

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
FEBRUARY 14, 2021

# FUN DAY TIMES



**Playing 'School'**

Pic. by  
Jayarathna Wickramaarachchi



**POETRY**  
**WINNERS**  
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**STORY**  
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**KIDS'**  
**WORLD**

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**Please send  
competition entries to:**

Funday Times  
C/O the Sunday Times  
P.O. Box 1136, Colombo.  
Or  
8, Hunupitiya Cross Road,  
Colombo 2.

**Please note that competition  
entries (except Reeves Art)  
are accepted by email.**

**Please write the name of the  
competition and the date clearly  
at the top of your entry and include  
the following details:**

Full Name (including Surname).

Date of Birth, Address,

Telephone No. and School.

Please underline the name  
most commonly used.

**All competition entries should be  
certified by a parent or guardian  
as your own work.**

Competition entries without the  
full details requested above,  
will be disqualified.

**Closing date  
for weekly competitions:**

**March 3, 2021**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

**Email: fundaytimes1@gmail.com**



**Age groups:**

**6 – 10 years 11 – 15 years**

**Word limit: 100 Words**

**6 – 10 years**

**When Covid had a holiday**

Covid had a holiday,  
He went to China,  
His friends and family went to Wuhan,  
While his relatives went to Shanghai.

When they had children,  
They had ten thousand,  
Five thousand went to Italy,  
France and Africa,  
The other half went to America and  
England.

They came to Sri Lanka,  
They knew they were a terror,  
To the world, the countries  
and their people,  
Corona will be evil forever.

Poor Sri Lanka had to surrender,  
But I think we are stronger,  
If we get together and fight Corona,  
This pandemic will be no longer.

**Miheli Kumarage  
Visakha Vidyalaya, Colombo 5**



## Poetry Competition

This is your chance to get your poem published here.  
Entries should be in your handwriting and clearly  
certified by a teacher or parent as your own creation.  
Your poem should be posted to Funday Times with  
'Poetry Competition' written at the top of the entry.  
The winner of each age category will be awarded a  
British Council Young Learner's Library membership.

Please write **the date** at the top of your entry

**11 – 15 years**

**Rain**

I feel a sudden gust of wind,  
A thunder clap up there.  
I feel another strong gust of wind,  
And rain falls everywhere.

Dark clouds appear in the sky,  
An icy hand gripped my heart.  
I hear another thunder clap,  
An I jump with a start.

I was playing in the garden,  
When water dripped down my nose,  
And it dripped everywhere,  
Down the garden hose.

The rain got heavier and heavier,  
I screamed and ran indoors,  
My mother gave me a cup of cocoa,  
And a soft red blanket that touched  
all the way to my nose.

**Nulura Jayawickrama  
Methodist College, Colombo 3**

**Please note  
that copied poems  
will be disqualified.**

**Winners**



*From a Young Reporter*

## Harry Potter Studios - London

**H**arry Potter is a magical  
film series which is  
popular all around the world.  
It was written by the British  
author J. K. Rowling.

Ever wondered where it was  
filmed? Harry Potter films were  
filmed at the Leavesden Studios,  
London.

Beside Harry Potter, films like  
'Fantastic  
Beasts' and  
'Wonder  
Woman' too  
were filmed  
there.

Now  
there's a  
separate  
section  
called as



**Entrance**



**Harry's cupboard under the stairs**



**Hogwarts Express**

'Harry Potter Studios' in the  
Leavesden Studios.

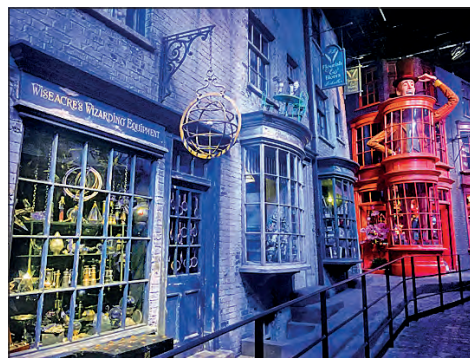
If you ever visit the Studios  
you can see Harry Potter's  
cupboard under the stairs,

the Forbidden forest,  
the Hogwarts Express,  
the Great Hall, Slytherin  
and Gryffindor common rooms  
and Diagon Alley.

