

Here, two eighth graders, inspired by the book [Dogzilla](#) and an online writing lesson at [WritingFix](#), were inspired to write stories about scientific mishaps. As they wrote and revised, they worked especially hard on their organization and idea development skills.

Read each story, then work with a partner to decide where each writer shows his/her best skills of organization and idea development. Be prepared to share your decision with the class.

Dr. Roachman

by Hunter, 8th grader

He had no idea what incident was waiting for him later that day.

Dr. Ringdolfshlagenstein was working at his bang-your-head-on-the-wall job at the Nuclear Radiation Center. He was working with disgusting cockroaches to see how much radiation they could withstand; to him, this was a pointless job. Ironically Dr.



Ringdolfshlagenstein was deathly afraid of bugs. The cockroaches made him sick with fright, but it was the only job available that could pay his bills. But on this day, the constant testing of radiation had worked down the bullet-proof glass that surrounded the testing chamber; it just shattered, and the cockroaches broke free, scattering across the floor.

Dr. Ringdolfshlagenstein was shocked, disgusted, but most-of-all frightened. He immediately panicked, something you never want to do in a room full of vials filled with toxic liquids, and he ran. Unluckily, the door was jammed, so the doctor tried to crush the bugs by swatting at them, but there were just too many of them. He huddled up against the wall, flailing his arms and legs in fright, knocking over vials of toxic liquids. The liquids fizzled and bubbled as they mixed. Next thing Dr. Ringdolfshlagenstein knew he was on the ground, passing out because of the toxic fumes created by the liquids.

The cockroaches were still crawling around though, unharmed by the liquids. As they crawled onto Dr. Ringdolfshlagenstein, the cockroaches fused, and Dr. Ringdolfshlagenstein was suddenly awake, knowing nothing of what had happened. The doctor looked into some broken glass on the floor, and he saw in his reflection that he had been transformed. His arms were now insect legs, his eyes were bulging, and he had transformed. He even had antennas. He would now be known as Dr. Roachman!

Dragonzilla

by Stephanie, 8th grader

The icy blue glow of the liquid contained in the glassy beakers sizzled as it heated. Just as Professor Zillan entered the lab and strode over to one, it shattered, the elixir splattering in all directions. Professor Zillan screamed, crumpling to the floor with pale skin. Her assistant, Mr. Starmill, came rushing through the doorway to see what had caused all the commotion and stared at the shrinking deforming body of his professor.



Mr. Starmill took a frightened step back, unsure of what to do and how to help, but he knew it was too late now. There was no antidote, and Professor Zillan's skin had already started turning a sharp, frosty blue with little ragged scales sprouting from it. They shimmered in the dim light of the lab. Her nose and jaw had elongated and formed together, giving her a thick muzzle with dagger-like teeth. Professor Zillan's body was now only two feet long, with long talons instead of toes and a large, curling tail.

Professor Zillan opened her tight and painful eyes, feeling completely baffled at the way her new body felt. She noticed her assistant beside her, holding a glass container. In its reflection, she saw herself and froze. The elixir in the beaker she had created had turned her into a frosty, spiky little dragon, thin wings and all. Topping it off was a poof of hair on her head, partially hiding her white horns. When Professor Zillan opened her mouth to speak, only a small *hiss* came out. She could no longer speak.