

Middle Schools create a supportive environment to reach all adolescent learners. Students at Titusville Middle School celebrate learning achievements AND nurture their "inner authors" through...

MIDDLE MATTERS

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Chloe Preston



Charlie Hamilton

Student Authors

Students in Mrs. Quirk's Language Arts classes have been writing mystery stories for several weeks. For this assignment, students write a mystery story through bell ringers. This story is about a mysterious JOURNEY for a character that students create. Twice per week, they are given a PICTURE that they include in their stories. They are also given instructions on different ways to add descriptive details to their stories.

Although they are presented with the same pictures, Chloe Preston and Charlie Hamilton, both seventh graders, have taken on the challenge and created very different journeys for their characters. The examples presented in this issue are Chapter one of their stories.

Wasteland

By: Charlie Hamilton

The world one thousand years from now is a wasteland uninhabited by humans, but there are some of us left trying to recreate it the way it used to be, before the accident. In October of the year 2583 the world had a massive war. It was one-half of the globe against the other; many people died due to the advanced technology and weaponry. On a dark night there was a massive ambush that killed most of the rebellions fighting for their land back, so the rebellions lost and by that point most of the people in the planet had died from the enormous explosions from the nukes sent in by the government. In the cemetery the gravestones were packed and closely put together. The graveyard went on for miles and miles seeming to never stop. In the dense forest the last of the few remaining rebels live trying to survive to one day fight back, and get their homes back.

But living in the forest was hard, for there was little left of it and barely any animals live there, So there was little food for the rebels to eat. They managed to sometimes sneak into the open world and get food, but some were not as lucky. As the rebels ventured into the dense forest, they spotted a ruined house and some other mini huts. The houses were not large but would hold the most of them. They were rusty and worn down and were spaced out evenly. They decided they would rebuild that land to make it their base to store their food. The rebels started to rebuild the worn down houses into a brand new town. They increased in numbers and started to look like a small army but that was not enough to fight back. They trained the young children to fight and kept developing their town until it was a small city. But the army sent a small scouting group to the forest and they found the leftover rebels. The scouting party took out a lot of soldiers but they

were no match for the populated rebels. The rebels fought mercilessly because of their need to avenge their dead family members who were killed in the war. They fought until the scouting party was no more. So the rebels were left alone for multiple years as they built more weapons and explosives to one day get their homes back.

On one dark night a common villager from the rebels went to get firewood in the forest. As he walked he found a path, and on the isolated path he saw a gray and foreboding hill, it was a big as a barn. As he walked atop the gray and foreboding hill, he found a ruined castle. It was a deep gray with stones that must have weighed many pounds. It was well built and seemed to be very old and had a strong sense of death and sorrow. When he entered the castle, he felt as if someone was watching him. His senses warned him to turn back, but his curiosity got the the best of him. With a shrill cry he was knocked down on the floor, dead.

When he did not return, his wife started to get concerned. She tried to report to the ruler of the rebels but he was a pig; he did not care for the miniscule problem. The townsfolk started to go on a riot since their ruler does not care for them. The townsfolk did not want to be used as a tool; they wanted to play an important role for the town. Eventually the ruler gave in and sent a small force to the forest to find him. As they looked they too found the castle, they crept inside to find his body sitting there lifeless. There were no marks on him it was as if he just died, but he was not old or suffering from a disease. They brought the body to the doctors and they didn't know what had happened to him; it was as if life was yanked out from him. The small force went back to investigate. After dusk the small force found the castle again. They all

went inside, and they saw a spirit float down in front of them. It was in the shape of an owl, and he said they could reverse the situation that they were in to prevent the war. They asked the spirit what was needed to do so, and the grey, ghoully, ghost responded, "The way to fix this event from occurring is time travel." They agreed to the ghost's response, and after that the ghost disappeared. The group was curious to what was going on, but soon after they disappeared, too.

The group awoke to a set of railroad tracks, the tracks were a deep black and seemed to go on forever. Along the ominous black tracks were different waving sections of light. The lights looked to be a portals, or rips in the universe, and they seemed to dance in the air. The group realized the portals were different times in history. They went into the portal that was closest to the time when the war happened. The group tried every way to stop the war but had no luck. When they tried to change something, it seemed to only get worse. Their actions caused the war to be even more massive than last time. But the group had information on what happened in the war the first time. That gave the rebels the advantage and they used that information to overpower the government and their followers. But the destruction was even greater than the first time and it was as if the earth was trying to take revenge for ruining its well being. They built the world and were still recreating things to the way it used to be. Things seemed to be going great but time did not like to be disturbed. The people who were dead in the past time were going crazy, and the small task force died for no apparent reason. The people who died in the other life soon died in this alternate universe. This new life was turning into the worst one.

