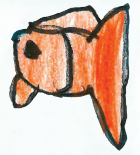


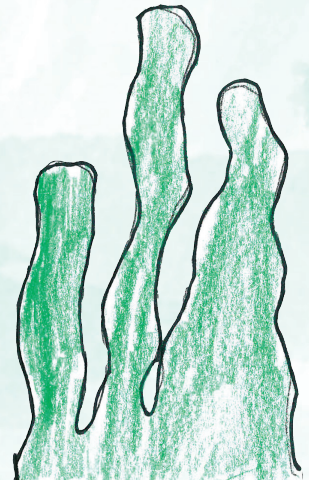


FISH TALES



If I were a fish in a classroom tank,
this would be my story...

Written and Illustrated by the
Stargazer Class 2015-16



About the Book

This year's Stargazer expedition was called "Fish Tank". It focused on exploring our 150-gallon class aquarium and the African Cichlids and Plecostomus that live in it.

At the beginning of the year we used the guiding question, "What makes a fish, a fish?" to build general knowledge and learn about some common characteristics of fish. We learned that all fish have backbones, at least one fin, and breathe mainly through their gills. We explored fish anatomy including their skeletons, the name and function of their fins, and how their gills work. We also learned about the fish in our tank:

The Cichlids are from Lake Malawi in Africa and the Plecostomus is from the Amazon river.

We were fortunate to have Rick Beaman, owner of Jurassic Pets, come to our class multiple times as our "expert". Over the course of the year, we asked and he answered hundreds of questions.

He taught us how to take care of our tank and explained water chemistry, showing us how to test and adjust variables like hardness, pH, and chlorine.

Perhaps the most exciting learning came from observing our fish and noticing how they behaved alone and with each other. Some fish dominated and chased the other fish around.

These "alphas" often had favorite places that they prevented the other fish from entering, and they even hurt the other fish at times. We were worried when one morning, we found our Plecostomus dead and another fish struggling to swim with his caudal fin (the tail fin) in shreds.

Luckily, Rick came to save the day. He helped us change the structure in our tank by adding and moving the rocks and plants and he took the "bully" and injured fish back to his pet store where he could separate them. He put new fish in our tank, including a very large Plecostomus that would be safe from nipping Cichlids. Now students and fish were both happy!

We really took to heart what was happening in our tank. To write these stories we imagined that we were new fish being introduced into our class aquarium and wrote from their perspective. While reading our book, see if you notice how our expedition influenced what we wrote.

We would like to dedicate this book to our expert, Rick.

This expedition wouldn't have been possible without his kindness and expertise.

Thank you, Rick, from all of us.

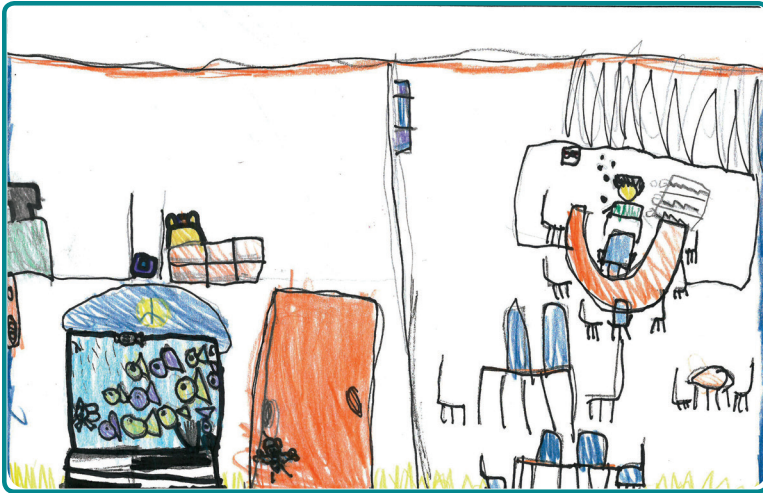
We hope you enjoy our book!

The 2015-16 Stargazers

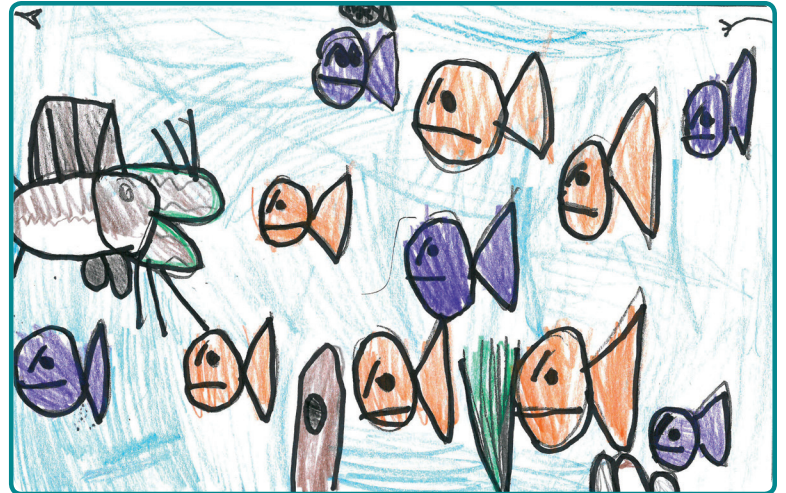
The printing of this book is made possible by the SFSAS Annual Fund.

Brownie's Big Adventure

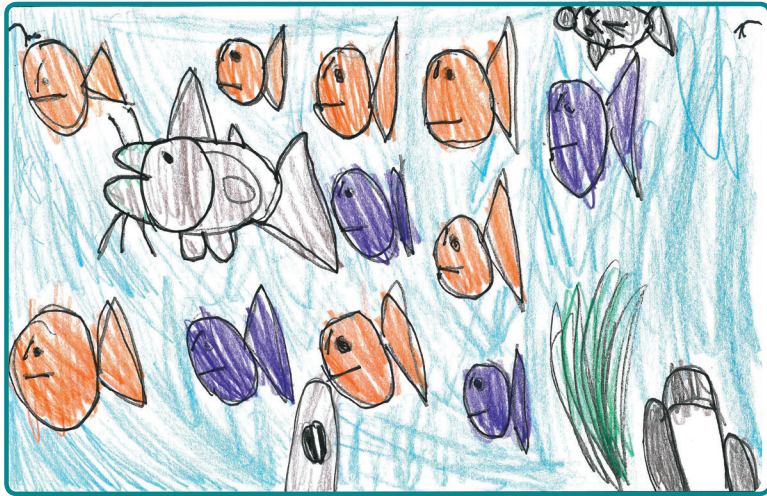
By Zeke



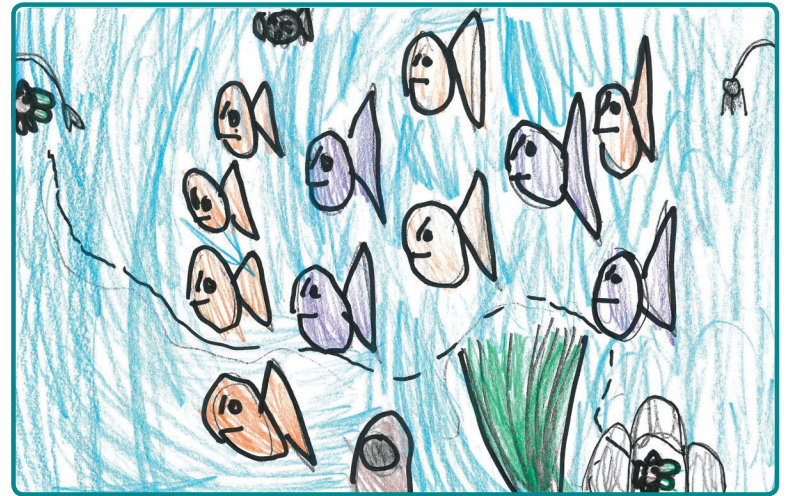
I was a grey, orange Catfish in a new school tank.
I like the food because it is crunchy.



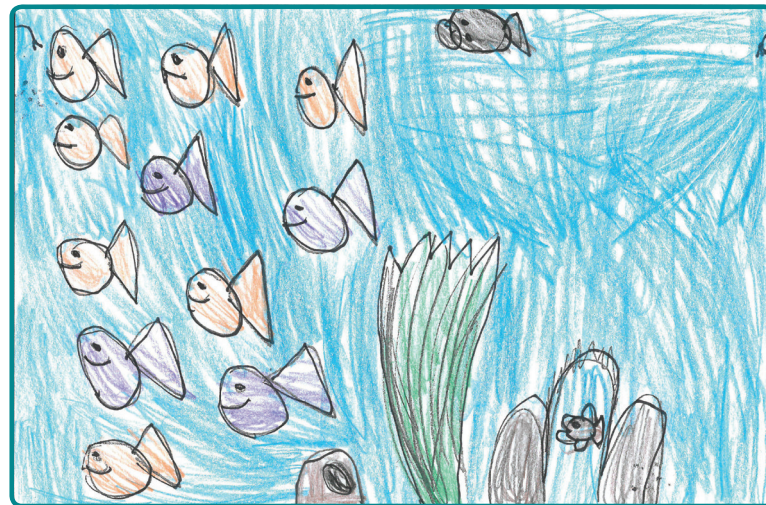
I saw Cichlids, eleven Cichlids, and they did not like me
because they wanted the whole place to themselves.



They chase me. I am swimming away from them.
They are an inch away from me and nipping.
I move my caudal fin side to side.
I don't know what to do!



I swim up to the spigots and then I look down and see
some rocks and swim down and hide under the rocks.
It is too crowded for two of us so they
don't want to come in.



I feel happy because I have a nice place
to live away from all the fish.

The Lost Lettuce

By Coriandra



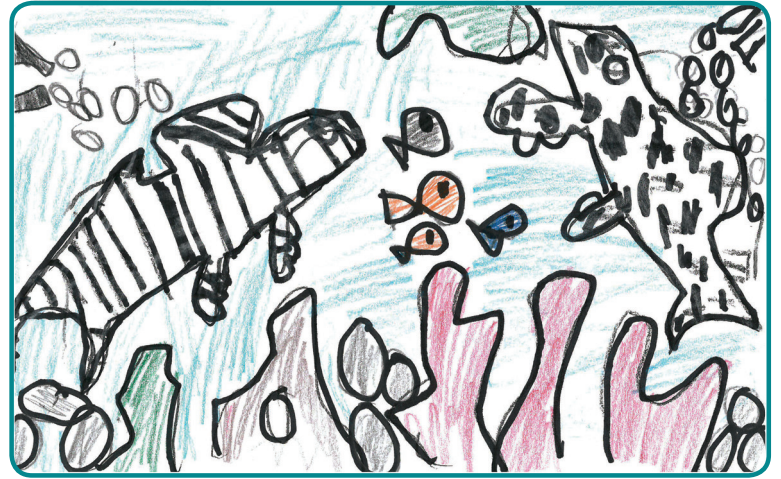
I am a Zebra Plecostomus and live in a fish store. There were lots of other fish there. One day someone buys me and takes me to a huge classroom. She puts me in a fish tank with plants, other fish, and rocks.



I am scared because there are lots of other fish. They are whitish, orange, blue, and black. I had never seen a tank so big or so many fish. I was swimming when I saw another spotted Plecostomus swimming toward the bottom of the tank.



I was very hungry because I hadn't eaten all day! I started looking for algae in the tank. I looked on the bottom of the tank, there was nothing there. I looked on the sides of the tank, there was nothing on them either. I looked on the rocks, the stump and plastic plants, there was nothing there either.



I go look near the top of the water and find the spotted Plecostomus eating lettuce. I go and ask him, "Can you save some lettuce for me?" He looks at me and says, "Yes, I will! Would you like the last bit of lettuce?" I smile and say, "Yes I would love it." I thank him and give him half of the piece.



