

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
DECEMBER 14, 2025

# FUN DAY TIMES



**Polka Dots on Stage**

Pic. by Eshan Fernando

**WINNERS** 🏆

**POETRY & ESSAYS**  
PAGES 2 & 5



**CYCLONES**  
PAGE 3



**New**

**COMPETITION**  
PAGE 4

**ONLINE  
KIDS NEWS**  
PAGES 7 - 8

Follow us on: [www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk)



**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 are accepted by email.**  
**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 Number 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 this week's competitions:**  
**December 31, 2025**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

**Email: [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)**



**Win super books from**



**Age: 9 years and below**

**Word Count: 150**

**Topic: A Christmas concert**

**Win: More Wishing-Chair Stories by Enid Blyton**

Mollie and Peter are home for the holidays and their wonderful Wishing-Chair is ready to whisk them away to magical lands.

Best of all, a certain jolly somebody needs help delivering presents or

Christmas might not happen!

Will Mollie and Peter be able to save the day?



**BRITISH COUNCIL**

**Age groups:**  
**6 – 10 years / 11 – 15 years**  
**Word limit: 100 Words**

**6 – 10 years**

**Kindness**

A king went to the forest with his little dog.  
 "Go hunt some animals," said the king.  
 So the little dog ran into the trees,  
 He saw a tiny rabbit hopping on the grass,  
 And the little dog chased him fast.

The little rabbit was scared,  
 And looked for someone to help,  
 He saw the king and jumped into his arms.

"Don't hunt this little rabbit!  
 Now he's mine," said the king.  
 So he carried the rabbit home to his palace,  
 And the rabbit was safe forever.

**Joshlynn Hensman**  
**Chundikuli Girls' College, Jaffna**



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

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



or [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

## 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.

**11 – 15 years**

**Girl Guides**

There are many things in Guides,  
 That I think I enjoy.  
 Let us take a look at them,  
 Between the lines of this poem.

Making so many new friends,  
 Can be the way that loneliness ends,  
 Helping others, having fun,  
 Guiding is never glum.

Independence, teamwork and responsibility,  
 We learn from Guiding,  
 Flowing rivers, flowery hills  
 And blue, blue skies,  
 We see from hiking.  
 Campfires we sing and dance,  
 Even outdoor cooking is given a chance.

Oh how I love Guiding,  
 It can never be tiring,  
 Not a moment can be dull,  
 Or give you time to sulk.

**Nethuli Perera**  
**Visakha Vidyalaya, Colombo**

**Age: 10 – 12 years**

**Word Count: 150 – 200**

**Topic: Home-made Christmas gifts for family**

**Win: Street Child by Berlie Doherty**

Jim Jarvis is a runaway.  
 When his mother dies, he is all alone in a workhouse and desperate to escape.  
 He faces a constant battle to survive. Just as Jim finds some friends, he is snatched away and made to work for cruel Grimy Nick.

Jim's gripping adventure is based on a true story.



**Write at the top of your Essay**

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic

**Age: 13 – 15 years**

**Word Count: 200 – 250**

**Topic: Your plans for Christmas**

**Win: Hercule Poirot's Christmas by Agatha Christie**

Christmas Eve and the Lee family's reunion is shattered by a deafening crash and a high-pitched scream. Upstairs, the tyrannical Simeon Lee lies dead in a pool of blood.

When Hercule Poirot offers to assist, he finds an atmosphere not of mourning but of mutual suspicion. It seems everyone had their own reason to hate the old man...



## Book Competition



**9 years and below**

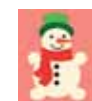
*Shopping with my mother*  
**Praveen Prashanthan**  
 Alethea Int. School,  
 Dehiwela

**10 – 12 years**

*A school picnic*  
**Saqeef-ul-Haq**  
 Matale Int. School

**13 – 15 years**

*Television programmes that I like*  
**Nivethikaa Yogendran**  
 St. Bridget's Convent,  
 Colombo



# Tropical Cyclones

Compiled by Cecilia Hewavitharana

**Tropical cyclones are intense rotating storms that originate over warm tropical oceans and are characterised by low atmospheric pressure, high winds and heavy rainfall.**

**Tropical cyclones are often simply called cyclones, even though the latter refers to a broad category of rotating storm systems, which includes tropical depressions, tropical storms, tropical cyclones and extra-tropical cyclones.**

## How are tropical cyclones formed?

Tropical cyclones develop when warm, moist air over the ocean rises, creating an area of low pressure beneath. As surrounding air rushes in to fill the gap, it too warms and rises, setting up a cycle that forms towering clouds and strong winds.

