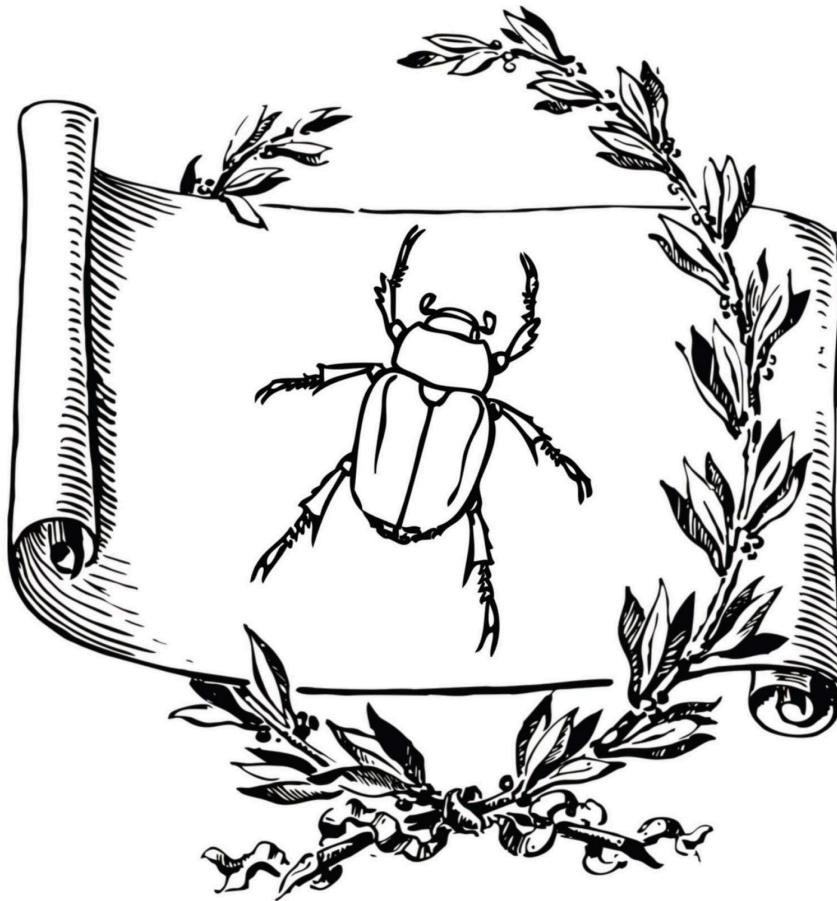


**Scarab Scrolls:
A Year of Writing Exploits
at East Tech High School**



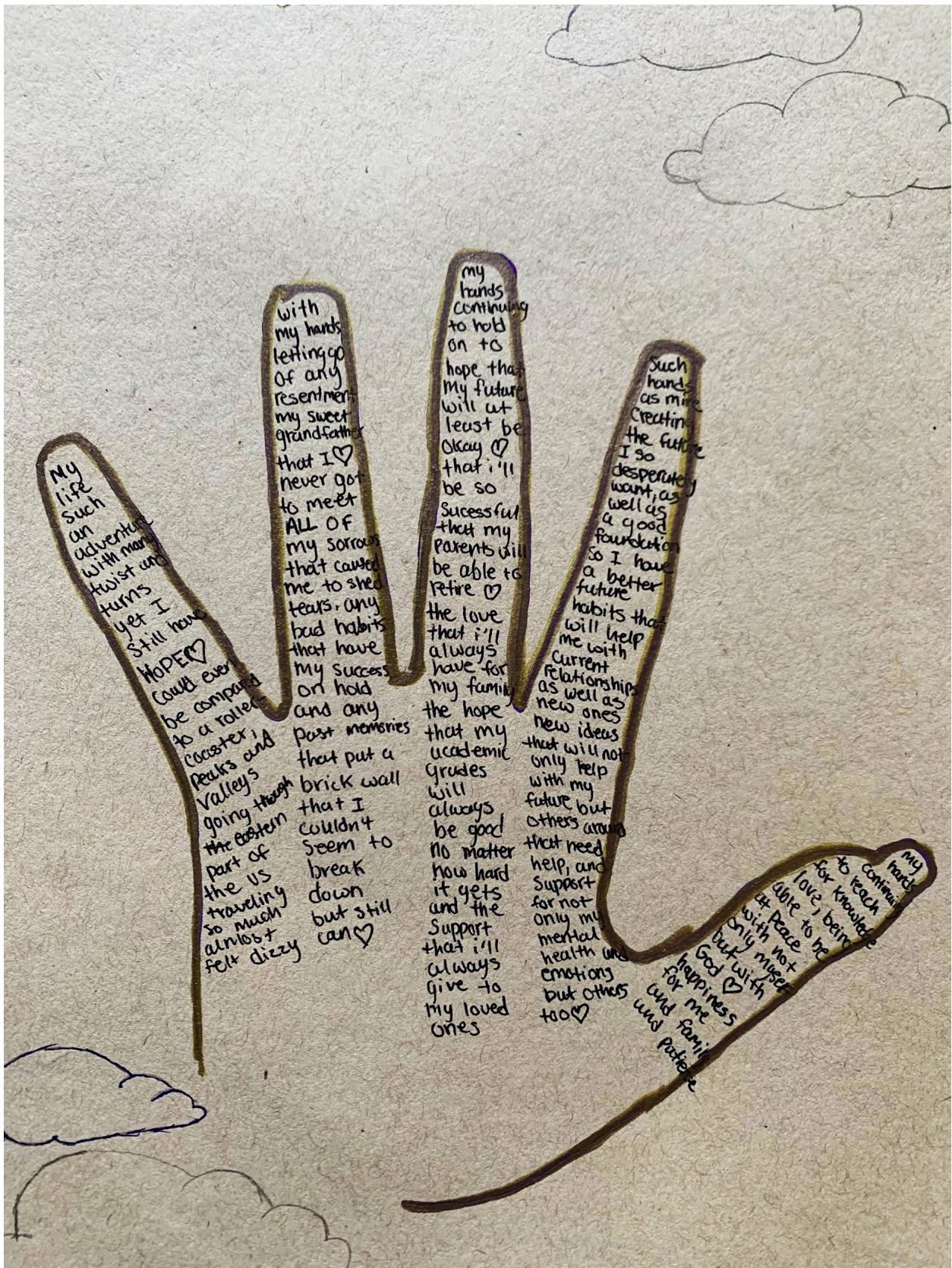
**Cleveland Metropolitan School
District
2024**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Hand poem by Adalicia O.	5
Tanka Poems	6
Hand Poem by Andre J.	10
Hand Poem by Cayla S.	10
ODES	11
Ode to My Sister by Adalicia O.	11
Ode To My Friends by Carrie D.	11
My Cousin by Aliyah B.	11
Ode to my best friend by A'maurie B.	12
Ode to the Bowlers by Anthony K.	12
Image by Cherish	12
Ode to my homegirls by Ariyon R.	13
Ode To My Cousins and Me by Brooklyn M.	13
Ode to My Friend by Cayla S.	13
Ode to Luster by Cherish H.	14
Ode to my Family by Chris S.	14
Ode to Subway by Deandre L.	14
Ode to Cordae by Cordae S.	15
Ode to my God Sister Maia by Damiana D.	15
Remembrance by Jaiden C.	15
Ode to my Favorite Homegirls by Jamaia B.	16
Ode to Wally by Jihari C.	16
Ode to Friendship by Jamiyah P.	16
Ode to My Friends and Family by Jerold T.	17
Ode to My Best Friend by Kiyah G.	17
Ode to Granny by Maniya P.	18
Ode to my sister by Minnie G.	18
Image by Reinika	18
Ode to My 2 Bestfriends by Nadia P.	19
Ode to my Sister by Niwyian B.	19
This is for You, Ma by Nassirra W.	20
Ode to Cousins by Shondell C.	20
Ode to my Sister Kasharra by Reinika H.	21
Ode to Friends by Stephen M.	21
Ode to My Bro Makhi by Tyrone P.	22
So we could hang out more	22
Ode to My Best Friend by Taliyah C.	22
Ode to my homegirls by Ty'Janeya G.	23

Image by Jaiden C.	23
ODE TO MY SIBLINGS (Missing You) by Zaria G.	24
Ode to Jehovah by Zimerria C.	24
Ode to My Old Best Friend in 1st Grade by Zyan V.	25
Hand Poem by Malik	26
Hand Poem by Kamarion	26
Hand Poem by Keshawn	26
What It's Like to be us	27
What It's Like To Be Me by Adalicia O.	27
Ali by Ali A.	27
Nobody Knows by Aaliyah B.	28
Sixteen by Aniyah M.	28
Being the oldest... by Ariyon R.	28
What it's like to be ME... by Brenda C.	29
Light of my Own by Cha'Maree M.	29
To be me by Cherish H.	30
All Alone by Deandre L.	30
What It's Like To Be Me by De'Asia T.	31
I'm becoming a woman by De'Nariel G.	31
To Be Me by Kamarion W.	31
That's what it's like to be me.	31
What's It Like To Be Me!!! by Jaiden C.	32
Free Verse 4/16 by Jamiyah P.	32
To Be Me by Janyah C.	33
I Am Kyra by Kyra F.	33
A Message to the World by Jihari C.	34
Blank Black Life by Lyn'yoda M.	34
Artist in Training by Malik F.	35
What it's like to be me by Maniya P.	35
What it's like to be me by Minnie G.	35
What makes me, ME, a poem by Niwyian.B	35
Story of Tray by Tray'Von B	36
What It's Like to Be Me by Tyrell D.	36
What it's like to be me by Marvell W.	36
My years as a kid were mysterious and fun by Reinika H.	37
My Name is Time by Timiah G.	37
What They Never Talk About By Ty'Janeya G.	38
Image by Harmony R.	38
What it's like to be me by Zyan V.	39
Hand Poem by Janyah C.	40
Stop the Hate Poetry	41
I am by Aniyah M.	41
My Mother Tells Me... by Ariyon R.	41

This Is Who I Am by Brooklyn M.	42
Embracing Every Curve by Cha'Maree M.	43
They say in this world of shapes and sizes where judgment often lingers,	43
I navigate the whispers as expectations to point fingers.	43
Chubby they label with a tone that's less than kind,	43
yet strength resides within me, an un-bothered mind.	43
Straightforward and blunt, my voice cuts through the haze,	43
no need for sugar-coated words in this complex maze.	43
My volume breaks through the barriers of deceit,	43
cracking facades, honest heartbeats.	43
Expectations cast their shadows, but i stand tall,	43
embracing every curve, i won't let judgment be my fall.	43
This is who I am, by Chereae	43
Racism by De'Andre L.	44
Model Minority by De'Andre L.	44
I Am by De'Nariel G.	44
Stop The Hate by Dai Shaun R.	44
Don't Judge Anyone by Emani W.	45
When you look at me by Essence H	45
When You Look at Me by Frank K.	45
This is what you see when you look at me by Harmony R.	46
You All Deserve the World by Eugene J.	46
Rising Above the Shadows: Embracing My True Identity by Janyah C.	46
Discrimination Poem/Rap By Jeremiah S.	46
44102 by Juaquim T.	47
72 years by Kenteiya R.	48
Wandering around Target by Lawren W.	48
Our love is not wrong by Londyn P.	49
The Prettiest Girl in the Room by R'lexceia C.	50
This is what you see when you look at me by Saanya W.	50
I was Meant to Stand Out by Zimerria C.	51
They say... by Zyan V.	52
Plays	53
Til Death Do Us Part By R'lexceia C.	53
The Search by Stephen M.	59
Alex and Emily by Zyan V. & Carrie D.	60
Narratives	62
Hand Poem by Cha'Maree	62
INSERT-Late Additions!!	63
What It's Like To Be Me by Kamal B. Ode	63
Ode to the guys by Kamal B.	63
What It's Like To Be Me by Terrell D.	63



Hand poem by Adalicia O.

Tanka Poems

A tanka poem is a 5 line poetic form based on an ancient Japanese poem. Each line has a specific number of syllables that follow this pattern. 5/7/5/7/7.

Our poems follow that pattern except for the last line, which might contain 5 or 7 syllables because we accidentally invented a new tanka form with only 5 syllables in the last line.

Aaliyah B.

Didn't like my job.
Boring, not interesting.
They didn't pay well.
A bad team and manager.
Customers were very rude.

Beach Adalicia O.

