

Inspired by [Pictures of Hollis Woods](#) and the [Episodic Writing Lesson](#) at the WritingFix website, this tenth grader wrote the following series of episodes to tell a story. Emma worked especially hard on his idea development and organization skills as she wrote and revised the published writing you see here.

Read this essay, and be prepared to discuss where this writer excels with idea development and organization.

At the Farm

by Emma, tenth grade writer

The Woods

It was about 1:30pm, and we had all just stuffed ourselves full of my Nana's cooking. My Poppy pulled out of their huge barn on his glorious, green, John Deer tractor. The tractor seemed so big as it crept out from the shadows. My brother, sisters and I piled onto the trailer being towed behind the tractor. Rollie pollies were everywhere. He took us down to the end of the fields where the cows rest after lunch. They looked at us like we were crazy as we slipped and slid through the mud. The only way to get to the other side of the fence was to go under. So that's what we did. One by one we crawled down to the corner of the fence and slid through the hole. What lay on the other side were amazing things: pine trees taller than sky scrapers and much more wide than houses, bleeding hearts scattered about, entangled with the black berry bushes, streams running along paths made by the cows. My Poppy would later teach me about all of these things and share his secrets of how to mend a Stinging Nettle scratch or what to do if a cow got stuck.



We all stood there, gazing up at the wall of pine needles we were about to enter. I took one last deep breath of the cold, damp air, took my Poppy's hand and followed him into the woods.

Salting Slugs

My Nana has a huge garden that winds around the barn and shed, sits in front of the porch and rests behind the house. She loved her garden and didn't mind sharing it with a few bugs, but the slugs were another story.

After lunch, before my Nana took her nap, she looked at my little sister and me wondering what to do with us.

"Bob, come show the girls the slugs! With the salt!" Soon after she called out to Poppy, in he came rubber rain boots and all. Slat the slugs? Why would you want to salt slugs? Why, other than to get them to leave? I'd much rather just have Rachel touch it.

He took us out to where the barn and shed lay side by side only to be separated by a patch of grass. The closer we got, you could see something was enjoying the grass and brought several of their friends. They were some of the biggest slugs I had ever seen.

"Now before you get started- Rachel put that down! -Before you get started, sprinkle just a little bit of salt on the slugs. When you're done, there might be more over by the porch. I'll be fixing the fence if you need me." He handed us the each a saltshaker and went over to the pile of barbed wire. Rachel, of course, was the first one to try it out without hesitating. The once dark brown slug now had yellow spots where the salt had touched his slimy skin. He shriveled up and started to slime. Rachel tried to pick him up but he wasn't squishy anymore. It sounds awful but all in all it was kind of fun. Almost all of Poppy's ideas are.

Snake Slime

Poppy would take us on lots of little adventures into the woods, out in the fields or with the stories he'd tell. One adventure took place in the woods.

My grandparents live by Portland, OR where it always rains. In the afternoons and at night when it's cooled down, little frogs and other small creatures come out. One day, after we got all geared up in our rain boots and walked down to the woods, a little gardener snake was resting by the black berries. I really, really wanted to pick it up but I was too afraid to touch anything, so Poppy picked it up for me. It was actually pretty calm. It didn't try to get away or move. It just let its tiny bones relax in my Poppy's hands. Then he gave it to my mom. I think she spooked it because it "slimed" all over her hands. The slime smelled like the compost pile after it had been in the sun and it seemed to get on everything. She washed her hands several times when she got back but nothing can stop the slime.

Dominos

A few years ago my Poppy was watching this TV show about these teams of people set up dominos so that they make one picture when they stand up and another when they fall over. My mom and Nana had already gone to bed, so my little sister and I went into the computer room to see him. We crawled up the giant computer chair and sat on his lap. Together, without talking, we watched that show with him until we fell asleep.

I loved just sitting with him for a while, watching something we were both interested in seeing. It was nice being able to spend time with him like that. I had fun even if we were just watching TV.

Slobber

Just like us, the cows get three meals a day. So, of course, my Poppy goes out to the barn and loads up the troughs with oats and hay readying it for the few dozen cows that were about to pass through it. This time I got to go with him.

While he shoveled the oats into the troughs, I climbed up the giant stack of hay that took up the majority of the barn. He started on the hay and got me down and sat me on the rail. After a few moments, he put everything down and lifted the oversized garage door up. Dozens of cows filed in trying to get through with the most food. Poppy stuck his hand out straight in front of him. The cows didn't seem to care or even notice his fingers touching their thick, wiry hair. So, I did the same thing. I had never felt something like that before and when I pulled my hand back it was covered in red hair and dirt.

When they actually got eating, he took me down to my Nana's favorite, and the nicest cow, Dakota. He lowered me down so that I was almost at eye level with Dakota. I cautiously held my tiny hand out not really knowing what to expect. She raised her head slightly and with one quick lick, she soaked my whole hand and forearm. My Poppy stood there and laughed at my not knowing what to do. He picked me up and carried me back to the house. I couldn't stop telling everyone about it. And of course Poppy, as the witness, had to tell everyone what happened.