

THE COURIER

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The longest running middle school newspaper in the United States!

Black History Month Competition

By: Sophia Levy & Isabella Arco



I received a certificate for winning New York's 17th Congressional District's 1st Annual Black History Month Video Contest. I am so happy and thankful that he gave me this opportunity. He is such a gentleman and a kind person.

I asked him if he had any advice for me, and he expressed that there are so many people that wish they could go back to middle and high school, especially to get good grades. He recommends that we focus on studying!

As an immigrant, I empathized with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech because I believe he was not only speaking for African Americans, but he was speaking for everyone, including myself. I have a dream too. My dream is to go to Harvard and become a lawyer. I want to use my studies to give back to my fellow citizens.

I would like to thank Mr. Spatafore, and Mr. Eaton, for staying with me the whole time! We thank Congressman Jones for supporting the American Rescue Plan, which will deliver nearly \$260 million to school districts in #NY17 to help them safely reopen."

We thank Gulgun (Rosie) Isiyel for taking the time to inform us with all this amazing information to share! 🐾

Click on this link to see the winning video!
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CL>

As you may know, during February, which was Black History Month, there was a competition to create a video representing and showing pride for all the important people for Black History Month. To win, you had to reenact your favorite moment in history and post it to a social media platform. Our very own classmate and friend, Gulgun (Rosie) Isiyel won this year's super exciting competition and a moment to remember!

We interviewed Gulgun (Rosie) Isiyel to go behind the scenes on this exciting meet and greet experience with Congressman Mondaire Jones. This is what she had to say: "The prize was to have a virtual meeting with the Congressman, but he prepared a meeting for me to meet him in person!

Highlands Talent Show!

By:
Isabella
Arco

The talent show isn't complete without our amazingly talented MCs (Master of Ceremonies). The MCs introduce the acts, hype up the audience and make the show entertaining. Our MC's will also be putting on comedic skits between acts. One of our very own MC's, Carla told me, "there is a wide variety of ideas that this group of people came up with." The MCs help make each Talent Show unique!

Rachel and Rosie Isiyel, two other MCs, are perfect for the job. While they both love hyping up the crowd, they also like performing and making the audience laugh. All our MCs agreed that one of the best parts about this Talent Show is how it represents our Highlands community.

Elena and Taylor are two other MCs. While it is new for Elena, Taylor has some experience from 5th grade, as she was the MC for the elementary school talent show, as well.

Highlands is incredibly happy to announce that we will be hosting a virtual Talent Show on March 26th! All our performances have been pre-recorded and put together into an iMovie. We have a wide variety of unique talents which include singing, dancing, instrumental performances and even beatboxing. Lucky for you, we get to watch it during school on Friday. What a great way to kick off Spring Break!

We are so appreciative of our MCs, and our wonderful advisors, Ms. Davila and Ms. Melendez. Another special thanks to all of the teachers who contributed to the show. We are so excited to see the talent! After the live performance, the show will be posted on YouTube so be sure to share this amazing accomplishment with your families. We really hope you enjoy the show! 🐾

Reopening the Schools: What Do Parents, Teachers and a Principal Think?

By: Student #1 and Student #2

We've interviewed parents, teachers and a principal here in White Plains, throughout the school district so we could discuss how they feel about reopening up the schools. We got quotes from people on all sides of the issue, and we've shared them with you today.

Question #1: Are you comfortable with teaching when they reopen the schools full time? (Teachers) / Are you comfortable with sending in your child full time? (Parents)

"From a health and safety standpoint, yes, because I'll be fully vaccinated next week. From an instructional standpoint, I've finally got used to the way we're doing it and there's going up be another big change. I wouldn't say I'm uncomfortable, but I've got a bit of anxiety going into this." -Teacher #1

"No. I am not comfortable with sending my child in full time, but I'm not comfortable keeping my child home remote. Honestly, hybrid would be the ideal for me as a parent because it gives exposure to the teacher and peers for socialization, and the safety of not being exposed each day." -Parent #3

Question #2: Many teachers and students have been placed into quarantine because of positive cases, do you think the quarantine number will rise once we open?

"I think logically it will. When you put more people in a space, there will be more exposures. Teachers I know who have been vaccinated may or may not have to quarantine, but students

definitely will. It seems to me like the variants of the virus are multiplying, and we may end up in a worse situation than we already are." -Teacher #3

"As of right now if one classmate is positive, they quarantine the whole class. I've been hearing that they may do it by students that were closest to the student. If they keep quarantining with the quarantine rule they have right now (quarantining the entire class), then absolutely." -Parent #1

Question #3: Do you have any concerns about the reopening plan?

