

the  
**SUNDAY  
TIMES**

SUNDAY  
MARCH 9, 2025



# FUN DAY

## TIMES



**Happy to be in school**

Pic. by Eshan Fernando

**WINNERS!** 

**POETRY & ESSAYS**  
PAGES 2 & 5

**7**

**MATHS**  
PAGE 3



**FAMOUS PEOPLE**  
PAGE 4

**ONLINE**

**KIDS NEWS**  
PAGES 6 - 8

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[www.fundaytimes.lk](http://www.fundaytimes.lk)



**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 are accepted by email.**

**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 Number 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 above, will be disqualified.

**Closing Date**

**for this week's competitions:**

**March 26, 2025**

**Telephone: 2479337/2479333**

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



**Age groups:**

**6 – 10 years / 11 – 15 years**

**Word limit: 100 Words**

## Poetry Competition

This is your chance to get your poem published here. Entries should be in your handwriting and clearly certified by a teacher or parent as your own creation. Your poem should be posted to Funday Times with 'Poetry Competition' written at the top of the entry. The winner of each age category will be awarded a British Council Young Learner's Library membership.

**6 – 10 years**

### Rainbow of Differences

A rainbow of people, different and bright,  
Each one is unique, like a shining light,  
We're the pieces of a puzzle,  
we're the morning and the night,  
We're the sun and the moon,  
we're in everyone's sight.

Some of us love reading, some love to play,  
Some are artists, some scientists in every way.  
We're all different, though woven with care,  
Each thread important, each person rare.

Some like to talk, some are shy,  
Some like football, others gaze at the sky.  
We may look different but we are all the same,  
We're the beauty, the chaos, the amazing human game!

So, let's celebrate our differences with pride,  
Treat each other with kindness, side by side.  
Learn from each other, grow and have fun,  
In our rainbow of differences,  
everyone's number one!

**Aadya Agrawal (9 years)**  
**The British School in Colombo**



**11 – 15 years**

### Living in the dark

Those who live in the light, are afraid of the dark  
But I am the one who lives in the dark,  
While they seek brightness to chase their fear,  
I find my peace where shadows appear.

The world may tremble at the blackened night,  
But in its silence, I find my sight.  
No need for light to show me the way,  
In the dark, I have learned to stay.

The fear the unknown, the things they can't see,  
But in the dark, I am truly free.  
For in the shadows, I am whole –  
A light that burns within my soul.

**Ramesh Nileshkanth (15 years)**  
**Rajawella Hindu National College**

Please write **the date** at the top of your entry.

**Please note that copied poems will be disqualified.**



or

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

**Age: 10 – 12 years**

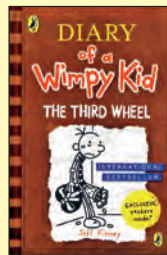
**Word Count: 150 – 200**

**Topic: The importance of water in our lives**

**Win: Diary of a Wimpy Kid – The Third Wheel by Jeff Kinney**

A Valentine's Day dance at Greg's Middle School has turned his world upside-down. As Greg scrambles to find a partner for the dance, he's worried he'll be left out in the cold on the big night. His best friend Rowley doesn't have any prospects either.

But a lot can happen in one night and you never know who's going to be lucky in love...



**Age: 13 – 15 years**

**Word Count: 200 – 250**

**Topic: International Women's Day**

**Win: Going Solo by Roald Dahl**

As a young man, Roald Dahl's adventures took him from London to East Africa, until World War II began and he became a RAF pilot.

Read stories of whizzing through the air in a Tiger Moth Plane, encounters with deadly green mambas and hungry lions, and the terrible crash that led him to storytelling.



## Book Competition



**10 – 12 years**

*A National Hero you admire*

**Sadev Chandrasekara**

Lyceum Int. School

**13 – 15 years**

*The importance of learning one's Mother Language*

**Aksharran Ketheeswaran**

Gateway College, Colombo

**Win super books from**



**Age: 9 years and below**

**Word Count: 150**

**Topic: The wild animal you like best**

**Win: The Adventures of the Wishing Chair by Enid Blyton**

When Mollie and Peter go to buy their mother a birthday present, they discover the most extraordinary thing; a chair that can fly and grant wishes!

