

## Inklings and Indigo Ink Students' Work

Students in my writing classes wrote the following pieces and agreed to have them included here. A note on the exercises: "I wish," "Animal," "I seem to be/but really I am," and "Swan of Bees" poems were inspired by exercises in Kenneth Koch's book, *Wishes, Lies and Dreams*. "My real name" poems were inspired by Susan G. Wooldridge's book *Poemcrazy*, though we used Poetry Magnets rather than words cut from magazines. "Five funny things for a story" came from Kathleen Phillips & Barbara Steiner's book *Catching Ideas: Activity Book for Creative Writing*. The *Story Spinner* tool was created by Bonnie Neubauer. Weather poems came from an exercise in Lorraine Ferra's book *A Crow Doesn't Need a Shadow*.

Abby, age 12

(5 funny things for a story)

Once upon a time, Donald Duck was chopping his way through a purple forest made only with taffy. When he finally cut his way through the final thick glob, he found himself in a clearing with a white castle in the distance. So he mounted his wolverine and galloped toward the castle. When he got closer and closer he realized that the castle was not made of white stone, like he thought it was, but white marshmallows. When he finally arrived at the castle he rang the bell and the door squelched open, revealing a small bag of chips who squeaked, "Come in, come in." So Donald did.

When he got inside he saw a beautiful orange pond right in the middle of the floor with chip bags floating in it, one of which seemed insane, splashing around like a mad chip. Donald was taken to a room down the hall where he was introduced to a bag of Doritos petting a small plush smiley face. And Donald had to comment, "Does it have a name?" he asked, pointing at the plushie. And the chips replied, "Smiley faces are people too!" and with that he pressed a button on the wall turning Donald into a fried banana.

The End

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Swan of Bees poem

In the forest of taffy  
There lies a book of hogs  
In the lunchbox of gourds  
In the mushroom of wood  
In the belly of the platypus of shirts  
In the heart of the melon of pencils  
In the gorge of cows  
In the forest of taffy  
In me

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Anabelle S., age 10

I am a giraffe, I can see the world.

I am a giraffe big and tall  
I am a giraffe captured by people  
And put in a zoo  
I am a giraffe, everyone comes  
I am a giraffe, I can see the world.

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Penguin, Penguin

Penguin, penguin short and fat  
Penguin, penguin the color of a bat  
Penguin, penguin you should know  
Penguin, penguin meant for snow  
Penguin, penguin Antarctica cold  
Penguin, penguin packed up I'm sold  
Penguin, penguin in a zoo  
Penguin, penguin something new.

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Bailey A., age 12

My real name is wild beautiful kid.  
Yesterday, my name was brilliant, bitter smile.  
Today, my name is ferocious brainchild.  
Tomorrow, my name will be sweet baby shadow.  
My name once was fun wind sister.  
Secretly my name is sweet smoke.

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Brenna R., age 8

The Routine of the Wind

I hear the wind singing  
as it slithers through the trees.  
It slinks behind bushes  
crawls under hedges  
then runs toward the town  
and hits it  
surprises it  
tromping all over  
it swallows an umbrella  
then stampedes it away  
it growls and breathes  
then goes to the unknown.

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I seem

I seem to be friendly but  
I am actually a little shy.  
I seem to be angelic but  
I am actually kind of demonic  
I seem to be a woman plunging into water but  
I am actually a girl plunging into words.

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I wish...

I wish I had an elephant.  
I wish I had an African elephant.  
I wish people wouldn't kill elephants.  
I wish that I could save the elephants.  
I wish that they were safe.  
I wish.

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Bridger F., age 8

Wish Poem

I wish I owned the stars.  
I'd keep them up at daytime and not at night and  
if they didn't listen I'd make them disappear and  
the shooting ones I'd let them shoot until they got too close to land,  
then I'd catch them and throw them back up.

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Brittany M., age 9

Life and Fear

The door is closed but the window open. Life is pouring down outside but here I am locked in a world without sound, no one to talk to, nothing there but a bed and desk and one little light. Light streams in through the window as I walk toward what I think is life—the window's shut and the blinds are closed by my own fear. I start to shiver and shake, enclosed in a dark world. The walls are closing in around me, my head is starting to spin, then I know that the world as I knew it was coming to an end. I closed my eyes hoping I was daydreaming, but I wasn't. I suddenly became stronger. I fought my way to the window, opened and jumped. Finally, life was good again.

