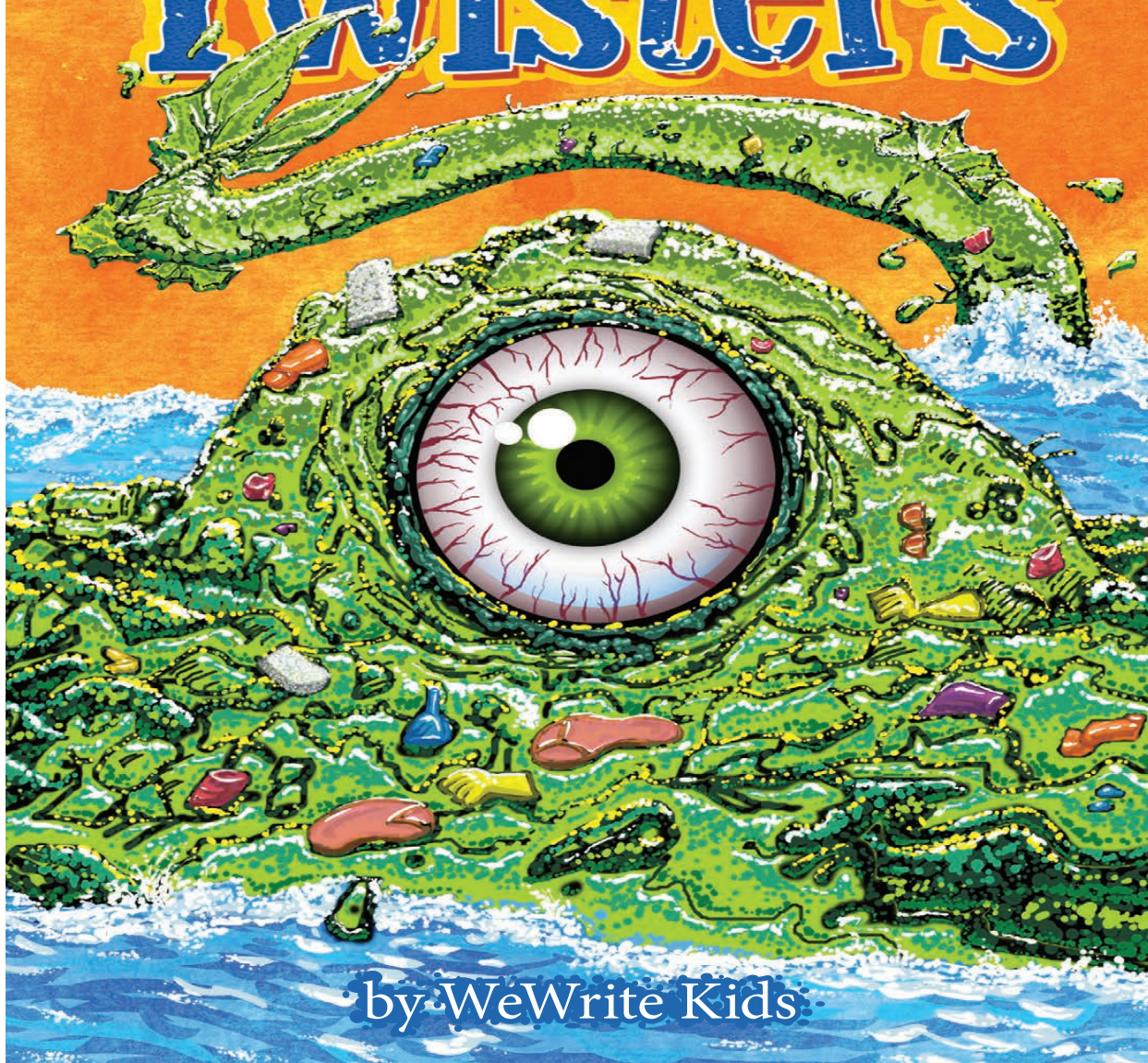


We Write

# Trash Twisters



by WeWrite Kids



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## **Trash Twisters**

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# Reducing The Ocean's Plastic Soup

The delightful story you're about to read was developed by Jody Lust's fifth grade class at Gault Elementary School in Santa Cruz, California, during the 2013-2014 school year. Ms. Lust's class had participated in O'Neill Sea Odyssey before they started working with the WeWrite team on this book.

Thanks to Ms. Lust's patience, hard work and willingness to redefine a teacher's educational boundaries to work with O'Neill Sea Odyssey and WeWrite Books on the development of Trash Twisters, you'll be able to enjoy a story firmly rooted in a real-life problem: the plastic soup that can be found in parts of the world's vast, dynamic ocean.

O'Neill Sea Odyssey, started in 1996 by surfer and wetsuit innovator Jack O'Neill and his son, sailor Tim O'Neill, engages fourth to sixth grade youth with hands-on science field trips aboard a 65-foot catamaran on Monterey Bay, and in a shore-side education center, in addition to ocean science curriculum provided for use in the classroom. It is free, and each class completes a community service project. The program achieves educational standards using ocean concepts, while

teaching youth about watersheds that flow to the sea and their responsibility to protect them. A study of the program's long-term impact found that 75 percent of students who participated in OSO five to seven years before had retained knowledge about non-point source pollution, as well as the stewardship needed to prevent it, taught in the program's ecology curriculum.

