WE ARE THE STARS, OVERLOOKING EVERYTHING

selected works

BY STUDENTS, AGES 8–18 YEARS OLD,
from our TENDERLOIN CENTER WRITING PROGRAMS

826 VALENCIA

Spring 2020
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OVERLOOKING EVERYTHING

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BY STUDENTS, AGES 8-18 YEARS OLD,
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Spring 2020
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We dedicate this book to our volunteers who provide encouragement and thoughtful guidance to help students further develop their writing skills and style. As one young writer expressed, “You gave me great advice. You gave me confidence. You gave me enough of those things, so I’d believe in myself.”
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ABOUT 826 VALENCIA
I AM THE SUN RISING

In this section, you’ll learn how our students see themselves—as lighting bolts, sturdy ladders, unpredictable weather—and what they love—steaming sinigang, palm trees dancing to music, suspenseful basketball games. Because when we reflect on who we are and what matters to us, we find the strength, as one student writes, to “have fun doing the impossible,” whether it’s cleaning up the environment or turning fractions into decimals.
I am a strike of lighting,  
an unpredictable bolt of energy.  
Enjoy the moment.  
I am a rushing river,  
adapting to change. I can go with the flow,  
getting stronger with many storms.  
I am a couch,  
welcoming as a cozy presence,  
appreciative to all different shapes and sizes.  
I am like a storm on the horizon.  
I am curious like the color yellow.  
Energetic and never gives up.  
I am a parrot, talkative yet curious,  
colorful in many different ways, ready to learn new things.  
I am a parrot for exploration,  
the color yellow for curiosity.  
The flow of a river is easygoing,  
a nice welcoming couch.  
An unpredictable bolt of lighting.  
I am me!
Oh paksiw, you are as yummy as a cookie.
You are spiky as a needle.
Filipino people would say, “Mmmm, this is so good. Can I have the rest?”
You are as slippery as a soap bar.
You are sweet, salty, and smooth.
You are as spicy as a pepper.
Oh paksiw, you are so good.
I can eat you 152 times a day.
Wait! More.
122 times a minute.
I love to thank you because I don’t get to eat you all the time.
I eat you when my grandma makes you.
Oh paksiw, you look so yummy.
I love to eat you, but you have spikes in your body that I can’t eat.
Oh paksiw, every time I see you, I’m filled with joy, and when I’m done with you, I will finally ask for more.
When you are not cooked, you move around and make me laugh.
My grandma makes you.
It takes her an hour because she has to add a lot of seasoning.
Oh paksiw, when I’m done eating you, I want more, but I can’t have any more because I’m full.
I’m Filipino, and I eat a lot of fish.
It’s in my blood.
LAYLONNIE BENTON  
Age 11 • Elmhurst United Middle School

HELPING THE WORLD

I am smart. I am kind. I am who I want to be, what I want. I am the sun lighting up the earth. I can make people happy. I can stop homeless people from being homeless so they can start over. I am going to fight for my people, no matter what it takes. I will stand and not fall.

My friends will have my back and my front, so we all feel loved and supported. So we don’t have to worry about haters. Haters are like monkeys throwing bananas at you so you lose your path. My friends need me when they have problems, so I can fix them like a therapist.

I believe that fights are not necessary, only if you need to fight for what’s right. Not for hurting others’ feelings.

I believe in recycling and reusing things so people can use them. I believe in not judging a book by its cover.

I believe in helping others who have lost loved ones, so that people don’t have to be sad and depressed.

I am Laylonnie. I will not fall, I will stand.
I believe in the *crack* of a bat, like a woodpecker tapping on a tree.
I believe in the *thump* of a glove, like throwing a rock in a pond on a sunny day.
Kids screaming, “Oh no, I killed a fish.”
I believe in laughter, like life all around you is a big loud joke.
I believe in happiness, like a well-timed joke that you said in front of your family.
I believe in equality, wishing that everyone has equal rights.
I believe in family, like a giant, fun maze you can’t escape from.
I believe in bad traffic, like a giant, tiring, endless pattern.
I believe in cleaning up after people, like a giant vacuum cleaning up a rug because we only have one world.
I believe in helping the world, like a giant recycling truck that comes once a week to pick up the trash.
Even though my family can get annoying, I would never be able to live without them. They are like a school of fish and we as a family are a group.
Do you ever look into the glimmering ocean under the setting sun and wonder what could be under it? Sure, it looks beautiful from above but what about what lies beneath? Palm trees dance to the music of the waves crashing against the sand. Just how you’d get lost in this endless sea in your mind, you could quite literally get lost in it and never be found, just left waiting. Until eventually, your head’s underwater and you’re left standing in the deep dark blue.
Fights and chaos.
A blazing fire filled through our phones. People caught between fights and disarray.
It's just so troubling, like an instinct we can't help but reply to.
A frown keeps no lie, hard to smile and keep up.
They can tell us what's right or wrong whether we know it or not.

A blazing fire filled through our phones. People caught between fights and disarray.
The world is turning around, beginning wars and arguments we didn't even know about.
It hurts, you know, that we are not welcomed.
But we should stop bullying because it's the proper thing to do.
And always will be.
Forever.
I am a waterfall who makes people feel calm and relaxed. I am a panda eating bamboo and being lazy by sitting down all day because I don’t want to go anywhere. Everything is around, so I don’t need to move a lot. I am snow. I can make people chill and relaxed. I am the color yellow because I make people feel happy. If I were a quote, I would be, “It’s kind of fun to do the impossible,” because it really is fun to do the impossible. An example of the impossible is impossible math, like turning fractions into decimals. Another example is inequalities.
Oh noodles, you are the best because you make me less grumpy, and you make me happy like a monkey jumping in a tree. Noodles, you are lucky that my mom made you for her secret noodle recipe. The second reason is that you make me feel like I am in Noodle Land.
“Oww, it’s too hot. It burned my tongue,” I said.
You smell like heaven!
You are slippery, you taste salty, you smell fresh, and you look clean.
You are as slippery as a fish or a water balloon.
Oh noodle, if I didn’t get to eat you, I would be begging for you for 100,000 years.
I am so lucky to have you as food.
I thank you for giving me some cool ideas to make.
Thank you for always making me feel better.
I have liked you ever since I was a little baby.
You made me better.
That’s why I am not so sick.
My mom made you so you can live.
You beg to not get eaten by me.
I wish you were part of my family and could live forever, but I might eat you when I am sleeping.
I could smell you.
Mmmm, delish.
When I eat you, I get so excited and yell so much and I say, “I am so happy.”
Sitting on the couch with my phone,
five percent on my phone,
liking Instagram posts.
The charger in the outlet.
The charger far away from me.
Should I get up now? Or later?
Maybe later I’ll have time.
I went to YouTube to watch videos.
Three percent on my phone now.
I was getting distracted by the video,
forgetting about my phone battery.
One percent on my phone now,
scrolling in the recommendations.
I found a cool video.
Then my phone died.
KIMBERLY NAJERA
Age 13 • De Marillac Academy

POPULAR

Waking up knowing you’re popular,
no need to worry about bullies, especially ’cause you are one.
Having so many friends, so many followers,
but then again also having haters talking bad about you behind your back, even though they say they’re cool with you.
Everybody sees your life as being “perfect” because you’re popular,
but they don’t know the real you.
They don’t know you get bullied by your older brother…
They don’t know that.
They also don’t know that you take all your anger out in school ’cause you can’t at home.
KAILE ALVAREZ
Age 13 • De Marillac Academy

I AM UNIQUE

I am the water,
peaceful, calming, neutral in fights or arguments.

I am the sky,
controlled, hard to read, multiple emotions.

I am a ladder,
helpful, strong, hard to break, kind of tall.

I am a book,
not easily judged by the outside, complicated.

I am the weather,
complicated, hard to read, hard to predict.
My brother and I played with my cousin’s PlayStation 4, which was white and was connected to a big TV. We played a game called *Watch Dogs 2*. You are a bad guy. And you have to call the hacker. And it works with one person at a time. And I was excited playing, but then he played more than my cousin.

Then his brother said, “Let’s play Superman so we can have some fun.”

Then it gave me an idea, “Let other people have a turn. You played so much.”

My cousin said, “Okay.” We walked in and started playing. He was speed walking and I watched him. Then he closed the door. Then I opened the door and I saw him playing superhero. One was Superman, one was Batman, one was Spiderman, and one was Hulk.

And I said, “Can I play superhero with you, yes or no?”

He said, “Yes.” Then I took one puppet. I started playing superhero with him. We had so much fun. We had so much fun playing superhero together. I thanked him for letting me play with his puppets.

Then he said, “You’re welcome.”

“Do you want to play this next time I come to your house?”

“Yes, let’s do it!”
Are there any things that annoy you? There are two things that annoy me: homework and siblings.

The thing about homework is that it’s super boring! Why do we even have homework? It’s as boring as having nothing to do because your phone has no charge. Staring at your lined paper with only your name written down frustrates me. I think that homework shouldn’t be given to kids.

If you have any siblings, I’m pretty sure they annoy you. Whenever you try to do something in peace, out of nowhere they come to annoy you. With their loud talking and frequent bothering, it seems as if it’ll never stop. Although both of these things get on my nerves, I guess you still need them.
I am the sky. I am clear without a cloud. When my friends ask me for advice, I am clear in my response.

I am a rock. I am very quiet. I don’t like to move as much. I like being home because I don’t have to do anything.

I am the sun. I can say that I bring light to a dark room. I am a bright leader, I lead my friends into doing good things. When they are talking to themselves very loudly, I tell them to stop.

I am a seed. I grow every day into a young lady. You know I’m growing when you hear *boom.* I grow every day in many different ways. I grow in my knowledge, in my friendships with people, and in my role as a daughter, sister, best friend, and many more.
CHICKEN

You are as sticky as a candy and as soft as a pillow.
And that’s why you’re amazing.
You are as brown as dirt.
You smell spicy and sour.
You are as large as a house.
When I cook you, you are hissing like fire.
Oh chicken, I could eat you for millions of days.

You are sticky as a chocolate chip cookie.
You are as salty as donuts.
Oh chicken, you make me dance for a hundred hours.

Thank you for being salty and delicious.
You are crunchy, crumbly, and crispy.
You are awesome because you are salty and crunchy.
Whenever Mom and Grandma make you, I feel excited.

You are happy when I put flavor on you,
flavors like ginger, salt, and vinegar.
You stretch like trees when I eat you.
You dance in my belly.
You sound crunchy like a chocolate chip cookie.
ALONE

Leave me alone.
People don’t understand that I sometimes need space.
Being alone in bed sleeping is a good day.
Just leave me alone.
I love the bored expression on my face.
This is my favorite way to spend the day.
Just leave me please.
Lying in bed listening to music, binging anime, or sleeping.
These are my peaceful ways to spend the day.
So please just leave me alone.
Being grounded isn’t fun. It’s as boring as a rock.  
It is because  
you can never enjoy your time  
away from school without technology.  
Being grounded isn’t exciting. It’s as boring as a rock.  
Also because  
your parents aren’t nice,  
because despair exists in kids.
I am a leaf against the wind, dancing and moving with energy.
I am an ant, determined and hardworking.
I am a rainbow on a rainy, cloudy day.
I am the sun rising, ready to conquer the world.
I am the big avocado tree in my backyard.
I am me and you are you. Appreciate that. Live by that.
We are playing soccer during the weekend with my friends. When I play soccer, I go hard. You should score a goal, so the other team doesn’t get the ball. Down the field we find someone who’s open. We do five passes to get the ball down to his teammates. They make a goal. I pass to my teammates, make a goal, and we get happy. We get a point. Then I get food at a restaurant. The school is closing because our teacher says they were closed.
DIEGO VELAZQUEZ
Age 10 • Boys & Girls Club — Tenderloin Clubhouse

THE BEST SOCCER GAME IN MY LIFE

The field was looking beautiful like the sky. It was looking so green and bright. My friend Adair played goalie because he is good at blocking. My other friend, called Rodney, played defender because he is not fast, no offense. My other friend, called Luca, played right wing because he is fast and he can shoot. My other friend, called Miguel, played midfielder because he is good at shooting. My other friend, called Angelo, is a lefty, so that is why he played left wing. My other friend, called Diego (me), played forward because he is a good shooter. My other friend, called Sem, played defender because he is a far shooter. Then these guys told us that we were trash at soccer.

“You are trash,” the other team said. They told us they want to play us in soccer.

So my team and I talked about it, so we said, “If we are trash, then play us in soccer.” Then we got on the field. Then we prepared for the game (we as in my team). Then the other team started with the ball. Then we started the game. They scored the first goal because we were not defending well.

Miguel shouted to Luca, “Pass it, pass it,” so he did. Miguel ran up to the goal. BOOM. It hit the net inside the goal. “Goal,” Miguel shouted. Then it was tied 1–1 so we went into overtime. Luca passed it to Rodney who passed it to Miguel. Miguel was running fast up with the ball but the defender fouled him. So they got in a fight but the referee broke it up, and the referee called a yellow card for both teams. The referee called a penalty, so I shot it for him because he was hurt.

“Do you want me to shoot it?” I said.

“Yes.” So we got ready for the shot. Bam. It went in.

