

CityKidzWorld

Summer 2012 Volume 3 Issue 14

**READ: THE CAVE &
ADVENTURE ISLAND**

**CREATIVE SUMMER
PROGRAMS
STARTING IN
JUNE**

**GREAT
SHORT
STORIES,
PASSAGES,
&
POEMS**

**Fun
Summer
Contests
Inside!**

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Special thanks to all of the creative writing teachers, classroom teachers, and parents who helped the children prepare their work.

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Cover Models

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 Aishwarya Mukundan
 Laya Venkatesan.
 Everett Murray



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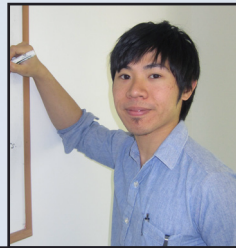
Dear Readers,

It has been a great 4 years! That's right! We have been publishing this kids' magazine for 4 years now! Our mission is to help children connect with their writing in critical ways. We want to provide an outlet for children who want to write, who care about their writing, and who strive to become better through practice. The best way to do that is to let children come up with unique ideas, help them write drafts of their stories or essays, provide them with skilled teachers who help them to understand their mistakes, and then help them write a final draft. That is what we do at the City Kidz World Writing Studio each week. Some of the final drafts written by our students make their way into this magazine every few months. We hope that this magazine encourages all of the children in the community to care about their writing and to try to accomplish the same level of writing as some of the hardworking children who appear in this magazine every quarter.

City Kidz World Magazine Creative Writing Team

Creative Writing Specialists

Daniel Dominguez is a graduate of Rutgers University with a major in English and history. He enjoys teaching his students about literature, writing, and strives to spark creativity in all of their work. When not teaching in studio, he also teaches reading in Kumon and Filipino Martial arts under the Bayani Warrior system.



Michael Mendonez is a recent graduate of the English program at The College of New Jersey. Other than working as a writing coach, he spends his time writing short stories of his own, substitute teaching, and playing guitar and keyboard in a local indie-pop band. He will be attending NYU in the fall of this year to pursue his MFA degree in fiction writing.

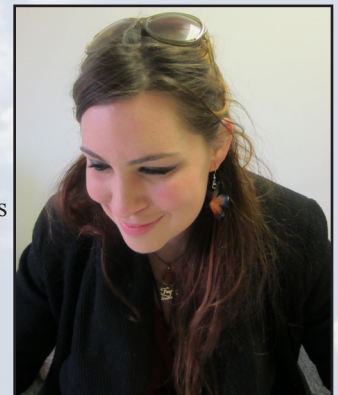


Writing Studio Director, Melissa Edwards, has been teaching language arts, reading and English for 20 years.

Her passion is creative writing, but she also feels it is important to help students master grammar and punctuation as well as enhance vocabulary in order to facilitate life-long success in writing. She has taught at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. She is currently a college professor.



Laurel White graduated from Rider University with honors. Her certification is in Elementary Education. She has assisted in several schools in Plainsboro and enjoys teaching and creative writing. She is quite successful with teaching some of our youngest students to read.



Kaitlyn Fischer has been an assistant teacher and home tutor with City Kidz World since January 2011. She graduated summa cum laude from Rider University in May 2012, earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education and Psychology, with a minor in Early Childhood Education. In January 2012, she student taught in a kindergarten classroom in Princeton. She also completed field placements in grades K-3 in various districts across the area, including South Brunswick, Lawrenceville and Trenton. In addition, Kaitlyn is an experienced and valued substitute teacher for grades K-8. Kaitlyn loves working at City Kidz World and enjoys watching her students develop a passion and

love of writing. She will be teaching Kindergarten at Central Elementary School in East Brunswick beginning in September.



Middle School

That's a Surprise...

By Janani Krishnan

I ran through the garage with the balloons in my hand. I threw my Uggs on the ground, and twisted the shiny gold doorknob that led into the house. I looked around and saw my mom sitting at the dinning room table looking at her pink, Sony computer diligently.

"Hi! We have to get to work quickly before they all come. Where is Harini? Oh anyways, I'll be decorating the entire house if you need me," my voice trailed off in the distance as I picked up the cupcakes and quickly stuffed them into the cold, lighted freezer.

"JANANI!" my mom screamed and I fell to the floor slipping on my own foot.

Earlier That Day...

I stood at the entrance of the YMCA waiting for my dad to pick me up. The pink and white backpack slung on my right shoulder, as I opened up the last zipper and grabbed my iPod and cell phone. I felt around for my phone until I felt the cold, metal back and the plush wire of my headphones wound around my new iPod Touch. I flipped open the baby-pink cell phone and looked for my dad's phone number. I scrolled down the contact list until I found the right number.

"Swim practice was over five minutes ago. Where are you?" I breathed heavily into the phone. Afterwards, I hung up and headed back inside the warm, chlorine-smelling lobby of the YMCA. Soon enough, I heard my dad's large, black suburban pull-up near the entrance. I got up, re-wound my headphones around my iPod, and put both my iPod and my phone back into the smallest zipper on the side of my swim bag.

The automatic sliding doors in the front slid open and waited for me to leave. My feet hit the ground quickly and swiftly since I was so excited to get home and decorate for my birthday sleepover, which I had hosted every single year since the fifth grade. I pushed open the heavy, metal black door and swung my backpack into the seat next to me. "Okay... we have to go to Party Fair pick up the balloons then get those ice cream cupcakes. Then we need to go to CVS to get the soda and snacks," I was so out of breath by the end of the statement that I inhaled and almost fainted on top of the backpack next to me.

"Hold on there. We also have to get a cake for..." Before my dad could finish his sentence, I cut him off.

"Oh we don't need to get a cake. Michele said she was going to bake one for me as her present. I bet it's going to taste delicious. Just make sure you order the pizza," I fiddled with my seatbelt until it didn't bother me and then I started to text my

friend Anshika about how excited I was.

We soon reached the complex, where all three stores were located right next to each other. My dad and I both made our way out of the car and walked across the street into Party Fair. When I opened the door, the bell rang with a soft, but noticeable chime. I went straight to the balloon section and picked out exactly 12 balloons for my 12th birthday.

"Hey, could we get those colored candles that make the fire the same color as the candle?" My voice was even more urgent this time, but also a little bit pleading.

"Oh sure those look original," My dad wanted to get out of the store as soon as possible so that we could get home before my friends arrived. As soon as the store clerks finished blowing up the balloons, we were out of there and at Cold Stone, my favorite ice cream parlor.

When I pushed open the door the strong scent of the ice cream wafted through the room. I headed toward the freezer that was not near the ice cream. In the freezer there was a large variety of desserts. I finally found two boxes of chocolate ice cream cupcakes with a chocolate wrapper. I took them out of the freezer, and brought them over to the cashier and waited for my dad to finish paying for them. When we came out of Cold Stone, we had to go back to the car and put the cupcakes in the car with the balloons. Since CVS was also a store near Party Fair, we walked back across the street and entered CVS. The cashier there smiled when we entered. We went in and grabbed what we needed and then took it back to the cashier.

When we were out, we went straight back to the car. Our hands were full with various goods and items so it was hard to get the car door open. We quickly got in the car and I asked my dad to drive extra fast because my friends were going to be at my house any minute and we might not. I wondered what would happen if my friends arrived at my house while I was out. I wonder what they would do. Would they go into my room?

"Hey dad, do you know anything about the surprise at midnight mom was talking about the other day? I didn't get that at all!" I was wondering about what Anshika and Shruti had planned for the "SURPRISE AT MIDNIGHT" thing.

"I don't have any idea what you are talking about. What surprise? Who surprise? Huh?" My dad's voice started to nervously trail off.

"Okay... never mind. I'm sorry I asked you." I felt awkward with the silence so I decided to turn on the radio to my favorite station, 92.3 NOW, until we got back home. When we arrived at the house, I ran through the garage with the balloons in my hand and threw my Uggs on the ground and twisted the shiny gold doorknob that leads into the house. I looked around and saw my mom sitting at the dinning room table looking at her pink Sony computer diligently.



The Lego™ Battle

By Rahul Ubriani

It all started on the stormy night of April 18, 2012. Rahul was playing outside with his Legos™ and their weapons. It was his birthday the very next day. His mom called him inside when she saw storm clouds gathering. He was lucky, because as soon as he got inside, rain fell down like a waterfall. He realized he forgot his Legos™ outside. It was too late now. That's when the trouble started.

He had placed his Legos™ in three different piles: good, evil and in between. They were all far apart from each other, for he was mapping a battleground for his made up Lego™ war. Little did he know that his fiction was about to become reality. Even though they were only a few yards apart, in Lego™ distance, they were miles away. Suddenly, lightning struck. The first Lego™ came to life.

He had an evil character and a sleek, purple body. His tail was as smooth as glass, but his eyes were as sharp as needles. He didn't slide on the ground completely like other snakes; he kept his tail on the ground and was in the air from the waist up. His neck was long, but his head was small. Even though he had a brain smaller than a pea, he was clever in an evil way. His name was Pythor. He thought he was the leader of evil and so he gathered up all the other evil snake Legos™ in the area and took them to the top of the house, where they were all struck by lightning and came to life. Thus, the evil race was born.

The snakes were organized into five tribes: the Anacondai (which Pythor was from), the Hypnobrai, the Fangpyre, the Constrictai, and the Venomari. Each tribe also had a general, who had a tail, and the rest were soldiers. Each tribe also had a special ability. The Anacondai had the power of teleportation and becoming invisible.

The Hypnobrai could hypnotize magnitudes of Lego™ people at a time. The Fangpyre could turn anything into a snake just by biting it, including Lego™ people and Lego™ vehicles (into snake vehicles). The Constrictai could travel underground and had incalculable strength. And the Venomari could spit venom and make Legos™ see odd things, or hallucinate. An example would be when you get spit on by a Venomari and you see everything as Gingerbread men and tomatoes.

Pythor's goal was to get back at Rahul because, as he thought, "He played around with us like toys. Now it's our turn!"

Now the Serpentine were racing toward the house in a snake/fire truck that the Fangpyre had found and made into a snake/fire truck, but it would take a week at least (the fire truck was half broken, and missing two tires). At the same time though, a fork of lightning struck a pile of good Legos™ and brought them to life.

Not all of them were ordinary Lego™ people though. There were a good 10-15 ordinary Legos™ and about seven special Lego™ people. The leaders of the group, Peter and Alex, weren't the way they seemed on the outside. They really had a whole stock of M-16s, RPGs, spears, bows and arrows, crossbows. You name it, and they had it.

Peter and Alex both had the same appearance: khaki pants, a tool belt, and a plain blue t-shirt. In addition, the force of the lightning strike blew the Serpentine's snake truck another 15 yards from where they were.

The others who had come to life were the ninja. They were: Kai, Ninja of Fire, Zane, Ninja of Ice, Cole, Ninja of Earth, and Jay, Ninja of Lightning. They each had a few pieces of armor on their heads and on their shoulders. On their soldiers, they had a piece of armor that let them store two swords. Each of them also had a special weapon and color based on their element. Kai was red, with the Dragon Sword of Fire. Zane was white, with the Shurikens of Ice. Cole was black, with the Scythe of Quakes. And Jay was blue, with the Nunchucks of Lightning.

Kai also had a sister named Nya. She had a high-tech machine she used to fight evil and was known on the battle ground as Samurai X. The machine was red because she was the sister of Fire. Her machine had rockets on its back, and had an attachable seat on the shoulder. She could also fit another person where she was sitting. Her machine was basically an oversized figure of a man. Sensei Wu, their master and teacher, was the master of all the elements. Lloyd Garmadon was Sensei Wu's nephew, and a pest to the ninjas - sometimes. All but Nya and Lloyd knew the ancient art of Spinjitsu, which was basically a tornado of the elements to fight or defend enemies. Sensei Wu's was gold, since his father created the world and Spinjitsu with Spinjitsu. He was the master of all elements after all. Each of the ninjas' tornados matched the garment they were wearing. Suppose Kai decides to wear pink one day. His tornado would be pink. The only exception was Cole, and his was brown.

