

21 Things Teenagers Can Do With a New York Times Subscription

nytimes.com/2020/04/07/learning/21-things-teenagers-can-do-with-a-new-york-times-subscription.html

Katherine Schulten

April 7, 2020



We know you know The Times reports the news, but maybe you *didn't* know that you can also use our site to play games and watch videos, listen to music, learn a skill, hear a podcast, find recipes and work out.

For three months starting on April 6, high school students across the United States can get free digital access to NYTimes.com. We hope you'll use it to follow the news and keep up with this global pandemic, and we've got tips for that, below. But we also want to introduce you to 20 more ways the paper can keep you entertained and informed.

1. First, Just Explore.

There are as many ways to read The Times as there are Times readers, so click around and see what catches your eye.

You can start with the sections that interest you most (Fashion? Movies? Technology? Politics?) — or check out what's trending. You can also use the search function at the top of the NYTimes.com home page or at the top of the "sections" navigator on the app to look for something specific.

Then, if you like, tell us about it. Our site, The Learning Network, is dedicated to helping people teach and learn with The Times. We're running a special shelter-in-place April version of our annual Summer Reading Challenge for teenagers right now, and all you have to do to participate is post a comment on our question "What Got Your Attention in The Times This Month?" We'll be choosing favorite responses to publish on our site later this month.

2. Take Care of Yourself.

Image



Margaux Rebourcet, a 28-year-old artist who lives in Nanterre, France, has found solace in her work during the coronavirus quarantine. "We are now isolated," she said. Related ArticleCredit...Margaux Rebourcet

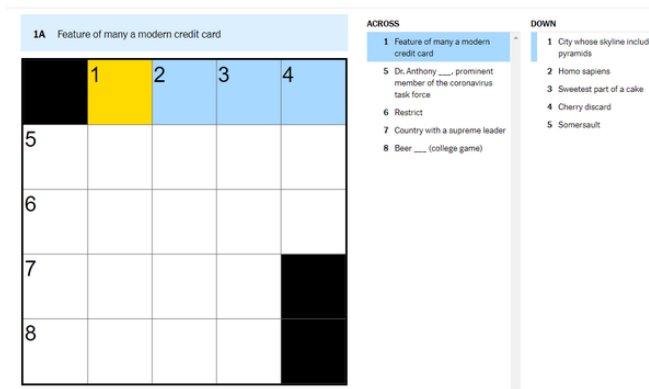
Here are the basics for keeping yourself physically safe and healthy during this pandemic, but The Times can help you cope mentally too.

Well Mind can teach you how to meditate and how to be happy. It will introduce you to a Buddhist teacher's five simple steps to quiet your mind and soothe your stress, and can offer you specific tips for controlling your anxiety in the face of this crisis.

Style's Self-Care section will encourage you to keep a quarantine diary to document your experience in words and images; explain how to get a good night of sleep; and reassure you that it's fine to stop feeling like you have to be extra productive right now.

For many, many more ideas, check out this collection, which rounds up articles from all over the paper.

3. Play Games.



Image

Play the free daily Mini crossword.Credit...The New York Times

Though playing the full Times crossword online requires a separate subscription, the daily Mini crossword, pictured above, is free and, according to people of all ages, addictive — as are logic challenges like Sudoku, SET and KenKen, and several new games like Vertex, Tiles and Spelling Bee. You can gain access to them all on this page.

And if you really get hooked, visit The Times's Wordplay column, where you can find tips galore for becoming a better solver.

4. Find New Music.

Every Friday, pop critics for The Times weigh in on the week's most notable new songs and videos via a column called The Playlist, but you can also skip the column and just hear the music, on Spotify.

Or check out Diary of a Song (on YouTube), which provides an up-close, behind-the-scenes look at how pop music is made today, using archival material — voice memos, demo versions, text messages, emails, interviews and more — to tell the story behind the track.

In March, The Times Magazine published the 25 Songs That Matter Now, which gave us an excuse to ask teenagers, "What songs matter to you now?" Check out what other kids have recommended, and if you'd like to answer our question yourself, please post a comment.

5. Lose Yourself in Stories About Modern Love.



Image



Related ArticleCredit...Brian Rea

Modern Love is a weekly column and podcast about relationships, feelings, betrayals and revelations. Click around and find a story that interests you, or read or listen to some of the classics, like "To Fall in Love With Anyone, Do This (and the related "36 Questions That Lead to Love") or "What Shamu Taught Me About a Happy Marriage."

Or just read the pieces that have won the College Contest over the years, like "My So-Called Instagram Life," "Want to Be My Boyfriend? Please Define" or "White Shirt, Black Name Tag, Big Secret." You can find more here and here.

If you have only a little time, there's always Tiny Love Stories, which is Modern Love in miniature, featuring reader-submitted stories of no more than 100 words.

6. Follow the News and Figure Out What to Do About It.



Lisa Evans, the coroner in Shelby County, Ala., said she was now suspicious of a surge in deaths in her county earlier this year, many involving severe pneumonia. She wonders about how big a part the coronavirus, which wasn't being tested for, may have played.

