

Level 2

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Article #1

I Want to Dye my Hair Green

Many of my friends have dyed their hair different colors.
I don't mean normal hair colors like brown or black.
My friends have dyed their hair orange, purple and blue.
I told my mother that I would like to dye my hair green.
I explained to my mother that I would only use food coloring.
The green would not last forever.
My mother said that dyeing your hair was a silly fad.
She said that I would not look good with green hair.
I said that if I couldn't dye my hair green, maybe I could get a nose ring.
My mother said "no."
I said that maybe a tattoo on my arm would be nice.
My mother said "no way."
My mother said that she did some crazy things when she was a young girl.
She said that she used to iron her hair to make it straight.
That sounds quite boring to me.
My friend Joan came over.
Her hair is dyed bright pink.
My father said "nice hair, Joan."
I don't think that he really meant it.
My mother says that when I am an adult I can dye my hair whatever crazy color I like, but
for now she would like me to leave my hair its natural color.
I tried to tell her that all my friends were doing it.
My mother asked, "if all your friends were jumping off a cliff, would you do it too?"
I said "no."
I think I'll have to wait to have green hair, but maybe by the time I'm old enough to dye
my hair green, I won't want it that color.
My mother says that fads change all the time.
One day something might be popular, and the next day it's not in style at all.

I'll just have to live without green hair for now.
I wonder what the fad will be next month.

Article #2

Why Do People Dislike Other People?

Some people don't like other people just because they look different.
I think that is silly.
I don't think that it is fair to judge someone by the way they look.
Some people look very nice, but they are mean or cruel.
Some people look very ordinary, but they are incredibly nice.
I remember when I was in grade one; I saw a girl across the room.
She had a mean look on her face.
I thought to myself that she was probably not a very nice person.
I stayed away from her, and played with the other children.
Then, we had to play a game, and the teacher said that she would pick partners for us.
The teacher picked the girl with the mean face as my partner.
I didn't think that the game would be much fun at all with a partner who seemed as mean as that girl.
I walked up to her and said hello.
The girl's face changed.
She smiled at me, and she began to talk to me.
Her mean face disappeared.
We had lots of fun playing the game.
We laughed a lot and enjoyed each other's company.
That girl became my best friend.
Now when I look at her I see what is inside her.
Sometimes she doesn't smile, but I know what she is like.
She is a kind and funny person.
I have learned that you can't "judge a book by its cover."
It is not fair to dislike someone just because they don't look like you want them to look.
You have to get to know a person.
It doesn't matter to me what color a person's skin is.
It doesn't matter to me if they are short or tall, skinny or fat or happy or sad looking.
I judge people by how they treat me, and I try to treat people like I would want to be treated.

Article #3

The Birthday Gift

It is going to be my father's birthday.
What can I give him?
I don't have much money.
I have looked all through the stores, and I have not found anything that I think he would like, or that I can afford.
I have thought very hard about what to buy for him.
I thought that he might like some candy, but my father really doesn't eat many sweets.
I thought that he might like a new shirt, but he has lots of clothes.

I can't afford a new car or computer for him.
I was watching him on the weekend.
He cut the grass, washed the car, took out the garbage, weeded the garden and watered the plants.
I got an idea.
I went to my room and took out some paper.
I cut out pieces of paper, and I wrote on them.
I wrote on one piece of paper that I would wash the car every weekend for the summer.
I wrote on another piece that I would take out the garbage every week for the summer.
I also wrote that I would cut the grass, weed the garden and water the plants every week for the summer.
I made a birthday card for my dad, and I put the pieces of paper inside it.
I went downstairs and gave my gift to my dad.
My dad thought that the gift was very thoughtful.
He said that it was a gift from the heart.
I did all those things for my dad all summer.
He said that he had a lot of free time because I helped him so much.
My dad and I are good friends.
I don't mind doing things for him because I know that he is always there to help me out.
A good gift doesn't have to be something that costs a lot.
My dad says that the best gifts are the ones that show how much you care for the other person.
I'm glad my dad liked his gift.

Article #4

New Year's Day

On New Year's Day people start a new year.
Many people make resolutions.
They resolve to be better people.
Some people decide that they will lose weight so that they can be healthier.
Some people decide to give up smoking.
They also want to be healthier.
There are all kinds of resolutions that people make.
Some people try not to lose their tempers.
Some people say that they will work harder.
There are people who try to give up bad habits.
Every year, my brother says that he will stop biting his nails.
He stops biting his nails in January, but by February he always starts again.
That is the thing about New Year's resolutions.
People seldom keep them.
Everybody starts out with good intentions, but it is very hard to stick with them.
I don't make New Year's resolutions.
I find that I just break them.
I just work day by day to break my bad habits.
I know that I eat too many sweets.
Every day, I just try to resist them.
I think that every day is a new day regardless of whether it is New Year's Day or not.

Bad habits are hard to break.
The best thing is never to start any bad habits.
I don't know if my brother will ever stop biting his nails, but I know that each January he intends to stop.
Maybe one of these New Year's Days he'll get over that habit.

Article #5

If I Could Fly

I sometimes imagine what it would be like if I could fly like a bird.
Just imagine what it would be like to soar into the sky, flying high above the trees.
You could stand on high rooftops and never be afraid of falling.
You would see so many things as you flew over rooftops and forests.
You would feel incredibly free as you traveled from place to place, not bothered by road signs or traffic jams.
If I could fly like a bird, I would start from my back yard and travel through town.
I would look down on the houses and factories.
When I got tired, I would land in a field and take a nap.
I would travel above rivers, and follow them as they wound along and emptied into lakes and oceans.
I would fly above parks, and I would call out to the children as I flew high above them.
I would dip and dive as I flew.
I would soar up high and dive down low so that I could almost touch the treetops.
Have you ever flown?
I know that you can't fly like a bird, but you might have taken an airplane ride.
When you're in an airplane, you pass through clouds.
It is exciting to take an airplane ride.
I love taking airplane flights.
I like to look down at the Earth.
When you are up that high, everything below you looks tiny.
That's the closest I'll get to flying like a bird.
But I can still use my imagination and spread my wings and soar high above the world just like a bird.

Article #6

What I Look for in a Friend

What is it that makes somebody your friend?
Some people are nice, and you have fun with them.
Some people are nice to talk to, but they don't become special to you.
Some people become very close to you.
Those people are the ones who become your good friends.
Did you ever wonder why certain people do become your good friends?
Friends usually have something in common.
Often, friends enjoy doing the same things as each other.
Maybe they like the same sports, or the same music, or maybe they can even talk about problems or schoolwork.
Friends usually find a common bond.

Friends share ideas and listen to each other.
Sometimes, people who don't have similar interests even become friends.
You can learn a lot from a person who likes different things than you.
The most important thing about friends is that they must communicate with each other.
A good friend is a person who takes the time to listen to the other person.
One of the most important things that I think a friend should have is a sense of humor.
I like to laugh with my friends.
I like to feel comfortable around my friends.
It is nice to be able to talk and laugh with people who have similar interests.
It is nice to share things with people and learn about their interests.
You become a better person if you are able to learn things from others.
Life is a journey.
On that journey you meet many people.
Some of those people will change your life.
You have to choose your friends with care.
A good friend is worth more than all the gold in the world.
A good friend will make your journey through life more pleasant.
Make friends along the way, and the path through life will be very rewarding.

Article #7

A Funny Thing Happened on the way to School

Last Friday it was very windy.
I was walking down the street with my friend John.
We were having a difficult time walking against the wind.
The wind was pushing against us, and we felt the force of it pressing against us.
We even had a hard time breathing.
We were walking slowly.
We watched the leaves as they danced and twirled in the wind.
We watched a plastic bag as it flew by us.
We saw a little boy whose baseball cap flew right off his head.
His cap flew along the sidewalk, and he had to chase it.
He finally caught it, and he held it in his hands tightly after he got it back.
The trees were swaying frantically.
Their branches swished and waved in the wild wind.
John and I were hit by flying bits of paper and leaves.
We laughed when a garbage can lid rolled along and hit John in the leg.
We saw another garbage can rolling along the road as if it was alive.
Everything was moving because of the wind.
Then, the funniest thing happened.
I wasn't paying any attention, and a paper bag came flying up the street toward us.
It hit me right in the face and covered my whole face.
At first, I didn't know what had happened.
I was blinded.
I couldn't see where I was going.
I stopped and held out my hands.
When I stopped, the bag fell off my face.
I looked at John.

He was laughing very hard.
He was laughing so hard that tears were rolling down his cheeks.
He said that I looked very funny with the brown paper bag stuck to my face.
I started to laugh too.
We laughed about it all the way to school.
John said that he wished he had a camera.
He would have taken a picture of me with the bag on my face.

Article #8

Advice

Sometimes my mother gives me advice.
She tells me to save my money for a rainy day.
She says that I should eat my vegetables if I want to be strong when I grow up.
She says that you reap what you sow.
I didn't know what that one meant, so I asked her.
She said that if you are good to people, they will be good to you.
If you do bad things, then bad things will come back to you.
My mother is always giving me advice.
She says that a penny saved is a penny earned.
I am still thinking about that one.
Some of these things are difficult to understand.
My mother is very wise.
She says that she has learned from her mistakes.
She tells me that she would like me not to make mistakes, but she says that everyone does make mistakes.
The important thing is that we learn from our mistakes.
My mother says that nobody is perfect.
My mother tells my sister that time is precious.
My sister wastes time, and my mother doesn't like that.
My mother tells me to be true to myself.
She says that I should not follow the crowd.
I should listen to my own conscience and do what I think is right.
She says that it doesn't matter if you fail at something, the important thing is that you try.
If you've done your best, then that is all that matters.
I listen to my mother.
I think she gives very good advice.
My mother has a lot of common sense.
I hope I am as wise as she is when I have children of my own.
Sometimes I wish that she would not give me so much advice.
I think that I know what I'm doing.
But, in the end, I always remember what she has said, and I try to live by the standards that she has set for me.
Take the advice that your parents give you.
They only have your best interests at heart.

Article #9

A Trip to the Hospital

I have to get my tonsils out.
I'm not really happy about it, but I'm tired of being sick and having sore throats.
I have to go to the hospital two hours before my surgery.
My mother will go with me.
The nurses will take my temperature and check my blood pressure.
They will make sure that I am ready for my operation.
I will be dressed in a white gown, and I will be wheeled down the hall to the operating room.
I can't have anything to eat or drink for a long time before my surgery.
My mother will walk down the hall with me; then she will wave goodbye as they wheel me into the operating room.
The doctor and the nurses will be busy in the operating room.
They will be getting ready to perform my surgery.
The doctor will say hello to me and tell me that he is going to put me to sleep.
He will put something into my arm.
He will tell me to count backwards from ten.
I think that I will only say "ten, nine," and then I will be fast asleep.
I won't be awake for the surgery.
When I wake up, I will be surprised that the surgery is over.
My throat will hurt, and I probably won't feel very good.
My mother will be there with me.
The nurses will give me a drink and try to make me comfortable.
I won't be in the hospital overnight.
I will go home later in the day.
My parents will have to make sure that I have a lot to drink.
I can't eat any hard foods or they will hurt my throat.
I will sleep a lot, because I will not feel very well for a couple of days.
It won't take long before I recover from my surgery.
Sometimes, we need surgery to make us feel better.
Hospitals can be a bit frightening, but the doctors and nurses are very nice, and their job is to make you better.

Article #10 What My Cat Did

One day I was sitting in a chair drinking a cup of tea.
My cat came into the room and sat on my lap.
She was quite content, and she sat there purring.
My cat likes to drink water, and sometimes she drinks milk.
I would never give her tea to drink.
Cats just don't drink tea.
We were sitting there quietly when suddenly my cat stood up.
She was looking at something on the floor.
She crouched down low and got ready to pounce.
It was a huge centipede.
I think that centipedes are ugly.
They have many legs, and they move very fast.

I would hate to have one crawl over me.
I was surprised that she caught the centipede.
She put her paw on it, and then she reached down and ate the centipede.
The centipede must not have tasted very good.
My cat got a funny look on her face, and she looked like she was trying to get a bad taste out of her mouth.
I was thinking that I would be sick if I ate a centipede.
My cat looked at me and jumped back up in my chair.
She stuck her face in my teacup and took a big drink of tea.
I was shocked.
I had never seen a cat drink tea before.
I think that the centipede must have tasted so bad that my cat just needed something to wash the taste out of her mouth
Guess what?
I didn't finish my tea.
I threw it out and washed out the cup.
My cat has never had a drink of tea since that day.
She has also never eaten another centipede.
If a centipede walks by, she just pretends that she doesn't see it.

Article #11 If I Was Tiny

Imagine what life would be like if you were two inches tall.
You would have to be careful that nobody stepped on you.
You would have to watch out for cats, dogs and birds.
It would be very dangerous, but just think of the things that you could do.
You could live in dollhouse, or even a shoebox.
You could use a bottle cap for a plate.
You would have to wear dolls' clothes.
A stamp would make a lovely picture to hang on your wall.
You could hide in a mouse hole or a drawer.
You wouldn't need much food.
You could probably live comfortably on the crumbs that people would leave on the table.
A thimble would make a good cup.
If you went outside, the grass would seem like a jungle.
An insect would be huge and frightening.
A puddle would seem to be an ocean.
You could cross the puddle in a paper cup and use a spoon for an oar.
A matchbox would make a good bed with a handkerchief as a bedspread.
You'd brush your hair with a toothbrush, but you'd never find anything small enough to brush your teeth with.
You could take a ride on the back of a mouse.
You wouldn't find any books that were small enough to read, but you might read the back of a pill bottle.
You could ride in a toy car and have a soup bowl for a swimming pool.
A leaf could be your umbrella, and a mitten would make a great sleeping bag.
If you used your imagination, you could think up something to use for almost all your

purposes.

Being small might be fun, but then again, it would be frightening.

I'd be afraid of my pet cat.

I wouldn't want a book to fall on me.

I would be afraid of being swept away by a big gust of wind.

I think I'd rather be my size.

Article #12 If I were a Giant

If I were a giant, I wouldn't be able to fit in my house.

I'd have to live in a building that had a high ceiling, but I'd probably have a hard time getting through the door.

I'd have to make my own clothes, but where would I get a giant needle and thread to sew with?

I couldn't ride in a car or a plane.

I suppose I would just have to take giant steps to get from place to place.

I would have to be very careful not to step on anybody or anything.

When I talked, people would cover their ears.

My voice would sound very loud to them.

I wouldn't find shoes to cover my feet.

I wouldn't find a knife and fork to eat my dinner with.

I might have to use a rake as a fork.

My dinner would be huge.

What would I cook my dinner in?

I certainly wouldn't find an oven big enough to put my dinner in.

If I sneezed, it would be like a hurricane.

If I fell down, it would be like an earthquake.

I wouldn't have any friends because everyone would be too tiny for me to talk to.

I think that being a giant would be very lonely.

I couldn't have just one apple.

I would have to have a lot of apples to fill me up.

I would have to drink gallons and gallons of water to quench my thirst.

I could never relax under a tree.

I would be taller than all the trees.

I don't think that being a giant would be fun.

I won't ever make a wish to be a giant.

I would rather be my height.

I'm very happy the way I am.

Article #13 Do People Have the Right to Smoke in Public?

My father used to smoke.

He got very ill.

The doctor told him that he had to quit smoking.

My father tried for a long time to quit.

It was very difficult for him.

Smoking is an addiction.
After many months, my father finally gave up smoking, but he still craved a cigarette once in a while.
He says that quitting smoking is the hardest thing that he has ever done.
When my father did smoke, he smoked everywhere.
He smoked in restaurants, stores and many public buildings.
Now, you are not allowed to smoke in a lot of public places.
When my father smoked, the rules were not so strict.
People could smoke just about anywhere.
It really wasn't fair to the people who didn't smoke.
Their clothes always smelled like smoke, and they breathed in second-hand smoke.
Some people think that second-hand smoke is actually worse for you than if you smoke yourself.
People would smoke in their houses, and very young children would inhale the smoke that was in the air.
Some people still smoke in their houses, and their children breathe in the smoke.
Some restaurants have areas for smokers and nonsmokers, but usually the smoke drifts from one area to the other.
There are some businesses that have banned smoking altogether.
Personally, I think that smoking in public places should be completely banned.
I don't think that I should have to breathe in another person's smoke if I choose not to smoke myself.
It wouldn't be fair for a nonsmoker to get lung cancer because they had to be in a place where smokers were allowed to light up.
I know that smoking is a powerful addiction and that it is very difficult to quit, but smokers should restrict their smoking to places where there is nobody else around.
Lung cancer is an awful disease.
Nobody should have to suffer with lung cancer.
People should be educated about the dangers of smoking.
Smoking should be banned in public places, but eventually I would like to believe that fewer people will smoke.
It would be nice to live in a smoke free environment.

Article #14 My Favorite Bedtime Story

Every night when I was little, my mother would read me a bedtime story.
My favorite story was Tom's Midnight Garden.
This was a story by Philippa Pearce.
It was quite a long book, and it took quite a few nights for my mother to read the entire book to me.
In Tom's Midnight Garden Tom moves to the city to stay with his aunt and uncle.
He is very bored at their apartment.
They have no children, so Tom has nothing to do.
One night, the clock strikes thirteen times.
Tom knows that this is impossible.
A clock can only strike up to twelve times.
He sneaks downstairs and goes outside.

