I

Overcome

Things

MISSION BAY CENTER
AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING
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In our second semester of virtual tutoring, our students were eager to continue writing, despite Zoom fatigue and other challenges of prolonged shelter-in-place. They wrote to release strong emotions felt during extended periods at home, away from school and friends. Their poems and stories reflect unique experiences and obstacles unlike anything they ever expected. They also, however, reflect hope and imagination of a world beyond COVID-19—a world full of the societal changes they dared to dream.
BE AWARE OF 2020

ABDULLAH HADWAN • age 13
Marina Middle School

Two years ago, I was eleven years old. Some advice I would give myself is to prepare myself for anything that could go wrong.

BEWARE OF FIGHTS
I would prepare myself by going on a different path unlike what has happened, or simply by telling a teacher if I needed help. My different path would be to not walk alone in and out of school or stay with my friends in hallways, at lunch, and in class (maybe). Me and my friends have our own system, and this is how it works. After our classes, we would have a specific spot that we would stay at. Like, let’s say it’s lunch. We would all go to a spot other than the cafeteria because it is crowded and noisy. We usually sit at areas, like maybe stairs or in a classroom or in our hidden spot. It’s a floor above the cafeteria. We hide there and stay on our phones, or we play the Nintendo Switch and maybe even just talk.

BE AWARE OF 2020!!!
2020 is going to go downhill for you, so have as much fun as you can.

Kobe’s death: I would tell Kobe to not go on the helicopter. Schools have changed by going to online classes instead of on campus because of COVID-19. COVID-19 is a virus that spreads around people who physically interact close to one another. It is fifty-fifty for me because I like the fact that I can just wake up and just go to class and that I don’t have to wake up as early as 7:00 a.m.
GIANT HORNETS
Be aware of the giant hornets. They are DEADLY they could almost kill you with a sting, and if it is a double sting, YOU ARE DEAD!!!

THE WORST THING ABOUT 2020 IS...
I am at home twenty-four seven, and I can’t go anywhere unless my mom tells me to go to any nearby stores like Gus’s, Safeway, or Walgreens. And you have to wear masks everywhere you go, even if you want fresh air or even walk out the door. Me and my friends usually interact by iMessage or class Zoom. If I had to choose between meeting friends or texting friends, I would choose meeting them because it is easier to talk than text. It feels normal because I used to text a lot anyways in 2019. In 2020, we are not able to do what we used to do in 2019, like go to our secret hidden spot, or ding-dong ditch teachers, and even play hide ’n seek around the school.

OVERALL, YOU BETTER GET PREPARED!!!
We go to the program on Hyde Street. There is a playground. First, we get the costumes, but I don’t use one. We go to the big building for trick-or-treating. We fight over who knocks on the door first.

Afterwards, we go back to the haunted house. We play video games there. It is scarier when there is more smoke. It is dark. We go really fast. Things pop out from nowhere. We also play games and watch a movie.

It feels funny. When you go out, you want to go back in. You want to do it one million times and get used to it, going round and round. The first time when you go in, it feels scary for some people. I don’t feel scared, but some people are scared when they go in. Sometimes when you go in, no one pops out. We eat some pizza, and there’s a lot of candy.

It was better when we could go outside without a mask. You could get a lot of candy. It’s just boring this Halloween, sitting in the house. Some of the people are wearing costumes, some of them are not wearing costumes. There are funny ones like SpongeBob and there are pretty cool ones. The stores give candy out. There are not a lot of people. We didn’t get a lot of candy the day after Halloween. 2020 is boring because you need a mask, and no one is going to go to the door. It is like sitting at home, jumping around, and playing games.
Thinking of life in general is not easy.
COVID-19 came and made our life’s way lazy.
Just remembering the old days makes me crazy.
We’re not allowed to meet family for their own safety.
We have been locked down and gaining weight.
After this, I can’t wait.
After COVID is gone, I am excited to live a healthy life.
An obstacle I had to overcome was learning this new way of school. This was probably the hardest thing to learn and overcome in my life so far. One way this was difficult was that we needed to learn something we hadn’t done in our whole lives. Another reason why it was difficult was because it’s sometimes harder to understand your teachers because you don’t see them in person. It even might be hard for the teachers to explain to you. And lastly, technical difficulties are very common during this time. Someone might have bad Wi-Fi, someone might not have a very fast computer, someone might have some background noises. Finally, sometimes students don’t participate or even tab-switch to other websites.

These are some reasons how this time may be difficult.
I OVERCOME THINGS

ABDULLAH ALDUAIS · age 10
Bessie Carmichael Elementary School

There are many hard things to do in life. Homework, for me, is one of them. Homework is hard, but I overcome it every time I work on it. It’s hard because there is a lot of work and writing. Writing is the best, but it kind of isn’t. It kind of isn’t because every time you write a lot, your hands hurt. That’s why I don’t really like it. Writing is really hard because every time we write, it’s a long sentence and it’s annoying, too.

Writing is important because it teaches you how to do letters and your name. I have gotten better at it. Math is easy because you work with numbers and not writing.

10x2 is 20!

Math is important to count money and to learn when somebody gives you a math problem. You don’t even know when you need it! In case someone gives you one million dollars, how are you going to know how to count it?

My dad and my mom help me with my homework. A calculator is one thing that really helps me in math. My teacher and my tutors help me too.
Learning to get along with others can be challenging. With news reporting the ways the pandemic has impacted not only family life, but learning life, students imagine a world where there are ways to get along with others. Through our students’ writing, family outings to look for ladybugs come to life off the page, superpowers create friends out of bullies, and stories of beloved little brothers emerge, bringing smiles to our faces.
One day Finn and Jake were on the Hot Dog Bus and saw that the Ice King was in the front of the bus. The Ice King saw them, cackled menacingly, and turned Finn’s arm into a glass arm. Everyone saw and immediately laughed out loud. Finn was feeling sorrowful. He didn’t like it because he couldn’t defend himself, and it was his dominant hand to write and to punch trees. Jake tried to cheer him up by saying it will grow back, but it was no use. Finn was gloomy, and he and Jake told the Ice King it wasn’t nice and told him to change his arm back.

The Ice King felt bad and turned it back, and now the Ice King, Finn, and Jake are friends. The Ice King also moved in with them because it was one hot, hot day and his kingdom of ice started to get wet everywhere. The Ice King went to go check what it was, and then he realized his house was melting. He tried to fix it with his ice powers, but it was no luck. He fell out, and when it was done melting, it turned into a lake.

A few weeks passed by, and he was feeling isolated. Then, he decided to call up his pals, Finn and Jake. Finn and Jake were a bit skeptical, but then they decided to let him live with them.

About the Hot Dog Bus: the Hot Dog Bus is just a bus. The condiments are the wheels, and you don’t sit on top of the hot dog. You’re inside of the hot dog and there’s no A/C, so people like Finn and Jake are pretty tired after riding the Hot Dog Bus.
One day, my family and I went to a big parking place, and we saw lots of ladybugs. We picked one of them first, and then we built a house for him. After a while, he was trying to go out, so my dad planned to bring a jar the next day. The next day, we brought the jar, and my dad caught two ladybugs. We decided to name them at home. My dad caught two more ladybugs. My sister wanted more, but my dad said this was enough. We brought them to our house, and we started to name them.

The biggest one was very red, so we named it Tomato. The other red one we named Strawberry. The smallest one we named Sweet Potato. The other orange one we named Potato. The biggest one was named Tomato because when you read the part where the names are, tomato is the biggest food. I named the other red one Strawberry because her spots looked like strawberry seeds. I named the smallest one Sweet Potato because it was the same color as a sweet potato. I named the last one Potato because it was the same color as Sweet Potato, but it was a little bigger. The next day we searched up what they ate, and one of them said they eat lettuce. So, we gave them lettuce! The next day, I noticed they didn’t eat that much! I tried to take it out, but they started to crawl on me! I was so surprised, so I asked my dad. He took it out, so I looked at it close up. And guess what? It was cabbage! So that was the reason why they weren’t eating that much! I tried to give them the sliced fruit, but I was a little scared. But I said, “Can you guys please not get on me?” Then they didn’t! Maybe they understood! Guess who ran over first? Sweet Potato! And then Potato and then Strawberry. Well, Tomato didn’t eat that much because she is very lazy. Well, she did eat, but not that much. And that was my story.
“Oh, stop bullying Isabelle!” said Matt the Fox.

The bullies were trying to play keep-away with Isabelle’s backpack. Then Twilight Sparkle tried to use her magic to stop it, but she couldn’t.

The teacher was Rarity, a pony like Twilight Sparkle. Isabelle is being bullied by the group of bullies because she spilled her favorite juice of bones and meat on Momo’s shirt in the cafeteria at lunch. It was just an accident. It wasn’t on purpose. They went outside for recess after. That is when the bullies took away Isabelle’s backpack when she wasn’t looking.

Since Matt the Fox saw it, he told the bullies to stop bullying Isabelle. Eggdog used his cuteness, so the bullies stopped bullying Isabelle. The bullies stopped after seeing Eggdog because he was really cute. They learned the lesson that just because someone made an accident or someone is different, they don’t have to bully people.
CHRISTMAS TRADITION

KENYA CAPETILLO COVARRUBIAS • age 8
Yick Wo Alternative Elementary School

My tradition is that every Christmas, me and my mom make tamales. At night, we can eat them, and they are super delicious. When I make one, I make myself a really baby one because I am obsessed with really small things. The filling has red sauce. Also, one has green sauce. It is made out of dough, it feels smooth, and it tastes really delicious. You cook them on the stove. Me and my mom really enjoy that it is just me and her making the tamales, just us together. Sometimes my brother Alex comes and makes one with us. It’s really enjoyable spending time with my mom.
My neighbors are very mysterious. We just moved in two or three years ago. They never greeted us, and I never knew their faces. One day, one of my classmates said he was my neighbor. At first, I didn’t believe him until I was taking out the trash and I saw him walking in the hallway. I saw him and his family. I know because I peeked through the hallway, and somehow, they didn’t see me. I sometimes see him, but we never say hi. We just nod to each other. We don’t even talk to each other. I live in an apartment, so I never see most of my other neighbors. We never visit them, and they never visit us.

