

OPEN MIC POETRY READING



SPECIAL PRIZES

VISUAL POETRY

TALENTED POETS

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Foreword

When I first introduced the idea of a Poetry Slam project, the class looked at me like I had completely lost my mind. End of the school year, sunshine outside and I come in talking about English poems. Written. And performed. Voluntarily. The reactions? Somewhere between polite horror and open rebellion. "Writing poems is hard enough in German!" someone muttered. "And now in English? And on stages!"

And yet – here we are.

This book is more than just a collection of texts. It's a showcase of voices: honest, reflective, messy and powerful. Based on everything that was covered in the EF English curriculum – from diversity and sustainability to identity, young adult fiction, the world of work and finding one's place – each student created a Poetry Slam that turned abstract themes into personal statements. But they didn't stop at writing. They gave and received thoughtful feedback, revised drafts and – most impressively – took part in cringe-worthy but effective voice training: from dramatic breathing techniques to over-the-top articulation drills. English-speaking confidences? Definitely unlocked. The result is a collection of unfiltered and deeply individual texts. These performances weren't just spoken, they were lived.

As a teacher trainee who only joined the class in May, I couldn't be more grateful. You welcomed me with open minds and trusted me from the very start. That trust made this project possible and unforgettable.

So here it is: your voices on paper. May you always keep speaking your truth even when it's uncomfortable, even when it's loud, even when it has to rhyme.

With pride, respect and lots of awkward vocal warm-ups and workshops in mind.

Mrs Pazan

June 2020

Finding MyPlace In The World

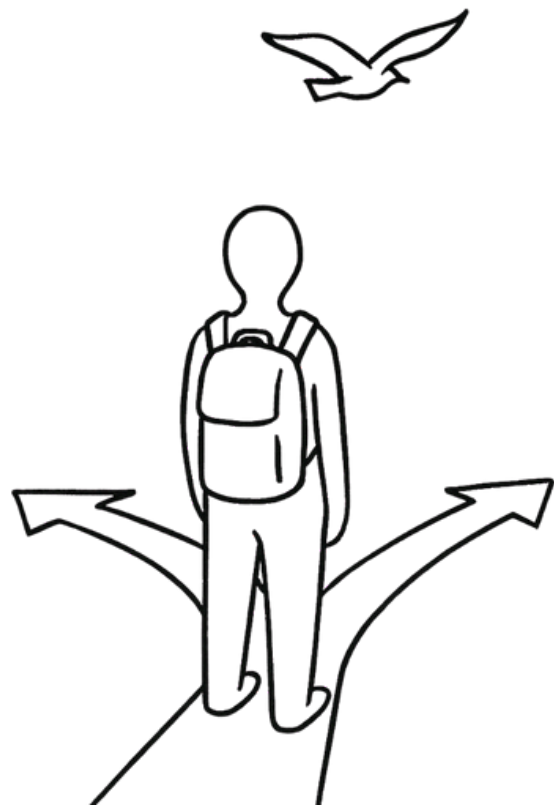
Figuring It Out

Ela Öksüz

Where do I want to be?
Can we even make such a decision
or is the way already chosen?
Is the place where I want to be still
far ahead,

Or have I walked it already un-
consciously instead?
Many opportunities are given at
certain times, living in a world full
of endless choice,
The future looks diGerent for every-
one, every path has its own voice.
Moving far away or staying in the
hometown we did not choose,
Led by hopes and fears, afraid of
something to lose.
DiGerent emotions at certain ages
and timelines,
Cannot give up the dream of mine.
Losing friends and getting to meet
new ones at an eventful night,
These could last longer than the
last ones, right?
Leaving your old family to build y-
our own life and having your own
children around,
You cannot always be bound.

Do I want to be stuck in one
place?
Getting a job, having big dreams,
you have to chase.
The system's not fitting for every-
one, everyone's having diGerent
chances,
At school they say you can rise
but not everyone gets it done in
the same way it is expected, get-
ting rejected from your dream
job,
The pressure enhances.
So here we are, lost and free,
trying to find out who it is we want
to be,
What are we trying to find? Not
only a place but also in your
mind.



