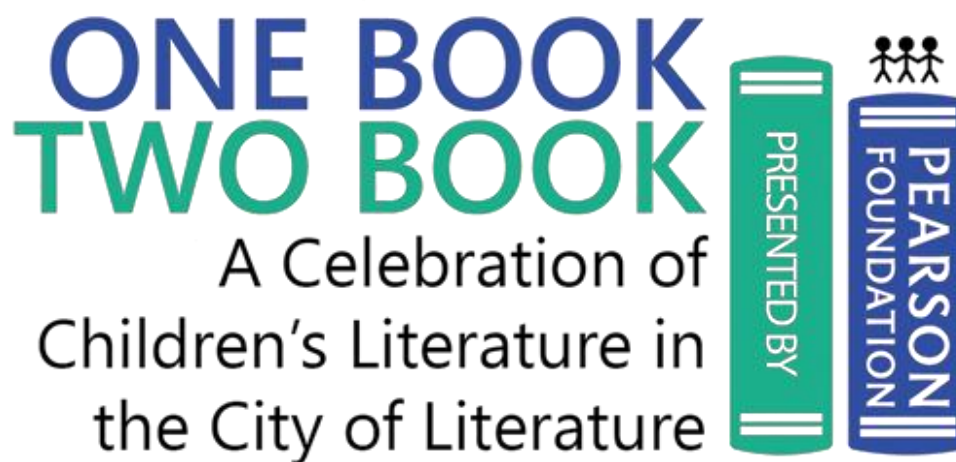


A Celebration of Stories in the City of Literature

January 17 - 19, 2014



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Thank you to the nearly 400 students who submitted writing for the 2014 One Book Two Book Children’s Literature Event. In addition to including writing by students chosen by leaders at their schools as outstanding writers to represent their schools, this booklet also contains writing submissions that were selected by judges at Pearson in the categories of “The Write Stuff” and “From the Heart.”

* School Representative

** “The Write Stuff” category winner

*** “From the Heart” category winner

The students selected as school representatives read their work at the Jan. 17, 2014 One Book Two Book evening event.

Reese Hill*, 6th Grade, Lucas: “Food For Thought”

Thomazin Jury*, 5th Grade, Lincoln: “Handless Hook”

Aubryn Kaine*, 6th Grade, Mann: “Korra”

Mira Kumar***, 6th Grade, Willowwind: A story in a forest

Maria Lin*, 6th Grade, Lemme: “Void World”

Kaden Littleton***, 1st Grade, Lemme: “Sparkle Goes Back in Time”

Layna Manjoine*, 6th Grade, Longfellow: “A Crazy Invention”

Ginger McCartney***, 2nd Grade, Willowwind: A story about Minnie

Leen Mekki***, 5th Grade, Kirkwood: “Kids Around the War”

Muriel Moon**, 3rd Grade, Willowwind: “My Cats”

Jessica Moonjely*, 6th Grade, Weber: “Life”

Theo Prineas***, 8th Grade, Northwest JH: “Waiting”

Jacob Roling*, 5th Grade, Hills: “HELP”

Sushma Santhana*, 6th Grade, Garner: “The Boy from the Future”

Samantha Saylor**, 7th Grade, North Central JH: “The Break In”

Alexa Schwartz*, 6th Grade, Van Allen: “The Feeling of Joy”

Melissa Uc*, 3rd Grade, Willowwind: “When You Go to Bed”

Hannah Vogts*, 5th Grade, Penn: “Penn’s Problem”

Jenna Wang**, 6th Grade, Borlaug: “My Discovery”

Karley Whitby*, 4th Grade, Hoover: A poem on true friendship

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Caroline Barker

4th Grade

Horn Elementary School

Oh, France

It is mid-afternoon, I am sitting outside at a café in Bourdeilles, France. The weather here is brilliant; there is a thin wind that gives a crisp feeling to the air. I look around and see a stone road leading up to the castle of Bourdeilles. Across the street there is a restaurant with red umbrellas and white tables that shine in the sunlight. People are sitting, eating, and talking. In front of me is a *citron-vert* sorbet. It is in a cup about the size of a shot glass, with a *petite* spoon. It is so peaceful here. Lying beside me is a black lab with his head on his paws. So mild, so quiet. I smell espresso, fresh bread being baked, and my sorbet. I feel like nothing in the world could possibly disrupt this moment.

Oh, France.

Evelyn Bergus
Grade 2
Grant Wood Elementary
11/12/13

At free period on the first day of school, Nancy was in the auditorium with her friend Ally making up a song for the school concert which was two weeks away. Every year their new school has a singing contest for who can write and perform the best song. Nancy and Ally had never done this before.

Although they met in pre-school, this is the first year at their new school. But then Fred came along, and he was wearing what Nancy liked him to wear best. And that was a brown vest with a green shirt under it, a brown necktie, pants and shoes. Every time he wore it Nancy complimented him on it and so he knew she liked it best. He wore it so he could get to hear their song.

Fred asks, "How is your song going?"

Nancy is scared to tell Fred because he's one of the biggest bullies in the school and she's scared about what might happen. She says, "It's not finished yet, and we haven't even found out the tune."

Ally looks surprised and says, "Yes we have. It's almost finished!"

Nancy whispers, "Just go with it."

Fred says, "So which is it, girls? Is it finished or not?"

Nancy and Ally say together, "It's finished!"

Fred says, "It's almost time for lunch, you better get going. I'll catch up with you guys later. I'll clean up for you."

Ally and Nancy say thanks and go to the cafeteria. When they get to the cafeteria, they discover they still had 15 minutes before lunch. They go back to the auditorium when they realize that Fred lied to them, but Fred had already left. They go backstage to where they were practicing and they find all their stuff is gone.

They look for him in the auditorium a little bit more in case he was hiding, but they still don't find him.

On the day of the concert, they finally find Fred. Nancy asks Fred, "Do you know where our song is?"

Fred talks kind of nervously. "No I don't."

"But I found it in the recycle bin ! And you were the only person who was cleaning up our stuff. Taking all those clues it makes it pretty obvious you stole our song," said Nancy.

They hear a voice on the intercom. "Students will you please report back to the auditorium."

Ally was thinking, "Oh no we don't have our song. How are we going to do the contest if we don't have our song?"

Suddenly they hear Fred say, "Yes I stole your song, and I'm a big bully. It's fun doing this because.....I just like to do it. I know it's rude to other people, it's kind of fun for me.....me, me, me, me--- that's all I ever think about, and that's all I need to think about. So there! I admitted it! Are you happy now?!"

They go to the auditorium and they are first ones to go up and they sing their song. Fred watches them and feels disappointed because his plan didn't work after all.

The Red Rubber Duck

The red rubber duck floats

He floats and doesn't gloat

Motionless on the soapy surface

He watches and he stares

He gazes and he glares

Lonely he sees

With his black beady eyes

The size of fat fleas

He has no friends

For his life never ends

His voice is very quiet

He is never heard

Indeed that is preferred

For he never speaks nice

And he never thinks twice

That little lonely duck

I wish he would smile

His face must be stuck

On that frown so vile

That poor red rubber duck

He will never change

I guess I'll go play

With my new toy truck

Claire Bockholt

Grade 1, Lohman

Coralville Central

I, for the very first time, went off the diving board. I was scared. My dad cheered me on. First, I went off the low dive. It made a big SPLASH! Then I went off the high dive. One step, two steps, three steps, almost there! Four steps, five steps, six steps, seven steps, eight steps, nine steps...finally ten steps up!

"Ok, ok. I'm good," I said to myself. I went to the edge. I looked down. "Ahhh!" I whispered to myself. "One, two, three, JUMP!"

Yay! I did it! I am very proud of myself. I am so excited. That was so fun. I am officially a very good swimmer. Yay!

