

Read about
this stinky
flower p.3



Snoz approved
comics
p. 6,7

WEST CENTRAL EXPRESS

A PROJECT OF SPARK CENTRAL'S WEST CENTRAL PUBLISHING UNION AT LEVEL UP AFTER SCHOOL

NO COST • West Central, Spokane, Washington, USA, Earth, Solar System, Milky Way Galaxy • Dec. 2023 • Issue No. 14

THE FIRST SPOKANE PRIDE



Lienn, Braxton, Harlow, and Madison (mentor) pose with Nancy, a participant in the first Spokane Pride, and Corey, current organizer of Spokane Pride. Grade, Holmes
Photo credit: Maddy (5th Grade, Holmes)

BY LIENN
3rd grade // Holmes

My family started going to Spokane Pride in 2022. That's where I met the people from Spark and Level Up. It was really fun because there was a bubble machine dance party, lots of food, and all sorts of fun booths. There were lots of people and even animals in the parade before the Pride Festival in Riverfront Park. My family felt safe and happy.

I got to interview someone [Marion] who was an organizer for the first Pride Parade in Spokane. The first Pride ever was in 1970 in New York City, but Spokane didn't get one until 1992, 22 years after the first one. "We were a little late to the party," Marion said.

At the first Spokane Pride they had more people than expected, but some people wore bags on their heads because they were scared of protestors attacking them. Lisa Brown was at the first Spokane Pride. Lisa Brown is the new mayor of Spokane. I hope you learned a lot about the first Spokane Pride!

THE INTERVIEW WITH OFFICER SETH WOLFE

BY MADDOX
5th grade // Audubon

When I met Officer Seth Wolfe at Level Up, the first question I asked Officer Seth Wolfe was, "Where did you grow up?," and officer Seth said, "I was born and raised in Spokane." The second question I asked officer Seth Wolfe was, "What do you do in the police force?," and Officer Seth Wolfe said, "I am in the SWAT team."

The third question I asked Officer Seth Wolfe was, "What has changed since the black man was beaten by a police officer in Minnesota?," and Officer Seth Wolfe said more training and more of a people-to-people conversation. And that concludes my interview with Officer Seth Wolfe.



Karen, Maddox, Zoey, Wren, Officer Seth Wolfe, Delaney, and Nora pose after their interview at Audubon Elementary. Photo credit: Spark staff

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AND OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS & MENTORS
TERRY • GARY • LILA • MADISON • SAMI • LINDSAY • AVERY • ELLA • OLIVIA • RJ • AMY • KELYSE
KATIE • WILLOW • SHAWN VESTAL



STORIES, PHOTOS & MORE AT
SPARK-CENTRAL.ORG/PUBLISHING

ALL ABOUT OUR BOTTLES

BY JAYCE

3rd grade // Holmes, with help from other Holmes students



Photo Wikipedia CC

Excavations - they happen here, too, not just Egypt. Brian Martin excavated about 15,000 bottles into garbage holes in the early 1900s here in Spokane. He dug between the 1980s and 90s. He donated his bottles to remind people that the things we use and throw away don't really go away. Valerie Wahl and Cindy Short took his donation to start the Spokane Bottle Project and inspire art and stories about the bottles. This is one of those stories.

Level Up students were each able to pick out a bottle from the collection. We looked on Google using the clues on the bottles to get information about our bottles and about what the bottles might have been used for. Ariana's bottle was from local pharmacy, a prescription for "Tummy Troubles," and we were able to find a picture of it. The building now holds a pub.

"My bottle held medicine for 'Ladies Days'" - Carly

"My bottle says E.R. Durkee and Co. NEW YORK. It says Salad Dressing. I wonder what flavor?" -Harlow

There were bottles of all kinds, big and small, different shapes, and the bottles were used for all sorts of things.

"We think my bottle was for perfume." -Lien

Plastic bottles are now used to store all sorts of things and can be recycled into toys, art, or other nice things, so if we recycle and reuse them someday archaeologists will not have to wonder about all our junk.

DANGEROUS DOGS

BY HARLOW

4th grade // Holmes

So the SCRAPS officer was talking to my group about dangerous dogs. If a dog is declared dangerous they will have 4 options. First, register as dangerous and the owner has to build barriers. Second, you may euthanize the dog. Third, the owner can rehome the dog out of Spokane County. Fourth, appeal the SCRAPS decision to the court. The end, the end, the end, the end, the end, the end.

WHY DO KILL SHELTERS EXIST!!!!

BY MADDY AND CARLY

5th grade // Holmes

According to Petpedia.com, 52% of all shelters in the U.S. are kill shelters. Approximately 390,000 dogs are killed yearly at shelters, 530,000 cats are killed yearly (140,000 more cats are killed than dogs) and about 920,000 animals are killed yearly. Between 4,000 and 10,000 animals are killed in shelters DAILY! 25% of animals entering shelters are killed. 9 out of 10 killed animals are adoptable, having no painful or life threatening conditions.

There are around 14,000 shelters and rescue groups in the U.S. About 1.4 million shelter animals are adopted yearly and about 810,000 are returned to their owners. Animal shelters nationwide take in as many as 6.3 million cats and dogs annually housing them in over 3,500 different facilities.

Right now the SCRAPS shelter has around 80 dogs and around 60 cats. Always tell your parents or guardian if you see a hurt or lost animal. If an animal isn't spayed/neutered, but has a microchip, but is not licensed it is a \$53 fine. If your dog or cat bites someone and it breaks the skin, it's put under house arrest for 10 days.

KATRINA THE FLORIST

BY CHLOE

5th grade // Audubon



Katrina Dalke, Lilac City Blooms florist, answers student questions at Holmes Elementary.

Photo credit: Spark staff

I had a chance to interview this florist named Katrina. Katrina is a florist that works at Lilac City Blooms. She has been working there for 3 years and one thing that inspired her was her mother-in-law. Katrina also said that some of her favorite flowers are roses, dahlias, and peonies. She always was

interested in being a florist since she was a little one. Katrina wants to be that person who sells flowers for a big event. She followed her dreams and ended up doing it.

OPINION: WHY FRIENDS BACKSTAB EACH OTHER

BY KAREN

5th grade // Audubon

WARNING: There could be trigger words.

If your friends backstab you, I might know why. One reason why could be because they're ignored or abused at home. Another reason could be that they are dealing with recent heartbreak, something that recently happened. These are just a few reasons. There could be another reason and you can ask someone else about it.

CROSSING IS RESPONSIBILITY

BY CARSON

5th grade // Holmes

My name is Carson and I have been a crossing guard. I care about being a crossing guard because I get to be very responsible and help people. I don't worry about getting run over because I follow safety instructions.

I like it when it rains, I don't mind that; I can wear rain gear. I don't like it when it snows. When I work as a crossing guard I like how I feel. I feel like part of the community. Being a crossing guard can be hard, but not too hard.

Use the whistle only when going out into the street - a good crossing guard needs to pay attention and follow the rules. With great power comes great responsibility. I recommend this job to responsible people.



Carson on duty
Photo by Spark staff

HAVE A HOT TIP OR LETTER TO THE EDITOR? WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Email our Assistant Editor, Snoz, at snoz@spark-central.org.

