A COLLECTION OF WRITING BY FOURTH GRADERS
from BRETT HARTE, MALCOLM X ACADEMY, AND STARR KING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
826 VALENCIA • Spring 2021
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We dedicate this book to our teachers and tutors, who guide us through dark caves and mysterious forests, encouraging us to find our own path. We also want to celebrate our classmates, who keep us company when facing the scariest of dragons and remind us how important it is to stand up for one another.
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HE LEARNED HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO STAND UP FOR WHAT IS RIGHT

—VICTOR HOPKINS, AGE 10

This section provides a wonderful look at what it means to love yourself and others. Each story unearths all the special ways that our students show and experience love, from eating good food all the way to flying high in the sky! There are also multiple poems demonstrating a celebration of who our students are and where they come from. Knowing where you come from and being willing to share that is what makes us as humans truly special, and our students perfectly encapsulate that. There is no one definition for love. It is a magical experience and should be shared with fantastical creatures such as unicorns or griffins. Truly a magical experience!
GOING ON A MAGICAL ADVENTURE WITH A UNICORN

ALIYAH LEWIS • age 9
Starr King Elementary School

It all started when I went on a magical adventure. You need to be very quiet. If you don’t, the unicorn will hear you. They hear everything. If you don’t want to get caught, then you have to go to the shop and get quiet everything. You need quiet dust and if you put it on, you will be quiet the whole time. If you don’t, you will scare them away.

Then, you need to feed them food and be nice. It’s the same food for them to fly or they will be too scared and think something else.

When you try and pet them, go slowly. You need to pet their heads or they will run ’cause they don’t know if y’all hunt them.

If you act nice, they will be nice. They need the proof that you’re nice. You have to pet them again and you need to say, “I won’t hurt you, okay. Trust me.” They know you’re not going to do anything bad.

Then you will get to be friends. Then you can fly it and be friends with all the other magical pets. The other magical pets are magical elves and magical everything you can think of!!! Because you are being nice, you will be friends with all of them.

If you don’t know how to fly it, you pat it on the side and point up. If you don’t do that, it won’t work.

If you don’t know what food to give them, you give them flying food. The flying food looks like glitter. It tastes like bubblegum toothpaste. The glitter looks like a rainbow and the unicorn flies. When you get in the air, their wings come out. The wings look like a rainbow. If you don’t do that, their flying will not work.

If you don’t know where to get the food, you go to the queen and king of the magical forest and ask there at the castle of magic. You find it by asking one of the elves for help. They will lead you to the castle. It’s a big, tall castle that goes up into the clouds. It’s made out of magic. If you don’t do this, your unicorn will never fly.
If you don’t know where to get your unicorn designed, you go to the unicorn designers. If you don’t know where they’re at, they’re in the castle of designers. If you don’t do this, your unicorn will be plain!

That’s how you make friends with a unicorn. You get to do secret stuff with it because it trusts you now. If you are nice, they will be nice.
HOW TO GET MAGNETIC POWERS

1. You have to wear bright colors because bees like bright colors.
2. You have to believe in yourself because if you don’t, your powers won’t work.
3. You have to make sure that you wear yellow and that you get stung in your arm.
4. You should be feeling kind of pale and woozy.
5. You should be falling and trying not to hit your head because if you do fall, your powers will not work.
6. When you charge your phone, it keeps your powers up.
Go to a magical forest with a smart, tall, little boy named Bryan. You will know it is magical because it is invisible and to see it you need to either throw a ball or look with heat-vision goggles.

You go walking for a little bit, then if you find two little trees decorated with snow and wood, you get into the flying golf cart between the trees. It flies by itself. You eat your ice cream in the backseat while Bryan is driving. The cart is red, purple, and black.

Next, you get a lot of pizza and Chinese food from a magic Safeway in the middle of the woods. When you go to the woods you will see something there. It is a magic Safeway that has potions and hunting gear and food. You only eat sugar and no vegetables. The Safeway smells like chocolate because the store is made out of chocolate.

Find a horse and a zombie to lead you to the Dreem. You have to give them a bunny first. They tell you, “The bunny has to be burned or tall.”

And you say, “I have a tall bunny!”

After, you find the Dreem and you feed the Dreem a zombie horse. The Dreem will take you to his home. It’s your home in a magical forest. It is covered in bones.

Save the Dreem from hunters. As a reward, the Dreem gives you a magical golden sword with enchanted flames.

Then, you go to your home together.

You eat some chow mein from the Safeway.
I am a boy of fantasy and adventure stories.

I am from my mom and dad. They are special to me because they brought me onto this earth, raised me, and took care of me. My siblings, because we have fun together sometimes.

I am from my great grandmother, who was Chinese. I am half Chinese and way, way Samoan. My family likes to play board games and watch TV. We like to play Monopoly. My grandpa likes to gamble.

I am from Christmas. I am excited to open my presents right when I get up. I open them as soon as I can. For Halloween, we make a circle or square of cars then walk around to each car and get candy. (I think this is a Samoan tradition.) On Thanksgiving, we eat chicken, not turkey. I don’t like turkey. And I love chocolate chip cookies. They are burnt and crispy on the bottom and they are iconic. A lot of the time we look at old pictures to remember what happened in the past.

I am from Nintendo Switch—I would play lots of games on it. The game Guess Who?
I am from playing board games,
Making cartoons—drawing what happens in them.
I am making one about a bunny.
Going to the beach and burying myself in the sand and swimming
   in the water.
And I love Harry Potter.

I am from my family likes to barbecue together.
In summer, we like to spray ourselves with a hose because we don’t
   have a pool.
Sometimes we get an inflatable pool.

I am from “Clean this room up.”
“Goodnight, I love you.”

I am from I have a dream that I can make a company,
To make more ships for America.
I would give them all names related to America.
Another dream I have is to make a twenties or thirties cartoon
In the future to show how people lived during that time.
Living at any time is just good.
A dream I have for the future is that the internet would be spread
Around everywhere, but we shouldn’t have any robots.
I am from pepperoni Hot Pockets and cheese and ham because they are good and yummy! Pizza because I like pepperoni and cheese and combinations! Pizza is super hot and amazing when you add parmesan cheese.

I am from my mom because she makes me food. She also makes sure I have things like pants. My sister because she loves me. I know she loves me because she makes me noodles, Burritos, and heats up my spaghetti.

I am from “I’m a good boy.”
“Do your work!”
“Get it done!”
I am proud of myself when I get my work done. My mom says, “Good job!” I say, “Thank you!” That’s how I know she’s proud of me.

My favorite holiday is Christmas because I get a lot of presents. I got a legendary and an epic Fortnite skin, and I also got a toy Hot Wheels.

I am from my favorite object, which is a basketball. I used to play on the basketball team. A football because I used to play football with Kaedo. I also used to play kickball and kick home runs. Xbox, where Paris claims he will win against Kaedo in Fortnite, Because his building is better, or in Warzone.

I am from drawing, playing PlayStation, and using my phone.
I went to my auntie’s house. But before we do this part, let’s do a flashback.

So like two weeks or three days before this happened, I was chillin’ with my cousin. Me and her were looking at BTS videos.

We got a text from my god-cousin, Vane. She said, “Tell my mom if you guys have two of the baby dogs.”

The baby dogs looked fat and skinny. One had blue eyes, but now has brown eyes. He had too much skin that made his face look like he was mad, and his forehead had rolls, but now he’s normal.

“Yes,” my mom said.

“Yes,” my dad said. So we went on Saturday and we got them.

I was like, “Now let’s go where we were.” So we got my dog then we stayed there until like midnight. We took him home and he peed for the first time.

I felt shocked. I screamed a lot. I had a lot of allergies to my dog. Then like a month or two afterwards, I stopped sneezing.

I stopped being stressed because of my dog.

I felt like it was a joke or like if I was in a good dream. Because I thought I was getting a prank because my dog was like so fake. He looked like plastic, like a doll. When people saw him they asked if he was real or fake. I felt surprised because I had a real dog. I feel happy because this is the first thing I ever had to take care of. My dog feels like my brother.
I am from a tender, delicious burger with In-N-Out sauce. Fried chicken with ketchup and ranch. A delicious, crispy Double-Double. It’s so good that it makes you want to go to sleep. It was crunchy and delicious. I just feel like it’s so good. Like it’s going to pull your hair out.

I am from my mom and my dad because they’re the ones that raised me, and they like music. I am from my brother and my sister because they raised me, too. I am from going to In-N-Out with my mom. We drove to the one in Daly City. And the burger with the In-N-Out sauce was the best. It tasted glorious in my mouth. And the fries with the In-N-Out sauce. Crispy, crunchy, and delicious.

My family is from Potrero Hill. I am from Christmas, one of the best, best, best things ever. On Christmas you get free gifts and I am in music videos.

I am from opening up presents on Christmas, Waking up super early, and going toy shopping, And eating cookies. I wake up bored because everybody is still sleeping. I am excited but angry because I woke up too late. When I am opening presents, I feel happy as a dog playing. Sometimes my mom makes cookies and dinner that smell so good that I can’t even describe the smell.

I am from Cairo, a black-and-white pitbull, who learned how to fetch after four weeks.
First, you need to give them something to eat like the sweet candy called Blueberrystar because they get calm.

Then, make a potion so your unicorn flies. The ingredients are strawberry, blueberry, and raspberry because this is a magical combination of fruits.

Next, make a unicorn sleep potion with pineapple and melon because it makes them sleepy.

After, to make a unicorn happy, go to the park and give them caramel because the caramel makes them really excited.

All and all, to make a unicorn brave, give them love because it is important to give love to everybody.

Soon after that, to make a unicorn rideable, give them more candy at a uni store that is named Ridebean because beans are a healthy food.

Later on, to make a unicorn play, go to the uni store and buy Godymay.

Soon, to make a unicorn run, go to a uni store and buy Anianirun because it is important to run for a lot of speed.

At the end, to make a unicorn invisible just like every time, go to a uni store and buy Invisi because we can be a spy.

To make the unicorn sparkly, combine sparkles, water, caramel, and milk. Then mix, and then the unicorn is sparkling.
HOW TO MAKE A POTION TO BE HAPPY LIKE ME

HILLARY CONTRERAS RODRIGUEZ • age 10
Bret Harte Elementary School

First, pack a lot of blankets and snacks like chocolate sandwiches and juice.

Second, go to the backyard of your house and walk around three times.

Then, when you are walking around your backyard, a portal is going to take you to a unicorn and the unicorn is gonna take you to a star in the sky. The sky looks regular, but the clouds are cotton candy and you can taste them. And the star looks like the brightest star in the world.

Next, when the unicorn is at the star in the sky, you touch the star and it’s going to take you to a place that is called the Happy Land.

And then, when you are at the Happy Land, you go to the castle at the top of a mountain. You get to the mountain by following a little path and when you walk, you see around it is a great city. It has fairies around the trees and they have little houses. When you get there, they’re going to ask you who you are, and you tell them a happy name and you go in and give the snacks and the blanket to the princess.

Then, when you give the blanket and the snacks to the princess, she’s going to give you a happy potion. You drink it and then it’s going to take you home and you are going to be the happiest girl or boy in the world!!

Next, when you are being the happiest girl or boy in the world, twenty-three weeks are gonna pass and an evil unicorn is going to try to take you to the Sad Land because the Sad Land hates the Happy Land.
After, the good unicorn is going to come and they’re going to fight, but then the good unicorn is going to tell you to get one apple, some oranges, and water. You throw them at the good unicorn and it is going to get more power.

A few minutes later, the bad unicorn has more power so they are fighting and fighting, and then the good unicorn uses its horn and destroys the bad unicorn because the magic of the Happy Land is stronger.

Then the good unicorn gets sick because he uses a lot of magic. So if you want him to feel better, you have to give him a little of your happy potion. Then everybody is going to be happy, but you are going to be the happiest girl or boy in the world. The End.
GOOD GIRL

MICAYLAH DECLOUETTE • age 9
Bret Harte Elementary School

I am from pepperoni and cheese pizza,
My grandma’s pumpkin cheesecake.
It tastes like sweetness and it smells like pumpkin spice.
When my grandma cooks the pumpkin cheesecake, she works so hard.
I help her put the mix in the bowl.
To say thank you, I made her a present.
It makes me feel happy.

