



# FUNDA Y TIMES



**Celebrating Thai Pongal**

Pic. by M. A. Pushpa Kumara



## EDUCATION

PAGE 3

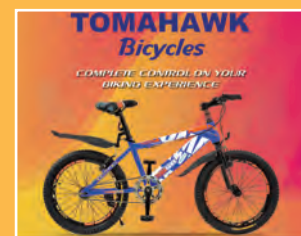


PAGES 4 - 5



## REPORT

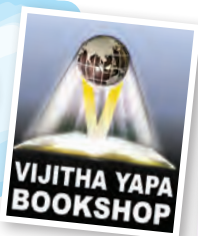
PAGE 6



## COMPETITIONS

PAGE 8

# Win super books from



**Age:** 9 years and below

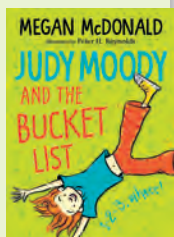
**Word Count:** 150

**Topic:** Making new friends at school

**Win:** *Judy Moody and the Bucket List* by Megan McDonald

Judy Moody is the Queen of Lists. Then Judy reads Grandma Lou's mysterious Bucket List. It's the most thrill-a-delicious list ever.

Wow! Judy speeds off to make her own Bucket List but she better move fast if she wants to check everything off... before Fourth Grade!



**Write at the top of your Essay**

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic

**Age:** 10 – 12 years

**Word Count:** 150 – 200

**Topic:** Helping family at home

**Win:** *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

Dickens' inimitable classic is a heartbreaking tale set in London and Paris during the time of the French Revolution



This book brings out the plight of the peasants and the grave injustices heaped upon them by the French aristocracy.

In the midst of it all are caught up the lives of Charles Darnay, Sydney Carton and Lucie Manette – the woman they both love.

**Age:** 13 – 15 years

**Word Count:** 200 – 250

**Topic:** Should there be Wi-Fi at every public place?

**Win:** *Stardust Stables – Free Spirit* by Sable Hamilton

Stardust Stables is a riding stable with a difference – it is home to the seriously talented kids who work as stunt doubles for movie stars!



Kellie is thrilled when she and her horse Dylan, are hired to work on a new movie. But when the lead actress Jemma Scott falls ill, the entire shoot is at risk unless Kellie can step into her shoes...



## Book Competition

### 9 years and below

*A letter to Santa Claus*  
**Esandi Ranasinghe**  
Musaeus College, Colombo

### 10 – 12 years

*How I plan to celebrate Christmas this year*  
**Omalya Senarathne**  
Lyceum Int. School, Nugegoda

### 13 – 15 years

*An enjoyable Christmas event*  
**Sajali Perera**  
Janadhipathi Balika National School

## Reading Development Tips by Room to Read

Room to Read Sri Lanka is teaming up with Funday Times to bring another interesting series about reading development, to help parents/educators improve reading with comprehension among primary grade children and instill a habit of reading for life. This series will particularly feature tips about reading development alongside an illustration. The first lesson is about 'Shared Reading'.



*Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience that occurs when students join in or share the reading of a book or other text while guided and supported by a teacher.*

*The teacher explicitly models the skills of proficient readers, including reading with fluency and expression.*

*The shared reading model often uses oversized books (referred to as big books) with enlarged print and illustrations.*

### Why use shared reading?

- It provides struggling early readers with necessary support to read with ease.
- Shared reading of predictable text can build sight word knowledge and reading fluency.
- Allows children to enjoy materials that they may not be able to read on their own.
- Ensures that all students feel successful by exchanging thoughts and providing support to the entire group.

### How to use shared reading

- Introduce the story by discussing the title, cover and author/illustrator. Ask children to make predictions regarding what they think the story might be about.
- Read the story aloud to the students using appropriate inflection and tone. Pause and ask the students to make predictions. Ask brief questions to determine students' comprehension level.
- Conclude the reading by reserving time for reactions and comments. Ask questions about the story and relate the story to the students' similar experiences. Ask the children to retell the story in their own words.
- Re-read the story and/or allow time for independent reading.
- Conduct follow-up activities such as making crafts, drawings related to the story.

