



WATERCOLOR PAINTING BY KENISHA RAMAKRISHNAN (GRADE 4)

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Dishing Up Kindness and Creativity

By Rachel Finkel, Hastings Fifth Grade Teacher

Each December, room parents ask teachers for a wish list of possible holiday gifts for the classroom from the families. Typically the list includes new games, special supplies for projects and the latest best sellers, however this year the 5th grade added something unexpected to each of their lists: wooden kitchen spoons. The 5th graders wanted to make one of their presents be giving to others in need by participating in the Project Bread Holiday Spoons Project.

On December 8th and 9th, all the 5th graders got to work to make ordinary wooden spoons into works of art. Together they made enough spoons so that every child and most staff members could bring one home as a gift. Attached to

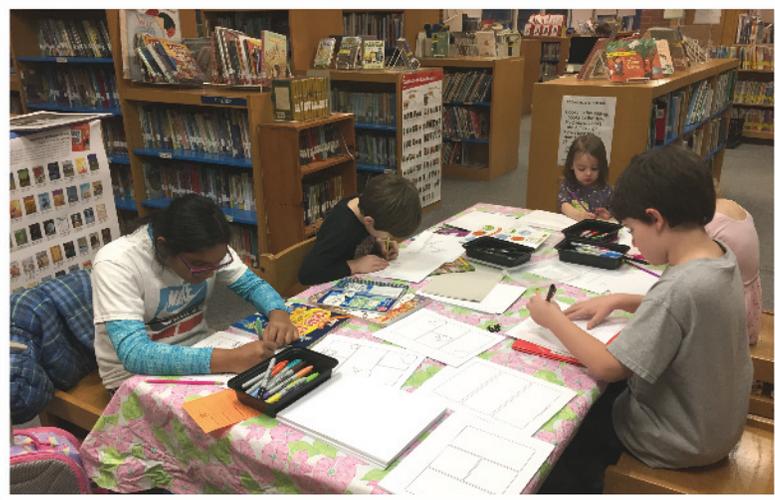
each spoon was a note that explained its purpose and an envelope for a donation to Project Bread. The Hastings community joined the 5th graders' effort and together raised over \$3500 for Project Bread's mission to ensure all families in Massachusetts have healthy food to eat. At All School Meeting on Thursday, January 19th, we found out from Alexa Droette, a representative from Project Bread, that our school donation was the largest they received. The surprises continued because she also told us that through an online voting contest, the spoons decorated by the Hastings 5th graders were voted the favorite out of all the spoons that were submitted to Project Bread. As a prize each 5th grader will receive an IMAX ticket from Jordan's Furniture.

This project was a success from the fundraising standpoint, but also from the impact it had on the students. Prior to participating in the Spoons Project, a spoon was a symbol of food to them. Now they see something more. A spoon now gives each Hastings School 5th grader a reason to pause and ask, how can I help someone today?



Welcome to the New *Hastings Star*

By Robyn Piasecki, *Hastings Star* Editor and Liz Sullivan, ACT Chair



DECEMBER STAR CLUB MEETING IN THE LIBRARY

It was quite loud in the Hastings gym when our first Star Club meeting convened back in November, during conference babysitting, but we had a few curious students check out the goings on. Some even drew up a comic or dashed out a few lines of poetry. Some kids didn't remember the *Star Newsletter*, Hastings' bi-annual publication that highlighted events significant to the Hastings community. However, many parents and teachers did remember and were enthusiastically supportive of a revamped publication that would showcase mostly student work. The next couple of months, thanks to Ms. Rich, we were able to meet in the much quieter space of the library. We had a couple of new attendees check us out, but our most rewarded

effort was an online Sign-Up Genius with writing prompts. This edition of the *Hastings Star* includes the work of those courageous pioneers, the students and teachers who took a chance on a fledgling idea. We hope you enjoy their work and are inspired to submit yours for the next edition!

