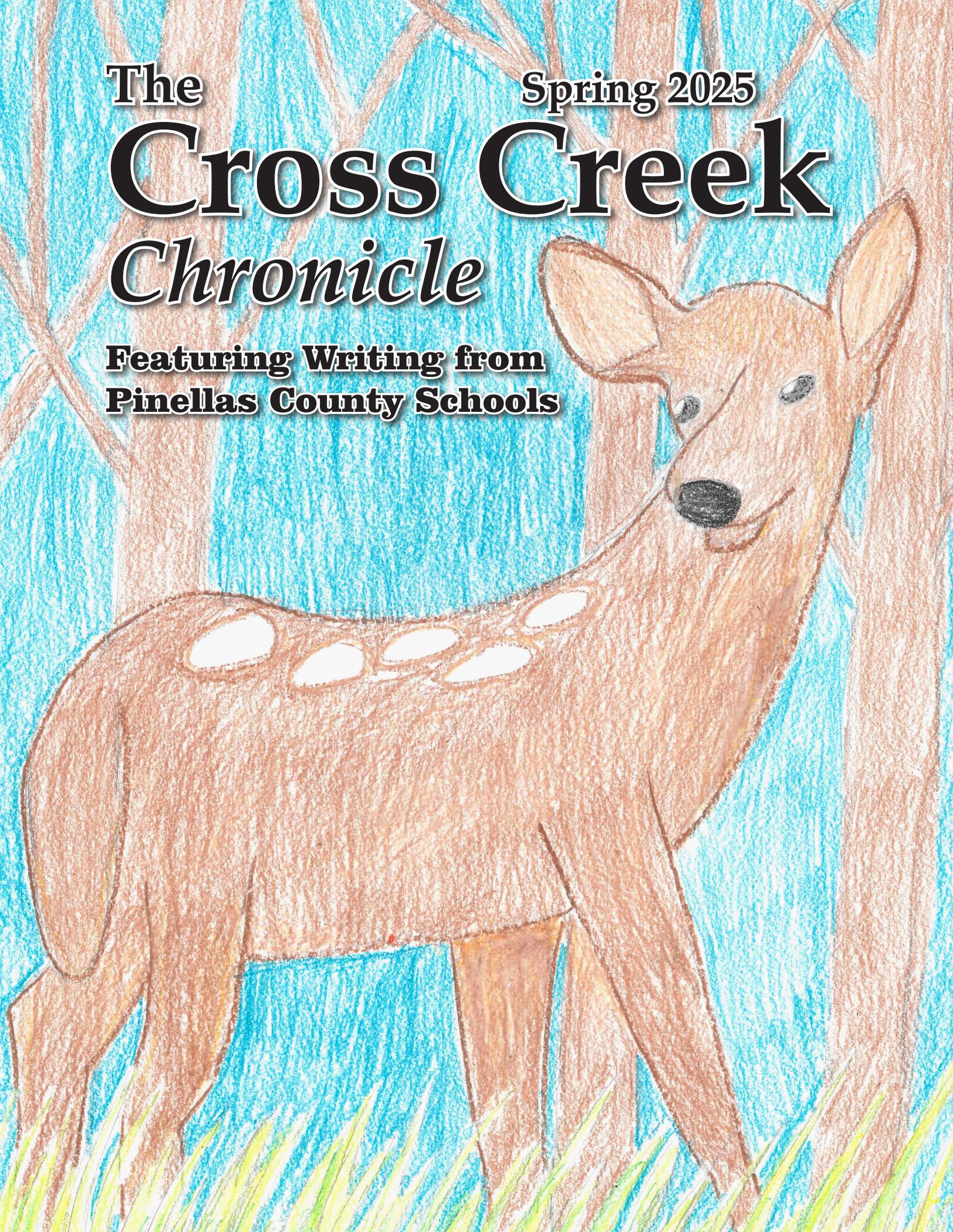


The

Spring 2025

Cross Creek *Chronicle*

**Featuring Writing from
Pinellas County Schools**



The Cross Creek Chronicle

Spring, 2025

Featuring Writing from Pinellas County
Elementary Schools' Students

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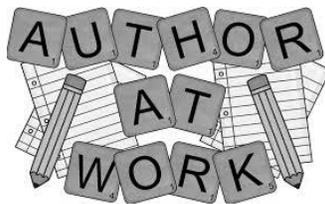


Cover Artist: Gwen Nipper
5th grade student in Mary Anderson's
art class at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings
Elementary School

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Autographs



All About Sea Turtles

by Ophelia Donald
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teacher: Caroline Williams

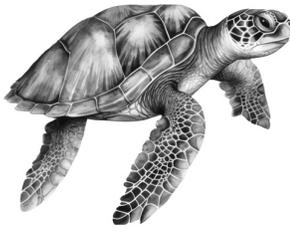
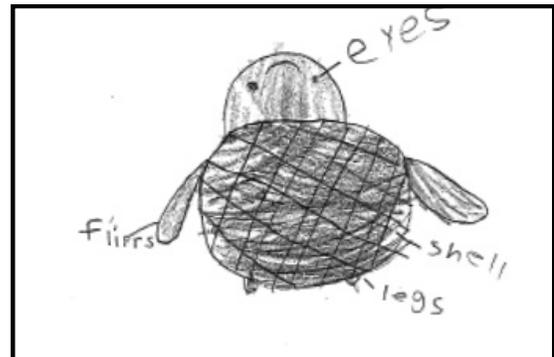
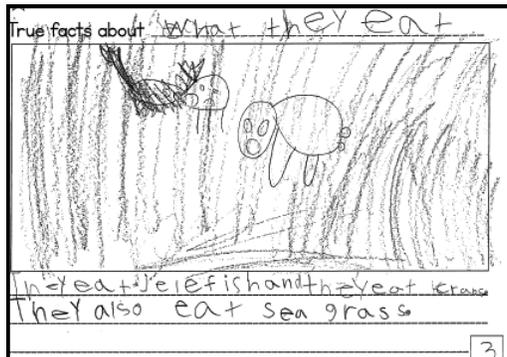
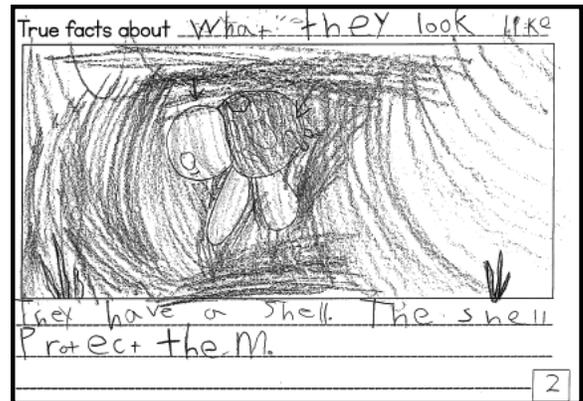
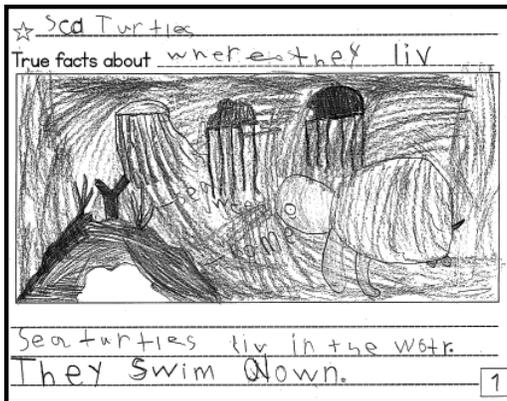


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Sea turtles live in the water. They swim down. They have a shell. The shell protects them. They eat jellyfish and they eat crabs. They also eat sea grass. Parts of a Sea Turtle: eyes, fins, shell, legs



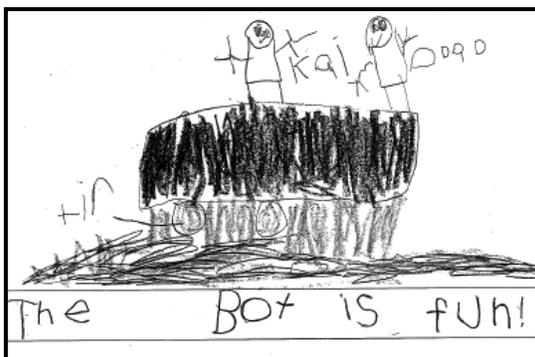
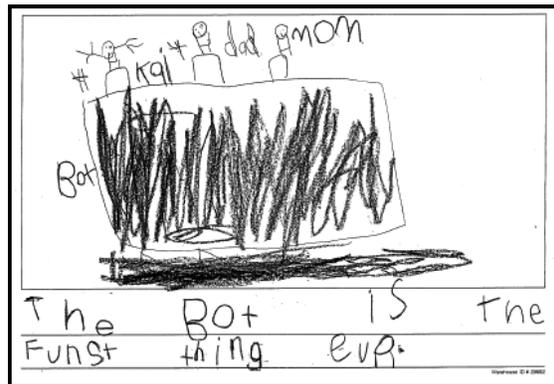
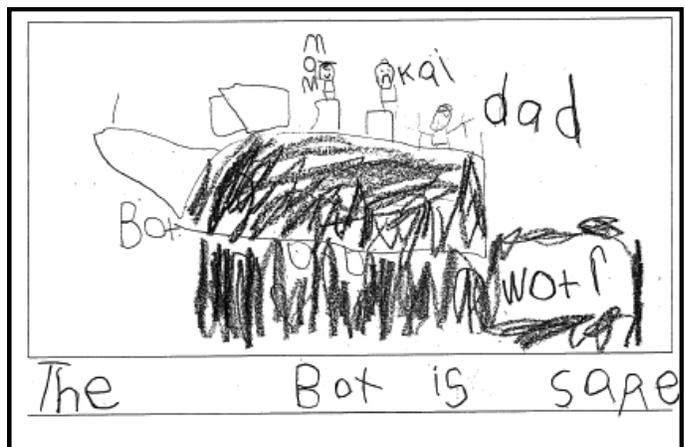
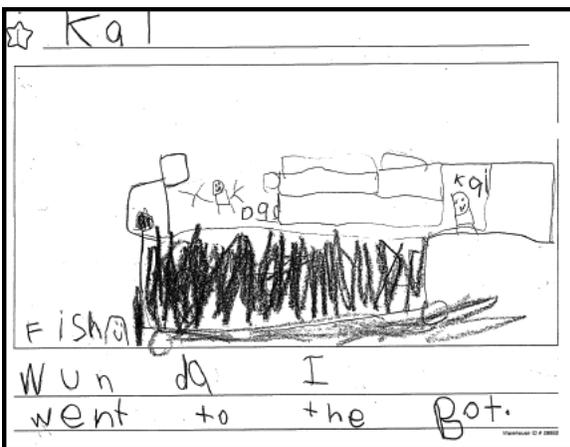
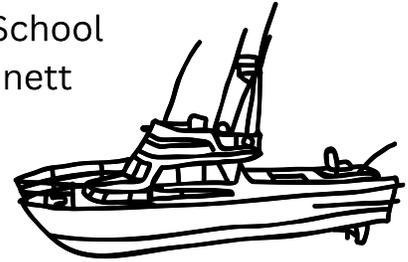


The Boat

by Kai Gorgas

Gulf Beaches Elementary School

Teacher: Stephanie Bennett

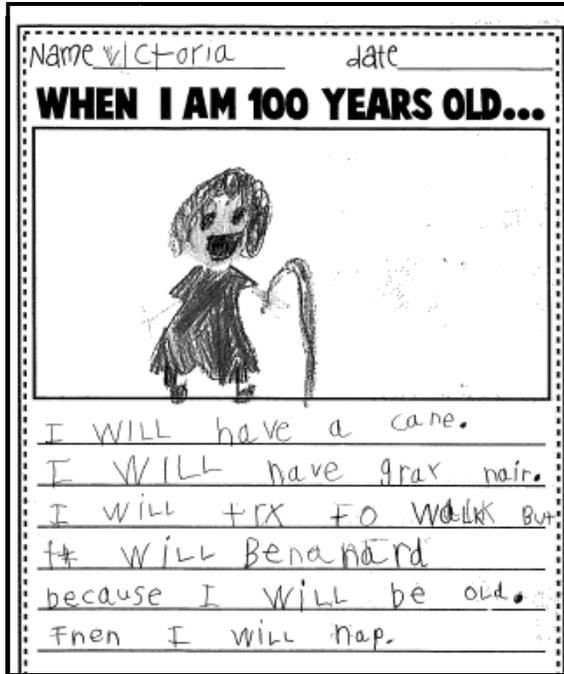


One day I went on the boat.
 The boat is scary.
 My Dad said, "You're OK."
 The boat is the funnest thing ever.
 The boat is fun.



When I am 100 Years Old

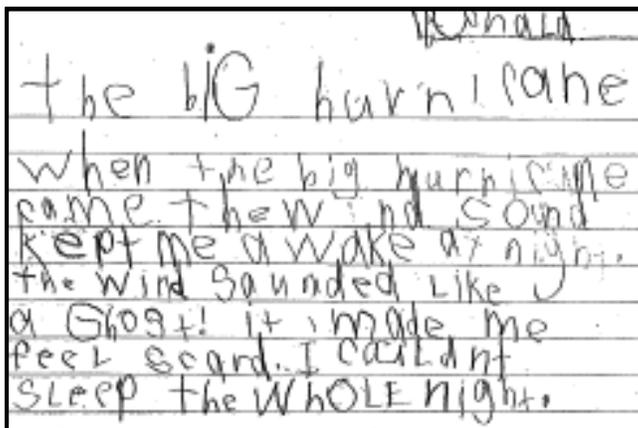
by Victoria Hudson
McMullen Booth Elementary School
Teacher: Cheyanne Mihalinec



When I am 100 years old
I will have a cane.
I will have gray hair.
I will try to walk but it will be hard because I will be old.
Then I will nap.

The Big Hurricane

by Ronald Johnston
Skycrest Elementary School
Teacher: Karen Baldino

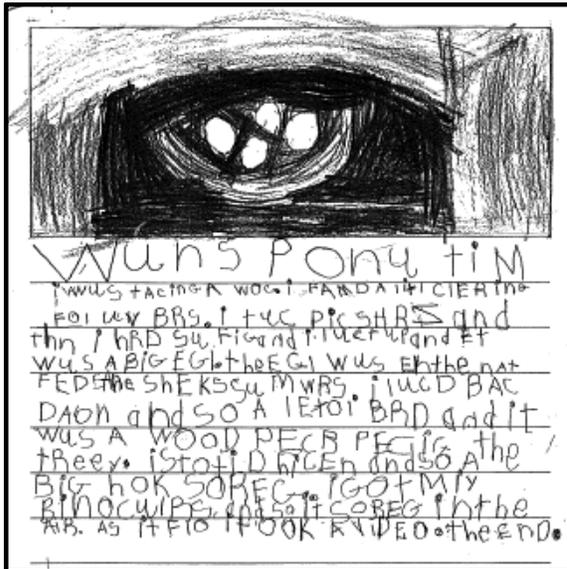


When the big hurricane came through the wind sound kept me awake at night. The wind sounded like a ghost! It made me feel scared. I couldn't sleep the whole night.



Birds High Up in the Treetops

by Preston Williams
 Jamerson Elementary School
 Teacher: Andrea Cate and
 Jessica Dean



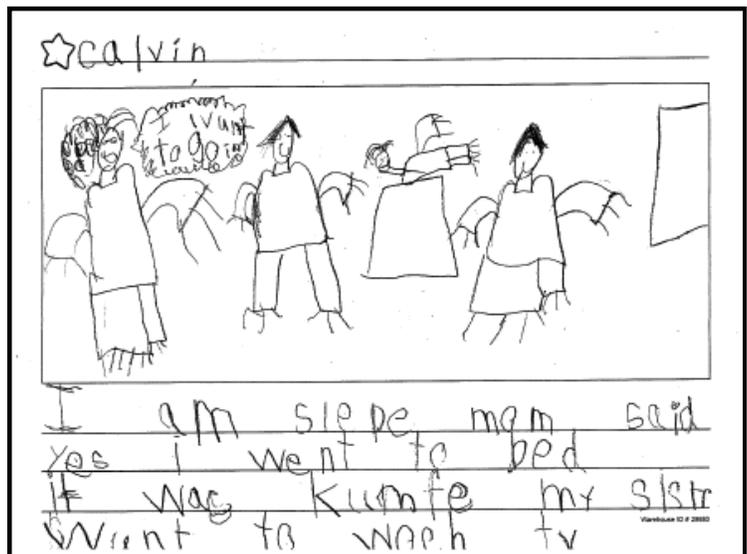
Once upon a time, I was taking a walk. I found a little clearing full of birds. I took pictures and then I heard something, and I looked up. It was a big eagle. The eagle was in the nest feeding the chick some worms. I looked back down and I saw a little bird. It was a woodpecker pecking the tree. Then I started hiking and saw a big hawk soaring. I went and got my binoculars and saw it soaring in the air as it flew. I took a video. The end.

Sleepy Time

by Calvin Gammage
 Sandy Lane Elementary School
 Teacher: Kim Martin



I am sleepy Mom said. Yes. I went to bed. It was comfy. My sister went to watch t.v.



I am sleepy mom said
 yes I went to bed
 it was comfy my sister
 went to watch tv



At the Park

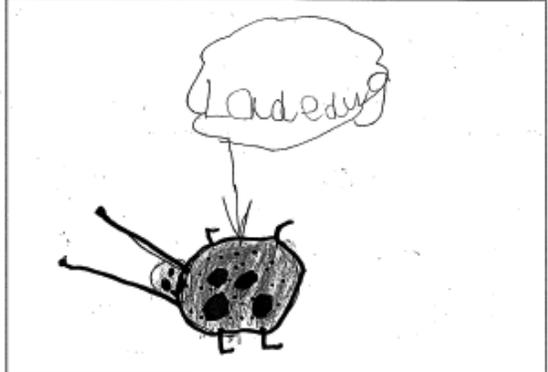
by Charlotte Tucker
San Jose Elementary School
Teacher: Heidi Baird



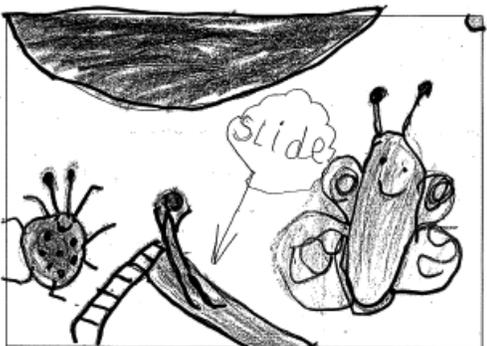
☆ At the Park by Charlotte Tucker



one day I went to the park. First, I see a butterfly. Next, I caught the butterfly in my hand.



Next, I saw a ladybug. It was yellow with spots.



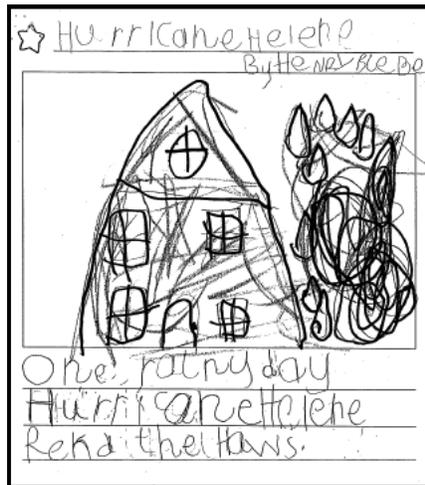
Lastly, I played at the park. I slid down the slide. Then I went home.

One day I went to the park. First, I see a butterfly.
Next, I caught the butterfly in my hand.
Next, I saw a large butterfly. It was gold with spots.
Lastly, I played at the park. I slid down the slide. Then I went home.

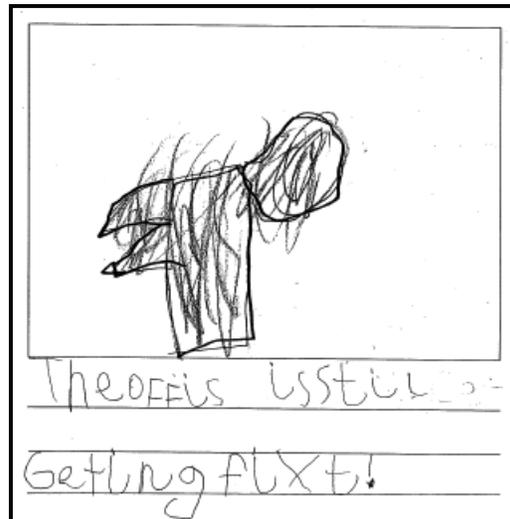
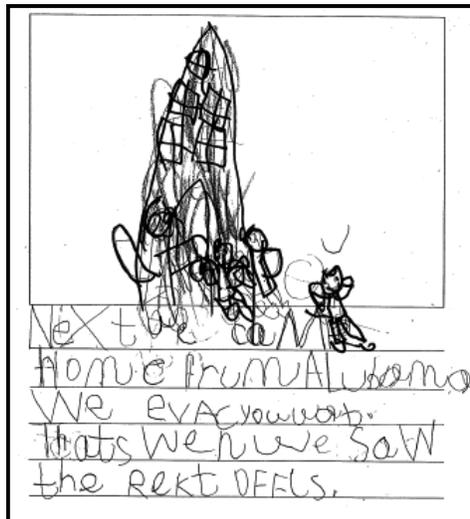


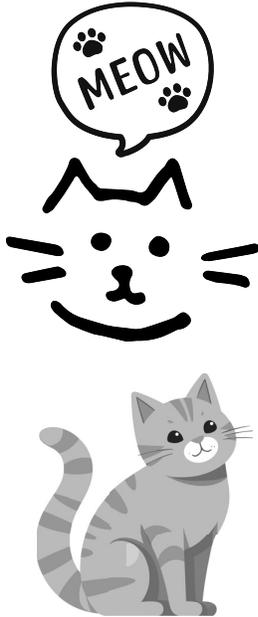
Hurricane Helene

by Henry Bieber
San Jose Elementary School
Teacher: Heidi Baird



One rainy day Hurricane Helene wrecked the house.
First the wind wrecked the house.
It wrecked the office.
Next we came home from Alabama.
We evacuated.
That's when we saw the wrecked office.
The office is still getting fixed!





All About Cats

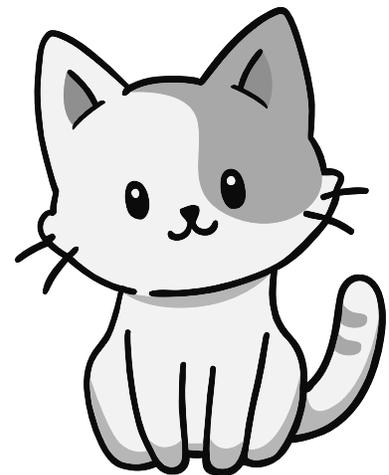
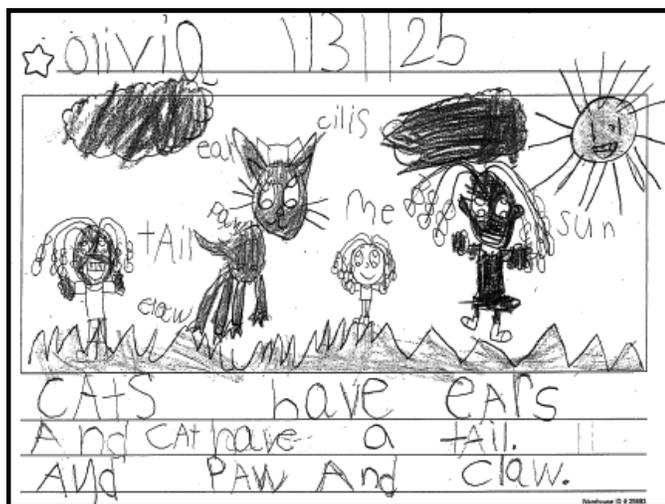
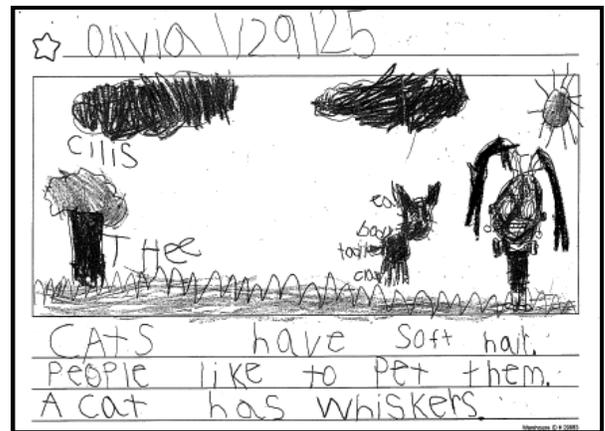
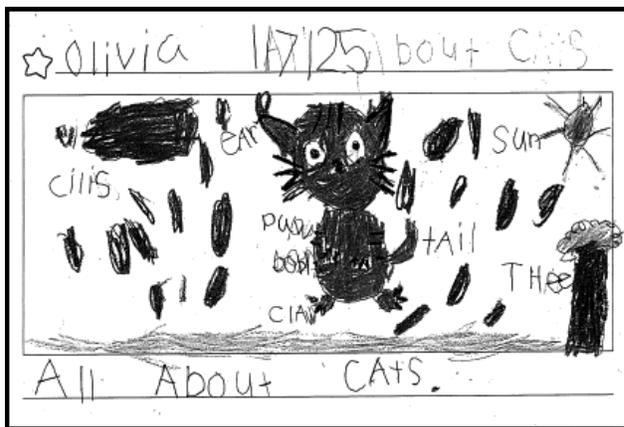
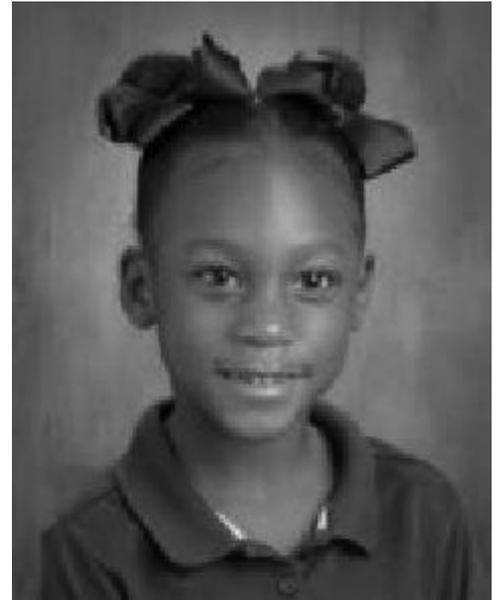
by Olivia Hester

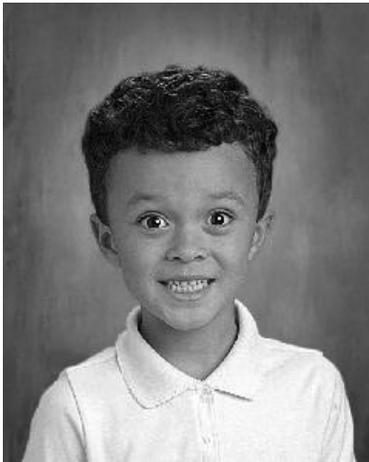
Lakewood Elementary School

Teacher: Tracy Boykins



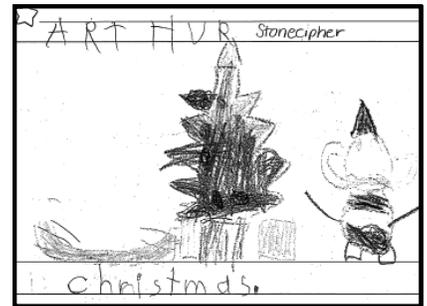
All About Cats
 Cats have soft hair.
 People like to pet them.
 A cat has whiskers.
 Cats have ears and cats have
 a tail and a paw and claw.



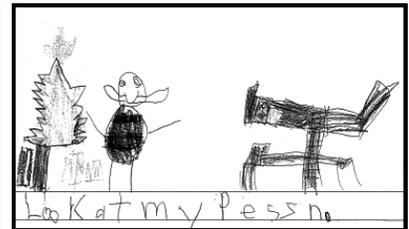


Christmas

by Arthur Stonecipher
Bay Point Elementary School
Teacher: Brandy Dickerson



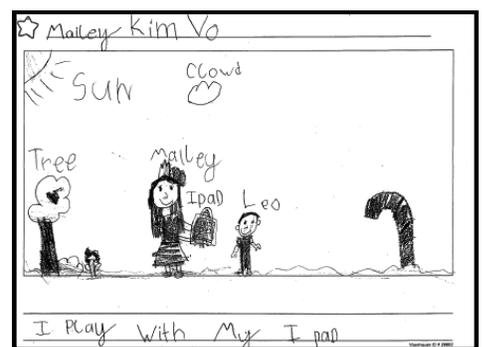
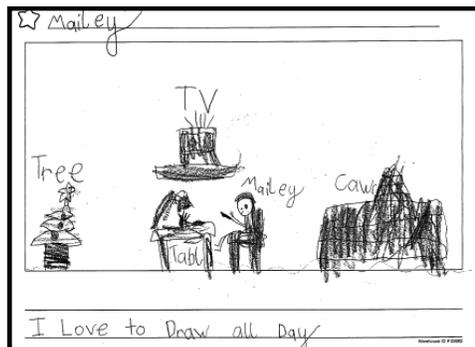
Christmas
Look at my snowman.
Look at the lights.
Look at the snow.
Look at my presents.

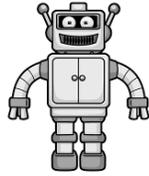
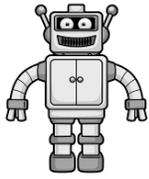


I Love to Draw

by Mailey Vo
Rawlings Elementary School
Teacher: Mary Lyons

I love to draw all day.
I play with my iPad.



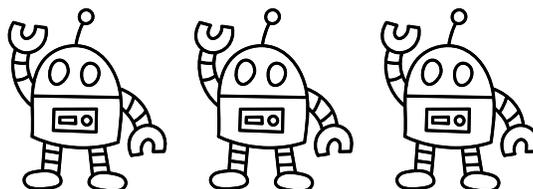
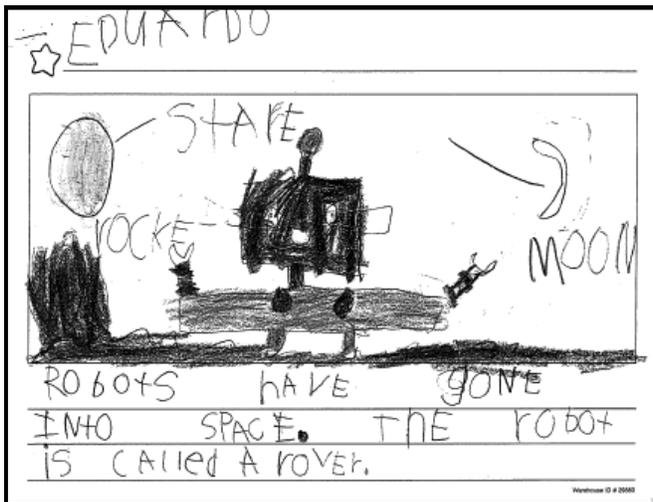


All About Robots

by Eduardo Lugo
Lakewood Elementary School
Teacher: Tracy Boykins



All About Robots
Robots have gone into Space.
The robot is called a Rover.
Robots are made of metal.
They have two legs and two arms.



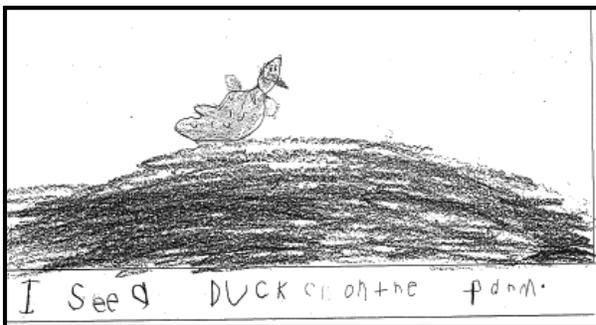
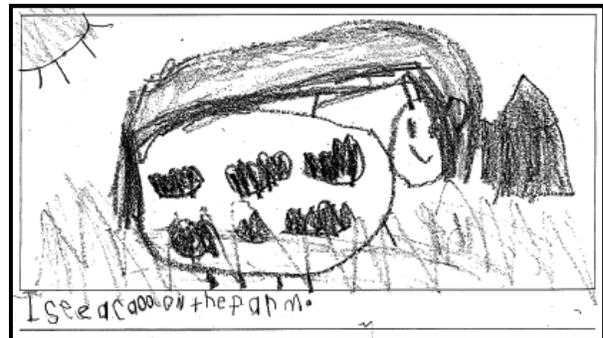
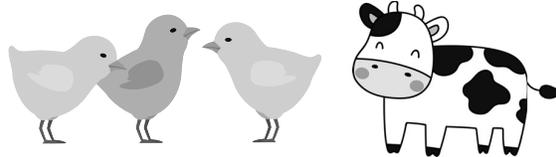
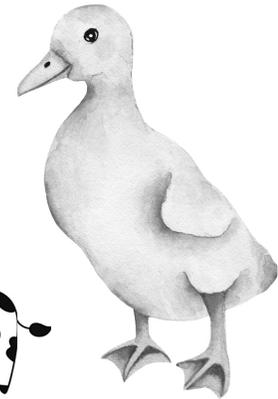


All About Farm Animals

by Abigail Santiago

Bay Point Elementary School

Teacher: Brandy Dickerson



Farm Animals

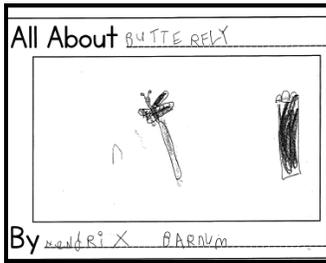
I see cows on the farm.

I see a duck on the farm.

I see a chick on the farm.

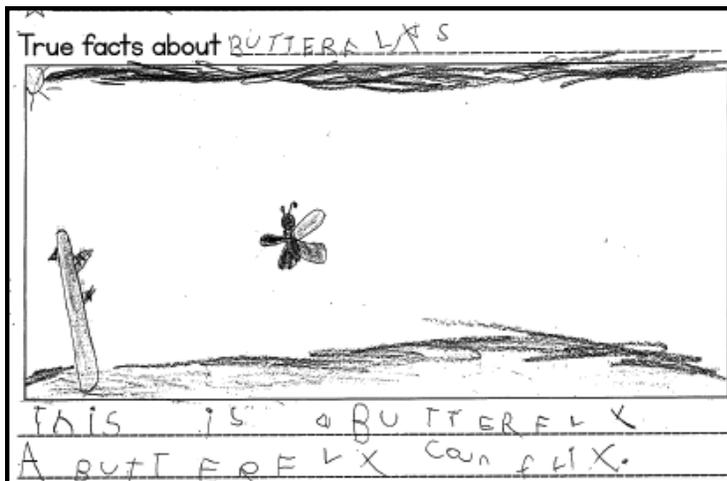
I see a dog on the farm.



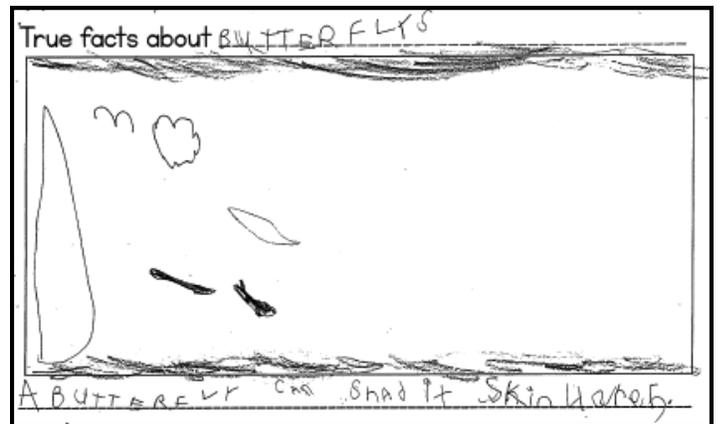
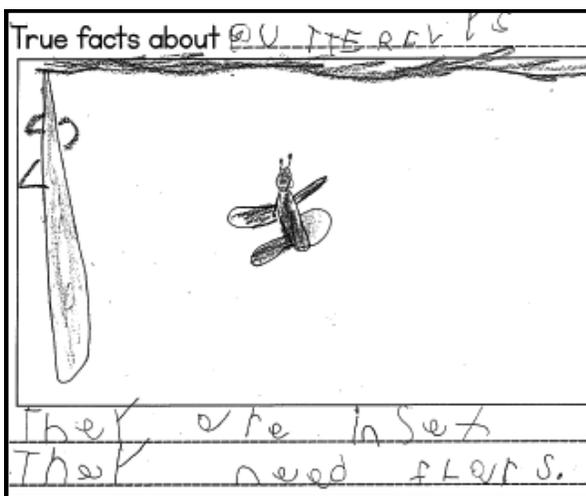


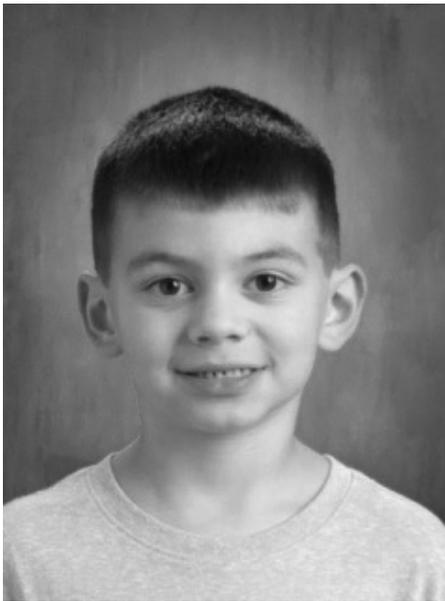
All About Butterflies

by Hendrix Barnum
 Bay Point Elementary School
 Teacher: Brandy Dickerson



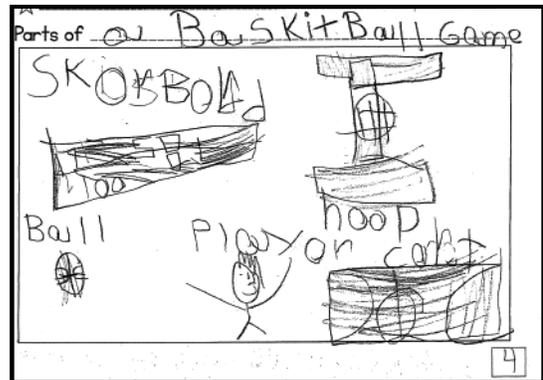
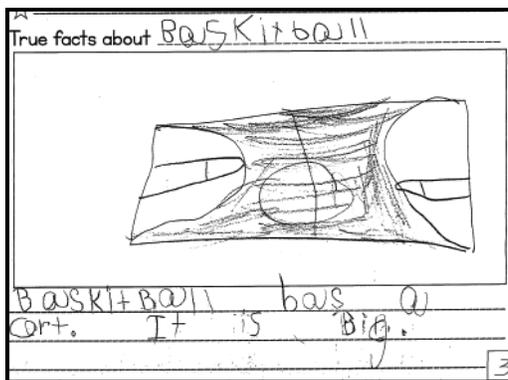
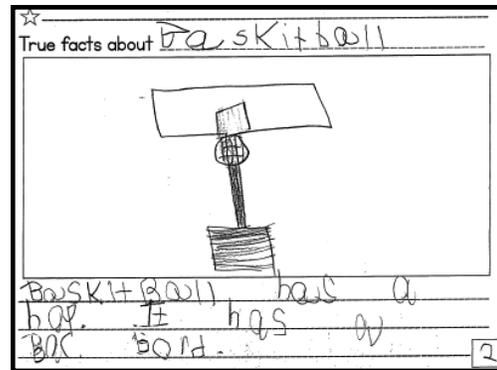
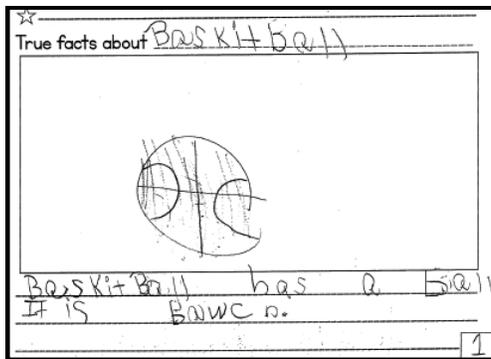
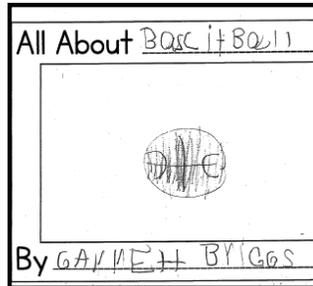
This is a butterfly.
 A butterfly can fly.
 They are insects.
 They need flowers.
 A butterfly can shed
 its skin 4 or 5 times.





All About Basketball

by Garrett Briggs
San Jose Elementary School
Teacher: Kathleen Kizilelma

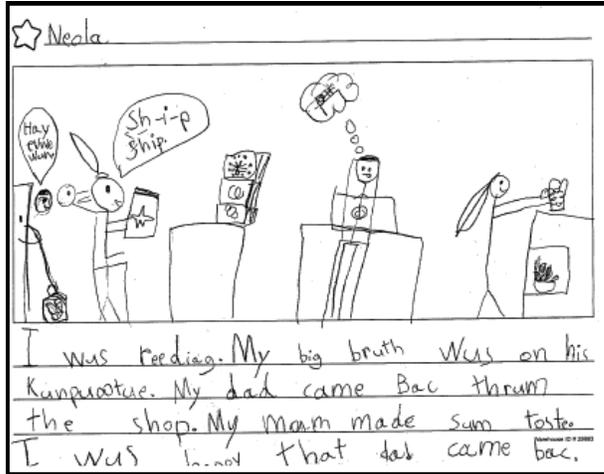


Basketball has a ball. It is brown.
Basketball has a hoop. It has a backboard.
Basketball has a court. It is big.
Parts of a Basketball Game:
scoreboard, hoop, ball, player, court

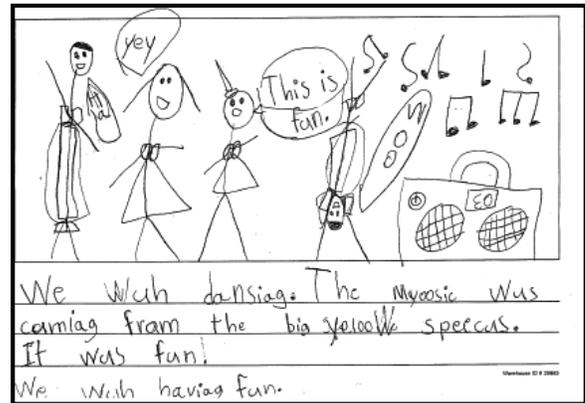


Family Day

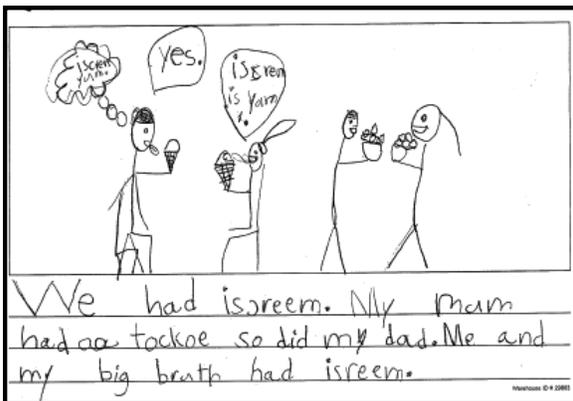
by Neola Shaw
Sandy Lane Elementary School
Teacher: Kim Martin



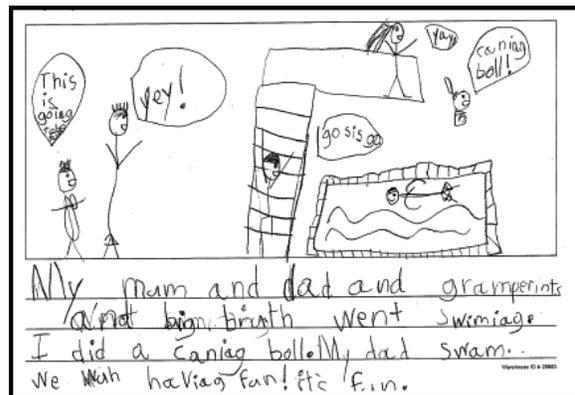
I was reading. My big brother was on his computer.
My dad came back from the shop.
My mom made some toast.
I was happy that dad came back.



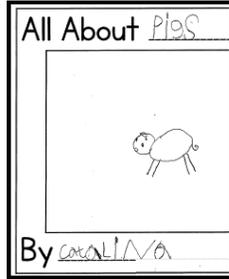
We were dancing. The music was coming from the big yellow speakers. It was fun! We were having fun.



We had ice cream. My mom had a taco. So did my dad. Me and my big brother had ice cream.

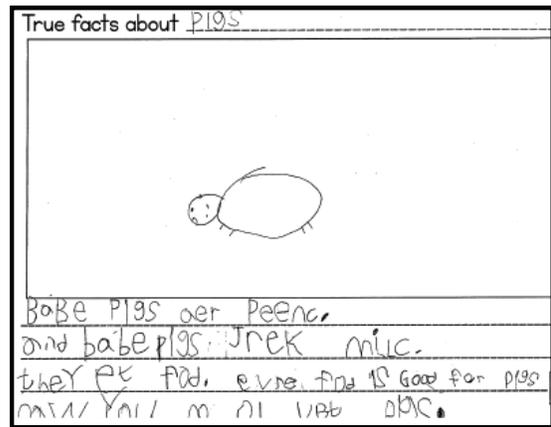
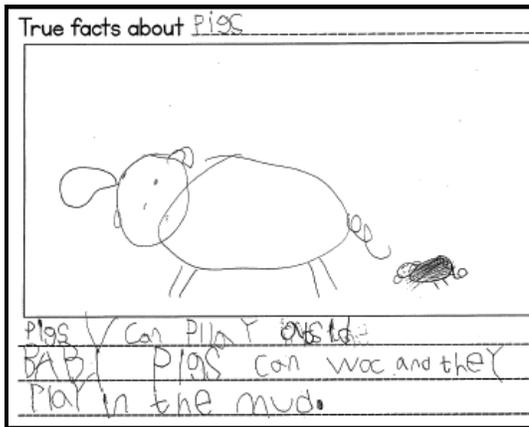
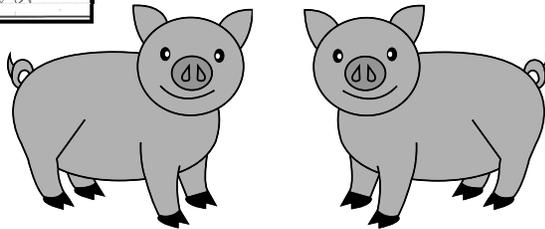


My mom and dad and grandparents and big brother went swimming. I did a cannonball. My dad swam. We were having fun! It's fun.