When he gets outside, there is a wonderful garden that wasn't there the day before.
The next day, Tom goes outside and finds that there is no garden.
The garden only seems to appear at night.
Every night, Tom slips out to this wonderful garden, and he meets some people in the garden.
He meets a girl named Hattie.
Hattie and Tom become very good friends in this garden.
Some very strange things happen in this book.
There are some coincidences that keep you guessing about what is really going on.
The surprise ending is wonderful.
I really enjoyed Tom's Midnight Garden and I was very sad when my mother and I came to the end of the book.
I felt that I had visited the magical garden with Tom.
It is a book that I will remember all of my life.

Article #15 If I Found a Magic Lamp

If I was walking down the beach on day, and I happened to bump my toe on a magic lamp, I would pick it up and rub it.
If it was a real magic lamp (but I don't believe that there really is a magic lamp), a genie would pop out in a cloud of smoke, and he would call me master.
He would say that he would grant me three wishes.
I would have to think very hard about those wishes because I wouldn't want to waste them.
I don't think I'd want millions of dollars.
Money doesn't buy happiness, or so they say.
I might wish for good health, because if your health isn't good you won't be able to enjoy anything.
Some people might wish for beauty, but beauty is only skin deep.
Some people would wish for a mansion, or a beautiful car or a big boat.
I don't want any of those things.
Some people would want fame.
Some people would want talent.
Some people would wish for happiness.
That might be a good thing to wish for.
Yes, maybe I'd wish for health and happiness, but what would my third wish be?
I could wish for something enormous, something global.
I could wish for world peace.
That would be a wonderful thing if somebody could grant me that.
Yes, that would probably be my third wish.
It's too bad there aren't any genies inside magic lamps.
I won't get my three wishes.
I can still work toward getting my wishes.
I can eat well and exercise to stay healthy.
I can be involved with a lot of things and be with my friends to stay happy.
I can volunteer my time to different organizations to help achieve world peace.
I can do my fair share in my community to help others.

That's how I can get my three wishes, not through a magic lamp.
I can only get what I want through self-determination and hard work.
That is the key to getting your wishes fulfilled.

Article #16 Superstitions

I am not superstitious, are you?
Yesterday was Friday the thirteenth.
Some people think that Friday the thirteenth is an unlucky day.
I think that it is just like any other day.
Some people believe that if a black cat crosses your path, you will have bad luck.
I don't believe that either.
My mother always gets upset if I open an umbrella in the house.
She says that it is bad luck.
She is probably right about that one because an open umbrella would take up a lot of space, and you might knock things over.
If your left hand is itchy, you are supposed to get money.
I have had an itchy left hand before, but I haven't received any money because of it.
It is bad luck to walk under a ladder.
This is probably true because you might knock somebody off the ladder, or have a can of paint fall on top of you.
If you are acting in a play, it is bad luck if someone says "good luck" to you.
This is very confusing.
You are supposed to tell an actor to "break a leg."
It doesn't mean that you want the actor to break his leg.
It means good luck to the actor.
Actors have a lot of superstitions that are very unusual.
I am not superstitious.
I don't believe in superstitions at all.
It is just fun to learn about superstitions.
Some of them are very old and have been passed down from generation to generation.
I once did a project at school on superstitions.
It was a very interesting topic, and I got a good mark for it.

Article #17 Help

Did you ever have to call for help?
Were you ever in a situation that was an emergency?
It is good to know what to do in case of an emergency.
You should always know how to get in touch with the police and fire departments.
I have read stories where very young boys or girls have called the police and saved their friend's or family member's lives because they knew just who to get hold of.
If you see a fire, you should call the fire department.
A lot of tragedies have been prevented because the calls have been made quickly.
It is important that emergency vehicles arrive very quickly.
That is why those vehicles have sirens.

When their sirens go, it means to get out of the way.
Policemen, firemen and ambulance attendants are trained to handle very difficult situations.
They often save peoples' lives.
They go through a lot of training to become good at what they do.
They never panic in emergencies.
For your part, you should keep emergency numbers near the phone, or know what the emergency numbers are.
Where I live, there is a special number that you call for any emergency.
We teach that number to everyone, even very tiny children.
It is important to remain calm if you need help.
If you call an emergency number, you have to be able to speak clearly, and tell the person you are talking to exactly what the problem is.
I hope you are never in an emergency situation, but it is a good idea to be prepared.

Article #18 The Peach Orchard

When I was very young, I lived near a peach orchard.
Now, there is a park where the orchard used to be.
I always remember the peach orchard because my grandmother and I used to go there and pick peaches.
The owner of the orchard would let all the neighbors pick peaches.
It's not the fact that I used to get many ripe, tasty peaches that I remember; it's the time that I used to spend with my grandmother that I remember.
My grandmother was very old, but she was very healthy.
She used to walk a lot.
I think that is what kept her fit.
She had a lot of energy so she liked to go to a lot of places.
She would get a fruit basket, and then she would ask me if I wanted to go to the orchard.
I always said yes because I enjoyed walking through the orchard on a sunny day.
We never climbed up on a ladder to reach the peaches;
we just reached for the low hanging fruit.
My grandmother and I used to talk all the time that we were out there.
It was nice to spend time with her.
She told me many stories about when she was a young girl.
We laughed and got to know each other better.
My grandmother only visited us during the summer.
She lived in California, and I lived in Niagara Falls, so we didn't get to spend a lot of time with each other.
We enjoyed the hot summer days in the orchard.
You could smell the peaches, and the bees buzzed lazily by us.
My grandmother would point out different insects and birds to me.
I learned a lot about nature from her.
We would end up with a big basket of peaches.
When we got home, my mother would wash the peaches, and often she would bake a peach pie for us.
Nobody bakes a peach pie like my mother.

It's good to have memories like that.
Childhood memories of time spent with my grandmother are very precious to me.
Sometimes, it's just the simple things that you do in life that leave you with the nicest memories.

Article #19 Learning to Dance

I went to England with my mother.
She used to be a singer in a band.
We went to the hotel that she used to sing at.
It was a big fancy hotel.
Some of the people that she knew when she sang in the band were still there.
They remembered my mother, and they had a good time talking to her and remembering old times.
Many people told me that I looked like my mother.
In the hotel, they had a fancy hall where they had ballroom dancing.
I am not used to that kind of dancing.
I always dance to rock music.
A man told me that he would teach me how to dance.
It looked very easy.
I held one of his hands, and put my other hand on his shoulder.
He told me exactly how to move my feet.
I was very clumsy, and I stepped on his toes.
He was patient with me, and he counted "one, two, three."
I tried to waltz with him.
I would start out pretty well, but then I would get mixed up and stand on his toes again.
The man laughed about it.
I told him that I wasn't a very good dancer, but he said that I was good for a beginner.
I think he was just being polite.
The man asked my mother to dance.
My mother is a very good dancer.
I didn't know that about her.
She never stepped on the man's toes once.
The man thanked us for dancing with him, and I thanked him for giving me dancing lessons.
I don't think I'll ever be very good at that type of dancing.
Each generation has a specific type of dancing.
The way that I dance is different from the way that my mother dances.
The way that I dance doesn't involve moving your feet too much.
I'm not too good at fancy steps.

Article #20 Super Heroes

When my brother was very young, he loved super heroes.
He collected plastic figures of all the super heroes.
I think he had every super hero figurine that there was.

He used to tie a towel over his shoulders and run through the back yard.
He pretended that he was rescuing people.
One time he stood on the roof.
He really thought that he could fly with his super hero cape on.
He would have hurt himself if he had jumped.
My dad saw him and told him to get down.
My dad explained to my brother that super heroes are not real.
Real people cannot fly from rooftops.
My brother was disappointed.
He thought that the super heroes really existed.
My dad explained that most super heroes were created as comic book characters.
Somebody used their imagination to make them up, and then an artist drew them.
My brother was not impressed.
He said that he wanted to meet the super heroes.
My father told him that he might meet someone dressed up as a super hero, but it wouldn't really be a super hero in the costume.
It is hard to explain to small children that the things that they see in comic books and on television aren't really real.
My brother still pretends that he is a super hero.
He doesn't jump from rooftops, but he runs around and makes noises like he is flying.
I look at him and remember when I used to do things like that.
I'm more mature than my brother.
I know that super heroes aren't real, but I know that he is having fun and using his imagination.

Article #21 Being a Princess

Sometimes, I think that I would like to be a princess.
A princess would live in a palace and wear beautiful clothes.
She would have servants to do chores for her, and she would probably marry a handsome prince.
People would recognize her.
They would wave to her as she drove by.
It seems like it would be a lot of fun to be a princess.
But maybe it wouldn't be so nice.
Maybe it would be terrible to be recognized by everyone.
Maybe a princess would feel like everyone was watching her.
She would have to look nice every time she left the palace.
There would always be people with cameras who wanted to take her picture.
A princess would have no privacy.
Even in her own palace there would be servants around, so she would never really be alone.
If I were a princess, I would worry about security for my family.
Sometimes, people who are in high positions are threatened by other people.
That would be a worry.
I'm not so sure that being a princess would be all that much fun.
I think it might be better to be just a normal person like me.

I don't have to worry about looking wonderful all the time.
People don't follow me around and take my picture.
Whenever you see a picture of a princess, she is smiling.
I wonder if she is smiling on the inside, or just smiling for the camera.

Article #22 My Worst Fear

I am afraid of water.
I don't know why I am afraid.
I have never had a bad experience in the water.
I just never learned to swim.
I should have done that when I was just little.
It would be easier for me to swim now if I had started when I was young.
I will go into the shallow water, but I start to panic when the water gets higher than my chest.
I don't like the feeling of not being able to put my feet on the bottom of the pool or the lake.
I don't like to get water up my nose.
I choke and cough when that happens.
My friends just tell me to relax and I will float, but I find it hard to relax in deep water.
They keep telling me that if I panic I will sink.
Most of my friends have had swimming lessons.
Some of them are even lifeguards.
They have tried to teach me to swim, but I think I need to go to a place where they actually teach swimming.
It would be so nice to jump into a pool of cold water on a hot summer day.
That would be so refreshing.
If I go out onto a boat, I always wear a life jacket.
I think it is wise to do that.
Everyone should wear a life jacket on a boat.
I would rather be safe than sorry.
I have decided that I will overcome my fear.
I will go and take swimming lessons.
I have a goal.
By this time next year, I would like to be able to swim the length of the pool without being afraid.
It is best to face your fears and deal with them.
I hope that I can overcome my fear of water.

Article #23 If I Live to be 100

It is an entire century.
Imagine all the changes that you would see if you lived to be 100.
I had a neighbor who was 85.
She used to tell me what things were like when she was a little girl.
She told me what my town used to look like, what her clothes were like, and what her

school was like.
I used to enjoy listening to her stories.
Everything was so different when she was young.
Listening to her was like having history come to life.
I used to try to imagine what life was like for her back then.
If I was 100, and I had grandchildren and great grandchildren, I would tell them stories about my childhood.
I would hope that I had a good memory so that I could remember everything.
If I do want to live to be 100, I'll have to live a healthy lifestyle.
Not too many people live to be that old.
If I do get to be that old, I hope I'll still be mentally alert and physically agile.
In my country, the Prime Minister sends a letter of congratulations to anyone who has their hundredth birthday.
People who live to be 100 are very special.
Maybe in the future with better medical care and healthier lifestyles, more people will live to be 100.
If I live to be 100, I'll have a birthday cake, but I won't put 100 candles on the cake.
I could never blow out 100 candles.

Article #24 What I Like Most and Least About Myself

I was trying to think up the best and the worst things about myself.
I think the best thing about me is that I am very friendly.
I have a lot of friends, and they all like me.
I try to be good to my friends.
I don't often have arguments with people.
I think that I am quite easy to get along with.
The worst thing about me is that I sometimes feel sad.
Sometimes I don't feel sad for any particular reason.
I just get into moods where I am depressed.
Sometimes there is a reason to be sad.
I was sad when my pet frog died.
I was sad when I lost my favorite baseball card.
On those days, I'm still nice to my friends, but inside I feel like there is a heavy weight in my chest.
I think that everyone feels sadness sometimes.
I try to do things that make me happy whenever I get into one of my sad moods.
Last Saturday, I felt a bit sad so I called up my friend John and asked him if he wanted to go to the movies.
We went to a comedy.
We laughed all the way through the movie, so that by the time the movie was over, I didn't feel sad anymore.
My friendliness is my best trait, and my sad moods are my worst traits.
I have to work at getting over my sad moods more quickly.
Being sad doesn't do anyone any good.
There is no use in feeling sorry for oneself.

Article #25 The Trunk in the Attic

Last month my grandmother asked me if I could help her to clean out her attic.
I was happy that she asked me.
My grandmother says that her attic is full of junk.
I think that her attic is full of treasures.
I helped her to dust and vacuum the attic.
I pulled and pushed around boxes and crates.
I helped her to wash the floors and walls.
My favorite thing that I did was to sort through the old trunk that she had up there.
The trunk had a rusty latch on it.
It was a bit difficult to open, but my grandmother got a knife and pried the latch open.
The trunk was full of all kinds of things.
There were lots of clothes.
Some of the clothes had been my grandmother's.
There was a blue velvet dress that she had worn to a dance when she and my grandfather were dating.
It was a beautiful dress, but there were a few moth holes in it.
There were some of my mother's old clothes.
There was a pair of bell-bottom slacks that had bright flowers on it.
I couldn't believe that my mother had ever worn something like that.
There were some of my mother's old report cards.
Some of her marks weren't very good.
I had fun reading the report cards.
There were photographs.
There was a picture of my grandparents holding my mother when she was a baby.
There was an old baseball glove that one of my uncles had owned.
There was even one of my old dolls in there.
One of her legs was missing.
My grandmother said that I was rough with my dolls when I was little.
I should have taken better care of my toys.
There was even some old jewellery.
I tried on some of the old clothes and jewellery.
I told my grandmother that I liked looking through old things.
My grandmother told me to keep whatever I wanted.
She said that it was all junk.
I still say that the trunk was full of treasures.

Article #26 Hot and Cold

I notice that whenever it is summer, people complain about the heat, but whenever it is winter, people complain about the cold.
It seems that people are never satisfied.
I don't like the winter.
It is usually much too cold for me.
My teeth chatter, and my fingers turn numb whenever the weather gets cold.

It is hard for me to warm up once I start to freeze.
I try to wear layers of clothes, but winter winds go through my clothes no matter how much I wear.
My feet feel like they are blocks of ice on a cold January day when I walk home from school.
I would not like to live in a place that had a cold climate all year long.
I am not comfortable when it is too cold.
I like the summer.
Some people say that it is hot and sticky in the summer, but I don't mind the heat at all.
I love to feel the warm sunshine on my skin.
I like the freedom of not having to wear heavy coats and boots.
I am the happiest when there is a slightly cool breeze that comes along to refresh you on a hot summer day.
I could live in a place with a hot climate.
I would enjoy that.
Of course, when you are in a place with a hot climate there are more bugs than in places with cooler climates.
I don't care for bugs.
Where I live, it is very humid.
The heat and moisture combine to make it uncomfortable sometimes.
It is nicer when the heat is high, but the humidity is low.
It would be better if I lived somewhere where it was hot, but not humid.
That would be just perfect.

Article #27 Walk a Mile in My Shoes

Have you ever heard the saying "walk a mile in my shoes?"
I think it is a very good saying.
Do you know what it means?
It means, that before you judge someone, you should put yourself in his or her position.
For example, if someone was running in a race, and they did very poorly and came in last it wouldn't be fair to say, "oh, he's just a terrible runner."
You would have to look at all the circumstances that made the person lose the race.
Maybe they pulled a muscle in their leg the day before; maybe this is their very first race; maybe they are not in good form because something isn't right in their lives.
There can be so many things that affect a person's life, performance and moods.
If someone was very quiet at a party, you couldn't just assume that they weren't friendly.
You don't know what is happening in their lives.
They could be feeling ill, or they might have just had a bad experience.
Nobody can know exactly how another person feels.
Even if someone tells you what he or she is experiencing, you still won't fully understand what is going on inside the other person.
Everyone perceives and feels things differently.
To walk a mile in someone else's shoes is to try and understand things from that person's perspective.
We are all shaped by the events that have taken place in our lives.
No two people have gone through the exact same things.

So, before you are quick to judge someone, stop and think about what it is that they might have gone through.
You won't always understand why people do what they do, but you can try to understand and put yourself in their position.

Article #28 If I Could Go Back in My Life

If I could go back in my life and do some things differently, this is what I would do:
I would not waste so many hours in front of the television set.
I would get out and enjoy my own life, rather than watching actors in shows.
I would be a little more considerate of other people.
I would realize that my mother has more to do than pick up after me.
I would pay more attention in school.
Tests are easier when you have paid attention, rather than fooling around in class.
I would save more money rather than spend it on useless things.
I would read more.
Reading is enjoyable, and it opens the doors into all kinds of wonderful places both real and imagined.
I would learn to play an instrument.
Music is always appreciated if it is played well.
I would eat better foods.
I would try to stay healthy through my diet and exercise.
I would take more pictures, and I would keep a journal.
Memories are very precious.
I would take the time to listen to what people have to say.
People appreciate a good listener.
I would take the time to enjoy each day as it comes.
Sometimes, I am so busy looking forward to what is coming up that I don't take the time to enjoy the day that I am living in.
That's what I would do if I could go back in my life.
In fact, I think I'll just make a habit of doing all of those things all through my life.
I think I would like to live to be 100.

Article #29 Joking

Joking is good.
Jokes can be very funny.
Jokes can also be hurtful.
Jokes can be tasteless too.
It is not an easy thing to find jokes that do not offend anyone.
Some jokes make fun of different races.
Those jokes are not funny.
They are hurtful.
It is not right to tell racist jokes.
Many jokes use bad language or are about questionable subject matter.
These jokes are also not acceptable.