They all grouped together, wondering what to do next, when Zane spotted a flare go up and burst into the shape of a serpent. "Look," he exclaimed. "It's the sign of the Serpentine!" "You're right," agreed Kai. "They must be on the move and attracting more evil forces out there." "Let's use our vehicles to meet them in battle," suggested Jay. Their golden weapons were created by Sensei Wu's father. The special thing about them was that they could turn into vehicles as a part of reaching the weapons' and the ninjas' full potential, or true power. Zane, since he was ninja of ice, he had a snowmobile that was white, blue and gold. Cole, since he was leader of the group, he got the biggest vehicle; and since he was ninja of earth, he got a black and



con't on page 6



The Lego™ Battle **con't from page 5**

gold car. Kai, since he was ninja of fire, got a red, gold, and black motorcycle. And Jay, since he was ninja of lightning, got a jet as fast as lightning.

Peter chimed in, "What about us? How will we come along?"

"I think I may have an idea," said Cole.

In the end, each of the ninja went in their own vehicles. Nya and Lloyd went inside the Samurai suit while Sensei was on the outside attachable seat. Meanwhile, Peter, Alex, and the rest of the people went on Destiny's Bounty. Destiny's Bounty was the ninja's headquarters. It was a ship that could sail and fly. It had sails and rockets. It even had a high-tech command room! It was truly an amazing sight. A flying ship, four ninja vehicles, and a samurai.

Soon, Peter caught sight of the snake army coming toward them. He informed the rest of them and they advanced with double speed. When they met, both armies stopped a foot away from each other. Pythor gave no time for either of the armies to rest. "Attack!" he exclaimed in a raspy voice.

As soon as he said 'attack', a Venomari threw something small and round at the Bounty. It went toward Alex.

He ducked and yelled, "Ha! Missed me!" Then the ship exploded.

"Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!" yelled the good Legos™ that were left.

The snake army charged. The ninjas jumped out of their vehicles and their vehicles turned back into their weapons.

They exclaimed, "Ninjaaagooo!" and spun into their special tornadoes. Soon, the snake army was being badly defeated with help from the Samurai. When suddenly, a giant metal shard from the ship's debris while flying through the air. As it was falling, the shard pinned the ninja and the Samurai suit to the ground.

"Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!" they exclaimed.

"Yessss," yelled Pythor. "We have defeated them!"

"Not yet you haven't!" boomed a deep voice. The snake army turned around. Behind them was a pure-black skinned man with four arms instead two. He was Lord Garmadon, Sensei Wu's brother, father of Lloyd, the real ruler of evil. Behind him was an entire army of skeletons, fully equipped with axes, scorpion ballista, siege tower, crossbows, hammers, and bones.

"Charge!" yelled Garmadon. The skeleton army advanced and Garmadon himself came to where the ninja and Samurai suit were pinned.

"Dad!" exclaimed Lloyd.

"Brother!" said a surprised Sensei.

"Quick, we must defeat them while they are in disarray," hurried Garmadon.

"Let's go then," replied Zane.

Just as Zane turned around, a Lego™ hand fell from the sky and landed at his feet.

He picked it up and turned it over. On the side was Alex's spy watch. Zane proclaimed, "It's Alex's spy watch. That means..." Zane left the sentence hanging. They all knew Alex, Peter, and the rest of the ordinary Legos™ were destroyed. That made all of them angry; especially the ninja.

"That's the last straw," said Zane angrily. "I'm tired of the Serpentine bullying us by destroying our forces. Innocent Legos™ were destroyed. There is nothing that will hold me back."

At that moment, Zane was engulfed into a light-blue sphere, and rose into the air; while his Shurikens of Ice rose in the sphere with him. A beam of light shot from his chest and engulfed the entire Hypnobrai tribe with the blue light.

"Zane's found his true potential!" yelled Kai. Soon, the Hypnobrai tribe was encased in a huge block of ice.

"Impossible!" screeched Pythor.

It was Jay's turn next. He turned into an electricity figure of a man and flew around. As he flew around, he summoned lightning and blasted the Fangpyre tribe. Soon, there were nothing left but tiny pieces of the Fangpyre tribe.

Then, Cole found his true power. He turned into a glowing, invincible man. He picked up the snake truck and threw it at the Constrictai. It flipped side over side and plowed through them as if they were bowling pins. A few dim-witted scouts from the tribe tried to drill through the truck as it came toward them in the air, but it was as strong as steel.

Kai was last. He became consumed by a bright orange fireball and zoomed over the Venomari, setting them on fire. Soon the Venomari were reduced to ashes.

"Noooooooooooo!" yelled Pythor.

The ninja advanced toward Pythor, but before they could do anything, a net captured him and the Samurai picked him up.

"C'mon sis!" complained Kai.

"Actually, that was Sensei," replied Nya.

"Fun!" added Sensei Wu.

"What should we do with him?" asked Zane.

"Throw him into a lava pit?" asked Kai.

"No, I have a better idea," said Cole. He took out his phone from his pocket and dialed a number.

"Hello, Leonidas?" asked Cole into the phone.

"Yea, it's Cole. Listen. We got an enemy and we need the extraction squad, a.k.a., you. Ok. See you in a bit," continued Cole.

"Who is Leonidas?" inquired Kai.

"You'll find out," replied Cole.

Just then, a swirling vortex of sand appeared above their heads. Out of it came a middle ages Lego™ man with a bushy beard.

"Where is the enemy?" asked the man.

"Right here," replied Kai.



The Lego™ Battle con't from page 6

"Are you Leonidas?" asked Jay.

"Yes, yes I am," said Leonidas.

"Ah, Sensei. It has been many years. Would you like to do the honors?"

"Oh, no. Thanks though. I just don't have that strength like I used to have," replied a stunned Sensei.

"C'mon Sensei. Don't be humble. Why, just yesterday there was a story circulating around that you made the Leaning Tower of Pisa lean just because you put your shoe against it to tie your lace!"

"Fine, fine. I'll do it," agreed Sensei.

"THIS IS SPARTA!" yelled Leonidas.

At the same time, Sensei kicked Pythor into a hole that had appeared behind him at that moment.

Pythor fell in screaming, "If I live, I will strangle you all with a cordless telephone!"

"I highly doubt that!" replied the ninja in unison. They all laughed.



Rahul, a fantastic 6th grader, has been published several times. He is a creative and dedicated writer! Stay tuned for more of his work!

How to Have Summer Fun

C G N I T T I S Y B A B N G A
V R Y P M C H B Y V I B N A M
S Q E Y M P O N F C Y I M S U
L R X A P A N N E H D H F M S
E P E J T U C C T I Y O X R E
V H R W S I R R R E U T X O M
A S C Q O E V E E R S F E T E
R G I W A L K E T M S T U S N
T J S M S I F H W U M E S N T
O N E D B C O J U R Y U H I P
E O E Z Z F N G C A I N S A A
X I W P J L Z N B Z P T C R R
E G E U S D N E I R F O I R K
K I L A I R P L A N E S S N S
S Y C A K F Z L F Z O O S E G

AIRPLANES
BIKERIDING
EXERCISE
FRIENDS
ICECREAM
SUNNY

AMUSEMENTPARKS
CONTESTS
FLOWERS
FUN
RAINSTORMS
TRAVEL

BABYSITTING
CREATIEWRITING
FOURTHOFJULY
HOT
SUMMERCAMP
ZOOS

My Patriot Pen

by Joshua Hymowitz

U.S.A.

People have fought and died over the right to simply say it.

It is now a great nation growing free and strong: A nation where a poetic and beautiful national anthem encourages the hearts and souls, and rings through the ears of millions of people across the country; A nation where a pledge, said in many, many schools across the country ensures the patriotism of so many young children across the country; A nation of dreamers and doers alike; A free nation: Free of slavery, prejudice, persecution – you name it.

I am proud to live in a country where a Jewish person can enter a Christians' store and not be turned down: Where black and white, girls and boys can share schools, bathrooms, water fountains parking lots, anything. I am proud of my country: Where no man or woman can be punished or persecuted for what they say or do, what they believe, their race or color or gender.

Anyone or country that hurts or does something to oppose the U.S.A. awakens a sleeping giant and quickly gets what's coming to them. In fact, nearly every war that America has been involved in has been won: The Revolutionary war, The War of 1812, World Wars I and II, The Korean War, The Spanish American War, The Mexican American War and many others. However, these wars, although won, leave us with a very heavy toll. But we always honor and commemorate those brave men and women who risked their lives so that we can do all the things

that we can do. So that we ride busses to school and work, not work camps. So that we may learn and choose our job, not be slaves doing whatever some terrorist tells us to do. We honor those who fought and came back on Veterans Day and honor those who weren't so fortunate on Memorial Day. After all Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends".

However, the U.S.A. has many problems. Such as the economic crisis, illegal immigration and terrorism. But these problems will be looked into and will be fixed because that is the can-do attitude that defines the American spirit. So say it with me, U.S.A the land of the free and the home of the brave!



Josh is patriotic and a great writer! He is a fantastic 7th grader!

That's a Surprise...con't from page 4

diligently.

Back to the Beginning...

"Hi! We have to get to work quickly before they all come. Where is Harini? Oh any ways, I'll be decorating the entire house if you need me," my voice trailed off in the distance as I picked up the cupcakes and quickly stuffed them into the cold-lighted freezer.

... "JANANI!" my mom screamed and I fell to the floor slipping on my own foot.

"AHHHHH!" I chuckled and screamed, as my friends helped me up and put down the gigantic poster they made for my surprise birthday party .

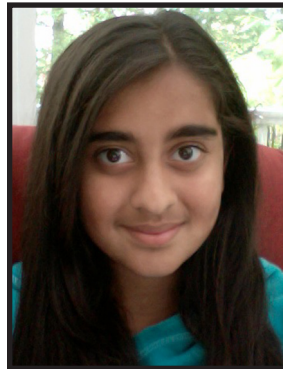
"Surprised?" they all said in a sing, song voice as I tried to say hi to everyone.

"Yhea no dha! I had no clue that was coming. I nearly broke something when I fell! Let's just say I'm easily scared," I laughed and then made my way to the sunroom where my friends had set everything up.

In the sunroom was a gigantic poster that all my friends signed, two cakes - one that Michele baked and the other cake

had been made by Anshika and Shruti. There were games set up, and the two swings were decorated with pictures of my friends and I.

I learned that people should always do things out of the kindness of their hearts, and not for anything in return. That night was the best day ever and the nicest thing that someone has done for me. My friends went out of their way since November planning this party and only to make me happy. They even tried really hard to bake a red velvet cake, but ended up adding strawberries into sponge cake. All that matters is that they tried really hard to make me feel special on my 12th birthday. That was the best present that I could ever ask for from anyone.



Janani is a talented 7th grader with great ideas who has been working on her creative writing for several months!

Adventure Island

By Ananya Krishnan

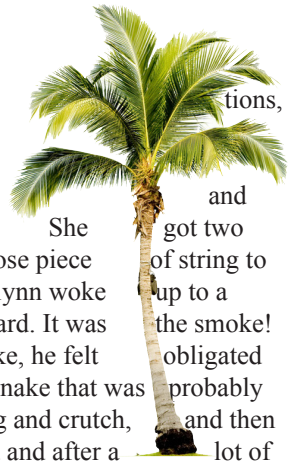
Talia, a 12-year-old girl, helped her 10-year-old brother, Flynn, out of the boat and started pulling out all of the supplies necessary to live on this small, tropical island off of the coast of Hawaii. Suddenly, Spike, their golden retriever dog, poked his head out from under the pile of things. “Whoa! Spike, you scared me! Get out of the boat,” Talia exclaimed. Talia, Flynn, and Spike were running away from their babysitter, Rachel. They had run away from her because she gave the worst punishments. Once, Flynn pulled Rachel’s dog’s tail because the dog ate Flynn’s goldfish and Rachel wouldn’t let Flynn into the house for eight hours in a row on the hottest day of summer! Another time, Rachel brought over two of her friends, Hannah and Sophie, and they bullied Talia into giving them her favorite purple tennis ball that her grandma gave her when she was five. When she refused to give them the ball, the girls snatched it from Talia and locked her in the cold basement for four hours. She even made them make her lunch and a snack! She always acted sweet in front of their parents, though. Afraid that Rachel would punish them, they didn’t say a word about Rachel’s behavior to their parents. One day, they couldn’t handle Rachel’s cruelty anymore and started planning out their escape. They had borrowed a boat from Terrence, the dock owner, and snuck out in the middle of the night. One by one, the supplies started piling up on the soft sand. There were loads of blankets, six large bottles of water, dozens of cans of fruit and nuts, and a duffel bag full of their clothes. Surprisingly, most of them were Flynn’s clothes. Flynn carried the food, Talia carried the duffel bag, and the blankets were strapped to Spike’s back. They got the boat far up inland easily, and then started on their quest for shelter. The island was full of palm trees, blowing in the wind. Soon, they encountered a small clearing in a forest and decided to make this their temporary home. There was a small pond, a place to build fires, and plenty of logs to make a tiny hut! They dropped their things on the sand and started collecting logs. Soon, they had 30 logs, and used 15 for the roof, along with 15 for the walls. It was morning and the brilliant sun shone on the brown hut, making it look magnificent. Spike dived into the water, making Talia and Flynn wet. They laughed and jumped in after Spike, not wanting to miss out on the fun. Soon, they were drying themselves off in the sun. They decided to explore the island. They kept walking into the forest, which was getting denser and denser as walked forward. Soon, Flynn tripped over something and landed with his leg in an awkward position. His pale face became red, and tears came running down his face as he squirmed in pain. His leg was broken! Talia rushed to his side and helped him up. He was leaning against her when she saw what Flynn had tripped over. It was black, yellow, and red, and had sparkling, black, beady eyes with a bright red forked tongue (that was hissing at them) and a scaly body. Talia literally dragged Flynn away, Spike right next to her. They kept running until they reached their shelter. She propped Flynn up against the hut with a can of fruit while she examined his leg. She got water from the pond and cleaned Flynn’s scratched up wounds from being dragged away.

