

Brilliant Star

A BAHÁ'Í COMPANION FOR YOUNG EXPLORERS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012

Soaring with Creativity



Brilliant Star

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Brilliant Star magazine invites all kids to explore the Bahá'í Faith. It is the second most widespread religion in the world, with more than five million Bahá'ís.

The Bahá'í Faith was founded by the Prophet **Bahá'u'lláh** ("Glory of God" in Arabic) in 1863. Bahá'u'lláh taught that all people are part of one human family, and that all religions come from one God. Bahá'ís work to bring peace and unity to the world, and end prejudice and discrimination of all kinds.

Bahá'u'lláh's eldest son, **'Abdu'l-Bahá**, interpreted His teachings and led the Bahá'í community after Bahá'u'lláh's passing.

Brilliant Star encourages kids to bring their virtues and talents to light, and use them to make the world a better place. **Brilliant Star** is produced bimonthly by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.S.

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aMAZEing ADVENTURE

Persevere as you explore the Land of Creativity.

SOARING WITH CREATIVITY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012

NEW DESTINATIONS



DEAR FRIENDS,

When you think of creativity, what comes to mind? A famous painting or painter?

A rock star, a movie actor, or a best-selling author?

Do you ever think of *yourself*?

You have the power to be creative in unique and wonderful ways. Any time your imagination comes out to play, you're being creative—whether it's at school, at home, or while hanging out with friends. Inside of you is an originality that can be triggered by anything—books, music, nature, or a dream at night. When you keep your mind open to the inspiring people and things all around you, magical ideas can burst forth.

In this issue of **Brilliant Star**, you'll find lots of tips for kindling your creative spark. Take a creativity quiz, make your own firefly, and get ideas for celebrating Ayyám-i-Há. And meet Arvid Nelson, who invents imaginative worlds in comic books.

Some of the best things about creativity are that it's always changing and it never ends. What will inspire *you* today?

With love from **Brilliant Star**



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ICY INVENTION

Snow is fun to play in, but people around the world used it to invent something sweet—ice cream! The origins are not clear, but ice cream may have roots in ancient Rome, China, and beyond. Nearly 2,000 years ago, a Roman emperor is said to have had snow and ice brought down from the mountains to mix with fruit juice.

Like many great inventions, ice cream evolved across cultures and centuries. By the 1700s, it was popular in Europe and catching on in the U.S. Innovators brought

us ice cream sundaes and sodas. The cone made its first appearance at the 1904 World's Fair in Missouri, U.S.

From Italian gelato to Indian kulfi, today people around the globe enjoy delicious frozen treats. In Japan, you can even try fish- or cactus-flavored ice cream. Whether you add hot fudge, pineapple, or cookies, you can find fun ways to dig into dessert. And any time you put your unique touch on something, you're adding to the world's inventive wonders.

Some letters have fallen off of the ice cream menu. Fill in the flavors with creative qualities.

1 A ven urous
Apple

2 Re our eful
Raspberry

3 Ca in
Cookies & Cream

4 Chee fu
Chocolate

5 oo pe ative
Caramel

6 Cu iou
Coconut

7 Me itati e
Mango

8 M nd ul
Mint

9 N bl
Neopolitan

10 O serva t
Orange

11 Pa ient
Praline

12 B a e
Butter Pecan

13 S ead ast
Strawberry

14 Vi ionar
Vanilla

15 Wi e
Watermelon



A Brief Timeline

The Life of Bahá'u'lláh

The highlighted area marks the time in which this story takes place.

1817 November 12

Birth of Bahá'u'lláh in Tihrán, Iran

1844

Recognizes the Báb as a new Messenger of God

1852

Imprisonment in the "Black Pit" of Tihrán

1853–1863

Exile in Baghdád, Iraq. From 1854–1856, He goes into the mountains to pray in solitude.

1863 April 22

Declares Divine Mission as Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith

1863–1868

Exile in Constantinople (Istanbul), then Adrianople (Edirne), Turkey. Begins writing letters to kings and rulers in 1867, urging world unity

1868

Last exile, to prison-city of 'Akká, Israel

1877

Finally free to live in countryside homes of Mazra'ih and then Bahjí, outside 'Akká

1892 May 29

Bahá'u'lláh passes away at Bahjí.

Bahá'u'lláh's Life: Mission of Peace Divine Poetry

Poetry can move and inspire people with soul-stirring words. Bahá'u'lláh Himself wrote poetry. And He sometimes quoted great poets. In 1852, He revealed one poem while imprisoned for His faith in the Síyáh-Chál, or Black Pit, of Tihrán, Persia (now Iran). Though He was suffering in terrible conditions, His words were joyful.

After His release from prison, Bahá'u'lláh prayed in solitude in the mountains of Kurdistan for almost two years. Scholars from the town of Sulaymáníyyih were impressed with His wisdom. They asked

Him to write a poem in the same rhyme and meter of a famous Arabic work—a challenge no one had ever been able to achieve.

In their presence, Bahá'u'lláh revealed at least two thousand verses! The scholars were amazed and agreed that their beauty and eloquence were far greater than the original poem. Bahá'u'lláh chose 127 verses for them to keep.

Bahá'u'lláh used poetic language in many other writings. He celebrated the Word of God and its power to transform people's hearts throughout time.

Find words that Bahá'u'lláh used to refer to the Word of God.
Search forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

All-Embracing
Beauty
Blessed
Divine
Exalted
Holy
Incomparable
Irresistible
Light
Majesty
Mysteries
Ocean
Paradise
Potency
Power
Resplendent
Sacred
Sanctified
Sublime
Wisdom

E	U	X	T	P	Y	N	W	A	E	N	A
B	L	Z	X	L	A	I	A	X	P	L	Y
L	J	B	O	Y	S	R	A	E	L	V	D
E	T	H	I	D	C	L	A	E	C	E	U
S	H	W	O	T	T	N	M	D	I	O	E
S	D	M	L	E	S	B	E	F	I	M	N
E	T	I	D	Q	R	I	I	T	I	S	R
D	N	L	V	A	A	T	S	L	O	X	E
M	E	M	C	I	C	T	B	E	P	P	W
Y	D	I	L	N	N	U	Y	H	R	O	O
A	N	E	A	R	S	E	J	C	S	R	P
G	E	S	B	E	A	U	T	Y	A	X	I
E	L	B	A	R	A	P	M	O	C	N	I
B	P	T	H	G	I	L	S	O	R	C	B
F	S	M	Y	S	T	E	R	I	E	S	U
I	E	M	I	C	O	T	L	D	D	M	H
L	R	Y	T	S	E	J	A	M	K	W	M
X	B	A	X	H	P	Y	V	Q	L	W	Z



ANIMATION
IS REALLY
AWESOME!



Magic of Animation

When you're watching an animation, one second doesn't seem like a long time. But did you know that in one second, you often see a series of 24 images? Animators break down actions into small movements and make a separate image for each one. When these pictures are viewed in very quick succession, your amazing brain fills in the spaces between them. Like magic, the objects appear to be in continuous motion.

Today, computers help to create incredible 3D characters and effects in animations. Back in the 1900s, animators began creating movies by filming or photographing drawings, paintings, or puppets. An early type of animation was invented in 1832. It was the **phenakistoscope**, which used a spinning disk of drawings to give an illusion of movement. Experiment with the world of animation and create your own phenakistoscope.

Phenakistoscope Fun

You'll Need: 9" (22.9 cm) round plate • thin sheet poster board • ruler
pencil • large eraser • pushpin • thick black marker • wall mirror • scissors

DRAW LIGHTLY WITH
PENCIL FOR STEPS 1-4.

- 1 Trace plate on poster board and cut out. Measure to find center of circle and mark with dot.



- 2 Draw four lines through dot to make eight equal sections.



- 3 Draw a 1" x 1/4" (2.5 x .6 cm) rectangle at end of each line. Cut out to create tabs.



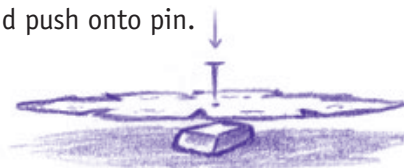
- 4 Draw a large and nearly identical face in each tab, making slight changes to several mouths. The mouth expressions should change gradually, then return to the starting expression.



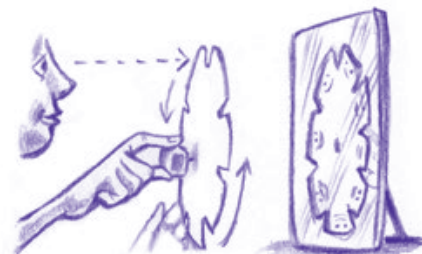
- 5 Trace faces and the center dot with marker. Erase all pencil lines.



- 6 Push pin through front of dot. Wiggle pin to widen hole, so disk spins freely. Place eraser under disk and push onto pin.



- 7 Hold phenakistoscope by eraser in front of mirror. Look at disk in mirror through a slit at top. Spin disk and quickly shield your eyes with your hand to block overhead light. Watch your "movie" move!



Unlock Your Creativity

Imagine stumbling upon an ancient castle, with flags flying from its majestic towers. The gigantic door of the castle is locked, but you can hear mysterious sounds. You're curious, but anxious. Suddenly, in a puff of smoke, a key appears at your feet. Will you pick up the key and step inside?

Entering the castle is like unlocking the door to your creativity. When you turn that key, you're

ready to explore the unknown. Maybe you've always wanted to try dancing, acting, painting, or writing. Or maybe you'd like to do cool science experiments, work on inventions, or solve mysteries. We all have creative talents that we can discover, strengthen, and nurture.

Step right up and find out what's waiting in *your* castle of creativity.

Take this quiz and see if you're ready to open the door to adventure. Circle your answers, then add up your points.

