

Living Wisdom School Angels Have A Lot To Say!

June 2012

**Living Wisdom School Angels
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**A Literary Magazine
June 2012**

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“A great work of art is cherished, not merely endured....because it guides and inspires.”

S. Kriyananda
Meaning in the Arts

Preface

Art, whether in the form of literature, music, painting, or sculpting, is ultimately about making meaning—and great art is about the deepest kind of meaning, which brings wholeness to our lives. It is not surprising, therefore, that within our *Education for Life* system, literature and art come under the curriculum heading of Wholeness.

Each unique and original entry in this literary magazine reveals the children in the very real process of making meaning both on the page and in their lives. They work hard at shaping their material toward an end. They imagine and reflect, observe, listen, ask questions, draw connections, make assertions, and revise to catch just the right shape, or sound, or nuance. They learn that surprises may be friends, not enemies, that roadblocks are temporary, and that energy, will power, and discipline are the foundation of creativity—all the “stuff” of the deepest kind of learning.

While this publication celebrates the children’s originality and creativity, it also celebrates their teachers who have crafted an environment that allows and encourages young writers and artists to trust their own ideas and to share them with others, to take control, to experiment, to struggle, to fail, and, ultimately, to succeed. Their creative products are the result of a wonderful synchronicity between child and teacher, and they are enchanting.

Helen Purcell
Literary Magazine Editor,
Middle School Language Arts Teacher,
& School Director

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

Imaginative Stories by the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Playmakers

Pirate Adventure

By Dean Bojinov, age 5

Pirates are sailing to a treasure island. There is treasure below the orange sand. When they were digging, they heard a clank. They knew it was a treasure chest. They were trying to take the treasure chest. They did it with a green metal shovel. They opened the treasure chest, and there was a golden cup, jewels and gems.

The Flowery Day

By Jaya Urrutia, age 4

There was a flower that was growing, (this is the tiny seed). There was a rainbow that comes from the clouds after the sun came out. A flower grew inside the rainbow. It started raining. The rain was getting harder and harder and harder and harder until it was almost time to stop, but it still had three little drops. Then it had eight drops. Then it had four drops, three drops, two drops and finally it had one drop left. The rain had stopped!

Bob

By Neel Rangan, age 4

The river is flowing. Bob is working in his house. The clouds are coming from the sky. It is raining. A monkey is hanging from the tree. He is trying to escape from a scary animal that eats meat. There is something enormous swimming in the river. It is a shark. The river is leading to the road and Bob's house. The shark is swimming, but Bob is far away. Bob is in his house. He is saving himself from the shark.

The Caterpillar Who Turned into a Butterfly

By Pooja Punn, age 5

Once upon a time there lived a caterpillar. His name was Squeaky. One day he saw a beautiful butterfly. "I want to be like you," said the caterpillar. He was hungry so off he went. He ate and ate until he turned into a chrysalis. Then he turned into a butterfly just like the beautiful butterfly. Then they both became friends. They played games and they flew outside together.

The Missing Light

By Alec Holmes, age 6

Somebody opened the door. It is a skeleton. He is camouflaging because he doesn't want anyone to see him. He is trying to get away with the missing light. The missing light is a power that was hidden inside a ball. As he is running away, the skeleton falls into the missing lake, which is formed in the shape of a number one. The power floated back to its home. The skeleton sinks and a shark swims up and eats him.

How Everyone Became Aliens

By Kevin Jiang, age 6

Seven different colored aliens were here on Earth to attack the humans. The leader made a house turn into fire. One of them was hiding pretending to be a person. This alien really looked like a person. The red one made people become black aliens. The yellow one shot banana boomerangs that made people into another type of alien. No one knew that this was happening. They all combined to scare people away.

How the Sun Disappeared

By Eegan Ram, age 6

Once upon a time it was a sunny day in Florida. One day the sun went away. Only one centimeter of the sun showed. Then one day it was like midnight during the day. After the sun stopped coming, it rained and rained. If you stepped in a puddle it would cover your whole foot. In the Fall the sun revealed itself. When it revealed itself, it was Christmas.

The Mystery of the Christmas Trees

By Bryan Fu, age 6

This is a Christmas tree mystery. In a store a Christmas tree was completely on fire. In a different house there were lots of presents, and one of the kids was running to get the presents. Santa had just come. In another store the Christmas tree had a lot of smoke, and the Christmas tree's face was all crinkled up. The tree was a little bit on fire. Santa just dropped two presents here because the smoke frightened him. In the next store Santa dropped a few more presents and other presents were still dropping. Next-door the Christmas tree was really on fire. One of the kids said, "Run." The other kid was frightened and sad because Christmas was getting burned up. Next-door Santa dropped more little presents and everyone came down and opened them all. Next-door the Christmas tree was broken. Why were the Christmas trees going on fire?

Dragons

By Luca Gabrea Tejada, age 7

This is a pack of Dragons fighting skulls. These are all their energy powers. Some shoot strings that wrap around and explode. Others have grass power, lava power, water power, and spark power. The black dragon has spark power, which distracts the skulls by shooting sparks and creating smoke. The black dragon, which is black like the night, is the longest and strongest dragon of all. The black dragon's name is Smoke. These are his energy powers. He has smoke power, fireball power, and can fly faster than any other dragon. Danger on sight!

The Rainbow and the Rainbow Flower

By Pia Alvarez, age 5

Once there was a rainbow. This rainbow didn't have any colors except one—red. The flower didn't have any colors either, except at its center. The next day the rainbow had two colors. It was red and orange. The flower grew a little more. The next day the rainbow had more colors. The new color was yellow. The rainbow and the flower's colors grew. Now it is the next day, and now the rainbow and the flower have the color green like the grass. Now the rainbow has blue like the sky. Now they both have the color blue, but one more color is missing. It is purple.

First Grade

Creative Writing by the First Grade Adventurers

Imaginative Stories

The Loving Sock Puppet

By Joseph Dieckmann, age 7

There once was a sock puppet named Walter. He was happy. Then, one day he wanted to write a love poem. So that's what he did. He said, "My poem shall be called *The Gateway to Expressing Love*, and my poem shall go like this:

Love is a bell
Ringing in your heart
Love is a sweet breeze
In the fresh morning air
I wonder how to express this feeling
And all I may think shall be love."

Walter shared it with his friends, and Walter's friends loved it as much as he did.

The Magic Flower

By Lylah Urrutia, age 6

There was a magical flower and there was a girl fairy that liked the flower. She made a wish. Her wish was to be a princess fairy. The next day she became a princess fairy. She flapped her colorful wings and traveled to an island called Galapagos. She made a house out of sticks. She made friends with an eagle. The magic flower had turned into the eagle. They had fun together. The eagle was really big. The princess got on top of the eagle and they flew through the air.

A Man Named Akshay

By Akshay Singhal-Nulu, age 6

Akshay grew up and became an inventor. He invented a Carboatplane. The Carboatplane can go super fast. It goes faster than any car and boat and plane. It can go 1,000 miles per hour, more or less.

Akshay decided to go to space in the Carboatplane. He went to the international space station. He met all the astronauts inside. He decided to stay in space for three years. We hope he comes back to Earth some day!

The First Snake

By Clara Rosenberg, age 6

Well, the first snake is living well, at least in my imagination. So, a long time ago there was one snake. He liked to take mud showers. Slithering, he found another snake. They became friends. They wanted to play with each other. After they played together they found out that they really liked each other. Then they wanted to get married. They had babies. Surprisingly, their babies were banana snakes. They were all happy together.

Pirate Treasure

Edan Cho, age 7

Once there was a pirate and he had many other pirate friends. The pirates came to an island. The captain of the pirates docked the ship and then they found treasure. They found gold rings. The treasure was buried on a mountain and there was an X on it. They played with the treasure and then they lost it. They decided to stay on the island anyway.

Air Force

By Neil Devnani, age 7

Once there were two pilots who were in the middle of a battle. The good guy hit the bad guy with his missile. The good guy beat the bad guy. The good guy returned to the base. The next day the bad guy came alive. I noticed he had more weapons. The good guy had more weapons too. The battle was twelve hours long. The good guy just won. They had a big party. The good guy got a trophy.

The Snail Who Goes to the End of the World

By Vincent Barragan, age 7

A snail is trying to get to the end of the world. That is where he can get a present for his friend's birthday. When he gets near the dynamite, he decides to go around it. Then the snail finds the gift for his friends. It is a motorboat. He thinks his friend, the ghost, will like it. He gives the ghost the motorboat. The snail does not want to go home to the other side of the world because the zombies are attacking it. He does go back to help his snail friends so they can get to the end of the world. He asks the ghost if he could borrow the motorboat. The ghost says, "Sure." Then he motors away. He gets all his snail friends, and he motors back to the end of the world. Then he introduces them to his friend the ghost.

Poetry

By Clara Rosenberg, age 6

Singing birds and
Blooming buds
Springtime is here
Love is flying
Birds are dancing
In the sunlight now
Smiling faces cheer up all the
People who are sad
Spring makes me happy now
Swimming in the deep wide pool
Cools me off
Calm and quiet, sound asleep
In my cozy bed

By Lylah Urrutia, age 6

Sun shining,
Clouds are up,
It is raining,
The rainbow is up!

By Akshay Singhal-Nulu, age 6

Green is a tree
Green is a pot
Green is a car
Green is paint

By Vincent Barragan, age 7

Mighty eagle
Speeding at a pig

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By Edan Cho, age 7

Sun is gliding
Bumblebee buzzing
Sky has orange, yellow, and blue
Mountains in front
High mountains
Little mountains all around

By Neil Devmani, age 7

Yellow is the sun
Yellow is the fun
Yellow is a bun and
My yummy yellow gum

*By Neil Devmani, age 7 and Vincent
Barragan, age 7*

Turquoise is the sky
Turquoise is the ocean
Turquoise is the color of
My good fortune

*By Lylah Urrutia, age 6 and Clara
Rosenberg, age 6*

Red is the rainbow
Red is a rose
Red is the color of
My little painted toes

*By Akshay Singhal-Nulu, age 6,
Joseph Dieckmann, age 7, and
Edan Cho, age 7*

Gold is a pencil
Gold is valuable
Gold is a metal
That is moldable

Second Grade
and
Third Grade

Creative Writing by the Second and Third Grade Discoverers

Imaginative Stories

Flight 161 – The Crazy Sushi Guy and Me

By Ryan Jiang, age 9

It was midnight. The plane just took off. Suddenly a slimy tentacle came out from under my seat. It wrapped around my leg. A flight attendant came and seized the tentacle. "Sorry for the uncomfortableness," she said. After six hours we landed in Japan. I said, "*Ni how.*" A random man said, "*Ni shu shae.*" He turned out to work at the sushi bar. I had a cup of green tea. The world was very busy at the airport. I took a taxi to a hotel called Rawfish. The sushi guy took me to the room. Something fishy was going on here. He was the taxi driver and the *shinkansen* conductor. Something very fishy was going on here. I took another *shinkansen*. The sushi guy sat next to me. I couldn't bear it anymore. "Who are you and what do you want?" "I am a sushi spy. I track down people who like sushi. Together we can eat the great sushi demon." "OK." So we had lunch together in Tokyo and took a train to Edo. Then we met the sushi demon. He was really a huge floating pile of sushi. We ate and ate until we devoured the pile.

Then I bought a GRV Transformer. It changes from an iPhone to an iPad and back again. Too bad it was only made of paper. I took the "*yma no te se m*" to the next station. The sushi guy took me into a taxi and we each rented a room at the *Ta ko*. Suddenly a slimy Ramen wrapped around my leg...

Book Two: Ramen Roundup

I bit the Ramen but it bit me first. Suddenly the sushi guy arrived with a bowl of diluted soy sauce and chopsticks. He took the Ramen, dunked it in the soy sauce, and ate it in one whole bite!

Preview of upcoming book, 'The Villains of Sushiland.' Riceball – the fattest villain. He has a piece of sashimi for his internal organs. His samurai armor is made of *Nori* (dried seaweed).

Glossary:

Shinkansen – A Japanese bullet train.

Edo – a particular city. Tokyo – the capital of Japan.

Ramen – thin Japanese noodle.

Ta ko – octopus.

Yma no te se m – a silver train with a green line.

Ni shu shae – Who are you (in Chinese)

Little League Baseball Series

By Dominic Christiansen, age 8
(n.b. Dominic is on the Cubs)

Giants vs. Cubs

The Giants scored in the first. They scored three.
First we got five runs on two doubles and six singles.
The second inning was a shut out.
Cubs 5 Giants 3.
Then there was one run on two singles and one double.
Cubs 6 Giants 3.
Giants score three to tie it.
I score the winning run and crush the catcher.
Three runs.
Giants 9 Cubs 7.
Cubs score three.
Giants 9 Cubs 10.
Giants score five.
Giants 14 Cubs 10.
We score five and win.
Cubs score five and win.
Giants 14 Cubs 15.
We win! Yay!

Cubs vs. Red Sox

For some reason, they wipe out.
We get five.
Cubs 5 Red Sox 0.
First of the runs we go to 2nd.
Cubs 5 Red Sox 0.
Four in the second.
"Here we come!"
9 to 0.
They score 0.
It was a fun inning.
"Ground ball up the middle. Dominic Christiansen, with a side arm throw gets him!"
We get two. It was cool.
They get five with one high fly.
We get four and a good inning.
They get five to end it.

Cubs vs. Athletics

First they score four. Not a good start.
We have a good inning and score three.
Second inning they score three on ten hits.
A second three run hit gets us the lead.
Cubs 9 A's 7.
Third inning two runs on a single.
We get one that at least gives us the 10 to 9 lead.
Fourth inning they get only three.
We are losing.
Cubs 10 A's 12.
They score on a towering fly.
We score four on three doubles and one single.
Christiansen is running home at his fastest! He touches home
and smashes into the gate.

We win the game.

Molly and Tilly Races – The Stories of Two Rats

By Elijah LaCour DeLyle, age 8

Book One: Once upon a time there were two rats. Their names were Molly and Tilly. They lived in my house, not in a wall but in a cage. But one day they got in a good, long fight. After a while, they decided to have a race. The next day they started their race. 3...2...1...GO! Molly went right to sleep. Why? I don't know but Tilly started running down the stairs. Molly now woke up and jumped on the railing and won.

Book Two: This time Tilly wanted to win so she looked up this new place called Academy. This is what she ordered: she ordered an iPhone 4S and she found out that in every staircase there was a secret passageway. The password was 'Open Timothy.' Molly knew where it went. So the next day they decided to race again. They went to the staircase and said, "3..2..1.. Go!" Molly tried to go to sleep but because of Tilly's yelling of 'Open Timothy', Molly had a hard time. But then when Molly got to sleep, a secret passageway opened. Tilly ran into it and, as I said, Molly knew where it went. So Tilly went in there, but the first thing she knew was that she was in a river of quickballs. She almost sank in it. After a long journey through the passageway, Tilly got out. She was exhausted and tired, but she was thinking that she was going to win the race, but when she came out, she was where she had begun. Molly jumped on the railing and won the race. Tilly was so mad that she exploded and got shot up to the moon. When she got there, she yelled so loud that Molly had to cover her ears. Then Tilly got blasted back to Earth and bawled for sixteen days straight.

Book Three: This time Tilly ordered something else from Academy. She got a slingshot. The next morning Molly and Tilly had a race. 3...2...1...Go! Tilly got in her slingshot and went back, back, back, back, back x 12. Right before she let go, the rubber snapped and smacked her in the face and instead of going forward she went backwards and through the wall into the bathroom, through the metal into the next room, smack through the wall, slammed into the ground and, because of the momentum, she went through the tree house stump, through the fence, scraped on the road, went through a bigger fence, bounced on a train track, through the fence again and stopped by the road yelling, "OUCH"!!!!!!

When a Man Bought a Bell Tower

By Finn von Bunau, age 8

He was a nice man. His favorite color was red. His hair color was brown. He liked his money. In time, he wanted a new house. He found a bell tower and he liked it. He thought it would make a good home. It cost five hundred thousand dollars. But he only had five cents. What could he do if he only had five cents? Well, we will turn the page and see what happens.

So, he went to the bank. The banker gave him a million dollars. (Unfortunately, we cannot go to this bank anymore because it got bombed in World War II.) Then he bought the bell tower for five hundred thousand dollars. "It was overpriced, but it was worth it," he said. Then the man went in and said, "I like this bell tower house."

How I Learned Guitar

By Gaurav Chakravarty, age 8
(made in China)

Once upon a time, about two years ago, I started learning guitar. The first chord I learned was C major. It was pretty hard, but I mastered it. Then I learned a few more songs. They were called *Imagine* and *Hotel California*. They were very fun to learn. Oh, yeah, I forgot to tell you that I started with an acoustic guitar. Anyways, I thought about quitting for a year or two; then around eight, I started again. Then I got an electric guitar. It was fantastic! At school almost every day we had a jamming session. It was great! After all that time I started to go to concerts. And here I am now – 8, almost 9 – and I still play guitar.

Disappearing Dog - Book One (an excerpt)

By Pailyn Tayjasanant, age 9

Chapter One – The Beginning

Hi, my name is Elisa. I make lots of inventions. One of my first was a spinner. I got some curlers and some ribbon. The reason I did this was because I wanted to spin my dog, Henry. Right now, I'm bored. "Ruff ruff." "Be quiet Gazpacho!" Gazpacho is Henry's nickname. Now that I think about it, I've called him lots of things before, like Broccoli, Cauliflower, Wonton, Carrot and so on. Any vegetable name that comes to my head, I call Henry that. I never call him Henry.

Chapter Two – My Great Idea

I'm looking on my computer for good ideas for inventions to make. "Ugh!" I said. "My computer doesn't work." I thought for a little moment. "Ah ha!" Bok Choy looked confused when I said that. I should make a computer that never runs out of battery. "New and improved," I announced. So I made a diagram. Then I came across a blank. "It has to charge something... But wait, it could be so big that if you use it for one year straight, that's when you have to charge it!" I announced to Lima Bean.

Chapter Three – The Problem

I was just finishing up my diagram when suddenly the lights went out, then turned back on. Cabbage had disappeared. "Oh no!" I screamed. I started pacing. My mind was practically racing. "Oh no! If he disappeared because I keep calling him vegetable names, I'm really sorry. Broccoli, I'm really sorry," I said while pacing around my room. I packed up some shirts, underwear, pants, dog treats, dog food, and shoes in my suitcase. I went into the living room with my suitcase, telling my mom, "We need to take a road trip."

"Why?" my mom asked.

"Bean Sprout has disappeared."

"OK, we'll go tomorrow."

The Serval

By Serena Peters, age 9

Once upon a time there was a serval. Her name was Rachel. She had no friends and she really wanted one, and that is where the story begins.

Rachel decided she would go on an adventure to find a friend. She decided to go north. Soon night came along, and she had nowhere to sleep so Rachel had to keep on going until she came to a large rock. On the top of the rock there was a house. She had to get to the top of the rock because she was really tired. She climbed and climbed but when she got to the top it was morning, but she was still tired, so she knocked on the door of the house. A dragon answered. Rachel screamed and ran! She ran down the rock. She looked behind her. The dragon was chasing her. She saw a very thick bush. She soared through air and landed in the bush. The dragon went by without seeing her. Rachel turned around; there was a serval behind her.

“What’s your name?” Rachel asked.

“Camille. What’s yours?”

“Rachel. Do you want to be my friend?”

“Yes.”

And they lived happily ever after until one day while they were going on a walk, they noticed the dragon on the path, so they started to run.

“Wait,” the dragon called. “I just want to be your friend.”

Rachel remembered what it was like to have no friends. She said, “Yes.”

They all went back to the dragon’s house and lived happily ever after.

The Race, Chapter One

By Vivek Punn, age 7

Once upon a time there lived a boy. His name was Gaurav. He was eight years old. One day there was a new student in his class. The new student loved racing and so did Gaurav, so the next day Gaurav said to the new student, "Do you want to race?"

"Sure," said the new student.

The next day Gaurav learned that the new student's name was Mace. Gaurav asked Mace if he would race with him. Mace said, "Yes, tomorrow we will race." All night long they practiced.

The next day Mace said, "I am ready. Where are we racing?"

"I don't know," said Gaurav. "Let's think about it. Oh, I know, we'll race from the jungle back to here."

"I am not ready to race yet," said Mace.

"Then we will race next week," said Gaurav. "Let's practice all week."

On Saturday Gaurav ran 20 miles. On Sunday Mace ran 20 miles, too. Sunday was the big day. They got ready. When they were all ready, they saw a stranger. The stranger looked weird. He was covered in brown, and he had a staff, and he rode a lion. He had long hair, too, but he was very quiet. The next day they saw him again but the next week they didn't, but the lion was there, which meant that the lion didn't belong to the man. The lion chased them back to school so they couldn't race that week. The next week was summer break so they could do it then.

In the middle of summer break, they camped in the jungle. The next day Gaurav got ready, but he couldn't find Mace. He searched the jungle but then he remembered that he was too scared to sleep in the jungle...

(continued in Chapter Two)

The Adventures of the Discoverers

By Nina Ulaganathan, age 8

My name is Natalie, the Newt. This is the story of how I made friends with a panther named Penny. One day I was walking through the forest to find a book. I found a cave and went inside, but there wasn't a book in sight. Instead, there was a bunch of panthers. Thankfully, they were asleep, except for one. It tried to catch me, but it didn't because it thought that I was cute. It asked me what my name was. I said that it was Natalie the Newt. The panther said that her name was Penny. Then Penny said, "You better get out of here or you will be breakfast. Quick!" "See you on Sunday at the fields," I said. The next day we made a tree house. Since I was so small I only put the nails in. The tree house turned out great. It was our secret hideout. Every day we planned a time and met there. We played Hide and Seek. I was not easy to find since I was so small. Sometimes I would get lost. We had so much fun and wanted to be friends, best friends, and we were. We had a fun time.

