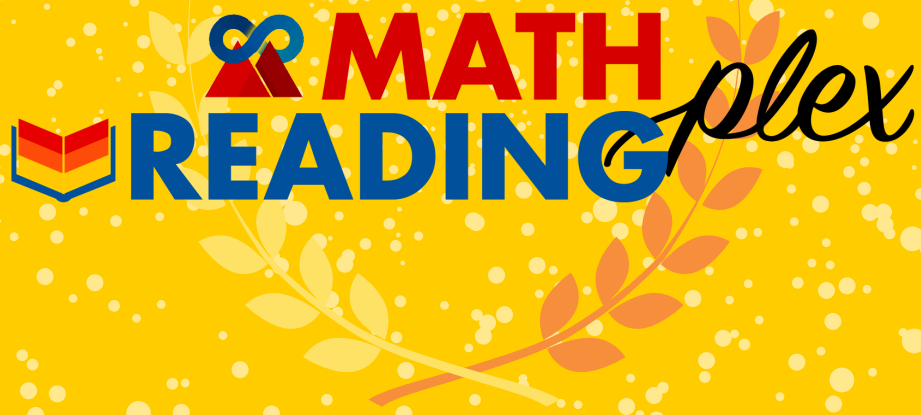
'24-'25 WRITING YEARBOOK

A RECORD OF YOUR BEST WORKS



THIS YEARBOOK'S

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Current Events Quickwrite: Greece Earthquakes

As of February 12, about 12,000 earthquakes with magnitudes over 1 have hit Greece's Santorini Island. Although there is an active volcano there, scientists say it is unlikely to erupt. However, many island residents still need to evacuate with the nonstop tremors.

If you were a resident of Santorini Island and you were asked to evacuate immediately, what are 5 items you need to bring with you and 3 actions you will take with your family?

Note: These 3 actions are part of your evacuation response. They should answer the question: What would you do?



Angelina Randall, 13

If I had enough time to bring 5 items when evacuating I would take the following: water, food, money/card, clothes, and a first aid kit. In addition, three actions I would take with my family is to make sure everyone is here, be aware of potential hazards around us (ex. falling objects), and immediately leave to the nearest exit.

Leah Bae, 13

If I had to evacuate Santorini Island with my family, then I would bring money, our phones, passports, filled water bottles, and our first-aid kit. Firstly, my parents, my younger sister, and I would get to the nearest dock, either by car or on foot. Then, we would catch a boat to Athens, which is where many other residents and tourists are heading as well. When we arrive, we would book a room in a hotel, then stay updated on the situation using our phones.











Chloe Chung, 11

If I was a resident in Santorini Island and I was asked to evacuate immediately, the five things I would bring would be:
- A first aid kit
- A cell phone
- Food
- Water and our emergency savings.

Three actions that our family would take for our evacuation would be to have walkie talkies for when we get lost and we don't know where we are, name tags with our parents' phone numbers, and mainly to stick together, so that we don't get separated.

Quickwrite: Honesty, Homework & Tik Tok

John Kim, 12

I think honesty can be trouble. Because being too honest can tell other people's personal things that you know. Being honest is just telling the fact about a person, therefore it can tell the embarrassing moments of the person that is close to you. It can break the friendship between friends. Also, in honesty, there are no secrets between person, so it can be hard to be close with friend. You can become lonely when you are too honest AND TATTLE A LOT!

Ethan Kuo, 14

I think sometimes, to be honest, it is a good thing, but sometimes it will be a bad thing. For when someone has already made a deal with someone else, but he doesn't want to follow it, then know it what, to be honest. On the other side, if someone has a terrible hairstyle, you might not be honest because it might hurt his/her heart.



Daisy L., 13

When I first heard about TikTok getting shut down last year, I was genuinely surprised. Millions of American uses TikTok on daily basis; it would be a huge change. Also, a lot of people use TikTok as their job. When they earn views and followers, they earn money. On Sunday, January 19, I believe that the Youtube Shorts will blow up. TikTok and Youtube shorts are very similar, so a lot of TikTok users would probably switch to Youtube shorts. People who have TikTok as their job would probably be devastated on Sunday since it means that they lost their job. This whole banning TikTok thing would really change the world. Better or worse? I don't know honestly.

Ethan Kuo, 14

I think ban TikTok was a perfect choice because TikTok has giving us the wrong news and it keep talking about some issue. It makes people stop thinking why it happen and start to believe what someone else say without research.



Q: If you could go back in time, where would you go and why?

Daisy L., 13

A: I would go back to November 2024. We changed seats in art class at school and I got seated with this friend who I really enjoy talking to. This friend was one of the most genuine, funny, and kind friend I met, and I always looked forward for art because of this friend. Art is a rotation elective, so when trimester 1 ended, we moved on to computers class. I wasn't seated with this friend this time, but I am two seats away from this person. I still laugh and talk with this friend a lot because we seat closely, but it's not as great when I sat right next to this friend.

Q: Throughout history, there has always been a fight for resources between humans. Explain the reason and the result.

John Kim, 12

A: When resources are exhausted and almost disappear, the developed country will tried to get all the resources for their country, which leads to war. The country will get exausted as the war gets long, and the weak country will destroy or become conquered by other countries. No one will get the resources and finally everyone will die. To solve this problem, you can copy the DNA of the plants or animals to increase the population or use other scientific ways.

Current Events Quickwrite: Dangerous Air Travel

2025 has not had a great start when it comes to air travel. Many planes have crashed which raises awareness concerning the safety of the engines, the change in weather due to climate change, and the communication between pilots and air traffic control.

What are your thoughts on the recent 4 fatal plane crashes in the U.S. and the deadly plane crash in Korea? You may have to conduct some research to inform your opinion. Your response should be 5 - 10 sentences long.



Angelina Randall, 13

The deadly plane crashes in the U.S. and in Korea are tragic. My friend's friend who was an ice skater recently passed away due to a plane crash. As I know how disheartening my friend felt, plane crashes are no joke. I hope the people in those plane crashes rest in peace.

Leah Bae, 13

I believe that the 2025 plane crashes show that air-travel systems need to be upgraded. For instance, engines could be checked using cameras throughout the flight to make sure that there is nothing stuck inside that could potentially cause a crash. Additionally, people must take into account that human error may play a role in these incidents. The plane crash in Korea, for example, was partly made so deadly because the concrete block that held the satellites was constructed above ground. Usually, they are built underground, so even if a plane crashes into it, they will simply run over the satellites; sadly, this did not happen. As a result, people should first double- or triple-check what goes on at airports beforehand. Therefore, humans must improve all airplane systems to ensure safety.



Daisy L., 13



There has been a lot of fatal plane crashes recently, and I am obviously shook by it. It's pretty rare for a plane crash to happen; after all, approximately 100,000 planes fly each day and accidents aren't reported every single day. The crash in the D.C. and the plane crash in Korea wasn't because the plane was defective. The plane in D.C. crashed due to a collision with a helicopter, and the plane crash in Korea was because of a bird strike that messed up the landing gear. Although there has been many plane crashes, I still believe it's safe to ride; it's actually the safest transportation in the world with a crash percentage of 0.0001%.

Timothy Yoon, 11

I think it's preventable by making the plane having the latest safest technology. In addition, you need to hire workers who have lots of experience and no criminal record on them. Yes I am planning on traveling by plane in spring break. I actually love going on long airplane cause it just makes me happy and calm. I will never change that feeling in the future.

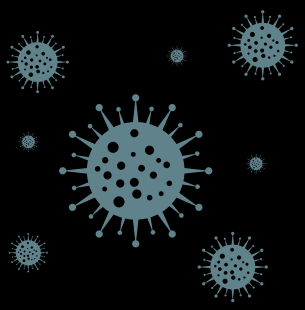


Current Events Quickwrite: Bird Flu

The flu is an illness that most people contract at least once a year. However, the bird flu is something humans should try their best to avoid.

The bird flu originates from sick birds, but it can infect humans. When humans get infected, there is a high mortality rate with a 50% chance of death. There has already been a death by bird flu in America; however, the Trump administration has removed the U.S. from WHO (World Health Organization) where even North Korea has joined. WHO was the leader in charge of overseeing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now that we are breaking ties with the rest of the world when it comes to receiving and sharing help when it comes to global health, what do you predict will happen if the bird flu becomes a national pandemic?



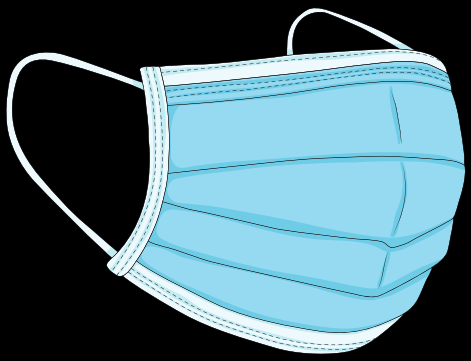
Angelina Randall, 13

If the bird flu becomes a national pandemic, I predict that most will go on lock down in a more calm manner. Since we have gone through this before due to COVID-19, people will know what to do instead of freaking out. It may sadden the world as people pass away, but at least we are more prepared.

Leah Bae, 13

If the bird flu becomes a national pandemic in the United States, then I predict that it will be detrimental to our economy and citizens. To begin, chicken/bird farmers would likely have to close their farms, ridding us of a major food source and making farmers lose their jobs. Currently, an egg shortage is already happening due to the outbreak of the avian flu. Additionally, people with pet birds may have to euthanize them under government orders, which would be sad for those who have deep bonds. The 50-50 mortality rate is also concerning, which could impact our population greatly.





Dokyung Kim, 12

I think the USA will go crazy because the bird flu is spread by airborne droplets which means, infected humans can spread germs to other people by their saliva. Also, the animals can infect humans, so people may die by starvation if they can't eat meat.



Chloe Chung, 11

In my opinion, I think US will be in a national crisis, and the pandemic will be worse than the previous COVID-19 epidemic. This is because when COVID-19 hit, WHO was the one that was protecting and assuring the people that everything will be okay. But now the US is not registered, and people know that, when the pandemic hits, there will be no way how citizens will react. I think there will be more panic and chaos if the bird flu epidemic, because one of the main medical supporters of the United States is gone.

Current Events Quickwrite: Screen Time Statistics

In the U.S., nearly half of teenagers spend more than 8 hours of screen time per day. What are your thoughts on this statistic? Are there questions that you have or explanations for this statistic?

Daisy L., 13

Screen Time. When hearing that, many people think that it's for entertainment purpose. As a student, I assure you that it's way more than that. I have TONS of school homework to do everyday, and 90%, I need my iPad, MacBook, or a school Chromebook to complete my school work. I would guess that about 3–4 hours of that 8 hour screen time would probably be used on studying, and others on social media. However, I am honestly not that surprised that the screen time rate is pretty high; some kids in my school are glued to their phone.



Ethan Kuo, 14

I think teenagers spend too much time in front of screens. It doesn't matter if it is learning or if it breaks our eyes; it's not good for our health.



Current Events Essay by Chloe Chung, 11

In 2025, there were many tragic incidents that led the new year off to a very grim start. Most of them were plane crashes that ranged from bird collisions to engine failures. Last year, a total of six plane catastrophes took place internationally, which took on many death tolls and concerns about the flight systems around the world. The most tragic one happened in South Korea, where a plane that returned from Jeju Island crashed while landing, and later exploded. It killed a current number of one hundred and seventy-seven passengers. The truth to it is still being held, about what caused the plane to explode and who should be the one to make amends to the tragic incident.

Back in December, the South Korean flight crash in Muan International Airport made top headlines globally, and raised undeniable awareness about the current problems in the flight industries. The background of the catastrophe was that there was a serious landing gear error, causing the plane to ultimately slide on the runway. The pilot planned for the soft flight bump to absorb at least some of the power when it collided, making the plane stop. The outcome of this plan was the plane exploding, resulting in the crash with a very small number of survivors. This crash could have been avoidable if one essence of this situation was fixed beforehand, and made it so that there were not even a single death at all.

During the emergency, the pilot didn't panic nor abruptly land someplace else. Instead, he tried every possible way to make the plane land, even with the error in the systems. He tried to make the plane stop with friction by sliding down on the runway, and when that didn't work, he thought that the flight bump would take on at least a huge amount of power, causing the plane to cease as well. The plan was nearly next to perfect, and after the incident, the pilot could have been hailed a hero. But in this situation, the flight bump, as it should have been made of sand or other spongy material as written in the law, was made of concrete or cement. The hard material broke down after taking in all that power, and moments later, the plane unfortunately exploded as well. Due to one person's negligence of the flight plans and the rules, it sacrificed not only the passengers' lives in the vehicle, but the hearts of many families who would have been waiting dearly for their loved ones to arrive.

The South Korean plane crash incident was very impactful not only to South Korean people, but to people all around the world. This accident raised sorrow and also notice about flight industries globally, and what can people do to help these situations. The matter of this shows that people should be more careful and cautious about flights, and generally should be more aware of the people around them. The South Korean plane crash in December was truly a traumatic incident that filled the country with sorrow and grief. I believe that accidents like that due to negligence should never happen again, because it would have been easily avoidable if one person just took notice of their situation and surroundings.





Current Events Quickwrite: Informative Important Issue

Write about an important event, problem, or issue. Inform the reader and if it is a problem, offer solutions.

Ellyn Hwang, 10

Students need to pay attention to class because they get distracted the toys or friends around them. Some of the solutions are that teachers assign seats that the students are responsible with. This means if the new seats aren't working then give the student or students a second chance or if they are misbehaving then move seats. The other solution is that to see if the students are too distracted with their toys or fidgets like nee-doh or 3D printed items. If it gets to over handed, take the toy away from the student or students. The last solution is that when the students have a group project, get into partners then make the students responsible about the team. When people get overhanded with the project and not working, then they need to be separate. This means that the kids need to talk about the project and not talk about other discussions like what's for lunch. These tips can help students pay attention in class. Even though these tips sound strict, this helps students concentrate in class.

Stella Park, 10

Plastic Pollution: A Big Problem for Our Planet

Have you ever seen trash on the ground or floating in the ocean? A lot of that trash is plastic. Plastic is a strong material that people use to make bottles, bags, toys, and more. But there's a big problem: plastic doesn't go away easily. It can stay in the environment for hundreds of years! Plastic can hurt animals. Sea turtles sometimes eat plastic bags because they think it's jellyfish. Birds can get tangled in plastic rings. Even tiny pieces of plastic, called microplastics, end up in the water we drink and the food we eat. That's not good for animals or people. A lot of plastic comes from non-recyclable items—like straws, cups, snack wrappers, and bags. People use them once and then throw them away. Some of it gets recycled, but most of it ends up in landfills, rivers, and oceans. Some solutions are, - Try to use less plastic. Bring your own reusable water bottle or lunch box. Say "no thanks" to plastic straws and bags. - Use items again instead of throwing them away. For example, decorate and reuse old containers to store art supplies! - Put plastic in the right recycling bin, if your town or school has one. - Help clean up parks or beaches with a grown-up. Every little bit helps! We all make a difference. Even small changes can help keep the Earth clean and safe. If everyone works together—kids, adults, and leaders—we can solve the plastic problem and protect our planet for the future.



In the midst of the dark, hue of the sky the crinkly noise tickles my ear. What could it be? Using my common knowledge I know it is a garage opening. I have my eyes closed and take a huge breath that expands my lungs up and down. I see darkness, with a faint red tint, which I assume is from the light that is on. I then open my eyes, and cover my ears. I see an emerald green shining in my face. It is of course my lovely plant that is at my desk. Finally, I reach for the stars and stretch as much as I can. Since I am not very flexible these moves strain my legs and arms. Some people may not notice, but every sense of the human body is amazing.

Angelina Randall, 13

Narrative Reflection



I hear the wind blowing on the trees outside of my window, and the roaring of the ocean. Another thing I can hear are the cars that pass by on the road around half a mile away. The ceiling fan also makes a small clicking sound as it spins around and around.

I can smell my lotion, as well as the dyed-hair shampoo that I use. My incense bottle permeates the room with a citrus-y scent. The vanilla hand sanitizer on my hands is sweet, and reminds me of Christmas.

When I open my eyes, I can see my gray closet curtains hanging limply from a black rod that almost touches the ceiling. I can also see a black analog clock on the wall that reads 8:38. My matching pillow and blanket set that has flowers and ladybugs on it are in view as well. I see my reddish-brown table full of Legos. If I turn my head towards the right, then I can see my mint desktop computer and aqua accent wall with a cat puzzle hanging on it. I can also see the poster of the Periodic Table of Elements above my computer. Four yellow lights that are built into the ceiling glow softly; there are also leaf green curtains hanging in front of each window. I can see an off-white bookshelf and the edges of my books.

After stretching, I feel sore, yet relaxed; probably because I had Physical Education at school today. My legs, arms, and back are especially sore. I realize how stiff my ankles and wrists are, so I roll them. Now I feel much more “loose”, except my ankles are still slightly sore.



When I close my eyes, I can hear some noise that I breathe, and I can hear some noise from outside. The bird's chirping, sounds from people, and some noise by the cars. When I take a deep breath, I smell some comfortable smells from my bed. Also, I can smell the food from downstairs. It makes me hungry because it smells delicious. When I cover my ears, I can see outside that my neighbors are playing outside in their yard, and I can see some cars that are moving. When I stretch with my full body, it makes me comfortable and feel peace and presence because it relaxes me.



A Calm Walk

As I take a hike I find a place to sit in and I close my eyes to see if I could hear some beautiful sounds and there I hear lovely birds chirping, people's footsteps pounding the ground softly, birds flapping their wings, and lastly a nearby lake swishing its waters.

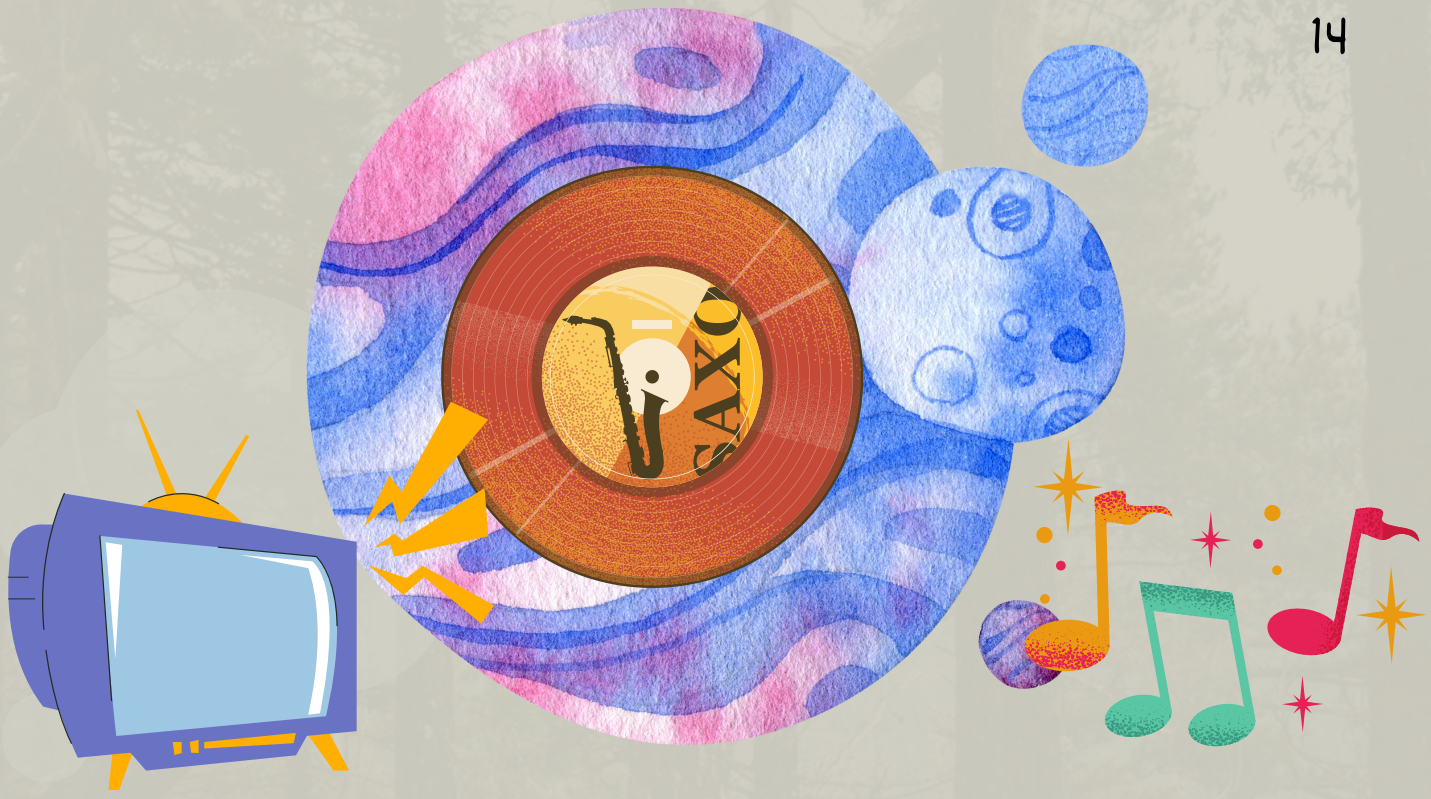
As I keep my eyes close I take deep breaths and feel the ground shaking, feel people slowing down, and feel the birds surrounding me and I also smell lovely pastries, smell the crumbs being thrown away to the birds, and smell the fresh grass just cut by the generous mowers.

As I open my eyes, I close my ears trying to see amazing things without hearing things like people on the beach talking and chatting to each other, a flock of birds landing on the grass area, and a lot of kids chasing each other around for fun.

As I smell, hear, feel wonderful things I stretch my whole body reaching as far as I can with my fingers and toes and I feel relieved out, I feel that I have absolutely nothing that can stop me from having a bad mood, and sensation of my relaxed body and the beautiful area around me.

I started to walk back home with a positive mind and a relaxed body ready to deal with what is in front of me.





I close my eyes. The world seems to dawn on me, as I quietly listen to the universe. I hear the jazz and piano music playing from my mom's phone, and my brother Chris flipping the book. My hearing darts upstairs. I hear the toilet flushing, and water drizzling onto my sister Charlotte's cup, preparing for brushing her teeth. I continue to keep my eyes closed and breathe in deeply. There is no specific smell in the air– as air is the breathable liquid through my nose. I cover my ears and open my eyes. I see Chris working on notes across the table from me, as books, homework, textbooks, and other materials are sprawled all over it. I see Charlotte, pulling up a chair next to Chris to read her book, and the lovely flowers and the cactus sitting on the two play boxes. More books and toys are piled up in shelves, and our old but dear sofa sits across the living room from it. I stretch my body, and the exhilarating tingling feeling spreads all over my body. My eyelids are a little heavy, for it is eight-twenty p.m., but the thoughts of me and my mom watching TV together pushes and urges me on. My five senses is a truly remarkable and amazing gift.

Chloe Chung, 11
Narrative Reflection

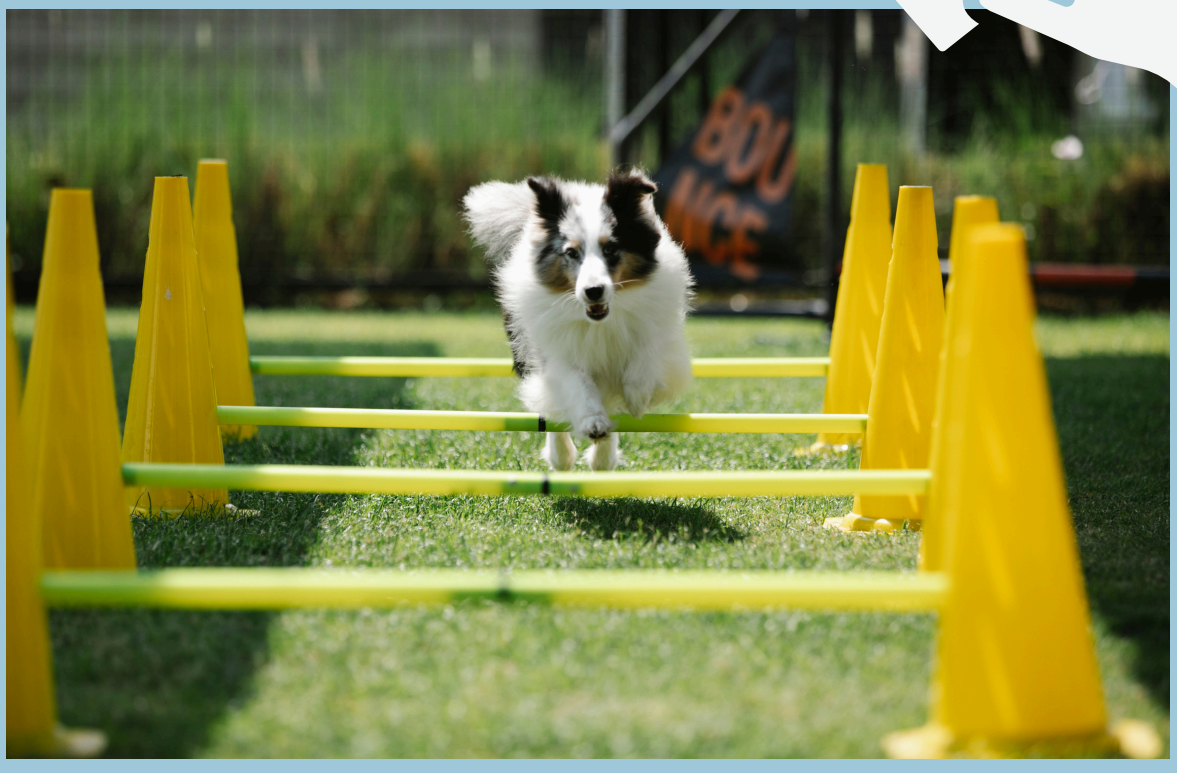
Show, Don't Tell



Angelina Randall, 13

Thump. Thump. The rain beats like a drum on the banana-colored bus. The green wildlife hangs on the side of the cement-colored cliff, waiting for its doom. Little pebbles fall. The bus swishes side to side, almost meeting the same fate as the pebbles. Adventures awaits this little yellow bus, with making one wrong move that will end its story forever.

An uproar arises. The audience gasps with awe and delight. A little show that will bring a warm glow into anyone's day. What is making such a commotion? Oh! It must be these fine gentlemen. They stand up tall with clear training of a professional. Their fur has a radiance of happiness. Their big, sparkling eyes would make anyone's hearts melt. The perkiness of their ears are unmatched. These little gentlemen are poise, elegant dogs that jump hurdles with such passion. No one could pass up a little show with kind mannered dogs that can brighten anyone's day.



Show, Don't Tell



Leah Bae, 13

A rocky path filled with fog is built on the side of a mountain. It is dark gray, with many rocks that glint as the light hits them. However, there are slight greenish tints, likely because of moss. The rockwall on the right side of the path appears very steep, although there is some shrubbery growing on it. A yellow-orange Jeep is speeding past, heading towards the fog. A bright yellow sign shows that the path up ahead has many curves. On the left side of the car, a sheer drop into the mist creates a mysterious, possibly eerie feeling.





