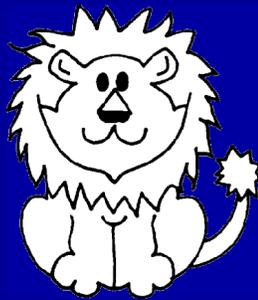


## Gratitude

Thankful, grateful,  
appreciative



# A Lion's Life

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 3

2 / 11 / 2011

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## Helping the Animals with Donations

By Keely S.

Have you ever thought about helping animal shelters? Well, now it's your chance! The Spring Avenue student council is collecting supplies for the Hinsdale Humane Society and a bird shelter called A Refuge for Saving Wildlife.

During the month of February, students at Spring Avenue can bring supplies for these shelters to school. Student Council is creating a big graph to show how many items everyone has brought in. The shelters will use our donations to help the animals that are waiting for adoption.

Are you wondering what the items are? Here is a list of some things for the two shelters:



### Animal Care Supplies

- Kitty litter (non clumping, clay litter)
- Canned cat food (no fish flavors)
- Canned dog food  
Purina kitten/cat chow or Purina Puppy/dog chow

### Laundry and Cleaning Supplies

- Liquid bleach
- Laundry detergent (HE: High Efficiency)
- Clorox or Lysol Antibacterial wipes

### Paper/Plastic Goods and Office Supplies

- Copy/Printer paper (white or colored)
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Postage Stamps

### Monetary Donations

- Donations of gift cards (PetSmart, Staples, Sam's club, Jewel)
- Cash & volunteer time are also greatly appreciated!

Thanks from the animals for your donations and support!



## 6th Grade Takes A Closer Look At Mars

By: Joanna Z. and Katie W.

This quarter in Science, the 6th grade classes are studying Mars. Here are some facts about the red planet.

To begin, Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun. Mars is 230 million km from the Sun.

Mars is often called the red planet because it looks red through a telescope. The planet gets its color from iron oxide which results in a light mostly in the red part of the spectrum.

Mars is named after a Roman god. Mars is the god of war. When the Romans first saw Mars, they saw the color of blood, and the war god was a perfect fit.

Mars and Earth are rapidly converging, and get 30km closer about every second. Possibly sometime in late summer, Mars will look like a blaze in contrast to the night sky.

Percival Lowell, a famous astronomer (who dis-

covered the Mars canals), once witnessed a close encounter of the two planets sometime in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Much later in June, 2003, a man in Tampa, Florida took pictures throughout the summer that show Mars zooming towards earth.

The polar ice cap is part of the reason that Mars can be seen from so far away. The dry ice reflects light off the sun and gives the planet a glowing appearance.



# Principal's Corner

By: Mrs. Webb



Dear Families,

## **My first thought and words of wisdom are all about gratitude!**

We are so very fortunate at Spring Avenue Elementary School to have the wonderful support and complete involvement of our families that we do. We could not do what we do without the amazing parents, grandparents and other relatives in the community that stay involved in our daily activities. From Fun Lunch to helping with shoveling, from reading to classes to shelving books, from making dragons for Chinese New Year to raising money for the Children's Diabetes Foundation, from helping with parties to helping with homework, from After 3 arrangements and pickups to After 3 instruction, and from silent auctions and raising money to Fun Fair baskets, we thank you! We know how lucky we are! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

As we move forward to warmer weather, I want to acknowledge the great efforts by everyone to help children get to and from school safely and for helping with homework on a daily basis. Children all respond to homework responsibilities in different ways, but it is the commit-

ment of parents, teachers and staff to work together to help students with what they need. We will begin a Homework Club for 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders on February 22<sup>nd</sup> where students will be asked to call home and let a parent or guardian know that they will be staying after school, under the supervision of a teacher, to complete homework that they did not complete. Please look for the letter and permission slip that will explain this process. It is not a punishment and will not be handled in a punitive manner, but it will increase communication between school and home and provide students with logical consequences. It will increase their readiness for school as well as knowledge and preparation for activities.