HOW TO BE A STAR CONTRIBUTOR:

Teachers: Feel free to submit class work.

Students: Submit work any time (rolling submissions), or join us for monthly Star Club meetings for comradery and inspiration.

WE ACCEPT:

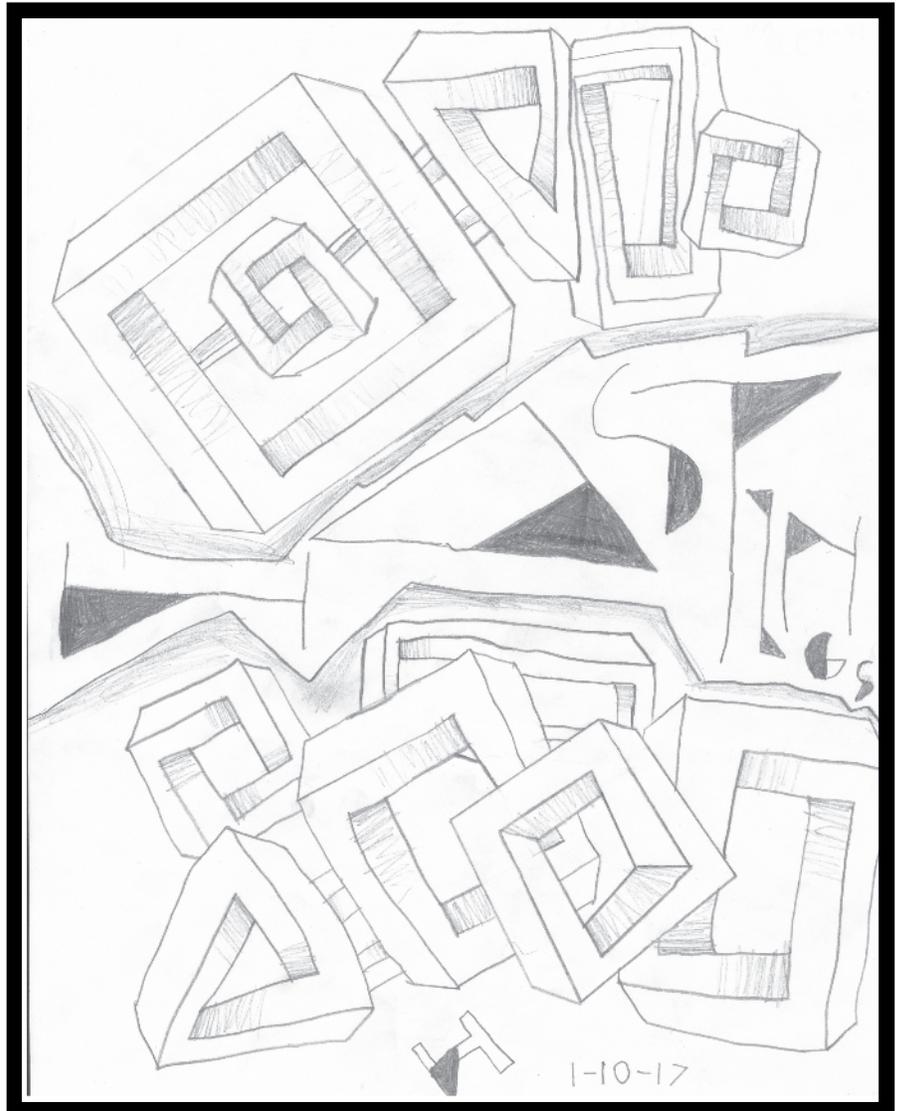
Writing: includes opinion pieces, essays, newspaper articles about school events, poetry, fiction or non-fiction, jokes

Visual Art: includes photographs, drawings, comics

How To SUBMIT WORK:

*Digitally is the preferred method: send to star@hastingspta.org
Or, you can place your paper submission in the Star Box at the PTA table in the lobby

Please feel free to ask questions and share ideas as this effort evolves! And definitely check out hastings.pta.org/star/ for more details, future Club meeting times, and writing prompts.