"The only flaws that I can see going in would be the movement of children. I have a small number of kids in my class, and they can get out of their seats and do 'energizers.' They've got to sit in their seats all day due to safety and it's hard for kids to stay still. I hope we can go outside. Plus, in the cafeteria they have to clean in between lunch periods and it's tough." -Teacher #2

"Quite honestly... not leaving hybrid in place for those who aren't comfortable with 5 full days. Everybody has a different level of comfort and people are going to ease back to normal at their own pace, and hybrid provided a cushion for those who want their kids in without too much of a risk." -Parent #2

Question #4: Do you think covid will break out once we reopen? How long will it be?

"I've never been a gambling woman, but we'll probably be in quarantine in the first few weeks, unless the infection rate starts to decline more. The

numbers are still scarily high, and we're going to have twice as many kids in the building. I definitely think we'll end up with Covid on a larger scale." -Teacher #3

"I don't think there will be one. I think at this point it will continue to go down and enough people are getting the vaccine. When kids catch it they really don't get symptoms. If you have an underlying health issue as a child, you probably will want to stay home." -Parent #4

Question #5: Do you agree with the plan to open up 5 full days or the kid has to stay remote? Should we stick with hybrid?

"It is very difficult from the teacher's point of view to do hybrid. Teachers plan differently according to how many kids who are in person versus online. So many children are still opting to go virtual, so I feel like it's not going to be much different than hybrid." -Teacher #4

"I definitely think we should open up 5 full days. I feel like the students in order to get social interaction and true learning, it needs to be done inside the classroom." -Parent #1

"I think we should stay hybrid the rest of the year, it just doesn't make sense. We're going to have to re-learn the protocols based on the 5 full days model." -Teacher #3

"We should definitely be sticking with hybrid, no doubt. It would've been best to

continue this through the entire year, so enough people will be vaccinated by September with a minimal risk.

I'm happy for those who desperately wanted 5 full days, but still keep hybrid in place." -Parent #2

Question #6: Are you concerned with your child's/the children's education, social or emotional needs now that we've been home for a year?

"Yes, I am concerned with both the emotional and educational needs of our students. The student experience since the start of the pandemic has been very different from a typical school year and we need to especially address the lack of social interaction. We are including lessons/activities in our Advisory to support social and emotional learning and providing Pupil Personnel support when needed." -Principal #1

"I'm not concerned, I feel they will all catch up at some point academically, because the rest of the country is in the same boat. I feel you set the tone at home, if you're stressed out your child is going to be stressed out. So whether you choose to keep your kid home remotely or send your child in 5 full days, stay calm and rational and your children will follow suit." -Parent #3

[Continued on page 3]

LOCAL NEWS

BREAKING NEWS

Spotlight: These next few questions were teacher/principal-only questions! Our teachers have been amazing throughout this whole pandemic and we're extremely grateful for their guidance and support.

Question #7: If you were to send your child into full time in-person learning here in White Plains School District, with the current reopening plan, would you?

-“Yes, [my child] is actually going to be attending full time in April. The bussing and cafeteria are going to be my biggest concerns, they said they'd be limiting the amount of students in those places and I hope they go through with that.” -Teacher #2

-“Actually, I have to do it. I have to do it because I don't have many options- I work. Now that she's practiced being as safe as possible, it's up to her to be masked and stay safe.” -Teacher #3

-“Yes. I think it's important to be in school, especially at this age [11-14], you kids need social interaction. Plus I think the people in person may have a better academic performance.” -Teacher #4

-“Yes, I feel that the district is following all current guidelines to optimize student and staff safety.” -Principal #1

Question #8: What safety protocols are they implementing in your school?

-“My understanding is that desks will be placed three feet apart with a barrier. In the cafeteria, there are going to be barriers and we're trying for outdoor lunch, or even classes outside. I know they ordered tents, but I'm not sure how they're going to use them or how it's going to work if it rains.” -Teacher #1

-“They bought the desk barriers, hand sanitizer



then they call busses over the intercoms.” -Teacher #2

-“Well, the strategies are basically the same. Social distancing has dropped in feet, plexiglass barriers will be on the desks and masks are mandatory. We're not doing a lot of switching of children in iBlock, and whatever class you're in will be the only people you see.” -Teacher #3

-“We are using layered mitigation to increase safety along with procedures to reduce student numbers in common areas during lunch, passing times and at arrival and dismissal.