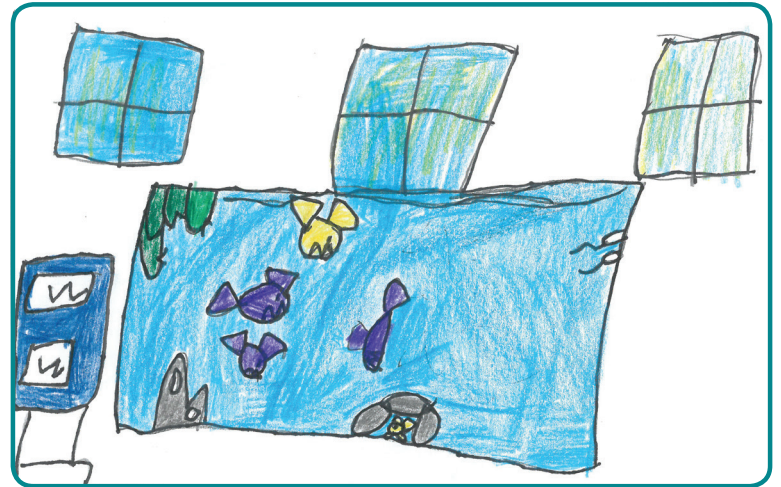
After that day, we become best friends and look for algae and lettuce pieces together.

The Little Goldfish

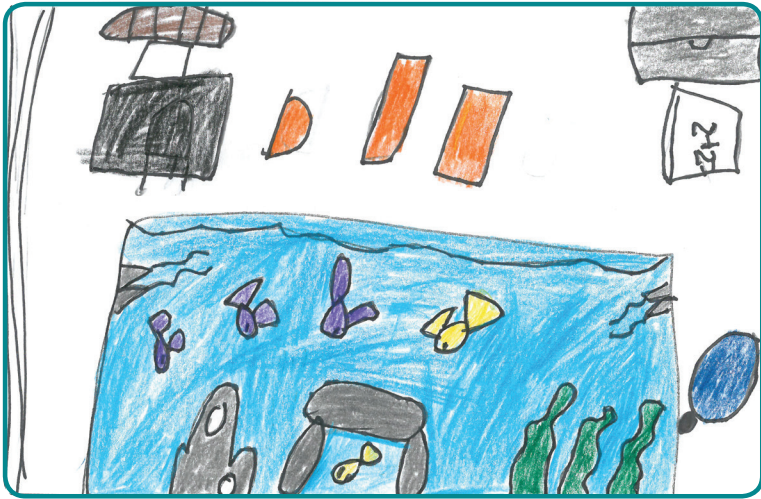
By Sadie



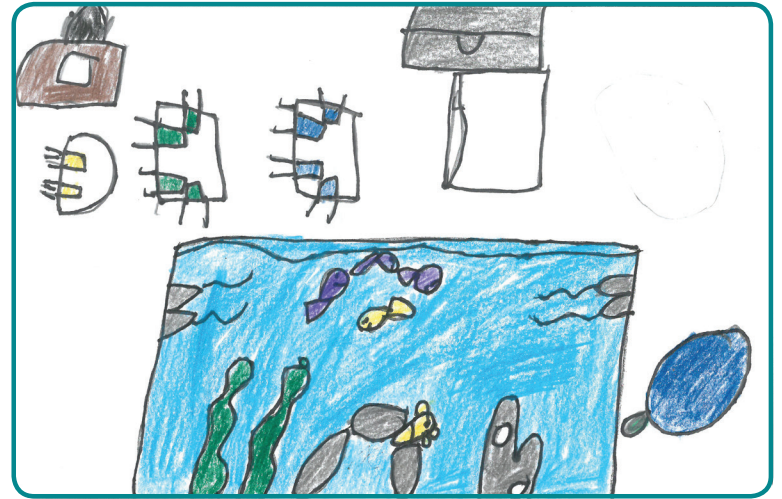
I am a little Goldfish. I just got put in the classroom tank. I used to live in a little boy's house. I had my own bowl. The water is a little cold in the new tank. I see really big Cichlids eating lettuce. I feel a little frightened.



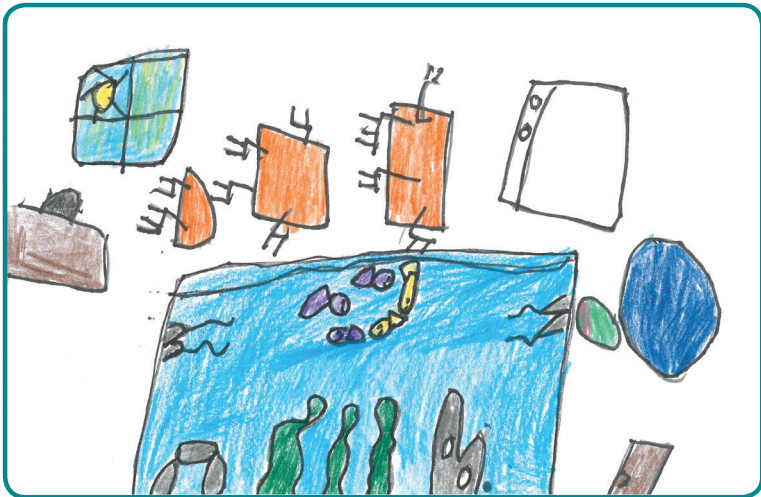
Some big blue fish come up to me and I feel scared. I don't like it because they are trying to tackle me. I want to go home. I find a hiding place in the grey rocks. I hide and feel a bit better.



I am hiding. I see the big fish crowding around the rock and feel afraid. I don't want them to attack me, but I want to meet my new friends.



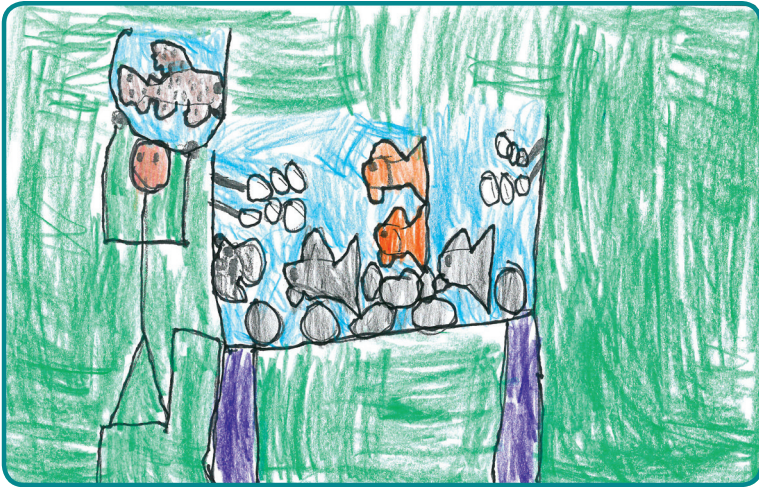
I see the fish playing chase and having fun together. I get my courage and swim outside the hiding place. I realize that the other fish are good friends. They say, "Hello, do you want to play together?" Now they are not trying to tackle me because I wasn't that new.



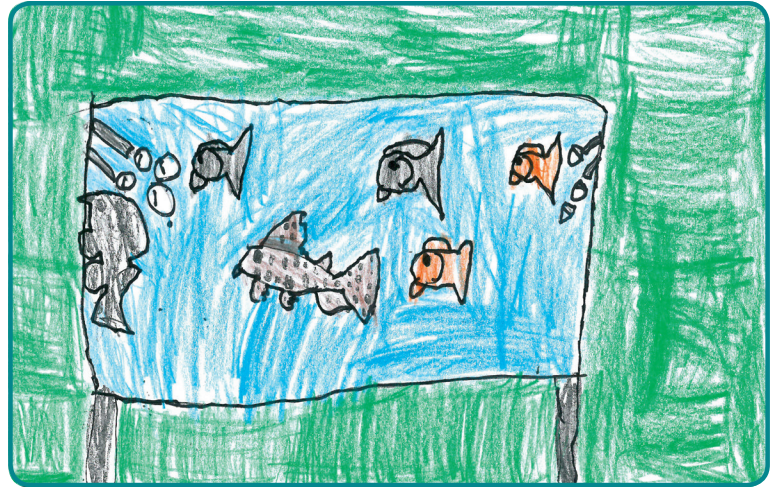
We have fun together the rest of the day.

Attack of the Plecostomus

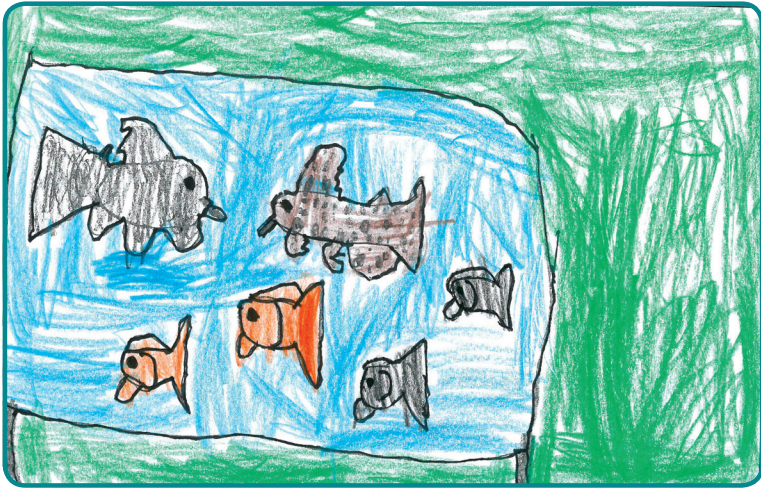
By Ethan



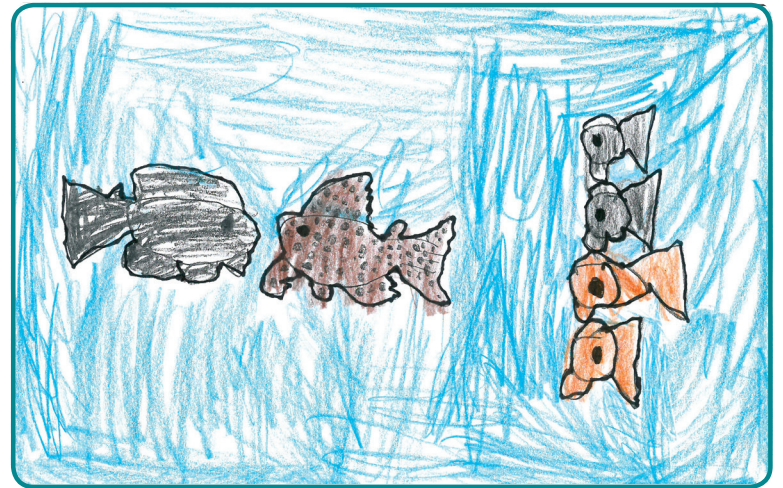
I am a Sucker Mouth Catfish. I got put in a tank at Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences. The Cichlids chased me, the black and orange Cichlids. I had to hide in the rocks, then I saw the black Plecostomus.



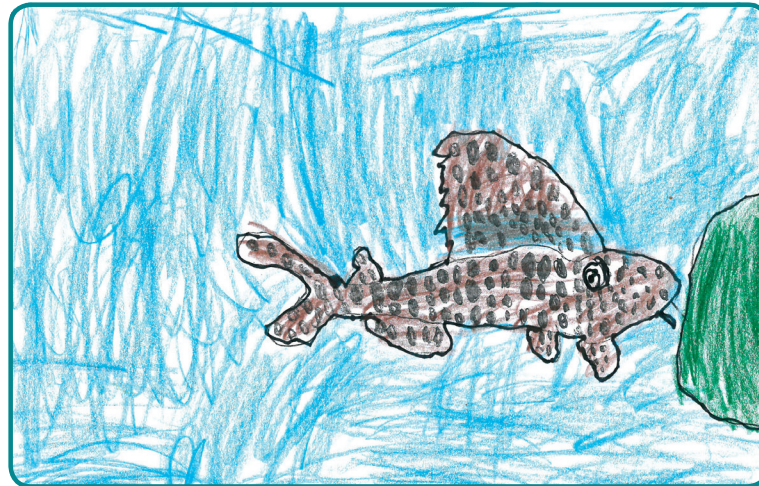
He saw me. I said to myself, "Swim!" I turned and swam away out. The boss Cichlid chased me, then it stopped because I was bigger than him.