Water right in front
Standing there hearing laughter
While seeing smiles too
Lots of warm sand in my toes
The sun's warm rays on my skin

My Old Car By Ali A.

Rusty bumpers and
sounds like grinding and banging.
My old car was sold.
Now my new car -sky blue- takes
Me around the town.

The Nintendo Battle Anthony K.

Raging at a game
The losing sound echoing
The controller rise
And thrown down into pieces
And then comes regret

Ariyon R.

I sleep in the cold
I couldn't sleep in the hot
But in the morning
It is like a summer night
A freezing iceberg

Wrong Order Carrie D.

I was beyond mad
Doordash got my order wrong
Hungry, frustrated
Went to app to dispute it
They gave me Doordash credit

Cayla S.

From my room I heard
My cat cry in the kitchen
Open on his head
A can of food had fallen
with a plop, like a tin hat

Cortezia R.

I was very sad
And I blamed the hospital
And blamed holidays
It was so painful and sad
I cried every day nonstop

**Season Starting
Deandre L.**

Basketball starts soon
Out of shape need to workout
Footwork shooting drills
Running, lifting, squats, pushups
Passing, left hand drills

**Love
Jaiden C.**

Love is like a train
Was waiting for a long time
She changed my whole life
Fuzzy warm sweet intentions
Changed me forever

Jamiyah P.

I remember when
dancing in my Tik Toks and
laughing low, smiling
with his eyes. Doing
everything to make him proud

**My New Job
Kiyah G.**

My new job is cool
It pays better than the last
I hold the babies
I have a good boss and team
Babies are the best

Janyah C.

The house is quiet
I open my eyes to see
Nothing but darkness
I hear the sound of barking
From the dog next door

**Flag Football
Kyra F.**

Flag Football is fun
Running routes and pulling flags
Playing to compete
I was quarterback this year
Let's play flag football

**Infinite Horrors
Jihari C.**

Infinite horrors
Stories of monsters increase
Growing evermore
Never ceasing nevermore
Stopping to remain

Makhi M.

Lebron steals the ball
Scores I jump out of my seat
Three points by Murray
Nuggets come back. Coach calls time!
Jamal won the game.

Nadia P.

Students cannot fight
In school for safety reasons
Someone could be hurt
Bloody nose, scarred up face
Hospital issues.

**How the Beauty Works
Nassirra W.**

I love doing hair.
Create glamorous designs.
Time-consuming but
Worth the wait. Beautiful hair
Is what you desire.

**Delightful Responsibilities
Niwyian B.**

I hate school. Waking
up early. Kids in my face
walking up and down
stairs. Plenty of work to do
in all my classes.

Quandell H.

I slept on the couch
Dropped my phone into the cracks
When I closed the couch
Crack!!! Screen shattered to pieces
I was hurt it was broken

**Throbbing Headaches.
R'Lexceia C.**

My mean headache throbs.
It's making me so tired.
I think of a bed.
The pain almost knocks me out.
When will I go home?

**Let Me Go
Sha'Niya B.**

Let me go home now
I want to lay in my bed
My birthday is coming
I can't wait to be turned up
July 13th is the day, so come pop out gang

**School
Shondell M.**

School is hard for me.
Students who think life is a
comedy. I can't
find a form of peace. Maybe
when I graduate someday.

Stephen M.

Lazy bodies stay
Lying there with heavy eyes
Have good dreams tonight
No sleep in my bed at night
I'm tired let's sleep

Caught Stealing**Timiah G.**

Stealing from the store.
Stuff he didn't need in his
pocket. Feeling scared-
Whistle blows. We turned around
and we started running.

Life of Being a Track Star**By Tray'von B.**

Never make that mistake
again. Not being in shape
cost us the championship.
Will work out more and harder.
Stay in gym for life.

Ty'Janeya G.

I can't wait to go
So tired of school today
I'll sit on the couch
Relaxing with my big dog
Waiting on my gram to come

Zaria G.**My Best Friend**

*I love my best friend
To the moon and back again
We've had ups and downs
And he kept secrets from me
But we remained close, best friends*

Sitting on a Hill**Zimmeria C.**

*Sitting on a hill
Blowing on dandelions
Deer starting to run
Startled by the deer's loud thumps
I jump up and hide*

Cavs Tanka**Zyaire B.**

The Cavs made next round
They play the Boston Celtics
I hope we can win
Celtics have a great offense
D. Mitchell's a playmaker

MY HANDS by Andre Jones

My hands let go of...
The past that used to hurt me, and all of my problems that I used to live in;

My hands hold...
The future that is in my face and hopes I move towards it to be happy and succeed.

My hands create... all the dreams and hopes I have, all I got to do is set my mind to it and just do it.

My hands reach for...
My hopes and dreams and for help so I can take it and go on into life with the dreams I have.

Hand Poem by Andre J.

MY HANDS by Cayla S.

My hands let go of feeling soft, smooth brown carpet that I used to touch crawling.
They let go of Sadness, Inspiration and Friends.
They let go of Amusement parks, tickets for Basketball. They let go of fear Becoming a chef.
Let go of Sports activities and Trust.

My hands hold on to my Happiness, Desires, Family and Friends.
School,
Being a helping hand, working in a medical field.
Exercising and Creativity.

My hands create warmth, patience, love, museums, achievements and different foods. Ideas and problem solving.

My hands reach for Joy, Mindset, Family House and Trust.
Reaching my goals, training and practice.

Hand Poem by Cayla S.

ODES

Ode to My Sister by Adalicia O.

From putting on colorful outfits
That looked like clown outfits
To asking me to pick an outfit
For your first day of middle school
For the times you had your smelly feet
And not wanting to shower
To asking me to paint your toenails
From not letting anyone touch that long silky
hair of yours
To asking me to braid your hair
For all the times that you and I
Would feel that warm sun on our skin
While feeling the cold water erupting from
the water balloons

And stealing my Barbies to play with them
Not knowing that later on you'd hate the
color pink
From picking you up and throwing you on
the bed
While you burst out laughing
Just for you to want me to pick you up again
Only to later complain about your tummy
hurting from so much laughter
You've grown so much
I am proud of you
And who knows maybe someday you'll like
the color pink again

Ode To My Friends by Carrie D.

I call Ty' Janeya in the morning before
school
Making sure she's ready for pick up
After school we hang out on hot days when
the sun is out
Neya means a lot to me

Avionne is my friend
She means a lot to me too
We always get something to eat on
Sundays after church
And Neya goes too
Ms. Merritt is my CTAG teacher
We are always in her room
Annoying her
Sometimes she goes to church with me,
Neya, and Avi
I would be failing my classes this quarter
again if not for her
She means a lot to me
I love the way she pushes me

My Cousin by Aliyah B.

I remember when me and my cousin would
always hang out at the park in the summer
He is dark skinned, tall
He can sing and has long hair
He always had some good smelling cologne
on
I feel like he is a great cousin to me
We had a great bond since we were kids
now that we have grown up
we've matured more and still have a great
time
I experienced a lot from him.
He always gives me great advice when I am
down and always builds me up When I'm
sad, like dancing together, going out to eat
and shopping.
He moved to New Jersey
I was proud of him and grateful he moved
out at the age of 20
Soon I'm going to follow after his footsteps
and make him proud

Ode to my best friend by A'maurie B.

Everytime you call or text my phone saying “
A'maurieeeeeeeeeee
LeT mE tEIL youuuuuu!”
I know you have some very good tea to tell
me
Or just wanna tell me my boo from your
school said something that's gone make me
smile.

Our very first time knowing each other was
in the 9th grade..
The teacher told both of us to go downstairs
to get a computer and that's when we
started talking
Then it just so happened we became
friends. Lol

I remember one summer
We went on a 2 man and it was a crazy day,
a very crazy day...
We ended up going to the movies but didn't
watch the movie.
The two dudes that were there I didn't know
They were friends of yours
The one I was with was cool in the
beginning
Then everything just went downhill after I
didn't want to do something
I didn't want to do
But we ain't gone speak on that.

I remember caring for you when you needed
me
I remember lying for you, for your dudes
I remember helping you lie to your mom
about where you were going
I remember the crazy nights staying out
past 12:00 hot boxing . .

Ode to the Bowlers by Anthony K.

Sitting in the bowling lanes with my
homeboys
Laughing, striking, losing, raging wondering,
How do you curve the ball like that?
It's not easy. Left-handers got it bad to be
honest.
But the Capt is a lefty, though he still screws
up as much as I.
I hate having to use both hands just to curve
the ball.
Yet somehow it works.
It does help not twist my wrist to curve it.
In the end, I still had fun, but this one
tournament,
I couldn't bare to bowl after my
performance,
Yep, it's about that time to put the shoes up
and go home.
I can't believe I got 3 gutters in a row.
You just can't get any worse than that.
33 points, that whole game, only 33 points.
I'll see y'all later, ya might not see me at
practice next week.

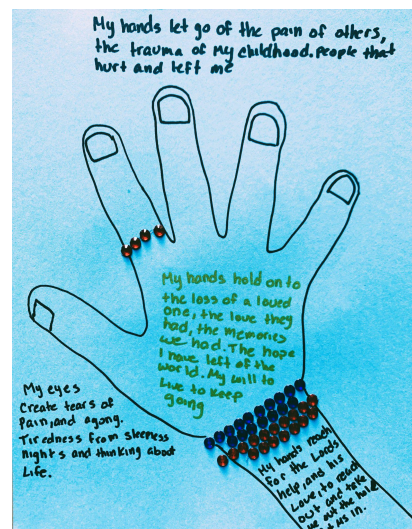


Image
by
Cherish

Ode to my homegirls by Ariyon R.

When I hear my phone ring , I already know
what it's about
You are the girls, I can listen to talk about
anything
I hear my phone ding
It's just you sending pictures of messages to
my phone

I don't complain
when I need you I would want you to listen
Not shut me out or tune me out

Ode To My Cousins and Me by Brooklyn M.

Me and my cousins
We were close at some point when we were
younger,
However, growing up with my cousins was
fun,
Having sleepovers at our grandma's house
Waking up in the morning
The good breakfast smell that lingered in
the air
Even though
Our parents weren't best of friends
We didn't let their relationship affect ours
As we all got older
We did distant a lot
One of them became a mom
And the other three graduated
I'm still finishing school and doing better for
me
Hoping
When the time comes
We'll get that bond back again .

You listen to me talk about that same boy
you told me not to talk to
Right after first period I see my Neya with
her morning energy
Soon as I walk into second period
I see Dami and Mya right there with smiles
on their faces
These are my homegirls

We make Tik Toks together
We laugh together
We joke together
We make each other somewhat who we are

Ode to My Friend by Cayla S.

I remember when you sat next to me in
kindergarten
You had on a blue T- shirt and black pants
Your hair was in a curly bun
At recess we would play on the swings and
monkey bars
During lunch we talked about our favorite
TV shows
You would tell me
Secrets that you were scared to tell
Anyone else
When we had English class together we
would
Read each other the books we picked out
Sometimes we still see each other
But it's not the same
And I miss you

Ode to Luster by Cherish H.

I remember like it was yesterday when I met
you

You knew I was something greater than
myself

You taught me to be better than myself

You were the dad I never had

The role model I needed

The nosy teacher that wanted to know
everything

Because you cared

Skipping all my classes to come bother you

That was my safe space

You listened to everything i was going
through

Gave your input to put a smile on my face

I was your favorite, you said it yourself

You were my favorite too

Air Force was the chill spot

And a free store with noodles and poptarts

Only thing you cared about more than us
was the uniforms

Making sure we looked extra nice in our
suits gave you the greatest smile

Luster you was best

Always made my days better when you
were here

You said you never were going to leave
me...

Memories with you have meant the world to
me

I'll Cherish those memories forever

Your with God now he's protecting you

I have to keep going without you now

But i'll always remember you, and will keep
your name alive

Because in my heart you were the person
everyone needed in life

I love you dearly #LongLiveLUSTER

12-5-23 🌟🙌

Ode to my Family by Chris S.

First I want to make an ode to my mother.

You have always been by my side since I
was born.

I appreciate you for teaching me how to be
a gentleman.

You taught me to have respect and
responsibility.

Ode to my dad.

Thank you for teaching me how to be a man
and step up and get things done.

Also teaching me respect and responsibility
and making basketball one of my favorite
hobbies. You always pushed me to go hard
and be great.

Ode to Subway by Deandre L.

Ahhhhh...perfection.

The right amount of everything.

I watch as they

Fold each piece of warm, fresh turkey

One, two, three, four, five, six.