The Wishing Chair takes them on many magical adventures – and you never know what might happen next!



**Write at the top of your Essay**

■ Book Competition ■ Essay Topic

Maths in Action 90

By R. N. A. de Silva

# Divisibility by Seven

Seven seems to be the most difficult digit when we want to check the divisibility of any number by the digits from 2 to 9. Seven is an interesting number and it is considered a lucky number in many cultures. It is a prime number as it has no factors other than 1 and itself.

We come across number 7 in many instances. Here are a few examples:

- ◆ There are seven days in a week. It originated with the Babylonians who measured time using the sun and the moon.
- ◆ Seven colours are in a rainbow.
- ◆ It is considered that there are seven wonders in the world.
- ◆ The total number of continents in the world is seven.
- ◆ Seven major seas in the world.
- ◆ Seven notes in a musical scale.

Mathematicians have been trying to figure out efficient methods to check the divisibility by 7 since ancient times. One such method is given below.

Double the last digit of the considered number. Then find the difference between this number and the number formed by the remaining digits. Repeat this process until you get a single digit. If the final answer is either 0 or 7, then the number is divisible by 7.

As an example, consider 231.

Double the last digit:  $1 \times 2 = 2$ .

$$23 - 2 = 21.$$

Repeat this process.

$$2 - 1 \times 2 = 0.$$

Therefore 231 is divisible by 7.

Now consider 5452 as an example.  $545 - 2 \times 2 = 541$ .

Then  $54 - 1 \times 2 = 52$  and

$5 - 2 \times 2 = 1$ . Therefore 5452 is not divisible by 7.

Algebraically, this process can be explained as follows for 2 digit numbers.

Let the number be  $n$  which can be written as  $10x + y$ . Double the last digit which then gives  $2y$ .

The remaining number is  $x$  and therefore the difference is  $x - 2y$ .

$$n = 10x + y = 7x + 7y + 3x - 6y = 7(x + y) + 3(x - 2y).$$

Therefore,  $n$  can be divisible by 7 only if  $x - 2y$  is divisible by 7.

Here is another method to check the divisibility by 7.

Multiply the last digit by 5. If for example, the number is 231, multiply 1 by 5.

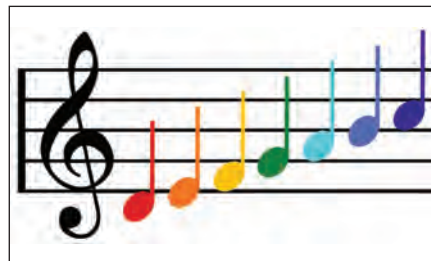
Add this number to the number formed by the remaining digits.

$$5 + (23) = 28.$$

This process can be repeated if required.

Check whether the result is divisible by 7.

As 28 is divisible by 7, then 231 is also divisible by 7.



### Math Plot - 90

Try to find the solution to the following puzzle. You may send solutions with reasoning to [rnades@gmail.com](mailto:rnades@gmail.com) within the next three days.

Please include your full name, date of birth, home address, contact details and the name of your school along with the solution.

**There are men and horses in a stable. In total, there are 22 heads and 72 feet. How many men and horses are there in the stable?**

### Math Plot 89 – Solution

The answer is 1.

The winner is **Rukaiya Ramzi** of **Hejaaz Int. School, Dehiwala.** Congratulations!

## Happy Birthday



**Suhanya Gamaarachchi**  
13 years on March 9

Photographs of members and non-members between 4 – 15 years, for the birthday page, should reach us at least ten days before the birthday, along with a letter from a parent giving full details.

### In our online issue this week:

- Page 5 – Book Winners' Essays
- Page 6 – Young Achievers
- Page 7 – Kids News
- Page 8 – News in Pictures

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 additional pages of this week's Funday Times.



