Twists and Turns
By: Sophie D.

"Hey dad!" I called to my father from the downstairs kitchen.

"What?!" he yelled back.

"Did you update the Flash yet?!"

"Yeah!"

"YES!" The Adobe Flash Player on our family computer was out of date, and it wouldn’t me go on some of my favorite websites such as YouTube and Animal Jam until it was updated. Dad had kept putting it off, so I couldn’t play. I kept on nagging about it. When he finally said yes, I ran over to the computer so fast I almost tripped over my own feet. Yes! Yes! Yes! I thought excitedly, I slipped into the computer seat and clicked on Animal Jam, which I had bookmarked.

I finished reading the updates and hurried to the diamond shop to buy the new den, and decorated it. When I was done, I felt proud of my work. But then, I remembered there was a new maze adventure. I took a shortcut to get to the adventure.

When I arrived, I was shocked to see that there was other people already in the maze. I didn’t expect to see that. Oh well. I thought, I came to a turn in the maze and stopped to think. The right side looked like it went on forever. I wonder if I should go that way? I quired. While I decided I took the time to notice that the maze looked like a cornfield. How clever! I thought. I finally decided to right, and followed all of it’s crazy twists and turns.

I reached another turn, and went right again. It went a little ways, but turned out to be a dead end. I sighed and turned around to go to the other side. I ended up at a four-way turn, with a crazy sign that had a bunch of arrows pointing all over the place. Huh, that’s weird. I thought, I clicked on the sign and a message popped up. It read, "Haven’t you seen this sign before?" No, I thought awkwardly. I chose to go to the top right, but it was a dead end. At the end of it though, was a chest. It looked different than the chests I’ve seen in other adventures. It was blue. Cool! I thought. I clicked on it to open, and a message popped up. It said, "You need a key to unlock this chest!" Well that’s new. I thought sarcastically. Where’s the key?

I ran around a little longer and found another dead end. There was a key at the end of it! But, it was a yellow key. I picked it up anyways. It could help me later.

I came across another key. This one was red.

"Can I pick up two?" I wondered out loud to myself. I clicked on the key, and my yellow one disappeared, replaced by the red one. Darn! I thought angrily. Oh well.

I continued running around like crazy, until I found one dead end too many. I typed a message to everyone saying,

"If I see one more dead end, I’m gonna scream!"
I continued the maze until someone else, who was a penguin, (I was an arctic wolf) asked me.

"Why?" I was typing in an answer when someone else, who was a fox, answered for me.

"Because it is annoying!" They shouted through text. I deleted my text, and replaced it with.

"Yeah." I then rounded a corner and came across another dead end. That's it! I thought. I clicked on the chat bubble and typed in.

"AHHHHHHHHHH!" I turned around and continued. The same fox who answered for me told us. "I'm gonna try that too." About ten seconds later they yelled.

"AHHHHHHHHHHH!" I laughed inwardly and went on.

I found yet another dead end and typed.

"AHHHHHHHHHHH!" Before the text even went away, I rounded a corner.

"Oh hey! I found the middle!" I typed. "Yay!" I get my prize and as I left the maze I thought that it wasn't really necessary to freak out like that. It's because nothing in life is impossible. It turns out, I'm not bad at mazes, because I have conquered the maze.
Attacked By Chickens!
By: Sophie D.

The weather was as cold as winter in Antarctica. There was an icy wind blowing on us and I knew that winter was approaching. I had on a green-blue Northface coat and a blue hat with a big puffed ball on the top and yarn braided on the sides. It had sequins that made out a fox head with glasses. I was with my two friends, Arabella and Allison. We were all cold and energetic, running all over Arabella’s yard. She had invited us over and we played a Warriors game as we always do. We had run to Arabella’s barn and were coming out. I saw a little pen in the distance and was curious about it.