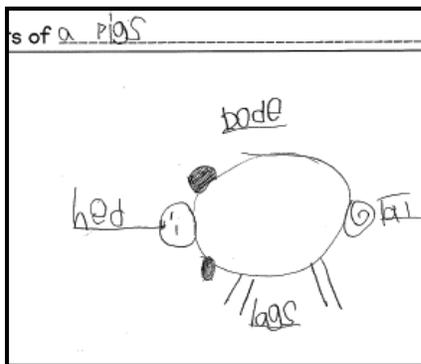


All About Pigs

by Catalina Sophia Mercado
 Seminole Elementary School
 Teacher: Donna Horton

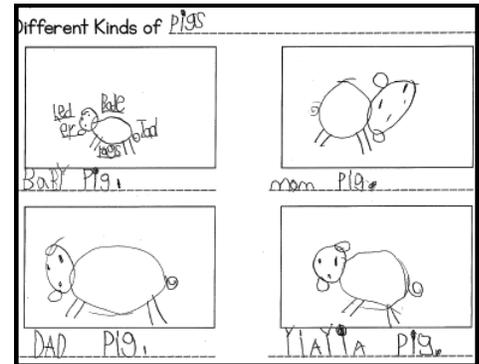


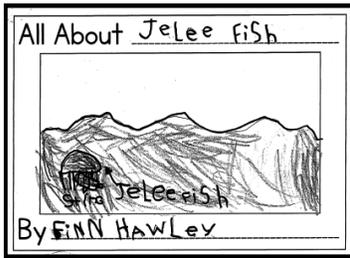
Pigs can play outside.
 Baby pigs can walk and they play in the mud.
 Baby pigs are pink and baby pigs drink milk.
 They eat food. Every food is good for pigs.
 Now you know all about pigs.



Parts of a Pig:
 head, body, tail, legs

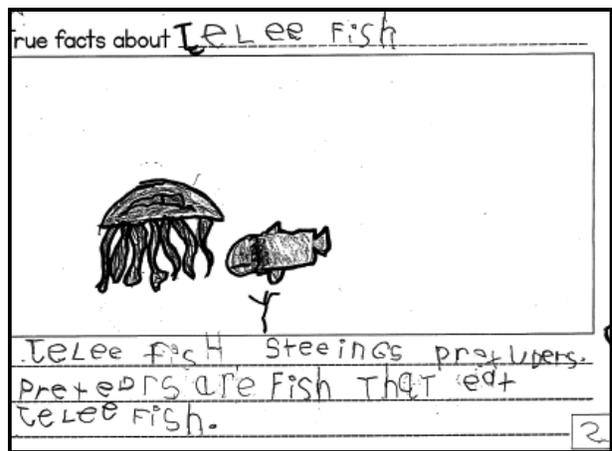
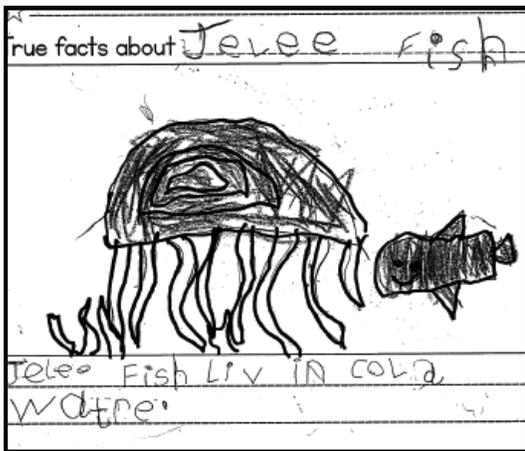
Different Kinds of Pigs:
 baby pig, Mom pig, Dad pig, YiaYia pig





All About Jellyfish

by Finn Hawley
 San Jose Elementary School
 Teacher: Heidi Baird

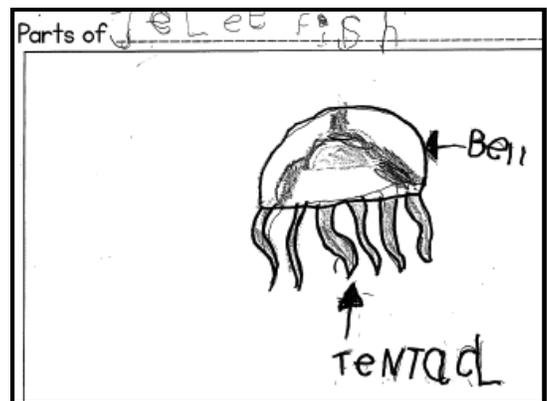
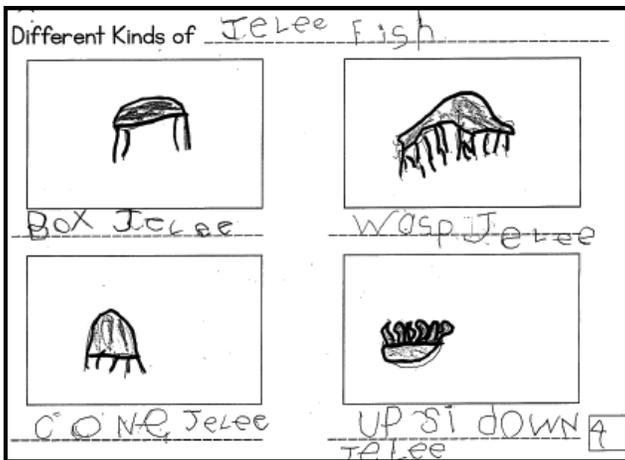


Jellyfish live in cold water.
 Jellyfish sting predators.
 Predators are fish that eat jellyfish.



Kinds of Jellyfish:
 Box Jellyfish, Wasp Jellyfish,
 Cone Jellyfish, Upside down Jellyfish

Parts of Jellyfish:
 Bell, Tentacle





All About Barbie
by Kemari Farmer
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teacher: Caroline Williams



Barbie



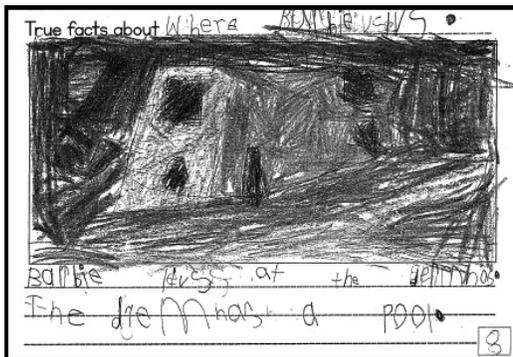
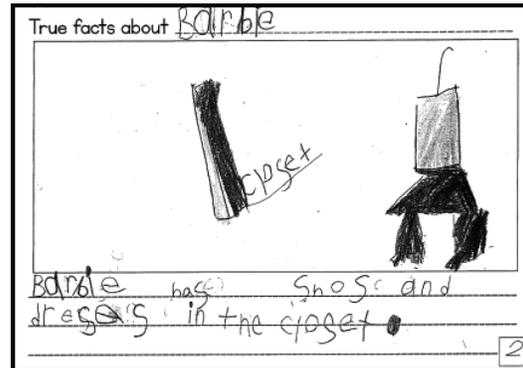
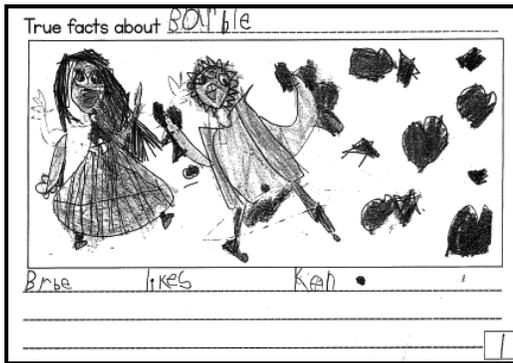
☆ Barbie

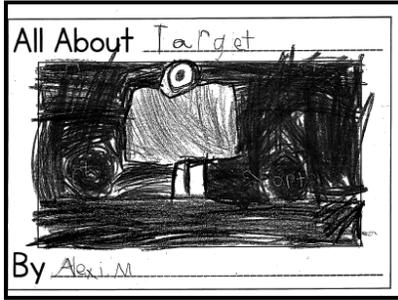
Table of Contents

	What Barbie likes	1
	What Barbie has	2
	Where Barbie lives	3
	Parts of Barbie	4

Barbie loves Ken.
Barbie has shoes and dresses in the closet.
Barbie has the Barbie mansion. The Barbie mansion has a pool.

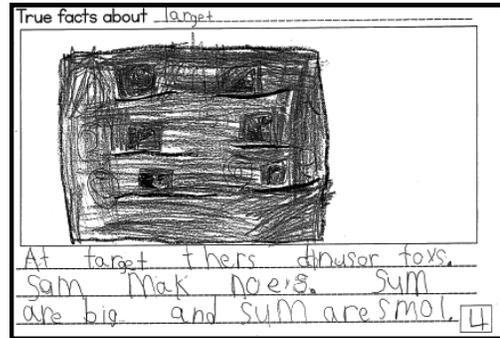
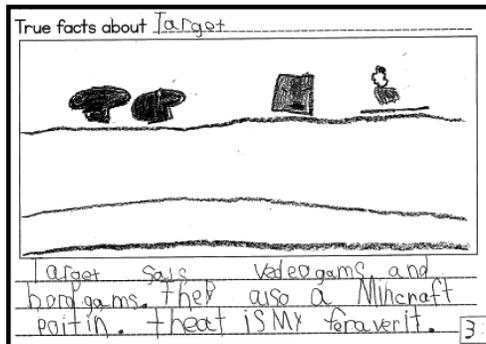
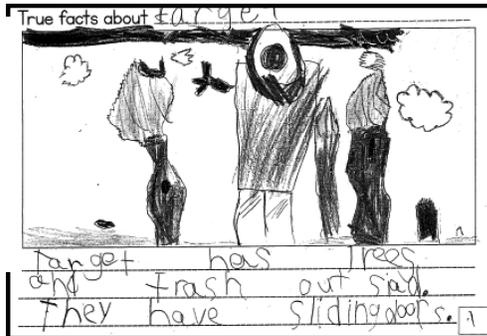
Parts of Barbie:
head, nails, dress



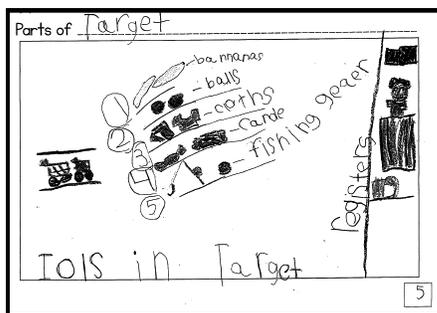


All About Target

by Alexi Machado
Oakhurst Elementary School
Teacher: Holly Gayden

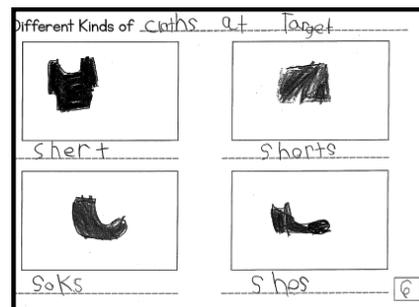


Target has trees and trash outside. They have sliding doors.
Target has candy and toys and a cart. The cart is red.
Target sells video games and board games. They also sell a Minecraft potion. That is my favorite.
At Target there's dinosaur toys. Some make noise. Some are big and some are small.



Toys in Target:
Bananas, balls,
Parts of Target;
bananas, balls,
clothes, candy,
fishing gear,

Registers
Toys in Target



Different Kinds of Clothes at Target:
shirt, shorts, socks, shoes

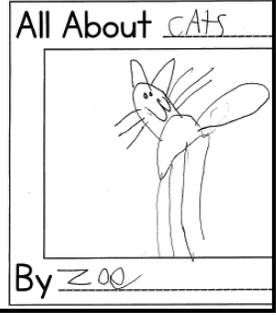


All About Cats

by Zoe Watson

Seminole Elementary School

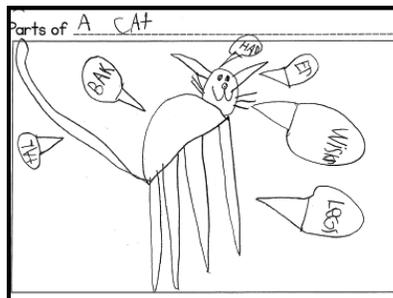
Teacher: Donna Horton



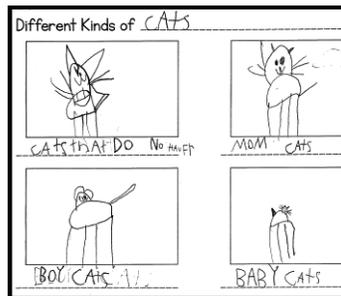
Baby cats are called kittens. Kittens can play with butterflies. Baby cats can drink milk.



Kittens can play with yarn. Kittens have paws. Kittens have fur. Kittens' fur can be brown and white. Now you know all about kittens.



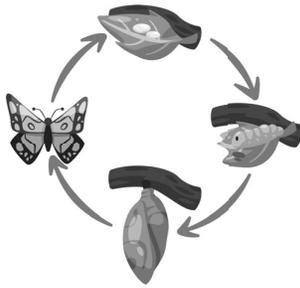
Parts of a Cat: tail, back, head, ear, whiskers, legs



Different Kinds of Cats:
Cats that do not have fur,
Mom Cats, Boy Cats, Baby Cats



How to Play with a Cat:
Get the yarn.
Get the toy mouse.
Get the toy popcorn.
Play with the cat.



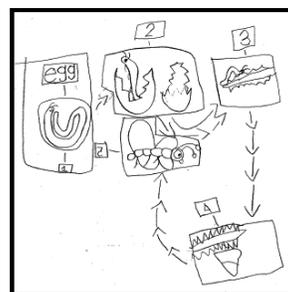
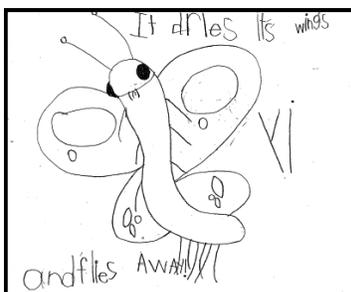
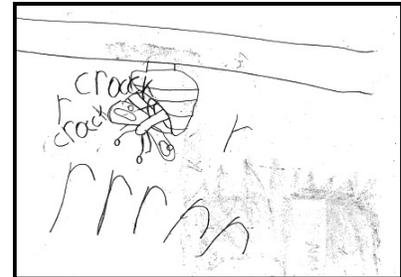
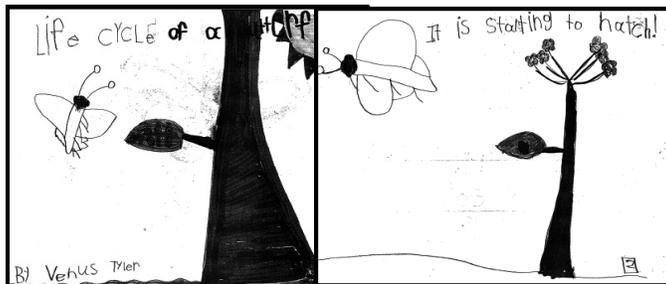
Life Cycle of a Butterfly

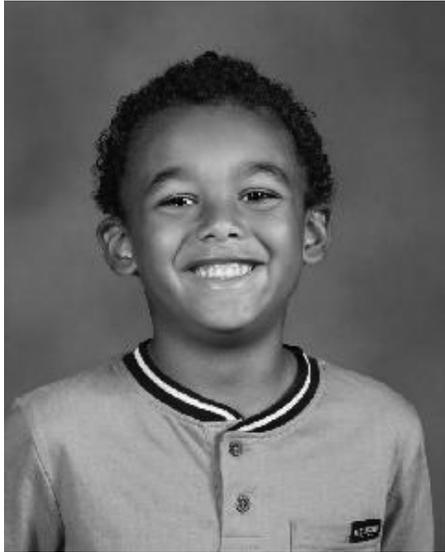
by Venus Tyler
 Skycrest Elementary School
 Teacher: Bonnie Ruby



Table of Contents	
	Laying eggs. 2
	hatching. 3
	They eat. 4
	Pupa BUTTERFLY 5

The Life Cycle of a Butterfly
 It is starting to hatch!
 Its silk is so sticky.
 They eat... A lot!
 Sleepy... It is in the cocoon.
 Crack! Crack! Rrrrr!
 It dries its wings and flies away!
 I love you.



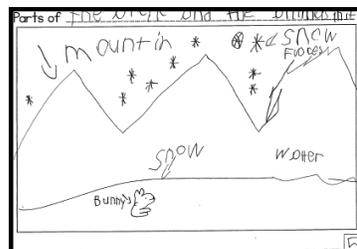
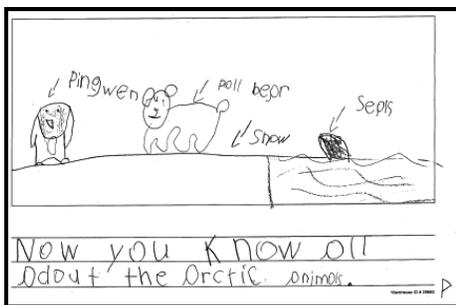
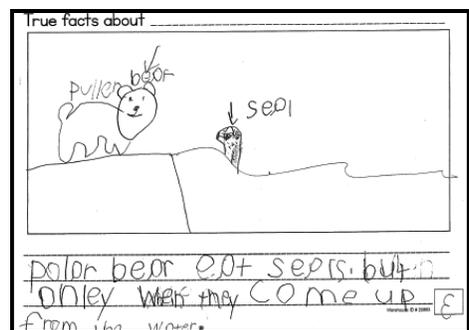
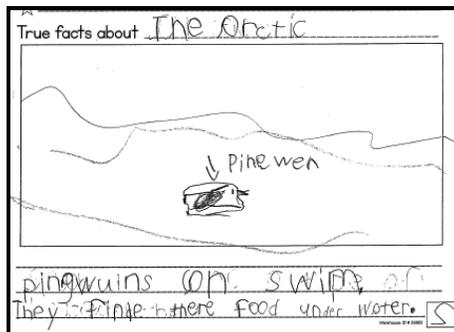
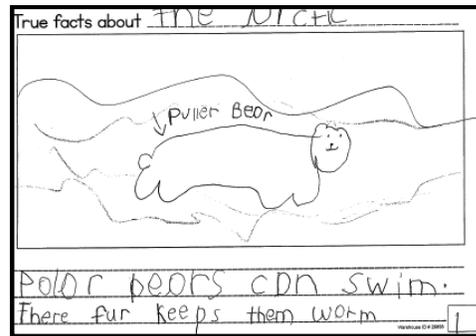
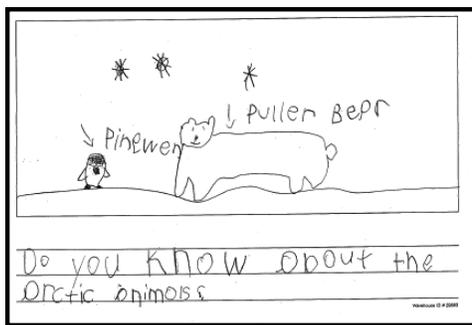


All About Arctic Animals

by Theodore Taylor
 Lake St. George
 Elementary School
 Teacher: Rachel Hart



Do you know about the Arctic animals?
 Polar bears can swim. Their fur keeps them warm.
 Penguins can swim. They find their food under water.
 Polar bears eat seals but only when they come up from the water.
 Now you know all about the Arctic animals.



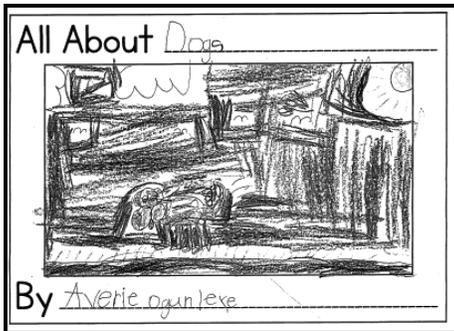
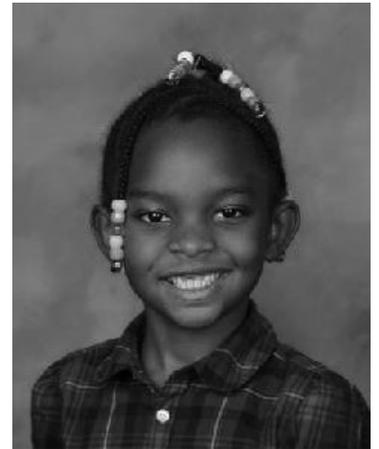
Parts of the Arctic: mountains, snowflakes, water, snow bunny

Different kinds of the Arctic Animals: Polar Bear, Penguin, Seal, Snow Bunny



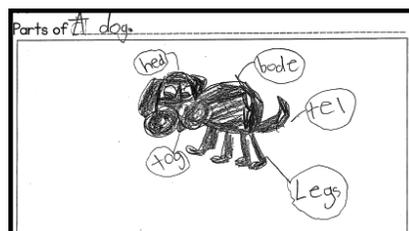
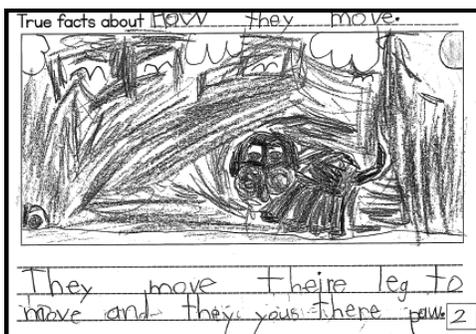
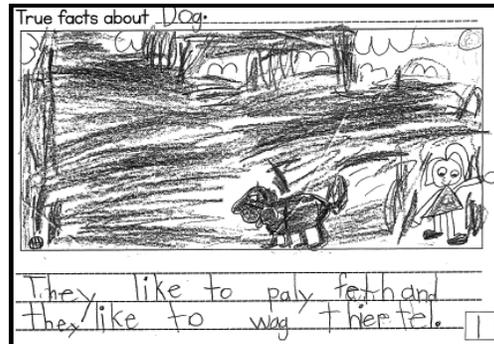
All About Dogs

by Averie Ogunleye
 Bay Vista Fundamental School
 Teacher: Caroline Williams



Dogs: They like to play fetch and they like to wag their tail.
 They move their leg to move and they move their paws.
 They eat the dog food and they drink the sink water.

Table of Contents	
	A fact about what they like 1
	How they move 2
	What they eat 3
	Parts of dog 4

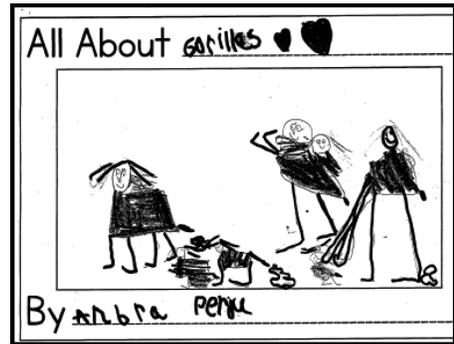


Parts of a Dog:
 head, tail,
 legs, tag

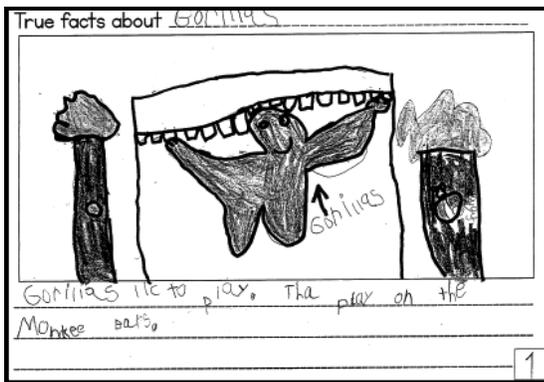
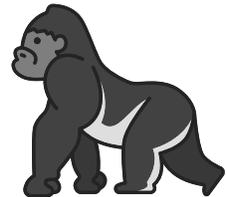


All About Gorillas

by Andra Perju
 San Jose
 Elementary School
 Teacher: Heidi Baird

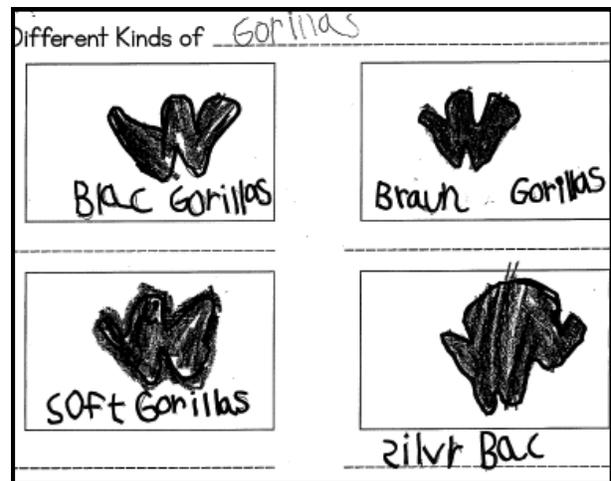
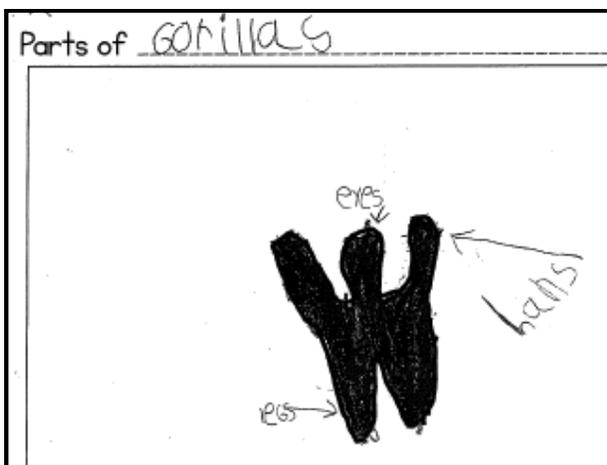


Gorillas like to play.
 They play on the monkey bars.
 Gorillas like to eat bananas.
 Bananas are here.



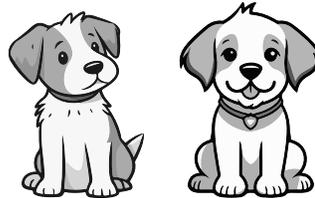
Parts of Gorillas:
 legs, eyes, hands

Different Kinds of Gorillas:
 Black Gorillas, Brown Gorillas,
 Soft Gorillas, Silverback Gorillas



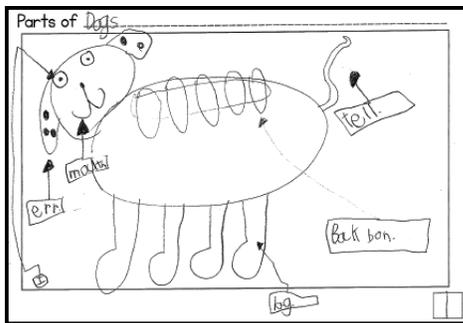


All About Dogs
 by Ruby Kozlowski
 Belcher Elementary School
 Teacher: Anne Fox



☆ RPP 7

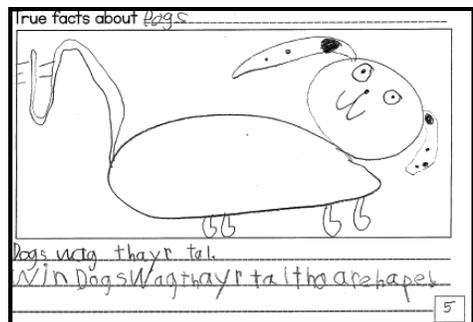
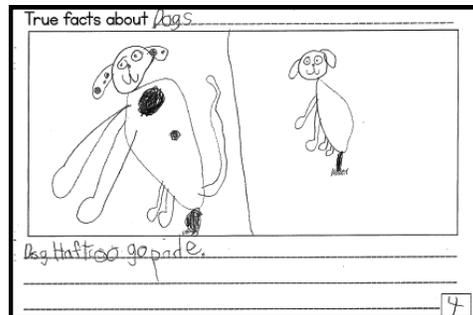
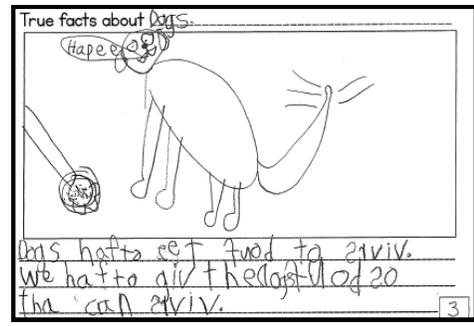
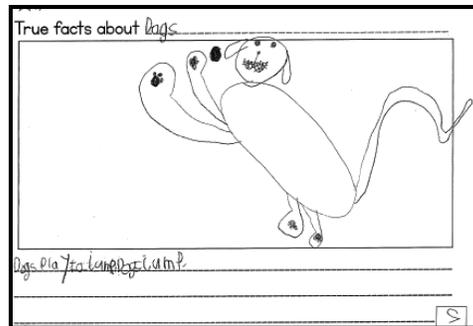
Table of Contents	
	Pts of _____ [1]
	Dogs Play _____ [2]
	Dogs eat _____ [3]
	Dogs Go Potty _____ [4]



Parts of Dogs:
 eyes, ear,
 mouth, tail,
 backbone, leg



Dogs play to jump. Dogs jump. Dogs have to eat food to survive.
 We have to give them good food so they can survive.
 Dogs have to go potty.
 Dogs wag their tail. When dogs wag their tail they are happy.



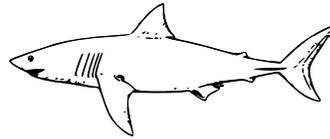


At the Beach

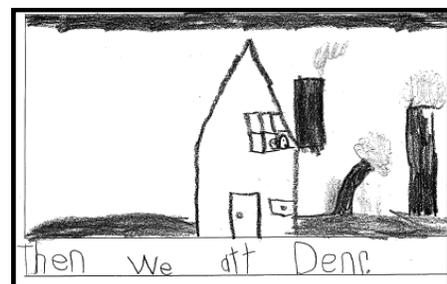
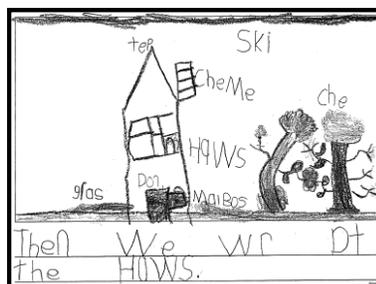
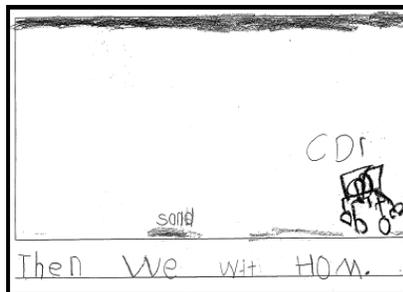
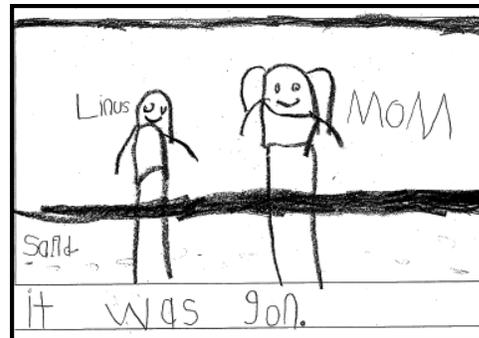
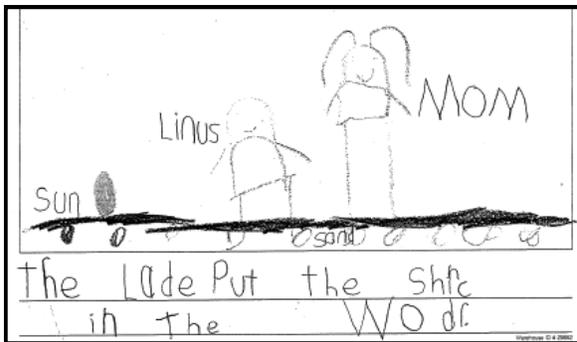
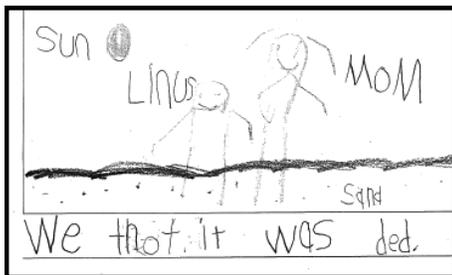
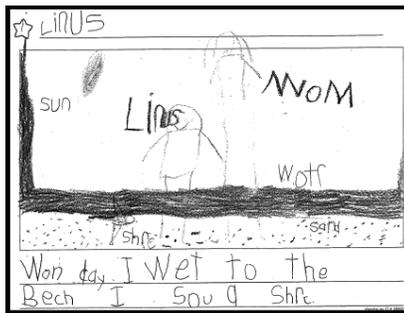
by Linus Gilton

Gulf Beaches Elementary School

Teacher: Stephanie Bennett



One day I went to the beach. I saw a shark.
 We thought it was dead.
 Some woman came to the shark.
 The lady put the shark in the water.
 It was gone.
 Then we went home.
 Then we were at the house.
 Then we ate dinner.



First Grade Writing

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35	Letter to the Principal	Benjamin Dedic
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37	Roblox 5 Star Review	Levi Kweyete
37	Excellent Elf	Ellie Lentz
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56	All About Axolotls	Raegan Trankel
57	My Opinion of Niko's	Reid Duren
58	All About Dogs	Charlotte Hradesky
59	How to Plant a Garden	Ellie Phillips
60	All About Octopus	Alexander Maron

Autographs

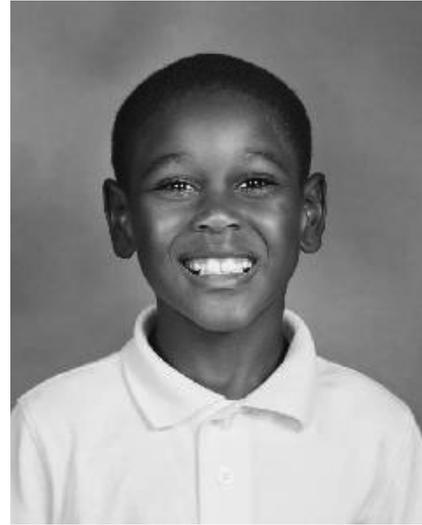


Basketball 5 Star Review

by Kyng Thomas

Lealman Avenue Elementary School

Teacher: Madison Ford



FIRST GRADE - MODULE E

SWOOSH! Basketball is the best sport in my opinion. I like basketball because I can shoot the ball. When I dribble between my legs. I can do tricks with the ball like lebron James and Steph Curry! I give basketball 5 stars. Go get your sneakers on and try it!

Swoosh! Basketball is the best sport in my opinion. I like basketball because I can shoot the ball. When I dribble between my legs. I can do tricks with the ball like Lebron James and Steph Curry! I give basketball 5 stars. Go get your sneakers on and try it!

Chrysanthemum Book Review

by Cole Gorichky

Gulf Beaches Elementary School

Teacher: Susan Topkin



FIRST GRADE - MODULE E

Chrysanthemum

Are you looking for a good book to read? Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes is one you should read! The main character is a mouse named Chrysanthemum. She goes to school. She gets bullied at school. If you want to know more, read this book. I give it 5 stars.

Are you looking for a good book to read? *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes is one you should read! The main character is a mouse named Chrysanthemum. She goes to school. She gets bullied at school. If you want to know more, read this book. I give it 5 stars.



My Favorite Mouse Character

by Hallie Puffer

Gulf Beaches Elementary School

Teacher: Renee Forte



My favorite mouse character
 In my opinion Penny is my favorite character and I will tell you why! First Penny is very kind. She returned a marble that she found to Ms Goodwin. Next Penny is sometimes nervous. She is nervous like when she found a marble and:


 She told that Ms Goodwin was looking for the marble. Last Penny is extremely sweet. For example she helps mom and dad. She helps with the baby siblings. Who do you like? Because I like Penny!


 So I want you to tell me who you like so I will make a book of a character that you like just for you. You can make copies for other people.

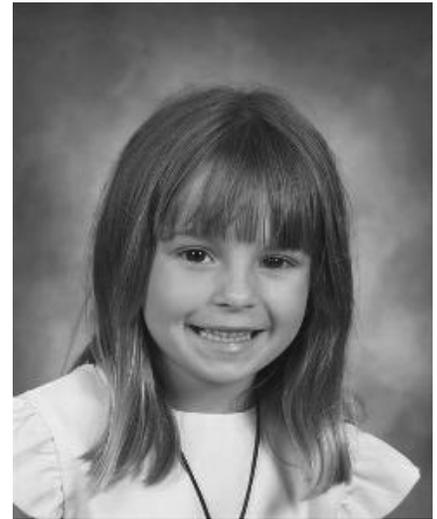
In my opinion, Penny is my favorite character and I will tell you why! First, Penny is very kind. She returned a marble that she found to Ms. Goodwin. Next, Penny is sometimes nervous. She is nervous like when she found a marble and she thought that Ms. Goodwin was looking for the marble. Last, Penny is extremely sweet. For example, she helps mom and dad. She helps with the baby siblings. Who do you like? Because I like Penny! So I want you to tell me who you like so I will make a book of a character that you like just for you. You can make copies for other people.

My Little Sister

by Zana Hochmuth

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean



When my Nana picked me up, I had a "Big Sis" shirt on and that day I saw my little sister for the very first time. Her face was red like a tomato. That first year she started to sit, walk and yell! Now she says, "No", "School" and "Mine" and hides toys behind her back. She gives me a hug every morning. Her favorite foods are chicken, water, bananas, and Chex Mix Cereal. She likes to throw her food on the floor. She tries to jump but just moves her knees. I love, love, love Nela!!




When my Nana pick me up i had a Big sis shirt on and that Day I saw my littl sis for vere first time. Her face was red like a tomato. that first year She started to sit, walk and yell! Now she says NO please and mine and Hides toys Behind Her Back. She gives me a Hug every morning



Her favorite Food's are chicken, water, Bananas and chex mix cereal. She likes to throw Her Food on the Floor. She tris to jump But Just moves Her knees. I love, love, love Nela!!!!

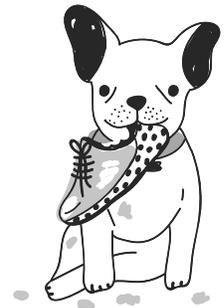
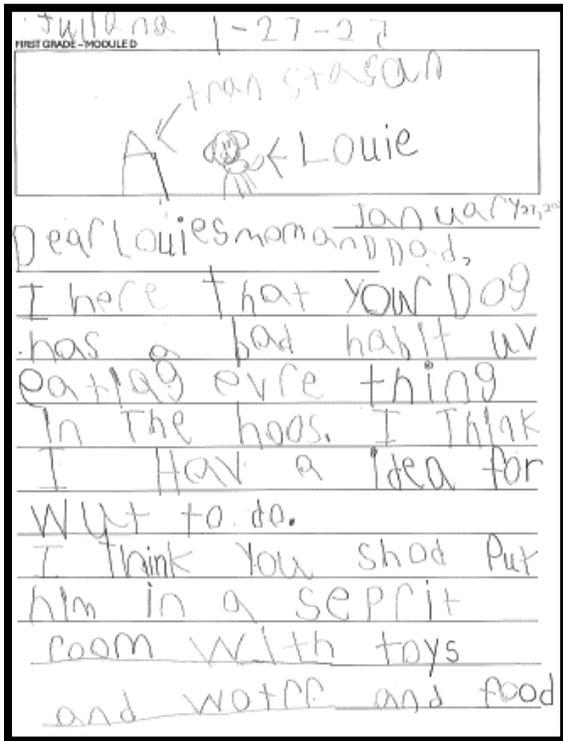
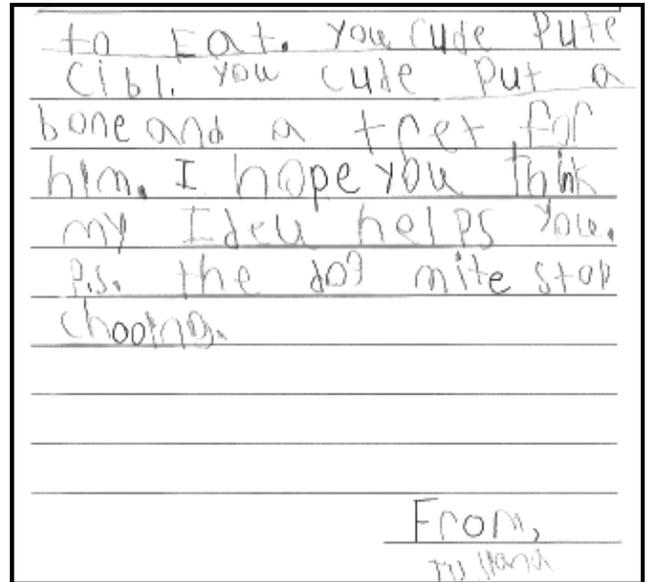


Letter

by Juliana Kern

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Shannon McConville



Dear Louie's Mom and Dad,

I hear that your dog has a bad habit of eating everything in the house. I think I have an idea for what to do.

I think you should put him in a separate room with toys and water and food to eat. You could put kibble. You could put a bone and a treat for him. I hope you think my idea helps you.

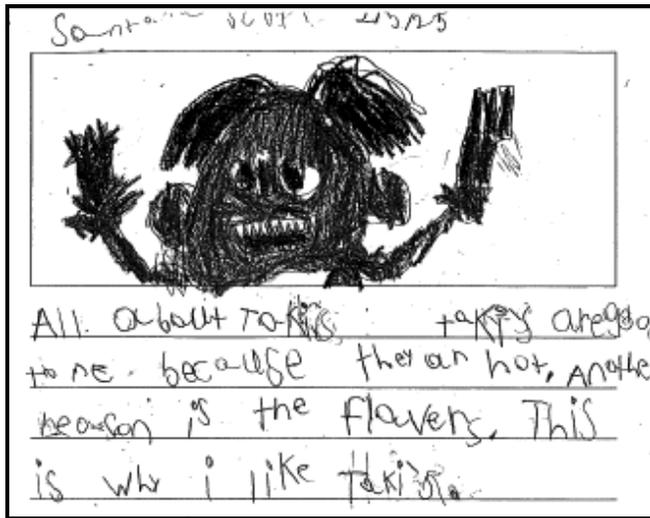
P.S. The dog might stop chewing.

From, Juliana



All About Takis

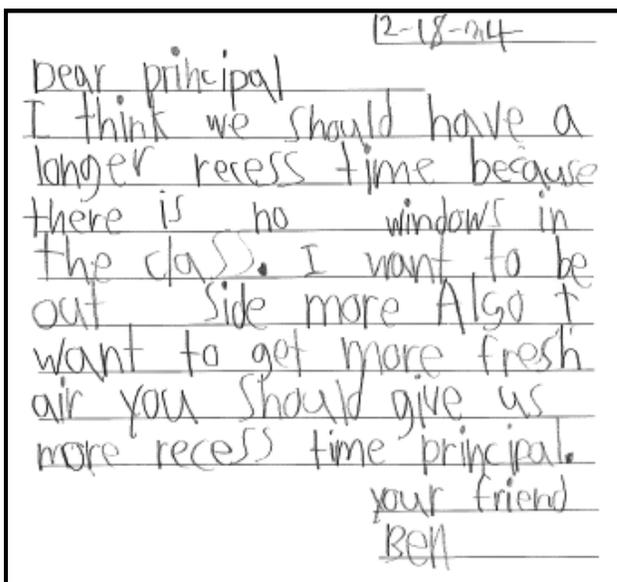
by Santana Scott
Melrose Elementary School
Teacher: Shelly Levitsky



All About Takis
Takis are good to me because they are hot. Another reason is the flavors. This is why I like Takis.

Letter to the Principal

by Benjamin Dedic
Eisenhower Elementary School
Teacher: Kimberly Daniels



Dear Principal,
I think we should have a longer recess time because there is no window in the class. I want to be outside more. Also, I want to get more fresh air. You should give us more recess time, principal.
Your Friend,
Ben



Lovely Lilly

by Shannon O'leary
Gulf Beaches Elementary School
Teacher: Renee Forte



In my opinion, Lilly is the most amazing mouse character. Chill, relax, and read about Lilly! First, I like Lilly because Lilly is fun! She has cool costumes. Next, Lilly is kind. She invites Chester and Wilson over for a sleepover. Last, Lilly is brave. She wore a costume that looks like a cat and scared the bullies away. I like all the mouse characters but Lilly is the best to me!

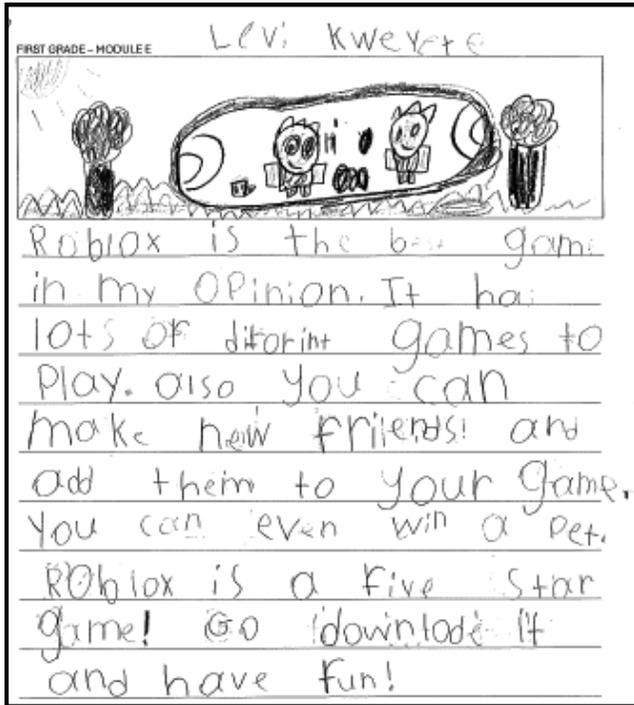
Name Shannon Date 1-23-25
Lovely Lilly



In my opinion Lilly is the most amazing mouse character. Chill, relax and read about Lilly! First, I like Lilly because Lilly is fun! She has cool costumes. Next, Lilly is kind. She invites Chester and Wilson over for a sleepover. Last, Lilly is brave. She

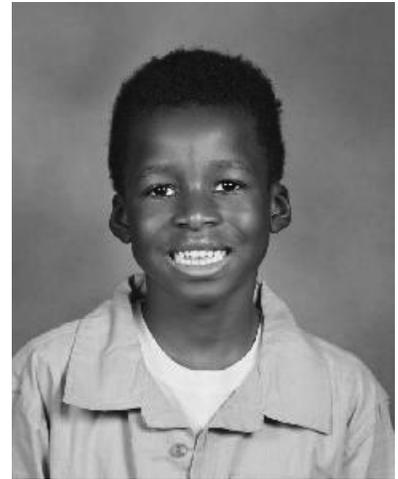


wore a costume that looks like a cat and scared some bullies away. I like all the mouse characters but Lilly is the best to me!



