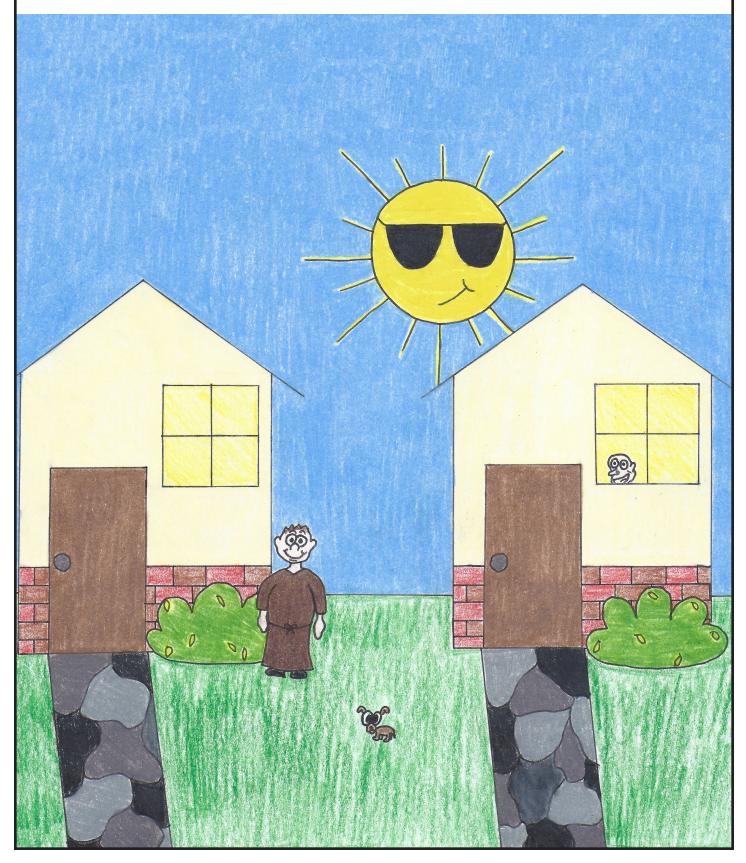
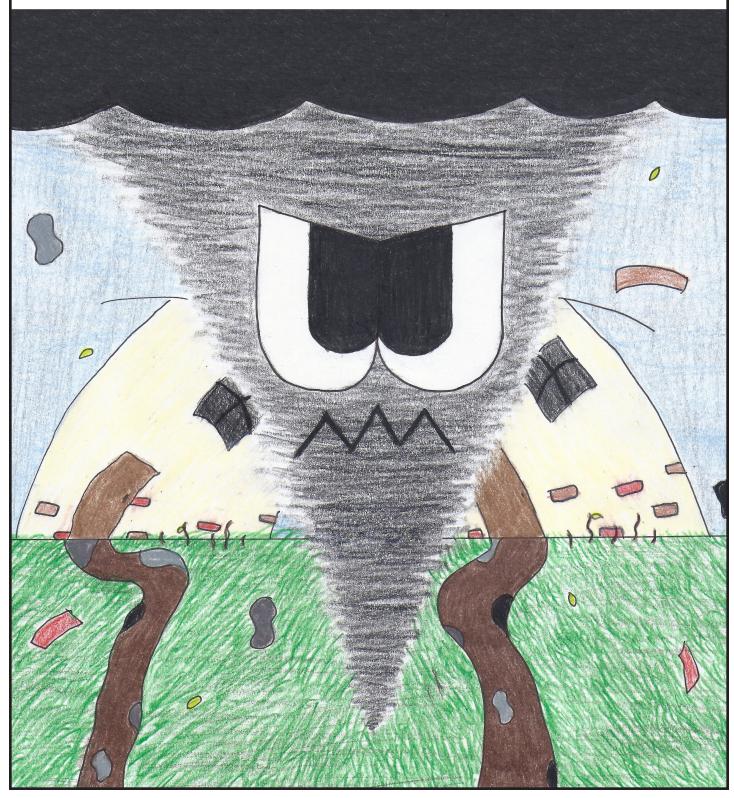
## The Perfect Place

Written by Jialin Wu Illustrated by Alexa Crookston Once upon a time, there was a happy village with a happy king. They lived happily, trading and sharing with each other.