“We won. Who’s trash now?”
I’m like the ocean, unknown and known.
I’m a tornado. I change quickly.
I’m a pillow, soft but sometimes rough.
I’m a wolf, mysterious and aggressive.
I’m the color navy blue in the ocean depth.
I’m “Ocean Eyes.” I’m nature.
I’m a koala. I cling to everything.
I’m a teacher’s hair, spins and has control.
I’m different since that one time.
CARLOS RAMIREZ  
*Age 13 • De Marillac Academy*

CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

As I walk down the court, the ISO is set. It’s the championship game. We are tied 48–48. It’s the last shot. Jesus sets the screen and I take the shot. It goes in. I savor the moment but quickly go to get back on defense. There’s 3.8 seconds left. I can barely hear myself over the crowd. The team is showering me with praise. They chant my name as I win the MVP awards and I get the MVP chants. We won the championship, but it was only the first step on my journey. Basketball is my main sport. I love the sport. The title meant a lot to me. It’s my way of escaping reality.
WHY ARE SPORTS AND GAMES SO HARD?

Why are sports so hard?
They are like getting good grades on a test.
They are like fighting with your siblings over who gets the best.
We argue a lot over dumb stuff, like who is better than the other at anything.

Why are games so hard?
They are like managing time wisely.
They are like trying to figure out a problem.

Why are sports fun to play?
I like playing sports because they are fun.
Another reason is that they keep me on my feet.
I really like sports because it runs in my family.

Why is it so hard to win?

Trying to win is like trying to tell your parents that they are wrong.
I am a diamond, 
super hard to find. 
I am a dog. 
I am energetic and loyal. 
I am the stars, 
bright 
but easily ignored. 
I am happiness, 
always wanting 
friends to smile. 
I am the color white, 
simple but I 
stand out. 
I am an orange, 
sometimes sweet and sometimes sour. 
I am Google, 
helpful and informative. 
I am Angelina.
School is very boring.
School is very boring.
Strike you like I’m going bowling.
I go to school in the Tenderloin.
It’s as cool as a pool.
I walk through the Tenderloin like I’m on TV.
I be ballin’ in PE,
jump in the pool with my drip, make it splash.
I’m as tall as a tree,
sting you like I’m a bee.
Are you ballin’ like me?
But I still be gettin’ all the Bs!
And you know for a fact that
“B” stands for boring.
Oh sinigang, you make me cry for a hundred hours. 
I like you because you are sour and salty. 
Oh sinigang, you are as sour as Sour Patch.  
Oh sinigang, you are as salty as the ocean. 
You look like a pond of veggies. 

You are as hot as a heater. 
You are as brown as a chicken. 
You bubble when we cook you. 
Thank you because you are very tasty. 
I like you. You are so sour. 

When I eat you, I slurp you. 
When I go to my grandma’s house, she says, “Do you want food?” 
I say, “Yes!” 
Oh sinigang, you splash your arms around when we cook you in the pot with potatoes, bok choy, and tomatoes. 
Sinigang, you are the best because you are good for sickness. 
I wish to float in a pool of sinigang. 

I eat you whenever I float. 
Whenever I smell you, I want to eat you really fast like a race car.
I am a parakeet because I like to fly, try it!
I am a rock. I am quiet.
I am the color metallic gold. I like to shine out of the crowd.
I am water. I go everywhere. Loud.
I am a building because I stand short.
I am YouTube because I like to create, yeah even forts!
“Dar, wake up!” my mother shouted. I forgot that it was Monday. It was 7:00 in the morning. I didn’t want to wake up but I had to. My mother yelled, “Hurry up! We have forty minutes left.” I got ready. Then my mom made buttery, warm pancakes for me and my sister, who also goes to the same school. First, I ate breakfast. Then, I went to brush my teeth. I made my lunch for school, and then I went out the door. When I walked into school, I went to class and I started my “do now.” The bad thing was that it was a Monday. Another bad thing was that we had a new homework packet to do and I don’t like homework. Homework is as bad as nasty food. I wish that we had no homework, rules, or school. That’s what I wish for. And the other thing is that my mom works until she gets out at 7:00 and she gets home at 7:40. The good thing is that I didn’t go to program, and I got to help my dad with shopping. But the bad thing is that I didn’t get to see my friends.
Oh mango, you are amazing food because I can make you into a popsicle or juice.
You are the best because you're so sweet and you can be sour.
Oh mango, you taste so good it's like my taste buds are having a tropical party.
You feel so smooth and you look delicious.
When I eat you, you sound like crunch.
You are as colorful as a rainbow and as yellow as the sun.
I thank you, mango, because you are so delicious and awesome.
I remember I ate you with my brother and cousin at a festival, and on a hot day, I made you into a popsicle and I said, “It's so delicious.”
People say, “It's so good and so sweet.”
You dance in the Tajín and scream when I put you in the blender.
You also shine in the light.
You connect to my family because they buy you because they know you’re my favorite.
Oh mango, when I bite into you, my teeth fall out because you’re so sweet!
HELAYNE BUSTO
Age 14 • De Marillac Academy

I AM ME

I am like a book, different, magical,
quiet but full of stories,
confusing, and ecstatic.
I am like water,
    taking different forms for different reasons,
good and bad,
helpful for some and bad for others.
I am always something different.
I am a powerful person.
I am a mountain climber,
never giving up,
setting a goal and reaching it, and hiking down when satisfied.
I am a mountain climber.
I am a chicken,
energetic and noisy,
screaming when getting good grades.
I am a chicken.
I am a statue,
still, but observant.
Chaos around me while the rock tries to be calm.
I am a statue.
I am a cloud,
moving a lot and emotions easily changing,
sprinting down the court, getting peevish when the ref doesn’t
call the foul.
I am a cloud.
EMELY AVILA TUZ
Age 13 • De Marillac Academy

DREAM OR FANTASY?

Going to college was so weird, going to a huge campus and hearing voices of people overlapping. That was, until I heard yours, saying, “Hi.”

College was the first place and time I met you. I got to know you during my time in college and I’m so glad I did.

The night I felt your arms around me and the sound of your heart, I felt like I was in heaven.

All night, you held on to me and never let go. Our hearts met and we fell in love.

I woke up and realized you were just a dream. I felt disappointed and desperate to go back and be with you.

A dream from watching After. You were a fantasy I was wishing for, knowing it was just a dream from a girl curious about love.
LIKE A SUN

I am like a sun,
only shining as I walk into a dark room,
lighting up the whole area as I walk in
only to put a smile on their faces.
I am like my pet hamster,
quiet at some points and calm,
always trying to eat and always trying to sleep.
I am like a toy action figure,
childish and always playing around during serious times,
only wanting to be on the court to play volleyball, keeping
a serious mindset.
Bump, set, spike, point.
I am like a Minecraft emerald,
hard to find and get.
My personality is hard to find in somebody else.
GUACAMOLE

Oh guacamole, you can be used with other foods and you’re very colorful.
You feel chunky and smooth.
You also smell fresh.
You are very colorful.
You are also quiet.
You are as fresh as drinking water on a hot summer day.

Thank you, guacamole, for making me happy with all your good combinations like tacos, chips, and quesadillas.
You are so colorful, cute, and cunning.
I was at my house with my brother and dad when I first tasted you.
I said, “Yum!”

Oh guacamole, you carry all the things that are on top of you, like tomatoes, onions, and cilantro.
You connect to me because you have a lot of stuff, and I have a lot of feelings.
You are colorful like nature.
Oh guacamole, you are so yummy that when people eat you, they say, “Yum,” so loudly that even Mexico can hear it.
HELEN CISNEROS
Age 13 • De Marillac Academy

I AM

I am a colorful rainbow because of the different emotions I feel every day. I am the sea. My waves can be quiet but at times very strong. I am the purple sky at dawn. The purple dawn makes my spirit unique. I see myself skateboarding before the sun goes down. The smell of burgers and fries comes to my senses. Suddenly, I arrive home and close my eyes. Tomorrow will be a new day!
I am a football player because I control and dribble the ball beautifully.
I am a scooter because I run fast.
I am a white cheetah because I run at a fast pace like one pursuing prey.
I am a parrot full of color on the outside, full with love.
I am the shade of blue representing the sky and all nature.
I am the ocean with a beautiful and cool look I give off.
I am like my dad, full of determination.

I am on track to being my best.
THE SPICIEST AND TASTIEST FOOD

Oh naan, you are amazing to me because you are spicy and you are so good!
You are brown and the meat in the soup is big.
You sound squishy, you smell like garlic, you feel warm, and you taste chewy and delicious.
I want to thank you because when I put you in my mouth, you make it taste so good.
People say, “Mmmmm…this is great!” or, “Bring me more tomorrow!”
You race me to the bread so I can’t eat you guys.
Oh naan, you are salty, spicy, and you are spectacular.
Oh naan, I can eat you for the rest of my LIFE!
That’s how good you taste.
I’ll even lick the whole bowl!
One day my substitute was so mean. So it all started at dance. At the end of dance class, my substitute said, “Move out the way.” Then I did. Then we sat in her PE class and she said, “Move.”

And my sister said, “Do not talk to my sister like that.” I said that too. Then she spit on her. She is a mean teacher and she is the meanest. She called the office on me for nothing. My friend made her fall. She was lying to all my class. She is so mean, OMG. She is so mean and unfair. She was so rude.
BIG SHOW VERSUS MARK HENRY

The crowd is watching from their seats as Big Show is fighting Mark Henry. Big Show slams Mark Henry, and then they cause an explosion in the ring. It all happens so fast. It sounds like an RPG hitting a building. The audience sees Big Show and Mark Henry disappear at the speed of light, and the crowd gasps as the referee, dressed as a pumpkin in a suit, appears onstage. He snaps his fingers to try to take them, but they both punch the pumpkin guy. Mark Henry goes first. He grabs the pumpkin and chokes him. Big Show and Mark Henry came back and everyone leaves.
That morning I got up, showered, packed everything, and I was off, walking to the church where the bus was waiting for us. I got signed up. They gave me bracelets, and I said bye to my parents. Long drive to camp. I tried sleeping but woke up and finally we got to camp. I thought we were the first ones there, but once we started our hike, I saw the others. Camp was not like last year for me, this time was better, in my opinion. I was with all my classmates and close friends, and I was also with some new and old friends. It was very good at the beach. I met new people in the woods when we would hike. Also in my cabin, we would be very crazy. The thing that sticks out to me the most was the night out. I really enjoyed walking, seeing the trees up and down the trails, and getting there. Our sleeping bags were already there and the boys were too. I got my purple sleeping bag all settled next to all of my friends. Later that night was the bonfire.
It warmed my hands, and some people put their butts by it. I sat next to my best friends Katia, Leslye, Daniela, Juliana, and Karen.

Katia was really funny. She was always clumsy in the cabin. She is so creative and I love her so much. She always knows what's right.

Leslye is very friendly. I also love her a lot.

Daniela is like the most shy and timid, but get to know her well enough and she’s great too.

Juliana is taller and more overboard than most. She does what needs to happen.

Karen. I love her face expressions and she just makes me laugh! I love them all.

I am sad I am not going this year. I really had good memories.
I am more than what I write or what people say.
I am tenacious,
unpredictable,
wanting to do something new every day.
I am nonchalant.
A “do whatever you do” gal.
I speak only when spoken to,
but talk to me and I’ll be your pal.
I am a koala,
sleeping away sixteen hours of day and night
and being exhausted anyway.

Although I am also a night owl,
eyes wide open
to the phone in front of me.
Eyes red and puffed
from the six hours of sleep
and eight hours on a good day.

Tired or energetic,
this day will not go to waste.
In the pages that follow, students offer guidance and reflection on social issues, such as facing discrimination, fighting for equality, and “listening to the angel that cares for others.” But our students are also experts at having fun! Read on to learn more about surviving in a big family, becoming a Pokémon champion, and how a well-built fort can lead to “one of the safest and funnest Nerf...wars...ever.”
I was sitting there, staring at bright letters that read, “YOU'RE GONNA DIE!” The light was seeping into my eyes, and the white background was becoming fainter. I was shaken, so I gasped as I read more. I saw that we all have seventeen months left to live if we don’t start doing something about our current situation. I read that Earth was heavily polluted and that nothing was being done to stop it.

I felt curiously scared, so I searched up some analytics. I found that eighty-eight percent of the ocean is polluted with plastic. This is caused by ignorant people who don’t throw trash in the proper bins or recycle. I kept researching, and I learned that there was 407.4 ppm of CO₂ as of 2018. This is higher than ever recorded. This could really do harm to our bodies, our planet, and our chance to survive.

Big corporations are like a “friend” who never helps you. Big corporations often release harmful toxins into the atmosphere. This causes climate change, according to climate.gov. Due to these increasing temperatures, the sea, ice, and glaciers have shrunk by forty percent since 1979. This makes me lose hope. It makes me feel helpless. This percentage continues to increase every year. What has this world come to? What are we going to do without our natural resources?
In conclusion, the world is quickly dying due to our actions. We MUST save our home because we could die if we don’t. This very ground that we live on could be gone by next year. Earth needs saving. I am twelve years old and my and other young people's futures depend on others’ actions. If the older people can’t save Earth, we can. We just have to spread the word that Earth is dying. It is possible to save Earth. We just have to take action and responsibility.
“Can you please give me some food?” he asked. I stood there surprised, not knowing what to do. How did I find myself in this situation?

It was nighttime and I felt tired and sore. I was at work, and finally having lifted and placed the last few boxes in the correct area, my boss told me that I could go. I grabbed my things and some food my mom gave me to give to my uncle. That’s when it happened.

“Can you please give me some food? I’m very hungry,” said the man. His clothes were shabby and looked like they hadn’t been washed for weeks. The tone of his voice was polite and kind. I stood there, not knowing what to do. I felt like there was an angel and a devil on my shoulders, whispering things that I’d heard from my past.