**Room to Read** is a global nonprofit organization that works on bringing quality education with the belief that, 'World Change Starts with Educated Children'. The organization seeks to transform the lives of millions of children in low-income communities by focusing on literacy and gender equality in education.

# International Education Day

Compiled by Cecilia Hewavitharana

The United Nations has declared January 24 as the International Day of Education. 2022 marks the fourth celebration and will be themed “Changing Course, Transforming Education”.



## A Basic Right

Education is a basic human right and the right to education is included under Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNHR), along with a call for free and compulsory elementary education for all.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child ventures further by stating that countries shall make higher education accessible to all.

Despite all this, about 258 million children and adolescents lack the opportunity to enter or complete school, while about 617 million children and adolescents do not have the ability to read and do basic math.

## The Foundation for Sustainable Development

Education has been recognised by the world as being essential for the accomplishment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals laid out by the United Nations.

In addition, Goal 4 is, “Quality Education” and aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030.

*Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.*

**Aristotle** (384 BC - 322 BC),  
Greek Philosopher and Polymath

*There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live.*

**John Adams** (1735 - 1826),  
Founding Father and  
2<sup>nd</sup> President of the  
United States of America

*A person who won't read has no advantage over one who can't read.*

**Mark Twain** (1835 - 1910),  
American Writer

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Education's purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.*

**Malcolm Forbes**  
(1919 - 1990),  
American Entrepreneur

*My mother said I must always be intolerant of ignorance, but understanding of illiteracy.*

**Maya Angelou** (1928 - 2014),  
American Poet and  
Civil Rights Activist

*Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.*

**Albert Einstein** (1879 - 1955),  
German-born Theoretical  
Physicist

*One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.*

**Malala Yousafzai** (1997),  
Pakistani Education Activist

**KIDS IN COLOUR** With **REEVES**  
*Kids in Colour together with Reeves Art Competition is conducted monthly. A topic is given for each month. Three winners from three age groups will be selected. Winners will be announced on the second Sunday of each month and all winners will receive an attractive gift pack from Reeves.*

**Mail to:**  
 Kids in colour with Reeves Art Competition  
 Funday Times  
 C/O The Sunday Times  
 8, Hunupitiya Cross Road, Colombo 2  
 P.O Box 1136 Colombo

**Winners of Reeves Art Competition please contact us in order to collect your prizes!**

**Topic - Independence Day**  
**Closing Date : February 28, 2022**

Wax Crayons • Oil Pastels • Paint Sets • Colour Sets • Water Colours • Oil Colours • Poster Colours • Powder Paints • Brushes

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**My World**

**Ibrahim Shiham (8 years)**  
 Royal Institute Int. School

**Corona the sickness**

Corona the sickness,  
 What a deadly illness,  
 Don't go out,  
 And walk about.

It is very deadly  
 Not like 'Ebola'.  
 Make sure you walk steadily,  
 And don't drink Coca Cola.

Wash your hands,  
 And wear a mask,  
 Stay in your own land,  
 As it is an important task.

Hate the virus,  
 Not the Chinese,  
 It has already faced us,  
 So all pray please.

Many lives it will take,  
 But, a good lesson it will make,  
 "No matter if it's a stormy sea,  
 God will always set you free."

**Joshua Segarajasinghe (13 years)**  
 St. Peter's College, Colombo 4

**I think video games are great**

It is widely believed that video games cause many negative side effects on children. But video games can also be good for developing cognitive, physical aspects and more.

Yes, video games can be responsible for behavioral and mental changes, lack of other hobbies and poor academic performance.

However, there are many advantages that you cannot overlook. I have found evidence of many positives. Research has found that playing video games could boost your focus and attention, as you are concentrating on how to win. It helps hand and eye co-ordination too. This also helps to develop problem-solving skills and strategy skills. It is believed to boost your brain in decision making.

Video games serve both purposes of entertainment and education. It is certain to enhance skills and abilities such as logical thinking, while playing games often, inspires you to learn new things.

