Woodlawn Middle School, Final Spring Edition, June 2015

The Griot

Sponsors: Ms. Chambers and Mr. Donahue

Cover Art by Taylor Matthews, Grade 6: Zentangle Cityscape

Art Teachers: Ms. Strenko and Ms. Sussan

Ms. Archelus, Principal
griot

[gree-oh, gree-oh, gree-ot] /griˈoʊ, 'gri əʊ, 'gri ət/ IPA Syllables

- Word Origin
- noun

1. a member of a hereditary caste among the peoples of western Africa whose function is to keep an oral history of the tribe or village and to entertain with stories, poems, songs, dances, etc.

Origin: Portuguese

From www.dictionary.com
This special issue of the *Griot* is dedicated to the memory of Freddie Gray who died in Baltimore in April 2015. His death and the subsequent riots sparked crucial conversations about police and the community.... and the belief that “All lives matter.”
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Baltimore Is My City
By Jarrod Oglesby, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

Baltimore is my city
I’m growing up here
I’ve been here for 13 years
I can’t bear that this is happening
I won’t go there and cause destruction
Because I love Baltimore
And I will never cause corruption
Baltimore is my city
And I want everyone to say it with me
Say it with me
Baltimore is my city
Say it
Baltimore
Possession
By Mohammed Yansane, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

Freddie Gray was in possession of a knife.
His death started all of the strife.
Ten hour curfews where the only fights were
If you were caught at night defending his rights
The police started the whole fight.
Barriers in the streets were sealed tight.
Riots from day to night.
People stealing from stores
Everybody’s becoming poor.
Without violence it would be silence.
Violence
I don’t think it’s fair how the white police are always judging black people. Well, it’s not all white people that judge black people. Not all black people act the same way. For example, when a black person dies they put a ghetto picture on television to represent the person. When a white person dies they put on a good picture, a picture of the person graduating from high school or something positive. They say the white person doesn’t deserve to die, yet they seem to be saying poor black people are better off dead. I do not like the way many white people judge black people. Not all, but too many view black lives as less valuable.
Chaos in Baltimore City

By Christina Atkins, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

I don’t like the things that are going on in my city during the recent riots. People are rioting and destroying things in their own community. People are looting, and they broke into Mondawmin Mall and were stealing clothes and shoes. There was this helicopter that caught everybody’s tag number who was stealing from the mall and most of those people got caught.

These people in Baltimore City were stealing from the corner stores, and trashing their communities they live in. Teenagers were setting cars and buses on fire. People was standing on top of police cars destroying them. Some people went through their cars throwing paperwork and other things out. They were even throwing rocks at police or anything they could find. They destroyed a CVS. First, people were stealing things from the CVS and then they set it on fire. The fire department couldn’t make it to certain places because people were blocking them off. When they got to CVS they started to put out the fire until somebody slashed the hose. Some gang members were trying to stop the violence because they didn’t want anything else destroyed. When they burned down the CVS it affected a lot of people who live in that area because that’s where they get their medicines and other items.

I didn’t feel like any of that stuff was necessary. It was not a peaceful protest. That’s not how you get justice. All those teenagers were just doing that to get attention, and that wasn’t the right attention to get. What they did was not going to help change anything.
I feel that the recent riots in Baltimore got out of control, and people over-reacted.

It was not necessary to burn down buildings and cars, throw rocks, vandalize stores, and steal stuff, as they did. This resulted in people getting injured. And, people ended up tearing down their own city where they have to live--- over something serious, but dumb. It could have just been a peaceful protest, with no violence.
City of Chaos

By Desmon Smith, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

City o City
Looters and Thugs
Fires and Arrests
City o City
Riots and Destruction
African-American oppressed
City o City
People are hurting
Parents bury Freddie Gray
City o City
Our culture is broken
Over time there is death
City o City I love.
Riots

By Joshua Brooks, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

One last death started the riot
And this time it’s not divided.
They came together and started unrest,
But together they all made a mess.
The police stood with their riot gear
Showing no signs of stress or fear.
In the end it was just a tear
For the man who is no longer here.
The family mourned, others did too.
But the ones who cared most were the clean-up crew.
At first it was one then there were two.
More and more came realizing the damage was true.
Each wanted to make amends for all the trouble
Flames, bricks, broken glass, rubble.
All that because they couldn’t stand it anymore.
National Guard making it feel like a war.
Eventually it all calmed down and stopped.
But Freddie Gray will not be forgotten.
Why did it start?

By Dylan Forbes, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

What I think about the riots is “Why did it start?”

The police killed a man name Freddie Gray. The citizens started up the riots because some policemen killed a man. Many police around the world end up killing people and don’t get charged. The citizens felt so angry that they started riots, not peaceful protests.

The citizens couldn’t express their feelings in a peaceful protest, so they had riots to show the police officers how they feel. The citizens burned down many stores. The citizens destroyed many stores in a mall. Now they will close the mall down early. When you are angry it’s really hard to express yourself.
I feel upset because people are tearing up our neighborhood that we live in. And, it is sad because now we cannot go to the places that we want to go and get our items. We can’t go because we don’t know if it’s safe yet. We need this stuff, and we have families that you love very much and they are suffering very badly and are struggling to get what they need like clothes, shoes, money, and also medicine, food and water that they need to survive. We are suffering to get the stuff and supplies for everyday life.

And, all this is unnecessary, sad, and dangerous. Now there is also a curfew in effect because of this. And, people have to try to get home safe and sound. And, this is very hard for people that have to try to get home without getting hurt.

This is the worst thing I have ever experienced. And, I wish everything would get better and our neighborhoods would become safe. I hope after the situation returns to normal that we will not have to go through this ever again. Living and not being safe and living in a dangerous community is very stressful and unnecessary. It is so sad that all of this had to happen.

I wish it would just stop, so we can have PEACE, FREEDOM, and JUSTICE.
Consequences
By Tyheim Adams-Knight, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

It’s not fair that cops are just killing or hurting black people. We need peace and we need justice for Freddie Gray. Cops think just because they have a badge and weapons they can do what they want. Also, the protest was not a protest it was a full riot. Everything was out of control, and we were destroying our cities and stores. And, people are stealing from stores and malls and bombing cars and houses.

To me I don’t think things should have evolved into a riot. It’s going to take a while until they rebuild the things that were damaged. You know we know things were out of control when they get out the National Guard. Officials should not have to do that. It’s too much. Now we are just out of control, and we are not using our brains. We need to THINK about the consequences that we will have to face before we do something like rioting.
Corruption of Baltimore
By Nic’Kiya Hayes, Grade 7, Teacher: Mr. Donahue

They had no right to kill
To defend themselves
To protect themselves
They had no right to kill
The hooligans and thugs
They were upset
Fed up with giving up
They’re fighting for justice
From peaceful protests to devastating riots
The families wanted peace, but they declared violence.
The key is the main source to understanding
and peace in the world.
While everyone forgets and ignores,
I’m the only one looking.
There are so many things
the world has locked up---
So many things that are hard to solve.
Even though the world is locked,
It still finds its way
to resolve and evolve.
So everyone seems blind,
so they cannot see.
But, I’m still the one searching for the key.
Speak to Me!
By Kei Chae Burns, Grade 8, Teacher: Ms. L. Williams

What is music?
Why does music speak to us?
In every song there is a point, a reason.
What exactly is that reason?

When I plug in the little plastic in my ears, music can make me forget all of my pain.
It takes me to another place in life, higher than the sky and far away from space.
Music can teach us many lessons in life.
It’s the voice of the community, expressing the struggles, pride, heartbreaks, and violence in life.
It also tells us stories, and meaningful messages throughout the lyrics.

When words fail, music speaks.
Music speaks of the pain of the life we live in today.
It shares emotions. It’s a way to connect to understand what others feel inside.

That’s how it’s supposed to be, right?
But, of course, all happiness has to come to an end.
I lift my hand to my ear, and pull out the plastic.
Suddenly, I feel sad again.
Music to me is where you see who you really are inside.
This year the Gentleman Eagles Club was a great experience for myself and the other members because it helped us learn to be more respectful of other people, and not get mad so often. We also learned that if we are failing a class, we need to make sure we stay after school for coach class, and then go to Gentlemen Eagles later. We learned to not simply walk out of class. And, if someone wants to fight you, we learned to walk away and go tell an adult.

We had a lot of fun by going into the gym when no one was there but us. We also had fun by having a basketball and football tournament. When we have the tournaments, Mr. Cole (who is our sponsor) buys us food and drinks. We found out that if we do well in all of our classes, we get to go outside for lunch. We also found out that all our teachers will tell Mr. Cole if we are doing well in their classes. If our teachers give Mr. Cole a good report for the entire month, then we can earn an eagle chain, a ribbon, or other reward.

We learned that there are teachers who will check in on us throughout the school year to make sure we are on task in our classes. The Gentlemen Eagles had a positive influence on my behavior and my grades. I’ll be back next year!
Mary liked shoes.
The shoes hit perfectly.
I guess the shoes liked Mary, too.

Mary was the shoe wearing girl.
She had almost 200 pairs.
But she didn’t care.
She liked shoes.

Until one day, she found those fabulous shoes—
That anyone would almost die for.
She swiped that card, and it said “declined.”
Life couldn’t get any worse.

She had bought too many shoes all her life,
And now she was broke.
But, at least she’s broke in style.
But, she still might get evicted.
Heart

By Kiara Mackey, Grade 8, Teacher:  Ms. L. Williams

I have thoughts every day that soothe my mind.
Thoughts every day that make me cry.
Summer nights feel like a beach under the stars....
And, summer mornings feel like a relaxing massage.

It warms my heart for the feelings, I feel.
And, then these feelings warm my heart for the thoughts they bring.
I am Kalia Perry
By Kalia Perry, Grade 7, Teacher: Ms. Miles

I am funny and outgoing
I wonder if we will all be riding bikes in the future
I hear roller coasters roaring in my ear
I see sail boats floating around the room
I want to be rich and have a four-door Jaguar
I am funny and outgoing

I pretend to be famous
I feel the Roman hallways of Catonsville will haunt me at night
I touch Michel Jackson’s glove
I worry if I won’t be a successful women when I grow up
I cry when I am hurt emotionally
I am famous

I understand that life isn’t always fun and games
I say cheer up when someone is down
I dream about laying in stacks of money
I try to always try to be honest and real
I understand that life isn’t always fun and games.
I am James Willis
By James Willis, Grade 7, Teacher: Ms. Miles

I am cool and fun to hang with
I wonder what China is like
I hear fish talking to me
I see air
I want a jetpack
I am cool and fun to hang with

I pretend to fly
I feel God watching me
I touch stacks of diamonds
I worry something will happen to me
I cry when I am mad
I am cool and fun to hang with

I understand God
I say no to smoking
I dream about life
I try to pass in school
I hope I get an iphone4s
I am cool and fun to hang with
Konichiwa, my middle school day.
Konichiwas, WMS.

My shining days were about to start;
I was open to everything new.
I welcomed thee with open arms
A great time to sing out our youth!

I will do something amazing,
To explore more and more doors!
That is the goal I wanted to achieve,
As my fabulous school life soared.

There were many ups and downs,
But, it’s different in my case.
Like between the cerulean sky above and azure sea below,
Everything fell in to place.

When promotion day is over
Where it all will end for me?
The most spoken phrase will be....
“I’m going to miss you terribly.”

Sayonara, WMS.
Sayonara, my middle school days.
Goodbye Woodlawn Middle

By Diamond West, Grade 8, Teacher: Ms. L. Williams

Even though most days here were the best---
Most folks were friendly,
And, these are days I will miss.

We had our ups and downs
But, I’ll miss my science class
I’ll miss the teachers who prepared me
For moving on.

I’ll miss my friends with whom I laughed
Others with whom I sang
I’ll miss seeing everyone joking around.
I’ll miss moments when laughter fills the air.
I’ll miss a lot of things,
But, I know I’m ready to move on.
So good-bye to all those wonderful days.

Goodbye to all my friends.
Goodbye and thank you teachers.
Goodbye to a very interesting year.
Goodbye to Woodlawn Middle School.
The Griot

Winter Online Edition, Jan. 2015

Sponsors: Ms. Chambers & Mr. Donahue

Cover Artist: Maria Broadwater, Grade 8
Architectural Relief of a “Cozy Home”

Teacher Artists: Ms. Strenko & Ms. Sussan
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Slaves Communicate

By Janae Jacobs, Grade 8, Ms. L. Williams, Language Arts

Slaves communicated with each other secretly through songs. These songs helped relay secret messages, tell a story, or bring people together in a common cause. Because many slaves knew the secret meanings of each of these songs, they could be used to signal many events. The songs were mostly used for escaping slavery or just as a way of saying they were about to escape.

