

WORD.
SOUND.
POWER.
IN THE
CLASSROOM

2024 ANTHOLOGY

Word. Sound. Power.
in the Classroom is BAM's
in-school poetry residency
for high school students.

Each year students explore the art of poetry and spoken word through a chosen theme inspired by history and current events. Over the course of 12 sessions, these young poets found inspiration and cultivated their own love for the written and spoken word. This anthology reflects that sense of discovery and serves as a culminating document of the students' participation in the class.

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WORD. SOUND. POWER. IN THE CLASSROOM

Teaching Artists

Gideon Bautista



Gideon is a Filipino-American actor, playwright, poet, improviser, and teaching-artist based in Brooklyn. Having earned his BA in Theatre Education at Emerson College, he's currently working on his Masters in Applied Theatre at CUNY's School of Professional Studies.

Marcus Smalls (@MarcusSmalls)



Marcus is a teaching artist and writer who uses his lifelong love of hip-hop to moderate creative environments around spirituality and identity. Marcus is a teaching artist at BAM and is currently querying literary agents for his debut novel, *The Divine Sinner Chronicles*. Marcus is also the Chief Creative Officer at Prayer Kloset Productions and is pitching *The Divine Sinner Chronicles* as a stage production

Jennifer Cendana Armas



Jennifer Cendaña Armas is a born and raised NYC performing artist, educator, and community worker committed to telling stories of diaspora. She is a commission 2023 artist for Restorative Justice Initiative, was a 2022 Harlem Stage WaterWorks Emerging Artist fellow, and recently served as directing observer and understudy for Elyria at Atlantic Theatre Company. She is also a teaching artist at Brooklyn Academy of Music and Social Impact Advisor and Coach with Inspire Justice.

Vee Arumemi



Vee Arumemi is a storyteller and second-generation immigrant, who loves food, film and music. He values authenticity and the vulnerability of expression, creative or otherwise. Vee is ever-curious and always looking for ways to translate inspiration and ideas across different mediums, and to diverse audiences. Recently, he's leaned into filmmaking but he also loves to write, perform, take photos, and collage. Currently, he's intrigued by finding ways to combine multiple artistic practices and noticing how they inform and compliment one another.

In 2022, Vee self-published a short collection of poetry entitled *member*. Last year, his short "give thanks.," which he wrote and directed, was an Official Selection at the Chain Film Festival. He also completed a multimedia project entitled, *port(als) of entry* in partnership with the Restorative Justice Initiative of NYC.

WORD. SOUND. POWER.

Rhythm is Rhythm

Spoken word is more than speech, it is the rhythm of language. Rap is Rhythm and Poetry.

This year's residency asked students to explore what it means to bring musicality to the words they wrote and the words they spoke. Thinking about the traditions of the Black Arts Movement, and giants such as Nikki Giovanni, The Watts Prophets, The Last Poets and others, students explored the marriage of words and rhythm.

Mikal Amin Lee

EDUCATION MANAGER

WORD. SOUND. POWER. PROGRAMMER

TEACHING ARTIST

Marcus Smalls

TEACHERS

Tameka Thompson
Matt Williams

Boerum Hill School For
International Studies

Iyana Rasin AGE 15

EMPTY PROMISES

You have others wrapped around a lie
that they'll always forgive but never forget
Because you're like a mirror that's so delicate,
once in the wrong hands and you fall into pieces
Because you're not a scrape on a knee that can easily heal
Because you're not a glass vase that breaks into pieces
that can possibly be put back together
Because you're something someone holds onto
until you come true
You able to swear this and swear and swear that
Able to cross two pinky fingers and say
"i promise you that"
Baffled by the way you swore and sworn
until that swear was ignored

As a young child you barely understand what

“i promise you” means

As you get older a promise can mean more than it seems

Bitter by the way you said it was a guarantee

Not mad because you fooled me to believe the lies

At a loss because i'm now a glass vase

that shattered into a million pieces that can't be fixed

Your word meant something to me

but it simply became nothing to me that easily.

I don't know when I will see you again

I don't know where I will see you again

People told me you are in heaven

Maybe I'll start praying to a God that I don't believe in

just to see you again

Ren Pena-Chavez AGE 15



WAS IT THIS?

Was it the wrath of
My old testament god
That summoned the power
To swing that hot leather belt
Over my fathers back arched like a rainbow
As if promising to never flood again
Was it this belt that struck his pale backside
With all the conviction of a preacher
Bounding like thunder across virgin skies
That i now look for in the depths of dreams
Was it church i looked for
Sifting fingers through sand dunes
Like notes in songs
Hoping to find the lord

Was it the dove that whispered to me
In a dream that there is
More than myself in the world
Mirrors reflecting off mirrors
Show my only worlds of envy
If i am my own god i know him to be a failure
I know my shortcomings all too well to also
Think of myself as divine
Was it the dove that laid an
Olive branch in my hand
As if promising there is more than myself
As if promising he is greater
Promising he would never strike again

Narah Pierre

WHAT DO I DO?

I don't know what to do with my life.

Do I wanna live a calm or wild life?

Right now all I gotta focus on is school,

But the future got a lot of rules.

All I wanna have is bread,

That's the only thing that's been in my head.

Everyone has a goal,

I know mine too but I'm behind a pole.

My parents have expectations I don't want to follow,

It's just too much to swallow.

I wanna be a lawyer, arguing and fighting;

I wanna be a doctor, saving whoever is dying;

I wanna have a business, supplying and buying.

I've been so caught up in my book,

I just want my little sister to show me off to whoever looks.

I just wanna make my parents proud,

But I'm just lost in this crowd.

I just wanna make my father proud,

He said if I do he'll appreciate me aloud.

That's all I want.

Wanna be a good person,

even though it feels like my soul has worsened.

Will Narah be somebody or nobody?

I remember reading my grandpa my poems;

He was so proud.