- 1 I'm curious, and I love to learn new things.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 2 I carry a notebook to write down or draw my ideas.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



- 3 When I have a problem or challenge, I like to find lots of possible solutions.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 4 I appreciate the beauty all around me, including in nature.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 5 I like to think for myself and explore my interests, even if others don't share them.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 6 I like to try new arts or hobbies, even if I can't do them perfectly.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 7 I enjoy sharing my creative work with friends, family, or teachers.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 8 I feel energized when I go to a good play, movie, museum exhibit, or concert.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1



- 9 When I work on my art or creative project, I often don't want to stop.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 10 I try to remember my dreams, and I can be inspired by them.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 11 If I make a mistake on a creative project, I learn from it and try again.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

- 12 If I'm not sure about something, I ask questions.

Often = 3 • Sometimes = 2 • Rarely = 1

My Score

36–28 points: You're the queen or king of your Creativity Castle. Have fun and keep exploring!

27–19 points: You've begun your journey into your Creativity Castle! Look for ways to unlock even more new ideas.

18–12 points: Take another step and open the door to creativity. Be adventurous and choose ideas from the quiz to try today!



Illumine Your Imagination

"Ye must shine forth like the lightning . . ." —'Abdu'l-Bahá

Do you ever have a hard time coming up with bright ideas for school projects, or even for fun? Sometimes searching for ideas can feel like being lost in the dark. But if you keep an open mind and heart, you'll find the light—with sights, sounds, and ideas that inspire you.

One way to illumine your imagination is by paying attention to everyday objects. You can invent cool

creations by looking at common items in new ways. For example, check out duct tape. It's a practical thing, but with it, you can make unique bags, decorations, and other crafts. Or how about building musical instruments with objects such as buckets and boxes?

Look around in nature or in your recycling bin. How can you make ordinary things extraordinary? Here's one brilliant activity to help guide your way.

You'll Need

16.9 oz. (500 mL) clean empty plastic bottle with cap • ruler
four 12" (30.5 cm) pipe cleaners • glow stick about 8" (20.3 cm) long
4" x 7" (10.2 x 17.8 cm) decorative paper • clear tape • scissors
black permanent marker • 5½" x 8" (14 x 20.3 cm) sheet stiff paper
glue that works with plastic (such as tacky glue) • dried beans and peas



MY HEART IS AGLOW!

Make Your Own Firefly

- 1 Loop three pipe cleaners around bottle and twist in place. Bend ends to make feet.
- 2 Wrap decorative paper around bottle and secure with tape.
- 3 Fold stiff paper in half so short ends meet. Draw wing about 5" (12.7 cm) long. Cut through folded paper to make two wings.
- 4 Add wing details with marker. Fold a ¼" (.6 cm) tab at base of each wing. Glue tabs to firefly.
- 5 Color entire bottle cap with marker. Let dry. Glue beans to bottle cap for facial features. Use marker to add details.
- 6 Wrap pipe cleaner around bottle-neck and twist at top. Curl ends.
- 7 Activate glow stick and put in bottle to see your firefly glow!





Artistic Sparks

Nur here! I LOVE doing arts and crafts. Art lets me add even more light and fun to the world. Art can also lift my spirit and help me look at life in different ways. And it feels great to learn a new skill or make something I'm proud of.

What helps your creativity shine? Going to an art

museum? Reading a cool book? How about taking a nature walk or traveling? There are lots of ways to kindle your artistic spark. To protect it and keep it lit, spend time with people who are encouraging. Follow your curiosity, explore new ideas, and light up the world with your imagination.

Join Nur's family in kindling creativity. In the art studio, find words to complete these tips.



1. Look for new challenges, then set _____ for yourself.
2. Let your _____ — sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste — inspire you in different ways.
3. Work with others who share your interests. If you get stuck, ask someone you trust for _____.
4. Take chances and _____ with your art. Play with different kinds of artistic tools and styles.
5. Learn about current events in the world and around you. Your _____ can impact your art and make your work timely.
6. Set aside a specific time to _____ your art, so you can focus your attention.
7. Remember that projects may not go the way you expect them to. _____ ideas can come from mistakes.
8. Let your ideas _____ without judging them. Just write or sketch freely, and pick out the gems later.
9. _____ your body by breathing deeply and calmly before you start to work.



RILEY'S RAINFOREST

"Send down ... from the clouds of Thy mercy the rains of Thy healing ..." —Bahá'u'lláh

Smart Arts

Can drawing, singing, or dancing improve your schoolwork?

Can they make you happier?

The arts not only lift your spirits—they may even help boost your grades. Some studies show that kids who are involved in activities such as dance, drama, music, and visual art have higher reading and math scores. They also have stronger motivation and self-esteem. And the arts help kids develop skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and working with others.

The arts are also linked to health and happiness. One study found that people who create or observe art, such as by singing or attending a concert, report better overall health. And music can relieve stress, helping to keep your heart healthy. Have you noticed how your favorite tunes can make you feel happier? In fact, music therapists use music to help treat many kinds of emotional



and physical conditions.

Some scientists are even exploring whether music changes your brain. They've found that certain areas of the brain can be larger in some musicians. One study showed that kids who studied music had stronger connections in some parts of the brain.

You can also use the arts to express your faith. Whether you're singing, dancing for joy, or using your talents to inspire others, your creativity can soothe your spirit and bring you closer to God. And that's really something to sing about!

Canopy of Questions

What do you want to know about staying healthy and happy? Health can involve your body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Send your questions to brilliant@usbnc.org. Responses are given by a health professional.

“What can I do to keep from being bored?”

—Bayan, age 12

Dear Bayan,

When we see the world as a place full of mysteries to unravel, suddenly nothing is boring. If you are always learning something new, you won't be bored, either—and there are *always* new things to learn. When I was little, I asked my grandmother to teach me the names of all the birds nesting around our house. Larks, doves, wrens, mocking-birds—I learned to recognize them all.

What could you learn to do? You could play a new game, cook something, fix something, learn new words, learn a new language, read about something new, write a story or a how-to manual, record a video, meet a new neighbor, or even create a new world, like author J.R.R. Tolkien's hobbit world.

Make a list of ideas to refer to if you're bored. Or you could write us another letter, telling us something new that you've learned!

Wishing you health and happiness,

Mary K. Radpour

Licensed Family Counselor

Explore and Soar: Creativity Boost

Ever feel like your creativity could use a boost? Try these fun ideas.

- Go outside and make a sculpture using only items in nature.
- Write a story with a friend. Take turns adding lines or sections.

- Choose an object like a pencil or spoon and think of 10 different uses for it.
- Invent new dance moves you've never seen before.





Happy Ayyám-i-Há!



Friends, family, fellowship, fun—it's time for the festival of Ayyám-i-Há! From February 26–March 1, it's a joyful holiday celebrated by millions of Bahá'ís around the world. It's a time for charity, goodwill, hospitality, and gift giving.

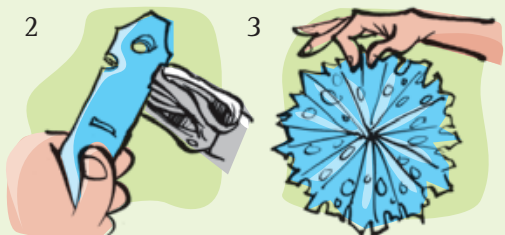
Families and communities enjoy Ayyám-i-Há with parties, service projects, gift exchanges, performances,

and much more. Arts from diverse cultures add to the festivities. Friends of all faiths are invited to join in the fun. Sing a song in another language, do a folk dance from a different country, or prepare a favorite traditional food. During Ayyám-i-Há, Bahá'ís also prepare for the Bahá'í Fast, a time of spiritual renewal.* Try these ideas for celebrating Ayyám-i-Há this year.

Colorful Cut-Outs

Decorate with these festive ornaments, and invite guests to make their own.

- 1 Use colorful paper, 4 1/2" x 11" (11.4 x 27.9 cm). Starting at shorter end, fold accordion-style, in 1/2" (1.3 cm) sections, and trim corners.
- 2 Staple paper in center. Punch decorative holes with hole punch.
- 3 Unfold ends and tape to make a circle. Hang individually or create a garland.



Service Surprises

Consult with your family about small acts of kindness, such as "Write a sweet note to Grandma" or "Bake cookies for the neighbors." Write each idea on a slip of paper. Decorate an empty jar for the slips. Every day of Ayyám-i-Há, ask each family member to draw one surprise to carry out.



Who Am I? Game

Hand out paper and pencils, and give guests five minutes to draw a picture, write a poem, or make a list of clues that conveys who they are. Collect the papers and ask everyone to guess who created each one.



"Fast Food" for Friends

Give the gift of a hearty breakfast to Bahá'í friends who will be observing the fast. Decorate a clean container for the gift, and add a tag with your favorite quote.

HEALTHY HOMEMADE GRANOLA

- 4 c (320 g) rolled oats (not quick-cooking)
- 1/2 c (40 g) shredded unsweetened coconut
- 1/2 c (120 mL) pure maple syrup
- 1/4 c (26 g) ground flax seeds
- 1 c (120 g) chopped walnuts
- 2 Tbsp (30 mL) vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 mL) salt
- 1 c (160 g) raisins



Combine all ingredients except raisins in large bowl. Pour into 9" x 13" (22.9 x 33 cm) baking pan. Bake at 350°F (180°C) for 25–30 minutes. Stir every 10 minutes. Let cool, then mix in raisins.

* During the Bahá'í Fast, March 2–20, Bahá'ís ages 15–70 who are in good health do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset.

Building Creativity

What are your favorite buildings to visit? Houses of worship or famous landmarks? Architects can inspire us with their imaginative designs. Some structures have lasted for thousands of years, expressing people's culture, history, beliefs, and dreams.

In their work, architects creatively think about a lot of factors, such as size, shape, patterns, colors, and

how the sun lights a structure. They study the location, what a building will be used for, the best materials, and the climate. Many ask, "Is this design good for the environment?" The list of topics to consider goes on and on, like the stories of a tall skyscraper.

Whether it's a house, a landmark, or a bridge, great architecture makes our world diverse, enjoyable, and safe.

If you love to imagine, draw, and build, you could become an architect and create amazing structures such as these. Match each one to its description.



