

How does one become a butterfly? You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar.

—Thomas Paulus



POSITIVE VIBES

We could learn a lot from crayons: some are sharp, some are pretty, some are dull, some have weird names, and all are different colors but they all have to learn to live in the same box.

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# Of Crayons and Butterflies



*Life* is like riding a bicycle.  
To keep your balance, you must  
**keep moving.**

— Albert Einstein



People are who they are. Give  
or take...about fifteen  
percent. That's how much  
people can change if they  
really want to. Whether it's  
for themselves or the people  
they love, yeah, it's fifteen  
percent. But sometimes, that's  
enough.

Before my 8th Grade poetry unit, I liked poetry, but I never appreciated how powerful it could be, how many ideas it can express, and how many emotions it can convey all at once. Looking back on this unit, I now know that poetry is one of the most powerful things in the world. Between the poetry slam at SPACE, and all of the sharing and creative collaborating done in class, I definitely have a newfound appreciation for my peers and poetry. As a poet, I notice that I come up with ideas quickly, and am able to execute them using figurative language. As a poet, I would like to improve with performance poetry, and continue to use it to reflect different aspects of my life. I definitely have enjoyed presenting in front of others during this unit, even though it is different than anything that I have ever done. I challenged myself by trying to imitate other poets, or build off of established ideas. I admire how much courage other poets at my school have, because it is definitely a lot more difficult than it looks to stand up on stage, and perform a personal poem. This is why I liked watching the Louder Than A Bomb documentary because even though I was not involved in this event, I learned what it is like to live in different areas of Chicago, and go through a different day-to-day routine. My poetry plan for the future is to continue to write poetry outside of school, and try to spend a little bit of time, at least once a week, writing poems. In my anthology, I am most proud of *Where I Am From* and *Ode to Flip-Flops and Bicycles* because it really explains where I live, and what my life is like, from positive, and a slightly more negative perspective. I also like *What Sunshine Feels Like to Darkness* because of the elaborate conceits. I enjoy reading a variety of poetry, and the works of poetry that I have seen from my peers have also influenced some of my writing. I hope that you enjoy my poetry anthology!

*Dedicated to those who strive to be different and change the world.  
Also, to my family, my friends, and my teachers.*

## Where I'm From

Where I'm From.

When people ask where you are from, do they want to know where you are now? Or what it took to get there? Journeys taken or memories recalled? Traditions passed down or questions answered? Friendships created or battles lost?

Well, I will tell you where I am from.

I am from a world where the sky's the limit, where hope, love, and family fills my soul. Where music floods my heart with happiness, and swimming makes my muscles ache with joy. Where Happiness is hidden around every corner, and opportunity shines for those who want it, where the Chicago skyline glitters in the light, guiding those who need it.

Of summer days, and winter play, snowflakes glittering in the sun.  
Where the importance of education takes over the world, and the waves of Lake Michigan lap against the Evanston Shore.

Summer days spent laughing with my friends, a melting ice cream cone in hand.

But I am also from a world where dreams can be crushed by stereotypes and put-downs,  
A world where your place in society can be decided by not the ideas in your head or the kindness in your heart, but by the color of your skin or the amount of money in your wallet.  
Where opinions are formed not by personality and conversation, but by the icon or brand name stamped on your clothing.

Where technology rules the world, and life-changing decisions can be made or destroyed with the click of a button.

Where everyone is just trying to be the same, when we should all be different.  
Of negative situations being news targets, instead of the millions of brilliant people making an  
impact on the world.

So, the question is not where are you from?

But where are we going?

## **Backwards in Time**

Undo the invention of natural resources and architecture,

The birth of towers reaching hundreds of feet into the open blue sky.

Replacing technology that took thousands of hours to create with sheets of paper and pencils.

Taking out all the hate and violence

Rekindling the burning ambition for peace

Erase the brand names and logos.

Distribute money and wealth equally

Rebuild small towns where everyone knew

Everyone else.

Break down planes, trains, and automobiles.

Revive the horse-drawn carriage

Transportation by foot.

Rewrite the laws of all men being created equally.

Bring back animals extinct from pollution and disease.

Undo the segregation of this intelligent nation.

Give the Native-Americans back land

That rightfully belongs to them.

Study the ways of fending for ourselves

In a world placed in the palm

Of our hands.

Construct ancient civilizations and sites

Re-design the Aztec's pyramids, preserve the ruins of Incas.