I saw the Plecostomus ate all the algae off the glass.
Oh no, the Plecostomus ate all the algae! I eat it too!
I'm hungry. I didn't get any! I fought the
Plecostomus and fought!



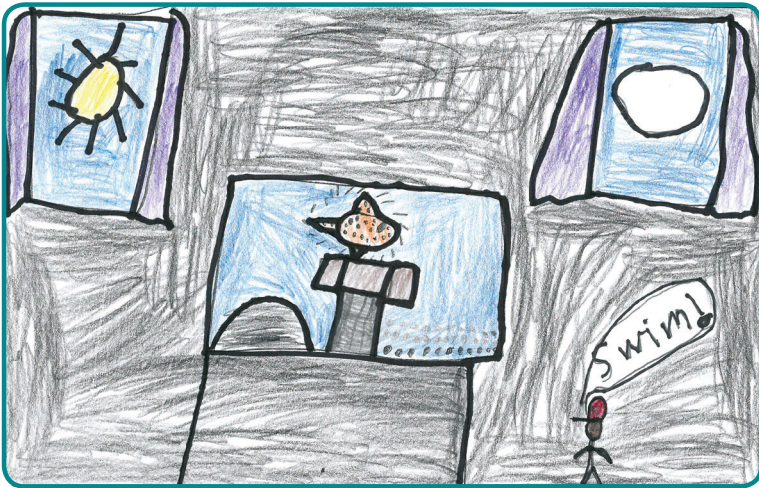
I pushed the Plecostomus hard. Heeeeave! I did it!
The Plecostomus stopped sucking on the glass.



The algae grew back in an hour. Hooray. I ate some.
Yum. I got a big smile.

The Very Fishy Story

by Cruz



I was a happy Rainbow Trout. I lived in Chris' house.
My fish tank has a castle and a bridge and a rock field.
I also glimmered in the bright sunlight.



My owner, Chris, donates me to an only for boys and girls school so they could have a class pet. I didn't know at first, but then I found out. Chris brought me to his school. I was really scared. I was put in this little bowl by myself. One by one the boys and girls came to look at me. I tried to hide myself.



It got worse! The school was having a yard sale so they could have money because the school was poor. They were going to sell me. Now I was really scared! I was afraid the person who bought me wasn't going to take good care of me because I saw other people walk by not treating their pets very well.



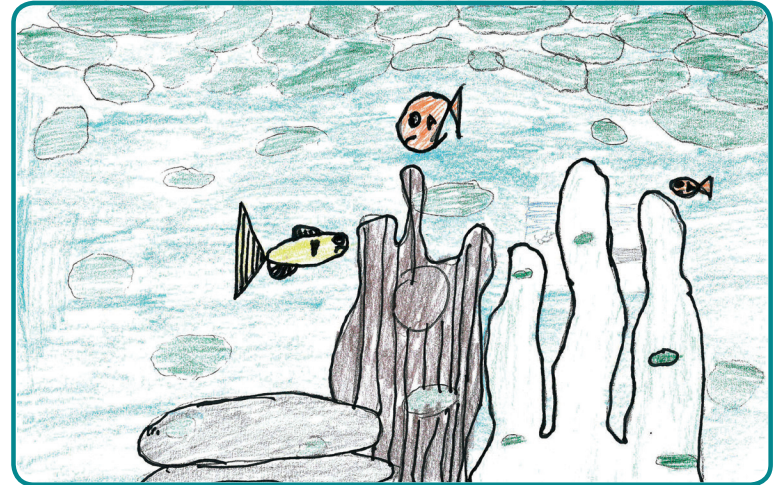
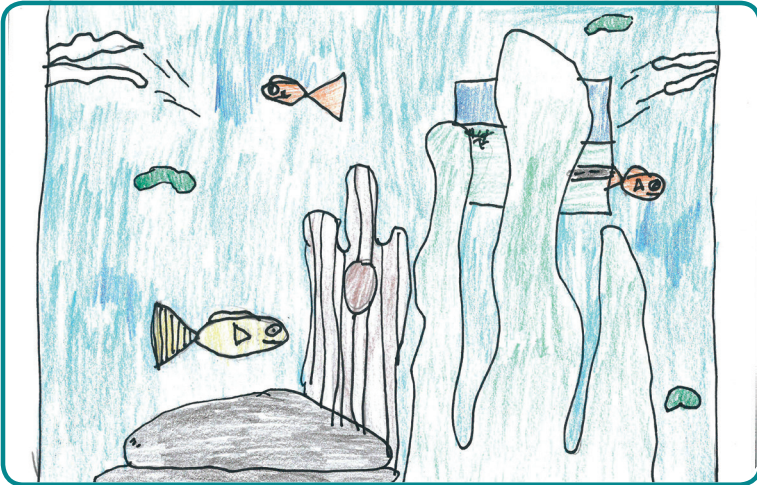
Luckily a nice boy bought me. His name was Jim Husky. He took me home and put me in a big tank by myself. There was plastic seaweed and nice rocks for shelter and also a toy castle to play in.



Jim fed me special fish food. He didn't put any mean bullies in my tank. He only put smooth rocks in the tank so I didn't get cut and I lived happily ever after!

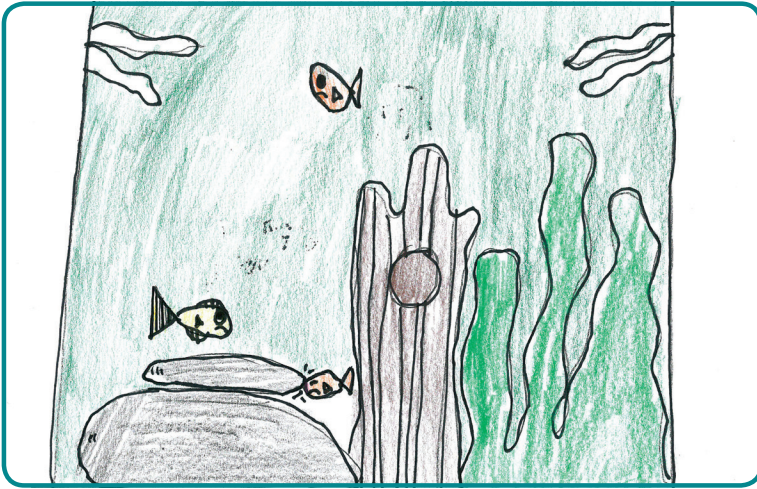
Goldfish Adventures

By Rose

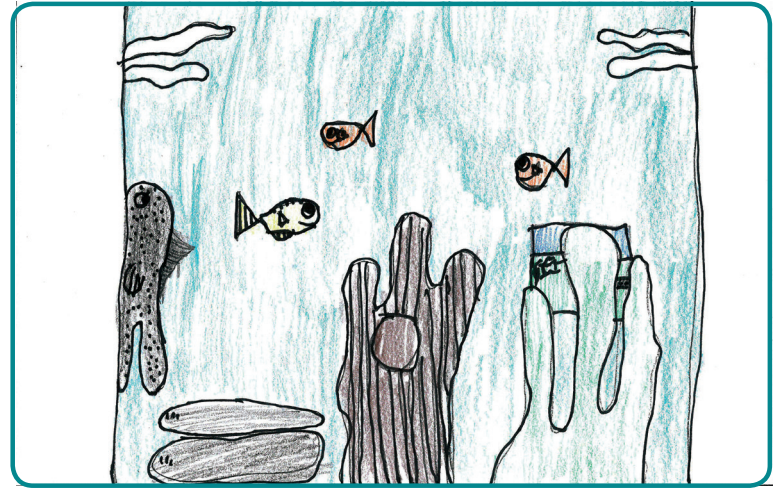


I am a shiny golden goldfish. I got put in the Stargazer's tank one hour ago. I see green seaweed. I go up to nibble on it. Yuck, it's plastic! I also see a smooth rock and a wooden stump. There's some algae on the glass on the sides of the tank. It is green. There are also 3 shiny orange fish.

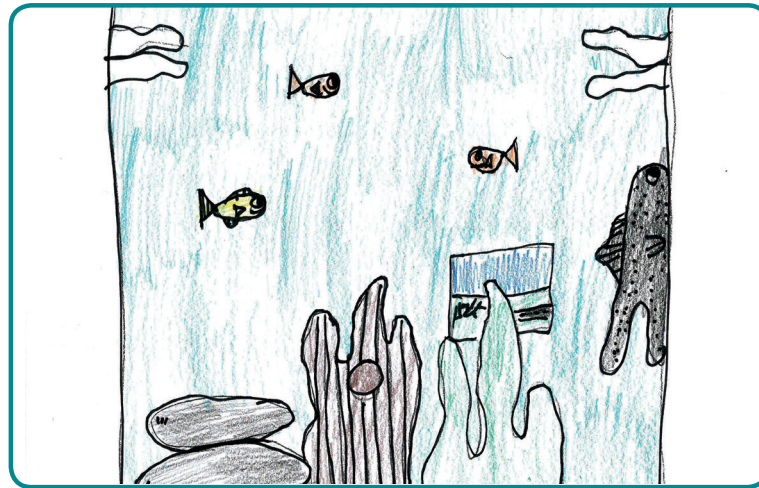
A couple of days later there's tons of algae on the glass on the sides of the tank. You can barely see anything because there is no light shining through! There's algae growing on the stump, the rocks, and even chunks of algae floating on the surface of the water.



The algae has grown so much that no one can see! The other fish and I start bumping into each other. We also bump into the rock and the wooden stump!
The algae has become unruly!



A week later the Stargazer's get a big, black, spotted Plecostomus. He eats a lot the algae and we can see again! "Thank you, Mr. Pleco!"



Now that I can see, I swim around the tank with my new fishy friends. Thanks to the Plecostomus, there are only a couple chunks left of algae.

The New Tank

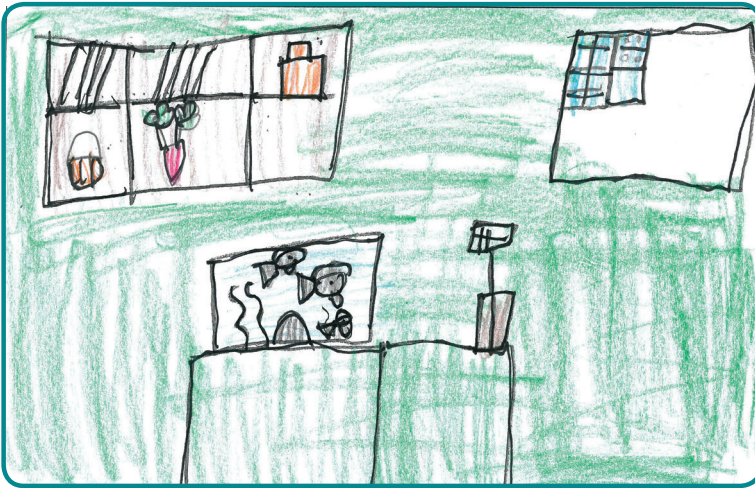
By Sierra



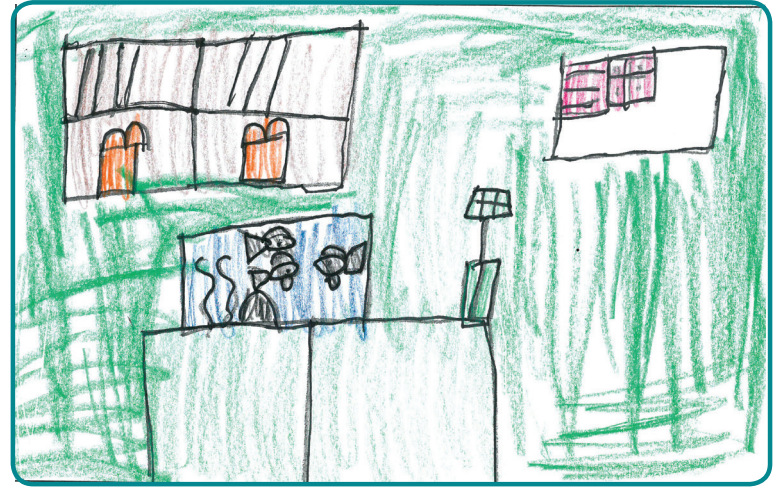
I am a catfish. I lived in a house in a fish bowl.
The people are moving. I am moving to a
new fish tank at a school.



