**File Name: N7R The Boy**

**Narrative**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

**The Boy**

The young boy stood with the most menacing look he could muster spread across his face. He just stood there watching the endless columns stretch as far as the eye could see down the long, dusty road. The soldiers would turn and look as they went by, and he made sure to look right back. He made sure to stare as far as he could into the dark pupils of their eyes, as if it would raise the house that was now nothing more than a heap of ashes. Only a few charred remains of the walls were left.

As his eyes went from soldiers to remains he saw a small soft lump poking up from the ashes. He knew exactly what it was and he turned away. That teddy bear had been his favorite friend. Not a toy, it was more than a toy to him. For a second he was back on a green lawn, with the shutters of a house tapping softly on the window pane. And there was his bear. They waited for the next pirate ship to come around the bend in the road, so they could board it and make the captain walk the plank. But then he heard a shout and knew he was back on the dusty road with no green lawn and no shutters tapping softly.

He leaped down from his perch on an old dresser, one of the few things that hadn’t been pillaged or burned in the fire. He bent down, putting both hands on his knees as his eyes searched the ground intently. He picked up the most deadly rock he could find and hopped back up on his perch to resume his watchful glare. No soldier escaped the watchful eyes as he probed them. The giant snake of blue tails was tapering off, and the boy could now see the end of the tail. The boy once again hopped down from his perch. He could feel the sweat-covered rock in his palm. The last of the blue columns were passing.

The boy took a step forward and leaned back, then whipped his body forward and released the rock at the same moment. The boy heard a thud as the rock came home and the rear most soldier clutched his side and looked back – but all he saw were those hateful eyes with tears rolling forth.

**File Name: N8R Black and White Photo**

**Narrative**

**Grade 8**

**Range of Writing**

**Black and White Photo**

I walked past the playground. The pigeons swarmed around the crumbs of food dropped

by children, and made a cloud filled with feathers, dust, and leaves. Admiring the day with every

step, I continued to walk through Central Park. I strode out of the park and onto the sidewalk. As

I walked a few blocks, I picked out the tourists from the crowds. Most of them were stopping by

every table to buy either and “I love NY” shirt or a postcard.

Finally, I saw the fountains and the big stone columns that protected the Metropolitan

Museum. I ran up the endless steps, dodging the people and cameras. I entered the cavernous

halls, donated my dollar, and was directed through stairways, exhibits, and halls. After I walked

through the Greek pottery section, I entered the exhibit of Richard Avedon. It was my first time

seeing his photographs, and I was fascinated.

I saw portraits of Marian Anderson, former presidents, and Andy Warhol. The crowds

moved slowly, as if to try to suck up the emotions of the photographs for life. Several people

blocked doorways, selfishly. With a little but meaningful push, I moved on. Each room was

watched by a security guard, I thought of how lucky they were to be able to see these photos

every day and have the time to think about each person being photographed. Most of the people

were very important to society and history. Some photos were being blocked off, from the amount

of people crowding around them, while other photos were lonely. I felt badly for those photos

and made sure I stopped to look at them. Each photograph was in black and white but was able

to capture the persons emotions and personality.

About three quarters of the way through the exhibit, I came across a lonely photo. I

immediately walked over to it, and then when I was two feet away, I realized that the man in

the photo must have been upset and lost. The man’s face was round but hollow. His eyes were

sunken in a he had dark bags surrounding them. He was beginning to go bald and his hair was

warn and messy. He looked as if he hadn’t bothered to shave for a week and little black prickles

were starting to grow in where his beard should be. He appeared crushed and broken. Small

tears gathered at the bottom of each eye, the type of tears that hadn’t fallen yet but made the

world around you look blurry. His mind seemed chained to a memory that he couldn’t escape.

I felt awful, sorry, and shocked.

Blinking my eyes, I woke myself from my daze. I looked at the bottom left hand

corner of the portrait. His name was Colonel Paul Tibbets. I had never heard his name before.

Then I noticed the words under his name. He was titled as the pilot of the B-29 Enola Gay. He

was titled as the man who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. As my

lips repeated these words to myself, I felt even more sorry and even more shocked. I sensed

from the photograph that when he dropped the bomb, he didn’t know what he was doing. The

photo told me he regretted it, and I sensed that he felt guilty and responsible for the 200,000

lives lost that day.

