

The Mirror

SPRING

2016-2017

New Paltz Student Wins Statewide Contest

Here is Aracely's award-winning essay:

Eighth grader Aracely Watson has been awarded first place in the statewide "If I Were Mayor" essay writing contest. She submitted the essay under the guidance of Ms. Denman.

If I were Mayor, I would build sidewalks in all residential neighborhoods in the village of New Paltz. The middle and high schoolers in our district need to walk home from school if they live in town, but in most neighborhoods there are no sidewalks. The students either end up walking in the streets or people's yard which is unsafe and angers the residents of those houses. These sidewalks would be of great use especially on Halloween when young children are running through the streets. Also, if there are sidewalks people living in the village will feel safer walking downtown instead of driving. This would decrease traffic in town and provide more available parking for tourists. I feel the increase in the amount of sidewalks in New Paltz would provide safety for both walker and drivers along with making a positive impact in our community.

If I were Mayor, I would put LED streetlights on all main roads. Due to the college population, there are cars driving in the middle of the night. We also have a high population of deer in our community. The streets are normally dark, and when a student is tired from studying or extracurricular activities, they may not be able to spot the deer while driving. This causes accidents and other problems that could have been solved, if only there were lights to illuminate the street. LED lights are brighter, longer lasting, and consume less energy than the regular bulbs that are used. These lights would brighten the roads and provide a safer environment to all members of the community.

If I were Mayor, I would do beautification in the form of "mini gardens" along the sidewalks and around the streetlights that I would build. These gardens would be composed of flowers indigenous to New York such as the Celandine Poppy, Jacob's Ladder and Dutchman's Breeches along with many others. This would pose as a small, positive visual change and provide numerous opportunities for the community. For instance, for community service students could take care of these "mini gardens" and make sure they are being maintained. Also, people could "adopt a post or piece of sidewalk" and for a set amount of time and money, they would have the authority to design these "mini gardens" on the condition they would use plants indigenous to our location. These gardens would help us connect to our community while making it more visually pleasing to those who come to visit and provide funding for new initiatives.

13 Reasons Why

By Ashya Farris

My name is Ashya Farris and I am in 7th grade. I just finished the young adult book *13 Reasons Why*. This book is about the importance of all life. The book truly draws you a picture of the struggles of being a teen and all of the pressure of growing up.

The book is not for everyone and you need to take it seriously. The book shows you the impact that one person can have on your life. This book shows you that negative feelings and attitudes can influence people to do very regrettable things. If people thought before they did or said something, the world could be a happier place.

13 Reasons Why explores the issues of bullying and suicide. I myself have been bullied on more than one occasion. I know what it feels like to have people not want you there. But, through it all, I remembered to be myself, realizing that it doesn't matter what people think. It only matters what you think! If you're ever feeling sad or helpless, remember there are people who love you, respect you, and want to help!

Snowy Hill

By Bella Guizler

Musical laughter
Fills the air,
As I watched him
From afar

Snow in my hair
Teeth chattering
Cold feet
Light breeze

Smiles so bright
Snowflakes fall
Moving so fast
He goes right by

The following is an excerpt from an article originally posted in *The Oakland Press*....

Oxford High School students begin project called "13 Reasons Why Not" By Monica Drake

In the popular Netflix show "13 Reasons Why," the main character gives 13 reasons why she wants to die. But, for students at Oxford High School, they are giving 13 reasons to live.

Beginning this week and continuing for 13 days, a recording of a different student will play during the morning announcements. In the recording, played for the entire student body, the teens reveal a problem they're struggling with. At the end of the recording, instead of blaming someone, the students thank a classmate who has helped them.

This project was the brainchild of Dean of Oxford High School Pam Fine in memory of Megan Abbott, a freshman who contemplated suicide four years ago.

"I watched the series. I thought it accurately depicted the problems that teenagers in high school are facing now. But it was incredibly troubling to me that suicide was portrayed as being, almost, inevitable, like she had no other option," said Fine.

"The idea was to come up with 13 reasons why not, because that was not portrayed in the show. ... Even though it can get very dark, there is always hope. Our message is that there are no 13 reasons why. Suicide is not an option."