Many people are highly offended by rude jokes.
What some people find funny, others will not.
Comedy is a very personal thing.
Some people like slapstick comedy.
That is the kind of comedy that the Three Stooges use.
Some people like very subtle humor.
Some people will laugh at just about anything.
Sometimes, it is not appropriate to laugh, but you feel like laughing anyway.
Did you ever see anyone fall down?
Did you feel like laughing when they fell down?
You were probably worried that they had hurt themselves, yet the way that they fell was so funny that you felt like laughing.
It's not funny when someone falls, but you can't help but laugh even though you try to hide it.
Jokes and comedy differ from culture to culture.
Many people from other countries come here and don't understand our comedy.
Jokes and comedies are often geared toward our environment.
Sometimes, comedians make fun of the things that we do in our everyday lives like going to the bank, or going grocery shopping.
We can all relate to that.
Being a comedian is not an easy job.
Telling jokes and making people laugh is extremely difficult.
Jokes are fun, and they are funny if they are good.
Jokes can get you into a lot of trouble if they are inappropriate, and sometimes they're just not funny and nobody laughs.
Here is a joke.
Why does a cow wear a bell?
- because its horns don't work
Do you get it?
Do you think it is funny?
Well, maybe it's not that funny.
I told you that it was difficult being a comedian.

Article #30 Drugs

There are two different types of drugs.
There are legal drugs and illegal drugs.
Legal drugs are the type of drugs that the doctor gives you when you are sick.
Illegal drugs are the drugs that people sell on the street.
Illegal drugs are very dangerous.
If someone ever wants you to try any type of substance that you are not sure about, you should always say no.
People who sell drugs on the street are criminals.
If they get caught, they will be sent to jail.
They sell drugs to get money.
They don't care that people's lives are ruined from taking drugs.
If you take illegal drugs, you can become addicted to them.

That means that you just have to have the drug no matter what.
Some people steal from other people to get money to buy drugs.
Drugs affect your mind.
If you take drugs, you will not be able to think clearly.
Your marks in school will drop.
Your memory won't be very good.
Your personality won't be the same.
It is very unfortunate that some people do try drugs.
They think that it won't hurt them.
They are wrong.
If you are smart, you will stay away from all drugs, except for the ones that the doctor gives you.
Drugs are just bad news.
If you know someone who is thinking about trying drugs, tell them that their entire life could be ruined.
In America, they had a saying.
"Just say no to drugs."
It is a good saying, but I think I would rather say, "I'm just too smart to take drugs."

Article #31 Divorce

Mary's parents just got a divorce.
Mary is very upset.
She thinks that her parents don't love her anymore.
She thinks that they got a divorce because of her.
She is wrong.
Her parents love her just as much as they always did.
They aren't getting divorced because of Mary.
Sometimes, marriages just don't work out.
It isn't really anyone's fault.
Marriage isn't easy.
It is hard for two people to stay together for a lifetime.
Sometimes, people change as they get older, and they move on.
Some people have perfectly good marriages, and they stay together for their entire lives.
Divorce doesn't happen because the parents don't love the children anymore.
A lot of children feel that it is their fault, but it isn't their fault at all.
Children neither cause the divorce, nor can they prevent it.
It is up to the parents.
Divorce isn't the end of the world.
Children can still see both parents and stay with them.
Life goes on.
Sometimes children can get new stepmothers or stepfathers.
That can be a good thing.
You just have to be understanding, and know that your parents still love you.
Life doesn't always go the way that we planned it, but it has its twists and turns.
Life is an adventure.
If your parents get a divorce, just be understanding.

Know that they love you and that this is a hard time for them.
It is a hard time for you too, but these things have a way of working themselves out in the end.

Article #32 If my Fish Could Talk

I have a goldfish.
He swims around in his bowl all day.
He looks bored.
I look inside the bowl and watch him.
His mouth always moves.
He looks like he is talking.
I imagine what my goldfish would say if he really could talk.
I think he would say:
"Hey, I'm bored in this little bowl.
Why don't you get me a bigger tank with more fish in it?
I would like to have some friends to swim around with."
I went out and bought a bigger tank for my goldfish.
I put some plants at the bottom of the tank,
and I got a miniature deep-sea diver to put at the bottom of the tank.
I looked into the tank and imagined what my goldfish was saying.
He seemed to be saying:
"This is a nice tank.
It's roomy in here, and you decorated it well,
but I still don't have any friends to swim with."
I went to the pet store and bought three more goldfish.
I put them into the tank.
All of the goldfish seemed to look at each other.
They swam near each other and seemed to be playing games.
I knew which one was my goldfish because he has a black spot on his fin.
I looked at him, and imagined that he was talking again.
He said:
"This is great!
I have a big new home and friends to swim with.
These are nice goldfish that you brought home for me; thank you."
Goldfish can't really talk.
I know that.
I just like to pretend that my goldfish talks.
He seems very happy now with his nice new home, and his new friends.
I don't think goldfish can smile either, but it looks like my goldfish has a smile on his face.

Article #33 The Best Teacher

I have had a lot of teachers.
Some of them were good, and some of them were boring.
There is one teacher whom I remember very well.

He is the best teacher that I ever had.
His name was Mr. Alban.
He was a history teacher.
History is not my favorite subject.
I don't really enjoy history a lot.
When I was in Mr. Alban's class, he made history seem exciting.
He was more of an actor than a teacher.
If he was describing a war, he would make us feel all the emotions that the soldiers and their families would have felt.
We could almost hear the guns firing and the people shouting.
He would paint a picture in our minds that was very vivid.
When I had a history test in his class, I didn't have to study much.
I would remember every word that he had said.
I would see him doing the actions that went along with his stories.
He was very animated.
He would shout out orders as if he was a general, or he would speak softly and reverently when describing the death of a great hero.
The most important thing that I learned from Mr. Alban was that I did really like history.
I just thought that I didn't like it because most people had made it dull by just reading from the textbooks.
History is not just a series of dates and dull facts.
History is what really happened.
History is real life.
All the historical figures had real families and emotions.
They weren't just fictional people.
After I took history from Mr. Alban, I realized that I really did have an interest in it.
He was my favorite teacher, and I will always be grateful to him for making me aware of just how interesting history really is.

Article #34 Weather

Sometimes, I watch the weatherman on television.
It is fascinating to watch him point to different areas of the country on the map.
He tells us where the weather will be nice and where it will be bad.
The weatherman is not always right.
Weather reporting is not an exact science.
Nothing is very exact when it comes to the weather.
The weather department does a lot of research, but they can never be sure of exactly what will happen.
Sometimes, it looks like it will be clear,
but the wind changes direction and clouds move in.
The weatherman can warn people if there is a chance of a hurricane or tornado.
The weatherman can also warn people of floods.
Sometimes, entire towns have to be evacuated because of bad weather.
It is important to be aware of the weather.
For example, it is not good to be caught in the middle of a field when there is going to be a thunderstorm.

You might want to take extra precautions if there is going to be a heavy snowstorm.
You would need to be in a secure place if a hurricane or tornado was predicted.
You might want to cancel a picnic if you knew that it would rain that day.
The weather affects us in so many ways.
Some people are really affected by dull, cloudy days.
If there are no sunny days, they become very depressed.
Heavy air pressure can cause some people to have headaches.
Weather affects all of us in one way or another.
It is always a topic of conversation.
People often say things like "hello, it's a beautiful day today."
Often we plan our lives and activities around the weather.
So, if you are planning on walking home tonight, keep an eye on the sky.
Are those rain clouds up there?
You might need an umbrella.

Article #35 How to Avoid Catching a Cold

How many colds do you catch in a year?
Most of my friends catch quite a few colds.
They cough, snuffle and sneeze.
They carry around tissues and blow their noses all the time.
Their eyes water, and they have scratchy throats.
I don't get many colds.
In fact, I can go for a whole year and never catch a cold.
That is why I consider myself an expert on how not to catch a cold.
I'll tell you how to avoid catching a cold.
I think that you need to take a lot of vitamin C.
I eat a lot of fruits and vegetables.
I drink fruit juice too.
I also take vitamin C pills.
Whenever I begin to feel a cold coming on, I make sure that I have taken my vitamin C pill,
and I drink a lot of orange juice.
That usually knocks the cold right out of my system.
I make sure that I get a lot of fresh air.
In the winter, a lot of buildings are shut up tight so that the air is stale, and people's
germs circulate through the buildings.
I get outside and breathe in fresh clean air.
If somebody is rude enough to cough or sneeze right in front of me without covering his
or her mouth, I just hold my breath for a second.
I'm not sure if this works or not, but I don't want to breathe in anybody's cold germs.
Many germs are passed through hands.
It is important to wash your hands thoroughly if you touch anything in a public place.
If I hold a banister while I am walking down the stairs, I think of all the people who have
used that banister, and I make sure that I wash my hands before I eat.
Doorknobs also have a lot of germs on them.
Money is another thing that is passed from hand to hand and is covered with germs.
Sometimes, I see people stick money into their mouths.

Just think of all the germs that you would be putting into your mouth if you did that.
If you just give it a little bit of thought, you can avoid a lot of the germs that cause colds.
If you eat good foods and stay fit, your body will be able to fight off the germs that cause colds and other diseases.
It is not always possible to avoid colds, but if you do catch a cold, drink plenty of fluids and get a lot of rest.

Article #36 The Future

I sometimes wonder what life will be like in the future.
Life has changed so much in just the past few years.
I'm sure that there are still big changes that are coming.
Do you think we'll still drive cars?
Maybe we'll get into computerized vehicles that we won't have to drive.
We'll just push a few buttons, and the vehicles will take us to wherever we have to go.
Maybe there won't be roads.
We might just fly through space to get where we want to go.
Instead of telephones, we'll just use our computers.
We'll be able to see each other when we talk.
That type of thing is already happening.
Maybe we won't have to cook our meals.
We might be able to push buttons to order whatever we want.
A nice roast beef dinner, or an ice cream sundae, might just pop out of a machine.
It would be nice to have a robot to clean the house for you.
In the past few years, computers have been extremely important.
People used to write to each other through the mail.
Now, people communicate so much more frequently through E-mail.
Most of my friends own computers.
If we had all of these things to do the work for us, what would we do?
We would still need people to program the computers.
We could spend more time being creative, rather than doing everyday chores.
The future holds many surprises.
I'm sure that technology will become even more and more amazing.
When my parents were young, they had never even seen a color television.
Nobody owned a computer.
It doesn't take long for things to change a lot.
Who knows what amazing things are in store for us?

Article #37 Giving a Speech

I had to give a speech last week.
I gave a speech to three hundred people.
I had to speak in front of a group of students.
I had to tell them about a campaign that we were having to raise money for cancer research.
Giving a speech can be a difficult thing.

When you stand in front of a big crowd,
you can get very nervous.
Some people feel like they have weak knees.
Their legs feel as if they are made of rubber.
Their heart beats very hard inside of their chest.
Their palms get sweaty.
Some people even become short of breath.
For some people, giving a speech is their worst fear.
When you give a speech, everyone is looking at you.
They are waiting to hear what you have to say.
When you have three hundred people looking at you; you have six hundred eyes that are on you.
It is a little frightening when you think of it that way.
Before I give a speech, I take three big breaths.
I calm myself, and I remind myself that what I have to say is important.
I like to be sure of what I am going to say, so I practice my speech in front of a mirror at home.
I like to look like I am relaxed and friendly.
They say that practice makes perfect; so the more speeches that you give, the better you will become at it.
Whenever I have to give a speech, I imagine that the audience is just one big person.
I look out into the audience until I find a friendly, smiling face.
I focus on that person, and I pretend that I am just talking to them.
I have become used to giving speeches.
I am more relaxed now than I used to be.
People tell me that I do not look nervous at all.
I like to hear that.
Sometimes I do feel a little flutter of nervousness, but I just ignore it and do the best that I can.
Giving a speech is not as scary as it appears to be.
Anyone can do it with a little practice.

Article #38 Moving to Another Country

My friend Steve moved to another country.
He had lived in Canada all his life, and he moved to Japan.
Life in Japan was very different for Steve than what he was used to.
At first, Steve suffered from culture shock.
His whole life seemed different.
He was not used to the way of life in Japan.
Steve was not used to the large crowds of people that walked up and down the streets in Japan.
In his hometown in Canada, the streets were fairly quiet.
Steve had to get used to the food.
In Japan, the people eat a lot of fish.
Steve had never eaten much fish before.
Steve wanted pizza, but it was expensive in Japan.

Steve said that he had to adjust his eating habits.
The people in Japan have different customs than we do here in Canada.
Steve didn't want to offend anyone, so he had to learn the customs.
He had to learn about what Japanese people considered polite and rude.
Sometimes, in a foreign country you can do something to insult someone without even realizing that you are being rude.
At first, Steve had trouble with the language.
He said that the only way to really learn the language is to talk to people.
Steve talked to a lot of people.
He made a lot of mistakes, but people were patient with him, and they tried to help him with his Japanese.
It wasn't long before Steve felt more comfortable in his new surroundings.
You have to be willing to learn new customs and a new language if you move to another country.
Steve feels very comfortable in Japan, and in Canada now.
He is thinking about going to another country now.
He thinks that he might like to try and live in Italy.
I'm sure that he would get over his culture shock very fast if he moved there.
Moving to a new country can be difficult, but if you are willing to learn, it can be a very rewarding experience.

Article #39 Look for the Beauty

I have learned that things don't always go the way that they were planned.
If something doesn't happen the way that I want it to,
I try to make the best of the situation.
I always try to find something good in everything that happens.
Last year, I broke my ankle when I was walking on an icy sidewalk.
At first, I was very upset.
I was missing school, and there was a party that I wanted to go to.
I couldn't do very much of anything.
My ankle was very sore.
I stayed home, and I read a book.
It was an excellent book, and one that I probably would not have had time to read under normal circumstances.
My friends brought my homework to my house, and we had some really nice visits while they were here.
I had to accept the fact that I couldn't go anywhere on my broken ankle, so I made the best of a bad situation.
Once, I lost my way when I was out camping.
I ended up in a very large field.
I was afraid that nobody would find me, but I calmed myself down and took time to examine all the interesting wildflowers in the field.
My family did find me.
They were surprised at how calm I was.
I have learned that there is something valuable inside every adventure and something beautiful inside every person.

We had a new boy who came into our class.
His clothes weren't in style, and he was not particularly handsome.
Some of the boys and girls made fun of him.
Sometimes, people can be really cruel.
He seemed to handle it all right, but inside, I knew that it must hurt.
Some of my friends and I invited him out with us.
We found out that he had a terrific sense of humor,
and he is probably one of the nicest people that I have ever met.
He has since become one of my best friends.
It makes me ashamed when someone that I know judges someone by how they look.
It isn't fair to do that.
You'll find that something good comes out of almost every situation.
You'll find something good about almost everyone that you meet if you look hard enough.
If something doesn't work out the way you planned it, just make the best of the situation.
Look for the beauty in everything.

Article #40 My Doll

When I was an infant, I got a rag doll.
It was a very plain, little doll, and it wore a clown outfit and a clown's hat.
I used to take that doll to bed with me every night.
I couldn't go to bed without my doll.
My mother used to pretend that the doll was talking to me.
She would make the doll dance and sing songs.
I would talk to the doll.
My mother would answer for the doll, but I was a baby, and I thought that the doll was actually talking to me.
That doll was my best friend.
I took her everywhere.
One time I took her to a store with me, and I left her on a shelf in the store.
We were halfway home when I realized that I didn't have my doll with me.
I was very upset.
My mother and I rushed back to the store.
My doll was still there.
I was so relieved.
I hugged my doll, and I promised myself that I would never leave her anywhere again.
I couldn't imagine life without that doll.
Through the years, the doll became less important in my life.
I had other things to do, but the doll still sat on my bed during the day, and I still took it to bed at night.
I gave that doll a lot of love when I was little.
In fact, I loved the doll so much that she looks tattered and torn now.
There are parts of her face and hands that are almost worn away.
I had a lot of other toys when I was little, but none of them were ever so important as that doll.
I don't play with toys anymore, but that doll is still in my room.
She sits in a special chair in the corner.

I'll always have that doll.
No matter how worn out she is, I'll always keep her and cherish her as a part of my early childhood.

Article #41 I am Curious

I am curious about many things.
I would like to find the answers to a lot of questions that I have.
What holds the stars up in the sky?
Why does ice form on the top of the lake when it is cold?
Is there life on other planets?
Why do we not fall off the face of the earth?
How do caterpillars turn into butterflies?
All of these things are mysteries to me.
There are so many questions that are unanswered.
I think I should go to the library and get a book to find out why people grow old.
What makes a television work?
I also want to know where electricity comes from.
Who is the strongest person in the world?
Who is the smartest person in the world?
Why do some people have blonde hair, and some people have black hair?
Why do people in different countries speak different languages?
Why do people have to die?
Why are no two snowflakes alike?
What makes people fall in love?
What makes the rivers run?
Why does the sun rise every morning?
How did the oceans form?
Why did the dinosaurs vanish from the earth?
I wonder if I'll ever find out the answers to all my questions.
I think I'll have to study hard and stay in school to find out everything that I want to know.
Some questions never get answered.
It is good to be curious.
People who are curious about things are the ones who learn a lot, and some curious people go on to invent things and make important discoveries.

