L-r: Derrick Gray, Corey Davis

Front cover, l-r: Tianna Cotton, Kiara Thomas, Myisha Jackson, Janisha Crump
Welcome to the fourth edition of Simon Says, the Abram Simon Elementary School literary magazine, written and edited by the students of Simon Elementary. Simon Says is published through a collaborative effort between the school and the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop, an independent non-profit working to create a literary renaissance in Southeast Washington. In September 2004, after four years of providing award-winning programming at Charles Hart Middle School, the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop expanded to offer similar programs to students at Simon and at nearby Ballou High School. This year, fifth graders at Simon have devoted themselves to learning the joy of self expression and the power of the written word. Simon Says is the result of nearly a year of workshops with professional writers, giving our young writers the opportunity to exercise their creative energies, speak their minds, and be heard by an audience throughout the city.

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My Life

My life is the darkness in my house,
a royal big tower, thickness like glass.
My life whispers for wisdom and silver-gold,
a shadow on the wall, a fountain that has blood coming out of it.
My life is sandpaper that I write on.
My life is not good because my mother and my father
are not together no more.
My life is like popcorn popping in the air,
teardrops coming out of people's eyes.
People's eyes are bloody because they are sad,
but my life is peaceful, dotted with animals.

Stelita Better

My Feeling

My feeling is like celebrating my heart.
My inspiration is my mother and father.
They are crashing in these homely ways.
I laugh at mothers who are marching for better life.
I believe in God because he is my father,
and he will always be my father no matter what happens.
I wince at my sister because she is afraid and mad.
I am not afraid of anything,
because God told me to not be afraid of anything.
I behold my heart, because it is alive and cracking at the same time.
I know I am smart and a butterfly, and I am free.

Stelita Better
World of D.C.

Since I was born in D.C., I’ve seen glass on the ground,
Glass broken on somebody’s head;
Some people do not live in D.C.
because they think about violence,
But it might be true.
I’ve seen a man, and somebody exiled him
from the world of D.C.
And you might know that person.

Khalil Jones

Baltimore

Violence, drama
some house I saw was scarier.
We have fragments of glass all over the ground.
Oh, my cousin is left-handed
and he used it in his fight.
He punched and kicked and he won.
I got exiled out of Baltimore.
Why?

Keyara Snead
I Love

I love my mouth.
I scream for somebody to help me.
I say my prayers at night
so I can be blessed by angels.
I love my heart
because it is money.
I love my hands
they are crayons
I love when I cry,
I will go crazy and my tears are colorful.
I love my back
because I have feathers.
I love my name
it is a lion in the woods hunting for food.
I love the outside
because it is relaxing and refreshing.
I love beaches
when me and my family are together.
I love my nose
because it helps me smell.
I love my sister and brother
even though we fight, we still love each other.
I love my body
because it is made out of dragons, lions,
and one million angels.

Stelita Better
Shoe

Shoe, shoe
if I was a shoe,
if I was walked on, what would I do?
I am yellow, brown, white, and red
the dark closet is my bed.
The other shoes are so lazy,
when I go out, I’m so crazy,
I wash up in the rain,
when I walk, I get a stain,
when I tripped
over the curb
this happened
when I skipped—
Shoe, shoe
I am a shoe
Now I know what to do.

Keyara Snead

Dreams

He dreams of being a professional baseball player
like Jackie Robinson, hitting
the ball like a rocket flying into space
and running faster than a rock
coming from a place,
thrown by a lefty.

Billy Chandler
All I Want

To go to a mall and shop around like a bee,
with my black and white dress, buying sun glasses to match.

To go to a picnic with my family and dance until it gets dark
and go home and play games with my two cousins, it’s going to be sweet.

Have you ever done the same thing like me?

Kiarra Thomas

Street Racer

To be a street racer, shifting gears in a muscle car, drifting past turns and curves.

When an open bridge is near hit the gas and make it across.

Diamonte Dimery
All Pink and Blue

To be a fashion designer wearing all pink and blue colors.

In a city that looks like a dream castle with a lot of people.

I want to have models in my designs, make millions of dollars cause people love some pink and blue cloth.

I had pink and blue dresses too short, too long, the shirts are pink the jeans are blue with pink designs and shorts and capris and gauchos.

Have you wished you were pink and blue like me?

Takeya Whitlow

Dreaming in the Sky

To fly in the sky like a pink eagle. Then to have a video with the pink eagle.

I want to see Naomi Campbell walk down the walkway wearing pink.

And then go to pink university where they make all pink clothes for me me me.

I want to be a million pink clothes.

Myisha Jackson
My Favorite Thing to Do

My favorite thing to do is
to dream. When I dream,
I dream about my

family, how they all argue
and that means me too. But
when somebody else dreams

their dream is to follow
somebody else’s dream.
When somebody dreams they
dream about a pencil
getting sharpened and they
are imagining if the
pencil can do what
the people do. So

they get some
information about
that and they tell

their parents, but
you know that
the parents do
believe them because

it is a pencil and you
know pencils just right.

But when you think
of it, it is like you
forget about your life
and what you want
to do in life.

When you think
of a dream or if
you imagine a
dream than do
what you want
to do in life.

What is your dream?

Stelita Better
I Dream

I dream about being an only child,
to be daddy’s little girl forever
and be able to go wild-
even if under the weather.

To make 6 other siblings disappear.

Angry big sister just because I’m a little
sister too, but I still dream of more
more of me, myself and I, my goals
and my fortune. Do you have any
paper I can borrow?

Jasmin Williams

The Unknown Dream

To fly to space with a four legged monkey
and a nineteen legged spider.
The four legged monkey dies without
oxygen, the nineteen legged spider survives
from blood.

I want to see if the four legged monkey
could come back alive and play
baseball, and hit the smallest planet, Pluto
until the news changed everything.

The news changed everything,
they said it’s not a planet.

Have you ever played base
ball on the moon?

Janisha Crump
Get Comcast

Timmy the turtle has DSL, which is very slow

Comcast is a much better but he doesn’t think so

turtles are slow, people are fast

if only Timmy the turtle will get Comcast

Larry the snail, comes to tell Timmy about how slow he really is

He says to him it’s not good and they need to straighten out some business.

Timmy does listen but doesn’t believe that DSL’s slow

Larry doesn’t give up and says, no, no, no!

Larry slides to the computer and turns it on

Timmy watches while the day goes along,

the computer is slow because it’s DSL

Larry tells Timmy its going to be forever before the computer turns on.

Timmy says too bad, I don’t care, so be gone.

Larry gives up, he tried his best.

He leaves and goes to take a rest.

Samone Grant
**My Seat**

I stick to my seat  
I move my feet  
I move to the beat  
I stick to my seat

I stick to the seat  
I have cleaned the room  
I stick to the seat  
With the broom

I love my seat  
It is a chair  
I stick to my seat  
People like to stare

My seat my seat  
My seat and me  
We sting so hard  
We sting like a bee

*Keyara Snead*
Florida

I like Florida, it’s so good.
Should I go back? I should, I should!
It’s so pretty,
it’s like a big city.

The air smells like chicken
Mickey and Minnie sometimes be picking
on people. My hotel room was so nice,
the only thing big was the price.

The carpet was clean
even in between.
The place was hot
if you like it or not.

Too much sun
but a lot of fun.
That’s the end,
you’re my friend.

Keyara Snead

The Darkness

Darkness made out of needles
Empty rooms that children don’t know about
It is unforgiving walls
Blizzards that scare me.

Loneliness in the darkness
When I blink, there are tornadoes coming toward me
It is untouchable pictures that you cannot see
It is midnight, I can’t see, so you are asleep in the darkness.

Stelita Better
Winter in my Brain

Winter in my brain
doing everything in my mind
Snowing, raining, storming
I can’t concentrate with all this on my mind
All this darkness
It’s an empty room in my mind
Oh my God! I’m seeing things
the darkness is killing me
Winter in my mind

Janisha Crump

Summer in Georgia

Summer in Georgia
sitting in the house
saving myself from the sun
Sitting down in the house
made by my family
it’s made good to the point
where we can survive
But it does not have
what we need in that state—
an air conditioner to save us
from the sun
This is why when I visit
my family
I stay in the house and sleep
and come out like a bat and play

Khalil Jones
Angry

I am angry now
as my bones are thrown in the flame,
Guns going off in my brain.
We think we know how it feels
to be the oldest,
If you have brothers or sisters
you’re in for a pain.
They did something and blame it on you
For what? To make you mad.

Khalil Jones

Love

Love is a bright, yellow and crowded heart.
It is an overdrive cop, trying to break you apart.
It is a memory of a song.
It is an animal calling you a lovely white city.
Love is a rainbow that you love.
Love is like money that scares you in the dark.
Love is like a phone ringing in your ear
telling you to get up in the morning.
It is all about love in your body
to make you proud.

