THE 2023 YOUNG MATHEMATICAL STORY AUTHOR (YMSA) COMPETITION

THE STUART J. MURPHY AWARD

(THE 8-11 YEARS OLD CATEGORY)

LONGLISTED

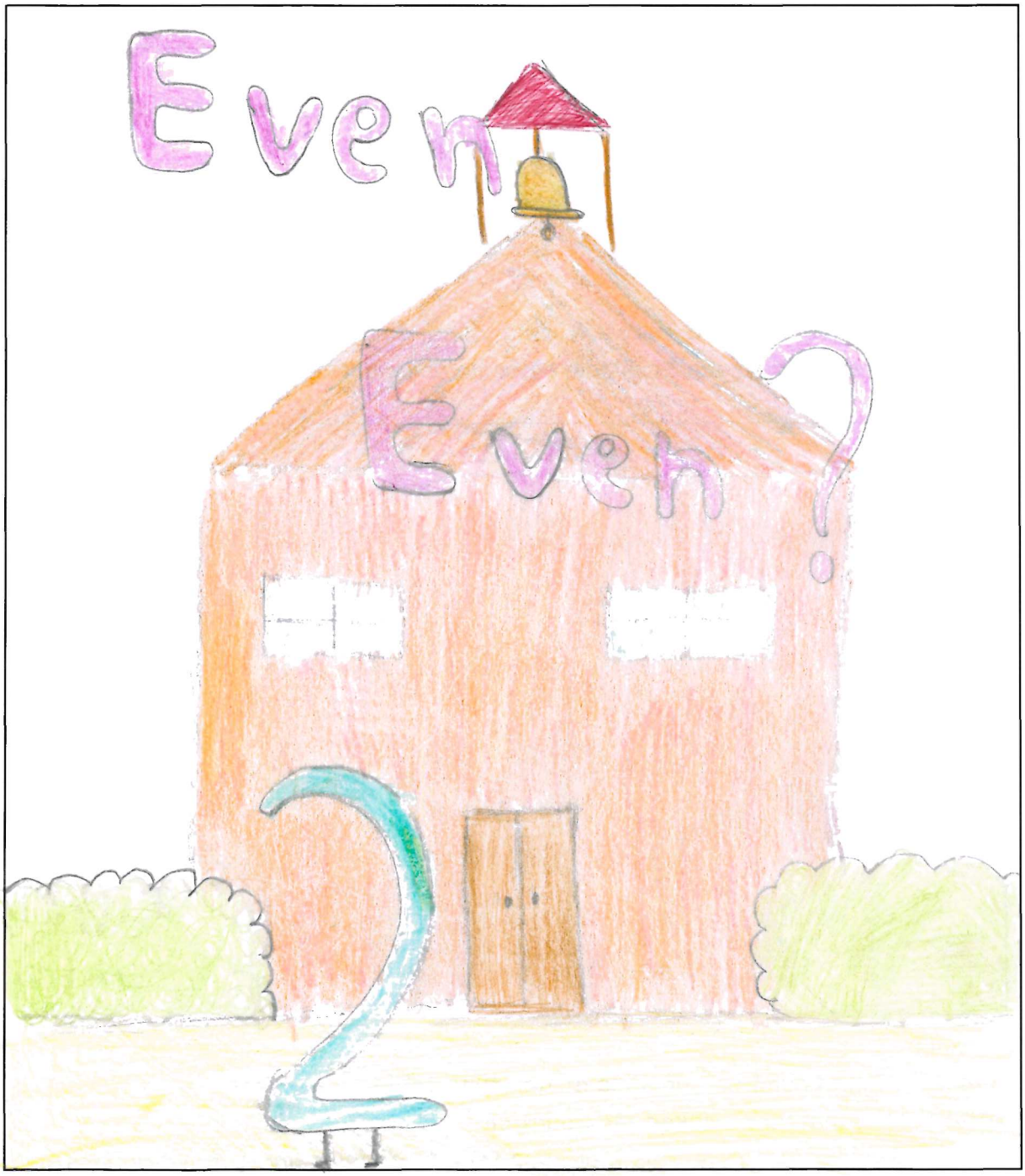
'Even Even?' by Isla Campbell (11 years old)

at St Christopher's School (UK)

