

Embracing Change!

A vibrant, painterly illustration of a winding path through a forest during autumn. The trees are covered in bright red, orange, and yellow leaves, with some bare branches visible. The path is light-colored and covered with fallen leaves. The ground is green grass, also scattered with leaves. The background shows more trees and a hazy sky.

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

I'm honored to be writing to you once again; this time, as a junior. Every time I mention junior year to *literally anyone*, they shudder as they relive memories of academic and extracurricular pressures. It's definitely a slog, but I've resolved to have as much fun as I can this year; after all, we juniors only have one more go-around at this high school thing. With my commitment to making this year my best yet comes accepting that change is the only constant, and these at-times pesky changes are often out of my control.

And change is precisely what this issue is about, as two of our writers adjust to life at boarding school and our focus at the iWRITER magazine shifts toward preparing current staff writers or junior editors to take on bigger leadership roles over the coming year. This issue, I've handed over the reins to Shaivi and Prisha for our magazine's design, and our copy editing team has expanded.

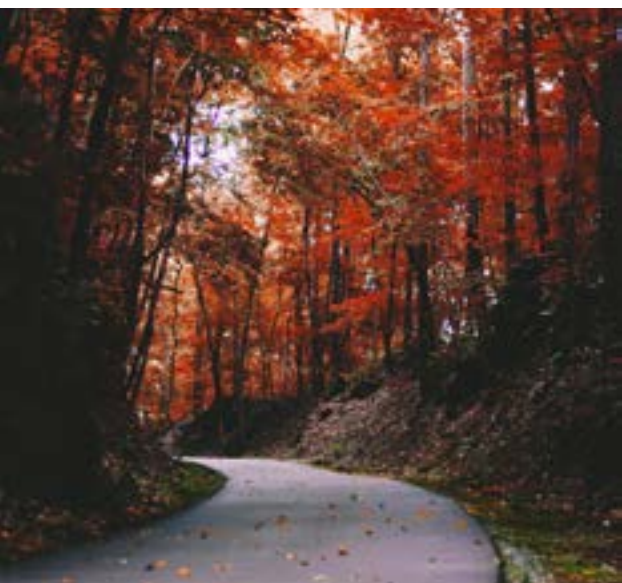
Whether you're seeking great new reads, gaining insight into how our staff members cope with change, or just looking for entertainment, you are in the right place! Feel free to reach out to me at eshaan.mani@kinkaid.org with any feedback about this issue. And as always...

Happy reading!

Eshaan Mani

Editorial Director

I WRITE for the rush of adrenaline I feel when my pen touches the paper. It is that exhilarating experience and the opportunity to not only get my voice out to the public but also be able to be the voice of inspiring people and organizations that inspires me to write.



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Remaining Steadfast In Whirlwinds of Change



Life is full of changes, both foreseen and unforeseen. Whether in a workplace, academic environment, sports practice, or even the environment, one thing that remains constant is that change is inevitable. Kind of ironic, wouldn't you say?

Though it can sometimes be emotionally taxing, it is important for us to arm ourselves with adaptability aplenty. Adaptability expands one's capacity to handle change, no matter the circumstances. Instead of wasting energy trying to fight the change, we can respond to it from within, so we are freed from expectations or apprehensions about the situation. Being adaptable is certainly not the easiest thing to do, especially nowadays when the world seems to move too quickly for adults and kids alike to process. But this might just be the key that fits perfectly into the door that opens to a happier life.

There are times in life when we experience unpleasant situations, and it can be even more vexing if these situations come upon us unexpectedly. Being adaptable ensures you stay afloat when adversities of life try to sink you down. Instead of running away from reality, you embrace it and flow with it. That way, whenever life pushes you to the ground, bouncing back will become easy. This is resilience at its finest; a quality that would deliver wonders if we choose to practice it. Adaptable people are resilient people.

Resilience coach Dean Becker says that our success in life is built on our ability to adapt. According to Becker, "an individual's success isn't dependent on their level of education, intelligence or experience. It is their level of resilience that really matters. This is true



in sports, medicine, business, etc."

When it comes to leadership, adaptability is an indispensable tool that every leader should have. We are surrounded by numerous young, capable, and intelligent leaders, and they share a determination not to let change affect them. Adaptable leaders not only earn the respect of their followers but also motivate them to embrace change. In an article titled "Why Flexible and Adaptive Leadership is Important," Rubina Mahsud and Gary Yukl wrote, "threats which are often unanticipated will always arise to sink an organization, damage properties, and lives. One way an organization can survive this threat is by responding quickly to these threats when they arise. Adaptive leadership is what every organization needs if they are to survive troubling times."