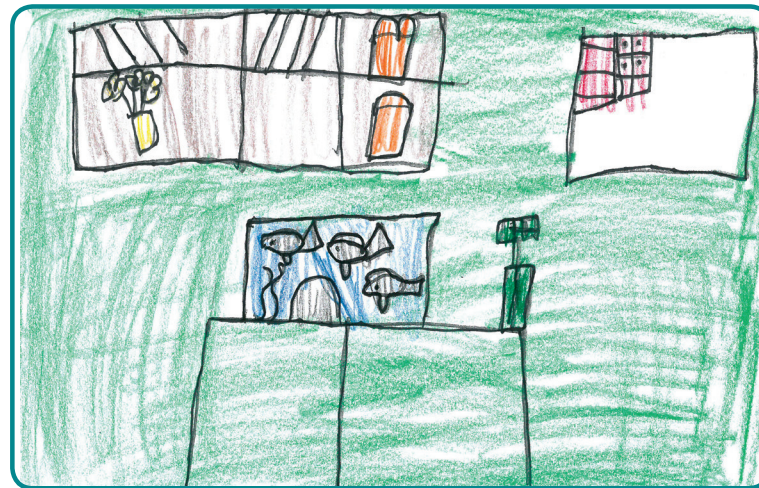
A little girl put my bowl close to my new tank while I
was sleeping. I wake up and watch. The new tank looks
scary. Some of the fish are chasing each other.
I hide in my rocks, then they get me in a
net and put me in the new tank.



I was at the tank. I thought the big fish wouldn't bother me, but they did. I didn't like it at all. They were chasing me. They nip me. I tried to hide in some weeds, but they found me.



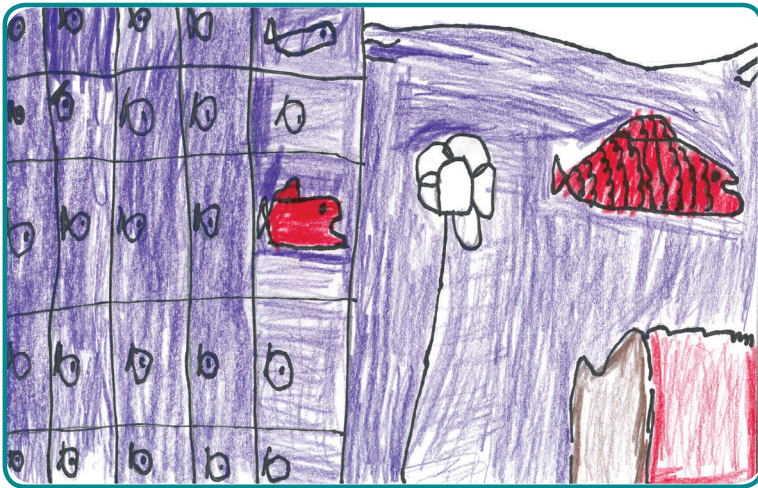
Then I thought of an idea. I asked them what they like to play. They said, "Chase." Then we played. I was happy. We played for the whole day.



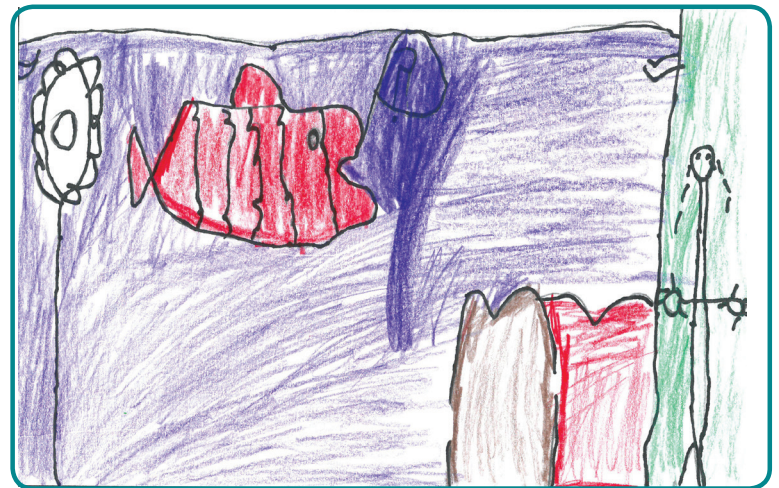
We played lots of things. I am very happy in my new tank with the fish.

The Story of the Trout and the Big Shark

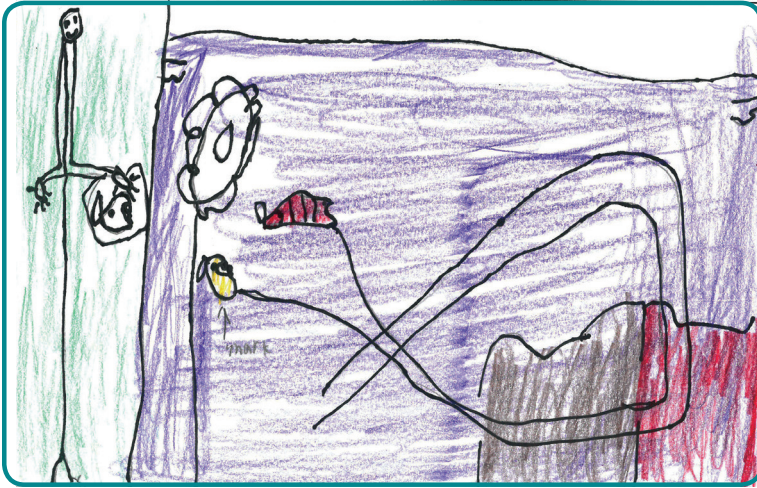
By Steck



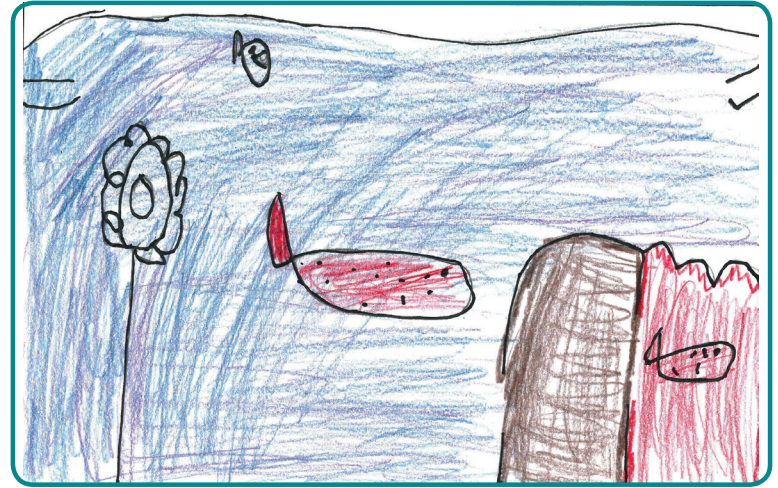
I am a trout. I was just bought at a fish store. Chintan brought me to my new tank in Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences. All sorts of cool things were in the tank like a driftwood tunnel to go through, a pile of red rocks with a secret cave and some big flowers that were plastic.



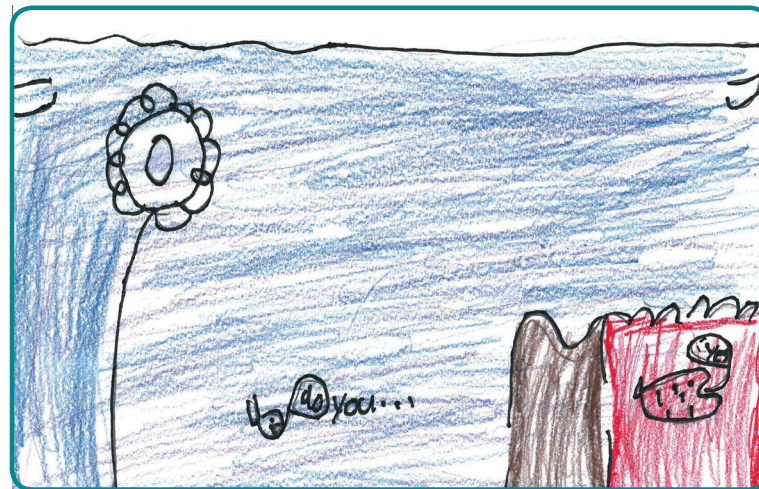
One day I noticed that I was the only fish in the tank. I felt surprised that the school didn't put any more fish in the tank. I used to be with other fish that would be with me.



The next day I saw a bigger fish in Chintan's hand. It was a freshwater shark. She put it in. He chased me around. I went in and out of my driftwood tunnel. He still chased me!



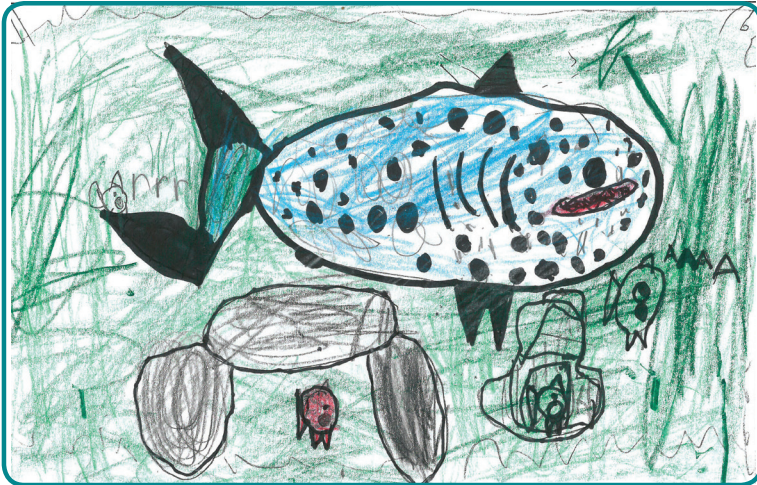
He was still chasing me when I thought, "I haven't hid in my red rock cave! Maybe I could chase him off a little and he probably wouldn't find me." I hid in my red rock cave. The freshwater shark couldn't find me in my cave. He thought that if he didn't chase me, maybe in the morning we might become friends.



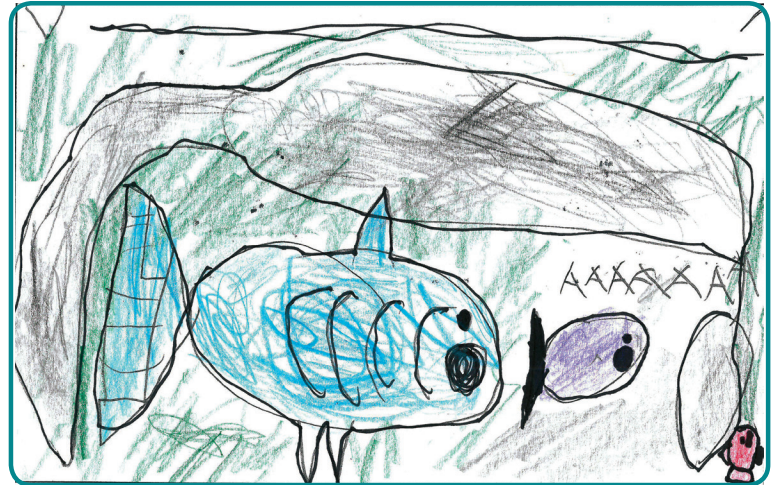
The next night, I saw the freshwater shark waiting to ask me to go on a swim. I said "Yes," and I felt very happy.