[You can read the entire article online.](#)

Fun Facts about North America

By Ivelisse Cabrera

- The US is the 4th largest country in the world by land area and 3rd by population.
- Canada is the world's 5th largest country.
- On February 25, 2013, the estimated population of the US was 315,568,000.
- After the attack on Pearl Harbor during WW2, Canada declared war on Japan before the U.S. did.
- "Canada" is an Iroquoian language word meaning "Village."
- Basketball was invented by a Canadian.
- The chihuahua is named for a Mexican state .

Elting Memorial Library's Youth Advisory Group

By Erik Jimenez and Henry Millman

The Elting Memorial Library's Youth Advisory Group is a group of young volunteers who help out with events like the Magic School Bus "Mini-golf in the Stacks", the Valentine's Day event, and the upcoming Mythological Day!!! We recently completed our "Mini-golf in the Stacks" which was a great success and made more than \$900 for the library. Also recently completed was the *Books Alive! Program*, a production of several books acted by the children of the youth club. On March 12th, the Books Alive! event was based on books such as One Fine Day and Anansi The Spider. Students from the Middle School participated, including Erik Jimenez, Henry Millman, Ben Fromm, and others. Also our mythological explosion, which should be happening soon, is open to the entire community and will hopefully be very fun. Mythological Day is June 11th and will be filled with many people dressed as gods, goddesses, and many other mythological creatures. Activities will include learning about mythology of many different cultures around the world and food will be provided from each culture.

The Mirelock: A Dramatic Story

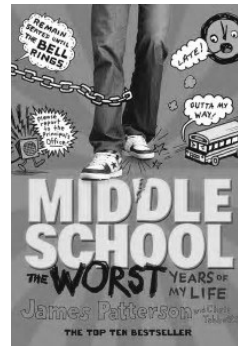
By Henry Millman

What lurks in the dark, unseen? What waits in the night for prey to come unknowingly into its monstrous jaws? The Mirelock, that horrible *creature of the fens* does. The last man unfortunate enough to cross its path was a boy named Samuel Winnersburg. The young boy walked into the Drakewood Fens lake at night, on a dare. He was fine until thought he saw a light and strayed off the path. He fell into a small pool of water and, as he was getting up, he saw two glowing green eyes, the glint of moonlight on foot-long fangs, and the scaly, green, reptilian skin. And then it was all over.

Three days later, a ranger found a skull, strangely crushed, in a hollow tree, long scratches running down the bark and red stains on the ground.....!

Middle School: The Worst Years of My Life Book vs. Movie

By Annsley Fischer



Middle School: The Worst Years of my Life by James Patterson is very different than its movie version. The movie is extremely different because in the books characters had different attitudes than they had in the book. for example, the sister was

kind of rude in the movie. However, in the book she seemed to be very good and well behaved. In the movie, the brother is younger but in the book he was the same age as the main character. The main character in the movie goes into the school at night and sets up the pranks but in the book there are less pranks. Normally many people think that the book is better than the movie, but in this case they are equally as good. You should read the book and watch the movie and see what you think. Which one did you like better?



We surveyed teachers about the books that have inspired them over the years! Perhaps you can find your next Independent Reading book from this list!!!

Ms. Hughes

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith

I read this book over two days when I was in 7th grade. My grandmother was watching me for the weekend and I blindly picked this book up to cure my boredom. I couldn't stop reading about Frances, a second-generation Irish-American teenager from Brooklyn. She and her family suffered through poverty and her story reminded me of stories I had heard from my grandparents. This book made a huge impact on me and changed the way I selected books going forward.

Ms. Potenza

Flags of Our Fathers by James D. Bradley, Ron Powers

This book was recommended to me by a 7th grader about 6 years ago. It is a huge book, historical fiction, and about war. All three of those things made it FAR from anything I had read or liked reading. The student, who was not much of a reader himself, insisted that it was a great book. He was a great student, so I read it over summer break. I loved it! Since then I have read other historical fiction books and liked them also. Thanks to this book and the student I now have a whole other genre of books that I like to read.