# Celine Dion



**Céline Marie Claudette Dion, (born March 30, 1968) is a Canadian singer. Referred to as the "Queen of Power Ballads", she is noted for her powerful and technically skilled vocals.**

**Her music has incorporated genres such as pop, rock, R&B, 'chanson' and classical music. Her recordings have been mainly in English and French, although she has also sung in several other languages including Japanese, Italian, German, Mandarin, Spanish and Neapolitan.**

Born into a large family, the youngest of 14 children, in Charlemagne, Quebec, Dion was discovered by her future manager and husband, René Angélil, and emerged as a teen star in her home country with a series of French-language albums during the 1980s.

She gained international recognition by winning the 1988 Eurovision Song Contest, where she represented Switzerland with the song 'Ne partez pas sans moi'. Her debut English-language album, 'Unison' (1990), established her as a viable pop artist primarily in North America and several English-speaking markets, while 'The Colour of My Love' (1993) gave her global success.

Dion continued her success throughout the 1990s with several of the best-selling albums in history, such as 'Falling into You' (1996) and 'Let's Talk About Love' (1997), which were both certified diamond in the U.S. She accumulated a catalog of numerous high-charting tracks, including 'Beauty and the Beast', 'The Power of Love', 'Think Twice', 'To Love You More', 'Because You Loved Me', 'It's All Coming Back to Me Now', 'All by Myself', 'I'm Your Angel' and 'That's the Way It Is'.

Celine Dion won an Academy Award for Best Original Song in 1998 for her song 'My Heart Will Go On', from the movie 'Titanic'.

Dion continued releasing French-language albums between each English record; 'D'eux' (1995) became the best-selling French-language album of all time.

During the 2000s, she built her reputation as a successful live performer with 'A New Day' on the Las Vegas Strip (2003 – 07), the highest-grossing concert residency of all time, and the Taking Chances World Tour (2008 – 09), one of the highest-grossing concert tours of the 2000s. In 2009, she was named by the Los Angeles Times as the top-earning artist of the decade, with combined album sales and concert revenue exceeding \$747 million.

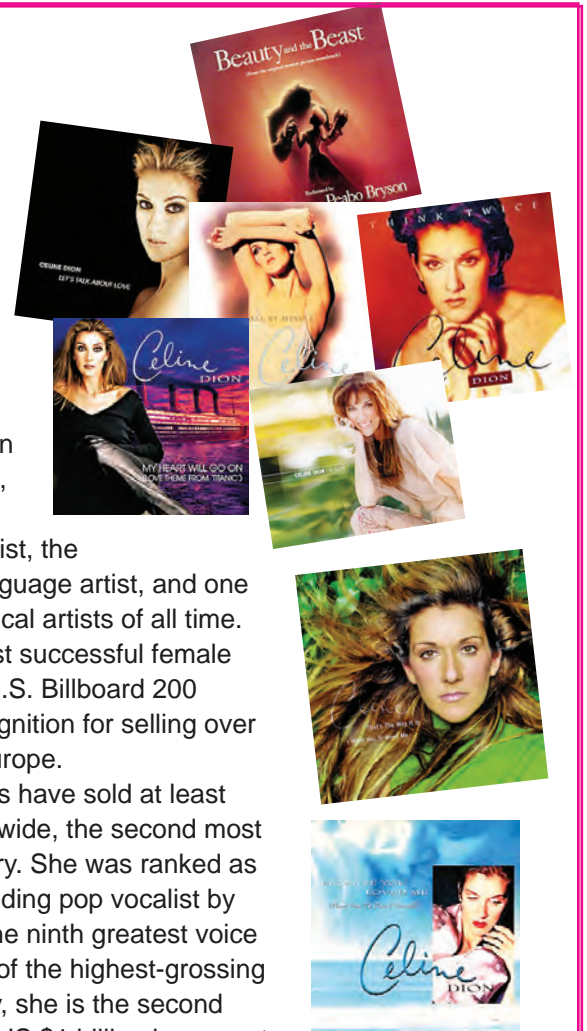
In 2022, Dion cancelled a tour due to her diagnosis of stiff-person syndrome, a rare neurological disease.

