

The View From Here

Creative Writing and Art by Patients
at Boston Children's Hospital



Boston Children's Hospital
Creative Arts Program

VOLUME 2



Our Mission:

The Creative Arts Program at Boston Children's Hospital provides engaging, innovative, and uplifting experiences that support an integrated approach to care for the many diverse families and communities we serve.



Creative Arts Program

Since 1996 the arts have been used at Boston Children's to enhance physical and emotional healing, transform the hospital environment, and provide opportunities for expression.

Our Programs

- Artist-In-Residence
- Art Cart
- Art Parties
- Artful Healing with MFA Boston
- Gifts of Art Program
- Art Galleries
- Touring Exhibitions
- Winter and Summer Concert Series
- Publications
- Collaborations with local artists, museums and arts organizations

To learn more about the Creative Arts Program contact Jessica Finch, Creative Arts Program Manager, at Jessica.Finch@childrens.harvard.edu or call 617-355-ARTS(2787).

Learn more about our programs at www.childrenshospital.org/art

Photocredits clockwise from the top: Leah Kandel, ICA/Boston; Phyllis Beinart; Boston Children's Hospital Public Affairs

Dear Reader,



Welcome to The View From Here.

Creative Writing at Boston Children's Hospital empowers patients to be authors in a world they can't control. Through creative play and conversation, we bring their poems and stories to life. And while medical staff treat a patient's illness, creative writing attends to what is most healthy in children: the simple desire to be a kid.

Our prompts range from serious to silly, but all create a structure for the imagination to swing upon and succeed. These pieces are often crafted amid the beeping of machines, the administering of meds, and all the ongoing hospital routine. Creative writing grows through the cracks in this routine, allowing individuality to blossom.

I hope you enjoy reading what we so enjoyed writing. Since creative writing is essentially an act to form community, there's space within for you to write, too. Remember: there are no right answers. So play around. Be a kid.

— Aaron Devine, Writer
Artist-in-Residence
Boston Children's Hospital

Creative Writing and Art by Patients

The View From Here

A sampling of work from
the Artist-in-Residence Program
at Boston Children's Hospital

Volume 2

Created June 2011 to July 2012
with Artist-in-Residence Aaron Devine

MY HEART

BY ALEANIS, AGE 10

"We do not quit playing
because we grow old.
We grow old because
we quit playing."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

My heart beats fast,
Pounds red.
My heart is a lion running after zebras.

My heart is Christmas presents,
Grandma's rice, beans, and pork chops.
If it could speak, my heart would say: "Yum."

My heart fears storms and lightning.
But the weather in my heart is a rainbow
Keeping all memories.

At night, my heart gets mad because I ignore it.
(My heart requires a lot of attention.)

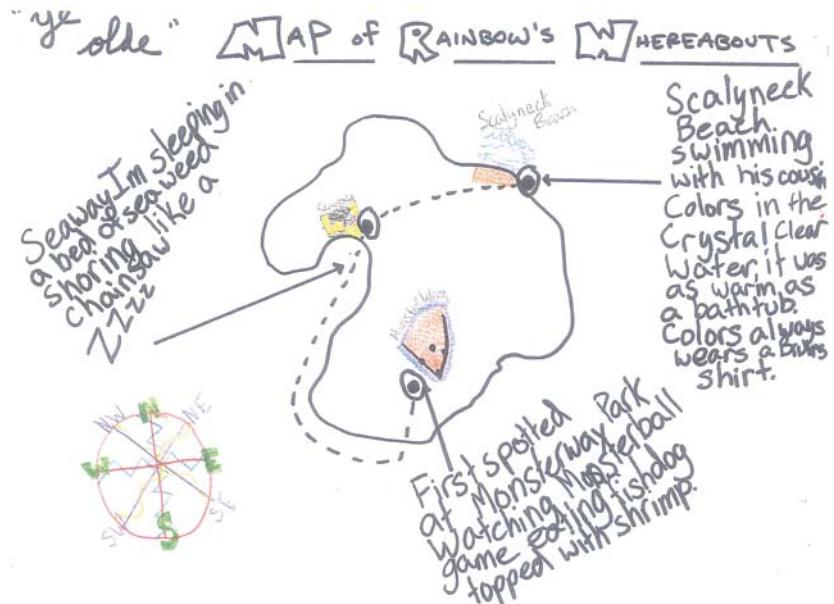
At night, my heart is the moon
Keeping the light on
When I sleep.

RAINBOW THE SEAMONSTER

BY TYLER, AGE 10



Rainbow the Sea Monster was first spotted at Monsterway Park watching a Monsterball game and eating a fishdog topped with shrimp. He then took a nap at the Seaway Inn, slept on a bed of seaweed and snored like a chainsaw. He was last seen at Scalyneck Beach swimming with his cousin Colors, who always wears a Bruins shirt, in the crystal-clear water that was as warm as a bathtub.



Sea Monster

There's a sea monster on the loose.

You've seen it. Draw it as though you were a police sketch artist. Then map the last known whereabouts of your creation. Your map is a story that tells how and why the sea monster moved from place to place.

PHIL THE MANATEE

BY EMMA, AGE 10

They found Phil the Manatee climbing the rope in the gym.

It was Tuesday afternoon. He was huge - at least as big as a kiddie pool. He was light brown in color and chubbier than two beds lined up together. He was tangled up in the rope and using his flippers to pull himself up.

Mrs. Hibbard, the gym teacher, saw him first. She stood there in her blue-and-red jumpsuit, holding her clicker, with her mouth open for half an hour. She'd never seen a manatee before.

Then she went to the principal and said, "Uh, I think you should come see our new student."

Mrs. Hibbard asked the manatee his name and he made a low whining sound like, "Awhhhuuuhhhh."

That's when Emma entered. Long blonde hair, blue eyes, and a pink shirt. She was 10 years old and she had seen a manatee once long ago at the zoo. Her dad had been teaching her how to move her eyebrows up and down when the manatee at the zoo responded back with his eyebrows. Since that day, Emma knew she could communicate with manatees.

When Emma saw the manatee on the rope, she waved her eyebrows up and down. He did the same.

"His name is Phil," she said. "He says he was born in some random person's hot tub."

Phil told Emma that he could smell the jellyfish & spaghetti wafting from the cafeteria. It smelled like seaweed. He thought it was upstairs, which is why he was climbing the rope.

Emma corrected him. "The cafeteria isn't up there, it's next door."

But how to get a 5,000 lb manatee down from the gym rope?



They called everybody over the loudspeaker and gathered the whole school under the rope.

The kids shouted, "Fall, fall."

But Emma told Phil, "Just trust us. We'll catch you and then get you the jellyfish and spaghetti afterward."

Phil trusted Emma because she could communicate with him. He rolled onto his back. He let out a big burp. He

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could smell the jellyfish much better and he could hear all the kids below shouting for him. And then: he just let go.

He fell as fast as a piano dropping.

The children's eyes grew wider than ice cream cones. They raised their hands above their heads to catch Phil and he landed safely on his back.

"Now can we go get the jellyfish?" Phil asked Emma.

"Everybody, carry him!" shouted Mrs. Hibbard.

