

Stories

American Stories

A FISH THAT CAN TALK, Sean Mansoory, Wilmington, DE, age 8, grade 2, Wilmington Friends School

Once there was a little boy named Zach. He is seven years old. He liked fish a lot. So one day he wanted to get a fish. A little fish. So he got one. He went to the pet store. And he saw something very weird. A Gold fish. And it could talk. I know I like weird stuff, but a fish that could talk was too weird. He called me. I didn't know what to do. So I walked over to him. He talked to me. He said "Hey kid, take me home with you." But Zach wanted to get a little fish. Not a big fish. But that gold fish was pretty cute. So I got him. And then he said "Nice place you've got here." But he didn't like the place. So he played dead. And Zach looked at him and Zach said "Is he dead." And he said, "I guess he is." And he took the fish to the sea. And the fish said "I'm free!!!"

A LADY'S HUSBAND DIED, Tamara, Washington, Grade 1, Yankee Ridge School, Urbana, IL

Once upon a time there was an old lady who was sick in bed. She was lonely, and she did not have a husband. Her husband died a long time ago in 1969. She went to his funeral and she cried. She went back and called her daughter and told her daughter, your father died.br> Her daughter was crying on the telephone, and the mother told her daughter to come to her house. I can take care of you. We can be together for a while. We will need each other right now, because I am very lonely and I love you, dear daughter.

A NEW LIFE, Gabriel Castro, Grade 8, Tioga Elementary, Bensenville, IL

Once there was a boy named Juan Carlos. He lived in Los Angeles with his family. They wanted a new life, so they moved to Chicago. He went outside and saw a gang. They asked Juan Carlos if he wanted to be in the gang. And he said yes. He did not go to school and he started to steal from the people. He wanted to get out of the gang, But the leader of the gang said if he gets out, they would kill him. Then one day he did not do his work to steal from the people. The leader of the gang wanted to kill. But he called the police. The police came and arrested the leader of the gang. Juan Carlos got a job and he started a new life. The family of Juan Carlos are happy to be together in their new life. The end.

A RIDE ON THE "EL", Aaron Gerber, Grade 8, Clinton School, Chicago, IL

ride on the el is an Adventure. A ride on the el is a great Experience. A ride on the el bring a Smile to one's face. Hearing the screech of the wheels skid on the tracks. Smile to one's face. Seeing the sparks through the window caused by the friction. Smile to one's face. Touching the rust-covered outer layer of the window. Smile to one's face. Smelling the dirt and oil dripping from the train. Smile to one's face. Tasting the excitement of going fast on the outer rim. Smile to one's face. A ride on the el is truly an Adventure.

All About Me, Brian Langner, Kindergarten, Prairie Grove School, Crystal Lake, IL

This is me when I was a baby. Wa! Wa! This is me when I was starting to walk. Walk, walk, walk. This is me when I was starting to run. Run, run, run, run. This is me when I was starting to talk. "Hi, Mom. Hi, Dad." This is me playing with my baby sister. Tickle, tickle, tickle. This is me when I'm starting to ride my bike. Bump, bump, bump, bump. This is me when I was swimming. Splash, splash, splash . . . SPLASH! This is me when I was camping. Good night. ZZZZZ. This is me in Kindergarten. "This is fun!" This is me rinding the bus home. And this is THE END!

ALONE, by Vanessa L. Trask

have three best friends, And other friends besides, Why do I feel so alone? Someone is talking to me I don't even listen. Why do I feel that coldness In the pit of my stomach? Someone taps my shoulder. I don't respond. Why is a cold feeling Creeping over me? Probably because someone Just put a snowball down The back of my coat. I feel my anger rising, Taking over my loneliness. I am no longer alone. The End

ANIMAL CRACKERS, Rachel Snitz, Grade 3, Walt Whitman School

I was eating lunch with Monica, Erin, and Laura. We opened our lunch boxes. We started to eat. I had a sandwich and fruit. All of a sudden I saw something wrapped in foil. I opened it up. It was a box of animal crackers. Chocolate animal crackers. All of the sudden an animal cracker jumped out of the box! It started to dance. She asked of I wanted to dance. I said yes. We started to dance. The teacher came in. The animal changed into a cracker again. I was dancing on the table. I got in trouble. That was the best day of my life!