Inside I'm twitching

Can't wait to stuff

This little piece of heaven

In my mouth.

They wrap up my sandwich

In a blankie, so it doesn't get cold

And hand me the Holy Bread.

In the car I peel back each corner


To reveal pure beauty.

I can almost hear the Saints and Angels
Singing

I take the first bite....

Ahhhhhhh,
perfection.

Ode to Cordae by Cordae S.

I remember when I was little...
The days seemed to always blur together...
and due to the amount of things I Went
through...
I often felt like there wasn't a single place in
the world...
That was safe for me..
Sometimes I wonder if people are only
around me 'cause they want something..
Other times, I feel like I know too much
about life, that not a lot of people know..
Oftentimes, I wake up everyday knowing
that no matter how positive I am, things
don't change...
That makes me feel exhausted, so
exhausted...
Life always seems to work against me in the
most obnoxious ways...
My body seems to scan for negative
experiences cause that's what I am used
to...
Negative experiences..
My eyes droop low, I can hear constant
chatter about what these kids do for a living
and what they have done...
Nine times out of ten, it's mostly
inappropriate...
doesn't matter to me, but it does...
Sometimes I wish I could be as happy or
oblivious to the world...
And as I continue to smell the rotten
sewage water, or the nasty smell of weed
that lingers here and there...
I always wake up, knowing...
There's always still some work to do...
The Ode To Cordae: focus, process, and
expect..
But don't hope..
Sincerely,
Cordae Amor Scott 

Ode to my God Sister Maia by Damiana D.

I remember when we fought together had
to go to a different school
We wake up and have a little attitude
before we get up for school together .
She pulls me up when I fall. She's by my
side, right or wrong.
I love her we do everything together couldn't
ask for another sister

We do everything together - really my twin
Wouldn't know what to do without her
she like my mom lol
When i try to to do dumb thing or just need
a hand she's the one i can call on

We be delusional together - even if we
know we wrong we just laughs it off
Couldn't nobody get between us - we
know how to talk it out before we let
someone gets in the middle of us - us
against the world

Remembrance by Jaiden C.

You are special, wonderful and great
My teachers- math, ELA, history, science...
I appreciate the times that we had together
the smiles on our faces
I remember the lessons that made me think
till i lost my mind
I remember the field trips that we shared
that made me smile till i couldn't smile
anymore
Time gone now is time gone forever
When you're absent I'm disappointed my
smile turns to a frown
The advice you've given has helped me
dramatically
Your teaching is like a piece of cake when
you're craving something sweet
Your feedback is like my mother's feedback
Your abilities are like a freshly baked pie
My teachers are my lightning rod
I appreciate you as a teacher
as a guider as a leader

Ode to my Favorite Homegirls by Jamaia B.

Feeling hot mist - from the bathroom
That must be - Dami taking her morning
shower
You're going to find your missing shoe

So you can stop whining - my homegirl
Neya
So bright - So sweet
Always being goofy - she's my favorite

My room - every school morning
Dami needs her edges done - per usual
I can't complain - just do them

Only Dami and Neya - comfortable with my
delusions
Through the hallways - searching for the
girl
I am so - so deeply in love with

Ode to Friendship by Jamiyah P.

Ode to my best friend
Dear best friend
I remember when we first met and had our first good conversation
We were a freshman so young and fried
Not old enough to know what we were doing
We literally did everything together
Like phineas and ferb
I remember the first time we got our whooping together
And the time we have our ups and downs
I also remember when we have our first bestie day and we went to them movies
We had a time of our life
And to this day and moment we have the best and forever long relationship now
I love you bestie to the moon and back!!!!

They send pictures of any funny business
To the group chat - where its normally
Overly funny & filled with laughter

Ode to Wally by Jihari C.

You stand out like a rose
in a field of thorns
Your beauty shining
like stars in the night sky
You bring out the sun
On a rainy day
Eyes bright
like diamonds
Moving with delicate grace
Your words
like bird songs
Your voice like classical music

Ode to My Friends and Family by Jerold T.

My ode is to my friends and family
Because they mean the most to me
Family and friends are a big part of everyone's life
That's why I cherish mine so much
Even when they get on my nerves
I will never let our bond go
Because we always get through the conflicts
I love my family
Because of the times we have that keep our moments and events precious

Then when you need them sometimes you have friends too
We have fun and just hang out.
Friendships go a long way in life
Because some friends stick with you through everything
I want that type of bond
Because friends build you up and always help

.
This is my ode to my friends and family who I love and I respect
And I appreciate them.

Ode to My Best Friend by Kiyah G.

Smelling of washing powder as a clean girl who washes her clothes every weekend

Most powerful girl in the world Come on bestie
We're going out
you can still be mad

We're going to eat
who laughs and talks about others
Sends ugly pictures of each other through messages

I remember when we went to the lake saw water, dogs, sand, Etc
Sat on the rocks and laughed
You were sad about our boyfriend

We used to play volleyball together at East Technical High School
You are the best friend a woman will ever have in her life
Has a bad attitude and is a crybaby, who always talks

Ode to Granny by Maniya P.

Waking up - Smelling sausage
granny must be up cooking
I walk down the stairs - plates are already ready

Dami is going on - about some boy
she has no interest in - what-so-ever
but she continues to respond

I love my granny - she's good for
all types of things
nothing's better - than having a great grandma

Getting up - in the morning
At my granny's - someone is always in the bathroom
It gets so annoying - but I'm fine with it

Ode to my sister by Minnie G.

I remember when we were little
We used to go to the pool together

We were some bad kids
I remember how we snuck out

You suck Imao
Remember when we got up for school at 3
a.m. ?

You're pretty cool
You used to sneak stuff for me

I hated when you
Went to evening group for the older kids at
Friendly Inn
Had me crying in our room because you left
me

Now we're older
And we get along sometimes
but I still can whoop you

You're my sister
I wouldn't trade you for the world

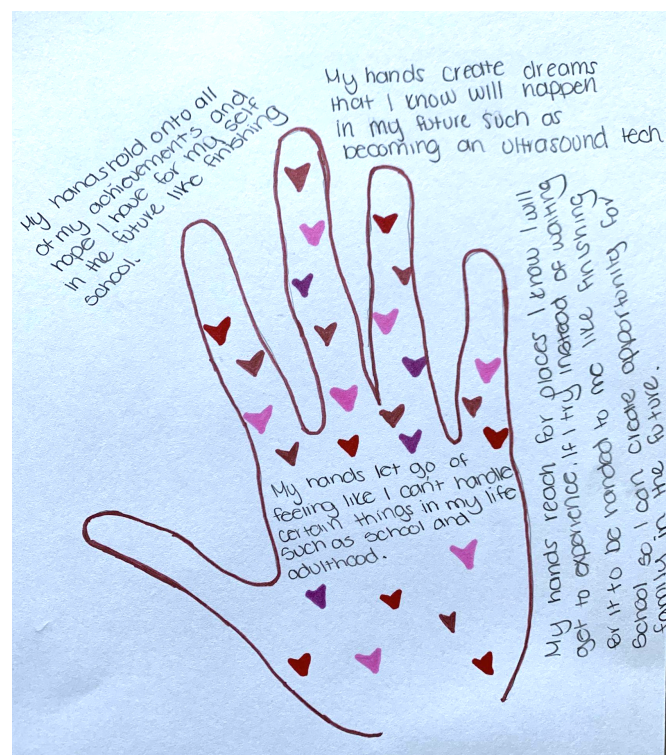


Image by Reinika

Ode to My 2 Bestfriends by Nadia P.

I remember when we first met..

We used to make each other laugh so loudly all the time..

Janaysha was always the loudest out of the group..

Anila was the youngest out of the group..

We always stayed back after school to hangout..

We'd sit for a few hours just talking to each other..

Then we would go and buy snacks..

Play games outside..

Joke around with each other and other people..

Help each other with class work

Give each other great advice still till this day.

Ode to my Sister by Niwyian B.

Dear Big Sis,
Thank you for everything you do for me.
I enjoy being around you everyday.
The things we talk about.
The laughs we share.
The thoughts we think.
The food that you cook is amazing.
The tacos are just mouth watering!

Even though I hate cleaning, I could never
hate you.
You're a great person.
I see potential In you.
You also have a gift that god gave you , he
blessed your hands.
The braids are just gorgeous.
Every hair is in place.

This is for You, Ma by Nassirra W.

The smell of you when you come in
A strong smell of Carmex peppermint.
When you give me very warm and cozy hugs
It feels safer than home.

You help me when I'm at my lowest.
And make sure your children come before you.
I love when you cook
The Smell of frying chicken or salmon
Those are the greatest smells when I come home.

I love when you ask about my day after work or school.
I love your personality, creativity, and fashion.
I love it when you help me put outfits together.
And when you help me with my projects
You're very important to me
You always encourage me
Thank you Ma

Ode to Cousins by Shondell C.

To cousins
Remember when we used to let the dog chase us around the house

Remember we used to go to the pool?
That was pretty fun--the water was so cold

Even when grandma would to let us play
At the nearest park were we would play on swings all day

We would always go way further than
We were supposed to and get in trouble

There were times we would sneak out
To go to the store just for Doritos

When we used to get punished for
Jumping on grandma's brand new couches, giggling as we jumped

Even though we knew we would get in trouble
We still did it anyway.

Ode to my Sister Kasharra by Reinika H.

The smell of her sweet perfume that leaves
the room
I glance at the sight of her beautiful brown
face that glows
The sound of her voice echoing through the
house
Brings excitement to my day, the sun
beaming
As we find our way around the
neighborhood
We talk about everything, she knows I love
her dearly
The times we talked about her boy
problems
Giving her advice I know she won't use
Your tears fall down your face like raindrops
but
You always hold your head high even when
Mother tries to tear you down
Days of feeling like a thousand bricks are on
your shoulders
We always did crazy things that made our
days fun

Going to parties with her are never ending
memories
Screaming across the room your echo gets
lower
I never want to forget, The times we cried
and laughed
The times we argued and fought, never
have I stopped
Loving you, the times we saved each other
from trouble
We never snitched on each other no matter
what
The sight of your smile make me feel secure
The times we snuck out together made me
feel so free
Made me feel like a rock floating in space
You are the most independent person I
know
You shower me with dollars even when you
know
You need it more
Your choices in life have brought nothing
But blessings to you

Ode to Friends by Stephen M.

The sound of light bantering and insults through the school hall
We play we fight and yet the bond just gets stronger
We're big, small, skinny, tall
All the laughs we have had, I remember them all
We've had disagreements that were not too serious
We have concealment that is very grievous
If I am seen you'll see them
If they are seen you see me
We stick together
Not many people are there like them
We bruise, fight, hide, talk, stay together
One day we might drift
But not today
If I could I would stay
Right here Right now

Ode to My Bro Makhi by Tyrone P.

I remember when we used to always talk in class
Then get in trouble with Mr. Davis

We used to play cool math in Art
Class

You are like a brother
To me

I wish you were my actual brother
So we could hang out more

Ode to My Best Friend by Taliyah C.

Dear bestfriend

I remember when we first met

We were in the 5th grade young and silly

Not mature enough to know what we were doing

We did everything together... we were

Two peas in a pot

I remember our first time getting in trouble together

The times we fought together

And the times we fought each other

I remember your 13th birthday we went to Wasabis

We had so much fun together

And till this day we still have the best relationship

I wouldn't trade you for nobody in this world!

Ode to my homegirls by Ty'Janeya G.

Walking in the hallway hearing heyy cuz
I know that's dami and mya happy to see
me

We give each other big hugs
We do our daily walks
And talk about everything and everyone
Because we understand each other so
much

I call my homegirl ari
She knew exactly what I was calling for
She answered with saying
What happened neya
Ari gets why i love this boy
So much so she just
Sits in listen to me
Because i'm just her favorite
Delusional friend

My phone rings late at night
I kinda figured it was my homegirl avi
Soon as i answered she instantly says
Guess wha nay
I just knew that girl den made her mad
Avi is my sweet gospel church friend
But her buttons get pushed so often
And I always be there to listen to
All avi problem she is also

A good listener and we keep
Each other up and make sure
We straight and delusional together

Me and Carrie ride around
And listen to ann marie
All day everyday
Carrie is one of my
Emotional friends and she acts just like
A big sister to me
We go on ice cream dates
Lake dates and lol
I'm always here when carrie calls
And we have sleepovers lol

Ms. Merrit is my coordinator but my
homegirl
She will always tell me when i'm wrong
Or When i'm right because
That's just who Ms. Merrit is
I remember when we went
To a gospel concert together
It was one of the best experiences
We ever had together
Ms. Merrit helps me with my future
And makes sure when I'm lacking i
Get it together
Ms. Merrit is one of our best
Role models in school

Image by Jaiden C.



