

Imagination will often carry us to worlds that never were. But without it, we go nowhere.

– Carl Sagan

The future of our planet will be decided by the imagination of our children. It is our duty to celebrate their ability to envision their worlds and encourage them to articulate their visions. Excel Vox is one such celebration of our children's perspective and expression. The freshness, feistiness and the feel of these writings were mindboggling to me. I'm sure you'll feel the same. Enjoy!

– Lakshmi Palecanda  
Editor

## A DIFFERENT BARBIE

Nivedha 1A



Once there lived a Barbie. She loved pink colour. Everything she bought had to be only pink. One day, she thought of buying a pet rabbit. When she went to the shop, the uncle said, "We don't sell pink rabbits". She had no choice but to choose from the available colours. The rabbit she bought was very cute and she loved it. And from that day on, she loved all other colours too.

daughter. They treat me like a queen. My favourite colour is pink. I like my mother too. She keeps the house clean and her favourite colour is purple. The prettiest girl in the house is my sister. She is just like a doll. She is very naughty and she also likes pink. We always play together and fight sometimes. I love my family. We go outside and play most of the time.

## My Grandparents

Gowri Hegde 2B



I love my grandparents. I watch TV with my grandpa. I go to the park with my grandma. I enjoy spending time with my grandparents. My grandma combs my hair and cooks delicious three-course meals for me every day. My grandpa takes me to his plantation. My grandma drops me at my friend's house. At my grandparents' house, there is a mango tree. Sometimes when I go there, I eat the mangoes. They are very tasty.

## Ella, The Unicorn

Ashira Elizabeth Beenesh 2A

Once upon a time, there lived a unicorn named Ella. She was very kind to other unicorns. She always helped everybody. She was the best unicorn of all. Once, Ella had to visit a celebration. At the party, Ella was having a lot of fun. Suddenly, Ella fell asleep and had a strange dream. In her dreams, she dreamt about how she would be in her future. She wanted to be a kind and helpful unicorn fairy. After sometime, Ella woke up from her dreams. As she woke up, she could not believe her eyes. To her surprise, she had already turned into a fairy. Thus, she helped all the unicorns and was always kind to them.

## My Family

Sanidhya K 2B



I have a lovely family. I like my father a lot. He is like a super hero to me. His favourite colour is red. I'm the eldest

## Warmth in My Heart

Miraya Mohanty 2B

There is a park in front of my house. Near that park, one

poor couple was living in a building that was under construction. They had a four month-old baby girl. One day, we heard the baby crying loudly. My mother asked the couple why she was crying. Her mother said, "She is crying of cold, because we don't have any warm clothes." That day, my mother gave her some of my warm clothes. The mother became so happy that she kissed my hands. Whenever I saw that baby in my clothes, I felt very happy.

## Helping Someone in Need

**Yathish Gowda S 2C**

One Sunday morning, I was going out with my father and mother. We stopped at the signal since the light was red. There, I saw a poor man begging for food and his clothes were torn. After going home, I thought about him. I asked my father, "Do you have any old clothes which are in good condition?" My father asked, "Why, my child?" I said, "I want to give those old clothes to the poor man whom I saw at the signal." My father said, "Ok, we will give him clothes and some food."

Next Sunday we went to him and gave clothes and food. He said, "Thank you, my child. God bless you, my child." I was very happy. I like to help people when they are in need.

## How we enjoyed our Field Trip

**Nishitha Naveen 3C**

Once, we went to 'Planet Earth Aquarium' for a field trip. On the way, we saw a train passing by. As soon as we entered the place, we saw a waterfall. We sat down under a big tree. There we saw a pet show. In the pet show, we saw animals like white rat, hamster, guinea pig, rabbit, snake, cat, dog, and a rooster. Then we went inside a big shark's mouth where we saw a collection of seashells, micro art, and fishes. After that, we saw pigeons, iguana, ducks, goose, emu, German shepherd, poodle, and Shih Tzu. In the end, we washed our hands and went inside the bus. We ate snacks inside the bus. Then we came back to school happily.

## Merry Christmas

**Disha 3C**

Once upon a time on a snowy Christmas day, Santa Claus

was ready to distribute gifts to the lovely kids. He was very excited. The kids were eagerly waiting for Santa Claus and the gifts. At night, all fell asleep. Santa came along with his favorite reindeer and kept gifts for everyone under the Christmas tree. The next morning, when kids woke up, they were excited to see the gifts. Everyone decorated the house. They were happy to know that Santa was real. We all love SANTA.

## Radha and her friends

**Soha Yajaman 4E**

Once, there lived a small girl named Radha. She had three friends who were not very nice. Sometimes, they were very rude to Radha. They use to trouble her and discourage her. One day, Radha came back home from school, looking disappointed and sad. When her mother asked her about her sadness and her disappointment, she explained to her mother about the bad behaviour of her friends. Mother told Radha to stay away from her friends for a few days and see the changes. "This will help them realize your value," she said.