You can read the author's inspiration for the story and the judges' comments on:

www.mathsthroughstories.org/ymsa2023

#YMSAMaths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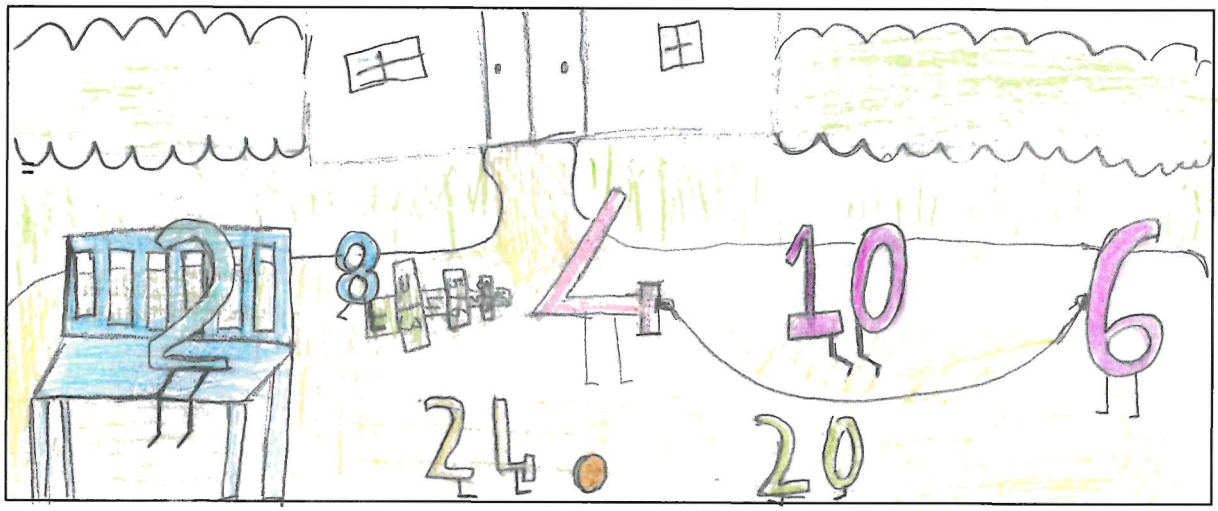
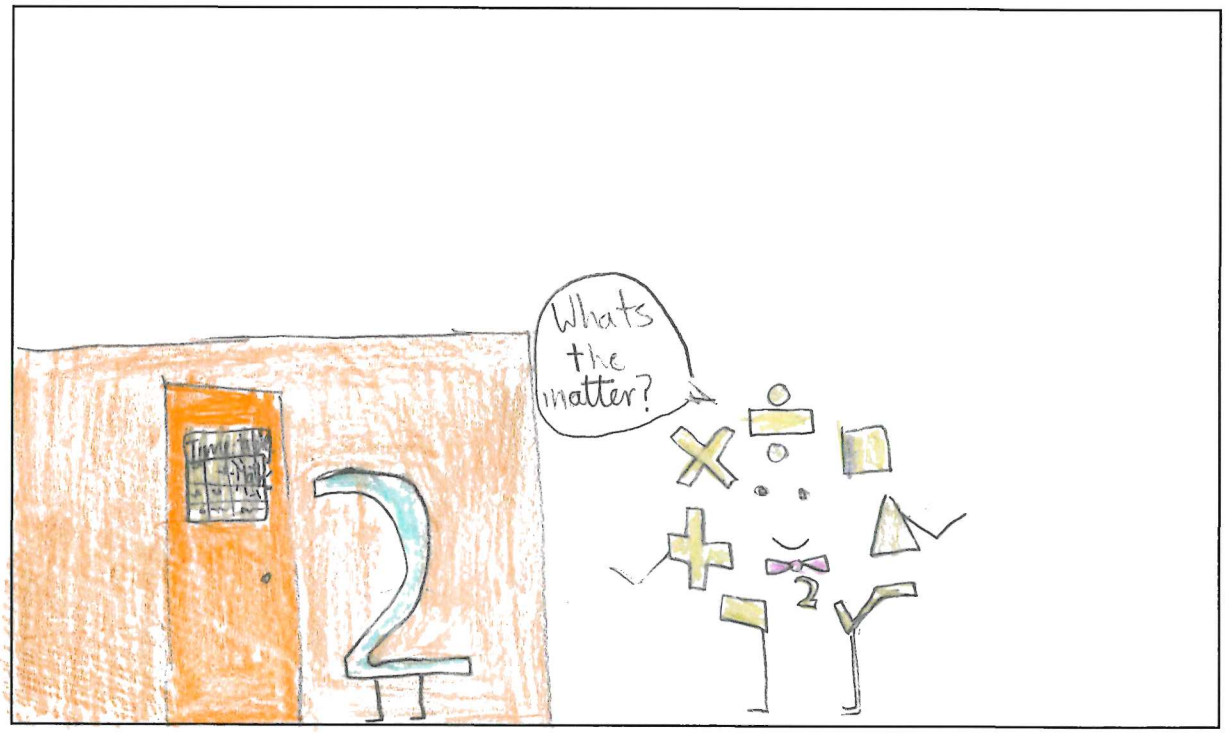


Poor 2 sat alone on her usual bench, everyone else understood each other but no one understood 2. This made 2 very sad and she felt left out.

