

helped me understand my dad and realize his good intentions. Thank you for sharing your childhood memories with me.

*With appreciation,
Lara Bagdasarian*

I live in Los Angeles with my parents and 8-year-old brother. I enjoy basketball, music, writing, and math. Lately, I've been learning about parrots and would love to get an Amazon or Macaw one day.

L E V E L 1



HONORABLE MENTION, LEVEL 1

Eleanore Hamilton, Grade 4

Individual Entry

Truckee

Hattie Big Sky, Kirby Larson

Dear Kirby Larson,

I love how Hattie Big Sky has a “bumpy” life. Your book made me see that I want a bumpier life as well.

A bumpy life to me means experiencing new things and becoming strong through all those experiences. When Hattie builds her new life in Montana, she becomes stronger and braver and sees where her real home is...and that is in her skin.

Yes, Hattie had a bumpy life when she was moving from relative to relative, but Hattie has an especially bumpy life when she is in Montana. Hattie has to almost drown her hen to have her lay eggs. She gets her hand stuck on the water pump because it is so cold. She survives in the rasping shack all winter. And she has to see horrible things happen to her friends, the Muellers, just because Karl is German.

I have started doing some things Hattie does to make my life bumpier as well. I have made Hattie’s Lighter-than-Lead Biscuits. I curled my hair with sugar water and strips ripped from a towel. I heated up water on the stove for a bath. It took one hour to fill the tub 1/6th of the way with 8 pots of water! I even opened the window to feel the cracks in Hattie’s shack. The bath wasn’t very satisfying. I had a cup of tea afterwards.

But of course my life is still not as bumpy as Hattie’s. I get my eggs at a grocery store. I get water out of my faucet. I have a warm bed and house to live in in the winter at the west end of Donner Lake (which is very snowy). I don’t have to walk three miles to get my mail: I have e-mail. Even though around Hattie’s time my town was racist against Chinese people (Chinatown burned down “mysteriously”), now there is very little racism. Truckee is a resort town now, where most people play and have fun.

I have a luxurious life but sometimes luxury isn't that great. I rely on other people to do things I could possibly do. It's like being a queen and Hattie is definitely not a queen.

But the real thing that caught me about *Hattie Big Sky* was its ending. I do not want to tell it to everybody but it was the most touching part of the book, the part I related to the most. You see, my family just built a house and thought we were going to stay here forever. We had dreams for it, but we had to sell it and we're moving out in three days. Like Hattie, I will not throw a tantrum when I leave because leaving is just another bump. Hattie is ready for another adventure. I am glad she faces herself west on the train. I am ready for another adventure, too. Hopefully, I am going to be as strong as Hattie.

Thank you again for your book *Hattie Big Sky*.

Sincerely,
Eleanore Hamilton

I love to ski, swim, write, sew, make art, and play violin. I have seven cousins and when we see each other every Monday night at my grandma and grandpa's house, we love to make dances and skits with each other. When I grow up I want to be an astronaut. There's so much to discover in space. There's the feeling of openness and flight. I have always wanted to fly.

L E V E L 1



HONORABLE MENTION, LEVEL 1

Katelynn Kelly, Grade 5
Andersen Elementary School
Newport Beach

A Voice of Her Own: Becoming Emily Dickinson, Barbara Dana

Dear Barbara Dana,

A Voice of Her Own: Becoming Emily Dickinson is a tale of courage, sorrow, and honor. I have trouble with anger, as I know Emily does from reading your book. Until I read your book, I could never control my actions or emotions. My words were hurtful to others and I hated just standing there after I crushed somebody's hopes or dreams. Your book gave me new inspiration to work on controlling this matter. Finding out that I was not the only one with this problem was a major relief to me. I kept on trying to achieve my goal even after I finished your book with one of Emily Dickinson's inspiring messages wired into my mind: "I was bursting with the joy of words, of what they could do, of what I could do by putting them together in countless ways."

Now at a comfortable stage with my anger, I became silent, moody, depressed, and negative. My aunt had just passed away putting me in a foul mood. I spent countless nights mourning in my room over my loss. I just wanted to have time left with her,