

The Write Challenge Anthology

2023



Lakota★LEADS
Lakota's Enrichment and Academic
Development of Students

THE 2023 WRITE CHALLENGE ANTHOLOGY

Pride

The word challenge has many meanings. Whether it's pride in who you are, an accomplishment, as a part of a group or even a group of lions, there are many different ways to view PRIDE.

PRIDE

1. the quality or state of being proud: such as
 - a. reasonable self-esteem: confidence and satisfaction in oneself: self-respect
 - b. pleasure that comes from some relationship, association, achievement, or possession that is seen as a source of honor, respect, etc.
 - c. exaggerated self-esteem: conceit
2. respect and appreciation for oneself and others as members of a group and especially a marginalized group
3. a source of pride: a person or thing that makes you feel proud
4. the most active, thriving, or satisfying stage or period: prime
5. a group of lions living together

Thank you to all of this year's entrants. Here are the top three students in every category and their wonderful literary works...all interpreting this year's theme of PRIDE!

Hosted by:



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Essay – Grades K-2: 1st Place

It Feels Good to be Proud of Myself and Others

By Samuella Djanie

Being proud of myself makes me know how much progress I have made and helps me appreciate myself to keep doing what I do.

I define pride as the feeling of excitement that I get whenever I accomplish something. For example, if I learn a new skill, like tying my shoes or riding a bike all by myself, I am very proud of myself. I also am proud of myself when I work hard and get good grades in school and show kindness to others.

We can also be proud of others when they do good things. The day my little sister, who does not like sharing, saved the candy she got from her paediatrician from her appointment for me, I was very excited and so proud of her. When I told her that I am proud of her, her reaction was priceless and that made me happy because I recognized that she had made so much progress in the act of sharing with others.

However, it is important to remember that pride should not turn into arrogance or boasting. We should be humble and grateful for our accomplishments and remember to give credit to those who helped us along the way.

In conclusion, pride is an important feeling that helps us build confidence and self-esteem. We should be proud of ourselves when we accomplish something we worked hard for and also when we show kindness to others.

Let us remember to be humble and grateful for our accomplishments and always strive to do our best.

Essay – Grades K-2: 2nd Place

What Is Pride?

By: Colin Camacho

To have pride is to feel good about something I did right. I feel proud when I have done something good and I get compliments from others for doing it.

An example of this, is when I am answering a question at school and I answer the question my teacher asks correctly. I definitely love when my teacher praises me for getting the answer right. The good feeling I have is Pride because I made my teacher so happy by answering the question correctly. I enjoy taking pride in my school work and this definitely fills my heart with joy.

I know that pride is also contagious. When I feel good or proud about doing something it makes other people feel good also. My good actions spreads more happy feelings to other people. An example of this is when I was playing my favorite sport Flag Football. During a game I had caught a pass and ran all the way down the field with the football to score a touchdown that allowed my team to win the game. It was so much fun seeing my team and all of the parents take pride by celebrating with me.

Another example of having pride is spending time together with my family on the weekends when we all hang out playing games together. I enjoy spending time with my family and I am so happy that I have a good family that enjoys having fun together. I especially find myself very proud when I am able to win at the games we play.

In the end I can take pride in knowing that I am able to do well in what I know, how I work, how I spend my time, being a winner and the way my good actions make other people happy.

Essay – Grades K-2: 3rd Place

Proud Feelings

By: Maria Sabatini

When I woke up Saturday morning, I was ready for my last game of basketball. I was so ready to score my first basket! All season long, I played basketball and I was really good at defense, but I was not so great at offense. I kept missing shots, but I never gave up.

During my last game I even fell down, scraped my knee, but I got back up. Finally, towards the end of the game, my teammate passed me the ball. I dribbled to the hoop and shot the ball. It went into the basket! I made a shot! It was the best thing I have ever done. It was the first shot I ever made! It made me so happy and proud.

I smiled and looked at my mom and dad, and ran down the court. Making that shot made me want to keep playing and work even harder. My coaches worked really hard at teaching us basketball. I am proud of our whole team.



Narrative – Grades K-2: 1st Place

Climbing with Pride

By: LaKhi Long

One sunny day in the bright forest Finn, Charlotte, Ben, and Lisa searched for the tallest tree they could find. Finn was trying to climb the tree. Charlotte, Ben, and Lisa made it to the top of the tree already. Finn was trying so hard, but he kept falling. Finally, Finn put one foot on a branch then another. He made it the top of the tree! He was so proud of himself. The moral of the story is to keep trying and never give up when things are tough!

Narrative – Grades K-2: 2nd Place

The Pride of Four

By: Olivia Abbs

The lion pride.

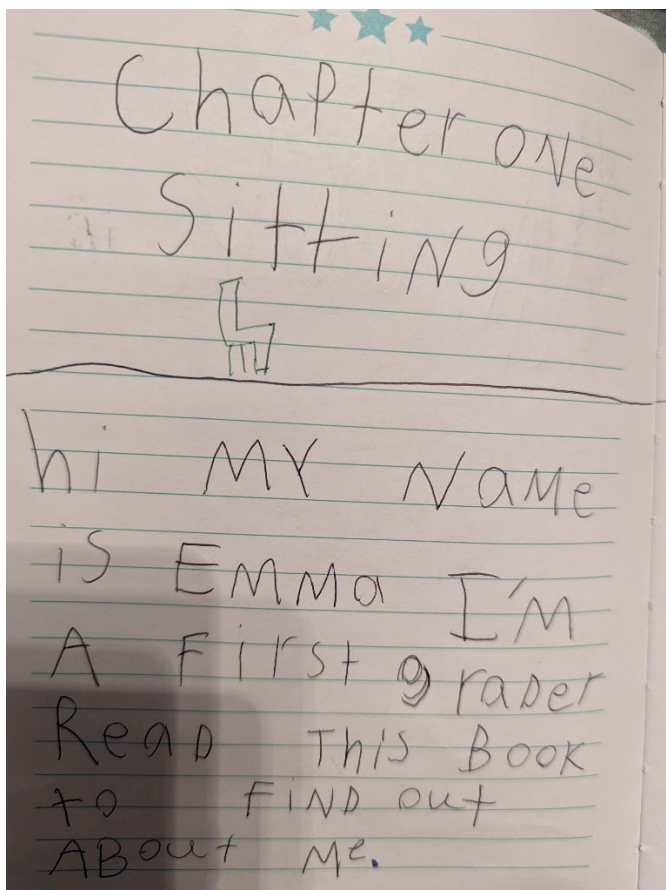
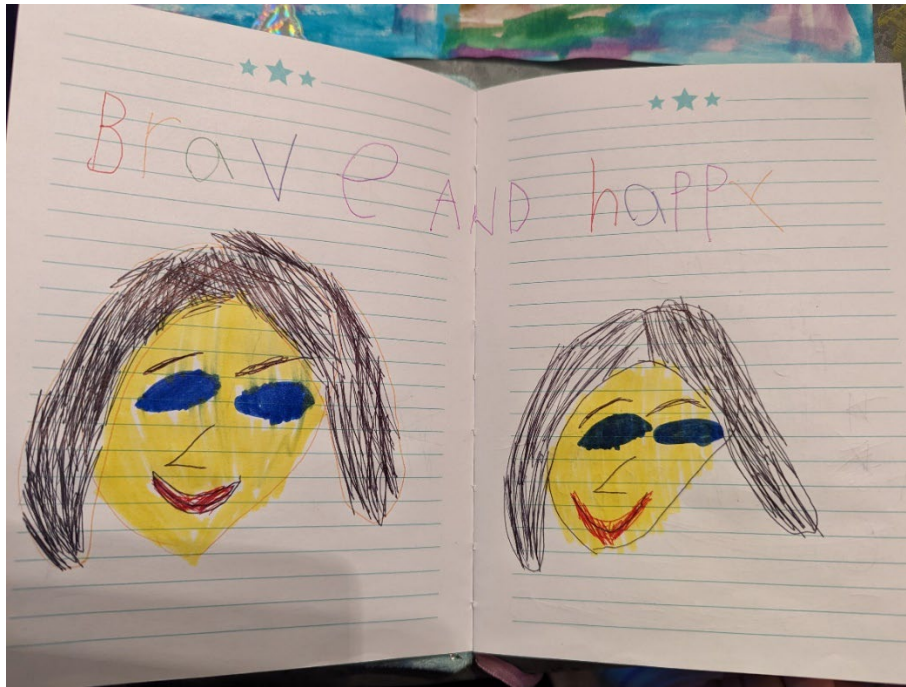
This pride was awesome because they were strong, but they were all different from each other, but they were a pride. Olivia Harper Grace and Caleb, the dad.