1 Bahá'í House of Worship, U.S.



2 Sydney Opera House, Australia



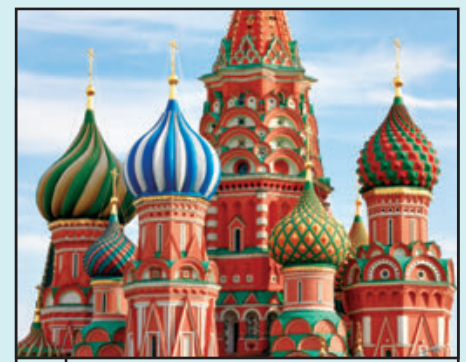
3 Tower of Pisa, Italy



4 Hozomon Gate, Japan



5 Burj Khalifa, UAE



6 St. Basil's Cathedral, Russia

A

The world's tallest building! It's over half a mile high, reaching 2,717 feet (828.1 m). Its Y-shaped design helps reduce stress from the wind.

B

Standing near Lake Michigan, this holy place has nine sides with nine gardens. Its elaborate ornamentation features symbols of many faiths.

First built in 942, this structure stores sacred treasures and leads to the oldest Buddhist temple in Tokyo.

C

D

This bell tower was going to be 185 feet tall (56.4 m), but it started leaning even before it was finished in the 14th century. Modern engineers have stabilized it.

This holy place with nine chapels is also a museum. It contains the tomb of a holy man who lived in Moscow about 500 years ago.

Built on a harbor, the dramatic roof of this performing arts center resembles sails in the wind. New engineering and building techniques were required to complete it.

E

F

EXPLORE AND PROTECT THE EARTH AND ITS CREATURES



"All the members of this endless universe are linked one to another." —Bahá'í Writings

EARTH-SAVING TIP

Feed the birds.

Be a friend to wildlife by making your own bird feeder out of an empty plastic milk jug. Having birds in your yard can help nourish flowers.

WOW, REALLY?

Glaciers store three-fourths of our planet's fresh water. If all land ice melted, sea level would rise about 230 feet (70 m)!



OUR CONNECTIONS



Did you know that Arctic plants and animals from thousands of years ago could affect our future climate? They're buried deep in frozen ground called **permafrost**. As the permafrost thaws, their remains release the climate-warming gases carbon dioxide and methane. Arctic plants can absorb some of the carbon dioxide, but some scientists say that over time, they won't be able to keep up. Reducing pollution can help slow the warming of Earth with climate change and the thawing of permafrost.

PROTECTING OUR PLANET

Dr. Ben Smith studies Antarctic and Greenland glaciers and ice sheets from the University of Washington, using satellite data. He's even helping NASA design a new satellite. He won a 2009 Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. He says, "The choices you make about how to live . . . and how you talk to people . . . can affect the whole Earth . . ."



WHERE IN THE WORLD?



Once a medieval fortress and then a royal palace, the Louvre is the world's most popular museum, with 8.8 million visitors last year. It's home to the famous *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci. *Unscramble the letters to find its location:*

ISPRA, ENCFAR ,

AMAZING ANIMALS



These highly intelligent creatures can solve problems, plan ahead, communicate, and even use tools. Dolphins have large, intricate brains and can work together. They use underwater sounds to help them navigate. *Fill in the blanks to find the name of this ability:*

C H L O A T O

RADIANT STARS

Getting to know kids who shine

Connect with kids around the world!
How are they like you? How are they different? Each of us has a unique story to tell. What's yours?

Elsbeth C.

Age: 9

I live in: **Ohio, U.S.**

I want to be:
Marine biologist

Best quality or virtue:
Joyfulness

Hobbies or sports:
Yoga, rock wall climbing, dancing, swimming, writing

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Performing in Ridván dances*

Favorite animal or pet:
Elephants, turtles, pandas, and bobcats

What is your favorite way to use your creativity?
Participating in NaNoWriMo by writing, because I got [to] achieve one of my goals of writing a 5,000-word story in 30 days.**

Who encourages or supports your creativity?
My sister, Ceilidh. [She] helps by telling me to not copy things and [to] be unique.

If you could create anything, what would it be?
I would create world peace so that everyone would have equal amounts of everything ... like shelter, education, food, and clean water and health care.



Olivia T.

Age: 13

I live in: **Humacao, Puerto Rico**

Best quality or virtue:
Excellence. I always try hard to do my best.

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Puerto Rican Feasts. I get to practice my Spanish, meet new people, and eat delicious food!

Favorite animal or pet:
Dolphins! They are highly intelligent and beautiful.

I like to help people by:
[Including] people who are outcast[s] and not treated fairly by others

Inspires me to be creative:
Everything I see around me. Just today, I was looking at a puddle, and I thought, "Hey, that would make a great painting!"

What is your favorite way to use your creativity?

Painting. You can create anything with paint and a canvas, and ... express your feelings and thoughts.

Who encourages or supports your creativity?
My parents ... by providing me with art supplies and lessons. If I am discouraged, they always help me get right back on track.

Can everyone be creative, or just those with special talents?
Everyone can be creative! ... Creativity is having the courage to do something different, whether it be in art or any other endeavor.



Zaki F.

Age: 10

I live in: **Texas, U.S.**

I want to be:
Web game designer

Something I like about me that makes me unique:
Perseverance

Hobbies or sports:
Football, video games, paintball

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Children's classes

Favorite animal or pet:
Cheetah

Place I'd love to visit:
London

I like to help people by:
Donating to food drive[s]

What is your favorite way to use your creativity?
I like building stuff, because it's cool.

Coollest creation I've made:
A globe puzzle. It looked really nice ...

If you could learn any art in the world, which would it be?
Game designing

Who encourages or supports your creativity?
My mom. She encourages me in everything I do ...

If you could create anything, what would it be?
A virtual 3D game and a one-kilometer paintball field ...



Mona M.

Age: 13

I live in: **California, U.S.**

I want to be:
An architect

Something I like about me that makes me unique:
Having a happy spirit and being optimistic in every situation

Hobbies or sports:
Playing tennis, biking, painting, and playing the guitar and violin

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Jr. youth groups and service projects

Inspires me to be creative:
Animals, nature, and flowers

Coollest creation I've made:
My duplication of the van Gogh irises. It took me five months . . . and I put my heart and soul in the painting.

If you could learn any art in the world, which would it be?
Sculptures. I admire the hard work put into them, and I would love to see my art become 3D.

Who encourages or supports your creativity?
My family . . . by allowing me to take art classes . . .

Can everyone be creative, or just those with special talents?
Creativity does not mean that you have to be an excellent artist, but . . . that you enjoy what you are doing and [put] all your heart into it.



Quentin B.

Age: 9

I live in: **Luganville, Vanuatu**

I want to be:
I'm not sure yet, but I like driving and fixing stuff.

Best quality or virtue:
My mom says I'm generous.

Hobbies or sports:
Swimming in the South Pacific

Favorite animal or pet:
CATS!

Places I'd love to visit:
I'd love to visit Israel and China.

I like to help people by:
Making them happy

What is your favorite way to use your creativity?
Tell stories, [be]cause that make[s] people happy

Coollest creation I've made:
Buried hidden treasure, and I like it because I got to dig it up.

If you could learn any art in the world, which would it be?
I am learning to play guitar so that I can play at Feasts.

Who encourages or supports your creativity?
Everyone encourages me by singing along when I play.



"God has crowned you with honor and in your hearts has He set a radiant star; verily the light thereof shall brighten the whole world!" — 'Abdu'l-Bahá

Kai P.

Age: 10

I live in: **Kentucky, U.S.**

I want to be:
Architect, like my papa, so I can help make our environment cleaner by using . . . architecture with solar energy and wind energy.

Something I like about me that makes me unique:
I am part Filipino, and I'm learning to speak Tagalog.

Hobbies or sports:
Piano, soccer, tennis, LEGO [toys], origami, designing/inventing things, taking pictures

Favorite Bahá'í activities:
Ayyám-i-Há"

Places I'd love to visit:
Philippines, Greece, and all LEGOLANDs . . .

Inspires me to be creative:
Tall skyscrapers inspire me to build and draw. Music inspires me.



What is your favorite way to use your creativity?
To make presents . . . I like to make origami and paper sculptures . . . [and] abstract pictures . . .

Who encourages or supports your creativity?
My mama and papa encourage my creativity. They give me ideas, advice, and help.

If you could create anything, what would it be?
A really cool city full of energy-efficient skyscrapers and houses . . . [and] whole forests of trees . . . The buildings would have the highest green technology!