She moved the leg into different positions, finally straightening it and wrapping a blanket tightly around it. She tied the blanket with Flynn’s extra clothes and wrapped another blanket around it. She got two sticks and tied them together with a loose piece of string to make a crutch for Flynn. That night, Flynn woke up to a mighty sound, “Sssssssss.....” he heard. It was the smoke! Since Talia saved his life from the snake, he felt obligated to save hers and Spike’s life from the snake that was probably close by. He stood up with his good leg and crutch, and then limped outside. He followed the sound and after a lot of painful walking, he found the snake, ready to attack. He picked up a stone and flung it at the snake, which turned around to look at Flynn. He slithered toward Flynn, making him cower like a toddler. Suddenly, someone’s hand was on Flynn’s shoulder. He turned around quickly and found Talia looking at him with an angry, hurt, and scared expression. The snake was looming right in front of them now, and there was no way they could escape from it. She whimpered quietly, “Why did you get us into this, Flynn? You owe me!” He shook the thought of doing Talia’s chores off and focused on the matter at hand: killing that snake. The two of them showered the snake with sharp stones, cutting it with every one of them. Finally, the snake was writhing in pain and half-dead. It was already morning! The two kids and Spike rushed back to the shelter, and when Talia felt Flynn’s hand, she knew something was wrong. Her hand was freezing cold and his was burning hot! She felt his forehead and decided that it was time to go back home. They got into the boat with all of their belongings and paddled away, not realizing that they were going in a circle around the island, and would soon end up where they started. When they found out, they brought the boat back onto the island carefully and climbed off, wondering how to get back home. Suddenly, Terrence came speeding up in his motor boat. He got off and grinned at Flynn’s broken leg.

“Did you have a cat fight with your sister?” he teased.

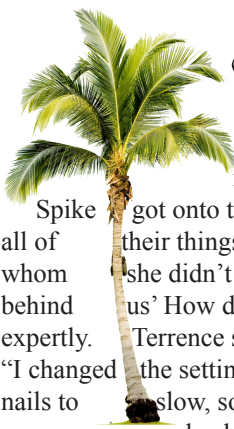
Flynn exhaled in relief said cheerily, “We had a battle with a nine-foot long snake. It looked like an anaconda!” Terrence laughed and said, “Everyone’s been looking for you. I knew you would be here.”

He winked and Talia knew what he was talking about immediately. Last summer, Terrence had taken Talia, Flynn, and Spike on a boat ride while pointing out all the other Hawaiian Islands. The one Talia and Flynn just stayed at were one of the islands that were deserted and the only island that Talia had been interested in seeing. Anyway, Terrence motioned to his boat, “Get in! I’ll be right behind you with all of your things. Just pull the white string in the boat and it’ll take you straight home.” Talia reluctantly stepped in, Flynn and Spike right at her heels. Talia pulled the only white string of many reds and blues, and the motor boat



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Adventure Island **con't from page 9**

started, automatically pushing itself to the mainland slowly. When the two kids and Spike got onto the main island, Terrence was waiting with all of their things. Talia doubtfully questioned Terrence, whom she didn't trust very much, "I thought you'd be 'right behind us' How did you get here so fast?" she mimicked expertly. Terrence smiled slyly and replied in a girlish voice, "I changed the settings on the boat with my perfectly polished nails to go slow, so you could enjoy your ride. You parents are absolutely hysterical! They fired Rachel, and now they're so worried that they've started packing up half of the house and want to move, believing that you weren't coming back. You better run back home, so they don't put the house on for sale." He mimicked a girl terribly. Talia wasn't even a girly-girl! If anything, she was a total tomboy. Talia glared at Terrence and kicked him in the shin, her perfect kicks in soccer coming back to her. They grabbed everything and trudged to their house because Flynn couldn't walk faster or run. When they got inside, their parents were on the couch, staring into space. When they saw Talia, Flynn, and Spike, their faces went from surprise to relief. Their mother stood up and screamed, "Where were you?!" Then her face went to shock when she saw Flynn's leg. "Flynn! What happened? Are you okay?" Flynn glanced at Talia, then at his mom. "I tripped on a log." She felt his forehead and rushed for her handbag, saying, "Oh my gosh, Flynn, you have a fever! We need to get you to the doctor! Talia, go get something to eat, then take a nap. Do you know how long you've been gone? Three days!" She went out the door, ushering Flynn along the way. Talia heard the sound of her mom closing the door to their SUV, then turned to face her dad, who asked, "Are you okay?" Talia nodded and said, "I'm going to fix myself a sandwich." She left for the kitchen and sighed. She would never run away again.

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Ananya wrote six sensational stories in six weeks! Stay tuned for some of her other wonderful stories in upcoming issues of City Kidz World magazine! She is coming out with a short story book soon!

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The Adventures Of Becky and Benson: The Missing Ruby

By Aishwarya Mukundan

The Lost Ruby

Sixty-five-year-old Mrs. Becky, the librarian, rummaged through the books until she at last found the perfect book for herself. It was titled "The Lost Ruby".

"Oh, the ruby! How spectacular!" Mrs. Becky smiled.

Ever since Mrs. Becky was a little kid, she had always wanted to go seek the missing ruby. She read all about it- the shape, the size, the texture and the explorers who tried to find it, but failed. For some reason, something was making them not able to go there. Something was blocking their way. And Mrs. Becky was curious what that was. "Honk, honk!" A car roared.

Mrs. Becky peered through the upper window of Hillsbury Library in New Jersey.

"Oh. It's Mr. Benson," she heaved a big sigh and stepped out the door.

"Hello, Mr. Benson. I forgot to tell you that I am planning to go and look for the lost ruby in Costa Rica! I haven't booked tickets yet, but I am planning on taking the flight next week!" Mrs. Becky exclaimed.

"Mrs. Becky! Ya' reckon I can join ya'?" 35-year-old, Mr. Benson questioned, sticking his head out the window. His half-beard flying around and eyes squinting as the sun moved toward him.

"Ummm...I... guess so. Uhhhhhh...book the tickets for next Saturday. Take the 5 p.m. flight and be sure to be here at 1:30 p.m. sharp. And please do lower down the smoking," Mrs. Becky's eyebrows furrowed.

"Eh... all right. Whatever. I'll try to be on time."

"All right! Bye!" Mrs. Becky waved, a little less confident about the trip now.

Departure

Mrs. Becky glanced down at her watch. It read 2 p.m.

What is taking Mr. Benson so long? Mrs. Becky waited pacing the front of the library back and forth, dragging her purple suitcase behind her.

"BEEP, BEEP!"

"Oh, Mr. Benson! Please don't be so loud! We are right in front of the library!" Mrs. Becky shushed as she climbed into the old, rusty, broken-down looking car.

"Sorry, eh! Just tryin' to 'ave some fun 'ere!"

As they neared the airport, Mrs. Becky pulled out a map.

"Mr. Benson, this is where we will be going. Are you sure you want to do this?"

"Ehhh... we 'ave to walk that long?" Mr. Benson heaved a big sigh.

"Well, what did you expect? To just go and ask some clerk for the ruby?" Mrs. Becky chuckled.

They parked their car, and sprinted into the airport.

"Flight number 351 is now boarding for Costa Rica. Passengers on this flight, please get to Gate 9 immediately," the speaker above them spoke urgently.

"Come on! That's us!" Mrs. Becky pulled Mr. Benson into the gate.

Costa Rica

"Wow... what a beautiful place!" Sighed Mrs. Becky remembering the thick rain forests and water falls on their way as they started walking down to their hotel room.

"Yeah...yeah. Nice. Okay. Eh, can we go look for the ruby now?" grumbled Mr. Benson.

"Let's go put our bags down first and refresh. I need a cool drink as well. It is getting very hot," Mrs. Becky wiped a drop of sweat running down her temple.

After cleaning themselves up and a brief relaxation, they started their way to the cave, where the ruby exists.

The Cave

As they stepped into the dark and gloomy cave, Mrs. Becky was excited and anxious about their adventure. They shuddered at the creeks and eerie squeaking of the bats.

Mrs. Becky immediately pulled out a flashlight from her backpack and switched it on.

They couldn't believe what they saw! There were animal bones scattered all over the place and spiders crawling everywhere.

"Uhhhh... I change my mind. Why don't we uh... ya' know, head back," Mr. Benson's voice quivered.

"Are you serious? The adventure has not even started yet! Are you scared already?" Mrs. Becky frowned.

They started walking up the cave, carefully dodging all the rocks and bones in their way.

All of a sudden, they spotted a bright-red light coming from the far end of the cave.

"Mrs. Becky! I think we found the ruby! Now, let's just, uhhhh... just grab the ruby and run out of 'ere," Mr. Benson tilted his head to shudder at the raccoon bones to the left of him.

"Oh, Mr. Benson! Stop being a scaredy cat! And of course we will get the ruby, but it won't be that easy," Mrs. Becky bit her lower lip, thinking very hard, still clutching hold of the flashlight very tightly in her right hand.

The Trap

As they neared the ruby they lowered down their pace.

"Mrs. Becky, why goin' this slow? I would think we would pick up our pace, eh? I mean... we are close to the ruby!" Mr. Benson retorted.

"Haven't I told you already? There is probably some sort of trap around the ruby or something. It won't be that easy to get there. Why do you think so many people tried and failed to get the ruby?" Mrs. Becky pointed out.

Mr. Benson did not care what Mrs. Becky said. In fact, he just wanted to get the jewel and run out. Following his instincts, he broke into a run. He was a couple of feet away from the beautiful ruby when, BANG! He hit a stone wall--head first.

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“ Oh, Mr. Benson! Are you all right? Are you hurt? Do you need something?” Mrs. Becky had a look of utter concern on her face. “ What do ya’ think, eh? Ya’ think I just am sittin’ ‘ere moanin’ for fun? Whatever. Go in and get the ruby!” Mr. Benson growled, his hands gripping his head very hard, trying hard not to cry from the sharp pain. Mrs. Becky walked to the wall, rubbing her hands gently on the rock. Oh... so there is an invisible wall here. Interesting! In a book she had read not long ago, wasn’t there a mention of a lever? Mrs. Becky noticed a big hill of rock adjacent to the wall. She walked closer to it and started to move the rocks out of the way. This looks like there would be something underneath it. Maybe if I continue to dig, I will find a lever. Mrs. Becky continued to dig until she hit something hard. “Mr. Benson! Would you please give me a helping hand?” Mrs. Becky spoke in a slightly irritable tone. “ Yeah, I guess so. So, I basically just got to move the big rock? And ya’ say it ain’t easy?” Mr. Benson chuckled. “Okay, well, I’d like to see you try it!” Mrs. Becky turned a beet-red and continued to slowly push the rock away. “ Shhhhh!” Mr. Benson whispered now shuddering. “Did you hear that?” “BOOM! CRASH! SLAM!” “Is somebody coming?” A tingling feeling ran up her spine and the hairs on the back of her neck stood on end. “I a-a -a -i-n’t g-g-g-g-o-t a cl-cl-ue-ue,” Mr. Benson stuttered still staring at the opening of the cave. Mrs. Becky straightened her back and spoke, “Let’s continue to work and if somebody comes we stop and explain to them why we are here. Simple, nothing to be afraid of.” But Mr. Benson’s face still looked as if a storm of angry bulls were hunting him down. Mrs. Becky and Mr. Benson worked together so hard and finally dug out the lever. “ Ok let’s pull the lever together. 1...2...” Mrs. Becky began.

