

This writing challenge is special because every year level is working from the exact same movie clip. But you are not writing the same story. Each year level has been given a different section of the clip. When all the pieces are placed together, they form one complete narrative — but told through different voices, perspectives and levels of skill.

Year 4s: Time Frame: 0:00 - 1:05 (It must end on Woody's line: "Well this is ludicrous.") Your Focus: Wonder → Suspense → Awe - In this scene from Toy Story, Buzz climbs up into the claw machine and lands inside among the small green aliens. What begins as curiosity quickly turns into something much bigger, as a 'claw' is revealed, daring to take one of our beloved characters. Your job is to write this section as if it were part of a novel. You must slow the moment down. (More instructions and expectations were provided to the students in terms of what to think carefully about, and how to control pacing).

YEAR 4 WINNER: Harper Schutz



The determined astronaut gripped the sides of the prize chute to the Claw machine. Buzz Lightyear sprung up over the high top. He landed inside the machine with a squeaky bounce. Scanning his surroundings, he noticed a sea of tiny green heads. His wide eyes stared at them. A hundred eyes stared back at him.

One of the tiny, three eyed aliens standing at the front of the claw machine marvelled in awe “a stranger”. “From the outside” another alien added. All the aliens chorused “oooooo” in amazement while holding their chubby cheeks.

Buzz raises his arms and announces with importance “Greetings I am Buzz Lightyear, I come in peace!”. Mumbling to one another in wonder, the aliens waddle over to Buzz, each reaching out to touch the mysterious astronaut with their stubby three fingered hands.

Meanwhile beyond the walls of the Claw machine, Woody, the cowboy, hides on the opposite side of the busy arcade. Noticing a break, he sprints to the claw machine. Shoving open the prize door Woody wiggles and struggles to crawl to the top of the chute. He holds himself up and peeks over.

“Who’s in charge here?” Buzz asks curiously. The blinking eyes of the aliens look up pointing their small fingers. Entranced, the creatures collectively chant “the claw”. Woody’s stuffing filled stomach tenses. A frown settles over Buzz’s face. With their mouths agape Buzz and Woody dare to look up. Higher and higher they gaze. A gleam catches their eye.

THE claw.

Shiny.

Sharp.

Still.

An eerie metal hand. It’s three fingers lit up by a ghostly halo of light.

“The claw’s our master”

“Claw chooses who will go and who will stay”

Buzz looks down at the creatures, disturbed to hear what they will say next. Woody holds his brow in disbelief. “This is ludicrous” he mutters shaking his plastic head.

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Year 5s: Time Frame: 1:05 – 1:57 (The first line is done for you, when Woody hears Sid...and it ends at the claw clicking onto Buzz's helmet) Your Focus: Rising Tension → Panic → Impending Doom- In this section, Woody realises Sid is nearby, senses the danger, and plans an escape, while the naïve character of Buzz is unaware of what's about to happen. The mood shifts

instantly from strange to dangerous. This part is about suspense. (More instructions and expectations were provided to the students in terms of what to think carefully about, and how to control pacing).

YEAR 5 WINNER: Riane Dominguez



Crash. Thud. “You got a BRAIN in there?” Woody jolts up, now aware of the strangely familiar voice approaching him. “Stupid machine!” says the voice once again, muttering this time. Huh, Woody wonders, I recognise that voice. A singular thought settles in his brain - who did the voice belong to? But then it clicks. He gasps

NO.

Woody spins around, his tiny porcelain heart pounding as he did so, praying that it wasn't ... that it wouldn't be ... him.

Panic rises in his chest as his eyes lock onto the figure. Woody couldn't have ever mistaken him for someone else. Ever. Who could forget that wretched voice of his, the voice of which some toys liked to call the 'devil's'. A voice which strikes fear into anyone who hears it. Certainly not Woody. Although he dreaded the thought of it

being him, so much that he practically begged the gods for mercy, there was only one match. It had to be him. It had to be... SID.

Sid starts toward the claw machine, leaving Woody only a moment to think. He lunges onto Buzz, diving into the wave of aliens, the plush dolls squeaking as the duo squash beneath them. Safe, he assures himself, for now... Woody whips his head to Buzz's direction, an accusing look plastered on his face. “Whats gotten into you sheri-” Buzz starts, getting interrupted by a dangerously irritated Woody. “WHATS GOTTEN IN TO ME? WHATS GOTTEN IN TO YOU?” Woody exclaims, louder than ever now. Fortunately, their bickering was interrupted by a soft tap on their shoulders. “Shhh”. They glance in the direction of the voice, an alien. It warns them: “The claw, it knows...”.

