

Dreams Come True: The Story of the First Flight

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The Story So Far...
Wilbur and Orville Wright have left their home in Dayton, Ohio and traveled to Kitty Hawk to experiment with a flying machine that they have invented. The machine is a glider without an engine. The brothers test the machine in manned flight, as a kite and flying from a derrick. While being flown from the derrick, the machine crashes. Undaunted, the Wright Brothers decide to fix the glider.

CHAPTER NINE: WIND AND SAND

Kitty Hawk was the place for wind! Fierce storms that the locals called nor'easters would blow up suddenly, especially in the fall. Early one October morning, after the repairs on the crashed glider were finished, a nor'easter hit the Wrights' camp. Frigid 45-mile-an-hour winds whipped the ocean waves into foamy whitecaps.

The Wright Brothers woke to the violent shaking of their tent. Its canvas top and sides shook so hard that it sounded like thunder. Wilbur and Orville spilled out of their tent. If they did not secure the

tent, it would blow away! Sand stung their faces and blew across their camp in clouds. Orville thought of their little mockingbird friend as he held on to the tent. He hoped he would safely ride out the storm.

After the big storm, the villagers looked out of their windows to see if the Wrights' tent was still there. Even the mockingbird showed his concern.

Wilbur and Orville were intact, but the glider was buried beneath a pile of sand. It took all morning to dig it out!

"We came down here for wind and sand," said Orville as he shoveled, "and we have got them!"

That afternoon, they continued their experiments. They tested how the glider responded under different loads and wind speeds. They flew the glider with the tail in different positions. Sometimes they flew the glider empty. Sometimes they used chains for added weight. And sometimes they used a boy named Tom!

Tom Tate was Bill Tate's nephew. Tom was a little fellow who could "...tell more big yarns than any kid of his size."

The Wrights used Tom in their experiments because he weighed forty pounds less than



they did, yet he had close to the same surface area as an adult. Tom thought it great fun, but these rides were not play. Using Tom enabled the Wrights to test the glider even when the wind was too light for them. As they tested the glider, Wilbur wrote his findings in a notebook. At the end of the day, they had a clearer idea what the flying machine could and could not do.

But Wilbur was troubled and confused by his readings. The glider didn't lift as he thought it would. Wilbur knew

that in order to solve the mysteries of how to control the flying machine, they would have to resort to making free glides like the ill-fated Otto Lilienthal.

Just before the third week of October, Wilbur was ready to try a free glide. Wilbur, lying prone in the glider, watched the sand fly by under him as he sped down the big hill. He could hardly believe it. He was really flying! To his amazement, Wilbur discovered that fore and aft equilibrium was easy to maintain. By

the end of the day, a dozen free flights were made for a grand total of two minutes in the air.

The next day, the wind died down. There could be no more exciting glides. Because Katharine had had to fire one of the men helping out at the bicycle shop, they would have to return to Dayton.

On October 23, 1900, they broke camp. The flying machine had served them well, but it was no longer any use to them. They left it lying in the sand.

Wilbur and Orville boarded Israel Perry's boat on the first leg of their journey home. On their trip, Wilbur and Orville thought about what they accomplished. They had not performed any miracles while at Kitty Hawk, but they were satisfied. They had not been able to practice with their flying machine for hours and hours. Their time actually flying was only minutes, but they were generally pleased. All in all, the Wrights' theories and their flying machine had held up well under real conditions. It was one thing to prove things on paper, but Wilbur and Orville had actually put their theories to the test!

"Well, Orv," Wilbur said as

their train sped homeward, "we are able to return without having our pet theories completely knocked in the head by the hard logic of experience, and our own brains dashed out in the bargain!"

"I can't wait to go back again!" Orville interjected with excitement.

Both brothers became quiet, each lost in thoughts that turned back to a place of wind and sand—to a place that had once sounded so strange. Kitty Hawk. Now it was a place they had come to know well. They thought about the people there, strangers that they now called friends. Israel Perry. The Tates.

About the same time that Orville and Wilbur thought of the Tates, Mrs. Tate was thinking about the two Mr. Wrights.

She was also busy making her little girls fine new dresses of freshly washed, white French sateen!

Next... Chapter Ten: The Wright Brothers vs. the Mosquitoes

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THE Student CHOWAN HERALD

The following essay was submitted by Mrs. Lloyd and Mr. Field's 5th grade classes at Lawrence Academy.

What time in the past world would you liked to have lived? I would have like to live in Athens, Greece when the First Olympics were held. I would have liked this time because I would get to see the first people competing in the first Olympics, the games they played back then, and I would have liked to see Athens, Greece when it wasn't old.

