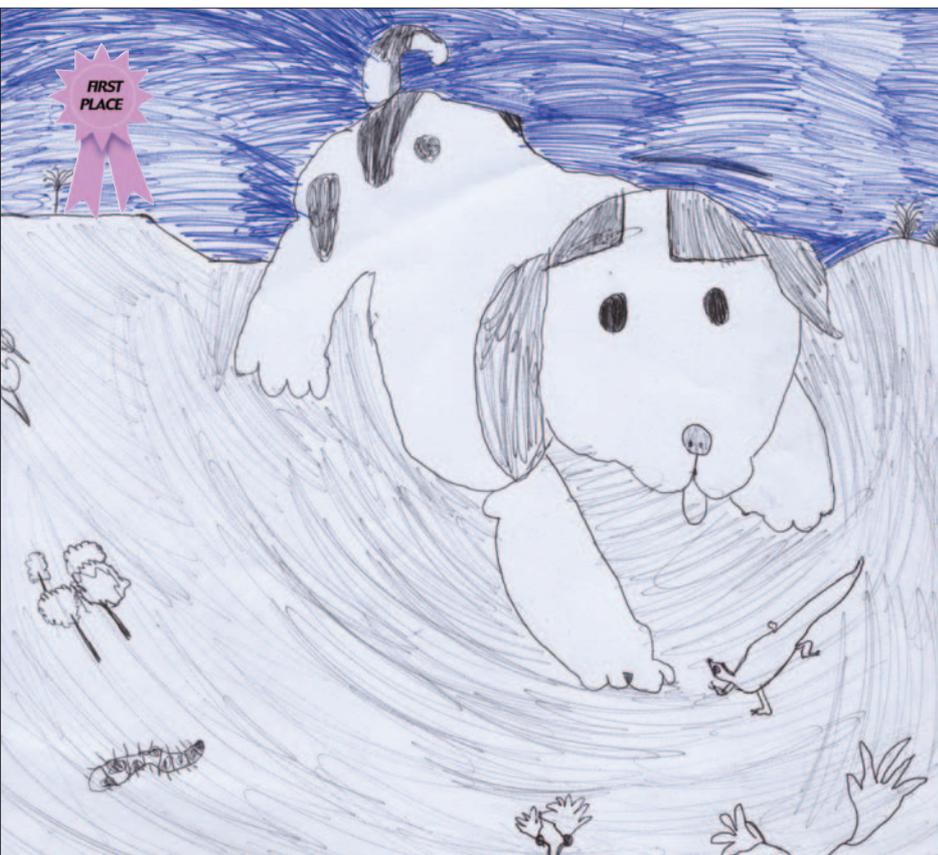
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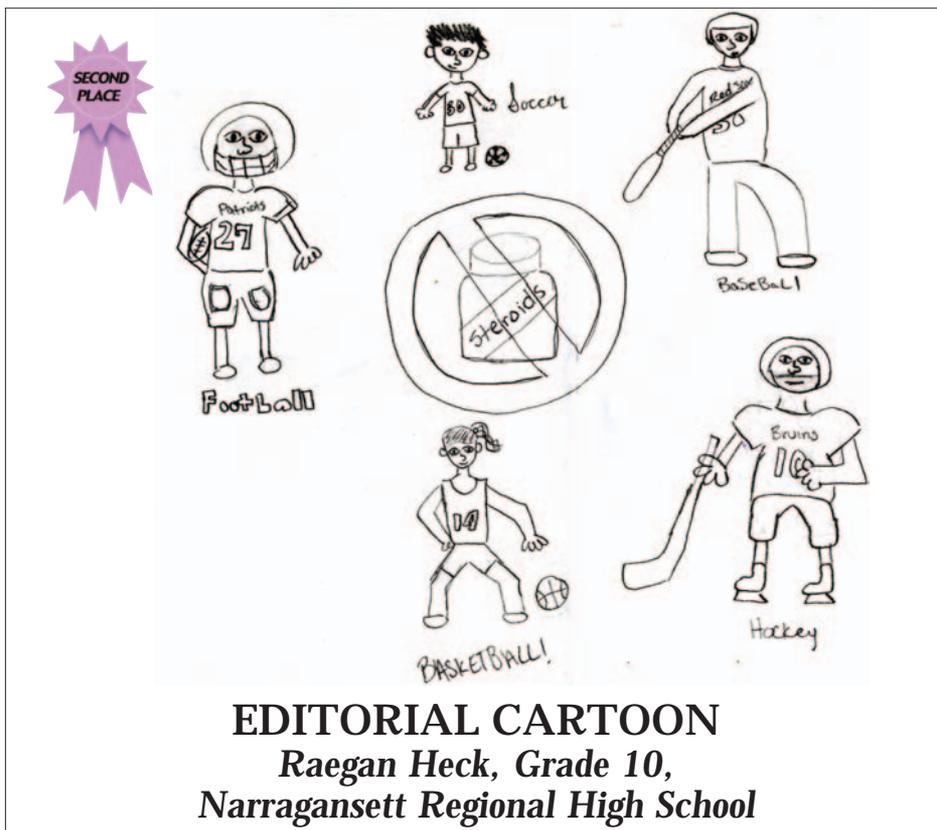
Hannah Campbell, Grade 8,  
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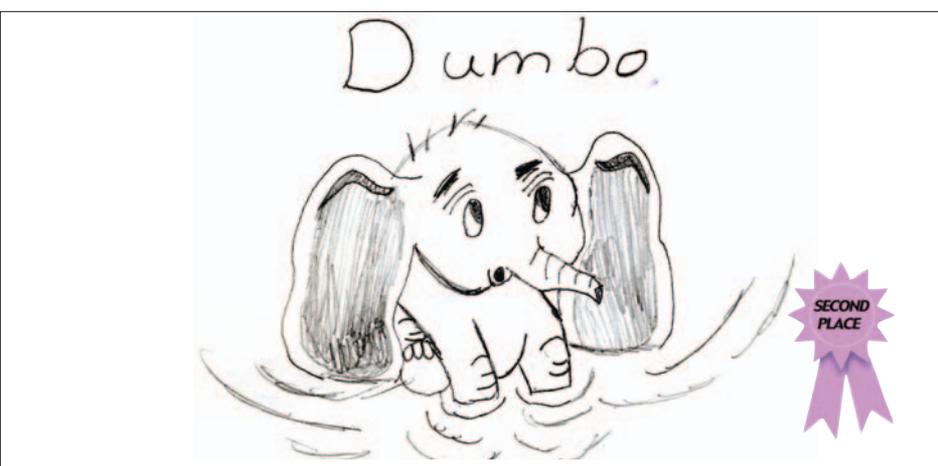
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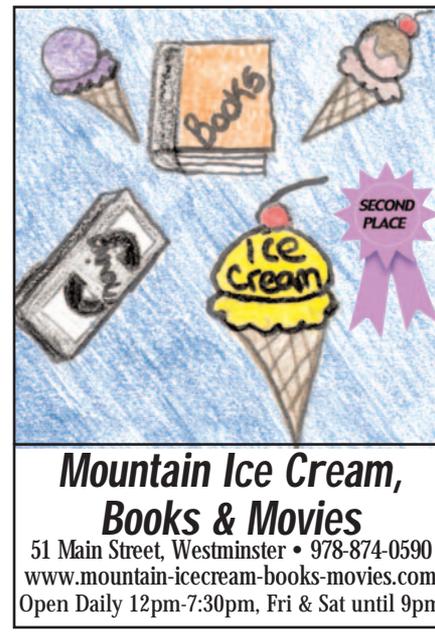
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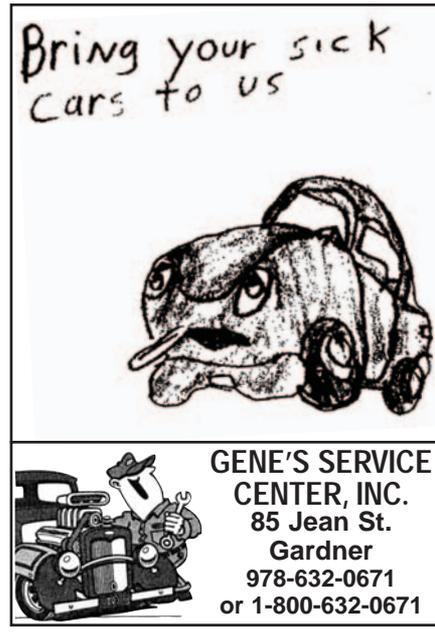


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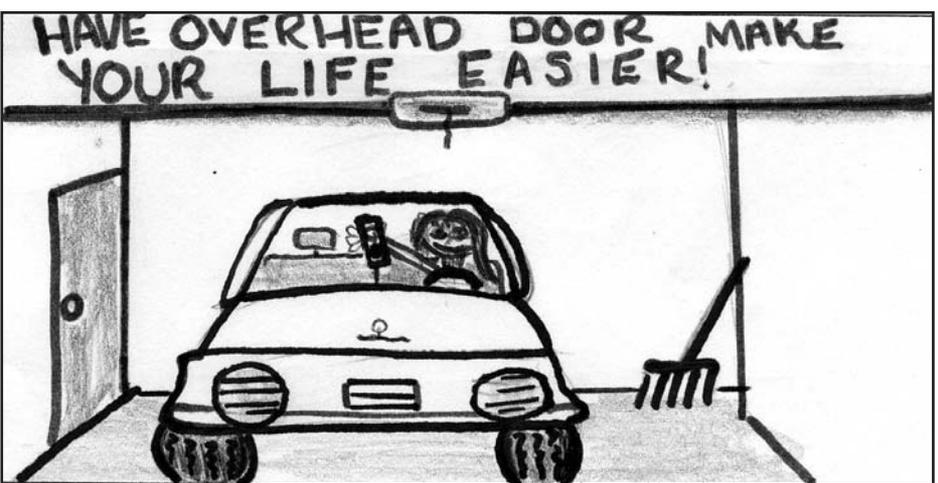
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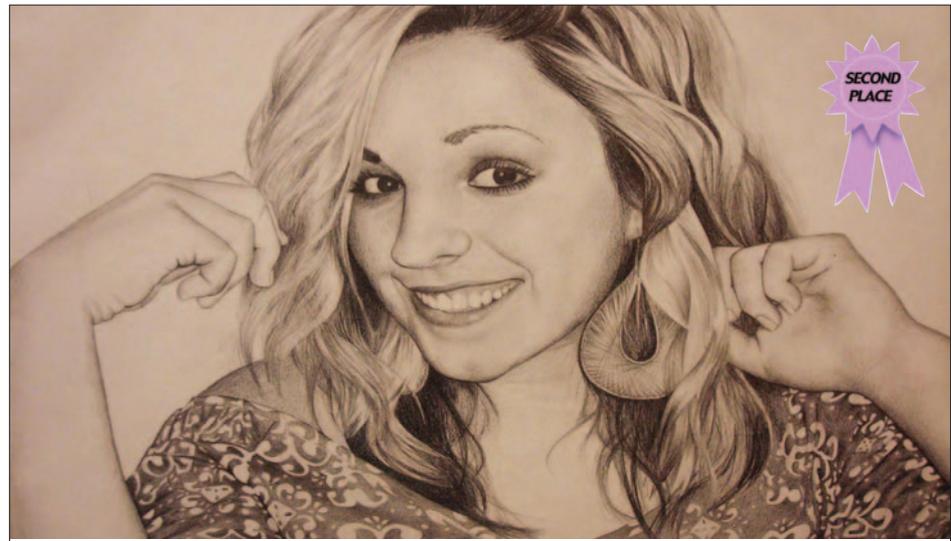
## What is your favorite season of the year?