Leaders are always confronted with challenges that require them to be decisive in implementing change, and failure to arrive at a decision can compromise the shared goal of that group of people. But through adaptability and a clear mind, a leader will successfully bring their group to their destination with flying colors, knowing that nothing can get in their way.

There are two important qualities to remember in our world of constant change: a growth mindset and the willingness to grow. If life begins accelerating in a different direction than anticipated, don't shy away from it. Instead of seeing change as overwhelming and all-encompassing, take it one step at a time and consider all there is to gain. Moreover, an unwillingness to try new things can prevent growth, stifle creativity, and hurt morale. In places where circumstances change daily, having an open mind is essential. Resisting a narrow mindset allows for better listening skills, better judgment, and the ability to think outside the

box. This open-mindedness will help when building critical-thinking skills. So, the next time the ball rolls down a path that wasn't favorable to the original plan, don't resist it. Instead, take it in stride and cultivate adaptability. As we come into the fall season of a new and better school year, let's resolve to become more adaptable and apply these lessons to our everyday interactions. In these seemingly insignificant moments of life, the journey toward adaptability starts.

BY Sanjna Pandit

I WRITE because writing cultivates my ability to be eloquent and express my feelings and ideas. I learn more and more about myself with every new thought that I put on paper. My mind forces me to enter a whole new realm of imagination and discoveries that I never knew I could reach.



Immersive Technologies To Shape Our Future

The greatest challenge of our age is Change. Change is not necessarily scary and bad. The ability to love and enjoy change is vital; otherwise, we cannot leverage its unique abilities.

The transformation of human experiences with digital technology has the power to revolutionize the way we communicate and interact in today's world.

Immersive Technologies

Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality are immersive technologies that are nothing less than magic. Experience the thrill of animals passing you closely or even experience yourself on a different planet. They not only enhance existing experiences but help us explore the world in an entirely new way.

They are important technologies because they have the potential to change how we perceive the world.

What is Augmented Reality?

Let's break it down. Augment means to add. Augmented Reality, or AR, is a concept that adds computer-generated content to our real world to make it fun and interesting.

AR can help kids learn science, math through interactive experiences, and can bring books to life. Imagine your favorite book coming to life, with its characters interacting with each other. What I like about Augmented Reality is that it makes learning an adventure.

AR and Its Uses

AR has become extremely relevant in medical training, entertainment industries, tourism, online furniture shopping, and design modeling to name a few. Smart phones using AR applications can be used in marketing and also online shopping. You will be able to try clothes and accessories virtually. Travel and sightseeing would become a wonderful experience. AR sensations Pokemon-Go and Harry Potter Wizards Unite let fans interact with a number of famous items, people, and creatures from their respective universes.

Medical students can use AR to learn about the human body. In June 2020, neurosurgeons at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore announced their first augmented reality surgery, guiding their way in the operating room. AR technology can make education and learning more effective and fun for everyone.

What really fascinates me about AR is that you get to learn in an interactive environment. Therefore, learning becomes an adventure. AR is my window to the world. It sure makes the future look a lot more fun and exciting.

What is Virtual Reality?

We've all had dreams that looked and felt real, and only once we woke up did we realize, sometimes to our disappointment, that we'd been dreaming. In your dreams you can go to a candy world, go to the moon, fly an airplane, or meet people from the past where your brain sometimes believes that whatever you are seeing is real. The best and the most realistic virtual worlds would most likely be the ones that mimic how our brain functions while we are dreaming.

Put simply, virtual reality, or VR, is the computer technology that makes a person feel like they are in a different place. It is a form of mental teleportation, and uses sounds and images to shape a different place.

VR and Its Uses

VR is becoming extremely relevant to gamers, astronauts, surgeons, real estate agents, teachers, and even students.

When training astronauts and fighter pilots, chances are that you are not going to train them using actual rockets and jets. That could be extremely risky. There is a risk of not only losing a life but also millions of dollars due to human error and inexperience. This is where VR comes in and saves the day. We can put these people in realistic situations. We can train astronauts, pilots, surgeons, and help others to hone their crafts without having to suffer the drastic consequences of failure. According to UNICEF, both AR and VR have the potential to vastly enhance the organization's ability to reach and assist children in its programme countries in key areas such as health, education, and training.

VR offers us the opportunity to experience life without ever leaving our homes.

When you see things, you remember them. When you experience something, you won't ever forget it. So, let's escape from reality and experience virtual reality.

AR and VR will change my life and other children's lives because we will learn concepts and experience the magic of visual technology that enhances and transports us to bold new worlds. It's going to be a grand adventure!