-Students arrive through 4 different entrances and go directly to their Advisory.

-In classrooms, student desks will be spaced 3 feet apart and will have barriers.

-In place of a single cafeteria, we have added the South Gym as an additional eating space, and we will allow students to eat outside whenever the weather permits

-Cafeteria tables also contain barriers to ensure that students are sufficiently separated.

-Students are encouraged to use hand sanitizer before and after eating and upon entering classrooms.

-To reduce the number of students in the hallways we have instituted a new bell schedule so that only one grade will be passing between classes at a time.” -Principal #1

dispensers in every classroom, and the school principal is adjusting the lunch periods. They adjusted specials, as well. For example, you'll have art for three straight weeks, and then gym for three straight weeks. They don't have any gatherings in the arrival periods or dismissal periods, kids go straight up to classroom and

Question #9: Do you think the safety protocols they're placing are actually safe enough?

-“I don't know. We haven't done this yet, so it's basically a big experiment. The part that I'm most nervous for is the distance, because we're cutting it from 6 feet to 3 feet and it may not be enough distance.” -Teacher #1

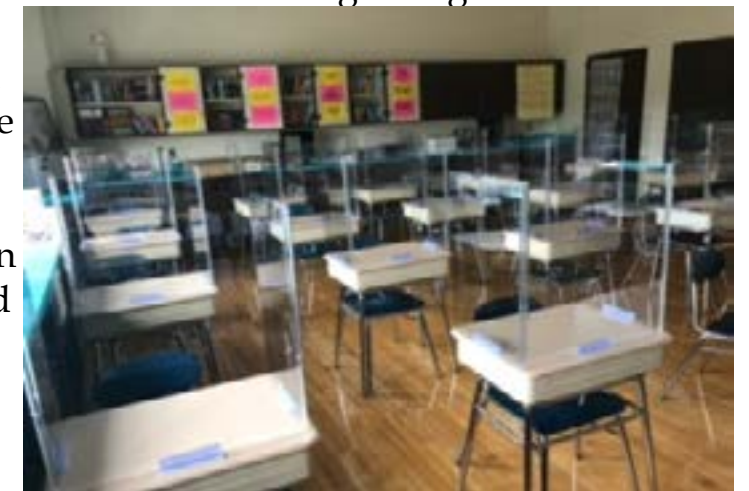
-“I don't know. I don't know if the barriers are safe enough, the kids are all going to be in the classrooms, I don't know if it's going to be 100% safe.” -Teacher #2

-“Time will tell. I think they will because we've had pretty good success with them so far, but then we're doubling the population, it's anybody's guess. I'm most worried about being unmasked, with lunch and snack.” -Teacher #3

-“I do think that the protocols are safe, it's a matter of everyone in the building following them and taking them seriously.” -Teacher #4

-“Yes. We have emphasized safety since the start of the pandemic and feel that students are safe to return. We will be doing our best to ensure that all of our protocols are maintained.” -Principal #1

Thank you to all the teachers & parents who interviewed with us! Please respect everyone's opinions, there is a global pandemic going on and everyone feels differently about it. We all have different comfort zones regarding restrictions and rules. We hope some of you found a little more inner peace and that you feel like you aren't alone in your opinions and decisions!! 🐾





LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Hastings Tea & Coffee

By: Leila Tomlin



The pandemic has had countless impacts on our community, especially local businesses. Here at The Courier, we want to do our best to showcase some local businesses that have working hard to keep their doors open to service us, the White Plains Community. One local business that will bring you some calming is Hastings Tea, a small café my family and I visit regularly. We spoke with Joan, the owner, to get some insight on how the pandemic has impacted her business:

Q: How did Covid affect your business?

A: Our business was down 95% and we were thinking about shutting down. It was essential to stay afloat. It was about giving employees a job. At first, we started with serving first responders with the BIDs donations. Thanks to the courtyard seating, our business increased last summer, and more people started coming in. We brought our business online, offering delivery service via GrubHub, UberEat and DoorDash. Curbside pickup is another additional service we added.

Q: How have your priorities changed?

