Vincent Randall
Second Place, fourth grade
Janet Prassl, teacher

If someone gave me a choice of going to a school in a one-room schoolhouse with one teacher and students of all ages or attending school like I do today, I would not have a quick answer! To answer this question, I wanted to understand what it was like to be a student in the 1800's in Franklin Township, Hunterdon County, New Jersey. So, I did some research and learned about the history of our very own 1837 Schoolhouse that sits on the Franklin Township School (FTS) property. Even though I see the one-room schoolhouse almost every day, I never thought what it would be like to be a student there with our current school building towering behind it!

While reading about the one-room schoolhouse, I thought about all the things we have today that we take for granted. Attending school in a one-room schoolhouse with children of all ages would mean being in class with my older sister, sometimes she can be helpful but other times that might not work out so well because we have different interests. I also learned that students helped bring in wood or coal for heat and had to use an outhouse as a restroom! Today, our school building is comfortable throughout the year with heat, air conditioning and indoor restrooms.

Being a student in the old days in a one-room schoolhouse might not be so bad after all, your classes would be in the same place so you wouldn't have to walk to different rooms or buildings. You would also get to see your friends almost every day except for Sundays and holidays. While I was not in school, I would be responsible and help my family around the house and farm with daily chores. This might mean some hard work compared to watching television and playing video games, but I know my friends would be doing the same to help their families.

After all that I have learned, I would still choose to go to school as I do today, but there are some things about attending school in a one-room schoolhouse in the 1800's that would make me want to be a time traveler and try it out!