

Week 15: Writing prompts: Surviving the '27 Flood; #3

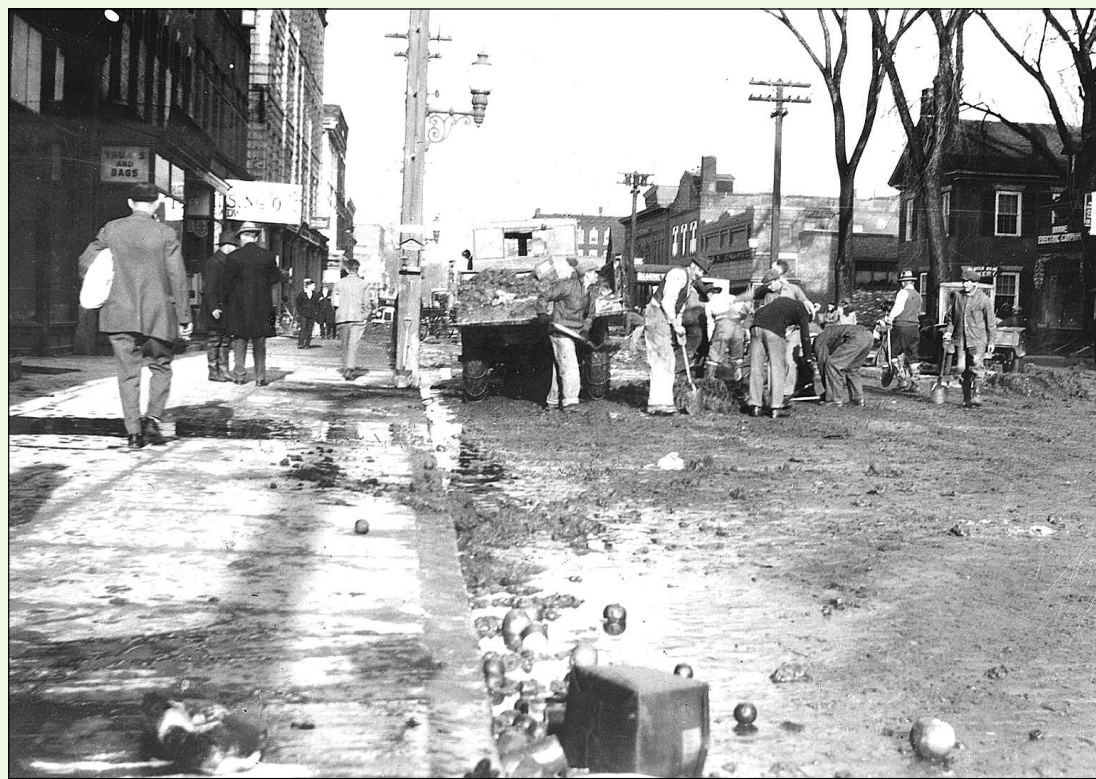
The Flood

Sweeping change

By Sean Bjornsson

WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

Mmm, rain
 Soft, pleasant noise on the windows
 Really raining hard now
 It's warm and cozy in here
 Wake up, sirens
 What's going on?
 Run downstairs
 Water on the floor
 "Get your shoes on!!"
 Out into the cold
 Out into the wind
 Wading through the water
 Water everywhere
 Someone in a canoe where the garden should be
 Soaked through
 No sleep
 Living at grandma's house
 The water's subsided
 Time to go back
 Through the door
 Dirt, stuff everywhere
 Everything soaked
 Everything ruined
 Nothing left undamaged
 See the water line on the wall
 Six feet
 Let's get to work
 Fix the house
 Rip up the floor
 Rip out the walls
 Throw everything out
 Dump overflowing
 A lot more to do
 Finally done
 Months later
 Back to normal
 ... I don't like the sound of rain anymore



Courtesy of the Vermont Historical Society

Cleaning up Barre after the 1927 Flood that devastated much of Vermont.

To survive

By Moya Cavanagh BROWNS RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

It has been
 Said,
 All too often,
 "When hell freezes over,"
 What about
 When hell runs in rivers
 When it breaks the dams and brings avalanches
 Of water in walls and blockades
 With tearing, destructive power
 Hurling the anchors of civilization
 Away for something else.