The days went by. Radha kept to herself and stayed away from her friends. After a few days, her friends started missing something in their group. They realized that it was Radha's essence of goodness. Radha's friends decided to visit Radha and apologize. From then, they again became friends.

**Moral:** Your goodness is always felt. So be good and do good.



## The Doggy Hero

**Samyukta Vivek 4B**

There once was a stuffed dog and its name was Fluffy. Its owner was a girl called Samyukta. Fluffy loved Samyukta very much. But there was a problem. Fluffy was a toy dog and toy dogs cannot speak. They can only come alive at night. Fluffy was sad. One night, when Samyukta was fast asleep, a fairy flew into the room, 'Help me, help me!' she cried. 'What's wrong, little fairy?' asked Martha, the toy monkey. 'A lizard saw me and wants to eat me! I need a hiding place!'

'I can give you one,' said a woofy voice. It was Fluffy. 'Climb

behind the cupboard,' he continued. 'Thank you... Thank you,' said the fairy. She quickly slid behind the cupboard. After sometime, Fluffy said 'It's okay to come out now.' The fairy slowly slid from behind the cupboard. Then she flung herself on Fluffy, 'Thank you so much. Ask for a wish.' Fluffy thought for a while and then he said, 'I want to be a real dog.' The fairy smiled and said a weird spell. 'In the morning, you will be a real dog.' Saying this, she flew away. Fluffy woke up as usual and he opened his mouth and then came a 'Bow Bow.' He was so surprised but then he remembered what had happened last night. So happy, he ran downstairs to where Samyukta was having breakfast. She was so surprised that she nearly spilled her cereal on top of her. 'What is a dog doing in our house?' cried her mother. Then, Samyukta recognized Fluffy. 'It's FLUFFY!!!!' Samyukta cried. 'What! You must be out of your mind,' said Samyukta's mother. 'But, but..... never mind, can we keep him please?????' 'Okay! We can keep him,' said her mother. 'Yay!' Cried Samyukta and rushed off.

Fluffy, on the other hand, stayed where he was and thinking about how good it was to be a real dog.

## SIBLING QUIBBLING

**Risha 6B**

Once, there was a boy named Spadling, who was ruling the house. He was pretending to be a king that moment. Then his mother and father entered from the backdoor and said, "Spadling, see who has come home! It's your new little brother, Bunny". Spadling was terrified at the news. He ran back into his room and 'Baaaaam', he closed the door. He was super mad. He told to himself, 'It's time for my pranks!'

From that day, Spadling was a destructive child. He made Bunny scared all the while by pinching him during his nap, spilling paint all over him, making loud scary noises to scare him and many more. Days passed, weeks passed, months passed and years rolled by.

One fine morning, Spadling was grounded. His infant brother who was now a cute little kid was feeling sorry for him. An idea flashed in Bunny's mind. He ran into his backyard, grabbed a rope, broke the window and called "Spadling, Spadling, come on, let's go down and play,

brother." Spadling was happy and hugged his little brother. They went down to play. While they were playing cricket, Spadling's friends started to bully little Bunny, who was very innocent. Spadling came before Bunny in protection of his brother and said, "Hey you!! How dare you bully my bro when I am around? Stay away to stay safe!!" Bunny was so happy that he ran for a hug from his brother.

Slowly, Spadling and Bunny started finding love within them. They started liking each other. Though all houses have sibling squabbles, all squabbles have love hidden in them. That is what Bunny and Spadling found out.

## The Four Best Friends

**Dhathri M 6C**



There were four best friends in a house named onion, potato, brinjal and tomato. One morning, a person wanted to cook something. So, he took the potato. When he started chopping, all his three friends started crying. After a few days, he took tomato for cooking and when the person was chopping; his other two friends started crying. Later, he took brinjal to cook and started chopping; the onion started crying.

After a few minutes, he started thinking that if he dies, no one is there to cry for him. So, he prayed to God. Then God asked, "What is your problem?" He said, "I have cried for all my three friends, but no one is there to cry for me." So, God gave him a boon and said, "Whoever chops you will cry." Listening to this, the onion was happy. This is why we get tears in our eyes if we chop the onions.

## Loud Pranks

**Shreya S Math 7C**

Long, long ago, the sky was not as high as it is now. It was really low, only a little higher than a tall man. Children played hide and seek with stars and clouds. The clouds sang:

'Peek-a-boo, you little one.

Find me, you funny one.

The children sang back:

"Caught you, cloud friend

You can never hide from us."

But the clouds were very naughty. They would shake themselves to make it rain above the dry clothes. Some

people scolded them saying, "Again, you naughty cloud? I will give you a nice thud."

Hearing this, the clouds would get sad and hide somewhere. They would not have any time. The people would not have any shade from blazing sunlight. Only when they said sorry to the clouds, they would come back. One day, the tallest man of the village, Nillu was walking back home. The clouds suddenly hid the moon behind them. Without knowing this, Nillu walked straight and banged his head on the moon. "Oh, my head!" Nillu cried and ran home. All the villagers were very angry with the naughtiness of the clouds. They went to the village headman and complained. He thought for a while and said, "The clouds wet our dry clothes, play pranks and even try to harm us. Everything happens because the sky is very near us. So let's do one thing. Let's all make long poles of wood and try to push up the sky. We can make the wooden poles as tall as we want the sky to go up."

