THE 2024 YOUNG MATHEMATICAL STORY AUTHORS (YMSA) COMPETITION

THE STUART J. MURPHY AWARD

(THE 8-11 YEARS OLD CATEGORY)

LONGLISTED

‘The Mysterious Map’ by Willow Moss (11 years old)

at St. Christopher's School (UK)

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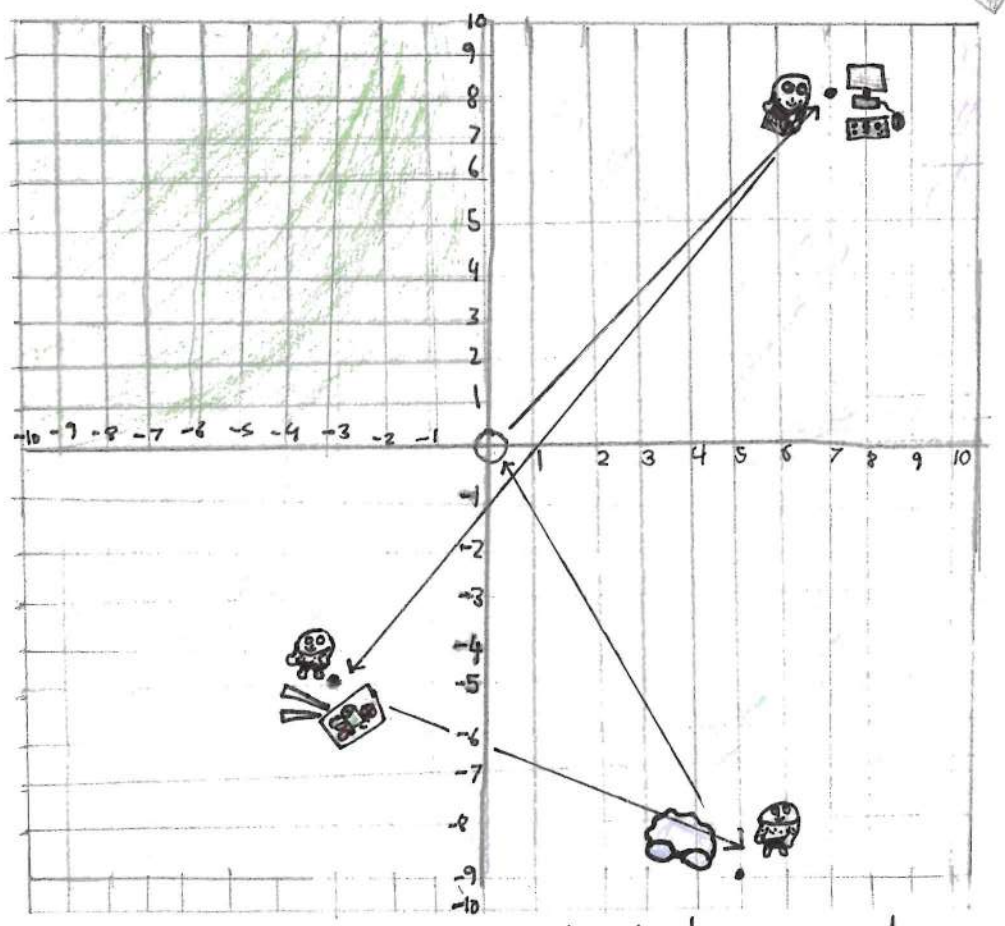
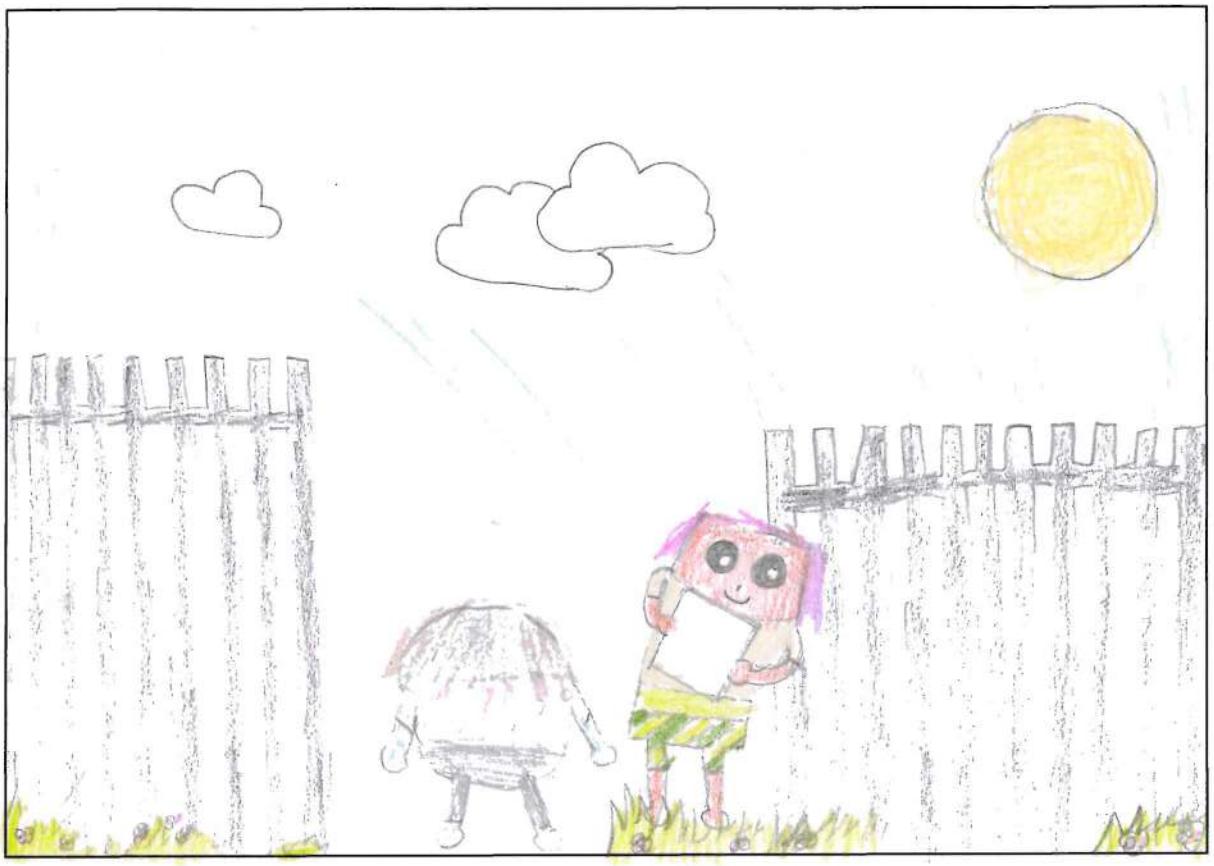
THE mysterious map



