

odyssey oracle

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Year 8 #12 February 23, 2011

Martin Luther King by Eleita Florence

Martin Luther King
Beautiful soul brother God did bring
Made people want to lift every voice and sing
Hatred, humility, hard times, he felt the sting
God gave him comfort, Coretta, a beautiful black queen
Non-violent, turn the other cheek, never being mean
Trudged on for civil rights with fuel steam
But some people didn't understand his dream
Thought that he was doing an ugly thing
Wanted him out of the picture, never to be seen
From one gun blast, so many hearts would bleed
And the world would lose someone it did need
This calm, cool, collected man, so serene
We have lost a beautiful human being
Rest in peace, Martin Luther King

*for Black History Month,
2011*



Frida Kahlo. Self Portrait Dedicated to Dr. Eloesser. 1940

This is a self portrait of Frida Kahlo. Her beauty overwhelms me. She holds her head to the right as her brown eyes focus to the left. Her indigenous Mexican heritage is reflected in her olive skin. Her black hair is up in a braided



bun with beautiful red, yellow, pink, and white flowers atop her head. She has a unibrow, a small pointed nose, a very thin mustache, and medium lips with red lipstick on. An earring shaped like a hand hangs from her left earlobe; this was a gift from Picasso and symbolizes the hand of fate. She has a necklace of thorns around her neck which is dripping blood due to the pokes from the thorns; the thorns represent the thorns Christ wore during the Crucifixion. Her body is covered with a dull gold robe. The sky is grayish blue appearing to be cloudy, and there is an overgrowth of large leaves behind her appearing to be out-of-control nature. (Bonita Greer)

Rembrandt van Rijn. Self Portrait. 1669

This is a three-quarter view, halfway between a frontal and side view, of Rembrandt's face. This painting is of an older, overweight white man with a long face, which is quite fat with chubby cheeks. He has a big nose, a double chin, big ears, and no facial hair. He also has long white grayish hair on his head. He wears a puffy cap on the top of his head. He has wrinkles and creases in his face and a blank and distant stare. He has on a black v-neck

shirt, with white on the v. The background is shaded, moving from light to dark, and the colors are light brown, tan, beige, and dark brown. The man's eyes and expression on his face show anguish and pain, as if he is going through grief, sorrow, loneliness, and despair. Perhaps he is showing his hurt at the demise and death of his heart, as his wife died, his mistress died, and all of his children died. He is left here feeling hopeless. (Marie Hill)



Albrecht Durer. Self Portrait. 1500

There is a man standing still looking directly into my eyes, with long brown hair covering his shoulders. His right hand is holding his robe shut together. A bushy beard with the end of his mustache twisted comes out to the sides. His robe has fur on the center of



it. His pose is so serious that I can feel the tension just looking at him. His stare catches hold of my soul. It's hard to see him and not come under some kind of control. I think of Jesus staring at you without a smile yet not a frown either. That is how it feels to see this picture.

(Trendell Johnson)

Oracle Call and Response February 2011



I carefully read through the February 2 Oracle cover to cover and decided to respond to Catina's review. I am so excited for her that she was able to connect with her future dreams and has decided to pursue a degree in human services. I think we need more people on the side of troubled youth, and Catina is a shining inspiration to all. I think when you are able to narrow down your goals and have your path mapped out in front of you, it is a very exciting place in life. I am maybe a little jealous that her dreams are that clear to her. I wish her the best of luck. **(Danielle Rosales)**

All of the stories I read were very good. Some were sad, and some were informative. . . . I decided to write about Danielle's article "Downtown on a Dime." It was very refreshing to hear about the day she spent with her family. It seems they had a good time at minimal cost. They visited some nice places downtown . . . attended a concert . . . were treated to traditional Christmas songs . . . and went for a ride on the trolley. It seems as though the family had a

wonderful, fun-filled, exciting day, and the price was right. **(Eleita Florence)**

Ray Migizi Hopp wrote about Clean Time Countdown. I'm so glad I was there also. It brought tears to my eyes to see so many people clean. I also was overwhelmed to know we didn't have to get high or drunk to bring in the New Year. **(Edwina Robinson)**

I think it was nice that all of Dwayne's family was able to get along. That's so sweet that his niece's first Christmas was this year. **(Nikyra McCann)**

I love how in the poem "Mental Intimacy" Marseills' words flow and jump out from the page as you're reading them. The words are so powerful; it's as if the poem is actually speaking to you. I must say two of my favorite lines are "Together we'll have supremacy while striving for mental intimacy" and "Someone who knows chivalry is not dead feels like I'm just trying to put her to bed loves that I prefer romance instead." This poem was very touching and beautifully written. **(Catina McAlister)** [Editor's Note: Marseills' poem "Mental Intimacy" was a response to Stephanie's poem by the same name: See Stephanie's original poem on p. 17 of this week's Oracle.]

I applaud Marseills' response to my piece called Mental Intimacy. It was written at a time when I had turned my back on the world. I was arguing about love and what it was, is and can be. Then I decided to write Mental Intimacy. My views have since changed and that is why I gave permission for him to write a response. However, I did not realize he would submit it. The thing about me is I can change my writing in the drop of a dime because I write



to release the emotions of that time. So, I applaud his attempt to understand because it has been said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

(Stephanie Pamperin)

I can really relate to Michael's Christmas vacation. I say this because I was also incarcerated during my break. I am going to be starting the First Offenders Program soon, which is sort of like being on house arrest. **(Precious LaShore)**

Marvin Pratt's piece really struck me. When you respect yourself, you don't allow anyone to disrespect you. This is something I'm working on. **(Trendell Johnson)**

When I read about Michelle losing her father and him not being fully present in her life as a parent, I felt a drop of sadness and pain, not just for her and her family but for myself and every person across the world who grew up in a single parent household without having a father. I truly know how she felt. . . . A son needs a father in his life for various reasons. One is to hand down those important fatherly jewels to his son about how to be a "man." My progression into becoming a man hasn't been easy. I'm still learning; it's a continuous work in progress. I'm glad to be the man I am today from being under the wings of a strong black woman, my mom. . . . We as black men or men as a

whole need to break this chain and truly understand the significance of parenting, the union between father and child; to make sure we're there for them.

(Marseills McKenzie)

Michelle's article struck a chord with me. When I read that she had champagne and gave her kids sparkling grape juice to ring in the new year, I instantly felt nostalgic. This was my tradition with my mom and sister (also watching BET...). As I read on about her childhood with her father, I could feel myself identifying with her. My father wasn't around very much and I can (in some ways) still feel the negative impacts of that today. Recently I have started to talk to him again. However, this has seemed to always be awkward. Reading this article inspired me to call him more often and try to make up for lost time. **(Dalonte Nobles)**

I love what Trendell said: "Enough is enough." He is right just to be himself and not worry about impressing people. He got saved and is happy, and he is going to let God be a part of his life. Trendell is going to worry about what God thinks of him. He has his goals set and is working on them. Trendell is not going to let his past relationships affect his future relationships, and he isn't going to take life for granted anymore. Trendell's story motivates me to go back to church and live in the future. He is right: Enough is enough. **(Kian Cunningham)**



I Love . . .