**Chanithma Joseph  
(14 years)  
Taxila C. C.,  
Horana**



**The Great Hall**



**Diagon Alley**



**Harry Potter actors at the Studios**



**February 9**

# News in Pictures



**Vinales, Cuba**

Oxen pull a sledge with tobacco leaves to a plantation drying barn. Cuban farmers cultivate with special care the leaves of the world-famous Havana cigars.



**Rafah, Gaza Strip**

A girl looks from a car while waiting at the Rafah border crossing departure area to travel from the Gaza Strip into Egypt.

**Medan, Indonesia**

A health worker takes a break during a swab collection drive in North Sumatra. Indonesia has reported more than 1 million Covid-19 cases since the beginning of the pandemic, the highest number in south-east Asia.



**Prague, Czech Republic**

A dog jumps on the Charles Bridge after snowfall in Prague.

**February 8**



**Yamanawa, Japan**

A performer wearing a lion mask performs the Ise Daikagura lion dance at the remote village in Ryuo. Lion Dance performers pray in front of farmers houses and businesses for good grain harvests and disease-free lives. Performers play sacred music using drums and flutes with two lion mask dancers. A lion mask is considered a symbol of God, who enters the house and performs in front of the Shinto God, a statue placed inside the house, mostly in the kitchen.



**Yangon, Myanmar**

Demonstrators gather at Hledan Junction during a protest against the military coup. Thousands of people took to the streets for a third day after Myanmar's military seized power and declared a state of emergency.



**Falkirk, Scotland**

Snow being cleared beside the Kelpies in Falkirk, 30-metre-high horse-head sculptures depicting mythical water spirits. Yellow snow and ice warnings are in place for much of the rest of the UK.



**Depok, Indonesia**

Puryanti and her nephew Raffi, cover themselves from head to toe in paint to become 'manusia silver' (silver people), as part of their act to make a living on the outskirts of Jakarta, Indonesia.



**Tapovan, India**

The remains of a dam along a river in Chamoli district damaged after a flash flood thought to have been caused when a glacier broke off. Eighteen people were confirmed dead on Monday and at least 200 others were missing.

Source : The Guardian

FEBRUARY 14, 2021



## Keystone Species

By Cecilia Hewavitharana

Imagine that everyone woke up one day, to find that all the nails in the world had mysteriously vanished overnight. Doors would have fallen off their hinges, paintings and furniture would have crashed onto the floor and even some structures would have collapsed – so much chaos and destruction because of something so small and seemingly insignificant.

While nails are unlikely to vanish overnight, species have been vanishing over the years and 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction.



OGRE STARFISH  
© Corbis

Between 1970 and 2020, the population sizes of mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles have dropped by 68 percent, according to the Living Planet Index (which measures trends in thousands of wildlife populations across the globe).

Surely, the extinction of some animal or plant cannot have such a large impact? Well, they can. Species such as these, which are vital to (and have a disproportionately large effect on) their ecosystems, are called “keystone species”. Zoologist and ecologist, Robert Paine, coined this term in 1969, after a study of starfish along the Pacific coastline. He observed that when the starfish were removed from the area as part of an experiment, the mussel population which they fed on, increased so much and congested the ecosystem that other species could not survive. This caused the biodiversity of the ecosystem to reduce drastically.

Scientists have since then listed three types of keystone species:

### Predators

They help keep the population of their prey in control, which in turn impacts the animals and plants down the food web. Similar to the starfish and mussels, sea otters protect kelp forests by controlling the population of sea urchins.

### Ecosystem engineers

These are organisms that create, change or destroy a habitat. Beavers, for example, shape river



NORTH AMERICAN BEAVER  
© Roy Thomson, Getty Images

ecosystems by redirecting water with their dams, creating wetlands where a variety of animals and plants thrive. Their use of old or dead trees for their dams further allows new, healthier trees to grow in their place liberally

Mangrove trees serve a similar function: their massive roots reduce erosion along shorelines, while also providing safety for small fish and mitigating the impact of tsunamis on land.