Everyone started making the longest wooden poles they could. People from distant places came to know of this. All of them made wooden poles. One day, when all were ready with the poles, the head man shouted, "Push it up and push it high with the poles."

Everyone pushed as high as they could and went back to their houses happily. But the sky and the clouds were very sad. Even now, the stars and clouds look down when children play hide-and-seek and peek-a-boo.

## The Wizard of Dragonland

### Gouri MA Class 7A

Once upon a time, there lived a wizard in a mystical and magical world of dragons. Once, the wizard totally ran out of dragon hair, which was very essential for making a very important magic potion. As he looked for a powerful dragon to capture, all he found was a weak little dragon. When the wizard took out his blade to kill the dragon, the dragon pleaded, "Please don't kill me, Mr. Wizard. If you let me go today, I will surely help you another day." The wizard laughed out loud. "You are just a weakling. How can you help me?" he said. But yet, he let the dragon go. A few months later, the wizard was caught in a magic time bubble. When the wizard shouted out for help, the weak little dragon heard him and came there. He chewed and

poked the magical time bubble until there was a hole big enough for the wizard to escape. The wizard escaped from the time bubble and thanked the dragon. Then they both lived happily ever after.

## What We Say, We Become

### Aditi Bhat 8

"She sat down there dismally, she was crying her eyes out. Hearing all the discouragements, she felt dispirited." spoke a voice from far away.

This story is all about a girl named Abbey who was desperate to be an artist, but unfortunately her medical conditions didn't support her aspiration. When she was of a very young age she had lost her right hand. When she was small, by and large she was alone and she didn't really have to compete with anyone. She was all by herself and people left her alone. But now she was grown up enough to face the larger world. "Can this obstacle really stop me from following my dreams?" she asked herself.

Her art teacher named Alan used to always lend a helping hand in Abbey's tough times. He used to always lead her in the right path and would always make her believe that life always offers you a second chance, called tomorrow. Regrettably, Alan died soon.

It was those hard days which she faced when there was no one with her, which made her realize that nothing great comes from comfort zones and it's what you say you become. It was surely the hard days when she had to face the larger world. People would always tease her. One day she was all ready to go and participate in her very first drawing competition. With all her confidence, she went to register her name. The organizers gave her a weird stare and their response was obviously a "No". She lost all hope. After a while, an old man came near to her and told "Hey you little girl, success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm." This one line changed her whole life. She had a dream to achieve which couldn't be destroyed. From that day onwards, she started to do the next thing which she felt was right to do and always had a thought in mind: "I can surely do it". Whenever she felt like quitting, she thought about why she started. She had a special affinity towards art. She kept on saying that she wanted to be an artist and she would become an artist.

All went well. Soon, Abbey became a great artist. Knowing about the problems she faced when she was small, she made sure that other kids like her wouldn't compromise on their dreams because of some unfortunate problems. She became a great person and a role model not only to the specially-abled, but also to everyone who felt that there is nothing more left that could be done.

## What you look for is within you

### Kavya Nair 8 E

There was a girl whose name was Priya. She was very shy and mostly kept to herself. Priya was very good at singing and it was her favourite pastime. One day, she saw a poster being put up at school; on it were the dates of the upcoming competitions. Priya generally ignored these as she didn't participate in any kind of competition. This time, however, she saw that there was going to a singing competition and got very excited as there had never been one before. She immediately signed up for it. From that day onwards she practised hard. After learning a song, she made sure she was perfect at every note.

Finally, two months later the big day arrived. At first, she was very excited but as the time of the competition neared, she started to get nervous and began losing confidence. When she went on the stage, she was so nervous that she forgot all the lyrics of the song. She thought everyone would make fun of her voice so she didn't sing and left the stage feeling embarrassed. When she went home, her parents asked her how she did and she told them everything. She knew that they had probably dealt with this kind of thing before. And they had. They comforted her, told her not to get upset and encouraged her. They also told her that she had the confidence in her but just needed to believe in herself. So, the next year, she practised hard just like in the previous year. But this time when it was her turn to sing, she sang, not the competition but for her love of singing. It was beautiful. And guess what? She won!

## Ahoy Matey!

### Reva, 8D

This story begins on a hot summer day while a kid named Aryan and his family are spending a lovely time on the

beach. He is enjoying his time walking barefoot hearing the rhythmic sound of the waves and the seagulls. He can also hear a ship honking and see it sailing near the horizon.

Aryan has now walked far away from his picnic spot, he now has reached a place where he can see rows of shops and hotels and a bunch of people in front of it. This is when he sees a cute 6-year-old girl with orange curls, freckles and a tooth missing in the front row. They become really good friends and before going for lunch, she gives him a cute gift. It is a small blue, red and white ship in a glass bottle looking very cute.