Reinvent the ideas based in Mesopotamia.

Change the path of the meteor that destroyed Earth.

Wiping the land clean of the dinosaurs, of life

At All.

Invert the creation of living cells

Change the Earth into a cloud of matter.

Undo the Big Bang that started it all.

Until the only thing left was

A Sky Full of

Stars

And

Silence.

## Ode to Flip-Flops and Ice Cream Cones

Ode to sunshine, warmth, everlasting happiness and lifelong hope.

Ode to the season where everything is possible

Where all dreams come true as the sun sets at 8:30

Only to rise again at 5:15 am.

When there is not a single care in my mind

The only thoughts streaking through my head are when I am meeting friends at the beach

And what time I need to be home for a family barbecue.

Summer camp and sidewalk chalk

Cold iced tea and bustling streets

Nukem, swimming, and sleepovers

Biking against the summer breeze, hands resting on the handlebars of my Schwinn Cruiser

A shade of pink brighter than the sun overhead, glistening with mist from lake waves

Lapping onto the shore, quenching thirst for rehydration after heat of the day.

Ode to packing extra money for ice cream after a day in the sun

Melting, streaking the sides of my ice cream cone with color.

Ode to sailing, tubing, and bumblebees

Wet hair, don't care, and block parties.

To fireworks exploding across the darkening sky

With music and refreshing blasts of air conditioning.

Flip-flops thwacking against the flourishing ground



Thwack! Smack!

Jean shorts, tank tops, hair up

Tan lines all around.

To haircuts, shaving cream, trampolines, and popsicles

Watering gardens for spending money, lawnmowers, and pulling weeds.

Unfolding my ping pong table, sliding down water slides at the pool

Concerts, and picnics, filling the sweltering air with laughter.

Ode to the time of year

Where the only thing that can ruin my day

Is a dropped ice cream cone

But even a summer day can fix that.

Ode to the time of year where the days will shorten and tan lines will fade

Where lawn chairs and baseball caps will be packed away for the year.

Where bicycles will be stowed away in garages

Buried under the shovels, and the two-person sleds.

But the memories of summer

Will last

Forever.

## *Like a Girl*

Why is it that we when it comes to women  
We are only defined by what we are not?

Not who we are and  
Not what we can be.  
Who we "need" to be.  
Need.

As if molding perfectly into the cookie cutter  
Is of utmost urgency.

Why is it that having a second X chromosome at birth  
Defines every aspect of life?

What we wear  
What we think  
What we say  
Who we are.

Why is it that when it comes to women  
It's okay to assume.

If you haven't heard already  
To assume makes an ass out of you  
and  
Me.

Why is it that  
78% means 100  
when you're talking about women

Every 78 cents  
that is earned by women  
will never amount to the dollar earned by a man

Even though they work just as hard,  
22 cents stay out of reach  
No matter how hard they work  
Another 22 cents that a women will never earn back.

Why is it, that some girls  
don't get to go to school.  
The men go to work and earn the money,  
and the women are expected to cook,  
clean, and take care of the family

Knowledge is not meant to be locked up in a safe  
With the key to release it only in the hands of men.

We need to know the past  
to not make the same mistakes in the future,  
this is something everyone should know  
not just half.

How can society tell us  
That we are beautiful  
That we are smart, intelligent  
Deserving.  
But then turn to our male counterparts  
And tell them that they are the *only* chosen ones  
That they are the stronger ones  
And that we are only good for sex

Why is it that some girls are treated  
Like prized horses at auction  
Paraded around,  
and then sold to the highest bidder  
Married,  
not for love,  
but to gain money,  
raise statuses,  
enforce relations

Married,  
without consent,  
Promised to a stranger,  
their fate sealed before they ever got the chance

We intertwine keys with our fingers  
Because walking at night is a nightmare  
And in the day, it's just as bad  
Because the day is filled with promises of what might come

Why is it, that when people say  
Like A Girl  
they are saying girls are not as strong,  
their opinion goes unheard

They can dare to reach for the stars  
and not be pushed down to the ground,  
with one phrase:  
Like A Girl

That one phrase should mean  
A girl can be strong,  
they can dream of growing up  
to be whatever they want to be

They can go to school,  
get a job,  
freedom, and choice in their lives  
Overcome the obstacles  
That society will place  
To block them from achieving dreams.