### Mutualists

This is when two or more species interact for each other's (and the ecosystem's) benefit. Bees and flowers are the best example here. In the process of collecting nectar and pollen (their primary food sources) from flowers, bees also spread pollen on to other flowers, increasing the



EUROPEAN HONEY BEE  
© John Seibert, Wikimedia Commons

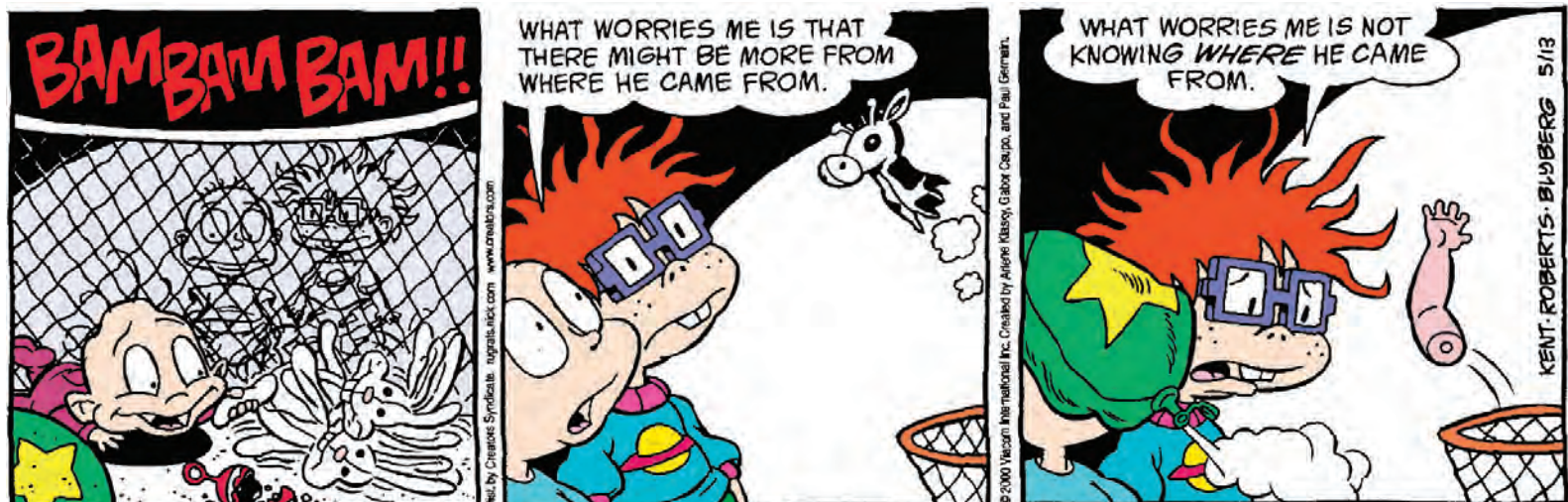
chances of fertilisation, flower and fruit growth.

While some scientists have criticised this idea for oversimplifying complex ecological systems, the bottom line is that even the most unassuming organism is needed for ecosystems and those dependent on them (humans included) to thrive.

Even if it is not a keystone species, the removal of one species could, with time, cause the ecosystem to collapse like a house of cards.

Sources: IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) Living Planet Report 2020 National Geographic Society

Rugrats







# The Fight

By Manoshi de Silva

The Mongoose came out of his burrow in the evening in search of food. The jungle was quiet and peaceful. The sky looked colourful with the sun about to set. He scurried under the thick bushes and shrubs, carefully looking for something to eat. Then he saw something moving slowly, not too far from where he was.

"Is that a stick?" thought the Mongoose, for the thing looked like a piece of a broken branch. "But sticks don't move!" He went a little closer. The thing slithered a little away from him. Now he was pretty sure that this was some kind of an animal. "Hello," said the Mongoose trying to make friends, "who are you?"

One end of the stick stood up. Two angry looking eyes stared at him with a fork-like tongue slipping in and out. It was a Snake. The Mongoose had never seen a Snake before. And the Snake also saw a Mongoose for the first time in his life.