I think the best season is spring, because it's not too hot and not too cold. The flowers are blooming and it's nice to see the grassy ground with flowers instead of the bare, hard ground. I like spring because all sorts of animals are being born. In spring, soccer starts and it feels good to run around after being stuck inside most of the winter. There are longer days in the spring, which is much better than having it dar at 5:30 at night.

Spring brings summer, which means that school vacation is right around the corner. Spring brings Easter and April Fools Day. I love Easter, because the Easter bunny comes and Jesus was resurrected on Easter. In spring, you can ride your bike and get a lot of exercise. In the spring, we do all sorts of outside activities. Spring is when the whole earth is renewed. In the spring, you get the nice weather, but not as many bugs you would have in the summer. That's why I love spring.

**STUDENT ESSAY**  
*Sophie Frushell, Grade 5,*  
*Holy Rosary School*



**ORIGINAL ARTWORK**  
*Christina Labowicz, Grade 12,*  
*Oakmont Regional High School*

## What is your favorite pet?



Otis, my chocolate lab was the best pet. He was a ferocious soccer player. He would bite the ball and run away with it. He used to push my foot away, I only got by him once in 8 1/2 years. When I would take him on walks, he used to make friends with cats. Cats didn't like him much, but he tried being nice.

He could be the fastest dog in the Olympics, if they had Pet Olympics somewhere. He also was the most awesome stick chaser ever.

His ears were as soft as a bunny. I loved to pat them even when there was food on them. He loved to eat. I used to love to sleep with him. He would lay on me and I would lay on him. Otis made the best pet, because he was so nice to everyone, funny when he shook his rump, cuddly and soft and I liked everything about him.

**STUDENT ESSAY**  
*Bailey Burpee, Grade 2,*  
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## What is your favorite pet?

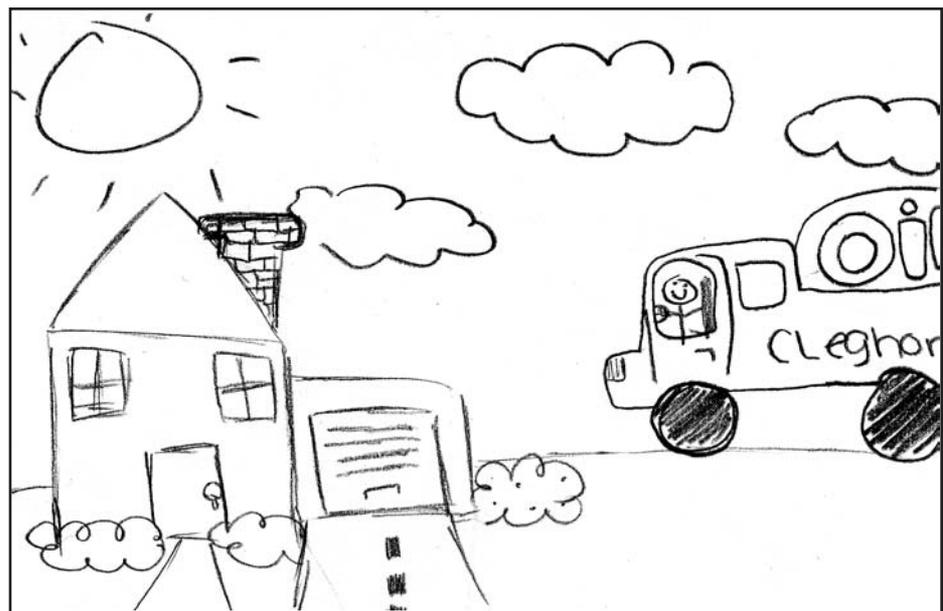


My favorite pet is a cat. His name is Shadow. He is cuddly, cute and loving. He lets you do anything you want to him. He found us in December. It was snowing at the time, and we were eating supper. We saw green, glowing eyes at the sliding glass door. The next morning, we gave him food, water and a litter box. Shadow slept in the litter box, because it was clod.

On the way to school, I touched him with my mitten on. A couple of days later, we brought him to the vet and took him in. Then the next morning, all of us thought of a name for him. We picked Shadow, because he looks like a shadow. He has a white tie on his neck and a spot of white on his back leg toe.

This is my favorite pet. What is yours?

**STUDENT ESSAY**  
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**EDITORIAL CARTOON**

*William Wang, Grade 7,  
Athol-Royalston Middle School*



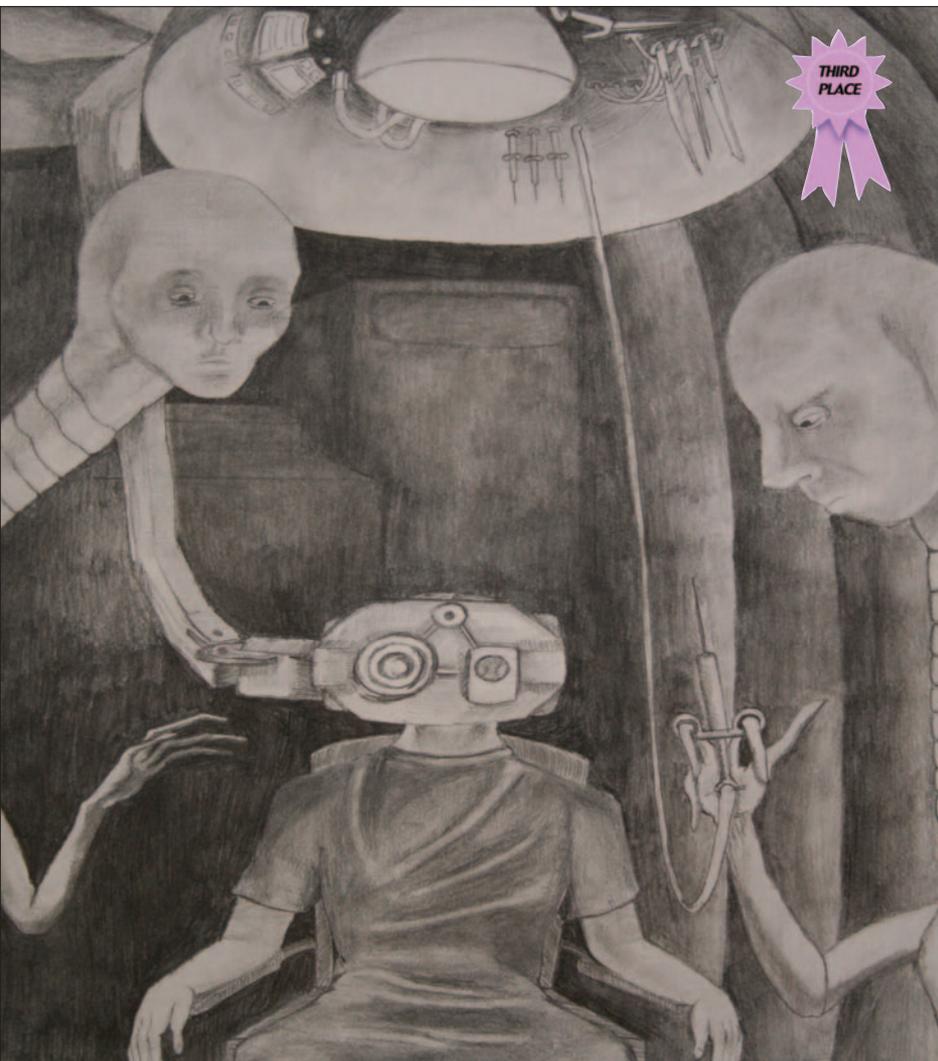
**STORYBOOK CHARACTER**

*Andrew O'Brien, Grade 3,  
Helen Mae Sauter School*



**EDITORIAL CARTOON**

*Grace Hartin, Grade 8,  
Sacred Heart School*



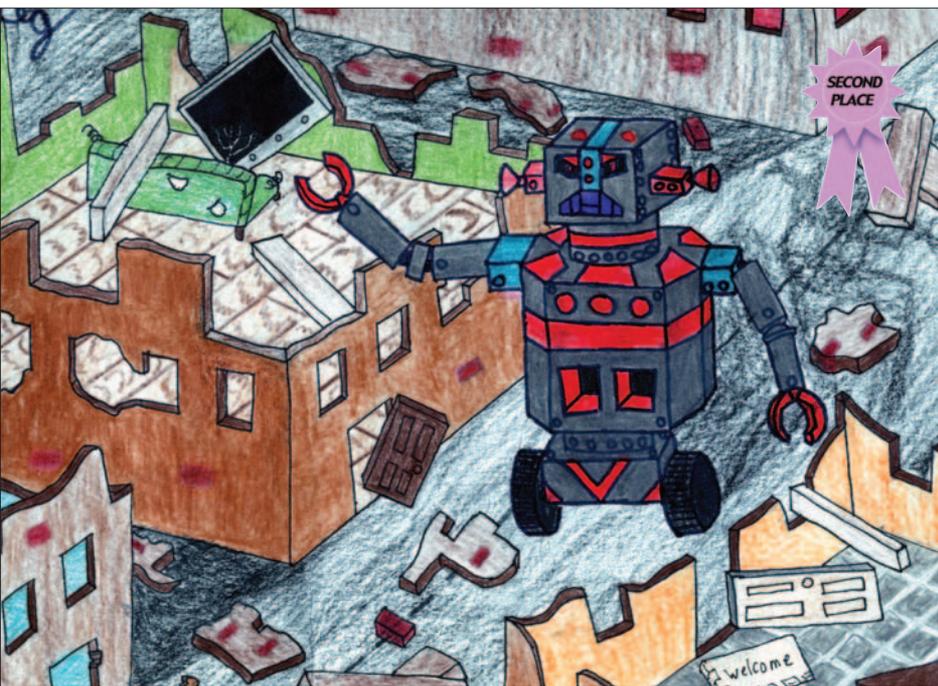
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*Dylan Safford, Grade 11,  
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**FEATURE PHOTO**