So the children carried Phil to the cafeteria. They laid him across three tables and brought another table to put the food on. They brought him fifteen plates filled with steaming spaghetti and jellyfish reaching taller than Phil's lumpy brown head.

He consumed it all in less than five minutes. He lay flat, cuddling with himself and the food, crunching it in his mouth, really stuffing it in there. He let out another huge burp that the entire school could hear.

"I want to stay for a couple of years," Phil said through Emma, his translator. "Because your food is soooooooood. I could teach a class about the ocean."

The principal said, "OK, you can stay. On one condition: you can't eat the children."

"Fine," Phil said. "I'll try not to eat their heads off."

Surprising Fiction

We began with a character (Phil the manatee) and then asked: What is the last place you'd expect to see a manatee? Emma said: "Climbing the rope in gym class." Our story began right there.

Begin your story with a surprising image. Then write to figure out:

How did that happen? and What happens next?

Feel free to use the blank pages in the back of the book.

Food House

BY SONYA CHIN, AGE 7



On tickle grass there stood a house where a nice kid moved in: one blueberry window, an apple window, a pear door, a milkshake flower, a chocolate roof with a cherry and licorice chimney. It also had a licorice wire for energy.

COFFEE WITH DAVE

BY JARRET, AGE 19

The author was challenged to write a poem using the words: Cheerios, drizzling, Mozambique, hands, and forever.

We were once again in Brew Haha
Drinking thousand dollar mocha cappuccinos
While **Mozambique** 808 drums knocked on our subconscious.

You were ordering our food,
And I was imagining **forever** as it stood before us.
My place in the universe was baby **hands**
Grasping boulders, hoping I might lunge them over my shoulders.

You were at the crossroads of love and breaking rules,
And I kept secrets like holes in **Cheerios**.
We stared into oblivion's window at modern art,
Through an icy **drizzle**, where neither of us belonged.

Word Challenge

Challenge a friend to make a poem or short story from 5 random words.

The more unrelated the words,
the more creatively you'll have to think to connect them. Choose the words quickly. If you're struggling, try:

1 sense-related word:
(i.e. sticky, lavender)

1 location:
(i.e. Paris, a garden)

1 verb:
(i.e. whistling, dig)

1 food:
(i.e. pomegranate, frozen TV dinners)

1 really wild and awesome word:
(i.e. zucchini, bungalow, dude)

Animal Love Poem

Cut out a magazine picture of two animals that appear to be in love. Write a cheesy love poem from one to the other. Include details unique to that animal (such as "play fetch" for dogs).

CRISTINA AND LIZZY: A PUPPY LOVE POEM

BY HANNAH, AGE 9

Oh Lizzy, I love that your fur is a snowy white color.
There is no one else I want to play fetch with.
Let's escape under the fence and beg for biscuits from the neighbors.

Do you remember when we went to the Frogs Living Swamp?
The water was nice and cold and calm.
We sniffed all the flowers in the field: dahlias, lilies, and sunflowers,
Under a sky full of butterflies — pink, yellow, and purple —
That sat on our noses, making a tickle.

After, we went to the Olive Garden.
"Table for two, please," we said.
We sniffed and ate the spaghetti and mussels.
Then headed to a cozy lighthouse to watch the sun set.
"What a great day," I said. "We should do this more often."



STAR

By SHAUNA, AGE 12

When you wish upon a star

The stars are the sun spread out across the sky.
Stand in your bedroom window. Look up.
Close your eyes. Think of what you want.

Makes no difference who you are

11-year-old girl in her apartment in Lowell:
Blue, gorilla city where happy people say hi
And the clouds are really soft, squishy pillows.

Anything your heart desires

Lunch with Winnie the Pooh.
Visits from the Prize Fairy.
Shooting lasers at the green aliens.

And Give Kids the World pool parties.
Free ice cream from the palace, covered in
Chocolate syrup, sprinkles, and whipped cream.



Will come to you

And it all feels like a hug from my family.
Like laughing at Patrick on Sponge Bob when he's acting dumb.
Like a first ride in a limo...

Or it feels like Buddy the beagle when we pet his furry head.
Like after his bath, when he runs, wagging his tail,
As we chase him all over the house.

Body Part Poem

Choose a part of your body (inside or out) that has something important to say. Then ask questions about it:

What animal is it?

What is the weather like there?

What would it say if it could speak?

What is it afraid of?

Push further. Sometimes the more abstract the question, the more poetic the response.

JUST HOW LIFE IS

BY DAIJAH, AGE 16

The burn on my right side is a lion
Because it looks ferocious and ugly.
The burn on my left is a fish
Because it looks irritating.

If my burns could speak,
They would say: "We don't mean any harm.
You are just being mean,
And you don't like us on your arms.
You are ashamed of us."

100 degrees.
Midday sun.
Devil's world.

I regret that day when I got burned.

I talk about the burns so much
That they want to go away
To their own world.
And I'd change back
Into my regular skin again.

But the burns are always there banging pots and pans
By my bedside while I'm asleep.

OPEN LETTER TO GOSSIPING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO LEARN I'M IN THE HOSPITAL

By SIERRA AND ASHLEY, AGES 14 AND 17

Dear Kids,

Just because I'm not in class doesn't mean you can make up dramatic gossip about me. I could be on a trip somewhere. I could have switched schools, or been abducted by aliens - that happens all the time! I could have run away from home (I did that once: made it to the mailbox before I realized I didn't have any food). I could have gone to my best friend's house but that's a long walk (and I can't drive yet). I could have witnessed a murder and joined a witness protection program.

Also, I'm not dying, even though I just made a wish. That's a big misconception: that when you Make-A-Wish, you're dying. But you don't have to be dying to make a wish. I made my wish last Wednesday and I'm still kicking. I wished to go to Paris. I'm going to go shopping and eat croissants with cute guys in berets.

When I tell you I'm tired because my counts are low, you freak out. "What does that mean?" you ask. It's fine. You flip out when you hear about my "port." It's just this little thing under my skin. The tube goes up and around and they put drugs in it. And it makes me all better. Yay :) :)

Actually, there are lots of upsides to being here. I don't have to take midterms. I don't have to take finals. I never have to take a gym class for the rest of my high school career. Plus, I get to take the elevator. And I don't do homework.

Also, I don't have to deal with all the daily drama, like:

"Oh my god, this girl hooked up with my ex-boyfriend at this party ... even though I broke up with him. How can he do this to me?!"

"Oh my gosh she's going to the movies with him ... that is NOT going to go well."

You all do provide great entertainment, I must say. I do miss that. And lunchtime is great, actually. It's like a big soap opera with the cliques.

I'm so excited for when I go back to school. I want to see what the reactions are. I imagine myself walking through the lunchroom doors. It will smell of three-day old pizza and spilt milk. Everyone stops, forks halfway to their mouths. My friends will scream my name. They'll run and hug and jump on me.

"You've been out of this place," they'll say. "You've seen stuff. Oohhhh, you've been poked with a needle."

I'll just smile and wave.

Yes, I'm home, I'll think. Finally.

In time, I'll explain to you again: I'm not dying. It might take a while, but it's going to be okay.

For the time being, though, I'll enjoy being special.