The weather has not cooperated with us and has added some extra challenges for dropping off students in the mornings. We realize that the drop off line in front of the building is longer than ever and we appreciate the amazing efforts to plan ahead a bit and to help students get here safely. Please continue to follow the traffic rules, stay in the car, pull up one at a time and do not pass another car in efforts to get through the line more quickly. We've been adding a minute or

two to the start of the day in order to compensate for this extra challenge. In other words, students are not marked tardy if they arrive a minute or two late due to the present circumstances.

By now, you should have been given a notice about the Parent-Teacher Conference make-up day. We will be holding conferences district wide on Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Please see the letter sent in your child's backpack or online for details. We have asked parents to respond with their preferences for this conference as soon as possible. We will be calling families to coordinate times on Monday afternoon, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Please list a phone number that is most convenient for you. You may also email me to let me know or to ask any questions you may have. We value you and this partnership with all of our families.

Thank you again for, well, for everything! You are appreciated and we are so very grateful to work with you to help all students grow!

Now, let's all start rooting for SPRING!

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Webb  
Principal

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# The History of Valentine's Day

By Kathleen C. and Samantha R.



Valentine's Day is not a religious or legal holiday. It is different from most of our holidays because schools, banks, and stores are all open. This holiday gets its name from Saint Valentine.

There were many saints named Valentine but the most famous one lived in Rome around the year 270. During those years many of the Roman people believed in their old gods, so Christian believers were not able to worship publicly. For Saint Valentine this was a problem because he was a Christian priest. Many of the Christians were imprisoned because of what they believed. Saint Valentine was one of those sent to prison. Oddly enough, he was cheerful in prison where he was said to have cured someone who was blind. Although because of this miracle, he was sentenced to death. He was decapitated on February 14th.

Another ancient holiday that the Romans used to celebrate instead of Valentine's Day was a holiday to celebrate Juno, the queen of the gods. Young men would choose the names of girls to be their partners in dances and games.

When the Romans became Christians, old traditions were kept but the holiday was given a new name. The name



was Valentine's Day. One old tradition that was kept was the pairing of young couples. No one knows why, how, or when Saint Valentine's Day became so popular from Rome to Northern Europe.

Valentine's Day was first celebrated in America by settlers from the British Isles. In the middle ages young men and women in many countries would pick the name of their valentines just as the Romans used to do.

In old stories cupid was a chubby young boy with wings. He shot arrows into people's hearts. These arrows did not hurt people but made them fall in love with whoever was nearby and that is the legend of cupid. That is some of the history of Valentine's Day!!



The Great Chicago Fire supposedly started when the O'Leary's cow, Daisy, kicked a lantern down in the barn. There is evidence that suggests she did. The O'Leary's had just laid up plenty of coal, wood shavings, and hay to see them and their livestock through the winter. All of this fed the fire that the knocked-over lantern started. Kate O'Leary revealed to different people the

## Chicago History Corner

By: Kelly C.

morning after the blaze began, when she was in her barn, that one of their cows kicked over a lantern.

Despite the story about Daisy, one can find good reason to think that poor Mrs. O'Leary and her cow Daisy, were innocent.

This famous disaster began the night of October 8, 1871. Fire-fighters exhausted from fighting a fire the day before, were sent to the wrong neighborhood. By the time they finally got to the O'Leary's, they found the fire raging out of control. It spread East and North. At that time, streets, sidewalks, and many building were made of wood. Wooden houses, commercial and industrial buildings and private mansions were all consumed in the fire. The fire finally died out on

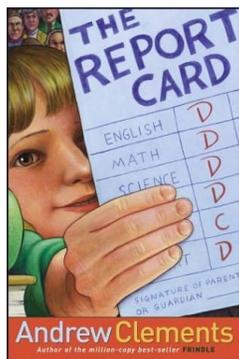
October 10, 1871 after many hours of rain. The fire had destroyed 18,000 buildings and 100,000 of the city's 300,000 people were left homeless. Also, \$200 million worth of property was destroyed and 300 people died.

Shock Bigford & Company selling cigars, tobacco, fruit and cider at old prices is generally credited for being the first retail enterprise to open in the devastated downtown. Later on after the fire, builders developed the use of steel framing for support and they invented the skyscraper in Chicago.