The Christmas Day Mystery

15 F/Loria

Once there was a little girl at the age of nine. Her name was Sophie and she had long golden hair. It was very beautiful! She had always loved Christmas until one day....

On Christmas Eve something went very, very wrong. When she went downstairs to see if Santa had given her a present, all there was left was a track of muddy foot prints and a glove that had the letters "M.S.K." on it.

"Oh, no," said the little girl, "this could only mean one thing. Master Su Kuki."

Let's call him M.S.K. M.S.K. was the famous thief.

Sophie ran outside and followed the foot prints to his lab. Sophie snuck silently into the lab. She saw M.S. K. He had her presents!

Sophie jumped out and hollered, "Give me back my presents!"

M.S.K. turned around in surprise. "What are you doing here?"

And again Sophie said, "Give me back my presents!" But this time she was much, much, much quieter.

Then M.S.K. took off his mask. He was actually Mister Santa Klaus! He said to Sophie, "What would you like for Christmas?"

Sophie felt bad because she had made a big mistake. M.S.K. had not taken her toys. He was giving her toys.

Sophie said, "Sorry. Thank you for the presents. Next Christmas I think I would like a stuffed animal. Next year I will deliver the toys for you. I have one question for you. Why did you make a mess on the carpet in my house?"

Santa said, "It was because there was a snow storm and my boots got very, very muddy. I forgot one of your presents and I had to come back here to get it."

Sophie helped Santa deliver the rest of his presents that night.

Daniel Burgess
8th Grade
Northwest Junior High

Prologue from Book One of The Veracist Trilogy: *BioNet Rising* (a novel)

John rushed in to his apartment and bolted the door, his heart pounding. The Corporate Police had been after him for hours. It was the dead of night, yet the holographic screens blaring advertisements and PropNews provided ample light throughout the small apartment. He carefully glanced out the window, hoping the rescue team was down there somewhere. Ceaseless currents of traffic flew past on their multilevel airways through the gargantuan skyscrapers that canyoned the business district. The NetGenics and Gene Corporations. John dashed to the bathroom. He had to remove all his files before they arrived. He double-tapped the large mirror in its upper-right hand corner. It glowed, and he pressed his thumb into a bright rectangle. He directed the computer to do a quick body scan to detect if he had been implanted with nanodrones. Negative. Good.

A strange scraping sound came from the wall. He had to move faster. A holographic menu popped up: his diagrams and plans to sabotage BioNet. It looked like the entire mirror was coming to life, as the screen's point of view dove and weaved in and out of countless designs and documents. The glass mirror projected holograms onto the walls, and the entire room became a capsule rocketing through an orange cosmos of 3D designs and hypertexts. He lay his hand on one of the countless holo-objects. All of the movement stopped. Yes, the BioNet files were intact. He opened a panel on the side of the mirror. Taking a deep breath, he jerked the main memory chip from its slot and pocketed it. A metallic rustling was coming out of the ceiling corner. He looked up, terrified. Like roaches, dozens of tiny, metallic, four-legged drones were crawling out of a hole in the wall. They were laser-scanning the room. They had found him.

He whipped out a gun and shot a few bolts into the Droneswarm. Pieces of drone rattled to the floor, glowing red hot. A thud at the front door. He dashed from the bathroom. The door to his apartment was being broken down. A mechanical whirring coming from the hallway could only mean Police Cyborgs. He looked around frantically. He had no other options. He couldn't let them launch BioNet. It would allow Corporate to remotely monitor or change anything about any living creature at the genetic level, even humans. First mind control, now cell control. He aimed his gun at the outside window; it dissolved into a shower of glass. Wind swirled toward him. He ran towards the opening just as several bolts flew by. His heart caught in his throat; it was over three-thousand feet down. He jumped. Cold air whistled past. He fumbled in his pocket and withdrew the locator device. The Veracist rescue team would catch him, should catch him, before he hit the ground. As he repeatedly pressed the button, his thought of his son was he alive? how would he find him? and then his world faded into oblivion.

Ocean Playground

Hi! My name is Sally. I am 11 years old and I live in Soap Ocean. My friends Teegan, Jason, Riley and I are merpeople, in case you haven't noticed. Our school is littered with things like tires, ropes, broken boards, anchors, and other things that humans drop here. We are working to make a playground out of all the junk. We had a meeting at the tree house to discuss.

"I think we should draw pictures of our plans to show the principal our ideas," Teegan suggested.

"I think we should tell the homeroom teacher what we want to do," Riley argued.

"Well I think we should do it ourselves," Jason wondered aloud.

"Hmm, maybe we could do all of that," I said, "we may have to tell the principal or our homeroom teachers, but..."

"Okay, we can do the principal," Riley interrupted. "We could draw pictures of our plans to tell the principal what we want to do, but WE want to do it. I'm sure he'll go for that."

"Yay!" Teegan cheered.

We were all very excited about being able to do something about it, when I suddenly remembered a very important detail.

"Wait," I cried, "we forgot something!"

Total Silence

"Oh no, I remember now!" exclaimed Teegan. "They send the Sweeper in every month and tomorrow afternoon is when it comes!"

"Oh nooooo," moaned Riley.

"Well," Jason said, "we'll just have to make it a surprise."

The next morning we were at school early to put together the playground. We had made a swing, a seesaw, a slide and were just putting together the baseball diamond.

"Ow, Teegan complained, "the wood poked me!"

"Toughen up," Jason said.

Suddenly a bright chariot raced toward the school and screeched to a halt in the parking lot.

"Mr. Neptune!" yelled Riley.

"WHAT ARE YOU KIDS DOING?" boomed the principal.

"W-we're making a playground for the school," I stammered. "Aren't you pleased sir?" I added cautiously.

"I AM NOT PLEASED!" Neptune positively roared at us, "AND I AM GOING TO HAVE AN ALL SCHOOL VOTE TO SEE IF WE WILL BE KEEPING THIS PLAYGROUND OF YOURS!"

Soon we were sitting in front of the auditorium facing over 400 merchildren. The vote was totally obvious. All Mr. Neptune had to do was saying we were going to be voting for a playground, and EVERYONE started chanting,

"PLAYGROUND! PLAYGROUND! PLAYGROUND!"

Mr. Neptune just shook his head in defeat.

"We did it!" the team cried together.

Sophie Ann Dahlstrom
4th Grade
Wickham Elementary

Snow Globe

I wake up. My heart is racing. I am shivering. Am I dreaming? I go outside my house and try to run. I hit a wall. I don't see anything. What is going on? I hear others. They are screaming too. Panic. No one can get outside this invisible wall. I try to find my family but they are nowhere to be found. I curl up in a ball. I cry. I keep my eyes closed for minutes. I open them hoping to get back home. White snowflakes are falling, but it is July. Suddenly, I begin to fall. I go right. Crash. I go left. Collide. I am upside down. It is scary. It is horrifying. It is complete madness. Then, there's silence. All is still. I hear no one moving. No one speaking. All are frozen. Then, I see it. An eyeball. Staring. Blinking. A child is laughing outside the wall. There's another shake. We begin to panic. Not again. A mother's voice outside the wall yells, "Tommy, put the snow globe down. It's time for dinner."

My mind is going to explode. I find the rest of my family. We need to get out. We all run to one side and then the other. Over and over and over again. Finally, everything tips and something around us shatters. Glass everywhere. I start to scream, "Free at last! Free at last!"

Just then, I feel my mom shaking me. She asks if I am ok and says that I've been screaming. I sit up in my bed and share my crazy dream with her. We decide to head downstairs to eat breakfast. On the way down, my mom cries out. She cut her foot. My mom then asks, "Where did all this glass come from???"

The Night the Crickets Didn't Sing

By: Harper Denniston

Longfellow Elementary, Grade 5

It was a stormy night. The kind that made you want to climb under the bed. Lightning cracked and thunder bellowed through the air. The weather was stiff cold and the sky was the darkest black. Not even the crickets dared to sing. The rain came down hard and beat the ground like a thousand conga drums. The strong wind whirled around, bending anything in its way.