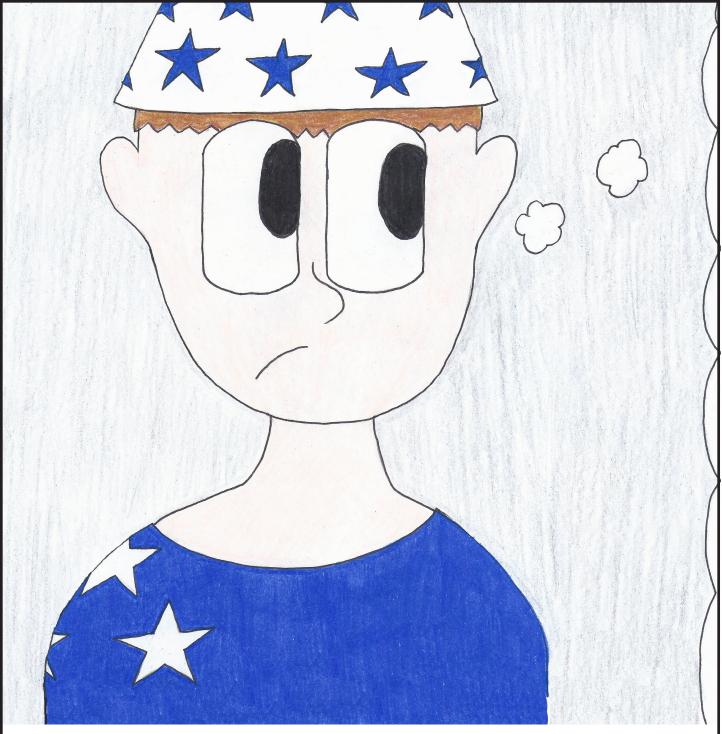


One day, something bad happened. A tornado came through the village tearing apart houses and sending crops through the air. Trash and debris were scattered in the pathways. The village was ruined. The king had to make sure a disaster like this could never happen again.



The king summoned Connor. Connor was a well-known wizard among the people of the kingdom, and the king wanted his help. The king knew that old wizards were wise. "Your majesty, the king, how may I help you?" asked Connor. Connor bowed, his pointy wizard hat falling over his face. This wizard was a child!