Like A Girl  
Shouldn't be an insult  
From the way you run  
Or fight  
Or play  
Or dress

Like A Girl  
Should be a compliment  
Something that doesn't crush self confidence  
In young girls  
Forcing them to paint "perfection"  
Onto their already perfect skin

Like A Girl  
Not a insult  
A compliment.  
Telling girls all over the world  
To reach for the stars  
And never let go  
Of  
Hope.

Like a Girl.

## **Pool of Success**

I brace myself as I jump.

Saturday morning, 7 am sharp.

I am immersed in ice cold water.

One second warmed by the heated air

A second later colder than a ocean of ice cold water

Covered with a tingling sensation for 30 seconds.

Then, it disappears 30 seconds later.

And I am filled with pure happiness and enjoyment.

Any day, every day

Any hour, every hour

When I leap into the pool

I feel this familiar sensation.

And never once

Do I wish that I am doing anything else

Than swimming in this pool

Of hard work and success.

## **Darkness to Sunshine**

Rejuvenation of the mind. A speck of life at the end of a dark tunnel. Warmth after a winter's hibernation. What sunshine feels like to someone escaping from darkness overhead. A warm hug. A leap into a jacuzzi after an afternoon skating in the ice cold air. The moment when a batch of fresh chocolate chip cookies are taken out of the oven. A drop of liquid gold, glittering in the afternoon sun. A bead of sweat after a long day of work, proof of success and excellence. Says darkness to sunshine, "What does darkness feel like to you?" The sun thinks a minute before responding. "A blindfold over a glistening rainbow, after a day-long thunderstorm. A scrape on a knee tanned by the invincible summer sun, after a hour of pure happiness, playing on a playground during the heat of the day. A melted ice cream an instant after purchasing it. But at the same time relief from a day of hard work." The darkness was offended. "How can I feel like all of these terrible things to you?" Sunshine looked at the blue sky below, beginning to lighten with the anticipation of daylight. "Don't you understand?" said Sunshine. "These things are not terrible at all! In the end, you will not remember what it was like to have a blindfold covering your eyes while everyone around you was taking in a beautiful sight, you will remember the moment when the blindfold was ripped off of your eyes, exposing you to the same beauty. When you think of a scrape on a knee, you will not remember the pain that you felt when the skin was removed by the unforgiving ground, you will remember what it felt like to be carefree, running in the daylight for hours, even with a scraped knee. When you think of a melted ice cream cone, you will not remember the disappointment, you will remember the chill of relief when you had your first lick of ice cream of the summer. And with that, the darkness disappeared and the sun rose, shining light on a brand new day.

## Touch the Sky

Perched on a branch staring into the ocean of blue that is the sky

Unobstructed by the thicket of rich, green leaves

Providing a landing destination for the birds descending from the sky.

But nowhere for them to take off from.

The tree is grounded to reality.

Reacting to every change in the Earth.

Affecting everything connected to the limber branches.

I feel the ground quake and tremble.

I look up at the ocean blue sky.

It ceases.

As I begin to climb higher, I feel a wave of motion beneath me, trying to knock down the tree.

I look up at the sky.

It stops.

I stick my head above the ocean of pure green leaves, destined to reach the clouds.

A branch breaks below me.

I look up at the frothy clouds.

The branch heals it self.

When I feel the roots stable enough below me, I reach up.

When I am ready, I grab the rainbow from the deep blue sea.

And I touch the sky.

**I Fight**

I

fight

The reminder

with sudden fierceness.

I did beg

Then again, begging might

promise me a better fight

calling the shots

reminded me

“ It’s probably a lie.”

you never told me that

no big thing

Why not?



## **I Love Myself**

I am amazing, great, dope, fantastic

I love it.

I love myself.

I put others before me.

Give 110% effort in everything that I do.

I love myself.

I am talented.

Recognize that there is opportunity waiting for me in the future.

I know the sky's the limit.

I love myself.

I listen, I love, I play, I teach, I talk, I smile, I laugh, I run, I understand, I touch the sky.

I love myself.

I understand my flaws, hey, you can't always be on time and ready for everything.

I still love myself.

I always make lemons into lemonade

Know the sun rises on a new day.

Who I am is not

Who you are.

Who you are is not

Who I am.

I am me.

You are you.

Who we are is who we are

Stars, shining the brightest in the midnight sky.

If who I am was who you are, and

Who you are is who I am..

The world would be simple indeed.

It's not.

I can change the world.

You can change the world.

We can change the world.

Decide the future.

Dream big.

Break the rules.

Accomplish anything we want to.