AS DEATHS SURGE, GOVERNORS PLEAD WITH WASHINGTON

A Count Understates the True U.S. Toll **Clamor for More Aid and Coordination**

By SARAH KLEFF and DAVID BOSMAN
By RICK WOOD and VANESSA WEALES

WASHINGTON — A coroner in Indiana wanted to know if the coronavirus had killed a man in early March, but said that her health department didn't test Paramoelica in New York City says that many patients who died at home were never tested for the coronavirus, even if they showed subtle signs of infection.

In Virginia, a funeral director prepared the remains of three people after health workers cautioned her that they each had tested positive for the coronavirus. She only one of the three had the virus noted on the death certificate.

Across the United States, even as coronavirus deaths are being recorded in terrifying numbers — many hundreds each day — the true death toll is probably much higher.

More than 400 people with the coronavirus have been reported to have died in this country as of Monday, but hospital officials, doctors, public health experts and

As the surgeon general told the nation earlier for "our first liber-her moment" of curbing coronavirus deaths this week, several governors said on Twitter that their states were in urgent need of federal help and equipment that they had been left to compete for critical equipment in the absence of a consistent strategy and coordination from the Trump administration.

Some clearly walked a delicate path, criticizing what they saw as an erratic, inconsistent federal response, while also trying to avoid alienating the White House as states with one another for resources both from Washington and on the market that can mean the difference between life and death.

"I'm grateful for the help that we've gotten," Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, a Democrat, said in an appearance on "The NewsHour." But she also expressed her alarm over what she described as "not having a re-

Horror for a Nurse as 3 Relatives Are Brought In
By TRACEY FULLY
 Virus Tightens Grip on
 Twelve doctors at her hospital

Queen Invokes British Resolve As Premier Ails

The front page of the print New York Times for April 6, 2020. Credit... The New York Times

The news is grim right now, but, for many of us, it's hard to think about anything else. If you want to keep up, here are some easy ways to do it:

- Visit The Times's regularly updated section on the coronavirus for both the news and guidance, including an FAQ, maps and graphs, the latest on how to protect yourself, and more.
- Listen to The Daily, a 20-minute podcast you can hear every weekday morning. It can help you understand the race for a vaccine and why the United States is running out of medical supplies, but can also offer a bit of relief and advice.
- As you read the news, you might pair reporting with a range of perspectives on it. Click around the Times Opinion section to find out what experts and ordinary citizens think. Which Op-Eds, editorials or Letters to the Editor best match your own point of view? Which challenge your thinking?
- If reading the news makes you want to lend a hand, The Times has lots of advice, including: "5 Ways to Help Your Community Combat Coronavirus (While Still Social Distancing)" and "How to Help the Helpers." And if you need inspiration, here is what Times readers shared about small moments that have heartened them in this crisis.

7. Live Smarter.

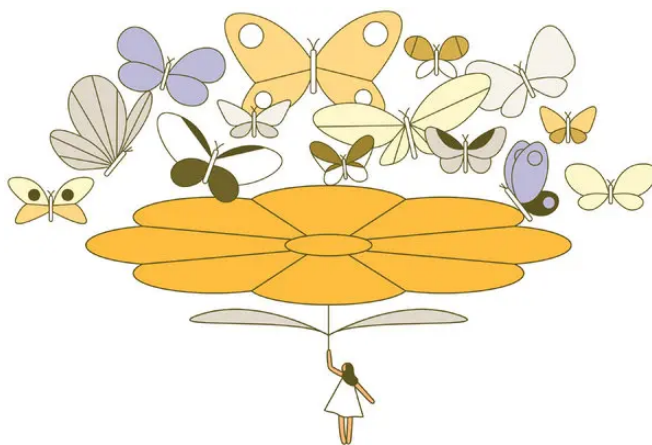
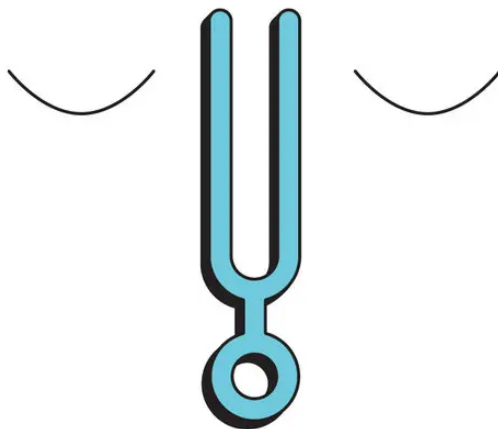


Image
Credit...Rose Wong

Smarter Living is a Times section devoted to tips and advice for living a better, more fulfilling life. Here are just a few of the things you can get better at with their help:

- Procrastinate Much? Manage Your Emotions, Not Your Time.
- Stop Your Phone From Using So Much Data
- Invest in Your Relationships. The Payoff Is Immense.
- So You've Made a Huge Mistake. What Now?
- Why You Should Stop Being So Hard on Yourself

8. Learn a Skill.



Credit...Illustration by Radio

Even if you have only a few minutes, the Magazine's short, weekly how-to column, Tip, can teach you practical skills like how to sing in tune or how to build a sand castle, moat, bat box or latrine; survive a shark attack, rip current or bear encounter; thwart facial recognition, prepare yourself for space, attract butterflies, talk to dogs, hold a venomous snake or find a four-leaf clover.