ANGELINA RANDALL, 13

The acidity of an tomato hits you like a bat. It looks deliciously like the heaven's angels kissed it personally. The flesh of the tomato is soft and juicy with kidney shaped seeds.

DAISY L., 13

She put a shiny knife in between an orange. The sweet and flavorful smell reach up to her nose as the orange was showing its bare skin. She reached her hand down as she grabbed the orange like a wrestler but squeezed it gently like a babysitter. The juice of the orange dripped down to the cutting board. Plop..plop.....plop. Unable to resist any longer, she took a bite out of the fresh orange and that was when the juice and the sweetness exploded in her hungry mouth. She felt the softness of the inside of an orange, and the icky unpleasant feeling of the orange pith.

LEAH BAE, 13

A starchy, savory scent filled with spices wafting out of the kitchen oven. A late night trip to a fast-food restaurant to get salty, golden fries. Sitting down at a table next to loved ones with a bowl full of creamy, white mush. This is a potato.

DOKYUNG KIM, 12

When you grab a mango, you can feel the soft peels with a smooth sound that is the same as a wave wash the sand. When you slice the mango, we can feel that blade cut a tasty mango into half with a juicy delicious sound. when you share a mango with your friend, a happy smile makes your heart warmer than lava.

CHLOE CHUNG, 11

My mom puts tomatoes on our plates, saying that, "it's healthy to eat". I used to dislike tomatoes. It's taste, mainly, which swirled distrustfully around in my tongue, making me furrow my brows. But then my mom told me the good things about tomatoes. How it prevents diseases and makes me healthy. Most of all, instead of making us eat it by ourselves, she ate it with us, complementing its sweet taste. Weeks passed, and I became fond of tomatoes. During that time, my mom, as usual, had made many foods that used them, such as pasta and fried rice with sliced ones. The day my mom placed small tomatoes on my plate, I picked one up and tasted it. It was sweet.



RYAN CHO, 10

Potato. Golden like the sun, always helpful in every way. Whether you're sad, happy, or calm, it's always there for you. The soft texture, with such an elegant taste- you can't find that anywhere. It's like a hug. Soft, warm, and uplifting. A potato, although it might just be a potato, there's more to it. It's a warm and soft hug, accepting you in every way.

AIDEN RHEE, 11

THE MANGO JOURNEY

The mango gets wrapped by foil at the bright day, ready to be delivered to France, Paris. The mango begins to get juiced up when it is about to head in the plane. The plane takes off making the mango tumble all over the place. Once it arrives the mango gets welcomed by a group of chefs hosting its open ceremony. The mango one of the deserts on the menu is overwhelmed of how it will leave the world. The mango gets cut into five pieces and is delighted on a golden warm plate. It says its bye to all its friend, the apple, blueberry, banana, and a pear. It gets in the mouth prepared for the person to have a happy stomach. After the mango's presence, another mango is ready to travel over its journey to Paris.





JAYDEN LEE, 12

The immediate crunch of the apple in your mouth, the sound of the apple slicing through that big giant juicy red ball you could feel that juicy taste in your mouth almost like that your drool even tastes just like the same sour juicy apple and when you're on the last second to cut the apple and your full of joy.

ERIC HA, 11

The moment you put your hands on a kiwi, your hand tingles with the fuzz like the soft matted coat of a dandelion corpse.

When you portion of the sweetness of the kiwi, blade and the crunch of the outside and how it cleanly carves the inside.

Then, the most rewarding instant you dig your silver spoon, shiny and glamorous, like the reflection in the mirror, into the tangy flesh of the flashy yellow inside, like a natural bowl



“Yellow Glass” by Elliott Cheng, 9

100-WORD STORY
ANGELINA RANDALL, 13



The menacing, hard material on the outside of a lychee seems daunting. The reddish bumps resemble a poison dart frog with vibrant colors, warning you to back off. Past the hard exterior, a pure white, velvet sphere pulls you in to taste its sweet, sweet nectar. With one bite, the tender juice trickles down your throat, entrapping you to crave more. Suddenly a hard, impenetrable material comes in contact with your teeth. It's a seed! Without need for the dense black pearl, you throw it away, longing for another bite of the sweet, supple meat of the lychee.

100-WORD STORY
LEAH BAE, 13



"What is the answer to question nine?" asks Ms. Turner.

The class shuffles around in their seats uncomfortably, waiting for someone to answer. No one does.

"If no one knows, then I guess we have to do some practice problems," she continues, hoping that this will elicit a response.

I stare at the board. I know the answer. Just, my mouth won't open. My hand doesn't rise.

Ms. Turner sighs, grabbing an Expo and walking to the board. "Wait" I want to say. I want to answer. But I can't. Too many people.

Of course, I think, the stereotypical introvert.

100-WORD STORY
SIHYUN PARK, 14



To the protector of tomorrow,

If you're reading this, you have a chance to make a difference to our Earth. I'm calling from the future to warn you that the world is now plagued by climate disaster. Our world is deteriorating because of global boiling. I'm sending information in hopes of preserving your timeline from it. Come to the hidden vault beneath the New York Public Library at midnight. Bring your phone to record the hidden truth and solution for it. With my information you can save our planet. The survival of the last generation depends on you.

Voice, Future



Memory Narrative

Beach Cleanup

By Angelina Randall

Thump. Thump. Thump. I trudged out of my sixth period, math on a Wednesday. I hate math! Since Wednesday was early out, it was finally the end of school. I joyfully skip, with the intention to leave school. Oh wait, don't I have YAT? I take a sharp turn back to the lunch tables where our usual meet up place was. YAT stands for youth action team, which is a program that offers activities to help communities. These participations gain hours of volunteer work that stay on your record forward to help with future college opportunities showing the hours you have done. I just recently joined YAT and this is my first time doing an activity!

I was planning to eat lunch at home, but oh well! I hop in the lunch line so I don't get hungry during YAT. Ooo! I spotted my favorite lunch item, turkey wrap! I quickly snag the item before anyone else does.

"Hailey!" I exclaim.

She gives me her classic raised eyebrows, a habit she picked up from her mom to say hello. I walk closer to her and plop down at the blue lunch tables near the mentor who is taking us today for the activity.

"Hiiii!" shouts Hailey.

Click! I open my lunch container to take a honking bite out of the turkey wrap. My eyes look from side to side. It looks like we're going with a lot of 6th graders.

A few minutes pass, with me having a few bites left to go off my food.

"Eunice!" exclaims the mentor.

"Here." Eunice says.



Memory Narrative

The SWimming competition

By John Kim

The silence before diving makes my heart faster. I went to the Jump platform. Now it was my turn. I did this 23 times, but this was different as I wasn't in lane 5, in lane 2. The smell of the wax water, and the sound of the take your mark tight my mind. I thought in a few seconds I am going to the smelly wax water and feel the coldness of the water. My only mind was to start good, and finish great, and just complete the competition. I notice in a few seconds I am diving. I look at my face by the water right below me. And the sound came, BOOOOO. I dive in, I don't care about the coldness of the water and the smell. The 100 breaststroke is a short race so I should start fast I don't know what place I am in; I just think one word makes me fast. JUST KICK. I was almost finished with my 50, I noticed the last 50, is the part where everyone gets exhausted and gets slower. I thought this was the key to victory. I have enough strength to use, I said focus, I was a little bit scared too, because of the isolation in the water. But there was no frustration and there is 30 yd left, and I was close to the finish.



Memory Narrative

The Tryout

By Ryan Cho

I took a deep breath and jumped off the car. I smelled the crisp winter air and got my cleats on the turf. It felt amazing and as I kept walking, I saw the team. It felt surreal that I was practicing with them. I warmed up and got ready to try my best to make it in.

It was in the winter of 2024, a notification popped up on my dad's phone. The director of my team, Coach Graham, had asked him if I wanted to join the Pre-ECNL team's practice sessions. I played in the 2013 league and was their main defender. I was great, even leading the team to a final. My performances caught the eye of the director, so he invited me to practice with a team in the best league in my age group. I felt sad to end my run with the 2013's but it felt good to have a chance to play with a team in the best league.

When my dad told me, my heart raced. " Am I really going to practice? How about my team? What if I don't make it?" My dad told me to not stress it and just enjoy it. Many of my former teammates got into the team in tryouts but I fell short last time. It wasn't even a tryout either. They scheduled practices for me only, because I was doing so well. I felt worried. My hands were shaking and I had a whole house full of questions I had. " Why me? Will I see my friends there? Will I make it?"

Finally, my last practice with the 2013s, I had the big day. I stepped off my car and smelt the crisp, cold air and made my way onto the field. I saw my friend, Eric, and Blake. I started off passing and I was determined. I made good passes and did well. Then I realized the real class of this level. The amount of dedication and hardwork into this practice was something I never experienced before. After the practice, my legs felt like noodles and I reflected on my practice.

The next few practices were hard, but fun. I got used to the hard work and got better. I made new friends and started playing really well. Then, out of nowhere, a player gets sick and I have to step up and play a tournament for them. I asked my dad for advice and he told me to try my best and enjoy it. The game came and I started out well. I was on the bench and we needed some goals. We weren't shooting enough. When I went in, I took a clean shot and it went in. My heart raced with excitement and I felt on top of the world. We ended up losing our 2-0 win and losing 3-2, as they started a comeback. I felt devastated but I did a good job. The next game was horrible. It was 8-2 and our defence was in scrambles. I couldn't keep up and ended up with a bad performance. Then, the 3rd game arrived and I was sick, so I didn't feel too good. I did bad again and we lost again. I felt as if all hope was lost. My heart dropped after the game and tears came out of my eyes.

The next practice came and we were getting ready for the state cup. I wasn't part of the squad yet but everyone did badly, which led to me thinking I still have a little chance to get in. My friend said the coach wanted me on their team but I didn't believe him. After a couple training sessions, The call came.

The coach asked me to be a part of their team and my dad said yes. I was elated and I couldn't hold my happiness in. I felt on top of the world, with nothing to be sad about. Everyone was happy for me and I was too. I felt proud and wanted this team to get better and improve with them. I played wonderfully at the state cup but lost. After we had a 6 game win streak after. Our team went from zero to hero in the span of a month.

I felt elated and I am currently in the team, enjoying the soccer and having fun. I went from being no one to being a top league player in the span of a month. I have fun and enjoy every game. I eventually will be an official team member when the next season starts. Wish me luck!

Short Story

Eight Eyes

By Jayden Lee, 12



Eight beastly eyes look at you hunting you till it's night.

Then at 3am. BAM!

It bites you with its teeth.

Then when you wake up and try to scratch your butt. you feel a huge bump.

You try to scratch it again. but you knew that you're going to make the bump bigger. so you knew what you had to do: you hide under a blanket and hold a squishy.

Breath deeply while your butt still has that big bump.

Then. the spider says. "Peekaboo. I see you"

Then. BAM.



Memory Narrative

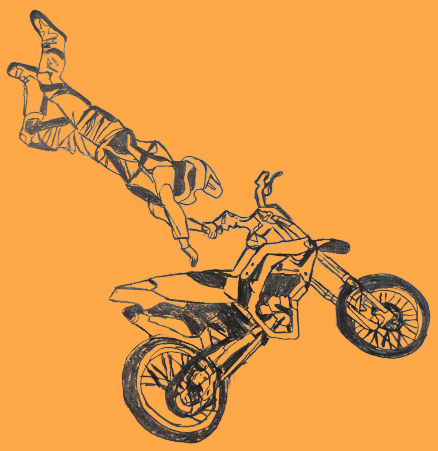
A Day at Lotte World

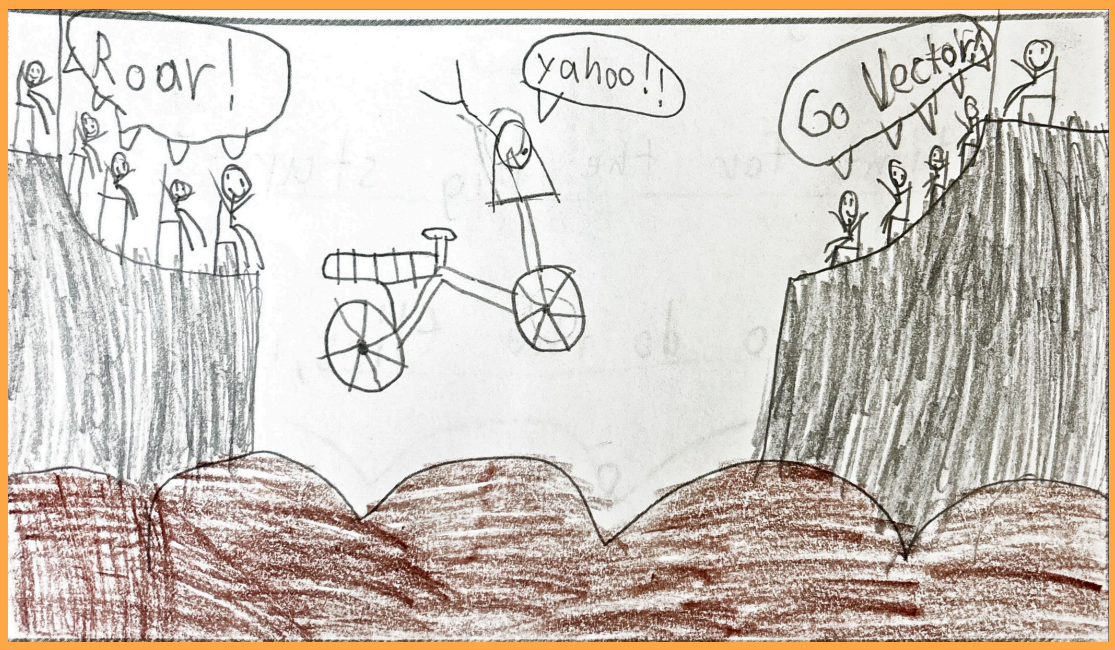
By Seorin Choi

"Mom, can me and Yeju go on the flying chairs ride?" I asked my mom immediately when we got inside Lotte World. "Yeah, sure. Just remember, always stick together. You don't want to get lost." She said. "Um, actually, can you come with us? You could just wait in the line with us, that's all. This place *is* pretty big." I said as I shrugged my shoulders. "Oh, fine. I guess I could come along," She said. As me and Yeju ran to the flying chairs ride, Yeju's smile suddenly disappeared as she saw the fast chairs in the air spinning like a carousel. "Um, wait. You're saying we're going on that?!" She said in worry. "Yeah." I answered and to tell the truth I was a teensy bit scared, too. "Um, actually I changed my mind. You could go on it. I can just watch." Now Yeju was slowly starting to back up. Then, I exclaimed, "What do you mean? We have to go on this ride!" Then, the line was shortening up. It was almost our turn! "Come on! It'll be fine!"









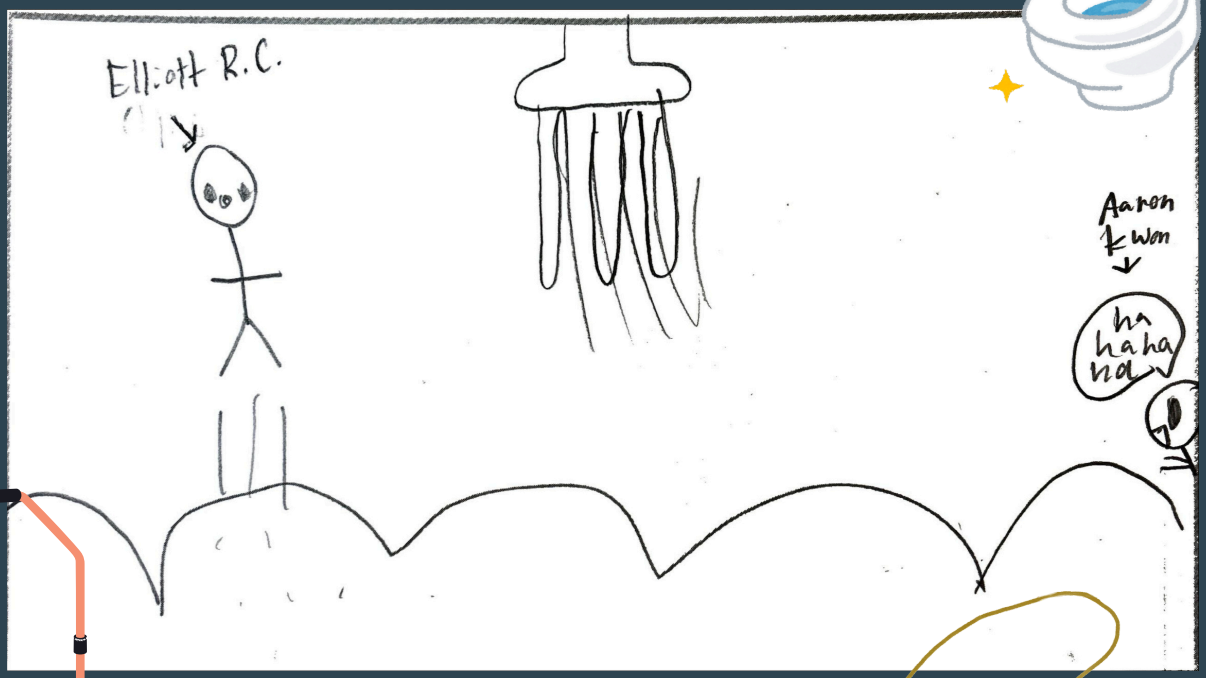
Narrative Writing

A Story

By Elliott Cheng, 9

Once there was a 20-year-old named Vector. He loves doing bike stunts for fun. When he was 17. Vector went pro early for bike stunts! Vector became popular 1 year later! He was so popular that he had to do 3 shows per month! Every time he puts on a show almost the same over & over. But fans still enjoy watching him doing stunts. This time Vector wanted to do a different stunt the fan have never seen before. He wanted to do a ... 6 flip that goes 3 forward and 3 backward! He went on the stage & did different stunts. 30 seconds later, it was time for the big stunt. It took him 10 seconds to do the flips, it was time for the landing & he ... landed IT! The crowd went wild! Vector lived happily ever after.

THE END.

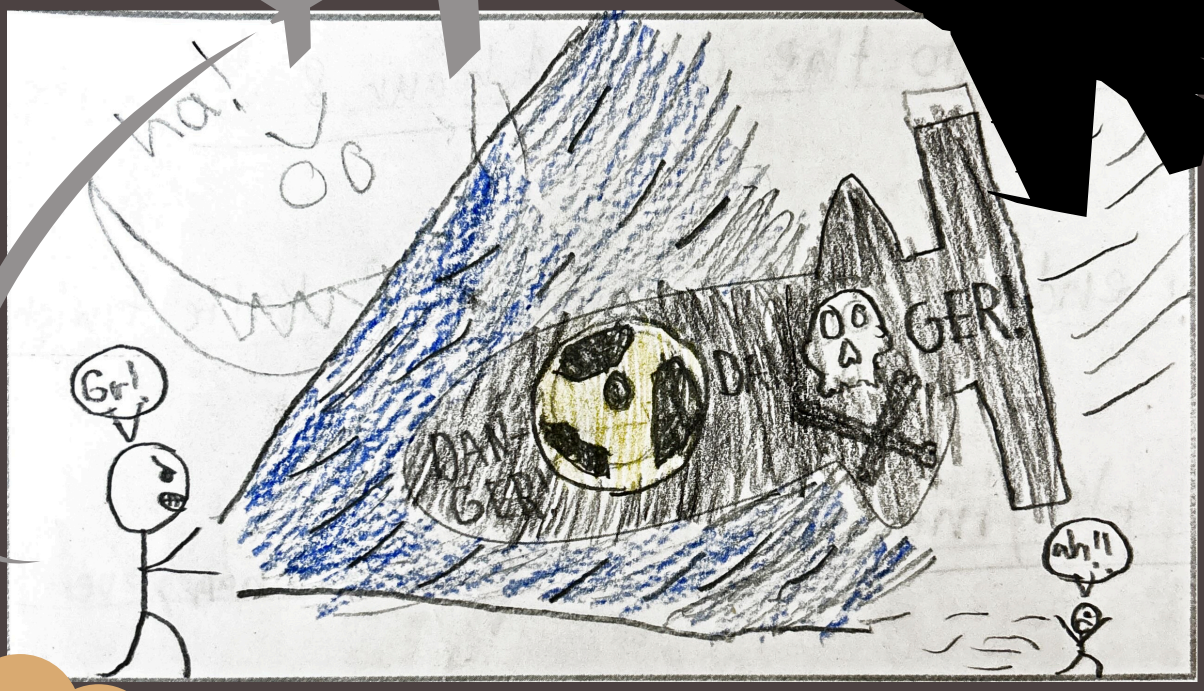


Narrative Writing

A Story

By Riley Trinh, 8

One day, a little boy named Elliott was bouncing at his favorite place in the world! The place was called Big Air. But when he was bouncing, he hadn't known that his friend Aaron set a trap. It was an air sucker. It sucked him UP!!! Aaron laughed and Elliott wondered where it led to. All of a sudden, he was in the bathroom. He noticed that he was in the women's restroom. He got hit with 1 million purses. Also, he was head-butted in the stomach 100 times and was body-slammed 300,000 times.



Narrative Writing

Another Story

By Elliott Cheng, 9

Once, Gregory was planning a trip to Chicago when his mom already booked Seattle. They both went to Seattle for their trip. What they didn't know was that there was a fighter jet show. So they booked the last 2 tickets. The show started on Wednesday and it was Sunday for them. When it was Wednesday, Gregory and his mom, Katie, went to the fighter jet show. The show was 3 hours long and there was only half of the time left before the show was going to end. One jet went over the stadium and accidentally fired a toxic nuke. Luckily, Gregory has water powers and pushed the nuke into the ocean. 1 hour and ½ later, the show ended. That day, Gregory & Katie finished playing games. They both lived happily ever after.



Narrative Writing

A Story

By Seo Ha Lee, 10

On a peaceful day in "Lalaland," the slime monster came through Lala Land. The monster made all flower into slime. All of the people got tripped over. Juingongnim suddenly thought that if she could get the tinkle tinkle beautiful glass ball in the tinkle spot, then the slime monster will disappear. She went to a cave. She went to the deepest part of the cave. She found the tinkle spot, but it was the slipperiest part in the world. However, there she went to put the TTBG into the TS.





Narrative Writing

Final Story

By Elliott Cheng, 9

!Once, there was a guy named Shawn. He loves to go hike the snowy mountains. One day, Shawn went to a very snowy mountain in Canada. He saw so much snow that he had to stay for two weeks! Shawn explored for 5 days then on the 6th day, he went to the mountains. The mountains were nice and calm until an avalanche came after 1 hour! He knew he was in trouble, so he tried to escape. Shawn tried to run through a valley, but he got blocked off on both sides! The snow was coming closer and closer! Then, he was about to get hit and go to the hospital, but then...MAY CONTINUE. Wait...WHAT!

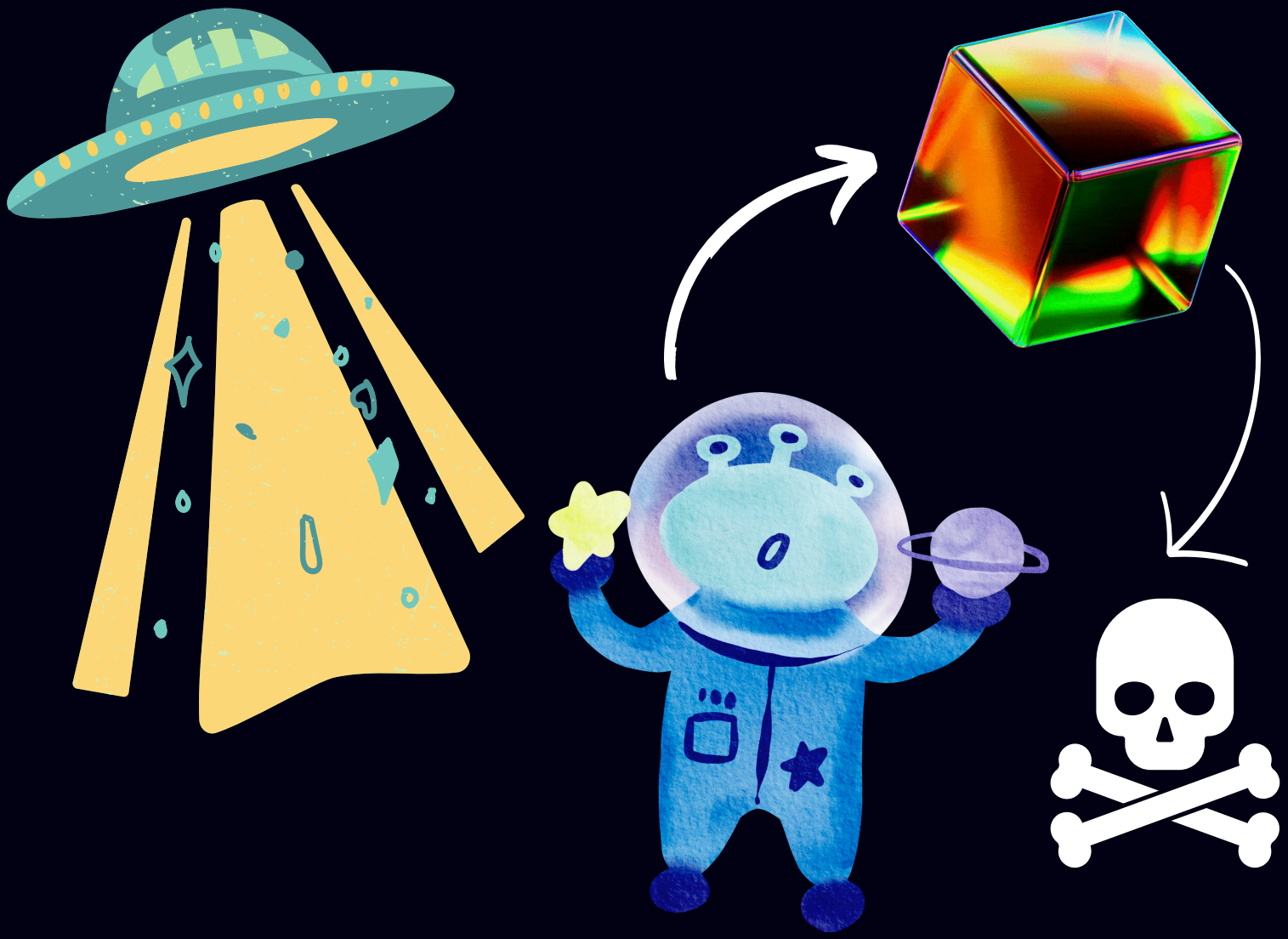
Class



Narrative Writing

A Vocabulary Wizard Story.
By Milan, 8

Once a wizard was so busy that he would go to 10 classes in one day. When he would go to sleep, he would be so so tired always. The next day, he would get ready. He would take care of the clothes. When it was magic time, they wish that magic time was all day. They even want it to be in the night time. They would choose the magic to make so much allowance money. The wizard took the money from them. Then, they brang it to school and tried their magic on him because he took the allowance money from them. After that, they used their brains to defeat him so basically he got smooshed with sponges. He lost all of his cool stuff and the old wizard took it but an animal took it and that animal was a dolphin. The dolphin was happy with all of the stuff.