I just wanna do this one thing to make him happy

behind the cloud

Lyle Fuchs

TIMED LIFE

You wake up and see the world pass by
Wishing you could fly
Along with it
But life is a one-way ticket
People treat it as a lock and try to pick it
But instead, they miss it
Life is like a river
It only gets bigger
And we shiver
As time makes us kiss her
Goodbye
We wanna live till the world runs dry
If we just had limitless time
We could be sublime

But time chimes in
We can't drink our fine wine
And share our prime rhymes
As we hear time's whines
Or can we
We just need to see
That life isn't about the bounty
Or which county you live in
It's about the moments

And the specific components
That makes up our opponents
And our friends
We don't want it to end
But we don't have to live
till the world runs dry
Just till our souls run dry
We just live until we have to say
Goodbye

Just like with levels that challenge,
and music that's grand
It's one of the best games
and I hope you all could understand.
Every jump and dash I go
"at the speed of light",
and with the next game mode I take flight.
As I strive for 100% towards the end,
the level feels like a "XXL" It just never ends
And exactly like "ascension to heaven"

I go higher and higher in the editor,
in hopes that I'll soon become a widely
known "Geometry dash reddit(or)"
My "Heartbeat" begins to speed up faster
and faster, but thankfully it's nowhere near
to "Heart Attack"
I continue to conquer each level,
with style and grace.
As the music pulsates and guides my way,
"Geometry dash"... a game that never fails
to amaze, RIP "Michigun"

Nashawn McLeod AGE 16



Jarvis Sopkia: Jordan is a 40 year old white guy who lives in the borough of Manhattan in NYC. Jordan works as an architect and he has been known for building and designing really expensive architecture.

Sanaa Morgan AGE 15



ODE TO FOOD

Food, oh glorious food, you bring joy to my
taste buds and fill my belly with delight.

Every time I take a bite,
tears are brought to my eyes.

In kitchens where the spices sing,
Potatoes humble,

Tomatoes red in every light.

Fruits that burst with sweet delight,

Aromas dance in kitchens

warm, Spices whisper,

Golden crusts, a crispy embrace,

Meats that sizzle, grills ablaze,

Cheeses aged in a dairy daze.

Baker's art in doughy trance,

A feast of flavors, a culinary dance.
From farm to fork, a journey grand
In every bite, a taste is so planned.
Ode to food, both near and far,
A symphony on every jar.

Yvonne Kaisam AGE 15

DEAR LITTLE SISTER,

December 8th 2011,
Was the day you were born,
Although I can't remember
the exact time only being 3,
I remember playing with you
when you were on your pink squeaky swing
set that used to be mine
Fighting with Jojo
over who's gonna hold you next,
So little and so loved
You were like my own personal baby doll,
I would help mom pick your outfits
Pink onesies, and pink bibs,
As you grew up I did too,

Made friends, spent less time with you
Your 5 and I'm 8 fighting over what toys
we wanted to play with
"What's mine is yours" is a saying
for everything,
I couldn't have my own dolls, or shoes,
favorite color,
You took that all from me and copied it
I would get so annoyed
and ignore you for hours,
You would tell mom and hug me,
apologizing for "being me"
You're not my personal baby doll anymore
you're 11, with your own voice and mind

When we once hugged each other we fight,
Stealing my pink crop tops and pink bags,
I don't even yell because mom does,
You're not old enough yet
It took time to understand you weren't being
me you looked up to me,
You wanted the same shoes, same clothes,
and same favorite color because you knew
how much I loved it
you just wanted to show me how much you
loved me.

Ashley Alvarez AGE 15

MEMORIES

A ti que cuando vivía me hiciste sentir más viva, A ti que cambiaste mi mundo en cuestión de días.

You that turns my sad days into happy, you who always saw the good side of me, you with whom i share memories but now, we were those strangers again but now with memories in common.

Contigo con quien me sentía viva y ahora no se como me siento, Se que estoy viva pero no se siente igual se siente como un vacío, En mi interior del cual no se si quiero salir.

Our memories keep haunting my head
thinking that one day I will see you again
and everything will be like before but it's just
those thoughts.

A prison cell

Filled with ww1

And the atomic structure.

If only...

Wait there ...

off In the distance...

It's so beautiful...

So small yet so big

Right there

In between period 3

And period 5

We are getting close

Counting down the

Minutes the seconds

Reaching out

Using every inch of our power

To get to the end

To get to this place

This amazing place.

We are almost there now

Its so close

it seems to Shine so bright,

Just like the sun

My heart beats like a drum.

Just a few more seconds now

And... and...

We have arrived!

In this heavenly place

Of food and soccer
It just so wonderful,
Exactly how i thought it would be.
And now we...
we...
...oh It's 12:12...
Time to go back to class.

Sanaa Johnson AGE 15

MUSIC

In the quiet,
chaotic harmony
Silence and noise intertwined.

Melodies,
like whispers in thunder,
Humble, yet fierce,
a peaceful clash.

Records,
like raindrops that light a fire under,

Soft,
yet raging with emotion.

rhythms,
a dance of uproar.
An order hidden in wild beats.

In tune,
a gentle collision.
different paths joining forces.
In disharmony,
concord finds home.
An oddity that puts us at peace.
Music,
an enigma of contrasts.
In the silence,
notes ignite.
A captivating symphony
that takes flight.

Jolene Kim AGE 15



JUDGE FISHER PARABLE

In a grand hall of justice, I met her,
Judge Fisher, the beacon of wisdom,
Chief administrative Judge, admired by all

Her gaze held stories of countless trials,
A scribe of justice her words compiled,
Inquiries flowed, curiosity awoken,
A dance of discourse, a memory unbroken

Her voice, a steady river of reason,
Guiding the ship through tumultuous season,
Her words, a tapestry of knowledge and grace,
Weaving tales of justice in this sacred space

With each question posed, she'd pause and reflect,
Choosing words with care, never neglect,
At first I thought she was firm and strict,
But as the clock ticked, my instinct kicked,
If it hadn't, I would have missed
her wisdom flowing,
A fountain of insight, guiding seekers of truth,
In darkness and in light.