I love music. Music captivates my mind as the melodies dance across my ear drums. Music makes my heart beat increase as the beats vibrate in my ears. Music calms my soul as the rhythm enters my inner ear. Music makes me move fast and slow as my muscles feel each vibration. I love to listen to R&B, Gospel, Country, Contemporary, Rock, Afrocentric, Reggae, Rap, Neo Soul, Folk, and Spirituals.



When I think back on the numerous times He saved me, it makes me think I really might have a purpose for being here. That helped give me a self esteem that had been non-existent. **(Pamela Lee)**

I love the town of Cleveland, Mississippi. I love the smell of red dirt in the air. I love the hospitality of the people who live there. I love the fact that no matter whose house you enter, you are offered something to eat.



I have a belief that rhythm was used while God formed the earth. In fact, music is described all through the Bible. Heaven will be filled with music. When I look at how things grow, I see a rhythm: human growth from conception, vegetation, animal growth from conception. **(Bonita Greer)**

I love Jesus. When I was a very young child, we (all my siblings) had a bedroom the size of a closet. We would literally get beaten for the most minor infraction. I think Jesus saved my life plenty of times. I drank a lot when I was young and I used to black out anywhere. I was never beaten, raped, or even killed.



I love Cleveland, Mississippi, because I was born and raised there. I love the family ties I have with it. I love that the fact it takes a village to raise a child is greatly recognized there. I love the feeling of security when I'm there. In a way I love the hungry mosquitoes at dusk. I love the early morning rooster. I love the magnolia smell as well as their magnolia sausage. I love Cleveland, Mississippi. **(Tracy Cunnigan)**

I love my husband Ray. He makes me whole. When I am weak, he is strong; when I fall short, he is there to pick up the rest. He is always looking for ways to support the goals of our whole family. He provides beyond our expectations and always thinks of our needs first.



When I met him ten years ago, I was in a very dark cave. He made me a promise that he would take care of me, and he has kept that promise. I love watching him father our three children. I love watching him grow and expand as a human being. I love how just when I can't do another thing, he comes home and picks up where I left off. I love how when I started this Odyssey, he was right behind me. As I sit here writing this, he is at the pool swimming with the kids so I can do my



homework.

He is a real man in so many ways. I love him for that because I can enjoy my role as a woman so much more. (**Danielle Rosales**)

I love the summer. I love everything that the summer brings, such as beautiful, bright sunny days where I can lie out in the sun and get that color that makes my blonde hair and brown eyes stick out more. I love that during the summer I can grab my blanket and sunscreen and head to the beach with my bikini on, spending the whole day outside really being able to connect with my planet without dying of hypothermia. I love that I can still stay in my tank top and shorts during the night and stare up at the night time sky, lying in the sweetly scented summer grass.



The summer scents and sights bring out my love for this world. Summer helps me to forget all the pain and suffering that's constantly surrounding me. . . . I especially love that my daughter Isabella can run free and naked through the sprinkler laughing like it's the best thing in the whole universe.

I love the simplicity of summer. It's just sun and warmth, but somehow all it brings to me is just plain happiness. . . . I started my liver treatment last July and felt terrible, but as soon as I walked out into the beautiful rays of sunshine my soul left lifted up and I forgot about my sickness. . . .

I don't just love the summer; the summer brings love right to me! (**Leah LaBarre**)

I love music, the way it infuses sound and words that stir my soul. A dose of R&B a smooth four-part harmony like Jodeci. The potency of this special girl that once had a hold on me makes me reminisce of how we used to be down, the way her frown would change every time I came



around. One year ago today I gave her a poem with flowers, cooked her dinner and we talked for hours and made love in the shower. Jazz is so rhythmic it puts me in the state of ecstatic where life's issues become erratic. Kenny G's sax allows me to relax takes my mental frame on an exotic plane to keep from reaching insane, some place tropicanic where it won't cause my heart to panic.

Riveting soul-baring blues record is what's playing in my brain, trying to find the right antidote to ease the pain from all loves we lost or suffered in the game. Like BB said, the thrill is gone but this Odyssey song will live on.

Hip Hop is living energy poetry a hidden anguish, spoken truth forbidden language so complex whatever I bless you know it's me. My pen temperature is like a Caribbean Island, unseen or heard, a king with words won't let his dreams be deferred. (**Marseills McKenzie**)

I love my son Daniel. Don't get me wrong, I love both my sons—Daniel and Andrew. I have to, no I need to, write about why I love Daniel. You see, Daniel is a special child. He has special needs because of his mental and behavioral illness. He has ADHD and some anger issues. At times he can be difficult. He has a hard time expressing himself. Daniel needs someone who understands and helps him. I love Daniel, so I am there for him.



When he gets in a frenzy and starts to act out, people move away and leave him alone. Sometimes they call the police and they take him away. I love Daniel so I go get him and bring him home. Even though I may be angry, I still love him. I talk to him, and I do my best to understand him. I even punish him if he has misbehaved, but through it all I love Daniel.

When he takes me to the limit and I want to scream and shout, I pray and ask God to help me out because I love Daniel. He is such a beautiful child inside and out, but people don't always get a chance to see him that way. I do, and that's why I

love Daniel.

I love Daniel for so much more I could write all day, but I don't have to: I can just say I love Daniel through good and bad, and joy and pain. Some may see him as a problem child, but it's no problem for me. I will be there for Daniel as long as I can. When others give up and turn away, I won't because I love Daniel. I love Daniel from the time my eyes open in the morning until they close at night. I love Daniel with all my heart and soul. As long as he needs me to be there, to pick him up when he falls, I will because I love Daniel. I give him unconditional and devoted love that only a mother can give.

I make it known to all who are in our circle that I love Daniel. I will always be in his corner, be his protector, be responsible for him and care for him until I'm not able to. Until then, I will express my feelings for my son simply by saying I love Daniel.
(Eleita Florence)

I love
I love women
I love their lips
I love their hips
I love the way they lick
 their lips
I love the curls, twirls on
 different girls
I love
I love women
I love their eyes
I love their smile
I love
(Michael Lozano)



I love gospel music. It is very uplifting. It touches your heart and grabs your soul. When you are going through the valley, the music about the Lord and his grace makes you feel better. It helps you to know that no matter what's going on in your life, the Lord won't leave you. It's the message in the music that makes you feel better. When you hear some gospel music sung by an



anointed singer, you can feel the anointing and the presence of the Lord. **(Marie Hill)**

I love my Dad! It's been 14 years since you've been gone, and I can't describe the loss and emptiness I feel inside. Some people who really know me would probably ask how I could miss someone who wasn't around as much as he could and should have been. But they wouldn't understand! I have many good and bad memories of you that will remain in my heart.