The Chaotic Sea

Lina-Marie Rech

Growing up is kind of like
sailing on an ocean.
You're sitting in your tiny
boat, trying to conquer all
the challenges of the sea;
Just like you're maneu-
vering through life.
Waves are coming at you,
clashing onto the planks
of your boat
and you're wondering:
"Can I even do this? Can I
make it?"
Then the waves calm
down a bit and you're
reassured. You can make
this.
But all of a sudden giant
waves rise out of the sea
again and you're back to
doubting yourself.
You see, the ocean chan-
ges as fast as life changes.
Growing up, years can
pass in no time because
people change, we change
and it all becomes chaotic
and hectic.
It all moves so fast while
you're in the middle of it,
feeling lost and helpless.

A sea of opinions is
surrounding you, enclosing
you in your small boat.
They make you doubt if y-
our way is right, if your jour-
ney is right
and you might even change
your way to fit others.
I feel tiny against the big
waves, the big questions of
life.
"What do I want in life?
What's important to me?
What makes me happy?
And who truly am I?"
They overwhelm me and
there's no guide on how to
figure this out.
I just continue my journey,
trying my best, waiting for a
safe harbor in sight.
But in the end, we all make
it. Somehow.
And we do it in our own uni-
que way.
Growing up is diGicult and
it's okay to take it slow.
To take small steps or even
some steps back.

We should look at oursel-
ves, focus on us and not on
others in their boats
and what they're doing or if
they're ahead.
We shouldn't compare our
journey to others,
since all journeys are diGe-
rent and special in their
own way.
And when you arrive at a
harbor, you're stronger
than before.
You've overcome the chal-
lenges of sailing on the
ocean and you truly know,
what your interests,
your strengths,
your weaknesses are.
Who you truly are.
You not only found a safe
harbor from all the chaos,
you found yourself.



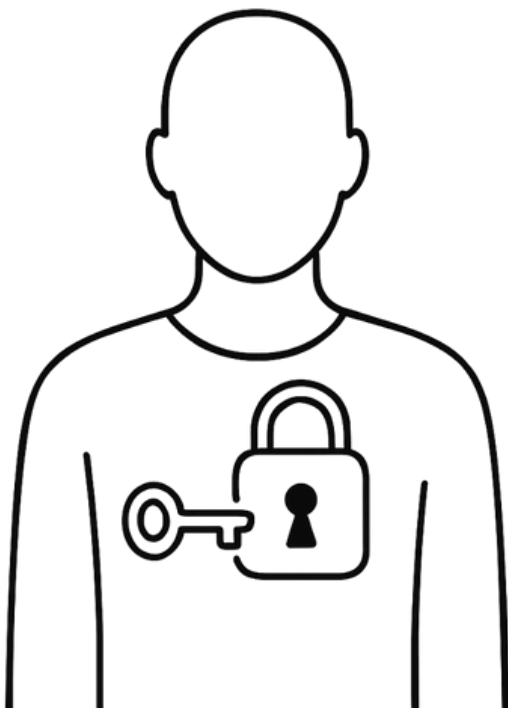
Stay

Samuel Schmid

In a world of fleeting moments,
I search for a place to belong,
A place where time stands still,
Where songs never fade and
moments never go wrong.

I long to be a character in a tale,
To stay when others depart,
To hold onto the beauty of life,
And never let go of the heart.

But change is necessary, I know,
And leaving is a part of the game,
For growth and learning await us,
And we must embrace the pain.



So I'll wander through wrong
places and people,
Learning to be lost and confused,
For I know that one day I'll find my
way,
And be the best version of me any-
one ever knew.

Trying hard to find my place,
Am I really that much of a disgrace?
I try to fit in, but what really matters
lies within.

My soul is fading, I feel degrading,
wearing black
I get attacked.

Don't you see?
I've already told you,
What matters lies within, can't pe-
ople see,

That I am me, and I will not change
for anybody.

I want to fit in, but be myself
at the same time...

How To Achieve Success

Aaron Dammaschke

The world is full of drugs, addicts, and people who behave badly; Maybe this is because of love they never felt, or good parenting they never had. Everybody is trying to level up; live their life happily and successfully. For most people, it is important not to spend their lifetime dully. But what actually is your true desire, where do you belong? What is it that actually makes people strong?

