

the
**SUNDAY
TIMES**

SUNDAY
APRIL 26, 2026



FUNDA Y TIMES



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WORLD**

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A fun Avurudu Ulela

Follow us on
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.

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

Telephone: 2479337/2479333

Email: fundaytimes1@gmail.com

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

Full Name, Date of Birth, Address, Telephone Number and School.

Please underline the name most commonly used.

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

Closing date for weekly competitions:

May 13, 2026



In our online issue this week:

- **Page 5** – Competitions
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Please log on to the Funday Times website on www.fundaytimes.lk or check out the Sunday Times epaper on www.sundaytimes.lk for additional pages of this week's Funday Times.

My favourite breed of dog

There are many breeds of dogs in the world but my favourite dog of all is the Golden Retriever. I like it because it is friendly. I know that Labradors are sometimes more friendly than Golden Retrievers but I don't mind because I have other reasons to love this breed of dog.

I like it because it is not too hairy and it sometimes has a very pretty colour. That's why I love that breed of dog.

I would be very happy if I had a Golden Retriever. I would name that dog 'Gizmo'. So, the Golden Retriever is my favourite. I know that everybody has a favourite breed of dog.

Ananya De Silva (Grade 4)
Musaeus College, Colombo

Nature

Nature is everything around us like trees, plants, animals, rivers and mountains.

Nature gives us clean air to breathe and water to drink. Nature keeps us healthy and gives us freshness and a sense of peace.

Nature changes with the seasons, bringing snow in winter and sunshine in summer. We can hear beautiful sounds in nature like birds singing and water flowing. Nature is important as it helps everything on earth to survive. We should enjoy nature without disturbing its balance.

Yunara Anuhas (Grade 4)
NCEF Buddhist College, Mulleriyawa



Girl on a swing



Githini Randini (10 years)
Polymath College

Eid Mubarak 2026



Luqmaan Abdul Qadir (4 years)
AMC-MMI Pre-School, Kotte

The charm and splendor of the New Year Festival



Vunal Himeth (Grade 4)
NCEF Buddhist College, Mulleriyawa

My Dog's Story

I was feeling lonely and bored. I wanted a partner to play with me. So, I decided to get a pet dog. But there were so many breeds of dogs to choose from and it was so difficult to pick.

Suddenly, I spotted a cute Rottweiler, with sparkling eyes and innocent looks. So, I picked this cutie and headed home.

But things took a twist. Not even a minute of our arrival, my so-called innocent dog started to destroy the house, like a world war.

To date, I am cleaning up the mess of my dog instead of playing.

So I picked the perfect name for it and it is 'Cheeky'.

Amraise Wijesinghe (10 years)
Holy Family Convent, Bambalapitiya

Water

Water, Oh Water,
We won't be here without you,
All the seas, rivers and lakes
Are filled with you,
And all the trees and animals
Are here because of you,
Water, Oh Water,
You are my favourite drink too.

Yethmini Mandeena (Grade 6)
Musaeus College, Colombo

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.



Celebrating Avurudu



Minudi Gamage (Grade 3)
Hillwood College, Kandy

A village



Shaadhi Irshan (10 years)
Matale Int. School

My home and garden



Danuthi Karunarathna (Grade 3)
Royal Int. School, Kegalle

Flying kites



Hasandu Thatthilu (Grade 3)
Bodhiraja Int. School, Embilipitiya

My favourite activity

There are different kinds of activities in the world. Among them my favourite activity is a bit different from other children. It is looking at something for a while and imagining about it in a new different way. After that writing my feelings about that thing.

My favourite activity started on a rainy and gloomy evening. One day I sat on chair and looked out how it was raining. Suddenly I felt that I could write a beautiful story about it. That's how my favourite activity started.

Whenever I am travelling or get bored I do this activity. Not only for things but also for persons, I do imagining and writing.

I think this activity helps me to have a good emotional balance. Also it helps me to improve my creative and critical thinking. When I'm greatly disappointed, this activity turns my disgusting face into a happy face.

While I'm looking, imagining and writing, it creates magical moments that's filled with excitement. I'm exposed to a different experience in my life. It inspires me a lot.