That stewardship is needed now more than ever. The ocean covers about 72 percent of the earth's surface. It's the world's largest habitat, its water and vast currents create weather and influence our atmosphere, and phytoplankton at the bottom of its food web produce half our planet's oxygen produced from plant life. It also absorbs excess carbon from the atmosphere. It's also under stress from a variety of causes, one of those being the millions of tons of human-made garbage and pollution—including plastic—that enters it each year. Eighty percent of it comes from land.

The non-profit Algalita Foundation has produced research that found in the North Pacific Gyre, an area bounded by a complex network of ocean currents, "plankton abundance was approximately five times higher than that of plastic,

but the mass of plastic was six times that of plankton.” This problem was brought to public attention by Capt. Charles Moore, who accidentally encountered a region of mostly plastic floating waste in the Pacific Gyre sailing from Hawaii to Long Beach in 1997.

Sun, wind and saltwater photo-degrade plastic into smaller pieces that retain its polymer structure. The pieces can't be seen from a distance and most are below the surface, suspended in the ocean's water column. There is debris at the surface, though it's only intermittently visual.

A couple of years ago my friend and respected gyre researcher Anna Cummins told me, "Whether you cross the North Pacific, North Atlantic, Indian Ocean or South Atlantic—we just returned from the latter—and drag a trawl on the ocean's surface for one half hour to an hour, you will very likely find plastic particles. Not many, up to a teaspoon, but you find them consistently. Across the South Atlantic, we dropped our trawl every 60 miles across 4,000 miles of ocean, and found plastic in every single sample.”

Much of the pollution that finds its way to sea could have been prevented from getting there. Re-using products that otherwise are thrown away is one way to do this,

reducing the amount of soil and fertilizers washed downstream is another, and helping other people to do that same thing is yet another. This is part of what O'Neill Sea Odyssey does: educating youth about ocean pollution and providing them the tools to be advocates for ocean health.

*Trash Twisters* is a fun-to-read story with a very real purpose. Its authors, the students of Jody Lust's class, have written a fascinating story based on the real-life problem of ocean pollution. Enjoy!

**Dan Haifley**

Executive Director  
O'Neill Sea Odyssey



O'Neill Sea Odyssey catamaran

Photo by Gail Kinstle



# Mr. Awesomeness

Nicole and Jayden were ordinary kids who did ordinary things like walking the dogs and brushing their teeth. Worries like grades and pimples were normal. They had ordinary friends...well, most of the time. All in all, they had a pretty ordinary life, but things were about to change.

"I can't believe we really did it! What are the chances?" asked Nicole. "We must be dreaming," replied Jayden. "I've never won anything before in my life!" "You're only ten," replied Nicole. "Seriously, Jayden, I've never won anything either and I'm two years older."

Just a few minutes earlier, the siblings had heard of a contest on their favorite radio station. "This is George Frank and you're listening to 106 FM. Today, one lucky family will receive an all-expense paid adventure to a tropical island paradise. This could be you. Keep that dial tuned to 106 FM and if you're caller 106, you'll win the trip of a lifetime," the DJ announced. "Let's go to line 8 right after this song. Stay tuned."

Nicole convinced Jayden to call, just for fun. "We're probably not going to win anyway. I already asked Mom and she said we could try."

Jayden grabbed the phone and dialed. Busy signal.

"Try again," Nicole insisted several times.

It rang, then again, then once more. Finally, a familiar voice answered. "This is 106 FM. You are our 106th caller. Do you know what that means?" It was George Frank, Mr. Awesomeness.

Jayden almost dropped the phone. "I won?" he questioned.



"That's correct," the voice replied. "You're the lucky winner of the trip to an island paradise!"

The song on the radio ended and Jayden heard the voice on the phone say, "Listeners, you can stop calling. We have our winner!"

Still shaking, Jayden and Nicole ran toward their mom and wrapped their arms around her. "We won! We won! We'll even get to go scuba diving!"

"Are you serious?" Mom asked. "Wait until we tell your dad. We'll finally get to use our scuba diving certifications."

The kids bounced around, on top of the world. They sang constantly for the next month and told everyone who would listen about their prize.

Finally, trip day came.

"Is everyone ready?" Dad asked.

Dad beamed at both children as they drove to the airport. "I still can't believe you two won this trip. We surely couldn't have gone on such an adventure otherwise."

When they arrived at the airport, it was very noisy. Everyone was going this way and that.

Nicole looked up at the board and found Flight 4321, then pointed. "It's Gate 14."

"Great, all the way on the other side of the airport," Jayden complained. "My bag is so heavy. Can we please get one of those carts?"

Nicole asked, "What did you put in there?"

"Stuff..." Jayden replied slyly.

"You brought it, you carry it," Nicole said, annoyed.

Arriving at the gate, they heard, "Flight 4321 now boarding at Gate 14."

"That's us. Just in time," called out Jayden,

"Everyone stay together," Dad reminded them.

As they boarded, the flight attendant greeted them with a friendly, "Aloha."

Mom sighed, as she sank into the cushy chair, "First class, wow!"