Be ourselves.

Who I am is not who you are.

I am myself.

I love myself.

## Social Change

How can we change the world as a society? As more and more issues arise in our community and all around the world, we as the human race must take action. With government officials and mediators in some countries finally realizing that all points of views should be viewed as valuable and equal, we will surely progress in the field of equality in social activism. The presidential campaign and election of 2016 for the United States is putting our current values and way of life to the test as well. In addition to this, many groups advocating for social change and justice are being created to display their values. Some of these social activism groups include PEETA, Girls Not Brides, Global Witness, Medic Mobile, Water and Sanitation for the Urban Poor, Slum Dwellers International, and more. Social activism portrayed in works of art (such as paintings, photographs, short stories, poems, and speeches) are also growing in popularity. One artist that is a great contributor to this movement is poet Martin Espada. In his poem, *Imagine the Angels of Bread*, he challenges us as readers to imagine what the world would be like if people take a stand in what they believe in. Other works of art, such as *Changing the World*, are created through photography. The former does a better job of displaying the theme that for social change to happen, we must believe in ourselves and our values, because the poem gives multiple examples of social injustices, while the picture only portrays a protest in a response to them.

*Imagine the Angels of Bread* by Martin Espada is a more effective way of portraying the message that social change is necessary for improving society. While *Changing the World* portrays the fight for social progression visually through use of evocative visual symbols, *Imagine the Angels of Bread* uses many verbal examples with detail to give the readers an image

portraying how the author feels about social change. Both pieces of art have a common purpose in mind: Social change is needed for continued progression as a society. However each source focuses in on a different detail within this idea. The photograph *Changing the World* focuses on the idea that society will try to block ideas of change, but as a society, we must overcome this to achieve our goals. A person pictured in the photograph is holding up a protest sign that says, “Sorry for the inconvenience, we are trying to change the world”. Even though this simple sentence states a clear, strong idea, the poem states a similar idea in a clearer, and stronger way. Allusions are made to several sizeable issues, such as poverty, homelessness, slum lords, tenements, and many more. This supports the purpose with more evidence besides evocative visual symbols in the background. Because *Imagine the Angels of Bread* states the main purpose with more textual support and detailed statements, it is the more effective source.

*Imagine the Angels of Bread* uses several different purposes to apply to all audiences, and portray a clear message, while *Changing the World* focuses on convincing all audiences that we need to defy expectations of society to achieve our dreams. *Imagine the Angels of Bread* is clearly for entertainment purposes because of the descriptive imagery and imaginative ideas. For example, the opening line of the poem is “This is the year that squatters evict/landlords”. This shows that the poem is clearly for entertainment because this statement is the opposite of reality, landlords evict squatters. *Imagine the Angels of Bread* is also informational because it reminds us of ongoing issues around the world. Although no evidence is given containing any numbers or data, the descriptive language and symbolism definitely convinces readers that the issues stated are issues affected millions of people. *Imagine the Angels of Bread* is lastly a persuasive piece as well because in the end of the poem, Martin Espada tries to convince us as readers that

this is the year that we will take action. He does this by saying “If every rebellion begins with the idea/that conquerors on horseback not/many-legged gods, that they too drown/ if plunged in the river/ then this is the year”. The photograph, *Changing the World* only tries to persuade readers that social action is good through a protest in the background of the picture, focusing on a sign with a meaningful message for protesters about changing the world. Because *Imagine the Angels of Bread* uses multiple methods to convey an important message, it has a more effective and descriptive purpose.

Both works elaborately describe and explore ideas relating to social change and taking a stand on aspects of society that could be improved for the better. It can be clearly seen that the approach to these topics is extremely different, as well as the background of these artists. *Changing the World* is an anonymous piece that reflects the idea of social justice in a way that will always be current. This anonymous piece represents the idea that anyone in the world can make a difference. While the author of *Imagine the Angels of Bread*, Martin Espada, claims ownership of his brilliant work, the poem still remains timeless. For Martin Espada, social activism has always been an important factor of his life, as his father became a well-known social activist in Puerto Rico when Espada was a child. Both of these works are effectual and well-executed, yet *Imagine the Angels of Bread* is a more effective and convincing piece because of the timeless allusions and extraordinary conceits while using several purposes to convey an important message. Nevertheless, it is works of art such as *Changing the World* and *Imagine the Angels of Bread* that will transform the world as we know it.

## Social Change Pictures

### Possibilities



### Changing the World

