The winners have arrived

Open up to see the winners of SRA’s What’s the Story? teacher writing contest

From more than 2,600 entries, 16 talented authors won the hearts of our judges. Meet them inside!

The winning stories and poems from What’s the Story? are being published as part of SRA/McGraw-Hill’s new Pre-K–6 reading program, Imagine It!

This core elementary reading program was developed using the input from thousands of teachers just like you—it turns imagination into reality!

Thanks to the insight teachers provided us, we’re proud to say that Imagine It! combines the strength of proven, research-based instruction with the fun, friendly, and engaging features teachers want in a reading program. The result? An exciting program that opens new worlds of imagination for you and your students!

SRAonline.com

Lea r n mor e a t  I m a g i n e I t R e a d i n g .c o m

Margaret Jordan        Grade Pre-K
The Line
Retired after teaching kindergarten for 36 years at E. Morris Cox Elementary School in Oakland, California, Margaret knew from childhood that she wanted to be a teacher. She loves that teaching gave her the opportunity to use her creativity to help others learn. She used this creativity to write “The Line” to help teach a math lesson about shapes and lines. Margaret currently lives in Pasadena, California where she edits and publishes the newsletter for Pasadena-Foothill Division 1 of the California Retired Teachers Association.

Esther W. McQuaid     Grade K
Transportation
Esther has been a teacher for seventeen years. She has a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey. Esther found herself drawn to teaching by the energy and boundless potential she saw in children. Being published by SRA has been a dream for Esther. She is thrilled by the opportunity to combine her passion for writing with her love for teaching in order to continue her work after retirement.

Alethea Eason          Grade 2
Turtle Soup
Alethea is a reading specialist for kindergarten through sixth grade in Middletown, California. Alethea, who decided to become a teacher when she was in the first grade, has taught for twenty-two years. She likes the combination of structure and creativity that teaching requires. Alethea has been voted Teacher of the Year by her school district three times. She enjoys painting and drawing and spends most of her spare time writing. Her love of sea turtles inspired this story, and she is proud to be a part of a program that has enriched the education of many students.

Sherri Campbell        Grade 1
Daffodils
When Sherri was three years old, her family found a box turtle and fed “Mr. Turtle” vegetable scraps and strawberries almost every day. In her story, Sherri conveys turtles’ wonderful qualities as well as the importance of showing love for others. Sherri’s proudest moment as a teacher came after a challenging school year. The encouragement she needed to continue teaching came when she received a Teacher of the Year Award. Sherri is thrilled by the opportunity to use her gifts in teaching to impact so many lives.
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Learn more at ImagineItReading.com

Meet the Story Winners

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A past come alive for kids. When he is not time with his baby daughter. Peter's story, also loves baseball and has visited stadiums all across the United States.

Peter says. "Telling these stories makes our history come alive." History is not just a series of dates and facts, but a living story that shapes who we are. "Jack Jouett's Midnight Ride," was inspired by a story that Peter heard during his world travels. The story takes place in the Revolutionary War and follows a brave horseman who carried important messages to save the American Army.

Peter Barnes is a fifth-grade teacher who lives in Medford, Wisconsin. She teaches science, a job that gives her a chance to share her love of the natural world with young people. She has traveled all over the world! She has visited Africa, Ireland, and even Japan. The things she hears during her world travels become the inspiration for her stories.

Jeanine Meyer-Gelhaus has many ideas for other stories, and having her students bring it to them through a story. Barbara has always loved the ocean. As a child, she and her family would go on family trips to the coast. They would often go night diving. "It's exciting and I love to watch the creatures move around the coral," she said.

Barbara Haight teaches Grade 6. She said, "Reading is so important. We need to keep reading and writing." Regina Geither teaches fourth-grade reading. She is passionate about helping her students discover their love of reading. "We need to create a love of reading in our students," she said.

Regina is also a poet. She has written a poem called "Night Dive." The poem is about a family who go night diving. "It's like diving into a different world," she said.

Cathleen Rogers is a reading specialist for kindergartners through third graders. She helps her students develop a love of reading. "I love seeing the excitement on their faces when they discover a new favorite book," she said.

Karen Hatcher teaches ninth through twelfth grade. She is also a dance teacher. "I love seeing the creativity and passion that my students bring to their work," she said.

Linda Doremus is a school nurse. She is also a dance teacher. "I have a very interesting job," she said. "I get to see my students grow and change every day."

Hi Sky! was written by Cathleen Rogers. It tells the story of a girl who loves to dance. The poem is about the joy of dance and the importance of following your dreams.

Fun in the Garden was written by Cathleen Rogers. It is about a family who love to grow vegetables. The poem is about the joy of gardening and the importance of taking care of the Earth.

Karen Hatcher also wrote a poem called Why Is It? The poem is about the importance of reading and the joy of discovering new stories.

Wendy Doremus is a school nurse who loves to travel. "I have been all over the world," she said. "I love seeing new places and meeting new people."

Hi Sky! and Fun in the Garden are both available as part of the Teacher Author Package. The package includes many books for young readers and poems in both Spanish and English.
Peter Barnes is a fifth-grade teacher who lives across the United States. He enjoys basketball, cycling, guitar, reading, and traveling, as well as spending time with his baby daughter. His hobbies include body-boarding, snorkeling, gardening, camping, and fishing.

Barbara Holmgren is a sixth-grade language arts teacher who teaches at Y.A.L.E. School. She currently lives in Hudson, Massachusetts. Barbara has taught sixth-grade language arts for twelve years. She has developed a love of writing as she began to craft stories and poems, filling endless notebooks and journals. This inspiration for the poem "Hi Sky!" came from eighth graders at Y.A.L.E. School. Her own four children, and their messes, inspired her to write "Saving the World." She is certain that they, despite their messes, will also make a difference in their lives. This is why Cathleen Murphy teaches third-grade science, a job that gives her a chance to bring it to them through a story. Cathleen's love of the outdoors and experience their own creative abilities. She hopes that the publication of her poem "Hi Sky!" will help inspire my students to believe that their work is being enjoyed and appreciated.

Linda Egeler teaches fourth-grade reading, and works in Traverse City, Michigan. Linda has taught at schools in New York State, Ohio, and New Jersey. She is in her sixteenth year of teaching. Linda has been inspired by her own four children, and their messes, inspired her poem "Who Am I?" The animals she met on safari in Tanzania, Africa, inspired her poem "Swamp Stallion." Regina Geither teaches fourth-grade reading, and works in Westerville, Ohio. Peter's story, "Breakfast for Ducklings" is written by Jeanine Meyer-Gelhaus. She teaches grade three.

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