But, in a tiny cottage, in the middle of a prairie, a small girl stepped out. She wore a bright pink raincoat and butterfly rain boots. She danced zig-zag like lightning and sang a jumble of words and sounds, imitating the crickets' song, who were all too scared to sing. She played the ground like a giant drum and laughed when the rain did it with her. Then, she whirled around with the wind. Spinning and spinning until she collapsed on the ground. She lay there until she was fast asleep.

Then, the crickets came out and sang. The rain pounded a steady beat on the prairie and the lightning seemed to dance to their music. The wind softened and gently soared around the sleeping girl.

Even the darkest black has a little pink.

I am an Autumn Tree

In the winter my bare branches piled with cold white matter.

*Then the spring sun melted it away leaving a once happy white man,
a puddle, and a carrot, and let me grow my leaves, coated in green.*

*But the summer sun left me dehydrated and hot, standing there for two
and a half long months.*

*Suddenly, a breeze hits my leaves, my crispy red, yellow, and orange
leaves that I seem to be sheading. They float down slowly, like a birds'
feather and become a small mountain made of me that children fling
themselves into. Suddenly the air has a bite, not bite like a burn but bite
like a chill, bite like a warning that Jack Frost is on his way. My acorns
have been swiped by squirrels getting ready for bed. My thick bark is a
blanket on my cold tall figure that shakes with the wind.*

Could it be? Is it here?

Finally, I am an Autumn Tree

A Day in My Life

Hi. I would like to tell you about myself. I am an oval, orange, opaque, obedient object—otherwise known as a pumpkin. My name is Mr. Pumpkin. Humans have many possible uses for me. Soon I could be carved and I would be very spooky. Then on the 31st of October for some strange reason, humans would put me outside. It could be freezing cold, but with a candle in me it probably would not be so bad. Then kids would come around and get candy, but *I* wouldn't get any. That would be unfair, because I have to make light and without sugar to keep me going I would get tired, plus I might get burned. Then on November 2nd I would probably just get put in the compost with a bunch of worms, teabags, half eaten bread, eggshells, orange rinds, banana peels, and last year's pumpkins, who don't have much to say because they are left to rot.

Then all my seeds would never sprout and I couldn't have children. I had a cousin that had his seeds removed and eaten. Just thinking about that makes my stem stand on end. My brother had a worse fate. He was cut up, put in a *pie*—and eaten, just like some crows that I heard about in an old storybook. I once knew a pumpkin on a neighboring vine that was very nice, but was painted like a devil. He said it didn't hurt, but he was highly misunderstood by humans. Some of my distant relatives in the gourd family are tiny, ugly as rats with chickenpox, and have bumps on them, but people keep them whole for many seasons for decoration inside where its warm and they take forever to rot. That is unfair! Then humans will take baby pumpkins off the vine and leave on one pumpkin on. It gets enormous, because it gets to drink very yummy milk. They also pick pumpkins up and roll us against the hard ground and hit us into squash. That must hurt! But let's not think about any of that.

Let's think about my granddad. He was painted like a butterfly and died of *moldaria* at the age of 2. He lived a good long life. But when he died he looked like a great grandma granny smith apple and smelled worse than . . . well worse than anything I have ever smelled. Oops. I better scoot. Here comes a human with a carving knife. Bye

The Ride of My Life

I had a crazy fantasy adventure—

It was a cold and windy Saturday afternoon. The grass was glistening in the sunlight. I was waiting in a long line at an amusement park. Maybe one hundred kids were in the line! The line was so long, I couldn't even see what the ride was called!

Finally, there were only three people left in line, and most kids had left the line behind me, they were so bored of waiting! I saw the name of the ride: The Dreamspinner.

I soon got on. Then, a plump man said, distressed, "Get th' pack on." "What is the pack for?" I asked. "Somethin'," he replied. So I just kept on wondering and took it and put it on. I sat down.

"Attention!" said a high, mild voice over the loudspeaker. It was an operator speaking. "Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls; buckle your seat belts. The ride will start in two minutes. Also, please put the helmet on, located under your seat. If it's too tight or too big, let one of us know. We have extras." Now I had another thing on my mind.

Soon, Miss Willow, the operator, counted back from five to zero: "Five...four...three...two...one...get ready and...zero!" She pulled a lever. The engine rumbled and grumbled. Zooooooooom! We were speeding down the track in a flash! We came towards a dark and wide tunnel. The kids and I raced closer...and closer...and closer...and closer...and even closer...until we were just moments away! We entered. Suddenly, *The Dreamcoaster* started spinning really fast. I was getting super dizzy. Then we stopped, quick as a wink! My head was twirling and whirling around like a crazy tornado!

Then I started seeing things: Falling flat on my back on the ice, going all the way to a sand bar in the ocean in Florida with my dad, digging a giant hole—then I realized these were all things that had happened in the past! Meeting my BFF Melissa, losing my first tooth...then the past vanished! "Knock! Knock!" Someone was at my door. I woke up. The person walked in. It was my mom. "Sweetie, you're almost late for school! Get up!"

This adventure was too good to be true! Even though I didn't finish the adventure, I know it would continue; I looked down...why did I still have the pack on? To this day, I wonder what it is for...I keep it safe and sound, hidden down deep, packed in with all that disgusting stuff all human beings have, all crammed in everyone's closets.

THE THREE LITTLE SLOTHS AND THE BIG BAD TIGER!

Once there were three little sloths. The first sloth's name was Joe. The second sloth's name was Bob and the last sloth's name was Fred. The sloths were in the rain forest, because they were going to build a house there. Joe made his house out of glass, because he can see through it the whole time. Bob made his house out of wood, because it was very sturdy. Fred made his house out of bricks, because he thought there might be a female tiger out in the woods, and tigers can break wooden and glass houses.

It was getting dark, so Bob, Joe, and Fred went to bed. Later that night Bob, Joe, and Fred heard footsteps coming closer and closer to their houses. Just then Joe heard a big loud noise that sounded like something walking on the top of his house. Joe could see the tiger on the top of his house, because it was made out of glass. "It's a tiger!!!" Joe said.

"Come out little sloth. I know you're in there," the tiger said. Joe did not come out of the house. The tiger said again, "Come out little sloth. I know you're in there." Joe did not come out of the house still. Then the tiger jumped on the house as hard as it could. And all of sudden the house fell down.

"**HELP!!**" Joe said, but nobody heard him. He hid from the tiger in a little hole.

Next the tiger went to Bob's house, and said, "Come out. Come out little sloth. I know you're in there. Bob refused to come out of his house, so the tiger had no choice but to stomp on Bob's house like Joe. Bob was able to run away.

Then the tiger went to Fred's house. Fred was really scared, but when the tiger stomped on his house it did not break. It was hurting the tiger's feet. Fred was surprised that the tiger could not break a brick house. The tiger tried and tried to break Fred's house, but the tiger gave up. The tiger was exhausted and soon fell to the ground. Fred helped the tiger up. He felt bad for the tiger, so he tried to be nice to her. Fred saw Joe and Bob running toward him. "**STOP!!**" said Joe. "What are you doing to that tiger? She is dangerous!!!"

"Don't worry," said Fred. "The tiger is harmless. She was just trying to be friends with us."

"That's right," said the tiger. "I have seen you playing and wanted to be friends." Then forever after they were friends.

**Katherine Geerdes
Grade 5
Regina Elementary**

My story started when I was at Lake of the Woods in Canada. You see, me, my dad and two of my brothers were going on a fishing trip. I was really excited because this would be my first fishing trip. As we left the cabin we grabbed our fishing poles and headed to the dock. Then we got in the boat and dad started the motor. We came to a halt near the shore, and we were at our first stop.