Article #42 Creative People

Some people are just born to create.
That's what I think.
Some people just have the need to write stories, compose beautiful music, or paint pictures.
Creativity seems to be inside them, and they need to let it out.
It's good that we have people like that.
Composers like Mozart and Chopin have given us music that is incredibly beautiful.
It's not just the classical composers who have given us great pieces of music; there are

modern composers who have written great songs also.
Elton John is an example of someone who has composed many wonderful songs.
Andrew Lloyd Webber has given us some very popular musicals like Cats and The Phantom of the Opera.
There are so many talented and creative people in this world.
When you visit an art gallery, you marvel at how artists are able to recreate realism or make up something that seems totally unreal yet beautiful.
The American artist Norman Rockwell painted some pictures that actually looked like photographs.
He tried to portray life as it was in America.
Through his paintings, one can get a good sense of American life through the years.
On the other hand, artists like Jackson Pollock did not portray realism.
Jackson Pollock painted abstract pictures.
His paintings are just as good as Norman Rockwell's, but they are entirely different.
Some books that we read are classics.
Mark Twain portrayed American life through his characters Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn.
Charles Dickens brought Victorian England to life through his books.
Most people are familiar with his Christmas Carol where the mean and miserable Scrooge learns the true meaning of Christmas.
People don't have to read the classics.
There are modern writers who entertain readers through their stories.
Stephen King has written a number of horror stories.
Some of his books have even been made into movies.
We are lucky to have creative people who share their gifts with us.
If you are lucky enough to be creative, you should use your talents to create works of art that we all can share.

Article #43 Career Choices

What do you want to be when you grow up?
There are so many things that you can be.
You might want to work in the field of law.
You could be a police officer.
You could be a judge or a lawyer.
Maybe you'd like to work in the food industry.
You could be a cook or a waitress.
You might want to manage a hotel dining room.
Perhaps you would want to do room service in a hotel.
You could be a chef and make fancy meals for people.
Maybe show business is what you'd like to be involved in.
You could act in television shows or movies.
You could sing or play an instrument in a band.
If you like to help people, you could go into medicine.
You could be a doctor or a nurse.
You might be a surgeon and operate on people.
There are other jobs in the field of medicine too.

You could be an x-ray technician or a lab technician.
It takes a lot of education to be a doctor.
Maybe you would rather be a teacher.
You could teach in a primary school or a high school.
If you don't want to work with children, you could become a professor at a university.
There are hundreds of other jobs to choose from too.
You might want to fix cars or work in a store.
You could be a dentist or a veterinarian.
You could be a janitor or a zookeeper.
There are so many jobs that I just can't name them all.
Maybe you'd like to be a minister or an organist at a church.
You could be a babysitter or a shop clerk.
You might be interested in being an astronaut or a baker.
You could work in a bank or at a shop.
You could work on a construction crew and build roads and houses.
Maybe you'd rather decorate the houses, so you'd become an interior decorator.
You could cut hair or be a driving instructor.
The list is endless.
There are even jobs that you may never have heard about.
The choice is yours.
You just choose whatever you want to be and do your best to become that.
I could go on forever . . . you could work in a library.
You could be a factory worker or a fisherman.
You could make clothes or build bridges.
You could wash windows or be a bricklayer.
The possibilities are endless.

Article #44 I Need Glasses

I have been having trouble seeing the blackboard.
Everything is blurry.
I keep getting headaches.
I told my mother about it, and she made an appointment with the optometrist.
I went to a place where they made me read words and letters on a chart.
Some of the words were big, and some were very small.
I tried to read everything, but sometimes I couldn't see some of the small letters.
The optometrist would cover one of my eyes while I read the chart.
Then, she would cover my other eye.
She even put some drops in my eyes.
I asked the optometrist if I had passed or failed the test.
She laughed, and said that it wasn't the kind of test that you passed or failed.
She was just trying to find out if I needed glasses.
I did need glasses.
My mother and I looked around.
There were many pairs of frames.
I wanted something that was in style.
I tried on many pairs of frames.

Some of them looked good on me, and some of them looked really funny on me.
I finally chose a frame that was my favorite.
I gave them to a lady who did some measurements.
She told me to come back on Friday to get my glasses.
On Friday, I got my glasses.
My friends liked them.
They said I looked smart in my glasses.
I wore them to school on Monday, and I was able to see the blackboard clearly.
I didn't realize how much I hadn't been able to see.
Now I don't get headaches anymore.
I'm glad that I have my glasses.
Everything is a lot clearer now.

Article #45 I am Clumsy

My mother says that I am clumsy.
My father says that I am clumsy.
I know that I am clumsy.
I do things all the time that are clumsy.
I fall down for no reason at all.
If there is a crack in the sidewalk, I will be sure to trip on it and fall down.
If I carry a plate of food in the cafeteria, I almost always either drop it or bump into someone with it.
I don't try to do these things, it just happens.
When I drink juice, I miss my mouth and get juice all over my shirt.
I always have something spilled on my clothes.
Last week I opened a jar of peanut butter.
The jar flew out of my hands and landed upside down on the floor.
There was a big glob of peanut butter on the floor.
Yesterday I knocked over the sugar bowl.
There was a big sticky mess on the floor.
I bump my head when I get into the car.
I rip my pants on things.
I lose my money out of my pockets.
I step on the cat's tail.
I always feel bad when I do that because the cat thinks I don't love her.
I don't mean to do these things.
I am just a clumsy person.
My parents tell me to slow down.
I am always in a hurry; maybe that's why I'm so clumsy.
Maybe it's just a stage that I am going through.
If it is, I hope it is over soon.
Being clumsy is no fun at all.

Article #46 Home Alone

I remember the first time that my parents left me home alone.
I was very grown up, and I thought that I would be just fine.
I was fine for a while.
I watched television and had something to eat.
I called my friend on the phone, and we talked for a while.
Then, I sat down to read a book.
The house was quiet, very quiet.
I found myself listening very carefully.
I heard a tap, tap tapping noise.
I wondered where it was coming from.
It seemed to be coming from the window.
I turned out the lights so that nobody would see me, and I peeked out the window carefully.
I was expecting to see a robber tapping at my window.
There was nobody there.
It was just a tree branch swaying in the breeze and tapping at my window.
I felt silly.
I turned on the lights and sat back down to read my book.
A few minutes later, I heard some creaking noises.
I listened carefully.
Then, I heard a clunking noise.
I think it might have been the furnace.
Then there was a whirring noise.
My imagination began to play tricks on me.
I was imagining that there were all kinds of creatures in the house.
I told myself to grow up.
I wouldn't let my imagination run away with me.
I was glad when my parents got home.
I told them about all the noises that I had heard.
My parents laughed and said that all houses make noises.
We're usually just so busy that we don't hear all the noises that go on.
I have stayed home alone many times now.
I just ignore all the little creaks and noises that I hear.
I am still alert and listen for anything suspicious, but I know that there are lots of noises that are harmless.
That tree that taps on my window still frightens me sometimes, but I'm a lot braver now than I was the first time that I stayed home alone.

Article #47 Family

What does the word "family" mean to you? The easiest way to define family is to talk about who you are related to. Usually, there is a mom and a dad and children who are brothers and sisters. This would be the "core" family. Then there is the "extended" family which would include grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews and in-laws (people married to your bothers or sisters, husband or wife). However, I think the word "family" has a much deeper meaning. The word "family" brings words to my mind like: love, support, help, kindness, fun, love, trips, closeness, love,

forgiving, sharing, love, understanding, respect and love! You'll notice one word that is repeated over and over again. LOVE. I believe if a family has real love for one another, they will be able to overcome any problems they may have. Actually, they may not have too many problems if they all love and respect one another. However, there are things that cannot be helped; like death, sickness or accidents. It is during those hard times that a family's love helps them to go through those experiences.

We had quite a few children in my family. There were brothers and sisters which included an adopted brother and a number of foster children, too. I was also very fortunate that I had both my mom and dad to live with and do things like vacations together. We had a lot of fun and there were some times of tears, too. Above all, we love one another! Family is a wonderful thing! I am so lucky!

Article #48 My First Job

My first "real" job was during my last year of high school. I had taken classes in various business subjects. In that last year of high school, we could do a "co-op". That meant we could work part of the time instead of going to school. It would count as a credit towards our diploma.

The place I got a job was at a men's tailor shop. The owners were a very nice older German couple. They had two other men working for them, too. One of the men had had brain surgery for cancer. He had a big, long scar all around the top of his head. He told me all about it. He was always happy and full of fun. I thought he was very brave!

The tailor shop made suits to order. One of the salesmen would measure the man, and the customer would choose a fabric and style he (or his wife!) liked. The people in the back of the shop would then cut and sew the suit. The suits cost a lot of money. There were also suits already made that the customer could buy instead if they wished. They could also rent suits or tuxedos for weddings or parties.

I worked at a little desk. I answered the phone, wrote letters, filed papers and did some bookkeeping. It was about a mile walk from my school to work. I passed many clothing shops. That wasn't good because I spent a lot of the money that I earned in those shops!

I worked at the tailor shop for almost a year. It was a good experience and helped me get my next job with the United States Navy. That was fun, too!

Article #49 First Trip Away From Home

Today I am going to my friend's house. Her name is Valerie. This is going to be my first trip away from home, without my parents.

My dad is driving me to Valerie's house, and I'll be staying there for two weeks. Her mom will drive me back home. It takes about 1 1/2 hours to get there. I have to pack enough clothes for play, work and church. I hope I'll pack the right things. Of course, I have to remember my toothbrush and hairbrush.

Valerie lives on a farm. I'll be helping her dad with milking the cows--I think! We'll play up in the hayloft after we have helped put the bales into the barn. We'll be all itchy when that job is done! There are a lot of things to do on a farm. Her mom is a good cook and will feed us well!

There is a nice pond where we can go swimming. I mustn't forget my bathing suit. I

wonder if the farm dog comes into the pond, too. That would be funny!
My dad and mom are giving me money just in case we go shopping. I hope we do go shopping because I want to buy lots of candy. (I won't tell my mom that!)
Oh, dear! I hear Dad yelling, "Let's go!" I haven't even finished packing my things yet. I guess I better stop writing this now and get busy fast! Bye!

Article #50 My Job

I work at a conservation park called Ball's Falls. I've only worked there for three weeks now. I am a Tour Guide, and I tell people the history of all the old buildings there. Somebody told me that one of the houses I work in is haunted. Now I get chills every time I walk into that house! My boss told me that the stories aren't real, but I have an active imagination!

Ball's Falls is very beautiful. It has two different water falls, the Upper Falls and the Lower Falls. There used to be tons of water cascading over them, which turned a big water wheel to grind grain. However, through the years the amount of water has really lessened.

I love working at Ball's Falls because I get to work outside a lot. I am getting a tan! In July and August, I will be working with kids there at a day camp. I am getting ready now, making different crafts and thinking up fun new games to play. I can't wait to start working with them. I think that will be the best part of the summer.

I will be going to work again tomorrow. I usually have to work from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. I also like the people I work with. They are very nice.

Come to Ball's Falls, and I'll give you a tour!

Article #51 My Hobby

Let's see. Today I might go fly a kite, or maybe go for a swim. It is hot outside, and I don't know what to do. My mom tells me that I should do something that I like doing on hot days. Since our house is nice and cool, I guess I'll stay inside and work on my hobby.

My hobby is something that not a lot of people do. I make and collect bookmarks.

To make my bookmarks, I use stickers, and special art pencils to draw. I buy the stickers at a mall, usually in a card store. The art pencils are bought in an art store. To make the bookmarks, I start with a piece of paper. I measure out how big I want the bookmark to be with a ruler. I once made a bookmark so big, that it couldn't even be used in a very big book! After I measure it, I draw lines so that I can cut it straight. Sometimes, I use fancy scissors that cut zig-zags or frills. Then I start to decorate them.

I like to draw cartoons and flowers on my bookmarks. Sometimes, I even put real flowers on them. A lot of the time I write little sayings on the bookmarks. I like to give my bookmarks to friends and family. Sometimes, I even sell my bookmarks to people.

I like my hobby. I can draw whatever I want on the bookmarks. Maybe sometime in the future I will be a famous bookmark maker and even have my own store!

Article #52 If I Had a Million Dollars

If I had a million dollars, I'd travel the world. I would go to the highest mountain. I would swim the deepest sea. I would probably buy a lot of clothes because I love clothes! More than anything though, I would want to visit Ireland.

I want to see the rolling hills and the green, green grass that everyone talks about. When I think of Ireland, I think of where my family came from many years ago. I am almost all Irish and would love to see my family over in Ireland.

If I had a million dollars, I would buy a Mustang or a Pontiac Sunbird car. I would buy a nice house with a big backyard and an outdoor and indoor pool. I would love to take my family wherever they wanted to go. I would buy them wonderful presents, too.

However, I know that money does not buy happiness. It does not buy you friends or family. It may bring some happiness only for the moment, but in the long run your family is what will be there for you if you love them and are there for them.

If I had to pick between a million dollars and my family, I would pick my family. The million dollars is a nice dream. If that dream ever comes true and I do get a lot of money, I hope I would use it wisely.

Article #53 A Picnic

What a great day for a picnic! We're not only having a picnic; we're having a big bike ride, too. We did this last year with a lot of friends also. It was really fun.

We meet quite early in the morning in a pretty little town. The town is where the Niagara River flows into Lake Ontario in Canada. The town's name is Niagara-on-the-Lake. Then all of the people, fifty or more, get on their bikes or roller blades. We go on a bike path beside the river. The path we take is about 11 km or 6 miles long. There are a lot of other people using the path, too.

We usually stop for an ice cream treat near the end or where we turn around to go back to our cars. It is just before the park where we will have our picnic, and a steep hill. Many of the men and boys go up the hill. Most of the women and children go back to their cars. The ride takes about two hours plus whatever time we take at the ice cream store.

After the ride is finished, we go the park. We have a delicious "pot-luck" lunch. Pot luck means everyone brings some food to share with the others. We eat, rest, talk and laugh.

After we've cleaned up, some of us climb the tower that is there remembering a war at that place and its general. It is a steep climb, over 100 steps. We usually end the day with a fun game of baseball or soccer.

Finally, we pack up our stuff. Tired and dirty, we head for home with good memories swimming in our heads.

Article #54 Working in my Yard

I live in a house that has a small yard around it. In my yard there is a lawn and a garden. There is also a sidewalk that leads to my front door, and a driveway that leads to my garage. Throughout the year I work to maintain my yard.

During the summer, I cut the grass that grows in my yard, using a lawn-mower. I like the smell of the grass when it has just been cut. But it's better not to cut the grass too short.

When the weather is dry, I also put water on the lawn and garden, so that the grass and flowers can grow.

During the autumn, many leaves fall from the trees in my yard. I use a rake to collect the leaves from the lawn. Then I can put the leaves into bags. I can use the leaves to make fertilizer. When I was a kid, I didn't like the job of raking leaves, but now I don't mind it. Another job during the autumn is to remove flowers from the garden before the cold weather arrives.

During the winter, there is no work to do in the lawn or garden, because they are covered in snow. But I need to keep the snow off my sidewalk and driveway. Whenever it snows, I use a shovel to clear the snow from the sidewalk and the driveway. Sometimes it snows a lot. If I didn't shovel the snow, it would soon be impossible to get into my house!

During the spring, the snow melts. I clean up my yard by sweeping away dirt and by removing weeds from the lawn and garden. I also put flowers back into the garden. It's nice to see them again after the long, cold winter. When spring comes, the grass grows very quickly, so I need to cut the grass quite often.

Working in the yard can be very satisfying work. It's so nice when the lawn and garden are looking green and healthy.

Article #55 Early Morning

"Yawn!" I am so tired. I don't like getting up in the morning. I wish I could sleep in until noon. My mom has to come into my room and shake my feet. "Get up, you lazy girl!" she says, "It's time to rise and shine. It's a beautiful day!"

I raise my head, mumble and turn over, putting my pillow over my head. My mom yanks my pillow from off my head and starts tickling me. "Okay, I'll get up!" I shriek. The sun is so bright that I squint. I think I will go outside and play. I can't wait to get up now. My mom cooks me breakfast. I have eggs, bacon, toast and orange juice.

When I finish my breakfast. I brush my teeth, comb my hair, wash my face and then change into play clothes. I choose a bright pink and yellow tank top with jean shorts and blue sandals.

My bike is in the garage where my dad keeps the cars and tools. As I pedal, my hair flies out behind me! I keep my mouth shut so that bugs don't get in! I am going down a big hill now. I can hardly pedal anymore. My legs are moving so fast. I hang onto my handle bars tightly. I don't want to fall off!

I finally am able to slow down as the road becomes level. I turn a corner and decide to go back home. I realize I now have to ride up the hill! I know I will be tired when I get to the top. I think that I will have some water now before I start to go up. Mmmm, it tastes great! It is so clean and cold.

Well, I know that I have a big trip ahead of me, so I need to get going!

Bye-bye!

Article #56 The Wedding

We went into the church and sat down. There were pretty flowers at the front. There was beautiful organ music playing. The church was full of people dressed up nicely. Everyone was waiting to see the beautiful bride walk up the aisle.

A hush, and intake of breath. There she was! Oh, she was so beautiful! She had a lovely, long white dress with pretty lace and beads. Her hair was swept up off from her face. There were curls flowing down her back. Instead of a veil, she had little flowers in her hair. Her bouquet of tiny flowers was very, very pretty. Her dad looked very proud of her. He looked just a little sad, too.

At the front of the church, the groom stood waiting. He had a beautiful tender smile on his face. He took his bride's hand as her dad left her there. They smiled at each other. The minister read, prayed and offered some words of advice to the lovely couple. Someone sang a pretty song. The groom slipped the simple wedding band on the bride's finger. She struggled a little to put a band on his finger. Pretty soon the minister said they were now husband and wife. They kissed. We all stood, and they walked down the aisle to live the rest of their lives together as Mr. And Mrs.!

We cried.

