

A Writing

Wonderland

1st
GRADE

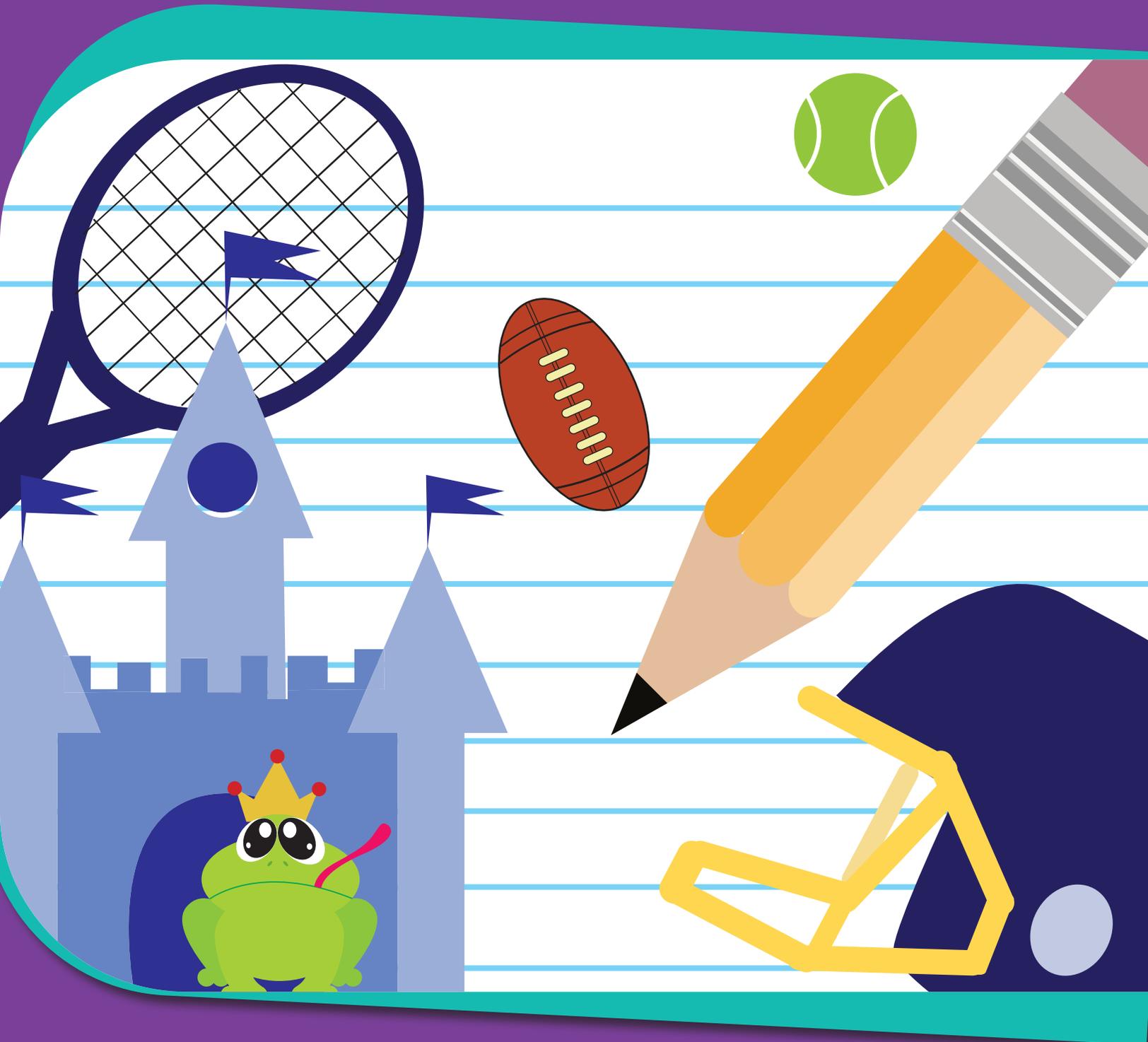


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My Penpal from Japan



Konnichiwa! (This means Hello! in Japanese.)