I remember the time when you took my brother Tony and me to Denver, Colorado, for the summer to meet our little sister and other family members that we hadn't met before. That was the very first time that I had ever seen mountains. . . . We never told you, but we were homesick and wanted to go back to Mom, but we dared not mention it because we knew your feelings would have been hurt. . . .

Then we received some wonderful news that you were moving to Madison. I was so excited because I felt we would have that bond that I so desired. Things seemed to be going so well. We saw you more often, spent more time with you, and even spoke more often than usual.

Then all of a sudden my world came crashing down like an avalanche on snow-covered mountains. My mom informed us that you had been diagnosed with leukemia. I started questioning God, like why and what did my dad do to deserve this unfair fate. Tony and I would come visit you every night that we could, and I remember having to leave the room so you wouldn't see my crying. But I do remember feeling a sense of relief when it was time to leave because we would all hold hands and say a prayer after every visit. Later I learned that you refused a bone marrow transplant. I didn't understand and grew angry with you, but soon I understood why you didn't want to.

On April 8 you called and wished me a Happy Birthday and told me you loved me. I was working my shift at Boston Store on April 9 when I received a phone call to meet my mom and brother at my

house. I remember walking so fast it was as if I was flying. When I got home, I raced upstairs. I could hear my own heartbeat. There was a knock on my door, and when I opened it my brother didn't even look at my but proceeded past me into my bathroom. At this point, my heart beat like a drum and I felt as if I was about to erupt like a red hot molten volcano if someone didn't say something.

My mom looked me in my eyes and said, "Your dad has passed away." I felt numb and my legs felt wobbly like jello. As my mom put her arms around me, all I could do is scream "No!" I ran into my room and started throwing things. I felt like I was in a deep, dark, dank cave.

The day of your funeral arrived. Up at your casket after kissing you on your forehead, I totally lost it. It seemed unreal to me, and it still does after all this time. I knew that I wouldn't see your handsome face anymore or you dressed to the nines. I wouldn't be able to give you hugs and kisses, talk to you on the phone, send you pictures or cards, or talk more in depth about your trip to Washington DC for the Million Man March.

They say everything happens for a reason. I can honestly say at this moment it was meant for me to write this essay in honor of Valentine's Day because you were the ONLY man that didn't forget this day. If you didn't send me a card, you would call and say "Happy Valentine's Day, daughter. I love you." And I would say, "Thank you, Dad. I love you too!" (**Catina McAlister**)

I love my granddaughter, Marissa Hailey. She has such personality! Marissa is only seven months old but is quite the conversationalist (babbler, if you will).

With her golden smile, she lights up a room. She finds every opportunity to engage whoever is around in a game of "Peek-a-Boo!" She also loves to be read to and anticipates turning the pages.

Marissa was born on July 21, 2010, at St. James Hospital in Chicago Heights. I will never forget that day because that's the day I became a grandmother!



Now that Marissa has progressed into her crawling stage, "Oh the places she will go!" Exploring adventures on her own, she finds it exciting to be so independent and free from her bouncer chair.

When she finally realized while playing the faces game (eyes, nose, ears) that her ears were pierced, she burst out in a hearty laugh! She never ceases to amaze me; it is a pure delight that someone so pure and innocent finds the simple things in life so joyous!

Her parents are instrumental in all of Marissa's early developments. I'm sure that she will continue to thrive into a well-rounded toddler with much love and discipline. With both parents and her maternal and paternal grandparents around, I'm certain that Marissa is well on her way to celebrating her first birthday with a game of "Peek-a-Boo!" (**Helen Montgomery**)

I love you unconditionally. I love you. You are so much a part of me. I love you with my heart and soul. I love you.

In case you were never told love, yes it's easy to say, but it needs action in everything you do. As you say it to me, I need to feel your love, see it, behold its beauty. Oh how I love you, my joy delight. Oh how I love you, my sweetness of a honeycomb. Yes, I love. I need you to love me too. Sometimes it hurts to love. Then there's joy in loving unconditionally with nothing in return. This is how God loves me, in spite of my shortcomings. This is a pure love without any strings.

Here are some different loves: *agape* (the way God loves humanity); *phileo* (brotherly love); *eros* (sexual love); *storge* (child and parent love). "To be a good person is great but to do all of this without love is nothing." (1 Corinthians 13.4-7) (**Edwina Robinson**)

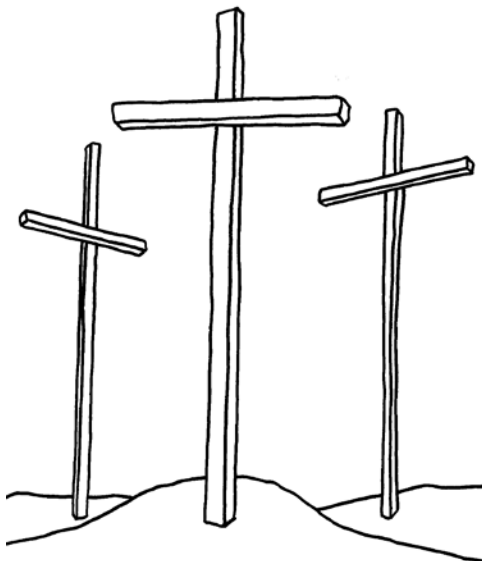
I love the way my life changed for the better. In the past, most of the problems I faced in life occurred as a result of not having a father. When I



was born, I had only one parent that was around to show love to me. My father died a month and five days before I was born. My mother had me three months premature, which she was not expecting. While growing up, I had a mother's love, but a father's love was what I did not experience. I did not fully understand love until I gave my love to Christ. I love the way my life changed for the better when I accepted Jesus Christ.



Prior to my conversion, I had so many insecurities which other boys may not have experienced because their fathers were around to be involved in their lives. To not have a father figure in my life was difficult at times, and there were moments of feeling inadequate or unloved. However, everything changed dramatically when I allowed Christ into my life. He showed me what it means to love unconditionally and taught me that true love is unfailing. By him dying for me showed me the depth of his love and how I mean the world to him. Furthermore, I learned that his love for me will never change, nor will it ever die.



In his love I am completely satisfied. In him I have no worries. He is a worthy friend and a great counselor. No matter what problem or situation that comes my way, I can talk to him, and He will always show me the right way I should go. I'm grateful to him because he has always been there for me. For I love the way that Jesus Christ loves me. **(Trendell Johnson)**

I love my son . . .
Lamont Anthony Moses Jr. I love my son because he is the motivation of my life. He makes me feel so happy when I am at my lowest times. I love my son because has been the only one around when I break down and cry. He says, "You OK, Mama?"



I love my son because he is innocent, pure, and mine. He loves me more than anything, and I feel the same. I love my son because he loves everything. He is happy, energetic, and open minded! He is ready to learn anything and trying to please everyone. I love my son because he is so smart, and I know nobody can take that from him.