"His eyes look so mean and wicked. He has no legs or fur. He is ugly and I don't like him!" thought the Mongoose. "What is this ugly animal? He is covered with hair and has teeth like thorns. I hate him!" decided the Snake.

The Mongoose and Snake both hissed at each other. "I hate you!" hissed the Snake, "and I don't even know why!"

"Well so do I," snarled back the Mongoose, "you look so stupid and ugly!"

They both started to move around each other, burning in anger.

"You should leave this jungle," growled the Mongoose. "Jungles are for animals and you're not even a proper animal. You don't have legs or any fur!"

The Snake hissed louder. "You are the one who should leave," he said, his eyes burning with rage, "you are stupid and look like a dried up husk!"

The two animals got closer and tried to attack each other. The Snake tried to bite and knew that the Mongoose would be in trouble if he did so, for he was venomous. The Mongoose carefully avoided the Snake's attacks but tried to get hold of him and bite him. He too knew that the Snake would be in trouble if he did so. Because the Mongoose had sharp teeth and could easily break the Snake into two pieces.

This fight went on and on for a while. Soon they were both tired, but neither of them wanted to give up. "I will finish you off today," growled the Mongoose. "No, I will," hissed back the snake. But they were both very tired by now and had very little energy left, to go on fighting.

The sun was about to sink in the horizon. A few bats appeared in the evening sky. One bat was hanging on a branch high above where the Mongoose and Snake was fighting. "What's going on here?" shouted the Bat.

The Mongoose and Snake pulled away from each other and looked up. "How stupid are you? Can't you see that we are fighting?" asked the Snake sticking out his long tongue in annoyance.

"I can see that, but what are you two fighting about?" asked the Bat.

Both the Mongoose and Snake paused for a second to remember why they started to fight. "No one fights without a reason. What did one of you do to the other to start a fight?" asked the Bat. "Nothing really," answered the Mongoose. "Then why are you two fighting?" asked the Bat sounding confused.

"I hate him," said the Mongoose, "he's different than me and the moment I saw him, I decided that I don't like him!"

"Well, I hate him too," said the Snake, "he looks so stupid. I get annoyed even when I see him!"

"You are both equally stupid! How petty you sound when you say that you don't like someone, just because you don't like the way he looks or because he's different than you! Is it any of your business what another person looks like?" asked the Bat.

"Not really," said the Mongoose, "his appearance is none of my business, but I still don't like how he looks!"

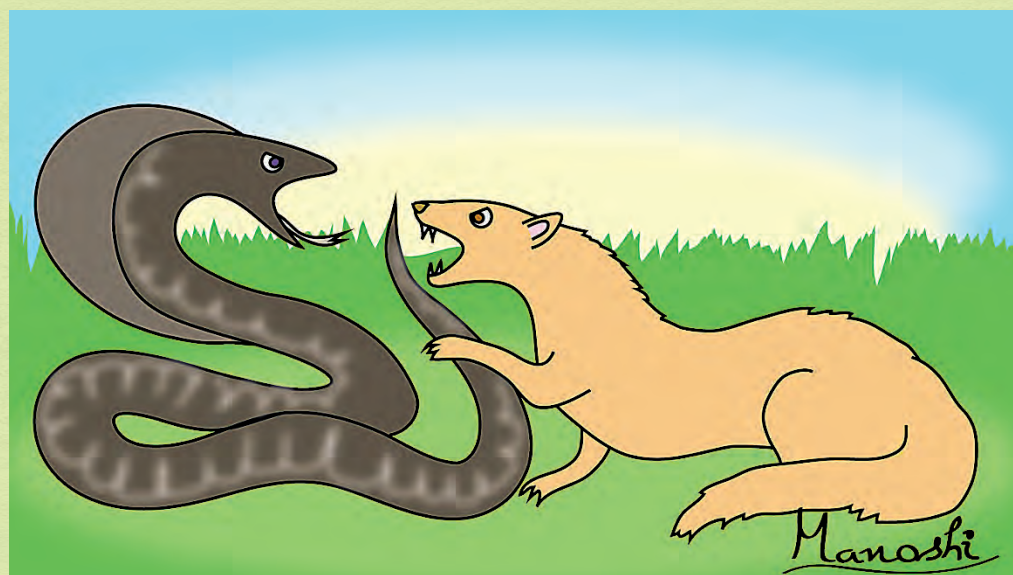
"I also get annoyed when I see him!" said the Snake.