“You should help the guy. You have the power,” said one voice. “Don’t help him. He doesn’t contribute to society and doesn’t deserve it,” said another.

I had to give the food to my uncle so I said, “Sorry, this is for someone else.” He very sadly left and after that, I felt really bad because I had the power to help the guy, but didn’t. With great power comes great responsibility, but I didn’t use it responsibly.
I may seem like a hypocrite, but as someone who has been in this situation before, I have learned and grown. So I believe that others can complete where I failed and help others.

You can be the next person. You can do simple things by giving them money or food they can use or eat, or start homeless shelters and take care of them, but most important is giving them a future. People who are fortunate should help others because what might not seem like a big deal to you can be a big deal to the other person. So my final message today is just pitch in to help others because it would make a huge impact. Any amount of help will be fine. I hope that you all don’t listen to the devil that only benefits yourself, but listen to the angel that cares for others.
If I were in charge of the world, I’d cancel homework, racism, drugs, and weapons because they are as bad as eating burnt chicken!
If I were in charge of the world, there would be more jobs for people, water, money, houses, food, and electric cars to save the environment. The environment will start dancing because it’s being saved!
If I were in charge of the world, you wouldn’t have to worry so much! ’Cause if you worry too much, you will start sweating and might flood your house!
If I were in charge of the world, you wouldn’t have, “Go clean your room,” or “Take out the trash.” You wouldn’t have those chores anymore.
If I were in charge of the world, condos and apartments would be free! All airline tickets would be free, so you can visit family or even enjoy your vacation, SPLASH!
If I were in charge of the world, nobody would be homeless! Everyone would have a home to stay warm during winter and stay cool in the summer. Ahh…
If I were in charge of the world, I would feel like I’m brilliant, just like the colors of a rainbow!
And a person who sometimes forgot to do their chores and sometimes forgot to pay the bills to their home, they wouldn’t get in trouble! They would have a little more time to do those important things.
I believe in joy and visiting my family in Mexico City. They always make me laugh at jokes and embarrass me when they take me out to dance at parties.

I believe in my mother, who is very hardworking to achieve success in life. She takes care of me as a single parent and still makes me smile at the end of the day after all she goes through. She tells me, “I love you,” and takes me out to eat, being the best parent she can be.

I believe it’s unfair for families to pay for AP tests, other necessary tests for college, and lunch based on income. Not everybody can afford the tests and lunch needed for students to stay focused during class.

I believe in fighting for equality in my Latino community so families aren’t broken apart and have the fear of getting deported back to their country. These Latino voices are important to be heard, just like children staying with their parents.

I believe being happy and motivated is the key to success in life. My mom always tells me to not focus on other people’s opinions and just focus on what you believe in and what you want in life.
HOW TO BUILD A FORT IRL

If you share a room with your sibling, and you want to get away or have alone time, making a fort will be like having your own room!

1. Firm floor 'cause if you don't have a firm floor, it will not be stable.
2. Get some chairs, or something a little taller than you. (But it depends how tall you are. If you are under five feet, then get something a little smaller or taller to put the blanket on.)
3. Find a clear area.
4. Get something that is like eight pounds or a big book and get a blanket for the fort.
5. Lay out the blanket and see how big it is and then you form the chair. You set and shape it.
6. Then put on the blanket and use the big books to hold the blanket.

When you make your fort, you will have fun because you can have one of the safest but the funniest Nerf...wars...ever.
“You three, stop moving,” shouted a stranger through their car speakers. We froze. Three different people, but all the same thoughts. *Is this it? Will it end how we hear it through the media?* The red and blue lights had acted green and unfroze me. The cop just got out of the car and told us to take our bags off filled with books and throw them towards him. It felt heavy. We had just got out of our program and were heading to the bus. It was dark and we were already near our stop. The cop searched our bags. Then when my friend began to question the cop, the cop grabbed his sweater, pulled him, and handcuffed him. The cop had changed his story from a house getting broken into to people selling drugs. We knew we were not gonna be let off easy.

After an hour of being questioned, he said, “Go home and don’t be out too late. It’s dangerous to be walking late,” but we all had felt danger from the cop and not anyone else. This impacted me because that was the first of many times of being harassed by cops. It showed us that we seemed no different than a criminal or a person who is a menace to society. We all had anger in us. We were furious. To me, it left a scar because after seeing my uncles and cousins getting arrested, it made me question if I was next, if I would get arrested over things that I had not done. I
replay that moment over and over, seeing my friends pale with the red and blue lights in their face. That was an image I never thought I would see.

But when I got home, I explained it all to my dad and he said, “This is a part of life as a brown person.” He began to rant about how it was normal since I was brown and was with my friends, but I blurred his words out and in my mind, all I could think was, *How is this normal?* I’m young and have never committed a crime, but my skin color was a sign that welcomed police harassment.
Misunderstanding.
Why can’t we just listen to each other?
We interpret:
love,
what’s right and wrong,
who we are,
and how to listen.
Just why can’t we listen?
In this society, we are taught all these terrible things, believing
a specific skin color is superior.
Maybe if we just listen and love, we’d be okay.
Who knows?
E’NYIAH WASHINGTON

Age 8 • Up On Top

HOW TO DANCE

Try to teach her to dance. She needs to learn how to dance right now because look at her dance. Ha. Fix it now, thank you. God, she can’t dance. P.S. By E’nyiah.

1. First her clothes, next her hair. Look at it. Look at mine. Girl, bye.
2. Her shoes, like look at it. Girl, work it now, okay.
3. Your nails, like stop, pretty. You mad, I’m happy.
4. Don’t cry little baby, fix your swag.
5. Do everything you try, okay. Don’t stop.
6. Now before I was saying.
7. Go to my angels, you be okay.
9. My dance is good, okay.
10. I’m sorry I hurt your feelings, Boo.
A Wednesday night on the first of the month. Every city resident knows that this is the longest time to be out on the busy streets. My story begins on Seventh and Market St. I had just finished my ballet classes and immediately began to pile the layers of clothing that I had hastily packed prior to leaving my house. Over my leotard and tights came a t-shirt, an oversized hoodie, and a thick pair of warm sweatpants. Then I began making my way out of the old building, down five flights of creaky wooden stairs, and out the two double doors.

Outside, my eyes came to find an overcrowded, congested street looking nearly like the inside of a bull ring with aggravated, almost enraged bulls running around without a purpose. Further stimulated by outside chaos, the sleepy and sluggish individuals sprawled out on the side, closely imitating spectators of a bull fight.

My heart raced and pounded, making a thumping noise in my ear. As I began walking further down the block, I watched as heads raised and mouths started moving.

In between the sounds of my speedily beating heart, I could hear the comments coming, “I would tap that ass.”

“Wow baby girl.”
“Hey beautiful girl, come over here so I can see you better.”

Just when I thought my chest was going to explode, a man came from behind me and reached out to grab my ass. Just in time, an inch away from my trembling body, I dove into the street. I hurried down the middle of the roadway, through the mystifying fog that gave an ominous feel to the night and to my destination, Civic Center BART. Only a block away from the building I had just left.

I’ve had many experiences similar to this, so when I am catcalled or verbally harassed, I’m unphased. Stuff like this happens to women all across the world on a daily basis. This is not new. Efforts to make our streets safer need to be made. Women and girls should not be living in fear.
LIZETH MACIAS-MENDOZA
Age 15 • De Marillac Academy

THE INJUSTICES WE CALL JUSTICES

Things be getting overlooked,
no justice here.
Why do we come if we’re not wanted?
If they build a border to divide us,
we’re not welcome. I can see that,
but why we still trying to fit in?

Things be getting overlooked,
no justice here.
We welcome them to our countries open-handed, but they
can’t do the same for us.

Things be getting overlooked,
no justice here.
They claim to be a place for everyone.
They give chances and job opportunities, they say.
But yet they tear families apart, separate them, and see the
kids tired, full of sadness and fear. But they keep doing it in
front of them still.

Things be getting overlooked,
no justice here.
’Cause justice don’t exist here,
only injustice.
I am a Pokémon champion. Read this to be a Pokémon champion.
1. Know your types and weaknesses. Fire beats grass. Grass
   beats water. Water beats fire.
2. Go to Google for ^.
3. Stock up on potions so you can heal your Pokémon.
4. Hate Miltank 'cause it's weak.
5. Don’t let your guard down.
6. Your Pokémon will hate you.
7. Catch different types. More types = better type coverage.
8. Pokeball, twenty-five percent; Greatball, fifty percent;
   Ultraball, seventy-five percent; Masterball, one-hundred
   percent.
Are you a funny person and do you like to do pranks, but don’t know how to? Well, we’ll tell you how.

First, you get to know what the person hates and is afraid of because it will get them more scared and it will be funny. Second, plan out what you are going to use and do for the prank. Third, get your supplies. Fourth, set up for the prank to happen. Fifth, act calm so they don’t get suspicious. The last step is to activate the prank, to blow it up and have fun.
“You’re fat, stop eating. Wow, you’re a pig. Ugly.” Those words sank into my skin deeper than the needle for my seventh-grade vaccination. His perfect self, his tall body, his dark brown hair, his skinny body. That’s the person that hurt me the most in my life. It was thirty minutes past noon when I heard those powerful words that impacted me the most.

I was just eating some chips outside on the blacktop with my friends, minding my own business, when I saw him. When we made eye contact, I soon felt judged once again. I soon thought, *Here we go again, get prepared for his terrible beating with words.* I’ve known this kid since elementary school. This all started in fourth grade. Outta the blue, as blue as the ocean. My tiny self was sitting down being fine with my body, happy in life, but all that happiness was soon gonna end. I just didn’t know it was coming my way, like a tornado crashing down and ruining a town of happy people that least expected it.

A group of kids were laughing like a crowd of people at the circus. My eyes soon became the stream of Niagara Falls. As soon as the clock hit 5:30, I was outta there, outta that horrible place that I disliked so much. I got home, my heart racing and trying to hold my tears, so my mother wouldn’t see me in pain. I got to
my room and slammed the door so loudly the country next to us could probably hear me.

I laid down for a while, thinking about my day and trying to find the positive, but I couldn’t. I just couldn’t. I was looking in the mirror, criticizing my body, lifting up my shirt to only see my stomach, to only feel fat, to only feel ugly. To only feel worthless, ashamed of myself as was the mirror. The mirror stared at me, judging me, but that did not make me feel any better. My tears started dripping down my eyes, I slid against my door to only feel the cold floor under me.

The cold floor was as cold as an iceberg, as cold as swimming when the pool isn’t heated on a fall day. But why? Why me? Why did I have to feel like this? I have always wondered why, but nobody could answer my question and at this point nobody could make it better.

The standard of beauty has changed so much over the years. But why do we have to match the fashion trends? Women—big, small, medium, and curvy—are beautiful. We shouldn’t have to change. Girls are beautiful just the way we are. We shouldn’t change for nobody. Be a leader not a follower.
LUKA DONČIĆ IS THE BEST PLAYER RIGHT NOW

Luka Dončić is the best player right now and here’s why. Luka was picked in the first round and was picked third by the Atlanta Hawks and got traded to the Dallas Mavericks for Trae Young. Both of these players were very good in their rookie year, but Luka won the Rookie of the Year in 2018. Luke is in his sophomore year, and he has been playing so well this year. His skill set is just amazing. He can shoot, pass, rebound, and even steal. I hope Luka wins MVP because he is doing really well this year. I also hope he wins a championship in the future. Luka has become an All-Star this year. Luka is a star, and one day the torch will be passed to him as one of the greatest.
ELAIDA LUCAS  
Age 13 • Boys & Girls Club — Tenderloin Clubhouse

HOW TO PAINT A MURAL IF YOU WANT TO PAINT A MURAL (WHICH YOU DON’T HAVE TO DO)

Painting a mural is a very relaxing and a very calming thing to do. Besides, I have been drawing since I was probably seven years old. When I start to paint, I think about what my favorite things are, like my family and friends. Sometimes I draw people like myself, my sister, or my mom.

First, I write the words. Then I do the background (details) and paint the color. Last, I write my signature. And then I would frame it.
Cats are intelligent animals that sleep through the night. Cats are always just laying around being as lazy as they can be. Cats love to be cozy and sleep with you. Cats can also be different sizes. Cats love to zoom. Cats can also be different colors like black, white, peach, and can be hairless. Also, cats can have two or more of the same color. It's fun to play with cats. I like cats because they are so fuzzy and soft. I think that cats are wonderful animals.
Hey you, reader, you want to learn how to score a goal? Yes you do. Okay, then read this book for an hour to score a goal. Just don’t be afraid to be strong and don’t let anyone say you are bad. If they do, you have to be strong and show them all you’ve got.

How to shoot a ball? Finding a soccer ball. Find some cleats. Find a goalie. Find a soccer field. Choose which side you are kicking. You can be offensive, kicking the ball, but you have to practice to get the ball. And hit the ball with your foot by using your inside.

Imagine you were trying to play soccer but you can’t find a ball. Just stand up and ask people if you can’t find a soccer ball. If you want to learn how to score a goal, you need a goalie so you can learn how to shoot a ball. Find a soccer field to play soccer.
HOW TO WASTE MONEY

Money can make you happy because you can buy cars, games, and clothes, and go to Ross and Macy’s and the Apple store. I am happy to get money to buy chips and candy and gum. If you want to learn how to waste money, read the instructions.