THE ANTS PICNIC, Robin Rokosik, Grade 2

Once upon a time, there was a queen ant. The queen ant planned a party. The ants dressed up in their best clothes and met in the park. There was music and the ants were dancing. The ants were all having a great time when the queen announced dinner. When the last ant was served, they heard a giant footstep coming toward them. Before the ants could run to safety, the giant's footsteps crushed them. Ants today get even with the giants every time the giants gather outside for a picnic. Have you ever been to a picnic without ants?

THE APPLE SAUCE STORY, Audry Simon, Grade 2, Edgar Allen Poe School, Arlington Heights, IL, 3/1/88

One day a very old man and a very old lady went shopping. They bought some meat and vegetables for dinner and then they wanted to buy some applesauce. But by mistake they bought apple baby food. They ate dinner and went to sleep. The next day when they woke up they started to cry and say "Goo goo goo" They fell out of bed and started to crawl all around the house. The baby food made them turn into babies again. They were hungry so they crawled in the kitchen and ate some crumbs from the floor. They kept on crying. They were thirsty so they drank the water out of the dog's bowl. Suddenly they started to bark. Then they ate the dog's food. When they were done they opened the door and ran outside. They played in the yard for a long time. When they came back in they found the old man's slippers.

BASKETBALL, Brad Ramsey, Grade 2, Mrs. Doyle

Once there was Bulls stadium and a basketball player named Michael Jordan. He was strong and rich. He lived in the city. He had a hoop to practice in his room. Scotty Pippin was on the Bulls too. So was B.J. Armstrong and Grant. They had their names printed on their shoes. They wore Nikes. They had red and white jerseys. In 1993, Michael quit and is playing baseball with Frank Thomas.

THE BIG MISTAKE, Jenny Musbach, Grade 6, Charles Quentin School, Barrington, IL

Hi. I'm Kelly and I am here to tell you about a most interesting mistake I made. It all started when my two kind of friends dropped by very unexpectedly. They were the coolest girls in school and they had their ears pierced. Oh, how I wanted my ears pierced, but my Dad said no. He said, "Your older sister Jamie hadn't gotten hers pierced until she got into Junior High!" So then the stupidest person on earth walked in - JoJo. I asked her what to do (not that I cared), but anyway she said, "Well my brother owns a jewelry store and he has an earring gun. I could get it and do it myself." "Well

. OK," I said. "OK, Squirt, come on, we've got ears to pierce." (Five minutes later) All done - well gotta go. See ya' Squirt. The next day . . . I woke up and my ears were the size of tomatoes and the color of apples. They were infected!!!! Jamie noticed, "Kel, you've got to get those ears to a doctor, or tell dad." "OK, I will." "Come on then, let's go." I found dad on the couch cutting coupons. "Dad, can I tell you something?" "Sure honey, what's up?" "Well you see . . . it's like this. I let JoJo pierce my ears." "What?!! After I specifically told you no!" "I want to be treated like an individual - not have to do whatever Jamie wants to do, when she does it.:" "I guess you're right. Now, how about getting those ears to a doctor, and after we'll go out and get a burger and fries, cause it's the last meal you'll be having out in a long time. "Grounded, huh." The end.