I am from my brother Micah.
We have a very fun time playing hide-and-seek and a game clapping hands.
My baby brother DeAndre is very cute.
When he comes over he always plays with me, Micah, and DeAndre, my little brothers.
I was playing hide-and-seek with Micah since he was three.
I always pretend I’m falling off the couch and make him laugh.
DeAndre loves standing up but he doesn’t know how to walk.
He is always holding onto something.
He’s turning one next month.

I am from Jamaica (on my dad’s side).
African-American (on my mom’s side).
Every Thanksgiving and Christmas, we go to my cousin David’s house.
They make a pie with marshmallows, which tastes like cheesecake.
My uncle David’s bread bowls, filled with soup.
I am from Rocco, my new puppy.
Kilo, my other dog, who has a twin sister Kitara, and my auntie’s
dog, who doesn’t like me.
My dogs make me feel as surprised as when I slip on slime on
the grass,
Every time they bark or bite my finger.

I am from singing “Ocean Eyes” softly like a kitten purring,
Dancing to “Bang” like a Thanksgiving party.
Gymnastics flips.
When I was a baby, I used to dance and now I dance even more.

We all like to go out on Sundays.
Sometimes we get Dunkin’ Donuts or go to In-N-Out or Subway.
We go swimming sometimes.

I am from
Not cheating and trying my best.
I am from nachos and tacos.
Ice cream because it’s so juicy and it’s so creamy.
I make them and I bring some. I put some whipped cream,
I put a little bit of Starbucks ingredients.
Then I put some strawberries, after I put some candy.
Then I put it in the refrigerator, and then it’s like ice cream.
I feel like there’s ice cream growing in my head!

I am from my mom.
She is special to me and is everything to me.
My sisters because they think I am special and cute and smart and
they buy me things.

I am from I love my family because they take me to see my other
family.
I feel like I’m on the moon with a whole bunch of Christmas
in my house.
Be in the kitchen making Christmas cookies, some with whipped
cream and designs on them.

I am from making food and cookies and presents for Christmas.
We make tamales, chicken, tacos for birthdays, or turkey.

I am from making ice cream and candy.
Making slime and cookies for birthdays.

I am from my dog, Selma.
I love that when I talk to her and come home, she gets so excited.
We play a lot together, and she goes up and down stairs with me.
My auntie has a pet upstairs: a husky named Lucy, a Chihuahua named Cheeky, And another Chihuahua named Rolfita.

I am from painting and other arts and crafts. It is something fun for me that helps me when I go back to school. I love watching animated cartoons. I like reading books because they make me ready for school.
How did Kelpie become what they are? When the pirate first met the horse, it was first a light-violet-purple baby. He found the horse in the woods. The pirate took the horse as his horse. Their name was Arian. He took the horse in, and he decided to name the horse Kelpie. So one day, the pirate left Kelpie alone in the woods. Then a big, big tsunami came, and Kelpie ran. They saw that the pirate was being taken by the tsunami, so Kelpie tried to save the pirate. It was their first time in water. The pirate didn’t survive. Then he became an evil ghost. While it was a ghost, it went inside Kelpie, and that’s how Kelpie became a very dark-purple spirit.

Kelpie went to their friend, the unicorn. After, the horse decided to get its revenge on the unicorn because the unicorn had betrayed him. Kelpie was chasing the unicorn because they were racing. The unicorn cheated and when he cheated, it made the horse mad. He didn’t know that Kelpie was about to fly. They flew! They got into a fight and the unicorn won. So Kelpie put the unicorn in a different dimension. The unicorn then said, “Kelpie, is that really you? Can we be friends? I know I betrayed you, but I still want to be friends, please!”

So then the pirate got mad and went out of Kelpie, and Kelpie turned back to light violet purple. Kelpie then said yes to being friends with the unicorn again. After the pirate went out of the body, Kelpie fell on the floor. The unicorn ran to Kelpie to help them up and give them a hug. They went into the unicorn dimension together because Kelpie was secretly a unicorn. Kelpie was happy because they got to see their family. Kelpie had a diamond horn and found out they were the queen of Muni! Kelpie found out something had happened to their mother while Kelpie was gone, and that’s why they are now queen. A lesson Kelpie learned was to never go with strangers.
Have you ever seen a phoenix before? Let me tell you the story of the first phoenix.

Scientists were working in their big, secret, underground laboratory deep in the desert. It was surrounded by a security system because they worked on evil projects with magical creatures.

“We must find a way to rid the world of magical creatures,” said Brad, the lead scientist. “We need to make sure they don’t take over the world.”

“How?” wondered Mike, another scientist.

“We’ll create a new creature that will be used as a weapon against dragons, water monsters, and anacondas. We’ll call it a phoenix!” exclaimed Brad.

They mixed together a bird and a fox to create a creature that would breathe fire, be super fast, and fly. That’s how a phoenix was created.

When the phoenix hatched out of the egg, it was only 6 inches tall. They kept him warm with blankets and a heat lamp and gave him lots of water. He grew much bigger over the next four years but he was used for all kinds of experiments and hated being there.

Eventually, he grew to be 12 feet tall and was red and furry. He looked for an opportunity to escape. He couldn’t find any other way but to burn down the laboratory with his fiery breath and fly away at superspeed.

Next, he flew until he found an abandoned town called Preysburg. He was very hungry, so he ate all the apples off of the trees. When he saw that there were no people, he went to sleep in an empty basement. Someone who was exploring the town found him sleeping in the basement and ran away to call the scientists.
The phoenix woke up suddenly and hid in another building when he heard the scientists coming. They brought superspeed robots and fire-resistant robots with them to catch the phoenix. The phoenix started spinning around and destroyed the robots. He also ended up ruining the town. The scientists ran away.

Because he had destroyed Preysburg, the phoenix flew to another town. There were people in this town, so he tunneled underground to hide. Someone saw this happen and called the scientists.

Finally, the scientists sent a dragon to come and try to stop the phoenix. The phoenix spun around like a tornado and swept the dragon away.

The phoenix went back to Preysburg and used magic to repair the town. The townspeople were happy. The phoenix became the protector of the town and lived there forever. The people of the town fed him lots of apples. He learned how important it is to stand up for what is right.
MY QUEST IS TO GET THE DRAGONS ON THE GOOD WIZARD’S SIDE

NEHEMIAH MEAFUA • age 10
Bret Harte Elementary School

STEP ONE: To be a wizard, my quest is to get the dragons on the good wizard’s side.

STEP TWO: I have to travel past the volcano.

STEP THREE: Then I travel through the Forest of No Return. On my way, I find a pet racoon-dog named Chopper. His full name is Tony Tony Chopper, but I always call him Chopper for short.

STEP FOUR: When I find my pet, Chopper, I have to go to the Icy Mountain of Frozen Graves.

STEP FIVE: I find the dragon’s birth place and boom! I pass it to ask for help in the battle.
My story takes place at the scientist’s laboratory. He loved making animals every day, and he had no partner to help him. He was good at stuff like that. As a kid, he always wanted to be a scientist. When he was five, he used to go in to find stuff to build. One day, he asked for Lego for Christmas. He got to build, and ended up building a dinosaur with Lego.

When he was eight, he used electronics and built a mini house. And then he turned seventeen and worked at Burger King. At twenty, he invented the one and only griffin, and at twenty-one he was a scientist. The griffin was green with blue scales and it was friendly. The scientist always had big dreams of being a scientist. He felt like it was a dream come true.
Imagine traveling to a forest of ice cream or eating the best pizza ever. In their odes about where they came from, fourth graders wrote about breadsticks, turkey, pupusas, and macaroni and cheese. On their magical adventures, they invented ways to make food with their minds, by using magic, or even by introducing bees to cows for sumptuous milk and honey. Culture and integration were themes that arose in these pieces. What families eat and how families come together to eat and share during holidays are important parts of students’ identities.
THE BEST DAY EVER

SHANTELE JOHNSON • age 10
Malcolm X Academy Elementary School

It was a sunny day. First, there was a party at Hilltop Park. I was with my class and my class was third grade. We got to have a party because we earned it because we were being focused. It was so hot and so sunny. We brought ice cream: chocolate, vanilla, and sherbet. Then we started playing on the swings. We were sitting in a circle that makes you go fast. There’s a big slide you have to slide down with a cardboard box. Mr. P. broke pieces of cardboard so everyone could slide. The teacher and the class were all one team.

After we started eating our ice cream, a lot more people joined. It was the whole school! The other classes brought ice cream, but they only brought sherbet. They were taking over the swings and being rough. We were having fun. It was so fun that we were playing by ourselves.

This memory makes me happy because we got to get ice cream and play at the park. Then after we left, we went to the school. Then it was the end of the day! It was an exciting day.
It was like any other day. I was playing my Xbox, and then my mom disturbed me to go do something fun because she doesn’t like it when I play Xbox all day. She gave me her phone for a minute. Then she took it back to call an Uber driver. I felt happy.

Then I saw the theme park where my dad would pick up his friend. I got bored, then I was getting more excited. Then we went to Applebee’s, but they were closed. When they were closed, I saw some workers come up to me and my mom. They said, “We’re closed, we open up on Thursday.” We also saw McDonald’s but nobody was there either because it was shut down.

When they were closed, we went to In-N-Out Burger and got fries, but I wanted to cancel it because I saw Subway. Then it got darker. A couple hours later, we went back home. When I left, I felt like going back there some other time.
I played my first baseball game at Bayshore. I was eight and now I’m nine. My baseball teacher and my soccer teacher and my friends were there. It sounded like fun, like an experiment. It looked like any sports field, rainbow. It had all different colors. I felt kinda scared that I was going to get hit by the ball, but then I started getting good with it and I was learning how to play.

I was doing my hardest playing baseball because we were running, switching positions, catching, and hitting the ball. It was fun playing the game and practicing, but it was scary because I thought I was going to get hit by the baseball, but not really.

I do remember it because I went past that place hecka times and I played there.
I am from pepperoni pizza, which looks delicious. When you taste it, the pepperoni is amazing. Tres leches cake, which tastes like sweet milk.

I am from my dog because he’s so cute and he always loves me. He sleeps with me and cuddles with me on the couch. He is as cuddly as my teddy bear asleep all day long.

I am from my mom because she makes good food, like pizza. She puts cheese on it, and she puts on pepperoni, the best one.

I love all my family because they are the best. We love each other. We make cookies together. Our cookies taste like chocolate cake. The chocolate cake tastes like strawberry.

I am from we went to Miami. My grandma lives in Miami. It’s super hot.

I like Christmas. We get a lot of gifts on Christmas night. We make Christmas cookies and pizza, my favorite foods. We got another dog. It was a husky.

We make a lot of food and Christmas cookies, and we also make pizza. It’s the best!
I am from my dog Rocky. He is a small Chihuahua. He plays with me. He barks a lot loudly like a bear that wants to attack. Because he is so hungry, My dog eats so much pizza. When he sees pizza, his eyes turn into pizza.

My dog has a squeaking cat toy. It is colored purple and has colorful eyes. He also has a soft pizza toy. He loves animals. He loves both dogs and cats. He was scared of the lion who opened his mouth. He jumped to my shoulders when he opened his mouth. He looked like he wanted to eat other animals when we went to the zoo. After we took him to a doggy store and bought him a pizza shirt. He was so happy because he got a pizza shirt.
BURGER

SHATIA PEASE-FINKLEA • age 10
Starr King Elementary School

I am from burgers with ketchup and mayonnaise, but no mustard, pickles, melted cheese, and lettuce.

I am from tacos with sour cream, lettuce, cheese, and salsa, But not with hot sauce.

I am from hot sauce so hot that my cousin, a boy who loves hot sauce, Put hot sauce on my taco and it was soooo hot. I ran around the backyard trying to find some way to cool off. I found a bucket of water, almost like a tub, and poured it all on my face.