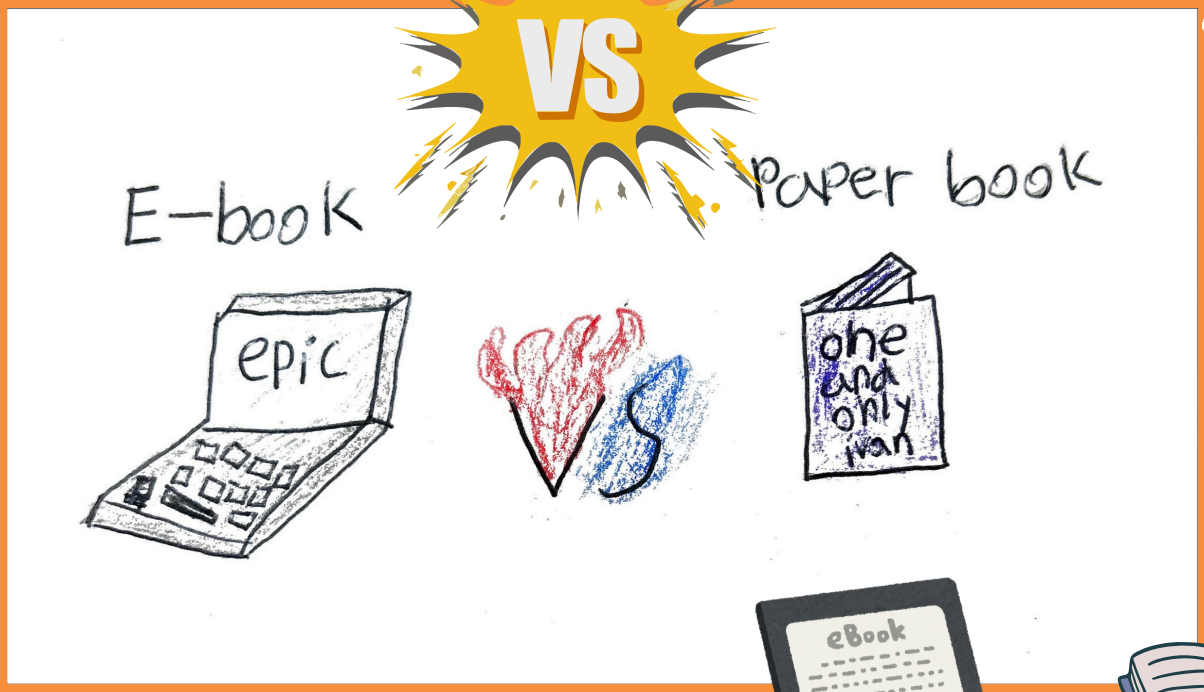


Narrative Writing

A Vocabulary Alien Story.

By Emily, 8

Once upon a time, there was an alien named T-Rex who loved living in his secret base and he weighed about 3 tons. He had big muscles and one day, he went in to a big cube and it had no air in there. After he died, everybody is curious how did he die.



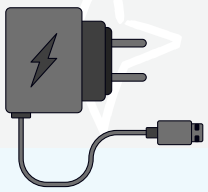




Opinion Writing

E-Books vs. Paper books

By Seojun Kim, 10



First, e-books. E-books can hold more pages, and it can save paper. Also, you need expensive electronics. And you have to charge it so you need to buy a charger too. Also, it runs out of battery. If electronics run out of battery, it will turn off.

Next, books. Paper books, you can read it wherever you are. E-books need chargers but paper books you don't need to buy one. That means you don't need to wait for it to charge. But books use paper, so when you write a lot, you are using paper.

Finally, e-books are easy to carry so you don't have to hold so many pages. Paper books use paper but you don't need to worry about battery. I prefer paper books because you don't have to buy expensive electronics to read.

Opinion Writing

E-books Are Better Than Books

by Elliott Cheng, 9





If I were to pick either e-books or paper books, I would choose e-books.

The reason why I would choose e-books is because in the future, everyone will be using online things in books instead of reading face-to-face.

Another reason why I choose e-books is because if we live like this forever reading with just books, people will think it is boring.

I have actually been reading online at school for a long time that I get used to it every time I do it.

Even though we can read books at the library or buy them at the store, people can still get a better chance of getting any book they want or just read whatever they like to read online.

Opinion Writing

Paper Books

by Riley Trinh, 8

I choose reading paper books over e-books. I choose this because you can read way longer books. For example. Harry Potter is a long book. I also think technology hurts and damages your eyes and brain. There is a limit to reading books online. but there are no limits to paper books. Paper books are way better than e-books.



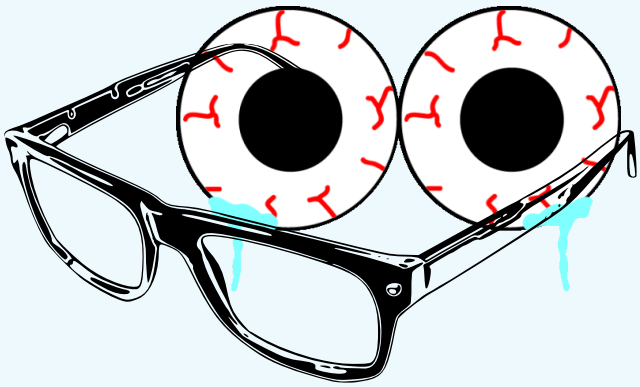
Opinion Writing

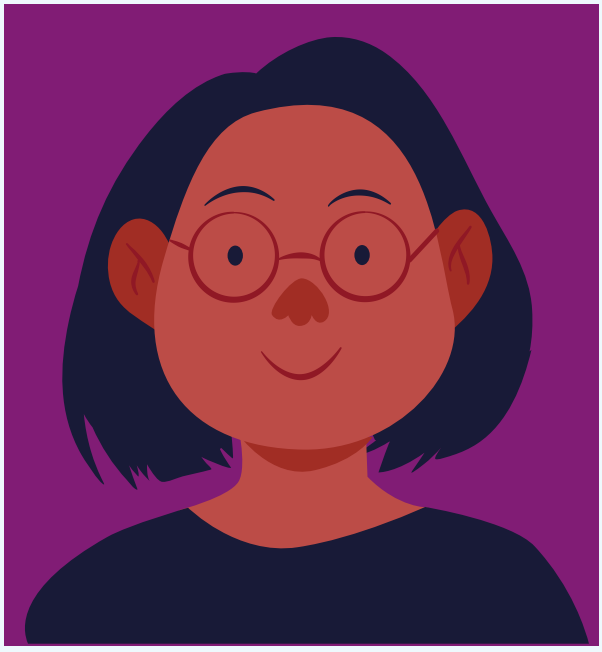
VS

Paper? Electronic?

by Seo Ha Lee, 10

In my opinion, I think paper is better because if you see the screen then you have to get glasses. In my dad's opinion, he said glass is very uncomfortable. If you want to get glasses, then you can choose e-books. In conclusion, if you want to read e-books, then think are you really, seriously, going to wear glasses.







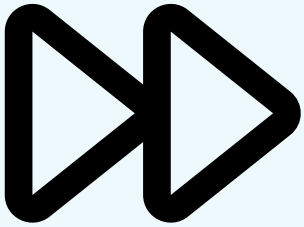
Opinion Writing

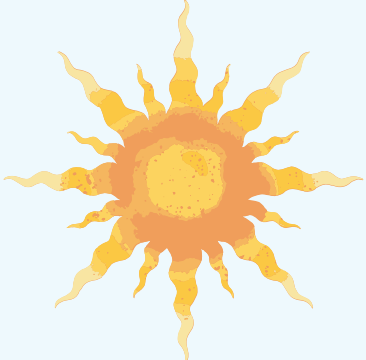
Changing the Clocks

by Elliott Cheng, 9

I think that changing the clocks is good because farmers and families can do their work and spend time together. For example, families can watch movies, play games and chill for special reasons. For one reason, it's good to have Daylight Savings because it can save more electricity and less criminals steal people's things and take things, too. For farmers, they can do more work in the morning and afternoon. Then, they could relax for the rest of the day. You can also just hang out with friends like watch a movie or just go out and eat. These are several reasons why we should change the clocks.







VS

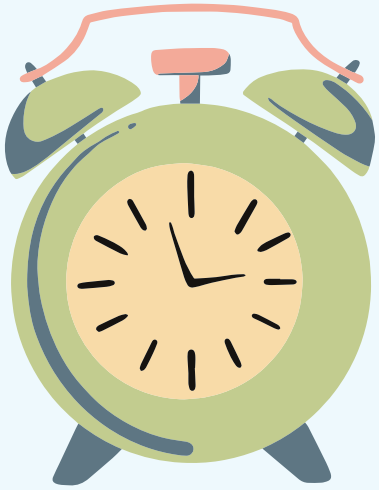
Opinion Writing

Daylight Savings Time

by Andrew Rhee, 9

I truly feel like Daylight Saving is needed in our lives. Daylight Savings always makes the day shine with color. and the time will last longer. Whenever the time comes for daylight savings. it happens to reduce crimes. It even takes longer to do fun activities since the day tends to last a long amount of time. For example. when crime reduces. it leads to a major effect. police don't have to be busy. and fun activities can make us not that overwhelmed. In my opinion. these are the reasons why daylight savings time is always needed no matter what.







Opinion Writing

My Friends

by Charlotte Chung, 9

My friends' names are Harper. Juliet. Miranda. Sahara. Zoey. Angela and Alexsandra. Juliet and Sahara like to do monkey bars. Angela and Alexsandra are kinda like my twins becuase they have black hair and bangs and they kinda have long hair. Harper tells funny things about his brother named Harrison and it is funny. Zoey is funny like Harper too. One day my friends and I chased my brother. My friends are nice and funny.

friends





Opinion Writing

Eating at Home vs. At a Restaurant

by Andrew Rhee, 9

I would rather eat in a restaurant than cooking and eating at home. First of all, the food in restaurants are nicer, the food is nicer, we don't have to cook, and most restaurants are clean. For example when it's nicer it smells good that more people want to go and eat in the restaurant. When the restaurant is cleaned it is bright and restaurants give extra, but they give extra food in some restaurants and sometimes. Restaurant cooks and serves you food. At home, you have to cook your food and eat the food. Restaurants would give the food and charge money.





> The USAID is a government agency that provides foreign aid (food, money, medicine, etc.) to other countries in need. However, people are questioning if foreign aid is working. The process foreign aid is the U.S. gives money to private companies to perform those activities (i.e., lower poverty rate in a country). The money is spent on the activities but are not providing results.

"U.S. Foreign Aid in Question" by Daisy L., 13

In the video "Where does U.S. foreign aid go, and does it make an impact?" (https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/where-does-u-s-foreign-aid-go-and-does-it-make-an-impact-2), Fred de Sam Lazaro, the reporter, states that the U.S. spends less than 1% of its budget on foreign aid but explains that many thinks it's ineffective. Only a small portion of that 1% helps local communities, with most going to big companies prioritizing on writing reports, instead of actually trying to make an impact. USAID, the agency in charge of foreign aid, has promised to give money directly to the local communities, but so far, progress has been slow. Despite USAID's efforts, I was surprised to find how much of the U.S. budget actually helped out the local communities in need; I don't think this is really effective.

Watching the video, I was surprised at how ineffective the U.S. foreign aid system was. 1% is small enough, but in reality, less than 10% of that 1% actually goes to foreign aid. "Forty-three percent of [USAID grants] failed to achieve about half of the intended results. But in spite of that, [implementing partners] still [get] paid in full almost every time and sometimes more," the video stated. Because 43% failed at achieving the intended results, they are really wasting a lot of money on these organizations that are supposed to help out USAID. To me, this showed inefficiency and lack of accountability. It was really shocking to see how impactful the USAID was. This is not a win-win. The U.S. is spending money on absolutely nothing, and the foreign countries get no help. I honestly have a pretty high expectation with the foreign aid system because it is really important to help others out. When I watched the video, it only makes sense for me to say that I was dumbfounded.

Wrapping up, there are definitely some things to work on the USAID program. Watching this video has been a very unexpected scenario for me. It was scary to know how little foreign countries are impacted. It's safe to say that the USAID program is not really effective currently; this system needs to change to prioritize real results that help people, rather than just looking good on paper.



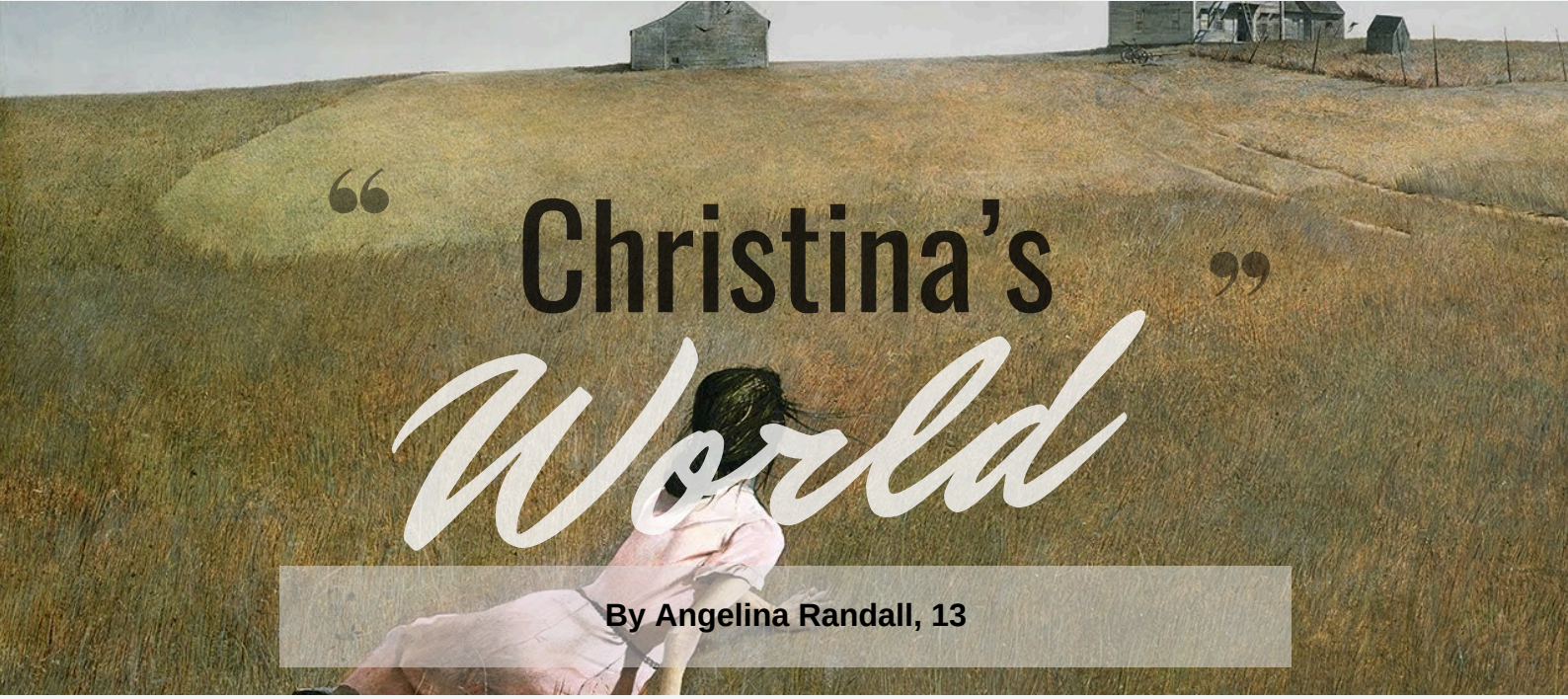
The USAID is a government agency that provides foreign aid (food, money, medicine, etc.) to other countries in need. However, people are questioning if foreign aid is working. The process foreign aid is the U.S. gives money to private companies to perform those activities (i.e., lower poverty rate in a country). The money is spent on the activities but are not providing results.

“USAID’s Misuse of Funds and Its Impact” by Ethan Kuo, 14

USAID, the United States Agency for International Development, is designed to assist developing countries with financial support to improve their economy, health, and infrastructure. However, there are concerns about how effectively the agency uses its funds. One major issue is the lack of transparency and accountability. In some cases, the money meant to help communities ends up being misdirected into ineffective projects, administrative costs, or even corruption. This mismanagement reduces the potential impact of the aid and limits the benefits for those who need it most.

Another problem is the reliance on for-profit contractors to carry out projects. While these contractors help execute large-scale efforts, a significant portion of the funds is spent on administrative fees and profits rather than directly improving local communities. This leads to inefficiencies, where resources are not used in the most effective way possible. In addition, corruption in some of the countries receiving aid can divert money away from its intended purpose, with funds benefiting the elite rather than the impoverished population.
To improve USAID’s effectiveness, better oversight and accountability are essential. More focus should be placed on ensuring that the money goes directly to the communities that need it most and that the projects genuinely address their immediate needs. Without stronger management and careful planning, USAID’s funds risk being wasted, leaving vulnerable populations without the support they need to improve their lives.





“Christina’s World”

By Angelina Randall, 13

A woman is laying on small blades of grass, looking at a distant farm house and shack. “Christina’s World” is a painting created by Andrew Wyeth in 1948. The woman shines in her pink attire, with the dullness of the background fading at her existence. She clutches the grass at hand, but why? This painting has many layers to unfold when deeply immersed, but at first sight it seems ordinary with no story to tell.

Personally, when the painting “Christina’s World" came into view, it looked like a typical, dull piece of art. She has a relaxed position to enjoy the breeze that has crossed her path. It seemed as if she was leisurely looking out in the distance where a building happens to be. In addition to her relaxed look at first sight, I faced a lot of confusion. Why is she looking at that building? Why is she laying on the grass? I wanted to know why. I could not pick up any clues on how the woman was feeling, nor what the whole painting was trying to portray.

After being immersed in the painting, I had a realization of how deep this painting may be. Having a closer look at this painting, the woman seems to have an anxious feeling, yearning to get up and move, but feels stuck and vulnerable. The dullness of the color gives me this clue, plus her leaning body longing to move forward, but is essentially grounded to the floor. The position of her hand reaching to move forward towards the house tells me a different story compared to my initial assumptions. Maybe this is a way to show Christina’s life– that she is so close, yet so far from achieving her goal in life. It could also show how she feels about her life with dull surroundings. In addition, there also seems to be another layer of this painting. The woman, Christina can also seem as if her body language shows a sign of determination. The clutch of the grass, wanting to push forward even in such a position demonstrates that she won’t give up. This is Christina’s way of life, so despite the challenges she may face, she will still fight for it. Christina seems as if she has a wide range of emotions that depend on person to person.

“Christina’s World” is a painting that even seems boring at first, but with a closer look and taking on different perspectives you can tell how much emotion the art is portraying. In general, this art piece is magnificent that has variations of stories to tell, depending on person to person.

Coraline: A movie full of details and hidden messages



By Leah Bae, 13

Coraline is a stop-motion movie based off of the book *Coraline*. It was directed by Henry Selick and first released in 2009. The protagonist Coraline Jones, who is an 11-year-old girl with neglectful parents, discovers a secret passageway in her home that leads to a “parallel world”; however, it has many details that make it “better” than her own. Although this seems like a dream-come-true, Coraline soon realizes that her “other-mother” wants to eat her by trapping her there forever. Eventually, Coraline rescues herself, her parents, and the friendly ghost children who alerted her of the other-mother’s true intentions. Then, she throws the key to the passageway down a deep well near her house. Coraline is a movie that I enjoyed very much because of the precision in visual elements and subtle plot details.

Firstly, the opening scene (0:45 to 2:23) of *Coraline* had amazing detail and foreshadowing. This was a short clip showcasing an unknown figure creating a doll; however, the viewer will later realize that it is the beldam, or other-mother, creating a replica of Coraline. Diving into the details, the parts where the beldam is seen sewing is truly wonderful, being a sewer myself. This includes scenes such as the stitches, cutting, seam-ripping, and movement of the thread. Considering that this film was all made using the stop-motion technique, it was a stunning result after what I believe was a great deal of hard work and effort. Furthermore, the claw-like hands that are made out of needles showcase the writing technique called foreshadowing, as it shows a glimpse of the Other-mother’s true form as a humanoid, spider- like creature built out of needles. Additionally, the cobwebs and dust over the entire work area pays tribute to how long it has been since the beldam has last “eaten” her a child, which was many decades ago. I realized this after it was revealed that the young girl eaten by the other-mother was the side-character Wybie’s grandmother’s twin sister, who apparently went missing long ago. I thought that this subtle detail was not exactly necessary, but an amazing decision by the creators because it added more meaning to the intro than being “just an opening scene with credits” by giving foreshadowing. Overall, this first scene was very well thought out and satisfying to watch.

Second, the scenes from 1:21:41 to 1:25:18 were amazing to watch because of the visual components and hidden meanings. For example, when the wooden floor breaks apart into thin air at 1:24:33, it was very satisfying to see it rise and disappear, in sync with when the beldam stomped her foot to break the illusion. This brings me to another detail that caught my eye: The empty, white background. This was another small detail that showed how the otherworld with the Pink Palace Apartments, garden, and neighbors was all an illusion created on a “blank canvas” that the other-mother customizes to appeal to each child that she has captured. I also realized that the beldam must put in a lot of work into creating a new world for each child, especially because they all lived in different time periods. Another interesting part was the hidden message behind some of the details. In this scene, the bug-like furniture shows how the Other-mother is a humanoid spider-creature, especially as bugs are the prey of spiders. Additionally, the web that the floor turns into shows the Other-mother’s true side, along with her biggest, darkest secret. For these reasons, the main climax was another stunning, detail-packed scene from the movie.

To conclude, *Coraline* was a fascinating movie produced with great details and key references to the book. Subtle details in the opening scenes and climax show the effort of the producers, while the book connections represent the deep thought that must have gone in. Therefore, I recommend watching *Coraline* and reading the book, as doing both helped me realize these relationships and make my experience watching the movie even better.



Overpopulation in Urban Areas

BY ANGELINA RANDALL, 13

The threat of overpopulation seems to never come to mind when strolling through a city. Unfortunately, this has become more of a problem than one may imagine. It might be the promise of glory or the opportunity of jobs that pull people into urban areas. Plus, there are many other factors at play. The problem of overpopulation in urban areas is devastating, but there are solutions that are key to helping this issue.

There are various harmful effects from overpopulation. These harmful effects can range from pollution to poverty. According to nationalgeographic, “Intensive urban growth can lead to greater poverty, with local governments unable to provide services for all people.” There is only so much of supplies and funds that can be given to people for support, making a vast amount of people to be neglected. This can become even worse when there is a corrupt government in hand. Additionally, pollution can take a big part in the threat of overpopulation. Having a large amount of waste uncollected can lead to numerous health hazards to the people. There is also the factor of air pollution that comes into play. The vigorous concentrated use of energy leads to air pollution that harshly impacts human health. These types of harmful effects are a big problem that should not be taken lightly.

Fortunately, there are solutions to this problem. An effect of overpopulation in urban areas is poverty. A way to help this effect of overpopulation is by promoting development and creation. According to nationalgeographic, “Combat poverty by promoting economic development and job creation.” This demonstrates that through promoting, it shows that supporting others is the key to success. In all, a solution for combating poverty is by promoting economic development and job creation.

Another key solution to help the problem of overpopulation in urban areas is through partnerships and upgrading. A harmful effect of overpopulation is pollution, but there is a secure way to help. According to *National Geographic*, “Create private-public partnerships to provide services such as waste disposal and housing.” With waste disposal and housing services in place, it will not only make everything refreshed and clean, but also stop various health hazards to people. Additionally, *National Geographic* states, “Reduce air pollution by upgrading energy use and alternative transport systems.” Within pollution, there is the contamination of air. With such an enormous amount of people, there comes a lot more air pollution created when urban areas operate. By upgrading transport systems and energy use, it takes out the risk of the harmful impact of human health. Through upgrading and partnerships, it can tremendously help with pollution and overpopulation in urban areas.

In conclusion, overpopulation in urban areas is a huge predicament, but there are extremely useful factors that can help this problem. One of the useful listed solutions include promoting economic development and job creation to help with poverty. Additionally, private-public partnerships and upgrading energy use can precisely help with pollution. I encourage you to take action and help with the problem of overpopulation in urban areas.



Poor Sleep

BY CRISTOPHER CHUNG, 10

You might have seen somebody working very late in the night. Maybe a family member or a person you know. You may not have known that this can be a huge problem later in life. When you sleep poorly, it can build up stress that can later be a problem to your health. Here are some ways you can sleep better and longer.

The first solution is to stay away from any major electronics like TVs and phones for an hour before you sleep. This way is effective because the bright rays of TV and phones stress out your brain making it harder to sleep when you turn off your device and try to sleep. For example, you can put it away in a drawer with a lock or if it's a large TV, you can make a rule that stops you from watching it.

Another solution is to plan out your week or work. The way it works is that when people with too much work try to cram all of it into one night, like a student trying to do his homework, do chores, study for a test, and practice soccer all at 8:30 P.M., they tend to get a lot of stress. If you break your work down into 7 parts (for each day) you can get work done without getting much stress and can sleep earlier.

The last solution to avoid sleep deprivation is to literally sleep early. If you start to sleep at 11 P.M. and wake up at 6 A.M., you are only getting 7 hours of sleep but if you start sleeping at 8 P.M., you are getting 10 hours of sleep. So, brush your teeth early or just change into pajamas early. Altogether, if you just sleep early no matter what, you can get more hours of sleep.

There are numerous ways to prevent loss of sleep. You can stay away from electronics, plan out your week, or even as simply as to sleep early no matter what. By following at least two of these three steps you can have better sleep even on days with tons of work.