A: We launched a wine business right before COVID-19, which was unfortunate timing. Thanks to the policy change,

though, we manage to do wine delivery. We did virtual tea infused wine events. We noticed more people are interested in teas due to their health benefits such as antioxidant, stress relief, etc. It also has plenty of caffeine. Do you know tea has higher caffeine than coffee?

Q: What are your COVID-19 protocols?

A: We have plexiglass dividers between tables. Tables are set six feet apart. When customers are leaving, we wipe tables and chairs down with anti-bacterial spray. We try to keep the doors open as much as possible. All the staff wear masks, we have plexiglass in front of the cashier, and

the employees wear gloves or hand-sanitize when serving.

Q: What problems has COVID-19 caused?

A: There is no business. People do not want to come out. We cannot do promotions or events, no gatherings. We built up the delivery business during COVID-19, but it is different than seating in a traditional café. However, so many volunteers & organizations are there helping us throughout this difficult time. I am touched by the united front from locals.

“Small businesses are big. They hold a lot of jobs. Without small businesses, no jobs, no services.” I really recommend coming here. Their tea, coffee, and snacks are amazing. They also sell loose tea, which is really good, too. 🐾



SPORTS REPORT

WP's Olympic Swimmer Qualifier

By: Elena Bediako

Claire Weinstein has recently qualified for the Olympic trials, but she's been swimming for her whole life. “I learned how to swim when I was either 3 or 4, but I've been swimming competitively since I was 6. I love the sport and a lot of my friends swim, so I practice, and I work hard, but I go to hang out with my friends too.”

Training is super important for Claire, but her hours have taken a hit. “It has changed since COVID-19. It used to be seven days a week - five days of five-hour practices and two days of two and a half hours. Now, it's still every day, but only about an hour and forty-five minutes each day.” Claire said. “I'm a distance swimmer, and it's different for everyone's specialties. It's mostly cardio and pace sets. Sometimes I'll try to do 100 yards (four laps) per minute.”

Obviously, that's a large amount of time, but Claire has managed a healthy balance of swimming and school. “It's not effected by my practices, but there are sometimes when I have to take a week off for higher level swim meets in different places. I definitely miss a lot of school, and it's difficult catching up. I took off the beginning of March to go to Texas, and I'm still catching up. My teachers are very understanding, and they give me as much time as I need,” Claire explained.

Claire has been swimming for a while, so it's natural to have goals. One of those goals is, “to make the U.S. Olympic team one day. My biggest accomplishment so far is qualifying for the Olympic trials in January.” It's no easy feat to qualify for the Olympics. Claire explains what her plan to qualify is. “Either [with] the 200 or 400 or 800 freestyle, those were my best events. I made the trials, but unless something weird happens I won't make it to the 2021 Olympics, but I've only got 3 more years to train until the 2024 Olympics.”

Claire has worked so hard and she deserves to be proud of everything that she has and will accomplish. Claire has worked hard towards her goals all her life, and still maintains a balanced life. Good luck Claire! 🐾

WORLD NEWS

England Girl's Perspective & a Bit About England

By: Taylor Cutrone



Israel versus Palestine: part II

By: Justin Lopez

In the last edition of The Courier, we covered the conflict going on between Israel and Palestine. We covered the goals of the two sides. The gist of the conflict is that Israel is a Zionist establishment set up to keep the integrity of Jewish adherents, to have the Jewish back home in their historical homeland, and to not let any more tragedies against Jewish people occur. While Palestine wants to keep their people in the land that they had inhabited for a long time, and to have Palestinian autonomy in the Middle East.

Religion heavily plays a role in this conflict, and as much as I'd love to go into detail about what exactly caused the conflict to happen between the religions, I'll keep it simple. These religions have quite a few connections, and these connections often resulted in problems between the people. The roots of each religion have aspects that clash with one another, and

Jerusalem (located in Israel), is a spiritual landmark that is also a source of contention.

While my description of the religious conflict is broad, we cannot dismiss it's role in the Israel versus Palestine problem. The reason as to why this is so important is because it shapes a big part in these two cultures. Israel wouldn't be a country if it weren't for their biblical claim of the land, and Palestine would have a rough time setting up a culture based around this contested country since they were there at the foundation of Islam.

Israel and Palestine have always had some type of issue, but religion plays a very important role in establishing these two clashing cultures. There is one more aspect of this conflict that is yet to be covered, so make sure to read the next edition of the Courier to put the pieces together in this very old puzzle. 🐾



England, I hope you find this interesting too.