Roblox 5 Star Review

by Levi Kweyete
 Lealman Avenue
 Elementary School
 Teacher: Madison Ford



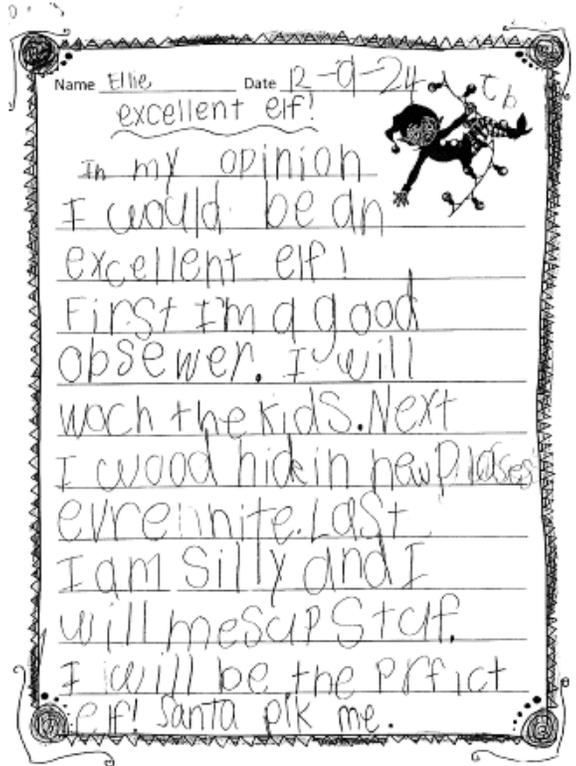
Roblox is the best game in my opinion. It has lots of different games to play. Also, you can make new friends and add them to your game. You can even win a pet. Roblox is a five star game! Go download it and have fun!



Excellent Elf

by Ellie Lentz
 Gulf Beaches
 Elementary
 School
 Teacher:
 Renee Forte

In my opinion I would be an excellent elf! First, I'm a good observer. I will watch the kids. Next I would hide in new places every night. Last, I am silly and I will mess up stuff. I will be the perfect elf! Santa pick me.





Cobra Nightmares

by Ethan Rynerson

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean



Cobra nightmares is the best roller coaster ever. Its top speed is 100mph its lowest speed is 75mph I went on cobra nightmares by myself. I felt super duper scared. My heart was pounding because the roller coaster was shaking



the roller coaster cobra nightmares can fit 10 people. its drop is so cool. it has shoulder straps. I would not go on it again,



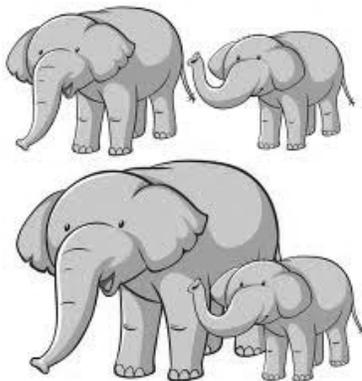
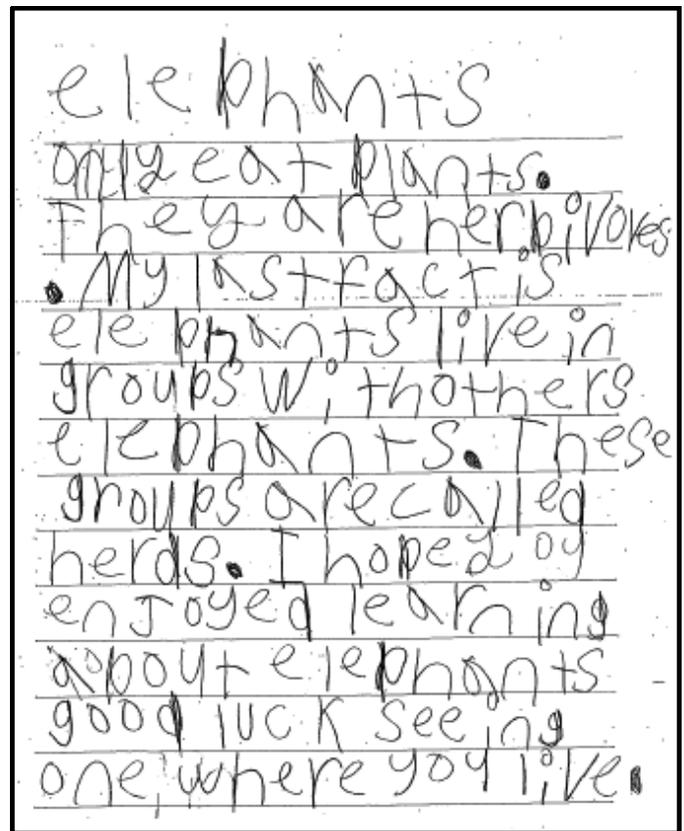
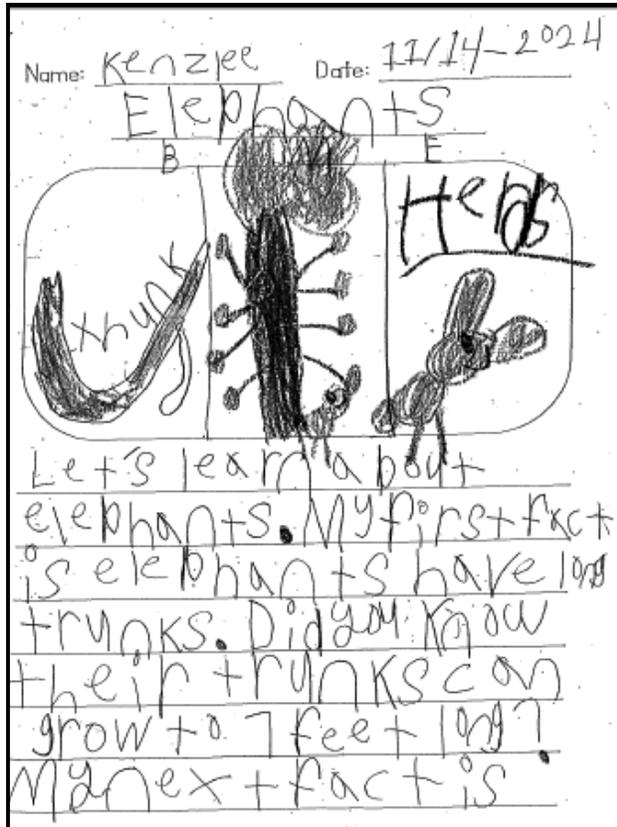
Cobra Nightmares is the best roller coaster ever. Its top speed is 100mph. Its lowest speed is 75 mph. I went on Cobra Nightmares by myself. I felt super-duper scared. My heart was pounding because the roller coaster was shaking. The roller coaster Cobra Nightmares can fit 10 people. Its drop is so cool. It has shoulder straps. I would not go on it again.

Elephants

by Kenzlee White

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Teresa Bodolay



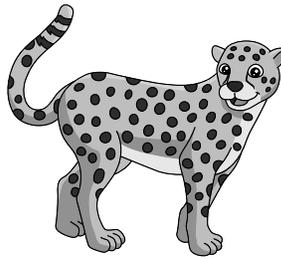
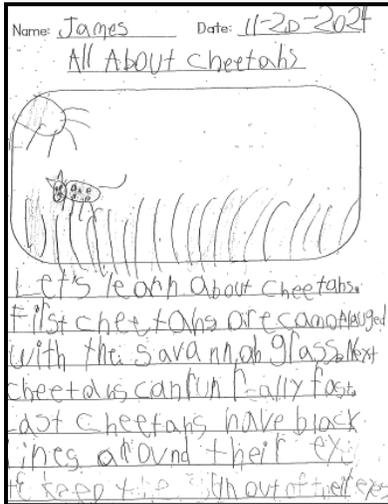
Let's learn about elephants. My first fact is elephants have long trunks. Did you know their trunks can grow to 7 feet long? My next fact is elephants only eat plants. They are herbivores. My last fact is elephants live in groups with other elephants. These groups are called herds. I hope you enjoyed learning about elephants. Good luck seeing one where you live.

All About Cheetahs

by James Stewart

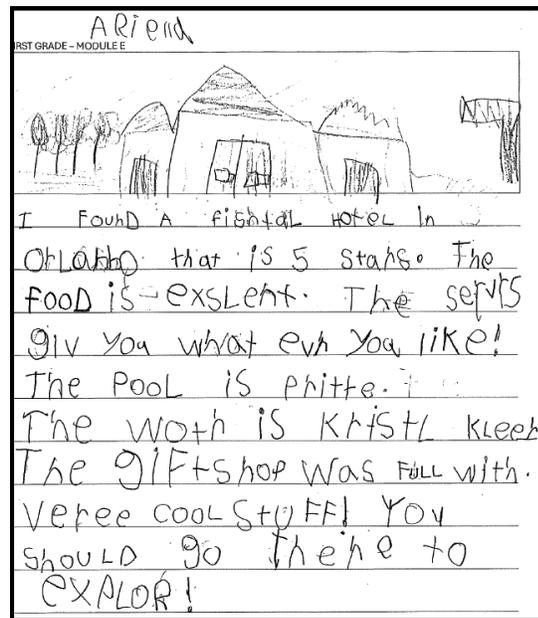
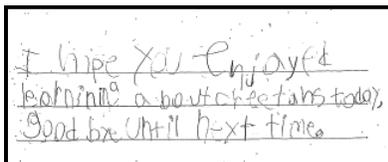
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Teresa Bodolay



Let's learn about cheetahs. First, cheetahs are camouflaged with the savannah grass. Next, cheetahs can run really fast. Last, cheetahs have black lines around their eyes to keep the sun out of their eyes.

I hope you enjoyed learning about cheetahs today. Goodbye until next time.



The Fishtail Hotel

by Ariella Wright

Lakewood Elementary School

Teacher: Jessica Marks-Crouch



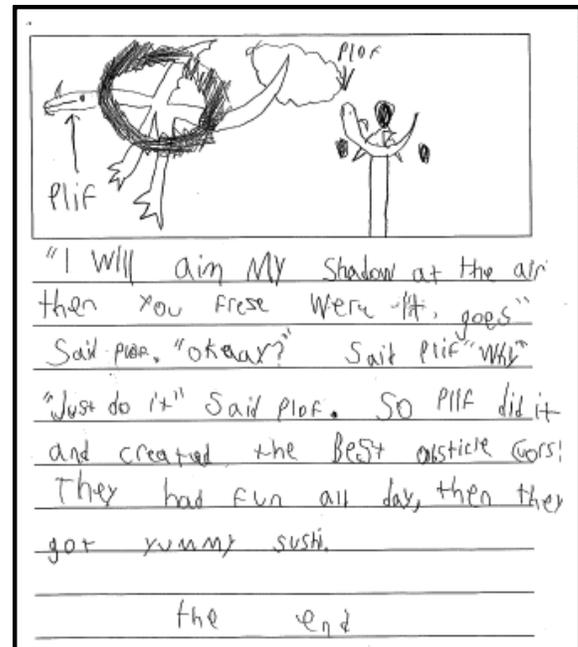
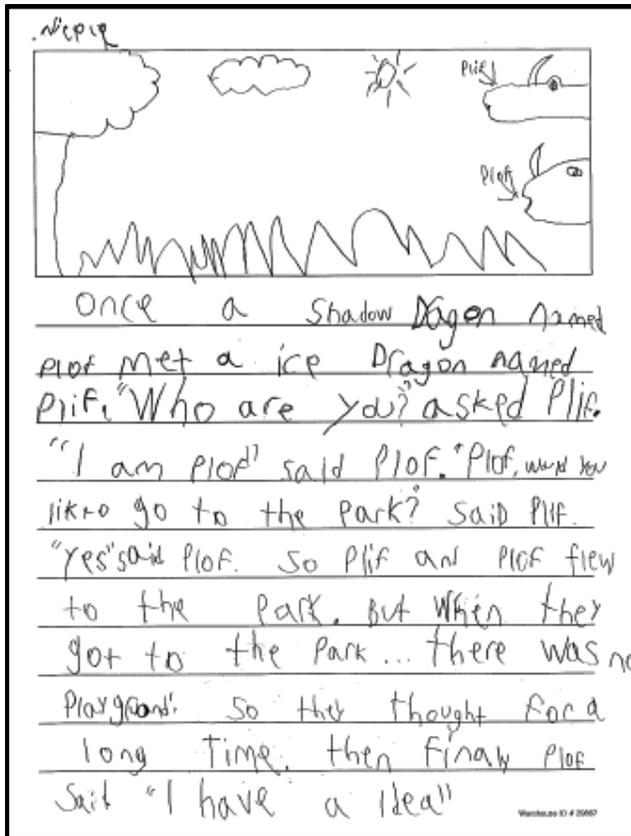
I found a Fishtail Hotel in Orlando that is five stars. The food is excellent. The servers give you whatever you like! The pool is pretty. The water is crystal clear. The gift shop was full with very cool stuff! You should go there to explore!

The Adventures of Plif and Plof

by Nicole Dunne

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean



Once a shadow dragon named Plof met an ice dragon named Plif. "Who are you?" asked Plif.

"I am Plof," said Plof.

"Plof, would you like to go to the park?" said Plif.

"Yes," said Plof. So Plif and Plof flew to the park. But when they got to the park... there was no playground! So they thought for a long time. Then finally, Plof said,

"I have an idea. I will aim my shadow at the air then you freeze where it goes.

Okay?" said Plif.

"Why?"

"Just do it," said Plof. So Plif did it and created the best obstacle course! They had fun all day, then they got yummy sushi.

The End

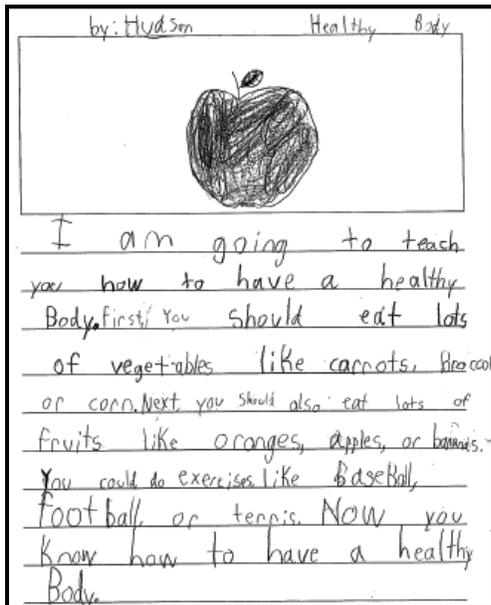
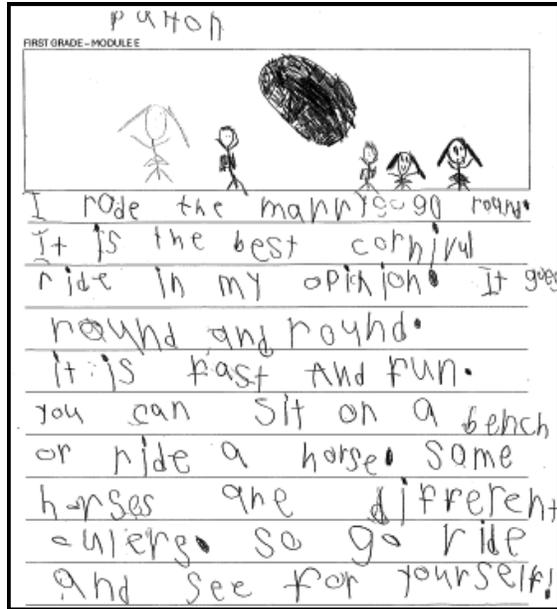


5 Star Merry-go-round

by Payton Billetdeaux
Lealman Avenue
Elementary School
Teacher: Madison Ford



I rode the merry go round. It is the best carnival ride in my opinion. It goes round and round. It is fast and fun. You can sit on a bench or ride a horse. Some horses are different colors. So go ride and see for yourself!



Healthy Body

by Hudson Porcelli
Elisa Nelson
Elementary School
Teacher:
Patricia Tremblay



I am going to teach you how to have a healthy body. First, you should eat lots of vegetables like carrots, broccoli, or corn. Next, you should also eat lots of fruits like oranges, apples, or bananas. You could do exercises like baseball, football, or tennis. Now you know how to have a healthy body.

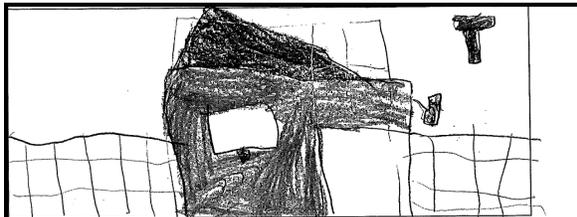


How to Take Care of Chickens

by Eloise Hansen

Northwest Elementary School

Teacher: Liz Johnson

Let me teach you how to take care of chickens. First make sure that you have a coop for your chicken. You can make a coop, or buy a coop. Next you have to go to a store. You can go to a pet store or feed store but whichever one you choose you still have to get your chicken there.



Then get a feeder for your chicken and a water container. Last put the feeder and water container in the coop. Then put your chicken in and you are done. Make sure to get the eggs every day.

Let me teach you how to take care of chickens. First, make sure that you have a coop for your chicken. You can make a coop or buy a coop. Next, you have to go to a store. You can go to a pet store or feed store, but whichever one you choose, you still have to get your chicken there. Then, get a feeder for your chicken and a water container. Last, put the feeder and water container in the coop. Then, put your chicken in and you're done. Make sure to get the eggs every day.





Bats

by Kaiden

Lake St. George Elementary School

Teacher: Susan Adams



Bats



What is black and can hang up side down? Is it a spider no it is a bat. First of all bats are mammals. Just like me and you. Bats can fly hang up side down on a branch and echolocation.



Did you know that bats can hear really good and they have echolocation? Bats help farmers because they eat crops. There is a bat called fruit bats they mostly eat fruit. They also sleep during day and hunt at night.

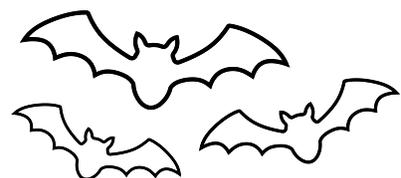
What is black and can hang upside down? Is it a spider, no it is a bat. First of all bats are mammals just like me and you. Bats can fly, hang upside down on a branch and use echolocation.

Did you know that bats can hear really good, and they have echolocation? Bats help farmers because they eat crops. There is a bat called a fruit bat. They mostly eat fruit. They also sleep during the day and hunt at night.

I hope you had fun learning about bats.

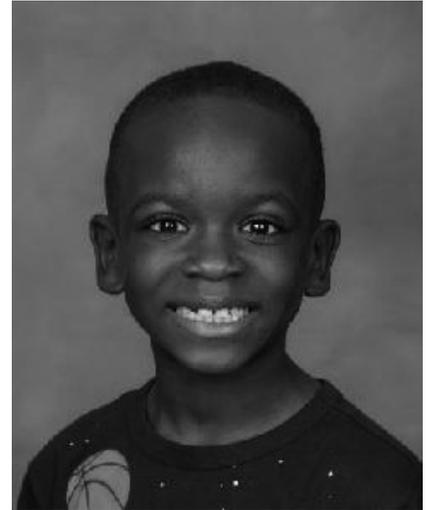
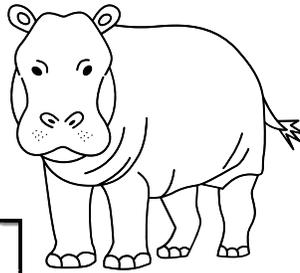


I hope you had fun learning about bats.



Hippopotamus Story

by Steven Fitzpatrick
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teacher: Sara Griffin



HOME STEVEN 11 HIPPOtamus. Story. 1



hippo

The Hippopotamus is the second heaviest land mammal. It lives in Africa. When hippos leave the water they secrete a red goo from the pores. In the evening hippos emerge from the water. 12-6-24

STEVEN HIPPOtamus. 2



Sum

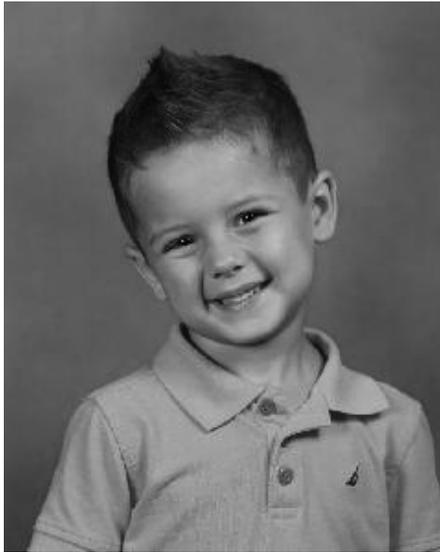
Pepe kill hippos for their ivory teeth. Sum Pepe think hippos are harmless but they are dangerous.

STEVEN HIPPItamus. 3



When hippos give birth to the baby they leave the seige to bond with her baby.

The hippopotamus is the second heaviest land mammal. It lives in Africa. When hippos leave the water, they secrete a red goo from the pores. In the evening, hippos emerge from the water. When hippos give birth to the baby, they leave the seige to bond with her baby. Some people kill hippos for their ivory teeth. Some people think hippos are harmless, but they are dangerous.

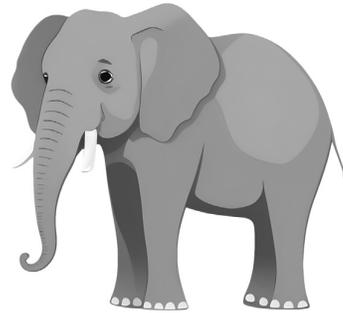


Elephants

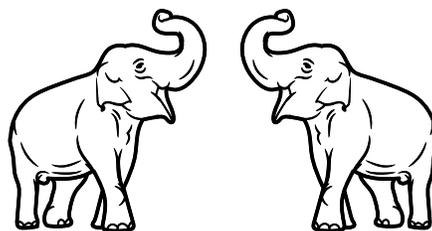
by Maddox Hartman

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Shannon McConville



What has 4 legs and a big trunk?
You guessed it! It's an elephant.
Keep reading to learn more. First,
a full grown female elephant is
called a cow. Next, elephants are
the biggest land animal in the
world. Last, elephants live in the
savannah and it is very hot. I hope
you liked learning about this
interesting animal.



Name: Maddox Date: 11/18/24
Elephants



What has 4 legs and a big trunk? You guessed it! It's an elephant. Keep reading to learn more. First, a full grown female elephant is called a cow. Next, elephants are the biggest land animal.

In the world, last elephants live in the savannah. And it is very hot. I hope you liked learning about this interesting animal.

Amazing Axolotls

by Ellie Luben

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

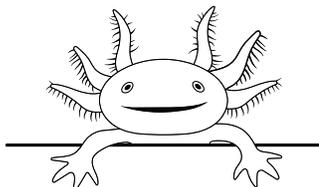
Teacher: Shannon McConville



Name: Ellie Date: 11-27
Amazing Axolotls

What has a long tail and is small? You guess it!
 It is an axolotl. Keep reading to learn more.
 First, axolotls hide during the day. Axolotls hide during the day because

they want to stay safe from predators.
 Next, axolotls sleep with their eyes open! Isn't that crazy that they sleep with their eyes open?
 Last, axolotls can grow new body parts! Axolotls can grow a new heart! Wow!
 I hope you enjoyed learning all about axolotls! See you next time!

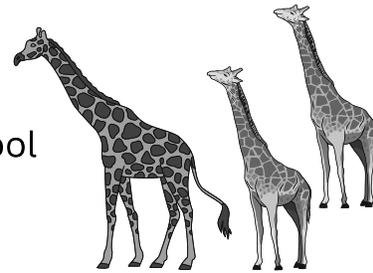


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All About Giraffes

by Mason Mueller
Curtis Fundamental School
Teacher: Emily Arends



☆ all about Giraffes.
by Mason Mueller

giraffes are a grate
anmall. giraffes are
the tallest anmall in
the worlds bigist
anmall.

Giraffes are great animals. Giraffes are the tallest animal in the world and the biggest animal. Males swing their neck to show that they're stronger to impress a female. Giraffes are plant eaters. They have a long neck to reach tall trees. They have a blue, black tongue. Have you ever seen a giraffe?
Diagram: eyes, head neck, legs, paws

giraffes are
plant eaters. they have
a long neck to reach
tall trees. they have
a blue, black tung.

males SWING there
neck to showe that
there strong er. to
inpres a felle male.

head
neck
eye
leg
paw

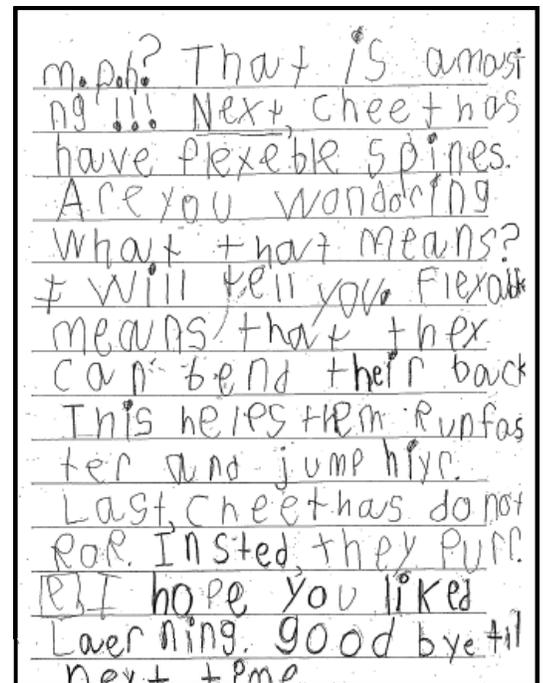
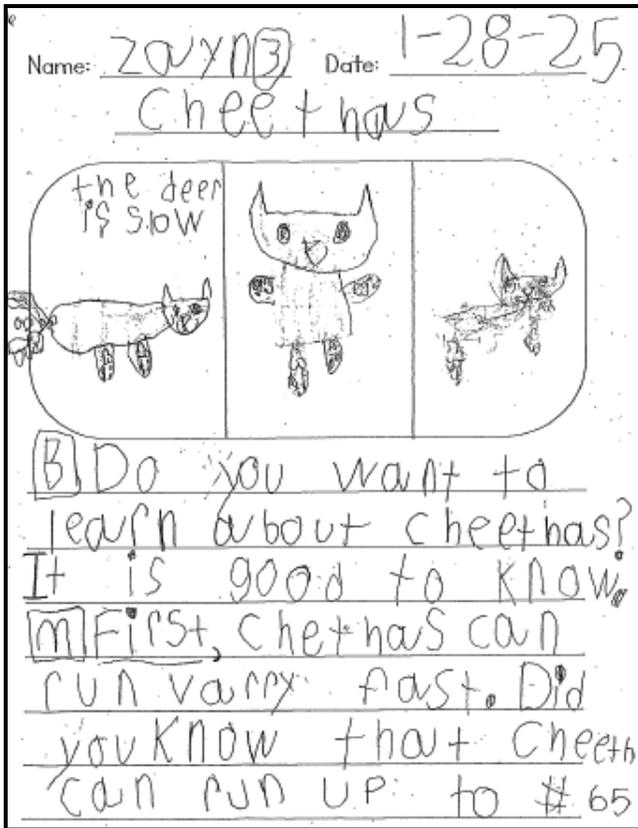
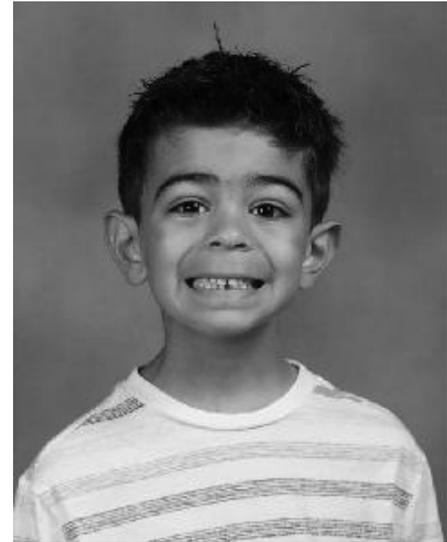
diagram. Have you
ever Soll a giraffe?

Cheetahs

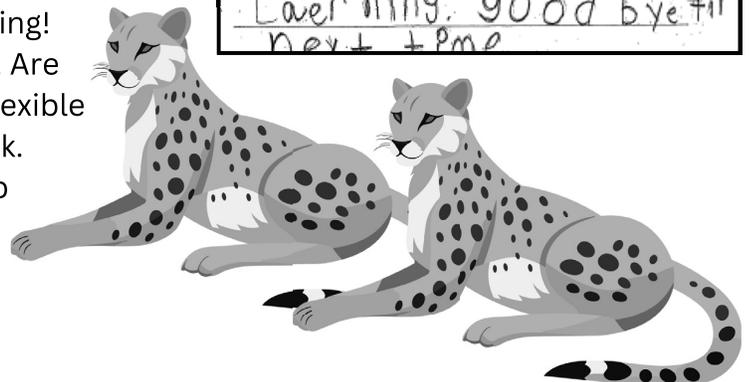
by Zayn El Tabakh

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Shannon McConville



Do you want to learn about cheetahs? It is good to know. First, cheetahs can run very fast. Did you know that cheetahs can run up to 65 mph? That is amazing! Next, cheetahs have flexible spines. Are you wondering what that means? Flexible means that they can bend their back. This helps them run faster and jump higher. Last, cheetahs do not roar. Instead, they purr. I hope you liked learning. Goodbye 'til next time.



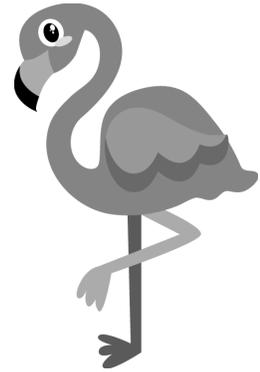


All About Flamingos

by Reagan Flint

Bay Vista Fundamental School

Teacher: Errin Randolph



Name: Reagan Flint

1



What are flamingos?
They are just pink birds. With pink feathers.

Name: Reagan Flint

2



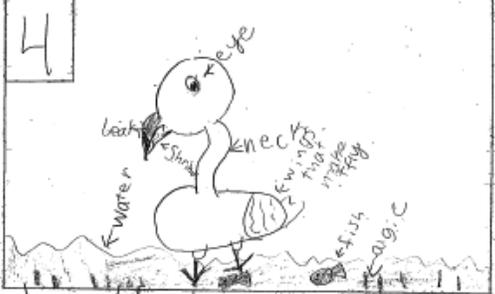
How are flamingos birds? There are a few different ways they are birds. For example,

3



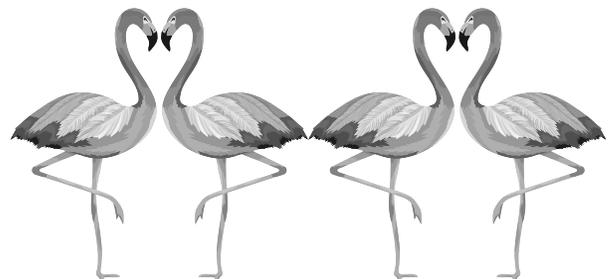
How are flamingos pink? Flamingos are pink because of the food they eat. For example they eat shrimp.

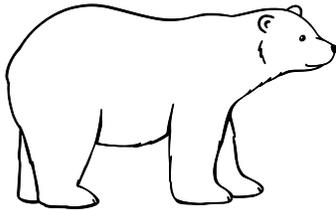
4



What do flamingos eat? They eat fish, shrimp, and algae.

What are flamingos? They are just pink birds with pink feathers. How are flamingos birds? There are a few different ways they are birds. For example, they can fly. How are flamingos pink? Flamingos are pink because of the food they eat. For example, they eat shrimp. What do flamingos eat? They eat fish, shrimp, and algae.



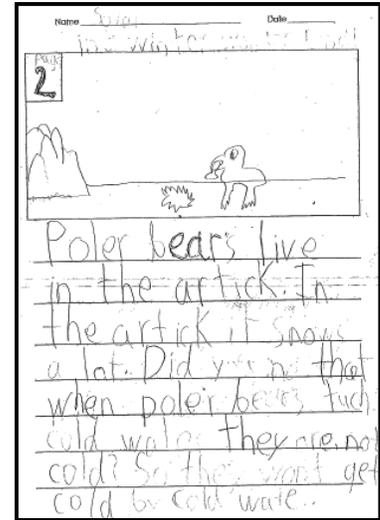
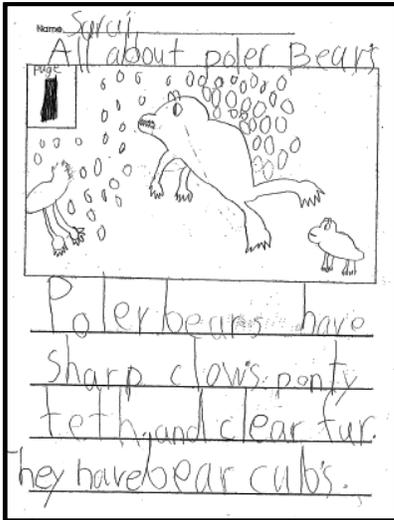
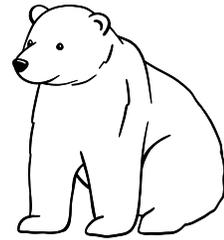


All About Polar Bears

by Sarai Shorter

Bay Vista Fundamental School

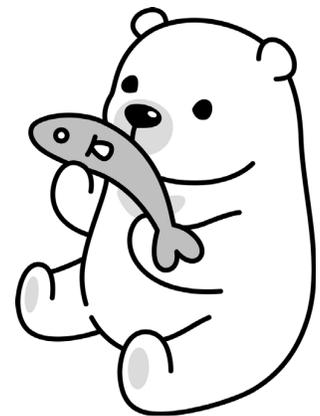
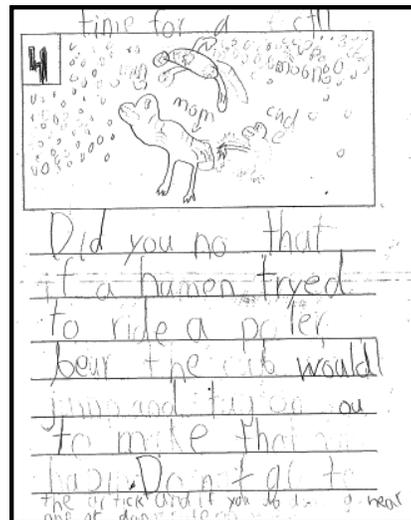
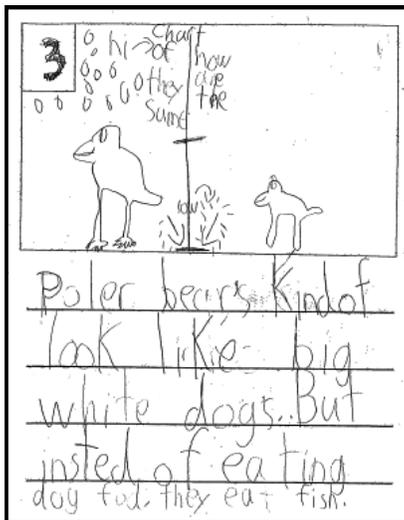
Teacher: Errin Randolph



Polar bears have sharp claws, pointy teeth and clear fur. They have bear cubs. Polar bears live in the Arctic. In the Arctic it snows a lot. Did you know that when polar bears touch cold water, they are not cold? So, they won't get cold by cold water.

Polar bears kind of look like big white dogs. But instead of eating dog food, they eat fish.

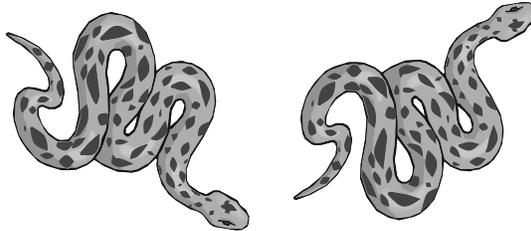
Did you know that if a human tried to ride a polar bear, the cub would jump and tug on you to make that not happen. Do not go to the Arctic and if you do, do not go near one or do not ride on one.





All About Snakes

by Victor Calar
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teacher: Errin Randolph



Name Victor Calar Date _____



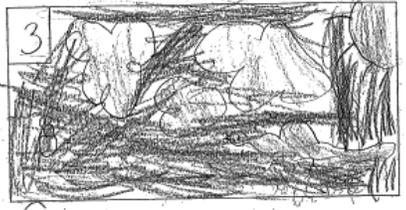
Snakes have scales.
For example snakes have
rib bones that grip
on to the ground and
helps them move.

2



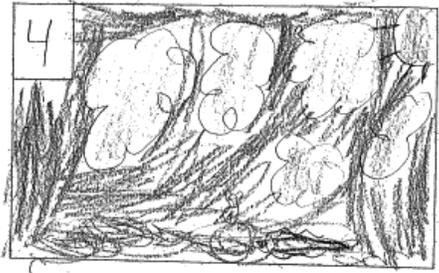
Snakes shed their
skin. Snakes shed their
skin because their skin
is too tight.

3



Snakes swallow their
prey whole. Sometimes it
could be months until
the snake eats again.

4



Snakes smell with
their tongue. Some snakes
hide in the dirt and
when a rat comes the snake
will come out of the dirt and get the rat.

Snakes have scales. For example, snakes have rib bones that grip onto the ground and help them move.

Snakes shed their skin. Snakes shed their skin because their skin is too tight.

Snakes swallow their prey whole. Sometimes it could be months until the snake eats again.

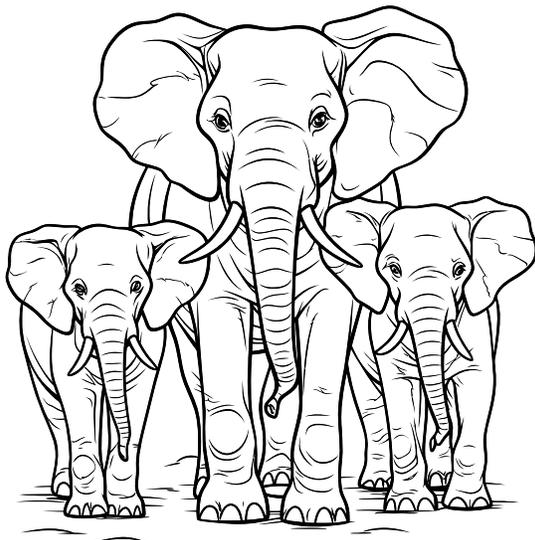
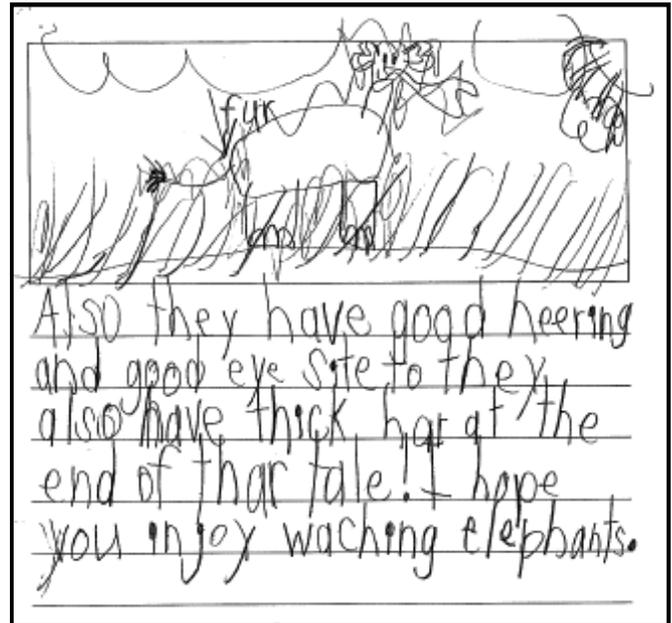
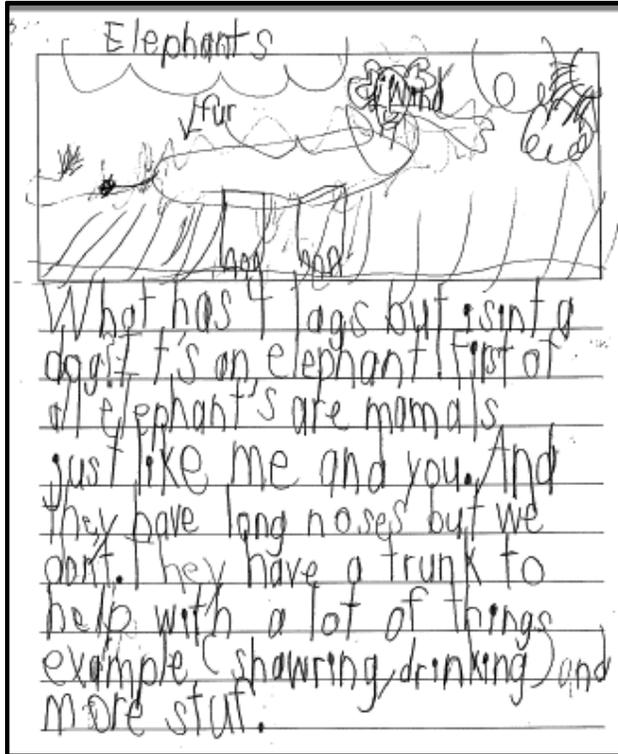
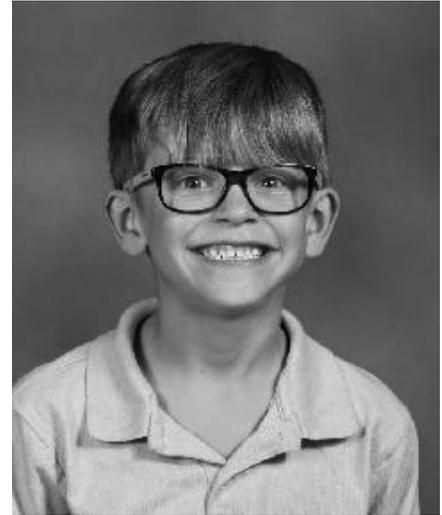
Snakes smell with their tongue. Some snakes hide in the dirt and whenever a rat comes, the snake will come out of the dirt and get the rat.

Elephants

by Aiden Jefferds

Lake St. George Elementary School

Teacher: Susan Adams



What has four 4 legs but isn't a dog? It's an elephant! First of all, elephants are mammals just like me and you. And they have long noses, but we don't. They have a trunk to help with a lot of things, example (showering, drinking) and more stuff. Also, they have good hearing and good eyesight too. They also have thick hair at the end of their tail. I hope you enjoy watching elephants.



How to Jump Rope

by Zoe Lewis

Lake St. George Elementary School

Teacher: Allison Carmen



★ How to jump rope
by zoe

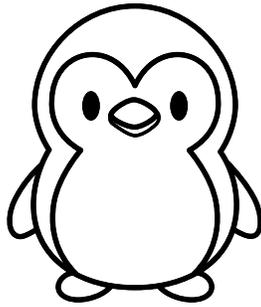
First take a jump rope. And get ready.

And then, put the jump rope behind your back. Each hand should hold a handle.

First, take a jump rope and get ready. And then, put the jump rope behind your back. Each hand should hold a handle. Next, jump and swing the jump rope over your head and under your feet. (Jump as high as you can.) And over and over again. Have fun!

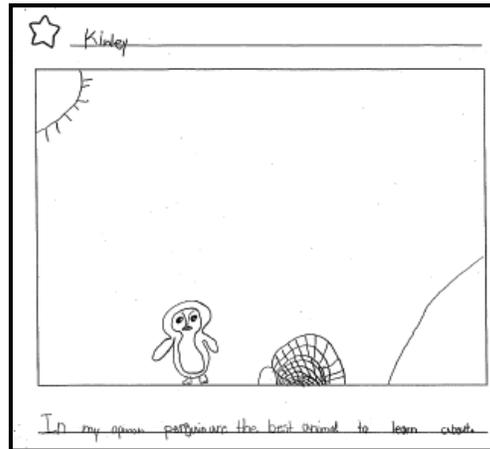
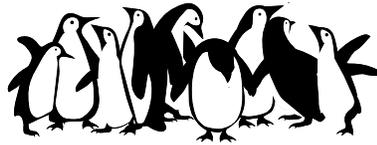
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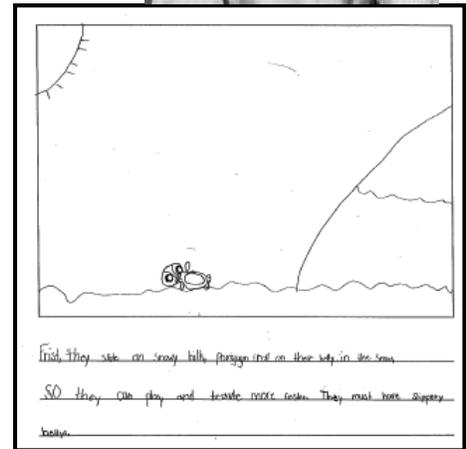


Penguins

by Kinley Elizabeth Mae Holder
High Point Elementary School
Teacher: Marion Reynolds

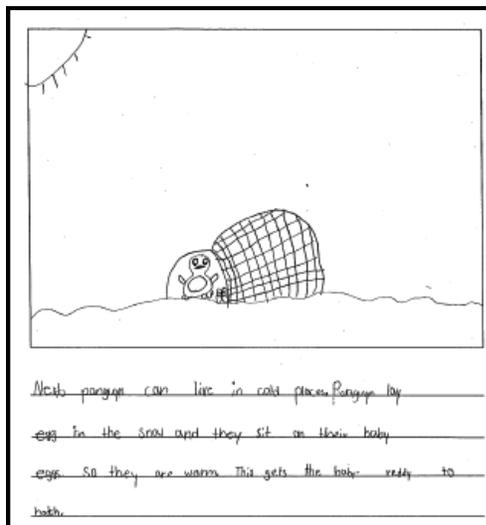


In my opinion penguins are the best animal to learn about.

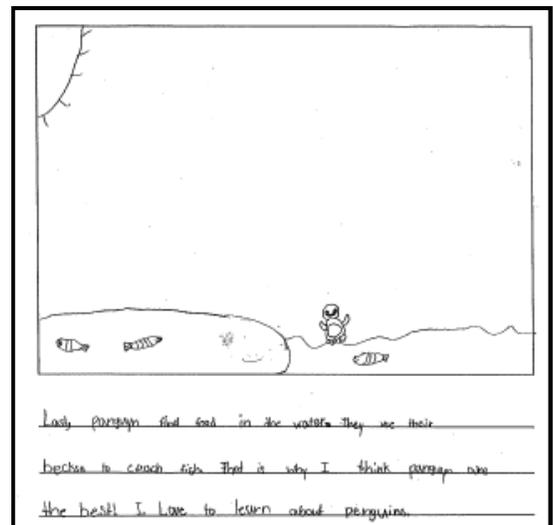


First they slide on snowy hills penguins roll on their belly in the snow so they can play and travel more faster. They must have slippery bellies.
SO they can play and travel more faster. They must have slippery bellies.