**Drevan De Silva (9 years)**  
 Colombo Int. School

**My garden**

**Adaya Nithiyaraj (11 years)**  
 Najaa Int. School, Mt. Lavinia

**Toucan**

**Naveeta Fernando (9 years)**  
 Ladies' College, Colombo

**Our Prefects Induction**

The Prefects Induction Ceremony of JMC College International was held on December 1, 2021 in the school auditorium. Mr. Kelum Weligama, a writer, journalist, life coach and lecturer on personal development was the chief guest and guest speaker. The guest of honour was Mr. Udara Jayasekara, Systems Development Officer of JMC Networks.

Other distinguished guests were Artist Ms. Nilwala Wishwamal, Branch Director and Head of Computer Schools of JMC Networks Mr. Nalaka Bandara, Madam Principal Ms. Chandima Dassanayake and Manageress of JMC Maharagama Ms. Dammika Neelawala.

First we started by lighting the traditional oil lamp. Then we all stood up to honour our Alma Mater.

Then Madam Principal welcomed the guests. After that was the most awaited moment of the event – the pinning of badges. I also received my prefect badge. Thereafter Mr. Kelum Weligama delivered a speech with a presentation. He explained the meaning and responsibilities of being a prefect, who is a leader, and showed us examples of good leaders such as Colonel Stauffenberg. We all liked that presentation and learnt many things.

I thank our Madam Principal, Teacher-in-charge of prefects Ms. Wathsala Gunawardana and all our teachers for organizing this event in a successful manner.

**Disna Sathsara (Grade 9)**  
 JMC College Int., Maharagama

**Camping time**

**Saeedh Khan (11 years)**  
 Royal College, Colombo

**A fisherman**



**Thinuri Dinethya (14 years)**  
St. Mary's College, Veyangoda

**My hobby**

A hobby is something we do in our free time. So people have different hobbies. Collecting stamps, riding bicycles, reading books, climbing mountains, watching television and doing sports etc., are some hobbies.

Among them my hobby is collecting stamps. It is a very useful hobby. It is very popular among children. Collecting stamps is called philately. We can learn about many things from collecting stamps; birds, flowers, trees, animals, greatest people in the world, famous places in Sri Lanka and the world etc.

I have both local and foreign stamps. I exchange stamps with my friends. It's a very interesting hobby, so I like it very much.

**Methupama Wijerathne (Grade 9)**  
Holy Cross College, Gampaha

**My cat**

My cat's name is Fluffy. It is brown in colour. Fluffy eats fish and drinks milk. It can run and jump well.

I love my cat very much.



**Salma Faizal (Grade 2)**  
Sherwood Girls' College, Akurana

**My flower garden**



**Rilwan Riza (5 years)**  
Sussex College, Badulla

**The commencement of schools**

After the long lasting travel restrictions of the COVID pandemic, the schools reopened. My friends and I were very excited about it. I missed school so much, the classes, the ground etc. I could not express my joy in words as I had been waiting for this moment since a very long time. And finally the morning I was waiting for arrived.

Soon after the sun rose, my big day came to life. I got up early in the morning waiting to go to school eagerly. During the pandemic, many children suffered due to the disruption of education, so due to the lockdown, online classes began at school. Online classes were quite interesting, but it never felt like school. Online classes didn't work out because of the strike of teachers, we were helpless.

As school reopened, I met all my teachers and friends. We had fun at school, we had so much to discuss. So many things had changed at school. When school was reopened the feeling I had was completely different and beyond explanation. It completely changed my life. Although it was not my first day at school, everything seemed new to me.

It was a wonderful experience. I am looking forward to go to school in the same way even after the December holidays.

**Hikma Manajir (14 years)**  
Springfield College, Kandy

**Old Mr. Frank**

He is an old fellow  
He likes the colour yellow  
When the telephone rings,  
He always sings.  
He loves to watch cricket,  
He pays money for the ticket.

A wonderful music composer,  
He bought a red bulldozer,  
And he dug a large tunnel,  
While I was cleaning my funnel.  
His mind was full of pleasure,  
Because he found a golden treasure!  
He shared the money with the needy  
And he never had the quality  
of being greedy.  
At times Mr. Frank was at zero,  
But now he has become a hero!

