THE 2024 YOUNG MATHEMATICAL STORY AUTHORS (YMSA) COMPETITION

THE STUART J. MURPHY AWARD

(THE 8-11 YEARS OLD CATEGORY)

SHORTLISTED

‘Irregular Izzy’ by Carina Usher-Smith (11 years old)

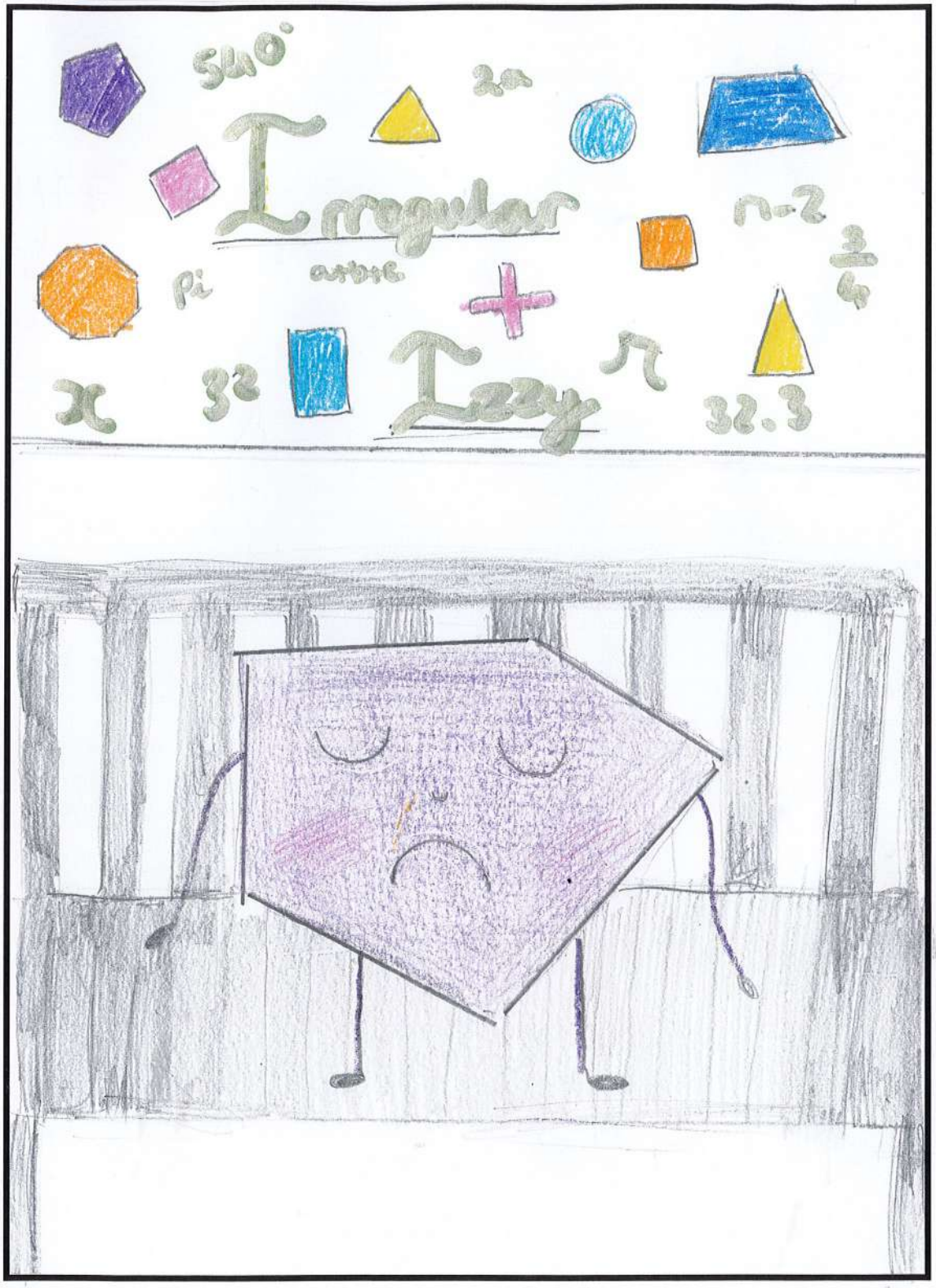
at Norland Place School (UK)