Open Letter

Write a letter to someone or something that can't write you back. Pet peeves are great subjects (i.e. "Dear Constantly Beeping Machine..."). Use letter or email format to get all your feelings out.

RULES FOR BEHAVIOR: BENJAMIN'S ROOM*

BY BENJAMIN, AGE 10

1

Parking costs 50 cents

2

DO NOT ENTER
without permission from the room keeper

3

No dumping!

4

Only bearded dragons
(and some people**) can come in

5

Laundry must be removed within 62 hours
or else: \$5 fine

6

If you are in Benjamin's room, you must always be fully
clothed*** and remember that you are on his property
and can be sent away

7

All guests must respect the bearded dragon or he will
hiss and possibly bite

*Rules may be changed at any time by the room keeper

**Anyone who agrees to this rule-use agreement

***All clothing must be given a special certificate by the
room keeper

18

You are the boss. This is your room. What rules would you make for guests (real and imaginary) to follow? Be bold. Be ridiculous.

Rules

1

2

3

4

5

6

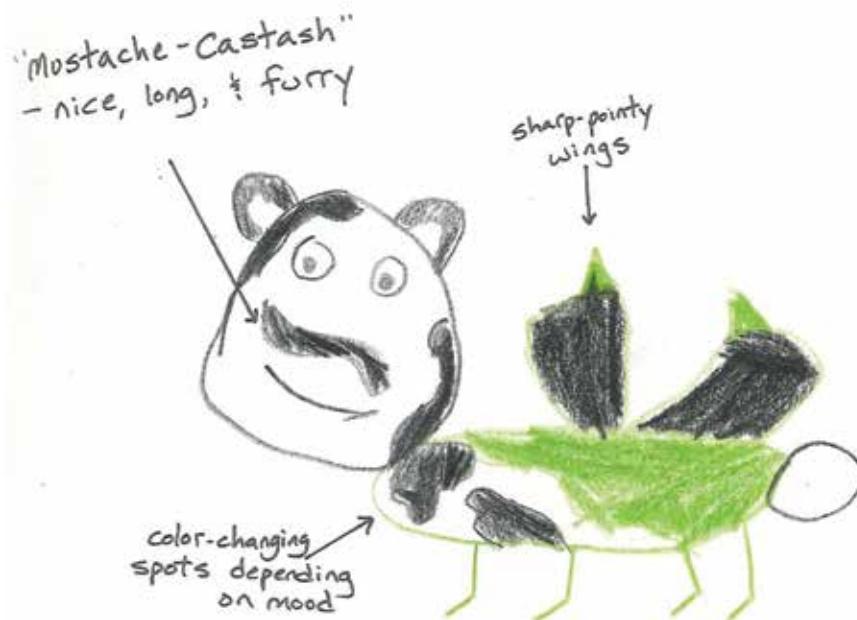
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STEVE THE PANCRICKET

By NICK, AGE 11

Steve the Pancricket is half panda (his head, stomach, wings, and tail), and half cricket (his stomach, wings, and legs). Steve eats pepperoni pizza. He lives in a nest of sticks and leaves, in the Australian jungle. When standing on two legs, he's the size of an 11-year-old.



Anatomy:

Mustache-castash is nice, long, and furry

Sharp, pointy wings

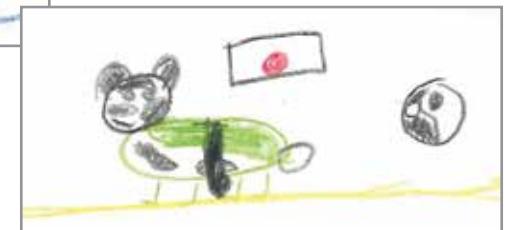
Color changing spots that vary by mood



Pancricket finding a date



Pancricket playing soccer
(which they do every day)



Pancricket doing karate

Fun facts:

Steve's mother put him on mute for talking too much.

Steve fishes for dates with his legs, takes them home, kills and eats them.

Humans want the huge head of the Pancricket to stuff with candy on Halloween.

Animal Combo Poster

Combine two real animals to make a new one.
Make a poster containing all the interesting fun facts about your creature that you can think of.

SEASONS OF DIALYSIS

BY SHEILA, AGE 26

*Sung to the tune of "Seasons of Love"
from the Broadway musical RENT*

Three hours hooked up to a dialysis machine.
Three hours hooked up three times a week.
Three hours hooked up to a fluid removing machine.
How do you measure a week in dialysis?

In catheters, in fistulas, in graphs in your legs,
In hot packs, low sodium, in fluid restrictions,
In ice chips, in BP's, in thermometers in your ear,
In taking big pills every time you eat, in—
Three hours hooked up to a dialysis machine,
What can you do while you're in here?

How about sleeping? How about iPad or reading?
How about music or writing? How about love?
Dialysis and love. Dialysis and love.

Three hours hooked up to a dialysis machine.
Three hours counting down the minutes till you're free.
Three hours hooked up to that fluid removing machine.
How do you measure all the patience that you need?

(Rap)
Doctor, Doctor.
I've been through it all:
Winter, spring, summer, and even the fall.
Always remember:
Don't be hard on yourself.
There's gonna be strife.
But this is only a chapter
In the story of your life.

[YOLO!]

In doctors with their questions: Any nausea or pain?
How are you feeling? Is your belly okay?

No it's not. Could you bring me some ginger ale soon.
No it's not and I'm gonna need some Zofran please!

Remember the love (from family and friends).
Remember the love (and treating yourself right).
Remember the love (from nurses and volunteers).
Measure in love.

Dialysis and love.
Dialysis and love (Measure, measure dialysis in love).

New Measurements

The song "Seasons of Love" from the musical RENT suggests new ways of measuring one year in a person's life (i.e. "in sunsets, in midnights, in cups of coffee").

What are new, creative ways that you can measure time spent in the hospital?

Re-write your own version of "Seasons of Love," or create an entirely new song/poem using these measurements.

ORIGINS

BY TATYANA, AGE 10

I was born in Boston
Land of beautiful sights
Like downtown at night
Lit up with lights
That make me feel I'm somewhere else:
A beautiful world.

My favorite foods:
My abuela's bread pudding ("budín"),
Fried dough, and dulce de almendra.
Also, a turquoise poppyseed muffin
Made of cake batter and food coloring
– My own invention.

From our house, I hear sirens
And popping shots at night.
I smell the cooking of 3 families on 3 floors.

My uncles used to hide from school
Up in the trees or under their house.
You could do that in Puerto Rico.
Where I live men hang out at the barbershop,
So I can't go outside alone.

But I don't want to miss school.
I want to be a teacher someday.
Little kids, like my brother,
Are drawn to me.

People who live in Boston don't tour it.
But when I drive through,
I see new things that thrill me:
Statues, highways, and tall buildings covered in lights.
There's something about lights that amazes me.

Where I'm From Poem

Write about the place you were born/grew up.

What surprising details do you remember? Try to include all five senses (sight, smell, taste, sound, and touch). How has this place shaped you as a person? Compare your poem with a parent or friend born in a different place and/or time.