With over 200 million records sold worldwide, Dion is the best-selling Canadian recording artist, the best-selling French-language artist, and one of the best-selling musical artists of all time.

She is the sixth most successful female artist in the history of U.S. Billboard 200 and also received recognition for selling over 50 million albums in Europe.

Seven of her albums have sold at least 10 million copies worldwide, the second most among women in history. She was ranked as the fourth most outstanding pop vocalist by Cover Magazine and the ninth greatest voice in music by MTV. One of the highest-grossing touring artists in history, she is the second woman to accumulate US \$1 billion in concert revenue. According to Forbes, Dion was the world's highest-paid female musician in 1997, 1998, 2004 and 2006.

She received honorary doctorates in music from Berklee College of Music and Université Laval.



Kids Encyclopedia Facts



# Book Competition **WINNERS!**

## 10 – 12 years

### A National Hero you admire

Anagarika Dharmapala (1864 – 1933) was a prominent Sri Lankan Buddhist revivalist and nationalist who played a crucial role in revitalizing Buddhism in Sri Lanka and beyond.

Born as Don David Hewavitarne, in Colombo, he later adopted the name ‘Anagarika Dharmapala’, meaning ‘Homeless Protector of the Dharma’. He dedicated his life to the global spread of Buddhism and the restoration of Buddhist heritage sites, especially in India.

Dharmapala was instrumental in the revival of Bodhi Gaya (Buddha Gaya), the sacred site of Lord Buddha’s Enlightenment. He founded the Maha Bodhi Society in 1891, striving to return Buddhist control over the

site. He also travelled extensively spreading Buddhist teachings in Asia, Europe and America. His efforts helped popularize Theravada Buddhism worldwide.

Apart from his religious work, he was a key figure in Sri Lanka’s independence movement, promoting Sinhalese culture and identity. He emphasized education, moral discipline and social reform.

His legacy continues to inspire Buddhists globally, marking him as one of the most influential Buddhist leaders of modern history.

**Sadev Chandrasekara (12 years)**  
**Lyceum Int. School**

## 13 – 15 years

### The importance of learning one’s Mother Language

The primary language someone learns in their early life, which comes from their native dialect, is known as the ‘Mother Language’.

Due to reasons like migration, many people refrain from learning their mother tongue. This is disadvantageous as there can be breakdowns in a person’s culture, traditions and family history, making learning and understanding more difficult.

First and foremost, being familiar with your native language boosts the way of speaking with your family and community. Ultimately, this will create a good bond with your relatives.

In addition, if you understand your first language, it will be easier to learn other languages.

Research has found that children who acknowledge their mother tongues are better in their academics, than those who don’t. Use of one’s mother language will prevent it from being lost across generations. It is a significant mark that reveals and conveys our personal and social identity. Furthermore it also assists in individuality and innovation.

People need to speak in their first language in various places and occasions; at family gatherings; when communicating with elders

and when discussing with community members. Grasping the ideas of a language involves reading, writing and speaking. At least knowing one part of it would be beneficial for anyone’s future.

In conclusion, preserving your native language will help you in thousands of diverse ways as mentioned. Last but not least, learning the basics of your mother language is a crucial part of everyone’s life!

**Aksharran Ketheeswaran**  
**(13 years)**  
**Gateway College, Colombo**

## 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 who have already enrolled with us, please send in new reports for publication.**



Or



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



### Young Reporters Coupon

Name: .....

Date of Birth: .....

Address: .....

Telephone: .....

School: .....

Parent’s approval:                      Date:

.....

## 10-year-old makes history speaking in UK Parliament

March 3, 2025

**O**n Friday February 28, more than 300 young people were in the UK Parliament.

But don't worry they aren't taking over – they had permission to be there.

