

Inspired by Margie Palatini's The Web Files, these three seventh graders were inspired to write their own original detective and mystery stories. The students worked hard to put **voice** in their stories. With a partner, read each story and be prepared to discuss where each student showed the strongest voice. This writing was inspired by a lesson from the WritingFix website (<http://writingfix.com>).

## The Case of the Jumpy Monkee

by Lucie, seventh grade writer

It was eight o' clock in the morning in Lyon, France, and headquarters was hoppin'. My name is Grenouille—Detective Grenouille to you (aka "La Frog"). I was swamped in problems. None as important as Miss Monkee's, though. She had gone bananas over some lost bananas. I was a hop, skip and a jump away from the Monkee residence, so I decided to check it out. My partner, S. Cargo (aka, — well, I think you know what) decided to meet me there.

I reached Miss Monkee's at ten past eight. As I walked in the door, I caught a whiff of fresh bread and was assaulted by a shrill cry as Miss Monkee threw herself at me. "I hate to say this," she sobbed. I detected a faint southern drawl in her voice. "But the banana thief caaain be no other than my repulsive neighbor, Mia Birdie."

"Hold on a sec, now. Just the facts, ma'am, just the facts," I calmly requested.

"But I saw her," she wailed. She walked to the front of her kitchen and stood next to her stove. "I was standin' right here," she explained in between sniffs. "I had just opened the windows on the right side of the kitchen." She demonstrated this by trekking down her long kitchen and cranking out the dirty windows. "Then I heard a noise. I looked out my kitchen window and saw Mia runnin' through the yard with her arms full of my bananas."

Her story seemed as airtight as a Ziploc freezer bag. But I knew otherwise.

*DUM DE DUM DUM*

"I mean no disrespect, ma'm, but you're story's as faulty as a broken reed."

Miss Monkee began to protest and back away, but I cornered her and she began to... giggle? "I know you're just pullin' my leg," she mumbled nervously.

"I know you know I'm not kidding — so don't try to monkey your way out of this," I said. "Besides, you shouldn't make frog leg jokes. You know what's on the menu. So back to the facts:

1. Your windowpanes are dirt encrusted;
2. Even if they weren't extremely grimy, the angle that you claim you saw Mia from is an impossibility;
3. I smell . . . BANANA BREAD!

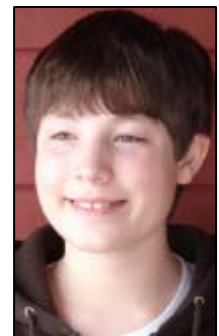
"Yes, Miss Monkee — I was onto you from the moment I came into your home and smelled your criminal confection." I snapped my fingers and S. Cargo put the cuffs on her. Case closed.

## Farce-Net

by Ryan, seventh grade writer

My name is Max Monday; I am part of the secret investigation force code named RED-NET. The cases you hear are totally unreal. According to the Bargain Basement Fix-It Squad, what you are about to read did not really happen.

I had been chasing our suspect for three months already. He was our only lead to where the missing Fix-It Squad team members had gone. We had found evidence that connected him to Sojokalo Godiskn. Sojokalo's partners had recently been disappearing without a trace, and we believed that our suspect was the culprit behind all of this; he was



Sojokalo's closest advisor, thereby giving him full access to Sojokalo's Fix-It Squad. We weren't taking any chances with him so we put on our new gore-tex "Dragon Hide" body armor and armed ourselves with M4 super-shot hydro max-force water propelled sling shots (with fully equipped pocket protectors). We then politely knocked on the door and Hankle (Sojokalo's very close advisor) answered.

"Hello. You're doing well today?" Hankle asked, staring at our armor.

I said "Uhm yeah, I am doing fine." Then we politely asked him to come with us down to the police station. He agreed and came with us, singing a merry tune that sounded like: *Ring, ring, ring, ring, ring, banana phone!*

Back at the station, we decided to ask the man a few questions. He told us his name was Hankel the Un-builder. We asked Hankle about what had been going on, and he told us that he didn't really know but he did know of a deaf man who overheard a conversation between two criminals.

So I let Hankel go to the hospital where we found the deaf man. I asked the deaf man, "What did you hear?" in sign language and he replied, "Close your eyes so you can hear all of what I am saying." So I did.

The man signed to me "I heard them saying, 'Man, I got great feedback for those cruise tickets I gave out to Sojokalo's partners!'"

Then I signed back, "Thanks, now we have solved the case." "That was easy" I said outloud. I believe that was the most super awesome uber cool case we ever solved other than the case of the disappearing beaver hat, which we finally found in the possession of a really rich person. He wanted it because it supposedly had magical powers to make your nose even bigger!!!