Then, one day in the morning, I heard a door open, then I heard somebody grab a knife. My mind was panicking. I walked into the kitchen and then I saw a person, but because it was in the morning, my eyes were blurry. The closer I got, the more scared I was that they were gonna harm me, but my curiosity got the best of me . . .

I went closer and closer and closer and then I saw the knife go up, then I saw my mom making me toast with butter.
After they had school, the bystanders (Jack and Jude) and Oggie, the guy with the weird face, go to a shop to get candy, and after that they run into the bullies in the alley.

**BULLY:** You have a weird face, Oggie. You don’t belong in this school. You should be homeschooled.

**MINIONS:** Yeah. *(They agree.)*

Oggie feels sad and mad—angry at the same time. His feelings are getting mixed up.

Oggie lets it happen to him.

The bystanders are surprised. They feel like they should be standing up. They don’t want their friend to get bullied. They might lose Oggie. They don’t want to hurt Oggie more.

**JACK:** Go away! If you mess with him more, he’ll tell his parents.

**JUDE:** Go away! Don’t mess with him.

Bully and minions are scared. They go home and tell their parents that they’ve been bullying people. They get grounded for a month.

Oggie is happy because he won’t be bullied anymore, and the bystanders are happy too.
The demon named Fierce is always picking on the angel sloth named Sharla. But Sharla, the angel sloth, has a friend named Molly, who is a deer that is half demon and half angel. She is really brave and powerful, and she has never given in to the bully. Then Molly has a friend named Loli, who is a half-unicorn PASTEL and loves candy. Then we have the last character who is Sharla’s friend and her name is Lola. Lola is a macaron and her flavors are strawberry and mint. Lola was always mad when Fierce would always bully Sharla. She would use her power that she can make creatures wet if they make her mad.

Loli loves to see nature, and check if nature is A-okay. She helps Mother Earth with the people that litter in the ocean so you know what that means *..whispers..* She can make things float. So when she gets mad, she can make them *FLOAT* so you might wanna keep a distance from her. Then we have Lola. She is a seal that is half macaron, and her flavors are strawberry and mint. She is very proud of her power. She is the princess of the sea, so she has a very nice and cool superpower: she can turn invisible (when she wants to). Finally, we have Molly, our most coolest girl in PASTEL Forest, which is known as the PASTEL Palace. She was born very different from the other creatures that live in the PASTEL Forest. She is half devil and half angel, so she has a very hard time controlling her evil side.

Sharla is our main character. She has two powers, and both of them are very, very, very special and rare to have. She has the power to control other creatures’ minds when she needs to, and she has the power to shapeshift. She is always trying to calm down the evil side of Molly. She always shapeshifts into Molly’s mom, then Molly always calms down. When Molly’s evil side comes out, it can be too much sometimes.
Sharla is very, very, very rare to be an angel sloth. She is always smiling her brightest smile. Everyone always smiles when she walks through the forest. She is always happy that she has very good friends who help her when she needs the help. She can handle the bully, but she is worried that she will hurt the bully and show her secret power that is very rare, so she does not want to be followed by the people that are very annoying to the creatures. She might get kidnapped if they know her secret power . . . it might be scary, but she is always hiding it because of that.

Fierce and his group bully Sharla, so what they do is they hurt her feelings by saying harsh words like “You don’t belong here,” or, “Why are you even alive?”

When Molly hears Sharla crying softly, she runs as fast as she can so then she can deal with Fierce, but sometimes Sharla says to Fierce, “YOU BIG MEANY!” She does not say that all the time, but she says it when she wants to. So then here comes Molly’s friends to deal with the bullies. Molly always on accident lets her evil/bad side come to her. Sharla always calms her down because then the bully is afraid of her and runs away from Sharla, Molly, and their friends. She is always happy that she has friends that actually care about her and don’t just leave her all alone with the bully. But no one tells Sharla about this. Sharla’s eyes glow when she is sad or mad.

Sharla has to deal with the same stuff every day, but the next day, it was different. Fierce was about to say something Sharla did not want to hear. He said in a pretend whiny voice, “Your parents left you because you are worthless.” His group started laughing, but then Sharla got so angry that she could not take it anymore. She floated in the air, then her eyes started glowing the color yellow. Then she said in a distorted, mad voice and with anger, “YOU’RE JUST A WORTHLESS BULLY WHO PICKS ON EVERYBODY BECAUSE YOU ARE JUST A BIG FAT BULLY!!” Then her wings grew out as big as they could, and she calmed down by thinking of her friends.

The bully was so angry he said even meaner things to her, then he noticed that she ran to the bathroom. Then her friends came and followed her, and Sharla said, “I can’t believe I
did it,” in an excited voice. “I ran in here so then Fierce can’t see my excitement and ruin my moment.”

Then Molly came up to Sharla and hugged her. “I am so proud of you,” Molly said.

But now here is the part where I, the narrator, explain the part why Fierce bullied Sharla. He was always told by his parents, “Make sure to bully the angel sloth, Sharla, so then she will tell her parents, and then we will have a war.” His parents laughed in an evil voice: “MWAHAHAHAHAHA!!” His parents laughed, but he felt very uncomfortable with what they said. Fierce has a good heart, but he thinks that his parents would be ashamed of him. He always wanted to apologize, but he knew that his parents were not gonna want him as their child.
The best thing about being the middle child is that you get more things than the big child. I get more toys and I get to use the charger first. I also get my food before my older sister, but my little brother gets it first before me. So sad! You technically get better stuff, like costumes and less homework, than the older child. Another good thing about being the middle child in my family is that I get to carry my ten-month-old nephew, and my older sister has to carry my two-year-old niece, and the two-year-old is heavy. The ten-month-old is also ticklish and smiles at me. The bad thing about being the middle child is that you have siblings who are older than you, so when you’re nineteen, they will still be older than you. You will never be older than them. My older sister got her braids done before me! How sad!
“Steve! Get down now!”
“Coming, mom!” I sling my backpack onto my shoulder and hurry down. As we pile into the car, my sister says, “You’ve made us late, again.”
“Jamie,” my mom warns. Jaime rolls her eyes and says a sarcastic, “Sorry.” She sticks out her tongue at me. I avert my attention to the view and try to ignore her.
We finally pull up to the school, and my mom looks for a parking spot. One of those big signs with the changeable letters says, “Welcome back to Greenwood Middle School.” We get out of the car, and a skinny kid with glasses walks up.
“Hi,” he says. He gives me a rundown of the school: the English teacher is mean, but the art teacher is nice; don’t use the bathroom on the first floor, it’s always clogged. Just then, a huge kid walks over and says, “Hey, what do you know? The twerp has found a new friend. Hope he isn’t as dumb as you.” Some kids following him snicker. “Well, let’s go,” he says. They walk away, still snickering.
“And that is Randy. Stay away from him.” The bell rings, and we part for our separate classes. The rest of the day is uneventful, until English class. I find out that I am to sit next to Randy in that class, so now I have to deal with a crabby teacher and the class bully. For the whole class, he is shooting spitballs at me, and he even gives me a noogie while the teacher is outside the classroom. When we come home, I hurriedly eat, then go to my room. I am tired and I soon fall asleep.

CHAPTER 1

Beep! Beep! Beep! Beep!...Crash! Great. My sister’s cat attacked the alarm again. I get out of bed and inspect the damage:
my alarm is lying in pieces on the ground, and the cat is sitting innocently nearby. I really need to do something about this. I’ve already gone through twelve alarm clocks since we moved here and got that cat. I pick up the cat and the pieces of the alarm clock and walk into my sister’s room.

“Why can’t you keep your cat in your room? My cat never does anything to you,” I ask.

“You’re the one who should keep your door closed. My cat deserves to be able to roam the house freely,” comes the reply.

“I do! Your cat learned how to open doors, and she always seems to come into my room.”

“Prove it.”

So I put a camera next to my door, close the door, and start filming. An hour later, I examine the video. Sure enough, the cat opened the door, snuck in, and closed it. I show it to her, and she rolls her eyes and says, “Fine. Lock your room.”

I give up arguing with her.

CHAPTER 2

“Your homework today is to memorize these elements: Boringium. Snoronium. Blah Blah Blah.” This is so boring. Why do they have to tell you what to do? Can’t they just let you read the instructions? RRRRRRING. Finally, lunch. I look at today’s menu: mystery meat; stale, rock hard bread; and something mushy they say is supposed to be brownie. Blech. I’ll pass. I find a seat to sit in while I wait for lunch to be over. As I sit down, I realize Randy looming over me.

“Hey! You know what happens when you take my seat, right?” he leers.

“Uh...no?”

“Well, you will.” He motions over his goons. “Take him away.”

They move in and pick me up, then start walking to the bathroom.

“Wait! What are you doing?” I say. Big mistake. Just as I am saying this, they dunk my head in the toilet.