Harriet Tubman, a conductor of the Underground Railroad, used the song “Wade in the Water” as say to tell slaves that were escaping to get off the trail and into the water to make sure the dogs slave catchers used couldn’t sniff out their trail. When the people walked through the water, they were did not leave a scent trail that dogs could easily follow. Tubman also used slave songs to relay other messages. Sometimes she had to leave a group she was leading north to get food or other needed supplies. She would tell them to hide and wait for her signal. If she came back and sung the son twice, they would know it was safe to come out of hiding. But, if the slave catchers were in the area or there was danger ahead, she would sing another song. That tells the group of slaves in hiding to stay hidden until Harriet sang the “all clear” song. To those who didn’t know the meaning of Harriet’s songs, they thought that Tubman was just singing to pass the time.
THE IMPENETRABLE MASK

By Janae Jacobs, Grade 8----Teacher: Ms. L. Williams

We wore the masked that grinned and lied;
that covered the face with clouded eyes.
The depraving darkness quickly closed in,
fear starts to crawl through the skin.
Our glow has faded, as dullness starts to rise inside.

Why did we let it claim our face,
Change our future and seal our fates?
It was deception that we fed.
Our innocent sides may now be dead.

The mask was painted to imitate a mirror.
But our reflections showed truth much clearer;
With a terrifying glare that almost killed,
The impenetrable shadow lurked beside us still.
We will never be the same again.
Because we wore the mask...
For a very long time I’d been told I couldn’t read.
I lost all confidence in reading at that point.
I began to read to myself, alone, and out loud.
I wanted to hear what they heard.
I started with small books---never thinking about chapters.
The first day of 7th grade I was introduced to Mrs. Leahy, my language arts teacher.
She could read a whole essay in under a minute.
That was amazing to me; I wanted that. I wanted to read like that.
I told Mrs. Leahy I wanted to learn to read like this.
She answered by asking me what books do I read.
I answered saying that I don’t read.
Ms. Leahy told me she was the same way once, and I would learn to love books the way she does.
I thought to myself: “It will never happen.”
But, then I had a moment. And, I realized Ms. Leahy was not the only inspiration.
I went to the library and met Ms. Amy, the librarian.
She was putting books away when she realized I was watching her.
She smiled at me and asked if I was new.
I answered yes and looked at the book she had.
I asked her if I can have the book, and she handed it to me.
continued They Said I Couldn’t

She told me it was new and to tell what I thought of it after I read it.

I thanked her and checked it and ran home.

I locked myself in my room. And, read some out loud and some in my mind.

I read the whole book before the night ended. I had read my first novel!

I read *Doll Bones* by Holly Black.

My mother always did tell me “It’s not that you can’t read, its finding the books that you want to read.”

Now I read all the time, sometimes twenty books in a few weeks.

All of this, because they said I couldn’t.
Once there was a boy named Jim who loved adventure and the thrill of excitement. One day Jim wandered off in search of his mother’s home. It was located in the badlands. When he arrived at where he thought his mother was, he could not find the house. So, he just let it go, thinking he did not have much time to waste.

Later, he went to find a friend who was in the desert, so his friend could help him. The two of them had great times as they searched. At times, Jim and his friend left their car and walked. There was a circus show that was in town. They saw the beach before a storm. They saw a brush fire. They saw kids leaving for school. Sometimes they just walked and talked about nothing and everything---mainly what they would do when they were grown.

Finally, Jim gave up on his search for his mom’s house and went home. He was surprised to find his mom and another of his buddies at home, waiting on him. And in unison they said: “It’s the journeys along the way that we take, not the destination that matters.”
What’s Special to Me?

By Dadrien Hunt, Grade 8---Teacher: Ms. L. Williams

What is special to me?
Something that cannot walk,
Nor can it even talk,
But, yet it satisfies me.
It is good and sometimes it is healthy.