This case ended in the middle of the year, December, in the middle of the month, on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and it was 84 degrees out with 5 feet of snow. This case wasn't real, the names have been changed to protect no one and to make me Max Monday sound more awesome. Just ask the blind man - he saw the whole thing.

## **Sister Ugly and the Case of the Missing Fruit**

by Alex, seventh grade writer

### **8:52 am**

I was watching bright oranges and reds dance across the sky with my sister as the sun rose. In the distance, I spotted Glinda, the good witch, floating towards us in her bubble.

"Sister Ugly!" she exclaimed.

"Please, call me Maggie," I said.

"There's been a theft at Rapunzel's tower!" she told us. As soon as she finished I said good-bye to my sister and then I got my our car and drove off the Rapunzel's tower.



### **9:18 am**

I called for Rapunzel to come down from her tower. She quickly slid down the long strand of golden hair to join us.

"I heard you have been robbed," I said.

"Oh, yes! It was terrible. No, it was horrible!" she exclaimed.

"What was stolen?" I asked.

" Oh my, it is so dreadful! I'm very scared now! It was so precious to me!" she said.

"Please, Rapunzel, get to the point," I urged.

"They took.... they took...my beautiful bunch of bananas!" she told us. "I don't see how it could have happened! I mean I was only outside for a few minutes talking to my neighbors, the three little pigs. They must have been quite speedy!"

It was that last sentence that led me to my first suspect: the Hare.

### **10:05 am**

I hopped out of my car and into action at the Hare's den. The Hare was picking carrots out of his garden when I walked up to him.

"Excuse us, Hare, but I need to ask you a few questions," I said.

"Well, all right," he answered.

"Where were you at around 8:30 this morning?" I asked.

"I was in a race. A big race! Man, there were so many people and creatures! Long race too, it was almost five miles! Man, was I tired! I could've fallen asleep. Come to think of it, I actually did. Cost me the race too," he went on and on.

"Just the important things, Hare, just the important things. All I want to know is were you the one who took Rapunzel's beautiful bunch of bananas?" I asked.

"Why of course not! But bananas are not something you want stolen! Why? Because of all the great things you can make: Smoothies, bread, shakes, cereal and bananas," he said.

"Next time, just the important things please," I said. I started to walk away when he called to me.

"By the way, while you are on the look out, could you watch for my missing peanut butter? I was going to bring some to my grandma's house. Also, there are some tiny footprints in the mud if you would like to look at them. That reminds me..." he started.

...But I was already driving off before he could go on and on.

### **10:45 am**

I was trying to figure out where to go next when Jack, who had grown a beanstalk, came up to us.

"Excuse me, but I heard you were on a case," he said.

"Yes, what do you need?" I asked.

"Well, my strawberry jelly was stolen. Red is my favorite color and if it isn't too much trouble, would you please look for it? I mean, you don't have to. I know you are busy and all. I shouldn't have disturbed you. Bye." He started walking away when I got an idea.

"Hold on, Jack. I think I know where your jelly is," I said.

"Really? Where?" he asked.

"I'll give it to you when I get it. Right now I must go visit someone," I said before driving off to visit Little Red Riding Hood.

### **11:14 am**

"Little Red, I need to talk to you!" I called from outside her house. The door opened and she appeared in the doorway.

"What? You just disturbed my nap! And I always nap after eating lunch!" she said.

"I believe that you have stolen some food from the citizens of Fairy Tale Land," I accused.

"Look, you can't come to my house and wake me up to accuse me of a crime I didn't commit," she said.

"Besides, where is your evidence? You can't accuse me without evidence."

I knew that was true so I quickly searched her house for some clues. "I know I can't. I just thought you might give me some information to the crime of the missing bunch of bananas, the stolen peanut butter, and the delicious jelly," I sighed.

"I don't care about the bananas, peanut butter, and the strawberry jelly! I just want to nap! Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to try and get some sleep, although it will be hard knowing that you think I'm a thief!"

She was about to slam the door shut when I said, "How did you know it was strawberry jelly if I never told you what kind it was?" I asked with a smile.

"Well...I...Lucky guess! Now please leave!" she ordered.

"Not so fast!" I entered her house and looked around. I found a knife full of red jelly in the sink, a banana peel in the trash, and a dish with gobs of peanut butter on it. "Little Red Riding Hood, you are under arrest of stealing innocent people's food to make a PB&J sandwich with bananas."

I called the police and she was arrested just in time to watch the sun fade behind the hills and the coming of the night with its cool winds.

Little Red was put in jail until she could learn not to steal...and how to do the dishes.