

CityKidzWorld

Volume 6, Issue 18, Fall Issue 2013

Contests!
Short Story
Vocabulary
Drawing

**Heartwarming story
about cutting hair
for charity inside!**

Read a Review on
Grover's Mill Coffee House!

Fable Contest Winner:

Rav

Runner Up:

Olga

Back to School Issue!

Table of Contents

Teachers.....3
 Interns.....4
 Just Another Lock of Hair.....5,6
 Summer Drawing Contest Picture.....7
 My Mysterious Mom.....8
 What I Liked About Camp.....8
 Wonderful Day8
 Nature Scene.....8
 Imaginary World War.....8
 My Day at the Beach.....9
 Horses.....9
 Alien War (Part II).....10
 Max's Mischief.....11
 Pip The Chick.....12
 David Saved the Day.....12
 The Gingerbread Ram.....13
 Frog and Rabbit are Best Friends.....15,16
 My Snowman.....17
 Spring.....17
 Milla and Katie's Friendship.....18
 Quality Over Quantity.....18
 Are you Polite?.....19
 Art.....21
 The Archers.....22
 Original Origin Story.....22
 Mermaid and the Shark.....23
 Summer Trip.....23
 James Fairytale.....24
 Antarctic Fight.....25
 Art.....28
 Dragon Secret.....30
 Saving Mars.....31
 Future Coffee Drinker's Opinion of Grover's Mill Coffee House.....32
 The Orphan Mouse.....33
 West Windsor Girl Finds Success in a Local Pageant.....34
 Children Should not Use 100% Online Schooling for Their Education.....35
 The Wrath of the Mammoths.....36
 Invasion of Earth.....37
 Travis and Brook's Exciting Day.....39
 The Haunted House.....40
 Mother's Day.....41
 THE TIME TRAVEL.....43
 My Puppy.....44
 Starting 1st Grade in the Fall.....44
 Crystal's Missing Bear.....45
 Fingers at a Concert.....46
 Lying.....47

Dear Readers,
 City Kidz World magazine wishes to engage the youth community in a creative experience. I hope that you will read this magazine and be encouraged to pick up a pen and write a story or draw a picture. Enjoy this reading experience.

Thank you,
 The Editor, City Kidz World magazine



Armaan and Atif are excellent cover models who love school, academics, and being on magazine covers. Armaan is in elementary school and Atif is in high school.

Index

Aayush Kishore...17	Kritika Nagappa...44
Abhinaya Mukundan...33	Kushal Shah...31
Ahisha Singh...41	Laasyasri Vaddepalli...9
Amitav...12	Lakshimi Kottapalli...40
Aryan Matha...30	Laya Venkatesan...47
Brianna Guzman...12	Laurel White...3
Byrav...23	Lindsay Holeman
Chintan Vajariya...22	Manan Vajariya...22
Daniel Dominguez...3	Melissa Edwards...3
Daniel Stermer...4	Neha Nishikant...5
Diya Patel...8	Nina Soukhanovskii...19
Elizabeth...45	Palash Shah...8
Ellison Murray...8	Param Shah...10
Eowyn Winchester	Pranav Kota...8
Everett Murray...32	Rav Kaur...7,18
Farhan Mohammad...11	Regina Cummings...4
Hafsa...21	Roman Alexander...4
Haiya...13	Sahiti Kota...23
Heera...28	Samantha Aucello...4
Isha...27	Samir Varma...8
Ishan Patel...37	Shrina Parikh...24,35
Jayant...36	Sreeram Nagappa...13,39,46
Jessica...3	Suparna...3
Katya...44	Tulika Sen...4
Keval Shah...20	Yash Nishikant...41
Kirstie Belle Diongzon...4	



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Publisher: E2Services
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Meet our Language Arts Specialists

Creative Writing Muses



Daniel Dominguez is a veteran CKW teacher. He can persuade even the most reluctant writers to get their thoughts out. He has a degree in English. Daniel is also the Site Director for CKW.



Laurel White is a fantastic teacher with several years of experience. She encourages children to be creative, while helping them master spelling, punctuation and vocabulary. Laurel teaches in homes and in the studio. She loves teaching our youngest students.



Julia Kravchin is a gifted teacher who is patient, intelligent, and always ready to help! She has multiple talents with an education from Rutgers that includes literature and art. She also has experience in teaching ESL.



Rafael Manzanares is a brilliant academician with fantastic ideas. He is an expert at teaching critical thinking. He is working on his master's degree in education.



Shannon Davis is a certified English teacher with a creative view on education through her experience teaching all over the world. Shannon has traveled to England, China, South Korea, Japan, Australia, Ghana, Mexico and Canada in the last six years. With a degree in Broadcast Journalism and experience writing for a newspaper and working for NJ101.5 for six years, Shannon has an effective and unique teaching style accommodating students of all ages and learning styles.



Michael Mendoza did a fantastic job this year and all summer working with students of all ages! His creative methods really get children excited about their stories. He did an excellent job focusing on SAT with some of our middle school students.



Jess has taught freshman composition and fiction at the University of Washington, and she has taught writing at an arts camp. She also taught at a camp for gifted middle school students. She is great at teaching math and English.



In no particular order of importance, I'm a reader, a writer, a mom, a Language Arts teacher, and I wish I was a better seamstress. I spend my time occupied with any of those activities, but usually my four year old son and my two year old daughter take center stage. I love teaching, and currently teach Language Arts in high school. I feel lucky to be able to teach the two other things I love most: reading and writing.
Suparna teaches in the summer.

Writing Studio Director and Writing Studio Founder, Melissa Edwards, has been teaching for 20 years. Her passion is creative writing, but she feels it is important to help students master grammar and punctuation as well as enhance their vocabularies in order to facilitate life-long success in writing. She has taught elementary school, middle school, high school, and adult education. She is currently a full-time English and journalism college professor. She also teaches communications and English part-time at various universities. She has been the director of the center for 3 years.



Welcome New Creative Writing Muses!

Lindsay Holeman



Lindsay Holeman's credentials include a NJ Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing for the Teacher of Preschool through Grade 3, Bachelor of Arts in English, Creative Writing, and an Associate of Arts degree in Education. She is a certified ESL instructor for K through 12. Lindsay

is also currently a Master of Arts in Education candidate at Rider University with the goal of earning an endorsement for the Teacher of Students with Disabilities.

Being a highly adaptable and versatile educator, Lindsay has enjoyed the opportunity to teach a diverse group of children, including those with ADD/ADHD, Autism, Down's Syndrome, Asperger's Syndrome, Epilepsy, speech impairments, noncompliant behavior, learning disabilities, and physical challenges. These experiences have enhanced her compassion and dedication as an individual. Each student's unique developmental needs, goals, and interests are considered to create effective lesson plans and activities to accommodate them. Lindsay is devoted to helping the children in her care experience joy and a sense of accomplishment in learning, as well as feeling the personal satisfaction that arises from progressing and excelling in challenging curriculum areas.

Regina Cummings



Regina Cummings is one of the new teachers to our writing staff. She is originally from Middletown, NJ, but left "the sand and sea" behind four months ago to make Plainsboro her home. Regina is a two time graduate of The College of New Jersey with a Bachelor of Arts in English Secondary Education and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Her past teaching experiences have been on both the middle school and high school levels with a strong emphasis on writing. Regina has a passion for writing and is looking forward to sharing this with her students. It is her hope that her varied interests in science and literature will inspire her students to explore their own passions and express themselves through writing.

Roman Alexander

Roman Alexander holds two bachelors' degrees from Rutgers University, one in history and the second in criminal justice, as well as a master's degree in history from the University of Oregon. Historical writing and research are passions and he aspires to one-day work in academia. He is currently in the process of applying to PhD. programs while working as both a tutor and substitute teacher. He is a recipient of the Leah Kirker award for teaching excellence from the University of Oregon, and has consistently been commended on his didactic skills. He thinks historians make for some of the best creative writing teachers, because the historian's craft is fundamentally based on his or her ability to create an interesting and captivating narrative. Writing good history is not just simply getting dates and facts correct, but instead incorporates a sense of drama, emotion, and humor into the story. He is very happy to have joined the CKW team and he strongly believes it will be an excellent academic year for everyone involved.



Eowyn Winchester



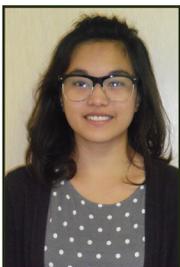
Eowyn Winchester is currently a student at The College of New Jersey. She is majoring in English and Secondary Education. Eowyn has a special interest in science fiction and fantasy writing, and loves exploring both genres over the broad spectrum of writing mediums.

Daniel Stermer



Daniel Stermer is a recent graduate of the University of Maryland at College Park. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in English Language and Literature, studying a wide range of classic to modern literature and theory. While enrolled, he worked as a writing tutor at the University of Maryland Writing Center to assist fellow students with academic writing assignments as well as personal projects. He is currently living in Ewing, NJ.

Thank you Interns!



Kirstie Belle Diongzon was one of our illustration interns this summer. This is her second year working with us!

Every week she came in to sit one-on-one with the kids to come up with the story illustrations that are featured in the magazine. She is currently attending School of Visual Arts in New York City as Illustration major in her last year.

She realized her passion for art in high school and finally pushed herself to tread the road toward her dream of sharing her works with the world. Eventually she would like to inspire children and young artists to follow their dreams and passions without fear.

Samantha Aucello, one of our illustration interns this summer, is an illustration major at Moore College of Art and Design. Her favorite things to do are sleeping, drawing, and gaming. Some of her favorite things to draw are monsters, aliens, weapons, and people. She loves developing character designs. She finds inspiration in the natural world, especially anything involving the ocean.



Tulika Sen, a current student at Rutgers University, was an intern this past summer for City Kidz World Magazine. During the internship, she came up with multiple contest ideas that corresponded with different sponsorships. Born in Brooklyn New York, and raised in South Brunswick for most of her whole life, she grew up as a first generation Indian-American, a title that helped shaped her today. She is currently in the process of transferring to the Rutgers Business School where she will hope to Major in Marketing and minor in Digital Communication, Information and Media. One of the goals she has in the future is to bridge the gap of quantitative analysis and creativity. Still today, she believes creativity is an important part of our everyday lives and she hopes to use it in a business perspective to both innovate and help people.

High School Intern:
Rohit Agarwal

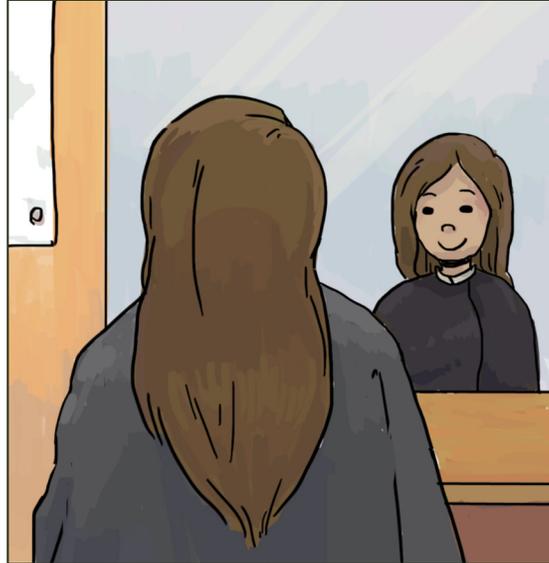
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Just Another Lock of Hair

By Neha Nishikant

It was bright pink. It just sat there mocking me, glaring at me. Without dragging my eyes away from it, I sank into my chair. I shouldn't be surprised it was pink. Everything in her room was pink. Pink and pretty. She said it made her room friendlier. On most days, I would've agreed, but not today. Not with this sitting on my desk. At the time it made me question who I was. I had never thought of myself as greedy. But when it really came down to things, maybe I was. Maybe everybody was. But what could concern a 7th grade girl like that? A 7th grade girl should be complaining about all the homework, not questioning who she was. Now if I ever looked at the little pink thing again, I'd smile and think of who I made happy. If I ever visited my past self I'd slap her. Staring at the little pink paper like it was a monster. Please. People made life sacrifices to protect the people they love and there I was fretting over a little, pink paper. Eight inches? Eight whole inches? I could just see the little red devil saying. I could imagine the other side of things too. It's just another



Illustrated by Kirstie Belle Diongzon



Neha has written several stories for City Kidz World since 2010! She is quite the accomplished writer. You will enjoy her quirky, clever writing style.

lock of your hair. You could make one little girl out there happy. The angel would've argued.

"Good morning class," my teacher, chirped. She was wearing pink, just like the

"A 7th grade girl should be complaining about all the homework, not questioning who she was."

slip. "Before we continue our lesson with the Native Americans, I have an announcement. Each year, every unit does a philanthropic event. For Zeta's event, I've decided to make it school-wide. We're going to have girls donate their hair! I've put out pink slips on your desks with all the information." I slipped back into my own world. Twisting my fingers into my dark locks, I gulped. My curls almost reached midway down my back. This was the longest I'd ever had it. I suppose what I really feared was another catastrophe like 4th grade. After a few miscalculations and an extra snip, I ended up with a boy cut. I shook myself from the flashback. Professional cutters were doing it this time and I could choose a friend to help! I

desperately tried to convince myself.

"Do it for the girls. Everyday their

lives are miserable knowing the day could be their last. Breast cancer is not an easy thing. Nobody should have to deal with it. But they do and they lose everything, even their hair. But maybe this little thing with

knowing they don't have to endure that extra pain." I looked down in shame. As soon as she finished her speech, I scuttled out of the room as fast as I could. The guilt was too heavy to bear.

A few hours later, I found bolted out to the bus. A quick wave to my bus driver and a few steps later, I slid next

to my best friend, Tanvi. "Have you heard?" I asked, wide-eyed. Listening to myself, I sounded like a shallow girl thirsty for gossip. "I mean about the hair cutting event," I corrected myself.

"Yeah," she replied. I couldn't help but notice her brown, beachy waves were longer than mine, "Are you doing it?"

I shrugged.

"Turn around, let me measure," she pointed to my hair. I pulled it out of my hair tie and let it fall loose. "Eight inches

Con't on page 6

Con't from page 5

would be about here," she brought her hand around my neck to align with my face.

"My chin!" I gasped.

"It's your choice, Neha," she shrugged.

Gulping, I managed to squeak out, "It'll grow by June. That's when the event is. It's only September." I took a breath, "I'll do it."

The next day, back in my pink Social Studies classroom, I handed in my signed pink slip to my teacher.

"Great job, Neha," she smiled. "I'll be cutting my hair too! It's good to have you on board. The ceremony is June 19th"

Squeak! My big red marker squeaked as it made an even bigger, bolder, red "X" on my calendar for June 19th. For what started out as a shaky decision started to become part of me.

Weeks later, Aishwarya, another participant of the event and one of my greatest friends, ran up to me and shook me by the shoulders.

"I can't do it!" she cried.

"Wha-?" I looked at her perplexed.

"My hair!" Her hand instinctively went to her shiny, black waves that ran longer than mine.

I laughed, "Don't worry about it! You'll be fine!"

"No I won't!" she shook her head.

"We could bring these girls happiness. It's the least we can do after all they're going through. I explained."

"I know, but—"

"Ash, listen. There are girls out there. They are dying every day. Some of them are much younger than us. They have to live everyday knowing they may never see the sun again. But our hair - it can give them some hope. Maybe it'll help them pull through. What if you had cancer? What if it was you lying in bed now just miserable. Maybe if you give them a little bit of what they lost, they will have hope and faith and just a little more courage. I purred and I realized that I meant it-every word. I knew that if I hadn't made the decision to donate my hair, I would regret it for the rest of my life and die with the guilt on my back. There are girls out there waiting for a miracle. And to some girls, the hair they're going to get, is a miracle, to them." I again realized I meant it: Every word. I knew that if I hadn't chosen to donate my hair, I would've regretted it for the rest of my life and died with the unbearable guilt on my back. I could've done something and

I didn't. My decision changes all of that.