A BIG MISTAKE IN GHOSTOWN, Andrew Stevenson

It was a hot, dry day in Ghostown, Arizona. The sky was clear and not a cloud in sight on June 6, 1991. A cowboy named Bob was riding on his horse, Dixie. Bob rode up to the bar where his friends Mary and the bartender Jake were. They were very happy to see Bob. Mary and Jake told Bob that they were going to buy a new bar because the one they owned now was too old. Cowboy Bob offered to get the deed papers from the bank for Mary and Jake and they said, "OK". After Bob got the deed papers, he was going to bring them back to Mary and Jake but on his way back he ran into an old friend named Ed. (Ed was really a robber.) Ed was such a good friend that Bob gave him two tickets to a play, but instead of reaching into his left pocket where his tickets were, he reached into his right pocket where the deed papers were. Forgetting what play tickets look like, Bob gave the deed papers to Ed. Bob got back to the bar and found Jake and Mary waiting for him at a table. Bob reached into his left pocket and pulled out tickets to the play. Now Bob was worried. Bob said, "We've got a problem." "What kind of problem?" said Jake. "I thought I gave two tickets to Ed, but I gave him the deed papers. Don't worry, we'll get Ed tomorrow," said Bob. The next day Bob got on his horse at sunrise. After 3 hours of riding he found Ed, got the deed papers, and chased Ed out of Ghostown, Arizona forever. After that Bob got his share of chores for his Big Mistake in Ghostown.

THE BIRD AND THE SNAKE, by Sara W.

Once upon a time there was a Mommy bird and four eggs. Mommy bird was sitting on them waiting for them to hatch. Along came Mr. Snake and he said "Why don't you go to the market and buy some birdseed for your eggs.?" Mama Bird thought for a minute and then said, "I guess so, but you have to promise to take care of my babies." She went off to the market. When she got home Mr. Snake was lying on the ground with red chalk on him. He said, "Mama bird, a lion climbed up the tree and knocked me down and took your four eggs." Mama bird did not believe him, so she said, "I believe you, but for

all your trouble I will watch your baby snakes while you go to the snake shop." And he said "Fine." When he got home Mama bird was standing near the pond with no babies. Well, Mr. Snake was so mad he said "What happened?" She said, "An alligator came up, threw me in the pond and took all five of your babies. I'm sorry for you." Snake jumped up and said, "That's not true! That's not true!" he screamed and shouted. He gave her eggs back. They heard some cracking noise. The birds hatched. They lived happily ever after, but they never asked each other to baby sit again.

BOOK REPORTS, Kim Nash

One day in reading class we were assigned to do a book report. Now, I think book reports are impossible, reading a two hundred page book, writing a very long summary, and even the books are boring, sometimes. When you come home from school, you see your kid brother playing Nintendo, your older brother watching television and here you are, locked in your room reading a book! Yuck! Sometimes your teachers are so demanding of children. When you finish reading your book, you have to start your extremely hard project. Next, it's the summary. OK, you finished writing your summary. Now your Mom has to correct it. (Boring!) You finally write it over and turn it in. When you see everybody else's project, it looks like it is a masterpiece, and yours looks like you did it in the morning, today, alone. I hate Book reports!!

THE BOULDER AND THE FEATHER, Rachel Brietman, Grade 2, Heathcote School, Scarsdale, NY

One sunny day in May on a big green mountain lay a big grumpy boulder and a colorful bird feather. A cool breeze blew. It made the feather do a little dance in the air. "Don't be so light and playful," said the boulder in a harsh voice. "Why shouldn't I?" said the feather. "It's such a lovely day!" "Because it's too hot!" "What?" "I said it's too hot for light and playful!" "Why are you yelling? I have never heard such a yell for no reason." "I don't like light and playful!!" "Well, I love it!" "All right, I've had enough of you. I'm going to run you over" And with that, the boulder swooped over to where the feather was lying, but a breeze blew and it made the feather go up in the air. And the boulder fell right off the mountain. And that was the end of the grumpy boulder. THE END

THE BOY WHO WAS MEAN TO PLANTS, Keith Mickie, Grade 1, Washington School, Glenview, IL

Once upon a time there was a boy named Tommy who was mean to all kinds of plants. He would pick their leaves and petals. One day he fell asleep under a tree and when he woke up he tried to move but he couldn't. His feet were planted in the ground. His legs were green, his hands were leaves. He turned into a flower. Tommy was thirsty, but he couldn't get himself a drink of water.

Then came a boy with a sprinkling can and watered Tommy. It felt real good. Tommy woke up and saw he was just dreaming. He was so happy. He was never mean to anything again.