WHERE I'M FROM

BY GENEVA, AGE 18

I was born in Dorchester: land of peace, crime, and family.
Oceans to rivers to ponds to where Poland Spring is formed.
Known for nice, caring, and outgoing people:
Haitians, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Irish, and Jews.
Where BBurg, the FHA, and segregation existed in the past,
While opportunities for education and change for all exist today.
Where people dream of money, mansions, and being famous.
Dorchester: Loving and dysfunctional all at once.

WHERE I'M FROM

BY GENEVA'S MOM

I was born in Cape Verde
Land of romantic music,
Full of happiness, caring and loving people.
Island of kachupa, cous cous, and peixe.
Good food all the time and it's fresh!
Hard-working people who believe in God and ghosts.
People who dream of bringing money home for a better life.
Ten islands floating on the Atlantic Ocean:
I was born on Fogo island where people are party animals,
Where even billionaires go barefoot.



COLLAGE BY FERNANDO, AGE 17

ZIGGY AND THE BOY THE LIZARD

BY PHOEBE, AGE 4

Ziggy the Zebraphant was part zebra and part elephant, of course. He lived on Mars and wore a space helmet to travel to Earth where all his favorite foods were. He loved Earth's peanuts, turkey and cheese sandwiches, ham and cheese sandwiches, and ice cream sundaes. Ziggy could eat an ice cream sundae as big as a building.

One day, Ziggy came to Earth and ate 25 ice cream sundaes. He was so fat after that he could not swing on the swings, or move the pieces to play Candyland, or even do SpinArt! Worst of all, Ziggy was too heavy to fly home to Mars in his space helmet.

That's when Ziggy's friend, The Boy the Lizard, came to visit. He saw Ziggy looked sad and asked what was wrong.

"I got so fat," Ziggy said. "I can't even get home."

But The Boy the Lizard was a scientist. He offered to help Ziggy build a rocket to take him home. They put it together in Ziggy's front yard. A window, a door, and then: a rocket.

When it was time to fly, Ziggy put on his humongous seat belt. He held onto the steering wheel, which also had a computer screen. The Boy the Lizard came, too, and played Wii while Ziggy drove. The rocket made a quiet poof sound and they rose into the sky.

In space they saw all the planets colored blue and yellow. They took the rocket H.O.V. lane so that they could go faster and not stop so much. They flew past the white moon, all the way to Mars.

At home, Ziggy was surprised to realize he was fit again!

"Wow," he said. He felt happy.

So he and The Boy the Lizard did all the things they loved to do: build with clay, play Candyland, do SpinArt, and swing on the swings.

I'M A CHAMPION

BY JAMES, AGE 26

I wear Tom Brady's number 12.
Like me, he keeps his team in line.
Like me, he's fun when he gets going.
I'm an athlete, too.
I ran track in the Special Olympics.
I wore my green Norton High shirt,
Running shorts, and black Nikes.
I ate Cheerios and English muffins with cream cheese.
(You gotta eat a healthy meal, just ask Tom Brady.)
My friends cheered so loud that day
It sounded like Gillette Stadium.
The day was hot. I sweated.
Midway through the race, I hurt my leg,
But still I crossed the finish line.
Like Tom Brady, I'm a champion.

Sports Memory

Sports are a natural source of drama and heroism, of underdogs and lessons learned. **What is your greatest sports memory?** Recall as many details as you can and tell the story of that moment.



HOW TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR PET PENGUIN

BY BENJAMIN, AGE 8

1. Penguins love to _____ on _____
(VERB) (FOOD)
so buy lots of them.

2. Don't let penguins go number two in the _____.
(ROOM)
They should go in the _____ with the
(PLACE)
(ANIMAL).

3. Penguins love to play Slipster, a game that's like
_____, so play it a lot.
(GAME)

4. Build a swimming pool with ice cubes as big as
_____, and keep it cool at _____.
(SOMETHING THAT'S BIG) (NUMBER)
degrees Fahrenheit.

5. Buy _____ and Mackerel to feed your penguin
(KIND OF FISH)
five times per _____ and Frozen Sardine
(LENGTH OF TIME)
_____ for dessert.
(TYPE OF DESSERT)

How-To Guides

Even a How-To Guide tells a story. **What's something silly that you never realized you were an expert in?**

Invent your own step by step instructions. You can even make it into a Mad Lib by leaving blanks for friends to fill-in with their own ideas.

COLOR MEDITATION

BY SAMANTHA, AGE 13



Green is the breath of life emitting healing power.

Green is health giving out perfectness and happiness.

Green is the gracefulness of deer performing the ballet of Nature.

Green are the clovers, the vibrant spirits in nature.

Green are the meadows blowing with the breath of God.

ATTACK OF THE MUTANT ALIEN PHONE BILLS

BY JOSH, AGE 13

1

Lirpá left her law firm near Yankee Stadium. It was a snowy winter day, the roads were icy, and she was chit-chatting heavily with her partner as she drove home.

The sky grew dark. Inside the car it got cold – so cold that Lirpá could see her breath come out like steam. She started to shake and bite her nails. Then the engine froze and the car came to a stop.

All of a sudden, a flying saucer appeared looking like two punched-in pizza dishes stuck on top of each other. Lirpá heard an eerie, high-pitched noise emanating from the saucer. Then it fired a straight beam and blew out the front tire on her car.

Lirpá tried opening the door, but it wouldn't unlock. The saucer landed in the street. It began to spin, faster and faster. Suddenly, it stopped and a hatch opened, first upward, then down. A bright light shone from inside. The aliens filed out two by two.

When she first saw them, Lirpá laughed.

They were paper! Bodies merely paper, flimsy paper printed with million dollar phone bills, which she admitted was the scariest part. Then she saw their giant heads, sharp razor teeth and claws. And their many skinny yet muscular arms, legs, and necks.

Still, Lirpá kept laughing and so the aliens kidnapped her into their saucer. Just as the hatch was closing, she took the necklace that her sons had given her and threw it out onto the sidewalk. After that, she could only hope.

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2

Jorge and Jesse were long-haired brothers and New York City Superheroes. They specialized in battling supervillains. Jorge had beautiful, shiny brown hair about a foot long. Jesse's hair was shiny, too, but purple. He was Jorge's sidekick.

They were out shopping one day when they saw a sparkling emerald light in the street. It was the necklace they had given their mother. They rushed over. Near the necklace was a trail of slime that led them a few steps and stopped. Just disappeared. There were peg marks in the concrete.

Jesse spoke first. "I know this slime – it's the slime of the Mutant Alien Cell Phone Bills," he said. "They come from the Planet Samsung and can only be killed with fire."

"They've got Mom," Jorge said. "Let's find these Mutant Alien Cell Phone Bills and I'll shoot fire at them. Can you use your psychic powers to find them?"

Jesse closed his eyes and concentrated.

"They're at Yankee Stadium," he said.

"Why?" Jorge asked.

"It's near her firm. It's really big. And it has a lot of hot dogs. Mutant Alien Cell Phone Bills love hot dogs."

3

When Jorge and Jesse arrived at Yankee Stadium, they saw 16 saucers parked on the field. But they were all empty. So the brothers split up, carrying walkie-talkies, to find their enemy.

Jorge followed the smell of slime and hot dogs

straight to the hot dog stands. There he saw tons of aliens – maybe 250 of them – eating hot dogs, ripping them apart with their razor teeth. He messaged his brother on the walkie-talkie.