I am from Christmas and my birthday. Both are in December and make the month amazing.

I am from my cousin, sister, sister, mom, dad, and dog.

I am from my friends.
THE GREEDY FARMER AND YELLOW COW

ASHER GORDON • age 9
Bret Harte Elementary School

Once there were some bees who found a cow for the first time. They thought the cow was some kind of house, so they went on the cow’s back.

Next, they laid some eggs on the cow. When the bees left, the cow accidentally ate the eggs! A few days later, the cow felt a disturbance in his stomach. A few seconds after that, he started turning yellow and grew flowers on his back!

After the cow’s transformation was finished, he tried saying “MOO” in cow language. The cow instead said, “BUZZ!” He was shocked because that is not what a cow sounds like! Then a farmer found the cow and thought to himself, “Why is this cow yellow?”

Finally, when the farmer brought him to his farm, he milked the cow and he was shocked! Instead of milk, there was yellow stuff. It was sticky and smelled sweet! The farmer tasted it, and to his surprise, it was honey! The farmer decided to make more of these cows and sell their honey. He brought the cow to a scientist and figured out how to make more of them. The scientist said, “Find some bee eggs and feed it to a cow.” Then when he figured it out, he made more and waited for a few days. Then he made more and named the cows “mooblooms” because they were like bees and had flowers on their backs.

He then sold the honey for money. He forgot to feed the mooblooms. When he ran to the cows he was surprised because they were in good condition. He went to the scientist again and the scientist said, “They don’t starve because they are made of honey. Their stomachs are always filled with honey.” The farmer thought to himself, That’s why after a few days they didn’t get sick. He sold more honey after that.

Then something bad happened. The bees started making other bees come and more and more came. Then the farmer realized
that his barn had started falling apart. He realized that it was because the bees from the beehives accidentally smudged honey all over the farmer’s barn. The farmer was shocked! He wanted to get rid of the mooblooms but he decided not to, or else he could not make any money. A few weeks later his farm completely fell apart and the farmer was shocked. Since he was really rich from selling honey, he bought a new barn. Then he asked, “Can you make it honey proof?”

The seller said, “Sure.”

The next day the barn was complete! The farmer was really excited. He started making more honey. After that, he went back to his house and watched TV.

The next day, the farmer sold more honey. When he was taking a break, he went to a tree and saw a beehive! He looked for bee eggs, and to his surprise there were hundreds! The only problem was that he would get stung if he took the bee eggs. So he tried carefully taking them and that plan failed. He tripped while trying to escape the bees. After that plan failed, he had about fifty bumps because he was stung a lot. The next day he went to a clothes seller and asked him, “Do you have any bee-proof clothes?” To his surprise, he did sell them. After he bought them, he went back home and put them on.

The next thing he did was take the bee eggs and his plan worked. When he stole the bee eggs, he was not shaking in fear because he had bee protection. He didn’t trip again. He went back to his normal cows and gave them bee eggs. A few days later, they turned into mooblooms. The farmer realised he had more mooblooms than cows. He also forgot to feed the cows. They were in bad condition. He started feeding them a lot. The next day the cows were stuffed, and they started mooing. And then the farmer realized he could double his money by also selling milk!

So the next day he started selling milk and honey at the same time. The farmer was exhausted and realized it would take double the time to sell them both. After that, he sold out of honey and milk. And when he was about to go to sleep, the sun started rising. He was really tired. So the farmer came up with a plan. He would sell them separately, not at the same time. So he did that and it
saved a lot more energy. One day the farmer completely ran out of milk and honey. He was really stressed because there were more customers. He thought of a plan to mix them up with water so there would be more. The farmer told the customers that he ran out.

The next day when he got the honey and milk, he started going to the lake and started putting water in them. He realized the customers didn’t notice. When he started running out again he put even more water. The customers started complaining that the milk and honey tasted like water. After that, he started running out again. He put even more water! The customers were really suspicious because it tasted like water. The next day they followed the farmer and were shocked because they saw him put water inside the milk and honey. The farmer’s customers started coming less often and he was pretty confused. He went to go buy some dinner, but when he got home and cracked the eggs, they were colored rocks! He was furious because they were not eggs. He went back to the shop and said, “What is this? I paid for eggs, not rocks!!!” He was really angry.

But the seller said, “Like we paid for milk and honey, not water!”

The farmer was shocked and realized that he had been caught. And the next day he bought a new water-proof shirt. He was happy. It started raining and he was shocked. The shirt was not waterproof. The paint started coming off and he was furious again! He went to the shirt seller and said, “Why is paint coming off this shirt? I paid for a waterproof shirt, not a fake shirt!”

The shirt seller said, “Like we paid for honey and milk, not water!”

It was pretty obvious that the farmer’s secret had spread out in the town. No one was buying from that farmer. So, he started not putting water in his milk and honey. His last customer was about to leave, but then he said he found that it tasted good, and people started coming back each and every day. The farmer realized he shouldn’t be greedy.
First, go to the sand. There’s a treasure chest under the sand. Bring a magic rat, magic tiger, magic frog, magic pigeon, magic squirrel, chipmunk, prairie dog, groundhog, and flying squirrel.

Next, the treasure chest is under the sand, so use a map to find it. It’s a green treasure chest. The picture on the map is a little picture of a treasure chest.

Dig the treasure chest under the sand with a shovel. The shovel needs to be white because that is the only one that can find the treasure chest. We need a shovel to dig the treasure chest.

Use the nine animals to help find our treasure chest and dig the treasure chest up. It will take the animals one minute to dig up the treasure!

Use the key to open the treasure chest. The key is under the sand, on the land. The key is a big, brown and yellow magic pigeon to save our treasure chest. The magical chipmunk finds our treasure chest. The magic chipmunk and squirrel dig with their paws and the prairie dog digs with his claws.

The magic tiger, magic rat, and magic frog save the treasure chest. The magic frog helps dig the treasure up.

There are golden chocolate chip cookies! They taste better than normal cookies. They will be on a plate, and there are a bunch of them! We find the cookies with the map.

Use a car to get back home. The car comes from the treasure chest!

Eat the cookies with a cup of milk! They taste like chocolate chips. You feel very good at the end of your adventure.
I am from pizza,
Good white rice.

I am from my mom and dad.
They are important because they’re my parents.

I am from Highland Avenue.
They can teach me stuff like financial literacy.

I am from my favorite holiday,
My birthday, because I get presents.
The days you only get presents on are Christmas and your birthday.

I am from my dog Hunter,
Who can jump on the couch easily when he wants something.
He jumps like he is in the puppy Olympics,
But he can’t walk down the stairs.

I am from Fortnite.

I am from an OG Recon Expert.

I am from YouTube, with 65 subscribers.
HOW TO USE YOUR MIND TO MAKE THINGS COME TO LIFE, LIKE FOOD

CAMILA GOMEZ-RODRIGUEZ  •  age 9
Bret Harte Elementary School

First, you have to say something in your mind and that’s how you do it. Because when you’re gonna be a scientist, you will explain how it works.

Second, say, “Make my dream come true,” two times.
Or you can think about what you want to make and say, “Make what I want,” one time.

Fourth, if you wanna fly, say, “Fly me,” one time, or use your magic fingers!

Fifth, if you wanna move everything up, but you don’t want to get up, say, “Move everything!”

Sixth, if you wanna use powers say, “Power me!” Then you will be able to use powers like super speed.

Seventh, if you wanna teleport, say, “Teleport me!” in your mind. Also, you will be able to say where.

Eighth, if you wanna be a superhero then say, “Superhero me!” in your mind or also in your own words.

Ninth, if you wanna go outside and fly by not opening the door then say, “Teleport outside!”

Tenth, if you wanna celebrate your favorite holiday or something say, “Celebrate your favorite,” with your eyes closed!
Primero, vamos a Houston, Texas. Voy usar un superpoder para ir a Houston, Texas.

Segundo, volar en una cueva mágica y obtener unas joyas y diamantes y oro.

Tercero, hay dragones en la cueva y comen joyas. Vamos a hablar usando nuestros superpoderes con el dragón.

Cuarto, si dice el dragón que sí, se lo agradeceremos y lo pagamos de vuelta. Duplicamos las joyas que nos dio el dragón y obtenemos muchas más joyas. Si el dragón necesita ayuda, los ayudaremos y él nos ayudará.

Quinto, vamos a nuestro cuidad y vamos ayudar a los pobres.

HOW TO HAVE A SCARY ADVENTURE

First, we go to Houston, Texas. I am going to use a super power to go to Houston, Texas.

Second, fly into a magical cave and get some jewels and diamonds and gold.

Third, there are dragons in the cave and they eat jewels. We are going to talk to the dragon using our super powers.

Fourth, if the dragon says yes, we will appreciate it and pay it back. We duplicate the jewels the dragon gave us and we get many more jewels. If the dragon needs help, we will help them and he will help us.

Fifth, we go to our city and we go help the poor.
1. Pack some food. I pack pizza, water, and a lot of stuff. I go pick up Jonny so we can go together because he wants to ride to the forest too.

2. Second, go to the river. I am going to the river in a car with Jonny.

3. Get on the bus parked by the river. How can I find a bus? My hands get cold and that is how I can find it.

4. Drive the bus to a forest. There is a bridge in the river for the bus. That is how I pass it to the freeway.

5. Press the horn and that makes the bus glow. I press the horn, and then it starts glowing. That is how I find the magical bus.

6. The bus turns magical. The bus turns magical like a superhero and can give me food, dogs, cats, and a lot of stuff.

7. The bus can fly now. The bus can fly because I give him a potion on his horn, and that is it.

8. Now it can disappear and jump like a frog and take me to the store, flying. I give him magical powers, and that is how it turns magical.

9. Then the bus can disappear and become like a superhero and can become a robot and run fast. Like a flash, it is fast. Then we can go to the store and buy stuff, like food, drinks, and water too.
I AM FROM FAIRFIELD

STUA TUPAI • age 10
Bret Harte Elementary School

I am from
A bowl of cereal when I am hungry.

I am from
My favorite food is pizza.
It smells and tastes good.
I feel good.
I feel happy when I eat pizza.

I am from
I feel good when I wash the dishes because my mom helps me.
I like going out with everybody in my family.
My mom, my dad, my brother, my sisters, and my dog.
I have fun with them!

I am from
Samoans are people from islands,
And we talk differently from other people.
“Watch out!” My sister told me to watch out for the waves because she didn’t want me to drown. I didn’t listen to her and I decided not to jump, so my head went under the waves. When we were done at the wave pool, we went to the cabin and ordered some ice cream and some pizza. So my sisters told my dad that they still wanted to be in the pool and not eat right then, and so I went to a different slide. I went to that pool, but before I got on the pool where I scraped my knee, I went to another pool. We had all types of fun with my uncle and my other cousins in the home pool. There were a lot of slides, but we mostly went on the big ones. And then we went on the slide where I scraped my knee. It smelled like bread sticks, chlorine, locker rooms, and sweat, and I heard whistles.

The waterpark looked like it had slides at the entrance and you walked from the parking lot and got tickets. We got tickets to the night pools and there were life jackets when you walked in. When you walk straight, there are lifeguards, the food area, and the wave pool all right there. On the other side, there are other types of pools like the lazy pool and the kids’ pool.
At first you can see its footsteps and then you can see its glitter from its fur. Why? Because when your magical pet is lost, you can see its footsteps and glitter on its fur.

Then after you see the glitter from its fur, follow it. Why? Because you can find the bunny.

When your bunny is lost, there is just one twist, they are with the other magical bunnies. Why is that? Because they are with other bunnies and if they are stuck together, then there is going to be a bunny avalanche.

Soon after that, you see elves and fairies. Then ask them if they have seen it. And so they asked them if they saw their bunny with another bunny, and the elves and fairies said yes. They were shocked. Why? Because they know that there will be a bunny avalanche! The fairies and elves are the only ones who can stop it with fairy dust and elves’ sparkle.

Then they have to go to a magical mermaid river to get a very special treat. They need the magical treat because it is a golden candy-carrot.