The Mad Shark

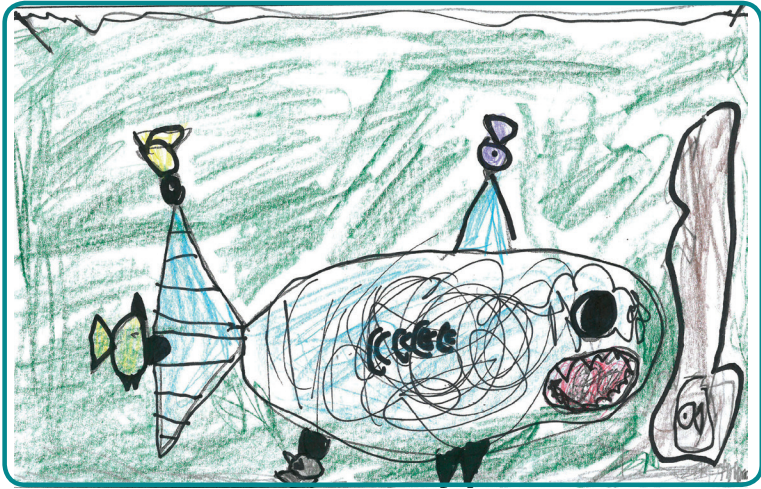
By Sebastien



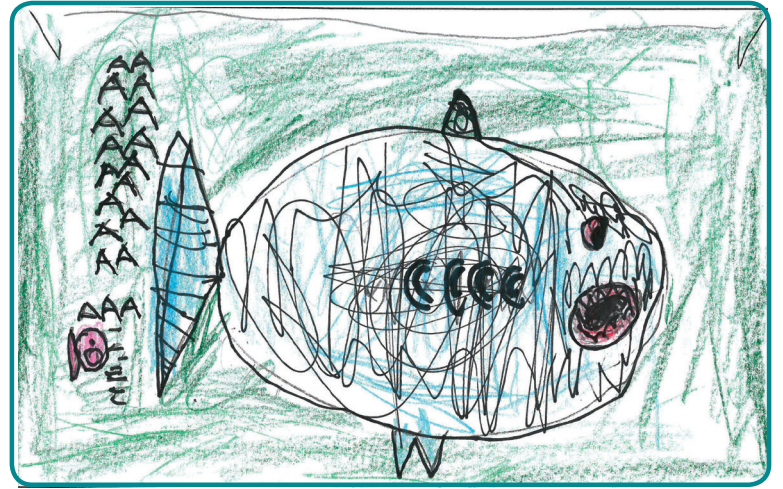
I am the biggest fish in the tank. I'm new. I am a Ruby Shark. I have very sharp teeth.



I like to chase the Tiger Barbs around to scare them away from me. It's fun. I like my personal territory.



The Barbs started bugging me, swimming around by my fins, getting in my way. I do not like it! Now I'm mad!



I solve the problem by eating the fish, all but one. I save him for dessert! "Burp!".



Now I am very happy in my tank. The other fish are gone and I don't need to be fed for a couple of days! I'm very happy in my new home!

The Story of a Cichlid

by Sofia



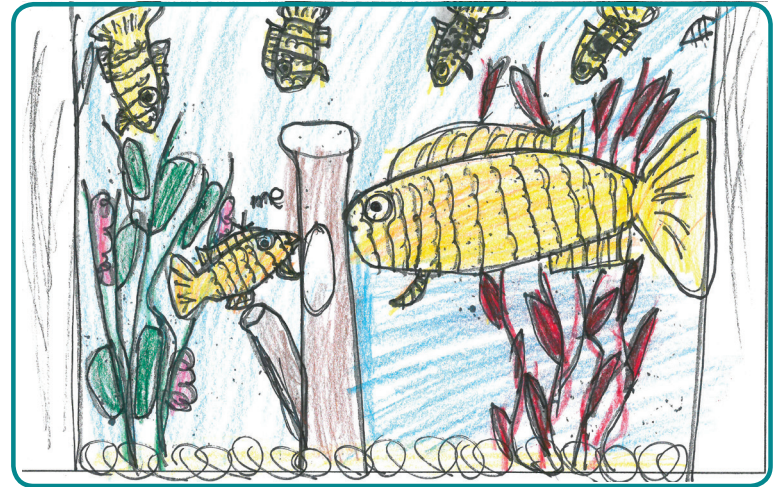
Hi. I am a Dwarf Cichlid. I live in my tank with my friends. Their names are Spotty, Swimmy, Stripy, and Dot. They are very nice. The tank is at Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences. The water is very hard, just the way I like it.



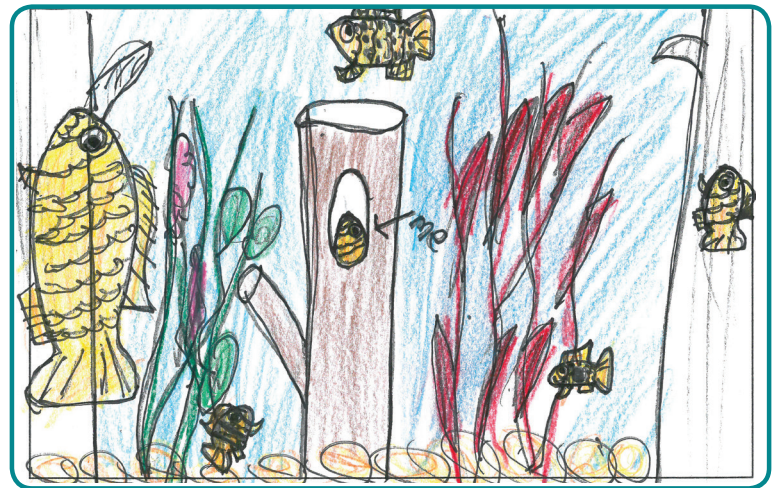
I like to hide near the spigots. My favorite games are hide and seek and tag. Hey, why are those humans going outside? One of them said that they are going to the pet store. I hope they come back soon.



Good. Those humans got back. What? What is that? It's a very big yellow Cichlid! It might eat me! Help! It is chasing me! Argh!!!! After the big yellow Cichlid was chasing me, he went to sleep. I played with my friends one more time and then went to sleep. Good night. Good morning. Yay! Somebody put more plants and rocks for me to hide in! I looked at all the plants and rocks and found my favorite plant to hide in. It is a red plant.



Wow, the big yellow Cichlid is still chasing me. Wait, what did he say? "I want to be your friend. AAAAre you going to eat me?" "No!" "Okay, I'll be your friend."



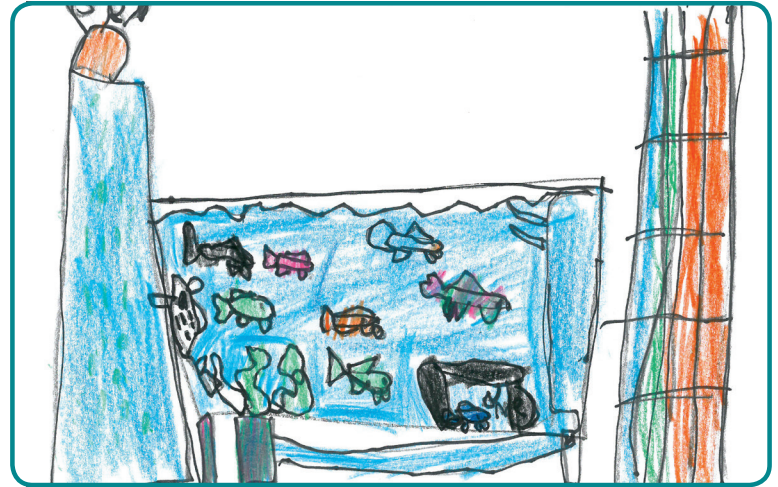
Now the big yellow Cichlid, my other friends and I play hide and seek and tag all together.

Crowded Fish Tank!

By Sarafina



I am a little light blue Cichlid. I live in a big tank in the Stargazer classroom but there is a big problem.



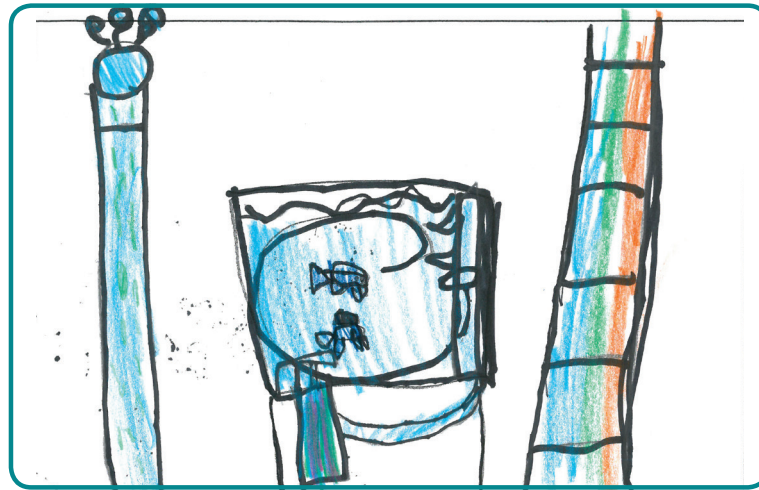
More and more fish get put in the tank. 15 Cichlids all different colors and one black and white Plecostomus!



Some fish were having babies. 15 more babies came out of their mouths. Now there are 32 fish in the tank. There were too many fish in the tank. It was crowded! I couldn't stand it because I couldn't swim. Bonk, Bonk, Bonk, Bonk, I was bonking into all of the Cichlids.



In three days the Centaur class got a fish tank. 15 of the cichlids got taken out, then Bob took them to the Centaur classroom.



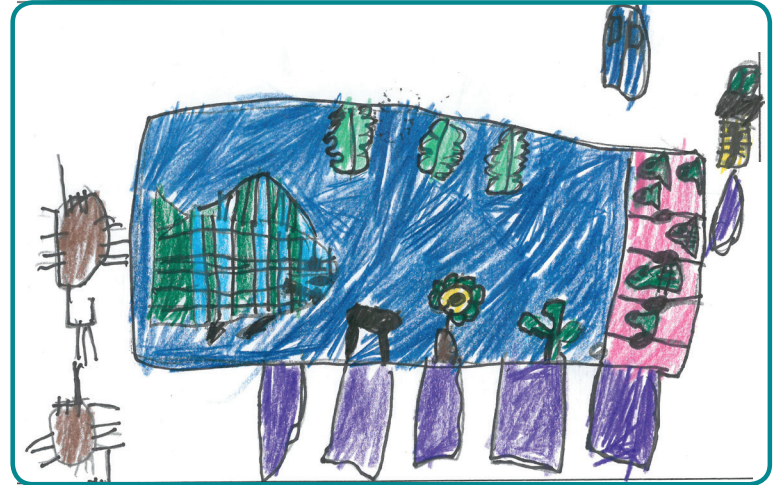
Now it is not very crowded. I swam around the tank. I feel happy!