Article #57 The Perfect Place

There is a place in my mind that is pure. Everything there is beautiful. Many flowers grow, and the grass is very green. The clouds are always white and fluffy. The tree's branches sweep the earth floor.

You can hear the sound of a waterfall. It is roaring with life, and the water races. A bird calls in the distance and as you listen, the sound gets closer. A flapping quite near makes me turn and look. A great, magnificent eagle flies over my head. The strength I see in his powerful wings amazes me!

I am never thirsty or hungry. I live off the beauty that surrounds me in this perfect place. I walk on trails that lead me to breath-taking places. The beach is my favourite spot to end up. The sand between my toes is soft and cool. I love to lie down on the sand. I watch the sun go down. Sometimes the sun is a brilliant orange. The world seems like it is on fire! Waves lull me to sleep. The seagulls wake me up.

In this perfect place I have learned so much. The animals and their homes are so precious. I have learned to respect the animals; they were here first.

The sounds, smells, and sights are too perfect and full of life. There is no war here, no anger or stress. I don't have to worry about pollution or destruction.

My perfect world exists only in my head. Maybe if we all work hard, my fantasy can become real!

Article #58 Visiting the Zoo

When I was a kid, I always enjoyed visiting the zoo. My family lived far away from the zoo, so we didn't go there very often. But whenever we went to the zoo, I always had a fun and interesting time.

Some of the animals were very large. Of course, the elephants were huge, and they had such an unusual appearance, with their big ears and their long trunk and tusks. The giraffes were very tall, with long necks that reached high into the trees.

Some of my favorite animals were the big cats. The lions looked very powerful, with their big teeth and paws. The tigers were just as big and strong, with yellow and black stripes. But the bears were even larger than these cats. The polar bears, with their bright white fur, liked to swim through the water. The grizzly bears had brown fur and liked to roam around on land.

The animals from Australia seemed very unusual. The kangaroos, with their strong legs and long tail, could jump great distances across the ground. The baby kangaroo could go inside its mother's pouch. Another Australian animal, the koala bear, crawled slowly in the trees, where it ate leaves.

The monkeys and apes were also very interesting. In many ways, they reminded me of people. Some of the monkeys were very small. They could use their arms, legs, and tail to swing through the trees. Some of the apes were very large. The gorilla was the largest of all. Sometimes a big gorilla would stand up and pound his fists on his chest.

To see all the animals at the zoo took almost a whole day. By the end of the day, I was very tired from walking around. But I was also very happy to see all the amazing animals from places around the world.

Article #59 The Dentist Appointment

My dentist called my house the other day. He told me I needed my teeth cleaned. I set up an appointment to see him on Saturday, June 10th.

When I got to my dentist's office, I had to sit in the waiting room. There were other people ahead of me. They finally called my name.

I went into his room and sat down on a big blue chair. They leaned it back. A bright light was turned on. It hurt my eyes, so I closed them. My dentist asked me to open my mouth. I did. I thought my mouth was very big, but he told me to open it even wider!

Soon he began poking around to see if I had any cavities. He flossed my teeth and put fluoride around my teeth too. The fluoride tasted like bubble gum.

I had to spit into a dish-like bowl. It squirted out water. My dentist kept asking me questions. I couldn't answer because there were weird tools in my mouth! When I tried answering back, he seemed to understand though.

His helper came into the room. She asked me to open my mouth again. I had to clamp down on something that felt like rubber. She put a big camera-type machine right next to my cheek. She did this on the other side of my face as well. They took two pictures of my teeth. It was really cool.

The dentist told me my teeth were perfect! I didn't have any problems. I could go home. "See you next year," he said.

Article #60 Day Dream

Little Annie was very bored one lazy afternoon. She had nothing to do! She had already played with her brothers in the sandbox and had tea with them and her dollies, too. She had baked chocolate chip cookies with her mom and even tasted one! They were very

good, she thought. Now Annie was trying to figure out what else she could do to pass the day away.

Little Annie decided that she would go to her favourite spot in the world...the green, grassy field full of daisies, beneath the great oak tree. She took a red and white blanket with her. She laid it down on the ground, and then she lay down on it. She lay there looking at the clouds, fluffy and white. She saw bunnies, huge gray elephants and scary-looking crocodiles. Soon, Little Annie was drifting in and out of clouds and reality. The clouds started dancing with her, begging her to come and play. She got up from her blanket and joined the clouds. They flew over roof tops of all of the village people, swam with the fish in the lake and said hello to all of the birds that they passed by. Little Annie was having so much fun!

The clouds had formed into a chariot so Little Annie could drive if she wanted to. She drove over a rainbow that was bright in the sky. Then, she shot through the branches of her friend's spruce tree!

Annie suddenly came to a STOP! Hearing someone call her name, Annie looked around. She blinked; once, twice, and finally everything came into focus. Her brother was tugging at her leg, wondering why she was staring into outer space with a big grin on her face! "Oh," Little Annie said, not really knowing that she had been sitting there all along.

Article #61 My Friend in the Next Office

Sometimes she asks my advice now about her work or about a problem and I ask her advice. Sometimes she comes in to my office and says " I'm really angry, can I whine to you?" Then she talks about a problem and I listen, and then she returns cheerfully to her office. Sometimes I go into her office and say. " I'm upset about something that happened; can I come in for a minute?" Then I grumble to her and she listens, and then I go back cheerfully to my office. Each of us feels better when we have shared our problems. Then they are no longer problems.

My Friend In the Next Office

When I started my job a year ago at the university, I did not know my way around. I did not know where to find anything. I had a million questions. But Dianne in the next office took me on a tour showing me the places to eat, the library, the lecture rooms, where to get a picture ID card, how to get from one building to another. When I had a question I asked Dianne: how to use the telephone, where to make copies, where to print with my computer, the location of my mailbox.

She teaches as I do. We both spend a lot of time helping students and answering their questions. She giggles a lot; I hear her laugh with her students.

Dianne is shy in a group of people. She is quiet and does not start a conversation.

Everyone around her talks and she listens. On Friday afternoons, she makes popcorn for everyone. We all sit in the staff room and eat microwaved popcorn and drink tea and talk. We start to relax for the weekend and talk about our plans.

She is a good friend; she helps my students when I am not there; she wishes me good luck when I go to a lecture. I am very glad that she can be my friend in the office beside mine.

Article #62 The Musician

There once was a little girl named Rain Angel. She loved to sit at the piano and play. Rain Angel was a very gifted girl. She had a voice that gave people shivers, and she loved to sing!

As Rain got older, she continued to love music. Rain became involved in the choirs and bands at her high school. She loved performing in front of people. She couldn't help but feel the sense of power she had when she was up on stage, and there was always loud clapping when she finished a song.

Rain soon went out on her own and looked for someone that could help her become famous. Rain wanted to share her talent with the world. She felt that her special talent for music helped people feel good.

Rain went out into the big world, and she did very well. She was always performing her best, and someone finally noticed her. Her new agent helped her to make her first album. Rain became famous because she never quit trying.

Rain loved her new way of life. She continued singing and playing her piano. She was even taught how to write her own music!

Rain Angel had always dreamed of becoming a celebrity. She always remembered her friends and family when she was famous because they had always believed in her.

Rain Angel strove for a faraway place, and it became her reality. She always believed that what she wanted to become was her choice. She believed that if you have the strength and determination you can make your dreams come true.

Article #63 The Circus

Wow! A big tent was in the middle of the town's parking lot! We were going to a three-ring circus. I couldn't wait for it to begin. Inside and outside of the tent, toys, balloons and food were being sold. All of the children were so very excited.

Inside the tent, we found good seats so we could see everything. The band started to play loud music, and the ringmaster came out with a big tall hat on his head.

In one ring, there were small animals, dogs, monkeys and parrots doing tricks. The dogs were dressed in funny clothes, and so were the monkeys. They rode on bicycles, danced and climbed ladders.

There were wild tigers and lions in a big round wire cage. A man with a whip was inside the cage with them. He had them trained to jump through a hoop of fire and to roll over. He even kissed them! He was very brave!

During the break in the middle of the circus, funny clowns came out and did silly things. They had happy faces and sad faces. Some had big red noses that honked if you squeezed them. There were rides on big elephants too. I didn't go on one because it cost too much money.

The last act took up the whole tent. It was acrobats. They hung from their teeth, their feet and their necks high up in the air! They also swung high up in the air and "flew" to each other. It's kind of scary to watch because I was afraid they might fall.

I had a very good time at the circus. However, my tummy felt kind of sick from all the cotton candy and junk food I ate!

Article #64 Going to the Grocery Store

Each week I go to the grocery store to buy food for my family. I get a shopping cart from the front of the store, and I push the cart all around the store. The cart is large, but when I am finished shopping, the cart is nearly full!

The grocery store is also called a supermarket. When I go shopping, I start out in the produce section of the supermarket. The produce section is where the fresh fruits and vegetables are kept. I like to buy different kinds of fruit, such as apples, oranges, and bananas. The vegetables that I often buy are carrots, peas, and corn. I also buy tomatoes when they are bright red in color. I often buy a bag of potatoes or a bag of rice.

After visiting the produce section, I go to the meat section. Here I buy poultry, such as chicken and turkey. I often buy seafood, especially fish. I also buy beef, and sometimes pork or lamb. I also visit the dairy section, where I can buy milk and cheese. Sometimes I also buy ice cream or yogurt.

When I have finished in the meat and dairy sections, I then move to the bakery section. This is where loaves of bread are baked and sold. There are many different kinds of bread in the bakery section. The bakery section also sells pasta, such as macaroni and spaghetti. And, of course, you can buy pies, cakes, and cookies in the bakery section. These foods are very sweet and tasty!

I also pick up a few other things at the supermarket, such as soap, toothpaste, and cleaning supplies. But sometimes I forget to buy something that I had planned to get. Maybe I should make a list of the things I need to buy!

Article #65 A Day at the Beach

When the hot summer weather arrives, many people like to cool off by visiting the beach. Often, there is a cool breeze that comes off the water. And, of course, the water itself is cool and refreshing.

One of the favourite activities at the beach is building sandcastles. Children use small shovels and pails to move the sand. They can build small forts and castles by carefully forming and shaping the sand. Building sandcastles is a lot of fun, but you shouldn't build them too close to the water: a wave might come and wash your sandcastle away!

There are also many games that people like to play at the beach. Some people play catch with a small plastic disc called a Frisbee. The Frisbee glides smoothly through the air.

Other people like to play beach volleyball in the soft sand.

Some people prefer just to relax on the beach. They like to lie down on a blanket and feel the warm sunshine. I like to sit on the beach with an ice-cream cone. But you have to eat it quickly, before it melts.

Of course, the main attraction of a beach is the water. Many children learn to swim at the beach, and enjoy playing in the water. Some people like to swim vigorously. Other people like to relax in the water on an inflatable, floating mattress. Other people just wade around in the water, as a way to keep cool. When it is a windy day, some people try sports such as surfing.

Going to the beach is surely one of the best ways to spend a summer day!

Article #66 Making Cookies

Ummmm. Something smells good! My friend's mom is making cookies. They are chocolate chip, my favourite! I think I'll go home and ask my mom if we can make cookies, too.

I run all the way home and rush through the door. I yell, "Mom, Mom!" She comes out from her bedroom, her eyes wide. "What?" she answers, a little worried. I breathlessly ask if we can please, pretty please, make cookies. She smiles and says, "I guess so." "YES!" I reply.

First mom tells me to get out the cooking stuff; so I get out the mixer and bowl, the measuring cups and spoons and the cookie sheets. Then she tells me to get out the recipe book. I remind her that the recipe is on the chocolate chip package. "Right," she says. Then she asks me to look at the recipe and get out the things we need: like flour, sugar and butter.

We set the oven temperature to 350 degrees F. Then, we mix all of the flour and other stuff (ingredients) together. Last, we add the chocolate chips. We drop the batter by big teaspoons full onto the cookie sheets. We set the timer for 12 minutes and just sit back and enjoy the good smell!

The buzzer rings. We take the cookies out. Oh, do they look good! We don't even wait for them to cool down. Both Mom and I get a big glass of cold milk and two big warm cookies each. Yum! Yum! Want to join us?!

Article #67 Stars in the Midnight Sky

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are; up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky, twinkle, twinkle little star." This is a little poem/song I always say when I am outside, and I see the stars. When I see the first star of the night, I sometimes say this one: "Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight; I wish I may; I wish I might, have the wish I wish tonight." Do you have a special thing to say about the stars?

Stars are beautiful bright spots in the sky. Stars are usually seen at night when it is dark. We can't see them in the day time because the sun is so bright, the brightest star of all. I like staying up late just to look at the stars.

One time I was outside at midnight, and the stars seemed to sparkle and dance. They really did look like diamonds dancing in the sky!

If you watch the stars long enough, you may see a falling star or a shooting star. I have seen both. A falling star is where the star just seems to drop, and it leaves a trail of what appears like star dust. A shooting star is very beautiful. It "shoots" across the sky leaving a long trail of colourful "star dust." Shooting stars seem to brighten up the whole sky. They usually seem quite close to the earth.

Have you ever watched the stars and got the urge to reach out and touch them, or even to join them in their secret dance? I wonder what it would be like to see a star up close. Would it look like the moon? Maybe one day when I am older, I will go up in a rocket ship and visit the dancing stars in the midnight sky!

Article #68 Music

A song comes on the radio. My lips start to move, singing along. My fingers start to snap;

my feet begin to tap. The music sinks deep into my soul. I listen to the music as it fills my brain, and I remember when I used to sing. I sang in front of huge crowds. I loved it when they watched me and clapped for me when I was finished.

Letting out my feelings when I was sad, mad, happy, or glad was when I would sing. I sang in the shower; I sang in the rain; I sang in church; I sang walking down the street! Music has always been a big part of my life. It seems like I was a baby when I started playing the piano! I would sit on my sister's lap while she played the piano, and I would bang on the keys. I remember sitting beside her and learning how to sing. I sang my little lungs out!

As I grew, I listened to other singers on tapes, the radio and C.D.s. I took those things that I heard from different singers and made myself sound like them. Soon, I could take what I had heard all my life and make it into my own sound.

I have always liked singing jazz and blues. I don't listen to jazz and blues a lot, however. I listen to pop, rock, classical and some country. As you can see, I like many types of music. I have seen musicals, too, like Phantom of the Opera and Les Miserables. Those musicals were amazing. There were such bright costumes and stage sets, not to mention the wonderful songs and singing.

Music has been on this earth since the beginning of time, and it touches every one in a different way. I know it has not only touched me, but is a big part of my very being!

Article #69 First Data

"Ring, ring." The phone is ringing. My mother answers it. "Hello," she says. It is for me. When I pick up the phone, I hear a boy's voice. It is a boy I go to school with.

This boy is very nice, and he is cute, too. He asks me if I want to go out for dinner with him tonight. I say yes. He is going to pick me up at 5:30 p.m. in the evening. He has a nice red car.

Before he picks me up, I have to find an outfit to wear. I am nervous and don't know what to wear. So my sister picks out an outfit for me. I feel excited and have the sensation of butterflies in my stomach. The inside of my hands are damp, too. I put on my outfit and do my hair. My sister gives me some nice clips to put in my hair.

"Ding-dong," the doorbell buzzes. My date is here! I hurry to the door, so I can greet him. He tells me that I look nice and that we are going to a place called M-T Bellies.

When we arrive at M-T Bellies, there is loud music playing. A smiling waitress comes who serves us our food. I order a large caesar salad. My date orders steak. When it arrives, the food looks and is delicious! The waitress asks us if we want dessert after we've finished. But we are too full. So we ask for our bill to pay.

My date pays for the meal. I brought money just in case we would share the cost. When we leave the restaurant, we go for a walk by the river. It is a beautiful night.

I am enjoying my first date. I am laughing and having fun. It is time for us to go home. So my date takes me home. I smile and thank him for the great time. I hope he'll ask me out again!

Article #70 University

It's time to sign up for school. This year Natalie is going to Brock University. She has never been to university before. She is a little bit scared. She hopes she meets nice, new friends. Natalie stood in line to get her picture taken. The picture was put on a card. The card was her picture ID (identification). She would use this card if she needed to buy books from the school bookstore; if she wanted to get a book from the library; or if she wanted to use the pool!

After all of the signing up and money was paid, Natalie went out to lunch with her mother. "Mom, I'm kind of scared about going to school. I'm going to be the youngest kid there. I don't know how to take notes. The teachers might be mean....", Natalie rambled on. Her mom just calmed her down and said, "Take one day at a time, Natalie. Worry only about today." "Hmmm. You're right, Mom. Thanks!"

Natalie was very scared on the first day of school. She made sure she had all of the books she needed and lots of pens, pencils and erasers. She walked into the front of the building and went on her way to try and find her classroom.

Natalie got through her classes and met a lot of new people, nice people. Her classes seemed to go by really fast, and the day went by even faster.

When Natalie got home she was so excited. She told her mom that classes weren't all that scary; the students and the teachers weren't scary either! Natalie knew that the school work would be hard, but she felt good about the people she had met that day. She knew she'd have a good year.

Article #71 School Dance

It is the first school dance that I have ever been to. All of the boys are standing on one side of the gymnasium, and all of the girls are on the other side. There is loud music playing, and I can hardly hear my friends talking.

The music is going fast, and some people are starting to move to the beat of the song. Soon all the girls are dancing, but the boys are still standing against the wall. Then the song ends, and slow music comes on. I don't know what to do, so I just go and stand against the wall. Then one of the boys in my class comes over and asks me if I would like to dance to the slow song. I really feel awkward and nervous, but say yes.