The rotation of the Earth causes the system to spin, giving cyclones their distinctive spiral shape. The centre, known as the 'eye', is typically calm, while the surrounding area, the 'eyewall', experiences the most severe weather.

Cyclones rarely form near the equator (within 5° latitude) as the Coriolis force required for the cyclone's spin is too weak in this area.

However, this has been changing due to climate change, as has been evident with the 2001 Typhoon Vamei and the recent Cyclone Senyar.



The area within 5° latitude of the equator is known as the **doldrums** or **Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ)**.

## The Coriolis effect

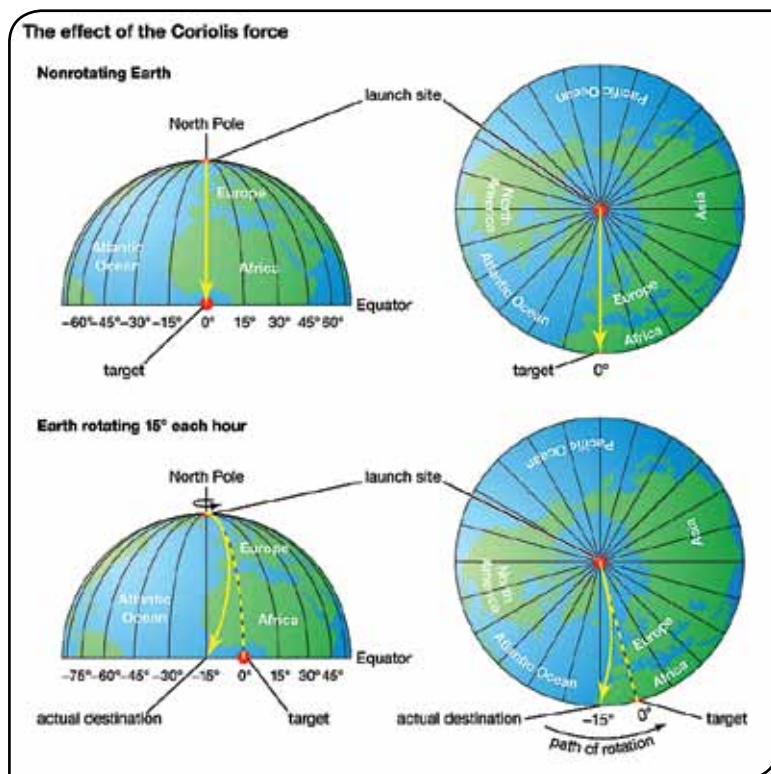
The Coriolis effect refers to the deflection of objects travelling long distances across the Earth due to the force (the Coriolis force) caused by the Earth's rotation.

Objects are deflected to the right in the northern hemisphere and to the left in the southern hemisphere.

This force is strongest at the poles and absent at the equator.

Furthermore, warmer oceans caused by climate change cause 'weaker' cyclones, such as the recent Cyclone Ditwah, to be fuelled with more water from evaporation, causing heavier rainfall.

A cyclone's strength is measured by its wind speed, and on that scale, Cyclone Ditwah was considered relatively weak, but caused devastating damages through intense and continuous rainfall.



## Cyclones, Typhoons, Hurricanes:

### What's the difference?

Cyclones, typhoons and hurricanes all refer to the same weather phenomenon: a tropical cyclone. The names depend on where they are formed:

**Cyclones** – Indian Ocean and South Pacific

**Typhoons** – Northwest Pacific

**Hurricanes** – Atlantic and Northeast Pacific

## Cyclone Ditwah

Now considered the deadliest natural disaster in Sri Lanka since the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, Cyclone Ditwah claimed the lives of 638 people, displaced over 200,000, affected over 1.4 million, and caused damages amounting to over US\$ 1.6 billion (at the time of press).

According to UNICEF reports, over 275,000 of those affected are children.

The catastrophic consequences of the cyclone have been attributed to a variety of factors, including insufficient warnings to people in at-risk areas and a general unpreparedness for a weather event of this magnitude.

In some areas, by the time people received warnings, their access to reach safer areas had already been cut-off. Furthermore, some also hesitated to evacuate as they were in areas that had never been affected badly by floods in the past.

