

THE CRISPR Whisperer

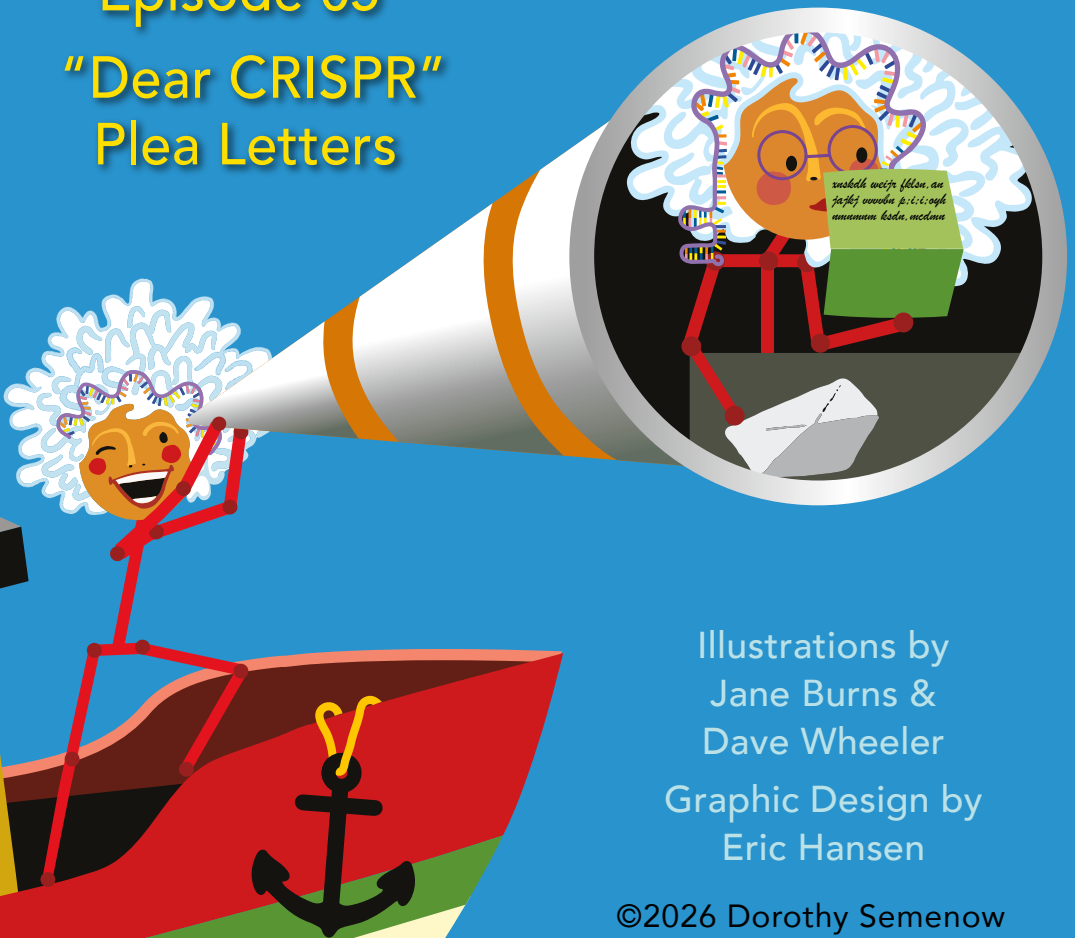
PICTURE Series

for Ages 11 to 111

By Dorothy Semenow, PhD

Episode 05

"Dear CRISPR"
Plea Letters



Illustrations by
Jane Burns &
Dave Wheeler

Graphic Design by
Eric Hansen

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Episode 05

"Dear CRISPR" Plea Letters

Written by
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Episode 05: "Dear CRISPR" Plea Letters
DEDICATION

To All Future Creators of Plea Letters &
Other STEAMy Edutainment Materials



You Don't Have To Be a Scientist
To Think Like One!

Art shows. Words tell.
The CRISPR Series is a Science Show and Tell!