BY Tanvi Padala
I WRITE because words are the sound of my thoughts and let me be creative. Through writing, I can escape to impossible worlds, experience magic, and create imaginative characters. Writing brings a tremendous amount of joy and relaxes me.



A Change That is Set to Revolutionize Healthcare



I am no Marie Curie or Jane Goodall. I'm just a 13-year-old who thinks she can change the world with her passion for science and technology. A girl in STEM who strongly believes the intersection of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and healthcare is set to change and revolutionize the field of medicine in the years and decades to come. My name is Shaivi Moparthi, and I have been fascinated with science, technology, and research from a young age.

This year, my science research project, PinkRibbon - A Novel Method for Breast Cancer Detection Using Machine Learning and Convolutional Neural Networks, earned me recognition and several awards, including the prestigious Top 300 Broadcom MASTERS. My journey from the regional Science and Engineering Fair of Houston (SEFH) to the state Texas Science and Engineering Fair (TXSEF) to the National BroadcomMASTERS Science Fair has been nothing less than exceptional. I also earned second place at the Science and Engineering Fair of Houston for my research paper.

In a press release statement in Washington, D.C. on September 7th, 2022, Broadcom Foundation and Society for Science announced the Top 300 MASTERS in the 2022 Broadcom MASTERS- the nation's premier science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) competition for middle school students. This program of the Society for Science seeks to inspire young scientists, engineers, and innovators to solve the grand challenges of the 21st century.

My love of STEM and finding innovative solutions to real-world problems inspired me to work on this project. I was motivated to do research when one of my teachers passed away due to breast cancer a few years ago. It all started one Sunday afternoon during the pandemic when I

I read an article on ScienceNews on how AI might transform healthcare in the future. I started with online research. I read a lot of blogs, scientific literature, and research papers. I discovered that invasive ductal carcinoma is the most common type of breast cancer, accounting for about 80% of cases.

About 1 in 5 women will develop invasive breast cancer over their lifetime. According to the World Health Organization, breast cancer is the most common cancer globally. If breast cancer is found early, there are more treatment options and a better chance of survival. The current diagnostic methods for breast cancer are time-consuming and subject to human error because of a lack of technology. My research goal was to leverage cutting-edge technologies such as AI and machine learning to address global problems like breast cancer detection. I wanted to implement an affordable and scalable solution for fast and accurate-diagnosis of breast cancer to help save millions of lives worldwide and make a significant impact on society.

After multiple iterations and fine-tuning, my model PinkRibbon outperformed all current methods and has 86% accuracy in predicting breast cancer. It is cheaper, faster, and more accurate than current methods and makes early diagnosis viable. To further demonstrate clinical viability, I integrated the model into a web application where radiologists can upload a patient's breast tissue image and receive recommendations in less than two seconds if abnormalities are present or not.

My research project is a step forward in computer-aided and AI-powered breast cancer diagnosis. **Radiologists and doctors can use my web app PinkRibbon for fast, reliable, accurate detection of invasive ductal carcinoma. In addition, the system can be integrated into local healthcare networks, assisting pathologists and shortening diagnosis time.** With my innovative solution, I hope to revolutionize the field of medicine by combining healthcare with technology and thereby save millions of lives.

Local science fairs have allowed me to share my research at the regional, state, and national levels. It's truly been a transformative and rewarding experience. Not only was I able to expand my knowledge of disease diagnosis, but I have also learned how to become a confident speaker, researcher, and, overall, a better scientist. Through this amazing journey, the connections and knowledge I've gained will be long-lasting. This incredible opportunity has allowed me to lead by example and lead by action. I am passionate about my research at the intersection of AI and

medicine, especially learning about different diseases and combining healthcare with technology to detect or find a cure for life-threatening diseases like cancer. This research has taught me if we continue to persevere and never give up and be passionate about things we enjoy, amazing things can happen.



BY *Shaivi Moparthi*

I WRITE because writing is a way for me to express myself and it helps me connect to my artistic side. I enjoy writing because it allows me to reflect on experiences that I have encountered. Writing is something that I truly enjoy, and it has always been one of my greatest passions.



A Change of Scenery

Sunlight poured onto my face as I walked along the sidewalk. It was a hot day in Cleveland, but to celebrate the first day of summer vacation, our street was throwing a block party. There were tables set up in the middle of the black pavement, sounds of laughter emanating from everywhere. While adults were conversing and eating, kids were running up and down the block, playing games like tag and hide and seek. Sighing, I took in the scene around me one more time before following my friends to the other side of the street.

