

**Ms. Durrance's seventh grader's wrote original Counting Up/Down stories. Julius and Vivian share their examples here.**

**Read these two stories and be prepared to discuss the skills of organization and idea development that you see these two writers using.**



### **The Duel**

by Julius, seventh grade writer

In the Old West, a local ruffian was causing trouble for the sheriff. The sheriff had tried on several occasions to put him behind bars, but each time he failed. Finally, one day, the criminal marched into the sheriff's office, looked him in the eye and said, "I challenge you to a duel. Winner becomes sheriff."

The sheriff was reluctant to accept, but he knew it was the only to put a stop to this troublemaker. "Okay, but we play by my rules. We start back-to-back, take five steps forward, and then shoot. Agreed?"

On the day of the duel, the town was dead silent; not even the rustling of trees was heard. Everyone took cover behind overturned tables and barrels as they anticipated an epic battle. The sheriff and his opponent were in position, and the duel was about to start.

They took one-step forward.

"I've been practicing my aim, but who knows what this guy has got up his sleeve," the sheriff thought nervously.

They took a second step.

"Just aim and shoot," the sheriff thought. His hands felt very shaky and rubber-like.

They took a third step.

"Almost there," the sheriff gulped. He tightened his grip on his gun until it hurt.

They took a fourth step.

"Moment of truth," he thought to himself. The tension was high as everyone watched. The sheriff's legs felt extremely shaky, and he was on the verge of collapsing.

They took a fifth and final step.

Both competitors drew their weapons and made a swift, one-hundred-eighty degree turn. The sheriff fell mid-turn, but still took a shot. He narrowly avoided a head shot, but managed to shoot his opponent's knee, disabling him for life. The crowd roared with cheer as the loser grunted and fell to the ground.



## Escaping Death

by Vivian, seventh grade writer

The day was cold and gloomy, and coughs were the only sound being heard from a young girl's mouth. As her parents watched her every move, she lay in bed, too weak to even ask for a glass of water. She had terrible asthma and a horrible cold. Her parents knew she would eventually have to be rushed to the hospital. They were just waiting for the right time. Suddenly the girl took a shallow breath and started to cough. Her parents knew that was the beginning of a long painful journey to the emergency room.

The nurse explained to her parents that the child would have to have five IVs stuck into her. They knew it would hurt, but it was the only way the little girl could live.

"ONE!" the nurse shouted.

The little girl closed her eyes so she couldn't see the needle. Although still very shallow, she took the deepest breath she could take. A tear slowly rolled down the mother's face. The room was so quiet you could hear her tear hit the cold, sick floor.

"TWO!"

Her parents' faces were bright red, while hers was as pale as death. The girl started to cry, and the nurse whispered, "Don't cry. You will only make it worse."

"THREE!"

The girl was coughing so hard it was like she had her own little desert placed in her throat. "Wait in the waiting room until you can be more calm," a doctor told her mother, who was sobbing uncontrollably.

"FOUR!"

The little girl's body could not take any more pain as death was creeping up behind her.

"FIVE!"

The last needle went in quick. Right as it was released, the girl slipped into a deep sleep like a hibernating bear in the middle of winter.

Later, her mother walked into the room to check on her daughter. The girl slowly opened her eyes. The nurse told her parents that she would be okay and could go home.

As the girl walked into her bedroom, she took off her hospital bracelet and put it into her keepsake box as a memory. It was only because of a miracle that she was even alive that day.