As Aryan lays down on the warm golden sand, he thinks about being a sailor and sailing the world and going to the edge of the world and see what lies there. The day is hot, the sun was gleaming and a light breeze blows which drifts Aryan to sleep. But later he is aroused from sleep by a loud bang on the door he opens one of his eyes lazily to check where the noise was coming from, when lo! He finds himself in a cabin with a little desk and a bed big enough for him and his brother to sleep in.

Confused and scared, he slips out of the bed and opens door, where, to his greatest of excitement, he sees himself on a deck of a ship which resembles the one in his pocket. He tries to dig down into his pocket when he realizes he is wearing an outfit of a captain. He still cannot connect the dots as to what actually happened but still he walks around the deck like a captain. Everything goes smoothly. Aryan is enjoying his time looking at how beautifully the ship sails through the ocean like a beautiful fish and how the wind is singing a tune in his ears but suddenly the dark clouds start hovering around and making blanket so thick that the sunlight cannot penetrate. The soldiers of the clouds take out their gleaming swords of lightning and send the arrows of raindrops flying down. He can hear the war drums of thunder banging so loudly that one has to cover his ears.

A sailor's worst enemy is standing face to face looking fiercely at Aryan and his ship as if he were thirsty for victory. Great men have tried their luck with him but they do not succeed. Only the storm and his soldiers know the secret of navigating a ship through a fierce storm like this one. Aryan is scared but then he looks at the crew which is starting to panic. That's when Aryan thinks it time to take some action. First, he calms all of his crew and then

assigns them tasks to do. He also tells them to sing a song with him while they do their jobs. They all start singing a song in which Aryan also joins. All this fun and songs make the crew forget about the storm, which really surprises the storm and his men.

When he sees Aryan and his crew winning this war, he gives up and goes away with his men sadly behind them, to give way to warm sunshine which makes the little drops on the deck look like pieces of diamond. At their victory from the evil the whole crew is happy and is dancing around but suddenly Aryan hears someone calling him. He walks towards the direction from where the sound is coming but when he sees his brother standing on the water with a tail for legs he gets confused. Before he could investigate this, he falls into the sea and goes deeper and deeper down until it is all black and suddenly everything starts to shake. He wakes up and finds himself on the beach with his brother who is trying to wake him up from so long. As he gets to know he was dreaming about the ship, it becomes clear how and why things happened. And later on, they say he could not become a captain or a sailor but he did share his adventures dreams with everyone through a book!

## The Mystery of Imagination

### S Nandhika 9E

Imagination is the ability of the mind to be creative, to form new ideas relying solely on the vision seen by the mind's eye. Imagination can have a great impact on people's lives. The term 'imagination' does not mean that the event cannot happen in reality. There are chances of it to occur in real life situations. There are instances where a person's imagination soars.

While thinking in detail, there are chances for us to relate certain words with imagination like dream. When the imagination comes into our mind, we can connect it to our real life experiences.

For example, I recently visited a school where the school children had wonderful imagination skills. They could imagine instances that I could not even think of. Imagination can also be related to our thinking skills. It can even be related to something that happened in the past. Therefore, unable to describe it in pure words, I call it 'The Mystery of Imagination'.

## Classified

### Manas KR 10D

It was annoying.

That was it. There was no other way to describe it. Stephen Huntley was one of MI5's best. Best at what, we'll never know. It's classified. He specialized in ... wait, nope. That's classified too. He had two kids ... wait, he didn't. His actual family history and biodata are classified too. You get the idea. He was a spy. The James Bond of the twenty-first century. Of course, James Bond still exists. But the key difference between Bond and Huntley is that one of them is real. Which one, we will never know. It's class ... wait, that isn't. Huntley is real, Bond isn't.

Anyway, this story cannot be told without me spilling espionage secrets. So I might as well do this manuscript justice.

Here goes. I might go to jail for this.

Stephen Marc Huntley, born 1991 in Sussex, was a spy, weapon master, ballistics expert, part time physicist and ... oh, yeah, the world's most lethal assassin. He was whom the British Government (and occasionally the Queen, for her own ulterior motives) used when they needed something done without it ever being traced back to them. 'It' of course is ... you guessed it ... classified. This man could shoot someone dead in the eye from a kilometer away with an MK14EBR designated marksman rifle. He could infiltrate the American CIA, walk out with their nuclear launch codes and evade any subsequent attempts to hunt him down. Oh, and he could wear a Tom Ford suit into battle, take down the enemy single-handedly, and walk out with his bowtie still in place and his shirt as crisp and immaculate as ever.

That's Stephen Huntley. More James Bond than James Bond himself. Audemars Piguet watch connoisseur, Van Gogh art aficionado, and a huge Lil' Wayne hip-hop fan. A man of eclectic tastes.

The days leading up to his death, however, were peculiar, to say the least. And the man who could brave anything, was, for the first time, visibly perturbed by something. Believe it or not!