It comes in many different forms---
Hot, cold, and even warm.
This is why food is special to me:
Hamburgers, pizza, and cereal.
All this can satisfy me.
Pizza

By Rashad Hunt, Grade 8---Teacher: Ms. L. Williams

Pizza is good!

Pizza is hot.

Pizza is the only thing I got.

Pizza is delicate,
And yes, fragile, when I’m done.

I’m gonna play Scrabble.

But, wait there’s more.

No, I want more.

Make me more.

Then watch me roar!
Today!

By Kei’ Chae Burns, Grade 8----Teacher:  Ms. L. Williams

Today is the day!
This is it.
Today we’ll learn, and have fun.
Today we will grow as we learn.
Today we will be kind, and respect one another.
Today is a very special day!
Don’t give up.
Don’t leave it behind.
Let’s give it our all.
Let’s make it shine.
We’d better get busy, because today is
A very special day!
The Feelings Inside

By Erin Hill, Grade 8----Teacher: Ms. L. Williams

Sometimes
I suppose I’m happy
Like when I’m with my friends
Throwing my head back and covering my month
As I shake with laughter
At a joke someone just made.

But then day turns to night
And my carefree grin turns into an unexplainable sadness,
Etched on my face like a tattoo.
And, I lay in bed
Thinking about all the things I wish I could say---
All the things I’m afraid to admit,
Even with only pen, paper, and mind.

Its nights like these when I realize:
I am many things...
I am happy and sad....
Outgoing and shy...
Rambunctious and quiet....But mostly, I’m just me.
I am one of those students who is fortunate enough to be in the Advanced Academics program at Woodlawn Middle School. It is also known as the GT or Gifted and Talented Program. I think this program is beneficial to me and others because some people progress at certain things more than others and it is incredibly important to accommodate these people, as well as others in order to allow everyone to rise to their true potential and be the best they can be. People like my peers and I should not be held back or slowed down in order to be taught more easily nor should people who are not ready to move on be dragged into something that asks more of them than they are able to give.

The Advanced Academic program allows me to excel in the things I am good at, and it gives me the knowledge that if I apply myself and remain dedicated then I can be extremely successful in life, as well as school. This program allows students who learn quickly and may have gifts and talents in a particular area to utilize their blessing and rise through the ranks. In my opinion everyone can be an advanced learner, if they are serious and diligent enough about their grades. I truly think that whether you are naturally gifted at something or not that despite those differences the thing that determines where you go in life is your “determination”. You can’t give up simply because you don’t find something easily. The only things that pay off in life are the ones that you work for, and if you are not ready to put in that work, then be ready to not amount to much.

To me the Advanced Academics program has provided a challenging environment that brings out the best in me and also allows me to show that my hard work means something. It allows me to achieve greatness and most of all it gives me the confidence that is needed to pursue my dreams no matter how difficult. I know that I am capable of whatever I set my mind to, and even though I may fail at first I won’t give up because that is what GT has taught me. To me the measure of your worth is not in your intelligence, it lies in where you want to be and what you are willing to do to get there. Simply said, if you are GT you are willing to do quite a lot.
Remembering Childhood

By Anthony Sanders, Jr., Grade 6——Teacher: Ms. Hayes

Childhood is crawling around the floor
Trapped behind closed doors
Never wanting more.

Childhood is rolling through the
Grass excited for class
Watching time pass.

Do you remember childhood?
Pedaling on your bike
The girl you still like—
Sad when the bell strikes.

Do you remember childhood?
Driving down the road
Those looks made with code
Your love always showed.

Childhood is when she broke your heart
And, it was just the start
You are no longer art.

Do you remember childhood?
When childhood was still there
And, your heart wasn’t bare
And, people would care.
**Childhood is...**

By Z’Aura A. Boone, Grade 6

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**Teacher:** Ms. Hayes

*Childhood* is listening to music, dancing, and playing video games

*Childhood* is playing at the playground and swinging on the swings

*Childhood* is learning new things at school and showing it to your mother

*Childhood* is playing with your toys

*Childhood* is getting in trouble and getting punished

*Childhood* is loving your family

*Childhood* is going on vacations and having a ball

*Childhood* is having a new little brother in the world and playing with him

*Childhood* is seeing my new family members

*Childhood* is seeing my mom and new dad get married
‘Waiting on Spring

By Jose Benitez, Grade 7----Teacher: Ms. Evans

It’s January, and it’s very cold.
It’s cold in the school building.
It’s cold outside.
I can’t wait until Spring time comes.
I can’t wait to see all my friends playing around outside all day.
How wonderful it will be to see green oak trees around me.
There will be bees buzzing, birds singing in the trees.
I’ll get to go camping with my family. And that is really nice.
I’ll see butterflies in the skies.
There will be the fragrance of flowers blooming on the mountain sides.
I’ll see and smell all kinds of wonderful things.
But, most of all, I won’t be cold.