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

www.mathsthroughstories.org/ymsa2024

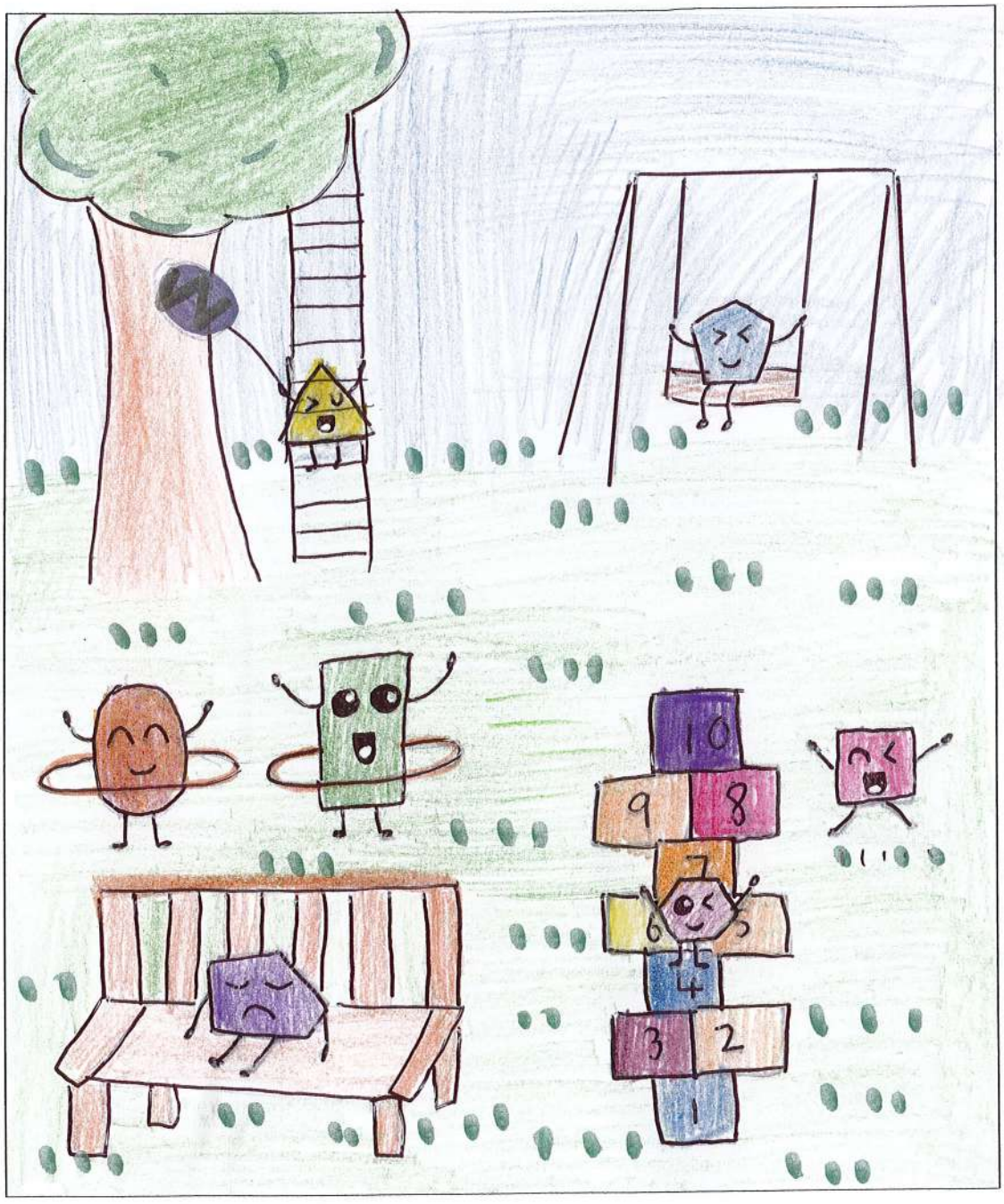
#YMSAMaths

NORLAND PLACE SCHOOL

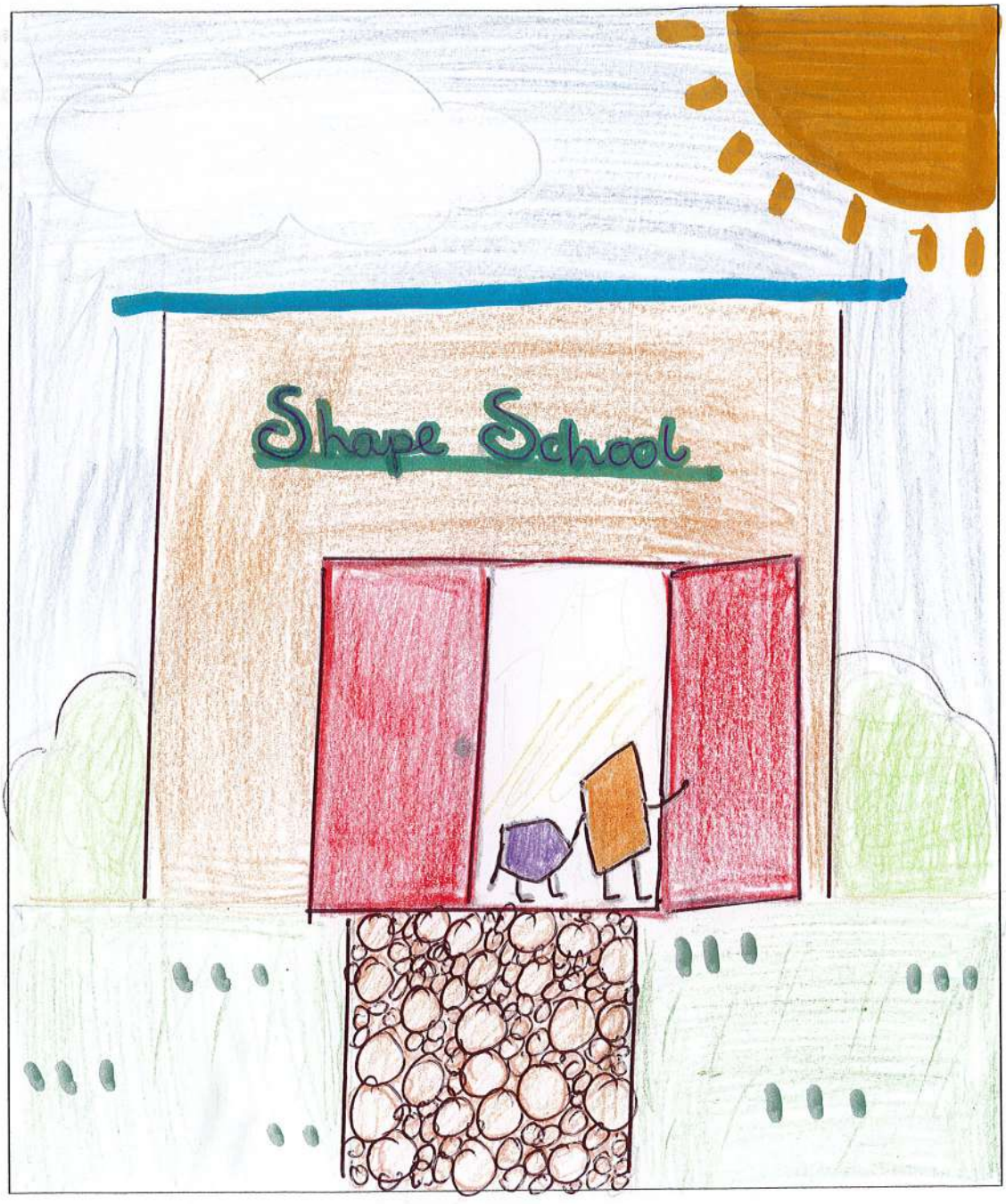


Author: Carina Usher-Smith