After you go to the mermaid river, your next stop is Rainbow Kingdom. You need to bring the Rainbow Princesses to bring their big cage to trap the small baby bunnies. You need to bring the Rainbow Princesses because they’re the only ones who can carry the cage.

Afterwards, they went to Boba Island to get a baby-bunny treat and a little home. Why? Because they need treats and a home to live in. The treat is called the baby carrot.

Later on they traveled to an ice-cream forest where unicorn ice creams live. They need to go there because they need to use their powers. Why? Because they have magical powers that nobody has. They can freeze stuff and can make anything you ask
them, including ice cream! They can do this because their horns are colorful.

Now that they have spotted them, they are doing their trap, and so the Rainbow Princess is putting the cage in the middle and she puts the treat in it, but then there comes a bunny avalanche, so everyone huddles, and the fairies pull them apart.

In the end they are having a party. They have a really big party, a lot of celebrations, and camping parties. Everyone gets their own baby bunny, except the unicorns because they already have their own bunnies.
HOW TO PLAY SUPER BASKETBALL

KAYDEN DUCKETT • age 10
Starr King Elementary School

It all started when someone went to a basketball court with a basketball and one of his friends. You do this so you can have a hoop and someone to play with.

Afterward, work out, because it takes a lot of power. This sounds like someone breathing hard, like the rim shaking and the ball bouncing.

When you play, you feel more power as you jump up and down.

Soon after that, you get some water. Water is key. You can stay hydrated so you don’t run out of breath.

Later on, you’re going to jump real high. It feels like you have butterflies in your stomach. And it feels like you’re on a rollercoaster.

Soon after that, you want to get more water so you can jump higher, so you can go over the rim.

Later on, if you jump high, you’re going to touch something high. You have to just jump and you will feel like you’re jumping really high.

Then you want to start a normal game of basketball. You can be better at jumping high. So you can have a hoop.

All in all, you’re going to notice you’re better than before because you can dunk.

In the end, you know how to play super basketball, so you can be better at basketball.
Have you ever held a snake in person? What do you think their scales feel like?

When I went to the pet store, it was on a Tuesday. The pet store was starting to close, but I was just in time. I was the last person. All the other animals were asleep and the pet store people were putting the frozen rats that didn’t get fed to the snakes back in the freezer. Then me and my dad started looking around for the snakes. The cats we saw were big and fat. The baby ducks were asleep and some were still eating. When I saw the snake I wanted, I was like, “Oh, I want that little guy.” My dad called the pet store man, and I held the snake for one tenth of a second and I was scared. I said “Get this off of me.”

Then I got the house thing and his grass and lastly his cage. Then my dad paid. When me and my dad saw the price, we were shocked. They gave him up for only sixty dollars. The pet store person said the last owners were abusing him. So he had to go in the foster home until there was enough room for him to go to the pet store and get sold. So the pet store people asked his abusers if they wanted him to be sold for the same price, which was one-hundred dollars, and they finally said it can go down to sixty dollars.

The pet store person asked if I wanted to hold him, and I said yes. Then after the pet store person let me hold him, me and my dad went to the aisle with the cages and the bedding. I was so scared and happy at the same time.

When we paid, my dad held the cage, and I held the snake and the cage, and my dad had to go back to the store to get the bedding. As soon as we went home I took a shower and my dad looked where he wanted to put the tank. At the time my grandma’s turtles were right there where my snakes were going to go, but we
found out they were dead so we cleaned up. Later, we set up the snake tank.

After we did the snake tank the next day, we both started to get comfortable. And my dad helped me. The snake started to shed, so I had to leave him alone, so he would know when I’m going to take him out. After he was done shedding, we fed him. So when he was so fat, we didn’t know much about having snakes and we did something wrong. What we did wrong was, when he was fat, I took him out at that point. He yawned. I didn’t know what that meant, so I kept playing with him. And my dad wanted him so he put him on the ground, and he threw up. Then I learned about that on YouTube. Every day I get comfortable when I touch my snake. And I started to touch his head, and he didn’t mind so he was comfy, and ever since we have been best friends.
THE WATER TURNS MAGICAL AND YOU HAVE A MAGICAL PENCIL

—JERRY VELASQUEZ-LOPEZ, AGE 10

These stories bring to life students’ wildest imaginations. Through our students we learn about the surprising history of how werewolves, krakens, and many more like them happened to become a part of our lives. This section is funny, curious, and packed with useful information about the mysteries of mythological creatures.
A HYDRA’S LIFE!

SULU FUENTES · age 10
Malcolm X Academy Elementary School

Have you ever wondered if the mythical creature hydra had an owner?

This story is about the mythical creature (the hydra name would be Kage, the Japanese for shadow). The hydra looked like its mouth would be bright purple and its body black, very, very dark green, teal, and darkish grey. It was at the bottom of the ocean in its egg, then a kinda gigantic rock fell on the egg and cracked it open. The egg was broken into pieces. The hydra came out looking around left! Right! Up! Down! And realized it was abandoned. Now all alone and sad, he forgot about his parents. The hydra grew up and now it’s present day. So it takes place in the Atlantic Ocean because I forgot the name of the other one. Anyway, while the hydra was roaming the seas, it came across a ship . . .

_Crash bedoink ahhhhhh!_ The people on the ship happen to be Navy men roaming to kill the hydra, but the hydra was mad because the men took its other head. The hydra had three at the time, but for every head that was lost it would grow two more! But if all heads were lost, he would die. So now the hydra had four heads, but then the Navy ship fled before the hydra could get a bite in. So the hydra shrugged it off and went roaming the seas again, but another plot twist is coming!

The hydra ran into the king of the sharks, the megalodon! It caught it at a bad time, for it was very mad ’cause its other prey had fled. The megalodon was hungry so the megalodon tried to bite the hydra, and sure, the megalodon was big! But the hydra wouldn’t go down without a fight, so he had the other two heads defend the body while one of the heads would defend the other head that would attack the meg.

And then the meg tried to go for the neck, but the hydra saw this and put his three heads in the meg’s mouth, leaving the one head
that was attacking. Before the meg thought it had won but the hydra grew . . . seven more heads! The megalodon was shocked, very shocked! The hydra took down the meg and won but fled fast before the shark’s family could find out. The hydra was tired from its last encounter. So the hydra went deep down into the ocean to rest. So the hydra rested at the bottom of the ocean. When it woke up, it was hungry so the hydra went out to look for some food. It found a couple clownfish so of course Kage the hydra went out to look for some food. It found an octopus so it snuck up on the octopus, and 

You have octopus for dinner. So the hydra’s belly was pretty full now. Though the hydra saw something in the mist of the ocean. So it hid for a bit until the hydra realized it was the ship from the Navy men! From the land of the Zoutar Kingdom. (The Navy men were out to kill the hydra because the king had said he would give them some gold and a promotion.)

But something was off. They had cannons! So the hydra, confused about what they were, tried to bite one. But the Navy men fired the cannon at the hydra! The hydra was very confused about what just happened, though its throat hurt a lot. So the hydra was very mad and it roared a terrifying roar. The Navy men were shook but were not going to run away. The hydra took a big bite, but something was weird. The ship would not crack! The ship was made out of steel! The hydra was confused and mad so the hydra had an idea. It bit their flag so they would be stranded in the middle of the ocean. The hydra fled. It could still hear the Navy men pleading for help, but the hydra couldn’t care less. With the megalodon down and the Navy men dealt with, the hydra was extremely bored. He had no one to fight, no friends or anything, so it went to bed. It then woke up to a loud noise coming outside. It swam up there and there it was . . . Odin the god!!!

Odin looked down at hydra. Hydra was confused.

“I like that spunk you got in you, Hydra! What do you say . . . would you be Odin’s pet?” Odin said.

Then Odin said, “Ahh what am I saying. You can’t talk!”

So, Odin put a leash around all eight heads of the hydra and picked him up. He brings him to heaven, and all the other pets were already there and they all said, “Hello.” They made a quick
friendship. The animals were the pegasus, the griffin, the dragon, thunderbird, and the basilisk.

The hydra said, “Hello,” too, and they all became friends. Now the hydra had sort of a dad and he was never bored; he would always be playing. The hydra was free of Earth’s suffering. He was happy. THE END.
HOW TO FLY IN A BLUE, RED, AND GREEN CARPET

BYRON CORTEZ • age 9
Starr King Elementary School

First, you have to find the map in a rock in the jungle. Then, you find a map under a rock. You have to pick the map up. The carpet is big, the rock is blue, and it is hard and scratchy. Then you will see a flying carpet in a cave.

To be continued . . .
YOU NEED AIR TO FLY UP HIGH

DANA WILLIAMS • age 10
Starr King Elementary School

1. First, get the gloves with flying air in it and a few wires so that you can fly up into the air. You can find gloves at Target. You can get any gloves you want that you think look perfect.

2. You need air to fly up high, and gas for the gloves. Go to a gas station to find both.

3. You need to learn to do science in order to do it. Focus on it a lot, however long you need to.

4. You need gloves, and you need to get wires to make the air. Go to the store and get wires.

5. Get a backpack full of gas, and put something around the backpack so that the gas won’t leak. Connect it to the gloves.

6. Go test it out to see if it works. You need to go to an open space so you can see if it works so you can’t get hurt. A big field would be best.

7. Turn on the gloves with a button, then test it out. The gloves sound like a motor. You’ll feel a lot of air pressure.

8. Make sure when you do it in public, you don’t hit anybody because they’ll call the cops and take away your supplies.
Go and find four pencils to turn them magical later.

You need to go to the beach and you need to find some rocks. You need to turn the water magical because the water is going to turn the pencil magical.

You need to get four rocks because they are strong. The rocks need to not float because the pencil is not magical.

You need to grab your rocks and your pencils and shake them, and the water inside turns magical. The water looks like green underwater, and you can even see the sand all the way down.

Then the water turns magical and you have a magical pencil.
THE HYDRA NEVER CAME BACK

KAMARY PUGH • age 11
Malcolm X Academy Elementary School

Have you seen a real life hydra before?
This is how hydras are born. They are born with huge, huge eggs. They have a lot of heads, too many heads to count. Then it got hit by a very different lightning, but the lightning was . . . purple. All the powers were a lot like laser, scratch, invisibility, and many more. The problem with these big animals is that they cause a lot of destruction in cities, villages, woods, and oceans.

There are characters like me: a scientist and a lot of superheroes. All the heroes use all the powers on the hydra. With all of them combined, it works. The hydra stopped attacking the city and it never came back.

The huge beast is done destroying things. It will rest and it will rest for however long it wants. He rests where he was born, underground where there are many rocks, and it was very dark with not a pinch of light. And that is all about the hydra and how it was born and got his powers.

We also help the superheroes by trying to stop the hydra by using our powers. It works! The hydra has never come back again. It kept staying underground.
Once upon a time, on planet Earth, there was a crazy scientist who wanted to have strength like a lion and hidden wings like a dragon or bat.

First, he got lion fur, a poisonous scorpion, part of a dragon, and a little bit of a bat too.

But the scientist’s assistant brought along a lion. The assistant thought they had to bring in a whole lion instead of lion fur.

Now, the scientist had to use the lion for his experiment.

Next, the scientist took a piece of the lion’s fur. BOOM. It went into the potion.

The scientist went to the bathroom to wash his face. The lion spotted the potion on the table above him. The lion hopped on the desk to drink the potion. SPLAT! went the potion to the ground.

Out of thirst, the lion drank the ground potion that turned the lion into a . . . MANTICORE.

The manticore escaped to a volcano where a friendly villager helped it. :)

THE BECOMING OF THE MANTICORE

KY’LIA WHITFIELD · age 9
Malcolm X Academy Elementary School
HOW THE KELPIE GOT ITS SHAPESHIFTING POWERS

JASELYNN GROVE • age 10
Malcolm X Academy Elementary School

Why can a kelpie shapeshift?
The lake was about three times bigger than a normal lake. It was dark green but something of a black horse was standing in the middle, but the eyes were much different than any other. Its eyes were like black lines.