Spring Butterfly by Student Artist Taylor Jackson, Grade 7
Once upon a time, there were three brothers, James, and Carl and Sidney.

They all lived on a farm, with their mom.

They helped her with the animals, dishes....

Hanging the clothes on the line to dry...until James applied for college in Cincinnati.

His mom was so proud that there were tears in her eyes.

Then Carl and Sidney grew up---

Old enough to get jobs, so they both moved to New York City---

In an apartment.

Their mom was alone.....

And, then there was none.
Student Essays And Narratives

(From Class Assignments)
I have read the speech, and I have also watched the video clip.

I think that the video was better because in the video viewers can see everything, and then in the text it is confusing sometimes when Dr. Ben Carson uses medical term vocabulary. In the video, as he used “big words,” he often demonstrated them. Also, in the video when he showed humor, I could understand it because of the expressions that showed on his face. But, in the text, of course, I couldn’t see these things.

In the video, I could understand how he was trying to get other students to become more educated, but in the text I don’t hear him saying anything about pursuing an education. The essay from his book was designed to tell readers that you can become more informed by watching and listening. The video was so much better because of the information that I was able to take away from the viewing. The biggest reason for enjoying videos is that I sometimes forget what I read after reading a paragraph, but the in the video all you have to do is listen and watch. Sometimes reading can be boring.

There were also funny events in the video that were not as funny in the movie. One example was when Dr. Carson said that some students called him “dummy.” I think it was funny because of the way he said it. And, it was also funny because we know he ended up becoming one of the world’s most famous brain surgeons.
Saskia had just moved to Yokohama, Japan and she knew no one. After Saskia had unpacked everything she realized that she needed more stuff in her apartment. Saskia went out to find some home décor for her apartment. When Saskia was driving back home she saw this shop with little trees, and she knew she had to get the trees for her apartment. Those trees were Bonsai trees that are little and have to be taken care of on a daily basis. They also need a physical and emotional commitment.

When Saskia went into the shop she saw that there were Bonsai trees everywhere, but there was one that looked very interesting to her. When she went towards it an elderly lady stepped in front of her. Saskia had no idea where she came from.

The elderly lady said to her “I trust you to take very good care of Branch.”

“Yes, in fact my tree does have a name. I want you to take care of my Bonsai tree as if Branch is a real person. If you do, Branch will have a special gift for you. Make sure that you give Branch very special fertilizer and a very special container to represent Branch’s style.”

When Saskia got home she immediately set it in a container that represented Branch. On a daily basis, Saskia took care of Branch. She cut off new trimmings; she made sure that she let Branch grow freely. If she couldn’t take care of Branch she would make sure that her neighbor was able to. Saskia loved her tree. Saskia knew that the Japanese took care of their plants and trees, as if they were alive. Bonsai trees are an example of how they show that. She wanted her Bonsai to be an art piece that was never finished.

One day when Saskia was in her kitchen, she heard a sound of humming. She also saw a light coming from her living room and she knew that no other lights were on except for in the kitchen. When she got to her living room she realized that Branch was glowing. When she stepped closer to the tree she realized that it wasn’t humming that she heard. It was Branch talking to her. That moment she realized that the gift the elderly lady was talking about had been real.

“I have come to repay you for all of the good care you have given me. Your gift is three wishes and they can be anything you want. But, I will not accept any negative wishes—only positive,” Branch said.

“Can I make my first wish now?” Saskia asked.
“Yes.” Branch said.

“I wish for the world to be better and to make sure that everybody is safe everyday of their lives,” Saskia said.

“These are very thoughtful wishes and they have come true now.”