Smarter Living, described above, also has fun how-tos, like this one, perfect for quarantine: How to Do 2 Simple Magic Tricks — and Why You Should Learn Them.

9. Cook.

Image



Mollie Katzen's made-in-the-pan chocolate cake is mixed and baked in the same pan. Related ArticleCredit...Linda Xiao for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Monica Pierini.

The Times Food section is full of ideas for easy, comforting meals. Though many are in the Cooking section, which requires a special subscription, these delicious self-quarantine recipes are all free, including the made-in-the-pan chocolate cake you see above. And, as one article argues, there's no need for recipes now anyway — open your pantry and follow your cooking muse. (The Times food columnist Melissa Clark can teach you how to think creatively about ingredients.)

10. Have Fun With Data.

The most popular thing The Times published in 2013 was an interactive quiz that was created by an intern. To take it yourself, just click [here](#) and answer the questions to generate your own personal dialect map.

If you like data, maps and graphs, you might consider this quiz just an introduction to the section of The Times called The Upshot, which examines politics, policy and everyday life through a mix of text, data visualizations, images and interactive features. In this post you can learn what the Upshot staff members say are their favorite, most-read or most distinct work.

QUESTION 1 OF 25

How would you address a group of two or more people?

- you all
- yous / youse
- you lot
- you guys
- you 'uns
- yinz
- you
- other
- y'all

Next ▶

The first question in an interactive quiz that can generate your own personal dialect map.Credit...The New York Times

11. Get Recommendations for What to Watch and Read.



From left, “The Good Place,” “Bluey” and “Knives Out” are among Times critics recommendations. You can also find recommendations from teenagers here.Credit...From left, Justin Lubin/NBC; ABC Kids; Claire Folger/Lionsgate

The Times is keeping up a steady stream of recommendations for movies, TV shows, books, podcasts, music, games and recipes, many of which you can find in this article. We recently asked the teenagers who come to our site to make their own recommendations for fellow students. You can read over 250 that have already been posted, and add your own if you like.

Here are a few other places to find expert recommendations.

- The Times’s Watching section asks, “What are you in the mood for?,” then lets you choose from categories like “Bloody,” “Strong Female Lead,” “Dark,” “Joke-Heavy,” “Informative,” “Suspenseful,” “Binge-Worthy” and “Family-Friendly” to help you find recommendations.
- As for what to read, the Books section’s got you. Take a look at the Best Sellers, get lists like this one, this one or this one to help you choose, and find out “How to Get Books When Bookstores and Libraries Are Closed.”

12. Follow Sports, Even When There Are No Sports.

Even if 99 percent of sporting events on the planet are locked down right now and the only games you can still reliably play or watch are these, the Sports section is still finding creative ways to keep you diverted.

There’s the freelance rugby commentator in London who has turned to covering everyday life like it’s a game. There are N.F.L. plays on Twitter and brackets for everything, virtual NASCAR races, a live platform tennis championship happening in a backyard, and recommendations for baseball movies to stream. And, of course, there is lots of advice for cooped-up gamers, whether you’re new to the world of interactive entertainment or are experienced and already bored.

13. Dance

Visit #SpeakingInDance on NYTimes.com or on Instagram to watch voguing, or “How the Rockettes Fall Like Dominoes” or “Where Subway Dancers Practice Their Art” — and, perhaps, imitate a few of the moves yourself at home.

Need even more? Here are 12 places to watch dance online.

14. Travel.

The New York Times brings you the world, and even if you can't currently go to any of the 52 Places the Travel section recommends this year, you *can* escape to different countries and cultures by viewing and reading across sections. Here's a start:

- Enjoy the Travel section's “Best Travel Photos of 2019” and consider where you might like to go when the world opens back up again. While we're all quarantined, however, you can read pieces like “How to See the World When You're Stuck at Home,” “The 18 Best TV Shows for Vicarious Travel Thrills” and — as Easter, Passover and Ramadan approach — “For Shut-In Pilgrims, the World's Holiest Sites Are a Click Away.” Or, be like this couple and just travel via Photoshop.
- But don't just confine your virtual travels to foreign lands. Consider visiting worlds you never knew existed, some of which might even be in your own hometown. Via Surfacing, a Times visual series about the intersection of art and life, you can experience skateboarding's anti-Olympics, homecoming at Howard University, a Brooklyn drag show that celebrates Arab queens, a New Orleans female biker club, the work of the Cloud Appreciation Society and shopping on haunted eBay.

15. Write.



Each week we publish nine fresh writing prompts, and every Thursday we round up our favorite comments in our Current Events Conversation. These are images from those prompts.

The Learning Network has been providing daily writing prompts every school day since 2009. That means there are more than a thousand topics to choose from, and you can use either our daily question or our daily Picture Prompt to get started.