In my opinion penguins are the best animal to learn about. First, they slide on snowy hills. Penguins roll on their belly in the snow, so they can play and travel more faster. They must have slippery bellies. Next, penguins can live in cold places. Penguins lay eggs in the snow and they sit on their baby eggs so they are warm. This gets the baby ready to hatch. Last, penguins find food in the water. They use their beaks to catch fish. That is why I think penguins are the best! I love to learn about penguins.



Next penguins can live in cold places. Penguins lay eggs in the snow and they sit on their baby eggs so they are warm. This gets the baby ready to hatch.

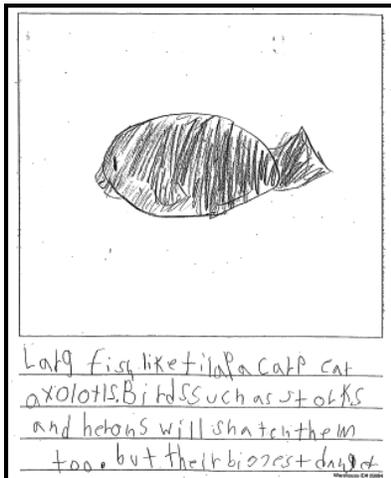
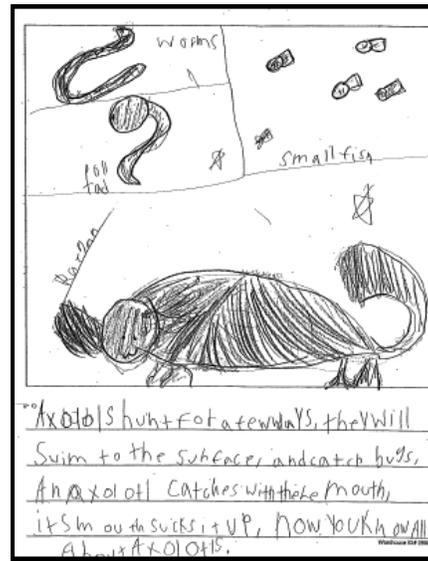
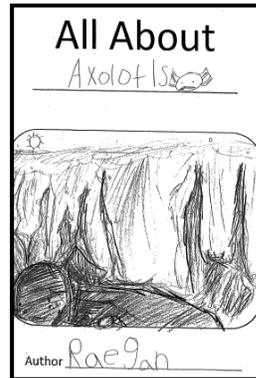


Last penguins find food in the water. They use their beaks to catch fish. That is why I think penguins are the best! I love to learn about penguins.



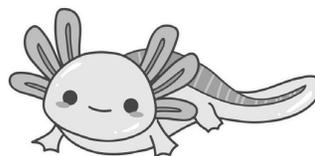
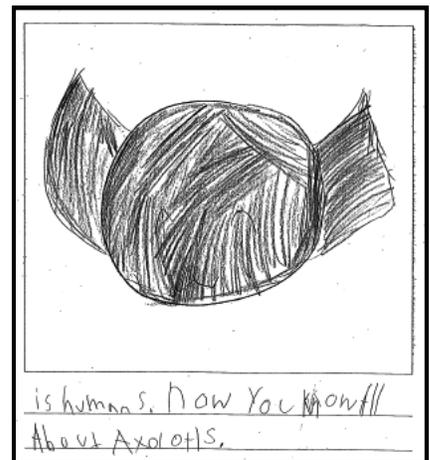
All About Axolotls

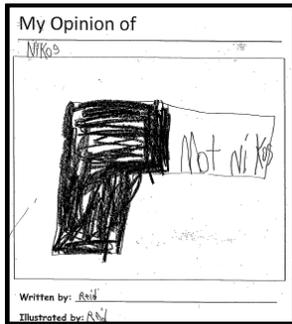
by Raegan Trankel
Lealman Avenue
Elementary School
Teacher:
Shelly Cornish



Axolotls are found and live in Xochimilco and it's in Mexico and axolotls eat worms, small fish, and they also eat tadpoles and insects too.

Axolotls hunt for a few days. They will swim to the surface and catch bugs. An axolotl catches with their mouth. Its mouth sucks it up. Now you know all about axolotls. Large fish like tilapia can eat axolotls. Birds such as storks and herons will snatch them too, but their biggest danger is humans, Now you know all about axolotls.





My Opinion of Niko's

by Reid Duren
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teacher: Heather Holdsworth

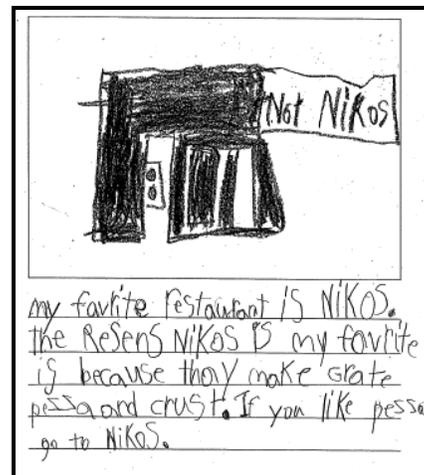
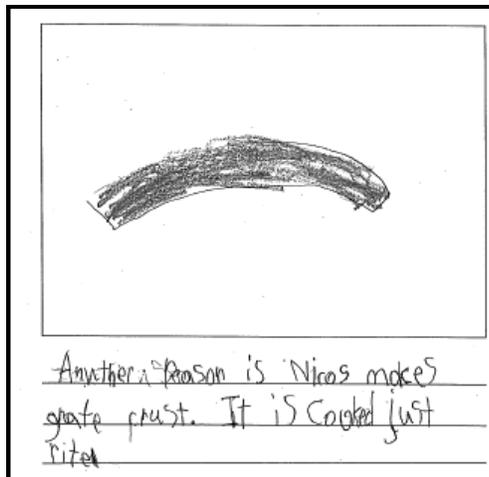
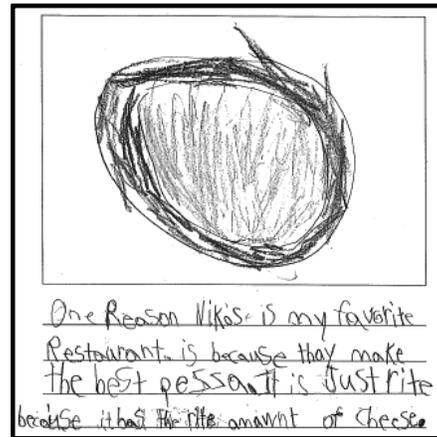
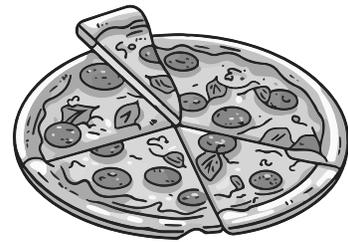


Do you like pizza? If you live in Tampa, I have the best place for pizza. It's called Niko's.

One reason Niko's is my favorite restaurant is because they make the best pizza. It is just right because it has the right amount of cheese.

Another reason is Niko's makes great crust. It is cooked just right. My favorite restaurant is Niko's. The reasons Niko's is my favorite is because they make great pizza and crust.

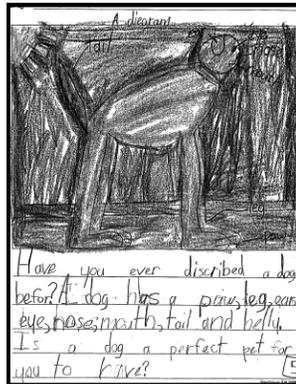
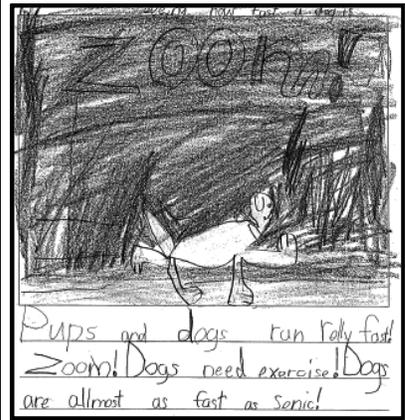
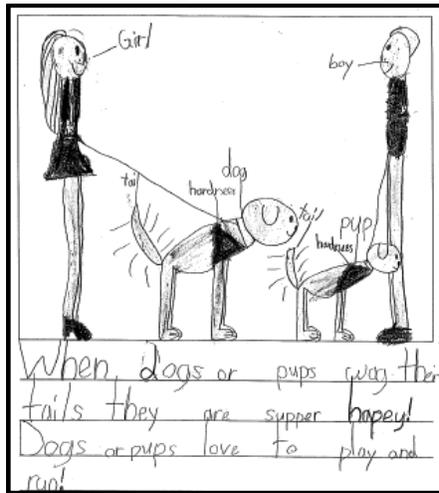
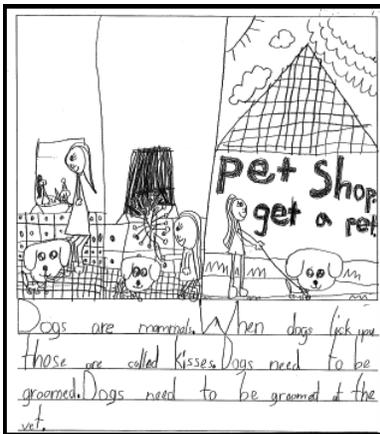
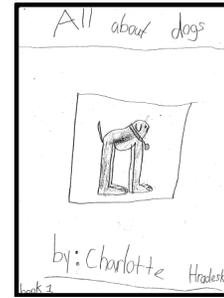
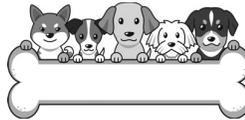
If you like pizza, go to Niko's.





All About Dogs

by Charlotte Hradesky
Curtis Fundamental School
Teacher: Emily Arends



Dogs are mammals. When dogs lick you those are called kisses. Dogs need to be groomed. Dogs need to be groomed at the vet.

When dogs or pups wag their tails they are super happy!
Dogs or pups love to play and run!

Pups and dogs run really fast! Zoom! Dogs need exercise!
Dogs are almost as fast as Sonic!

There are 100 types of dogs in the world. I will show you by the picture. My dogs are really happy!

Have you ever described a dog before? A dog has a paw, leg, ears, eye, nose, mouth, tail, and belly.

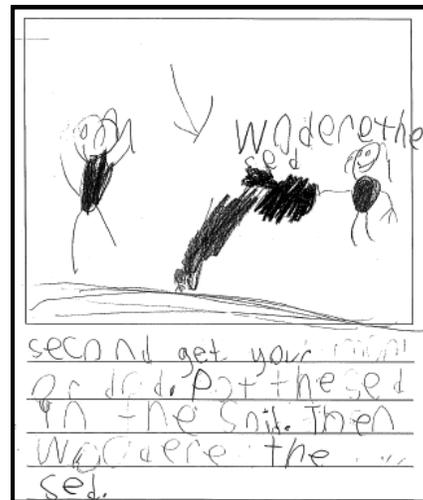
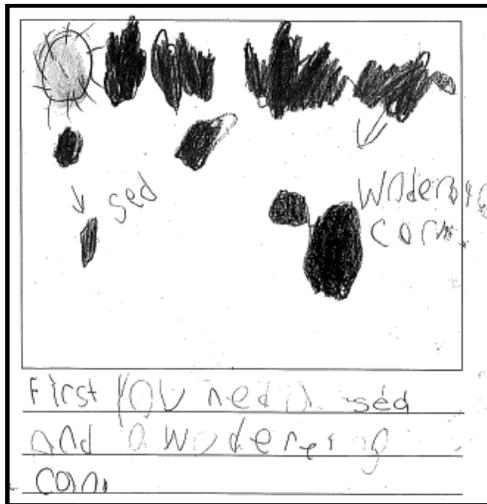
Is a dog a perfect pet for you to have?



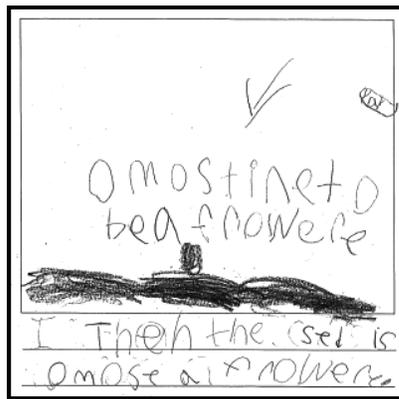
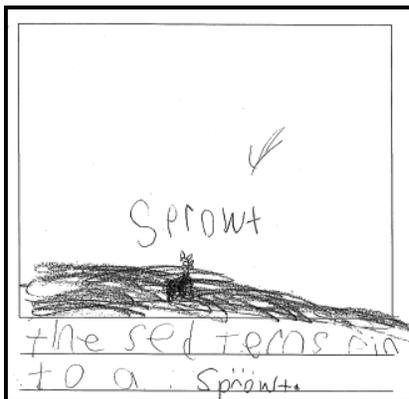


How to Plant a Garden

by Ellie Phillips
Belcher Elementary School
Teacher: Amanda Larkin



First you need a seed and a watering can.
Second get your mom or dad to put the seed in the soil. Then water the seed.
The seed turns into a sprout.
Then the seed is almost a flower.
The seed is a sunflower.
The end of my flower story.



All About Octopuses

by Alexander Maron
 Bay Vista Fundamental School
 Teacher: Heather Holdsworth



What Octopuses Look Like

Octopus look like jellyfish and like a blob. An octopus is bright orange. Octopus can make their bodies look bumpy and octopus are like rainbows.

What Octopuses Eat

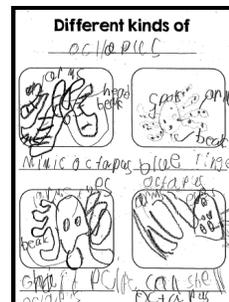
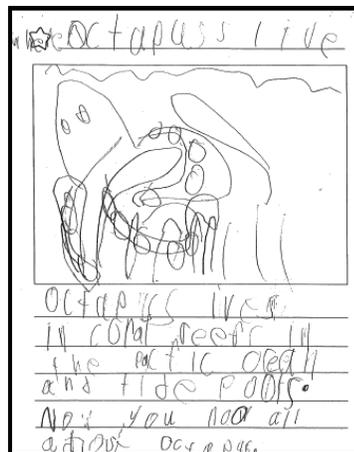
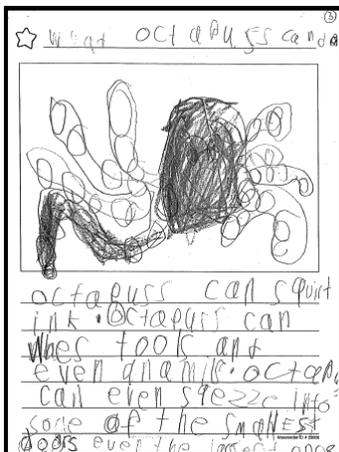
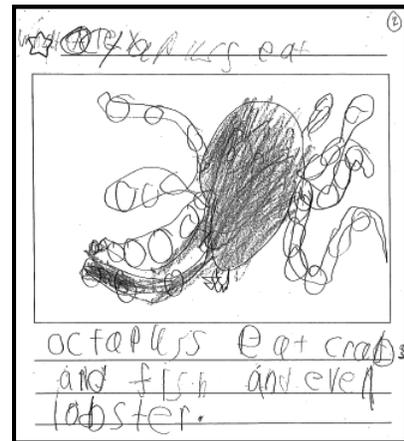
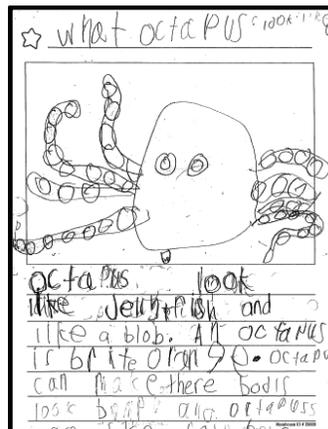
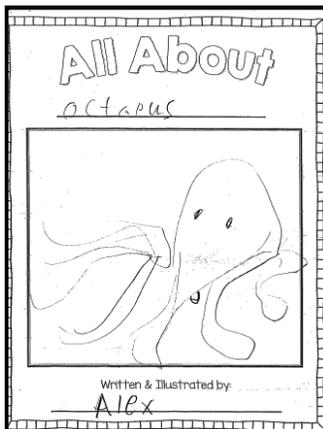
Octopus eat crabs and fish and even lobster.

What Octopuses Can Do

Octopus can squirt ink. Octopus can use tools and even animals. Octopus can even squeeze into some of the smallest doors even the largest ones.

Where Octopuses Live

Octopus live in coral reefs in the Pacific Ocean and tide pools. Now you know all about octopus.



Different kinds of Octopus:
 Mimic octopus
 Blue ringed octopus
 Giant Pacific octopus
 Clam Shell octopus

Glossary
 Octopus: an octopus that looks like a jellyfish
 Coral: a colony that is made up of tiny animals.

word	definition
octopus	an octopus that looks like a jelly fish
coral	a SCENE that is made of tiny animals

Second Grade Writing

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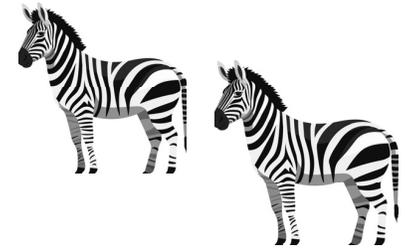
Autographs





The Band of Zebras

by Scarlett Phoenix Lane
 San Jose Elementary School
 Teacher: Joanne Digirolamo



the band of zebras

I'm going to teach you about zebras!
 Let's get started. First, a new-born zebra is about 3 feet tall and 60 to 70 pounds. A newborn is able to stand 20 or 30 minutes after birth a foal never strays far from its mom. When other zebras drink, male zebras watch in case of any danger. At dark and night zebras look for predators so they don't harm them. No two zebras look alike. Zebras look like a horse but with black and white stripes. In herds the leader is always a male. A stallion sleeps standing up to watch over his family. Males are called colts, females are called fillies. Zebras spend most of their time eating and drinking. A zebra's speed is 40 m.p.h. A zebra's weight is 770 to 990 or 620 to 880 lbs. Zebras are in the gestation period for twelve to thirteen months. Zebras live up to 20 years in the wild and up to 40 in zoos. Thanks for reading. Now you know about zebras!

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All About Cats

by Finley Hollingsworth
Pinellas Central Elementary School
Teacher: Kelly Hoylman



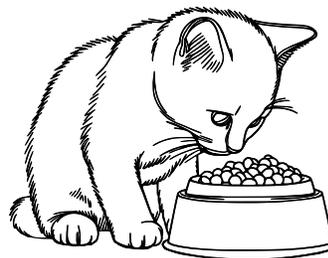
Imagine you are in a house. Then you hear a MEOW! Yes, it's an animal. It is a cat sniffing for food. Cats are so fun to learn about. Cats are so cute! I hope you like this book. I am going to teach you all about cats and I bet you will like it.

Some cats eat dry food. Some like wet. Mittens likes both. Some cats like kibble. Kibble is a tasty snack for cats. When cats are babies they drink milk. When cats are adults they drink water.

You need to take your cat to the vet. You need to give your cat food. You need to give your cat water.

When cats' ears go up they are mad. When cats' ears go down they are sad. When cats purr they are happy.

As you can see cats are amazing animals. Cats are so fun to watch. They are so cute. They always seem to be having fun in the warm, cozy house that they call home! MEOW!



Greta Thunberg

by Ava Holloway
Fairmount Park Elementary
Teacher: Jenna Mosher



Ava Ava Holloway



Did you know Greta Thunberg would speak up for the earth? Well, let me give you some facts and details. First, Greta was born on January 3rd 2003 in Sweden. Also, Greta was such a helpful child. Next, Greta has shown that even one person, no matter how young, can still make a big difference on helping the environment. And Greta had gotten her own group of kids to help

Ava



protect the earth. Lastly, Greta stood outside of Swedish Parliament with a sign that said, "School Strike for Climate." Soon many young people joined her to ask leaders to protect the environment. Now you know all about Greta Thunberg. If you see her you can try to talk to her.

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Anyone Can be a Changemaker

by Arielle Sollberger

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Robert Ferguson

Who can be a changemaker?

Did you think only adults can be changemakers? Well, no! Everybody can be a changemaker, even you! Changemakers are people who help you have a better life or in another way of saying, they help you be your best self. I know that you will like that. That is what changemakers do.

How do you decide what to change?

First, find something you care about. Remember, you can have an impact doing something small. Use your strengths and talents. You can do something you love while making a difference. Next, tackle a problem. Look for a problem. Look for problems or issues that need to be solved and think of ways to solve them!

What can you do to make a change?

Finally, do you want to find or know more about how to be a change maker? Well, join others. Look for groups of others that care about the same things. Use your voice! While you might not think kids can make others aware of the issue, they can! And don't forget to use your voice to motivate others!

Be a Changemaker!



What is the Best Holiday?

by Isabella McGraw
Tarpon Springs
Fundamental School
Teacher: Emily Wright



Lay down. Relax. You can feel the warmth of the fire next to you. The ornaments are twinkling on the Christmas tree. It is dark outside. In my opinion, Christmas is the best holiday because it is cold outside, we get presents, and because we get to put up the Christmas tree and other decorations.

Weather in Christmas is so cool! I love weather in Christmas because it is cold, it sometimes snows, and we get to wear mittens and gloves! If it snows, we can make snowmen, snow angels, and we can go sledding!

Who doesn't love presents? Presents are one of the best parts about Christmas. You can get soooooo many presents or about two of them. But, all presents are amazing. I love presents because you could get some of the best things that you have ever seen, or you could get something that is a total surprise and you have never seen it before.

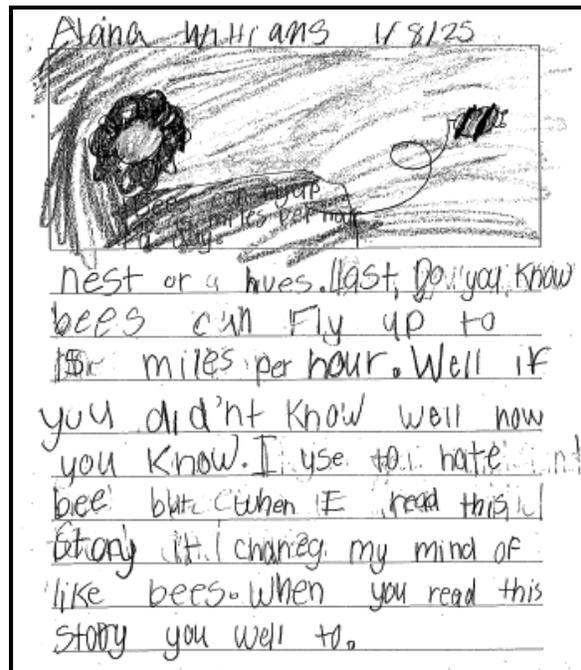
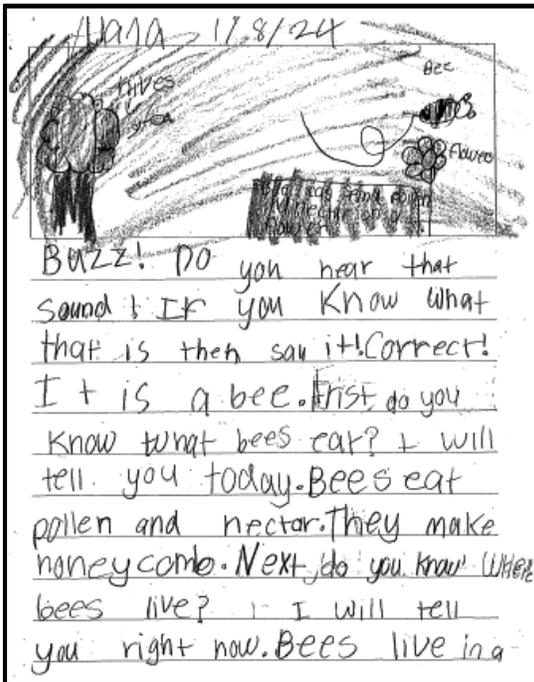
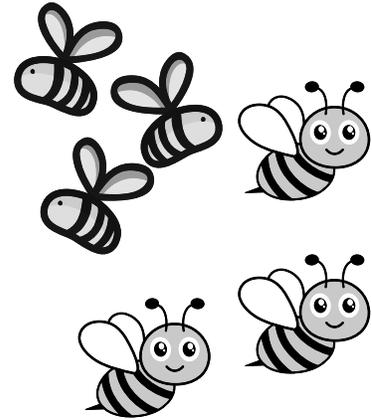
I love Christmas decorations! Christmas decorations are so pretty and shiny! Do you know why I love Christmas decorations? Here is why: Christmas ornaments are so pretty and shiny that they make the tree sparkle in the dark! I also like decorations because all decorations come from somewhere, right? Well, those decorations remind me of the places they come from. This is why I looooooove decorations!

Now you know why I love the weather in Christmas, the presents, the decorations, and Christmas! I am looking forward to Christmas this year!





All About Bees
by Alana Williams
Fairmount Park
Elementary School
Teacher: Jenna Mosher



BUZZ! Do you hear that sound! If you know what that is then say it! Correct! It is a bee. First, do you know what bees eat? I will tell you today. Bees eat pollen and nectar. They make honeycomb. Next, do you know where bees live? I will tell you right now. Bees live in nests or hives. Last, do you know bees can fly up to 15 miles per hour? Well if you didn't know, now you know. I used to hate bees but when I read this story it changed my mind, now I like bees. When you read this story, you will too.

The Runaway Christmas Tree

by Charlie Burnett

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean

There once was a girl named Kylie and a boy named Ben. Kylie and Ben were siblings. One December 24th, they were decorating their Christmas tree with ornaments, tinsel and lights. After they decorated their Christmas tree, Kylie yelled, "Who wants to decorate gingerbread cookies?"



"Me!" exclaimed Ben.

"Okay," said Mom. So, Mom grabbed all the ingredients to make the cookies.

When they were frosting the cookies, Kylie heard a sound. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Kylie glanced around. She saw her Christmas tree running away! "Ben, Ben!" screamed Kylie, shaking Ben's shoulder.

"What?" asked Ben.

"The Christmas tree is stomping away!" she replied.

"No, it isn't!" exclaimed Ben.

"Look for yourself!" yelled Kylie.

They quickly ran to the living room and their Christmas tree was gone. "Where is our Christmas tree?" questioned Ben.

"I don't know," wailed Kylie.

They both looked out the window in shock. The tree was walking. The tree was stomping down the street. It was opening roofs and grabbing cookies from the neighbors' houses.

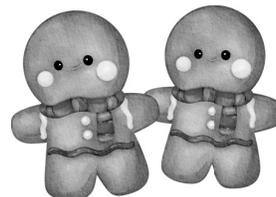
"Oh, no!" cried Ben.

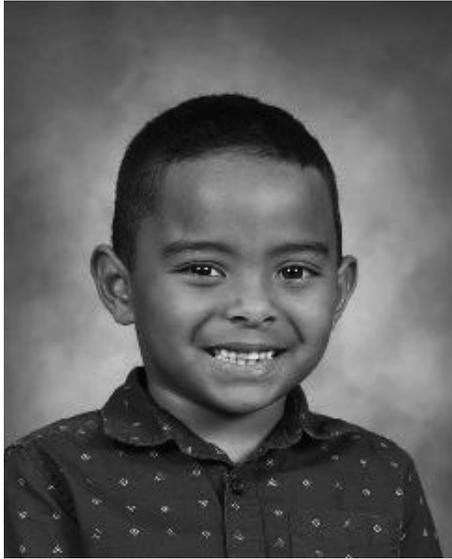
"What will we do?" asked Kylie.



Just then, Ben came up with an idea. "How about we catch it with a giant net?" Kylie agreed with this plan. They used the gingerbread cookies as bait and waited behind a bush. Finally, they saw the tree pick up a cookie and ... they threw the net!

"Gotcha!" screamed Kylie and Ben. They tied the net around the tree and hauled it back to their house. They secured the tree to the living room wall so that it couldn't run away ever again. They all enjoyed the rest of Christmas Eve filling their tummies with delicious gingerbread cookies.



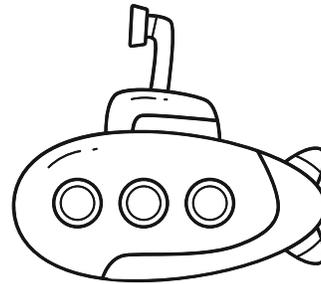


Sea Adventure

by Christian Soriano

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean



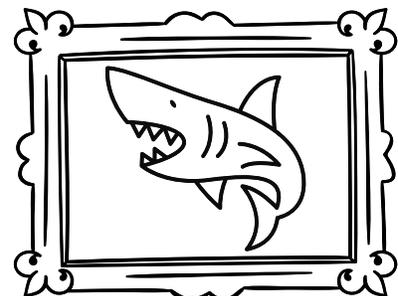
There once was an adventurer named Pete. He traveled to a rainforest, to the desert and he even went up into space. But there was one place that he had not gone. He had always dreamed of going underwater. Pete was curious about what was under the water. What would he see?

He first tried to buy a submarine online, but it was too expensive. So, he decided to build one himself. Pete gathered up all his materials, went to a lab and worked for a week.

Finally, when he was done building the submarine, he dove underwater. He was so excited! He saw colorful anemone and rainbow fish. He even saw sea snakes!

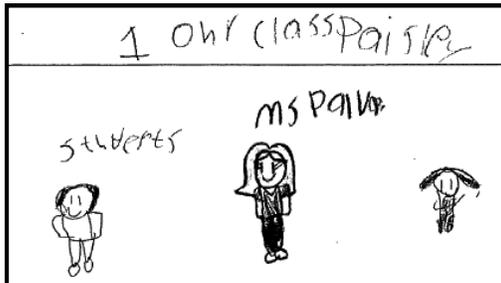
Pete put on his swimsuit and got out of the submarine to swim with the fish. He was so happy to finally explore underwater. But then a huge shark appeared! Not only that, but he was also far away from the submarine. He tried to swim to the submarine, but the shark got even closer. He needed to distract it! Then, he remembered he had an underwater flashing camera. He flashed it at the shark, and it made the shark dizzy. Fortunately, he was able to swim back to the submarine unharmed.

Pete headed home and told his family about his awesome sea adventure. Thanks to his camera, he made it home safe and had a cool shark photo to show everyone.



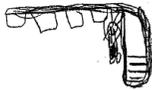
All About My School

by Paisley Boling
 Lealman Avenue Elementary School
 Teacher: Haley Paiva



Do you like school? I do! Let me tell you about mine, Lealman Avenue. First, in our class we use our brain to think. We use our brain to sound out words. We all try our best. Also, our teacher gives classroom jobs. One job is doorholder. That person holds the door. Another job is caboose they are in back of the line we have a straight line. I love my classroom.

2 SPECIALS
 12345678910 PUSH UP!
 12345678910 JUMPING JACK
 NEXT we go to SPECIALS. ON MONDAYS we go to music where we sing and use our best voice. On Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday we go to PE. PE is outside. We exercise and play sports and fun games. On Fridays we go to Art and make our best pictures. SPECIALS ARE CREATIVE.

3 RECESS

 At the end of the day we go to recess. Sometimes go on the playground. Sometimes we go to the media center. It is makerspace with papers, Legos and more! Sometimes we do inside recess. We play games like Candyland or color. I hope you enjoyed all about my school!

Do you like school? I do! Let me tell you about mine, Lealman Avenue. First, in our class we use our brain to think. We use our brain to sound out words. We all try our best. Also our teacher gives classroom jobs. One job is door holder. That person holds the door. Another job is caboose. They are in back of the line. We have a straight line. I love my classroom. Next we go to specials. On Mondays we go to music where we sing and use our best voice. On Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday we go to PE. PE is outside. We exercise and play sports and fun games. On Fridays we go to Art and make our best pictures. Specials are creative. At the end of the day we go to recess. Sometimes we go on the playground. Sometimes we go to the media center. It is a Makerspace with papers, Legos, and more! Sometimes we do inside recess. We play games like Candyland or color. I hope you enjoyed all about my school!



Cupcake Running as Best Elf

by Deya Naydenov
Gulf Beaches
Elementary School
Teacher: Roseann Sacino



In my opinion, I would be Santa's best elf because I love making presents, keeping an eye on kids, and filling stockings. These are the three reasons why I would be chosen as Santa's best elf. Am I bad....where are my manners? Let me tell you my name.....Cupcake!

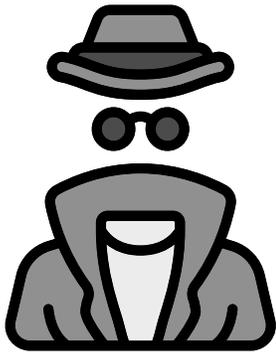
My first reason is to make presents. I would tinker on making presents until dawn. I would even make presents for the other elves. I will make books, dolls, and trucks. I am going to add lots of details and colors. I love seeing kids happy.

My second reason why I would be Santa's best elf is to keep an eye on the kids. I will make sure that the good kids get presents and the bad don't get any... well, maybe one! I will also be silly. I will hide and I will not be easy to find! I will report to Santa every little thing I hear and maybe Santa will let me ride on his sleigh? Mmmmmmm...

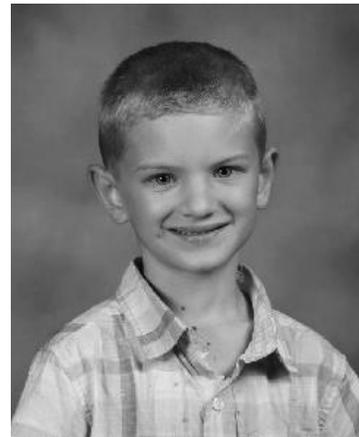
My third reason why I would be the best elf is filling stockings. I will fill the stockings with so many goodies like chocolate, miniature toys, and candy. I would hide and see if they like my surprises that I put in their stockings. Well, I know they will like it, but it is nice seeing them open presents.

In my conclusion, I will argue that I would be the best elf because I love to make presents, keep an eye on the kids, and fill stockings. Those are my three reasons. Now, can I just please be an elf!





Best Superpower
by Jackson Levey
Tarpon Springs
Fundamental School
Teacher: Emily Wright



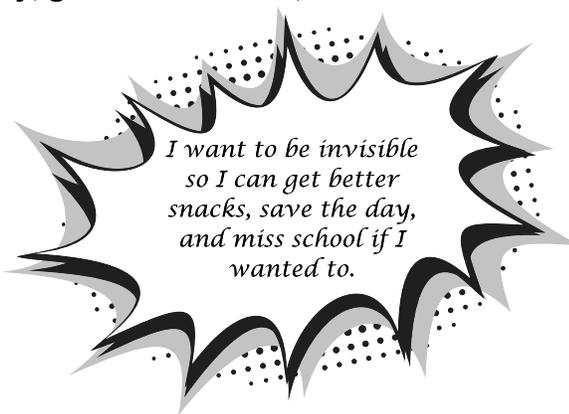
My favorite superpower is the power of being invisible. I would like to be invisible so no one can see me. Some of the reasons I want to be invisible are so I can get better snacks, save the day, and miss school if I wanted to.

I like to get better snacks than my brother. My brother always has better snacks than me. He has Z bars and chocolate chip muffins. If I was invisible, I would get some king-sized Hershey bars!

I want to be invisible because I like to sneak up on people so I can save the day. If two people robbed a store, I could sneak up on them without them knowing and stop them before they got away.

If I were invisible, I would like to miss school because I would play with my friends. I would always win hide and seek if I were invisible. We could also play tag, and no one would know where I was. We could even play sports, and I would win every time because nobody would see me score.

I like invisible powers because no one can see you. If you are invisible, you can save the day, get better snacks, and miss school easier because no one can see you.





All About California

by Isabella Gibbs

Cypress Woods Elementary School

Teacher: Samantha Wicks

Have you ever been to California? California is a really good state. Let me teach you about California. It

All About California
The capital of California is Sacramento. A major landmark is Disneyland. A major city is Los Angeles. California is known for becoming a state in 1850. I live in Florida and there is Disney World and I think it's fun!

California's Weather and Water
First, one of California's bodies of water is the Pacific Ocean. The Pacific Ocean is very large and full of interesting creatures. California's climate in the summer is warm and dry and in the winter it's mild and wet. In many places the weather is different.

California's Fun Facts
Next, California's state bird is the California Quail. The state flower is the Golden Poppy and the state nickname is the Golden State. One interesting fact is California has the largest population in the United States. I think that California is a cool state.

Now you know all about California. I hope you get to visit California someday!

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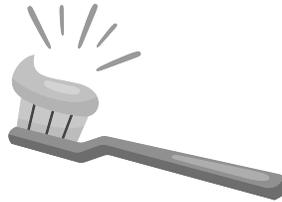
Now you know all about California. I hope you get to visit California someday!

How to Brush Your Teeth

by Aurora Seslar

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Emily Wright



Today you are going to brush your teeth. So you will need water to wet your teeth. You will also need a toothbrush to brush your teeth. You will also need some toothpaste to put on your toothbrush. Keep reading because you might want to brush your teeth.

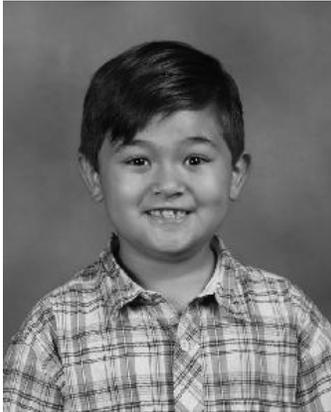
The first step to brushing your teeth is to walk to the bathroom very carefully! Stand up on your step stool, pick up your toothbrush, and turn on the water. Put your toothbrush under the water for about five seconds then remove from water.

The second step to brushing your teeth is to turn off the water and put your toothbrush down with the bristles facing up. Then pick up your toothpaste, put it over your toothbrush, and SQUEEZE your toothpaste on your toothbrush.

For step three, you need to pick up your toothbrush and smile. Then put your toothbrush on your teeth and scrub going up and down brushing across your teeth. Then remove from the tooth. Open your mouth again and put the toothbrush on the bottom row of teeth. Do the same as you did on the top row.

Let's review what we learned how to do. We learned that first you need to wet your toothbrush. We also learned we need to scrub your teeth really, really, really good so you don't get any missed spots.





Flying

by Emmett Ferguson
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School
Teacher: Emily Wright



Imagine it: you are walking down to the park but all four roads are closed. How are you going to get to the park? You can fly! You could see everything, fly over stuff, and not have to buy airplane tickets ever! In my opinion, the best superpower is flying!

Run into a bully? Fly over him! If you ever run into a bully, all you would have to do is fly over him and go tell the teacher. Need to get past a wall? Fly over it! If you are trying to run away from someone but you are cornered, just fly over the wall!

Don't have airplane tickets? Fly! If you don't have any airplane tickets, just fly yourself to where you need to go. Stuck in traffic when trying to go to the store? Fly! If you are stuck in traffic on your way to the grocery store, just fly to the grocery store.

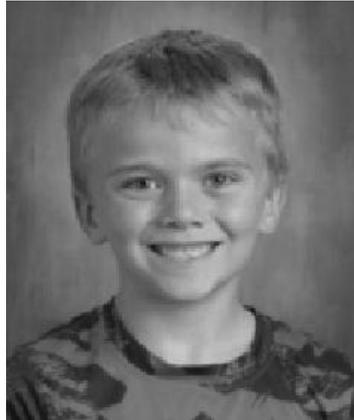
Need help spying? Fly! You can fly over someone and use binoculars to look at what they are doing. Need to read a code but there is security? Fly! You can be at a very, very long distance, then fly up and over the security, land, and read the code.

That is why I like flying!



All About Cheetahs

by Sawyer Nunan
Pinellas Central
Elementary School
Teacher: Kelly Hoylman



Imagine you are in the middle of the Savannah and you hear a growl! Ouch then you get poked by a cheetah! Ahaha come on let's go on a fun trip to learn about cheetahs.

Cheetahs communicate differently than other species of cats. Cheetahs purr, hiss, growl. Purr when cheetahs are happy or content. They hiss when a cheetah feels angry. They growl when a cheetah feels angry.

Cheetah Body parts help them survive in the wild. Cheetahs have light brown fur with black spots. They have stripes on their tails. This helps them blend in with the savannah. Fact: a tail of the cheetah balances them. Fact: the small head makes the cheetah light. It makes the cheetah fast. The poor animals can't run fast enough.

Cheetahs need to hunt to survive. Cheetahs hunt during the day. Most cheetahs hunt mostly at night. They eat rabbits, antelope, and young warthogs. Cheetahs need to blend in to hunt. This means the poor animals can't see them.

As you can see now that you know about cheetahs, check!

"Buzzing With Facts"

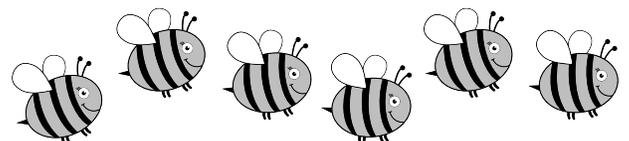
by Milee Monroe Gentry
Sandy Lane Elementary School
Teacher: Caitlin Brickey



Buzz, Buzz! Do you want to know about bees? Here's some facts you would want to know. To begin with, bees sip on nectar to keep up their energy! We sip on coffee for our energy!

Another interesting fact is queen bees lay 1,200 to 2,000 eggs in the summer. Wow! That is a lot. There are more bee facts out there so you can find out more.

-Buzzing off,
Milee





White Water Rafting

by Kai Miller

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean

One sunny Wednesday, my mom, dad and I went white water rafting in Bryson City. I was feeling excited and kind of scared because it was my first time white water rafting. But I was still willing to give it a try.

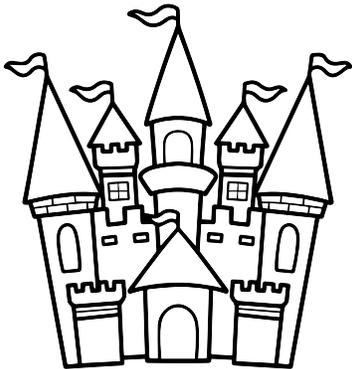
We hopped in the gray car that we rented and drove down the smooth and curvy road. Twenty minutes later, we arrived at the brown, shack-like stand. The staff had to tell everyone the pros and cons to everything. They told us how to hold on if there was a lot of rapids. They showed us how to hold our paddles. They taught us how to put on our life jackets and strap our helmets. After hearing the instructions, I felt brave and ready to go on the water.

So, we got the gear and climbed onto the old, yellow bus. The bus driver drove us through the mountains and dropped us off at a gray dock on the Nantahala River. We stepped into the yellowish-orange puffy raft and then our guide joined us. The water pushed us around and we started paddling down the river.

We hit a crazy amount of rapids! Water splashed over us, and it felt like cold, freezing Arctic water. I was laughing and having fun. At one point, our guide fell out and the other raft behind us had to pick up the guide. I was surprised because the guide said it had never happened to him before. My dad had to control the raft. He did a good job.

It was a great rafting trip. I hope we get to go back again next summer.





Magical Creatures
by Mckenna Medeiros
Bardmoor Elementary
School
Teacher: Kathleen Mcgrath



Once, there was a beautiful kingdom with a big golden castle. Lots of magical creatures liked living there. They were all very nice and very happy. In the castle lived a king, a queen, a prince, and a princess.

One day the king was making breakfast when suddenly he heard a big loud, SLAM!!!

"Honey!" said the queen, startled. She was holding the kids still in her robe . "I looked out the window and saw new villagers, but they looked evil!!!"

The king dashed out the door as fast as lightning and all the way out of the castle and spotted the new villa. He made a big whistle and said real loud, "EVERYBODY MOVE!!!" He dashed to the new villagers, and said "Why are you here?"

The villagers looked scared. "We want to move here. Do you have a problem with that?" said the villagers.

"N-no," said the king. "You scared us though."

"Oh, we're so sorry, I guess I should introduce myself. I'm Rocky and I'm a troll. This is Martin and this is Daisy."

"Can we live here?" asked all three trolls.

"Yes. I have a perfect house just for you."

"YAY!!!" shouted the trolls.



The whole kingdom learned everyone should be welcomed even if they look different. And they all lived happily ever after, together.

THE END.



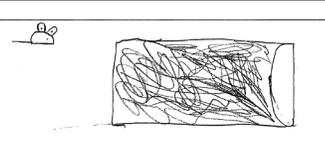
All About Hibernation

by Parker Paulson

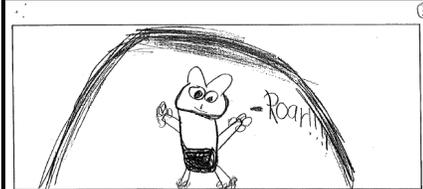
Cypress Woods Elementary School

Teacher: Samantha Wicks

ALL ABOUT Hibernation
 Do you know what hibernation is? Let me tell you all about hibernation!

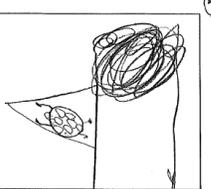


What is hibernation
 Hibernation is an animals long sleep during the winter months. Animals hibernate to help them survive the winter. Hibernation is when animals sleep for six months and wake up in spring. This reminds me of when my sister sleeps for a long time.



Different ways to Hibernate
 First, one different way to hibernate is that some animals make nests, adapt to the cold, and hide under rocks. This reminds me of an Arctic Fox adapt to the cold and their fur blends in with the snow.

Part 2



Animals that Hibernate
 Some animals that hibernate are bears, ladybugs, frogs, and dormice. This reminds of a Arctic Fox that adapts to the cold and the fur changes color.

All About Hibernation

Do you know what hibernation is? Let me tell you all about hibernation!

What is hibernation?

Hibernation is an animal's long sleep during the winter months. Animals hibernate to help them survive the winter. Hibernation is when animals sleep for six months and wake up in spring. This reminds me of when my sister sleeps for a long time.

Different Ways to Hibernate

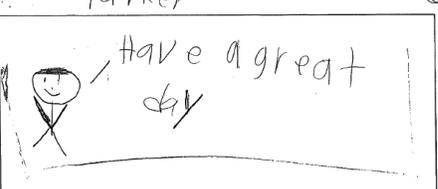
First, one different way to hibernate is that some animals make nests, adapt to the cold, and hide under rocks. This reminds me of how an Arctic Fox adapts to the cold and their fur blends in with the snow.