How to Waste Money:
Go to stores and find some hot Takis.
Go to Macy’s. Find some games.
Go to Old Navy.
Get in line at Macy’s.
Pay with cash. It cost four hundred dollars and I paid five hundred dollars. My change was one hundred dollars.

I went home and my mom said, “Where have you been?”
“I went to Macy’s and Old Navy and Ross and the Apple store.”
And my mom said, “No way!”
I said, “Yes way, okay.”
And my dad came home and my mom told my dad and my dad said, “We are home.”
And my mom said, “In the room,” and my dad got mad.
Dad came to the room and my dad said, “Where are the clothes?”
And I said, “My bed.”
My dad got the clothes and my dad said, “Good job.”
You want to know how to play guitar? Read on to find out! First, sign yourself up in a guitar class. Next, know the chords and songs. Play to someone you love. Finally, you’re going to be so good at it. In conclusion, you’re going to be famous.

1. First go to guitar class.
2. Pay attention in class.
3. Know the correct chords.
4. Practice a lot in class.
5. Know the correct songs.
6. Know how to sing and play a song.
7. Play for someone you love.
8. Be FAMOUS.
9. Know how to play your favorite songs.

Thanks for reading. Now you know how to play guitar.
IMMIGRANT’S OLD PHONE

Small home, bright TV. The news yapping its mouth off. I’m on my old phone watching YouTube until something caught my eye, some random ad, something about Latinos. I didn’t mind it until it mentioned immigration. It was overly patriotic, this ad, as usual. It said something about an expensive border. Even I thought this random guy’s ad was ridiculous. After I finished this ad, I went to learn more about immigration. Have you ever had that feeling where you’re laughing on the outside and crying on the inside? Well, apparently I have. My old phone was throwing the weirdest but truest text at me. And what it said was essentially that good people who pay their taxes and have jobs people don’t want, and some people who are great towards society, these people are getting kicked out just because they’re “illegal,” yet work harder than normal people. And just like that, I learned that not everyone is treated equally.

You know how feelings have different levels? Well my feelings were like a microwave. Some things were high and low in temperature. For example, my anger was at medium temperature. My spookedness was somewhat high and I couldn’t stop laughing.

I want my fear to go away. I don’t want to worry about my friends or other people’s family. I want to know if my people will
stay in this country. I want to stop laughing at the truth, the truth that sounds like a comedy. A lot of this stuff is ridiculous. Good people are being kicked out—a lot of people that your economy relies on. Yeah, you better vote for someone who improves the immigration process. You better vote for someone fair and open-minded. Don’t think for only yourself. Think for everyone. Be selfless, not selfish.
WE FORGOT ABOUT THE LAVA MONSTER

Gingerbread armor against a giant gummy bear. A lonely pair of scissors and a caring piece of paper. A spaceship that travels all the way from Mars to Yemen. Let the imaginative stories in this section take you to magical forests, underground islands, and time-traveling pools. And as our writers suggest, make sure you make a friend along the way and get home before dinner.
"Wake up…WAKE UP!" my brother said. I was still in bed. “NEVER!” I said. So I stayed asleep. My brother yanked my blanket off my bed. I checked my phone. It was only 8:24 a.m. I went to the living room, and my mom had pancakes ready for me. Once I sat down, I realized that something was wrong with my picture on the fridge. In the picture in front of me, there was something in the background that wasn’t really there. It was a clown. As fast as I could, I told my family that there was something in the picture.

“What do you mean?” my sister said with pancakes in her mouth. I walked to school, and I stopped by the store. Then I got out of the store. I walked home. Then I stopped by my friend’s house. Once I was waiting for Elijah to come open the door, I saw a clown, the same clown I saw back at home. They were in the alley. Once I looked back at the door, I looked back to the alley and the clown was…MISSING! I went back to see if Elijah was there, but instead of Elijah, it was the clown. Next I started running home. I realized I left my keys at home, so I called my brother to open the door. I was shaking. Then my brother opened the door and we got home. I went to my room and called Elijah. “Elijah, don’t go downstairs,” I said.
“Why?” Elijah said. Then Rodney joined the call as fast as he could.
“I’m scared,” Rodney said.
“Why?” Elijah and I said.
“I saw a clown—”
I interrupted Rodney, “Yeah. I saw it too,” I said. Then everyone started joining the call, our friends Ryan, Jaden, Jordan, Bruce, and Hoy.
“I saw a clown,” they all said at the same time.
“Okay everyone, let’s meet at Boeddeker Park.”
“Okay,” everyone said.
Minutes later, “What are you guys talking about?” Elijah said.
“So everyone saw a clown except Elijah,” I said. Then something caught my eye. The same clown that we all saw. Elijah was surprised. Elijah was frightened. He couldn’t believe his eyes! He thought it was all fake!
One day, a special day, Day of the Dead, there were multiple dead people and animals. They whispered, “It is our day,” and they screamed, “Yeah! It’s Day of the Dead.” Then they went to get the food from the desk that the people left. They ate pizza with cheese and some fruit. The fruits were mangos, apples, and strawberries. And then they went to the living world. The skeletons had flower eyes, and for girls they had a flower headband. For the boys they had a hat with red spots and with blue lines, and inside of the hat it was orange. When they went to the living world, the people could not see them because they were invisible. The dead walk through the living people.

And a little girl heard something and she got scared. Then she said to her mom, “Mom, did you hear the noise?” Then her mother said, “No? What?” “But why did I hear it but not you?” “Maybe you just hear things in your mind,” her mom said calmly to her. Then the multiple dead people and animals had a party, a Day of the Dead party. There were cakes and drinks and Day of the Dead candy that tasted like fresh, new candy. And it smelled so good that if I had that candy, I would buy them all because they might be very good, and I would give some to my family and friends because they might like them, and then Day of the Dead was over. The dead people went back to heaven with their spirit animals and they lived happily ever after.
THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN

It was a cold, dark night. Jake was freezing while walking home from night school and he passed a graveyard. When he was at the graveyard, he saw something strange happening, so he went and checked it out. He saw a ghost coming out of the ground. It wasn’t a normal ghost though. It was the Headless Horseman! When the Headless Horseman was fully up, it spun so fast that mist came. Seconds later, it stopped, and here it was, the real thing, the Headless Horseman. Jake screamed for his life and got out of there. He headed home and into bed. Hours later, he got tapped by something. His eyes opened, and there he saw the Headless Horseman. Jake screamed, and his family came into his room.

His mom asked, “What’s wrong?” with a groan.

Jake said, “The Headless Horseman was here!” His mom thought how childish dreams can be. After that, she left the room with laughter.

Glenda was flying around and saw the Headless Horseman but it suddenly disappeared, and so she banged her head onto the ground with a hard impact. She was unconscious. Across the street, someone saw her and called medical services. When they arrived, they put her in the back and drove off.
When she woke up in an ER bed, a doctor said, “I’m sorry but your medical insurance expired yesterday!” After that, the doctor handed her a bill that cost seventy-five thousand dollars. Her jaw dropped like a waterfall. When the doctor wasn’t looking, she ran out of the hospital. She went out and flew again. But she would fall because she hadn’t fully recovered from her crash, so she fell and hit her head on the hard concrete. The doctors saw she was missing, so they went outside and saw her unconscious. The doctors took her in and didn’t help her. She became conscious again and saw her mom in front of her.

Her mom said, “I paid for you to get out of the hospital, but you better pay me back!” So she and her mom walked home.

Jake hadn’t seen the Headless Horseman in three months. In those three months, Glenda got kicked out of her mom’s house. Then one day, Jake saw the Headless Horseman while he was passing through the graveyard. He went to night school. Then when it was over, he went back to the graveyard to check out if the Headless Horseman was still there. And, of course, the Headless Horseman was still there. So Jake went up and started punching it. He would miss though because the Headless Horseman would dodge it. While Glenda was flying, she saw them and came down behind the Headless Horseman. She gave a signal to Jake to not talk. Then she knocked out the Headless Horseman. The Headless Horseman fell down into a hole that looked like a dark void. Jake felt so great that this was over! Glenda became rich because of her bravery, so she bought a house and gave zero percent of her money to her mom. She didn’t even pay her back. There was never a sighting of the Headless Horseman ever again.
In a corrupted city, there was a superhero named A Guy Who Stops Time.

When he stops time, the superhero can move and make people into silly statues. He chased the villain intensely and jumped over really high buildings. He ran really fast but it was no use. What a bummer! So the superhero was mad, and he knew the villain liked water. So he went to the lab and made a potion that takes away powers. He made the bottle and added ingredients. He used a special machine that filters out colors and makes it look transparent like water. After the plan he baited the villain. He struggled to bait the villain. Hours passed but... he forgot to stop time so he stopped time. Then the villain came. He drank the water. Then the villain lost his powers, and the potion he invented was successful. He did the wiggle dance as a celebration. “Do not be evil ever again!” said A Guy Who Stops Time.

“Okay fine,” said the villain. Then the city became great.
It was a hot day in the water park, and Senomy was playing in the pool. Just then, her brother Max jumped into the pool. He was drowning. Then their mom and dad said they needed to go back home. Their mom and dad were so worried! Max was crying, so they put him back to bed and gave him a blanket. But Senomy was sad because they stayed in the water park for just one minute, but a superhero named Carlie came to help her, and Carlie reset the time all over again. Carlie wanted to help Senomy to make her happy again, and Carlie was really surprised when she saw Senomy so sad.

Carlie said, “No need to worry. If you need help, just call me.”

Senomy said, “Okay, I will call you if I need help. Thank you, bye!” When Carlie left, Senomy reminded herself, Whenever you need help, call Carlie.

The next day, Senomy wanted to time travel again because last week she didn’t go on the swing and she wanted to try it, so she called Carlie.

“Carlie!” called Senomy. Carlie came so fast.

“What do you want?” said Carlie.

“I want to go on the swing,” said Senomy. “Do you want to come with me?” said Senomy.

Carlie said, “Yes.”

“Okay, reset the time all over again,” said Senomy. So then they went on to the park and played! Carlie felt proud of herself!
There was a bear in the woods. He moved to the city to start fresh. But when he wanted to make friends, the humans didn’t listen to him. *Why is no one listening to me?* he asked. He tried to make friends everywhere, the beach, the dump, workplaces, and even the school. But still no one listened to him. Next he just went home to his apartment. But when he was walking home, he met a small boy. He asked if he could be friends with the boy. So he invited him to his house. The boy said he had to ask his parents first. The boy ran home to ask his parents. So the bear stayed there at the bus stop.

Then at the boy’s house he asked, “Hey Mom, Dad, can I go to a bear’s house?”

“What, a bear?” questioned Mom.

“Well you can go, just be safe,” said Dad.

“Oh, you can go,” said Mom.

“Okay, bye Mom, bye Dad.”

Then the boy ran off to the bear. Right as he saw the bear, he tripped. The bear rushed to him. “Are you hurt?” said the bear. “Get on my back. I’ll carry you.” So then the bear started walking.

“What’s your name?” said the bear.

“I’m Tommy, Tommy J. Carter,” said Tommy. “What’s your name?” said Tommy.
“I’m Berry,” said the bear.
“Okay,” Tommy said.
“Ohh, we are at my house,” said the bear. The bear walked in the house. Berry let Tommy down. The bear said that he will go cook, so the bear was cooking a secret recipe. It was his pizza with his secret sauce. Cough, onions. So the bear put it into the oven. Then he went to the living room to play with Tommy. They were playing Mario Kart. After five games they heard the oven was ready. So they took the pizza out. Tommy was drooling. The bear was drooling too. When they sat down, they ate so fast that it took only one second. Tommy said it was great. It was late so he went home.

The next day, Tommy was going to school. He was going to tell the school about Berry. And he saved four slices of pizza. So he shared it with his friends. It was so good the kids posted it. But he got famous for his pizza. People were crowding his house. But Tommy ordered bodyguards to help. So then he bought a big house. They went there. They were playing tag with some new friends and were having fun. Then they went inside to eat. They ate so much that they fell on the ground.

