

Week 6: Writing prompts – Expectations, listening in

Great expectations

By Lydia Gabourel
HARTFORD HIGH SCHOOL,
GRADE 10

Are you expected to do great things?
Expected to get good grades?
Expected to be funny?
Expected to be perfect?
What are great expectations?
And what are the expectations you have of yourself?
You say
I need to be perfect to be what they expect.
I need to be pretty to impress them.
I need to be smart to make them happy.
I need to be skinny to fit “in.”
Is that what they’re expecting?
Expectations cause pressure.
Pressure may lead to anger
Anger can lead to abuse
Abuse to hatred
What then?
More expectations.
Expecting great things is not wrong,
Yet expecting greatness can be destructive.
The pain of pressure, perfections,
Leads you down the path of confusion,
The path of great expectations,
The path you may not be able to accomplish.
But
There is hope.
You can expect that you are capable,
Capable of certain great expectations:
Expect to be loved.
Expect mistakes.
Expect imperfections.

Eliminate expectations

By Nikko Malerba
WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12

There is no such thing as expectations.
We are all that we make ourselves.
Our focus determines our reality.
Our determination defines our lives.
Our lives are what we make them.
The expectation is in your mind.
Let go, live your life.
Die your death.
Expect nothing from others
And you shall never be disappointed.
Be as yourself
And you will never be disappointed.

Easy for you to say

By Emma Redden
LELAND AND GRAY UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

We read
“Don’t pay beggars.
There are places all over where they can go for help.”
Easy for us to say.
The mother of the boy
With the head
Of a caricature,
Needs my help,
She says.
Why would she want my help?
Her son can get free help at the hospital.
It is only two hours away.
Easy for me to say.
“Are you crazy?”
She says,
“It would take me a year to save that money.
It would mean I would have to find the right bus
At the bus station.
That would mean
Someone would find out
I can’t read
When they tell me the schedule
Is on the wall.
That would mean I might get lost in
A big city.
That would mean
I would need to find the courage
To be strong
Enough to help
My baby.
That would mean I would need to
Realize I am worth
Helping.
You say that
There are lots
Of ways for me to get help.
That is easy for you to say.”

NATURAL LIGHTSHOW



Connor Greenbaum, a student at Essex Junction High School, has this to say about his photography: “My dad got me my first camera when I was very young. I have always liked taking pictures of nature. I have found taking pictures to be very relaxing and peaceful. I have been most intrigued with lighting; a very boring or plain scene can be changed dramatically by certain lighting. My two favorite light times are sunrise and sunset. Both times have unique and powerful lighting.”

The storm

By Cara Johnson
SHELBURNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
GRADE 5

CRASH! BOOM! Silent light flies through the sky. Light flickers on and off. Then... stops. It is pitch black. CRASH! BOOM! Light flies through the sky. Shiver. Under your sheets. Climb down the ladder. Step. Step, step. Hit the floor. Run to the door. Slam. Slam. Slam. You ran into the door, find the knob. CRASH! BOOM! Light flies. You fly down the hall to your Mother’s and Father’s room. You whimper “Mom, Mommy, Mom!” You climb into the bed. CRASH! BOOM! A light flies once more. You see something. Or someone at the door. You slip down from the bed. There at the door you heara Boom! Boom! On the other side you open up the door and Your CAT rushes in to the room. You slip back into the bed and fall asleep. CRASH! BOOM!!

Say what?

By Emma Davitt
SHELBURNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL,
GRADE 6

You’re sitting in the Coffee Shop
Everyone’s abuzz
On the phone,
Or talking,
Singing,
Laughing,
Coughing.
You can’t help what you hear,
Their voices hushed,
But clear.
“She said this...”
And
“He did that!”
Say What?
Say What?
It’s fun to sit and listen
To
All of that jabber.
“And I was like...”
“And then he said...!”
Say What?
Say What?
Their words mean nothing to you,
And you pretend you don’t hear,
But really you’re just sitting,
Listening to what you hear.
Say What?
Say What?