DRAWING BY HENRY MA (GRADE 5) –

It Was Magic

By Leah Barrentine (Grade 5)

It was only 4:00 in the evening when Drew was sent to his room with all of his technology taken away. He was left with only homework and his dog Rosi to keep him busy. By 5:00, Drew was bored out of his mind. He watched his neighbor Jack playing outside with a few other boys from school. Occasionally, he would yell down to them, but they never seemed to hear. The sun blazed into his room, bouncing off of his light blue walls. He realized that he hadn't had his room redone since he was just a baby. The paint was old and chipped, and the white trim was turning grey with dirt and finger smudges. His bed was unmade, with half of the sheets falling off, but he had no desire to fix it. He watched as the sun set, painting the sky into a multi colored masterpiece: a blend of yellow, orange, blue and a few hints of purple.

Drew wished he could geo leap out of his room, but he knew that it was impossible. When he was eight, he had wished a thousand times to get the superpower of geo leaping, but he never got it. That was when he stopped believing in magic.

Around 6:00, his mom came in with his dinner. Though she was the one who had sent him up to his room in the first place, Drew was never happier to see someone.

"Next time," his mom said, as she handed a plate of chicken and rice over to Drew, "think before you act."

Drew had heard the same thing for over five years, but it had never registered in his mind until now. He took the plate into his lap.

"Sorry. I know that I should've acted better," he answered sincerely.

His mother stroked his hair once before saying, "I'm glad that this is finally meaning something to you." With that, she turned and walked out of the room.

Drew was ignored for the rest of the night. By 10:00, everyone was upstairs and going to bed, but not one person had come in to say goodnight to him. Finally, he decided to go to sleep.

Around midnight, Drew was wakened by loud barks and sharp moans from Rosi. He rubbed his eyes and they came into focus. Small dots of light were flying in through his window. Interested, he sat up. Rosi watched the little lights intently as they began coming into the room faster and faster.

Drew opened one of his hands, putting it in the middle of the lights. He managed to capture one in his palm. He felt the warmth of the light burning throughout his body. He opened his palm to examine it, but it had disappeared. He grabbed two more from the river of lights. Again, with his touch, they seemed to dissolve into thin air.

"Whoa," he breathed, his heart and mind racing. He opened his door, and the lights immediately vanished. When he closed the door, the lights appeared again.

As a science lover, he tried to think of an explanation on how the lights worked. They definitely weren't fireflies, Drew knew that as a fact. None of them

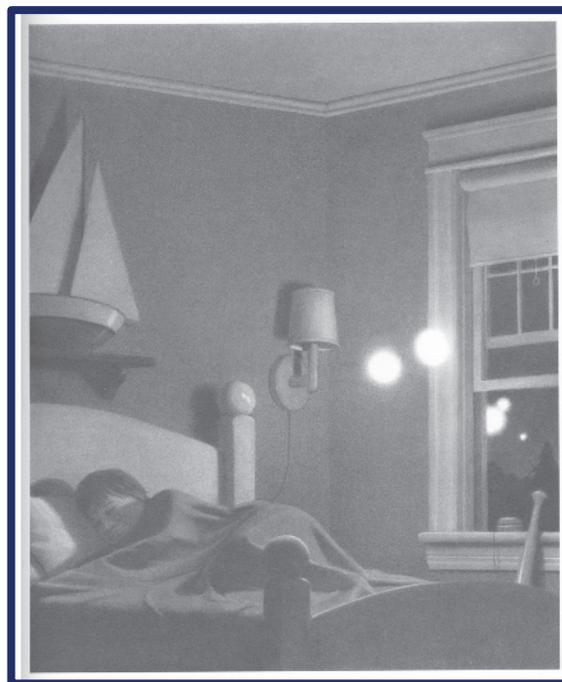
seemed to be connected to anything. He couldn't see any batteries or wires, no matter how hard he looked.