Ms. Ibrahim

All These Things I've Done By Gabrielle Zevin

In this futuristic novel, chocolate and coffee are illegal and water is scarce. The black market consists of fruit and vegetables and there is a curfew for teens. This book explores tenacity and perseverance as you travel through the life and times of the main character. The author weaves a story with a delightful voice- it's as if she is telling you a story and you never want it to end. She draws you in and you become immersed in this literary world. This is book one of a trilogy- it's a wonderful read and makes you look at the world around you with fresh lenses :)

Mr. Constable

The Young Patriot, by James Murphy

About five years ago a local author visited the New Paltz Middle School to discuss a new book he wrote. The book was an account of a 15 year old Connecticut boy who lied about his age to join General George Washington's Continental Army in 1776. The War was going badly for Washington's army, and young Joseph Warren experiences many challenges and failures at first. Showing tenacity, Joseph and the Continental Army begin to change the tide of the War to the American side. Eventually the determination and persistence of the men fighting for freedom won out. The book reminded me that teenagers are capable of showing extreme courage, and can be an influential force in any endeavor. I recommend the book to all Middle Schoolers, and I have plenty of copies to share.

Ms. Judy Smith

I loved reading many books, especially old Grimm Fairytales, which were pretty gruesome. However, one book that stood out and I read several times was *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, by Mark Twain. Tom Sawyer is a boy who lives with his Aunt Polly and spoiled cousin, and is always getting into trouble. He skips school and gets neighborhood kids to do his chores (like painting a fence). Most of the story is comical, but also scary, like when he feels he has to run away with his friend, Huck Finn, because they witness a murder and the bad man is after them. The writing is very detailed, which makes the reader feel like they are part of the story, but some of the wording can be offensive to some. The reader has to remember this book was written over 100 hundred years ago (1876).

Ms. Denman

The Glass Castle by Jeanette Walls

I didn't come across this memoir until I was an adult, but I would have enjoyed reading it during my teenage years. It is a piece of nonfiction that often gets people who have not regularly read nonfiction to become fans quite quickly. Walls is an amazing storyteller with a story to tell. Her unique and troubling childhood keeps readers entranced as she describes their difficult and sporadically changing lifestyle. When she was 3, she was rushed to the hospital for accidentally burning her legs while she was cooking her own hot dogs. Her narrative continues through days spent roaming the desert, her family's life living in a shack by the railroad, and it weaves the tales of her siblings in as well. At the end, most readers have a new appreciation for their own families as well as respect for Walls because she truly embraced challenge, exhibited strength, and became a successful, intelligent woman.

Mr Halpern:

Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy

I have no idea when I first read this book, or how many times I have read it, but I do remember always having a copy of it around. I think that I had seen the movie first, and it inspired me to pick up the book, which really was a massive upgrade. The absurdly British sense of humor, coupled with the outlandish sci-fi characters and settings and the rarely impartial descriptions of the *Guide* itself all combined to create a novel I could not put down. I still dip into the works of Douglas Adams from time to time. And I rarely leave home without a towel.

Ms. Sharpe

From my later elementary and middle school years, I remember loving *Walk Two Moons* by Sharon Creech, *A Wrinkle in Time*, by Madeleine L'Engle, *Letters from Rifka*, by Karen Hesse, and *Catherine, Called Birdy* by Karen Cushman. I loved stories about kids having adventures, and I loved historical fiction. I still do! Lately, I really enjoyed *All of the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. The author of that book did an amazing job of weaving two people's stories together. *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates, was a great and powerful book that I read recently and will never forget.

Ms. Pilz

La Sombra Del Viento by Carlos Ruiz Zafón

I read this book in college and it was so captivating that I could not put it down. The book starts out in 1945 in the old city of Barcelona where Daniel Sempere's father takes him to the "Cemetery of lost books" by Julian Carax, there Daniel's father allows him to pick any book he wants. Daniel finds himself intrigued by this labyrinthine library of obscure and forgotten titles that have long gone out of print.