We go out into the middle of the gym, and he puts his hands on my waist, and I put my hands on his shoulders. We start to move to the music, and we step on each other's feet! He is bigger than me, so my toe starts to hurt a little bit! As we continue to "slow dance," more boys and girls come to the middle of the gym to dance together.

It sure is funny to watch people dance because they are stepping on each other's toes and bumping into each other and turning in opposite directions! Soon the song ends, and the boys go to one side of the gym again. The girls decide that they want to dance to a fast song, so they stay in the middle of the gym and dance with one another.

Our teachers are making sure that we are behaving because they are watching us. I wonder if they want to dance. They probably are remembering their first school dance. I wonder if someday I'll be grown up just like the teachers and laughing at the memories of my first school dance? I sure hope so!

Article #72 Health

Our health is very important to us. People can have good jobs, money or good looks. However, if they become sick, those things don't mean a thing. It is wonderful to feel good.

Feeling good isn't just about our body. It is also about our mind and spirit. We need to feel good in every area of our life.

One of the things we can do to be healthy is to get enough sleep. If we don't sleep well, or enough, it hurts our body. It is during sleep that our body restores itself.

Everybody knows we should also eat good foods. We need milk products, meats, fruits and vegetables and breads and cereals. We shouldn't eat too much fat or sugar things either. Of course, we just shouldn't eat too much at all! Another thing that is very important is water. Most people know our bodies are mainly water, and we need to keep that replaced with good water--often!

Exercise is very good for both our body and mind. It is good for our heart, lungs, muscles and bones. It gets oxygen to our brain to help us think better. It can help us be smarter!

Doing things that we believe are right and good gives us peace inside. It makes us be nicer people and is good for our spirit. When we do what we know is right, it helps to reduce stress, which isn't good for any part of us.

When we take care of our body, mind, and spirit, we feel good all over and inside, too!

What a beautiful world this would be if we could all work at doing these things for ourselves and also trying to be a help to others!

Article #73 Halloween (1)

Ghosts, goblins, witches, princes and princesses, kings, queens, skeletons! So many of these "things" are walking down my street. "Oh, no! They are coming to my door!" The doorbell chimes, and I slowly open the door. There standing on my front porch, is a little ghost and a cute little witch. They hold up a bag and say, "trick or treat." I put candy into their bags and they smile and say, "Thank you."

Every October 31 is Halloween. That is when children dress up as different things (not just funny people, but things like animals or fruits or vegetables, etc). They go from door to door and get different candies or little toys from the people in the houses. Some children, who are not very nice, will do naughty things to houses where people are not home, like throwing eggs at their windows. I think that is bad.

Sometimes people decorate their houses for this day. Some of the houses can be pretty scary. They'll have scary noises coming from a tape recorder, too. However, it's only for a few days out of the year, so we may as well have fun with it.

This year my brother is dressing up as a skeleton, and I'm dressing up as a bride. I am wearing my mom's wedding dress. It is fun dressing up in costumes and putting on lots of makeup. Sometimes our friends don't even know who we really are!

The best part of Halloween is the candy, of course. I once got an entire garbage bag full of candy. Mom and Dad took it away because I was eating too much. Mom gave me a piece of candy every day, though. If you eat too much candy, you can get a stomach ache. You need to remember to brush your teeth often, too, so you don't get cavities. Still, that candy sure does taste good!

Well, it's time to go "trick or treating." So off I go, door to door, getting yummy candy and hearing people say, "Oh, aren't you pretty!"

Article #74 New Year's

"Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one! HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

What is New Year's? Well, to me a New Year is when the date of the year changes. This year it is 2001, and on December 31 at midnight it will change to 2002. I wonder who invented the changing of years and how it was made the way it is. It must have been someone a long time ago, since it's already 2001.

When New Year's comes closer, a lot of people talk about New Year's resolutions. I don't bother making "resolutions" because I never do them anyway! And the ones that I do make are usually ones that will happen anyway. I guess it's just common sense.

The biggest reason why I like New Year's is because of the fireworks that we have here in Canada and many other countries, too. You should see some of the fireworks that go off.

There are many different colours. There's pink, blue, purple, yellow, green, red, even white, silver and gold. Fireworks make loud bangs, squeals, siren sounds, and sometimes all at once. There are lots of different sounds, but I can't even explain what they are all like.

Fireworks are best when it's very dark outside. They light up the whole sky! Sometimes, they look as though they are going to fall on you.

I like New Year's because it's fun in other ways, but the fireworks are the best part. You can buy fireworks to use for your own fireworks show. However, you have to be careful that no one gets burned or hurt.

Usually, there are parties at New Year's. Some people really dress up fancy and even wear masks. They don't know who one another is until midnight when they take their masks off. As midnight comes very close, everybody begins to count down, and then everyone yells out "Happy New Year's" and bang pots and pans or ring bells or honk horns. Join me in the count down on New Year's Eve. "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one - HAPPY NEW YEAR!"

Article #75 More Music

I like music. I have always liked music. Even when I was very young, I liked music. I like to listen to it, and to make it. When I was a little girl, listening to nice music would sometimes make me cry! That may seem silly, but the music was so pretty that I cried!

As I grew older, I started to take piano lessons. I was not very good at first, but after a while I got better. Also, as I grew older, I started to take violin lessons. I did not sound very good at all at first, but I improved.

When I was a teenager in high school, I made sure I had music classes every year. Those were the classes I enjoyed most of all. Everyone loved music, and we had a lot of fun. I started to take private singing lessons while I was in high school, too. I also sang in the choir, played in a band and acted in plays in high school. The plays were all musicals, so I got to sing and dance and enjoy music that way also. It was so much fun pretending to be other people!

When I finished high school, I went to university to learn how to be a music teacher. That was a lot of fun because every day I was with other people who loved music as much as I do. Mostly I played the piano, but I also learned how to play the drums, a saxophone, a

trombone, a French horn, a clarinet, a flute, which I REALLY was not very good at, and a viola. I took more singing lessons, too. We did not have plays to sing and act in, but I sang in the university choir. Some years, I played the piano for other students who were learning other instruments. One year, I played duets with another girl who was also there to play piano. She and I made sure we played fast, funny songs, so we really enjoyed ourselves doing it.

Now, I am a music teacher. I do not have a lot of students, not as many as I used to have anyway. I still find it very rewarding. I like to see people who start off not knowing very much, if anything, and go on to be very good at creating music.

I still love listening to music also. Music makes me happy when I am sad. It makes me want to dance or sing when I am already happy. Mostly, music just makes me glad that I am me and that music is alive in me.

Article #76 Babies

My baby is asleep in my arms. Her soft cheek rests against my chest, while her sweet breath puffs gently on my skin. Her tiny lips are puckered a bit. Her little eyelids flutter. I wonder what she dreams about as she sleeps. Does she dream? I have heard her whimper in her sleep. Sometimes she awakens with a scream. What is so scary in her little baby dreams? Once I heard her giggle as she slept. Her dreams must have been sweet that day.

I have had three babies. The one I am holding now is my last one. My other babies are grown up more and now at school. I love their childish play and laughter. I miss their baby dimples and their baby sounds and smells.

There is such joy in the birth of a new baby. We hear their first little cry, telling us all is well with their small world. We feel their newborn skin, wrinkled, soft and slightly damp. We feel each little limb and are filled with wonder and humility. Life is good as baby takes its first food from its mother. Family gathers around, each waiting to hold and love this newest member. Each time the baby cries, its mom worries, and their bond becomes stronger.

Babies have their own special smell. Some have described it as "milk and innocence." It is the sweetest smell on earth, I think. It cannot be copied. Somehow, it disappears as baby grows.

I love to hear my baby talk. Once in a while I can even understand a little bit! She is so serious in her baby talk that I just have to pick her up and hug her. I love to hear her say "Mommy."

When my baby is tickled, or when the dog or her big brothers do something funny, it is so sweet to hear her baby laugh. It's such a cute little giggle! Sometimes she laughs so hard, her face turns red, tears come to her eyes, and she falls down weak with the laughter. Those who watch her can't help but laugh, too. I hope she always laughs so easily.

The parents watch with pride and joy as baby grows and has many "firsts." There is the first time baby sleeps through the night, rolls over, smiles, laughs, hugs and kisses. Then there is the first tooth, crawling, first step and first word. With each new first, the baby becomes less a baby!

These steps are a little sad to parents, too, because they know they're "losing their baby." However, to a mother, even an adult child is still her baby!

My baby is not perfect. Sometimes she gets mad or whines for no reason. But, to me, she is still beautiful. Her smiles more than make up for her tears. Her hugs wipe away when she's been bad. I intend to cherish each moment with my baby while I can!

Article #77 Bed Time

I am almost nine years old and my bed time is 8:30 p.m. I think that is so unfair! I think I am old enough to stay up until at least 9:00 p.m. My parents say that I have to go to bed early because I have school the next day. I can't wait until I am grown up and can stay awake as long as I want. Even though I think I should be able to go to bed later, I do like our night time routine.

At about 8:15 p.m., my Mom sends us up to put on our pajamas. When we come back downstairs, we read together. Sometimes Mom will read to us, and sometimes we will read to her. If Dad is not working, he will sometimes read, too. Mostly it is Mom we read with though. When we read, Mom helps us with words we cannot read. We have to try and sound the word out, but if we are really stuck, she will help us. If we come to a place in our reading where we do not understand the meaning of what was written, we stop reading and look at Mom. She will tell us what it means or help us figure it out on our own.

After we are finished reading, we say goodnight to everyone in our house. First we say goodnight to Mom and give her a hug and a kiss. Then we do the same for Dad, then our little sister, and then our dog! Afterwards, we go upstairs and brush our teeth.

I have to do special stretching exercises for the muscles in my chest and legs, or I get pains when I run and play. I do my stretching before I get into bed. After my exercises, either my brother or I turn off the lights. We share a bedroom, so we take turns turning the light off.

Before we get into bed, we say our prayers. After we get into our beds, my brother and I talk to each other for a long time. We tell each other about our day, about what we hope will happen in the future, about our friends and all sorts of other important things. After awhile, we get so tired, we just fall asleep in the middle of talking!

Even though we go to bed at 8:30 p.m., we talk so long we don't go to sleep until about 10:00 p.m. I still do not know why I have to go to bed so early when I am not even tired!

Article #78 Why Do I Like Mathematics?

Sometimes there is a problem in life that has no answer. Perhaps a child has trouble learning. Perhaps someone becomes ill. Perhaps there was love, but now there is conflict. These problems are hard to solve. There is no single answer. Many people have opinions on what is the best answer.

But in mathematics there is an answer: a single answer that is right. There is no doubt; there is no argument; this answer is right. If we ask, "What is five plus seven?" The answer is twelve. If we ask, "How do you raise a child?" The answer would depend on the child and the parents.

Sometimes there is more than one way to reach an answer. Imagine we want to find the area of a triangle. The triangle has a right angle; the two sides surrounding the right

angle are 20mm and 30mm. The formula for the area of a triangle is one half of (base)(height). We could consider the 20mm side as the base and 30 mm as the height. We could consider the 30mm side as the base and the 20mm side as the height. Both ways would produce the same answer. The area is 300 square mm. Alternatively, we could consider the base as the third side of the triangle and then we would have to draw a height and measure it. The height would be neither 20 nor 30. But still we would end with the same answer. In math, the answer does not change.

Another reason I like math is the way it brings order. There can be a whole set of numbers or a whole set of measurements that mean nothing until mathematics organizes them into a pattern. An average number can be found; graphs can be drawn; the spread of the numbers and probabilities of a certain number happening can be calculated. This is like having a whole lot of dirty dishes after supper. Applying math is like washing and sorting the dishes and putting them back into the cupboard.

Math is a powerful tool. Math should be our friend, and we will find more ways to use it to better our lives.

Article #79 My Sister's Visit to Canada

My sister had never been to Canada but came for a visit last April. I picked her up at the airport in Toronto and drove her through the traffic and multilane highways, past the grape vines and peach trees to Niagara Falls, where I live. She was very tired from the flight and soon slept.

The first day we walked to see the Falls. The spray from the Falls drifts high into the air and across the people standing to watch. There are people from all over the world watching the water and using their cameras. Because it was April there was still ice beside the water, huge chunks of ice that looked like white rocks. In the river there were floating pieces of ice moving downstream.

The next day we went to the town where the Niagara River joins Lake Ontario. The weather was warm. We walked a long way and our feet were hot, so we went down to the edge of the water to put our feet in. One toe in was enough! The water was so cold it made our feet ache! A piece of ice drifted beside our feet. I put one foot in for a second then out, as the pain of the cold went right through me! My sister could not understand how it could be so warm, but there was still ice.

Another day we went to see my daughter; she is living on a farm an hour's drive away. We walked through her trees; the buds were starting to turn into leaves. We stopped and looked at the spring wildflowers. We climbed across a creek by walking over a fallen tree. We saw the footprints of raccoons by the water. There was fresh air and sunshine and blue sky.

On the way home we stopped for hamburgers and fries at a drive-through restaurant. She had never been to a drive-through restaurant before. Then we went to a donut shop. There are no donut shops where she lives. There was a choice of 20 different types of donut: some round, some with holes, some with frosting, some with jam inside--each was different.

The days passed quickly, and soon it was time to take her back to the airport. Some of the trees now had leaves; some of the tulips were now blooming. It was hard to say goodbye to my sister. I hope we can visit again soon.

Article #80 A Summer Sunday

Today the sun was warm; the sky was blue with a few white clouds. It was a good day to pick strawberries; it was a good day to go to the beach.

I drove to a pick-your-own farm where people can pick their own fruit and buy it. There the fruit is very fresh and delicious. The owner of the farm gave everyone a row to pick their strawberries. Everyone was wearing sun hats. I knelt down on the straw between the rows and picked the big juicy red berries. I tasted one; it was warm from the sun. When I bit into it the juice was sweet and strong. When three big pails were full, I went to pay for them and picked up some recipes for some strawberry desserts. I packed two of the pails in a cooler with some ice, and the other one we would eat at the beach.

I met my daughter at the beach. She had a soft pink blanket on the sand. This beach is beside a lake, and across the lake about 50 km away the large city can sometimes be seen. Today the wind blew cooler air across the lake over the people on the beach. There were children playing in the water. One man helped his son dig holes in the sand, and the water ran into the holes. One lady held her children's hands and walked down into the water. Families climbed over the rocks and sat on the last rock where the water was deep. Teenagers rode bicycles and roller blades along the path beside the beach. Adults walked and ran along this path, carrying water bottles around their waists.

We sat on the blanket and ate sandwiches of meat and lettuce and strawberries from the pail. We talked and read books and lay in the sun, relaxing. We wore sunscreen, but our skin was getting hot. How cold was the water? We walked across the sand that almost burned our feet, to the edge of the water. She went right in and lay down floating. I put my toes in and felt the chill through my body. I went up to my knees, then my thighs, but that was far enough! My whole body was cooled down; I headed back to the blanket to lay in the sun again.

Soon it was time to go home, she was coming to my house for supper. We drove down the highway with the windows open and our hair blowing in the warm breeze. We cut the strawberries up and made a strawberry dessert with cake and ice cream. We sat outside in the backyard under the maple trees with the birds singing around us and ate our supper. It was a perfect ending to a relaxing summer day.

Article #81 My Parents

My parents live in England, and I live in Canada. I don't see them often. They used to come and visit on a plane, and we would pick them up at Toronto airport. But now they are older and say the flight is too long for them.

I went to visit them last year, with my son, their grandson. They live by the ocean, and we could hear the sound of the waves through the bedroom window and see the blue water of the English channel. There is an island with a castle on top in the bay. We walked many times on the beach and picked up pebbles and feathers. We visited the island and walked up the steep hill to the castle.

My mother likes to cook. She makes delicious cakes and pies. We went for a hike and picked wild blackberries. She made them into a pie that smelled so good coming out of the oven and tasted so good on our plates. She has many cook books with recipes from all over the world and likes to try new things. She can make pastry very easily and rolls it

with a rolling pin quickly. When I tried to make pastry, it sticks to the rolling pin, it has holes at the bottom of the pie, and it tastes like a rock! Her pastry is crisp and tender. My father likes to garden. He grows lettuce, carrots, potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers and many flowers. When my mother was very ill last year, she had to stay in bed. He planted roses outside her bedroom window, so she could open the curtains and see them. Their house has small room with windows all around, and they plant seeds there in winter in small pots. The warmth from the sun makes the seeds grow, and in spring they are a good size to be planted outside.

In the house beside them and in the house in front of them, there are older ladies whose husbands have died. These ladies do not drive, so my father takes my mother and the two ladies to the town for shopping every week. He helps one find her groceries because she cannot see well. He helps her take tapes of books from the library so she can listen to books instead of reading them because of her eyes. He helps them cut their grass and fix anything that is broken in the house.

I am very proud of my parents; they are over eighty years old and often hurt when they move around. But still they help other people, and they help each other. They have been married for over fifty years, but still my father loves my mother enough to plant roses for her to cheer her up when she was ill.

Article #82 The Planets of Our Solar System

The planet on which we live is called the Earth. Our planet is constantly moving around the sun, and each year, the Earth travels all the way around the sun. But there are many other planets that also travel around the sun. Together with the sun, the planets, and various other bodies, the Earth is part of our "solar system."

The planet that is closest to the sun is Mercury. Mercury is extremely hot, and it is much smaller than the Earth. The second planet from the sun is Venus. Venus is about the same size as the Earth. Venus is also very hot.

The Earth is the third planet from the sun. The Earth is unusual among the planets, because it has such a large moon. The Earth is bigger than the moon, but the moon is still quite large. It takes about one month for the moon to travel around the Earth.