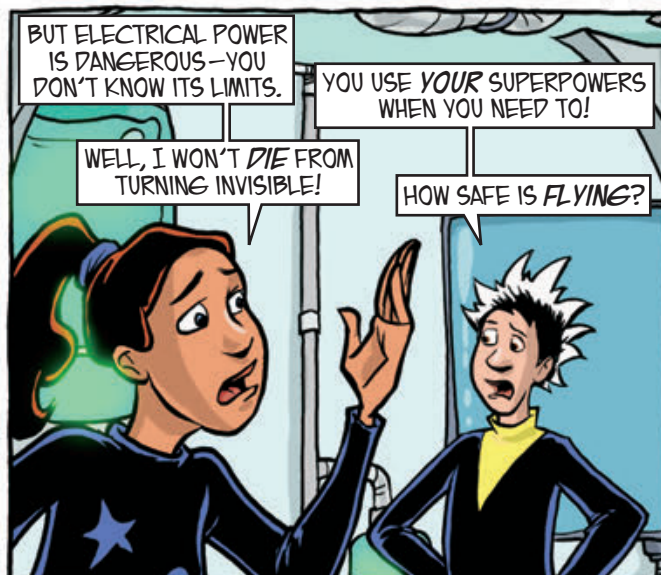
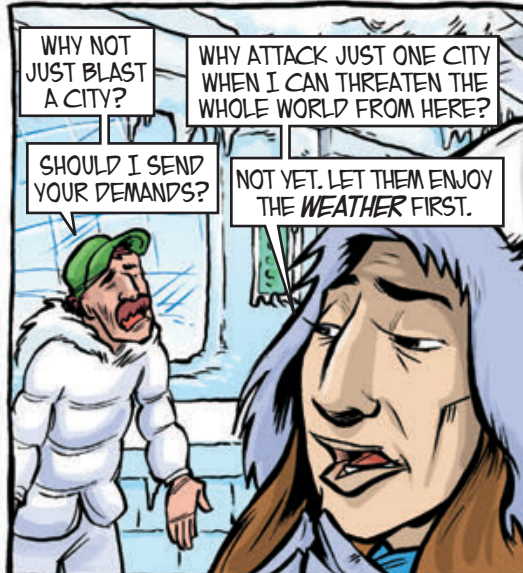
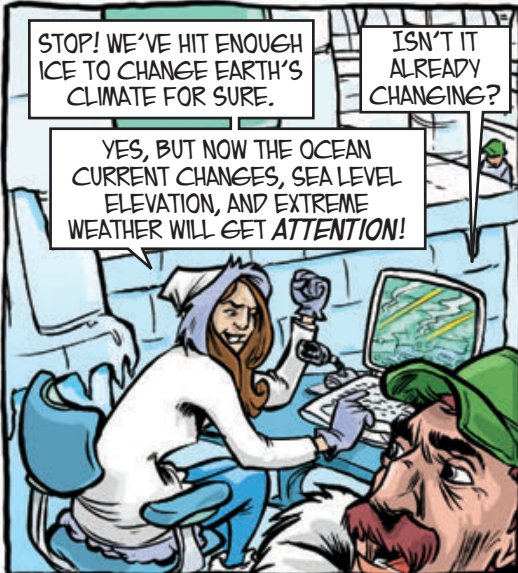
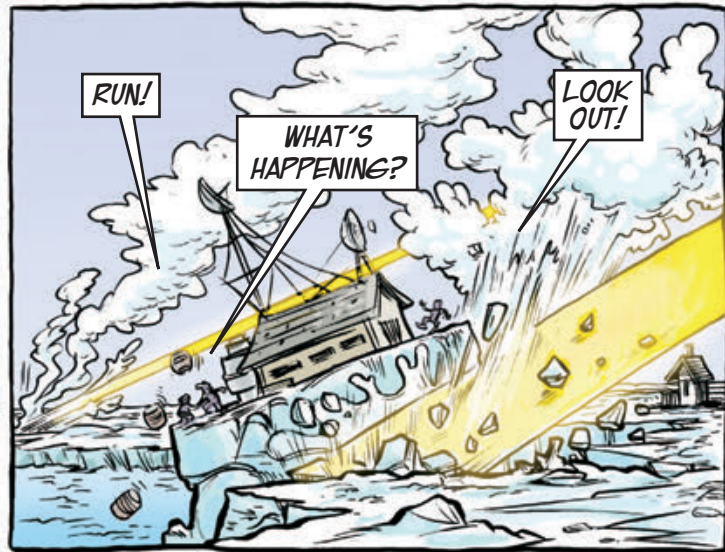
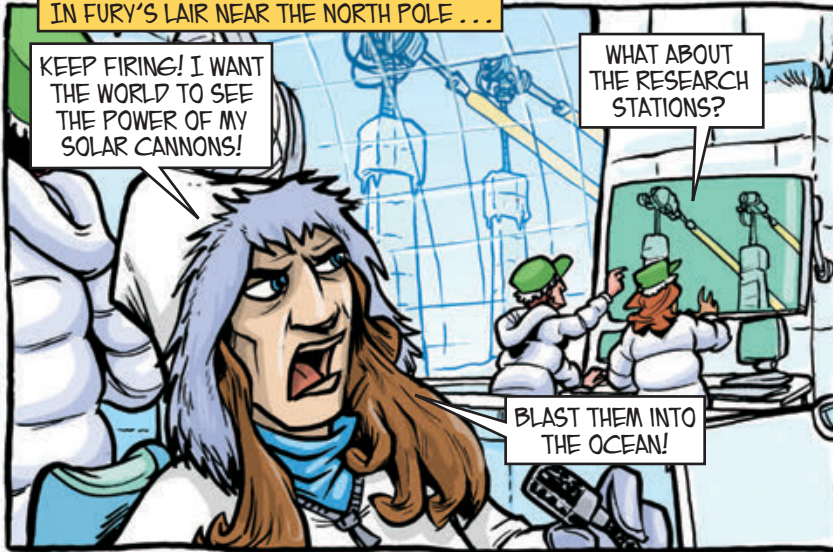
How to be a Radiant Star:

1. If you're age 7–14, write us at brilliant@usbnc.org or Brilliant Star, 1233 Central Street, Evanston, IL 60201. Include your name, age, mailing and e-mail addresses, and phone number. Mention "Radiant Star" in the e-mail subject line or in your message.
2. When it's your turn to shine, we'll send you questions and a form for you and your parents to sign.
3. Answer the questions and send them to us with the signed forms, along with at least two good-quality, close-up photographs of your smiling face. Photos should be in sharp focus and show your eyes clearly. Please don't send color copies, low-resolution digital images, or copyright-protected images (like school portraits).

⁹Feast is a Bahá'í community gathering with prayers, consultation, and fellowship.

¹⁰Feb. 26 – Mar. 1, days of hospitality, charity, gift giving, and preparing for the Bahá'í Fast

IN FURY'S LAIR NEAR THE NORTH POLE ...



MEANWHILE, IN THE UPLIFTERS' COMMAND CENTER...

OUR SATELLITES ARE GETTING PUZZLING DATA FROM THE ARCTIC.

INCOMING EMERGENCY MESSAGE FROM FALCON, AT OUR ARCTIC OUTPOST!

SHE SAYS IT'S A DISASTER! THEY SEE STRUCTURES BEING DESTROYED AND MASSES OF ICE CRASHING INTO THE OCEAN.

COULD IT BE A VOLCANO ERUPTING, QUASAR?

FALCON SENT THEIR UPLIFTERS TO HELP WITH A RESCUE AT A RESEARCH STATION.

PULSAR, ARE YOU OK?

I SEE... LASERS... PANIC... PEOPLE RUNNING... ANIMALS SCARED...

YOU DON'T USUALLY HAVE SUCH A POWERFUL REACTION—THIS IS BIG!

ZAPPO, SEND TEAMS TO HELP FALCON RIGHT AWAY.

I'LL GIVE THEM THE NEW PODS.

WHAT ABOUT THE PRESENTATION OF THE NEW UNIFORMS?

NO TIME. IT'S URGENT.

SEND LIGHTNING AND LUNA FIRST!

CHANGE IN PLANS. YOU'RE LEAVING ON A MISSION.

NOW!

AWESOME UNIFORMS!

I FEEL READY FOR ANYTHING!

HAS FURY WRECKED THE CLIMATE FOREVER?

Many Ways to Shine

The school halls are buzzing about the big play. Lots of kids are getting involved. What role excites you most? Will you audition for the lead as the brave knight? Or will you sing in the chorus? Maybe you'll be backstage, painting the set or creating an awesome dragon. No matter what you like to do, there's a way to let your talents shine.

Every show has a star or two, but the whole team is important. If you don't feel comfortable onstage,

think about other ways you could contribute. Do you like building things or working with electronics? You could help make the scenery or set up the lights and sound system. Is writing your thing? You could work on the script—or even write your own play.

Take the stage—or work backstage—for a new creative adventure. Even if you're not in the spotlight, you can develop new skills, make friends, and have fun. And that's cause for a standing ovation!

These friends are putting on a play. Find each one in action. Which role looks most fun to you?



Acting



Building



Dancing



Designing



Painting



Playing Music



Photographing



Singing



Writing



Musical Escapades

When you travel around the world, you discover new ways of life. In fact, some researchers found that people who have lived in other countries show more creativity and innovative problem-solving. Traveling the globe is a rewarding experience that can lead you to think about your everyday life in fresh ways.

Your eyes and ears can also explore art, music, and humanity's rich cultures by visiting nearby museums and attending concerts and festivals. People everywhere use music to tell stories, express feelings, and celebrate. Where would you like to go, to sing the praises of travel and adventure?

Tune in to the clues from these instruments and match each one with its homeland.

1 Apache Violin

My body is a plant stalk
That grows where I am made.
Near mountains of the great Southwest,
You'll often hear me played.

2 Great Highland Bagpipe

By the waters of Loch Ness
Where tartan kilts are worn,
You'll hear my strong, distinctive tone
Some sunny Highland morn.

3 Tar

I'm curved just like an hourglass,
And hours do fly by
As my notes echo through Tihlán
And Elburz Mountains high.

4 Steel Drum

With sticks wrapped up in rubber,
I'm played by drumming hands.
My sound is high and piercing
In Caribbean lands.

5 Didjeridu

First made by Aborigines
Off in the land down under,
I'm now played all around the globe
With energy and wonder.

6 Kora

A rounded gourd is part of me,
Attached to many strings.
In Africa, fine tales are told
In songs my player sings.

7 Tabla

Beautiful and striking sounds
I sing when people play me,
Along the Ganges River
Or concerts in New Delhi.

8 Rainstick

In Rio de Janeiro,
I sound like falling rain.
And also by the Amazon
You'll hear my sweet refrain.

A Australia

B Brazil

C The Gambia

D India

E Iran

F Scotland

G Trinidad
and Tobago

H United
States

ARVID NELSON



"Creating is wonderful, and kind of living in a fantasy world . . ." says Arvid Nelson. When he writes his successful comic books, Arvid often puts imaginative twists on historical events. His *Rex Mundi* series has been translated into five languages. A screenplay is being written for a *Rex Mundi* movie with the involvement of actor and producer Johnny Depp. Arvid has also written comic books for publishers Dark Horse, DC, Marvel, and Dynamite Entertainment.

Growing up in Connecticut, U.S., Arvid loved books, including mystery and fantasy. In college, he studied creative writing, and after earning his degree in 1999, he worked as a production assistant for a movie by writer and director Woody Allen. Then he got excited about telling stories through comic books.

Though Arvid's comics are for older teens, he wants to write for a younger audience, too. He's working on a fantasy novel for kids about age 14 and up. "As I get older, I realize that the stories that I like the most are the stories that are truly [for] all ages," he says. Arvid lives in Massachusetts with his wife, Robyn.