The **CRISPR Series** marries **Art & Science** in a humorous, hands-on romp designed to **spark your creativity** while clueing you in on an exciting new DNA editing tool called



CRISPR



A for ART goes here



STEM



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CRISPR DELUGED BY PLEA LETTERS



CRISPR is flooded with Plea Letters, requests that encompass both somatic and germline edits. The next exhibit samples the fictionalized letters she receives.



What Do All Those Plea Letters Sent to CRISPR Say?

I'm deluged by letters from folks who learn about me through the popular media, school courses, or scientists. It's amazing how many write letters pleading for me to do edits they care passionately about!

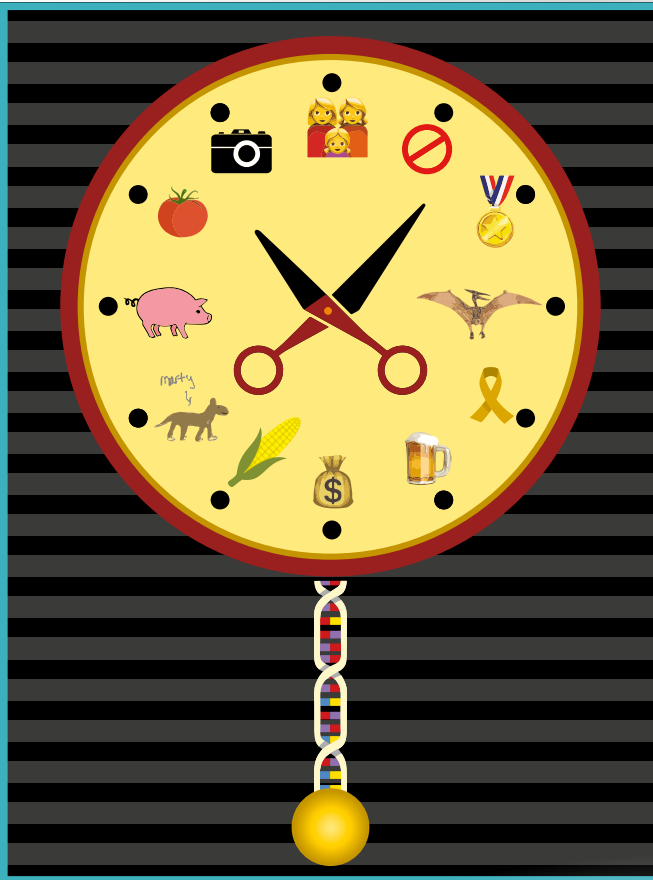


Answering all these letters
Would tie my time in fletters.



So I drew 19 from a hat,
Then just declared that that is that!

Some letter writers sent virtual charms to try to enhance their pleas.



I fashioned the charms into a clock to remind me that I have much work to do! A brief overview of my work locations lies ahead. Each clock charm is a clue pointing to one of those locations.



Just ahead, we'll view all 19 sample letters that CRISPR drew from a hat. *Writers made up the letters to request CRISPR projects that they themselves might want.*

Each fictionalized letter here also appears at the CRISPR work location where the project requested would be undertaken IF it were pursued. So we'll see each one again when we explore the Island.

Sample Plea Letters

CRISPR Science Lab

Dear Esteemed CRISPR:

Please focus on finding the functions of understudied genes in people of color. Uncover genes causing genetic diseases in our people. So far, studies have focused lopsidedly on people of European descent.


C'mon CRISPR, we're counting on you to be a Friend of the Underrepresented!

Your Friend,
Tyrell in Texas

I love taking pics. Pics of where I'm at, who I'm with, what I'm eating...I'm all over Insta. My storage is full up. My hard drive, my backup, my phone, my tablet, my watch—even the cloud. I want it all shrunk down and at my disposal anytime, anywhere. In fact, I'd like my whole life downloaded into a tiny molecule that's injected under my skin. The entire me, my medical, my music, my portfolio...whatever. And make it retrievable in a second.

There's an assignment for you, crazy CRISPR software people.

Visually,
Genie Pho



DNA Repairs & Upgrades Mall: Human Clinic

DEAR CRISPR PEOPLE:
I AM 8 YEARS OLD AND HAVE SOFT BONES BECAUSE OF OUCHERS DISEASE.