The age of the lions is this Harper 8 Olivia 7 Grace 7 Caleb 39. The lions lived in Africa in a den a cozy den. Harper loved to chase. She loved to chase a tiger and gazelle. Olivia loved to play tag. She loved freeze tag. Grace loved to chase the spotted dog. Caleb loved to eat. He liked to eat gazelle. The pride loved to hunt together!

The three girls were best friends. They all loved each other. They thought that they were very lucky to have each other. Then one day Harper said let's chase animals. Olivia thought that they should play tag. Grace wanted to chase the spotted dog. Caleb wanted to eat. The four of them were mad at each other. They all went to their room's. Harper drew a good lion. Grace played with a lion doll. Olivia sewed a good little blanket. Caleb ate. Caleb went with Olivia to hunt. They killed the gazelle so they can eat it when it was lunch. Caleb called "its lunchtime." At lunch they all said sorry to each other. They did all the games the lions wanted to do. The pride went back together and loved each other again the best again and never went to their room's again well they still got mad at each other, but they said sorry in the end!

Narrative – Grades K-2: 3rd Place

By: Grace Almendinger





MISS DING MY TEACHER
IS READING A BOOK!!
AND SHE'S GETTING
PAPETS FOR US IN
HER ~~ROOM~~ ~~ROOM~~

Dror BUT I
COULD NOT WAIT SO...
I ~~JUMP~~ JUMPED

★ ★ UP AND SAID
★ I CAN'T WAIT!!!
SO THE TEACHER SAID
GOT DOWN. THE BOOK
WAS ABOUT TO
START BUT EMANA
WAS SO EXCITED
THAT SHE WIGGLED
AND TIGGLED.
AND BOOM SHE
SHOUTED THIS.
WHEN WILL
IT START!!!

Miss Ding Was
Shocked. She said
Go to The CALMING
COVER. AFTER That
It Was LUNCH.
~~WAAAAAAW~~ Emma
talked to her FRIENDS.


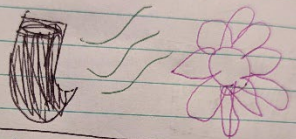
Emma
LUNCH



AFTER LUNCH ~~WAAAA~~ Emma
Wrote IN her COUNCIL
But she Was so
EXSITED to have
RECESS That
She JUMPED
UP AND SAID
When Will it BE
RECESS!!
The teacher Miss
Ding SAID Sit DOWN.

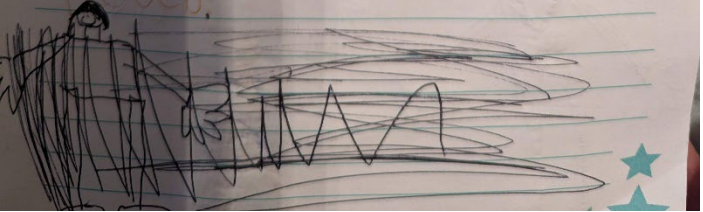


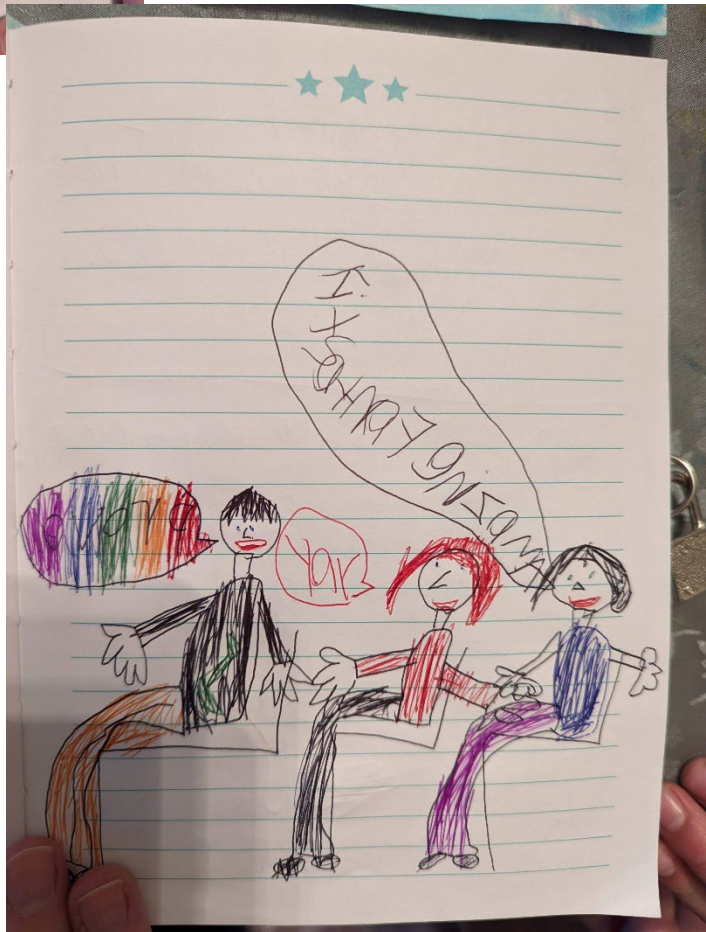
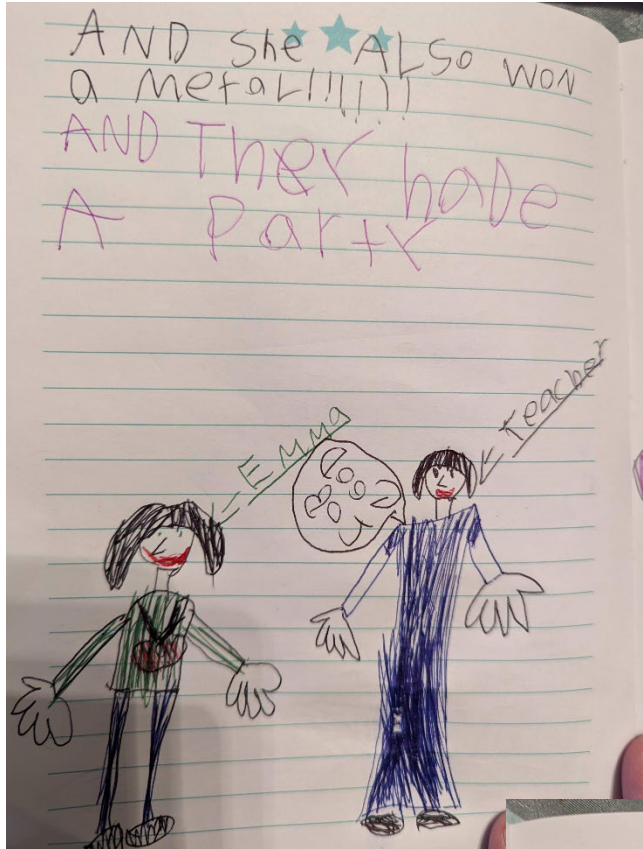
Sit DOWN


 Chapter two
 SHOW AND SMELL


OKAY CLASS NOW
 IT'S TIME
 TO HAVE SHOW
 AND SMELL AND ~~EVERYONE~~
~~EVERYONE~~ BRING SOMETHING

TO SMELL SAID MISS
 DING. Emma would like
 like to go first. ^{SAID} YES I WOULD ^{MISS DING} SAID
 Emma. I BROUGHT A
 SOCK. EVERY BUTT
 THOUGHT IT WAS
 FUNNY TO BRING A SOCK.
 BUT IT SMELLED WONDERFUL
 EVERY BUTT CLAPPED AND
 CHEERED. EMMA WAS
 PROUD.

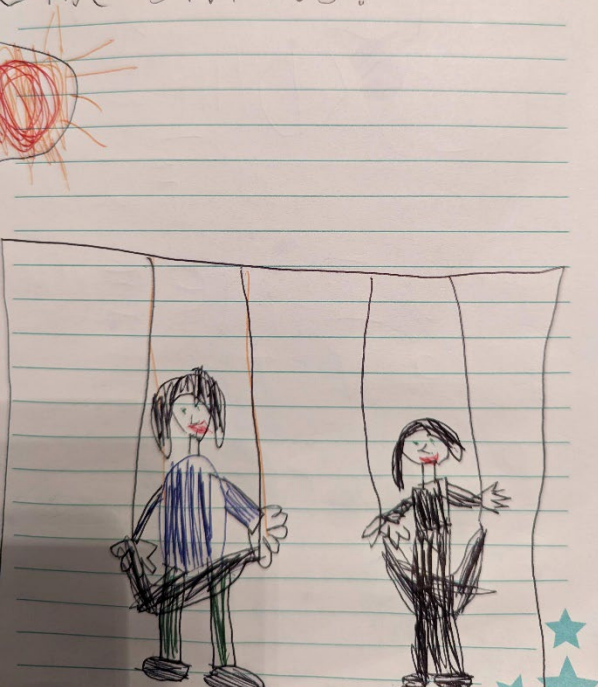




★ Chapter ~~Two~~ Three
Big News

OKAY CLASS SAID MISSING.
I HAVE BIG NEWS
FOR YOU. MONDAY WE
ARE GOING TO HAVE
A SPELLING TEST
EVERYONE GASPED.
A SPELLING TEST
EVERYONE ~~SAY~~ SAID YES.
A SPELLING TEST SAID
MISSING, MEAN WELL

it was Ressecc
EMMA PLAYD ON
THE SWINGS.



The drawing shows a simple sun with a red center and orange rays. Below it, two children are depicted on swings. The child on the left is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and green pants. The child on the right is wearing a black dress. The swings are represented by vertical lines and a horizontal bar at the top. There are two blue stars in the bottom right corner of the drawing.

IT'S THE ^{★ ★ ★}WEEKEND AND
I PLAYED AND
PLAYED!!! IT
WAS SO FUN.
AND I MET EMMA
I DREW THIS
PICTURE OF
FUN.

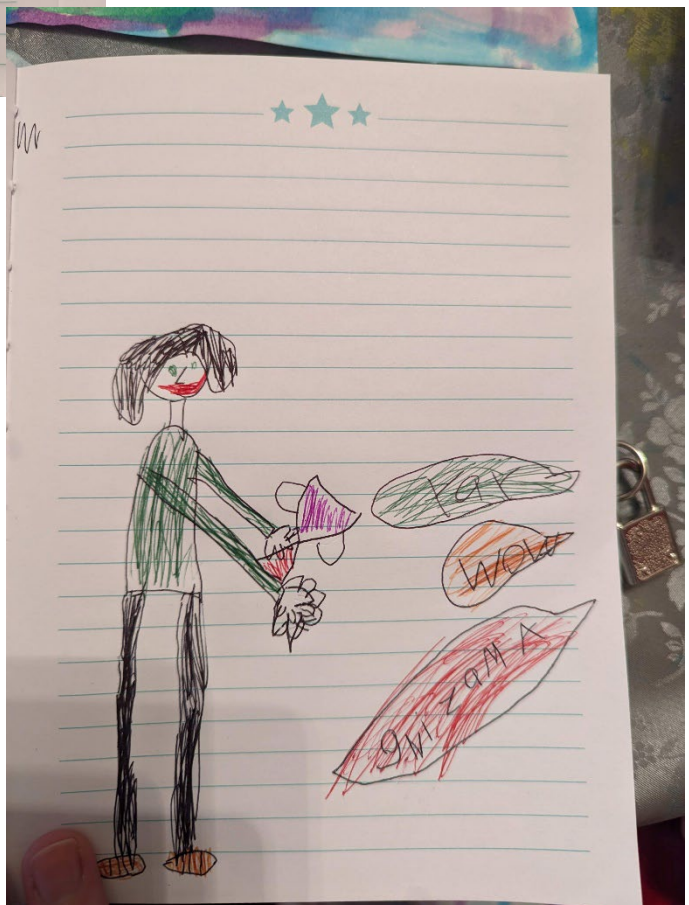
^{★ ★ ★}FUN Y
FUN
FUN O
FUN O
FUN Y
FUN Y

Chapter ~~1~~
PRIDE FOUR
~~PRIDE~~ ♥ ♥ ♥
OKAY CLASS SAID
MISS DING. ITS
TIME FOR ARE
SPELLING TEST.
BUT OH NO EMMA
FROGOT TO STUDY
HER WORDS.

CLASS THE
FIRST WORD IS
BUTTERFLY SAID
MISS DING.
AND EMMA WOULD
YOU LIKE TO
SPELL THIS WORD.
EMMA SAID YES,
OKAY COME ON UP.
EMMA WENT UP,
TO THE BOARD AND
SHE WROTE... ★ ★

B-u-t-[★]f-[★]e-r-f-l-y
Ther said emma
evr~~x~~one claped
AND cheafed. Emma
was so proud
that she felt
pride. she got a
trofnie

ButterFLY



Poetry – Grades K-2: 1st Place

Pride

By: Cora Howard

Once I made a star
I worked really hard
I took my time and never quit
It's something I will never forget
When I wake up in the morning I'll see my star
I'll smile really hard
The star that I see will remind me that I worked hard and everyone will see



Poetry – Grades K-2: 2nd Place

By: Sami Jo Bennett

PRIDE means FRIENDS
because they are kind.

PRIDE means COUSINS
because they are part of my
family.

PRIDE means FAMILY
because they love me.

PRIDE means ME
because I am loved.

Poetry – Grades K-2: 3rd Place

By: Lorelai Kennard

Pride is

Pride is a Feeling

Pride is what you feel when you do something ^{good}

Pride is feeling good about something you did

Be
Proud!

Essay – Grades 3-4: 1st Place

You Can Do Anything

By: Declan Sauer

Have you ever met someone who makes you think differently? Someone who makes you laugh whenever they are with you? My someone is my best friend, Colin.

Colin is a person who makes me proud. He has down syndrome, but he never gets discouraged whenever he is faced with a problem. Colin likes to face challenges head on. He is always determined and never gives up.

One time when we were at the Main Event I wanted to do the sky course, but Colin did not, so he made the choice to go with his parents. I was already in line when Colin suddenly appeared. He walked up to me and said “I want to do it.” So he stepped in line and we waited until it was our turn.

When it was time to go up the steps to the sky course Colin jumped up and down with excitement. A smile stretched across my face because of how thrilled he was, but at the same time I thought he wasn’t going to go through with what he said.

Soon, it was Colin's turn to walk across the obstacle course. I waited behind him watching his body fill with fear. His eyes widened and he started biting his nails as he looked down at the ground which seemed a thousand miles away. However, that didn’t stop him. He started off slow, taking little baby steps, across the rope while holding on to another rope above. His legs were still, but his arms were swaying side to side as he gripped the rope. Eventually he started taking giant steps. I couldn’t believe he was moving so fast. I was actually scared his foot was going to slip and he was going to fall. Colin continued through the course at a pretty fast rate. Whenever he made it to a checkpoint he would turn to me and yell, “Hurry up Declan!” This made me laugh as I made my way across the course.

After another 5 minutes Colin hit the end of the ropes course. Still attached to his harness, he began jumping up and down while screaming, “Yeah!” over and over. He was so proud of himself.

Our families were filled with joy, congratulating him. I was right behind him, shouting, “Great job Colin!” My heart was full of pride seeing Colin finish the course.

When we took our harnesses off, Collin leapt down the stairs and gave his parents a giant hug. He was so happy his face was turning red. I gave him a high five as we sprinted to the arcade.

This is not new to Colin, he is always facing his fears and never giving up. If you try and tell Colin he can’t do something, he will fight to prove you wrong. When I come up against a challenge I know I can do anything because Colin has shown me that anyone can accomplish their goals. He is always smiling, living life to the fullest, and I hope I can do that as well. I am proud of Colin and I am proud to be Colin’s best friend.

Essay – Grades 3-4: 2nd Place

Charlie

By: Molly French

Ever since I was born, Charlie had been by my side. He was a tan Goldendoodle, with brown eyes, a brown nose, and a big white spot on his chest. Charlie really loved to greet people at the door. Every time someone would knock on the door and come in he would sprint to them begging for attention. Once someone petted him, he would follow them around the house.

Soon we started to notice that Charlie was acting unusual. He was not eating, losing weight, and could barely walk. We were heartbroken.

One of the scariest times happened during the night. Charlie was walking around on the hardwood floors when suddenly my parents heard a loud noise and woke up. They went to the front door and saw him passed out on the floor. They didn't know what to do, but after about 45 seconds Charlie woke up.

The next day my parents told us what happened, and they decided to take him to the vet. Once at the vet the doctor figured out that Charlie had a heart disease. My family was devastated.

Over the next few days we loved on him and played with him as much as we could. He liked to lay around and wanted to be pet, but he didn't want a lot of attention. He didn't really eat or drink anything, it was so sad. My heart started to ache because I knew he wasn't going to live much longer.

Charlie was put down a week later. My eyes filled with tears when I said goodbye. He was the most loving, kind, sweet, happy, and positive dog. He was a fighter, and he was my favorite dog ever.

I still have so many wonderful memories of him. When I was 5 years old my older sister Anna put me on his back like I was riding him. Another memory I have is from the middle of the night. When Reagan and I were sleeping Reagan would wake up to Charlie's eyes glowing in the dark. She would run over and want to sleep with me for the rest of the night.

