

## High School Writing

From "Language Reflection" by L.H.

To me, language is a tool that helps me to better communicate with other people. I use two different languages in my daily life: Chinese with my family members and Chinese friends, and English with teachers and friends who speak English. As I paid more attention to the way I talked to different people, I became more aware of the different ways I speak. Even if I use the same language, my tone, my way of forming phrases, seems to be changing as I talk with different people. Sometimes the changes are so slight that I can barely feel it; sometimes they are so apparent that I would say there are two different people speaking if I wasn't the one who was doing it....

... Now that I come to think of it, the different ways that I speak reflect the different aspects of myself. William Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players." I play different roles in front of different people: to a teacher, I am a good student with appropriate manners; to a friend, I am an enthusiastic friend; to my aunt, I am a child who shows respect to her; to my mother, I am her little daughter who never grew up. As my language shifts, my personality, my attitude, changes as well.

## Middle School Writing

From "Swimming Success" by S.M.

My eyes fall on the glass-like pool, lost in the moment of the sun's rays reflecting off the water into faint rainbows. I run my hands along the familiar walls, pondering over the thought of dipping my sore feet in the hot tub; however, the closer I get to the warm pool, the more the hot scent of chlorine, Gatorade, and sweat burns in my nose, stinging all the way to my chest, as if I inhaled a bottle of pepper spray. I glance at the clock and every second stretches into a minute, time completely stopping as I realize there is only 15 minutes left until my only chance to redeem myself, or to let it all go.

"Apology Poem" by A.S.

I shattered the Chinese vase that you kept your money in and gave it all to the garbage truck guy.

I am sorry, but he looked poor and carrying garbage for a living sounds like torture.

We gazed longingly at the gingerbread house that you were saving for Christmas day. Then at midnight we crept downstairs and ate it.

I apologize, but the bright colored candy and sweet frosting was calling our names and we couldn't let anyone else get to it first.

We were playing kickball in the driveway and I kicked the ball into the window of your new convertible.

Forgive me, but they really shouldn't have made the windows so low or the car so short. You know I'm not the best athlete.

I made a small volcano for my science project in your bedroom. I thought things were going pretty well, until it exploded and made vivid, red stains on your white sheets.

I apologize, but it was only supposed to be an experiment and I think your bed looks better with more color on it.