Becoming the best version of yourself could be a desire. You must be disciplined and believe in yourself in order to be ranked higher. To become successful, you need to do the hard work nobody else wants to do.

In sports, for example, this never did. could include running in the cold or with a broken shoe. So what should you do now? You probably want to know.

The most important thing is to just simply start. Start taking care of your bad habits, your laziness and your excuses, while keeping a good heart. Starting a disciplined life will be hard, But the greater will be the reward.

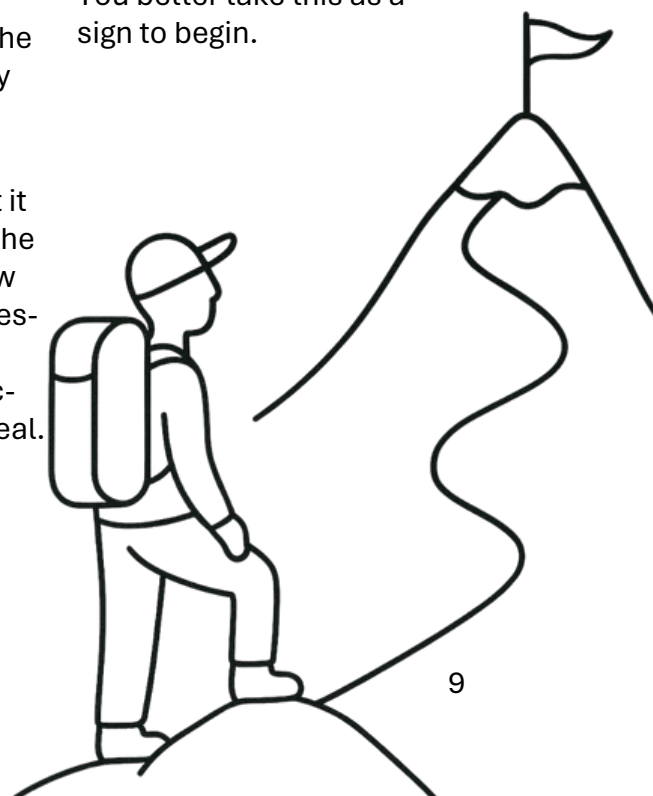
Always remember: doing something is better than doing nothing. It is important that the work is the weather or your clothing. Do the things you do right, and do something for your

goals every day; No matter if the weather outside is hot, because it's July, or more pleasant, because it's May. And be aware of people wanting you to quit, They are often afraid of the hard work they very likely

Let it be said to you, that it is important to keep up the discipline, no matter how tired, exhausted or depressed you feel, If you want your own success to be big and very real.

Keep in mind that working hard on your goals will most likely lead to bad mental health, as well as sometimes even depressive thoughts; And most importantly, a hard way of life characterized by giving up other leisure time activities, alongside the consistent feeling of fighting against massive swords.

But when you stay consistent with the hard work, you will see your own success and you will feel joyful. You will realize how important your dedication was and the success and abilities you gained will feel extremely cool. So, if you want to become successful and win, You better take this as a sign to begin.



Somewhere Else

Youssef Kobrosli



Have you ever dreamt of going somewhere else? Being somewhere else?

Staying somewhere else?

Travelling is more than taking a plane and finding yourself in a totally new place.

Travelling means discovering something new.

A new place.

Not just the coGee shop that opened around the corner. Maybe even more than that.

How about visiting a new continent? On your own? New people.

Don't you think getting to know the diversity of human beings is worth the sacrifice?

Which sacrifice?

The sacrifice of leaving everything behind. Not forever, but opening yourself up to new perspectives.

A new culture.

New music.

The kind of music you don't find on Spotify.

New food.

More than McDonald's, Burger King and KFC.

A new language.

Maybe even sign language.

Why else do you wonder why horizons there are yet to discover. The world is big, and still you hear people talking about how granular things are and in need of protection. And we fly around with planes? Yes, we do. And we know we should be protecting the no first see important.

Being somewhere else, we are protecting the no first see important.

Being somewhere else enriches your view of the world.

Your view of people who aren't like you.

Your view of cultures that

that you then go on to like.

Sometimes all you want is to stay in bed all day.

