

My Room

by Brandon K., eleventh grade

I enter my room. No silence here. It is an area void of any order or neatness. I know only by faith that the floor is even there, hidden beneath mounds of dirty and clean clothes. The walls, invisible under posters and pictures, souvenirs and snapshots, haven't seen the light of day in years.

I take a step further in, being careful to avoid what could be

hiding under the mounds of stuff that buries my floor. The stereo is booming beside my bed, which is unmade. This is a room of beautiful disorder. All four walls are one big collage.



Abandoned House

by Bridget V., eleventh grade

Dark and unlively, here it stands. It was once full of life, but now only sorrow lurks around every corner.

The smell of a home cooked dinner is no more. Laughter of small children has faded away. No light brightens the rooms. And the fresh flowers that bloomed with life have shriveled up and died.

This house has no life...at least not anymore.

The floors creaked with one step. Dust lies everywhere. Cobwebs settle in the corners of the rooms. The furniture has been covered up to not be seen at all. Silver candle holders have droplets of wax covering all over until finally settling on the wooden surface.

You think you hear the happy laughter of children, but all you see is an empty hall leading to empty rooms.

All that stands in this house are the fresh tears and blackness of a broken heart.



Raven's Hollow

by Ben C., eleventh grade

Forgotten away behind ancient black iron gates near a rocky ocean shore lies the small village that has come to be known as Raven's Hollow. Here, you will not find the laughter of children, nor the song of a morning bird in the bright sun, or the noises of livestock scampering through the streets. There are no church bells tolling, no people working, and no newborn babes crying for their mother's protection.

Here you will only find the deathly shrill of a black raven before it takes up its flight. The echo of empty inns and homes, the crash of window shutters in disrepair, the tasks of former residents left undone or untouched. A thick suffocating fog fills the silent forest bordering the forest's edge and waits for the next of tourists to wander into its dark history. Forgotten away behind ancient black iron gates near a rocky ocean shore lies the small village that has come to be known as Raven's Hollow.



What's **Voice**? It might be:

- Humor
- Emotion
- Passion
- Mood & Tone
- Persuasion
- Point-of-view
- Devices that add style

Your Olympic-Committee Task:

1. Read all three pieces carefully;
2. Award a gold, silver, and bronze medal for **Voice**, and gold, silver, and bronze medal for **Sentence Fluency**.
3. Compare your medals choices with others, discussing any differences of opinions.

What's **Sentence Fluency**? Perhaps:

- Varied Sentence Lengths
- Varied Sentence Beginnings
- Rhythm
- Flow of words
- Natural-sounding use of transitions