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**ORIGINAL ARTWORK**

*Greg Barry, Grade 6,  
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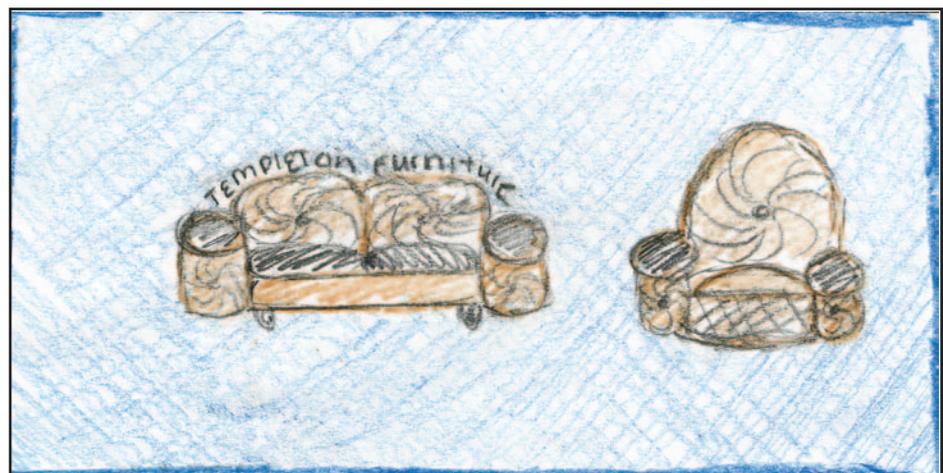
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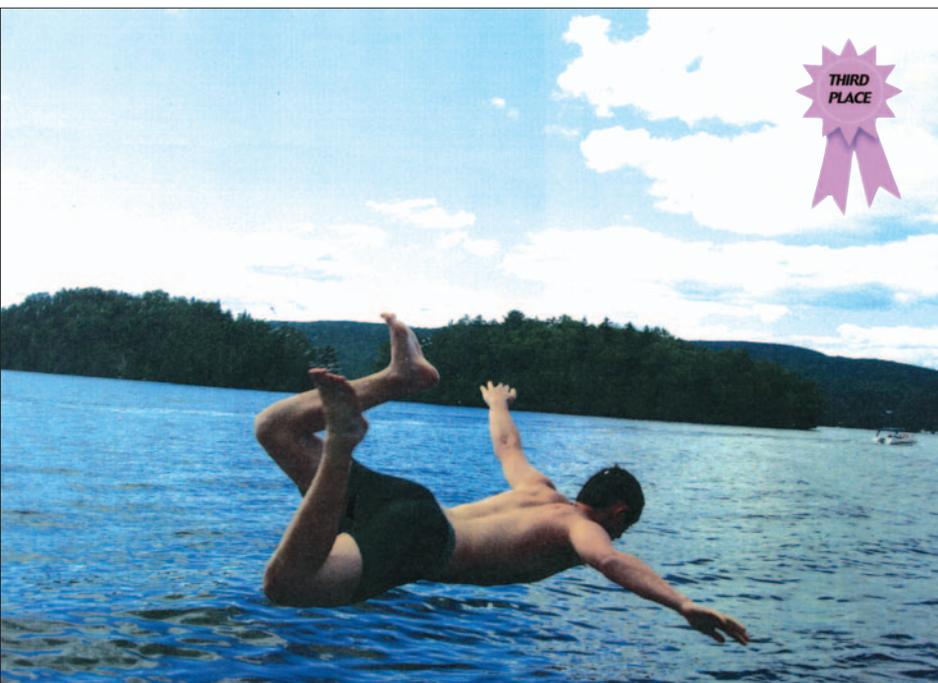


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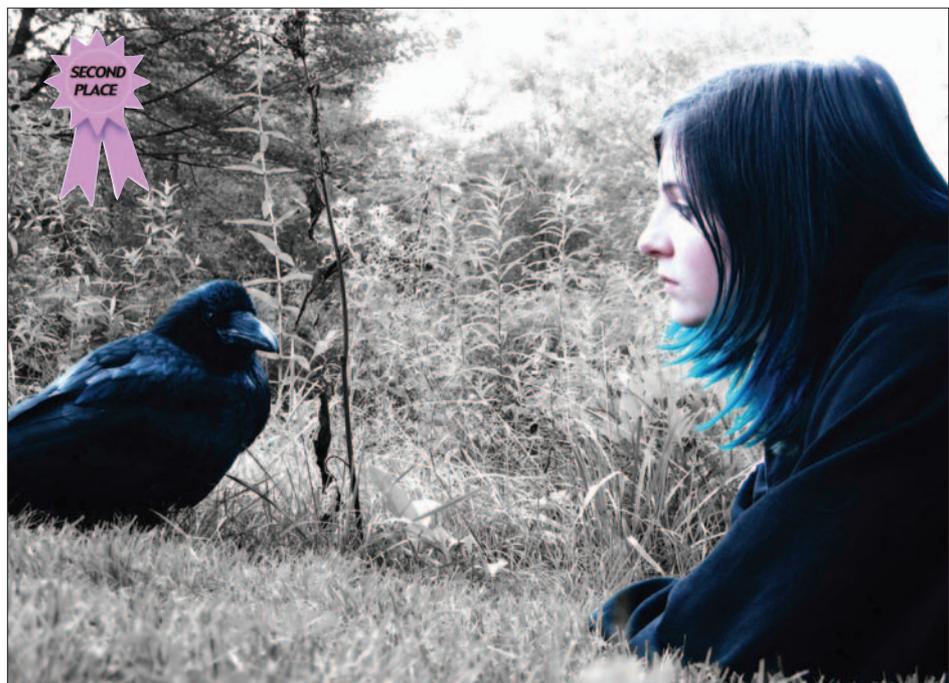
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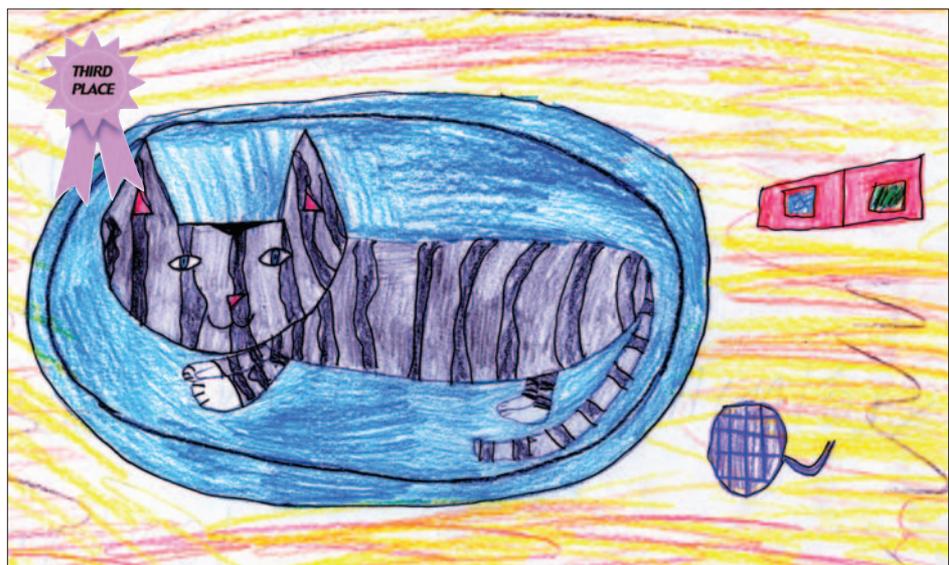
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Holy Rosary School*



**ORIGINAL ARTWORK**  
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**ORIGINAL ARTWORK**  
*Miranda Ingram, Grade 3,  
Oakham Center School*



**ORIGINAL ARTWORK**  
*Kristen Dunn, Grade 2,  
Baldwinville Elementary School*

# What is your favorite pet?



Have you ever had a friend that wakes you up in the morning by licking your face? That sits, stays, and speaks on command, or greets you at the door jumping up and down? Well, I do; that's why my favorite pet is a dog. When you think about it, dogs act just like humans. They keep you company when no one's around, and can tend to your every need if you give them proper training. Although dogs are so cute and hard to resist, originally the dog came from the wolf, so all dogs are sweet, yet even the cute little Chihuahua has a small bit of instinct of the wolf.

Some people think dogs are vicious and dangerous. All dogs, even the pit bull, if taken care of well can be the sweetest dog in the world. When people mistake dogs for vicious beasts, they often end up at the pound, on the streets, or even put to sleep. Some people think that dogs are meant to kill things. Those people often train their pit bulls and Great Danes, and other dogs to fight. Even though some dogs were used in wars in ancient times, they have been strongly bred out of that killing instinct.

Dogs are very useful in our world and we use them in lots of different ways such as seeing eye dogs that help lead the blind, therapy dogs that help people get better, police dogs that help sniff out crime scenes, rescue dogs that save lives, and herding dogs that help farmers keep livestock safe. Then again, some dogs are just meant to be companions. Working dogs help many people in many ways.

All dogs are unique in their own way. Some dogs have a waterproof undercoat that helps them to dry quicker when they come out of the water. Terriers (meaning "terra" or ground) have a keen sense of smell and long noses so they can hunt small things in the ground, while beagles were bred with short, stubby legs so that their noses are closer to the ground, so that they can sniff things out. Bernese Mountain, St. Bernard and Newfoundland dogs have thick coats that protect them in the mountains, and paws that act like snowshoes in the snow to help them rescue people. All dogs have a certain cuteness that will win your heart for sure!

Many people, including myself, have a passion for dogs because these four-legged friends will always be there for you. Although it is always hard to say goodbye when we lose our companion, their unconditional love makes it all worthwhile.

**STUDENT ESSAY**  
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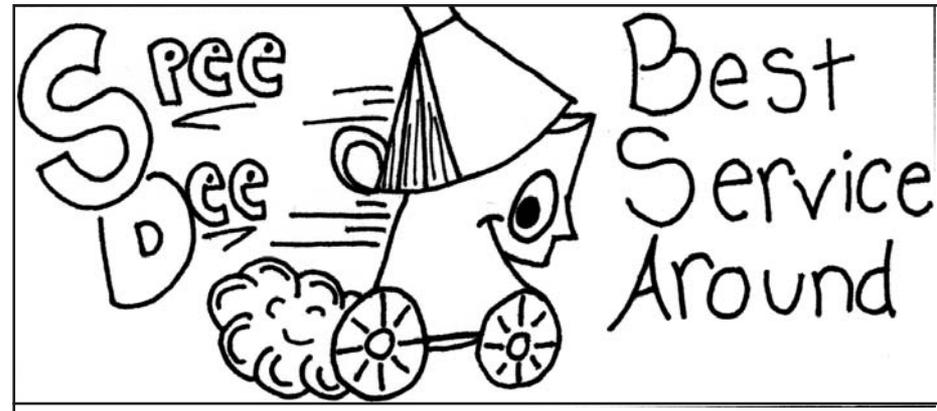


**FEATURE PHOTO**  
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# With college costs rising, how has that changed your mindset or plans?



In late August 2009, I walked through the doors of a familiar school, to see familiar people, to talk about familiar things, and to be asked to do familiar tasks. However, being a freshman was not so familiar. Freshman year means getting grades that count, attendance matters, more homework, actually having time to study, juggling friends, family, sports, clubs and more, all while trying to get that eight hours of sleep that seems to be on the verge of impossible of getting. Somewhere sandwiched among all of the new experiences and stress, gaining a sense that graduation is a mere four years away, remains lodged in the front and back of our teenage heads, motivating us to give school a purpose.

Meanwhile, dreams of being aspiring doctors, firefighters, teachers, police officers, veterinarians, fairy princesses and pirates inundate the minds of young children. Shows they watch on television portray these careers as all fun and games, but what they don't incorporate into these visual forms of entertainment is all of the time, energy and effort that must be put forth for those dream jobs to become reality. A place we call college is the first stepping stone that leads a great many of us to right where we would all love to be; successful and happy.

I know that the feeling of being a freshman will not be a one-time deal for me, because I have every intention of going to college where I will once again be a freshman. Unfortunately, with an economy hovering barely above rock bottom, the cost of attending college continues to increase markedly and finding necessary loans or grants has become a growing challenge. Regardless, attending college is not an option for me; it is a priority.

Futhermore, the fact that scholarships are anything but easy to get, and as time goes on, decrease in availability is that extra push that is going to make me work five times as hard in school.

I know that I have just as much potential as anyone else, and I am going to take that potential, hold on to it with both hands, and run with it. I plan on continuing to play sports, taking a variety of classes, keeping my grades up as high as they can be, and being a part of the amazing drama program at my school, as well as committees such as student council.