Without wanting to go anywhere.

But sometimes... the last

place you want to see is your bed.

Full of energy, yet not sure where you want to go.

Being too inspired to be tired. Do you know that feeling?

Good news. Travelling doesn't necessarily mean packing your bag, going to the airport, boarding, flying, landing, picking up your baggage, leaving the airport and going out into the world.

Every dream you have at night is a reflection of your thoughts and who you are. Teachers get mad when you start daydreaming in class instead of doing your work. But maybe we should daydream way more often.

net.

Otherwise... it might take its last breath soon? Our planet?

But my family lives somewhere else.

In a place far away.

What about FaceTime?

No, that's way too impersonal. We should care more about our relationships.

What about writing letters?

No, thanks. Do I look like a cave person or what?

So it seems like the only reasonable solution is actually—what a surprise—going somewhere else.

In your mind. Physically. However you like. Whatever you prefer. Do whatever feels like you.

Some people just can't get themselves to leave their comfort zone.

But do you know what?

If you're scared to do something, then do it scared!

Is there a right place?

Daniel Kraus

It's 6 am The day begins. I crawl
out of bed Ready to win. But
where's the excitement What do
I do? Sadly, I have to go to
school. But is this where I
belong Just sitting here, listening
to y'all? I'd rather be walking
outside a- lone Or sit at home
and stare at my phone. But
would it be better staring at my
phone? Just wait and listen to
this poem. Everyone's saying:
"Just think to yourself: What's
better for you? You're meant to
learn and go to school. You're
meant to get a better job. You're
meant to get better." It never
stops. But sometimes I think, is
this right for me? Have I found
the spot, sitting under a tree?
Yet again we all sit together at
school Trying our best to keep
friends that are cool. Trying our
best to get through with good
grades To show our parents and
not be ashamed.

Have I found my place
Doing what I do
Or is it all wrong?
That thing I pursue?

I don't know...

What's with the future
Standing right there,
Waiting for me
To move up the stairs?

What do I want?
Where should I live?
Do I have good friends?
Is Santa a myth?
Where will I work?
Am I able to do?
Is this all just talk
Or the life I'll pursue?

All of these questions
Stacking up in my brain.
But it's all nonsense
Here's a story to explain

A bird in a forest,
Living in peace.
If there is danger in sight
It hides in the trees.
If the place is wrong it
moves to another
From Europe to Africa,
leaving its brother.
But the world can't be
perfect
And struggles will stay.
You can leave your home
And still be prey.

There are kids living through ter-
rible wars.
But guess what, it's not a good
place in the world.
You should try your best
To change what can change
To make yourself better
And the world a beautiful place.
Here is something I have been
told
And something I have been trying
to hold:
Be nice to the one next to you
And your surroundings will
change.
Give them a compliment
And talk with grace.
That's my life, that is what I
learned
Through the years I have lived on
this beautiful earth.
Everyone's equal,
A creation of God.
Don't judge others
In a world that is cold.
Just be yourself
In a world full of hate.
Your place is there,
Where you set your own trace.



Ego Death

Giulio Pieri

What are you?
Are you left?
Are you right?
Are you trying to fit in everyone's
sight?
You collect aesthetics, but you
don't feel them
You dress with a theme, but you
don't really get it
Buy your personality and behave
like a mannequin,
The content is not important, the
attention matters now
No culture, no passion
Just superficiality and coldness
Change style like a chameleon
Survival is your focus
But perhaps you don't know or you
don't understand

Why does it matter so much to ex-
plore and be interested in what lies
behind
The meanings, the expression
Why is this person saying a bunch?
Passion
The force that moves the world
In bad and good ways
The fire of the human being
The point
What today is seen as embarrass-
ing and pompous
What needs to be hidden a little
"Don't be so passionate about it"