To be continued . . .
I am thankful for my friend.
She always helps me with homework.
She always plays with me when I am bored.
We just run around, kind of playing tag but not really.
For recess, we play on a gymnastics mat.
She is nice to me.
She helps me when I don’t know a word in Spanish.
She shares with me.
When I don’t bring any food, she gives me a little bit of hers.
One thing I am grateful for is my mom, dad, and sister. I am thankful for my mom because she does a lot for me. First, she cooks for my sister and me. Second, she washes the dishes and cleans up the house when it is dirty (washes clothes, brooms, mops, etc.). Another reason I am thankful for my mom is because she loves my sister and me very much. My mom shows us love in many ways, like I said at the top. One more way my mom shows us love is by tucking us in bed because me and my sister sleep together. LOL. I am very thankful for my mom. I can’t even explain how thankful I am for my mom. I am grateful for my dad because he works a lot to pay the bills and for our stuff. He is barely with us because he is working really hard every day. I am thankful for my sister because even if she is annoying, I still love her, and she does nice things for me when she wants to.
OVER THE WEEKEND

TANIA ESTRADA TRUJILLO • age 6
Thomas Edison Charter Academy

Over the weekend, I drew a house, a window, a yellow car, and stairs. I went to the movies. I wrote a letter to a friend and sent it.
A family member I am thankful for is . . . my baby brother, Ismael. I am happy he is in my family because every time he needs something he goes, “AAAAHH.” Yesterday I was drinking Coca-Cola, and he said he wanted a drink. I said no and shook it, and my baby brother drank for one second. He drank my dad’s and my brother’s, and it was so funny. He was drinking it, and it was ours. I said, “Give it to me, give it, give me the trash!” I have a lot of fun with my baby brother. He can climb and he’s a crazy baby. Every time and every day we run, we run around our home. My baby brother, every time it is time to eat, he holds the steak. We eat rice and he makes it up and makes it fall. He runs and comes to eat and there is Coco-Melon he comes and runs. He said his first words, “Mom,” “Dad,” and “Grandma.” He is always nice to my mom and he kisses her. He fake kisses. My Dad says, “You always give them fake kisses you don’t give a real kiss.” Every time I run and play with him. I would get him food, I let him have my drinks too, but he always drinks everything.
“I Would Play Marbles with the Dinosaurs” encapsulates the whimsical and weird aspects of youth. As we whittle away our time in the pandemic, imaginations begin to run wild. In this section, students take you on a tour through the virtual world, where life becomes a video game. You will meet witches and take adventures to worlds of pandas. You will travel across space to Mars and uncover hidden treasures with pirates. And you will encounter magic in the most unexpected ways, delving into a world where nothing is as it seems. Imagination is self-care. Enjoy.
A long, long time ago, there were shapeshifters with twitchy long ears and green skin that held magic in a huge emerald. The emerald was the same color as spring leaves on another planet named Akwa. One day the guards woke up to find that the emerald was missing, and they told the King and Queen of Akwa. A very smart shapeshifter found out that one of the humans took it! They located the emerald and sent Moon the Shapeshifter, the most brave and strongest warriors in all of Akwa to go and get it.

Moon, disguised as a human teenage girl, took a plane to Paris, France. She didn’t know where the emerald was hiding, so she questioned two girls about it. One had hazel hair and a purse, and the other had black hair with glasses. The humans told Moon that Derrick stole the emerald from Akwa. Derrick has an evil mustache and suspicious dark brown hair. The humans said to Moon to go to Felicia’s store because Derrick’s daughter is Felicia. Moon ran to Felicia’s store and asked her if Derrick stole the emerald and where it was hiding. Felicia said to Moon that the emerald was with Derrick at the museum. After Moon left, Felicia called Derrick and told him that Moon was going to the museum for the magic emerald.

When Moon got there, there were already guards and also Felicia. Moon had an epic fight with the guards. Choose a move: shapeshift, punch, or jump. She shapeshifted into a cheetah and ran around the guards SHOOOO! until they got dizzy.

When the guards fainted, Moon was about to grab the emerald, and just then Felicia pushed the emerald—SWIII—and ran to her dad! Moon followed her, and then Felicia and Moon had an epic fight. BOOM BAM! Choose a move: defend, mercy, or kick. Moon noticed that Derrick left Felicia with the emerald.
When Felicia fainted, Moon was about to take the emerald again and then Derrick came again. They had an epic fight. CRASH—AHHHHHH! And Derrick was about to finish-off Moon, but the other shapeshifters came and helped Moon until Derrick was gone. Finally, they took back their emerald. They kept telling their story for years. You gained a level!
IF MY LIFE WERE A VIDEO GAME

NAOF ALNAWFI • age 14
Calileo High School

If my life were a video game, it would be risky like an adventure game. My character would be a tomboy woman. Her name would be Lucy. In the game, she wears a black t-shirt and jeans, and she would have black hiking shoes. Her hair is short and brown like wood. She is short. Her special job is saving people. She travels around the world, and when she sees people in danger, she helps them out. Lucy has a healing power. She heals injured people by touching them and light comes out of her hands when she does it. She likes to eat strawberries. She is very loud. She has a bear named Nastu that helps her travel around the world.

They travel by walking. Whenever she is tired, she gets on the bear and the bear keeps on walking. Lucy and her bear sneak onto boats to travel the water. She also sneaks onto trucks to travel. Lucy travels around the world to build her map. She also helps people and makes friends. She makes four friends, and they start to travel together in level two.

Lucy and her friends might decide to travel around the world to look for something they would like to do in the future. While they travel around the world, they would also help her accomplish her goal. When they arrive at their first place, Moonland, they find their first mission to help the people from evil spirits and monsters. The Moonland people ask Lucy and her friends to help them defeat the monsters and the evil spirits so they can live peacefully. Moonland is a small island in the middle of the ocean and there aren’t a lot of people. Those people use the moon for their own benefits as an energy source.
On every level, they are in a new place and every time they arrive somewhere, there is trouble and they have to help those people with that trouble. Once they have traveled all over the world helping people, Lucy will have accomplished her goal and her friends will have found something they would like to do in the future.
I was in the sea and it was at night. I was swimming when I saw something shiny with bright colors. I grabbed it and I went to investigate. It had bright colors, and it was shiny and clean. It was a donut shape. I said, “What is that? Why was this in the sea?” I rubbed the magic lamp. I was scared and I saw that everything was bigger. When I looked through the glass, I saw that I turned into a fish! I flapped to get the lamp with all my strength. I couldn’t breathe. I was scared. I touched it with my flipper. I rubbed it on the ground hoping it would work. I saw my toes and hands and I was relieved. I think the magic lamp is awesome.
WHAT HAPPENED IN MY DREAM

FRIDA LIMON • age 8
McKinley Elementary School

First, I went to sleep and then a miracle happened. I was on the moon. Then, a star came to me, and I made a wish. My wish was? To have superpowers! So then more stars came and made stairs, and I went up the stairs. Then I went on the yellow moon that looked like a banana. Since I had superpowers, I used my mind powers to bring my dollhouse and my dolls on the yellow banana moon. I played for a little bit. Then I saw a wolf chasing a reindeer. The wolf was so hungry that he wanted to eat the reindeer until I made the reindeer go to a lake. Wolves can’t swim because they are only for snow. Since the reindeer was thirsty, he drank water from the lake. Then I gave the wolf carrots! Since the wolf was also thirsty and scared of the water, I gave her a full bucket of water. With my mind powers, I got a pink rocket ship, so then I went to the North Pole! I named the wolf Carrot, since she ate carrots, and I named the reindeer Pinky. Then I saw a little lost bunny who was cold. Since I had a blanket at home, I used my mind powers again and brought a little blanket for my bunny. I named the bunny Bluie! It was morning time and I had to leave before my mom noticed I was on the moon. Before I did that, I took a picture with everybody and left on my pink rocket ship.
I was playing in the park near the playground when I heard a ticking noise, like a clock, underneath me. I wanted to try and find the sound. Since I was already digging while I was playing, I kept on digging. I used a pickaxe that I noticed in the park and dug for half an hour! I stopped digging because I saw something. I saw something gold, and when I looked, it was a treasure chest. It was made of solid gold and was four feet long. I was excited because of the gold. I took the treasure chest out of the hole I dug to open it.

When I opened it, there was a golden cellphone and lots of gold coins. I noticed something brown inside the treasure chest, crumpled in the corner. I picked it up and opened it to see what it was. There were some words and a lot of pictures. Some of the pictures were of houses and a ship. I realized it was a treasure map! I was curious about what the ship was.

I saw a clear water bottle and picked it up. It felt a little bit heavy and felt cold, like ice cream. Inside, the potion was light blue and glowing. I was confused about why it was glowing. It didn’t smell like anything and made no noise. The bottle had a plus sign on it, so I knew the potion was for healing, because it was the same image hospitals use. I put it in my pocket, and it was really glowing so you could see it through my pocket.

I looked back into the treasure chest and saw my favorite food! There were some strawberries inside. They looked like normal strawberries but they were bigger, like the size of an apple, and they were also blue! I picked one up and ate it. It tasted cold, like a strawberry mixed with ice! It was cold, but not cold enough that you couldn’t eat it.
There was also a dragon’s egg. It was the shape of a normal egg, but extra big—bigger than a human head! It was blue and red, like fire. It felt smooth.

All of a sudden, I heard, “Hello.”
I was so shocked! The egg could talk!
I said, “Hi!”

Suddenly, the egg started to crack. It cracked open, and inside were two dragons! There was one big one, and one small one. The bigger dragon was purple and grey and the smaller one was yellow. They said, “We want to be your friends,” and I said, “Hi . . .”
I am hiking in the woods when I see a rainbow. I walk over and then I realize that I’m standing right at the end of the rainbow. Suddenly, the rainbow turns solid. A cat walks over and says, “Follow me!”

I ask, “Where?”

“Go across this rainbow. I haven’t had any visitors for 100,000,000,000 years!”

“Wait, you lived that long? I thought you were a kitten!” I am surprised.

“We don’t age in this forest, and all the creatures can talk there! Oh yeah, my name is Whiskers,” says the cat.

“Okay, I’m going,” I say.

Right as we are walking across, a flower stops us and says, “This is my forest! Only I can stay here!”

Whiskers says, “That’s one of the evil flowers in our forest. There is only one left. It can’t take over.”

We walk right past it but realize that a bunch of evil flowers are walking towards us. “This is our forest! Nobody besides us can come in!”

“Oh no, we can’t get past a thousand evil flowers! There’s too much to defeat!”

“Wait, do you have a hairball coming up? I think that will knock all of them into the water.”

Then, the cat tries to cough up a hairball, but right as the flowers get knocked into the water, more come, this time with weapons and shields.

“I know! Do you have a vacuum?” I ask the cat.

“Why would I? I wasn’t planning that this would happen!”

“Do you have a shovel?” I say.
“No, what do you want to do with it anyway?” Whiskers whispers, “I’m going to take their pollen away so they can’t reproduce.”

“That’s a good idea!” Then, I take a candy wrapper and scrape away their pollen. Then we push all of them into the water.

“So long, suckers!” we say.

When we finally get to go to the forest, a giraffe welcomes us.

“Welcome to our enchanted forest!”