Q. What's your favorite childhood memory?

There was a nature preserve near my house. I loved walking there . . . There was a big rock we liked to climb. My father knows a lot about geology. He said it was called a glacial erratic; that is, a glacier just dumped a big boulder in the middle of the woods, so we liked to climb that . . . There were duck ponds and marshes. It was very peaceful.

Q. What inspired you to become a writer?

For a long time, I thought I wanted to make movies. But the more I heard about making movies, the more difficult I saw that it was. Movies cost a huge amount of money. Even an inexpensive movie still costs millions of dollars to make.

So I had to reflect on what I really wanted to do, and I realized that for me, what's important is storytelling and the story. I don't really care if it's a movie or a comic book or a song or a poem. What interests me is storytelling, and writing is just the easiest way to do that . . . To have done the stories I did in comics would have taken millions and millions of dollars [as films].



Left: Arvid, at about age four, with his dad. Arvid says, "I was very, very blessed to have loving parents, a stable environment."

Right: Visiting the Bronx Zoo in New York, U.S., at about age nine

Q. How did your family encourage you in your career?

I am so blessed to have my mom and my dad. They were always supportive . . . They would read everything that I wrote as a child. They read to me when I was very young. They instilled [in] me . . . an appreciation of art and literature . . . every step of the way. They still support me . . . and I love them, and I'm so grateful to them.



Q. When you write a comic, what's your process like?

It really depends on whether or not I'm writing a story that I'm creating, or a story that a publisher has asked me to write. If it's a story that I'm creating, it's my idea. I'm a lot like the director/producer of a movie, where I make all the decisions, and I kind of have the final say on everything.

When I'm writing for a publisher, it's very different. I have to be cognizant of what they want and what their vision is . . . Not everything you write is great and wonderful at first, so I think part of being a professional writer is understanding what the concerns of the other people you're working with are, and trying to address them as best you can.

Q. Religion is a big theme in some of your comics.

What inspired you to explore that theme?

A lot of it was the Bahá'í Faith. It just totally blew my mind, reading about [it] and the prophecies surrounding it. Growing up Christian, I had one perspective on it, and the Bahá'í Faith just made everything kind of fall into place like a puzzle. Yeah, the Bahá'í Faith was extremely important to me . . . I just find religion in general really interesting, whether it's Christianity, Buddhism, or Islam.

Q. How has the Bahá'í Faith affected your career?

One of the best assets you can have as a writer is having something to say, having a point of view. It's really easy to be negative about the world and say, "Oh . . . I don't like that, I don't believe in this." But I think it takes courage and strength to take a stand *for* something and believe *in* something and be *for* something. So the Bahá'í Faith gives me that . . . I believe very deeply in the ideals of the . . . Faith, and I always try to transmit that in my writing.

Q. What advice do you have for kids who want a career in writing, especially in comics?

Definitely think about online comics. [They] have done really, really well lately . . . That and learning about technology is really, really important . . . One reason I've [had a] little bit of success with *Rex Mundi* is that I've really learned how to use graphic design software like



Left: Arvid visited the Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain, partly for research for a comic book project. He says, "I very much admire the architecture of early Islam . . ."



Above: At Comic-Con 2010 in California, Arvid signed autographs with director Joseph Kosinski. Arvid co-wrote a novella called *Oblivion* that Kosinski plans to turn into a film.

Q. How do you juggle so many projects at once?

Just willpower . . . If you're writing with a publisher, they set a deadline . . . You have to have it done by a certain time. If you don't, the publisher just is never going to ask you to write anything ever again. So you *have* to do it. When you write something for yourself, it's so important to do the same thing, to set deadlines for yourself.

Photoshop and Illustrator. And I've learned a lot about the technology of the web . . . It's fun to learn, and it's really useful . . . Learning proper grammar is really, really important . . . The most important thing is just to maintain your sense of awe and wonder about the world . . .



MUSIC CAFÉ

"Music, sung or played, is spiritual food for soul and heart." —Bahá'í Writings

WHEN DO YOU FEEL CREATIVE? FOR ME, IT'S AFTER DREAMING, BEING IN NATURE, OR LISTENING TO MUSIC.

I KEEP TRACK OF MY THOUGHTS FOR NEW SONGS IN MY NOTEBOOK. I FEEL VERY *EXCITED* WHEN I'M INSPIRED AND HAVE ...

SO MANY IDEAS

Music and lyrics by Brady Rymer with Dan Myers and Monica Osgood

1 G Em Am D G Em Am D

1 Like a book that's not been re - ad I got so ma - ny i - deas in my head Like
 2 Like a book that's not been re - ad Like
 3 Like a book that's not been re - ad Like
 4 flow - ers growin' on a ri - ver be - d

5 G Em Am D G Em 1. Am D7 C
 tools just sit - tin' in a to - ol she - d I got so ma - ny i - deas in my head Yeah, they're hard to get out I wan - na
 sheets all wrin - kled on a big ol' be - d
 tools just sit - tin' in a to - ol she - d
 10 Wild - flow - ers on a riv - er be - d

10 G Am D C
 scream and shout I wan - na let you know a - bout all the things I've been think - in' a - bout Yeah, they're hard to get hold of

14 G Am D DC 2nd ending 2. D
 let'em all go I wan - na fill the air up with my pa - lette of co - lours head I wan - na let 'em

18 C Em Am D C
 go I wan - na let you kno - w 'bout all the pla - ces that I love to go, wan - na tell you a - bout

23 G Am D DC 3rd ending 3. Am C
 my i - deas. Like stars in the sky there's mil - lions a - round me head I wan - na let 'em fly

28 G Am D
 I wan - na let 'em go Yeah, I'm gon - na

31 C G Am D DC 4th ending 4. Am G
 change the world Like head

Silent Storytellers



When you think of your family, what images come to mind? Your house? Your pet turtle or dog? A favorite place you like to visit?

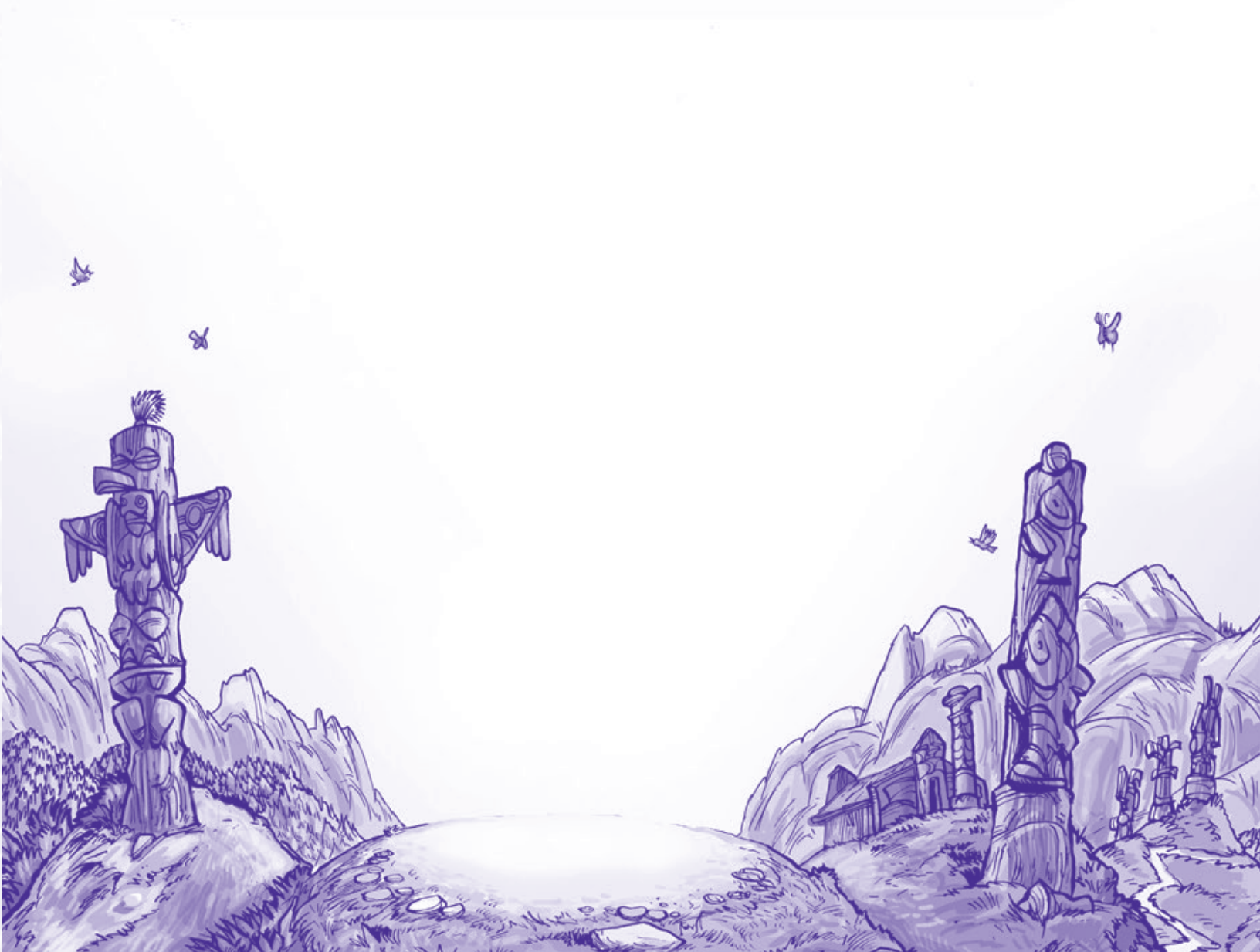
American Indians in the northwestern U.S. and First Nations cultures in Canada have a tradition of telling family stories with totem poles. Huge cedar logs carved intricately with animals and people represent tribes or families. Or a series of figures on a pole can reveal a legend.

In the past, artists used handmade tools and natural paints made from materials such as minerals,

shells, and salmon eggs. The figures on a pole have meanings that vary with different tribes. An animal may represent a family's clan. A person with out-stretched hands can be a sign of welcome and peace. A raven might symbolize the Creator, while a wolf may stand for family unity.