The Great Chicago Fire was one of the most spectacular last events of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and it is recognized as a major milestone in the city's history.

# Book Review: The Report Card by Andrew Clements

By Nora W. and Taylor S.



Nora Rose Rowley is a girl who is very smart but doesn't want to show it, because she doesn't want to hurt her best friend Stephen's feelings. She is in 5th grade.

Nora purposely gets average grades to show she is an average student. She searches the Internet on advanced subjects such as educational theory and alternative energy sources because school is

too easy for her. She has kept her knowledge a secret since kindergarten.

At the beginning of the book, Nora is in the back of the bus with Stephen, reviewing grades. Later that night, her parents open the report card to reveal the shocking contents. Now, Nora's got an angry gang of grown ups thinking she's really dumb, her parents are shocked with her

grades, and they're doing an additional evaluation of her. But after she loses her temper at lunch one day, and gives a bully what he deserves, her additional evaluation ends and everyone discovers how smart Nora really is.

You should read this book because this is a good book and it makes sure that you don't try to get bad grades. We recommend this book for grades 3-5.

## Who Am I?

By: Kendall F.

- ? My favorite book is Bridge to Terabithia.
- ? My favorite music is classical music and songs from musicals.
- ? *Heart and Souls* is my favorite movie.
- ? Writing is my favorite subject.
- ? My favorite sport is horseback riding.
- ? Seafood and chocolate are my favorite foods.
- ? Utah and the Dominican Republic are my two favorite vacation spots.
- ? My favorite season is Fall.
- ? Nemo is my favorite fish.
- ? My favorite animals are lions, puppies, and horses.
- ? My birthday is August 15.

Do you know who I am? Turn to the last page to see if you're right!



## Zoom, Zoom, Zoom

By Clare C.

Look closely, can you guess what the objects are at the right? To find the answers, go to the back page. Good Luck!



# A Lion's Life Crossword Puzzle

By: Olivia B.

Read the articles in this newspaper to find the answers to the crossword.

	1						2					3						
4																		
						5												
6																		
7								8										
9																		
			10															

## ACROSS

1. a plump young boy with wings
2. Name of robotic friend
4. Impressionist artist
5. Nickname of fourth planet from the sun
6. new face in the spring office
7. the cow the cow that kicked over the lantern that started the Chicago fire
8. Humane Society event
9. Who am I's favorite fish
10. What Nora purposely tries to bring down in The Report Card

## DOWN

1. Favorite dipping sauce
2. Spring's favorite color
3. one of Mr. Wydra's favorite hobbies
8. En-dangered animal

Find the answers on the next page!

# Teacher Spotlight

## The Story Behind Mrs. Coltri

By Clare C. and MacKenzie B.

Mrs. Coltri grew up in Chicago with her 2 brothers and her 2 sisters. She is a huge Sox fan. After college she had her 3 wonderful kids. She has 2 boys and 1 girl who are in their mid 20s. Mrs. Coltri has no pets. In her free time she likes to read, meditate, and ice skate. Her favorite book is Seat of the Soul, by Gary Zukow.

Before she came to Spring Avenue she worked at a hospital and at the Quarry. Mrs. Coltri is a great addition to Spring Avenue School.

## Magnificent Mr. Wydra

By Taylor S. and Nora W.

Mr. Wydra is a new paraprofessional at Spring Avenue. He attended Northern Illinois University. He was the co-director for the musical last year. Mr. Wydra has been involved in theatre since 5<sup>th</sup> grade. He's been in over 15 plays throughout elementary and high school. One of his favorite Broadway musicals is *Wicked*.

Mr. Wydra also works part time at a clothing store. His hobbies include musical theatre, shopping, making others smile, laughing, and not playing sports. Mr. Wydra's favorite type of music is pop/rock.

He likes working with 6<sup>th</sup> graders because there are a lot of familiar faces from the musical. In his free time, Mr. Wydra likes to go out to dinner with his friends, go see a plays or movies, grab some coffee and have long conversations with his friends. Mr. Wydra's favorite thing about teaching is that every day throws something different at him.