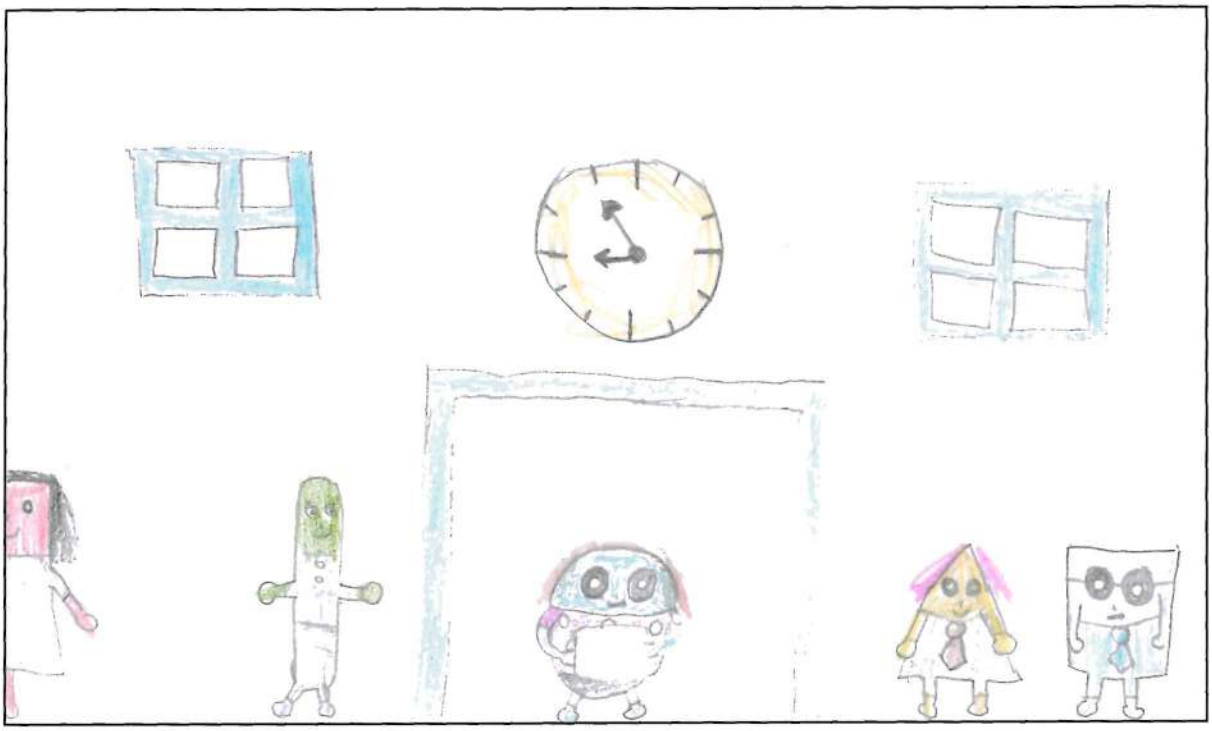
By Willow Moss St Christophers School



Today was a big day for Robin. She was starting a new job and it was her first day.
She stepped through the gates and strode up to the door. There was a woman standing there.
"Hello, You must be Robin!" She exclaimed.
"Y-yes." Robin trembled.
"I'm Holly. Anyways, here is the map to your office".
She handed Robin a piece of paper with a map on it.
"Thank you." Robin said.

She stepped inside into a very formal building. There was a long corridor ahead of her with doors leading off into different rooms.
"Hmmm."

Robin looked at the map, hoping it would help her find her way around this maze-like building.
But her hopes all disappeared as Robin took a glance at the map.

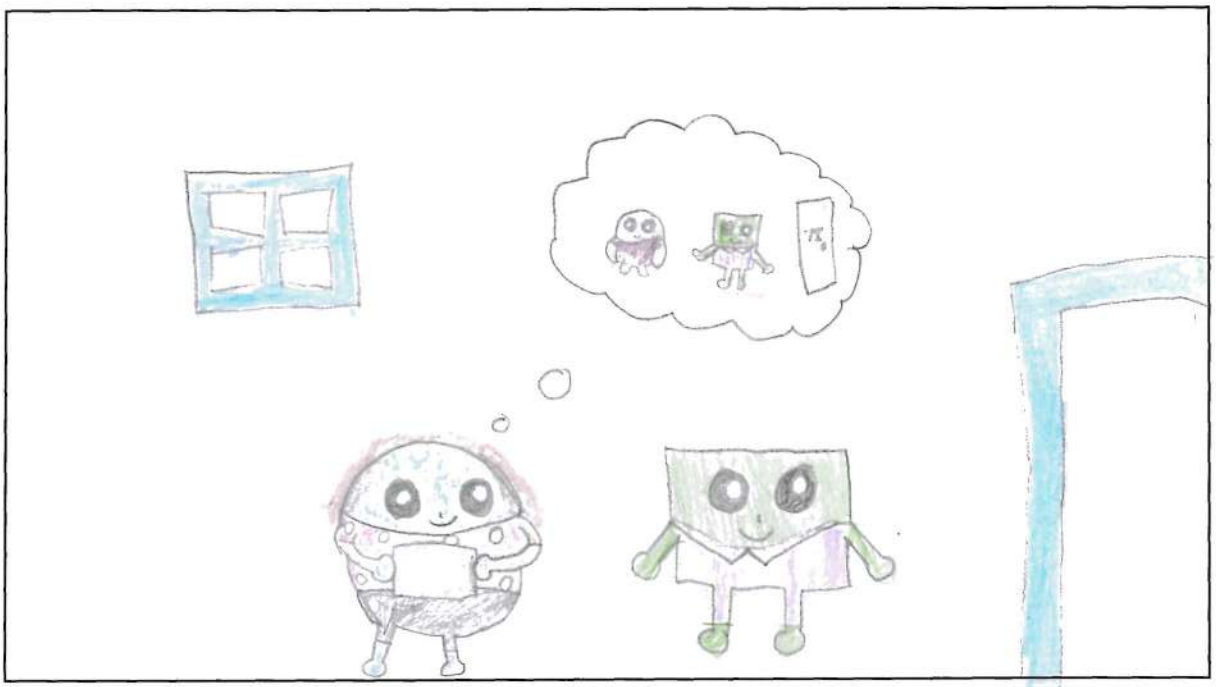


"What on earth?"
Her map was not a map at all. It looked like a graph with labelled dots and along some lines were numbers from -10 to 10.