But as he grows up, several people seem inordinately interested in his find. Then, one night, as he is wandering the old streets once more, Daniel is approached by a figure who reminds him of a character from *La Sombra Del Viento*, a character who turns out to be the devil. This man is tracking down every last copy of Carax's work in order to burn them. What begins as a case of literary curiosity turns into a race to find out the truth behind the life and death of Julian Carax and to save those he left behind. A page-turning exploration of obsession in literature and love, and the places that obsession can lead.

Ms. McNamee

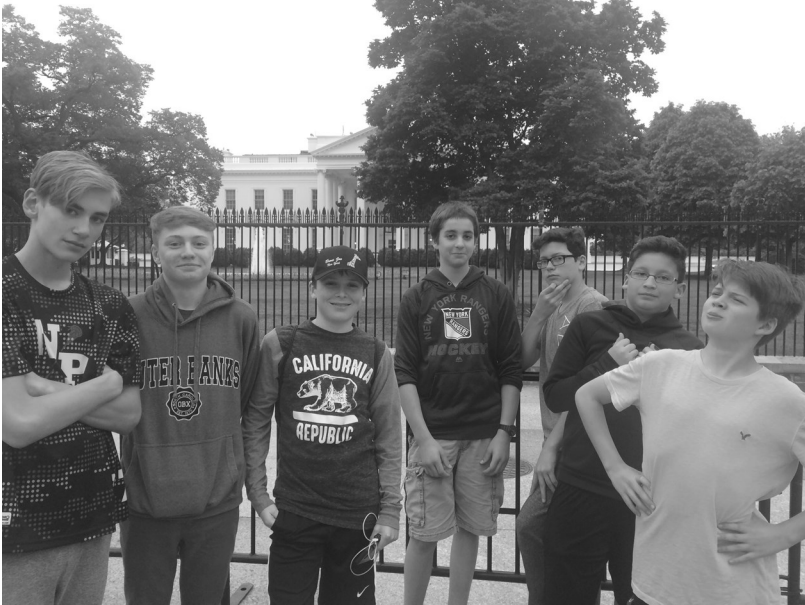
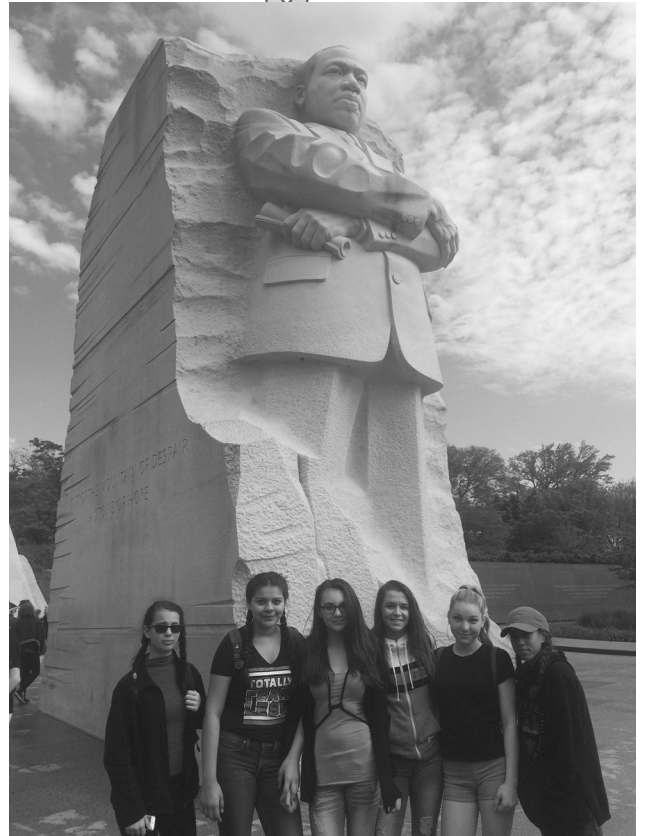
I have two favorites: *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck. I was definitely *not* an avid reader growing up, but these two books pulled me in (mostly due to the anger I felt regarding the treatment of the main female characters). These characters were treated horribly, but they demonstrated great strength and perseverance.