“What’s that?” I asked, not really caring if I got a reply or not. I dashed over there to investigate. I was also making a video on my Ipod. We arrived at the pen, which turned out to be a chicken coop, panting our hearts beating fast. We were looking at the chickens and talking about them for a little while. The chickens’ pen door was open with a branch on either side of it, allowing them to go out even though none of them did. Arabella eventually yelled,

“Run away from the chickens!” She and Allison ran to the side of the coop, but I stayed put. The chickens that had moved to the door went to the side of the coop where Allison was. I thought that was pretty funny.

“They’re moving toward you!” I exclaimed. Arabella had run off somewhere, but Allison had stopped. She came back over to me and we looked at the chickens. The whole time laughing hysterically. We stopped laughing as if on cue, and watched a light orange one that was named after my Warriors character, Hollyleaf. She came closer to us at the branch. We started to back away from the chicken nervously. Hollyleaf moved faster towards us. She then climbed out of the pen and ran towards us.

“Ahhhhhhhhhhhh!” I screamed at the top of my lungs while running away. Allison was at my side. We reached a good distance away from them, then burst out laughing. In between laughs I managed to say,

“It...was...chasing us!” The whole sentence sounded like a laugh. Thunk! Allison fell to the ground she was laughing so hard. We watched Hollyleaf from a distance, still laughing. Another chicken, a rooster, joined Hollyleaf. A new round of screaming and laughing came. Allison fell over again. Pretty soon all the chickens came out of the coop, strutting around like they owned the place. It was like they were saying, “Ha Ha! Little girls are afraid of chickens!” There were chickens all over the yard. Even though it was pretty funny, at the same time I was also scared. You know whenever you’re scared about something, you usually have this weird feeling in your stomach? I call it “the nervous feeling in your stomach”. I had that feeling then. We finally decided to be “brave” by not running away from the chickens. They approached us, and I got scared.

“Nnn, they’re getting closer!” I said to Allison, “Arabella, help us!”
As the chickens closed in on us, I thought about the strange times I had with Allison. We were weird in most of them.

The present faded as I started to think about a time Allison and I were on a website, Animal Jam. I had logged on and followed her as usual. She was playing Doctor Who (as usual). She was apparently a crazy version of the Doctor, and she had a banana. I had said, “I'll be your banana!”

“YAY!” She had replied. I changed my fox’s look to all yellow with some other accessories. I came back to the room as Allison was saying,

“Let’s go to Sarepia Forest and be AWESOME!”

“YEAH!” I screamed along with everyone else in her den.

We went to the Sarepia Forest and walked around. Allison had said, “I am the Doctor!” I followed her and said,

“And I am her banana!” Some random person came up to us and said,

“You’re weird.”

“Yeah, we know.” I had said. The memory faded and I came back to the present just as Allison stated,

“Yeah, help us!” They came closer. I screamed and suddenly, Arabella ran in between us and the chickens.

“Defender!” She yelled. Arabella to the rescue! I thought. The chickens ran away when Arabella came, and we all laughed.

“Did you get all of that on film?!” Allison asked me after I ended the recording.

“Yup.” I replied.

“Can we see it?” Arabella asked.

“Sure!” I answered. I was excited to see that event again.

We watched the recording laughing hysterically. It made me cough.

“That was hilarious!” Allison laughed. After we recovered from laughing (again), Arabella asked us,

“Do you guys wanna continue the game?” We agreed, and ran away towards our Warriors “camp”, leaving the chickens behind.
Splash!
By: Sophie .D.

It was a dark night. I had no idea what time it was, probably around eight o'clock. I was with my friends, Allison, Taylor, and Paige. We were at Allison's sleepover party. All of us were bored out of our minds, so we were in the kitchen talking and drinking some pop. I had a can of root beer. I loved the taste of it, fizzy and delicious. The reason this happened, let's just say my friends are hilarious.