We waited, and waited, and waited. At last I got a nibble! I started reeling my line in quickly. Have you ever heard the expression "Patience is a virtue"? Well patience is a virtue I don't have. I reeled my line in too quickly, and by the time I was done, the fish had escaped.

After some more waiting with no more fish, we finally headed to a different spot. On the way we heard a loud "Thump." We had hit a rock! I realized the boat was sinking! Quickly we started picking up bucketfuls of water and throwing them back into the lake. Once we realized this idea was hopeless, we used the trolling motor to get to a nearby island. We had no idea what island it was, but we were worried and it seemed like the only logical thing to do.

We all decided that we should see if anyone was on the island, but after a close encounter with a very protective mother deer we decided to stay near the shore by our boat. As we looked around worriedly, we decided no one could be on this island because it seemed that no one had even touched it in years. Then I noticed there was a hat by the shore and tracks leading into the forest. I decided to follow them thinking "it couldn't be that bad right"? Before I could see anything my dad started calling for me. I guess this was one mystery that I wasn't supposed to solve.

We pretty much got lucky! Another fisherman came and saved the day. When I returned to the boat another fisherman was there helping my brothers into his boat. We were saved! I wanted to jump for joy and call my mom to tell her we were coming home to the cabin. Unfortunately, I saw my dad's phone was soaked. We probably should've thought of taking it out of his pocket earlier but we were a little busy.

We finally got back to the cabin. My mom was really happy we were safe and my other brothers, who had not gone fishing, were just like I still can't believe you went fishing without me. They might not have listened to the whole story I told them.

Emma Gehlbach, 7th grade, North Central Junior High

A Day on the Mississippi

In my family, we go to Cass Lake, Minnesota every year for a week in August. One of my favorite things to do there is to go canoeing. We wake up early, pack our gear, and head to the Mississippi River.

One year, my cousin Caroline, my Uncle John, my dad, and I went canoeing. My fishing pole was balanced on the tarnished metal side of the canoe. We had been on the water for only a couple minutes, but we could already tell it was going to be a beautiful day. There was a light breeze, and the sun was peeking out through the dark green leaves on the trees.

Suddenly, I saw a thin, bony, figure with a long neck and legs flying through the air. It was a bird, and not just any bird. It was a huge Great Blue Heron, and it flew right over me. I craned my neck to watch it. Then I noticed what looked like a whitish string coming from it. I realized what it was a second before it hit me. I twisted my body to avoid it, but you can't move around much in a canoe. The stream hit me, splattering all over my hair and arms. I looked down in shock. I was absolutely covered in disgusting white gunk.

I looked ahead to my cousin Caroline, who was sitting in the other canoe, just ahead of me. She was staring at me with her mouth slightly open, her gray-blue eyes wide. In the water, a white zigzag was slowly sinking. I looked at my arms again, and then started to laugh. I couldn't help it: just the odds that it would fall on me, and nowhere else in the water was too much to hold in. Caroline smiled and everyone seemed relieved that I wasn't freaking out. Soon, everybody was laughing as we paddled our canoes to the bank and I stepped out to wash off my arms and hair.

The Message

I stared at my computer screen reading the passage over and over again. What should I reply? I settled on a simple answer. I typed it in, feeling satisfied. I had started S.O.S. when I realized I wasn't the only one with problems. S.O.S. is a website I created to help people. They anonymously send me a message telling me their problem. I send them back my advice. I don't expect them to reply but once in a while I do get thank you messages.

I started scrolling down the page of messages until one caught my eye. It said: *I recently moved to a new school. I am having trouble making friends. I try acting like the other girls but it doesn't seem to be working. I hope you can help me.* I didn't answer that one just yet. I was having trouble myself making friends. I had tried to act like the other girls but it didn't work. Feeling defeated, I typed in: *I'll have to get back to you.* I closed my laptop, still thinking about the message. I stayed up late thinking what my reply should be. I just hoped I could answer the message.

I opened my locker and pulled out my science books. I speed walked down the hall to my next class. I chose a seat in the back row. I figured I could observe the popular girls who always sit there. I saw Jenna McCray, the most popular girl in school, walk toward the seat next to me. Instead of Jenna, Summer, one of Jenna's distant friends sat there. She turned to me and said. "Don't you just love Fridays?" "Yeah", I replied. Mrs. Fields clasped her hands, asking for attention. "Today we are going to do a partner activity. You can pair up with the person next to you. I will tell you more later. I will be right back." She stood up from her chair and exited the classroom. As soon as she left there was a riot. Everyone started talking. I decided to befriend Summer. She seemed pretty nice. "Are you friends with Jenna?" I asked. She quickly turned to face me. "Yeah. I guess. We are not that close though. I'm probably the 15th person on her guest list." We both laughed even though it wasn't that funny. We then started talking about ourselves. She told me about her family and I told her about mine.

The rest of the school day went by fast. Summer and I got to know each other more during lunch. That's when I knew what to reply to the message. As soon as I got home, I turned on my laptop and clicked S.O.S. When I found the message I was looking for I typed in: *Sorry for the wait. I needed to think about this. You should be yourself. You don't want to be someone you are not. You might not even get friends that way. I hope my advice will help you.*

I closed my laptop feeling satisfied. I still couldn't believe I had a friend. I finally had a friend.