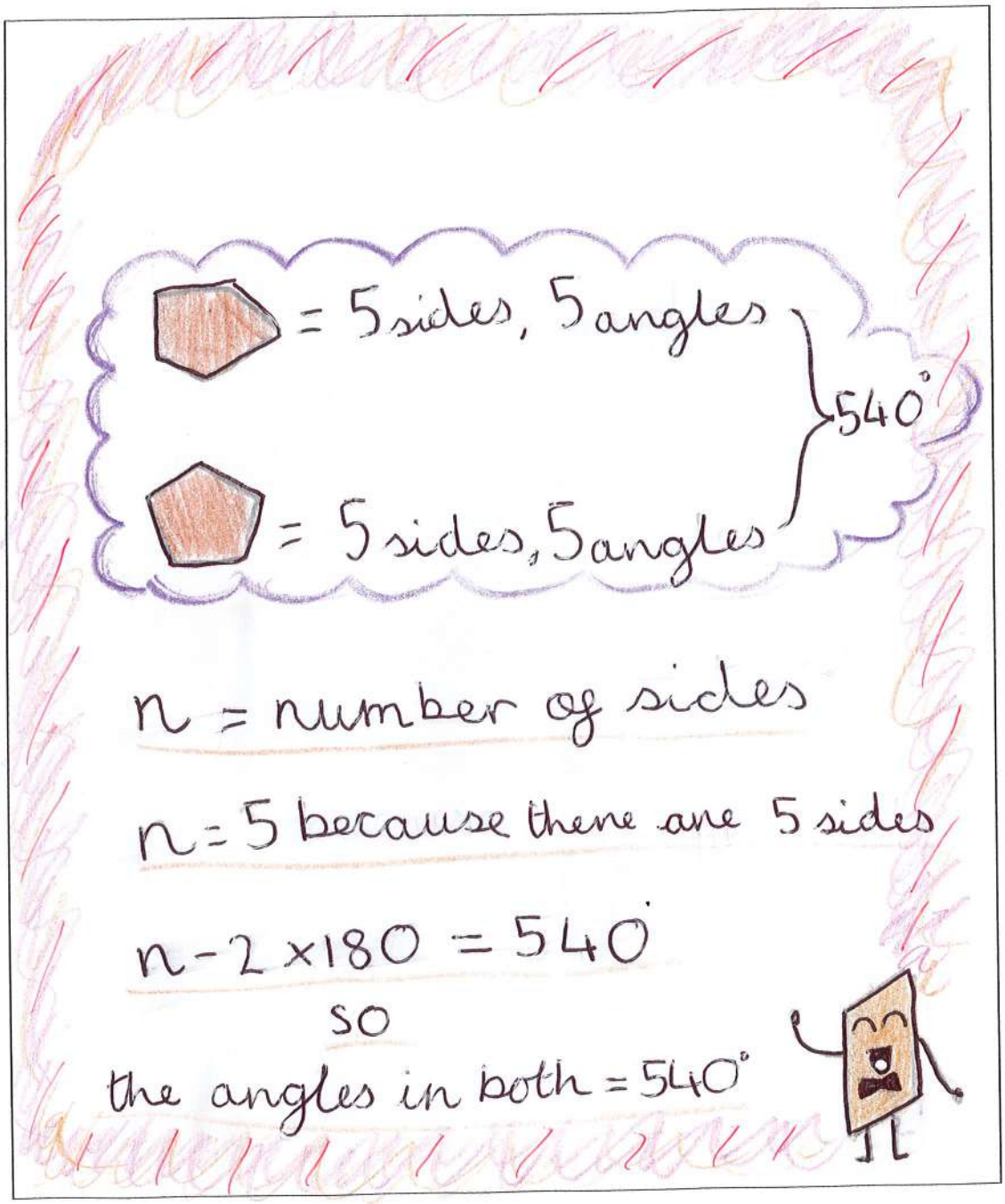
School : Norland Place School



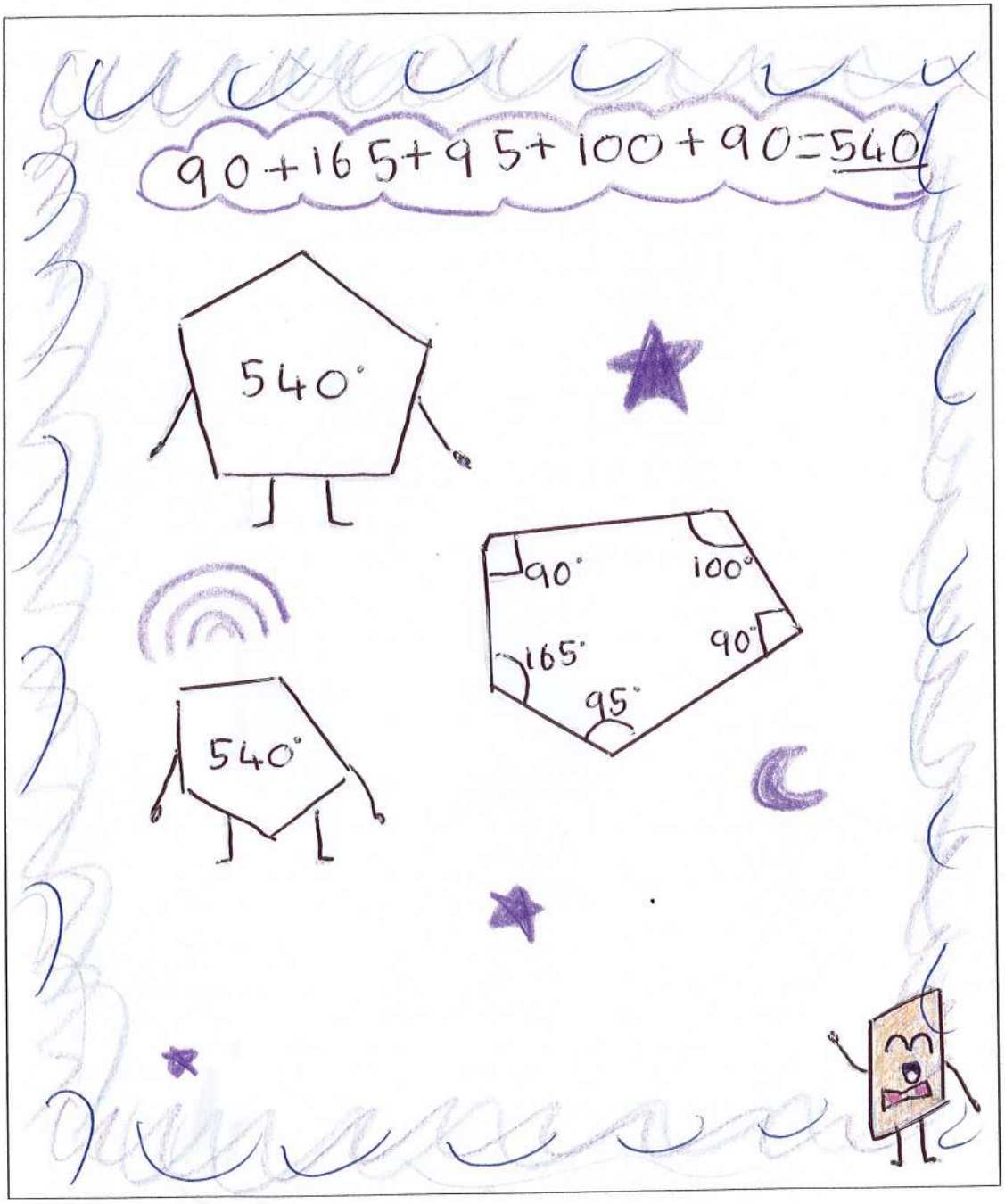
It was Isobel angles first day of shape school, she was having an awful day. Izzy was an irregular shape: no one liked her. All the other children teased her and sang this horrible song "Irregular Izzy is not like us, she should leave us, yes she must!" this made Izzy very sad, she had no one to giggle with, no one to play with, she had no friends.



