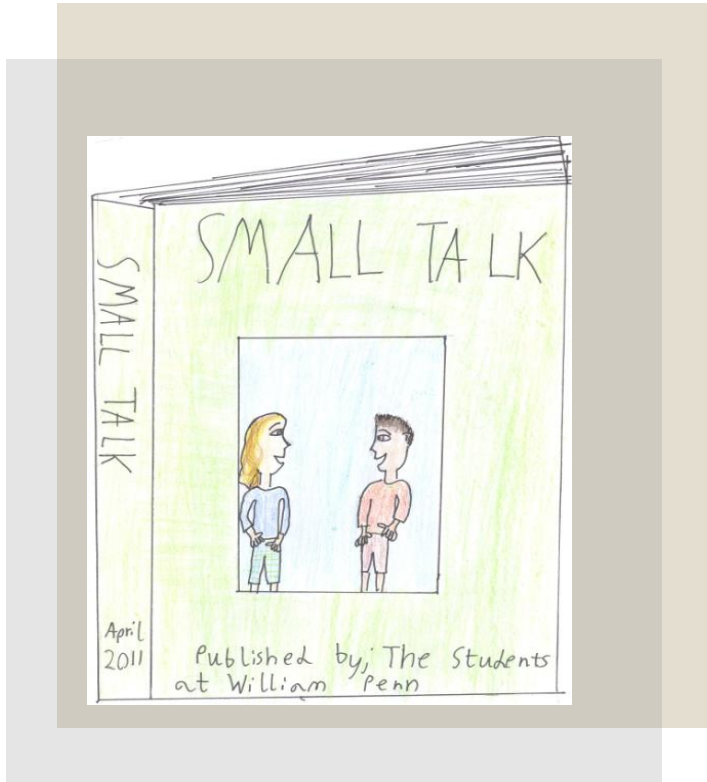


Small Talk Literary Magazine



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Small Talk is a literary magazine published by the students of William Penn Middle School as an expression of our interest in literature and creative writing.

When Is Winter?

by Kathryn Howarth, grade 6

When is winter,
With its glittering snow,
Making the ground,
Glow and glow?
Will there be a blizzard?
Or just a few flurries?
Maybe a couple snowflakes instead?
But let it snow,
All winter,
All year.
So when is winter?

Bird

by Lulu Herman, grade 7

I'm alone,
no friends,
I pick up my brush,
brown line,
yellow point,
brown circle,
the paper tears,
saturated with paint,
frustration.
It's in the trash.

It's survived the move,
brown line,
yellow point,
brown circle,
the tape,
yellow and peeling,

I feel it,
the frustration,
the loneliness,
the despair.

It was five years ago,
I'm almost thirteen,
I have friends,
I'm no longer alone,
Now I know what I painted,
"Spread your wings," it says.
Fly.

The Science Column

By Lucas Levesque and Liam Tahaney, grade 6

The real fun of science is figuring it out through experiments not just doing research. This time we have completed a physics experiment. In all honesty, it was pretty fun. We wanted to find out the fastest way to go down a hill on a scooter. We believe that by putting your feet at the front, near the handlebars, and leaning back you feel like you are going faster but we wanted to make sure it wasn't perception. So we got to work on the experiment.

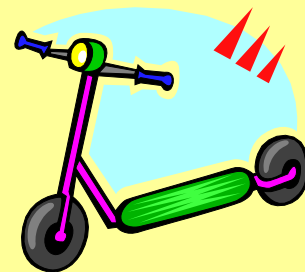
Here's what we did: We scooted over to the best hill in the neighborhood. We used two scooters, had four races, and switched drivers twice in order to provide as much experimental control as possible. The chart below shows how we executed the experiment each time. As you can see our hypothesis was correct. Riding your scooter with your feet close to the handle bar and leaning back is the fastest position.

	Faster Scooter	Slower Scooter
Experimenter 1	Displacement Pose-Winner	Lost
Experimenter 1	Lost	Displacement Pose-Winner
Experimenter 2	Displacement Pose-Winner	Lost
Experimenter 2	Lost	Displacement Pose-Winner

Our experiment supported our hypothesis. How you stand on your scooter will affect the speed. What is the science behind this event? The change in speed is related to center of gravity and wind resistance. By leaning back you transfer your weight more evenly over the entire scooter. This changes the traction of your scooter and allows the front wheel to go faster.