We were having a conversation about Animal Jam, a website we all play on. I was finishing the last of my root beer. I had my head up to make it easier for me to get the rest when Paige told us a really funny story. I tried to hold it in, but I couldn’t help it. I laughed. The root beer squirted out my mouth and in the air like a fountain. It happened so fast, I didn’t have a chance to move before it came back down. It looked like little brown raindrops speeding towards my face. Splash! It landed on my face and some spilled on the ground. It was everywhere. I had no idea that I had that much root beer in my mouth. Everyone froze what they were doing, in shock of what just happened. Someone laughed. We didn’t know who, but everyone joined in, breaking the ice like warm sunshine after a cold winter day. I felt my face turn red with embarrassment. They are laughing at me! I thought. But, I am laughing with them. The embarrassment went away and turned into pure joy. It’s going to be awhile ‘till they forget about this! I predicted. The scene was so hilarious, we could hardly stop laughing.

Allison’s dog came over and started licking up the root beer on the ground. Eww! I thought as Allison’s mom rushed into the room.

“What happened?” She asked while grabbing paper towels to mop up the mess on the ground.

“Paige,” I said accusingly, “made me laugh while I was drinking root beer.”

“Oh!” Mrs. Wall laughed. We continued to laugh about the “incident” as we helped clean up. It made me think that friends are always there to
have a good laugh with you. I had a feeling this won’t be the last time something like this happens!
Have you ever wondered what it would be like to live in an airport? Well that’s Andrew’s life. In the story “Fly Away Home”, by Eve Bunting, Andrew, the young boy, is having a hard time without a home. We believe he wants to feel safe, protected, and welcome in his own house. If you don’t agree, you might just change your mind.

Why we think Andrew is having a hard time without a home is because he wants to feel safe. The airport isn't his home and he doesn't feel safe. This is important to notice because everyone should have a home where they can at least feel safe. He wants to live in his own house where he can feel safe. But, most people would probably say that Andrew is safe with a roof over his head and someone who cares about him, we, however think that he isn’t safe if he always hides from security and is basically living his life in secret, that’s not a very good life to live. He wants to live somewhere where he doesn’t have to hide to feel safe. The text states, “Sitting together will get you noticed faster than anything.” This shows that you can’t always feel safe if you have to not get noticed and have to blend in. It also means you can’t have many friends or talk to people you know if you live at an airport, and that isn’t a very safe feeling.

Another way one could view this is because Andrew wants to feel protected with a home. When you live in an airport you aren’t always protected. For example, the airport isn’t always a safe place and and sometimes Andrew might not feel protected enough. Furthermore, if you have to live most of your life in secret at an airport, it’s not a very protective feeling. This is significant because most people don’t normally think about the less fortunate and that is not good. It is important to notice that Andrew and his dad always try hard to blend in, such as dressing like most people and constantly changing their location. They must not feel very protected because of that. The text states, “At dead time there aren’t many people
around, so we’re extra careful”. This shows if you had to hide in the place where you live, you definitely wouldn’t feel protected.

Above all, Andrew wants to feel welcome in his own house. Andrew doesn’t feel welcome in the airport because he isn’t supposed to live there. Even though Andrew has his dad with him, Andrew still feels unwelcome. The text states, “My dad and I live in an airport. That’s because we don’t have a home and the airport is better than the streets. We are careful not to get caught.” This shows that he wants to live in his own house where he knows he is welcome. To add on, He wants to feel welcome at his own house and not live in an airport where he knows he isn’t welcome. This is significant because no one should ever feel unwelcome in the place where they live.

After all, Andrew wants to live in a place where he can feel safe, protected, and welcome. You definitely would not want to live like that, well neither would the characters in the story. Hopefully, you have learned to never take your house for granted.
Fly Away Home Theme Based Literary Essay
Narrative #2
By: Sophie .D.