Write just for yourself, or post your thoughts online where other teenagers from around the world can see what you think. These directions explain everything you need to know.

16. Listen to Podcasts — or Make Your Own.

You already know about The Daily, The Times's popular 20-minute news podcast hosted by Michael Barbaro, but you can find three more great listens — Modern Love, Popcast and Still Processing — on this page.

The Times also has these recommendations:

- A Beginner's Guide to Getting Into Podcasts
- A Podcast Playlist to Help Distract You (for the Most Part)

And if you would rather make your own podcast than listen to one, well, we have a contest for that, too. The Learning Network's Third Annual Student Podcast Contest runs from April 9 to May 19 this year.

17. Go Behind the Scenes of Your Favorite Films.

Anatomy of a Scene | 'Black Panther'

Ryan Coogler narrates a sequence from his film featuring Chadwick Boseman as T'Challa, a.k.a. Black Panther.

I'm Ryan Coogler, co-writer and director of "Black Panther". This scene is an extension of an action set piece that happens inside of a casino in Busan, South Korea. Now, T'Challa is in pursuit of Ulysses Klaue, who's escaped the casino. He's eliciting the help of his younger sister, Shuri, here, who's back home in Wakanda. And she's remote driving this Lexus sports car. And she's driving from Wakanda. She's actually in Wakanda. T'Challa's in his panther suit on top of the car in pursuit. These are two of T'Challa's comrades here. It's Nakia who's a spy, driving, and Okoye who's a leader of the Dora Milaje in the passenger's seat in pursuit of Klaue. The whole idea for this scene is we wanted to have our car chase that was unlike any car chase that we had seen before in combining the technology of Wakanda and juxtaposing that with the tradition of this African warrior culture. And in our film we kind of broke down characters between traditionalists and innovators. We always thought it would be fun to contrast these pairings of an innovator with a traditionalist. T'Challa, we kind of see in this film, is a traditionalist when you first meet him. His younger sister, Shuri, who runs Wakanda's tech, is an innovator. So we paired them together. In the other car we have Nakia and Okoye, who's also a traditionalist-innovator pairing. Nakia is a spy who we learn is kind of unconventional. And Okoye, who's a staunch traditionalist, probably one of our most traditional characters in the film, you know, she doesn't really like being in clothes that aren't Wakandan. And this scene is kind of about her really bringing the Wakandan out. One of the images that almost haunted me was this image of this African woman with this red dress just blowing behind her, you know, spear out. And so a big thing was, like, you know, for me was getting the mount right so that the dress would flow the right way. It wouldn't be impeded by the bracing system she was sitting on. So that took a lot of time. We had to play with the fabric and the amount of the dress to get it right.

2:12

2:12Anatomy of a Scene | 'Black Panther'

Ryan Coogler narrates a sequence from his film featuring Chadwick Boseman as T'Challa, a.k.a. Black Panther.CreditCredit...Marvel/Disney

The long-running Anatomy of a Scene video series features directors commenting on the craft of moviemaking.

You can watch scenes from “Uncut Gems,” “Pokémon Detective Pikachu,” “The Joker,” “A Star Is Born,” “The Hate U Give,” “Ford v Ferrari,” “Us,” “Crazy Rich Asians” and many, many more — including a special edition called “From ‘Mission: Impossible’ to ‘Godzilla’: Plane Jumps in the Movies.”

18. Enjoy Three Minutes of Science.

ScienceTake videos are usually less than three minutes long and combine cutting-edge research from the world of science with stunning footage of the natural world in action. You can see how spiders fly, water droplets dance, ants build towers, wolf puppies get wild, snakes slither, frogs leap, scientists brew lava, and Japanese monkeys lower their stress.

(And if you would like even more small “nuggets” of fascinating science reporting, we also recommend the Trilobites column.)

19. Work Out.

Use this 6-Minute Workout or a host of other really, really short workouts to stay in shape. The Move column can also teach you how to start running, how to use yoga to relax, and how to do moves from push-ups to body-weight split squats.

20. Learn About Teenagers Around the World.

The Times regularly covers stories about young people in every section, and every month The Learning Network rounds them all up.

Scroll through an edition or two of Teenagers in The Times to find stories about young athletes, artists and activists — as well as TikTok pundits, comedians, dancers, and viral challengers, eagle hunters and motivational speakers, planet-finders and quinceañera-redefiners.

21. Create.

The Learning Network has been running contests for teenagers for over a decade now, and you’re invited. Right now, our Editorial Contest is live until April 21, and our Podcast Contest and Summer Reading Contest will follow — and in August, we’ll announce our new challenges for the 2020-21 school year.

But to inspire you in the meantime, take a look at the excellent work of ...

