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SPORTS
Big wins in track and field
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THE WEEK Junior

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Making sense of the world



THE WEEK Junior

THE BEST MAGAZINE FOR CURIOUS KIDS

STONEHENGE

Discover a prehistoric monument that fascinates the world p12



DID YOU KNOW?

- Stonehenge is a famous stone circle in England.
- Construction began about 5,000 years ago.
- It was built to align with the Sun's movements.



DID YOU KNOW?
The US Bill of Rights, which includes the First Amendment, was passed on December 15, 1791.

A large crowd attended the memorial for Charlie Kirk.

Freedom of the press

30 YEARS International IDEA

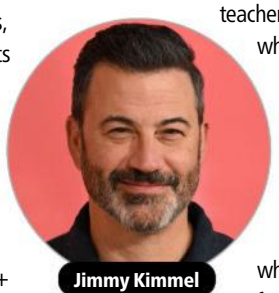
The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), in Sweden, issued a report stating that freedom of the press has declined around the world. In 43 countries, journalists' ability to report on governments faced the sharpest drop-off in 50 years. IDEA said this poses a "serious threat" to democracy.

Activist mourned, free speech debated

A debate over the right to free speech has intensified across the US following the assassination (killing for political reasons) of prominent conservative activist Charlie Kirk. He died on September 10, and a memorial service for him was held on September 21.

Who was Charlie Kirk?

Kirk, age 31, co-founded Turning Point USA, a youth organization focused on conservative values (set of beliefs that typically aligns with the Republican Party and some religious groups). He often spoke on college campuses and was known for debating with people who disagreed with him. Kirk was speaking at Utah Valley University when he was shot and killed. After his death, he was lauded by many conservatives for his beliefs, which included support for gun rights and marriage between men and women only. Kirk also thought Christianity should be part of government. Critics accused Kirk of discrimination because he opposed laws and programs that support people of color, LGBTQ+ people, and others. They also said the US Constitution (nation's highest law) prohibits religion from being part of the government.


Jimmy Kimmel

What happened at the memorial?

Kirk's memorial service at State Farm Stadium in Arizona was attended by more than 90,000 people. Many traveled from far away and waited for hours to attend, while more than 100 million people streamed it online, according to Turning Point. President Donald Trump, Vice President JD Vance, and other Republican leaders spoke at the service. Kirk's widow, Erika, called on people to continue her husband's mission.

How is free speech being challenged?

The First Amendment of the Constitution protects people's freedom of religion, speech, press, the right to gather, and the right to petition the government for change. Free speech applies to all citizens, including members of the press like journalists, even if they criticize government leaders. Since Kirk's death, some people, including teachers, have been suspended or fired for what they have said about him. Trump and members of his administration have publicly supported this.

On September 15, late-night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel spoke about Kirk's assassination on his program *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, which airs on ABC. He said supporters of Trump were using unconfirmed facts about the killer's motives for their own political advantage. On September 17, ABC suspended the program under pressure from Brendan Carr, head of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC, US agency that regulates broadcasts). ABC's decision prompted a major public outcry, but Trump praised the move on social media. The President also called for the firing of other talk show hosts who have been critical of him and his administration. This year, Trump has filed several lawsuits against media outlets that criticized him, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and Paramount, which owns CBS.

How did people react?

Some Republicans said that, in the wake of Kirk's death, freedom of speech should be limited because it can lead to violence. Others have emphasized the importance of being able to speak freely, even when people disagree, and pointed out that Kirk himself supported the First Amendment. "The [US] was built on the right to free speech," said Senator Chuck Schumer, a Democrat from New York. Senator Ted Cruz, a Republican from Texas, said that although he disliked Kimmel's comments, it is "unbelievably dangerous for government...to decide what speech we like and what we don't." Anna Gomez, an FCC commissioner, said the FCC does not have "the constitutional right to...punish broadcasters for speech the government dislikes."

What will happen next?

When *The Week Junior* went to press on September 23, ABC had announced that *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* would return that night. Erika Kirk had taken over as head of Turning Point USA. The lawsuits will continue to move through the courts.

ON THE COVER: GETTY IMAGES; MICROIDS; WAC; JOE ST. PIERRE

NASA counts new exoplanets

On September 17, NASA (the US space agency) announced that more than 6,000 planets have been officially identified outside our solar system. Known as exoplanets, they orbit stars similar to our Sun. Scientists around the world use equipment on Earth and in space to discover them.

The milestone comes almost exactly 30 years after the first exoplanet was spotted on October 6, 1995. Between 1995 and 2022, 5,000 exoplanets were identified. The rate of discovery has accelerated in recent years as technology and equipment have become more advanced, with 1,000 more identified in just the past three years. There are currently an additional 8,000 possible exoplanets waiting to be assessed.

NASA scientists said they expect to identify many thousands of exoplanets in the coming years. Though no planets similar to Earth have been spotted yet, researchers hope to determine where they're more likely to be found. "If we want to find out if we're alone in the universe, all of this knowledge is essential," said a NASA official.



A rendering of exoplanets



Symbolic foods are eaten on Rosh Hashanah.

WARM WORDS
In Hebrew, "Rosh Hashanah" means "head of the year," and the holiday greeting "shana tova" means "good year."

Jewish High Holidays are observed

Jewish people around the world are celebrating the High Holidays, which began with Rosh Hashanah, the start of the Jewish New Year, from September 22–24, and will end with Yom Kippur, from October 1–2. In Judaism, this is a time for self-reflection, prayer, and atonement (when someone makes up for any offense they may have caused).

Jewish people believe that during Rosh Hashanah, God considers people's behavior and records their deeds in the Book of Life. It is the start of 10 days of reflection, when Jewish people weigh their actions over the past year and seek forgiveness for things they've done wrong.

During Rosh Hashanah, Jewish people gather in synagogues (places of worship) for prayer and the blowing of the shofar, an instrument made from a ram's horn. Families eat traditional foods like challah bread, pomegranates, and apples dipped in honey to symbolize sweetness in the year ahead.

The Book of Life is sealed again on Yom Kippur, also called the Day of Atonement and the holiest day of the year. On Yom Kippur, many Jews pray and fast (do not eat or drink) for 25 hours. They attend services at synagogues and hear the shofar for a final time.

As Jews gather to mark the holidays this year, there is rising concern over antisemitism (prejudice against Jewish people) in the US and around the world. An ongoing war between Israel and Hamas (a terrorist group in Gaza) and other conflicts in the Middle East have heightened security concerns. Government, religious, and community leaders are working together to ensure a safe holiday period.

IT'S AN AMAZING WEEK FOR...

A SLICE OF GLORY

A Connecticut city has earned a Guinness World Records title for largest pizza party. More than 9,000 slices were served in New Haven to 4,525 people. "The pizza is amazing, the people are amazing," said Owen Zhang, a participant.



The party

PAWS IN POWER

The results are in for a pet mayoral race in Somerville, Massachusetts. A long-haired black cat named Minerva captured nearly 6,000 votes in a race of 70 pet candidates to win the community's title of "Bike Path Mayor." Minerva will follow in the pawprints of the path's previous mayor, a cat named Berry.



Minerva

A JOYFUL HOMECOMING

An orangutan named Popi, who was rescued as an infant from illegal captivity nine years ago, was released back to the wild in East Borneo. While in "jungle school" at an orangutan center, Popi learned survival skills like how to climb and find food. Popi's release is a hopeful sign for conservation of the endangered species.



Popi

GETTY IMAGES; NASA, ESA, AND D. SING/UNIVERSITY OF EXETER; ARNOLD GOLD/ARNOLD GOLD/HEARST CONNECTICUT M; IG/@PAWESOMEPLANET_; CENTER FOR GREAT APES; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2)

BIG NUMBER
More than 68 million people identify as Hispanic in the US, making up nearly 20% of the population.



A dance group performs in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month at a National Football League game in 2024.

US astronaut honored



To mark Hispanic Heritage Month, toy company Mattel has released a new Barbie doll (shown at right) honoring Dr. Ellen Ochoa, a former US astronaut who was the first Hispanic woman to travel to space in 1993. In 2013, she became the first Hispanic person to lead NASA's Johnson Space Center, in Houston, Texas.

Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated

The US is celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 through October 15 to honor and recognize Hispanic communities. This year's theme is "Collective Heritage: Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future."

Who is being recognized?

National Hispanic Heritage Month is meant to recognize anyone who identifies as Hispanic or Latino. The term "Hispanic" typically refers to anyone who comes from, or is descended from people who came from, Spanish-speaking countries. This includes Spain as well as Mexico and Cuba. The term "Latino" is often used to refer to anyone from, or descended from people who came from, Latin America, no matter what language was spoken in their home country.

What is the history of the month?

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson declared the week of September 15 to be National Hispanic Heritage Week. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan expanded the week to a month. September 15 was chosen to start the observance because five Central American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua—celebrate their independence on that date.

How is it being celebrated?

The city of San Antonio, in Texas, has performances and film screenings taking place. The Smithsonian museum in Washington, DC, has organized a virtual event about the musical journey of salsa, an exhibit of postage stamps that celebrate Hispanic heritage, and more. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio, threw a Hispanic Heritage Celebration concert on September 20. The Atlanta Braves, a major league baseball team, will host its annual Los Bravos night on September 23.

How is this year different?

Many organizers said they have canceled or postponed festivals, including Mexican Independence Day events in Chicago, Illinois, due to opposition to immigration and diversity initiatives by President Donald Trump's administration. Events in Indiana, Louisiana, and Massachusetts were also canceled. Organizers expressed concern that hosting large gatherings could draw government officers looking to arrest immigrants or that their event would be in violation of federal bans on diversity programming.

WORD OF THE WEEK

GOBLIN

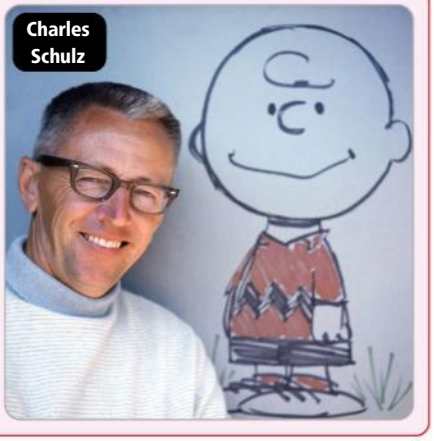
The English word "goblin" has its roots in a legend. It is based on *Gobelinus*, the name of a mischievous sprite who was said to haunt areas of northern France in the 12th century.



THE WEEK IN HISTORY

October 2, 1950
First Peanuts comic strip appears

On October 2, 1950, the first Peanuts comic strip, created by Charles Schulz, appeared in US newspapers. It starred Charlie Brown. Soon after, Lucy, Snoopy, Linus, and other characters in the gang appeared. Peanuts eventually reached 355 million readers and was translated into 21 languages. "My ambition from earliest memory was to produce a daily comic strip," Schulz once said.





Grocery prices continue to rise

Grocery prices grew by half a percent from July to August, the fastest monthly change since 2022, reported the Bureau of Labor Statistics (the agency that studies the economy). Overall grocery prices are up 2.7% compared to a year ago, with eggs costing about 11% more and beef prices up nearly 14%. Climate change, labor shortages, and tariffs (taxes on goods coming into the US) are the main reasons for the increasing grocery costs, experts said.