Hopefully, these additional efforts and accomplishments will show colleges that I am consistent and that I have a lot to offer, so that my chances of being accepted to multiple colleges are higher.

Both of my parents have had a massive influence on my mindset regarding my plans upon graduating high school. They were the ones who planted the notion of furthering my education into my brain at a young age, and they were the ones who proudly watered it. As I have grown up, my parents' expectation of me, education-wise, have not changed one bit. Although from time to time, I question the purpose of those expectations, I know that I will graciously thank them in the long run. I believe that because of these standards, I am motivated to gain grades worthy of hanging on my refrigerator.

Moreover, with the news flash of college becoming more difficult to attend, the pressure to maintain my determination and receive grades above good to average has increased. Another factor to be considered in thinking about college is that my family's funds have seen much better days. To me, being a single child out of the five in my family means that massive amounts of money stand in the way of me and college. I will not let money be the reason why college is not a part of my life. For starters, I have gotten a work permit; during the summer, I work as a camp counselor to earn money that I can gladly store away in the bank as a gallon that will drive me miles closer to college. Additionally, I plan on applying for financial aid in hopes of getting as much help as I can in that department, so that being a college student is possible for me.

As an individual, being a stay-at-home wife has never appealed to me all that much, because I have been exposed to the innumerable career paths that I can meander down. Nonetheless, I will be the first to say that much credit is because of these hard-working ladies. Any of the thoughts that I might have had of spending my life as one of these ladies have been thrown out the window, thanks to a few choice words from my mother. She tells me time and time again, "You need to have a steady, good paying job and be able to stand on your own two feet before you even *think* about getting married." My mom's message has and will continue to stick with me until I grow old and I am able to pass it on to my own children, so that they can make it as much of a part of their lives as I have mine.

Altogether, my mindset in what my plans upon graduating from high school have not changed entirely. They have just intensified. I will find a way to attend college, despite the extreme increase in cost. Keeping up my grades, getting involved in extra-curricular activities, and raising and saving money to put toward college are all the beginning steps for me to actually get there.

In the end, it all comes down to a single conclusion, I do not want to have a job. I want to have a career. A career that I will take pride in which I enter college, when I graduate from college, and as I earn paycheck after paycheck, using each and every one of the specialized skills that college was willing to teach me.

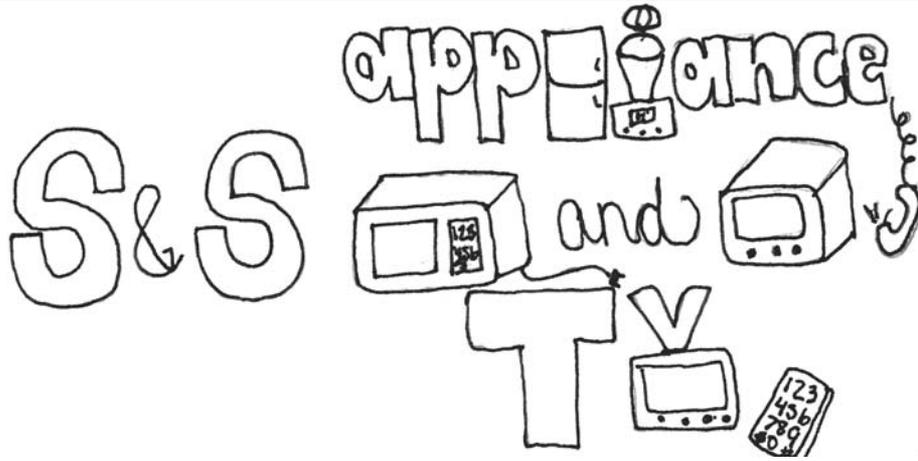
## STUDENT ESSAY

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## What is your favorite season of the year?



What is your favorite season. Summer is my favorite season. When the breeze hits you, it is truly summer. When you see the sunshine, it's beautiful and you just want to jump in a swimming pool! But you need to remember to put on some sunscreen, so you don't get a sunburn.

Now when you're going swimming, don't go too deep. You should always make a sandcastle when you're at the beach. Since it's summer, you can wear shorts and tank tops. Don't stay in your house all day; go outside and play!

### STUDENT ESSAY

**Julia Jaillet, Grade 3,  
Helen Mae Sauter Elementary School**

## With college costs rising, how has that changed your mindset or plans?



I have always been taught that after high school, you go to college. No questions, no complaints, no two ways about it. College has always been mandatory. Many parents in this time are teaching their children similar values, that college will help further you in your life. True, that in most cases, college will help you in the long run. Eventually, you could earn a higher salary than without an education. You could have more job opportunities available than you would without a college education, but at what expense?

I have never asked any questions about college being mandatory because I have never worried about it. When I was younger, my mom did my laundry, my dad handed out punishments, and both of them supported me 100 percent. That means when I needed food, my mom would buy it. When I needed a new backpack, I would just stop at the store and have my dad buy it. I, like most other children, didn't have to deal with money until much further on. This is why I went with the college rule. I wasn't worried about having to pay for college or any of the expenses that came with it. However, now that I am a sophomore in high school, college is no longer some abstract, far off idea of the distant future. It's almost here.

There is a program through the school that students can go through to explore college majors and career paths. I signed up and when I first looked at the tuition for my dream college, I was in shock. I had no idea that you had to pay so much just to get an education. And on top of that there were other expenses! I was blown away. I looked at the tens of thousands of dollars that it would cost to go through my schooling. Then, I looked at the tens of thousands of dollars less that I would make after getting my schooling and finding a career. I figured that I'd be in debt until at least age 56. It was at this time that I really had to weigh my pros and cons.

I would be set up for my dream job, something I can't do without a college education, pro. It costs tens of thousands of dollars to get my required bachelor's degree for my dream job, con. They have many scholarships and student loan options, pro. I would make a considerable amount less a year than I would spend per semester in college, major con. I would be on the path for success in my life and in my career, major pro.

As you can see, I was torn. The thought of going through four years of discretionary school really got under my skin. Then I came across a quote by Nelson Mandela: "Education is the great engine off personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become head of the mine, and that the child of a farm worker can become president of a great nation." What Nelson Mandela means by this quote is, with education, one can do anything they desire. Education is the most important thing in life, and by furthering your education, you can further your life.

This is why I have decided to keep my sights set on college. Through student loans, payment plans, and scholarships, every single person has the ability to go to college, whether their parents have started a college fund or not. One can better themselves immensely by choosing college. They will have better opportunities, a higher income, and chances are a better life. Ultimately, deciding to go to college is deciding to succeed in life.

### STUDENT ESSAY

**Jessi Pultorak, Grade 10,  
Oakmont Regional High School**

## With college costs rising, how has that changed your mindset or plans?



In today's society, education is one of the most valuable things a person can have. It is far too often said, "You can't put a price on education," but it is well known that there is in fact a price put on higher education, and it is nowhere near a bargain rate. As a senior in high school I have done my research when it comes to pursuing my college education and over the two to three years of researching I have only found the tuition prices going up. While I never thought that I would have to restrict my college choices according to price, I now find myself doing so.

Coming from a small town there are far less opportunities available to students than there are in larger cities. The number of classes, abundance of materials, and variety of classes are nowhere near the amount that larger schools have. Just recently I attended the Massachusetts' Junior Miss Scholarship program where I met girls from all over Massachusetts. Most of these girls came from extremely large school and were shocked when I told them what my school had to offer. Taking AP biology online, rather than in a classroom, was amazing to them, and while I sat there with the fifth edition book they were confused as to why, when they used the brand-new eighth edition. I am fully aware of the lack of opportunity I have compared to other high school students, and I have always said that I would rise above this, make the best of my situation, and go to whatever college I could get into, no matter the price tag. I always believed that if money held me back now, it would continue to for the rest of my life.

I was determined to prove that even a small town girl can attend a big name school. Since the young age of nine years old I have always wanted to attend Cornell University. Everything that I did was to please the mysterious person sitting in the admissions office. It was not until recently did I realize that Cornell may not be a realistic option for me. According to the Cornell University website just housing and tuition would cost \$45,000 per year for me to attend. It is true that the government caps you on how much you can borrow for students loans, something I was recently told by my mother. As an aspiring medical school student I have to be careful as to how much my undergraduate degree costs me to ensure that I can borrow for my graduate degree. An eight year dream of mine has suddenly become almost a fantasy because of a price tag — something I always said would never hold me back.

Loans and scholarships are hard to come by in such hard economic times and without immaculate credit, it is difficult to find private loans. As a young adult, I have not built credit yet, which means I have to rely on scholarships and government loans. Young students are very much so restricted in what they can find for financial help. I know I am not alone in the search for college cash and that there are many kids putting their dreams to the side to make the more responsible and logical choice.

The rising cost of college has already affected my college plans. Upon acceptance to Drexel University and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro so far, I know that I would have to attend the University of North Carolina because of the cost of tuition, even though Drexel was a top choice of mine. With this, I have found things that I love within this university and understand that the name of a college in not necessarily important, but instead it is what you make of it. I have learned that I must take the same approach I took at my high school; even though it is not the most desirable of situations, I will make the best of it and rise above it. Ultimately I know that I will succeed wherever I go, just like I have at my small town high school.

### STUDENT ESSAY

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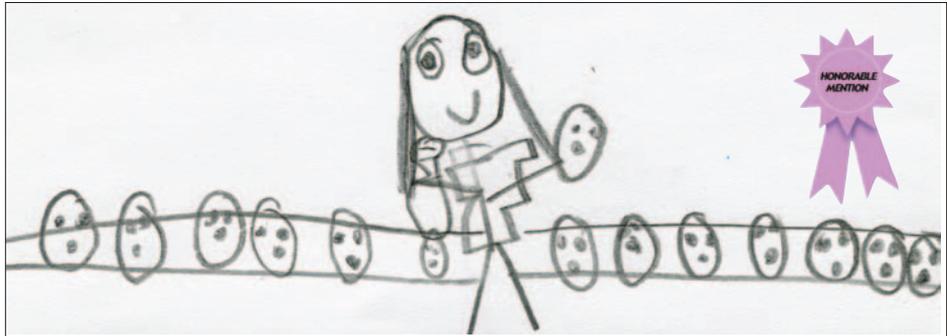
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Emily Buchanan, Grade 5,  
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### What is the best pet?



My dog's name is Kelly and she is the best pet. She was born on July 10, 2008. She is a beautiful Golden Retriever. She is a dark, golden, fluffy dog. She enjoys the outdoors and likes to run. We bring her to the vet for a checkup.

Everyday at 3 p.m. she waits for me to get home from school. She waits at the end of my driveway for me to get off the bus and then she runs and jumps with excitement.

She likes to play fetch with her ball. If you throw the ball straight up in the air, she jump and catches it.

In the morning, she waits at my bedroom door and at 7 a.m. she runs and licks me on the face to wake me up. She is so loving and fun. She is the cutest puppy on the planet and the greatest friend to me. I love her very much!

#### STUDENT ESSAY

*Faith Marcinkiewicz, Grade 3,  
Hubbardston Center School*

### What is your favorite season of the year?



Warm weather, fresh, billowy, blue skies, lush green grass, this is summer. Summer is a time to relax and enjoy. No school, no stress, complete fun. That is why summer is my favorite season.