Memories etched like ink on parchment,
Of meeting Judge Fisher,
a woman of enhancement,
The weight of her presence, both firm and kind,
Left a lasting impression, imprinted in my mind

Oh how I cherish those moments we shared,
A glimpse into her world, a privilege rare,
For in her presence, I felt a sense of awe,
A reminder of the power of justice's call

So I hold dear these memories, forever enshrined,
Of meeting and interviewing Judge Fisher,
so refined,
For into brief encounters, I glimpsed the sublime,
And forever shall they dwell in the corridors of time

Skylah Thomas AGE 15

G I R L B E S T F R I E N D

“Two drifters off to see the world”

A lyric by frank ocean

A lyric i like to believe he wrote about me and keira

The friend who knows me

Down to if I still sleep with teddy bears or not

The person I go to when I want to write with my silver pen

and red ink

My friend I can cry to

My friend who knows my middle name

The only friend ever that I'll ride a plane to go see

I don't know where i'd be without her

My best friend

Chenei S



I grew up in a world with chicken heads
Nothing but a bunch of crack heads

Cultural Academy of Arts & Sciences

TEACHING ARTIST

Vee Arumemi

TEACHER

Conor Madden

Abdul Omigie AGE 16



LIES ON LIES

Lies, lies go on
within your life

Lies influence you,

Lies go on in your life

making you realize these lies
warp the way you feel.

These lies hurt inside

As the time goes on, these lies feed you
in a way that changes your whole feed.

These lies you can't help but stop
and grieve.

And you can't understand the promises
being broken within

For the emotion that you go through
and ask yourself why.

Why, why would they tell lies?

Why break the promises we made?

Why tell lies and put yourself first?

Within these tuff times, the innocent mind lies

the mind that spills and we drink up the
substance. And pass it along to others,

causing broken people,

Depression

Heartbreak

And so on

As life goes on, the lies become worse.

Lies, lies go on

within your life

My anger messes with me
I think I need a cool down time
My best friend makes me violent
He makes me want to commit a crime

But besides that, it's okay
I would just go back to my music
Just sitting there vibing,
listening intently to the lyrics

2024, new year, new me
Leaving that overthinking alone
Staying stagnant and not progressing,
is something I will not condone

Emmanuel Rhodes AGE 16



FADED THOUGHTS

Why do all these test's come
and give me a break?

Carrying all this load as I'm flying over states

Staying up day and night
Just to study, just in case

Prepping myself for the trials I have to face

But I'm not gon think about it right now
I'm starting to feel the come down
My brain needs to slow down

Images fading in and out

Moving to the beat,

Tick tock,

on the clock,

Time has stopped,

Hit the block,

Reset

As I woke up, come on, let's go again

Switching jets, right out of my mind,

I'm out here making bets

One v. One, making out these steps like I'm
playing chess

But like before, I ain't gon think about it right
now

So, LET'S BALL OUT

GO ALL OUT

NO RUN DOWN

TO THE SUNDOWN

CAUSE ONCE I GAIN FULL

CONSCIOUSNESS

THEN IT'S LIGHTS OUT!

Christopher Vazquez AGE 16



DO YOU KNOW YOUR WORTH?

Do you know your worth?

Do you set your goals to an all-time high?

Do you try and try, even though it makes you cry?

Do you feel like you can control the earth?

All I want to know is, do you know your worth?

How long did it take to know your worth?

Was it after your birth?

Was it after many and many years?

Was it during all those puddles of tears?

How long did it take for you to know your worth?

So I pass this book
and I ask a question.

One that can be used later
as a suggestion.

You don't need one person or a traffic
congestion.

But all I want to know is,
do you know your worth?

Axel Salgado AGE 16



HELLO KITTY GIRL HE LOVES YOU

Sweet like sugar,

a cutie pie

Soon, one day

you could be mine.

Hello kitty girl, you are fine.

Live like a shooting star,

I could make you mine.

Oghomenyughan Osayawe AGE 16



MY HAIR

It's mine, mine hair

She won't let it be

She won't leave me alone

1, 6, 14 years—still, my mom still don't want to let me be.

Pain, crying and relaxing is the only thing she thinks would stop the pain.

But it only makes me feel more pain and hurt.

“Come sit and be quiet,

it will go away in a second”

I had enough,

I got up then looked in the mirror

and cut it all off.

In the same mirror, I saw my face light up.
I went to show her, she was speechless.

I can now say,
I did it.

Corime Thompson La-Croix AGE 16



SLEEP

Between Sleep and awake,

I'll know where you'll be

Bathed in Warmth and Light

Patiently waiting for me

Nothing can describe the loss I feel,

Now that I will no longer see your smile

But I know, we will be together again,

In only a short but painful while.

Daniel Abdul AGE 16



MY TWIN

I call them my twin
But we dress different
Most times we think alike
So, there's no difference
Never thought that we was grown
Always stood on our own
And when it come to teamwork,
we always leave minds blown
They're my duplicate, my reflection,
nothing like a clone
So, I call them my twin

Jaya Anthony AGE 16



INNER THOUGHTS

Depression is another way to sin
Feeling lost and crazy, not knowing what to do
In my own corner, no one to run to
At night they eat me up inside

Mind all over the place,
Struggling to pretend I'm sane
It will get easier, they say
But When??