Today, modern carvers continue to create these majestic, colorful works of art. Many stand in parks, villages, and museums, honored as symbols of rich aboriginal heritage.

What family stories would you tell on a totem pole? Think about symbols that represent your family, and draw your own family totem pole here.



Octopus Adventures

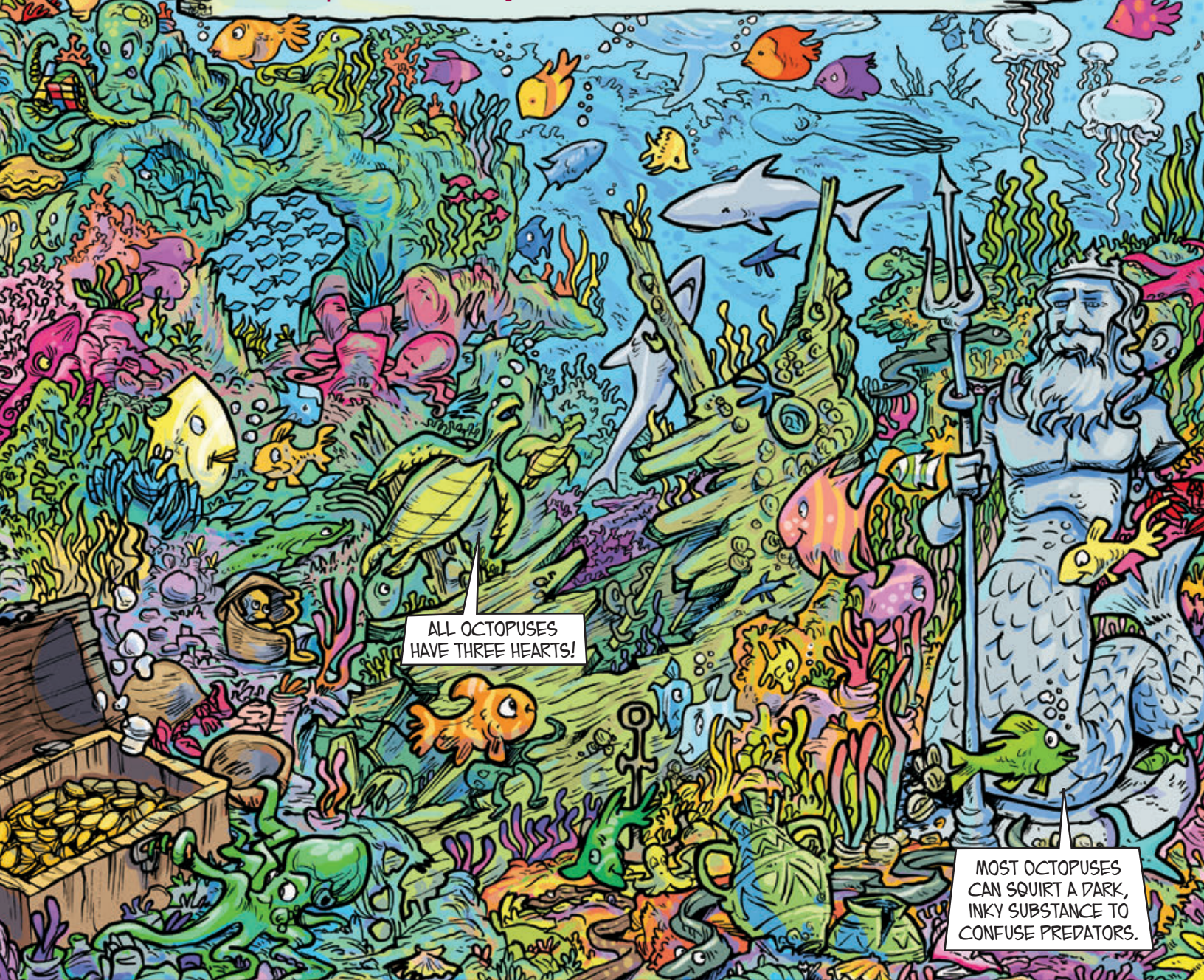
Did you know that octopuses are some of the smartest creatures of the sea? Scientists in Indonesia were astounded to see them pick up coconut shells larger than their bodies, carry them across the sea floor, and hide inside! This surprising behavior is “tool use”—a sign of animal intelligence.

Octopuses have large brains compared to their body weight. They use their complex brains to cleverly protect themselves from predators. They carefully

choose their dens and move rocks to block the entrances. They also change color and texture to blend in with their surroundings. Some sneak around disguised as rocks.

In scientific research, octopuses have learned to recognize shapes, open jars, and solve mazes. They cause trouble in labs by escaping from their tanks. Some scientists believe octopuses are curious and like to play. But some are poisonous to humans. The next time you visit the beach, keep your eyes open for the incredible octopus.

These octopuses are swimming in cleverness. Search the scene to find 15 of them.



ALL OCTOPUSES
HAVE THREE HEARTS!

MOST OCTOPUSES
CAN SQUIRT A DARK,
INKY SUBSTANCE TO
CONFUSE PREDATORS.

SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

EFFIE BAKER (1880–1968): Picture of Courage By Gail Radley

A woman died here, Effie recalled. She gazed at the ruined luggage scattered by the road to Baghdád. A Bahá'í traveling with the woman had said that bandits also shot off their driver's ear. They took what they wanted, leaving the rest to rot. Effie and her companions hoped bandits wouldn't bother several cars traveling together.

Bandits weren't the only danger. It was 1930. Effie was a 50-year-old unmarried Australian woman traveling to Persia (now Iran). There, neither westerners, nor Bahá'ís, nor independent women were welcome. Foreigners were seen as spies. Bahá'ís had been persecuted and even killed since the Faith began there in 1844. Persia still wasn't safe for Bahá'ís.

Effie was going to Persia to take pictures, but her photography risked attracting unwanted attention. Shoghi Effendi, the current Bahá'í leader, had asked Effie to document the Faith's historic sites. The task couldn't wait. First, Shoghi Effendi needed photographs for *The Dawn-Breakers*, a Bahá'í history book he was translating. Second, Persia's leaders, eager to create modern cities, were destroying old buildings. They weren't concerned with preserving Bahá'í history. In fact, they wanted to eliminate it. This mission required a skilled photographer. It also required a brave, daring one.



Effie was a gifted photographer who risked danger to take photos for the Bahá'í Faith. One type of camera she used is shown below.

Adventurous Spirit

Happily, Effie was both. From her sea captain-astronomer-inventor grandfather, she learned to enjoy working with technical equipment and observing carefully. She shared his adventurous spirit, too. She also developed her artistic talents. She played piano, painted, drew, worked with wood, made toys, and explored photography. Then, in 1922, Effie became a Bahá'í. She soon traveled to what is now Israel to meet Shoghi Effendi, staying five years to serve the Faith.

Now, she was heading to some villages no westerner had visited. The three-month trip became six as she and her companions moved through Persia. When they weren't repairing tires on rough roads, they were thawing a frozen car. They

also traveled by horseback on rocky mountain paths. Along the way, Persian Bahá'ís helped them.

Dangerous Visit

Effie's most dangerous visit was to a mosque. Only Muslims were allowed inside. "If they had ever suspected me," she wrote later, "they would have torn me to pieces . . ." Two Persian girls dressed Effie in a robe, her face covered. They entered the mirrored room, and Effie gazed in awe at the jewel-studded ceiling. She stepped into the courtyard, nearly tripping over a shrouded body. There were, she said, "dozens of them, bodies brought in to be blessed, [w]rapped in sack-cloth . . . They had died on the way . . ." Then the girls showed Effie a sign stating that foreigners entered "at their own risk." They hurried her away.

In all, Effie took nearly one thousand pictures, developing them as she went. This requires running water and a room lit only with a red safelight. Effie found creative substitutes: a blanket over her tent, a flashlight covered in red paper, and a bucket of water. She worked secretly to avoid causing suspicion.

Back in Israel, she chose 400 pictures for Shoghi Effendi. Without Effie's courage and creativity, images of the Bahá'í Faith's beginnings might have been lost forever.





Painting, writing a song, or inventing a dance are ways to express your creativity. But being creative is about more than practicing the arts. Part of creativity is being curious, asking questions, dreaming, wondering, and looking at the world in your own way. It's having fun and finding humor in your daily life. And most of all, it's being your unique self—a masterpiece that only *you* can create! In this new year, put an imaginative spin on everything you do.

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday



1 New Year's Day
In Belgium, kids write letters of appreciation to their families.



4 2012 is the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (UN).
What do you do to save energy in your home?



7 Imagine your life 10 years from now.
Write or draw what you see.



8 A kind of paint from 100,000 years ago was discovered in shells in a South African cave!



10 A cat's ears have about 30 muscles. Humans only have 6.

13

14

My Goal for the Month:

15

World Religion Day (Bahá'í)
Pray for the Bahá'ís in Iran and others denied religious freedom.

16

Religious Freedom Day (U.S.)
Martin Luther King Jr. Day (U.S.)

17

Birthday of author, inventor, and diplomat Benjamin Franklin, 1706



18

Every 19 days, Bahá'í Feast is held on or near the first day of the Bahá'í month.

19

BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF SULTÁN (SOVEREIGNTY)

20



Make up new words to your favorite song.

21

22

23



24 Chinese New Year begins (Jan. 22–28)
Year of the Dragon, symbolizing luck and prosperity in Chinese culture

25

No Name-Calling Week (Jan. 23–27)
Speak up and tell an adult when you see bullying.

26

Australia Day
It's summer in Australia from December through February.

27



Did you know?
Some dogs can recognize their owners—and even other dogs—in a photo.

28

29

AUSPICIOUS MEANS...

Cosmo's Word Challenge

- a) A great detective
- b) Disbelief
- c) Favorable; promising success



WHERE DO COWS GO TO SEE COOL ART?



THE MOO-SEUM!



