

Kira Kiwi, How Will School be?



Where do I
belong?

written and illustrated by Monica Keszler

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B'NAI B'RITH INTERNATIONAL

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Kira the Kiwi is a bird from far away
Who moved with her mommy to the USA.
A smart little bird, brown and quite shy;
She had little wings but just couldn't fly.



Mommy found a flier for bird school one day,
What a nice place for Kira to run, learn, and play!
“Look, Kira, I found this, a place just for you!”
Kira looked up; could it really be true?





The flier had birds with wind in their
wings,

Birds with bright feathers and voices
to sing.

But no birds in the photo were stuck
on the ground;

No birds were waltzing with their
feathers of brown.



But Kira still went, as scared as she was,
With her small flightless wings and scruffy brown fuzz,
She walked into class and was scared of a stir.
She picked out a seat by a white-feathered bird.



“We have a new student!” The teacher did say,
“She’s a bird from an island from far, far away.”
Kira blushed and hid; she was scared they would laugh!
But the class only smiled and greeted and clapped.

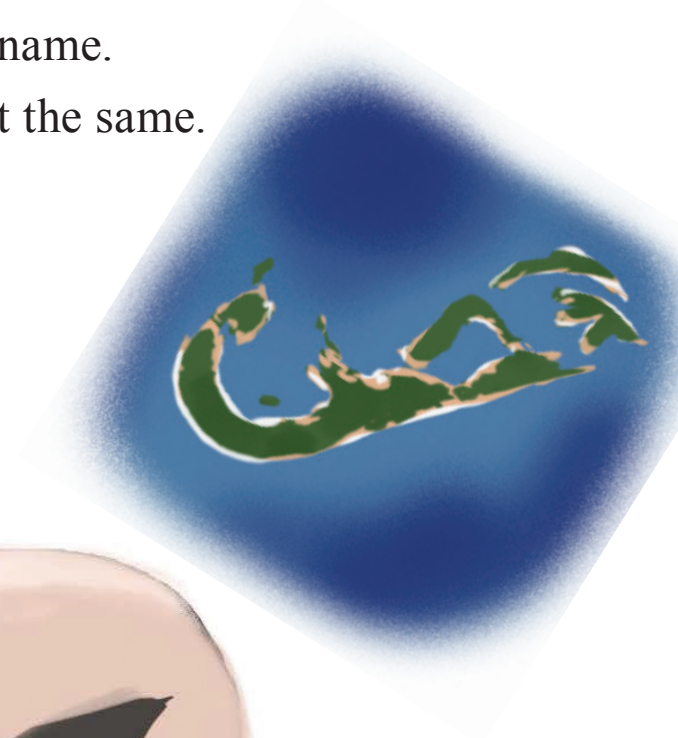
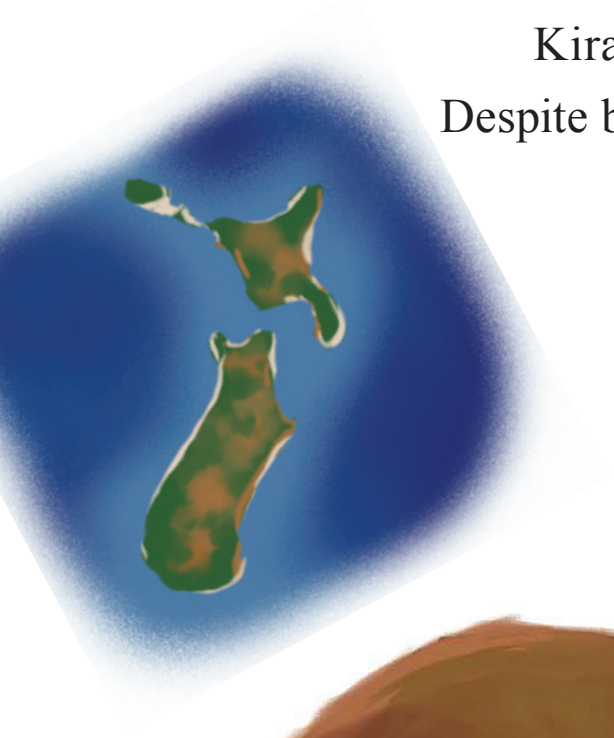


“The white bird grinned, “I’m an island bird too!