One day while we were playing Hide and Seek, a big bear came. It was coming towards me. I was really scared. I was afraid it was going to step on me. Luckily, Penny, the Panther, grabbed me and took me home. I thanked her and thought 'not every panther is bad.'

We stayed best friends for a long time.

Candy Land

By Kaia Flores, age 7

Chapter One – An Adventure (an excerpt)

One day there was a boy named Michal. Once he was playing a game called Candy Land. He saw a portal and went through. He saw lots and lots of candy. He saw a mint chip on the ground. He started to eat it but then saw his hands. He saw that he had turned into a gingerbread man. He said, "Where am I?" and he started to worry.

The next day he felt better. He sat down on a brownie, and then started to eat it. He found a gingerbread house. He ran to it and started to eat it. Then he swam in a chocolate ocean and drank a little. After that he made a snowman out of ice cream. He ate the snowman; his favorite part was the hat! He loved it because it was made of black licorice.

The Time Helen Told Me a Story

By Nakai Brock, age 8

So this is how it goes. Helen's grandchild was moving. He had a humidifier and the humidifier was shaped like an elephant. He liked it so much that he named it Elefante. He was about two, and he was moving with his mom and dad to New Mexico. His dad was already there. He could not bring his humidifier on the plane but he really liked his humidifier. So his mom called his dad and told him to get the same humidifier and his dad said, "I'll try." When he got there, he went in his room and saw his humidifier and he thought that humidifier had gone to New Mexico and into his room and waited for him.

Fodur, the Blue-Nosed Reindeer and the Quest for the Nose – (an excerpt)

By Mace Drobac, age 9

Once upon a time, there was a reindeer named Fodur. He loved hearing stories about his uncle Rudolf. "I want to be like my uncle when I grow up," Fodur said.

"That's not possible," said his mother. "He had a red nose. You have a blue nose."

Suddenly, BOOM! A bomb had ruined the house. Then two figures appeared.

"We are here to protect our world from devastation, to unite all the fruits within our nation, to denounce the evils of truth and love, to extend our reach to the stars above," they said.

Bob! Bobita! Team Evil blasted off at the speed of light. "Surrender now or prepare to fight!"

Fodur stared at them. "You're evil," he said. "You're just an apple and a cantaloupe!"

"That's not the point!" said Bob. He jumped up to Fodur and grabbed his nose. "We have the nose! Let's go," he said.

Bob and Bobita jumped into their cucumber canoe and paddled away.

"My nose!" cried Fodur. "How do I get it back?"

"You must travel to the Land of Ice," his grandmother told him.

"That is where your nose is."

Poetry

Love and Fun

By Thandapani Chandrasekaran, age 8

Love and fun
Make other people happy
Even Hafiz

Friendship and Courage

By Thandapani Chandrasekaran, age 8

Friendship and courage
Make people love
And live in peace

Yellow

By Elijah LaCour-DeLyle, age 8

Yellow is the color of the sun
Yellow is in the middle
Of red and blue
Yellow is the color of daisies and sun dew
Yellow is like a good sweet meadow in the wilderness
Yellow is the egg yolk in an egg
Yellow is the color of the stars
And yellow is mixed with lava.

Black

By Faroz Aghili, age 8

Black is the Hydra
Fighting Hercules
And black licorice.

Green

By Serena Peters, age 9

Green is the color of blooming spring
It sounds like birds when they sing
It feels of a gentle breeze blowing by
It's sometimes bitter, sometimes sweet
It smells like a rose
Green is luck.

Red

By Kaia Flores, age 7

Red is the light.
Red is an apple.
Red is your favorite color.
Red is a parrot.
Red is your clothes.
Red is paint.
Red is your shoes.
Red is a fox.
Red is a flower.
Red is a trike.
Red is wood.
Red is a marker.
Red is a lunch box.
Red is sunglasses.
Red is an eraser.
Red is a building.
Red is an ant.
Red is a nail.
Red is a leaf.
Red is lava.

Black

By Nakai Brock, age 8

Black is the night
Black is when you close your eyes
Black is a cave when it is night
Black is calming
Black is burnt marshmallows

Black

By Mace Drobac, age 9

Black is evil, sinister and dark.
He's like a bird of prey, or a shark.
He smells like charcoal, tar, and smoke.
He smells so bad he makes me choke.
Black tastes burnt cookies, gross and hot.
It makes me gag a whole, whole lot.
He feels like a monster that avoids your sight.
He sounds like dark silence, endless night.
Black's a menace, cold and gray
He shows no mercy so they say
Here he comes! Come run and hide.
Here's a room, let's go inside.

Yellow

By Faroz Aghili, age 8

Yellow is Zeus throwing
His thunderbolt
At the Titans.

Haiku

I have a big leaf
It has a lot of colors
I have two of them.

~By Vivek Punn, age 7

I have a baby
Her birthday is in summer
She is very cute.

~By Vivek Punn, age 7

Winter is so nice
And snow covers everything
I enjoy winter.

~By Serena Peters, age 9

Summer is the best
Summer is for mint ice cream
And cherry soda.

~By Faroz Aghili, age 8

Winter is the ice
And my birthday's in winter
And huge snowball fights.

~By Faroz Aghili, age 8

Red is a sizzling burning kill
Red is the only fox or hound
That will make red.

~By Dominic Christiansen, age 8

More Colors

Blue is the color of the waves
It leads to deep dark caves
It makes me calm
I can hold it in my palm
Blue is the color of the sky
In it the birds fly.

~By Nina Ulaganathan, age 8

White is the cloud with the angels and it's sweet
I can smell it.
White is peace.
White is silent in the woods.
Red and white make pink like they are brothers.

~By Finn von Bunau, age 8

Green is the grass swinging back and forth.
Green is the plants meeting the ants.
Green is a bean rising from the ground.
Green is the scene of the vivacious leaf.
Spring is the moss rising from the grass.
Spring has fully sprung and we are having fun!

*~By Gaurav Chakravarty, age 8
and Vivek Punn, age 7*

Yellow is a little bird
Yellow is like a lemon
Yellow feels like a summertime breeze
Yellow tastes like a wonderful taco
Whenever you see yellow
You should always sneeze.

~By Pailyn Tayjasanant, age 9

Green is the lawn, wide and wet
Green is the parrot, nice but stubborn
Green is the color of the forest
Green is the color of a stem
Green feels peaceful, like the breeze
Green is the color of ripening fruits
Also the color of new life
That's what green is.

~By Ryan Jiang, age 9

Quality Personifications

Creativity went to the meadow and made a crown of leaves and flowers.

~By Serena Peters, age 9

Humor was happy and then he got hurt and then he got a bandaid and then he got happy.

~By Thandapani Chandrasekaran, age 8

Friendship went to the park, he saw another person, and he gave him a gift.

~By Pailyn Taylasanant, age 9

Friendship went to the park and made friends with a homeless man.

~By Gaurav Chakravarty, age 8

Power was in the ocean, and he created waves with Poseidon.

~By Faroz Aghili, age 8

Humor walked into a theater and made everyone laugh.

~By Mace Drobac, age 9

Peace is a happy tree that lives at the playground.

~By Finn von Bunau, age 8

Awareness went in a rocket and saw the moon.

~By Dominic Christiansen, age 8

Kindness did fundraising for children in need.

~By Nina Ulaganathan, age 8

Creativity drew a picture using different colors.

~By Ryan Jiang, age 9

Strength went to the circus and picked up 100 elephants.

~By Nakai Brock, age 8

One day, humor went to a park and told a joke and made everyone laugh.

~By Elijah LaCour-DeLyle, age 8

Kindness was walking and he found a frog and took the frog and went home so he let the frog go.

~By Vivek Punn, age 7

Courage was sad but brave because she moved from North America to Naomi. Then she got some new friends.

~By Kaia Flores, age 7

Fourth Grade and Fifth Grade

CREATIVE WRITING FROM THE FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADE CREATORS

Prose

Across the Coast and to the Islands

By Jason Fu, age 9

The coast of Tanata was very interesting. It was interesting because nobody had ever figured out how to get from the coast of Tanata to the Tanata islands. Well, people have tried but always died for different reasons. You would not want to live on the coast of Tanata because you would probably die.

Only one family dared to live on the coast of Tanata. Their dream was to prove to the world that they could explore the Tanata islands. They were a family of five. The father was brave and acrobatic; the mother was intelligent and fast; the oldest, Ben, was brave, small, quick, and intelligent; the middle one, Mellissa, was a bright and acrobatic ten year old; the youngest, Austin, was a big, strong, and curious eight year old.

One day, while the family was watching American Idol and thinking of when they would explore the Tanata islands, their house jiggled. The family was so mesmerized in their thoughts that they didn't notice their house was cloned. One was floating towards the Tanata islands and one was standing on the coast of Tanata, just like normal. As we know no ship has survived going to the Tanata islands, but this case was different. This time it was a house and it was unintentional. Therefore, they had a chance.

Austin happened to peek out the window and saw that their house was drifting towards the Tanata islands. He alerted his mom. She knew just what to do. At first, she was worried that a catastrophe could happen at any moment. Then she thought, "What would be enough evidence to prove that we sailed across to the Tanata islands?" Then, like a light bulb, an idea appeared in her mind. Her light bulb glowed brightly, which meant a BRILLIANT idea. She got her computer, turned on her Skype camera, and pointed it at the ground. After that, she filmed what the world already knew of the Tanata coast (which was the front) then she trailed the camera down the ocean, to the Tanata islands, which they were drifting around, and saved the film. After showing the film of their journey to the world, the family became famous, and finally their wish came true.

The Crazy Disease

By Caleb Flores, age 9

One day Locks was taking his morning jog. He saw a crazy man trying to rob a bank. Locks cried, "Stop!" but the man pushed Locks out of the way. Just as the crazy man pushed him, Locks noticed he had spinning eyes. Locks yelled, "What is wrong with this man?"

He wanted to know what was wrong with the man. Locks chased the man and tried to tackle him. He failed, but there was nowhere the man could go. It was a dead end. Locks knew the man couldn't go anywhere so he went home.

The next day Locks went on his morning jog. Everybody was robbing each other and had spinning eyes. He saw people stealing, breaking stuff, and setting things on fire. It was madness. He wanted to investigate again. Before he could begin, people started chasing him. He ran around the corner and lost them. Locks leaned on a wall. He fell into something. The president was in the place that he fell into.

"Yes, the crazy disease is spreading," the president said.

"You did it! You made everyone crazy," Locks yelled.

"Yes, I did it, I spread the crazy disease because I am actually evil and you can't stop me," responded the president. "I will never give you the antidote, never!"

The president had his bodyguards chase Locks. He ran out of the president's lair before the president's bodyguards could get him. He went back to his base to get weaponry and armor. He needed to arm himself against the president's twenty-seven bodyguards. Locks was thankful his crazy uncle had given him his weaponry and armor. He went to the basement in his base to get weaponry and armor. Then, he went to get the antidote for the crazy disease from the president. When he went back outside, the crazy people captured him. Locks was knocked unconscious.

When Locks woke up, he was hanging over a pit of lava. Locks saw the president. "Goodbye kid," said the president. Locks took two swords out of the secret pockets of his pants. He sliced open the sides of the cage he was in. He jumped to the floor where the president was standing. The president's bodyguards jumped in front of Locks. Then, they all hit him. They didn't realize he had armor on. They hurt their fists. Locks pushed them out of the way. He ran after the president. The president ran. Locks caught up to him, grabbed him, and told the president, "Hand over the antidote!" The president threw smoke bombs. Locks couldn't see anything. The president kicked Locks to the ground. Locks grabbed his leg and threw him into a wall. While the president was lying on the floor, Locks searched the president's pockets. Locks found the antidote and took it from the president.

Locks ran to the top of the building. He was about to throw the antidote into the wind to heal everyone. Suddenly, the president appeared at the top of the building and threw Locks off. Locks was falling to the ground. He found a button on his suit that activated a jetpack. Locks switched on the button. He flew back to the top of the building. He hit the president on the back of his head and knocked him out. Then, he threw the antidote in the air.

After some time, everything went back to normal. The people were free of the Crazy Disease. The president was arrested. Locks got a medal of honor for defeating the president. It was very brave of Locks to defeat the president.

The Little Princess

By Chloe Christiansen, age 11

If you look at the trees, they seem so magical and mysterious. But really, they're just like us. We may also seem magical and mysterious, but really we're just big machines – full of cells and atoms working together to keep us alive. It's likely that trees can think and feel just like us. But it's hard for us to tell, since the trees cannot speak.

This is a story about a girl who could speak to trees. The girl was a princess, but not a happy princess like in most fairytales. By the way, this is a fairytale because it will include a princess and even a few faeries, but more about that later.

This princess was no ordinary princess. She had practiced her fighting skills since she could walk, and she was amazing at writing poetry. She had long, silky black curls, olive skin, and bright green eyes. She was very small. She could sneak away or hide so quietly that no one ever knew she had left.

Every night she climbed out of a huge window that overlooked a deep forest beneath the castle. She would sneak through the deep grass surrounding her home, tiptoe across the little footbridge over the little stream that wove through the town, and emerge into the dark, beautiful, mysterious trees. She would leap across the leaves and branches scattered across the forest floor. She would keep running until she reached the heart of the forest.

That was where her favorite tree was, a huge oak whose branches seemed to stretch across the universe. The tiny princess would walk up to its massive trunk and press her ear against it. She could hear water being pulled up from the ground, and it would soothe her. Sometimes, she stayed there for hours. The water rushing through the tree, and the voices of the trees singing to her, would lull her to sleep.

One day, she was making her way out of her window, when her mother walked into the room. She wanted to ask the princess about her garment choices for a dance that was coming up. When she saw her daughter climbing out of the window, she was furious. She ordered the royal guards to stand beside her bed at all times.

The princess was devastated. Listening to the trees was her escape from her life. It wasn't that she didn't like living in the castle, but sometimes all the attention and pressure of being a princess was just too much to handle. Her mother was always bothering her about what she looked like and whom she talked to. Everything she did was always under scrutiny. When she was with the trees she could just be herself.

She couldn't stand just staying in her room. So, one night she quietly chanted an ancient verse that a wise woman had once told her: "Abba mit ku, alum mot cor." Suddenly, the two men standing silently by her bed shed their armor. They became two beautiful young faeries. One had silky black hair that hung beneath her waist and deep violet eyes, and the other had soft white hair and piercing, warm blue eyes.

This was not what the little princess had expected. She was so surprised that she jumped back in fright. She hit her head on the windowsill and knocked off her precious crown made of gold inlaid with bright, clear emeralds.

"Don't worry, dear. We are not here to hurt you, but only to help you," said the white haired fairy, in a voice much older and wiser than fit her appearance.

"I don't understand!" said the poor frightened princess. She looked back and forth between the two faeries with her mouth hanging open.

"We are only here because of you. You called us here with your special words. What is it that you want?" asked the white haired fairy.

"Well, my mother, the queen, discovered that I had been sneaking away at night to be with the trees. Since then, she has confined me to my room. I loved visiting the trees. I could hear them talking to me. It always made me feel better. Can you help me go back to the trees? I could spend the rest of my life there."

"Of course we can help," said the silky black haired fairy. "Now I want you to listen very closely." The princess nodded her head vigorously. "I will give you my cloak of invisibility. You must put it on, and not take it off no matter what happens to you. For if you do take it off, you will find yourself right back in this room. And you will never be able to go back to the trees." The princess nodded.

The fairy continued, "You must go to the center of the forest, where the largest tree is. A freshly killed deer will be there with an arrow through its neck. Take out the arrow, and wipe the deer's blood on the edge of my cloak. A door will appear in the tree. Go through the door and you will meet our sister. You can tell her what you wish for. She will grant it instantly. Good luck."

With that said, the two faeries disappeared as fast as they had come, leaving only a faint scent of flowers and a sparkling, translucent piece of fabric on the princess's bed. The princess, now filled with anxiety, walked over to the bed and picked up the small piece of fabric. It unfolded into a billowing cloak that she wrapped around herself. She looked into her huge oval mirror. She was amazed to find that she was completely invisible.

She then climbed out of her window and ran the way she had so many times before. The only sign that she had ever been in the castle was the window that she had left open when she climbed out. She reached the huge tree in the center of the forest. She was so glad to see it that she forgot all about what she was supposed to do and ran to give it a big hug. Luckily, her cloak stayed tight round her and soon she remembered what the faeries had told her.

She saw the deer. She knelt, removed the arrow from the animal's neck, and wiped the blood on the edge of her cloak. Suddenly a sparkling golden door formed in her favorite tree. The trees whispered to her louder than ever, telling her to go in.

She walked up to the door and gently pushed it open. A fairy twice as beautiful as her sisters combined, with flowing caramel-colored hair, and deep golden eyes stood behind the door, waiting for the princess.

"Hello, little princess," she said in a voice as soothing as honey. "What is it that you wish for?"

The little princess paused, thinking of all the things she could wish for, but nothing came close to what she had wanted for so long.

"I want to live here, in the forest with you."

And to this day, the little princess lives happily with her trees, eating nuts and berries, knowing that finally she has a place to call home.

GONE

The Land of Lost Files

"Inspired by the lost files of Charlotte's computer"

By Elizabeth Peters, age 11

Prologue

So, Bob is a semi-crazy guy who 'thinks' his life is "amazingly exciting." It's not really that exciting. However, Bob types up his entire life everyday. Only Brittney, his pink haired girly, nerd daughter knows these awful secrets.

"Dad! Stop typing that dumb document! I need the computer for my science report," demanded Brittney.

"No, Brittney! I need it for my life memo. If you make anything I won't have enough room for my documents. Now get me a stick from the neighbor's yard to chew," said Bob.

"No. Just buy another Computer!" yelled Brittney.

"No, I'm too busy. I have to type up my life story," said Bob.

"I'm going to quickly dye my hair before school. Bye," said Brittney.

Britney ran upstairs and quickly spray-dyed her hair, grabbed her backpack, and left for school. About five hours later, during fifth period, she was still thinking about her fight with her dad.

"Get out a computer to type up your fifteen page report on the History of America. It will count for 50% of your grade," said her social studies teacher, Mr. Harrisburg. "I will be right back. I left my glasses in the teachers' lounge." He left the room. "Ring! Ring!" Brittney's phone was ringing. She answered it. It was her dad.

"What, Dad?" Brittney asked.

"My files, my documents. GONE!" said Bob sadly.

"You probably didn't save them," Brittney told her dad.

"No. I triple saved them. They're GONE," Bob said.

After Bob finished his sentence, screaming erupted in the room. Everyone was screaming, "My files, my documents are GONE." And at that inconvenient moment, Mr. Harrisburg walked in. "What is all this screaming about?!" he yelled at the class. Luckily for the children the bell rang, "Ring!!!" The class hurried out the door before Mr. Harrisburg could give them all detentions. As Brittney walked out she

stopped by her locker to put away some books. Then she heard some students talking about what had happened in fifth period.

“What ya guys talking about?” Brittney asked.

“The lost files. They just disappeared. No one knows what happened,” one of the group members said.

“Well, bye.” Brittney said. She began to walk home from school. As she walked she thought, “What if I found the files? No way. I am a nerd, but that is an advanced computer problem. You would need an expert to fix that.”

When she got home, her Dad was throwing a fit on the couch.

“Dad, seriously,” said Brittney.

“I wish I had my files,” her Dad wailed. “I wish you could fix it!”

‘Pouf!’ Suddenly, Brittney was in the computer!

“How ironic,” Brittney thought.

She saw a road sign. It said, "Welcome to the Second Dimension"

"So, THAT is where I am," she thought. "Well, if I'm here might as well look for those lost files."

First I need to get into the Internet. A swirling portal opened up. She jumped through. That was easy she thought. Brittney was in a swirling tunnel with portals opening and closing every which way. She continued soaring through the Internet tunnel thinking about what to do when she noticed something very strange. Documents and files were flying out of the portholes and zooming down the tunnel. Then, she noticed something very, very bad. A huge, black portal loomed up. It was the end of the tunnel. She, along with files and documents were sucked in, "Whoosh!"

When she was inside. It looked like the lobby of an office building- except in the middle of the room sat a huge monster. It kind of looked like a huge bloated sack, with tiny lizard legs, and a squashed-up dragon face. It was eating all the files and documents! He spied Brittney. He galumphed over toward her with his mouth open. There was a scream and Brittney was eaten. A minute later he barfed Brittney and all the lost files and documents!

Turns out, he was poisoned by her hair dye. The portal opened and everything was returned to their computers. Now all Brittney needed to do was get out of the computer. Suddenly, she was jerked into one of the portholes onto a computer screen. Someone was emptying the trash! Screaming, Brittney was sucked in. Then, she was catapulted out of her roof top satellite dish into her back yard where here dad caught her.

"I'm sorry I was so into my documents. You are more important than that," her dad said.

"I love you Dad," said Brittney.

"I love you too," her dad said.

In the end, Bob became sane, and they lived a happy life together.

Bob the Pig and the Land of Puxxlepus

By Freya Edholm, age 11

Once upon a time, there was a pig called Bob. Bob was a special type of pig made out of a math worksheet, and decorated with Pentominoes. He absolutely loved math, puzzles, adventure, and his family. Therefore, he thought exploring the land of Puxxlepus would be perfect for him.