I got even closer. I wasn’t paying any attention to the horse’s feet but I started to look at them and saw they were fishtails with seaweed around them. That’s when I knew something was off. I ran away, never going back to that very lake, and I decided to start calling it a kelpie. The kelpie is two times bigger than an actual horse. It’s actually really quiet.

The kelpie is able to shapeshift because two thousand years ago, the kelpie ran into a shapeshifting devil, which gave the kelpie its blood. If the kelpie was to drink the devil’s blood: 1) It would die because some creatures can’t handle it. 2) It would inhabit the powers of the devil. Two hundred years after, the kelpie decided to drink the blood and inhabited the devil’s power of shapeshifting. We will never know what happened when the kelpie was transforming.
THE MONSTER KRAKEN

KHALIL WASHINGTON • age 9
Bret Harte Elementary School

Have you ever thought if a kraken monster could be real? Once upon a time, the tigers came to eat the scientist. The scientist went into his secret lab inside a cave. The scientist ran as fast as he could with his scientific thoughts, and his legs were getting really tired. Then he decided to create a creature to destroy the tigers. He made it with ingredients from Germany. What he got from Germany was baking soda, holy water, and kraken juice! With those ingredients he made the monster kraken. As soon as he made the monster kraken, it was slimy and humongous. The monster kraken immediately busted through the roof and destroyed the planet. The monster kraken now lives in space.
How do you become friends with a hydra?

There was a person named Mr. Facts. One day Mr. Facts was fishing, and he saw a meteor. He went to the town and told the people, but they did not believe him, so he felt uncomfortable. He went on the news and said, “If you don’t believe me, then watch me go in the water and prove it to you because I’m Mr. Facts.” And everybody went there.

When everybody got there, Mr. Facts was in a suit and he said, “Watch me show you!” He dove into the water and he was in there for two and a half hours. He came out with a meteor about the size of my leg, and the whole town was shocked that they were wrong.

Robot came behind Mr. Facts and was so scared. It followed me. Mr. Facts and all ran away. Mr. Facts looked behind him and a lightning bolt struck the egg. Then the egg cracked open, and Mr. Facts dropped it in the water.

After he dropped it, he saw a sting on his hand, and it looked like a four-headed thing. Then he tried to wipe it off, but it stayed on. Then he remembered that one of his teachers said, “If you see a four-headed thing on your hand, show it to a creature.”

So he put his hands up and he did the crossing because he thought the hydra was a demon. But then the Hydra stared at it. And then Keith and Jimmy broke the docks. Mr. Facts thought it was the end of him but he forgot that he had the oxygen tube on, and the mask. He did not have that much oxygen left because he used it for the hydra egg—cuz he would go down after two and a half hours. But he took the mask on, the tube off, and tried to swim up, and he was talking underwater.

After that, the hydra was glowing, and then all four of them spun into a spiral. Mr. Facts went ZOOM and then he thought he lost him. When the robot’s arm came off, the hydra went down in the
ocean to make sure the robot was demolished. The robot came out of the water and the hydra bit it and pulled it down.

After the robot was taken down in the water, the hydra came out of the water with robot stuff in it. The robot stuff combined with hydra and became metal hydra. The people in the robot escaped and landed on land.

Mr. Facts saw the lonely, shiny scale that was blue. He saw four heads with blue eyes on the beach. Water was dripping off the hydra. Mr. Facts was a zoologist, so he could talk hydra, and then they became friends. But one day they became legends.
First, you have to get potions. There’s going to be three potions: a red, white, and blue one. Drink the red one first, then the white because if you drink the wrong potion, then you might turn into the wrong thing. If you drink a white potion and then a blue potion, you are going to turn into a witch, if you’re a boy. If you drink the white and then the red potion, it is going to turn you into a wizard, if you’re a girl.

You should turn into a wizard or a witch. For a witch, they get a broom, and for a wizard, they get a staff. Witches use brooms like weapons because most witches use brooms to fly. This is why a wizard has a staff.

If you turn into a wizard you are supposed to help people to have a good adventure. If you’re a witch, you have to make nonsense.

The reason for this is because the witches and wizards always fought each other. Wizards help because they make the things like all the decorations behave.

Wizards and humans are actually always friends because wizards use their staffs to help them. The humans make catapults and shoot fire-pumpkins and the wizards use their spells. Wizards actually use a spell that’s called *Uma loofah poop*. It’s how they melt witches. A witch actually has a wand. We just have to use a spell book.

If you want to turn back into a human, you have to drink the
legendary rainbow potion. If you drink the wrong potion, you can turn into a cat or a frog. If you drink the blue potion you turn into a cat. If you drink the orange potion, you will turn into a frog. I got in a fight with a witch. The witch and I were battling to our deaths, but I defeated her and took her soul that was the Master Witch. Two golden nuggets, two pieces of rainbow, fruit punch that’s very dark, one sharp vampire tooth, a handful of charcoal, and cherry ink. It smells like cherry.
Have you ever wondered where werewolves come from? They come from in the woods on Earth 2.0. Isaiah is the creator of the werewolf.

How did you create the werewolf?
I used a wolf and a bear to make my werewolf. I took their DNA, more wolf DNA than bear, into a white-and-black DNA machine to create my hybrid creature. The machine has tubes, wires, and cool rainbow lights everywhere. And two days later, there was my werewolf, all black with red eyes and tall.

When the werewolf woke up from the machine, he got scared and jumped out the window in my science lab. I yelled, “AHHHHHHHHH!”

The werewolf tried to bite people because they tasted like candy and made other people into werewolves. Plus, they need to eat peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to survive.

I grabbed my silver net because silver slows them down, and I ran after the werewolf. When I got close to him, I threw the silver net but I missed him and he got away.

Then the werewolf began hunting humans and turning them into werewolves. I wanted to catch the werewolf, but I didn’t know where he was. I felt bad about others turning into werewolves.

I learned that werewolves are real and cool, but that they can also be very dangerous. The lesson is that we should stay away from them.
First, you can’t know that you’re on a quest. The THINGS only let innocent humans into their kingdom. The innocent people are people who do not know about the THINGS. It stands for Totally Tiny Historical Insecure Nimble Great Skylans.

This book is something a parent should read to a little kid. As the kid grows up, they forget everything they know about the THINGS. And one day they stumble in the forest and get taken in.

Here is a guide on how to meet the THINGS. First, there are many quests and riddles you have to solve. And no answers are included because a different question is asked every time. We give you advice on what to pack, etc. But please! This book is not useless. Keep on reading.

Next, when you leave, you’ll most likely be searching for something, like your grandfather’s wristwatch or a piece of bubblegum. Really anything. The THINGS are collectors, so your possession is most likely to be with them. Except for bubblegum. They hate it. They don’t like bubblegum because it’s like a ball of spiderweb. *Definitely* chew up bubblegum.

So, as you search, you see some kind of clue. Like, for example, the glinting gold color you see: the color of your grandfather’s watch. As you approach it, you might go near an old oak. This is your first challenge. He will ask you a question: “Do you really want to do this?” And, really, this seems easy, but it’s not. As if a spell goes on you, you can’t decide. Here is a hint: a spell has gone over you. It’s the same spell every time. Fight the spell by thinking of the happiest things. And then don’t think at all. And now you are suddenly right next to the clue.

Then, the clue is your lost thing, duplicated using magic. It’s a trick. No one would know though, so, as clueless as you are, you will pick the thing (your lost thing, not the creature) up. Now you
get transported to the THINGS (the creature) kingdom. You are so shocked, you faint.

*Well.* You are probably saying, “Oh, wow. Just a giant tree? This is easy.” Well, too bad. It’s not. The THINGS will question you till you don’t even care about your mission. They will ask you about math you haven’t learned. Like apple+seed (it makes a tree). Scream and yell all you want, but they will not stop stampeding you with questions. Useless, stubborn, questions.

Then, just recite something: a school play, your birthdate, or your parents’ phone number (it’s fine to tell them personal info. They don’t know what a name is). They absolutely *hate* reciting because they have tiny brains, so it is hard for them to stuff all of that stuff in there. When they make a speech, they make it up. That is the main reason they live in a forest. They never make a speech up telling them to move.

Then, with them all paused, tell them that you want to see Hmm. Hmm is a THING that collects the collected. He is their leader. All of the things he collects are in his shoes. They’re not big. His shoes are still the size of molecules. The shoes have a spell on them so that they can fit everything in them. He has your thing you lost.

He will give it back. Now, wasn’t that easy?
First thing’s first! Go to amazon.com. Make sure you have an account and buy your dragon. Use code: sauce to get fifty percent off.

Now that you have a dragon, get a saddle and tame the dragon by feeding it milk and cookies. Make sure the milk is boiling hot.

Since you have done all that, gain trust of the dragon by feeding fire to it and it will trust you.

Dragons are way too big for us humans. They’re as big as Jupiter! Right here is a solution.

After all that, do it again and breed them. Now you have a dragon that is your size, so do this all the time and you will have a family.
Have you ever wondered how fast a snake can crawl? There once was a snake. It was looking for food. It was thundering outside. There was a cloud that formed in the sky and he got hit by the lightning and his body changed.

The snake looked different. It turned black and his eyes turned into different colors. The snake was 9 feet long. The snake grew arms and he went to the woods looking for more food.

He liked to eat fish. The snake used camouflage to sneak around to get the fish. He goes into camouflage then out of camouflage to eat the fish. He grabbed the fish with his hands and bit it. It tasted good. The snake learned lightning and it made him faster and stronger.
Do you ever wanna see a Hyphanix? Well, I can show you one. This story takes place in New Jersey. It was an awesome day when a boy saw something coming down at him. It was huge. He ran. Then he saw a ship and he was scared of it. It was aliens. The spaceship was silver, and then the Hyphanix saw the spaceships. The Hyphanix warned the whole galaxy, and they freaked, so then they tried to disable the bombs. Then everybody in the galaxy got a lot of spaceships and put like ten million spaceships on each planet so they all escaped. Then they came back to their planets and the bombs were gone, and the aliens were sent to space jail, and the bombs went to the space war. The space bombs did not have any sound because it was in space.
Through road trips with family, marvelous birthday parties, transforming sharks, and much, much more, our students remind us that the best memories are often made with others. These stories show us that friends and family care for us in many different ways, such as by helping us navigate the first day of school or with the food that family cooks for us. Our students capture vignettes that show the joy of connecting with others, whether human, dog, or hydra.
I am from nachos—cheese, sour cream, beans, and sometimes jalapeño. They smell and taste like Doritos, but are still delicious. My mother makes the best nachos in eternity.

I am from my whole entire family. My big brother.

I am from SF, California.

I am from Christmas. I was born that month, two days after Christmas. I play with my big bro, and my big bro da best.

I am from TV and PS4. Gaming supplies.

I am from YouTube: I mostly game for my channel. Make a video everyday. Twitch: I play games while live-streaming. Goes live every Friday. Own a clan in a game called Clutch.

I am from my mom is going to have a baby girl in October. My brother plays games too, but he doesn’t take them as seriously as me.

I am from “Clean your room.”

I am from wanting to be famous. “Do what I’m doing in this moment but be known for it.”
I am going to tell you about when I got my puppy, Simba. I was in second grade. Dad’s friend, Robyn, had dogs named Minaj and Bully. They had puppies and my dad got one of the smallest. A puppy was sitting on my dad’s arms. He was staring at me with his crinkles on the top of his head. He was a newborn puppy and he had all this skin on the top of his head. His eyes were really tiny. He was a little pink because he was just seven-weeks old and he had a little pink nose with dots on it.

The first time my father brought the puppy home I felt a connection. When we named him, I wanted to name him Migo or Rose, but at the time I did not know the gender. So my dad told us the gender. He replied, “It’s a boy!” We all screamed, “Yay!” in excitement. He had little teddy bear pj’s. When my dad lay down, he would walk to my dad. He learned not to bite people and hurt people. If you get them at a young age, they will understand stuff.

My mom brought him to school and all the people went in a circle. Everybody loved him. Me and my brother’s friends from school liked the dog. Everybody thought he was cute. He kept growing and would whine.