I could go on and on about why I love my son. Most I love my son because he is me, meaning my everything. **(Precious LaShore)**

I love my two boys.
They are the joy of my life that I wake up to every day and that I go to sleep with every night. They bring me happiness, joy, laughter, hugs, kisses, and cute words. They try to tell me they love Mommy. Though they both also come with stress and naughtiness like any toddlers growing up, they do still bring me the happiest joy!



Waking up to them every morning and seeing a big smile on their faces lets me know they're well rested and full of energy to start their day off seeing Mommy first thing when they wake up. They both smile really big when they see me walk into their room and turn on the lights. They smile and say "Mommy!" The laughs and the sparkle in their eyes just makes me not want to take them to day care because I miss them and want to spend more time with them. **(Diance Lor)**

I love R&B. I love R&B because it is one of my dramatic alter egos. I say dramatic because any drama I encounter (good or bad), there is always a song in relation. It soothes me so intimately. R&B and I are a perfect pair. We have many personal conversations.



I need R&B by me, beside me and always to guide me. Mary J. keeps me with letting me know I'm 'Not Gon Cry' over nothing and will be doing 'Just Fine.' I'm not trying to 'Stay Down.' Beyonce always remind me of the biggest 'Ego' I got with Keri Hilson getting me all aroused with that 'Pretty Girl Rock.' I've been through a lot and Al Green taught me my whole life about 'Love and Happiness' and how Fantasia upgraded it to 'Bitter Sweet.' R. Kelly always 'Remind Me of My Jeep' that I used to bump '12 Play.' I used to think things

were 'Forever' until New Edition asked me 'Can You Stand the Rain?' I told them After 7 times that 'Ready or Not' I'm a 'Soldier' and 'I Will Survive.' Now when I talk to Mariah, she's the one that tells me to 'Still Believe' in the 'Hero' inside myself, which is the 'Greatest Love Of All.' Donell always let me know that I am his 'Special Girl.'

Musical tunes flow through my body like an electrical shock bringing me back to life, back to reality. R&B entered my life at a time when I needed security, when I needed love, comfort and contentment. It takes me to another level of ecstasy. R&B has the grooves that bring me from being sad and blue. It brightens my day. I treat R&B like it is my king. I wish R&B could adopt me.

R&B makes the clouds go by...

R&B makes a happy day...

R&B makes me want to sing loud...

R&B is my heart and soul and is more precious than gold...

I LOVE R&B!

(Michelle Bozeman)



To An Anonymous Odyssey Student Battling Alcoholism

From Marshall Cook

I want to tell you where I'm coming from. We've got more alcoholics in my family than the Kennedys have got politicians. Alcohol destroyed my father's father—and my father's home life. Alcohol ruined my mother's life for 25 years and made things tough in the house for the rest of us. Alcohol is in the process of taking my only brother down with it. And alcohol, with help from other drugs, damn near killed my son. (He's been taking life one day at a time for over seven years, and I get down on my knees—literally—and thank God for that every day.)

I quit drinking when I realized I was likely headed for trouble my own self, and I'm so glad I did, I can't tell you. I hate what alcohol does to people I love. Hate it! I truly wish there were no such thing. I can't think of one good thing alcohol has EVER done for ANYbody (jokes about helping white men dance to the contrary).

I'm praying that you'll whip it. If you do, it'll be one day at a time, too; there's no other way. I think you got a hell of a good start by coming clean about it to Emily.

I know you have to make a choice: you can drink on Wednesday afternoon, or you can come to Odyssey class Wednesday night, but you can't drink on Wednesday afternoon and come

to Odyssey Wednesday night. Your call.

If I can help, I'd be very, very happy to. Mostly, you've got to walk this yourself, like Christ in the desert, but that doesn't mean I can't be walking and praying for you.

Love,
Coach



Learning about Lincoln

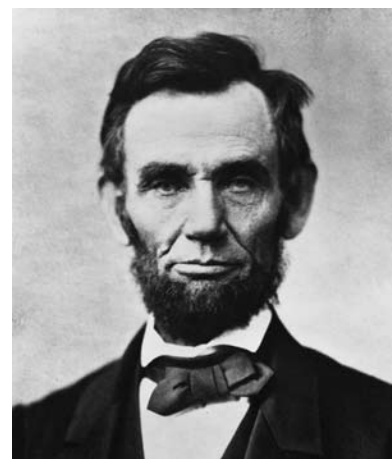
I believe the Gettysburg Address is so famous because it's very motivational, inspirational, and powerful. It actually wakes you up! Lincoln was saying to the people that we as a country should come together. We should remember that all men are created equal and honor the ones who fought for this country. They didn't just go out and fight; they fought for something they believed in. We the people need to stand together as a united front to fight for equality, liberty, and justice for all. (**Catina McAlister**)



Lincoln reminded the people how this nation came to be. He also mentioned that all men are created equal and the nation is conceived in liberty. There were more casualties in Gettysburg than anywhere else during that time. He was there to dedicate a military cemetery. He welcomed the fact that this great nation was becoming one nation and not a nation divided—one government that represented the people of the great nation. (**Bonita Greer**)



The Gettysburg Address struck a spark for so many people. Most presidents' speeches are terribly dull, banal, and not worth hearing. Lincoln's Gettysburg Address was unlike most presidential talks. It



was fresh, new, something people had never heard before. He delivered it in a graceful poetic language. He saluted the dead rather than dwelling on the war's issues. The speech expresses

the highest form of patriotism and gives hope to the nation's future—that this nation under God will have “a new birth of freedom” and that we as people “shall not perish from the earth.” (**Marseills McKenzie**)



In “A House Divided,” Lincoln tells those attending the Republican Convention of 1858 that the issue of slavery was not being solved by the laws they had in place regarding the issue. In fact, he says that the issue of slavery is being constantly debated and he believes that the debate will not cease until war has come and ended. However, he says this in polite language using the word “crisis.”

Lincoln tells his audience that this nation will not fall and he doesn't expect it to come to that but he knows like he knows his name that this nation cannot survive two different governments. He warns listeners that the day of choosing is upon them and the choice is slavery or no slavery. He cautions those who are for slavery to think about the solidness of the Dred Scott case as well as the Nebraska Bill because the new States entering the Union are doing so as Free States.

He then dissects the intricacies of the Dred Scott decision and its implications to the Negroes as well as the perceived citizens of the United States. His questions resonate through the convention hall and he tells them that if they choose war they shall not fail.

(**Stephanie Pamperin**)



Lincoln is saying that the nation cannot survive as a half-free/half-slave nation. He also warned that it was a threat to the future territories of the union. I think his main intentions were to establish the impracticality of state rights to slavery (immediately makes me think of the gay marriage debate).

(**Dalonte Nobles**)

Thinking About Thoreau

Thoreau reminds me a lot of Socrates in that he is not comfortable following the majority, even if it is the law. Thoreau believes in doing what he feels is right according to his values and morals, not because everybody else does it.

He does not go along with the government because he does not agree with the laws as they stand.

Thoreau cannot in good conscience go along with a government that condoned slavery or oppression of the underdog. By going to jail for something he believed in, he felt he was making a statement.