- Our 2019 and 2018 “Show Us Your Generation” Photo Contest winners
- The 2020 winners of our 15-Second Vocabulary Video Contest
- The winners of our 2019 Personal Narrative Essay Contest

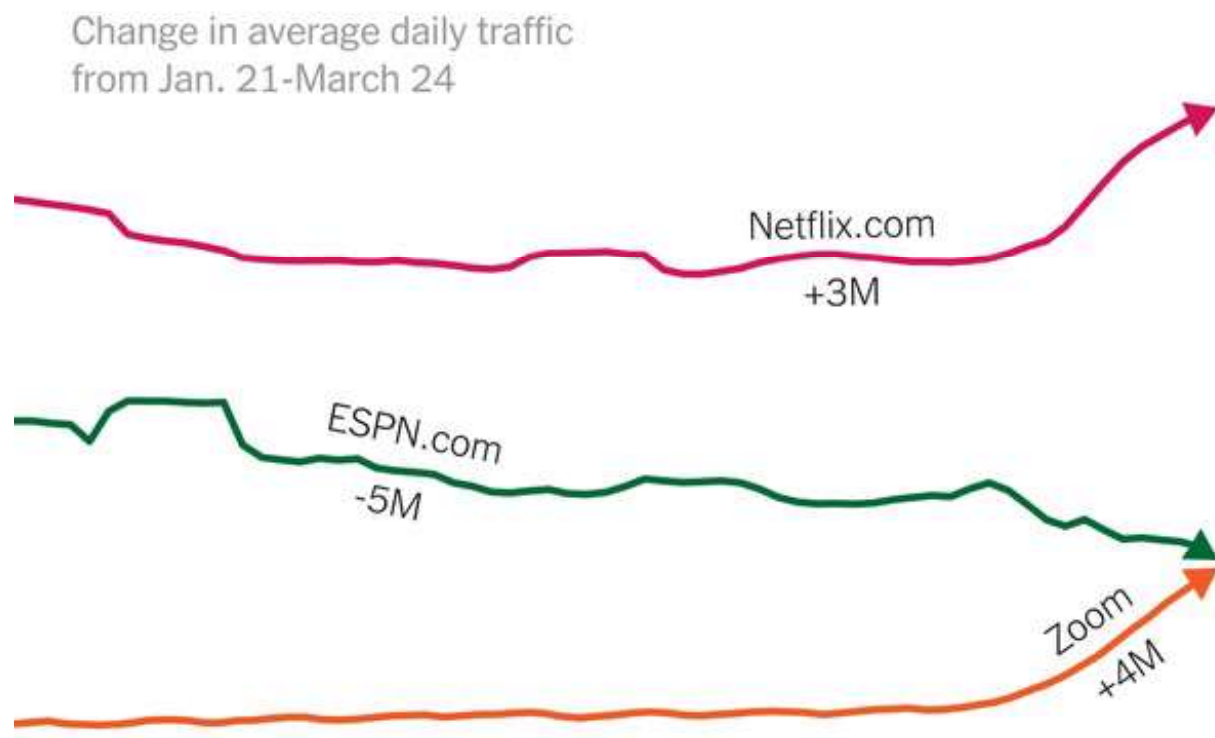
- The winners of our 2019 Editorial Cartoon Contest
 - The winners of our 2019 Review Contest
 - And the winners of our 2019 Podcast Contest
-

How Has the Coronavirus Changed How You Use the Internet?

[nytimes.com/2020/04/09/learning/how-has-the-coronavirus-changed-how-you-use-the-internet.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/09/learning/how-has-the-coronavirus-changed-how-you-use-the-internet.html)

Jeremy Engle

April 9,
2020



How much of your life is online? Has that changed since the coronavirus pandemic?

How has your internet behavior changed? Are there sites and apps you are visiting and using more? How has the coronavirus affected how you learn, play and connect online?

In "[The Virus Changed the Way We Internet](#)" Ella Koeze and Nathaniel Popper write:

Stuck at home during the coronavirus pandemic, with movie theaters closed and no restaurants to dine in, Americans have been spending more of their lives online.

But a New York Times analysis of internet usage in the United States from SimilarWeb and Apptopia, two online data providers, reveals that our behaviors shifted, sometimes starkly, as the virus spread and pushed us to our devices for work, play and connecting.

Here are some of the big takeaways from The Times's analysis of internet usage across the United States:

We are looking to connect and entertain ourselves, but are turning away from our phones

With nearly all public gatherings called off, Americans are seeking out entertainment on streaming services like Netflix and YouTube, and looking to connect with one another on social media outlets like Facebook.

In the past few years, users of these services were increasingly moving to their smartphones, creating an industrywide focus on mobile. Now that we are spending our days at home, with computers close at hand, Americans appear to be remembering how unpleasant it can be to squint at those little phone screens.

Facebook, Netflix and YouTube have all seen user numbers on their phone apps stagnate or fall off as their websites have grown, the data from SimilarWeb and Apptopia indicates. SimilarWeb and Apptopia both draw their traffic numbers from several independent sources to create data that can be compared across the internet.

With the rise of social distancing, we are seeking out new ways to connect, mostly through video chat

While traditional social media sites have been growing, it seems that we want to do more than just connect through messaging and text — we want to see one another. This has given a big boost to apps that used to linger in relative obscurity, like Google's video chatting application, Duo, and Houseparty, which allows groups of friends to join a single video chat and play games together.