Ms. Nosovsky

This may be rather hilarious, but the *Harry Potter* series is one of my all time favorite book series. I was actually 10 years old when the first book came out and totally bummed that I did not get a Hogwarts letter. I have been to every book release and midnight movie, including *Fantastic Beasts* and *Where to Find Them!* Each book has dragged me deeper into a world filled with mystery and magic - Always.



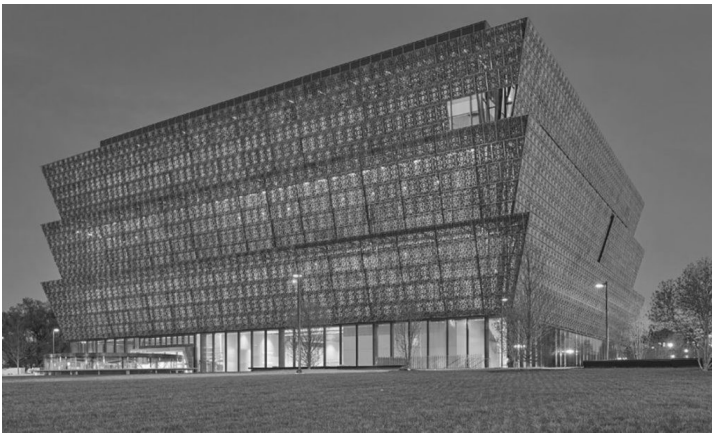
8th Graders Go To Washington D.C.



A New Museum to Explore

By Annsley Fischer

This year was the first year that the 8th grade got to experience the *National Museum of African American History and Culture* while on the Washington D.C. field trip. The 19th museum in the Smithsonian system, it is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, art, history, and culture. It opened September 24, 2016, but is still the hottest ticket in town! Every day there are long lines to get in, but we were lucky to have been provided passes by our tour company. The museum has 6 levels - 3 levels above ground and 3 levels underground. The first three levels explore slavery and bondage, while the top three floors explore African American achievements and influence. There is a ton to see and the lines were long, so most of the 8th grade did not see everything. But that was ok because there was so much to see on the other 3 levels. Overall the museum was very fun, interesting, and a privilege to visit.



“A Wintry Night “

By Ivelisse Cabrera

The sky is dark and the ground is white.
The world is peaceful on
This wintry night.
No one is around, not a
sound to be heard.
Not a laugh, not a car,
Not even a bird.
For a Moment, it's
just the snow and me
I smile inside.
I just feel so free

7th Grade Symposium

By Bella Guizler

On March 7th, all 7th graders participated in a school-wide Symposium where they created projects for our literature circle books. The books were *The Giver*, *Matched*, *The Big Empty*, *City of Ember*, *Maze Runner*, *The Hunger Games* and *Among the Hidden*. We each got assigned to a book title, I got *Matched*. After a few weeks of reading and writing about the books, we got to create the projects with our groups. The main idea of the symposium project was to show that we had a deep connection to the plot, theme, and characters in the book. For this project, we were allowed to work in groups. I paired up with Riley Stutzman. Each group had to create an exhibit, like in a museum. First, we'd create an 'object' or symbolic representation of our books. Afterwards, we would have to write the museum label, describing the project and the process and materials it took to make it.

The projects came out great! All of the kids had different yet unique ideas. We did a museum walk and looked at all the projects. At the end, we had to 'grade' ourselves and our partners. That was my favorite part of it all! It was a fun experience overall, thanks to everyone for it making enjoyable!



The History of *The Lion King!* By Ivelisse Cabrera and Kaitlyn Weinerman

Disney's *The Lion King* is a unique cartoon. Here are a few facts about the highly grossing animation that you may not know about!

- Originally, the movie was going to be called "King of the Jungle", until the creators realized that lions live in the Savannah Desert, not the jungle.
- For inspiration, the creators spent two weeks in Africa. They also had real lion brought to the animation studio under the supervision of an expert named Jim Fowler.
- "The Lion King" was the highest grossing movie worldwide in 1994 with a total of \$772.6 million around the globe. It is also the highest grossing hand-drawn movie of all time.
- Pumbaa was the first Disney character to fart.
- The song ' Hakuna Matata' was a phrase heard by Tim Rice during their African trip, which means 'no worries'.
- The story was influenced by Shakespeare's plays *Hamlet* and *Richard III*.
- In actuality, Scar and Mufasa were not originally designed to be related. In early drafts of the script, Scar was a rogue lion and not Mufasa's brother. They look different because their relation was added later but their original designs were kept.
- In the real lion world, male lions can have dark manes, some of them even turning black, due to age or genetics. However, Scar was Mufasa's younger brother, and Mufasa doesn't have a darker mane so most viewers conclude that Scar was given a black mane so as to distinguish him as the evil lion, rather like the bad cowboy always wearing a black hat.

