

## Overcoming Fears: The Sixth Grade “Newsletter” from WritingFix

Inspired by Mercer Mayer’s [There’s a Nightmare in my Closet](#), these seven sixth graders wrote about overcoming a fear. All seven writers worked especially hard on their stories’ **organization** and **idea development**. Read each story, then talk with a partner about where you see each writer’s best use of both organization and idea development skills.

### The Monster under my Bed

by MacKenzie, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

There used to be a monster under my bed. It made me stay awake all night. Before I finally bought my night light, I always hoped the monster would be gone. I even slept with my parents once. When it was time to go to bed, I would lie awake with my blanket pulled over my head.



Because I was constantly awake, tired, and needed my beauty sleep, I decided to go under my bed and teach that monster a lesson. So I crawled out of bed, turned on the light, and searched under the dark covers of my bed. When I looked and saw nothing, I knew my fear had vanished! This was my breaking point. Without the monster, I knew I no longer had to worry about the monster or had fear to live with.

What a relief it is not to have to live with fear of the monster under my bed. I can now sleep without fear and anxiety. That monster is no match for me or my bedroom. Not only do I get a good sleep, my parents do too. Bye bye, Monster!

### My Fear

by Morgan, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

There used to be a spider in my underwear. The thing that scared me most was its glaring eyes. They are always watching me, and they make my hair stand up on my legs. Every once in a while, I still get the wiggles just by hearing someone mentioning the word “spider.” Long before the hairy monster bit me in the bottom, I always hoped it would die, but how? I managed to get the spider out of my underwear, but it came back. When it



was time to go to school, I checked my underwear. Guess what? The eight-legged spider was back Oh no! Finally, one day I decided not to be afraid of my fear of spiders by taking this problem on in my own creative way.

My decision finally made, I decided to wash away my fear of spiders. So I put my underwear in the washer. Bye bye, spiders! It would not only wash away my fear, it would also wash away those devils! I only wish you were there to see the grin on my face when the suds washed my enemy away.

I no longer am afraid of the thing that haunts me in my sleep. My mind is now free of the spiders! Every time I see a spider, I’m prepared and ready to take action. Into the washer each spider must go, one after another, day and night. Now they’re just a speck in my everyday life!

### There’s a Math Dude in my Math Book

by Meredith, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

Everyone had a fear when they were little, and some still do! I still have mine and will have it forever. I have to live with it every day. I hate math. I can’t live with it. Preschool math was easy, but 6<sup>th</sup> grade math is soooo stressful. That’s when HE showed up...the math dude. He makes me get D’s and C’s. He is so annoying. He is more annoying than a little sibling. The math dude is made of terrifying numbers and dreadful +, -, \*, and division signs. He has an evil grin of +’s too. EEWV!



One day, I went home to do my math homework. I took a peek, and he was there! I saw his terrible smile. Ugh! I knew I was going to fail this math test. When I got a C-, I was done. That day I planned my attack. It took about thirty minutes. When I came back, I had a little surprise. I had gone to the store earlier and bought a huge

eraser. A few minutes later, I opened the math book, and I chased him with the eraser. For once, I caught him. He was stuck. Then, in the blink of an eye, he was erased. All that was left was a tiny 8.

Today, math is a breeze. Without that math dude, I get all B’s, but I still carry my eraser just in case! Now everything is perfect. Math is fun instead of miserable. No more stressful math homework. No more math dude! I can finally feel happy about math.

But now, there’s a monster in my shower...

### There Used to be Darkness

by Matthew, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

There used to be darkness everywhere I went. He was around the corner, in the basement, under the bed, and even at school. Darkness would make me cower and run under my bed, which apparently was haunted by him too. I used to be so paranoid that when I was told to go downstairs, my feet would stick like glue, ignoring the incessant commands. Darkness was my enemy, and I had no authority over him.



As soon as the lights were off, there he was, standing as tall and as wide as the room, surrounding me with his entire mass. His dark, red eyes stared deep into my soul, searching for a soft spot which he could strike. The mouth is what would scare me most; his large grin would show its yellow stained, pointed teeth that were willing to do anything it wished. But the part that he enjoyed most was his claws; every time that I turned off the lights, I could see him scratch away all remaining light until he, Darkness, was the only thing standing.

Years passed, and I was still terrified of Darkness, all until one day, the day I decided my

fear needed to be put to an end. Since I wasn't brave enough to end it too fast, I started out small. My basement was the place where I practiced. I brought down flashlights so that I could still have a little light instead of having the lights completely off. Flashlights helped me slowly get used to the darkness. And, sure enough, the flashlights that I brought downstairs grew fewer and fewer, till there was only one left. I was proud of myself and what I had accomplished, and then, there was only one thing left to do. This was to turn off the last flashlight, so that it was just him and me.

