

Overview

[The Global Health Education and Learning Incubator at Harvard University](#) (GHELI) supports interdisciplinary education about world health through the production, curation, and dissemination of educational public goods. This exemplar work was a final project for “World Health: Challenges and Opportunities,” a General Education course at Harvard College taught by GHELI Faculty Director Sue J. Goldie. For this creative assessment designed with support from GHELI, students systematically analyze a societal health challenge they care about and create a “real world” product intended to influence policy or motivate change.

Abstract

A children’s book on how climate change is causing damage to communities and threatens public health.

Artist

Roaa Marei (2023)

Caption

Climate change has been a specifically relevant topic over the last decade. Communities are experiencing the impacts of our changing climate with more frequent and dangerous extreme weather events, including wildfires, destructive flooding, and drought, which have caused unprecedented damage to communities across the globe and also threatened public health. Warming that exceeds 1.5 degrees Celsius could produce serious and long-lasting consequences, so now is the best time to act with a focus on younger generations. This picture book aims to introduce climate change into conversation with U.S. children (aged 6-10) informally and educationally to enable them to understand the causes and effects of climate change and consider how to mitigate it.

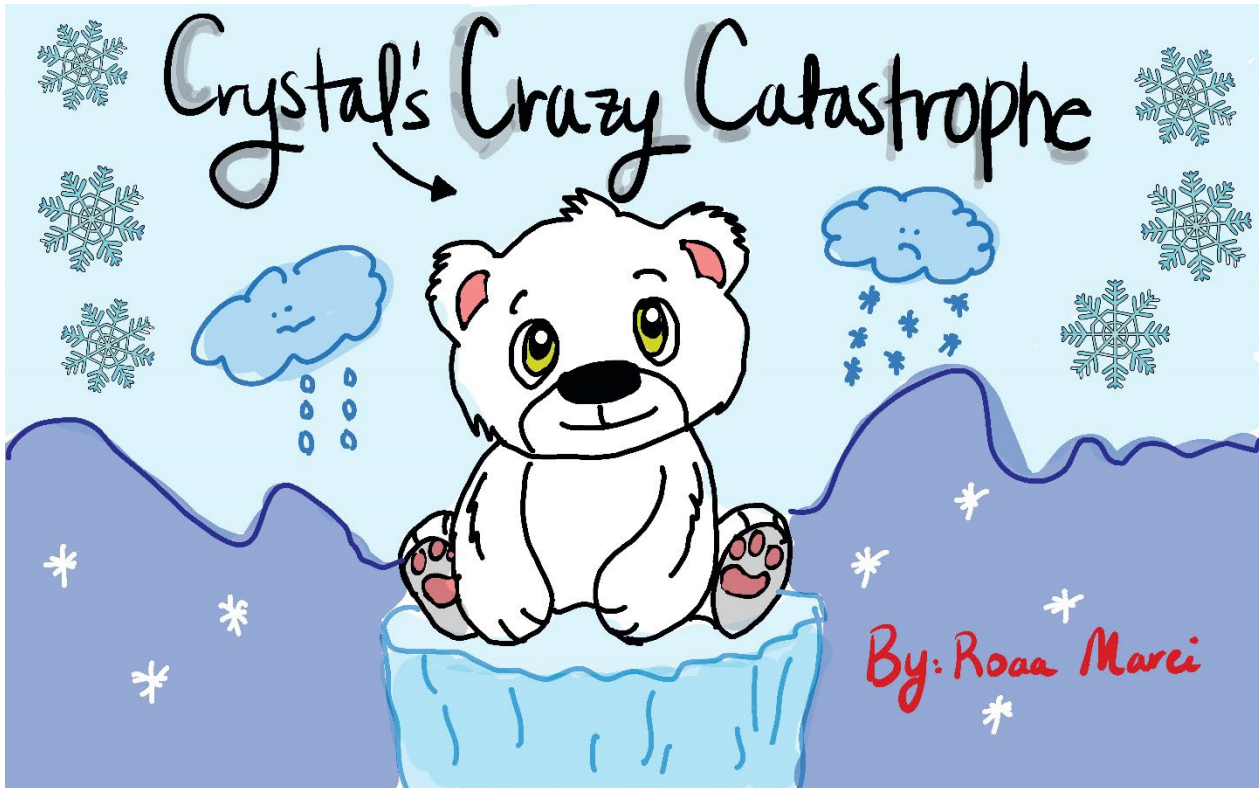
Artist Lens

My children's book, *Crystal's Crazy Catastrophe*, is colorful and imaginatively designed to capture children’s attention with cute images and easy words that explain and break down the concept of climate change. I chose this medium because I felt the topic of climate change and global warming can be heavy with important factors and information, and the most effective way to help children understand the concept is through helpful visuals and simple context. Crystal is a polar bear at risk of losing her home and is trying to see what humans can do to help keep her population and others from dying and losing their homes. I chose children as my target audience because they are our future. Children are often influenced by emotions and should start caring early on to act. Giving Crystal tears and emotions in the drawings is an effective way to get children to emote and sympathize with Crystal at an early age. These emotions will likely stay with the child and may motivate them to act on this topic. The mitigations I have added in my book are easy and small, and if we stay consistent with our efforts, may help diminish the impact of climate change. The hope is that we can implement small actions, like recycling more often, using a bike, or walking instead of using public transport, to reduce the impact of climate change. This can serve as a starting point for children to implement solutions to reverse climate change and expand on these convictions as they grow.

[Watch Roaa Marei Reflection](#)

Media

Illustration



[Watch Narration of Crystal's Crazy Catastrophe](#)