Crying for help but no one sees
Reliving the same days, over and over again
Trying to talk but no one understands
I think I've just been dealt a bad hand

I speak but no one listens

But when I'm quiet, they think I'm insane

But in reality no one understands my pain

No one sees my dark and stormy nights

But through all that my light still shines

Jaden Maraj AGE 17



I'M ABLE TO DO

I'm proud I'm able to cook

Thanks to my grandmother

It feels nice and warm

It sounds like sizzling meat on a stove

It feels hot just like the stove top

It tastes nice with every little spice

Smells like fun and happiness

I'm proud of who I've become

I'm happy to have clothing

I'm happy to have clothing

Because it keeps me rolling

Thanks to my clothing, I have

more space to keep on growing

Be more controlling

I'm gonna keep on glowing and hoping,

for the better me

I am able to do so much more like learn

Cause in the future, it's gonna help me earn

Thanks to my family;

I'm gonna make them happy in return

Thanks for making me learn

It helps me stay alert

More aware of the future

Things are looking bright;

soon I'm gonna be standing loud and proud,

in the sunlight!

Isaiah Anderson AGE 16

LITTLE BLACK BOY

One dark room, one boy, one light bulb.

Little melanin boy, gradually learning

what life was

Through adversity, should he shut down

or express like a white dove?

I was taught that was what the advantage

of being white was

They could curse back at their parents

and not get lashed

They could cry to their male elders

and not be bashed

Little melanin boy, no longer so little, drowning

his sorrows with alcohol only resurfaced
depression
and that new car, ended up crashed.

Isaiah Anderson AGE 16



POST

Post post post

You got that new benz

Post post post

You outside with your friends

Post post post

You got a good meal

Post post post

You saying fuck how he feel

Post post post

You posting fights on the reel

Post post post

You giving everyone the spill

Post post post

You got some new shoes

Post post post

You got a new Boo

Post post post

Your grandmother died

Post post post

Post smiles, cus you never cry

Post post post

You got some money

Post post post

You sucking in your tummy

Post post post

Life, is getting less funny

You cant smile anymore

You go from thriving, to barely
surviving

You can't post that you need help, what about
your image?

They can't help you
but you need it

Inside you're screaming...

But you

post

post

post

Isaiah Anderson AGE 16



SIGNIFICANT STALKER

One day, I was just walking

We shouldn't call it this but you did something
like stalking

I saw it, peeped it, I preed it...
you creepin

Our feelings, uneven

but you hit me with that stare

I replied with a glare

then you let out a subtle smile

Ain't know what to think

But your feelings clearly were at the brink
of bubbling over

I look back over my shoulder
and you still staring

and if I walked up to you,
then you would run, it's apparent
but still, Imma try

My significant stalker

You were moving improper

But I couldn't ignore that figure,
under that romper

So, I chased and I ran and you dashed
not looking back

I was pissed but I blinked and to my avail,
the knife was to my neck

Your face was oozing with utter excitement

The thrill of possibly getting killed

Never felt anything like it

I was petrified by fear
but my heart was excited

If you were a bike, I would ride it
If you were a plane, I would fly it
if you wrote a book, I would buy it

And if you ended up having a man,
trust and believe...

I would surely fight him

I'll send that nigga hiking, cus after all

You came up to me

so, hurry up with those chains
lock me up
for no one else
to see.

Neifi Perez AGE 16



UNTITLED

I woke up, looked past the six lies, the sixth cry.

Grab me by my hair, I'm not scared,
that was the last time.

5th place, thought I was safe.
Looks like that was the 7th lie.

How long do I have to fight to see the lights?

O, dark can't testify as I look up to the sky.

I look for a reason why;

I'm so out of my mind 9 at night, 10

night to come,

1 more morning

Passages Academy

TEACHING ARTIST

Gideon Bautista

TEACHER

Damon Villaronga

Taliyah Chambers-Brown



AS DA FLYEST

I woke up,
looked past the six lies,
the sixth cry.

Grab me by my hair,
I'm not scared,
that was the last time.

5th place,
thought I was safe.
Looks like that
was the 7th lie.

How long do I have to fight
to see the lights?

O, dark can't testify as I look up to the sky.

I look for a reason why;

I'm so out of my mind

9 at night, 10
night to come,

1 more morning

Taliyah Chambers-Brown

SOMEWHERE I CAN BE HEARD

Somewhere I can be heard but people don't know

So I put on a show

So they can hear

What they don't know

But now they on go

And don't know the flo

For me to even know

What to do

The pain in my body is already on go

So they really don't know

So I do things to cover my show

For people to know

My hair my body I feel it is already a show

To watch but it makes me think
am I the reason for the show?
Or is it my flo?’

Cause people don’t know
I’m too young, I’m too little,
I don’t know anything.
But realized it’s all tricks for their show.

Ciann Coleman



I'M THE FLYEST

I'm the flyest and most confident
When I have my haircut and a
Nice outfit with kicks and out
And about with my friends or
Family having fun taking pictures.

The opposite is no haircut and
Feeling dirty or not up to
Part with everything and not
Being with family or friends
Having fun with pictures and
Being arrested in program.

I'm the flyest when I walk in
Spot nice fit to my head to my feet
Bending the block I'm letting off 3
Call up my bitch she give me the lo
Spin to her crib you all ready now
Haircut look good walk thru the hood
Making a show come correct

When speaking to me i don't duck
No action. You bleed how i bleed
Screaming free all the bros till they
Face like i gotchu just tell me
whatever you need.

Ciann Coleman

NOVEMBER 13, 2023

I like the group when staff and kids
Will participate in that make all
Of us get to know each other
It remind me of kid in play house
Party when we be breakdancing
And everyone be cheering them on
While interacting in the party
Then shouting “The roof the roof the
Roof is on fire!!!” while drinking
Beer the smell spunk on boiled
Egg with a side of cornchips while
I see the flickering lights of police making
sirens from the car everyone
Running around.

The neighbor walks by the house
seeing that there a lot of people drinking
Underage she hears a lot of loud
Noise and lights flickering like
They didn't pay the light bill she
Calls the cops because she heard
Them saying "The roof The roof
The roof on fire!!!" then the police
Came and everyone ran out the house.

Ciann Coleman



WHERE WOULD YOU GO?