When you move through the air you aren't moving through nothing. Air is like water, except much less dense so when you walk you don't feel it. Now think about when you are walking against the wind and it is hard to maintain your speed. When you scooter quickly it is like always walking against strong wind. By leaning back you reduce the wind resistance and cut through the air quicker. You can't lean forward like on a racing bike because you would flip your scooter.

So there you have it. If you want to go faster, on your scooter, use physics. Lean your body back, with your feet close to the handlebars to change your center of gravity, and wind resistance. Most importantly, remember to wear your helmet.



Ugly Pomes™

by Elizabeth Vasquez, grade 6

Chase

My heart is pounding

My legs are burning

But I can't stop

I can't ever stop

He's catching up to me

The wind in my eyes makes it hard to see

"I got you now!" the kid screams

I yell back, "Not in your dreams!"

But he speeds up as I slow down

Sadly he's the most determined kid in town

Dang! He got me! Then he squeals with glee

Tag is a very fun game, you see!

Reading

One time my dad said, “Reading exercises your mind!
If you read a lot you’ll find,
You feel like your brain has been lifting weights for
The longest time!”

Deluxe

I weigh 100 million pounds.
I never fit into the doors of any school, so I found
That not many teachers like me, Columbus Grooth.
They like my sister, but not us both
Just because I like to eat sandwiches that are only 100
pounds!

Different

by Kate Delaney, grade 7

Welcome to the country of hope, dreams, and freedom. This is a place where everyone is free, but to what extent does freedom go? It is true that we are free to be ourselves, to be “DIFFERENT”. But does everyone accept people who do not look or act like they do? The answer is no. You are immediately judged on who you are, and who you ought to be. It is true that our society is much, much better than others. And everyone should of course, be proud of being an American. However, that does not mean we should leave our country the way it is. There are many miles still to be traveled. For in a place so safe and tranquil, like ours, people are not free. They are judged, and they are punished because they are not afraid to push past the boundaries that have destroyed our community. The “different” people should be honored, but of course, they are not. And what is the reason? I believe I know it. They fear those who are unafraid. They believe that others, who are different, are better people than they, themselves, are. It is my opinion, that this is true. But that does not mean that they will be like that forever. It just means that they have traversed the journey that everyone should take. So, we shall make our country a better place, where you are judged by your actions, not by your looks, or how you speak, or where you come from, or what you wear. There are many more miles, but I promise that I will walk it with you, and there will be many others who will walk it too. So no one will be left behind.

Dad

by Kate Delaney, grade 7

The chair in the corner,
The one you used to sit in,
Is empty now.
Mother says that you
Have gone to a better place,
But I don't believe it.
What could be better
Than sitting in that perfect chair
With the perfect indents,
And that place where I
Scratched my name in,
While your family sits around you?
What could be better than our house
With its peeling yellow paint,
That you and Mom
Picked out
Together?
And that special hiding place you found,
The hidden crawlspace,
With the painted sides
The perfect size for father and daughter?
Mother seems to have forgotten
About how no one
Is supposed to know about that place,
Because he tried to go in there.
He tried sitting in your chair,
But I wouldn't let him.
He is not my father.
You are.

The Egyptian Gods vs. The Greek Gods ON FACEBOOK

by Allie Bausinger, grade 7

CAST:

HORUS: THE EGYPTIAN GOD OF WAR AND HUNTING. HIS SYMBOL IS A FALCON OR THE EYE OF HORUS

Ares: The Greek god of war. His symbol is a wild boar.

Isis: The Egyptian goddess of life and magic. Her symbol is “Tiet” or “the knot of Isis”

Athena: The Greek goddess of wisdom and strategy. Her symbol is an owl or an olive tree.

Hathor: The Egyptian goddess of love, music and beauty. Her symbol is a mirror.

Aphrodite: the Greek goddess of love and beauty. Her symbol is the rose.

These gods want the top spot! And they want NO competition. But when they meet their counterparts, they go a *little* crazy.

HORUS: I AM NUMBER ONE. YES! THE ONLY GOD OF WAR! I AM THE BEST!