When Jesse arrived, he used his psychic powers to lift the hot dog cart up over the aliens' heads and carry it to where the two superheroes were hiding. The aliens followed and Jorge blasted one after the other with fire balls from his hands. The aliens disintegrated into ash.

Soon enough, the aliens figured out they should attack all together. They charged the brothers all at once. Jorge gathered all the fire he could, so that it was like a meteorite in his hands. He shot the crowd of aliens and WHAM – they all disintegrated right there, leaving the stadium looking like a giant fireplace.

The air was suddenly peaceful. But then Jorge and Jesse heard a cry. It got louder. It was a happy cry. It was Lirpá.

They found her in a jail cell built from a batting cage. Jesse used his psychic powers to bend the bars and release their mother.

"Thank you boys," she cried, tears running down her face. "I'm so glad to see you."

Jorge and Jesse hugged her and said, "We love you, Mom."

They left the cage, then, and headed for the stadium's exit. As they left, Lirpá's cell phone rang. Jesse grabbed her hand, then Jorge's.

"Hold on," he said.

They lifted up and flew, up over the city, to the top of the Statue of Liberty. Standing on her crown, Lirpá took out the cell phone, still ringing, reached back, and chucked it way out into the Atlantic Ocean.

SOCK-O-LICIOUS!

BY EMILY, AGE 13

Socks make statements bold and brave
With colors, designs, and frills I crave;
Styles no one else can create —
Which to wear is your only debate;
To the mall, across the street,
With your friends or ones to meet.
Wear them with a pair of pants,
Or even with shorts because there are no can'ts;
Mix them up day by day
And choose to wear as you may.

On my feet socks sing and dance,
There's one named Kim and one named Lance -
Personalities are not the same;
They're always cool and never lame -
One says, "hey" and one screams, "hi."
When I run, they say they fly;
But most of all they stand up tall
To make sure I will never fall.

MY FAVORITE THINGS IN SPRING

BY ISRA, AGE 8

To swing on the swing
When the flowers come out.
To swim in the Kennedy School pool
And splash my brother
(As he splashes me back).

But my favorite thing in the spring is jump roping.
My jump rope is pink: the handles, everything.

It was a present from my dad.
It scratches the concrete every time I jump –
80 times in a row is my record!

Ping! Swing! Wing! Fling!

And all of the bad things
– The bugs and mosquitoes –
Are kept away by my jump roping.

Ode to the Ordinary

Write a poem to praise something ordinary or unexpected.

FIREFLY

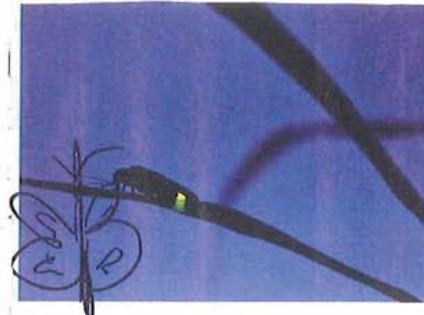
BY SHEILA, AGE 24

The author crossed out unwanted text in a magazine article, leaving behind this "blackout poem."

As darkness falls on a midsummer evening
Beetles flash and wink their way through the mating season.
The luminous larvae
Emit a signature flash pattern
And a unique color once used
To steer boats after dark.
Synchronized flashes
Draw thousands of tourists in June.
When nights turn warm and humid,
Let starlight and the gentle
Twinkle of fireflies stand in for lighting.

Blackout Poem

Begin by circling one or two interesting words or phrases in a magazine or newspaper article (don't read it; just skim). Then find other words that connect them, forming a message, story, or poem. This may take time. Be patient. When you're ready, cross out all unwanted text to leave behind your blackout poem.



ANIMAL TRACKS

Firefly

[REDACTED] as darkness falls on a midsummer evening.
[REDACTED] beetles [REDACTED] flash and wink their way through the mating season,
[REDACTED] the luminous larvae [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] emit [REDACTED] a signature flash pattern and a unique color,
[REDACTED] once used [REDACTED] to steer
[REDACTED] boats after dark. [REDACTED] synchronized flashes [REDACTED] draw thousands of tourists in June.
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] When nights turn warm and humid, [REDACTED] let starlight and the gentle twinkle of fireflies stand in for lighting. —

ERIC MICHMAN/SHUTTERSTOCK; FIREFLY: NIKI STANTON/SHUTTERSTOCK

THE STORY OF RUFUS AND MESSI

BY ANTONIO, AGE 12

Rufus the alien had a face like a clock and lived in Boston. He was so scary that he could scare a dinosaur. He growled like a werewolf. He had claws on his hands and feet that were as long as pencils.

One hot summer night, Rufus decided to scare the soccer player Messi. He found Messi in the stadium, practicing all alone. Everything was silent. The moon, shaped like the letter D, shone over the field. As Rufus ran toward Messi his heart beat like someone knocking on a door. He grabbed Messi with his long arms.

"Help!" Messi screamed.

But then Messi turned and saw Rufus for the first time.

"Hey," Messi said. "I'm an alien, too."

"Oh," said Rufus. "I only wanted to scare you."

Messi smiled then. He said, "Do you want to play for Barça with me?"

"Yes," Rufus said. "Can I play forward?"

"Sure."

And from that day on, Rufus and Messi played together on Barça and they won three European Championships.

This story was first written in Spanish. We translated it into English so that Antonio could share it with more people, including his nurses. Having a creative work translated can open the door for others — including caregivers — to encounter and enjoy a patient's personality.

LA HISTORIA DE RUFUS Y MESSI

POR ANTONIO, 12 AÑOS

Rufus un extraterrestre que tenía la cara como un reloj y vivía en la ciudad de Boston podía asustar hasta un dinosaurio. El aullaba como un hombrelobo, tenía manos de garras y pies tan largos como lápices .

Una noche caliente de verano Rufus decidió asustar a Messi un futbolero que encontró practicando solo en el estadio.Todo estaba quieto, la luna brillaba sobre el campo y tenía la forma de la letra "D". Rufus corrió hacia Messi, y su corazón latía como si alguien tocara la puerta. Rufus se acercó y lo agarró con sus largos brazos.

"¡Auxilio!" Messi gritó.

Pero para entonces Messi se dió la vuelta y vió a Rufus por primera vez.

Messi dijo: "Oye, yo también soy extraterrestre."

Rufus respondió: "¿De verdad? Yo nada más quería asustarte."

Messi sonrió y dijo: "Quieres jugar conmigo en el equipo Barça?"

