

First day of school



Looking up at the clock, the hands finally read three o'clock, the piercing sound of the school bell ringing, releasing my classmates and I from our first day of kindergarten. As I step outside the front doors, I see the long line of buses, which seems to infinitely extend into the distance. "Six", I said to myself over and over, "find bus number six." After walking for what I felt like eternity, I finally arrived at my bus. I managed to draw final breath of the heavy emission-polluted air as I looked up at the threatening yellow vehicle which towered over me. "God, this sucks" I thought to myself. "I don't like this bus, I don't like this school, and I don't like these kids. I just want to go home". But unfortunately, I couldn't even if I wanted to. My first time riding a bus also happened to be in the week we moved into our new house. That wasn't home to me, not yet at least. As I shyly made my way down the dreary aisle with what I felt were a hundred blood sucking little minions surrounding me, I carefully made sure not to make eye contact with any of the other students; I searched for an open seat. I settled in one towards the end of the bus, distancing myself from the rest of the children. I sat down and swung my backpack around to my side, letting it rest on the outside of the seat in an attempt to prevent anyone from sitting beside me. The bus began to move and my stomach started to turn. As the school drifted off into the distance, I found myself wishing that I were still standing outside the building which I so recently disliked. I occupied myself by continually rocking back and forth in my seat firmly, which caused the backrest to flex and make a loud popping sound as if it were a giant Snapple cap. This soon irritated the older, and thus superior, student across from me, who glared at me as if to demand that I sit still or else he would personally throw me out the window. I slunk back into my seat and focused my attention out the window. Some

time had passed before I realized that nothing looked familiar and I began to panic. I remembered that my parents had given me instructions on where and when to get off, but my mind went blank. All I could think about was how I might have missed my stop and how I may never get home. I felt as though I had been hit by a wave of uncertainty. I looked around apprehensively for a familiar face but I knew no one. Everything suddenly felt sharp. The chilled leather bus seats pressed against my back and sent good bumps down my spine. I could feel my face start to get hot and red, and almost automatically my eyes began with the water works. When it was finally my turn to exit, I didn't realize it due to the panic attack I had been currently having. My parents watched from the driveway as the bus paused for a moment and began to accelerate again when nobody got off. My mom, worrying what might have happened to me, sprinted like a track star along the side of the bus for a block or two until she finally managed to attract the bus driver's attention, who immediately stopped the bus. She stepped into the bus, and angrily exchanged a few words with the driver. He then stood up from his seat and yelled out, " is their a Jorge Becerra on the bus!?" Everyone turned and watched as I stood up slowly. I could feel their stares as I shamefully walked down the aisle with my head hung low while I shakily tried to catch my breath through my frantic sobbing. My mom firmly grabbed my arm and shot a disgruntled look at the bus driver, her eyes saying " you should be ashamed of yourself", as if it was his fault that I missed my stop. I later realized that my embarrassment could have been avoided had I just kept my composure despite the discomfort I was feeling. I am now reminded of that embarrassing moment every time I am feeling nervous or panicked.

Remembering how I reacted, and how it only made the situation worse, helps me to keep calm under stressful situations.