

THE WRITE THING:

A COLLECTION OF WRITING FROM DOLLARWAY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



WRITINGS FROM THE
2019-2020 PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN DOLLARWAY
HIGH SCHOOL & THE ARTS &
SCIENCE CENTER FOR
SOUTHEAST ARKANSAS

ASC
The Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas

ASC701.ORG

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
for the **ARTS**

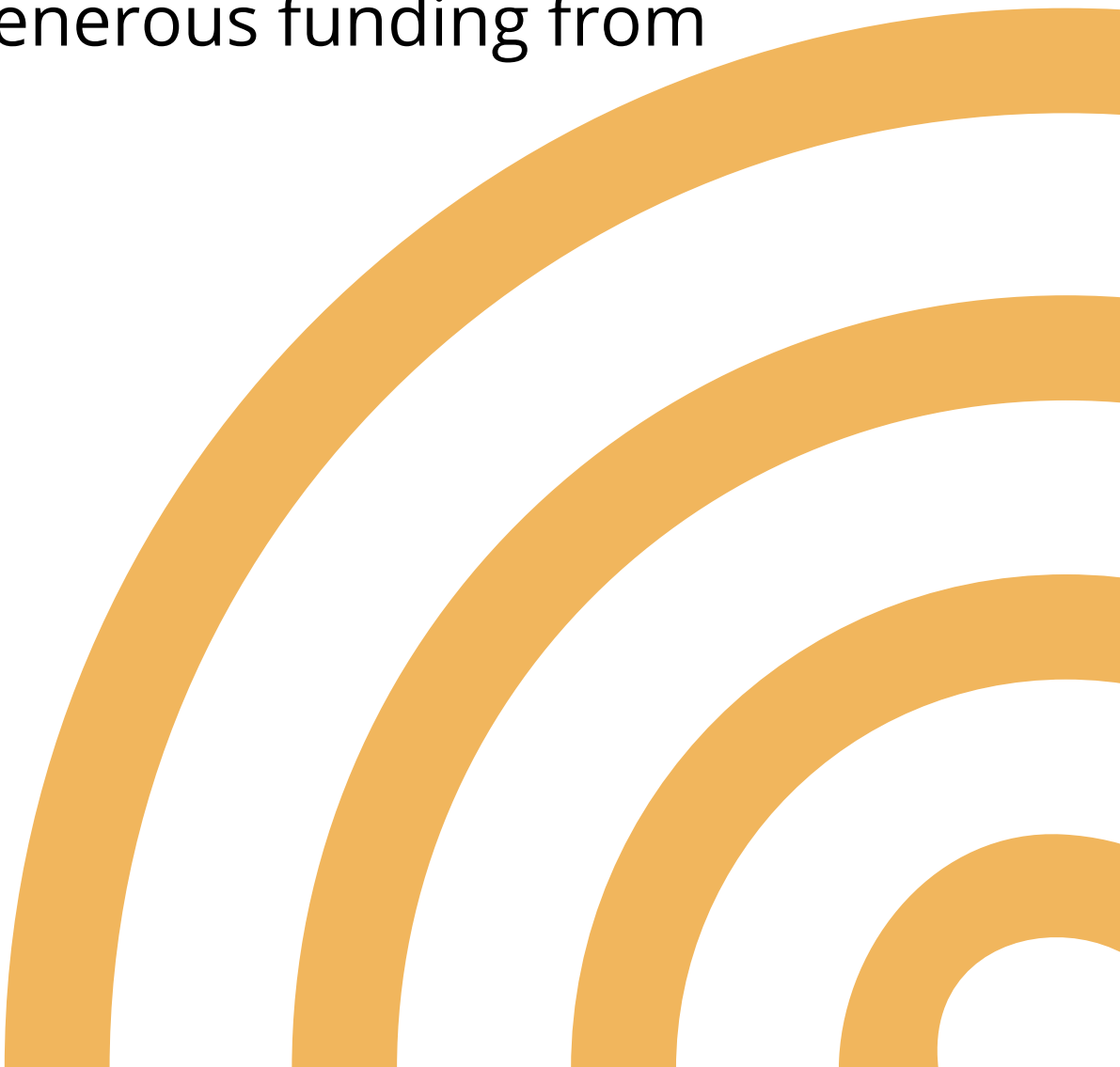
arts.gov

THE WRITE THING:

A COLLECTION OF WRITING FROM DOLLARWAY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Over the 2019-2020 school year, the Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas sponsored an artist-in-residency program at Dollarway High School. Teaching artist, April Gentry-Sutterfield visited Dollarway four different weeks throughout the school year. During the residencies, Gentry-Sutterfield facilitated the students in drama exercises as entry-points for writing. All writing was based on literacy standards and inspired by visual art exhibitions at the Arts & Sciences Center for Southeast Arkansas. This journal is a collection of some of that writing.