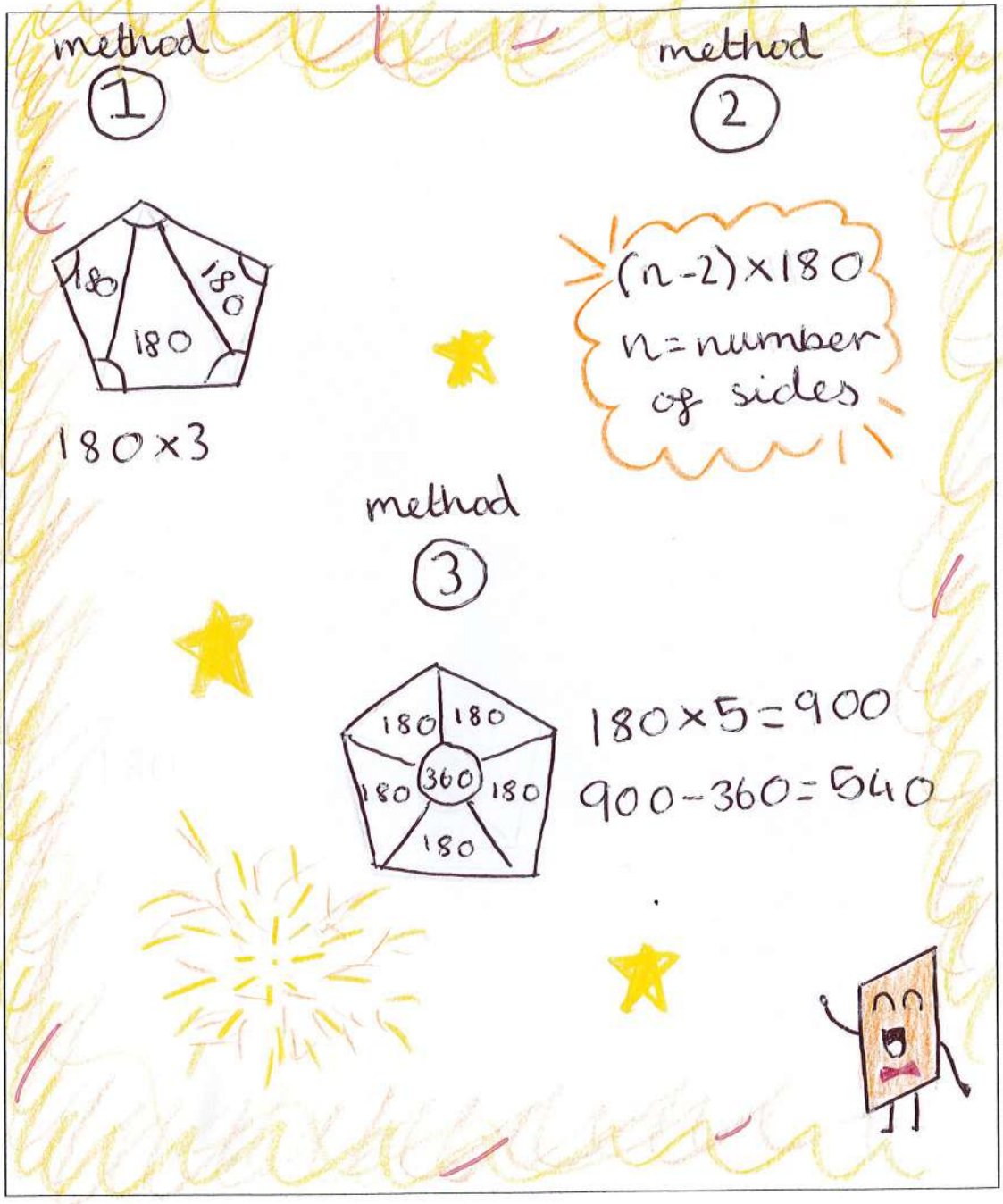
Izzy wished so much that she could be regular and join in with all the other children. A tear rolled down her cheek as she sat down on the school bench. Mr Parallelogram came up to her. 'Izzy are you enjoying your first day?' he saw how upset she was and sat down next to her. 'what's wrong Isobel?' Izzy broke down in tears and explained how she was irregular and so no one wanted to play with her. Mr parallelogram smiled 'Izzy you are just the same as everyone else on the inside, just a little different on the outside.