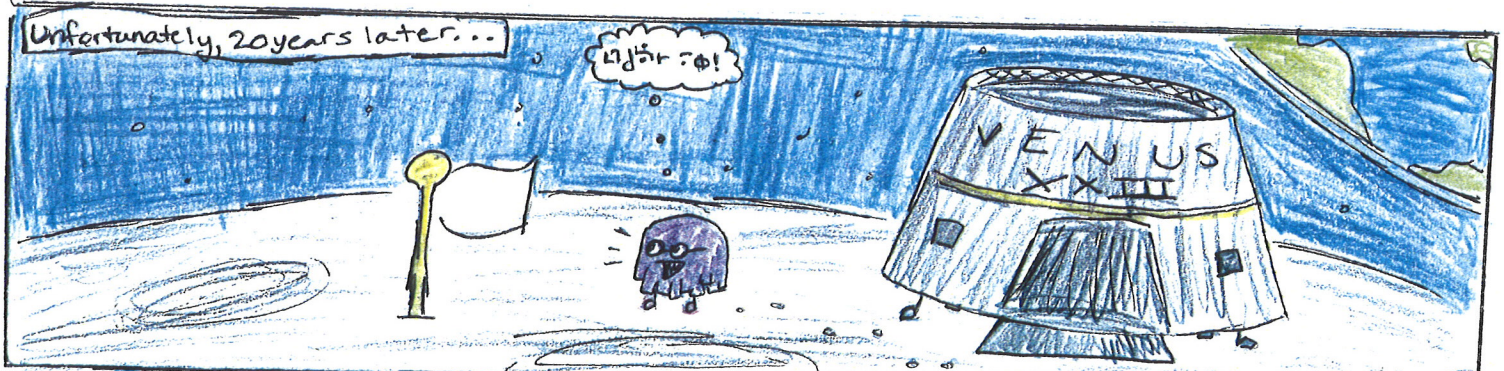
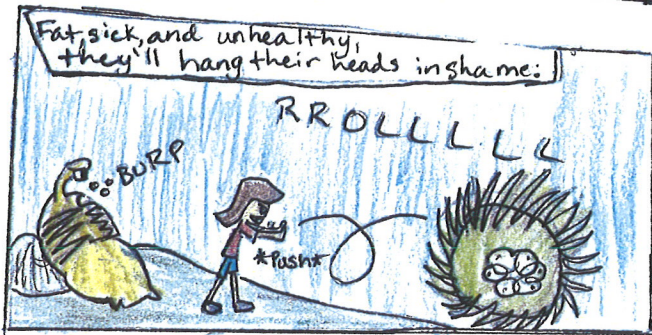
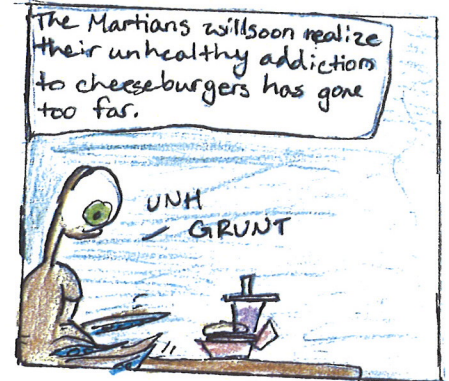
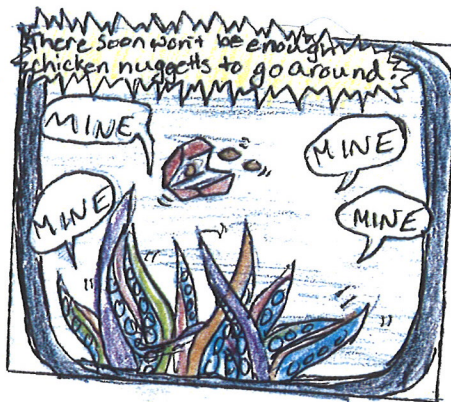
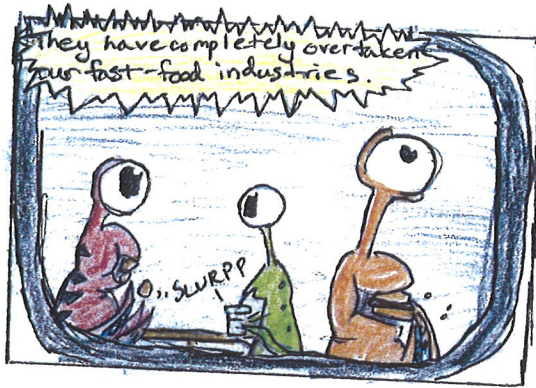
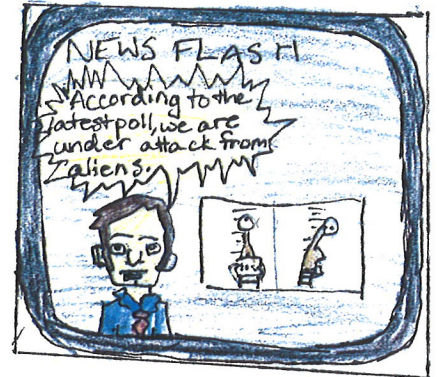
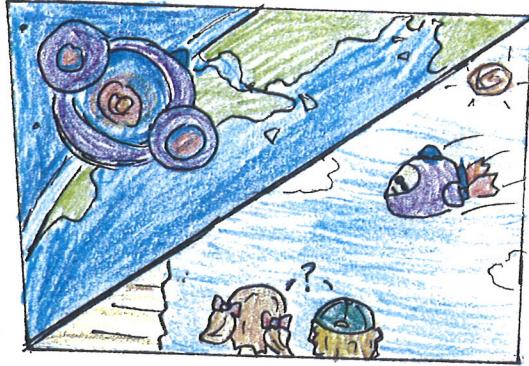
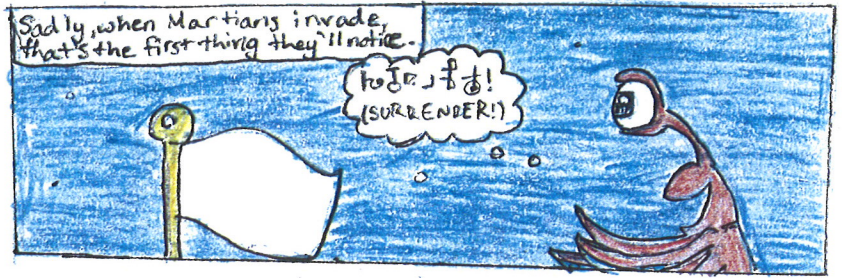
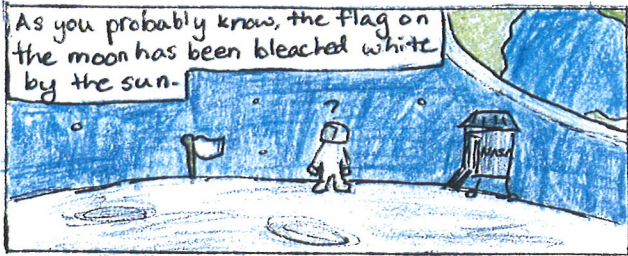
STRIKE

“Brian, dinner time. And remember, turn off that TV!” The boy pressed the power button and rushed up the stairs. As he slammed the basement door, the sofa grunted: “Shipped here in 1975. Back then, people knew how to use a couch. The biggest threat was that dog, Wee Willie Lickn’stein. Whoo! He’d jump on me and try to rip me up. But I’d take Wee Willie over Wee Jillie anytime. That girl and her crayons. Dropping them all down my sides. What’s she expect me to do, eat em? Coins and pennies, maybe. Crayons give me indigestion.”

The TV took up the rant. “You think you’re mistreated. I work practically 24/7, and *you*,” he said, eyeing the sofa, “you contribute. People turn me on, grab a blanket, and get all cozy on you. Why sometimes they fall asleep and leave me talking to myself.”

“Talking. What about having your face smashed into your back?” chimed a new voice. “Folks used to know the difference between decorating and relaxing, but now, they just say, well, a pillow is a pillow. I should be seen, *not* slept on!”

“This family is confused,” sighed the TV. “Maybe,” said the pillow, “if we went on strike, things would change.” The next day, when Brian tried to turn the TV on, it turned its black back. He groaned but then went to play soccer. Later that afternoon, the sofa flung Jill’s coloring book onto the floor. She huffed, collected her things, and headed to the porch. As the mother lay down for a pre-dinner nap, the pillow poked her with its tassel. Soon, the family began to play cards, read, and sometimes just talk. The TV, the throw pillow, and the sofa liked watching them, but not everyone was satisfied. One evening, the computer asked, “Are you all in charge of the strike?” The threesome said, “Yes, why?” He replied, “Can I join the union?”



Handless Hook

Handless hook has an evil look,

and a very sneaky sneer.

Dirty as a broom, but as hard as rocks.

As wind flows through, his long black locks.

He is scared of a croc,

That goes tick-tock.

Also an enemy of Pan.

Sharp as a knife,

who created strife.

And is everything in a man.

So you better watch out,

and you don't have to pout,

about Handless, Handless Hook.

~Thomazin Jury

5th grade
Lincoln

Aubryn Kaine

6th grade

Horace Mann Elementary

Korra

From far away she came,
Three months old and playful.
She chews everything that comes her way,
But you could never, ever be hateful.

Me and my dad went and got her,
Far from all I call home.
She was a scared, lonely puppy,
But without her my heart is alone.

For her it was hard,
For me; love at first sight.
The work finally paid off,
When she saw me in the right light.

Now she is two years old,
And still has a playful aura.
Still a puppy to the soul,
And her name is Korra.

The forest was quiet that day. In fact, that day started as probably the most serene and quiet day that the world had ever seen at that time. But the forest was especially quiet. Even the music of the forest, the swish of the grass and the trees, was quiet. That day, the brooks' laughter was smothered, and all that emitted from them was the occasional giggle when they gathered the courage to make noise. In the little wood cabin that sat in the middle of that forest, things were no different. The house's only human inhabitant sat quietly in an old, creaky rocking chair, reading one of her favorite books.

You might think from that last sentence that it was lonely in that little cabin, alone there in the dark and dapple of that patch of forest on the gentle surface of that quiet day. But the human inhabitant was not lonely. Far from it. I have not yet mentioned all of the animals in that house. Ah, the animals. A yellow Labrador lay at the human's feet, body curled around five puppies in a pile, and a Golden Retriever lounged on a comfy beanbag, looking as if there were nowhere he'd rather be.