ODE TO MY SIBLINGS (Missing You) by Zaria G.

Remember when we used to spend the
night at granny's house?

Watching movies

Playing games

Joking on each other for laughter and
enjoyment

I do

Waking up to the lovely smell of bacon

Eggs

Grits

Sausage

And pancakes

Fighting over the last bit of orange juice in
the carton

I miss those days

We're all grown up now

Going in different paths

Living

Life

I wish things were still the same

I mean yes

We still talk and laugh

But we used to be closer when we were
Little

I want that back

Even though in reality

It won't happen

I still have hope

Getting into stupid meaningless fights

But the 3 of us still sticking together

Even when we are mad

Jumping on each other beds

Playing around in our small room

Making a mess

Getting in trouble for putting holes in the
walls

Coming back in the house all dirty from
outside

And even going to the same school

I miss those days

I miss

YOU

Ode to Jehovah by Zimerria C.

Dear heavenly Father

I remember when I was laying on

My hospital bed, with no blood in my body

Thinking about life, you saved me from
death

You were always there next to me when I
needed

Help, when I was down and depressed

You were there to lift my mood when I
thought about giving up

We used to read the bible together while i
listened to

Soft lyricless music, and you taught me
More about you

We prayed every night and talked every day

I'm very thankful that you changed my life

And that you are always with me

In Jehovah's name

Amen

Ode to My Old Best Friend in 1st Grade by Zyan V.

i remember when we used to do work together
sit next to each other at lunch
share snacks with each other

She always liked chocolate chips cookies
And i liked peanut butter cookies

we used to play outside together
and tell each other secrets we wouldn't tell nobody else
we became real close friends throughout my middle school year

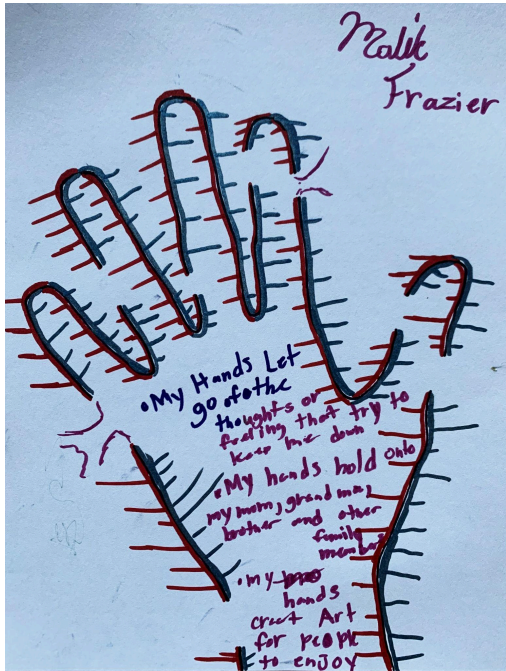
until she transferred and i didn't have a phone
at the time so we lost contact later on as i got in the 6th grade
i finally got a phone and we ended up finding each other through social media
we started back talking and became close again

but didn't come back besties because i already found me another one
but till this day as i get older we is still good friends
and still talk everyday and make plans to see each other

she was the first real friend i ever had she never changed on me
she never talked bad about me behind my back we always had a good bond
i miss hanging around her and going places with her
but my new bestie is also a really good friend.

we have been besties for 3 years now.

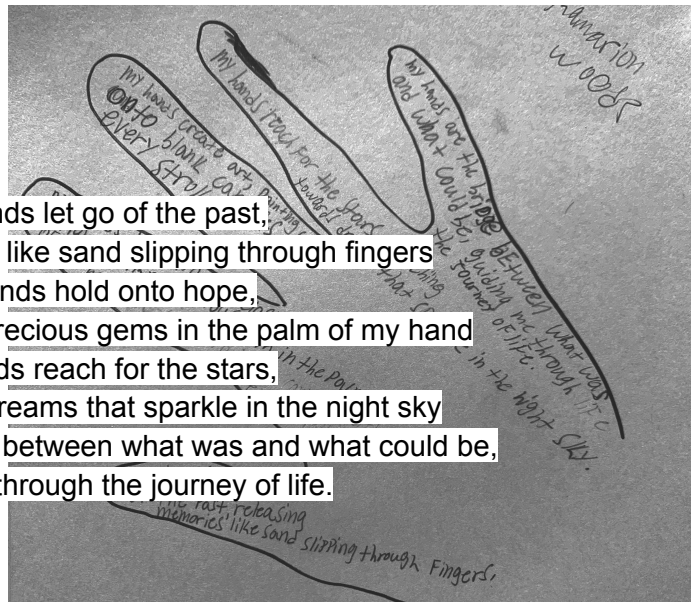
these two girls are my real friends who I know got my back
and I can always call on them whenever I need.



Hand Poem by Malik

My hands let go of the thoughts and feelings that try to keep me down
 My hands hold onto my mom, grandmom, brother and other family members,
 My hands create art for people to enjoy

Hand Poem by Kamarion



My hands let go of the past,
 releasing memories like sand slipping through fingers
 My hands hold onto hope,
 clasping it tightly like precious gems in the palm of my hand
 My hands reach for the stars,
 stretching towards dreams that sparkle in the night sky
 My hands are the bridge between what was and what could be,
 guiding me through the journey of life.

Hand Poem by Keshawn

My hands let go of eating too much snacks
 My hands hold onto a basketball when I'm dribbling in a game
 My hands create a clap noise when I put them together
 My hands reach for a professional basketball player

WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE US

What It's Like To Be Me by Adalicia O.

A windy, sunny day where the trees swing like their dancing
With that earthy smell of dirt and plants
Little me running and jumping ever so happy in the sun
Sweating so much it almost looks like a bucket of water had been thrown on me
But even so it still felt so good
The warm sun piercing through my skin
Almost like a warm hug
I hadn't felt that warmth in a long time
Not the warmth of the sun
But the warmth of home
Home, it was and felt amazing, so cozy
Where I laughed for what seemed like hours
Feeling like everything was always going to be okay
Going outside felt amazing
Being able to feel the warm wood on your skin
But the warmth doesn't last forever
Neither does your innocence
Having to take that hard step
More like leap of faith
And leaving the only home you've ever known
Where your days are now chilly and filled with sorrowness
I now feel the cold piercing through me, almost freezing your blood
I now don't laugh anymore
As every person you talk to almost feels like a nickel
Or maybe it's all in your head
After all my home was somewhere where summer seem to last all 12 months
But what I do know is that there will be day where I do feel that warmth once more
One day I'll be able to have a place to call home again
Feeling that warmth from not only the sun but the wood I sat on

Ali by Ali A.

Was born on november 7 that make me a Scorpio
Sometime i asked my what do they see in me
They all say something new every time
Love to be in my room all the time
A space I would love to stay at every day
Looking at the sky and I think what would happen
If there was no sky I that is something I be thinking
In my room they might say i'm loud some might say
I'm quiet but I most like being quiet because why be loud

Nobody Knows by Aaliyah B.

Nobody knows what it's like to be me
To hear them talk and laugh as they make
fun of me
To see them stare as I walk by
To hold it all in and not let my anger out

I have no one, I'm all alone
My mother asks, "What is wrong?"
I say nothing, she wouldn't understand

I really haven't known happiness
Just put on a fake smile
My room is my hiding place
Food gives me comfort

Nobody knows what it's like to be me

Sixteen by Aniyah M.

This is what it's like to be 16
I love to be alone
I was born November 29th, i am a
Sagittarius
I enjoy being with friends
I am a hairstylist
I was 14 when i started doing hair
People say im mean
I say i'm just antisocial
I am Aniyah
My family loves to be together
They never talk about how your childhood is
the easy part of life
I remember wanting to be a youtuber
I remember making stickers with my friend
Ashley when I was eight
I wonder if my childhood friends remember
me
I enjoy being by myself

Being the oldest... by Ariyon R.

They never talk about growing up being the oldest sibling.
They never talk about all the things that come behind it.
I am in fact the oldest.
Nobody stops to think about what being the oldest child feels like.
Nobody stops to think about if what they are saying is hurting their child's feelings.

I remember being with my grandma when I was having rough days.
I remember her funeral like it was yesterday. It's been 2 years...
My family doesn't know how bad I've been affected by it.
I was 14 years old when I lost her. I'm now 16..
I was born in 2007. The first born. The one whose siblings look up to.

Secretly, I cry. All this hurt behind these smiles and laughs.
My family knows none of this. It's better this way..
Why do I cry to myself instead of opening up?
Why do I stay silent instead of saying what's bothering me?
Why do I keep holding all this in instead of letting it out?

People say I always have an attitude or I'm mean.
People say I always look mean and need to smile more.
I am 16 years old and I do in fact hide how I feel all the time.
They never talk about growing up being the oldest sibling.
This IS what it's like to be the oldest sibling.

What it's like to be ME... by Brenda C.

Going outside to parks and lakes to read, write, and relieve stress is what it's like to be me
Getting up extra early to make sure I am able to do my same routine everyday is what it's like to be me...
Getting close to someone but then you push them away for your own security is what it's like to be me...
Getting up every day tired and exhausted but still pulling through because you're afraid of failure is what it's like to be me...
Sitting alone at school because you feel as if you don't fit in with anyone is what it's like to be me...
Nonstop hustling outside of school because no one ever helped you provide for yourself is what it's like to be me...
Looking beautiful on the outside but torn up on the inside is what it's like to be me...
me...
Still trying to build a bond and contact my father after he clearly shows he doesn't care about me is what it's like to be me...
Cutting hair every day to make money because it's what you love to do is what it's like to be me...
Trying to please everyone but not doing enough for myself is what it's like to be me...
Meditating when things get stressful because hurting people is a crime is what it's like to be me...
Having money on your mind all day is what it's like to be me...
Getting dressed up and doing your makeup to feel better is what it's like to be me...
Being ok with things you're actually not okay with to keep the peace is what it's like to be me...
Saying affirmations in the mirror everyday because you're trying to get over the bullying from middle school is what it's like to be me...
Having ptsd because your middle school bully was a boy and he made your nose bleed so bad one day is what it's like to be me...

Light of my Own by Cha'Maree M.

This is who i am
An older sister, a guide throughout
The years, a music lover's heart, notes
And rhythms where emotions impact.

An artists canvas, a world to create
brush strokes of passion, shaping fate.
Female strength a resilient Core,
a symphony of roles, forever more.

Boldly I face them like a beacon
in the night, through the journey of days
Through the calm and the flight.

To be me by Cherish H.

Nobody knows how hard It is to be me
To be me isn't as easy as it look
From the outside I am a goofy, happy person
Because I am a child at heart
But the inside i'm fighting to keep this smile on my face
Everyday it's a struggle of life
I can act okay, but do you really know who I am?
I'm a caring and loving person
Because I've been hurt, I wouldn't want anyone else to feel the same
I'm sensitive and soft hearted
Because my heart's been broken
I'm smart and I know things
I'm just so drained of the world, and can't take anything else in
To really know me, you have to really understand me
To understand what i've been through to know who I am now
I am a string of emotions
I can laugh and cry at the same time
I hold so much in, to keep the peace of others
Because others feeling are more important than mines
I am who I am
I can't change that
But if you can't change me, then understand me

All Alone by Deandre L.

You don't know what it is like to be me.
To hear them laugh out loud as others make fun of me.
To see them stare as I walk by.
To hold it all inside and try not to cry.

They go to each other's houses and talk on the phone.
I have no one, I am all alone.
My family asks me if I am feeling okay.
I lie, because what would I say?

I haven't known happiness in a while.
When it's expected I'll use that plastic smile.
In my room is the place that I hide.

But I am not ready to give up not just yet.
There is someone for everyone, I try not to forget.
I keep hoping that someone will come my way.
I just hope that day isn't too far away.

What It's Like To Be Me by De'Asia T.

What it's like to be me...
being me feels
Like being the most empathetic person in
the world
Literally
Everywhere I go and everything I do
I feel strong emotions
Sometimes it's irritating
How much I can feel others' emotions
because i can tell when someone is
bothered by me
without them even showing it

I also can tell when someone doesn't like
me
But that's their loss

Being me, people seem to always do as
they please
They don't think about how I feel
When people figure out that I'm a very
sensitive person
they tend to play with me just because they
know I'm nice
They think I'm a pushover
But they are wrong
Even I have claws

I'm becoming a woman by De'Nariel G.