Willie Nelson

Concert held to help farmers

Farm Aid 40, a concert to benefit family-owned farms, was held on September 20 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. More than 18 artists, including country music legend Willie Nelson, performed to increase the public's awareness of the struggles that US farmers face. It was the 40th anniversary of the first concert, held in 1985. Since then, Farm Aid has raised about $85 million for farmers.



Some of the finalists

Top toy finalists are announced

The National Toy Hall of Fame in Rochester, New York, has named 12 toys as finalists for inclusion in its all-time top toy list. The finalists represent a mix of classic games and nontraditional toys that are "wonderful vehicles for play," the museum said. The list includes Connect Four, Trivial Pursuit, Furby, Tickle Me Elmo, slime, and cornhole. The Hall of Fame selections will be announced in November.



Robert Redford in 2016

VERSATILE ACTOR
Robert Redford played the Marvel villain Alexander Pierce in *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* and in *Avengers: Endgame*.

Farewell to influential Hollywood icon

Robert Redford, an actor turned activist, died on September 16 at age 89. In a career of more than 60 years, he became one of Hollywood's biggest stars and used his platform to elevate filmmakers and support environmental causes.

Redford was born in 1936 in Santa Monica, California. As a young adult, he studied acting in New York City and got his start on Broadway. He gained attention in 1963 for his role in the hit play *Barefoot in the Park*, and in 1967 he appeared in his first major film role in the play's movie adaptation.

His breakthrough came in 1969 when he played an outlaw in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. He followed with strong performances in other films, including portraying journalist Bob Woodward, investigating wrongdoing in President Richard Nixon's administration in *All the President's Men*. Redford later directed and won an Academy Award (top film award) for best director for the film *Ordinary People*.



Robert Redford receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Barack Obama

In 1981, Redford founded the Sundance Institute in Utah to support the creative endeavors of independent filmmakers. Soon after, he launched the Sundance Film Festival, which is one of the world's biggest events for releasing films.

Redford was a lifelong champion for the environment. He served as a trustee of the Natural Resources Defense Council for nearly 50 years, protecting public lands and advocating for environmental justice. At a United Nations Climate Summit, he urged action on climate change.

President Barack Obama awarded Redford the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, in 2016. Redford's "art and activism" have shaped our nation's cultural heritage, Obama said.

In recent years, Redford remained hopeful about the world. In an interview in 2021, he said, "My optimism comes from seeing young people... they understand that the future is in their hands."

THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Raccoon steals package from New York porch" *UPI*



ALAMY; GETTY IMAGES (3); THE STRONG NATIONAL MUSEUM OF PLAY (3); ON LEFT PAGE: AP; MATTEL/NASA; GETTY IMAGES (2)



Protesters in Paris, France

France
Workers go on strike

At least 500,000 workers, including some teachers, went on strike (refusal to work as a form of protest) across France on September 18. The protesters took to the streets to oppose planned cuts to government spending on public services. Roads were blocked, public transportation was disrupted, and businesses were closed during the strikes. Clashes took place between police and protesters.


People celebrate in Mexico City.

Mexico City, Mexico
President leads national celebrations

President Claudia Sheinbaum made history as the first female head of state to lead Mexico's Independence Day celebrations. She delivered the traditional "Cry of Dolores" ceremony at the National Palace on September 15. This involves ringing a bell and reciting a speech inspired by Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who called for rebellion against Spanish rule in 1810. On September 16, Independence Day, Sheinbaum led a military parade.


A street in Málaga, Spain

Spain
Converting vacation rentals to housing

Spain's government plans to convert 53,000 vacation rentals into permanent homes. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced the plan as part of a project to increase housing availability for Spanish families and young people. Spain has been suffering from a housing shortage, and many people blame the high number of buildings that are owned or used by foreign visitors.

Sweden
No phones at school

Starting in fall 2026, all schools and after-school clubs in Sweden will ban mobile phones. In an effort to improve learning, the new law will require students ages 7 to 16 to hand in their phones when they arrive at school and retrieve them at the end of the day. A similar ban in the Netherlands was shown to improve concentration in 75% of schools.


Phones will be banned.



Cairo, Egypt
Artifact stolen

A 3,000-year-old gold bracelet was stolen from Cairo's Egyptian Museum during preparations for an exhibition. Authorities say the artifact, which featured a blue bead and originally belonged to Pharaoh (ruler) Amenemope, was sold and later melted down to create new jewelry. When *The Week Junior* went to press, four suspects had been arrested. The incident has prompted calls for more security measures at Egyptian museums.


The museum and bracelet (inset)

Around the world


Zakia Adeli

Afghanistan
Ban on books by women

The Taliban, an extremist group in control of Afghanistan, has banned Afghan universities from teaching books written by women and six subjects relating to women. Zakia Adeli, an author and former government official, said the group is trying to suppress women's views. Girls in the country are not allowed to attend school beyond sixth grade.


An iced matcha drink is poured.

Japan
Matcha prices soar

Prices for matcha—a type of Japanese green tea made from powdered leaves of the camellia sinensis plant—are rising rapidly. Poor weather in Japan has affected crops, while demand for matcha, which is said to have health benefits, has grown around the world. In the US, sales have risen by 86% in three years. Experts predict that top-grade Japanese matcha will cost 75% more this fall than it did last year.


A yellow-crested cockatoo

Hong Kong
Nest boxes save cockatoos

Critically endangered yellow-crested cockatoos have found sanctuary in Hong Kong. The birds, which typically nest inside large holes in tree trunks, are facing challenges as trees are chopped down by humans or destroyed by storms. About 2,000 of these birds remain in the wild, and about 10% of them live in Hong Kong. Conservationists have installed special nesting boxes to help the cockatoos survive in the city.


Dancers at the ceremony

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
Gift to mark major anniversary

Leaders from several nations gathered in Papua New Guinea's capital on September 16 for a ceremony celebrating the 50th anniversary of the country's independence from Australia. At the event, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said his country would pay to build a new wing of Papua New Guinea's parliament building, where laws are made.

Kashmir, India
Apple harvest rots

About 4,000 trucks carrying apples have been stranded for weeks along a key highway that was damaged by landslides in late August. The farmers who grew the apples face losses worth nearly $146 million as the fruit rots in the trucks, unable to be transported to markets. The government has launched a special train service to help move the fruit, but farmers say it carries only one truckload daily, so most of the region's apple harvest will be wasted.


Inspecting rotting apples

ALAMY (2); REUTERS (2); GETTY IMAGES (5); EAST-WEST CENTER

Are poems better than books?

Poetry offers readers a different way of experiencing the written word.

What you need to know

- **The oldest known long poem is *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, which was written about 4,000 years ago.**
- **Poems often have emotional themes and use rhythm, rhyme, and line breaks to convey their meaning.**
- **Studies show that reading, watching, or listening to poetry can improve well-being, empathy, and learning.**
- **In September, the Library of Congress named Arthur Sze the next US poet laureate, a position that fosters appreciation for poetry in the nation.**



WOW! From 1912 to 1948, poetry was an official Olympic event, featuring poems that were inspired by sports.

There are many different forms of poetry, such as 14-line rhyming sonnets, three-line haikus with exactly 17 syllables, long and elaborate odes, and limericks that make you laugh out loud. William Shakespeare wrote sonnets about love, while Emily Dickinson wrote short lyric poems about life, death, and domestic life. Epic poems, like *Beowulf*, tell tales of heroes and monsters. Many of Maya Angelou's poems addressed themes of resilience and social justice, while Amanda Gorman writes about hope and change. There's a poem for everyone, and some people say poetry is superior to longer works. What do you think? Are poems better than books?

Yes—poems are fun to learn

Sometimes you don't have time to read a whole book, but if you can spare a couple of minutes to read a poem before bedtime, you can still have a rich experience. In a few words, poetry can be beautiful, thoughtful, and powerful. Poetry is also great because you can memorize it and share it with family and friends. Poems can include song lyrics or rap rhymes too—you could learn one by heart and recite it on the way to school. That's harder to do with stories. A book of poems, known as an anthology, gives you a range of themes in one place, offering you more variety than you can find in other kinds of books.

No—you can get lost in a book

Most poems are so short that they're simply not as satisfying as books. It's much more enjoyable to curl up with a good novel that you can return to, page by page and chapter after chapter. And with a book, you spend time following the plot, getting to know the characters, and going on a journey as they change and grow. Books let you step into a whole new world and escape from reality. You also find out what happens in the end, whereas with some poems you're left wondering what they really mean. Poems can be difficult to understand, particularly older ones that were written centuries ago.

YES Three reasons poems are better than books

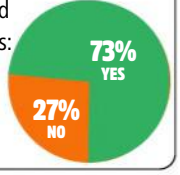
1. **Poems can be short and sweet, letting you read something beautiful and meaningful in a few minutes.**
2. **Whether it's song lyrics, raps, or short verses, it's fun to memorize poetry and share it with friends.**
3. **One collection of poems can take you on a journey through a wide variety of themes.**

NO Three reasons poems are not better than books

1. **You can immerse yourself in a book for days, weeks, or months. Poems are usually too short for that.**
2. **When you read a book, you go on a meaningful journey with the characters and step into their world.**
3. **Poems can be open-ended and hard to get, while books have a satisfying ending.**

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week, we asked if it's OK to pull pranks on people. Most of you voted in favor of good-natured practical jokes: 73% of you said yes, and 27% said no.



What do you think?

Now that you've read a bit more about this issue, visit kids.theweekjunior.com/polls so you can vote in our debate. Vote YES if you think poems are better than books or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The goal of the big debate is to present two sides of an issue fairly in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on this page do not reflect those of *The Week Junior*, and the page is not funded by third parties.

GETTY IMAGES

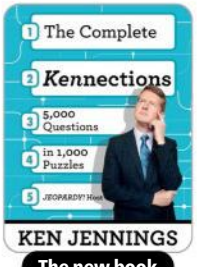
A passion for puzzles

Jeopardy! host Ken Jennings shares his love of trivia in a new collection.

Ken Jennings holds the record for the longest winning streak in *Jeopardy!* history. He is also the quiz show's full-time host as well as a best-selling author. His newest book, *The Complete Kennections: 5,000 Questions in 1,000 Puzzles*, is based on his years of solving and creating trivia.

Jennings was born in Edmonds, Washington, and grew up in South Korea and Singapore, where his father worked as a lawyer. He loved watching US game shows and spent many rainy recesses reading the encyclopedia. Jennings went on to study English and computer science at Brigham Young University, where he was the captain of the school's quiz bowl team.

In 2004, while working as a healthcare software engineer, Jennings got the call to be on *Jeopardy!* He prepared by creating flash cards and practicing at home with a pretend podium and a fake buzzer. On the show, he won a record 74 games in a row and earned more than $2.5 million. He returned as a guest host in 2022 and was named full-time host in 2023.



The new book

Jennings has also written several books filled with fun facts about geography and history. The idea for *The Complete Kennections* came from his childhood love of trivia books. It compiles more than 10 years of the "Kennections" quiz series he creates for the website Mental Floss. Each puzzle includes five trivia questions and one hidden theme that links all the answers together .