In winter you have snow, in fall there are leaves, and springs means flowers, but summer has sunshine. Bright rays of happiness shining down upon the earth, warming us and our moods. It seems that as soon as we feel that soft rush of warm air after cold, we become excited and happy. Happy to have warmth and happy to see the signs that summer is coming.

And as soon as it arrives, all the fun begins. You can bike, ride, swim, play outside, watch fireworks, and plainly have fun. I can go play with my friends, without worrying about homework or grades. I can play and jump and run the whole day, smiling and laughing.

In summer, nothing can ruin a great day.

Summer is a feeling, A sense of pleasure and tranquility. Summer is the smell of grass after it's been mowed and pavement after it has rained. Summer is laughter and smiling faces, full of joy and relaxation. Summer is my favorite season.

#### STUDENT ESSAY

*Mimi Reitz, Grade 5,  
Westminster Elementary School*



**STORYBOOK CHARACTER**  
*Michelina Gregson-Pareago, Grade 1,  
Hubbardston Center School*

### What is your favorite season of the year?



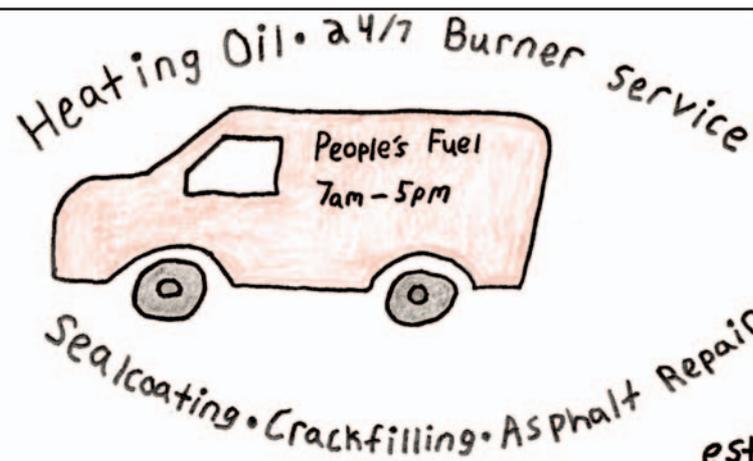
Spring is my favorite season, because everything is clean and fresh with new life. Crocuses, dandelions and tulips spring out from the light pile of snow that is left from the blustery winter. Soon, they will burst with color. Baby robins are about to be born from the aqua blue eggs. Mother deer prepares for the birth of their babies. You awaken to the call of the chickadees. The days are longer so at 6 p.m. dusk is just breaking. The smell of morning dew. Nature is now awakening from its deep, sleep and transitioning toward the warm summer ahead. Rain falls a bit more often, so life can grow. The blue skies and puffy clouds reflect on the emerald green grass that shines in the sunlight. Now in warmer temperatures people are outside doing their daily work. The freshness of spring brings life to the earth like no other season.

#### STUDENT ESSAY

*Katherine Arsenault, Grade 5,  
Westminster Elementary School*



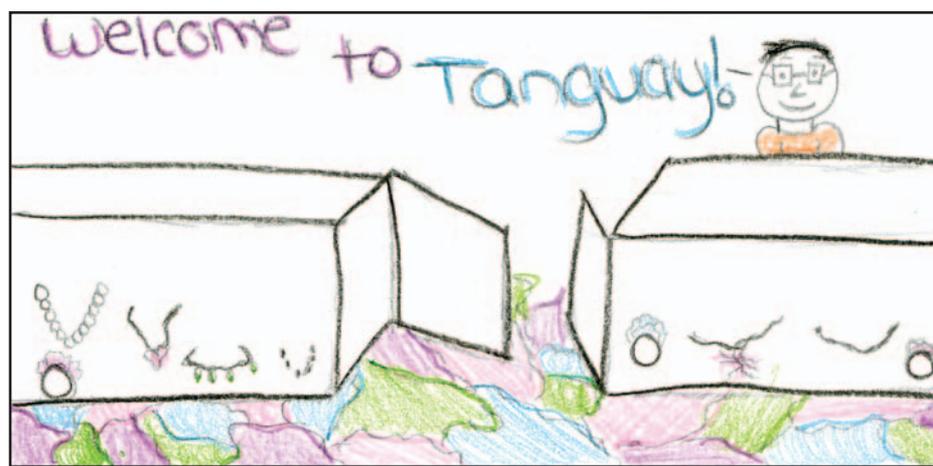
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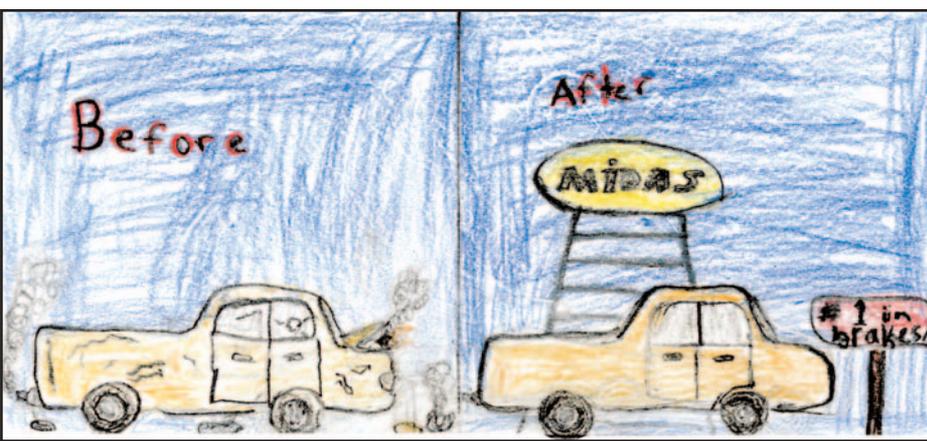
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*Jack Kinnear, Grade 5,  
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# What is your favorite season of the year?



Seasons are caused by the earth's tilt of axis and rotation. Spring, autumn, winter and summer, all offer many endeavors. Of the four seasons, spring is my favorite season. Spring is when the earth looks reborn with flowers and greenery coming to life everywhere, marking the end of winter. Though the year officially begins in winter, it is only being concerned as a new year when we begin to see the grass grow, the first leaves hanging from the branches and the first flowers opening to show us their colorful petals. Only at the moment when we see the birds return and make themselves new nest, we begin to feel that spring is here.

The sound of birds singing, of sunny, happy days fills the morning hours, and a quick peek toward the yard can send your thoughts in the direction of fresh paint for the bird house. All of this quickly begins to take place, bringing a deep-seeded need to break the back-of-the-closet-flip-flops out of solitary confinement.

This is the time of year when looking forward to seeing green grass and enjoying the fragrance of a freshly mown lawn overshadows the oncoming monotony of weekly mowing during summer months. The smell of a spring rain carried by warm winds replaces memories of the stinging winter snow blown against the few inches of skin that you dare expose. You begin to be reminded of the bright hues of color due to the newly blooming flowers that will soon be filling your flower garden. Pink is the new black because it goes with everything! The chill of water from the garden hose on bare feet in the early evening as you spray the winter salt off the driveway is work, which brings the excitement of knowing warmer weather is just around the corner.

Spring also brings about the holiest time in the Christian year, the end of Lent and the celebration of Easter, promising spiritual renewal, and most importantly, promising mankind hop of life after death, fittingly symbolized by spring following winter.

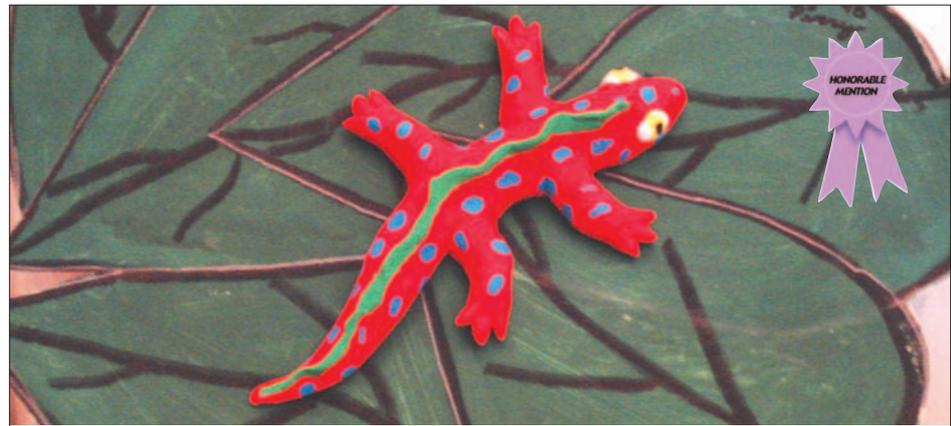
The animals are shedding their winter coats, and the shiny fur underneath the dull winter trappings begs to be brushed until surfacing. The caterpillars and inchworms are starting their ascent into the trees, where they will become the beautiful butterflies and pesky moths of summertime. After many sequestered months of growing out, things start growing up, and we look to the neighborhood joggers to inspire us to stretch our own legs to gain a few inches of height while losing a few inches of girth. Potential is everywhere. It is still too early for the mosquitoes and just a perfect time for that mouthwatering barbecue.

Children start rummaging through bedroom drawers, looking for their shorts and bathing suits, intent on pre-planning their summer outings. And mothers constantly remind us that although the air is warm, the ground is still cold, and they need to keep their socks and shoes on their feet. Adults have their own angst. Visions of sugarplums have their place, but visions of the poolside with a favorite novel are a female paradise. The guys have their dreams with golf clubs bearing witness to this fact.

Hope is perhaps the most important element that makes the spring season the one that affects the emotions most strongly. There is hope that the summer will be warm; that the harvest will be fruitful; that the new life just emerging will grow strong and healthy, and that despite the cold harshness that can be present throughout life, there is hope that it will be followed by a bright and joyous future. Yes, this is spring. Thank goodness it is almost here.