Animals that Hibernate

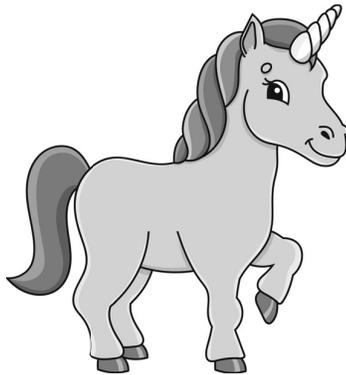
Some animals that hibernate are bears, lady bugs, frogs, and dormice. This reminds me of an Arctic Fox that adapts to the cold and the fur changes color.

I hope you learned a lot about hibernation. Have a great day!

Parker



I hope you learned a lot about hibernation



Unicorns are the Best!

by Mackenzie Green
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School
Teacher: Robert Ferguson



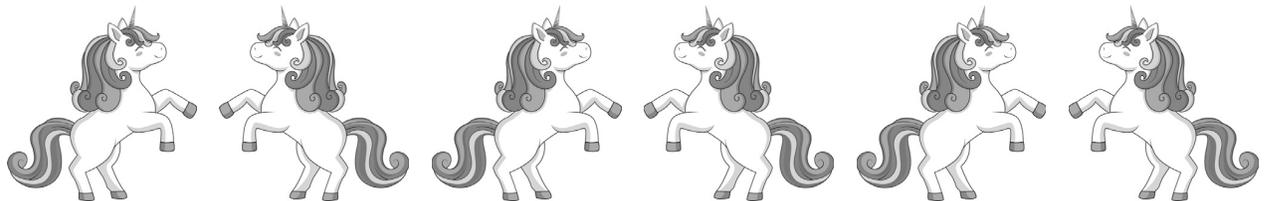
Flap! Flap! Flap! That is the sound of my pet unicorn. Do you want a pet unicorn? Well, I do! Let me explain why having a pet unicorn is so much better than a robot. She would be white with bronze spots and a yellow horn! And I would name her..... Buttercup!!! Can you imagine living with a unicorn?! A pet unicorn would be special because it reminds us to dream big and believe in magic! Plus, it would be like living in a fairy tale every day!

Unicorns are gentle and friendly. Also, unicorns are beautiful. Unicorns are magical creatures that can make us feel happy and inspired too! You can go for a fly! You can have a fun time. Go for a walk too! And if someone is trying to bother you, you can fly away. You can play with your unicorn! And have a sleepover with it. That would be really fun to have a sleepover with your pet unicorn!

The unicorn could grant me wishes, yup! I would be famous because of my pet unicorn! I could paint the unicorn's nails. I could dress her up for Halloween and I could be matching with the unicorn. That would be fun! Really fun! And my dog could play with the unicorn! Maybe because she does not really know her manners. And it will be fun to show and tell my friends.

Me and some of my friends could go on my unicorn and we could feel the clouds. I've always wanted to feel a cloud... That will be my pet and I do not have my OWN pet. And if my unicorn has baby unicorns, I will have even more unicorns but I might sell some cause if I had that many unicorns that would be a big responsibility.

Now you know why I like unicorns more than robots. Thank you for reading!



The Great Platypus

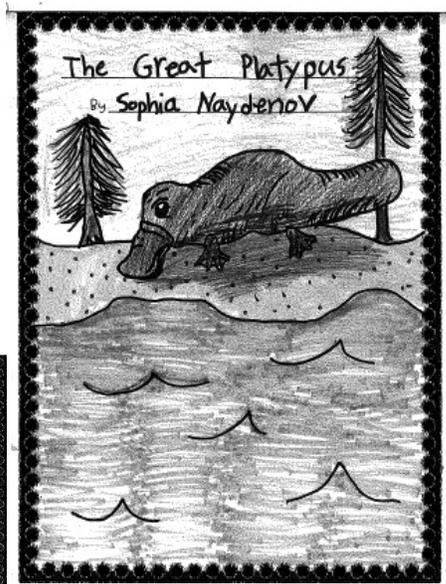
by Sophia Naydenov
Gulf Beaches
Elementary School
Teacher:
Roseann Sacino



About the Author
My name is Sophia Naydenov. I am eight years old and I am in second grade. My favorite color is turquoise. I love to draw, jump rope, and swim. I also love to visit Belpatria to see my grandma and grandpa. I chose a platypus because they are my favorite mammal.

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"Hi! My name is Plady the Platypus come and join me on my tour of my self I will tell you about what I eat, and show you how I look like also where I live. So what are you waiting for!"

Chapter 1: what I look like!

"Us platypuses are unique looking creatures. We can grow 20 inches long. Did you know male platypus weigh up to 4 pounds. I cannot see or hear that well in the water. I can keep my body warm and dry in

the water. Because I have two thick coats of fur, I was blind and hairless when I was born. In four months me and my siblings will be ready to swim in the pond. A newly hatched platypus is no bigger than a jelly bean. that is so small isn't it? I also have a large rubbery snout shaped like a duckbill. "I told you I was unique!"

Quick Fact! male platypus have spurs on their back legs they use this to dig worms and there predators.

Chapter 2: what I Eat!
My soft bill uses Electroreceptors "it tells me where my food is. platypus eat eggs, and tiny bugs also

"I eat worms, and shellfish. A young platypus like me drinks my moms milk. we do not have teeth. I can eat up to half of my body weight a day, and store my fat in my fatty tail. That's why I look so furry."

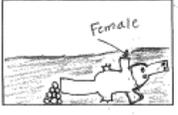
"did you know I am the only mammal that lays egg's? I am so special right."

Did you know? foxes, dingoes and owls are predators to us platypus oh no! they're coming!

Chapter 3: where I Live
us Platypuses dig burrows in the banks of streams. Did you know a platypus adult lives in it's own burrow. A platypus burrow may be up to 60 feet deep. I live on the continent of Australia. I love ponds. I sometimes swim in cold water, we rest during the day and come out at night. come down in my home and learn more

about my burrow. Me and my family build several burrows. One is for nesting and the others are for resting.

Conclusion
Thanks for listening about my

<p>great life "Hey maby you could travel to Australia and see where I am at." you know where to find me because I told you where I live what I look like and what I eat.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">8</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Glossary</h3> <p>1. Snout: A nose or mouth of an animal.</p> <p>2. Electroreceptor: sensors on the animal that tells where to find their food.</p> <p>3. Shellfish: underwater creature that have a shell.</p> <p>4. mammal: an animal that has fur and feeds it's baby with milk. Also have a backbone.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9</p>	<h3 style="text-align: center;">Fun Facts</h3> <p>A female platypus lays her eggs in her eggs in her nest.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">Female</p>  <p>We hunt in the riverbed to find our delicious food.</p> <p>I also like to live on kangaroo island in Australia.</p>  <p>Taps like this are used for catching Yabbies we eat them.</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">page 10</p>
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Introduction

Hi, my name is Plady the Platypus, come and join me on my tour of myself. I will tell you about what I eat and show you how I look, also where I live. So, what are you waiting for!

Chapter 1

Us platypuses are unique looking creatures. We can grow 20 inches long. Did you know male platypuses weigh up to 4 pounds? I cannot see or hear that well in the water. I can keep my body warm and dry in water, because I have two thick coats of fur. I was blind and hairless when I was born. In four months, me and my siblings will be ready to swim in the pond. A newly hatched platypus is no bigger than a jellybean, that is so small, isn't it? I also have a large rubbery snout shaped like a duckbill. I told you I was unique!

Chapter 2-What I Eat

My soft bill uses electroreceptors it tells me where my food is. Platypuses eat eggs and tiny bugs; I also eat worms and shellfish. A young platypus like me drinks my mom's milk. We do not have teeth. I can eat up to half my body weight a day, and store fat in my furry tail. That's why I look so funny. Did you know I am the only mammal that lays eggs? I am so special, right?

Chapter 3-Where I Live

Us platypuses dig burrows in banks of streams. Did you know a platypus adult lives in its own burrow? A platypus burrow maybe up to 60 feet deep. I live on the continent of Australia. I love ponds. I sometimes swim in cold water. We rest during the day and come out at night. Come down in my home and learn more about my burrow. Me and my family build several burrows. One is for nesting and the others are for resting.

Conclusion:

Thanks for listening about my great life. Hey, maybe you could travel to Australia and see where I am at. You know where to find me because I told you where I live, what I look like, and what I eat.



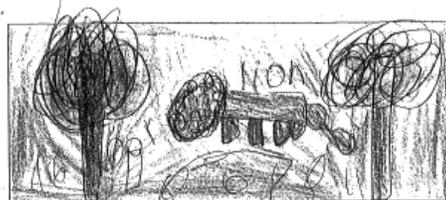
Being a Changemaker

by Eliana Flournoy
Fairmount Park Elementary School
Teacher: Mary Forte



Eliana Flournoy
me are you OK gift
Cher UP! bb

Do you know how to be a changemaker? If your friend is sad you can talk to them. You can say encourage words like I am glad you told me. If you are at the pond and you see trash pick it up.



Trash can hurt wild animals. You can make a thank you letter to your teacher. Like if the air is not good tell your teacher to pick up her or his trash. If they say they don't like a girl because she



boy girl boy
do not play sports. You can help your friend see that it is good to have many kinds of people in the world. Now you know all about a changemaker.

Do you know how to be a changemaker? If your friend is sad, you can talk to them. You can say encouraging words, like I am glad you told me. If you are at the pond and you see trash, pick it up. Trash can hurt wild animals. You can make a thank you letter to your teacher. Like if the air is not good, tell your teacher to pick up her or his trash. If they say they don't like a girl because she does not play sports, you help your friend see that it is good to have many kinds of people in the world. Now you know all about being a changemaker.

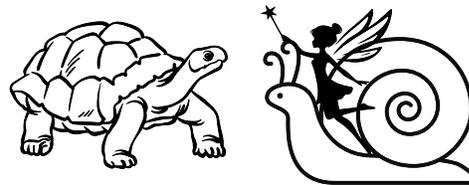


The Tortoise and the Snail

by Allison Froehner

Cypress Woods Elementary School

Teacher: Samantha Wicks



Once upon a time lived a tortoise named Tortellini. She was the kindest tortoise ever. She also lived with her brother Huteson.

One day when Tortellini was eating a banana, Bolt, the bearded dragon, raced over to her and said, "You're so slow! You're even slower than my grandma ha ha."

"Hey that's mean, stop, and I am not slow."

"Then prove it," said Bolt.

"Ok we will have a race tomorrow. We will race to the biggest hill."

"Ok" said Bolt, "you will stand no chance to beat me."

"We'll see," said Tortellini.

Next as Tortellini got to the race Bolt was already there. "Ha, I beat you!"

"Ok" said Tortellini. "Ready set go!" Bolt zoomed off leaving Tortellini in the dust. As Tortellini crept along she thought how am I going to win?

As all hope was lost Tortellini tried to go faster but she would not budge. "What will I do? Bolt is probably at the finish line."

Meanwhile, "Ha Tortellini is in the dust so I will just take a nap, yawn zzzzzz."

As Tortellini stopped to take a break, she said "I will never get to the finish line."

All of a sudden sparkles formed in the air. Pooof. "I am your fairy snail mother. I will help you win the race with kindness. You can do this, think about good kind things you have done." Tortellini felt something inside her, some magic, then she zoomed off.

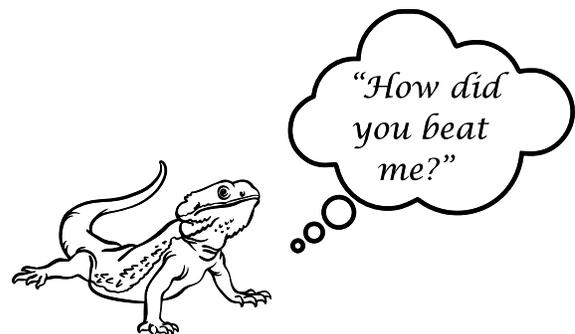
"They grow up so fast" said fairy snail mother. Then she passed Bolt and crossed the finish line.

Bolt woke up and saw Tortellini at the finish line so he ran over to her and said, "How did you beat me?"

"Magic," she said with a smile.

And that's the story of the tortoise and the snail.

The End





Lupita Nyong’o

by Maya Sereda
 Bay Vista
 Fundamental
 School
 Teacher:
 April Bradley

Do you know who had a role in Black Panther and Star Wars: The Force Awakens? And wrote *Sulwe*? What do they have in common? Lupita Nyong’o!

Lupita can speak four different languages. Those languages are English, Spanish, Luo and Swahili! Lupita was born on March 1, 1983. She was born in Mexico and grew up in Kenya. Her dad was a Kenyan politician.

Lupita moved to the U.S. to attend college. Lupita’s greatest accomplishment was writing *Sulwe*. It is about a little girl who wishes for her skin to be lighter.

Now you know all about Lupita Nyong’o. You should read her book and watch Black Panther and Star Wars: The Force Awakens and see how amazing she is.

Glossary

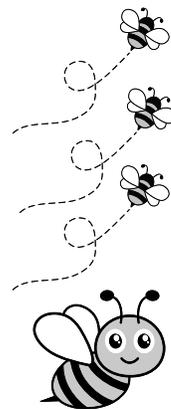
- role - a part in a movie
- languages - something a person can speak
- politician – someone who deals with rules and laws
- U.S. – A place a person can live
- Kenya – A country in Africa

Buzz About Bees



by Talia Silva

Tarpon Springs Fundamental
 Teacher: Robert Ferguson

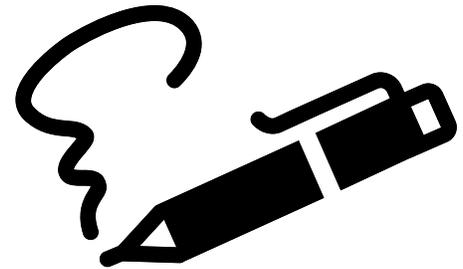


Buzz, buzz! That’s a bee. Today we will learn all about the Buzz on Bees! Flowers and bees go together like peanut butter and jelly. Next If bees were not around, flowers would be in trouble! Bees are very important to the Earth! Fun fact: Did you know that there are more than 10,000 types of bees? And do you know why they have stingers? They have stingers to protect themselves. For example, if you catch a bee they will try to sting you. Bees are not trying to hurt you. Bees live in something called a hive. Hives are where a lot of bees live. Bees are one of the most important pollinators. They help make honey and flowers too. There are many other pollinators in the wild. Pollinators are helpful to flowers. They help flowers grow. They sprinkle pollen all over flowers. Now you know a lot of the facts about tiny insects called bees.

Third Grade Writing

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Autographs



Edward Continuation

by Ethan Masi

Lakeview Fundamental School

Teacher: Devin Niyan



Edward couldn't believe it. Even though she was standing right above him, Abilene was impossible for someone to believe after so long to remember her. Without hesitation, she grabbed Edward and gently balanced him on her arm. She looked at Lucius Clarke and said in a hushed whisper, "We'll take him."

Yes, thought Edward. Yes, yes, yes.

And so it was Abilene that took him home from Lucius Clarke's shop. Maggie held him in her lap the whole way home, caressing Edward with every little movement. Finally, the car came to a stop in the driveway of a little one-story house on the outskirts of Memphis. It was painted in a light blue and looked beautiful. Maggie carefully unbuckled her seatbelt and, holding Edward tightly, got out of the car. When she got in the house, Edward caught sight of a picture on a bookcase. It was a picture of him and young Abilene, framed and sitting on a shelf by itself.

She always remembered me, thought Edward, and this thought filled him with love and warmth and opened his heart the widest it could.

The next day, after a wonderful night, Maggie, Edward, and Abilene went to the beach. Edward didn't remember there being a beach around where he was, but he mostly didn't know a lot about where he was at all. The crashing water. The crying seagulls. The soft sand. It was extraordinary. But he didn't enjoy it for long, because a snotty, toothless kid walked up to Maggie and jeered, "Look, a little girl playing with her dolly!" He kicked sand into her face and scooped up Edward by his ear tightly. "Why not go for a ride?" And, with all his power, he threw Edward towards the ocean. Edward went flying and hit the cool water with a splash. He knew this was Pellegrina's action.

Please, thought Edward, I am loving. I know love. I lived love. I feel love. Stop making me say goodbye. I can love.

Then, a powerful wave rushed by and scooped up Edward. He washed ashore and heard Maggie rushing toward him. And, in fast motion, she scooped him up and hugged him. "Oh, Edward," she said. "I thought I lost you." At that moment, Edward knew that he was okay. Pellegrina stopped punishing him. Everything was going to be alright.

Because he knew how to genuinely love.

(We shared Ethan's continuation of [The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane](#) with the author, Kate DiCamillo! Her response is included below.)

Thank you for forwarding on that truly beautiful next chapter of Edward Tulane. It is so well-written, so deeply-felt, and so wise that it gives me hope for all of us. I am grateful that you took the time to make sure I read that student's words.

*Yours,
Kate*

There Once was a Man with a Beetle

by Daniel Le
Highland Lakes Elementary School
Teacher: Catherine Cooper



There once was a man with a pet beetle.
Who ate all his food with a needle.
His favorite food was cheese.
Then he ate it with ease
And his dad screamed use a fork not a needle.

Mateo's Limerick

by Mateo Filomeno
Highland Lakes Elementary School
Teacher: Catherine Cooper



There once was a boy named Paul.
He liked to play dodgeball.
He had lots of friends
Who couldn't defend.
So Paul got hit by the ball!

Aunt to Cousin

by Elaina Milian
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Lisa Farmer



My Aunt Chloe was a special person to me. She was young and we had great memories. Like one time she crashed her golf cart into a tree at her sister's house. Another time she went to Fossil Park and a bird landed on her head! But these memories were a long time ago. We had to say goodbye to my Aunt Chloe.

I like to remember the times we spent together. I will always remember the times we went to the park to feed the birds and the memories that made me laugh.

I do have one special person that reminds me of her, it's my baby cousin Chloe. She is named after my aunt. She is two years old, and my aunt never got the chance to meet her. I know she would have loved her. She would have loved to have another niece. Now, whenever I see my baby cousin I think of my aunt. This is why my story is titled Aunt to Cousin.



Monkeys Haiku

by Jonathan Ramirez-Sabanilla
Ponce de Leon Elementary School
Teacher: Chloe Janiro

A monkey that swings
And plays around in the trees
Eats a banana

Washing Waves Haiku

by Victoria William
Tarpon Springs Fundamental
Teacher: Donna Quinn



Washing washing waves
Across the glittering sea
Washing through the shore



The Forest

by Dylan Huizache-Bolteada
Plumb Elementary School
Teacher: Stephanie Perri



Once upon a time Andrew and Bob went fishing while they were on their camping trip. As they started to set up the tent, Bob said “Let’s set up the fire now.”

“OK,” said Andrew. After they set up the fire they started fishing and Bob caught a big fish. Then they made s’mores and played at the park. Andrew said, “I am getting tired, let’s go to bed,” and they did.

They woke up early because they were only there for two days. They kept fishing all day long until they couldn’t fish anymore. Later that night, Bob heard strange noises. Andrew was asleep so Bob woke up Andrew and whispered, “I keep hearing noises outside the tent.”

But Andrew didn’t care he just said, “That is just the fire Bob, go back to sleep.”

Suddenly, Bob screamed “Ahhhh! Run for your life!”

Andrew sat up and asked sleepily, “What is going on?”

“There is a bear!!!” yelled Bob. So, they both ran but the bear was too fast... so they started to fist fight the bear when Bob saw a net and caught the bear. The boys got away safely, but after that day they never went back camping ever again!

Makeup

by Alexandria Felton
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Lisa Farmer



If you don't know how to do makeup this is for you. Let me explain to you a basic makeup 101.

First, clean your face. Then use your primer. I recommend Elf because it will keep your skin looking vibrant and brand new all day!

Then you must do your base. If you do not know what a base is, it is also known as foundation. Because it is the foundation to your whole makeup look!

After your foundation you can do a clean look, glam look, or even a soft look. You should not wear white while doing your makeup because make up does not stick very well and might get on your clothes. For your makeup to stick, use a setting spray. Do not go anywhere that will make you wet. You can use it for girl's night or at a fancy place. Then you will look fabulous!

*This story was inspired by watching my mom do her makeup in the morning. My mom always said putting on make up is like painting on a canvas.



Where are You, Snow?

by Yamn Hassan
Highland Lakes Elementary School
Teacher: Catherine Cooper

There once was a man named Joe
Who wanted to play in the snow
He traveled north on a train
but only found rain
So, he cried 'Where did the snow go?'

Christmas Cheer Haiku

by Kayla Paredes
Cypress Woods Elementary School
Teachers: Mary Mulligan &
Elizabeth Williams



It is Christmas day
Presents and family fun
Best of all is love!

I Like...But I Don't Like

by Logan Romano
74th Street Elementary School
Teacher: Richele Clark



I like watching videos on my blue Android phone,
But I don't like when the batteries die at the most exciting part.

I like cooking a meal with my mom,
But I don't like when the food tastes disgusting.

I like writing about animals in my classroom,
But I don't like when I have a limited amount of time.

I like brownies after dinner for dessert,
But I don't like when I get crumbs all over me.

I like going to the pool to jump into the water.
But I don't like it when there are a lot of people.



Bobby Joe Thibodeaux

by Nancy Enguita
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teachers: Adrienne Wooten & Christine Smotzer

Bobby Joe Thibodeaux went walking down the street.
She was happy because she was the person that everyone would meet.
She looked all down her avenue, but no one was in sight.
She searched the whole morning, and even through the night.
She ran to her bedroom and started to cry.
She used to be so popular she thought she was going to DIE.
Her mom came in and said, "There's a reason no one's around."
"Why?" she asked happily. "We rented the whole town!"
So, Bobby Joe was happy, as happy as could be.
So, she went walking down her favorite street.
She realized she loves nature, and she doesn't need any friends.
So, Bobby Joe kept walking and that's her happy, the end.



All About Sharks

by Cooper Niedermeier-Oden
Frontier Elementary School
Teacher: Channing Austin



Need to Know

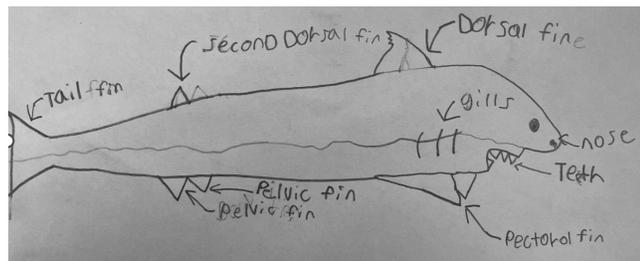
Did you know there are more than 500 different types of sharks in the ocean? That's right! People are normally scared of sharks because they think they are going to get attacked by one. But the odds of getting hurt by a shark are 1 in 11.5 million! Sharks would rather eat fish instead of humans!

Shark Bodies

Did you know that sharks don't have bones? Shark bodies are made out of cartilage. That's the stuff your ears are made of. Cartilage is strong but flimsy. Even though shark skin looks slimy, it is bumpy. Sharks have lots of fins. They have pectoral fins, dorsal fins, two tiny fins on their bellies, and of course, their tail fin. But the scariest part of a shark is their teeth. Sharks have more than one row of teeth. That is different from us because we only have one row. Also, unlike humans, they are always losing and growing teeth. They can go through 10,000 teeth. They need their teeth to catch their prey.

Fun Facts

- There are some sharks that can glow in the dark! They are called lantern sharks! They need the light because they live deep in the sea. They can also use their light to attract prey to their mouths.
- The fastest shark is the mako shark. It can swim up to 20 miles per hour! I can't swim that fast!
- The tiniest shark is the spined pygmy shark. It is only eight inches long!
- The creepiest of all sharks is the great white shark. It is also the most dangerous!
- The weirdest shark is the hammerhead shark. Its head is flat like a pancake and really wide!



Final Thoughts

Sharks are cool and amazing animals. Unfortunately, sharks are in danger because of people. Since they look scary, people kill them, or they get caught in nets. It is important that we keep these super cool animals safe!

Rosie's Day in 5th Grade

by Hadley Beaver
Curtis Fundamental School
Teacher: Alex Colette



Rosie Gemma was about to do it. About to open the door and start 5th grade!!! But just then, Rawnie Embittering ran right in front of Rosie and yelled, "Big baby in 5th grade!!!"

"Be quiet, Rawnie!" said a strange voice.

It was Emma. Rosie's been friends with her ever since 3rd grade, when Rosie stopped a bully from bullying Emma. Then in 3rd grade, Emma became friends with Rosie.

"Thanks, Emma. You really saved me from being humiliated by everyone." Rosie yelled.

"Uh, I was not doing that for you, Baby Rosie! I was doing it for the other "Rosie" behind you! Rawnie was talking to her!" Emma yelled as she pointed to another student walking into the classroom. Her name happened to be Rosie, as well. But her full name was Rosie Hemma.

Rosie could not believe her ears. "Why is she calling me Baby Rosie," thought Rosie Gemma. Is Emma now Rosie's enemy? She sobbed right there in front of the whole school, being humiliated by everyone. Then, a girl named Ariel walked up to Rosie to ask if she wanted to be friends.

"CAN WE BE FRIENDS?" she shouted in her loudest voice as she was ridiculously small, and Rosie was ridiculously tall. Then Rosie thought she must have been dreaming because she heard Ariel's voice as a faint, tiny voice like in one of those dreams where you think you hear someone calling you downstairs but when you go downstairs, no one is there.

"I SAID, CAN WE BE FRIENDS!?" the tiny little girl shouted even louder this time.

"Oh, I did not see you there. I am Rosie and I was just on my way home, away from this school, away from Emma, and most of all, Rawnie Embittering," she wailed.

Just then Rawnie, Emma, and even Rosie Hemma with her almost fully blond hair, icy blue eyes, designer outfit, and her little perfect pink, purple, and blue poodle came strolling down the hall, laughing at Rosie and her little friend, Ariel. Then, an idea popped into Rosie’s head, and she took Ariel by the hand and took off into the cafeteria. Then, Ariel asked confused, “Why are we here?”

“Because” she said, “We are going to start a stand that supports kids with no friends. We can add a bench for people to meet other people and possibly become friends.”

So, they collected all the supplies and started building. Then by the time school was over, they had a masterpiece of a bench. The bench was engraved with the words, “I Need a Friend.”

The next day, the bench was a hit. All the students were talking, and a few became friends. The two girls were so excited. Just then, Emma, Rawnie, and Rosie Hemma came in with their faces bright red and steam coming out of their ears.

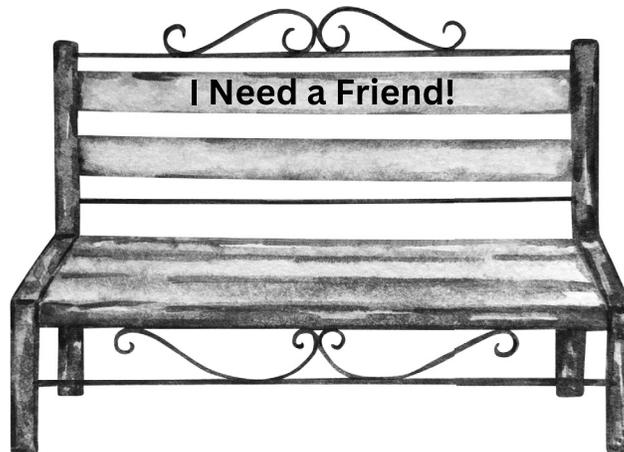
“All thanks to you two, we are in detention for the rest of the year!” they shouted angrily.

“Karma,” Rosie thought while giggling to herself, “That’s called karma,” she whispered.

The whole cafeteria burst out laughing.

Then, the next day, the most shocking thing happened. All three of the girls sat down on the “I Need a Friend” bench and waited patiently for a friend.

“Hmm... maybe we can be all friends after all,” Rosie said as she thought about all the wonderful days to come with having more than one friend.





Peci the Pencil
by Alsea Stone
Perkins Elementary School
Teacher: Elissa Swick



It was Monday in the classroom, I forget what subject. Kids were writing a story for a school assignment when my owner did something terrible! He used the ERASER! Now sit back, get comfortable, cause I'm gonna tell you the whole story. By the way, I'm Peci, a pencil in room 106.

I live a pretty average life for a pencil, spending most of my time in a caddy with a daily draw. I always see my fellow pencils getting turned over and using a pink square instead of our main attraction - LEAD. And say that my owner wrote the letter "N" but accidentally put 2 humps. And that's okay, just write over it, right?! No, of course, humans have to take everything to the next level! Because every time this pink square comes around, we get erased! My friend Mark the Marker doesn't get erased, and he doesn't have whatever this pink square is. Instead, he has a lid and that doesn't matter. What matters is he is permanent. If only I was permanent! Wait, that's it! I can make myself permanent. Some glasses, extra lead, and a time traveling machine should do the trick.

You may ask, "Why a time traveling machine, Peci?"

And I may respond like this, "The answer is easy, so that I can go back into time to tell the creator of pencils to make us permanent!" And, voila! We're permanent!

When I went to tell Mark my extraordinary idea he said, "And where exactly are you getting a time machine from?"

"Ohh yeah, I kinda didn't think about that."

"I guess it wasn't so extraordinary after all."

I went back to Mark to ask how life was being permanent, and his answer surprised me. "You know Peci, what you call complaining about not being permanent I call blah, blah, blah. Get it?" I respond with a confused, "No."

"Well, what I was trying to say was... have you ever thought that you are the only one who can make mistakes go away? You're special!"

"Oh, yeah, I never thought about that, I guess it is good that I have this pink square. Thanks, Mark!"

One year late... and yes, I did learn what the pink square is called; it's an eraser.



Africa

by George Atiya

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Alexandra Shontz

Africa is a continent where pyramids are, and it also has the Nile River, which is the biggest river in the world. There are tombs where people put dead bodies in. Also, there are mummies, but I don't believe in them. They are in ancient Egypt, but I come from Cairo, the capital of Egypt. There are many things Egyptians do like wear makeup because women thought that they had healing powers. Also, Egyptians play an incredibly old game called Senet. Egyptians also think that cats have power because they brought good luck. Egyptians were first known to have river people because they have the longest river in the world called the Nile River.

Africa has a lot of stuff to do and see as in the Sahara Desert. It also has the Nile River and it is very long so you can't even see the end! Also, it has many pyramids, and they sell stuff for cheap prices compared to us. You could get a real Louis Vuitton bag for like only \$75 dollars! For instance, if you found something at Gucci that you like but it's \$2000 dollars, you can get it for a 95% discount! There are also a lot of hotels. To rent a room it costs only \$100 dollars, and the food and room service is free. If you rent somewhere below the Sahara Desert there can be water slides, lazy rivers, and big drops from 100 feet. Trust me, it's fun but scary.

Africa has good food. I personally like Koshary. It's pretty much pasta and noodles mixed, you can make it spicy or not spicy. I like it when my mom makes it because it's spicy and very flavory. There is something I also really like called shawarma. It can also be spicy or not. There is only one flavor, chicken. All the shawarma in the world have chicken, so there is no difference. There is only that flavor unless you make your own. Tameya is also very good. That's why I'm persuading you guys to go to Africa and maybe you could go to an Egyptian restaurant to find some of these foods.

If you go to Africa, I know you're going to love it! Every summer you are going to want to go to Africa. That is what I mean, it is that fun. You will love all of the food, and you must go hiking or go to national parks. They are so fun. You can go on safaris, explore the continent and the religion of people living in Africa. Maybe you can explore the wildlife and see cool animals that you probably never seen in person like elephants, parrots, tigers, cheetahs, and lions.



My Favorite Place to Go

by Holly Conrad
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School
Teacher: Donna Quinn



Do you have a place where you feel safe? A place where you eat delicious food? A place where you can stay the night at? A place where you can be yourself, and be spoiled and loved? Well, I do! It's my grandma's house. It's my favorite place!

The first reason I love going to my grandma's house is because it is very relaxing. I can get a break from my sister, Leah. I get to play in my very own room and play without any distractions and anyone messing with my toys and making a mess. I love my sister but sometimes I need a break!

Another reason I love going to my grandma's house is because she makes delicious food for dinner, breakfast, and lunch. My papa's a good cook too. He makes very good dinners. He can make good milk shakes. My favorite meal that my grandma makes is chicken and yellow rice. My favorite meal my papa makes is hibachi with steak, chicken, and shrimp.

My grandma has good tile floors that I can skate on. I am currently learning how to skate backwards, and I am really good at it! Her house is big, and I can skate everywhere!

I like to come over to my grandma's house to create 3D stuff with my papa. I also just love being there doing nothing but hanging out. We cook together, do our nails, watch TV, go to the park, and go to my other grandma's house. We have holidays there. Spending time with my cousins-so many fun things!

My grandma's house is so awesome for so many reasons. It would take forever to list all of the reasons. But best of all, going to grandma's house is my favorite place to go because of my grandma and my papa!



Fern's Special Birthday

by Reese Cox
Curlew Creek Elementary School
Teacher: Vicki Jetton

It was a special sunny morning when Fern's mom opened her bedroom door and shouted, "HAPPY 9TH BIRTHDAY FERN!!" Fern woke up and got dressed in her jean overalls and went to get breakfast.

"Mom, I'm going to get Avery and go see Wilbur and the other animals in the barn for my birthday."

"Ok Fern, be careful on that rope swing." said Mom. So, Fern went to get Avery and Avery yelled, "IT'S MY SISTER'S BIRTHDAY!"

"OMG, you're so funny Avery," Fern laughed.

Fern and Avery ran to the barn and when they got there, she went looking for Wilbur. "Wilbur!" shouted Fern.

"Hi Fern!" said Wilbur. "Come here Fern, I need to show you something. Now close your eyes." Wilbur quietly went to get the straw cake that he had made for Fern's birthday. He gently picked it up with his mouth and set it in front of her. *What is Wilbur doing?* Fern wondered. Wilbur told Fern to open her eyes.

"WOW!" Fern cheered. "I LOVE IT!" On the table there was a yellow cake made of straw with a fancy white frosting web spun all around the outside of the cake. Little pink flowers were placed on top of the cake and 'Happy Birthday Fern' was written in orange icing. "This is the BEST cake ever!" shouted Fern.

"We're glad you like it, we all helped to make the cake." said Wilbur. "Nellie, Aranea, and Joy spun the frosting web and wrote the words. We wanted to make a special cake for your special day."

"Let's all sing Happy Birthday to Fern!" said Avery. All the animals gathered around Fern, even Templeton. The babies dropped down on top of Wilbur's head, and everybody sang Happy Birthday. Fern was smiling from ear to ear. She was feeling grateful for her friendship with the animals, and she knew that friendship was the best birthday gift to have.





School Jitters

by Logan Grace
Oldsmar Elementary School
Teacher: Shanon Wilkins



It was a hot June day at the Fluffs house. It was Billy Owl's first day of school. He was nervous and his mom kindly said, "You look great with your feathers and your big eyes and little beak." Even though his mom was trying to be nice, he was still very nervous about the unknown. He thought what if they don't like me.

He quickly arrived at school. He got out of the car and flew to his class. He met his teacher Mrs. Wing. Billy met his classmates and then his teacher read a book about the alphabet. Billy was still nervous about school, then finally it was recess.

Everybody flew to play at the playground. Billy stood still. He didn't know if anybody wanted to play with him. Then one of his classmates asked him, "Want to play tag with us?" Billy nodded. Billy and his classmates ran off to the trees to play tag.

His friend chased him and then Billy thought about the rest of the school year. What if I get bullied or get detention? Billy was so worried he decided to fake a broken wing. Billy pretended to be in pain and yelped for help. Everybody surrounded him, even his teacher Mrs. Wing. Mrs. Wing cried, "Take him to the office!"

Billy walked to his classroom got his stuff and went to the office. The office called his mom. His mom was scared about her Billy baby. She drove as fast as she could and when she got there, she carried him to the car and drove home. When he got home, he walked to his bedroom.

Many weeks had passed then one day he got up and decided to turn on his PlayStation and play video games. His mom caught him using his wing. She yelled, "Why are you playing video games with your wing!" He didn't know what to say.

"I faked I broke my wing because I was nervous about school and didn't want to go."

"Ohh Billy, why were you nervous?"

"Because what if I get detention?"

His mom looked at him. "Honey you're not a bad kid. Don't worry, you won't get detention."

Billy felt happiness. For the rest of the year Billy came to school every day with a positive attitude and fuzziness in his heart.



The Perspective of a Pet Cat

by Morgan Winfree

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean

Hi. I'm Cookies and this is my story. Oh, you might be wondering, "Why is this person named Cookies?" Well, that is because I'm not a person, I am a cat. A pet cat. And this is my story!

I was born under a tree in springtime 2024. I was in a litter of seven. My mother was a Siamese and my dad, a ginger. I have no idea what kind of cat I am, but my owner knows. When I was two months old, I was put into a pet store with my three brothers and three sisters. Oh, I am a girl, by the way. When the people found us, they couldn't find my mother, so she is still out there, I think. They put all seven of us in a big metal cage on a shelf with other kittens. It was cold, bright, and uncomfortable. A few hours later, a human with a mask on opened the cage and put in a bowl of food and water. Three of the kittens and I started eating, while the other three started drinking. That was what it was like for two months, until...

I was in my cage waiting for the big rush of people to come in when the store opened. It was just me and two sisters and one brother because someone had already bought my other siblings. Then, a little human girl came up to my cage and said, "Aww, they are so cute. Can we get them?"

I was used to that, but the mother or father always said, "No, those are kittens, they are harder to take care of than cats." Then the kid would go look somewhere else. But this time, her mom came over.

"They are cuties. Maybe we will get these." It was my lucky day! I was so thrilled I started jumping up and down! I was tired, so I curled up in the cage, thinking about waking up in a whole new world...next thing I knew I was lying on a couch and the little girl I saw at the store was now petting me in a house! I was afraid of her, but it felt so good, like the wet tongue of my mother going through my fur.

I looked around. We were sitting next to a window and I could see the soft glow of sunlight coming through the glass. It was a blue couch with blue and white pillows. Next to the couch were two big bowls--one filled with food, the other with water.

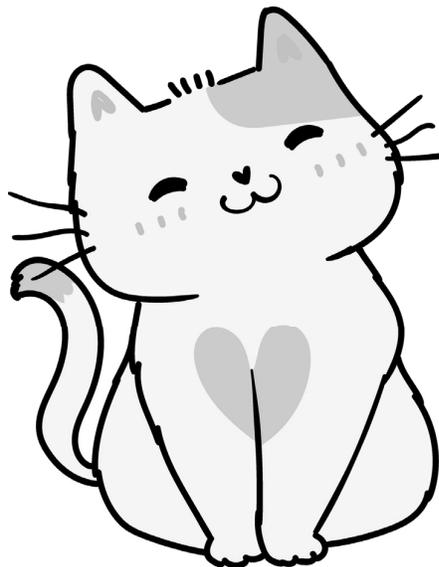
I got off the couch and trotted over to the food bowls. I started drinking water. Then, I heard a very disturbing sound – RUFF! RUFF RUFF! I turned around to see a dog! He was a German Shepherd, with a red collar with spikes on it! “RIP” was on the collar in silver letters. He cocked his head and was staring right at me! I was too frightened to move!

But then, surprisingly, he smiled as he slowly crept towards me. I stood still as he examined me. “Hi!” he barked.

“H-hi...,” I said in a shaky voice.

“Welcome to your new life here with me and our owners,” he barked happily. He gave me a tour around the whole house. It was a nice home, but I did not appreciate his “favorite poop spot.”

After a few days living in my new home, I started to get used to baths, dogs, and gentle humans. I soon learned the little girl’s name was Amia. She was very good at petting. I guess I started getting too comfortable, because that is why I was getting pushed off Amia’s bed all the time. Oh well, it’s better than a cage in a pet store. Life is pretty good.





The Adventurous Penguin
by Tait Corson
Jamerson Elementary School
Teachers: Andrea Cate & Jessica Dean



Once, there was a penguin born in Indiana who liked to go on adventures. He liked to go on adventures because his dad was a famous archaeologist who traveled the world. He wanted to be just like his dad.

One day, the young penguin went on a solo adventure to Hawaii to study the mountains, volcanoes and the ancient tombs. First, he had to rent a boat so he could travel from island to island. But he soon realized that his wallet was missing. It must have fallen out of his pocket. He was out of money!

The penguin needed to get a job as fast as possible. He looked around the boat dock and had an idea. He could work at a bait shop. Since his favorite food was fish, he knew all about bait.

The penguin started to look for a bait shop. Suddenly, a man shouted from across the dock "Hey, would you like to work at my bait shop?"

He shouted happily back at the man, "YES!" and started wobbling uncontrollably. He immediately wobbled to the man to ask about the pay.

The man said, "\$10/hour, that's all I can afford. But you can use my boat on the weekends. It may need a few repairs," he told the penguin as he shrugged his shoulders.

The penguin replied, "No problem. I grew up on boats and can fix anything!" The penguin looked at the boat and saw it had a gigantic hole. It also had a broken engine and a ripped sail. The penguin got straight to work. Three days later, the boat was repaired and ready to set sail.

The penguin wobbled onto the boat, started the engine and took off into the sunset and headed to The Big Island.

He woke up in the middle of the night to a loud ripping sound coming from the sail. "OH NO!!! The sail broke, what am I going to do?!" he exclaimed. "Wait, I still have an engine, and I can make a new sail out of my extra clothes."

The next day he sewed his clothes together to patch up the sail and continued his journey. He quickly got to the island and found the tombs hidden in the middle of the jungle. Luckily, he remembered his camera so he could take a picture for his dad.

"Oh boy, I need to get back. I only have the boat for the weekend!" He wobbled uncontrollably to the boat and immediately sailed back to the dock. He told his boss that his dad was in Indiana, and he must return home. He sadly and kindly told bait shop owner that he had to quit his job.

He packed his bags and headed to the Penguin Port to get on his plane. Eight hours later, he arrived at the Central Penguin Port in Indiana. His dad was waiting for him at the Penguin Port. They wobbled together with lots of hugs. And then they went back home. The penguin couldn't wait to tell his father about his adventures.

Poland

by Damian Gawryluk
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School
Teacher: Alexandra Shontz



I am Polish-American. My entire family branch is Polish except me and my brother Olivier. The first thing I want to tell you about Poland is that the capital of Poland is Warsaw. Warsaw is the biggest city in Poland, it is also the third capital of Poland's history. The first capital of Poland was Gniezno, and the second capital of Poland was Kraków, and the third capital of Poland is now Warsaw. The first time I went to Poland was when I was two years old to visit my Great Grandma.

My dad is from a city called Bialystok and my mom is from a city called Kamienna Gora. My parents had a tough time growing up because they grew up during communism. My mom got split from her family because no one had money. So my grandpa decided to go to America because one American dollar was worth four Polish dollars which are called Zoltowski. My mom's dad left to go to America when she was six years old and my mom's mom left to go to America when she was eight. My mom stayed with her grandma until she was eleven. Also, when she was eleven, she flew to America to meet her parents. She cried every day because of how much she missed her friends in Poland.

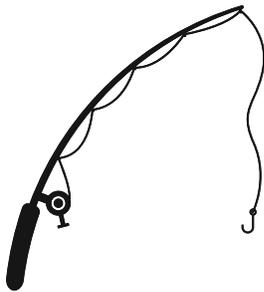
On the other hand, my dad had it a little easier because he left Poland when he was an adult. My dad has shown me pictures of his communion at church and at home. Also, he loved to play the guitar, and his favorite sport back then was soccer, but he and his parents could not find a soccer team for him to play on. He decided to play for his school handball team. My dad was so incredibly good at handball that he played with teammates two years older than him. He also played in the junior national Polish league.

One of the most amazing places to go and do in Poland is to go camping in the north-west part of Poland. Some of the interesting things I learned to enjoy while camping in Poland was to go swimming in the beautiful lake. My brother and I also liked to go on the rowboat when camping. Most of the time me and my brother slowly row around the lake but sometimes, we will go fishing in the rowboat. One of my favorite things to do while camping is to make a bonfire. Me and my brother will go in the woods with walkie-talkies and we would race who can collect more big logs and tiny sticks. My favorite part is when we get to chop the wood. My dad told me when you chop the wood, do not hit it straight in the middle, always hit it from left to right, never behind your head. The next step to making a bon fire is putting it together. First you make a tiny hut out of tiny sticks make sure to leave a hole in the hut so you can either stuff paper or dried leaves in the hole. After that, make a bigger hut made of long and thick logs. The last step is to light the bonfire; start to light the paper or dried leaves and then wait after about three or four minutes it will turn into the biggest fire you have ever seen. When the bon fire is lit you can make a ton of different foods on it.

Poland has variety of several types of foods. Personally, my favorite Polish food is pierogi. Pierogi look like a dumpling and can taste the same if you put the same filling for both. My personal favorite filling for pierogi is meat. Usually, you would put cooked onions on top of the pierogi. One Polish food I know how to make is fried pork chop. First, get a long plastic container, some eggs, and breadcrumbs. Next, crack the eggs add some seasoning and mix. After that, take a cutting board and put the pork chop on it, take a meat tenderizer and hit the pork chop all around on both sides five times. Next, put a pan on a stove and heat it on medium heat for five minutes with a dab of butter. Put the pork chop in the egg and submerge it for fifteen seconds, then submerge it into the breadcrumbs. After that, put the pork chop on the pan and if you hear a sizzle then you know you did it right. Every five minutes put another pork chop on the pan. If you have a big pan, you may be able to do more than one at a time. Once the pork chop is cooked, put one on a plate and if you want you can have it with ketchup and salad - yum!

Do you think you would like to go to Poland? If so, buy tickets early because they can get expensive fast.





The Fishing Accident

by Cali Wikoff
Plumb Elementary School
Teacher: Stephanie Perri



One day there were two boys who decided to go fishing. They were named Mike and Tom and were the very best of friends. The two boys met at Mike's house to gather their supplies for their day of fishing fun. When they met at Mike's house, they gathered their fishing poles and Mike begged his mom to drive them to a fishing spot. "Mom, can you please, please PLEASE drive me and Tom to go fishing?!"

Mike's mom smiled at her son's eagerness and replied "Yes, you may go fishing as long as you two boys are careful. Let me drive you now." The boys jumped with joy and off they went to the car. They were in Clearwater and as they drove, the boys rolled down their windows and felt the nice warm air. It felt like they were in warm shower.

An hour later they arrived at a lake and spotted a great fishing place. "Thanks mom, see you later!"

When they got out of the car, they grabbed their fishing poles from the trunk of Mike's mom's car and started jogging to the lake. The boys sat on the ground looking around for the bait that they needed. Tom started digging around in the dirt and shouted "Hey! I found some worms!". They grabbed a wriggly worm or two from the grass and dirt and quickly put them on their hooks.

Mike and Tom both threw the worms on their fishing lines as far as they could, but Tom's did not go very far. "Aw man! My line is in the shallow part!" whined Tom. Tom reeled his line back in and tried again. It took about 5 minutes when all of the sudden, one of the boys felt their fishing line tugging. All this work was worth it! The person who caught the fish was... Mike! Tom cheered him on, and they were both as happy as a child who found out they were going to Disney.