But it still hasn't found what it's looking
 For.
 To survive the flood was to dive into
 Hell
 And break the surface unscathed.

To survive the flood was to
 Walk among the splinters and ruins
 Of a sand castle after a wave.

Windows
 Doors
 A scuffed leather shoe,
 Skeins of yarn,
 Photographs,
 Candlesticks,
 Skeleton keys
 A single glove,
 The shattered porcelain face of a doll by
 A child who cries,
 For all that is,
 And was,
 And has died
 Lives sent spinning,

Changed ruined
 Opened
 Broken

To survive the flood was to walk among the
 Ghosts
 Of those still half alive,

For to survive the flood
 Was
 To see such destruction of all that
 You once knew,
 Was to see your doom flash before your
 Eyes
 Even though you
 Knew you'd survived.

To survive
 Was to start anew
 In the aftermath
 Of hell's
 Crushing tides
 In the cold of November,
 To salvage,
 To recollect
 To try and
 Try,
 To start again.
 To cry,
 To mourn for the silenced,
 The 55 who had died.
 And to wonder if you were worthy
 To continue your life
 As it was
 As it now is.

The lost

By Tucker Stone

HARTFORD MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

I trudge down the street looking left and right,
 staring at my destroyed territory. My coat is caked
 with mud, sending a chill through my body every so
 often. I'm walking down the main road checking to
 see what streets have been decimated. Maple
 Street, gone; Mulberry Lane, gone; and Ash
 Avenue, gone. Destroyed, every one of them.

I've been held up under that bridge on the
 other side of town for a week, maybe two at the
 most. I have lost all sense of time. The sunsets
 weren't as delightful; I've lost interest in watching
 them. Sirens cloud the sounds of tranquility.
 Smoke in every corner of my sight. Splish, smuck,
 I step carelessly into the puddle not realizing that it
 would suck me down into the mud. I have lost all
 care for whether I will be stuck forever or break
 loose in mere seconds. I then ease myself out of the
 mud, continuing my sad slow march. Would my
 family give up on me? Their loving dog who sat by
 their side every night despite the bad times? Would
 they?

Surviving

By Oliver Manning

FAIRFIELD CENTER SCHOOL, GRADE 8

Scrambling to get the cows out
 Unbelievable flames, high and bright
 'Round the corner a line of fire trucks
 Vein bulging when I heard the bellowing of trapped cows
 Internally scarred, externally scarred
 "Volunteer or paid, all came to try and save the
 day," my grandpa said about the firefighters
 Intimidating flames
 Nine casualties in all
 Grey and black smoke billowing into the sky.

Still standing

By Hannah Domas

ROCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 9

People mill about,
 in small clumps or pairs.
 They look at their ruined town,
 looking lost.
 Their feet splash in puddles
 that almost drown the street.
 Some buildings still stand,
 others are smashed,
 their walls too weak.
 Rubble lines the sidewalks,
 pieces of once grand houses.
 Limbs of trees have fallen,
 proof of destroyed beauty.
 Tears start to form on people's faces,
 making the puddles grow bigger.
 But after their misery
 they group together
 and become strong.
 They begin to restore the old town,
 working with each other
 until the job is done.
 They have survived the 1927 flood.

Picture imperfect

By Mindy Yeung

HARTFORD MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

Click.
 The camera flashes.
 Through the lens you can see water surrounding
 buildings,
 Like blue surrounding the stars on the American flag.
 Such dread and dreariness fill the motionless picture.
 The gloomy people walk through it all,
 As if they don't care what happens to their unpro-
 tected earth.
 The trees shiver their bare limbs,
 All their red, orange and green leaves dissolve into
 the flooding earth.

Three: The magic number

Why the number three?

