

## Flaws?

There is a fat kid who is laughed at solely because he is fat. Every day he is made fun of, and every day he goes home crying. He is fat. He admits it. He tries to lose weight, but nothing works. He has zits and shaggy hair. Kids call him lard face, doughboy, and fatso. He acts like it doesn't hurt him at all. He walks by, eyes down, mouth closed, never turning, never responding to any of the taunts. On the outside, it looks like he doesn't care, but on the inside his stomach knots and his throat catches. Every time he's called a new name it slices like a paper cut. But he's become quite good at suppressing his emotions.

When this kid goes home to his trailer park house, he goes right to his computer, the gateway to his sanctuary, where he doesn't get ridiculed because of his physical appearance. If you were on the outside, looking in, you might think this kid is kind of weird—antisocial even. But he's really just a regular kid, who wants some friends, or just a friend, who might pick him for a team just once, or not groan and roll his eyes when he's assigned the seat next to him, or might ask him to his house to skateboard or play computer games . . . or might just call me by my real name for once.

*Owen A.*

### **Try this:**

- For 2-3 minutes, write as quickly as you can all that this piece brings to mind for you.
- Think of someone you know who may have been made fun of in some way. Write as quickly and as specifically as you can all that you remember about the way this person was treated.