BOYS, Gina Braun, Grade 3, Central School, Harvard, IL

Why is it that boys chase girls? It is not fair to girls, because girls probably do not like boys very much. And probably do not like boys at all. I do not think it is fair to girls. Some girls do not like boys and I do not like boys. I know me and Angie do not like some boys. But they smile at me and Angie. And some boys like me and Angie. But we do not like them.

BRAVE CAPTAIN, Tom McGrath, Grade 4, Mrs. Boslett

Once upon a time a brave, handsome captain was sailing with a beautiful princess. The captain was going to marry the princess. A mean, old pirate wanted to marry the princess. He swore he would marry her, too. Later, when the captain and the princess were enjoying the music from the violinist, the pirate swung through the window on a rope. He challenged the captain to a sword fight. Whoever won would get the princess. The captain accepted his challenge. The captain took a sword from the wall. Klang! Klang! Klang! They ducked! They jumped! They did everything to not get stabbed. But the captain did get stabbed. He fell on the ground. The mean old pirate grabbed the princess. The princess struggled. The captain was still alive. He struggled to get up. He took the sword and stabbed the pirate. The pirate died. The captain and the princess got married and lived happily ever after.

CHITTER CHATTER, Ms. Saltsman's First Grade, Newburgh Free Academy, Newburgh, NY

The teacher started to take attendance, but the children went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK! The teacher started to take the lunch count, , but the children went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK! The teacher started to read the class a story, but the children went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK! The teacher started the Writing Process, but the children went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK! the teacher said, "Take out your math books", but the children went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK! The teacher said, "Let's do our ribbon dance," , but the children went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK! The teacher shouted, "BE QUIET!" and sent the children to seats to put their heads down. The principal came in And . . . The principal and the teacher went . . . CHITTER CHATTER CHITTER CHATTER YAK! YAK! YAK!

CHRIS'S BIRTHDAY PRESENT, Sarah Bijeol & Goldie Bates, 4th Grade, Lowell, MA, J.G. Pagne School

Aunt Kay said "Here's your birthday present dear." A birthday comes but once a year. "WOW" thought Chris. "Am I in luck, I'll bet it's a pony or a big toy truck! Or maybe a robot or a ten speed bike, or a ping-pong table that I'd really like, or an encyclopedia all my own, or a chemistry set, or a big trombone!" He tore off the paper of the birthday box, and said Thank you for this.....pair of socks."

THE DINOSAUR, By: Justin Ahrens, Age: 6, Grade: 1st, Westdale School, Northlake, IL

Once upon a time there was a dinosaur. It was a big dinosaur! It was hungry. He went hunting for something to eat. He went hunting in the woods. He kept walking and walking. The dinosaur was looking for deer. Then he found something! It was a chocolate chip cookie! He ate it. He said, "Yum!" From that day on, the dinosaur hunted for chocolate chip cookies.

THE DRAGON AND THE PRINCE, Jennifer Jepsen, Grade 2, Mrs. Zwarich

There once was a strong, handsome prince who fell in love with a beautiful princess. She was wearing a long blue dress and blue glass shoes. They wanted to get married and have children. The mean, old, ugly dragon couldn't let them get married because the dragon was also in love with the princess. So the prince found a mouse and made it a magic potion. The mouse turned into a beautiful girl dragon. The prince took the girl dragon to the mean dragon's castle. The mean dragon fell in love with the girl dragon. The prince and the princess finally married and had two children.

THE DREADED CARD, By: Blanca del Castillo, 4th Grade, Greenwich, CT, Greenwich Catholic School

Joey woke up one day, and told himself, "Valentines Day, Nooo." He went down for breakfast "Honey, there's something in the mail for you," said Mrs. Smith. Then Annie, Joey's sister yelled, "Girlfriend, girlfriend, Joey has a girlfriend." "Shut-up, twerp!" Screamed Joey. Joey opened the envelope, and the letter read. Dear Joey, I really like you! Love, your Sweet Admirer "Aaahhh!" Screamed Joey. At School, Joey saw a lot of girls staring at him. "Oh boy" Joey thought. At the end of the day, Jessica came up to Joey, and told him, "I like you, I'm sorry." And they walked home.

