

Kenneth May

School Projects

After jamming coats on racks and Batman
lunch boxes on shelves, we posed beside desks
like Olympians, hands over hearts, repeating
the Pledge of Allegiance as it crackled over the intercom.
We sat in alphabetical order and raised our hands
to speak. My friends Kardu and Meredith
rode the bus from downtown. Art once a week,

gym twice, we square danced. At recess,
after a lunch of Sloppy Joe's, we tossed a football
into the air: catch, run and chase until tired
or tackled, spiral the ball back up, catch and run
until grass stains blotched our elbows and knees.
Jon-Jon and I hunched in the corner during math
and read encyclopedias we sneaked off the back shelf.

Officer Friendly visited every year and handed out
plastic badges, commanded us to look for
helping hands in windows. After the last bell rang,
thinking of kites and kickball, we marched
in two lines towards double-doors and sunlight
between tables of chiseled army recruiters
stationed along the walkway who had our names on file.