

Week 12: Writing Prompts: Stress and siblings strike chord

My brother, my autistic brother

By Hugh Garrett Randall

Rochester High School, Grade 10

Living, breathing, seeing, being.
You are always there with a physical appearance and a smile
But you say nothing.
On and on you stare as each day goes by.
What are you thinking about?
You are living, I feel you.
I hear your cries; I feel the walls and the floor as they shake.
No one knows your pain, not even me.
And I've known you for 13 years.
I wish I could let you know it's alright.
That you have a family that loves you,
Friends that would stick by you through anything.
But you don't understand.
My efforts to communicate are disastrous.
I talk, but then anger takes over.
And I do things I wish I could take back.
Could you ever find the words to forgive me?
My efforts amount to nothing, and violence fills the empty void.
The harder I try the more I hurt you and the people around me
Then their efforts amount to nothing.
So the cycle goes on.
Every day is the same,
And all I seem to know about you is your name.
Who ARE you?
Why are you here?
What is your purpose in life?
Do you want to make me miserable?
A silent torture, with immutable screams?
Or is this a test of patience and will?
Can my efforts last longer than you?
But after all this, the truth. You look up to me, don't you?
It's up to me to impose the Big Brother figure.
How am I doing?
I can answer that; I hurt you, scream back to make it all stop.
What kind of brother is that?
But it's a hard thing, trying to be there for you.
Trying to be the best friend you'll ever have.
And if we could have even just one conversation for a mere minute,
I would let you know that I love you
and I'm sorry for everything I ever did to hurt you.
But the fact of the matter is, you'll never know.

HOT AND COLD



Callie Cox of White River Junction says this about her piece: "When I made this I was thinking of fire and ice and what they might look like together. I like the whole picture, especially how the different colors blend together. I like art and pictures because you can express yourself in many different ways. In this picture, I wanted to express how fire and ice can be different but when blended, the same."

Look what you do to me

By Jackie Potter

Rochester High School, Grade 10

Oh you poor, poor soul. You have to make a decision; what a shame. It's not so easy, is it? But when has anything ever been simple? You just expect the answer to fall right into your lap. Whoops. I guess you were wrong there.

Funny. I don't recall you ever being wrong.

You're a male, since when did guys have to ever think or make a choice? People expect your gender to not have to give anything a thought —am I mistaken for believing so?

Now, time has continued and the tables have been turned. You are about to affect the life of others. There are the two girls you're playing. Oh yeah, remember them? Believe it or not, they're human as well. They care, believe, hope and feel like humans do. They can't tolerate being pushed around. And when you mess with them, it screws with

their head. How does it feel knowing that you are the cause of a broken heart and a corrupted mind? Should I hate you because you hurt me? Or love you because you make me feel special? I'm tired of boys being a constant headache. I have enough troubles as it is. Do you honestly believe it's necessary to apply additional stress on my shoulders? I can't hold this much weight. Shortly, I'm going to snap. Break.

Will you please just take me far away before I'm melted to the ground and all my words are used against me. You treat me like a door, walking in and out of my life as you please. My hinges are coming loose and I'm falling apart more with every push and pull. Soon, I will collapse to the ground with only the air beneath my body and the hard wood floors of my house to break my fall. I'll inch to the wall, lean myself against it and let loose all the stress I've been carrying.

A prince's life

By Rebecca White Hartford Memorial Middle School, Grade 8

Being a prince is hard enough, especially when you are one of eight brothers. Yes, you can have fancy robes and your bed is always made for you. Your hair is slicked back in tight lace ribbons by a maid whose only job is your wardrobe. It may seem like a life of luxury and extravagance, but it is more a cruel joke for outsiders.

Unlike most royals in my family you fight for the right to be king. We are prepared since birth, trained to kill our siblings with not only brawn but brains as well. If you are dull witted and unfit to battle you will surely die. No one but yourself is on your side; alone and even against your family. My Mother cries for us with tears as big as the ocean, stinging her pale white face like salty

arrows slashing across her cheeks. She wishes she had died in labor, anything to stop her from seeing her children murder each other in front of her eyes.

Once my youngest brother, Petrof, turns 11 we will begin our war on each other. It scares me to think that if I do not win I shall die, no second chance at life, just a bleak future of blood stained fights. How could our own father kill his five brothers just to rule? Or even watch his sons rip each other apart like starving animals for power? The boys I played with since childhood, who I was brought up to hate, even though I know they are as scared of their futures as I am.

My friends, you know nothing of sibling rivalries.

Letting it out

By Laura Voelker-Hebert

Hartford Memorial Middle School, Grade 8

I stare off into the sky,
Hands all fisted up,
Just wishing I could forget everything and start out new.

I stand up to calm down
Turn around and run,
Running and screaming to get it all out
Slowly tearing up
As I force it to stay in.