My name is Sakura. I am from Japan.
I live in Tokyo. It is the capital city of Japan.

Sakura, means cherry blossom.
In 1912, Japan gave cherry blossom trees
as a gift to the United States. They were meant
to show friendship.
I heard in Washington D.C., there is a National
Cherry Blossom Festival in spring. Have you
been there? What cities have you visited, and
what did you do there?

Japanese food is also famous. My favorite food
is sushi. It is a cooked rice wrapped in seaweed
with fish and vegetables. Have you tried it?
What is your favorite food?

Japan makes a lot of cars, but I go to school by
train. It is more convenient because I can take
a train by myself. I can't drive yet.
Can you drive?
How do you go to school?

Sincerely,

Sakura



Write a letter back to your penpal.

Dear Sakura,

My name is _____

I have visited _____

My favorite food is _____

I go to school by _____

My Penpal from India

Namaste! (This means Hello! in Hindi.)

My name is Rahul. I am from India.
I am glad to have you as my penpal.

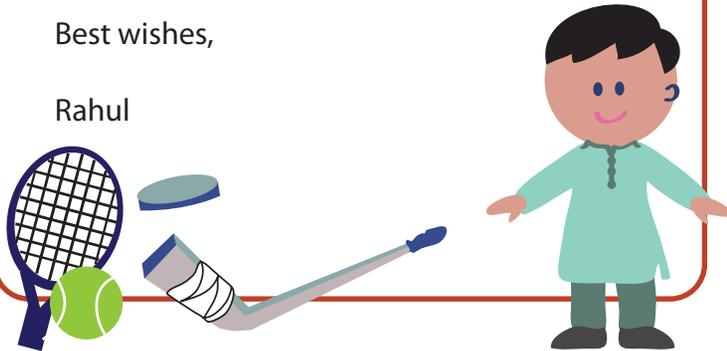
India has the second largest population in the world. Our national sport is field hockey. I like to play field hockey with friends in my spare time. What do you like to do when you are not in school?

I have a big family. There are 10 people in my house, including my grandparents, my parents, my siblings and myself. I have 3 brothers and 2 sisters. I am the third one. How about you?

We have the world's largest film industry. It is called "Bollywood", it sounds like Hollywood, doesn't it? Have you seen a Bollywood movie? They're very fun. What is your favorite movie?

Best wishes,

Rahul



Write a letter back to your penpal.

Dear Rahul,

My name is _____

My hobby is _____

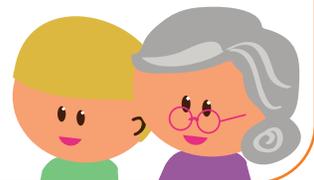
My family includes _____

My favorite movie is _____

My Family

Write a story about your family.

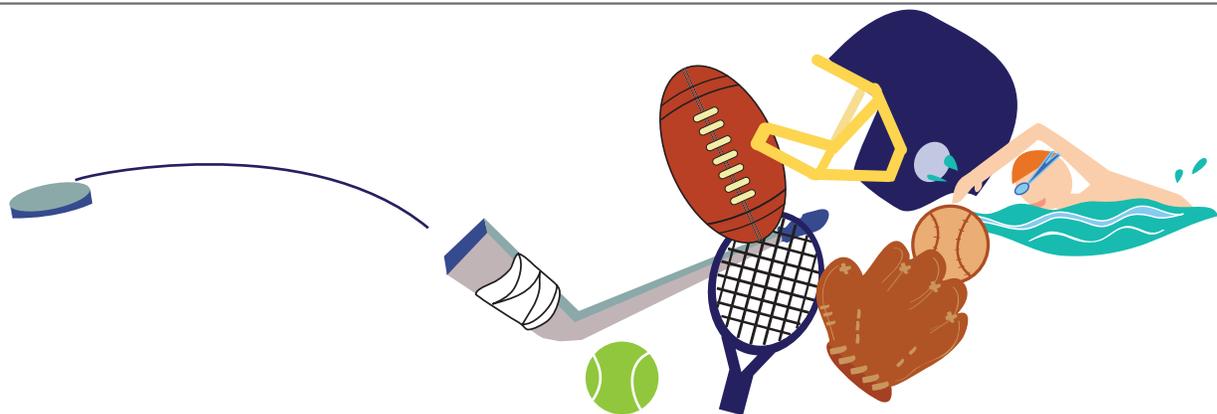
Handwriting practice area with multiple sets of lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid) for writing a story.



