



Westmount kids  
chase their dreams / 6

## Description

# Local students show off their literary stuff in Westmount schools Writing Competition.

Introduction by **Wayne Larsen**.

In what has become an annual tradition in Westmount schools, the McEntyre Writing Competition always attracts a wide variety of thoughtful and creative entries, and the 2015 edition was no exception.

Endowed by the late Peter McEntyre, mayor of Westmount from 1969 to 1971, the competition encourages young writers to express themselves on a designated topic, each designed to get the creative juices flowing. It is coordinated each year by the Westmount Public Library.

This year, “Chasing a Dream” was the topic assigned to students in grades 1 through 11.

While local newspapers have printed the names of the winners each year, space restrictions made it impossible to publish all of the winning essays. Now, for the first time, Westmount Magazine presents the full texts of the first-place entries in each grade category, as supplied by the Westmount Public Library.

## Grade 9 Leonardo Cunha of Westmount High School

### Chasing Dreams

A dream is a wonderful thing; for it brings hope, and a reason to live. It can drive the one who has it ever onwards, and give untold joys when it's finally attained.

A dream is a terrible thing—to strive for something, only to have it slip away time and again. It can leave you hollow, and to lose your dream completely can crush your very soul.



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You see, it is with a dream that our story begins, and with a dream that our story ends.

Long ago, there was a dream. It belonged to a lone, humble couple. He, a clocksmith of some talent but little fame; she, an artist of some fame but little confidence. He who found beauty solely in the gears with which he worked and the eyes of his wife; she, who saw beauty in the all world and the touch of her husband. One and another, together as one.

As one, they dreamed. They dreamed of a child, a life born of their emotions. They dreamed of a home, a place to spend their lived in the happiness that belongs only to those whose love is true and fair.

Together they travelled. Teary farewells as they left their families, a new life before them. Warm and loving touches, as winter's caress drove them to cover beneath trees and bushes upon their journey from old dwellings, the cold serving only to bring them closer. Slow kisses upon the shores of silver rivers, feasting on the spring bounty of berries and flowers. Through seasons good and bad, weather cruel and kind, they were together.

He created clockwork marvels of carved wood and brass gears: birds that sang in beautiful chorus, so true in pitch that to hear without seeing was to believe a nightingale was near. And there were rabbits that hopped and chased one another endlessly, to the delight of children. Music boxes: their melodies singing the love he felt for his wife.

She gave unfathomable beauty to all she saw, with paint and charcoal and chalk: serene and silent lakes and ponds, the waters so still and perfect that one was afraid to breathe, lest they cause a ripple and spoil such tranquility. Trees, filled with singing birds, each one poised as though to leap from the canvas and take flight. Roaring flames in hearths, their warming glow filled with her love for her husband.

Through towns warm and cold, across roads of stone and dirt, over hill and over dale, they travelled, seeking the place that would capture their hearts, the place they belonged.

A place they found—a new town, too small yet to have a name. A town that had the cold winter winds, which caused them to seek shelter; for they may never have found it otherwise.

A home was built, to house two and their dream. Days became week, weeks became months, and months became years. Seasons came and went, but never did their love fade or wane. Always they were together. Always, they dreamed.

The town grew, earning a name, though to the pair it was always Home. She sold her paintings, as she always did. No house in their town was bereft of her work, and many a family had found themselves the subject of her talents. It was rumored that one of her paintings, depicting the town in winter's grasp, with the moon gazing down upon them, forlorn and distant, was a lonely eye watching over the sleeping world. She, however, cared only for the beauty, for her husband and for their dream.

His clocks, his contraptions, his mechanical marvels—they too found places in homes near and far. Those little dreams were given life, with wood and brass and copper forming tiny miracles. No matter the care he had for his carvings, his precise work, it could never have compared to the care he had for his wife and the dream they longed to fulfill.

Dreams are wonderful things. They are beautiful and wondrous.  
Dreams are terrible things. They are fragile and cruel.

Illness came to their town, carried upon the back of a winter that ate at the soul as it ate at the body. Food ran short and hungry beasts drew ever closer, but it was the illness that took the greatest toll. The young, the elderly — those



who had seen to little life, and too much — they were the first to fall, to leave their dreams being in eternal sleep.

Still, they stayed together, and together they would stay... had the illness not touched them, too. With a whispered word, she met her end. With a heavy heart and silent prayers, he laid her to rest.

With winter's end, few remained; and broken hearts, families smaller than they had been before the coming of the snow. Little food, and far less joy, he stayed only until no snow remained, until the first flower grew upon his beloved's grave.

Without a word, he left. There was no love. There was no dream. There was no home.

While he travelled, he created. His works of wonder, delightful to those around him, seemed as hollow and empty as his heart. It was all he knew without her by his side. Days became weeks, and weeks turned into months—the summer, the spring, the autumn, and the winter. No laughter beside the silver rivers, no warming touch in the shelter of the snow-laden trees.

He walked, he created and he never wept. His tears lay frozen upon a mound of earth, where hope and a dream lay buried.

Until, that is, he made something he once had wanted, but now could not imagine. The artist's touch, when left alone, gives rise to the heart's desire; and when he broke from his thoughts, he found a child in his palms. Tiny, carved of the wood he had picked up to put on the fire, and utterly perfect. It had her eyes and her smile, and his cheeks. It was what he could have had, the dream unrealized, chased away by the cruelest fate.

Read [Grades 1 through 4](#), [Grade 5](#), [Grade 6](#), [Grade 7](#) and [Grade 8](#).

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### Category

1. Poetry | Essay | Short Story
2. Westmount

### Tags

1. McEntyre Writing Competition

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