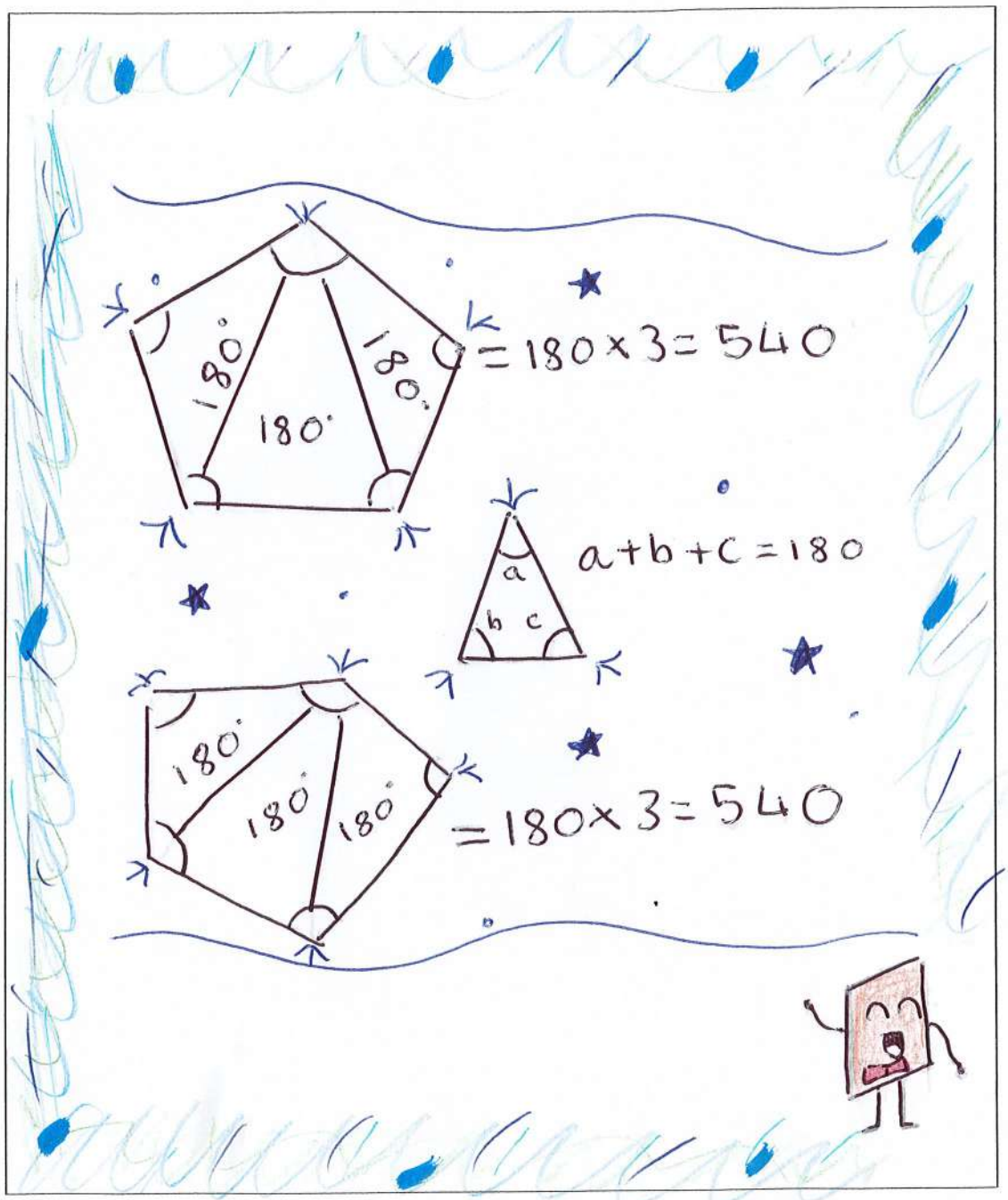
Mr Parallelogram and Izzy walked into the classroom. He was writing lots of numbers and shapes on the board. He explained that Izzy had 5 sides and 5 angles, so that made her a pentagon. He taught her that a regular pentagon's angles and sides are **all equal** and that an irregular pentagon's angles and sides were **not all equal**.