They were in the House of Commons chamber for the day, for the 14<sup>th</sup> sitting of the UK Youth Parliament.

The debate included young people of all ages, but one young person, 10-year-old Owen, made history.

He became the youngest person EVER to deliver a speech in the House of Commons Chamber.

Members of the UK Youth Parliament (MYPs) are elected to represent the views of other young people in the UK in the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

Owen, is from one of the British Overseas Territories – Tristan da Cunha.

Tristan da Cunha is a tiny island in the South Atlantic, 1,750 miles from Cape Town in South Africa.



Kristers used BSL to deliver his speech.

It has a population of 230 people with one school, one pub and no restaurants.

### What are British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies?

British Overseas Territories (BOTs) and Crown Dependencies are places that are far away from the UK, but they have a historical or constitutional link to the United Kingdom.

The King is the head of state but they have their own governments and laws.

For 10-year-old Owen, the trip to London was a big one and took more than a week via sea and air.

Owen said: "I am very excited to be given this opportunity to speak in the House of Commons, and to see famous landmarks like the clock tower of Big Ben."

Owen spoke to the chamber about his ambitions to be a car mechanic, and the challenges that he faces when it comes to education and training to reach his goals.

He said: "I might be young, but like everyone here I've got dreams and I know that education and training is how I make them come true."

Another young person making history in the Commons was Kristers, the MYP for North East Scotland. He was the first MYP to deliver a speech using British Sign Language (BSL).



10-year-old Owen made history by becoming the youngest person to deliver a speech in the House of Commons Chamber.



Owen delivered a speech about challenges of education on his island.

A BSL interpreter communicated this via a microphone in the Commons Chamber.

Kristers said: "I feel really honoured to be invited to come to the House of Commons to deliver my speech on the importance of 16 and 17 year olds having a vote.

"Today I think I was the first BSL user to speak in the Chamber – I feel it is important for the deaf community to show that any young person who uses BSL can do anything!"

Source: *CBC Newsround*

## It all adds up to success for Aaryan Shukla

February 27, 2025

**A**s a young child, Aaryan Shukla's parents learned that he was good with numbers. Like, really good. Now he's 14, and recently set six new Guinness World Records in a single day – all for math problems that most people would need a calculator to solve.

Aaryan lives in the Indian state of Maharashtra. His parents knew he was good with numbers as a child. But around age six, he began doing math problems – in his head.

When Aaryan was eight, his parents entered him in some international mental calculation contests, and he began winning.

In 2022, Aaryan went to the Mental Calculation World Cup in Germany. He didn't win all of the contests, but he was the overall winner, and set three new contest records along the way. He was only 12.

At the next Mental Calculation World Cup in September of 2024, he won all five of the main contests and was the overall winner again.

A year ago, Aaryan set a Guinness World Record by correctly adding up 50 five-digit numbers in just 25.19 seconds.

Aaryan's math skills are amazing. But they don't come without effort.



Aaryan says he practices several hours a day, on top of his schoolwork. But he also makes time for other things. He plays video games, reads adventure and mystery books and likes to play cricket.

Source: *NewsForKids*

## At the Oscars 2025

March 3, 2025

**The movie world's biggest awards ceremony of the year, the Oscars, took place in Hollywood in the US city of Los Angeles.**

The 97<sup>th</sup> Academy Awards, to give it its formal name, sees actors and celebrities from all over the world come together to celebrate the best films from the past 12 months.

There were also live performances throughout the show, including a special performance by the two main stars of 'Wicked', Ariana Grande and Cynthia Erivo.

### What happened?

The show began with a performance of 'Somewhere over the Rainbow' from 'Wicked' star Ariana Grande, who stood on stage under the backdrop of a moon and a starry sky projected on the screen behind her.

Then, her 'Wicked' co-star Cynthia Erivo appeared in a white gown and joined Grande on stage. The duo sang together and wowed the audience with a performance of 'Defying Gravity' from the film.