"Trivia is just an art of connections," Jennings told the *Los Angeles Times*. It has the power to "bring people together and make the world more interesting."


Ken Jennings

AWARD BUZZ
Ken Jennings was nominated for the Emmy Award for best game show host in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Building for others

Rita Ebel, known as the "Lego Grandma," is gaining attention for building wheelchair ramps out of Lego bricks for her town in Germany. After a car accident left her in a wheelchair, Ebel noticed a lack of secure ramps. In 2019, she started building her own, using Lego bricks for their bright visibility. Ebel has since created more than 20 custom designs for local businesses and received Lego brick donations from supporters worldwide. Ebel told *Ability Magazine* that her ramps "get the people to actually think about accessibility."


Rita Ebel


Issa Rae

Actor honors history

Award-winning actor and producer Issa Rae created a new HBO documentary series, *Seen and Heard: The History of Black Television*. The series explores the contributions of Black actors, writers, and creators in shaping TV, highlighting both their challenges and achievements. It goes behind the scenes of shows from the 1950s through today and features interviews with icons like Oprah Winfrey and Tyler Perry. Rae, inspired by the Black TV characters she grew up watching in the 1990s, hopes the series shows why representation matters. "It makes such a difference," she told CBS.

OVERHEARD



"Put your energy into something that you really want to and give your best."
Latin music star Bad Bunny, on connecting with his roots during his two-month concert series in his native Puerto Rico

GETTY IMAGES (3); COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; ALAMY

SAY CHEESE
Leopard seals look like they are always smiling, with a permanently curved mouth covering their sharp teeth.


A leopard seal

Birds have dance moves

Cockatoos, a type of parrot, can really shake their tail feathers. Researchers watched cockatoos at a zoo and in online videos. They saw 30 different dance moves, including 17 that had never been documented before. One favorite move, the downward head bob, was in about half of the dances.


A cockatoo

Leopard seals sing special songs

Leopard seals are solitary creatures that live in one of the world's most remote areas—the Antarctic. During the Antarctic spring season, between October and January, scientists have observed leopard seals singing for up to 13 hours a day. The seals dive underwater and sing for two minutes at a time, then come up for air before repeating the cycle. A new study shows that their vocalizations also follow a structured and predictable pattern, similar to human songs and nursery rhymes.


Females sing on rare occasions.

The study was conducted by researchers from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Australia, who have been collecting leopard seal sound recordings since the 1990s. Since the seals sing during the night, UNSW Professor Tracey Rogers rode a bicycle to the edge of the sea at nighttime and recorded each animal vocalizing. The team has now analyzed 1,900 recordings from 26 male seals, looking for patterns in the noise.

All the seals' songs are made using five common calls, which work like an alphabet or a set of musical notes. Each male arranges the calls in a specific order that is unique to him and sets his song apart from all the others. The researchers compared these sequences to various music styles, including classical and rock music. They found that the seals' songs were most like nursery rhymes: simple, repetitive, and easy to remember. "They're not as complex as human music, but they aren't random either," said Lucinda Chambers, the lead author of the study.

Researchers believe the structure of the seals' songs helps ensure that other seals can hear and identify them accurately, even after the sound has traveled a long distance underwater. The songs may help males mark their territory and prove their fitness so they can find mates. Females also sing during a few days each year while seeking mates.

Understanding seals' communication patterns could lead to better methods of tracking the animals. The team plans to research whether seals use their songs to express individual identity, like a dolphin does with its signature whistle. They also hope to find out if the song patterns have changed between generations. Chambers said leopard seals are the "songbirds of the Southern Ocean."



PLACE OF THE WEEK
Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda

Located in northern Rwanda, Volcanoes National Park spans 62 square miles with landscape features including the Virunga Mountains, Musanze Caves, and Kamiranzovu and Rusumo waterfalls. One of Africa's oldest national parks, it was established in 1925 to protect mountain gorillas. Today there are 12 groups of mountain gorillas in the park, and many visitors enjoy gorilla trekking tours, safaris, and the Kwita Izina, an annual naming ceremony for baby gorillas. Many other rare animals also live in the park, including African forest elephants and golden monkeys.


A golden monkey



A Polymita snail in Cuba

Saving rare, beautiful snails

Scientists are racing to save some of the world's most beautiful snails from extinction. Polymita tree snails live in the forests of Cuba, an island in the Caribbean.

The snails have shells with stunning colors and patterns that make them a target for collectors. International protection laws make it illegal to remove the snails from Cuba without a permit, but some people illegally transport them in order to sell them for use as decorative objects or in jewelry.

Scientists from Cuba and the UK have joined forces to protect all six known species of Polymita snails. The most endangered is the green Polymita sulphurosa, which has a blue flame-like pattern with orange-yellow bands. Fewer than 30,000 of these snails remain, and their habitat is threatened by climate change and forest loss.

To stop the snails from going extinct, Cuban scientist Bernardo Reyes-Tur is trying to breed them in captivity. Researchers are also studying the snails' DNA (chemical that carries all the information about a living thing) to better understand Polymitas and confirm how many different species exist.

Animal of the week: Sumatran tiger



Four Sumatran tiger cubs were recently born at Manor Wildlife Park in the UK. The litter is believed to be the country's largest, offering hope for the critically endangered subspecies. Fewer than 400 are left in the wild.

- **LIFE SPAN:** 15 years
- **HABITAT:** Tropical forests of Sumatra, Indonesia
- **SIZE:** 7 to 8 feet long
- **DIET:** Fish and mammals like deer and monkeys
- **FUN FACT:** Compared to other tigers, they have closer-together stripes and darker orange fur.

Good week / Bad week



Kashmir's lotus flowers
For the first time in nearly 33 years, lotus plants are blooming in Wular Lake in Kashmir, India. In 1992, floods filled the lake with sludgy material called silt. A 2020 cleanup removed more than 10 million cubic yards of silt, helping plants and wildlife.



Beech trees
Beech leaf disease, which makes it difficult for beech trees to produce energy, has spread to 15 US states and Canada. A study suggests the infection has killed 30% of native beeches. Experts are researching potential treatments.

Ask an expert: "Why do goblin sharks have such long mouths?"

Caleb, 11, North Carolina

Thom Linley
Curator of fishes, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa



Goblin sharks often live in darkness. Instead of seeing food, they sense it. The underside of their long snout is covered with nerves that sense vibration and electrical signals and two nostrils with a great sense of smell. The shark's large body is slow, so it shoots out its jaws to grab prey.

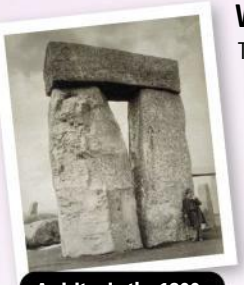
Do you have a question for an animal expert? Send it to *hello@theweekjunior.com*. Find out about Linley's *The Deep-Sea Podcast* at deepseapod.com.

GETTY IMAGES (3); MEGAN LEE PHOTOGRAPHY; ALAMY; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (4); ALAMY

A mysterious circle of

Stonehenge is the most famous prehistoric stone circle in the world.

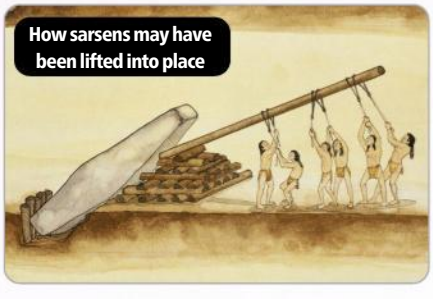
A complex Stone Age monument located in southern England has inspired fascination and debate for thousands of years.



A visitor in the 1800s

What is Stonehenge?

The prehistoric monument known as Stonehenge is made of two kinds of rocks: large sarsen stones and smaller bluestones. Some rocks are arranged in a shape called a trilithon, which is two vertical stones with a horizontal stone on top. Stonehenge was built to align with the Sun's movements. On the summer solstice (day of the year with the most sunlight) at sunrise, the Sun's first rays shine into the heart of the monument. On the winter solstice (day with least sunlight) at sunset, from inside the circle the Sun appears to "sink" between two large stones.



How sarsens may have been lifted into place

Building Stonehenge

Pine posts were placed near the site of what would become Stonehenge between about 8000 and 7000 BCE. The oldest part of Stonehenge was built from 3000 to 2935 BCE, when bluestones were brought to the site from Wales, more than 140 miles away. The next phase of construction took place around 2500 BCE, when the largest stones, the sarsen stones, were brought to the monument from about 20 miles away and arranged into their trilithon shapes. Experts still do not fully understand how Stonehenge was built. One theory is that the monument's builders may have hauled massive stones to the site on sleds, then raised them upright with ropes, levers, and logs.

BUILDING BOOM
Stonehenge was built at about the same time as the Great Pyramids of Egypt.



HEAVY LOAD
The sarsen stones at Stonehenge weigh an average of 25 tons each.

Stonehenge at dawn

Ancient artifacts of Stonehenge

Battle axe

This bluestone axe was made in about 2200 BCE, likely for ceremonial purposes. It is one of the oldest known objects of its kind in Britain.



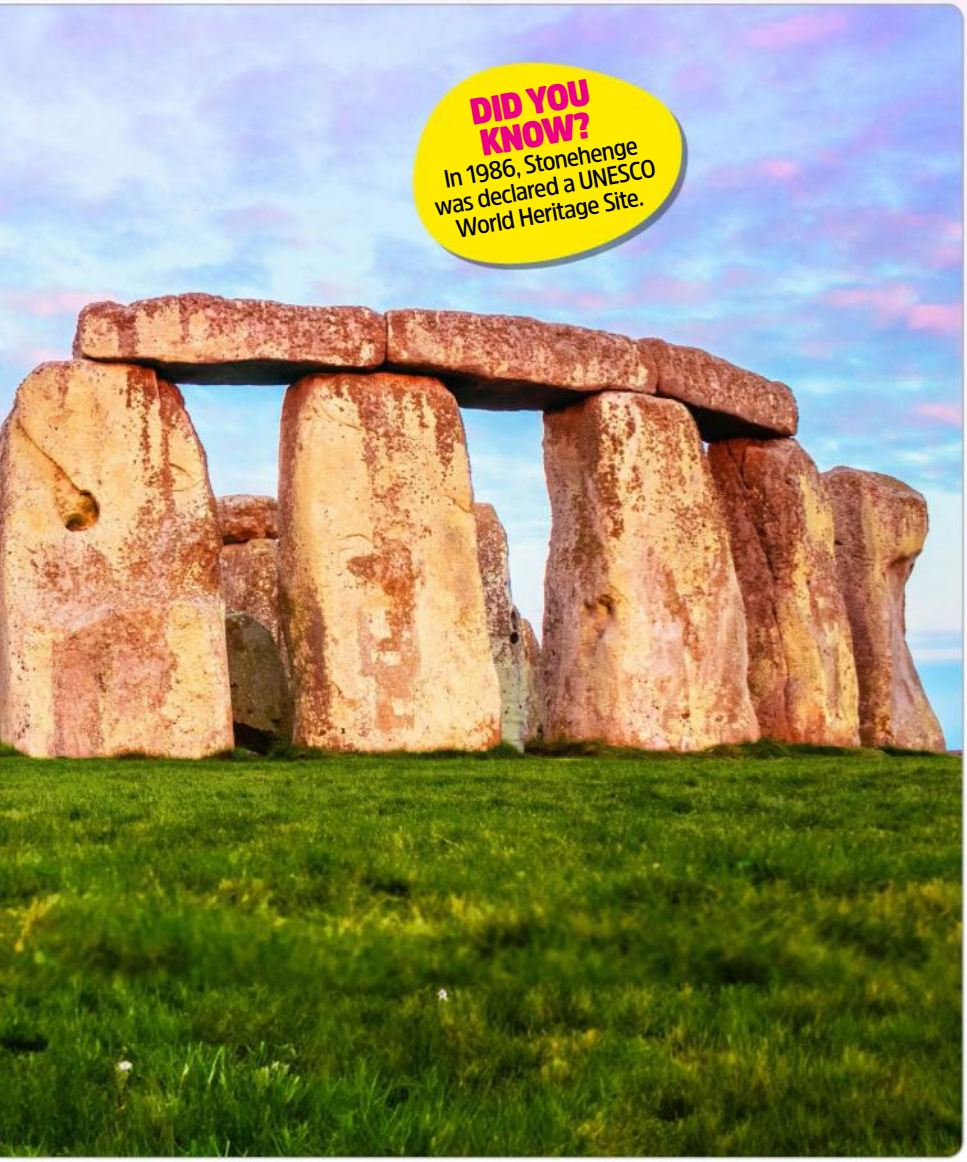


Durrington flint

Hundreds of arrowheads have been found at and around Stonehenge. This sharp arrowhead for ritual hunts was made from local flint in about 2500 BCE.