After spending two years in Shaker Heights, I had a diverse friend group of different ages and grades on my block. Addie and Liesel were sisters, Addie having started kindergarten, and Liesel in her first year of middle school. Daisy and I were in second grade and had become close quickly. Every day, we would collect potato bugs and worms, building a city for them, each of us playing a different role. I remember being the doctor, though ironically killing a few potato bugs by accident. In the evening, we would catch fireflies in jars and let them free after staring at them wide-eyed.

Seven years later, these memories stay with me. The day we moved was a sad one; waving them goodbye, tears forming

in my eyes. According to research, the human brain tends to react negatively to change. This makes sense, since change in our daily lives may be unsettling or upsetting. On our first day in Houston, I stayed inside our house, scared that I wouldn’t be able to make friends on my new street. To cheer me up, my mom took me outside for a walk to explore our new neighborhood. While we were walking down our street, we heard children laughing and basketballs bouncing on the concrete, similar to the sounds of our old neighborhood.

Since that moment, I’ve made a close group of friends, whom I still meet with to this day. I believe that everything happens for a reason, and that life leads us to make choices or decisions that will affect us in different ways. In my six years of living in Houston, I have made lifelong friends. Now, I know that change is difficult, but one needs to persevere and face change with a positive attitude and develop new perspectives of the world.

BY Prisha Shivani
I WRITE because it is a creative way of expressing your thoughts and ideas through words. iWRITE has given me the opportunity to write and publish, sharing my pieces with many people.

A Leap of Faith

American Sign Language (ASL) is more than a language; it is an art. Many signers who know sign language can tell inspiring stories of their introduction to ASL, where learning has impacted their lives in momentous ways. My introduction to ASL, in comparison, began with a club fair, anime posters, and a random number generator. While adults were conversing and eating, kids were running up and down the block, laughing and playing games like tag and hide and seek. Sighing, I took in the scene around me one more time before following my friends to the other side of the street.

Club fair was controlled by insanity: the yells and jeers of more than fifty clubs jockeying for sign-ups, the star-spangled, glitter-smothered posters with pictures of Sailor Moon and skeletons, and the choking aroma of sweets ranging from Hello Panda chocolate snacks to sopapillas. Despite the colorful sights and smells, none among the many options stood out to me. And so it happened that a website designed to choose a random option among several inputs was brought out; it chose ASL club among eight others.

It was minutes before my first ASL club meeting that I had begun to hate random number generators. Numerous self-conscious thoughts flooded out: what if everyone already knew ASL? What if I can’t do some hand signs? What if I’m not good enough? These fears would wash away as I became engrossed in learning as much ASL as I could

in those short thirty minutes. *How are you? What is your name? How old are you? How was your day? How was school? Did you have Chemistry today?* Sign language was addictive because I could now communicate how I felt in a silent but expressive manner.

ASL has also grown connections that otherwise would not have been possible, allowing me to develop a friendship with a fellow signer in my apartment complex. From this friendship, I gained someone who I could tell stories to and play basketball with. I also learned about the important aspects and nuances of deaf culture and the pride that those who are deaf have in being non-hearing.

That’s not to say our friendship was not without moments of absolute confusion or awkwardness due to the language barrier. Indeed, one of the most important things I learned from this experience was to be open and to fully immerse yourself in new experiences. If I had been too afraid to join the ASL club or to start learning ASL itself, I would have never gained the numerous opportunities and experiences that I now have. A new friend, a new skill, and the ASL community at large. This would have been lost if not for a random number generator and my openness to new experiences.

BY David Liu
I WRITE to help others escape to worlds full of color with characters of energy and nuance. To create a place where someone can find refuge, if only just for a few seconds, is something that I love to do.

5 Ways To Embrace Change in Your Everyday Life

Throughout all the stages of our lives, change is omnipresent. From childhood to adulthood, one’s environment and responsibilities are constantly changing. Though it may seem ironic, change is constant. However, it’s not a bad thing! Here are five ways you can incorporate and embrace change in your everyday life.

1. Have a growth mindset. There are some benefits of this that may seem obvious, like a generally happier mood. However, there are some other advantages that manifest themselves in unexpected ways. In 2018, the Program for International Student Assessment did a study on the effect of growth mindsets on academic success; they found students who displayed a strong growth mindset performed better in all subjects compared to those that didn’t. On a hundred point scale, students with strong growth mindsets scored 31.5 points higher in reading, 27 points higher in science, and 23 points higher in math when compared to their peers with a fixed mindset. Simply changing your outlook to one of growth can improve your life.