Whispers

By Shannon Page
OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

Voices echo off the walls
Filling crevices and darkened halls
Rumors build while friendship falls.
People laughing but at who?
Parents whisper about you
They just aren’t sure what they should do.
Gossip hangs thick in the air
Breaking hearts without a care
They’d tell the truth but do not dare.
Fear kept silent in her heart
But clear to all right from the start
Her sad small face a tearful chart.
Behind locked doors such secrets stay
Behind cold walls the whispers say.
Behind the windows faces stare
Behind the glass and wood frame there
And I myself am guilty, too
For passing these words on to you.

DANCING LIGHTS



Brittany Peduzzi, a student at Essex Junction High School, describes her approach to this photo and her other work: “In general, I like to get very different, trippy pictures. I like my pictures to be unique and weird. So, I like tools like liquefy, panning and jiggling. These two are my favorite because you can create very sweet, unique pictures with these two tools ... My last piece of work was for our theme ‘rolls.’ I choose to do panning and jiggling as my theme, and I used tube lights, and lighted waterfalls as my main subjects, and black lights and black light posters. Through this last project I have found that panning and jiggling is my favorite way to take pictures, and I look forward to taking more panning and jiggling based photos.”

My expectation: Don’t lie to me

By Emily Potter
LAKE REGION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12

I expect the world to turn
and I expect fire to burn
I expect people to respect me for how hard I try
and for the fact I don’t really lie.
Of course everyone lies every now and then
It’s part of what makes this world excitin’
Don’t get carried away with it
because I don’t really want to deal with it
I expect my mind to think
but I don’t expect boats to sink
I expect my mind to learn
but everyone has to wait their turn
I expect my eyes to see and the buzz to be
Wait, I mean the bee to buzz
I went in the wrong direction
just so I could make a connection
I expect teachers to teach
and preachers to preach
I expect children to grow older
And the world to grow colder
When the world is endin’
I wanna be in heaven.

YWP Special Projects

SYMPHONY POEMS. The Vermont Symphony Orchestra is seeking poems written in response to “The Skater’s Waltz” by Emil Waldteufel. (Download or listen by going to youngwritersproject.org; click on PUBLISH and Special Projects.) Selected poems will be read at the Holiday Pops concerts in **Barre, Burlington** and **Rutland** on Dec. 7, 8 and 9 respectively. Only students in the general area of these communities are eligible. The poems should be about skating and, if possible, about sleep dreams. **Deadline Oct. 26.**

WINTER TALES. The Vermont Stage Company’s professional actors give dramatic readings to selected student winter tales. VSC’s shows will be in early December. This year additional presentations will be made at First Night in Burlington. The prompt: Tell a story about winter; it can focus on the holidays or the season – the weather, the outdoors, the emotions. **Deadline: Oct. 26.**

For specific details on all the projects and to submit your work for the Newspaper Series go to: www.youngwritersproject.org



YWP is a grassroots non-profit that helps students write better and gain an audience for their best work. YWP offers writing ideas or prompts, special projects and a safe Web site, www.youngwritersproject.org, where students can share their writing, comment on each other’s work, participate in group discussions and work on projects. YWP is indebted to the generosity of the Vermont Business Roundtable which is funding the YWP’s core work for the second year.



Untitled

By Tim LaCombe
OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 12

The Sun will rise.
She expects to.

When she first peeks
Over the brim of the world
She expects there will be a field
Dusted in gems
For her to dance through.

She expects it.

And the Moon will rise.
She expects, too.

When desire grabs her
And pulls her through the sky
She expects to see little faces
Little noses and little eyes
Gaping upwards at her voyage

She expects it.

But Curiosity will also rise
And he does not expect.

His sleek feline form is a constant shadow
On the awe in little eyes
On the sky above

His furred back faces the faces
Of the heavenly women
And his smile upon the world
is the question
and the quest.

He does not expect.

Listening

By Myrrhanda Wentworth
OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

I’m listening
I hear typical teenage laughter
“Ohhhh, he’s sooooo cute!!!”
“Shhhhhhh, I think he heard you.”

I’m listening
I hear toddlers shrieking and throwing tantrums
“Why, mommy, why?!!!!”
“No!!!!”

I’m listening
I hear babies that need changing cry
And mothers reassuring them that it’s going to be OK

I’m listening
I hear a couple arguing about how much money they can spend
“We need to save money...”
“Ohhh, yeah, well we need this, too!”

I’m listening
I hear an old, married couple whisper
“I love you.”