SHUTTERSTOCK; ENGLISH HERITAGE TRUST (4); GETTY IMAGES (4)

massive stones



DID YOU KNOW?
In 1986, Stonehenge was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



An aerial view

What was it for?

Experts are also not sure why Stonehenge was created or what prehistoric people used it for. Some of the earliest theories suggested that Stonehenge was built by Celtic priests called Druids, but these theories have been disproven. Burial mounds and human remains have been found at and around Stonehenge, and some researchers believe the site was used for funerals. It may have also been a place for people to worship their dead ancestors. Other theories suggest that it was a destination where people went for healing or a way to track the movements of the Sun to guide farming practices. A more recent study suggests that Stonehenge may have been built to unite people from across prehistoric Britain.



Celebrating the summer solstice

The modern era

An Englishman named John Aubrey conducted the first surveys of Stonehenge in the 1660s. (Some pits at the site are named Aubrey Holes after him.) However, the first serious scientific excavation of Stonehenge wasn't completed until 1901. Efforts to conserve and restore the monument continued throughout the 20th century, while archaeologists (scientists who study objects left by people long ago) have continued to conduct digs and research at the site. Stonehenge remains one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. It received more than a million visitors in 2023, and thousands of people gather at Stonehenge to celebrate the summer solstice every year.

Chalk plaque

A chalk plaque that is about 5,000 years old was found carefully buried in a pit. It is not clear what this plaque was used for, or what its markings and incisions mean.



Pig leg embedded with arrow

Pig bones found in the area suggest the animal was hunted for feasts. A bone fragment discovered at the site of a prehistoric village near Stonehenge reveals the tip of an arrow had broken off into a pig's bone.



BIG BITE
The dinosaur with the most teeth was Nigersaurus, which had more than 500 teeth arranged in several rows.



An artist's rendering of a Tyrannosaurus rex

Dino teeth shed light on past climate

Scientists have used dinosaur teeth to gain new insight into what Earth's climate was like millions of years ago, according to a new study. The findings will help researchers better understand how long-term climate changes affected life on the planet.

Researchers in Germany examined the tooth enamel (protective outer layer) of dinosaurs that lived during the Mesozoic Era (252 to 66 million years ago) in North America, Africa, and Europe. These dinos included Tyrannosaurus rex and a type of sauropod called Kaatedocus siberi.

When the dinosaurs breathed, they absorbed oxygen into their hard tissues, like bones and teeth. The oxygen contained chemical data about the makeup of Earth's atmosphere (blanket of gases that surrounds the planet) at the time. That data was stored in the tooth enamel, which can survive for millions of years and provide "a robust time capsule," the study said.



A replica of a T. rex tooth

Using new methods, paleontologists (scientists who study the past through fossils) analyzed specific oxygen isotopes (types of oxygen with slightly different properties) in the teeth. These isotopes are affected by changes in amounts of carbon dioxide (CO_2, a gas that traps heat in the atmosphere and contributes to climate change) and rates of plant photosynthesis (when plants turn sunlight and water into energy). By analyzing the isotopes, scientists could determine what the CO_2 levels and photosynthesis rates were when the dinosaurs were alive.

The team found that during the Mesozoic Era, the amount of atmospheric CO_2 was up to four times higher than the levels in more modern times. This was likely due to the high number of active volcanoes at the time. In fact, the CO_2 levels in two of the teeth indicated spikes of the gas that may have been caused by large eruptions. The study also discovered that the rate of photosynthesis at the time was twice as high as it is today.

Dinosaur teeth "recorded the climate more than 150 million years ago—and at last we are able to read that record," said Dingsu Feng, the study's lead author. "Our method gives us a completely new view of the Earth's past."

The research technique is a powerful new tool for understanding how the climate affected Earth and its inhabitants billions of years ago. It could shed light on other prehistoric eras as well.

Prehistoric picky eaters



Herbivorous (plant-eating) dinosaurs could be picky eaters, a new study found. This contradicts a long-held view that dinosaurs ate different parts of a plant or tree depending on their height. For example, experts used to think the extra-tall Camarasaurus ate mostly from treetops. The study found, however, that they preferred low-lying plants and twigs. Other dinosaurs also had preferences for plants that were not necessarily easy for them to reach.

Scientists analyzed tooth enamel and calcium from 150-million-year-old fossils. The study measured the calcium isotopes in the teeth, which have a chemical record of the creatures' diet. Different types and parts of plants have different chemical signatures, which allowed researchers to narrow down what the prehistoric animals ate.

Meteorite in Georgia is older than Earth

Scientists have determined that a meteorite that landed in a Georgia house earlier this summer is about 4.56 billion years old, making it about 20 million years older than Earth itself.

The meteorite entered Earth's atmosphere just after noon on June 26 and was spotted streaking across the sky in Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, and South Carolina. People also felt vibrations as the meteorite broke into fragments that landed throughout Georgia. With a loud bang, multiple pieces tore into a house in the town of McDonough, near Atlanta, leaving a hole the size of a golf ball in the roof and a dent in the floor. No one was harmed.

FREE FALLING
The McDonough Meteorite is the 27th space rock known to have landed in Georgia.

Researchers at the University of Georgia (UGA) examined some of the fragments using advanced microscopes. They determined that the pieces belonged to a type of stony meteorite called a chondrite. The most common meteorites found on Earth, chondrites formed about 4.5 billion years ago in the same cloud of gas and dust in which the Sun, planets, and other objects in the solar system formed.

The McDonough Meteorite, as it is called, likely came from a group of asteroids in the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. "This particular meteor...has a long history before it made it to the ground," said Scott Harris, who examined the fragments.

Fragments of the space rock will remain at UGA for further study. Other pieces will be put on display at the Tellus Science Museum in Cartersville, Georgia.



A fragment of the McDonough Meteorite in Georgia



A scene from *Bluey*

Bluey helps kids learn resilience

Scientists in Australia said that watching *Bluey*, the hit animated series about a dog and her family, helps children build resilience. This ability to handle life's challenges is an integral part of healthy child development, helping kids regulate emotions, manage stress, learn, and have strong relationships.

In the show, 6-year-old Bluey faces problems children can relate to, like fighting with her sister or breaking a toy. Scientists watched all episodes from the show's three seasons, totaling about 18 hours, and tracked storylines, characters, and themes. They noticed when characters were resilient, which they defined as the ability to deal with and bounce back from difficulties.

The study found that nearly 49% of *Bluey* episodes featured resilience. And parents in the show often helped out in tough situations—which models resilience and helps children learn to navigate challenges.

AMAZING INVENTION

A phone that can handle adventures



The Armor 33 Pro

A rugged phone with two screens and a long-lasting battery is designed to go on big adventures. Weighing almost 2 pounds, the Armor 33 Pro has a screen on the front and back, regular and night vision cameras, GPS, and a powerful speaker.

The Armor 33 Pro is heftier than a regular smartphone, in part due to the extra-large battery that lasts up to 10 days. The tough case is waterproof, resistant to scratches and dust, and keeps the battery safe in extreme temperatures, from -22° F to 131° F.

ANDREW DAVIS TUCKER; ALAMY; ULEFONE; ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (3)

Apply to join Junior Council

We're now accepting applications for the Spring 2026 program.

We're conducting a national search for 12 students, ages 8 to 14, who want to have their voices heard about the issues and causes that matter to them. This will be *The Week Junior*'s seventh session of Junior Council. During previous sessions, council members attended virtual meetings with *The Week Junior* editors, interviewed guest speakers, and completed writing activities. Use the information below to find out more about Junior Council and apply for the Spring 2026 program.



COURTESY JUNIOR COUNCIL

Speak up and speak out!

Junior Council members will dive into turning their ideas into action. Kids ages 8 to 14 will discover how to be heard by local, state, and national leaders—and how to share big ideas for a big impact—directly from *The Week Junior* editors and mentors. A project created by council members may appear in a future issue of the magazine.

How it works

The Week Junior editors and mentors will guide Junior Council members through regular video calls and virtual workshops from January through May 2026. There will be about six sessions, with special guest speakers at some of the meetings. Other sessions will focus on helping council members learn how to research, report, and write content for the magazine. The council will meet during weekday evenings (Eastern Time).

Junior Council!



Participants from previous Junior Council sessions

Apply today!

With an adult, go to juniorcouncil.theweekjunior.com to download the application and fill it out. A parent or guardian must review and sign the form. The completed application, along with a photo of yourself (school picture or similar), should be emailed by a parent or guardian to *juniorcouncil@theweekjunior.com*. The deadline to submit the application is October 20, 2025. See the official rules at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-JCRules. Send an email to *juniorcouncil@theweekjunior.com* with any questions.

NO PURCHASE OR SUBSCRIPTION NECESSARY. Void where prohibited. Open to legal residents of the US, DC, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands, 8–14 years of age. Begins 9/23/25 at 12:00:01 a.m. ET and ends on 10/20/25 at 11:59:59 p.m. ET. Odds of being selected as a Junior Council member depend on the total number of eligible entries received and adherence to the judging criteria. Subject to Official Rules at tinyurl.com/TWJUS-JCRules. Sponsor: FUTURE PLC and its division named THE WEEK JUNIOR, 135 West 41st Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10017.





WOW! Alphonce Felix Simbu of Tanzania won the men's marathon at Worlds by .03 seconds, the closest-ever margin at the event.





History of the event



The inaugural World Athletics Championships was held in Finland in 1983 (above). It drew about 1,300 athletes from 154 countries. The event takes place in odd-numbered years so it is never in the same year as the Olympics. Japan is the only country to host it three times.