We have also grown much more interested in our immediate environment, and how it is changing and responding to the virus and the quarantine measures. This has led to a renewed interest in Nextdoor, the social media site focused on connecting local neighborhoods.

We have suddenly become reliant on services that allow us to work and learn from home

The offices and schools of America have all moved into our basements and living rooms. Nothing is having a more profound impact on online activity than this change. School assignments are being handed out on Google Classroom. Meetings are happening on Zoom, Google Hangouts and Microsoft Teams. The rush to these services, however, has brought new scrutiny on privacy practices.

The search for updates on the virus has pushed up readership for local and established newspapers, but not partisan sites

Amid the uncertainty about how bad the outbreak could get — there are now hundreds of thousands of cases in the United States, with the number of dead multiplying by the day — Americans appear to want few things more than the latest news on the coronavirus.

Among the biggest beneficiaries are local news sites, with huge jumps in traffic as people try to learn how the pandemic is affecting their hometowns.

Americans have also been seeking out more established media brands for information on the public health crisis and its economic consequences. CNBC, the business news site, has seen readership skyrocket. The websites for The New York Times and The Washington Post have both grown traffic more than 50 percent over the last month, according to SimilarWeb.

Video games have been gaining while sports have lost out

With all major-league games called off, there hasn't been much sports to consume beyond marble racing and an occasional Belarusian soccer match. Use of ESPN's website has fallen sharply since late January, according to SimilarWeb.

At the same time, several video game sites have had surges in traffic, as have sites that let you watch other people play. Twitch, the leading site for streaming game play, has had traffic shoot up 20 percent.

TikTok, the mobile app filled with short clips of pranks and lip-syncing, was taking off before the coronavirus outbreak and it has continued its steady ascent ever since. It can be nice to see that at least some things remain unchanged by the crisis.

Students, read the entire article, then tell us:

- How has the coronavirus changed how you use the internet? How has it affected how you learn, play and connect online?
- How much time are you now spending each day and week online? Is that a big change from before the virus? Which online activities do you spend the most time engaging in? What sites and apps are you visiting and using most?
- Which takeaways and trends described in the article resonate with your own experiences? Do any of the graphs match your experience of the internet since the pandemic? What other takeaways have you observed in your online life and that of others?
- The article says, "Now that we are spending our days at home, with computers close at hand, Americans appear to be remembering how unpleasant it can be to squint at those little phone screens." Does that match your own experience? Are you using your phone less? Are you messaging and texting less and using online video chats more?

- What has been the overall effect — socially, emotionally, intellectually, physically — of spending more time on the internet? For you or for others you know? On the whole, are you content with the amount of time you spend online?
 - Screen time was hotly debated before the coronavirus. Nearly two-thirds of parents said they worried about their teenager spending too much time in front of screens and more than half of parents put limits on their children's screen use. Is the debate over screen time over — at least for now? Does your family have any rules about screen and online time in your home?
-

Lesson of the Day: 'The Original Renegade'

 [nytimes.com/2020/02/20/learning/lesson-of-the-day-the-original-renegade.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/learning/lesson-of-the-day-the-original-renegade.html)

Nicole Daniels

February 20,
2020



Lesson Overview

Featured Article: "[The Original Renegade](#)" by Taylor Lorenz

How many times in the last week have you, or someone around you, done the Renegade dance? Can you remember where you first saw the dance? Do you know who created the Renegade?

If you are not familiar with the dance, here is the creator, Jalaiah Harmon, demonstrating it:

14-year-old Jalaiah Harmon does the original version of Renegade dance that she choreographed in her Atlanta bedroom last fall. Months later, it became one of the biggest things on the internet and she got no credit <https://t.co/o1YrN46S87>
pic.twitter.com/fobL2ukkQV

— Taylor Lorenz (@TaylorLorenz) [February 14, 2020](#)

In the featured Times article, you will learn about this 14-year-old who, in September 2019, created the dance and posted it to Funimate. Then you will use media literacy skills to think about the intersections of cultural appropriation and crediting online creations.

Warm Up

Take five minutes to scroll through your TikTok, Instagram, Dubsmash or other social media feeds and note what you observe about the top posts. Record your observations on a piece of paper:

- Who created the post you are viewing? How many followers do they have? If they borrowed or shared the content, how many followers does the original creator have?
- To your knowledge, is this person who posted the original the creator of the content? How do you know? If they are not, do they give credit to someone else?
- Is the post a cross-platform share? For example, is it a post originally from TikTok that was shared on Instagram?

Compare your findings with those of your classmates. What do you notice about how content and ideas are shared across platforms and between content creators? What do you observe about the norms on each app around crediting creators?

Questions for Writing and Discussion

Read the article, then answer the following questions:

1. How does Jalaiah Harmon's experience show what it means to be "coming up in a dance world completely reshaped by the internet"?
2. Why, according to those quoted here, is TikTok "like a mainstream Dubsmash"?
3. How was the Renegade dance created, and what moments led to its popularity? What happened when Jalaiah first tried to receive credit for creating the dance?