His favorite color is purple, because in 1<sup>st</sup> grade when he was in art class he discovered purple by mixing red and blue and that's when he fell in love. He concluded by saying that he is very happy to be at Spring Avenue and wishes everyone a whimsical year.

## Tech Time: Focus on Bina 48

By Joey P. and Owen F.

We did some research and saw a video with a robotic interview with a humanoid robot named Bina 48. Who is actually based on a real person named Bina Rothblat.

Bina 48 is the first of her kind and she knows she's not the real Bina but has a mind of her own. One day she hopes to be more like the real Bina. She is very indecisive, first Bina talks about gardening then talks about conspiring on taking over the world. (To find more info search robot interviews.)

Bina 48 is high tech prototype that might be the key to future robot "household helpers!"

That's the scoop, and see you next time on "Tech Time with Joey. P and Owen. F."

## ANSWERS

### Crossword

On Page 5

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1 cupid      | 1. Chocolate |
| 2 Bina       | 2. Blue      |
| 4 Monet      | 3. Theater   |
| 6 Coltri     | 8. Foxes     |
| 7 Daisy      |              |
| 8 fundraiser |              |
| 9 Nemo       |              |
| 10 Grades    |              |

# Monet's Paintings Said To Be Better Than A Camera

By Devon W.

Claude Monet was one of the world's most famous artists. He helped invent an important type of painting called impressionism. Monet was born in Paris, France in 1840. Claude loved the way that the colors reflected on the surface of the water. That is why most of Monet's pictures are of sparkling waters. Boats, rivers, lakes, and ponds are some of Monet's favorite subjects to paint about.

When Monet was young, he had a good sense of humor, but he didn't do very well in school. That was probably because he never listened to anybody, and spent most of his time drawing fun-

ny pictures. He even drew funny drawings of his teachers! (Although he got into trouble doing that.)

The way Monet made money was by selling his drawings. One day, an artist named Eugene Boudin convinced Monet to paint instead of draw. It was Boudin who inspired Monet to paint the out doors. He also convinced Monet to paint outside, even in bad weather! Monet loved the idea of painting outdoors. In 1862, he left his home town of Le Havre to study art in Paris. Monet wanted his paintings to become well known so that people would buy them. Monet's paintings were finally respected when he grew older. Claude

Monet lived to be eighty years old, and spent the rest of his life painting beautiful paintings of his water garden, which he had planted himself.