Christiano Ronaldo of the Past and Present

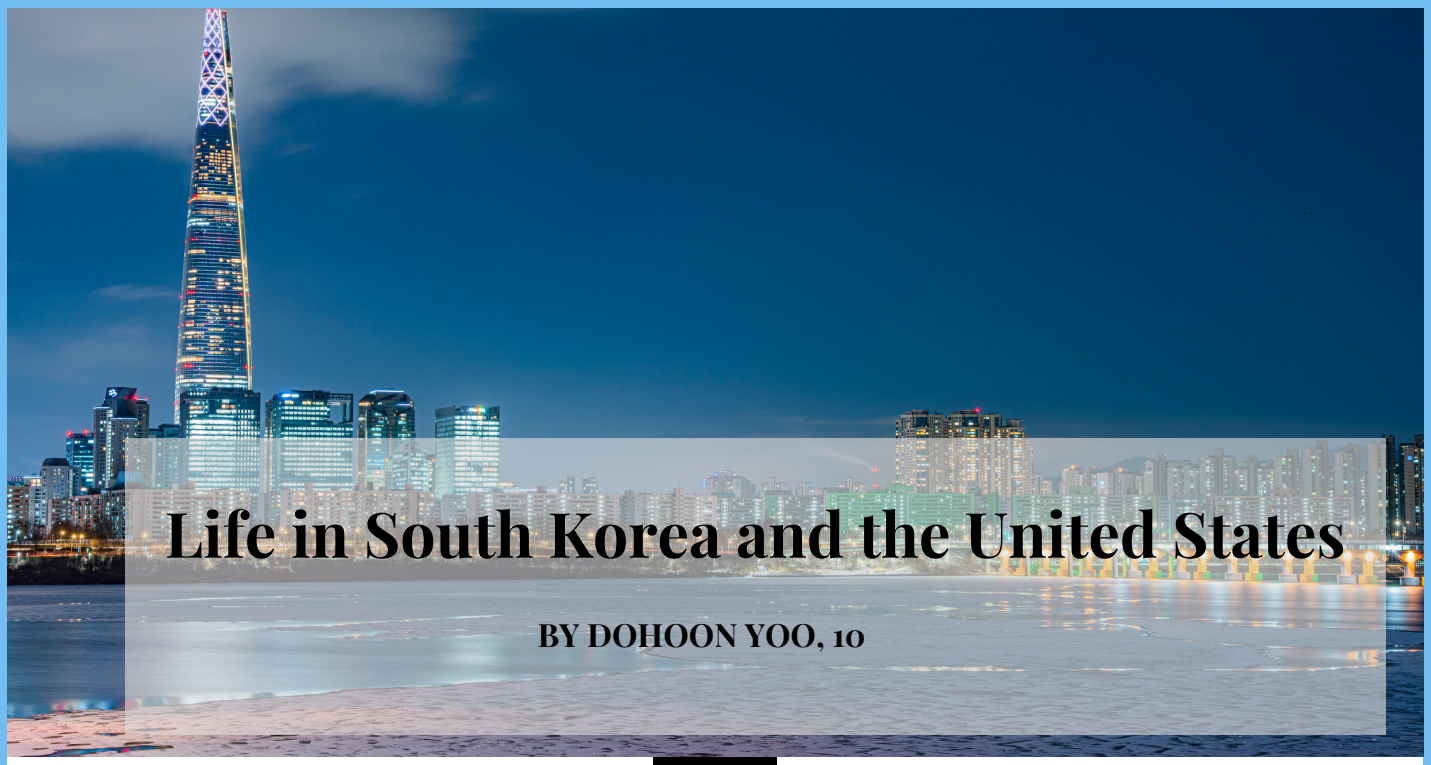
BY DARIS AKHLAQ, 10

Have you ever wondered what has changed in Cristiano Ronaldo's performance as he has become older? If you are also wondering how long he has been playing soccer, he has been playing for over 20 years! So, for more than 20 years, Ronaldo's performance has changed in various ways in his career.

He became a professional soccer player when he was 18 years old. When Ronaldo was 15 years old, he had a rare disease named tachycardia, that disease made his heart beat super fast, including while he was sleeping. This affected his career by not letting him run that much, but fortunately, he got cured. One strategy that Cristiano Ronaldo used back then was his knuckleball technique when doing free kicks. Ronaldo started getting famous by having very nice skills and by showing everyone that he can beat anyone. One is the knuckleball technique, which is the strategy that Cristiano Ronaldo uses for free kicks. Ronaldo keeps his fame by keeping a very expensive lifestyle while also showing up in many soccer games and being very famous.

Ronaldo currently has a lot of new pros and cons that he plays with these days. One way his performance has changed is because of his old age. This means that he had better performances when he was younger than now because he gets cramps. That shows that he can't run that fast anymore. A strategy that Ronaldo uses is mentality and physicality. He uses this strategy because he gets stronger, so he can shoot better, although he is 40. He is really still really famous because he is the oldest soccer player ever in the world.

These are the various ways in which Ronaldo's performance changed over the years. He can still play even though he is 40 years old, and he is even trying to play with his own son. He never gives up these days.



Life in South Korea and the United States

BY DOHOON YOO, 10

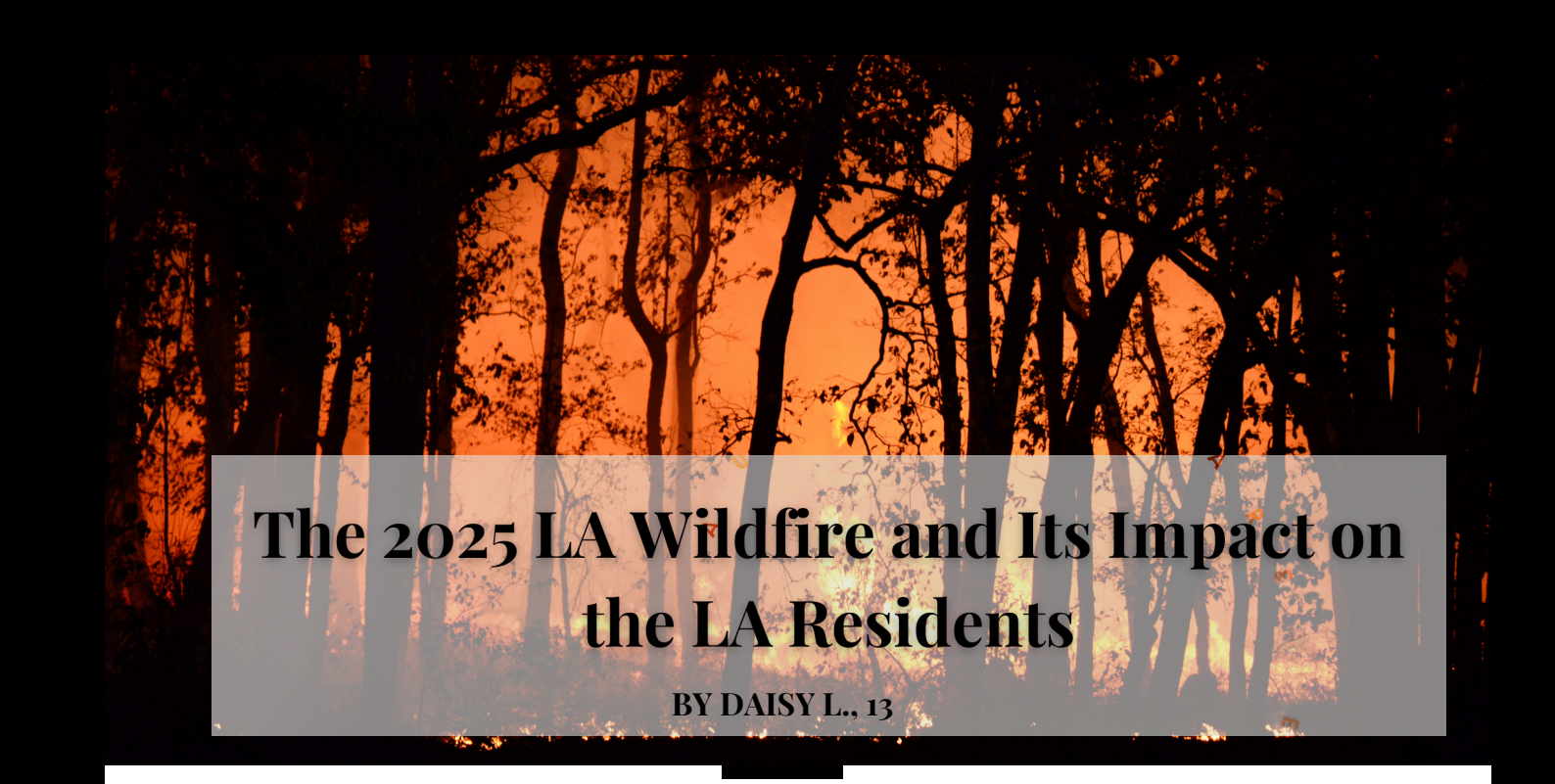
Life can be drastically different between two countries. The United States and South Korea are two very different countries in faraway continents: South Korea in Asia and the United States in North America. Life between South Korea and the United States varies in terms of the amount of immigrants, types of soccer fields, and lunches at school.

One of the major differences between the United States and South Korea is the amount of immigrants. In South Korea, a majority of the population are native Koreans. Only 4.37% of people are from other countries. On the other hand, the United States has lots of immigrants. About 30% are immigrants, which is about 7 times as big as the percentage of immigrants in South Korea! This creates more chances of creating worldwide friends in the United States than South Korea.

In addition, the types of soccer fields are very different. In South Korea, most of the fields are artificial, especially in big cities like Seoul. This is because they have a very high population density and the country is not big. They need to build apartments for people to live in, and they don't have enough room for nature-made soccer fields. However, there are way more natural fields than artificial ones in the United States because they have the right climate. They are not as humid as South Korea. Therefore, people usually play soccer on artificial fields in South Korea, while in the United States they play on natural fields.

Lastly, the quality of cafeteria lunch between the United States and South Korea is also very different. South Korea is well known for their excellent lunches. It is almost like having a meal at home, except with schoolmates. For example, they have healthy foods, which are mostly traditional, like bulgogi and kimchi. In contrast, America has terrible lunches. They have pizzas that do not taste good and one of the only healthy foods is the milk or the apple. In South Korea, they have well-made lunches that can even make some students excited, while in the United States, they rarely give students any good food.

It is clear that life in the United States and in South Korea is different. They vary in terms of the amount of immigrants, soccer fields, and lunches at school. Even though both countries have a lot of differences, they are both excellent countries to live in.



The 2025 LA Wildfire and Its Impact on the LA Residents

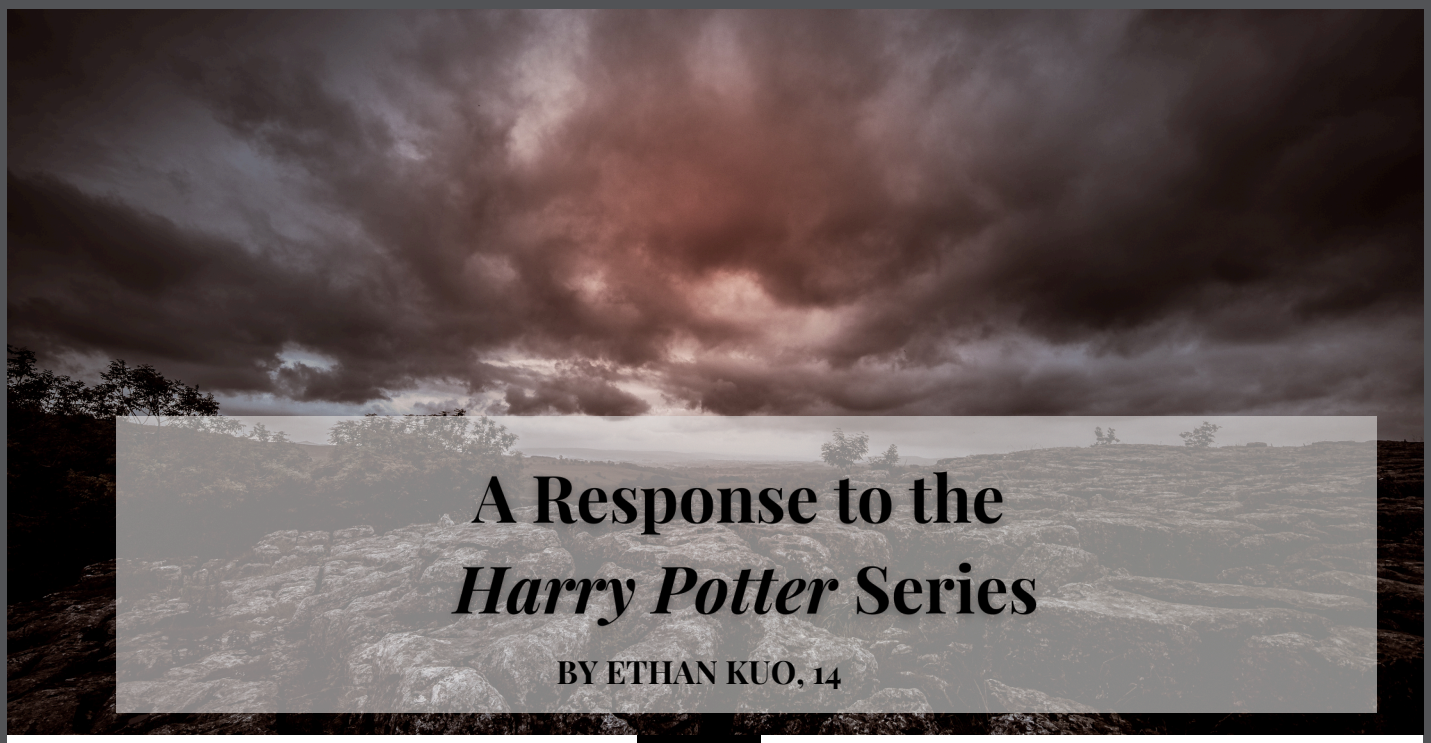
BY DAISY L., 13

In the article 'I have nothing to go back to' - LA fires heartbreak (https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0eweel5zg3o), Lucy Sherriff, a climate reporter, describes her hollow experience when the fire devoured her home. She initially thought that she was safe, but as the fire came closer to her community, she was forced to evacuate. When she came back to visit her neighborhood, she was devastated to find her home destroyed. Lucy reflects on the deep loss of her community and plans to leave LA as the city grapples with the shock and horror. While reading this article, I felt a pang of sympathy and gratitude all at once.

In the beginning, reading the article honestly made me want to cry; it was a very emotional read, filling my mind with sympathetic thoughts. “As a climate reporter, I am used to covering extreme weather events. Just a few weeks ago I was interviewing residents who had fled the Malibu fires. Now I'm on the other side of the story.” The last part “Now I'm on the other side of the story,” made me really sad. Lucy never expected to flee from her home. She thought she was safe. Her saying that out loud makes it seem more real, more scary. Lucy was one of the people who got impacted by the fire out of more than 179,000 LA residents. I can’t imagine how they feel right now. How Lucy feels right now. I don’t know what it feels like to lose something that was once your home. But Lucy does. When Lucy had to tell her neighbors that all their homes were gone when the fire devoured it. Her home, along with all her things, were all gone. I truly wanted to help out the LA residents; they don’t deserve this. They don’t deserve to lose their home by a destructive fire and live as a refugee.

As I continued reading the tragedies the people of LA faced, I couldn’t be more grateful for staying safe with my family and friends. In the article, Lucy stated, “The Palisades Fire has already been dubbed a historic wildfire. And it will forever be burnished in my memory because it's the wildfire that burned down my community and my home.” Because her home has been completely destroyed by the LA fire, she will now forever remember what happened in 2025; it will always remain in her memory as one of the most traumatic events. Lucy Sherriff also mentioned, “But when I got a text from a neighbor to say she saw Palisades High School on fire as she was evacuating, I knew that the fire was spreading further than anyone could have predicted.” A high school was burning down. A school that students need for education, for their future. Students were losing their second home. I really couldn’t believe it. I never thought about the students that were affected. I really couldn’t be more grateful to know that my community, friends, and family are all staying very safe. I feel very lucky to be far from danger and relieved to know that the fire is pretty far away from my home.

Concluding, the Palisades Fire made a wild impact on countless people in LA and its surrounding cities. I felt very sympathetic towards people in need and wanted to help them out in any way possible. The best thing to do is staying safe, no matter the circumstance.



A Response to the *Harry Potter* Series

BY ETHAN KUO, 14

The *Harry Potter* series, written by J.K. Rowling follows the journey of a young wizard named Harry Potter, who discovers his magical heritage and his destiny to confront the dark wizard Lord Voldemort. Spanning seven books, the series begins with Harry's discovery of his true identity and explores themes of friendship, bravery, love, and the battle between good and evil.

The story begins in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (also known as Philosopher's Stone). Harry, an orphan raised by his neglectful aunt and uncle, learns on his eleventh birthday that he is a wizard. He is invited to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where he discovers he is famous for surviving a deadly curse cast by Voldemort as a baby. At Hogwarts, Harry befriends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, and together, they uncover the mystery of the Sorcerer's Stone, thwarting Voldemort's attempt to return to power.

In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets,* Harry faces new challenges, including a series of attacks on students by a mysterious creature. He discovers the existence of a secret chamber within Hogwarts, opened by a dark force. With Ron and Hermione's help, Harry defeats a young version of Voldemort (Tom Riddle) and the deadly serpent, the basilisk.

Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban introduces Sirius Black, an escaped prisoner believed to be after Harry. Harry learns Sirius is actually his godfather and was wrongly accused of betraying Harry's parents. With Hermione's time-turner, they save Sirius and a magical creature, Buckbeak, from unjust punishment.

In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Harry is unexpectedly entered into the dangerous Triwizard Tournament. During the final task, he is transported to a graveyard where Voldemort regains his physical form. Harry escapes but not before witnessing the death of Cedric Diggory, marking Voldemort's return to power.

Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix explores Harry's struggle against the Ministry of Magic, which denies Voldemort's return. Harry forms "Dumbledore's Army," a secret student group preparing for the battles ahead. He suffers personal loss when his godfather Sirius is killed in a confrontation with Death Eaters at the Ministry.

In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Harry learns more about Voldemort's past, particularly the Horcruxes, objects containing pieces of Voldemort's soul. Dumbledore is killed by Professor Snape, a member of the Order of the Phoenix who appears to betray the cause, leaving Harry determined to destroy the Horcruxes.

The final book, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, follows Harry, Ron, and Hermione as they leave Hogwarts to locate and destroy the Horcruxes. The story culminates in the Battle of Hogwarts, where Harry sacrifices himself to Voldemort but survives due to his connection to the Deathly Hallows. Voldemort is ultimately defeated, and peace is restored.

The series concludes with an epilogue showing Harry and his friends grown up, sending their children to Hogwarts, ensuring the legacy of love, bravery, and friendship continues.



Differences of Kimbap And Sushi

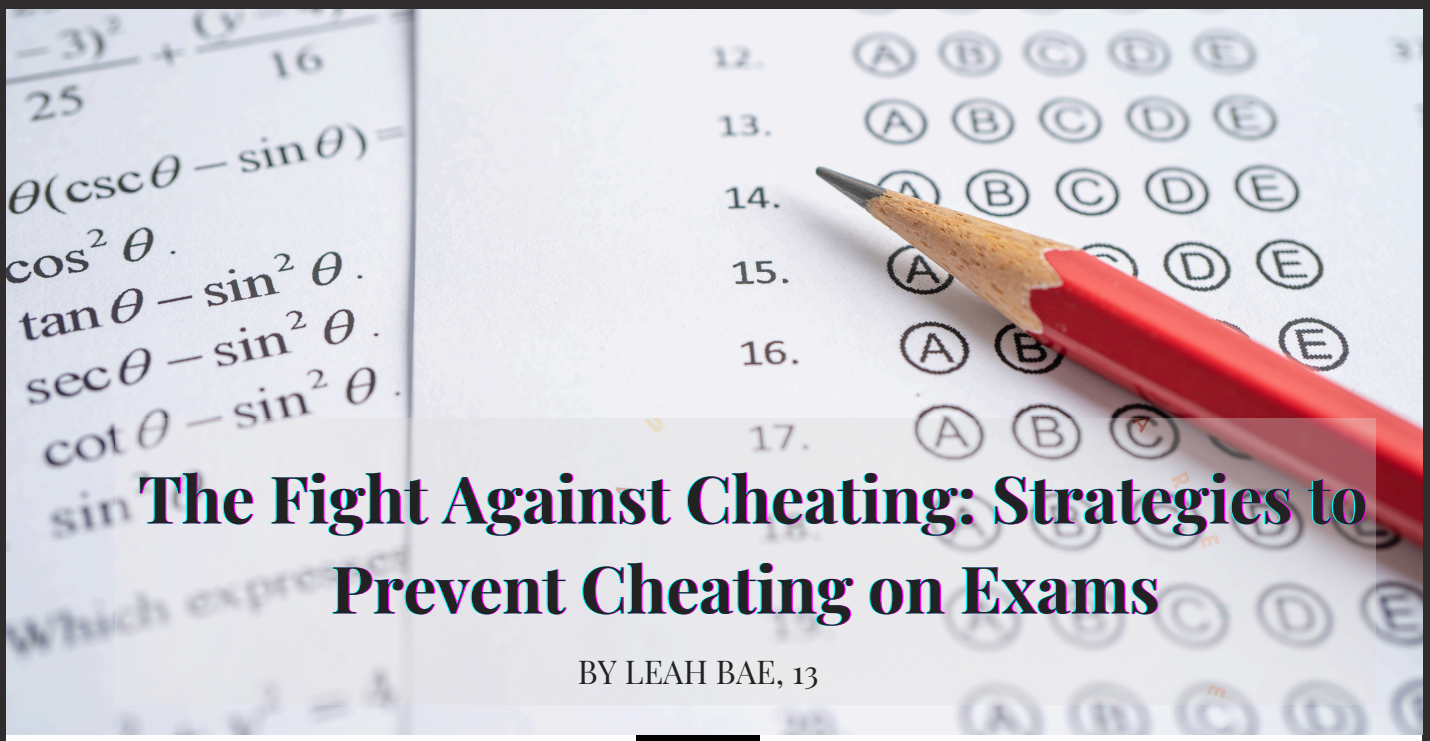
BY ELLYN HWANG, 10

A fun fact is that kimbap and sushi look similar and also different? Kimbap is a rolled up food that is full of different types of vegetables. The location of South Korea is east of China and south of North Korea. Kimbap is a Korean food because it's local to Korean street food. Sushi is the same as kimbap but has fake crab meat and sometimes has the rice on the sushi instead of the inside. The location of the original culture is also different. Japan is near South Korea but it's east of South Korea. Bordering them, is a body of small water. Japan has a lot of sushi and was the origin of it. There are a lot of similarities when a person looks at sushi and kimbap together in a supermarket. Everyone has similarities. It 's rolled up with seaweed, it's healthy food, and it's Asian. But the biggest difference is when a person tries to make it and looks closely. There are a lot of differences between these two Asian foods. Specifically, the three points are how it's made, the customs, and the inside or the filling.

Kimbap has three main differences. The first difference is how it's made. When you make kimbap home, then it's hard work. The process of making the kimbap is really hard because people have to chop carrots and season them, season and clean the spinashes, cook a long strip of an egg, and a lot more to do. The second point is that the culture of the foods are different. Even though it's Asian, the state is different. The third point is the inside of the seaweed wrap. Kimbap has healthy veggies and eggs for protein. No unhealthy or fake foods inside of kimbap. Kimbap also has a triangle tofu covered with rice and with chunks of veggies inside. This is a Korean dish that is a side dish with kimbap at street foods. Kimbap is healthy and great for people who have diets for healthy foods. This is beneficial and a traditional Korean dish that is nutritious.

Sushi also has three main differences. Sushi is really easy to make and there is so little process to make it. On the other hand, it's hard to find the ingredients and try to find a seafood store with the exact raw fish that people like. People can add many toppings like sauces and sprinkle some brown powder. People can put the rice inside out too and can have a roll or also a nigri which is a clump of rice below on raw fish. Another different type of food that is together with sushi is uni and it's a yellow colored flesh from a sea urchin. The last difference is the food inside it. Sushi has some unhealthy fillings like crab meat and maybe the sauces people or makers choose. Some sushi also has fake crab meat. It looks like actual crab meat but it's fake and not good for you. The rice in both of the foods are different too. Kimbap just has oil in the rice but on the other hand, sushi has vinegar and has crooked seafood. Also they have a different way to serve too. Sushi is served in wasabi or ginger but kimbap is usually served plain. Sushi is unhealthy but has many types of pastes and sauces.

There are a lot of differences between sushi and kimbap. How it's made, the customs, and the food inside of them are the main differences between sushi and kimbap. So the next time people go to the market and find sushi and kimbap, try to figure out the differences of what everyone wants.



The Fight Against Cheating: Strategies to Prevent Cheating on Exams

BY LEAH BAE, 13

According to a survey of 70,000 American students in 2020 by the International Center for Academic Integrity, roughly 64 percent admitted to cheating on an exam. Although this may seem like a number too large to be real, cheating on exams is a prevalent problem. Even university students who are expected to be mature have cheated; the survey stated that slightly over 60 percent of 840 college students cheated on a test. This is a large issue as it incorrectly measures the cheater's academic growth, and undermines the honor system. However, there are at least three simple yet effective ways that instructors can prevent cheating.

Firstly, having teachers monitor students during tests can be key to decreasing cheating rates. Many teachers use the quiet test-taking time as an opportunity to grade assignments or work on lesson plans. However, having a distracted instructor makes it much easier for students to share answers with their peers. Watching students will deter the students who plan on cheating, and allow teachers to catch the pupils who are doing so anyway. For instance, my social studies teacher sits in the back of the classroom during tests, which helps her view everyones' computer screens. In addition, my sixth grade English teacher made us share our screens on her laptop while taking online exams. This way, she could easily check what tabs and apps were open, even while working. For these reasons, as tempting as it may be for instructors to take advantage of test-time, observing students will lessen the rates of cheaters in classrooms.

Another way to prevent cheating is by creating multiple versions of the test. Students sharing answers is definitely not a new method of cheating. This tends to be more common during transition times such as lunch; having the same version means that a student could copy down the correct answers, then share it to their peers. Consequently, creating at least two versions of an exam will help because the students who take the test first will not be able to share answers with students who take the test after. My science teacher implements this strategy with his quizzes. I have science every other day in a six day cycle, so although some of my friends will take tests before me, they cannot share their answers because we take different versions. Though this may seem time consuming for busy teachers, all it can take is replacing numbers or rewriting scenarios. Overall, creating more than one type of exam is a useful way to minimize the number of cheating pupils.

Lastly, randomizing questions on exams will help lessen the amount of cheating. As mentioned before, students can easily share answers with each other if tests are the same. So, if the problems are also all in the same order, then cheaters do not have to waste time finding the same problem that their peer is on. So, if teachers randomize questions, then cheating will take longer because students have to look back and forth between their test and their peers'. This strategy also increases the chance of cheating pupils being caught, as they will likely be looking at their peers for longer periods of time. My math teacher uses this strategy on our math tests. He has all ten questions randomly mixed up for each student, and uses dividers between them as well. As a result, looking at others' tests is already a challenge, while looking for the matching questions and answers creates a large risk of being caught.

In conclusion, observing students, creating multiple versions of exams, and shuffling questions are three strategies that decrease cheating rates. Some instructors may observe students during the exam, while others make different versions and scramble problems to prevent pupils from sharing answers easily. Therefore, teachers must use these three efficacious solutions to prevent cheating on tests, while encouraging students to be honest in the first place.



Gelato or Ice Cream: What Are The Differences?

BY RYAN CHO, 10

Gelato and ice cream are undoubtedly two of the best desserts in the world. While most people debate how they are similar, some may wonder how they are different. Gelato is a creamy dessert found in Europe, mainly in Italy. It provides a creamy taste with simple flavors. However, ice cream is quite the opposite, as it offers a variety of flavors and is served at a colder temperature than gelato. There are several reasons why these two deserts are different.