Every time he went on one of his top secret missions, and

began his super-stealth skills to uncover deadly secrets,, annoying music began to play, as if the sound was emanating from invisible speakers. Like when he was hiding in an oil barrel listening to Arab princes lay out their plans to rob their own country, and Wiz Khalifa's 'We own it' began playing. Or when he was following a corrupt politician in the dead of the night in his carefully camouflaged Aston Martin DB5 and 'Fire' by Barns Courtney began blaring from the unbearably loud Bang and Olufsen sound system. Or that time he was holding on to the underbelly of a drug lord's Range Rover in the Colombian rainforest and Freddy Mercury's 'We are the Champions' took all the sicarios by surprise. In each instance, the bad guys had stopped to investigate the source of this mystical music, but the answer remained as obscure as ever. Huntley was worried that one day, his cover would be blown by this flattering yet disastrous occurrence.

And that day was today. On his four hundred and fifteenth mission for MI5 (it could be six hundred and ninety-one; it's classified, after all) and fourth (or was it?) in India, Huntley had disguised himself as a tourist. Of course, his motive was recording a top-secret conversation between the Prime Minister and his Defence Minister.

As he inched closer to the rendezvous point, Indian hip-hop began deafening everyone in a three-mile radius. Alerted by this sudden rendition of 'Apna Time Aayega', the ministers' henchmen spotted Huntley and whizzed towards him ...

And then he woke up.

Waking up was annoying.

That was it. There was no other way to describe it.

## Moving on

### Ankit Aneesh 10D

Dealing with loss is hard. It shakes you up and questions all those ideals and beliefs one stands for. It questions the very essence of one's faith. Everybody deals with loss at some point in their life, it is inevitable and bound to happen. But, it is how you face the loss that really matters. The loss could be huge but coping with it shows one's real character. Loss breaks a person from the inside. But the important thing to do is to learn from the experience and become better versions of ourselves.

I have faced several losses in my personal life but the loss of a dear family member tends to leave a void in one's life, and that is exactly what happened. Coping with it was hard but having a supportive family helped to a large extent. I found support in family and they loved me unconditionally. Eventually, we moved on but it was never the same again. Experiences like these just show us how life works and we need to be thankful for all the things that we have achieved in our lifetime.

## Murderer on the Loose

### Ankith Aneesh 10D

It was a dark and stormy night. The sky was overcast. Strong winds were wreaking havoc. I was relaxing on the couch when I saw on the news that an intruder alert had been issued to all the residents of the neighbourhood. A murderer was on the loose, he had killed a couple of people and was now a wanted criminal of the state. I was drifting off to sleep when I was awakened by a strange noise at the door. It sounded like someone was trying to break in. I soon started panicking. I broke into a cold sweat and was shaking with fear.

Just then, I heard footsteps on the stairs. I snapped out of it and ran to the window. I vaulted out onto the garage roof and went on to jump on the huge garbage disposal unit filled with large bags of garbage. The bags helped cushion my fall, as I ran out through the garden. As I paused, I looked up at the window I had escaped from as the lights go on. I sighed with relief. A chill ran down my spine as I wondered what would have happened if he had caught me.

I quickly ran into the woods adjacent to the house. Once I was safely hidden by the trees, I broke into a run. I stumbled through the darkness as I approached another house.

Clutching a knife, I headed towards it.

## Rain

### Yuktha 1A



Ho! It is raining

And I love rain!

There are so many drops

In the rain I like to play.

Ho! It is raining a lot

I better go home

I should run fast.

## Haiku...

### Lekha Gowda 4E

I have a cat

It loves eating rats

What if it's fat ...

Madhuri R 4E

I drank water

It was bitter

But, it doesn't matter.

## Seems like ages

### Samyukta Vivek 4B

Seems like ages

Seems like ages since I went outside

Seems like decades since I won

Seems like weeks since I went on a hike

Seems like days since I went on a peaceful bike

Seems like eternity

Since I was playing I-spy in the city

So get up, roll on the lawn

Prance about like a young fawn

Run a mile

Turn back and say it was a trial

And repeat the same again

Whoa-whoa –whoa-whole

Sleep under the night sky

Feel like you're about to fly

Try to count the stars

Feel like you're up in Mars

Now listen to my advice

Stop swatting those flies

Go outside and play

And have a good day!

## Adventures with my favorite friends

### Shreya Bhardwaj 5C

From Singapore came a cockatoo

Feathers white and yellow crown

It folds its wings and clings around my arm

I wonder if he knows how to frown.

From Dubai came

Pikachu, Squirtle, Charmender and Bulbasour

All are my favorite Poke'mons

And they came in tiny poke' balls

From Japan came a silky soft cat

From Egypt came two colorful macaws

From India came a family of pandas

You must be wondering "how"?

Handpicked from shelves

Of busy malls

Faraway airports and small stalls

They are the souvenirs of my travels across the globe

Every day after school

We sail across the seas

We adventure in Amazon

Fly and buzz like honey bees!

My stuffed buddies inspire my poem

We have our adventures at our home

This poem is about me and them

And they all are my little gems!