In the kitchen, three other creatures poked their small snouts out of the cat climbing structure where they were lazing, adorable, sleepy kittens--one calico called Patch, another brown with black markings named Minnie, and a pure white one with blue eyes called Goldie as a joke--that were small enough to fit in the palm of the reading girl's hand. A huge albino grizzly bear sat dozing in the corner, absurdly cradling a small Cocker Spaniel, and outside, two horses and a colt slept in a little garage converted into a stable. The kittens' father Dell was drowsing on a ledge in the stable and a Doberman Pinscher snoozed in front of it, long having given up his guard duties to the nodding temptation of sleep.

Why did this girl have so many animals? She could speak to all and heal as many. The mother cat had had her babies in the warm shelter of the barn, and so had the mare and the retriever. The girl's deft fingers sewed up the cut on the stallion's foreleg, which was now a raised scar, a memory laid out in stark white skin against the warm brown and black of his coat. She'd given the Cocker, Dandy, a splint for a sprained paw. The girl's name was Bianca.

All of a sudden she jumped up and snapped her book shut. Ear-pricking became a phenomenon among the animals in the house--how could she, they thought, how could she dare to break the stillness on this day, when the silence seemed to be how the day was intended to be?

Void World

By Maria Lin

As I walk in the portal, I change, getting smaller. To be first to test the dimension, of course I'd be nervous. Everyone chooses a world to live in. You have to be 18 to test, but my dad is a manager for Void World Company, so a 14 year old girl is valid. A big red and white mushroom veers to my left, and in front of me is a meadow with purple grass. Nearby are a few silver trees, but most of all, was a castle. An aroma enters my nose of cake frosting. I go to the doors, and they open.

"We've been waiting for you!" She said. I try to look behind the lady who welcomes me, but I'm blocked by a pair of red wings. I look at them, as I'm welcomed into the Castle. I am given a red cake, and grasp it. I sit down at a fountain that was few feet away, spilling water that is a lime green shade. I look up to find a lady in front of me.

"Take a bite of your cake! I think you'll enjoy it." She says. I smile and take a bite, and get drowsy.

"Where are you from?" She asks.

"Earth," I say after a moment's hesitation. "Sorry, I'm a bit tired."

"Oh, that's normal, just..." She replied. And suddenly, I'm under darkness. I wake up off the ground and scream, but not a single sound comes out. I see green wings on my back, flying uncontrollably. Thoughts pop in my head by the fairy controlling me.

"Sorry to give you bad news, but we're taking over Earth." thought the fairy.

I—the fairy— jump to earth, as I quickly send a burst of energy, and take control of my body, but already feel the fairy trying to gain control again, so I know I don't have time.

"Close... the portal!" I say, as I jump through it. I see the portal shut, as the fairy gains control, angry.

I've saved Earth.

The End

SPARKLES GOES BACK IN TIME

Once upon a time there was a new puppy who was born. Her name was Sparkles because she had sparkly purple fur. She met her owner going out the house when the owner got in the car. Sparkles sneaked in the house. Sparkles wanted nobody to see her. Because it was so hot because it was summer. As fast as a blink Sparkles had an idea. Sparkles went outside even though it was so hot because Sparkles was on a mission. "Don't give up when there's a mission that you have to do," said Sparkles in her head. She was sweaty, but she didn't care. She wiped it off, and then she ran to her dog house and she pushed so hard, it moved out of its place. Sparkles was pushing it inside the house! Then she went back outside and every building that was near her, she climbed on top taking down every antenna. Sparkles goes inside and chews up dog toys and takes out the squeakers. Then she climbs up to the fans and takes out screws. Then she makes a teleporter because she wanted to go back in the time when cave-men lived because she thought it would be a little cooler then than in the day when she is now. She makes the screws and squeakers into buttons and she uses the antennas for the electricity and when it was all done Sparkles realized there was just one thing missing a lever, and everybody knows that is the most important piece of a teleporter and that is really true. Sparkles looks around the house and sees the fan and she takes a light bulb out of the fan and then she takes it to the teleporter. She makes a hole for it to go on and screws it on for the lever. She goes in the teleporter and pushes the button that will take her to the time when the cave men lived. It rumbles and tumbles and she grabs on to a bar she made. The teleporter suddenly stops when the cave men lived. The door opened and Sparkles came out. She realized in the cave days, it wasn't so hot. She saw a cave and lots of trees. She goes into the cave and she sees another dog. She looked almost like her, but she had sparkly stone-colored fur. Her name was Sparkles, too. Sparkles meets the cave mom. The cave dogs are scared, but then Sparkles the cave puppy asked the cave mom if the two Sparkles could play together. The cave mom says, "Yes. Just stay out of trouble." The two Sparkles have lots of fun until Sparkles the not cave dog says, "I have to get back to the time where I live, because I am not a cave dog." So Sparkles goes in her teleporter and goes in the time where she lived. She sees her mom in a pool, so Sparkles comes in the pool.

Layna Manjoine

6th Grade

Longfellow Elementary School

A Crazy Invention

There once was

A crazy invention,

A crazy creation,

A foolish development,

A psychotic discovery.

It was

A maniacal finding,

A mad sighting,

A nutty detection.

It was

An insane innovation,

A deranged ensemble,

A berserk novelty.

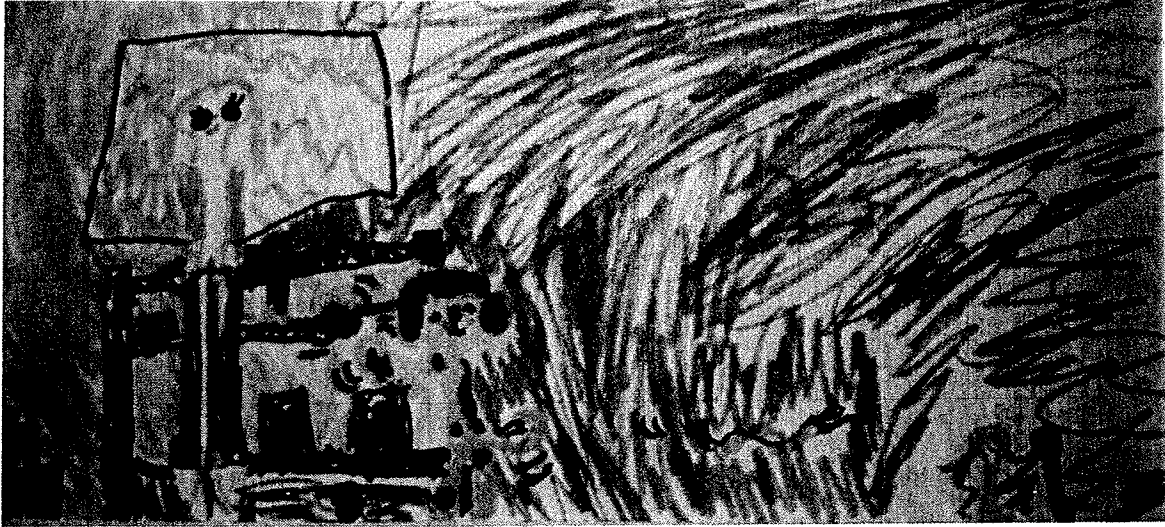
There once was

A crazy invention.

Ginger McCartney

Second Grade

Willowwind School



I loved Minnie at first sight. Before that, I had sushi with my friends. Then I went to the pet store next door. In one of the first cages, I saw Minnie. She was sleeping. "Mom, Can I pet that one?" She said, "Sure."

We waited for them to get her out. The petting areas were full so we sat on the floor. When Minnie got on the floor she found a comfy place on my lab and went to sleep for a minute or two. Then she got up and played around. Then we had to go. In the car, I said, "Mom, That was the one." She said, "Are you sure?"