Drew didn't believe in magic. Everything that he had stumbled across in his eleven years of life had a scientific explanation. But he couldn't see anything practical about these lights. Thinking it was a dream, Drew pinched himself, but all that accomplished was pain.

"It's not magic...it can't be," Drew mumbled softly.

By 2:00 in the morning, the lights were still swirling around in his room, burning as bright as ever. Rosi had fallen asleep, but Drew hadn't. He had been up, taking notes, drawing pictures and making comparisons to what the lights might be, and how they were made. By 5:30 in the morning, Drew had only come up with one possible answer.

It was magic.



"ARCHIE SMITH, BOY WONDER"
A TINY VOICE ASKED, "IS HE THE ONE?"

Editor's Note: Leah's inspiration was the above illustration by Harris Burdick, posted as the *Star's* January writing prompt with the following message:

You may have been inspired to draw a picture to go with a published story, but what about the other way around? Harris Burdick is purportedly the author of 14 stories; however, all that survives are captions and illustrations for each piece. What could the "real" story be? Write a poem or story to tell us what you think is happening in the illustration!

Stay tuned as we post additional Burdick illustrations for future prompts...

The Lazy Bear

By Siya Setty (Grade 4)

It is usually very calm in the forest. The stream flowing slowly, sticks crunching as foxes walked by waiting to hunt their prey. But, today it was frantic. All the animals scurried by collecting food. It was harvest season.

Everyone was in a panic. Mother foxes told their pups to find food. Squirrels were jumping from tree to tree collecting acorns. Birds were getting ready to migrate south. There was only one creature that didn't join the act, the bear. The bear, as all the animals knew, was the laziest creature on the planet! He never bothered to even find food for himself and always was depending on other animals to get it for him. Today, he was taking a long slumber sleep and no one bothered to wake him up. So, the bear was sleeping for a long time. Finally, one brave fox pup became very worried about him. Fearing he wouldn't survive the winter she climbed up the rock pile to his cave. There she slowly crept up to him exploring the cave. It had smears of squished berries all over and some mice scuttling around in the corners. Smack in the middle, sat the bear, who was snoring softly. He woke up with a jerk as she accidentally stepped on a twig. Snorting loudly, he screamed "ME HUNGRY, GET ME FOOD!" The fox stepped up and said "It is harvest season, the animals are worried about you, and they think you won't have

enough food to survive. The bear stood silently but then let out a loud sneeze blowing the fox into a corner with mice. Then, he bellowed "GET ME FOOD FOR WINTER!" Patting her ear drums, the fox pup squeaked bye to the bear and trotted out of the cave. When she reached home, her mom wondered out loud "Where were you? We were all really worried!" Gasping for breath, she whispered "The bear asked me to get him some food for the winter." "You were at the bear's house!" a little pup yelled. "No fair!" she added frowning. Soon, all the animals heard about it and before long everyone realized there were no crops to give the bear. But nobody gave up. Soon everyone planted seeds, watered plants & plucked grown crops. Within a few days, the crops were ready. The squirrel handed the fox pup a basket with some sticks over it. Bowing slightly, she again trotted off to the bear's cave. This time though she trotted up the rock pile quickly. When she entered she found the bear eating the mice. One of the sticks plopped to the ground that caught the bear's attention. He strode to her with the mouse hanging from his mouth. Finally he gobbled it up and bellowed "GIVE ME FOOD!" she handed him the basket which he snatched quickly. She bowed deeply and trotted off to tell her friends. They cheered with excitement. Soon everything was back to normal; the forest was quiet with the streams flowing and the sticks crunching. As for the animals, they were off to hibernate without any worries to disturb them. The winter was here!