## STUDENT ESSAY

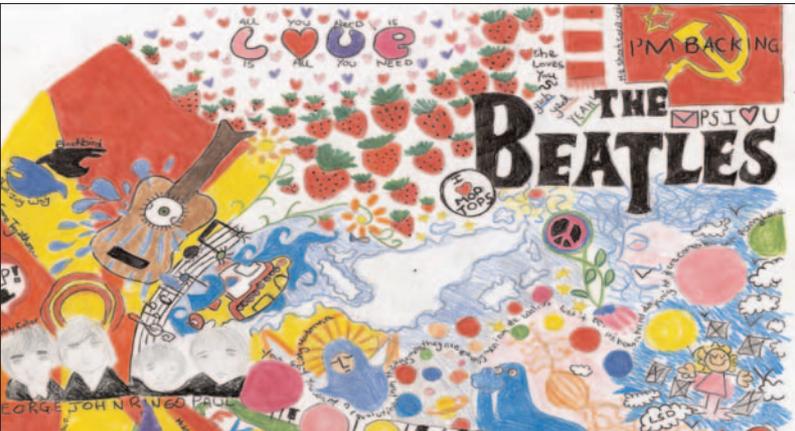
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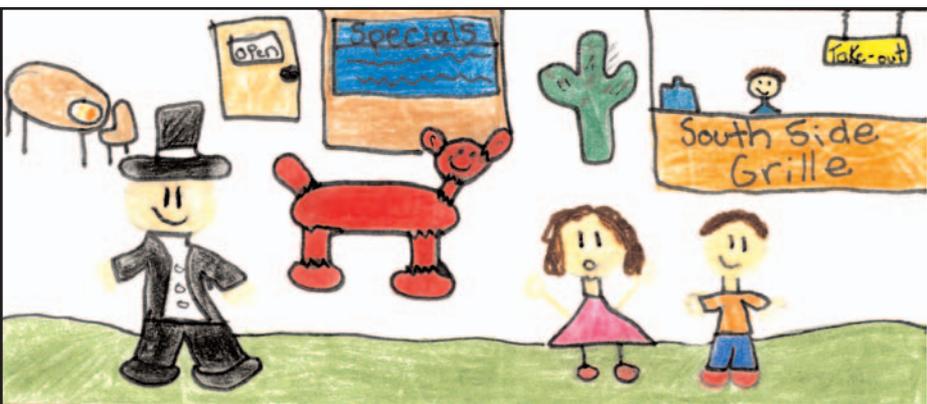
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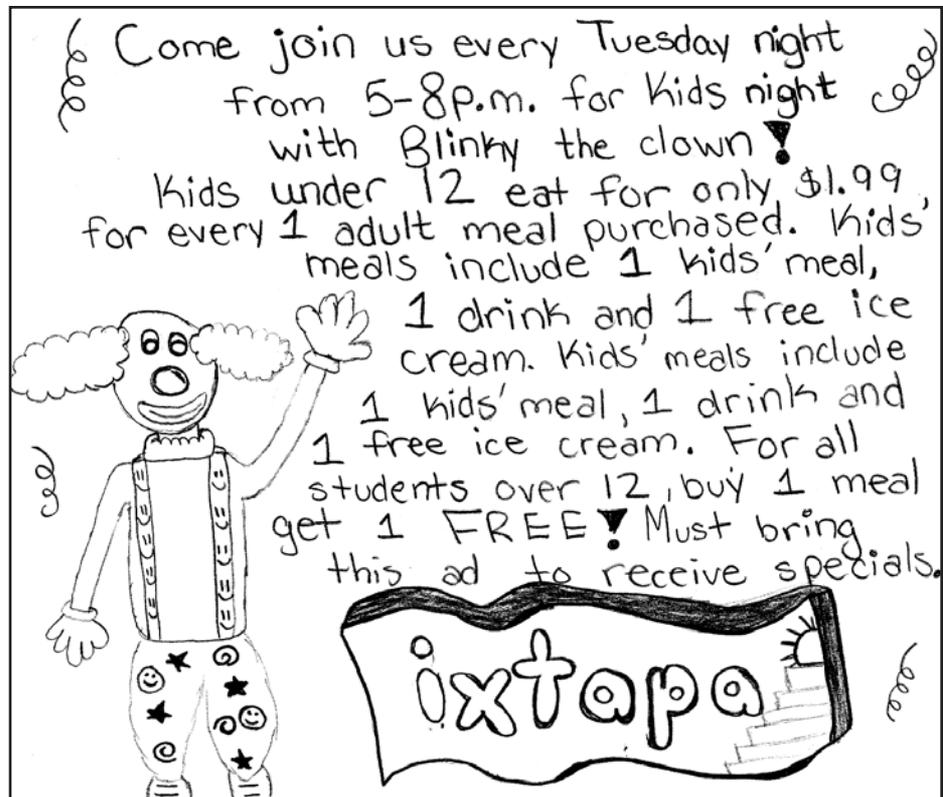
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## What is your favorite season of the year?



Fall is my favorite time of year because I love to see all of the colors changing and the wonderful smells blowing around. Every house is filled with warm lighting and decorated so beautifully with all of the fall colors. The fall to me means families getting together and spending as much time as possible for all of the holidays. I am very close to my family and some of my fondest memories are the laughter and sharing that happens when we sit down for a holiday meal. Some people don't appreciate the season as much as I do, but I love spending time with my family. They are wonderful and special and you never know when things will change, so you need to enjoy every minute. I also love fall foods. My favorite meal is Thanksgiving, where you eat all day and enjoy the turkey, potatoes, and every thing else that goes with the meal. I have to say that you can't beat apple pie; there is nothing like the smell when it's cooking in your home. It's when we get the car to head for my aunt's house for Thanksgiving dinner that I get excited to taste everything. My aunt and my mom are great cooks!

Another fun memory to me is jumping into the ocean of colorful leaves with my sister. We love to have them float above our heads and you just keep jumping around until you finally smell like the leaves. I will say, however, that one of the highlights of the fall is Halloween night and getting to dress up in costumes. Well, let's just say that is my favorite part. This is because I want to be an actress when I grow up and this one night I get to be anything I want to be and act like a character I want to portray in the future. I also like seeing what other people come up with for costumes and maybe getting a little treat. But when it comes to fall, I have many traditions. My family and I go to the Yankee Candle Factory and get as much Halloween stuff and we get a lot of great fall smelling candles. After our shopping trip, we go out to eat, which is another tradition on that day. But I think one of the most important things to fall is spending time with just your family and playing games and just having fun. I love my life and everything about it, and I wouldn't change anything for it. This is why I love fall.

### STUDENT ESSAY

**Nicole LaBrack, Grade 9,  
Murdock Middle High School**

## Should 'Under God' remain in the Pledge?



Whether or not to keep "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance is an issue that has been debated for many years now. A lot of people will say that you must be religious to say this; I, however, don't believe this. I would consider myself someone without an "organized religion," but I do believe in a god. It may not be the same god as Christians believe in, but it's my god, therefore I have no problem saying "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The word god can be interpreted many different ways. Whether it is the god we think of with Christianity or Buddhism, it doesn't matter, you're just showing that you believe in a god, in a power higher than ourselves.

Many people will say that they don't believe in any god, so saying "Under God" to them isn't right, and while I understand where they're coming from, they really just don't have to say it. They're not forced. That may seem like an unrealistic end to this debate but what else are you going to do? About nine in 10 people say the reference to God belongs in the pledge despite constitutional questions about the separation of church and state, according to a poll taken by The Associated Press.

I think that, unfortunately for some people, this is a situation where you must favor the majority; you can't just get rid of the word "God" because 10 percent of the population doesn't believe.

Most who don't agree with the majority believe that saying "Under God" makes it seem like this nation was "founded upon religious principles," but wasn't it? That's who we are; we were founded upon religious principles and although times have changed, where we come from remains the same, and I believe, more so than religion, the pledge represents our history.

Although only about 10 percent of Americans are offended by saying God in the Pledge of Allegiance, prosecutors in the *Freedom from Religion Foundation vs. The Congress of the United States of America* are trying to wipe out the name of God for everyone. David Cortman, ADF's senior counsel, said that "Those who disregard America's heritage have no right to demand that America abandon its traditions simply to appease their political agenda."

This, again, brings us back to the fact that saying "Under God" is part of our history as Americans. This phrase was first used in the Gettysburg Address given by former President Abraham Lincoln before the pledge was even written, why should we abandon that simply because some people don't believe in any god? Many will argue that sometimes history needs to be changed, and while I understand that some things from history did need to be changed such as slavery and discrimination, changing the pledge would be a completely different scenario. It just wouldn't be right.

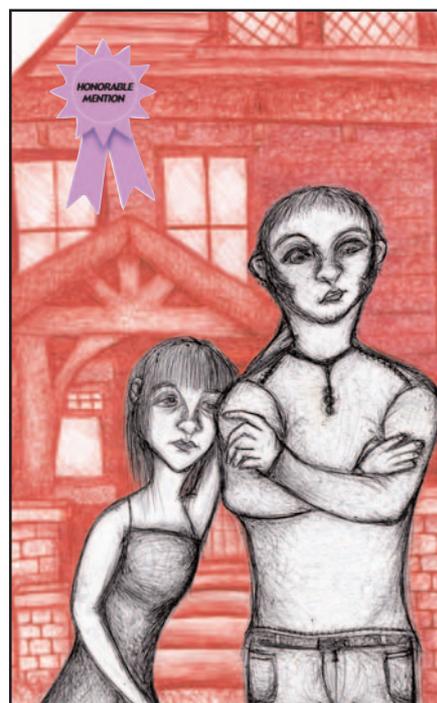
Overall, I believe that we have much more important issues going on in today's world like hunger and global warming to be worrying about changing a phrase in a historic pledge that could be interpreted many different ways and is a part of our history.

### STUDENT ESSAY

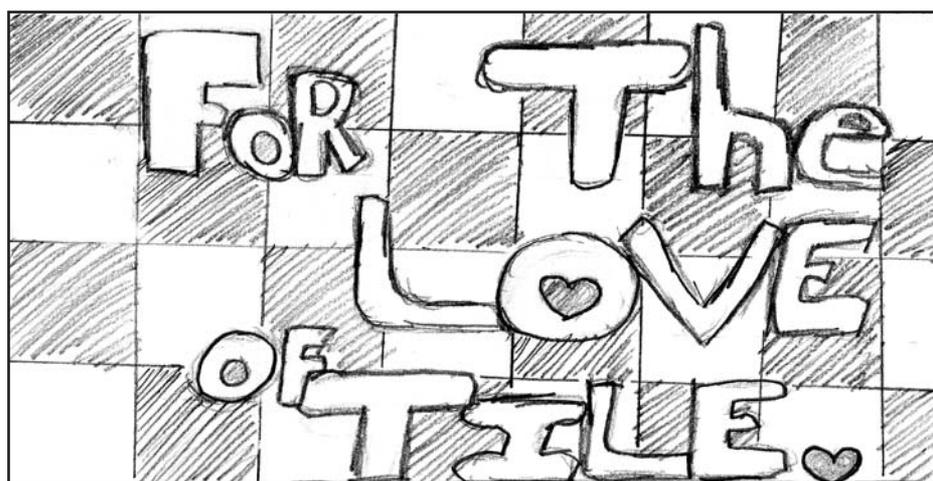
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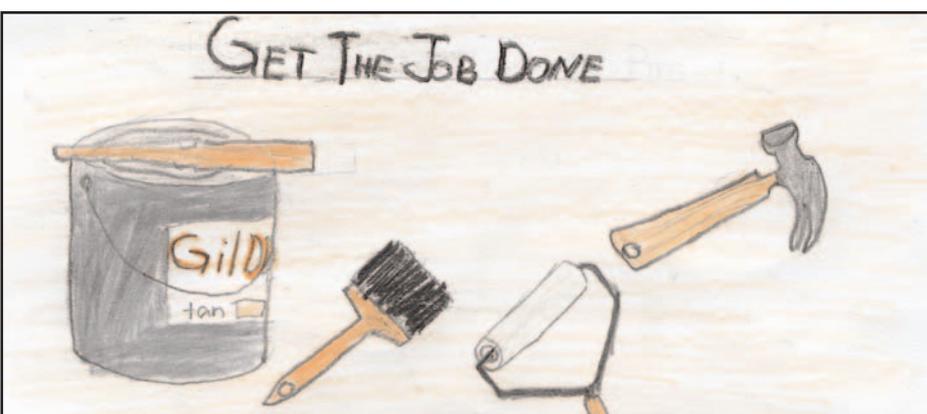
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# With college costs rising, how has that changed your mindset or plans?



As a high school senior, I know how difficult paying for my college education will be, both for my parents and me. Scholarships and grants are sure to take me part of the way, but they are certainly not enough to cover all the fees, books, and meals that are included in the overwhelming price total. Money should never compromise the satisfaction of walking away after four years of college with a hard-earned degree, but going to the most affordable school definitely provides a big incentive to consider.