We waited a week and discussed the decision. We finally made the decision to buy her. When we went to pick her up, she had an eye infection. "Awwwwww." We had to wait a week to pick her up. When we finally did pick her up, we picked her up on Christmas Eve Day. When we got home, we played with Minnie. We gave her a bath. Minnie is a great dog now, some of the time.

Kids around the war

Once upon a time, there was a 10 year's old named yasir; he was a smart boy he lived with his parents and sisters. He always tried to follow his parent's rules. But sometimes following rules was hard. One day, Yasir asked his mom to play outside with his friends (hides and seeks) but his mom said no, there is a war outside it is not safety. Yasir ~~did~~^{didn't} listen to his mom and he ran away. Just a moment the life goes with a blink of an eye. People were killed in bombs, houses and schools were destroyed. Many people lost their houses including yasir's house. He heard that sound so he ran to his house. He didn't find anything except blood, and stem he screamed loudly and said....MOM PLEASE FORGIVE ME!!! . I wish I listened to you ^I want my family back mama. That moment Yasir promised to his self and said I will never forgive those people who did that to you!!! A month later Yasir got adopted, he left his country his memories, friends, and family. But he didn't forget his mom's voice. He studied hard and succeeds until he became one day a president. Yasir was a strong man but his sad memories made him a bad president.....it looks like a life turn, but it cost a lot, who will pay? the children??? They are growing worried, orphans, and sad. Yasir is just an example for many children around the war right now like: (philistine, Sudan, Syria, Egypt and more). Kids are need a natural life, simple time between family, warm moment which can help them growing healthy and successfully. We are the future, the people who create the world, so we deserve good life and peace moment together!!...When our life turns up side down from the booms which is man made; that is not fair!!

By: Leen Mekki

Kirkwood Elementary School

5th grade Teacher class's Ms: Harper

Muriel Moon, Third Grade, Willowwind School

My Cats

Primo

Cuddly, calm,

Hungry, sleepy, lazy,

Share food sometimes,

Jumping, running, snuggling,

Energetic, playful,

Twilight

I have two cats and even though they are different they get along great. At first when we got Twilight she lived in the bathroom and when she got to live elsewhere Primo REALLY DID NOT LIKE HER!!! They had a bunch of fights and Primo usually won them. He stole her food and favorite sleeping places. The funny thing was they fought over which one got to sit on the big folded up cardboard box. Actually they still do, and when they do it's the funniest thing you have ever seen.

Now they have grown to love each other and rarely fight. Now they share food. When primo gets his fill he steps away and lets Twilight eat. We now have a little chair covered in cat hair that they sleep on and it's so cute to see them sleep together. Twilight is very active, but when tired she is very lazy. When Twilight was allowed to go outside, Primo sort of showed her around and she followed him everywhere. Sometimes Twilight follows him even now. But sometimes Twilight is the teacher. She taught Primo how to be naughty and leap on a box to get on the counter to get the food. These are my cats AND I LOVE THEM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Life

"Life is like a journey.

*We are all trying to get to a destination that we may or
may not know.*

It could be a pebbled shore, with water as salty as tears.

*It could be a green meadow, where we could frolic like
gazelles.*

*Or it could even be to raise content children, with cheeks
as rosy as robin's feathers.*

*Not all of us know our destination, or how to get there,
for many of us stumble about like blind mice until we
find the right path."*

-Jessica Moonjely

Theo Prineas
8th grade
Northwest

Waiting

While I wait, the wind blows,
curling the hot, dry air
all around me, rustling the
leaves on the cherry-trees,
and dropping the cherries.
The cherries. They are hard,
like red stones as they fall.
They fall to the ground,
lying there among the hasty bugs,
and the dry, soft grass,
with blades so gentle.

Jacob Roling

5th Grade

Hills Elementary

HELP

Chris and Josie live in the small town of Swisha, Germany. The two kids knew everyone who live and lived there and just about everything the small town has to offer. But there was something lurking throughout the neighborhood, something evil.

After school, Chris met Josie and the end of the meadow in their secret hiding spot. "What happened!" Chris said. Ashes mark where grass was burned to make a wide path into the dark woods.

Curiously, Chris and Josie followed it to a dark rotting cabin with the word "Hey" scratched into the wood. Using no thought, they walked in. Suddenly the door shut and locked behind them. Scared and cold, they cried. But then the candles lit, setting the cabin in flames.

The Boy from the Future

This was the third time he had ridden his bike past my house. Every single time he lifted his baseball cap just slightly to get a good look at my house and then just kept riding like nothing happened. The boy's cap was positioned so perfectly that I couldn't make out his face. I stared as his front wheel became visible around the corner, again. I took a deep breath and watched as he rode and then slowed down near my driveway, tipped his hat, stared, and then kept pedaling. I sighed. I had to do something about it.

I bolted outside and stood on the sidewalk, arms crossed over my chest. For the fifth time, the boy's bike tire was seen at the corner. He started riding again, but quickly skidded to a stop in front of me.

"Can I ask why you keep staring at my house?" I asked. Quietly, the boy hurriedly explained how his cap had flown into my backyard, and he just *had* to get it.

I stared at his green cap. How many caps did this boy have? He gave me a sheepish grin. Before I could reply, I woke from my dream. For the past week I had been having the same dream and I could never make it last any longer. I sat up, suddenly remembering the importance of today. We were taking in a foster child today, and I had to be ready by the time he came, which was soon. I quickly ran a comb through my hair, threw on the first few things my hand touched in my closet, and finally raced downstairs to scarf down breakfast. I wasn't fast enough.

"You're late," Mom said. I muttered a quick apology. Then I saw the foster boy. There was the green cap sitting on his head and he had the same sheepish grin.

"Have any nice dreams lately?" he asked.

The Break In

Samantha Saylor
Grade 7
North Central

Darkness filled her eyes as she sat up, clearly out of it. Her feet dragged across the rugged halls as if she was trying to make electricity. She trudged up the stairs so slowly it almost looked like she was tripping over her own weight. Her head turned to the window, but oddly, she saw an object outside. She squinted, then a sudden burst of fear shot through her chest.

There was a man! Staring her right in the eyes. All she could think of were the doors. The doors had been unlocked! She screamed in terror as the man's face vanished. All of her instincts told her to run, but her feet disagreed. She was frozen. Her mind went into a deep thought, but in a split second reality rammed her right in the face. Energy engulfed her like fire as she ran to the closest door available. After entering, she slammed the door shut. Her eyes widened with horror.

"What's going to happen to me?" she whispered to herself as she rocked back and forth.

The sound of a door entered the room. Fear crept up on all sides of her. After a few minutes, she realized the man was getting closer. Sounds echoed off the walls as he twisted and turned, searching for something. Her eyes flickered back and forth as her nerves threatened to overcome her.

Dead silence hung in the air. Finally, her shoulders relaxed, her hands stopped shaking and terror released her. Boom! In a flash, the door swung open with such force it must have dented the wall. The man grabbed her, and she just stood there staring at nothing like a dumbfounded puppy. He bolted outside, and shoved the poor little girl in his car. She didn't even struggle. She just sat there, unmoving, as if every bone in her body was numb.

"I feel bad for her," the man said to another man, "I know she just broke out of a mental hospital, but even after all my years as a cop, I can't get over the idea that she thought I was a kidnapper."

The Feeling of Joy

Dear Diary,

The date is 1853.

The calmest year we have had since my papa made us move to northern Africa when I was just 7 and my two little brothers were about 5 and 6.

My two brothers hated it when we first got there and so did my mama, but they seem to like it now.

I guess it makes sense because that was 2 years ago, and my brothers thought southern Africa was a great life environment, but my papa didn't think so because if he did we would have probably stayed in southern Africa.

I can understand why my papa made us move here now, it's not because I'm older, and it's not because my papa told me why he did. It's because I feel joy, and it's not the joy that you feel at your birthday party, or the joy you feel when you see someone playing at the park. It's the joy that keeps you alive, energetic, and a living person. It's the thing you feel deep down in your heart, something that changes your life forever.