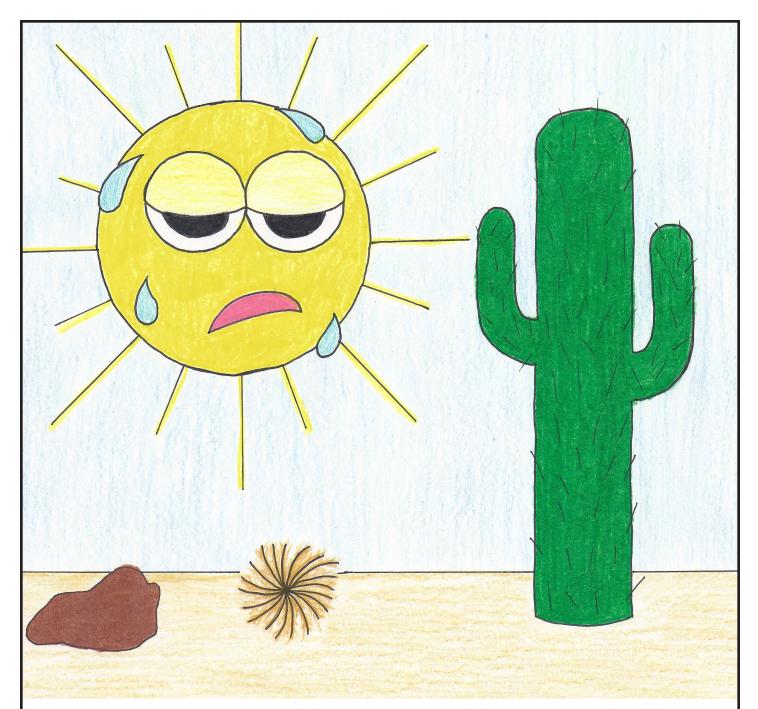




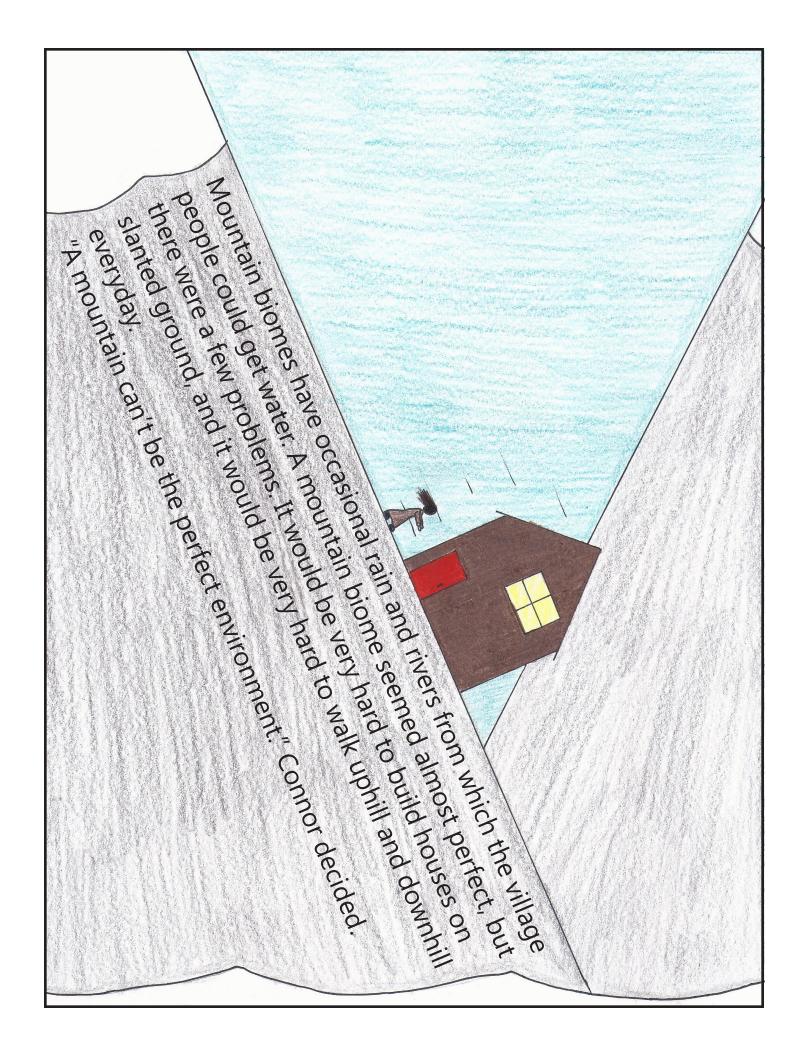
For a moment, the king wondered whether a little boy could do the task. The king decided to trust Connor. "I need you to create the perfect environment; a biome suitable for my kingdom," said the king. Connor was happy that the king put him in charge of somthing so important. He agreed to the job and set off to work. The village would need to have water for the animals and villagers. A wetland had plenty of water, but it had too much water. Wetlands have too much rain, and the dirt would soak up the water. The houses of the village would sink in the mud.

"A wetland wouldn't work," Connor thought.