Charlie will always be in my heart. I am proud of him for fighting to stay alive for as long as he did and proud that he was my dog and part of my life.

Essay – Grades 3-4: 3rd Place

Pride

By: Mia Premdas

Do you know what pride means? Pride has a lot of definitions, one of them is 'a group of lions'.

Lions live in the savanna with giraffes and zebras. Lions live in groups called prides. Here are some reasons why they live in groups. First, they have more chances of getting food when they need it. Second, they are less likely to get injured when they are hunting.

In a pride there are 3 to 40 lions. 2 female lions have babies at about the same time. The babies are called cubs. It is easy to take care of the cubs in a pride because everyone in the pride takes care of the cubs.

There are 3 male lions in a pride. In the pride, all the cubs are raised together. Male cubs at the age of 3, leave from their pride and join another pride.

In conclusion, pride is a group of lions which live, hunt and raise cubs together. And they are stronger together.



Narrative – Grades 3-4: 1st Place

John the Scarecrow

By: Charlotte Lee

There was once a scarecrow named John. He loved to scare the crows at dawn. In the morning, crows come too much to eat the crops and John can't scare a lot at one time. The afternoon isn't a great time either because it is so hot standing in the middle of the field. At night, the crows wouldn't see John very well, so the crows won't be scared.

One day, John forgot to scare the crows. The field was filled with crows. The farmer came and said, "It is hard to care for a large field with a ridiculous scarecrow." John got angry because he didn't get a single compliment when John did his job correctly! John thought he was useless. John wanted to have a different job than being a scarecrow.

Suddenly, a tiny fairy appeared. John was surprised by the weird guest, and asked "Who are you?" The fairy said, "Listen carefully, I am a fairy, and I will grant you 3 wishes." John thought and thought, he finally knew all three wishes.

John said, "My first wish is for you to show me what will happen if my job was a firefighter." John always wanted to be a firefighter because when the farm was on fire last spring, a firefighter rescued a calf.

He thought the firefighter was a hero! So, he knew being a firefighter was his dream job. But reader as you know, a scarecrow is made of hay, easy to be on fire. John was trying to take out the fire, then he tripped into the fire. John screamed in fright, "**STOP!**"

The next hero that John wanted to be was a truck driver. Truck drivers deliver soil and fertilizer to the farm. They also get the crops and milk to stores nearby. He said, "Show me what will happen if my job was a truck driver." John was happy to see him deliver the crops to the store. But he couldn't go anywhere. He didn't know how to drive the truck. The cars behind his truck honked loudly. He said "**STOP!**"

Now, John wanted to be a farmer. So, the fairy showed what will happen if John was a farmer. John knew it was going to be easy, he saw how the farmer worked every day. Everything went well. One autumn day, the crops were fresh and ready to go to the market. But then, the field was filled with crows because there was no scarecrow to guard the field. John realized that without him the field would be such a mess and no crops would be left. "**STOP! NO!**" cried John.

He told the fairy that he wanted to go home. Now John didn't need to get compliments because all he wanted to do is fit right in. From that day forward, John took pride in his work.

The End

Narrative – Grades 3-4: 2nd Place

The A Grade

By: Rebecca Bryan

Amelia trudged home after a long day at school. She wasn't the best in her class. She also wasn't the worst. She usually got a B or a C on her tests though. Some of the kids teased her when they saw her grade. That always made her sad.

At school, her teacher had just announced a test for social studies coming up. She was getting worried about the test when she got out her homework. That night, Amelia could not sleep. She kept thinking about the test. She tossed and turned until finally she came to a decision that she would try her hardest to get an A on the test.

The next morning, she put a notebook in her backpack so she could take notes in class. When she got to class, she flipped open her notebook and turned to a clean page. "I see someone's ready to learn," her teacher said. "I decided to take notes for the test," Amelia said. "That's smart!" her teacher replied.

The next day was Saturday, so Amelia decided to go to the library to check out some books on the Declaration of Independence, George Washington, the Constitution, and more. "You must have a test to be reading these many books!" the librarian exclaimed. "Yes, I do! It's about the American Revolution," Amelia replied. "I can see that!" the librarian said as she checked out the books. Amelia was busy the rest of the day reading books and taking notes. She knew she should make her own vocabulary words so she would know the meanings of the words on the test. That night, she came up with a list of words in her mind and practiced what she knew about the meanings.

The next day, after church, she put the vocabulary words that were in her mind on cut-out paper to make flashcards. By lunch time, she had memorized every one! "You should go outside," her mom said. "You've been cooped up all weekend!" "But I'm studying for the test on Tuesday!" Amelia exclaimed. Her mom gave her "the look" as she and her siblings called it. "Fine," she said. When Amelia opened the door, a wave of warm air hit her skin. Then she stepped outside. *I really have been cooped up all weekend.* Amelia didn't want to be alone outside. Luckily, her friends spotted her and waved for her to come over. As she ran over, she saw they were playing freeze tag. She joined the game and she played until dinner time.

When she took the test on Tuesday, she had butterflies in her stomach. A few days later, when she got the results, she looked at the test and saw an A! She was so proud she almost screamed! She showed the test to her mom, and she put it on the fridge. The lesson that Amelia had learned was that if you work hard at something, you can accomplish it no matter what.

Narrative – Grades 3-4: 3rd Place

Trying Times at Soccer

By: Kadjie Sarchet

Ojo is a twelve year old boy from the Western Cameroon. The village he lives in is very poor and hasn't got any fresh water. His family struggles to make ends meet. Ojo is a very smart boy and loves to read, his dream is to help his village. His family's crops are dying because of the lack of clean water. He also likes to invent things such as water wheels. Ojo gets most of his inspirations from people like Nikola Tesla, Thomas Edison, and Leonardo da Vinci. Ojo swore on his life that he would save the village.

To Be Continued...

Part 2/Final Part

Six years later, Ojo managed to go to a prestigious university in South Africa. Ojo's major in college was engineering and he graduated after 4 years. After Ojo got a well paying job and worked for a couple of years. He went back to his village in Cameroon that was still not doing well. Ojo used his hard earned money to build proper schools for the children's education and partnered with a company that helps make the water safe to drink, Ojo's dream is finally real. After a couple of years Ojo got married and had 3 children. THE END.

Poetry – Grades 3-4: 1st Place

Pride

By: Ellison Vance

Proud of you
Proud of me
Proud of life
Proud of the living
Proud of the reasons why

Pride is a feeling
Pride is a song
Pride is completing yourself
Pride is the thing you hope in your head
It isn't a thing you hold

The feeling inside you
You feel it in your heart
You feel it in your soul
It is how you start to make a part of a whole
The more you feel it the more it grows

Pride in the questions
Pride in the answers
Pride in the people who discover those answers
Pride in the women
Pride in the men
That helped provide those answers

You try to feel it
You don't always succeed
It comes by chance
Not on purpose

It comes by you
Not by others
Only you the one and the only you
You are the only one to make yourself proud

It is a great feeling
Wonderful with no doubt
The things it can do reach very very far
You can do one thing to get it

Just try hard
Sooner or later
You will find it
Or it will find you
Just remember try

Poetry – Grades 3-4: 2nd Place

My Grandma

By: Reagan French

Fighter

Before I was born you started fighting.
Going to doctor appointments,
Having treatments,
Receiving chemotherapy.

You fought to live,
You fought to meet me,
You fought to get healthy.

Brave

Never embarrassed when you lost your hair,
Talking walks with Scotchie your dog,
Enjoying a vacation with Grandpa,
Shopping and eating out while wearing a hat.

You were brave
You were brave for me
You were brave while getting better.

Healthy

Your hair grew back,
You finished your treatments like a champ,
You are free to do whatever you want.

You are the most entertaining grandma ever.
You mean the world to me and
I am very proud to be your granddaughter.
You will always be with me.
I love you with my whole heart,
I love you one less than God.

I am proud of you for being
a fighter.
I am proud of you for
being brave.
I am proud of you
for getting healthy.

Poetry – Grades 3-4: 3rd Place

Lion Pride

By: Ellie O'Connor

Lion pride,
Africa wide,
King and Queen of the savannah,
Color of a ripe banana,
Strongest of the four big cats.
Never stops to take a nap,
Cubs are playful and fun,
Always want to run in the sun.
Moms are nice and protective,
They are so impressive,
What a great way to live!

Essay – Grades 5-6: 1st Place

Pride

By: Lexi Garcia

I saluted in order to start my routine. I squeezed and tightened every muscle I owned. As soon as I start my routine I remember that I've done this routine too many times to even count. I think of all the corrections that I have had from my practices. When I get to my dismount I forget to let go of the bar but eventually let go. As I rotate my body mid-air, I manage to land on my feet but end up falling to my face. After I finish the competition I go to the awards ceremony. I somehow manage to get first place on everything. I'm very glad. I have pride in my place but not in my routine. I remind myself that everyone makes mistakes so my mind goes to pride. Next up is team awards. I wait and wait and finally the judge announces, "The first place team is Perfection!" I get overwhelmed with excitement that we won. I have much pride.