In a world of whispered dreams a girl like me could only dream,
My womanly essence brightly beams,
I'm becoming a woman.
My world is crazy my heart is a maze of love,
people are starting to notice me,
I'm getting taller my features are starting to pop,
I'm becoming a woman.
Im dressing different my hair is different my body is different
I'm getting older I am changing
I'm becoming a woman.
Im looked at different im treated different
Because i'm becoming a woman
That's what it's like to be me.

To Be Me by Kamarion W.

To be me is to wake with the first light of dawn,
To be me is to not put pride or take important things for granted
To be me is to experience real life injuries at minority
To be me is to break down and build yourself up to be a better person
To be me is to invest in others to make the community better
To be me is to inspire the youth to not do bad things even tho they see it
To be me is to be responsible for family and those who care for you
To be me is to help the less fortunate to gain maximum benefit for your community.
That's what it's like to be me.

What's It Like To Be Me!!! by Jaiden C.

Me— who am i?

What's it like to be me?

A boy who's nearly 6 feet 150 pounds light skin

Someone who is seen as skinny underweight and weak

Others who see me as strong caring and passionate

One who wants to help all no matter the relationship

Always remembered the hardships i went through

the hardships that taught me

The hardships that hurt me

that build the anger inside of me—the grit in me

A person who cares too much about people more than himself

One who gives his all to the things he enjoys and to the people he loves

A kid who is feeling up with thoughts inside

A person who is afraid of failure and making mistakes but knows that everyone makes mistakes

But also a kid who is grateful for everything

the opportunities

the chances given

Someone who aims to be perfect at everything he does

An overachiever A believer ... A worker

Expectations so high the clouds can't even reach'em

Possible or impossible

One who takes the big challenges

the kid who stands up for what's right

A kid with an, I will... I must... I am... mindset going through everyday

I am proud to be me

and i will continue to be proud of what i do

Free Verse 4/16 by Jamiyah P.

People use to always think my life was great

Because how I use to come to school happy

But deep down inside I be going through bad depression

I just come to school happy and with a smile on my face

So nobody will know anything in my life

Or feel bad about the things I go through outside of school

I feel like if anybody walked in my shoes 24 hours

They wouldn't last or they would of gave up

Or probably asked how do I deal with everyday

And i'll tell them that i just blessed to be one of god strongest

always talk to god

And just wait patiently and good days will come

One day I will be out that stage

And look back and be so proud of myself

For not giving up on myself and ending it all

To Be Me by Janyah C.

I'm 15, almost 16
5'5, almost 5'6
89 pounds, almost 90
To be me is to overthink
Yet never know what to say
To know a lot
Yet understand nothing at all
To be me is to have a room full of flowers
With a pollen allergy
To love the sun
Yet hide from its rays
To be me is to wish to me alone
Yet wish for a companion whenever i am
To have piles of things to do
Yet still do nothing
To be me is to love everything
Yet hate it the same
To prioritize health
Yet stay up for nights on end
Eating once a day

I Am Kyra by Kyra F.

I am Kyra
I was born in cleveland
People always say
I'm so tiny and small
My favorite place is
at home
I really don't like communicating with people
My family are my favorite people to be with
I'm very shy and quiet too
I also love playing flag football
Love to make tik toks
Being with my twin sister makes me happy
I have 3 brothers and they can be irritating sometimes still love them though
Favorite thing to eat is yogurt with oreos
Secretly, I think is everything about me

A Message to the World by Jihari C.

I hate a lot of things
like people i hate everyone until i decide i don't
but i can easily start hating them again
I hate the way they act
i hate they way they talk
i hate the things they do
I hate being around them
i hate seeing them everyday
and i especially hate the ones at school
I constantly have to pretend be be someone i'm not to preserve the feelings of people i don't
care about
Concealing my intelligence to blend in with the masses
Hiding my personality trying not to start imaginary problems
Even still everything i do seems to be a problem which only makes my hate grow
The lies they tell to make themselves look better
The way they judge and talk about people as if they're perfect
Thinking they're untouchable when at the end of the day we all breathe the same
We might not all bleed in the same way but we all still bleed the same
I hate the way they don't know their place in life feeling invincible while everyone else is invisible
I hate having to fit into a group in order to have friends
If it's me vs the world then i'll fight until i can't fighting not for love but for hate because even the
things i love turn into hate

Blank Black Life by Lyn'yoda M.

This is what it's like to be me. I was born on the 3rd of July and my year is 2007...
I remember when I was very sweet and nice but..
After 2018 passed all that changed
I became quiet and stayed in a dark era that wasn't pretty nice

I stayed in my room, never went outside and stop talking to family and friends
Nobody stops to think about why I changed or ask me why I changed...
They just think I'm always mad or just being mean but, I'm hurting...
My family see me as a mean girl but really i'm not mean i just need them to talk to me so they
can understand me more.

Secretly I'm depressed but I always make sure I smile so nobody ever see that side
I was 14 when my depression started
I remember how much I loved being outside but I don't even step foot outside now until I go on
walks to get my mind off negative things
My life and mind is blank like a sheet of paper but in black

My world is peaceful but stressful
I drink orange soda on a daily but I drink water everyday
I can't see myself being outside or going to parties
I'm more of a homebody
I don't like being around a lot of people And I'd rather lay in my bed all day..

Artist in Training by Malik F.

I am an Artist in training
But everyone believes that I don't draw on my own
Some people like to say " Oh you probably traced that on your computer at home"
Or "You're too young to draw like that"
But despite those words, I keep drawing
Because there are people who appreciate my art or my drawings
People who support me in my creativity and push me to keep going
So with their support, I'll keep learning, sketching, and drawing in my own way
Ignoring the bad words I get from certain people
So I am an Artist in training
That will soon be an Artist
With the support of my family, friends, and teachers I will become an Artist for myself and the people who support me.

What it's like to be me by Maniya P.

What it's like to be me
It's hard and fun
I get respect and hate
But also a lot of love
People see me as mean
But I am just always very outspoken
I have to keep a smile on my face to uplift my siblings
It feels really good for people to look up to me
And that I always smile
Even when there is hate around

What it's like to be me by Minnie G.

What it's like to be me
I'm a simple girl and I don't do much
I attend school every week
I am in the halls laughing, but I still get my work done
I pick up and drop my siblings off at school
After school
I go home and smoke a lil
I chill with my mom sometimes when I'm in the mood
I am a 17 year old senior
I'm always laughing when nothing's funny
It's hard being so sexy
Because everyone loves me

What makes me, ME, a poem by Niwyian.B

What makes me, ME ?
I think what make me, me,
is being able to have confidence.
Confidence is key.
Confidence is ME!
The clothes that I wear,
The Perfume I use

"Make Me, Me" !
The foods that I love to eat because I'm a picky eater.
The films that I watch,
or the snacks that I love ?
I really can't choose because they all make me, me.

Story of Tray by Tray'Von B

I am tall
Like to crack jokes
I eat a lot and don't get bigger
I hate school
not an early bird
hate doing work
love playing the game
I love watching throwback movies and hood
movies
I like to watch tv here and there
love females with a nice face
I like to go out and do productive things
People talk about me eating a lot
I take it as a joke
don't cry
just laugh pain away
believe in God
He cures my problems

What It's Like to Be Me by Tyrell D.

Get up in the morning fix the mop on your
head
Pick out the best gear to wear for today
Leave out and tell your family you love them
Say wassup to all yo friends
Get all your work done
Get through the day
Go back to your residents where you resign
Tell your family you miss them
Go back out to have some fun in the car
Come back to the house
Get in some water
Put some clothes on
Brush your teeth
Hit the hay

What it's like to be me by Marvell W.

I remember waking up to the smell of homemade
Biscuits
it was the best smell ever growing up
But now that smell is no more
Life got worse and more depressing growing up
I was 13 when COVID started and ended my young love
And affection for school
I still managed to have fun outside
While staying safe from the disease
I am very grateful that time is over and everything is back to normal
No more stress just great memories and just staying blessed
I remember playing outside until 2 AM
now it's unsafe
People say parties are cool until someone ends up hurt
Life changed a lot just as my mentality over the years
Nobody stops to think about someone
they worry about themselves
Can't blame them because no one wants help from anyone
Music and sports kill everything and relax my mind from all
My favorite place is HOME

My years as a kid were mysterious and fun by Reinika H.

My years as a kid were mysterious and fun
Like a summer day playing in the rain and sun
My sister and I riding our bike until curfew,
Feeling the breeze as it hit our face
Watching the bush sits in front of my home as it blossoms
The touch of its flowers are soft like a pillow
The smell is as wonderful as champagne toast perfume.
I would sit on the porch and listen as the wind swings back and forth
The sound gracefully takes over and relaxes me.
Watching my favorite shows that I enjoyed
Gravity falls, full of adventure made me feel like any thing could be solved
My childhood summers were amazing
Coming in to the smell of my favorite comfort food
Hanging out with friends that made everything challenging
The feeling of cold water touching your skin as
The calmness of the water becomes silent
Sunset so peaceful as you watch them when the day ends
Life as a kid was great when being a kid was normal.

My Name is Time by Timiah G.

Hi my name is time
I was born june,16,2007
I am 16
My favorite thing to eat is alfredo
People say I'm mean but I think I'm nice if you get on my good side.
I remember playing with my little cousin and I slipped and fell on some oil and busted my head.
I wanted to be a doctor when I grew up.
I was 16 when I first started my job.
I have 16 siblings.
I'm a Gemini.
People say Geminis are very mean but i don't think i'm mean.
My family says I'm doing a great job in life.
Secretly i feel like i don't deserve friends.
Childhood memories are memories I will keep forever.
They never talk about how talented I am.
My favorite place to go to is to work and back home.
Body stops and think of how much i care about people.

What They Never Talk About By Ty'Janeya G.

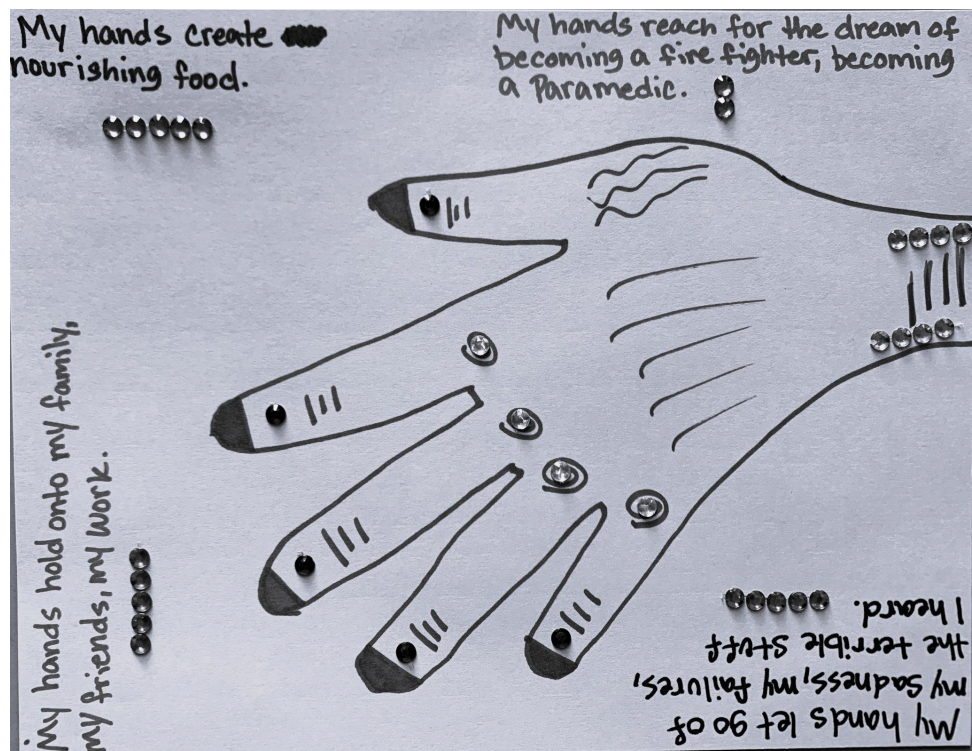
They never talk about what's it like to be the only child
I have to do everything by myself
Yes i might be spoiled and get whatever
But it comes with having to do everything
By myself when my mom ask me to

They never talk about what's it like to be a stressed teenager in school
They always saying I don't pay bills or anything so i should be ok
But that's not the case, school stress me out daily
And i just keep trying not to give up on it

They never talk about what's it like to lose a father
Losing a parent is one of the worst feelings ever
U feel so alone and ready to give up on everything
They never talk about how hard it is grieving and
Still having to come to school and continue on with
My life inside of here feeling like my teachers don't care
About what i'm going through as long as i get the work done

They never talk about how students feel or what they go through
They will be so quick to judge you by your actions but never
Be concern on why they actions is because caused
They never check to see why you slipping in class
They just sit and talk about u to other teachers

Image by
Harmony R.