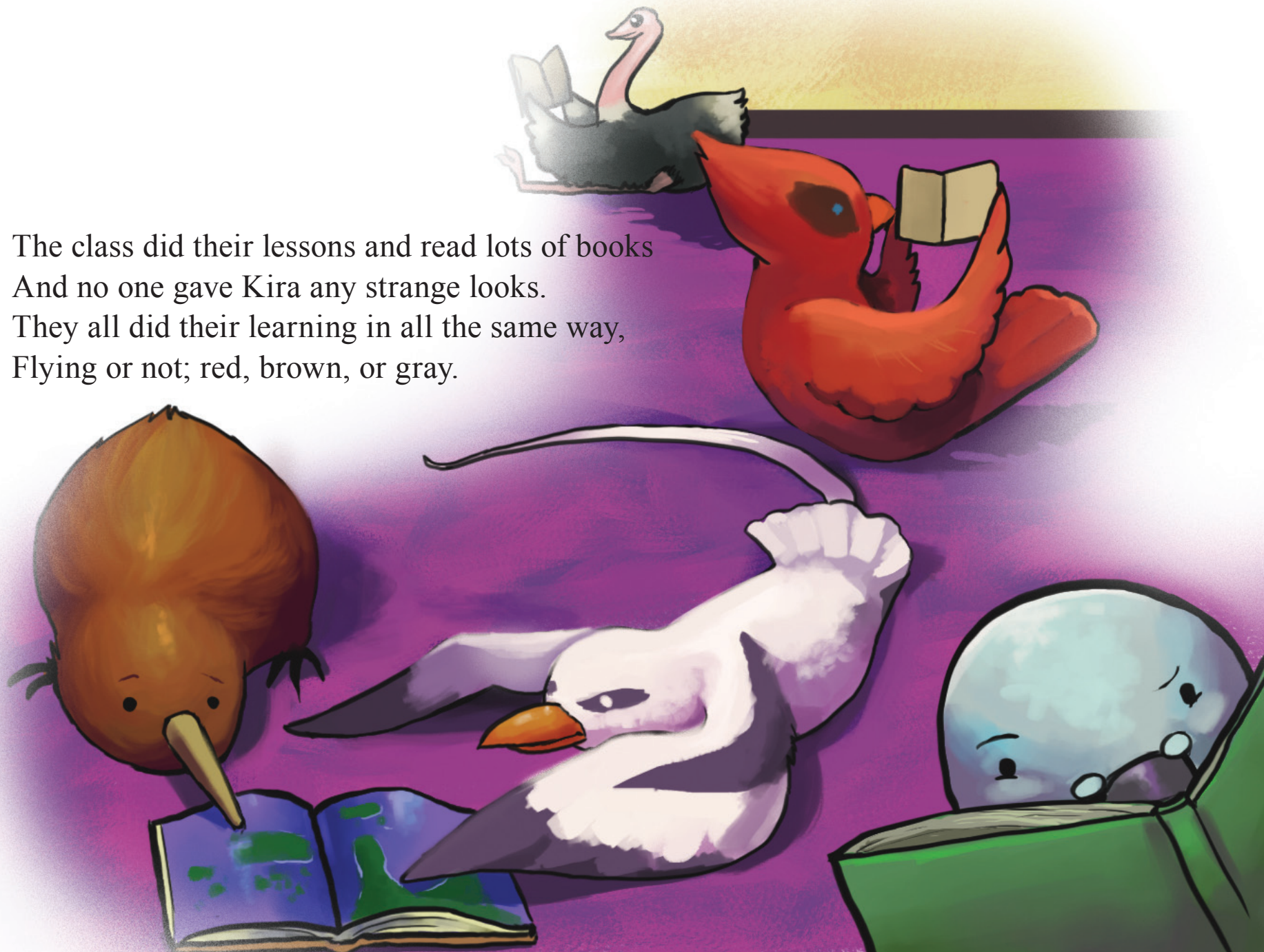
My name is Glitter, it’s nice to meet you!”

Kira smiled at her and told Glitter her name.

Despite being different, they were birds just the same.



The class did their lessons and read lots of books
And no one gave Kira any strange looks.
They all did their learning in all the same way,
Flying or not; red, brown, or gray.



But what about recess?" Kira thought in her head.

"All the flying birds will go on ahead,
Playing fun flying games all up in the sky!"