The alien stretches its hand to the roof of the claw machine. Woody and Buzz follow the creatures pointing finger to the top. While fighting they had not noticed the presence of the claw lingering above them. They look back down to the alien who, also, stares back at them. After seeing their puzzled expressions, he explains the use of the claw. A whirl from above takes their attention. They tilt their heads upwards to see an alien dangling from above, held by the metal arms of the claw. “I have been chosen!” It cries out, far to joyfully for Woody's opinion. “Farewell my friends. I'll go on to a better place.”, it assures them before he gets dragged to the prize hole. So foolish, Woody mumbles. While in the midst of panicking, they did not notice a crucial detail. When the alien was lifted, it uncovered Buzz, leaving him vulnerable and an easy target. Buzz freezes upon noticing, leaving Woody to recover under the dolls. His heart racing, he glances at Sid. Now something other than evil fills his eyes, mischief replaces it.

Buzz hears a whirl, the same sound the claw made before it striked. He feels something cold grab him around the waist. Meanwhile, below the dolls, Woody searches for an exit, frantic. His eye catches a glint of silver. He focuses his eyes on it, squinting. It is the handle of a door, a way out.

Joyfully, Woody pumps his fist up in celebration. He reaches out to Buzz, eager to share his discovery with him. Woody falls back, ready to shout at his friend for not catching him. Dizzy, he looks back, surprised at the fact that Buzz is not there. There is a 'tink' from above, the sound of metal hitting glass, no, plastic. Woody's eyes widen. Oh no, he worries, Buzz...

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Year 6s: Time Frame: 1:57 to the end of the clip (from the claw gripping Buzz to 'Let's go home and play' – a line delivered by Sid). Your Focus: Desperation → Struggle → Sinister Resolution. This section is the climax. The claw grips Buzz. Woody panics. Turns back to save him. Dives and clings to his legs. Sid grows frustrated. Everything intensifies. They accept their fate. (More instructions and expectations were provided to the students in terms of what to think carefully about, and how to control pacing).

YEAR 6 WINNER: Chloe Li



“YES!” exclaimed Sid triumphantly, his eyes widening at the thought of having his own Buzz Lightyear.

CLINK!

Whirring mechanically, the creaky three-legged claw wrapped its pincers around Buzz. With a

gasp, Woody’s stomach dropped.

“BUZZ!” thundered Woody, leaping forward, his fingers just grasping Buzz’s booted feet. The rusty fingers of the claw groaned furiously, tightening around Buzz. Shaking uncontrollably, the arcade game’s metal arm seemed to pause midair.

SCREECH!

Sinking down back into the vat of plush aliens, it appeared to have given in. A balled up fist banged on the thick glass. The whole machine rattled. A deafening roar followed shortly.

“Hey!” Sid bellowed, quaking the sticky grease-stained panel. Woody pulled with all his might. His limbs bent under the strain. With his boots anchored against a small opening behind the machine, he heaved Buzz’s feet out of the door. His precarious grip slipped – then tightened again. Grunting through his teeth, Woody hauled Buzz with strain. Almost there! Just his head and body left now! He was going to win! Suddenly, the pull worsened. Some mysterious force held Buzz back. Was it the claw? A gravelly voice came out of nowhere.

“He has been CHOSEN!”. Another voice joined in. Then another. Then another.

“Chosen!”.

“He is the one”.

“He must go!”.

“The CHOSEN ONE”.

“The Claaaawwww”.

A chorus of raspy chants overcame Woody’s ears. His eyes fluttered around to see the once stationary aliens advancing towards him. Woody’s legs gave way and he was lugged along a tidal wave of lumpy lime green aliens wearing sapphire blue jumpsuits.

“What are you doing?!” cried Woody hysterically, as the crazy aliens dragged him and Buzz up, almost helping the claw. One arm came free, attempting to swat away the hypnotic creatures.

“STOP IT! STOP IT YOU ZEALOTS!” exclaimed Woody as he was yanked up by the all-mighty claw. He saw light above him. As if accepting his fate, Woody went limp as he entered the line of Sid’s vision. Sid’s expression lit up. Woody, still grasped onto Buzz, levitated in front of the boy’s earthy cold eyes.

“All right, double prizes!” he grinned mischievously. Almost happy to get rid of the pair, the claw’s slender beak unceremoniously dumped the two into the prize basket.

Sid’s eyes followed every move. He stooped down and his chubby hands crawled their way into the box, wrapping around the two figures. Slowly he stood. Examining the pair, he smirked peevishly.

“Let’s go home and,” he paused hesitantly, tasting the word.

“Play”