**Chalinu Rathnayaka (10 years)**  
Lyceum Int. School, Panadura

**Elephants in the jungle**



**Subagi Buthmini (Grade 2)**  
Royal Int. School, Kegalle

**My favourite toy**

My favourite toy is a fire engine. It is red and has six wheels.

Fire truck has ladders, hoses, siren, cones and flashing lights.

It can go fast as it is an emergency vehicle. It carries firefighters and water. Fire engine helps to put out fires.

I love to be a fire fighter and save people.



**Ranuga Bandara (Grade 2)**  
Royal Int. School, Kegalle

**My family**



**Moksha Damdew (4 years)**  
Ashoka College, Horana



Please remember that **ARTICLES, POEMS** and **PAINTINGS** sent, will not be published unless they are certified as your own work by a parent or teacher. Also please mention the topic, your full name, date of birth and address in your entry. Articles should not exceed 200 words. Art should be on A4 size paper.

From a Young Reporter

## Sinharaja - a tropical paradise

Sinharaja is a large rainforest located near Deniyaya. It is the only virgin rainforest in Sri Lanka. It is well known for lots of unique plants and animals.

Last December, ending a long movement restriction, we went to Sinharaja. Even though we kept to known trails, we were lucky enough to catch a glimpse of some interesting creatures.

### Green Pit Viper



I spotted two green pit vipers on our journey. It is also known as the Bamboo Pit Viper. I think it is the laziest creature I have ever seen, because even after 6 hours, it didn't move an inch! I came to know the reason later. The green pit viper can camouflage so well and it doesn't want to give itself away. It will wait for the prey to come close to it. It does not want to spend its energy for food by moving.

### Hump Nosed Lizard

Also known as the Hump Snout Lizard and the Lyreshead Lizard. When it senses danger, it puffs its neck to scare away predators. There are many myths about the Hump Nosed Lizard and it is considered to bring bad luck, especially to males.



Sri Lankan Giant Millipede



Kangaroo Lizard

(A very special thanks to our nice and kindly tour guide Mr. Sagara)

### Tarantula

On our way back, we found a creature well camouflaged on a tree. It was a tarantula. Interestingly, they have tiny hairs on their body that will sting if they feel threatened.



### Leeches

Leeches are blood sucking creatures. Even after you take them off, your wound will still bleed a lot. That's because leeches have a powerful anticoagulant called Hirudin. An anticoagulant is a substance that stops blood clotting. They have another chemical to make their bites painless.



### Tips

- Apply salt below your knees, even on your shoes and socks. This will keep leeches away.
- Wear tight-fitting clothes.

Mumudi Gajadeera (8 years)  
Horizon College Int.



## Young Reporters

If you are interested in joining as a Funday Times Young Reporter please fill in the coupon given and send it in to us along with a recent report or interview not exceeding 300 words. Photographs or illustrations would enhance the report.



### Young Reporters Coupon

Name: .....  
Date of Birth: .....  
Address: .....  
.....  
Telephone: .....  
School: .....  
Parent's approval: ..... Date: .....  
.....

Young Reporters who have already enrolled with us, please send in new reports for publication.



Or



[fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

# News in Pictures

**January 18**



**Batu Caves, Malaysia**  
Hindu devotees climb the steps to Sri Subramaniam Swamy temple. After a one-year hiatus because of the coronavirus pandemic, celebrations resume this year with tight health protocols limiting the number of participants to 6,000 from the usual tens of thousands. Several rituals such as devotees carrying Kavadi, a large, decorated contraption, are not allowed, in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19.



**Strasbourg, France**  
Roberta Metsola, the newly elected president of the European parliament, delivers a speech during a plenary session.

**Sapporo, Japan**  
A long-tailed tit in a park in Hokkaido. Also called 'snow fairy', the 14cm-long bird is popular on Japanese social networks and has become a favourite of photo enthusiasts.



**Zakopane, Poland**  
A drone view of people trying to find their way out of the biggest snow maze in the world. The maze measures 3,000 sq. metres.