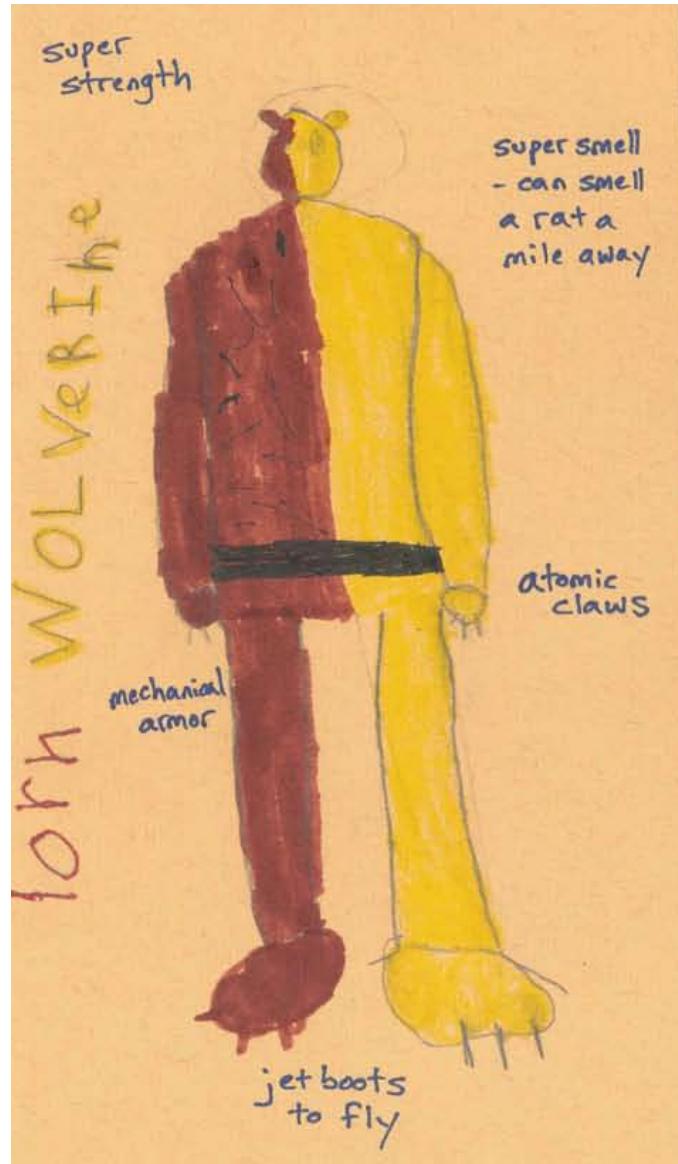
Rufus contestó: "Sí pero ¿Puedo jugar de delantero?"

Messi respondió: "¡Seguro!"

Y desde aquel día, Rufus y Messi jugaron juntos en el equipo Barça y ganaron tres campeonatos europeos.

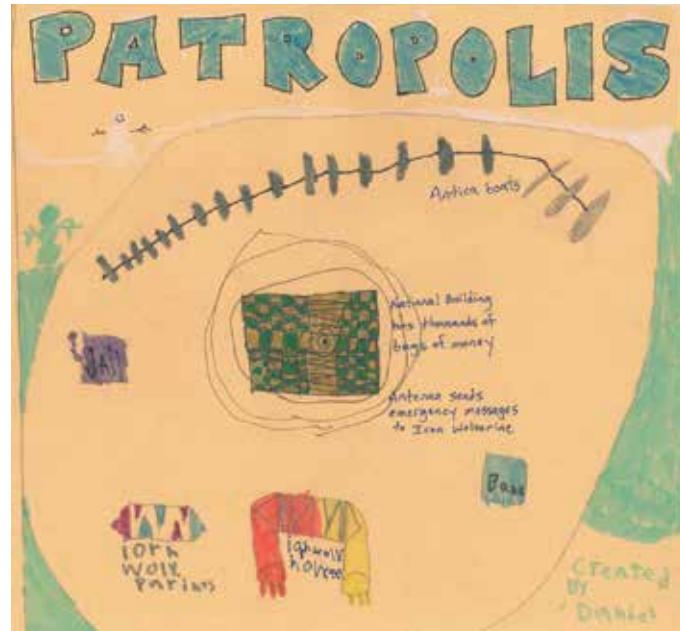
PATROPOLIS

BY DANIEL, AGE 8



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Iron Wolverine has super strength and super smell (he can smell a rat from a mile away). He wears mechanical armor, atomic claws, and jet boots that help him to fly.



Iron Wolverine lives in and protects the city of Patropolis, shown in the map above. Patropolis is cold year-around, as you can see by the row of Arctic boats. The center of treasure and trouble in Patropolis is the National Building, which contains thousands of bags of money. This is obviously where the criminals try to break into. Atop the National Building is an antennae that sends emergency messages out to Iron Wolverine. Fortunately, Iron Wolverine doesn't live far from the National Building, in his red-and-yellow theme color fortress. Fortunately, he also lives next door to his parents.

Maps to Superheroes' Homes

Every map tells a story. Where does your superhero live? Draw it out and write about all the significant places.

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CAMP ROMANCE

BY ARIYANNA AND SKY, AGES 12 AND 13

At the colorful, bright Camp Sunshine, Ariyanna, a 13-year-old Massachusetts girl loves having fun: fishing, acting, and making award plaques for her friends.

One day she was at wood shop when she saw a 14-year-old boy with short black hair and big brown puppy dog eyes. He was working on making a race car. He was dressed sharp! He wore creased pants and a Polo shirt and black Nike blazers. She felt like she would pass out.

Ariyanna decided she had to meet him, so she planned to bump into him like an accident. She carried her plaque in front of her and walked right into his side.

"Oh, I'm sorry!" she said. "By the way, my name is Ariyanna."

She held out her hand and he shook it.

"That's okay," he said. "My name is Tay."

"So what are you making?"

"A race car."

"Cool," she said as she looked into his eyes.

"So I see we are in the same color group," Tay said.

"Yup," Ariyanna said distractedly.

"See you later then," he said.

But all she did was look into his big brown eyes.

"Hello?" he said.

"Huh? Oh yeah. Cool," she said.

Then Tay invited Ariyanna to have lunch with him so they could get to know each other better. In the cafeteria, Tay asked what she liked to do for fun.

"Arts and crafts," she said. "What about you?"

"I like to write raps," Tay said. "And then perform them at camp talent shows or just to friends in general."

Ariyanna and Tay became good friends after that and continued to hang out, doing arts and crafts, fishing, acting, and swimming

in the "It" pool.

The night of the Talent Show came toward the end of camp. It was held on stage in the auditorium. The entire camp was there – every color group, every counselor and staff. Before the show, the place was noisy with excitement. The breeze came through the open doors smelling like woods and S'mores.

Ariyanna sat in the front row with her friend Skyy. First up was a singer who did "Baby" by Justin Bieber. Then came a juggler. After that a comedian telling jokes. The crowd loved it, but Ariyanna wondered where Tay was. She had hoped he'd sit by her, but he was nowhere to be seen.

Suddenly, everything in the room went dark. The lights came on stage and all she could see was Tay. He smiled and started to rap. The rap, he said, was called "Ariyanna."

*She has nice hair and she really does care,
She has a pretty smile – I can't wait a while
To see her. I know. This girl named Ari.
I love her so much.
I can't even front.
I want to be with her for the rest of the year.*

When Tay finished, the whole room clapped, including Ariyanna. She stood up smiling and screaming with happiness.

"Oh my god," said Skyy. "I can't believe it."

Skyy made room so that Tay could sit down by Ariyanna.

"I'm so proud of you," Ariyanna said and gave Tay a hug.

After the show ended, they walked outside together. The air was warm with summer night. They saw stars up above and the big full moon. For a moment, all they could hear was the clicking sound of crickets. Then Tay turned to her.