On his 20th birthday, he told his family that they were leaving for Puxxlepus that day. His children, Blues and Katy, were shocked.

"Daddy, what are you thinking? Aren't those Puxxles demons?" asked Blues.

"Yeah, Dad, those Puxxles are demons," said Katy.

"Look, Mom said so. So why aren't you listening to her?" echoed Katy. Bob assured Blues and Katy that their mother, Ann, gave them permission to go and would protect them. Fortunately, Blues and Katy agreed to go.

The next day, Bob, Ann, Blues, and Katy got into their van for pigs. Bob drove them to Puxxlepus. Ann took Blues, Katy, and the other piglets to an Ice Cream Parlor, while Bob went to the Council.

At the Council, Bob met the treasurer, \$harpline, who taught Bob all about money. Since Bob loved math, \$harpline let Bob do some of his money problems. Bob did so well that he was appointed Assistant Treasurer of Puxxlepus.

Bob also met the Principal of the Puxxlepus Public School, the President, and the Vice-President of Puxxlepus. They all saw that Bob

had very creative thinking, could solve any brainteaser, and was a great mathematician. They decided that not only would he be Assistant Treasurer, he would also be the Boss of Math at the Puxxlepus Public School. Bob was exhilarated, for he loved the land of Puxxlepus.

That evening, Bob announced to his family about his new jobs, which meant that he would have to move to Puxxlepus. Fortunately, Ann, Blues, and Katy loved Puxxlepus. They had changed their minds about the Puxxles being demons. Bob and his family decided to move to Puxxlepus. They all lived happily ever after in Puxxlepus.

The Five Cats – White Kitty and the Drink of Doom

By Rishi Deshmukh, age 11

One day the five cats, White Kitty, Blackee, Friday, Autumn, and Woodruff were playing. White Kitty found a glass full of something red on the ground. On the side of the glass, it read: "WARNING: if you drink this you will morph in to a hamburger!" The other cats got hungry from playing so much. They went inside to eat, but White Kitty stayed outside. "It's just a dumb old label," said White Kitty to himself, while drinking the liquid, and morphing into a hamburger.

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!" he screamed. "I'M A HAMBURGER! Ooh, I taste good!" he said, biting himself. Before he could take another bite out of himself, Autumn came back out and ate him! White kitty had fun sliding down Autumn's esophagus and falling into her stomach.

While Autumn was outside she found a bottle on the ground with green liquid inside. "Mmm... I am parched. I need something to drink." So she swallowed the green liquid. It was the antidote for the red liquid. The antidote absorbed into White Kitty in Autumn's stomach. He turned back into a cat, but he noticed he was as tiny as a treefrog. "Oh no!" teeny weeny White Kitty screamed, "Oh, how small I am." Autumn burped and White Kitty flew out of her.

White Kitty ran and ran through the gigantic stalks of grass looking for the antidote's antidote, but found a carnivorous praying mantis instead! The praying mantis lifted him up in its claws. But just as White Kitty was about to be devoured, he found the antidote's antidote! He drank it, and grew bigger than Godzilla! He walked step-by-step, country-by-country, searching for the antidote to this giant making formula.

Finally, on the other side of the world he found the antidote. He drank it and shrunk back to his normal size. Then, he realized he wasn't big enough to walk across the world anymore! He looked around for a way to get home, but couldn't find one. What luck! He noticed he was in an airport! So, when no one was looking, he climbed into somebody's suitcase. The suitcase was carried on to a plane. During the flight White Kitty parachuted down to his house.

"Yay, I'm back in time for lunch!" The five cats ate and played.

Lick Smiles Chases After Gangster Wu

The Secret Stash

By Quincy Linder, age 10

Lick Smiles was in his office filling out paperwork when he received the telegram that would change his life. He tore the piece of paper off the role from the message machine. The sound echoed eerily around the room. It was midnight on a Saturday and no one was in his section of the building. The note read:

To Lick Smiles, from Wu. We have kidnapped all of your men. Tell me where your secret treasure is or I will be forced to kill your men and you.

Lick heard a bang. A bullet whistled through the wooden door of his office. A voice outside said, "Just wood, no problem." Several more bangs echoed around the room. The door drooped on its hinges. Then, "Crash! Boom! Bang! Bong!" The door SMASHED to the ground. Seven men ran into the room, "Put your hands up Lick," one shouted. But Lick had already gone.

Lick was not at all pleased. If this Wu person was gutsy enough to kidnap his men, then Lick could be sure that something bad was going on outside his building. He tried to think of strategies that he could use against this Wu person. But it is quite hard to think while you are sliding down an especially modified escape chute. So, he waited until the chute took him underground. Then, he pressed a button. The chute forked and dropped him off in the middle of a narrow passageway.

Lick walked to the end of the passage and took a key from his belt. He slid the key into the lock and opened the ultra reinforced steel door. He walked inside. Before him were thousands of jewels – diamonds, pearls, and dollar bills. It was the secret stash that he found when on another occasion he had defeated the “Evil Force” and saved an island. Lots of the fortune was still left.

“It’s about time I got a refill,” Lick muttered to himself, as he stuffed five thousand dollars into a secret pocket in his shirt. Then he went out of the room and closed the door behind him.

“Now to get some assistance,” he said. He went to the opposite side of the passage where an elevator waited for him. He went two floors up and entered a room.

In the room there was a telephone and a computer. He brought up the monitors that showed him what was going on in the city. Everything was quiet except for a couple of cars. Apparently, nothing was wrong outside. But it didn’t make sense. Lick studied the screen closely for a minute or so then shouted, “I’ve got it! Somehow Wu is feeding me a loop on the video.”

Lick Smiles telephoned the army general. He asked, “Can I lead an operation?” The general said, “I can spare twelve soldiers. I will send a chopper to you but the rest of the soldiers are having medical checkups.”

“That’s not enough,” Lick said. “This guy has hundreds of men.”

“I’m signing out. You get what you get,” the general exclaimed.

Lick rebooted his computer and got rid of the loop Wu had sent him. Lick Smiles could see the army chopper in the distance. “OH @#\$\$\$%6^%\$%##4435#! I left the slide shoot open,” Lick exclaimed. He realized the bad guys could slide down the chute too. He ran to the elevator. He went down in the elevator to the passage where his secret stash was. Sure enough, there were several of Wu’s men trying to open his ultra reinforced steel door. One of them noticed him. “Hey, look it’s Lick!” he shouted. They all ran at Lick. He only had one trick up his sleeve, but it might be enough to get him out of this mess. He went to the chute and slid down three floors to another passageway. He detached another key from his belt and slid it into the lock. Wu’s men arrived in the passage. They ran at Lick. Lick opened a drawer and took out some explosives disguised as cigars. Lick threw the explosives at Wu’s men and went to another elevator door. He went up for a while then the elevator stopped.

He climbed out the top of the elevator. He ducked an overhang and crawled along to a fake ventilator he had put there. He pushed the ventilator forward. He was now in the basement of the police station. Lick crept up the stairs and poked his head out of the basement. Bad luck! Lick was spotted by six of Wu’s men. They ran over to him and yanked him out of the basement. They dragged him over to a chair and tied him up tight. Just then the twelve soldiers burst through the door, guns blazing. Wu’s men sprinted away. One of the soldiers untied Lick; the others went after Wu’s men. Lick and the soldier waited a couple of minutes until the soldiers returned.

“All Wu’s men are waiting outside,” said one of the soldiers. “There must be two hundred out there.”

“We have to move out,” said a sergeant.

"Not yet," Lick said. He lit a fuse to a stick of dynamite. "Okay now we can move out," he said as two hundred of Wu's men rounded the corner to the basement.

"We have ten seconds!" Lick yelled through the gunfire. Lick led the twelve soldiers. They sprinted towards the door to the basement. Then... "BOOM!!!!!!!!!!!!!" Wu's men and the twelve soldiers were killed as the police station exploded. Lick saw the explosion. Then, everything went black.

Unfortunately, Lick was the only one who survived. He woke up feeling terrible. He felt as if he never wanted to smile again. A doctor was leaning over him.

"He is alive," he shouted. Lick's son Jimmy Smiles stepped into his line of vision.

"Hi daddy," Jimmy said. "We thought you were gone forever."

"Oh really," Lick said. "Just how long have I been out?"

"Seven months," Jimmy said. "The doctor called me here when your brainwaves started spiking. The police station is almost rebuilt so everything is good. Except..."

"Except what?" Lick asked.

"Wu was in your vault. He survived the explosion and stole your stash. We tracked him to his house."

"Shall we go there?" Lick asked.

"Sure, if you're up for it," Jimmy said.

"Let's go then," said Lick.

So they went to Wu's house. Jimmy shot Wu. Wu died. Then Lick shot Wu's butler and reclaimed his treasure. The police station was rebuilt, and Wu's threat was extinguished.

Summer Camp

By Ansley Perryman, age 9

I can't believe my mom and dad sent me away to Camp Doring, or should I say camp boring, a summer camp in Florida. My friends said I shouldn't go because weird stuff happened there.

My first night was a mess because I am allergic to peanuts. Guess what it was for dinner? Yep, you guessed it, peanut butter sandwiches. I went to bed without dinner.

Next morning I was starving. I had some toast. Then I went to my first class, swimming. In my opinion it was the best thing about Camp Doring. Well let's just say I had more fun than on the first night, for sure. I met a girl called Natalia. She was really nice. We had a weird thing in common. Someone kept moving our suitcases into the woods or to the camp doctor's room. At first we thought it was our enemy, Katy. So, we played a prank on her. We put some hair remover in her shampoo. It made some of her hair fall out. However, we made a mistake. We found out it was actually just the cleaners moving our suitcases when they cleaned. "Oh, dear!"

I realized that camp wasn't about how cool you are, or getting away from your parents; it's about being happy and meeting new friends.

The Adventure Of The Secret Agent

By Pongsa Tayjasanant, age 10

Chapter 1: Tom

Hi, my name is Tom. I'm a secret agent for the U.S. with special talents. I have lots of snakes of every kind with special powers. Right now, I'm going to tell you about a mission I led that could have led to almost certain death. I rocketed through the galaxy to fight an army of things I didn't know about. You may ask why I had to do this. Well, the reason is, I had to save the president.

Now, for the story: I flew in to the secret base at lightning speed. "No sign of the enemy," I muttered to myself. I was alone apart from my snakes. I told two boa constrictors, "Find the enemy and report back." (All my snakes have a special talent.) I walked forward and heard something; something that sounded like an advancing army. Then, my boa constrictors reported back, "There is a huge army advancing towards us!" "CODE RED!" I yelled to all my snakes. We had about 15 minutes until the army reached us.

I decided to turn invisible. I put on my invisibility cape. I marched toward the enemy. I shot the power transformer for the base and everything went black. I snuck through a vent, and then I heard clanking – droid footsteps. I looked down and saw about 10,000 armed droids below me. I walked forward and stuck a camera on the wall so I could see what was going on. I shot a liquid force field onto the ground to hold off one branch of the droids. I found a hole in the floor and jumped through. I saw no enemy

and advanced forward. I turned a corner and saw some monsters. Silently, I crept past them. I saw a droid. I knocked him out and took his memory chip. I reprogrammed it "to kill any droid in its path." I put it back in for two minutes to reprogram his computer and took it out again. The droid marched off in the other direction.

I took the memory chip and plugged it into my computer. I found dimensions, scales, airways, and then, "Aha!" their plan to destroy Washington D.C. It contained diversions, ships, planes, and ground attacks. Meanwhile I heard the words: "TRAITOR!" screamed out by the leader of the droids. I guessed my plan was working.

I saw a person running across a hallway. I took off my invisibility cloak.

"Hold up!" I said.

"Who are you?" He asked.

"I am Tom, agent for..."

"Stop!" he said.

"Why?" I asked.

"Because now I know who you are! You're an agent for the U.S. So am I."

"Right you are," I announced. So I told him my plan, and he approved.

"What location are you from?" I asked.

"I'm from location 25B76."

"Wasn't that location Pearl Harbor? How old are you?" I asked him.

"Twenty seven," he replied.

I thought, "Something isn't right." I waved away my thought and checked my computer. I selected 'dimensions.' I saw a diagram and saw a weak point in the building. So I turned and asked, "What's your name?"

"Cameron," he answered. I told Cameron to go east and that I'd go west. So I raced through a vent and burst through the end of it and landed in the "control room." I was smart enough to cling on to the wall. The room was full of monsters. I put on my invisible cloak – 3,2,1, I was invisible! I shot the control panel, and it exploded. The monsters fled the room.

Suddenly, I realized 10,000 droids were charging me! I quickly turned and hid in the vent. Two minutes later from the camera I planted, I heard the commander tell his troops, "Scour the area for any signs..." and then, "BAM!" The camera was destroyed. It shriveled up and burnt. So, I was on my own.

I heard a gust of wind from behind me and things suddenly got warmer. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw something red, a flame. I soon realized the droids had a flamethrower. They shot it at the vent where I was hiding! I turned my water gun on. "Whoosh!" The fire was extinguished. "Phew!" I said, "That was a close one." Then everything went black. The heat from the flamethrower overpowered me. I awoke in the vent. The enemy had not found me. "How long had I been passed out?" I wondered.

I shot a hole through the vent where I was lying. I shot a grappling hook to the floor beneath me. I carefully climbed to the floor and put a camera on the wall. I ran through the door into a big hallway. To clear the hallway, I threw a little bomb down it. "Boom!" the bomb exploded. I ducked into a room. It was empty, nothing but eerie silence. Suddenly, 'CLANK!' the doors slammed behind me. "Huh?" I thought. "That was weird," I muttered to myself. I walked forward. "This looks like a mess hall," I said.

"Because it is," a voice said from behind me. I turned and saw Cameron.

"So, I see you've joined the dark side," I sneered.

"Yes I have," said Cameron.

"You are now my enemy," I said.

"Well..." he swung at me with his double-bladed sword. I quickly blocked the strike with my machete and deflected a bullet he shot at me. He shot another bullet at me. I dodged it. I threw my machete at Cameron. He blocked it. It dropped to the floor. He threw a sticky bomb, but it missed! It clung on to the wall. '2:00' it said. I threw a 6' x 8' piece of steel. It hit Cameron hard and made him fall backwards onto the floor. I approached Cameron. One by one, I threw ten bricks on the piece of steel. Just to make sure, I put a slab of concrete on the steel and ran out of the room. The door felt hot. The bomb blew up. A chill went up my spine. My knees turned to water, and I collapsed.

I woke up in a net. "Dang it," I muttered, "I have been caught!"

"Yes, you have," said a voice that sounded like a nail scratching against metal. I turned to see 10,000 droids facing me. I tried to move but no use. And out came... "No, I don't believe it," I thought. It was my previous boss, President Bush.

"Hello agent C78Cf67," he said.

"But. But..."

"Yes agent C78Cf67, America was too slow after all. I'm the best president that ever took the throne. Except that Obama guy, so that is why I created this army." And there, right before me, was his whole army of monsters, human warriors, and droids. The grand total of warriors in the whole army was probably 1,000,000. According to my boss, that is a bad ratio.

"My plan is to over run the city of Washington D.C. and capture Obama," Bush said. "People will think he is a bad president to let this army into the United States of America. Then, I will still be the best president in the history of the U.S. My droids have predicted that Obama will pass me in "The Best Presidents List." I will fall to number two. I can't take that."

"Were you ever number one?" I asked.

"Yes, I was, agent C78Cf67. Now you have two choices: you can perish at the hands of my army, or you can become a part of my army. Your choice."

"I want to perish at the hands of your army!" I exclaimed.

"Ok," said Bush. Suddenly, I dropped into the army. I crushed a droid, cut the rope that secured me, ran for my speeder, and sped away.

Chapter 2: The Battle of Life and Death

I immediately went to the White House. "Boss! Boss!" I panted.

"What?" said Obama.

"Bush is coming to take you sir."

"Okay, guard the border," he said. "And Tom, lead them into battle. I will give the other guards and their tanks."

"Yes sir," I said.

I lined up our troops. Right on cue, Bush's army appeared out of the sky. "Stand ready! FIRE!" And from the explosion, I swear, I saw stars in the sky. At 1:00 PM, the battle was in full swing. I was manning a cannon. The enemy was winning "the battle of life and death," as I called it.

I knew if the battle went on like this we would all die. So, I made a bold move. I snuck behind the enemy lines and planted a bomb. I kept on progressing up the ranks until I got to their gunship. From here they were sending in troops and covering them with defensive fire. I shot my grappling hook and hit the gunship. Then, I stuck my sword into the side of the gunship, pulled myself up, fired my gun at the engines, and jumped off. Instantly, it blew up. "Now, they can't send reinforcements, and we can actually win," I thought. I ran back to the battlefield. We were doing better. I started attacking from the back. I was quite successful. From that moment on, we wiped out the enemy pretty quickly. We had defeated Bush's army. After that win, Obama promoted me to highest ranking, field agent. And that's the end... for now.

The Knight in Black Armor

Inspired by *The Hobbit*

By *Kalyan Narayanan, age 9*

Once upon a time in Middle-Earth, there lived a man who's name was Arthur. Arthur Took, to be precise. He was a very adventurous man. One day, when he was walking through the market he heard Mr. Frank talking about a quest to the heart of the mountains of Balkan. Arthur immediately got excited. He walked over to Mr. Frank and asked, "Who is going there?" Mr. Frank said, "It is a team consisting of: Aver and Baser – two dwarves, Hamadun and Bronx – two elves, and of course, one human who we have not chosen yet. Arthur immediately applied for the spot.

The next thing he knew he had been accepted. Two days later the team left. (Now I must pause the story for a bit, to tell you that the team faced many dangers on their quest including dragons and snakes, and so on. I am only telling you this so you know that I am going to be skipping some minor parts, like when the team stopped in the dwarf city of Arakanese.)

For two days straight the team journeyed without stopping for rest. Until they met the dragon named Slaving, a deadly Rastofocorian type. It happened very quickly Baser found a large "tree" in their way. Aver took his axe and chopped at it. The axe bounced off as if it were made of sponge. Hamadun aimed an arrow at the middle of the "tree." Suddenly the tree roared, (Wait, the tree roared! Yup, the tree roared.) "EVERYONE DUCK!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" Yelled Bronx. He was right. Just then a wave of fire rushed towards them. It nearly scorched Baser's hair. Arthur's swiped his sword on Slaving's legs. No blood was drawn. It just made Slaving angrier. By now, they knew it was a dragon. Slaving cut a gash in Arthur's left arm. "AAAAGGGGH!" Arthur yelled. His left arm was in serious pain. Hamadun had had enough. He climbed up a tree and shot an arrow in Slaving's mouth. That ended Slaving's life. Bronx quickly healed Arthur, who was still screaming.

Three days later the team stopped in the city of Arakanese. After picking up supplies they continued on their quest to the Balkans. Twelve days later they reached an opening in the 1,743rd Balkan Mountain. Before they entered, Hamadun gave them a pep talk.

"Friends, Dwarves, Elves, and Humans, I am here to tell you that our quest is nearly over...and to tell you the real reason why we are here. It is to find the Black Armor and to destroy the Black King."

"What?" Arthur said.

"That's suicide," exclaimed Baser.

"You're mad," Bronx mumbled.

"I never should have signed up for this," Aver said.

"Let's go," Hamadun said, and he walked inside the opening. The others had no choice but to follow him in. The inside was filled with skeletons. They lit a torch and continued. After what seemed like hours, they reached a door. They opened it. Inside was nothing except a round pedestal with the Black Armor standing on it.

"Who will don the Black Armor?" Hamadun asked.

"Not me," Baser said.

"Not me," Bronx said.

"Not me," Aver said.

"I will," Arthur said.

"WHAT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" everyone yelled.

"Yes, I will don the Black Armor," said Arthur calmly. He slowly walked up to the pedestal and donned the Black Armor. It was as if power was coursing through his veins – ultimate power! With one stroke of his hand, he made the magical Sword of Balkans appear.

"Now we must march to the Black King!" commanded Arthur in a deep resonant voice. First, they marched to different kingdoms to gain help for the war. Finally, they formed an alliance. It included five dwarf kingdoms, 18 human kingdoms, and one elf kingdom. The united army marched to Black Land.

The war began. Eight Kings who had sworn allegiance to the Black King entered the fray. They were ferocious fighters, killing anyone in their path. A quick swipe from Baser's sword killed one. Five minutes later, Hamadun shot an arrow in the chest of another of the kings. He vaporized into dust. The team killed five more kings. Arthur shot a zap of electricity from his magic sword, killing the final king. Then, Arthur found the Black King. He radiated pure evil power that made everyone feel fear and dread.

"I see you wear MY armor you idiotic fool. Now you shall die!"

"NO, NOW YOU SHALL DIE!" cried Arthur.

As they fought, the very ground seemed to tremble. Sometimes Arthur would be winning; sometimes the Black King. Finally, Arthur stabbed the Black King in the chest. The Black King was killed. Arthur was the victor of the battle. "Arthur, Arthur you won," cheered the team. There was no response from Arthur.

"Please take off the armor, Arthur, please," pleaded Aver.

"NO," said Arthur's voice from within the armor. The ground shook with the sound.

"Please, Arthur, please. Take off the armor," again demanded Aver.

"NO," said the voice of the armor. "Yes," said the voice of the true Arthur.

"NO!"

"Yes!"

"NO!"

"YES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" The armor flew off revealing Arthur. He took the magic Sword of the Balkans and destroyed the Black Armor.

"AHHHH!!!!" screamed the armor.