Essay – Grades 5-6: 2nd Place

My Snow Covered Save

By: Melanie Howard

It was a dark and snowy day. Hail was pounding down. Snow and rain was falling from the heavens. The player was laying on the ground. The ref set the ball on the white dot. The player was running to kick the ball and it was coming towards the upper middle of the goal. With a diving save I batted the ball away from the goal. Even though my hands were frozen solid and had so much pain, I still remember that one moment of pride that helped my team win the game.

Pride is an essential thing to have in a daily life. It helps you always give 100% at everything you do. Pride is having respect and appreciation for oneself and others. When you do hard things in life it makes you feel good because you know you can do it again. When I have to play in these conditions again, I will always know that I will come up on top. I will always have my pride to keep me going. Having even just one little bit of pride every once in a while can raise your self-esteem and confidence.

That one save not only won us the game but boosted my self-confidence and gave me something to be proud of from that game. Even though my fingers hurt, I was cold, and it was raining little, tiny pieces of hail, I stuck with it and kept playing till the very end. I will always feel proud of that. I stuck with it and didn't give up. Doing hard things and taking pride in them makes you be able to do the hard things in life you want to do. Even though I played a game in miserable conditions, with my hands frozen, and with it snowing, I never let it stop me from making the saves I made in the game.

Essay – Grades 5-6: 3rd Place

Pride

By: Bennett Briggs

I sit there hands down, everyone else hands up. I had just moved from Guatemala, and I knew nothing. No math, no reading and I have no idea what social studies and science was. The whole rest of the day was honestly terrible. Kids kicked me out of their lunch table, I sat on the bench at recess, with my hands in front of my face to cover the tears that I had. I hated all the pity that the teachers gave me, it made me sick.

When I went home my mama was preparing tortillas with rice. My mama was about to talk to me, but I sprinted into my room.

“Meha come on tell me about your first day.”

“Mama, I feel sick I might tell you about it at dinner. But for now, I am going to stay in my room.”

I thought in my head. *Why did I have to be Guatemalan, could not I have been from the United States of America.* Mama called me down for dinner. She asked how school was. I did not respond. She realized that something was up. She asked again, but I did not respond. I sat moving my rice around the plate.

My mom sighed, “Meha, I know how tough it is, you went into a new school. You are from somewhere else so people would not understand you. But you know what you must do, you need to have Pride. You need to embrace yourself, be you. Do not care what others think. You need to just be you.

I started to break down into tears I had never thought about that. I always thought I needed others' approval. But I now know that I need only my approval. When I went to school the next day, I followed my heart and did what I wanted too. When having Pride, you can do anything. You could draft an essay or conquer the moon, but either way
Pride gets you anywhere!

Narrative – Grades 5-6: 1st Place

The Proud Little Kitten

By: Emily Varga

Once upon a time, there was a cat that loved to go outside. He enjoyed the outdoors, meowing to go out every day. One day, he went a little farther than usual. He went to the creek in the back of his house and saw water! He bounded towards the creek and took a sip of water. It was cold and fresh! Much better than his tap water at home. He looked up from the water and saw a little mouse, drinking water at the opposite end of the creek from him.

He suddenly felt excited. He crouched down and shook his behind, ready to pounce. The creek was skinny. He would surely be able to jump across, no problem! The mouse looked up at Oreo, a look of fear in his eyes. Just then, Oreo pounced!

Oreo meowed and meowed at the door, waiting for his owner to let him in. She came to the door and let Oreo in, not realizing what was in his mouth. Oreo dropped the mouse on the floor and looked up at his owner proudly. She screamed, picked up the mouse and put it outside. Oreo ran out the door and picked it up again. His owner shut the door on him as he tried to go back inside.

“Put it down, Oreo, then you can come inside.” she said.

Oreo did not know what she was saying and went to the front door and scratched. His owner opened the door, thinking he had dropped the mouse, and let him inside. Once she saw he was still holding the mouse, she screamed again. But Oreo just stood there looking proud. Nothing could ruin his good mood!

The day went on like this, Oreo’s owner throwing out the mouse, then Oreo going back to get it. He was so proud that he caught the mouse. Eventually, Oreo’s owner got tired and realized that if she put the mouse in the trash can, Oreo couldn’t get it anymore.

Later that night, Oreo’s owner bought some toy mice so Oreo could play with mice whenever he wanted and it wasn’t a real mouse.

From then on, every time Oreo caught a toy mouse, he was very happy and proud of himself and his owner always clapped for him.

The End!

Narrative – Grades 5-6: 2nd Place

Dog Narrative

By: Emery McCullough

I am ready for the championship dog race. I believe I am the best dog out there. I have so much pride in running and jumping, I think it will be a piece of cake. I have done this my whole life. I am Sammy, a brown colored corgi with confidence and pride. As I step up to the crisp new green grass an announcer states, “You all must get around the hill and back through the obstacle course and whoever makes it back first will go onto the New York race for the winning dogs.” All the owners pat their dogs and give them treats.

“You will do great!” My owner Fred tells me. A green flag rises into the air, I leap for joy and sprint to the mountain as my tiny legs scurry through the grass, I get around the hill still holding first place, and as I try to go through the first tunnel, I get stuck tight! I try and try to fit through but I just can’t, I fall in the pool and try to doggy paddle, thankfully I am good at swimming. I bump into the wall and a sharp cut burns me. As someone passes me I feel I am giving up. And as I try to go forward my pride is broken. I float there, flat on my back.

But wait, something is pushing me a little forward, the golden retriever that was behind me, I doggy paddle out and get the tube off of me and start sprinting again. I jump straight over a loop, the Golden Retriever beside me panting, he is looking at my cut. I motioned him It’s fine and we race faster. Suddenly, we pass the other dog that was ahead of us. We raced to the finish line.

As I was about to pass the line I stopped. *Huh?* I thought to myself. The golden retriever stopped too. We walked through the line together. *Will it count? Will we both go?* I wanted to tell them to let him go instead of me. I had so much pride before, and I had thought I would win easily, but now I realize, helping others is better than helping yourself. And that dog did it for me! The announcer suddenly stands on the podium, “The winners are, Sammy and Cooper! We have two due to them getting past at the same time. Be proud of yourselves!” I walk over to my owner, scratch burning, but I don’t even care! Fred pats me on the side and I wag my tail.

My pride is regained and I learned a new lesson! I should not think everything is so easy. I have pride to run and jump and keep learning again.



Narrative – Grades 5-6: 3rd Place

How to Be Proud

By: Nora L. Corcoran

One day, Maddy and Max decided to go outside in search of something to do. At some point, they found a four leaf clover! They chanted in unison and decided to show mother.

“Mother!” shouted the children. “Look what we have found!” Mother looked happily upon her children.

“People say, for three straight days, you will be granted with happiness and pride.” The children felt a spark of excitement. But there was one question that must be answered.

“What is pride? How can you earn it?”

“For day one, write a speech and find out,” said mother. The children looked confused but agreed. They showed their speech to their mother.

“Excellent!” Said mother. The children felt happy.

“Thank you, four leaf clover!” Maddy exclaimed. But both of the children were still confused.

“I still don’t understand. How do you earn pride?”

“For day two, build something and find out.” The children both got out their hand-dandy tools and built a beautiful structure. They both felt extremely happy for themselves.

“Thank you, four leaf clover!” Said Max. Yet again, Maddy and Max needed clearer answers.

“How do you really earn pride, mother?”

“For your last day, accomplish anything you want and find out.” Both Max and Maddy went off and accomplished something. Maddy organized all the rooms and Max cleaned all the bathrooms. They both came up to mother.

“Beautiful!” Exclaimed mother. The kids were delighted. For the past three days, they have accomplished many things.

“But Mother, did we earn our pride yet?” Mother looked down at the children.

“Yes. You have earned pride.” The children chanted in happiness.

“Thank you, four leaf clover!” Said Maddy. Mother took the four leaf clover in her hands.

“The four leaf clover didn’t accomplish anything for you.” explained mother. The children looked at mother in confusion.

“You both accomplished everything for yourselves. The feeling of pride didn’t come from the clover. It came from you and your hearts. You should be proud of yourself for being who you are.” Max and Maddy looked at each other in amazement.

“Pride is a feeling that you can accomplish by doing something that makes you feel confident in yourself and happy. It is able to boost your self-esteem. Be happy for yourself. Be proud.” Both Maddy and Max learned their lesson; Be proud of yourself for the things you do.