But one of the wishes didn’t come true for Saskia. When Saskia was in her kitchen her kitchen towel accidently dropped onto the stove, and it immediately caught the kitchen on fire and since Saskia’s floor is wood, the whole apartment caught on fire.

Saskia couldn’t reach her phone but her neighbor had smelled the smoke and called the firefighters. When the paramedics came they realized that her burns were severe and that she had smoke inhalation. Her last wish to her Bonsai was to get better.

This wish of hers also came true.
The Legend of the Origami Dragon

By Elijah Carmichael-Myrie, Grade 6—Teacher: Mr. Frazier

Kaden, a young boy from a Japanese village, wants to try out origami for the first time with his father. But his father, Iroh, says he must learn about it first.

“Origami is the Japanese art of paper folding,” Iroh said to Kaden “It requires patience.” But, Kaden already knew this and wanted to start right away.

Meanwhile, at the volcano that borders the village, the Origami Dragon wanted something to do. The Origami Dragon is the dictator of his area and acted unfairly toward his subjects.

“I need something to do!” he said. “Oh, I know what to do! I’ll capture someone from the village and force them to entertain me.” It was not hard for him to find someone because Kaden and Iroh were arguing so loud you could hear them from the volcano. “Perfect,” said the Origami Dragon.

Then, to Kaden’s surprise the dragon’s enormous hand reached in from the roof and grabbed Iroh. “You will be the newest edition to the volcanic area! You will come with me to entertain me with your origami skills for an eternity!” The dragon carried Iroh away. Kaden, still confused by the whole event, knew he had to rescue his father. But, he had no idea how. Only an origami master could stop the dragon. But his father was the only one he knew that was really good at it. So he just decided to go to the volcanic area himself.

Kaden thought to himself. “I have to run into someone who can do origami.” Kaden knew he had to be patient to learn origami, so he tried taking it easy on his way.

About halfway there, he saw a crowd gathered around a stage. He saw it was a magician. He was making origami! Just what Kaden needed! Kaden joined the crowd and started to talk to him.

“Please sir, you have to help me! My father Iroh got captured by the Origami Dragon and…”

“Wait, you said his name was Iroh?”

“Yes, why?” Kaden replied in question.

“I know Iroh! He and I used to be great friends. It’s been so long since I’ve seen him! How is he doing?”
“I told you he’s been ca-”

Just then Kaden realized he was yelling and remembered he had to be calm to learn origami. Then he continued. “Not well. He’s being held prisoner by the origami dragon.”

“Oh, well what are we waiting for? Let’s go save him!”

So Kaden and the Magic Man continued their journey. But it wasn’t easy. There were mosquitoes in the air, grasshoppers in the grass, and it even started to rain a little. Kaden was ready to quit. But he knew he also needed perseverance to learn origami. So, he tried his best to stay calm. When they finally got there, they saw the enormous dragon on his rock throne.

“Look Iroh, it’s your foolish son trying to save you,” the dragon said with a laugh.

“Okay Magic Man,” Kaden told him, “Make some origami to defeat this dragon!”

“What origami? I can’t do origami.”

“What do you mean you can’t do origami?” shouted Kaden. “That’s the whole reason I brought you with me! I saw you do origami on that stage before!

“Oh yea, I didn’t make that. A volunteer did.”

“But, you...” Kaden sighed “I’ll try and do it myself. Got any paper?”

“Sure.”

Kaden remembered his training. But, then he realized he had no training. “Wait,” Kaden realized his whole journey was training! He easily created an origami dragon out of paper. Then all of a sudden...

“Abra-cadabra!”

The paper dragon came to life. Kaden couldn’t believe his eyes. It was amazing, incredible, it was...

“Wait, you do real magic?” Kaden asked with a confused look.

“Well I am the Magic Man, aren’t I?”

The paper dragon soared through the sky with its mighty wings. Its speed was so incredible; the Origami Dragon couldn’t keep up! It rescued Iroh from his imprisonment, and returned him back to his son. But, his job wasn’t over. He had to make sure the Origami Dragon never committed acts of evil again. The paper creature showed off his mighty fire breath and destroyed the dragon for good. As Kaden, Iroh, and the Magic Man returned to the village, the beast was to stay at the volcanic area and rule as the new Origami Dragon for all of eternity.

THE END
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