"That armor was wicked," said a relieved Arthur.

"WE HAVE WON!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" the team cried.

The Poisonous Kale Chips

By Charlotte Glen, age 11

Once upon a time, there was a flock of ducks. Their names were Marty, Fred, George, Bob, Pacifica, and Britney. They lived on a floating island on the planet of Chipotle, and they loved to eat kale chips. It was their favorite snack. But then, one day, George accidentally ate a poisonous kale chip! He passed out. "OMG!" exclaimed Britney. They rushed George to the hospital. When they got to their room, the doctor announced that George had food poisoning! "OMG!" said Britney as she reached into the bag of kale chips. She ate one and Britney fainted too!

"Hmm, that's strange, I'd better sample one of these kale chips to make sure they're safe!" said Bob, and soon after he did, he fainted! The doctor was 'confuzzled.'

"I am going to have to test these kale chips in my lab!" he said. After an hour, the doctor came back out. Britney, Bob, and George had all un-fainted by that time.

"We have had other cases of the exact same thing, so I went out and bought some other bags of kale chips to see if they were contaminated by the same thing, and they were. So, I put out a meter to detect any changes in the air status. It turns out that a wave of energy went over the planet and has contaminated all the kale. All the bad kale chips will be cleared from the stores and replaced with good kale chips. When this is accomplished, an announcement in the news will tell you that they are safe to eat," said the doctor.

"OMG!" said Britney.

"You will have to resort to eating potato chips during this time," said the doctor.

"NOOOOOOOO!!!!" yelled Bob.

"This is horrible!" exclaimed Marty.

"What are we going to do?!" screamed Pacifica.

"I can't live without kale chips!" yelled Fred.

"Oh no, this is terrible!" said George.

"OMG!" exclaimed Britney.

The ducks were devastated. On their way home, they stopped at SpaceMart to stock up on freeze-dried potato chips. When they got home, Bob was the first to be brave enough to taste the potato chips.

"These are pretty good!" said Bob, nodding his head. They all reached into the bag to try one.

"They're almost as good as kale chips!" exclaimed Marty.

"Dee-licious!" said Pacifica.

"Yum!" said Fred.

"I love potato chips!" said George.

"OMG!" exclaimed Britney.

They put the bag of potato chips on a pedestal that was next to the pedestal with the bag of kale chips on it. From then on, they ate potato chips frequently. Of course they still bought kale chips when they

were available again, but they also ate potato chips along with them. And that is the story of how this flock of ducks came to love potato chips.

The Thief

A Police Report

By Matthew Roberts, age 9

New York Square, 9:15 p.m.

A man walked into a building on ~~New York~~ Square. He killed two guards and grabbed five files. He took one of the files and torched the building. He got into the getaway car that he had parked behind the building.

He drove to an airport in ~~New York~~. He got on a plane and he flew to ~~Moscow, Russia~~. A ~~CIA~~ agent was told to track him down. He got on his tail and tried to track him down to arrest him. The ~~CIA~~ agent tracked the thief to his last known position, ~~Moscow airport in Russia~~. The ~~CIA~~ agent searched the airport looking for him. He looked everywhere. The thief was nowhere to be seen.

He upgraded his search to all of ~~Moscow~~. The agent located the thief in a hotel on ~~Cannon Court~~, a ~~KGB~~ outpost. The ~~CIA~~ agent called the ~~US Navy Seals~~. The ~~CIA~~ agent and the ~~US Navy Seals~~ surrounded the outpost. The thief ran out of a backdoor. He climbed over a wall and stole a car. The ~~CIA~~ agent saw him leave. He jumped into his car and chased the thief to Paris.

The ~~CIA~~ agent stalked the thief for two days. The thief was hiding out in an apartment. The ~~CIA~~ agent found the building. Finally, the thief left the apartment. The ~~CIA~~ agent had his chance. He opened the door to the thief's apartment and set off a trip wire with his feet. He heard a ping and the house exploded. The ~~CIA~~ agent was thrown back fifteen feet into a wall. He died. The thief went on the run.

Two weeks later the US army located the thief in Berlin Germany. As soon as the army found him they called the CIA and the Navy Seals. They went to the apartment he was staying in. They were about to open the door with C4 when shots rang out inside the apartment. They blew the door open and found the thief dead. They heard a crash and someone jumped out the window. They took their guns and shot at him. He was wounded and surrendered. He was a KGB agent sent to recover the files. He told the CIA about the thief's plot to blow up Hoover Dam. He said the files included a plan of the dam's construction. The CIA agents thanked the KGB agent for helping to save America and let him go.

The Wall

By Finn Mennuti, age 11

Dedicated to the Baldoni family

Once upon a time there was a twelve-year-old boy named Ian. Ian lived in Pellmellia, a very hard place to live. Now Ian had mean parents. They locked the food up, hid the bed sheets, and they beat him. One night, Ian decided to run away. He snuck out of bed and crept downstairs. He stole all the food he could fit into his backpack, packed all his clothes, a slingshot, and a radio and put them in too.

"It's going to be hard to get out," he thought. "They lock all the doors and windows." Ian was a very good boy. He would never do this purposely unless his life depended on it; however, he broke a window. He grabbed his backpack and quick as a flash, he leapt out the window. The breaking glass woke his parents. They jumped out of their bed and ran downstairs. "Max!!!" yelled his mom, "Ian's gone!!!"

"Tell me something I don't know, Sarah!" yelled his dad. "Release the hounds!"

The hounds chased after Ian. It was dark; he was running hard, and then he... tripped! His future didn't look too bright. The dogs were right behind him. In front of him was a wall. "Damn it!" he yelled as he crawled backwards. He saw the lead dog about to catch up with him. He scooted backwards until he was almost touching the wall. The dog jumped. Ian leaned away from the dog's path so it would hit the wall. Ian's head touched the wall. He felt a warm sensation; he heard a buzzing hum; and suddenly, he was transported inside the wall.

"Where am I?" thought Ian.

"You're in the wall," said someone.

"What's the wall?" asked Ian.

"The wall is like a transport system, it takes you where ever you want to go. Lets you see whatever you want. Lets you do whatever you want," said the voice.

"By the way, I'm Luke what's your name?"

"My name's Ian," said Ian. "Question, if I wanted, say, um, a new family. Could I have one?" asked Ian.

"Yes, but there's a catch you must spend a year in a haunted house!"

"Really?" asked Ian.

"Nah, I'm just messing with you," said Luke. "The door is right over there."

"Thanks for all your help," said Ian.

And with that Ian walked through the door. There was a "whoosh!" sound. He started spinning; he felt every color and saw every noise. He woke up on a couch with four people leaning over him.

"Hello, Ian," said Nick, the man leaning over him. "We're your new family. I'm your father, Nick. This is your sister Creegan, your mother Karen, and your brother Luke.

"You must be starving," said Karen. "We'll make you a peanut butter and jelly sandwich."

His new parents left the room. His new brother Luke sat on the couch.

"Wait," said Ian, "your name is Luke?"

"Luke can't talk yet," said Creegan.

"Luke, you've helped me more than you know," said Ian.

"Who wants milkshakes?" yelled Nick from the kitchen.

"Yay!!!" said Creegan and Ian.

"I think this is going to be a great place to live!" thought Ian.

The Haunted Country

By Tyler Keen, age 9

One day, when I was having dinner with my friend Scott, he told me about a ghost that rose out of the river Ragubanaja on a full moon. He claimed that it was a real story. "I'll be okay," I said. As I was driving back home, I came to a fork in the road. I choose the road on the left, since I usually go that way.

After a few more miles, my car stopped. I got out and opened the hood. My battery had run out of power. Suddenly, I heard the sound of snapping twigs. I looked to see what it was. It was Scott! Now, his face was pale and his eyes we're red. I called his name. He didn't answer. Quickly, I grabbed my suitcase and ran.

I walked for hours and hours through the night. Finally, I came to a forest. Exhausted, I lit a fire and made a breakfast of oatmeal that looked like dirt. I looked around at my surroundings. The trees looked like they had faces and arms. "I must be seeing things," I said. When I woke up, the trees were moving towards me and they were saying: "Kill him, kill him!" I didn't need to hear them any more. I threw a stick that was on fire at them and set the forest ablaze.

After several days, I came to a river. I was about to take a drink from it, when I saw Scott. I was about to talk to him, but he was still pale, and he had red eyes. So I ran away from him. Several days later, I found my car. I looked at the battery again. Someone had cut the power cords! "Who did this?" I wondered. I retraced my steps back to the fork. I had taken the wrong road!

I took the right turn and I walked to my house. I went inside. In the living room I found Scott! I was stunned. He just laughed.

"All those times you saw me, I was wearing a costume. Pretty good, right?"

"Sure," I said. "You really scared me."

"That forest was remote controlled for a movie. You set off the detectors." After that, we talked and ate. Scott said I seemed like a good actor. I agreed.

Poetry

Time

By Finn Mennuti, age 11

Time is constantly fading, lost forever.
What has happened to yesterday?
I fear we will never know.
We never recycle it,
We don't know how yet.
What will happen when we run out of time?
I worry for humanity.
Our time is rationed;
We use it constantly,
Wasting it, without regret.
But what happens when we worry about time?
Will there be wars?
Riots?
Or peace and love?
Time fades away
In life and earth
For evermore,
Get used to it.

The Sanctuary of Water

By Jeannessa Lurie, age 11

The water
rushes,
spilling over
the rocks.
The
split-splattering
water sound
in
the stream,
serene,
Gives
me
a sense of
Peace.

Poems Inspired by Hafiz

Wonder

By Tyler Keen, age 9

Wonder!
What is wonder?
It is the feeling
Of a curious
Soul
Figuring out
A question
For itself.

Love

By Tyler Keen, age 9

Love!
What is
Love?
It is the
Feeling
Of a
Soul
Embracing
Its beloved!

Tomorrow

By Chloe Christiansen, age 11

The happenings
of fate
will find you.
The chains
of life
will bind you.
But persevere
and your eyes
will show clear
that there is
hope of
Happiness
for tomorrow.

The Subject Tonight is Laughter

By Pongsa Tayjasanant, age 10

The subject tonight
is laughter.
Tonight
I am happy.
My happiness spreads
all over
like a new invention.
Laughter,
laughter,
laughter,
I can't get enough.
I will soak
my bones
in laughter
for the rest of my life.
Laughter is endless
like numbers
in math.
You can
never get
too much laughter
or happiness
for that matter.
Laughter
and happiness
are the keys
to life.

What is Hate?

By Quincy Linder, age 10

Hate is sadness
Turned bad,
Hate is my
Body waiting to pounce,
Hate is God
Not glancing
In my direction,
Hate is constant loneliness.

Love is Like...

By Ansley Perryman, age 9

Love is like a humming bird,
Love is like a ship at sea,
Love is like a rose blooming in spring,
Love is like a light in the darkness,
Love is like a ruby surrounded in rocks,
Love is everything,
Everything is Love.

Joyfulness

By Joey Mattia, age 10

Joy flows
through me
like a waterfall,
it's never ending
like life.

It shines
like the sun
on a hot day,
giving light
and warmth
to me and
everything
I see.

Joy is
God dancing
and singing.
Joy is one
of the
greatest
feelings
you can
have.
Why, why is
it so great?
Because
it enlightens
the Body
with the
Joyfulness
of God!

Determination and Belief

By Caleb Flores, age 10

My determination
Is like a wrecking ball
Breaking through a wall,
Failure tries to
Mess me up
By pushing me around,
Packed in a punch.
But belief in my wise-self
Conquers my fear
And everything standing in my way.
My determination and belief
In my wise-self
Always stays strong like a tree.

I'm happy

By Matthew Roberts, age 9

I'm happy
whenever
and always!
Happiness is
like a sailing
boat that floats
on the ocean, always
moving, and never
stopping; always
sailing with the
wind. Happiness
flows every-
where anywhere
and always.

Silence

By Finn Mennuti, age 11

Silence
rings out in
the night like
the pause after
a gunshot.
Silence
can sting
like a thorn,
or heal your
wounds.
Beware, beware
Silence
might
swallow
you
up.

What is Love?

By Emma Farley, age 10

Love
Is a humming bird
In spring,
Love
Is a cold winter night
Roasting chestnuts,
Love
Is a warm hug from a
Friend in a time
Of need,
Love
is wonderful!

Nature

By Divya Thekkath, age 10

The wind blows
silently as you sit...
The world unfolds around
you like a flower in spring.
The trees, the birds, the flowers
Awaken before your eyes.
And for one moment,
The world is at
Peace.

Happiness Is

By Kalyan Narayanan, age 9

Happiness is like the thin waters
of a river.
Happiness is like the Sun's fiery breath.
Happiness is like the Earth's cool
soil.
Wait, Happiness, I've just figured
it out.
Happiness is the deepest
and innermost part
of the heart.

Determination

By Jason Fu, age 9

Determination is like
digging for buried treasure,
I jump at it!
I dig & dig
for treasure
but it never
comes.
I don't give up,
I never stop.
I think,
will the digging
ever stop?
Suddenly,
I hit
my goal
and I feel
a weight
fall from
my shoulders.
And I feel
relieved.

Death

By Jeannessa Lurie, age 11

Death
has struck.
I suffer,
drowning in pain.
Constantly
struggling to breathe
under the heavy weight
of Death
sitting on my chest.
Death looms
over me;
a dark shadow on
a bright,
sunny day.
And when it seems like nothing
can go wrong,
Death
strikes again.

Creativity

By Rishi Deshmukh, age 11

I
am Creativity.
I Rain on art
and statues.
I am the Extravagance
in projects.
I am the wonders of
Art
I will Take you on an adventure
through your imagination.
I am the Inside of
your mind.
I am Visible to you
but Invisible to others.
I will Tell you an enjoyable
story.
You hold creativity in
Yourself.

Determination

By Andrew Dollente, age 11

Determination is telling yourself
to keep going.
Determination is like smashing
a brick wall until it breaks.
It is what makes you think
and work and play.
It is what helps you win
the Game
of
life.

The Secret to Beauty

By Freya Edholm, age 11

I know the secret to beauty
Divine joy, love, and bliss.
I know how to feel this feeling,
By giving God a kiss.

Sunset on the Sea

By Elizabeth Peters 11

The day is done
and night is swelling up.
But now day and night give a gift-
A sunset on the sea.

The sun is just a sliver.
The clouds are red.
The sun's light jumps like a rainbow
from the water.

Day and Night are harmonized.
This is a gift from
Sun,
Night,
And Nature
that nothing else could
give.

The Phoenix is Rising

By Matthew Sloan

From the shadows the Phoenix is rising,
Sweeping through the depths of my suffering,
His flaming wings scatter Grief's ashes to the four winds,
Dissolving them in flames of joy!
Desires, forgotten dreams, heart's love,
Become a spiraling pillar of golden flame,
Borne on the Phoenix's wings to alight like a dove
At the gateway to infinity.
"Anything is possible,
What does your heart yearn for?"
From the shadows the Phoenix is rising!

Favorite Haikus

Love embraces me
Making me feel beautiful
My mommy's warm kiss
By Jeannessa Lurie, age 11

Daily I see you
The time I retire to sleep
And you shine brightly
By Pongsa Tayjasanant, age 10

Long or short and soft
Dead cells by the millions
Uh oh, here comes lice
By Chloe Christiansen, age 11

Light shines through the trees
The river runs cool and bright
Gentle breeze is soft
By Elizabeth Peters, age 11

No man can touch it
It gives heat to you and me
Glowing in the night
By Tyler Keen, age 9

The sun shines on me
Filling me with warmth and light
Want to go swimming
By Matthew Roberts, age 9

The stormiest wrath
The deadliest of oceans
And Zeus's anger
By Kalyan Narayanan, age 9

Warm light flows gently,
I'm always playing outside
Warm breeze touches me.

By Joey Mattia, age 10

The Dalai Lama
Truthful compassion
Philosophy is kindness
Needs no religion.

By Freya Edholm, age 11

Hidden in the bush
Blue and black ceramic art
Ceramic Mushroom.

By Charlotte Glen, age 11

More Haikus...Guess the Animal

A big carnivore
Catch a prey along the way
Orange and black stripes.

By Jason Fu, age 9

I have furry fur
I have super sharp claws, ah!
Nobody come close.

By Caleb Flores, age 10

I love the jungle
I climb tall tropical trees
I love to make noise.

By Tyler Keen, age 9

Swish! The grass rustles
The vigorous hunt is on
The zebra is dead.

By Elizabeth Peters, age 11

I am huge to ants
Destruction lurks in my path
I would scare your mom.

By Chloe Christiansen, age 11

A green carnivore

*Living Wisdom School Angels Have a Lot to Say
June 2012*

Animal eats Antelope
Lives in Africa.
By Pongsa Tayjasanant, age 10

Splish splash in the sea
Come, my friend, come play with me
I will get you wet.
By Jeannessa Lurie, age 11

Black and orange fur
Big glow-in-the-dark eyeballs
Retractable claws.
By Rishi Deshmukh, age 10

Swim through the water
I am golden and awesome
With beautiful scales.
By Charlotte Glen, age 11

Furry with big horns
Grazing on the soft green grass
Symbol of Tibet.
By Charlotte Glen, age 11

With a cool duck's bill
A very awesome swimmer
I am not a duck.
By Charlotte Glen, age 11

Tall trees and branches
I like to climb and play games
Lives in Africa.
By Matthew Roberts, age 9

I breathe red-hot fire
I am extremely deadly
I am mystical.
By Kalyan Narayanan, age 9

My light bulb is bright
I can fly around at night,
I can glow all right!
By Ansley Perryman, age 9

Crawls on many legs
Has a long creepy body
Like a fringed carpet.
By Andrew Dollente, age 11

Splish, splash, wave my tail,
Dancing at aquariums
I really love fish.
By Divya Thekkath, age 11

Creeps and crawls on legs
A big poison stinging tail
Big, dark, sharp pincers.
By Quincy Linder, age 10

Little and furry,
Soft, kind, and independent,
Lives in a cool house.
By Freya Edholm, age 11

Grandma

By Matthew Sloan

Fluffy white clouds float,
Ah, blue sky, blue sparkle sea.
Grandma's warm embrace.

Tiger
Bear
Howler monkey
Tiger
Rat
Crocodile
Dolphin
Calico
Goldfish
Yak
Platypus
Lima
Dragon
Firefly
Centipede
Dolphin
Scorpion
Cat

Sixth Grade,
Seventh Grade,
and
Eighth Grade

CREATIVE WRITING
FROM THE SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH GRADE
EXPLORERS

Poetry

Imagery

A Thorn

By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14

If I were a thorn on a rose
I would prick your finger
To protect my flower
I am not vicious
I only hurt if I have to

A Cherry's Throne

By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13

If I were a cherry,
I would lie comfortably
On lined layers of whipped cream
Atop an original sundae
Knowing I'll be first to go.

Siri

By Reza Navadeh, age 11

If I were Siri,
I would answer every question you ask,
I would find you the nearest market,
and I would help you
with every task.