To be continued...

Jack's Adventures

By: Chloe Preston

Jack was near the edge of the forest in his kingdom. He was with a hundred men in a search party looking for their king. He was not dressed like the others; they wore their best riding outfits and boots. Jack looked down at his dirty old work boots and then at his stained tattered T-shirt. He knew he was not fit to be there. Suddenly someone heard a noise in the woods and the mob headed in. Jack, who was in the back of the group, turned around and started off in the other direction.

He saw the light brown stone castle that reminded him of the days when the king used to let people like him in. He could smell the musty scent of the great hallways. He saw the small edge on the stairs that he used to sit on with other kids. He can still picture the gorgeous room with the long tables where he used to eat feasts with his family. Jack sped along an icy stream. He saw the beautiful fish dancing in its rapids. Then Jack looked back near the dense forest, it seemed the search was far in the woods now. Jack had always longed to be a knight for their king but he knew now that his chances of becoming one were slim, now that he left the search party. With an eerie feeling he turned his head away from the kingdom he called home, he knew he had just disobeyed the law. Jack's horse, Diamond, had a gorgeous silky white coat that shone bright in the scorching sun. Jack saw a hill and pointed her in that direction. They saw a path and decided to follow it.

On the isolated path,

Jack saw a small brown bunny with a twitching little nose and a small stubby tail. When Jack and Diamond rode by, the little bunny didn't move at all. He thought it should be frightened but it wasn't. Jack turned around to check on the little guy. Jack picked up the little bunny it was as small as a child's shoe. Jack could tell it had a hurt leg and probably couldn't walk. Just then Jack saw a hungry owl fly overhead and he knew that this bunny would not make it. The owl looked down viciously and seemed to swoop down closer and closer to where Jack stood. Jack whispered softly to the bunny, "I won't let that terrible hungry owl get to you, I promise." Jack put it in the front pocket on his pants and hopped onto Diamond and up the hill they went.

Atop the gray and foreboding hill Jack looked over the kingdom. It seemed quite small compared to the wilderness in front of him. The tiny rabbit in his pocket lay sleeping, breathing softly. The owl was overhead again; it seemed to be following Jack, Diamond and the bunny. The sky began to dim and Jack didn't want to ride home in the dark. He decided he better stay near the hilltop till morning. He found a nice place to sleep under a willow tree. Jack tied Diamond up on a branch on the opposite side of the willow, and he made the rabbit, who he decided to name Peace because she slept so peacefully, a nice bed out of leaves. Jack was Superman to this little bunny and he enjoyed that. Never had Jack ever meant anything to anyone but his mother. Jack

became heavy eyed and fell asleep.

When Jack awoke, he found himself on the other side of the hill. Jack must have rolled over and all the way down the hill in his sleep. It seemed so foreign to Jack; he had never been outside the kingdom or known anything but it. There was a strong wind whistling all around him. Jack saw a young squirrel in a far off tree. He then was reminded of Peace and Diamond. Jack turned and started the tedious walk back to where he set up camp. With a blustery breeze at his back, Jack jolted to a stop. He heard a whistle coming from the valley below him. This time it wasn't the wind; this was a train. The train was chugging along the ominous black tracks. The glorious, gigantic, gray train was so fascinating to Jack. He had never seen anything like it. In fact, he had heard no one speak of such a thing. Jack stood motionless staring at the evercoming train. His eyes were astonished by the moving headlights and the loud noise coming from a tall chimney-like tube on the top of the front of the train. He liked the way the train moved fast and the way his ears felt numb when the loud whistle sound stopped.

Jack didn't want his mother to miss such a sight, so he raced up the hill and hopped onto Diamond. Jack was a forth of the way down the hill when he remembered Peace. He made Diamond come to a halt and Jack himself, ran up the hill to retrieve the little rabbit he loved to hold so much. He went to the bed he made for her, and to Jack's surprise she was still there.