*The Guardian*

## Thai Pongal Festival

**T**hai Pongal is a harvest festival to give thanks to the sun god for the harvest. In Sri Lanka, it is usually celebrated as a two-day festival. This year Thai Pongal was celebrated on January 14 and 15.

On the first day, a sweet rice meal (Pongal Rice) is made, dedicated to the sun god, and then consumed by families. The rice is boiled in milk, along with spices, raisins and cashews etc. Devotees visit the kovil with offerings.

On the second day of festivities (Mattu Pongal), the oxen who help farmers work their rice fields are honoured.



**Making Pongal rice**



**Kolam**



**Food offerings made from harvest**

The animals are given a bath and beautiful garlands are hung about their necks and horns. The oxen are also marked on their foreheads and horns with decorative dyes.



**Mattu Pongal celebrations**



**Pix by M. A. Pushpa Kumara**



**Please send competition entries to:**

Funday Times  
C/O the Sunday Times  
P.O. Box 1136, Colombo.  
Or  
8, Hunupitiya Cross Road,  
Colombo 2.

**Please note that competition entries (except Reeves Art) are accepted by email.**

Please write the name of the competition and the date clearly at the top of your entry and include the following details:

Full Name (including Surname),  
Date of Birth, Address,  
Telephone No. and School.

Please underline the name most commonly used.

All competition entries should be certified by a parent or guardian as your own work. Competition entries without the full details requested, will be disqualified.

**Closing date for weekly competitions:**

**February 9, 2022**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

**Email: fundaytimes1@gmail.com**

**NOTE**

Please log on to the Funday Times website on [www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk) or check out the Sunday Times epaper on [www.sundaytimes.lk](http://www.sundaytimes.lk) for this week's Funday Times.

**Read-a-Book and win a voucher from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop**



Read any book of your choice and write briefly about it. What we want is not just a summary of the story but your views on the book.

The best account in the three age groups will be awarded book vouchers of Rs. 500 each from Vijitha Yapa Bookshop.

Three winners will be selected each month.

**Your account should not exceed 200 words.**

**Please fill in the coupon and attach it to your entry.**

**Read-a-Book Competition**

Name : .....

Date of birth : .....

Address : .....

School: .....

Tel: .....

Finished book on : .....

**Read-a-Book for December**



**9 years and below**

**Christelina Foenander**  
Treetop Twins  
Wilderness Adventures  
by Cressida Cowell

**10 – 12 years**

**Sandani Gamage**  
Five Run Away  
Together  
by Enid Blyton

**13 – 15 years**

**Lihini Wijsekara**  
Opening Pandora's  
Box by Ferdie Addis

Or [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)



Winners of Reeves Art Competition of 2020, who have not collected your prizes please call Funday Times on 2479333/2479337 and arrange to collect your prizes from our office.

**Tomahawk**

**Quiz No. 191**

Questions for Tomahawk Quiz No. 191 are based on articles appearing in the Funday Times of December 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2021.

All you have to do is to find the answers to the questions given. Write the answers neatly on a postcard. Cut the strip 'Tomahawk Quiz No. 191' seen at the top of this page and paste it on your postcard.

Please get your entries certified as your own work by a teacher or parent.

Two lucky winners will receive brand new

**Tomahawk Mountain Bikes**

with the compliments of

**Tomahawk Bicycle Mall**

All Funday Times readers between 8 – 15 years are eligible to participate.

(Those who have already won a bicycle are not eligible to participate.)

**Closing Date: January 31, 2022**

Or [fundaytimes1@gmail.com](mailto:fundaytimes1@gmail.com)

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**QUESTIONS – QUIZ NO. 191**

1. Who were the colonial rulers of Ceylon at the time Captain Edward Henry Pedris was arrested?
2. What was the first book authored by Jane Austen? Which book is considered her most famous novel?
3. Who were the first people to visit Baby Jesus?
4. Name the architect of St. Paul's Cathedral and state one of the cathedral's most well-known features.
5. Which country donates the famous Christmas tree seen decorated in London's Trafalgar Square every year?