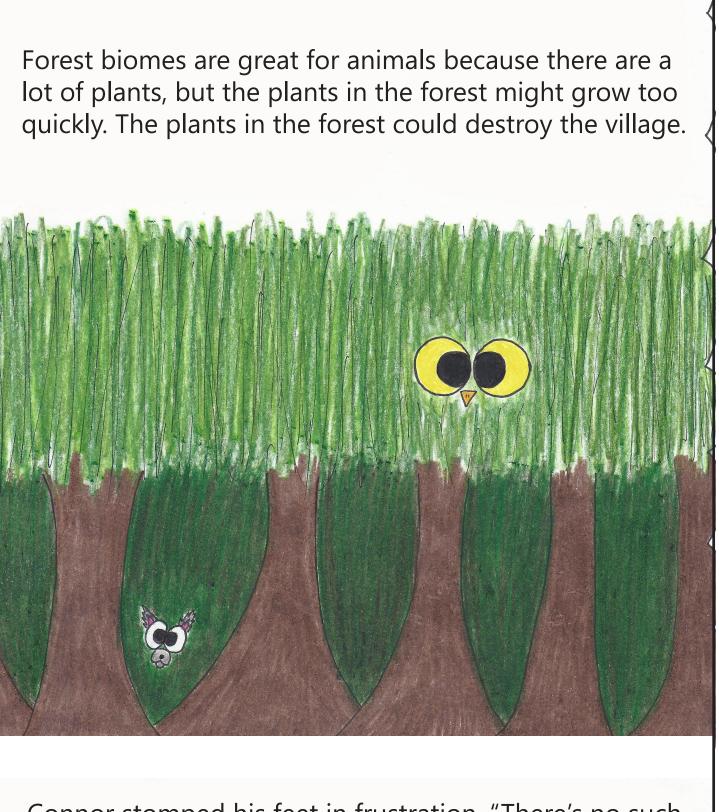


"What biome would have less water?" Connor wondered. In a desert biome it hardly ever rains, but a desert biome had another problem. Deserts were very dry, so most plants and animals could not live there. Every living thing needed water in order to live. "The village could not thrive on a desert," Connor figured.





Grassland biomes have good soil for planting, and there is a lot of grass for animals to eat. The floor of a plains biome is flat and even, and it rains occasionally in a plains biome. A grassland biome seemed perfect, but tornadoes happen more often in grasslands. "A grassland can't be the perfect environment, because another tornado might come," Connor realized.



Connor stomped his feet in frustration, "There's no such thing as a perfect biome!" he yelled.



Connor took off his hat and began to give up, when another wizard appeared. "Don't give up, Connor!" It was Alex! Connor's best friend. "Two brains are better than one," Alex said. Connor slowly put his hat back on and agreed, "You're right, it would be easier to do this together."

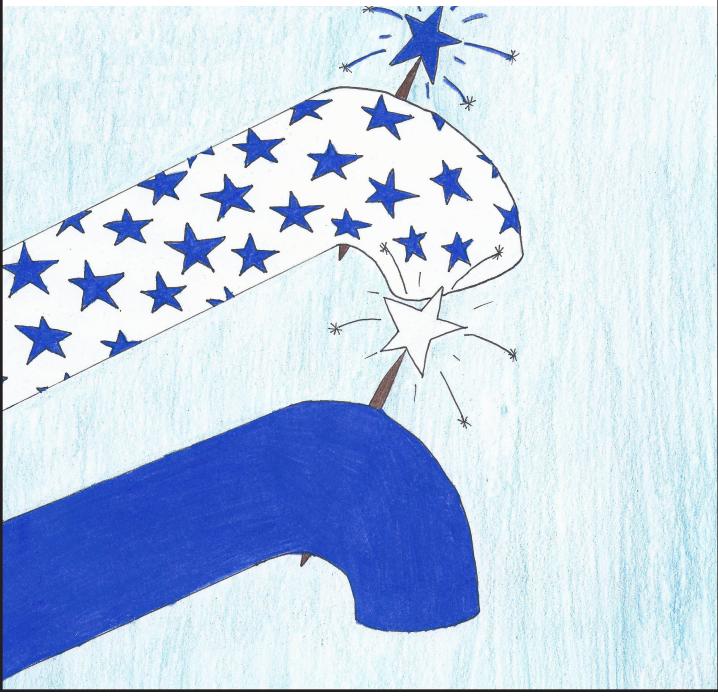




"A plains biome would be a good place, but tornadoes are common in flat places," Connor explained to Alex. The two wizards thought in silence for a moment. "We could surround the place with mountains," Alex suggested, "The mountains will block out the tornadoes." "You think we should put two biomes next to each other?" Connor asked.

Alex smiled, "We'll call it a valley!" he said.

Alex and Connor excitedly shared their idea with the king. Together, they ran outside to fix the village. "I don't know if I can cast a spell that powerful," worried Connor. "We'll do it together," said Alex. Together Connor and Alex cast a spell to fix the ruined village. With a wave of their wands, the dirt and the rocks rose from the ground to become big mountains. In a puff of smoke, the grassland was formed. They created a beautiful grassland surrounded by mountains. Finally, the valley was built.





The village cheered when the valley was created. People were chatting, laughing, and some people were gathering water from the mountain streams. The village people were already beginning to rebuild houses and plant crops.



The king was pleased. He loved the biome combination of mountains and grassland. He thanked Connor and Alex and gave them a reward. "For your great thinking, you are now known as the Kingdom Wizards," The king gave them each a new wand and a medallion. In the end, everyone lived happily ever after. Connor was a teacher in wizard school. Alex spent a lot of time studying magic. The king was happy and the villagers were too.

It was the perfect place.