FAKE NAILS

BY JAISA

4th Grade // Audubon



Sparkly fake nails
Photo credit: Wikipedia CC

OK, so we are talking about nails. We need facts, so let's start! If you are wondering how long can fake nails get... they are fake, so you can make them as long as you want. They can stay on for multiple weeks.

You can make them last longer if you get them filled in every two weeks or so. Filling is when the nail artist adds new acrylic into the space where your nail grew out and created a gap.

When you want to take them off without ruining or hurting your real nail underneath, you need to soak them in acetone. If you use them right, fake nails can make you look and feel cuter.

GHOSTS

BY NORA

5th grade // Audubon



Haunted house
Photo credit: Wikipedia CC

I talked to people about if ghosts are real or not real. I asked, "Do you believe ghosts are real?" 10 people believed in ghosts. 4 people did not believe in ghosts. *The New York Times* shared that half of people claimed their house was haunted.

Ghosts are creepy. Sometimes they don't even have eyes. Wow, that is a fun fact! Ghosts are found in hotels and houses. They can also be found in restaurants and sometimes on boats. You cannot see them in pictures. Some ghosts live in mansions.

You should tell the buyer [of a house] that it is a haunted house in New York if you're trying to sell and it's illegal if you're trying to sell it without telling the buyer.

FLOWERS :)

BY ARIANA

5th Grade // Holmes Elementary

You should read this so you can know facts about all different types of flowers!

Did you know that most flowers grow thorns, spikes, or prickles to defend themselves? The inside of a flower is called a pistil. Broccoli is a flower.

Some flowers don't need soil, instead they use air to get their nutrients. Some flowers produce toxic substances that kill other flowers, such as sunflowers. Not all flowers smell good. There are over 400,000 types of flowering plants all over the world. Titan arum, or corpse flower, is a flower that smells like rotting meat.



Broccoli is a flower.
Photo credit: Wikipedia CC

Each sunflower can have over 2,000 seeds. There are over 32,000 types of flowers in North America. If a flower is not harmful to humans, you could drink the nectar.

According to Littlelearningcorner.com, gas plants are flowers that produce extremely flammable oil! On a hot day those flowers could burst into flames!



Corpse flower in bloom
Photo credit: Wikipedia CC

Studies show that flowers can make people happier and feel more connected to people. Flowers help the air quality that we breathe! Some types of flowers, such as lilies and gerberas, produce a large amount of oxygen.

Tulip bulbs were more valuable than gold in Holland in the 1600s. The largest flower in the world is called the Titan arum, which is 10 feet high and 3 feet wide. You can find the Titan arum in Indonesia. I hope you liked these facts from my article.

HOW IT IS OWNING CATS

BY KAREN

5th grade // Audubon



Art by Karen

In my opinion, cats are the best animals. And I will give you some pros and cons on owning cats.

Pros: you can snuggle with them, they can comfort you at tough times, they can make you laugh, and they are adorable.

Cons: Sometimes they meow too much, they knock over things, you have to clean their litter box constantly, and sometimes their cat toys are very obnoxious.

These are the pros and cons of having a cat or 2. Do you agree with these pros and cons?

TORNADOS SUCK!

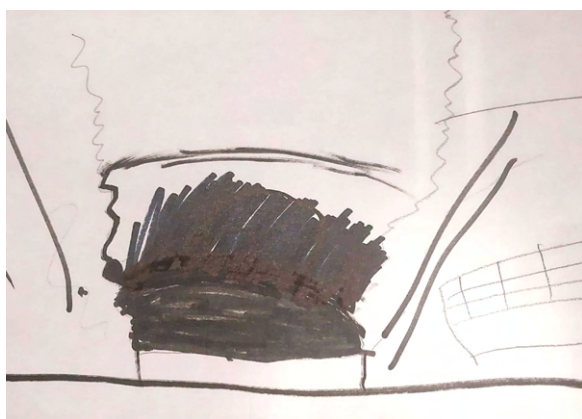


Illustration by Noah

BY NOAH
3rd grade // Audubon

You might not believe that tornados happen here in Spokane, but actually they do and that's why you should know about them. In May of 2004, a hybrid F0 bow echo tornado touched down in Spokane. Storms merged to create a vortex that damaged trees, blew off

roofs, and caused as much as eight inches of hail to accumulate according to Weather.gov. Weather.gov says that at least one tornado touches down in Washington state every year.

Tornadoes can be very dangerous. If you are caught outside in one, find

the lowest spot you can, get low and cover your head. If you are inside go to the basement if you have one or to the inside of the house away from windows if you do not have a basement. Make sure your house has a well stocked med kit just in case.

Recently, my dad and I, who are storm chasers, watched an F5 that touched down in Arkansas. We watched from several miles away to stay safe. It was a large supercell tornado that was a mile and a half wide. I saw an entire hotel tip over and roll away! I was really excited and happy to be hanging out with my dad doing something like that. When I grow up I don't want to fly into storms for a job, but I would like to keep storm chasing and helping people learn about tornados so they can stay safe. If you are interested in learning more about tornados or other types of weather check out Weather.gov or even Google. Weather can be exciting!

THE HISTORY OF THE MEGALODON – THE FACTS

BY MAEVE
3rd grade // Holmes

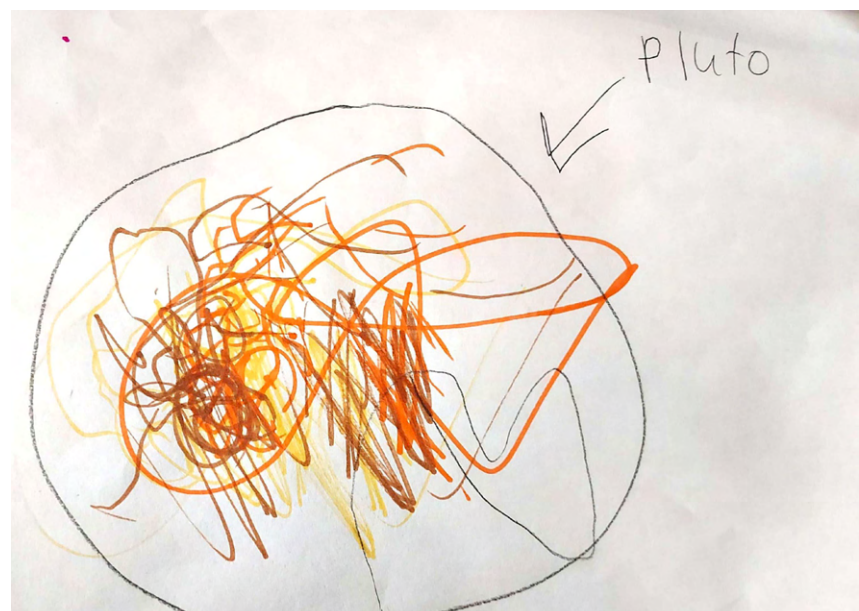
The megalodon was over 50 feet long. I want the megalodon to still be around and not to be around. If the megalodon were still around you should not put megalodon in an aquarium, because the megalodon will take up all the space.



Photo credit: Jon Zander

PLUTO

LEILA
4th grade // Audubon

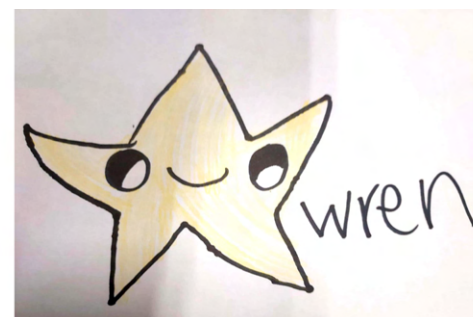


Pluto was discovered in 1930.