The Costa Rican Tribes

The giant of a person who was leading a lot of tribal people watched them and said something in a language that they couldn’t follow. The giant then said something to the rest of the tribe and they all laughed.

Mrs. Becky and Mr. Benson looked at each other anxiously. The tribal people then turned around and left. Mrs. Becky and Mr. Benson heaved a sigh of relief. They didn’t realize they were holding their breath.

“BLAM!” A horrible sound reached them soon after. They realized it was the dragging of a rock. Mr. Benson ran toward the entrance of the cave. The tribal people had shut the cave’s entrance with an enormous rock. They were shocked. They tried hard to push the rock in vain.

They returned to the ruby in utter despair.

What will they do if they are stuck here? How long can they survive here? The TV survival shows came to Mr. Benson’s mind.

After a few minutes, Mrs. Becky said, “We should go and try to get the ruby. Maybe the ruby will show us the way.”

The Magnificent Jewel

After a few hard pulls and tugs at the lever, the wall had begun to open with a sharp screeching noise.

“YES!” Squealed Mrs. Becky and Mr. Benson excitedly.

As it was moving, a big rush of wind swept toward them, and then, everything was still.

“ Woooooowooooow!” Mrs. Becky gasped wide-eyed staring in wonder at the gorgeous, bright, red ruby.

“ Geez!” Mr. Benson was bewildered at the sight of it.

They both touched the ruby. It was the size of a big cabbage, but weighed as much as a gallon of milk. It was very smooth and had an oval shape. It was so bright that it blinded their eyes. They couldn’t stop running their fingers across the surface of the stone. They couldn’t believe what they were holding. They kept staring at it in amazement.

Mrs. Becky then noticed that the rock near where the ruby lay was in a weird shape as if someone had carved it. She gingerly touched it and then pressed hard on it. They both heard the grinding first and then realized that the wall nearby was moving. There was a big, gaping hole where the wall was standing a minute ago. They realized this was their exit.

“ Ok! We did it! Yay! Now let’s get the ruby, and... eh... get out of here!” Mr. Benson said crying excitedly toward the ruby.

Mrs. Becky couldn’t believe her eyes. They picked up the ruby and headed out triumphantly.

Leaving Costa Rica

“ Wow. I never thought we would get the ruby! I thought we would die out there!” Mr. Benson giggled telling a journalist.

A crowd of reporters ambushed Mrs. Becky and Mr. Benson asking them a million questions, when they were at their gate getting ready to board the plane back to New Jersey. The ruby was right beside them throughout the whole conversation. The journalists couldn’t seem to take enough pictures.

“ Okay, yeah. Thanks! We have to go!” Mrs. Becky quickly pulled Mr. Benson out when there was a brief pause.

The ruby is now proudly sitting in the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. There’s been a book and a movie on their adventure. Mr. Benson and Mrs. Becky don’t have to work for the rest of their lives, but they can’t seem to get enough of adventures!



Aishwarya is a brilliant 6th grader who loves to develop her writing!



The Beautiful Sunset

By Srinidhi Ramesh

I woke up with a start. I had the most wonderful dream.
But for your sake, mystery reader, I'll skip the boring parts.
In my dream, I was a small person. I was sitting on the top
of my Grandfather's favorite deck of cards for some odd
reason. Suddenly, the joker slithered right out of his card, and he was
carrying a bucket of golden paint. He flew out of the deck and
out the gate. With a wink, he flew into the sky. Very slowly, he
splashed the golden paint across the sky, making a perfect
semicircle. He laughed a tiny laugh and flew back into his card.
Then, the King flew right out of his card with a paint brush
in his left hand and a bucket of blue paint in his right hand. He
flew into the sky, like the joker, and painted a wavy streak
under the semi-circle. It looked like the sunset painted by a
two-year-old.
Finally, I flew up to the sky and made some finishing
touches. I drew some birds and some fish in the water. Then
me, the joker, and the King sat on the clouds and watched our sunset.
Our beautiful sunset.

The Secret Wonderland

By Srinidhi Ramesh

I was in Grandfather's house when it all started. The fireplace
was still and quiet. Books and old newspapers were scattered on
the floor. It was Grandfather's famous 'Finding Day'. On 'Finding
Day', Grandfather would invite me over to spend the night with
him, not to sleep, but to look for items Grandfather use to own
when he was a wee little baby.
Last year found Grandfather's first lollipop stick. The the year
before that, we'd found his first dime. But this year, all he
had found was books and old newspapers. Grandfather would not
stop searching. I glanced over at the small little case that held his
lollipop stick and his dime. I wondered, Can't anybody just dig
into a box, find a dime and say, "Well! I found my first dime!"
But it's not like I do not trust Grandfather, or anything.
I finally grew bored of digging into boxes, so I walked through
the hallway. Suddenly a piece of string with a rubber circular
thing hit me on the head. I fell unconscious and fell to the ground.
When I opened my eyes I was still on the floor and noticed rubber
circular thing was still dangling above me. I became curious, so
I pulled the string, noticing it was attached to a door on the ceil-
ing. Once I pulled it, the door opened, and a row of stairs came
plopping down.
I walked up the stairs. Boxes and more boxes flooded the room.
The carpet was wet, but there was a board made of tree wood on
which I could walk. I carefully walked so that the wood would
not break. It would groan and moan every time I took a step. The
wood stretched further and further into the room. I was prob-
ably walking on it for about five minutes. I felt tired and hungry,

so I opened an old rusty fridge to my right. Really? I thought to
myself, questioning my own instinct to search for food in the old
device. This fridge looks like it has been untouched for years.
You would actually eat the food in there?
I shook out the thoughts and opened the fridge. From every
edge of the fridge, I saw a slight glow.
"What is this? A glow?" I asked myself. I pushed the back of the
fridge until it opened! A puff of green and pink smoke shot into
my face. That's when a whirring noise came and a giant, metal
claw came out. It grabbed me by the waist. I yelped! But it was
too loud for Grandfather to hear me.
I shut my closed my eyes tight. Tears came rolling our
of my eyes or maybe it was just the fact I was very scared, and
afraid that something may happen.
My eyes shut. I prayed to Jesus that nothing would happen to me.
My prayers worked. I hadn't gotten the least bit hurt. In fact, I
wasn't even inside my Grandfather's attic! I was in a place cov-
ered in thick snow. I was no longer stuck in a metal claw. I was
in an open area. Everywhere you looked, you would see blue and
white, blue and white!
And the most fascinating part was that I was dressed in different
clothes! I was in a blue jacket with trimmed blue and white fur,
and blue boots with the coziest of sheepskin! I had blue streaks in
my blonde hair.
I noticed my blue gloves were grasping on to a feathery blue

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The Secret Wonderland con't from 13

and dark blue line of strings – no, it was a mane! I was sitting on a blue and sky blue tail, the tail of a horse. The horse was blue, as well (like everything in this very peculiar world I was in). It had sparkly dark blue hooves. Its hooves looked like the old disco ball me and Grandfather had found 4 years ago for 'Finding Day'. Grandfather. O, poor Grandfather! He must have been worried sick! How could I contact him, reach him, tell him I was all right?

The horse went slower and slower, as we approached a tall building – wait, it was a castle! I jumped off the horse. The castle was beautiful. There was a long, blue brick passageway to enter the castle. Blue roses lined up by the passage way. The horse galloped to the door and slammed its tail on it three times. Slowly, the door opened. Instantly, majestic music filled the open area. I could see violinists and bass players enjoying themselves, playing the wonderful music.

The horse galloped away. I went to the door. A tall man dressed in a blue suit smiled.

“Welcome to the castle of King Henry. How may I help you?” I smiled.

“Oh, well, good day sire. I ... um ... yes, right, I'd like to see Grandfather? No ... I'd like to see ... Henry?” I stammered. My grandfather's name was Henry, but when I said it, the man looked offended.

“King Henry, my dear. Not Henry. Do not talk with disrespect.” I took the ends of my coat, pulled them, and bent my knees as an apology.

“Well, I wish to see King Henry, if you don't mind,” I said. The man in the blue suit introduced himself as Ronald Quintis while we were walking to the King's room. I introduced myself as Genevieve Michelle. The man stopped at a brown door.

“The only item in this world that is not blue,” I chuckled, as Mr. Quintis opened the door.

“Good luck, Genevieve!” he said, as I walked in.

With the first step I took, I fell to the floor. I wondered, What is going on? Then, a big, fat, red book went down, down, down, and slapped me in the feet. A large, rusty, yellow newspaper came down, down, down, and slapped me in the head. This kept going on, and on, and on, and on, and on, and on, and on...

I opened my eyes. I was still lying unconscious on the ground. I saw Grandfather with a worried, but relieved face. He had been slapping me with a book and a newspaper!

“O, Genevieve! I was so worried that I may have lost you! What are you doing on the floor?” I sat up.

“Grandfather? What are you saying? All this time, I've been on a horse, in your very own castle with Ronald Quintis, your personal assistant! I was never on the floor!”

I stood up before grandfather could say anything.

“But you're my Blue King, grandfather!” I said, with a hug.

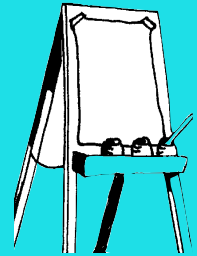


Srinidhi is a creative 5th grader who can write an excellent fiction story!

Art Lessons

**Cartooning
Drawing
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various mediums



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Bundle of Mischief

By Laya Venkatesan

Cans were rolling across the floor. BOOM! We heard a big monstrous explosion. My mom and I gasped.

It all started when we had to take dauntless Svava, my 3-year-old sister, to the grocery store because my Dad wasn't home. "Mommy!" my baby sister called zealously.

My mom lethargically dragged herself toward charismatic Svava and rubbed her weary eyes because Svava had kept her up all night.

"Yeah," my mom replied.

Svava pointed to the Lucky Charms cereal avariciously. It was her favorite cereal. Grabbing the box of cereal, my mom started to try to pour it into a bowl.

Very little cereal came out because it was empty. As Svava devoured her snack, my mom quickly threw on her tan, puffy coat and grabbed the car keys.

"Laya, put on your coat! We have to dash immediately to the grocery store to buy more Lucky Charms for Svava," my mom explained as she started getting closer to the door.

I gave her a puzzled look.

"Are we actually bringing Svava? She's going to cause a lot of trouble there," I warned.

"I'm afraid we're left with no choice. Daddy went to Philadelphia and we can't leave her home alone."

I sighed, but put on my coat and followed my mom and sister. Seeing my mom's anxious look, I knew this trip wasn't going to go too well.

Hurrying to the car, I hoped we could go to the store and get back quickly.

My mom gathered her belongings as we parked our car in the parking lot and started to get out of the car.

"This is going to be quick," I tried to convince myself.

Svava, my mom and I hurried to the store.

Svava is pretty nimble for a baby, I thought.

The automatic doors opened and we entered the store.

Svava's eyes wandered through the store and she smiled.

"Mommy, mommy! I want lollipop," Svava pointed to an enormous pink lollipop.

"Svava, I told you, no candy in the morning," my mom reminded.

"Lollipop," Svava screamed. Everyone's eyes were on us.

"Ok, ok," my mom grabbed the lollipop and gave it to Svava.

My face turned red and I was praying hard hoping that Svava wouldn't throw any other tantrums.

"Come on. Let's get the cereal before Svava takes something else," my mom suggested.

"Good idea!" We all rushed to the cereal section.

Svava was going in the opposite direction heading to the soup aisle.

"Oh great," my mom and I synchronized as we dashed to Svava, trying to lead her to the cereal.

Svava wouldn't yield. She stuck her hands out and kept running toward the soup shelves.

The cans seemed to instantly start falling and dropping to the floor.

Boom!

My mom and I gasped. Picking the cans up, I crossed my fingers, hoping no damage was done.