She nods and whispers, "Okay. I'll do it."

Every month, we used to get prizes to keep us going. But I never relied on those little pink ducks and pretty pencils. I was doing it for the girls and I no longer had to convince myself of it because I already knew it in my heart.

RRRIIP!! I ripped off the next month of my calendar. It was coming closer and closer. Rip, rip, rip! There goes March, April and May. The days flashed by until I found myself face to face with June 19th. Instead of fighting it like I would've months ago, I embraced it. I was ready to make a few dreams come true.

"All Pantene girls please come to the stage," a voice boomed. I squeezed Aishwarya's hand and we all marched to the front. All 60 of us proud girls ready to make a difference. Tanvi came down too. She was going chop off my eight inch ponytail, which the professionals were going to shape later. I held my breath as the hair dresser tried to tie me an eight inch ponytail for Tanvi to cut off.

"Hmmm," she whispered. "I'm going to have to tie you hair into to ponytails because it's very thick. The cool thing is you get to donate double!" she explained to me. I smiled, but I couldn't ignore the butterflies in my stomach. Tanvi ran down with a set of sharp, glinting scissors.

"I'm ready," I smiled at her.

"1, 2, 3, GO!" The announcer boomed. I felt Tanvi tug my hair and try to snip it off.

"It's so thick!" she screamed over the loud commotion. I could barely hear her.

"Let me give you a hand," I heard one of the staff say. Suddenly I found a thick bush of black hair eight inches long tied with a rubber band.

"My hair!" I gasped, reaching for the chopped off ponytail. At first my stomach had a free fall sensation to see my hair off my head, but soon I started laughing. I laughed until my eyes watered. I held up two proud ponytails and laughed and laughed until my stomach hurt from laughing. It's the kind of laugh when you feel like you accomplished the best thing ever. It was the same laugh I had when I first swam and when I rode my first rollercoaster but this time it meant so much more. I realized it wasn't just another lock of hair. It was a lock of hair that made someone who you thought would never be happy again, smile. It was the kind of smile that made you feel like the luckiest person in the world.

Writing Challenge!

Ages 11 to 17

Do you have an interesting Personal Experience to share?

Submit an essay of 300 to 600 words describing your experience.

6



Submit to editor@citykidzworld.com

www.citykidzworld.com

Water Gun Fun in the Sun



By Rav Kaur

Fun in the Summer Drawing Contest!

Rav is a talented student who loves to write and draw.

1ST
PLACE



Poetry - Small Moments - Small Stories

My Mysterious Mom

By Samir Varma

My Mom is mysterious
She is also very curious
She gives me shrunken apples for snack
I hope those never come back!
She gave me a backpack made of metal
and now because of that, I'll never settle!
She has an unusual friend named Sanet
Who I'm pretty sure is from another planet.
These are stories that make me feel sore,
Come back and I'll tell you more!



Samir is an awesome writer.

What I Liked About Camp

By Diya Patel

I liked when I was outside.
I played four squares with all of my friends.
I liked when I was on the ice and played limbo.
It was lots of fun.
I liked when the teachers let us watch T.V.
I liked the snacks.



Diya has become an excellent writer this summer.

Wonderful Day

By Ellison Murray

Once upon a time there was a man with his daughter.
He bought a fish and a violin. When they went home, they played a song to the fish.
The next day they bought two more fish so that the first fish would be happy.

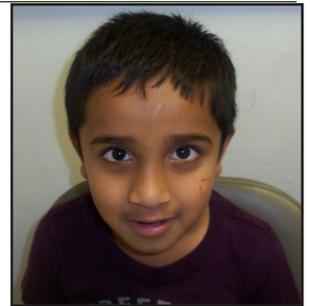


Ellison is a 2nd grader who is learning to imagine.

Nature Scene

By Pranav Kota

Once upon a time there was a big water fall. There were some flowers and there was green grass on the ground. There were long trees and in the trees there were brown stumps. One day a dad and a boy were sitting on the ground and they were eating a sandwich. After the sandwich, they were going to build a house to live.



Pranav is a great writer!

Imaginary World War

By Palash Shah

It was U.S. and British vs. Germany and other countries. Germany's captain was Hittler. Hittler was mean. They fought. A lot of people died. U.S. military jets arrived. Germany's Giants arrived. U.S Giants arrived. Germany said, "Not fair." It was Giant vs. Giant and U.S army and Jets V.S Germany's army. U.S army and Jets won. Jets helped the U.S Giants. The U.S. army hit the Germany's Giants leg and their swords broke. U.S. Jets fired missiles at Germany's army.

Palash is a harding working 2nd grader who knows his history.

It did a lot of damage. U.S Giants beat the other Giants. In the end, Germany's jets came, but the U.S. Giants destroyed them. The U.S. won.



Writing Challenge!

Can you Write a Small Movement, Story, or Poem?

Ages 5-7

Write: 100 to 200 words

Submit your story to editor@citykizworld.com



My Day at the Beach

By Laasyasri Vaddepalli

The waves were crashing and splashing very loudly. I was on the beach sitting on my towel. I saw a seashell with many colors. It looked so beautiful. I held it in my hand and smelled it. It smelled so sweet. I like it very much and decided to keep it. I was enjoying this moment when my mother and father said, "Come on now. It's time to go home!"

I was a little upset, but at least I would have a memory of this moment, I thought. We were driving home when I saw a girl playing with a stuffed teddy bear. The girl was so cute and

she seemed about 2 years old. We went home and were surprised to see that the babysitter was able to make my brother sit down and watch TV and be quiet. He was watching Lego Ninja turtles. Usually my brother is always doing pranks on people or other crazy stuff. Right now, he was very quiet. It was peaceful moment for us. I saw a plastic rose in a vase; I had never seen this in my house before, so I guessed my parents had bought it recently. It was 6 p.m. and I was hungry. We all ate and then we watched a movie. It was over at 9:30 p.m., which was my bed time. I slept and I had many sweet dreams.

Horses

By Laasyasri Vaddepalli

I always admired horses. They are elegant and wonderful. They come in colors like black, white, grey, golden brown, and dark brown. Even though the colors are faded colors, the horses look most beautiful in those colors. My interest in them has grown this year. I have decided to learn about them. When researching horses, I was surprised by the many facts I learned.

I learned how useful and big horses are. I wondered why they were so big. They have 205 bones in total, and their hooves grow approximately 0.25 hands a month. "Hands" are what we measure horses with. They are the size of an average human hand. The horses make good rides for humans and their horse hair makes a wonderful bow for glorious music. There is an average of 75 million horses in the world. I'm sure you'll be able to observe them and their interesting characteristics.

Horses have lifecycles like all other animals. There are basic facts based on their life cycle, too. Foals have milk teeth and they are replaced with permanent teeth at the ages 3-5. An adult has 36-40 beats per min. Also people can estimate how old a horse is by their teeth.

Did you know that no horses are identical? Other cool facts are that a female horse is called a filly. I also found out that

there are names for different sides of a horse. The right side of the horse is called the off side, the left side of the horse is called the near side. Also, the heart weighs about 9 pounds. We know major facts about horses, but what about their likes and dislikes? I also learned about this. Horses dislike the smell of pigs. They love to eat hay and they need a comfortable saddle. Horses are also known to be the base category Zebras are in, which means Zebras are also horses.

Lastly, horses have a secret relationship with humans. That is why horses get well together with humans. Please keep the relationship and be friends with horses. Don't dislike them. If you like them, they will like you.



Laasyasri is a hardworking 6th grader who wrote several stories this summer! Great job!



After School &

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"We're in this to Make Writers!"

Alien War (Part II)

By Param Shah

I got up, but then found myself on the floor. My brother Alpha was staring at me in confusion and horror. I looked around and saw that all the aliens were dead. They must have held the guns backwards and pulled the trigger. Then I noticed a hole through my leg. I couldn't feel a thing. "The mini cannon might have gotten me," I thought to myself, while looking at it. I then saw something amazing. I told my brother, "Look at that."

He looked at the car that was upside down. "What do you see?" he asked me. He looked harder and saw a car upside down. Then something popped out behind the barrels, which was behind the car. It was our mom and the commander. My mom came to me and looked in horror. She screamed and called the ambulance.

Soon the ambulance came and took me to the hospital. I was tired and fell asleep. I woke up when the nurse touched me. I got in a good position. I finally felt relaxed. When I looked to see where my family was, I saw everyone looking at my leg. Then a nurse came and gave me a pill and it tasted very bad, like soda with salt. I looked at my wound. I saw it healing. The nurse was happy to see me getting better. She told me to take rest. When I got up, the nurse checked my leg flexibility. It was good, so I was able to go home.

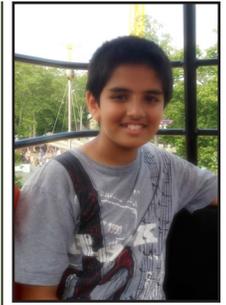
When I went home, I wanted to tell my dad what happened. I knew he was going to be astounded. The problem was that he was nowhere to be seen. I looked in the closet, in the garage, and even in the trap door we had. I went to my other family members who were looking in every corner of the house. I had a theory. "Gummy bears from another planet took him and made him ruler of Gummy World." They asked, "What?"

I told them, "It is just a hypothesis!" I thought and whispered. All of a sudden the doorbell rang. I went to see who it was. It was our dad. He had the groceries. I called my family and they were so happy to see our dad. Our dad said, "I have to tell you guys something important. He went to a chair and told us a long story. Long story short, dad met an unfriendly animal at the store. My dad trapped it at the store and the animal is now on its way to find him. Is that him, I asked him. There was a figure in the distance running at us. He yelled "Take cover," which most likely meant "yes". The creature ran like a buffalo. We all went up stairs. Something fell from my pocket, but I didn't care. I went to my room to take cover.

After a minute of complete silence, I opened my door. Everyone else was in their own rooms. When I was on

the stairs, my brother came out and took the lead. I had a plastic sword and my brother had a baseball bat. We peeked down the stairs. The animal was trapped outside. It was trying to break the glass. It appeared like he was trying to get the key that had dropped from my pocket. The FBI came and caught hold of the animal. We came outside with the key. The animal set out a strong force that pushed everyone around backwards. I fell back and the key fell out of my hand, but I was still standing. The animal got the key and headed for the woods. I chased the animal. My older brother, Alpha saw me and had enough strength to follow me. I kept my eye on the animal's back. I could see a bright light and a clearance in the forest. It was a space ship. The animal got on the space ship as a walkway appeared. I wasn't going to give up so easily. I ran and was just able to hold on to one of the rocket boosters. My brother, Alpha, also wanted to join me, so he grabbed onto my foot. I was able to make it in a vent, so me and my brother were able to stay in the vent until we landed. (There was air.) After a big "Whoosh", we landed.

We were on a mysterious planet. There was air, or something that humans were able to breathe. I peeked out of the vent. I saw the animal that had taken the key from my hand. It was with a big robot. I looked up in space and saw Earth. "We must be on Mars", I told my big brother. We saw that all of the animals were robots, at least on top of Mars. Alpha came up with a plan. We were going to disguise ourselves as robots. We saw a robot come by. We came out of the vent and tackled the robot. With Alphas smart skills, he was able to communicate in English. We put the costume on and followed the animal and his owner. Alpha controlled the legs and I controlled the arms and the communicator. The animal went inside the ground and we followed. We saw a hallway of doors, in Martian, but somehow, we were able to understand it. The animal went in the door "laboratory", and the owner went into the room "power cell". We followed the animal until he went in the room. We looked through the glass. We saw real Martians and helping robots in the laboratory. They were going to get the key from the animal. They put some liquid on the animal and the key popped out of his mouth. They went out from the lab and went straight to the power cell room. We acted like one of the scientists's helping robots and followed in. They thought we were a helping



Param is middle school student with an interesting and amazing imagination.

Con't on page 11



Max's Mischief

By Farhan Mohammad

"Brrriinggg, Brrriinggg," rang the alarm clock. "Flash, Jack, wake up. You have to babysit remember?" Flash didn't say a word.

"FLASH get up!" screamed Flash's mom.

Flash dramatically got out of his bed and said, "Okay mom, you can go now!"

The main door shut, "CRACK!"

"Why don't people give me peace!" muttered Flash under his breath.

LATER THAT DAY

"Dude, what we are going to do to avoid Max? The kid we are babysitting asked Jack, Flash's brother.

"I don't know," said Flash in a joking way. Flash knew about Max because he is very nice, kind and generous, but he is a trouble maker because he gets F's in every subject. Then the two boys headed over to Max's house.

"Here we go," said Flash as he rang the doorbell. Max's mom, Mrs. Frame began, "Here are the things you need to do: Let him do his homework, Watch T.V for an hour, Eat dinner

Con't from page 10

robot. The robot we took over was one of the robots who had access to the power cell. We went in and saw a martian giving a speech. We learnt that the Martians needed the key to charge a ray that would destroy the Earth. In the key's handle was a power cell. I whispered to Alpha "That was the key that the dog had ate. The Martian that was next to the speakers had the key. He put the key in its hole and a ray rocket came out of the ground. Alpha had a plan. He went back to the surface and walked to the rocket. Then he ran in one direction. I knew I was stupid to listen to him, but I had

and put him to bed." Flash was shocked when he heard the list, but he said, "Okay."

"All right - see you honeybunches, bye," said Mrs. Frame to Max.

The main door shut SLAM! "Okay, do you want to play Chess?" asked Flash.

"Sure," said Max.

One minute and 45 seconds later, "AHHH I LOST! I NEVER LOSE!" Max screamed so loud that the house shook and he ran 45 times up and down the stairs. Then he broke his H.D. T.V by throwing the remote on the ground.

After that Flash, Jack and Max ran out the door and to a friend's house. After an hour Max's mom came home and looked around everywhere. The house was a big mess! Chess pieces were everywhere and the HD TV was slashed. Then she realized that Max, Jack and Flash went for a sleep over! What a MEAN TRICK! She would never hire FLASH AGAIN even if he begged to babysit Max the troublemaker.

no other ideas. We saw an object in the distance. It looked like a robot, but not a mars robot. It was a USA space prob. We ran like a maniac at it. The probe looked active. Alpha communicated tp the probe the whole story about the laser and asked the humans to make a similar kind of laser and intersect the Martian laser. I took the probe to the society of Martians and showed the laser. It looked like, it would hit Russia. We wished the Earth good luck. Earth's people only had about 30 minutes until the laser would shoot. We told the people of Earth that we would try our best to stop the laser. We looked at earth to wish it good luck as we headed for the laser... (Stay tuned for Part III).



Farhan is a gifted writer with fantastic ideas.



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Pip The Chick

By Brianna Guzman

One day there was a chick named Pip. He found a farm and saw a farmer. The farmer was throwing seed in the dirt everyday. The chick came to eat some seeds, but then the farmer saw the chick eating his seeds and caught him. After that, the farmer put the chick in a cage. The chick saw a stick. The chick caught the stick. But then he heard a zoom and dropped the stick. "Now what am I going to do?" said Pip. Then there was a girl who saw the chick and opened the cage. After that, the girl and Pip became friends. Everyday the girl took Pip to the farm so the farmer could not get Pip again. One day the girl said, "Let's meet at the park." At the park there was actually a duplicate of the chick. The girl met the duplicate chick instead. When the real chick came actually arrived at the park he became sad because his friend, the girl, did not recognize him as her friend. She was there playing with a similar chick. After a few days of not being friends, they finally talked to each

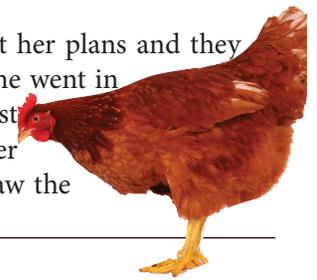
other again. The girl decided she could be friends with both of the chicks. The other chick was female and her name was Lousy.