The students of Dollarway should be applauded for their work. They tackled challenging, academic ideas; used their bodies to create characters and scenarios; and expressed themselves through visual art. Dollarway Superintendent Barbara Warren, Curriculum Specialist Dee Davis, Principal Yolanda Prim, Coordinator Kristi Caldwell, and English teachers Sarah Sutton, Phyllis Childs, Linda Simmons, and Kenneth Avery were instrumental in the success of this project. The Arts & Science Center for Southeast Arkansas, under the leadership of Dr. Rachel Miller, sponsored this project with generous funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.



SESSION ONE:

USING FROZEN PICTURES TO WRITE ABOUT JAMES MATTHEWS'S EVICTION QUILTS

Using James Matthews's Eviction Quilt, East 20th St., students read informational texts about gentrification and the history of the word "ghetto." Given the readings, they explored these ideas in frozen pictures and wrote how they viewed the quilt.



Dollarway English teachers view East 20th St. from James Matthews's Eviction Quilts at ASC as part of a professional development series that correlated with this residency program.

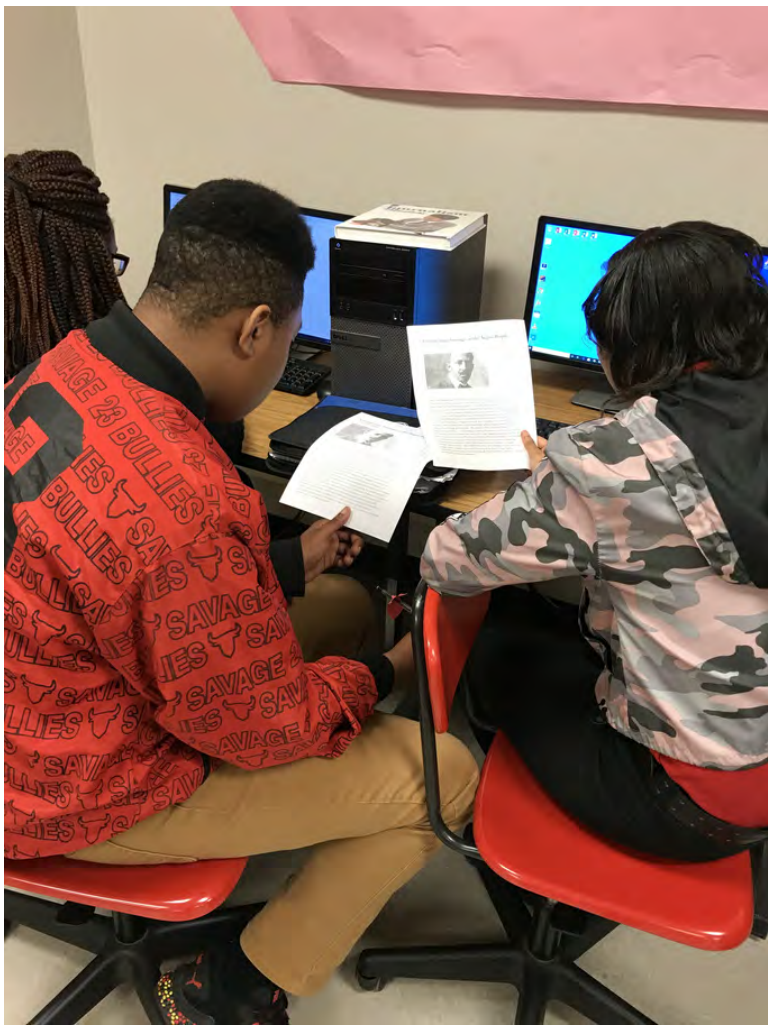
James Matthews' Eviction Quilt, East 20th St., reveals that even a hard-working man trying to provide for his family will not always be able to live the American Dream.

