

Toitoti 30 Bonus Activity: Take a Leap!



READ

My Big Day by Aimee van Jaarsveld, age 7 - p18

My Family in Palestine by Maryam Daoud, age 12 - p60

A New Beginning by Jessica Marr, age 11 - p104



LEARN

Read the stories from Toitoti 30 with your class. Have you ever conquered a fear? What does it feel like?



CREATE

Write a story about a time when you needed courage. What happened? Remember to take the reader on a journey with you and describe how you felt before and after your adventure.



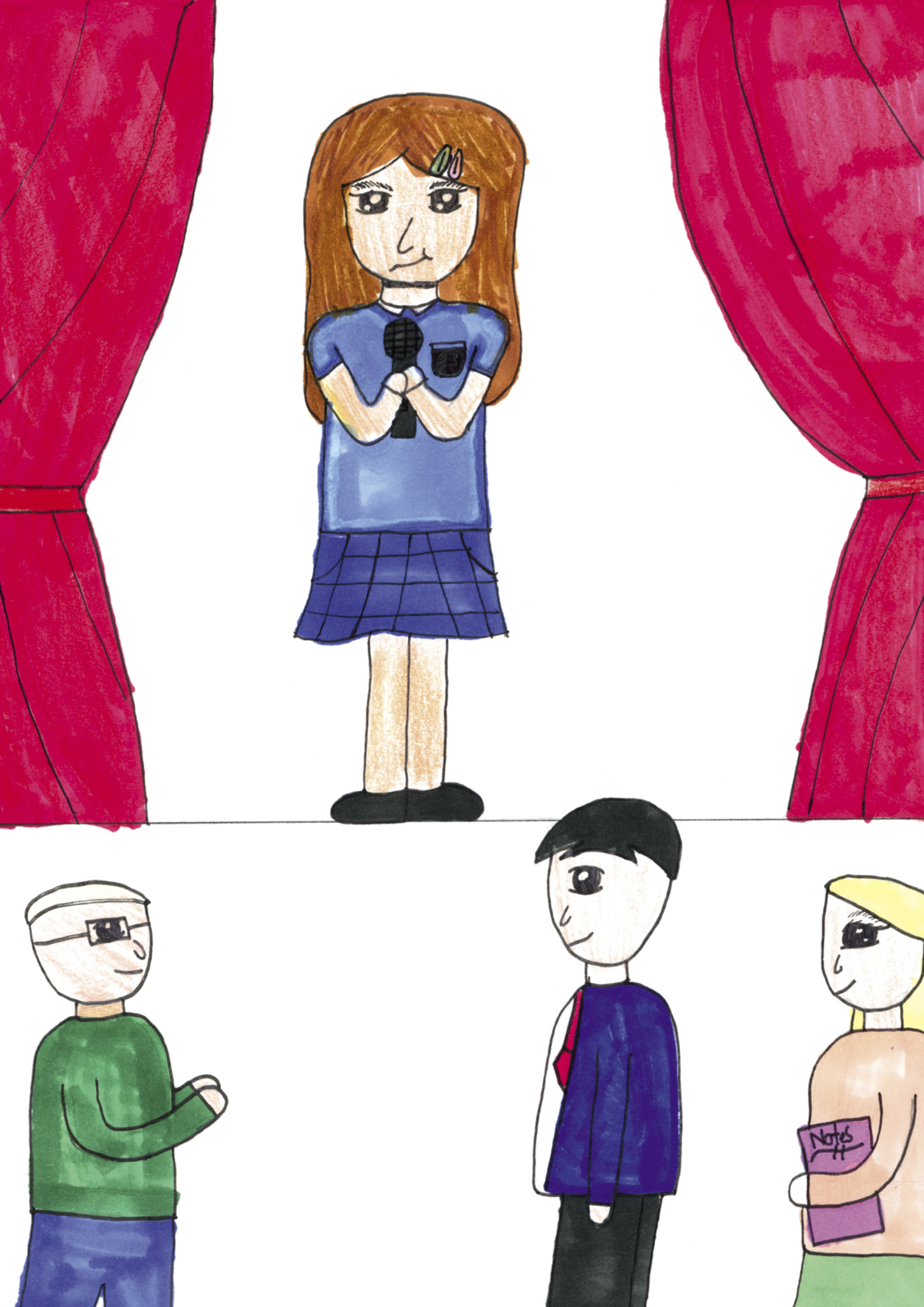
ILLUSTRATE

Pictures also tell a story. How? Create images of the key moments in your story that show how your feelings changed.