If you don't know where England is located, it's an island in the west of Europe. The capital is London. Lizzie says, "Apparently we're not in Europe anymore, but we're a little island off the coast of France, in Europe." England is leaving the European Union, their system that manages foreign affairs.

Question: What is England like?

"It's pretty much COVID central. We're on a lockdown, but people ignore it. We keep getting loads of death and to the people who don't wear their masks, what if that was your family? What if your mum died of COVID? What if your grandma had cancer and she couldn't get surgery because of COVID? It all goes back to people who don't follow the rules." -Lizzie

Question: What is special about England?

"We have a lot of historic monuments; one has big black lions. We have the Parliament and the Great Tower of London. There's the Angel

of the North, although it's just a big red hat with the rest of a random sculpture." -Lizzie



I asked Lizzie about America. Lizzie admits she barely knows anything about us, but she does think we're important to England after forming an alliance after WWI. The one thing she does know for sure is that we have a different schooling system than them. Here we have pre-school (3's and 4's), elementary (k-5), middle school (6-8), high school (9-12) and college (ages 18+). In England they have Primary School (ages 5-11), Secondary School (ages 11-15), College (ages 16-18) and University (ages 19+).

Question: What did you think of the 2020 presidential election?

"I was very happy for you guys when President Biden was elected. I think Bernie Sanders should've won office. I am glad Trump is gone, ever since 2016 I knew it would go downhill. I don't mean to offend any Trump supporters." -Lizzie

After our interview I gave her a lesson on American history, but she had to go for dinner. I've learned a lot about England, and I enjoyed the information I learned. We've been keeping in contact and if I learn anything else about England, I'll be sure to follow up. 🐾

How can we help defeat global warming?

By: Olivia Tuzel

WORLD NEWS

Introduction

Global warming has been getting progressively worse over the years, and we cannot help but wonder why. Why is this crisis becoming dangerously severe at such a quick rate? As you may know, the worldwide debate about whether humans are the ones responsible for global warming has been going on for many decades, particularly between the Democratic and the Republican party. Most of us acknowledge the fact that if we do not act, global warming will have a detrimental effect on our future. How should we make up for our actions?

The Different Energy Groups

A remarkably effective solution to defeating global warming is utilizing energy that will not damage the planet! It seems like an easy change, but it is not as simple as it seems. Multiple groups run in the category of how to retrieve “good” energy: sustainable, renewable, clean, and green energy. Sustainable energy is a type of energy that never runs out or is never going to be depleted (unless we face an abnormal crisis). Renewable energy is an energy produced by renewable/natural sources that must be replenished, like crops or biomatter. Then there is clean energy, a source of energy that does not emit any pollutants into the atmosphere. At last, green energy, which is energy that emits a ridiculously small amount of pollution in different forms and can occasionally impact the environment. That must have been a lot of information to take in, so here is a small chart to the right that demonstrates what the separate group’s solar energy represents.

Using Sustainable Energy

Pollution and greenhouse gas emissions that humans have created is the main problem that has caused global warming. By widening the usage of these energy groups, we can help create a change. Perhaps you are reading this and thinking, “Why should we change the way we retrieve our energy when we already have enough from the energy sources currently being used?”

That is an excellent question, and I will now tell you why.

A vast number of non-renewable sources (fossil fuels, coal, oil) are used daily, which is what provides us with energy. Matter of fact, using non-renewable sources is very environmentally unfriendly. In the magazine, “EPA Repeals Clean Power Plant” the text implies that, “Coal and natural gas plants are responsible for about 40 percent of the U.S carbon dioxide emissions. Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas causing global warming.” That is almost half of the total carbon dioxide emissions released in the United States! Imagine how much we would reduce by making the slight change of switching to sustainable energy.

Although 40% may not seem like a substantial percentage compared to the whole planet, it can disrupt. To add on, sustainable energy can be the same price as non-renewable energy. Once more, the article “EPA Repeals Clean Power Plant” comes into play. As seen in the text, “That’s because coal is no longer the only cheap source of power. Natural gas is also cheap and even the price of solar and wind has fallen to be as cheap as coal in some places.” Although natural gas (a non-renewable source) can be as cheap as coal, what is the point of using it if we can pay the same amount for different energy types that will not ruin our planet? Even if it may be a little more expensive in other places, it would still be 100% worth investing in, considering it can motivate other nations/countries to do the same.