WHY ARE STARS CREATED?

BY WREN
3rd grade // Audubon

We interviewed Professor Syphers of Eastern Washington University on Tuesday, November 21, 2023 about stars. What are stars made of? Helium and hydrogen gases make up stars. How far away are stars from Earth? Light years. Stars are always in the sky, but we can see them best at night. I always wondered what stars were made of and why we can see them better at night.



Drawing by Wren

SPORTS

ALL ABOUT BASKETBALL

BY TERENCE
5th grade // Audubon

I researched all about basketball. When was basketball invented? Basketball was invented in 1891. Where was a basketball invented? Basketball was invented in Springfield, Massachusetts. Who invented basketball? James Naismith invented basketball. What would you do if you had no basketball?



Illustration by Terence

OPINION BY DEAN

BY DEAN
5th grade // Audubon



Photo credit: Wikipedia CC

The best team in my opinion is the Buccaneers cause of Tom Brady. 94 points? No, I'm not going against him. He's better than all the other QBs. He has like 2,000 complete passes and he would have like 3,000 passes if he didn't throw them in the wrong direction. That's why the Buccaneers are better than any team. I think the Washington Commanders are close. This matters cause I like this team and football.

PHOTOJOURNALISM



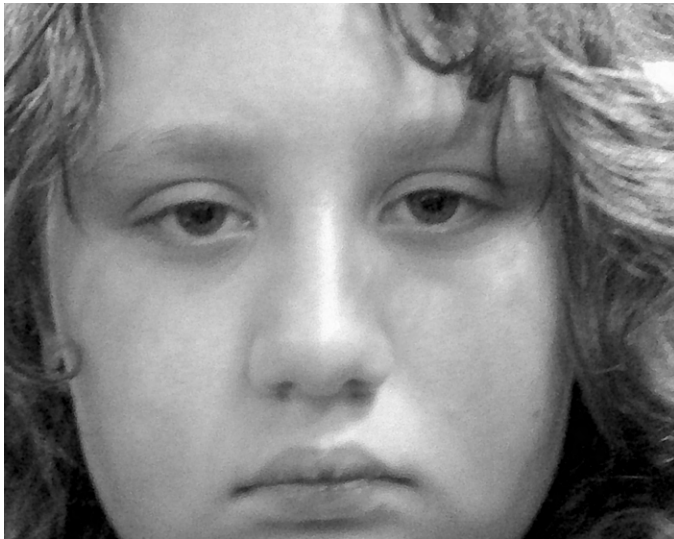
Several students in Audubon's Level Up Press Club are interested in becoming police officers when they grow up. Officers Daniel Valencia and Seth Wolfe generously gave their time to our young journalists to answer dozens of questions about their profession! - Spark staff



"I had the idea of making a photo of having an Idea." - Lienn, 3rd grade, Holmes



We had a sweet staff "Oh No! I ate the honey I ate the honey [The honey f -Leila, 4th grade



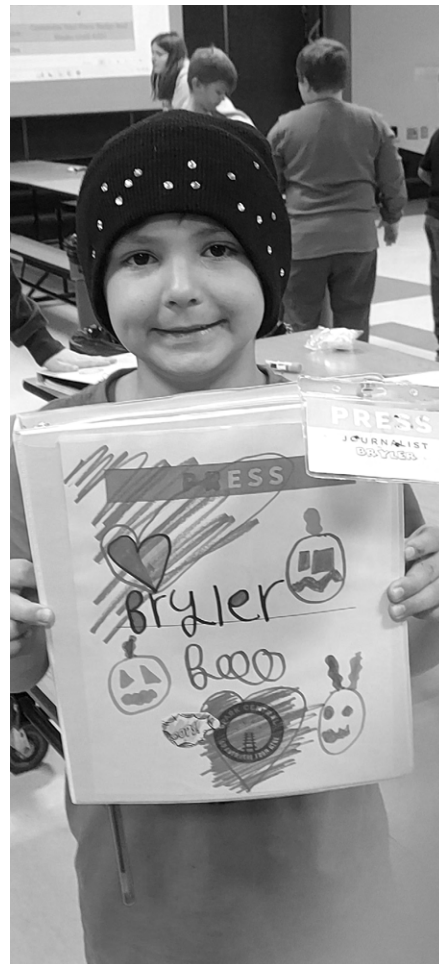
"We were learning how to take pictures for the newspaper. I took this close up of my sister." - Jayce, 3rd grade, Holmes



"In this picture I am upside down so the photographer could get a unique perspective. Next time I would crop the picture in closer. Maybe I will try a head stand." - Noah, 3rd grade, Audubon



Spark Program Coordinator Terra Price reads a story to press club members at the beginning of an immersive mystery game designed to practice their investigatory skills. - Spark staff



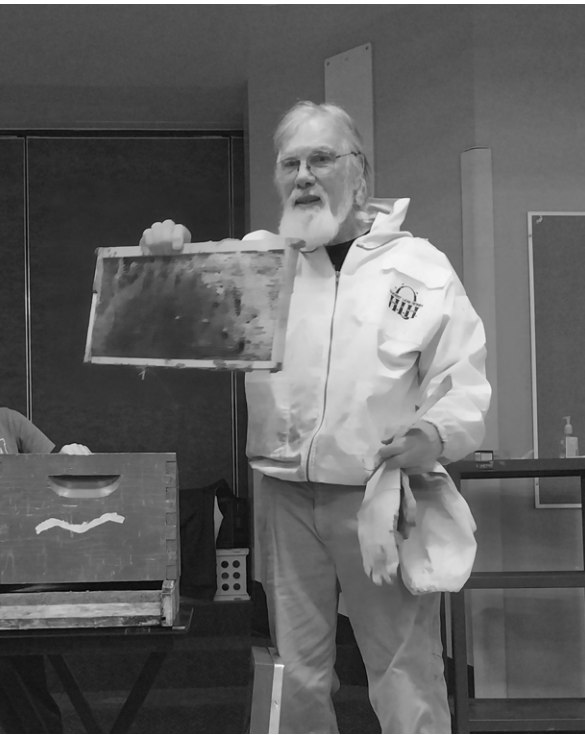
"Bryler looks nice in this picture." Maeve, 3rd grade, Holmes



Spark Program Director Wilson Faust posed for our young journalists. - Spark staff "This type of picture is called a portrait. I like it because Wilson looks happy." -Kennedy, 4th grade "This is Wilson in his usual Wilson costume. See his hat, sweater, and beard, that's how you can tell it's him." -Ariana, 4th grade, Audubon