US shines at track and field Worlds

From September 13 to September 21, more than 1,900 top track and field athletes from 193 countries, plus a refugee team, gathered in Tokyo, Japan, for the World Athletics Championships. It was the 20th edition of the event, which is held every two years.

For the fifth time in a row, the US team earned the most medals. They finished with 16 golds, a new record, plus five silvers and five bronzes. Three of the golds came on the competition's final day, when the US won the women's and men's 4x100m relays and the women's 4x400m relay. Back on Day 1, the US 4x400m mixed relay team also won gold.


Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone

One member of the women's 4x400m team was Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone, a four-time Olympic gold medalist. She was a champion in the 400-meter hurdles, but this year she shifted to the 400-meter flat race. She not only won the gold in that event in Tokyo, but her time of 47.78 seconds was the second-fastest in women's history. She is the first person to win world titles in both the 400-meter flat and hurdles.

Another star was Melissa Jefferson-Wooden, who won the women's 100-meter and 200-meter events. She is only the second woman in 30 years and the first American to win both races at one Worlds. She earned a third gold as part of the women's 4x100m relay team.

Among the other US women who took home golds were long-jumper Tara Davis-Woodhall, discus thrower Valarie Allman, and pole vaulter Katie Moon. She is now the first woman to win three world outdoor titles in a row in that event. In the heptathlon, a seven-event competition, Anna Hall won the first world title for the US since 1993.

Several US men also left as world champions. Noah Lyles won his fourth straight world title in the 200-meter race. He now has as many 200-meter world titles as legendary Jamaican sprinter Usain Bolt. Lyles was also part of the men's 4x100m relay team. The US had two gold-medal-winning hurdlers: Cordell Tinch in the 110-meter event and Rai Benjamin in the 400-meter race. Meanwhile, Ryan Crouser won the men's shot put title.

In the men's 5,000-meter race, American Cole Hocker delivered an exciting victory when he surged ahead of his competitors in the final lap to win his world title by less than a second.

THIS WEEK'S WINNERS...

BASKETBALL

Las Vegas Aces star A'ja Wilson has been named the WNBA's (Women's National Basketball Association) Most Valuable Player for the 2025 season. She also won the honor last year, and she is the first player in the league's history to win it four times. One of the other players who received a season-ending award was Dallas Wings guard Paige Bueckers, who was named the WNBA Rookie of the Year.


A'ja Wilson

TENNIS

On September 21, Team World defeated Team Europe to win the Laver Cup, a competition between teams of top players. US players were part of Team World, and a victory by American Taylor Fritz secured their win.

WRESTLING

Four US athletes—Kyle Snyder, Zahid Valencia, Trent Hidlay, and Helen Maroulis—won golds at the Senior Wrestling World Championships, which ended on September 21.

CUSTOM TURF
CPKC Stadium, home of the Kansas City Current, was the first stadium in the world ever built for a pro women's sports team.


The Kansas City Current celebrate with the NWSL Shield.

KC Current wins NWSL Shield

The regular season of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) doesn't end until November 2, but on September 20, the Kansas City Current won the 2025 NWSL Shield, the award for the season's best record. With a 2–0 victory over Seattle Reign FC, they improved to 17 wins, two draws (ties), and two losses. That gave them a total of 53 points (earned through wins and draws), which no other team will be able to match.

This is the first time the Current have won the Shield. They still have five of their 26 matches remaining, and they made league history by clinching the prize with that percentage of games left to play. They can make even more history before the regular season ends. If they win two more matches, they will set an NWSL record for the most wins in a single season. If they earn eight more points, they will break the points record set by the Orlando Pride in 2024.

One of the Current's two losses was to the Reign in May, setting up a big rematch. The Current have not allowed an opponent to score on them since June 14, and they continued that streak with their September 20 victory. The Current's goals were scored by Debinha (she uses one name) and Temwa Chawingwa. It was Chawingwa's 13th goal of the season, which ties her for the most in the NWSL.

The Current have the top seed (ranking) in the playoffs, and several teams are vying for the other seven spots. The Washington Spirit are safely in second place with 37 points. Five points separate the teams in third through 10th, making for an exciting last few weeks of the season.

COACH OF THE WEEK



Coach's Name: **Kyle Steitz**

Team: **Nelson Farm Gators (swimming)**

"Coach Kyle is so awesome! He's coached our team—which is for ages 6 to 18—for the past 15 years. Last year, we had an undefeated season and got to the city meet championship and the state championship. He encourages us to have the most fun, be the nicest, and swim as fast as we can. He makes practice fun with games, nicknames, drills, and doughnuts. He's also great because he trains the oldest swimmers to help coach the younger ones." Lily, 9, and Joshua, 11, Colorado

To nominate a Coach of the Week, send your coach's name, photo, sport, and team to *hello@theweekjunior.com.* Include your name, age, state, and a few reasons why your coach is great.

SPOTLIGHT ON...



Carra Sassack

AGE: 21 SPORT: BEACH VOLLEYBALL
TEAM: FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Sport switch I started playing indoor volleyball when I was 8 or 9 years old. When I was 12, I decided to play in a beach tournament. That's all it took to make me change to beach volleyball. I really liked the freedom of it. I was a setter in indoor, and I was always itching to be more involved in the game. Beach volleyball allowed me to do a bit of everything and have more leadership on the court.



Big fan Growing up, I was a huge volleyball nerd. I lived in Georgia, so I'd go to the Georgia Tech games and get autographs from all the athletes. Once I switched over to beach, I'd go to California to train. I'd watch the pros practice and wake up at 2 a.m. to watch livestreams of international tournaments.

Training routine We have courts on campus, so they're not on the beach. Most of the year, we practice for four or five days a week. We lift four times a week, and we have conditioning two times a week. That will include sand conditioning and conditioning on grass.

Mind trick On match days, I do visualizations. I sit in silence and picture myself playing in a game, winning certain points, bouncing back from scores, and ultimately winning the match. Then when I'm really on the court, it feels like it's familiar.

Key to success When I was younger, I held on to losses. Since then, I've learned that whatever the outcome is going to be, it's going to be, and I really can't change it. But I *can* change how I prepare to play and how I respond to an outcome. That's how I'm going to make progress in whatever I'm doing.

GETTY IMAGES; FSU ATHLETICS (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (7)



LITERARY HISTORY
From 1812 to 1857, the Brothers Grimm collected and published 211 fairy tales.

Fantasy books become a show

In *The Sisters Grimm*, a pair of siblings uncover their family's magical connection to storybook characters.

A new animated series on Apple TV+ is bringing a fantasy adventure book series to life. *The Sisters Grimm*, which is based on author Michael Buckley's best-sellers of the same name, is about a pair of sisters who uncover a magical family secret. It premieres on October 3.

The first *Sisters Grimm* book, *The Fairy-Tale Detectives*, came out in 2005 and was followed by eight more. Buckley was inspired to write them after reading about the Brothers Grimm, the 19th-century German storytellers who collected fairy tales like *Cinderella* and *Hansel and Gretel*. Learning they had a sister and seeing a need for books with young female heroes gave Buckley the idea for a story "where girls save the day," he told *The Week Junior*.



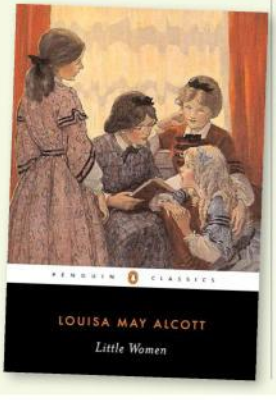
The first book

The show is based on *The Fairy-Tale Detectives*, though some minor details were cut from the story to make it work as a six-episode series. It is set in modern times and follows sisters Sabrina and Daphne Grimm, whose parents have gone missing. They are sent to live with a grandmother they've never met and discover they are related to the Grimm brothers. When a giant kidnaps their grandmother, they must rescue her and find their parents. They get help from local residents, who are characters from fairy tales. Through their experience, Sabrina learns about understanding the feelings of others and all the characters learn about the power of making their own decisions. "We are the authors of our own lives," executive producer Amy Higgins told *The Week Junior*.

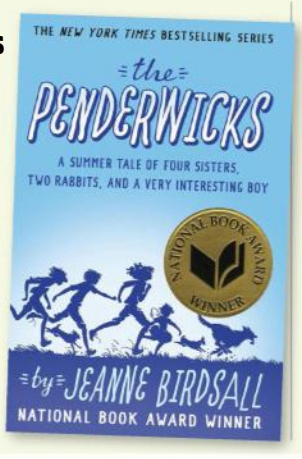
The sisters don't always get along, but they are always loyal to each other, Buckley said. No matter what challenges come their way, he told *The Week Junior*, "Sabrina and Daphne will be standing there holding hands and facing it together."

More sisterhood stories

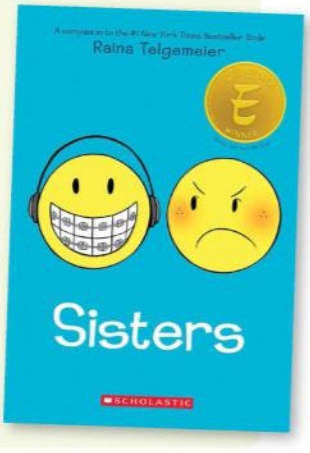
Little Women
This beloved novel by Louisa May Alcott was published in the late 1800s and follows four sisters. An award-winning movie adaptation of the book was released in 2019.



The Penderwicks
Jeanne Birdsall's five-book series is about four sisters, each with a distinct personality. It begins with a memorable summer and goes on to follow the girls together and apart.



Sisters
The follow-up to Raina Telgemeier's graphic memoir *Smile* explores the funny relationship between Raina and her younger sister, Amara. The story unfolds during a road trip, blending present-day scenes with flashbacks.



FUN FACT
In 1969, Robert Rauschenberg was among a group of artists whose miniaturized artwork traveled to the Moon on Apollo 12.


Art by Robert Rauschenberg

Celebrating an artist's legacy

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Robert Rauschenberg. He was an influential American artist who became known for his creativity and versatility as he made paintings, sculptures, drawings, photographs, and sets and costumes for the stage. Some of his most famous works were painting and sculptures that incorporated everyday objects, such as rubber tires, a clock, and a quilt. To celebrate his legacy, several US museums are hosting exhibitions of his work.


Robert Rauschenberg

As a child, Rauschenberg, who died in 2008, drew in his school books and covered his bedroom walls with photos from magazines. He began studying art after he visited his first museum at age 20. He had dyslexia, a learning disability that can make letters appear flipped around, and he said he thought it was "probably responsible for my having made so many new discoveries in printmaking."

Among the museums currently showing his work are the Menil Collection in Texas, which is focusing on his use of fabric in his sculptures; the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, which has sculptures and wall works he made using cardboard boxes; and the Museum of the City of New York, which has many of his photographs. On October 10, the Guggenheim Museum in New York City will open a show that includes Rauschenberg's *Barge*, a 32-foot-long silk-screen painting. Meanwhile, New York University's Grey Art Museum is highlighting some of the artist's prints that centered on animals and the environment—subjects that were important to him. He once wrote, "I try to use my art to communicate that you, yourself, must take responsibility for life on Earth."