“You mean, my enchanted forest?” says the last evil flower. We get off the bridge and it turns into a rainbow again. As we explore the forest, we see one spot where there are weird trees like candy trees, money trees, even tree trees! There’s another section that has all the houses and buildings. Then, the cat asks me if I want to stay.

“Why not?” I say.

The animals build another house for me. It is on the candy tree so I can take some candy when I want some. There are all kinds of candy! “Wait, how am I going to get up there?”

“I forgot you can’t climb well,” says the cat. “Here’s a ladder.”

There are also a few other houses close by, like Whisker’s house. Whisker’s house is shaped like a cat. Her house is also on a tree so Whiskers can climb up. Whiskers likes climbing.

But then, it starts raining. “Oh great. Here comes the yearly flood.” All the houses and buildings washed away. “And after this there is a drought. Then we don’t have much water to water the plants. And if all the plants die off, we will be just like the other animals in this area, the non-magical ones. We have to solve this problem every year. And all the houses are hard to rebuild.”

“Why can’t you use your magic to make something to block the rain?”

“Well, we can make small things with our magic, but big things are really hard to make. What should we do?”

“Is there anything about the rainbow that can help us?” I ask.

“Well, the rainbow can bring this whole forest anywhere on this planet… Maybe we can find a place that doesn’t flood?”

“My city never got flooded. Maybe we should move to San Francisco?” I say.

“What’s that place?”
“You don’t know what San Francisco is? What places do you know?”

“There’s outer space and this planet. But moving to space is very hard.”

“Can we get on the rainbow again? Maybe I can go and learn how to make a rocket!” So, I go over the rainbow again and after learning how to make a rocket, go back and make a rocket. Then we make a city in space.

“No floods, no droughts, no earthquakes, no volcanoes, I like this place! You can see space from this city too!”

The End.
IF I WENT TO MARS

HAISSEM JONES  •  age 11
Bryant Elementary School

If I went to Mars, I would bring a machine that could create anything I want. I would create a city that would be very high tech and it would be in the air. I would create a serum that would make me invincible from everything so nothing could penetrate my skin. I would also create a cure for cancer. I would also create a new money called Mars money. It would be a black coin with a skull engraved in the middle with lightning going over the head of it. It would be more advanced than anything on earth.

I would create a force field around the city, and plant trees and flowers. I would make gyms, a soccer field, a football field, and plant lots of food. I would create vaccines to every disease ever. I would create every fruit and vegetable. There would be one fruit that makes you gain superpowers. I would only create one so I could be the ruler of Mars, but I wouldn’t be corrupt. I would treat my people well and enact new laws.

I would enact one new law that requires a person to run thirty kilometers every day, but you can take breaks in between. There would be a running field that has snacks and drinks in the middle and at the end. If your feet start to hurt, we’ll give you a serum that will make your muscles not hurt until the end of the track. It would calculate how long it would take for this person to run across the field. I would make some genetic changes to the human body, like being able to withstand multiple deadly diseases like the Black Plague and other diseases. I would also increase intelligence so a baby would have a minimum IQ of 1,000, an eleven-year-old would be 1,000,000, and an adult would be a 1,000,000,000 IQ.

I would also increase the strength and endurance of the human body and the capabilities of how much it can withstand. You could get run over by a billion tanks and get shot by a billion tanks at
the same time and you wouldn’t even get scratched. You could be disintegrated, and your body would reform.

I would have to increase how hard school will be; not even Albert Einstein could withstand the amount of intelligence in schools. If you get trapped underwater, you could survive around a billion years. I would increase the human lifespan to a trillion years. I would invent immortality but not release it to the public because they don’t need to know. I would increase my military power by around infinity. By the second, they would get more powerful. I would declare war on racism and sexism. I would bring all the homeless people to Mars to give them homes and make their mental state ten billion times better if they need it. I’d also increase their IQs by 1,000 and give them better clothing, food, and houses. Their houses would be huge. They don’t have to run thirty kilometers a day, only twenty. I’d also clean them up, because why not?

I would start my own company that would develop technology and help the military. We would have our own personal military. I would clean up the atmosphere and make it okay to live there. I would clean up all the Mars spiders. I would also add oceans to Mars, and make grass and animals like dogs. I would create huge lobsters and crabs the size of a T-Rex, but they’d have paws instead of claws. But if you kill them, you’d release over a billion eggs. I’d bring over sharks, but they wouldn’t eat humans. You could not kill the sea animals or you would get eight million years in prison.

My people will speak every language because they will have a chip implanted into their necks. The sun will be light green. There will be new gods that will have their own areas like the sea and the plants and the sun and the moon. There will be supreme gods and goddesses. They will control the universe. And they will handle prayers and they will have their own categories like for good health and to get through horrible things. I would make myself the ultimate god. I would also make the best candy shop in the multiverse. It would have the best candy ever imagined. It would have the best Mexican candy and it would also have a function where you create your own candy.
There would also be the best shoes in the galaxy. These shoes would change to the person who wears them. With just a thought, you could change what type of shoe they were.

There would also be a tower that would let you see the galaxy in all of its glory. And the sky will be like a galaxy. That's how beautiful it would be. There would be a special vehicle that would be a bike that would hover, and it would manipulate gravity around it so it would float, but if you turned it off, it would still hover and it would not mess up the air quality. It would be illegal to mess up the air and to put garbage on the ground. There would be a button that would disintegrate the molecules so there would be no trash. There would be a force field around Mars so nothing could harm us.
MY STUFFED ANIMALS

NEYA MULDER · age 8
Starr King Elementary

I was five years old at home with my brother. Mom wasn’t home, but my dad was upstairs working. What is she doing that’s taking so long?

My mom came home with a stuffed animal. It was a cat. I really like cats. I showed it to my brother. “She’s always in flying position . . . Maybe we can call her Supercat!” said my brother.

“Yeah!” That night, I thought and thought and thought about Supercat. I couldn’t fall asleep. Well I thought sleeping was closing your eyes that time, so it didn’t really matter. The next day, my mom got another stuffed animal. I called it Megacat because he’s big compared to the other stuffed animals I have. Tasha was called Tasha because she has a name tag that says “Tasha.” Then I met the Superkitties. They were tiny and I found them in a Lego set. Then I somehow created a whole universe with those characters. After that my teddy bears were in it too. But they weren’t bears. They were friendly spiders!

Two to three years later, it was Valentine’s Day. I put Tasha in a box as a gift but lost her for at least one year! Recently it was me and my dad’s birthday. My brother found her in a box in a box. I was so happy to see her! I didn’t know how I stayed fine for so long! Then I found Rumamango in the couch crack (lost for a month). I also lost some Superkitties for a while, but now I have all of them and I keep my Superkitties in a plastic egg.

One day, when I was watching funny cats, I saw Megacat, scaring the cat away! Recently, I also saw Supercat on TV. Twice! Once it was a real cat that looked exactly like her, and the other time, it was the stuffed animal version of Supercat.

I think they will never get old and the three to four years with them was a priceless experience.
Me name be Pirate Neckbeard, and today I’ve visited me old buried treasure. It’s been a long time since I visited it. I buried it in a hidden place that you can only get to every hundred years. First, you have to plant a special seed. That will take about fifty years, and then add fifty-five more years because the clouds have to be aligned perfectly or shiver me timbers, you’re going to end up at the end of Africa but more bright than usual . . . Good thing I drank the potion of eternal life. That way I won’t die. Sooner I climb me beanstalk, I drink my potion of floatiness, for me would be able to walk on thy clouds. Once me got up, a ball bonked me head that brought thy foul language out of me. I was unconscious for fifty minutes, then me crew found me lying on the clouds. They helped me up and when I went back to thy buried treasure, it was under a thing that had five sides and was white like the clouds but more hard than usual. I saw two black lines coming out of it, then I saw one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten . . . I’m getting off track . . . I saw a lot of buccaneers. I asked not politely to get thy out of my buried treasure because, first of all, they bopped me with thy stitched ball and, third of all, they’re in my property, therefore they should really move out.

To be continued . . .
DINO REY

OLIVER RAMOS • age 8
Sanchez Elementary School

Yo voy hacer lo mismo que Owen, un personaje de Jurassic World hizo. I would play marbles with the dinosaurs. I would do a race. Mi dinosaurio favorito es el Velociraptor.

Los Velociraptors son carnívoros y corren muy rápido como cuarenta horas al día y cazan juntos.

Si yo tuviera uno o cuatro, yo los cuidaría y les daría de comer. Algo más que se de los Velociraptors es que tienen garras filosas, que hay otros tipos de Velociraptors como el Indoraptor y el Baryonyx y el Gallimimus y los Compys son Velociraptors pequeños.

DINO KING

I am going to do the same thing that Owen, a character from Jurassic World, did. I would play marbles with the dinosaurs. I would race. My favorite dinosaur is the Velociraptor.

The Velociraptors are carnivores and run really fast like forty hours a day and hunt together.

If I had one or four, I would take care of them and give them food. Something else I know about the Velociraptor is that it has sharp claws. There are other types of Velociraptors like the Indoraptor and the Baryonyx and the Gallimimus and the Compys are small Velociraptors.
One day, Lily the fox was going to school, but when she came back . . . HER PARENTS WERE GONE! She thought her parents were at a shop, but the next day Lily saw that her parents didn’t come back! Lily was so scared! More days passed but her parents still didn’t come back! :O She had to do something but she didn’t know what to do! Then suddenly she had an idea! She grabbed a big bag to put the villains in the big bag! She had to look for villains! :O She was a little scared. But it was okay. She went outside to look for the villains when suddenly she saw a horrible face! It was Momo!!! :O Then she heard some running! It was . . . the ninja squirrel! :O Momo and the ninja squirrel were about to attack! But Lily was not scared. She started to sing a song called “Rainbow” by Sia then the monsters disappeared, then . . . Lily woke up! It was just a dream. “Phew,” said Lily, and they all lived spooky ever after.