I want to go to Miami,
To see more things and meet
New people. To introduce myself to
More new stuff that might change
My mind on where I want to go
Or live. When I get older in the
Future, I think it's going to
Be a dream in real life.
With a new beginning of life
With my family to understand
Other places. I also want
To go to the spa to relax my
Body like a relaxing day.

Food you never ate

Ciann Coleman

The food I want to eat is

Octopus, frog leg, crawfish, chicken feet,

And cow feet.

I wonder how they taste

And where I would get it

From because this world is

Big with a lot of mysteries.

Ciann Coleman



WHEN I BE HEARD

When I be heard I
Rap thru ceiling bend thru the
Block. bad bitch she tucking knock
Bend through the block im letting
Out shots.

When I be heard I rap through ceiling
Bend thru the blocks I'm making them
Listen.

Davia Daley



I WANNA GO

I want to go to Jamaica.
I wanna go because I need
A vacation. I also want to
Go see my family because
I haven't saw them since
I was 7. I want to see
My siblings and just get that
Feeling of being home. I want
To go to the beach and
Do different activities like
River rafting with mad pedicure.
Go to duns river falls, and
Go to parties. I also want

To go to tokyo because
I like the aesthetic. I also
Want to go down south for
Their crawfish, Jamaica, and
Go to their parties. I also want
To go to bora bora because
I want to be on a cabin on the
Water at the beach.

Davia Daley

ADULTS FEEL LIKE

I feel like adults feel
Like they could disrespect
Kids because of the age
Difference and because
They feel like they are better
Than us because of our
current situation and bitches
Keep acting like they on that
And trying to prove a point
To staff and create this tuff
Image of their self knowing
They not on that and I also
Hate the fact that bitches
Get around niggas and start

Turning and bitches be in everybody
Nigga face that's why I had
To take her man and she be
Acting like she not butt hurt
But she really is LOL anywho
I miss him.

Davia Daley



ONE THING I HEARD

One thing I heard that changed
My life was when my boyfriend/
Bestfriend died. It changed my
Life in so many different ways. I
Was arrested when it happened.
It was a very hard time in my
Life because I had just lost my
Cousin the friday prior then I lost
My man the Friday after. I was
Watching TV then my mom called
The facility and told me. It was
Other residents there and a staff
No there was no problem involved
–was just so depressed after

Everytime someone said something
I just got more sad. Those words
Just live in my head rent free
And just replay in my head.

“Munchkin Malik passed away?”

Davia Daley



SOMEWHERE I CAN BE HEARD

I feel as though I can be heard
At times in school or when I
Speak to my lawyer he understand
Me very well and he just get
Me he also always put himself
In my shoes or he would speak
And be the voice for me other
Than that I just don't feel like
People anywhere else hear me
Or understand me I think
People don't respect me because
I speak my mind and I
Don't hold back on anything
I just say what I feel and

Get it off my chest and not care

Or feel anyway about it and I

Don't let anyone play with my <3 <3 <3

Emotions or put me down I always <3

Stand up for myself and a lot of <3 <3 <3

<3

People are not used to that so they <3 <3

Perceive me as disrespectful <3 <3 <3 <3

<3 <3 <3 <3 <3 <3

Aaliyah Lambert



ONE DAY ME AND MY MAN

One day me and my man
Was arguing so bad that
He slapped the shit out of me.
So I just slapped the shit out
Of him back. I slapped him so
hard...I seen some spit come
Out his mouth. It was like Chris
Brown and Rihanna. He was so
Tight because I really slapped
Fire outta him, and then
Beat him after. He should've
Just never said nothing to
Me because maybe that
Would've prevented the

Whole fight and argument.
But instead it escalated really
Bad. Moral of the story
Is, I wish a nigga
Would.

Sebastian's: POV:

Yo, honestly, all i told her was
mad niggas is gonna
Be on her body cus of
What she wearing, and how
Her hair was looking.
I ain't gon lie, she was looking
Mad good, but not for everybody

Else to see. I'an want nobody
Looking at my girl.
Anyway, she started telling
Me IM insecure because I
Think other niggas is gon
Be looking at my girl.
I told her it's not my
Fault niggas is the way
They are, I ain't gon lie the
Fact that she called me insecure
got me ode tight.
So i told her don't never
Call me insecure again
Because I'm the type of

Nigga a bitch would pray to
God for. Anywho, the bitch
Proceeded to call me insecure,
So I slapped the shit outta her.
Aint gon lie I kinda
Felt bad. But before I even
Got to apologize, the bitch
Slapped the shit outta me

Back. Bitch mad fast aint
Gonna lie as this bitch
Just started whacking my
ass. I was too weak to
Hit shorty back so I just left.
Bitch got me tight. She
Still my girl tho.

Aaron Baptiste



ARGUMENT

A time when I had an argument with
Another person was when I was at
My house. I got into an argument with
My mom because she was trying to make
Me come home early. I was mad because
I was with some females and I wasn't
Tryna leave them yet. My mom was mad
Cause she don't like when I'm outside
Too late. She said "Aaron come home now,
It's getting late and you got school
Tomorrow." I said "I'm doing something RN,
Ma, Imma come home in a little
While." She wasn't hearing dat, and she
started barking at me.

Get some piss RN. I miss going to regular
School with the regular females tired of
Seeing these belmont girls. Miss the bros
And my mom and aunt ready to get
Out of here.

Between still being in program
And recently losing a loved one
That comes to all my games and
Supports me. But instead of not
Playing I had chosen to
Play and perform in his honor
Because I knew he is up in the
Sky still cheering for me.
I end up being MVP Defensive
And Offensive Player of the game
With 6 fumbles 8 headtaps and
3 touchdowns

After the game I had a breakdown
Thinking and praising the fact that
My lost brother is always going to be
With me even though it is not physical
He is still here mentally with me.

Jadyn Whyte



6 WORDS

DEATH

Personally death has played

Many roles in my life. Death

Can be many things but no

Matter what way you put

It, it will and still is a form of

Pain that can hurt and damage

You mentally and sometimes

Physically too when you are hurting.