(Eleita Florence)

Thoreau believes we should not pay taxes for a government we are not a part of. We should not vote just for voting's sake; we should take our own steps toward making change happen. Here is a great quote: "Is democracy, such as we know it, the last improvement possible in government?" **(Takeyla Benton)**



Paraphrasing Gandhi

"Our pledge of non-violence excludes the possibility of future retaliation. Some of us seem unfortunately to have merely postponed the date of revenge."

If you are promising to have no intentions of destroying, damaging, or causing bodily harm to others, you are not supposed to be violent at any time. That is the promise that you set forth.

(Tracy Cunnigan)

"If I believe that honesty is the best policy, sure whilst I so believe, I must be honest in thought, word, and deed; otherwise I become an impostor."

If you're not honest you are a con-artist. You become a fake. You will be called that person who cried wolf, and no one will believe a word that comes out of your mouth. People will not trust you. Be honest and tell the damn truth. You will be helping yourself out! **(Kian Cunningham)**

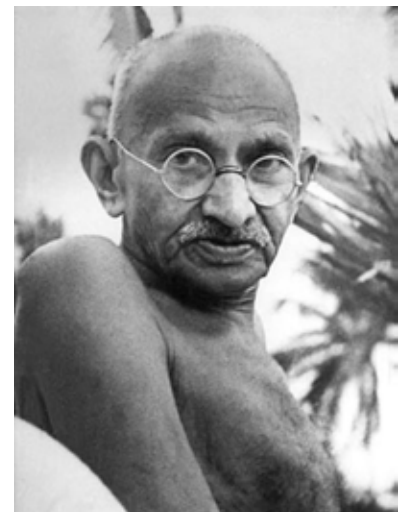
"He allows his solid action to speak for his creed."

A person acts a certain way or does a certain action to represent what they stand for—their core belief system. **(Danielle Rosales)**

"Violence is the weapon of the weak; non-violence the weapon of the strong." Violence is not a weapon in the eyes of God, only of man, but non-violence is a weapon in the eyes of God. **(Marseills McKenzie)**

"There comes certain times, generally rare, when he considers certain laws to be so unjust as to render obedience to them a dishonor."

There will be certain times, but only occasionally, when he sees that laws are just not right and that to submit to them would be a disgrace. **(Catina McCalister)**



A Raisin in the Sun Responses

Analysis of Beneatha Younger

Beneatha is a young college student with different views of the world. Her strength represents young African American women of the new generation hungering for intellectualism and thirsting for individuality.

Beneatha dares to seek her identity and expresses herself very openly. Although she is studying to become a doctor, she has explored other interests such as guitar lessons, horseback riding, and other activities considered frivolous in a traditional working-class black household.

Beneatha also believes that there is no God but only man, and that man makes all miracles. Of course, that conversation involved Mama and resulted in Mama slapping Beneatha for disrespecting Mama and God with those devilish words.

Beneatha's weakness is that she doesn't know when to shut up and can be disrespectful to others while expressing her point of view. However, I love Beneatha's spirit and her drive for feminine equality. I believe that she will have a successful future. She receives a proposal of a lifetime when Asagai, a male college friend from Africa who shows a huge interest in her, invites her to move

back to Africa to practice medicine and to get a better understanding of the Mother Land. (**Michelle Bozeman**)

Beneatha is a confused young woman who is torn between who her family expects her to be and who she really is. She is being raised in a house with two women who have very stereotypical and repressive jobs for black women, yet she decides that that is not for her. Not only is it not for her but she wanted more for her mother and sister-in-law. She was an amazingly brave woman because not only was she breaking racial barriers, she was also breaking gender barriers. Here is an African American woman saying very seriously, "I am going to be a doctor."

I think that at times she can let that go to her head because she can be disrespectful to her family. She seems to feel they are beneath her. She wants to get out of school, leave home, become a doctor, and start saving lives. She wants to continue to grow as an individual and not compromise her intelligence for anyone, be it her family or a love interest.

Bennie has a bright future ahead of her. She is not going to let anyone or anything stop her from achieving her goals. I applaud her for this. (**Morgan Chichester**)

Beneatha's character was strong yet immature, smart, stubborn, disrespectful, and determined. She has a very headstrong personality. She wants to be a doctor so she thinks at times she is better than her family members. . . . I feel that Beneatha treated her family members as if they embarrassed her when it came to her male visitors. It was as if she felt that since they didn't have some of the education she had, they really couldn't hold a conversation. She had such negative, smart retorts when it came to her brother Walter. . . . I know she loves her mother, but she also was disrespectful to her at times, especially when she told her she was tired of hearing about God. . . . All and all I believe she loved her family but just showed it in a different manner. . . . (**Catina McAlister**)



Beneatha is kind of childish. She likes to fight with Walter and likes to rile him up. Despite her fighting with her brother all the time, she's understanding and likes learning from other cultures... She responds to others with attitude at times or starts arguments, but through all that she can be caring... I think that she can become a doctor because she's caring and seems smart. **(Michael Lozano)**

Beneatha is a radical woman in her family and for the time the play was written. She comes from generations of women who worked hard but didn't have the very ambitious dream of becoming a doctor. I see her as a character who is not settling for the normal role of a woman at that time. She sees her mother and Ruth and feels that she can aspire to a greater height in her life.

She doesn't bite her tongue or say things to please others. She is strong with her words and arrogant at times. I think she has a lot of strengths such as her ability to work hard in school, not to marry a man just because he is wealthy, and stay true to herself and her dreams. I think her weaknesses include feeling superior to others and belittling people. She also seems to have a sense of entitlement that seems undesirable, considering how hard everyone else is working around her...

I think she has a great future ahead. She seems to have a supportive family, a quick mind, and the perseverance to follow through. I also believe that when she becomes a doctor and starts to make a decent living, she will turn around and give back to the family that has helped her reach her dreams. **(Danielle Rosales)**

The Ending of *A Raisin in the Sun*

In the final act of the play when the Youngers are moving to a new home, it is a touching scene. After everyone has left, carrying packages to the moving van, Lena Younger is the only one left in the apartment. She stands there with her little plant she's been nursing and looks at her past and her future. Mama, as she is so fondly known, stands in the place where it all began for her family. She stands and sees what became of her family. All her hopes and dreams did not come to fruition, but she still kept the family together. Through death and other tribulations, she held on and now she can see a brighter future.

If walls could talk, this room Mama stands in would have a lot to say. It would tell a story of how a newly married couple came here to start their lives. Now as she stands here, about to leave this place, all she has is plentiful memories... Lena is a little sad because these rooms have seen so much.