The End.
THE CANDY PAINTING

VERA HUANG • age 9
Ulloa Elementary School

If I were a place, my place would be a Candy Land! There would be an ice-cream-cone house, cotton-candy pool, and it would rain candy. The weather would be cold so that the ice cream doesn’t melt (who would want melty ice cream anyway?). It would smell like candy of course! It would smell like cookies-and-cream ice cream. None of my friends like eating too much candy, and my parents don’t like too much candy. They like veggies. I don’t think they would like to come. There would be animals, mostly chocolate dogs.
Once there lived a sushi named Sposu and he was always scared of Halloween and never wanted to go trick-or-treating. He did not like the costumes because they were too scary for him and did not even like the not-so-scary costumes. The costume he hated was a piece of paper with sushi on it. He did not like it, because the sushi on the paper was only drawn with a pencil, or he thought he was a pencil color. One Halloween night, the sushis were trick-or-treating when they saw the sky get really, really, really, dark. Sposu thought that he was inside a haunted house and there was a haunted house in front of him. He screamed, “HELP,” and a witch came out. It was a witch that was nice but was also like the witch in “Hansel and Gretel,” but was not evil. She locked him in the cell and gave him very good food. The witch did not want to eat him, but she wanted to see if the sushis had meat in them.

She did not go to school a lot, so she just fed him meat, and, of course, he had meat. She fed him a lot of SPAM (meat). He used to look like a California roll but now looked like a SPAM roll. One day he felt itchy and then he found out why . . .

*It was because the witch had given him ham, not SPAM!*  

His roll is now called SPAMEL & HAMTA. He is scared that he is going to be experimented on today. The witch got ready with her chopsticks and started picking out the avocado, crab, ham, SPAM, and all that. Like I said before, she did not go to school so much so she did not know what meat was . . .
THE SECRET TREASURE CHEST

TASNEEM ETTAGHI  •  age 7
Yick Wo Alternative Elementary School

I found a treasure chest swimming with the dolphins and other sea animals and otters until I saw something glowing underwater. So, I brought it out on land and inside of it was a treasure map leading me back home to a big treasure chest. It had my parents inside of and a mystery potion that gives me mind-thinking powers. So, anything I think about happens in your life. It’s rainbow and it has a brain inside a big tube that can make multiples and more of them. The potion lasts forever. I also found the most favorite food of mine, homemade soup and rfissa. There was also a dragon egg that looked like a diamond. It was the biggest, beautifullest oval. It had five scratches on the side of it. It had some dragon wings on the sides with crooked lines on them. Also on top of the egg, there were baby dragon horns. The egg also had other scratches near the top of the head. The egg is gonna hatch right now!

The cowboy duck is named Lolilo. The duck and the cow were walking very happily. The duck and the cow found the chicken. The rooster fell asleep and had dreams.
A WITCH NAMED LUNA

LISA LI · age 11
Herbert Hoover Middle School

Once there was a witch named Luna born in Turtle Town. When she was little, she always wanted to explore the world, but when she grew up, her parents wanted her to be a housekeeper because they wanted Luna to become rich.

When Luna was twelve, Luna got her first magic broom from her mom. She wanted to use it to fly around and explore the world, but her parents thought differently. Her mom said, “I brought you this broom for cleaning! Not flying around!” Her dad yelled, “The outside world is too dangerous! I won’t let you out of Turtle Town ever!” Then her dad threw the broom out of the window and Luna was disappointed. After that, Luna’s mom got her a normal broom for house cleaning.

When Luna was sixteen, her parents wanted her to get a job. It was normal for witches to get their first job at the age of sixteen. Her mother wanted Luna to be a housekeeper, but Luna wanted to be an explorer and discover new land. When she told her parents, they were furious and kicked her out of the house till she found a job. Luna had nowhere else to live so she begged her parents to let her back in. Her parents agreed but on one condition: she had to become a housekeeper. Luna had no choice but to agree because she didn’t want to be homeless.

Soon, Luna became a housekeeper for a rich family from another town. She would go out to work every day and come back at night. She would wake up at 7 a.m. and walk to Golden Town, where the rich family lived. She had to walk there because her parents wouldn’t let her use magic brooms. Her parents let her carry a normal broom there so she could clean. She would get there at 8 a.m. and start cleaning the house with her broom. Then she would walk back home at 8 p.m.
One day, while she was walking to Golden Town, a tiger attacked her for no reason. She threw her broom, hoping it would hit the tiger, but she missed, and the broom went over the tiger’s head. But luckily the tiger chased the broom instead of Luna. While the tiger was chasing the broom, Luna ran for her life not looking back. She ran to Golden Town and into the rich family’s house and told them what happened. The rich family didn’t care about her story and gave her their broom for cleaning. After Luna was done cleaning the house, she left holding the broom. She forgot the broom belonged to the rich family.

While she was walking back home, she sat on the broom pretending she was flying and exploring the world like how she dreamed of it. Then her broom magically lifted up. She thought she was dreaming, but no, the broom that belonged to the rich family was actually a magical broom. She never knew. She flew away and into the forest with her broom. Little did she know, it was gonna change her life forever.

She tried to stop the broom but since she never really flew on a broom before, she didn’t know how. She had an idea to jump off the broom but she might get hurt. She tried everything to stop the broom, but the broom just kept flying deeper in the forest. When she finally managed to stop the broom, she was deep into the forest. She was lost. She tried to get out of the forest but since she didn’t know where she was, she ended up going deeper into the forest.

While she was walking deeper into the forest, she ran into a fairy. She wanted to ask the fairy to help but the fairy ended up running away. She followed the fairy. She ended up following the fairy to Fairy Town. When she entered the town, she saw everyone panicking and screaming. She asked one of the fairies that was crying, “What’s wrong?”

The fairy replied, “Some dragons flew here and attacked us for no reason! They even took the Fairy Princess.”

Luna tried to calm everyone down. Everyone finally calmed down when Luna said, “Guys, calm down, I’m a witch, I can maybe somehow help.”
A fairy wearing a crown came up to her and said, “If you somehow get the princess back, I’ll reward you with two wishes and more.” Turns out, she was the fairy queen. Her name was Ava. Luna agreed to help but she would need a few things. Ava agreed to help her get prepared before she went to get the princess back from a dragon. Ava gave her a magical backpack full of stuff she might need. Luna asked what was in the backpack, but Ava just handed her a map and her magic broom. Ava then said, “No time for explaining. We need to get the princess back now. In the backpack, there will be a list full of stuff you might need and how to use them. Now get the princess back.”

Luna was confused and opened the map. She noticed the Dragon Cave was not far away. She quickly went on her broom and tried getting it to fly. By the time she learned how to fly, it was nighttime. She flew to a random spot and opened her backpack. A random piece of paper dropped down on her and she got a magic message from her parents saying, “WHERE ARE YOU? COME BACK HOME NOW! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO LEAVE WORK AT 8 P.M.! IT’S 11 P.M. NOW, COME BACK HOME NOW.” She wanted to write back to her parents, but she didn’t have any magic paper with her. She reached into her backpack and saw a tiny sleeping bag. She took it out and thought, How do I even use this? It’s so small. I can’t even fit in it. She thought it was useless, so she threw it away. Suddenly the sleeping bag turned into a normal-sized sleeping bag. Luna now understood that it was one of those magic sleeping bags. Every time you throw it, it changes size. It’s like that so it could fit in a backpack.

She went in the sleeping bag but couldn’t sleep. Soon it was 12 a.m., midnight, when werewolves came out. She reached in the backpack and grabbed a sword and some other stuff. Right after she did that, a werewolf came out and snatched her backpack. Luna took her sword, map, and some other random stuff and flew away with her broom. She flew back to Fairy Town, but Ava kicked her out and said, “Get the princess back first, then I’ll let you in.”

She decided not to sleep and flew to the dragon’s cave. She thought she could get the princess back while he was sleeping but when she looked into the cave, the dragon was awake. When she
looked in the cave, the dragon saw her and got angry. The dragon left the princess alone and started going towards Luna. Luna got scared because she didn’t know how to use a sword. She’d never even held one before. Soon the dragon was getting closer and closer till he saw the sword. He got scared and flew away. After the dragon flew away, she quickly went back into the cave to get the princess back. But to her surprise, the princess was gone. She must have run away when the dragon was going after Luna.

She flew around, using her broom, into the forest finding the princess but she was nowhere to be found. Luna couldn’t see well because it was 1 a.m. so she probably passed the princess without even knowing. She went back into the cave and slept in her sleeping bag. She woke up the next morning to find the princess. She couldn’t find the princess anywhere, so she gave up and went back to Fairy Town to return the sword and other stuff Ava gave her. But to her surprise, when she arrived at Fairy Town, everyone was cheering. She soon noticed that the princess got back to Fairy Town by herself when Luna wasn’t looking.

Ava thanked Luna and gave her a bunch of gold coins. Ava also said, “Keep the stuff I gave you. You probably need them to get back home. Also, come back to Fairy Town when you want to use your two wishes.” Luna went back home with all the stuff and gold coins. When she went back home, her parents were mad but as soon as they saw the gold coins, they got curious. They asked Luna what happened, and Luna told them what happened with a big smile.

Luna’s parents were so happy that Luna was now rich that they let her quit her job as a housekeeper. They only wanted her to be a housekeeper for the money. But now, she already has the money. Luna became a famous person and she started doing quests for fairies.
SIXTY PEOPLE REMAIN

LORAM DUKE • age 12
Homeschool

They are on a deserted island, which used to have a couple of cities and towns. Now they will face the biggest challenge of their life. About a hundred random people were chosen to come to the island. On the island, they find snipers, machine guns, ARs, and any other weapons you can think of. A person named Loram explores the island and finds a secret hideout filled with weapons. He is weak, hungry, and doesn’t know how to defend himself. There is a death barrier that is closing down on the players of the game, so it is a fight against time. Rick, the bad guy, doesn’t want Loram to win because they are brothers. No one knows it except for Loram and Rick. Loram was kicked out of his family and Rick always hated him.