"Well if you don't like the way someone looks, all you have to do is not look at him. It's not fair to try to hurt someone just because you dislike their appearance. How stupid is that?" sighed the Bat.

"Most animals don't like the way I look. I am a mammal but I fly like a bird. Birds dislike me although I fly, because I am not a bird. And animals dislike me because I don't live on the ground. So I get ridiculed all the time by both animals and birds as well. But I don't care what others say. Because this is the way I was born. And no one has the right to dislike me just because I am different!" explained the Bat.

"You should never try to attack another person just because they are different than you. That only shows how silly you are!" said the Bat and flew away.

The Snake and the Mongoose both felt very stupid. How silly they were to fight with each other simply because they didn't like the way the other one looked. They slowly slipped away into opposite directions, feeling ashamed about their behaviour.





## Online Schooling

My microphone  
isn't working,  
And my ears are  
always aching,  
Because the teacher  
keeps on shouting.



They tell me my mic's always muting,  
Always I have to tell them, it's not even  
working.  
And when I tell them to join the meeting,  
They say, "I hate online schooling".

Oh! This is so annoying,  
I would love to see this phone burning,  
But of course, not my gaming,  
It was better than anything.

But very soon, school will be opening,  
I know that my friends will be waiting,  
For me to come and be studying,  
And of course, together we will be  
playing.

**Joshua Segarajasinghe (13 years)**  
St. Peter's College, Colombo 4

Please remember that ARTICLES, POEMS and PAINTINGS sent, will not be published unless they are certified as your own work by a parent or teacher. Also please mention the topic, your full name, date of birth and address in your entry. Articles should not exceed 200 words. Art should be on A4 size paper. Remember to write the date that you send your entries.



## Magic

Swish, swish the magic flies around  
the wonder tree  
It made my heart, sadness free  
And then the magic swirls around me  
Puff! I'm in the air, look at me!

When I was in the air  
I saw the whole world, I swear  
Oh no! I was lost in the air  
I didn't know where...

Then I saw a fairy  
She was lovely and merry  
She said, "don't worry,"  
And she brought me home safely.

**Chiara Francisco (11 years)**  
Holy Family Convent, Colombo 4

## My hobby

My hobby is collecting stamps.  
I love to collect stamps of many countries.  
In my collection, I have about 100 stamps  
belonging to Sri Lanka and many other  
countries.

Stamp collecting is a very interesting  
hobby because you can learn a lot about  
various countries. In Sri Lanka, there are  
many kinds of stamps and some have

beautiful butterflies and birds on them.  
I started collecting stamps when I was  
eight years old. I have a big stamp album.  
I get stamps from my father, my friends  
and relatives. They help me to collect these  
beautiful stamps.

**Ashmila**  
Kingston College Int.,  
Wellawatte Branch

## The way I felt when my father worked at Brandix

Today, the world has lost thousands  
of people from this deadly virus that is  
plaguing the entire world. In Sri Lanka also  
the number of infected people is gradually  
increasing. Our Sri Lankans who successfully  
faced Corona the first time are now suffering  
for the second time. A large number of  
infected people in our country were reported  
from a clothing factory called Brandix.

When it was reported for the first time  
that an infected person was found from  
Brandix, I felt so scared and sad because  
my father works at Brandix. Since then we  
(my family) felt so much fear about ourselves  
although we have always been accustomed  
to keeping healthy habits. I was very relieved  
the day my father did the PCR test. Less than  
24 hours later, my father's report arrived,  
relieving much of our stress.

I was so glad that he was reported  
negative from Coronavirus. We are still  
self-quarantining at our house. We  
regularly eat and drink healthy food and  
beverages and always maintain social  
distance. Now I feel so much relief  
because we follow health care steps.