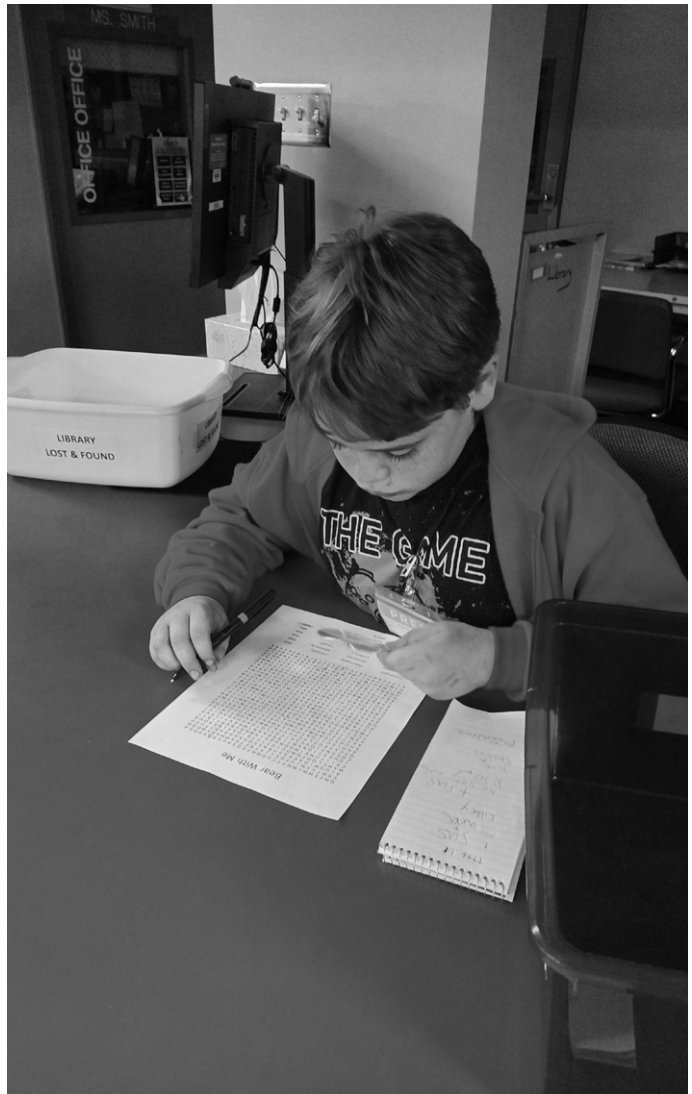
"We got to peek inside this bouquet to see what holds it together. We also learned [from florist Katrina Dalke], 'The most popular flower is roses.'" -Lienn, 3rd grade, Holmes



Guest visit from local beekeeper Steven Price. - Spark staff
"I'm stealing the honey and no one can stop me!... Ok it tastes weird." -Jaisa, 4th grade, Audubon
"The honey [from the honeycomb] is sweeter than storebought." -Maddie, Audubon



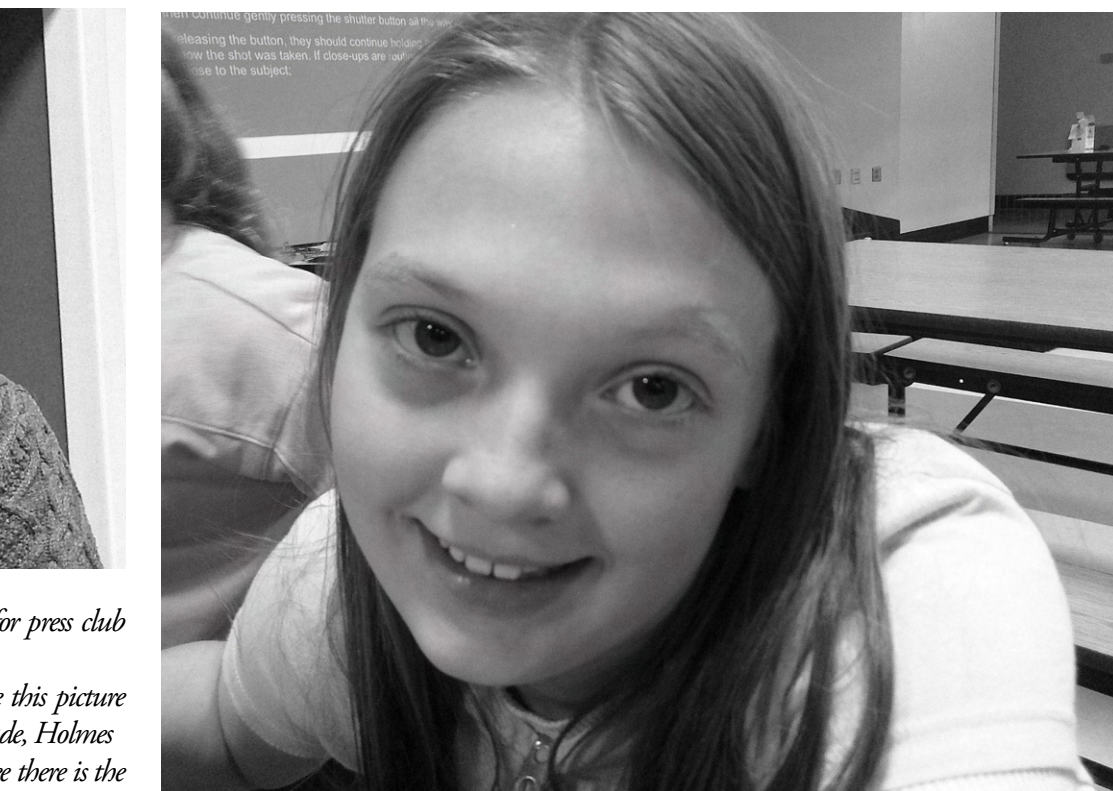
Zeke shows off an air dry clay sculpture during creative choice time. - Spark staff



Level Up students practiced their investigatory skills in October by working together to solve a mystery of a kidnapped teddy bear. Here, Dean (5th grade, Audubon) closely examines a potential clue with a magnifying glass. - Spark staff



"My picture is called a silhouette. It turned out cool!" - Jayce, 3rd grade, Holmes



"I'm for press club
I took this picture
of my friend,
Maddie, Holmes
because there is the
best Wilson!" -

Carly (5th grade, Holmes) poses for a close up during our photography lesson. - Spark staff



Level Up students reflected on solving the mystery of Barnsie the teddy bear's kidnapping. - Spark staff
"Barnsie got kidnapped. He went down Garland and wandered down the street. He stumbled upon Bigfoot Records. I personally want to go there." -Maddy, 5th grade, Holmes
"The bear went to the place my mom used to work!" -Tariq, 3rd grade, Holmes
"He went to my favorite burger place!" -Leila, 4th grade, Audubon

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CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT

DEMON SLAYER

BY AUDRIENNA
3rd Grade // Audubon

Demon Slayer is an anime show. It's a fun show to watch, but it's scary. Get comfortable. What you see in the show is demons eating people. If you are a little kid don't watch it. It is scary - you might get scared. When you grow up you can watch it. You will get scared when the demons eat people. And you should ask your mom to watch Demon Slayer.



Photo credit: Vu Hoang

PERCY JACKSON!

BY CORRINE
3rd grade // Audubon



Illustration credit: Wikipedia CC

I like the books and movies so much I think I'll watch it tonight. I'll also read the rest of the 2nd book. Percy has a little sister. In the last book Percy is a dad with his wife, Annabeth, and his son. I'm the #1 fan of PERCY JACKSON!