First, the origins of the two are very different. Gelato originated in Italy in the 1500s. The modern version of gelato began to take shape during the Renaissance in Italy. Italian chefs began experimenting with freezing sweetened milk and cream. Bernardo Buontalenti, a talented chef, experimented with milk and cream and eventually created the first known gelato. Success followed, and for hundreds of years, gelato was a famous and tasty dessert. Ice cream, however, originated around 2000 BC as a mixture of rice and milk served to the elite in China. Then, during the Middle Ages, the concept of a creamy frozen dessert spread to Europe. Arabs shared techniques, including mixing techniques and portioning. They also brought sugar to ice cream, which made it a fan favorite in Europe. In the 18th century, ice cream became more famous, made with milk, cream, and sugar. King Louis XVI was known to love this dessert. Later, the British colonized America, and ice cream became a major dessert there. Over time, ice cream developed into the ice cream we know today.

Additionally, the taste and texture of gelato and ice cream are very distinct. Gelato is a creamier dessert, as it contains more milk than ice cream. It is also considered healthier compared to ice cream, as it has less sugar and cream. The average gelato contains only about 150 calories, while ice cream contains around 400 calories. Gelato is also served at a much higher temperature than ice cream, making it enjoyable not just in the summer, but also in winter. Ice cream, on the other hand, is colder and considered less healthy compared to gelato. It uses more sugar and cream to enhance the taste. It contains more fat and has more air in it, which gives it a fluffier texture. Ice cream is a popular summer treat and is more widely consumed than gelato today. The taste and texture of the two desserts can be quite different.

Finally, the process of making gelato and ice cream is very different. Gelato is made with cream, milk, and sugar, mixed slowly and carefully to incorporate less air. This results in a denser texture. It uses more milk and less cream and sugar, creating a creamy consistency that's easy to eat. Ice cream, on the other hand, uses large amounts of sugar and cream, with less milk. It is often served in a cone and is churned rapidly. The recipes are very different, but both are delicious in their own way.

In conclusion, gelato and ice cream are two similar desserts. However, they are different in many ways too. Gelato originated in Italy and is famous around Europe, while ice cream originated in China and is more famous in America. Gelato is creamier and healthier, while ice cream is sweeter and richer. Gelato is made with a lot of milk but little sugar and cream, while ice cream favors cream and sugar over a large amount of milk. Although both are amazing desserts, which one do you prefer?



The Causes of Animal Endangerment

BY SEORIN CHOI, 11

Have you ever wondered what causes animals to become endangered? When you hear that an animal is becoming endangered from the world, you might say, “Oh no!” or “That’s so sad!” If you are eager to know about what types of acts are endangering these animals, you might want to know them. The three main causes of animal endangerment are habitat loss, overhunting and poaching, and spread of harmful diseases.

The biggest problem of animal endangerment is habitat loss. Animals need a home for themselves to live, which is also called a habitat. Their habitat provides everything the animal needs in order to survive. Without their habitat, they might not be able to hunt their prey, or food, live in the right temperature, and. They might have a low chance to survive. The causes of how an animal might lose its habitat are pollution, which can be air pollution, oil pollution, or other dangerous pollution which can disrupt their homes and kill them, invasive species, which can destroy other animals’ homes for them to live in, and disruption of ecosystem processes, like natural disasters destroying animals’ homes. Humans are harmful, too. They usually cause pollution and disruption of the ecosystem process. Animals’ habitats are very important to them.

Overhunting and poaching is another one of the main causes of animal endangerment. Overhunting is to hunt animals to an excessive and unusually harmful degree. Poaching is the illegal hunting or capture of wild animals. Both overhunting and poaching are very cruel and extremely harmful acts. Fortunately, there is less overhunting and poaching these days than back in the old days. Overhunting makes large amounts of animals get killed or hunted. It’s usually a lack of regulation or lack of food for people. That’s how overhunting begins and how different types of species are prone to extinction. Poaching kills animals or traps them. People poach because they want the animals’ valuable and rare skin, horns, tusks, fur, and body parts. It sounds very horrifying. Hunters, merchants or retailers, want the animals’ body parts because they want to sell them and get money. Or, they just want to keep it to themselves and use it for decoration. That’s how lots of animals, usually with big, strong horns, long tusks, and expensive looking soft skin and fur, have a high chance of extinction.

The last of the main causes of animal endangerment is the spread of harmful diseases. Spread of harmful diseases can affect animals in these different ways; they become sick, or their prey becomes sick and eats it. The first is the animal itself getting sick. Animal endangerment might occur if there is a dangerous disease going around, but it depends on how big the harm is. If the disease isn’t that harmful, the animal might get sick badly but not have a high chance of death. If the disease is very harmful, then there might be a high chance of death. Spread of harmful diseases can harm animals greatly and very fast, which can cause animal endangerment.

In conclusion, the three main causes of animal endangerment are habitat loss, overhunting and poaching, and spread of harmful diseases. These are the reasons why and how these three main causes of animal endangerment affect the animals and their lives. Stand up with me today to save and rescue the millions of animals living on our planet Earth, and shout “No!” to the illegal acts leading to animal endangerment!



📚Fiction VS Nonfiction📚

BY STELLA PARK, 10

Have you ever wondered about the differences between types of books? Books have many different types of genre, like fiction and nonfiction. One similarity between nonfiction and fiction is, they are both read and loved by many people. Two differences between nonfiction and fiction are, fiction uses invented characters, settings, dialogue, and/or action to tell a narrative, and nonfiction tells true narratives about real characters in a real place who say real things and perform real actions, and while fiction is often driven by creativity and imagination, whereas non-fiction is based on reality and actual experiences.

Fiction is loved and read by mostly kids, while nonfiction is read mostly by grown-ups. Fiction primarily aims to entertain, explore themes, and provide escapism while nonfiction intends to inform, educate, persuade, or document real-world subjects. Some examples of fiction books are: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, and fantasy. And some examples of nonfiction books are: biographies, histories, scientific reports, news articles, essays, and textbooks.

When you write fiction books, you use a lot of creativity and knowledge, like the series, Wings of Fire. While writing nonfiction books, you don't really use that much creativity because it has to be real, like National Geographic Kids. Non-fic- tion writers need to research and check facts; if they make a mistake, it becomes fiction. Writing nonfiction books takes lots of research and needs to be detailed. Also, fiction may contain elements of fantasy, supernatural occurrences, or speculative elements, while non-fiction emphasizes facts and evidence.

The credibility of a fictional work lies in the author's ability to create a believable narrative, even if it's based on imagination. Fiction often uses creative language, symbolism, and subjective perspectives. The credibility of a nonfiction work depends on the accuracy and reliability of the information presented and the sources cited. Nonfiction employs objective language, factual evidence, and verifiable sources. Fiction may contain elements of fantasy, supernatural occurrences, or speculative elements, while non-fiction emphasizes facts and evidence.

Fiction involves storytelling and imagination, featuring invented worlds and characters. By contrast, nonfiction is focused on presenting factual information and real-world knowledge. To further complicate matters, writers also categorize some nonfiction writing as creative nonfiction. Creative nonfiction can also be called literary nonfiction or narrative nonfiction. Fiction and nonfiction are two distinct categories of prose that serve different purposes and employ different narrative techniques. Fiction refers to literature that is not grounded in real-life events but is made up or created from a writer’s imagination. Nonfiction refers to factual stories based on real people, information, or events. To summarize, these are the ways fiction and nonfiction are similar and different.



BLOG STORY: “THE TRIP”

BY AIDEN RHEE, 11
CALIFORNIA

Going to Japan could be really exciting, but there could be horrific obstacles to reach sightseeing areas. Jason, an energetic, intelligent, and caring person always dreamed of traveling to Osaka, Japan to see crazy monuments and temples. As a result, he asked his mom and dad if they could visit one day. With a devastating no, Jason kept on trying to make mom and dad agree to say a satisfying yes.

After a few weeks of asking, Jason gave up asking, since they kept saying no. Later that day, they visited the mall to get some clothes, until Jason spotted a store that had a raffle, and on the box, it said, “If you win you will receive a first-class family trip to Osaka, Japan and food at the airplane, twenty-five dollars per raffle.”

Immediately, Jason dashed to the store and signed up for the raffle, the only problem was that the raffle was twenty-five dollars for each ticket, so Jason pleaded with his mom, “Please, please can you sign me up for two tickets, please?!”

Jason’s mom replied with, “Only if you promise me to do chores for a whole week.” after hearing that Jason shouted, “DEAL!”

The next day the ticket results came in online, and luckily, Jason won! Jason was speechless and didn’t know what to say. After cherishing the moment, Jason soon got up and was jumping up and down, screaming, “Yay, yay, yay, no way, I can’t believe this happened to me!”

He told his parents that they won first class tickets to Osaka, Japan, they didn't believe him at first, so Jason showed him the results on his iPad. Even though his parents were grown adults, they too started to jump up and down, shouting in happiness, “We are going to Japan, for absolutely free!” (Even though the fact they had to buy two tickets each worth twenty-five dollars)

The whole family immediately packed their bags and prepared to go to Osaka, Japan after winning first class flights to Japan. They thought of visiting the most amazing, breathtaking temple, which they found to be Mount Koya, on the peak of a mountain. In order for them to hike up the mountain they packed hiking sticks, boots, and more necessities needed for the hike in their bags.

After a good night’s sleep at home, it was time for their flight. They reserved an uber to the airport since they had nobody to drive them to the airport, and quickly got on the plane when they arrived. There in the plane Jason and his parents saw beautiful, comfy reclining seats with delicious food awaiting them. After a while of relaxing, and venturing the big airplane, the airplane blasted off heading to Osaka, Japan, Jason’s dream vacation.

Right when the plane took off Jason whispered to his parents, “Finally we are going to Japan, I have been waiting for so long.”

Jason’s parents were happy for him, replying with, “Good for you, have fun on your first trip to Japan!”

The airplane ride was a long and tiring seventeen hours, but it was not bad since they had comfortable seats and good food to eat. Then, they finally arrived in Osaka, Japan. Jason was super excited to visit Mount Koya and fulfill his dream to visit all the cool things in Japan. They booked a fancy hotel, specifically one with Jason’s own room, and slept. The night past and morning hit, Jason and his parents took an underground subway to Mount Koya. When they arrived, they took a lot of pictures, and prepared food and water for what was about to be a long hike up the mountain.

They took off with a ten-mile hike. When Jason and his parents reached five miles, they took a break and ate the food they had packed. After restoring their energy, they went back to the hike, with only two miles left they pushed themselves to the limit to reach the peak where Mount Koya is located without any breaks in between. Eventually, they had reached the top of the mountain where Jason immediately freaked out on seeing a bridge they had to cross a big cliff under it.

Jason thought it couldn’t be but a bridge?! Jason did not know he had to cross a bridge to reach Mount Koya, since he was super scared of heights. With all of the support from his parents and the urge to reach Mount Koya, he later built up the courage to step foot on the bridge.

He realized that crossing the bridge wasn’t that bad so he started to walk forward more, until he accidentally looked down and immediately ran back in horrific fear, shouting, “Ahhh, there is no way I can cross the bridge!

Jason really wanted to get it over with and reach the temple so he looked straight forward, only straight forward, and ran as fast as he could. Afterwards, he reached the other side of the bridge without knowing and was so relieved to finally cross the bridge.

Jason and his parents happily glared at Mount Koya and headed inside the temple. Inside, they had a blast exploring all the artifacts inside and attending the fun activities. The activities provided traditional Japanese games, cool dancing shows, and much more. After a long day at Mount Koya, it was time to head back to the hotel. Luckily for them the mountain was downhill, so Jason and his parents wouldn’t have a hard time hiking. Jason had so much fun at Mount Koya and forgot about the horrific bridge. Luckily, Jason had already overcome the fear of heights, so he crossed the bridge with complete ease.

Afterwards, Jason and his parents hiked down the mountain once again and slept the night at a luxurious hotel. The next day, Jason and his parents headed home with many breathtaking memories to cherish from Mount Koya. Clearly, Jason's experience of overcoming heights in Japan gave him the courage to face anything that could occur in front of his future.



A Genshin Impact Fanfiction:

By Stella Park, 10

–Prologue–

My name is Kokomi. I live in the land of Fontaine, with my best friend/sister, Furina. We live in a city called Bourou. There's an outer city and an inner city. We live in the outer city of course. It's near the coast of the Great River. At the center of the outer village was a clock tower that at the top, there is a stone called 'The Savior of Fontaine'. When I was little, about 6, I would ask my parents about The Legend of Nilou.



"Little Koko," Mom would say. "Do you want to hear it? It's sad."

"So?" I would protest. "It's sad, all right. But I want to HEAR it."

"Fine... fine..." Dad would tell. "Long ago...

-The Legend of Nilou-

2000 years ago, the village of Bourou was in danger. The Great River struck, flooding the entire village. Hope was lost for everyone, except one person, Nilou Kokomi . Nilou quickly ran from her home to the flooding river. She cast the spell, "shokuin" and summoned a staff. Then she cast a spell, "rikiba", to make a force field to stop the water from entering her village. But she realized the water level was high enough to flood the village next to Bourou, Meropide. She went to the top of the clock tower, and was ready to create a power source that will keep Fontaine safe. A tear flooded from her eye, a tear of sadness, happiness, and excitement. The tear turned into a stone, and Nilou used all her power to turn the stone into a powerstone. The stone shined brightly and Nilou let the stone absorb her for her energy. Nilou's husband, Ayato, saw it all happen. Ayato's wife was gone. The power of the stone stopped the flood and kept the village safe for centuries."

Chapter 1–

At school, we try to do magic, just like Nilou did many centuries ago. Of course me and Furina can only do magic because our family is the only living descendant of Nilou. After school, me and Furina were chatting about the easiest spell in the world, "elo". We were at home when suddenly the ground began to shake. The clock tower fell. "Rabuldo!" Furina shouted while pointing her staff at the clock tower.

The clock tower simply rebuilt itself. Now I could see what was wrong with the tower. The misty glow of The Savior of Fontaine was gone, which meant the stone was gone.

Chapter 2–
What? GONE??? No way.... I thought. Wait... If the stone is gone, that means – SPLASH!!! A sound interrupted my thoughts. I wasn't sure what to do, run or investigate. My curiosity was winning, so I rushed and set my backpack down on the front porch of my house, grabbed my staff, and rushed to the river. "Wait!" Furina called.

I didn't look back. I was finally at the river, and sure enough, I was right. The river splashed horribly, and there it was, the legendary water dragon.

Chapter 3–
4 years ago, I asked my dad, "Dad, in The Legend of Nilou story you used to tell me, there was the part about the river flooding. But in the book with pictures, there was a water dragon."



"Oh, sweetie, you want to hear the Myth of the Dragons?" Dad asked.

"YES!!!" I shouted with wide eyes. "Yes, YES, YES!!!"

"Ok, then... 5000 years ago...

–The Myth of the Dragons–

Long ago, the land was filled with dragons. Too much, in fact, that the dragons started giving up their dragonets to the humans to kill them or to keep or just kill them themselves. Then, a very aggressive water dragon decided to kill her baby and her eggs. As she was about to strangle her baby, the baby fought back. He touched his brothers and sister's eggs, and they burst out of the eggs. They joined together to form a large water dragon. They killed every dragon in sight, and made dragonets join them. Legends say they lost so much energy that they rested in the form of a river. 3,000 years later, the dragon will scorch the land. Only the children with power and the confidence needed can save the world..."

Chapter 4–
My heart was pounding with fear as Furina rushed over to me and looked up with a jolt of fear. The dragon roared, and sent water bubbles that were probably big and strong enough to put something the weight of a whole skyscraper, into the whole village. The bubbles returned, but the villagers were trapped inside. The dragon roared again and sent bubbles to us. Furina screamed, but instead of screaming, I shouted, "Yuka!", and POOF the droplets turned into ice.
"Fantastic" Furina sarcastically muttered.
"Atatakais!" I shouted and a burst of flame burst at the end of my staff. The fire evaporated some of the bubbles headed for us, but not enough. Furina and I screamed as two bubbles headed for us.



To be continued...



The Very Big Natural Disaster



By Daris Akhlaq, 10

It was a gloomy day. Daris and his friends, Ethan and Muba, were talking about what they should do during their winter break.

“Guys, I think we should go to Mammoth,” Ethan suggested.

“YEAHHHHHH,” Muba and Daris exclaimed. After talking, they packed up and got ready to leave until they heard the siren for natural disasters sound outside. They also saw an amber alert on their phone saying. “ALERT, ALERT, STAY SAFE, 24 HOURS UNTIL GEOSTORM!”

“Ummmmm guys, what is a geostorm?” Ethan questioned.

“Ethan, a geostorm is a geomagnetic storm that it looks like it has already happened to the state next to us.” Daris said shiveringly.



“Seems like we have to save the world,” Muba says bravely.

“You are NOT the main character Muba,” Ethan says.

“Guys, if we want to live, then we have to save the world,” Daris said.

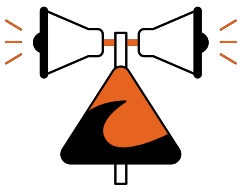
Since Muba, had a job that involved space, they each went to the NASA enterprise space shuttle and got ready to blast off. Just when they got into the air, the NASA space engineering got hit with the most devious storm ever which was full of brainrot, there was skibidi toilet, omega nugget, and even the ohio party. When they go to the ISS (International Space Station), everyone there welcomed the trio. Everyone there was very scared because no matter how many geostorm detatchers they put, it wouldn't detach the storm from earth. The trio noticed that the most important element to fully activate the geostorm detachers.

“Guys, the element is missing, which might means that someone may have stolen it,” Daris says. “That is very bad.”

“No kidding sherlock,” Muba says.

The trio wanted to figure out who took the very important element, so they went to the upper security room to see the security cameras. When they got up to the place, someone told Ethan the code for the door.







When Ethan tried to put in the code, Daris said, “BRO, THATS THE WRONG ONE GOOFY.”

”OHHHHHHHH” Ethan said stupidly. He finally went to the correct door and put the correct code in but when you look at the wrong one, it had definitely not locked for about 1.8367289287962 Googolplex years (a googolplex is a number 1 followed by 100 zeros). They never told anyone about it but they ignored it because it’s not their policy.

When they walked into the security room, they spent a so long time that you don’t even want to know how long they had to check the security cameras. They kept looking on and on until they found who stole the important element. It was on September 11, 2001, 5:36 A.M. The guy’s name that stole it is Alexander Hernandez.

The trio went to his locker but noticed that nothing was in there. They noticed that that wasn’t the locker that he put the element in but it was actually locker number 72,954. They found the element and correctly put it in but then in America there were nonstop tsunamis and in Antarctica all of the snow and ice melted. The ISS started to say, “ Self destruction is in 24 hours.”

So that meant that one person had to stay on the ISS and press the activate geostorm detacher when it is about to be the self destruction moment. Everybody started to leave the ISS but the trio didn’t. They wanted to be the last to be there and do what no one else wanted to.

The trio went to each of their rooms and then slept for 10 hours. When they woke up they each went to eat their breakfast and they waited. When there were 30 minutes left until self destruction they got into their astronaut clothes and got ready to press activate geostorm detacher.

At the 5 minute mark, they pressed activate geostorm detacher. They noticed that there was still one more space shuttle left so they quickly went into it blasted off.

2 minutes after take-off they saw the ship that everyone else went on, so they attached to that ship and everybody hip-hip-HORRAYED for what they did. When they got back down to earth, everybody was on the news watching how 3 adults saved the world. Daris, Muba, and Ethan became famous for saving the whole world.

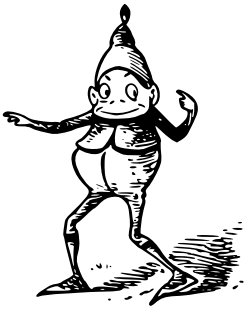






Pin's Adventure to the Alien Planet

By Dohoon Yoo, 10



Meeting the Dwarf

"Ha! Torturing animals is so much fun!" Pin exclaimed with joy.
"Pin, respect the animals!" Pin's dad scolded him.
"Fine."
Unlike what he said, Pin was planning to torture them when his parents weren't looking.
'Get ready animals!'
"Pin, why don't you go read Alien Planet?" his mom suggested.
"Alright."
So therefore, Pin went inside the house to read.
"This is boring. I wish I can go outside and torture the animals."
Suddenly, a dwarf appeared in front of him.
"Who in the world are you?" asked Pin, surprised.
"I am the dwarf of the animals. Animals have reported that you have been torturing them."
"No I didn't." Pin lied.
"I know that you are lying. I'll give you another chance," the dwarf answered.
"I DID NOT TORTURE ANIMALS!"
"How dare you! I am not a dumbhead! I shall give you a punishment."
Then the dwarf left.
"Ha! I guess the little dwarf was just too scared!" Pin laughed.
Then suddenly something strange happened. The world started to spin around Pin!
"What's happening! Ahh!" Pin shouted.



At the Alien Planet

After 30 seconds of swirling, Pin finally landed.
"Where in the world is this place?" Pin rubbed his chin, confused.
The place where he landed had a blue sky, and it was full of weird looking people. There were signs on buildings saying weird words that Pin could not understand. However, as he wandered around, he realized that the place was unbelievably similar to Alien Planet that he was just reading!
"Did that dwarf use its magic to send me here?" Pin suddenly suspected.
Suddenly the dwarf appeared again.
"Here is your punishment," the dwarf explained, "I hope you will learn your lesson."
"No! Wait, come back!" Pin shouted after him.
But it was too late. The dwarf had already left Pin alone.
"Alright. Since I am alone, I should try to find my way back home."
Pin's first strategy was jumping as high as he could. However, it was nothing but a waste of energy. In fact, he wasted so much energy that his brain couldn't think properly!
'According to my calculation, the sun will blow up in 30 seconds,' thought Pin.
And then suddenly, Pin fell to the floor with a crash.

Pin to the Rescue

After Pin became conscious, he spotted a baby Alien at the top of the building! It was not so tall, but the Alien's were too short. So then, Pin came to the rescue!

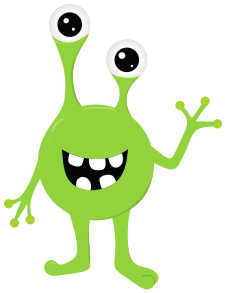
"Out of my way Aliens! I shall save that baby alien!"

Pin ran as fast as he could, and when he was about three inches away, he jumped! It seemed like everything was in slow motion. Pin spun two times in the air, and landed perfectly on his feet! He picked the Alien up, and jumped down with another flip. Here you go! Pin handed the baby alien to its mother.

"Thank you so much! How will I ever repay you?" the Alien's mother thanked him with tears in her eyes.

"It was my pleasure." Pin replied with a small bow.

"Hooray for this weird looking creature!"



Help from AtA

After his heroic rescue, Pin found a strange looking alien in front of him!

"Who in the world of the Aliens are you?" the Alien asked. "You don't look like an alien."

"Allow me to introduce myself! I am Pin! Even though I am not a pin!" Pin introduced himself with a grin.

"Well, I am AtA and it is nice to meet you!"

"Nice to meet you too!"

"Like I said before, you don't look at all like an Alien!"

"I am not an Alien! I am a human! An evil dwarf used its stupid magic to make me come here!" Pin exclaimed with rage.

"Are you sure that you didn't do anything wrong? Did you do anything to cause the dwarf to use its magic?" AtA asked.

"I don't want to talk about it." Pin said.

So therefore the two creatures were quiet for a moment. Then suddenly AtA opened his mouth.

"You said that the dwarf sent you here, right? And you want to go back to wherever you came from?"

"I not only want to go back, but need to go back." Pin answered.

"Then you should visit the Wizard of the Alien! He is a fabulous wizard, 500 years old, as wise as an owl. However, he tests people for their maturity before he grants their wish," AtA replied.

"Then I don't think I'll be going home with his help," Pin replied sorrowfully.

"Why not?" asked AtA sympathetically.

"Because I'm not that mature! Do you know any other people that can send me home?"

"Wizard of the Alien is the only person in this Alien world that can send you back home," said AtA firmly.

"Fine," said Pin, "Do you know where he lives?"

"Yes, and I can draw you a map." AtA replied.

"Why, thank you very much AtA! I would really appreciate that!"

"However, I am not allowed to go with you." AtA said.

"Why?"

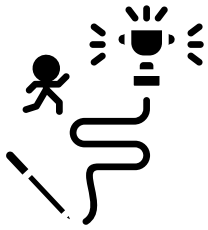
"Because my parents do not allow me to go over that border over there." AtA said pointing at the castle.

"That's fine. Thanks for doing so much for me!" Pin thanked him.

To Where the Wizard of the Alien is

With the map, Pin started on his journey to meet the Wizard of the Alien, hopeful.
However, when the Wizard of the Alien saw Pin coming, he did not want Pin's task to be too easy.
"Hmm," the Wizard said to himself, stroking his beard, "What would be a good task for a boy as immature as him?"
After 10 minutes of thinking, the Wizard of the Alien decided that three tasks would be good enough for Pin.
"Let me review my tasks. First task, animals. The animals will grow twice as big when they are tortured, and will disappear when that kid's kind to them. He will need to make all 10 animals disappear. Second task, world of graphic novels. He will have to read one novel to continue his journey. Third and last task, my test of maturity. This will probably be the hardest of all. Get ready Pin, here comes your tasks!"

The First Task



While Pin was walking along the road, he saw a big field of animals!
'Ooh! Animals for me to torture!' Pin thought.
So Pin ran over to the animals and grabbed a cow's tail. Then suddenly, something magical happened! The cow started to grow twice as big as he used to be!
"Whoa! How is that cow growing?" Pin exclaimed.
He pulled its tail again, and it grew twice as much again!
" Oh no! If it grows again, I won't be able to touch it! What's going on? Is the Wizard of the Alien tricking me or something?" Pin suspected.
So then, Pin tried petting the animal. It started to fade away!
"I was right! The Wizard was trying to trick me!" Pin exclaimed with joy.
Pin petted all the animals, horses, chickens, and ducks, until finally they were all gone! Suddenly a portal opened in front of him, showing the words, 'enter this portal.' Pin entered, and it brought him to a new place!
"I guess I'm one step closer to meeting the Wizard of the Aliens."

The Second Task

The Wizard of the Aliens noticed through his crystal ball that Pin had completed the first task.
'Good job, but there are still two more tasks.' the Wizard thought.

"I wonder what the next task will be." Pin wondered. "I hope it's not too hard."
Suddenly, a wall appeared saying, 'The World of Graphic Novels.'
"Whoa! I bet this is the next task!" Pin said out loud. "Wait! There's a notification!"
The notification read, "You must complete one graphic novel in order to pass this challenge."
"Aaw. Graphic novels are the WORST! Why graphic novels?"
However, Pin had no other choices. He found the book with the most interesting title. The Wizard of the Alien.

“Hmm, so that’s what the Wizard looks like!”

Pin read and read. At first, he thought the book was really boring, but as he read through, facts about the Wizard were pretty interesting! He was becoming mature too!



“This is better than I thought!” Pin exclaimed.

Finally, he finished reading the book. Then a portal appeared!

“You know what? I think I want to read some more books.”

So Pin read one more book, and then he jumped into the portal.

The Wizard of the Alien

“Okay, now it’s time to meet him,” the Wizard muttered to himself.

The Wizard came to the front door to meet Pin, and waited. After 15 minutes, he finally met him.

“Hello, Pin,” the Wizard greeted him.