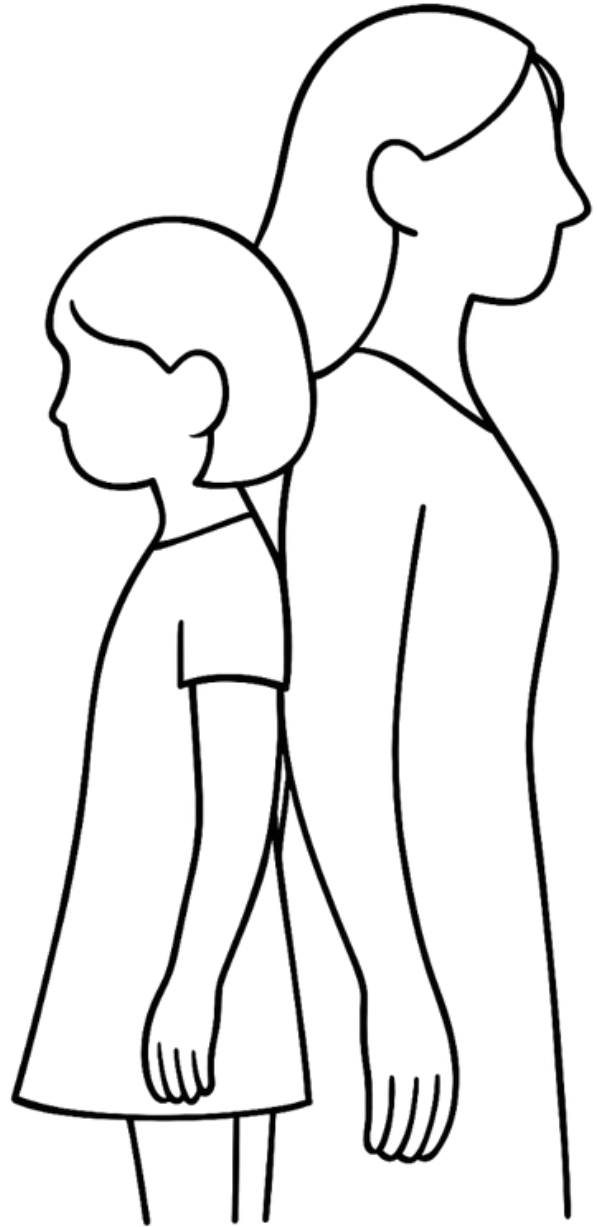
In this type of world, with this
type of mind
Creativity ceases to exist
Experience false experiences
Copied and repackaged
For the sake of profit
It's the trap that's repressing
Killing
The fire that feeds our mind
Hurts less not to think than to
think too much
Then you die before you're dead
Ego death



All and Nothing

Luisa Ullrich

Where shall I start?
Don't wanna bet on one cart.
Want all the possibilities,
Making new memories,
I want all — and that now.
But this world is so big.
Aren't I still too little?
Little in knowledge,
Little in spirit.
The urge to feel vivid,
It's the most breathtaking thing.
But at the end I can't wait
To slam the door behind me.
So,
Just a moment of appreciation for
my inner child,
That everyone wants to listen to,
But no one wants to talk.
Just a moment of silence for my in-
ner adult,
That everyone wants to talk to,
But no one wants to listen,
That has to glisten,
Every moment, every second,
Because life is a test, they say,
And the moment you think you've
aced it,
Right then, you get chased
By Pythagoras and Goethe.



Chances and Challenges of Diversity in Our Society

The Way of Life

Lutz Koman

A world with colors full of joy
DiGerent people and origins
Voices rising, blending strong

Each one's story sings along

From every land a light shines bright
Cultures dancing into sight
Hand in hand we shape the day

Painting peace in our own way
Life is hard and often true
Sometimes you will have no clue

Everyone gets their own chance
So life may feel like a trance
Challenges here and there
In life they are everywhere
Sometimes small, sometimes big

And sometimes they will make you sick
A challenge called 'racism' is very hard
Racist people are often not that smart

Also the news and the newspaper
Make the faces of people not shine brighter
People with certain social

backgrounds are often excluded

But we as a community need to make them included

If black, white, short or tall

Everyone has their value
Everyone should shine like the morning sky
Even if you just be your own you

I mean, look at the best footballers in the world
Cristiano Ronaldo
He came with nothing out of nowhere
He worked hard and made himself feel joy
He made the best out of the worst
Also Lionel Messi
He was so small and not that strong

So do the things that make you happy

Do what gives you joy
And don't always be that unhappy

Unfortunately, you maybe will not be that boy
So be what you want to be
Express your feelings and let others take part
Let them all see what you see