Although they are far away from the places they belong,

Together we sing our favorite song

"Friendship is the way to be

Love and care is the key... to be always happy!"

## Keeping My Promise

### Ganavi 6B

Each day I'll do my best,

And I won't do any less.

My work will always please me,



And I won't accept a mess.  
I'll colour very carefully,  
My handwriting would be neat,  
And I will not be happy,  
Till my papers are complete.  
I'll always do my homework,  
And try my best in every test.  
I won't forget my promise,  
To do my very best!

## **Mother India**

### **Ram Naren 6C**

India is my country but Mother India is my soul.  
Diversity is our culture but Harmony is our nature.  
Arunachal Pradesh to Kutch in the East-West  
Kashmir to Kanyakumari from North to South  
Agriculture is our backbone, driving India are our young  
ones.  
Violence is the rule of war, but Non-violence is our  
mantra of life.  
Tricoloured is our national flag, but multicoloured is our  
brotherhood.  
Mighty is our nation and witty are our countrymen.  
Sundarban is our heartland and Himalayas are our  
shield.  
Mango is our national fruit, but jingo is our living style.  
Tiger is our national animal, but culture is our message  
to the world.

## **Proud to Be Indian**

### **Eshanvi MN 7C**

I am proud to be an Indian  
Such a wide culture  
Such a beautiful nature  
The gods have blessed rivers  
As they shine and quiver  
As farming exceeds  
It serves the whole country's needs  
A country of vast diversities  
Has one of the world largest metro cities  
The stories talk about empires and kings  
Or even mythical tales of lost rings  
Or even songs to sing.

Western classical or folk

Take all the knowledge you can soak  
There are different dance traditions  
We invented homemade medicines  
Many bright minds are from here  
Who reached their goals ignoring their own fears  
The tale of great people I hear  
the freedom struggle I admire  
The hand we use to eat  
We adjusted to the floor as our seat.

The land where yoga originated  
Never gets old or outdated  
With second largest population  
And it's our India  
I want to share so much about it  
I am proud to be an Indian.

## **Who stole my pudding!?!**

### **Swarna 7C**

Dring...went the bell  
Time for lunch you could tell  
To the canteen I went for my food  
Today's menu was....  
Baijiu and Aiwowo (foods from Beijing )  
And for dessert ....pudding!!  
I took my food and went to my seat  
To only notice that I forgot a spoon to eat  
So I went back to get one  
And when I came back...my pudding was gone!!  
"Oh, I'll find that pudding even if I'll have to search until  
dawn! "

So I started my quest  
And oh! I did my best  
But nothing did I find  
"The bell's going to ring soon, I guess I'll go back to  
class" I sighed.

It was time to go home  
And I'll bet you no one could find that pudding not even  
Chrome!  
I pushed open my house's door  
To see the refecton of a pudding on the floor  
"Oh great, I'm seeing things now!!?"  
I lifted my head and said "Wow."  
It was no imaginary thing!

It was actual pudding!  
Of course not the same one  
But who cares, 'cause that's done!  
I dug in and started hogging every last bit of that thing!  
But if I think of it...who did steal my pudding?!

## Grade Nine Chronicles

### K Nehal Chinnappa 9A

As we stepped into our thirteens  
In eighth grade and late tweens  
There were changes  
At different ranges,  
OnePiece was trending  
It was decided our value system needed some mending  
So we were taught and taught again  
About love, growing up and a happy forever.  
What I'm saying is, we basically got a do-over.

Now most of us are fourteen  
And things don't seem that bright.  
Fast-fading is the happy forever light  
We are now senior students,  
Teachers are trying to perfect our dents.

At the start of 2019 June  
At hands' reach was our life's moon.  
Now if I have to say,  
Even the stars are too far away.  
Then came July, not at its rainy best  
The 25 mark exams were our first test.  
August was the countdown to September,  
Our lives' driving seat, the term exams took over.  
There was panic and tension  
Hitler and India's dimension.  
If these were the villains in my life's movie,  
Well now, they were surely getting groovy.

Then came the Dasara break,  
Twelve days plus the reopen was the wait.  
Then our lives' Boeing 777  
Just boom! Crashed!  
Now, with our marks in mind,  
We knew the parents definitely would not be kind.

We thought life would be dope,  
Now we're losing hope.

At first it was #ninth grade,  
Now it's as terrifying as an IT raid.  
Now I stand here with sweaty palms and shaky knees,  
And Earth's in trouble, please save the trees.  
Don't forget to study well for December.  
My poem, you please try to remember.  
I don't think we'll have a round two,  
to tell you what to do.  
Always Perfection is our goal.  
Or else, on your life, all this will take its toll.