He was a man who made a huge impact on World War II. He is a man who models for

us what war really is. He opened our eyes by dropping a monster who could not be tamed.

Things like this happen during wars. People are killed. Not just the phony actors who spill

their fake blood and fire their fake guns with fake smoke. Real people are killed. Nearly every

person sees movies on wars. People are taught through commercialism that those movies are

what was really is.

Before seeing this photograph, I was like other people who thought war was a bunch

of GI Joe’s, dressed in camouflage, being brave. But after seeing this photo, I realized that

war was just pain and misery. It made me wake up to the real world and learn that everyone

is affected by war, both those who are killed and injured and those who kill and injure them.

Both sides of people are innocent. By looking into Colonel Paul Tibbets’ watered eyes, I was

awakened to what happened and what can happen in war. He helped define the word “victim.”

In war, those who are bombed, hurt and killed are victims, but those who are instructed to

perform terrible acts in war are victims too. War affects everyone. Everyone is innocent.

Everyone is a victim.

I wish that people could see this photograph before making opinions on war today.

I wish that Colonel Paul Tibbets’ lonely picture was surrounded by crowds at the Met. I wish

that he had the opportunity to teach more people from his huge mistake rather than us

learning by another being made.

**File Name: N 11-12R All the Roads to Kansas**

**Narrative**

**Grade 11**

**Range of Writing**

**All The Roads to Kansas**

I was six years old when my mother ran off with the pizza delivery boy. She sent a note in the mail to my grandmother that read, “Katie’s at home. Needs food and clothing. Jane.” Gramma drove the one-thousand-seven-hundred-twenty miles from Kansas to pick me up, pulling into the trailer lot in her blue, wood-paneled station wagon, slamming the car door behind her. I was sitting in a rusty hubcap on the from lawn, my chin cupped in my palm and my heart thundering wildly when she said, “Well, I’m here.”

She wore a pink silk handkerchief around the beehive of her blue-tinted hair, a paisley mu-mu and orange scuffs on her feet. Red, plastic-rimmed glasses hung from the chain around her neck and a cigarette dangled from the corner of her pink-painted mouth. She was terrifying.

She was perfect.

She crossed the front lawn without saying a word, opening the door to the trailer as she looked back, once, for me to comply. I followed her, remaining stubbornly, apprehensively, at the front door. She bustled around the house, bundling up all my clothes and typing them with a piece of twine she found heaped in the back of her Buick. Before she decided it was time to leave, she trussed me up in my snow gear, explaining tersely, “Its cold in Kansas this time of year.”

I had been sifting inside the trailer, alone, for three days. Leaving for Kansas was the most spectacular adventure I could imagine, so wondrous I could barely believe it was real. She hauled me into the Buick, grunting at the dead weight of my tense body, and we sat on the leather bench seat of her car as she let it idle in the lot. She was flicking cigarette ashes out the open window when I mustered up the nerve to pinch her, just to make sure I wasn’t dreaming.

“What--?” she narrowed her gaze at me, dragging on the cigarette so the tip gleamed in a bright orange “O” between her lips.

“You’re real,” I whispered in wonder.

“As much as you are,” she huffed, tossing the cigarette from the car and cranking up the window. “Just don’t make a habit of pinching people to test out that theory, ‘kay, Sugar?” She rammed the car into reverse and sped away from the lot. The pieces of my childhood were fading as fast as the scenery, and yet I was filled with a sense of bone-deep elation. For the first time in three days, I smiled.

I saw Gramma cut a look at me out of the corner of her eye, and nod. She glanced back at the road when she pulled the slip of paper from her pocket, and said, “It’s all you’ve got of your momma, so I figured you’d want to keep it.”

I was six, and I couldn’t read the words my mother had hastily scrawled on a grocery receipt, but I kept that piece of paper fisted in my hand all along the roads to Kansas. “Gramma,” I whispered after a few hours, barely awake and suddenly terrified, “are you ever gonna bring me home.”

I could see her eyes in the passing lights of oncoming cars, watching them fill up with giant, watery tears, saw them go soft and achy. “Oh, Katydid,” she murmured gently, reaching out in the darkness to clutch the fist that held my mother’s letter. “We’re getting there.”