WHAT CAN YOU FIND IN THESE PLACES,

a found poem

BY KENNEDY
4th Grade // Holmes

- Rodeos
- cowboy
- Cowgirls
- Ranch
- Cattle
- Horses
- Some cowboys work on ranches

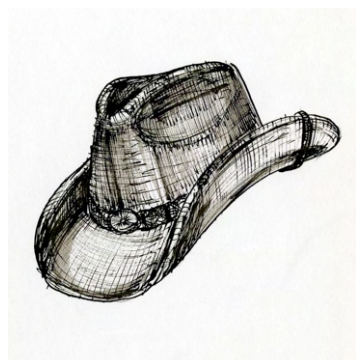


Illustration credit: David Ring

SOFIE DOSSI

BY THEALANAN
3rd grade // Audubon

She is an elite gymnast. She started at 12 years old she grew up in a city of Cypress. She was homeschooled from an age by her mother. Her father Mike has helped with her career.

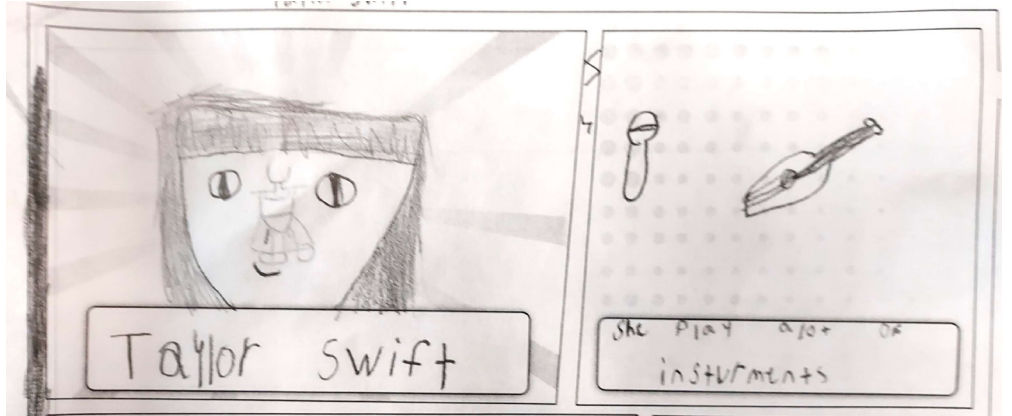


Photo of Sofie Dossi
Photo credit: Le Monde de Nicox

She is an actress. At 12 years old she discovered her talent. She made a new song named BUNNY.

TAYLOR SWIFT

BY DELANEY
4th grade // Audubon



Comic by Delaney

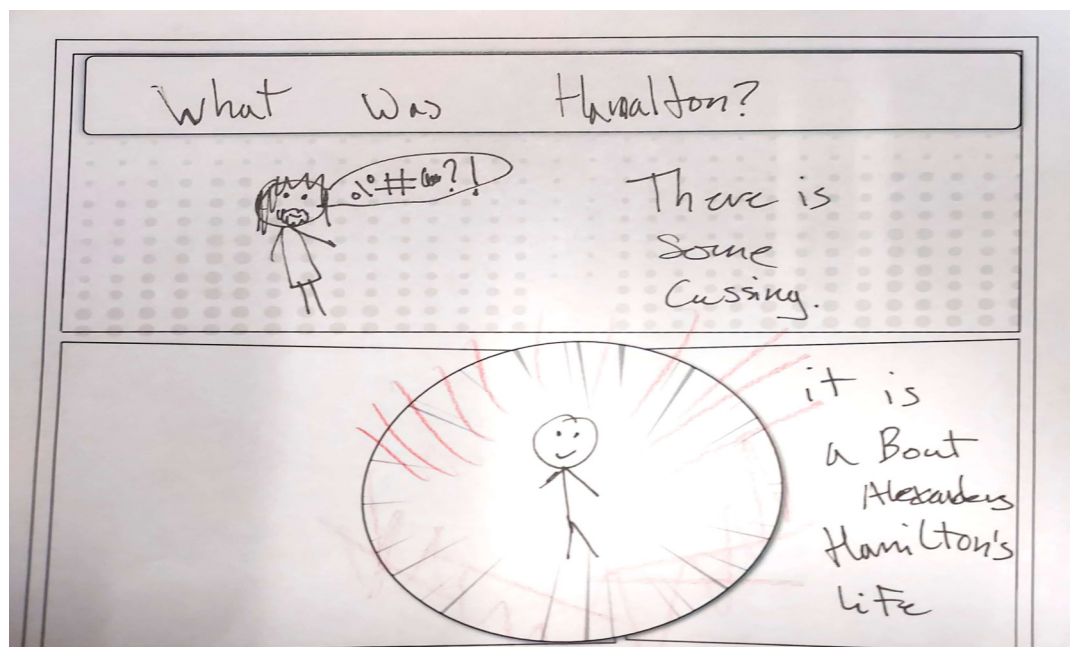
Taylor Allison Swift is a great songwriter and she's the one who makes songs - she makes ALL her songs. Her lucky number is 13. She loves her fans. Taylor Allison Swift was the youngest to win a Grammy for an album of the year at age 20. Taylor Swift always tries to help like when a child had terminal brain cancer she tried to help. Some of my favorite songs are "22," "Lover," "You Belong With Me," "Shake It Off," and "Paper Rings."

WHAT IS BROADWAY'S HAMILTON?

BY AINSLEY
4th grade // Audubon

Hamilton was a play made in 2016. It includes Lin-Manuel Miranda, Leslie Odom Jr., Phillipa Soo, Renée Elise Goldsberry, Christopher Jackson, and even more!

The whole play is two hrs., twenty-two mins. long! It has a little swearing, but the plot & story is really good. It goes through Alexander Hamilton's life.



Comic by Ainsley

THE AMAZING GYARADOS

BY TARIQ

3rd grade // Holmes

Pokémon are really strong and Gyarados is super strong. Gyarados is a sea snake. Gyarados does lots of damage. Gyarados has lots of health. You should catch him in Pokémon Go!

MISSINGNO: THE GLITCH POKEMON

BY ZEKE

3rd grade // Holmes

I'd never seen a Pokémon named MissingNo. The name of the glitch Pokémon is MissingNo. The glitch Pokémon can be caught. Paste Magazine says, "Players could trick the original games into thinking a small strip of land on Cinnabar Island is a patch of grass which allowed for all kinds of exploits." MissingNo has 5 different sprites. Based on your name you would learn what type of sprite MissingNo is. I think people that like Pokémon should try to catch MissingNo.

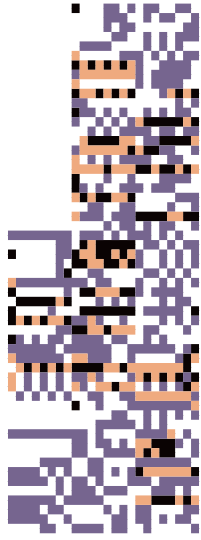


Photo credit: Wikipedia CC

MINECRAFT IS MINING & CRAFTING

BY ALFREDO

3rd Grade // Holmes

The Minecraft exhibit at the Spokane museum was very cool.

Minecraft is a game where you mine and craft. You can build houses and a tent for a chain reaction machine.

The exhibit was cool because it showed everyone how the video game works. They had computers to let us play the game.

I like creative mode, because you don't have to survive and I don't have to go looking for the ingredients. I also like to hunt animals.

The game was created by Markus Persson, who is from Sweden. He sold the game for \$2.5 billion.