If I Were a Cat

By Luke Chacon, age 12

If I were a cat,
I would bound away
And chase the mouse
Of eternal happiness

Records

By Mariah Stewart, age 13

If I were a record
I would give the gift
Of events past,
With an eye to the future

~~~~~  
I would give golden treasures  
From Greeks to Romans  
Their olives and spears  
From British tyranny  
To Yankee independence  
From Trojan horse  
To the Crusades  
I would fill minds with past splendors,  
Promises, and inspirations

## **Dragonfly**

*By Kelly Olivier, age 14*

If I were a dragonfly  
I would dart and zoom  
Over fields and flowers  
And the wind would  
Whisk away my worries  
So that I can fly free

## **Santa Cruz**

*By Adam Larrimore, age 14*

Sand everywhere, itching, irritating  
...must dig  
Clouds gently make their way to and fro  
Along the boardwalk  
Hot, noisy, bustling...  
Smell of funnel cakes and corn dogs, cotton candy,  
Sweet and abundant in the air  
Blurs of people walking by...groups  
Which group am I?  
Waves crash. Girls screech. Boys loiter.  
Kaw, kaw, kaw...Pelicans in the air.  
Blaring barker, "Step right up, folks...toy...  
Then home again.

**If I Were a Clock**

*By Lucas Washburn, age 12*

If I were a clock  
I would go tick tock  
They pulled out my batteries  
So I shall stop.

**If I Were...**

*By Kieran Rege, age 14*

If I were a planet  
I would have rings  
Radiant and glowing golden.  
I would drift in space,  
Endlessly going in circles  
Bound to find more planets.  
Then I would shine my rings  
And know true friendship.

**If I Were a Shadow**

*By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13*

If I were a shadow...  
I'd follow you around  
I'd mime your moves  
But never make a sound  
I'd chase you 'round  
Wherever you move  
And on the sly  
I'd mock your groove.

## Simile and Metaphor Poems

### **What Will Become?**

*By Kieran Rege, age 14*

Could Earth be God's experiment  
Product of a heavenly science class  
Of such inspiration and clarity  
He made his own world?

Poured some water for life to grow  
Shined a sunlamp to balance an ecosystem  
And a nightlight to pierce the darkness  
And developed a presmatique spectacle?

If so...then came a curse  
A mold, claiming everything in its path  
Our of control His people are,  
Taking advantage of their disposables

God watches over them, worrying  
Unsure of what their future holds  
And if He doesn't know what will happen,  
How can we?

### **Sun Flowers**

*By Jeydie Pondler, age 12*

Sunflowers light up my life.  
High fashion little girls,  
They grab my attention  
With their bright bonnets.

Sunflowers light up my life.  
On days when I'm feeling sad  
My bright yellow jacket  
Makes me feel like a sunflower.

### **The Shooting Fountain**

*By Reza Navadeh, age 11*

A shooting fountain,  
Like a dolphin,  
Hovering high in the air,  
With a few milliseconds,  
To take a breath  
And dive back again.



### **God's Eye**

*By Sierra Sholes, age 13*

The moon is God's eye  
Which he uses to spy  
On little children tucked away  
Under covers 'til the day

### **A Child's Ball**

*By Kelly Olivier, age 14*

Each night before I go to sleep  
I look out my window at the moon.  
Rolling across the sky,  
Night after night, it slowly deflates,  
A child's ball with a hole in it,  
Until only a sliver remains.  
Then patched like new, it re-inflates.

### **Who is Poetry?**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 12*

Poetry is a true companion.  
You can tell her anything.  
And when you ask for secrecy  
She'll veil your heart with words.

But she can be quite open, too  
With feelings and emotions  
She'll cry with worry, cheer with joy  
The result can be very moody

Poetry is sure to inspire you  
She sometimes tells great stories  
Her words so expressive, alluring  
You'll know you've found a friend

### **Diamond**

*By Evan Rose, age 12*

A diamond is shiny and sharp  
Pretty and hard  
Diamonds are rare and valuable  
Reflective and clear  
Like a thousand mirrors  
Diamonds are the Earth's beauty

## Personification Poems

### **Little Miss Diamond**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13*

Little Miss Diamond's a bit of a pig  
She poses and preens  
She doesn't give a fig  
Truth be told, she's a stuck up queen

She shines great flashes  
She thinks she's the chief  
She bats her pretty lashes  
As we plastic rings watch in grief

### **The Sad Pencil**

*By Reza Navadeh age 11*

Pencil was sad and out of joint  
He had broken his lead and lost his point.  
Instead—how sad! He was replaced by Pen.

### **The White Board**

*By Jeydie Pondler, age 12*

Her clothing is all white.  
You can write on her  
Whenever you like.

She attends every class  
All the year long.  
She'll hold as many words as you like  
'Cause she is tall and strong.

### **Trees**

*By Lucas Washburn, age 12*

Trees are hardy  
Slow and tardy  
If a tree asks for a race  
Don't be nervous  
For it will take him years  
To match your pace

## **Two Perspectives**

*By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14*

A Gardener's Thanks...

The trellis lends a helping hand  
To her friend, the beautiful vine.  
She holds the flowers way up high  
To the generous, blue, blue sky.

The Vine's View...

My trellis is a helping friend.  
Through rain and shine, 'til season's end  
She never lets me hang too low.  
She helps me bloom; she helps me grow.

## **Pens**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

Pens can be sly  
As they cross the page  
Pens on the fly  
As they take the stage

Pens on the run  
Get the words out fast  
Pencils aren't **fun**  
They don't even last.

Pencil never  
Will outdo the pen  
By being clever  
Not now, not then

## **Mosquito**

*By Percy Jiang, age 14*

"I need blood! I'm starving!"  
Says the little mosquito with an empty stomach  
He knows humans hate him,  
But he is thirsty, more than sorry.  
He sits on a little boy, imperceptibly  
Hesitating for one crucial second.  
"Should I rob his blood?"  
Bang!  
The boy sees him first.

## Alliteration and Onomatopoeia Poems

### **Thunder Storm**

*By Luke Chacon, age 12*

Thunder booms and  
Lightning crashes through the  
Air as the storm moves  
Toward the city.

Tornados howl, and  
Rain pitches from the sky.  
The cold wind moans and groans,  
And houses creak.

Slowly but surely  
Lightning and thunder  
Fade away. The storm moves on.

And the howl of wind and  
Tornadoes recede to the gentle  
Whoosh of a breeze.

The sky clears and a rainbow  
Smiles on the city.

### **Symphony of Sound**

*Name: Sita Chandrasekaran, age: 14*

A leaf lingers in the air as it gently floats down  
Trees sway in tender winds; click - clack; branches meet  
Fluttering butterflies flap their frail wings back  
To the rustling green grass; where the silent stag - crackle!  
Steps on the resting leaf, while the rabbit rapidly thumps,  
Flattening the forest floor with rhythmic tempo.  
Bobcats purr with alto voices, resting under shades of giants  
A bustling brook murmurs as she trickles daintily through,  
All in time for Mother Nature's symphony of sounds when  
Whoosh – an oblivious car cruises by the refined orchestra.

### **Slip and Slide on Concrete**

*By Sierra Sholes, age 13*

Splish, splash.

Oops. CRASH!

### **The Cookie**

*By Reza Navadeh, age 11*

I just can't wait to eat a cookie.  
Crimbling and crampling,  
Crumbs will fall upon my seat.  
I'll dip it in milk  
And say, "mmm" and "ahh,"  
I go to the pantry  
To find my desire,  
And then Mom says, "NO!"

### **Making a Veggie Salad**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 12*

Cut the carrots nice and clean  
Peel the pickles, dark and green  
Dice tomatoes, fine and square  
Then chop, chop, chop, if you dare!

Mix in a bowl; don't forget the salt.  
Then stir and stir; there can be no fault.  
After you're done, it's time to eat  
Hear the crunch and enjoy your treat.

### **A Fish in Trouble**

*By Kieran Rege, age 14*

I am a feeble fish  
Like a wandering cloud of the sea  
Careful, colorless, cold

When "WHOOSH"  
Like a dart, something zips by

Then "CHOMP"  
A shark...swimming around me  
Like a swarm, I feel it coming close

"CRUNCH"  
Another one zips by!

This can only mean one thing.  
FEEDING FRENZY!

**Poems from the Ananda Meditation Retreat Fieldtrip**  
**May 2012**

**Babaji's\* Cave**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13*

We walk calmly, with a steady pace,  
Following the leader, twigs snapping.  
We come to a stop. Down below  
A parade of stairs leads to a door—  
Invitation to concentration.  
Silence looms. Dark walls chill  
As we meditate in Babaji's Cave.

\*Babaji is a revered Indian yogi.

**Lizard**

*By Sierra Sholes, age 13*

If you find a lizard  
Be proud you found a wizard.  
The way it blends  
And hides in bends  
Its magic has no ends

**The River**

*By Jeydie Pondler, age 12*

It runs past  
With a glimmer  
Its bright green water  
Begging to be touched.

When I look  
Down the steep cliff  
From the bridge above,  
I am afraid  
Of dropping  
Into the River.

My fear of heights  
Turns me away.

### **Morning**

*By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14*

I lay in bed—quiet, calming  
Noisy birds sing—loud, chiming  
Eyes dart open—alert, watching.  
Sunlight floods the sky—bright, spreading

I'm out of bed, careful, walking  
Steps call like birds, loud, creaking  
Girls roll around—awake, groaning  
We whisper, one of us still sleeping

### **The River Within**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

I feel a river  
Rushing through me  
Flowing in my veins

Its cooling waters  
*All within me*  
Flowing up and down

*My inner river*  
Calms me, cools me  
Flowing inner peace

### **21 Blackjack**

*By Evan Rose, age 12*

"21 blackjack! I have won!"  
Says Adam, sure  
The game is done.

"Not so fast," I coo.  
"Joker always wins"  
So the joke's on you.

### **The Rope Swing**

*By Lucas Washburn, age 12*

The wind in my face  
The sun in my eyes  
'Tis a fun game

Watch out for the tree  
Once your friend  
Now your enemy

### **Confusion**

*By Shubha Charavarty, age 13*

Writing poetry is like  
Wandering  
In a dark tunnel  
The noises,  
The dark confusion...  
Arrgh!

Rhythm  
Rhyme  
Such a  
Hard time

Suddenly  
A light...  
Hope  
Is in sight

It is far far  
Long  
Tough  
And hard

Will you go  
Or forfeit all?

### **Wisps of Nature**

*By Rico Barron, age 14*

A breeze glides  
Through trees  
Whistling the breath  
Of a thousand wisps  
A slithering tail  
Slips out of sight  
A bird's wing  
Marks the earth  
With a shadow  
A mountain lion  
Clenches its claws  
Against a tree  
To hunt its prey  
Bears roar  
Coyotes howl  
Falcons screech  
Stars fly  
Fish splash  
Nature holds  
And nature lets go.



## **Peace and Tranquility**

*By Luke Chacon, age 12*

A small jet of water  
Shoots out from a fountain  
Into a pond. Water plants  
Float peacefully on the  
Surface, and insects fly  
Through the air.  
Occasionally, a fish jumps  
When I get close.  
This is peace and tranquility.

## **The Temple Cat**

*By Adam Larrimore, age 14*

Pitter patter...soft paws  
Push into the dirt.  
Rustle, crinkle...a feline shape  
Slinks slyly out of the bushes  
Wandering to and fro.  
My hand summons the creature.  
It sniffs me.  
I caress its fur as soft  
As the clouds themselves.  
Thinking of a name—he  
Reminds me of a  
Bright summer morning,  
Not too sweet, not too sour—  
“Orange Juice.”

## **The Cabin**

*By Max Lussier, age 14*

Our cabin is called Peace of Mind.  
Nice and small,  
But cramped when  
We all pile in.  
There's a room with a couch.  
There's also the kitchen.  
There's a loft with two beds and a fan.

At night Peace retreats  
When we play our games  
And yell back and forth  
Until we all sleep  
With a snore or two.

Then the morning comes.  
We're up bright and early  
And it starts all over again.

## Definition Poems

### **A Snake**

*By Luke Chacon age 12*

A slithering reptile  
Venom dripping from its  
Fangs, legless, staring,  
Always ready to strike  
Snake

### **Irritation**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13*

Irritation buzzes like a bee  
Swarming about so noisily

Irritation is what I feel  
When the ants my picnic lunch do steal

It's what a girl feels late at night  
When baby brother starts to fright.

Irritation the ear does stalk  
When talker talks, and talks, and talks.

Look here! Irritation for one  
Could be consolation to some.

### **Silence**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

When you hear music  
You listen to notes  
But have you heard the silence?

Silence is the drama  
Of crescendo, a finale  
Silence is the doom  
Of execution, the fear

Sometimes, silence is everything

### **Kindness**

*By Jeydie Pondler, age 12*

Kindness is a helping hand  
It makes you friends throughout the land  
Kindness is a living tree  
Rising, flowing all through me

## **The Spiritual Path**

By Cassidy Norfleet,

Manifested as a single seedling,  
Self-Realization took place,  
Sprouted from God's creativity,  
Expressing Itself throughout space.

As constellations and nebulae took form, so did we.  
Our hearts illuminated with light,  
Delusions darkened into night.  
Skewing our sensibility.

Few grasp the depth of enlightenment,  
Yet the Ones who aspire, are wise beyond comprehension.  
Realizing they're alike to kindred brethren.  
No disparities exist, a complete amalgamation.

Connected to a vibrating frequency beyond delusion,  
An exponential similarity between land and ocean.  
No death can be present when birth-less,  
Leaving an empty vessel, the soul effloresces.

Some darkness resides in each of us.  
The ones who have needled it out,  
Watch it dissipate and burn, making it scarce,  
Through omnipresent Cosmic Bliss.

*Editor's note: Cass Norfleet is a graduate of Living Wisdom School, now finishing his freshman year in high school. His poem was inspired by his reading of Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda.*

## **Prose**

### **Reflections on The Point Reyes Field Trip October 2011**

Every year our middle school goes on a field trip whether by foot, ferry or van. When you hear the word middle school van, you might think of a tame version of a school bus, but don't let that deceive you because, a middle school van can be an explosively random, scary, emotionally unbalanced pool of hormones, or a demonically dreary, mind numbing and eerily sleepy experience....

Conversation in the van is one of the most random strings of words woven together that I have ever heard. If I were to start a conversation about the president, it might jump to his hair, to hamburgers, to what type of cheese is the best for aliens. You couldn't go one minute without getting interrupted or without the subject changing....

A lot of the van's noise level can be determined by where you travel. For example, if you were to take the middle school to a candy or ice cream parlor and tell them they could get anything they wanted, you would be asking for big trouble. Survival tip: don't give a middle schooler the key to a sugar plantation.

**~ Adam Larrimore**

While we were driving to the Lawrence Hall of Science on our Fall field trip, there was an amazing view of San Francisco Bay. There were so many tall buildings and a lot of houses and trees. When we got to the Lawrence Hall of Science, one of my favorite exhibits was called The Sphere. By a push of a button, I could see the recent earthquake in Japan, the tsunami that followed, our earth, and also our moon. The earthquake caused a lot of damage to the countries of Japan and India. This caused a huge amount of flooding in Japan and India. The earthquake actually made the earth split in two parts and go into two different directions! The shaking caused a tremendous amount of damage to the houses in Japan and India.

The earthquake forced the ground into a shape like a hill. The two sides of the split were different, as one part of the split would go up and the other would stay down. The tsunami caused a lot of damage to the people's houses. Many were destroyed. This natural disaster also caused great economic crises. Many people died from the earthquake and the tsunami.

**~Jeydie Pondler**

Our first field trip of the year to Point Reyes on October 3, 2011, was an incredibly interesting adventure...including the discovery of some antiques (pre 1998)... When we arrived at Gary's "rustic" cabin in Point Reyes, we put down our bags and walked through the building. We found an old computer and a floppy disk. I picked up the floppy disk and read it. The floppy disk said, "windows 98 startup disk." I then said with a grin, "Let's put some coal in this thing and fire it up!" Everyone laughed....

~**Rico Barron**

After dinner some of us watched a movie called *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*... About half an hour in, I decided to see what the rest of the class was doing in the old room on the other side of the house. When I walked in, there was almost as much chaos as the van ride because of a glow-stick war. So I decided to join in. To win the game you needed to throw the glow-stick and hit the other team. About half way through, Reza got about twenty glow-sticks and just threw them right when everybody wasn't hiding, and he took out everyone. It was lots of fun....The definition of chaos is "complete disorder and confusion." Throughout the field trip there was a lot of chaos, but it was a good kind of chaos....

~ **Evan Rose**

Drake's Beach...had a beautiful view of Drake's Bay and some distant ridges that were shrouded in fog, and

clouds. Gary ate his lunch, and Ciaran dug several deep holes while I looked for sea glass and shells down the beach. Sadly, I only found two pieces of sea glass, one white and one brown, but I found lots of whole shells. From where we were sitting we could see the sea lions that live in Drake's Bay, but not very well because they were out on a rock that jutted into the bay, so they were just tiny brownish-black blobs. We stayed in that spot a while, but then Gary realized that the tide was coming in and that we should go back before the way was blocked. On the way back, he realized that he couldn't take the other kids on the walk because of the tide. I was enthralled by Gary's explanations of how the beach, the Estero, and the bay were named for Sir Francis Drake. I relished the beautiful and serene walk with Gary, and the magnificent views we had from the beach at Drake's Estero....

**~ Kelly Olivier**

While we were hiking, we talked about the history of Sir Francis Drake. We learned that people have been looking at Sir Francis Drake's chaplain's travel journal to try to learn about where he landed to fix his damaged ship. In his journal he talks about seeing white cliffs in the sunlight. Drake's Estero's cliffs look white in the sunlight. He also described how perfect the low water level of the Estero is. Learning about the history of Sir Francis Drake was very fun! At the mouth of the Estero I could imagine a ship shaped like a pirate ship on it's side with people doing construction on the bottom. They would be pulling broken planks off the bottom of Sir Francis Drake's ship and putting on new boards and metal sheeting to fix the ship.

**~ Ciaran Farley**

The boys created an interesting and dangerous game where you would throw a rock at the crumbly cliff and try to get a large amount of rubble to fall off of it. After I watched this for about ten minutes, I decided to join in, and for some reason it was a very fun game. Someone would find a group of loose rocks on the cliff and shout, "target acquired" and show the others the "target." Then we would all throw rocks at the "target" until it came off the cliff. When that target was gone, we would then find another target and so on. After we had knocked down a particularly large "target," I discovered that it had crystals on it. Technically, they were just salt crystals that formed when salt water seeped into a crack in the cliff and dried up to form the crystals, but everybody was very excited. A little later on, the boys started to choose one specific rock, name it, and use it as a missile until it broke into little pieces. Rico named his Tooth Fairy, and later Jelly Bean, while Adam found one that looked kind of like a knife and named it Saber.

Shubha had the idea that we should stand on one of the clay rocks and watch the waves go in and out. At first, we went on this very low rock, but then we realized that we would get really wet, so we went on a medium sized one and stayed there for a while. Some of the boys were still building the fort, and Reza got a splinter. They needed my pocketknife because it has tweezers in it, so I left Shubha, Jeydie, and Mariah on the rock to go help Reza. While I was gone, a rogue wave came, and all the girls got their shoes wet. This happened because Shubha blocked the only way off the rock when the water is around the front of it. Mariah, Jeydie, and Shubha went back to their backpacks to try to find dry pants and socks, but they didn't have any extras packed. Shubha went off somewhere while Mariah, Jeydie, and I went to some rocks to poke sea anemones (it's actually quite fun). We decided to go to an even larger rock to find more anemones to poke. We found a whole colony, but they were all closed up

because the tide pool that they were in would drain when it got full. We decided to try and fill it up with seaweed bulbs. Seaweed bulbs are the long, hollow parts of kelp with a larger bulb at the end. I cut open the two largest ones I could find with my pocketknife. We filled them with water over and over to try to fill up the tide pool, but it kept draining, and we gave up. We were pretty far away, so we decided that we should go back in case everyone was leaving.... I appreciated the freedom and sense of adventure that Helen and Gary gave us on this field trip. It was refreshing. I also enjoyed spending time with and getting to know the other kids in my class. I wish that I could see all the beaches in Point Reyes if Drake's Beach is anything to go by.

**-Kelly Olivier**

One of my favorite games was knife throwing, organized by Adam, Rico and Shubha. The rules were: don't throw the knife at anyone, don't throw a knife when anyone is in front, behind or next to the target, and don't jump in front or behind the target when someone is throwing. The objective was to get the knife stuck in the log about 10 feet away. The knife was black, and people weren't always very successful at hitting the log. That is how we lost the knife twice. The first time I found the

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knife, but the second time we weren't so lucky. Knife throwing was cool because you got to throw real weapons. My friends from Clifford School will be so jealous.

~ **Sierra Sholes**

The definition of chaos is “complete disorder and confusion.” Throughout the field trip there was a lot of chaos, but it was a good kind of chaos. Sometimes there was peace, and there was always a lot of fun. I really look forward to the next middle school field trip, and I thought that this week was really amazing!

~ **Evan Rose**



## Essays on Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*

*Editor's note: Having read The Taming of the Shrew in class, we saw the Cal Shakes production of it while on our field trip to Point Reyes.*

### **CalShakes' *Taming of The Shrew***

*By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13*

CalShakes is a theater company in northern California that has a reputation for putting on spectacular plays. This year one of their plays was *The Taming of The Shrew*, directed by Shana Cooper. Having read this play in class, we went to see it. I can say with certainty that all of us were in for a surprise. This play is controversial and can be staged in many different ways. Miss Cooper had an interesting way of doing it. The production was funny and light, but, underlying the plot, was an interpretation, which sent a message about the characters and their relationships. It was sublime. She took this traditional comedy and tuned it to the demands of a modern audience.

Her character portrayal made the play unique. Bianca (Alexandra Henrikson) was the naughty, blonde beauty queen (recently proclaimed "Miss Padua"). Katherina, the Shrew, (Erica Sullivan) was the "spoilt teenager" wearing cargo pants and army boots, and Petruchio (Slate Holmgren) was the tough body builder wearing a bunch of outfits, including half a pair of pants and saran wrap. Baptista Minola (Rod Gnapp), the typical hardworking dad, wore a blazer, and Gremio (Danny Scheie), the crabby old man, had a bit of a '60s look and a New York accent. Instead of having Renaissance gentlemen come in with roses and medieval tunics to woo Bianca, Cooper made them wear blazers and shades, and carry heart shaped balloons. This all worked out. It would have been nice to see the traditional version of the play with the lords and ladies and dukes and duchesses, but body builders and spoilt teenagers worked just as well.

Other components also made a difference in conveying Cooper's vision. The music was interesting. It went from '60s music all the way to Lady Gaga's Poker Face. The theme song was "Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?" which was an interesting choice for this play. The set was perfectly suited for this play, and conveyed the time setting immediately. There was a double floor. The bottom floor was bare, while the top was a living room in either Minola's house, or Petruchio's house. It was furnished with a modern reclining chair, plants, and a couch. This seemed to work out well, considering that the play was set in many locations, so it allowed for versatility.

By far, the best part about this play was how Miss Cooper depicted the changes the characters underwent. For example, when you read the play, you do not think of Bianca going through a change of personality, but in this production she definitely changed. In fact, Kate and Bianca almost switched roles. At the beginning of the play, Bianca says, "Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe," when they ask her

to leave. But at the end of the book, when the new husbands are betting on the obedience of their wives, she says, "Fie, what foolish duty call you this?" In the play she said this quite arrogantly, which was a bit surprising, especially because that is not how we expect Bianca to behave. But Bianca was not the only character who went through a change. Our main character, Kate, went through a huge change! You could see how Petruchio tamed her. At the beginning she was yelling and screaming and hitting everyone, including her sister. But at the end, as Kate and Petruchio were just walking off stage, you could see by the way they were holding hands and looking into each other's eyes that they were friends. That is what I thought made this a happily-ever-after play. After all of the drama and fights, it was a relief to see them together. I could see the change the characters went through clearly, which is something I enjoyed about the play.

The CalShakes performance of *The Taming of The Shrew* exceeded all of my expectations for it. *The Taming of The Shrew* can be a confusing play, but Miss Shana Cooper set a perfect balance of humor and seriousness. She did an exquisite job and impressed us all!