Pip and Lousy got married and they had kids. One was a girl the other was a boy. The girl was called Nicole and the boy was called Nick.

The girl grew big. She told her grandma when is time to get serious she would leave to go to college. She told the chicks about her plans and they were sad, but they said good-bye. She went in her birdy car. She did everything fast in chicken college. She passed all her classes then went back home and saw the chicks. The chicks were happy.



Brianna is a talented young girl who has fun ideas that she has turned into a story.



DAVID SAVED THE DAY

By Amitav

Once upon a time there was a dog named David. He was a Chihuahua. He had brown fur and big floppy ears. There was a dog park next to his house and he loved it there. One day on the 4th of July there were fireworks near the dog park. He barked at Jonathan (his owner) and George (his owner's dad) to go to the park. Both George and Jonathan were very kind, although George was very fat. "Sure," George answered anyway. Jonathan had a play date with Luke in the hockey rink near the dog park. "Luke's father (Vikram) and I are going to be watching over David and watching the fireworks," George said. At the display, Vikram and George were talking about the fireworks. Meanwhile, Jonathan, Luke and Jane (Luke's sister) were playing hockey. The game was Jonathan vs. Luke and Jane. Luke passed to Jane as fast as he could. The puck

was going so fast, it missed her stick and smashed into her toe and bounded in the woods. She wailed in pain. "Are you okay?" Jonathan asked Jane. She shook her head. "Let me take her to my dad," Luke whispered. "I'll wait here," Jonathan answered.

One moment later, Luke came back. "Dad took her to the doctor," Luke said.

Suddenly David came running to them. They did not see him. He wagged his tail and ran away.

They saw him and ran after him. He stopped by a bush and sniffed the puck out.

"Good boy," Luke said and gave him a doggy treat.



Amitav is a harding working writer. His story is awesome.



Writing Challenge

Ages 8-5

Do you have an Animal Story to share?

Submit your story to editor@citykidzworld.com

EDITOR'S CHOICE FICTION

The Gingerbread Ram

Illustrated by Kirstie Belle Diongzon



By Sreeram Nagappa

In a time not too long ago, there was a brilliant chef that worked at the beautiful 'Cavaner'. The chef's name was Raymond. He had gleaming sapphire eyes and wavy brown hair. Chef Raymond was an average sized man, but slightly plump. Raymond was a splendid chef, and he appreciated his job at the hotel. He cooked day and night - everything that was on the menu. Then one day, the zaniest incident happened.

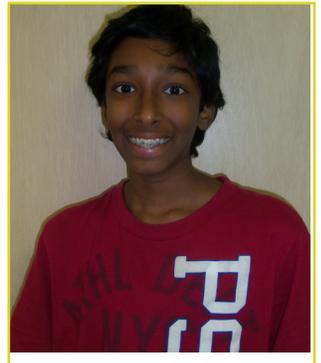
It was on a sunny Friday morning when Chef Raymond drove his brand new Porsche to work. He knew that today was going to be very hectic because the owner of the 'Cavaner', Mary Holland, was bringing the senator of Nevada to dinner. The streets were jam-packed with all types of cars: Jaguar's, BMW's, and many more luxurious vehicles.

When Raymond got to the back of the hotel, he could overhear the guests communicating in different languages like they were foreigners visiting the United States. Raymond hopped out of his Porsche and dashed to the back entrance

before he was late for work again. As Chef Raymond walked through the rough doors, he saw the cooks relaxing in chairs like they were 3 year olds not knowing what to do. "IS THIS WHAT I SHOULD BE SEEING -ALL OF YOU SITTING THERE AND RELAXING?" bellowed Raymond.

"N-no, sir," stammered the lethargic cooks.

"Do you know who is coming to dinner tonight?" questioned Chef Raymond.



Sreeram is a great middle school student whose imagination has become amazing.

Con't on page 14



Con't from page 13

"Y-yes, sir, the senator of Nevada," stuttered the cooks.

"Here is the menu for today. Start cooking," demanded Chef Raymond. Everyone was assigned either an appetizer or an entrée. The dessert was up to Raymond to decide and make. Instead of baking chocolate chip cookies, Raymond decided on gingerbread. It was going to be Chef Raymond's first time making gingerbread, so he was apprehensive it might not come out as planned. He found some gingerbread dough in the pantry and took it back to his corner where the tasty aroma blended together. All of the gingerbread cookies were made to perfection for the senator tonight. In addition, he carved out a ram and a hawk for him to eat. The reason he carved a ram and hawk because they were his favorite animals. Chef Raymond's ram had optimistic yellow eyes and snowy white hair. Also, the ram wore a tuxedo with a red bow. He placed each cookie carefully so nothing awful would happen. Chef Raymond seized the silver trays and placed them in the newest oven: The Kover 3000. He set the timer to 45 minutes and strolled away.

Forty minutes later, the timer rang. Raymond ran to his cookies and opened the oven. Suddenly, his gingerbread ram sprinted out of the oven and through the kitchen doors. Chef Raymond was stunned and he went blank for a second. After Raymond got back to normal, he ran after his ram and kept shrieking, "Come back, come back!"

"Yo, how'ya doing man, you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread ram," snickered the ram. The ram ran through the restaurant, the hallway, and to the lobby. There the gingerbread ram met the doorman, Steve Wilkens. At first, Steve didn't notice the ram, so he stood there doing his job. The door was wide open, so the gingerbread ram jogged out and onto the busy streets of San Diego. Just as the ram ran out, Steve noticed the ram. He had always wanted to be a detective and now was his opportunity.

"Come back, come back!" hollered Chef Raymond and Wilkens, but the ram ignored them and skipped on the burning hot sidewalks.

"Yo, how'ya doing man, you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread ram," cackled the ram. The ram ran through pedestrians' legs, underneath moving cars, and onto the hood of a parked taxi. 500 feet behind, the chef and the doorman were on the run. That's when the taxi driver noticed a cookie-sized ram sitting on the hood of his taxi. The driver was bored, so he decided to chase the ram with the others. The gingerbread ram reacted quickly and leaped of the rusty, old taxi eagerly.

"Come back, come back!" bawled Chef Raymond, Steve Wilkens, and the taxi driver. By then the gingerbread ram was rushing past crazy shoppers and turning the corner onto Quin-

cy Avenue.

"Yo, how'ya doing man, you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread ram," chuckled the ram. By accident, the ram entered an alley where he saw an old, hairy beggar sitting near a fly-infested dumpster.

The beggar whispered hungrily, "Come ginky, come to papa." In the distance, the others were calling, "Come back, come back!" Suddenly, the beggar charged at the gingerbread ram, but the ram made a faster escape than the bearded beggar.

"Yo, how'ya doing man, you can't catch me, I'm the gingerbread ram," snorted the ram. The chef, the doorman, the taxi driver, and the beggar were on the tail of the ram, but not close enough to catch him.

It was 12:00 P.M. and the senator was scheduled to arrive at 6:00 P.M. While the commotion was going on, the kitchen at the hotel was busy making the food. All the cooks were exhausted because they had been cooking since 9:00 A.M. Only the appetizers were completed, but there were 12 more entrées to be made. While the cooks were busy, the gingerbread hawk that was in the oven flew away because he knew that his friend the ram was in danger.

The streets of San Diego were quiet, but the earsplitting and screeching from the chef, doorman, taxi driver, and beggar were so loud it felt like the 4:00 P.M. rush hour. By now, the gingerbread ram was a quarter mile ahead. That's when he noticed an eagle munching on baby worms across the street. Seeking help, the ram dashed across to the eagle.

"Hi, eagle. Can you help me get away from that mob?" requested the ram.

"Sure, hop onto my back and we will soar away." So, the ram did as the eagle told him and thought that he would be safe. On the sidewalk, the mob stood there, staring at the sky as the gingerbread ram and eagle glided away. While they were airborne, the eagle had a plan in mind. The eagle had always wanted gingerbread as a treat and he had got one. His plan was to make the ram fly in the air and swoop down and catch the ram in his beak. When it was time the eagle threw the gingerbread ram in the air and let him plummet down.

"Help me, help me!" cried the ram. Suddenly, a hawk flew from a rooftop of an apartment and saved the ram by flying under it. Thanks to the hawk, the ram was saved from the eagle and the mob. Both gingerbreads flew off into the gleaming cobalt sky. As the crowd began to form beneath the ram and hawk, the chef, doorman, taxi driver, and beggar left to have another quest.

At the hotel, Chef Raymond received great compliments from the senator and the owner for his delightful gingerbread cookies. No one saw the gingerbread ram and hawk that evening.

It is good to be back thought Raymond.

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14

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Frog and
Rabbit
best friends
forever

Frog And Rabbit Best Friends Forever

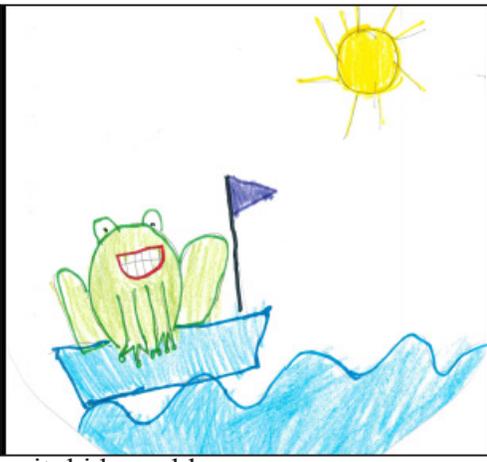
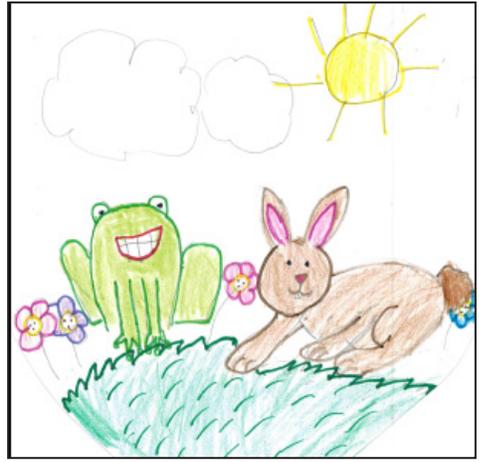
by Haiya



Haiya is an up and coming writer.

Rabbit and frog were best friends. They play together every day.

One day frog wanted to meet his family in Hawaii. So frog hopped away to his frog boat. He went to Hawaii.



He met his parents in Hawaii. He was so happy and had fun in Hawaii. Rabbit came out of her hole. Frog was nowhere to be found. Rabbit looked and looked until she gave up. She soon realized that

Today frog had to go to Hawaii. Rabbit was sad. Rabbit missed her best friend. Frog missed his best friend too. Soon frog came back. Rabbit was very happy her best friend came back and they played together again.



My Snowman

By Aayush Kishore



Illustration by Samantha Aucello

In the winter I like to build,
A snowman that is buckets filled
A snowman that will never break
Even when I whack it with a rake.

A snowman that has a smile,
A snowman that is built by Kyle,
A snowman that will not stay for a while
But for everyday, my day comes to a smile.

That snowman that I love,
That snowman that I trust,
That snowman I will give,
My last mushroom pizza crust.

My snowman that I love and trust,
Needs more than a mushroom pizza crust
So I will give what he always wanted
And give him a snowman dust.
This is what he always wanted
And so I will give him these things
To that snowman I really, really trust.

Spring

By Aayush Kishore

In the spring time, your cheeks are turning red,
And you wish you were still in bed.
Everywhere you go, the wind is on you
Now you are wishing the spring breeze never
blew.

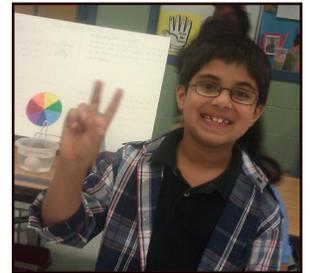
You ride the bus everyday,
Because of the breeze you have to put up with
every holiday.
At least I am not covered with the winter snow,
But still I have to put up with the spring blow.

The blossoms are starting to grow.
On the bright side they wouldn't have grown with
the winter snow.
Looking back to the spring times,
It's a bummer in the summer for hot days to start.

No more cold breeze on your frosty face,
And now I have to deal with the hot summer
days,
But still there are ways to enjoy the summer holi-
days.



Illustration by Samantha Aucello



Aayush is a great poet.
His ideas are great.

1st Place!

Fable Contest!



“MILLA AND KATIE’S FRIENDSHIP”

By Rav Kaur

“Come on Katie,” Milla the horse whinnied as she galloped towards the city.

“Okay, okay. Just hold on for a sec,” Katie the donkey whined. Katie and Milla were best friends. They did everything together and they trusted each other very much. Today, they were going into town to watch a movie together. Milla neighed impatiently and tossed her mane.

“Jeez, Milla calm down,” Katie said. The two excited girls started trotting towards the town.

“I brought some money for hay,” Katie exclaimed in her happy way. The two best friends giggled and chatted all the way to the theater. Once they were in the ticket line, they saw that Modessa, the evil wolf, was in charge of the ticket booth.

“Um, two tickets for the movie ‘Animal Discovery,’” Milla spoke up nervously.

“OK. Two coins,” Modessa said in her snotty wolf voice. Katie handed her two coins and walked away with Milla.

“Who let her be in charge of the ticket booth?” Milla whispered furiously in Katie’s ear. Milla and Katie showed their tickets to the person outside the door to the theater. That person happened to be Quin the fox, Modessa’s evil follower.

“What is up with them?” Katie groaned. Milla and Katie sit down in their seats. Halfway through the movie, Milla was fast asleep and her hooves were resting on the empty seat next to her. Katie, on the other hand, was watching the movie with rapt attention, while simultaneously chewing on some hay. Finally the movie was over. Walking out of the theater, they both were tired. They went to their own homes. As soon as she got home, Katie’s doorbell rang.

“Who is it?” she called exhaustedly.

“Modessa and Quin,” came the reply. Katie slowly nudged the door open.

“Um, hey! So like, can we have some snacks? I prefer rabbit,” Modessa snarled with an evil gleam in her eye. She winked at Quin, who licked her lips.

“S-s-sorry, b-but I don’t k-keep r-rabbit,” Katie stuttered.

“Ugh! Fine, we’ll take whatever disgusting food you have. Although wolves and foxes eat meat, it may be... uh...interesting to try something new,” Quin replied slyly.

Katie went to the pantry and she was shocked that none of her food was there.

“OH NO! Someone stole all of my food!” She screamed.

“I don’t have anything to eat! What am I going to do?” Katie moaned. She called up Milla and asked if she could spend the night because she didn’t have food to eat.

“Hey, wait a second! Why are you calling Milla? She’s the one who stole it in the first place!” Modessa bluffed. Katie was suspicious since Modessa and Quin lied a lot.

“By the way, we saw Milla do it,” Quin added.

“WHAT!?” Katie gagged. She was turning a deep shade of red. Katie called Milla again and decided that she wouldn’t spend the night with her. Modessa and Quin lent her some food.

The Next Day...

KNOCK! KNOCK!

“Yeah, Katie?” Milla asked sleepily.

“How DARE you! Why did you steal my food? Only a heartless person would do that! I thought we trusted each other! You’re not my best friend anymore, Modessa and Quin are!” Katie exploded.

“I didn’t steal your food! Why would I do that? And why are you their best friend?” Milla asked sadly.

“You didn’t? Oh, I knew I shouldn’t have trusted them! But then they said that they saw you do it and oh I’m so sorry! Can we be best friends again?” Katie confessed.

“Of course!” Milla forgave.

Milla and Katie both went to Modessa and Quin’s house where they caught Modessa and Quin red-handed, eating Katie’s food.