The boys looked at each other with a plan forming to cook the fish, but before Tom could say "Let's cook it," out loud, out of nowhere the fish jumped up in the air and bit Tom's head! It felt like a brick had smacked him.

Mike looked at Tom and said, "I'm glad that fish had no teeth!"

Tom was rubbing the top of his head where the fish got him and replied, "Easy for you to say, you aren't the one that got bit by a fish!". The two friends started laughing like crazy and decided to call it a day. After that whole incident the boys made it home, cooked the fish and had a great afternoon.



The Rare Golden Apple

by Gwen Tubbs

Northwest Elementary School

Teacher: Lisa Farmer

One day Joy was not feeling so good. She felt dizzy, had a bad stomachache and a bad cough. Then suddenly she fell over. Her sisters, Nellie and Aranea, hurried over. "Joy! Are you alright?!" they asked.

"Is she still breathing?!" Nellie asked.

"Yes," answered Aranea.

"Let's take her to the old sheep," Nellie said.

"You need to find a rare golden apple to save your sister," said the old sheep.

"Okay!" Aranea and Nellie said.

"We need help from Wilbur!" Aranea said.

"Wilbur, can you help us? Joy is sick and we need to find a rare golden apple. Please, Wilbur, please!" Nellie pleaded.

"I will," said Wilbur.

So, they set off into the forest to look for the rare golden apple. "Is it that apple?" Wilbur asked pointing.

"No!" Aranea and Nellie yelled, desperate to save their sister.

"OH NO! It's a bird! Get under me so it won't eat you!" Wilbur frantically screamed.

"I don't have enough strength to move, Wilbur!" Joy weakly said.

Suddenly, the bird swooped down and got Joy! "HELP!!" Joy cried.

"OH NO! We need to save her!" Wilbur told Aranea and Nellie.

"Templeton can find the bird's nest and get Joy back!" Nellie explained excitedly. So, they went back to the barn and found Templeton eating from Wilbur's trough.

"Templeton, Joy is sick, and we went to find a rare golden apple to cure her and then a bird came and snatched her up. We really need you to go find the bird's nest and get her back," Nellie explained.

"No," said Templeton.

"If you don't, I will tell the old sheep what you did and there will be consequences," Wilbur warned.

"Ugh, fine, I'll do it," replied Templeton.

"Good!" said Wilbur.

They continued their hunt for the rare golden apple and returned to the forest. "I smell a spider," said Templeton and he scampered up a tree. When Templeton came back down the tree, he was carrying Joy.

"Joy!!" Aranea, Nellie and Wilbur yelled with relief.

"We still have to find the rare golden apple," Wilbur reminded them. They kept walking through the forest until they came upon two different roads. They were unsure which road to choose.

"I think the regular road would be too dangerous so we should follow the dirt road," said Aranea. They went down the dirt road where they found an old dog.

"Do you know where we can find the rare golden apple?" Aranea asked the old dog.

The old dog looked up and replied, "The rare golden apple? No one has asked me about that rare golden apple in ten years. My name is Rom, I know just what you are looking for, but it is a dangerous journey."

Wilbur asked nervously, "Will you help us?"

Rom answered, "Yes, I'll give you a map." He grabbed a piece of paper and gave it to Wilbur.

"Looks like we have to go up the mountain," Nellie said reading the map.

"Watch out for bears!!!" the old dog warned.

They went up the mountain (not including Templeton who went back to the farm). When they were halfway up the mountain, they heard a loud rumbling sound... "Avalanche!" Wilbur screamed.

"Get in that cave!" Aranea yelled, frantically. They scrambled into the cave. They watched mud and rocks slide down the mountain. When the avalanche was done, they came out of the cave. There were rocks everywhere. When they reached the top of the mountain they heard a low growling. They turned around and saw a medium sized grizzly bear. Wilbur, with his very sharp teeth, bit the grizzly bear. This made the grizzly bear stumble back in pain and kick Wilbur against a stone wall. Aranea and Nellie hurried over, but then the grizzly bear closed in on them.

Joy, summoning all her strength, got up and used all the venom in her year-old body and bit the bear to save her family but to sacrifice herself in the process. The bear started shaking and then fell to the ground with a loud thump. Joy collapsed. Aranea rushed over to her sister. Wilbur knelt next to Nellie and said, "You are so brave, Nellie. You are smart. I need you to get that apple to save your sister." Then going over to Joy, Nellie slumped against a stone wall. They heard a sound and turned around to see a door.

"A door?! This must be the way to the golden apple!" Nellie said excitedly. Nellie went into the passageway, down a long tunnel and some steep stairs. What she saw next was amazing.

Birds chirped. The sound of rushing water from streams could be heard. It was magical. Nellie walked over to an old apple tree and looked up. She saw the rare golden apple. She quickly grabbed it and ran out of the secret room. She gave a piece to Joy when she was back at her side. They waited for hours. On the second day they thought there was no hope. But suddenly Joy opened an eye. "What happened?!" she asked. Everyone rejoiced in her recovery.

Cupid's Letter

by Lilyana Jae Simmonds
Jamerson Elementary School
Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean



Dear Citizens,

I'm Cupid, but you would probably know me as The Love Master. I can't believe that I am even saying this, but I'm so overwhelmed because everybody keeps asking me to help them with their love problems. I know that is kind of my job--but hello--sometimes I need a break, too. Even the Easter Bunny gets a break, and he has to hide eggs for every child in the world! Next time I get offered the job of the Sandman, I am definitely going to accept it. I mean, he sleeps half of the time.

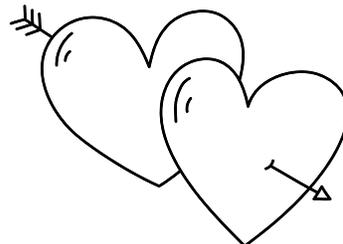
I'm going to have to hire another cupid to help me with the job. Luckily, it won't be as busy as before if I have some help. I already made the flyers and passed them out last week. I hope people want to get hired as a cupid. Even though I want a break every once in a while, I still want to help people find love. When you help people, it feels good inside. Your heart feels all warm and toasty, like a roasted marshmallow.

I had one person respond to my flyer and I think she is the perfect person for the job. Since there's only one person, I guess she is hired. Plus, she seems very nice. Her name is Sasha. She says she loves animals and she is great with people. She is actually very loving and lovable.

I think she is the perfect cupid for the job. Now, I can finally have some time to myself and still get to help people, too. If there is ever more than one person that needs help at the same time, they can come to either one of us. I hope nothing goes wrong!

I think I will love this new life. It's a win-win. Hopefully I get to talk to you guys soon. Oh, and have a happy Valentine's Day. I will be looking for that special someone for you!

Love,
Cupid



No Chance

by Oliver Nguyen
Plumb Elementary School
Teacher: Stephanie Perri



It was 4-4 at the end of the first half in the finals of the soccer tournament. There was an entire half left to play. Everyone was gulping their Gatorades until the coach announced our strategies. "We are going to play with two strikers" he said. Everyone nodded. The other team's defense was good, and we were going to try to penetrate it. When the second half started things were going badly. Our team was getting pressured and when they scored a goal our team was shouting at each other. Things were starting to fall apart.

With less than 5 minutes left in the game we got a free kick. Coach told me to take the shot. It was going to be very hard because I was at a horrible angle. There was almost no chance. Time seemed to stand still, and everyone had their eyes glued to the ball. The only thing you could hear were babies crying and birds chirping. I took a deep breath and shot the ball. It rocketed off of my foot and when it looked like it was going to go in... it hit the crossbar. We had failed to score the equalizer. The parents on the other side were cheering happily. However, the parents on our team sighed deeply. Later, the other team scored another goal. That was when the final whistle blew.

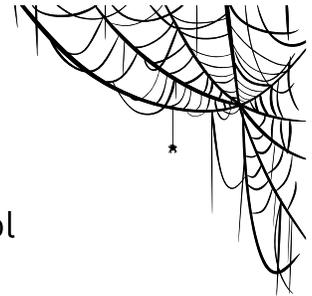
After the game, tears were welling up in my eyes. My teammates were trying to cheer me up, "You did your best," said Zander, my best friend on the team, with a gentle pat on my back. He also told me that it was just a small tournament and that nothing matters more than having fun. Eventually, when I got home, I learned that failure is not the end but just the beginning.





Aranea's Web (Charlotte's Daughter)

by Aubrey Bertalan
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School
Teacher: Alexandra Shontz



One sunny morning, Wilbur got up extra early to wait for Aranea. Once Aranea woke up, Wilbur jumped up and screamed "GOOOOOD MOOORRNINGG!"

"AAhhhhh," shouted Aranea, "Don't scare me like that," she demanded.

"Sorry," said Wilbur quietly.

"Now my web is ripped, and I have to make a new one," Aranea said exhaustively, but Wilbur was not listening. That night she went to make a new web.

The next morning...

"AHHH, where is Aranea???" screamed Wilbur.

"Be quiet," grunted the goose but Wilbur was scared. He didn't see her anywhere. He asked the sheep, the cow, and the goose if they knew where Aranea could be. The goose replied, "NA-NA-Noooooo." The rest of them did not know where she was either.

He had searched everywhere and asked everyone. His heart was broken. He thought he had lost her like he had with Charlotte. A few seconds later, the goose shouted, "THERE SHE IS!" Wilbur's heart was filled with excitement!

He zoomed over and asked, "Where Is SHE?"

"I THINK that's her leg," said the goose.

Wilbur pulled a stick out of the ground with his hooves, mistakenly thinking it was Aranea's leg, but nobody was attached. Wilbur burst into tears. "My my baaadd," whispered the goose. If you were in that barn cellar, you would hear Wilbur cry and think your ears were breaking (and your heart).

"Why are you crying," asked a familiar voice.

"Aranea?" Wilbur cried, "Is that really you?"

"Yes, who else would it be," asked Aranea in shock.

"OOOhhhhhh ARAAANEEAAA, I thought I lost you!" he cheered.

"Lost me?" questioned Aranea, "I told you I was going to be making a new web."

"I don't think I was listening when you told me," Wilbur thought aloud. "And I wouldn't have got myself in this mess if I would have just listened to you," Wilbur said, "but now, all I'm worried about is you." Aranea hugged Wilbur with all eight of her arms.

"I'm so happy I found you Aranea," Wilbur said with love.

Darkness

by Evann Gann

Bay Vista Fundamental School

Teachers: Sheri Cianca and Kristin Jennings



So scared to hear the leaves rustling
Covers being the only thing that can
protect you
All your worries go to your head
Recall the good memories of the golden
days
“End the nightmares” you think while the
noises get louder
Don’t get out of bed or the monsters will
get you

Peer through the window to see if
someone is there
Unknowing if something is behind you
Return to under the blanket is the only
safe place
Pressure going through your head feeling
like a watermelon with a 1,000 rubber
bands
Lies, you want them to be, lies
End as you fall asleep, but the darkness
still lurks



Trick-or-Treating

by Benjamin Erb

Bay Vista Fundamental School

Teachers: Sheri Cianca and Kristin
Jennings

You’re walking in the dark and eerie
night, and you see a creepy decoration.
You look at it and it jumps right in your
face! In my opinion, trick or treating is
way better than passing out candy!

You can get hundreds of pieces of candy
(sometimes I don’t get to eat all my
candy because there’s too much).

It also allows kids to be creative with
their costumes. Once, my sister dressed
as a Star Wars character. It was a super
creative and cool costume.

Finally, Halloween gives you a bunch of
exercise since you’re walking or running.
A couple of years ago I only went to 20
houses because it was so buggy outside.
We usually get more exercise than that
year.

That's why trick or treating is way better
than passing out candy.

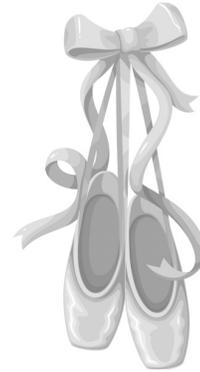


Dancing Traps

by Payton Lackey

Curlew Creek Elementary School

Teacher: Ashley Wyatt



Tap, tap. I slipped on my dance shoes. On the evening of Tuesday January eighteenth, I was getting ready for dance. Tuesday is the day I go to my dance classes. I have classes in Ballet and Tap. Now, don't be fooled, dance is harder than it seems. Let me present to you what I call the dance traps!

To begin with one of the hardest things about dance is coping with your feelings. Believe it or not, if you are a perfectionist and you mess up, you go hard on yourself. Going hard on yourself can sometimes result to things like crying, arguing and sometimes abusing or hurting yourself. I know it doesn't seem realistic but it's true.

Additionally, ballet can cost an arm and a leg! Not literally but ballet requires a specified uniform of a leotard, a ballet skirt, tights, and your hair in a bun. That uniform is expensive. The uniform also requires ballet shoes. Now, this specified type of shoes does help you dance. This type of shoe is very expensive. However, these shoes do help you dance so they are worth it.

Another type of trap is that tap class can be hard too. Tap is a type of dance class that puts pressure on you but also your legs. When you're on your legs for a while it can lead to cramps, sloppy moves and even sights of emotional changes, these can lead to concerns not just from your tap teacher but also from your parents. Therefore, if these concerns fade away from your parents and teachers it can lead you to mischief. The mischief could be lying or sadness. For example, lying can lead to saying things like "I'm too tired for dance," or "Mom, do I really have to go to dance?"

Now you know why these dance traps are rough, but there are plenty of things that will inspire you to stay connected to your hobby. So, if you enjoy your hobby you can persevere through the traps. You've got this. Good luck, dancing on!

A Dance with the Jellyfish

by Marley Johnson
Ozona Elementary School
Teacher: Theresa Kessenich

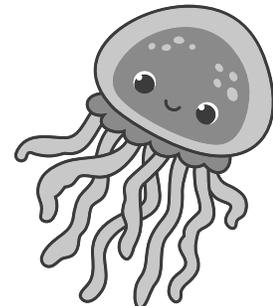
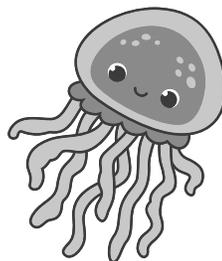
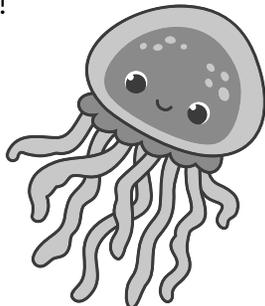


It was a beautiful bright Saturday. I was very excited to go to the aquarium. I wanted to escape the commotion. Then I slipped into a dark and quiet room. There was a blue glow, it was as bright as a star in the night sky. The light was from a group of jellyfish gliding gracefully in a big tank.

I wanted to say hello, but it looked like they were talking. I walked up to the tank and the jellyfish did not see me. The next day I came back but I had brighter clothes, and I brought glow sticks. Then I had an idea! I can dance to communicate with the jellyfish. I waved my glow sticks to get their attention.

I did a pirouette, and they did it with me. Then, I did an illusion. I did a leap, and they loved it. They started to dance with me. I was very happy to see them dance with me.

It was getting late. I knew my mom was expecting me soon. "Goodbye," I said as I waved farewell with my glow sticks. When I get home, I will be choreographing a dance for you guys!





WILBUR'S BEST DAY EVER!

by Leonel Palomino

Highland Lakes Elementary School

Teacher: Catherine Cooper

It was Springtime at 2:56 at Mr. Zuckerman's barn. "I wish that I had a girlfriend," said Wilbur. "I feel lonely. I have no one to play with," he said with a sad sigh.

"I will help you Wilbur. If my mother can help you, so can I," said Joy.

"But how?" asked Wilbur.

"I will trick Mr. Zuckerman by putting words that you will see in the morning," she replied excitedly.

The next morning Wilbur woke up extremely early. He was ready for this day. Wilbur thought Joy was going to write, "SOME GIRL" but instead, to make Mr. Zuckerman think that Wilbur needed a girlfriend, Joy wrote clearly wrote in her web, "A GIRLFRIEND."

"I thought it was just a friend, not a girlfriend," said Wilbur with anxiety. Just then, Lurvy came to Wilbur to give him his food.

When Lurvy looked up he dropped the bucket and screamed, "Homer, we have a MIRACLE!"

Mr. Zuckerman came running "Oh, Wilbur needs a girlfriend; it is so obvious! I will get the Arable's on the phone."

Ring, Ring. "Yes," said Mr. Arable.

Mr. Zuckerman shouted, "I need A female pig if you have one."

"Why, yes! Yes, we do! You can have it for \$5"

"Okay do you want me to pick it up or can you..."

"I will bring it to you," said John Arable.

Within the next hour Mr. Arable came with a strange box. He opened it and the prettiest female pig came out and said "Hi."

Wilbur was in love at first sight. "Salutations!" said Wilbur.

"What does salutations mean?"

"It means hello or good morning." And they lived happily ever after!

The Day I got Kittens!

by Hannah Bilbrey
Highland Lakes Elementary School
Teacher: Catherine Cooper



In the morning, I awoke to hear my mom's car. She said we were going to get two kittens this summer. We drove to the adoption center, and I saw these two beautiful black kittens that had green shimmering eyes. They were just so cute that I thought I could die of happiness.

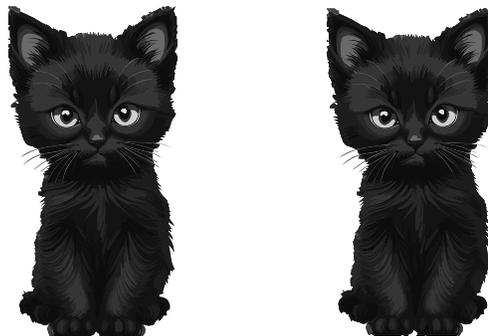
Then we walked up to the counter to pay for them. We paid 100 dollars for Co-Co and Yumi. After we paid, we drove home, and I had a great idea.

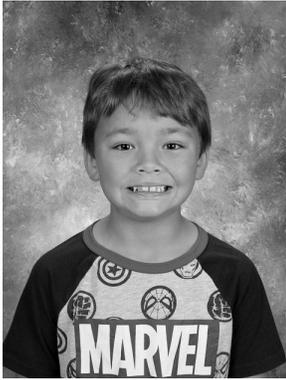
My idea was to do a fashion show with the kittens. These are some of the outfits I found: a cute little rainbow dress, an Elsa shirt and a terry-cloth robe.

So next I dressed up the kittens and put on my best announcer voice.

"First up, we have Co-Co Puff dressed in a fancy purr-fect rainbow dress with beautiful colors like blue, pink and purple. Next up, we have purr-fect Little Yumi and she is wearing a pretty pink and gold dotted dress. When she walks down that runway she looks like a model."

Strutting their stuff down the runway must have been hard work because my little kitties sure slept well that night! Finding them was the best part of summer!





My Amazing Football Game

by Brighton Sciarappa
Highland Lakes Elementary School
Teacher: Catherine Cooper



"Have fun at football! See you this afternoon," said my dad as he dropped me off at school. I play flag football at my school and it's one of my favorite sports to play. My favorite player is Justin Jefferson, and I try to play like he does.

First, as soon as the bell rings for the end of the day, I race over to the field and put on my gloves and my flags. We practice for about ten minutes to get warmed up before we start. Once the game starts, I always line up as a receiver (it is my favorite position) and on this day, the unthinkable happened... I scored 4 touchdowns!

The first one, a first grader, was covering me and I outran him, caught the pass, and took off running for the first touchdown of the game!

I celebrated by doing Jefferson's move (the griddy). Next, right after I scored, I had to line up on defense. I thought that there was no way the QB would throw it my way... well, he did, and I intercepted it!

This game felt too good to be true. Suddenly, everyone realized I was one of the best players on my team, so the opponents put a 5th grader on me to guard me. That couldn't stop me because today, I was on my A game! The coach called "hike" and threw it to me. I caught it, made a move and then touchdown! Then my whole team erupted with cheer! They couldn't believe I scored on a 5th grader! It felt like I was dreaming.

After another drive, we got the ball back and this time, I had to make another crazy one-handed catch for another touchdown!

Finally, the game was coming to an end and with 2 minutes left and the game tied 5 to 5, my team had the ball with one more chance to score. My coach said "hike," dropped back to pass and launched a "Hail Mary" pass to me! Somehow after feeling like it was in the air forever, it floated down right into my arms! Another touchdown!

We ended up winning the game on that play and I couldn't wait to tell my dad what kind of game I had!

The Universal Downpour

by Jase Sturgeon
Highland Lakes Elementary School
Teacher: Catherine Cooper



“WAKE UP JASE! TIME TO GO!” my mom says early in the morning. I jump out of bed and quickly get dressed and brush my teeth. My mom and stepdad told me they had a surprise for my birthday, and we drove off in the car. Once we jumped out of the car, I realized that we were at Universal Studios!

First, we walked through the front and went straight to the Spiderman ride because Spiderman is my favorite superhero! Next, my mom and stepdad took me to Hogsmeade in Harry Potter World to get my first wand. We walked in and a wizard came up to us and offered to help me. I was excited to finally have my own wand and now I was ready to ride some rides. I decided to ride Hagrid's, and we waited in line for what seemed like forever!

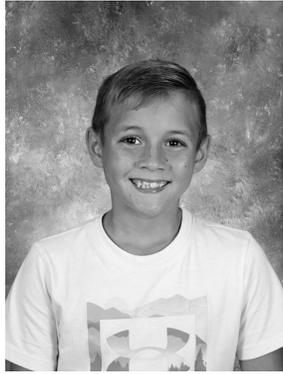
Suddenly, I heard a loud clap of thunder and then it started to rain. Luckily, my mom brought us some ponchos to keep us dry from the rain. We ran over to the train station to go to Diagon Alley to keep cover from the storm. We spent some of our time riding rides inside. I really wanted it to stop raining so I could see Hashtag the Panda at the Jimmy Fallon ride.

As we were leaving Diagon Alley it stopped raining so we headed straight for the Jimmy Fallon ride. BOOM! The thunder clapped and it started to pour AGAIN.

My stepdad looked at the weather and noticed it was going to rain for the rest of the day. I begged them PLEASE that all I wanted to do was to ride a couple more rides. I started to get real sad because I thought my birthday was going to be full of stormy weather.

Luckily, the clouds started to move away. I could not believe it... THE RAIN WENT AWAY! I was happy and ready to see more of the park. We were even able to ride a couple of extra rides too!

And the best part, I even picked out my own messenger owl to take home. As the day ended, we left the park and drove home. I was so thankful that it stopped raining, and I got to have the best birthday ever!



Don't Push Me In!

by Nicholas Salzer

Highland Lakes Elementary School

Teacher: Catherine Cooper

"Wake up, wake up!" I screamed as I jumped up and down on my parents' bed. They always take forever to wake up. "Uncle John invited us on his boat. Can we go please?" I asked.

"Alright we are up, let's get ready to go," they replied. We hurried to get our bathing suits, towels, and masks. Then, we hopped into my dad's truck.

At the boat dock, we put our bag and cooler on the boat. I helped Uncle John untie the boat. Then, we headed out to the island. When we got to the island, my dad threw out the anchor. We were all excited to hunt for shells and sand dollars. I brought my net to try to catch a fish.

Splash! My brother, Decker, pushed me in! I was very surprised. I quickly climbed back on the boat to get him back, but it was too late. Decker had already jumped in the water and swam to the beach.

"I am going to get him back when he least expects it," I told my mom and dad. "Be careful," they said.

I hopped in the water and joined Decker on the beach. We found a lot of shells and three sand dollars before we decided it was time for lunch. Then we swam back to the boat. Dad handed us our subs and we gobbled them up.

After lunch, Decker and I wanted to swim again. As Decker put on his mask, I snuck up behind him. Splash!

"Hey, don't push me in!" Decker screamed.

"Got you back!" I laughed and jumped in the water.



Wilbur and the Big Pig

by Fabian Christian

Highland Lakes Elementary School

Teacher: Catherine Cooper



It was a normal spring day. The goslings were chirping, the lambs were playing, Tempelton was collecting trash from the dump. Wilbur lay in the sun gnawing at leftover slops. "Haul 'em in boys, haul 'em in!" came a loud voice from outside the barn. Wilbur jumped from his feet. Mr. Zuckerman, Lurvy, and Mr. Arable were hauling a wagon with a big fat pig in it.

"Another pig! This is too much!" Wilbur reacted. The huge pig got thrown right into the pigpen.

"Uh what's your name?" questioned Wilbur.

"Robbin," said the pig grumpily. This was not going to be good, thought Wilbur.

Time passed by. Wilbur had a huge problem with Robbin. He kicked when Wilbur was asleep, he lay in his manure pile, too. The next morning, Wilbur woke up to a horrid sight.

"Take this! Take that!" shouted Robbin. Robbin kicked big pieces of manure into the air.

SPLAT! SPLAT! Manure went into animal's faces.

"What is all the commotion?" asked a very familiar voice. It was Joy, Charlotte's middle daughter.

"Oh, great heavens! Stop him!" exclaimed Joy. However, Wilbur trembled in fear. He was scared of Robbin. He was bigger than Wilbur. But Wilbur was determined to be brave, so he rammed Robbin.

BANG O' BONG!

"What a show-off!" grunted Robbin.

Robbin walked away with an angry expression on his face. Wilbur knew he had no time to lose. He had to get rid of Robbin. Suddenly, he had an idea.

"Um... Joy can you trick the Zuckerman's into removing Robbin?" asked Wilbur.

"Oh yes, sure!" yelled Joy.

Joy worked on the web all night long. The next morning, when Lurvy came to the pigpen to slop Wilbur, he saw the web.

"Wowy wow! Homer, come and see this!" shouted Lurvy

Mr. Zuckerman saw the web in disbelief. "Do you think this has something to do with the new pig?" asked Mr. Zuckerman.

"Sure, I'm sure," Lurvy replied. "Just read the web."

Four hours later Robbin was removed, thanks to Joy.

What did the web say... I'll never tell!

Autographs



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Absence

by Roxanne Tas

Ridgecrest Elementary School

Teacher: Jenny Courchene



She was the best friend, that I could ever have
She always kept me in line, and that was that
She cared for me, when I was sad
She made me feel good when I usually felt bad.

She always was positive, never not glad
The way she smiled, was sweet not mad
She used “all in all” but whatever
Because, that cannot happen anymore.

When I felt crazy, like I was gonna cry
She held my hand, she said “it will be alright.”
It's sad she is absent now, and forever
I miss when she used her brain for fake endeavors with me.

The Kickball Game

by Colm Scally

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Kimberly Moran



It's Friday. That means it is choice day in P.E. class. The clock strikes 9am and the entire class knows it's P.E. time. We rush outside and start to warm up. Everybody is talking about what they're going to do for today. Me and a couple of other kids already know our plan. The kickball plan.

After the warm-up, we take a quick two-minute water break and coach asks, "Do you have your checks for the week?"

When we answer, "Yes, coach!" he dismisses us to make our free choice. My friends and I race over to play kickball. We will probably only get to play two innings. The other team has a fantastic start. They've already scored five runs on us.

But now it is our turn to kick. One of my teammates steps up to the plate. The pitcher winds up, sends the rubber ball rolling towards the plate, and BOOM! It flies into the outfield! My teammate rounds the bases all the way to third. Our next teammate steps up to the plate. BAM! The ball is hit into the far infield. We tell the teammate on third base to stay in place. The teammate who just kicked made it onto second base. I am waiting for my turn to kick as my last teammate steps up to the plate. He kicks and runs to first base.

Finally, it's my turn. The pitcher rolls the bright red ball. I approach the plate as the ball comes in. BANG! I kick the ball into the outfield. I shout to my teammates to "Go home!" One by one, they cross home plate.

Then I run home. "GRAND SLAM!" I say in a joyful voice.

Luckily, we had two runs before coach said, "Time." We cleaned up and won because of MY kick! Coach tells me, "Great kick!" I thanked him and that was THE KICKBALL GAME.





Florida

by Julia Spring

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Summer Renedo

The ocean rolling. The beach glistening. The sky is a beautiful blue. An osprey is flying above. What place do you think this is? It's Florida! Why you ask? Because Florida is a great vacation destination for tourists to visit. The two reasons to support this is Florida has both indoor and outdoor activities.

To begin with, Florida has fun indoor activities for tourists to enjoy. First of all, Florida actually has history museums. Personally, I went to a history museum, and it was so cool! Second, according to source 4, Florida has theme parks including Disney World, Universal, Sea World and Legoland! At these theme parks, you can go on rides, watch shows, play games and more! Last, there are restaurants and shopping for all to enjoy. For example, in Tarpon Springs, there is a delicious restaurant and bakery called Hellas! Now you know that Florida has lots of indoor activities for tourists to enjoy.

Furthermore, Florida has many outdoor activities for tourists too. For example, Florida has a lot of amazing beaches, and you can also boat! Personally, I love boating! Next according to source 2, Florida has a bunch of national parks. I believe that national parks are amazingly beautiful. Lastly, many places in Florida have fun water activities. For instance, swimming pools, beaches and more! Now you know that Florida has many outdoor activities for tourists to explore.

Your swimsuit is wet. Your bag is full of seashells. Your stomach is full. Where did you go on vacation? You went to breathtaking Florida! This is why Florida is a great vacation place. It has many indoor and outdoor activities for all to enjoy! So next time you are thinking of going on a vacation, don't think twice, and go to Florida!





Basketball Dreams

by Calvin Buffam
Gulf Beaches Elementary School
Teacher: Melinda Carney



Have you ever dreamed of being the best out of the best at shooting, dribbling, passing, jumping, and running like Kobe Bryant, Luka Doncic, or LeBron James? Well, I am going to tell you how I got good at basketball. I will show you how you can get good with practice and determination.

First, when I got into basketball I lived in New Bedford, Massachusetts and my mom signed me up for basketball. For my first practice my coach taught me and some other kids that were also on the team how to shoot a basketball. The ball was bright as the sun. The coach said to aim for the white box on the backboard and it helped me because, since it is above the net, it will help it go in. So, if you are a beginner I suggest doing that. Then, we did some more shooting drills. Next, we worked on passing drills and my coach said that there were three types of passing: bounce pass, chest pass, and overhead pass. Then after my practice I felt good and was ready to keep practicing.

A few days later, when it was my second practice, we did dribbling drills and my coach said if you touch the basketball with two hands and dribble again, that's a foul. A foul is when you do something in basketball that you're not supposed to do. Coach also said if you take two or more steps without dribbling, then that's also a foul. Then, after the long practice that felt like it took one million years to finish, we were ready for our first game. Then, in one week it was my first game. When it was time for the game, we were at the YMCA. When the game started, I found a good spot on the court that was shiny as clean metal where nobody was guarding me, so my team started passing to me and I was scoring. From all of that scoring, we won the game.

Everyone on my team felt good and we earned medals for doing our best. It all happened because of my coach, he taught us how to shoot, dribble, and pass. From that we won the games, and we were an amazing team.



Red Door Blue Door
by Enziatta Bucci-Allen
Gulf Beaches Elementary School
Teacher: Meghan Starnes

Rain poured as Mina, Lily, and Ravaka were awake in the middle of the night.

“Guys, my parents will be out until 10:00 pm at night. So, let’s talk about what we wanna be when we grow up!” said Lily jumping up and down.

“I wanna be a.... DOCTOR!!!” said Ravaka

“Oh please! Give me a BREAK!” said Mina, sharpening her nails with her nail clipper.

“Wanna play red door blue door?” said Lily, smiling under the flashlight, wiggling her fingers. Everyone agreed and went to the bathroom with no flashlight. They took the haunted doll, too.

“Red one blue one. Choose wisely little one!” Lily chanted, wiggling her fingers again. But Ravaka was so scared she didn’t say a single word or movement. Two paper doors, one red, one blue popped up.

“W-Which o-one?” said Ravaka scared to death as she hugged the wall.

“Blue,” said Mina, unimpressed and bored, and Ravaka went with her.

“YOU PASS!” said Lily, smiling under the flashlight, right in front of Mina who felt uncomfortable. The next level was easy for Ravaka, but not Mina.

“Blue,” said Mina.

“YELLOW!” said Ravaka scared for Mina.

“I p-picked the w-wrong o-o-one!” said Mina, scared and putting her bored act off. Then, Lily stopped smiling, and then as a joke, started hiding and turned off the flashlight. “LILY?!” said Mina, terrified. Lily then popped up to scare Mina and Ravaka and jabbed her fingers into Mina and started laughing nonstop, and so did Ravaka, letting go of the corner of the bathroom.

“S-STOP IT!” said Mina. Ravaka then heard something in the bedroom that was closed behind them. THUMP! THUMP! TH-UMP! Then, Mina and the others went to bed, after being scared to death. Later in the middle of the night, Lily was gone and Mina heard thumps of footsteps and cold voices coming from the two red and blue closets. She looked in the red one and nothing happened, but then she realized something; there was one red and one blue door. She heard voices from them. She then opened the door.

Ravaka came out of nowhere and saw Mina picking the blue door.

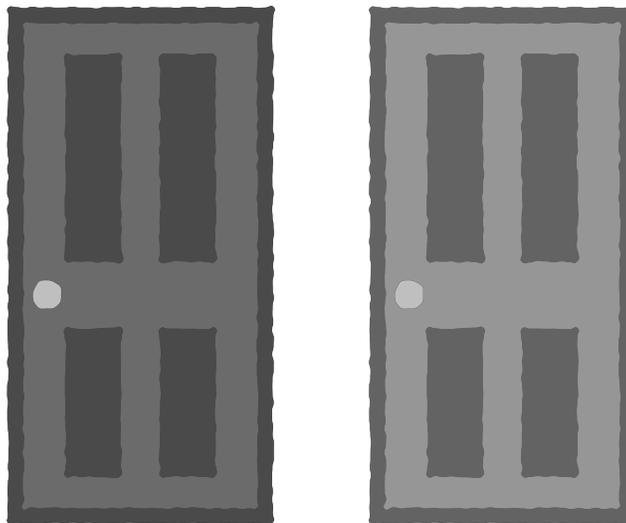
“MINA WAIT!” said Ravaka, but it was too late. Mina closed the door behind her. Ravaka opened the blue door, but Mina wasn’t there. Ravaka only heard small voices singing a long cold melody. Ravaka looked through the blue door, but no one was there. It was silent. But then, Ravaka opened the red door and found Lily singing a nice, sweet melody all night. Lily’s eyes were red as she smiled and laughed, as Ravaka fell to the floor. As she saw Mina lying right next to Lily singing the same melody with the exact same scary glowing red eyes.

“DO YOU WANNA PLAY WITH US?!” said both the girls. After the sleepover was done, forever until eternity.

Ravaka told everyone, but no one believed Ravaka one bit! Her mom said they did see her friend that day for the horrifying sleepover, so they went to her friend’s house again to take a picture of it, but there was a builder shredding the house, except the basement.

“This place closed way back in 1923!” said the builder, annoyed about Ravaka’s complaints. Ravaka then stayed in the basement for a couple of hours. And then the built house popped up again, even the builder was scared. And then that’s when Ravaka heard it.

“DO YOU WANNA PLAY WITH US?!”



Dreaming in Peace

by London Witt
Curtis Fundamental School
Teacher: Andrea Russell



Dreams,
A time when your mind takes control
You don't have to worry
About a thing.
Because your mind is in dream land,
Jumping on clouds.
Dancing with stars,
Singing a song together.
You blink and you wake up,
You must go to school.
But you're okay with it,
Because you can only think of what you will
dream about next.
Dreams

Birds

by Noah C. A.
Bergbrant
Gulf Beaches
Elementary School
Teacher:
Anna Lewen



Birds have feathers,
Birds have beaks,
They lay eggs in a nest,
And I like birds the best.

Owls are nocturnal,
They hunt at night.
They have big and forward eyes,
But not the best sight.



Flamingos have pink feathers,
They eat a lot of shrimp.
I think they are unique,
Because of their big and curved beak.

Peacocks are majestic,
They have the most beautiful feathers.
If I got one as a pet,
I would love it forever.



Blue Hyacinth Macaws are exotic,
Their feathers are blue.
If you see one,
You will be mesmerized by it, too.



Cardinals have red beaks.
The boys have red feathers.
The girls' feathers are brown,
The feathers on their head
stand up like a crown.

The Boat

by Giara Cruz
Curtis Fundamental School
Teacher: Andrea Russell



Sailing in crystal clear waters of
the sea,
fish jumping around you as
you rock side to side

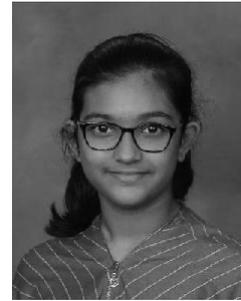
Take me to my homey home, sailing sailing in the ocean of the world

The wind flows through your hair as you stand on the boat



Dream Like Martin

by Vrunda Patel
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teachers: Chelsea Riley and
Stephanie Stophel



Fancy cars, the latest iPhone, and all designer clothes are what most kids dream of when they think about what the future will be like when they have their own job to buy what they want. My dream for my life doesn't contain any of those materialistic items! My dream includes helping people and saving lives. So, given the choice of a life full of money or a life helping people, I am clear as glass that being a doctor that will help save lives and educate people how to stay healthy is the career for me.

To give this essay some background, my class was recently discussing Dr. Martin Luther King and how his dream is still important for our world. Dr. King's message of support and kindness leads me to my very first point why I want to become a doctor. I want to be a doctor to help people. Helping people is one of the most selfless things a person can do. For example, I dream of working as a doctor who travels around the world giving aid to people. I knew I wanted to be a doctor, so I started researching organizations that help people like the Red Cross. I discovered an organization called *Doctors Without Borders*. This organization travels around the world helping people by doing exams, providing medicines, and performing lifesaving operations. *Doctors Without Borders* inspires me because I was born in India and I was able to see so many people who needed support and medical treatment, but they were not able to get the medical help. This is why I think this would be so rewarding to be able to do it.

So now that I have completed my first goal, the next reason why I want to be a doctor is so I can educate people on how to stay healthy. Educating on how to stay healthy is important. I believe that if you teach people the correct foods to eat, they can help their bodies stay healthy. This reminds me of how Dr. King taught us that we are all the same and we should treat people with love and kindness. I want to do the same thing, treat everyone with love and kindness. In my home country of India, I learned that there are many problems with safe drinking water. This is causing people to get really sick. We all know that our bodies need water to work properly. So, I would work with the people to show them how to avoid getting sick. Also, I would educate the communities I serve with the proper foods to eat that will help their bodies have more energy. One time, I remember a "More Health" lesson we had in school that taught us all about healthy food choices to keep our bodies working. This is what I want to do as I travel the world helping people.

So, in closing I am very excited for my future because it is one where I can help people by providing them with the medicines they need to survive, but I also get the chance to teach how we can help our bodies stay healthy. So how does the name Doctor Vrunda Patel sound? It sounds like music to my ears.

THE STATUE AND THE LAKE

by Jordin Solomon

Bay Vista Fundamental School

Teachers: Chelsea Riley and Stephanie Sopher



It was a lovely, warm, and sweet spring day for Lilly Brown. Lilly loved painting landmarks of cities she had never been to. For example, she went to a tropical city in Hawaii that had gorgeous flowers that amazed her blue eyes. What inspired her to do so was her grandmother, she also liked to paint things. She would always tell Lilly, "Not everything is perfect." The next location Lilly drove to paint landmarks was Trolley City. A place where the air smells fresh, clean, and refreshing.

"What a wonderful place!" she said to herself, while the wind blew through her hair. She walked to a nearby hotel and booked a room for the night.

"Hello, Mrs., are you booking a room for tonight?" the receptionist says while looking at her.

"Yes, I am." Lilly replied. After booking a room, she went to take a look outside and walked around to see if she could find anything to paint. She was walking for a while until there standing in front of her was a statue and a lake.

"Wow," Lilly thought to herself, "that is something I must paint!" She sat on a bench near the statue and lake and started painting. She first drew the head, body, then the legs, and finally the arms. "Hmm," Lilly thought. "This doesn't look right," she said under her breath. Her drawing didn't look all the way like the statue, but the lake was easy to draw it had looked like a replica. "Now isn't this interesting," she said to herself. She first tried to draw it over again, "Maybe I missed a step," she said in her head that nobody heard. So, she got out another canvas and tried again. "Why can't I do this one thing right!" she cried. When she looked up, she saw an ice cream stand.

A lady and her daughter were walking and stopped at the ice cream stand. The little girl's mother bought her daughter the ice cream.

"Mommy," the little girl said.

"Yes sweetie?" the mother responded.

"Why doesn't my ice cream look as good as her ice cream?" the little girl cried while pointing at the other girl's ice cream.

"Not everything is perfect," the lady said. That's when it hit Lilly.

"Not everything is perfect," she thought. Then she yelled out loud, "NOT EVERYTHING IS PERFECT!" Watching the little girl and her mother made her realize that not everything is perfect. It also reminded her of her grandma. So, she grabbed another canvas out and started painting. Again, she drew the head, body, then the legs and finally the arms. It did not look perfect, but she knew her grandma would love it.



My First Soccer Goal

by Parker Stofan
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teachers: Chelsea Riley and
Stephanie Stophel



As my mom and I pulled into the soccer field complex, I was already thinking about all the ways I could possibly mess up, but I convinced myself to be confident. When I stepped onto the rough gravel ground, my stomach blew up with unsettling thoughts. It felt like a million different fireworks were exploding in my stomach. This time I couldn't convince myself out of it, but half of me thought this was going to be a good game.

We were finally approaching the game field where my teammates stood, looking confused. I honestly didn't know why they all looked confused, until I asked Savanna, my teammate, and she said, "I thought we were having a challenge today." She snarled, then continued "But obviously not." She then pointed at the other team warming up.

I then screeched as I walked away, "I was expecting a challenge too!"

We were on the field getting ready to play, it felt like we teleported onto the field we went so quick. I was sent into midfield by my coach. I had never played this position before. I started jogging in place because I was extremely nervous. In one fast blink, the ball had already been kicked by my other teammate Kylie. I was running up the field as fast as I possibly could to help my teammates. I yelled to Charlotte, who was looking for a pass, because the other team was hot on her heels.

"Hey I'm open!" She immediately passed to me with a force like the Hulk and I ran up more. I was ready to kick the ball in the goal but suddenly BOOM the other team had stolen the ball and were making a break for it. But luckily, my teammate, Victoria, used her leg and took the ball back. It almost looked like she was practicing ballet. Before the other team could surround her, she passed to me. When she passed to me, we were right next to the goal.

You would think that I would score as fast as a cheetah, but no, instead I hesitated. My brain was moving so fast, it was like it was in an Olympic track meet. My brain was telling me to pass to my team, but I heard the audience cheering. I noticed my teammates, with encouraging looks on their faces, and seeing the other team's worried faces, I knew I had to trust my gut. So, I took one big breath and kicked the ball as hard as I could and with an amazing loud "WOOOH" I knew I scored for the first time. In fact, my shot was as perfect as a painting. I looked at my mom and she was smiling like an angel! I guess if I feel anxious before a game, it means I'm going to do spectacular!

A Letter from Your Best Friend

by Tré Bryan
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Alexandra Hansen



Dear Tré,

It's me your side kick, your favorite accessory, and the guy you always rely on. I appreciate how obsessed you are with me, but we need to talk... Firstly, you leave me dirty and use me a lot.

I love that you use me, but you use me way too much! We have like 20 others of my brothers lying around, why can't you use them? Plus, when you got me, I was beautiful. I was bright orange. Now I'm as black as dirt! I wonder if people can even tell who or what I am!

Oh! And whenever you bounce me or shoot me, that noise I make, it's either me screaming OWWW! or the sound of a broken bone, you know if balls had bones. Also, I want to have a mouth SOOO BAD! I would say so much. You have basically locked up my mouth for years with your big sweaty grippers!

Oh, since you care about me "so much," you never let me rest. Even when you're not using me, you're still thinking about me. I'm in your dreams, thoughts, and hands. For my final argument, let's talk about these little creatures that you let slap me all the time, it hurts, ya know!? I thought I was going to have a good life, but it's not looking great right now.

I need a vacation.

Sincerely,

Your Very Own Basketball



Swiftly Sarcasm

by Callie Davis

74th Street Elementary School

Teacher: Christina Macurdy



I hate Taylor Swift!
I hate watching her tours!
Her amazing singing,
fantastic outfit changes,
the excitement of the crowd.

I hate her personality!
Funny videos of her many cats,
showing admiration to her fans,
giving to those in need.

I hate her albums.
Fearless confirms her positivity to
others,
Reputation reveals her true feelings
deep inside,
Lover displays her dreamy love life.

Goodbye Abuela

by Annaliese Maria Ruiz

Northwest
Elementary School

Teacher:

Alexandra Hansen



The person that held my hand when I was younger and
took care of me,
When my parents had to work, or when I was a baby.
Whenever she could and I always said, "she should."
She was that person.

The person that I will never forget because she is still
here,
I see her when I look at my sister, they have the same
cocoa bean curls.
I hear her when we sing "La Vaca Lola," (the cow song).
I like to say she is here, even though she is not.
She is the person I think about a lot.

The person that left the Earth but never left my heart,
on May 15th my dad and I went to the hospital to go say
goodbye.
Even though it was the last and final time, I didn't cry.

When I was younger, I was more ok with her leaving me.
But now my heart is emptier than before.
So, her memory I store,
Store in my heart.
Store in my mind.
She was one of a kind.

What I'm Thankful For

by London Ross
Rawlings Elementary School
Teacher: Michael Ciesluk



What I'm thankful for: items, family and friends. These are all the things I'm thankful for. I'm thankful for my items and the people around me.

I'm thankful for my items. I'm thankful for my sports equipment because I can practice and get better at it. Personally, soccer is my favorite sport. I'm also thankful for my gaming equipment. For example, my phone, Nintendo switch, pool table, board games and card games because they're fun. Personally, my game is pool. Those are some items I'm thankful for.

I'm also thankful for my clothes because they protect me from the cold. For example, yesterday I wore a sweater, and I wasn't cold. I'm also thankful for furniture because it is comfortable and it lets me relax and sleep. For example, beds, couches, chairs, desks, tables, and shelves. In conclusion, I'm thankful for sporting equipment, gaming equipment, clothes, and furniture.

I'm thankful for the people around me. I'm thankful for my family because I can trust them, they support me, and they love me. For example, our movie and game nights. My parents also provide me with food. For example, my mom buys groceries, so we don't starve. I'm thankful for my friends because they're loyal. For example, they're happy for me when I earn awards. My friends also support me during hard times. In conclusion, I'm thankful for my family and friends.

In conclusion, I'm thankful for my items and the people around me for what they do.

THANKFUL



Florida National Parks

by Jonah Walia

Westgate Elementary School

Teacher: Patricia Kwapien

Whether relaxing on the beautiful beaches, swimming in the magical waters, or looking for fish in the colorful coral - The Dry Tortugas is Florida's best national park to visit.