She went to the school for even numbers but she sometimes wondered if she was even even.

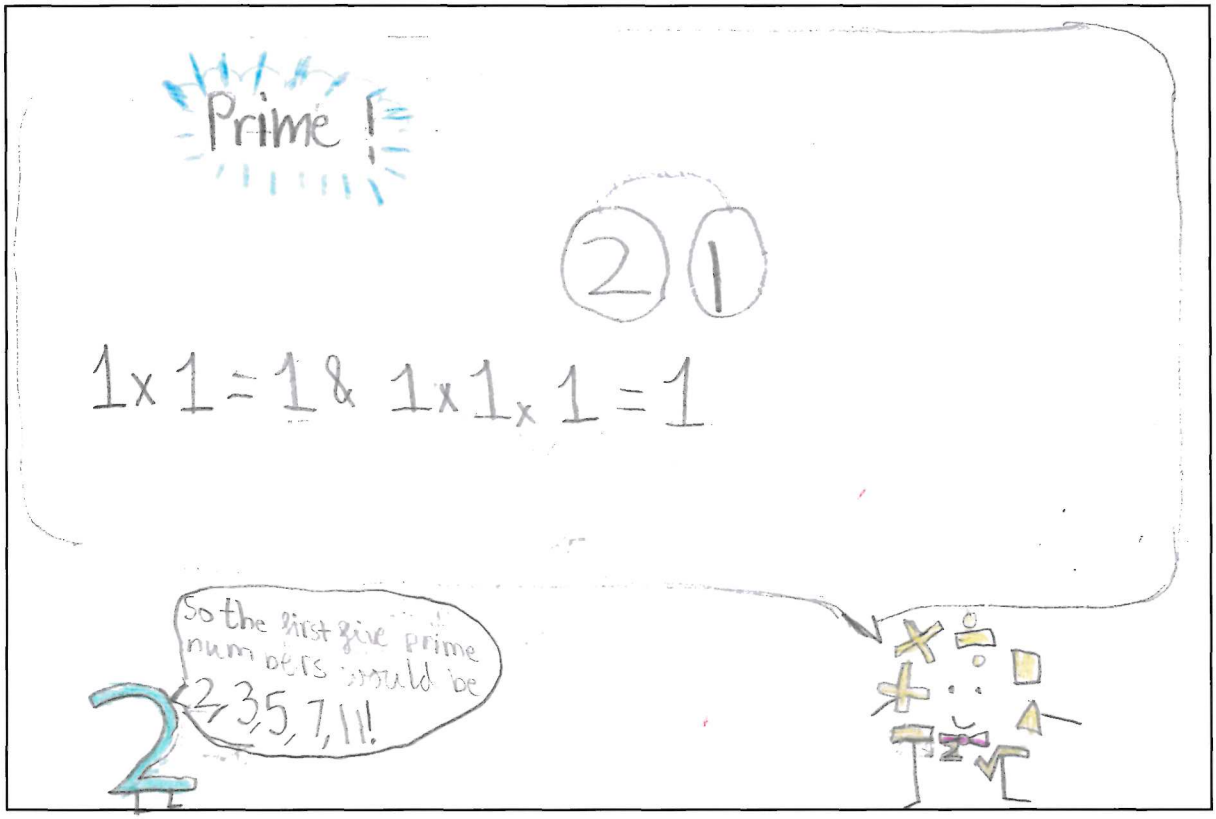
The bell rang for the end of break, ding, dong, ding, dong. "Yes, finally exclaimed 2". She hated being alone at break, since no one wanted to play with her.



