



**Special Edition of the  
Rutgers Center for Literacy Development Newsletter:  
The Pandemic Quick Writes**

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Vol. 2



**A BRIEF NOTE FROM  
THE DIRECTOR**

Dear Colleagues,

We asked school children to do some quick writes about the pandemic. Here is one we received from Soham P., Grade 4, Mountainview Road School, Hanover Township.

*“This is a stressful time for most of us but I like to look at the good things about it. One thing good is the fact that we are being homeschooled. We just wake up early, do our homework, and then we get to spend some time with family members and not wait for them to come home. We have no pressure when we are learning from home. We can take as many breaks and still study. Although we are not seeing friends we can still message and facetime.”*

Thank you to the teachers who motivated their students to write. They are: Eileen Bancalari and Kelly Leary from Bethlehem Township Schools, Amy Swanson from Tinton Falls Schools, Mrs. Veltre from Linden Schools, Jenny Ahn from Cliffside Park Schools, and Christina Kalavrouziotis from Hanover Township Schools.

This is the second edition of our Special Newsletters. We hope you enjoy these articles. Newsletter 3 will be out soon.

Thanks to Kelly Clarida, Sharon Masso and Brianna Rinaldo for putting this issue together

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## PANDEMIC QUICK WRITES

I like on-line schooling because there are no distractions from my friends. Also, I don't need to get off the couch to do my work. It's comfortable!

***Alba Sanchis, Grade 2, Thomas B. Conley School, Bethlehem Township Schools***

I really like having school at home because I get to do stuff I don't get to do at real school. I get to jump on the trampoline with water for our Fun Friday. I also get to have a Star Wars math book.

***Owen Lynch, Grade 2, Thomas B. Conley School, Bethlehem Township Schools***

I love remote learning because I can chill with all my stuff and take breaks whenever but I do still need to finish all of my work.

***Arthur Aniceto, Grade 3, Cliffside Park School #3, Cliffside Park School District***

I am feeling excited for not coming to school because I can just sit at my computer almost all day. I'm excited about virtual school because I feel like I'm in college.

***Rohan Zaveri, Grade 3, Cliffside Park School #3, Cliffside Park School District***

During this stressful time I have been really board not being able to see my friends or go out like we used. I also have not been able to see my new baby cousin. I have enjoyed being able to do gymnastics longer than I did before. I learned that I like school more than doing school at home.

***Michelle B., Grade 4, Mountainview Road School, Hanover Township School District***

During this pandemic, people are learning to be strong. We are losing the things that are most important to us like family members. We are having thing taken away from us due to this pandemic such as hobbies, careers, or even sports. This pandemic had made us learn to be strong in life and to play our role which is staying home. I learned by staying home we are not only saving lives, we are putting a stop to this pandemic which would result in everything going back to normal. Although it is pretty boring staying home all day, everything will go back to normal faster by following the rules by staying home.

***Glenn Heredia, 7th grade, McManus and Soehl Middle Schools, Linden School District***

**Students from Tinton Falls were asked to write their own version after reading this  
by Laura Kelly Fanucci:**

“When this is over,  
May we never again take for granted;  
A handshake with a stranger, Full shelves at the store,  
  
Conversations with neighbors,  
  
A crowded theater, Friday night out,  
  
The taste of communion, A routine checkup,  
The school rush each morning, Coffee with a friend,  
The stadium roaring, Each deep breath! A boring Tuesday. Life itself.  
When this ends, may we find that we have become more like the people we wanted to be,  
we were called to be,  
we hope to be,  
and may we stay that way — better for each other because of the worst.”

When this is over,  
We'll have stories to tell.  
And we may never again,  
Take for granted  
Masks that we thought were cheap,  
Hand sanitizer that once packed the shelves.  
When this is over,  
We'll have the heart to give a little extra  
Kindness  
Compassion  
Help To the ones that need it most  
So these times may be tough  
But they can teach us a whole lot more than it may seem.

***Sophie Filippelli, 6th Grade, Markham Place School, Little Silver***

When this is over  
I will be able to see my friends again  
And go back to school  
And go outside my neighborhood  
I can go to Giannis  
And Carvel after school  
And have fun in the sun  
And throw a party too  
All I want to do  
Is leave this jail cell  
To get back into the real world  
With people other than my family  
When this ends,  
I will go out and celebrate  
I will run around freely  
Without a care in the world  
I will meet my friends  
At Carvel in town  
And get a gigantic sundae  
Bigger than my head.  
I won't take anything  
For granted  
And I'll use  
Every minute wisely  
Because now I know  
That things can change  
At any moment.

***Caitie Courtney, 6th Grade, Markham Place School, Little Silver***

**Am I supposed to have A heart of stone?**

I'm hearing

So many things

There are polarizing opinions-

"I know we are going through a lot,

So I've given you less work"

vs

"There's no reason

why you can't get this done"

"You have so much time"

Am I supposed to have a heart of stone?

I struggle

Everyday

With boredom, hopelessness

Contacting the person

I want to see the most

Soon.

When can I see you?

Soon.

I want to see you-

Just a little bit longer.

How much longer?

I do not have a heart of stone.

I sit. In the shower.

Thinking, spiraling, procrastinating.

Whatever you want to call it.

Whatever you call it,

I still do not have a heart of stone.

This heart is used to coming home

Having ten minutes to eat dinner

Then driving to piano lessons

Then driving straight to soccer

Then driving home to do homework.

This heart is used to soccer practice

And dance

And piano

And driving

And physical school

And friends

And special someones.

I do not have a heart of stone.

My parents

Want me to be happy

I want to see someone

I want to jump

Into their arms.

I want their hug

The hug where they wrap

Their arms around me,

Their head on top of mine

It is safety,

It is comfort,

It feels like home.

I do not have a heart of stone.

I want to have.

A heart of stone.

**Alex Kiernan, Grade 11, Abington School District, Abington, PA**

Please note the Center for Literacy Development's  
Programs for the upcoming 2020-2021 year

# SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 23, 2020  
53<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
ON READING AND WRITING

## KEYNOTE AND FEATURED SPEAKERS

Register at  
<http://rutgerscenterforliteracydevelopment.cvent.com/d/6nqx9m>



**Tanny McGregor**  
Internally-know Teacher  
and Author



**Donalyn Miller**  
Texas Teacher and  
Author



**Wiley Blevins**  
Author



**Diane Lapp**  
Author



**Janet Wong**  
Author

# CENTER FOR LITERACY DEVELOPMENT 2020-2021 SPEAKER SERIES WORKSHOPS



**Cornelius Minor**  
*We Got This: Equity, Access, and  
the Quest to Be Who Our  
Students Need Us to Be*  
December 10, 2020



**Lucy Calkins**  
*Teaching Writing*  
February 26, 2021



**Kate Roberts**  
*A Novel Approach*  
April 28, 2021



**John Schumacher**  
*"Mr. Schu"*  
Ambassador of Books  
June 3, 2021