“I thought you only ate meat,” Katie smirked at them.

“They are the real thieves!” Milla accused.

“Oh Milla, I promise to never ever listen to them again and always listen to my heart,” Katie apologized.



Illustration by Samantha Aucello

Moral: Always listen to yourself.



Rav is a talented writer. This is an excellent fable. Enjoy.



Quality Over Quantity

By Nina Soukhanovskii

The two kids raced towards the huge house. It was pure white, with a green door, green shutters and a green garage. The lawn was bright green, with roses growing around it. There were vases with yellow, blue and red flowers on the porch. Everything looked so neat.

An old woman was sitting on the porch, dozing in a checkered rocking chair.

“Um...,” Kate was puzzled.

“AUNT ANDREA! WAKE UP!” Jim hollered.

Kate winced. The old woman opened her eyes. She smiled.

“Why, hello! It’s my darlings Kate and Jim! It’s so good to see you!” Aunt Andrea cooed.

“Hi!” both kids replied.

“Welcome! Come on in!” Aunt Andrea gestured toward the house. She crossed the porch and went up to the door and opened it.

The two children followed their aunt, gaping in awe. There was so much to see. Pictures covered the painted wall, furniture carved in a unique design stood along the corridors and strange, but pretty statues gazed at the children with their cold, grey eyes.

“Aunt Andrea, this is amazing. Where did you get all these...um, interesting things?” Kate asked.

“Oh, well, my husband, before he died, had won a lottery. Yes, a lottery with a lot of money. Using the money he bought this house and these ‘interesting’ products,” Aunt Andrea explained.

They walked a flight of stairs and down a corridor and stopped

in front of two pale green doors engraved in gold.

“These are your rooms. During the day you’re allowed to explore any room, but not the attic. Understand?” Aunt Andrea asked.

“But, why? Why not the attic?” Kate wondered aloud.

“DON’T ASK QUESTIONS!” Aunt Andrea roared, “I said- NO ATTIC! Means - NO ATTIC!” With that, she left.

Jim walked into his room and sat on the bed. An adventure was forming in his mind...

Kate heard a knock on her door. She opened it eagerly.

“Let go, Kate!” Jim whispered.

Kate followed him. Jim was grinning ear to ear. He nudged Kate and pulled her into a huge dent in the wall.

“What are you doing? Jim! You’re crazy!” Kate hissed.

Jim didn’t say anything. He grabbed her hand and dragged her upstairs. They went up several flights of stairs until they came to a door. It was labeled ATTIC.

“Jim, it’s forbidden. We can’t... we can’t and won’t do this!” Kate panicked.

“Blah, blah, blah. I want to do it!” Jim teased.

Kate turned around and ran downstairs. She wanted to tell Aunt



Nina is a great writer. This is a nice story!

Con’t on page 20

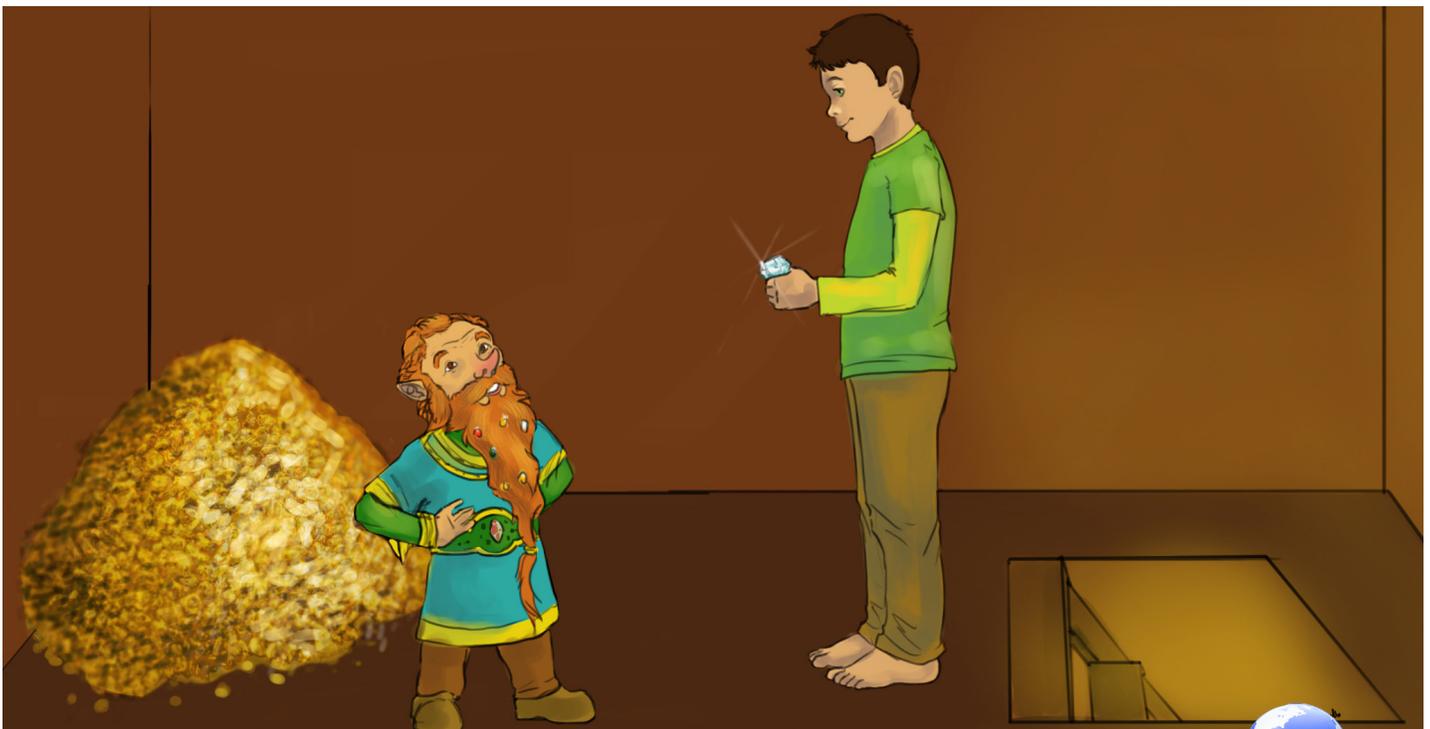


Illustration by Samantha Aucello

Are you Polite?

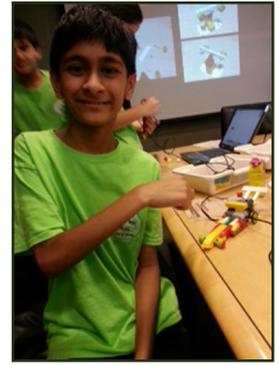
By Kushal Shah

Think about how you behave at home. In public and in school are you well mannered? People who are polite have to be respectful. They don't bully and they use others good manners. It is important to always say please and to ask for help. A polite person should always remember not to insult people. In order to be polite, you should always be respectful. You should talk nicely and not insulting or blame others. When you're not respectful, people might think of you in a bad way. In order to be polite, you should be well mannered you should remember to say, "Please" and, "Thank you" when asking for something. Manners are important because they can help you solve a problem. If you ask nicely for something, you are more likely to receive it. For example: If you're in a cafeteria and say to the worker, "Give this to me.. I want it now." The worker would be very angry. If you say, "Please may I have this? Thank you. The worker will say, "You're welcome!" and give it to you. Another characteristic of a person is that he or she does not bully

other people. If you bully others, they might cry or be sad for rest of the school year. This is not polite because we should always be nice to each other. Also a polite person doesn't even cut lines because that's also a form of bullying.

For example, if you push or knock out a boy or a girl you would be in trouble. Also wait in the line because if you don't wait in the line, you can get in trouble also.

Conclusion: Therefore, it's important always be nice and good. If you're not nice people would think of you in a bad way. If you ask nicely for something, you are more likely to receive it. These are some of the many reasons why it's important to be polite.



Kushal is a hard working guy and he is very polite!

Con't from page 19

Andrea as soon as possible.

Jim opened the door and gasped. The room was full of sparkling jewels and silver coins.

"Wow! It's...well, amazing!" Jim exclaimed. He began to scoop jewels and coins into his pocket.

Suddenly, he heard a shuffling noise behind him. Slowly, Jim turned.

"Good evening, my friend! My name is Qwauffle. I have come to give you a lesson about the secret of this room," a short dwarf-like creature said.

"What? What secret? Who are you? I'm confused!" Jim said.

"I am Qwauffle, guardian of the Treasure Room. You, human being, obviously don't know the secret of the Treasure Room," the dwarf snorted.

"No, I don't. What's the secret?" Jim wondered.

"Quality over Quantity!" Qwauffle answered.

"Um, what? Quality over Quantity!?" Jim repeated.

"Yes. There is a lot of treasure in this room. It looks in good state from a distance, but when you look closer-it's rusty, in bad condition. Now, look over there. One shiny jewel, one in good condition," Qwauffle pointed out.

"Oh! I get it!" Jim nodded.

"Farewell, then, my wise friend!" Qwauffle exclaimed and in a burst a light, he was gone.

Jim, still amazed, took the one and only shiny diamond and left the attic. He has had a wonderful adventure, and he had learned a wise lesson.

"Jim, you're back!" Kate was surprised, once Jim returned from the attic.

"Yes, why?" Jim asked.

"Oh, Jim! Why did you do this? Did you see Qwauffle - that drat dwarf? He is bad news," said Aunt Andrea.

Jim disagreed. He had learned a nice lesson.

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ART BY HAFSA



Enjoy the work of up and coming young local artist, Hafsa! These are two of her beautiful scenes. Hafsa has published her artwork in City Kidz World magazine several times.



The Archers

By Chintan Vajariya

Once upon a time there lived two archers named Manan and Chintan. They were very very very very very very good! They were the best archers of their time. For example, they could they could shoot a very thin stick, and it would turn into 25 pieces! (It's 25 pieces, not two or five.) They looked like Hawkeye. They wore sleeveless jackets, black pants, arrow holders, glasses and a glove each.

Manan was 14 and Chintan was eight.

Let's get back to what we were talking about. They have a very special briefcase with their lucky bow and sharpest arrows.

They both have pets. Chintan has a panda and Manan has a horse.

One adventure Chintan had was when his sharpest arrow caught on fire and there was a lake a kilometer away, so he shot the arrow and it landed on the lake! Then he walked slowly so nobody would think he was trying to hurt anyone. Then when he knew that nobody was looking (actually Manan was looking) he got the arrow out of the lake. Then they lived happily ever after.

THE END

Author's Note: Writing this essay was hard, but I got the gist of it. That was fun, right?



Chintan has a great story. He is getting better.

Original Origin Story

By Manan Vajariya

It was a dark and cloudy night in Arizona. The workers in the SETI's (Search For Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) detection facility were getting really weird readings from the satellites. It was as if there was an unidentified object roaming in the skies in the northwest.

"It's probably just a huge group of birds coming back from hibernation," said Kevin, the monitor.

"They'll just fly away."

"No, it's much bigger. And it's also emitting dangerous amounts of gamma radiation. I think we should tell SETI," replied Zack the team leader.

"I think that's a good idea," added Brittanie. "Plus, we haven't found or reported anything in the last year. I think this will regenerate our reputation."

The team did just that. After a few minutes, Zack got a call from SETI that they were sending a few helicopters to the location and finding out what was going on.

It was 9:30 p.m. local time when a UFO from the planet Moratorium had landed in the middle of the Arizona desert. Out came an alien sent from the planet to find any extra-terrestrial intelligent life forms. So far, it had only found sand just like most of the planets that he had visited.

Recently, he was on Mars (another "deserty" planet), where a little vehicle with the word NASA written on it was examining his fluids. He thought that this creature had found something interesting (water on Mars), so he traced it back to Earth.

Earth-just like Mars- felt very similar, but he still decided to take a look around. After walking 1/4 mile south, he discovered two lights in the distant. As he observed for a while,

he figured out that they were sky vehicles (helicopters) coming in his direction. He quickly ran to his spaceship and pressed the phase transporter button on this remote control. The phase transporter was a beam of light that ran on gamma radiation and turns whatever the light touches and turns them into energy. Then that energy is transported into the spaceship and concerted into the original figure. Unfortunately, due to Earth's high level of hydrogen in the air, the phase-transporter malfunctioned. Due to this malfunction, the whole space ship exploded causing the two helicopters to also blow up.

Since the Phase transporter was powered by gamma radiation, the explosion caused a shock wave of gamma rays to spread through a radius of 25 miles. About 23 miles from the explosion, 16-year-old Owen Ryder was driving to a certain part of the desert to find samples of rocks for his science project. He was driving a black 2011 hand-me-down Suzuki Hayabusa motorcycle; the fastest on the market. Suddenly a shock wave hit him and he fell off of his motorcycle.

The shock wave had mutated his genetic DNA and improved it up to superhuman levels. He now had superhuman straight, superhuman speed, and superhuman reflexes. Not just that, but to put a cherry on top, he was able to slow down time if he built up enough energy, and his healing powers had increased up to the level of the Wolverine. The gamma radiation had also improved his metal ability. He had an IQ of 165. Owen Ryder was now the world's most powerful man.



Manan is a gifted student who is learning how to put together great fiction.



Mermaid and the Shark



Illustrations by Kirstie Belle Diongzon

By Sahiti Kota

One Sunny day there was a man and a woman at the park. The woman name was Sandra and the man's name was Jack. The park was peaceful and clean.

There were no dirty spots on the park. It was clean on the lake.

There was a Mermaid named Rosa. She was attacked by a shark named ALEX. Jack and Sandra did not know what to do. They thought harder and harder and they got an idea.

They asked Alex some questions and Alex was not that smart, then Alex went away and they saved Mermaid.

Sahiti is a great 2nd grader! She is learning to combine her imagination with her writing.



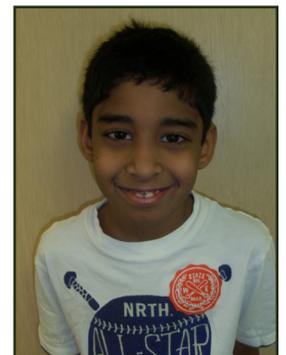
Summer Trip

By Byrav

My mom drove us to Connecticut. My Mom dropped us off there at a train station. We were waiting for the train. Then it came so we went inside. Then we sit inside the train. We saw some other trains. We also saw cities. We arrived in New York.

There was a lot of fun stuff in New York. We saw the Empire State building. It was tall. We saw a lot of floors. We also got to look at the last floor. It was cool. We could see all of the buildings. Then we eat at Burger King. We saw my dad's office. Then it was time to go. We caught the train. We were back at the train station. We were waiting for my mom. We were sitting on the bench. Then my mom came. We went home and we also ate at KFC.

Byrav is a hard working student. He put a lot of time into this very interesting travel feature!



Byrav practiced his sentences and wrote a great story over the summer.



James Fairytale

By Shrina Parikh

James was a peculiar child from the moment he was born. His mother and father were average height and muscular, yet James was awkwardly tall and skinny. His hair was light brown and he had pale, freckled skin. He even had an interesting birthmark- a star on the back of his neck. Despite his awkward figure and in contrast to what one would believe by only meeting James for the first time, James was an exceptional baseball player. Playing since he was just four, James was always the team MVP. As a catcher, he never missed a ball. As an infielder and outfielder, he always got players out. As a pitcher, he never let the other team score.

Even though James received loads of attention for being a star athlete, he liked to keep to himself. He often created artistic masterpieces with everything from highlighters to pastels.

December 21st, the winter solstice, 2013, was the very afternoon James' life had changed. It started off just a normal day in his backyard. Although his New Jersey house was average-sized, a two-story house just like the 50 others on Cornelius Drive, his backyard was about 5 acres and led into a dark forest that no one dared to enter.