Finally I would like to say thank you  
very much to all those who are working  
so hard to protect everyone from this  
pandemic. And as responsible citizens  
we have to always be concerned about  
our own security and the security of  
our country. Once again to protect our  
little motherland from this pandemic  
let's stand together as Sri Lankans.

**Shakya Perera**  
Musaeus College

## Scenery



**Asma Ali (Grade 7)**  
Muslim Ladies' College, Colombo 4

## Sophie and the Shadow Woods



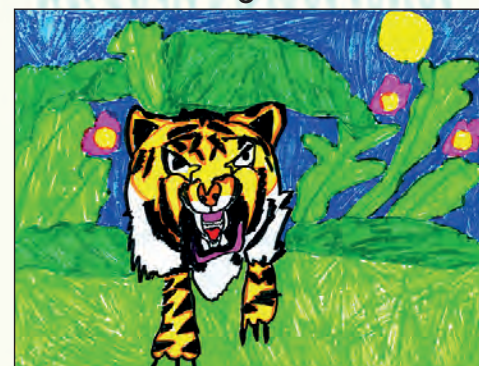
**Diwya Rehinika (8 years)**  
Gamini Primary School

## My family



**Rayha Wijesekera (7 years)**  
Asian Int. School

## Tiger



**Kyaara Gardiarachchi (9 years)**  
Ladies' College



### Evening scenery



**Fathima Shaidha (10 years)**  
Aql Int. Girls' School, Akurana

### Let's protect our environment



**Fiorina Fernando (6 years)**  
St. Thomas' Catholic Int. School, Seeduwa

### Crocodiles in the river



**Kashyapa Athauda (9 years)**  
Trinity College, Kandy

### Let's protect our country



**Fadhi Ifham (11 years)**  
All Saints College, Galle

## Life in 2020

Of life in 2020, what could I say?  
It's a sorry mess all the way.

It began with fireworks and all the glory,  
On the very first month, January,  
People blessed and spoke of fortune,  
In this brand-new year with a jolly tune.

Oh! How wrong they were, the deluded men

For death has spread his wings again,  
Across towns, villages and great states,  
People cower in fear and lives abate.

Keep your distance for the sake of safety,  
Use sanitizer to preserve humanity,  
Wear a mask for your own good,  
They repeat to the misunderstood.

What is this minuscule thing?  
That has upended our lives in a blink,  
It all feels like a dream more than a reality,  
So welcome to all the modern farce,  
'Life in 2020'

**Tharuki Bandara (Grade 10)**  
Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy

## The greatest gift I ever received

My only dream was to get an off-road truck for my birthday and I was just finding how to get it. One whole night I was thinking about it.

I asked my mother what she would give me for my birthday. She asked me what I wanted. I was so happy I hugged her and said that I want an off-road truck. She said that she would buy it for me.

At about 12 o'clock, my father came home and asked me to get ready to go to Kandy. I was excited and happy. We went to a shopping mall. To my surprise my mum bought me a beautiful off-road truck. It was very big in size and the lights were on.

I was so happy. I brought it home and showed my elder brother. He too liked it. All my friends came for the party. We had great fun. All friends admired my greatest gift.

**Shevin Perera (Grade 4)**  
Redding Int. School, Kandy

## Living a healthy life

Living a healthy life is important for everybody. We have to eat healthy food and we have to drink a lot of water. We have to exercise regularly.

Healthy people do not get ill often. We have to be healthy in body and mind both. Healthy people are always in a happy mood. We can work well if we are healthy. Everybody should try to live happily.

**Nethupama Wijeratne (Grade 3)**  
Holy Cross College, Gampaha

## Honey

Honey is a healthy sweetener. But honey is not without sugar. Too much honey can be harmful to the body. Glucose, fructose and water are the main constituents of honey.

Honey also contains enzymes, Vitamin B, amino acids, minerals, antioxidants and Vitamin C. Honey also has natural antimicrobial properties. Honey has the ability to heal wounds quickly. Honey also relieves cough and sore throat.