It has been six hours now and about forty people have already lost the game. Sixty people remain.
My superpower will be super speed, shooting spiderwebs, and flying. My brother Abdullah will fly and shoot webs, and he’s very strong at fighting. My brother Yunes would have very strong punches and be fast. He’d be the best superhero ever. My baby brother will be able to turn into other dangerous animals so everyone runs away from him. My parents would have strong punches and kicking, and they could turn into a dinosaur. Everyone would run away from them and stop stealing. I’ll help everyone in this world because I want to help other people.
EVERYONE IN YOUR FAMILY HAS A SUPERPOWER!

KENYA CAPETILLO COVARRUBIAS • age 8
Yick Wo Alternative Elementary School

My mom likes cleaning so her superpower would be: whenever she touches something, it would become clean, very shiny clean. Everybody will be so happy that they might destroy the house and make it dirty, but my mom can always clean the house again, just with one touch!

Whenever my dad is hungry, he opens his mouth and he aims for anything he wants. He shoots a laser from his mouth, and the laser grabs the food, turns it into a taco, and brings it to his mouth. He was so starving so he is super happy.

My brother likes playing video games. When he is so bored and wants to play a video game, he puts his hands out, and then a long, long spoon and fork come out of his two hands. Then he touches the thing he wants to turn into a video game. It will always be the game Minecraft.

If I had a superpower, I would turn myself into a stuffed-animal queen and I would have all the stuffed animals in the world! I would turn anything into a stuffed animal because I love them so much.
One day I went to someplace but I don’t know what it was called. I think it was called ??? I forgot. Anyway, this was a weird obstacle. The obstacle was weird because it had, let’s just say, about six hundred challenges. The hardest one was to run on a pole for thirty minutes blindfolded. And the poles were one hundred feet tall. As you might know, I am scared of heights.

Another obstacle was being blindfolded and riding a one-thousand-foot roller coaster. Well, luckily the ride was for thirty seconds, but unluckily there were no seat belts. Hold on to anything you want to hold on to. I did not hold on to anything because the ride started before I knew it would. And I fell right into the water one second later. Luckily, I was thirsty and drank the water. And this one was the hardest of all because it was the six hundredth challenge. The challenge was to put fifteen spiders on my head. They were well, white widows. White widows are very dangerous. They are so dangerous, they drink all your blood in a minute. Someone invented them. His name is Benjamin Franklin. The challenge includes white widows because the owner of the course was Benjamin Franklin. I got so scared I jumped right on the roller coaster and fell right into the water. Luckily the spiders were thirsty and they drank the water and did not drink my blood. I was all frustrated and ran out of the door stomping angrily and saying, “Okay, I am done with this. Goodbye.” Let’s just say I got home on an Uber ride. I felt all dizzy and I am finally done. I am finally done.
I found a treasure chest in a shipwreck that was underwater. I went scuba diving in the ocean, nowhere important. Inside the treasure chest, I found treasure, a treasure map, a mysterious potion, your favorite food, and a dragon egg. The treasure was a good one. It had gold, riches, and money. It was worth hundreds of billions of dollars. There was also a treasure map that led to another treasure! It was a short path to the other treasure. It led me downstairs where I found another treasure chest with another treasure map. This led to another treasure chest with another map! I kept finding treasure chests and each one had more money than the last one. Inside the first treasure chest, there was a mysterious blue potion. It looked like just a potion. You sprinkle this potion on stuff, and it makes it more powerful. The potion was also endless! You never run out of potion. I sprinkle it on stuff and then sell the stuff for more money. I also found the most expensive food in the world—gold leaf caviar with white truffles and saffron on ham from pigs who only eat acorns. Once I found the food, I used the mysterious potion to make it worth even more and I ate the ham. Finally, there was a dragon egg. It was oval like an egg and was dark navy blue. If it hatches, the dragon would be a water dragon. It would live in water, control water, and breathe water instead of fire. After finding everything, I would buy cars, houses, and anything I want to because now I’m rich!
One morning I woke up in my bed noticing that I hear pig sounds. I was like, It’s probably the toy machine that my next-door neighbor’s son has. But I woke up and saw my dog as a pig!? I was thinking that it was a dream at first but I rubbed my eyes over and over and it was NOT a dream. I was laughing at first but it kinda was creepy and weird that my dog would turn into a pig. I was very creeped out by the way my pigdog was looking at me. Hehe. I was kinda happy that my dog was not a dog for a bit because I was tired of the barking and my dog pooping and peeing all over the house and then making me clean it up. Feeding the pig for lunch was just so stressful. The pig would go crazy! The craziness was that he would start making a lot of oinking and other noises. It would drive my mom and my whole family crazy. I mean if my dog turned back, I would keep it, but if it stayed like that, nope not happening. What I would do is give it away to someone who loves pigs. And a second thing that would probably happen is that the pig would wake up the whole neighborhood with snorts and oinking. Drinking water, mmmm . . . water, in their head they would say. So, I would go down the stairs and I would eat my breakfast, then my pig would be in the bathtub, then just looking at me like, What? Is there something that I am doing wrong? The pig would always give me a cold face like “😑” and that is the cold face my pig would give me. I am like, “Dude, don’t give me that face -_-.” So then here comes the sunset. I was so excited for the day to end :0. Then all the sudden there was a huge cloud right above my house, and then it took my pigdog. Then out of nowhere the dog just plopped out of the sky and I was so confused ;-; Meanwhile: I’m grabbing a box of popcorn before watching my dog plop out of the sky, and then my dog runs back to the house.
all freaked out and uncomfortable. I was like, YES, MY DOG IS FINALLY AFRAID OF SOMETHING, in my mind 😐. So then the day ended and I went to sleep but then I woke up in the bed and it was already morning!? Then I woke up, went downstairs, and checked my dog’s bed, and he was just a dog. I was so relieved, but I looked in my parents’ room and I looked under the blanket, and they were the ones who were pigs. My face was blown. My face was so mad that I would burn something down if I could now. I have to go through the circle of pigs again?!?!?

   Fun fact: I thought it was a dream 😛.
In honoring our histories this year, students engaged in a number of anti-racist and abolitionist lesson plans. With space to explore their roots and identities, students crafted poems and stories that range from what our students enjoy, to how they see themselves in the world. Weaving words together, they embrace their journeys as newcomers and their diverse ways of being in community, giving us a small but vibrant glimpse into their worlds.
I came to the United States six years ago so I have roots in multiple places. I was born in Yemen and I came to the U.S. when I was eight years old. At first, I wanted to go back to my country but then I started to make friends. I lived in Alameda for seven months and now I live in San Francisco. San Francisco is my favorite place because the city is very lively and different. It’s not quiet and there’s something to do every day. In Alameda, it’s always the same—even the buildings are the same! Everyone in San Francisco is social. Some people are friendly and some are not. Yes, my culture plays an important role in who I am today because my culture determines some things that I can and can’t eat. For example, I can’t eat pork or gelatin. I also have to wear a hijab on my head. At home, I speak Arabic.
NAIMA

NAIMA CLAIBORNE • age 13
Synergy School

Naima
Stubborn, artistic, athletic
Daughter of Karen and Deszon
Sister of Danika and Kailan
Lover of all food, board games, and sports
Feels happy, tired, and stressed
Finds happiness in soccer, dance, and art
Needs sleep, Netflix, and food
Who gives laughter, joy, and positivity
Who fears spiders, heights, and the future
Who would like to see my friends and school
Who enjoys performing, swimming, and reading
Who likes to wear jeans, leggings, and hoodies
Who hates cleaning, being bored, and online school
Claiborne
Dear Bethany,

The games I like to play on the PlayStation and I am good at are Among Us, Fortnite, and Fast Speed. How I win these games while playing Among Us is by, if I am the crew member, doing tasks, trying to figure out who the Imposter is, following people, and, if I am the Imposter, by lying. How I win Fortnite is by beating other players. How I win Fast Speed is by crashing into other cars. Instead of crashing into other stuff, I crash into them.

I am good at painting. I paint my favorite things like flowers, the ocean, my favorite video games, and my favorite animals. I feel calm and peaceful when I am painting. I am good at math by doing times and adding. I love that I’m funny, kind, and good at studying. I’m proud of good grades. The classes I’m proud of are my regular class, my Spanish class, and my religion class. I’m proud of my writing because I think I have improved. I’m proud of my reading skills because I feel like I have brought up my reading skills.

From,

Bethany
ENERGETIC JUST LIKE A DOG

EVOLET QUINTAL • age 10
Bessie Carmichael Elementary School

Energetic just like a dog
Very good imagination
Overall likes flowers
Loves painting
Eyes are both brown
Talented like her mom
Queen
Ultracreative
Inspired by her cousin
North Boulevard is where she lives
Tamales are her favorite food
Aloe is her 3 p.m. drink
Long hair she has
This place is called Rainbow. The sky is pink, the clouds are blue, the sun is purple, and the moon is yellow.

There are rainbow buildings. There are pink donuts at the purple bakery shop. There is a toy store that only has pink things. There is a school supply store, and its color is blue. There is no black and white. There are only pink, blue, yellow, purple, and green plants.

There are only pink, purple, blue, red, and brown clothes. The people are black and white. They are Barbie dolls instead of people. Some of them only like pink. Some only like blue. Some of them only like yellow. And some of them only like purple. And also red. Their favorite treats are ice cream and donuts. Anything sugary! The place smells like ice cream! There are lots of Barbie traffic, cars, airplanes, and cruises. There is even a place in Disneyland there! You just have to walk. It is a city in San Francisco! It is only hot and cold. Sometimes there are rainy days. But the rain is special because it is a rainbow! There are a lot of colors around you. There is school but it is fun school!
My brother is as sweet as sugar.
The universe is as big as my imagination.
My grandma is as sweet as apple pie.
Mango ice cream is as creamy as peaches and cream.
Mochi ice cream is as good as an ice-cream pie.
Dumplings are as good as swimming in a nice cold pool on a hot day.
Sushi rice and fish go better together than mashed potatoes and gravy.
Mexican food is as good as an ice-cream sundae on a hot day.

Writing is like having the power of a god at your fingertips like your own reality.
WHO AM I?