James was drawing that day. His art supplies were all laid out on his family's wooden picnic table. He picked up his head, and he looked around the dark, gray sky.

"A storm is rolling in; I better get inside," James thought, "but what was that cheerful chirping I heard?" He foraged the sky in search of the origin of the chirping and spotted a blue robin from the corner of his eye. Suddenly, the baby blue robin began to flutter its wings rapidly and swooped down, aiming directly for James.

The robin's piercing black eyes locked with James' ice blue eyes. James' eyes looked as stunning as the Hawaiian ocean glistening during sunset.

Suddenly, and just for a split-second, the robin froze in midair. James was startled and lost eye contact. The robin continued in its path and picked up the sketchpad James had placed on the picnic table in its mouth. James panicked and didn't know what to do. The robin soared upwards and towards the forest. James followed the bird the best he could from the ground. He ran and sprinted all the way into the forest.

Absolute silence blared throughout the forest. The tall, over-shadowing trees cast shadows over the trail of bushes covered with broken branches. James had lost the robin, but continued to explore. The forest got a little bit brighter with each step James took.

"Where did the robin go?" James thought. "How is it so silent here? It's as if there isn't even a single bug here! I bet I could hear a pin drop!" As James took another nonchalant step, he walked into a portal, but he didn't realize it. All James knew was that he had felt a sudden shock, but it was over in a millisecond. He wondered what caused the shock, but decided to let it go. From the first tree to now, the amount of light had increased to be about as bright as the sun shining through the marshmallow-white clouds after a hurricane.

James heard a noise and decided to continue, hoping it was the robin with his sketchpad. He followed the noise, the crunching of branches like they were being stepped on, until he got as close as he could. James leaned against the tree and could hear the noise coming from the other side. He poked his head around, and sprinted in the opposite direction. The wolf had scared him off. Now James heard the same noise as before, only this time, the crunching of branches echoed his own footprints. The echo became closer and closer as James ran, eventually so close that James had a thick, uncut nail scratch his heel.

The wolf placed his hairy, grey paw on James' shoulder, pulling him to a stop. James was too terrified to turn around, so it was up to the wolf to break the silence, "Can you understand me?"

James' eyes grew exponentially in size, "You can..." He stuttered, "c-can t-t-talk?"

"What is your name?"

"James."

The wolf's aged eyes stared at James, studying him.

"Go. Roam the endless forest; nothing shall harm you within these walls." Then the wolf scurried away.

James was confused by what the wolf meant. What "walls" was he talking about? The wolf had told James nothing would harm him, but James wasn't ready to believe that. After all, he heard that from a talking wolf.

"Maybe I'm hallucinating," James said to himself.

As he traveled deeper into the welcoming trees, James saw various fairytale characters, all antagonists, although he didn't realize the common trend. He continued walking at a slow, cautious pace, yet still managed to bump into the beast, from Belle.

The beast looked tired, as if he skipped several hibernation periods. His fur had lost its fluffiness- it just hanging onto the beast for dear life. Unlike the wolf, the beast didn't have much interest in James. He scrutinized James once, tilted his head, and went off in the other direction. James breathed a sigh of relief and continued to plunge deeper into the now bright, cheery forest- besides the creatures in it.



Con't from page 24

Approaching James from a rather determined stride, a grizzly bear, which James did not recognize, was charging towards him. James saw the bear, but stood in place, frozen.

"Uh oh, this could be some trouble," James thought.

Suddenly, the bear began to sprint and reached James in seconds.

"What is a scrawny little kid like you doing here?" the bear shouted.

"A robin stole my sketchpad and led me here," James responded, shyly and out of fear.

"Leave. This isn't a place for you 'perfect' humans."

"Then why am I here and all right? Why did I make it this far into the forest?"

The bear pulled out a bow and arrow from behind him and began to set up a shot. James' blue eyes widened in panic. He knew what the bear planned to do, and he couldn't believe how malicious this bear was.

The bear locked his target, slowly pulled back, and unclasped his hand. The arrow flew towards James' pale nose. It was only in the air for seconds, flying and spiraling at full speed about six feet off the ground. Within that time, the arrow covered ten yards. Just as it was about to plunge into its target, the sharp, polished, wooden arrow abruptly stopped.

James' eyes widened even more than before. The bear wiped his smirk off his smug face. Nearby creatures stopped in their tracks.

Everyone stared - not at James, not at the bear, but at the arrow. The arrow, still pointed at James and sharp as a knife, was completely still. James' almost albino-white fist wrapped around the wood.

The attention shifted to James. The forest was yet again so quiet, one could hear a pin drop.

The bear's rough, scratchy voice broke the silence, "And what is your name?"

"James."

"Well James, that was a pretty amazing feat; only special people are able to catch my arrows." Since James didn't reply, but instead looked away, the bear continued, "Follow me, I'll help you make sense of today's events."

So James followed the bear's long and wide footprints into a hidden house. The house was different from his own. It was of relative size, but run-down and dirty. The bear, who still has not introduced himself, opened the creaking front door. Com-

pletely contradicting the outside of the house, the inside was lavish. The first room James saw was the living room, a gold and purple themed room fit for a king. Two comfortable looking chairs bordered the fireplace. A white leather couch was placed on the opposite side of the room, and a yell-gold sheepskin rug decorated the center of the wooden floor.

James looked out the small windows and saw a different scene than what he had experienced. It was raining, hard. The droplets made loud thuds as they splashed against the window. James felt as if the house could collapse any second due to the strong storm.

The bear spoke, breaking the silence once again, "Sit." So James sat on one of the chairs. The bear sat on the other, and turned on the fireplace. Right after the orange-red flames appeared, they died into the logs.

"What is this place? A place with talking animals who look so tired and old, a place where the outside of a house looks poor and run down, but the inside is incredibly designed, a place with weather so happy one second, only to have mother nature sobbing an ocean the next?" James asked.

The bear took a deep breath, then explained, "My name is Fussy. In order for me to explain our world to you, you have to tell me all about yourself and how you got here."

"I'm just a normal kid. I like playing baseball and art and I do well in school. Um, I was in my backyard earlier, actually, I don't know how long it's been." Fussy smiled the smallest smile possible, and James continued, "A bird took my sketchpad and flew into the forest, and, and I followed. I lost the bird, but I kept going. I ran into a wolf earlier too."

"Have you ever wondered why you were so good at baseball, or why your drawings are so detailed and incredible? Why you stand out in a crowd, why you never feel like you fit in? Or how in the world you caught my arrow, which was going at a rate of 146 miles per hour?"

"I'm tall...?"

Fussy chuckled. "No, James, it's because you have powers. Powers you wouldn't even begin to imagine."

"So, like, magic?"

"Almost."

James tried to take that in, but it just didn't make sense. "Then why are there no humans here? Why are there only talking animals?"

"There aren't just 'talking animals!'" Fussy mocked, "Maybe those are just the ones you've seen, but in this forest, lives every single fairytale antagonist of all time. You may know the popular ones, like the wolf, but there are also ones unheard of, like

con't on page 26



25

Con't from page 25

me.”

“Wait, but-“

“No, let me continue. I’ll probably answer your questions anyway.”

“Okay.”

“Hundreds of years ago, all fairytale characters used to live in peace, antagonists, protagonists, supporting characters, everyone, in one forest. We all understood that the roles we got in stories are just roles, and we were all nice creatures on the inside. However, a few decades ago, some humans somehow got past our border, which is what I thought happened again when you walked in. My arrows are the ultimate test if one is magical or not. It’s simple; if you catch the arrow, you have powers. If you don’t, you’re dead and just an ordinary human.” Fussy paused for a few moments to let James take it all in, then went on, “When those humans intruded, I gave them the arrow test. This was the very first time a creature had not passed the test, so the two humans died on the spot.”

“Wow, I’m sorry.”

“Well that convinced all the ‘good guys’ that all of us antagonists really were bad guys. They basically kicked us out, and we were forced to re-locate. Since that day, there has been a hatred between us. Some of the guys here still hate me for it, but most have moved on. This forest has a portal, which you probably got through without realizing it was even there. Usually, humans

are the good guys in stories, which is why a lot of the creatures here were on edge about you, myself included. But you’re not a character from any story now, are you?”

“I don’t believe so.”

“There’s a loophole. That the part I still don’t understand. Maybe it’s in your blood. But anyways, this forest never ends. Sure to the outside world, which we don’t enter, it’s only about 50-60 acres of trees, but once you go through the portal, our world, still unnamed, is infinite in every direction. We mainly stay around the same areas, though.”

“What about new characters? Any what powers do I have?”

“James I don’t know.” Fussy shrugged, “I really don’t, but James, even though the concept of time doesn’t exist in our world, and I haven’t explained everything, it’s probably late in your mortal world. Get back to your parents, but come visit again. We’ll try to figure out your powers next time, and you should leave when the weather is calm.”

James looked outside the small window again to see a sun shining and not a single sign of wetness. He got up and was led by Fussy out the door.

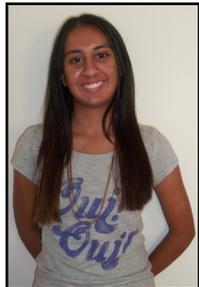
“Goodbye James.”

“Bye.”

James left. When he reached his picnic table, the blue robin was ready for him with the sketchpad left exactly as it was before the robin came.

“Thank little bird.” James said.

“You’re welcome,” The bird replied.



Shrina is a great short story writer. This is a fantastic and original story. She is in high school.



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Antarctic Fight

By Isha

“Beep! Beep! Be-“

It was another gloomy, cold morning when Richard sleepily trudged out of his bed. He dragged his feet as he slowly walked down the narrow hall that led to the breakfast buffet. The chef gave him a disgusting dollop of green pudding as the chef rapidly mixed spinach and pudding together. Richard mournfully looked at the chef. The chef looked at Richard angrily, and said, “Either eat or don’t eat at all!” Richard stormed up to table and started complaining loudly to the man, who quietly stuffed lumber into the fireplace. All of a sudden the humungous speakers cleared up. The man who controlled the speakers (he really was an optician) said with lots of pride, “Good morning excited eaters. Today I have some fantastic news that will make you do an amazing leap! We have reached the cold Antarctic where we will easily fight the penguins!” Richard really did an amazing leap in the air as he started to rush down the crowded staircase. Suddenly, he realized how disheveled he looked. He quickly ran down the narrow hallway and changed his clothes and combed his hair. He excitedly ran out of his room and practically leapt down the stairs. Richard did a huge jump on a high block of snow. He quickly looked at the large road map. Then, he started to make big hops across the soft, white blanket of snow, while leading his army. His journey had begun.

Three long days later they still hadn’t found a single penguin to “easily” fight. But, Richard was being fantastic leader. You would think they would be freezing cold, but they were still merrily running along. On the first day, people started getting extremely tired and couldn’t even do a little step. Smart Richard quickly made small sleighs with fire in it for sleepy people while others pushed it. Another time they saw a polar bear angrily chasing after them. With a little help, Richard and his army ate the polar bear. Today, everything was beautiful and everybody was happily walking along the path.

“Richard, wake up! We’re going up!” said his friend, Josh pushing Richard. Richard sleepily rubbed his eyes and started sleepily climbing up hill. All of a sudden, snow started blowing into Richard’s face. He heard deafening screams and cries as he suddenly slipped. They were in a predicament and he knew he had to go back. But then he remembers his boyhood, and how much optimism he had to fight the penguins. Then, “Snap!” he got idea. He quickly slid down to the others and said loudly, “Get the polar bear skin.” Everybody quickly slid down to the polar bear skin loudly screaming to others. They quickly dug themselves into little igloos if they were brave enough. They all quietly sat shivering in the white snow: all except Richard. He slowly walked from igloo to igloo in the cold blizzard risking his life for every step he took. By the time the strong blizzard stopped, brave Richard was weak. The team told Richard to stay in a sleigh while they slowly walked uphill taking cautious steps hoping not to go off course. They all knew this penguin



Isha wrote a great story with an awesome vocabulary list and a few good pictures!

quest will take more than a blizzard to stop.

Everybody was still proudly walking in the cold Antarctica. Richard still had a bad, cold, but he was really jumpy. They were all singing Christmas carols when all of a sudden a penguin appeared. It was big fat penguin that was slowly trotting towards them. All of a sudden, Richard tied the penguin in a big net and as quick as a fox he put the penguin in a box. All at once loud, cheering was heard from their army as they proudly jumped and danced and pranced...at over a billion penguins squawking madly and then everyone was still...absolutely still. All you would hear was the soft wind and the muffled strangling of the captured penguin. “CHARGE!” Immediately penguins started to madly peck on the people as the people started trapping them and grabbing them. The penguins were losing! All of a sudden, big mountains of snow started falling on them.

“Take cover!” Richard shouted quickly sliding into the warm polar bear skin. When Richard got out of the polar bear he saw the penguins hugging each other.

“STOP FIGHTING!” Richard said loudly, forcefully dropping his weapon. “Look how they are hugging each other. They are a family. Why should we destroy it?” So Richard took some dead meat from his pocket and threw it to a penguin and signaled everyone to follow. By the time they were done, they were all friends.

When Richard got into the ship, instead of planning another battle, he started writing a book...

“Beep! Beep! Be-“

It was another gloomy, cold morning...

Isha wrote a fantastic story using an advanced vocabulary list.

Her story is advanced!



ART BY HEERA

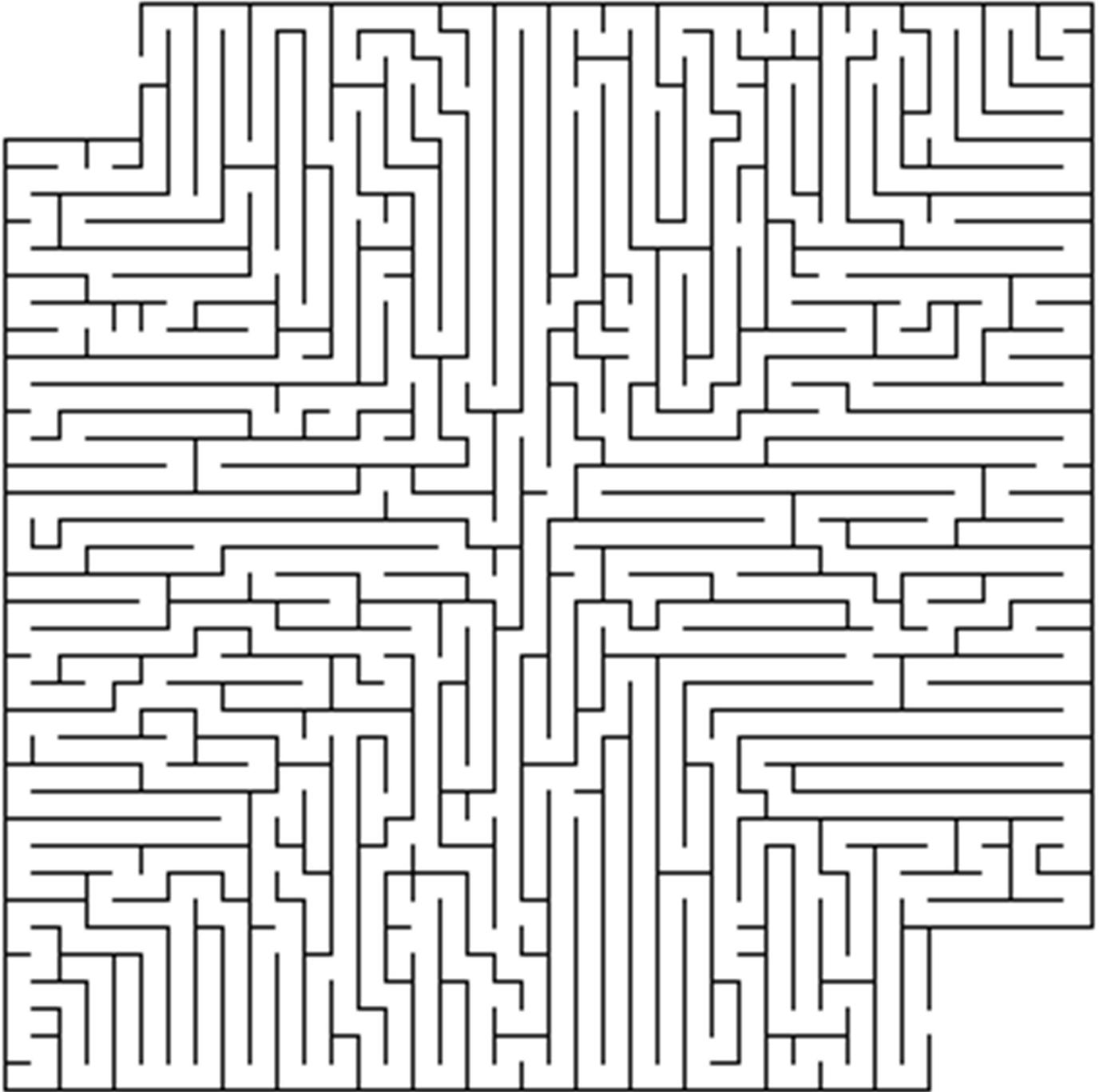


This is great artwork. Enjoy this fruit art!