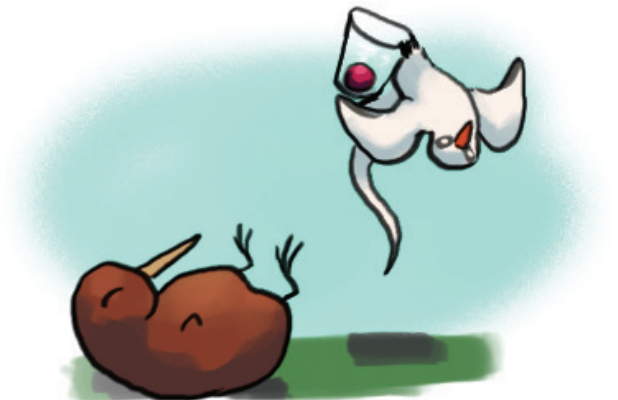
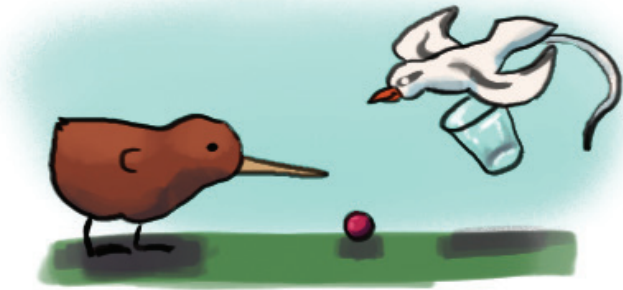
These thoughts made Kira want to go cry.



But when she got outside, Kira did see
Flying and not-flying, playing happily!
The birds on the ground would kick a ball up,
And the flying birds would catch in a cup.



“At Bird School, we want all the birds to have fun
So we all made a game good for everyone!”
Glitter cheered as she flew overhead,
And Kira smiled at what she had said.



So Kira had fun on her first day of school
Meeting birds who could sing or swim in the pool.
But Kira remembered why she'd been scared;
On the flier, only flying birds were shown there.