What it's like to be me by Zyan V.

What it's like to be me is always happy
but can let someone ruin My day really easy
I'm a really jolly person
always like to be around a lot of people

but if I feel unwanted or like I'm bothering you
I will remove myself
I'm very cool with everybody
but I know everybody is not my friend
I only have one real friend

I come from a family that fights and argues
and gets right back cool

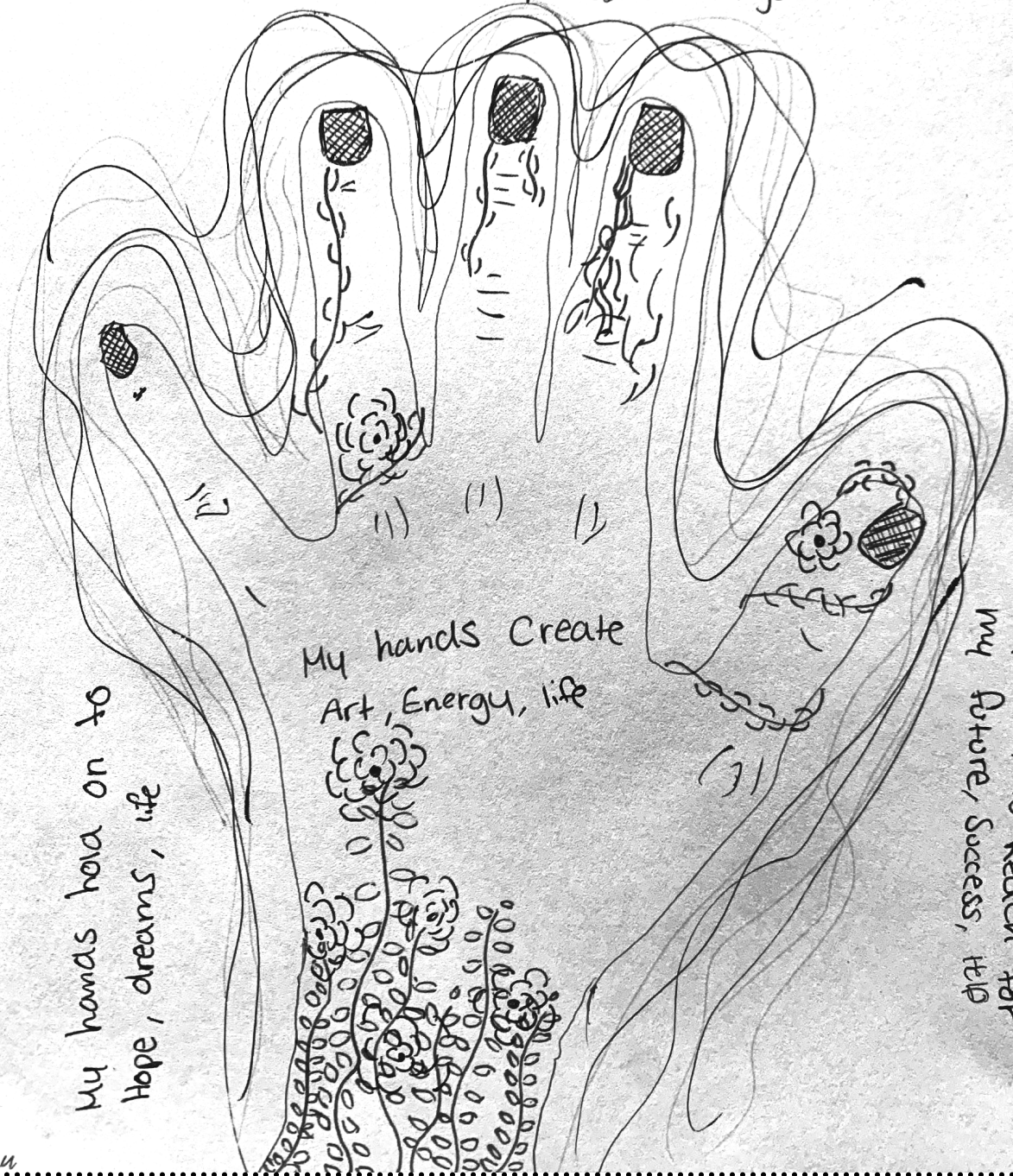
I always keep my hair done
I usually always get braids
And when I dress up I often wear crop tops
I really want a belly piercing

Me keeping myself up makes me happy
to be able to dress nice makes me happy
and to have a mother that take care of me and makes sure I'm good

But I often bump heads with lots of jealous and mad people
but I don't really pay it no mind
you gonna run into a lot of people that's jealous or mad

just because you are being you
but you have to ignore stuff like that
keep moving forward in life
because you can't make everyone like you
they're gonna feel how they feel regardless
but I don't let it change my ways
I still continue to be the nice jolly person I am.

My hands let go of Stress,
Fear, hate, The past I Choose
not to remember, Dead things



My hands hold on to
Hope, dreams, life

My hands Create
Art, Energy, life

My hands Reach for
my future, Success, Help

Hand Poem by Janyah C.

STOP THE HATE POETRY

I am by Aniyah M.

I am smart and responsible.
I wonder what happens after life.
I hear imaginary things.
I see other people's perspectives.
I want to be something big in life.
I am smart and responsible.
I pretend to not care about anything.
I know my worth.
I worry about life, I'm Aniyah.
I am a middle child.
People assume I'm rude.
I am smart and responsible.

My Mother Tells Me... by Ariyon R.

My mother tells me fix my attitude
She tells me fix my face and the way I speak
But I say my attitude reflects off people
I say my face tells how I feel
I say the way I speak is fine

My mother tells me stop being mean
She tells me stop being disrespectful
She tells me stop being rude
But I say its not rude—it's not wanting to be bothered
I say it's not mean—it's just how I come off as a person
I say it's not disrespectful—it's not taking people's hate

I say I'm just a girl living in this big world trying to survive
I have to survive through all the fights
I have to survive through all the protest
I have to survive through all the cat calling

But why?
Why should I,
a female, a human being
have to survive
When I'm just like everyone else.

This Is Who I Am by Brooklyn M.

This is who I am... I am a Black Woman
I'm also a young woman
I am Human

I have value attached to me
I have more purpose in being who I am now
—strong-minded, I have stability and Potential, I'm more of a listener than a talker—
& I'm also more than just the way you view me

From my brain to my heart to my soul it's all pure

I've always been judged on my looks throughout my life
Your hair is too short
you have on too much lip gloss
you're too cocky
you're showing too much skin

Why would I satisfy your opinion by changing my appearance?
This is what I was blessed with

Just 'cause I look the way I look or present myself a certain way it doesn't define me,
just cause I dress "half naked" doesn't mean I'm easy or a gardening tool

I'm more than an image
and how you view me
I have feelings, self-morals, respect for myself, priorities that come along with me

Not only here to create the babies,
My purpose is to be something in life. What if I wanted to become a real estate agent or create a
hair product company? I want to create something else other than a living thing.

You get my drift?
My presence should be cherished and adored
like a silver diamond owned by a rich family.

Embracing Every Curve by Cha'Maree M.

They say in this world of shapes and sizes where judgment often lingers,
I navigate the whispers as expectations to point fingers.

Chubby they label with a tone that's less than kind,
yet strength resides within me, an un-bothered mind.

Straightforward and blunt, my voice cuts through the haze,
no need for sugar-coated words in this complex maze.

My volume breaks through the barriers of deceit,
cracking facades, honest heartbeats.

Expectations cast their shadows, but i stand tall,
embracing every curve, i won't let judgment be my fall.

This is who I am, by Chereae

I am Black

A female

5'8

Just because I'm tall

Every day somebody stereotypes me,

It's not always just about my height

You look me up and down

As if i'm a tree

I always wonder wassup with that

Yes, i am a hooper and athletic

Or maybe 'cause I'm black

Does that mean i have to like fried chicken

Or watermelon?

What about my favorite colors?

Or what i like to eat

Does any of that matter

I love to paint and color pictures

Also, on my free time i like to

cook, and baking is my favorite

I am 15 years young

People think otherwise

Maybe 'cause I'm mature

Or maybe how I appear

Don't they judge me by my color?

Or maybe how I really am?

See, we all knew it

Maybe because i'm not in the suburbs

You only judge me 'cause I am BLACK.

Racism by De'Andre L.

A small word but a big talk
It is about something we should stand
Up and confront
How many times can we escape from it
How many times we can ignore it
It's not just about a color, it's about the heart
Of millions who say
BLACK LIVES MATTER
One should not encourage
One should not take it in
Let us all stand up and build a society
That does not judge people by their color
but
By their heart.

I Am by De'Nariel G.

I am African American
When you look at me you see brown,
No black but you couldn't see the shine
around me or the way
My heart beats when i see how pretty and
smooth my skin is

When you see me you see skinny and tall
Can you see that I am gifted, smart, and
passionate?

When you look at me do you see
Ghetto or a well-mannered female?
Do you see dumb or do you see
intelligence?

When you look at me and see my glasses
you think
"Oh she's a nerd" but can you see that
That these glasses help me shine and
prosper
In every class?

You look at me and see my big forehead but
can you see

Model Minority by De'Andre L.

I want to fight back behold
The hate weighs on my soul
But I'm told
To slow my roll
Don't make it worse
Don't live under the curse
Of the model minority myth
That tells me to sit Down
Push my feelings down
Don't make too much sound
And maybe soon
The racism will just dissipate

That this is the head of one talented
individual

Stop The Hate by Dai Shaun R.

I want to stop the unnecessary hate
Towards a certain demographic of people
From a different ethnicity group, or people
That are different from other people

Now some of the hate can be justified in
some
Parts where the person is exposed for being
A bad person in those parts.

But Anything else where the Hate comes
from
Is somewhat unfair in all parts
Just because someone
Hates another someone for no good reason

Don't Judge Anyone by Emani W.

People who are straight are more comfortable
seeing two men holding guns
Than two men holding hands
No one should judge anyone for who they like
You should follow your heart
And don't follow what other people hearts want
Do what your heart wants
People make other people feel down because
Someone don't want them or love them
So they bring other people down with them
Everyone is born in their own way
They have their own desires
No matter who people like
You shouldn't judge them until you get to know them
It's like judging a book by its cover
You can't judge unless you know them or know about them.....

When You Look at Me by Frank K.

When you look at me you assume I'm just African American
Even though I am
But when you look at me you assume I'm just a clone of another... an African American,

Even though I have had a rough school history,
And a rough past,
I want you to see when you look at me an intelligent African American,
I want you to see a

When you look at me by Essence H

When you look at me
You see a girl glammed up
A girl who always makes faces,
But when you talk to her
She immediately smiles
You see my body,
You see my shape
And assume she's fast
Or "her clothes are too tight"
You see my makeup and assume "She's trying to be grown"
But nobody has thought to ask me
Why is it when you're complimented you smile instead of saying thank you?
Why do you put so much effort into your looks and still don't feel pretty ?
Why are you so awkward and just smile when people talk to you?
Why do you cover your mouth when you laugh ?
So, you might see when you look at me
A confident girl
Or an awkward girl
You might even see behind the act
But just take the time to get to know me.
The real me.

Black
American
with a goal,
A Black American
in the 11th grade
praying for success

You say
every black male from Cleveland has no hope
and that's what you see,
But when you see me
I want you to know
that I am a male in Cleveland
who likes technology and manufacturing
Black visual doesn't describe a lifestyle

This is what you see when you look at me by Harmony R.

This is what you see when you look at me compared to my family.
You see a short girl, shorter than her 5'7" little brother.
You call me 5 feet.
This is who I really am.
I am more than 5 feet, more than the small one in the family.
I am not short.
You think I can't reach the top shelf.
You say I'm too small to drive
Can't reach the pedals
I am really not that short.
But I am not super small.
I am the perfect height, of being 5'5.
That is who I really am.