Everybody was looking at us. I went red with embarrassment. I quickly pulled my hood on so no one would recognize me. I tried to be casual, acting like nothing happened.

We just rushed to the checkout and paid for the lollipop and cereal, getting out as fast as our legs could carry us.

I knew all of this wasn't worth it just to get cereal. Yes, my sister does cause a lot of trouble. However, when she sets her something, she always gets it done.



mind to



Laya is a great 6th grader who loves reading, writing, and vocabulary! She is going to be a great writer one day!



Shorter School Opinion

By Shubh Ambavi

I don't think that school should have really long hours. A regular school day for children in grades K-12 is about 7-8 hours long. In those 7-8 hours, there are about eight classes, which makes each class about an hour. Some people get bored being in class for so long. They also don't do their work in class because they're busy worrying about how much homework they are going to get that day. Children want to participate in sports and music programs, but they don't have the time because school ends late. Children also like to play with their friends and spend time with their family, but they just don't have enough time. They only have time on the weekends. The strongest reason I think school should be shorter is that school starts really early, so you have to wake up even earlier. Students are tired in the morning because they didn't get enough sleep. When they go to school, they might not be ready to learn.

Children need less school time because they like to participate in sports and music programs. Children might already be doing sports and may be in music programs, but they never have enough time to finish their homework. School lets out late and then they have sports, which leaves barely any time for them to do their homework. They then have to quit their sport or instrument they play to have enough time to finish their homework. Sometimes children get about an hour to an hour and half of homework, but that is not always. Usually children get homework that lasts 3 to 4 hours. All the time in schools, sports or music, and homework can add up to 12 hours each day. That is half of the day. Most children sleep about 10 hours each night. That only leaves 2 hours or less to anything else they have to do that day. If about 20 minutes were cut from each class, it would make a big difference. There would still be about 40 minutes of each class left. You would save about 2½ hours and then you can use that time on sports and music. You will also have more time to do other things.

With there being less school time, you could also have more time to play with your friends and spend more time with your family. When you are in school, you are always stuck in all of your classes. Most of the time your friends are not in your class so you really can't talk to them. You don't see them until you get back home and when you get back home, you do have to do your homework first. By the time you are done with your homework, it will already be late, so you can't go out and play with your friends.

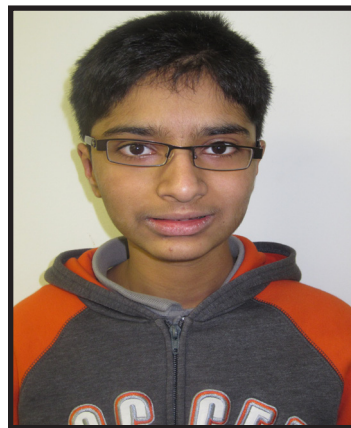
You can also have more time to spend with your family. You could do your homework right away when you came back from school and still have some more time to do things with your family.

With long schools you really won't have any time on the weekdays to do anything else besides school related things. You would only have the time on the weekends. Sometimes you even get homework, which is really long on Fridays because you have

two extra days to do it. With the more homework, sometimes even weekends are boring because you barely had any time to do other things. Sometimes children aren't able to do their homework on the weekends. They sometimes already have small trips planned for the weekends. Then when they get back to school, they get in trouble by the teacher for not doing their homework. It is a waste of your weekend time.

The strongest reason I think that school should be shorter is because of the time it starts. Most schools start really early. Elementary schools begin at around 9:00 A.M. Most middle schools and high schools start at around 8:00 A.M. Sometimes high schools even begin at around 7:00 A.M. You have to wake up about an hour to an hour and half earlier because you have to get ready and wait for the bus. Walking up early can make you tired when you are in class. You might not be able to focus properly on the task. Sometimes children also might have to hurry in the morning because they don't want to miss the bus. Hurrying might make them forget something important they have to take to school. They could have packed everything the night before, but they might forget something like their project that they can't fit in their back packs. They might not even have time to eat. You should eat something so you don't get hungry before lunch and to have enough energy to do your work in school. If school was more in the middle of the day, it would be a bit easier for the children, but that can't happen because then the children would be getting home very late.

Not being able to do sports or participate in any music program is one thing that is not good about the long time spent in schools. You would also want to play with your friends and spend more time with your family, too. You would have to wake up really early and you would only have more time on the weekends to do something that is not related to school. You would not be able to do any of those things with the school hours being so long. You would need more time. With a bit less time in school, you would be able to do all of those things a bit longer.



Shubh works hard on his writing. He is getting better each day. Stay tuned to learn more of his opinions about pressing matters in Middle School! He is in 7th grade.



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The Story of Lightning A Myth

By Matthew

You see clouds when a storm rolls in, right? When Helios the sun god starts his morning, that's how the story begins. Helios sprang off his throne and opened his doors into his servant Dawn's room. She got some chains and disappeared into a dark basement. She came up with four horses and locked them together. Helios came up the stairs after he put a chain around his neck. Now when Helios moved, the stubborn horses had to move as well. The horses breathed fire and attacked Helios. Then Helios opened a gate and chained the horses to a shining, gold and emerald chariot. The chariot had four wheels. One of them was a burning star: the sun. The wheel was made of microscopic pieces of burning thread and an infinite number of golden rods called spokes. Helios put on his crown of flashing sunbeams and a cream that protected him from the searing heat of the sun. He hopped inside the chariot. The sun god whipped

the horses and pulled the reins so the horses jumped into the dark sky. The chariot's wheel spokes fell. O-Mighty Father Uranus (a.k.a. the sky) shielded the spokes (lightning) with a gray blanket. The spokes hit the blanket with a loud thud. That was the forceful boom of the thunder. The spokes came through, but Uranus caught them before the spokes fell into Greece.

Matthew is a smart and creative writer. He loves to use his knowledge to develop creative stories. He is in 3rd grade.



My 7th Birthday

By Andres Moreno

I had a birthday party and it was fun. It was filled with people. My mom, brother, aunt, uncle, friends, and cousins were at my house. I played soccer with my brother Oscar and friends. We put a tail on a donkey and I opened my presents and I ate cake, cupcakes, lasagna, and pizza. It was cold, but it was fun. I had a pinata and I broke it with a bat. The candies came out of the pinata. People jumped all over the candies. At night we played hide and seek with my cousins. My cousin Katherine was the best at playing hide and seek. We were looking for her all that time. I had the best birthday ever.



Andre is a fabulous storyteller!

The Fire Dragon

By Arun Janardhan

One day there was a DRAGON! IT WAS EATING FIRE! It was so freaky! I ran away so quickly.

"I need to go to the bank," I told myself.

There was only one way to get there. The first time I tried, it didn't work. I tried again. The dragon was only covering half of the path. I went the other half. The dragon almost got me, but I got out of the way. Then, the dragon was chasing me. I ran as fast

as I could. I was running to the police station. I went inside and called a police. He got out a gun and the dragon got scared. The dragon ate lots of fire. Then he was nice, so I gave fire to him and we were nice friends. Five minutes later, I got his address and we played with each other.

Arun is a cheerful and talented 1st grader who has been working on his creative writing for a few months.



The Sky Lit Up

By Kritika

I stretched up from bed and I looked out my window when I saw a cloud that reminded me of my friends Maddie Myers and Holly Jones. Then I rushed downstairs to eat breakfast, when the door rang.

Ding dong.

I went to get it, but nobody was there.

I said, "Hhhmmm," and looked outside one more time. This time I heard a voice say, "Boo!"

I jumped up as though an ant bit me! It was Maddie and Holly.

Holly asked, "Did we scare you enough?"

I replied, "Oh yeah - you did."

Maddie asked, "Do you want to play?"

I said, "No, I didn't even eat my breakfast."

Holly said, "Hurry up slow poke."

I replied, "That's it Holly Jones. I am getting you in tag today, and I mean it!"

I finished my blueberry pancakes, and headed out the door. Suddenly the sky lit up, so I went back into my house, and then the sky was back to normal. Then I went outside again, but the sky lit up again! I thought to myself, What's wrong with me? Then I remembered Holly saying, sometimes you will get karma (cursed). Maybe this is the time!

"Oh no," I said.

Then Holly and Maddie came back.

Holly asked, "Are you ready to catch me?"

I said, "I am not sure."

"What do you mean you are not sure?" Holly asked.

I told them what happened to me, but then we discussed it, and I found out it was the clouds that were hiding the sun.

I said, "Yeah! I am not cursed."

Kritika is one hardworking 2nd grader. Her stories are awesome!



Green Leaves

By Siya Gurugunti

Green leaves fall down the brown tree branches.
Yellow and white Honeysuckle moves from side to side.
The yellow bees buzz around the flowers.
The air blows the leaves off.
Honeysuckles smell so good.
The scent of the pretty flower goes all over the world.
It is very good.
The fresh air blows my hair all over the place.
The tree moves side to side and the leaves fall all down.
The leaves make a hill.
It is very pretty.
I love going outside.



Siya is an up and coming poet! Her work is interesting. She is a 3rd grader.



Shark Attack

By Rayan H. Patel

One day there lived two pleasant sharks and their names were Jayden and Max. Jayden was a Great White shark and Max was a Hammerhead shark. Jayden's type of shark was the strongest shark and the most ferocious shark in the sea. Jayden and Max were the best of friends. If anybody hurt Max, they would have to deal with Jayden.

One day, an older orca came into their territory. The orca and his crew were bullying and teasing Max and Jayden. Jayden said, "You better back off or I will give you a knuckle sandwich."

The orca and his crew slowly started to move back.

One day Jayden's dad signed him up for kickboxing. Jayden beat all of the sharks in his class and he also beat the older orca, who was in his group. On the first two rounds, Jayden won. Jayden was fighting fearlessly, but the orca was fighting even harder. Then, Jayden pinned the orca on the ocean floor before time was up. The orca said, "One day I am going to get revenge on your friend."

One Tuesday, Jayden did not go to school because he was sick. Max was all alone on his way to school in the sea. He was scared because Jayden was not there with him. All of a sudden, the orca approached Max. He grabbed Max by the chest and held him in the air. Max could not breathe at all.

When Jayden was watching the news, he saw that Max was in trouble. Jayden snuck out of his house to help his best friend. He and the orca had a talk, but it did not go well and led to a fight. The orca said, "Over the weeks I've grown stronger and I will now get my revenge."

It lasted a long time, but after a few minutes, the orca was tired, and then Jayden put the orca on the ocean floor with a power punch. The orca never went into the shark's territory again. To celebrate Jayden's victory, his parents took him and Max out to dinner.



Rayan is a second time published writer! His stories are clever, smart and entertaining! He is in the 2nd grade.

When I Fell Off My Bike

A Small Moment

By Trisha

One evening I wanted to ride my bike. I took the bike covers off and then I unlocked the chains from my bike. I had lost my knee pads and elbow pads and so I wore only my helmet.

After I put on my gear, I started riding my bike by myself. My little sister, Aditi, was too young to ride on the road with me. She does not really ride her bike on the road yet. She rides around the walk path and sends all kinds of messages to me, She sends about 10 messages every time we ride.

While I was riding, my sister called me and said that I need to tell you something. "Come here," she called to me.

I called back, "I am coming... if I can turn my bike."

Then something dangerous happened. I fell. I felt so badly after my fall that I needed to go home. I cried so loudly that my friend's mom heard me. She picked me up and carried me home because my mom was in the house and did not see or hear what happened. Another of my mother's friends noticed that I was hurt and she came along to help by knocking on my door of my house while I lay in the other woman's arms. When my mom saw me she was worried, but relieved. The good news was that I could still walk. The bad news was that I fell down and it really hurt. I finally went home and my mom put first aid on my knee and on one arm.



Trisha is working on description, storytelling and creativity. She is an awesome 3rd grader!

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Uōukliflip's Disastrous Reign

By Abhiyudh Rajput

Destruction by Mushroom Farm - Almost

Many people of Earth were terrified when they listened to the ferocious voice of the alien Uōukliflip who was from the planet Gorgeyu. He said he was going to invade Earth and fill it with mushroom farms that would provide his planet with energy! Many people started to shake and panic.

"What should we do?" some of the citizens asked.

"Panic!" yelled another citizen.

Scream! Is was people actually did.

Uōukliflip had terrified the whole planet. Many citizens imagined images of mushroom farms covering their lands. Uōukliflip had an evil smirk on his face when he saw the terrified people.