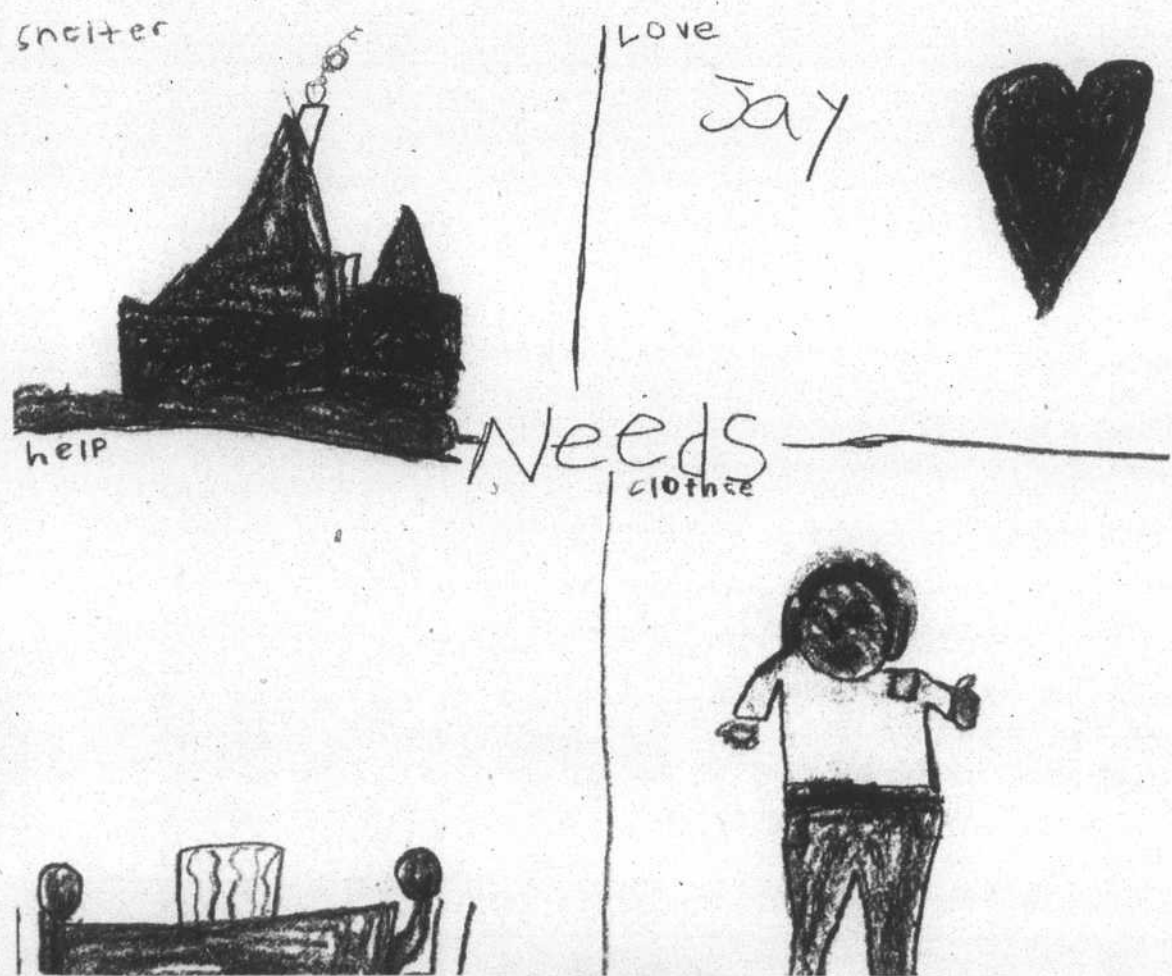
First of all, I would have liked to see the first people that competed in the Olympics. If I went to Athens, I would have liked to see if other countries besides Greece competed in the Olympics. I would have liked to meet the first competers that raced in chariot races because we don't have chariot races anymore. If the King judged, I would have tried to meet him. As you can see it would be fun to meet the first competers or people of Athens, Greece.

Secondly, if I went to Athens, Greece in the time of the Olympics I would have liked to see what games they played back then. I would see if our sports originated from them. I think bobsledding came from the chariot races. It would be fun to see the games they played back then because they probably had different color medals, they probably didn't have many rules, and the games they played were probably different and more bloody than ours. As you can see the games they played back then were probably different than ours.

Finally, it would have been fun to see Athens, Greece when it wasn't old. I would have liked to see the stadium when it didn't have the crack in it. I think the architecture of Greece would have been superb. It would have been fun to find out what they made their buildings out of and try to make the mixture for a building. As you can see it would have been fun to see things in Greece when it wasn't old.

I would have liked this time in the past because I would have liked to see the first competers, the games they played back then, and I would have liked to see Athens, Greece when it wasn't old. I would recommend that if you have a dream to go to the Olympics, go ahead and go for it!

Rachael McCarthy



Artwork by Jay McKinnon, 1st Grade, Mrs. Goodman, White Oak Elementary

March Writing Prompt

Think of a new invention, tell me about it, and convince me to buy it.



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