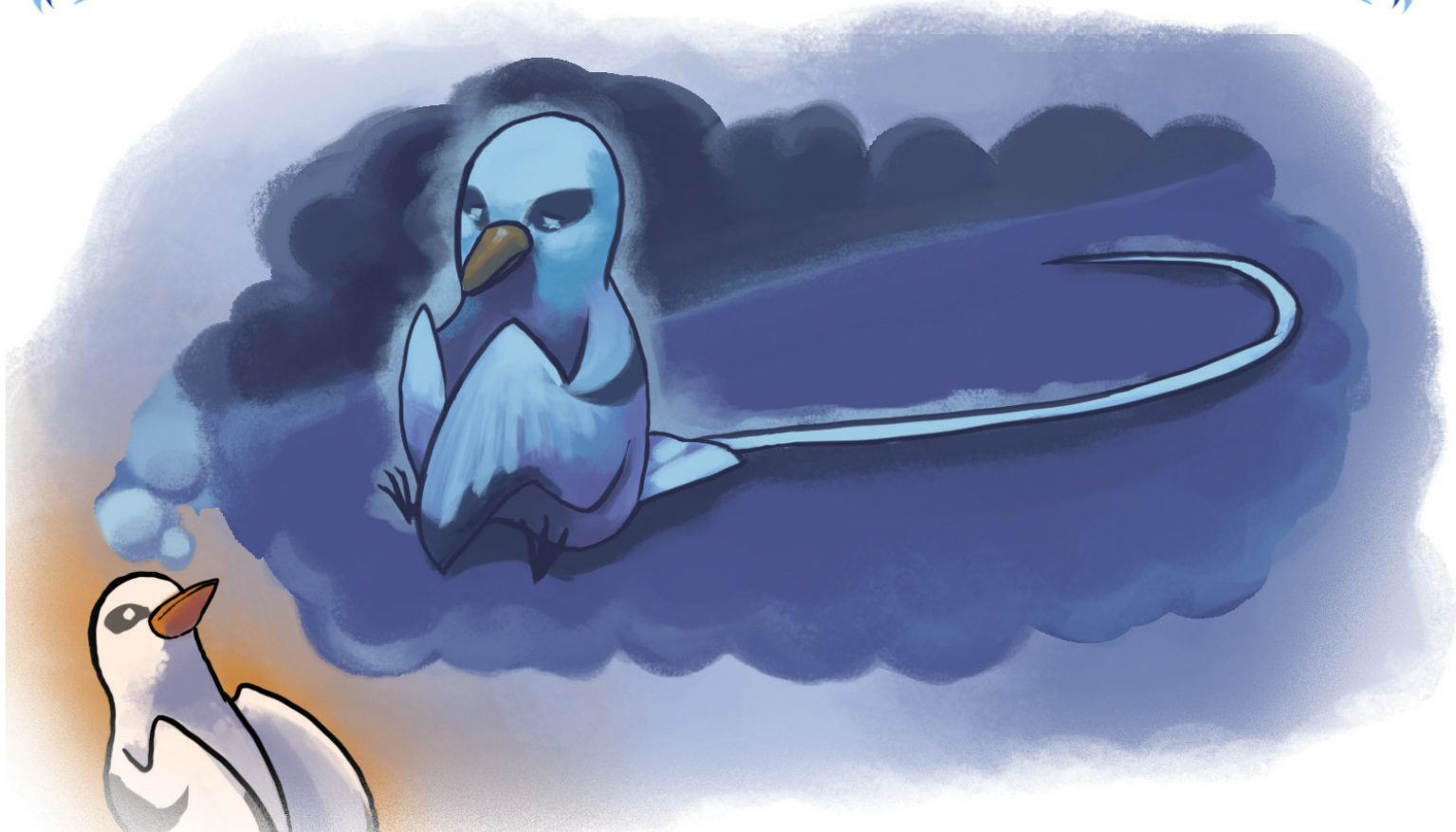




She told Glitter her thoughts, and Glitter agreed

“I was scared, too!” and Kira took heed:

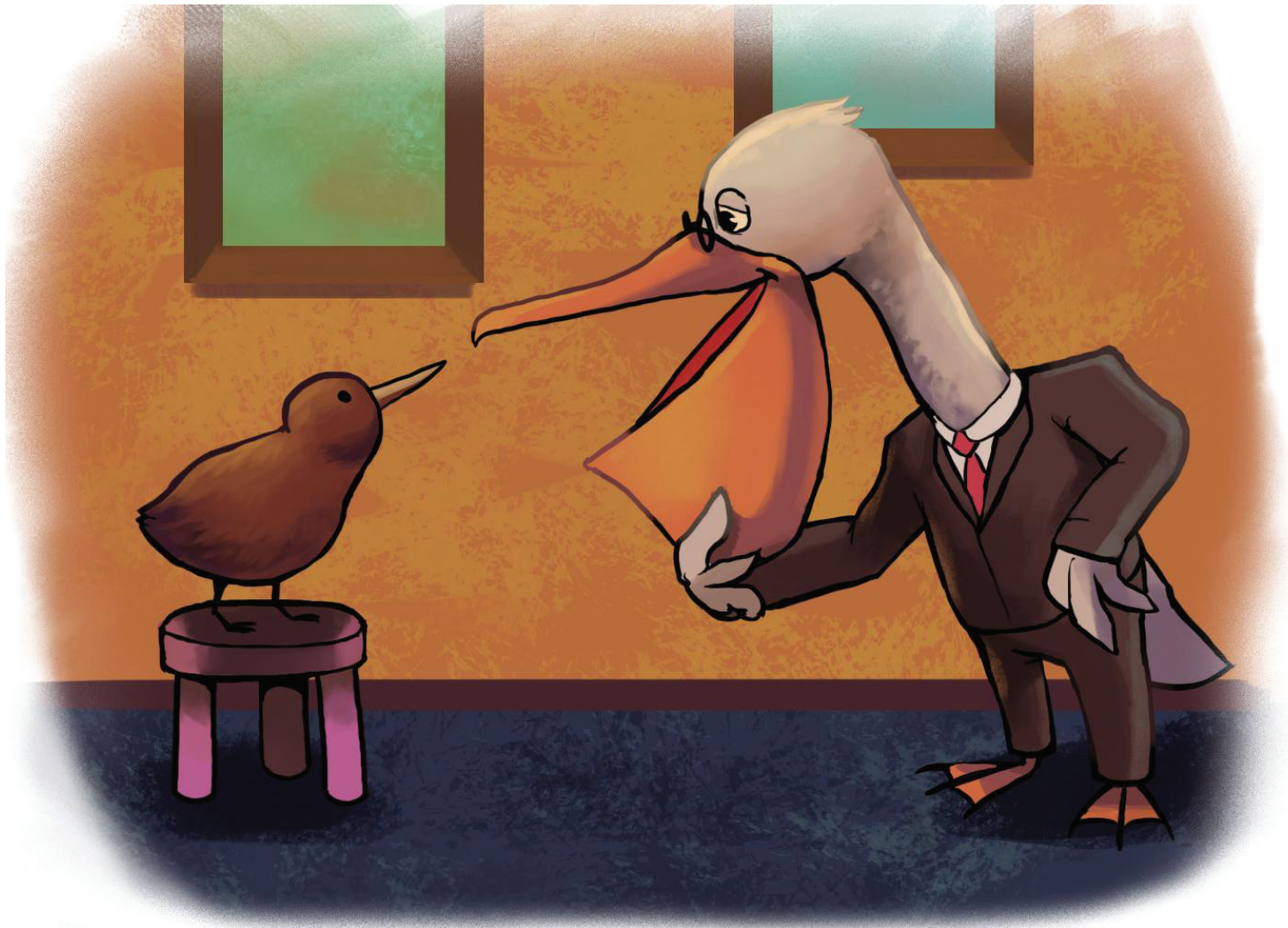
“My tail is so long, and I didn’t see
A bird on the cover with a tail like me!”