Being in the School Play

By Anna Adams

Back in January and part of February, I was in the Middle School production of *The Lion King*. Being in the play is one of the highlights of my year. I was in the play last year, in the 6th grade ensemble. This year I was a "lioness singer" and was a part of almost all of the musical numbers. I was even a giraffe at some points! That meant I had to change my costume very quickly and run around backstage! It was very hectic backstage, with stage crew members moving around preps and people going on and off stage. It was well worth it though once you got onstage!

Aside from dress rehearsals and the weekend performances, we also went to Barnes & Noble and performed a few numbers as a fund raiser. We also went to Woodland Pond and performed for the elderly citizens of the community. When we first arrived at Woodland Pond and saw the pool and the hair salon, we wanted to live there! Seventh and eighth graders in the play also got to go to see the real Broadway production of *The Lion King*. Even though I had already seen it twice, it was incredible.

The school play opens up a lot of great opportunities and experiences for the students involved!

The Coral Reef is Going Extinct

By Annsley Fischer

Almost half of the world's coral reef has died in the last 30 years. Scientists are racing to ensure that the rest survives. The threat to coral isn't something of the future; We are losing them right now.

Even if global warming were to stop right now scientists predict that more than 90% of corals will die by 2050. If no major steps are taken to address the issue, the reefs may be headed for total extinction. Reefs are ecosystems that provide habitats for one in four of all marine species. In addition, the reefs serve as barriers that protect coastlines from the full force of powerful storms. Corals are used in medical research for cures to diseases including cancer arthritis and viral infections.

Corals release a substance called calcium carbonate, which forms protective skeletons around them. The skeletons grow and take on vivid colors. Corals have a symbiotic, or mutually beneficial relationship, with algae that live in their tissues and give them energy. Corals are particularly sensitive to changes in temperature. A rise of just 1 or 2 degrees Celsius can force the corals to drive out the algae. Coral's skeletons turn white in a process called bleaching and can only survive at higher temperatures for a few months. Areas in the central Pacific were hit the hardest and about 90% of the reef was destroyed. The reefs have also been affected by pollution, coastal development, and overfishing.

It is a no win game if we do nothing. We all need to be aware.