PRAISE

Praise means not just to
Worship but to live by the moral
That you will forever love and
Not ot just survive but to thrive
Through any circumstances and
To keep pushing in life and ife you
Are not doing it for yourself then
Do it for the person you praising.

HURD

To be hurd means not just to
Be verbally hurd, but mental & physical
Emotion as well. These things must
Be hurd because if you keep in
Silence and bury your feeling it
Will drive you crazy and your mental will be
unstable.

CHOSEN

Chosen means well to be honest
There can be many different
Meanings but personally the meaning
To chosen is that you have
A purpose in life some is to be
Great and some is to to stay working
A 9 to 5 their whole life. But if
You feel like you are the chosen child
Out of your family you should never
Stop grinding until you reach
Your life's goals because you will be great.

MENTAL

Mental can be a few things but they
All come to same sort of answer
Like mental health. But mental to me
Means like what's going on in your
Head. Like your thought and inner voice.

PHYSICAL

To get physical means to get involved
Or to be using your physical strength
To do something or to use contact.

Carlos Leon

MARINES IN 3 PARTS

1

I would like to go to the Marines when I grow

Up so I can save lives and be a bad ass.

If I don't decide to go to college I'd ;ole

To be a gunner sgt in the marines. If I do

Go to college I'll like to be a general

In the marines. I say f the m I'm going to

The CIA to be a black ops to go on

Secret missions and everything is classified.

To do all

This I gotta be humble, brave, bold, smart

and wise

Otherwise I will die, get captured or

Tortured by the enemy. I will be the

baddest of the baddest and the dangerous of
The dangerous anybody get in my way on
Any mission I will not hesitate to kill
A MFer. after that when I get old
I will retired from the black opps
And live a happy life.

My regrets are about the people I couldn't
save.

2

When I'm in the marines
On the battle field I will have to
Kill enemies and take their life. I

Will be humble brave bold. I cannot
Worry about no girls no friends
Or family on the battled field cause that
Can get me killed or my team killed.
It's either my life or theirs so
I will not hesitate to take their life.

3

Like I said I want to go
To the Marines to save
People and be a badass but
What if I can't save them all?
What do I do when someone
Innocent dies right in front

Of me and couldn't do nothing
I have to live with that
Regrets for the rest of my life.

Jaleen



YOU STICK WITH ME

You stick with me on my waste dane

I can't even lie

And you know that shit hurt bae

But you dont even cry

You say I got poisoned

You see it in my eyes

But you don't got to let yo

Even though I even cry

And it's crazy how we

Fell in love

It's crazy how i fell for you

Knowing that we cant give up

Cant stand to see you

Without my love

Without you

Without you

Without you

Without you.

Jaleen



LET IT BE KNOWN

Let it be known

If you don't fuck me

Cuz it will show

My heart will break

Straight like stone

Better know

Cuz im playing my role

Just let it be known

Facts

Imma fuck with you

If you dont judge me

Shit get ugly

If you dub me

Play in my face
So you can hurt me?
You dont deserve me
Cuz you ain't worthy
How you gonna earn me?
When you treat me like shit
And never really heard me
How you gonna paly these games
That you do
And i stuck up for you
When you had no clue?

PS 373
Brooklyn
Transition
Center

TEACHING ARTIST

Jennifer Cendana Armas

TEACHERS

Bilal Wright
Vanessa Osborne

Mumin Adam



H O M E

Home is a beautiful place to live with your friends and family

Home is living in peace

Home is where everybody comes together as a big family

Home is the place where you keep your comfort and security

that brings you the opportunity to stay and work.

My home is Sudan.

I grew up there.

This is a beautiful place that you can explore, enjoying new foods that you eat and more.

You see palm trees and grass grow
from the ground.

You can see the Nile River from the north of
Egypt all the way to South Sudan.

Home is a beautiful place.

My home is Sudan.

Bernard Gil



I AM

I am funny and caring.

I wonder what other people think of me.

I listen to love songs and relaxing music.

I see people and trees.

I want women to understand me better.

I am funny, caring, and calm.

I pretend I am nobody.

I smell food and cologne.

I feel confident about myself.

I worry about myself.

I cry when girls don't understand my feelings.

I am funny and caring.

Tristan Lewis



MY FIVE SENSES

The smell I like is pizza.

I also like the smell of perfume.

The smell I don't like is dog poop and smelly
bathrooms.

I like to taste Boston cream and vanilla with
sprinkles on top doughnuts.

I also like to taste chocolate ice cream.

I don't like to taste expired food.

I like to touch my cat's fur because it really
feels fluffy.

I also like to touch my blanket because it's
really soft.

I don't like to touch insects and slimy things.

I like to see a lot of people walking and cars
and buses running.

I also like to see birds in the sky flying.
I don't like to see people fighting in the streets.

I like to hear good rap music and birds singing
and chirping.

I also like to hear lots of people singing.
I don't like to hear traffic and cars honking.

Humberto Lugo Jr.



TO RAKEEM

In a world where love is an eternal flame
I found you, my heart's forever claim.

Through the twists and turns life's path may
take

Our love, unbreakable, it will forever make.

Like a gentle breeze caressing the trees
Your love whispers sweet melodies to me.

In your arms I find peace

A love so profound,
it will never cease.

With every touch, my soul ignites

As your love envelopes me in its light.

In your eyes I see a love so pure
A love that forever will endure.

You are the sun that lights my day
The moon that guides me on my way.

With each passing moment,
my love grows
Overflowing, like a river
that forever flows.

In the depths of my heart you reside

Your love, a treasure I'll forever hide.

Together we create a love story so rare
A tale of two hearts, a love beyond compare.

I pen these words
So you know how much you mean

To me as this poem comes to an end
Know that without you in my life I am not
complete

I will need you forever
For my world to be complete.