Both actresses had also been nominated for an award. Cynthia Erivo was up for the Best Actress award, while Ariana Grande has been recognised in the Supporting Actress category. Both missed out on the night, however, 'Wicked' did win two Oscars.

The film won Best Production Design, and designer Paul Tazewell



Ariana Grande sang 'Somewhere over the Rainbow'.

picked up the award for Best Costume Design. In his speech, he said it was a "significant honour".

He also thanked 'Wicked' stars Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande.

In the Best Animated Feature Film category, Latvian film 'Flow' beat off competition from the likes of favourites 'The Wild Robot', 'Wallace and Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl' and Disney's 'Inside Out 2' to scoop the award.

There was also a show-stopping performance from British singer-songwriter Raye, who sang Adele's hit 'Skyfall' from the James Bond film of the same name.



Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande, stars from 'Wicked'.



This year's Oscars also paid tribute during the show to the fire relief efforts after the recent wildfires in the city, with a number of local firefighters also invited to the awards.



Best Actor Adrien Brody, Best Actress Mikey Madison, Best Supporting Actress Zoe Saldana and Best Supporting Actor Kieran Culkin.

Source: CBBC Newsround

**March 4**

# News in Pictures



**Cologne, Germany**  
Revellers take part in the traditional "Rosenmontag" Rose Monday Carnival parade in Germany.



**Gold Coast, Australia**  
Crowds gather to watch surfers riding the waves at Kirra beach. Tropical Cyclone Alfred is expected to make landfall in south-east Queensland as a Category 2 storm, marking the first time a cyclone has directly hit the region in over 50 years.



**Ivrea, Italy**  
Members of the Aranceri della Morte team fight against I Difensori del Castello during the traditional Battle of the Oranges at the carnival in Ivrea, near Turin. During the event, which marks the people's rebellion against tyrannical lords who ruled the town in the Middle Ages, revellers parading on floats represent guards of the tyrant, while those on foot represent the townsfolk.

**Jakarta, Indonesia**  
Rescuers evacuate people using a rubber boat from a flooded residential area following heavy rains in Indonesia. Over 1,400 people were affected and thousands of homes were damaged.



**Seljalandsfoss, Iceland**  
Visitors stand below Seljalandsfoss, one of the most famous waterfalls in a country where there are about 10,000. Seljalandsfoss, a tourist hotspot in the south of Iceland, takes its source from the Eyjafjallajökull volcano glacier, and is formed by the Seljalands River pouring from a height of about 60 metres.



**March 3**

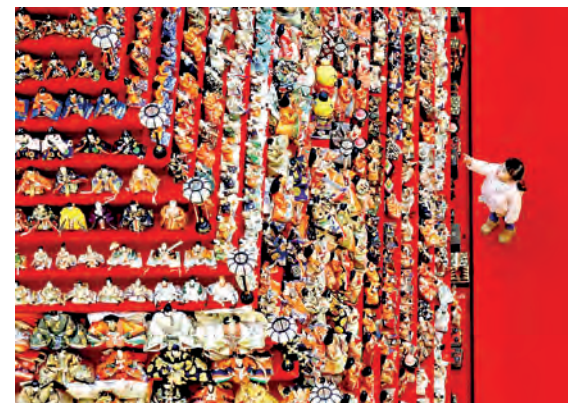
**Salisbury, UK**  
Choristers practice flipping pancakes before Shrove Tuesday at Salisbury Cathedral.



**Thrissur, India**  
Workers carry a robotic model elephant. The lifesize replica flaps its ears and waves its trunk, and has been rolled out in India as an alternative to the endangered animals used for festivals in Hindu temples.



**Tal al-Hawa, Gaza**  
People gather by the rubble of destroyed buildings for a communal Iftar (fast-breaking meal) on the second day of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.



**Konosu, Japan**  
An event celebrating Hinamatsuri, a traditional festival dedicated to girls, plays host to a showcase featuring 1,605 traditional Japanese dolls.

Sources: The Guardian & Reuters