

# **New Jersey Literacy Association 2021 Writing Contest**



## **Grade 4 Honorees**

**Isobel D'Amico**, Port Reading School 9, Port Reading

**Jacob V. DeLeon**, Harrison School, Livingston

**Sofia Jackson**, Mountview Road School, Morris Plains

**Aanav Parikh**, Harrison School, Livingston

**Tvisha Thar**, Indiana Avenue School 18, Iselin

**MY FIRST SLEEPOVER**

It was an ordinary Friday afternoon and I was laying in a perfectly comfortable position on the fluffy couch. My mom called in from the kitchen, “Ella’s mom texted me and said you could come over for a sleepover. You up for it?” My jaw dropped open as I mouthed the words “Yes,” silently.

After running around the house to gather my things, I finally had my sleeping bag, Ipad, pillows, blanket, and soft plushie. It was about a 6 minute drive, and after reassuring my mom that I would be safe and have manners, we were on our way. I chatted away about how exciting the sleepover would be. I said, “Oh my god, I’m about to have my first sleepover.” My mom was probably annoyed, because she looked happy when we arrived. Once we got there, Ella was getting the mail, and when she looked up, she was so excited when she saw me. She dropped the mail, ran over and gave me a big hug. We both went inside with a ginormous smile on my face.

I finished putting my stuff away, said thank you to Ella’s mom, got a huge bag of cheesy hot Doritos and marshmallows, and headed upstairs. Ella then reached in the chip bag and pulled out a big handful of Doritos, enough to feed a village. We both laughed as Ella stuffed the chips in her mouth. We soon played Fortnite for a few hours. Pizza came, and it was hot, gooey and had extra cheese on it, just the way we liked it. We decided to watch a Spiderman movie. Jack, Ella’s cat, was rubbing his head on our legs as we fell asleep, halfway through the movie.

When we woke up the next morning, it was 10:45. It was also sunny and hot so we blew up a waterslide in Ella’s backyard. We spent hours out there, rotating between playing tag, the water slide, and her trampoline. When we got tired, we had lunch. I went home around 2:00 that day, and I’m still dreaming about it. So that’s how my first sleepover was, and to be honest, it was one of the best days of my life. I have never been able to spend that much time with my best friend ever before.

Seeing a Brighter World Through a Pair of Glasses  
By Jacob D., Grade 4, Harrison Elementary, Livingston, New Jersey

“The time has come, your child needs glasses,” The eye doctor told my mom. My body froze and my stomach flipped. I looked down at the tiled floor, black and brown tiles filling my blurry view. I came home, tears making a puddle. While in bed, I whispered,

“Mommy, I'm afraid of getting glasses,”

“Why are you afraid of getting glasses, Jacob?” my mom asked in a calming voice.

In a petrified state I stammered, “Everyone will tease me! Everyone will laugh! Everyone of my friends will think I'm strange.”

“Don't worry Jacob, it's for your own good. Can you read that poster?” My mom pointed to a vibrant, “All About Me” poster that my kindergarten teacher made during my birthday.

“Jacob likes yellow,” I paused because I could not see vividly. I was shocked, scared of the inevitable future.

I soon mumbled,

“I can't read it mom”. My tears look like a small pond in my cheek.

“That means you need it, it's for your own good. If you can't see something that's only a few feet away, then you need glasses. We are doing this to help you, not to embarrass you,” she assured me. I hugged my mom tightly, thinking that everything was fine. However, in my gut, the inescapable truth was sinking me down to the seabed.

We went to Coctco to get the glasses. I looked at the floor, a marble one, and my eyes opened wide. The words “Do not be scared,” keep on repeating in my mind. Soon, we saw the optical shop in sight.

“Are you scared, best friend?” my dad pondered.

“Yeah,” I responded back. As I tried the glasses for the first time, I was awestruck!

“Wow!” I eventually exclaimed, amazed with the brighter world.

My dad soon asked, “Ready to go home?”

“Yeah!” I answered. My dad drove and I cheerfully read all the advertising signs. Soon, when I got to school, my classmates jumped, and noticed the change and asked how it felt.

“It's good, I can see much better!” I replied. My teacher told me that there were at least 10 other kids that had glasses in our grade and that made me feel special. I wondered then why I was so scared in the first place. It's funny how you worry about things and in the end, it turns out to be nothing.