2. Be flexible. I’m sure you already know that in life, things rarely go the way they are planned. Besides helping you stay calm and collected, you will have an overall happier lifestyle when you accept change and adapt to it accordingly. It is important to stand firm in your beliefs and convictions, but you can do this while still allowing room for flexibility.

3. Be willing to compromise. Solving problems is an essential skill in both independent and collaborative environments. When working as a team, compromise is particularly vital to make sure everyone’s voices are heard. There are many situations in my everyday life where something unexpected comes up, whether it be a group project that is due in only a week or a disagreement with my partner over the topic of an in-class group assignment. I have to move on and accept that my plan might be changed, but that does not mean that I cannot speak up. Collaborating and using creative problem solving might even lead to a brilliant idea I couldn’t come up with by myself!

4. Set goals for yourself. Goal-setting always requires some change. Whether it is deciding to stop procrastinating on an English assignment or resolving to practice your violin piece for 30 minutes a day, achieving your goals will usually take a change in the “status quo” of your life. But that’s okay! It’s important to applaud yourself for taking the step to set your goals. However, don’t forget to regularly assess your progress and make changes as needed. For example, if I’m setting a goal to study more efficiently, I can keep track of which study strategies I try, and I can use the ones that are the most effective for me.

BY Sophie Lighvani
I WRITE because it opens up an entirely new dimension for me to express my thoughts and feelings in. The ability to craft new worlds purely through words is remarkable.

5. Take initiative. As Mahatma Gandhi said, “be the change you want to see in the world.” To embrace change is great, but to take initiative and “be the change” is extraordinary. With the right mindset, you can see change as an opportunity to challenge yourself. For example, standing up for yourself and others when you see injustice or bullying might push you out of your comfort zone, but it is brave and shows that you can make change happen. Even though change in life is inevitable, it can challenge us to become better people.



The New Arrival

My life was perfect. I had my mom and dad, a best friend, a hamster, and almost anything I wished for. Then everything changed. One day, I was all-smiles, then I found out I was going to have a baby sister.

The first thought that came to my mind was “Who’s gonna have to change the diaper?” because I knew I didn't want to do that. All my life I had been an only child, and I wanted to keep it that way. Because the first thing that baby would do is take away all the attention. My parents would be hugging and kissing the new baby who could barely lift her head up. I would be stuck babysitting and being the “mature” one.

When my mom told me the news, she was so excited; I knew if I showed her how I really felt, she would be sad. So, I put on a fake smile and pretended to care. I might be eight, but I know a thing or two about acting. Even though the baby wasn't due for a few months, it feels like she’s already arrived. My parents have been preparing. They transformed the guest room into a nursery, they stocked up on baby supplies, and they had an overnight bag just in case. I couldn’t imagine our family having one more member. There would be no more bike rides, no more movie nights, and no more storytelling. It seemed so unfair that I have to give up all those moments. Besides, all my friends with younger siblings are always complaining about their little brother or sister being annoying. Now I have to deal with that.

Something weird happened today. In school, I told my friend Teresa that I would be having a younger sister. Since Teresa has a big family, she knows a lot about being an older sibling. I thought she would feel bad for me, but instead, she was happy for me. She told me having a younger sibling is an experience that you will never forget even if she has been through it four times.

“Is it fun to have a little sister?” I asked her.

“It’s lots of fun! And the best part is you get to boss them around.” she said, giggling.

“But aren’t they annoying?”

“Sometimes. But they are younger than you. You probably don't realize it, but they worship you! And when you think about it that way, it’s really hard to stay mad at them.”

“Wow. I didn’t think about that.” Teresa smiled and went back to doing her math problems like what she had said was no big deal. This evening, I saw my mom painting the nursery. She was quietly humming to herself. She had a big smile on her face as she stroked her brush. I couldn’t help but smile back. I realize now that maybe, just maybe, having a little sister

wouldn't be so bad. Even though I couldn't have movie nights with mom or bike rides with dad, I could still do these activities with my sister. Instead of crying over lost memories, I can make new ones. And like Teresa said, it’s nice to have someone you can boss around.



BY Sanvi Pandit
I WRITE because writing is my way to share what I think and feel. Composing stories and poems helps me tell the world about myself without feeling scared.

A Place for Poetry

Featured poems from the iWRITER staff

VIOLET CANVAS

Change is like weaving blue into red,
A violet hue that deepens the canvas,
A purple flower blooming in a field of poppies.

