



A Day at the Beach

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER HEPP, AGE 10
NOVI, MICHIGAN

ILLUSTRATED BY ADITI LADDHA, AGE 11
INDORE, MADHYA PRADESH, INDIA

“Ow!” I yelped. I sprang back in shock. My foot had landed heavily on a seashell. The seashell was pearly white with black specks scattered on it, a particularly sharp seashell. I dashed to the edge of the beach, where the ocean met the land, this time keeping a sharp eye out for pokey seashells.

I overlooked the sparkling blue ocean, and my ears caught the sound of the waves crashing up against the shore. I took a deep breath, and I sensed the smell of sun tan lotion being splattered on children’s fair skin.

WHOOSH!

I let the mild wind sift through my chocolate brown hair, making it more tangly than ever. Today was a great day to come to the ocean.

I whipped my head around, and I realized that my parents were being slowpokes, again. Their feet had just landed on the the sandy beach.

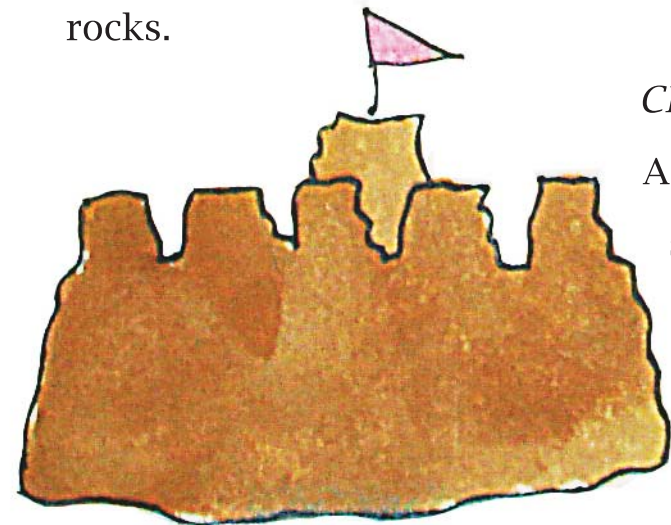


“Please, please, please can we play in the ocean now?” I pleaded with my parents, as I took the beach materials from their slippery hands, greasy with sunscreen.

“Give us a few minutes to set everything up,” replied my dad. I knew not to irritate him by the look on his face and the tone in his voice. I silently trudged back to the shore.

After what seemed like hours, my parents surrendered. My mom sprang up from her beach chair and together we walked to the ocean and waded in the water. The salty seawater was a little cold, but it felt refreshing, like devouring an ice cream cone on a sizzling hot day.

My feet detected sharp rocks on the ocean floor. I quickly skipped past them and soon my feet felt the nice, soft bottom of the ocean without the rocks.



CRASH!

A wave nearly pulled me under with its strong force as it slapped against the shore.

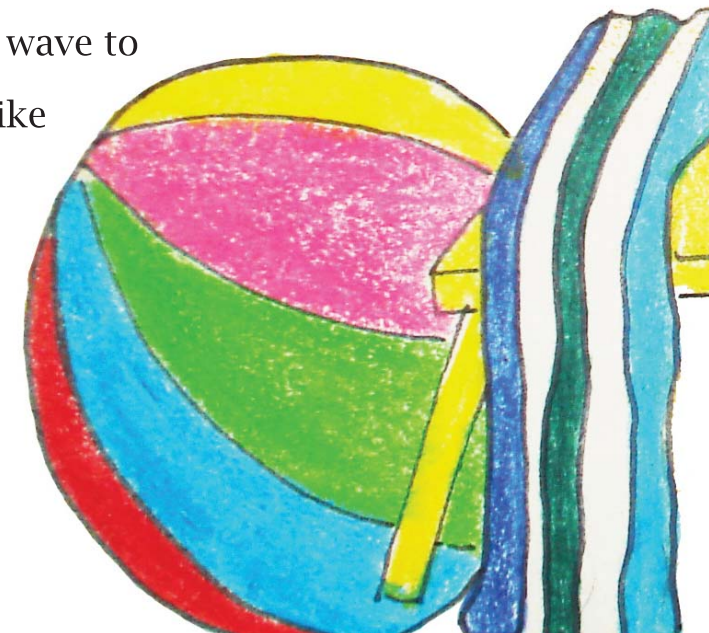
“It’s a fantastic day for boogie

boarding,” I thought to myself. “I’ll be riding the waves like there’s no tomorrow!”

“Mom! I’m going to get the boogie board!” I didn’t even wait for her to reply. I just stomped out of the ocean water, stamped up to our cabana, grabbed the boogie board, and dashed back into the ocean before I could become too cold. I ran so fast into the ocean that I didn’t even feel the rocks beneath me. I felt like I just skipped over them. I jogged back to my mom, and I strapped a string that was attached to the boogie board around my wrist so that the boogie board would remain by my side at all times.

I strolled farther into the ocean with my mom to catch the really good waves - the kinds with the white caps on top of them.

I looked over my shoulder with both hands gripped tightly on the edges of the boogie board, ready for a giant wave to pummel me. Time passed, and it seemed like I would never be satisfied with any wave but a Tsunami. Finally, a boat whizzed by, and giant waves started to charge towards me.





“Here they come!” I thought to myself nervously. I have to admit, I was really nervous. My toes scrunched up beneath me. My hands started to sweat, becoming clammy. Every second, the waves kept creeping closer and closer until...

CRASH!

I had hopped on my boogie board at just the right second! I was riding the wave! The wave carried me all the way to the shore where it dropped me heavily on the sand, leaving me sprawled out on the beach, resembling an octopus.

Right there at that moment, I didn’t care how much sand made its way into my hair, how much water I had swallowed, or how my stomach was churning wildly. All that mattered to me was that I had done it - I had achieved my goal, and that was more important to me than anything else. Suddenly, I had the urge to do it again, again, and again. I sprang back up, picked up my boogie board, and headed back into the salty ocean.

The waves were strong now, and when the waves crashed up against me, it really hurt. I skipped back to my mom, who was still in the ocean.

“Oh my gosh!” she screamed. “You did it!” I just beamed proudly, and

prepared to do it again. I looked over my shoulder and sighted a big one coming. It inched closer and closer...

YES!

I had jumped at just the right moment again! Another success! Again, the wave plopped me down on the shore.

“I did it again!” I thought, excited and proud at the same time. I was so overjoyed; I ran out to the ocean and repeated the process again, again, and again.

Finally, after I had sought victory a bazillion times, I had had enough of boogie boarding for today. I was unbelievably tired. I trudged out of the ocean with the boogie board dragging behind me, the string still attached to my wrist. I reached our cabana and grabbed a towel. The towel was a striped pattern, every stripe a different shade of blue. The towel’s texture was so soft. It made me feel warm and cozy after playing in the salty ocean for an hour. I collapsed into one of the beach chairs, and relaxed, snuggling up in my soft, warm, cozy towel.

At nighttime, I lay in my bed in our condo and thought, “This was a great day at the beach!” Then, an even better thought traveled into my mind: “And I can’t wait to go back tomorrow!”