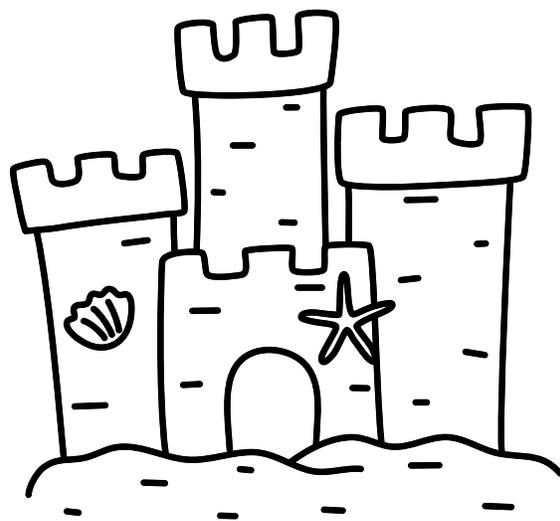
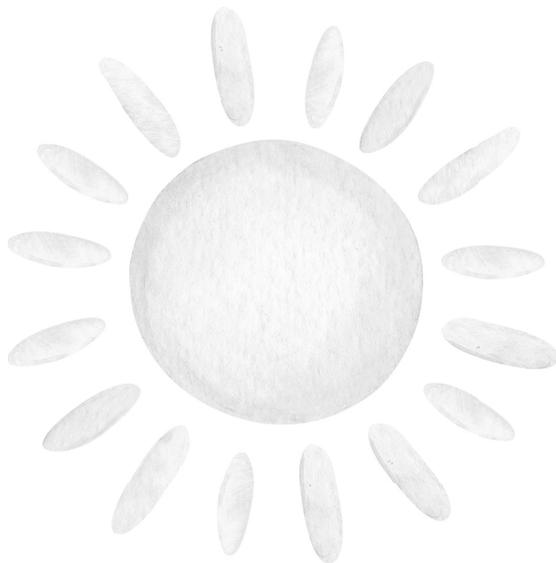
To kick it off, the Dry Tortugas waters can be a very fun time. If you love to swim over coral reefs, the Dry Tortugas is your destination. The Dry Tortugas has the most vibrant coral (source one)! Isn't that amazing? I went to the Dry Tortugas once. The coral was so colorful, I couldn't decide which was more colorful, the fish or the coral! Hey, anyone here like sea turtles? If yes, at the Dry Tortugas you can see the largest sea turtles nesting, perhaps the largest you have ever seen (source one). Guess what I saw? A turtle at the Dry Tortugas when it was nesting, and I'm sure if I laid next to it, the sea turtle would be longer than me! Just so you have a guide, I'm four foot ten! If you like swimming, the Dry Tortugas is almost all water. The Dry Tortugas only has 1% land (source one). If you ask me, it is the best; who wouldn't like swimming?

Also, if there is only 1% land, it makes everything better. But here is a trick... why does the Dry Tortugas have the word dry if the Dry Tortugas only has 1% land? Now that's something to search up. The author of source one states the water at the Dry Tortugas is only three to four feet. That is perfect for swimming! Once I was snorkeling in that water, the coral was so close to me, and all I had to do to look for fish was to just simply look into the water! The fish were amazing! I saw a fish that looked like the sunset. Keep an eye out for that fish; it had yellow and orange and a hint of red! I wish you could have seen it; it was beautiful.

But if you are not a fan of swimming, source one states there are super sandy beaches at the Dry Tortugas. If you ask me, that is the perfect sand for playing volleyball and building sandcastles. I'm reminding you now, bring a volleyball! Source three states the Dry Tortugas are found in the Keys at the bottom of Florida. Remember when I told you about the evidence that there is only 1% land at the Dry Tortugas? Now do you get what I mean?

Furthermore, the Dry Tortugas land can also be an amazing experience. Source one states the Dry Tortugas have mostly subtropical weather. It ranges from 60 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit. That is the best weather. If you go to the Dry Tortugas and it's 90 degrees out, I'm so sorry - but wait, I forgot that the Dry Tortugas is only 1% land! Just jump in a pool or the water. I'm telling you, you will feel much better. Source one also states the Dry Tortugas holds Fort Jefferson on Garden Key. How cool would it be to walk on a fort most likely used to protect Florida! If you are a fan of having no Wi-Fi, the Dry Tortugas has no Wi-Fi. In my opinion, I would rather enjoy nature instead of hovering over a phone or watching TV, and also that's just plain wrong when there is so much nature around. The author of source one also states Bush Key is the best spot to see tropical birds. I would definitely go there. I got a super powerful scope for my 10th birthday. If you are there at the same time I am, I might let you look in. Maybe you will see a sandhill crane. If you thought about going to Canaveral National Seashore, you are going to get bitten up - literally! Source two states that when hiking there are loads of mosquitoes at Canaveral National Seashore almost all year round! See what I mean when I said you will be bitten up?

As you can clearly see, whether relaxing on the beautiful beaches, swimming in the magical waters, or looking for fish in the colorful coral - the Dry Tortugas is Florida's best national park to visit. I would be packing, because you just won a trip to the Dry Tortugas - Florida's best national park ever!

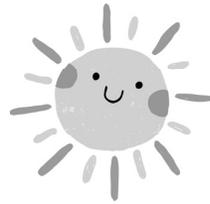


The Dragon

by Rachel Gilson
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Melissa Jones



The wind is blowing,
Over a flower bed,
Down there in the flowers,
Is a dragon, they said.
One with big purple wings,
With a bit of blue,
And friendly red eyes,
That seem to hypnotize you.
A dragon, so kind,
With a voice so soft,
A voice that says,
“Come aloft!”
But the dragon’s a theory,
Probably not true,
Unless you believe in dragons,
Maybe she doesn’t believe in you.



Sunshine

by Caroline Johannson
Ozona Elementary School
Teacher: Deborah Larsen

Look at the shimmer when you are feeling
down and weary,
The smiling sunshine will make you cheery.
Lemonade in summertime,
Sunflowers stretching and shining high,
When you need a lift...
feel nature’s golden brightest gift.



Haiku

by William Monzon-Aguirre
Safety Harbor Elementary School
Teacher: Shelley Pompeii-Holder

**In the big meadows
The flowers dance in the wind:
A peaceful moment.**





How to Take Care of a Hermann Tortoise

by Lia Blackman

Sawgrass Lake Elementary School

Teacher: Thomas Wade



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Introduction

Have you ever heard of a Hermann tortoise? I am here to teach you about how to take care of a Herman tortoise. They are incredibly special creatures that need special food, baths, and shelters.

Diet

Hermann tortoises enjoy eating flowers. Many tortoises can eat fruit, however, Hermann tortoises cannot. A hibiscus flower is something Hermann tortoise loves to eat. If they have one growing in their home, they will eat it every single day, but that is not good for them. They should only eat flowers about once a week. Most of their diet should be weeds. Calcium and vitamin powder should be added to their food twice a week. They also need a water bowl. It should have enough water to cover their tail but not higher than the bottom shell.

Humidity and Baths

It is important for the tortoise to have humidity and baths every day. To add humidity to the cage, you can add a humidifier, or you can also spray the ground of the cage with water. Baby Hermann tortoises need a bath every single day. This helps them get water and go to the bathroom. After a year, they only need a bath three to five days per week. The bath should be warm. If they go to the bathroom, dump it out and give them fresh water.

Shelter

A tortoise shelter needs to be BIG! For a hatchling, they need an enclosure that is about three feet by two feet. A fully grown Hermann Tortoise grows to be between five to nine inches, so their home needs to be about double the size of a hatchling. In the shelter, there must be a cold and hot side. The hot side must be 90-100 degrees and at night it must be around 75 degrees. To get it so warm, you need a heat bulb and a special long bulb that helps it get vitamins. The Hermann tortoise likes to climb and slide down things. It also likes to bury down into the dirt. There also should be some type of house in the cage for them to hide and sleep.

Conclusion

To sum up, Hermann tortoises are the best tortoise ever for a pet. They will come to you, sleep on you, or nibble your toes if you have nail polish. They like color! If you follow these directions, you will have a healthy tortoise.

Never Back Down, Never Give Up: The Story of Antonio's Life

by Antonio Roberts
Lealman Avenue Elementary School
Teacher: Sarah Murray



One day there was a baby named Antonio Brenard Roberts Jr., aka AJ. As he got older, he thought that his life was going to be easy, but it ended up being more challenging than expected. A couple of those challenges included asthma and school. It all started in grade three when he encountered a couple bullies. His bullies were a constant problem for him, but he pushed through and persevered. He ended up making a friend along the way. Her name was Aniyah. Her friendship was just the distraction he needed to forget about his asthma and the bullies. It made his school days so much better.

He also had a loving and supportive family. He began getting honor roll on every grading period. At times he doubted himself and his ability to be successful, but he never let those thoughts hold him back. He kept trying and overcame. He is now excelling in academics. He would not have made it without his family, Aniyah, and his teachers who believed in him. He is thankful to have incredible teachers such as Ms. Hanten, Ms. Futch, Ms. Murry, and Mr. Butler. Though school started out easy, he faced more obstacles.

As the schoolwork got harder, his grades began to decline. There was so much pressure to bring his grades back up. He began to study to excel in any area he struggled in. Antonio even joined a couple of clubs to get extra credit. He told himself that he would one day be a scientist to help heal the world. He started a YouTube channel to make inspiring videos about persevering through tough times. Some people were haters, but he ignored them! He grew stronger and smarter; he even got in Talented. He has a sister that was soon going to college. The thought of her going away made him sad. When he thought about her getting a better education, it made him feel better. You see, Antonio never stopped giving up and he persevered. He had so many chances to stop, but he kept trying. He had so much going on in his life.

He now is age nine, turning ten years old, and has A's and B's in the fourth grade. He doubted himself, but those doubts turned into beliefs. He had perfect attendance for August and November. He made honor roll and other accomplishments. He now has a lot of friends including Aniyah, Andrew, Elianna, Mir, Neveah, Amelia, Marlyn, and many more. He joined drumming club and plans to learn many different ways to drum. He is also in Chorus Club. He and his family are successful. Even his sister is taking college classes in high school. He started making raps inspiring people and lots of others.

Spider-Man Marvel Rivals

by Bayluun Rafraf
Bardmoor Elementary School
Teacher: Anthony Gaymore

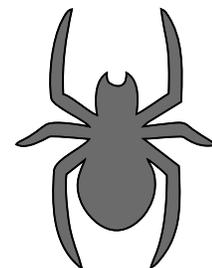


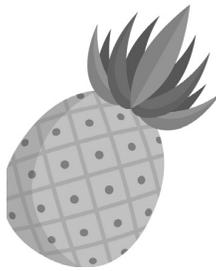
SPWWWW! SPWWWWW! That's the sound of Spider-Man in *Marvel Rivals*. Spider-Man is a unique character with a five-star difficulty, with many abilities to use. *Spider-Man Marvel Rivals* is a game everybody should download and play.

SPIDER-MAN has abilities, like getaway, such as swinging. This ability can help because it can get you out of a sticky situation. It's also helpful because you can swing on enemy's and combo them. Spider-Man is also helpful because you can team up with Venom and become Spider-Man's symbiote with Venom. He also has a "spider sense that warns teammates of enemies." "Wall crawl" allows you to crawl on walls while sprinting. "Thwip and flip" allows you to do a double jump. By effectively utilizing these moves, Spider-Man players can outmaneuver their opponents and stay alive in even the most challenging situations. "Spider-Sense," while not directly a "getaway" move, can alert Spider-Man to incoming danger, giving him precious seconds to react and find an escape route.

In addition, Spider-Man also has offense attacks. His normal attack is he shoots spider webs, and it does 30 damage. His fist does 25 damage. And, on his third hit, he does 45 damage and increases damage for one strike when hitting with "Spider-Tracer". He also has an ability called "Get Over Here!" Use the "Spider-Tracer" to pull the enemy towards you. His ultimate is where he shoots webs everywhere and it does 55 damage per hit. According to *Marvel Rival's Official Website*, his primary fire, "Spider Power", is a three-hit combo, being two punches and a kick. "Spider-Power" is his primary attack, involving a series of punches, with the final punch enhanced by a "Spider-Tracer" that marks enemies. "Spectacular Spin" launches web clusters around him, damaging and stunning enemies.

Overall, Spider-Man is a strong offensive character in *Marvel Rivals* who excels at controlling the battlefield with his mobility and web-based attacks. His versatility makes him an important asset in various team compositions.





The Magic Pineapple

by Karis Schrayner

Elisa Nelson Elementary School

Teacher: Beth Stark



It all started when I was born. At first, I was just some leaves sticking out of a pot. But then, I turned into a green thing with those leaves still on my head. I really thought they would come off soon. Then, in a blink of an eye, I was yellow. Yes, a really bright yellow, but those leaves were stuck to my head. Other than that, my life was pretty good.

My mom was older than me, so she wasn't a bright yellow like me. She always said I was magical, but I know I am not at all. One day she told me to make some magic. So, I said, "Magic? How in the world do you think I can make magic?"

"Well, your room is a mess so why not make some magic on that?" My mom walked away and left me alone. I had no choice except to clean my room. I walked to my room and on my way, I felt weird, and I started glowing! I stood there glowing bright and then it faded away. I went back to clean my room. When I opened my door, my room was clean! In the first time in years, my room was clean!

I had no idea I was magical, so I asked my mom, but she never answered me. She always says, "Because you are special." But how am I? Who do I get it from? Still no answer. I never asked again because I know what she is going to say.

One day my mom came into my room and said, "You get all your magic from one of your relatives."

"Who!?" I said with excitement. "Who!?"

"You get your magic from me."

"You! What? Can you show me some?"

"Sure," said my mom.

I went to the place where all the fruits live, aka the kitchen. We don't go there that often because my mom says it is dangerous. When I walked in, no one was there except one little apple. The last time I went there, there was lots of fruit. The apple said, "Hi," to us.

I didn't want to be rude, so I said, "Hi," back. I asked the apple where all the other fruits were.

He said nothing and stood there in silence. He finally said something, "They don't live here anymore."

I knew he was lying, but I tried to get the truth. "Well, where do they live now?" I spoke.

"Umm I don't know where they live now," he said very confused. We left and thought the apple was weird.

We went back and the apple finally told the truth. He said, "I took all the fruits and put them in the jail, aka the basket. I had to do something, and I did."

I hit him with my pokey leaves. Yes, I did, and I stopped him and got all the fruits back. I guess my leaves aren't so bad after all.



The Risk of Going to Mars

by Khloe Reynolds
Ponce Elementary School
Teacher: Jenna Kulikauskas



Could you imagine being on a cold, dark and empty planet with just the food, water, and oxygen that you brought with you? What would you do if you ran out of oxygen? I know that I would never be able to build up the courage to do that. In my opinion, we shouldn't go to Mars because living on Mars is both dangerous and difficult. Not to mention the journey to Mars is super intense and risky.

One reason we shouldn't travel to Mars is because living and trying to survive Mars's crucial environment is both dangerous and difficult. According to text 1, there is not enough air to breathe on Mars. This means that we would have to bring our own air. If you ran out, your life would be on the line, and you would have to rush back into the lunar module to save your life. I know I would never be brave enough to have my life on the line like that. It also says in source 2 that there are many dust storms that can last for a few weeks! Would you ever want to be in the complete dark on an unfamiliar planet not being able to do anything for several weeks? On top of that, it states in source 1 that you would have to bring your own food, water, and air because there are no animals on Mars and it's almost impossible to grow plants. And the only water is frozen under the surface, and no one knows how deep down it is. Could you imagine trying to dig into Mars, while you are being lifted into the air, because there is so little gravity pulling you down? Plus, in text 2 it says that the atmosphere is not breathable, so that is why you must bring your own necessities. This means that you must bring enough for about two years (because the journey there is so long.) Now you can see how dangerous and brutal living on Mars can be and why we shouldn't go to Mars.

Another reason we shouldn't go to Mars is because the journey to Mars is too intense and risky. According to source 1, to go we will first have to wait for Earth and Mars to line up, which only happens about once every two years, and after we wait it'll still take us seven months to arrive on Mars' surface! This is very bad because seven months with no gravity is dangerous and can cause health problems. So not only will you most likely be in the hospital when you get back to Earth, but you also will be separated from all your loved ones for two whole years! It also says in text 2 that on the way you might come across some sun rays that can both damage equipment and cause health problems for you and your crew. If these sun rays give you trouble, you'll need to solve them using just the equipment you brought with you and whatever knowledge you have from intense astronaut training. And, you better know how to solve this problem with just your crew because the author of text 2 says that even if you contacted NASA, it would take nearly 20 minutes for your one message to reach them, and their response would take up to 40 minutes to reach you. What would you do if you had an emergency, and it was taking forever for your message to reach NASA?

Now you see how insane it would be to even attempt going to Mars. Would you ever go if you had the opportunity to?



The Terror of the Giant Gummy Bear

by Violet Touchton
Frontier
Elementary School
Teacher:
Cara Coughlin



One day, Violet was eating some gummy bears. Then, one fell on the floor, “plop!” She went to pick it up. But when she grabbed it, suddenly the ground disappeared under her feet! Then, Violet fell into a deep hole. Confused and scared, Violet didn’t know when she would reach the bottom. Half an hour later she finally reached the end of the tunnel feeling relieved that the fall was over. When her feet touched the ground, the ground was very squishy and clear.

When Violet looked up, a giant gummy bear was standing right in front of her. The giant gummy bear was as tall as an elephant and quietly said, “Boo.” Violet was so scared she fainted! When she woke up, she was in a gummy bear prison! It took her a long time to think about how to escape; then she got an idea. She would carve a key out of her gummy pillow and see if the key would fit into the prison door. Using her teeth, Violet carved the key. With some luck, the key fit!

Finally, the prison door opened, so she ran as fast as she could. Violet was so scared she was running as fast as a cheetah until she woke up! Violet woke up to her unfinished gummy bears she was eating and one of them looked exactly like the one she saw in her dream. So, Violet quickly threw them all away and promised to never eat gummy bears ever again.

Nature

by Juniper Hernandez
Curtis Fundamental School
Teacher: Andrea Russell



Sitting on the gentle grass.

Seeing the sky above.

Feeling the wind on my face.

Seeing the birds fly by.

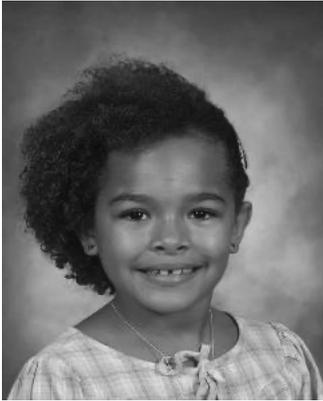
A butterfly lands on me
as I admire the beauty.

A ladybug flies on by to give
someone some luck.

Ah, the nature
so beautiful and quiet.

How I love you so and how
you love me back.

I hope I can see you again,
dear nature.

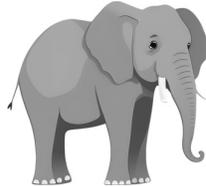


Ellie and Elvest's Elephant Exploration

by Chloe Foster

Jamerson Elementary School

Teachers: Andrea Cate and Jessica Dean



Buuuurrrrrrahh!!!

"Come on, Ellie! Keep up with the herd!" said Elvest. "You don't want to get lost like you did last time, do you?"

"No, I'm just...really hungry," Ellie said exhausted.

"Thankfully, we're almost there," said Elvest.

Meet Ellie and Elvest. They are going to a new land because their old homeland was flooded and got destroyed. They finally got to North Africa after walking 60 miles. The little baby elephants ran around the beautiful, grassy land.

"What do we do now?" asked Ellie.

"I don't exactly know," said Elvest.

Ellie decided to go explore their new land. Ellie then stumbled upon a strange pond.

"Hello!" said a small squeaky voice.

"Who...Who's there?" said Ellie in confusion.

"Down here!" the voice said again. "Hi! We're Slip and Slide!" said the two small freshwater snails. Ellie bent down closer to get a better look and they gave Ellie some strange-looking food. It looked like a glowing berry. Ellie ate the strange fruit. She instantly felt odd. Ellie then decided to go back to the herd of elephants.

"Elvest, I don't feel so good," said Ellie. All of a sudden, a glowing light came out of both elephants! About two minutes later, they said to each other, "You're in my BODY!"

"No, you're in my body!" They had swapped figures!

Ellie and Elvest decided to find and confront the two creatures who did this to them. After searching for a while, they finally found them behind a rock.

The snails explained, "Well, we were going to say, 'Give this to the frogs,' because that's the kind of fruit that they can eat, and it has no effect. But you had already eaten it and then you walked away before we could say anything else."

The two elephants stared at each other in disbelief. "This is my fault then," said Ellie.

"There's a way you can change back!" Slip said. "All you have to do is go on a quest to Frogs' Fruit Land. That's about 120 miles away. So, you go to there and find the rainbow glowing tree, pick a fruit from it, eat it, then you will transform back."

Ellie stared at Elvest. Elvest stared back at Ellie. "Well, I'm perfectly fine being in Ellie's body for all of eternity!" said the very tired and lazy Elvest.

"Nope! NO! NO! NO!" said Ellie, very upset. "We're going on that quest one way or another!"

"Fine." said Elvest. The two then left for their quest the next day. For days, they continued on to find this land. Until finally, they reached it. They looked around and saw a ton of frogs jumping around a glowing tree. They hesitantly ate the mysterious fruit, with hopes that it was the right thing to do. The light then abruptly left their bodies. "Ha! Eureka!" said Elvest. "Let's hurry back home. I'm sure our parents are worried sick about us."

Days later, when they finally returned back to their herd, all the elephants rushed up to them asking where they had been. Ellie and Elvest just smiled with traces of rainbow crumbs glowing on their faces and glowing juice dripping from their trunks. This was going to be a amazing campfire story for many future generations to come!



The Last Gingerbread Man on Earth (A parody of *The Last Kids on Earth*)

by Greyson Douthirt
Jamerson Elementary School
Teachers: Andrea Cate and
Jessica Dean



A few days ago, I escaped Bubble Bean Elementary School. Here is how:

It was Christmas time, and the art teacher was giving out gingerbread men cookies as treats. I was being placed into a basket in the art room. There were other gingerbread men there with me. It was cramped and I was starting to sweat out frosting.

Then... in came the students. Monstrous, ginormous, terrible kids. They were going to eat us! When the kids walked in and sat down, their ginger-eating eyes turned toward the gingerbread men in the basket. I knew I had to act fast in order to survive.

I searched the room and saw the paints. That's it! I could paint myself! But what kind of disguise should I paint? I looked around and I saw it—the teacher's computer. That would be a simple, easy, and quick disguise.

When the students were looking away, I jumped out of the basket and ran to the paints. I took out the paints and a brush and disguised myself as a computer. Then, I snuck over to the teacher's computer and stood perfectly still.

When class was over, I snuck out and headed toward the gate. I had to sneak past the school officer. I was successful until the police dog spotted me. The dog started running at me and the chase was on. I ran for the fence as fast as my little ginger legs could go. I slid under the fence, but the dog simply jumped over it.

Now, I was in the playground. I started sprinting through the grass. The dog spun around me and tried to take a bite out of me, but I dodged it and made it to the gate! I was free! Freedom at last! I could finally live my life without the fear of the monstrous, gruesome, terrible kids.



Best Pet: Dogs

by Dulce Morgado Perez
Frontier Elementary School
Teacher: Cara Coughlin



BARK! BARK! Is that a dog I hear? Oh, well that's my dog, Blue, wanting to go on a walk and play. Well, in this essay I am going to tell you why dogs are the best pet.

Dogs are the best pet because they are loyal. First, dogs are known for their joy and comfort they bring to their owners. According to paragraph two in the passage, dogs are always ready to greet you with a wagging tail and boundless enthusiasm and energy. Next, dogs are natural protectors offering safety and loyalty for their humans and are so loving towards kids and babies. My dog, Blue, protects my family and me by barking if someone comes close to us while on a walk. Blue is a great protector and makes my family and I feel very safe. Finally, according to paragraph three in the article, dogs' abilities to bond with their humans makes them one of the most rewarding pets to have. Though cats are also loving, they are not as faithful as dogs because if a cat can escape from their home, they usually will not come back to their owners, making them less loyal than a dog. Now you know why dogs are the best pet, because they are so loyal.

Dogs are the best pets because they are playful. First, if you need some motivation, you could always take your dog out on a walk to get some awesome motivation for getting up and moving. For example, when I am feeling lazy or down, I take Blue out for a walk around the neighborhood and this act makes me feel better and helps both Blue and I get some exercise. Next, in paragraph three in the passage, it states dogs offer companionship and comfort when you are gloomy or when you're in a bad mood. Dogs are very caring to their owners and can sense that their owner is feeling sad and want to comfort them to make them feel better.

Finally, dogs also can help keep their humans stay healthy too by going on walks, playing outside, or even running outside together. My dog, Blue, after school, always greets me with excitement and enthusiasm because he is so eager to go on his afternoon walk! Dogs are the most playful pet ever, for sure. In conclusion, dogs make the best pet because they are the most loyal and playful pets. So, what are you going to name your pet dog?

Fifth Grade Writing

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Responding to Stress

by Savannah Stokus
Cypress Woods Elementary School
Teacher: Kim Hardgrove



One day you and your family want to go on vacation. You guys pick to go on the plane, but you are scared, and you don't know what to do. Some people might freeze or panic, but some people face their fears, and they breathe or look out the window. Stress can be bad for you when you are in those situations. That is why some people have special ways to deal with that. People respond to stressful situations in many different ways. People have ways to stay calm from stress, fear, and anxiety and to help with stress and anxiety.

To begin with, people have ways to stay calm from stress, fear, and anxiety. In "Anxiety: A Natural Response" it mentions that, "It might seem too easy, but taking time to breathe deeply can help you feel better." For example, you can be really stressed out on a test and then you can take deep breaths and calm down and focus on the test; that will make you calm. In the same source it states that, "Many people also benefit from talking to someone about what they are experiencing." For instance, you could be going through a hard time, and you need someone to talk to. In "Fighting Your Fears" it says, "Remind yourself it is okay to have stress and fears." In this case you could be on a plane, or you had a nightmare. Also, it could be you are afraid of the dark, but just remind yourself that that is okay to be afraid. These are some reasons that people have ways to stay calm from stress, fear, and anxiety.

Finally, people have ways to help with stress and anxiety. In "Human Instincts: Fight, Flight, or Freeze" it states that your body could do a fight or flight action to what happened or what you see. For example, you could see a snake and your body could fight or flight. Your body could fight and grab the snake and move it somewhere else. Your body could flight and just run away to somewhere. In "Anxiety: A Natural Response" it mentions that people start yoga or meditation, which can help mindfulness and relaxation. For instance, people can be really stressed so they do meditation to calm down or they just relax. In "Fighting Your Fears" it says, "Replace your stress or fear with positive thoughts." When you do this, you could be on a plane, and if you are scared on it, you could think of what places you will visit. Also, think what you will do when you get there. You can take your mind off of the stress and think of those nice thoughts. These are some reasons why people have ways to help with stress and anxiety.

As you can see, people have many ways to deal with stress, fear, and anxiety. Some people need to have a healthy diet and exercise daily to calm down and deal with all that stress that you have and let it go. These are just some of the reasons how people have ways to help with fear, stress, anxiety and ways to keep calm.

Halloween Poem

by Allan Baday
Rawlings Elementary School
Teacher: Charles Raby



Kids dressed up and ready for treats
All with buckets and knocking doors,
The pumpkin filling up even more
It will go up till they bore,
All decorations falling to the ground,
The kids leave and eat their treats,
And make their room tidy and neat
They get in bed and tuck up,
And take a little spooky snooze.



A Beach Poem

by Amore Van Vranken
Jamerson Elementary School
Teachers: Andrea Cate and
Jessica Dean



I open the car door,
My feet touch the sand.
I walk a bit more,
See the shimmering land.

I run to the water.
I can taste the salt.
Feet getting hotter,
The waves slow to a halt.

I feel the calming breeze,
The wind in my hair.
Soothing me with ease,
Birds soar high through the air.

I settle right down,
Chilling in my chair.
No reason to frown,
It's beautiful out there.

I breathe in a deep sigh.
There's no more to say.
Sun sets in the sky,
It was the best beach day.

Why Me?

by Kaleah Muhammad
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Tina Marion



Why this, why everything,
Why am I more developed than most 11
years olds,
Why this?

Why am I so tall like my dad,
Why can't I be short like my mom,
So, I can be like everyone else.

Will I have a big nose all my life like my dad,
Like it still is a blessing,
But, why this?

Why do I have big feet,
Is that because my parents can spend more
money?
Why this?

Why do I compare myself with stuff,
I should not care.



Why does my hair feel soft like cotton
candy,
Like why isn't it hard like a rock.
Why can't I have straight hair?
It's not that hard to ask for in life.

Like why can't I like what I like?
Why do I write so big,
that you can't understand.
Why this?

Why do I like black,
Like it is so dark.
Why am I like this? Why?
Why everything?

Even with all of these why's,
It will always be me, and I will still love me!
Even if I have hair as hard as a rock,
It will still be me, and I will always love me,
And everything about me!



Busy

by Mila Revis

Gulf Beaches Elementary School

Teacher: Kayla Copley

People think busy is a good thing
but busy just means that you
only have time to walk and chew gum
at the same time.

I can see why people stay busy.
Why they want to have purpose in life.
But I see it differently.

As something scary,
like the monster that's under your bed.
Sure, it gives you something to do,
but I like doing nothing, unlike you.



Grandma's Secret

by Siena Rrjolti

Curtis Fundamental School

Teacher: Robert Tuttle

I came back from school with a cheerful attitude
but something was wrong, an unspoken sadness.
What could it be? What could it be?

Whispers fill the air with a sad whistle sound.
A moment of silence till it is broken.
Great grandma rest in her grave without a goodbye to say.

You lived till one hundred and two I am happy for you,
Although you are gone and it has been some time, melancholy,
and grief still fill my mind.

I miss you great grandma I really do,
And I am sorry I missed you turning one hundred and two.

Love.

by Asma Rahim
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Paula Isett



love

Love is something you want
Something you'll think you need
When you experience it finally,
It'll be exhilarating, amazing even.
But when it reaches its expiry point,
Something common but not so at all.
You'll be heartbroken, wrecked.

Or have a neutral emotion,
Because maybe what happened was because of you.
Love is something we all want.
So much that it's become a need.

When she experienced it,
She was overjoyed.
But she knew it wouldn't last forever,
Because her and him, forever didn't quite exist.
It just didn't seem possible at all.
She knew but she secretly hoped that it wouldn't happen.
It did anyway.
She was heartbroken, like many would've been.
She expected it, but she wasn't quite ready.
So when it happened,
She wasn't exactly her best self.

Love is happy,
Tragic even.
Bad things happen,
But so do happy things.
To someone love may mean everything.
It may mean nothing to someone else,
Everyone has their own definition of love.
Whether it's happy or neutral.
We all experience it, bad or happy. It's still something special.



The Chocolatier: Not So Sweet

by Grayson Posewitz

Safety Harbor Elementary School

Teacher: Michelle Brennan

“That was the story of *The Chocolatier*,” said Aleena Reynolds as she was accepting the Cross Creek Chronicle Award for her first published short story. *The Chocolatier* was the best horror story that she had ever written. It was about a chocolate shop owner who made a machine, called the soul extractor, that could turn human souls into the best-tasting chocolate ever! The store was called The Hoffman Family Chocolate Shop. The crazed shop owner focused on stealing the souls of children as the secret ingredient for his chocolate. Aleena was so creative that she had even placed herself as a character in the story of *The Chocolatier*. In the short story, Aleena’s best friend, Velvet McFon, went missing and Aleena ate some chocolate at the Hoffman Family Chocolate Shop that oddly reminded her of her missing friend. Aleena’s inspiration for Velvet’s character emerged from her childhood, as that was the name of Aleena’s imaginary friend.

Aleena was a 5th-grade student with curly blonde hair, very pale skin, hazelnut eyes, and freckles covering her face. She was loved and adored by the whole town. One might even say that she was a bit too sweet. One day she was playing outside with her German Shepard named Ozzie when a venomous snake bit him. Ozzie immediately fell to the ground and Aleena tried to call for help, but it was too late. Ozzie was dead. But then something bizarre happened, a little blue essence emerged from Ozzie. It had the appearance of a mesmerizing sparkling powder that filled the air. “I thought that thing was only in my published story,” said Aleena muttering to herself. Aleena was referring to *The Chocolatier* where souls could be extracted from living things. Thinking quickly, Aleena grabbed a jar and started placing as much of the blue essence from the air into the jar as she could. She then had an idea. Could she put the mysterious blue essence into chocolate? So she went back into her house, grabbed a cup full of chocolate ice cream, added some sprinkles of the essence, and let the ice cream sit for one whole day. The following day Aleena tasted the concoction she created. That was the best thing she had ever tasted! She knew that she could not get enough of it.

Ten years later, Aleena opened her own chocolate shop named The Hoffman Family Chocolate Shop. It was strange that this shop had the same name as the fictitious shop from her short story. But Aleena’s husband’s last name just happened to be Hoffman. Aleena’s shop was clean and inviting. The walls were covered with wallpaper filled with pillowy clouds. The floors were such a shiny white tile that you could almost see your own reflection. Aleena’s shop was known in town as the “go-to” place for chocolate when she had only been open for a week! All the townspeople wanted to know what Aleena’s secret ingredient was for her delicious and irresistible chocolate. She would always reply that the secret ingredient for her chocolate was just as important as every human's soul. The townspeople would always laugh with Aleena when she gave her reply. One little girl even asked Aleena if she would ever publish a recipe book. Aleena just smiled back at the girl and when she walked away, Aleena murmured to herself, “Little does she know I published an award-winning recipe book ten years ago.”

One day Aleena was relaxing at her kitchen table with her morning cup of coffee as she was reading the town newspaper. The newspaper’s front headline read that a local child named Frederick Peterson had gone missing. The article also added that Frederick was the third child that week who had disappeared without a trace. As soon as Aleena read the article, she dropped the newspaper, sipped her coffee, and grinned in sweet, sweet delight.





The Fair Gone Wrong: An “Interview” with I.M. Fake

by Eleni Damianakis
Elisa Nelson Elementary School
Teacher: Tamara Bryant

(THIS STORY IS BASED OFF A REAL STORY, BUT NOT ALL DETAILS ARE TRUE.)

I jammed my hands in the icy cooler, fishing for a final soda for the last customer. The church fair was closing, and one final family was here, ordering some of the many scraps of food we had. The sky was dark, and the church fair had been practically empty for the whole day. That’s because everyone was scared to come. The reason for this includes some whining, digging, a water pipe, and even some stolen candy. Oh, you want to know more? Then let me tell you the tale of “The Fair Gone Wrong.”

The sky was sunny, and a cool breeze blew as the employees set up for the fair. Things were going great, and they were making good progress, setting up tents and signs everywhere. But then, there was a high-pitched wail. I thought it was an animal, but it was actually the neighbor whining. She wasn't so bad, but was just too uptight, and had a voice that was so high and loud it could make buildings crumble and satellites fall. She stormed over and yelled at a poor girl setting up a tent by the road. “That tent is way too close to the road! If you do not move that tent, I will call- um- someone important!” The girl nodded quickly, and ran to go tell the boss, and get help so they could move the tent. They didn’t want any trouble, and for all they knew, that woman could call 911 if they didn’t move the tent. So, the employees called a little company to help. The company was new and was not professional at all. They didn’t get the map showing all the ground, so they just eyeballed it and tried their best to dig in some stakes for the tent. Meanwhile, I was dealing with something much more important...

I stroll into the storage room to see a mess. Ripped candy wrappers were everywhere, and chocolate was smeared all over the floor. My Valentine's Day box was shredded, scratched, and thrown onto the ground, and all my candy was gone, eaten by someone! I was in shock, and then that shock turned into anger as I examined the wreckage. By the time I walked out of that room, I was livid and determined to find that little candy thief. However, I was unaware of what was happening outside at the moment...

The company kept digging and digging and was almost done with the last stake, when they struck something. The noise echoed, and brown water started gurgling and bubbling, rising higher and higher. The company stepped back, and the moment they took one step, there was a loud crack, and water shot up into the air, straight onto the road. The water went up to more than 15 feet high and shimmered in the sunlight as it fell right back down. The neighbor stood on the road, and got soaked as the water drenched her, leaving her sopping wet. She shrieked and ran in a dazed panic, and everyone followed. At last, SOMEONE had the common sense to call the water emergency services, and they came, and tried to stop the water. However, they paused when they heard a triumphant cry from behind...

I had done it! I knew who the wretched thief was! But as I went to confront the suspect, I was tripped by a creature that zipped in front of me. It was a very-well-plump squirrel, and it zipped in the storage room. I fell, but then got up, dusted myself off, and then ran after it. I saw the squirrel rushing around, licking the chocolate off the floor, gnawing on the discarded wrappers, and I realized who the real thief was. It was that little fat squirrel! I started to laugh as the squirrel searched through the torn box, looking for any extras.

Who was my original suspect? My brother, but it makes more sense with the squirrel anyway. However, back to the water incident...

The emergency services eventually patched up the problem, but you're probably wondering, why did that happen? So apparently, they had hit a water pipe while digging, and the water pipe busted and let out the water. The company didn't get a map with all the pipes, so as I said before, they were just guessing. The fair went on, but word had spread, and soon, the whole town knew about the pipe. People thought it was dangerous, but the truth is, the pipe didn't affect the festival at all! They all still had water, and the pipe had poured onto the road, not the property. So, that's the tale of The Fair Gone Wrong. What did I learn from all of this? Oh, never mess with the church!





Hazelwood Academy

by Isabelle Weldon
Sandy Lane Elementary School
Teacher: Karen Youssef

Chapter 1

Sunlight was streaming through the grimy windows of Summerfield’s Orphanage. It must have been well past time to wake up. I could hear the sound of the other orphans downstairs at breakfast, chattering away. Life at Summerfield’s wasn’t exactly “pleasant.” But it had its advantages, like not having to do the dishes. But, other than that, all we did was work, eat, and sleep. We weren’t even allowed to read, which is outrageous. Girls aren’t allowed to read anywhere, because it is something witches do, so any girls reading will immediately be executed. It’s ridiculous. Oh, I forgot to introduce myself. My name’s Iris. Iris Nightshade.

Chapter 2

I missed breakfast. Not that it really matters, but rule number one at Summerfield’s is never want anything more than you have. I can’t wait to get away from this wretched place. Today, we cleaned the bathrooms, then the bedrooms, then the front yard. After lunch, we’re going to clean the porches, and then the kitchen (dishes not included). It’s time for lunch now. The food here is just as bad as the people here. Take Martha for example, always bullying the other orphans, young and old alike. She calls it “reinforcing.” Speaking of Martha, here she is right now. She’s shoving and pushing her way in line. For what, I’m not sure. I suppose she’s gotten used to this food. As she’s passing me, she says, “Move it, Reed,” which is my nickname. She gives everyone nicknames, some good, some bad. Mine is bad. She calls me “Reed” because I’m taller than everyone, and probably slimmer too. Not to be rude or anything, but I could call her something too, something you probably don’t want to hear.

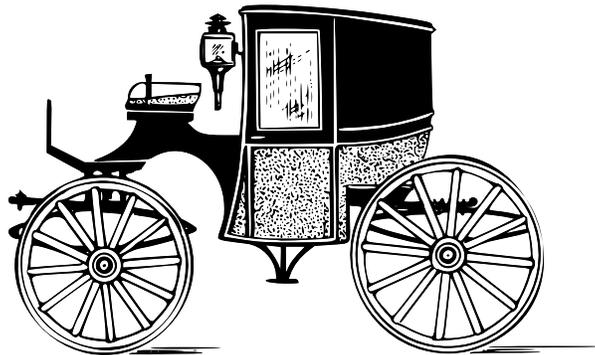


Today we're going to be visited by "someone important." No idea who, but I'm not exactly excited. Last time we had someone "important" visit, it was the headmistress of the school for proper young ladies. We had a long lecture about how to properly tie a ribbon in our hair, then another on how to talk to men, and many more on other girly topics. Well, it's time for lunch, they said they'll arrive after lunch so I'm sort of dreading that moment.



Just as I expected. Lily Summerfield. "Welcome, new arrivals, to Summerfield's Orphanage," she says in her deceptively sweet voice. She always comes to the orphanage whenever there are at least five new arrivals at a time. I supposed she was our important visitor. "Let's all go over the rules together for the new ones, shall we? Rule number one, never want..." CRASH!!! A ginormous silver carriage burst through the wall, scattering bricks everywhere!

To be continued...





Paisley

by Ella Domeier

Bay Vista Fundamental School

Teacher: Jaclyn Schafer



There once was a girl named Paisley. She was in kindergarten at Rose Street Elementary School. Paisley was a special girl; she was the smartest girl in Mrs. Agnello's class, had the most friends, and was pretty really pretty. She had long curly hair that was swept back into half up half down every day and bright blue eyes full of eagerness to learn something new every day. Not to mention how kind she was. Paisley was used to her life being perfect. After all, when everything you do or try to do is perfect, you kind of get used to it. However, what happens to somebody when they are used to being perfect and they find something they cannot figure out how to do? Well little Paisley was about to find out.

It all started on Paisley's sixth Birthday. It started off like most birthdays do, she woke up at 8:00 and practically jumped for joy when she saw the mountain of presents sitting in front of her parents. "YAS SLAY QUEENS," she cried. She started to open her presents, each one better than the last. First, new crayons for her art projects, then an American Girl doll (who she had already named Marigold for her golden blond hair). Then she opened a pretty bag with a lip gloss inside! She could not wait to tell her friends. When she finally got to the last present, which was shaped like a box, she opened it and to her surprise it was a pair of hot pink shoes. Not just any other shoes, but tie shoes. Paisley was excited, for she had never had a pair of tie shoes before. She quickly slid off her pink slippers and put on her new pink sneakers. The question was how you tied them. She asked her Daddy, and he smiled and sat down next to her to show how to tie her shoes. First, he showed her how to tie a knot, make an x and pull one string over the other. Then he showed her how to make a bunny ear and pull the other string around and over and BOOM! You are done. Paisley smiled at her father, said thank you, and went to work tying the other shoe. She made an x and pulled, it did not work, she tried again, and it still did not work. She took off her sneakers and threw them across the room. She hollered, "I can't do this! I CAN'T!" She stormed to her room and slammed the door so loudly the entire house heard it. She cried for what seemed like hours only, it was minutes. Paisley's Mom and Dad finally came into her room and sat down on the bed.

"It is okay. It takes a long time to learn something that you have never learned how to do," said Mom.

"In fact, I want to explain to you, the power of yet. The power of yet is the idea that if you have not achieved something, like tying your shoes or learning something like how to tie a knot, it does not mean you can't or won't in the future. So instead of saying I can't tie my shoes, say I cannot tie my shoes...yet. Because trust me, you are the smartest, most independent, sassy little girl I know. You will learn and you will probably be the best shoe tier in the world. You just have to believe you can do it. So, wipe those tears, I do not want you crying on your birthday."

"And what do you say we give it another shot? After all, those are some pretty sweet kicks," said Dad.

Ten minutes and a little lip gloss later, Paisley walked out the door with not only adorable shoes on her feet but a whole new perspective on the power of yet.



My Awesome Dog Zeus

by Paisleigh Stanton
Lealman Elementary School
Teacher: Erin Hickey



I want to tell you all about my amazing dog, Zeus. He is a German Shepherd-Husky mix, which means he has the best traits from both breeds. Zeus is not just my pet; he's my best friend and protector. He makes my life so much better!

One of the coolest things about Zeus is how protective he is of me. Whenever we go for walks, he stays close by my side. If he hears a strange noise or sees someone he doesn't know, he stands tall and barks to let me know that he's watching out for me. It makes me feel safe to know that he always has my back. I think he believes it's his job to keep me safe, and I love him for that!

Zeus also has a favorite toy: his ball! He loves playing with it more than anything else. When I throw the ball, he runs after it like a lightning bolt. His fur flies in the wind, and he looks so happy! Sometimes, he brings the ball back and drops it at my feet, ready for me to throw it again. It's so much fun to play together, and I love watching him chase the ball. His excitement is contagious, and it makes me smile every time!

After our fun playtime, Zeus loves to curl up next to me. He enjoys sleeping with me, and I think that's one of the best parts of having him. When we lie down together, he rests his head on my lap or snuggles close to me. His soft fur and warm body make me feel cozy and safe. Sometimes, I even tell him my secrets while we're cuddling, and I know he understands me. It feels nice to have a buddy to share my thoughts with!

Going for walks with Zeus is another adventure. We explore the neighborhood together, and he loves to sniff all kinds of interesting smells. I enjoy watching him wag his tail as he meets other dogs and people. It's like he's making new friends everywhere we go! Our walks are special because I get to spend time with him and enjoy the fresh air.

In conclusion, Zeus is the best dog anyone could ever ask for. He protects me, loves to play with his ball, and snuggles with me when it's time to sleep. Every day with him is an adventure, and I'm so grateful to have such a wonderful friend. I can't imagine life without Zeus by my side!

Hurricanes

by Genevieve De Neve
Gulf Beaches
Elementary School
Teacher: Kayla Copley



The storm came in the
dead of night.
Hope was all gone,
and gone was our might.

Sadness crawled
Inside our hearts
We lay in silence
Everything getting ripped apart.

The wind pounds on
The windows
There are many sounds
Low bellows

Then it starts to slow
Then to a stop
Every sound
Mellows

Look around, look up, look down
The damage it caused,
We'll always remember,
But now we think,
All is fine,
Because in a sea of worries,
Find a new life.

Lost & Found

by Ashby Rood
Jamerson Elementary School
Teachers: Andrea Cate and
Jessica Dean



My heart thumps like the beat of a drum
I fall down, falling from the light
And it feels like I'll never get back up

My breath falters like a dying battery
I close my eyes to escape it
And huddle in the darkness

I'm lost
In a labyrinth
In my mind

My heart keeps thumping
keep falling down
But this time, I pick myself back up

My breath falters
I close my eyes
And open them back up

I'm still lost
In a labyrinth
In my mind

But a labyrinth eventually has an end
And I will find it

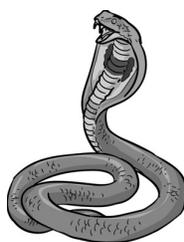


Animal Wonder

by Lian Echevarria

Walsingham Elementary School

Teacher: Julie Christian



Imagine you are hiking and as you walk, you encounter many trees...suddenly, a jungle appears full of animals you have wondered about all your life! Imagine you are snorkeling in the vast ocean and see many fish in diverse sizes. However, you look in front of you and see a big octopus looking for food. There are many amazing things to learn about land and sea animals. Some of these animals are at risk of extinction, but there are ways to prevent it. Let's explore the animal world by land and by sea.