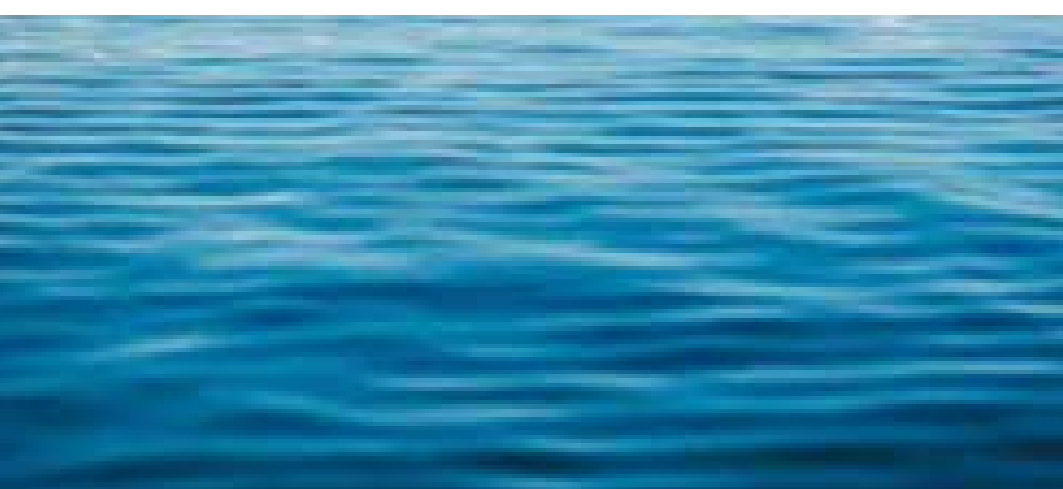
Yes, change is—
The unmistakable sound of doors slamming shut,
Of heavy boxes and bulging vans,
Of looking around at the naked walls of your home,
Where only scratched paint was left of your artwork.
Of waking from a stupor to unfamiliar walls,
An unfamiliar home.
Change leaves us a violet in a field of daisies,
A deer flanked by wolves.

Change can be sudden like that,
A pebble splashed into a still pond,
Sending ripples fanning out upon impact.
But change can be slow, too,
Like the inhale and exhales of the sun, so gradual that
One day you look up and see only a moon of pearls,
A sky full of stars.

Change is a deviation from the norm,
A ripple in still water,
A breeze in stagnant air,
A nighttime sky in the midst of day.
I felt change in the whirl of unfamiliar names and faces,
Of sitting alone at lunch,
A foreigner in a land so familiar,
And yet so different as well.

But what leaves will always come back,
A new norm will be established,
And the ripples will smooth over.
After you’ve adjusted and perfected,
After you now call this house your home,
All that’s left of change is a whisper of violet,
And perhaps the hint of a star.

BY Helen Zhang
I WRITE because, in a world where so much is uncertain, my imagination is always reliably creative and available. I know that, in times of stress, poetry and literature are always ways to find release and consistency in my life.



GOODBYE SUMMER

Houston summers drip into fall
The reminiscence of vacation weigh down the heart
School demands focus and control
Yet I still float and melt
But chill
Snap back
Work crunches under my feet
Like fall’s orange leaves
Breath in but do not breath out
Soon enough the cold air will not let more than a gasp
So hold it.

BY Cami Culbertson
I WRITE because it makes me feel powerful. Normally in my everyday life, I feel small or insignificant in the grand scheme of things. When I write and have the ability to publish, I feel like I am making my mark. Even if what I am writing about seems small, the fact I can share my voice in works like magazines where I am alongside talented writers, makes all the work I do feel significant to me. I enjoy keeping what I write, no matter how old, so I can reflect back on the work I have done and feel confident. Writing is the articulation of everything I cannot express otherwise.



PASSING TIME

like little cradles, leaves fall—
curled into themselves,
lonely spines bending, twisting—
browning into little crisps and swept away
into a faceless sky.

lost, swirling in the air and landing
in a green, green meadow:

wind combs through strands of wild, dew-
licked grass,
rustling along with poppies, tulips, and
marigolds—
fluttering their thin velvet petals like fins
and resting upon the hills like curls
swirled into one another, nodding up at a sun,
golden lining laced into twilight.

twilight spirals into night,
letting the sky bruise black and blue
and time runs until dawn.

BY Sophie Yu
I WRITE to let my thoughts, feelings, and ideas spread across the paper. To form and create a story that can be told in any perspective, described with any words. Writing can create a whole new world.