Seja Abeywickrama (11 years)
Southlands College,
Galle

Cats in the wild

In some countries, people keep domestic cats as pets. These small creatures are relatives of much bigger cats that live in the wild.

The Jaguar

This wild cat is found in Central and South America as well as the southern parts of USA. Jaguars live in forests and scrub. They can grow to 2.5 m in length.



The Puma

This wild cat is also known as the cougar, mountain lion or catamount. It can be found in North and South America. They can grow up to 2.4 m in length.



The Leopard

The Leopard can be found in Africa and Asia. It preys on monkeys, wild dogs, antelopes and deer.



The Tiger

The Tiger can be found in Central and South Asia. It hunts mainly for antelopes. It is a good swimmer and has keen eyesight.

The Cheetah



The Cheetah is found in Africa and South West Asia. They are also known as hunting leopard. They grow 2 m in length. Cheetahs are mammals. Cheetahs are the fastest land animal in the world, reaching the speed of 130 kmph.

The Lion

The Lion is known as, the King of Beasts. It is mainly found in Africa and parts of Asia. It has a sandy-coloured coat and grows up to 2.8 m in length. Lions live in grasslands and are skillful hunters. They feed on giraffes, zebra and buffalo.



Tharumin (Grade 5)
Royal Int. School,
Kegalle



Mathematics helps people to make the best decisions when confronted with difficulties regarding the choices available. This is usually done through a mathematical branch called 'decision theory'. Decision theory can be considered as an overlap of probability, logic, sociology and psychology. It tries to formalize the ways we make choices, assess them and to show us ways to make better choices according to the stated preferences.

The Secretary Problem is an example where mathematics can help to make a decision to enable positive results saving time and the costs involved.

Imagine an administrator who wants to hire a secretary. Obviously, the idea is to hire an outstanding applicant for the position. The applicants are interviewed one by one in random order. A decision about each particular applicant is to be made immediately after the interview. Once rejected, an applicant cannot be recalled. During the interview, the administrator can rank the applicant among all applicants interviewed so far but is unaware of the quality of yet unseen applicants.

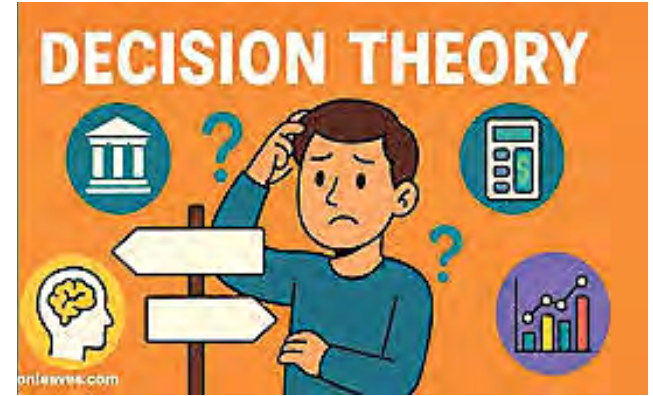


Let us consider that there are 100 applicants and the administrator does not have the time or resources to interview all of them. So, the question arises as to how many should be interviewed to have an optimal solution of finding a suitable secretary. The theory of probability suggests that you should interview about 37 applicants and thereafter choose the next one that's better than any of the ones that you have seen so far.

The algorithm is as follows:

- ◆ Stage 1 - The 'n' applicants are to be interviewed in random order
- ◆ Stage 2 - Interview 37% of the applicants (The mathematical value is $1/e$ where $e = 2.718...$)
- ◆ Stage 3 - Hire the first person who is better than all of the previously interviewed applicants.

This problem models decisions in dating, selling houses, choosing investments, or any situation where you must make sequential, irreversible choices to find the best option.



Math Plot - 99

Try to find the solution to the following puzzle. You may send solutions with reasoning to rnades@gmail.com within the next three days. Please include your full name, date of birth, home address, contact details and the name of your school along with the solution.

Rose planted sunflower seeds in her garden. Every day, the number of flowers doubles. If it takes 52 days for the flowers to fill the garden, how many days would it take for them to fill half the garden?



Math Plot 98 – Solution

The answer is 19.