MOMMY SAYS I CAME EARLY SO I THOT MAYBE MY BONES DID NOT GET BAKED ENUF. BUT TODAY I READ THAT A BAD GENE CAUSES SOFT BONES PLEASE MAKE A FIX FOR MY BAD GENE AND CRISPR UP MY BONES SO I CAN RUN FASTEST LIKE FLO-TO. SHE WROTE BOOKS TOO!


OOOOPLES OF LOVE ❤️
OLYMPIA

PS I LIKE THE REST OF MY GENES

My sister, Sarah, and I are Ashkenazi Jews, so our doctor suggested both my sister and I get tested for the BRCA gene. Turned out we both carry the BRCA1 gene, which means very high risk of breast and ovarian cancer. Plus, our mother died 10 years ago from ovarian cancer. I want a double mastectomy and a hysterectomy. My sister doesn't. CRISPR, please fix that awful gene for all of us BRCA1 women so we don't have to make these impossible choices!

Worrying in Washington Heights,

Golda



Editor Note: "Ouchers" = Gaucher's

DNA Repairs & Upgrades Mall: Human Clinic (Continued)

I'm Sally. Thanks to the Supreme Court, I'm now legally married to the love of my life, Linda, and we want to get me pregnant. Linda's already had two children, but I haven't had that experience. We thought IVF would be the answer, but after three tries, I'm still not pregnant. We can only afford one more try. We've heard that CRISPR may improve our chances, but we're too old to wait long. CRISPR please hurry, I'm anxious to show off my baby bump.

Hope in Louisville



I'm Emma, I'm only 14, and 3 months ago I was diagnosed with type I Diabetes (I call it Die-Beats). I'm already good at doing injections—what a pain!—and I'm doing all the eating and exercising and blood check stuff like I'm supposed to. But I found out by googling that I might become blind or deaf or even have a stroke or lose a foot when I get older. I think the doctor shoulda told me that. CRISPR, please give my Die-Beats a permanent time-out!

Earnestly,

Emma



I love designer everything. Designer bags, designer shoes, designer dog treats. I really want designer kids. Thank God, I've got the riches to buy them. Courtesy of husband number three. First, I'll design their I.Q. (sky high of course), then I'll design them to have superior health—immune to every disease known to man.....and their looks, well of course, designed to be off the charts. OK, CRISPR, where's your catalog? I really don't care if it sounds immoral, name your price, CRISPR, name your price!

Gisele Gosee



The people of Outer Wannabee are hungry. Hungry for Gold Medals. We've participated in the Olympics for decades and have only won one. CRISPR, we know you can change all of that. Make us some souped-up contenders, groomed from the womb to be faster, stronger, more agile than the mere mortals those other countries bring to the competition. Let's make a pact. With what we can pay, we'll both be covered in gold.

Hungry Hercules



DNA Repairs & Upgrades Mall: Animal Clinic

I'm a 75-year-old granny and my favorite book is still Charlotte's Web. I've always wanted a baby pig. But pigs grow and I can't feed and care for a three-hundred pound porker. CRISPR, please make me a pig who weighs less than 25 pounds. That's about as much as I can carry. Also, if it's not too much to ask, please make him pink. It's my favorite color, and I am not a fan of any of the other colored pigs I've seen at 4H fairs (or even in my dreams).

Amy Styhouse



Dear CRISPR:

I love cows. My heroine is Temple Grandin because she made life better for cows. Please be like her and fix cows' DNA so that they don't have horns to hurt each other with anymore. Some cows already have no horns, so I know you can do it.

Heaps of Thanks,
Cowgirl Mooey

PS. Temple also made pictures in her brain. I love pictures too. In 4 Years, when I'm old enough, I'm going to come on the Tour so that I can see all your pictures.



Pest Control Corps

Dear CRISPR,
I am Jake and I am turning 8 years old on Thursday!!! I have a dog named Marty and he is really sick my mom is going to take him to the vet, but I don't want him to die! I saw a CRISPR Presentation at the science fair at school and now I want Marty to be CRISPRED Then he can live with me forever!!! Please help my dog!