My Favorite Sport

Tell a story about your favorite sport.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dashed middle line, repeated across the page.



1st
Grade

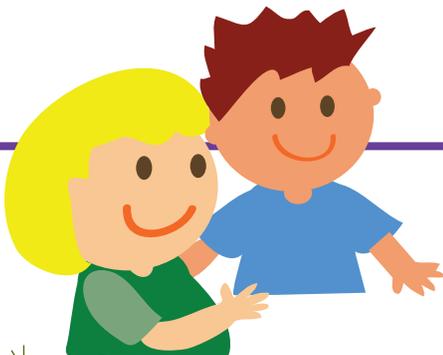
Writing
Story
Starters

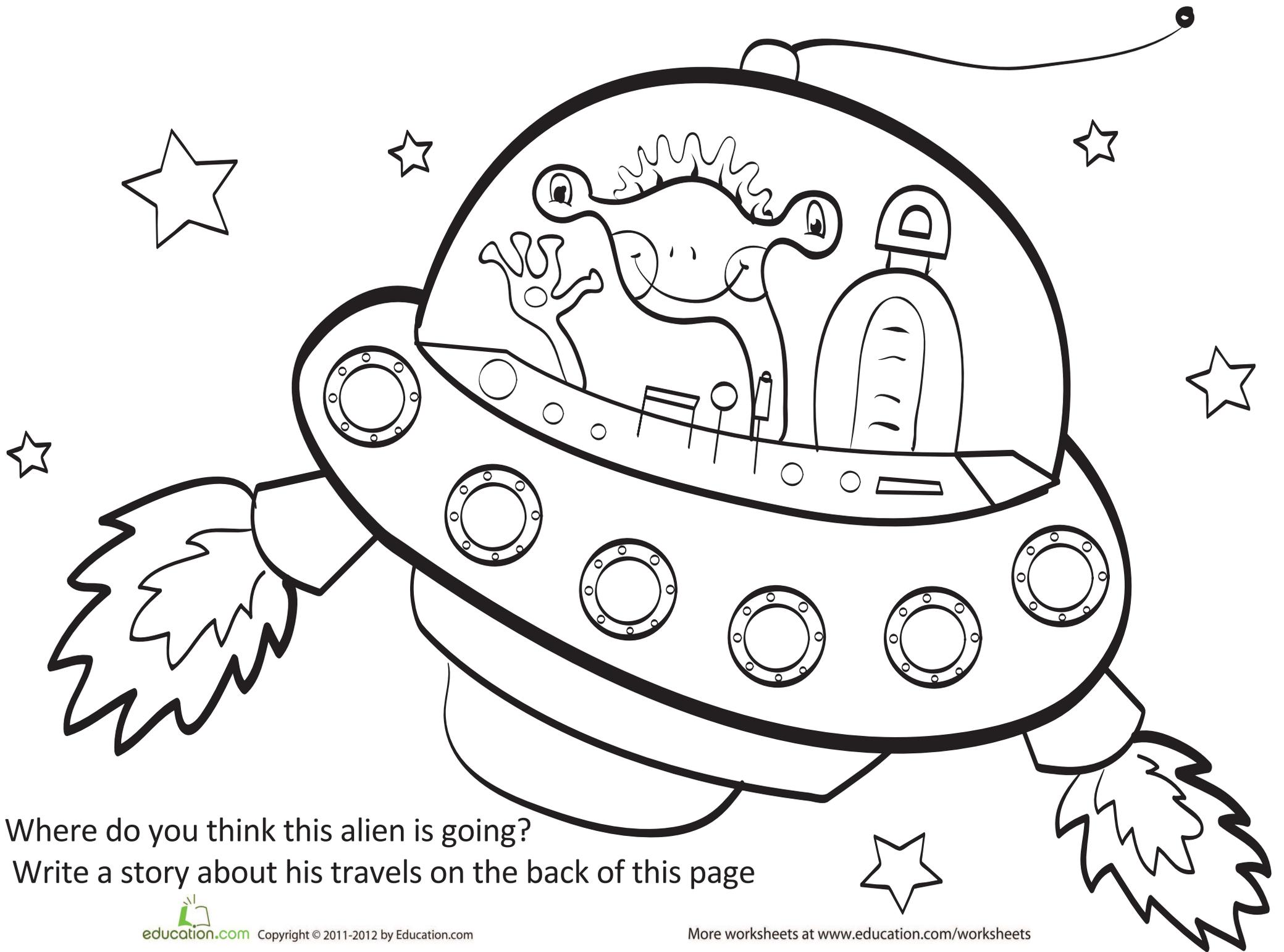
My Best Friend

Tell a story about your best friend.



Handwriting practice area with multiple sets of lines (top solid, middle dashed, bottom solid) for writing a story.



