

Inspired by the characters' writing advice from Nothing Ever Happens on 90<sup>th</sup> Street, these eighth graders worked on their idea development and word choice as they created these stories. Read each story, then talk with a neighbor about where you see evidence that the writers have followed the advice of the four characters from 90<sup>th</sup> Street. The lesson that inspired this writing can be found online at WritingFix: [http://writingfix.com/Picture\\_Book\\_Prompts/90thStreet1.htm](http://writingfix.com/Picture_Book_Prompts/90thStreet1.htm)

### Number Two Pencil

by Max, eighth grade writer

**Person/Character:** a vampire slayer

**Place/Setting:** forest

**Thing:** a pencil

She could feel the cross necklace against her skin as she tried to write her paper on mythological creatures. Every time she thought about it, her mind came back to one thing...vampires. She couldn't stop thinking about how one could be lurking behind one of the great redwoods that towered over her in all directions. It was always dark in the forest at night, but the overcast weather and the



waning moon made it hard to see anything. The darkness should have made great cover for her, for her black clothes blended in perfectly, but she still felt horribly vulnerable with only her over-sharpened number two pencil.

Suddenly she heard a crack, which seemed to come from all directions. Then she heard it again, the sound of a twig breaking, but magnified by her fear it was as loud as a whip cracking. A third time the whip seemed to crack; this time she detected where it was coming from. She quietly set down her notebook and moved toward the tree from which the sound was coming, pencil raised, ready to attack. As she grew closer to the massive redwood, horrid thoughts flashed through her head. What if the meager pencil didn't kill the vampire? She tried not to think about it...

### Taco in Paradise

by Hannah, eighth grade writer

**Person/Character:** an actress

**Place/Setting:** a tropical island

**Thing:** a taco

One fresh, sunny morning, Karla Swanson sat on her sea-view balcony and twirled a lock of hair around her finger. The sun made her hair shimmer golden blonde, matching the color of the endless beach. The turquoise sea reflected her glowing eyes. Peace was disturbed when a loud rumble came from Karla's stomach. She grabbed her sequin-studded purse and strode out onto the street. Her name was well known on this tropical island, since almost everyone watched the Karla Swanson sitcom.



There was only one place more famous than her: Mr. Macho's Taco Shack. As she daintily stepped inside the cozy shack, the salty sea air was replaced by a nose-tingling smell of spicy chipotle. Within minutes, Karla had an overstuffed, mouthwatering taco in her hands. Crisp lettuce sat upon juicy ground beef. Bright orange cheese melted to gooey perfection and overflowed in the crunchy taco shell. She could hear the taco beckoning to her, whispering seductively in her ear, "Eat me. I know you want to. I'm all yours". Karla took her first gigantic bite as she exited the Taco Shack. Unfortunately, she wasn't paying attention to her clumsy feet. A crack caught her off guard and claimed the life of her beloved taco.

### Dragon Number Five

by Aidan, eighth grade writer

**Person/Character:** a dragon slayer

**Place/Setting:** a forest

**Object:** a sword

James' camo-green uniform made him *almost* invisible as he crept through the trees. Owls and other animals howled and scattered through the brush as twilight surrounded him. This would be his fifth dragon, and



already his blade was marked with scratches and stained purple with blood. People already called him the Dragon Slayer because of his reputation.

"What if I don't see my wife again?" he whispered to himself. The trees crowded in on him as if they were the hunters and he was the prey, and he instinctively shivered at the thought of this. Suddenly there came a clearing ahead, and he could hear the slow instinctive rumble of the dragon where it slept. "This is what I do for a living. God forgive me," he whispered, and he charged toward the sleeping dragon.