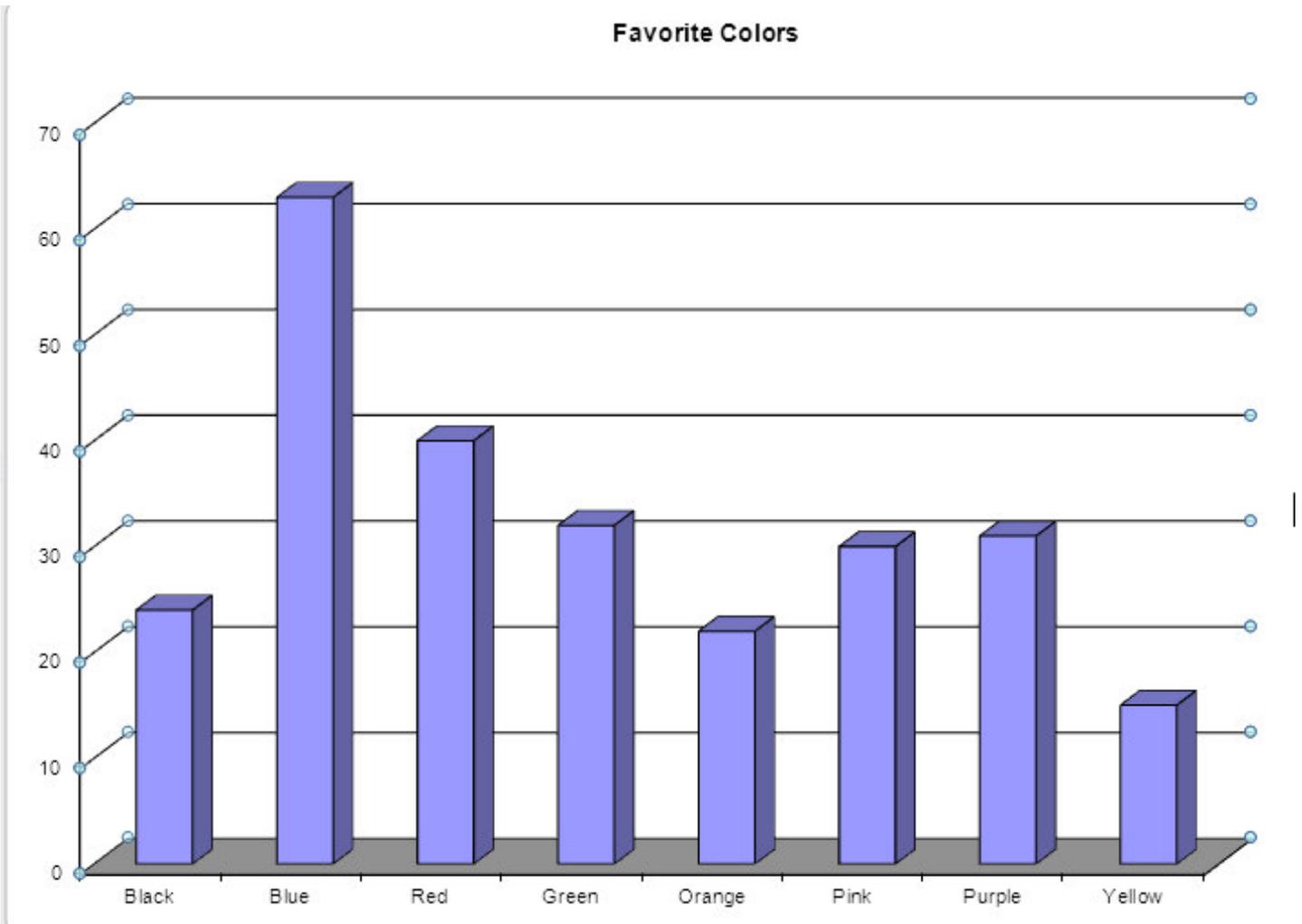
Some people say that Monet's paintings were better than a camera, and that is believed to be true. He could even make mist look real on his paintings. Monet is believed to be one of the world's greatest artists, and I think that it



# Student Survey: What Is Your Favorite Color Spring Ave?

By: Danielle N., Rowan C., and Karol G.

225, ... 226... out of all 226 students who voted, blue was our winner with 60 votes. Next up was red with 40 votes, and one behind was green with 32 votes. Wow that was a close one. Again close behind was purple with 31 votes, Wow close again! Pink was following with 30. Black was behind with 24, and orange was following with 22. Last but not least was yellow with 15. Thank you for participating in our survey!



# Gray Fox and Leatherback Turtle on Endangered List

By: Toni M.

There are many, many animals on the endangered animal lists for different reasons. There are two animals in this article, one endangered animal is the gray fox, the other one is a leatherback turtle. The first one I will talk about is the gray fox.

The gray fox lives in the mixed wood plains. The gray foxes have their dens in rocks, crevices, caves, hollow logs, hollow trees, stumps, trees and enlarged wood chuck burrows. The gray foxes are rare in Canada, but are a native species there too. Some foxes are also seen by the U.S. border.

They eat wheat, insects, plants, birds, eggs, nuts, but mainly small animals like rabbits. The reason why the gray fox is endangered is because where the foxes live is being polluted, and it is making them rarer and rarer. Also another reason is because manmade and natural threats are causing their extinction. Horned owls, bobcats, and coyotes eat young gray foxes, and hunting too, is causing extinction.



The foxes aren't all gray but only peppery-gray on the top. There is a gray stripe on their back. Their necks and bellies are white and their legs and chest are reddish-orangeish. These foxes have a pointed muzzle and strong necks. Also they have reddish brown on their side. Their tails are bushy and have a black tip. Foxes are members of the dog family. Foxes can climb trees because of their strong hooked claws. They weigh 16 pounds, but the babies weigh only 100 grams. The gray fox is the same size and shape of the red fox but the gray fox has shorter legs and muzzle. They are the size of a small dog. They have pointed ears. Also the gray fox is nocturnal, which means it

is awake at night.

