

## Not my fault

By **Rebecca Lauren Mahany**  
Rice Memorial High School, Grade 9

Hello, Mrs. Mulligan!

It's awfully nice of you to have me here in your office, you know fifth-grade science is my least favorite class, and I don't mind telling you, but I'm glad I got to skip and come talk—

Oh. That. Well, you see, I can explain that. I can, really. You want me to? You see, it wasn't my fault. No, not at all. It was Dani's fault.

What do you mean, Danielle was the victim? She wasn't a victim — she ruined her own presentation. I didn't do it. You probably know already, but Dani lies. A lot. You should hear some of the things she says in class—

What do you mean, how can I explain the fact that I interrupted her presentation and ruined her visual? First of all, that lousy piece of paper with a couple words and pictures plagiarized from Wikipedia should not count as a visual. I myself had been reading up on the color spectrum and wavelengths on Wikipedia recently, and I knew right away that what she had was plagiarized, plain and simple. I went up to look at it—

Well, yes, Mrs. Mulligan, I did ask her to stop first. But I didn't shout it at her. I mean, I might have spoken a little loudly, but it's not my fault Dani wouldn't stop at first. And it's not like it's such a big deal that I asked her to stop for one minute.

What do you mean, the fact remains that I destroyed her visual? I went up to look at it, and Dani pulled the poster board away—

What do you mean, I said it was a piece of paper? I did not. It was a poster board. But it's not like it matters, anyway. It was a crummy visual.

I'm sorry, Mrs. Mulligan, I'll try to remember school language. Anyway, as I was saying, Dani pulled the poster board away, and it caught on the edge of the table, but she thought I was the one who had caught it so she pulled more and it ripped.

What do you mean, the entire class and the teacher saw me rip it in two pieces?

What do you mean, I told the class that it wasn't fair that Dani got a good topic, and I had to report on earthquakes?

What do you mean, a detention after school?

## Whoops

By **Evelyn Needham** | Hinesburg Community School, Grade 7

(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))

I trudged into school on Monday morning. I would give anything to go back to bed. My first class of the day was language arts. The teacher sternly told us to read silently while he went around to collect homework and stamp power books. Uh-oh. I thought to myself. We had homework last night?! Mr. Lasher paused by my desk. I pretended to be so absorbed in my book that I didn't notice.

“Evelyn?” he questioned disapprovingly.

“Yes?” I responded casually. This was terrific. I had completely forgotten about all the language arts assignments that were due today.

“Where's your homework?”

“Um, it's kind of a long story.” I muttered to my desk.

“A long story that's not true?” Mr. Lasher said quizzically.

“Of course it's true.” I assured him. Mr. Lasher looked like he was going to say something more, so I cut him off.

“You see, right when I stepped off the bus my mom told me we were going

to pick out a kitten at the pet store. She convinced me that we would be back by 5-ish. That still would leave me plenty of time to do my homework.” Mr. Lasher was eyeing me suspiciously now. I acted like I didn't notice and continued on with my story. “So I decided to go. We ended up buying this adorable kitten. It was calico colored, only a month old, and it didn't take long to find because right when we lay our eyes on it we knew that it was absolutely the cat we wanted. Anyways, we were headed back home by 4:20.”

I couldn't quite look my teacher in the eye right now because if I did I would definitely give myself away. “Anyways, when we were driving back home the truck directly in front of us was carrying a myriad amount of nails. When it hit some potholes in the road some of the razor sharp nails flew out of the truck, and landed on the ground in front of us.”

By now everyone in the class was staring at me. I decided to tone down the volume of my voice a notch. ...

## Excuses

By **Sunny Drescher** | Hinesburg Community School, Grade 7

(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))

I ran through the halls, trying desperately to get to class on time. My teacher wasn't going to like it if I was late, not to mention I didn't get my homework assignment done last night.

“Sunny? Are you here?” my teacher asked, taking attendance, just as I burst into the room.

“I'm present!” I exclaimed, gasping for air.

“Thank you for joining us.” she replied coolly. “Please hand in your homework.”

“Well, I couldn't really complete it last night.” I muttered, a blush creeping onto my face.

“Would you care to explain yourself?” my teacher snapped.

“Um, well, my mom took my sister and me on some errands after school yesterday. Then we met up with my dad for dinner. At dinner, my little sister accidentally knocked over the candle on our table, which resulted in the whole restaurant going up in flames.” The entire class was staring directly at my red face, making me feel exposed and

examined.

“Anything else you'd like to add?” my teacher queried skeptically.

“Yes, there's more to my tale.

Anyways, we drove quickly back to our house. As I was about to start the assignment, several police officers thumped on our door. They told us that the restaurant owners were livid about my sister's carelessness. My dad argued and argued and argued a lot more before he called his boss, the Attorney General of Vermont. His boss called the president who told the cops to go away and forget the whole situation. The police crew left, but by this time, it was midnight! My mom told me to go right to sleep. I slept in a tad bit this morning, so that's why I was tardy.” I concluded. My class stood up and applauded. I wasn't sure if this was a good thing or not. On the one hand, they obviously enjoyed my story, but on the other, the teacher looked like she was about to explode into a thousand tiny pieces.

“Enough already!” my teacher screamed. The class fell dead silent; you could've heard a feather fall. ...



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## Wings

By **Sarah Rathbun**  
Vergennes Elementary School, Grade 3

I was reading when suddenly I felt wings on my back. I went down the stairs and said, “Mom!” She looked at me as if I wasn't there. “Oh, hi Sarah,,” she said. I went to my room and locked the door. I screamed with surprise. I opened the window and flew out. I thought I was dreaming! I thought I would fall, but I didn't because I had wings.

## Excuses

By **Ben Clark**  
Vergennes Elementary School, Grade 3

I was supposed to be doing my homework, but instead I was reading. Then my mom came in. She asked if my homework was done. I said, “No.” My mom said I had to do it. My excuse was, “It is too hard, so I can't do it.”

My mom said, “Here, let me help you.” I said, “OK.”

EXCUSE FAILED.

## Next Prompt

**Stuck.** Describe a time when you found yourself in a tight spot. Tell us how you got there and what you did to get out of it. Or write a story about someone who is in a difficult situation. **Alternate: India.** What images come to mind? Write them down and tell us where those images come from? Do you think they are accurate? **Due Friday.**

Submit at:

[youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org)

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