Heera is a great artist! She is becoming better each day!



Cut-Out Maze



DRAGON SECRET

By Aryan Matha

Once there was a Chinese temple. It was on top of a mountain. The temple was big. It was made by monks with clay and stone. They used magic to lift the stones. There was a water fall. The waterfall was important. Every time the waterfall stopped, the dragons were on the way. The dragons came to visit every year. They rested when they passed by the temple. They have been doing this for 1,000 years.

Lee, the monk was so excited because it was his chance to prepare a party this year. Lee prepared a party for the monks and dragons. Lee set fire works that said, "Come dragons come." Lee put food for the dragons and the monks. He was young so it was easy to do the chores. He gathered the monks for the dragons to come.

Ryan, who is an American reporter, took creative pictures. Ryan saw fireworks and he thought that dragons were interesting. Ryan started to climb the mountain. Lee met Ryan on the mountain when Ryan was on the last rock. Ryan asked, "What's your name?"

"Lee."

Lee asked, "What's your name?"

Ryan said, "Ryan."

Lee told Ryan that he was invited to see the dragons. When the dragons came, they were making lot of noise. The dragons looked big. They had long legs, nice faces, and red bodies. It was a big party. They had fighting competitions between the monks. The dragons ate and watched the competitions. When the dragons were about to go to sleep, Ryan took pictures on his phone and posted them on the internet. The people wanted to see, but they couldn't because they had to climb the mountain. Lee was mad because Ryan showed it to the people and they might turn up. Lee told Ryan to leave. The next day 111,000 people came to the mountain. Their faces were red with excitement. They all came with blue clothes and blue body paint to honor the dragons. They lined



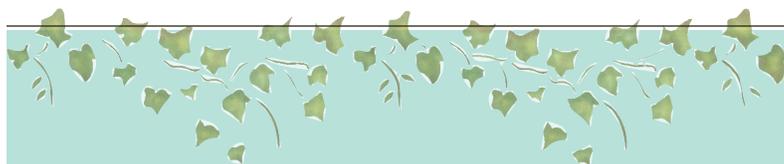
Aryan is a hardworking student! He practiced his writing all summer. He is getting better everyday. Enjoy this creative story.

up in front of the temple.

Lee asked, "Why did you guys come here?"

They said, "To see the dragons."

Lee told the first guy to turn around and he kicked him. He fell on the 2nd and the 2nd fell on everybody else. Very soon, all 111,000 were rolling down the mountain. They hurt themselves and they never came back.



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Saving Mars



Illustration by Kirstie Belle Diongzon

By Keval Shah

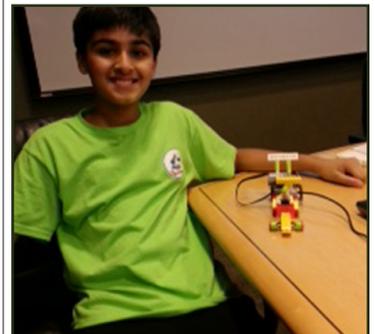
One morning, after Jake and Andrew ate cold breakfast, they went to their glorious, massive lab and built X-160. This was a white, shiny machine to get to Mars. They wanted to destroy Mars! They almost did it, but suddenly their strict parents, Mr. and Mrs. Harry saw their planning to destroy Mars. Andrew and Jake were grounded. They were thinking of a plan. So, Mr. and Mrs. Harry said,

“It’s fine. We forgive you guys,” Jake said. “Can we protect Mars?”

Mr. and Mrs. Harry said, “Fine.”

They rushed up to the lab and they built an original rocket and brought the X-160 to Mars. They landed on beautiful, colossal Mars and rushed to control the switch and moved it to (protect) mode. It was a cold, black button. They had to push the button to the

position. They protected Mars by covering the hole on the X-160 with a strong, solid piece of paper. That way no more damage would be done to the planet. They were happy and their parents were happy also. Now they told themselves that they would never try to destroy Mars again.



Keval has a great imagination. This is a nice space adventure. He is a hard-working writer and he is getting better.





Grover's Mill Coffee House

Inside South Brunswick Lib



FUTURE COFFEE DRINKER'S OPINION OF GROVER'S MILL COFFEE HOUSE

By Everett Murray

Grover's Mill Coffee House is just like Rock and Joe's, my favorite coffee house. It plays music just like Rockin' Joes.

It's a coffee place, and has many pictures. I have only been there one time and I liked it. In addition to coffee, they give customers a good deal with good prices.

For example, a goat cheese and beet sandwich is only \$5.49.

Best of all, you could buy ginger ale for \$3.75.

I had a San Pellegrino. It tastes like cold, bubbly oranges. My drink cost \$1.99.

Another good thing is that they even claim that their coffee cups are made of plants: 100% of the cup.

If you are very sleepy at the library, because you were reading a long book, you can get a cup of coffee.

I rate this coffee house as nine out of 10.



9
Globes!



The Orphan Mouse

By Abhinaya Mukundan

“Oh! How wonderful!” Whiskers whispered as she crept into the tall field of grass. She was a small, baby, orphan, mouse. Her parents had gone to get food for her one day and didn’t return. She had waited the whole night and the next day and then she knew that they wouldn’t come back. She had found this hole one day and it was empty, so she had made that her new home. She loved to read so she had a bookshelf full of books. This morning, like every other morning, she scampered out of her house to the nearby woods to look for breakfast. She found green apples, her favorite fruit, and acorns. After her breakfast, she leisurely walked in and decided to clean her house that day. She found a book in a small corner that she hadn’t noticed before.

It was an old tattered book. Whiskers sat down on her bed and opened the book. The title was Magic Mouse Magicians. Whiskers turned the page to the table of contents. There were 10 chapters, but Whiskers didn’t want to read the chapter names so she turned the page instead. The first chapter was named Biter Overtakes Brownie. Whiskers frowned. Brownie was the world’s best magician. How could Biter overtake Brownie? Then she read slowly. Biter was born on April 10, 1930. She gasped! That was the same day her mom was born. She read on. Biter loved magic as soon as she saw her first show. In

In the morning, she sat up and changed into new clothes and put the old ones in the water. Then she wrung out her clothes and hung them up outside to dry. She put on a pink clip and meandered out the door with her map. She found Mummy Cave on it and scampered out the door. Whiskers opened her pocket and noticed she had a human needle in it. She smiled and thought, This is like a sword for mice, so I can use this if I bump into obstacles. Whiskers got her bags, and came back outside. She looked at the map and scurried across two roads. After wandering around for a few hours, she finally reached Mummy Cave.

Darkness swallowed her as she rushed in. She whimpered, but then thought about her parents and how she could just get a portion of the gold and just wish for her parents and get them back right away. She took out her bag and found her flashlight. She slowly switched it on and she took out her needle and got ready to fight. Whiskers waved her flashlight around and saw something written on the ground. It read, “Pick a pathway. In two of them, you will die. In one of them, you will stay alive. This is the easiest obstacle of all, so choose wisely.” Whiskers’ mind raced as she thought about which direction she should take. Since three was her lucky number,

she randomly chose the third pathway. As soon as she tottered inside, a booming voice congratulated her for picking the right path. Whiskers managed a small smile.

Then the booming voice said, “Now, you have to get past the cat that will come next.”

Whiskers took out her needle and then the loudspeaker said, “Use the poison I give to you.”

A poison vial came down to her and she poured the poison onto her needle.

Suddenly, an orange cat came running down to Whiskers. Whiskers put the needle in the cat’s eye. Then she cut off his nose and ears. Then finally chopped off his legs. Whiskers slowly tottered into a tunnel with sweat dripping off of her. The loudspeaker boomed, “Your last obstacle is to go in a maze. If you step in one wrong spot, you will fall to your death. You have 15 minutes. 3...2...1...GO!”

Whiskers scurried through the flags and then suddenly stopped. She saw a dragon a bit bigger than a human! She was scared of humans! How could she pass this? She looked around and saw the end! She saw that the floor that would not make her die was the floor that the dragon was standing on! Whiskers took her needle and climbed on top of the dragon with great difficulty, but managed to hold on. She took her needle and stretched her arm as far as it could go through his head. The dragon fell down, unconscious. She beamed and jumped off of the dragon.

She then saw a mummy mask and opened it. She looked inside, and carelessly tumbled down. She saw many small pieces shimmering ahead of her. She darted toward the sparkling pieces and immediately knew it was a heap of the “Magician’s Gold”. She picked up one piece and realized that it was very smooth. She looked around and saw an outline of a ladder to get out. Whiskers ran toward the ladder and climbed up.

The loud speaker suddenly roared, “You got the piece of gold! Your challenge is complete! You may make a wish!”

“I wish I can get my parents back!” Whiskers squeaked.

“So be it!”

Suddenly she saw her mom and dad!

Soon, she was back at her house with her family. She smiled and knew that life couldn’t get any better than this.



Abhi is a great writer who is becoming more creative each year. She has written for CKW for 2 years!



West Windsor Girl Finds Success in NAM Pageant



Anshika

Anshika was the first person in her family to be involved in a pageant sponsored by National American Miss (NAM) and it was an excellent experience, her mother said.

She participated in this event during the summer.

Anshika said she learned a great deal as a participant in this event.

“It is important to have confidence and a good attitude,” Anshika said.

She did a great job and ended up being selected as one of the top 20 semi-finalists out of 200 participants. She-

was actually in the top 10, said her mother. She also won awards for State Ambassador, Best Thank you-Letter and Best Resume for Versatility.

Anshika will participate in the national NAM competition in November.

Find out what Anshika has to say about her experience @ www.citykidzworld.com

Children Should not Use 100% Online Schooling for Their Education

By Shrina Parikh

For 10 out of 12 months, students wake up early in the morning, get on a bus, and go to a building with classrooms, teachers, and other students. School children wouldn't like to change this system because they are so accustomed to it. However, some people do think it would be better for students to stay at home all day. Unfortunately, children would probably stay in their pajamas and stare at the computer screen. I believe that learning should be in-person so students can socialize, avoid health issues, and participate in extracurricular activities.

A typical teenager has friends and loves to spend time with their friends (Csikszantmihalyi 1). In fact, social activities tend to produce above average scores in happiness (Csikszantmihalyi 1). By attending school in one's own room, a child is not likely to have many friends. I think most students would stay at home all day because their families probably can't manage to take them out. They probably won't get their needed fresh air or vitamin D. By not having classes with other students, he/she will be uncomfortable around new people. Later on, the unsociable child will have a hard time meeting new people as an adult. Who wants to hire someone who has a hard time communicating? Like I said before, typical teens have friends. Without going to a classroom with about 25 other students, a teen may not have as many friends. They won't get to have a fun childhood- no going to the movies, mall, or bowling alley. Let us not deprive children of these social benefits only acquired from traditional classrooms.

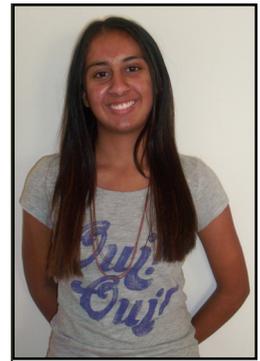
Health should always be a person's number one priority. Physical fitness is extremely beneficial to all people (Warburton 1). Home-based students aren't likely to get much physical fitness. Additionally, a computer screen will hurt healthy eyes (Blehm 1). A screen makes eyesight worst by possibly giving the user computer vision syndrome, or CVS (Blehm 1). Symptoms of CVS include eyestrain, irritation, blurred vision, and double vision (Blehm 1). Those who don't have a need for glasses will develop a need for them, and those who already have weak eyes, will have weaker eyes. Lastly, another symptom of CVS is getting headaches (Yan 1). If a student has a headache while learning, they will not be able to focus. There is no point in teaching an unfocused student. Students shouldn't receive an electronic education because their health will be in great jeopardy.

The best parts of school include the extracurricular activities, like sports and clubs. Home-based students

will lack experiences from such activities. Students who participate in extracurricular activities have better social skills, emotional adjustment, and schoolwork habits (Chaplin 5). Home-based students will miss these skills, as well as meeting people of similar interests and having a lot of fun. On top of that, another beneficial activity that shouldn't be missed is tutoring. When a student is having difficulty in a particular subject, they

have the opportunity to visit that teacher during their lunch period or stay after school to receive additional instruction. The focus will be solely on their needs, so they will accomplish what they need to. Computers don't provide physical one-on-one assistance like this.

In conclusion, we should keep our current school system so children and teens can develop relationships, stay healthy, and get involved. This tradition has been used for decades, and shouldn't be altered. After all, old is gold.



This is a well supported opinion!

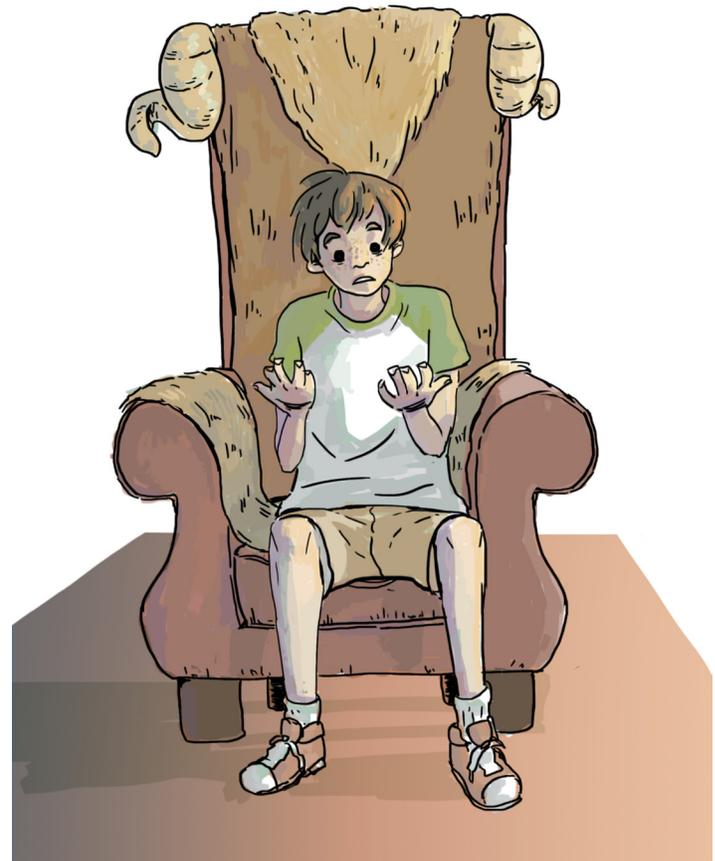


Illustration by Kirstie Belle Diongzon

The Wrath of the Mammoths

By Jayant Bhasin

The rage of a thousand behemoths stared the poor, raggedy villager in the eye. He alone possessed the power to bring the dead to life. He knew the mammoths would break out of their icy shell and try to kill the team once they had found out that six men had come with the intention to kill them. The team knew that they had to gather meat and tusks to help their poor, desperate, Siberian village of Oymude. They raised their spears in determination.