“Hello, Wizard. Are there no other tasks?”

“I believe my son AtA has already told you that I have a maturity test.”

“AtA is your son?”

“He is more of my son than anyone else’s,” was the Wizard of the Alien’s curt reply.

“Okay, so give me the test of maturity!” Pin told him, desperate to go home.

“Alright, good luck,” the Wizard replied and left.

The room was swirling again like when Pin was brought to the Alien Planet! When it stopped, he was in his house!

“What happened?”

“This will be your final task,” the fading Wizard’s voice said.



Confusing Task

“Being at home is my final task?” Pin was confused. “Oh well, I guess I’m back! Mom! Dad! I’m back!!!”

However, it seemed like the house was empty!

“Huh? Why is nobody home?”

As Pin wondered, the Wizard's booming voice said, “Your job is to be nice to the animals for one day. Also, you must read 3 graphic novels.”

“Okay, Wizard! Graphic novels are pretty fun to be honest!”

However, Pin had a concern.

‘How am I going to be nice to the animals for one whole day?’



Graphic Novels

Pin decided that he will read the graphic novels first.

“Let’s see the choices. There’s *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils* by Selma Lagerlöf, *Wishing Spell* from the *Land of Stories* Series by Chris Colfer, and *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by Frank Baum. *Land of Stories*? That’s an interesting name! I’ll read that one first.”

So off Pin went into the world of books. After he finished reading the first one, he read *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. Lastly, he read The Wonderful Adventures of Nils.

“That’s strange. My adventures are awfully similar to Nils and Dorothy’s combined, and Alex and Conner also fell into a book like me!” Pin realized.

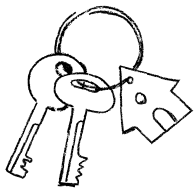
Now all Pin had to do was to complete the task of being nice to the animals.

“Let’s do this,” Pin said.

Be Nice to the Animals

"How do humans be nice to each other? They say hi!" Pin exclaimed joyfully.
"Hi animals! How are you today?" Pin said feeling strange.
The animals had remembered his cruelty against them, so they were growling and kicking dust at him.
"Whoa! What is wrong with...Oh it's because of me torturing them. Look, I'm sorry I tortured you. I promise I won't do it anymore. Can you give me a second chance?" Pin pleaded. "I must look crazy. They can't even understand me!"
However, as if the animals could understand him, they became quiet.
"Thanks! I promise I'll be nice to you guys from now on."
Surprisingly, Pin and the animals had a lot of fun that day.
"It was fun playing with you animals! Let's play again in the future!" Pin waved.

Home, Sweet Home



"Wizard of the Alien! I completed the tasks!" Pin shouted at the air.
Then a portal appeared in front of him saying, 'Please enter.'
"Okay!"
The portal led to the castle of the Wizard of the Alien. When he got there, the Wizard and Ata greeted him.
"Hiya Pin! You didn't know that I was his son right?" Ata said, pointing at his dad.
"Nope."
"Then I bet you didn't know that I'm 300 years old!"
"You're 300 years old?!"
"Yep."
"Whoa!"
"Okay, enough talking. Pin, good job on completing the tasks. Now I will send you home," the Wizard said.
"Thanks Wizard and AtA! It was good knowing you Aliens!" Pin waved goodbye.
"Now close your eyes and count to 10 in your head," the Wizard told Pin.
Pin obeyed and when he opened his eyes, he was home!
"Mom! Dad! I'm back!" Pin shouted.
"What do you mean your back? You've been here the whole time!"
"Well, you see, a little dwarf of the animals made me go inside Alien Planet, and I made a new Alien friend AtA, the son of the Wizard of the Alien, and..." on and on he went until the sun was set.
"Well you had a big adventure!" his dad said as he chuckled.
"I sure did! Now I'm friends with the animals! Look!"
Pin walked over to the animals and he petted them.
"We believe you. It's time for bed now! Good night Pin!" his mom and dad said.
" 'night!"
For his bedtime story, Pin read the Alien Planet. He could have sworn that he saw AtA and the Wizard waving at him.
"Hi, AtA! Hi, Wizard of the Alien! I'm glad I can see you anytime I want! Have fun in the book! Hey! That's the building where I saved the baby alien! Live safely, little creature! Bye bye, aliens!"

The Brightest Star at Dawn

By Seorin Choi, 11

The red sun rose elegantly over the towering skyscrapers in the busy city waking up all the darkness. Winter Everest opened one eye to see the bright sunshine shining through her window. Suddenly, Gold, her dog, barked loudly, making Winter surprised. It was 5:49. She usually woke up very late during weekdays but today was different. Winter was going to be a new student in Goldenview Elementary School. Winter went downstairs and saw her mom making breakfast.

"Good Morning, Winter, ready for your first day of school?" Mom asked.

"I don't really know," Winter said as she took a bite of the delicious blueberry pancakes her mom made every morning. After breakfast and getting ready to go to school, Winter and her mom drove to Goldenview Elementary School. When they arrived, Winter had a look of disappointment on her face. She expected her school to be a little more . . . happier?

Everyone looked gloomy and sad. The school buildings also looked old and miserable. The mood was unhappy, too. The kids all pushed each other and yelled. This was not how Winter expected her new school to be like. Her old school was better. Everyone was happy and nice, she had lots of friends, and the school was new and big. Even her mom had the same look on her face as she got out of the car. As they walked into the school, kids started to stare at Winter and whisper about her.

Suddenly, a very strict and scary looking teacher walked up to them.
"Are you Winter Everest? I'm Ms. Wilde and I will be your teacher this year. Classroom 97, turn left then right and down the hall, last classroom. What are you waiting for? Run! Class starts at 8:15 when the second bell rings." Winter couldn't believe that that strict and scary looking teacher was going to be her teacher for the whole year!

"It's a pleasure to meet you, Ms. Wilde, I'm Winter's mom. I'm sure Winter would love being in your class this year!" Winter's mom spoke with a friendly smile, but Ms. Wilde just ignored her and said, "Now Winter, follow me, class is about to start in 5 minutes." Winter reluctantly followed Ms. Wilde to her classroom. On the way, she saw a classroom filled with kids throwing pencils and paper airplanes in the classroom. Another classroom had a teacher crumble up a nice drawing a kid drew and make them cry. 'That's very mean!', Winter thought. When they got to classroom 97, Ms. Wilde opened the door and what Winter saw horrified her.

Paper airplanes flying around everywhere, kids dumping trash cans on each other's desks, kids scribbling on the teacher's white board, a huge mess on the floor, kids crying, yelling, screaming, shouting, pushing, pulling, and ripping notebooks. Ms. Wilde shouted on the top of her lungs, "CLASS!!! WHAT IS ALL THIS TERRIBLE BEHAVIOR? I AM GOING TO LEAVE A MESSAGE TO EVERY SINGLE ONE OF YOUR PARENTS AFTER SCHOOL THAT YOU KIDS WERE BEHAVING HORRIBLY! TODAY WE HAVE A NEW STUDENT NAMED WINTER AND I WANT YOU TO SHOW YOUR BEST BEHAVIOR! GOT IT?!!" The class answered, "Yes, Ms. Wilde." DING, DING, DING, went the third bell.

“Winter, you may sit next to Scarlet for today.” Ms. Wilde said. A girl with a green sweater and red glasses waved her hand. Winter waved her hand back.

At snack time, Winter sat alone at the snack tables and ate her peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Scarlet suddenly walked over and sat next to her. “You have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? Yum!” Scarlet said. “Come on, I want to show you something!” Scarlet grabbed Winter’s hand and ran to the school back gate. Scarlet suddenly closed her eyes. A moment later, she was gone!

“Umm, Scarlet! Where are you?” Scarlet suddenly appeared back again!

“Tada! What do you think? Impressive, right?” Winter stared at Scarlet like she just spoke another language to her. Suddenly, Winter’s hand glowed and a shape appeared in her palm! Scarlet stared at Winter in awe. “Winter! You’re a witch, too! Just like me!” Winter stared at her glowing palm with a raindrop shape. “Your Witch Symbol is a raindrop, like mine!! You have the power to turn invisible, too!” Scarlet exclaimed happily.

“So, I’m a witch and can turn invisible?” Winter was surprised. She never knew for ten years that she was a witch!

“Hey, I’ll teach you how to use your powers! Just close your eyes and concentrate on invisibility!” Scarlet demonstrated and turned invisible. “Now you try!” Scarlet said as appeared. Winter closed her eyes and concentrated on invisibility. A moment later, she opened her eyes. She still felt the same. But Scarlet was looking at her in shock. She looked down at herself and didn’t see her body but she was glowing! “Umm, Scarlet? What’s happening to me?” Winter was frightened. She didn’t really like the look on Scarlet’s face. She looked like she was scared too.

“I...I don’t know either...I never saw any witch glow before!” Scarlet and Winter were speechless for a moment until Winter interrupted, “But how do I appear again?”

“Close your eyes again and concentrate on appearing back to yourself!” Scarlet said. Winter did as she said and closed her eyes. When she opened them, she saw herself in the mirror that Scarlet was holding. DING, DING, DING! The bell rang. “We have to get back to class! Meet me here after school!” Scarlet said.

After school, Winter and Scarlet ran to the school back gate. Scarlet looked around to see if anybody was watching them and said, “Can you promise me that you will never tell anyone about this?”

“I swear my life.” Winter promised.

“Okay, then. So, I’m a witch from the magical world of Witch World. The only problem is, the Witch World will be gone if we don’t find the Brightest Star at Dawn, an enchanted object. The hard part is that a powerful, evil wizard is trying to find the star first, so he can destroy it! The wizard lives alone where it is called the Dark Mountains. It used to be called the Mountains of Peace, but the wizard turned evil and cast an evil spell on it! You and I were the two chosen witches who are going to go on this journey to save the Witch World. I know this is a lot to take in, but the Witch World is very important to me and a lot more witches. Can you go on this journey with me to save my home?”

Scarlet looked like she might cry if Winter didn't say yes. Winter thought for a moment and answered, "Yes. Let's find the Brightest Star at Dawn and save the Witch World!"

Scarlet smiled thankfully at Winter and suddenly created a gigantic passageway in the air which went into never ending darkness.

"This is a portal to the Witch World. Come on, follow me, quick!" Winter and Scarlet jumped into the portal and dropped into deep darkness.

"Ahhhh!" Winter shouted as she dropped down, down, and down. Winter landed with a thump on the ground. Unfortunately, it was made out of glass! "OWWW!!!" Winter screamed painfully. Scarlet heard Winter scream and helped her up.

"Are you alright? Be careful next time, we're gonna have to travel in lots of more portals."

"More portals? Can only Rain Witches make portals out of nowhere?" Winter asked.

"Actually, every witch can make portals and travel. I'll teach you later! Come on, we have to hurry, we don't have much time!" Scarlet grabbed Winter's hand and they ran, following the glass trails. The glass floor glowed every time they took a step.

"Keep following me! The Star Palace is this way! The Star Kingdom has every type of star! I'm sure they can help us find the brightest star at dawn!" They ran quickly to the Star Kingdom. Winter was amazed by the bright stars floating around the kingdom. Scarlet was right! There were all types of stars!

"Quick! We don't have much time!" Scarlet said as she pulled Winter's arm. They dashed into a giant palace and went inside a room that had a sign that said The Collection Room. When they went inside, Winter saw an old man sitting on a stool and sorting stars by each type.

"Welcome, Scarlet! Do you need anything?" he asked. "Oh and I see that you brought a friend with you today. Welcome! I'm Master Margo, the master and collector of stars, what's your name?"

"Hello, I'm Winter and we are here to ask if you know anything about the Brightest Star at Dawn." Winter replied.

Master Margo stared at Winter, then Scarlet then Winter, then Scarlet, and back and forth.
"So, you guys are the chosen witches of Witch World to find the Brightest Star at Dawn?"
"Yes." Winter and Scarlet replied at the same time.

"I don't really know a lot about it," he said. "But I do have something that could be useful as a clue." Master Margo reached out into his drawer and pulled out an old looking piece of paper. It was faintly printed in letters that read, "In the Star Palace, follow the blue trail of light. The next clue for the Brightest Star at Dawn will await.

“We need to follow a blue trail which leads to our next clue to finding the Brightest Star at Dawn! ” Scarlet exclaimed.

They looked around to see any blue trails, but they saw no blue trails in sight. Suddenly, Winter saw a whole collection row of blue stars collected in jars. “Couldn’t those stars be the blue trail?” Winter asked Scarlet, who was searching everywhere.

Scarlet turned around to see the row of blue stars that Winter was asking about. “In the script it said ‘follow the blue trail of light’, so couldn’t the stars symbolize light?”

“I think you’re right! Let’s follow these star collections and see where they lead us to.”

They ran down the hallway, up some stairs, and stopped. Winter and Scarlet saw the last collection of blue stars which stopped on the top of a tower that they were in. In the center of the small room, a yellow stone as yellow as the sun when, was in a fragile glass jar. There was a small piece of paper that said, “Yellowstone, as yellow as the sun, pick it up and start to run, go to the Ocean of Depths, don’t look back, or else . . .”

“Or else, what?” Scarlet said.

“Quick, let’s get that stone and run to the Ocean of Depths!” Winter reminded Scarlet and put the stone in her backpack. “Now let’s run! Don’t look back!”

They started dashing down the stairs and out of the Star Palace. ‘Don’t look back! Don’t look back!’ Winter thought to herself, but she was eager to look back. When they ran for a mile, Winter and Scarlet could hear waves crashing on rocks. It was the Ocean of Depths! Winter layed down on the soft, warm sand and made sand angels. Suddenly, she felt something rough on the sand! She took it out and what she found was another piece of clue!

It said, “Dive in the ocean, a treasure will await, the Opal gem hidden in the sand. When you get to shore, head straight to the Rainforest of Whispers. Your next clue will wait.”

“Scarlet! Look what I found! Our next clue!”

Scarlet looked at the script and said, “Let’s dive!” She suddenly took off her shoes and ran into the ocean. Winter also followed her and ran to the ocean. “Ready? Three, two, one, dive!” Scarlet shouted and they plunged into the ocean.

Inside, Winter was amazed by the amazing sight! There were all colors and types of fish swimming around! Scarlet swam to the ground to search for the opal hidden in the sand. Winter followed her and searched for the opal. Winter and Scarlet were searching in the sand, when a shiny object caught Winter’s eye. It looked like a small, oval shaped rock that was super shiny! It was an opal!

Winter grabbed it tightly in her hands and tapped Scarlet’s shoulder to show her that she found it. Scarlet smiled and nodded. They both swam back up to shore to catch their breath.

“Now that we found the opal, let’s go to the Forest of Whispers!” Scarlet said. The forest was not far away. They could see it just from the beach.

“Let’s go find our next clue!” When Scarlet and Winter arrived, they saw so many colourful plants and insects surrounding them. Trees towered over them, blocking the hot sun away from them. It was cool and shady, with a river flowing not far away. Winter saw right away that there was something pinned onto a big tree as they walked by. It was their next clue!

“Scarlet! Come look!” Winter waved at Scarlet. They both read the clue.

It said, “In the Rainforest of Whispers, wonders await. A hidden green uvite will be hiding in the forest. After you search for the hidden gem, uvite, place the gems together in the order you have collected! Remember their names and the first letters of each, put them all together and will show you your destiny. And remember that the Brightest Star at Dawn is a true gem that shines the brightest of all.”

Winter and Scarlet were speechless. This clue was the hardest one and the last step of finding the Brightest Star at Dawn.

“Well, I guess we have to find the hidden uvite.” Scarlet said, going off on her own.

“Wait for me!” Winter said as she tried to catch up with her. Winter and Scarlet search through the rainforest to see anything looking like an uvite.

Suddenly, Winter saw an odd looking frog sitting on a rough rock near the flowing river. “Hmm… I wonder?” Winter said as she picked up the sparkling green uvite. “Yes! I knew it was the hidden uvite!”

Winter ran to Scarlet and told her, “I found it! I found the hidden uvite!”

“Yay! Now we just have to match all the gems together in the order of when we found them!”

Scarlet took out the other two gems from her pocket and placed them on a big, rocky, rock. The yellowstone was the first gem that they found, the opal was the second, and the uvite was the third. They placed the gems in order.

“Now we have to remember their names and the first letter of each.” Winter said. “Yellowstone is y, opal is o, and uvite is u. If we put them all together, then…”

“It’s…you…?” Scarlet said, confused. “But who? It could be you or me! How are we supposed to find out?” Scarlet carefully read the clue again (she had taken it with her).

Slowly, her eyes went wide, “Winter, the clue says that the Brightest Star at Dawn shines the brightest of all. Remember that you were glowing when you used your invisibility powers back at school? So, the Brightest Star at Dawn… is…you.”

“Me?!!! I’m the Brightest Star at Dawn who is going to save the world?!!”

“Yeah, it’s you!” Scarlet smiled a big smile with hope in her eyes. We have to go to the Witch World and they’ll see what they can do.” Scarlet made the portal again and they jumped in out of sight. When they arrived in the Witch World, they were in the Witch Palace. Winter and Scarlet heard voices in the throne room, where the witch king and queen were. Scarlet grabbed Winter’s hand and ran to the throne room. And there.

Right when they entered the room, he was there. The wizard. Magnificent.

“Well, well, well. Look who we have here. Princess Scarlet with the Brightest Star at Dawn!” Magnificent spoke with a cold voice. He had a dark gown and a hood covering his face.

‘How does he already know that I’m the Brightest Star at Dawn? How could he see? Does he have any powers to do that?’ Winter thought, staring at the wizard.

Scarlet ran to the king and queen, looking worried.

‘Wait a minute. Princess Scarlet? She was a princess? She was the king and queen’s daughter?!!’ Winter looked at Scarlet. She looked scared. The hope in her eyes was gone. That meant bad news. The world was doomed. And it was her fault that the world was about to end.

Winter fell down on her knees and big tears dropped down her face. SPLAT, DROP, SPLAT! The whole world seemed to be silent. It seemed like the world stopped. ‘Maybe Magnificent ended the world. It’s over.’ Winter slowly opened her eyes. The world hadn’t stopped, it looked just the same. But now, Winter had to talk it out. Winter stood up. She wiped off the tears in her face and eyes.

“Magnificent, I want a word with you.” Winter felt braver than before. She was doing the right thing.

“Magnificent, it doesn’t have to end like this. You don’t have to end the world in this way. That isn’t going to fix any of your problems. Listen to me please. If you’re going to end the world, I’m fine. But you need to fix something before you end it. You need to join us. You need to become one of us. What you really need to do is join us. You have been living in the mountains all by yourself with no friends, family, or anyone.”

Magnificent turned away, but didn’t leave. Winter saw that and knew he was listening to her.

“Magnificent, I know that you are kind deep inside of you, but the reason why you are acting so mean is because you have no one around you who cares about you. That’s why you should let yourself shine and show everyone what a great wizard you are.”

A drop of water hit the ground. SPLAT! Suddenly, Magnificent pulled off his hood, showing his face. Everyone stared at Magnificent.

“I...I am so... so so... so sorry... I just didn’t understand who I actually was. When I was little, my parents left me alone in the mountains and never came back. I got bullied a lot, too. I felt so sad that I suddenly became angry about everything. I was angry that I had no family who cared for me. I was angry that I always got bullied. I was even angry at myself. I don’t know why. And then, I said, “I don’t even need all those things! I can just stay away from it if I don’t want it!” And I ran far away from the Witch World because I couldn’t bare my eyes on seeing others having all those things. I became an evil wizard and even cast an evil spell on the Mountains of Peace. I am so sorry! I... I...”

Magnificent suddenly looked at Winter. “I really thank you, Winter Everest. You truly shine.”

Magnificent hugged Winter.

“Now, let’s go to the Main Room. Once you open the Door of Destiny, the world will be safe from danger. Winter and Magnificent walked over to the Main Room where a giant door was.

Winter looked at Magnificent. He nodded, signalling Winter to open the door. Winter grabbed the door knob and twisted it. With a swoosh, the door flung open and Winter could see bright light shining. She stepped inside but dropped down, down, and down, forever from the door.

“Ahhh!!!” Winter screamed as she bumped her head hard on the floor. “Ouch!” She opened her eyes and saw her room. Was this all a dream? Winter saw a glow coming from her hand and looked at it. Right there, on her palm, was the glowing raindrop Witch Symbol.

THE END



A Percy Jackson Fanfiction

By Chris Kim, 10

Annabeth

I was mad at the Bovine Majesty (Hera) when she took my fabulous, phenomenal boyfriend. Actually, it could be an understatement. I wanted to murder her, but it can be slightly inconvenient since she's immortal. She says it is because of "uniting Greek and Roman demigods," but I wasn't buying it. At least I found Percy back, but the reunion came with some price, like impossible, treacherous quests. Today, we are going to vanquish the enormous giant Orion that is born to oppose the godly twins, Apollo and Artemis.

"Annabeth, landing!" Leo bellowed from above.

"Coming!" I grunted gripping some handles inside the mess hall. I could already hear my companions gathering.

When she went to the mast, every member of the Prophecy of the Seven was there, but their expressions ranging from tense to downright boring. Nico di Angelo and Reyna, and Coach Hedge were ready for their insane voyage with the massive, vast statue, the Athena Parthenos to the Greek Demigod's home, the marvelous Camp Half-Blood. Coach Hedge looked so enthusiastic about going on an insane journey. We encountered a Cruise ship, and the tourists seemed to be impressed by 7 teenagers having a gigantic ship, but most thought it was a tourist attraction, and they got pictures of us enthusiastically.

"Hey, is it just me," Leo said, leaning on the ship's railing, "or is that cruise ship super into us?"

"Hi! Want some autographs?" waved Percy with happiness.

"It's OK!" shouted the tourists.

"You got rejected, Jackson!" snickered Jason.

"Shut up, Grace." said Percy with a shameful visage.

After the encounter with the ship, we arrived at our destination, the place that the "Orion navigation" that Leo created a few days ago.

"Landing!' Leo shouted.

The ship shook and the ship landed, but they saw unfriendly warriors trying to attract.

"Go back!" Piper clamored with charmspeak.

They went back, but it looked like it was only going to work permanently and Gaea's forces looked more furious.

The demigod Bryce and Gaea's forces looked vicious so much that Piper and Leo were shivering a lot.

"Can you create part of the Labyrinth?" Annabeth requested.

Without words, the Labyrinth was created which made the forces separated.

"Percy, Jason go together and if you find several forces, send a signal with Leo's emergency fireworks. If you find one, Hazel will make a closed room for you to fight." Annabeth said.

"What? I have claustrophobia!" Jason complained.

"No objections! Go!" Annabeth commanded.

Percy

Percy was tiresome since Jason was complaining. Jason was complaining all the time while they're walking about his claustrophobia. They met several forces that looked furious.

"Ready?" gripping Riptide.

Jason rolled his shoulders. "As ready as I'll ever be. Let's just hope Hazel's quick with that room trick."

Before they could take another step, a group of armored warriors charged toward them. Their eyes gleamed with malice, and their weapons glowed with the sickly green light of Gaea's magic.

"Signal time?" Jason asked.

"Not yet," Percy muttered. He tightened his grip on his sword and stepped forward, already calling upon the ocean's power. The dampness in the air thickened, responding to him. He could feel underground water sources nearby. Perfect.

One of the warriors lunged, a jagged bronze spear aimed straight for Percy's chest. With a flick of his wrist, Percy deflected the attack and sent a surge of water from beneath the ground, blasting the attacker off his feet.

Jason was already moving, his celestial bronze gladius flashing. With a burst of wind, he propelled himself into the air and brought his sword down hard, sending two enemies sprawling.

More were coming.

“We need that room, Hazel!” Percy yelled.

The ground trembled, and before the remaining warriors could react, stone walls erupted from the earth, sealing them inside a compact chamber. The walls rumbled as if they were alive, responding to Hazel’s will.
“Great,” Jason muttered. “Trapped in a small space with murderous enemies. Just what I wanted.”

“Less talking, more fighting, Grace,” Percy quipped.

The battle erupted in chaos. Jason fought with precise, calculated strikes, using bursts of wind to throw off their enemies’ balance. Percy moved like the tide—fluid, relentless—disarming and knocking out opponents one by one.

But then, the ground quaked violently. From the far end of the chamber, a massive figure stepped forward, his body wrapped in shimmering golden armor. His red eyes glowed with cruel amusement.

“Bryce,” Jason growled.

The demigod smirked. “Miss me?”

Percy tightened his grip on Riptide. He remembered Bryce from before—his ruthless nature, his obsession with power. He had betrayed his own comrades before, and now, he was fully under Gaea’s command. Percy tightened his grip on Riptide. He remembered Bryce from before—his ruthless nature, his obsession with power. He had betrayed his own comrades before, and now, he was fully under Gaea’s command.

“This time,” Bryce continued, drawing his Stygian iron blade, “I won’t be playing around.”

The air grew colder. Shadows twisted unnaturally around Bryce as he raised his free hand, summoning dark energy. The walls of the maze trembled under his presence.
Percy and Jason exchanged a glance. This was going to be tough.

Jason took a deep breath. “On three?”

Percy smirked. “Oh, we’re past counting. Just try to keep up.”

With that, they charged.

To be continued

Story:

SURVIVNG MARS

BY CHRISTOPHER CHUNG, 10

The mechanical voice says "T minus 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, blast off"; One second, I'm on the launching pad then a second later I'm sailing towards Saturn.

"Wow" I say in awe as I spot Earth becoming a tiny dot. The second I'm at a steady course; I turn on autopilot and check the engines to see if everything is running smoothly.

"Okay! Nothing malfunctioning!" I exclaim with relief. "If nothing goes wrong for the first few weeks of sailing, I'll be orbiting and collecting data on Saturn in no time," I think with joy. Then I start my long journey toward Saturn by getting some sleep. As the first week goes by, I receive several intercoms messaging things like.

"Ben, you need to check the engines frequently. Ben, do you copy." And the answer's always. "Yes, I copy." The second week goes by pretty quickly with all the small tasks I had to do like screw an unscrewing bolt, etc. The next day I woke up to angry alarms blaring. I literally fly out of my sleeping bag thinking, 'What's going on!?' Then I realized that the emergency alarm was ringing and jumped into my spacesuit and sprinted like an Olympic player towards the cockpit while putting on my helmet. When I reached the cockpit, all the screens were flashing red and an automated voice was saying "On asteroid collision course, on asteroid collision course." I grab a hold of the handles and twist it all the way around but by then it's too late.

The automated voice says, "Collision imminent" and a split second later, a big crunch comes from the right engine followed by a colossal boom that sends the aircraft with me inside spinning towards Mars. I was still conscious and frantically twisting the wheel, but half of the aircraft was blown up with the two engines so all I could do was see Mars rushing up with immense speed. As soon as the spaceship or what's left of it crashed down, I instantly blacked out from the shock.

I wake up some time later on the ground and open my eyes to only see a deserted and red landscape. Then it all comes rushing back towards me. The alarm, the explosion, and my crash on Mars. Now that I know how vital my every decision is, I start looking through the wreckage.
"Oh no!" I exclaim with despair. "Everything is in scraps and ruins except for some food and some battered air tanks."



