

Half man, half octopus, he's...

Manopus

by Mickayla P., 7th grade writer



It's finally done. All our research paid off. We are the first to make a mutay-ray. I could hardly believe it. My partner, Dr O'Man, and I, Dennis Vonswert, had been working on a ray that would combine two animals into one. After three years, it was finally complete. Then out of nowhere, the window in the main lab shattered into a million pieces. A small object rolled across the floor. It looked like a grenade. As it exploded, there was a smell worse than a dozen rotten eggs left in a dumpster for a week. I fell to my knees, coughing, choking, ready to puke. The foul and ghastly smell left me unconscious on the floor.

Before I passed out, I heard footsteps coming towards me. I struggled to yell, "Help!", but all that came out was a faint, soft yelp. I stared at the person's shoes. The shoes were familiar. They were owned by someone I thought was a dear friend. Dr. O'Man laughed and sneered at me while I lay hopelessly on the cold floor. He spoke in a wicked voice that made my hair stand on end. "I couldn't let you steal my glory and fame," and those were the last words I remembered.

After what seemed like hours, I regained consciousness. I had an explosive headache. It felt like my brain was going to cave in. As I reached for my head, something felt different. I grabbed a broken piece of glass and tried to focus on seeing my reflection. As my eyes started to

work, I could not understand what I was looking at. When I looked in the glass, I saw a hideous monster. The monster was purple with bright yellow spots and was vaguely human in shape, but it had six arms...or were they legs? On each arm/leg there were tiny suction cups—hundreds of them. Only one thing came to mind. Dr. O'Man had crossed an Octopus with a person. Then I realized I was the person. I was Manopus, and I would be doomed to roam the earth forever, a freak of nature—no, a freak of science. How could he have done this to me, and where had he gone?

As I slithered my way to the door, I saw two police officers putting Dr. O'Man into the patrol car. One officer was asking him what he had done with

me. They couldn't find me or my body anywhere. It looked as if Dr. O'Man was going to get what he deserved. He would be marked as a *Mad Scientist* and never accepted into the scientific community again—not to mention a long stretch in the county jail. As for me, on a clear well-lit day, you can find me in the sea where I live as a "normal" sea creature, enjoying all the things underwater life has to offer.

Organization:

Rank Mickayla's skills from 1 to 5 (5 is her highest) in the following:

- ___ Mickayla's lead hooks the reader into wanting to read more.
- ___ Mickayla's plot events are connected to each other with carefully chosen transition words.
- ___ Each of Mickayla's paragraphs has an easily-explained purpose.
- ___ Mickayla's conclusion feels like a satisfying end to her story.
- ___ Mickayla's title is interesting.

Using the Post-It above to get your writer's brain started, write down one or two revision strategies you might suggest to Mickayla, if she were to write another draft of her story:

Womingo

by Kyle S., 7th grade writer



We were all pouring and mixing chemicals and fixing up machines when Professor Lixten dropped a beaker on the ground. All of the bluish, clear liquid that it contained was lost and spilled on the linoleum tile. At the same time, Professor Hyken was crossing the lab with two beakers of the solution that caused a chemical reaction that joined things together.

Professor Hyken slipped on the bluish, clear liquid, and went tumbling to the floor, releasing her beakers containing the solution. They flew through the air and hit Professor Whitney Pafferton. Professor Pafferton began running and screaming as the fluids from the beakers swamped over her like it was raining thick, sweaty water. She ran around the room like there was a monster chasing her and ripping at her ankles. She screamed as if trying to wake the dead from their graves. Then she smacked Professor Hickman's ladder, and he fell down as he tried to reach something to break his fall. He grabbed a light bulb hanging from the ceiling, and he pulled it out of the socket as he fell to the floor. The ladder crashed down and hit the test animals' cages and opened them. All the animals escaped, including the flamingo. Professor Pafferton kept running around until she tripped, falling into the flamingo. They fell to the ground, and they were both knocked unconscious. Together they formed WOMINGO.

Professor Pafferton woke up twenty minutes later, and she saw the room trashed

with broken light bulbs and broken beakers on the floor. There were fluids on the floor. She saw Professor Hyken cowering under a desk. Professor Pafferton stood up and walked over to the mess of spilled chemicals on the floor. She heard a clack, clack—like hard nails on the ground—as she walked. She looked at her feet, and she realized they were pink and scaly. Then she looked at her arms. There were little feathers sprouting out of her skin! The professor looked down at a puddle of chemicals and saw a beak growing where her mouth once was. She yelled, "No, I am a monster!"

Organization:

Rank Kyle's skills from 1 to 5 (5 is his highest) in the following:

- ___ Kyle's lead hooks the reader into wanting to read more.
- ___ Kyle's plot events are connected to each other with carefully chosen transition words.
- ___ Each of Kyle's paragraphs has an easily-explained purpose.
- ___ Kyle's conclusion feels like a satisfying end to his story.
- ___ Kyle's title is interesting.

Using the Post-It above to get your writer's brain started, write down one or two revision strategies you might suggest to Kyle, if he were to write another draft of his story: