

telling it

Arts-based interventions
for change



Telling It Teens
Ypsilanti Community Middle School

SPRING 2023

Welcome to the Spring 2023 Telling It Anthology!

After a few years hiatus due to the impact of the pandemic, we spent this past year having a wonderful time getting to know and engage with the 7th grade group of teens. They attended the weekly sessions during their Advisory Period of the school day.

The writing and artwork in this anthology reflect the individual brilliance of each teen and their capacity to see themselves as the empowered and intelligent people that they are. Over the course of this past year, they have had opportunities to identify their community networks, explore their identities, emotions, and practice de-stressing skills. The teens learned to cooperate, problem-solve, and take responsibility. Most importantly, they had fun, played games, exercised their creative writing muscles, and learned some new arts-based skills.

The mission of Telling It is to enhance social emotional learning and support the well-being of young people using a blend of expressive arts and social work methods. All of this is made possible with funding from Generator Z and the support of Principal Neal, 7th Grade Dean Anthony Irvin, 7th Grade Advisory Teacher, Mrs. Gossett, and School Librarian, Jibril Naeem.

We hope you enjoy this collection of the teens' creativity. Each page reflects the imagination, creativity and character of the teens. It was truly a pleasure to get to know them and to hear their stories.

With all good wishes,

Deb Gordon-Gurfinkel, Founding Director
Morgain MacDonald, Team Leader





I AM MORE THAN

I am different from you

I love to help disabled people

I am more than many people think

I am not the best at socializing

I love the LGBTQ+ community

I love pop music

I hate Bo Burnham

I love advocating for my communities

I love youtubers

I love Big Time Rush

I am not just a “special ed kid”

I’m much more than that. Stop using my disabilities to insult me.

Stop treating me different

I love Larray

I love singing and theater

I like to be understood

ILLNESS CANNOT TOUCH ME

It actually does because people get cancer, diabetes, HIV, covid and more. Cancer puts you at risk of dying, diabetes affects your blood sugar, HIV is bad, covid changes taste buds and other things permanently.

“Death has no claim over me”

It kinda does. When you die there’s a cause to your death.

Someone can claim that you’d died of sickness, cancer or whatever and it likely would be true.

Also, 1330 is so long ago. “My wife Perenelle has been kidnapped”.

Getting kidnapped is my biggest fear. I’d rather sleep with 90 roaches honestly.

Let’s move to a different topic, like Big Time Rush and how Logan is the cutest in that band.

Jasmin is so lucky. Every boy in BTW has a gf, Carlos and Alexa, Jasmin and Logan, Kendall and Micha, forgot the name of James’ gf, but she’s very cute. I see what James sees in her.



A'LAINA

OF SECONDS
OF SUMMERS



...grades, the middle of the
THE PROBLE
THE GHOS





A'RIEL

I AM

I am funny, I am someone who lives to entertain those around me, I am glad I still have people I enjoy or love with me, glad I can openly express how I feel with others. I am proud, proud of myself. Proud I got through what I thought or what was told impossible. I am me, and when I say me I mean Amiyah, Miyan, Thomas. All those titles describe who I am, who I want to be, who I want to be known as. I am strong, strong enough to overcome things I dislike, things I fear, everything I thought I couldn't get over. I am me.





AHMIYAH



ANASTAZIA



Spring noises in the middle of the night
HAVE A PROBLEM WITH A GHOST
GHOSTS ARE REAL



ARIANNA

I AM

I am me.

I am different

I am lovely

I am a day maker

I am quiet

I am an artist

I am smart

I am short

I am a 3 sport athlete.

I am loved

I am helpful

I am hungry

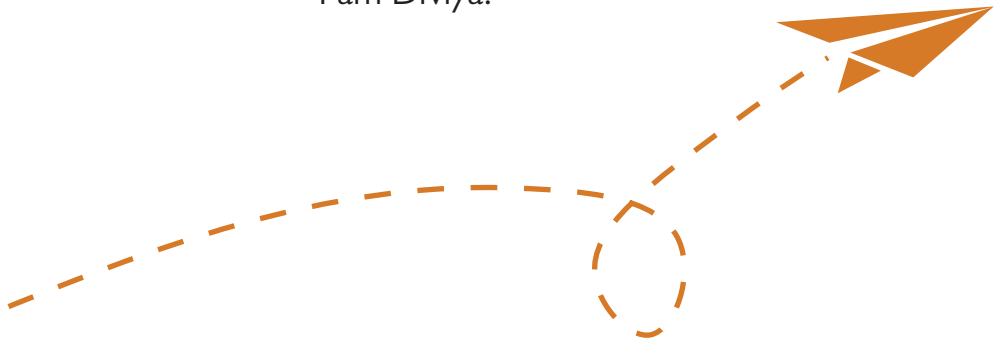
I am an entrepreneur

I am a chicken alfredo lover.

I am unique

I am awesome

I am Diviya.



DIVIYA







Green Plant My Friend
Green Plant Till The
End.

Donna Reyes



The void is like my heart a dark abyss inside a rot
People take chances and sometimes regret it. I try and try
and try but I also know the world's a lie. They say stay a kid.
I'd say no. I see why they say that now say that it's the little
things that matter. I wish I could turn back time and see
The world deep inside the warm sun the less work and the
real friend now I see how it is
Now I've had people come and go. I'll also leave this small
note. Enjoy life now, take risks and don't hesitate in life



DONNA



CHAPTER IV


Hadiza



From my discourse with Mr Lloyd, and from the above reported conference between Bessie and Abbot, I gathered enough of hope to suffice as a motive for wishing to get well: a change seemed near – I desired and waited it in silence. It tarried, however; days and weeks passed; I had regained my normal state of health, but no new allusion was made to the subject over which I brooded. Mrs Reed surveyed me at times with a severe eye, but seldom addressed me: since my illness she had drawn a more marked line of separation¹ than ever between me and her own children, appointing me a small closet to sleep in by myself, condemning me to take my meals alone, and pass all my time in the nursery, while my cousins were constantly in the drawing-room. Not a hint, however, did she drop about sending me to school; still I felt an instinctive certainty that she would not long endure me under the same roof with her: for her glance, now more than ever, when turned on me, expressed an insuperable and rooted aversion.

Eliza and Georgiana, evidently acting according to orders, spoke to me as little as possible; John thrust his tongue in his cheek whenever he saw me, and once attempted chastisement; but as I instantly turned against him, roused by the same sentiment of deep ire and desperate revolt which had stirred my corruption² before, he thought it better to desist, and ran from me, uttering execrations, and vowing I had burst his nose. I had, indeed, levelled at that prominent feature as hard a blow as my knuckles could inflict; and when I saw that either that or my look daunted him I had the greatest inclination to follow up my advantage to purpose, but he was already with his

Harry Potter



I am from a weird state with its hottest summer to its coldest winters. Shaped as a mitten the snow horribly hitting this weird place called Michigan.



HADIZA

Luna Gilson



I am Luna,
I have green eyes that sometimes look blue, some people say they are weird, but I love my eyes. Some people ask me why I dye my hair, they say that they like my natural hair better, but I don't, I prefer my dye.

MAY



LUNE

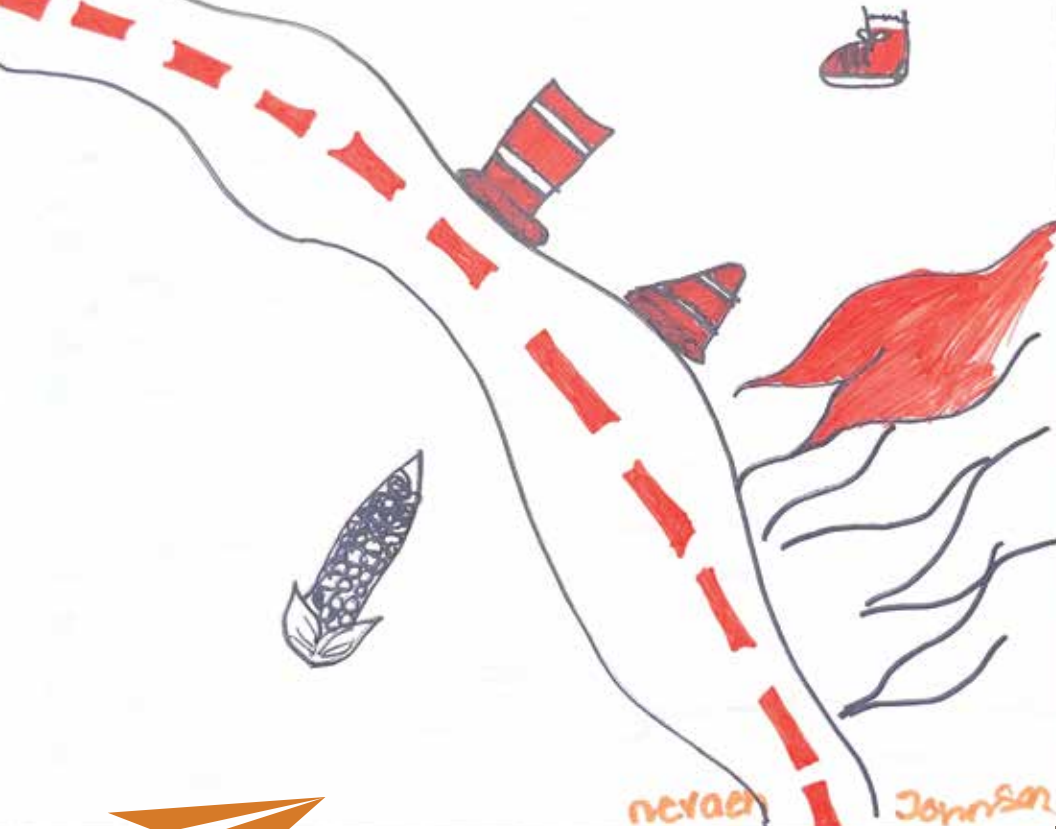


I AM

I'm Madison. I love bracelets and sunsets and going swimming. I love the walking dead and American Psycho. I love going up north with my best friend and eating fruit for breakfast every morning and going on car rides in her grandpa's old fashion car.



MADISON



the best thing that happened
to me was today





NEVAEH

I AM

Me am really cool.

Me am wanting to to jump in pool.

Me am smart.

Me love drawing art

Me am nice,

Me love, love chewing on ice.

Me am not bad

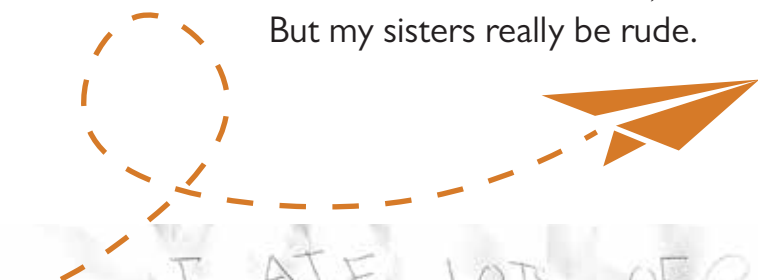
Me really love my dad.

Me no read book,

But my mom watch me cook.

Me am a not so bad dude,

But my sisters really be rude.



ZAIRE



I am black,
Just like the color of my heart
The heart of which is fragile,
Through tries not to show
I am introverted though
Talk around those who I feel comfortable with.
I have been broken, yet mended.
I will not give up.
My life is my own, I don't
Need help. Black is the color of my heart, but I won't back down.
Black it may be, I don't mind.
For I have many for who I can call mine.





ZERO

middle of the ni
HAVE A PROBLEM
WITH A GHOST

Team Leader

Morgain MacDonald

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Adam Baird

Funding & Support

Generator Z – driven by teens

and powered by Lakeshore

Connections with support from

the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.

Foundation

Anthology Credits

Karly Gibson, Graphic Design

Leisa Thompson, Photography

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