READER RECOMMENDS



The Mandalorian *(Disney+)*
"This series is set in the *Star Wars* universe. It follows a bounty hunter named Din Djarin, also known as the Mandalorian, whose adopted home planet was destroyed by the evil Empire. The Mandalorian is sent to capture Grogu, a small creature who looks like a younger version of Yoda from the *Star Wars* films. The pair form a bond, and Grogu uses his strong special powers, called the Force, to help the Mandalorian when he has to fight. Together, they try to defeat a villain named Moff Gideon and they make many new allies on their adventures." Isaac, 9, New Hampshire

Do you have a film or TV show to recommend to other kids? Send your review to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

THIS WEEK'S WATCH LIST



Dancing with the Stars
(Hulu) (ABC) Tuesdays at 8 p.m. ET
The popular competition series, which pairs celebrities with dance pros, is back for a new season and it's celebrating its 20th anniversary. The latest competitors include Olympic gold medalist Jordan Chiles, former NBA star Baron Davis, and wildlife conservationist Robert Irwin.



Dog Man
(Netflix)
This hit animated film based on Dav Pilkey's best-selling graphic novels is now streaming. It follows Dog Man, a half-dog, half-human police hero who must stop the evil cat Petey and protect the city. The main story involves a sweet Petey clone who bonds with Dog Man.



Next Gen Chef
(Netflix)
In a new series, 21 talented chefs under age 30 gather at the prestigious Culinary Institute of America for a high-stakes cooking competition. They face tough challenges and prominent judges. The winner earns $500,000 and can be called the leading chef of their generation.

ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG FOUNDATION, PHOTO BY RON AMSTUTZ (2); ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG FOUNDATION/LICENSED BY VAGA, NEW YORK, NY/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK. PHOTO: ARIEL JONE WILLIAMS, SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM FOUNDATION, NEW YORK; GETTY IMAGES; DISNEY; ABC/PAULA LOBO; DREAMWORKS; COURTESY OF NETFLIX; ON LEFT PAGE: APPLE TV+; BOOKS: COURTESY OF PUBLISHERS (4)



Garfield Kart 2—All You Can Drift

Go on wild rides with Garfield

Garfield Kart 2—All You Can Drift is a new cartoon racing game. It is out now for the Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X/S, and PC.

As fans know, Garfield is a lazy orange tabby cat with a sarcastic sense of humor and a love of lasagna. He lives with his owner, Jon Arbuckle, and a cheerful dog, Odie. He has appeared in comic strips, TV shows, films, and earlier video games. The first Garfield Kart game was released in 2013 and was remade as Garfield Kart Furious Racing in 2019. Garfield Kart 2 is the series' first new game since then, and it has upgraded graphics and a brand-new feel. The action is similar to the Nintendo game Mario Kart.

Players get to choose their driver before the game begins, and you can pick among eight different characters from the Garfield cartoons, including Garfield, Jon, and Odie. The game also features Garfield's sometimes-girlfriend Arlene, his buddy Squeak the mouse, and his adorable rival cat Nermal. You can customize your car and drivers' looks, and every race track also has its own special hat.



The action takes place within three different cup circuits that each feature four unique race tracks. Garfield and his seven fellow racers can whip around pirate ships, the Wild West, thick jungles, and even a futuristic city. While trying to outmaneuver the other drivers, you can toss lasagnas, bowls of food, and slippery bars of soap.

The game allows you to compete with up to four players locally or eight online to share the silly circuits and laughs.

APP OF THE WEEK

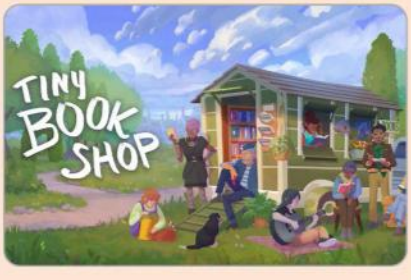
FOCUS FRIEND

Apple App Store, Google Play

Hank Green, a top science communicator, created this app to help users avoid phone distractions while doing tasks. You get a virtual bean friend, and when you set a timer for a focused session, your phone locks and Bean knits. When you finish, you earn points and get to help decorate Bean's room.



GAME OF THE WEEK



TINY BOOKSHOP

Nintendo Switch, PC

This game is set in a seaside town, and your job is to own and run a local, cozy secondhand bookstore. You choose what books to stock, create inviting reading spaces for customers, and get to know the local residents by learning their favorite kinds of books.

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

DISNEY PRINCESS CONCERT

tinyurl.com/TWJUS-DisneyConcert

To celebrate the 70th anniversary of Disneyland in California, several of the women who are the original voices of animated Disney princesses performed at a concert. Watch to see Auli'i Cravalho (Moana), Anika Noni Rose (Tiana), and others sing songs from their classic films.

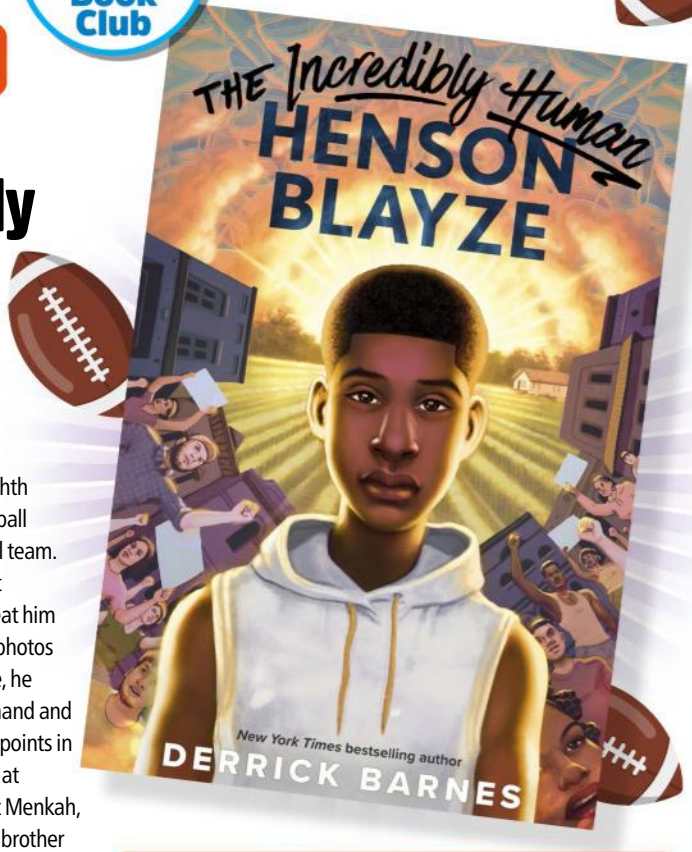


MICROIDS (2); HONEYB GAMES; SKYSTONE GAMES; DISNEY VIA YOUTUBE

BOOK CLUB PICK FOR OCTOBER

The Incredibly Human Henson Blayze

By Derrick Barnes (Viking)



Although Henson is in eighth grade, he's already a football prodigy on his high school team. The townspeople in Great Mountain, Mississippi, treat him like a star, asking to take photos with him. In his first game, he catches passes with one hand and helps score more than 50 points in the first two quarters. But at halftime, he finds out that Menkah, a friend who is like a little brother to him, has been unjustly beaten by state troopers. When the crowd at the stadium learns what happened to Menkah, some shout, "Who cares? Start the game!" But Henson leaves the stadium to see his friend at the hospital. As Menkah recovers, Henson grapples with whether he wants to play football next week or ever again. This powerful story tackles the thrill of football, as well as underlying racial divisions that can threaten sports. *Ages 10 and up*

WIN A BOOK!

We're giving away one signed copy of our Book Club pick.

For a chance to win, send your name and address to *contests@theweekjunior.com* with Henson in the subject line. Enter by midnight on October 17. See theweekjunior.com/terms for complete rules.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR YOUR BOOK CLUB

A breathtaking story about a young football star questioning his dreams, *The Incredibly Human Henson Blayze* will stick with you long after you finish it. Here are questions to get a conversation going with friends and family who have also read it.

Why do you think some townspeople treat Henson differently from Menkah?

What adjective best describes Henson?

Does Henson's talent on the field remind you of any real-life pro football players? If so, who?

If you were Henson, would you still play football? Why or why not?

How is the pacing of this book different from other stories you have read?

Did the ending of the story satisfy you? Explain your answer.

JOIN *THE WEEK JUNIOR* BOOK CLUB

Find out more about *The Week Junior* Book Club and check out our previous book of the month selections at kids.theweekjunior.com/bookclub.

Ask the Author



Derrick Barnes' work for children ranges from picture books to graphic novels. He won a Newbery Honor for *Crown: An Ode to the Fresh Cut* and was a National Book Finalist for *Victory. Stand! Raising My Fist for Justice*.

How did Henson, the story's main character, come about?

I created Henson in 2012 for a book that didn't work out. I kept his character in mind because I knew I would use him someday!

Do you follow a specific process when creating your characters?

I spend a few weeks creating profiles for my main characters. I decide on their favorite foods, the clothes they wear, and the music they like. When I begin writing a story's dialogue, I refer to these profiles to make sure I am accurately capturing a character's voice. I advise all aspiring writers to use this strategy.

Did you always know you wanted to write?



I always knew I was a good storyteller, but I studied marketing in college. Before turning to writing full-time, I worked for Hallmark. I composed messages for the company's greeting cards.

What do you hope readers take away from the story?

People of all ethnic backgrounds have so much more in common with each other than they realize. We have to get to know people on an individual basis rather than making assumptions based on their religion or race.

Do you have a professional football team you like to root for?

Yes, the Kansas City Chiefs. I've met Travis Kelce a couple of times!

Favorite Halloween candy?

Jolly Ranchers

BOOK: COURTESY OF PUBLISHER; AUTHOR: ISAIAH ANDERSON/EYESUN PHOTOGRAPHY; GETTY IMAGES

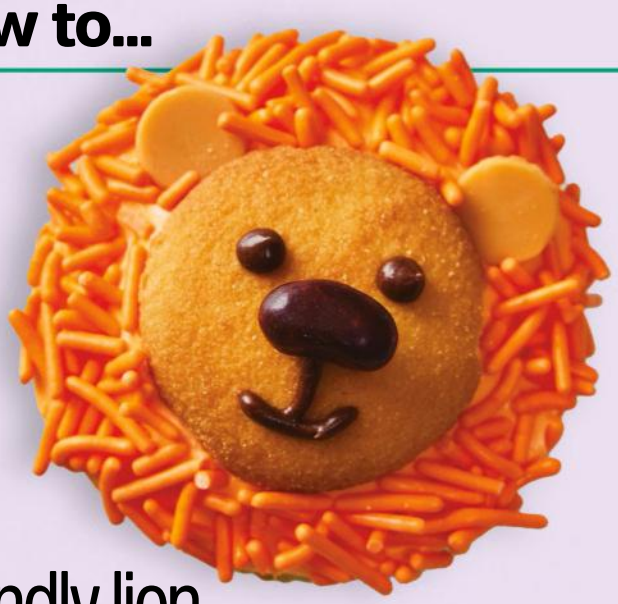
Have fun decorating cupcakes



Joy Howard

Have you ever wished you could decorate cupcakes like a pro? You can—thanks to these ideas from the new book *Cupcake Class: 50 Fun Themes & Totally Amazing Designs for Kids to Make & Share* by Joy Howard and Deanna F. Cook. "Cupcake decorating is an activity that anyone of any age or skill level can do," says co-author Joy Howard, who develops many of the recipes you see in *The Week Junior*. "Plus, it's so fun to make something—and eat it after!" Happy decorating!





