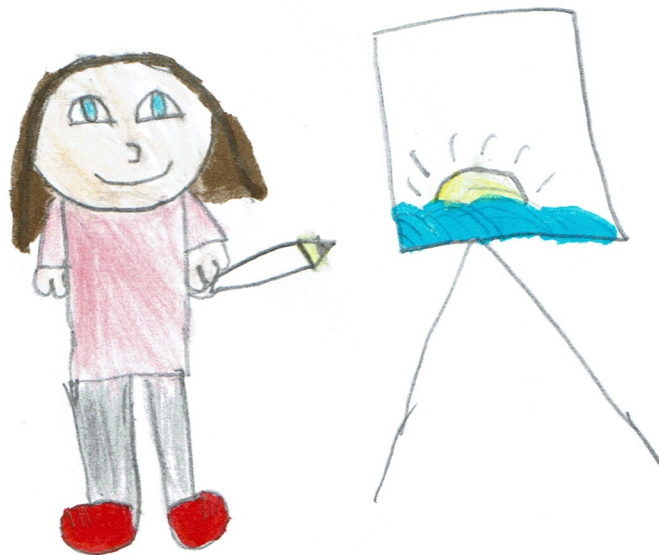


# Hard Work Pays Off

*By Abbey Walters*



Allie, a 9 year-old girl who loves all things art, lives in Austin, Texas. Although her parents diligently work in their jobs, the family is rather poor. Because she only has a meager amount of money, the only art supplies she can afford are colored pencils.



If she only had the right art supplies, she could create the masterpiece of her dream. Because she only had simple colored pencils, her dream seemed far from reality. Allie, who was greatly determined to paint a canvas, began researching ways to get the supplies she needed.



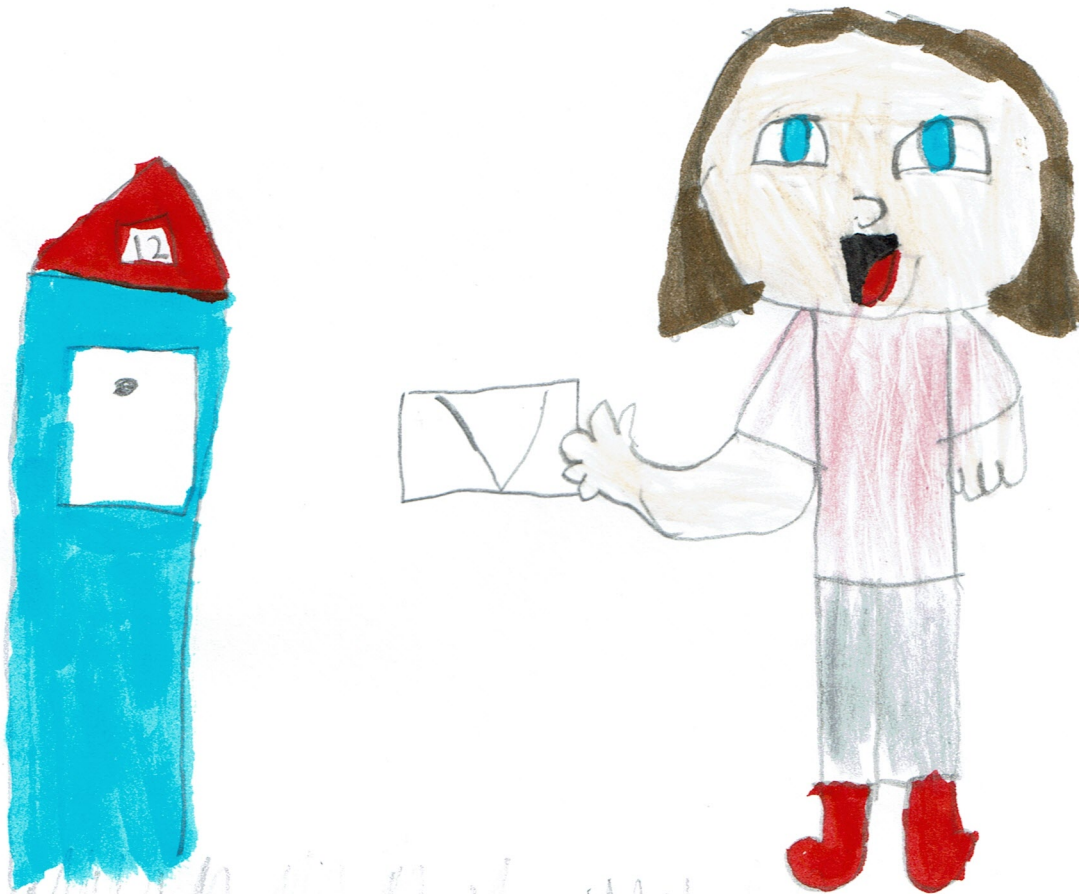
Thankfully, Allie's local library was holding an amazing art contest. The winner would receive an awesome art set. Because Allie had found that out, she decided to enter the contest. While other kids were playing outside after school, Allie, who was determined to win that art set, was spending hours designing and creating her art contest submission.





Once she had perfected her picture, she turned it in. Allie glanced at another artist's picture and felt like it was better than hers.

Two weeks later, she received a surprising letter in the mail. She opened it up and found a certificate saying she had won the contest, along with information about how to pick up the art kit!



With her new supplies, she created a magnificent painting and donated it to her grandma, who was living in a nursing home. Her grandma had it hung in the main hall and said it was the best painting she had ever seen. Allie realized that all that hard work really paid off. And the best reward ever was the joy of her grandma.

Allie's grandma  
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