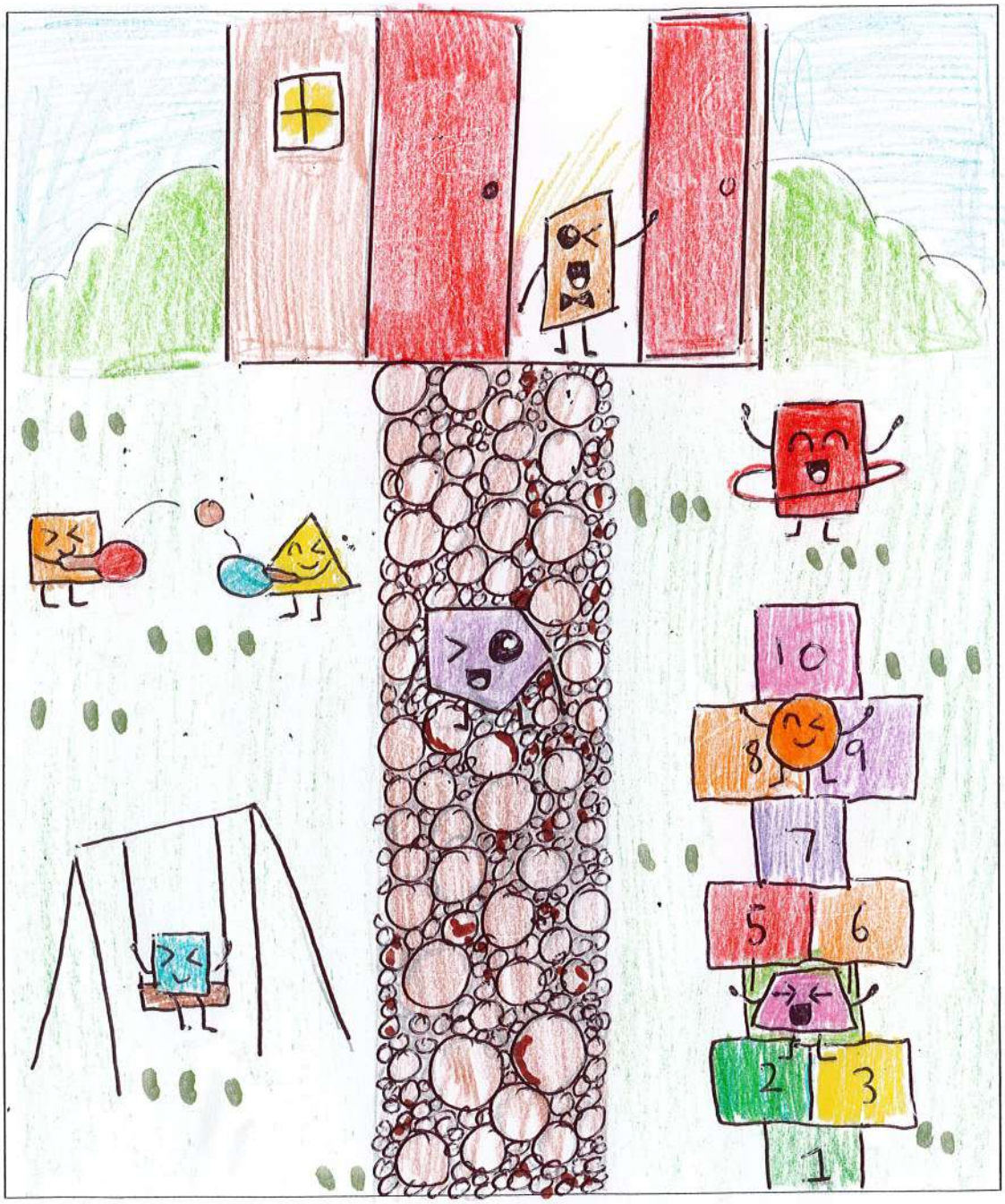
He then explained that all pentagons have the same number of interior angles. The angles inside a pentagon all add up to 540 degrees. The only difference is her angles are 90°,165°, 95°, 90°, 100° and in a regular pentagon the angles are all 108°.