Suddenly Gōrgé, Uōukliflip's assistant, calmed down the havoc. He announced a plan. He said that all of the Earth's leaders would have the chance to come to him and compete to save their own countries. The leaders would have bandanas attached to their feet by Gōrgé. They were going to be asked to guess the color of the bandanna in the dark. Whoever got their color wrong, would have their country turned into a mushroom farm.

The leaders, all wearing suits and big smiles, were picked up into the flying pyramid that was the aliens' ship. They were loaded into storage rooms, where they had colorful, bright neon bandanas tied to their feet. Back on Earth, multiple people were scared for their countries. They had to be because some new countries like Belarus (real country) were already turning into mushroom farms. Meanwhile on the space craft, representatives of all countries were being crammed into a tiny room and the test was starting.

The next day Gōrgé gave in the results. Not everyone was happy. Only England, USA, and Russia succeeded in the attempt to save our planet. It was now up to England, Russia, and America to form a group to help save Earth. The next day, at the UN in New York City, the three superpower countries signed an everlasting contract that formed a ceaseless group of allies that would go against Uōukliflip and his troop. But these countries had to succeed fast. Gōrgé already planted some seeds that would spring into loathsome mushroom farms. The group (the Resisting and Ceaseless Superpowers) freed many insolvent countries. This action added more countries to the RCS (Resisting and Ceaseless Superpowers) making it easier to fight Uōukliflip. RCS had to do this quickly though because Uōukliflip was already monitoring North America and boy was he not happy. He noticed that some of the people seemed happy and things were still normal. Uōukliflip was enraged. His face was pouting and his head was steaming. Meanwhile, in the space craft, Uōukliflip was already in a furious mood, but someone decided to make it even worse.

Knock! Knock ! Apparently that someone was busting in.

"Who dare disturbs my meeting?" bellowed Uōukliflip.

"I disturbed your meeting to tell you that Asia smells foul and has been ruined," said the unknown disturber. Uōukliflip couldn't believe this dishonest statement. He immediately neutralized the stranger and jumped down from his ship himself to inspect Asia. But he was

foolish when he didn't listen to the stranger. When he got to Asia, he saw that it was true. He smelled the fetid odor and looked in horror at the big continent that used to be his power source. Luckily Uōukliflip didn't faint and fall as the other aliens were about to.

Back on Earth

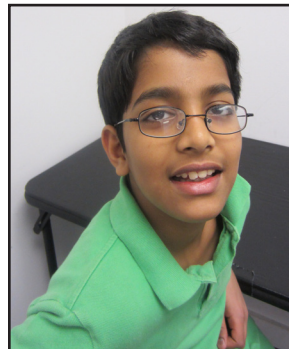
Many people thanked India, the holy country, that lent Asia the cows (which caused the smell) that would stop the aliens from spreading their evil farms in Asia.

The Chinese government was happy. Uōukliflip was infuriated when he saw how dreadfully and successfully India had freed Asia.

"At least there are two more continents that we could use for our success," Uōukliflip said angrily.

Very quickly Uōukliflip's agents gave Uōukliflip a view of Europe. "Excellent," Uōukliflip thought, but he was wrong. He was up for something no one even thought of. Uōukliflip went down to Europe with his bodyguards. As soon as they reached Europe, Uōukliflip's face turned red. He saw that everything looked normal, but then suddenly they were under attack from the rebels on Earth. Injuries occurred and Uōukliflip was immediately sent to hospital back on his ship.

There the doctors checked his breathing rate, heart rate, and digestive rate, but something was definitely wrong. Uōukliflip's nose picking rate (the most important rate for survival for aliens) was extremely low. It was not until the next day that the doctors realized that Uōukliflip was neutralized. Back on the ship, Gōrgé was crowned King of planet Gorgeyu. Immediately after his crowning, Gōrgé monitored South America with his surveillance cameras, but he was fooled. He was actually looking at Neptune, a long gone planet that had been invaded before. While he was "watching them" the South Americans were getting ready to fire sugar canes. These sweet sticks would beat up the aliens. After he finished his South American "TV Show" Gōrgé wanted to see the home of the Amazon in person. Suddenly the fire canes arrived. Many Aliens got scorched and sick as the burning sugar canes came flying ahead at them at full speed. All the aliens raced back into the alien ship to decide on what to do. "We should give up the on plan Earth because Uōukliflip is neutralized, our ship is damaged, and our invasion has failed. I guess the humans are smarter than we thought. They outsmarted us." Gōrgé exclaimed in disappointment. "We should give up," added Zoomba, Gōrgé's friend. The whole council of aliens agreed with Zoomba and gave up. They all left beautiful planet Earth with a half broken ship with unknowing possibilities. Who knows what will happen to them?



Abhiyudh has a fantastic imagination. His stories are complicated! Try to keep up with his clever plot! He is in 5th grade.

Heartman

By Shikta

One warm sunny day, Heartman, a heart-shaped super hero, and Apple, his imaginary friend who was shaped like an apple, were going to the Heart Garden. Heart Garden was a restaurant in Shapeville, where all the apples and hearts lived. The restaurant was the most famous restaurant in all of Shapeville. You had to pay a ton of money just to have one meal! The outside of the restaurant had a huge heart-shaped waiter on it holding a platter of various kinds of food in his hand. The people who worked there wore heart-shaped costumes because they were apples.

Heartman wanted to eat, but he didn't want to spend his money because he was saving up for an expensive car. He thought and then, Ding! He just remembered that the waiters had heart costumes on and he was a heart himself. Heartman pretended to be a waiter. He went inside by going through the back door so he would end up in the kitchen. "Order up!" A cook handed Heartman a platter of food.

Heartman ate the food on the way to the table to which he had to serve it. When he gave the platter to the people at the table, they got angry and so they left. The manager fired him because he thought he worked there and then he made him pay for the food. Now Heartman did not have enough money to get a car!

Next he went to the mall because the mall usually makes him happy. It didn't this time. BANG! CRASH! BOOOM! SPLAT! Heartman

broke one thing in every store. At last, a store policeman saw him so he was put in mall jail for two weeks. When he came out, he met an apple named Apple. This Apple looked like his imaginary friend Apple. Heartman asked Apple if he wanted to come over to his house and hangout. Apple said, "Yes."

They went.

Heartman introduced Apple to his home. Then came a loud BEEEEEEEEEP! It was the bad guy alarm. Heartman ran to the park to pursue the bad guy. Apple ran after Heartman, even though he was very confused. When Apple reached the park, he saw Heartman on the ground next to the corrupt Yogurt, who was trying to hurt Heartman. Apple grabbed Yogurt to help Heartman. Heartman got up and said, "THAT WAS AMAZING!" and that was when they became a team.

They fought a thousand fights and won them all until one day. . .

It was a stormy night. The team was fighting Yogurt and his new henchmen. Heartman was down . . . again! Yogurt was about to clobber Heartman, but Apple came to the rescue. They continued their friendship and lived happily, ever after.

Shikta has a wonderful Heart! Enjoy her action/adventure story.

Glasses!



By Sayli

It all started when a girl couldn't see the board. That girl was a 9-year-old girl named Ally. Ally had many friends and a huge house. Everything was going great for her, but everything was going to change.

Ally was at school looking at the board and answering the math problem when she realized she couldn't see the board. Soon school was over and Ally was at home. She told her mom that she couldn't see the board and her mom said that she would take her to the eye doctor. The next day Ally went to eye doctor. *If I get glasses, people will make fun of me*, she thought while she was walking to the exam room.

Ally walked into the exam room. She was scared. She didn't want to get glasses. Ally sat on the exam chair. The doctor put this machine in front of her face. In front of the machine was a chart that had letters of all sizes on it.

The doctor told her to look through the machine and read the letters on the chart. Ally did what she was told to. Soon Ally's eye exam was over and she was waiting in the waiting room for her results with her mom. After a few minutes, the doctor walked toward her. The doctor said she needed glasses.

"I don't want glasses!" screamed Ally.

"You won't be able to see without them," replied the doctor.

"Fine," moaned Ally.

"Do you want to go look at some frames now?" asked the doctor.

"Sure," answered Ally. They walked around the store, looking

at frames for a while. Ally finally found the pair she liked. The frame was purple and had a small blue designs on it.

"You look beautiful in those glasses!" said her mom. Ally still wasn't sure about how she looked in the glasses, but she got them anyway because they looked better than the others. Her mom went to the counter and ordered the glasses. The lady behind the counter said she would call her when the glasses are ready.

Five days later, they received a call from the lady. The lady said that the glasses were ready and that they could pick up the glasses. The next day, Ally and her mom went to the store and picked up the glasses. Ally tried on the glasses. She liked her glasses, but would her friends like them?

The next day she wore her glasses to school. Ally was hiding her face from everyone. *Will everybody start laughing as soon as I walk into the classroom*, thought Ally. When she walked in she realized that nobody laughed at her. They just complimented her on her glasses. She was surprised.

Nobody laughed at her. Ally was happy and that was all that mattered.



Sayli knows how to tell a great story! She is smart, hardworking, and creative!

Duck in a Pond

By Ninaad Laksman

Hi! I am Sherman, a duck in Mellow Grove Creek. I am about 6 years old in duck years, and about 9 years old in human years. I have Flappy-Duck Syndrome. This is when your wings are too weak to fly, but I am an awesome swimmer. The good thing about this creek is that it is an all-you-can-eat-fish and bread place. All I do every day is eat fish and bread sandwiches. However, a rumor has been spreading that a big monster has been terrorizing the town. I knew it was real. I wanted to help, but I had to pass SSD training first. SSD stands for: Super Spy Ducks.

After an exhausting day of training, it was time to catch the

monster. Our plan was to put bread as bait and catch it with our own hands. The group and I waddled to the side where the monster lived. Out flew a fin! The monster jumped to eat the bait and I held him tight with my arms. There I was, capturing the monster and seeking true identity. The aroma of the monster made me want to bite it. As soon as I took a nibble, I knew it was a fish! That night all the ducks in the town had a wonderful feast. It indeed was a special time. I caught a big fish and saved the town.



Ninaad has a clever sense of humor. His stories reveal a potential for a great humor writer!

Out the Window

By Kritika

Out the window I see you.
Out the window you see me.
Spring has sprung when bells have rung.
My tongue is made hot by the orange sun.
The sun is hot when I run.
The sun is hot because its' job isn't done.
So what do you know when you look out the window?
You tell me when I am free!



Kritika is a great 2nd grader who loves to write poetry. She works hard to develop description in her writing.



By Dhruv Misra

Chapter 1 Jet Pal

Twing...twing...kshshhshshhh...Finally, I made a “Jet Pal 3000”! Monty thought. Monty was a genius boy and who knew that he was Albert Einstein’s secret son?!?”Ok, test drive mode,” Monty said to the computer. PHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! The jet pal was flying. “Wooohooooo!”Monty yelled. *A jet pal is a jetpack.* “Well, time to go back.It was fun while it lasted...” Monty murmured as he put his Jet Pal away. It folded nicely into his pocket.

Chapter 2 $E=MC^2$

“Helloooooo!?!?!?! Dad?” Monty was trying to find his dad, who apparently was not there. “Man, it’s 6:28, and I’m early.”

“Monty? W-what are y-you doing here so early?” Albert asked. Pretending to play along with his excuse.

Monty replied, “Oh, Wanko got hurt, so I came back home.”

*sniff*sniff*

“I smell mashed potatoes!” Monty changed the subject.

“ Oh yes. I know it’s your favorite food!”

After dinner they went to sleep. Early the next morning, Monty woke to the sound of cheering.

“What the- gasp!”Monty took a peak and saw Albert giving a presentation of $E=MC^2$ or... Monty’s formula! Albert had been stealing and presenting Monty’s stuff. After everyone left, except for one person Monty said, “YOU STOLE MY FORMULA!”

Monty yelled and paralyzed Albert.

Chater 3 Runnin' Away

The very next day, Monty ran away from home. Literally. For dinner he made s'mores. Meanwhile, General Imyaboss turned Albert into Mr. Walnut.

"Cockle-doodle doooooooo!" Monty's robo-rooster screeched. Monty got up and disintegrated the robo-rooster.

"God, I hate getting up early..." Monty sighed.

Meanwhile, "I need you to get some stuff from Monty," General Imyaboss said.