Friendly lion

Ingredients

- 12 cupcakes
- 2 cups white frosting
- Red and yellow food coloring
- ¼ cup chocolate frosting
- Piping bag fitted with a writing tip
- 12 vanilla wafers
- 24 butterscotch or peanut butter chips
- Orange sprinkles
- 12 brown or black jellybeans

Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, tint the white frosting with the food coloring (mixing red and yellow to make orange). Put the chocolate frosting in the piping bag.

2. Top a cupcake with an even layer of orange frosting. (It's best to frost and decorate 1 cupcake at a time.)

3. Add a vanilla wafer to the center. Press a pair of butterscotch or peanut butter chip ears into place.

4. Working on top of a sheet of parchment paper to catch spills, scatter orange sprinkles on the frosting around the edge of the cookie.

5. Pipe on eyes with chocolate frosting. Add a small dot of

EXCERPTED FROM CUPCAKE CLASS © BY JOY HOWARD AND DEANNA F. COOK, USED WITH PERMISSION FROM STOREY PUBLISHING; PHOTOS BY JOE ST. PIERRE



Daisy cakes

Ingredients

- 24 mini cupcakes
- 2 cups white frosting
- Green food coloring
- Piping bag fitted with a grass tip
- 60 mini marshmallows
- 24 yellow chocolate or fruit gems

Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, tint the frosting with the food coloring. Put the frosting in the piping bag. Use kitchen scissors to cut each of the marshmallows in half on the diagonal.

2. Pipe green grass onto a cupcake. (Decorate 1 cupcake at a time.)

3. Press a yellow candy gem in the center and place 5 mini marshmallows, cut-side up, around the candy. Frost and decorate remaining cupcakes.

Candy panda



Ingredients

- 12 cupcakes
- 24 black or purple gumdrops
- Granulated sugar
- 2 cups white frosting
- 24 mini brown chocolate gems
- 12 mini black jellybeans
- ⅓ cup coarse sugar or shredded coconut

Instructions

1. Cut 12 of the gumdrops in half lengthwise for ears. Sprinkle a cutting board with granulated sugar. Use a rolling pin to flatten the remaining gumdrops to about ⅛ inch thick. Use a mini oval cutter or kitchen scissors to cut each into 2 or more ovals. (You'll need a total of 24.)
2. Working with 1 cupcake at a time, top it with an even layer of frosting, about 2 tablespoons.
3. Position a pair of gumdrop ovals to make the eye masks. Top each with a dot of frosting. Lightly press a chocolate gem onto the frosting so the frosting shows around the edges.
4. Add a black jellybean nose and 2 gumdrop ears.
5. Sprinkle cupcake with the coarse sugar or shredded coconut. Frost and decorate the remaining cupcakes.

WRITE TO US!
Did you make any of these cupcakes? We'd love to hear from you! Ask an adult to email a photo and a quote to hello@theweekjunior.com.

Rainbow jellyfish

Ingredients

- 12 cupcakes
- 2 cups white frosting
- Blue food coloring
- 4 strips rainbow sour tape
- 12 mini fruit slice candies
- 24 candy eyes
- White nonpareil sprinkles
- Mini fish-shaped sprinkles

Instructions

1. In a medium bowl, tint the frosting with the blue food coloring. Cut the sour tape crosswise into 48 thin strips.
2. Top a cupcake with an even layer of frosting, about 2 tablespoons. (For best results, frost and decorate 1 cupcake at a time.) Add a fruit slice head and 4 sour tape tentacles.
3. Use a toothpick to add small dots of frosting to the head, then attach candy eyes.
4. Scatter on nonpareil bubbles and fish sprinkles. Frost and decorate the remaining cupcakes.



Crisscross

Each of these kinds of fish fits into this grid. Can you find where each one goes to complete the grid?

3 letters
EEL
RAY

4 letters
BASS
SHAD
TUNA

5 letters
GUPPY
SHARK

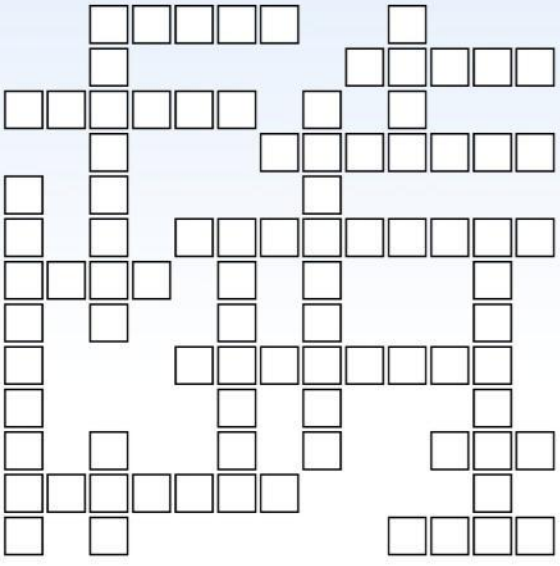
6 letters
SALMON

7 letters
HADDOCK
SNAPPER
WALLEYE

8 letters
FLOUNDER
GOLDFISH
STURGEON

9 letters
BARRACUDA
SWORDFISH
ZEBRAFISH





Take five

Five 5-letter beverages are hidden in this grid. For each one, the first letter is somewhere in the first column, the second is somewhere in the second column, and so on. Can you find all five?

C	U	T	K	A
L	O	D	C	E
S	I	A	O	H
C	H	N	T	R
P	A	C	E	E

ALL THE SAME

Each answer contains the letters S-H-E. Those letters have been placed for you. Can you figure out the words? (NEED A HINT? Check the bottom of the page.)

ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.

1. Word on some food packages sold for Passover — ☐☐SHE☐
2. Completed — ☐☐☐☐SHE☐
3. Law officer who wears a silver star — SHE☐☐☐☐
4. Things she sells by the shore — ☐☐☐SHE☐☐☐
5. Thought someone said "piece of pie" when they said "pizza pie" — ☐☐SHE☐☐☐

SUDOKU

To complete the grid, place the numbers from 1 to 6 exactly once in each row, column, and 2x3 bold-lined box.

4					3
	5		6		
3		2			
			1		2
		1		4	
5					1

Spot the difference

These two pictures of Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda appear to be the same, but take a closer look. There are actually five differences. Can you see them?





PUZZLES BY PUZZABILITY

All the same hint: The first syllable of answer 5 ends after the S.


Ouch!

Stepping on Legos—on purpose

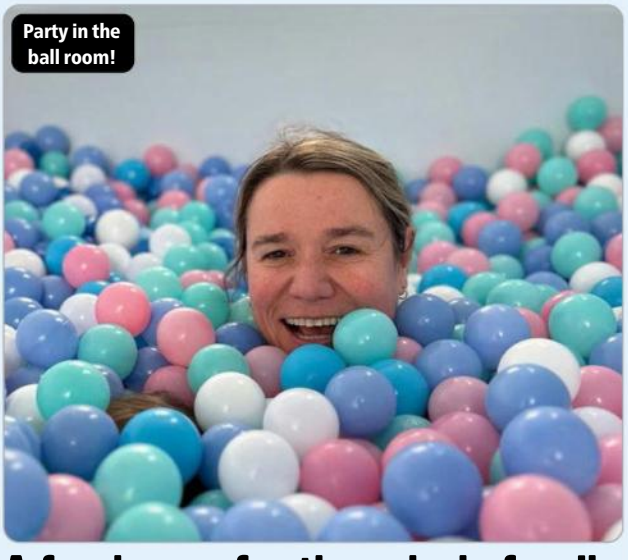
A mom from New Zealand broke the record for the fastest 100-meter run over Lego bricks with bare feet. Gabrielle Wall spent 24.75 seconds making the painful trek down the track, which was strewn with more than 600 pounds of Legos. To toughen up her soles in preparation for the attempt, Wall walked around barefoot for two months, including while grocery shopping and attending a wedding. The final ordeal was "like running on clouds," Wall joked. But she said the experience was "unforgettable."



This movie is a hoot.

Owl becomes feathered film star

A spectacled owl in the UK has landed a starring role in a Mexican film. Spectacled owls originate from South America, but Elton, named after the pop star Elton John, lives at a center for birds of prey. He was talent-spotted after the film crew noticed his charm and confidence in front of the camera. The crew filmed the bird flying over hills and valleys in England, but they will switch the backdrop so it looks like a South American rainforest. Owner David Edwards said, "Elton was absolutely fantastic."


Party in the ball room!

A fun home for the whole family

A house for sale for $1 million in Southport, England, comes with one very fun extra feature. Next to one of the home's seven bedrooms is a pit full of 11,300 plastic balls. It's not just a play area for kids—Julie Williams, the house's owner, installed the ball pit as a birthday gift to herself. "This is the new relaxation method for mums and dads," she said. Williams said that the person who buys the house can keep the play area and its contents if they want. "It makes sense," she added.

Real or fake?



A suite way to start the day?

Special hotel for breakfast lovers

Cereal lovers visiting Bremen, Germany, are in for a sweet surprise at the John & Will Silo Hotel, located above a Kellogg's cereal factory. Not only does the hotel offer a round-the-clock cereal bar with freshly made flakes, but each circle-shaped room is designed like a bowl of cereal. Guests with a strong cereal preference are advised to make their reservations early for a choice of rooms with Frosted Flakes, Mini Wheats, or Fruit Loops decor, among other delicious designs. Is this story true, or is it all Trix?*

*Fake! The John & Will Silo Hotel was built in the empty storage towers of a former Kellogg's cereal factory. While its rooms are circular, the hotel has a simple design with no cereal to be found (except maybe at the breakfast bar).

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS (2); GETTY IMAGES; SETTLE FALCONRY; SWNS; PIET NIEMANN/COURTESY DMAA (2); ON LEFT PAGE: GETTY IMAGES (2)

Editor's note



The legendary actor Robert Redford died this week at the age of 89 (p5). He appeared in films for 60 years and was well known to multiple generations of film fans around the world. I saw and enjoyed many of his movies, but my favorite might be *All the President's Men*, which was released in 1976 and tells the true story of two *Washington Post* reporters (Bob Woodward, played by Redford, and Carl Bernstein) who investigated wrongdoing in the administration of President Richard Nixon. I saw the film after I had already decided to become a journalist, and it reinforced my belief that I'd chosen the right path for me. Redford also made an impact beyond his acting. He founded the Sundance Institute to draw attention to independent filmmaking and was a devoted advocate for environmental causes. All of us at *The Week Junior* bid him farewell with great appreciation for his contributions to the world.

Andrea Barbalich
Editorial Director

CHARITY OF THE WEEK



Grassroot Soccer

This organization's mission is to help young people navigate challenges in their lives and communities by playing soccer. Active in 25 countries, it offers soccer-based programs that connect teens with mentors and provide educational opportunities to help them stay healthy and safe. The group supports more than 300,000 young people each year.

Find out more at grassrootsoccer.org.