TWO DAYS EARLIER

It was a normal day in the Siberian village of Oymude for 45 year-old Chin, 41 year-old Cho, and the 11 year old twin boys, Bang and Bao. They all woke up to the village bells and got ready. Cho sent the kids to school, and then the couple sat down to breakfast. They were all normal except for one fact, Chin alone held the power to bring the dead to life!

"Knock; knock," Chin heard at door.

"Come in," he called. He was surprised to see the head of the village, Khas Donigre!

"Chin," he said, "The fate of the village depends on you. As you know, Oymude is in a desperate situation. Starvation and disease are spreading. We need you to get us some food and money. There is an iceberg with three mummified mammoths in it on the island of Udan 10 miles from shore. Their meat is still fresh, but we cannot wait that long to mine them out of the ice. We want you to bring the mammoths to life. They will break out of the ice themselves. Then, you must kill them. A return party will bring them back. We shall eat the meat and sell the tusks. I have also arranged a team of five to go with you," Chin merely nodded.

The next day, Chin set out to meet his team: Long, a strong, handsome hunter, Cheng, a young man handy with any weapon, Tai Yang, a strong, friendly laborer, Fai, a grumpy laborer, and Sheng, an experienced mammoth hunter. "All right team," Chin said, "As you know, we have been given a very special task, but we need to build a trap. Me, Tai Yang, and Fai will do that. Then, once we have knocked out the mammoths, Long, Cheng, and Sheng will kill them quickly." The team was ready, but nervous.

That night, Chin put his coat, boots, gloves, tools, and spears

by the door. Tomorrow was the big day.

Chin stood on the shore of the island of Udan. He and the laborers got to work on the trap. Soon, it was finished. The bait was a basket of fish, three juicy red snappers. The mammoths would come running towards them. At the last moment, Sheng would re-

trieve them sending them crashing into a gargantuan boulder, which would knock them out. While still out cold, Long, Cheng, and Sheng would each send a spear into each one, killing it. Chin looked at the iceberg.

It was on front of him. He slowly walked over to it and put his hands on it. It glowed golden at first and then started shaking. Suddenly, a thousand bits of ice started flying all over the place. But through everything, he could make out the silhouette of three woolly mammoths advancing towards him! He gave a signal to Long who put the plan into motion.

Long quickly threw the red snapper. He could taste the sweat dripping down his forehead. The whole island started shaking due to the beasts racing towards the prize, the basket of fish! It was now time for Cheng to retrieve the basket. He looked at the charging mammoths, their tusks as sharp as wicked cutlasses. In order to save his village and his life, he ran like the wind to pick up those floppy fishes. The beasts were at too great of a speed to halt. With a sickening crack, they slammed into the boulder and fell down not moving. The hunters did not waste any time killing each one. Soon, he had 3 mammoth corpses!

Chin blew the signal whistle and the return party arrived and loaded the corpses on the boat. Chin just smiled. Back at Oymude, the whole village had a party to celebrate the food and money they got and they had a parade in honor of the team. If only they knew what was coming next!



Jayant is hardworking and a fantastic writer!

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Invasion of Earth

By Ishan Patel

“They’re coming,” Jack whispered. Jack, Henry, Mom and Dad all dove under the bed. The sky was filled with Zeegonion invasion ships.

Jack is a 13-year-old boy and he loves adventure.

A few mornings ago he woke up because of a strange humming sound. He looked out of his window and you wouldn’t believe what he saw. He saw an alien! Jack drank a little glass of milk, grabbed a granola bar, and ran to his backyard. There was dirt everywhere and Jack saw a crashed UFO! Jack noticed the alien had three toes for each foot, four fingers on each hand, and three eyes. Just then the alien spoke.

He said, “My name is Henry. I am from Gleeclan.” Jack shook Henry’s hand.

“Do you want water?” Jack asked.

“Water melts us and the Zeegonions!” Henry yelled.

Jack asked Henry what a Zeegonian was. “Zeegonions are our alien enemies,” Henry said.

Jack showed Mom and Dad Henry, but Mom and Dad fainted.

“Mom, Dad wake up,” Jack said calmly.

“They’ll wake up in an hour,” Henry said.

Jack decided only to show Henry to Mom and Dad at night so that just in case they fainted again they would fall asleep until morning.

“Do you know how to play video games?” Jack asked Henry? “No,” Henry answered. Jack walked over to the T.V. Jack turned on the T.V. He put a DVD inside the DVD player. The DVD had two letters on it. E.T.

“I think you will like this movie. It has an alien in it,” Jack pressed play.

They watched for a while. Then they turned the T.V. off.

“Bedtime,” Jack said to Henry as he looked at the clock. Jack went upstairs. Henry followed. They both went into Jack’s room.

“Where will Henry sleep?” Jack thought to himself. “Could you sleep on the floor Henry?” Jack asked. “Of course,” Henry said. They both went to sleep.

In the morning Jack woke up quickly and then woke up Henry. Jack and Henry ate breakfast and went into the T.V. room. They watched the rest of E.T.

In the meantime the Zeegonions were planning on invading Earth. They write funny letters. $\text{\textcircled{W}}\text{\textcircled{r}}\text{\textcircled{e}}\text{\textcircled{m}}\text{\textcircled{e}}\text{\textcircled{L}}\text{\textcircled{e}}\text{\textcircled{t}}\text{\textcircled{e}}\text{\textcircled{L}}\text{\textcircled{e}}\text{\textcircled{t}}$ is one sentence. It reads, “We are going to invade earth.” The leader wrote that to everyone. They turned on light speed and headed toward earth.

Jack and Henry had just finished the movie when

they heard a sound that sounded like a blender.

“Mom could you not make a smoothie today?” Jack said. But when Jack got into the kitchen he saw that the blender was not on. Jack looked out the window and saw many UFOs in the air.

“Oh No!” Henry said. “Those are Zeegonion invasion ships.”

“They are going to TAKE OVER EARTH!” Henry shouted.

Jack and Henry raced to Mom and Dad. Mom and Dad didn’t faint this time. But Jack and Henry could tell they were a little scared. “Mom, Dad those are alien invasion ships,” Jack said. Mom and Dad didn’t believe Jack. “You are always telling stories,” they said. And with that they went back to bed.

“Hey Henry, how about we check inside your spaceship and see if anything useful for combat is in there?” Jack suggested. “I don’t think I should go out there,” Henry said. Jack asked “Why?”

“If they find me they will put me away forever like they did with Uncle Melvin,” Henry said sadly.

“But you can go out there,” Henry said to Jack. “Look for the self destruct button and push it then run,” Henry said. Jack did exactly what he was told to do and then ran back to his room. He filled up a bucket of water and threw the water out the window so all the flames go away.

“Henry, why did you make me destroy your spaceship and all the stuff inside of it?” Jack asked. “I told you to destroy my spaceship because if they see a Gleeclanion spaceship they will get suspicious and destroy your house,” Henry said.

Jack and Henry turned on the news but when they saw the Zeegonion General they freaked out. “We should warn Mom and Dad about the Zeegonions one more time,” Jack said. They ran upstairs to Mom and Dad. “Mom, Dad wake up, look outside!” Jack yelled.

“Fine,” Mom said still sleepy. They looked outside and saw aliens everywhere.

“WOW!”

“Let’s all go downstairs in the basement, we will think of something,” Dad said. They all went to the basement. Dad



Ishan worked hard on his story during the summer.

Con't on page 38



Con't from page 37

looked out the window and said, "I can't take it anymore I am panicking AAAAAaaaaa." Mom and Dad started screaming and running around in circles all scared.

"STOP!" Jack said. "We will think of something." Jack and Henry thought, and thought, and thought. "Those Zeegonions are almost as bad as water," Henry said. "That's it!" Jack said. "I have a plan, we just need to get some water first."

Meanwhile, the Zeegonions were saying they picked up a Gleecanion on their radar.

"Master, which house should we hunt down?" One Zeegonion asked. "The one on our radar," the master said.

"That is the last bucket of water," Jack said. "Remember, all we have to do is melt a few Zeegonions and take their blasters. Then we fill a few of the blasters with water and use them against the Zeegonions," Jack whispered.

Everybody went upstairs. When they got upstairs they were in for a big surprise. "They're coming," Jack whispered. Jack, Henry, Mom and Dad all dove under the bed. "What do we do now," Henry whispered. Jack showed Henry a blaster he had in his hand. "Before I blew up your ship, I took a refillable blaster and filled it with water," Jack said. Jack jumped out from under the bed and started melting the Zeegonions.

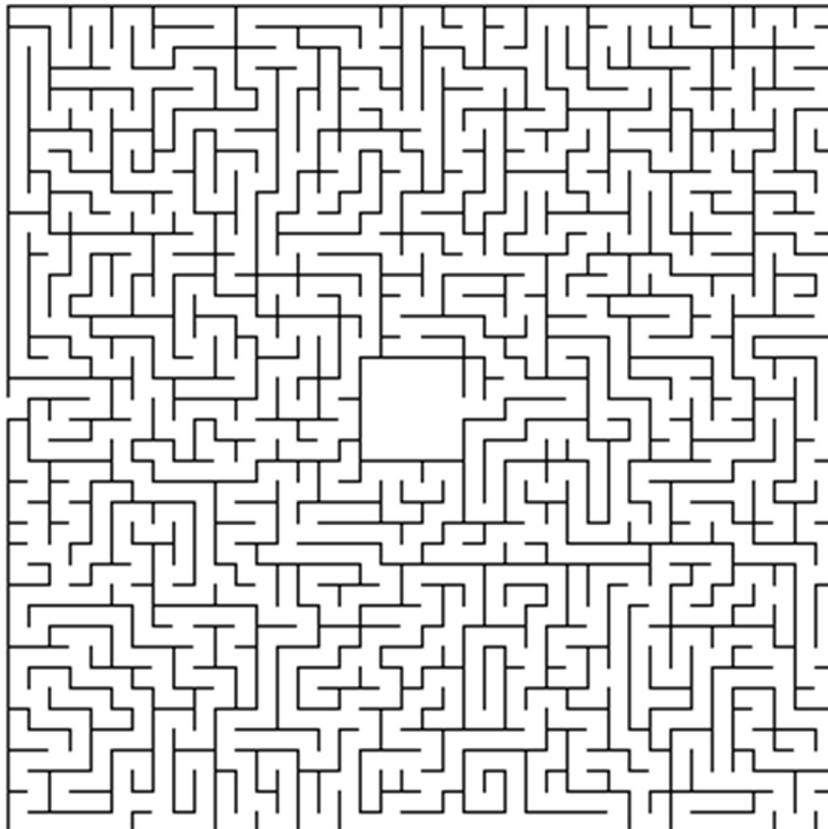
"Catch," Jack said to Henry and he threw Henry a blaster. Henry filled it with water. Then they melted all the Zeegonions in the house. Jack looked out the window and, with one lucky shot, he got the main power source and the leaders' ship went down.

The Zeegonion Leader was no more! That meant Jack was now the new Zeegonion Leader.

"I want all of you Zeegonions to go to your home planet and NOT invade anymore planets," Jack ordered. And from then on no planet was ever invaded again.

It was a tough decision, but Henry decided it was best to return to his home planet Gleeclan and be with his people, but he promised to visit Jack every year!

Escape the Maze



Travis and Brook's Exciting Day

By Sreeram Nagappa

It was a warm spring morning and 7-year-old Travis decided to have an enjoyable day with his nose-less teddy bear Brooks. Travis got out of bed and rushed to his bathroom. He picked up his brush and brushed his yellowish-brown teeth. Travis took a quick, but proper shower and ran outside with Brooks even without eating breakfast. That's when Travis smelt his teddy bear. It smelled like a pig that had fell into a sewer. Therefore, Travis decided to take it to the dry cleaners.



As he crossed the street, Travis noticed two kids tossing a beanbag back and forth. He continued down the street and observed some more interesting people. There was a man who was proposing to a woman with a diamond ring and a fresh rose. As Travis passed the beach, he saw a couple of kids collect-

Sreeram can write a story using any tools!

ing seashells with their friends.

Travis reached Bob Sugarman's Dry Cleaners and noticed lit candles in the back of the room. He put his teddy bear in the washer and took a seat on the bench.

Ten minutes

later the washer ran and Travis transferred Brooks to the dryer. After the process was over, Brooks smelt like sandalwood.



Sreeram did a great job of creating a fun story out of items placed in basket for creative writers! This is a great imagination exercise! It took him less than 30 minutes. Try this at home!

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The Haunted House

By Lakshimi Kottapalli

Once there was a boy named Ryan. It was hardly raining. Ryan ran inside a haunted house. It was old and dusty.

He climbed up the stairs. Each time he climbed up the stairs, there was a creaking sound. It got louder and louder. There was a creepy piano playing by its self!

Ryan was very creeped out. In the scary bedroom Ryan jumped on the smelly bed, but all it did was make whoo-whoooo sounds. Ryan saw a ladder and climbed up it. He saw a mummy.

"Ahh!" Ryan shouted, as he ran and ran, suddenly he found a dusty box. There was a jet pack in it. Ryan also noticed there was an open space in the wall. "Hmm," Ryan thought. He wore the jet pack and zoomed to safety!



Great job Lakshimi!

Illustration by Samantha Aucello

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Mother's Day

By Yash

"It's Mother's Day!" shouted the three boys, Sam, Nick and Max. They had been waiting for this day for a long time and wanted to do something special for their mom. All the three were very excited and wanted to start their plans.

Sam called his Grandpa to go fishing, so on Mother's Day they can eat their Mom's favorite fish. When they got out of the car near their favorite lake, they saw their red fishing boat tied near the sparkling water. They took their fishing gear and got on the boat. They rowed the boat to the middle of the beautiful lake and started fishing.

"I caught something! I caught something!" shouted Sam on the bright red rocking boat. He pulled out a large, scaly fish out of the sparkling water. "Very well!" said Sam's Grandpa. "I caught something too," said Grandpa. He had caught a medium size fish. In the meantime, Sam and Grandpa also caught at least 30 Minnows.

Back in the house, Max and Nick were sitting on the porch deciding what to do for Mother's Day.

"I know," said Nick. "We can do a play!" "Great thinking," said Max. They were doing a play about a tree and a leaf. They made costumes and they were practicing until..."Ouch!" said Max. He bumped into a tree. He had a wiggly loose tooth.

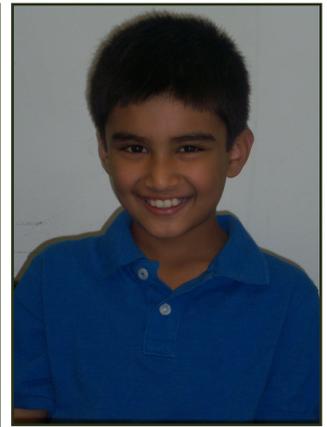
"Mom! Mom!" Nick called. "Max has a loose tooth!" Mom rushed out to the porch and saw that Max's tooth was bleeding a lot. "On no!" said Mom. They all jumped in the car and zoomed to the dentist. As soon as they got there, they

noticed it was a huge building. They walked in the dentist's office and Max had butterflies in his tummy. He was really nervous thinking about if the dentist was going to yank his tooth out. The dentist called Max in the examination room and they all went in.