James Parrish



WHO I AM

I am caring and chill

I wonder what I want to do next year

I hear cars honking

I see chairs

I want a game console

I am caring and chill

I pretend to know someone

I smell cheese pizza

I feel tired

I worry that someone might get hurt

I cry because someone might die on me

I am caring and chill

I understand I need some space

I say I believe in someone

I dream about getting a girlfriend

I try to get a girlfriend

I hope I get a PS5

I am caring and chill

Khalima Smith



JUST ABOUT ME

I am proud and smart

I wonder if unicorns are real

I hear the sound of music

I see a roller coaster

I want a new apartment

I am powerful

I pretend to be a chef

I smell something that's tasty

I feel my Auntie's stuffed bear

I worry about my future

I cry because my Grandma passed

I am fearless

Raleak Simmons



I AM

I am hard working and good

I wonder who created the first painting

I hear hissing in the walls

I see a giant cat with three hands

I want a good easy life

I am a good listener

I feel my hands are dry

I worry about surviving another day

I cry about not tasting good food

I am hard working and good

I understand that some days are going to be hard

I say people can live life to their fullest

I am a good listener

Devinn Best



ME

I am tall and handsome
I wonder why people get hurt
I hear loud fire trucks
I see the fast moving ambulance
I want to learn to talk to people.

I am tall and handsome
I pretend to shampoo my hair
I smell fried chicken
I feel warm water
I worry about nothing
I try not to be upset.

I am tall and handsome

I understand I have to go to school

I dream of getting a job

I try my best in class

I hope to be successful

I am tall and handsome.

Saron Bitew



I AM BEAUTIFUL

I am beautiful.
I wonder why I am short.
I hear the rain drops.
I see the bright sun.
I want a job at Burlington.

I am beautiful.
I pretend to sing.
I love beautiful things.
I smell the food.
I feel the rain.
I worry about myself.
I cry when I am sad.
I am beautiful

I am beautiful

I am beautiful.

Gabriella Cogdell



WHAT IS HOME?

Home is New York.

Home is where I can relax
and feel safe with my family.

I have two brothers. They are older than me.

I like when I get to hug
my mother and brothers.

Their touch lets me know they care.

Home is where memories are made.

Marvin Smalls



I AM WHO I AM

I am tall and handsome
I wonder about a lot of things
I hear loud noises in the park
I see the sunlight
I want to go out and play
I am very good at football.

I pretend to be very good at football
I pretend to be the best
I smell garbage on the sidewalk
I feel the cold wind in the winter.

I cry when I get very upset
I am getting better at math

I understand life is not perfect

I say traveling is fun

I try to make things right

I hope for a better tomorrow.

I am who I am.

Hayley Owen



FOR JAMAICA

Home is Jamaica

Home has many beaches

Home is sunshine and banana trees

Home is where I smell jerk chicken

Home is where I hear the good reggae

Home is Jamaica

Jermaine Brown



THIS IS MY HOME

Brooklyn is the place I was born

It is full of big buildings, many people, good
food, and great music.

The streets are filled with many things to see.

Home is cozy.

It is a place for me and my family.

Home is where I belong

I can truly be me

This is my home—Brooklyn.

Jaylen Martin



HOME TO ME

Home to me is family, tall buildings, cars,
buses, and trains.

A lot of fine beautiful girls, money flowing
and winds blowing.

Home to me is Bed-Stuy
and bacon, egg, and cheese.

New York breeze,
while I take my girl out to eat.

It's just me and shorty in peace.

Teachers Preparatory High School

TEACHING ARTIST

Vee Arumemi

TEACHER

Ms. Jasmin Fearon-Weakes

Keishon Bobb AGE 16

'94

July 23, 1994—12:26 AM: A mysterious figure with a jester cosplay & a bow tie appears out of the dark. This figure runs from house to house to take the citizens' of this city's prized possessions. After said figure takes the items of the people, it runs off never to be seen again.

When the sun comes up, people find it very confusing how their items went missing & don't know who had caused such crimes. This sudden memory loss leaves the people in confusion of where their items have gone. This figure goes by the name of '94.

After this mysterious day happened, every day since that horrid day, people are on the lookout for this mysterious creature.

On August 24th, 2000, 12 y/o Genesis Roberts claimed to see this monster in a dream that she had, in which she illustrated an image of said monster. The illustration included a dark creature with a circular head, skinny limbs, big hands, hyper-realistic eyes & big elf boots which the people of this unknown city used to imagine the monster for centuries.

To this day, this monster has never been found & people are still on the lookout for him & are “trying their best” to punish this mysterious creature for its crimes.

Zeniyah Bryant AGE 16



MISTAKES

I got in touch with an “old” friend on the date of October 6th, 2023. Excitement. The rush of excitement was bar breaking. I missed him...a lot. We talked nonstop every day and night. His responses were always late but I didn’t mind as long as we spoke. Seeing his messages brought me a sense of comfort. Warmth to my “cold” heart. From frozen to warm. That feeling anyone would want.

One afternoon at 1:04, he asks to see me because he “misses” me.

Awwww!!!

HA! I wouldn't "awww" just yet. I jump up and get ready to see him. I take the B17 to the 4 train to the Bronx...EWWWW.

Yeah, I know.

Anyway, for about 30 minutes everything was... perfect. Until, I got that one text that changed our whole perspective of each other. HE: Mr. Perfect, in my eyes...asked me for something that made my soul shiver. I was speechless and couldn't move. Paralyzed. That's what I was. Stuck in the moment and didn't know what to do until I finally

thought of my escape.

A tongue ring...I was saved by a tongue ring.

I leave and never look back but on my way back to the train I hear something unexpected...DING. A message. Reading the message, a rush of sadness overthrew me. The message read, "I don't think we should talk anymore." GASP.

Yeah, after reading that I knew it was clear he only wanted me for one thing. I get home finally, reflect, grieve and get over it. One

week later I got a screenshot from my best friend. The screenshots were a bunch of messages from...him? Remembering I let him use my phone; he took her number down and texted her. He used me twice and I will never EVER forgive him or let someone else get the same chance I gave him.

