



POWER
OF THE
PEN®

Ohio's Original Interscholastic Creative
Writing Program for Middle Schools

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE

Where's Grandpa?

by Greta Kremer, Grade 7, McKinney Middle School

I felt the sun's warm arms wrap about me. They soaked into the worn wooden benches, stroked the wide, paved sidewalk, and kissed my cheeks. We sat on one of the benches, Grandpa and I, quietly tossing crumbs to the birds on the sidewalk in front of us. Benches just like ours lined the sidewalk, offering a creaking but welcoming place to sit.

I studied Grandpa, who was watching the little brown sparrows peck at the crumbs and flutter about, hopping and twittering into each other. Grandpa reached into the chicken feed bag we had brought along and tossed a few more breadcrumbs to them. His hands shook. He was thin and frail, his skin draped loosely over his bones. His glasses were so thick I couldn't see his eyes clearly. His hair was wispy white and couldn't quite cover all of his head. Even though it was warm he wore a flannel shirt and heavy pants.

He slowly turned to me, a vacant expression painted across his face.

"Where are we?"

I swallowed and glanced about. Spongy, healthy grass sprung from the ground, green and dewy. Neat trimmed trees and more benches were scattered throughout. The pathway, clean and swept, trailed through, winding its way aimlessly. Near the center was a playground, brilliantly colored in reds, yellows and blues with children shrieking, laughing and climbing.

"This is Oakwood Park, Grandpa."

His face was still blank.

"You used to walk with Grandma here. And when I was born, you used to take me to the playground over there."

I pointed, but he stared at the birds.

"That's your house."

I pointed to a neat row of houses a ways off, but he didn't look up. Instead he turned to me.

"Where are we?"

The sadness sank into my heart and weighted it down. My Grandpa was lost and couldn't be found. He was broken and couldn't be repaired. ❦