SEASONS OF CHANGE

S - Surviving and thriving happen when nature adapts, hibernates, or alters its appearance,
E - Evolving species transition as they adapt to new temperatures, climates, and weather,
A - Aurora borealis is constantly changing its ostentatious displays of luminous hues,
S - Snowfall in the Arctic spurs the blending of playful alabaster polar bears with their habitats,
O - Occasionally, new life forms, and it may continue to grow, evolve, adapt, and change,
N - Natural phenomena encourage environments to morph for rebirth and new opportunities,
S - Storage of food sustains clever beavers and squirrels who learned to adapt to frosty winters,

O - Orbits around the sun create seasons and change for people who live on Earth,
F - Foraging and stockpiling of food reserves ensure mammals, reptiles, and insects survive.

C - Courage & Calmness
H - Hope & Harmony
A - Active & Ambient
N - Natural & Numinous
G - Grit & Growth
E - Empathy & Ebullience

The seasons are a wonderful time to embrace change,
So many transformations occur; the amount is a wide range,
Changes happen all around us, from humans to nature,
There is an endless amount to explore, more than 100 I would wager,

Nature in Spring
Vibrant flowers blossom in brilliant green fields,
New baby animals, birds, and insects are what fully grown animals yield,
Lush fruits and vegetables are ready to be devoured,
Light rains trickle into rivers, and we plant parades of dazzling flowers.

Humans in Spring
Gardeners plant frost-resistant flowers and vegetables,
The outdoors summons us to hikes and picnic tables,
Many visit farmer’s markets for the juiciest crimson berries,
Brisk spring winds call to children and kites not to tarry.

Nature in Summer
Scorching rays of sunlight assist in helping plants grow,
The days will become longer, and the tender zephyrs will blow,
Bright blue skies scream with many thunderstorms,
Succulent fruits ripen, and insects swarm.
Humans in Summer
The heat encourages pool parties and tons of water fun,
Many go for bike rides and play tennis matches in parks full of sun,
We munch on popsicles and freezing ice cream cones from trucks,
Parades and soft grassy lawns leave us moonstruck.

Nature in Autumn
Crisp leaves transform into vibrant hues,
Cool, gentle breezes blow vibrant trees with great views,
Many animals search for cozy dwellings to hibernate,
Juicy fruits and vegetables harvest as we continue to create.

Humans in Autumn
Visits to orchards for crisp apples,
Scary costumes with bags of treats to grapple,
Hot mugs of cider, cloves, and cinnamon,
Carved pumpkins glow with tiny lights all alone.

Nature in Winter
Gleaming crystals form in the shrill, icy atmosphere,
Beautiful, white snow plummets down from the powerful spheres,
Animals hibernate; the days are short, and the flowers have ended their season to sprout, Pines and trees are permeated with snow while animals migrate to the south.

Humans in Winter
Long cold days and nights require mittens and boots,
Sleds fly down hills as children shout with hoots,
Snowball fights, and sugar-drenched cookies sizzle,
While hot cocoa mugs and peppermint sticks bring joy.



BY Tanvi Padala
I WRITE because words are the sound of my thoughts and let me be creative. Through writing, I can escape to impossible worlds, experience magic, and create imaginative characters. Writing brings a tremendous amount of joy and relaxes me.

BOOK TALK

It Ends with Us by Colleen Hoover is a book that has sky-rocketed in popularity for the past two years, predominantly gaining traction on social media sites including TikTok and Instagram. The book was published in August of 2016, and in January of 2022 received #1 on the Bestseller List by the New York Times. *It Ends with Us* is about the life of a woman named Lily, who has a complicated past with her father, moving to Boston only to fall in love with an even more complicated man.

Though listed as romance, the novel shows the danger in looking at life through rose-tinted glasses. By the end of the story, the reader can ask themselves "How did we get here?" and "What happened?" just like our protagonist Lily.

It Ends with Us also tackles the question that is so often asked to people in abusive situations: "Why did you stay?"

Hoover is able to write Lily so that readers can understand just one of the many reasons why it might be hard for individuals to leave

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter focuses on sensitive topics like depression and grief through the eyes of 15-year-old Julia Reyes. After losing her sister, Olga, Julia is forced to deal with the many struggles that growing up as a teenager in an immigrant household brings: high expectations, stereotypes, and navigating life as a teenager.

The book starts off with Olga, getting violently killed in a bus accident. Olga was the "perfect" Mexican daughter who went to church, attended college, listened to her parents, and would never bring shame to the family. Julia is far from perfect, and she matches the standards of the rebellious younger daughter.

After Olga's death, Julia starts to see clues that point to secrets that her sister might have been hiding. Discovering suspicious clues in Olga's room and a hotel key that belongs to the Continental Hotel, Julia decides to start snooping further. Reaching a dead end at the Continental Hotel, Julia decides to stop searching, but Olga's death weighs on her mind. Julia goes through profound bouts of depression and anxiety, as tensions rise at home with Amá (Mother), blaming her for Olga's unsuspecting death.