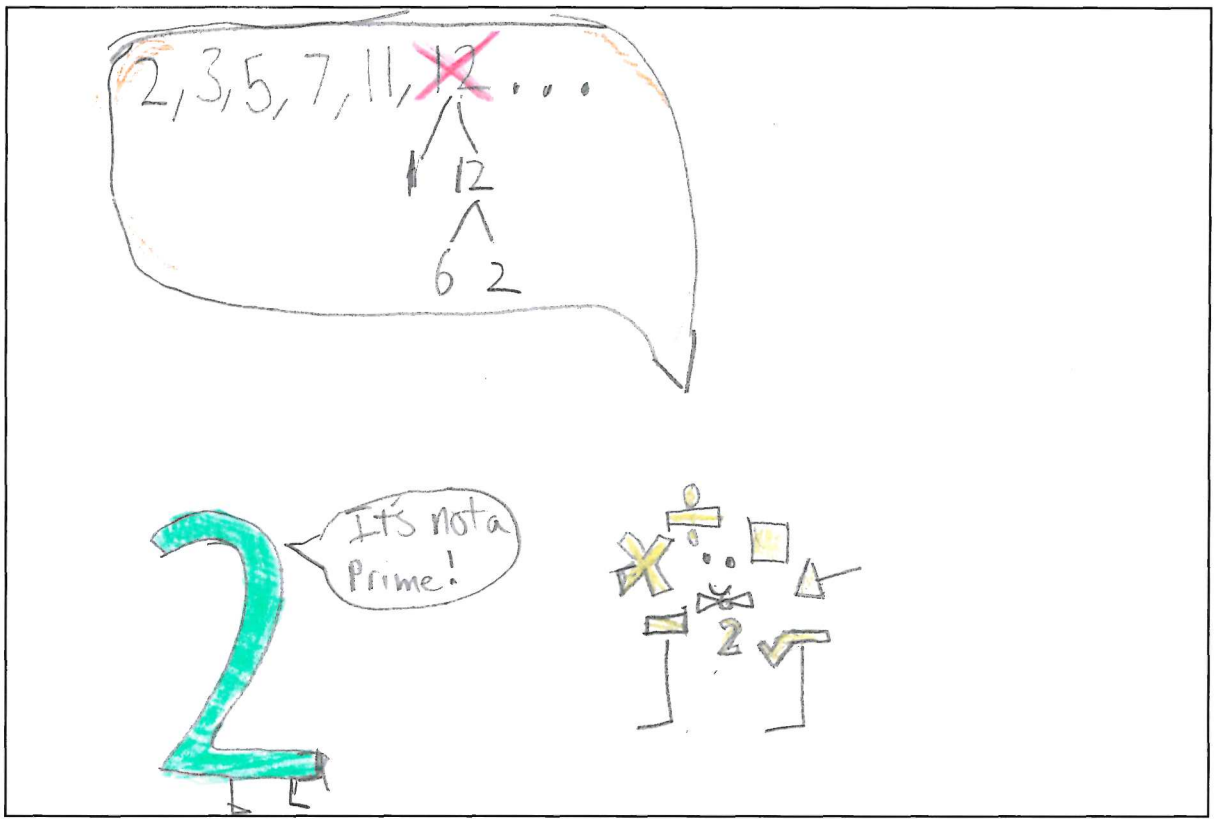
"Oh no", sighed number 2 looking at her time table.
"What's the matter?", asked Mr Equation.
"My next lesson is maths, this week our topic is division and I don't understand any of it", explained 2.

"That's because you're a prime number", explained Mr Equation.
"What's that?" Asked 2.
"It means you can only be divisible by yourself and 1."

"So is 1 also a prime number?" Asked 2.
"No, It might seem like one because you can do 1x1=1 but you can also do 1x1x1=1" He explained.