The End

-Achieve your dreams. Be proud of yourself and who you are.

Poetry – Grades 5-6: 1st Place

Pride

By: Lydia Cushman

In the black barn Lydia can be seen
Very busy indeed for she is almost fifteen
As proud as she can be, it isn't as easy as it may seem.

She encounters a bully, oh woe is she
She toughens her skin to be as proud as can be
I am not scared so fear me, I will not break so don't try me.

He takes it as a challenge and is as hurtful as can be
She hears all these words, unsure what they mean
He takes a breath for round two
Unsure of what words are left to use.

Whilst she has her chance she speaks from her heart
The words flow through her mouth
Smoother than she thought,
I will go far just you wait and see
Someday I will soar and be as great as I can be
I will fly high and not look back to those who doubted me
I will move on and look in front of me.

People can walk in my shoes if they so choose
For she is proud of who she is
And wouldn't change it for the world
She has learned to accept those who do and those who don't

(throughout my time playing competitive basketball I decide to incorporate one of our
mottos (soar) Soar stands for
S- serve others O- overcome adversity A- always seek God R- reject passivity)

Poetry – Grades 5-6: 2nd Place

Pride

By: Xonzoda Mavlonova

Proud of our hearts.
Rallying up every score-
In our minds
Don't get down
Even when you aren't the same.

Interesting-
That's what we all are

Whether we are on the other side of the world-
All of us have pride
Races, genders, and colors-
Maybe that is different, but we are not.
So stick together.

Our creativity
Under unity
Relying on one another

Helping one another
Every one of us
Are equal
Risks we have to take-
That's pride-
So joyful and free.



Poetry – Grades 5-6: 3rd Place

Pride

A Poem of Haikus by: Ethan Stubenrauch

Running through the track
Passing everyone around
Winning the big race

The feeling you feel
when you hold the gold medal
That feeling is pride

The pleasure you get
when scoring the winning point
That feeling is pride

Respect for yourself
even in the hardest times
That feeling is pride

Appreciation
Knowing that you are unique
That feeling is pride

Something gives you pride
Trophies and medals you've won
They give a feeling

When you look at them
You've earned all of these awards
That feeling is pride

Your own religion
Your own skin color and race
They make you special

You're the only you
No matter what people say
You are amazing

When fighting for things
That you really care about
That feeling is pride

But what is this pride
Is pride a happy feeling
Or an idea?

Whatever it is
It makes you feel accomplished
That feeling is pride

Just remember that
pride is with you through good times
And in the tough times

We achieve goals and
we earn this happy feeling
That feeling is pride

Narrative – Grades 7-8: 1st Place

Earning My Spot in the Pride

By: Abigail Molloy

Today I woke up early and I was already full of energy. I was supposed to go hunting. I was never able to catch anything before. All of my sisters caught something.

I decided to try and get some sleep, so I had more energy to hunt later, but I couldn't. I stared at the clear, sunny sky. I could see all kinds of animals from where we were. Eventually, I drifted off to sleep. When my mom woke me up, it was almost time to hunt. I was ready.

We saw a baby gazelle. My mom told me to try and get it. I was so excited. I hid in a bush and when it strayed away from its family, I started to chase it. It ran as fast as it could, and so did I. Sadly, it ran faster than me and caught up with its family.

I couldn't believe it. I failed. I felt empty and dejected. Mom trusted me to help the family and I couldn't do it. Mom caught our dinner that night. No one said anything mean, but I could feel the disappointed stares. I felt even more disappointed than they did.

For weeks they wouldn't let me try to go hunting again.

Fast-Forward One Month

Yesterday my mom said she trusted me to try and go hunting again. I was so nervous because of what happened last time, but I still gladly accepted.

I slept in last day, I wanted to prepare for the night ahead. I woke up at sunset. I still had about one or two hours before it was time to hunt. I spent that time scratching at trees to sharpen my claws and taking cat naps. In what felt like only a minute, the sun had set, and it was time to hunt. My mom found a zebra and told me that I should get it for dinner.

I was a lot more cautious this time. I waited until the zebra was right in front of me, until I could hear its every movement and breath. I could feel the adrenaline pulsing through my veins and my heart beating heavily in my chest. Even though I was nervous, at that moment, I knew that I could do it. As I pounced at it, I could hear the wind quickly rushing by me, it sounded like the wind was encouraging me, I could almost hear it say, "go for it, you can do it". I grabbed it by its shoulders and bit into its neck. I could feel the blood running down my chin and it was exhilarating. I waited until it stopped moving and then signaled to my pride to come over.

We ate well that night. Everyone was happy and my parents said they were very proud of me. My siblings congratulated me on my catch. I finally felt like I belonged.

I finally earned my spot in the pride.

Poetry – Grades 7-8: 1st Place

By: Soleil Lugo Carrillo

They say pride is at the bottom of all great mistakes,
They say pride comes before the fall
The majority, me, you,
And the rest
Don't see it at all.

I am stressed,
I call for my friend pride
I put him over all to fill the void
I slowly die
But what's left of me when you're gone?

Like a devil on your shoulder
Pride creeps.
He makes you believe
You shouldn't weep.

Protect your ego.
Protect your self esteem
He slowly moves up to your ear
He whispers
"Your right
They're Wrong"

He stops you from admitting the truth
He takes your youth
Because of you
Others begin to feel
The cruel seal you've placed yourself in.

Again, and again, and again
You attempt your escape
You fail,
You scrape your skin
But nothing

You're trapped
You're a wrapped pupa
Trying to expand your wings
From the locked chains of pride and arrogance
Pride ends your reign.

Essay – Grades 9-12: 1st Place

By: Sara Sparling

Pride is a term that comes with great misconception. Most will argue it is single sided, and can come with arrogance, which is not always the case.

Lucas Oil Stadium, downtown Indianapolis is an NFL stadium that hosts the annual Bands of America Grand National Championships, the second weekend of November. The Lakota East Marching band is one of few in the country that is invited to attend. The bright lights, jumbotrons, Colts logos, echoing bangs, and thousands of people in the crowd with all eyes on you, is such a surreal feeling.

A marching band show is something moving all as one fluid motion. It is about painting pictures and telling a story. Everything that goes into a production is something that must be done together. Not one person is out of place. That is called teamwork.

Performing our story with multiple instruments, flags, movements, costuming, props, and designs, followed by sitting in the stands after the crowd cheers and celebrates our hard work-- two hundred members, all as one group, waiting to hear the judges' results.

The suspense of watching our drum majors come out onto the field standing tall, lining up overtop the Indianapolis Colts logo on the fifty-yard line, waiting, watching the clock tick. Judges approach the field with information we seek. The crowd slowly, but surely falls silent. Some holding hands, others too scared to speak. Thirty semifinalists will be announced that evening. Will we make the semifinals? This is a goal we have had since August, yet, we don't know for sure. But, one thing we do know, is no matter the results, we are the Lakota East Marching Band, the LE Band Fam, and we will never give up on each other, or our passions.

"Semifinalist number four...semifinalist number seventeen...semifinalist number twenty-eight..." and then finally, "semifinalist number thirty...the Plymouth Canton High School Marching Band!" *'No..no, no! it can't be over that soon! All that hard work, and effort we put in! It's not true! It's a lie! It's not real!'*

"Semifinalist thirty-three..." *'Wait, there were only supposed to be thirty semifinalist bands, why are we at thirty thr-'* "The Lakota East High School Marching Band!" We made it! After many hard, challenging and grueling days, we never gave up, and we finally had our moment! All our hard work paid off and for many, became a core memory hearing our name announced at national competition as a semifinalist.

From that day on, no one took being able to work as a team, and being able to constantly be strong, for granted. We left Lucas Oil feeling overjoyed, but also humbled. The pride of being able to be a part of something so grand and amazing is something truly special. It is something people cherish for the rest of their lives and is something we as a band will cherish for the rest of our band's history. Pride is discipline, respect, hard work and most of all, teamwork and honor.

Essay – Grades 9-12: 2nd Place

Pride in a Grandparent

By: Matthew Smart

When you think of pride, you might not expect to feel this complex emotion in someone who you have known for most of your life. You might just feel like they are a normal consistent person who you are just happy to be around with. However, I used to think this about my Grandpa, until I realized that he is one of the people that I feel the most proud of. And it came as a shock because I hadn't thought of what I felt about him being prideful. I just thought it was a general pleasure being near him. In contrast with what I feel about him, he is one of the most humble people I have ever met, despite living through so much history and dealing with weird family dynamics.