SHARE

Submit your own writing, artwork or both for publication in Toitoti and begin a conversation with other young New Zealanders through the arts.



My Big Day

Today is the big Rā assembly and I feel as nervous as a mouse in front of a lion that's ready to pounce. Oh no! My grandad is here. I am even more nervous than before. Soon it will be my turn to speak. Thoughts rush through my brain. Am I dreaming? No! This is real.

Before I can explode, Taylor passes the black microphone to me. My hands get as sweaty as a boiling cup of tea. I say what I have to say and it is over. As the principal is talking, my teacher, Mrs Langley, taps me on the shoulder. This means I am the star student! At least I know I did well.



My Family in Palestine

My name is Maryam. I am 12 years old. I live in Mt Cook in Wellington. I came to New Zealand at the beginning of 2022. The years leading up to this hold the story of a very difficult period for me.

It started when my older brother found out that he had kidney damage. In Palestine we don't have a great health system because of the occupation, so my family decided to move to Aotearoa New Zealand. My mother had lived here during her childhood.

My mother moved first in order to complete my brother's treatment. This meant she left me, my older brother and my older sister with my father. She left when I was eight and she came back when I was 12. For me, it felt like four centuries. My sister and I lived without a mother for too long. It was hard for me to focus on my studies as I had to spend a lot of time cooking and cleaning. It was difficult and there is no way to express my sadness, longing and tiredness from living without a mother. I couldn't understand how she took care of us four monkeys as well looking after our lives. She is amazing.

It is good that those years are over. My mother collected my sister and me in Jordan. She did not enter Palestine. I had many feelings about leaving. Palestine is very far from New Zealand and the trip was very tiring.

I have been here for six or seven months now and I'm happy with my life and to be back with my mother. But I still feel lost because my father and my older brother are not with us. I worry that they could die because of the war in our country. The situation is very dangerous there. I hope they stay safe but I am scared I may never see them again.

Words by Maryam Daoud, age 12
Pictures by Lola Tan, age 9



A New Beginning

My lips quiver as I watch my house fade away in the distance. I close my eyes and take a deep breath, tears rolling down my cheeks. I fidget with the small hole in my grey, frilly skirt. "Are you all right back there?" Mum calls from the front. "Yup," I mumble with a slight attitude. Mum stares at me and frowns. "Honey, I know this move is hard but you..." I look at my shoes and sigh heavily. Dad taps Mum on her leg, signalling for her to stop. I feel the tension in the air. I look around for something to distract me but there are so many bags I can't find my things. "Black suitcase, check the small pocket," says Dad. I look in the rear-view mirror and see him looking at me with a small smile, which is almost hidden by his big, brown moustache. I reach over to the black suitcase and I pull the cold metal zip. The pocket slowly reveals a small bag of lollies. My muscles tense as I tug on the hard plastic. Once it rips open, my dad cups his hand and swings it behind his seat. "Would you like some?" I ask as if they are mine. "Nah. This is just a comfy position for when you're driving," he laughs, obviously trying to cheer me up. I grin at his joke and Mum smirks. I dig through the bag and grab my least-favourite lollies, then plop them into Dad's hand. He tosses them into his mouth all at once. I move my head to get a better view but nothing seems interesting. The sun roars over the long road with no clouds in sight. I try to move a big duffel bag that is blocking my view. My arms are weak and it topples over my legs and slams onto the car floor. My parents don't say anything. I stare out the window. I am surprised to see a long, beautiful beach with tall palm trees. The window makes screeching

Words by Jessica Marr, age 11

Pictures by Antonia Leonor Ortiz-Minguez, age 13



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MAKE NOTES HERE



CREATE

Write a story about a time when you needed courage. What happened? Remember to take the reader on a journey with you and describe how you felt before and after your adventure.

PLAN YOUR WRITING HERE



ILLUSTRATE

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