Lots of people always go to sleep in their bed in their warm homes, not even thinking about having to hide in an airport for shelter. They don’t even think about anyone being less privileged than they are. Especially not little kids. In “Fly Away Home” by Eve Bunting, Andrew, the main character, shows us that not everyone is as privileged as we are. Some examples are like having a safe place to sleep, having great paying jobs, and having a home.

To start, not everyone is as privileged as we are, like having a safe place to sleep. Many people don’t realize that there are people in the world who don’t even have a bed to sleep in. They are always at a risk. In “Fly Away Home", Andrew and his dad have to constantly move around the airport and sleep sitting up, so nobody gets suspicious of them. It says, “Dad and I sleep sitting up. We use different airport areas.” They can’t be safe in one certain area every night and they can’t lay down. It would get them noticed and kicked out. It is also important to notice that all the other people in the airport don’t seem to think that maybe not everyone in the airport is there to travel. Even though Andrew and all the other people who secretly live in the airport mean no harm, the security still tries to hunt them down and kick them out of the airport. I think this is not fair, since they have nowhere else to go. Those people all go to sleep in their warm bed at night, thinking they had done a good deed to the airport, when really, they may have possibly put more people in danger. This basically means for homeless people, sleeping in the airport is the safest thing they have because there is nowhere else for them to go.

To follow up, not everyone is as privileged as we are, like having great paying jobs. Lots of people have jobs that give them enough money to allow them to have a home and food. In “Fly Away Home” it says, “Dad’s a janitor in an
office in the city.” Janitors don’t get payed as much money as one may get having a job as a lawyer or a businessman. This is important because they don’t normally offer homeless people better jobs, which causes them to have no home, and barely be able to afford food. It’s even worse if they have a family they need to care for. This is significant because some people can actually afford a good life get the good paying jobs, while the people who can’t get bad paying jobs. This isn’t fair because how can they get their old life back this way?

Some people might not agree that homeless people can’t get very good jobs. While sometimes this is true, people may still think so, since then they can’t get the good jobs. I disagree with this because how can the homeless people ever actually get a home? I think the people who don’t really care about them are greedy, since they basically want all the good job opportunities to themselves.

Above all, not everyone is as privileged as we are, like having a home. It might be hard to believe for some people that there are people in the world who don’t have a home. There are many people who end up homeless because something happened to them that changed their life. But sadly, not in a good way. In “Fly Away Home”, Andrew and his father have to live in an airport because they lost their home. It is important to notice that in the text it states “I’d like it to be the way it was, before Mom died.” This is significant because it shows that many families that lose their homes lost a family member who helped them live life how they are supposed to. Even though Andrew is with his dad, you can tell he still clearly wants his mom back. Many people don’t really care or don’t realize how a good amount of their population desperately needs their help, but many people aren’t willing to help.

As you can now tell, a big theme in “Fly Away Home” is to teach you not everybody is as privileged as we are. It’s also a fact that many people hardly think about the many people in the world who don’t have a safe place to
sleep, great paying jobs, or a home. This book teaches you about the people who don’t have many of the things other people have.

Compare and Contrast – Literary Essay
By: Sophie .D.

Narrative #3
You may have heard of the books “The Maze Runner” by James Dashner and “Stung” by Bethany Wiggins. But, have you ever wondered what they might have in common? Both of the protagonists in the two books have a friend who sacrifices their life for them. This shows that a main theme they both share is that only a true friend will make sacrifices for you.

In “The Maze Runner” the author shows us that only a true friend will make sacrifices for you. In the beginning of the story, Thomas makes some friends with the Gladers. In the middle of the story, Thomas saves one of his friend’s life in the Maze, but he goes a little crazy and burns important information, and ends up killing himself. At the end of the story, Thomas and the few survivors end up in a place with a bunch of crazy scientists who supposedly “rescue” them. He almost gets killed by some crazy Glader, and his best friend saves his life by taking his. The lesson here is clear: true friends are people who make sacrifices for you.