Stelita Better
The Other Side of Me

I may be mean on the outside,  
but on the inside, I’m very nice.  
In my brain, what am I?

I’m a person of color and a shadow of darkness  
I may be goofy  
but during work I’m very smart.  
Nobody can stop me from doing that.

I may live in a bad hood, but guess what?  
My hood is just like yours.  
Now I got all this on my mind  
It’s making me go crazy  
like that empty room being  
filled up in that little boy’s head  
Just like mine.

Oh my, are they bad or good?  
Okay, I’m alright—  
It’s just my imaginary thinking.  
This is not my mouth  
it’s a daydream  
so all the readers get over it  
and  
I have no other side of me.

Janisha Crump
Keyara

Hi, my name is Keyara.
My favorite teacher was Ms. Anderson.
She died right in front of the class.
Another thing is, I had a dog
but my mom gave him away
because we were moving to another house.
My heart is frozen shut.

Keyara Snead

Life is Sweet

Today is sunny and I am very happy.
I feel great and today is Monday and Sunday.
I feel extremely radiant, like the sun without burning.
I feel like a daisy without the bee.
In the evening, I feel like fall
because fall is a very relaxing season.
And when I go to sleep,
I feel like I am lying on the beach in spring.
Life is sweet.

Keyara Snead

The World Will Stay the Same

When it rains or snows
there will be a mess.
But the world will stay the same.
When there is something wrong
the wind will howl.
But the world will stay the same.
When the trees burn down
the world will stay the same.

Keyara Snead
A Cricket

You hear something in your house, so you go see what it is about. You look on the ground and all around. And still can’t find that noise, you look on your bathroom floor and you see a cricket.

Khalil Jones
Green

And you live your life like the green
trees in the sky,
brave like a skier going down a slope.
Irish green a bug in
the air, lonely just like a tree.

And brave,
brave,
brave as green
cool as green

And I don’t want to be brown like
the dirt off the ground
not even navy blue like a flower on a tree

brave,
brave,
brave as green
cool as green

Cause I’m brave means I will
not fall down, but stand tall
so don’t disrespect me or the color
green, just be cool.

Khalil Jones
My Color

My color burgundy is dark
It is like the moon in the sky
Burgundy is a frosted chocolate ice cream
with a cherry on top
Burgundy is like a dark color from the woods
It is an eggshell buried in the sand
It is a burgundy gun, pointing to you in your face
Burgundy is a color melting over your head.

Stelita Better

Class

A girl in the corner was not happy.
I said, “Are you not happy because you don’t have happiness in your body?”
She said, in the corner dark with shadows, “I just want to be left alone.”

Stelita Better

My Eyes

My eyes are closed.
I see lights that are flashing.
I see candles that are mean and dark.
I see blackberries on the table.
I go outside, I see roses that come out of the ground.
When it comes from out of the ground, it is on fire.
When it rains, the fire goes out and the rose is burnt.
When I open my eyes, it is sunny.
When I open my eyes, I see happiness.
I see butterflies flying through the air.
But I see my family sad when I open my eyes,
that is the sad thing.

Stelita Better
It Will Always Be

It will always be learning in school
It will be an iceberg dropping on my head
It will be sun in my face to wake me up in the morning to go to school
It will be somebody by my side when I need help
It will be purple laughter all around me
There will always be people helping homeless people out when they have no food to eat, no home to stay in

Stelita Better

My Family

My family had melted.
There are melted by the heat.
They are frozen in the cold.
They were blue when they were watching TV.
They are guys that are dolls that people play with.
They are dinosaur eggs that will crack in the sun.
When they read a book, they cry every time.
When they go outside, they feel scared like mice.
When they get up in the morning, they always fight.
At midnight, they sleep with a goat on the bed.
They are crazy—when I see them every day.

Stelita Better
The Game room

I have a city make over on the wall.
The black bed is on the right side.
The brown TV is on the left side.
The bed smells bland.
I have a green Nintendo 64.
There is a car collection.
I have covers that smell fresh.
The bed feels soft.
The room is cold in mornings, hot at night.
It is a bumpy bed.
It tastes like chocolate.

Diamonte Dimery

My Room

The fly on the wall in my room
My room is green
With a green floor
And it smells sweet and it sounds peaceful
It is fresh, soft, and pretty
It is the best bedroom in the world
I got a lot of sheets in my closet
and a play station in my room and a flatscreen TV
My bed is green, blue and white.