To start things off, my Grandpa was born in 1947, which is right after WW2 ended. When I asked him if he felt that the end of WW2 heavily influenced his childhood, he simply said "no". My Grandpa grew up in Chagrin Falls, and had to walk a mile to school every weekday. It is no exaggeration either, as his school was almost exactly 1 mile away from his house. His parents both worked, which was uncommon because at the time, women were expected to be housewives and not really go into the workforce. When he went to school, he was usually a calm and more reserved kid, who had 2 really good friends and not much else. He also was a boy scout, and knew his way around the woods that were in his backyard. So when he got into high school, he was the type of kid who would rather go camping than go roller skating, which was where all the popular kids went for fun. He was a good student as well, and had a close bond with his Uncle, who moved in with him sometime after WW2 ended. I just couldn't imagine how it would feel to go through Nuclear War drills in school, among other things. But he went through them and never really was worried. The amount of courage he faced and the amount of bravery he had just fills my heart with pride for him. He learned how to do woodworking at home, and later in his life, would use that knowledge to build my family a table that the top of the table could slide out revealing my LEGO's. Overall, his elementary to high school years were just him and his family. Which in this time, is impressive with the amount of trials everybody suffered through COVID-19. But in my personal opinion, his college years are where he really shined.

After high school, my Grandpa decided to go to the University of Akron. While it was originally his backup choice, he lived through so many big events in College, that it is admirable that he just kept calm and studied his majors. I feel so proud that even though my Grandpa's father committed suicide the day before he went to college, he still went to college. And while he was in college, a lot of major events happened. The first big event that happened while he was in college was Martin Luther King Jr. 's I have a Dream speech. He said that he just watched the speech while moving into his dorms. Then he witnessed both the assassination of JFK and Martin Luther King Jr. Then he witnessed the moon landing, which brought an end to the space race. And then finally, he lived through Kent State Shooting, which had the military fire upon a group of unarmed protesters in Kent State. My Grandpa wasn't nervous and told me in my

interview that “The shooting really just shut protesters up,” he had also stated that he “wasn’t nervous” and that he just paid attention to his studies. After college, he was immediately drafted into the military and was scheduled to go to Vietnam. But then his grandfather committed suicide, and after he went to the funeral, he came back to his barracks to find that his radio equipment was stolen. So because he had to stay back to testify to what was stolen, he couldn’t go to Vietnam. And so during the trial, he became heavily involved with military training and came up with a program that kicked out any sort of person who hadn’t turned in any work in 6 or more months. So because of this, one of his supervisors decided that he had too important of a job on site, that they couldn’t send him to Vietnam. And I must remind you, he still never was nervous at any time. I couldn’t imagine being in that situation, and the fact that he lived through it while being completely nonchalant just makes me swell with pride. But his greatest accomplishment came many, many years after his days in college.

Finally, his greatest accomplishment was the fact that he was willing to take in 3 kids, while his wife was pregnant, that weren’t his own. He helped get 3 innocent kids who were caught in a terrible situation, out of that situation. He worked his life away for those kids, and he never regrets his decision. My Grandfather, the man to whom I owe my life, worked hard to feed 3 more mouths at his table. He was willing to do something that knowing the dynamics of my family, I don’t think I could do. And the best part of all, is that those kids grew up to later have their own greatest accomplishments. If it weren’t for him and my Grandmother, I don’t know if those kids would have had the life that they have now. My Grandfather is a hero in my eyes, and I could go on for hours about what his existence helps contribute to the world every day.

To sum it all up, my Grandpa is a humble man that deserves so much more in life than it gives him. He has a patent, and he is a loving father, as well as a great cook, and overall, one of the best people that this world has ever made. He is the type of person that I want to have in my family. And if it weren’t for his bravery and his smarts, I don’t think my life would be as good as it is now. He is a man that I fully respect. As well as a man who deserves all the unconditional love that he gets from my family. He might not always be on this Earth, but his impact on it is one that deserves to be told for generations to come. I just hope that one of these days I can read my essay to him, and let him know how big of an impact he has on everyone he meets.

Essay – Grades 9-12: 3rd Place

By: Arianna Sanders

Growing up, being prideful was never a positive trait for someone to have. If you are a proud person, then you were seen as a person with a high ego who needed to take things down a notch. John C. Maxwell once said, “There are two kinds of pride, both good and bad. ‘Good pride’ represents our dignity and self-respect. ‘Bad pride’ is the deadly sin of superiority that reeks of conceit and arrogance” (Brainy). Pride is not something to look down on when earned the right way. Feeling proud of self-earned accomplishments is a great feeling and a positive. Pride is an important feeling to have, but arrogance is something that you should stay away from. Knowing the difference between authentic pride and arrogance increases your self-worth and improves your overall well-being.

The word hubris originates from Greek mythology, and in ancient Greek, they saw it as “one of the most dangerous traits one could exhibit” (Hubris). An excessive amount of pride can cause a person to lack self-awareness. When being on the hubristic side of pride, having no control over emotions causes a high of antisocial behaviors. This lack of control over emotions takes away the part of pride that makes it feel good and is enjoyable to be around. Hubristic people are more likely to have more unrealistic reactions to minor successes and unrealistic ambitions coming from their reaction to that success. When hubristic people are in the face of failure, they express higher levels of anger towards something they thought would be easier than it was. Hubristic pride shows behaviors that lack self-awareness and lead to harmful or self-defeating behaviors.

I think people with the most authentic pride are best able to see their strengths and weaknesses. They understand they might not be great at everything and know they deserve to feel accomplished for their wins. These people have high levels of self-control and have a behavioral persistence that effectively controls emotions. Authentic pride comes with reflecting on and seeing what else has contributed to their success and what other factors played into the results. Authentic pride is, “understanding that self-worth isn’t measured by achievements, failures, or the opinions of others,” but rather having a sense of humility towards peers and even rivals (confidence).

Overall, pride looks different to everybody. It is an important quality to have, but not everyone values having an authentic pride rather than hubristic pride. The way we carry ourselves and the way we treat others factors into our own self-worth. Having an excessive amount of pride causes an elevated view of self and a deprecation of others. While having a genuine pride allows us to be proud of our achievements and still respect ourselves and the people around us. The kind of pride we have factors into our behaviors, emotions, self-awareness, and our conscience. Understanding the difference between authentic and hubristic pride can change our practices for the better to live healthier lives.

Narrative – Grades 9-12: 1st Place

By: Mackenzie Sexton

A cursor blinked in and out of sight like a broken lightbulb. Despite everything on the Chromebook working smoothly, the document was blank. Victoria stared at it in frustration.

Victoria remembered Mrs. Mahaffey's words in class, "For your final quarter grade, you have to write a piece about pride!"

This is not going to be easy, Victoria thought, but I can do it.

And here she was, no words to show for her efforts. Maybe the category was too broad for her? No, that was not true. She had done hard things like this before.

"What is wrong with me?" Victoria asked the ceiling. Naturally, the ceiling did not respond.

Her teacher had told her in a cheery tone, "The options are a poem, a narrative, or a personal essay!" None of the ideas Victoria had for any of those categories really fit what she felt pride was. Pride was easier to define as experiences.

She remembered how her mother had told her after her report card, "We're very proud of you." She recalled the moment when her sister told Victoria excitedly, "I got into the volleyball striker team!"

It was when she stood in front of her class and gave her Magnified Presentation, despite being terrified. It manifested as Victoria scrolled through her peer's comments. She had tried her best and others recognized her efforts.

When Victoria had stepped back from a mural that took over a month to finish, covered and smeared in brightly colored paints, she had felt like a small fire was in her chest, warming her from the inside out.

But it was so much more than all of that.

It was the fact that here she was, still standing after all this time. She had spent so many days crying over her mistakes, bearing emotional pain, and reminiscing over what was and what could have been.

Yet here Victoria was, still standing after all this time.

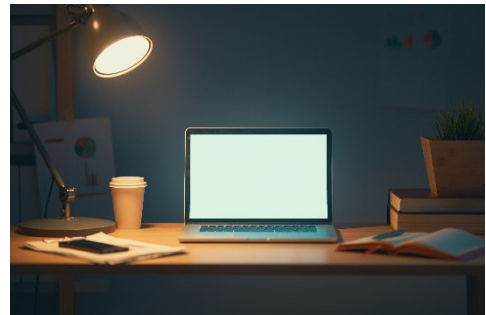
She had never given in, despite all the challenges life threw at her.

One final memory played in Victoria's mind. Victoria had spread drawings of characters and new animal hybrids across the carpeted floor, which had given off the impression of a collage. Careful handwriting on the pages described all the pieces and people. Sunlight drifted through the window and gave the room a golden glow. Victoria stood back to admire her work. For once in her life, Victoria felt at peace with herself. She had done this; she had crafted a story of her very own.