Braylen Gridley
Malcom Parker
Trent Simmons

SESSION TWO:

USING ETHNOGRAPHY & IMPROV TO WRITE ABOUT CHRYSTAL SEAWOOD'S BOYS TO BLACK MEN: THE SEER IS THE KEEPER OF HIS DREAMS

With Seawood's work, students explored WEB DuBois's theory of double-consciousness as well as the critique of that theory by the Black Arts Movement. First, they wrote an explanation of Seawood's work as it relates to DuBois. Then, they explored a self-determined definition of identity by explaining to a partner when they feel most like themselves. Their partner recorded the interview as an ethnographic performance (written word-for-word how the interviewee said it).



Students in Ms. Simmons's first period class read DuBois's work as a lens for viewing Seawood's portraits.

In *Jonathan*, Chrystal Seawood paints a visual description of a black male being judged. The subject is Jonathan himself existing among judgements. The background is in flames covered by different facial expressions. In this painting, Seawood was trying to get us to see how others' opinions could reflect onto how you live your life.

Seawood approaches this topic through her use of creativity of real situations through emotion and art. Seawood's work inspires the viewers to think and question how double consciousness affects you more than judgement.

Shakiah Clark
Jamauria Byrd

In *Albert with Orange*, Chrystal Seawood paints a relaxed but aware Albert. The subject is Albert, and the faces around him. In this painting, Seawood is showing examples of double consciousness. Seawood explores this idea through the use of faces symbolizing his outer vs. inner emotions. Seawood's work inspires the viewer to question if everyone lives in a world of double consciousness.

Micah Thomas
Kenyon Carr
Briveon Sample
Gerren Alexander

In *Jonathan*, Chrystal Seawood paints a young man. The subject is how people see yourself. The background is red with a bunch of facial expressions that can be categorized as rude and judgemental. In this painting, Seawood draws a portrait of a person with animated faces of how the person thinks people see him. The faces are how he is being looked at. Some faces look envious. The angry faces explain the flames in the background. Seawood explores this topic through her use of creativity because of the way the faces look. Also, she put more thought into this painting than she did the others. This particular painting has a specific background. Seawood's work inspires the viewer to wonder what the person is really like, and it makes you think about who [Jonathan] thinks the faces represent.

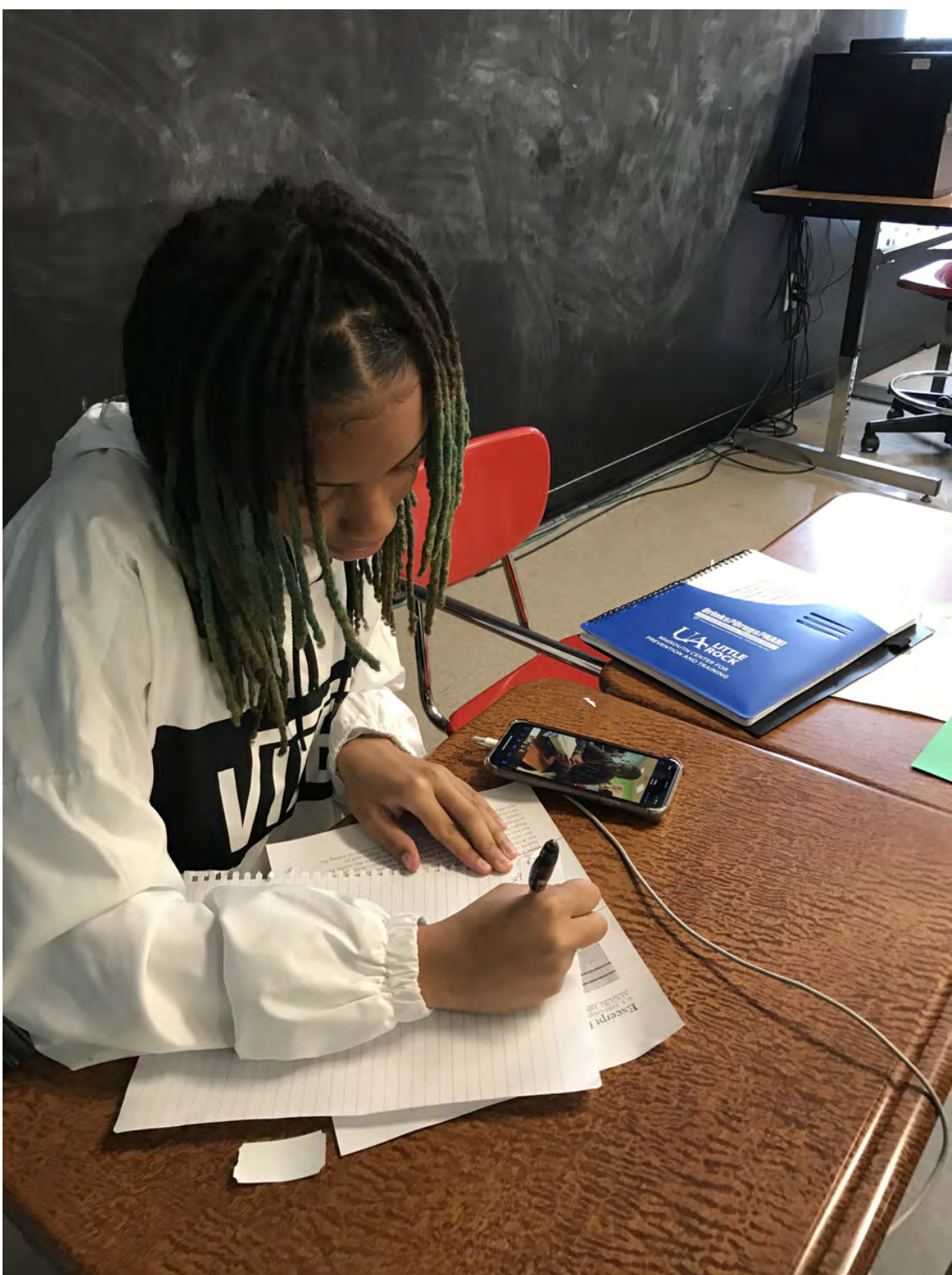
Jeremiah Warrior
Kamron Swift
Shariah Thorne