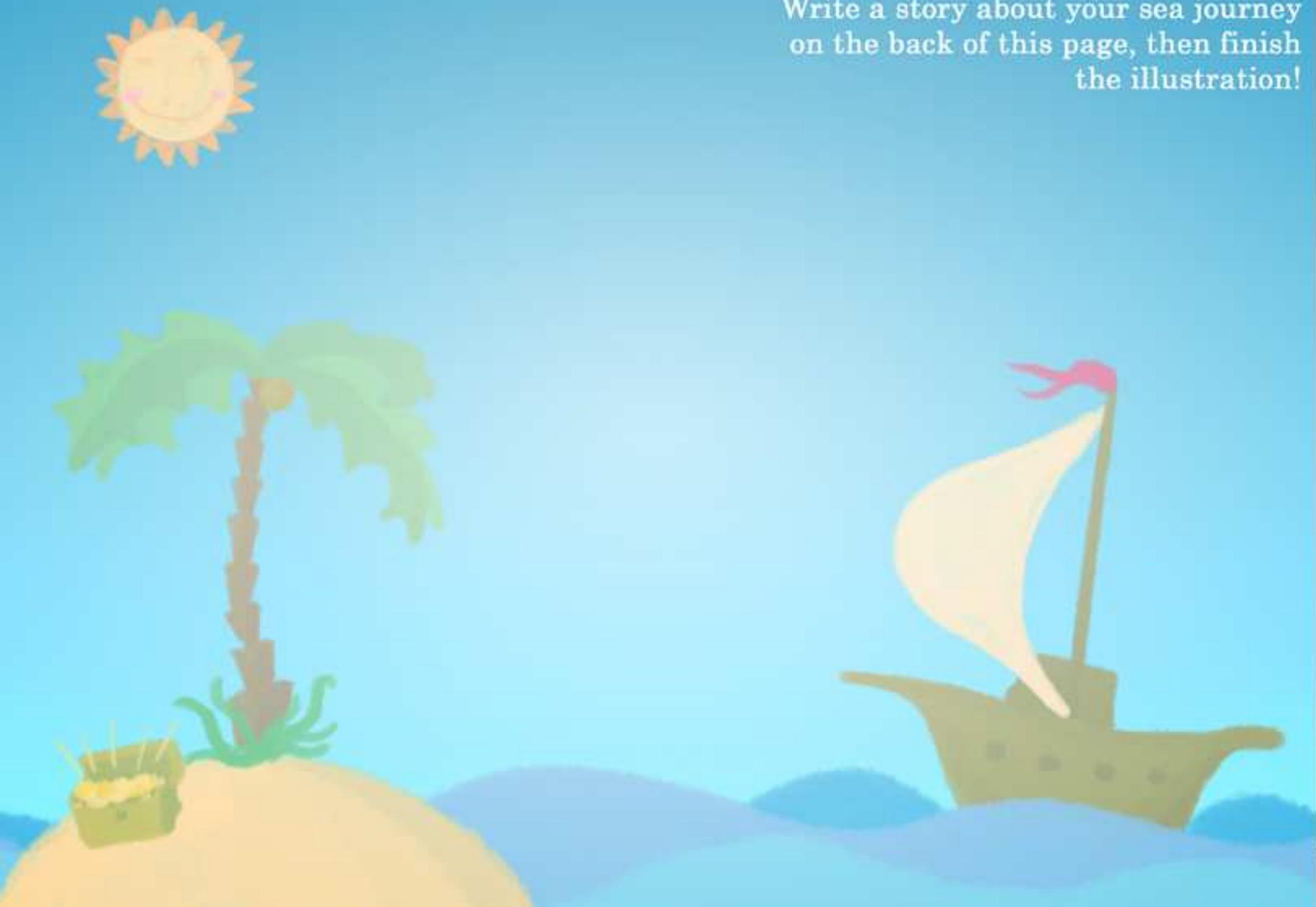


Where do you think this alien is going?
Write a story about his travels on the back of this page

This hedgehog got balloons for his birthday. Do you think he likes this present? Write a story about hedgehog's birthday.



Imagine you are a treasure hunter!