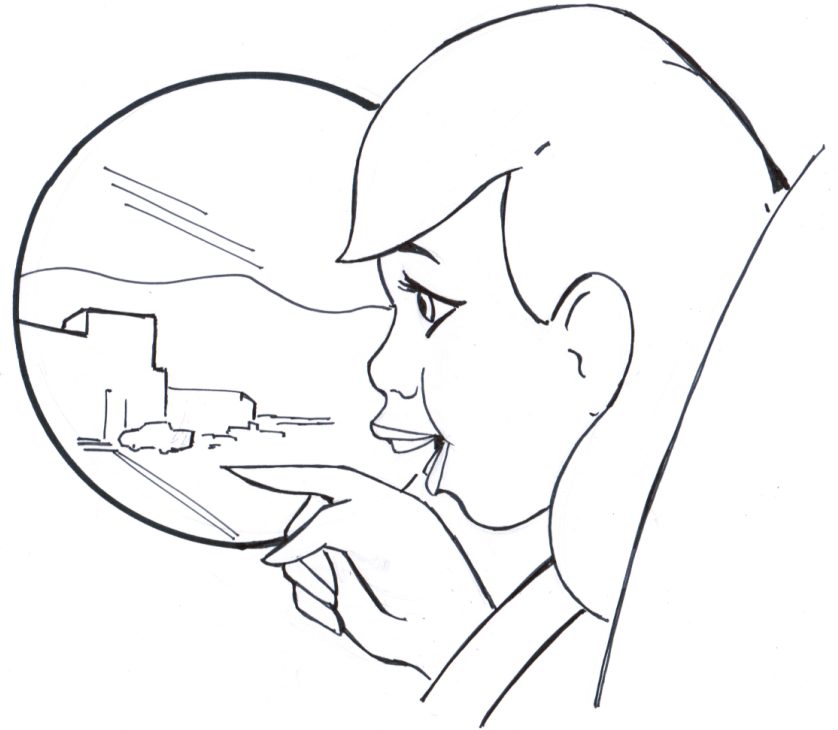
"Can we get some peanuts?" Jayden immediately asked. When Mom shook her head "no," he busied himself exploring around his seat.

After a few minutes, there was a sudden rumble. Jayden shouted in fascination, "I think they ignited the engines!"

"Yippee kii yi yaaay," added Nicole, as the plane lifted off. "We're flying!" Jayden squealed with a big smile.

Mom and Dad just grinned at their kids. They were happy to be on their way to a wonderful and unexpected vacation. "Who would have thought...?" Mom whispered to Dad.

As the plane rose higher, Nicole thought to herself, "The cars and buildings seem so tiny from up here. Are those even cars? They look like ants."



The jet engines droned on and on, making her drowsy. Hours later, all Nicole could see was ocean. "I can't believe how big it is," she exclaimed.



Jayden, always interested in his stomach, munched on peanuts. "These are some good-diggity-bomb things."

Nicole noticed Jayden had his headset on. "Typical Jayden," she thought, turning her attention back to her book, absorbed in the story. Meals, snacks, a movie, and her book helped pass the time.



# The Mission

In the morning, everyone was subdued on the plane ride home, reflecting on the recent events, and simply worn out. Both Jayden and Nicole were exhausted, but happy.

Back at home, there was a phone call from Walter Crankcase asking Jayden and Nicole to appear on a major talk show to share their experiences on what was now being called “Flip Flop Island.”

After some discussion, everyone agreed to have them appear. Many television stations, newspapers, and radio stations, as well as internet reporters, contacted them for interviews. It was fun to be stars and answer questions for a while.



Nicole and Jayden wanted to tell people about the trash, how it was ruining the ocean and harming marine animals.

Something important was happening. Even though they were only children, people were listening to them. The garbage patches were getting bigger all over the world and it seemed like it was their job to tell people about the problem.

Both Jayden and Nicole realized they could still answer questions, tell people how they could clean up the garbage patches, and still keep their secrets.

It wasn't long before even the President of the United States heard about Nicole and Jayden's message. The White House contacted the family, wanting to help. After considering several good options, they all decided on a plan which included an international monument.

The President declared, "FlipFlop Monument will draw attention to the problem and help people learn what they can do in their own neighborhoods to save the ocean and help the animals."

Jayden told his friends about the monument idea. "It's going to be awesome. It will inform people about ocean pollution and how they can get involved. Yeah, it's going to be really cool. It's a pollution solution!"

"Hey guys. Lets write a book about Flip Flop Island."

"Yes! What a great idea!"

Armed with pencils and the belief that kids can change the world, they began to write a little about their own neighborhood. Each agreed that their efforts would multiply with each helping hand.

Grandma always said, "Many hands make light work." So, together, kids can help save the Earth. As they spent mornings writing their story together, Nicole remembered a poster she'd seen by Margaret Mead. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Nicole smiled. She understood exactly what those words meant. They were doing it. She went back to work with her group, revising their story.





Nicole and Jayden met many people because of their experience. Learning more and more about the ocean and how to take care of it, they became ambassadors for ocean conservation and stewardship. Familiar questions kept popping up everywhere: "So, what's up with this garbage patch and why is it so important? What can I do?"