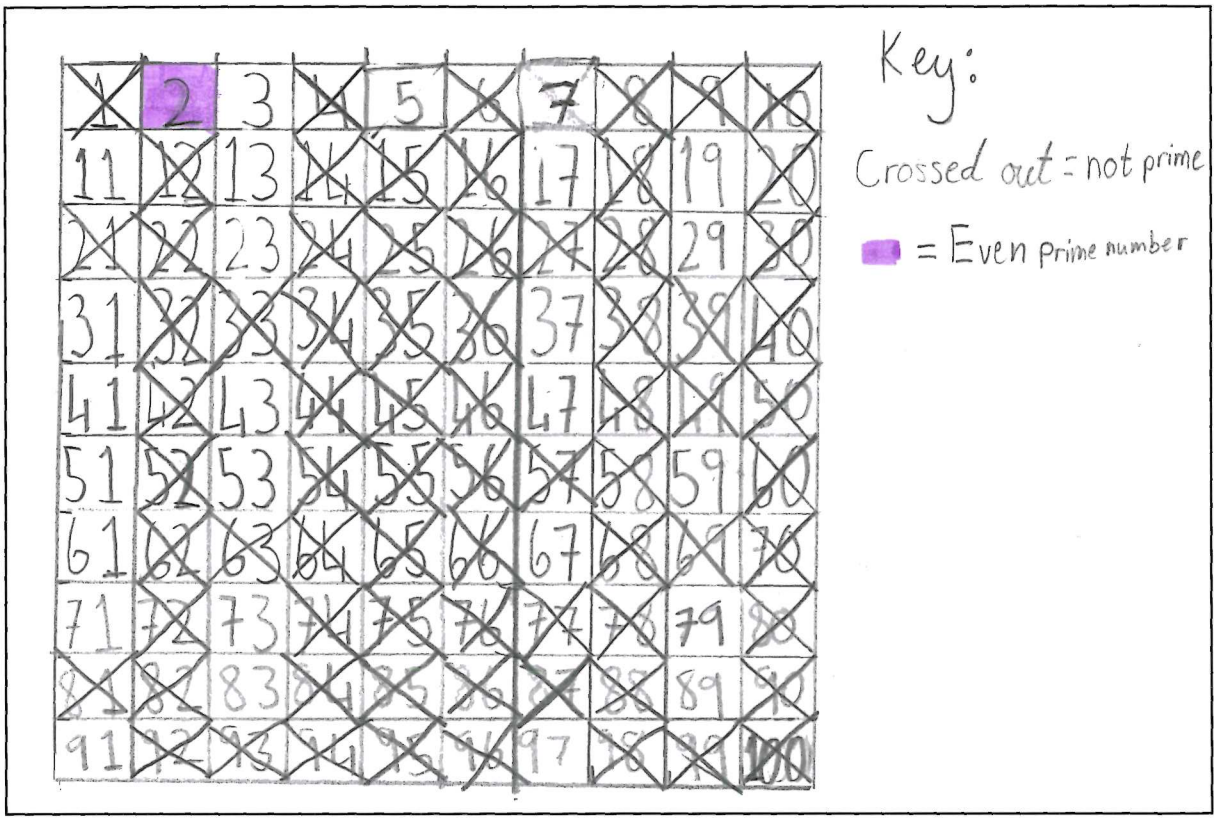


"Oh,"said 2. "I think I get it now. So the first five prime numbers would be: 2, 3, 5, 7 and 11!"
"Exactly". Exclaimed Mr Equation.



"So am I the only even prime number?" 2 enquired.
"Well, you can write all the prime numbers up to 100 and find out for yourself." Answered Mr Equation. "I'll help you."

"We already know the first five prime numbers: 2, 3, 5, 7 and 11," the teacher explained. "The next number after 11 is 12. Now, we know that 12 is a multiple of 1, 12, 2 and 6 and because it has four factors..."
"It's not a prime number!" exclaimed 2 excitedly (nowjumping up and down in joy.)This went on for a little while longer but they finally finished.



"Wow, I am the only even prime number," said 2 looking at the grid they had made.
"Yes you are, and that makes you a very special prime number."
"Really?" Asked 2 hopefully.
"Yes but I'll give you a choice. You can either stay here and carry on as usual at this school or I could help you get a place at the 'International school for prime numbers'
"Are you sure?" questioned 2.
"Absolutely, if you're happy with that choice." Answered Mr Equation.
"In that case" answered 2 with a few moments of thinking. "I think I would like to go to the 'International school for prime numbers'.

It was 2's first day of school and she was nervous but excited all at the same time! There were so many questions running through her head. Would she know how to answer the questions? Would she be able to make any friends? Would her teachers be nice and what would she do if this school was the same as her old one? What if she would stand out again and not be able to understand anything? All these thoughts and worries made her tired, so she decided to move on and have a new beginning at a new school.

With a deep breath, 2 stepped through the school gates.

For a moment everyone froze, but then they all cheered for 2. Mr Equation was right! At this school, 2 would be popular and special, it was the best day of her life.

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At 'The School For Even Numbers' number 2 feels confused. Will he ever find the right school for him and find out what makes him special?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[Say a few words about yourself here]

My name is Isla Campbell and I'm 11 years old, I go to st Christopher's school in Hampstead. I was inspired to write about this topic because it is my favorite area in maths and I find it realy FUN! I also would like to encourage other people to have fun doing it too.