Creativity is a gift from God, and it's a gift you can share with others. Ayyám-i-Há, February 26–March 1, is a perfect time to let your imagination shine. It's a Bahá'í holiday of hospitality, charity, gift giving, and preparing for the Bahá'í Fast.* How about making your own party invitations, decorations, or gifts? Or be inventive in the kitchen with delicious party treats. Share your talents in music, dance, acting, or comedy at a party or nursing home. How will you be generous with your creative gifts?



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

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Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Every 19 days, Bahá'í Feast is held on or near the first day of the Bahá'í month.



1
Black History Month (U.S., Canada)
Learn about the Harlem Renaissance, a surge of African American art, mainly in the 1920s and 1930s.



2
Groundhog Day (U.S., Canada)

3
4
American Heart Month (U.S.)
Keep your heart healthy with an hour of activity every day.

5
From Cosmo's Bookshelf
Brainstorms Ivan Idea
Paint with Pizzazz Grabba Brush
Rhymes Rock Rita Poem
My Melodies Carrie A. Tune

7
BAHÁ'Í MONTH OF MULK (DOMINION)

8
9
My Goal for the Month:

10
11
Birthday of inventor Thomas Edison, who held a record 1,093 patents on his own or with others.



12
13
Random Acts of Kindness Week (Feb. 13–19)
Show your love with a handmade gift.



14
Valentine's Day



15
16
Did you know?
Some crafty crows can make and use tools—a sign of super smarts.



17
18
Great Backyard Bird Count (U.S., Canada, Feb. 17–20)*
Help scientists track our feathered friends.

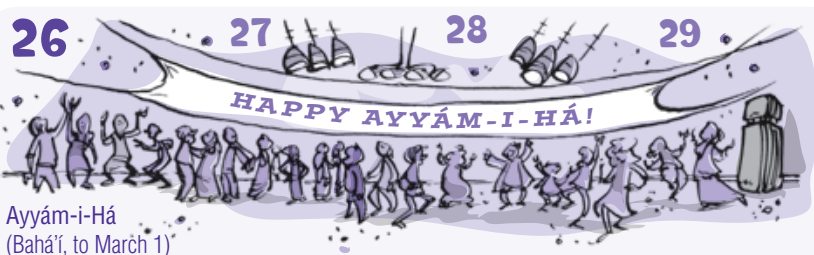
20
World Day of Social Justice (UN)
Presidents' Day (U.S.)

21
International Mother Language Day (UNESCO)
What languages are part of your family's heritage?

22
Ash Wednesday (Christianity)
Lent begins—a time of prayer, fasting, and preparation for Easter.



23
24
25
In Japan, cloths called *furoshiki* are reusable gift wrap.



Ayyám-i-Há (Bahá'í, to March 1)

EDIFICE
MEANS...

Cosmo's Word Challenge

- a) Huge office for inventors
- b) A building, especially an impressive one
- c) Giving a friend good advice



*Intro—During the Bahá'í Fast, March 2–20, Bahá'ís ages 15–70 in good health do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset; 17—See www.birdsource.org/gbbc
ANSWER: Cosmo—b

Song of the Heart

Adapted from a Yoruba Folktale



Long ago, near the Nigerian coast, a Yoruba family lived in a farming village. Dayo, the eldest son, tended the yam field with his father. Lara wove colorful cloth to sell with her mother. But Tobi, the youngest son, loved to sing and play his dundun drum.

"Music doesn't put food on the table," Tobi's father said.

"But, Father, music makes my heart sing," said Tobi. "I want to be a musician."

"You will have a difficult life wandering the land. You are no musician. You are a farm boy."

Tobi's mother said, "Most musicians play in the court of an *oba*, and they come from musical families. It is a position passed from father to son."

"Our farm is not good enough for you?" asked his father, sounding hurt and angry.

Tobi said respectfully, "You have worked hard on this farm, Father. But we have troubles here, too. Like the droughts. Maybe music can help the family."

His father shook his head. "This is just foolish."

"I believe I can succeed. Let me prove it."

The next day, Tobi packed for his journey. His family urged him to stay and work on the farm. He worried about the future, but he was also hopeful and eager.

Tobi's mother hugged him tightly and whispered, "I understand that you have to follow your dream."

"*O da bo*. I love you!" he called to his family. They sadly watched him go.

In the first village, Tobi played and sang in the streets. He earned some food and a place to sleep. Then he moved on.

After a while, Tobi lost count of the many villages he visited. Although people danced to his music, he grew tired and lonely, and worry gnawed at him. Maybe his father was right, he thought. He was running out of food and money. Should he give up and go home?

One day, he walked until the sun was high, then rested under a mahogany tree. He was far from the next village, and he felt heavy with sadness. To lift his spirits, he played a lively beat on his drum.

Suddenly, Tobi stopped. He thought he heard music in the distance. He kept drumming, and the music played again.

Tobi followed the sound. Along the river, he found a young man playing a flute.

"*Ekaabo*," said the man.

"Who are you?" asked Tobi.

"I am Ayo. A traveling musician, like you."

"I want nothing more than to perform," Tobi said. "But so far, I feel that I'm failing."

"You have good rhythm," said Ayo. "And there is strength in teamwork. Maybe our meeting was meant to be."

Ayo taught Tobi the ancient songs of Nigeria's noble obas and myths passed down through the ages. Ayo said Tobi's drumming was the heartbeat of their songs. Their voices worked in harmony, and they grew as close as brothers.

In each village, Tobi played his dundun with more passion and skill. Soon they were known throughout the land. Tobi was happy, but he longed to see his family.



Often he and Ayo walked many miles, only to reach a village where people had little food to share.

One day, Tobi heard news from his village. There was another drought, and the crops had suffered. His heart lurched as he worried about his family.

Tobi and Ayo came to a city where the oba's palace sat high on a hill. A plan formed in Tobi's mind.

"Ayo," he said, "Some musicians find favor with the oba and play at court."

Ayo grunted. "The oba's musicians are arrogant. They have musical ancestors. We are not privileged."

"But if we prove our worth, we will no longer struggle just to eat. And we can help our families."

"My family is in the next world," said Ayo, as he looked up to the sky. "The plague took them all years ago. I am alone, except for you." Then he said with sadness, "After all this time together, do you want to part?"

Tobi's stomach churned at the thought of playing without Ayo. The oba was known to be demanding. Tobi said, "Please, my friend, come with me to the palace. If my plan does not succeed, we will continue on our path."

"If you want to try to meet the oba, you go. I will play in the market," replied Ayo.

The next day, Tobi alone took his drum to the gates of the oba's palace. People danced and gave him money. At noon, two drummers in fine robes walked through the gates. One of them sneered, "Go home. We are the oba's musicians, like our fathers before us."



Later, Tobi told Ayo about the other musicians. "See?" Ayo said. "We are not welcome in a royal court!"

"I want to keep trying," said Tobi. "Come with me."

"No, I am sorry," said Ayo. "I will wait for you for two weeks, but then I must move on to the next village."

Every day, Tobi played at the palace gates. When the court musicians went by, they ignored him. He wondered if their music was truly superior.

At the end of two weeks, Tobi performed in front of the palace until he thought he would drop. As the sun set, he sighed and hung his head. Then he heard a voice say, "Don't give up yet. You have good rhythm." It was Ayo.

Tobi looked up. "It was lonely playing without you, my friend," he said. "Yes, there is strength in teamwork," smiled Ayo. "How about one more song?"

Our favorite one about our great Creator?"

This time, they played for no audience but themselves. Carried away by their own hypnotic rhythm, they didn't notice a man standing nearby as they joyfully sang the final notes.

"The oba wishes you to play for him," said the man.

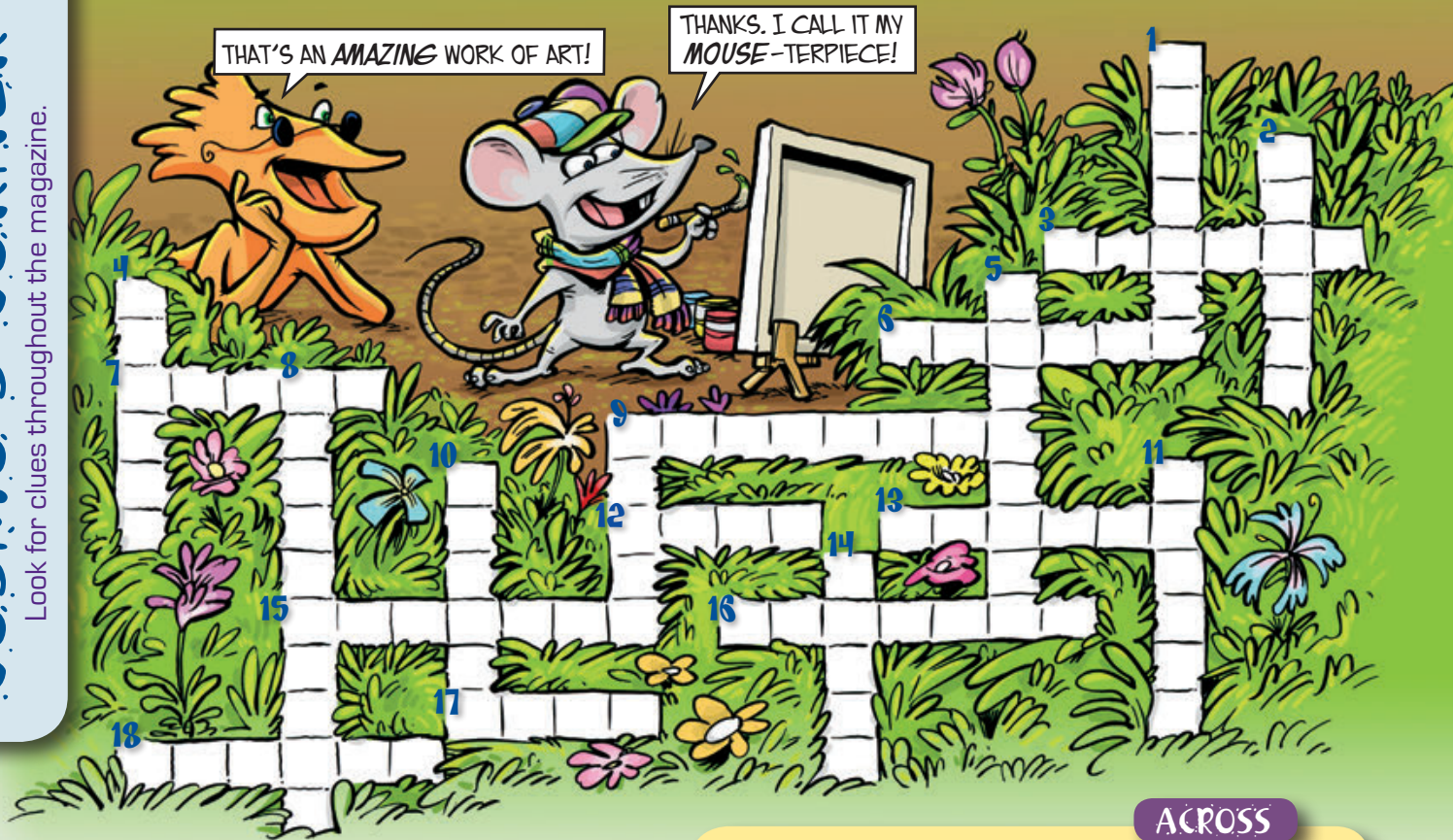
With wide eyes, they followed the man into the palace and bowed before the oba. Tobi thought he was in a dream. But they played and sang with all their hearts. People danced and clapped. Even the court musicians listened with surprise. Yet the king sat in calm silence. They finished and bowed again, their hands shaking.