In “Stung” the author shows us that one person you don’t think you can trust in the beginning, can be your most trusted protector. In the beginning of the story, Fiona meets someone who provides her somewhere to hide for the night. She ends up in a camp and meets a man who she fears. In the middle of the story, she forms a friendship with the man she thought she hated. Near the end of the story, the man gives Fiona his only bulletproof vest, so that she wouldn’t get shot. Even though he may get shot too. The man sacrificed his life, to help protect Fiona. Fiona was very thankful that the man cared enough to risk his own life to help hers.
If you become friends with someone, they are only your true friends if they make sacrifices for you. It applies to real life too. Even if your friend doesn’t save your life, they might still take the blame for something you did, and other things too. Both “The Maze Runner” and “Stung” show that friends make sacrifices for friends. In both books the main characters have someone who sacrifices their life for them because they care for the main character’s safety.

Post on Demand – Papa’s Parrot

By: Sophie .D.

Imagine having someone who cares about you so much, and you felt the same right back. Then, suddenly you take them for granted and stop visiting them every day after school. This happens to Mr. Tillian and his son, Harry in “Papa’s Parrot” by Cynthia Rylant. Harry learns that you should never take anything or anyone for granted. The act that Harry chose to do caused Mr. Tillian to feel unwanted, to be lonely, and to start to lose the special bond he had.

To start, someone taking you for granted can make you feel unwanted. Lots of people lose interests through time, which may cause them to not spend much time with someone who does have those interests. Someone doing something like that may cause the person to feel unwanted, because the other person isn’t with them much. This very situation happened in “Papa’s Parrot”. The text states, “When Harry entered junior high school, though, he didn’t come by the candy and nut shop as often.” Harry’s father, Mr. Tillian, owned the candy and nut store, and was delighted whenever Harry and his friends stopped by his shop. Harry changing his interests in junior high caused Mr. Tillian to feel neglected
and unwanted, even though Harry may have not wanted him to feel like that.

Some people might disagree that changing your interests can make someone feel unwanted. While sometimes this is true, I feel that more often someone feels unwanted than not. People who don’t agree might not realize that they might make someone feel unwanted with their actions. Lots of people can hide their emotions well, and others sometimes don’t pay attention to how their friend may feel. Everyone has felt unwanted at least once in their life.

Also, someone taking you for granted can cause you to be lonely. In “Papa’s Parrot”, Mr. Tillian got a parrot and named it Rocky, once Harry stopped coming by his shop so often. The text states, “Rocky was good company for Mr. Tillian.” This shows that Mr. Tillian got Rocky to keep him company. Even with the bird, however, Mr. Tillian must have missed human company. Mr. Tillian started talking to Rocky, and Harry saw him do this as he walked past his father’s shop on the way home from school. He thought it was strange and started to get more and more embarrassed of his father. I think that if Harry had asked him about the bird, maybe Mr. Tillian could tell him why and they could become close again. Instead, neither of them did anything. This happens a lot in real life, and when nobody does anything, someone starts to feel lonely.

Lastly, someone taking you for granted can make you lose the special bond you may have had once. Whenever people start to go their separate ways, they drift apart and lose their special bond they once had with each other. This is what causes a lot of good friendships to end. In “Papa’s Parrot”, Harry and his father were so close when Harry was young, that he considered his father as a friend instead of a parent. Later in the story the text states, “Mr. Tillian was always talking to the bird, so Harry kept walking.” Harry started to think Mr. Tillian was weird when he got the bird. They weren’t close “friends” anymore. Best friends can lose each
other too, if one of them starts to form an opinion on the other friend, and doesn’t like them for that, it can cause drama and have them question if they are really friends.

Now you know, taking someone for granted can cause them to feel unwanted, lonely, and can make you lose the special bond you had once. The theme of “Papa’s Parrot” is to never take anyone for granted, because you will regret it in the end. This is a good lesson for friends too. You must always treat people to the fullest so that they never feel for granted.