Robin was baffled.
Robin had been given clear instructions not to be late.
Horrorstruck, Robin thought of what would happen if she was late on her first day.

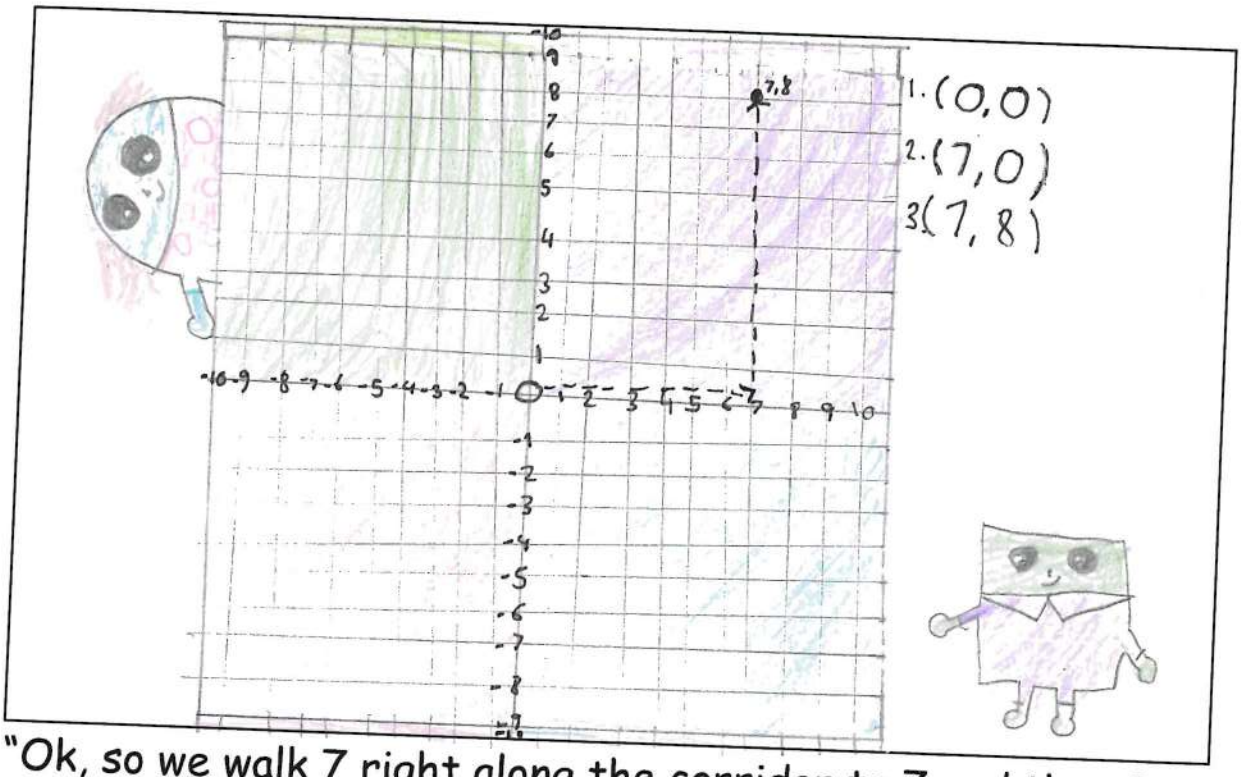
"Errr, Holly? What is this map?" Robin raced back to the metal door but Holly was gone.

Robin sighed.
What was she going to do?
And what didn't help was that everyone around her was rushing past, knowing exactly where to go.
Although there was ONE person who also seemed to be lost.
Robin headed towards him, trying to give herself some self-confidence.
"Breath, breath." Robin muttered.
"Hello, are you lost?" Robin asked.
"Yeah. It's my first day here. I'm trying to get to office 7,8," He said."And by the way my name is Trevor."
"My name is Robin. And, I am also trying to get to office 7,8!" Robin exclaimed.