Thanks for reading The Times.

[Subscribe to The Times](#)

4. According to this article, "To be robbed of credit on TikTok is to be robbed of real opportunities." Why?
5. Why has there been a clash about crediting between TikTok users and Dubsmash users?
6. What is your understanding of the role race has played in conversations about who gets credit for dance creation?
7. What questions does this article raise for you — whether about the Renegade, the role of race, how things are shared and credited on social media, or anything else? Do you think that sharing something online is automatic consent to its being copied, regardless of who is copying it? Why or why not?

Going Further

Many commenters on this article posted a version of this reaction: “Nothing new. Black culture is always appropriated and the culture vultures always overlook the originators.”

What other examples of this can you think of — whether now or in history?

The Times frequently covers questions of credit and appropriation in the arts. For instance, as part of the 1619 Project, The Magazine looked at how black music has been appropriated for centuries. A recent article on an exhibition in Miami called “Who Owns Black Art?” explains:

At a time when black creators are being celebrated as much as ever — from Hollywood to the fine arts — some are raising the question of whether black people are truly the main beneficiaries of the culture they produce.

What black creators do you admire, whether they are alive today or from the past? To what extent are or were those creators beneficiaries of the culture they produced?

Student Opinion: No test, no stress

By Jerren Hayes on 03.12.20

Word Count **462**

Level **MAX**



Are standardized tests like the ACT and SAT worth the stress? Photo: Shutterstock

Six simple letters may be the most important letters you will ever come across. What are those letters? SAT and ACT! These acronyms can strike nervousness and even dread into students across the country. The SAT and ACT are standardized tests.

Most universities and colleges rely on students' performance on these tests to make admissions decisions. The SAT and ACT could very well be the most important tests of one's life. These test results can determine where students will go to school and how much scholarship money they will receive.

This method for college admissions is widely known and used. Unfortunately, it is also obsolete and ineffective. The SAT and ACT are supposed to measure your readiness for college material, but they don't measure your ability as a student.

The SAT/ACT does not measure effort as a student. College admissions officers use the test to get a vague idea of how well you'll do in college on the things presented to you, but it does not show your ability to take notes, listen in class, engage with ideas and information, and actually try your best. You can get straight A's and ace every test you've ever taken and still get a low score on the

SAT/ACT. Your lower score on the SAT does not mean you're a poor student; it may just mean you are a poor test-taker in high-stress situations. Likewise, a good score doesn't necessarily mean you're a great student.

The SAT/ACT puts an unhealthy amount of stress on students. These tests can be a huge factor in one's life. There is immense pressure not to blow your chance at a good life. The threat of not getting into the right college is always a looming thought.

Taking one test as a 15 or 16 year old and knowing it may be a determining factor in your life can make even the calmest of people sweat. This stress is made worse when you realize that the exams aren't designed to see if you know college material, but rather designed to see if you're paying close enough attention to the test itself. As a senior in high school who has already sat through the four-hour test, I can honestly say the questions are meant to trick you.

Yes, I believe there should be a baseline to measure college readiness, but having a four-hour test in high school where so much is riding on a number (400-1600 or 1-36) from three letters (SAT or ACT) isn't the best way to get it done. Why are we relying on an outdated technique to express ourselves to colleges? This is a harder question than most of the questions on the tests, themselves!

Jerren Hayes is a high-school senior. He attends school in Warren, Michigan.

Quiz

- 1 According to the article, why do students experience stress while taking the SAT and ACT?
- (A) The tests pressure students to prepare them for the stress of college.
 - (B) The test results could have a great impact on the rest of a student's life.
 - (C) The tests determine whether a student will be allowed to graduate.
 - (D) The test results might show a student's ability in a subject that is uninteresting.
- 2 How do SAT and ACT scores affect a student's higher education?
- (A) The scores can determine how much a student will receive in scholarship money.
 - (B) The scores can indicate how well a student will be able to handle stress in college.
 - (C) The scores might show the subjects that a student will be allowed to study in college.
 - (D) The scores might illustrate how well a student can work through trick questions on tests.
- 3 The author argues that the SAT and ACT are designed to see if students can pay close attention to the test content itself. Is there enough strong evidence to support his claim?
- (A) Yes; the author provides data from invalid test results to support the claim.
 - (B) Yes; the author emphasizes the length of the testing session to support the claim.
 - (C) No; the author offers an outdated research technique to support the claim.
 - (D) No; the author relies only on his own experience to support the claim.
- 4 Which piece of evidence from the article is MOST relevant to the author's argument?
- (A) Most universities and colleges rely on students' performance on these tests to make admissions decisions.
 - (B) The SAT and ACT are supposed to measure your readiness for college material, but they don't measure your ability as a student.
 - (C) The threat of not getting into the right college is always a looming thought.
 - (D) As a senior in high school who has already sat through the four-hour test, I can honestly say the questions are meant to trick you.