Then the oba's face lit up with a smile. He opened his arms wide and declared, "My kingdom needs your music. It is refreshing and original. Serve in my court and you will be richly rewarded."

Tobi's heart soared and Ayo's eyes beamed. Quickly, Tobi sent for his family. When he saw them, he hugged them tightly and felt their frail bones. The oba invited them to enjoy a feast. A sacred festival was held, and Tobi and Ayo joined others in a magnificent performance.

Under the stars, Tobi's father said, "I see that your music brings joy to many. I am sorry for doubting you."

Tobi smiled and said, "You were right. It was difficult. But all is well, because I followed the song in my heart."



DOWN

1. Part of Fury's evil plan will change the earth's _____. (p. 14)
2. Arvid says, "The most important thing is just to maintain your sense of awe and _____ about the world . . ." (p. 19)
4. In animation, you often see a series of 24 images in one _____! (p. 4)
5. The world's tallest _____ is in the United Arab Emirates, or UAE. (p. 10)
8. They think about a lot of factors with buildings, such as size, shape, patterns, colors, and how the sun lights a structure. (p. 10)
9. Look for new challenges, then set _____ for yourself. (p. 7)
10. You can _____ cool creations by looking at common items in new ways. (p. 6)
11. This Chinese New Year, it's the Year of the _____. (p. 24)
14. Tobi wants to use his _____ to help his family. (p. 26)

ACROSS

3. Octopuses have large _____. They can also change color and texture to blend in with their surroundings. (p. 22)
6. World's most popular museum (p. 11)
7. Ice _____ is a sweet invention with a multicultural history. (p. 2)
9. Ayyám-i-Há is a time for charity, _____, hospitality, and gift giving. (p. 9)
12. Kids who are involved in the _____ have stronger motivation and self-esteem. (p. 8)
13. Quentin is learning to play this. (p. 13)
15. We all have creative _____ to discover and strengthen. (p. 5)
16. Olivia says, "Creativity is having the _____ to do something different, whether it be in art or any other endeavor." (p. 12)
17. Every show has a star or two, but the whole _____ is important. (p. 16)
18. Though it was dangerous, Effie Baker traveled to Persia in 1930 to take _____. (p. 23)

FROM OUR MAILBOX



My theme [for a future **Brilliant Star** issue] would be creativity. Because creativity is how you show emotion . . . You are your own creative self. I am creative by making my own music and making my words to the song, and then singing it to a group of friends or family.

—Teresa A., age 11, China

Editors' Note: Thanks for your sharing your idea, Teresa. The theme for this issue of **Brilliant Star** grew out of suggestions from you and other readers around the world. We love hearing from you!

ANSWERS

KEY: T=Top, C=Center, B=Bottom, L=Left, R=Right

PAGE 2: 1) Adventurous, 2) Resourceful, 3) Caring, 4) Cheerful, 5) Cooperative, 6) Curious, 7) Meditative, 8) Mindful, 9) Noble, 10) Observant, 11) Patient, 12) Brave, 13) Steadfast, 14) Visionary, 15) Wise

PAGE 7: 1) goals, 2) senses, 3) help, 4) experiment, 5) observations, 6) practice, 7) Original, 8) flow, 9) Relax

PAGE 10: A) 5, B) 1, C) 4, D) 3, E) 6, F) 2

PAGE 11: Paris, France; Echolocation

PAGE 16: Acting at C, building at CL, dancing at CR, designing at C, painting at CL, playing music at BL, photographing at CL, singing at TR, writing at BC

PAGE 17: A) 5, B) 8, C) 6, D) 7, E) 3, F) 2, G) 4, H) 1

PAGE 22: Octopuses at far TL by title; at TL with cube, by fish, in cave; at TR swimming and behind trident; at CR behind statue; at BC by anchor and by fish; at BL with trunk; at CL in shell, by turtle's feet, behind coral; at C by turtle's head inside ship

Creative Journey

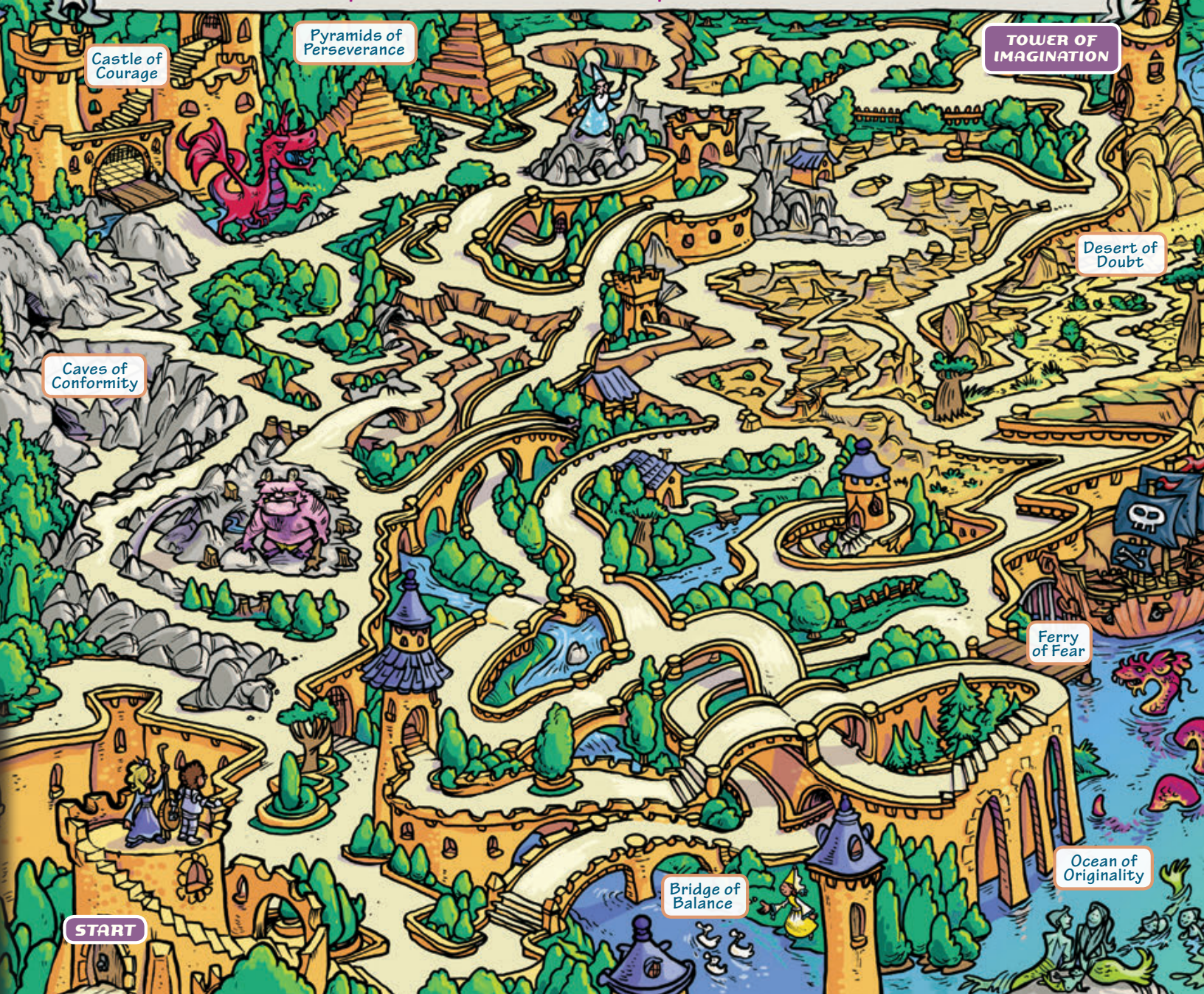
Have you ever delved into a story where the characters battle frightening dragons or monsters in raging seas or gloomy caverns? The heroes need strength, resourcefulness, and even magic to overcome their dangerous challenges.

When you're creating your own story, sometimes the scary creatures can be your own thoughts. You may doubt your talents or feel unprepared. But you have

the power to defeat these discouraging demons.

You're full of original visions that only *you* can bring to life. Every artist has challenges. Try to be patient, let yourself relax, and have fun with your art. Do your best to keep going—you'll improve with experience. When you believe in yourself and your imagination, you can express your creativity in unique and magical ways.

These kids are exploring the Land of Creativity. Help them reach the Tower of Imagination.



*"In this wonderful new age, art is worship.
The more thou strivest to perfect it,
the closer wilt thou come to God."
—'Abdu'l-Bahá*



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