SESSION TWO:

USING ETHNOGRAPHY & IMPROV TO WRITE ABOUT CHRYSTAL SEAWOOD'S BOYS TO BLACK MEN: THE SEER IS THE KEEPER OF HIS DREAMS

In *TeJohn*, Chrystal Seawood paints a picture of a guy. The subject is an African-American male smiling, chilling, and living his life. The background is showing eyes that don't look too pleased with the guy. In this painting, Seawood is trying to explain to us that African-Americans want to be themselves but others make it difficult to do so.

Joydyne Carmickle
Ariah Redix



A student in Ms. Sutton's class writing her ethnographic performance from a recording of her interview with a partner.

Shariah Thorn's Interview of Kamron Swift: "I feel most like myself when I'm in the band room with my bandmates. I always feel like they are the ones that understand me the most, even though at school I don't feel like myself at all, but I feel most like myself with them. Because I'm comfortable there, I feel like I can share everything with them."

La'Naja Tyson's Interview of Niana Williams: "I was young and I was at my grandmother's house and all of my cousins were over there and we were having a blast and I just felt like I was loved and I never wanted to leave."

Linda Simmons's interview of Freddiemae Thompson: "A time where I felt most like myself is usually on a stage performing. Uh...theatre, acting, that's when I normally feel most like myself. Also I feel most comfortable being myself around my mother. When I'm with my mother, I feel like I can be just who I am. So those are the two times or places when I feel most like myself. Either when I'm performing or when I'm in the presence of my mother. She accepts me for who I am."



SESSION THREE:

USING DRAMATURGY TO CREATE CHARACTERS AND A SHOW INSPIRED BY IAN CAMPBELL'S REFUGIA

ENGLISH TEACHERS WERE FOCUSED ON CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE. EACH STUDENT SELECTED ONE OF CAMPBELL'S PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGINED IF THE SUBJECT WAS HUMAN CHARACTER INSTEAD OF A PLANT OR BUG. STUDENTS IMAGINED: WHAT WOULD THIS CHARACTER BE LIKE?; WHAT WOULD HIS/HER JOB BE?; IN WHAT SETTING WOULD THEY FEEL THE MOST COMFORTABLE? STUDENTS THEN REPRESENTED THESE CHARACTERS IN A MIXED MEDIA ARTWORK USING MAGAZINE CLIPPINGS AND OIL PASTELS. NINTH GRADERS WROTE PARAGRAPHS AS THEIR CHARACTER. UPPER LEVEL STUDENTS GOT INTO SMALL GROUPS AND USED FROZEN PICTURES TO CREATE THE PILOT EPISODE OF A TV SHOW FOR THEIR CHARACTERS. THEN THEY CREATED CHARACTERS WEBS.



