

GA Geography and Story Competition Winning Entries

My Birthday Treat to London Guarav Sunner, Age 6

I woke up very early to open my presents on my sixth birthday. I got Hulk, Liverpool bed sheets, Liverpool money box but my favourite present from my mum and dad was a weekend in London. After breakfast we set off on a train. I was excited and so was my brother, Taran. I wore my brand new Liverpool shirt. I read a Marvel book on the way. There were lots of stops at different stations and the journey took ages. Then we finally got there. We went on a Tube to our hotel. I was scared because I didn't want to fall off the platform so I held on to my mums hand tightly. We arrived at our hotel. It was a good hotel. There was a sofa bed for me and Taran. We watched TV for a few minutes while mummy was sorting the luggage.

We ate our lunch in Maxwells. Then we decided to go on the London Eye. In the capsule everyone sang happy birthday to me, I was shy. We took some pictures when we were high up. It was fun up there. After that we went to Madame Tussauds I wanted to see Torres but his wax work wasn't there. That's alright because I saw Hulk and Spider Man and my mummy took ages in the Bollywood section and daddy was getting cross because mummy was taking too many photos. Me and Taran bought pens and books from the shop.

On the way to Planet Hollywood it was raining and I ran into a big puddle my socks got wet. Mummy had to buy me some new socks. They had a map of London on them, daddy found that funny! We got to Planet Hollywood and there was a DJ. Mummy secretly asked him to play my favourite song, soldier boy. He played the video on a big screen. At the bottom of the screen it said "Happy birthday Guarav from mum + dad". I fell off my chair with excitement. For dinner I ate chicken and chips. For the dessert I had vanilla icecream. We went back to our hotel by Tube. Me and Taran played Go Go's before we went to sleep. We went to sleep in our sofa beds.

Another Place Matilda Smith, Age 10

I can see the sun's glistening rays shining through the water, hear the waves crashing over my head. It truly is a beautiful sound. As the tide goes out I am revealed. I stand in the same spot on the beach with golden sand and sparkling silver sea every day. The beach is my favourite place. The same dog comes every day to mark its territory. I don't do anything, I can't do anything. A seagull lands on my ear every morning and I feel something dribble down the back of my neck. I don't know what it is, I can't turn my head, I can't lift my hand, I can't move. I see people playing beach ball, I want to join in but I can't run.

I watch a little boy playing in his boat, he is waving his arms about. It looks like he's having so much fun. No, wait, he's getting smaller and smaller. He's getting dragged out to sea! I want to do something but I can't. I want to shout and scream, let someone know he's there. Someone finally notices. I think they are calling the Coast Guard. Yes! I can see a bright red boat zooming out to him.

Later on this old woman comes up to me and starts talking to me. "Hello, what's your name? Don't speak much do ya". She looked a bit lonely. I want to talk to her but I can't. I want to ask if she's Ok but my lips won't move. "Do you want a mint?" she asks and drops a mint into my hand. I've never eaten before. "You go play in the sea now, I'll be over here if you need me". She leaves and I'm on my own again.

A little girl starts digging around my feet. She's making a trench around me. I think she is trying to make me into a sand castle. In about five minutes my head is covered in sand. I'm surprised she could reach my head she's so small.

The tide is coming in now. The cold water rushes around my feet, tickling my toes. The water flows around my ankles getting higher and higher every time, getting further and further up the beach. It is around my hips now. A strong wind is sweeping round the coast. It is refreshing, the salt air whipping round my face. I'm almost covered up. The wind is getting stronger. I still don't move, and very soon I'm gone, covered by the waves, still standing on the ocean floor.

I am Antony Gormley's creation. I am ... 'Another Place'

On the Banks of the Ogooué River **Zoë Reed Sanderson, Age 11**

My name is Njava and I am 10 years of age. My family and I live in a leper village on the banks of the Ogooué river in the country of Gabon, West Africa.

Our village is in a beautiful, quiet location, hundreds of miles from any big town or city. It cannot be reached by car: the only way in and out is on a small dirt track that leads to the jetty. Then you can take a big boat down river to the capital city, Libreville.

My Mum has leprosy, a type of infectious disease, on her hands and feet. As a result, she can't write or walk so I have to help her. I go to fetch water from the river with my younger sister to lift the heavy jug onto my head and I love to care for my baby brother.

When I am not helping my mother I go together with 30 other children, to the village school where I learn to read and write. We also learn interesting facts about my country – I learned that the Ogooué river is 1200km long.

For fun, we go down to the river for a swim, but we need to be careful of the hippos, crocodiles and electric fish. We help the fishermen to build boats, made from hollowing out a single tree. They are very narrow, so if you are fat, you are not able to fit on board!

My favourite time of year is Christmas when all the lepers act in the Nativity play. Last year I was a shepherdess.

A part of the village is a hospital built by Albert Schweitzer. He has a saying, reverence for life, and his team of doctors help to look after us all as well as the rainforest animals which have been harmed or are ill.

The nurse who looks after the lepers is a fun, caring person. She keeps quite a few of her animal patients in her bedroom, including a stork called Bumbumbara, who had a broken leg, and Gigi the chimpanzee who used to steal her toothbrush and brush his teeth at the top of the palm tree.

It was very funny to see the stork hanging from the roof of her hut while the plaster on his leg was drying. The fishermen had to come every morning with live fish for him to catch from the bucket. When his leg has healed he will return to catching his own fish in the river.

The forest is a pleasing sight to anyone, lepers or visitors. The smells of ripe golden mangoes and prickly pineapples give your taste buds a tickle. It is teeming with wildlife: monkeys, colourful birds, snakes, lions and elephants.

Recently the harmonious sounds of the forest have been disturbed by men with saws. They come to our forest to cut down the beautiful trees and sell them to people in richer countries.

My mother told me that there is such strength of life in this forest it makes you feel that you can fight the illness away. I believe this because I have learnt about the new medicines that can be made from the special plants in the forest – God's unique creation.