### **The Taming of the Shrew: A Play of Humor and Imagination**

*By Kieran Rege, age 14*

This fall, our class read William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew: The Cambridge University Edition*. It was deep, specific, and easy to understand. I was able to really enjoy myself while reading it as a part of our Reader's Theater production. Then I wondered how much the Cal Shakes version of the play was going to meet up with my expectations. I am happy to say that all out preparation absolutely paid off.

Individual performances by the actors were outstanding. All of the actors helped make these characters believable. There were serious characters, funny characters, mean characters, and some pretty complicated comical banter between them all. It all just seemed to work. The relationships were entertaining, and they made the play very enjoyable to watch. I loved it. Petruchio had a particularly interesting personality. He isn't your ordinary main character. For example, at his wedding, he wore a ridiculous costume. It was a part of his plan to tame his bride, Katherina. I'm just glad that it was part of the original play, instead of a superfluous new addition, which made no sense. Katherina was a suitably mean person. Her typical conversations with Petruchio included some hilarious moments, and the actress who portrayed her did a great job showing the evolution of her character, from mean to nice. Gremio, one of the suitors, and Grumio, Petruchio's servant, had so many laugh-out-loud moments. Gremio's accent, which was New York Jewish, was priceless, and Grumio acted as the fool of the play. They are good contenders for some of the funniest people I've seen in a theater production.

I also really appreciated the atmosphere of the play. It had so many themes and moods, including many funny scenes. But there were also serious scenes, such as the last scene when Katherina and Petruchio

walked out of the room. The play had a consistent sense of morality and meaning, and every scene had a purpose, even the funny ones, such as a scene when Katherina was chasing after Hortensio. These types of moments were peppered into the play at just the right times. Shakespeare just seems to know the perfect moment to add comic relief. The pacing never wore thin either. Every scene transferred smoothly into the next. The little plot twists and unexpected change of character motivations made it even richer, especially the final speech in the play, which really brought out Katherina's true view of everything.

While the script of the play was similar to the one that our class read, the production was very ambitious and original. I thought that it was hilarious and very meaningful. I could really see a strong connection between Katherina and Petruchio by the end, which made this production special. I think that there is a moral in the play that suggests that good relationships depend on mutual respect. All of these elements together make this one of the most special plays out there.

### **Shakespeare: Modern vs. Traditional**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

In comparing the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the present in matters of equality, people's roles, and societal ideas, it becomes clear that some of the older ideas have been discarded in modern times. As a result, some directors direct Shakespeare's plays for a more modern audience through tone of voice, physical behavior, the overarching relationship of the characters throughout the play, the costumes, set, and music. A wonderful thing about Shakespeare is how many options he gives a director. In the Cal Shakes production, *The Taming of the Shrew*, the director decided to give the play a modern twist.

If you showed the Cal Shakes play to a 16<sup>th</sup> century audience, the reaction from the crowd would be quite different than the reaction from a modern audience. At the time, women were considered property and had no rights. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Katherina would have been portrayed as more broken than triumphant. She could even have been perceived as mad or crushed. In Shakespeare's time, Katherina was far from the perfect wife. In Shakespeare's time, Petruchio's powerful domination over Katherina would have been accepted. In the more modern production, however, even though Petruchio enjoyed depriving Katherina of food and sleep and manipulating her, he loosened his grip upon Katherina near the end of the play and even enjoyed Katherina's strength.

A modern audience has a very different outlook on the ending of the play than Shakespeare's audience would have had. Instead of Katherina being broken, she is triumphant. Katherina and Petruchio end up being a team. Petruchio, Lucentio, and Hortensio make a bet of 100 crowns to see whose wife is most obedient. All of the ladies are summoned, but the only one who comes is Katherina. Petruchio asks Katherina why the other women are not beside her, and she says that they are talking and feel that their husbands are jesting with them. Petruchio then tells Katherina to bring Bianca and the widow in. Petruchio then demands that Katherina tell the two wives what they owe to their husbands. Katherina tells them that their husband is their protector and master. To add emphasis to her speech, she speaks with dignity and trust. When Petruchio and Katherina walk off stage, they look happy and teasing like a couple. It is clear that Petruchio and Katherina became teammates, friends, and lovers. By contrast, at the end of the play, Bianca is more shrewish than Katherina!

To reinforce her modern take on the play, the director put in place many modern touches: songs by Madonna and Lady Gaga, plus the actors were wearing T-shirts and jeans. The set for the entire play included a leather office chair and coffee table. The actors carried balloons,

and they even had a motorcycle! As I read this Shakespeare play, I was imagining Elizabethan costumes, tapestries, and woven carpets. Seeing a traditional version of this play inside my head compared to the very modern rendition at Cal Shakes, offered a new perspective, especially on the relationship between Katherina and Petruchio.

Modern audiences compared to Shakespeare's audiences have a very different outlook on life, making a director's job quite interesting and offering more options. The more modern rendition of the show gave me a new, fresh, and exciting perspective. However, there is an art to balancing old and new. There must be a combination of both. As a modern audience member, I think Cal Shakes did an excellent job of combining the two. Shakespeare would approve.

## **Who's the Shrew?**

*By Sita Chandrasekaran, age 14*

The reputations of the characters of the *Taming of the Shrew* change over time, and so do the reactions of the audiences. For example, in the *Merchant of Venice*, Shylock the Jew is persecuted and wouldn't have received any sympathy in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but now, after the Holocaust, people feel more compassionate towards him. The same thing happens in the *Taming of the Shrew*, and so I invite you to look through the layers of manipulating schemes and unspoken feelings.

At first, Katherina is like a skunk – if you see her, stay far away to avoid the disgustingly scolding stench, but, just like a frightened skunk, Katherina has a reason for her behavior. She wants to be free, which, of course, was a “crazy” idea for the time. At first, she persists in having her way and pushes even more when her father fights to have control. This behavior plaintively shows her independence and her firm resolve not to give up, to be accepted as she is. After she gets married and is deprived of sleep and food until she behaves, she finally gets a chance to eat at her father's house, but then Petruchio changes the rules. He refuses to go because Katherina won't agree to his proclamation that it is really night when it is actually day. Katherina finally decides to agree with whatever he says. Perhaps she gives into Petruchio because she is tired and weak, or maybe she decides to play along not only to get food and rest, but also to beat Petruchio at his own game. For, example Petruchio tells Katherina to address passerby Vincentio (an old man) as if he were a beautiful young girl. When Vincentio is startled by this greeting, Petruchio rebukes Katherina and tells her that Vincentio is an old man; and then Katherina apologizes saying, “Forgive me, father, the sun hath bedazzled my eyes and took you for a young girl.” Petruchio is testing her obedience, but she turns it around by saying it was the Sun's fault (which she had previously agreed was a Moon).

Katherina's last speech in the play gives even more food for thought. Why did she make that speech? Some think, that she was completely broken, but the speech is too powerful. If she were acting the entire time, then she probably wouldn't have made the speech with such passion and energy. Shakespeare's leading women are never weaklings. It doesn't make sense for Katherina to turn the tables on Petruchio, since after she started agreeing with him, he started being nicer to her. At the end, I think that Katherina strikes a remarkable balance when she says that wives should be subject to their husband's “good will,” meaning honorable will. Her speech suggests that she has understood that compromising can't just come from the other party – that marriage is a mutual understanding between husband and wife.

By the end, Katherina has pulled herself together. In my perspective, she has started to look at the entire society in a different way. At first, she looks at the society with contempt, because it will not allow her to be who she wants to be, but later she looks at society as a system that is not exactly perfect, but works well enough to make England one the greatest countries in Europe for that time. Mirroring Katherina's change for the better is Bianca's for the worse. Bianca becomes more shrewish to get her

way, while Katherina is tamer. Another change that I noticed was the switch in roles between Bianca and Katherina. In fact, the progress that I see in this play is the maturing of both Katherina and Petruchio.

## Excerpts from a Final Examination in Early American History

*Jamestown was important to U.S. history because...*

Jamestown was the first colony, so it was partially an experiment, and after some adversity like *The Starving Time*, people began to figure out how to survive in America. They contributed ideas to the founding of America such as religious freedom, new crops, and democracy. They started bad things like slavery and owning a wife.

~ Kelly Olivier

Jamestown is important in U.S. history for three reasons. It was the first permanent settlement in America. Another reason why it was important was because Jamestown was the first settlement that made its own laws. Also, it allowed people from other countries and other religions to be free.

~ Luke Chacon

In 1619, many things happened that proved Jamestown was there to stay. Not only did they bring Africans, they brought women, too. This means that people are ready to stay and make families. Several other things happened such as the first labor strike, the first time English settlers were allowed to own land, and the first elected lawmakers known as the House of Burgesses, which gave the Virginians the chance to make laws instead of England making their laws.

~ Mariah Stewart

Just about everyone came to Jamestown in hope for freedom and a second chance. One of the greatest things about Jamestown in my eyes is its strength as a colony. It went through horrible times and continued onward. The settlers risked their lives to get a second chance. Their mental strength kept them breathing. It was will power, anger, and sadness that kept them fighting whatever was in their way. And that, in my eyes, is the beginning of the "new" age and the USA. Jamestown was also extremely unfortunate...many people lost their lives by arrow, starvation, sickness, or overworked labor coming to the land we call home today. We misunderstood our enemies, and they

misunderstood us. We betrayed each other in the struggle for survival. As great a monument as Jamestown is, many people seem to ignore or neglect the bad things that have happened, however...it was and always will be history.

~ **Rico Barron**

Jamestown was a new beginning for many people. It gave people a second chance at life. At this time, in England, you would be distinguished as a peasant, king, queen, etc. In the New World, everyone was treated equally. This made people want to come to the New World even more. Who wants to be put down in one country, when you can be equal in another? People came here to start a new life.

Not everything about Jamestown led to good things in America's history. Jamestown did bring slavery to America and that was not really something to brag about. In 1619, slaves came. Why? The reason was that a new plant was found in Jamestown. Tobacco. This had started a big trade with England (which was also another fact of why Jamestown is important). But planting tobacco was not an easy job. The answer: get slaves to do it. Slaves were brought from Africa and sold to the people of Jamestown. This is one event that led to The Civil War.

~ **Shubha Chakravarty**

Jamestown was a colony that didn't give up and survived at the worst times. The colonists survived the Starving Time, Indian attacks, the weather, the environment, and The Massacre. The survivors almost gave up after all they had been through. But they came back, ending up with a colony and giving thanks. If there hadn't been a Jamestown, our present America wouldn't be so big and free."

~ **Reza Navadeh**

"Jamestown was a new beginning for many people. It gave people a second chance at life. While in England you would be distinguished as a peasant, king, queen, etc., in the New World, everyone was treated equally. This made people want to come to the New World even more. Who wants to be put down in one country, when you can be equal in another? People came here to start a new life.

What ideas (and ideals) did colonists bring? They wanted more freedom, isn't that why they came? But what was their standard of freedom? Everybody from Europe wanted as much or more freedom than in England. Now that might seem like a low standard, but at the time it was THE standard.

This is the most important point. Their standard was high for the time, and kept growing, until they broke away from England, until we have what we have today.

**~ Sita Chandrasekaran**



## Research Papers on a Famous Person

### Andrew Hamilton

*By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13*

Have you ever heard the term “Philadelphia Lawyer?” If yes, then do you know where it came from? It came from a very famous case called the Zenger Case, in which the great lawyer who fought and won the battle was from Virginia. This lawyer’s name was Andrew Hamilton. This name might not ring a bell in your head, but Hamilton was the man who helped this country earn freedom of speech and freedom of press.

Born in 1676, in Scotland, this slightly chubby man did not speak much about his childhood, parentage, career, or even name. At one point he walked around with the name of Trent. In 1697, he arrived at Accomac County, Virginia and started learning law. He taught at a classical school, and there met a student of his named Joseph Preeson. He got a job on the Preeson plantation as a steward. In 1705, Preeson died, but Andrew still worked on the plantation. Soon after, on March 6th, 1706, Andrew married Ann Preeson, the widowed wife of Joseph Preeson.

In 1712, Andrew moved to Chestertown, Maryland and started to practice law. A little later he left for England to “raise his status.” He was then called upon by the Penn family to fight a replevin case against Berkeley Codd. A replevin case is a case that allows for a person to get back whatever they lost if it is being kept away from them. Andrew helped him win the case and this was the start of a long and friendly journey between the Penn family and Hamilton. His victory with the Penn case and visit to England brought him popularity, and he caught the eye of the Baltimore family. This led to him becoming the deputy of the Maryland House of Delegates. On May 14th, 1715, he helped put together a series of laws called the Act of 1715, which helped form the law that was Maryland was based upon until the Revolutionary War. A little later there was some friction between the Native Americans and the Colonies. A Seneca man had been killed by a colonist on Native American Property. Andrew was sent to go and meet the five nations, or the Iroquois League. After peace was brought, Andrew went to them and gave them gifts on behalf of the Colonists.

By far, Hamilton is most well known for his excellence in the Zenger Case. John Peter Zenger was a printer for *The New York Weekly Journal* and had printed some papers that criticized the English. He was taken to trial for libel immediately. The trial was about to start when Andrew stood up and asked the judge if he could take the case. The judge could not say no to him because Andrew had become a very influential and wealthy person. So, Andrew took on the Zenger case pro-bono (which means he did it for free and did not take any payment.) His main plan was to surprise them and catch them off guard. First he admitted that it was indeed John who had written those papers. At this point the other team tried to end the case by saying that he admitted it, so he is guilty. But then Hamilton said something that changed American history forever. He said, "There is no libel if truth is told." The jury heard this and proclaimed Zenger as innocent.

Andrew had a nice family. He and his wife Ann had a few children; Margaret Hamilton born in 1709, James Hamilton in 1711, and Andrew Hamilton in 1713. Margaret married William Allen, and they had six children together. Andrew really bonded with his son-in-law, because they both worked in the government. Andrew Hamilton II married Mary Till, the step great granddaughter of Berkeley Codd, the man who Andrew faced in court with William Penn.

After looking at Andrew's work and success, I have come to the conclusion that he deserves the quality of "sense of justice." This was portrayed in his Zenger case, which was a huge accomplishment for America. If you do not believe me, then listen to what he said. He himself said, "It is not the cause of one poor printer, nor of New York alone...It may in its consequence effect every free man...in the main[land] of America. It is the best cause. It is the cause of liberty."

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## **Deborah Sampson**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 12*

Deborah Sampson was a woman of true courage. She went into war disguised as a man not thinking of the consequences of being found out, all because of her need for adventure.

Deborah Sampson Gannet was born on December 17<sup>th</sup> 1760 in Plympton, Massachusetts, a small village, to Jonathon and Deborah Bradford Sampson, who was a descendant of William Bradford. She was the eldest of three boys and three girls. However, at a young age, her father left her family in order to go across the sea for adventure and drowned. Her mother could not support the large family and so sent them all to different friends, neighbors and families. Deborah became an indentured servant with Deacon Jeremiah and SuSannah Thomas. She would do all sorts of things; clean the house, sew and spin, and watch the children. She loved to learn, and so made the little boys in the families teach her the lessons that they learned in school. Finally, when she was 18, she earned her freedom and became a teacher, using all her knowledge from the little boys' lessons.

Deborah was someone who needed to have adventure and longed to travel around the world. So she enlisted in the army as a "continental soldier." and the local recruiting office recruited her as Robert Shurtlift from Caver. She bought herself some men's clothing. When she was dressed up in the men's clothing, her own mother couldn't recognize her! Deborah Sampson first served Captain George Webb. Her height of 5' 8" was average for men back then, so her fellow soldiers just thought that she was a short man. During her first battle, she got shocked with two musket balls on the thigh, and got a big gash on her forehead. The other soldiers in her troop decided to take her to a hospital, but she had asked them to leave her to die, for fear of being found out, but they refused. When she got to the hospital a couple of doctors took care of the cut on her forehead, but she left before they could take out the musket balls. Then later, with a penknife, she managed to take out one of the musket balls, but her leg never healed because of the other musket that was too deep in her leg to get.

About a year later, she was promoted to being a waiter to General John Patterson for about seven months. Then on June 24<sup>th</sup>, the President of Congress told General George Washington to lead a bunch of soldiers to Pennsylvania. But during the summer, Deborah got the fever and became unconscious. She was taken to a doctor, Dr. Binney, who found out the secret; however he did not reveal her secret. He took her home with him, where his wife and daughters took care of her. Then, after she recovered, she went back to war, but when the day for the soldiers to go home came, Dr. Binney gave her a note,

asking her to give it to General Patterson. She knew that he would get upset, but he simply gave her an honorable discharge.

After she came back from war, she married a young farmer, Benjamin Gannet and had three children, Earl, Mary, and Patience. She also adopted Susanna Baker Sheperd, a delightful orphan.

Deborah Sampson was not very beautiful, but she was able to impersonate a man to get into the army. Paul Revere, one of her friends, said about her, "I have been induced to enquire her situation, and character, since she quit the male habit, and soldier's uniform for the most decent apparel of her own sex; and obliges me to say, that every person with whom I have conversed about her, and it is not a few, speak of her as a woman with handsome talents, good morals, a dutiful wife, and an affectionate parent." Deborah loved to speak. She would often wear her soldier uniform and make trips around England and New York giving speeches about serving her country. Her friend Paul Revere wrote to Congress asking for Deborah to be given a pension, which is like a payment, and so she was given four dollars every month.

Deborah Sampson died on April 29<sup>th</sup> 1827, at the age of 66 due to yellow fever. She is buried at Rock Ridge Cemetery in Sharon, Massachusetts. I believe that Deborah Sampson should receive the quality of Bravery, because she was the first women to ever disguise herself as a man and go to war. After all it takes courage to be the first.

**Selected Play Reflections on the 19<sup>th</sup>  
Annual  
Theater Magic Production**

**The Subject Tonight is Love  
The Life and Poetry of Hafiz**

## Adventurers (1st Grade)

... My favorite part of the play was the first night when I didn't know how it was going to go but then I did my parts perfectly...

*~ Clara Rosenberg, age 6*

... Before the rehearsals started I felt nervous about getting up on stage and speaking my lines in front of the audience. I took lots of deep breaths, and I calmed myself. It felt really easy when I took a deep breath...

*~ Neil Devnani, age 7*

... The war scene was scary and awesome! The war scene had fighting and a loud gong. I liked the sound of the swords clinking against the shields...

*~ Edan Cho, age 7*

... I loved my beautiful angel costume. It was sparkly. I hope I can be an angel again in another play...

*~ Lylah Urrutia, age 6*

... I loved the war scene. It had loud music and the music had a lot of instruments...

*~ Akshay Singhal-Nulu, age 6*

... My favorite part of the play was the war scene when Muzaffar beat Abu Ishac...

*~ Vincent Barragan, age 7*

... I had to practice a lot to remember when to go on stage to say my lines. I was proud of myself for remembering!

*~ Joseph Dieckmann, age 7*

### Discoverers (2nd and 3rd Grades)

I liked my part as Hafiz' brother because it was the biggest part I've ever had. You have to have a good sense of acting. We used movements instead of having lots of lines... It was so dramatic to be in the war scene... Our director, Matthew, was a good director. He was very strict, but he was funny, too. Matthew is very British...

~ *Dominic Christiansen, age 8*

My favorite part of the play was the war scene. The war scene was a powerful scene. The people who were in it felt powerful, brave and astonishing. The lights were flashing red, and there were red ribbons hanging from the ceiling. The war scene was noisy because of the gong, the music, the clashing of the swords and the yelling.

~ *Elijah LaCour-DeLyle, age 8*

The war scene was very interesting because of the fighting, lighting and the sounds during the scene. ... The soldiers fought with their shields. The girls with waving streamers looked like fire on the battlefield. The fighting was exciting! The sounds of the war scene were very loud and intense.

~ *Faroz Aghili, age 8*

The costumes that were my favorite were worn by the pre-k, first grade, second grade, third grade, and some of the fourth and fifth grade, because they had black pants. The second thing I enjoyed about the costumes is how they fit. The pants and shirts were easy to move in. Mostly everyone had a clip for their hats. The clip was so the hat didn't fall off. The costumes in this play were magnificent.

~ *Finn von Bunau, age 8*

This year my school had a play called *The Subject Tonight is Love*. It contained an exciting war scene that was choreographed by Jorge Tejada. There was also an exquisite all-school poem.

The war scene made me feel exhilarated. There was so much going on – there were props hitting shields and streamers everywhere! Jorge made each move so vivid, we could not forget it.

But one of the most exquisite scenes was the all-school poem. I liked the way we did the movements. It was soothing.

~ *Gaurav Chakravarty, age 8*

I loved the Bismillah dance because it was inspiring. I liked being in the front because everyone could see me. And at the beginning we got to sing Bismillah. It took only a short time to teach us it. My teacher taught us the song; her name is Marguerite. She is really nice. Lots of girls liked the dance.

I love my costume. I got a dress. Asha put a lot of work into it. It was a green dress and had a lot of colors. I also liked the boys' costumes. Asha used plastic hats and put fabric on them. The women who helped me were good at braiding hair and giving ponytails.

*Living Wisdom School Angels Have a Lot to Say  
June 2012*

*~ Kaia Flores, age 7*

My third favorite part of the play was the entrance – it was cool. It was cool because we all walked in wearing our radiant costumes. ... We all took our bows at the beginning of the play and the audience liked it.

My second favorite part was my feeling of accomplishment when it was all over. I was cheerful and the audience was cheering while the classes took bows in consecutive order, and finally the Hafizes: Shuba, Adam, Finn, Reza and me. The audience clapped a lot for me; it made me feel joyful.