Ares: Excuse me? Hate to break it to you buddy, but you're not the only violent bloodthirsty god around!

HORUS: OH REALLY? WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! I CHALLENGE YOU . . .

Isis: Horus, you're not getting into any fights with the "lower class".

Athena: I'm sorry, Isis. Was that a typo? Because I believe that anyone who calls us Greeks the "lower class" is sadly mistaken.

Hathor: Girls, girls! Can we please just get along? All this fighting is making me want to bite my nails off! And I spent 5 hours on them!

Aphrodite: Only five hours? That's just sad, sweetie. I spent an entire day on my nails. Can u top that? I believe not!

Hathor: Oh, don't even go there or I'll bring up the day u chipped a nail! Oops! Just did. Sorry (sarcasm 100% intended).

Ares: So this is what women argue about? Interesting . . .

Isis: Oh shut up, u bloody awful war god.

Ares: This is coming from the woman whose son is the god of war.

Athena: U tell her, Ares!

Is it just me, or do these Facebook conversations get crazier every time?

Water

by Kate Deitch, grade 7

Inky, jet-black water attacks the land

It maims & beats old sturdy oak

One that sits strong & tall, that never quivers or shakes

Behind it rests frail, thorn rosebushes shaking & terrified

They fear the day the old oak falls

& the inky, jet black water destroys them, too.



Swim

by Kate Deitch, grade 7

For months & months, day after day we train
We train through exhaustion, through muscle strain
Until hard work pays off, we're off like a gun
Body turns to machine & mind disappears
Everything disappears but the beat of your heart,
Until the race is done



Pieces of Amber

by Kate Deitch, grade 7

Far above hang pieces of amber, gold, and ruby

They dance as they fall, gently floating

And touch down on a rolling sea of jade

They stand out like stars in the night sky

They sit & rest until large creatures come to take them away

The creatures blow them, push them into heaps

Smaller creatures descend upon the piles & perform a strange ceremony

They jump & scream & destroy the perfectly formed pile

The jewels die but their dance repeats each year



What Kind of Friend Are You?

by: Jaclyn DiPierro, grade 7

No matter what you say or do,
A friend will always be there for you.

Friends are respectful and great,
They support all of the decisions you make.

Through both good and bad,
A friend will always make you glad.

Both near and far,
They are as sweet as a candy bar.

A friend who shares,
Is a friend who cares.

A friend will always be there in the end.



friends

Frost's Life From Now On

by Elizabeth Vasquez, grade 6

Give me Frost, or a series of tragedies will strike your beloved family. Bring her to 1313 Windham Drive

--Mr. E

This is the letter that changed my whole life. I am, sadly, Frost. That morning started out like any other Sunday morning. Slow. Bed head. Crankiness. Then my dad just HAD to open the mail. This letter was in a crisp, new envelope with the strong scent of paper. Dad opened it with a smile on his face. Then, suddenly, his look was grave. "Maurine, come have a look at this," he said to my mom.

"Hmm?" She had a "what's this?" facial expression on. Then she read the note. Next, she looked directly at me, and then back at the paper.

"What?" I wondered out loud.

"I'm very, very sorry, sweetie. But you're going on a trip." My own mother said that to me. My own mother.

"Where?"

"We're sorry," my mom said.

"Where?" I repeated.

"1313 Windham Drive. Mr. E's house," my mom said on the verge of tears.

"Who's that?" I asked. They just stared at me.

"Who's that?" I asked more urgently this time.

"We don't know," my dad said flatly. "We don't know."

That morning I had woken up thinking I had a lot more time to live and be a kid. Now I knew I was going to have to become a grown-up all too fast.



The American Flag

by Sonali Deliwala, grade 6

Up I go, above your head,
I represent all the *Constitution* said,
Striped and starred, red, white, and blue,
And you pledge allegiance to my name, too.

SKY

by Sonali Deliwala, grade 6

I don't have a beginning or end,
My color tells you the time of day,
I stretch endlessly without crease or bend,
Shapes of various shades and sizes clutter my
wide open spaces,
I can be bright or dark at many different
places.