Now, efforts are being focused on helping all those affected by the disaster. Many people have lost their homes and all their belongings. Furthermore, exposure to flood water poses the risk of diseases such as leptospirosis (rat fever), while drinking contaminated water can cause typhoid.

The country has been receiving aid and volunteer help from other countries in the aftermath of the disaster, but Sri Lankans from around the country have been coming together, even during the cyclone, to help all those affected, showing the world why we are called 'A Nation of Volunteers'.

**Sources:** NOAA, NASA, World Meteorological Organization, National Geographic, Britannica, UNICEF, Disaster Management Centre Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Medical Association



**Bizzy Minds Publishing**

**FUNDAY TIMES**

## 'READY TO ORDER?'

*Holiday Challenge*

### Can You Prepare Santa's Order?

*Scan the code to listen and play*



Stand a Chance to Win 'The Ready To Order?' Sticker Book

### SANTA'S TREAT HOUSE MENU

Apple Pie



Cookie Plate



Love Cake



Reindeer Carrot Sticks



The Elf Slice Mini Pizza



Kringle Lasagne



Candy Cane Shake



Mug of Milk



Hot Milo



### Waiter's Order Sheet

Restaurant: .....

Customer: .....

Order Taken By.....

Paste the items below & write the quantity

Quantity.....

Quantity.....

Quantity.....

Quantity.....

Please include your Full Name, Date of Birth, Home Address, Telephone Number and Email when sending in the Order Sheet clipping to enter the competition. Send the completed cut-out by post to: Funday Times, 'Ready to Order, Holiday Challenge', No. 8, Hunupitiya Cross Road, Colombo 2 or scan and email the clipping to [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com) Send your entries by Dec. 31, 2025



Kiddie Cove Annual Graduation and Concert 2025 was held on December 6, at the Buddhist Cultural Centre in Colombo.

Pix by Eshan Fernando



## Book Competition



### 9 years and below

#### Shopping with my mother

Last Sunday, my mom and I went shopping at One Galle Face. Going shopping with my mom is thrilling for me. We went by PickMe cab and soon reached the shopping mall.

I was a bit nervous when we went inside the mall. My eyes were looking around here and there at the colourful shops. I was very scared to use the escalators to go to all the floors. When I came down, my mother took me into the Keells supermarket. I took a trolley and started my shopping. I started with the fruit section, picking my favourite fruits such as green apples, oranges, mangoes, a bunch of bananas and deep red cherries. I walked slowly to the biscuit section and I took chocolate biscuits, potato crackers and strawberry wafers. Next we went to the drinks section and I bought some drinks such as Milo, Fanta and Coke.

Finally we came to my favourite section – chocolates. I picked a few such as Kinder Joy, Revello and Kandos. Finally we went to the checkout counter. My mom paid for my trolley. We reached home late in the evening.

I enjoyed the day shopping with my mom.

**Praveen Prashanthan (7 years)**  
Alethea Int. School, Dehiwala

### 10 – 12 years

#### A school picnic

It was an unforgettable day when we went on a school picnic to Riverston in Matale.

Riverston is a very beautiful area located in the Knuckles Mountain Range. It is about 30 km from Matale. The surroundings are extremely attractive and many people love to visit this scenic location.

We went on a sunny day, so the roads were very good for travelling. When we reached the place, we all shouted happily. Some of my friends were even jumping with joy. After arriving, the teachers divided us into three groups: Keppetipola Group, Weera Puran Appu Group and Gongalegoda Banda Group. Each group was given a special task, and the teachers also appointed leaders. It was very funny and enjoyable.

At lunchtime, we ate together, and it was a very good experience for all of us. We shared our food with each other, and we also gave food to those who hadn't brought any. It was a great opportunity for us to practice good behaviour.

Afterwards we hiked a small mountain. During the hike, our leader gave us commands and we were able to follow them well. Some of our friends also became leaders of each group and guided us throughout the journey.

It was a wonderful experience for us as Grade 6 students. The teachers guided us properly throughout the journey. We saw many interesting sights and observed several geographical features.

As evening approached, we felt sad because it was time to leave. Our teacher asked all the groups to gather together and we enjoyed our final moments before returning. It was truly a memorable day for all of us.

Overall, it was a fantastic picnic and we were able to develop many good qualities through this experience.

**Saqeef-ul-Haq (11 years)**  
Matale Int. School

### 13 – 15 years

#### Television programmes that I like

Television is a source of entertainment and relaxation. With the evolution of social media, not many people watch television, yet there are a great many variety of shows and programmes telecast on television.