**Rising Above the Shadows:
Embracing My True Identity by
Janyah C.**

In the depths of my soul, a storm exists
A constant battle that my heart resists
A blanket of dark, heavy and deep
Flooding my spirits where secrets keep

I am more than the shadows I wear
A physical being, hurt by despair
My identity, not defined by this fight
But by the courage I hold tight

Through the tears that stain my face
I search for peace, a moment of grace
A glimmer of hope, the shine of a light
Guiding me through the darkest night

So don't see me as a body of sorrow
But as a warrior fighting for tomorrow
My identity and soul, shaped by love and pain
A reference to the strength i'll regain

You All Deserve the World by Eugene J.

How many young black males
have to die or be indicted
Before we realize the system
is against people like them ?
How many Mothers have
to raise their children on their own
Before they
are taken from them ?
A message to the world
I would like to send
Stay away from crowds
that might cause you pain
A message for the mothers
Who do their best
YOU ALL deserve the world

**Discrimination Poem/Rap By
Jeremiah S.**

Discrimination looks as if the world isn't listening
Stop the murder, stop the violence, enough of social distancing
everybody is the same in their own way
whether Spanish Japanese or France (Todos son importantes).
For instance, there are still signs of Racism around and if I were god I would have picked it up and slammed it down also
Everyone has different blood but we are on the same planet so let's all stop the murder
And violence just bring the peace d**n it
I have said enough but at least I got to speak my mind
So let's all try to work this out before we leave this world behind

44102 by Joaquim T.

What do people see
When they look at me?
They look at me and stereotype me
saying I look mean or thinking I did something wrong like assuming—
Most people think I'm a bad person just by looking at me
one time someone thought I stole something in their store
just because I had a hoodie on and was with my friends.
They say things without getting to know me.

I am about 5,9, weighing about 185.
I try to treat people how they treat me no matter the mood.
Also I love cooking food like chicken and rice or a break for my family and friends.
I like to play chess
I play chess anywhere where there's a board and pieces.
I like card games.
I play mostly with friends and family.
I like football and watching football games.
My favorite team is Ohio State
The position I like is the lineman.

I am not a bad person and I am very respectful
To friends and family, teachers and elders
I never liked the fact that people would stare at me
and judge me.

I stereotype every once in a while
but I won't take it as far as saying something to someone.
People shouldn't profile
Someone they never met

I try to stay away from negative things
I don't like when people start to yell and argue.
I usually get aggravated and say something about it.
I don't like to fight
but I will if I have to.
One of my favorite colors is blue
Grew up on the west side of Cleveland—
something I never liked—
zip code 44102.

72 years by Kenteiya R.

She's too tall, you say,
Her hair isn't done
She's too skinny, you say
But now it's—she's too fat &
She can't dress—

When does it stop?
Since she was little
she didn't like herself
She tried so hard to fit in but she couldn't

She's weird
She do too much you say—

72 years
That's how long you get if you are lucky
72 springs, 72 summers
72 winters, and 72 autumns
That's not a lot of time now, is it?

And you're wasting half of it worrying
about how someone else is living their life.

Or is it the pain caused from how YOU see
yourself
Do you bully because you think YOU are
too fat?
Or too short?
Or you feel like you can't be yourself?

You have 72 years and you choose to waste
it on this?

Wandering around Target by Lawren W.

Wandering around Target after losing my
mom.

I was looking through the aisle.
I seen a black woman getting bullied
By two white boys
she wore big clothes
didn't have her hair done
and was poor.

*You don't have anything
why is your black a## in this store?
Said the two white boys
They began to push her
I jumped in.*

Why are you pushing and bullying her?
They told me I was a nobody.
I told them that bullying someone mentally,
verbally, or physically is not nice. I went
through that before so I would know how
she felt so I could not just stand there and
watch that.

They continued to bully her when I left.
I am somebody.
I imagined the woman going home feeling
depressed and sad due to her getting
bullied by just going in the store.
I imagined her deciding to kill herself and
then
Hours later the woman killed herself due to
bullying.

Our love is not wrong by Londyn P.

We as people , hate we give, the way we are
We fail to see the divine eternal beauty within us all
Trauma can interrupt our sense of identity
You are not your trauma self
We seem to always take things personally
letting it affect us mentally
Why do we let people's projections, their hate within,
Determine how we see ourselves, our lives or bodies and our skin?

You are not your past, your sexuality
Your depression or your trauma
The body that you are in is just a vessel
Holding the collection of stars that you are
They don't see your scars
The internal ones
Or the ones that stain our skin
They don't know that you almost made that choice
Yes "that one"
They don't know there was a time that you didn't have a voice

But I know what you are
You are guided , protected, loved
You are your own
You fight for those who cannot
Love those who think they are undeserving
You are a beautiful spirit and soul
Inside of the vessel that is holding you
Regardless of the hurt
The pain
This is me giving love to all

We all have a chance to break the cycle
Regardless of everything we've been through
We still love
We still flow
We all grow
Our love is not wrong
We are not born to hate we were born to love

Destruction makes room for creation
I once was destructed, now look at what I have created

The Prettiest Girl in the Room by R'lexceia C.

Do you not find my personality likable or the slightest bit attractive?
I hear the slimmest girl in the room.
Who gets praised with gracious compliments about
How her beauty reflects all her gorgeous environments
Say that she always feels that
She is being judged on her body,
Or getting laughed at by her looks and just wishing people would see her for more than just her
curves.
I say to myself relating to her, wishing that people would also see me as more than just my
curves and lines, looks, and loose skin too.
But how could she say that about herself?
She's the most beautiful girl in the room.
Her friends confront her by telling her that
But when I whine and complain about how I look, my friends say that I'll be alright, will I?
Sometimes I do wish that I was seen for just my curves.
I envy compliments.
I envy her smile.
I envy her size.
I envy her voice.
I envy your jawline.
I envy her laugh.
I envy how beautiful and lighter her skin is than mine.
I wish my skin didn't have any dark patches or rough bumps
I even envy her torso.
My mother tells me that I'm the prettiest girl ever, but I know it's not true.

I get told to love myself, embrace myself, and stop beating myself up about the way I feel.
But how?
When I'm sitting across from the prettiest girl in the room.

This is what you see when you look at me by Saanya W.

This is what you see when you look at me	Some say they don't think I'm smart
You see brown eyes	I say I'm really smart
They say I'm too shy	Some say I'm a bad person
I say I'm an introvert	I say I'm a good person
They say I'm quiet	They say I look mean
I say I open up around people I trust	I say I'm the nicest person you'll meet

I was Meant to Stand Out by Zimerria C.

*That day in fifth grade
playing alone on the swings*

*I met a girl named Trinity,
blonde, pretty green eyes, shorter than I was*

*She had a sweet and kind accent
I thought to myself, "I could never be as pretty as she is."*

*I have brown eyes, and poofy dark brown hair,
but she was still so nice to me.*

*The next day, a new girl came. She was blonde, tall, with light brown eyes,
freckles on her cheeks and a raspy voice.*

Trinity was also very sweet to her.

*As days went by, she paid less attention to me
hanging out with the other blonde girl.*

Now I was alone on the swings again.

*Kicking my feet
With no one to talk to*

*Trinity sat on the swings next to me
But with her new friend.*

*They laughed together
And played together.*

*Maybe it's because I'm not blonde
Maybe it's because I am not as
Pretty as they are*

*But as the days went by
I sat in those swings staring at other blonde kids playing in the sand
or kicking soccer balls around fields*

*Maybe I didn't need friends
Maybe I didn't have to fit in*

*Maybe I was meant to stand out.
Maybe I don't fit in, because I was meant to stand out.*

They say... by Zyan V.

They say she walks around with an attitude
they say she is always mad
but in reality there is a girl who is happy inside
and very kind hearted
but goes through things on her own
and would rather deal with her problems alone
and not take it out on anybody else.

no i don't walk around
with a big smile on my face
but that don't mean i'm a bad person
or always mad

A lot of people always think I don't like them
in the beginning just because of how quiet I am
and I don't really show emotions unless I'm close to them,
so I think my shyness affects others
and makes them overthink

i'm really nice and kind
and love to be around everyone

just don't judge someone off facial expressions
because some people go through things alone
but that don't make them a bad person
just because they go through things.

PLAYS

Ms. German and Ms. Clement's students practiced playwriting in February, and many of them submitted plays to the Marilyn Bianchi Kids' Playwriting Festival.

One play, by R'Lexceia Cannon, was recognized as a winning play chosen to be performed at the annual playwriting festival in June at Dobama Theatre. We are including R'Lexceia's play here, as well as several others students wanted to publish.

All of the other plays submitted to the contest can be read and enjoyed using this QR code.



Til Death Do Us Part By R'lexceia C.

CHARACTER LIST

I'yna
William
Joe–William's friend at work
Diane–I'yna's friend

SCENE ONE (The factory)

(William and Joe are both working inside of the factory. They are on break speaking together and eating their sandwiches.)

Joe: This job is killing me. Everyday I'm working myself more and more closer to the grave for some ol' low down cheapskate who sits on his butt all day. Y'know what I gotta deal with? "oh Joe you gotta do this, oh Joe you gots' to do that." Well I got a job for you, how about you kiss my ass... goddamn prick.

(William starts to shakes his head scoffing at Joe's senseless rant then taking a big bite out of his turkey sandwich)

Joe: No William I'm dead serious, I'm sick of this place. I just might quit and go off to Las Vegas. At least I know they'll want me there.

(William shakes his head letting out a slight laughter.)

William: Good cause I'm gettin' sick of you. I think it'll be better for everyone if you just did yourself a favor and work yourself into the grave quicker.

Joe: Oh don't act like you don't love me, when I fall, you all el' miss me.

William: When you fall... there'll be a party!

(William says while walking away towards the trash can to throw his plastic wrap away. Joe follows behind him.)

Joe: Oh William there you go getting' all soft! Always gotta be an asshole eh?

William: Calm down Joe. I'm just needling you.

Joe: Sure.. But y'know you should come with me too, Willie.

William: And babysit your ass all night? Yeah right. I'm better off here freezing MY ass off for a couple of bucks.

Joe: Jesus christ William you are one pain in the ass. I understand though, you just don't wanna upset your ol' lady.

(Joe chuckles, giving William a small pat on the back.)

William: Nahh...

Joe: What? She finally left your ass?

William: Eh.. y'know how it is Joe. Marriages go wrong.. I'm always working and she's at home. I'm too tired, I can't make time for her. And with the money we have left it's not looking too good. She's an honest woman, supportive, cooks and cleans, I promised her she wouldn't have to work a day in her life and here we are, makes me feel pathetic.

Joe: ...Well you got to get your shit together! No woman wants a lousy, whining, cheap broke ass idiot who works in a factory, comes home and does nothing but sits on his ass all day. I don't care what you have to do, do it. If you truly love this woman you have nothing to worry about.

Joe: I'll tell you what.. Valentine's day is coming up, so try and get her something sweet, it doesn't have to be expensive or fancy.. She'll appreciate it either way. And look, I ain't one for favors but if you need anything Willie, I'm here for whatever you need.

William: Thanks Joe.

Joe: Yeah, yeah... enough of this mushy shit, I got a date tomorrow man.

(William chuckles at Joe's response.)

Scene 2–At the Diner

(The story progresses with I'yana and her friend Diane. They are both sitting at a diner having lunch.)

Waiter: What can I serve you ladies with today?

(I'yana looks at Diane cueing her to go first with her order)

Diane: Oh! I'll just have a ceasar salad, shredded parmesan cheese and white wine.

I'yana: I'll have that too please.

Waiter: Okay I'll be right with you both soon.

(Both ladies nod their heads smiling as the waiter walks off. Diane proceeds to grab a box of cigarettes and shares one with I'yana as both attend to smoke.)

Diane: Now what about this man?

I'yana: At this point, I haven't the faintest idea. We're in debt now, and he's working double time. It's caused a gap in our marriage. I don't want to worry him, everything is stressful enough as it is, but I wish he'd talk to me.

Diane: Debt?... Well that's something you'll have to tell him. You don't want to keep this in forever I'yana, I can tell it's bothering you too.. Are you sure he isn't just being unfaithful?

I'yana: No of course not, he's not that type of man at all, he's actually very genuine and kind. I know he loves me.

Diane: How could you be so sure? You married a poor man, how do you know he isn't just using you.

I'yana: Well how can you? After your divorce-

Diane: It was honestly... meant to be.