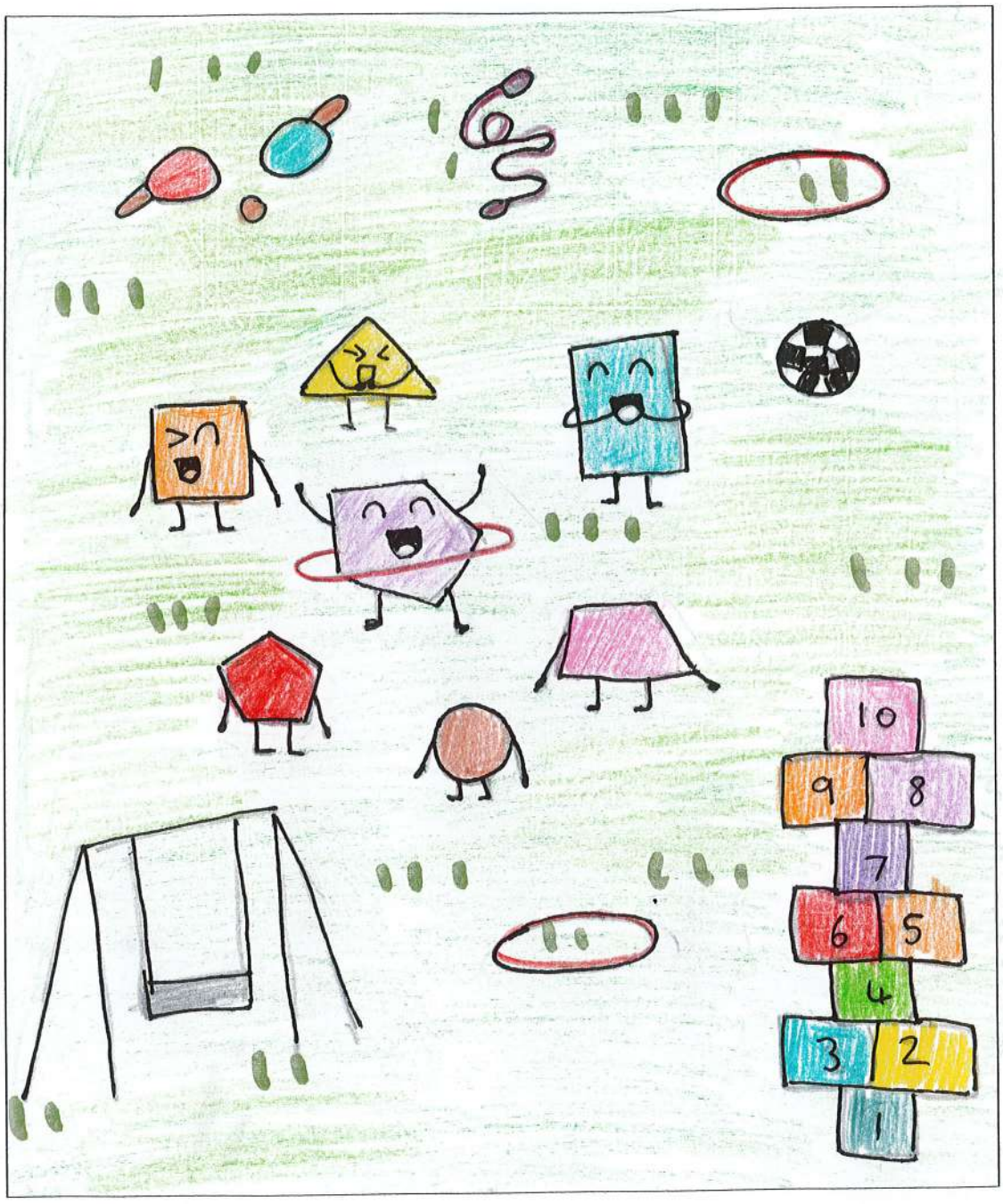
Mr parallelogram then said that there were so many ways of finding the interior angles of a shape. Algebra, the rule of the interior angles in triangles being 180° etc. Whatever the outcome is though, regular, and irregular shapes' interior angles add up to the same total. For example, inside any quadrilateral the interior angles always add up to 360°.



Mr parallelogram then showed that a pentagon, no matter whether it is regular, or irregular can be made out of triangles and there are so many similarities and yet so many differences. Izzy realised that she was unique and original. She was INCREDIBLE IZZY! Her differences are what make her special and regular can be anything you want it to be. 'Thankyou Mr parallelogram' she said smiling.



Izzy burst through the door with a newfound confidence, and everyone stared at her. She started to feel dizzy when she reminded herself that she had nothing to feel ashamed about. She walked over to Romeo rectangle and Tess triangle. 'Can I play with you please?' Izzy asked. Tess triangle nodded and handed Izzy a hula hoop. 'Here you go, let's see who can do it for the longest!' Izzy beamed with happiness, she was playing with the other girls and boys!



Izzy started to hula hoop. Then Tess stopped and Romeo stopped, but Izzy was still going! All the other children were crowding around her and watching her carry on. Izzy couldn't believe it. So many children were cheering for her! The kids' toys had all been discarded and soon enough, the whole playground was watching her with excitement! Izzy was happier than she had ever been in her whole life! Just then the bell for end of break rang. Mr parallelogram smiled at her and guess what their maths lesson was about? Interior angles, something Izzy knew a lot about now!

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she is an irregular shape who struggles to make friends. All seems lost untill a kind teacher helps her find her confidence will her classmates finally come to their sensens and realise just how special she really is?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR.

I go to Norland Place School in London in England. I am 11 years old and I am in year 6.