PUZZLES BY SIENA FOO (KINDERGARTEN)

An Interview With Ms. Contre

By Emma Lachowitz (Grade 4)

What is your favorite place to visit?

MS CONTRE: Cape Cod ~ because I love the beach and it's very calm.

What was your favorite subject in school, growing up?

MS CONTRE: Reading.

How long have you been working at Hastings?

MS CONTRE: 2 years.

What is your favorite food?

MS CONTRE: Pizza.

Why did you want to become a teacher?

MS CONTRE: I wanted to teach kids how to read, but now I enjoy teaching math more.

What is your favorite subject to teach?

MS CONTRE: Math.



Hastings Students!

Do you have any questions for Hastings staff members? Perhaps they would consent to an interview for the *Star*!



DRAWING BY ANNA KLEMOVITCH (GRADE 1)

Interviewing a Teacher: Mrs. Brianna Ambrus! (Teacher, 4th Grade)

By Saisha Gupta (Grade 4)

What is your favorite book?

MS. AMBRUS: "My favorite book is Matilda by Roald Dahl."

What is your favorite place?

MS. AMBRUS: "My favorite place is anywhere in Summer!"

What do you like most about your job?

MS. AMBRUS: "I like to get to know different students every year."

If you were a superhero, what power would you want?

MS. AMBRUS: "I would want to fly!"

Any unknown talents or hobbies?

MS. AMBRUS: "I can speak pretty good Italian."

Is there any challenging parts of the job?

MS. AMBRUS: "I think it is assigning grades for the students in my class."

The Hastings Star!



An Interview With Ms. Muzyka

By Noah Lachowitz (Grade 1)

NOAH: What Superpower would you like to have?

Ms MUZYKA: To fly - because then I could visit anywhere in the world and not have to wait for an airplane.

NOAH: What is your favorite subject to teach?

Ms MUZYKA: Reading - because my favorite part of first grade is seeing how kids read so much at the end of the year.

NOAH: Do you have brothers or sisters?

Ms MUZYKA: 1 brother.

NOAH: What is your favorite time of the year?

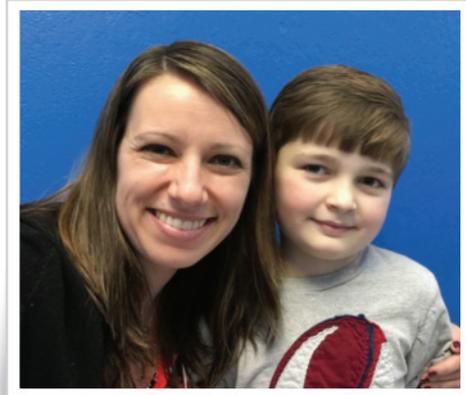
Ms MUZYKA: Christmas - because I love to celebrate with my family.

NOAH: How long have you been working at Hastings?

Ms MUZYKA: 9 years.

NOAH: Why did you want to become a teacher?

Ms MUZYKA: Because I loved watching my little brother learn how to do new things and then helping him to do new things. I thought I would like helping other kids and I do like it!



DRAWING BY JACK SULLIVAN (GRADE 2)

My Violin

By Khushi Krishna (Grade 1)

My violin sounds like a water flowing from a faucet.
My violin sounds like a bouncing ball.
My violin sounds like a cricket at night.
My violin sounds like me drinking water from a glass.
My violin sounds like the wind.
My violin sounds like a squeaky door/shoes.
My violin sounds like my heart beating fast.
My violin sounds like me whispering in the ear.

Joy

By Zoë Aldairy (Grade 5)

Happiness,
Happiness and joy,
Here and there,
Everywhere.
I am almost filled to the brim
with it.
I look to my left,
Happiness.
I look to my right,
Joy.
I look behind me-
Wait.
What is that,
In the bushes?
It's a monster!
I slowly back away
Very slowly,
Slowly, slowly,
Slowly.
I stop.
I am against a tree,
A big tree,
The best for climbing,
That's it!
I climbed up,
Surely safe, right?
It climbs up behind me,
And takes off its face.
Wait, what?
Oh, it's just my brother,
And again I am filled with joy.