So Kira went up to the school principal,
Scared, and, of course, not very tall,
To ask if a photo could go on and show
All sorts of birds she had gotten to know.



The principal looked, and gave it a thought
And let out a laugh, “Of course! I forgot,
This place is a place for birds of all kinds.
Take a new picture? Of course! I don’t mind.”



So a new flier came out with birds of all sorts,
Birds on the ground, birds playing sports,
Birds of all colors, birds singing songs,
Birds with their tails, some short, some long.

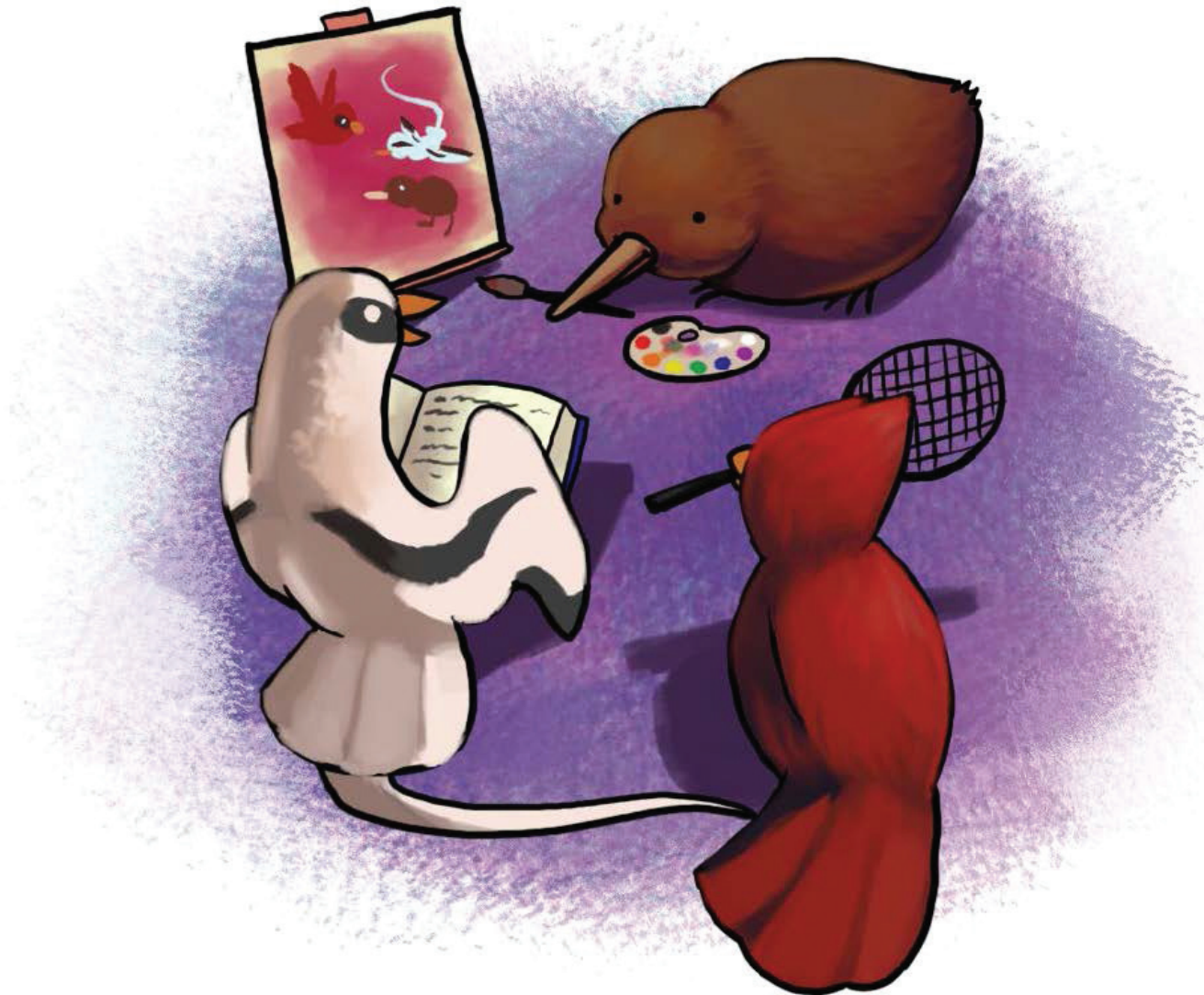


And Kira felt happy, she felt free of fear
That birds could see there's a place for them here.
She made new friends with all sorts of skills
And went on adventures with all sorts of thrills.



She saw it didn't matter if birds are smart,
If they could sing or be good at art,
If they could fly or if they were brown,
Or if they could read a book upside down.

All birds have hearts and all have brains.
On the inside, they are all the same.
All have feelings and know to be nice,
And when being kind, they'd never think twice.



Everyone deserves to be loved and accepted,
Treated kindly and well represented.
And even though people may look different, it's true:
Remember, inside, they are all just like you.



B'nai B'rith International



Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge

Kira Kiwi, How Will School Be?, written and illustrated by Monica Keszler, was created as part of the B'nai B'rith International *Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge* in Delaware and the Delmarva Peninsula.

The *Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge* is an education and awareness initiative created by B'nai B'rith International as part of its series of programs developed to combat bigotry through the promotion of tolerance and equality. The contest aims to present positive views about diversity to a broad range of youth in order to achieve tolerance within our communities.

Executed through public and private high schools within Delaware and the Delmarva Peninsula, the contest asks high school students to write and illustrate a children's book that tells a story of diversity and tolerance. Participants are required to think about how these principles can improve our world, and then create innovative ways to teach these ideas to children through the creation of a book.

Book submissions were reviewed by a local judging panel comprised of business leaders, educators, non-profit community leaders and local officials. Scholarship prizes in the amounts of \$5,000, \$2,000 and \$1,000 are awarded to the first, second and third place winners, and the first-place winning book is professionally published and donated to elementary schools, libraries and literacy organizations.

For more information about the program and next year's contest, please visit www.bnaibrith.org/diverseminds.

Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge

DELAWARE / DELMARVA PENINSULA REGION JUDGING PANEL

B'nai B'rith International would like to thank the following judging panel members for donating their time and talents to reviewing the finalists' submissions and selecting the winners for the 2014 *Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge*.

John J. Allen, Jr.
Region Vice President
Delmarva Power

Susan S. Bunting, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Indian River School District

Anthony S. Goode
Battalion Chief
Wilmington Fire Department

Patti A. Grimes
Executive Director
Carl M. Freeman Foundation

Sophia Hanson
Director of Planning
City of Wilmington, Delaware

Penrose Hollins
Councilman
New Castle County Council

Jim Ireton
Mayor
City of Salisbury, Maryland

James Mathias
Senator, 38th District
State of Maryland

Yolanda R. McCallum
Director of Development
Delaware Children's Museum

Glenn A. Moore
Region Vice President
Delmarva Power

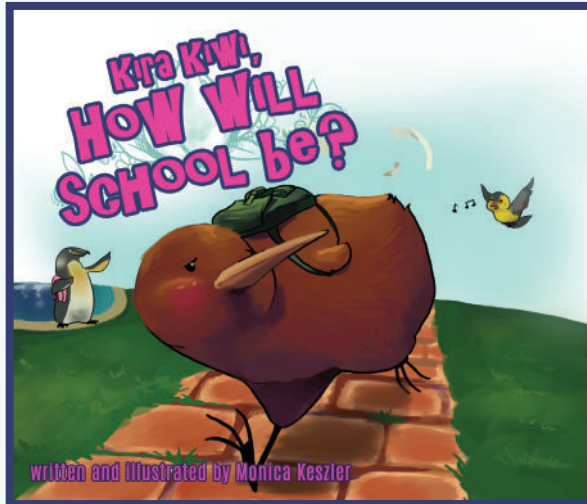
Heather Morrissey
Executive Director
Cecil County Arts Council