The Alpha's Big Adventure

By Malachi



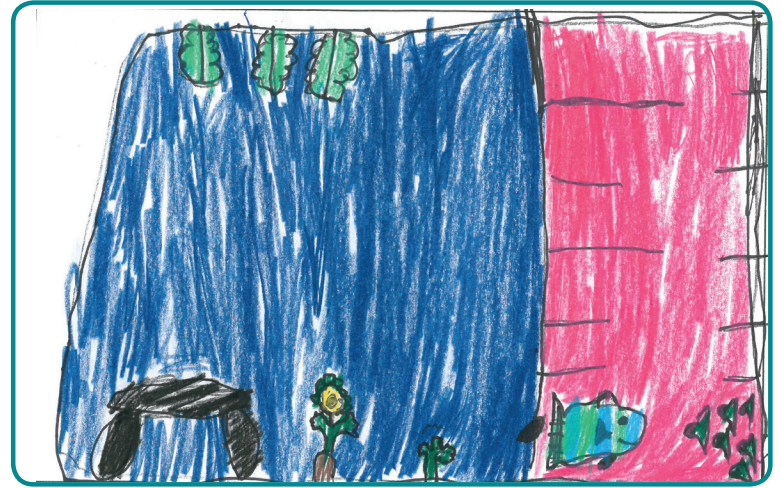
I am a Nymph Goldfish. I am the boss because I am the biggest! I am in the school tank. There are a bunch of guppies that live with me.



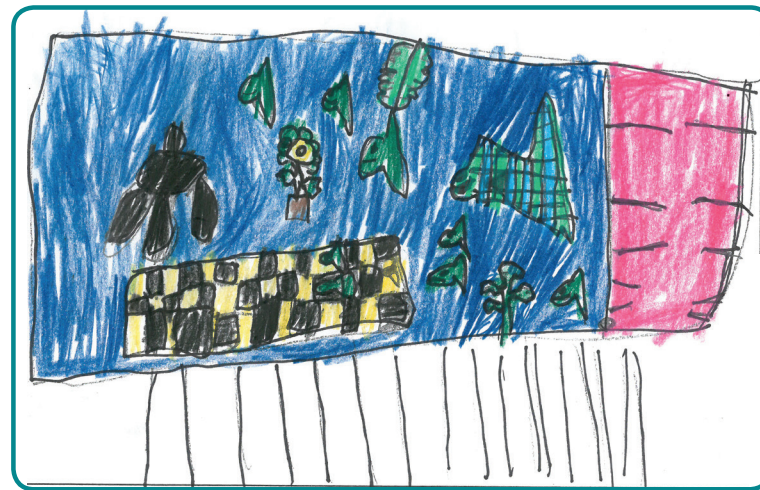
All the fish are hiding in my spot. My spot is at the edge of the tank. It is the structure I live in. They are afraid of me. I want to get in to talk to the guppies.



It is too crowded and I can't get in to tell them that I won't be bossy to them and that I will be kind. I won't yell at them and tell them what to do. I will ask them and say please instead of saying, "DO THIS!"



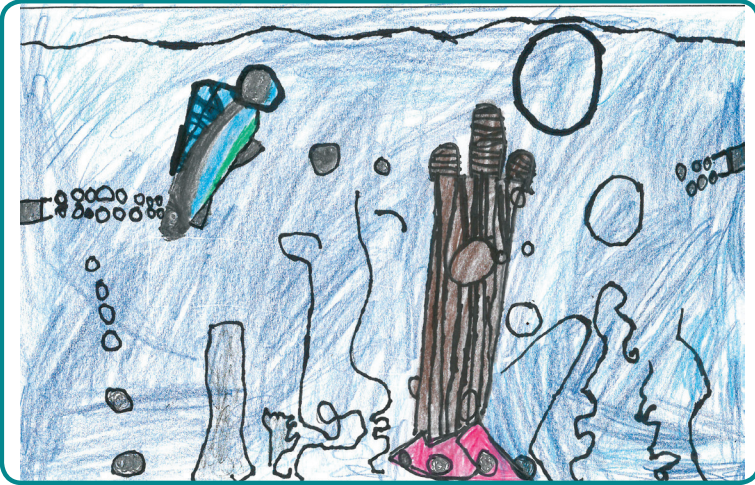
Some of the fish see me and back against the wall. I get in because now there is enough room and I say, "I'll be nice, really nice! I'm not going to yell at you."



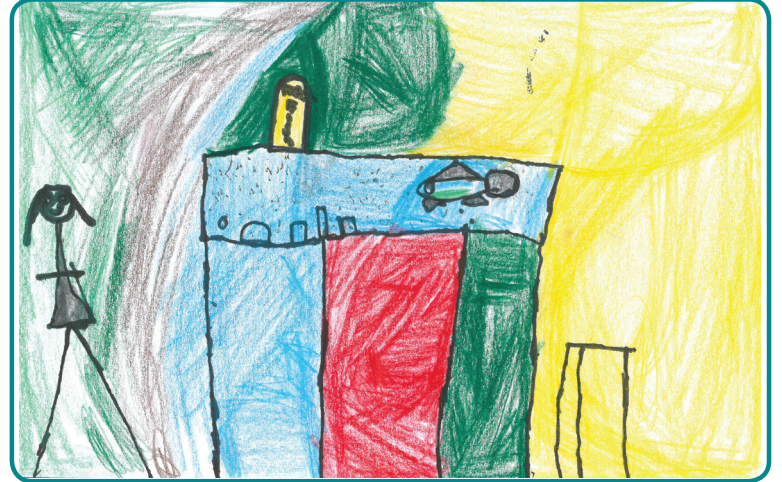
They say, "All right, if you are going to be nice we can be your friends." They come closer. We all swim out of the structure and have a picnic." I am happy that they are my friends.

The Fish That Got a Friend

By Luke



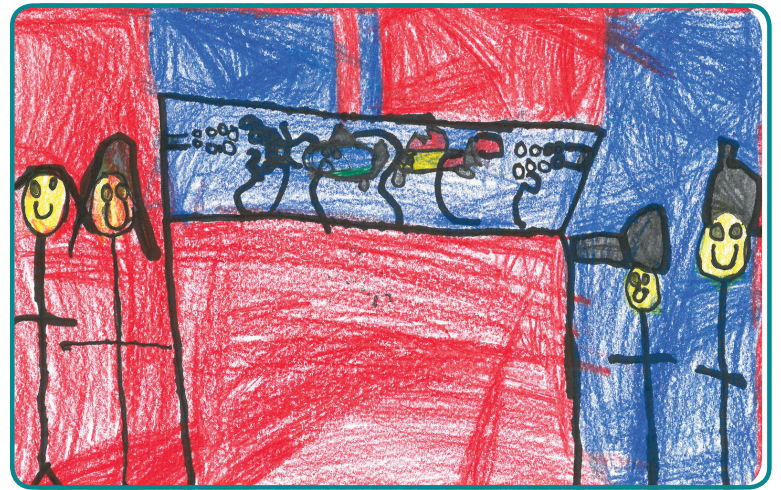
I am a gleaming Cichlid. My name is Swimmy.
I live in a big tank alone.



I don't have anyone to play with so my class gets a
new fish. I flip my tail and jump with joy!



The new fish came. He is a huge yellow Cichlid. He is very mean. He chased me around and tried to eat me. I feel very scared. When he got tired out and stopped chasing me, I found a rock to hide under.



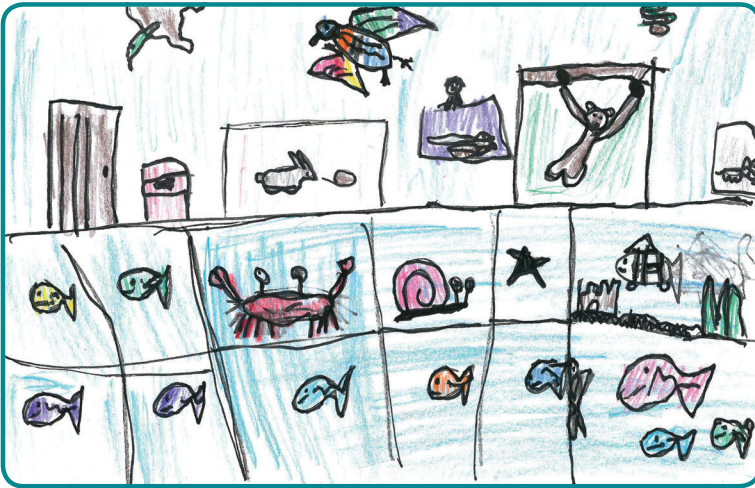
My class gets rid of the mean fish because they saw he was chasing me and they get a new cichlid the same size as me that is fun to play with.



We played hide and go seek together. I felt very, very happy. I am swimming quickly!

Tiger Barb Adventures

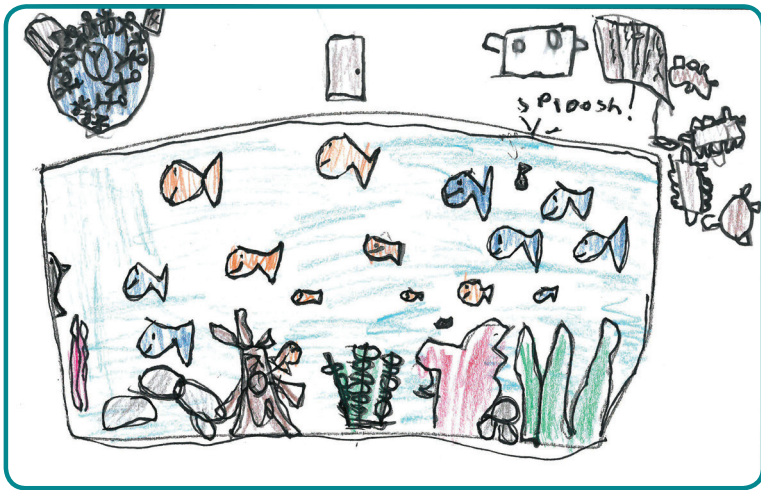
By Jenna



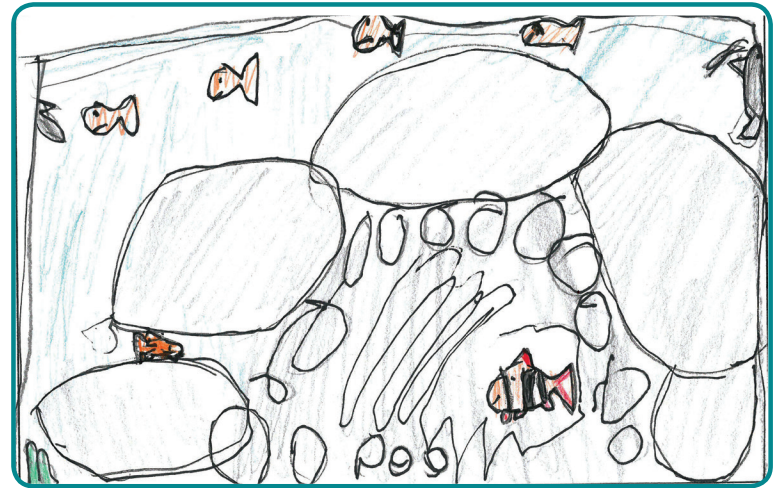
I am a little and shiny Tiger Barb. I live in a pet store with lots of pets, in fact there are tons of other pets: rabbits, snakes, mice, hamsters, guinea pigs, and of course, a ton of other fish.