Alfredo holds a clay sculpture of a Minecraft zombie
Photo credit: Spark staff

VIDEO GAMES

BY ABE

4th grade // Holmes

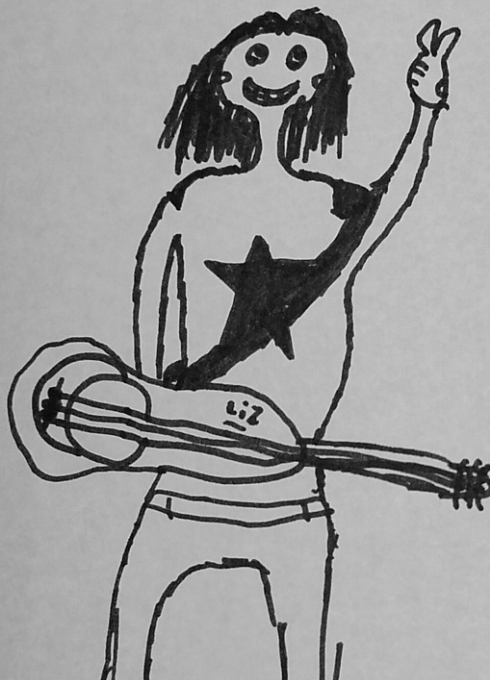
Video games are something kids and grown-ups love, there's no doubt. One of the most known video games is Minecraft. My favorite video game is Fortnite. Fortnite is an online first-person shooter where you jump out of a flying bus in the beginning.

But that's only my favorite game on Nintendo consoles. There are more gaming consoles! Like the Oculus 2, my favorite game on that is Breachers. Breachers is an online team shooter with two teams, the blue team and a yellow team. The blue team breaches to stop the bombs with an E.M.P. The yellow team has planted [the bombs]. The yellow team tries to protect the bombs. And there is a bunch of other stuff in Breachers that you will have to find out on your own. Video games are really fun and you should try them if you haven't.



Photo credit: Vu Hoang

LIZ VISITS LEVEL UP



FROM THE EDITOR:

Liz Rognes, local musician and founder of Girls Rock Lab, visited Level Up to answer questions at Holmes Elementary.

Although an article on the interview was not written in time to print, we thank Liz for bringing music to our young journalists and artists!

Thank you,
Liz!