The winner is **Michela Thambimuttu** of **Ladies College, Colombo**.
Congratulations!

Rugrats



Win super books from



Age: 9 years and below

Word Count: 150

Topic: My favourite New Year sweetmeat

Win: Fun for the Secret Seven by Enid Blyton

The Seven are very fond of Mr. Tolly and his horse Brownie so they are determined to help when Brownie falls sick. Things get worse when the children hear that a gang of dangerous horse thieves is on the prowl.



Age: 10 – 12 years

Word Count: 150 – 200

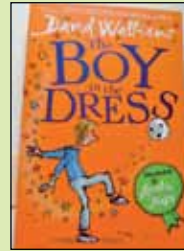
Topic: Celebrating the Sinhala and Tamil New Year

Win: The Boy in the Dress by David Walliams

Dennis lives in a boring house, in a boring street, in a boring town.

But he's about to find out that when you open your mind, life becomes anything but boring!

You'll laugh, you'll cry and once you meet Dennis, he'll live with you forever...



Age: 13 – 15 years

Word Count: 200 – 250

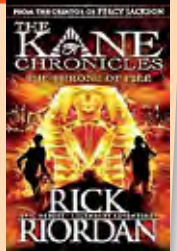
Topic: Sinhala and Tamil New Year Customs

Win: The Kane Chronicles – The Throne of Fire by Rick Riordan

The Egyptian gods have run loose in the modern world; and Apophis, the giant snake of Chaos is rising.

Carter and Sadie Kane have five days to revive the sun god Ra to battle the forces of Chaos – a feat no one has ever achieved.

If they fail, the world ends...



Write at the top of your Essay

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic



Hi Kids,
Please send in your Articles and Art for Kids' World, to be published in the Funday Times online edition and website.

FROM THE EDITOR

As you can see, we have space only once a month for Kids' World articles and art in the print edition.

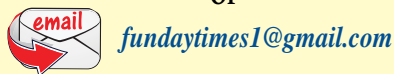
Therefore, we are planning to carry them every week in the Funday Times online pages as well as on the Funday Times website.

We also invite schools to send in their students' work for a school page in the online edition and website.

Thanking you in anticipation of your positive response.



Or



Read-a-Book and win a voucher from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop

Read any book of your choice and write briefly about it. What we want is not just a summary of the story but your views on the book.

The best account in the three age groups will be awarded book vouchers from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop.

Three winners will be selected each month.

Your account should not exceed 200 words.

Please indicate word count, fill in the coupon and attach it to your entry.

Read-a-Book Competition

Name :

Date of birth :

Address :

School:

Tel:

Finished book on :



Or



Young Reporters

If you are interested in joining as a Funday Times Young Reporter please fill in the coupon given and send it in to us along with a recent report or interview not exceeding 300 words.

Photographs or illustrations would enhance the report.

Young Reporters who have already enrolled with us, please send in new reports for publication.



Or



Young Reporters Coupon

Name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Telephone:

School:

Parent's approval: **Date:**

Avurudu Ulela



The children of Inspire International Pre-School and Day Care Centre, Nugegoda celebrated the Sinhala and Tamil New Year with traditional games, cultural activities and joyful participation on April 8, 2026.

New Charlie and the Chocolate Factory film announced

April 16, 2026

There's a *scrumdiddlyumptious* treat for film fans - a new Charlie and the Chocolate Factory movie is coming soon.

Titled *Charlie vs the Chocolate Factory*, the new animated film will air on Netflix in 2027. It'll be a bit different to previous adaptations though, as it'll focus on events that take place in the original Roald Dahl book.

Set in modern-day London, we'll see what happens after the mischievous chocolatier Wonka is released from prison, after having served time behind bars for turning a child into a blueberry (and other crimes you may remember).

It'll star Taika Waititi (*Avengers Endgame*, *Thor Ragnarok*) as Wonka, and Kit Connor (*The Wild Robot*, *His Dark Materials*) as a new character called Charlie Paley, who works with a group of other children to try and steal a chocolate bar from Wonka's factory. Taika Waititi will also be an executive producer on the film, and has said he's "thrilled" to bring Wonka to life in the new animation.