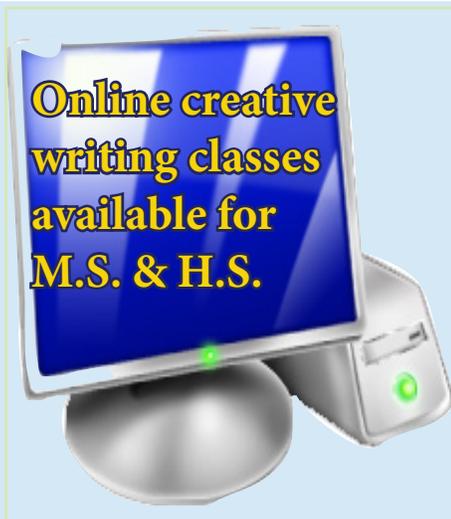
"Hello there little guy. I see you have a loose tooth. Sit on this chair and we will examine it." Max started shaking nervously and slowly went ahead to sit on the chair. "Don't worry Max. I will get a paper gauze and tug your tooth gently, ok?" said the dentist. Nick, Mom and Max all look worried, but the doctor was very gentle. He took a paper gauze, put it in Max's mouth and gave a tug and ...out it came! It did not hurt at all. "Finally!" everyone said.

"I feel much better," Max said and he thanked the dentist. "Can I have ice cream now?" Max said and after the dentist, they went to the ice cream shop and ate the yummy cold ice cream. Max felt a lot better and wanted to go home to continue with Mother's Day plans.

Once they got home, they saw that Sam and Grandpa were already home and cooking the fish. Dad came home and got a pie for dessert. Then their friends came over and they performed the Mother's Day play for everyone. Then they all had dinner and dessert. This was the best Mother's Day ever!



Yash is an awesome writer! This is his second story for CKW.



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THE TIME TRAVEL

By Ahisha Singh

“Hey Ally!” yelled Tommy. Tommy was Ally’s younger brother.

“Look what I found!”

Ever since Ally had moved to a new house, Tommy had been yelling for her to come explore it with him. For a second grader, he was pretty adventurous. Ally, on the other hand was a mature and responsible 6th grader.

“I’m coming Tommy!” she replied. “What is it Tommy?”

“Look, it’s a mirror,” he said curiously.

“I know that Tommy,” responded Ally frustrated.

“Why did you have to wake me up to tell me that that’s a mirror?”

“It’s not just any mirror. It is a magical mirror.”

He explained.

“Yeah right,” Ally exclaimed.

“Look, it’s lighting up!” Tommy said excitedly. Ally looked mad. Her kid brother had awakened her up to show her that it was a glow in the dark mirror. Even if it looked real, Ally still thought it was some kind of second grader prank.

“Tommy, can I go to sleep now? I’m way too tired for your dumb pranks,” said Ally.

“But it’s not a prank!” he yelled.

“Oh yeah, how are you going to make me believe that?”

“Well if you knock it three times, it will take you to a fairy tale, I think.”

“Well show me!” insisted Ally.

“Fine,” Tommy knocked it once, then twice, then finally, three times. It started to hiss and it sucked everything in.

“Okay Tom, I believe you now. Make it stop!” ordered Ally.

“Yeah about that, I don’t know how to make it stop,” Tommy confessed.

“WHAT!” screamed Ally as they were getting sucked in.

“Tom!” she yelled.

“Don’t let go of my hand! Even though you’re annoying, it’s my job to take care of you!”

“Weeeeeeeeeeeeeee!” Tommy yelled with joy.

“Really!” thought Ally to herself.

“How am I even related to him?”

“THUMP!” Ally was asleep on a bed in a cottage in the woods. Right next to her was Tommy, asleep too.

“Thank goodness he’s safe!”

Then suddenly she woke up and realized that it really was a magic mirror! “Tommy, Tommy, wake up, NOW!”

“What Ally, just let me sleep for 5 more minutes!” pleaded Tommy.

“NO!” yelled Ally.

“Don’t you remember that we got sucked into that mirror

and now we landed into an unknown place, and we don’t know how to get out!”

“Relax Ally,” insisted Tommy.

“All we have to do is find a magic mirror and knock on it three times and we get back home.”

“Now where are we going to find a magic mirror?” asked Ally worriedly.

“Don’t worry Ally. This is a fairy tale. I bet a magic mirror will show up SOMEWHERE!”

“By the way, Ally, is it just me, or does going through a mirror really work up an appetite?”

“It’s just you!” replied Ally frustrated.

Just as Ally and Tommy had started to walk around to find food, they noticed an old woman with lots of juicy apples.

“Hey Ally, look at those juicy apples that super old woman is holding!”

“Tom, it’s not nice to call old people old,” explained Ally.

“Okay,” said Tommy.

“But do you think that she will give me her apples if I call her YOUNG?”

“I don’t think you should take apples from a dirty old woman,” exclaimed Ally. But before she knew it Tom had gone after that old woman to get her apples.

“I’ll give you 50 cents and some lint!”

“NO!”

“Oh no,” thought Ally.

“What is that boy doing now?”

“Ummmm sorry madam my brother was just really hungry....”

“So what, I don’t care!”

“I need to give this apple to my stepdaughter!”

“Okay,” said Ally calmly.

“Well bye now, and sorry if we disturbed you.”

“Well you did, so beat it!” scolded the old woman.

“Wow,” thought Ally.

“Boy is she mean!”

Both Ally and Tommy couldn’t resist urge to see how special her stepdaughter really was, and why she wouldn’t even give them one apple. They followed her for 1 whole hour then finally stopped upon an old and small cottage.



Ahisha did an awesome job on this short story!



Con't from page 42

"I wonder if that's her house too, and she was just doing chores for her stepdaughter."

"I doubt it," replied Ally.

"Knock! Knock! Knock!"

"Who is it?" replied a gentle voice from inside the cottage.

"An apple seller," said the old lady in her nicest voice.

"Sorry, I'm not allowed to let anyone in."

"Please just one chance!"

"Okay, just one chance."

Then the girl inside opened the door. She was very pretty.

"Here, eat my best apple!" "The girl slowly took the apple from her hand and was about to eat it when Tommy suddenly yelled something out that did NOT make any sense whatsoever.

He said, "Hey!"

"That's not fair!"

When I asked you for the red apple you said, it's poisoned!"

"But obviously that's not the case because you're giving it to your stepdaughter!" The girl got a really scared look in her eyes. Then the old lady's old lady makeup stated to come off. "I told you to just leave me alone!" said the girl in a shaky voice. With that she slammed the door and ran inside.

"Ummmm what just happened?" asked Tom.

"No idea," Ally answered.

"Want the apple now?" said the queen.

"No thanks," answered Tom. So it was official, Ally and Tommy were in Snow White's story. Ally and Tommy felt really proud. They had stopped Snow White from eating the poisoned apple!

"Wait Ally," exclaimed Tom. "If we stopped Snow White from eating the apple, we sort of blew her chances for meeting the prince, and having a happily ever after." "Oops," said Ally.

"We need to fix it or she'll live her life worrying that the queen will kill her!" "Yeah!" Then Ally and Tom begged Snow to get in, after a while she agreed and they told her what they did. "Please help me fix my story!" she said.

"Okay, but only if you do something for us," said Tom.

"No Tom, we messed up her story so we have to fix it!" commanded Ally. For two whole days Ally and Tommy couldn't think of how to fix Snow's story. Then finally the dwarfs thought if they let the queen poison Snow everything would go back to normal.

"No!" shirked Snow.

"You can't let her poison me. I'll die!"

"Yes and then the prince will save you," Ally answered. "What if he doesn't?" Snow replied. "Then I will certainly die!"

"Don't worry," Ally said. "Then we'll just pretend you're dead, and lay you in the glass coffin."

"Okay I guess that's better," confessed Snow. So the next day Ally, Tommy, Snow, and the dwarfs, all went to the mountain where snow's glass coffin was. Then they sent a letter to the prince to meet them on the tallest mountain in the kingdom of Zimmel. Then all they had to do was wait. Finally they heard the footsteps of a horse.

"He's here!" exclaimed all the dwarfs at once. It seemed hard to believe, but the prince bought it, and he kissed Snow White, and she opened her eyes. It was a good thing it happened quickly because Snow is a terrible actress. Now came the hard part. If Ally and Tommy didn't get home quickly, the prince and Snow wouldn't be able to have a happily ever after.

"So how do we get home?" Ally asked.

"Well I'm pretty sure we have to go through a magic mirror because that's how we got here," responded Tom.

"Hey Snow do you have any magic mirrors?"

"No, but the only person who I know that has a magic mirror is my stepmother, Evelyn," said Snow.

"Just great!" said Tommy rather loudly. "Now we have to get in through the magic mirror that Evil Evelyn has?"

"Let's just get this over with Tom," said Ally.

"Yeah," Snow agreed.

That night, Ally, Tom, Snow, And Scott, the prince, all headed to Evil Evelyn's castle. Tommy and Ally went through the window and Snow and Scott followed them. Evil Evelyn was sound asleep. Ally and Tommy knew as soon as they went home, Evil Evelyn would die. So they tried to go as quick as they could. They knocked once, they knocked twice, and finally they knocked three times. Then the mirror started to hiss and sucked stuff in.

"Wait!" commanded Snow.

"Ally, Tom, before you go, here's a necklace. It means friendship forever." "Awwww thanks Snow!" they both said tearing up.

"Well bye!" Just as they were getting sucked up in the mirror, Evil Evelyn woke up. But they weren't worried because as soon as they got home she would die. "THUMP!" Ally was in her bed wide-awake. No time had passed at home. "Did it really happen?" She wondered. It turns out that it did because Ally was still wearing Snow's necklace.



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43

My Puppy

By Kritika Nagappa

My puppy is furry and gold
She is not old
She is very cute
Just so you know you cannot put her on mute
She even barks after dark
It is just me , my puppy and the moon
To tell you more we have to finish our walk
soon
She is covered with fur, but she will gurr at you
if you are new
She wags her tail with pride
Even though she wants someone to teach her
how to divide
Soon she will become a dog
I just hope she won't create a toilet clog!



Kritika is an awesome and advanced writer. Every story that she writes is more interesting. You will love this poem.



Illustration by Kirstie Belle Diongzon

Starting 1st Grade in the Fall

By Katya

When I go to first grade I will have fun.
The leaves are going to change colors.
School is fun and to going change color.
School is fun and everyone likes school.
I like fall because it is fun in fall.
Teachers are nice in class.
It is fun in fall.
School is always fun because there will be games.
Fall is fun because leaves will fall down.
Teachers love you.
You love them.
Fall is fun always.



Katya is a hardworking 1st grader who learned about how to write a story during the summer.



Crystal's Missing Bear

By Elizabeth

One day, best friends, Skylar and Crystal were visiting an overnight nature camp. Fifteen-year old Skylar was athletic, confident, kind-hearted, smart and fearless. She liked to play with Crystal. Sixteen-year old Crystal was the opposite of Skylar because she was frail, scared and lacked confidence. But she was smart and kind hearted, too.

The camp was in a big, hollow tree near the beach of Cancun, Mexico. The beach was warm and the sand was soft. There were many seashells. They were all beautiful. There was a garden, too. The garden smell like vanilla because it had vanilla beans. It also had roses, tulips and sunflowers.

One summer morning in the camp, Crystal discovered she lost her precious aqua stuffed bear, which she bought from Build-a-Bear Workshop. She felt very bad and started crying. When Skylar found out, she thought that she would surprise her friend and would try to make her happy again. During her "Free Time", she decided to take a walk on the beach and the nearby garden. She collected some sand, rose petals, seashells and a stick in her sand pail. Once done, she went back to her cabin and took out her bean bag and started making a doll. The bean-bag was the body, the rose petals were the dress. Then she took great care in making a small necklace using the seashells for the doll. She used the glue to make hair out of sand and then she put a stick at the bottom as a holder. The doll was complete. Skylar picked up the doll in front of her eyes to make sure that it was perfect.

As soon as Crystal came out of her cabin, Skylar sneaked into her cabin and put the doll under Crystal's blanket. At night,

when Crystal went under her blanket, she found her precious Build - a - Bear Workshop bear there. To her surprise she also found a bean - bag doll. Then Skylar looked under Crystal's blanket and smiled. She figured out that someone must have taken Crystal's bear, but when they saw the bean - bag doll she made, they thought that that Crystal didn't care about her bear. So the person who took Crystal's bear returned it. Skylar went to her bed, blew her candle off dozed off to sleep.



Another great basket prompt story! Elizabeth did a great job using her imagination to put this story together!

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45

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Fingers at a Concert



Illustration by Kirstie Belle Diongzon

By Sreeram Nagappa

*My nervous fingers place themselves on the luminous keys
Trying to position them in the precise spot
Suddenly, they sprint across the checkered flag
In a haste to finish the song
As righty goes up and down to flip the page
Lefty buzzes like a bumblebee to make the music come alive
That's when my fingers hit the last note
My fingers jump with relief
Hands in the audience clap with pride
As my fingers go to sleep to start another day of excitement*



Sreeram is an inspired poet.



Lying

By Laya Venkatesan

Gossip spreads around the room quickly and all you could hear is whispers. One clique started to snicker as others started to tease and bully an innocent person. Lying could lead to these type of situations and cause you and others a lot of trouble. Lying naturally and for short-cuts is unacceptable, but lying in terms of protection is justified. When you lie just to get ahead and to falsely accelerate while avoiding work, it can reveal bad things about you and interfere with relationships. If you lie to protect others, it is okay because you aren't doing it for selfish means and it is for a good reason. Lastly, careless lying could lead to unnecessary fights and arguments.

What is the point of lying just to prevent work? For example, once my mom asked me if I brushed my teeth. Even though I didn't brush my teeth, I just said I did because I was too lazy. When my mom found out, I did lose some of her trust, but even though I was doing it for my own benefit to avoid extra work, in the end, the boomerang will just shoot back at me to my disadvantage. That's exactly what lying is. It can slowly untie and isolate relationships, while it builds up to hurt you the most. Plus, if people find out you lie compulsively, you'll be labeled as an untrustworthy person.

"Do you think I'm a good dancer?" my friend asked.
"Ummmm..." I started hesitantly, "yeah!"

Lying to protect someone else's self-esteem is okay if it is short term. But if it is long term, it can end up hurting them. For example, if someone asks you how their hair looks, it is okay if you lie and say it looks good because it won't do any harm. However, if someone asks you if they are good at singing, and you lie and say yes to bolster their happiness, it might not end well. Once they gain that boost of confidence, they might want to go showcase their so-called "talent" and

end up humiliating themselves. If you just want to make your friend smile for the present at the cost of future mortification, it isn't worth it. It is better to say they can improve, but still give them words of encouragement.

When you lie casually, it can create a host of problems. For example, since you want to impress people, you might lie and put false talents you possess on your résumé; in the end, it can cause a lot of conflict and hurt many people. If you use your fake résumé to get a job you don't deserve like a nurse, you can hurt a lot of students who need proper care, and you can hurt yourself the most. Just because you were feeling lazy and careless, you caused a lot of chaos. To avoid and prevent these types of mistakes, all you have to do is to tell the truth. Another example is if you lie to a person about your personality and skills, so you can befriend them. At first, it might seem like a good idea to make friends. But, sooner and sooner, the truth will slowly unravel. Once you confess, there will be a lot of fights and you can easily lose a friend which you could have made by just staying true to yourself and to others.

To sum up, lying might be a quick and easy way to get to the top, but that success will never last nor is true. Even though lying is tolerated in terms of making others feel good about themselves, in the long run, some of the things you lied about to not hurt your friend's feelings can crash right back at them. However, casual lying is the worst. A habitual liar can get themselves and others into a lot of trouble. Plus, you can lose trust from the people who are closest to you. Overall, it is best to avoid careless lying at all costs not only for the well-being of others, but for the good fortune of yourself.



Laya is a great writer. Her nonfiction is as great as her fiction.

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