Write a story about your sea journey
on the back of this page, then finish
the illustration!



Write a story about underwater life on the back of this page and illustrate it!

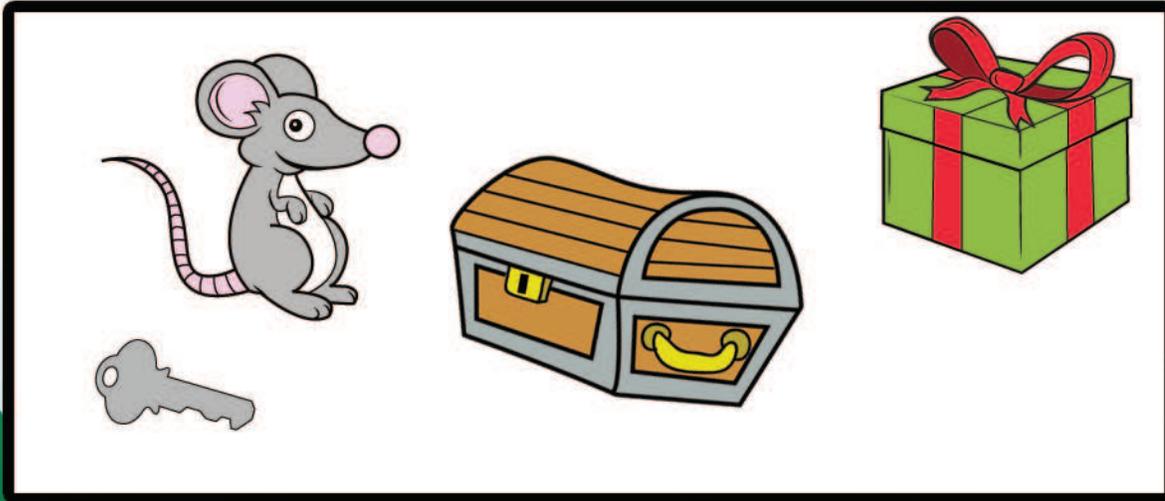


Write a story about a day in a magical land on the back of this page and illustrate it!