By Celsey Lumbrá FAIRFIELD CENTER SCHOOL, GRADE 8

Why the number three in many fairy tales?
 Why three characters that always prevail?
 Three little pigs, three houses were made,
 Built of three things, one of which outweighed.
 Next comes the three little bears who were robbed,
 A girl, who was caught, cried and then sobbed.
 She tried three porridges, three chairs and three beds,
 My gosh, did this girl fall and bump her head?
 Third comes the three Billy Goats Gruff,
 Who crossed the bridge three times, sure enough.
 They outsmarted the troll, tricked him three times,
 Crossed to the other side, told him three tiny white lies.
 We cannot forget the three blind mice,
 Their three tails made a sacrifice,
 The tails were chopped by a sharp carving knife,
 That was held in the hand of the farmer's wife.
 Why are these fairy tales all based on three?
 Why all other numbers do we always oversee?
 I am so confused, why does three have special rights?
 All the other numbers are shunned from the limelight.

Three of us

By Bailey Walker

DERBY, HOME-SCHOOLED, GRADE 8

Three, standing.
 Three, laughing.
 Three, crying.
 Three of us,
 United by bonds
 Of Sisterhood.
 Together, we
 Support each other
 With love.
 Three.
 A triangle,
 A perfect
 Shape.
 We are
 Bonded,
 Forever,
 Through anything.
 Three, joking.
 Three, playing.

Three, hugging.
 We are
 Connected in
 Such a way
 That no matter
 How hard our
 Lives get,
 Or what
 Tomorrow brings,
 We live
 Today,
 Together.

Three, standing,
 laughing, crying,
 Joking,
 Playing, hugging,
 Loving one another.
 Three

Three haiku

By Allison Getz

OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

Nature:
 It is winter now
 It is getting much colder
 Soon, the world will rest

School:
 Noisy, loud, boring
 Noisy is the loudness that
 bores me to my death

Vermont:
 Beautiful nature
 Green mountains high above us
 Alone in the world

Three, three, three

By Kacie Collins

WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

Three rings of the school bell
 Three o'clock in the afternoon
 Three minutes to run to the bus
 Three, Three, Three
 And then I am free.



YWP is a grassroots nonprofit that helps students write 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 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.



Three deer

By Mariah Hill

CHARLOTTE CENTRAL SCHOOL, GRADE 8

Three golden deer stand in the fog,
 pawing at the ground restlessly. Their
 snouts are bound with plaid muzzles in
 order for them to remain perfectly silent.
 Cherry-red leather saddles sit polished
 and new upon each of their backs. As
 they wait, snow begins to fall lightly. It
 gives their saddles a pleasant shine as it
 melts away on contact.

A few small people carrying tote
 bags emerge from the cloudiness after
 about 30 minutes or so. They all wear
 knit leg warmers in various colors:
 turquoise, maroon and white. They
 mount the deer and ride back the way
 they have come, disappearing through
 the fog. It is almost as if they were never
 there, except for the small hoof prints
 that have melted through the paper-thin
 snow coating the ground that leads away
 from where the deer were tethered; a
 vague glistening outline of three deer and
 their riders is visible on the hazy horizon.

Right time

By Kasia Wright

WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

When I think of the number three
 I think of 3 in the afternoon when the
 sun is shining, and I'm not in school.
 The sun's warmth is starting to cool
 down, but not enough to make you cold.
 The sun's light is a little duller, and the
 sky is vivid and pretty; the trees are hit
 with a sparkling shimmer and the air is
 fresh and cool. When I think of 3
 o'clock I also think of snack time, cook-
 ies, ice cream, cereal, the before-dinner-
 keep-me-from-starving snack. When I
 think of 3 o'clock I think of sports prac-
 tices and meeting up with friends. Three
 o'clock is my favorite time because one
 thing ends and another always begins.

A look ahead

YWP will be off until Jan. 8. Here's a
 sample of what we'll have for you
 when we return:

My best friend

By Shannon Page

OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

Because her hands are jittery
 And she just cannot sleep
 Because her body leans on me
 As she begins to weep
 Because I hold her close at night
 And she spills out her pain
 Because she's always been my light
 When I've no more to gain
 Because we've always been best friends
 Through all the years and fights
 Because it's just her hand that mends
 She saves me from all heights
 Because her shoulder's always there
 When I can't help but cry
 Because I know she'll always care
 I'll love her until I die.

Triplet mood

By Molly Pekarik

MOUNT MANSFIELD UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11

tired perhaps
 but satisfied
 dwelling in the past

there is no moon outside
 yet I see a light
 your face reflected in the glass

a moment passed
 someone's life just changed
 I wonder if it's mine