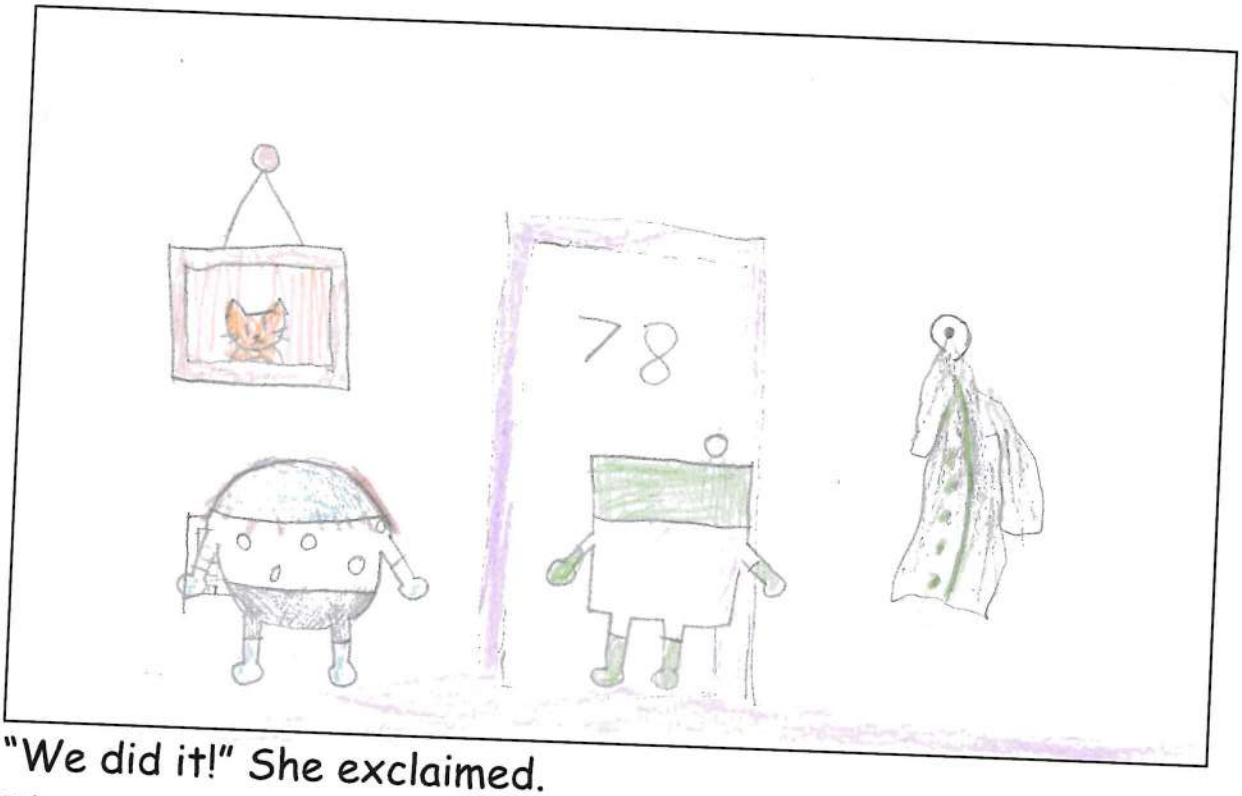
"Maybe we can get there together! Do you have a map?" Trevor asked.
"Yeah, but I don't understand it,"
"Hmmm, I think I've seen this before. I will explain!"
"That's great!"

"Ok, this is called coordinates. 0,0 ,the point in the middle, is where the entrance is, which is where we are now. See? It's labelled. Are you following?"
"I-I think so," Robin replied.
"Anyways, Office 7,8 is labelled here, near the top. We need to go 7 steps along the corridor to 7 because you have to start along the x-axis first and then 8 steps up the stairs to 8 on the y-axis."
"Right."
"So take me to the office."



"Ok, so we walk 7 right along the corridor to 7 and then 8 up the stairs to 8! Let's go!" Robin cried.
They darted past everyone else, Robin's amber-coloured hair whipping behind her to door 0,7.
"What do we do next?" Trevor wondered.
"We go up the stairs to 7,8!" Robin figured out.
They rushed up the stairs, not even pausing to catch their breath.