Her sadness is quickly overtaken by thoughts of a new beginning for the Younger family. She can leave now with a smile on her face because as the matriarch of the family, she has done her job, which is to hold the family together against all odds. Now she is moving them toward new possibilities. **(Eleita Florence)**

... I think it's a happy ending because as they move to the white neighborhood, the last scene of the story shows Mama coming back to grab the plant. I think it signifies that they will finally have life because the plant will finally grow. They will also grow into prosperity. **(Nikyra McCann)**

The ending of *A Raisin in the Sun* is a bittersweet one. After years of struggling, the family received money from Walter Sr.'s death. . . . The family continues with their decision to move into the house in an all-white neighborhood despite the possible threat of violence and uncertain hardships. In the final moments of the play it seems Walter Jr. becomes a man by making a decision that will be better in the long run for the family instead of convenient in the short term. The resolution comes in the form of facing the unknown instead



of staying and dealing with what's safe...
(**Takeyla Benton**)

Marriage Advice for Walter and Ruth Younger

Walter should sincerely listen to his wife's advice, always respect her, and be more concerned about his wife's feelings. Moreover, he should not demean her intelligence or her strong desire to want to love and be loved. Walter should make solid decisions instead of decisions not well thought through which may not guarantee the safekeeping of their money or anything they value and want.

In addition, I would tell Ruth not to be doubtful of her man's decisions for the family, to be more supportive of her husband, and to love and trust him. (**Trendell Johnson**)

Walter and Ruth, I've been listening to the way you two talk to each other and I feel that you both need to communicate more. Stop running off when the conversation gets difficult. Ruth, even though Walter talks about the same things every day, listen to him and wait until he finishes telling his story instead of cutting him off every time or changing the subject. For example, Walter is talking to you and you keep telling him to eat his eggs.

Walter, you can't keep running off thinking that's going to take away the trouble between you and Ruth. Stop fighting everyone and concentrate on your wife and kids. Stop putting people down, like when you say, "Who even cares about you?" to Ruth. (**Diance Lor**)

Walter, when you speak to your wife, speak to her soul. I know your current living and financial

situation makes you feel less than a man, but you're all the man that Ruth and Travis need! Anger must never be the promoter when faith hasn't had a chance. When you return to your Mother's house, you must ask for your family's forgiveness to reverse the chaos. Manhood is the call of a lifetime. Discover your own rhythm, Walter, and move forward with grace and determination in all your endeavors.

Ruth, please know that it kills a man's spirit when he cannot provide for his family. Encourage each other because you're the backbone of this family unit; your job is to bring joy into each other's lives. I want you both to instill these values in your son.

So I'm prescribing a large dose of communication! Reach over in the night for the warm place in each other's heart. You must also have faith in GOD! (**Helen Montgomery**)

Mr. Younger, there are times when you must display warrior behavior. In your home against your wife is NOT the place to be a warrior. An example of this behavior was when you yelled at her about the eggs. She was trying to ensure you get proper nutrition before a hard day's work. Yes, she should have listened to you, but she didn't want you to be late for work. You must be a Gentle Giant when interacting with her... Your dreams are important and should be heard as well as validated, but there is a correct way to tell her of those dreams. . . . If you feel the need to turn to alternate substances for stress relief, please reconsider. Alcohol only magnifies your problems and makes you feel more depressed.

Mrs. Younger, you are a quiet, kind-hearted, patient woman who is a nurturer and hard worker. While interacting with your husband, you sometimes have lost your temper... You must talk to him in a calm manner when getting your point across. When he was explaining to you that he has a dream of being a liquor store owner, that would have been the perfect time to listen instead of getting impatient with him and yelling, "Eat your eggs, Walter!" (**Bonita Greer**)



Mental Intimacy

by Stephanie Pamperin

Friends say
My standards are too high
There's no way
I'll ever find a guy

Though they try
They don't understand
I don't need a guy
I need a man

Someone who doesn't fear
My intelligence or wit
Who knows I may shed tears
But I will never quit

Someone who knows
There's more to romance
Than sticking his nose
Down my pants

Someone who believes
In a greater force
And wouldn't drag me
Through a divorce

Someone I can bring
To meet family
Before wearing his ring
And knowing him intimately

Someone who'll look beyond my CP
While striving for mental intimacy



A Christmas I'll Never Forget

by Eleita Florence

Hang all the mistletoe, away we go.
 My adventure started on Christmas Eve.
 In the store shopping, about to leave,
 All of a sudden, I felt a pain,
 Then it happened again and again.
 This pain hit me with such a whack
 It literally stopped me in my tracks.
 Now I thought to myself, what can this be?
 This pain in my chest attacking me.
 I waited for a moment to let it pass,
 Then thought to myself, it must be gas.
 So me being me, I pushed it aside
 But the look on my face I could not hide.
 So just went on my merry way
 Hoping and praying the pain would go away. . .
 This pain in my chest would not cease or desist,
 And I was not willing to take a risk.
 I thought to myself, this pain is no fun
 So I picked up the phone and dialed 911.
 A sound arose and what did I hear?

Well, it sure wasn't eight tiny reindeer.
 Sirens whirring and flashing flights
 Oh well, there goes my silent night.
 The paramedic came in very quick
 I guess he'll have to be my St. Nick.
 He gave me aid and he gave me care.
 I'm off to the hospital, soon to be there.
 I asked the doctor, "What have I got?"
 "Well, Ms. Florence, you have a blood clot."
 To say the least, I was stunned,
 A blood clot in my left lung.
 Oh, my God, what have I done?
 Where in the world did it come from?
 Why, why, am I going to die?
 The tears began to well up in my eyes.
 The doctor had a lot to say
 Mainly that I may have saved my life today.
 Here at Meriter E.R., all forlorn,
 At 5 o'clock on Christmas morn.
 Even though this was not where I wanted to be
 I was thankful and relieved.
 Wow, what a way to spend Jesus' birthday
 For me Christmas was spent in a most peculiar
 way
 But I am grateful for the gift I received that day.
 I was given the gift of life, and you can bet
 This is a Christmas I will never forget!
 I AM BLESSED!



Submission (a villanelle*)

by Takeyla Benton

His seductive smile dominates my daily flights of fantasy
and his cashmere caress lights a candle deep inside
but all I have to offer is myself— which I'll submit willingly

when I'm with him and my heart feels as free as air
and he seems to find that timid and terrified lil' girl trying to hide
from his seductive smile that dominates my daily flights of fantasy.

When he examines my soul through my eyes, I take him there
to allay the angry black woman, yet allowing her to sustain her pride
remembering all I have to offer is myself— which I'll submit willingly

when he secures this sensation of strength, I can climb the highest stair
and he promises to protect my soul through the rough ride
if his seductive smile doesn't dominate my daily flights of fantasy.

When I can close my eyes and allow him to take me anywhere
and he nurtures the naked wounds staying 'til the tears subside
recognizing all I have to offer is myself— which I'll submit willingly

when I forget about forcing it and allow it to flow as freely as air
and I open up and expose my emotions, then trust taking him inside
where his seductive smile dominates my daily flights of fantasy
for all I have to offer is myself— which I submit willingly.