My favourite television programme is 'Eureka'. It's basically about biology, astronomy, physics and daily discoveries made by scientists. The programme elaborates on the daily discoveries made with regard to space, aliens, cure for diseases, origin of dinosaurs and much more. It also elaborates on the scientific reason behind how black holes are formed, working of machinery using basic principles of physics, how the body defends against diseases and things related to science.

I've been watching this programme since childhood and it sparked a great interest in science within me. Watching this programme has made me view everything I do in my day-to-day life with an understanding of how and why. For example, when we heat food using a microwave oven, the waves cause the molecules to vibrate and generate friction and heat, making the food hot. Moreover it has aided me in my school studies and gives me an advantage over other students who merely memorize the facts without truly understanding the actual reason behind things.

Other than 'Eureka', I also enjoy watching 'Do You Know?' which is a quiz where contestants compete as a team, to answer questions from various topics, and the winning team wins a cash prize.

These programmes help me to develop my intellectual skills and practicality. I would strongly recommend these shows to any science lover like me.

**Nivethikaa Yogendran (15 years)**  
St. Bridget's Convent, Colombo

### Cartoon Time!

Hey Kids!  
We plan to put in more cartoons in the Funday Times and what's more they will be your own cartoons.



So, here's a chance for you to try your hand at producing your very own original cartoons.

Draw a little cartoon with a caption. It could even be a small cartoon story in a strip (not more than three boxes).

The best cartoons you send will be published in the Funday Times.

So good luck to all you cartoon fans!

**Please remember that the cartoons you send in should be your original work and not copied or traced from anything. They should be certified as your own work by a parent or teacher.**





## Christmas Rocky Road

Nigella's Christmas Rocky Road is a no-bake Christmas treat that's wonderful for making with children too.

### Ingredients

- 250 g/9 oz Dark chocolate, broken into pieces
- 150 g/5½ oz Milk chocolate, chopped
- 175 g/6 oz Butter, softened, plus extra for greasing
- 4 tbsp Golden syrup
- 200 g/7 oz Shortcake or Nice biscuits
- 150 g/5½ oz Nuts (optional)
- 150 g/5½ oz Red glacé cherries
- 125 g/4½ oz Mini marshmallows
- 1 tbsp Icing sugar
- Edible glitter, to decorate (optional)



### Method

1. Place the dark and milk chocolate pieces into a heavy-based pan. Add the butter and golden syrup and cook over a low heat to melt and combine.
2. Place the biscuits into a freezer bag and bash with a rolling pin to make crumbs of various sizes.
3. Place the nuts into another freezer bag and bash in the same way.
4. Take the pan of melted chocolate mixture off the heat and add the crushed biscuits and nuts.
5. Add the glacé cherries and mini marshmallows. Fold the mixture carefully to coat all of the solid ingredients with the syrupy chocolate mixture.
6. Pour the mixture into a 25 cm/10 inch x 30 cm/12 inch greased and lined baking tray and smooth the surface as much as possible (although it will look bumpy).
7. Refrigerate for two hours, or until firm enough to cut. Dust with icing sugar, then sprinkle with edible glitter.
8. Remove the block of Rocky Road from the tray and cut into 24 rectangles.

## Speculaas Biscuits

*(traditional continental Christmas biscuits)*

### Ingredients

- 100 g/3½ oz Plain flour
- 1 tsp Cinnamon
- ½ tsp Ground ginger
- ½ tsp Freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ tsp Baking powder
- ½ tsp Salt
- 50 g/2 oz Dark brown sugar
- 1 tbsp Whole milk
- 75 g/2½ oz Butter
- 2 tbsp Candied peel, finely chopped
- Flaked almonds or cadjunuts to garnish (optional)



### Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.
2. In a bowl, mix together the flour, cinnamon, ground ginger, nutmeg, baking powder, salt, sugar, milk, butter and candied peel until well combined.
3. Using your hands, bring the mixture together as a dough.
4. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and roll out to a 0.5 cm/¼ inch thickness.
5. Using a cookie cutter, cut out shapes or circles from the dough and place them onto the lined baking tray. Decorate the tops of the biscuits with flaked almonds or cadjunuts, if using.
6. Transfer the biscuits to the oven and bake for 15 - 18 minutes, or until golden-brown. Set aside to cool on a wire rack, then serve.