How beautiful was that?

I'm proud of myself, Victoria had thought with a smile.

Suddenly, Victoria zoomed back to the present. She was not idealess anymore. She carefully typed in the words, 'A cursor blinked in and out of sight like a broken lightbulb.'



Narrative – Grades 9-12: 2nd Place

I am Proud

By: Pika Yonjan

Outcast, alien, stranger, weirdo, freak. That's what they all call me. Every day, every hour, and every minute of every second, there is always someone lurking beside me, laughing at me, waiting to torment me. It hurts so much. I feel pain, suffering, humiliation, and shame. Everyone around me has pride in what they do, what they say, and what they feel, but me? Nothing. I am Assa Lee Tanaka, a 15-year-old mute teenager who lives in shame and fear.

"Hey, freak! Why don't you go cry to your daddy?" Aziel mocked, making a crying face.

"Oh wait! You don't even have a dad!" he burst out laughing, the whole class following along with him. I felt my whole body go hot, I couldn't move an inch or breath. All I could hear were the laughing and mocking of my fellow classmates. More tears started pouring down my cheeks like streams. They were all laughing at me because I just had a panic attack and started crying. This was life for me every day.

"Class dismissed!" Mr. Tsu shouted, the bell ringing loud and clear. Finally, today was over! Everyone rushed out of the classroom, but as Aziel was about to leave, he kicked the side of my desk and threw papers at me. All I could do was sit in silence and take it in.

"That's enough!" Someone shouted, I quickly turned my head around to see Eren. Eren came face to face with Aziel.

"Start acting your age, Aziel. Don't you ever treat someone like this ever again." Eren stated in a very serious tone. Aziel only smirked and left. Eren turned to me, "Are you okay Assa? Are you hurt?" He asked sincerely. I shook my head and signed thank you. He smiled and helped me out of my seat. We both walked through the hallways and out of the school.

"Assa, you know you can't live like this every day. Life is too short to live in fear and shame. I know it's very hard for you but you have to take a stance and have pride in yourself. You have a bright future ahead of you and you have to make a way to grab that opportunity." Eren stated softly. I listened to him carefully and nodded. Maybe this was the time. How can I do things that I love if I don't have pride in myself? I questioned myself. I turned to Eren. I took a deep breath in and finally slowly, piece by piece I will step out of my comfort zone and build courage, confidence, and among all pride in myself.

I realized something today. If I believe in myself, if I dedicate and do my best, and if I have pride in myself then it will become real and true. Life is too short to worry about small things. You must have pride in yourself and believe in yourself that you can do it.

Narrative – Grades 9-12: 3rd Place

By: Kara Bolton

Phoebe let out a large breathe. Shivering from the cold. She glanced around; looking to see if Raha was anywhere near. Just as she started to stand to a voice came from behind her. “Waiting for someone?” Phoebe let out a small scream and quickly turned on her foot. She let out a sigh of relief as she realized it was just Raha.

“Oh my god, you scared the life out of me!”

Raha laughed loudly: “That wasn’t my goal, I promise.”

Phoebe rolled her eyes, “fine, fine, let’s at least start shopping them.” Going to grab Raha’s hand but Raha pulled her hand away. Phoebe furrowed her eyebrows but shrugged it away as Raha having a bad day. They started walking, Phoebe ran up to shop windows to peer in. Time seemed to fly by as they shopped, Raha carrying the countless bags. But, eventually both of their stomachs were growling.

Raha smiled wider as Phoebe’s stomach growled again: “You want to stop and grab something to eat?”

Phoebe groaned, “Yup. I’m starvinggggg.”

Raha laughed, “There’s a cute cafe over there. Does that sound good to you?” Phoebe nodded. They went over to the cafe, ordering and paying for their food. They sat down by the window and Phoebe let out a sigh of relief.

“Geez my feet hurt” Phoebe flopped onto her chair.

“Says the one who isn’t carrying any of the bags,” Raha smiled, grabbing a pretzel and starting to eat it.

“Hey! You volunteered to carry the bags!” Phoebe leaned over to grab a pretzel from Raha as she usually would. Raha glanced out the window at people passing by and batted Phoebe’s hand away. Phoebe frowned but didn’t say anything. They finished up their food, Phoebe checked her phone and gasped at the time. “Oh god! The time!”

Raha glanced at the time and her eyebrows flew up, “Oh geez, I didn’t realize that much time had passed. We should probably get going.”

Phoebe nodded, “Definitely.” Phoebe started skipping back to the town square. Raha smiled, carrying the many heavy bags. Once they got to the town square Phoebe twirled around and grinned at Raha. “So this is our goodbye! For now” She leaned up to give Raha a kiss goodbye. Hurt was evident on her face as Raha leaned away. “What’s wrong? You’ve been acting odd all day.”

Raha winched, “well just... nothing.”

“It obviously isn’t nothing!”

Raha sighed, “well it’s just, I’m worried how people will see me. You have such a good reputation and I don’t want it ruined by you being with me.”

Phoebe frowned, gently grabbing Raha’s hands: “Raha, I don’t care what people think. I love you and I’ll always be proud to be with.”

Raha smiled softly, “yeah, I know, I love you too. I’ll work on it, I really am proud to be your girlfriend.” Both smiled widely and started walking to Phoebe’s car to drop off the bags, holding each other’s hands as they did so.

Poetry – Grades 9-12: 1st Place

I Am Yours

By: Annabelle Hammerly

You speak through me, to the rest of the world
You speak through so many, and so many speak your name
I breathe your word and speak your truth
I live your name and sing your praise

Your songs travel with the wind and into our souls
Whether we feel it or not, that's up to us
You have planted seed within us, and it is our job to let them grow
You have given us roots, and it is our job to keep them strong

When I stand before you at the gate, I will keep your warm embrace close
You have given us wings, and it is our job to learn to fly
We hear your stories and follow your word
For you are my reason, my reason to stay planted in this world

I breathe your word and speak your truth
I live your name and sing your praise
I will represent you and your word
And when I stand before you at the gate, I am proud to be yours

Poetry – Grades 9-12: 2nd Place

What We Seek

By: PJ MacFarlane

It is the goal- the thing we all seek
But pride is only temporary, very hard to keep.
When you're doing well it's easy to be proud
When you struggle, degradation becomes loud.

The path to pride is a bumpy road
You will have to bear a heavy load.
But when the end of the road is reached
All the pride in the world will be yours, unbreeched.

Get better today, be proud later
Or else your pride could be a traitor.
Don't be content with where you're at
Don't be the one who only chats.

The way to pride is a hard life's work
In laziness, only regret will lurk.
If you put your all into everything you do
All your dreams just may come true.

This is why it's better to wait
Pride should not come sooner, but late.
After you've worked hard for many years
You may lie down and cry happy tears.

Poetry – Grades 9-12: 3rd Place

By: Ishanvi Karthikeyan

Pride is a curious creature
That always lives in the back of our brains,
Yet we are unaware of it
Until we achieve something that gives us pleasure

Think of a boy who is constantly worrying
About why he can not understand
How to do multiplication and division,
Even though he keeps studying

When he starts asking his teacher and parents
To show him tricks and give him tips,
And finally gets a 100 percent on a test,
His pride in himself starts to become apparent

He realizes that math comes rather easily for him,
And he starts to enjoy doing math,
So much that he starts learning more advanced topics,
Impressing his teacher,
Causing him to skip a few grade levels ahead,
Which brings him quite a bit of acclaim

As time passes and the boy reaches middle school,
He enjoys continued successes
But pride, which was slowly building up in his brain,
Made him lose focus and not put in as much effort,
Causing him to get a bad grade on a few tests,
Which made him make sure his pride did not turn to arrogance,
And make studying for 30 minutes every night as a rule

He constantly performs well in his classes
Throughout both middle and high school
Achieving high scores on AP exams and standardized tests,
Bringing him more and more pride,
But he remembers to not let his pride blind him,
And he uses his pride as a source of confidence to empower him,
Setting better and better goals that he continually surpasses,

And, finally, his hard work and effort paid off,
And he became a successful statistician,
Developing new ways to control contagious disease spread
Because pride, which was always in him,
Showed up when he achieved something he didn't believe was possible,
Teaching him to believe in himself and keeping working harder,
And brought him everlasting success



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- Lakota Students and Parents
- Lakota Classroom Teachers
- Lakota's Board and Administrators
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About LEADS

Lakota's Enrichment and Academic Development of Students (LEADS) is primarily aimed at the parents of children identified as gifted, but welcome ALL families in the Lakota School District.

LEADS mission is to identify, provide and/or sponsor enriching academic and social opportunities for students of the District. www.lakotaleads.org



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