Sofia Jackson

## The Most Painful Time Of My Life.

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. Screaming with delight and screaming with pain. Right now I am in Karate, and waiting for the cue to be able to spar. Why am I fighting you ask? Well I am fighting for student of the month. Student of the month is a prize for being good and rising to the top above all. I was tied for student of the month, and the only way to settle it was by fighting. We both wanted to win, and prove to ourselves that we were better. He was older than me, stronger than me, and had been in this karate class longer than me. I couldn't get over the mixed feelings of happiness, anxiousness, and terror. When the fight began I knew I had no moment to lose. I aimlessly grabbed him and tried to get a good shot, but I couldn't get a good grip on him. We went about this for about a minute. Until we heard a frightening crack. We both stopped to make sure that both of us were okay. And I felt fine. Finally after some worthless tries, I sidestepped him and took him down. I was overcome with joy. Knowing that I got student of the month made my day, no, my month. And right then before I could get off the mat I winced in pain. A jolt ascending down my spine. I slowly make myself come to the ground, and examine my body to make sure that everything is alright. When my eyes meet my toe, I see that it is purple and blue. On cue my eyes roll into my head for a brief moment. And my karate teacher and Dad come to see if I am okay. And well, I am not. They help me get over to the nearest chair, and sit me down. I let them feel my toe, though it didn't really hurt when they touched it. It hurt by itself. So now here I am in the doctor's office in sandals limping towards the

room wincing in pain. That was one of the painful times in my life. And yet that was one of the greatest times of my life.

## First Day of Third Grade

By: Aanav.P, Grade 4, Harrison Elementary School, Livingston, NJ

Have you ever switched schools? Well, if you have I am sure it was nothing like my change. It all began when I moved to New Jersey and therefore a new school. I left my previous school in second grade and was kind of nervous for the new school... and a new grade! The days went by like a blink of a second. Before I knew it, the first day of the Third grade was here!

The morning of the first day, I got out of the car with my parents and slowly, cautiously walked to the blacktop of the new school. I watched all the students talking in a group, and me, standing alone in the crowd. ALONE! My heartbeat started rising while I was just standing there, thinking of what things could go worse than this. According to my mind, nothing else could go more unpleasant than being alone in the whole school. I was slowly taking small steps side to side, and then I saw my parents moving towards the car to leave. I really did not want them to go because that's when all of the nervous feeling boosted up inside of me. (When I was in Kindergarten, First grade, and Second grade, I cried on the first day of school.) I had no idea what I would do on the first day in a new grade, in a new school, and in a new state!

While staring at a tree, my mind was working on thinking about things I would do with the nervousness . First, I felt I was going to cry, but it would feel awkward in front of all the kids. Secondly, a group of students on the blacktop were staring at me, probably thinking who I was. Probably not the bad way because I sometimes glanced at new students in my old school for a second wondering who they were. Also, I remembered how they fitted in with us perfectly. Now, that thought made me a little comfortable cause I got some confidence but still, I was anxious. I was thinking I will have no friends in this school except my neighbor and who was also in the same grade.

Also, I was recollecting things which were very sad and my heartbeat was fast. All of a sudden, there was a blur in my eyes, it was water! And then, a student came, I was more terrified than ever. He was coming near me and as much he came near me, I felt more and more terrified. I thought he was a first day bully. All of a sudden, he began to ask something and he said, "Are you new to this school?", I nodded in fear. "So will you be friends with me", and then, my face was beaming and a smile lit up my face, my response was, yes!

# The Ferocious Night

It was a dark, stormy night. I was relishing a delicious meal in my luxurious dining room with pearly white walls and radiant red carpet. Suddenly, I heard deafening loud sounds outside like a sonic boom and perceived the rumble of thunder with a flash of lightning. I darted to my kitchen window to witness what was going on. Torrents of rain poured on my window. I glimpsed flashes of lightning which lit up the ebony-black sky. The storm was raging like a wild monster.

These ear splitting noises continued with intervals of buzz and hiss. The wind was howling hundred miles an hour like an untamed beast. I discerned a clunking sound at a distance and observed a lightning hit a tree. The shabby head of the tree was attacked by nature's violence. This one was so powerful my whole house trembled. My heart sank as I beheld steam rising slowly from the tree. I quickly finished my dinner and plopped on my low and fluffy gray couch to watch any television show but this tragic environmental disaster. My worst fears came to life, the power went off with another clank. Everything turned pitch dark. The only sound and light was from the vicious howl of thunder and sharp lightning outside. I stayed still on my couch wondering when the electricity would be back. And then there was the doorbell. I jumped out of my couch with a shriek! "Who could it be?" I thought to myself. I hurried myself to light up a candle and opened the door shivering with fright. To my great relief, I saw my friend standing right in front of me. "Can I borrow a candle for tonight?" she asked. "Of course you can! Why don't you sleep here tonight?" I exclaimed "Sure, I'll check with my mom and be right back." she implied. We chatted and giggled for hours, listening to the hail of bullets bellowing outside. With soft and warm blankets around us, our eyelids became heavy and we were falling asleep.

The next morning when I woke up stretching and twisting I pulled up my blinds and to my excitement saw the golden sun painting the sky into a bright blue color. The fresh smell and winds invigorate my body. The storm had finally come to rest.