When I received the first letter from a college with "Congratulations!" at the top of the page, I was very excited to start my accepted list. When another letter came in February, this time announcing that I had received an extremely prestigious merit scholarship that covered tuition and all fees, my head swam. I had since received two other acceptance letters, one of which was my top choice. I had been granted an exceptional scholarship there as well, but it wasn't quite as impressive as this.

The problem was, my first choice school provided a communications major that concentrated more narrowly on my desired career path. I had realized that the school I was granted the most money to attend didn't adhere to my future plans as well as the college that offered me the smaller amount. But regardless of what I saw as fit for my future education, my parents instantly began to lie on the pressure. We, as well as the majority of American families, are having a difficult time staying afloat during the recession. As soon as I would walk through the doorway after school, my dad would go into persuasion mode. "I was talking to so-and-so today, and he said something that good is hard to come by," and, "you know, you should decide where you're heading; the dorms are starting to fill up." And once my mother would get home from work, I'd be hit from all sides. "She's practically got a full-boat here; she better not pass something like that up."

As it is, I have applied to all inexpensive public schools. I have stayed inside Massachusetts, and applied for countless scholarships. I thought all of the hurdles had been jumped — I had received all my acceptance letters, now all that's left is to choose, right? I never anticipated the amount of work that would go into scholarship searches and additional financial aid. Student loans take years to pay off, and work study programs, while a beneficial tool, will still only bring a student so far. Especially since money is so scarce in the country's current economic situation.

Tons of seniors are experiencing the same applicant wrap-up anxiety that I am. One Oakmont senior has already been through the financial aid raffle. However, with scholarship money not easy to come by, he has had to fill out an additional appeals form, with merit information updated since he submitted his application in the fall. In a last-hope attempt to gain further money for school, he is beginning to realize that he "most likely won't be going to my first-choice school regardless of the fact that it is much more prestigious, solely based off of money and affordability."

The application process is stressful enough. The anticipation, the worrying, and the anxiety that goes into simply applying for college are enough to make a student stressed to their breaking point. Add that on top of the countless hours spent on the FAFSA and the millions of scholarship forms and essays needed to be prepared to help with paying for school, and you have something more stressful than taking three AP exams in one week. Lots of seniors, myself included, are making real sacrifices, including missing out on attending their dream school, all because of a lack of financial aid. Wherever they may end up, they are sure to succeed, but there is a fine line between earning a college degree and despising the school you are attending for the next four years of your life. It is unfortunate that some students may have to settle for that instead of having the college experience they really desire in a field they are truly passionate about, all in the name of money.

## STUDENT ESSAY

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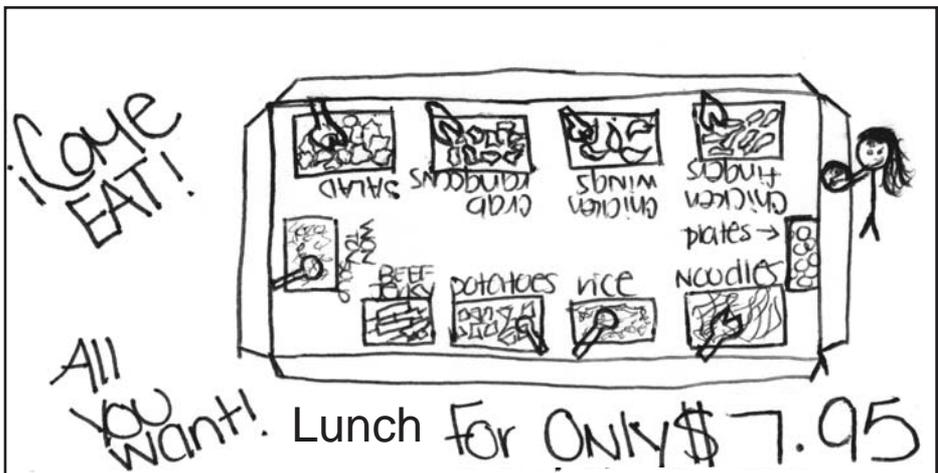


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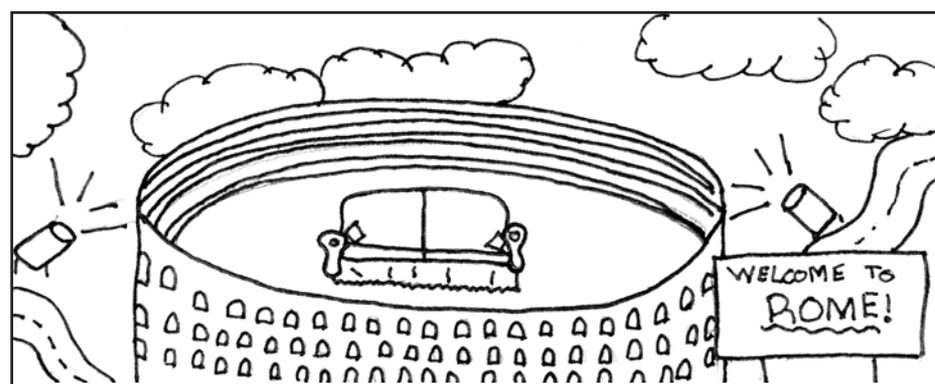
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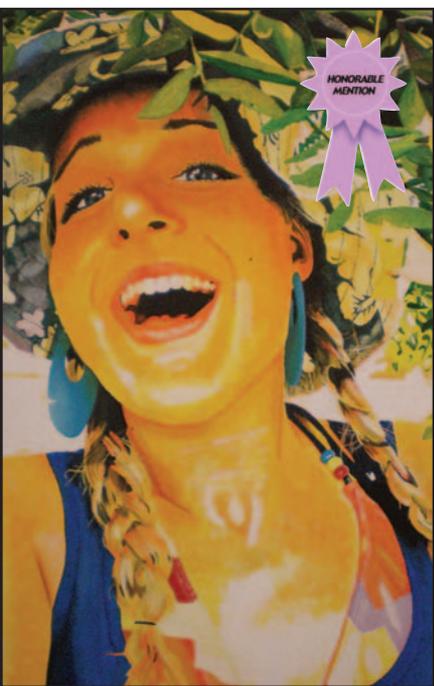
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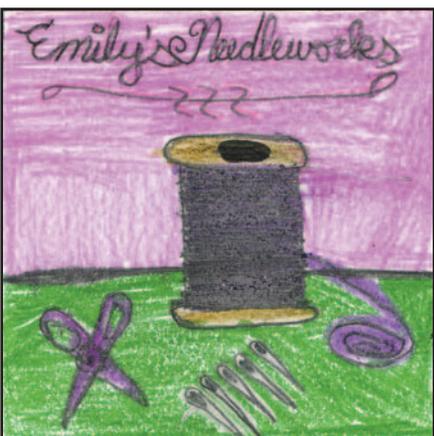
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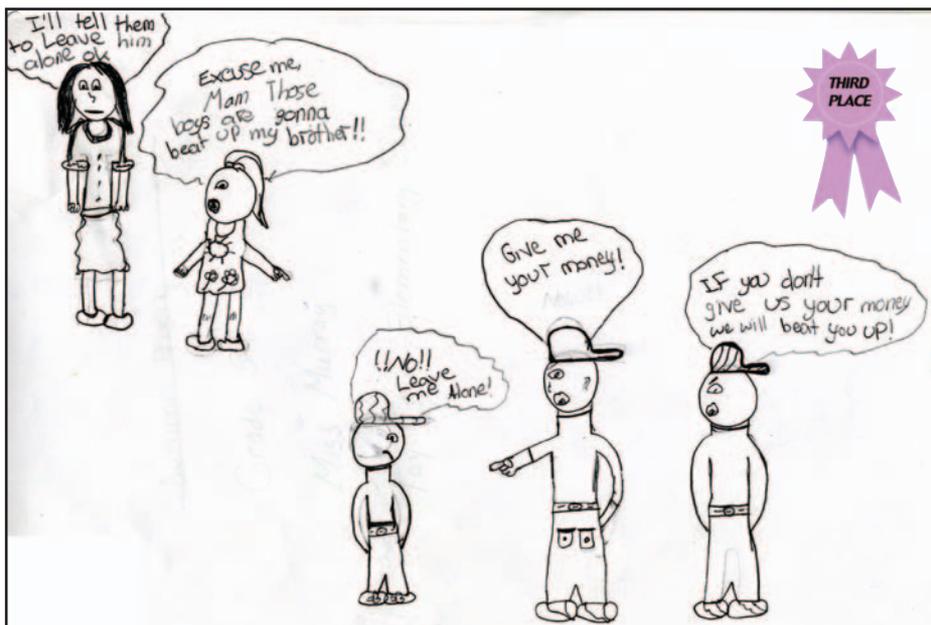


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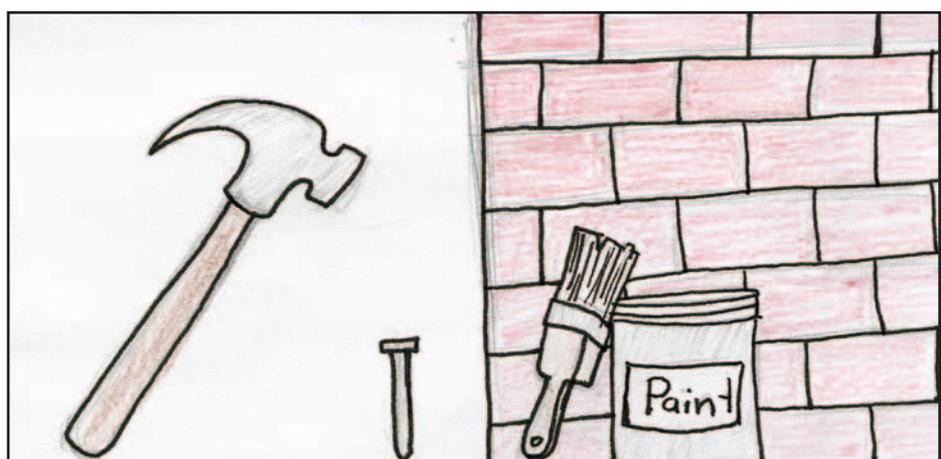