And don't make each other's life hard

Social media, like Instagram and TikTok
Makes every problem feel like an unnecessary rock

Everyone laughed about his look
He did his own thing
And now he is one of the best



The Colour of Opportunity (Or: Where Chances Wear Shadows)

Leonard Ullrich

A chance is given in life
Followed by a challenge
It feels like a dive
But is there a balance
Between red and blue
No, I don't think so.
A parrot has no choice
But is this his real voice?
Don't be like others, be yourself
Because in the end
You really want to stand out.
Something won't go out of my
mind
The challenge is grabbing me from
behind
The opportunity can be seized just
like that
While I don't recognize the black
cat.
White, black and yellow
Colours that represent more
But only without a fellow
Or is this a lore?

Something you can't leave behind
It follows you step by step
Others are getting blind
Like the background is so big.
Some people ignore it
Some people have it
Some people hate it
Many people judge.
So does everyone have the same chance?
Does everyone have the same challenge?
Some people have an advantage
It is there all along.
Social media is a problem
People getting excluded
Feeling alone in a diverse area
Many getting discriminated.



Society

Julian Dietz

We speak our truth, we raise our voice, In
noise and silence, we find our choice. A
spark of change in every post, We stand
for those unheard the most. From TikTok
clips to paper news, The world reacts,
debates, and views. We shape the world
with what we share, From dance to pain,
from joy to care. But still, the shadows
creep in slow, Where hate and fear begin
to grow. A lonely soul in crowded space,
Still searching for a friendly face. Yet
through the cracks, the light breaks free,
A world of what we can still be. With
every story, truth is sown, Together we
are not alone.

Some people judged for how they look,
Not by their heart, not by their book.
Their voices quiet, their pain ignored,
But we stand up and use our word.
When people fear to just be free,
Because of race or who they be,
We say their names, we see their fight,
And stand with them to make things right.
Some live with less, while some take more,
The rich get richer, the poor stay poor.
We fight for fairness in every place,
For kindness, truth, and equal space.
Our world is a big maze
And some souls are like a dark cave.



Exploring Options and Opportunities in The World of Work

Is His Work Unworthy?

Adriana Petrossian Sireki

Nobody thanks him.
Nobody sees him.
He watches.
Listens.
Coordinates.
Collects information.
Checks the safety
And lands safely.
One mistake in his job
Could cost lives.
Everyone cheers when the
plane lands
But not for him.
Someone else gets the at-
tention.
They clap for the pilot when
he lands.

Smile at the crew when they
leave the plane. Hug their
families when they see
them again. He? He listens
to the next ap- proach. And
the next. And the next. Just
the people who are present
get the attention. But
people who work in the
background like him, The
ones who stay unseen, They
are not recognised. Some
don't even know that this
job exists.

Tired of doing work that no
one ever claps for.
He loves it.
It's his passion.
But doing a job in which pe-
ople don't even know you
exist —
Can that be passion?
He asks himself:
Is this really enough?
Can silence be satisfac-
tion?
He watches the sky
But no one watches him.
No one looks behind the
curtain.

No one sees him.
Again and again.
When they say "perfect
landing"
They don't mean him.
When they say "thank you"
They don't think of him.
Is his work unworthy?
Is he unworthy?
A human who saves us too.
Without really touching the
plane.

The fear of not being
enough.
The anxious feeling of
being left out.
The quiet anger
Not shouted,
But held back.
Turned inwards.
The fight with himself.
The hate that overcomes
him.

The discontent that builds
in him.
The jealousy that grows
when others are seen.
He saves lives.
But who saves him from
his loneliness?

Sometimes,
He wishes for one thing.
To hear his name said out
loud.
To be known,
Not famous.
Just seen.

Because
To be seen is to exist.
And still,
Tomorrow,
He will go again.

No applause.
No medal.
No smile.

Just a headset.
Just a voice.
Just the sky and him.



What Do You Wanna Be?