Consumption of honey more than a prescribed quantity would cause side effects. Sweet honey also contains carbohydrates. It has the property of raising blood sugar levels. Therefore, diabetic patients should consume honey with caution. It's better to consult a doctor if you are consuming honey.

The carbohydrates and sugar in honey can increase body weight. Consuming too much honey can mean eating too much sugar. Honey is easily sticky to the teeth so can be harmful to the teeth. Some people are allergic to honey so abdominal cramps may occur.

Those who want to lose weight should use honey only one or two teaspoons daily in the morning.

**Varsha Suresh (13 years)**  
St. Anne's B. M. V., Wattala



## Tomahawk

Quiz  
No.180

Questions for the Tomahawk Quiz No. 180 are based on articles appearing in the Funday Times of January 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, 2021. All you have to do is to find the answers to the questions given. Write the answers neatly on a postcard. Cut the strip 'Tomahawk Quiz No. 180' seen at the top of this page and paste it on your postcard. Please get your entries certified as your own work by a teacher or parent.

Two lucky winners

will receive brand new

Tomahawk Mountain Bikes

with the compliments of

Tomahawk Bicycle Mall

All Funday Times readers between 8 – 15 years are eligible to participate.

(Those who have already won a bicycle are not eligible to participate.)

## Tomahawk Quiz No. 179

- ▶ Malarvathani Suresh, Point Pedro
- ▶ Ishfaaq Ahmad, Dehiwala

TOMAHAWK  
BicyclesCOMPLETE CONTROL ON YOUR  
BIKING EXPERIENCE

@TOMAHAWKBICYCLEOFFICIAL

245 B, GALLE ROAD, COLOMBO 04  
BAMBALAPITIYA - 011 250 7307

@TOMAHAWKBICYCLES

## QUESTIONS — QUIZ NO. 180

1. Name a country that was affected by Storm Bella.
2. What is the special event that takes place at Times Square in New York on New Year's Eve?
3. What is special about Mount Etna and where is it located?
4. What is the difference between a Capital and a Capitol?
5. What is metamorphosis?

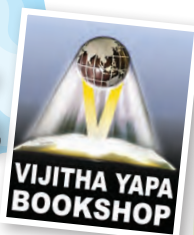
Closing Date: February 28, 2021



Or

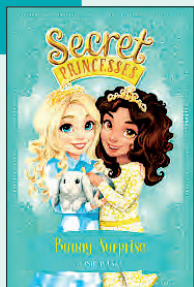


fundaytimes1@gmail.com

Win super  
books  
from

Age: 9 years and below

Word Count: 150

Topic: My favourite song  
and why I like itWin: Secret Princesses –  
Bunny Surprise  
by Rosie Banks

Charlotte and Mia have another wish to grant! Aisha loves looking after the rabbit next door. Can the girls use their princess magic to give her a bunny surprise? Or will nasty Princess Poison really spoil things this time?

Age: 10 – 12 years

Word Count: 150 – 200

Topic: A famous woman scientist  
or inventor you admireWin: The Mystery of the  
Disappearing Cat  
by Enid Blyton

Pip and Bets have a new neighbour who lives with her prize-winning Siamese cats. When one of the cats goes missing, all the clues point to the Find-Outers' friend Luke. The only way to prove Luke is innocent is the find the real cat snatcher...

Write at the top of your Essay

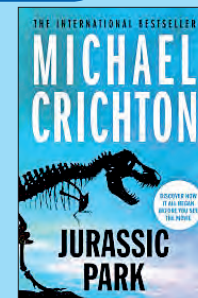
■ Book Competition

■ Essay Topic



Age: 13 – 15 years

Word Count: 200 – 250

Topic: What you know about  
Valentine's DayWin: Jurassic Park  
by Michael Crichton

On a remote jungle island, genetic engineers have created a dinosaur game park.

An astonishing technique for recovering and cloning dinosaur DNA is discovered. Now one of mankind's most thrilling fantasies has come true and the first dinosaurs that the Earth has seen in the time of man emerge.

But there is a dark side to the fantasy. And after a catastrophe destroys the park's systems, the scientists and tourists are left fighting for survival...