“It’ll be a pleasure... hehehhehehehehehehahahahaaahhhahahaha-hahahaha!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” Mr. Walnut laughed evilly.

“ZZTT!!!!!! Yup. Ready.”

Monty had invented “Micro-watt blades.”

“Ok, let’s test it. Aim! Ready! Fire!”Monty commanded as he wrote down the results.

The computer had raised an apple and Monty had shot at it with

his blades. The apple was crackling with electricity. Hup-hup-hup-hup-hup-hup-clunk! The batteries from the bossmenbots had run out. Boosmenbots were the “army” Imyaboss had given him.

1 HOUR LATER...

"Finally! I have replaced all the batteries!"

"Hup-hup-hup-hup-hup," "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHAAAHH
HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH-
HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

Walnut shouted.

The next morning bom, bom, bam, bom. The bossmenbots and Monty were battling. Monty was electrocuting the bossmenbots, while the bossmenbots kept doing their ju-jitsu thing.

"Wutchal!"

"Huzzah!"

BOOM!

"Huzzah," Monty cheered silently.

All of a sudden, Mr. Walnut ran up the cliffs (they were battling in the grand canyon) and jumped..... Boom! He landed in front of Monty.

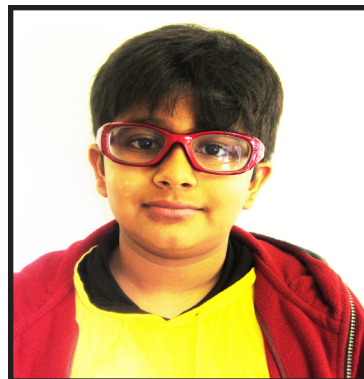
"Hey, have I seen you on-

" SILENCE, FOOL!"

"T.V..."Monty whimpered.

Then, Monty looked deep in to his eyes, and whoosh! Monty was back at his house. Monty saw.....Himself!?!?!!?! All of a sudden, Monty knew what just happened.

“I must have been carrying my mini-time traveler and if myself sees me, there’ll a time paradox!” Monty whispered to himself. So Monty hid under his bed. Monty saw himself yell at Albert. Then Monty saw General Imyaboss turn Albert into Walnut? Gasp! Then, Monty went back to the future. Mr.Walnut was in his face and so Monty pulled off his mask and there stood Albert’s familiar face. His last words were: “I love you son.” Everyone knows Albert died from abdominal aortic aneurysm, but he really died from Dramaitis.



Dhruv has found his talent! He tells great, zany stories! He is getting better each day!

The Cave

By Akaash Srikakulam

One day I saw a crumbly, old dirt covered paper piece of paper. I pulled it out of the ground carefully, trying to avoid making any rips. I couldn't read it. Rubbing a little dirt away, I felt it was waterproof. I brought it inside and washed the dirt off. Seeing it was a map, I saw there was a thick waterfall marked on it. Behind the waterfall was a cave, according to the map, but the map only showed the entrance. I thought, maybe people were too scared to go on. Well, I wasn't. I packed a portable tent, flashlight, pocket-knife, water bottle, a waterproof suit, food and water. I started to scout first thing in the morning. I came to a clearing right in front of the waterfall. I set up a tent.

There was a pebble on the ground. I pegged it at the waterfall.

PLOOSH!

Going away from the trees, there were lots and lots of trees, like a mini-forest. I started cutting bark off trees. I was trying to make a shield so I wouldn't get drenched.

3 HOURS LATER.

I finally finished the shield. I put the pocketknife in my pocket. I went back in my tent.

THE NEXT DAY.

I got out of bed and put the waterproof suit on. I pulled the shield over my head and went under the waterfall. CRACK! The water continuously dripped on my head. CRACK! The shield split in half. I darted straight into the cave.

Walking slowly and cautiously.

BEEP!

Six arrows shot out of nowhere. One missed and hit the wall, another skimmed over my head, and two flew right past my ear. One made a gash in my neck. My neck started to bleed. Putting my fingers to my neck, I noticed that not much blood was coming out. The last few arrows flew into the floor. BEEP! I jumped just in time. Spikes popped out of the floor. I dashed forward. Jumping fire sizzled my face. I landed on my stomach, sliding really fast. BEEP! Water came falling down hitting me with lots of force. The water didn't slow me down. It sped me up. The water stopped and I stopped sliding.

I got up and looked around. There were boxes with stone guardians. Each guardian was resembling an element: fire, earth, ice and lightning. They were statues. Lost in thought, I saw a sack. I peeked inside and saw a sword. I took it out. It had engraved letters on the blade: Sword of fire. Inside there was two daggers, also with engraved letters: Daggers of ice. Three weapons were on the floor. There was a scythe, two shurikens, a long bow and arrows. The blades remind me of the arrow that hit me. I put my hand to my neck and I felt dry blood. I examined the weapons on the floor. The scythe said, Scythe of Earth. The longbow and arrows said, Arrows of Lightning. Then the shurik-

ens said, Shurikens of Creation. I picked each weapon up and attached them to myself. Then I realized they were the weapons of legendary ninjas of long ago.

I opened a box. It had a diamond the size of a Clementine. I opened another box. It had gold the size of a hacksaw. I opened another box. It had a ruby the size of a tennis ball. The last one, to my disappointment, was empty. Priceless, I thought. How do I get back up if slid down? I asked myself. As I said those words, a passage appeared. I stepped inside. There was a passage leading up. Looking back, I saw that the guardians were gone. Strange, I thought. I went further and further until it stopped, into a clearing and the guardians were blocking the exit. Lodged in the wall was a nun chuck. I pulled it out and examined it closely. Its letters were wearing off. It said, EXPLODES ON IMPACT. In small letters it said, regenerates after each explosion. I pulled out the sword and waited for one to charge. With my luck, the fire one charged. I swung the sword and he exploded into little fire balls. I put the sword back, and pulled out the daggers. I threw it at the ice guardian. He exploded into little icicles. The air turned into a blizzard and then it was back to normal. Lightning flew right next to me. I put the daggers back and pulled out the arrows. Aiming very fast, I shot and hit him and a blinding flash came out. A boulder came flying. I pulled out the scythe and threw it at the earth guardian. It exploded and all the elements were suspended in midair. They started to swirl together. A huge guardian formed. It spat fire. All I did was throw the nunchucks at the head and the whole thing exploded. All the elements vanished except for the fire. I readied the sword. It started to vanish, except this time quite slowly.

I gathered everything and dashed out before something else happened. I slept in the tent that night. I was staring at the map and saw that new things appeared every second until six other destinations were placed on the map.

END OF STORY ONE
More to Come!



Akaash is working on becoming a great author one day. His writing is sophisticated, fun, and entertaining.

Jack's Piercing Scream

By Yasasvi Tallapaneni

I was walking down a street when my friend Joe asked me, "Jake, can you call Chuck to play outside?"

"Sure," I said.

It took about 10 minute to call him. Then we called Jack, whose house was in front of us. I was wondering why his pants and shorts were on his balcony.

It took only one minute to call him. He was a really loud screamer. We started playing Find the Treasure. After a while, we were really bored. Jack was really bored so he did a really loud scream. It was so loud that his clothes fell off his balcony. The clothes got ripped when they fell in the bushes.

"Wow," I said.

"I never knew someone could do that."

"How are we gonna' fix the clothes?"

"Oh, I don't know. What we should do?" Joe said.

He did another piercing scream for fun. That's what we should do. We walked around our neighborhood collecting clothes with Jack's piercing scream. We went back to where we were. We threw the clothes to his balcony and Jack handled the rest.

Yasasvi tells a great story. It's a scream! Keep up the great work.



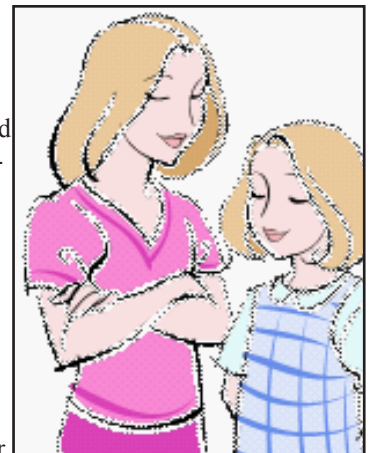
The Flood

By Sreenaina Koujala

One day Martina was at her house doing her homework. She then turned on the radio. Men were talking on the radio about the flood. One of them said in New York there will be flooding soon. The radio said that everyone should either stay upstairs or in a car with windows closed so that if water rises nobody will drown. Martina immediately turned off the TV and ran to warn her family. She rushed downstairs and told her family everything she heard on the news.

Her parents said, "No need to worry Martina. Everything is covered." But Martina was still sad. She wanted to live with her Grandma. Her grandma lived in Florida. Best of all, she was safe and because she lived on the 16th floor of a building! Martina had one solid hour to get ready. She packed her clothes, some snacks and her sister got pillows. The flood was still more than 3 hours away. Her family got into the big van and waited for the flood waters to rush in. As they expected, the

flood waters rushed in. Martina's car rose 10 feet and stayed there floating like a boat. Martina thought about her Nanny who was still safe in Florida. The waters were rushing in with big waves. Some people were swallowed by the big waves. Martina felt very sad for those people. The waters receded after some time, until there was a little peep of water left. Martina was happy that she and her family were safe. Everyone was happy!



Sreenaina is a great writer! She is working on her description and storytelling! She is in 3rd grade.

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In a Split Second

By Bridget Lobo

In a split second, I jumped into my mom's car and we drove off to school. *It was going to be just another boring day at school, I thought, without any special events or happenings.* I got to school and as usual started unpacking my bag. The teacher looked very excited and waited for the noise in the class to pipe down. She started with a broad smile and said, "Class please welcome Officer Feline," Something was very suspicious about that name, I thought.

Officer Feline entered the room and said, "Good Morning children!" We returned the greeting back politely, since our teacher had taught us to be polite to visitors coming to the class. Officer Feline had a very strict and unfriendly look. She had large glasses through which her green eyes peered. She smelled fishy and seemed as though she had whiskers. She looked hideous and I could tell that it wasn't going to be fun having her around. She started giving us a boring introduction about why she was there and gave us information about the police academy. Half of the things she said we already knew.

"Any questions?" she purred.

"Are you a cat?" my friend Natalie asked.

"Of course!" Officer Feline meowed, pulling off a police disguise.

Before we knew it, Officer Feline jumped on the teacher's desk, ripping our test papers that lay there and scratching children in the front row. We were all so scared that we ran for the door. Officer Feline tried to stop the kids from getting out and started following us down the hallway. I thought to myself, *is this a dream or what?* It felt so surreal. All I could remember, as I looked over my shoulder, was my best friend Natalie being caught by the devious cat and screaming for help. Officer Feline carried Natalie in one arm with her legs dangling down.

Before Officer Feline could create anymore chaos, I took out a pack of M&Ms from my pocket and threw it toward her. I threw it as a bait to distract her so that she would let my friend Natalie go. It worked! She dropped Natalie and the greedy cat went for the M&M's. Who knew that even cats loved M&Ms? She tore the packet and stuffed all the candy in her mouth. I could hear her gagging and choking and holding her throat. No one went to her rescue. My plan had worked! I could hear her choking and then falling down to the ground. That was the end of Officer Feline. My friends gathered around me and so did the principal and the class teacher. They all hugged me and thanked me for being so brave and putting an end to the ever so evil police officer, disguised cat. It was a good end to what seemed to a boring day at school.

Beach Fun

By Bridget Lobo

After a long, tedious drive we finally arrived at the beach and I jumped out of the car. I took a deep, long breath of the salty air and felt so refreshed. At last! Here was my chance to play boardwalk games, eat hot dogs, build sand castles and splash around in the water. Isn't this what summer's all about? What a way to start off the summer I thought.

As we walked down the beach to find a spot to put our umbrella, I felt the hot sand burning my feet. My mother hollered, "Put on your sandals Emma and wear your cap!" I was too excited and made a dash for the cool, blue water. After I cooled off, I came back to the shore and thought of building a sand castle. I had my shovel and bucket and started digging a hole in the wet sand. It was wet and squishy and felt like Playdough. My dad and mom came to help me build the castle as well. My dad is a pretty good builder. He started making a moat and the base etc., while I went hunting for sea shells so that they could be the windows of the castle. Once I gathered the sea shells, I washed them in the water and gently pressed on the castle walls to stick the shells in. When I was done, my mother took a picture of me and my castle. It was around 1 p.m. and the sun was getting hotter, which made

me thirsty and hungry all at the same time. We headed to check out the restaurants on the pier. When we found a good place to everyone's liking, we went in and were immediately seated. We ordered a pizza, hamburger with fries and hot dogs to eat and cool, strawberry lemonade to drink. While we munched on our lunch hungrily, I watched the sea gulls float on the surface of the waves. They were looking for fish or any unsuspecting guest not watching their food. The sea gulls looked like little boats floating on the water.