Jayden and Nicole explained there are at least five of these patches in the oceans, and there are more than just a few pieces of trash floating in the ocean. Some have tiny pieces of plastic that resemble "nurdles." Some have huge pieces. It all gathers together in soupy blobs, maybe even bigger than Texas.

"But it's too big for one person to clean up," Jayden would explain in his best ambassador voice. "You just need to pick up trash in your own town, around your own neighborhood, taking care of your own area. This is your sphere of influence. Don't let the trash get into the waterways. That will help the ocean the most."



Grabbing his lucky spear, always near by, Jayden would raise it high into the air. "Be a champeen. Find your own Spear of Influence. Like mine. The ocean doesn't belong to just one person; it belongs to everybody. We're doomed if we don't take care of it."

Nicole and Jayden thought about how their life had changed, just like Mr. Awesomeness on the radio predicted when they won the adventure. They liked being on his radio station and talking to people. Mr. Awesomeness would announce each time he began one of the interviews with Jayden and Nicole, "I hear that you have been growing your sphere of influence and have been invited to the White House by the President of the United States to share your mission to clean up the ocean. When we sent you on a family vacation to paradise, we never expected it would become a Garbage Patch Odyssey. Remember, it all started here on 106 FM where exciting things happen everyday."

"Stay tuned."



# From the Authors



Artist, Cartoonist, Film Director, Screen Writer  
Photo by Alex Bentley

## Joe Barcelone

Illustrator

This book project is a great way to satisfy the kid in myself and I love working with kids.

The book has a positive message, and I enjoy being creative with kids and seeing their imaginations. It's fun to share their excitement and be a celebrity with the kids. Of course, I like to be the center of their motivation.

I've loved watching WeWrite grow and seeing the positive impact of what we do on the kids. I think WeWrite is a unique program that makes kids think and participate at an adult level by using their child's (childlike) imagination.

*Trash Twisters* offers a creative angle to tackle an important issue using fantasy. And I like drawing monsters. I love watching the authors act out characters and scenarios and how much they are willing to get involved in an idea.

At the beginning of the project, I noticed that the kids were scattered when it came to ideas. Later on they became more cohesive and focused; then it became about working together.

I look forward to working on more WeWrite projects with creative kids and helping them develop their imaginations.







Master Teacher, Writing Coach

Photo by Alex Bentley

## Jody Lust

Facilitator

Before this project, my class wrote because they had to. Afterwards, they wrote because they had something to say. By doing the research, they gained a knowledge and understanding they could draw from when developing the characters and story.

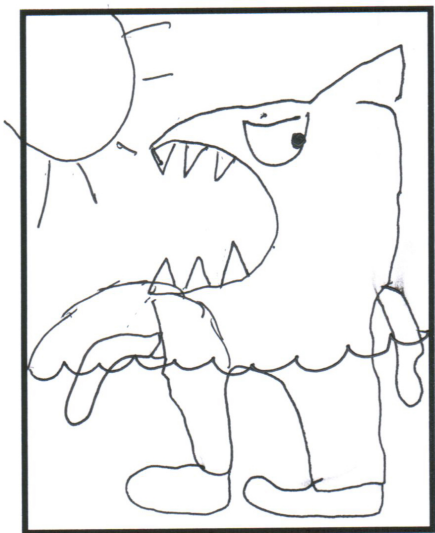
These writers truly believe this book will make a difference. This book starts a dialog about what can be done to save the turtles and the other animals in the ocean. My dream is to inspire them to learn and make the world a better place.

## The Authors



Laura Barnes (O'Neill Sea Odyssey) and authors

Photo by Gail Kinstler



Omar O.

Omar O. - age 11

"My favorite part is telling people about the garbage patch and saving the ocean."



Alex R.

Alex R. - age 12

"I like being able to tell people to clean up their trash."



Natalie R.

Natalie R. - age 11

"My favorite part of writing the book is we get to make people realize that anyone could help clean the ocean."



Owen P.

Owen P. - age 11

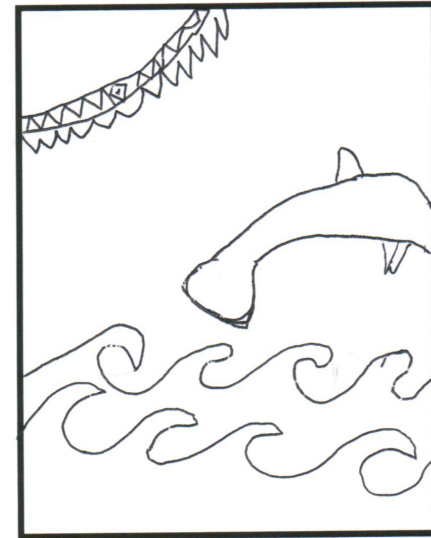
"I think it's cool that you can write basically anything you want and have it in a book."





Authors vote on their story ideas

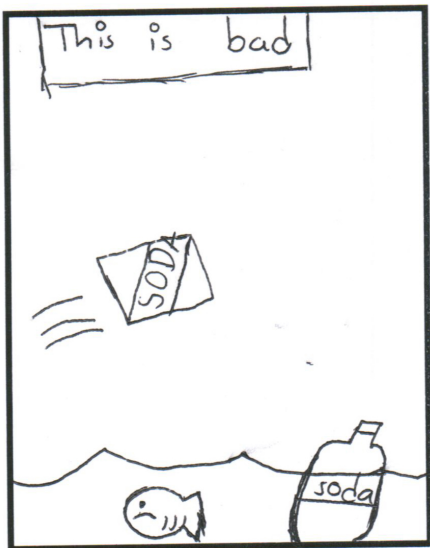
Photo by Gail Kinstler



Analysia Y.