Violet...Yes, I am she. No, you do not see me, and, no, you do not hear me, but I am me. I hide, and I do not reveal myself. I have but one, and the one is my strength. I know how to control my one, with only itself. Just like a weed, I will grow uncontrollably but soon will be cut away. While me and my one are here, I choose not to cut the other weeds of people that grow in this land. I also would not like them to cut me. Yes, this is how it should be, but some do not believe. There are no fairs and un-fairs, but there is Violet...Yes, me. As I am me, I am also free. I will not reveal myself to the other weeds of people, but you can reveal yourself to me. There is no one to help weeds grow so there is just me and my one. You will see us again soon. So goodbye from me and my one. I know you do not know the one but my one is my strength, and this strength will always be within me. Goodbye for now, I will return to reveal more, but until then goodbye.

Jasmine Stinnett, 9th grade

SESSION THREE:

USING DRAMATURGY TO CREATE CHARACTERS AND A SHOW INSPIRED BY IAN CAMPBELL'S REFUGIA



Hi. My name is Lynx. I've been here for awhile, and I don't think there's a way out. I'm trapped in an open field of grass and am starting to get bored. I'm becoming miserable and depressed with no one around--just me. No one to help me when I'm in need of help. I'm stuck. Nowhere to run, nowhere to hide--all in a green field outside.

Trevor Baker, 9th Grade

Dear Diary, Hi! It's Joe here. Once again. And I did a portrait of myself. My portrait portrays me being a photographer which I am. I love taking pictures of nature. When I was 8 years old, my mom bought me my first camera. I went outside, and started taking pictures of the blooming flowers and bumblebees. That brings me to my portrait of me in my photography red room dipping my photos of butterflies. They turned out really cool. This is a gift for my 4 year old daughter. She is fascinated by butterflies.

Ty'kira Boston, 9th Grade



Night and day went without hearing a squeak of noise. The clouds were dark and bunch up as if there was a storm coming. I gathered up wood and leaves to make cover and start a few. As the night passed, the winds started to get stronger. My cover started to fall apart piece by piece until there was none left. I stood there in the dark as the rain poured on me feeling like bloody hell. When the clouds cleared, a star passed the night sky, and then I wished. I wished to not be alone anymore, and then the old man made it come true.

Damarion Wallace, 9th Grade



SESSION THREE:

USING DRAMATURGY TO CREATE CHARACTERS AND A SHOW INSPIRED BY IAN CAMPBELL'S REFUGIA



Stone Cold

by Brycen Pryor, Jeremiah Warrior, and Deja Thomas

"It feels so amazing to finally be with someone again...though something feels off. I think someone's watching us."

"When I realized she wasn't alone and that she was with a date, I became enraged...Standing there watching what I was seeing with my eyes I wanted to get even."

"He says: 'It feels like we're being watched. The blood drains from my system, and I feel weightless.'"

The Gift of Friendship

by DeYanna Howard, Akyrah Boykin, and Kayla Daniels

"Me and Joey have started talking and I've sent this cool person named Raygen a friend request."

"I grabbed my laptop to get on Friendbook to see if Reigneh accepted my friend request."

"I am doing everything I can to connect to wife but I can't. I'm gonna try this one last thing and maybe it will work. I need to have human connections."



The Hopeless and the Hidden

by Laila Baker, Niana Williams, LaNaja Tyson, Rikkiya Britten

"I've...moved here for a fresh start."

"Ear Diary, Today marks the 12th day of my sophomore year of college, and it has not been easy."