"Do you want to go out?" he asked.

On the inside, she was ecstatic. But on the outside, she had to play it cool.

"Yeah," she said.

Tay picked her up and carried her on piggy back. They returned to the cabin to tell all her friends the news.

THE MIGHTY SAFINA

BY MOHAMMAD, AGE 11

Out on the Gulf Sea,
Slow like a turtle,
The mighty Safina* sails.

On board are aliens from Egypt
Carrying a herd of white elephants.
Did you know? They are sailing to Texas
So the elephants can feast on bird poop.

The winds cry like owls.
The air smells of dead cows.
Now the aliens are pirates
- they transformed! -
Filling their yellow canons.

Beware: the mighty Safina this way comes!

ALL THINGS ARE ONE

BY JOSH, AGE 15

All things are one,
Every thing together,
Moon and sun,
Connected with each other.

Like death and life,
Relief and pain,
Ease and strife,
Relaxed and strain;

Water and sand,
Sky and ground,
Foot and hand,
Free and bound;

A perfect balance
Of harmony,
The universe's talents
For you and me.

*Safina is the Arabic word for ship

My Mysterious Love at First Sight

By Kristie, age 15

I woke up at my house in Framingham and my mom said, "We're going to the beach." We got ready and took our white stretch limo down The Pike to Unicorn Beach. A unicorn died there a very long time ago, and that's how it got the name. It's a magical place.

Then, like any other person, I put a towel down on the rainbow-colored sand, which was as soft as a bunny's fur, to do some sunbathing. I went to the concession stand and that's when I saw him.

First of all, he was hot. He was drinking a Shirley Temple and the sun was beaming perfectly on his caramelicious, human skin.

He came and sat next to me. I froze. I felt like a dozen butterflies were in my stomach, tickling me and being annoying.

"Hello," he said in a deep voice.

"Hi," I said.

We started talking about the Twilight series. And then he took me to the Beach House with the view of the ocean. I was pretty happy. We sat there sunbathing when I discovered him running into the woods. It was night then. And a full moon appeared.

I ran after him. After what felt like an hour, I found him in the middle of nowhere. I hid. I was afraid. He had grown big and hairy. He was a werewolf.

Then he saw me. I started to run back to the beach. At my towel, I sat down to think about what I had seen - he was a werewolf? I didn't get it. Hours later, he came back, sat next to me, and explained:

"The werewolf you saw was me. I turn into it to protect myself or when I need to. No matter what, I will protect you, too."

So we sat there together, on Unicorn Beach, watching the moon turn into a silver star, holding hands, and having a good time.

My Hero

PATIENTS, FAMILY AND STAFF ON 6NORTH

This poem is a compilation of responses to the question: Who is Your Hero?

Captain America because he embodies all that's awesome.

My mom because she amazes me every day.

Jon Lester because he overcame cancer and still is a good pitcher.

My dad because he's an amazing, strong leader.

God because he works it out.

My daughter because she's the most beautiful person I know.

My cat because she's a cat and I love her.

My dog because he's always around to play tug-of-war.

My husband because he's a wonderful person.

My mom because she can literally do everything.

My cousin because he's been in the service 20 years.

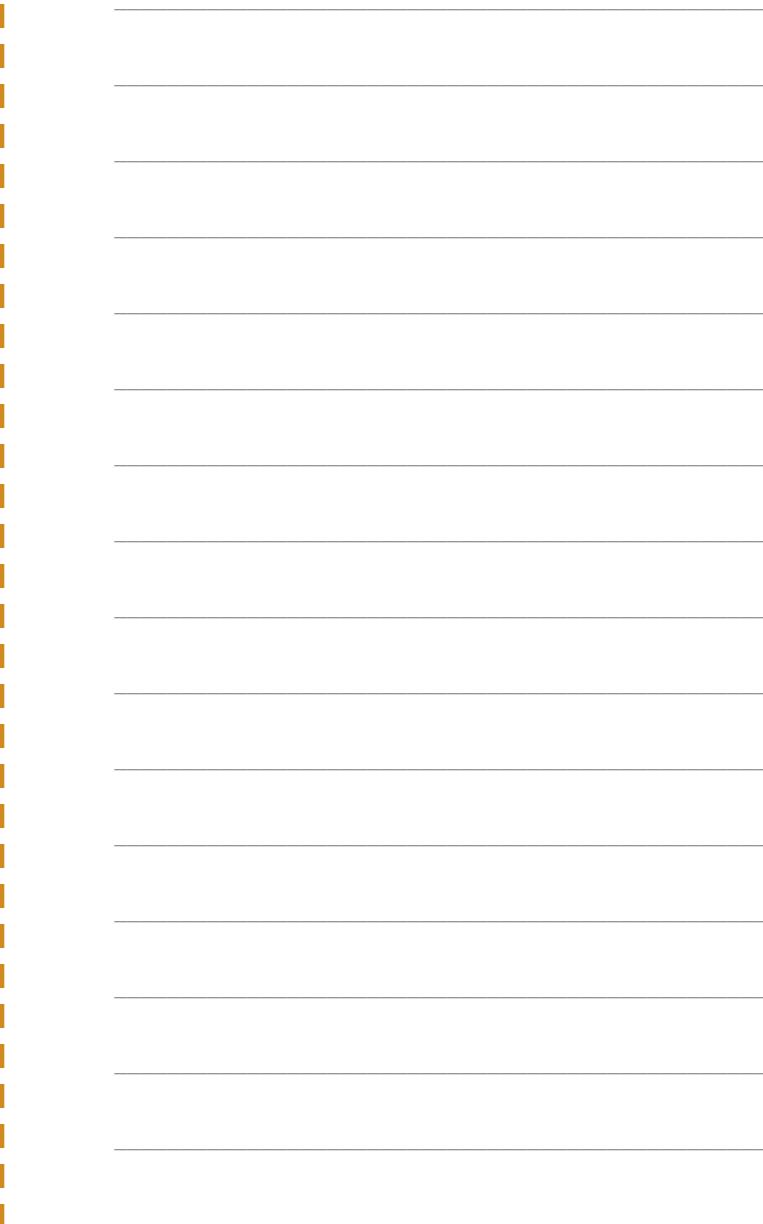
Someone I haven't met yet who will be all a hero should be: full of honesty and respect.