Writing a Poem

By Arjun Ramakrishnan (Grade 4)

Writing a poem,
is not so much fun!
But I can make the job easier
And get it done..
Now, it's fun!
And now I am ready to run.
I can use words with pun.
And how to write a poem,
I just did learn!
Though, I wish I got a hot cross bun,
I could eat it sitting in the sun!

Books

By Abby Myerberg (Grade 5)

Those words
That fill the page
They fly out from inside
Words that were unread
Trapped
Hidden
Waiting
To be read
And once you uncover them
You find their beauty
They become words that trap
you in
To the wonders of books
The delight
The joy every time you open one
If you're having a bad day
Books will uncover the sun
Behind the gray cloud
Characters that you haven't met
You haven't enjoyed
Because you haven't opened a
book
So open one
And see what you have missed.

OPINION: Should Students Have More or Less Homework?

By Drew Zhang (Grade 3)

I think kids should have no or less homework. My first reason is that many kids have a lot of activities after school, so they don't have time to do their homework. If they do get to their homework, they probably have to stay up late to do their homework. My second reason is that most teachers check their students' homework. If a student didn't do his homework, the teacher will get upset. Having no homework will stop this. And that's why I don't want homework. So, this is a win-win thing!

LOVE

By Zoë Aldairy (Grade 5)

Love is in the air,
And it even isn't
Valentine's!
I see a couple on a
bench.
Up in the clouds,
Two kiss,
And I look back at the
couple.
They lean in,
In,
And then...
SMOOCH!
Ew!
I walk away,
To the field.
There I see a dog,
Sound asleep,
And a kitten snoozing on
top.
Now that is real love.



DRAWING BY ZOË ALDAIRY (GRADE 5)

Little Deer's Night

By Anusha Ramakrishnan
(Kindergarten)

Little deer, little deer,
What is the fright,
On this summer night?

Little deer, little deer,
Did you get a bite,
On this summer night?

Little deer, little deer,
Did you have to fight,
On this summer night?

Little deer, little deer,
Did you see the moon light,
On this summer night?

Pokemon Go

By Eddie Zhang (Grade 5)

Pokemon, go
walk into a tree
I hope it didn't notice me
Pokemon, go
gonna eat my jello
oh no
it a Ditto
Pokemon go,
hey look, a Lucario
Greninja, go

Thompson Island

By Mayari B. Rajamani (5th Grade)

Ring, Ring, my alarm goes off.

I really wanted to go to Thompson Island so I jumped out of bed. I have been waiting for this trip for years and now it is finally happening. "We're here, we're here" I shout. I am at the edge of my seat ready to jump out of the car. I am really excited for this trip so I grab my bag and run inside my school building where they are checking in people.

The weather was cold, rainy and wet, so the bus arrived late and all of us quickly got on the bus. Within a wink of an eye, we saw the THOMPSON ISLAND logo on the ferry pulling up into the Boston harbor.



for them it is dangerous so for kids to do that, it is a total no-no.

The first highlight is the 10 foot wall. I loved this activity because you were relying on your team to help you get over the wall. For most of the activities you need teamwork.

My favorite activity was the Monkey Bridge. It was scary because it was so high off the ground and there was 3 feet of water below you, but your team helped you get through it by holding down the ropes. It wasn't wobbly so there was less chance of you falling into the water. I loved this activity.

Another highlight is the food. Omg! The food was like 5 star hotel food. The burgers were the best and the pancakes too because they had blueberry filling. If you want to enjoy that type of food go to Thompson Island.