In my opinion, the best part of the play was the war scene; it was dark and sinister....The red lights made the scene full of tension. ...Warriors slashed, ducked, whirled and blocked with their swords, shields and bodies. It was very exciting and it seemed violent.

*~ Mace Drobac, age 9*

I liked 'Hatcheck Girl' because it was funny when the boys hit each other. My favorite performance was the last one because I got to have a lot treats. I had a cupcake and the cupcake had vanilla frosting on it and it also had sprinkles.

*~ Nakai Brock, age 8*

The dance I liked the most was the all-school dance. I liked it because the music was very active and I liked the dance moves. Marguerite was our dance teacher. I loved her choreography because it was incredible.

I liked the war scene costumes because they covered up my whole body and there was a headdress, and the headdress was my favorite part of the costume.

*~ Nina Ulaganathan, age 8*

Our school play this year was called 'The Subject Tonight is Love.' It was a love story full of poetry. One of my favorite poems was 'A good poem is like finding a hole in the palace wall – you never know what you might see.' This sentence is a simile comparing a good poem to a hole in a wall. I like it when poems use figurative speech.

Another poem had the words 'Nibble at me. Don't gulp me down.' I liked the poem because Shuba said the words beautifully.

The third poem was called 'I am a Hole in a Flute.' I really liked the poem because it talked about a flute and creatures that I thought were animals.

*~ Pailyn Tayjasanant, age 9*



*Living Wisdom School Angels Have a Lot to Say  
June 2012*

My favorite part was the war scene. It looked like a real battle! The lights were dimmed red. There were two types of soldiers. There was hand-to-hand combat and many soldiers fighting in the front. There were also girls with streamers that represented fire and blood.

*~ Ryan Jiang, age 8*

I liked my costume. My hat and pants were black. My shirt was white. My colors looked beautiful together.

The war scene was spectacular because director Matthew made us do a great job!

*~ Thandapani Chandrasekaran, age 8*

The poems were astonishing! I loved how Hafiz put all his hard work into his poems. They were about love and his love for God.

I loved my costumes. My costume contained a green sash, a golden vest, black pants, a white shirt and a black hat. It made me feel very happy.

*~ Vivek Punn, age 7*

I really liked my costume and all the other costumes, as well. My costume was a green dress with a leafy design on it. Kaia's was exactly the same. Nina's was blue and Pailyn and Nakai's were pink. Asha cut out all the pieces and some of the parents sewed them together. My mom did a lot of work on them. I think the play wouldn't have been the same without the beautiful costumes.

*~ Serena Peters, age 9*

Creators (4th & 5th Grades):

This year we did a play about the Sufi poet, Hafiz, and his journey to God. I was in four performances, two at night, and two during the day. The whole school was involved. Our teacher, Mathew Sloan, directed the play. A lot of work went into the play. The costumes, props, and set were so lifelike. The lights and sound worked with the set to make the dances and scenes stand out. I had a lot of fun performing. It was an honor to be in such a great play.

I felt many emotions in the play process. For my first performance I was really nervous. I had never been in a play before and I had no idea what to do. On my other performance's I wasn't as nervous, because I knew what to do. The play was great; however, I was relieved when it was over. I couldn't wait to relax for two weeks.

My favorite scene was the war scene. I started out as a soldier in the front row. Then, Mathew gave me a fighting partner. I got to learn the choreography for the big battle. I started practicing the choreography with a foam pad for a shield and a stick with padding for a sword. It was my favorite scene because I got a sword and shield, and I got to fight a partner. My favorite dance was the Nazcan dance. When the girls spun slowly, the sequins on their dresses glittered. I thought the dance was lively.

All in all the play was fantastic! The teachers put a lot of work into the play. Our director, Mathew Sloan, fit everything together like a giant puzzle. A lot of parents volunteered to help set up the stage. I even spent some time setting up the swords and shields on the Sunday before the first performance. I enjoyed being in the play. I am so proud to have been in such a great play, and I hope everyone else felt the same way.

*~ Andrew Dollente, age 11*

*Living Wisdom School Angels Have a Lot to Say*  
*June 2012*

This year the community of Living Wisdom preformed a production of *The Subject Tonight is Love*. The play tells the story of the life and poetry of the mystical Sufi poet, Hafiz. Marguerite Fishman choreographed the dances; Mathew Sloan directed the production; Gary McSweeney designed and operated the lighting; Erica Glazzard created and presented the slide show; Helen Purcell did sound; Craig Kellogg did the soundtrack; and Asha Prayer and her friends created the costumes for each of the performers. Each one of these people was vital to the play's success.

Marguerite Fisherman choreographed and miraculously produced the dances for the play. She is one of the best dance teachers I have ever had. (And I've been dancing for a while.) She knows how to motivate us to doing our best. I guess you could say she knows kids. Whenever I don't understand a part of the dance, she is able to explain it to me clearly. If I still don't understand it, she shows me – that always works!

Gary McSweeney did the lighting design and operated them during the play. They were breathtaking. He spent so much time planning the lights that they came out flawlessly. My favorite lighting effect was during the war scene. Gary had a mix of red light and some gold. The effect it created on the stage with the hanging paper lanterns looked spectacular. The lights, plus the streamers, music, and gong, made this the most spectacular scene I have ever seen. It was A-M-A-Z-I-N-G!

The play was spectacular! It was a royal blessing to even be in the same room as the performance, let alone participate in it. This year, barely any people counted their lines and complained. I guess the saying, "There are no small parts... only small actors." really changed people. It was the best performance I have been in and I've been in over 35 of them! Every time it just gets better. Long live LWS!

*~ Divya Thekkath, age 11*

This year we did a school play on the life of Hafiz, a famous ancient poet from Persia. It included breath-taking costumes hand made by Asha and her helpers; sets beautifully hand painted by the teachers, students, and parents; songs from Persia; poems written by Hafiz; exquisite dances choreographed by Marguerite; and wonderful lighting designed, programmed, and operated by Gary.

The dances, choreographed by Marguerite – our best and only dance teacher – were fantastic! They included real Sufi dances taught to Marguerite by Kelly Olivier’s grandmother. After months of stumbling and falling, we pulled it off. Most of the dances were perfect or near perfect. We had many dances including The All School Dance, the Nazcan, and the Disciples’ whirling dervish dance. They were all flawlessly performed at the time of the play.

This year, I had many emotions before, after, and during the play. Every performance was different. Before the first performance, I felt very nervous. I had no idea how the play was going to be. I didn’t know whether it would work, blow up, or get a standing ovation from the audience. Wednesday’s play went well, there weren’t many mess-ups. After Wednesday’s performance, I felt extremely good inside because I knew we did a good job and that we knocked the audience dead. I felt about the same on Thursday, with the exception that I messed up a couple lines. I was really annoyed with myself for messing up; however, life went on. On Friday, I felt close to flipping out because I was a little sick, and I knew that whatever I did would be on film. I didn’t mess up that much. I missed one line, but I recovered, remembered the line, and said it. I felt pretty good after Friday’s performance, mainly because I went to bed straight after it. On Saturday I don’t feel I performed that well. I forgot a few lines, but I felt good knowing that I did a reasonable job. After the play I was so tired, but I went out for ice cream and candy anyway.

All in all, the play went well. Other than a couple of slip-ups, like forgetting lines or missing a scene, the play was good. We had a ~~good~~ **great** director, beautiful costumes, flawless lighting, perfect writing, magical dances, and great props. So needless to say, and I might be repeating myself, the play went great!

*~ Finn Mennuti, age 11*

There were many of Hafiz's wonderful poems in the play. One of my favorite poems is: "I am hole in a flute that the Christ's breath moves through." I liked this poem because it signaled the beginning of the magic of theater. Even the second time Hafiz recited the poem I still felt the magic flow over me.

I played a Narrator this year. Compared with last year's Living Wisdom School play, *Cry From the Heart of the First Americans*, I had more lines. To begin with, I had a hard time memorizing my lines; however, I still hungered for more. In fact, I succeeded in getting another line. It was from the beautiful poem, "We Are the Guardians of His Beauty."

When I was awarded the line "Let a noble cry inside of you speak to me saying," I felt a wash of nobility flow over me, soothing the guilt of wanting more lines when I hadn't memorized the ones I already had. Getting this line motivated me, to not only memorize the rest of my lines, but also to actually *feel* them – not just say them because I had to. Surprisingly, I didn't hunger for more lines. I feel that if I hadn't got this line, I would still have needed the script in the performances.

Honestly, I felt that this was the best Living Wisdom School play ever, not just for me, but also for every other star who participated in this magical production. It was full of learning and joy. I can't wait to participate in another Theatre Magic production next year!

~ Freya Edholm, age 11

Before the first performance I felt very giddy, but also confident and excited. My confidence grew with each performance. After my last performance on Saturday, I felt exuberant because I had finished yet another play. I didn't really have a favorite performance; however, I enjoyed Friday's performance in particular. It had a very good audience. They responded well to the jokes, sad moments, and joyful moments.

During the third show I forgot to go on for the poem "Guardians of His Beauty." It was mortifying! I could not believe I missed it. Worse still, it was the night we were being filmed – "Ugh!" During intermission, I was very hard on myself. As bad as I felt, I just accepted my mistake and moved on. In retrospect, I should have been kinder on myself. Everyone makes mistakes.

I thought that the costumes were exquisite. The stitching was so small and intricate! The variety of the girl's costumes was beautiful. There were red, pink, blue, yellow, gold, silver, green, purple, and brown dresses. The boys' costumes, however, were almost all the same. A white blouse, black pants, a hat, and a belt in pink, blue, green, or yellow. My favorite costume was Hafiz's mom, Banoo, played by my friend Chloe. It was a dark green velvet dress with gold trimming and a sparkly gold veil over her hair. The boys' costumes were made by Asha Praver and her friends, including my own mom! The girls' costumes were rented. Costumes are always one of my favorite parts of theater.

This year's play was definitely my favorite school play. I liked the costumes more, the storyline more, and the characters more. I love acting!

*~ Jeannessa Lurie, age 11*

I felt many emotions during the performances. In the first performance, I was very nervous and excited because it was my very first play. I was worried in the first performance that I was going to forget my lines, or forget when to go on. I needn't have worried because everything went well. On our second performance I was not as nervous. I was more excited. On the third and fourth performances I was not nervous at all. I was very excited and I couldn't wait to go on stage.

My favorite line in the play was when Hafiz said, "God belongs to only you!" The reason it was my favorite line is because I like to think God belongs to only me. This makes me feel safe and secure.

My favorite part of the play process this year was when I got to say my lines. It felt good to get up on stage in front of a lot of people and say my lines. I had never done this before. It gave me a feeling of accomplishment.

I enjoyed Saturday's performance the most. I felt courageous to perform in front of my dad and step-mom and I knew I would succeed. Another reason I liked the Saturday performance was because there was a lot more applause. The audience seemed more engaged. Of all the poems performed in the play, my favorite was, "Why are there so few in the court of the perfect saint?" I thought it was very funny when they all slapped each other.

This play was the first play I have ever done in front of an audience and it was very fun and I hope to do it again!

*~ Joey Mattia, age 10*

My first performance I was really scared and excited. The only thing I wanted was to do well. For the first performance and my first scene, I felt like hiding off stage. However, this wasn't an option. I went on stage and performed. As soon as the blackout happened I came straight off stage. After I was off stage, I was amazed and relieved that I hadn't made a mistake. After my first few lines, I became much more confident in myself and I projected my voice. On the second performance I remained very confident, so I did well. On the third performance, everyone, including me, got a little overconfident so we didn't do as well. On the last performance we gathered ourselves up and gave the best performance of them all.

I thought the best part of the play was the ending because it was very happy. I enjoyed taking my bows with my friends. After we finished each performance I felt a sense of accomplishment. I felt like a star. My favorite lines in the play are the last line, "I find my heart infinite and everywhere." and the line before the intermission "Ouch!!!!!" I like those lines because the first one is wise and the second one is funny. I also like them because they both lead to breaks in the performance, the intermission and the end of the play.

My favorite dance was the All School Dance because it was chaotic and energetic. I also liked it because the choreography is very complicated and matches the music perfectly. The choreography of the dance suited me well. I enjoyed grouping together as a snail, the chaotic parts, and the energetic parts.

This year in the play I learned patience, how to overcome stage fright, and to be determined. This play was a great experience.

*~ Jason Fu, age 9*



On the first performance, before we went on stage, I felt anxious because I thought I was going to mess up. After I finished I felt a lot better. I felt confident and courageous. I knew that if I could do one out of the four plays, I could do them all.

My favorite costume was Muzzafar's costume. I liked it because it had my two favorite colors, black and gold. I also liked it because it had gold coins that danced around. His turban was awesome because it matched his costume.

My favorite lighting effects were during the war scene. It was an awesome shade of red and the theater was very dark. My favorite poem in the play was "Meadows of God." It was awesome at the end when everybody lined up behind Mariah and put their hands out. It looked like she had twelve hands.

I felt joyful after the play. It was so fun! It was the best play ever. The play was enjoyable to be in. I hope I will do it again next year.

*~ Caleb Flores, age 10*

The war scene was really intense. The soldiers were marching slowly from the back of the sanctuary in beat with the cool war music. At first, the crowd did not notice the soldiers coming from the back. As the soldiers came closer to the stage the crowd started turning their heads to see them. The soldiers froze on stage prepared for battle. Then, the director, Matthew Sloan, smashed a mallet onto the gong. Everybody jumped in his or her seat. The battle began with the soldiers fighting each other with wooden swords and shields. At the end there was a crescendo of music, everybody on stage froze, and then a blackout. A martial artist, Jorge Tejada who was previously my teacher (he can break 12 bricks with his hand) choreographed the sword actions and fight pattern.

The next cool thing in the play was the costumes. I think Asha did a superb job on them. The boys' costumes were hand-made by Asha and her helpers. It must have taken hundreds of hours to make the boys' costumes. I loved the lighting in the play. It made the play come to life and be interesting. I feel, without lighting the play wouldn't be a play, it wouldn't be as exciting. The lighting is such a vital part of the play.

I felt a bit nervous and excited as most people are before going on stage. The nervousness plus the excitement made me full of energy on stage. After all of the hard work I think the play turned out great. I had great fun despite the pressured experience of the play process.

*~ Quincy Linder, age 10*

This year we did an amazing play on the life of the mystical Sufi poet, Hafiz. Every student participated in some way. I enjoyed the play process thoroughly; it was awesome! And I learned a lot about Persia and Hafiz's time. I also learned about Sufism. Of all the plays I have ever done, this was the most fun.

Wednesday's performance was nerve wracking for me. "No more time for errors and mistakes. It's time for the first one, no more do overs for anyone!" Thankfully I didn't mess up. For a little time during the first performance I panicked, but then I realized I have done this play a billion times in rehearsal.

Undoubtedly, the scariest moment for me was when Director Matthew told me I was filling in for Charlotte forty-five minutes before show time! I panicked for a few moments, but then I realized it wouldn't be that hard because I could memorize three lines in forty-five minutes. However, I missed a line because Director Matthew didn't show me the new version of the scene. I was memorizing the old version. During the performance Vivek asked me "Ready?" I answered, "Not this time." He asked, "Why not?" I replied, "I am in the next scene." "Oh," he said. During the scene, I said my first line then Vince said his line. Then there was a fifteen second silence. At the start of the silence I thought someone else had messed up. Everyone in the scene started looking at me. Suddenly, I realized they were looking at me to say Charlotte's next line. At that moment Ruth whispered my line to me and I said it.

My favorite scene in the whole play was the War Scene. It was really intense and drama filled. It took four weeks to choreograph two and a half minutes! I especially liked it because I got to fight Hugo Pappalardo, one of my best friends. It was a blast fighting him. However, it felt weird to be fighting my best friend. Luca's dad, Jorge, choreographed the fighting part of it. Jorge is a professional martial artist and teaches at a school that I go to.

My favorite props were the wood scimitars and shields. I got to stage fight with them. They made performing in the War Scene really fun. They were so life like. They made us look like professionals who were able to handle real scimitars and shields. My side, the good side, had swords and shields spray-painted silver. Hugo's side, the bad side, had shields spray-painted gold and swords spray-painted silver.

All in all, I learned a lot of life lessons and teachings. One of the lessons I learned is, if you want to achieve something you can always do it. Hafiz shows this in his search for God! He eventually found him at the end of forty, frustrating, years. Also, in the end he got frustrated with his teacher, Attar, because he felt he had gained nothing from him. However, when the Archangel Gabriel came to Hafiz he realized the love he had for his teacher and his only desire was to serve him.

*~ Pongsa Tayjasanant, age 10*

This year we did a play on the life of the mystical Sufi poet, Hafiz. Every student in the school was involved. The play told about Hafiz's life and poems. During the production, we studied about Hafiz and learned how to perform in a play.

During the performances, I felt many emotions and feelings. Before the first performance I felt nervous that something would go wrong with the lighting, or music; or that someone would get seen in a blackout (like Adam). However, during the other performances I was confident that everything would go well. While we were performing, I felt kind of scared since more than two hundred people were watching me. To handle this, I just focused on my lines and forgot about the audience. Of all my performances, I liked Saturday's performance best. We had a good audience and nothing went wrong.

I have learned many things from my play experience. The most important thing I learned is that you should always encourage yourself and never give up.

*~ Tyler Keen, age 9*

The lighting for the play was amazing. Gary McSweeney set up the lights. He put up different pieces of clear plastic to create different dramatic effects. For example, during the war scene he used red gel paper to create a scary, horrible, dramatic scene.

This year's costumes were cool. However the boys' costumes were very simple. The girls' costumes were fancy and colorful. My favorite costume was Hugo's. He was playing Muzzafar. It was all dark and scary looking. Asha did a good job. Some of the girl's costumes were rented. The boy's costumes were spectacularly hand made by Asha and her helpers. The ones that were handmade were very Persian looking.

I really liked most of the scenes and lines in the play. There were twenty-six scenes in the play and roughly one hundred and fifty lines. My favorite lines were my own because its fun to say lines. My favorite scene was the war scene because of the effort that went into it.

*~ Matthew Roberts, age 9*

I felt many emotions before and during the performances. On the day of the first performance, I felt happy and excited to act in the play. The next morning, I felt a little tired; however, I was excited to perform the play. On Friday I felt good, and I was ready to perform. On Saturday, I was really tired, and I didn't want to perform. However, When I arrived at school, and saw everybody, I got into my costume, and I felt energized to perform once again. After the last performance on Saturday night I felt good because I knew that the next day was my birthday. I enjoyed the Friday night performance the best because it was fun. They were filming, and I felt really good.

My favorite line in the play was, "Legend told that anyone who performed a forty night vigil at the tomb of the famous saint Baba Kuhu would win their heart's desire." It was a fun line to say. I like legends, and it would be great to fulfill a desire like that. I think that the most important line in the play was Shubha's line in the last scene when she said, "God belongs to only you." That is very inspiring.

My favorite part of the play was saying my lines for the first time in front of an audience on Wednesday. The scariest moment in the play was when I fell down the stairs in a blackout. I almost missed my next scene. I handled this moment by getting up, running to my place on stage as fast as I could, and going on with the play.

My favorite scene in the play was when four people recited the poem, "Why are there so few in the court of a perfect saint?" It is a funny poem, and it made me laugh when they hit each other on the head and cried, "Ouch!"

I learned about Hafiz's religion, poetry, and life. It was a great play, and I enjoyed being in it.

*~ Rishi Deshmukh, age 10*

During the play process and production I felt many different feelings. On Wednesday's performance I felt very nervous, not because it was my first play ever, but because I hadn't performed in such a long time. I was convinced I was going to make a mistake, but I didn't. On the morning of the second performance I felt very angry. During Wednesday's performance a few Middle Schoolers, from another school, had been very rude. They laughed and pointed at some of the performers. By the end of Wednesday's performance I was very angry. On Thursday's performance, more children were being rude. It was very frustrating. The performances on Friday and Saturday night were fine except my PARENTS were there. Having them watch made me feel nervous; however, I did fine.

My favorite line from the play is "God belongs to only you." I like this line because Hafiz means God belongs to everyone and everything in this world. My favorite dance in the play was the Disciple Dance. I liked this dance because the music was awesome, the dance was amazing, and it was executed splendidly.

From this play, I learned that every single person on planet Earth matters. And that God belongs to everyone. I also learned how to perfect my Theatre skills. This year I learned also how to do a Sufi dance and song. This year's play was my favorite ever. All in all, it was a great success.

*~ Kalyan Narayanan, age 9*

On Wednesday I felt very nervous. It was the first time we had performed. Questions were running through my mind: "Would I make a mistake?" "Would I miss a cue?" "Would I forget a dance step?" When I finished my first dance I didn't feel nervous anymore. The dance made me feel confident. After the performance, I felt relaxed because the play was over until the next day. On Thursday I felt a little worried but it didn't even come close to matching up with Wednesday. On Friday I felt a little less worried. And finally, on Saturday I felt relaxed, confident, and happy. I didn't even feel worried.

My favorite lines in the play was "Holding hands and climbing . . . together . . . I see . . . it is God's love that binds our hands together." I found it very touching. Also, I thought it was good because my friend said it with power and exuberance. The most important line in the play was "To God belong the east and the west and wherever you turn there is the face of God." I feel this line is saying God is always with you, God is always in your heart. Shubha, as Hafiz, said this line slowly and with feeling, which just added a "cherry on top." It was a great line made better by her power and feeling.

After the final performance I felt very sad and upset; however, I was also a little bit happy. In the dressing room after the play I cried for two reasons: 1. My best friend, Emma, was going to leave the school. 2. That the play was over.

*~ Ansley Perryman, age 9*

Before the first performance on Wednesday morning I was happy and excited to perform. This year, on the other performances I still felt happy and excited. Each new performance is a new adventure! Sadly, on the last play I felt ill. I didn't think I could perform. However, I performed the war scene and finished the play.