Source: BBC Foods



## Lando Norris: From 'racing around the school playground' to F1 World Champion

December 8, 2025

**L**ando Norris is the new Formula 1 World Champion, and children at his old primary school couldn't be prouder.

The boy who once 'raced around the playground' at Chew Stoke Church School near Bristol has now raced to history.

Toby in Year 6 said: "It's amazing what Lando has achieved, we are all so proud of him. He has worked hard all season and it's been really inspiring for all of us at the school."

Charlie in Year 6 added: "We have followed Lando all season, earlier this year he sent us a video message after we had written to him. It was cool that he found time to message us back, we



Lando Norris was "one to watch" from the start of his career according to Rob Dodds.



are all so proud he went to Chew Stoke Church School."

Ben Hewett, headteacher at the School said: "From racing around our school playground to racing on the world stage, Lando has shown extraordinary dedication, talent and determination. We are all extremely proud of everything he has achieved and the inspiration he continues to be for our pupils and community."

Lando's championship triumph came after finishing third in the final race of the 2025 season, beating Max Verstappen by just two points.

Before becoming a global motorsport star, he grew up in Glastonbury and spent much of his childhood

speeding around karting tracks.

Every week, he travelled with his dad and older brother, Oliver, to Dorchester for karting practice.

Rob Dodds, who coached Lando at BKC Racing when he was only seven, says Lando is part of the reason he's seen the sport's popularity increase.

Mr. Dodds said watching Lando win the championship in Abu Dhabi felt "very surreal". He explained that young drivers face a lot of pressure: "It's massive. I don't think people actually realise how much pressure these young lads are under."

Explaining that as a youngster it was Lando's brother who pushed him to improve. "He had his brother to aspire to. He was a competent driver himself and there was a sibling rivalry. Whenever he went testing or racing, Lando wanted to be the fastest."



Rob Dodds (Centre) with Oliver (Left) and Lando Norris (Right).

## Eleven year old becomes youngest male video game developer in the world

December 6, 2025

**A**n 11-year-old is officially a Guinness World Record holder after becoming the youngest male video game developer in the world.

Max, from the Vale of Glamorgan, spent four hours developing a game with five unique levels earlier this year.

After six months of waiting, he finally received confirmation that his record attempt had been successful.

Max said it was "amazing" to achieve the record and that he hopes to become a full-time video game designer in the future.

Max first started coding four years ago, when he was seven. And since then, he has gone on to publish several of his own games.

So Max decided to apply to Guinness World Records and they sent over everything that he needed in order to make an attempt.

In total, it took Max four hours to develop a new video game and experts kept watch to make sure that he didn't receive any help or support.

Max said he was "really, really happy" to be recognised for the hard work he has put in.



He added: "I like coding because whatever you can dream of you can put into a code language and make it real."

Source: CBBC Newsround



December 9

## News in Pictures

**Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan**

The Soyuz MS-27 space capsule carrying the International Space Station (ISS) crew of NASA astronaut Jonny Kim, Roscosmos cosmonauts Sergey Ryzhikov and Alexey Zubritskiy lands in a remote area near Zhezkazgan.

**Hachinohe, Japan**

A worker cleans up inside a commercial facility in Hachinohe in Aomori Prefecture, northeastern Japan following a strong earthquake the previous night.

**Castel Gandolfo, Italy**  
Pope Leo XIV and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy shake hands at Villa Barberini in Castel Gandolfo, Italy.

**Minna, Niger, Nigeria**

Rescued schoolchildren from St. Mary's School arrive at the Niger State Government House after being freed from captivity following their abduction by gunmen, in Minna, Nigeria.

December 8

**Nairobi, Kenya**  
Lavender Orisa leads members of the Dance Centre Kenya (DCK) as they perform the classic Christmas fairy tale, Tchaikovsky's ballet 'The Nutcracker', at the Kenya National Theatre in Nairobi.

**Bogotá, Colombia**

Artists play instruments during a Christmas parade.

**Aceh Tamiang, Indonesia**

Nurhayati, a 42-year-old nurse, cares for a newborn at the damaged Aceh Tamiang Regional Hospital after a deadly flash flood triggered by heavy rains in Karang Baru, Aceh Tamiang Regency, Aceh Province, Indonesia.

**Oddar Meanchey, Cambodia**

People flee amid clashes between Thailand and Cambodia along a disputed border area, in Oddar Meanchey Province, Cambodia.

**Rio de Janeiro, Brazil**

A child holds a balloon during a Christmas lighting-up ceremony in Rio de Janeiro.



Sources: The Guardian &amp; Reuters