**A premature birth happens when a baby is born before the 37th week of pregnancy.**

Thumbs up for my friend, David

**Around 5% of children in Croatia are born prematurely. The smallest ones are the strongest fighters.**

Some babies are really impatient and they want to come into the world as soon as possible, like my friend, David.

''I was born when my mom was 7 months pregnant. She told me she was really scared when her water broke 2 full months before her due date.'' The eight-grader starts his story. David was born prematurely. By the age of ten, he spent a loto f time in the hospital. He couldn’t leave the hospital for a long time after he was born because of his early birth and jaundice, he also had to be incubated. Premature babies have to be incubated until they can eat by themselves and have gained enough weight. During the first year of his life, David’s teeth weren’t developing properly and he had to have a surgery. Next came the hernia and tonsils operations. Just when he thought he was done with hospitals, he had to undergo an emergency operation because of improper vasoconstriction in his head. He is reminded of this long operation by a scar behind his ear. Three years have passed and David feels fine, he sometimes gets headaches and he doesn’t do P.E. so he wouldn’t get hit in the head with a ball. He is a big brother to five younger sisters and three younger brothers. He’s bigger than his mom now and you can’t even tell he was a premature baby. He is a class favorite and he never mocks others.

**Thumbs up for little heroes**

The 17th of November is marked as an International premature birth awareness day, i.e. Purple day. On that day, purple balloons are let into the air all over the Globe in order to remind everyone of the brave heroes with the smallest hearts. Humanitarian actions raise funds for new incubators and extra medical equipment needed to care for the prematurely born babies. Their moto is: Our strength is their courage! David has, even as a prematurely born child, overcome all obstacles thanks to his strength and the love and support of his family.

Tara Čolakić, 8.b

OŠ Marije Jurić Zagorke