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Corinne C., age 8

Wish Poem

I wish I was a kitten so people would play with me.

I wish there were more angels on every block.  
I wish I could have playdates or horseback riding or swimming every day.  
I wish I could fly up to the moon and  
I wish that I could touch the sky and bring home a star to keep forever and ever.  
I wish I had a mansion with three kittens.  
I wish a lot but some of it might not come true.

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Jenny M., age 11

(Story Spinner)

Erin Sanders was sitting behind her closed bedroom door when her phone rang. She bounced over to her bed, rolled across her flannel bedspread, and picked it up. "Yo," she said, knowing it was one of her friends.

"Hello. Are you Erin Sanders?"

Erin regretted saying, "Yo," but she said, "Yes."

"Then you've been chosen to win a free trip to Cuba and stay in the best hotel in the country. You can bring your family and two of your friends."

Erin's eyes grew wide as oranges and her mouth grew into a perfect O.

"R-really?"

"Really."

"Wow. Mr. Dude, YOU ROCK!"

Erin hung up and immediately called her friends and told them they were going to Cuba with her. She opened her door and shouted, "Alright, everybody, let's get crackin'! We gotta pack for Cuba, chop chop!"

"Erin?"

"Yeeeeeah?"

"Who said were going to Cuba?"

"Don't play dumb, Matt. Didn't you hear me talking to that dude on the phone? You always eavesdrop anyways," she said to her 15-year-old brother.

"But Errriin, why'd you have to wake me up at 11 in the flippin' morning?"

Erin gave Matt one of her "don't mess with me" looks and said, "Just pack, idiot."

"But-but-can't I sleep longer?"

"NO!"

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Kaziah W., age 11

My real name is Heart Secret.  
Yesterday my name was Celebrate Chocolate.  
Today my name is Fool.  
Secretly I know my name is Forest Velvet.  
My name once was Elaborate.

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Kelly M., age 12

Picture prompt

I was once a beautiful princess, but because of my selfishness I was turned into a leopard. I loved animal furs and I made everyone give me furs. My favorite was leopard, because it was so soft and it had beautiful designs. One day I was in my magical garden when a leopard leapt over the wall. The leopard turned into a beautiful sorceress.

"I am the guardian of the leopards," she said in a voice like a deep purr.

She frightened me so much that I forgot to scream.

"You have been so horrible to the leopards for years, and there are hardly any left," she continued. Then she struck her staff to the ground and I was knocked out.

When I woke up, I was deep in the jungle. I tried to stand up, but I fell to four feet. When I screamed for help, my voice sounded like a roar. I looked down at my hands and saw they were paws, just like a leopard's. I could smell and hear very well so I followed my nose to water. When I looked into the water, a leopard was staring back at me. I turned and looked at my body, and it was the body of a leopard.

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Hummingbird in search  
Must find living flowers now  
Migration is soon

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Clouds in the distance  
Silence before the first boom  
Storm passes quickly

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Swan of Bees poem

My mom gave me a sweatshirt of water bottles  
My dad gave me a pen of wombats  
My brother gave me a lunchbox full of problems  
My sister gave me a watch of sun  
My dog gave me a lick of books  
My friend gave me a pencil of mushrooms  
Now I'm off to an odd day of melons.

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Mackenzie S., age 12

The Garden of Dreams

I am lying on my bed with a book in my hand. The librarian had told me never to open it but I did.

I'm in a room with vines all across the walls. I'm lying in a bed of flowers. On one side of the room, there's a gorgeous garden so I head that way. There's a wooden swing hanging from the tree. I sit on it and a gentle breeze pushes me back and forth, back and forth. Then I spot a peach tree in season. I go over and pick a perfectly ripe one and take a bite. Juice runs down my chin. Delicious.

Then I spot a maze and start running through. I hear children laughing ahead. I run faster. As I turn around the corner I see a little girl wearing a white dress disappear into the distance.

I run as fast as I can. When I turn another corner I'm back in the room where I started, this time on another side of the room that is dark and dead. Once again I simply turn and head to the side with the garden. I'm being pulled toward the dark side. I try to run to the other side but the force becomes stronger, stronger. I turn around and I see the little girl running into the dark and laughing.

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Clouds fly by swiftly  
Mountains gray, ancient, and tall,  
Snakeskin in the grass.