At the end of the day, everybody said goodbye to the dog. We had to say goodbye one more time when he had to leave.
ALL ABOUT MY FAMILY

BLAKE VERDUN • age 10
Starr King Elementary School

I am from my mom’s lovely tamales.
Tacos with cheese and sour cream and meat.
Christmas food like turkey and chocolate chip cookies feel really good.
That’s why I love banana bread.

I am from my family.
My friends, like my best friends Armani, Kingston, and Shatia.
My mom because she cooks for me and gives me shelter and a home.
My stepdad is as caring as someone who cares for the environment and picks up trash.
He stepped up to be my dad.
He is big like a bear.

I am from my family, where family comes first.
This means that it is really special to care about your family, and family is more important than other things.
My family is more important than friends.
My family makes me feel cheerful but sometimes upset.

I am from on Christmas, we go shopping and eat dinner, and then play with our toys.
I usually have Christmas with my grandma and grandpa and brother.
My mom, Grandma, Grandpa, and I all open presents after dinner.
We also like going to Black Friday and going shopping.

I am from my dogs—Panther and Mimi—because they protect me in case somebody would try to break in.
They make me feel safe.
I am from
Playing board games and games.
We like to play *Sorry* and *Pokémon: Let’s Go, Eevee!*
I hope that I will become a YouTuber.
It would feel really happy because that’s the only thing I want to be
when I grow up.
THE FAMILY ROAD TRIP

KAEDO VALDES  ·  age 10
Starr King Elementary School

Have you ever been to your grandparents’ house? My mom and my brother and sister were with me last year for two weeks. We went from San Francisco to Texas and we went through Arizona and Los Angeles. I slept a lot during the trip, so I only remember going through those. We stopped a lot like at gas stations, we ate at a drive-through, and we stopped at this store which had an Arby’s. We went on the highway a lot. When we got into Texas, we went to Whataburger. We were a few hours away from my grandparents’ house.

Then we got to my grandparents’ house at three o’clock a.m. I hugged my grandpa and grandma, and we went to sleep. The next day we ate breakfast. We went to a café and then we visited my cousin’s house and we slept there. The next day, we went to the beach. We swam. The water wasn’t that cold. We had barbecue with hot dogs and burgers, and the sand was really hot. It hurt my feet. Only two of my cousins went because two are old.

When we were at my grandparents’ house we played, but since I was playing on my iPad, I kept on getting kicked out. My dad saw that, so he gave my grandparents money to buy an Xbox. They brought me to Best Buy. I felt as happy as getting a million dollars. We went home and my grandparents called my dad. He told me what to do and made me an account over the phone. I was playing with my brother and my dad. I opened the Xbox and I told them, “Thank you.” My grandparents told me that they were going to call my dad so he could make me an account. Me and my dad and brother played. I felt happy.

After we went to the beach, me and my grandparents went back home and took showers, and then I played on my Xbox. We had Hot Cheetos and cheese and we had snow cones. I got a rainbow one and then we went to my cousin’s volleyball game. Then a few
days later we went back home. It took three days and it felt good to be home. I was a week late to school so they thought I left the school. I was in third grade.
THE TRIP WITH MY FAMILY

EZRA TISDALE • age 9
Malcolm X Academy Elementary School

Hello, my name is Ezra and I’m going to tell a magnificent story. So I walked into the water park and I said, “Whoa, there are big slides and a lot of water. It looks really fun.”

I rushed into the water. There was literally water in a park and there were swimming pools and a baby section. “This place is the best day of my life,” I said.

I had a really fun time there, and afterwards we kept playing. It was really fun.

I remember going down a big, black slide. I couldn’t see anything. There was a lot of water splashing on my face. Finally, I came zooming down the slide and my mom got me out of the big swimming pool. It was really big and I thought to myself, “This is really fun.”

I was wearing shorts and a tank top. We were so cold that we went home and took a hot, nice shower. My mom made me hot chocolate, and I fell asleep.

I burned out all my energy sliding and having fun, so I was really sleepy. I remember this because my whole family was there, and it was the first time my cousins came. It was a big event.
I am from Thanksgiving, turkey, mashed potatoes, rice, macaroni and cheese,
Tuna casserole, beef stroganoff, hot dogs, strawberries, shrimp, pork chops, ribs, chocolate, s’mores, and pancakes. A cupcake for my mom on Valentine’s Day.
Steak smells so delicious and it tastes so juicy.

My snack tastes like chocolate chips. Can you guess what it is? Chocolate chip cookies.
My mom cooks delicious juicy chicken that we eat at home or at my godmother’s house.
I play with my godsister, and when the food is ready, we go eat.
I feel the warmness tickling my back.

I am from my family: mom, brother, sister, grandma.
Friends at school: Aliyah, Lyric, Armani, Kingston.

My mom is from San Francisco.
She likes to play music a lot.
I am from San Francisco. I was born in a hospital and I like to sing and dance.
My brother and sister were also born in a hospital.
My grandma I think is from San Francisco.

I am from music: hip-hop. My family loves to sing “Happy Birthday” at our birthdays.
Thanksgiving: I love all the food!
Christmas because I like to open presents. I love candy canes.
I am from my baby doll. It has pink hair and a gold diaper. It’s Black like me, and it also has pink lipstick. I love pink. Notebook and my spoon, and my favorite pencil and ball.

I am from singing and dancing—mostly to hip-hop and slow dancing. I like to play with my little sister sometimes. I like to watch movies. My favorite movies are *Trolls* and *X-Men*.

I am from liking to do gymnastics and I also love my blue tie-dye shirt. I am flexible. I did not know how to do gymnastics, but now I do. I feel excited.
I was outside on the fake soccer grass in my school, Bret Harte. There was a boy who came to play with me because I was playing alone.

“Why are you playing alone? Do you want to be friends?” he asked in Spanish.

“Sure,” I said in Spanish. “I don’t have any friends.”

We started playing and he showed me his tricks like juggling. He started showing me around the school. He showed me where the bathroom was and where we go to drink water. I felt happy because he started helping me make friends with people who spoke English. He was showing me what to say in English by repeating what he said. He helped me with the basic things.

We needed to go to an English class, and we had to be in groups. He was in the same group as me and helped with basic words. We were in English class and Jose sat next to me at the same table. He helped me with some more English stuff. He helped me when I was struggling a lot. I feel happy because, even when he was sick, he came to school and helped me.
I am from
Pepperoni pizza, which smells like my favorite food to eat.
I smell the sausage and cheese from far away.
Pumpkin pie, which is so sweet, made by my great, great,
great grandma.
When she cooks, the whole house smells like love.
It makes me feel excited.

I am from
Mom, dad, grandma, and my niece.
My family took me to Disneyland, we were buying toys.
We were playing on the merry-go-round.
They always make my life easier by helping me with my clothes
and breakfast.
My stepmom because I work with her and she gives me money.
My tutor Ms. Bita, who helps me read and learn.
She is always by my side, and I really love her so much.
My family always helps me out when things go wrong.
I have two sisters and three brothers who help me make food.
Except one, who I haven’t seen in a long time.

I am from
Getting presents.
I feel as surprised as a jack-in-the-box popping out.
Sometimes we get presents early.
Love spending that time with my baby sisters.

I am from
My dogs and my Baby Alive.
I am from
Playing soccer with neighbors,
Eating at different places,
Playing with baby sisters.
Sometimes I act like I’m the monster
And I chase them as fast as a cheetah.
The shark is in the bottom of the sea in a cave. The shark is shiny blue!

To meet the shark, he needs to find someone to help him catch the shark.

The shark is guarding a pearl. If you get the pearl, you can turn into Sharkboy.

El tiburón está en el fondo del mar en una cueva. ¡El tiburón es azul brillante!

Para conocer al tiburón, necesita encontrar a alguien que lo ayude a atraparlo.

El tiburón guarda una perla. Si obtienes la perla, puedes convertirte en.
I am from
Watermelon that tastes as sweet as strawberries and
Hot wings that are hot as hot Takis.

I am from
Mom,
Dad.

I am from
San Francisco, California.

I am from
Thanksgiving, a lot of food, family.
We eat turkey, and yams with marshmallows.
It tastes as delicious as regular marshmallows by itself.

I am from
Dog and RC cars (remote control cars).

I am from
Playing basketball, football, and soccer.

I am from
Chilling all together and watching movies.

I am from
Wanting to become a famous gamer YouTuber.
I am from typical Salvadorean food.
Pupusas, tamales.

My mom is special because she works and brings me food.
My grandpa is special because he takes care of me when my mom goes to work.
He plays catch the ball with me and we go to the park together.
He can no longer do things he did before.

I am from Christmas.
We visit my aunt on Christmas and play with my cousins.
Today I found out yesterday was a holiday in El Salvador.
In my house in the living room it was loud. It was big and it smelled like pizza. I was lying down while my cousins were running around. It was my tenth birthday party. It was September. It sounded loud like recess at school. It smelled like oysters on the grill and pizza. The theme of my birthday was royal blue and gold because my mom picked it. It was a sleepover with seven or eight of my friends, my cousins, and my brother.

We played my game called 2K on a projector and I was the Lakers. I was lying down while my cousins were running around and we had a pillow fight. My mom was playing this board game in the kitchen with my aunt called Popcorn.

We got the covers all ready so we could lie down on the carpet in the living room. We turned on the PlayStation and we played on the projector 2K and Call of Duty. We wouldn’t go to sleep, but if someone fell asleep, they would get ketchup on their face.

It’s a special memory because a lot of people made it and sang “Happy Birthday.” It made me excited and happy.
Have you ever wondered if a griffin, a human, and a hydra were real? Well, they are! They are mystical, magical, powerful creatures of the sea, and the earth, and the air.

One day, a human named Jasmine went to the beach to look for a buried treasure. Jas swam in the water and saw the hydra. The hydra was swimming all over the water and floated over a treasure chest. It said “BEWARE” on it. Jas and the griffin found the same magical box.

Then, the Storm King came. He destroyed the whole human land with a big storm. Storm King was going to the griffin land next. The human, named Jas, tried to stop the Storm King, but Jas flew away to the griffin land. The Queen Griffin saw the human Jas with the other crystal. Then they put their crystals together and they disappeared to the land of the hydrams. There, they put all three crystals together and combined into the Leedra. But then, the Storm King destroyed the other two lands. By combining the hydra water powers, and the griffin air powers, and Jas’s brain, they defeated the Storm King.
THE WOLF SAID WAOOOO

ESTEBAN GUTIÉRREZ CHAPARO • age 10
Bret Harte Elementary School

One day a man came out for a walk to the woods at night. It was a full moon. He thought that wolves didn’t exist anymore, but while he was walking, he heard a strange noise. In the woods, he heard footsteps, so he followed the noise. He noticed some type of animal. He thought it was a dog, so he didn’t bother. He kept walking until the animal that he thought was a dog followed him. Then the man turned around and touched the animal. Then the wolf was chasing him. The man was running for his life until the wolf said, “Waoool!”

Then the wolf’s friends came in. The man saw a big dog. While running, he thought that the dog was gonna hurt him, but he was wrong. He was here to help him out. So the dog tried his best to fight all three wolves. The dog got rid of the main wolf’s friends, then the dog was distracting the big wolf while the man was running to his house. The man finally ran to his house, but the dog was still fighting, so the man brought a stick and fought the wolf with the dog. Then he took care of the wolf. The man wanted the dog, so he kept it. The wolf’s colors were gray and white. He was the most dangerous wolf, too, and the fastest. His eye color was blue and he looked very mean. The man felt safer after he got to keep the dog.
HOW TO USE INVISIBILITY AND VENOM POWERS!

JAMAR HARRIS JR. • age 9
Bret Harte Elementary School

First, you drink a potion. Wait a couple hours. You can buy it at the special magical grocery store for two hundred dollars. Some potions have fire, invisibility, and electricity. You drink the electricity and invisibility potions.