The fourth planet from the sun is Mars. Mars is known for its red colour. Mars is smaller and colder than the Earth. Mars has two very small moons. After the planet Mars, there are many small bodies called the asteroids. These rocky objects are much smaller than planets.

The first four planets are all made of rock and metal. The remaining planets, however, are mostly made of frozen gases.

The fifth planet is called Jupiter. Jupiter is the largest planet. It has many moons that travel around it, and it also has a large red spot. The sixth planet is called Saturn. Saturn is the second-largest planet, and it is famous for the wide "rings" that surround it. These rings are made up of many smaller objects that are found in the same area.

The seventh planet is called Uranus. The eighth planet is called Neptune. These planets are also gas giants, but they are smaller than Jupiter and Saturn. Both Uranus and Neptune are so far from the sun that scientists only discovered these planets during the past few hundred years, using telescopes. The other planets had all been visible to curious people for many thousands of years.

The ninth planet is called Pluto. Pluto is very small, and it is much more rocky than the gas giants. Some scientists believe that Pluto is not really a planet at all. They suggest that Pluto is the largest of many asteroids that are found at the edge of the solar system. The solar system is a vast place. So far, people have not travelled beyond the moon. But perhaps someday, human astronauts will visit the other planets of our solar system!

Article #83 Learning to Drive

Each year, many young people learn to drive a car. For many people, learning to drive is important because the car is an important method of transportation in many places. Before learning to drive a car, it is important to understand the rules of the road. A beginning driver should already understand the many signs that are found along the roads. Also, the student driver should know the many rules about changing lanes, turning, stopping, and many other aspects of driving. In addition, the driver should be familiar with the way the car is operated; it is important to know how to use the lights, signals, brakes, accelerator, and steering wheel.

When a person starts learning to drive, it may take some time to become skilful. It takes some practice to become an expert in driving a car. One must become familiar with steering, speeding up, and slowing down. At first, it is good to practice driving in a large open space, such as an empty parking lot. Here, one can practice without being a danger to anyone.

When a person gains some skill in driving, it is then safe enough to practice driving on a road. Of course, a student driver must still be very careful. He or she should always have an expert driver in the car with him or her. Many beginning drivers take driving lessons from professional instructors, who can teach safe driving techniques.

Eventually, the young driver is ready for a driving test, which is needed to obtain a regular driver's licence. This test is supervised by a government official. In the driving test, the driver must show that he or she can control the car with great skill by being able to make turns and to park the car in small spaces. But he or she must also show respect for the rules of the road by driving at a proper speed, and obeying all traffic signs and signals.

Of course, even when one has obtained a driver's licence, it is always important to drive carefully and responsibly!

Article #84 Snow

Snow is the white substance that falls to the ground during cold weather conditions.

Each tiny piece of snow, called a snowflake, is a very small amount of water that has frozen into an unusual shape. During the winter months, huge numbers of snowflakes fall to the ground, covering the land in a white blanket of snow.

In many parts of the world, people never see any snow. Snow only falls when there is moisture in the air, and when the temperature falls below the freezing point of water, which is zero degrees Celsius. During the winter, snow falls instead of rain.

One advantage of snow is that it allows many fun outdoor activities. Children like to play in the snow. For example, they may make a "snowman" by rolling snow into a large ball, and then placing these balls of snow on top of each other, in the shape of a person.

Another fun activity in the snow is skiing. Skis are very long, thin, flat pieces of hard material that one wears on one's feet. Wearing skis allows a person to slide along the surface of the snow. People can ski down the side of a hill, travelling at great speeds. Many people find the sport of downhill skiing to be very exciting. Some people like to ski along flat ground, often travelling great distances. This sport, called cross-country skiing, is an excellent way to develop physical fitness.

Of course, snow also causes some problems. Snow can make driving dangerous because falling snow makes roads slippery, and on a windy day, blowing snow can make it difficult to see very far. It can also be a lot of work to remove snow from the roads and sidewalks. Snow is a heavy substance, and it must be cleared away using a shovel or a large machine.

Many people love the beauty of the land when it is covered by snow. The white covering of snow over the fields and trees can give a feeling of peace and calm. If you have never seen snow before, you should someday experience this strange and wonderful substance!

Article #85 Christmas

In most Western countries, Christmas is the biggest holiday of the year. People gather with their families to celebrate this day, which occurs on December 25th each year. The holiday of Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. In the Christian religion, Jesus Christ is recognized as the Son of God. During the Christmas season, many people celebrate the events of the birth of Jesus Christ. For example, they recall the three wise men who visited Jesus Christ shortly after his birth. Also, they recall that Jesus Christ was born in a manger (a place where horses are kept), because his parents could not find a place to stay.

In Western countries, Christmas is also celebrated by many people who are not religious. People view Christmas as a time for being together with one's relatives. Children, parents, and grandparents gather to exchange presents and to eat special foods.

The tradition of giving gifts at Christmas is unusual in one way. When children go to bed on the evening before Christmas, they hang large socks (called stockings) in their house. When they wake up on Christmas morning, the stockings have been filled with toys and candy.

According to tradition, the presents have been given by a fat man who wears a white beard and a red suit. This man, called Santa Claus, flies around the world in a sled that is pulled by reindeer. He stops at each house and flies down the chimney to deliver his presents. In the weeks before Christmas, children are usually very well behaved. Their parents tell them that Santa Claus will only give presents to children who are good! Another Christmas tradition is the Christmas tree. People put a small tree inside their house and decorate it with various pretty objects. Nowadays, most people use an artificial tree instead of a real tree. The tradition of the Christmas tree is actually older than Christmas itself-the people of Europe celebrated the beginning of the winter season in this way even before Christianity reached Europe.

Christmas is certainly one of the most important and most enjoyed holidays in Western countries.

Article #86 Thanksgiving

An important holiday in North America is held during the fall, or autumn, season of the year. This holiday is called Thanksgiving. At this time of year, people join with their relatives to reflect upon their good fortune.

Thanksgiving is a holiday that has a long history in North America. It was first celebrated when English settlers arrived in the eastern part of what is now the United States, during the seventeenth century. When they survived the first hard year, they celebrated and gave thanks to God. They invited some of the Native people to their Thanksgiving celebration, because the Native people had helped them to survive during the hard winter. The tradition of celebrating Thanksgiving continued and spread throughout North America. Each fall, during the time of the autumn harvest, people celebrated Thanksgiving. They gave thanks for the food of the harvest, and for all the good things in their lives.

Today, the tradition of Thanksgiving celebration continues. Families gather to eat a large bird called a turkey. They also eat pumpkin pie. This is a sweet dessert that is made from a large orange vegetable that grows on the ground.

In the United States, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November. But the following day, Friday, is also a holiday, and then comes the weekend. In Canada, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the second Monday of October. The reason for the earlier celebration in Canada is that the weather is colder than in the United States. This means that the harvest happens earlier in Canada, so Thanksgiving is held at an earlier date. But in both countries, Thanksgiving is a very pleasant time of year.

Article #87 Halloween (2)

The holiday called Halloween is celebrated on October 31st of each year. Halloween is not an official holiday. Everyone goes to work or to school on Halloween, just as on any other day. But Halloween is still one of the holidays that children like the most.

Why do children like Halloween so much? There are two reasons: costumes and candy. On the evening of October 31st, children dress up in strange and unusual costumes. They wear costumes that may look like a witch, a monster, or many other weird things. Putting on these scary costumes is a lot of fun for children.

After the children put on their costumes, they walk from house to house during the evening. The children carry large bags with them. At each house, they stop and knock at the door. When an adult opens the door, the children shout "trick or treat." The adult who opens the door pretends to be frightened, and then puts pieces of candy into each child's open bag.

At the end of the evening, the children have visited many houses and have collected much candy. During the next several days, they can feast upon the sweet candies that they have received.

Another Halloween tradition is very unusual. In each house, a family gets a very large, round orange vegetable called a pumpkin. They cut a hole in the top of the pumpkin, and empty out the flesh and seeds of the vegetable. Then, they cut holes in the side of the pumpkin, so that it appears to have eyes, a nose, and a mouth. When the carving is finished, the pumpkin looks almost like a person's face!

When the pumpkin has been carved to look like a face, people place a light inside the

pumpkin, so that the vegetable seems to glow in the dark. This strange-looking face is called a "jack-o-lantern." On Halloween evening, one can see many of these jack-o-lanterns, some of which are very beautifully carved.

Halloween is truly a fun and interesting holiday, especially for children!

Article #88 Easter

Traditionally, Easter has been one of the most important holidays of the Christian religion. For Christians, the Easter holiday celebrates the death of Jesus Christ, who died for the benefit of all people. The exact date when Easter is celebrated is different each year, but it is always held in early spring, during March or April.

There are two very important days that make up the Easter holiday, which occurs during the spring season. The first of these days is called Good Friday. Christians recognize Good Friday as the day when Jesus suffered and died on behalf of humanity.

The second of these days is called Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday occurs two days after Good Friday. Christians celebrate Easter Sunday as the day when Jesus rose from the dead and went to Heaven. For Christians, Easter is the most solemn holiday of the year. Many people attend church services on Good Friday and on Easter Sunday.

Easter is also a time for celebration. Some Easter traditions come from old springtime festivals that existed even before Christianity. One of the traditions associated with Easter is the painting of Easter eggs. People take chickens' eggs, make them hollow, and then paint them with beautiful colours. Some people paint very beautiful and complex designs on the Easter eggs.

Another Easter tradition is the Easter Bunny. According to tradition, the Easter Bunny is a magical rabbit that visits the homes of children on the night before Easter Sunday. The Easter Bunny hides chocolate candies, shaped like eggs, throughout the child's house. On the morning of Easter Sunday, the children must search throughout the house, to find these many hidden treats!

The Easter holiday is an important time, both as a religious holiday and as a celebration of springtime.

Article #89 My Friends

Two of my best friends are named John and Jane. John and Jane are related to each other. In fact, they are brother and sister. Not only are they brother and sister, but they are also twins. Their mother gave birth to them only a few minutes apart.

I first met John and Jane when we were only five years old. We went to kindergarten classes at the same school. Because the house where John and Jane lived was close to my family's house, I often walked to school with John and Jane.

When we weren't at school, John and Jane and I often played together. Sometimes, we would play sports and games. Sometimes, we would play in the forest, looking for birds and animals. On rainy days, we would stay inside, and play with toys and dolls. On warm summer days, we would go swimming in the lake that was near the place where we lived. I often visited John and Jane at their house. On many occasions, I had lunch at their place. John and Jane's parents were very nice to me. Of course, John and Jane often visited my house too. My parents enjoyed it when John and Jane came over for lunch.

When I became older, I remained friends with John and Jane. Sometimes, we would study or do our school homework together. Sometimes, we worked at the same part-time jobs, to make extra money. We often helped each other in various ways. Sometimes, I did a favour to help John or Jane, and sometimes they did favours to help me.

Eventually, when we grew up, I moved to a different town. Both John and Jane also moved to different places. But I am still good friends with John and Jane. Two years ago, I went to Jane's wedding, and last year, I went to John's wedding. I think I will probably always be friends with John and Jane.

Having friends is very nice. I am very lucky to have had good friends such as John and Jane.

Article #90 Hobbies

Hobbies are activities that people do in their spare time, for the sake of enjoyment. A hobby usually involves work of some kind, but the work is fun for the person who does it. Some people enjoy their hobbies very much and like to spend much time on those hobbies.

There are many different hobbies that people enjoy. One of the most popular hobbies is gardening. Many people enjoy growing beautiful flowers or tasty vegetables in a garden near their house or apartment. People who have a garden enjoy seeing the results of their work, when flowers show their bright, beautiful colours. But gardeners also enjoy the tasks of gardening itself. They like to work in the soil, planting and watering their flowers.

Another popular hobby is photography. Some people enjoy taking pictures of the people and places around them. People who enjoy photography may sometimes buy expensive cameras that allow interesting photographs to be taken. But even people who have only a basic camera can still take beautiful pictures.

For many people, car repair is a favourite hobby. Some people enjoy looking at the engine and other parts of their cars. Those people make repairs or improvements to their cars. Of course, this is a useful hobby, but many people enjoy "fixing up" a car simply because they enjoy working with cars.

Some people collect objects as a hobby. For example, some people collect postage stamps, and some people collect coins. It can be very satisfying to find the missing parts of one's collection, especially when the stamps or coins are very rare.

Of course, these are just a few of the many hobbies that people enjoy. Do you have any hobbies that you enjoy?

Article #91 Life in Outer Space?

People have often wondered about whether or not there is life beyond the planet Earth. For years, the idea of intelligent life on other planets has been very popular. Many books and movies tell stories of what those forms of life might be like.

Many scientists believe that very simple forms of life are likely to exist on many other planets. Under the right conditions, simple life forms might arise. Those conditions, which include moisture and warmth, might occur in many parts of the universe.

Fewer scientists believe that very intelligent forms of life are likely to exist on many other planets. For intelligent life to evolve, a very long period of time is needed. During that time, the conditions on a planet must not be too harsh. Otherwise, the evolving life forms will die. The amount of water, heat, and various chemicals must be "just right." If not, then complex life might never evolve.

The conditions needed for intelligent life to evolve are very unlikely to occur on any one planet. However, some scientists believe that intelligent life might be common in the universe. Because there are so many stars and planets in the universe, there might be a few places that have intelligent life. However, those places are probably very, very far away.

Other scientists disagree. They think that the conditions needed for intelligent life are extremely rare. Because of this, our planet might be the only place that has intelligent life!

So far, it is impossible to know whether or not there are intelligent beings on other planets. But even if those beings do exist, it seems very unlikely that we will ever meet them.

Article #92 Reading the Newspaper

I often enjoy reading the newspaper. In my city, there are three different newspapers, and I look at different newspapers on different days. I find that each section of a newspaper has some interesting information.

Most newspapers contain several sections that can be easily removed from the rest of the newspaper. The main section is found at the front of the newspaper. This section usually contains the most important news from around the world, from around the nation, and from the local area.

Sometimes the main section also includes some pages that contain opinions about the news. The editors of the newspaper write an editorial opinion. Other writers provide many different opinions about current events. Also, some readers of the newspaper write letters to the editor, in which they express their opinions.

Another popular section of the newspaper is the sports section. This section contains information about many different sports events. The sports section provides scores and results from many games and competitions.

Another section of the newspaper contains information about entertainment and the arts. The arts and entertainment section tells readers about new movies and plays. It also describes new books, music concerts, and art exhibits.

Most newspapers also have a business section. This section provides information about new business deals, and about the stock market. Many people read the business section of the newspaper to gain information and advice about investing their money.

Finally, newspapers usually have a section for classified advertisements. This section allows people to advertise about things that they want to buy or sell. It also gives notices about job openings.

Reading the newspaper is surely a good way to keep informed about many different events in the world around us.

Article #93 Summer Jobs

In North America, many young people attend high school, college, or university. But during the summer months, most of those students work at a summer job.

For most students, there are no classes during the months of July and August, and sometimes none in May and June also. Having a summer job allows students to make money that they will need during the rest of the year. They need this money because it costs a lot of money to pay for university or college. Of course, students also want money to spend on things that are fun, also.

Many students have summer jobs that involve working with children. For example, some students work at children's camps, where they teach children various skills and games.

Some students work as lifeguards, at swimming pools and at beaches.

Some students do heavy work in their summer jobs. For example, some students find jobs as construction workers. Other students work in factories, and some students work on farms. There are other students who find jobs mowing lawns or collecting trash.

Quite a few students work in stores. Some of these students have jobs as cashiers, and some have jobs putting products on store shelves. Other students work in restaurants, as waiters or as cooks.

Other students work in offices. Some of them work as assistants for other employees.

Their tasks might include typing letters, programming computers, or delivering mail.

Some students enjoy their summer jobs very much, and they find those jobs to be a pleasant break from studying. Other students do not really enjoy summer jobs, but find their jobs to be a nice way to make new friends. But nearly all students who have summer jobs are pleased to have the chance to earn some extra money.

Article #94 Eating Out

Many people enjoy the experience of going out to eat at a restaurant. It is enjoyable to eat one's favourite foods, or to try some entirely new food. Going out to a restaurant is also fun because it allows a change from the usual routine of eating at home.

There are many different kinds of restaurants. One popular type of restaurant is the fast-food restaurant. When ordering fast-food, you must first wait in line at the front of the restaurant, and then order food from the counter. After paying, the food is quickly delivered, and you can then take the food to a table, where you can enjoy your meal.

In most restaurants, you don't have to go to a counter to order your food. Instead, you are taken to a table soon after entering the restaurant. There, a waiter comes to give you a menu. You can choose your meal from the foods that are listed on the menu. After ordering, it takes some time to prepare your food. After a while, the waiter brings your meal to the table. When you are finished eating, the waiter brings the "bill" or "check". You then pay for the meal, and leave some extra money as a "tip" for the waiter.

In some other restaurants, the waiter does not bring the meal to your table. Instead, after you are taken to a table, you then go to a counter called a "buffet." There you can select different types of foods, such as salads, soups, meats, breads, vegetables, and desserts. After putting the food on your plate, you return to your table. After eating, you can return to the buffet to get more food.

Other restaurants can be very fancy. They may have beautiful decorations, and they may have food that is prepared by expert chefs. These restaurants may also serve fine wines with the food. Of course, these restaurants are very expensive. At these restaurants, it is

often necessary to reserve a table by telephoning the restaurant in advance. Different restaurants specialize in different kinds of food. Fast-food restaurants may specialize in hamburgers or chicken. Some restaurants specialize in steak or seafood. Other restaurants specialize in foods that belong to a certain nationality. For example, many restaurants specialize in Italian, Mexican, Chinese, Indian, or Thai food. Eating out at a restaurant can be a fun and tasty experience. What is your favourite kind of restaurant?