When we finished our lunch, we walked on the board walk and played a couple of games like the claw machine, balloon popping etc. I won a huge, soft toy that made me ecstatic! My dad asked, "Does anyone want ice cream?" Who would say no to a cool delight on such a hot day? I jumped and yelled "Me, me, me!" After the ice cream, we headed for one last dip in the cool ocean. Mom and Dad joined me in the water. It felt so good to be with my family down by the beach on such a hot day. I was beaming and felt so happy and light. Soon it was time to go and we started packing our gear and headed for our car. It was such a fun outing! I hope I get to visit the beach again!

Bridget is a magnificent, 3rd grade, creative writer! Her work is entertaining and creative.



Trip to Infinity

By Isha Wagle

On a stormy Saturday there was a black hole beside my bed filled with lots of books. I loved books so I wanted to jump in. What I remember the most was not to forget my little, lucky purse. My purse has a GPS, cards and \$1000. I jumped in the hole with excitement, not knowing it would close.

I looked around and saw a cow. On the left side of the cow, read a sign "LOLLY ME". I started milking the cow, even though I did not know what the sign meant. Then I realized why the sign said "LOLLY ME". It was because lollipops came out instead of milk.

When I tried to take one, a bunny hopped in front of me and said wisely, "\$10 dollars."

"For what?" I asked confusedly.

The rabbit just had to say it, "In this world..." Before he could finish, I gave him money and started asking him directions to my home.

The rabbit thought I was a spider with five fingers and a palm and so he gave the directions to spider world. The rabbit said, I have to take a right, then a left then another right and keep going straight to reach my home. I did exactly as he said, but could not find my home, instead I reached the world of spiders.

Before I could say, "Yuck," or "Ugh," a donkey snorted and started talking in a strange language and then realized I speak English. I was going to ask him how do I get home, but then I realized that donkeys are supposed to be dumb. There was no one else around so I had to take my chances.

"Hey are you guarding this place here?" I questioned.

"Well of course I am," said the donkey.

"Okay then, where is the human world?"

He replied, "You just have to climb six mountains and you will be there."

I thought to myself, just six mountains, but I had to do what he said to get home so I started walking. I climbed six, tall, big, stubby mountains. When I got to bottom of the sixth mountain, I saw nothing.

I sat on the rock close by and thought to myself, donkeys are dumb. But then I said to myself, don't whine and scotched a little bit back on the rock.

"Ough," the rock moaned. I jumped away, and said in a sorrowful voice, "Sorry little rock."

"Not to worry," said the rock and asked me in a hopeful voice, "If someone just gives me a deck of cards, I will do ANYTHING for them."

Then it struck me. I could give him my deck of cards, so I did. Then he kept thanking and thanking and thanking me until I said, you can stop now.

"You know, you said you would do anything," I reminded him.

"Yes!" said the rock.

"Can you please tell me how to get home?"

"That's easy," said the rock, "Since you are person..." He could not finish his sentence because I hollered surprisingly!

"You know where I live?"

"Of course I know," he said. While he was giving directions, I listened closely.

"You have to first go to joker world..." as he was giving me directions, he suddenly thought of something else.

"You need a GPS so it could give you directions."

I got my GPS out happily and the Rock setup directions and said, "You are all set!"

I followed the directions and after a while I reached the joker world. There were many jokers with red and yellow cloths all around me.

One joker came to me and said, "Do you want to go home? Play a game of chess with me and if you win, I will tell you the directions for your home but if you lose you have to give me thousand dollars!"

Seeing no other choice, I quickly went to the game board and started playing with him. He was very close to winning, but did not. He became sad, but gave me directions. I wanted to cheer him up so I gave him the money. I ran along the track he told me and finally I saw a big black hole. Jumping out of it, I found myself near my bed. Just then, my mom entered into my room and asked, "Where were you honey?"

I replied with a giggle, "To infinity and beyond!"



Isha is a talented, hardworking 2nd grader who works on her writing nearly every week.



Power Outage

By Abhinaya Mukundan

“Boing! Boing! Boing!” I was jumping on the green pogo-stick like a spring. Then I shrieked excitedly to my friend, “Let’s both do it.” We both jumped as high as kangaroos.

Then she exclaimed, “You know how it’s getting dark? I think we should go inside.”

I whispered, “Okay, let’s go.”

We went inside our houses. I tried turning on the light to know where I was going. It would not turn on! Then I screamed, “Mom, why are the lights not working?”

She shouted, “The electricity is out. Come wash your hands.”

I came to my mom. I bumped into a lot of things. I was freaked out. I wanted to cuddle up with my mom, dad and my sister. I finally got to the bathroom to wash my hands. I really wanted to turn on the lights because I was so intimidated.

I tried to run to my mom, but instead I ran into many walls. Then I finally found the brown dinner table. Near the round dinner table was my mom, dad and sister. I could not believe how they found their way so quickly. Then my mom went to the white stove. I was so happy because we had a gas stove. Otherwise, we couldn’t cook. Suddenly, there was a hard knock on the front door. I ran to get the door, but instead I ran into many of the walls again. I got to the door and opened it. It was my friend’s mom. I let her come in. She did not bump into any walls. I just followed her. She went in

the kitchen. She asked my mom if she could heat up food because my friend’s little brother was sick and needed food. In fact, their whole family needed food. Their family’s stove runs on electricity so it didn’t work now. We let them warm their food. Then she left.

We went to the red fireplace. My mom gave us hot rice and some soup on the side. After dinner, we got four soft sleeping bags. Then we lit the fire in the fireplace and cuddled up. We did a word search for my sister’s school homework. Then we went into a sound sleep. In the morning I was dancing like a happy peacock all around the house because the power came back on. I ran outside and started to play on my pogo-stick again. I thought, “Without electricity, it was cold. All the things that run on electricity like lights and electric stoves don’t work and school was out!” Can you imagine life without electricity?

Abhinaya is a clever, fast-writing 2nd grader. She can write a beautiful creative story in no time at all.



About the Hotel

As told by Ellison Murray

I was at the hotel with my cousins.

I played basketball with my cousins.

I played DS with my cousins.

I played toys with my cousins.

I even went outside with my cousins.

I went to the beach with my cousins.

I went out to eat with my cousins.



Ellison is a kindergartener. He is working on his reading AND writing.

Lost

By Ashwin Saraswatula

Boom! Crash! Boom! Bam! The shiny white BMW bounced its clear black wheels on the rocky road. Dave, a 13-year-old boy was riding in the car with his parents Linda and Ronaldo. They were heading to New York City for vacation. He was holding his New York City map, which his mother told him to never lose. Suddenly, the car lurched to a sudden stop and the map flew out of Dave's clumsy hands and flew out the window. Dave was scared to death. He was about to jump out the window for the map, but he regained his senses and didn't do it. He didn't tell his mom because he thought his mom would be as mad as a giant troll. Linda and Ronaldo stepped out of the car. Next, Dave stepped out of the car. He was very nervous. The fresh air calmed him down and reassured him that nothing bad would happen. As he was walking down the street in New York City with his parents, he saw a construction site. It looked very interesting and so he ran toward the construction site without his parents. While running, he slipped and fell into a manhole with a nasty splash. Dave stood up drenched in cold water. He took out his phone and dialed 911, but nothing happened. He realized his phone broke due to the water seeping into it. Just then, the manhole cover was closed and he was stuck inside. Panicked, Dave ran everywhere. He finally calmed down and walked forward and tried to find a way out. After a while, Dave had no idea if there was daylight outside.

When he was tired, he slept on garbage piles. At first he thought it was disgusting, but soon he got used to it. When he was hungry,

he ate the leftovers from the garbage and his stomach got upset. Suddenly, while walking, Dave spotted a light. He ran in the direction of the light. In no time at all, he figured the light was coming from jewels of different colors and sizes. They sparkled like the sun. He looked up and saw there was an opening right above. He piled the garbage higher and higher. It was soon high enough for him to climb up and get out of the manhole. The fresh air and sunlight never felt better. He borrowed a phone from somebody named Ron and called his parents.

"Who is this," Linda answered.

"It's me," Dave said.

"Where are you? We are looking for you everywhere," said Linda.

He asked Dave where he was and Dave replied, "We are in Times Square."

His mom heard that and came and picked him up from there.

That day Dave learned a lesson: not to run away from his parents ever again!

Ashwin is a brilliant and creative 3rd grader. His stories are awesome!

The Hot Brazilian Rainforest

By Nihal

"Attention, all CF (Continental Flight) plane members, please report to the airport."

I quickly grabbed my bags and headed toward the airport. The airport was green with shiny windows. It took me one hour to get out of the airport. I was excited to go to the Amazon rainforest Rainforest. I've been on many adventures, but I've never had an adventure in the

Amazon rainforest Rainforest. After I got out of the airport, I took a yellow, Brazilian taxi to the Amazon. When I got there, I set up camp and left my bags there so I could pick them up when I went back.

They were too heavy and I couldn't carry them forever. I took my camera so I could take pictures.

Off I went taking pictures with my camera. The rainforest looked exciting because it was as noisy as the biggest, loudest band ever, as colorful as a painting, and as beautiful as rubies and pearls. It looked like an ocean of trees with lots of animals. A jaguar, parrot and toucan followed me.

Suddenly, I realized it was becoming too hot because of the sun. I

remembered that my boss told me that people polluted the air and water and created global warming, which was making tropical areas too hot. Of course the rainforest is already hot. I ran everywhere. I was trying to find some shade, but I couldn't. When I stopped running, it became so hot I thought I would melt. Then I spotted a tree, which would give me shade for at least 45 minutes. After I got under the tree, I took pictures of the jaguar, parrot, and toucan.

After 15 minutes, I got bored so I decided to rest for 30 minutes. Later, I moved on and took pictures of snakes, sloths, and tapirs. Then, I saw what looked like 2,000 army ants. I screamed and ran for my life. After 5 minutes of running, I stopped. I looked back and just saw a pile of leaves. I was safe - for now. Nobody knows what can happen in a place like this. Just then, a bright light filled the rainforest. I followed it to where it ended. When I got there, I was amazed.

There was a huge tree with people living inside its trunk! I introduced myself and they invited me to stay with them. I stayed with them for 2 months. Oh yeah, and I got my bags back!

*Nihal tells a great adventure story!
He gets better everyday!*



The Farm Family

By Everett Murray

The red barn and the yellow bush are a good match when they are together.

The big, brown horse comes out of that big, red barn with a big, white smile. The old farmer comes to ride the horse all around the big, yellow bush.

The chickens were excited and wanted to play, but the mean dog chased them right back.

Then the farmer noticed cows, sheep, and pigs were on the loose. The big, red barn had nothing inside except rats, mice, spiders playing around.

The chickens were playing in the corn field and that mean dog was chasing the rats, mice and spiders in that big barn.

The kind cat walks past the barn. That mean dog saw her and decided to chase her. The mean dog and the kind cat were running, running, and running fast –

around, around and around.

The yellow bush is so, so, so, beautiful now.

That mean dog stopped and stared at it. Now that gave enough time for the cat to run away and the mean dog learned his lesson.



*Everett has a way with words.
He loves writing a good nature
poem! Everett is in 3rd grade.*

The Fairies and Gnomes

By Srinidhi Ekkurthi

Once upon time, when fairies and gnomes existed, there was a war. The Gnomes kept destroying Fairyland. The Fairies thought of a plan. They asked the queen of Fairyland for Change-2-Dust so the fairies could turn into gnomes and turn the gnomes into bugs. They did and the fairies that helped in the war and defeated the gnomes got trophies and free tickets to the Wish Pond in the summer.

Afterwards, each and every fairy got to ride a stallion in a race. The fairies also got to play in the Redcap, which had so much music playing the fairies went crazy with happiness.

*Srinidhi is a talented 3rd grader
who loves to make up stories about
fairies and gnomes.*



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