I sigh. ‘At least I won’t die of hunger or suffocation.’ I think optimistically. Then I started collecting the bigger pieces of metal and I pushed them into a circle formation then placed a piece of metal on top to make a crude shelter. Just like that, I survive on the little food, water, and air I could scrape together. A few days later I searched the cockpit for some useful items when I found the Intercom buzzing, beeping, and still working after the crash. It took me a second to realize what I was seeing but then it hit me. I slammed the intercom button and screamed, “Stranded on Mars, please send rescue!”

And immediately the answer was, “We lost your signal and worried that you might be in a terrible accident. We will send a rescue squad as soon as possible.”

For the next few weeks, I hoped rescue would come sooner and stayed in my shelter to protect myself from the heat. A few weeks later, I was in my shelter when the walls and ground began to shake. I climbed out in curiosity and saw a giant red wall in the distance. It took me a few seconds to realize what that wall was and then my blood ran cold. A giant dust storm that’s at least 30 kilometers tall. I didn’t even have time to react before the dust storm was upon me. I got swept along the dusty ground practically blinded by all the dust. Then a bright streak of light filled the air.

‘Lightning!’ I scream in my head. A second later, I crashed into my crude shelter and got flung over. I quickly scrabble for a ledge and grasp the very edge trying not to get flung over. I’m breathless and hopeless while the winds howl in the air as I’m hanging in midair, but just then powerful searchlights cut through the dust and then a voice says:

“Grab on!” I turn around to see a giant rescue ship hovering in the air. Then the voice more urgently says “Grab on!” Then I jumped. The momentum and winds carried me through the air and my right hand slammed onto the rim of the ship. The pain momentarily blinded me and forced me to let go. When the winds were about to carry me away, a strong hand gripped my arm, and I was immediately pulled out of the winds. The following weeks were just a blur. When I returned back to Earth, the whole nation was waiting for me. I even achieved being known globally as “The man who survived Mars." Most importantly, with all the data I collected on my “trip” to Mars, the first settlement on Mars is being built. With all the fame and respect, life has gotten pretty overwhelming over the few days I’ve returned to Earth.

Weeks later, I got invited for a ceremony at the White House. The president is proud of my bravery and courage and wants to invite me for another space expedition to Venus. I was a little hesitant for a bit but eventually agreed.

A mechanical voice announced, “T minus 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, blast off.” I rocket towards Venus with impressive speed. Soon, the Earth is a tiny blue dot in a blanket of darkness.

Not long after this, there would also be a home on Venus too. A town. A country, a civilization. As I blasted off at immeasurable speed, I smiled. Mankind was now traveling above and beyond.



Letter to Older Generations: The Rising Concern of Stereotypes by Angelina Randall

Dear Older Generation,

In today's rapidly evolving world, each generation has become shockingly different from each other. With the new age of technology, people and parenting tactics change. People are now adopting new tactics with their children, trying to put the new advancements of the world to use. Unfortunately, older generations are extremely uncomfortable with these new changes and speak ill of the newer generation. There are various misconceptions and stereotypes that the older generations have made for the newer generations that are simply not true due to multiple reasons.

One prominent misconception is that the newer generation is lacking in intelligence. It has been rumored that they are behind in terms of school grades and lack the understanding to keep up with their own grade. This is undoubtedly not true due to my personal experience. I am also in this younger generation and have seen first hand how many smart classmates I have. They all mostly put hard work into studying and keeping their grades up. There is also a large number that are in more advanced classes and are still able to keep up in terms of grades. In addition, like in every other generation, there are people with more artistic strengths than academic ones. People in that category find more passion in art and sports than school. I know numerous students that are like that as well. This misconception of the newer generation is very untrue as I find many people who are smart or just have different passions.

This generation being loud, rude, and impatient is a big stereotype. It is supposed that we obnoxiously talk to others with a voice of impatience, whether it is an elder or not. This is not true for most within the younger generation. Almost everyone I know that is close in age with me treats everyone with kindness and patience with a normal tone of voice. For some, they may roast each other, but in a joking way to practice their wit. In addition, there is a huge guarantee that this type of behavior is shown in every generation as there is always a fair share of expressive people. Making judgmental statements about one group without even considering that this type of behavior is shown in every group reveals poor awareness and understanding of one who is making such remarks. This stereotype is certainly not true for the whole generation as there is a wide variety of personalities.

On the complete opposite end, compared to the last stereotype, there is also the misconception of the newer generation being completely unsociable. This is due to others thinking that we only want to be on devices instead of communicating and socializing with others. This is completely untrue. Everyone I know that is in the younger generation has never been so far as to be unsociable or not wanting to interact with other people. In my school, everyone is having fun interacting with each other. There may be some people who are a bit shy and scared to go up to others, but there are never people who don't want to have friends or acquaintances. There are also some who just prefer online communication, but that doesn't mean they don't like talking to people. This stereotype is not correct at all, at least with my personal experience, as I have never met someone who didn't want to have friends.

I hope this writing has spread awareness of all the misconceptions that are being made. All the misconceptions of the younger generation such as lacking in intelligence, rude, and unsociable are simply not true. I encourage readers to tell others that the newer generation is simply not what it is made out to be!

Sincerely,
A Hopeful Member of the Younger Generation

Dear Generations X, Y, and Z,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am a 12-year-old member of the newest generation, Gen. Alpha, and am writing to discuss the stereotypes of my generation. Despite what many of the older generations believe, not all people in Gen. A. are wild children who cannot live without their devices. Personally, I am quite the opposite, and many people that I know share the same sentiment.

My first point that I would like to make is that not everyone in this generation is chronically online. Although I do enjoy watching YouTube and playing Minecraft on my Ipad, I am not "obsessed", nor do I use other social media apps such as TikTok or Instagram. Additionally, my school bans phones during the school-day, requiring those who have them to keep them in their lockers until three o'clock. However, my classmates and I still have "normal conversations", not just about what we see on social media, what online games we played, etc. In fact, many of us talk about topics such as music, sports, school, books, and our other various interests. Furthermore, some children in Gen. Alpha are tired of being told to "put down your phone" or "get off of your device", as it can result from misunderstandings. As technology improves, schoolwork is increasingly online, necessitating us to use our computers, phones, and other devices to complete assignments. Many of my classmates check their homework on their phones after school through the app Canvas. Additionally, I recall one of my classmates complaining to her friend about how her parents tell her to stop looking at her phone, without realizing that she is trying to complete homework. I also take a writing class, which I have to do online because I do not live in the area. Therefore, although the new generation does spend more time online compared to the older ones, we do this because the world is becoming more reliant on technology.

Another misconception about Generation Alpha is that we are developmentally behind. The "cause of this" is our tendency to be online more often compared to older generations, which some claim makes us unable to focus for long periods of time and kills our brain cells. However, I know many of my classmates who always score high on our math, English, science, and history tests, which is definitely saying something as my school is one of the best in the state. In addition, addressing our "ineptitude in spelling", it turns out that my school did not teach spelling extensively in elementary school until after my grade was already in middle school. Furthermore, spelling is something that can always be learned later in life, whereas grammar and reading are essential skills in English. Although correct spelling is on the Common Core State Standards for Hawaii, grammar and reading comprehension are listed on there as well, with more details and expectations. We, as a generation, simply have different criteria for our learning compared to the past. Additionally, I am on the Science Olympiad team for my school, and enjoy it very much; many of the team's members all are science lovers as well, and this passion for an extracurricular is what led our school to win the States tournament and move on to Nationals. Hence, most members of Gen. Alpha are not lacking academically; moreover, it is crucial to consider that everyone in my generation are still children, so judging our intelligence at this age is unfair.

I will agree that many members of Generation Alpha use brainrot in their daily terminology. It is quite prevalent online, and I often hear my classmates singing remakes of popular songs with brainrot added. Personally, I understand what it feels like to have to listen to the constant stream of modern slang from an outside point of view because I am one of the few in my grade who do not use it at all. At first, it was quite annoying to hear these terms everywhere I went; however, I eventually got used to it. Currently, I think of brainrot as another way for children in this age to express themselves and make it easier for them to connect to friends and peers. Another way of thinking about brainrot is by comparing it to speaking a different language. My school requires its students to learn a foreign language starting from seventh grade; I take Japanese and often use it at home to practice. Despite my parents knowing almost no Japanese, they do not become annoyed when I talk to them in it and instead ask for an explanation. In my belief, people need to be more understanding about Generation Alpha and the new slang that they use. It likely makes no sense to the members of the older generations, but they should not make fun of our usage of this just because many of us use it 24/7. Although it may be irritating to hear children using this slang, please try to understand where they are coming from.

To conclude, my generation does fit a few of the stereotypes placed on us. Many members use slang, others enjoy spending time online, while others can definitely be wild. However, I would like you to consider that it is simply us being children. Our brains have not developed enough to have total self-control. Furthermore, this is a new generation built around technology. Every generation is slightly different because of the changes that happen between those time periods. So, please do not judge us for being who we are. Thank you for taking my words into consideration before making conclusions about us as a whole.

Sincerely,
Leah Bae, a member of Generation Alpha

My Generation Open Letter by John Park

To the older generation,

I hope you find this letter well. I am proud to write this letter to the older generation. As a member of the generation alpha, I am writing about the misconception about the younger generation, the alpha generation. This is an important discussion because this generation is the future of our society.

For many years the older generation claimed that generation alpha is too close to the internet, which is bad for studying, reading and being creative. I think that they probably think like that because time passes and the way of thinking can change. For example, the toy that the generation of X's toy was a Rubix cube while the generation alpha played with the Fidget spinner or smartphone, which can be different from interesting stuff. However, I think that they should know the feeling of the alpha generation and should not blame them for being different from the past generation. That is the reason why I am writing this letter.

THE IMPACT OF THE GENERATION ALPHA
The generation alpha is the generation between the years 2010 to 2025.
And there is no trust in the older generation, therefore although the generation alpha succeeds as an achievement, the older generation will underestimate what they did. In addition, the lack of confidence can make it hard to create a peaceful and great society. They can blame each other which will affect the other people in the society.

The Familiar Misunderstanding about our Generation

Now I will tell you the misunderstanding that older generations have in the Alpha generation.
The first example is They always use the smart device in school and get distracted by it.
The style of studying changes in every generation. For example, the baby booth to Gen Z, they usually use the book to study and dictionary for information.
However, the Generation Alpha use the smart device at school, which can be used for studying and dictionary. Therefore, using the internet is more convenient for studying also for searching and preparing the presentation. Although there is a disadvantage that it tempts students to play games and watch video of game and video, if the school denied the access to the game and the video, there will be more advantages than the other generation.

The other misunderstanding is 'Gen Alpha have less intelligence than other generations.'
In 2019, the covid spread across the earth. Therefore, the students, which was generation alpha can hardly go to school. So, they studied less than other generations, which affects the use of smart devices to study. Because of Covid, the Gen Alphas studied less than they should have, but it also can be an advantage because they became more familiar with using technology which helps them learn better online. So, they can catch up faster than other generations.

Also, they misunderstood that "Gen Alpha hardly makes friends." The generation alpha used to have the smart devices. Therefore, they rarely go outside, which means that the time that is apart with others, the time using the smart device. So they have difficulty making friends. because they usually are apart. But in my opinion, with smart devices, we can make new friends through the internet's object like games and TikTok videos. And with new friends, Gen Alpha can play outside if they are really close.

The Conclusion

There are lots of misconceptions about the Gen Alpha.As the time changes,the vision and the way of thinking change. Even though Gen Alpha can be different from other generations, there is no need to believe that Gen Alpha is doomed.. Otherwise the damage in the trust of each generation will increase.

My Generation Open Letter by Daisy L.

Dear Teachers, Staff, and Administrators,

Introduction
Hello, I am a fellow 7th grader from a middle school in Irvine Unified School District. I want to start by saying that IUSD is an amazing school district, with advanced educational opportunities, fun school events, student development programs, and learning experiences.

However, I want to speak up for my fellow friends, classmates, and the whole Generation Z/Alpha students of IUSD. The misconceptions, assumptions, and myths about our generations are starting to get to us. I want to raise awareness about how we are impacted, what we think about getting judged, and what we are actually capable of. I am writing this so that our school district can be greater than it was before.

Some Misconceptions and their Impacts
Over the past few years, I noticed that there were a lot of misconceptions about Generation Z/Alpha. For example, some common misconceptions are:
Addicted to technology
Doesn't care about anything
Unintelligent
Spoiled
While this may be accurate for some students, this is generally not true. We are as hardworking as all other generations, and it's not only our generation who's on their phone constantly. Speaking of technology, we do not only use it for social media; we use it for many other reasons, like studying. For example, there are a bunch of study tools online that generate notes, help with understanding concepts, and so much more. In my case, I use Chat GPT for additional notes and feedback, vocabulary, questions I have, and to break down contents I don't really understand, and it's been really helpful, getting me amazing grades at school.

Misconceptions could discourage students and make us think that we are not good enough. It's important for everyone to know that most myths about our generation are false; it could get really frustrating when people continuously make wrong assumptions.

What Actually Defines Us?
I want to let you know that generations do not determine someone; they do not conclude our identity, values, or our success in life. When people know which generations I am from, they start to assume the worst in us. Just because we are from the same generation does not mean we are all the same. It could be true that some students could have the traits that you think they have. However, it does not apply to everyone. It means that it is not okay to assume our personality, the way we act, or how we think.

Everyone is born different; we have our own traits that make up who we are. For instance, my friend and I are from the same generation. Do we think the same? No. Do we look the same? No. Do we act the same? No. It's crucial to let you know that we are all unique individuals with individual goals.

We Want to be Seen as Who We Are
After countless days of hearing unnecessary remarks about my generation, I realized that we just want to be seen as a real person, not as a " random kid born in the Z/Alpha generation." As mentioned in previous paragraphs, people falsely assume things about us that are not true. Just because of what our generation "seems" like, does not mean everyone "seems" to all be the same.

Being seen as who we really are is important because it allows us to live with more confidence, build meaningful relationships, and make choices that we want, instead of being worried of what others expect us to do. If we define ourselves by the generation we are born in, it might lead to unwanted pressures that might not truly reflect us as our true self . Gen Z/Alpha is a label that the world gave us, yet it doesn't "define" us.

Conclusion
The purpose of this letter was to raise awareness of how Gen Z and Alpha students, including me, are feeling when people randomly assume things about us that are not true. No one wants to be misunderstood. We are more than just a person born in Generation Z/Alpha; we're individuals with our own goals, talents, and personalities. We may be born in the same generation, but that doesn't mean we're all the same. However, there is a solution that can prevent any more of this mess. It's simple as it sounds: stop assuming and start listening, actually taking time to talk to us. Do not judge anyone before you get to know them, and that includes us, too.

Warm Regards,
Math Genius

My Generation Open Letter by Ethan Kuo

To Whom It May Concern,

I want to talk about how people see our generation and the misconceptions they have about us. Many believe that we are lazy, obsessed with technology, and don't care about hard work. But that's not true. I believe our generation is smart, hardworking, and creative in ways that people don't always understand.

One big misconception is that we spend too much time on our phones and don't care about the real world. While we do use social media a lot, it actually helps us stay connected and informed. We use it to learn new things, support important causes, and keep in touch with friends and family. Instead of disconnecting us, technology helps us make our life more convenient and cheaper. For example when we're writing a paragraph with the language you're still learning it will be more convenient to just use a phone to translate at the side.

Another common misunderstanding is that we don't work hard because we rely on technology too much. But that's not true either. For example, in AP Computer Science Principles (CSP), I have to follow very detailed steps, and if I make one small mistake, I have to start over. This takes patience and problem-solving skills, which shows that our generation is determined and capable. We're in a company and your boss tells you to do a PPT then you can google what's the best format to write a PPT and later you can ask AI to fix your mistake and where you can do better. This step helps you save a lot of time checking mistakes and it helps you to make a better PPT.

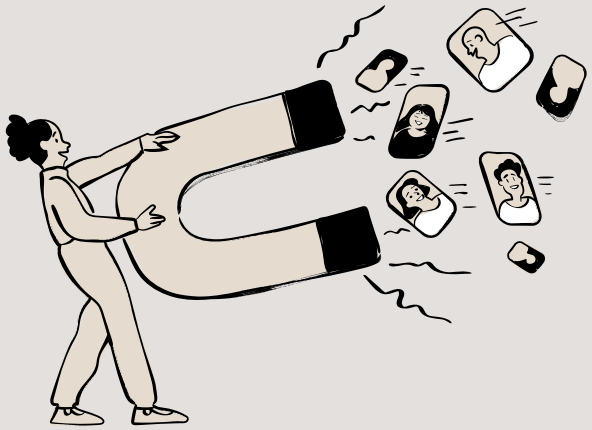
Some people also think that we don't appreciate human effort because we use AI and digital tools. In reality, we understand both the benefits and the risks of technology better than most. We don't just use technology—we improve it and find new ways to make it helpful for everyone.

Even though there are many misconceptions about our generation, we continue to prove that we are smart, creative, and hardworking. I also want to take this chance to say thank you for always supporting me. Your help means a lot, and I appreciate everything you do for me.

Sincerely,

Ethan,

A VERY SMART, POWERFUL BOY



Open Letter to Former Generations: A Call That Gen Alpha Stereotypes Are Not All True by Chloe Chung

Dear Baby Boomers and Other Former Generations,

I hope this reaches you. I am writing to you to share about a crucial societal problem that has been going on for the past decade. People and communities have mentioned this widely about the present generation, and I am afraid that it's unfortunately becoming more widespread in society. My subject is Generation Alpha criticism, or Gen Alpha stereotypes, and how some of them are not genuine.

To begin with, Gen Alpha has been criticized immensely by former generations assuming that the generation has not been taught well. It is now definite that the present generation is pressured by harsh nicknames and the judgement of how they will not succeed. This needs to stop now, and people should stand up for Generation Alpha and support them to carry on their own lives.

The Existence of the Stereotypes

To look for the stereotypes, it was best to go on news reports that had mentioned the growth of Generation Alpha. But soon after, it became evident that some public news reports held messages that the Gen Alpha group is spoiled and ruined under their culture and advancing technology features.. Furthermore, popular news systems, such as *LA Times*, are also broadcasting the "spoiled" behaviors, (such as more screen time) of Gen Alpha, supporting the fact that society is lashing out on the young generation.

Additionally, former generations such as Baby Boomers and Gen X are taking notice of how their culture and Gen Alpha's cultures are widely different, such as different online video games and slang terms. They have also been saying that with the advancement of technology, the current group of children get more device-handling and screen addicted. Soon, complaints about Generation Alpha have been widely spread, and sparked into a worldwide societal problem that the young generation must face off.

The Misunderstandings About the Stereotypes

As mentioned before, it is said that Generation Alpha are "screen-addicted" and "spoiled", making them unsuitable to be successful in the future. But however, that is not true. The present line of kids to teenagers have been making amazing advancements, inspiring and possessing a high level of intelligence and entrepreneur skills. They also have been in touch and connected to society more than any other generations have been due to technological evolutions in the twenty-first century.

Not only that, there are many kids that these stereotypes do not apply to. They are hardworking and diligent, and possess talent and skill to achieve success in their lives. The stereotypes are looking at the cultures of Gen Alpha with bad meanings, and don't acknowledge that some kids might be the exact opposite. They are obedient, more device-free and focused on their current events and main goals of life. Following this, we can concur that there are serious misunderstandings about Gen Alpha, and that they are not all true.

A Call To Action

In summary, it is undeniable that there are misunderstandings and harsh criticism about Generation Alpha, and that it should stop now. It is understandable that former generations might be startled and concerned about the current generation's cultures and safety, but it is wrong for them to judge from it. It is also unjust for them to say that Generation Alpha are not ready to take on society and even their own lives.

To elaborate, it has always felt right for former generations to take notice and safety of children. But unfortunately, wrongdoings about Generation Alpha are still happening in our world, spreading unjust messages to other people. Right now, adults and older generations should acknowledge the children's successes and power and stand up for what is right and support the current line of future leaders to grow and prosper. This way, it will not only get rid of the criticism, but will also connect and join adults and kids even more, making our society stronger.

In Conclusion

It is noticeable that currently, some people are criticizing how Gen Alpha has unique cultures and trends, resulting in incorrect assumptions that their futures are hopeless and meaningless. It is time for trustworthy adults to take a stand for Generation Alpha and prove to the rest of the world that the group of kids have a chance to become one of the most successful generations in history.

Thank you for taking your time to acknowledge my message. I, along with the rest of Generation Alpha and many others, hope for the best out of this letter, and that Gen Alpha's existence and notices will be known widely across the globe.

Warm Regards,

A Passionate Student From Generation Alpha

My Generation Open Letter by Aiden Rhee

Dear Older Generations,

I hope this letter finds you on the right path to see the younger generations in a different perspective. I am writing to express a heartfelt response to people who kept judging us, and to advocate on behalf of many others who share a similar sentiment. I am saying that everyone should judge younger generations the same as older generations since that would help you change our world and behavior.

Over the last few generations, people all over the world saw us as weird generation kids or as “ipad kids”. Back then, the world was so simple and yet so peaceful when people saw everyone respectfully the same, so we should all do the same now and judge everyone equally as a whole.

The generation for younger kids was not just a normal generation, it was a versatile thought that gave other kids a better and a more fun life rather than simply a boring time with no entertainment such as television, ipad, or any kind of electronics. If it were that everyone did not refer to generation alphas as “ipad kids” maybe that would give us a brand new beginning to actually show people that we use electronics as much as normal people like generations older than alpha.

More importantly, we as a whole should judge everyone equally the same because not all generation alphas are actually what influencers in social media think they are, and as we should all know that not all generation alphas are brain rot, which means lacking intelligence. A different way to define the word brain rot refers to skibidi toilet, Kai Cenat, and more.

Generation alphas are simply just seen as kids that are spoiled and do not listen to instructions, which is false. The only reason people truly believe that alphas are different people is because everywhere on social media, influencers tend to convince people globally that alphas are brain rot, and misleading in everything they do, or will do, which is of course not true at all.

In the future, we know that the influencers on youtube give false information about generation alphas, we should remind ourselves to not let all the misconception on youtube to our mindset. While the topic misconception gets talked about a lot to generation alphas, I am totally different from those type of brain rot alphas so is most of everyone that gets misjudged by every other generation in the world.

For alphas, yes, they are more disrespectful and ungrateful then most kids in your mind, but that is not the true face of the generation alphas. People only tend to think of alphas like that due to not seeing their background such as breakups, a family member injured, or in some cases being mistreated by people who do not treat them just like other people.

In conclusion, as life goes on, we tend to keep misjudging other generations for being such weird kids, but we should all look on the bright side and change our perspective since in real life they are just normal kids experiencing life. We should always consider treating everyone the same, especially kids since they could be going through hard times or the period of growing up to become a teenager or an adult.

Sincerely, Shares his ideas of younger generations, Aiden Rhee



My Generation Open Letter by Timothy Yoon

Open Letter To The Older Generation: You Guys Are Somewhat Correct

Dear Older Generation,

I hope you understand that you're a bit wrong about what you think of my generation. You guys are somewhat correct but not really. One reason is that we do watch Kai Cenet but not all of us. I just want you guys to know that I think instead of getting advice from you guys or wherever you get the information. It's just better to just get help from a friend to be Gen Alpha or our generation. It could go wrong if you like something or do something wrong like being teased or bullied. I know that since there are lots of kids like that everywhere, especially in our everyday school. But I will say you impressed me by getting information about us.

Outdated

Most of the stuff that you guys think we do or like is pretty outdated. For example, most kids don't play Roblox anymore like Rainbow friends, Poppy Playtime, Bedwars, etc. They're just games in Roblox that used to be really popular to play. You could have a hard time making friends if you like that stuff since these days, everyone plays Brawl Stars and Fortnite. So we always watch out for what we like or do. You either keep going on social media or just ask your friends. Also not all of us have phones or don't even want one cause they could just walk to their house and play something else.

Different Taste That is Okay

Now, it's bad if you're kind of different or like something else. Well, except for some stuff. Gen Alpha kids now like Rap or Phonk but there are always kids like this one kid in my class who likes other stuff. I will just say he likes orchestra music and I will say he pretty much has no friends. Also for music, those are pretty much probably the only category but there are other songs that are fine for example "Die With A Smile" by Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga. Every edit is based on that song and fits well with every sad moment of a movie or a show. An edit is basically another word for YouTube Shorts which you could find on YouTube.

Cooked If You Don't Know How To Act And Live Like An Gen Alpha

You generations are correct that it's bad if you don't know or act like your generation. If you don't know how to act and live your generation then it could affect your social skills since it will be harder to get friends. Well for me I have lots of friends while other kids only have few. Now people could make fun of you if you don't act like your generation, so hurry and ask advice from someone who knows or is in your generation. It kind of happened to me kind of.

Now You Know

All in all, you guys are somewhat correct. Instead of relying on you guys, you should rely on your friends who actually know and live with Gen Alpha. It's a better idea to ask your friends for advice about how to be Gen Alpha before it's too late and get bullied or teased.

Warm Regards,
Timothy Yoon



My Generation Open Letter by Ryan Cho

Letter to Gen Z

Dear Gen Z,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing this letter because of your generation's bad view on Gen Alphas. After years of getting stereotyped, us Gen Alphas are here to address the truth. We are smarter, more focused, funny, and overall way better than what Gen Z have stereotyped us to be. I hope this letter can change your generation's point of view about Gen Alphas.

First, we are smart and not just game addicts. According to a blog from journalist Josh Hogwarth, "Generation Alpha is set up to be the most highly-educated generation in history. Mark McCrindle predicts that 90% will earn a high school diploma (compared to 80% of Gen Z teenagers) and half will complete their secondary education." This shows how we are actually very smart and successful in academics. For example, I, as a gen alpha, was a valedictorian in 4th grade and have very good grades and excel at sports too. Other gen alphas are very smart too. Although you think we are dumb, most of us are pretty smart, but not just academics in general. We also excel in problem solving skills, finding patterns and connections between things, and many more outside academics. Also, although Gen Alpha has more technology to play with, there are more programs that help Gen Alphas learn, like Khan Academy and more. Even though we play more video games than Gen Z, it doesn't mean we are dumb and brainwashed. For example, according to Hogwarth, "**Smartphone addiction** and **social media addiction** have been on the rise in recent years. Generation Alpha may represent the pendulum swinging in the opposite direction. 75% of children aged 8–10 are already thinking about mental health, with a similar number recognizing a need to disconnect from technology at times to maintain wellbeing." We take breaks to manage the screen time and we know when to stop and go outside.