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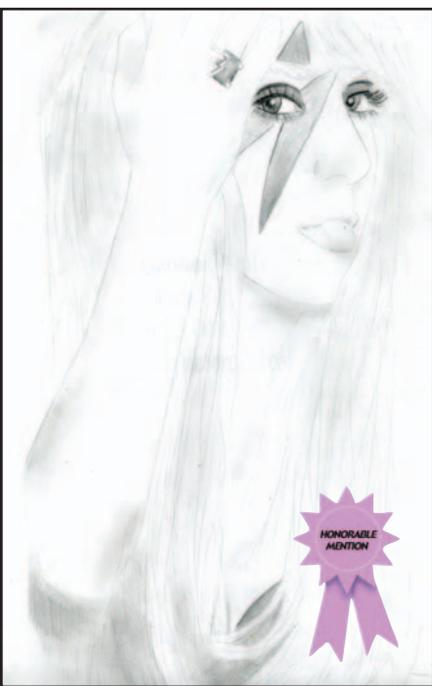
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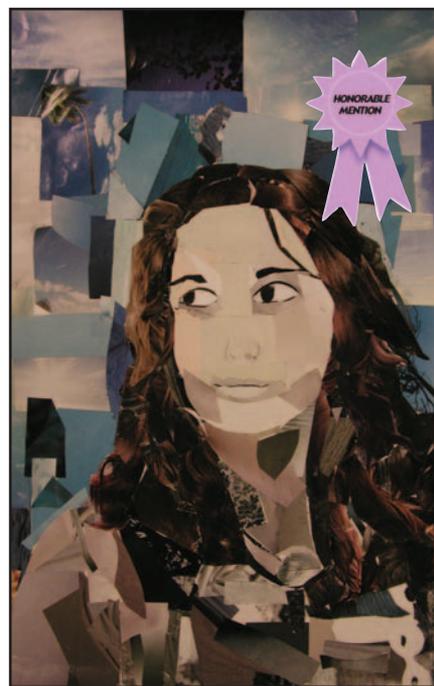
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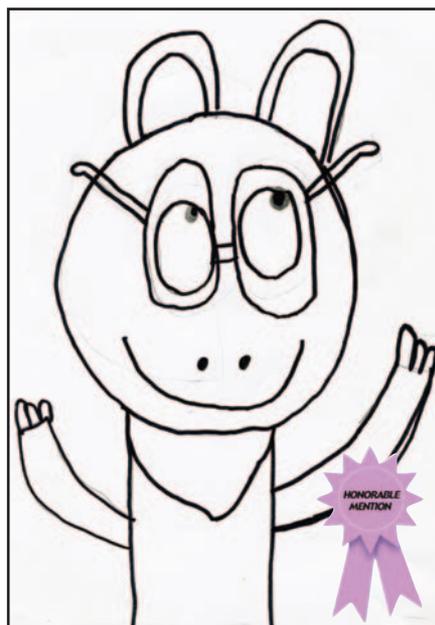
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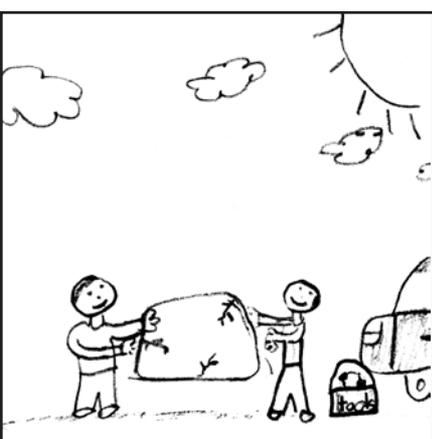
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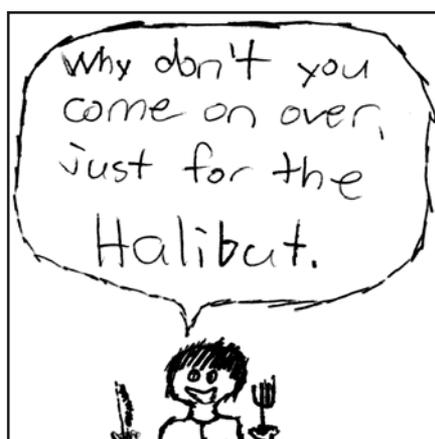


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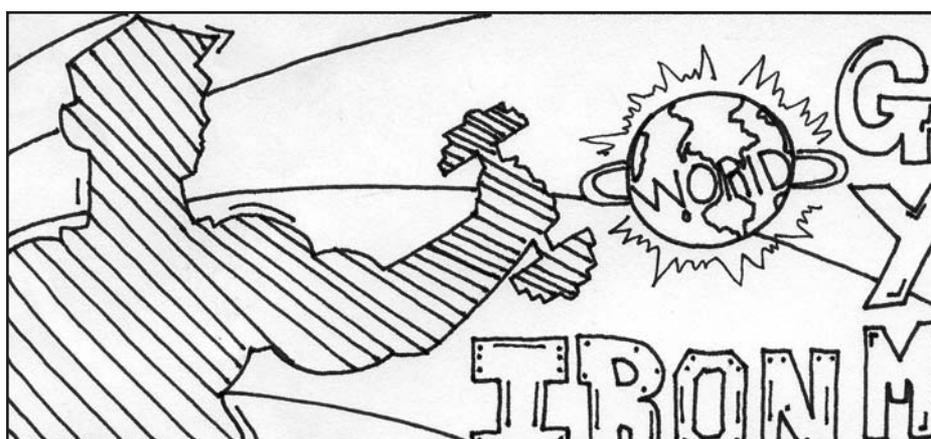
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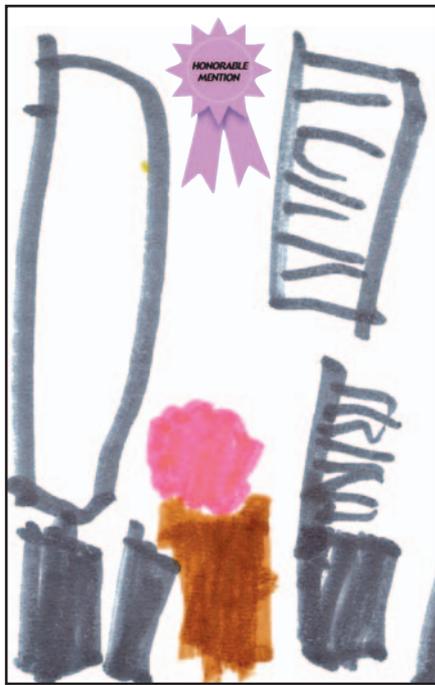


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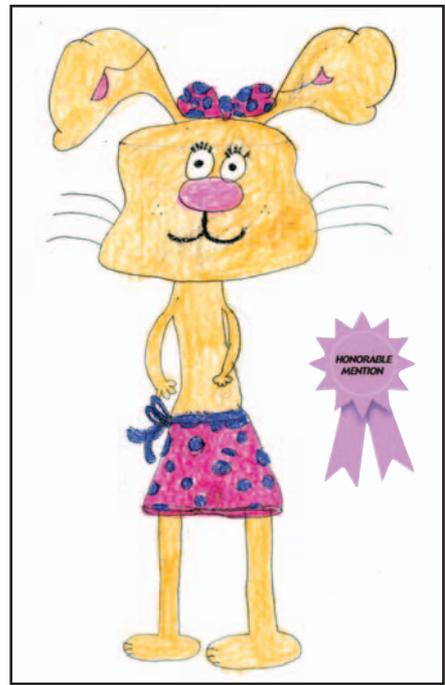
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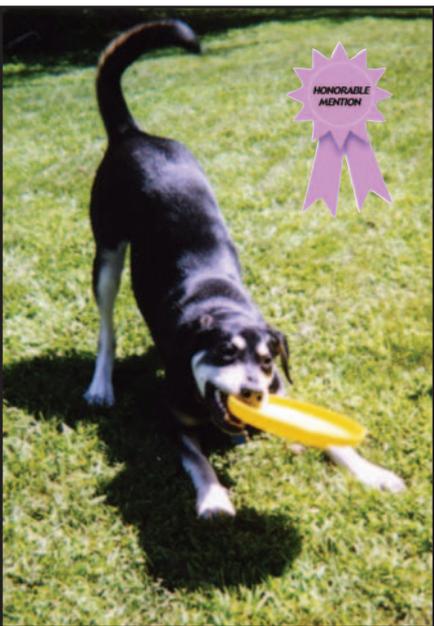
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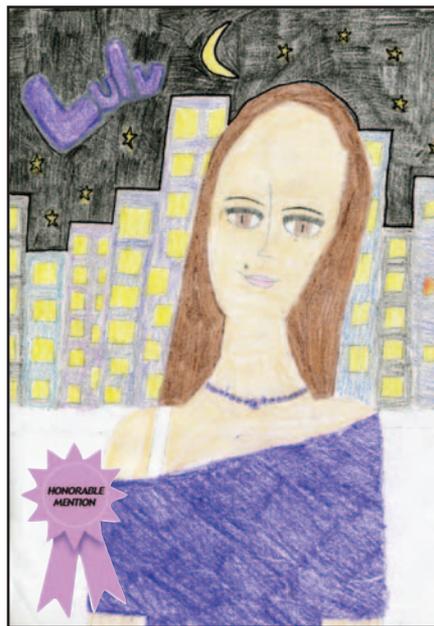
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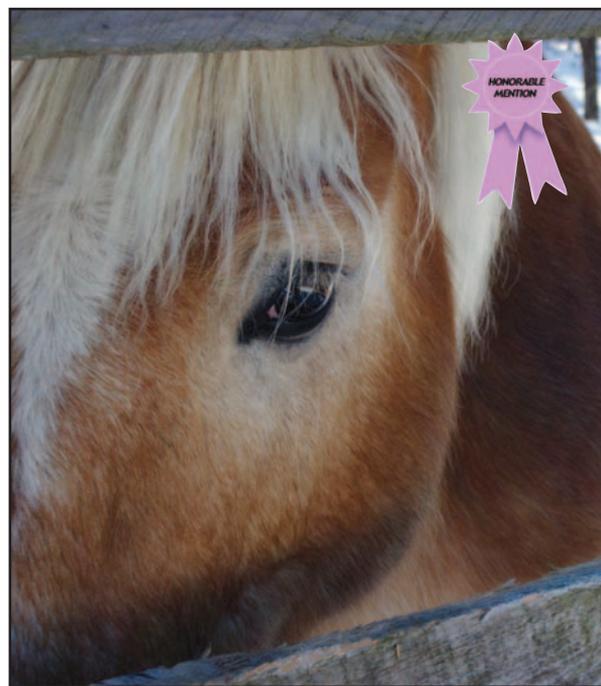
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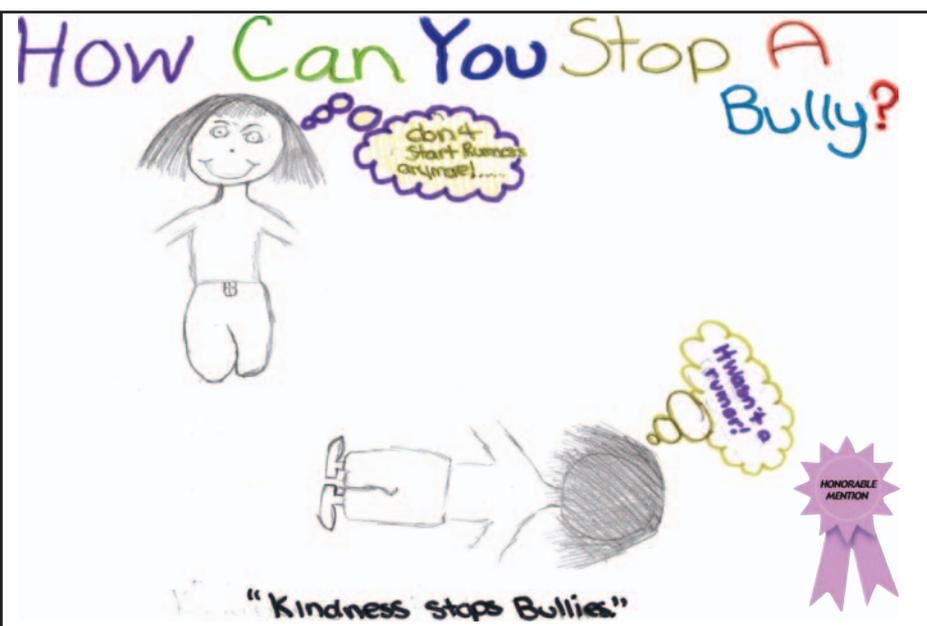
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