Umbrella

by Sonali Deliwala, grade 6

I shield you from getting wet,
Striped, polka-dotted, or plain, I reach up and
greet the rain,
When the sun begins to chase away the clouds,
I'm forgotten until another time,
When my owner spots a gray sky and cloudy day.

Fright Night

by Kathryn Howarth, grade 6

My sister's a freaky genius. It's bad enough I had to move all the way to Romania. The fact is, Lily is already the most popular kid in our new school. Meanwhile, I don't have one person who knows my name, not even my teachers. And, I don't speak Romanian! Of course, Lily learned it while we were still living in Miami. Now I just have to fit in, learn how to speak Romanian, and stop thinking the weirdoes are the cool kids because all of that makes me, Melina Wu, the least popular kid in school.

"Melina! Sweetie, get up for school!" There's the magical Sonoma Wu, who not only is able to completely ignore me but is also able to be my amazing mother who prefers my twin sister, Lily. I can understand why. Lily has shiny, bouncy, black hair and eyes that make boys literally faint, and that's why she wears sunglasses all the time. I have messed-up hair that never cooperates, and regular boring. dark brown eyes and a usually dirty baseball cap to cover up my stupid hair.

I finally dragged myself out of bed and put on some jeans, a green Disney World jacket with a purple t-shirt underneath and Keds with the Dolphins' football logo stitched into the laces. I thought that I couldn't become any more of a nobody so I decided to wear my dorky glasses, which are more comfortable than my contacts. I ran downstairs, grabbed a piece of toast, and ran out to meet the bus. As usual, Lily was already there, fed and dressed in strappy sandals with a pale pink short skirt that complemented her ivory skin and a green plaid blouse. Her perfectly manicured toe and fingernails glinted in the rising sun.

Compared to her, I'm a klutzy hobo with a poor fashion sense. But I didn't have time to bask in the glory of my identical twin that looks nothing like me because just then the bus arrived and so began the usual, tortuous day at Johannes Middle School. But when I got on the bus, something was even more wrong than usual; there was someone sitting in my seat!

He looked amazing in that one moment, but my staring was interrupted by the bus driver screaming at me to sit down. I started down the aisle and watched my sister sit next to her Romanian friends, and they immediately started gossiping in rapid Romanian.

I sat down next to the guy in my seat. "Hey, my name's Melina. What's your name?" I asked.

He responded by waving and saying, "I'm Drac . . . I mean Dylan."

I thought it was odd he had started to say something that sounded like Dracula. So I said, "Are you new here? Because you're speaking English, and I haven't met anyone in this country who does."

"I heard the bus driver yell at you in English, so I bet I'm not the first." He didn't even answer my question!

We didn't talk for the rest of the ride. I figured that a lot of the older kids had automatically pinned him as a freak for his Goth clothing and were already picking on him so I decided to avoid him as best I could.

That afternoon, I was relieved to see that Dylan wasn't in my seat when I got on the bus. But, when I looked out the window as I walked down the aisle, I thought I saw Dylan FLY across the sky.

The next thing I saw was blood, and then blackness.

MUSIC

by Allie Bausinger, grade 7

Listen to the notes playing through your ear buds.

Listen to the lyrics; do you hear the message that the artist is sending?

Listen to the instruments playing in the background and backing up the track.

Listen to the CD; pay attention to the similarities in the songs.

Take Taylor Swift for an example, if you may.

All of her songs are about life and love.

Songs are like a book.

You can read them, you can learn lessons from them, and they can teach you things about life.

Next time you plug in your iPod, listen, and take everything out of your music.

LISTEN

The Land of the Everlasting

By Kathryn Howarth, grade 6

Her parents, Lamais and Orion, were the commanders of all the planets and stars. Kindness was one of their many children. The other children's names were Anger, Will, Courage, Hope, and last of all, Belief.

One day, Kindness' brother, Anger, convinced her to meet Fear: the one and only son of Atilis and Beatrice. Atilis was the commander of the Big Bang Theory; Beatrice was the dictator of all the black holes.

When Kindness went to meet Fear on the star Sirius, it was love at first sight. They started going out to Mars to see the space probes from Earth. Their differences caused them to fall even more in love, which drove their parents insane. They ran away to Pluto, where they started a family; their children's names were Pain and Agony. The parents of Kindness and Fear finally caught up to them, but not before Pain and Agony were sent off to Earth, a planet close to a small sun. The girls were bundled up with special necklaces that described their personalities through symbols. And on the back of the necklaces were their nicknames: Paige and Aggy.