He said: "He is so special to me, and the opportunity to voice such an iconic, eccentric candy genius - if a little mischievous at times - is hugely exciting."

Kit Connor has also said he's excited to enter the Wonka-verse. He said: "This new adventure is going to surprise audiences around the world, you're in for a treat."

This new animated adaptation of the 1964 novel written by Roald Dahl and illustrated by Quentin Blake is the latest in a huge number of films set in its universe.

It was first brought to the big screen in 1971, with *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* starring Gene Wilder.

Then in 2005, Tim Burton directed a new film called



Taika Waititi and Kit Connor will voice the two main characters



There have been many Wonkas over the years, including Gene Wilder (left) and Johnny Depp (right)

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory starring Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham-Carter.

And a film about Wonka's life before the chocolate factory starring Timothy Chalamet called *Wonka* was released in 2023.

Source: *CBBC Newsround*

Giant Tortoises return to Galápagos Island after centuries

April 21, 2026

On February 20, 2026, conservation teams released 158 young giant tortoises on Floreana Island in the Galápagos. This historic milestone marked the first step in restoring a species that disappeared from the island in the 1800s.

Park staff carried the young tortoises in crates. They walked several miles over rocky, volcanic ground to special release sites. These sites were carefully chosen to ensure the tortoises would have access to food and water, as well as safe areas for nesting. Before release, each tortoise was fitted with a microchip. This will allow scientists to monitor them in the wild.

Floreana Island was once home to hundreds of Floreana giant tortoises. But the animals were hunted down by early settlers. Invasive animals such as pigs and rats further reduced their population by eating the eggs and hatchlings. By the late 1800s, there were no tortoises left on the island.

In 2000, researchers surveying giant tortoise population on the nearby Isabela Island made a surprising discovery. Some of the tortoises there carried traits of the original Floreana species. These animals became the starting point for a long-term effort to bring the species back.

By 2017, the scientists had found enough individuals whose DNA closely matched the Floreana species. They began a focused breeding effort, which produced hundreds of offspring. Many grew large enough to survive in the wild. This made it possible for tortoises to return to Floreana for the first time in nearly two centuries.

Giant tortoises play an important role in the Floreana ecosystem. As they graze, they



158 young giant tortoises were released on Floreana Island on February 20, 2026 (Credit: Galapagos.org)



Floreana Island was once home to hundreds of giant tortoises

clear vegetation, open paths through dense brush, and spread seeds that allow plants to grow. Their return could help the island's environment recover after nearly 200 years.



Transporting the tortoises



The new tortoises could help restore Floreana Island's ecosystem

Source: DOGO News

April 21

News in Pictures



Tokyo, Japan
Shinto priests perform a purification ritual during the annual spring festival at the Yasukuni shrine.



Daraj, Gaza
Palestinian children play on the rubble of homes destroyed by Israeli airstrikes, in al-Daraj neighbourhood east of Gaza City.



Latrun, Israel
Families climb on old tanks and military vehicles at the Israeli Armoured Corps memorial, a day after the country commemorated Remembrance Day for fallen soldiers, or Yom HaZikaron.

Poel Island, Germany
A stranded whale is sprayed with water after it became stuck on a sandbank off the island in the Baltic Sea



Guwahati, India
A rescue boat from the State Disaster Response Force heads along a flooded road to help people affected by heavy pre-monsoon rains in the city in the north-eastern state of Assam.

April 20

Muxima, Angola
Pope Leo XIV waves to the faithful as he arrives to lead a Holy Rosary Prayer at the "Mama Muxima" Shrine during his apostolic journey in Africa.



Hokkaido, Japan
The Pacific coastline around the port of Tomakomai, where a tsunami warning was issued after a powerful earthquake off the northern coast of Japan.



California, US
Festivalgoers dance as the electronic music group Major Lazer perform at the end of the second weekend of the Coachella music and arts festival at the Empire Polo Club in Indio.



Pirojpur, Bangladesh
Watermelon traders gather in their boats at a floating wholesale market on the Sandha River. From here, wholesalers send the produce on to markets across the country.

Sources: The Guardian & Reuters