

Inspired by J. Ruth Gendler's [The Book of Qualities](#) and the [Personifying Abstractions](#) lesson at WritingFix, these high school students took interesting approaches as they personified three different emotions. As they wrote and revised the final drafts below, they worked especially hard on skills of idea development and word choice. Work with a partner to determine where each writer shows his/her best skills of **idea development** and **word choice**.

### **Insanity**

by Bailey, tenth grade writer

Insanity is a wonderful person. He drags us from normalcy and makes us different, so we're not all robotic. He's tall and wears a straight jacket. With wild, spiked hair and bloodshot eyes, he captivates us with his vivid, evil grin. Listening to hardcore death metal pumps him up. He can't stand calm music, because it's soothing.

Don't underestimate him. You may think you are sane, but the wrong chain of events can spiral you down into the gloomy hole he calls home. He is friends with Ferocity. When they get together, they create utter chaos. They prey on the weak, those without the strength to fight them off.

He is usually laid back, but he does have a pet peeve. If he doesn't get his way, he will go crazy and destroy anyone and anything in his path.

He leads you down a ruthless path. Once you get a taste of him, it's over. He will be with you forever. Consuming and controlling your way of life until he gets his way. He wants nothing less than to ruin and scar you forever. He lives within us all, feeding on our insecurities until we snap. He is unstoppable.



### **Gossip**

by Alexis, ninth grade writer

Gossip is a popular high school girl who sweeps through the hallways. Her outrageous lies make you want to run away and hide. Jealousy is her best friend, and Truth is her worst enemy. The little lies she says are dirty and sticky.

This tall, skinny blonde can make anyone believe her and anyone feel low. Her words flood the school like an oil spill. As she basks in the criticism, she smiles as kids get picked on.

Her enemy, Truth, really gets under Gossip's skin. Truth is always honest, has a loud, clear voice and constantly makes eye contact. Gossip hates Truth for all these qualities.

Gossip is a sneaky snake. She always speaks in a low, whispery voice. She never makes eye contact with anyone. Her vicious bite injects a toxin of pure humiliation. She locks her jaws into anyone weak enough to believe her.

When the sun rises and the truth is revealed, she slips away into her cave of self-pity and loneliness, never to be seen or heard again.



### **Need**

by Tyler, tenth grade writer

Need lives in a box on the side of the street. Need looks for people who have nothing: people who dig in the trash for food, people without jobs, people who don't even have homes.

When Need talks, he sounds hoarse because he could use some cough medicine. His skin is grey and pale. His only friends are the homeless and disadvantaged. If it wasn't for them, Need would not be here. The only people that Need doesn't need are people who don't need him.

Need and his brother, Want, are totally opposite, and they don't really get along. Want is the type of guy who has everything he requires but craves unnecessary objects. While Need suffers, Want complains about foolish items he desires.

Need discovers old newspapers and books while digging in garbage, but he can't read them. Sadly, all he can do is look at the pictures. This is what he does on the weekends. The rest of the time, he is busy scrounging for food to eat. Sometimes on busy days, people get stuck in traffic jams, and Need gets to hear music from their idling cars while he sifts through dumpsters.

As you can see, half of your needs are really just wants. Be thankful.