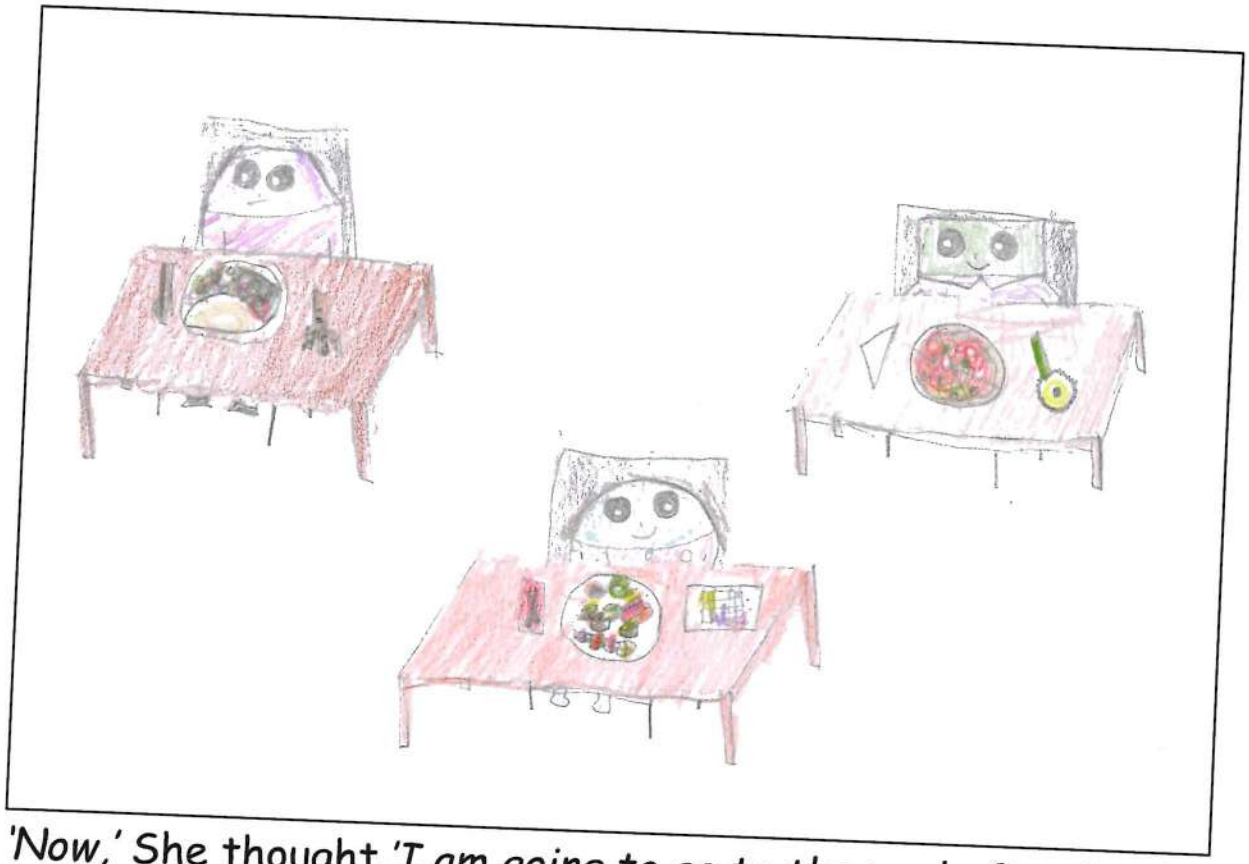
Finally, they stopped outside room 7,8. Robin checked the map.