Derick Gray
My messy bedroom

My room has two beds.
My bed has spider-man covers and my brother has green army covers.
My room has two small TV’s and a carpet.
We also have a lamp.
I have a dresser and two windows. I have two hampers.
My bed has lots of teddy bears and a lot of shirts and pants.
And we have a scary closet filled with clothes and coats.
We have a clock radio.
I have shoes that smell nasty.
The walls are bumpy and hard.
My dresser is hard and brown and made out of wood
and some of the drawers are broken.
I have dirty clothes all over the hard floor.
The carpet is bumpy and green.
The floor is wooden and brown.
My door is made out of wood and the lock is broken
and the door knob is jiggley when you open it.
The walls are blue.
We also have a fan, a heater and an air conditioner.
My room is messy.
I have spider-man video games too.

Marcus Jamal Watson

Poem #1

My real name is Jaquan Dunn
Yesterday my name was Tech. O
Today my name is Mysterio
Tomorrow my name will be Jaquan pants Dunnbob
Secretly, I know my name is Invisible man
My name once was Peter
My mom/dad/spouse/friend thinks my name is Patrick
My name means squidward
In my dreams my name is Presssssent

Jaquan Dunn
Poem #1

I wish I get a new house without one mouse
I wish I had a million dollar so I could be in the pop my collar

I wish my neighborhood
I’m so hood
All the money on men pocket so fat
It don’t make no sense
I want my license
I wish my country
I wish everyone could have a bike
Me and my family could go on a hike
I wish people don’t fall
Why do we have to walk the wall

Stephon Mingo

Rain Dance

Rain is beautiful.
Rain whispers my name.
Rainy days are the best days.
I see a face dancing and singing in the rain.
It sings to me.
Rain is my best friend.
I see rain often.
We dance to the rain song.
When summer comes, rain will move a way
But I will always remember... The Rain Dance

Jasmin Williams
Something that is white, a cloud

The cloud is a puffy pillow that is white and feels good.
The cloud is a taste that is a cotton candy.
The cloud is white desert that is beautiful and big.
It is a white treasure made of a dragon’s eye.
It is a white paper that is blank.
The cloud is snow on a white star.
The cloud is a white fog with a little cat foot.
It is a big tornado heading this way with a wildlife wind.
It is white people singing a song while it is swooning rain.
It is something that is white, a cloud.

Stelita Better
Fabulous Me

My dream is the dream of a lifetime.
Overly excited and full of energy.
Dear to be fabulous is my motto.
Everyone cheers my name as I walk down the runway.
Lovely roses that I get from my fans.
I appreciate this wonderful opportunity.
Never, have I felt this excitement before.
Giving is getting in my world.

Caring and sharing is beauty in my eyes.
A new day in Paris, France for a new show tonight.
Rushing to get dressed and ready to go.
Every night I dream of what to do next.
Excited and nervous, happy and afraid of everything.
Rough as boys and sweet as honey but modeling completes me.

Jasmin Williams

Dreams

My dreams are to be super fast and control fire with my hands.
Wow! That is a call man and my dream is to be rich.
And my last name will be Smith.
So, I know you will get bad and I will be sad.
Do not ask me for money, I knew you were going to ask me, I have twenty.

Anthony Simms
The Day Light

The sky is a clear blue sky in the day.
At noon the sky turns purple and orange.
At night, the sky is sparkly with stars.
Boom! I hear thunderstorms coming in and the sky turns grey and dark.
When it is over I love to look at the sky and picture myself wandering on the clouds.
The clouds are fluffy and white.
I tasted it.
It is cotton candy.
To my surprise I found out that I ate all of the cloud that I was standing on.
I fell down with a gentle joy.

Samone Grant

Poem #1

I wish...
I wish my family will not be alone.
I wish I will become grown.
My dog wishes she had the sand and bone.
I wish my neighborhood would stop having a war.
I wish my neighbor would stop slamming their door.
I wish my neighborhood would be creative to draw.
I wish my neighborhood would not fight no more.
I wish the country would be free.
I wish the country would agree.
I wish the country could think like me!
I wish the country’s blind people could see.

Tianna Cotton
Your contributions help make Simon Says possible!

The D.C. Creative Writing Workshop is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality creative writing instruction to students in economically underserved areas of Washington D.C. One hundred percent of every donation goes directly toward our creative writing programs at Charles Hart Middle School, Simon Elementary, and Ballou High School, allowing our students to work with professional writers-in-residence in the classroom, the Drama Club, the Writing Club, and the Literary Magazine Club.

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