Analysia Y. - age 10

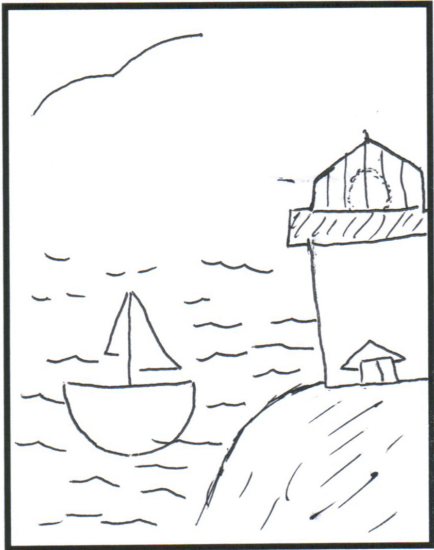
"My favorite part during the creation of the book was putting in and getting to hear great ideas."



Marco C.

Marco C. - age 10

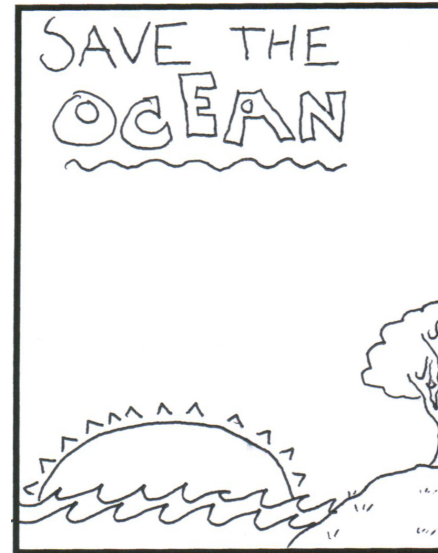
"I like teaching everyone about what they are doing with the trash."



Mariana H.

Mariana H. - age 11

"I liked the writing and how we got to write independently and also writing with people."



LUELLA B.

Luella B. - age 11

"I like what the book is about and how we're educating people so the ocean will be safe and clean."



Working out a part of the story

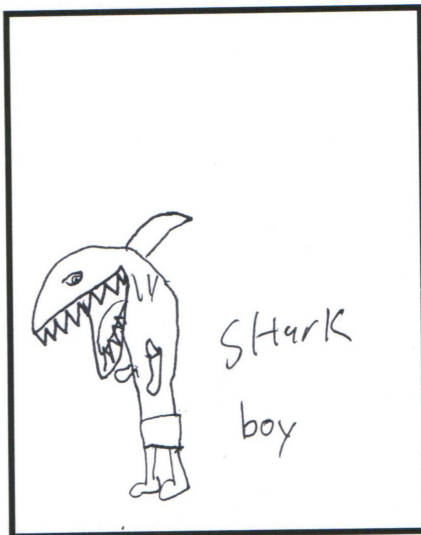
Photo by Gail Kinstler



Carlos A.

Carlos A. - age 10

"I liked drawing the pictures."

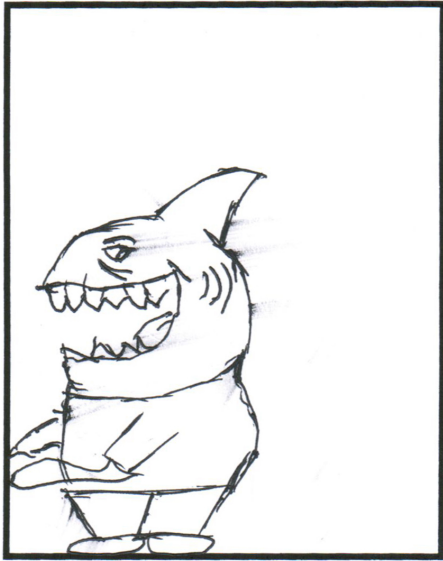


NICO las

v

Nico V. - age 10

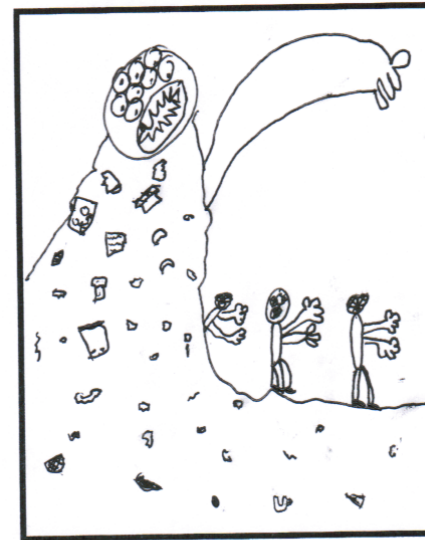
"I liked helping my friends so we could make a book."



Brian E.

Brian E. - age 12

"I like the book because we get to learn new things and I love the ocean."



Tyler D.