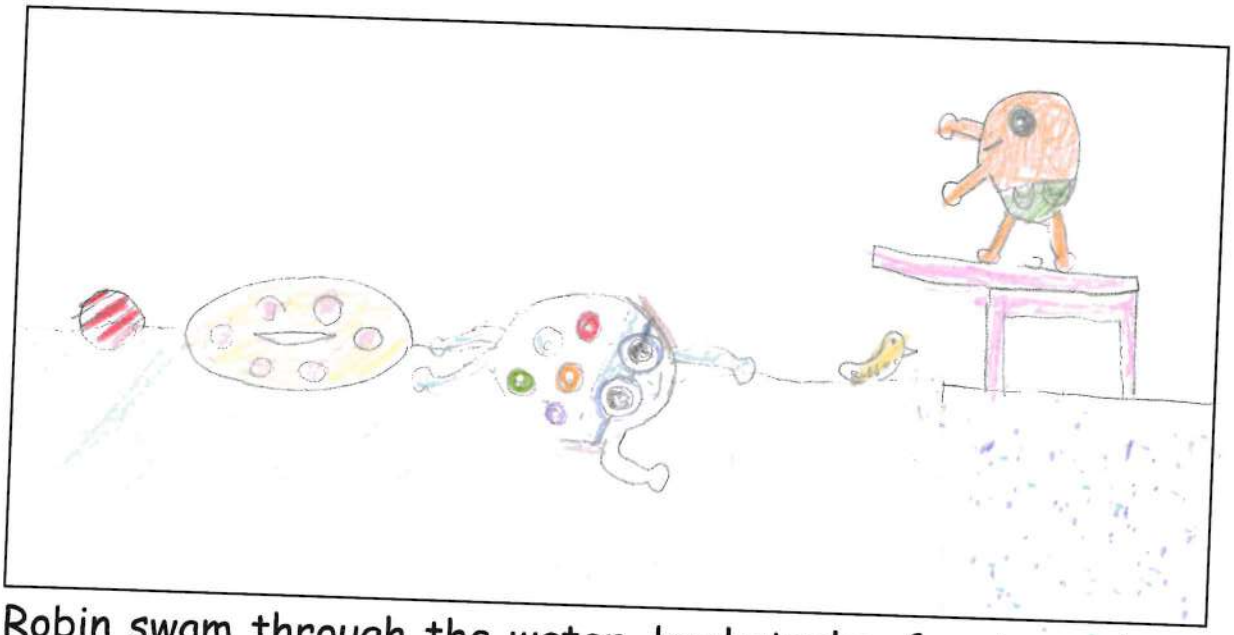
"We did it!" She exclaimed.
They swung the door open and went inside. Robin sat down on a chair and began her work.

When her work was done, she looked at the map.
'I need some lunch.' Robin thought to herself.*'If my office is at 7,8 and the canteen is at -3,-5, I need to go 10 left along the corridor to -3 and 13 down the stairs, underground to -5!'*
Robin told Trevor and they trotted down the hall and down the stairs.

They arrived at the canteen and Robin chose her lunch.
"Hotdogs or sushi?" She wondered aloud.
In the end, Robin chose sushi.
"Yum!" She said.



'Now,' She thought. *'I am going to go to the pool after lunch.'*
She looked at the map.
'The swimming pool is at 5,-9 and I am at -3,-5 so I need to go 8 right along the corridor and 4 down the stairs.'
She left the canteen and strode right and then hopped down the stairs.
She put on her swimming costume and dived into the pool. A big splash echoed off the walls.



Robin swam through the water, backstroke, front crawl and then dolphin.

She looked at her watch. It was time to go home.
'One more time,' She thought.'I am at 5,-9 and to leave I need to get to 0,0. I have to go 5 left along the corridor and 9 up the stairs'.

She walked left and then pulled herself up the stairs.
Once she was outside, the cold breeze hit her.
Holly was standing at the gate.
"Did you have fun today?" She asked.
"Loads." Robin replied."I can't wait to come again tomorrow!"

Robin strode out the gate, hiding her cheeky grin.

As Robin walked home, she recalled her busy day in her head.
'First I talked to Holly, then I got lost but Trevor helped me and taught me about coordinates on the map. I worked in the office, had sushi at the canteen and swam in the pool. Then I talked to Holly again and walked home.'

THE END

BLURB

It is Robin's first day at work. She has been given a map to get to her office; number 7,8 but doesn't understand it. She then meets Trevor who teaches her about coordinates on the map. They have to work together to find their way to the office and get around for the day. But they can't be late...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

My name is Willow and I live in England with my brother, my sister and my parents. I go to St Christophers School in London. I chose to write my maths story about coordinates because I think it is a really fun topic and I wanted to show how much coordinates can come up in everyday life.
Also, on a coordinates grid, you have to go along the corridor and up the stairs so I thought that fit very well seeing as the story was based in a building.