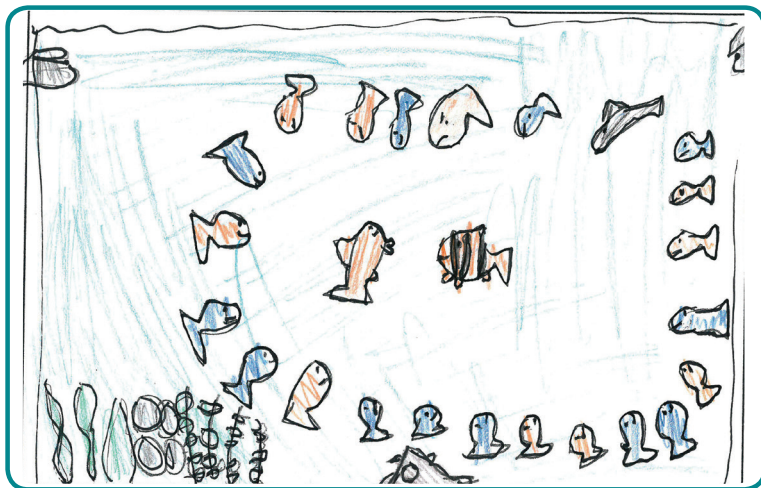
One day a person came in. She said, "I think I'll take that Tiger Barb!" Who is she talking to? All of a sudden a net burst into the tank. Oh no, I got wrangled in the net. The woman carried me in a plastic bag to a school.



Kerplunk! I looked around the tank. I saw a ton of other fish. I looked around the tank. There were a lot of great hiding places too. Hmm. I think I'll like it here . . . but I was wrong! Out of a stump came a big mean fish. He was picking on the other fish, nipping on their fins. Oh no, he's coming to me! He's going to pick on me! I swam to the rocks as fast as I can. I need to fix this.



"I can help," said a little voice. "Who said that?" "I did." A little head poked through the rocks. "You can?" I asked. We discussed what we would say to the other fish. We swam out of the rocks. "Um, excuse us," we said together. No one answered. "UM, EXCUSE US!" Everyone looked at us, even the weird fish that looks and acts like a vacuum cleaner looked at us. "Um, we would like to say something." What do you want?" said the alpha. "We want to stop all the fighting and picking on each other. Alpha can still be the alpha and not pick on other fish."



We told everyone what we discussed. We told the alpha that he can have a few flakes of our fish food, and the alpha agreed that he wouldn't nip on the other fish and we swam and swam the whole day long.

The Little Tetra

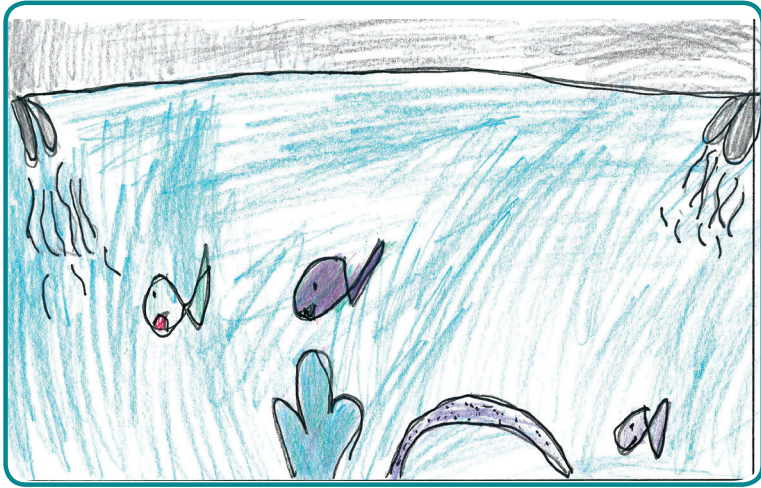
By Sylvie



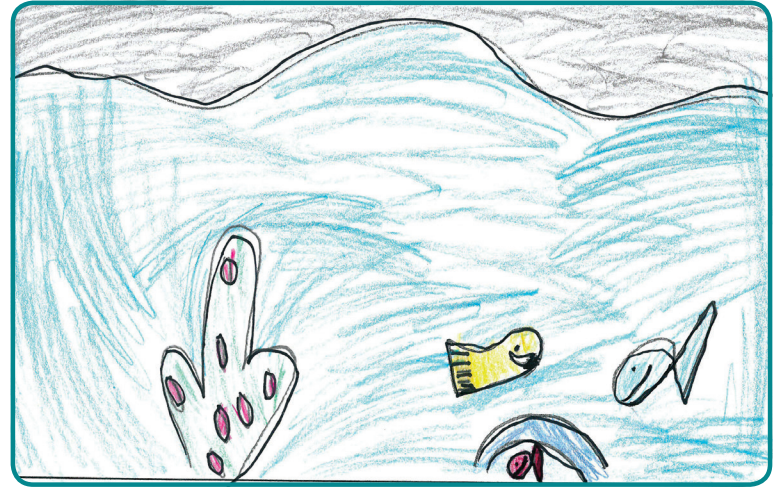
I am Goldie. I am a Tetra. I live in a small clear bowl.
There are some other fish. They are my friends. They
live in the rocks with me.



I was sleeping and when I opened my eyes I was in
a bigger tank! I see some new fish that I never saw
before. I couldn't find my friends. "Where are you?" I
asked, "Are you in the rocks!" I yell.



I decide to swim and hide in the rock. I see a big fish at the rock. He sees me, second thought, swim away. Bad idea, the fish chases me! I swim around the rocks.



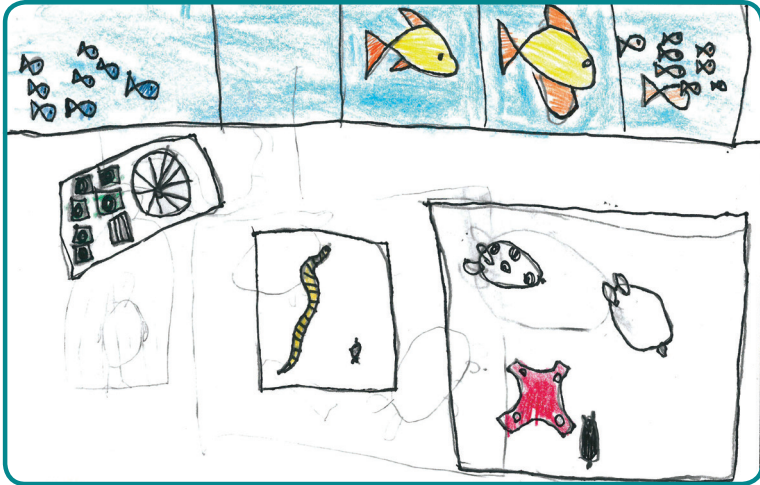
What is that? Is it a rock? No, it is a different fish. Maybe that fish can help. I will go see. "Help me!" The fish knew the bad fish, so he helped me. He knew how to get away when the big fish was chasing me. He would throw the food and the big fish would follow the food. He would swim in front of the big fish and talk to him and say not to eat me, "Goldie is not trying to take away your habitat."



The three of us swim around the tank eating food and chasing the food because it was floating away from us. The little fish eat their own food and swim together in the rocks. We all have fun. We play together.

The Troublesome Cichlids

By Isaac O.



I am a catfish that has been in a pet shop for 6 months in my own tank looking at snakes, birds, rabbits, other fish and all sorts of other animals. I had wondered what it would be like to live in a tank with other fish.

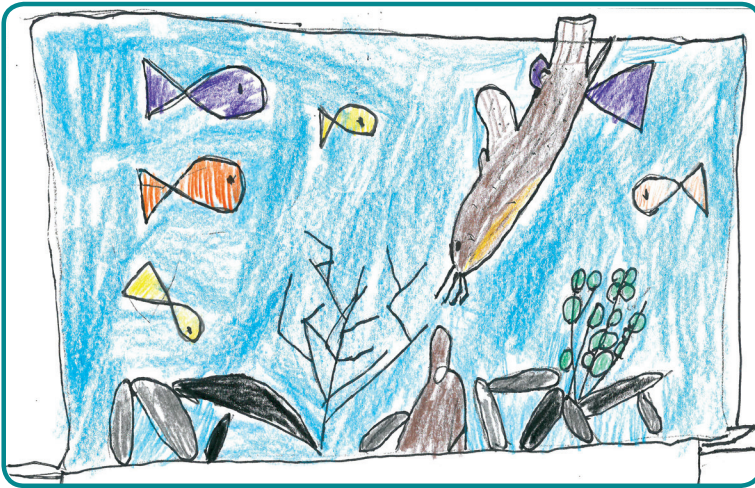
I couldn't remember much from when I was still in the wild.



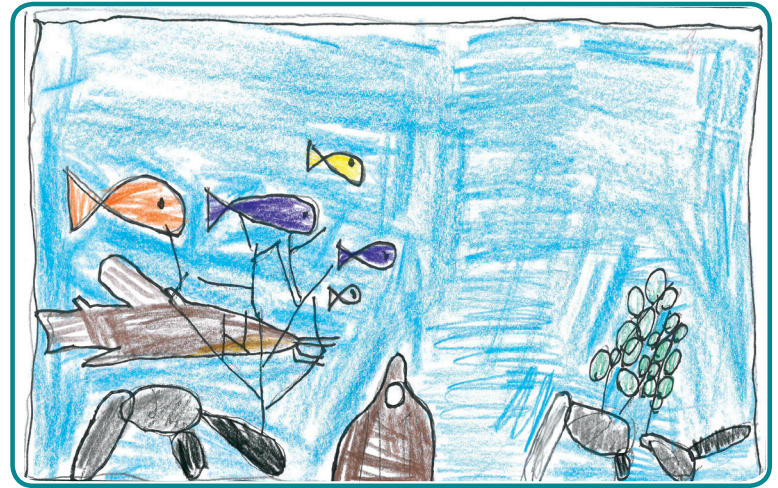
Suddenly a net broke the surface of the water and struck at me. I swerved and dived for a while. Finally, it cornered me. I had to think fast. I surface jumped over the net and plunged back into the water. The net retreated. To my disappointment another bigger net came in and, first try, it got me. I was put in a plastic bag. I was brought outside and put in a car. It seemed like hours until the car stopped. The door opened and my plastic bag was picked up by something.

I couldn't see what it was. A few minutes passed, then suddenly, the bag hit a table. About half an hour passed. I passed the time watching a ton of fish in a big fish tank, wishing I was in that big tank too.

I had been picked up. I thought I was going back to the pet store but . . .



I was dropped into the tank. I estimated about two seconds later I was attacked from all sides. I streaked past the fish, ducked under a rock, swam all the way under and when I looked back, I had rid three of the attackers. The other fish chased me for a while, but soon learned I was too fast.



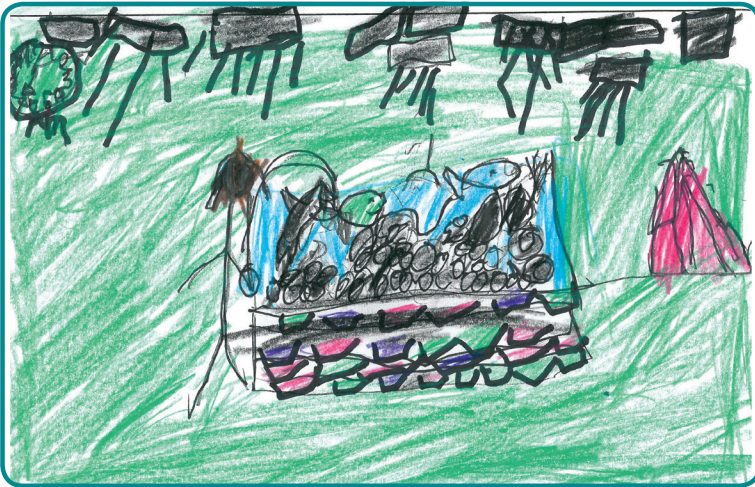
The boss finally caught up with me. He realized that I was bigger and stronger than him. He turned around and swam into the corner. The other fish approached me and when they see that I did not pick on them like the old boss, we made friends and they showed me the special spots in their tank.



And the next time a new fish came in the tank, I restrained the Cichlids from attacking by telling them he might become a good friend.

The New Black Shark Becomes My Friend

by Isaac G



I live in a classroom called the Stargazer Class. I am a Nymph Goldfish. I loved the fish food flakes. I loved my driftwood because it was so comfy.



One day a new fish came. The new fish was black. I didn't know it was a shark, but I was very scared.