Creative Writing

The scenario below can give way to thousands of different stories. There are clearly two characters in an outdoor setting. Create a short story about what you see below, but to make things more interesting choose an item from the box to add to the story. You may choose as many as you want. Use another piece of paper to create your story. Good luck!



How to Jumpstart Your Child's Mind with Brainstorming

By Heather Vale Goss

When you ask your child a question, does he routinely give a single answer... and then stop? Is it hard for him to come up with a variety of ideas while taking on a new task, working on a project, or doing homework?

Choosing one solution without weighing the options of others prevents your child from exploring possibilities, and ending up with something even better. Having a flexible mind, on the other hand, allows him to be more creative, make more informed decisions, stand out from the crowd, and excel not only in school, but in every endeavor for the rest of his life.



A great way to practice this skill is through brainstorming. Bruce Van Patter, an illustrator and creative writing teacher for kids, says, “Most children, when trying to come up with an idea, grab the first one that pops into their heads. That idea is bound to be a common one; if it came that quickly to one child, it probably is readily available to the minds of thousands. Brainstorming moves kids past the obvious.”

How can parents help children learn how to brainstorm effectively? Here’s what Van Patter suggests:

Encouraging

Van Patter recommends providing an environment for your child that encourages the safe exploration of ideas. After all, brainstorming really isn’t just about the results; it’s about the process. It’s kind of like exercising the mind... doing stretches so that you become more and more flexible over time. That’s why people say, “There are no bad ideas when you’re brainstorming!” Obviously some ideas are better than others, but it’s important not to judge or criticize while your child is coming up with them.

Teach your child to think in terms of “no limits”. It might seem crazy at first, but why can’t he build a helicopter-sized model of a dragonfly for the science fair? Let him decide later if he wants to tweak the idea.

Asking

Next, you can help the process along by asking your child questions. “Questions can gently nudge kids to keep reaching for something different. A very helpful question is to ask is, ‘What if?’” Van Patter explains.

You could also ask questions such as, “What else could you try?” or “What other possibilities are there?” If it’s a report or essay he’s brainstorming, you could ask, “What else is important?” or “What would someone want to know next?”

Combining

Not all ideas have to be completely from scratch. Van Patter points out, "Creativity is more of a rearranging than a creating. A child can produce an original concept by combining two very ordinary thoughts. The originality comes through the unusual combinations."

One way he has kids do this is to create a grid with one category of ideas down the side, and another across the top. Where each column intersects with each row will be boxes that create new ideas. For example, if your child is brainstorming a story for creative writing class, one category could be animals, and the other habitats. What story could be written about a bear who lives in a swamp? Or an elephant at the North Pole?

Expanding

If your child's too young to write, you can take note of what he says; otherwise have him write down all his ideas on a piece of paper. He might like to draw random circles on the page and write his ideas inside the circles, or he might prefer making a list, or a series of categorized lists. "Brainstorming works best when a whole slew of ideas are recorded, without much editing. The temptation will be to either off-handedly discard ones that seem useless or to stop too soon. Fill a whole page with ideas before sifting through to find that one concept that grabs one's attention. The bigger the stream of ideas, the greater the chance of finding that shining nugget," Van Patter says.

Waiting

After your child has brain-dumped everything he can possibly think of, have him take a short break. This allows him to see the results with a fresh point of view, and lets the subconscious mind start making connections and sorting through the ideas. When he returns, the last step will often come very easily.

Sifting

Now's the time to sort through the page and pick the best idea. If the brainstorm is for an essay or school project, have your child discard the weakest ideas, and divide the rest into topics and subtopics. If he drew circles, he can connect them up with lines and color them to group related ideas. With lists, he can draw boxes or lines to join certain concepts together, or use different colored highlighters to code them.

Once your child begins stretching and flexing his mind through brainstorming, you'll find him constantly coming up with new and more creative ideas, and making better decisions as a result!

Great job!

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