The script this year was well written. My favorite two lines in the play are "The jewel in the eye starts to dance." and "Lanterns of love." I like "The jewel in the eye starts to dance." because it sounds beautiful, like the end of a spell. I like "Lanterns of love" because it brings beautiful images to mind.

My craziest moment in the play was on Friday night after the "Lanterns of Love" poem. I dashed out the door because I was in scene 11A. As soon as I was out the door, I realized it was pouring rain. Only one thing to do- run!

The props, set, and costumes this year were awesome! The props made by Maria were cool! I would really like some of those paper lanterns for my room. The set made by Salvia and her special helpers was spectacular! It would be so fun to jump through the arch and visit the town square then jump back! It was fun to paint the set and the shields for the play. The costumes, whether made by Asha, my Mom, special helpers, or rented, were all cool! My favorite costumes were Shak-e-nabat's and the narrators' costumes. The costumes this year were far from dull!

These are the people I would like to thank: Thank you Asha, Gary, Maria, Salvia, Ruth, Erica, Helen, Adam, Craig, Marguerite, and of course Mathew and all the actors! I would also like to thank Sowmya. She always helped me when I went the wrong way in the Bismala dance. Thank you. This play was very good. The meaning I will take from this play is, "Never give up." After the last play all I wanted to do was go home. Hooray for the play!

*~ Elizabeth Peters, age 11*

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I was nervous before the first play on Wednesday morning because if I made a mistake, I wouldn't be able to re-do it. I was also glad because we had no more run-throughs or rehearsals. When Wednesday's play was over, I felt excited to perform the next three plays. My favorite performance was Saturday night, because it was the last time the play would be performed. Also, it was my only night performance because I was too sick to perform on Friday night, and it was the only time my family would see me in this play.

I think the most important line in the play was "Once upon a time, long, long ago, the poet we know as Hafiz was born in the city of roses and nightingales, Shiraz, Persia, in the early 1300's, to devout Muslim parents." I think this is the most important line in the play because this was when Hafiz was born; if Hafiz hadn't been born he wouldn't have existed; if he hadn't existed, we wouldn't have this play. Therefore, that is the most important line.

I was really happy after the final performance on Saturday night because I was going to go to get ice cream. Also, we had just finished performing the play for the last time, "Yay!"

*~ Charlotte Glen, age 11*



As in previous years, Asha and her friends either rented or made the costumes. The boys' costumes consisted of a white shirt, black pants, and a gold belt. They were distinguished by wearing differently designed hats and different colored belts. The girls' costumes were all individually designed. They were all intricate and beautiful in their own way. Some of them had long, shimmery veils, while others were brightly colored in patterns of leaves and flowers. They were all exquisite. My favorite costume was my own. I loved the mixture of deep green and gold in the fabric. It was so detailed, with a gold ribbon choker, a sparkly gold veil, and a tasseled green-and-gold vest. I also had billowy green pants. I wore my hair in two buns. It looked really cool and medieval under my veil.

On the morning of the first play, I was excited and not at all nervous. In fact, it was hard for me to believe that it was the actual play, and not just a dress rehearsal. It was very exhilarating and fun. I think the first performance was the best one. Everyone was excited and doing their best. In other performances, I felt some of the magic was getting lost. I wasn't as excited about performing.

I loved all the dances because each one had different music and movements. My favorite dance was the All School Dance. Everyone danced together on stage. All the colors of our elaborate costumes made a marvelous effect. I also loved the Nazcan Dance. It was fun to perform with all my best friends.

My favorite scene was the war scene. The effect of all the dark costumes, the red lighting, the music, and weaponry was very dramatic. I also loved how some girls got to stand in the aisle and wave streamers that signified blood and fire. It was spectacular!

I learned a lot of patience from this year's play. We rehearsed many times, especially the poems. Sometimes I had to hold my arms up for a long time. We had to do this in my favorite poem, "Lanterns of Love." All the actors had to hold up their lanterns above their heads. It really made my arms ache. However, all our hard work and the music made this poem one of the most beautiful in the play. I also gained in confidence this year. Usually, I get stage fright before the play, which immediately goes away when I begin acting. This year all I felt was excitement and happiness. This helped me enjoy the experience more thoroughly. I had a lot of fun.

At the end of Saturday's play, one of our best productions, and which a lot of my friends and family attended, I was happy; however I was also very sad. Everyone had worked so hard, it felt tragic that it was over. I know that I'll never experience anything like our Hafiz play ever again. I'm so glad I got to participate in the magic with everyone else who was in it or who watched it.

*~ Chloe Christiansen, age 11*

## Explorers (6th, 7th, & 8th Grades)

### How Does Learning to Act Help in Life?

*By Shubha Chakravarty, age 13*

Every year, our school does a play about some great human who has made an impact on the world. The play highlights people who are from all over the world, allowing us to learn about a new culture every year. We spend six weeks of our school year working on this production. We give up class time and personal time to make this play the best it can be. But is doing all of this worth it? Why do we spend so much time and energy for a school play? It is because learning how to act in theater is an amazing skill that can open up opportunities for the future.

Public speaking and stage confidence are two of the many life skills that make a huge difference in life. Participating in a play helps give you these skills. In recognition of this, all UC colleges now require one year of performing arts in high school. This is also one of the reasons all students from Pre-K to 8th grade participate in our productions. This allows for exposure to these experiences at a young age. As we go through more and more plays, our stage confidence increases and our ability to speak to a large group of people grows. Whether it is giving a presentation at school, or leading a team of workers at work, throughout life, situations come in which we must talk to a large number of people.

There is an old Chinese proverb that says, "Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand." This means that the best way to learn and understand something deeply is to experience it. One of the main goals of our productions is to help the actors and actresses learn about the time, culture, and politics of the main characters. By playing a part in a play of a 1300's Persian poet, we begin to learn and understand what the Persian civilization was like in that time. In 20 years, I may or may not remember that  $a^2+b^2=c^2$ , but I will remember the troubles the blacks went through during the Civil Rights Movement, and what Martin Luther King Jr. did to help them because of the play we enacted on his life.

While it is true that we put quite a lot of time into the play, our school academics continue, and when possible revolve around the play. During the Hafiz play, we did research about Persia and Islam. Studying this broadened our knowledge for the play, and, in return, the play helped us understand what we were studying -- a win/win!

The play goes hand in hand with academics in some surprising ways. For example, class and rehearsal go on simultaneously. We can be sitting in a Spanish class, when all of a sudden, a voice comes on the intercom saying, "I need all the actors for Act one, Scene seven." We stop what we are doing and quietly leave the classroom and head over to the theater. In the theater, we bare our souls. The director always asks for more energy, more projection, and more feeling. Then the scene is over and we run back to class bursting with adrenaline, only to sit down in a chair and quietly listen to what is happening. To do this at a young age takes tremendous control both mentally and physically. Learning how to do this increases self-control and calmness, two hugely important qualities.

In the end, is giving up a little class time really giving up academics? I believe that in doing the play we learn more than we could otherwise imagined. We learn things that we may not understand by reading

a chapter in a book, things that will go with us even as we grow and leave this school. This is the exact reason our school does these plays; in order to provide education for life.

## **The Ways of the Play**

*By Kelly Olivier, age 14*

It was very interesting to be a part of this year's play about the Persian poet, Hafiz. This is my first and only year at Living Wisdom School, because I came as an eighth grader, so I only get to do the play once. Even so, I can attest to the fact that the plays at my other schools pale in comparison to an LWS production. It felt wonderful to be a part of something that was of such excellent quality, to watch other actors try to express their parts, and to learn the Sufi style of dance and music. Having my grandma come to help teach the dances and to refine them was especially fun. All in all, I enjoyed everything, because it is amazing to see something so rough become polished.

For me, the most inspiring part of the play was the disciple dance. When Marguerite, our dance instructor, was casting the dances, everybody wanted to be in the disciple/ dervish dance. After they were about two weeks into practicing it, I asked Marguerite if I could be a part of the dance. I didn't have a character in the play, but I had some poetry, and I was in almost every dance. I am very good at spinning, and she figured out that it would be very interesting to add me in. She said yes, and added me in as the lead disciple. It was complicated, and it took us a while to get it right. When my grandma came to rehearsal and watched us practice, she gave us very helpful advice. She said that while we are spinning, we should look at the place where the walls meet the ceiling and keep our elbows straight. When I followed her suggestions, it was very meditative and calming. I can now understand how a practiced dervish can spin for half an hour and not get too dizzy or tired. When we got it right and were dressed in full costume, it had an otherworldly quality to it. When my parents watched the play, they said that having me come in right before the dance started added an interesting aspect to the dance. They said that it made them think, "Who's that girl?" when I came in. Out of everything, that was my favorite part in the whole play.

In the play you don't only learn on the stage, but you also learn off the stage. My teacher, Gary, assigned each of us a topic that had to do with the history behind the play. I did my report on Modern Sufism in America, while someone else did theirs on Persia in the 1300s. Listening to all the middle schoolers give their reports on Sufism helped me to learn more about Sufis, their history and where they come from. Sufi art is beautiful and a lot of it has a spiritual aspect to it. When Max did his presentation on Sufi art we noticed that many pieces of their art have wings of some kind in them sometimes on a bird or hidden in the background. Our teacher showed us a video about the culture and practices of modern day Iran. I didn't really know anything about Persia and the Middle East before this, and the play really allowed me to expand my knowledge in that area.

This play and all the rehearsals have helped me with public speaking. I noticed that after we performed the play, I was much more comfortable with speaking louder on stage, and I now do a much better job of speaking in front of the class. This will help me my whole life when I have to get up in front of people and tell them my ideas or present information.

I deeply enjoyed being part of a play that was so well executed, from the costumes, to the set, to the lighting and sound. This play has taught me important skills, and it has expanded my knowledge of Middle Eastern culture, art and religion. I really wish that I could have been in this school longer to be in more of the plays and because the kids and teachers are all wonderful and energetic.

## **War, Poetry, and The End**

*By Adam Larrimore, age 14*

How Do "War, Poetry, and The End" come together like salt and pepper on fried eggs?

The answer lies in the details of the experience of this year's play on Hafiz, a 14<sup>th</sup> century Persian poet.

I mention the war scene or the final bow because they were my favorite part of the play. I chose the war scene first because I really FELT it. The loud music, the good acting, dazzling lights, exquisite sound, including Matthew's well timed passionate striking of the gong, all came together in that one scene, and I think it blew the audience away. It sure did strike fear inside of me and got the point across about what was happening in Hafiz' times. I think the scene was the best one I have been involved in.

On the other hand, the final bow on the last night was amazing. People in the audience went berserk! This was a very, very, very deeply satisfying moment in my life. Having 300 people clapping, cheering, whistling, and smiling for me and my fellow actors is a truly divine feeling that everyone should experience at least once in their life. The whole experience was delicious.

The poetry too, was a divine experience. My favorite poem in this year's play was "The Small Man Builds Cages."

The Small Man  
Builds cages for everyone he knows  
While the sage,  
Who has to duck his head  
When the moon is low,  
Keeps dropping keys all night long  
For the beautiful, rowdy prisoners.

To me, "The Small Man" represents a wealthy businessman who is building cages for his employees that keep them from seeing God. He works them long hours, tells them to keep their minds on making money, and keeps everyone working hard doing his corrupted business. But the sage comes along, and he is very aware of these types of situations, and maybe he wants to bring God's message to earth and free people from their cages, telling them there is hope and that they should keep following the path that God has given them. That is what this poem means to me.

I feel that you cannot take in these poems in one brief reading. You have to read them many times, ponder, and see old meanings in new light. You should take a few minutes and look above at this wonderful poem and try to absorb it again and again to try to understand the truer, fuller meaning. It might open an inner door within your heart and you might not like what you see, but isn't that the beginning of change? At first, I thought how weird to have a man building cages. Then I thought about what the poem was saying metaphorically and how the small man was not keeping people in actual cages but was keeping them in a spiritual prison. He was keeping people from seeing God or a higher Being. In other words, the man was preventing people from having hope or faith.

Surprisingly for this year's play, I was not nervous one bit. As I looked out at all the people in the audience, my brain didn't say, "Oh God, all those people are looking at me!" nor did it tell my palms to

get sweaty and clammy and my knees to bend and shake in fear. Instead my brain said, "Hey, whatever." I was still acting with all my might, but my brain's nervous part just did not kick in like it has in the past. I think this calm energy came in part from the fact I played the head role of Hafiz. I tried to fully absorb his character into myself and to be calm. It worked very well.

This year's play was the best play for me because I felt a deep connection with the script. It had real meaning for me. It was more than just a play.

### **Hafiz: A Man With Many Words**

*By Kieran Rege, age 14*

Our play process went very well this year. We spent hours having rehearsals, setting up props, adjusting the lights, synchronizing the sound system, and memorizing our cues. Thankfully, it paid off. All of this hard work resulted in a memorable and very well done theater production on *The Life Of Hafiz: The 13th Century Persian Poet*.

The play process always starts with the exhilaration of seeing the scripts for the first time. You can't help but wonder what part you're going to have. Not only that, but you realize that whatever part you play, it will end up being something you'll have to be committed to for over a month and a half. I always become curious about how it might change as the play process goes on. When I looked in my script for the first time, I found out that I was one of the many narrators of the play, as well as the father of Hafiz. Some additional dancing parts were assigned to me later on, and I have to be committed to every single part.

Next would come rehearsals, which end up being the most unpredictable part of the whole play process. Things change constantly, but thankfully it's for the better. Parts can get changed around, scenes can be rearranged, and parts can even be cut (although I've never seen that actually happen before). Scheduling can also get sketchy. Some scene rehearsals can happen over twenty minutes past the intended time. Dress rehearsals can also happen at times that we didn't originally plan. While it may not feel like all of these sudden changes can lead to a great actual performance, it actually does.

The actual performances are exhilarating, and that can unfortunately lead to some problems. The amount of energy in these plays can make some of the kids get a little hyper, which makes it harder to control their own energy. Sometimes it can even be hard for me, but I manage to get through it. I find it really helpful to imagine that there is no one in the audience. Besides, when it comes the theater arts, you need to be focused in order to have any fun at all. I have found that very helpful in my five years of doing theater production at LWS. Every year, the Saturday night performance ends up being slightly out of control because it always has the biggest audience, but by working together, we pull through and we have so much fun.

The Living Wisdom School theater productions are easily my highlight of the year. I have so much fun performing them. Sure, during rehearsals, I felt stressed at times and nervous that I might not be able to pull myself together. But that's how theater works. The important thing is that I didn't stop giving it my all. When it comes to theater arts, if there are no bumps, there won't be any magic.

### **Play Process:Garland :: Parts:Flowers**

*By Sowmya Chandrasekaran, age 13*

The play process is like a garland, each flower a step towards completion. The first flower you string on is the first time you read your lines. The second flower is when you start memorizing. As the garland grows, so does the play process. Before you know it, half of the garland is finished, and the play is halfway to completion. A month goes by, and "Poof!" The dances, poems, props, costumes, and everything else is finally in order, and the once empty garland is full of gorgeous flowers, each one making a difference.

I had many favorite flowers on my play garland as we prepared this year's play on Hafiz, the great Persian poet, but if I had to pick one, I would probably pick learning the new dances. The dances were gorgeous, and all the spinning made the shining costumes sprinkle shimmers all over the stage. However, as similar as the messages of our annual play might be, every type of dance that we do for these plays is always creatively different; that's what makes it so much fun to learn them!

This year's play garland was overflowing with all sorts of beautiful poems: happy poems, love poems, sad poems and wise poems. The poems that I understood were so cleverly composed, often disguised behind metaphors. One of my favorite poems was, "The Small Man Builds Cages". It was much easier to understand, compared to the other poems and had a rather witty meaning. I think that the small man is a person with a lot of ego, and so he tells everyone what to do and how to do it. However the sage knows what everybody is capable of and so he gives the imprisoned people a key at night to free themselves. In a way, I think that the poem delivers the message of how oppressive some people can be.

The hardest flower to weave into the garland was my balcony scene. When I first started out with my lines, they sounded bland and void of feelings; however, they ended up better than I had hoped, because of my friend Shubha's help. Ever since she found out I had trouble with the balcony scene and with putting feelings into my lines, she took her recess, lunch, and other free time to help me get it right. I admire her patience with me, as I think that it is a quality that is necessary for anyone who helps others with theatre arts, especially when it comes to putting in feelings. She was an example to me, because she showed whatever she told me to do with my lines, in her own lines. Out of everything else that I've done in past school plays, the balcony scene was a breakthrough-experience for me.

All in all, this year's play process was something that I really enjoyed. It was full of meaning, dedication, love, and peace. Hafiz showed great respect to his God after his sincerity led the way to true devotion through poetry. Something that I might take from this play into life would probably be that to accomplish anything, there must be true devotion to whatever it is that you're doing. Hafiz was devoted to writing poems, not just for the amusement of his Shah and other people, but to cover a deeper, hidden meaning inside. All of the flowers in the garland took time to bloom, but when they did, the garland became a gem!!!

## **Theater Magic Made Possible**

*By Mariah Stewart, age 13*

Every year, Living Wisdom School plays are better than the last. Our play this year about Hafiz has certainly outdone all the previous plays in my time at Living Wisdom School. Matthew Sloan, our director, plus the actors' teamwork and focus made this play a success. Matthew asked us to give it our all and to go beyond our limits and comfort zone to feel as if we were all living in Hafiz's lifetime. I was asked to not only say my lines, but to believe that they were truly my own words. In our play, *The Subject Tonight is Love*, we gave it our all.

"Take it from the top." These are words all actors would hear over and over again from our director Matthew. Matthew has an incredible amount of patience as he teaches us actors to be in character and take on all aspects of the play process. As Mavash, Hafiz's wife, I had to let go of all tensions. Matthew worked with me even right before a show to help me relax, to do even better than before. Sometimes to help us perform better, Matthew encouraged us to relate some of our parts to our own experiences. However, I had never experienced war in my life, which made things a little more complicated. Still, I pictured myself in the situation to try to see how I might have reacted, felt and carried my body as Mavash. By the time I got onto the stage, I felt as if the story were actually happening to me. I think this made my performance more vivid and true and helped the audience truly experience Hafiz's life.

Whenever I act, I try to convey the deepest meaning possible. When I recite the poems I am in, I put as much emotion and feeling as possible into it because that is when the audience can start to understand the deeper meaning of it. As an actor, that is what I strive for. I strive for audience members coming away from a play and saying, "Wow, I really got something from that." Once I have done this, I have accomplished my mission.

The teamwork that went into this play was very heartfelt and supportive. Sometimes it took the form of a comforting word, but sometimes it involved going the extra mile, reminding someone about a prop or line. For example, on a dark and stormy performance night, as we made our way in costume to the theater, one of my schoolmates shared her umbrella with me. Sometimes teamwork means rearranging a hairpin or skirt that isn't in the right place, or helping with costume changes to make the transition as smooth as possible. One of my friends had to wear a huge afghan for one scene and take it off immediately after. My friends and I were there to help her get ready for her next dance. Without teamwork, this wouldn't be half the play it is.

Underlying the success of our plays is the fact that we all put out energy. Swami Kriyananda wrote a book called *Education for Life* where he states in his preface that when you put out energy and try your hardest, there will be rewards. This play is just one example of his philosophy. His advice applies to many things in life. I am so grateful that I have experienced the truth of this principle. Learning this now has been a great gift.

### **Magnificent Costumes**

*By Jeydie Ponder, age 12*

This year's Living Wisdom School play costumes were amazing. I liked how Asha Praver puts all her hard work into making them. I thought all the girl's costumes were fantastic, but I liked the boy's too.

For example, the angel costume that Jeannessa wore was sparkly. When the mirror ball was turned on it showed a lot of inspiring light and sparkles and made me want to be an angel! Mariah's costume was stellar. Her costume was a golden yellow, and it shone on stage. She looked so dazzling that it would make any girl want to wear her costume.

I like how Asha makes the design match the colors of the costumes and the headdresses. She always puts something on the costume that will make it interesting. She puts a scarf to make the costume come out more so they grab the attention of the audience. Her art would make someone want to wear that costume.

I thought Asha did a fabulous job on my costume. I wore a skirt that was a soft cream gold with a top with sparkles around my neck. They blended perfectly together. I also like the headpiece that came with my costume because it fit in with the other part of my costume and my radiant color skin.

I like how she turned costumes from previous plays into this year's costumes so the school can save a lot of money. I think this is a really great idea, and I would do the same. Also I like how she makes some amazing hats out of simple fabric – dark green and white.

When I grow up I want to be a fashion designer like Asha or design costumes for plays. I have a really hard time figuring out how to put my outfit together each morning. This shows how much I care about fashion. Something that inspires me to get into fashion is the variety – from sparkly to plain, from pinkish to blue. I would enjoy doing boy's costumes, too. I enjoy the costumes that Asha made, and I really appreciate all the hard work that goes into them. Thanks to her we have amazing costumes for our plays.



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