From,
Jake



I'M A SIX-FOOT-FIVE, FORMER MARINE, BUT WHEN I'M CAMPING WITH MY SIX KIDS, THEY TEASE, "DADDY IS A SCAREDY CAT, HE'S AFRAID OF DEER!." LOOK, MY KIDS MAY NOT KNOW, BUT I KNOW THE DANGERS OF A DEER TICK. LYME DISEASE! I SAW ONE OF MY SQUAD BECOME SO DEBILITATED HE HAD TO LEAVE THE CORPS. WE NEED TO WIPE THIS THING OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH. IT'S NOT THE BUGS, IT'S THE BUGS IN THE BUG.

CRISPR! OOH-RAH!

BIG GUY IN CONNECTICUT



Extinction Prevention & Returns Center

I have sickle cell disease, and I live in Nigeria, where malaria strikes many people. I can join a clinical trial to cure my SCD, but that might cause me to lose the malaria resistance that weirdly comes with SCD. Please make malaria carrier mosquitos sterile so that when you cure Africans like me of SCD, we won't become susceptible to malaria.

Sooner rather than later,
Gabriel



Dear CRISPR De-Extinction Dept,
I really like the pterodactyls. I wish I could see them flying in the sky all around our house. Will you make pterodactyls come back alive? Pretty please. It would be funny to see my mom's face. And maybe she'd even let me keep one. I could name him Thor.
Awed in Alabama,
Dina



Dear CRISPR:

I know you're working hard in George Church's lab to bring my kind back to earth. I just want you to know that you have a whole bunch of fans here in Mammoth Heaven rooting for your success in this Mammoth-Sized endeavor! And we're also sending a "trunks up" to the Asian elephant for lending her genome to the project. May that blessed genome keep inching toward ours.

Forever yours,
Curvy Horn
CEO, Heavenly Mammoths, LLC



Dear CRISPR Wizard:

Please, please, pretty please bring back the passenger pigeons. My grandfather raved about their spectacular flocks and taught me about their ecological benefits; they contributed to a healthy forest fire cycle and greater animal diversity in the forests. C'mon, C. Wizard, we want those splendid flocks back blackening our sky!!

Eyes Up,

Birdy,

President, Passenger Pigeon De-Extinction
Fan Club



Super Seedy Greenhouse & Bioreactor

We have been corn farmers in Iowa for over four generations. We know a lot about rain. We used to see moderate rains which actually increased our corn production. But over the last decade or so, we've seen heavy rains which spoil the soil and hurt our crops. We need you CRISPR be all ears now and to make our corn thrive, however the climate keeps changing.

Corny Cornwall



My family is from Milwaukee. So, naturally we make beer. I think we'd make a lot more money if we could make a beer that doesn't cause a hangover. CRISPR, can you change the yeast or hops to make a cold one that won't have the nasty after effects, without hurting our beer's great flavor?

The Brewsky's



I'm Willy, a tomato plant. Problem is, when my fruit gets ripe, my branches get soooo heavy that I can't hold onto it anymore. Then, eighty days of hard work drops to the ground and dies. CRISPR, please make my branches stronger so that my beautiful red juicy ones don't go to the birds? Urgently,
Wasted Willy
PS. My eaters complain that I've lost my tomato-y taste. Please fix that too.



Next, it's on to an overview of CRISPR's workplaces, where work on granted plea requests would be done and challenges on the route to market confronted.

Is there a trait change you wish CRISPR would perform? Write a Plea Letter—just text or with graphic design included—and send it to info@crisprahead.org



5 CRISPR Labs & Clinics



CRISPR Science Lab (aka Sci Lab): Here, CRISPR constantly undergoes upgrades and extensions of her skill set; she also plays a key role in basic genomic studies, among others.



DNA Repairs & Upgrades Mall: CRISPR is used to develop cures for genetic diseases in humans & animals and perform some animal upgrades. The Mall hosts discussions about future potential human upgrades.