## A 6-lettered Cancer

### Layaa Sreeharsha 9D

This one time I was told that God doesn't make mistakes.  
I wanted to ask 'What about me?'  
But I kept quiet. Being silent was what girls were meant to be,  
As I stepped into the real world I realized there was a mould I was to fit in,  
Inspired by Barbie, Kylie and Kim Kardashian.  
All I had to do was take care of what I ate  
Because I was supposed to be the figure 8.  
You know, I always disliked math.  
But then I realized, my brain itself had a calculator  
Which kept counting the number of calories everything had.  
I already wear glasses, but I think I need another one.  
Instead of seeing a cookie, I started seeing the number of squats to be done.  
I asked a friend, 'At this early age why would you go to the gym?'  
She said 'Duh! Guys only like girls who are slim'.  
I am 14 and I realized something.  
Apparently girls were only supposed to wait for their Prince Charming.  
I wanted to believe what Meghan Trainor once sang.  
'I won't be a stick figure silicone Barbie doll.'  
But everytime someone asks me what do you want to be' –  
I say 'Small'.  
So I started following all the norms of beauty.  
I started feeling pretty only when I was hungry.  
But then I questioned myself.  
And honestly it helped.  
Did I want to live in a world where eating meat, giving in

and starving meant to win?  
I registered that women were showpieces and the only  
showable ones were the ones who were pretty.  
We were ratios  
A mere mathematical calculation.  
1:618:1 if you didn't know.  
I wanted to get rid of this cancer inside me.  
So I started to live and to just be.  
I decided that I will not let a 6 lettered word contain any  
of 'these'  
Utter definitions of gorgeous-ness.  
So girls, ladies, women listen up.  
You can be 'pretty awesome',  
You can be 'pretty funny', you can be 'pretty \_\_\_\_\_  
(talented, gymnast, dancer, singer, actor, swimmer, etc.)  
But YOU NEED NOT BE JUST 'Pretty'.

## **Are You Ready to Meet Us? A Cry From the Foetus**

**Arya Pooviah 9D**

I still remember the joyous look on the face of my  
mother  
When she found that I'd been gifted to her womb  
And whispered to me, "I will love you like no other".  
I was then overjoyed, finding myself lucky enough,  
To have a parent so loving and not so rough  
Although she was so caring  
I never thought that the world would be so mean with its  
teeth baring.

Today I speak on behalf of every foetus  
And want to ask all of you a question,  
Are you really ready to meet us?  
Are you ready to forget your caste and creed,  
Religion and culture, custom and income, status and  
money  
And also pride – your biggest demon!  
And accept us only as a pure human?

This unborn soul of mine is rattled and shaken  
By the spiteful turn that this world has taken  
I thought that I would be welcomed with open arms  
But I seriously doubt it, now that I heard my relatives  
worrying about how I would look and my charms.  
Does it really matter?  
In your world so small and puny,  
with your differences

And your vengeances  
Your spites  
And your insignificant fights,  
Your money  
And your concerns that are phony  
Your lies  
And your fake ties  
And your promises  
That are like thorns among roses.

How can there be place for us – someone so tiny?  
And who – who can we call our very own truly?  
Oh dear Lord! We don't know whether being born would  
be a boon or bane  
For our biggest fear is to be abandoned in a lonely lane  
So let me ask all of you once again,  
Are you ready to meet us?  
And not bind us to the chain,  
Of being tall or short or fair or dark or fat or thin or smart  
or not or big or small  
And not compare us to them all,  
Not have us build a wall of  
Ignorance or of arrogance or of spite or of hate  
And just not blame everything bad under the sky on our  
fate?

As I speak now, there's a foetus dying in the bed next to  
mine,  
Poor one didn't even have a chance to shine.  
Why? Only because he was found to be a boy.  
Surprised? You should be.  
For the corrupted minds of his parents thought that he  
wouldn't bring any luck.  
I'm afraid and astonished that there's a new stigma  
that's stuck.  
So I want to reach out to each one of you,  
With a desperate cry from the foetus.  
Are you ready to meet us?  
Are you really ready to meet us?

## **I'll Never Forget**

**Nehal Chinnappa 9A**

Let us laugh together till the moon stays high  
Let us laugh together till the birds still fly  
Let us laugh together and end this fun never.  
Let us laugh together because I know this time will fly  
If you're in the sun and I'm in Saturn,

Let us still laugh together  
As the hands of the clock wear by.

You may forget that we laughed  
Even if you do, smile when you walk by  
If you can't smile when you walk by, please  
Stare at me from across the street and whisper bye  
Because I – I will never forget we laughed  
I will never forget we tried,  
I will never forget we cried,  
I will never forget.

## Why?

### Mrudula Hamsini 10D

Why did you shower upon this soul, your unconditional love?  
All those nights you stayed awake until I succumbed to slumber  
Wiping my tears, fears with the gentle caress of your finger.

Why? Tell me why!  
You held my hand with love, not spite.  
Became my light in the darkest night.  
Never, never let me out of your sight.  
Just to make sure that I was alright.

When I hurt you, bruised you, betrayed you,  
Not once but for the hundredth time,  
Why did you hug me and say, 'It's okay'?  
And pretended the fault was yours and not mine.

When you knew it was my mistake at home, you slapped right across my face.  
But in front of 'them', you stand by me  
And you never let me break.