Mark Olshan
Associate Executive Vice President
B'nai B'rith International

Gary R. Stockbridge
Region President
Delmarva Power

David M. Velasquez
Executive Vice President
Pepco Holdings, Inc.

FIRST PLACE WINNER



KIRA KIWI, HOW WILL SCHOOL BE?

Written and Illustrated by
Monica Keszler

Charter School of Wilmington
Wilmington, Delaware

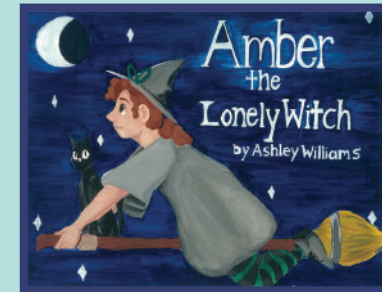
Teacher: Richard Hanel

Monica Keszler, a senior at Charter School of Wilmington and a student of Cab Calloway School of the Arts, was selected as the first place winner of the 2014 *Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge* for the Delmarva Region.

Kira Kiwi, How Will School Be? was inspired by Monica's own experience with attending a new school, full of different people with different talents. Monica has been practicing digital art for six years and has always dreamed of writing a children's book.

"Seeing the great diversity in bird species, I wanted to show that not all birds have the same looks and talents, and not all birds were meant to find freedom in flight. Regardless, just like people, each bird has its own individual purpose and talent in the world, and both birds and people need support and love from the others around them!"

SECOND PLACE WINNER

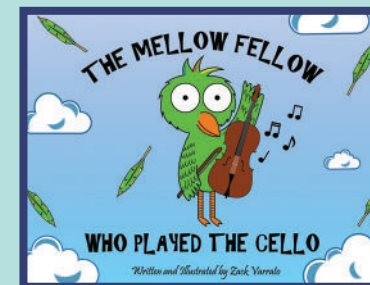


AMBER THE LONELY WITCH

Written and Illustrated by
Ashley Williams

Padua Academy
Wilmington, Delaware

THIRD PLACE WINNER

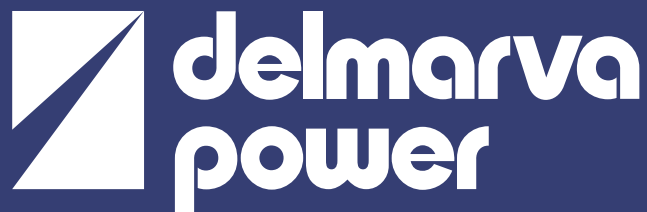


THE MELLOW FELLOW WHO PLAYED THE CELLO

Written and Illustrated by
Zack Varrato

Sussex Technical High School
Georgetown, Delaware

PROGRAM SUPPORTER



B'nai B'rith International would like to thank Delmarva Power for its support of the *Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge* in the Delmarva Region.

Delmarva Power provides safe and reliable energy to 501,000 electric delivery customers in Delaware and the Delmarva Peninsula and about 124,000 natural gas delivery customers in northern Delaware.

Delmarva Power is committed to ensuring that our customers continue to receive the highest quality service. We place a high value on being a good corporate citizen. We conduct our business responsibly and in a manner designed to protect the health and safety of our employees, our customers, the general public and the environment. We encourage and support our employees who give their time and energy creating a brighter future for others.

Delmarva Power attaches great importance to learning from and working with the diverse cultures that make up our community, and we are proud to be a part of the *Diverse Minds Youth Writing Challenge* in our region.

"Being connected to our communities must be more than through the power lines. Like all good corporate citizens, we have to play a role in the health and well being of the areas we serve. In the end, we are residents too, and we benefit along with the larger community when we make the effort to make a positive difference in the lives of others."

Joseph M. Rigby
Chairman, President & Chief Executive Officer
Pepco Holdings, Inc.