“Thanks, you helped me so much. You became my first friend right away. Thanks for being my friend,” said Berry tiredly.
“You too,” answered Tommy.
“Hey! Let’s explore the neighborhood!” said Rose.
“Sure!” said Alex and Anthony at the same time.
They went after asking their parents and ran out the door when they heard the word “YES!” from their parents. Now the kids were outside exploring. Soon they found this hotel that looked pretty old. They decided to go in and take a look. Then they saw a man. The name tag on the desk said, “Assistant David.”
The kids went up to the desk. “Why is this hotel so old?” asked Rose.
The man said, “We are going to sell it very soon because customers reported that they saw and heard ghosts at night.” The kids looked at each other and nodded their heads and ran home. They asked and begged their parents.
“But we already have a house!” said Anthony’s mom. Soon all three of them convinced their parents so much that now they decided to move into the hotel for a few nights. They packed their stuff and went there. When they got there, they unpacked and took turns showering. They and their parents went to sleep.
Before the kids went in their rooms, they met and said they would wake up when their parents were asleep, so that is what they did. They met each other outside and hid in a closet. Soon
they heard footsteps, so they waited until they got closer. When
the steps were close enough, they jumped out and yelled. Then
the “ghost” wiped its makeup off and pulled the wig off. They
ran to the “ghost.”
“Wait, isn’t this a person?” asked Alex.
“Yeah,” Rose and Alex joined in.
Then the “ghost” said, “No! I’m not a ghost. My name is Amy,
and I’m acting in a movie here.”
“Who hired you?”
“Two guys, I believe their names are Billy and Bobby.”
Then Rose remembered something. She looked at Alex and
he nodded. Then Rose told Amy about Billy and Bobby. Then
Anthony said, “I got it!”
“Got what?” asked Alex.
“The people. They want David to think that this place is haunted,
so he would sell it for cheap,” Anthony told them. The next
morning they told David before it was too late. David heard
about the story and declined their deal and thanked the kids by
inviting them to eat at a fancy restaurant!
My house was as big as a giant blue gummy bear. “We finished,” I said as I finished my gingerbread house. It had frosting and gumdrops for decoration and marshmallow smoke with lollipop trees. I hopped on my gingerbread bed and started to sleep until my house started shaking. Boom, boom, boom! A giant gummy bear was breaking my house. I ran and took a lollipop with me and hit the gummy bear. Then the gummy bear took a lollipop and started to try hitting me, but I jumped on a rolling peppermint and escaped and crashed into another house. I hopped off and yelled that a giant gummy bear is coming to eat us. We all got gingerbread armor and lollipop or candy cane swords, and we started to set marshmallow traps. There were not a lot of us, and we shot Twizzlers at the gummy bear and then BOOM! The gummy bear stepped on a marshmallow. The gummy bear was covered with marshmallows and Twizzlers then a bunch of gummy bears came out of nowhere. BOOM, BOOM, BOOM! Marshmallows started flying everywhere. We closed the ice cream sandwich gate and then gingerbread people came and everything was getting destroyed. We set off our peppermints and M&M traps but they kept coming. We rolled away on our peppermints and mints and got away. We were all worried because they were chasing us.
Once upon a time, there were lots of bad guys. And then there was a hero named Mohamed. Mohamed’s powers were invisibility, water, fire, and flying powers. He got his powers from a scientist. He lived in a wild forest. He treated it like he treated other Tenderloins and cities because he calls it a community. There are three types of gangs. There is a Fire Gang, there is the Flash Gang, and the last gang is called Lightning Gang. In each gang there are twenty people. Each person in the gang has a gadget that shoots their power.

First, Mohamed met the Fire Gang in the Tenderloin when he was going back home. “I almost forgot my powers,” said Mohamed. He used his invisibility powers because the Fire Gang could not see him. Then the Fire Gang got out their gadget and kept on shooting fire because they wanted to get that person. Mohamed started to shoot out fire too until Mohamed hurt someone. He was the leader of the gang. The gang started to run away. The Fire Gang ran all the way to the other gangs and told them all the story. And then the gangs and Mohamed talked about it until they all became friends.

They said, “Just forget about it and let’s become friends.”
Batgirl is in a big house setting the time to sleep. She is happy and smiling because she gets to set the time, because the kids are sleepy, because they do not want to go to school and get bored. The kids are sleeping every day. They are so happy they say, “Thank you.”

Batgirl says, “You’re welcome,” energetically. Batgirl is the best. She sets the time to sleep!

Batgirl has black hair and bat ears and a black costume with red polka dots. She has a small, light brown cat. Batgirl explains how to get food like fresh cupcakes. The cupcakes are blue, red, and white. The kids give her the cupcakes. “That is great,” says Batgirl. And then Batgirl gives a big high five.
Once upon a time there was a man named James in a house so big like ten elephants stuck together. Inside it was so messy, it was like it was just a trash house. And he saw a ghost on a Sunday. The ghost was moving stuff. Then James went down the stairs and he was running down. He ran in a circle three times. Suddenly he ran into a bookshelf, and it knocked other bookshelves like some dominoes. Then *Ssspppllaat!* Finally he was a ghost too, but he was not sad because he did not have to do work ever again now that he was a ghost.

The ghost asked, “Do you want to be friends?”

James said, “Yeah, do you want to go to New York?”

“Yeah, sure.” They both went to New York. Next he flew to New York, where he’d wanted to go for years, and walked like a person, and he played in a park like a little kid.

“This is so fun,” said the ghost to James.

“Oh, what is your name?” said James.

“My name is Barry.”

“My name is James.”

James was happy as a puppy having so much fun. Then he was so happy ever after.
Have you ever thought how scissors cut your paper? Maybe there are little people on the scissors with little scissors that cut your paper, or maybe it’s a monster going like, *chop, chop* with one eye. Just think. It could be looking at you when you are using it. It also is hard and sharp. Be nice to it or you will get *chop, chop*.

The paper comes and says, “Hey you, why are you chopping paper?”

Then the scissors responded, “Because—wait, you don’t need to know. I will cut you.” The paper ran so fast that she was like lightning. Then the scissors got even madder and the paper felt scared.

Then the paper strip said, “Why do you like to cut paper?”

Then he said, “Because I have no friends and I lost all my friends.”

The paper said, “I can be your friend.”

The scissors got so happy and they lived happily.
Boom! Boom! Boom! as Ninja Kid takes the bullies’ kicks and Woosh! when Ninja Kid throws the bullies into an unbreakable cage. Ninja Kid said, “No more bullying ever again.” Ninja Kid hid the coat. He hid it into the sand. No one will ever find it, not even in a million years. The coat will be still in the sand. It happened in Egypt. Before, the bullies tried to snatch it but Ninja Kid is really fast, so Ninja Kid snatched it before a second. Ninja Kid has speed, agility, stamina, strength, and “quarterback,” which means time travel. A new story about the bullies’ parents taking revenge. Stay tuned to the next story.

Ninja Kid and the Revenge of Bullies’ Parents:

Boom! Shhh! Clang! Ninja Kid is as strong as unbreakable steel. But the bullies’ parents don’t have faces, how do they see? They don’t. They use their brains to think where they are going. I will give you an example: When they want to go somewhere, they use their brains to cooperate on where they are going for their destination. Even though they look easy, they are really hard to fight, and Ninja Kid is really determined to fight them. Three, two, one, GO! Boom! Snap! Clang! Ninja Kid still fights. He never gets tired. The parents are charging. Ninja Kid uses his special attack! Boom! He wins again. Ninja Kid is unstoppable!
One Saturday I was at home and I was on my tablet. My thirteen-year-old brother, Andre, got a phone call and the mysterious voice said, “Get ready.”

My brother said, “Who are you? I don't recognize your voice. You probably have the wrong number, sir.”

Then the man said, “HAHAHA estoy jugando. Es tu papa.”
Once upon a time, there was a thirteen-year-old girl. Her name was Brianna. So she and her little brother were at the beach, but her brother went for a walk so it was just Brianna. The beach was windy and the sand was blowing everywhere. She was feeling cold and also excited because she had wanted to go to the beach. She ended up going with her brother. When she got to the beach, she glared at the beach and the waves were so big. She got bored and went into the waves and the waves got bigger. When her brother came back and didn’t find her, he created a sea creature, and the sea creature searched for her in the ocean. The sea creature was light green mixed with blue and it was so big. And it had light blue eyes. Then the sea creature found her and took her back to the shore. She wouldn’t wake up, so he took her to the hospital, and they said, “She is going to be in a coma for eight months.” After that, her brother started crying. After eight months, the day she woke up, she felt funny, and she moved her hands and magic came out! A rainbow came out of her hands. Then she and her brother went home after five days and lived happily ever after.
Once upon a time, there were two children that were about ten years old. Just like us, their names were Aron and Evelyn. Evelyn is very friendly. On the other hand, Aron is daring and rude. But anyways, when it was Halloween night, they decided to go trick-or-treating and then stumbled on a house that kind of looked like a barfing, disgusting zombie that had risen out of the trash can.
BEST BROTHERS

The water was blue as the sky, and in the water lived two dragons and one of them was bad. Bad Dragon was red and Good Dragon was black. So Bad Dragon flew out of the water and destroyed half of the Golden Gate Bridge, and he flew at the Golden Gate Bridge and destroyed it! And he was moving fast and twisting and hooked down the bridge. And next, the floor under the water was shaking, and Good Dragon came out of the water and blocked the second punch of Bad Dragon. Next, he pushed Bad Dragon into the water, and Bad Dragon got up and then pushed Good Dragon to the Golden Gate Bridge and destroyed the Golden Gate Bridge more, but Good Dragon got back up and slammed Bad Dragon in the water.

Then Good Dragon said, “I am going to tell Mom.”
And Bad Dragon said, “You’re no fun.”
And Good Dragon said, “You’re killing people!”
And Bad Dragon said, “No don’t tell Mom.” And then they went home and Good Dragon told Mom Dragon about how he almost killed more than five hundred people. Then Bad Dragon got in trouble and Good Dragon felt good for saving more than five hundred people.

“Say, ‘I am sorry,’” Mom yelled, “You are in bad trouble because I told you you can’t do that.”
“You almost killed more than five hundred people and I had to save them, but I am sorry for telling Mom and getting you in trouble and sorry for letting Mom scream at you.”

Bad Dragon was mad at Good Dragon, but they are still best brothers.
A twenty-year-old Mocats took a spaceship from Mars. He lived in the largest land on Mars, which was Yemen. Mars is the opposite of Earth. It is blue and orange. It is always sunny. Then he crashed into a star. His spaceship started landing on Earth, and it landed on Yemen. Then Yemeni circled around him. Then they helped him out of the spaceship and asked questions.

“How did you get here? What happened?” He purchased a home. Then Mocats’ family found his location and bought a machine to bring kind people back to Mars. The mean people became kind people and learned their lesson.
One day after school Miguel, David, and I met together at the entrance to the woods and waited for each other with our phones, tablets, and iPad. Miguel talked so loud. He said, “La la la.” The woods were green and the sky was as dark as a cat. Miguel screamed so loudly that a stranger heard and came and we all ran. We got lost because we all ran in different paths. So Miguel went left and David went right and I ran forward. So the stranger found a gun from a war a long time ago and shot the gun. We were scared, so we all ran as fast as a cheetah, and we all bumped into each other. David was scared and Miguel was happy and I was also scared.
WHAT’S IN THE LIVING ROOM?

Once upon a time, I was making a video on my phone in the living room. Then I looked back at the video, and then I saw something like a shadow and it popped out of nowhere. And it was 3:00 a.m., but I did not know what time it was. It was really scary, so I tried rubbing my eyes fast, so that the real or fake ghost would go away and I did and it was gone. It was scary. I ran to my mom and slept in there for the night. The next day I was spooked. What is going to happen to me? I didn’t know what to think. I felt like I was in the sunken zone. I was just stuck. Then at night I heard something in the living room.

I remembered a video and it said, “I guess that is not the living room anymore.” I didn’t know if it was the video or the ghost talking to me and I did not get it, but a couple minutes later, I woke up at midnight and I heard something again. The next day I played at my friend’s house. I thought I heard something but I just ignored it. But I heard it again, so I told my friend about what happened two days ago.

He was like, “It must have been a dream.” But I didn’t believe it so I just sat down.
AQUAMAN SAVES THE DAY AND THEN GOES HOME

Aquaman stops a fight between two boys. Two cars crash into each other. They weren’t paying attention. One person says, “Hey, you crashed my car!”

The other person says, “I couldn’t see!”

The other person says, “You gotta pay for my car—you crashed into me first.”

Aquaman swims. He stops the fight. And he saves the day. He gifts him a new car. He throws the money into the car. The pile is big as a bear. Later he swims home to Candyland.
There once was a unicorn. The unicorn was eating an apple, and an ugly witch came and got the unicorn. The unicorn was in the bed, and the ugly witch was making stone soup for the unicorn and herself too. And now they’re friends forever and ever.
GRAND MASTER FOGA

Grand Master Foga became an enemy trying to ruin humankind itself. But Kocha finds out and tries to stop him in his tracks. Kocha finds Grand Master Foga, but Master Foga has a sense that someone’s trying to stop him, so gets his army ready to fight. Meanwhile, Kocha is on his way and runs, dashing so fast he almost walks on water. A couple of local people see it, but it just looks like a fast-moving object. Some videotape it and post it online. Others think that it was a fast boat. Kocha finds the lair. He roams around it but no one had been there. But Kocha hears a ticking noise and turns around and BOOM! PING! POW! Kocha flies in midair and shortly after falls. He gets up slowly in pain. When he starts to walk, he has a small limp with it. He looks around but can still hear a ringing sound in his ear. As he looks behind, he sees Foga and his army of minions, but Kocha is too weak to fight, so the minions easily take him down, and the last thing Kocha hears is Foga laughing.

But Kocha overpowers the minions and gets his UnelectricFire. It can knock out all electricity within a twenty-mile radius of it. He throws it on the ground. Turns out Foga was a robot too.
Jack said, “What a good day to help the homeless and to fight the bad guy.” Jack was in San Francisco.

Jack was happy because he was having a good day. He woke up. Then something just happened. Then he ate breakfast. Then he flew up to the sky to see if the bad guy was doing something. The homeless people were tired. Jack was helping the homeless people get some food and make houses.

Then he saw the Joker and he said, “Stop, Joker.”

Joker said, “No, I will not stop. I will break the houses.”

“No, I will stop you. That’s it. You are going to jail,” Jack said. “No, you will not stop me.” Joker was breaking the house. Jack fought the Joker. Then he used all his powers. Joker said, “You can’t stop me because I have a big robot.”

Jack said, “I can break the robot.”

“No you cannot.”

“I will use my laser eyes.” ZZZGGG
Diana was stealing ten million dollars from the bank. The heroes were Goku and Alex. Alex had fire powers to stop Diana. Alex told Diana to stop. Diana did not listen, and Diana ran behind a car to hide. He used fire to distract Diana. Alex was gonna stop Diana.