It started to chase me around the tank. He wanted the tank to himself. He wanted to be the boss. The black shark had sharp teeth. It was just a little bigger than I was, but I was scared. I swam around in circles and then I hid in the driftwood.



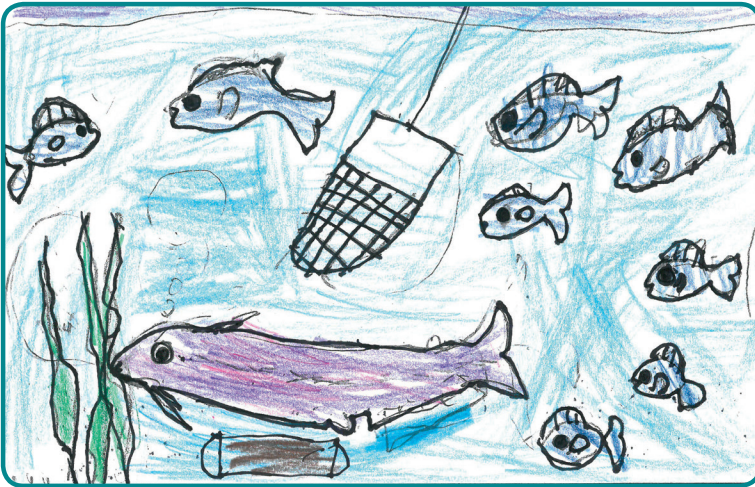
Two weeks later he asked, "Would you like to be friends?" He was tired of chasing me and wanted some company. I said, "Yes I would love to!" I asked him, "Do you want to play in the driftwood?" The shark said, "Yes, I would love to!"



We were happy forever because we could have company and we weren't alone all the time.
I love my new friend!

The Catfish Adventure

By Lila

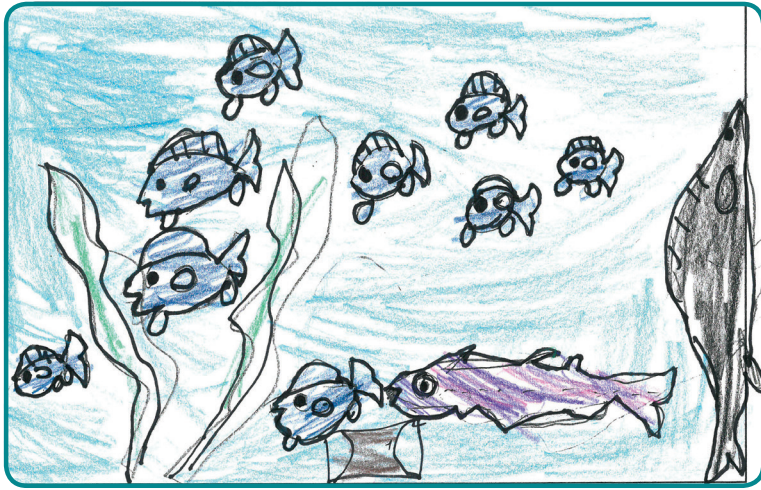


I am a Purple American Catfish. The first thing that happened was that the net dropped me into a tank at Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences. I saw 8 Cichlids and 1 Plecostomus sucking on the algae.

I thought, "What is that purple light at the top of the tank . . . hmm?"



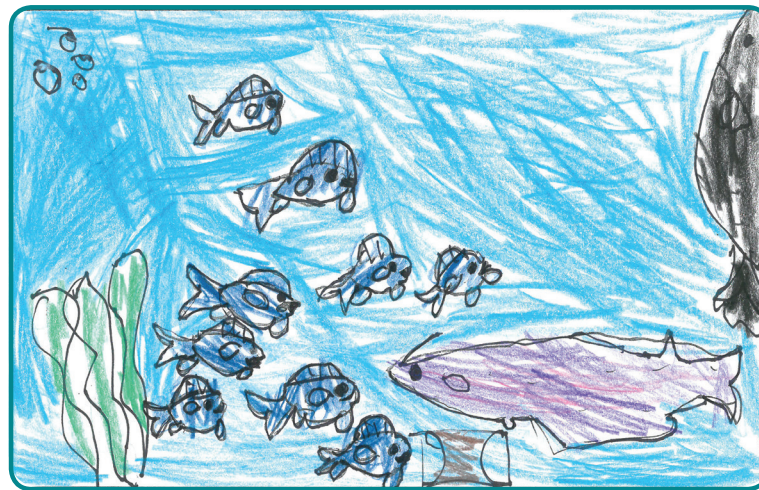
When I swim toward the Cichlids, they swim away. They never stop to talk to me like they do for each other. When I try to talk to them, they turn the other way. I am going to say hello to a Cichlid and see what they do. I swam to the wood tunnel. I saw the boss Cichlid. He looked at me and then darted away. That made me think he was scared of me.



I looked at another Cichlid. She darted away as fast as she could. I thought, "Are the Cichlids scared of me? They are smaller than me, they always swim away from me, and I am the biggest fish in the tank."



A Cichlid, shivering all over, comes and tells me the other cichlids are scared of me. I say, "Thanks, I did not know that. I am nice!" The Cichlid said, "ssso yyyou're nnnnice?"



She came back with the 7 other Cichlids. They started to ask me questions like, "What is your favorite color? What is your name?" Finally, I was happy because they weren't scared of me anymore.

The Three Nice Fish

By Autumn



I am a Nymph Goldfish and my name is Goldie.
I was the new fish. I was last put in the tank.
No one saw me at first.



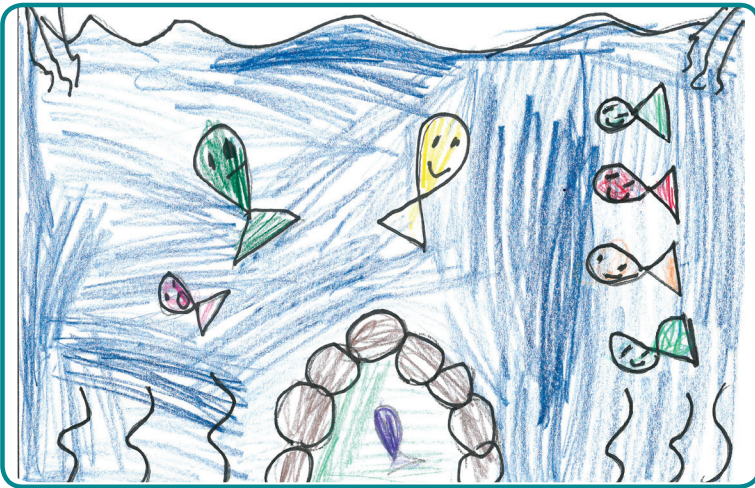
The other fish see me. Every fish made fun of me.
They called me names like “New fish, new fish,
you’re a gross fish!”, so I swam to the middle of
the tank to get away from them and I
have to find somewhere to hide!



I was not looking then I swam into the Boss! The Boss is big and blue. He has red stripes on him. He yelled at me! He said, "Get out of my way!" He does not like me!



There were three new fish who were new too. My face was quivering. They came up to me and one said, "What is the matter?" I said, "The Boss, he yelled at me." They said, "He just does that, just don't mind." The three new fish said, "What is your name?" I said, "Goldie."



The three nice fish said, "Do you want to swim with us?" I said, "Yes!" We swam and had a great time. I learned that some of them weren't bossy.

The Cichlid Attack

By Clayton

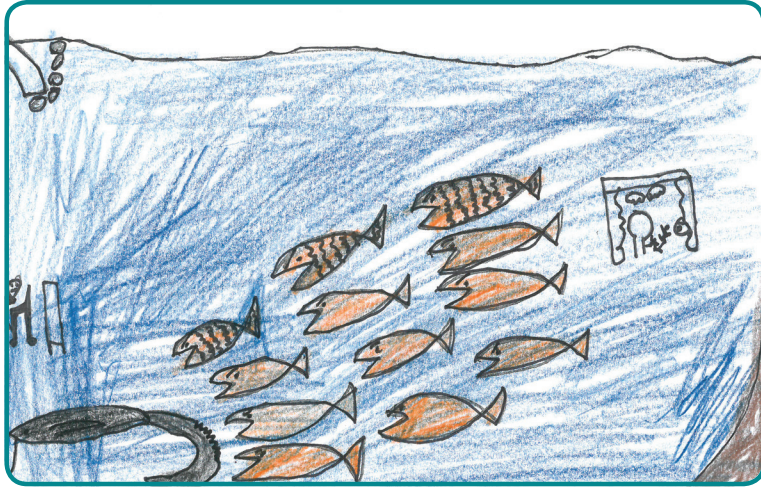


I am a thorny, spikey catfish. I live in a humongous tank and it has tons of seaweed. There are lots of rocky places to hide. All of the rocks are smooth, and this one place is the best place. It is the stump.

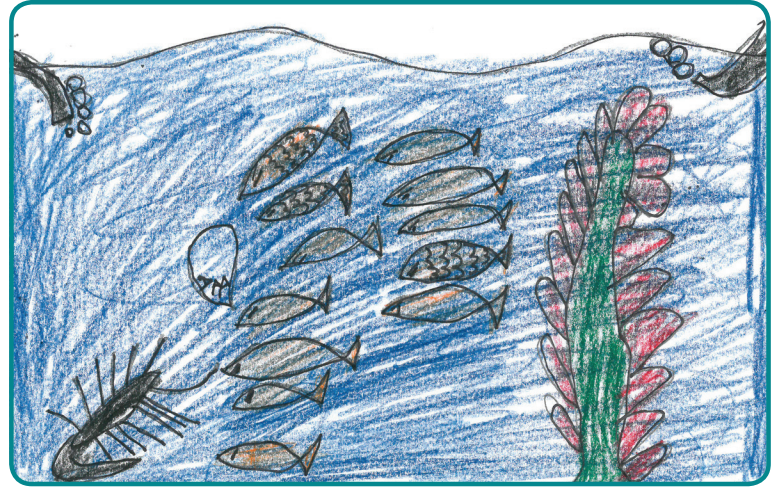
I think it is awesome because no one can see me when I hide in there. There are twelve nippy Cichlids in the tank. They are shiny and sparkly, some are blue and some are orange.



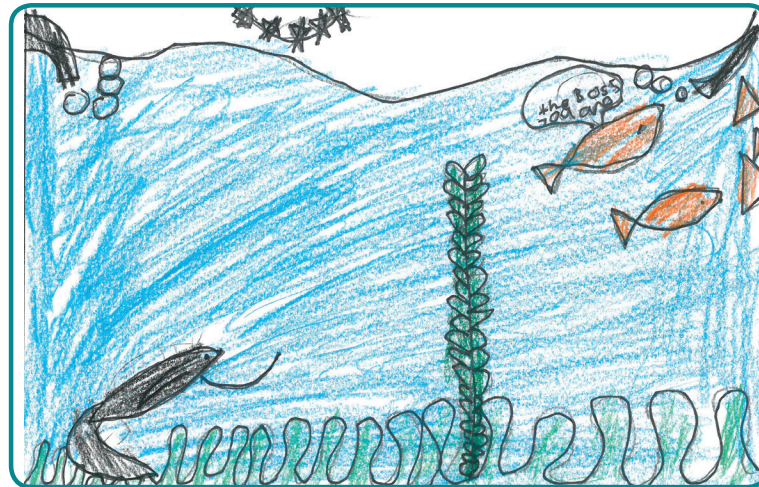
I got way too close to their territory and they wanted the biggest feisty fight ever!



The Cichlids chased me. They were so fast I could hardly get away. They picked on me and it was extremely annoying. IT HURTS A LOT!
It felt like fifty wolves biting me.



I decided to spike out my enormous, thorny spines.



All the Cichlids swam backward, then turned around, swimming forwards very fast! They gave me the stump and one turned around and said, "You are the new boss!"



THE END