Tyler D. - age 11

"I like being able to add anything you want to the story."





Explaining part of the story

Photo by Alex Bentley



Angel G. - age 11

"I liked doing this because I was working with my team. I love to help the Earth be in a better place."



Jose A.

Jose A. - age 11

"My favorite part of the book is when the monster wants the trash."





Claire R.

Claire R. - age 10

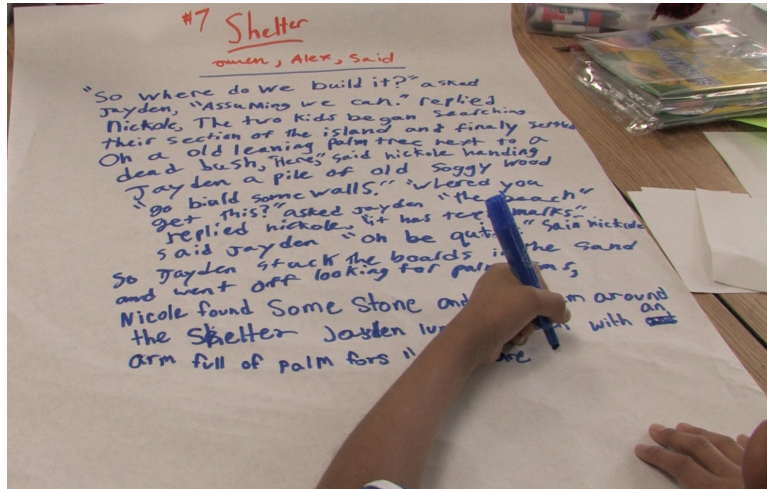
"I liked seeing my writing up on the walls."



Joshua S.

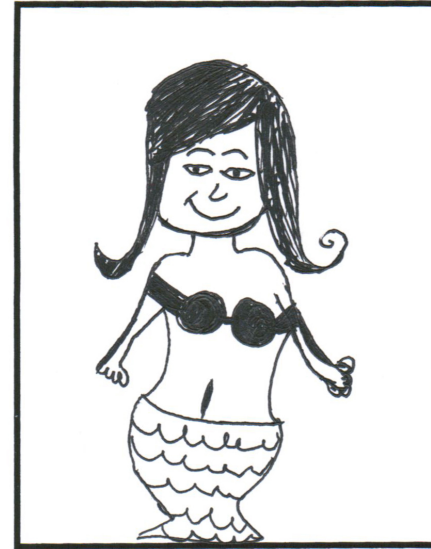
Joshua S. - age 10

"I speak for the ocean and want to save the Earth."



Writing the story

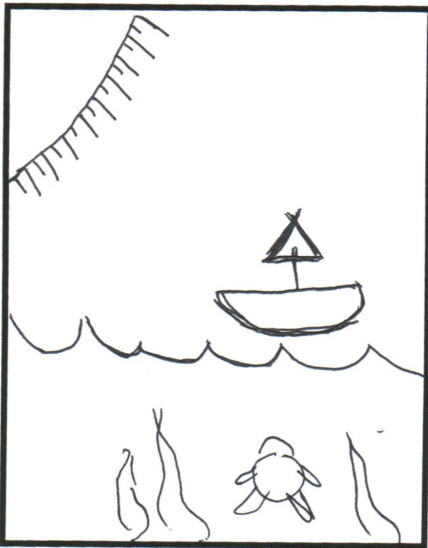
Photo by Gail Kinstler



*Lizbeth A.*

Lizbeth A. - age 11

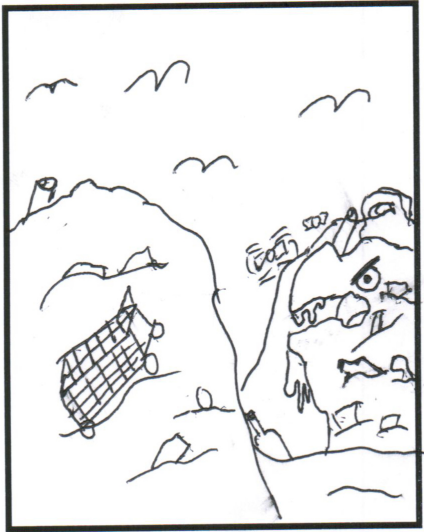
"The best part about the book was everything. It has action."



*Kimberly M.*

Kimberly M. - age 10

"I like writing with the group and what is going on in the story."



Cole L.

Cole L. - age 11

"I like the fact that we are teaching the world."



Kyla S.