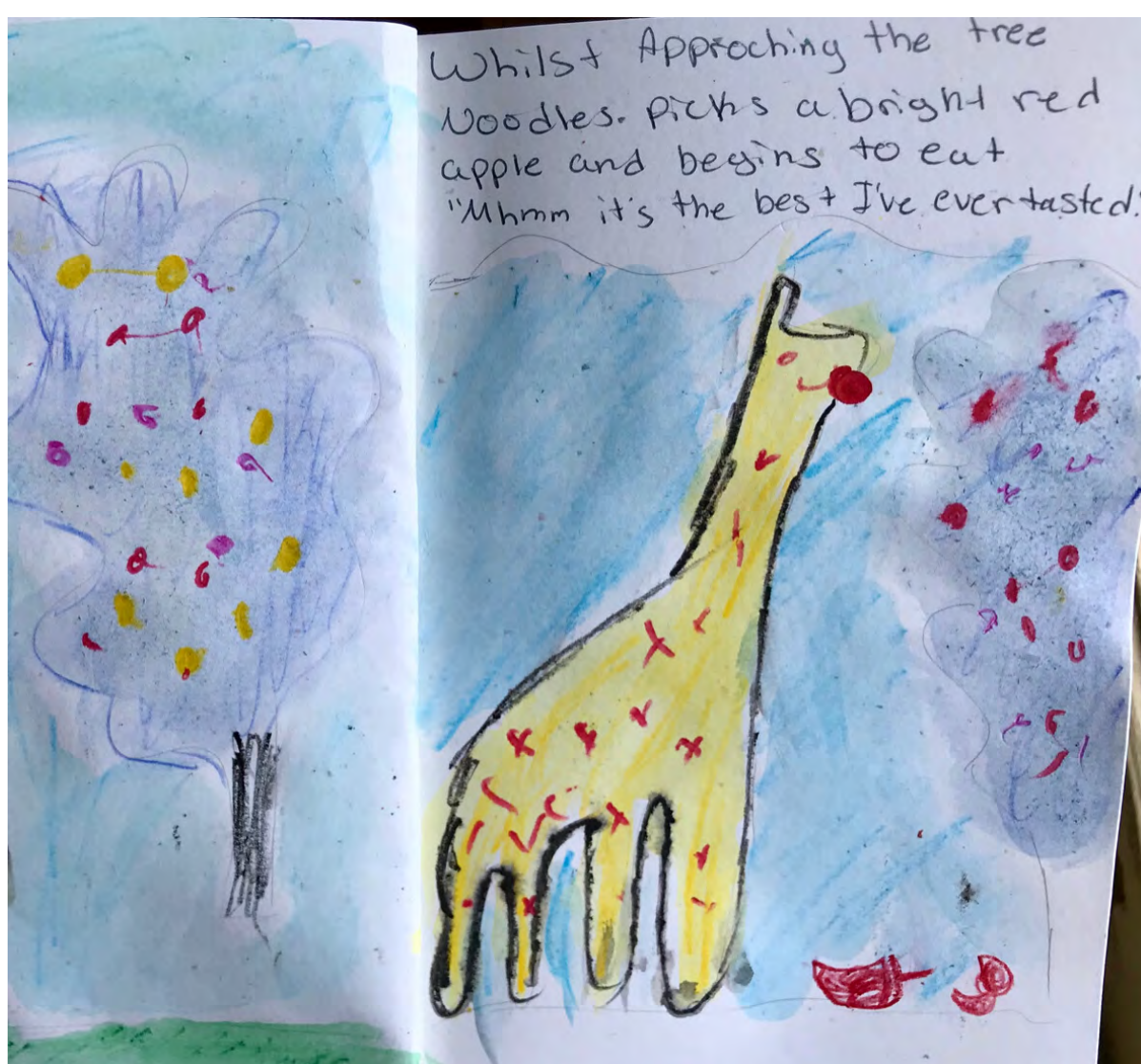
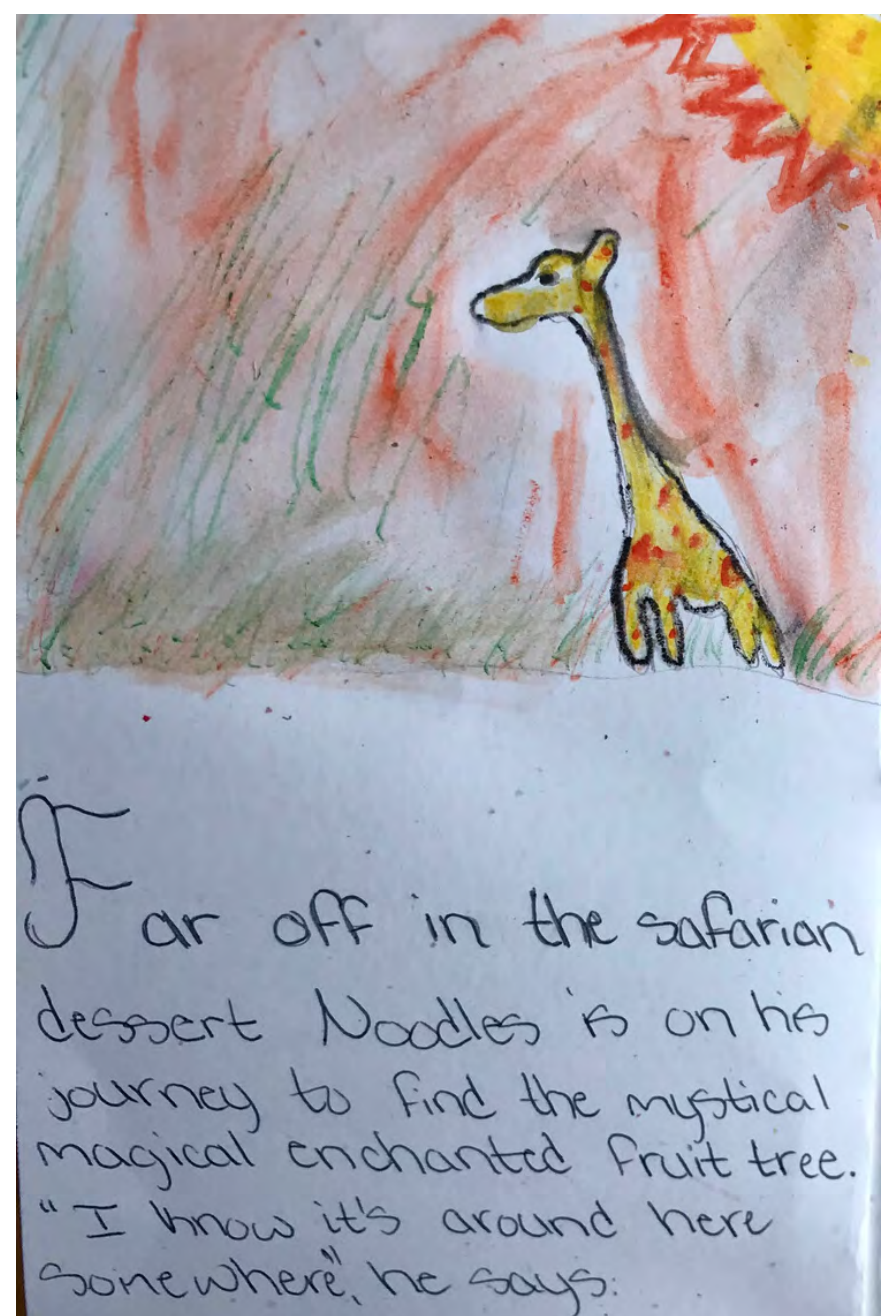
"My life is always changing--constantly trying to uplift everyone and everything."