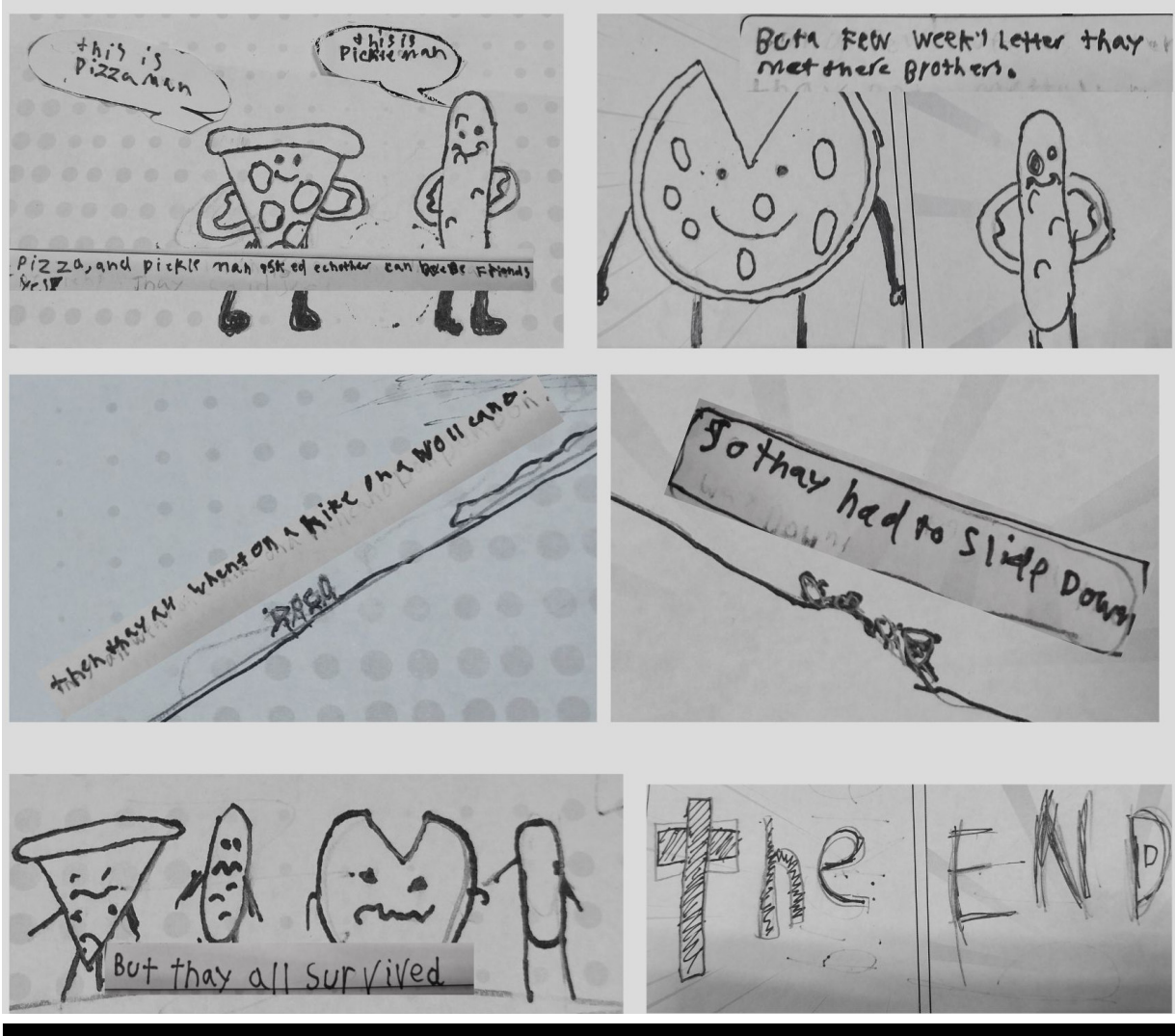
Illustration by Carson

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FOOD FAMILY

BRAXTON
5th grade // Holmes



SNOZ

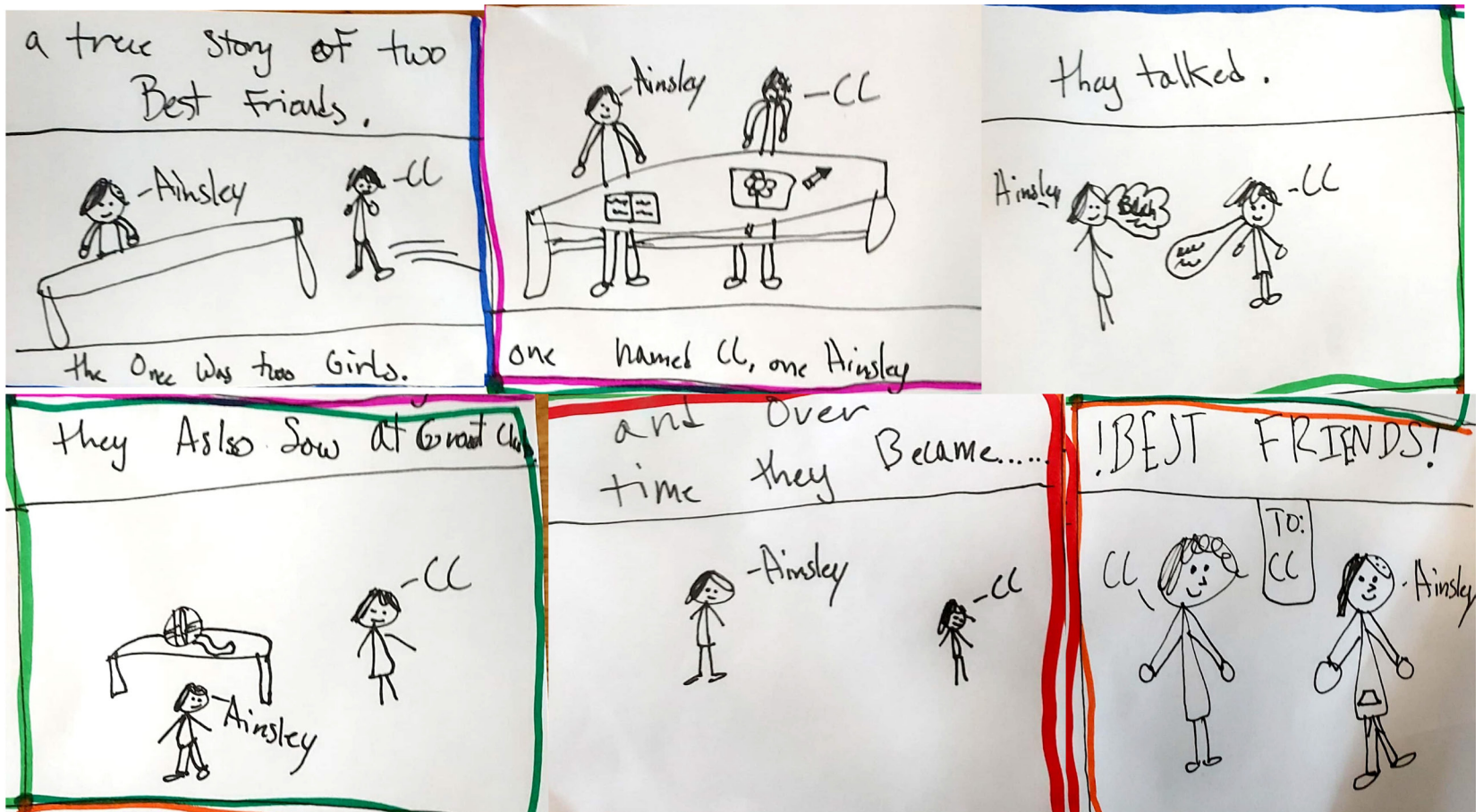
ALLISON
4th grade // Holmes



THESE COMICS ARE SNOZ APPROVED

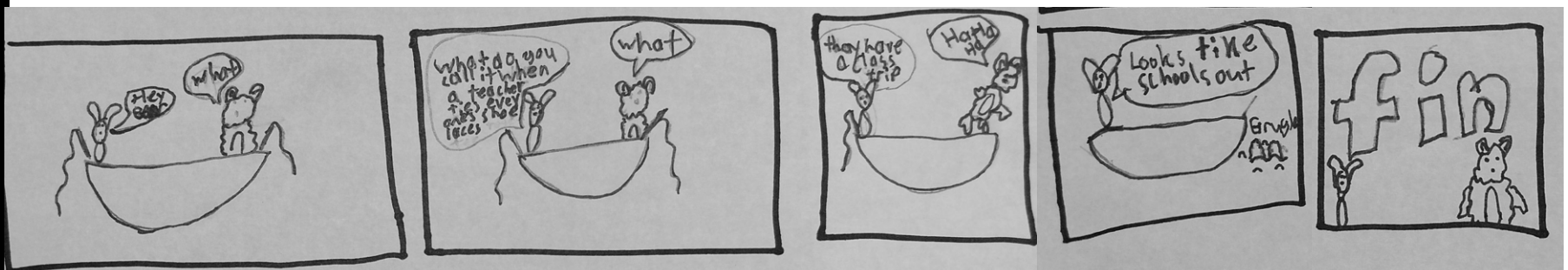
2 BEST FRIENDS

CORRINE
3rd grade // Audubon



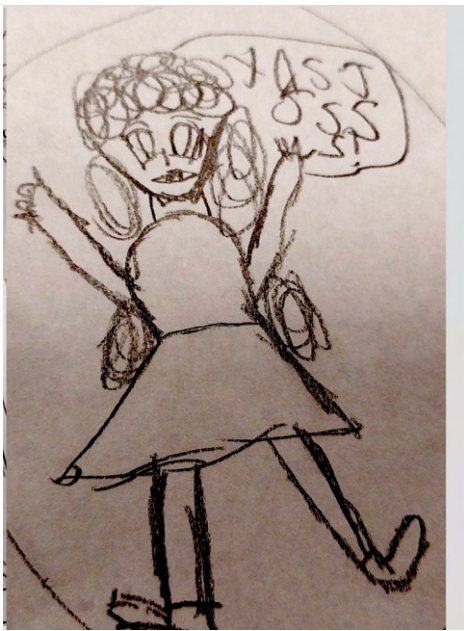
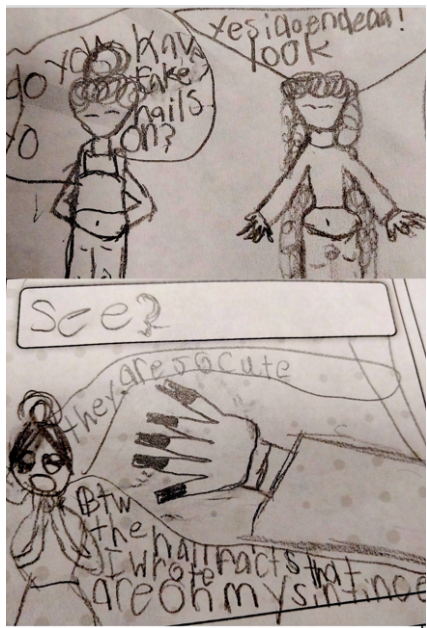
RABBIT AND BEAR