“Stop stealing money from the bank,” Alex said and ran.

“Do not steal the money,” Goku said, “to buy a car to go to Las Vegas.” Goku had fire jail to capture Diana.

She said to Goku, “Curse you, Goku.” Alex took the money to the bank.

“Thank you, Alex,” said the bank. Alex felt great.
ADISON THE MERMAID

One day a mermaid named Adison had powers and she had every power. So she wanted a tree that had powers so she found the perfect tree. It was shiny and gold and the tree was named Zed. So Adison gave him powers. He could stretch his arms, and when he saw an animal that was hurt, he helped them. And he had a hedgehog house in the tree, and when an animal was on the road, Zed stretched his arms to grab the animal before the car hit it. And there was an animal (a raccoon) named Big Mouth. He wanted to always get in, but he couldn’t because he was mean to all the animals, especially the…MERMAID!

And every night, the mermaid would always cry to the tree, and the tree would be like, “What happened?” Until one day he said, “This has to stop!” He built up a silver cage to trap the racoon. He went inside the cage to get some peanut butter. Not even a drill could go through it. The racoon was in a prison, and there was enough food for its whole life. And they lived happy.
THE MONSTER

They entered a mysterious, dark cave. They saw animals. The pets helped them find their way out then they obby (which means jumping on stuff to get out). The flood got big and the people did the obby, and then they ran out of the cave. Then the flood got bigger and deeper, and they had to climb to the highest rock! “Follow us,” the pets said. The pets led them to the highest rock. Then they climbed. Then the flood got bigger and also deeper. Then another rock came up. Then the monster appeared with a log to get across. Then the monster got closer to the other rock and then the sun came up.

The monster said, “Nooooo! THE SUN!”

The other people said, “That’s right, you deserve this. You poisoned us and kidnapped one of us.”

The monster said, “You don’t understand. I was only trying to help. Ever since a murderer arrived, I went insane! I couldn’t take another murderer in these woods…I didn’t poison ANYONE!” Then he grabbed a person’s backpack from the group. He opened it and inside there was rat poison! The people looked at the murderer that had the poison from the sandwiches. Then the monster carefully crawled and he grabbed the murderer, and then the murderer took out her knife and stabbed the monster. The monster didn’t die. It got up again, but someone took out their phone and called the police. The murderer chased them. The others ran by screaming and shouting and sprinting. But minutes later the police arrived and arrested the murderer, and they were given twelve years in prison.
Ben and Alyssa came camping with Richard and Collen. They were in the magical forest together with someone part horse and part man. After, they did so many fun things, like tag and hide-and-go-seek in the magical forest. After, they set their tents and went to sleep. The next morning, Ben woke up and didn’t see his friends. *Where are my friends?* Ben thought. He got really lonely ‘cause his friends were gone. Then he got his things packed and looked for his friends. A few days later, he found his friends in a cave sleeping and he woke them up and he hugged them really tightly.

*Why did he hug so hard?* his friends thought. His friends hugged him back. Then they decided to go home and sleep there rather than the magical forest.
Guava Juice said, “Hey guys, today we are going to call SpongeBob at 3:00 a.m. so let’s call him now!” So Guava Juice called SpongeBob.

Then SpongeBob answered and said, “Hi Roi, wanna play a game?”

Roi said, “What game do you wanna play?”

SpongeBob said, “Find all the ingredients for the Krabby Patty.”

They looked on the floor. Then they found bread. Then they looked in the toilet. They found ketchup. There was ketchup everywhere. Guava Juice then looked at the dog poop and found ham. Then SpongeBob chased him with a chainsaw and Guava Juice ran away.
THE SCARIEST HOSPITAL IN THE WORLD

One day, Josue was so sick that Brandon, Nancy, Amanda, and Gillber, too, said, “Quick, we have to take Josue to the hospital right now.” They went to the hospital and got medicine. After getting the medicine, they were going back home but they found a monster, and it was going to get them, so they ran as fast as they could.

I’m going to die in here, get me out right now, thought Nancy. So snakes were coming, venomous snakes. So before they left, they had to pass a maze. It had water, snakes, traps, skunks, mice, and stinky bombs. So they went through the maze. They wanted to get out, so they passed the first part of the maze. Next was the hardest part of the maze. It had everything, so they went to the other part where there were the stinky bombs and the snakes and the water and even a big mama mouse. Then they went to the last part. So they had to go to the last, last part and they were tired so they passed it. So they killed the monster with the medicine. So they lived happily ever after.
It was Christmas day! I was so happy and excited! I ran out of my room and saw my family waiting for me.

“Did you watch TV after you woke up? Did you forget about Christmas!” said my family normally.

“ Totally didn’t forget about it,” I said. After we opened our presents and cleaned up, I went outside with my friends and played with snowballs. When we accidentally hit a car, it disappeared! My friends and I tried it on ourselves. We ended up in a bus!

“We’re in Fortnite!” said Rob.

“We’re not in Fortnite. This bus is literally called the Party Drop Down!” I said. My friends and I were confused.
The bedroom was red. Billy was dreaming about pigs flying. Billy had to get a flying pig. You would want a flying pig ride. However, he got one and he flew onto the moon. It’s five times bigger than the building that you’re standing on. And then he fell really hard and he broke his head. His brain leaked out of his head.
“Hi, I am thirsty,” said Goku. He was feeding the monster. He had a sword, and there was fire in the sword. Goku and the monster were fighting. It was bloody because they showed their powers. They were mad and Goku’s flash was white. He met the monster face-to-face. He was mad because he did not like the monster. He said, “You look ugly.”

The monster said, “I want to fight you.” Goku pulled out his sword. He looked cool. He wore orange clothes with spiky black hair. After three hours, he defeated the monster. Goku was happy. He saved all the people.

They all said, “Thank you, Goku.”

“You are welcome.” The monster is dead, and the people threw him away. Then Goku went back to Earth.

“See you next time.”
GOKU BLACK, SPONGEBOB, BROLY, AND GRANNY

Goku Black was on Earth. He was training. First, he used Super Saiyan. His hair turned as purple as the moon. Meanwhile, Broly came with his minions and attacked Earth, *dun dun duuuun*. Then one hour later, Goku Black was done with his training. Then Goku Black screamed with tensed fists. Then his hair turned into gold. Then he shot a blast at Broly and his minions.

Broly dodged it and said, “Hahaha I will destroy Earth!”

Goku yelled while shooting another blast, “No you won’t do that because I am going to help Earth!” Then Goku Black won. And the world started clapping!

Then SpongeBob came. Then Granny came too. Then Granny hurt SpongeBob and Goku Black. Then Goku Black was mad, so he turned Granny into a frog-snake and then stuff started coming out from her nose.

SpongeBob said to Goku, “Why did you do that?”
It was all fine and then SpongeBob said, “Hahahaha.”
Granny said, “It’s not funny, SquareHead.”
Then Goku Black said, “Hahaha that’s funny.”
Then SpongeBob joked, “Roxanne, all she wants to do all night.”
BRYAN SANDOVAL
Age 11 • Boys & Girls Club — Tenderloin Clubhouse

TIRONE’S DAY

My superhero was at home and heard that the police were trying to find him to do experiments on him.

One day, Tirone was in bed on his phone, like always, before class. He got up off his bed and showered. After that he put on his clothes, brushed his teeth, and put on deodorant and perfume. Then he went to his jewelry box and got his amulet from his grandmother that her grandmother gave her and passed down the generations. Then he got to work and got to his desk and got on to his emails.
SUHAIB ALAMERI
Age 7 • Cross Cultural Family Center of San Francisco

SUPERHERO DREAM

Once I had a dream about me and my friends.
We all had super powers.
We fought criminals and bad guys.
We fought to look for our leader
but we had two more teammates.
I’m smart.
We all won, but we found our leader in time to celebrate.
“Yay.” They exclaimed.
“Woohoo, this is the best party.”
“Oh yeah.”
“Did you know I’m the mission leader?”
Remember we never quit.
We always get up.
“We are fast as the Flash.”
We save innocent people.
We are the good people. Come on, let’s get some “rest.”
Yawn. Aha.

“Good morning.”
“How are you?”
“Good.”
“Good.”
“Let’s get some eggs for breakfast.”
“Ummm let’s watch the news—”
“We’re twins.”
“Wait! We still forgot about the bandits. Let’s go by train. Pack your bags. Why, we forgot about the lava monster. But where?”
“Hawaii. Can we stay there?”
“Yes.”
“Yes, we’re home. Let’s go.”
“Wait, what monster? You guys are golden ranks.”
“Yeah!”
“Wait, is the future war done?”
“Yes, can we go to paradise?”
“Yes.”
“Thank you, sensei master. Can I go to Japan?”
“Yes.”
“Thank you!”
“Hello, I can introduce you. My name is Pezzey. Ya and I were in a world. We went somewhere and that was SPACE! I was closest to Jupiter, and there were lots of nice people,” Pezzey yelled to the space, “who gave nice flowers and they had a spaceship and they would go to work with it. And the place they work in is at the moon. And when the moon turns, they have to go back to their home or they will die. It sounds like Whoosh! in the spaceship.” Pezzey didn’t get on the spaceship on time. She just got pushed off. Someone saved her. It was Ya. She said, “Thank you, Ya.” And, “When you get pushed off, I will save you.” And when they got back on Jupiter, there was a party with pizza and Coca-Cola. They ate hamburgers, tacos, and fries. For dessert they ate donuts. Desserts got back to the donuts. The parents got really scared because she was out at 11:10 at night. Why’s that? The parents said, “Thank you for saving my daughter.”
Bobby the Brown Bear opened his mouth and roared. When he roars, that means you are in danger. The animals ran home scared and camouflaged, and then Bobby the Bear flew to his cave and closed the door, and he slept until the men left. Bobby the Bear roared. Then the men who were fat and scary and tall got scared. The animals jogged outside. Then the door was jammed. Then he yelled, “Help!” The animals tried to help Bobby the Bear but he used his fire power. “Thank you for listening to me.” The fox, wolf, lion, tiger, snails, cheetah, bears, and worms felt proud. “Shoot! Watch out,” said the Bear loudly! “I got this.” Then he used his fire power from his mouth and then the men ducked down. Then the Bear said, “Get out.”

“Okay,” said the men.

Then they rode a horse to the truck. Then the Bear roared. Then the animals got out.

The animals said, “Thank you for protecting us.” Then the Bear and the animals went to sleep. Then the men will not come for a year.

The Bear woke up in the spring. He went to catch a fish in the rushing river. He ate the fish and was happy. He was happy as a baby with a toy.
“Hey Edd, wake up!”
“What do you want? I am trying to sleep!”
“Tom and I want to go trick-or-treating.”
“Okay.”
“Do you want to come?” Then they put on their costumes and got their candy buckets.
“We’re heading to trick-or-treat.” So they went into like three houses already.
“Hey, Thomas!”
“What?”
“Did you really have to be Thomas the Train for Halloween?”
“Well, it was funny.”
“Come on, guys, there are more houses to go!” So they got candy at like eleven more houses.
Matt thought to himself, Why are there only twenty-five pictures of me, but there’s supposed to be like thirty-six more photos?
“Hey Tom, do you see that little girl?”
“Yeah, why?”
“She’s staring at us!”
“Come here, little kids!”
“Okay Tom, we need to start running!”
“Good idea, I was about to say that!”
“Just run!” So they ran as fast as they could! Then they saw Future Edd.
“I came back to kill my younger self again!”
“Get back here, Future Edd!”
“You can’t stop me, Future Tom!”
“Hey me, why the eye thing?”
“Remember the laser in the eye? Well, cancer.”
“Oh,” Tom said.
“Hey Edd, why didn’t you know about this?”
Edd said, “Well I forgot like three years ago.” Then Future Thomas came out of the portal.
“Ew I am so old! Run Edd!”
So he ran for his life and hid from Future Edd.
“I found you.”
“Aaaaaa!”
“Time to say goodbye to your lovely life!” Then Future Edd triggered his gun, BOOM!
“I wanted my chicken extra crispy!” Then the laser hit his hands.
“This doesn’t change nothing!”
“Look out, Edd.” Then Edd grabbed a shiny object and held it up to his chest.
“Ka-Boom.” The laser hit Future Edd and he was knocked out.
“Thank you, Younger Edd, for turning yourself in!”
“I mean the Future Edd, okay.”
“Thanks, Future Tom and Future Thomas, for saving me.”
“No problem.”
“Now you will face twelve years of future prison for mistakes!”
“Nooooo.” Then Tom, Edd, and Thomas saw how much candy there was.
“This is the best day of my life!” So they all went back home and ate all their candy while watching a movie.
“Hey Tom, why didn’t you make popcorn?”
Tom said, “You make it yourself.” They all had the best dreams in the world.

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SUPER TOP SECRET MEETING (STSM)

One day underground on another island, villains were having a Super Top Secret Meeting (STSM). “So you get the plan, right? DON'T MESS THIS UP!”

“We can have a chance to finally rule the TOWN!” said the evil boss.

Both villains said, “Yes, boss!”

Hi, I’m Bob. You’re probably wondering what’s going on! My boss wants us to kill everyone in Freezeinburg and make clones and put them in Freezeinburg. Then my boss will rule. Pretty crazy, right? I’ve done lots of crazy things, like freezing everyone and other stuff that villains do, but something doesn’t feel right about being a villain.