THE FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

When I went to the first day of school I rode a bus. I got onto a new bright big yellow bus and rode to school. But it was the wrong school AHHH!! The sign in front said "Junior High." Help!!!! Finally I got to West School but I was twenty minutes late. I was embarrassed to walk into the classroom. I didn't want anyone to notice me so I tip toed in. I sat down in an empty desk at the back of the room without anybody noticing me. Then the lunch bell rang. The teacher noticed me!! She asked me my name and I said "B-B-B-Bryant." She looked at her list and said you're not in my classroom. Ahhh! She said to go to room 110 after lunch. When I got to lunch and opened up my new Superman lunch box there was no lunch in my new and cool box. I screamed! Everybody heard me! I felt like the whole world was watching me. A boy across the table gave a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The peanut butter and jelly were dripping out from the sides. He also gave me a moldy apple. Yuck! There is one good thing today, I found a friend. After lunch Tim and I played kick ball. I kicked it really far and I started to run and I got to third base!! Everybody cheered. I even drove a man home. After lunch I went to room 110 and I found out that my friend Tim who I met at lunch sat right next to me. That afternoon Tim and I passed notes and talked. The afternoon went fast because we had my favorite subjects, Art and PE. The bell rang and it was time to go home. When I got on the bus, I found out that my friend Tim was on the bus. The Day Which I Thought Would Be Bad Was Wonderful!!
THE END

FISHING, Evita Taylor, Grade 2, Clark School, Waukegan, IL

One day my dad said, "Why don't we go fishing today." So we went to get the fishing poles. We got in the car, dad drove. Daddy put the worms on the fishing poles. I threw the fishing line in the water and the fish ate the worm and my dad said, "Very good!" We put the fish in the bucket. The fish started wobbling in the bucket. My mom hates fish but she looked at it anyway. She said she was going to faint and she did. We got the fan then we patted her cheeks and she woke up. My dad said, "Next time I'll know not to take you." We went home. Daddy said, "We might go again but not your mother."

FLOWER, By: Colleen Johnson, Grade 3, Hinsdale, IL

I once had a flower that did not grow. I watered it and fed it once a day, but it would not grow. I made a bet with it! I said, "If you grow, I will plant you outside." It started to sag as if it were saying, "No". I sang it songs, played it songs on the piano, but it would not grow. I put it in the sunlight. Still nothing happened. Then at that moment, I realized something. IT WAS LONELY! I bought another plant and put it in the sunlight next to my plant. Then they both started to sway as if they were saying, "YEAH!" The next day, little buds started to grow. Both plants were happy and growing. The end

**FREDDIE THE ANT, By: Adam Arrigo, West Chester, PA, age 13, grade 7,
C.F. Patton Middle School**

Hi, my name is Freddie and I'm a red ant. In my ant family I have a mother ant, a father ant, and a grandpop ant. I'm an only ant. My grandmom was tragically smushed by a mean giant before I was born, so I never got to know her. Giants, formally known as humans are huge things that walk where they want, whenever they want. But they aren't us ants only problem. Our main problem was the evil ant eater who is known to destroy our homes and try to suck us into his snout like a vacuum. But anyway, I'm here to tell you how I, Freddie the ant, saved my ant hole. It all started when my family was sitting in the living room of our hole watching TV. "In ant news today, we have an emergency news bulletin. The FAI (Federal Ant Investigation) have traced the evil ant eater to his present location: Antenaville. He is said to be wandering somewhere within this place." "Oh no!" Mother Ant cried, "That's where we live!" "Oh, not to worry," exclaimed Father Ant, "I'm sure everything will be fine. The FAI are highly trained for situations like this. I'm sure they can handle it." I felt my little ant stomach churn and ache. What if he attacked our ant hole, I thought. I don't want to become some evil ant eater's mid-day snack! I woke the next day from a deep sleep. I crawled out of bed and through the upstairs holeway. I was starving when I finally reached the kitchen. I smiled as I saw Mother Ant cooking me a big, juicy, crumb for my breakfast before ant-school. I sat down at the table next to grandpop ant. "Here's your breakfast sweetie," said Mother Ant in her always jolly kind of voice. What a morning ant she is!