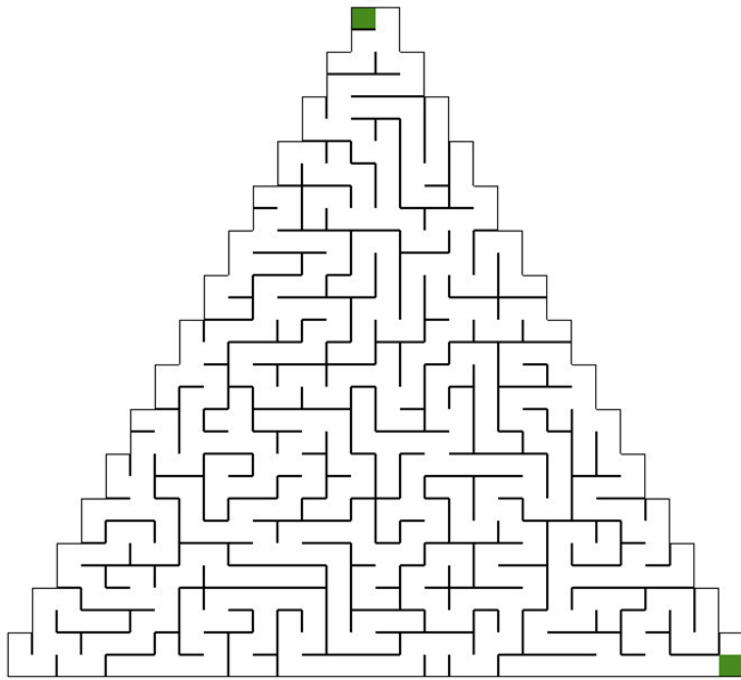


LAPTOPS VS BINDERS by Ethan Swanander

My name is Ethan Swanander and I am a 7th Grade student attending the New Paltz Middle School. After being in this school for over a year and a half, it has come to my attention that too many students are getting GOAL for losing their papers. If you don't know what GOAL is it is an after school program when a bunch of kids that didn't hand in their prep tasks to their teacher are forced to stay after in the library to do it as a punishment. Another problem I noticed throughout my time in my school is that too many papers that are handed in are too sloppy to read and it makes it hard for teachers to grade. But don't worry I have a solution! My idea for decreasing all the problems I listed is to replace binders with laptops. I feel this is a great idea because my school offers the feature on the computers called "Office 365". Office 365 is a feature on a laptop where you can type essays, summaries, or even your homework. Also on Office 365 you have the ability to share what you type. I feel that there's no need for binders when we have all this technology. In my opinion I hate binders. Papers can fall out easily. If you forget to attached the rings after putting in a couple of papers as soon as you walk - "BOOM" - it's an ocean of papers around the hall.

Personally I like the idea of replacing binders with laptops but also I know that there are careless people in the world that would not be careful with their laptop and possibly break it. That's the main reason why some people don't like the idea of laptops replacing binders. But the school doesn't need to worry about that because it would be the students/guardian responsibility for their laptop. Plus if teachers feel like the student is not responsible enough for their personal laptop then the teachers should have a choice to make them go back to using a binder.

In conclusion I say the New Paltz Middle School should replace binders with laptops. Thanks for reading my article if you have any questions feel free to ask me in school.



Spongebob Word Search

G T R E E D O M E C D D I E V B S P N
 L R M I C V Q D Q R V Z W G I P N A U
 R C H U M B U C K E T A G K O C B T U
 H M E R M A I D M A N J I N D H V R R
 P F U N O T K N A L P N G W H Q F I G
 N O I E A Q O E X P I E R S Y P X C Q
 D K Y R A G D O I B B T M Q T Q S K H
 Y I Z A U E I N O O K R E U T W N R W
 Q S E K H N E T B Q K U Y I A R Q C K
 K Q F C B A T N V R S X S D P D J E F
 R U I J P O P E A R L V A W Y Z G F V
 U A R P M E H B I N K K Z A B H B F G
 S R L S X D S V I A P W F R B I Y U K
 T E Y O B E L C A N R A B D A J D P R
 Y P H Y R R A L I I Y B Y N R I N S O
 K A E E X A C F J H D O L I K R A R L
 R N B J E L L Y F I S H W Z C B S M Y
 A T Q I B M T T V Q J F K B B J F L O
 B S J Q A Y U G C T E N I R A L C M B

BARNACLE BOY
 BIKINI BOTTOM
 CHUM BUCKET
 CLARINET
 GARY
 JELLYFISH
 KAREN
 KRABBY PATTY
 KRUSTY KRAB
 LARRY
 MERMAID MAN

MR KRABS
 MRS PUFF
 PATRICK
 PEARL
 PINEAPPLE
 PLANKTON
 SANDY
 SPONGEBOB
 SQUAREPANTS
 SQUIDWARD
 TREE DOME



"If you are always
 trying to be **NORMAL**,
 you will never know
 how **AMAZING**
 you can be."
 - *Maya Angelou*

Newspaper Staff

**Anna Adams, Ivelissa Cabrera ,
 Emma Clements , Ashya
 Farris , Annsley Fischer ,
 Isabella Guizler, Eric Jimenez,
 Henry Millman, Delia Nocito,
 Madison Rosario, Ethan
 Swanander, Aracely Watson,
 Kaitlyn Weinerman. Roy
 Wilms**

**Advisor:
 Miss Hughes**

**Special thanks to
 Mr. Chervenak and members
 of *Reflections*.**

Do you see a rabbit or a duck?