GRASSROOT SOCCER

Caring for kids



Olivia, 13, California

"A year ago, I started a nonprofit called Hospital Hugs that delivers care packages to children in the hospital. I came up with this idea based on my own hospital experiences. I received care packages from friends and family that brought me joy. I realized that every child may not get packages from friends and family, and I wanted to change that. Since founding Hospital Hugs, I have delivered more than 150 care packages to Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, each one filled with a stuffed animal, an insulated water bottle, stickers, art supplies, and nail polish."

Have you done something interesting or raised money for a cause you care about? Whatever you're up to, we want to hear about it at *hello@theweekjunior.com.*

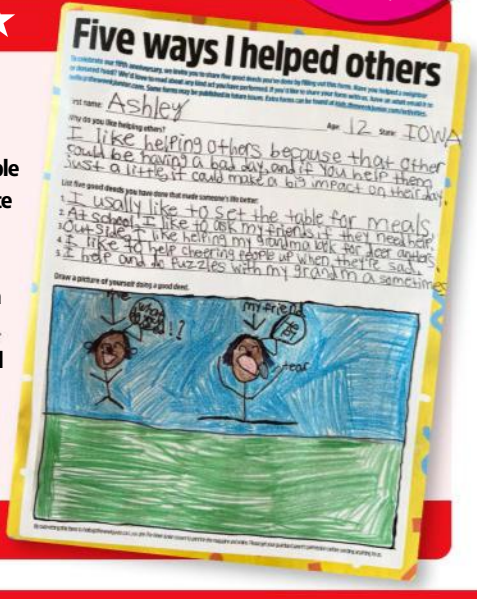
RIDDLE OF THE WEEK

What are you unable to see when it's new?

The Moon

Your five good deeds

Ashley, a 12-year-old from Iowa, enjoys helping others. Ashley's good deeds include setting the table for meals and helping friends at school. To celebrate *The Week Junior*'s fifth anniversary in 2025, we're asking readers to share five good deeds they've done. Have you helped a neighbor or performed a kind act? Go to kids.theweekjunior.com/activities to download a form like the one shown at right. Fill it out, then have an adult email it to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*. We'll feature some of the submissions on this page in future issues.


Five ways I helped others

Name: Ashley Age: 12 State: IOWA

Why do you like helping others?
I like helping others because that other could be having a bad day, and if you help them just a little, it could make a big impact on their day.

List five good deeds you have done that made someone's life better:
1. I usually like to set the table for meals.
2. At school I like to ask my friends if they need help.
3. Outside I like helping my grandma kkk for her garden.
4. I like to help cheering people up when they're sad.
5. I help and do puzzles with my grandma sometimes.

Draw a picture of yourself doing a good deed.

YOUR PHOTOS

We'd love to see pictures you've taken or pictures with you in them! Have an adult email them to us at *hello@theweekjunior.com*, along with anything you would like us to know about what's happening in the photo.



"I love reading *The Week Junior* so much, I take it everywhere." Lincoln, 9, Michigan

"I made *The Week Junior*'s frozen banana bites, and they were delicious!" Mia, 13, Virginia





"We were inspired by *The Week Junior* to go to the US Open! We had an amazing time." Ethan, 10, and Emmeline, 13, California



Teacher OF THE WEEK

Teacher's Name: **Mr. Paglinawan**

School: **Waialua Elementary School**

"Mr. Paglinawan is such a funny teacher. He makes sure to get a laugh out of us, even when he is serious. Mr. Paglinawan enjoys teaching us games that help us with teamwork. He also makes sure there are only good vibes in the classroom. Mr. Paglinawan makes learning so much fun for us and turns a normal good day into a GREAT day."

Sera, 11, Hawaii

Nominate your teacher for Teacher of the Week!
Send your reason for the nomination, a photo of your teacher, and your school's name and address to *hello@theweekjunior.com*.

GETTY IMAGES; ON LEFT PAGE: GRASSROOT SOCCER

Puzzle answers (from page 26)



Take five
cocoa
latte
shake
cider
punch

All the same
1. kosher
2. finished
3. sheriff
4. seashells
5. misheard

4	2	6	5	1	3
1	5	3	6	2	4
3	1	2	4	5	6
6	4	5	1	3	2
2	6	1	3	4	5
5	3	4	2	6	1



Quiz answers (from page 30) **1** Lego bricks **2** False. They studied dinosaur teeth. **3** a) Cuba **4** c) Four **5** False. It is aligned with the movements of the Sun. **6** *The Fairy-Tale Detectives* **7** b) Singing **8** *Ordinary People* **9** a) Resilience **10** True **11** Football **12** c) 74 **13** Garfield **14** True **15** c) Rochester, New York

We want to hear from you! To have your letters, photos, nominations, recommendations, or ideas considered for inclusion in the magazine, please include your first name, age, and state with your submission. By emailing your submission to us, you give *The Week Junior* consent to publish it in the magazine and online. Please get your parent/guardian's permission before sending anything to us.

How much of this week's news can you remember?

1 A New Zealand mom set a world record for the fastest 100-meter run in bare feet over what objects?

2 True or false? Scientists in Germany studied dinosaur claws to research Earth's atmosphere millions of years ago.

True ☐ False ☐

3 On which Caribbean island do Polymita tree snails live?

a) Cuba

b) Aruba

c) Jamaica

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

4 How many WNBA MVP awards has women's basketball star A'ja Wilson won?

a) Two

b) Three

c) Four

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

5 True or false? Stonehenge is aligned with the movements of the Moon.

True ☐ False ☐

6 What is the title of the first book in the Sisters Grimm series?

7 Leopard seals have been observed doing what for up to 13 hours a day?

a) Dancing b) Singing c) Sleeping

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

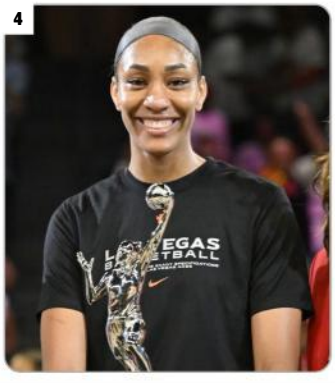
8 Robert Redford won the Academy Award for best director for what movie?







ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29.





9 A recent study found that the popular animated children's show *Bluey* helps teach kids which skill?

a) Resilience

b) Gratitude

c) Optimism

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

10 True or false? Apples dipped in honey are a traditional food for the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah.

True ☐ False ☐

11 In the book *The Incredibly Human Henson Blayze*, Henson is a star in what sport?

12 How many games did Ken Jennings win in a row to set the *Jeopardy!* record for the longest winning streak?

a) 54

b) 64

c) 74

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

13 Which famous cartoon cat is starring in a new kart racing video game?

14 True or false? The women's soccer team the Kansas City Current won their first NWSL Shield this season.

True ☐ False ☐

15 Where is the National Toy Hall of Fame located?

a) Rochester, Michigan

b) Rochester, Minnesota

c) Rochester, New York

a ☐ b ☐ c ☐

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GETTY IMAGES (4); ALAMY



TESTED BY TEACHERS
WE ARE TEACHERS
TEACHER PICKS
2025

It's amazing what happens when you open the world to young minds

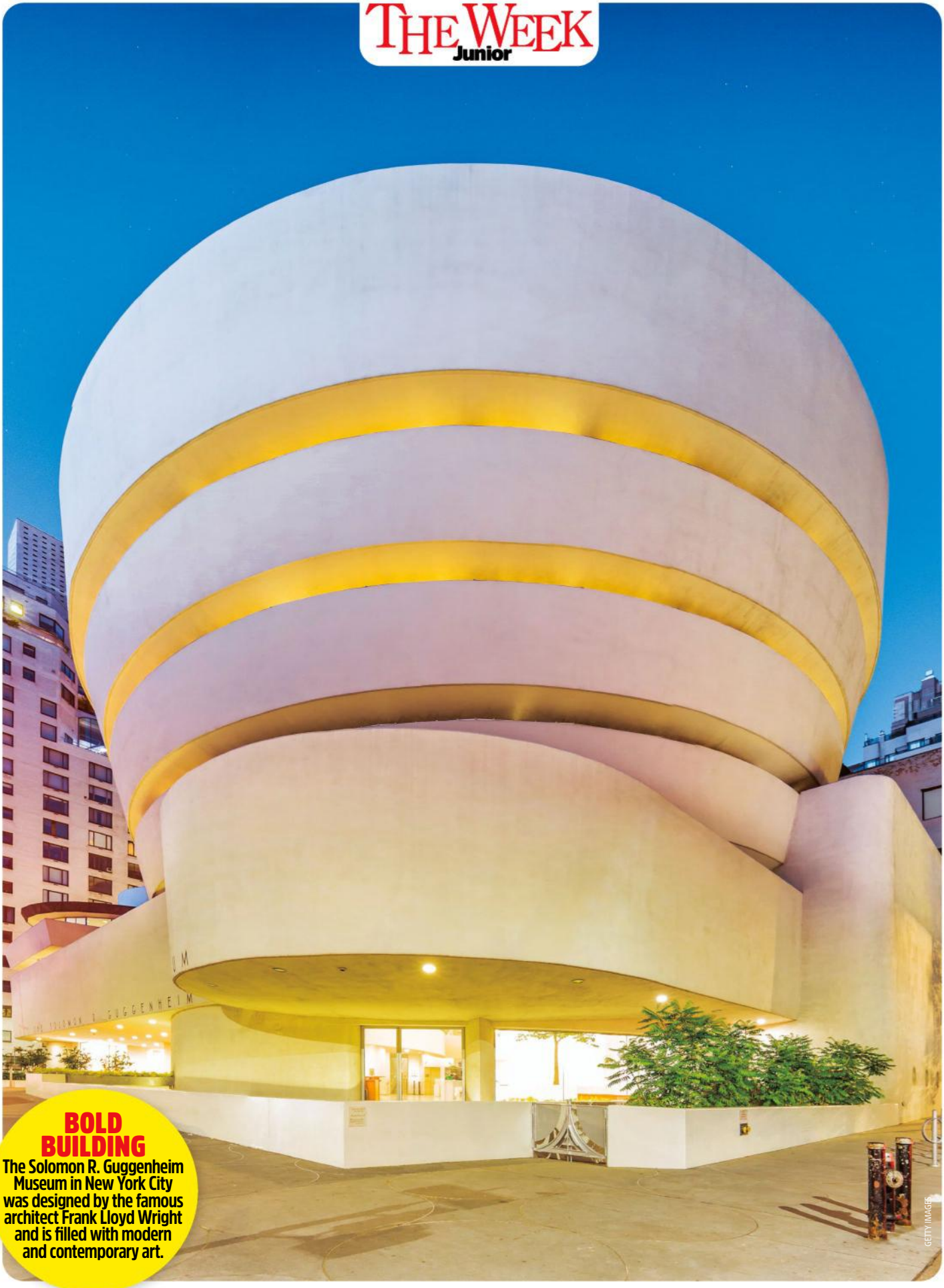
Reading sparks a lifetime love of learning, gets kids on track for success, and helps them identify and follow their passions. There are stories in *The Week Junior* that speak to every child and inspire them to keep reading.

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Order online at theweekjunior.com/leaves

or scan to subscribe



BOLD BUILDING

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City was designed by the famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright and is filled with modern and contemporary art.

GETTY IMAGES