The day had come, and I was in the middle of the basement, ready to flip the switch of the last light, ready to complete the last step in overcoming my fear. *Click*, and the light was off. And there I lay, watching Darkness try to use his eyes to look into my soul and scare me. But not this time, for this time I overpowered him, and this time I watched him cower in disbelief at the sight of me not cowering. Then, I gave him one last stare--a stare that showed confidence and trust, because I knew I could defeat him, and he knew I was no longer afraid.

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### **Spiders, Spiders, Spiders, BOO!**

by Courtney, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

There use to be spiders in my garage. They made me always want to have my brother get stuff from our family garage for me, like the soccer ball or chalk. I always hoped the spiders would go away for good. I even had my dad carry me to the van (my mom would sometimes too). When it was time to go to the van, I would jump and run as fast as I could. Finally one day I decided to try to overcome my fear and guess what? There was a spider standing there waiting for me.

I decided to finally get over my fear and teach the spider a lesson! To do this, I first had to search and find a pair of "spider killing shoes." This special pair of shoes could only be created by following the secret recipe that my mom discovered in an old Betty Crocker recipe book. First, I had to spray the shoes with water. Next I had to dip them in melted butter with 1 cup of flour. When that had dried, I had to sprinkle it with cinnamon, and then



grease the laces with peanut butter. Finally I had to bake them in the oven with ham around it on high for 10 minutes. This recipe created my "spider killing shoes," which I carry with me everywhere I go. I always make sure if a spider comes near me, he better know what is ahead of him!

I no longer live in fear of spiders, so I now walk in the garage with no problems or worriers! I love being able to be free, because before it felt as if I was in a trap and spiders were in control of my life. I feel that if you would like to overcome a fear, you need to believe in yourself, trust yourself, and feel confident.

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### **The Shadow**

by Heather, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

Every day, when it gets dark, I feel terrified. I feel alone, and as I look over my shoulder, it's always lurking behind me. Of course, my fear would be shadows. If it's my shadow or someone else's shadow, I have a superstitious feeling of fear when I walk around. I feel as if the darkness is reaching out to me, longing to devour me into its ghostly presence. It looks like any other shadow, dark with shaded rims, except to me it has a shrill laugh and menacing eyes. When I walk around in a dimly lit area it's always behind me, embracing the perfect moment to snatch me so it could find its own comfort.

When I felt the fear strongest in my life, I had only one thing left to do: confront it. This has gone on for way too long, and I had to put a stop to this. The shadow had to be stopped once and for all. I spent days figuring out what the shadow's weakness was. Finally, I figured it out; the opposite of complete darkness is light!

When I came home from school, I tore up the stairs, ripping through the halls. As I reached into my bedroom closet, I felt the smooth surface. Yes! I found it! A flashlight rolled out. I grabbed it and ran down. I waited until dusk and looked behind. There it was! The shadow smiled a wicked smile. His eyes were wary and grim. He stared at what I was holding and shrieked. I took the flashlight and shined it into the monster's eyes. I trembled, feeling my legs turn into J-E-L-L-O. I



wondered if it had actually worked. I felt an icy adrenaline feeling shooting down my spine to my stone cold feet. I closed my eyes, and when it felt like two hours, I opened my eyes and the evil shadow was gone. From that day on, the malicious shadow never came back to haunt me ever again in my life.

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### **Acrophobia**

by Ben, 6<sup>th</sup> grade writer

There it came, flapping on silent wings, approaching the roller coaster. My fear of heights was about to rear its ugly head, or should I say heads. Take a peregrine falcon, cut off its head, and replace it with seven grinning, green snakes. Put two glowing red eyes and a mouth full of razor sharp teeth. Add six sickly yellow tentacles growing out of its sides. Now you have my fear. Every time I try to do something up high, he stops me. I was getting furious.

The ride was called the Rocket. It shot you up to the top, then dropped you down to the bottom at high speeds. As I tried to get on the ride, the imaginary tentacles turned me away. Again and again, he did this. The line behind me was getting restless, so I left.

My brother went on and came back, saying that the ride was awesome. My dad loved it too. Eventually my entire family, with the exception of me, had gone on the ride. That was the straw that broke the camel's back. I knew I had to face my fear.

"Prepare to be vanquished, beast!" I roared. I slammed through the imaginary tentacles and hopped onto the ride. My fear hovered uncertainly above me, knowing that it was about to be beaten. *Crunch!* The ride shot up and crushed the creature's imaginary wing. Spiraling, my fear hit the ground and exploded into a glittering, golden dust. Triumphant, I ran off the ride to greet my smiling family. They were glad to know that I had overcome my fear, and that I would never be scared of heights again.

