**Try Outs** David D. 10/16 p7

“Go to the bleachers and wait for me to finish making my decisions,” Coach yelled as he walked to the ref’s table, with a voice that said he’d done this a million and one time before.

“Do you think you made it?” was whispered frantically throughout the sea of sixth graders.

“Line up shoulder to shoulder on the half court line,” the coach’s voice boomed throughout the silent gym. Everyone got there as fast as they could, making a pathetic attempt to try to impress the coach. We stood with our backs straight and lips sealed. I was nervous as the coach was looking at each one of us. He marched down the line of desperation. As he walked, he wrote things down on his clipboard that only he could see. He analyzed each one of us and picked the few lucky kids who would be part of the team. “Turn to your right,” The coach’s voice echoed.

Then he put a piece of paper on the bleacher. “Go look at the paper one by one, once this guy’s done, you can go. As long as you’re in this gym you will not speak of the paper. If you tease someone about not getting past the cuts, your number will come off as fast as I put it on.” The coach yelled to make sure everyone understood him.

The line was moving slowly and as it came closer to my turn, an eighth grader whom I’d never seen before said, “Don’t get your hopes up.” as he passed by with a grin on his face. As much as I wanted to talk back I knew he was right. I shouldn’t get my hopes up and then see that I didn’t make it.

I was assigned number 5 at the beginning of the try outs. The person in front of me walked up to the paper. He was studying the paper searching for his number. He walked away with his head hung low.

Then it was my turn. I walked up to the paper slowly, afraid of what might be on it, but also excited to see what was on it. I didn’t touch the paper; I just looked at it, taking my time, looking at each number, trying to figure out who went to which number. I got to the third number and tried not to look at the other numbers below it but I hadn’t found my number. When I got to the fourth number, I recognized it - it was 5.

Now that I look back at the try-outs, I realize that I hadn’t done much. I just made a few lay-ups, missed a lot and passed the ball a few times. I almost asked the coach why I made the team a few times but then I reconsidered. Even though I only scored eight points during the whole entire season, the new experience shaped me to who I am now. I mostly played left benchwarmer and wrote things down on the shot chart, I won’t be on the sidelines in life; the game of life won’t have any timeouts.