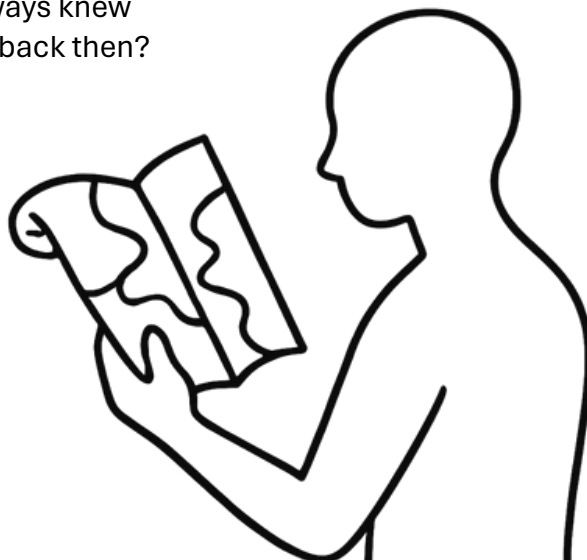
Paul Grothe

They ask me,
What do you wanna be?
Like it's a thing
Like I should know already

Like I've got the map
The plan, the guide
Like I've got it all

But I'm here
With a million ways open
A mix of pressure
And quiet hoping
Artist
CEO
TikTok star with millions
Astronaut
But I'm still figuring me out
Because how can I choose one forever route
Some days I want to fix the world
Other days I just want peace
Some nights I scroll through job ideas
Some mornings I just want to sleep
I've got dreams like playlists
Changing every week
And every adult
Seems to pretend
Like they always knew
But did they back then?

Some say pick "smart"
Some say pick "safe"
But I say
What if you just picked "brave"?
Try
Fail
Learn
Repeat
Find what fits for you
Not just what's neat
Work is not just suits and ties
It's who you help
How high you rise
How true you stay
To your inside
I don't need to rush the race
I just need some space
To find my hopefully forever place
Not a perfect plan — just a spark
Something real
To forever leave my mark
So ask me again
What do you wanna be?
And I'll say
Still becoming — let's see



Take Your Time

David Kaul

As a student in the 21st century, there are quite many options for what to do after clock on everything, like there's a right graduating. But this exactly can be so age for doing every single thing. But the overwhelming for many people like me. truth is — everyone's journey is diGe- There is so much to do or to study that it rent, and that's totally fine. Just because feels like an ultimate decision you have to someone is ahead of you in one area do- make, even though it isn't always final. It esn't mean you're behind. You're just on feels hard, It feels overwhelming, It feels your own path. complicated! As a young person, you So let me tell you: please enjoy your y- shouldn't be struggling with the decisions outh and never rush into something just you make; you should feel free and good in because you feel forced to do so! your decisions and in being yourself. You have to remember that you can always change your path if you don't like your deci- sions afterwards. Just do what you feel like! Let me give you a quick example from my life: I always thought I had to decide right after graduating what to study, so I wouldn't end up not having a degree while being 25 or so. But over time I learned that it's so important to use your time wisely and rushing into a job is not what you should do. And even if that means that you travel a lot, that's totally okay and often even helps you grow up later.