The next animal is the leatherback turtle. They are found in the warm seas, but they migrate. They are the largest turtle in the world. The turtles live in oceans all over the world from Alaska to the southern tip of Africa. They eat small sea animals like jellyfish. The food the turtles eat has to be soft because they have no teeth.

The reason why the leatherback sea turtles are endangered is because of recent hurricanes disturbing the turtles nest and then the eggs won't hatch, but most of the harm comes from people. Hunters hunt them for meat and rob nests. Their regular nests aren't safe because people are building houses on the beaches where the turtles have their nests and the beaches are getting more popular.

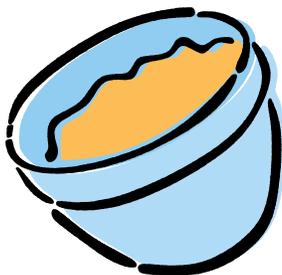
The leatherback turtle weighs 1,500 pounds. They have big, strong flippers. The front flippers are powerful and help the turtle swim and the back ones helps them steer. The turtles are reptiles so they lay eggs.



They lay about 100-200 eggs in one nest. The eggs feel soft and rubbery. The females only come to shore every 2-3 years to lay eggs, and they have usually 8-9 nests. The turtles don't care for their eggs after they lay them, instead they cover them up with the sand and go back to the ocean. The eggs hatch after 60 days the baby turtles hurry and go into the ocean. They are 270 cm in size.

Leatherback turtles are named for their rubber-like shell. They nest in Florida in the months of April- June. Leatherback turtles have softer shells than any other turtle. They have no claws, legs, or toes, instead they have flippers. They breathe air. The turtle can stay under water for more than an hour.

## Cooking Corner



### Chocolate Dips!

#### Cook's Tools:

small bowl, wooden spoon, toothpicks, waxed paper, paper candy cups, small saucepan.

#### You will need:

6 ounces of dark chocolate, cherries, brazil nuts, blanched almonds, walnuts, fresh mandarin orange sections, strawberries, seedless grapes.

#### Melting the Chocolate

- \* Break up the chocolate into a bowl.
- \* Heat some water in the saucepan over a

low heat until it just begins to bubble.

- \* Keeping the heat on low, place the bowl over the saucepan. Stir the chocolate with the wooden spoon until it completely melts.
- \* Turn off the heat. Very carefully move the saucepan and the bowl from the stove to a mat or dish towel.

#### Creating the chocolate dips

- \* One at a time, put a piece of fruit on a toothpick and dip half of it into the chocolate. Then put it on wax paper to dry.
- \* Using your fingers, dip the nuts half way into the chocolate, one at a time. Let them dry on the waxed paper.



By Alexis H. and Allison T.

## Important Dates

### February

Feb 21—President’s Day, No School

### March 3

March 3—Kindergarten Roundup

March 4— Fun Fair

March 7-18 — ISAT Testing Window

March 7 — Battle of the Books Meet and Greet at Gurrie, 5th, 6th graders

March 9 — Student Half Attendance Day

March 16 —Fun Lunch

March 22 — Helen Keller Assembly

March 28-31 — Spring Break

## Lost and Found

There is an abundance of Lost and Found items in the office. If you have lost something, please come into the office to claim your items.

## History Fact

**Abraham Lincoln**, our 16th president, was born on February 12, 1809. He was assassinated on April 15, 1865. He successfully led the country through its greatest constitutional, military and moral crisis, --the American Civil War--by preserving the Union by force while ending slavery and promoting economic modernization. Taken from Wikipedia.org



## Zoom, Zoom, Zoom

### Answers



1



Mural on Wall

2



Spring Avenue Lion

3



Mural on Wall

## Who Am I?

Mrs.  
Webb!



## Reader Feedback

Please share your thoughts!  
Email the advisors:

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