Why did you worry about me?  
Why did you protect me from the world's viscous clamp?  
Why did you care for me  
Wiped my eyes when they were damp?

Why did you hold my hand  
When my heart was broken and so was I?  
Why did you wipe my tears  
With your warm and beautiful smile?

Why did you give me  
Your flesh and blood?  
Your hopes, your smile,  
Your sleep, your comfort,  
Your thoughts and your love ...  
Stretching longer than the Nile!

Why have you indebted me like this?  
How will I ever repay you?  
How will I ever settle the account between us, mother?  
How will I ever settle the account, for the rest of my life?

## Adulthood

### Divya MM 10B

She looked me in the eye,  
I recognized  
A look of concern  
And warning combined.

I knew that I had neared  
The end of my innocent days  
Where I had not a worry  
About my responsibilities.

"The world is a beautiful place  
With scary people  
You don't have to be afraid  
It is just your time."  
She said;  
"Innocence might fade  
But beware,  
Your ethics should not,  
For all they do is try and fool you.

Everyone is selfish  
You should be too  
But just not too much  
That it starts consuming you.

Earn, if you want  
Escape from hell,  
The world is cruel  
You should be too.

Losing yourself is a  
Part of this game  
But, you win only

When you build yourself.

It will be hard.

You have some issues?

They need to be treated

Not hated.

But, don't dream for too long.

Dreams may be crushed

Your confidence shouldn't

You may fail

But never stop yearning.

Looks hard

But it never is.

Looks easy

And it never is."

No I'm not afraid. Just a little confused. But, I will find my

way, I will go to the place I belong

In this world.

I will serve my purpose.

I will not be afraid.

## Overcoming

### Punya Bopanna 10D

I lie in bed wide awake

haunted by things I cannot take

and the thoughts that make my bones shake.

The emptiness won't fill, my heart does nothing but  
ache.

I put on a smile that's fake

cuz I can't show them that I'm about to break.

I'm too scared about what they'd say.

there's nothing they can do, anyway

nothing they can do to take the pain away.

I've hit rock-bottom, I'm underground

just when I begin to think I can't sink further down

I slip and fall, and begin to drown

In my sorrows, in my nightmares, in my heartache, in my  
pain,

in my anxiety, I continue to drown

I can't stand the sound of my own voice

I wanna rip off the hair from my head

and my heart from my chest

my existence makes me stressed.

I scream my lungs out, but no one hears

nobody wipes away my tears

no one cares for my fears

they just stand there and watch, maybe even laugh

while I wither and die on the inside

cuz of the demons in my mind.

I finally thought I'd be better off dead.

I brought the gun to my head,

with my hand wrapped around that heavy lead,

I was 3 seconds away from death!

But before I could pull the trigger,

I felt a hand on my shoulder

and a voice filled with love and passion whispered into  
my ear.

That voice took my fears away, along with my misery

It freed me from my sorrow, from my pain, my anxiety.

That voice took every negative thought in my head away,

and replaced it with hope, understanding and bravery

the voice that changed me.

I realized that I had to let go of my fears, not hold on to  
them.

I realized that to eternal sadness I wasn't condemned.

I realized. I finally opened my eyes

and realized that my family I had

That life wasn't really that bad.

That stars could only be seen in darkness.

So I found someone, and opened up about my stress

I asked if she could understand, and said yes

she told me I wasn't alone in this mess

that the whispering devil I had to repress

That I had to knock on his door, not him on mine!

and I had to show him I wasn't confined to my old sins.

That it was finally time

For me to break free,

and be who I really wanted to be.

I had dreams that had to be turned to reality!

I had my own song to sing, my own story to tell.

I fell down, but got up.

hit rock-bottom before I rose up.

I was told I was nothing, that I should go to hell!

And back then, I listened, and into that pit I fell

But I faced the devil, and to his face I yelled!

I walked away from him, I dispelled!

I came back from that miserable place

And from the bottom, I flew up to grace!

I'm ready now, and the world I will face!

but I will not again be displaced  
I'll run this race, at my own pace.  
I'll do now, what I didn't before  
I won't again let myself fall to the floor!  
My dignity I will restore!  
I'll find my way, I'll shine my light  
I'll hold it up, with all my might  
I'll find myself where I was lost  
pick myself up at any cost  
I'm stronger now, than I was before.  
I won't give up, not anymore.

## Me

**Deeksha N Rao 6E**

A sad thought  
can make you cry  
spreading glaze on your eye  
Happy thoughts  
Bursting with joy  
crack out of their  
thin shells  
like freshly unwrapped toys  
They say what's stronger than light?  
It's darkness, the night  
taking over my happy thoughts  
starting a whole new fight.

## Miracle Café

**Deeksha N Rao 6E**

On an old dusty roadside  
Miracles come alive  
They only appear in front of you  
If you struggle and strive  
It's not like eating whipped cream,  
Achieving your goal or dream,  
Swimming in a clear stream,  
Or jumping into rainbows.