**villanelle: A poem that contains five three-line stanzas and a final four-line stanza. Only two rhyme sounds are permitted in the entire poem, and the first and third lines of the first stanza are repeated, alternately, as the third line of subsequent three-line stanzas; the last stanza ends with these two lines. Like the sestina, the villanelle is a circular form; its movement recalls a dance, and indeed it was originally derived from an Italian folk song.*

(Norton Anthology of Poetry)



Meet the Donor: Book Sharer Carolyn Sumner

“Reading opens up the whole world to you,” Carolyn Sumner says. As an Odyssey donor she not only has made gifts of money and food but also recently purchased many beautiful new books to give to children of this year’s Odyssey students.

As a child, young Carolyn treasured receiving gifts of books from her mother and older sister. “I spent a lot of time alone as a child, and books gave me such pleasure. Up in the attic I would pore over the *Book of Knowledge*.”

After graduating from Madison West High School in 1943, she attended the U.W. majoring in Anthropology. She moved to Evansville and raised—and read to—her four children while her husband ran a weekly newspaper. A school official saw how much she loved children and books and encouraged her to go back to college to earn a Master’s degree in Library Science. That new training gave her the chance to serve as an elementary school librarian in Evansville for 23 years.

Carolyn Sumner now is 85 and has several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She treasures a letter she received from a grandson starting to attend classes at the University of Minnesota: “Grandma, I can’t thank you enough for introducing me to all those good books.”

As a widow, she moved back to Madison and found herself wanting to share her responses to books with others. She joined Emily Auerbach’s Tuesday Morning Booktalks at the downtown Madison Public Library, reading nine novels in the fall and nine in the spring. Each year she enjoys



debating the merits of literary works with a group of fellow booklovers. She laughs and notes, “I didn’t expect to find myself talking so much, but I just have to share my opinions, too!”

Through the book group she learned about the UW Odyssey Project and how it enables more adults to read great literature: “Oh, I think it is wonderful, an absolutely spectacular project. I’ve wanted Oprah Winfrey to put it on her program. I picture the student [Annette Bland ‘06] I heard reciting Langston Hughes’ “Mother to Son” (“Life for me ain’t been no crystal stair”), followed by a shot of the class.”

For Odyssey children this holiday season, this retired librarian chose a wide variety of books, including *Goodnight Moon*, *A Snowy Day*, *The Patchwork Quilt*, *Just-So Stories*, *The Hatchet*, *The Golden Compass*, and numerous biographies of figures such as Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, George Washington Carver, Harriet Tubman, Marian Andersen, John Henry, and Sitting Bull.

“I try to give books to everyone,” Carolyn Sumner explains. “If I could buy 50 times that many books, I would do so.”



Letters to Mrs. Carolyn Sumner, January, 2011

My two sons (Andrew, age 15, and Daniel, age 11) were so very pleased and excited with the books they received from you for Christmas. They enjoyed the books very much. My oldest son was happy that the books he got were ones that had been recommended at school. Both of my sons really liked their books. Thank you so much! (**Eleita Florence**)

Mrs. Sumner, I would like to thank you so very much for the books you donated to my children, Ciara and Julius. May God bless you and keep you. (**Marie Hill**)

Thank you very much. My five grandchildren enjoyed the books. This is also a way for me to enjoy our reading time together. I will always remember this Christmas. My grandchildren and I felt so blessed. (**Edwina Robinson**)

Thank you, Mrs. Carolyn Sumner, for the wonderful books. My granddaughter enjoyed them and I enjoyed reading them to her. Thank you again. (**Helen Montgomery**)

Dear Mrs. Carolyn, I am Hmong and a single mother. My boys are three years old and 16 months

old. I would like you to know that my two boys loved the books you got them!! Every night I read those books to them before bedtime. Thank you again. Happy New Year and bless your kind heart and soul.

(**Diance Lor**)

God bless you! Thank you from the bottom of my heart for the books. My boys loved the books. I'm in the Odyssey Project to better my education. I also want to go to UW Madison for Business Accounting. My children are 5 and 3 years old, and both of them want to be plastic surgeons. Once again, thank you for the books. It was greatly appreciated! (**Kian Cunningham**)

Thank you for the books you gave to our children Isabella, Noah, and Mira. It was great to watch them open the books on Christmas morning and to sit with them and read them. "Wow! Your teacher's friend bought these for us!" my eldest exclaimed. This made them feel recognized by people they don't even know, and that made them feel special. My son loved the *ABC of Nature* book. He is a real outdoors kid and found it fun to know that the ABCs are all around him. Thank you! (**Danielle Rosales**)

I'd like to share with you my gratitude for the books I received. My children love to read, as do I. These books are being put to good use. Thank you very, very much and God bless you and your family. (**Bonita Greer**)

Thank you for the books! Both my children love reading so they were overjoyed with their new books. Thanks again—you are giving so much more than a book. You are giving a lifelong memory. (**Takeyla Benton**)

Thank you very much!! Much appreciation for you, for real! It was true love what you've done for us here with these books. I gave books to my nieces. Thank you! I love the Odyssey Project! It's one of the best things I've ever done! Peace. (**Ray Migizi Hopp**)



I want to thank you so much for the books my children received. La'heice, 16, my basketball star, has had problems with reading her entire life. I've bought her many books and have helped my daughter with her reading so much. When she saw the books from you, she was excited. Mia, 12, is one who reads a lot. She really enjoyed the books and wanted to thank whoever sent her that perfect gift. Jaleel, 9, my son, reads everything from street signs to billboards, so when he opened his new books he was so excited that he made sure he read me to sleep. My baby read me to sleep and tucked me in. Thank you, Mrs. Sumner. (**Michelle Bozeman**)

Thanks so much for the wonderful books this Christmas! (**Dwayne Ellis**)

I am eleven years old and my name is Daneia. My step father [Dwayne Ellis] is currently a student in the Odyssey Project. The books I received were *Mystery Pups* and *The Secret Garden*. I have not started reading the *Mystery Pups*; however I have begun *The Secret Garden*. I myself have written five books, one of which I wrote in the second grade. I really enjoy reading and I am so thankful that you have given such wonderful gifts.

Daneia

My name is Dontaeva. I am ten years old. I got the books *Side by Side* and *My Name is Celia*. I read

both of my books. They were really good. *Celia* is about a girl who loves to sing and she traveled a lot to show people her music and she will fight until she can sing. *Side By Side* is about Dolores and Cesar and they fight so that people can work as a farm worker or any other place and still get paid enough to live and have a house and stuff like that. I really enjoyed reading the books and looking at all of the wonderful pictures. Thank you so much for giving me the books.

Dontaeva

Even though I didn't get a chance to meet you in person, I just wanted to let you know that I sincerely feel that you are a wonderful person! You truly provided the very first presents of my little Lamont's Christmas.

I received two books that Lamont LOVES! *On Noah's Ark* by Jan Brett has perfectly put short sentences that keep my son interested until the end. The other book, *Our Children Can Soar* by Michelle Cook, has big colorful pictures! I like pointing to things so Lamont can name what they are. Being that Lamont is only two years old, these are the perfect presents!