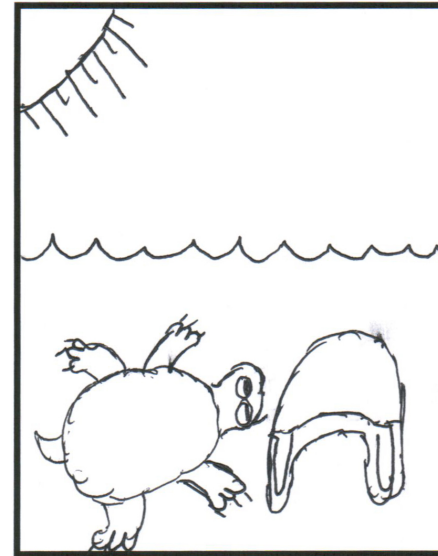
Kyla S. - age 10

"My favorite part about doing this is **everything!**"



Describing a scene to the illustrator

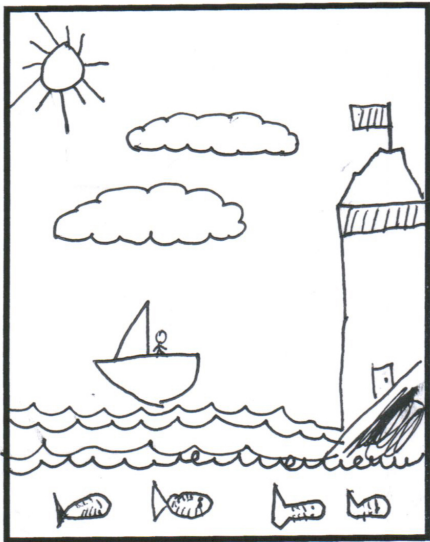
Photo by Alex Bentley



Stephanie A

Stephanie A. - age 10

"My favorite part of this book is that we get to tell everybody our ideas and that all our ideas are in this book! I like writing and looking at all the drawings that will be inside this book."



Jose H

Jose H. - age 10

"I like that adults will be hearing our ideas."



Greta G.

Greta G. - age 10

"I really liked writing this book because it gives the world a kid's view of what grownups should do so there is less trash. It's just fun writing and giving ideas."



Aiden T.

Aiden T. - age 10

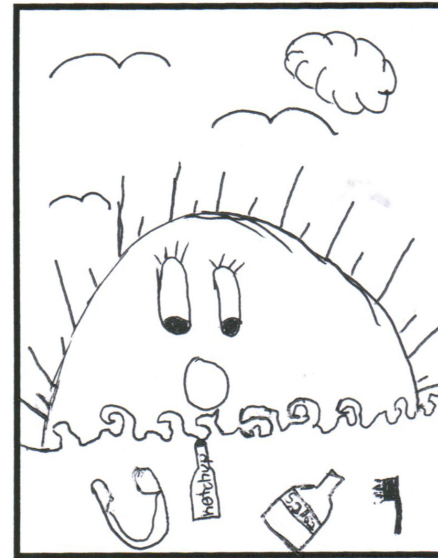
"I like pretty much saving the ocean. I've always liked the ocean."





Acting out a scene

Photo by Gail Kinstler



Khunaxhi X E. L. G.

Khunaxhi L. - age 10

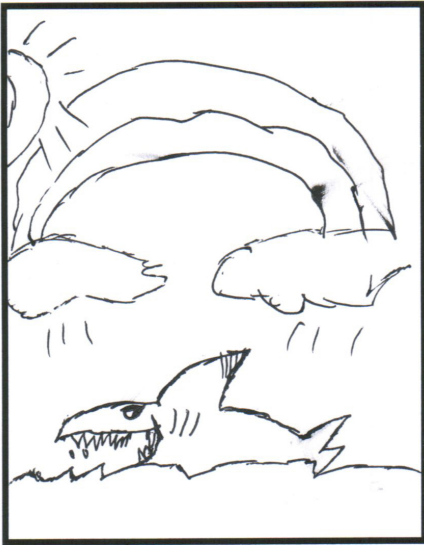
"I guess I like all of the action and details. I like the drawings, all of them."



Isai R

Isai R. - age 11

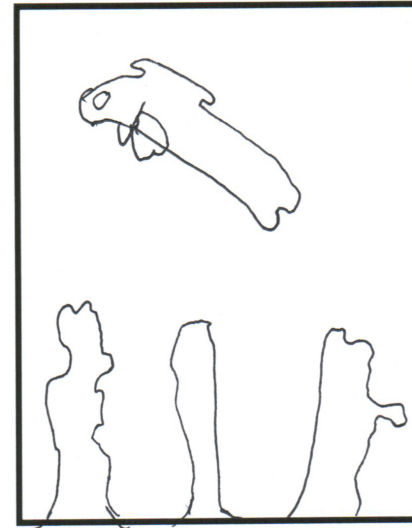
"I think we can write about saving the ocean so other kids in the future have the same ocean."



Said J

Said J. G. - age 11

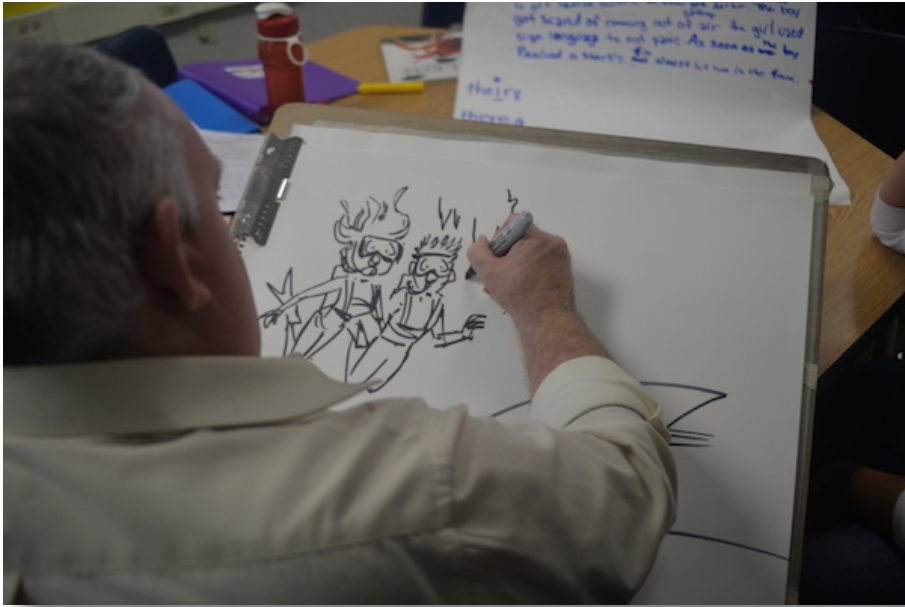
"I liked seeing Joe's cartoons."