Then, you fight a rhino and turn invisible. It’s running around the city, and nearly attacks you. Then BOOM! You’re invisible! The next day, grab the building with your hands, so you don’t fall! You find the rhino again. Well, actually the rhino finds you, and you use your electric-zap venom power to stun the rhino. Concentrate and get out of invisibility because you don’t want to stay invisible for the rest of your life!

One day you meet your friend, you ask, “Are you good? You sure you’re okay?”

“Yeah, why do you ask?” he says.

You told your friend the truth. You showed your friend the truth. You turned invisible.
In celebration of home, many students wrote about their everyday lives before and during shelter-in-place rules. From mom’s burgers that taste like heaven, to celebrating the arrival of siblings, to moms who make them smile, students brought forth images honoring powerful women in many of their stories. Fostering dreams and providing nourishment, the moms, grandmas, and aunts in this collection embody love in action.
MY FAMILY CARES ABOUT ME

MARCUS BLACKWELL • age 9
Starr King Elementary School

I am from my mom’s burgers that taste like heaven. I put bacon on my burgers because I love bacon. It’s good and crunchy. I feel great and happy when I eat it. A food that is special to me is turkey on Thanksgiving because she adds a hint of BBQ sauce.

I am from my mom because when I need help with something my mom will help me get back on track. My siblings are important to me because when my mom is not there they will help me with my homework.

I am from Sacramento and my sister came from Daly City. And my brother came from Brazil. My mom says to me, “Don’t miss school or you’re not going to get a job.” My family cares about me because I am the youngest in my family.
**MAGICAL SLIME**

**THAT CAN CHANGE TIME**

NATAYA LABORIN • age 10

*Starr King Elementary School*

First, you need glue, Borax, shaving cream, glitter, and also food coloring. If you want a lot of slime you need half a gallon of glue, a teaspoon of Borax, half a bottle of shaving cream, a pinch of food coloring, a small bag of glitter and don’t forget to put all of that in a bowl. Next, you need glue for the first step, because you can’t make slime without glue.

Next, add food coloring. I prefer food coloring so it can already have the color you want, and it can look cute.

Third, you can add the glitter. It can be any color, but my color glitters blue and light blue. When you add the glitter, it starts to suck up all the time.

Fourth, you need to add the shaving cream then . . . when you add shaving cream it makes the slime fluffy, so it can change the time. Wait two to five minutes for the slime to sparkle and get fluffy, and then it will be able to change time.

Next, take it to a dark, quiet, alone place. Say the time you want out loud and wait for the slime to sparkle. Stretch the slime and pull it. It feels like you’re stretching out clay. But it’s stretchier, softer, and more colorful. You keep on stretching the slime and pulling the slime but you want no one to know.

If you want to make slime and you want to make this magical slime just follow these steps.

And if you have a dream, follow your dream and it will come true.
I’m going to tell you an interesting story about the time my mom told me that she was pregnant. I remember hearing birds and dogs barking outside. We were in my parents’ room in my house. It was in a messy room. My mom and dad came in with a new puppy and my dad told us that my mom is having a baby. They told us in the evening around two o’clock p.m. It was in the early part of 2020. My mom was four months pregnant when they told us.

My dad came from work. He told us about it. My sisters and I were already lying on my mom’s bed. We were painting our nails. My mom was also on the bed. My mom’s friend came and she gave us a customized mug with pictures of the family for my dad. We got excited. I started writing letters to my mom. My three older siblings didn’t know she was pregnant, yet. My mom wanted to surprise them. I found out it was a girl.

I like to remember when my mom was pregnant. It makes me feel happy and excited. I was excited to have a baby sister. I felt kind of happy and sad at the same time. I was happy she was pregnant and I don’t know why I felt sad. We started making breakfast. I remember it because it wasn’t long ago. This happened recently.
Yo estaba sentada en la alfombra, estaba en la clase y estaban mis compañeros y no sabía cómo se llamaban.

Ese día estaba muy bonito porque estaba haciendo frío y nos conocimos el primer día de clase. Yo tenía ocho años y nos conocimos en el año 2019. Y el día de clases estaba emocionada para llegar a la escuela. Solo crucé la calle para llegar y antes de irme a la escuela me comí un sandwich. Me lave los dientes. Y me gustó el pasillo y me gustó el salón de tercer grado.

En ese momento nos hicimos amigas y le presenté a mi primo, se hicieron amigos y después le presenté a mi prima pequeña y se hicieron amigas y después conocí mi familia. A mi mamá le cayó bien y ella a mi mamá. Ese día comimos juntas y jugamos juntas y hablamos y nos íbamos conociendo. Un día nos llevaron a un paseo e hicimos crema, miramos a los animales los conejos y patos y otros animales vimos los insectos y nos dieron miel. Ese fue el primer paseo que fuimos.

Ese día fuimos con mi familia al parque de las ardillas. Nos despedimos y yo estaba triste porque no nos íbamos a ver mi amiga y yo. Yo me puse a jugar con mi tableta porque no había nadie con quien jugar.

DIANA AND LIZBETH

I was sitting on the rug and I was in class. My classmates were there and I didn’t know their names.

It was a really nice day because it was cold and we met on the first day of school. I was eight years old and we met in 2019. And on the day of class I was excited to arrive at the school. I only crossed the road to get there and before I went to school I had
a sandwich. I brushed my teeth. And I liked the hallway and the third-grade classroom.

At that moment we became friends and I introduced her to my cousin. They became friends, and after I introduced her to my little cousin. They became friends, and after my family met her. She liked my mom and my mom liked her. That day we ate together and played together and we talked and we knew each other more and more. One day we were taking a walk and we made cream, and we looked at animals. We looked at the rabbits and the ducks and other animals. We looked at insects and they gave us honey. It was the first walk we went on.

That day we went with my family to the squirrel park. We said goodbye and I was sad because my friend and I weren't going to see each other. I started playing with my tablet because there was no one to play with.
I am from pizza and cereal.
I don’t like the ones with no flavor.
I put sugar in my Cheerios because they don’t have much flavor.
I like BBQ chicken, I like spicy chicken, I like chicken that’s crispy.
I like chicken that’s got flavor.
I like chicken that doesn’t get too messy.
I like chicken when there’s a lot of crispy, when you can hear the crunch.
I am from honey chicken. It smells like honey.
I bite into it and it tastes juicy and crunchy, and it looks sweet and savory.
I eat this at fancy restaurants.
I feel good, happy, and full.
I learn to cook from TikTok videos on how to make food from the freezer.
There’s a Taki-covered chicken I learned!

I am from my mom and my stepdad.
They are the most important ones to me because they make me feel happy.
I went on a mom-and-son date, before this virus happened.
We used to do a lot of fun stuff like skydiving.
Not the one where you jump out of a plane,
The indoor kind.
When I look at my mom, she makes me smile.
MY GRANDMA IS A WHITE BUTTERFLY

KAMANI MOORE • age 10
Bret Harte Elementary School

I am from my mom’s famous lasagna! (secret recipe.)
It is my dad’s favorite too!
Hot fries! I like them because they’re so spicy like Tajín and jalapeños. So good.
Honest Kids juice drink, Berry Good Lemonade flavor.
(They’re sour like Sour Patch Kids because sour goes well with spicy.)

I am from my mom who is important to me.
She is the one who gave birth to me and brought me into this life.
My dad because I look just like him.
He treats me like a queen and a princess and we love each other.

The thing that I love about my family is that we are Black.
We are from Hunters Point.
My family calls each other Nishy Poo Poo Bear.
(My mom calls all her nieces this.)

I am from my favorite holiday that I celebrate with my family—birthdays!
We go to Vegas, and other trips to different cities, and stay in motels!
One tradition that we have on birthdays is that we take a video while singing “Happy Birthday”
So that we can remember the memory.
On Christmas, we get toys, phones, computers, and iPads.
(Mostly toys.) My sisters get clothes and shoes.
I am from two pitbulls (but right now I only have one because one is in a new home).
Jack is the one who is in the backyard.
OG has a new home now.
My bed because I do everything on it.

I am from watching TikTok,
Playing on my phone,
Playing with Jack with his toy named Sara.
His toy is a pink unicorn.
We play tug-of-war with it.
Sometimes we can play for hours.

I am from my grandma.
She is really special.
She started our family by having my mom and her sisters.
My family told me that you have an animal in your heart, you turn into that animal.
My grandma is a white butterfly.

I am from where they always say, “Can you get this for me?” because I’m the littlest.
I have the most energy.
I know I’m in trouble when my mom says my whole name, Kamani Brenda Rene Moore.

I am from hoping the coronavirus and racism stop.
Have you ever heard of this planet? It’s called planet Luna because it is full of magical trees. The seaweed that is magical is owned by the royal Van Crystal family. It is passed down from generation to generation. It was passed down to King Stuart, Joshua’s great grandfather, and then to King Joshua Theador Stuart the Second. Now it is Joshua’s to keep. That is the leaf that is keeping planet Luna balanced and that is why all the trees on planet Luna are magical and powerful. If that gets into the wrong hands, planet Luna will be destroyed and they will have to move to planet Everest. That is the last planet with water, so they have to move there if planet Luna is destroyed. But, they have to stop villains from getting it because 1,980,000 years ago, there was this planet called the Wicked Isal. It is filled with villains and all other types of creatures, like the hydra and a broom with a bee’s face. The planet is dirty and filthy and is filled with pumpkin guts.

Then, one year later, Queen Valentina was pregnant with a baby girl. Joshua was so happy, but then about a month later, the baby girl was born. They were fighting about what her name was. The dad said, “Ocean is a good name,” and the mom said, “No, Leilani is a good name for a baby mermaid like me and you.”

The doctor said, “Um, why not Ocean Leilani?”

Soon, about ten years later, Leilani was a teen and she went to Summer Cove. That is her high school. When it was time to leave, the guards at the castle came to escort Leilani home. She asked if it was okay if she went to her friend’s house. The guards went to the castle to ask the king and queen about Leilani, and they said no. The guards went back and Leilani was not there. They searched the entire kingdom, up and down.

The dad said, “That can only mean one thing. They kidnapped our daughter.”
The mom asked, “Who kidnapped Leilani?”

Joshua said, “The hydra and the witches,” and the mom said, “The what?” and the dad said, “Uh, the witches uh dua,” and the mom was like, “Oh, okay. So, why did they kidnap her?”

And Joshua said, “Because of the seaweed, they are coming,” and the dad said, “Whatever you do, do not look at the lapu if we go to the tomb of our ancestors. But if we go inside, the tomb is kapu (kapu means sacred and lapu means ghost in Hawaiian). They want to know where it is so they can destroy planet Leilani.”

But Valentina said, “How did they know where Leilani’s school is at? We did not tell anyone. Yet wait, that only means one thing.”

“What?” said Joshua.

“There is a spy.”

And Joshua said, “Gather all the guards. There are one thousand in this entire kingdom. Bring me those one thousand guards, and if they ask, keep your mouth shut and do not say anything.” So the guards went out to the king.

To be continued . . .
I am from pepperoni, pineapple, and sausage pizza. From when my mom or my sister buys it. It smells good, tastes good, and looks good. I feel happy and smile. I am from salad—carrots, onions, tomatoes, and ranch dressing. Good, crunchy and soft, and sour.

I am from my brother because he’s handsome and nice, even though he fights sometimes. My stepdad, because sometimes when I ask him for stuff, it’s gonna be good! He says nicely and kindly, “Yes, you can, Lyric.” My mom is so fun. She’s nice and she gives me stuff sometimes, like clothes and slime. I feel amazing in them.

I am from San Francisco. It’s hot and cold and sometimes fun. My mom tells me to play with my brother or do something with him. My mom says nicely, “Lyric, will you please clean up your room?” What I love about my family is that they are nice to me and I love them so much. They’re always gonna be my family. I feel happy and joyful with them.

I am from opening presents. I rip it slowly so I can save the wrapping paper. Happy. I’m jumping up and down. I see happiness on their faces. I do some of the stuff I get.
I am from my cat Cookie. I play with it, rub it, and it’s soft. Slime. I get to make it, or sometimes it’s already made. Feels very soft, smooth, and cold. I like to throw it in the air and stuff.