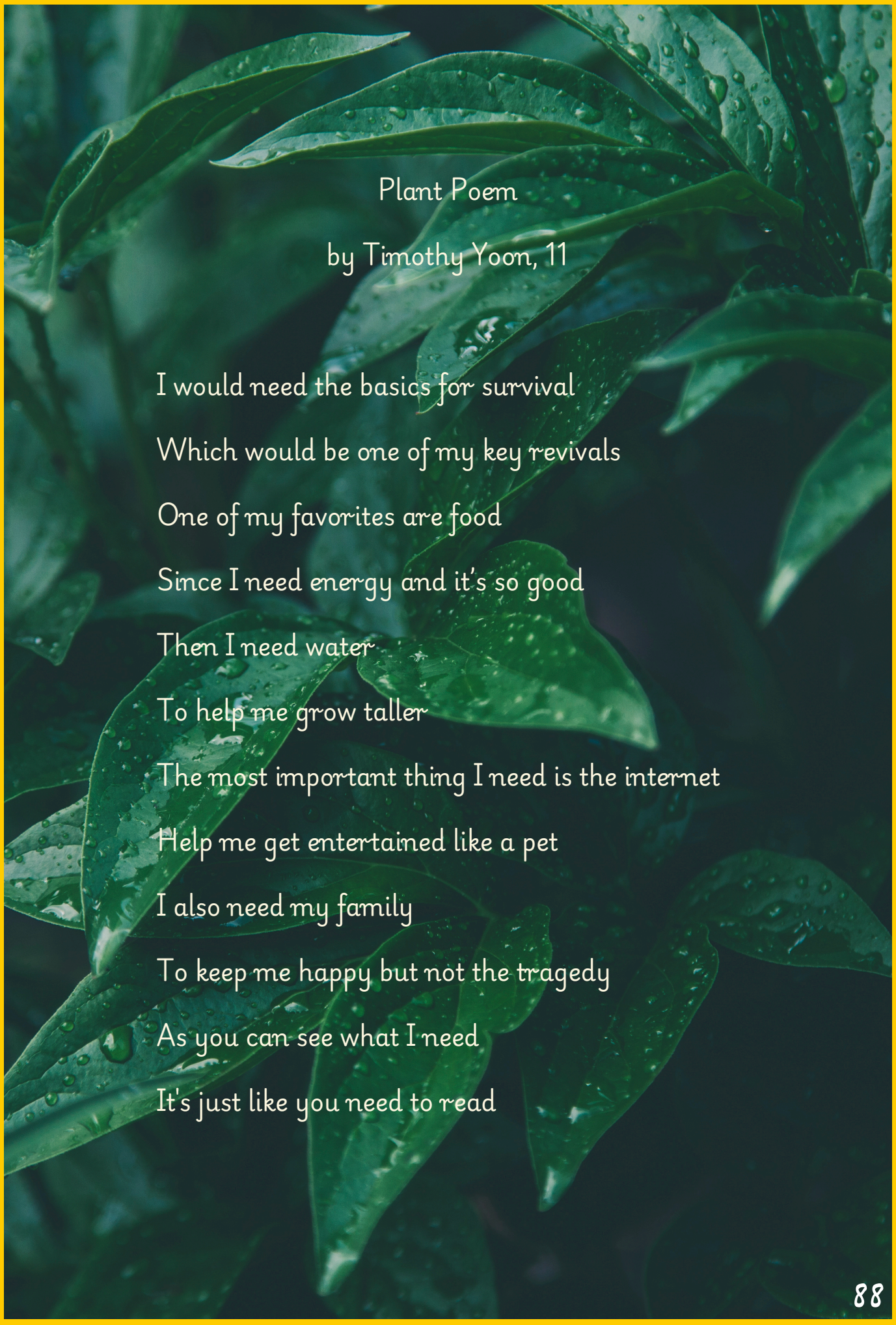
Also, another common misconception is that Gen Alpha have no social life. This is because people (especially Gen Z) think we only have lives on the internet, not in the real world. This is because we chat and spend our days on the internet, not making connections in the real world. However, we have a social and healthy life with plenty of friends outside the internet. An example of this is me. I spend a fraction of my day on the internet, and I have a good social life outside of the internet. I have no friends on the internet but I connect with my friends from the real world on the internet. For example, I text with my friends online, and play games with them on apps like roblox and more. Outside of it, I still connect with them and in most cases, have more fun socializing with them than just playing with them on the internet. This proves that Gen Alpha is social and has friends outside the internet.

In conclusion, Gen Alpha is more than what you think. We are not game addicts, and we have social lives and are very smart. With evidence from Hogwarth and my own life, this proves that Gen Alphas are way more than what others think. I hope and know that this generation will make an impact on this world and revolutionize industries.

Sincerely,

Ryan Cho





Plant Poem

by Timothy Yoon, 11

I would need the basics for survival

Which would be one of my key revivals

One of my favorites are food

Since I need energy and it's so good

Then I need water

To help me grow taller

The most important thing I need is the internet

Help me get entertained like a pet

I also need my family

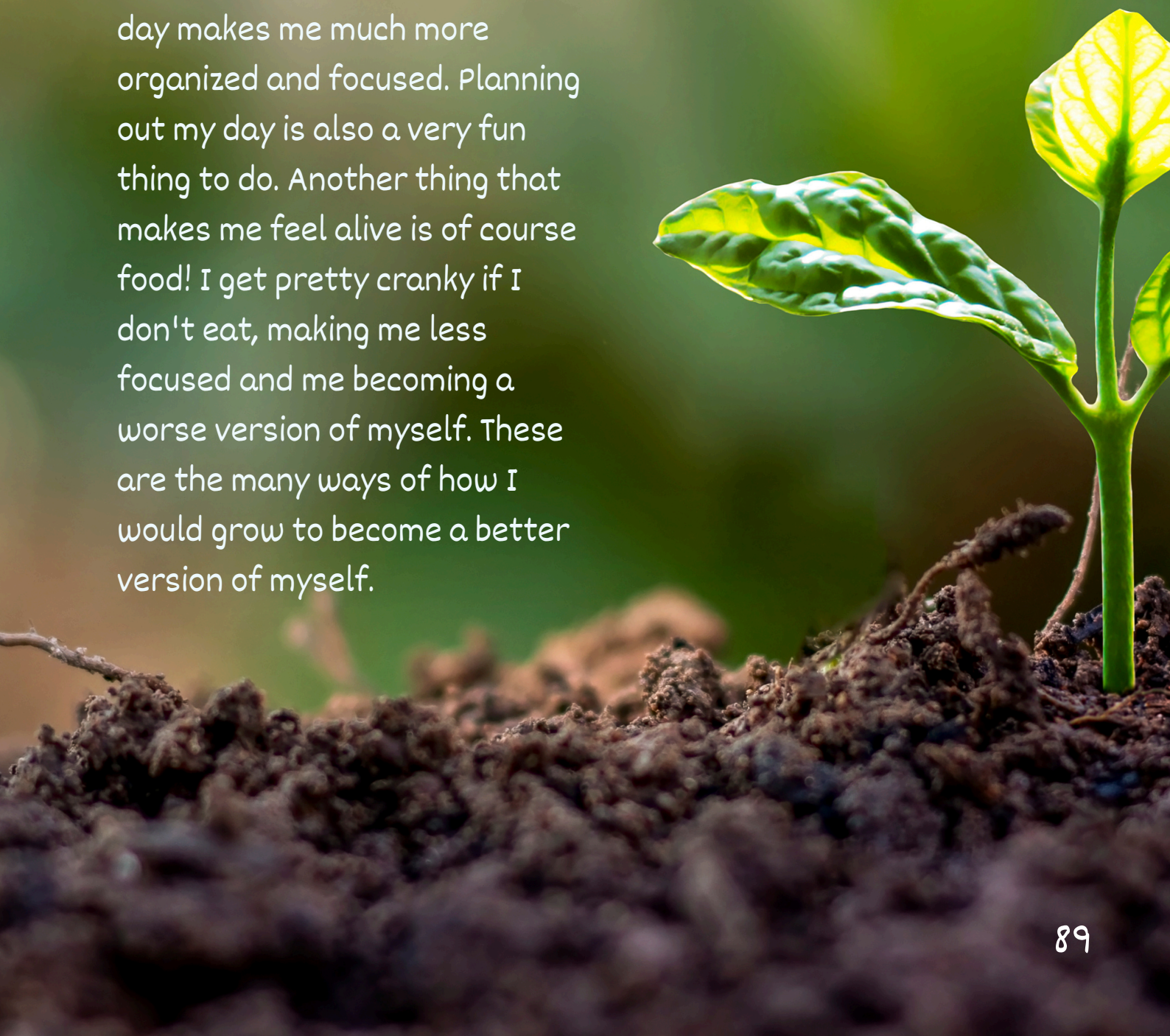
To keep me happy but not the tragedy

As you can see what I need

It's just like you need to read

ANGELINA RANDALL, 13

Something that makes me grow to become a better version of myself is having a simple schedule. Having a planned out day makes me much more organized and focused. Planning out my day is also a very fun thing to do. Another thing that makes me feel alive is of course food! I get pretty cranky if I don't eat, making me less focused and me becoming a worse version of myself. These are the many ways of how I would grow to become a better version of myself.



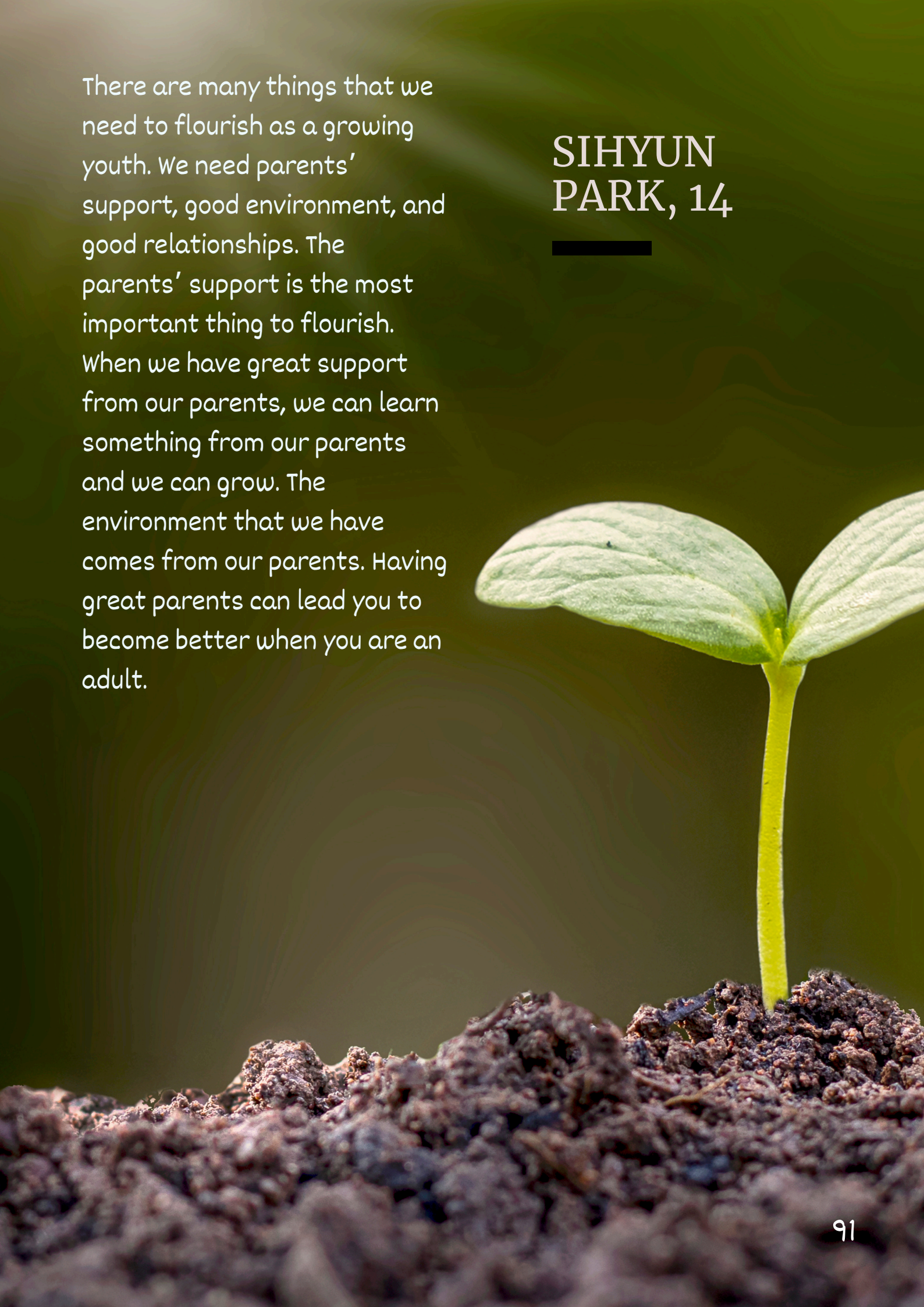
LEAH BAE, 13

One thing that helps me grow is school. It is one of the key factors in helping me grow mentally and socially, as it gives me at least seven hours of time that I learn and socialize. Another thing, although it may seem awkward, are disagreements. During one, it is very tense, but after I reflect on it and can understand the other person's perspective better. They also help me decide what to do next time. Something that makes me feel alive is K-pop dancing. I picked it up in May (2024) and it has grown into one of my favorite hobbies. After school, I will often be dancing, which helps me release endorphins and relieve stress; it is a very good physical workout as well. In addition, reading is very important to me, as I have always loved reading even as a younger kid. Books transport me to different places when I am reading, but they also help me learn a lot about the world.



There are many things that we need to flourish as a growing youth. We need parents' support, good environment, and good relationships. The parents' support is the most important thing to flourish. When we have great support from our parents, we can learn something from our parents and we can grow. The environment that we have comes from our parents. Having great parents can lead you to become better when you are an adult.

SIHYUN PARK, 14



CHLOE CHUNG, 11

Things that I need to flourish as a growing youth are my family and chill-hobbies. Sometimes I had a really hard day, or just need a break. To help me with that, my family are always there for me, and so are my hobbies. On "break" days, a.k.a, the weekends, I spend a small amount of time doing homework and for the rest, I spend time with my family, play games or watch YouTube, or just chillax on our sofa. These are some things that are crucial to me when I just need a break or had a hard time. On the contrary, I think those "hard times" are what's needed to make me into a better version of me. I know that I'll help me grow emotionally and mentally and let me learn my lesson or know what to do next time. I believe maintaining friendship, family relationships, and peace will help me transform myself into a better version of me.

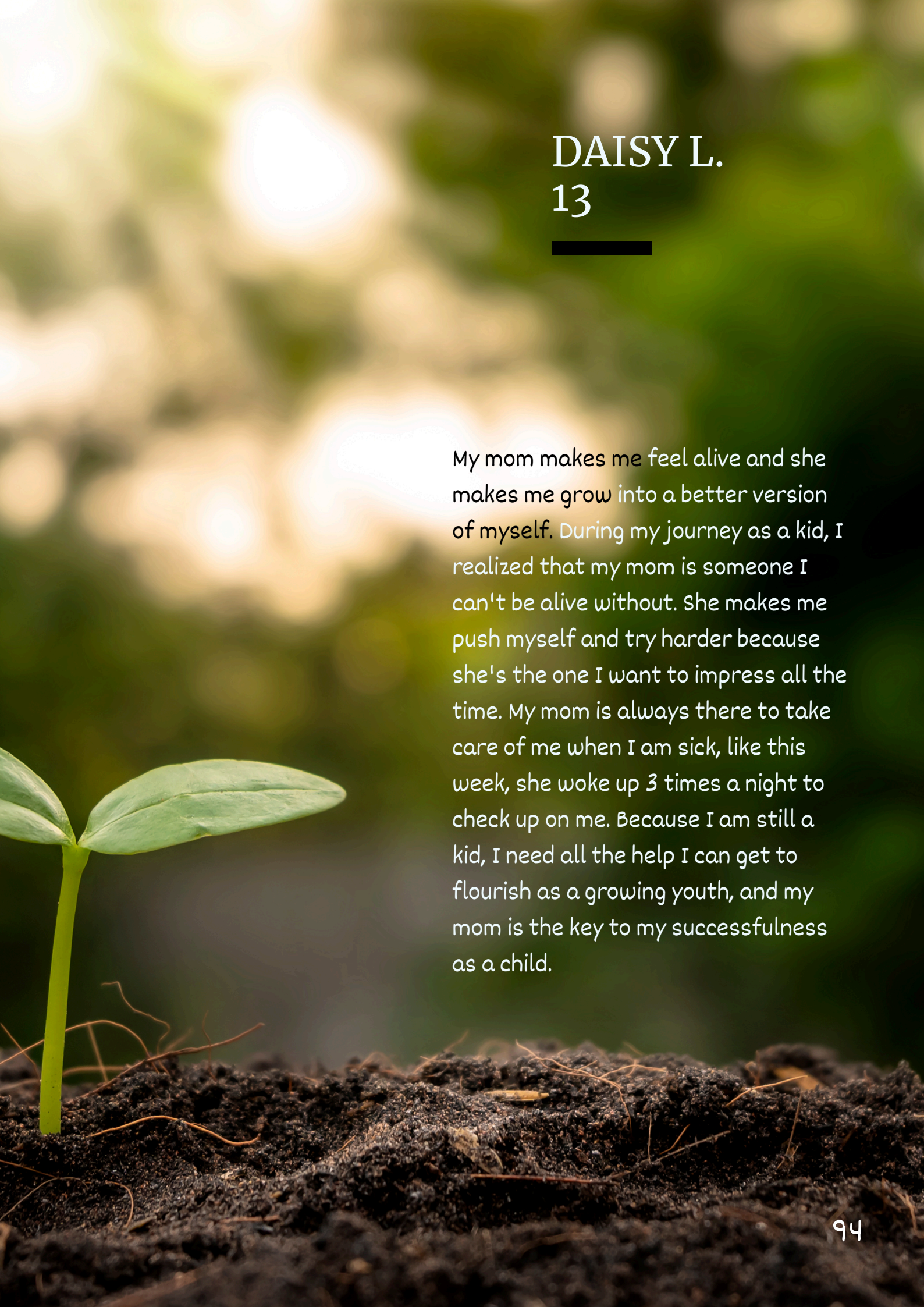


DOKYUNG KIM, 12

1) A few years ago, when I was just one small seed, I needed water called 'parent', sunlight called 'love' and rich soil called 'family'. These days, I became a half- grown plant, but I still need water, sunlight and rich soils until I become a full-grown plant.

2) The love makes me feel like I am a seed that is getting a water. The rich soil called 'good parents' makes me grow bigger so I can make fresh, yummy fruits.



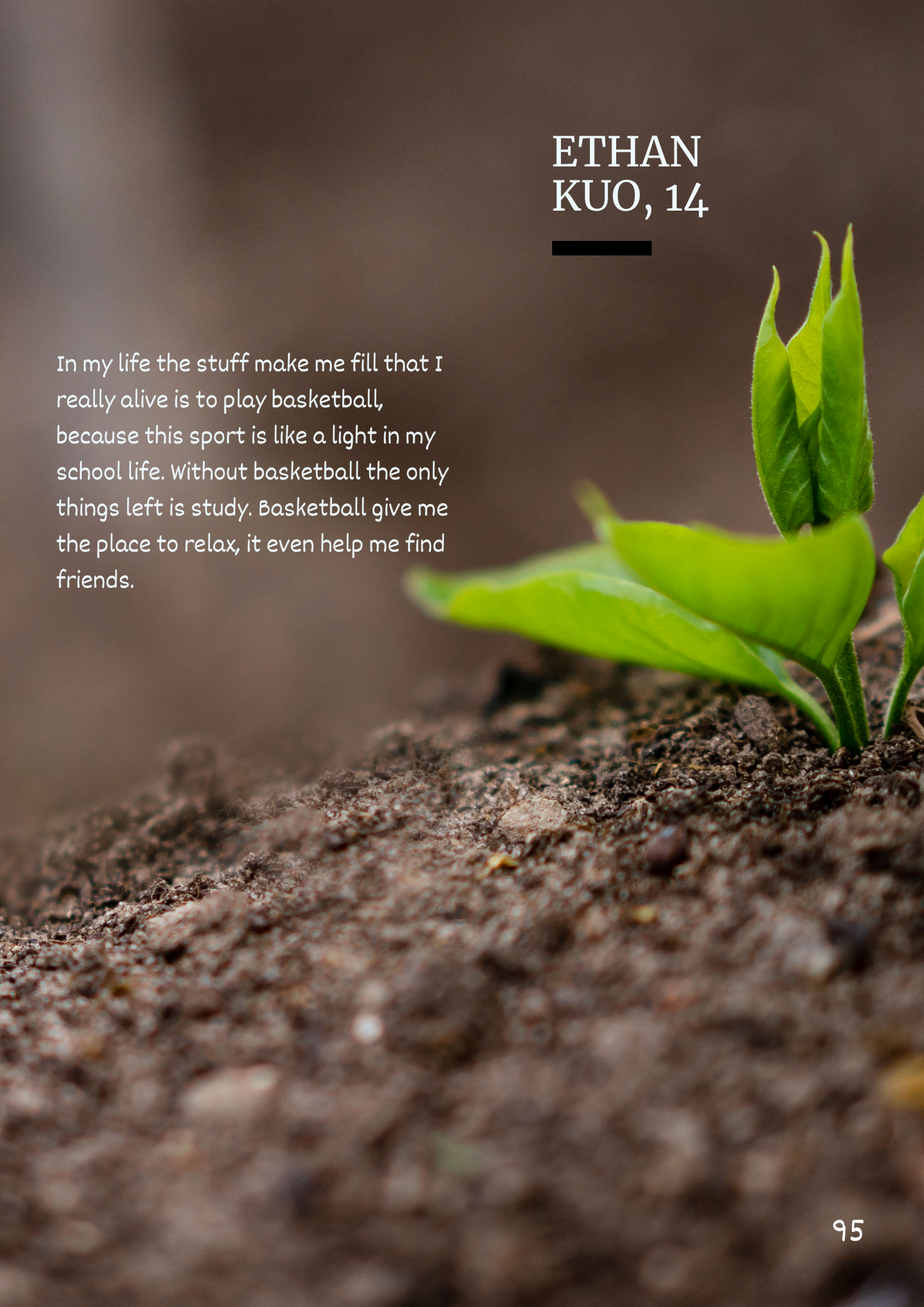


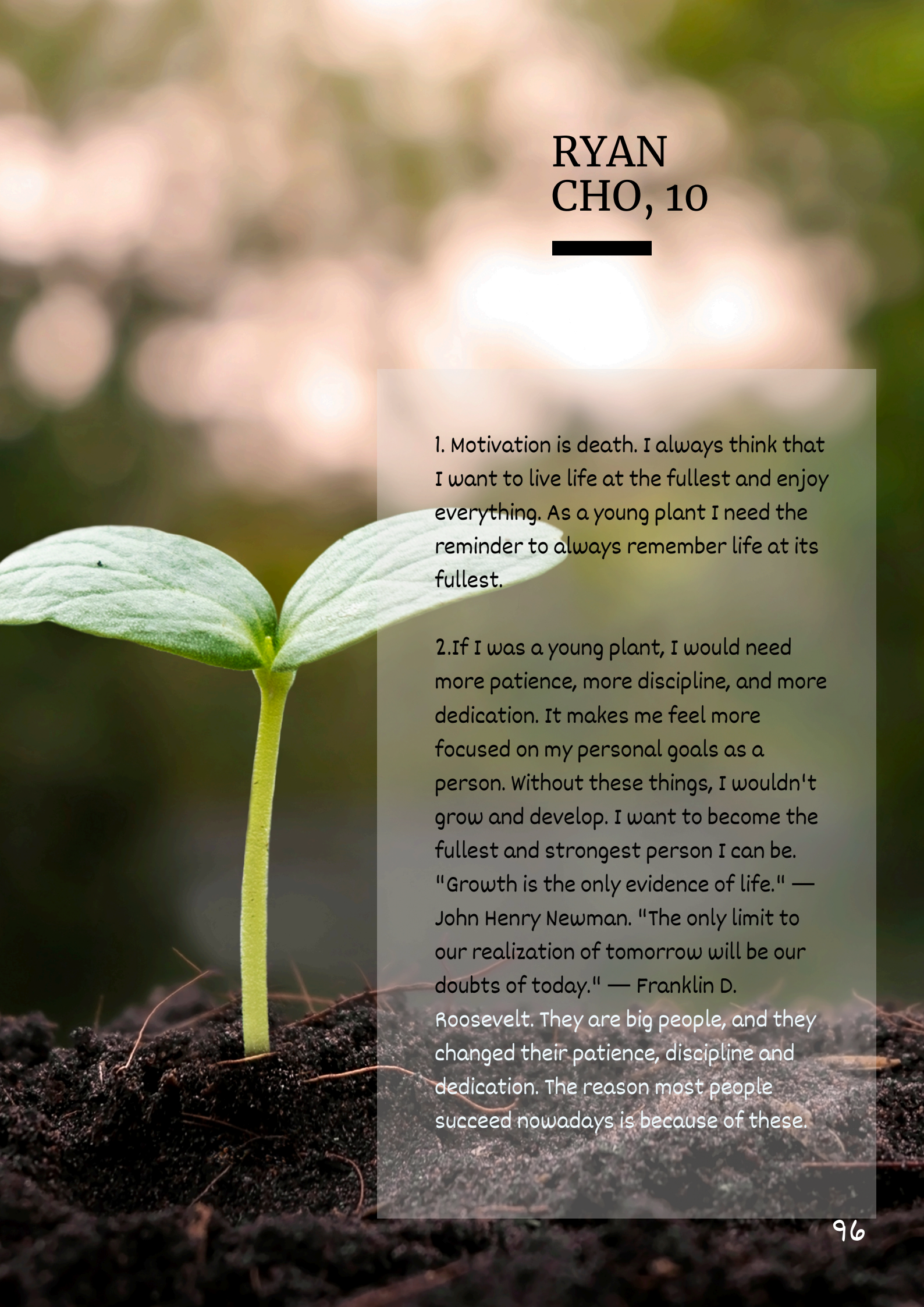
DAISY L.
13

My mom makes me feel alive and she makes me grow into a better version of myself. During my journey as a kid, I realized that my mom is someone I can't be alive without. She makes me push myself and try harder because she's the one I want to impress all the time. My mom is always there to take care of me when I am sick, like this week, she woke up 3 times a night to check up on me. Because I am still a kid, I need all the help I can get to flourish as a growing youth, and my mom is the key to my successfulness as a child.

ETHAN KUO, 14

In my life the stuff make me fill that I really alive is to play basketball, because this sport is like a light in my school life. Without basketball the only things left is study. Basketball give me the place to relax, it even help me find friends.





RYAN CHO, 10

1. Motivation is death. I always think that I want to live life at the fullest and enjoy everything. As a young plant I need the reminder to always remember life at its fullest.

2.If I was a young plant, I would need more patience, more discipline, and more dedication. It makes me feel more focused on my personal goals as a person. Without these things, I wouldn't grow and develop. I want to become the fullest and strongest person I can be. "Growth is the only evidence of life." — John Henry Newman. "The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today." — Franklin D. Roosevelt. They are big people, and they changed their patience, discipline and dedication. The reason most people succeed nowadays is because of these.

ERIC
HA, 11



I think it is mostly the consequences of life that drive me out of bed and toss me to school each morning . The consequences of dying, being alone in the streets and being a dropout just because I did not go to school and learn, then go to college, man. It seems RIVETING. I guess I only live with all the agony and severe pain of every single moment and aspect of life is because I think there is a itty bitty reason I live and I shouldn't sell it

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