

*On the All-School Fall Camping Trip, students rotated through four classes on the beach in Monterey. Dawn's classes did the following:*

Using excerpts from John Steinbeck's Cannery Row as our inspiration, we created some character sketches as we sat and observed the other visitors to Monterey. Students were asked to start with actual observations of people on the beach, and then write them into a scene that imagined other details about their subjects' lives.

Savannah:

Sage Cadburry was riding her bike through the park. She felt careless and worry-free for the first time in a while, but whenever she brushed her long, thin fingers over her jaw, she could feel the scar that that horrible day had left her with three years ago. She tried to block the images from her mind, but eventually the threshold broke and it all came rushing in. She could hear the screams of her little brother and feel the fire catch in her hair. Then she stopped. She couldn't think about it anymore. That memory had created so much pain in her life that she couldn't let it control her anymore. She had moved to this city for a fresh start and so far it had been, but she was the type of person whose mind never relaxed...

Hope:

Maria packed her small silver camera back into her colorful tropical patterned bag. She straightened the woven straw hat that flopped a bit to the right as she thought about what her friends would comment on from the pictures she had taken of the beach in Monterey in her blue chair. She admired the beach's pleasant beauty, completed with rolling waves.

Kiana:

Karen was uncomfortable with her body. She always had been. That's why she'd started speed-walking in the first place, as all she was really comfortable in was a mumu or burka-type garment. When she went speed-walking, though, she took a risk. Now, when I say risk, I do mean risk from the point of Karen, meaning above-hip athletic sweat pants, and a huge t-shirt tucked into those pants, which for most of us is not exactly an imposition on our modesty. That's most of us, but for Karen...It was a big step compared to her usual outfit. There is one more thing which I think is truly an important fact you need to know to understand Karen: She loved the police channel. She understood problems and she knew how to fix them. As a child, she had pulled a baby out of a burning building, proving at the young age of five years old that she could always keep a cool head in a disaster. She stayed at home all day watching her local police channel, planning how to save the maximum amount of citizens, catching and prosecuting drug dealers, and most importantly to Karen, getting those poor cats out of trees. The other reason she started speed-walking was to gain confidence for her soon-to-be trip to the police station to try out to be one of the new Elders against Evil division. There was only one problem: how

was she going to go speed-walking for an hour and a half each day and still watch the police channel fifteen hours a day. She slept exactly nine hours a night, so she couldn't cut into that, it was her beauty sleep, and she already ate her meals in front of the TV.

Jon:

She sits on the beach with her old sun hat on. It reminds her of him. She reads her book or takes pictures sometimes, checking her phone for a call or text, but mostly she watches the surfers. She remembers her husband surfing in the same spot when they would visit the ocean. A small wind tugs at her towel, which covers a pair of brown shorts with a green shirt on top. A smile plays across her lips as she watches a mother and child play with their child. Suddenly memories come flooding back to her. Memories of her and her husband doing the exact same thing a long time ago. She remembers the draft and watching him leave while comforting her crying daughter. A tear comes to her eye. She knows no one is watching her, but she puts on her glasses anyway.

Sydney:

Joe was lost in the rhythm of the waves. Even Blackjack's barking couldn't distract him. He felt his heart beat a little faster every time he watched someone catch a wave. He quickly turned away. It hurt to watch. He let his eyes wander a little until he settled them on a tattooed young man, probably in his twenties. The young man held a half empty beer can with a sway in his walk. Behind him at least two more were lying in the sand empty. Joe reached up to wipe his eyes as a tear slipped. He would never touch that stuff again. That he swore to. The padding of fast footsteps approached behind him. He turned to see another man with his dog and greeted him kindly.

Abigail:

Jenny lay texting on her blackberry. Her fourth husband was home cooking. "Can u bring milk?" Her husband texted. Jenny thought he was very needy. A man on a park bench was staring at her. She had a way for attracting men's looks. She fanned him away with a wave of her manicured hand. In this action, she accidentally knocked over her spf 4 tanning lotion. She got up and packed up her stuff. A trolley passed by, full of people who smiled and waved at her. "Stupid tourists," she thought bitterly.

Nearby on a rock, a girl was staring at her. She occasionally would write something in her journal. Jenny thought that these things should be locked up in school on these days. After all, it was Thursday. She got up and climbed into her convertible. Time to go.

Kylan:

Looking back at life, Lauren was satisfied with it as she crossed the beach. Settling herself in a small nook in the sand, she allowed herself a few minute break before she took the 5-mile walk back to the house. She had been athletic in her college years, being a popular track runner, but those dreams had been crushed when she had fallen back and landed on her thigh. After spending a month in the hospital, she had gotten out of shape completely, and she had never been able to replenish the skill she once had, though she took daily walks on the beach to help keep her strength up. She jerked her mind out of thoughts from the past and remembered that she had plans later with her friends, so she had to start heading home. Glancing quickly at the engagement ring she had received a month ago, she pushed herself out of the nook and began to retrace her steps back to her house.