The moral of the story is if a person walks out of your life DON'T give them the leeway back. LET. THEM. GO...or you'll be living my MISTAKE.

Alyssa Davis AGE 16



LILITH

They say love is like a drug. The euphoric way being held feels with the way being kissed makes your stomach bubble with excitement is better than any drug.

Love is more than a drug. Losing your partner to circumstances out of your control is more than a withdrawal. The longing for them to reach out; holding your phone in your right hand, your left hand burdened with the habit of nail biting.

Looking at the text. Living the text, you swear you're going to send

just to discard.

The thought that you were made for them doesn't happen to just disappear. You're struck with the thought that you were replaced, not knowing what goes on in their head.

And in their heart.

Losing hope as the days go past.

Why won't they talk?

Was it me?

What did I do?

At this age *Cranes in the Sky*, shouldn't be on repeat "to write it away, to cry it away."

How do such actions replace the craving for them? Paragraph after paragraph, tear after tear.

How did Lilith do it? Forgotten as if all the fish in the pond disappeared leaving just your favorite. But you can't catch it. You reel and reel. Use all your bait...but they still aren't there.

How much longer.

How much longer do you have to try?

Will it ever be good enough?

Raiven Johnson AGE 17



BABIES GONE CRAZY

These babies is crazy

Crazy but viewed as a baby

But have not been babied

Told to grow up fast.

Wait hold on

too fast, don't grow

You're still a child

A child that doesn't know . . .

The ups and downs

to life or even the back roads

The trial and error you face as an adult

A trial that an adult is too afraid to face

Trapped in an adult body, but a kid

At heart

We beg to grow up fast,

later on in life we scream

“Help me, God.”

These babies is crazy

Crazy but viewed as a baby

In a generation

Where the people have gone crazy

Kids dying, mamas crying,

daddies lying

it's Crazy

but still viewed as a baby.

You're a boy, don't cry

You're a girl, keep your legs closed

It's crazy

but still viewed as a baby.

Skarlet Gallego AGE 16

LA MUELONA

Colombian legend of the Andean region: la muelona or the “colmillona” is described as a beautiful woman with long hair and devastating teeth. It is said that this was a woman called “Maga”, who was dedicated to reading the future of women and punishing men.

At the time of her death, the neighbors said they heard her inside her house swearing revenge against all unfaithful, drunk and vicious men. Many say that her spirit appears on the edges of the paths, when it is six in the afternoon and nine in the night. At first she looks like a seductive and attractive woman, so

many men approach her. But when she shows them her “horse” teeth, they get scared. She enjoys making them shudder and sometimes, she even crushes them as punishment.

She almost always persecutes inveterate gamblers, unfaithful men, alcoholics, perverts and adulterers. People say that the homes that are saved from her are those that have newborn children or women who are going to be mothers. The chroniclers say that during the colonial era, Spanish women spread throughout the country, and although many

were good, the rest had a terrible background. Some of the gypsy style were perverse, corrupt, causing unfortunate harm to modest families, deceiving innocent girls and ruining men who had large fortunes. One of them, “La Maga” established her business solving love queries, or better yet, breaking up marriages, using cards, reading palms, in short, everything that was tricks. When she had a lot of clients, she combined the business with a fun house; where she conquered the weak and cleansed the pockets of representatives of the king of Spain and the rich “criollos.”

She told young women how to avoid motherhood; homes were covered in venereal diseases and abandoned wives. Shortly after, the day of her death arrived she was heard saying “I have to take revenge on the gambling and pernicious men! Damned, on the light and shameless women! They will be with me in hell, I’m La Muelona!”

From that moment La Muelona wanders among roads and forests, looking for insane, unfaithful men and shameless women, to destroy them with her terrifying teeth.

Daniel Straker AGE 17



MY WORLD

Life is not easy.

There are problems in every clover.

The pressure of school; my parents always got something to say and some people in this world just be acting weird.

I feel like my world is in circles but when I am with you, it slows down. You make me see the world through a new lens. I see the beauty in front of me and I don't feel the pressure of life.

When I see you, I see why life is important.

When I am with you,

I feel something I have not felt before. You have become my world but now that you are gone, my world is in circles again.

I lost you, I lost my world and I don't want it
back without you.

Daniel Straker AGE 17



COALY

Have you heard the mythical story of the Coaly? If not, let me tell you, listen up. The Coaly was first seen on April 23rd, in 2006, the same day I was born. It is believed that the Coaly protects our tribe and they believe I am the one to continue his works. The day I was born my mother said to me, the Coaly and I are connected. When I was five, my mom said she saw the Coaly next to me while I was sleeping, and she has always told me that one day I will protect the tribe and all the tribe members have been teaching me the ways.

They think I am his replacement. They think,
I am up next and I am ready.

Richard Whittingham AGE 16



MONEY

Money, oh money. You know, I once heard that money was the root of all evil. I find that almost impossible to disagree with and let me tell you why. This piece of paper that us humans put so much value onto, strips us away from our natural law which is free will and that no man should have power over another. We know that the more money you gain in life, the more power you gain as well which separates the rich from the poor. This means that all people are separated in life based on their financial status.

Well, ok but dont we need money to live and get the things we so deeply desire?

Yes, we do.

I just don't like the effect it brings on society as a whole. For example the fact that the U.S. government sends out billions of dollars to other countries for gas when there are still major financial issues inside the country such as how I grew up; in the hood and there are conditions worse than that that still haven't been addressed. In today's time

when you see a person that doesn't have the appearance of a moneymaker they are often looked down on and not looked at as an equal or barely human, compared to a person with wealth.

Life for people who aren't as fortunate as someone with money is almost impossible because of this pay-to-live system. Ultimately, I believe that money shouldn't hold value in today's time due to all of these negative effects and you should too.

Word. Sound. Power. in the Classroom

BAM

2024