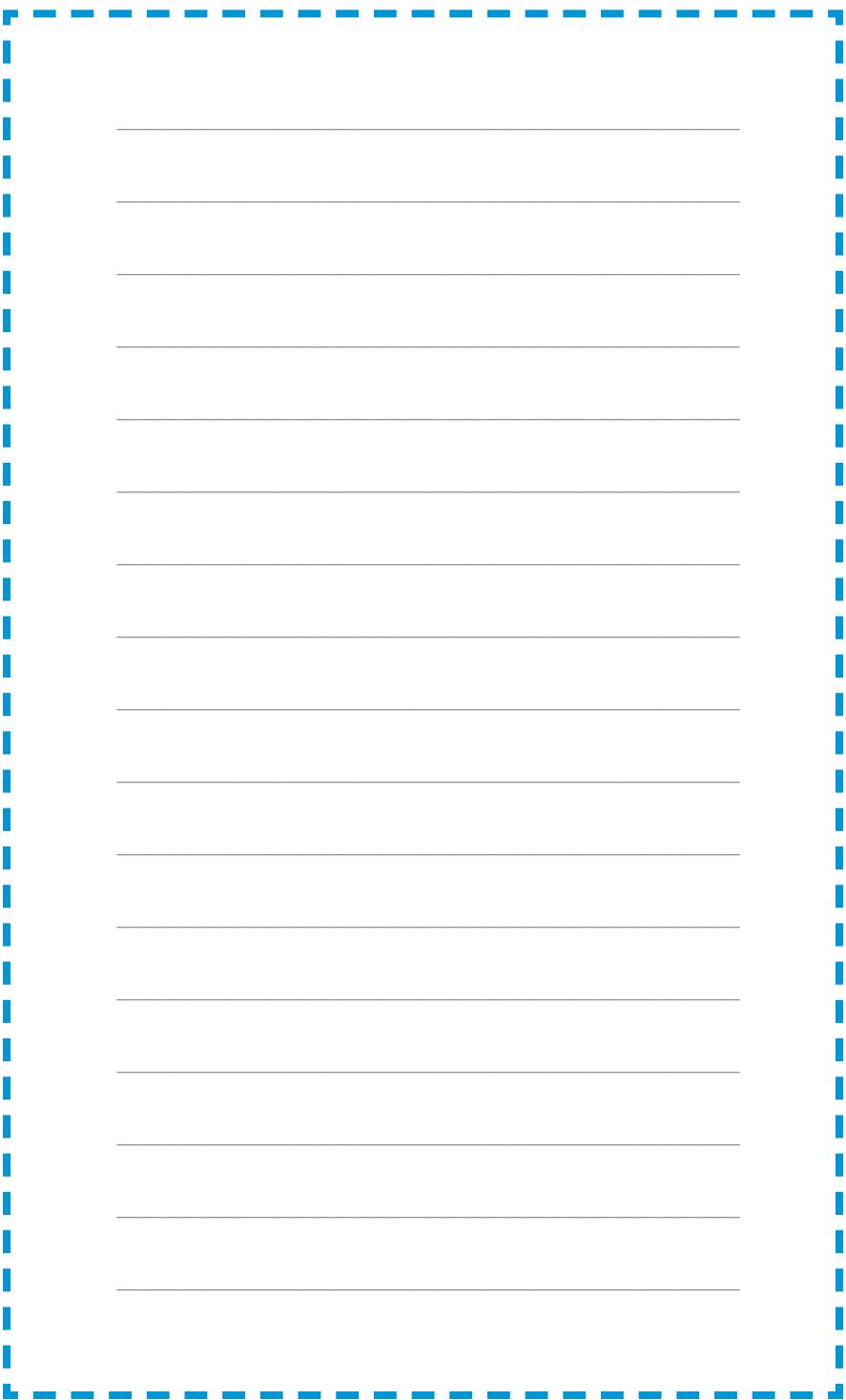
Now it's your turn!

Use the following blank pages to try some of our creative prompts or invent and follow your own.

Glossary

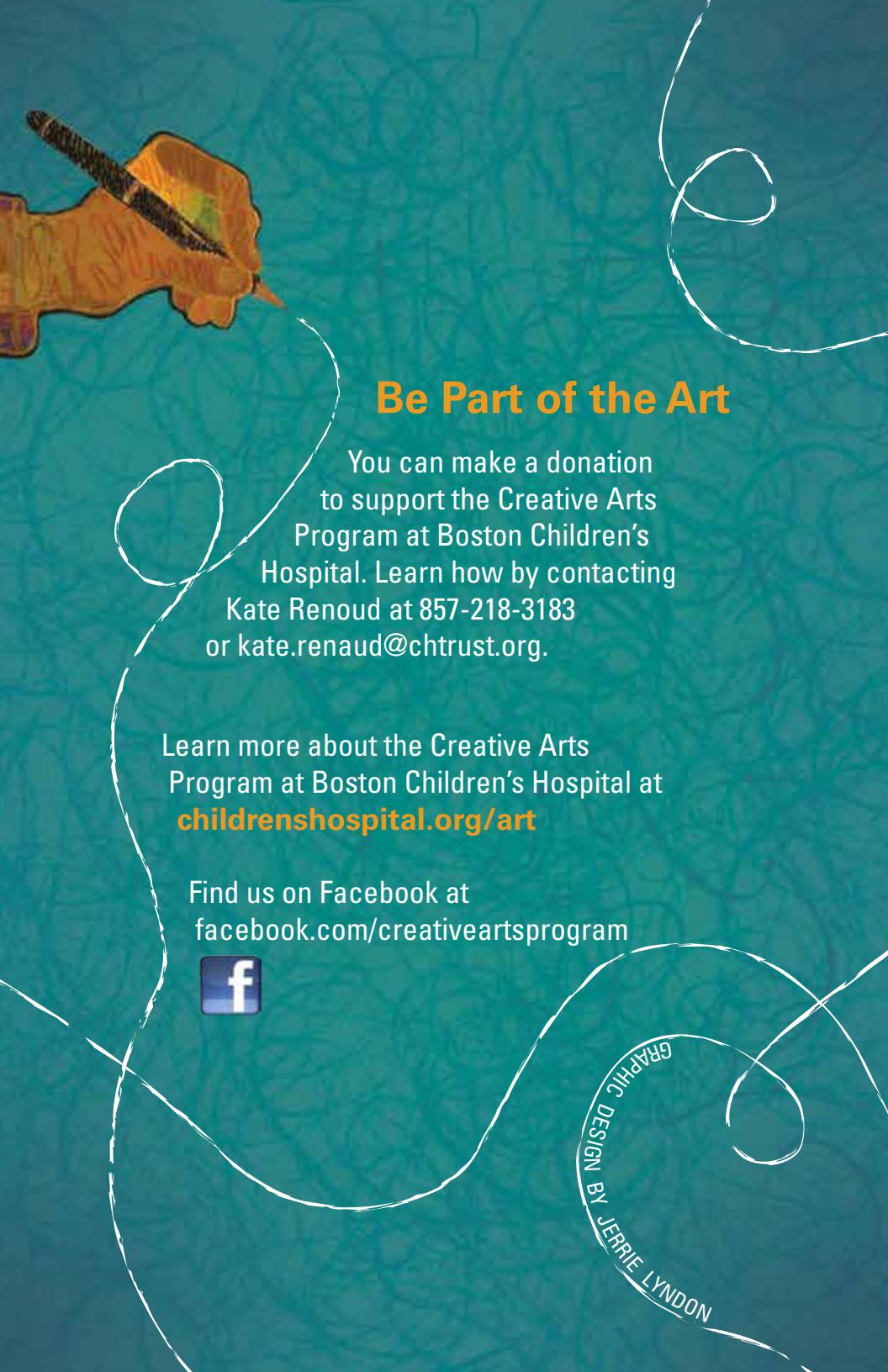
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Inspired?

We want to hear your story. Share your picture or poem with us on Facebook at facebook.com/creativeartsprogram or drop us a line at arts@childrens.harvard.edu



Be Part of the Art

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