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Rain started to fall in little translucent  
Drops, and as if a goddess  
Was working magic, the fire  
Gave off one last blaze,  
And the fire was killed,  
And the night became calm and dark,  
When the sun rose, no birds were chirping. Why?  
Where were the trees and grass of green?  
Where was the life of nature?

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Maia R., age 12

My real name is Needle Cloud.  
Yesterday my name was Dazzle Bulb.  
Today my name is Porcelain Exploding.  
Tomorrow my name will be Salt Symphony.  
Secretly my name is Morning Tree.  
My name once was Corduroy Night Fish.  
My favorite name was Iron Cat.  
My least favorite was Fish Night Struggle.  
My friend's name is Secret Coffee Man.  
My sister's name is Rustle Rain Cut.  
My made-up name is Thick Ground Worm.

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Cat

Awake  
one eye open  
slowly  
the other  
blink

blink  
yawn stretch  
pad  
pad  
pad  
Mmmm....food  
Oh no! It's all gone!

Mrow! Mrow! MROWWW!  
Oh, finally. A person.  
Food  
pouring in the bowl  
munch munch

Outside!  
The wild!  
Mrow! Mrow!  
and the door opens

Sneaking through the yard jungle.  
A bug.  
Pounce!  
missed.

Yawn...tired.  
Sun on the patio.  
Lie down  
close one eye  
slowly...  
the other  
sleep.

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Nonsense

A mushroom of pencils  
A nonsense dream.  
A watch of books  
A nonsense library.  
A wombat of notebooks  
A nonsense story.  
A lunchbox of paint  
A nonsense meal.  
A sun of goggles  
A shirt of gourds  
A cow of water bottles  
A nonsense poem.

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Maria R., age 10

I gallop across the lush green fields of grass on my horse Biscuit. I pull gently back on the reins and Biscuit immediately halts. She drops her head and munches on some grass. I sit on her back daydreaming...

I am still on Biscuit. But I am somewhere else, in a fantasy land. I am sheltered by a beautiful arch. There are long golden poles all around me. A little ways away, I see an elk with bright orange flames emerging from his horns. There is a pond near me with bright blue water. There are strange fish in the rivers. The weirdest thing is the man next to me. He is floating in the air and has a book in his hand. I take the book, and he disappears. I look around. Everything disappears.

Biscuit jumps by a bird flying by and I wake up from my dream. Everything is back to normal.

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My Real Name

My real name is a blooming gift.  
Yesterday my name was frantic peach  
Today my name is a smelly kid  
Tomorrow my name will be a purple, bleeding girl.  
Secretly I know my name is looking beneath shadows.  
My name once was the voice of caramel  
I wish my name was dazzling blush.

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Melanie S., age 12

Clouds, white and stirring  
Move along an unknown path  
Following the sky

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A long winding path  
A fence almost tipped over  
Alone in the heat

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A still, lone prairie  
Tinged brown with splotches of green  
A large magpie chirps

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Through the twilight blows a soft wind  
Filling the air with life  
A flock of birds feel the breeze  
And decide to linger

In a clump.  
Their brown feathers resembling melted chocolate  
They collect by a cloud  
Streaked pink  
Like a giant booming flower  
Settling into the night.

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The air suddenly picked up a wind  
Blowing through the garden  
Rain pounded like feet  
Pummeling the flowers  
Saturating the soil  
Then it was all over  
The rain slowed  
And the clouds faded back to white  
The air again became still  
The storm had passed.

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My real name is smile,  
A warming of the heart  
Yesterday, my name was storm  
A cloudy gray disposition.  
Tomorrow my name will be secret  
Hiding from the world  
But today my name is Melanie  
A name that is  
all my own.

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I stood in the middle of a forest listening.  
Coo Coo. The sweet sound of a dove filled the air.  
It lingered for a moment  
Then disappeared  
Carried off by the moon.  
A fish jumped from a silvery pool  
It slipped down again into the depths  
Carried off by the moon.  
A wolf howled off in the distance  
The sound wavered  
Then floated away  
Carried off by the moon.  
I stood for a moment,  
Soaking up the sounds.  
Then I left this forest.  
This forest that was  
Carried off by the moon.

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Sammer Z., age 7

Wish Poem

I wish I won the Stanley Cup in the NHL.  
I wish I could climb Mt. Kilaminjaro.  
I wish I was in a cartoon.  
I wish I was a wizard  
I wish I was an Olympic snow boarder.  
I wish I could climb Mt. Bridger.