“Calling all villains!” Well, my boss is calling me. Gotta run. “You guys need some rest. Tomorrow is a big day!”

“Yes, sir,” said Gulpo with an excited tone.

“Yes, sir,” said Bob excitedly.

June 6, 2019. “Wake up!” said the boss. They woke up, got ready, and went out the door. Gulpo was over-the-top excited.
One sunny day, my mom and I were coming back from a swimming pool. We had been there for three hours. It was really fun. I felt lucky because it was a hot day.

Then eventually I bumped into some kind of keys. So I immediately picked them up. I was surprised. I was like, “I’m keeping them for sure.”

My mom said, “I think you should leave them.”
I said, “No way. I am keeping them.”
My mom was like, “Oh well.”

I saw a yellowish car. It’s called a Ferrari. I got the keys and unlocked the car. It was the best day ever. When I turned the car on, I let my mom take it for a drive. When she got in, I saw my mom telling me to come, so we can go home and tell my dad what happened. So I got in the car and we were out of there. The car went fast. It was as fast as a cheetah.

When we arrived home, I went straight home to tell my dad what happened. I told him, “When Mom and I were coming back from the pool, we found keys on the ground. Then I picked them up and Mom said, ‘Do not pick them up, leave it.’ I said, ‘Nah.’ Then I put them in my pocket. Then I saw a yellowish Ferrari. Mom and I went to it and unlocked it. Then we went home and
now we are here. You should have come.” I told him Mom was going as fast as a cheetah. The next day I woke up. I saw a purple limousine. I got out of bed immediately. I was shocked. Then I went downstairs and took it for a spin.

I was going as fast as a lightning bolt in my car. Then I went so fast that the engine made a popping sound. But it was actually the wheels. I went to the nearest gas station and filled it up with air. Then I went back home, and I went up to my dad and told him about everything. He didn’t care so I just went to sleep and I was watching TV. I slept for twenty-one days and then woke up and slept for twenty-two days…
Librarians with the best book recommendations. Little brothers who make us, “happy as elephants munching on fresh leaves.” The Golden Gate Bridge, “standing strong as a representation of our strength.” In the pages that follow, students recognize and appreciate the strengths of their communities while also envisioning ways to improve them. You’ll find a plea to the president on immigration policy, a poetic call to end violence, and fantastical stories of a boy with the ability to end global climate change and a superhero banana who “gives the homeless his riches to provide and share.”
The constant changing of the weather and the misalignment with the seasons. It can be fall and be hot like summer. The city bursting with diversity like a splash of different colors. The city having different ethnic towns like Japantown, Chinatown, and the Mission District. The local laundromat, the local restaurant, and the local grocery store. The sense of community in each district is astounding. Our designated schedules with our designated places. The Golden Gate Bridge standing strong as a representation of our strength. I wonder if anyone from the outside feels the same? I am lucky I get to experience this. I welcome you to San Francisco! We are golden!
Thank you, 826 Valencia. You make me feel great about my writing, like Justin. What makes 826 Valencia great is that it helps kids to write more and that is good for the kids to learn how to write. Just like when I was bad at writing, Justin cheered me up. Justin helps me learn how to write! Thank you, Justin. Thank you, all of 826 Valencia. Another reason is that it gives me good food to eat so I can get fat.

LOL :) 

I think that everyone should go to 826 because they help you be a good writer. This makes me feel good to write a lot about stuff. All of them are as nice as a rainbow in the sky and it rains out gold coins.
CUTE AS A PANDA AND KOALA

When I see Bushra, she makes me feel excited as a hyper kid. I love to be her student because she loves experiences like me. She is nice like a flower and she is an amazing teacher. Bushra is kind, nice, helpful, caring, friendly, and artistic. She is happy when we listen, and she is as happy as her birthday. And she is cute as a panda and koala! Bushra keeps us safe and she is so silly. And I already knew she is so nice and kind.

Bushra helps me with my homework, and she makes me safe and proud of myself. She makes me feel amazing and she is the best teacher. I hope she is hearing this. Bushra, thank you so much.

Bushra always makes sure everyone is not in the street so that we are safe. She helps me by opening the door when I put my backpack away. She holds the door, and she looks at me putting my backpack away.

I hope everything goes well in her life. She is an amazing teacher and she is the best one.
Hungry is strong and nice. Hungry likes to help people by giving homeless people food. Hungry uses his riches to provide and share. One day, he gave a homeless person a banana. Then one day, the homeless person was mad because they got in a fight. They fought because one of the homeless people lost another homeless person’s only phone, which made him throw his banana at Hungry. Hungry was mad and sad, so he decided he would not give that homeless person food because he threw the banana at his face.

Hungry said, “Can you please stop?” Hungry is a banana.

The homeless person said, “Sorry, I was angry.” Hungry forgave the homeless person and gave him food and gave him a banana and gave him a hug. Hungry created a house and gave him a thousand dollars.

Hungry said, “Have a good life!”
WHAT’S GOING ON IN OUR WORLD?

I am a twelve-year-old who knows about cruelty. I know about animal abuse, dogs getting shot and killed. What’s going on in our world? Racism is the worst to hear or see. People are being called names they should not be called. Doesn't it break your heart to see how people are feeling like they’re not welcome? The worst thing for a family is immigration. I hate immigration. I’m a kid with immigrant parents who don't want my siblings and me to get separated….Families are being separated. How do you feel about that? I’m especially talking to you, Mr. President.
Mi amiga Jennifer es alta y tiene cabello muy largo de color rosado. A ella le gusta hablar mucho sobre la escuela y su familia. Ella ama hacer pijamadas. Jennifer es cariñosa y amigable. Le gustan los animales, como las serpientes. A mi amiga le importan mucho los animales.

Ella es importante para mí porque me cuida y la conozco desde que era un bebé. Una vez me enferme y ella vino a verme con su perro. Ella me cuidó durante el tiempo que estuve enferma. Ella tiene un hámster que quiere mucho.

Ella es importante para mí porque ella juega conmigo y tenemos una buena comunicación. Cuando tengo problemas ella siempre me apoya. Ella es como una hermana para mí. Jennifer es bonita como las flores. Ella es muy amigable, que me invita a su casa para las pijamadas.
One day, Mrs. Food and Mr. Food were out in the city passing out food to the homeless people when it got dark in the day. Clouds moved in the sky and made it dark. The clouds loomed. And everybody thought that there was a storm so everybody went inside, but the only people that were out were Mr. Food and Mrs. Food! It wasn't a storm, but a monster.

The monster came and it looked like a bloob of food! The color of the monster was green! Ewww! The people were so surprised! The Bloob Monster could change shapes. Then they fought the Bloob Monster. Then they got the food and they lived happily ever after! But wait, there is more! How they fought the Bloob Monster was with a cookie machine! So they got home. The cookie machine shot cookies at the monster. The end!
We are the stars,
overlooking everything
from an amazing view.

We are bright
like the lights
of the city.

We are unique
because we are
hard to find.

We are a family,
going our separate ways
all over the city,
making new friends,
making memories while they last.

We are the stars.
Kindness is in my mom’s blood. It pumps from my mom’s heart and it makes me happy. When she has to do tamales, she wakes up very early to make them.
There was a girl named Super Laser Girl. She was so bored. While she was walking, she heard an *Ahhhh*. She rushed! While she went flying to help, she shot her laser so the tree would go in another direction. The old man said, “Thank you!” So when he went, she was wondering what made the tree fall because it looked too young to fall, so she was wondering while she went home. It was night. She was on her bed. She had too much in mind. Suddenly, she heard a tree falling. But not like somebody needed help. It was somebody cutting down a tree but she missed. She was going to see who cut down the tree, but she felt somebody watching her, so she went to the police officers. She told them what happened. So she and the police put cameras in most of the places, but she had a sense that she knew who cut the tree, but she didn’t care because she was too excited to find out who cut the tree.

So the police said, “Did you help somebody yesterday?”

She was creeped out because the police were not there so she said, “How do you know? Because you were not there.”

He was like, “Yes I was,” but she felt so weird. And she went home and the police laughed. He asked, “Where are you going?”
She was like, “Why do you need to know?” She said, “It’s none of your beeswax.” Then she said, “I knew it! You are the person who I got yesterday.” So it was good because she was faster than Jivoney and he went to jail for six months. That’s why she learned to trust people who really need help.
Daniel was walking down the street when he heard people talking about climate change. “It’s getting really hot,” they screamed.

He felt warm so he went to a park. He was sitting on a bench when he touched a small plant and saw that it was growing. He felt confused because he didn’t know how that happened. After a while, he knew what had happened.

“What happened?” he said confused. He realized he had gotten super powers. So he was very excited. After a while, he went for a run and saw that there were not that many trees. He touched around and the trees grew up. After that, he went around the world. He used the weather and traveled. First, he traveled to Africa. It was hot as lava. Daniel touched the dry, dusty ground. It started to pour. The trees started to grow big as a Spinosaurus.
THE MOST AWESOME PERSON I KNOW

I am so happy when I spend time with Miss Mimi. Being with Miss Mimi is as fun as a birthday party. She is so kind. She is kind as a horse. She is helpful. She is happy when we listen to her. When we do not listen to her, she sits down for five minutes or one minute. When we listen, we play more SAT. She is my favorite teacher at school. She makes me happy as a panda. She has been my SAT teacher since kindergarten until now. It is awesome when she lets us play dodgeball.
LAURA JULIE VIRAY
Age 14 • De Marillac Academy

I WON’T STOP

Borrrrrrrrrrrring.
“Not right now, go away.”
I always wonder and think, Should I really go or stay?
Boring, boring.
Siblings can be so annoying.
They say I’m always on my phone,
but when I want to do something, they want to be left alone.
Boring, boring.
It’s 2:00 p.m. and what does she say?
“Not right now, go away.”
Boring, boring.
“Not right now, go away.”
She sounds like an alarm clock.
Soon, hopefully she says yes because I won't stop!
“May I help you with your money?” she asks poor people in a soft voice.

“But I don’t have money to buy a house and food.” They look like they’re sad and anxious. They’re feeling anxious because they don’t know how to make money. They are holding a cardboard box that says, “I need money and a house,” and then the superhero asks them to touch her and she says, “Why?”

“Because I can give you money and a house, and food if you’re hungry, and water if you’re thirsty.” And then she says yes and the superhero touches her neck, and says, “Check your pockets.”

And then says, “Really, are you sure?”

“Yeah.” And then she checks her pockets and then she receives 100,000 bucks. “Because you are a kind person, and you’re the first person I gave a lot to.”

“Thank you for helping me get money and a house and food! How can I repay you for helping me?”

“It’s okay. You don’t need to give me anything. I just like helping people and being kind.”

And then she leaves by saying, “Goodbye, thank you for helping me.”

She says, “You’re welcome.”
KAREN TAMAYO ROJAS
Age 14 • De Marillac Academy

ACT ON EARTH

The government
cut off their ears,
so now they “can’t” hear
their Earth in distress,
and now all they care about is “that” dress.
When will they be fair?
When will they finally care?
Their mother provides them with everything
and they give her literally nothing.
She’s slowly dying
and they’re all lying.
The promises they make,
it’s all fake.
We’re bound to act out.
Time’s running up and out
but the fires are still about.
Help me lead the way
starting
today.
Sad and angry with the world.
   Violence.
He is harmful, full of sadness, and awful.
He is not the type of person you want to be friends with.
He will destroy everything that gives you joy in your life.
Your family, your friends, and your heart.
   No one knows why he is this way.
Maybe it’s because of his past or something awful that made
   him be this way.
But only Lord knows why he is this way.
   Violence.
   If only he
would find a way to stop himself.
Stephannie estaba caminando alrededor de muchas personas. Luego, ella vio que la calle estaba sucia. Y ella lo limpió y dijo que ella los podía ayudar a limpiar.

Estaba sucia y ella decidió a limpiarlo, y dios dijo que ella quiere ayudar a las personas, y dios le dio el poder de limpiar mágicamente. Entonces, él decidió ayudar a todos a limpiar. ¿Y saben porque el padre le dio magia? Se lo dio porque era una buena persona. Un día, Brikni le pidió ayuda al super héroe. Porque su cuarto estaba muy sucio. Había muchas cosas tiradas. Los calcetines estaban debajo de la cama y también sus zapatos estaban en el cuarto por allí tirados. Ella no quería tener su cuarto sucio. Entonces, pidió un deseo de que alguien le limpiaba su cuarto y gritó y dijo, “Ayuda Stephannie por favor porque quiero que mi cuarto está limpio pero no lo quiero limpiar.” Stephannie entro volando por la ventana y dijo, “Estoy aquí para ayudarte.” Y Brikini estaba muy emocionada y abriendo y cerrando de ojos. ¡Pum! El cuarto está muy limpio y bonito. Brikni vio que Stephannie era pequeña como una abeja pero eso no impidió que Stephannie no ayudara a toda la localidad y las personas fueran felices como Stephannie.
I am so happy when I see Kelly because I can’t see Kelly in school anymore. Kelly is always helpful, kind, and funny. Kelly always tells me funny things like jokes and more things, like all the time. And she is the best friend I have ever had.

Kelly is an important person to me because she helps me with my homework and cares about me all the time like I am in her family. I remember the time that she let me play with her iPad, and we played a game called *Roblox*.