YEJIN HEO · age 10
Claire Lilienthal

I am creative like a person imagining all the time whether walking or sleeping.
I am a fast-learning girl like a monkey.
I love the color purple and I like dumplings just like my sisters do.
I like designing and making stuff. So, I want to be an architect someday.
My parents are from Korea. My cousins are in Korea just like my parents. My sisters and I were born here in America. I have no brothers.
I love to sing and draw. I used to learn the guitar from my dad like a famous person with guitars.
Though I like coconut drinks, I do not like coconuts as much.
I do not like ham, turkey, sausages, and oat milk.
I love hamsters and tigers. They are cool and cute. In first grade, our class pet was a hamster named Snowball. She was very round and as white as a snowball.
My baby fish bite, but they don’t have teeth.
No holidays in China, except Chinese New Year.
I am four feet two inches tall.
I was in first grade and I didn’t know how to write.
My sister Nina is vicious.
Black hair and brown hair, brown hair and black hair.
My mom buys me eight year olds’ clothes, but they don’t fit.
My cousin lives next to my apartment.
The skateboard cost $40 and the wheels cost $35.
I play *Call of Duty* and *Among Us*.
I don’t know how to say “happy” in Chinese.
It’s a nice neighborhood and it’s happy and it has a park.
I got 100 on my report card and it made me happy.
My family buys me fish and my mom tried to find a school desk for me today. She didn’t find a desk, so she bought me a tiger-striped fish instead.
At the park, we swing super hard and I jumped out of the swing too high and too far (eighteen feet).
We see who can swing the highest and who can climb the highest in the slide.
What people do that’s the same as me. Look down and read to find out.

I used to go to a program, and someone had the same name as me. Some people play a game called Roblox. Some people play High School Simulator. Some people like burgers just like me. People like watermelons like me. A lot of people have phones just like me. People have Jordans just like me. That Bratz doll name means a lot because someone gave us a big box of them. We lost them so I keep that name to remember them.

I live in the United States of America.

Important people in my life are my family. They are very nice and I have a four-year-old sister that’s almost taller than me. I’m only nine years old and I go back and forth with my parents. My friends are nice, but we argue a lot. We argue about whose turn it is to do something or what’s theirs and what’s mine. My school is fun. I miss school. At first I did not wanna be at school but now I wanna go back to school. I don’t like to share too much information about myself.
PARTS OF ME

TASNEEM ETTAGHI • age 7
Yick Wo Alternative Elementary School

Nice,
Animal lover,
Nature lover.
A goal in life is to keep earth healthy.
Almost all the girls I know are my friends.
My family is sweet.
I care about anyone I know.
I like looking at and opening new stuff.
I like buying stuff.
My name Tasneem means a fountain in heaven, says the Koran, a book God wrote himself.
I am light brown. I’m half American, half Moroccan.
Cousins are cool
Because they showed me how to play soccer.
Starbucks gets me awake.
Delicious.
Swimming gives me energy.
Guatemala is a beautiful country where my mom was born.
Long hair is a tradition in my family.
Road trips
Taking the back seats.
White—my whole room is white.
White can match with everything.
Among Us keeps me entertained.
Grandma is important because she loves us.
Candy store makes me sugary.
Braids, not brushing my hair.
Takis spicy!
Painting makes me calm.
Little sister makes me laugh.
Big sister does a lot of chores.
Brothers keep me protected.
HOME means safe to me.
I have family to take care of me.
I get sleep at home.
I love my mom, dad, and brother.
Dear myself,

I am good at writing books. I have lots of books that I’m writing. My first and favorite one is *The Spooky Village*. I like that book because it has lots of characters. I’ll tell you some: Yehyun, Silene, the big rock, Black Berry, Black Berry’s husband, and some spooky characters. My favorite part of that book is when I met all of the spooky characters. I started writing a book when my sister said making books is fun. I love my hair and eyes and my ears and lastly my mouth. My hair keeps me feeling happy. My eyes let me see. If I didn’t have any eyes, I wouldn’t be able to see. My ears help me to hear stuff good. And my mouth helps me eat. I am proud of myself because I finish my assignments in time. And I can do the seal yoga pose, which none of my family members can do. And I’m proud of myself because I made my dream house. When I grow up, I want to have two kids. One is a boy, and one is a girl. The boy’s name is Ethan, and the girl’s name is Eleanor. And Ethan’s Korean name is 에단. And Eleanor’s Korean name is 에나.

Love,
Yehyun
WHO AM I?

NAIMA CLAIBORNE • age 13
Synergy School

Needs, who has curly hair like a curly fry, blue/green eyes, and is as tall as a tower
Art, something that makes me happy whenever I feel sad
I like sushi, burritos, and pizza
Music, I listen to everyday and dance like a ballerina
All animals like dogs, cats, and giraffes
For many, the most important message of 2020 was one of change, from Black Lives Matter to wearing masks for safety. Students themselves made many changes, some by choice and others because current events necessitated them. In After-School Tutoring at Mission Bay, students took stands on important issues, envisioning themselves as leaders and refusing to shy away from hard questions. In the pieces of this section, students tackle issues from immigration to the environment to animal cruelty to the very definition of real freedom. Their voices say to the world of adults, Yes, you would want us to make a change.
Equity looks like equality, being fair and kind to all human beings including animals. In the photo about equity, I see a little boy, a teenager, and an adult watching a baseball game. First, the little boy was upset that he couldn’t watch the game because he was too small. Next, the teenager could barely see the game, so he felt glad but also bitter that his sight was eye level with the fence. Lastly, the adult was thrilled because he could watch the baseball game perfectly with no issues. If there was equity, it would help the little boy the most because it would give him extra height to watch the baseball game. Equity sounds like having fairness and justice, honesty and integrity. Equality means that everybody gets a pair of shoes, but equity means everybody gets a pair that fits. Some practices or actions we can take are to help others who are disadvantaged. Charity is one way of helping and donating. I have experience donating to a Muslim mosque. My donation helped the mosque by supporting others and also to repair the mosque if needed. They used the money to improve the walls, paint the walls, and repair restrooms. Another form of charity is volunteering to help local communities. I could make the world more equitable by volunteering to help people who lack resources like clothes, money, shelter, and much more. Equity to me means to have fairness, integrity, and justice.
I would like to go to Mexico and try some of the things my abuelo did, like fishing and catching birds. Also, catching a rabbit and taking care of it, also an eagle. I would like to learn all of that and be happy while I do what I do on the farm. And I would like to learn how to cook posole from my dad, and when I’m in Mexico I would cook posole. I would also like to know how to sew shoes, because my dad’s dad knows how to make shoes, and I would also like to know how to sew, so I can make masks or gloves for people, because I see on TV what’s happening in Mexico and it’s kind of sad.
THE LITTER HURTS PEOPLE

BRITTANY JIMENEZ • age 7
Saint James School

Dear Mayor Breed,

I am writing to you, the Mayor of San Francisco, to tell you about the environment.

What I see in the environment is that there is a lot of trash in my San Francisco streets, in my neighborhood, and in our oceans. What I smell in the environment is gas-filled smoke made worse by littering. This is a problem because it’s not good for the people, the animals, and the turtles of San Francisco. The litter hurts people because they will get sick from eating the sick animals. The litter can get inside the turtles’ noses and make it hard for them to live and breathe, and the animals get really sick and hurt by thinking the litter is food. This problem is important to me because I love animals and I want everybody that God made to stay safe.

I would give her money until she shows me that she’s going to make people clean the environment. I would put cameras. I would tell her that if we do not clean our world that God made, we would not have oxygen. We could put posters and then we could tell people to get a poster. Then everybody in the world could bring flags, saying, “Clean the environment.” I would tell the mayor to tell people to clean the environment.
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE TO VOTE?

YEJIN HEO  ·  age 10
Claire Lilienthal

I think it is important for people to vote because they need someone to help the country and city, make the country and city better, and more reasons. Voting for a president is important because it represents the whole country. Voting for mayors is also very important because it represents the whole city. Voting for city councils is important too because they make decisions for the city like adding more schools, parks, stores, etc. There are also citizens. Citizens are people who are allowed to vote only because they were born from that country. San Francisco would be different if there was no voting because people would be free without the laws of the president. People would do more and more bad stuff, dangerous stuff, and a lot more. My parents cannot vote because they are from Korea, but my sisters and I can vote since we are American citizens. And that’s it.

An issue in the world is the coronavirus. This virus is all over the world. I wouldn’t want to be president because I would have to be really busy, and life would be stressful. Every four years in America, the citizens vote for a president.
If I were president, the first thing I would do is add more recess and playgrounds at school so that students can play in them. I would give dessert to the whole school. The dessert would be ice cream and chocolate chip cookies.

I would also add escalators and elevators to the school. My mom has a stroller for my sister, and the elevator would help because they can’t use the stairs. I would make it so that there are more bathrooms. In my school, there are not that many. On some days, one of the bathrooms is broken.

I would also have water and Gatorade.
One thing I would like to see in the world this year is faith in humanity. I want people to believe in each other. What I mean by “faith in humanity” is that I want people to be nicer and trust each other like friends and family. It is important to me because nowadays the world is more dangerous because of us. We have no trust in each other anymore because anyone could be dangerous. This is also important to others and me because if we trusted each other and everyone more, then we could make more inventions or find more ways for life to be easier with teamwork.

I can be caring and friendly to all the people and show kindness in order for them to know how it feels, so they will be kindhearted to others, too, so people can trust one another. I can also invent a machine that shows a clip of a video that is caring and I can also have a superpower to put a little bit of compassion in their personalities, but the rest is their decision. People can help by giving people that have a hard time some help or things that will help them, with the result that the person being helped can feel kindness and become kind as well.
Dear people who don’t wear masks,

I have noticed that recently when I go outside with my mask on, I notice other people with no masks on. It doesn’t bother me or it might not bother anyone else, but someone out there is being bothered and it isn’t kind. You don’t have to wear the mask, but for your safety and other people’s safety, you most likely should wear the mask for protection. If the experts are wrong, there’s no harm in wearing a little piece of cloth on our faces, but if they’re right, we could be saving millions of lives.