With the help from you and Odyssey, my son had a wonderful Christmas filled with lots of presents and happy spirits. I know that I could have never done any of this without your help putting me back in the Christmas spirit. I had a cousin that passed away a few years ago on Christmas Eve, so a little kick and push from Emily and from you was all I needed to stop feeling so down and to have the year end with joy.

I want to thank you sooooo much for all your support!

(**Precious LaShore and Lamont Moses Jr.**)



Thank you notes to Baron Kelly from Odyssey Class of 2011

I want to thank you kindly for your much needed help during this time of learning. You have really inspired me as well as my daughters (who came to the workshop with you on Saturday) to explore the art of acting. Thank you again for your encouragement and great coaching. Madison needs you. God bless you and your family. **(Bonita Greer, and my girls, Zakiya and Akilah)**

I want to thank you for coming and giving your advice on acting, speeches, etc. Even though I wasn't able to come on the Friday or Saturday, I still enjoyed having you come to Odyssey class Wednesday night and the short conversation I had with you. Again, thank you! I hope to meet you again. I would still like your personal opinion about my speech! **(Diance Lor)**

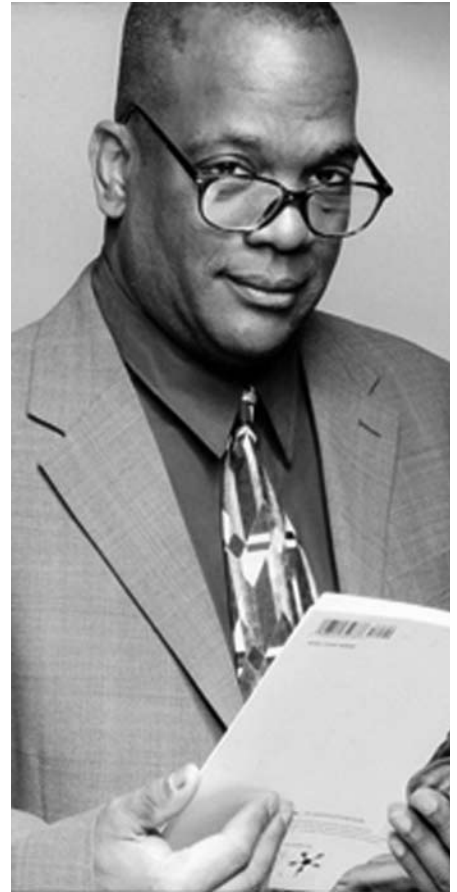
Thank you for coming to the 2011 Odyssey Project class. I really enjoyed learning skills to help me



“When I am involved with the Odyssey class (including former students) and Emily, my life is truly put into perspective.”- Baron Kelly

with my acting, and I also would like to thank you for helping my really good friend and classmate Dalonte Nobles. He talks a little firmer now. Thanks. **(Tracy Cunnigan)**

Thank you for getting me out of my shell! It was an honor to meet you! I appreciate you taking your time to come to Madison to help us at Odyssey! Thank you! God Bless You. **(Kian Cunningham)**



Thank you so much for taking time from your busy schedule to help us out. It was very exciting for me to have a professional actor come and give us instruction. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work with and learn from someone of your stature. You are greatly appreciated, and I'm sure you know you are welcome back any time. Again, thanks and see you at the Oscars! **(Eleita Florence)**

Thank you for giving your time and energy to come to teach our class. I had a lot of fun doing the warm up exercises with you and my class. I wish you all the best and thank you a million times. **(Kiara Hill)**

I do want to say thank you sooo much for sharing your talents with us. You really made my day when you started “pushing people” into reading their

lines! Even though you didn't really get a chance to watch me act, your acting really helped me to understand the reading of our book, *A Raisin in the Sun*. My nephew really wanted to meet with you or even show you his acting. Maybe you will visit again and he can show you his talents! Thanks again for your support to our 2010/2011 Odyssey class! **(Precious LaShore)**

Thank you for coming and showing us a little acting! It was something new and fun. Thanks again. **(Michael Lozano)**

I really enjoyed you and am very proud of you for where you are in your life. I wish you the best of luck! Thanks! **(Nikyra McCann)**

It was a pleasure to have you come to our class. Thanks for giving us a glimpse of your talent. I'm sorry we didn't get a chance to work together. I would love to see some of your performances and have you give me a few pointers! **(Marseills McKenzie)**

Thank you for sharing your amazing talent with us. I really enjoyed having you in the Odyssey class. **(Helen Montgomery)**

I truly enjoyed working with you. You have been a blessing to me. The night you were here, I left and came home and did a lot of thinking about my future. I pictured you living in Madison across the street. You have worked very hard in your life. It encouraged me a great bit. I always had thoughts that I was too old, but more and more I'm proven wrong. Oh, I also looked you up on the internet. I saw so many accomplishments you have achieved. I'm very honored to have been able to meet you. I am planning to go to UW. I will see you again. Working with you ruffled something in me. All I can say is thank you. You have many talents. I will discover mine. **(Edwina Robinson, the lady with golden hair)**

I want to thank you so very much for coming to Madison to help me and my classmates with our lines, speeches, job interviews, voice coaching, and acting and for boosting our confidence up. Thanks

"When I am involved with the Odyssey Project, I feel I am making a contribution toward my goal of being a creative artist who gives back to the community."

- Baron Kelly

for helping to reignite the fire in us! I enjoyed meeting you and talking with you. The workshops were great fun. Your visit helped me to come out of hiding and unleash some of my gifts that have been lying dormant. You have helped me to use my voice again. May the Lord keep you in the hollow of his hands. I pray He continues to bless you in abundance. To God be the glory, and I thank him for using you! **(Marie Hill)**

I would like to thank you for the hope I felt you brought to any black man, young or old. I'm not sure what the appropriate title is for what or how you ACT, but I think you are one of the best character actors I've seen. It was such a pleasure to meet you. **(Pamela Lee)**





I would like to thank you for coming in and speaking with our class. It was surprising how much fun throwing an invisible baseball and screaming “Hey You!” back and forth could be. Oddly enough it made me feel more comfortable to be the first person called out. On a serious note your insights and expertise were inspiring and useful. I hope to incorporate the things I’ve learned during the session in my everyday life, especially in my artistic pursuits. Once again, thank you very much and I hope you’ll continue to support this program. **(Dalonte Nobles)**

Thank you for the gift of your Wednesday evening and Saturday afternoon. I haven’t had that much fun being serious in a long time. It was nice to be understood and taught at the same time. It is a shame we did not get to talk more about Shakespeare because I really want to pick your brain on *Othello*. Thank you so much for giving me the gift of reading my own words to an audience. It was a pleasure to realize my

words can leave me and mean what I intended using my voice. It was exciting and I am glad I had the opportunity to do that. Thank you for taking the time to visit Madison and The Odyssey Project. **(Stephanie A. Pamperin)**