Pest Control: CRISPR participates in potential strategies to control creatures that cause diseases or harm the ecosystems.



Extinction Prevention & Returns Center: CRISPR edits genomes of endangered species to favor their survival and tries to de-extinct species already gone.



Super Seedy Greenhouse & Bioreactor: CRISPR is used to upgrade plants and customize microbes; improve crop survival, yields, and quality; and create other non-food products for specific purposes.



Beyond Labs & Clinics: 5 Indispensables



Critics Cavern: Collection of criticisms and associated evidence. Some criticisms are well founded, others not.



Funds Dispensary: Grants, venture capital, sponsors, and any other funding sources.



Publications, Patents & Regulations Bureau: Gateways to the building blocks of scientists' reputations and consumer products.



Public Opinion Well: Repository of a powerful collective say!

Please deposit your opinions!



Mentoring & Creativity: A key theme that runs through all content in the CRISPR Whisperer Picture Series.



Pest Control Corps



DNA Repairs

& Upgrades Mall



CRISPR Science Lab



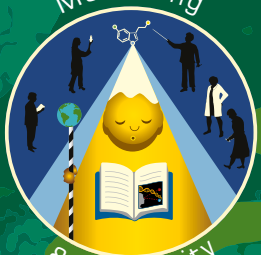
CRISPR STEAMship Berth



Extinction Prevention & Returns Center



Public Inputs Well



Mentoring & Creativity

CRISPR ISLAND



Critics' Cavern



Super Seedy Greenhouse & Bioreactor



Publications and Patents & Regulations Bureau



Funds Dispensary





Episode 05 "Dear CRISPR" Plea Letters CREDITS

Sarah D'Souza created Jake Letter

Dorothy Semenow created Olympia Letter

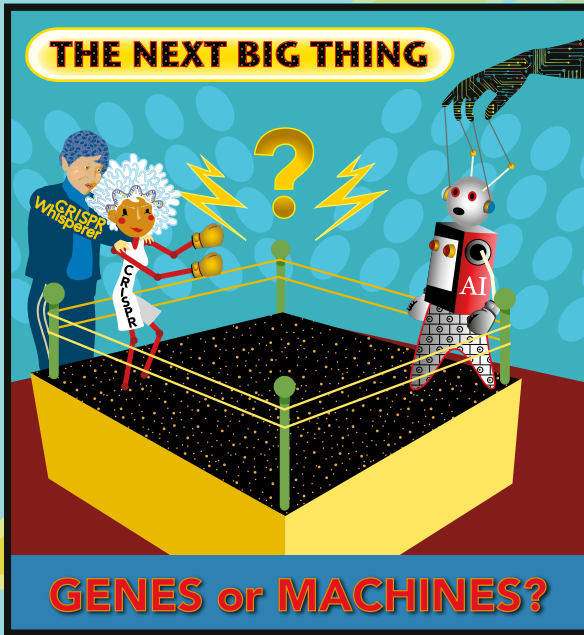
Caron Perkal & Lisa Zarowin wrote text for all other Letters

Jane Burns created art and designs for all other Letters



Refreshed and recharged, she's set to go—
Next Stop: "CRISPR Plea Letters!"

We close this episode with CRISPR pitching her unifying message—it's your invitation to visit the upcoming episodes of The CRISPR Whisperer Picture Series. We look forward to seeing you there!





CRISPR Whispers Picture Series EPISODES LIST

- 01 CRISPR Smarts Via the Arts
- 02 Mentoring, Creativity, and Women Entrepreneurs
- 03 Age Reversal
- 04 CRISPR Origins & History
- 05 "Dear CRISPR" Plea Letters
06. Critics Cavern
07. Science Lab
08. DNA Repairs & Upgrades Mall
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10. Extinction Controls & Returns Center
11. Super Seedy Greenhouse & Bioreactors
12. Indispensable CRISPR Support Centers
13. CRISPR Roots
14. CRISPR Foundation: Science Power
15. CRISPR Fun Activities

CRISPRwhisperer.org
and
PGED.org
Personal Genetics Education & Dialogue