"Dear Diary, I have made new friends."

SESSION FOUR:

USING FROZEN PICTURES TO DEVELOP CHARACTERS AND SEQUENCE A CHILDREN'S STORY WITH ASC'S "WHIMSY AND FLIGHTS OF FANCY" EXHIBITION

STILL FOCUSED ON CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE, STUDENTS SELECTED ONE OF THE ARTWORKS FROM ASC'S "WHIMSY AND FLIGHTS OF FANCY" EXHIBITION AS THE MAIN CHARACTER IN A CHILDREN'S PICTURE BOOK. THEY USED FROZEN PICTURES TO CREATE THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS FOR THE BOOK. THEN THEY USED WATERCOLOR PENCILS TO ILLUSTRATE AND WRITE THE BOOK.



Noodles & The Magical Tree

by Cherri Graham, Rikkiya Britten,
and LaNaja Tyson

A giraffe discovers a new world
after he eats the fruit from a
magical tree which makes him
shrink.

SESSION FOUR:

USING FROZEN PICTURES TO DEVELOP CHARACTERS AND SEQUENCE A CHILDREN'S STORY WITH ASC'S "WHIMSY AND FLIGHTS OF FANCY" EXHIBITION

Billy & Kim
by Juliun Barnes

A teenage daughter gets revenge on her overly restrictive father.