I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter follows a young girl, struggling to deal with a surprising death, and to meet her parents' "perfect standards." This novel's central message is that there is no such thing as perfect or beautiful, and you don't need validation for you to love yourself. *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* preaches the message that at a certain point in time, you must move on, or you will be stuck in a never-ending cycle of terrible sadness. While this is an extraordinary novel, readers must be aware that this novel tackles subjects such as self-harm, violence, and abuse.

abusive situations and why one might still love their abuser. If you are looking for an analysis on the psychology of an abuser then I do not recommend this book for you; it is told from Lily's perspective and thus all of the thoughts and psychology are her own.

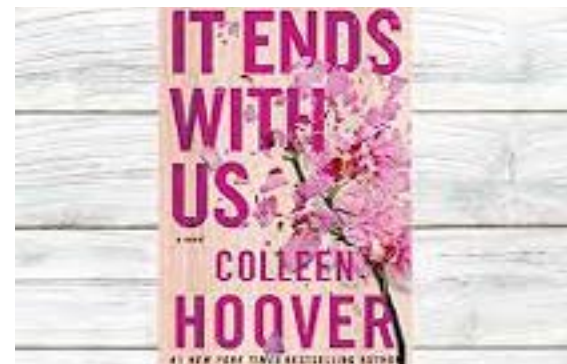
Colleen Hoover writes her characters deceptively so that not only the characters do not expect the worst, but neither does the audience.

I read *It Ends with Us* with little knowledge on what to expect, and this is how I suggest approaching it. The story unfolds heartbreakingly and by the end you feel as though you've been with Lily every step of the way.

Despite this sensation, the book is not slow paced and not particularly long, only having 376 pages. Overall, it is understandable why this book has gained so much interest and I recommend it for any reader who is interested in a shattering romance.

BY Cami Culbertson

I WRITE because it makes me feel powerful. Normally in my everyday life, I feel small or insignificant in the grand scheme of things. When I write and have the ability to publish, I feel like I am making my mark. Even if what I am writing about seems small, the fact I can share my voice in works like magazines where I am alongside talented writers, makes all the work I do feel significant to me. I enjoy keeping what I write, no matter how old, so I can reflect back on the work I have done and feel confident. Writing is the articulation of everything I cannot express otherwise.



Reading *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* will transport you into Julia's world, one filled with tears and hate, yet learning how to be yourself again. Author Erika L. Sánchez's imagery and style of writing will make you want to reach over and give Julia a warm hug. *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter* will take you on a heartfelt journey.

BY Nia Shetty

I WRITE because of the joy I feel when I put a new idea down on paper. To be able to bring feelings and emotions to the reader, through ideas that I get to express.

Writing Recommendations

Whether we realize it or not, change is constantly happening. Changes can feel exciting, overwhelming, and challenging, as it marks a new chapter in a story. If you ever find yourself in the fast transformation of an environment or evolution of self, take a moment to find a pocket of peace with the below writing prompts:

1. Journaling Prompts for Self-Discovery

a. What are five things from before the change that you used to enjoy? What are five lessons you are learning right now from the change that you appreciate? What are five things that will happen after the change that you are looking forward to?

b. Write a letter to your future self. What is happening at the moment? What are your emotions? What do you expect for the future? Where do you hope to be, physically or emotionally, moments later from now? Be specific in your expressions and expectations.

c. Change can sometimes be scary- which is natural; you're encountering something that is totally new! Try turning the page and face the fear. What exactly is scaring you? What actions can you take to better navigate those feelings?

2. Poetry and Prose Prompts for Reflection

a. Find a clipping of any poem from an archive online. Select your poem and do a blackout poetry piece, redacting words with a black marker. Keep words that most resonate with how you feel.

b. Create a piece about change without using the word "change."

c. Write a haiku about changes that occur in nature.

d. Write a haibun (a continuous haiku, often written in block form) about changes that can happen to anyone and everyone.

e. Write a creative nonfiction piece about a time when something unexpected happened to you, and the impact it had on your life.

3. Fiction Prompts for Creativity

a. A young boy has moved into another state after living in the same place all his life. Everything has changed, and everything-from school to friends- is new. How will the boy adjust to his new life?

b. Overnight, time has somehow reversed and you are back in the age of the dinosaurs. Nothing of the modern day exists anymore. What do you do next?

BY Kate-Yeonjae Jeong

I WRITE because I have a passion for being able to share my reflections and thoughts with others. I write so I can share the spark of joy that writing gives with many other interested students.



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