I'yana: Still, it doesn't sound like much fun.

Diane: No, it's depressing but it's not my fault.

I'yana: I think we're always responsible for our actions. We're free. I raise my hand- I'm responsible. I turn my head to the right - I'm responsible. I'm unhappy, I'm responsible. I smoke this cigarette, but I am responsible. I forget that I am responsible, but I am.

(I'yana takes a small pause facing down at the table, before continuing her rant.)

I'yana: Remember I told you escape is just a pipe dream. After all, everything is beautiful. You only have to take an interest in things, see their beauty.

Diane: Well what are you trying to escape?

I'yana: I'm not quite sure yet.. It's like.. an anxious feeling I have in my stomach that won't go away, like butterflies. It's driving me insane.

Diane: Oh I'yana-....

I'yana: It's true!... Don't you think a man would go out of his way to show their undeniable interest and love? To one who's never properly experienced it? A man who senses true beauty in a woman no matter the color, body, looks. A man who believes in beauty... Life!..

Diane: Some men.. but all would rather, indulge her with gifts, a few faithful words and assure themselves they'll stay.

I'yana: Oh.. I know. I could care less about money. It's always been my biggest enemy anyways.

Diane: So do you think that of William?

I'yana: ...No.

(Diane giggles along with I'yana)

Diane: I have to use the restroom. I'll be back.

(I'yana nods and Diane gets up and heads to the bathroom. I'yana's smile slowly fades away as she puts her cigarette down along with her head. Suddenly she looks back up and stares deeply at the loving couple in front of her with a blank expression on her face.)

Scene 3

(On Valentine's day Joe and William arrive outside of a jewelry store staring at a ring in the window.)

Joe: So that's what you wanna give her?

William: That's what she asked for, for her birthday I mean.

Joe: No.. You- You serious? Her birthday.

William: Ah.. Joe-

Joe: Look I'm just sayin' Willie.. .

William: I'yana knew we wouldn't be able to afford it. She understood. Joe, y'know from the bottom of my heart, everyday I hope that one day all of this will blow over. We'll be outta debt, we can actually go somewhere warm...

I know deep down I'yana is disappointed in me. She feels sorry for herself because of me.

Joe: William, she ain't disappointed in you man.. quit thinkin' like that, she adores you, Will. You both have flaws and most are very similar and you're right, she does understand she knows your struggle. She probably doesn't even care about the goddamn ring, William. You guys have been through so much together since, that alone simply twines you two with marriage. The ring ain't gone makes a difference.

William: Ah.. man. I'm dying, Joe.

Joe: The hell you talking about?

William: Let's not pretend anymore. I've worked in a goddamn factory for 12 years. I'll die in that factory sooner or later... The least I want to do is leave my wife poor or homeless on these barbarous streets. I want to make sure she's safe, wealthy enough to be on her own but I also want to give her something she can reminisce about. Make her proud.

Joe: You keep saying I want.. I want, I want, I want I wish I had what you had but now look at me I'm as good as fuckin' old, I work for 9 hours of my life just to come home with my useless fuckin' cat, I was married once but she divorced me, died a year after from breast cancer. I loved that woman, she was a feisty, smart, stunning girl...

I look back at those times.. I miss her a lot. But there's things I would like to change but I can't and women... They're complicated. Trust me I know I'd be so grateful for what you got because I'll tell you right now you got a good one, a great woman. Don't make the same damn mistakes I did. Cherish her while you still can, so what about the fucking money?! The best gift you can provide her is love and the more of that you have the more you'll be able to conquer.

Joe: Aw man.. Cut it out.. Here, take the money and go buy the ring.

William: Aw.. no I can't take this Joe-

Joe: Just take the money I don't need any more anyways. Please.

William: I owe you-

Joe: Yeah, yeah whatever, let's get the hell out of here before one of my cousins sees me out here or somethin'. You've got a woman waiting for you back home.

(William and Joe hop in Williams' car and leaves. William takes Joe home and heads home to I'yana. William eventually arrives and I'yana hears a knock at the door she opens it for him.)

I'yana: William! Happy Valentine's Day honey!

(I'yana hugs William)

William: Good afternoon, I'yana, Happy Valentine's day!

I'yana: Please come in, come in.

(I'yana rushes William inside and sits him down at the dinner table to prepare him dinner)

William: Okay, okay no rush haha!.. What's that in the kitchen? Smells amazing.

I'yana: Grilled chicken alfredo. Are you hungry?

William: Hungry? Is that even a question?

I'yana: Of course.

(I'yana serves both of them dinner and they eat. After a while William requests I'yana to go with him to a small gazebo by the lake. I'yana kindly accepts. I'yana gets ready and they leave. Once they arrive they go for a little walk heading to the gazebo. Along the way they made conversation until they finally got there and sat down to watch the sun gaze.)

I' yana: I got you a present. It isn't really.. Fashionable but it's the least I can do...

(I' yana pulls out a small box from her pocket and hands it to William. William opens it.)

William: No I' yana! I love it, thank you. I have something for you too but I want to let you know something before I do this.

I' yana: Well now you're scaring me.

William: Ha.. Uh.. I' yana I am terribly sorry for everything. You married me and I promised you paradise and I have not granted you that yet, but you've stuck with me for 27 years. It kept me away from you and I couldn't imagine what it has felt like for you after that. I've felt nothing but contempt for myself. You've shown me empathy, care, responsibility and trust and have also taught it to me in a way... but in my actions I realized I haven't been those things. In fact I've only been distant along with inarticulate and still you chose me and I never quite understood why.

(Both were silent for a second. I' yana tried to hide both her nervousness, tears and excitement all at the same time. She looked down at her feet and stared into William's eyes again.)

I' yana: You're right, you have been that way and it has hurt but I understand it now. But William you have to understand– it was never about the money. I could care less. Till death do us part whatever we've gone through we've gone through together. With money or not, I will never discriminate against you for that.

William: Of course. Though I didn't bring us down here just for you to hear me yap my ass off for 10 whole minutes.

(I' yana looks at William with widened eyes as he gets on one knee.)

William: Will you marry me?

I' yana: Oh get up, I am married to you.

(I' yana giggles)

William: No... I mean proper.. In front of god.

I' yana: Y-You serious?

William: Yes.. I'm sorry if this is corny-

I' yana: Yes, I will marry you.

(I' yana looks at William with widened eyes as he gets on one knee.)

William: No... I mean proper.. In front of god.

I' yana: Y-You serious?

William: Yes.. I'm sorry if this is.. corny-

I' yana: Yes! yes I will!

THE END

The Search by Stephen M.

CHARACTER LIST

Jimmy
Chris
May
Dad

SCENE ONE

Dad: JIMMY WAKE UP

Jimmy: I don't want to get up, leave me alone.

Dad: Go find a job NOW

May: Someone is mad(with a smirk)

Jimmy: May shut up

Dad: Both of you stop arguing, Jimmy get up and look for jobs

Jimmy: FIIIIINNNEEE

May: You said it so SAAASSYYYY!!!!

Chris walks in the front door

Chris: Hey everybody what are you doing

May: Chris can you tell Jimmy he's being sassy

Jimmy: Shut up May with your fat head looking like Megamind

Dad: Jimmy why are you still here

Jimmy: Because I still have to get dress

Chris: Why is everybody yelling?

May: Jimmy won't get up and get a job

Jimmy: Shut up because you are broke too

May: Shut up, this shut up that, how about you do something with your life other than telling a little girl to shut up

Jimmy: *silent stare*

Chris: Me personally

Jimmy: Whatever, BYE

Jimmy walks out

Scene 2

Jimmy walks around looking for available jobs

* But then Jimmy sees his trouble making friends*

Jimmy doesn't look for a job and continues to do things he isn't supposed to

END

Alex and Emily by Zyan V. & Carrie D.

CHARACTER LIST

Alex–13 year old girl, black

Emily–13 year old girl, white

machelle- Alex mother 40 year old woman, black

vanessa- Emily mom 38 year old woman , white

SCENE ONE – At School

Alex: Hey Emily, you wanna come to my house afterschool ? My mom is going to be at work.

Emily: Are you sure she's gonna be okay with that ?

Alex: She's not gonna find out!

Emily: Are you sure?

Alex: Yes Emily! stop being scared. nobody gonna find out.

Emily: Okay let me check in with my mom first.

Alex: okay.

(Emily texts her mom and waits for a reply.)

Emily: My mom said it's totally fine.

Alex: Okay, I'm gonna meet you in the C building after school.

Emily: alright see you soon

**Scene Two
(C Building after school)**

(Alex is on her phone, Maybe speaker phone?)

Alex: Where are you? I'm in the c building.

Emily: coming down the stairs. be right there.

Alex: Okay I see. you come on, lets have some fun.

(Emily makes it to c building and her & Alex leaves)

**Scene Three
(Alex's House)**

Emily: You have a nice house, Alex.

Alex: thank you,

Emily: Come on, let's go inside.

Alex: You don't mind taking your shoes off by the door?

Emily: sure.

Alex: Bring them with you to my room. follow me.

Emily: okay.

(they makes it to Alex room & closed the door)

(Emily and Alex started playing a girls game)

Alex: HAHAHAAAA

Emily: I'm thirsty. Alex, you have some to drink?

Alex: Yeah, let's go to the kitchen.

Emily: ok.

(they both leave the room)

(Sound of a door cracking open, keys shaking)

(Alex gives Emily her drink and they head back to her room)

(Alex mom pops up around the corner)

(Alex moms walked in seen Emily)

(Alex mom gets mad and starts yelling at Alex)

Emily: Alex, I'm gonna leave. I'll see you at school

Machelle (Alex;s mom): yea it's best if you leave.

(Emily leaves)

Narratives

Well, this anthology is getting pretty long, don't you think? East Tech students also wrote short personal and fictional narratives, independently and collaboratively. They chose some of their favorites to share.



This playful work can be found online by using this QR code.

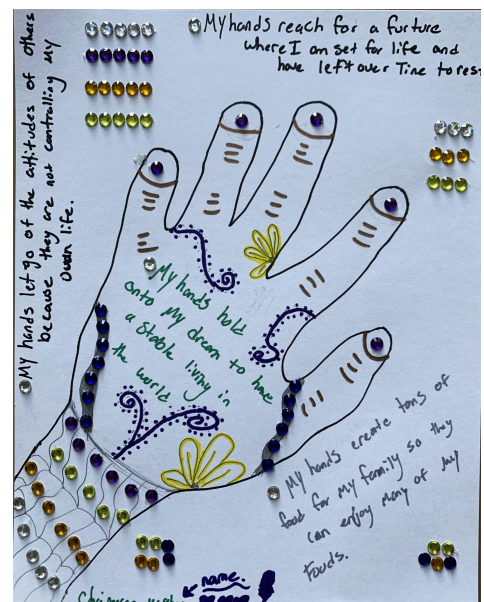
Hand Poem by Cha'Maree

My hands reach for a future where I am set for life and have left over time to rest.

My hands hold onto my dream to have a stable living in the world.

My hands let go of the attitudes of others because they are not controlling my own life.

My hands create tons of food for my family so they can enjoy many of my foods.



INSERT–Late Additions!!

What It's Like To Be Me by Kamal B. Ode

My name is Kamal
I am 18
living this life
No one can define me
As mean or not nice
i greet teachers in this school
more than twice
i come from a good family
with heart
and nothing can tear
us apart
i have lost people
and gained friends
but the ones I have
never took me down the
wrong path.

Ode to the guys by Kamal B.

We been through it all
But that never
Affected
How we treat each other
We aren't siblings
But I can call you my brothers
We share stuff
We came from the gutter
All the problems, arguments
And we never threatened or really hurt each
other
Still my brothers
And forever will be.

What It's Like To Be Me by Terrell D.

I was born
April 26, 2006
I am 18 years old
I was 2 years old when I got this scar on my forehead
People say
That I'm always quiet
But I just don't like to talk
I was a good artist when I was younger
I'm 6'2
I like to play basketball
And spend time with family and friends
I often think about what I will be in the future

This year-long project with Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth was made possible with the support of **After-School All-Stars**, as well as **Ohio Arts Council**, and the **Maltz Museum**.

In the fall, students wrote poetry for the Maltz Museum's first annual Stop the Hate poetry contest. In the spring, they explored multiple genres through a residency supported by After-School All-Stars.

OAC Arts Partnership funds were used to support time spent on editing and publishing this anthology.

Thank you to all the teachers and the nonprofit staff involved!