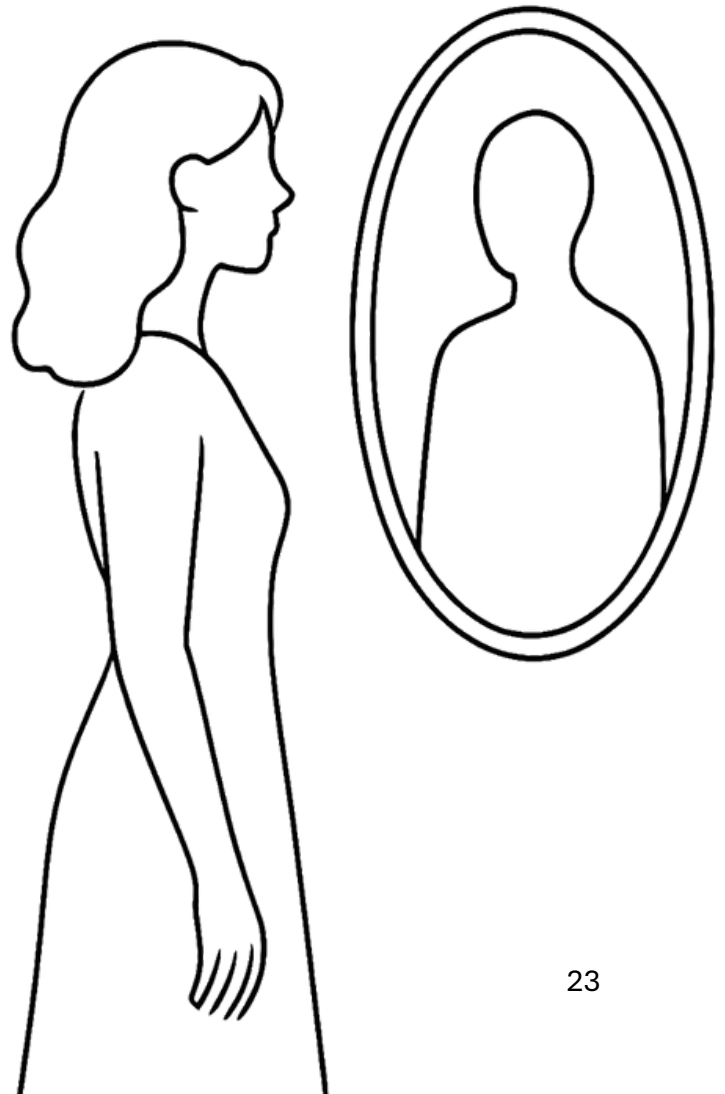
Shaping Identities In and Through Young Adult Fiction

Who am I?

Nathalie Wiebe

Who am I?
Everybody seems to know – except me
I am a sister, a daughter, a friend
But who am I without the others?
I am a girl, 17 years old, interested in science
So - am I what I like?
I like logic
But there is no logic in me
I laugh when others do - not when I want
That is not logical to me
So where is my logic? Where is my me?
I don't know
And I know even less how to find it
I know I am not my relations to others, not
my grades, not my appearance
So - am I what I am not?
No, that is only what I am not, not what I
am
So – what am I?
I am what I have experienced, what I want,
what I feel
This is me – definitely
But what did I experience, what do I want,
how do I feel?
It changes
I experience new things every day, I want
new things every day
Sometimes I feel all at once, sometimes I
feel nothing
Some days I feel too loud, other days too
silent

That all is never the same So –
am I never the same? Yes, I
changed But something is still
me It doesn't change What is
this 'me'? Maybe it hides from
others But not from me I know
who I am But finding words is
hard Maybe I don't have to
find any Because I have this
feeling Of who I am And that is
enough



Who am I?

Jana Huebner

I know I am But who am I? I don't know how to find out	They ask, "what do you want to be?"	But maybe wholeness isn't being certain
Everybody sees me diGerently	As if I'm not already something	Maybe it's being honest about not knowing
For some people I'm a good friend — for some I'm not	As if becoming is more important than being	Maybe identity isn't a solid thing
Sometimes I'm a good sis- ter — sometimes I'm not	But what if I want to become nothing	Maybe I just don't need to define it
So how can I find out whe- ther I'm a good or bad per- son? Is it even important to know? People change	Just for a while	What if the question "Who am I?"
So do I become a diGerent person with time?	To the quiet	Isn't meant to be answered
	To the part of me that doesn't speak in words	But asked
	I am the guilt I carry	Again and again
	For things I didn't say	Reminding me that I am here
	For the kindness I never gave	That I am still becoming
	And the times I let myself	Even without clarity

Can I even find out who I am down if I keep changing?	The weight of my decisions	And that is enough
They say, "just be yourself"	No one saw me make	Because maybe being lost just means the map hasn't been drawn yet
But what if I don't know who I am not just skin and bones		I am not finished
		But I am enough right now
		As I am

that is?	Not just daughter or friend
What if I'm still searching	Not just what I show of me Or what they think they know
Still building	
Still breaking apart	
And putting pieces back in a new pattern	If I forget who I was
Not better Not worse Just diGerent	To become who I am
They call it growth	Do I lose anything
But sometimes it just feels like shedding	Or do I just trade it in
Like losing pieces of myself	For something new?
And calling it progress	Sometimes I envy the ones who seem so sure
	Who wear themselves like a favourite sweater
	Comfortable
	Familiar
	Whole