I fall to the ground
And cry,
Cry it all away
Till the stress is gone...
But it's only gone for the day.



YWP is a nonprofit that helps students write better and gain an audience for their best work. YWP offers writing ideas (prompts), special projects and a safe Web site, youngwritersproject.org where students share their writing, comment on each other's work and receive feedback from YWP's college mentors. YWP is indebted to the generosity of the Vermont Business Roundtable which is funding YWP's core work for the second year. YWP also depends on individuals' generosity to do its work. To donate, click "support" in top menu on: youngwritersproject.org



Sibling rivalry

By Mindy Yeung

Hartford Memorial Middle School, Grade 8

I know that we may not get along,
But I still love you,
Even if you locked me in the attic for five hours
I know that we fight a lot,
But I'll still let you win the argument
Even if the statement is unbelievably false
I know the look in your eyes,
When everything is wrong,
And you just want someone to care
I know the hurt in your face,
When you lose something valuable to you
I hope you know that I'll always stand by you,
and look out for you,
Forever

S-T-R-E-S-S

By Katherine DiBella

Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

Stress,
Could you please use that in a sentence?
Stress is causing me to feel pressure to do things I shouldn't, giving in to my friends because they say I need to relax.

Stress,
S-T-R-E-S-S,
Stress,
Correct,
Anxiety,
Could you please use that in a sentence?
The anxiety caused by the things around me makes me want to turn away from the things I love.
Anxiety,
A-N-X-I-E-T-Y
Anxiety,
Correct,
Help,
Could you please use that in a sentence?
Help is something that someone can give to anyone in need.
Help,
H-E-L-P,
Help,
Correct.

Every time

By Sam Stockwell

Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

Every time,
Every stinkin' time
He beats me.
Basketball is my sport,
I think I'm ready,
I think I'm on fire,
And every time
He beats me.
I'm ready to play
I practice
I hone my skills
I run through my moves
I go over my gameplan,
But every time it doesn't matter.
Every time he beats me
I don't know how
Maybe he's quicker,
Maybe he's stronger,
Or maybe
Maybe I'm just scared of my big brother
But this time
This time I'll be ready
When I play him one-on-one I'll beat him
This time will not be like every other time
This time he's going down!
Then again,
Every time we play, I say this.
And every time we play,
He wins.
Every single time.

How to submit

One of the goals of the Young Writers Project is to publish the students' best work online, in our partner newspapers, on radio or on stage. Work can be in response to our prompts or general writing; the work can be fiction, nonfiction, essays, poetry — any genre. To submit, go to: youngwritersproject.org, register and follow the instructions on how to submit.

To read more great student writing, view our image gallery, or listen to audio clips, go to youngwritersproject.org.

What it's like

By Phillip James Parrish

Rochester High School, Grade 9

Looks like steam coming out of tea pot
Sounds like someone punching a brick wall
Tastes like chewing on a piece of rubber
Smells like a horse pasture
Feels like touching a chalk board
Stress is a nightmare!

An older sister

By Sierra Cruikshank

Rochester High School, Grade 9

Living up to someone's standards never quite struck gold
someone else who came before you living life so bold
my tears have dripped for many reasons
I could never hold
people think of me like her
for certain traits I hold
We may have certain genes alike
such as eyes and hair I'm told
but when I hear it over and over
the sound of it gets old
arguments arise from dust
our differences unfold
she always seems to push me first
the outcome is so cold
"I'm the boss!" her body language screams
I imitate her mold
I try so hard to mature up
"You're too young!" she scolds
when will she learn I'm growing up?
and she should, too
Oh my God she drives me crazy
but that's what sisters do

What is stress?

By Meredith Cross

Charlotte Central School, Grade 8

Stress is when you wake up thirty minutes late.
Stress is when you forget your homework at home.
Stress is when there is one more second on the clock in the championship basketball game, your team is one point behind, and you have the ball.
Stress is when you have two different plans with two different people at the same time.
Stress is when you can't find your music five minutes before your band concert.
Stress is when it is 11 p.m. and you still have math homework.
Stress is when your shoelace comes untied in a race.
Stress is when it starts thundering and lightning while you are tubing.
Stress is when you have five more minutes to finish your science test.
Stress is anything that is a little scary or anything that isn't going perfectly.
Stress is all around you.
But without stress we would never be able to say; "I am feeling so stress free."

Stressed?

By Gianna Carchia

Woodstock Union High School, Grade 10

Meditate
When there is too much homework
Meditate
When there is trouble at school
Meditate
When it is too much to handle
Meditate
When you are looking for an answer
Meditate
When you feel like the maid
Meditate
When your friends treat you badly
Meditate
When it feels like the end
Meditate
To get rid of stress
Meditate
And just let it all go