ALLISON
4th grade // Holmes



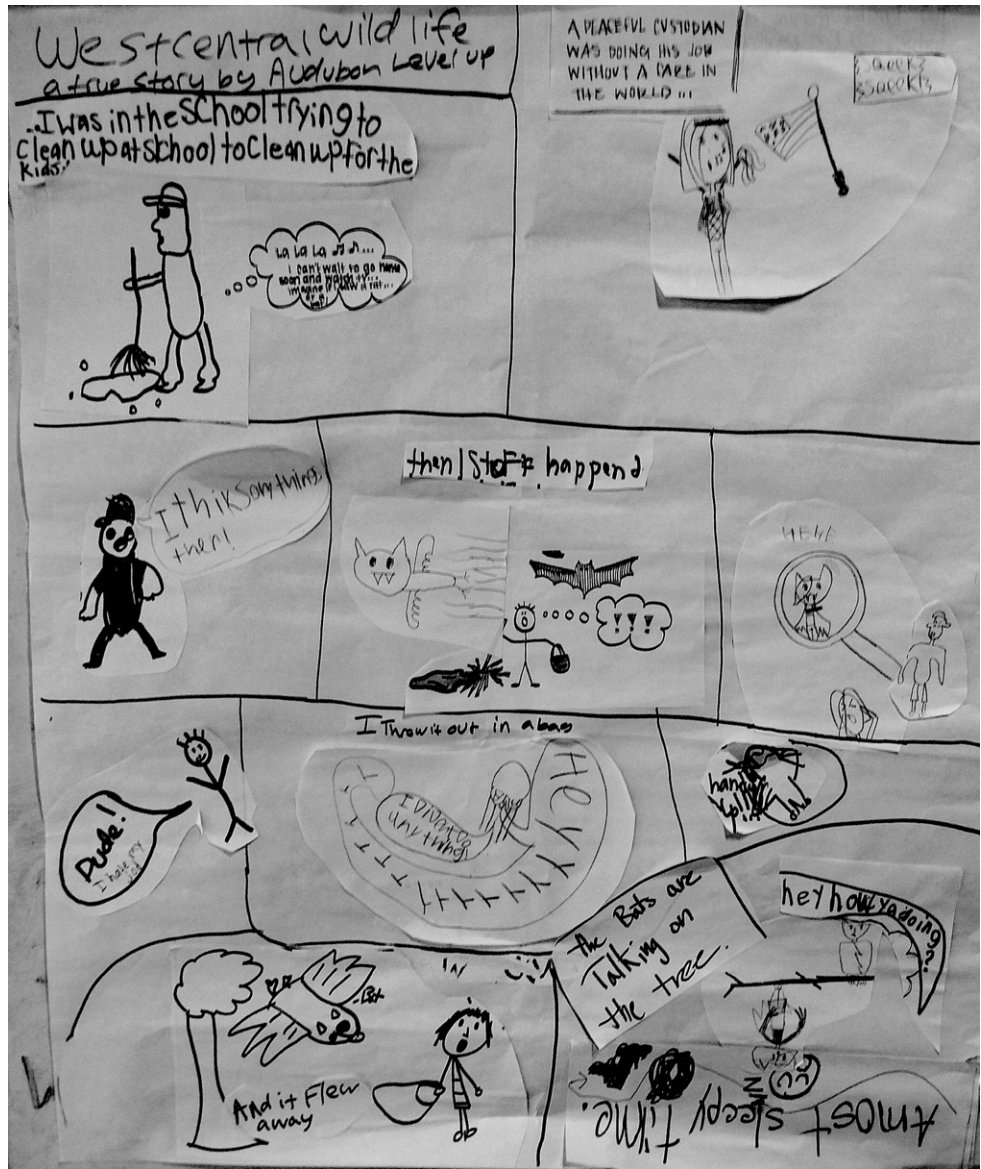
FAKE NAILS!

JAISA
4th grade // Audubon



WEST CENTRAL WILDLIFE

AUDUBON GROUP PROJECT



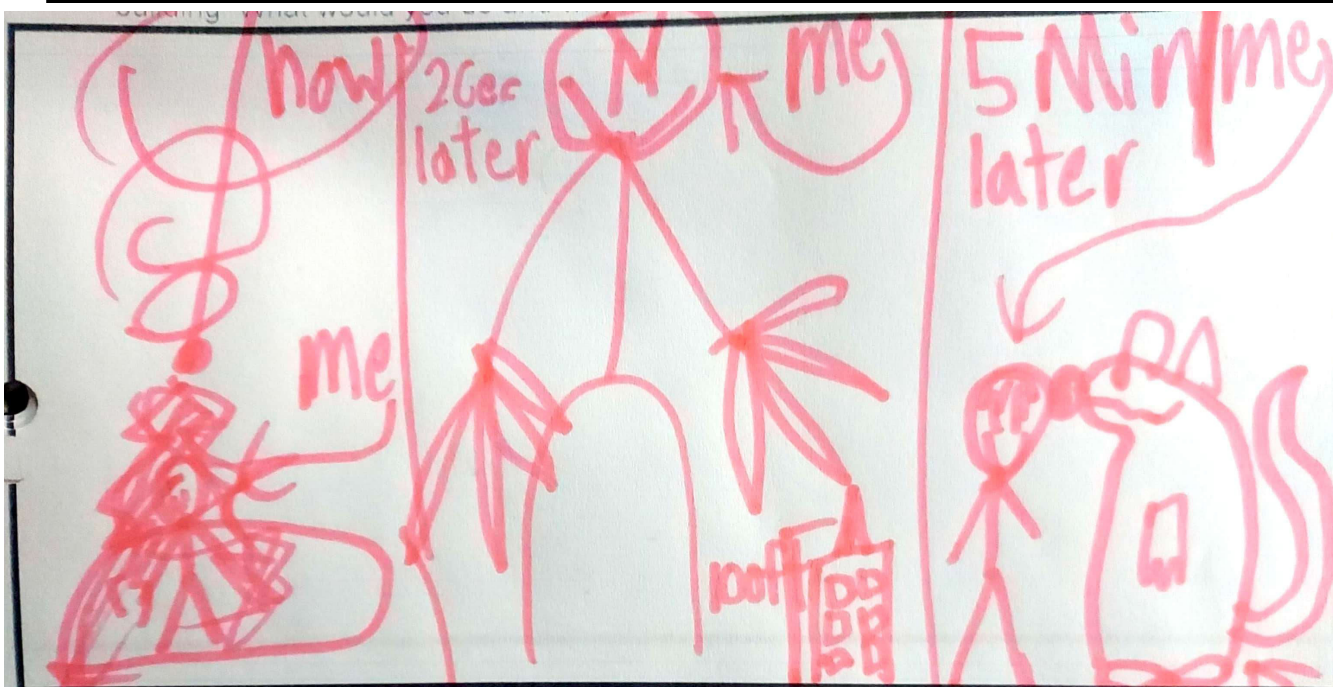
BIG BUTS 2

ABE
4th grade // Holmes



BIG BUTS IN SHARPIE

ABE
4th grade // Holmes



BIGGER AND SMALLER

TREFIN
5th grade // Audubon

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We break barriers to creativity so people of all economic backgrounds can create the future they imagine.

A BIT ABOUT MENTORS

READ ON TO SEE IF YOU'RE A GOOD FIT!

Mentors can read great stories. Parents are great mentors. Mentors can play.

– Alfredo, Grade 3, Holmes

Hello world. We at Level Up are looking for a funny mentor. That is all, world.

– Dean, Grade 5, Audubon

I want a mentor to be kind and smart.

– Maeve, Grade 3, Holmes

Mentors are creative, kind, caring, [and] nice.

– Carson, Grade 5, Holmes

Hello we are looking for a funny mentor for Level Up!!

– Terence, Grade 5, Audubon

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HELP WANTED

YOU COULD HANG WITH THESE COOL KIDS



HELLO, is your dream to be a mentor in Level Up? Well, if so, you're in luck because Level Up needs mentors. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Audubon & Wednesdays and Fridays at Holmes from 3-5 p.m.



SCAN ME FOR MORE INFO

*Psst!
Karen wrote
this ad!*



Karen, mentor & Chloe

Mentors need these qualities:
NICE
FUNNY
HELPFUL
HONEST
CARING
FORGIVING
If you are all these things, you just gotta sign up! Contact Spark Central today!

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