Mariano L.

Mariano L. - age 11

"This story is a really good story because other people wrote our ideas and the pictures are really nice."



Sketching out the authors' ideas

Photo by Alex Bentley



# What the authors want to say to the world

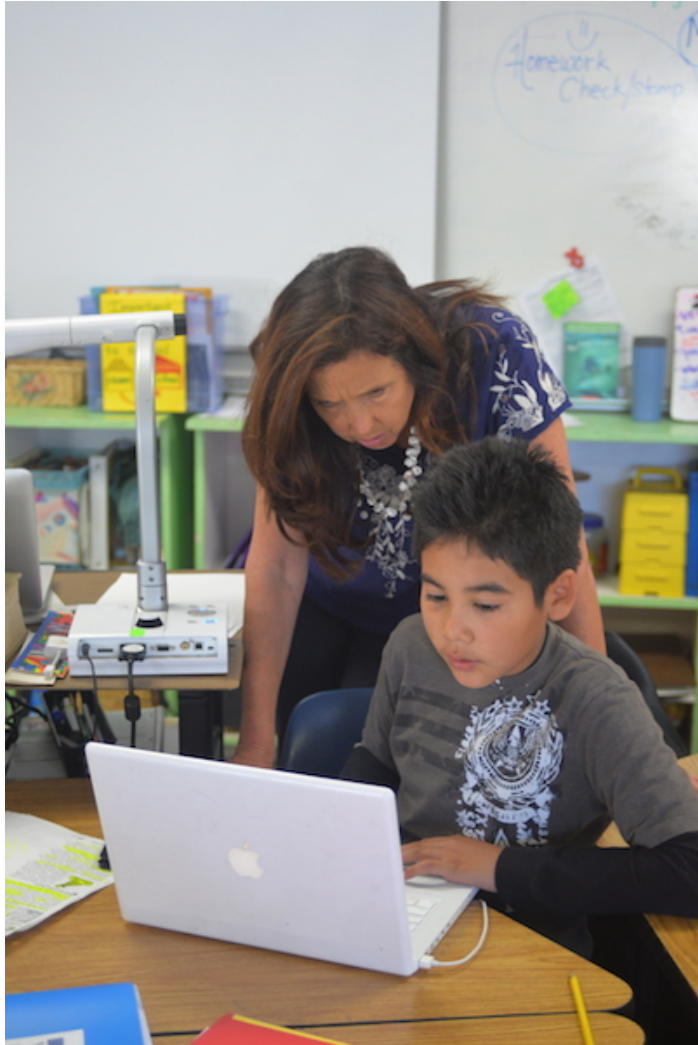


Photo by Alex Bentley

"We are writing this book so everyone will know to keep the world safe."

Natalie R. - age 10

"I speak for the ocean and marine life when I say, 'Stop polluting! Your trash is making it so others can't live!'"

Analysis Y. - age 10

"Don't pollute. Keep the world clean."

Mariana H. - age 11

"If I could say something to the world it would be, 'SAVE THE OCEAN!'"

Luella B. - age 11

"Don't pollute!"

Nico V. - age 10

"I want to save the ocean."

Carlos A. - age 10

"I speak for the ocean and I won't let people throw trash in the ocean."

Brian E. - age 12

"Trashing the ocean is like trashing your home."

Tyler D. - age 11

"I would say to the world, 'Don't cut down those trees.'"

Angel G. - age 11

"Please stop littering and hurting the sea life. Try to clean up trash that you see lying around."

Claire R. - age 10

"I would say I speak for the animals because there is trash in the ocean."

Kimberly M. - age 10

"I want to tell the world to take care of everything because if you don't you will be seeing trash. Just trash!"

Lizbeth A. - age 11

"I want to tell the world about an actual and serious problem with the hope that we can make people stop littering. If there is no one who owns the ocean, it is everyone's job."

Cole L. - age 11

"Please help the ocean and save animals instead of not helping and killing animals, because my classmates and teacher care about the ocean!"

Kyla S. - age 10

"Help the world to be a better place to live."

Jose H. - age 10

"Please understand that we are killing our sea life and animal habitats. I am writing this book because I want to keep on living in a beautiful world, not a garbage world."

Stephanie A. - age 10

"Please be respectful to the Earth and keep it clean by not throwing trash away on the ground and please recycle."

Greta G. - age 10



Photo by Gail Kinstler