The Humble Phone Call Has Made a Comeback

[nytimes.com/2020/04/09/technology/phone-calls-voice-virus.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/09/technology/phone-calls-voice-virus.html)

Cecilia Kang

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Alyssa MacKenzie, 32, rarely used her smartphone to make phone calls, apart from the occasional conversation for her work as a disability rights advocate.

But when the lockdown for the coronavirus set in, Ms. MacKenzie could no longer pop by her mother's house a few minutes away in New Canaan, Conn. So she has called her multiple times a day, including once recently to get a recipe for pasta e fagioli.

A couple of hours later, she said, they were still talking.

"We started with the recipe, then talked about my younger brother, then my work, then her day, and next thing I knew, the soup was done," Ms. MacKenzie said. "I needed to hear the familiarity of her voice."

Phone calls have made a comeback in the pandemic. While the nation's biggest telecommunications providers prepared for a huge shift toward more internet use from home, what they didn't expect was an even greater surge in plain old voice calls, a medium that had been going out of fashion for years.

Verizon said it was now handling an average of 800 million wireless calls a day during the week, more than double the number made on Mother's Day, historically one of the busiest call days of the year. Verizon added that the length of voice calls was up 33 percent from an average day before the outbreak. AT&T said that the number of cellular calls had risen 35 percent and that Wi-Fi-based calls had nearly doubled from averages in normal times.

In contrast, internet traffic is up around 20 percent to 25 percent from typical daily patterns, AT&T and Verizon said.

The rise is stunning given how voice calls have long been on the decline. Some 90 million households in the United States have ceased using landline phones since 2000, according to USTelecom. Wireless calls replaced much of that calling activity, but the volume of minutes spent on phone calls hasn't changed much over the past decade as people turned to texting and to apps like FaceTime and WhatsApp, according to wireless carriers and analysts.

New needs are emerging in the crisis. "We've become a nation that calls like never before," said Jessica Rosenworcel, a commissioner at the Federal Communications Commission, the agency that oversees phone, television and internet providers. "We are craving human voice."

Though phone calls are now made over airwaves that connect through cell towers, the appeal of talking hasn't changed much from the earliest telephone days of the late 1800s and early 1900s, when wooden poles stretched copper wire lines across the nation and into every home in America.

In Albany, La., the priests and deacons of St. Margaret Queen of Scotland church recently divided up a list of 900 parishioners to call to check in on them, something they never did because they saw their members in person. Some of the congregants in the rural community outside New Orleans were suspicious when they answered, accustomed to robocalls from unfamiliar numbers.

But Brad Doyle, the associate priest, said they eased up when he began to speak. They talked about their daily routines and said they missed Sunday service, especially ahead of Easter. One congregant went into great detail about the Netflix documentary "Tiger King." Many wanted to just hear a prayer, he said.

Grace McClellan, 32, a high school teacher in Charleston, S.C., has also turned to phone calls as an antidote to the loneliness of living apart from family and friends. She has begun synchronizing a daily walk-and-talk with her best friend, who lives in Connecticut. With her friend's voice piping through her earbuds, "it feels as close as possible to a real walk together," Ms. McClellan said.

The return of the voice call is a throwback for telecom companies. For years, Verizon, CenturyLink and AT&T have retired copper wire phone lines that were introduced 150 years ago.

The companies have instead invested in broadband networks and expanding capacity for things like higher-resolution video and video gaming. They also beefed up their networks to handle next-generation wireless technology, called 5G, which will allow people to download a movie in seconds and may spur a wave of driverless car technology and robotics.

"For years, we've seen a steady decline in the amount of time people spend talking to one another, especially on wireless devices," Kyle Malady, Verizon's chief technology officer, said in a statement. "The move to staying at home has reignited people's hunger to stay connected, voice to voice."

The surge in voice calls is for both business and personal purposes, said Chris Sambar, AT&T's executive vice president of technology and operations. Before the spread of the coronavirus led to stay-at-home orders, wireless calls typically peaked in the morning and evening rush hours. Once people got to their offices and schools, the call volumes fell.

Now, he said, voice calls are high throughout the day. While Zoom and Google Hangouts are a popular replacement for meetings with multiple colleagues, the phone is easier for one-on-one conversations and doesn't buffer and break down like video. On weekends, phone traffic is also much higher than normal.

"Voice is the new killer app," Mr. Sambar said. "It's been a real surprise."

He added that AT&T and other phone providers had experienced hiccups in their networks with increased voice call volumes, but had made upgrades to calling connection points and were able to handle the new demand.

Even young adults who grew up with texting and messaging apps as a primary form of communication are embracing voice calls.

Emily Lancia, 20, a college student, said she now called her parents daily instead of weekly from the campus of the State University of New York at Binghamton. Walking on the campus nature preserve one day this week, she was inspired to ring her best friend from childhood, whom she texts with almost daily but has never called.

"It was nice to hear her voice," said Ms. Lancia, a junior.

Heading into spring break, Ms. Lancia said she was comforted by the voices of family and friends. That was especially true, she said, of her dad's deep guttural laugh and what has become his quotidian phone greeting: "What's up, peanut? What have you done for the last 12 hours?"