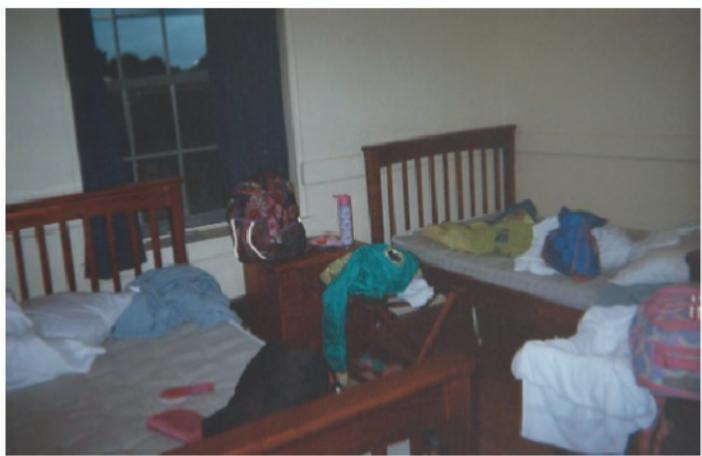


Thompson Island is located 1 mile from the Boston harbor, and is a 30 min ferry ride to get there. When you get there you will think that it is very small but trust me it is very large!

For your Thompson Island groups you do not get to choose teammates but your counselors do. My team's counselors were: Kim and Brendan and they were the best. If you get them you are in the awesome group because you get to do all the activities plus you get to listen to music whenever you are going somewhere.

All the activities were fun. The activities were separated into two categories, low ropes and high ropes. Spider Web, Monkey Bridge, and the 10 foot wall, were all the low ropes. High ropes are meant for adults and even





Now onto the rooms. A room can fit around 2-5 people and it felt like home, at least for me. So once you find your room you can either chat with your roommates or go to the common room. For those of you who do not know what a common room is, it is a room that your whole dorm can meet in. It looks like an arcade!

For me personally, I had no problems from being away from home, but you can talk to the counselors if you feel home sick and they try to make it as comfortable as possible. And do not worry parents, your child/children are in the hands of amazing, comforting people.

So, I hope you got a little feel of Thompson Island and I am not going to tell you anything else because I want you to experience it. 4th graders who are going to 5th grade, you are going to love it and enjoy every moment.



Laugh Out Loud Jokes

By Joonsung Chyung

**WHY DOES EVERYONE
HATE WINDOWS?**



BECAUSE THEY'RE A PANE!!!!!!

**WHAT DID THE WRAPPING
PAPER SAY AT ROLL CALL?**



PRESENT!!!!!!

**WHAT HAPPENS WITH A
TOOTHBRUSH IN ANTARTICA?**



FLOSSBITE!!!!!!



Please join us at the next Star club meeting in the Hastings library:

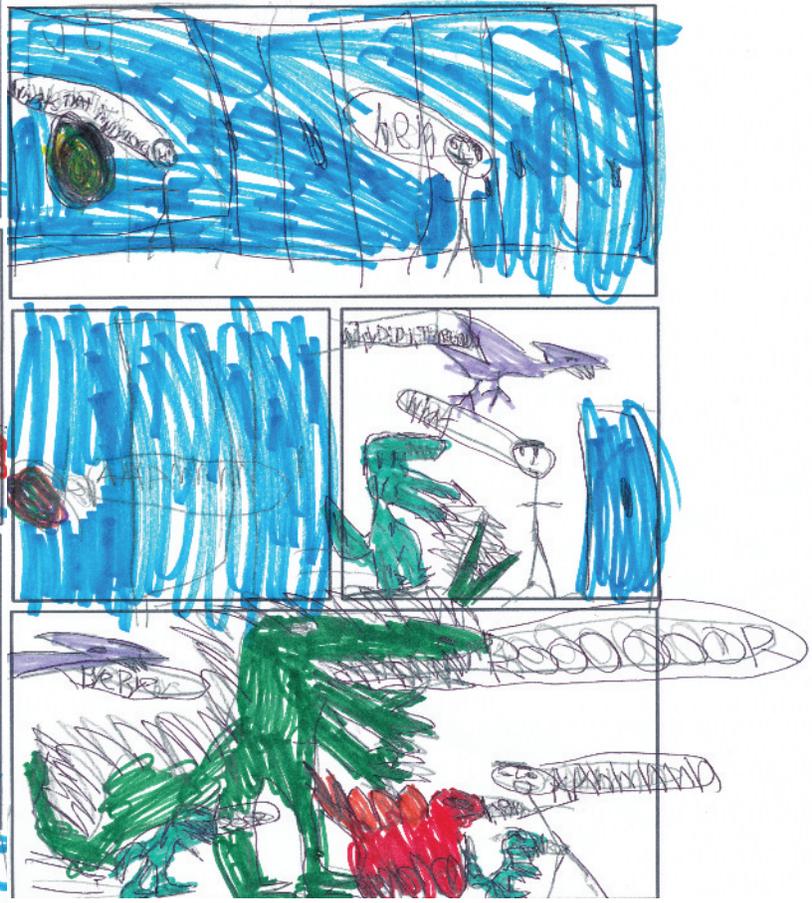
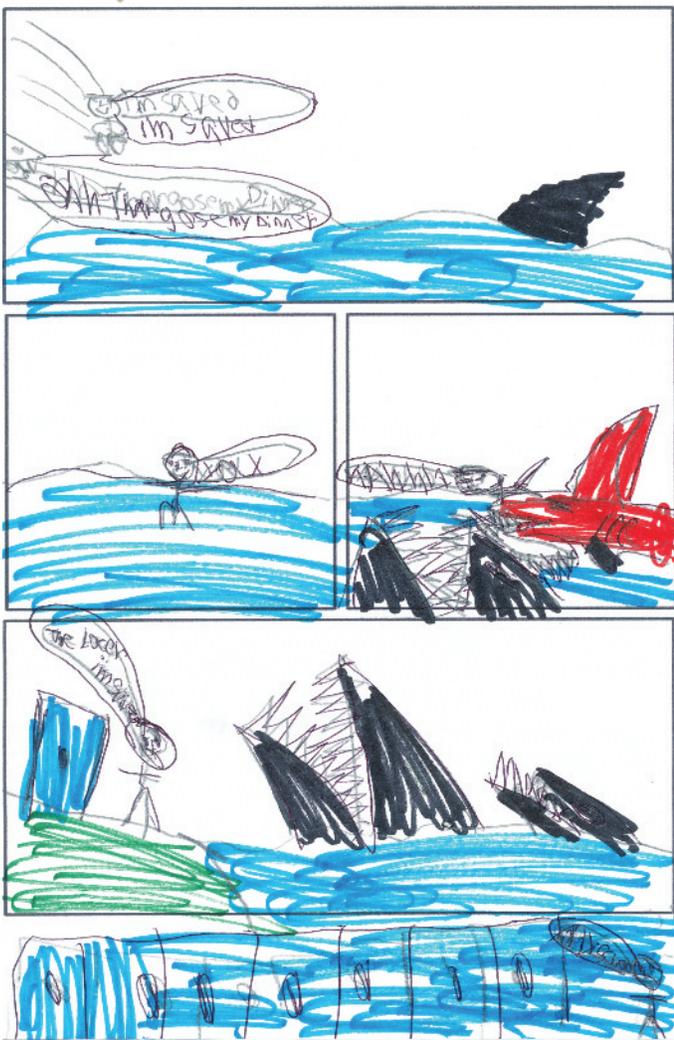
March 24: 3:15-4:15

April 12: 1:00-2:00

May 10: 3:15-4:15

Deadline for Star submissions: May 19

↑ CARTOON BY MADDI MORAN (GRADE 4)



- CARTOON BY JACK SULLIVAN (2ND GRADE)