The girls were each sent to Earth trapped in human bodies and would discover their special powers when they became twelve. If they ever lost their necklaces, they would lose the protection of Fear and Kindness. And Lamais, Orion, Atilis, and Beatrice would be able to track them down. But the spaceship bound for Earth went horribly astray. The two girls were separated when coming in, landing in towns close to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Aggy was sent to an orphanage in Newtown, Pennsylvania, while Paige was sent to the doorstep of a wealthy mansion owner and his wife in Yardley, Pennsylvania. And so began their journey together, yet separated.

BULLYING

The Victim

by Allie Bausinger, grade 7

Day after day, I receive my torment.

In class, I'm the shining star, the apple of every teacher's eye. But it's after class that I receive my daily torture. Griffin Rosenfeld stomps over. He pulls the beautiful hair bows from my curly brown locks and stomps them into the dirt. He calls me rude names and insults me into oblivion. I always walk away with tears streaming down my face. He's called me stupid and pointless and told me I don't belong in the world. I, Hazel Griffiths, absorb it, wishing I could fight back. What is his reason? Why am I his victim? Why do I get this everyday?

The Bully

by Kate Delaney, grade 7

Swinging and dodging. That's how my life goes every day. He swings, I dodge. He laughs all the while, the man I'm forced to call my father. He thinks it's a game. It's not a game to me, but that doesn't seem to matter. I'm certain that one day, he is going to kill me.

My mother watches, and waits. When he leaves, she tries to fix my injuries, but she has given me the worst one of all: She doesn't do anything while he's trying to hurt me and doesn't take me away. This is enough to leave the deepest scar of all. Maybe it's why I'm a bully. I'm not the best at school. Nobody seems to notice what I have to say. The teachers just sigh and say, "Try to LISTEN, Griffin. Just this once." They don't ask the right questions, though. They ask about the past, about the hardships of others. They always say, "Be grateful for what you have." This may sound selfish, but I don't have anything to be thankful for. And that annoying Hazel with the bow in her hair, the one who always raises her hand, she has *soooo* much to be grateful for and she doesn't even know it.

I stomp toward her and throw insults at her. I grab that stupid ribbon out of her hair and toss it to the ground. Her eyes always well up with tears. *Welcome to my world, Hazel. You will ALWAYS remember Griffin Rosenfeld.*

Bullying is a vicious circle. It's up to you to listen to others, stand up for yourself, and end it. People like Griffin and Hazel aren't the only ones like this out there. We think that almost everyone has both been bullied and done the bullying at one point in his or her life. Obviously, some people don't hurt others physically, but words hurt just as much, and you can't take them back. Do your best and don't just watch other kids get bullied. Take a stand as a community, and as friends.

~ Kate and Allie

Delineation of Dance
by Saloni Shah, grade 7

An eagle with its head held high,
Capturing the land below with ease,
Streaming the mighty sky with grace.

A full-bloomed rose,
Iridescent paint the petals,
Coloring the book left in black
and white.

A beating rhythm grows faster,
The beat fills the stage,
The stars shine upon me

-I dance



Psychic

by Elizabeth Vasquez, grade 6

You enter this page thinking about the last thing you read. When you leave this page you will think about what you are reading right now.

Okay, now leave this page and come back to read the bottom . . .

You were thinking about this page when you left this one!

It's pretty CREEPY, I know that . . . right?

New!

Writing Challenge!

The Art of the Six Word Memoir

The idea of the Six Word Memoir dates back to Ernest Hemingway. He was challenged to write a memoir in six words. His response:

“For sale: baby shoes never worn.”

We writers at “Small Talk” are trying a new idea:

The Writing Challenge!

If you, our readers, respond well to this challenge, we hope to make it a regular part of “Small Talk.” Our goal is to have a Writing Challenge at the end of each edition. Selected responses will be published in the following edition. We hope to get more members through these challenges!

To respond to the challenge email Mrs. Martino with your submission at pmartino@pennsbury.k12.pa.us. We look forward to your responses.



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their work.**