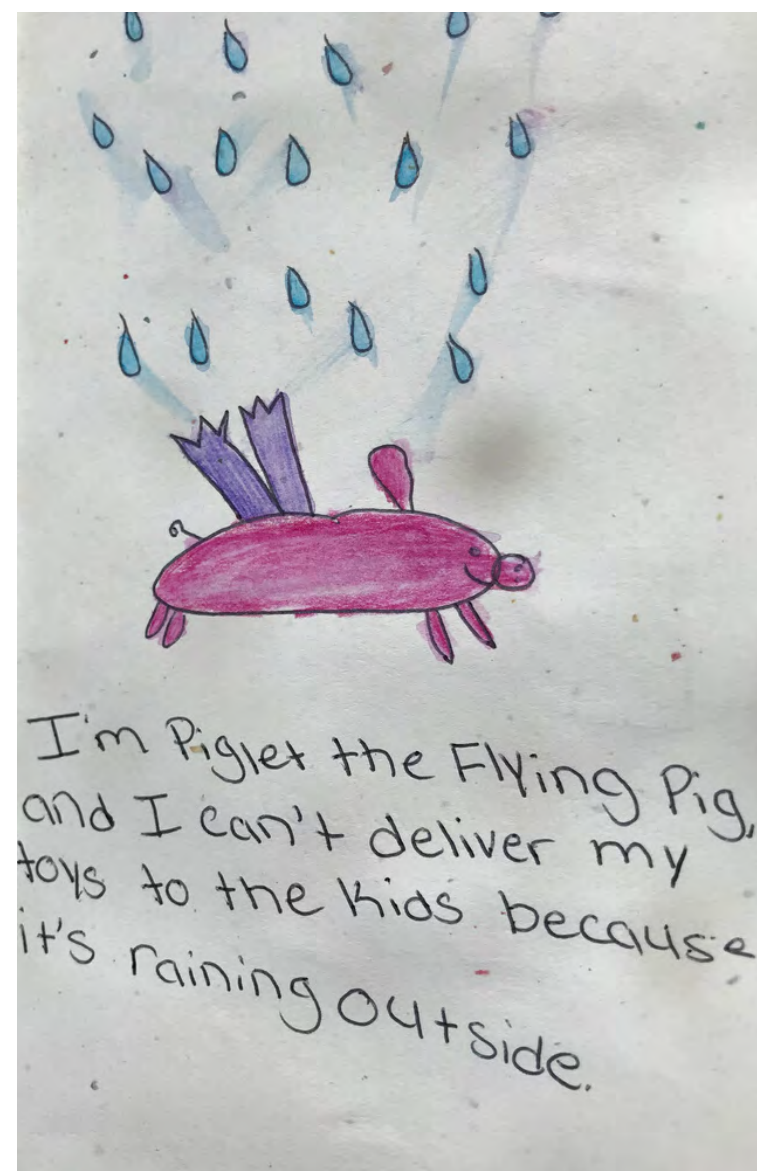
SESSION FOUR:

USING FROZEN PICTURES TO DEVELOP CHARACTERS AND SEQUENCE A CHILDREN'S STORY WITH ASC'S "WHIMSY AND FLIGHTS OF FANCY" EXHIBITION

Piglet the Flying Pig

by Travia Whitehead

A flying pig is sad when rain keeps him from his job of delivering toys to children. When the rain stops, the flying pig delights in returning to work.



A Publication of Collected Writings From:

- Braylen Gridley
- Malcom Parker
- Trent Simmons
- Shakiah Clark
- Jamauria Byrd
- Micah Thomas
- Kenyon Carr
- Briveon Sample
- Gerren Alexander
- Jeremiah Warrior
- Kamron Swift
- Shariah Thorne
- Joydyne Carmickle
- Ariah Redix
- Freddiemae Thompson
- Jasmine Stinnett
- Trevor Baker
- Ty'kira Boston
- Damarion Wallace
- Brycen Pryor
- Jeremiah Warrior
- Deja Thomas
- DeYanna Howard
- Akyrah Boykin
- Kayla Daniels
- Laila Baker
- Niana Williams
- LaNaja Tyson
- Rikkiya Britten
- Cherri Graham
- Julun Barnes
- Travia Whitehead

