

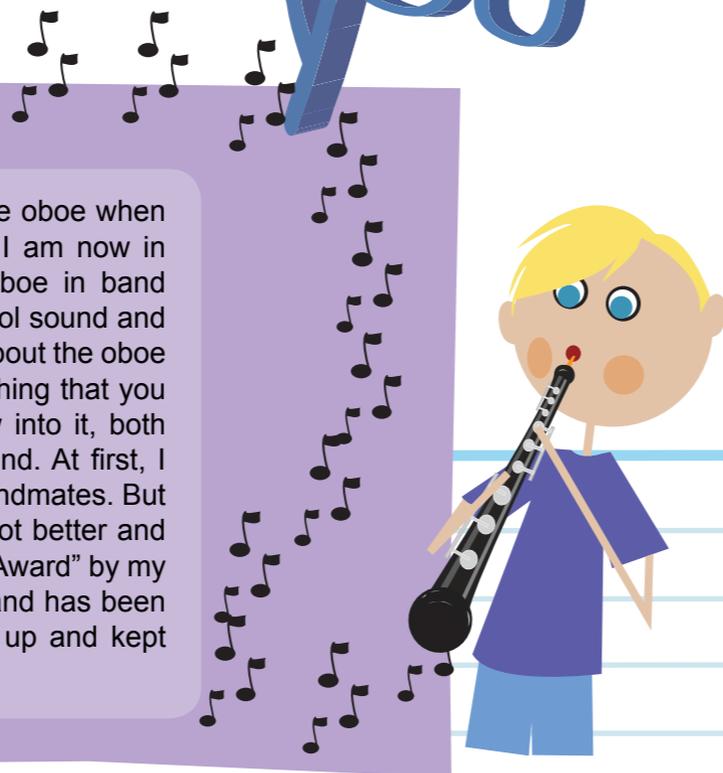


**WHAT DOES AN OBOE, PANDA AND SWIMMING HAVE IN COMMON? THEY ARE ALL TOPICS FROM TRUE STORIES SHARED AT THE COMMUNITY CENTER!**

Lessons Learned  
**WHEN WE WERE YOU**

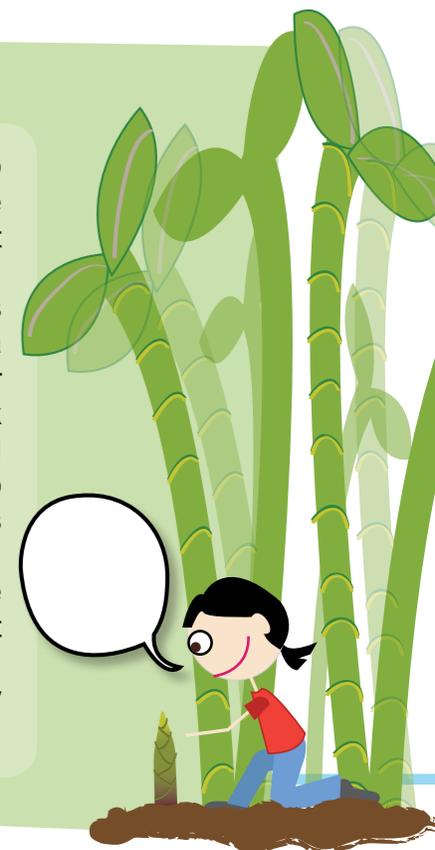
**Blowing My Own Horn**

“My mom plays the piano and my dad played the oboe when he was in Grade 7. That’s when I started and I am now in Grade 8. I wanted to learn how to play the oboe in band because I thought it was nice looking, it had a cool sound and a unique reed. The first thing you need to know about the oboe is that it is a woodwind instrument and it has a thing that you blow into called a double reed. When you blow into it, both sides vibrate and create a strange but nice sound. At first, I found it a bit hard to keep up with my Grade 7 bandmates. But after a couple more months of hard practice, I got better and ended up getting chosen for the “Most Improved Award” by my classmates! Playing an instrument is super fun and has been worth my time and effort. I’m glad I didn’t give up and kept trying. I sure love my oboe!” *Leith, Age 13*



**Search for the Mighty Bamboo**

“Bamboo shoots grow like a weed in hot climates. I grew up in Japan and you can find them there. Often when you see photos of panda bears, they are eating bamboo. Pandas eat the leaves, stems and shoots of various types of bamboo. But people, like my grandparents, look for the new shoots that are tender and very delicious when cooked. They are a part of many Asian dishes and have been cooked in China for centuries! I like eating them a lot. Young bamboo shoots look a lot like asparagus—when you see them in the ground. And they taste similar to corn. When I was 8 years old, I went to the forest to get bamboo shoots with my grandparents. This was the first time for me to go searching for them out in nature. My grandfather was so good at finding them, he’s a pro. He gathered many of them. Although I tried very hard, I found it very difficult. When I finally found one, the sun was setting. It is a good memory I have, spending time outside with my grandparents finding bamboo shoots!” *Honami Takeuchi*



**AFTER READING THE STORIES, TRY THESE QUESTIONS...**

★ **WHAT INSTRUMENT DO YOU PLAY OR THINK WOULD BE FUN TO LEARN?**

★ **DO YOU KNOW HOW TO SWIM? DID YOU FIND IT HARD TO GO UNDER THE WATER?**

**Go Girl and Ace that Test!**

“As a child I loved to play in the water and pretend that I was swimming. However, every time I put my face under the water, I felt like I was being smothered and I would panic. My parents knew I needed to get over my fear, so they registered me in swimming lessons. I was a little embarrassed because I was the oldest child in the class, the rest of the kids were four or five years old. I remember one student asking me why I was so big! But I was determined to learn how to swim. I never missed a lesson but still felt that smothering fear under the water. When testing day arrived, I panicked. But my mother firmly convinced me, “Go girl and ace that test!” I was glad and proud that I passed it, though my underwater fear has never left. Not too long ago, years later, I realized that I have claustrophobia—a fear of being closed in. It has been good for me to finally know why that was so difficult for me as a kid. I have learned to just deal with it!” *Karen Clarke*

