Student Ideas Inspire a New Treat for a Day at Snuffy’s Malt Shop

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This spring, second graders in Ms. Skogerbo’s class at Groveland Elementary used their imaginations and their budding persuasive writing skills to dream up something delicious.

Inspired by Snuffy’s Malt Shop, the family-owned ice cream and burger restaurant with a location across the street from the school, Skogerbo challenged her students to fill in the blank and respond to this writing prompt:

“I think Snuffy’s should make ____ their new malt, because …”

Writing an opinion piece is a standard in second grade curriculum, Skogerbo explained, and as she planned for this lesson, an idea struck. “I knew Snuffy’s is a beloved malt shop near Groveland, and I thought, ‘I bet students would like coming up with a new malt, and how cool would it be if Snuffy's actually made it?!’”

She knew having a specific audience in mind would inspire students to fine-tune their written reasoning. “When the students knew their audience was going to be Snuffy’s, they were beyond excited to convince them with their new malt ideas,” said Skogerbo. “Engagement [in the lesson] increased immensely. The students wanted to make sure their pieces had all of the parts of an opinion piece, as well as good spelling and handwriting. They were all so proud!”

As they crafted their ideas, students knew Skogerbo was working with Snuffy’s to choose the winning malt, but the teacher and the class didn’t know if the shop would actually be able to make the idea that was chosen. When students finished their pieces, Skogerbo sent three of the class’s pieces to Snuffy’s for consideration. The malt shop made them all, and their staff chose the final one.

Second graders’ ideas ranged from “Delicious Delectable Delight,” “Lovely Lime” and “Oreo Wizard” to “Fudgy Wudgy,” “The Sea World” and “The Rainbow,” but it was Ariston Le’s idea for “The Pokeball” that won the grand prize.

Snuffy’s Marketing Manager, Dana Bach and her husband Bryan, who is the Minnetonka location’s General Manager, were thrilled when they heard about Skogerbo’s project. “[We] thought it was a fun, terrific idea. What a neat way to incorporate a homework assignment with the local community,” she shared. “Plus, we always love to test out new malts!”

Typically, managers and staff members think of and taste new flavors for Snuffy’s. “It gives them excitement and empowerment to come up with what could end up on the menu if it’s
popular enough,” said Bach. “And let’s just say kids, especially young kids, have the most adventurous taste buds when it comes to new flavor combinations.”

After much deliberation, the staff chose to move forward with Le’s idea, The Pokeball. “This has vanilla and strawberry ice cream, yellow and red sprinkles, whipped cream and a cherry on top,” Le wrote in his opinion piece. “I believe it will taste great … and many people will like it.”

The winning flavor was added to the Minnetonka location’s malt menu for the day on Monday, June 7. Overall, Pokeball malts accounted for nearly a quarter of Snuffy’s malt sales that day, including one served to the inventor, Ariston Le, himself. Several of Le’s second grade classmates also made it out to Snuffy’s to try the Pokeball. When Le entered the shop, students clapped and cheered.

After trying his creation, Le said, “it had a great taste and looked melty.” When asked to give his advice for other students who are considering sharing their opinions and ideas, he replied, “You should share them because you might have a good idea, and maybe they’ll make your malt, too!”