Article #95 Radio Stations

When I drive in my car, I like to turn on the radio. By listening to the radio, I can enjoy music and learn the latest news while I am travelling from one place to another. Of course, you can also listen the radio at home, or even at work. Listening to the radio is a popular activity for many people, and each city has many different radio stations. There are many different kinds of radio stations. Some radio stations provide news and information. Other radio stations have a "talk" format, where listeners can call the radio station's experts, to discuss political affairs or to ask for personal advice. Although there are many radio stations that provide news and opinions, most radio stations are mainly devoted to playing music of some kind. For example, some radio stations play the songs that are currently most popular, often called the "top 40" songs. Other radio stations specialize in particular types of music. There are some stations that play only classical music. Other radio stations mainly play jazz music. Some very popular radio stations play "hard rock" music. Others specialize in country music. Some people prefer radio stations that play rhythm-and-blues music. Still other people enjoy radio stations that specialize in soft, "easy listening" music. If you have a favourite kind of music, or even if you like to listen to all kinds of music, you can probably find at least one radio station that you will like. In addition to news and music, some radio stations provide other kinds of entertainment. Sometimes, a story from a book will be told over the radio. Occasionally, the words of a theatrical play may be heard on the radio. Even in the age of television and computers, the radio has remained an important source of entertainment and information. People will surely listen to the radio for a long time to come.

Article #96 Being a Good Citizen

Every society has laws that regulate the way people behave. A good citizen should obey laws. However, there is more to being a good citizen than merely obeying laws. There are many other things that people can do to make their society a pleasant one for every person. One way to be a good citizen is to be polite in everyday activities. For example, when passing through a door, a considerate person will hold the door open for a person who is close behind. Holding doors open is especially important when someone is carrying a heavy load. Being a good citizen is very important when travelling on the roads and streets. Pedestrians, bicyclists, and car drivers should all follow the rules of the road. Bicyclists

should yield to pedestrians, and car drivers should yield to both bicyclists and pedestrians. Drivers should also allow other drivers to merge into their lanes. Also, drivers should avoid honking their horns except when this is necessary. A good citizen will also avoid doing things that interfere with others. For example, a considerate person does not smoke cigarettes in areas where this might irritate others. Also, a polite person avoids playing music so loudly that other people will be annoyed. And of course, a good citizen avoids littering or making a mess. Other ways of being a good citizen involve greater effort. Some people serve their community by doing volunteer work of some kind. Other people help by donating money to a charity. Another way to serve the community is to donate blood. Blood donors are needed so that there will be enough blood available to help people who are sick or injured. Being a good citizen is very helpful for the community, and it also gives a feeling of satisfaction and pride!

Article #97 Visiting the Doctor

When people feel sick, they go to a doctor. But sometimes people visit the doctor even when they are not sick. Doctors can perform a medical "check-up", to find out if a person is healthy. By performing this physical examination, the doctor can identify any health problems that might be developing. During a check-up, the doctor examines your eyes, ears, and throat. The doctor uses a small flashlight to examine the eyes, ears, and throat. It is important to make sure that the eyes react normally to changes in light. It is also important to make sure that the ears and throat have a normal appearance. When the doctor examines your throat, he or she will ask you open your mouth wide and say "ah". The doctor uses a stethoscope to examine the patient's heartbeat. The stethoscope hangs around the doctor's neck. By using a stethoscope, a doctor can hear the patient's heartbeat very clearly. While checking the patient's heart, the doctor also listens carefully to make sure that the patient's breathing is normal. The doctor also checks the patient's blood pressure. Blood pressure is measured by placing a cuff around the arm. Air is then pumped into the cuff, and this allows blood pressure to be measured. Having very high blood pressure, or very low blood pressure, is not good for one's health; it is better to be "in between". Another part of the examination is a test of the reflexes. The doctor tests the patient's reflexes by gently hitting his or her knee with a small hammer. If a person has normal reflexes, the leg will extend suddenly. Sometimes a doctor may give injections using a needle, as an extra part of the check-up. These injections, called vaccinations, prevent the patient from developing certain illnesses. Medical check-ups can help to maintain health, but people should also maintain their health by leading a healthy lifestyle.

Article #98 A Small Town

I grew up in a small town. There were only about two thousand people who lived in the

town where I grew up. When a town is very small, it is also called a village. My village was surrounded by many farms and many lakes.

The house where my family lived was near the middle of the town. On the street where we lived, most of the houses were similar in size, but many of them had different shapes and different colors. Each house was surrounded by a yard, where people grew their lawn and their garden.

Often, I would walk from my house to the downtown part of the village. "Downtown" is the area where the stores and shops of a town are located. Because I lived in a small town, it was a short walk to the downtown area. Along the main street, there were several different kinds of stores. Some stores sold food, some stores sold clothing, and some stores sold hardware (or building supplies).

It was also a short walk to the schools in my town. When I went to elementary school, it would take about ten minutes to walk to the school. Some of my friends lived on the same street where I lived. Sometimes, we walked to school together.

During the summer months, many people came from the big city to visit our village. The people liked to get away from the busy streets of the city. They enjoyed the quietness and the slow pace of village life. They also liked to spend their vacations near the lakes that were near the village. People from the city often said that people who live in villages seemed very friendly.

When I grew up, I left my village, and I went to work in a larger town. But sometimes I like to go back and visit the place where I grew up.

Article #99 Personal Computers

During the 1980s and 1990s, personal computers became very widespread. The use of the computer has changed people's lifestyles in several ways.

Before 1980, hardly anyone owned a computer. Only governments and large companies had computers. But throughout the 1980s and 1990s, computers became much cheaper, faster, and smaller, and they held much more memory. More and more people were able to afford to buy a computer. By the year 2000, computers had become very common. For many people, the personal computer is used mainly for performing calculations and for word processing. For example, people can calculate their finances on the computer. They can also use the computer to type their written documents, such as essays or letters.

Many people enjoy playing games on their computers. Some people like to play chess or checkers on their computer. Other people prefer games that require fast reflexes and fine co-ordination. Computer games were very simple during the early days of the 1980s. Today's computer games show detailed images and sounds.

Another very popular use of computers involves communication. Many people keep in touch with their friends and relatives by using electronic mail, or e-mail. E-mail allows people to send letters instantly to people far away. It is even possible to attach pictures to one's e-mail messages.

Many people also like to use their computer to gain information on the Internet. The Internet is a vast network of electronic pages where people can find information on many different topics. For example, people can read newspapers and magazines on the Internet.

Personal computers have only existed for a short time. But for many people, those

computers have quickly become a very useful part of everyday life!

Article #100 Methods of Transportation

In the modern age, people often travel long distances. Sometimes people travel for reasons related to their work. Sometimes they travel as tourists. And sometimes people travel to visit relatives and friends.

There are many different ways that people can travel. Some forms of transportation move people along the ground. Other methods of transportation move people across the water, or through the air.

Airplanes provide the fastest method of travelling. Modern jet airliners travel at about 1000 kilometres per hour. These airplanes cruise through the skies, almost ten kilometres above the level of the sea. Jet airplanes allow people to travel great distances in a short time. For example, it is possible to fly across a great ocean, such as the Pacific or the Atlantic, in several hours.

Ships were once the only way to travel across the oceans. Before airplanes, it took many weeks or months to travel around the world. Today, many people still travel by ship when crossing smaller bodies of water. Some ships, called ferries, allow people to bring their cars with them onto the ship. Some people also like to travel by ship as part of a holiday. These holiday ships, called cruise ships, stop in several interesting ports along the voyage.

Trains are very popular in many places. In some places, such as Japan and France, trains travel at high speeds of about 300 kilometres per hour. These trains move people throughout the country very quickly and efficiently. Trains are also used to move people over short distances, such as the trip from one's home to one's workplace.

Buses and cars are also widely used for transportation. Some people travel by bus or car for only short trips, but sometimes buses and cars are used for very long journeys. In North America, many people have driven across Canada or the United States in their cars. The wide, smooth roads allow cars and buses to travel quickly from one place to another. There are many different methods of transportation. Which one do you think is the best?

Article #101 A Life Experience

My friend Lani and I went to Burger King yesterday. We ordered a big order of french fries and a couple of drinks. Lani got a strawberry milkshake.

I picked out a table near the window so we could look at the people passing by. As we were sitting there, we heard our favourite song, "Butterfly" by the band Crazy Town come on the radio. We looked at each other with big grins on our faces and started singing and dancing!

It was great fun. Many people began staring at us, wondering why we were so happy. We didn't care; we just kept on moving and enjoying ourselves.

The song ended, and we were almost finished our food. We sat and talked about what was happening in our lives. She had just bought four new t-shirts for the summer. The new sandals she had gotten for her birthday had given her really bad blisters on the sides of her feet. When she wore other shoes, she had to wear bandaids on the blisters. I told her that I had bought four new C.D.'s. I love music!

As we finished our conversation, we finished off our drinks. I like going out with Lani and talking. Lani is my best friend and I can talk to her about anything. I am glad I have her to share my life with, even if it is as simple as going to Burger King and eating french fries! Lani and I are planning to travel together so we are trying to save our money. Our french fries and drink only came to about \$6, so we didn't feel too bad about spending our money!

I wonder though, if McDonald's would have been cheaper?

Article #102 Air Plane Ride

Tasha signed a piece of paper which gave her a chance to win a free air plane ride. She put her name, address and telephone number on that piece of paper. A few days later she got a telephone call. It was the man that was holding the ticket draw. Tasha didn't think she would win, but the man on the telephone said she did!

She listened as the man told her where she would have to go to get her free air plane ride. She had to go near the town of Grimsby. She was allowed to pick a friend to go with her on the air plane ride. Tasha was so happy! She asked her twin sister Tawnya to go with her. Tawnya was very excited! Neither of them had been on an air plane before.

When they got to the air plane centre, Tasha and Tawnya were nervous. They knew the air plane was small so that meant only the pilot and them were going to be in the plane. Their mom took a picture of them beside the plane before they left.

Tasha and Tawnya hopped into the plane. They put their seatbelts on and got ready for take-off. Tasha got to sit in the very front, right beside the pilot. Tawnya sat behind Tasha. The girls laughed nervously as the plane started rolling down the runway. They went faster and faster, trees passing by quickly. There was a powerful surge making everyone's head jerk back. The plane started lifting off the ground. Up, up, and away! They were up off the ground and flying high in the sky! It seemed as though they could get anywhere within a matter of seconds. They flew from Grimsby to Beamsville where they saw their high school. Then, on to St. Catharines and then Niagara Falls. They even flew over top of their house! They took pictures of their house. They could see their pond from way up there, too.

The pilot asked Tasha if she wanted to fly the plane. "Sure!" Tasha said. So, Tasha took the steering handle and began to fly the plane. She didn't really know how to fly it, so when she pulled the handle down, the plane shot upward. Both of the girls squealed.

Tasha levelled the plane and flew smoothly from then on.

Soon it was time to go back to Grimsby. The pilot took over again. We braced ourselves as the landing strip got nearer. The landing went smoothly with Tasha and Tawnya beaming as they looked out at the ground. They hopped off of the plane, thanked the pilot and ran to tell their mom about their wonderful experience.

Article #103 A Rainy Day

The clouds were very gray. There was a loud boom that came from the sky. A bolt of lightning struck down a tree. All of a sudden buckets of rain came pouring down!

Jane and Bill were walking in a park when the rain started. Jane wanted to take pictures of the flowers, but the rain got her camera wet. She had to put it away so that it wouldn't

get ruined.

Jane was going to hide under a big tree to stay dry, but Bill told her that was not a safe idea. He said that she could get hurt if the lightning hit the tree. The tree could break and fall on her, or the lightning could even hit her!

The air was very chilly. Jane and Bill put on their sweaters and raincoats to keep warm.

Jane took her umbrella out and put it up. They both walked under it to stay dry.

The ground was really wet and muddy. Bill and Jane were very glad that they remembered to wear their boots. They ran through the puddles, getting mud and water all over the back of their pants.

As they were running and having fun, they saw some ducks. There were five of them splashing around in a pond. The ducks were not afraid of water; they swim in the water all the time!

Jane and Bill saw some big bull frogs near the pond. The frogs jumped into the pond when they heard Jane and Bill coming.

After a little while Jane and Bill decided to go home. They got into some dry clothes.

Jane started to sneeze. She had gotten a little bit too wet!

Bill noticed that the rain had stopped. "Look outside Jane," he said. Jane wrapped a blanket around her shoulders and looked outside. There was a beautiful, bright rainbow across the sky Violet, blue, green, yellow, orange and red, the rainbow shone high in the sky. "I wonder if there's a pot of gold on the other side?" Jane asked. She had once been told that Leprechauns lived on the other side handing out money to those that made it to the rainbow's end.

Bill didn't believe there was a pot of gold. Jane ignored Bill though and started off across the field, to claim her big pot of money.

Let's hope Jane finds her way back home, safe and sound, with a big pot of gold!

Article #104 Elementary School

I go to Gainsborough Public Elementary School. I am in Grade 8. I am known as the "King/Queen" of the school this year. I feel very grown up. I love being the oldest kid in the school. My friends and I are told that we are examples to the younger kids in the school. That means we need to be good. I remember looking up to the grade eight kids when I was younger. I remember thinking how big and wise they seemed to be. Now that I'm in grade eight, I hope that the younger kids see me as wise.

I want to be a music teacher or maybe a nurse. My school counsellor helps me plan for high school. I am nervous because I know I will not feel like the "King" anymore. Things will be so different. I am excited because I will be meeting so many new people!

I am looking forward to my graduation. I will wear a pink, silky dress. My shoes are a light pink, too. My date's name is Chad. He is very nice. He is a good friend. I have known Chad since I was a little girl.

I know that my future will be a bright one. I will miss all of my friends but I know we will see each other again someday.

Article #105 The Middle Child

I am the middle child of the family.

I think it is nice in some ways.
I have an older sister from whom I can borrow clothes from, if she lets me.
I get to meet my older sister's friends, although sometimes they think that I am too young to be with them.
I have a younger brother.
He is cute, but sometimes I have to baby-sit him.
There are good things and bad things about being the middle child.
My sister is the eldest child.
She was the first child, so she spent time alone with my parents.
She got lots of attention when she was first born.
They took lots and lots of pictures of her.
All her clothes and toys were brand new.
I got her hand-me-downs.
My parents were the strictest with her.
They had lots of rules for her to follow.
She is the first child, so they want her to be perfect.
My younger brother is the baby of the family.
I think that we all spoil him.
We let him get away with some things that he shouldn't get away with.
His room is always messy, and my mother never gets mad about that.
She gets upset with me if my room is messy.
She tells me that I'm old enough to keep a nice clean room.
It's no good thinking about which position you would like to hold in the family.
You really don't have a choice about that.
I think I like being the middle child.
I can relate to my older sister and my younger brother.
Yes, I think the middle is probably a good place to be.

Article #106 Advice to a Student from a Foreign Country

My advice to a student from a foreign country would be to talk, talk, talk.
Talk as much as you can to the people who live in the place that you are visiting.
Talk to them and practice your new language skills.
Learn all the funny sayings and different words that make up their language.
Talking is the only way to really learn a language.
Listen to people and talk to people.
If you talk to people, you will also learn about their culture.
I have a friend from Japan.
His name is Nori.
He often comes to see me just so that he can practice his English.
He gets confused about words that sound the same, but mean different things.
He was asking me about the words "see" and "sea."
I explained to him that they do sound the same, but they are spelled differently, and they mean different things.
Nori is learning some of our funny sayings from different people.
One morning I asked him how he was, and he said "alive and kicking."
Another morning when I asked him how he was, he said "so so."

He laughs about these strange sayings that we use.
He is learning English quickly because he spends a lot of time with English-speaking people.
He likes to have lunch with my friends and me because we ask him questions about his homeland, and he answers us in English.
If he doesn't understand our questions, we spend time explaining what we mean to him.
He says that he enjoys being here.
He thinks that the people are very friendly.
We enjoy speaking to him and helping him to learn English.
We also enjoy learning about his country.
It is enjoyable for us to meet new people and learn about new things.

Article #107 A Ghost

One dark and gloomy night, I was sitting in my bedroom reading ghost stories.
The stories were very scary.
A storm was brewing outside my window.
The wind began to howl, and the trees shook and bent in the wind.
Lightening started to flash across the sky.
I felt uneasy as I heard the low rumble of thunder.
I glanced around my room.
The shadows were deep and dark.
The ghost stories were making my imagination play tricks on me.
I thought that the shadows were moving.
I looked under my bed to make sure that nothing was under there.
I hid under the covers and peeked out.
I was starting to hear things.
A big streak of lightening flashed across the sky, and a loud clap of thunder made me jump.
I was very nervous.
All of a sudden, I heard a noise.
It was coming from my closet.
I thought that it must be a ghost.
I looked out from under my covers and waited for the ghost to appear.
My face was white, and I was very, very scared.
Then, I heard the noise again.
Yes, there was definitely a rustling in my closet.
I stayed very still and did not make a sound.
I watched the closet and hoped that the ghost would not come flying out at me.
Something started to come out of the closet.
I squeezed my eyes shut.
I didn't dare to look at the ghost.
I heard it come out of the closet.
I felt it jump up on my bed.
I was still too scared to look.
Then the ghost made a noise.
It said, "meow."

I opened my eyes and saw my kitten standing there.
It was my kitten that had made the rustling noises in the closet.
I laughed and felt very foolish.
I have decided not to read ghost stories on dark stormy nights.
I think my imagination plays tricks on me when I read ghost stories on nights like that.

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