"Milk!??? I don't want milk, I want juice!" I demanded in my grumpy morning tone. "Drink your milk Freddie, it makes you strong. In my day I drank my milk every day and look at these biceps now!" uttered Grandpop Ant in an old crackly voice. He held up his skinny arm trying hard to flex it. I just smiled and grinned. "What's that grin for?" he demanded in his scratchy voice. "Nothing, Grandpop," I said. I took a big gulp of milk to make him happy. I nibbled on my crumb a little. "Time to go to school, Freddie," exclaimed Mother Ant. "But I don't want to Mother, all the other ants make fun of me because I'm red!" I explained to her. She was about to say something when Grandpop Ant interrupted, "Why in my day, when the other ants made fun of me I have 'em the 'ol left jab into the right antenna. Worked every time!" "I'm sure grandpa!" I said sarcastically, "And I bet you used those big biceps of your too!" "I did! I remember it like it was yesterday..." "I'd really like to stick around and listen to your little flashbacks, but I'm going to be late," I said, "Bye!" Everyday I dreaded going to ant school, because I was the only red ant in the entire school. All the other ants were black. I felt so different, and to top it all off, everybody makes fun of me. As I made my way to class, the other ants behind me pointed and laughed. "Ignore them," I said to myself. One of the other ants yelled, "Hey! Look! It's Rudolf the Red nosed Ant! HAHAHAAAA!" All the other ants laughed. I felt so bad. Then I finally made it to class. As I was

walking home from ant school (I was above-ground) I tripped over something. When I got up to see what it was I screamed. I had tripped over ant eater tracks! Hundreds of thoughts raced through my mind and I started to feel light headed. I ran home as fast as my little ant legs could carry me. I dove into the hole and yelled incoherent words at my mother, "The ant, the ant tracks, the eater!" "Slow down Freddie, what happened?" inquired Mother Ant in a terrified voice. But before I could answer her, the entire ant hole started rumbling and shaking. "The ant eater!!" Mother screamed. Out of the corner of my terrified eye, I saw a long brownish-orange snout, plunge through the ceiling.

"AAAAAA!!!!" we both cried in horror. I knew I had to do something and fast. So I grabbed the nearest object possible: my book bag. I used all of the strength in my little ant arms to hurl the book bag at the snout as hard as I could. "Ow! My snout!" I heard a little voice cry. Then everything was silent. I didn't know what to think or do. Should I climb out there or stay in here, I thought. I decided to climb out through the ant hole. When I peeped my small head and antennas out, I couldn't believe my eyes. There weeping on the ground in front of me was the ant eater. He was much smaller than I expected. He was a brownish orange color. His skin looked scaly and rough and his sky-blue eyes were filled with tears. Everyone depicted him as a huge monster but there in front of me lay a helpless animal who didn't look dangerous at all. The sight of this made me recoil slightly, but then I came little closer. "AAA...Are you OK?" I inquired with my voice shaking. "I think so," said the little voice. I gained the courage to speak again, "I didn't mean to hurt your snout." "Why'd you do that, anyway?" asked the ant eater. "Because you were trying to eat me!" I exclaimed. The ant eater looked puzzled for a few seconds. Then he said, "I've never hurt a fly. I just want to make some friends. I don't have any, but when I get near any ants they all run away screaming. Everyone thinks I eat ants because of my name, but that's just a really bad stereotype! All I want is some friends. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. But without even knowing it, I heard myself saying, "I guess you can't judge a book by it's cover." After that I had a long conversation with the ant eater. We concluded that it would be a good idea for the ant eater to apologize to the other ants for giving them a scare. So, that day we went around going from hole to hole apologizing. All the other ants at school saw how brave I was for confronting the ant eater and soon enough I was the most popular ant in Antenna High. Everyone started realizing that they had all misjudged the ant eater. Even the FAI realized that they were wrong. But sadly enough the ant eater had to leave. All the ants of Antenaville threw him a big farewell party. And he was off sooner than we knew it. Now he visits every once in a while. But no matter how many other friends he makes, he'll never forget his friends in Antenaville.