To start with, there are land animals, and each one has unique habitats and appearances. One of the most popular land animals is the giraffe. These mammals have long necks that can grow up to six feet. They live in the dry savannahs in Africa. Additionally, they eat flowers, dirt, and leaves. Giraffes' predators are lions, hyenas, and African wild dogs. For example, if giraffes see anything approaching them, they will run in any direction to try to survive. But they are not the only land animals.

Grizzly bears live in communal areas but mostly in Canada and Alaska. Grizzly bears are mammals. Furthermore, grizzly bears eat salmon, fish, and birds. For instance, if a grizzly bear sees any movement in the rivers it will try to catch whatever it is to eat it for itself or bring it to its family. The grizzly bears' predators are coyotes, foxes, and wolverines.

Finally, the king cobra can grow up to eighteen feet (216 in) and live in India and also in Asia. King cobras are reptiles. King cobras mostly eat lizards and other types of snakes. King cobras are venomous and can kill a person in 30 minutes. Also, one single bite of the king cobra can kill a 12,000-pound elephant in just three hours. The predators of the king cobra are mongooses, and eagles. To illustrate, a king cobra is looking around and sees a lizard and the king cobra is trying to be sneaky to capture it. Then the lizard looks in another direction, and the king cobra takes the chance and captures it for itself. To finish this paragraph, you now have more understanding about these land animals.

To continue this essay, there are not just only land animals but there is a world under the sea with infinite sea animals you may not have thought of. One of the sea's living animals is the anglerfish. These fish live over 3,000 feet (about 914.4 m) down on the ocean floor. The anglerfish can weigh up to fifty pounds. Anglerfish mostly eat other fish; they do consume marine invertebrates sometimes. The anglerfishes' predators are sharks and barracudas. Likewise, anglerfish like to live at the bottom of the sea so if you ever go for a relaxing swim, you might never see an anglerfish unless you are lucky and suddenly spot one in the ocean swimming with you.

To continue, there are more, for example sharks. They weigh up to 5,000 pounds (about 2267.96 kg). Sharks are mostly predators and eat other fish, marine animals, and other sea creatures. The shark's predators are killer whales, crocodiles, and larger sharks. Imagine you get close to shark you might get really scared. You feel like that because you've heard of their bad reputations, but not everything is true. The shark might even trust you and come close and do no harm but mostly, they harm people because they think you are food.

Finally, electric eels like to spend their time deep in the ocean up to 30-150 feet. The electric eel can weigh up to twenty kilograms (44 lb.). The electric eel has poor vision, so they only eat fish. Its predators are large birds, raccoons, and larger fish. For instance, if you ever see an electric eel, you would not like to get in the water, but you might take pictures from the outside. To close this paragraph, you now have learned more about the world under the sea.

Furthermore, you might think that there is a fair amount of each animal and its species but in the world, there are sea and land animals that are almost extinct. One of those animals is sea turtles. They are dying from garbage and other stuff that people throw into their habitats. Sea turtles usually spend their time looking for food, so they think garbage is food and usually get their heads stuck in plastic bottles. Sea turtles usually die if they are stuck in plastic bottles or if they eat garbage, so their population has declined over the years.

One endangered land animal is the cheetah. Habitat reductions and people illegally killing them so they can trade with others endangers the cheetah. But there are ways to prevent it, like people can stop throwing trash in the ocean and instead walk to find a trash can where all the trash belongs. This way everything is exceptionally clean and neat. To exit this paragraph, now you know what you can do to help these animals and tell other people so they can do it too.

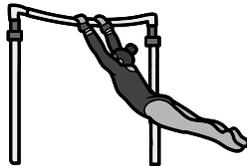
To conclude, you now have answers to all your questions about animals, both sea and land. But there are still questions and mysteries to solve about animals. So, you can travel around the world exploring the jungle or go snorkeling in the large ocean to find the answers to your wonders.

The Gymnastics Competition

by Emma Youssef

Tarpons Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Imani Boyce



“Uhhhh! We are going to be late again!” I yelled from the car. I felt butterflies in my stomach and my legs were shaking. I felt like I was going to mess up in my gymnastics competition. I had just stared at my breakfast, not wanting to finish it. I finally saw my mom coming to the car. She was walking as slow as a turtle. I signaled her to run, but I don’t think she saw me. When my mom came in, I smelled the perfume she sprayed around the car and in my face. My dog was barking so loudly that I felt like my ear drums were about to explode. I was so excited we were about to leave. I started jumping in my seat. It was a long drive, but we finally got there.

Once we got out of the car, I ran inside. “There is a move I want to try but I am afraid to hurt myself,” I told my mom. She tells me to just go for it. I step on to the floor and I see everyone stretching so I decide to stretch, too. When I was done stretching it was time to start the competition. I heard the tumble tracks heart beating from the girl running on it. My first event was vault. I run like the wind, my hands hit the table, I twist and land it. I salute to the judge and get water. The order of my next events were bars, beam, then floor.

I was about to do bars. I put on my grips and jumped. I caught the bar and did a kip. My teammates and coaches were cheering. I stood on the bar and jumped to catch the high bar. I flipped off the high bar and landed. I took off my grips and washed my hands from all the chalk. After that, I did beam. My heart was racing; it was time for floor. “Go for it. Go for it,” I whisper to myself. I sit in my starting pose, smiling. I sit tall. When the music starts, I start. Not too early and not too late. I stand and do my leap pass. I can feel the air hitting my face. I was ready to do the move, but right before I ran, I looked up to my mom. She nodded to me, cheering. I started running, I did a few moves and then I went for it. I did the move and landed it. Perfectly. I ran to my friends.

It was time for the ending ceremony. I was so excited that I jumped all the way there. I won for each event: bars, beam, vault, and floor. Now it was time to see who won overall. “And the winner is...” I hear the judge announcing, “Emma Youssef!” I was so proud of myself and so was my mom. I could tell because she was screaming so loudly. I got up on the stage and waved. I got down and walked to my mom with a smile bigger than my face. The reason I won was because I tried my best and landed the move. That day I was taught not to be scared and just go for it; you are capable of anything.



The Move

by Audrey Bochichio

Tarpon Springs Fundamental School

Teacher: Zachary Van Stratt



I am at my friend's house, so why do I feel like my heart is on fire? Why do I feel like I am going to throw up? Because tomorrow, I am moving to Florida. It might not seem so far but from here it feels like I am moving to Mars.

My friend and I are DEAD silent. I look at my watch – 9:30. “I have to go home soon,” I blurt out. She is glaring at me. I can feel the tension in my head. I see her eyes slowly turn into blood red balls of fire as a tear rolls down her left cheek. My brain was telling me I was moving but my heart didn't want to believe it.

My mom started calling me downstairs. Now the tears were really coming, I was still in shock, but I knew I was going to have to leave at some point. Might as well get it over with. I started to walk down the stairs; I noticed something that made me jump. My friend grabbed my shoulder.

“Do you really have to leave?” she says in an almost whisper. I didn't know what to say so I remained silent.

My mom breaks the silence, “Are you girls almost finished in there?”

My friend replies, “Yes.” I still can't find my voice. My heart is pounding like it's going to burst into a million pieces in seconds. I looked at my friend's house one more time before leaving. As we continue to walk down the stairs, I notice the cracks in the steps, and a memory comes back to me of us having a tea party in the yard. I can almost feel the summer breeze on my face. Suddenly, something stops me. This is reality. Tomorrow I am moving and there isn't anything I can do to stop that.

We finally get downstairs, which feels like an eternity. We walked into the dining room in sync. My mom started smiling. I could tell she was trying to hide something. Then I remembered the real reason we were moving; my dad got a great job offer at a construction site. I have heard him and mom talking about it in the kitchen a couple of times. That is only one of the reasons though: I was a little excited to move because I would be able to see my grandma, my cousins, aunts, uncles and my family. Usually, they have to visit us. I haven't seen my cousins for three years and I really miss them, so I am excited to finally catch up. Suddenly, I hear a faint sniff come from my friend. She is standing on my left looking at my mom like she just killed her dog. I don't blame her - I am mad, too. My dad isn't home yet. He went into the city to say goodbye to some of his old work friends. I am praying that he stays there for as long as possible because my mom said that when he gets back, we must go home. And right now, that is the last thing I want.

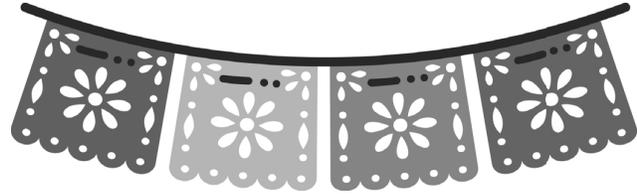
As we make our way to the door, I see my friend. She is bawling her eyes out. I feel a sudden pain in my chest. I can hear my heart thumping. Ba-bump, ba-bump, ba-bump. "Say your last goodbyes," my mom says. I can tell by her tone that she is trying really hard to sound as joyful as possible, but I could still hear the sadness in her voice. My friend clearly isn't in a talking position. So, I just stand there and wait for her to finish even though I am crying as well. I look into my friend's sad eyes, and we exchange a look nobody in any universe could decipher. And at that moment I understood her, and I could tell she understood me, too.

As I walk down her concrete steps, I remember the first time I knocked on her door with my mom. I remember how I was feeling a mix of excitement and happiness and at that moment, just by the look on her face I could tell we would be really good friends. And I could tell it would be even harder to say goodbye.



Hispanic Heritage Month

by Corinne O'Marah
Bauder Elementary School
Teacher: Elizabeth Basley



America is a country that is made up of many different people from different heritages and cultures. In September, we celebrate Hispanic Heritage. Some Hispanic people have come to America to seek fortune, adventure, or a better life for themselves and their families. Hispanic people are doctors, astronauts, engineers, and politicians. Hispanic people have worked hard to make a name for themselves and their heritage in America.

Hispanic people come from many different countries and have their own unique cultures. Some Hispanic countries are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Columbia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Some unique traditions are Las Posadas, La Quince Nera, and Dia de los Muertos. Las Posadas is a celebration from December 16th to the 24th to honor the story of Mary, Joseph, and the birth of Jesus. La Quince Nera celebrates a celebration of a girl's 15th birthday and welcoming to young adult. In Latin America, Dia de los Muertos, or the day of the dead, is a celebration at the end of October through the beginning of November to honor loved family members who have passed.

I hope from this essay you can learn that the Hispanic heritage is not one thing. It is a mixture of cultures from different countries. By honoring and celebrating their cultures and their traditions, Hispanic American's experience the beauty of the cultural experience of America.

KOI

by Meyer Rapport
Bay Vista
Fundamental School
Teacher: Anthony Ateek



Determination, Peace and Friendship.

A Koi symbolizes all,
Graceful giants swimming in the pond
Peacefully dancing all along.

Quiet and Strong
A Koi swims along under lilies building
strong bonds
Never giving up as they glide under
the dark water.

Beautiful creatures
Orange and white they shine brightly
Their black spots are as deep as space.

Humble and respectful
A Koi's unblinking eyes see all.

I Am

by Jayce McCluster
Walsingham Elementary School
Teacher: Julie Christian



I am tall. I got it from my grandfather -
not from my dad or mom
I love music and being home alone
Singing to the beat while watching my phone

My hair is black, just like a sharpie
But my deep brown eyes love looking at
writing
I'm creative and unique - not afraid to be me
I have a great childhood - happy and
carefree!

I'm sometimes a copycat - they say it's
annoying
I have friends - sometimes they're boring
Telling stories, but you see them poking

I love playing football and encouraging
myself
Encouraging others and always willing to
help.
I'm still growing and dreaming new dreams
Being present and living life to the extreme!

I AM JAYCE!

If I Were in Charge of The World

by Jaclin Moawd
Brooker Creek Elementary School
Teacher: Rachel Smith



If I were in charge of the world,
ramen noodles would be healthy,
groceries would be free, and
dangerous animals wouldn't be
so dangerous.

If I were in charge of the world,
going into space would be safe,
the color grey wouldn't exist,
and kids could just
be kids.

If I were in charge of the world,
most people wouldn't be rude,
most people wouldn't be cruel,
most people would be
loyal and kind.



This Little Stray

by Lucas Reyes-Kraftchak
Dunedin Elementary School
Teacher: Rachelle McDowell

This little stray
On these fateful short days
Is this stray alone?
Or does he have a home?
When I play with you
I don't want to leave you.
I know it won't last forever,
Can't we just keep him safe forever?
Though I want him with me,
I know it will never be.
I like my lovely pet,
But doesn't everyone
Like an orange tabby cat?



BIRDS

by Collin Guerrieri
Ozona Elementary School
Teacher: Lyza Rutkoski



Birds, they are as sweet as honey

Chip, chap

You hear them singing like pianos, each note played with a little bit of magic!

Flitter, flatter, chirp, chap

Birds are pros at flying - they are like planes gliding around the big blue sky

Flitter, flatter, gliding, chirp, chap

Birds are crackle masters, they crush the seeds with power, they are hydraulic presses, what's also impressive is how they don't swallow the shells!

Flitter, flatter, gliding, chirp, chap, cringle, crackle

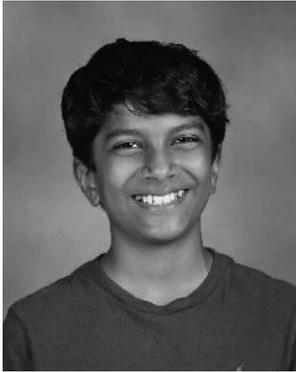
Birds are also master cleaners - they prune their feathers all the time, they even take baths like brushes.

Flitter, flatter, gliding, chirp, chap, cringle, crackle, scrub, scamp, preen

Birds also learn tricks like no other pet, they can: kiss, high five, handshake, talk and many more

Flitter, flatter, gliding, chirp, chap, cringle, crackle, scrub, preen, and do tricks!

Now you know how these beautiful birds can: fly, glide, talk (sing), crack seeds like pros, bathe, and do tricks and more. These birds love you like flight.



I Am ME

by Vibhu Mantripragada
Brooker Creek Elementary School
Teacher: Camille Miller

I am me. No-one else, no-one more. I may be a brother, a son, a cousin, but in the end, I am me.

I am me. One with a smile that can light up a room, one with willpower
Enough to make a flower bloom. There will always be ups and downs
in life, but no matter what, I will pull through.

I am me. The person you can count on to fulfill his promise, the person you can
You can count on to always make progress. I am me.

A Thank You from My Heart

by Naomi Mora
Lynch Elementary School
Teacher: Kerri Roberts



You have given me roots, so I can grow; taught me the things I need to know.
With every hug, and every smile, you have made the hard days feel worthwhile.
You have shown me love that never ends, my biggest cheerleaders, my truest friends.

Through every stumble, every fall, you have always answered when I call.
Sometimes I wonder if I give enough back, for all your love, there is nothing I lack.

But one thing is true, as I stand here today, I love you more than words can say.
So thank you, Mom and Dad, for all that you do, this poem is my way of saying, "I love you."

The Day You Left and Never Came Back

by Railynn Evans
Northwest Elementary School
Teacher: Paula Isett



One sunny, bright day my dad said he was going to go camping. I wanted to go with him. He said it was OK with him, so I packed my bags, and I was ready to go. We started to walk slowly towards the door, and just as I reached out to open the door my mom came out of nowhere! It startled me, so I screamed a little, and then she said, "What are you doing, missy?"

I said, "Camping with Dada."

"No, you are not," she said.

I was confused, "Why not?"

She put her hands on her hips and rolled her eyes, "Because you have to deep clean your closet." I forgot all about that.

So, I said sorry to my dad, "I have stay back. You have fun and be safe!" The second I said that my stomach ached, I knew something was wrong. I could not get rid of the feeling, but before I got to tell him something was wrong, he was out the door, like he was a cheetah, and the only thing left behind was dust.

The next day was gloomy. I was still lying in bed when there was a sudden knock on the door. Knock, knock! There it goes again. So, my mom answered the door. There was a police officer standing there.

He took his hat off and said, "Ma'am, I have unfortunate news for you. I am sorry to say this, but your husband had an accident. He did not make it." The officer stood there like a statue. Then, he left, like he did not just ruin our entire life. The next days and weeks were filled with me, my mom, and my whole family crying buckets and buckets of tears. Life would never be the same again.



Kids Were There Too

by Djordje Budesa
Belcher Elementary School
Teacher: Meghan Kassem

Many kids today can help with a lot of things, but what about back in 1776? How did young people help America in the fight for independence? Back then, boys 16 or older could join the Continental Army to support America in the Revolutionary War. Most of the army was 16-18 years old, don't forget about 16-year-old Sybil Ludington, and don't you even think about skipping Deborah Sampson and James Armistead.

To start, one way young people helped America in the fight for independence was joining the army. In June of 1776, Joseph's family finally said yes after months of begging. Although he was only 15 years old when he did apply for the army, he found a way to trick the people into thinking he was 16. According to the source he wrote, "I was now what I had long wished to be a soldier." Although Joseph wasn't a soldier yet, neither were the nearly 20,000 men and boys. They were all regular, like Joseph, and couldn't even fire a rifle correctly. He didn't complain about shooting practice, nor the endless marching. Besides, he loved the army meals, somehow, known as wormy biscuits and flavorless meat. Aside from that, he was just excited to be a soldier.

Furthermore, another way young people helped America in the fight for independence was when 16-year-old Sybil Ludington rode farther than Paul Revere to warn the people in Connecticut of the upcoming British soldiers. According to the source, "Today her midnight ride is a symbol of courage shown by ordinary citizens in the struggle for freedom." Because in the end, the British got away, but Sybil's courageous actions would eventually lead to the colonists winning the Revolutionary War.

Lastly, a third way young people helped America in the fight for independence was when Deborah Sampson helped by leading an extremely dangerous expedition to help capture some loyalists. James Armistead became a spy under Marquis de Lafayette during the war and gathered secret information. First, let us explore Deborah's marvelous journeys. According to the source, "She led dangerous expeditions, dug trenches and helped capture 15 loyalists," and still somehow managed to keep her identity hidden for two years. Now, let's look at James Armistead. As a spy, he managed to gather secret information from Army General Cornwallis of the British, and some information from British Benedict Arnold, which eventually led to the American victory of Yorktown.

In conclusion, young people helped support the American victory over the British in the Revolutionary War in various ways such as being a spy, warning the colonists, leading expeditions, and joining the Continental Army at a young age.

The Little Fairies

by Valeria Gomez-Larios
Skycrest Elementary School
Teacher: Kimberly Henson



On a sunny morning, there was a little girl named Sabrina, who loved nature. She asked her mom to let her go to the forest since they lived in a little cabin next to the forest. “Can I please go to the forest? I really want to go look at all the beautiful flowers and the animals,” asked Sabrina nicely.

“Well OK, but make sure to be back before breakfast. Please do not be late like last time, okay?” responded Sabrina’s mom.

“Yes, OK mom. I will not be late this time. Hahaha!” said Sabrina.

Then, she kissed her mom on the cheek and left with her notebook and her pen. She loved to write and draw about what she would see there in the forest. She got on her purple bike, with a little basket on the front to put her notebook and pen in. Sabrina was so excited, because as she was riding to the forest, she saw so many fresh flowers that had bloomed since it was springtime.

“I am finally here. It is beautiful here,” Sabrina said as she approached the little flowers. But as she got closer, she noticed that something was moving in one of the flowers! But what Sabrina did not know was that inside each flower there was a tiny fairy that was sleeping quietly. One of the little fairies was secretly looking through her flower and accidentally made her flower move. Sabrina was too scared to see what was moving, so she hid behind a big tree.

“Ahh, what a nice sleep!” said one little fairy, as she woke up and stretched and got out of her comfortable warm flower bed.

“OMG!” Sabrina said quietly so the fairies did not hear her. “They are beautiful,” she said as she was looking at one of the fairies with purple hair, a pink bow, and a long blue dress with purple hearts on it.

“Finally, you woke up, Lily! Let’s wake up the rest of the fairies to play!” said the fairy peeking out of her flower.

“OK, Olivia, let’s go wake them up and get ready for the day,” said Lily.

So, after all the fairies woke up, they started playing fairy tag and fairy rope, which is tag and jump rope.

“Wow, I wonder if I should ask them to be my friends?” thought Sabrina. But as she was pondering about that thought, she accidentally stepped on a loud tree stick and the little fairy, Olivia, heard.

“Did any of you guys hear that?” said Olivia.

“Umm... No, I think you are just hearing things!” said one of the other fairies.

“OK, I guess,” Olivia replied.

“OMG, I need to leave before they see me!” thought Sabrina.

So, she grabbed her notebook and pen and got on her bike and pedaled away home. As she was pedaling home, she almost fell off her bike because she kept thinking of the fairies, like “How long they had been living in the forest?” and “How did she not know sooner?” So, she got home and thought about it some more. Then, she told her mom about the fairies.

“Hey mom, do you believe in fairies?” asked Sabrina

“What is that silly question? But no, why?” said Sabrina’s mom.

“Oh, because I saw some fairies today in the forest and they were beautiful,” said Sabrina

“Oh, I am sure you saw some beautiful fairies, sweetie,” said Sabrina’s mom, as she giggled.

“No, I am not lying mom!” replied Sabrina.

“Umm... OK,” said Sabrina’s mom.

Then, Sabrina took a shower and went to sleep.

The next day Sabrina woke up and asked her mom to go to the forest again to see all the fairies again. So, she ate breakfast as quick as lightning and rushed to get her bike and pedaled to the forest. She was so excited to see the fairies again, she honestly really wanted to be friends with the fairies. But when she saw close-ahead that there was a scary cave with scratches, moss, slime and a lot of other gross stuff, Sabrina was so confused! It was like magic! When she reached the cave, she was really scared to go in, and then there was a weird purple gas that smelled super bad! Then, just eight seconds later, she was passed out on the grass.

When she woke up, she was just in a room with potions, books, and worst of all, a giant monster!

“Ahhhhhhh, OMG, what do you want from me? I want to go home! Don’t hurt me please!” cried Sabrina.

“I am not going to hurt you, but I do need you to do something for me! Hahahaha!” said the Monster.

“OK, what is it?” asked Sabrina.

“My job for you is to capture every single fairy in those flowers because they have ruined my life! Every time I sleep, they are always making so much noise! They play fairy tag and fairy rope, and it is so annoying!” said the monster.

Sabrina did not know what to do, she wanted to help both. The monster looked very lonely, so maybe she could convince the fairies to maybe play with him, and they would all be friends!

“Umm, OK, just let me go back home and I will come up with a plan, OK?” said Sabrina.

“OK, I will let you go this time, but you better be back tomorrow, got it?” replied the monster.

“OK!” said Sabrina.

As soon as Sabrina got out of the cave, the cave disappeared! She walked over to the flowers and bravely yelled out to all the fairies that the monster wanted her to capture all the fairies! Sabrina then did her best to convince them to consider being friends with the monster because he was very lonely after all. And they, of course, said yes because they had kind hearts!

The following day, Sabrina was ready to talk to the monster again. And, as expected, the cave was there again! She walked in and found the monster and told him to follow her.

The monster was so annoyed when Sabrina took her to talk to the fairies.

“Hello, we are so sorry for not letting you sleep at night. We had no idea that you were here,” said the little fairies.

The monster realized how nice the fairies were, so he became a little bit more friendly. They talked almost all day, and finally they started playing and talking and had so much fun! Sabrina was glad everything worked out, so she went back home and lived happily ever after.



Polluted

by Daniel Nicholas
Bay Vista Fundamental School
Teacher: Mrs. Jaclyn Schafer



The world is facing pollution
If we work together, we can conduct a solution.
our disgraceful rubbish
Is causing global suffrage
The war between us and the planet.
We are bitter
We can't see the picture
We are a disgrace
We're not changing this place.
We keep it the same for our own personal gain
Money
Which is funny, because the planet's worth more
And it's dying because we keep finding more ways to hurt it.
I know we're not perfect,
But this planet is worth it.
It's worth the hustle,
It's worth the struggle.
Because without it we can't strive,
Without it we can't survive.
That's why I say and pray that this world will change someday
Because if we keep standing still like water
The earth will continue to get hotter.
If we don't change our ways
and keep Earth the same
We won't have an Earth,
And without the planet, what are we actually worth?



The One I Want

by Jillian Obenauf
Pasadena Fundamental School
Teacher: Christina McCartney

Ah, the sweet smell of horse hay. I love it. I'm going to see Charm, my Thoroughbred/Belgian mix! Yay!! I think. "NEIGH!!" Someone's not happy, I think. I should go check on them. I see them. What is going on? A girl is riding Charm.

"What in the world is going on??" The girl whips Charm. "No, don't you're going to..." Too late, she already fell.

I go to get her. "What were you doing?" I say.

Her response is, "I was riding my horse. Who are you?"

What does she mean by that? Charm whinnies. I know what that means. I walk over. He is happy at my touch. The girl runs over.

She says, "Careful, he is dangerous. You caught him by surprise. Walk away slowly before he hurts you."

What? Who does she think she is saying that my Charm is dangerous!!

Now I am downright angry, "Why were you riding Charm?"

"Well, he is my horse. I'm the only one that can ride him, but even then, he sometimes gets flustered. But he is the best jumper at this barn," she said.

"What? He is not your horse, he's mine," I say.

"Oh, you must not be from around here. He is not mine yet. But my parents are going to buy him for me soon. I'm Jasmine, nice to meet you."

"Sasha."

"Sasha, nice to meet you. But I must have misheard you, Jasmine. Because I'm buying Charm, you see."

"Oh, I see," Jasmine says. Her look is downright dark at this point. "But you did not mishear me. I am buying Charm. But I'm willing to make this fun. You must know that there is a horse show coming up."

I nod. "Me and Charm are going to do it," I say.

"Perfect I'm doing it too," says Jasmine. "What bracket are you in?"

"Four-foot eventing," I say.

"Great, same. My uncle owns Charm. If I win, he will give Charm to me. If you win, then I will have my uncle sell Charm to you for \$100. I assume you already have that saved up," Jasmine says. I nod. "OK then. Can I have your number so we can work out who rides Charm when?" We exchange phone numbers. Then she says "I think that I'm done riding for today. You can finish riding him."

I nod, "Good."

Then she walked off. I get on and have a day of flat work. After I'm with him in his stall. I tell him that it's going to be OK.

The next day I go to the park, the meeting place that Jasmine said that we were going to meet. We agreed on me having Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Having Sunday as his off day. Since today was Sunday, I go to the barn. I signed up for the show. And then spent some time with Rocco. And went home.

The next day, I had to go to school. I made a beeline for my bestie, Heather. I tell her all about it.

"I'm still going to ride everyday with you. I'm going to ride Wish. You know, Morgan's horse, on the days I can't ride Charm. She is kind of like him just... Not like him."

"Yeah, I wish I could ride him whenever I want with all this still happening but..."

"I get it, Sasha. But we have to hurry, or we are going to be late for class."

"Yeah," we walk to class together and then go our separate ways. We meet up after school so we can go to the barn. I'll be able to ride Charm and then go home. When I get there, Jasmine is there. In Charm's stall.

"What are you doing here?" we say at the same time.

"I'm here to ride Rocco. Remember it's my day?" I say.

"Oh, yeah. I just felt a need to see him. Hey, while I'm here why don't I watch you ride?" she says.

"Oh, I'm riding Phoenix a little in a while."

"I'm also going to ride in a while," I say.

"Oh, OK I guess I will just go tack Phoenix now," Jasmine says.

She walks away. Good riddance, I think. I tack Charm up with Heather for our lesson with Mr. Connor. After we warmed up, Mr. Connor walks in for the lesson.

"Good afternoon, girls. Sasha, I saw that Charm is signed up twice for the four-foot jumper - one with you and one with Jasmine."

"Yes, we have this bet on Charm," I say.

"Ok, I will be sure to have them give Charm a sufficient break. Oh, and if you are going to have Charm do the show twice, then we are going to have a very, very good lesson."

"That lesson was brutal," I say.

"Yeah, Mr. Connor was right though. It was a pretty good lesson," Heather says.

"Yeah, it was good." Then we go our separate ways to clean the horses. I take Charm's tack off and brush him. "Oh, Charm your tack is due for a cleaning later." I brush Charm down, put him away and bring my tack to the tack room. I get the saddle soap and start to wipe my saddle down and hear someone talking on the phone. They are going to get in big trouble with Mr. Connor - he does not allow you to be distracted on a phone with horses. But wait, I recognize that voice. It is Jasmine. Now I don't care. I go back to my saddle.

A week goes by. Same routine. Soon it is Thursday, the day before the show. The school day goes by fast and I rush home. I'm not going to ride today since I have to make sure I get a good night's sleep and get my stuff ready for tomorrow. I show in the afternoon, so I will wake up and put my stuff in the car to go show after school. I am going to have a blast. If I win, then I get Charm. That is my last thought before I drift into sleep.

IT IS SHOW DAY!!!! That is my first thought. But I have to go to school first. The day seems to whiz by very fast. I go to the barn. I am not in my show clothes because first I have to get Charm in the trailer to go to the barn that is hosting the show. I'm about to load Charm when I see Jasmine run over.

"Can I please load my horse?" Jasmine says.

"He is not your horse yet. And no, I am going to load him," I say.

"Oh, OK," she says.

I load him, then get in the car. The ride over is short so I cannot worry so much. When we get there, the trailer is not there yet. So, I go and change into my show clothes. By then they are there. So, I get Charm ready since I go first in dressage. We. Do. So. Good!!!!!!! Charm is being the perfect boy, and it is amazing. I give Charm a good cool down then put him in his box for Jasmine. I give him a few treats. I stick around to watch others go. Charm and me are in first at the end of the day. Jasmine is in third. I go to get our ribbons. Then I go congratulate him. I tell him to sleep well and that I will see him in the morning. I go to bed still smiling.

It is very early in the morning when I wake up. I go to the show grounds and let Charm graze a bit. Jasmine is pulled before me, so I go and watch her. She is a pretty good rider, but I see that I am better. I know Charm will hold enough energy for me and don't worry about it. We ride sometime after. The course is hard since it is cross-country, but Charm and I have done harder. We snag second while Jasmine snags third again. At the moment, Charm and I are in first overall. Jasmine is right on our tails in second. As I go to sleep, I think that Charm and I will have to be exceptional in show jumping.

"It is show jumping today," I sing to Charm. It is our favorite event by far. When I go, I know directly that Charm and I have won already. We are fast and amazing. The rest of the day goes by in a flurry. But I was right. Charm and I won. Charm is mine. Later, I pay Jasmine's Uncle, but now I can stop stressing. Charm is mine for sure now.



Rose and the Wilmington Tea Party

by Raegan Shaffer

Pasadena Fundamental School

Teacher: Denise Dawson

It was springtime, March 31, 1774. My favorite time of the year! Today is the Wilmington Tea Party. I am excited... but not as excited as I normally am. This is going to be my only time going with my mother. You can only go to protest tea parties if you are younger than 40. My mother is 39 and turning 40 in May. Next year I will not go with her. But I am 16 and I need to start maturing.

Mother tried to get my sister, Marelyn, to go but she just likes to ride on her horse and race with her guy friends. Marelyn isn't a serious person and does not like politics.

"Okay, Rose and I are getting ready to leave!" My mother shouted to everyone, but she wanted my father to hear it the most. "Are you sure you don't want to go Marelyn?" my mother asked her one more time.

"I'm sure mother!" she says while walking out the door with all her riding gear on.

As we are walking towards the buggy, I smell the smell of the fires because of people burning their tea. As we start driving, I can see some smoke in the air.

We arrived at the docks, and we walked into the crowd. The lady in charge of the protest announced what has happened in her life since last year. It was nothing new. She started talking about the British.

"As we know, the British have raised their prices on the tea. England does not have the right to raise taxes without asking. We women have the right to make decisions. Until then, we will not buy their tea. We have been burning their tea in honor of that. Have you all brought a family member?" she asked. Everyone shakes their heads yes. "Good. Because we express political options and love of family and country. Everyone loves this country, right?" she says jokingly. Everyone chuckles and laughs but shakes their heads while laughing.

"We, the woman of Wilmington, stand by our protest of the tea tax. That is why we are here today."

I just stood there and thought about how this has been happening recently. We women should get to share our opinions. Like voting. It is not fair. I hope in the future this does not go on, and women will have rights. Women should not just stand behind men who make all the decisions. Why don't we get to have rights? That is my question.

My thoughts are interrupted when mother taps on my shoulder. Everyone is talking to the person next to them, so I start talking to mother. I told her about what I was just thinking about. "That is just wonderful, Rose! You should give a speech." I think about what she had just said. I'm not afraid of speaking in public.

"I wouldn't mind that."

Right then, mother gets up and goes to ask our leader if I can speak to the women around us. She calls me up.

"Attention everyone! This young lady, Rose, would like to give a speech."

I go in front of the crowd and say everything I think aloud. Once I am done, everyone claps very loudly. I look at mother and even she is crying. I think what I said was important and hopefully someone will repeat it. Now it is time to burn the tea.



Save The Sea Turtles

by Carli Clatfelter

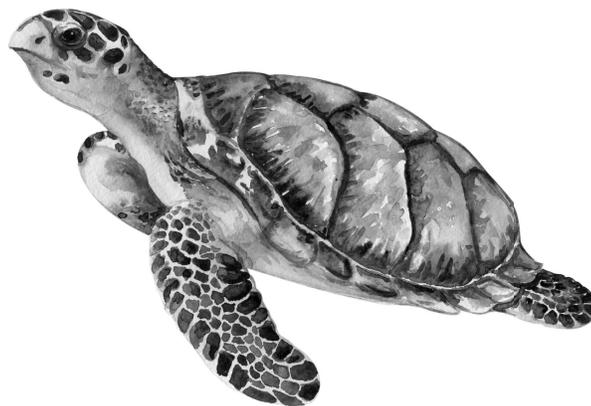
Pasadena Fundamental School

Teacher: Denise Dawson

Imagine you're on the beach just sitting there very relaxed but then suddenly a baby sea turtle just hatches... the sound of the crack and a new life starting. Well, if we don't pay attention to all the resources - we use a lot - you will not be able to see a baby or grown sea turtle ever again. Well, there is something you can do at your house or if you are an outside person, you can do some things outdoors. And the little things that we do can be a big change in the sea turtle world.

How You Can help At Home

Sea turtles are very majestic animals. So, when sea turtles are hatching, they follow the bright glow of the moon glazing over the horizon. But when the beach houses keep their lights on during nesting season, the sea turtles get confused. They follow the house lights and streetlights instead of going to the ocean. So, most of the turtles don't even make it to the ocean. So, guess what? YOU CAN HELP! As little as just turning off your lights at night if you live on the beach can help a baby sea turtle live a long happy life. Also, you can reduce plastic use. Both these things can make a "HUGE" difference, so be a changemaker and help these wonderful animals.



What You Can Do Outdoors

Sea turtles can use a lot of help. As we can see, here are some things you can do when you're outside. One of the most common ways sea turtles get hurt is when people go fishing in sea turtle zones. Well, some fishing nets old or new stay in the water and sea turtles get caught in them and they get stuck and there is no one there to save them. You might think they can chew their way out. Well, you are right. They can, but then they are digesting plastic and that's not good for them either. So, if you or any of your friends go fishing, make sure to tell them not to go in sea turtle zones or even text or email or post on social media sites to not go in sea turtle zones. That would do a lot for sea turtles. Another thing you can do is when you take a nice walk on the beach, pick up some plastic. We have a club called "Beach Cleanup" that we do at school, and we go and pick up plastic. But also, people can go slow and steer around boat strikes, watch for sea turtles in the water, and give sea turtles at least 50 yards of space. Lastly, be careful of fishing gear. All of these are things that you can do daily. I'm not saying you have to do this. I'm just saying please consider helping these magnificent creatures. So do a good deed and help them. It is up to you to be a world changer.

So, now what are you still doing here reading this? The sea turtles need your help and it's all up to you to make sure these beautiful animals do not become extinct. Now you know ways you can help at your house and when you're taking a nice walk on the beach. So, I hope that you liked the story and please, I'm not saying you must save these wonderful animals, I'm just saying please at least consider it. As you can see, I'm very passionate about sea turtles and I think so is my teacher Mrs. Dawson. She loves sea turtles a lot and I'm sure that she would agree that you should help these admirable animals, so they don't become extinct.





A Birthday Surprise

by Ellery Jacobsen
Tarpon Springs Fundamental School
Teacher: Zachary Van Stratt



“Zzzzz,” (Yawns) I try to stretch but as I wake up it feels like a thousand pounds are on top of my legs. Then once everything came back into focus and I did not see a big blurry room anymore I realized that it was only six little pounds that was still fast asleep on my lap.

----- two Hours Earlier-----

Me and my mom were heading to PetSmart, and it was only three days before my birthday, so I was excited. As we were walking past the kitten adoption center, I tried not to look, but I could not help myself. One shiny gray kitten was stretching out her paw to the glass. To me. I may explode. To be honest I think I may have. My heart starts beating in and out of my chest. “Thump, Thump, Thump.” I feel so... so... I cannot describe it, but it feels magical. I want her. “Bugs, Bugs, we have to go. I have to meet someone,” my mom said as she brought me back down to Earth. That is a very suspicious reason to leave, but whatever.

Once I plopped down on the couch a few minutes later my mom brought out a big box from behind the Christmas tree.

“Do you want an early birthday present?”

“Sure?” I replied awkwardly.

Once I start ripping off the wrapping paper, my mom pulls out her camera and begins to record me. She does this a lot, so I do not think anything of it. The box is full of cat toys, a pretty purple carrier for a kitten, and some other supplies for being a new cat owner.

“What is this for?” I ask.

My mom stays blank. Then it clicks.

“Are we getting a cat? The gray one????!!!!” My mom nods. I lunge at her, tackling her with one of the biggest hugs in the world. “Well, what are we waiting for, let’s go!” I say with a grin.

My heart starts to race. I feel as if I could cry confetti. We zoomed over to PetsMart (this time with my dad). Once we get there, we go straight over to the adoption center, my heart dropped. The sign on the door said “closed.” This can’t be happening, not today, not now. Thankfully, there was a phone number on the sign. When my mom called it, a truly kind lady picked up the phone. She said she could be there in around ten minutes. When she arrived, we spent a little time with the kitten, and I knew I would forever love this cat. On the way home my mom asked me what I wanted to name her, and I simply replied “Lily.” I beamed at what I had just said.

After we got home, I went upstairs and released her from the carrier. She looked a little frightened and nervous and to be honest, so was I. Soon enough my mom came into my room, and we laid on my bed and got some cat toys out to make her more comfortable. Lily was soon curled up next to me, purring, fast asleep and after a while so was I. This was one of the best gifts, days, and memories ever.

Why We Should Honor Veterans Everyday

by Artemis Wynter-Martinez

Lake St. George Elementary School

Teachers: Bernadette Lewis & Amy Nordstrom



Have you ever asked yourself what Veterans Day is or why it matters so much to some people? There are many reasons why it is so important. One reason is that people who have had family or friends in the military have had to worry about their loved one and be scared every time they get a call from them. Because they have to worry, it feels right for them to celebrate and honor them. Another reason is that the U.S military has to go through so much while they are deployed, and they may have critical injuries that harm them and scar them for the rest of their lives. But there are countless other reasons, too many to even actually think about, but that is what Veterans Day is for, thinking of all the reasons why we should commemorate them. And to have a real effect, we need to learn why it is important to memorialize them every day, not just Veterans Day.

As source one states, “Veterans Day 1961, President Kennedy invited all citizens to observe Veterans Day in ceremonies expressive of our people’s desire for peace and their gratitude to our veterans who have served and sacrificed to attain it.” (S1) Another quote by a president, “Veterans Day gives all Americans a special opportunity to pay tribute to all those men and women who throughout our history, have left their homes and loved ones to serve their country. Their willingness to give freely and unselfishly of themselves, even their lives, in defense of our democratic principles has given our great country the security we enjoy today. From Valley Forge to Vietnam, through war and peace, valiant patriotic Americans have answered the call, serving with honor and fidelity.” (S1) - President Reagan. Veterans risked their lives to protect us and the least we can do is memorialize them and make sure that the memory of them is eternal.

You can honor veterans, but you can also help them in other ways. For example, you can donate to veteran foundations or businesses or even veteran healthcare. You can help not just physically too. You can visit them in a hospital, or you can write to them and ask them questions if they want to answer them. You can even volunteer to work or help with veterans. Even a simple, simple thank you can be enough. Just two words, just eight letters, just a thank you. That could mean the world to them, to know that they have at least one person that actually cares about them.

In conclusion, it is important to honor our veterans for so many reasons. One being that they risked their lives for us while they were in the military. They protected us when we needed protection. They made their loved ones worry; they could have gotten severely harmed. We need to let them know that they have value. If they fight, then we will fight too. We will fight for them and all that have died.



Discovery

by Rhianna Garcia
Sandy Lane Elementary School
Teacher: Karen Youssef



Chapter 1: The Discovery

We were walking through a neighborhood when we noticed something strange in the distance... at first, we didn't suspect anything out of the ordinary. But as we kept walking, we noticed something huge not so far in the distance. While we were walking towards it ... we noticed tons of abandoned cars. They seemed to be irradiated, and we'd come to the realization that it was tons of old cars from 2011. All the plants and bushes in the area were all overgrown. As we got closer to the building, we saw that it was an abandoned hospital. We found an open window on the lower floor and decided to investigate further. At first, it seemed like an average hospital, But the further we went the more eerie it was... we soon realized something was very wrong with this place. The walls of the hospital were all soundproof.

As we walked further inside, we noticed there were so many unordinary pills stocked up which weren't in stock anymore in other markets. We looked in the patients' rooms and all 20 rooms had cameras hidden by the doorframe. There were blood stains all around the rooms and many questionable tools on the tables. Something seemed evil about this place. We went to investigate the other side of the abandoned area. We were walking there and spotted lots of signs and we ignored them without thinking anything about it. We eventually came to a stop. We saw a huge wall like a barrier which split the area into two. We climbed over it thoroughly, which revealed an abandoned town. There were everlasting rows and rows of homes. All the cars were left behind, scattered around the area. We decided to look inside the homes, and we were amazed to see... everything was left behind untouched and perfectly preserved. Electronics were surprisingly turned on... which was weird. It was like we weren't the only people here. Once we turned around, we heard a noise. It couldn't be a coincidence. It was someone else for sure because we didn't touch a single thing which could've caused a noise. We knew we weren't alone in this abandoned house. Me and my friends left as fast as we could. We were out of breath. We spotted a chair. We went over to take a break from the tiring running. It was weird to have a bench randomly located in a forest, am I right? We weren't fully sure if we were safe here. But all we knew was we weren't going to stick here to find out what that was or who that was that made a sound in the abandoned house.

Chapter 2: Not Normal

After a while, we got up and continued to walk around. We heard a weird sound like heavy footsteps crackling the leaves on the ground near us in the enormous never-ending forest... We ran, ran, and ran without looking back once. After a long time of running, we came to realize that we were lost in the enormous forest, piles of trees in the distance stacked among us. It felt like we were miniature people in a giant's world. Considering how tall the trees were, we could barely see the sky... We swiftly ran and tried to find any possible way out of here. But a figure appeared out of nowhere behind me. I tried to steal a glimpse of it, but it was too late. It suddenly grabbed me and somehow ran faster than lightning. I was terrified. I tried to escape this creature, but its grip was too strong for me to do anything. Even if I did, it was way too fast. I was doomed... I suddenly woke up in a hospital and I realized it was the hospital me and my friends explored earlier this evening. As I suddenly zoned out, I noticed a dark shadowy figure right in front of me, which almost gave me a panic attack. I was taken into a mysterious room. It was dark and foggy. The lights got turned on and revealed a dark shadowy figure standing in front of my very own eyes. I was terrified of what this creature was. The mysterious creature led me into a room. Somehow, I trusted it in a way... We went into a creepy looking room, which looked like something straight out of a horror game. When the lights were turned on it revealed a... CREEPY LOOKING EXPERIMENT. From what I saw, it was true that this place was evil. The mysterious figure made eye contact with me. It felt like it needed help or something. It led me into a room which was supposedly covered in blood... They murmured, "This is the evil scientist that has captured us in here for so many years, I've lost count..." It's like it wanted something like revenge.

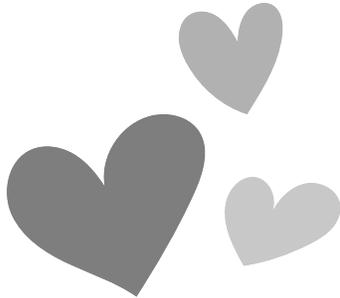


Chapter 3: Plotted Revenge

I've come to the conclusion that the creatures needed help to plot revenge on this evil scientist. I've decided to help them... which was a bad idea, because how would I help them avenge on a crazy scientist, am I right?... What if he had all this planned? But it was worth a shot, so I went to help the experimented creatures. I wondered what they wanted to do. I just followed them all the way to an experimental room. I WAS SUDDENLY STRAPPED TO A CHAIR. I was betrayed! Turns out they were threatened by the mad scientist to trick me. Turns out my hypothesis was true all this time. I should've listened to my theory instead of butting in. Now I'm stuck here unless someone saves me. I got injected with a weird substance out of nowhere which made me tired... I tried to stay awake as long as possible... but failed. The next day I woke up. I was lying in the forest. Was it all just a dream or true? I was extremely puzzled for the next whole hours. I've been walking around trying to find a way home or even find my friends. I came across the abandoned hospital again even though I have walked away from it. I kept walking trying not to think about it. But as I was walking, I came across the abandoned hospital again. Was I daydreaming or was I really stuck in a loop? I entered the hospital... I saw something from behind... IT TOSSED ME TO A WALL. My arm got injured badly. It was a big wound. It was very painful. I couldn't get up. A dark, shadowy figure was approaching in the distance. I've come to the realization that this was most likely my fate. I accepted what was going to happen, as I stayed still waiting for it to attack. I suddenly woke up in my bed - this was all just a nightmare.

To be continued...





**The Cross Creek
Chronicle
Dedicated to the
Memory of
Janie Guilbault:
1945-1999**



Jane Guibault was born November 19, 1945. She passed away on October 3, 1999. Jane’s childhood was spent in the small town of East Seatauket on Long Island, New York. After graduating from the State University of New York at New Paltz, Janie began her teaching career in Lakeland, New York. A few years later, Janie moved to Pinellas County. Her twenty-seven-year career began at Ozona Elementary. In 1995, while teaching at Ozona, Janie was named Pinellas County’s Teacher of the Year. Later, Janie went on to teach at Sutherland, Eisenhower, and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Elementary schools. As Director of the Poynter Institute’s summer Writers Camp and Coordinator of the Pinellas Writing project, Janie created new programs, curriculum, and teacher workshops that positively influenced students and teachers in Pinellas County, South Africa, and districts around the entire nation.

Janie was more than a colleague of mine, she was my best friend. Together we shared our lives and, most importantly, our passion for teaching writing. I think of her often. Sometimes she is my muse when I sit down to write and the words just won’t come. Other times she is my strength when I enter a new classroom to guide a teacher or inspire a room full of young writers.

Written by: Mary Osborne
Former PCS Literacy Leader



Autographs



