

Artist statement:

When I thought about showing my voice, I decided to write a narrative fictional story about Aanya who is a 2nd grade student. In the story, Aanya conquers her fears and speaks up to make a difference in her school. When her idea is not immediately understood, she finds creative ways to find a solution.

Title: Showing your voice might be scary, but it's worth it.

Artist/Author: Aanya Sharma

Grade, School: 2nd, Fall City Elementary School, SVSD, Washington

Teacher: Ms. Beck

Category: Literature, Narrative Short Story, Fiction

It was a crisp Fall morning. Aanya started running to the bus stop while still putting on her jacket and finishing up the last piece of her toast. Phew! "I made it just in time", she thought as she saw the bus arrive.

She went to school and started on her writing assignment. Just then, the teacher announced, "All the student representatives, it's time for your student council meeting". Aanya was one of the student representatives. Oh no, Aanya thought. She won't be able to finish her writing assignment which means she'll have to take it home and complete it. But she was excited to go to the student council meeting – this was her first student council meeting. She was proud to have been elected to represent 2nd grade. She was going to share her idea about the soar tickets! Soar tickets were little rewards that students got when they showed the school values – kindness, responsibility, and safety. Special soar tickets were only given if a student showed all three values in the same instance – that was very rare!

She started running in the hallway to get to the student council meeting in time. She slowed down just as she turned a corner and saw her teacher tell another student "No running in the hallways". *Oops, I need to remember that too*, she thought.

At the student council meeting, the students were just settling in. Today's topic was about how to make students follow the school values and also make it fun at the same time. They were going to discuss soar ticket goals and ideas. There were a lot of good ideas that her friends in the council presented. One girl suggested PJ day, another boy suggested a game day. All good ideas she thought. Then it was her turn to speak up. She was a little nervous to share because this was her very first student council meeting. *Do I even have to share?*, she thought anxiously. *But I want to! It's such a good idea.* With that little self-talk, she spoke up. "I have an idea I'd like to share". Everyone looked at the little voice coming from the corner. Aanya felt all eyes on her. "I think..." she started timidly "... we should have Fall City trinkets like bands, pencils as a reward". "What's a trinket?" someone asked. "Oh, it's just a little item or thing.. like a pencil or a snap band or a bracelet...but these will be special because they will represent our school!" she explained. She felt her confidence growing. Then her friend Macy said, "We need money to do that though, won't we?". The student council president agreed. She said "We do need money for something like that... It's good idea Aanya but I don't think it's doable because we don't have the money to buy it."

Aanya was disappointed. She thought everyone would love her idea. They kinda did, but it was just hard to make it happen. She stayed quiet for the rest of the meeting but her wheels were turning.

She came home and told her mom that she wanted to raise money by selling hot chocolate at the park nearby. "What for?" her mom asked. "Oh, it's a long story" Aanya said. "I have all the time in the world. Go on then." her mom prodded. So, Aanya told her mom what happened at the meeting. She said she wanted to raise money to buy trinkets. Her mom encouragingly said, "Sure sweetie, let's do it."

So that weekend, Aanya setup a hot chocolate stand at the park. Her mom also baked some cookies for the sale. Aanya invited all her friends in the neighborhood. She spent all morning at the park and sold what felt like a lot of cookies and hot chocolate! They came home and Aanya counted the money. She raised a whole \$43!! She was proud and exhausted at the same time.

The next morning, she went to the principal's office first thing in the day. She told the student council's idea and said excitedly "I even have \$43 to buy the trinkets!!". Her Principal was very proud of her work. She patted her on the back and said, "Nice job Aanya". "You know sweetie, we will need a little bit more money than \$43 to make the idea happen but that's ok. I'll help figure it out and I'll make sure your student council's idea gets represented!". She felt heard and was proud of showing her voice.

The following week, Aanya heard in the morning announcements that the school will get Fall City trinkets as rewards this month! The principal also thanked the student council for such a fun idea. "Woohoo!!!" Aanya thought. All the kids were excited too. They said they would work very hard to earn the trinkets. "Yes, it's working!" Aanya thought with pride. It was a little scary to show her voice and speak up, but she was SOOO glad that she did! Because her voice made a difference. At that moment, she knew that she was always going to show her voice and be creative to solve for what she believed in.