I am from playing outside—ride my scooter and play with my brother. We ride our bikes or sometimes ride our scooters. I hear all my friends playing, fighting, or at the park. Paint. Paint pictures of my family. Red, orange, yellow, green, green, green, blue, purple, brown. I like to sew pillows, blankets, and robes. What I do to sew is get your stuff around you so then when you’re done, you can be able to use it. Press your feet on the thing slowly.

I am from knowing. We all have talents—my talent is dancing and doing the splits and the handstand. We’re so out of control and sometimes we love doing a lot of stuff together like art, like sewing.
HATTIE

ARIEL DAWSON  •  age 10
Bret Harte Elementary School

I am from
Mac ’n’ cheese is yellow like the sun.
My sister cooks it and we eat it at the light-brown table. Tasty!
Chicken tacos.

I am from
Rocko. My brother and I walking the dog.
It was sunny and a little bit hot like a fire.
We went to the playground and we were all alone.

I am from
My grandma. She says, “Be smart!”
San Francisco.
My family cares about my grades.

I am from
San Francisco.
They are nice and kind.
I always get presents for all the cousins on Christmas.

I am from
Oreo (Guinea Pig),
Sunny (Gecko).

I am from
Playing video games,
Playing outside with the dogs.

I am from
Studying all the animals in the world!
Who knows a magic unicorn? Who invented unicorns? Who came up with the name unicorn, and where do they get their horns from?

It all starts with this little girl named Magic. She had a high ponytail and she had a shirt and ripped jeans on and shoes. She had slime, candy, snacks, and she had nail polish and stuff in her backpack. The bag color was galaxy.

Then she saw a berry bush, but they weren’t ordinary berries, they were sparkly and big and gushy. One of her friends tells her, “Do not eat that, Magic! It looks poisonous.”

Magic ate the berry. After she ate the berry she said, “Wow, this is one sour and salty berry.” She got the poison on her hands but couldn’t see it because it was clear. She touched the chips and stuff. Her friends were eating the snacks that had the poisonous berry on it. They start shaking. It was like a little earthquake and they all started to fall on the ground. They woke up and started changing into unicorns. It was like pain in the stomach, and their heads were pounding.

They all turned into unicorns because Magic ate the berry. One of them was purple and blue, one was pink and blue, one was white and blue, and one was purple and white. They had sparkly hair and sparkly bodies and a horn. Mother nature made all animals and the unicorns too. Here’s the twist—at first they didn’t know how they became unicorns.

They found a wizard and the wizard gave them a little berry. It just so happens that it looks exactly the same as the poisonous berry but it was different. Magic cut it in slices real fast and she shaked it in a blender and put it into cups. They drink it, and it changes them back into girls. They felt pain in the stomach. They have a happy emotion; they are relieved. They look at each other and smile. :)}
It was two years ago, when I was going to be eight years old in 2019. My mom, all of my family, my uncles, my mom, dad, and sister, and my cousins, and friends like Selena were there. We were in my uncle’s house in San Francisco.

People were talking, food was being cooked, and it was sunny. There were little kids running around. I was with my cousin in her room playing Simon Says. She had some slime, neon green, pink, and purple. She had some lights in her room that could change color. Her favorite colors were blue and purple. My favorite color was blue. There was a backyard and my uncle was making the food. There was a cake.

I like remembering this memory. It makes me feel happy because my uncle’s house is fun, and I could play with my little boy cousin and also with my favorite cousin, Ashley. I was happy that day, too.

I walked there with my younger sister. I was holding my sister’s hands. I spent the night at my uncle’s, in my cousin’s room. I remember it because it was my best day ever.
“Ready or not, here I come,” I said.
“I found you,” my friend said.
“Boo.”
“Peekaboo.”

I was playing hide-and-seek and it was nighttime, so my friend was scared. My backyard has trees and there are ten bushes, three trees, and one toy car. It was ten o’clock p.m. at night. It was dark and there was one bike. She hid in the bathroom. She wanted to go to the bathroom but it was too dark. She got scared because they said, “Boo,” and they were close. They said, “Peekaboo.” Then she was crying. She felt like her best friends were bullying her and everybody was laughing at her. And I felt bad for her, but then we played something else. We played tag.

And then after she wanted to go eat food. So we went to eat and then we went home.

From this experience, I learned that when you play a game, go to the bathroom first.

When that happens, don’t be mean and help them.
Have you ever seen a seacorn?

I flew to Planet Seacorn with my flying car that helped fly through space. We were flying super fast for a couple hours. Planet Seacorn has a pink palace with a blue pathway and pink and blue shining lights and an ocean around the palace. Planet Seacorn is one of the biggest planets in space. It even won an award for being so big! It has Seacorn Eat Out, one of the restaurants. It’s all-you-can-eat for seacorns! They eat human food, like Seacorn Cookies.

They go to the bakery every day to get these cookies that are shaped like unicorns and are chocolate, vanilla, and strawberry. Then we saw one of the seacorns getting their powers. They ate the magical cookies and got their powers! Some seacorns are growing up and as they get older their powers get stronger. They can fly, run super fast, and read minds. All the seacorns have pink hair, blue skin, and rainbow teeth.

Later, me and the seacorn were leaving Planet Seacorn when something happened . . . there was a man trying to destroy Planet Seacorn so he could take all the seacorns. He wanted to use the seacorns’ powers to rule the world.

We tried to defeat him, but he was too powerful. “We can’t give up!” said one of the seacorns.

So everybody started to give him food and talk to him. He joined the good side with us and finally he agreed to be on our team to destroy the three-headed dragon! This three-headed dragon is trying to not just destroy Planet Seacorn, but the whole universe. He wanted to destroy Planet Seacorn because it was too pretty and pink, and he hated the universe because all the people were too nice. We didn’t hit the three-headed dragon because that would have been rude, so we gave him some steak that sunk to the
bottom of the universe, and the dragon went to chase the steak. He was never able to find the meat, but he didn’t bother us anymore.

The seacorns were going to Earth for the first time but they were scared. You may be wondering how we got there. We got there through seacorn transportation. That’s basically a cab or an Uber. The Ubers and cabs were flying cars that had rockets at the back and turbo wheels, so we go faster.

Me and all the other seacorns (at least three hundred searcorns) made it to Earth and we crash into a school. This school was a random high school in China. We apologized and fixed the school with our seacorn powers. Then we flew around the school fixing the building. Then we flew to San Francisco, but one of the seacorns broke a heel flying. Then we rested at a big beach for a while. Later, we went back to Planet Seacorn and went to eat at all-you-can-eat Seacorn Land.”

I went to planet Earth as they were asleep, but when I went back home, everything was fine. I was sad because I had to leave. I have now finally seen a seacorn! The seacorns learned a lesson never to hurt people.
Hello Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today I will present you with the ten-headed monster that people have never seen before. This monster is not like any monster, so sit back and relax so I can teach you!

First, there was a big, big egg in an old cave and the egg was glowing white. So some people passed by the old, dark cave and there was one girl named Alexandrine. She was not like any other girl. She was different because she wouldn’t pass by. She would just stay outside of the cave and had short white hair, not short but in the middle. She had red eyes like blood and there was a birthmark she had on her wrist which was glowing white. She didn’t really care much about it, but she felt like her wrist was dragging her into a dark old cave!? She tried to hold back but she was too weak to hold back, so she gave up, and let her wrist lead her where she needed to go . . .

Next, Alexandrine saw a white glowing thing ahead. Then she said, “What’s that over there?” in a curious voice. The closer she got, the closer she knew what it was; it was a big, big egg. Then she said, “How could an egg get that big!?” in a loud voice. Then the birthmark stopped glowing. Then there was a dragon that looked like a ghost, but was walking to the egg. There, the ghost dragon cracked it open and then the ghost was gone. There was also a little slimy baby dragon that was in the egg. Alexandrine said, “Ew! So much slime!” in a disgusted voice.

Well Alexandrine took off all the white slime, and then when she took off all the white slime, she made space in her backpack to put the tiny dragon in. When she put the tiny dragon in her backpack, she went outside of the old cave and then she went home.

She was right outside of her house then she rang the doorbell. That’s when her mom opened the door. “Where were you now
Alex?” she said in an annoyed voice. She really looked tired but for real. She hated that nickname but she went in to be greeted by her annoying brother, James, and her two favorite twins Jayden and Jade. Her dad passed away a year ago, but she has a necklace of him.

The dragon was so noisy, so she pulled the dragon out of her backpack. Then her door opened and there was James! “So why do I hear weird sounds?” he said in an annoyed voice.

“Just get out! And, do you know how to knock, James!” Alexandrine yelled in an annoyed voice.

“Whoa calm down. But what’s in your hands?” James said.

Alexandrine thought, Oh no oh no oh no! Alexandrine put the dragon down on her bed.

One year later . . .

Alexandrine didn’t see any baby dragons anymore. She saw a dragon. The only people who knew Leviathan (which Alexandrine named him) were her family and friends, James, Jayden, Jade, Lily, Angel, Athena, and Ari. He had scales that would be red and black, and his feet had fur with a sharp tail, fangs, and claws. Alexandrine was thinking if she could shapeshift. She took out her phone and called Angel and Lily because they are better with dragons, or may I say, he did look like a dragon. But he was half hydra/sea monster/dragon, so when Lily and Angel came, they told her that he had powers of flying, shapeshifting, and camouflage. So, they tried their best to connect with him to tell him to shapeshift into a human. He turned into a human.

After all that, Leviathan had turned into a human, but it was hard to teach him what we do. Sometimes he turns back to his other form, like when taking a bath or a shower. He hated doing it.

James and Leviathan are like best friends but they act like children. Angel, Lily, and me are best, best, best friends. Also Ari, Athena, Leviathan, and James can’t be apart because they are a group of pranksters. They prank each other and others but not Angel because they are too scared to.
I am from my mom who makes the best red velvet cake!
It smells sweet like pudding!
When I taste it, it feels very moist.
I like the cake batter because it tastes good.

My mom’s chocolate chip cookies.
They taste like cookie dough ice cream.
I love chocolate chips.

I am from my baby sister.
The first time I got to hold her she was as light as a pillow.
The second time, I got to feed her.
When I go into the room, I see her little face and it makes me happy.

Baby brother.
I liked when I went to see my baby brother for the first time.
He is growing up so fast, as fast as me.
Because he is so little, he can get hurt and get sick easily.

I am from every summer in March.
We go to the swimming pool and the pool is like a big school bus,
and we stay there all day.
There is a buffet and we go there all month, every weekend.
We don’t always go but we go sometimes.

Valentine’s Day is my favorite holiday
I can tell my valentine to my mom, my dad, and whomever I want.
September is my favorite month because it is my birthday month!

I am from my phone.
I love my books *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, Black history, and *Super Turbo* because they challenge me.

I am from girl time with my mom.  
Playing peekaboo with my sister  
Playing outside with my friends. Racing each other, getting ice cream and going to the park.  
We like to spend time together.

I am from being a smart kid,  
Talking about math too much.

I am from  
Wanting to graduate, go to college, get a degree, and become an independent WOMAN!
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.
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
826national.org

826 Boston
826boston.org

826CHI
826chi.org

826DC
826dc.org

826LA
826la.org

826michigan
826michigan.org

826 MSP
826msp.org

826 New Orleans
826neworleans.org

826NYC
826nyc.org

826 Valencia
826valencia.org
This year, 826 Valencia provided online weekly reading and writing support to fourth-graders from four classrooms in San Francisco’s Bayview and Potrero Hill neighborhoods. *Ask There at the Castle of Magic* captures the honesty, wisdom, and warmth of these students. From poems of self-love and identity, to recounting cherished memories, to exploring fantastical worlds alongside magical creatures, students have continued to share their creativity while learning with us online during a time of great uncertainty. Our students show us that even while facing the toughest of challenges, we can find strength in our friends, family, and from that spark of magic within ourselves.

*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. Since 2018, we have provided individualized attention to students at *Bret Harte, Malcolm X Academy,* and *Starr King Elementary Schools* in Bayview and Potrero Hill.

*Get involved at 826valencia.org*