Kelly is a kind person, and she took good care of me for a long time. She helped me do my homework.
The wind is blowing aggressively, causing the tree to move violently, while the car is vrooming to go to the highway. As the day gets darker and time goes fast, the man beside the tree gets colder and colder until my mom arrives. The man loses hope as, one by one, cars pass him with a disgusted face. The man is weathered with age. He looks like he has been standing at the same spot for years. He has a dirty beanie, dirty beard, dirty face, and raggedy clothes. My mom comes to the rescue. She looks at him with a heartbroken heart and gets an idea like a lightbulb that just turns on above her head. She goes through her purse and gets a warm object. Money that helps him feel warm, warmth that defeats the coldness. K.O.
As we pass by him, when the traffic ends, I look behind and see something wonderful, a smile.

According to streetsteam.org, people become homeless for many reasons, some are:

- thirty-one percent lose their job,
- twenty percent do drugs or alcohol,
- fifteen percent get a divorce or separation,
- thirteen percent get kicked out because of an argument, and more.

Is this surprising? I believe so!

Do you know how many people are homeless every year? I’ll give you a minute.

If not, according to homeraid.org, it states, “Around 3.5 million Americans are homeless each year.”

How can you help decrease the number of homelessness?
Hero watched the news when he heard that Donald Trump was building the wall. The wall would be as big as a redwood tree. He decided to go to his secret lab to think of a plan to destroy Donald Trump and stop him. Then he built a fake wall projector and tricked him so he didn’t build the wall. So people can be free. People were happy after everything happened and kids saw their parents. They lived happily ever after.
JESSICA HUITZIL CHAN
Age 13 • De Marillac Academy

MI NENE

The day you walked into my life,
I didn’t know it would be a new beginning.
You changed my life completely,
for the better.
We have our ups and downs,
like a roller coaster that won’t stop.
All of a sudden,
after years of knowing you,
you became one of the things I love the most.
When I hug you,
I feel like nothing bad can happen. You’re like my shield.
You became my other half.
If I ever lose you,
I would lose my other half.
When I say, “I love you more,”
you claim you love me more but
that’s not possible.
The people around me were wonderful. That day was wonderful. The vibe was lit. Nothing's better than spending time with the people that bring you the most joy. The laughter was contagious. I wouldn't want it any other way. Then heading to the mall and then Boeddeker Park to celebrate.
“Oh heck no!” Andy says. I quit. Video games make Andy happy. Andy plays *Brawl Stars* and it gives him joy. He’s my friend. He plays video games at Up On Top. He’s awesome. He tickles me for fun. Andy is as funny as a monkey.
Family and friends.
I learned to stick with the people closest to you,
to always keep it real,
to always be real.
There are a lot of people out there,
not all of them keep it real.
But the thing is you’re better than that.
Keep it real when they don’t keep it real.
In San Francisco, it was dark and gloomy and there was a robbery at Boys & Girls Club. He quickly grabbed the girl and disappeared to a different location. But a superhero came and saved the person. People walking by were shocked. *I should get this person to the police,* the hero thought. He dropped the person off at the police station and disappeared. Breacher the superhero appeared in the kitchen, and he started getting ingredients like leaves from a plant. “I need to make this healing potion.” Next, Breacher teleported to the sky to get the last ingredient... clouds. He grabbed the puffiest cloud and teleported back to the kitchen and lightly poured the cloud in and carefully mixed. “Finally it’s done. I really need to get healed.” Breacher sipped the concoction and instantly felt better.
DIEGO SUAREZ GONZALEZ  
Age 10 • Boys & Girls Club — Tenderloin Clubhouse

JAZZMIN G.G.

She is kind and funny. She’s important to me because she’s been playing and giving me a home for the past ten years. She loves me! She likes to clean the house (paradise). The smells that remind me of her are macaroni and cheese and perfume. Dogs remind me of her because she loves dogs.
JACQUES BIDJIMA
Age 9 • Up On Top

MY FRIEND JAMALL

My friend Jamall, we play together. My friend plays rough. Playing rough. And playing together. He’s taller than me. He plays with me a lot. Jamall plays tag with me. Jamall is as unique as a black rainbow.
JULIO CABRAL
Age 9 • Up On Top

HE IS MY COACH

My coach makes me happy because he tells me to be a better player. He is happy when we make a goal. A soccer goal, in soccer, because he wants us to win! He is a good person because he is kind and nice! He gave me a book and I read it with him and the book was about soccer. He is a nice person. He is joyful and happy, and I am happy because he is my coach, and I am happy because he is staff for me and that makes me happy.
BOOM went the bomb. It made an earthquake. All the people screamed, and that made the earth quake harder. The people got buried.

They started saying, “Help, help.”

I heard, “Help.” I went flying as fast as I could. I put on magic gloves so that I pulled sooo fast. I finally pulled out everybody.

Everybody said, “OMG, thank you.”

And I saved a mom and her daughter and the mom said, “Thank you sooo much. I wish I had something to give you.”

I said, “No problem.”
Have you ever made a book about your teacher? Today is the day I read a book about my teacher. Ms. Cortez makes me so happy and awesome. When she greets me, when school starts, she says, “Good morning, Maweda.” And I say hi, and sometimes I hug her or high five or fist bump. She wants us to be ready for middle school and get a good education, mostly for high school. My teacher cares for me and my classmates. My teacher says, “Good,” and “Great job,” about my published writing and claps for me. And the classmates clap for me. My teacher says to me when I am doing my work, “Thank you, Maweda, for doing your work,” and gives me a class dojo point. My memory is of when my teacher was not in class and we had a sub, and she called me to a room in our school. Then I went there and did a test, because she wants me to be on a higher letter and get good grades on my reading with my teacher. You make me happy when you give me a dojo point and I get a sticker. When I get ten, twenty, and thirty, I feel awesome and wonderful.

I think my teacher is like a rainbow. She’s great because she always wears one color each day and different earrings and necklaces. She is so pretty and enjoyable to stay with in class. And I hope you like my long, huge story. Sorry if I wasted your time, but I hope you have a nice, amazing teacher like mine.
Jeffy and everyone else is mad and bored because of the lagging that happens too much. Everyone besides Jeffy says, “Please help, somebody!” Then Jeffy makes a plan of how to stop the lagging.

“I’ve got a plan.” Jeffy springs to the store. All of a sudden, Jeffy is at the store. He wanted to tie his shoes because they were untied. The second he looks down, he sees a magical blue ball. “What is this!” Jeffy knows it’s a magical ball because it is a glowing blue ball. When he picks the magical ball up, he feels something very powerful. After a minute he feels strong and feels like he could transform. He also could transform things. Then he goes to the Wi-Fi system. Then he transforms the ball into the best Wi-Fi machine and then everyone stops lagging. So he and they were so happy.

Everyone said, “Hooray, Jeffy fixed the lagging.”
“Mom, can I have some money to buy chips?” a kid asked his mom. She said no. Money Man heard all the kids asking their moms for money, so he decided to give money to all the kids. Money Man felt sad and he likes to help kids, so he decided to give money for all the kids. He went to the Magical Kids Park and they found Money Man.

He said, “Hello, I heard you wanted money to buy some chips?” The kid said, “Yes, but my mom said no.” :( Money Man felt sad and he likes to help kids. Money Man threw money in the air so high that it even touched the clouds. All the kids started sprinting very fast and screaming and got some money and bought chips.

They said, “OMG, thank you so much!” The kids hugged Money Man and said, “Bye!” When the kids went back home, their moms were confused.

They said, “I wonder where they got that money from. Maybe they worked so hard to get that money or maybe someone gave it to her/him.”

The kids told their moms a story like, “Oh, Mom I...uhh...got the money from...my friend!” Money Man is now going to other cities to help people by giving money. Money Man thought, I’m so proud that I helped out those children!
I feel joyful when I see a librarian because they are good book-helpers. And I go to the library every weekend. A librarian’s personality is book-loving, kind, and patient. And what makes them happy is being a librarian, and what matters to them is taking care of books. One reason they’re important is that a librarian helped me with my science homework and got me science textbooks so I could learn science! This person is special to me because they helped me find the *Al Capone* series books that I like to read. Memory: I wanted to read mangas and they helped me. He is tall: six foot something, and is kinda old: sixty-something, and is very kind. This person makes me feel so joyful like a puppy. This person is special to me because he is like an energetic dog because he likes to help people a lot.
WILL GILLYARD  
Age 11 • Up On Top

MY FUNNY BABY BROTHER

Kasiqé is my funny baby brother. He is about six months old. He is as funny as a monkey. Sometimes Kasiqé cries a lot and sometimes Kasiqé smiles a lot. He likes specific music. He likes serene and happy music like the ad “Tomorrow.” He is very important and delicate and has very bright and surprising features. One time we were driving to school in our car. Then Kasiqé started crying. I tried to calm him down with the pacifier but he wouldn’t take it. I sang to him and he calmed down and smiled. Kasiqé really loves drinking milk. One time, Kasiqé was trying to crawl. He tried so hard he farted. Kasiqé also loves to play superhero with his dad. He likes to smile. I’m really happy as an elephant munching on fresh leaves. That’s what Kasiqé makes me feel like.
826 Valencia is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting under-resourced students ages six to eighteen with their creative and expository writing skills and to helping teachers inspire their students to write. Our services are structured around the understanding that great leaps in learning can happen with one-on-one attention and that strong writing skills are fundamental to future success.
826 Valencia comprises three writing centers—located in San Francisco’s Mission District, Tenderloin neighborhood, and Mission Bay—and three satellite classrooms at nearby schools. All of our centers are fronted by kid-friendly, weird, and whimsical stores, which serve as portals to learning and gateways for the community. All of our programs are offered free of charge. Since we first opened our doors in 2002, thousands of volunteers have dedicated their time to working with tens of thousands of students.

PROGRAMS

FIELD TRIPS
Classes from public schools around San Francisco visit our writing centers for a morning of high-energy learning about the craft of storytelling. Four days a week, our Field Trips produce bound, illustrated books and professional-quality podcasts, infusing creativity, collaboration, and the arts into students’ regular school day.

IN-SCHOOLS PROGRAMS
We bring teams of volunteers into high-need schools around the city to support teachers and provide one-on-one assistance to students as they tackle various writing projects, including newspapers, research papers, oral histories, and more. We have a special presence at Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8, Everett Middle School, and Mission High School, where we staff dedicated Writers’ Rooms throughout the school year.

AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING
During the school year, 826 Valencia’s centers are packed five days a week with neighborhood students who come in after school and in the evenings for tutoring in all subject areas, with a special emphasis on creative writing and publishing. During
the summer these students participate in our Exploring Words Summer Camp, where we explore science and writing through projects, outings, and activities in a super fun, educational environment.

WORKSHOPS
826 Valencia offers workshops designed to foster creativity and strengthen writing skills in a wide variety of areas, from playwriting to personal essays to starting a zine. All workshops, from the playful to the practical, are project-based and are taught by experienced, accomplished professionals. Over the summer, our Young Authors’ Workshop provides an intensive writing experience for high-school-aged students.

COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS
We offer a roster of programs designed to help students get into college and be successful there. Every year, we grant several $20,000 scholarships to college-bound seniors, provide one-on-one support to two hundred students via the Great San Francisco Personal Statement Weekend, and partner with ScholarMatch to offer college access workshops to the middle- and high-school students in our tutoring programs. We also offer internships, peer tutoring stipends, and career workshops to our youth leaders.

PUBLISHING
Students in all of 826 Valencia’s programs have the ability to explore, experience, and celebrate themselves as writers in part because of our professional-quality publishing. In addition to the book you’re holding, 826 Valencia publishes newspapers, magazines, chapbooks, podcasts, and blogs—all written by students.
TEACHER OF THE MONTH
From the beginning, 826 Valencia’s goal has been to support teachers. We aim to both provide the classroom support that helps our hardworking teachers meet the needs of all our students and to celebrate their important work. Every month, we receive letters from students, parents, and educators nominating outstanding teachers for our Teacher of the Month award, which comes with a $1,500 honorarium. Know an SFUSD teacher you want to nominate? Guidelines can be found at 826valencia.org.

826 NATIONAL
826 Valencia’s success has spread across the country. Under the umbrella of 826 National, writing and tutoring centers have opened up in eight more cities. If you would like to learn more about other 826 programs, please visit the following websites.

826 National 826michigan
826national.org 826michigan.org
826 Boston 826 MSP
826boston.org 826msp.org
826CHI 826 New Orleans
826chi.org 826neworleans.org
826DC 826NYC
826dc.org 826nyc.org
826LA 826 Valencia
826la.org 826valencia.org
We could not do this work without the thousands of volunteers who make our programs possible. We are always seeking more volunteer tutors and volunteers with design, illustration, photography, or audio editing skills. It’s easy to become a volunteer and a bunch of fun to actually do it.

Please fill out our online application to let us know how you’d like to lend your time:
826valencia.org/volunteer

OTHER WAYS TO GIVE
Whether it's loose change or heaps of cash, a donation of any size will help 826 Valencia continue to offer a variety of free writing and publishing programs to Bay Area youth.

PLEASE MAKE A DONATION AT:
826valencia.org/donate

YOU CAN ALSO MAIL YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO:
826 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110

Your donation is tax-deductible. What a plus! Thank you!
Beyond King Carl’s wall of doors and beneath the leafy façade of our treehouse, students of 826 Valencia’s Tenderloin Center work with volunteer tutors to develop their ideas into writing that is at turns funny, forceful, and fearless. This book is a collection of works by students from our field trip, after-school, and in-school programs, who come to us through partnerships in the Tenderloin community and from schools throughout San Francisco.

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