But don't worry if you haven't felt that feeling yet, it takes real love to make that joy.

Now I smell the grass and the little flowers that grow on their own around the house. I see my brothers trying to catch butterflies in the prairie, the sweet smell of plum pudding coming from the kitchen, and I ... well I just swing on that swing of mine till my heart is content.

I didn't feel this way back in southern Africa, I felt love from my family, and I felt joy, too, but like I said, it's not the joy that you feel at a birthday party, or someone you see playing at the park, it's the joy that changes your life forever.

Melissa Uc, Third Grade, Willowwind School

When You Go to Bed

Do you ever have those days
when your parents make you go to bed
and you're not even tired?
Yeah!
Been there.
Done that.
And you try counting sheep
and that does not work
and you are so desperate.
So you try closing your eyes
and that does not work
because your eyes hurt
because you're not tired at all!
You try reading.
and after you try all that
it is almost morning.
You are finally tired
and you only have ten minutes to sleep!
I know!
It is so annoying!
And when you get up your Mom asks you,
"How was your night?"
And you're like, "Huh?"
Because you're so tired.
Then the next night
you have a good night
and you feel so good.
It is so unfair!
Aaaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!
AAAAAWWWWWN!
I think I'll just close my eyes a bit.

ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

Penn's Problem

It was November 5th, and Mr. Penn Penguin was on his way home from police training when he heard the robbery report. Somebody had stolen antiperspirant, a backpack, a cactus, detergent, and now an emerald!

"Boy," thought Penn. "If I catch that robber they would let me on the penguin police force for sure!" When he got home he waddled as fast as he could to his office and started to think of all the things the robber had stolen. He sighed. It was no use. In order to take his mind off of things, he took out his flute and started to play his favorite tune, the Alphabet Song.

"Eureka!" he cried. The robber was stealing things in alphabetical order! He flew down the stairs to his bedroom where Penny, his wife, and Polly, his daughter, were. He told them about the robber and his plan, and they all hopped in the penguin mobile and went to Freddy's Flounder market.

He went inside and bought a large amount of flounder. Every penguin loves flounder! Who could resist? He drove home and immediately went to work setting up tables in his garage. Then, Penn put all of his flounder on the tables. Next, he put extremely loud bells on the door. Soon, Penn went around town putting up posters that read "Flounder sale on November 6th, 210 Tilapia Avenue." He sighed. "I hope this works," he mumbled. It was getting dark, and Penn went home to get some sleep.

At 12:08a.m. the bells started ringing extremely loudly. Penn and Penny leaped out of bed. "I'll call the police!" Penny exclaimed. "I'll go check it out," said Penn, as they both waddled down the stairs. Penn cautiously opened the garage door. There standing in front of him wasn't a penguin at all. It was Shawn the Seal with a mouthful of flounder! Shawn the Seal was a famous news anchor for Antarctica. Penn was astounded. "Why would..." Then the police ran into the garage and took Shawn away.

"You did well, Penn," said the Penguin Police Chief. "None of us could have thought of that. There will be a celebration tomorrow in your honor." The very next day Penn and his family went to the celebration. The Police Chief said to all the penguins, "This penguin has shown a great amount of courage. I hereby proclaim Penn Penguin on the police force, and for making peace for all penguins, I give him the Penguin Peace Prize!" Penn was so proud! Penn, Penny, and Polly all went out for a cone of sardine ice cream!

My Discovery

Jenna Wang
6th grade
Borlaug Elementary

"Do not ever, on any circumstances, go out at night," My father would always tell me sternly before bed, a stony expression painted on his face, "The forest we live close by, is filled with unknown creatures that are always dangerous. You go out Maddie, and you will never come back."

I always answered with a solemn nod, and then climbed into 'bed', a small, wool cushioning with a thin quilt of an article, buffalo hide with my mother, Amy. My father Neel, a giant, overprotective man, would always use his huge arms to heave a large stone in front of our cave entrance to keep out hungry animals that would chew us to tiny bits. Then, he would crawl into bed as well, tired as always from hunting. Every time when he goes to sleep, the quiet, meaningful words he states still lingers in my mind. I don't know why, or when, or what, changed my mind when I got up from bed one night, in only a piece of thin fabric that chilled me to bones. But for whatever reason, that didn't bother me, and without a split second of hesitation, I crept my way in the pure dark to the big boulder that always secured the cave. Feeling my way around, I managed to feel a small crack, small enough to fit me, and crawled out with a small wave of fear. Why was I doing this? Did I want to get killed? Did my mind take over my body? Small noises buzzed from the thick trees of the forest that nearly scared me so much, I thought an animal could hear my heavy breaths now. *There's no turning back now*, I thought to myself slowly, regaining my composure. Sweat trickled down my neck like water, and I felt the cold ground for anything sharp or pointed. My fingers landed on a stone, and I held it close to my heart. *This is for my family. Anything for my family. I must do something to improve our welfare.*

In my other hand, I grabbed a random stick from the ground and scraped the rock hard and swift across it, and I gasped as I saw the small light of fire slowly pop up and dance elegantly across the stick. My mind reacted at once to the intense beauty of sudden light and I followed my dad's instructions. Quickly before the spark disappeared, I blew small, shallow breaths until there was fire blazing across the top of the stick, like flames on a dragon's head. Raising the stick close to my eyes, as if it was a torch, my eyes searched wildly about for anything, just anything to take home. The surprised faces on my parent's looks, the happiness around us.... I just couldn't stop thinking about happiness. Feeling excitement more than fear, I took a step deeper into the forest, unaware of the pain beneath my feet. Slowly, I just walked for a moment, the torch in front of me as I looked out my path for a source of life considered useful, glancing here and there. Rocks, leaves, sticks... Minutes passed by without any signs of animals. Was my father wrong? Are there really dangerous animals? Or... an animal could be watching me, taking account of me. Trying to figure out my weaknesses and strengths.....and watching me. I shuddered, imagining the thought of creepy red eyes, always positioned right at my heart. In utter fear, I circled the torch all around in a circle, looking for any eyes or the noise of crunching feet. My father had said that animals were always afraid of fire, because it burned like coals, but there were no animals in sight. Then, I heard heavy footsteps lumbering over. I looked all around. Only a few feet away, stood a ginormous apple tree, filled with apples, but no signs of life. I trembled. There, only a foot away were perfect apples for my family, but....some animal was going to get me first. But if I could make it out of this, I might as well try to collect one apple. In a split second, I dashed out to the freshest apple I could find. Grabbing it, I stood up and.... Something, or someone suddenly rammed into back, and I bit my lips in ferocious pain. A second later in horror, I realized that I was being hoisted up on a brown skinned animal's long back at an intense speed, that I almost lost my torch. Wind lashed out at my cheeks as tears fell down my eyes. I was going to die, right? Through the pain, I tried to open my eyes as wide as I could, and I saw the animal, and the elegance. I ignored the pain through admiration. This animal was so beautiful... could it really be that dangerous? Suddenly, I felt myself flying, in the air as I rode for the first time. Raising the torch high in the air with confidence, I rode my way through the night, all the way back home, on this new revolution, I called.... The horse!

Karley Whitby

4th Grade

Hoover School

They say I'm not good enough
But I know it's not true.
The true feeling of losing something
Like a good friend
Is like losing the world, or a hurricane,
Swooping your life away and apart
But a true friend would
Stand in trouble and face
The world with you. I'll face the dreadful
World and all the bullies
With a good and true friend
That has my back and will never bring evil to the world, a true
Friend is bigger than a shining
Star in the night sky.
A true friend that will always
Be the song of the world
Nothing will break two friends away and apart.
A true friend that defeats demons in the night sky
That is a simple star, butterfly.
Nothing will tear apart if you stay forever together.
We will always be in each other's heart.