This place is the right place to write about ongoing problems in the world, such as people not wearing their masks. It is the right place to write this because not many people know what is going on. It may be helpful to wear your mask and it may not be helpful to wear a mask, but the world is saying that it is helpful to wear a mask. It is also important that people should know about these articles because there are some people in the world who don’t know what’s going on and they may be clueless, so my article may be able to help them.

My article can tell people that they need to follow the rule that the world has put upon them, and these are the reasons why:
1. They could be saving millions of lives.
2. You should stay six feet apart because regardless of the virus, some people may not be comfortable being that close.
My reasons could make things better because, if people don’t know or follow the rules, then other people might get upset, and you may not be let into certain public places. I feel a bit upset when I don’t see other people wearing their masks because it makes me think they might get that virus that everyone is talking about.

Sincerely,
Clayton Hill
You Would Want Us to Make a Change

Aliyah Lewis • Age 9
Starr King Elementary

One change I would like to see in the world this year is that I would like to see that Black people would not have to die by police. I only say this because like I don’t wanna die or anyone in my family. It’s hard for men because they die the most, and I’m scared for my dad.

It’s important because a lot of Black people have to go through this, and I don’t want more of us to die.

I can make a difference by telling more people to protest on this, and it just might make a change. If I tell more people to protest, they might know how we feel, and the cops are scared of us. That’s why they bring weapons.

I feel good about writing about stuff that needs to change. I don’t want it to feel like because of our skin color, we have to die. Some people don’t care about it. If this was happening to you, I know you would want us to make a change.
Dear public,

The world is warming up. You should care because if you don’t listen, then you might die from a hurricane. Even if you live in California, there will be lots of droughts or floods. Another consequence of global warming would be higher sea levels and because there are higher sea levels, there will be flooding. There might not be enough food because of the droughts, and some animals will move, and there might be pests. There will be a lot more mosquitoes and ticks. There will be a lot more disease like malaria and yellow fever. There will be not enough food so people will be hungry. For example, this year was a huge hurricane season. They’re already at Hurricane Beta, which is a Greek letter. Hurricane Laura was pretty big, it was a huge upper-level Category 4. An upper-level Category 4 is very destructive and can rip the windows and the roof off a building.

Deforestation is when you cut down all the trees. Because you’re cutting down all the trees, they’re producing less oxygen and can’t help us repair. A lot of our medicine comes from the rainforest. Because of deforestation, we won’t have as much medicine. A lot of people who have diseases might not be able to get the medicine they need, and they might die.

You could also turn off the lights when you’re not using them and plant some native plants in your garden or some of your own food, like mint. Planting native plants, like naked lady plants means you don’t have to water them as much, because they’re already adapted to the environment.

Reduce your carbon footprint to stop greenhouse gases and use up less carbon, so less carbon dioxide would be in the atmosphere. Recycling takes less energy, so they don’t have to use that energy.
in a big stinky factory that produces carbon emissions, which is greenhouse gas. You could also compost so that you don’t have to go out and buy compost, so that you can reuse your own stuff and it’s good for the environment.

Biking also reduces carbon emissions because there’s no engine. It’s powered by you, so it doesn’t use up a lot of stinky gas, which also causes greenhouse gases that cause the greenhouse effect. The greenhouse effect is when gases like methane and carbon dioxide act like a greenhouse by trapping sunlight, so the earth warms up. Public transit uses less resources to get more people around and uses less gas. Instead of having one person per giant SUV, it’s many people on one bus.

If you’re a meat eater, then you should know that 41% of America’s land is used for grazing, feeding, slaughtering, and growing food for meat. A much smaller percentage is used for actual people. You could eat less meat, like maybe once or twice a week. You could just start with going vegan one day of the week.

There was a mass extinction event in prehistoric times because of global warming. We wouldn’t want to end up like those poor animals that died because of global warming.
ONE CHANGE I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN THE WORLD...

OLIVER RAMOS  • age 8
Sanchez School

I would change COVID-19. I want those who are sick with COVID-19 to recover and to never get COVID again.

I’ll have superpowers.

One change I would like to see in the world this year is the COVID-19 because it will make people sick and my family in Guatemala will get sick. I don’t want my uncles to be sick.
YOU WILL BE FREE ONE DAY

LISA LI · age 11
Herbert Hoover Middle School

I made this butterfly to show how many people are away from their mothers and their fathers forever. This butterfly symbolizes freedom for all the people who are away from their parents forever. I hope that you will be free one day.
When I was first in 826 Valencia, I felt so excited because I went to the Pirate Store 826. I grew and grew, then I went to another 826, Mission Bay 826 Valencia. I like this program because it helps you with your homework, and you get to socialize with other people, have friends, sometimes be published. You do a lot of writing, talk on stages, and make videos.

Mission Bay was so close to my house that I started liking it more. 826 Valencia has helped me finish my homework and level up my reading level because my reading level was a little bit low, but then I grew and grew and grew. Now I like writing. My experiences in 826 were awesome because you get to perform your writing in front of a lot of people, and I really like being in 826 Valencia ‘cause you get published. Some experiences I had was when I was in the Warrior’s video, and I was published in two books. The two videos I did were awesome because I got to meet more people that I did not know. They were the camera person, and I got to meet some people from the basketball team the Warriors.

I am proud of myself because I’ve been published, and my mom thinks I’m famous. I’m proud of my school scores because 826 helped me get my scores more up in schools, and my reading level and my writing. I understand more, and I can read higher level books. In my writing, they tell me I have to write an essay and I finish it in two days and it’s easy. I love 826 Valencia because of that and to get published. I’m here today.

Having support helped me socialize with others on the computer even though I wasn’t in person. I wish I was in person. They gave me a lot of writings, and what I liked was that I socialized with other people, talked to famous people like the artist Broobs and
an animator from Pixar, and at the end, I got published. I always like getting published anywhere.

I would use the experience I had with 826 Valencia in school and tell them I met a famous person, I talked in front of a whole bunch of people, and I do my homework better. A future plan I would have is to be a vet, but I would also like to be famous and do a lot of business jobs and do what I also like. 826 helped me with a lot of things, like when I go to college, 826 helped me in the things I have to learn so I could pass to being a veterinarian of animals. Since my mom and dad are from Mexico, I would like to be dancing in every Independent Mexican Day celebration and eat pozole, which is my favorite Mexican food.
I feel like the main problem between humans in this world is racism. After all we are all humans. We may have different skin color but under the skin we are all the same. After George Floyd’s death some Black American citizens were scared to go outside because of what people are doing to them. You can go outside, and a police officer could say that you look like someone they need to arrest, and you could say you’re not the person, but they won’t trust you.

The reason why I think racism is unfair is because some Black people’s rights are taken away. They do not have the same rights that other people can have. I think this is a societal problem because the government sometimes doesn’t care about racism. It’s mainly the society not trusting Black people.

A time I witnessed racism was in second or third grade. We had two new students that year. The first student was a white boy, and everybody was hanging out with him, but when the second student came, nobody hung out with him or even talked with him because he was Black, but I hung out with him with some of my friends. He is also a great friend once you get to know him, and now he is one of my best friends.

If I were able to end racism, I would start by ending the rioting. The rioting just made so many things worse for so many different people.
My hope for the future is that I want to change the way people treat the ocean. This is important because the fish and the sea turtles will get sick and be hurt because of the trash. The trash will make them sick because they eat it, and it is bad for the water. Straws in the ocean make the fish and sea animals sick. It is sad. The ocean needs fish so they can all live happily. I can help by asking people not to throw garbage in the ocean because it will hurt the fish. I put garbage in the trash. I can ask people to go to the ocean and clean up trash, so it does not get into the beach. I could go to the beach and say, “Don’t litter on the beach because the turtles will eat it and get sick and die!” We can make this change happen by making posters that say, “Do not throw trash in the ocean!” I would hang these posters everywhere on the beach. I would show my friends and family. What would you do to help the ocean?
If kids ran the world, I would be happy but then scared because kids are still kids and kids still need to learn. Adults don’t need to learn that much. Kids would not know what to do because adults know the kids’ schedules and many kids do not know their schedules. How would they get to all their activities? They cannot even drive. If there’s a kid president, it would be me because if there was a different kid president, they would probably want to make everything fun and I don’t want to have fun all day. I mean I would, but we have to be a little more mature. So I think I would let kids have fun, but I would still do school because we would get smarter and if we stop school, we would not get smart.

One thing I would want to change is deportation because it is not fair to the people that come here and just get sent back like that. Sometimes, they just come for a better life and a better job because not a lot of people have a job. Also, they probably did not go to school so they might want a better education. I think adults should still take care of their children but they would not tell them what to do that much. One thing I think a lot of kids would like to do is eat a lot of junk food and they would want to go to sleep at a later time, but I would have some rules as the president. I would say that kids have to listen to their parents, like when they say it is time to go to sleep. If it is Friday, the adults should watch a movie if their child wants to—but not every Friday, some Fridays. And kids would be allowed to have more than one sweet. The best part of kids running the world would be us changing the world because mostly adults litter and not that much the kids. So we would help the environment and we would help keep the world clean.
ABOUT 826 VALENCIA

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

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

In the spring of 2020, as San Francisco schools transitioned to remote learning, we launched online versions of these core programs. To learn more about what our programs look like now, see our website: 826valencia.org

FIELD TRIPS
Classes from public schools around San Francisco visit our writing centers for a morning of high-energy learning about the craft of story-telling. 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-age 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 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
In this time of social distance, unrest and fear, the power of writing has given us voice and strength, but mostly, hope. *I Overcome Things* represents diverse student voices from over twenty schools in San Francisco. 826 Valencia collaborated with many community partners including Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation, in whose building we are located. These students’ whimsical thoughts are simultaneously innocent and sophisticated, and use the imagery of technology and magical creatures to touch on themes of overcoming obstacles and facing bullies, racial justice, community, family life in a pandemic, and love. They use writing to voice their feelings and frustrations we face and urge us for change.

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826 Valencia is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting under-resourced students with their writing skills. Located in the retail space of TNDC’s affordable housing development, **Mission Bay Center** is a magical forest filled with sparkles and stars. We create a safe space where students ages 6–18 can get help with their homework and work on writing projects.

Get involved at 826valencia.org