✔ Sustainable:	Produces energy from energy that “renews itself automatically” (the sun)
✔ Clean:	Does not emit any pollutants when in use
✔ Somewhat Green:	Can affect the environment if the land must be cleared to place solar panels down
✘ Renewable:	Does not require replenishing sources to produce energy

Using Our Voices

Most of us bluntly accept that we are the ones to take the blame for why global warming is happening in the first place. Alas, there is a slight conundrum. Only a small percent of the individuals who are aware of this topic use their voices to spread the word! Everyone knows that this is a real problem, yet we are swatting the topic away as if it were a mosquito in the summer heat. The magazine, “What Ever Happened to Global Warming?” written by New York Times Upfront, claims that “The number of Americans who believe the earth is warming dropped to 59 percent in 2010 from 79 percent in 2006, according to the Pew Research group.” Although this statistic has been proven over nine years ago, it demonstrates how fast people can completely disown a topic for it to never occur in our minds again. In those four years between 2006 and 2010, Americans either kept fighting for change or fell into a hole believing that this is all a hoax.

If we want to spread the word, the most efficient option is to take it to social media. Although the social community can be a toxic environment, there are still some pros to using these platforms. We can reach millions of people with one click, so we might as well take advantage of that ability. You can start sharing important posts related to global warming/ climate change, educating others on this important topic as you do so. Not only that, but you can also engage with others! It is important to communicate with other accounts so that they could spread the word, too. 🐾

Please enjoy some fictional writing from members of The Courier!

Missing Chapter 2: The Hill

I awoke the next morning with a plan. I sprinted down out my room, down the stairs and into the kitchen.

"Where are you going?" Mom inquired.

"Just for a bike ride." I responded quickly, although I feel she might've found that suspicious.

"Did you feed Shadow yet?" she asked me.

I stopped in my tracks. I had completely forgotten to feed Shadow. I bolted to the fridge and grabbed some celery for him. Then I ran upstairs and into my room.

Panting I opened Shadow's cage and shoved some celery in it. "Shadow" I said quietly, "it's time to eat." His coal black head appeared from underneath his paper bedding. He looked up at me with his one good eye.

I remember when we found him as a baby. He was in our backyard cold and injured. He looked like a shadow with his soot black fur, so that's what we called him.

After playing with Shadow for a bit, I ran to my garage and got my bike out. I pedaled to the end of my driveway and took out my phone. The directions were already there from when I put them in earlier this morning.

I plugged in my earbuds and pedaled out of my driveway. Around 20 minutes later, I reached the hill.

I spotted the glove place, called Toasty and Warm, located at the top of a huge, steep hill. You see, a bike and a hill are no easy task. I took a deep breath and I started up the hill with my bicycle.

When I reached the top, I saw what I was looking for: a small hut surrounded by woods. A giant wooden sign with a picture of a roasted marshmallow perched on the top. 'Toasty and



"The Villain's Side of Evil"

By: Juliet Weigand

People always ask why I liked the villains more,

They are always cold and all they want is war.

But when I look at them all I see is a shattered heart,

One that torn and that is ripped apart.

People always seem to judge them right away,

For if they knew their past, they wouldn't be so quick to say.

Evil is not born it is made,

Their whole lives they were just fighting the monster that soon became outweighed.

So, the next time you judge the villain just remember their past,

And how they always felt unloved and just harassed.



Warm' was written in bright colors on a sign above the door. I hopped off my bike and ran towards the front door. I quickly opened the door and ran inside.

"Oh Quinn!" the shopkeeper, Kathy Doll, exclaimed, "I didn't expect you to be here!"

Mrs. Doll was a widowed woman in her 70s and she didn't have any children or any family. She had cloudy white hair, a short pale frame and an old pudgy face. She looked at me with warmth in her eyes and smiled.

"How are you, my Quinn?" she asked, "I haven't seen you in a while."

"I'm alright," I responded. Obviously, I wasn't, but I didn't have time to chitchat.

"Hey Mrs. Doll" I said, "Can I see your customer list?"

She looked at me, "Oh heavens no!" She responded, "I have a patient privacy agreement."

I sighed, I had expected this, and thankfully I had another trick up my sleeve.

"Ms. Doll?" I inquired, "are you hiring?"

"Yes, why do you ask?" she responded.

"I was just looking for a job" I said, smiling.

"Well, we have to have a proper interview, but I think you'd be a great candidate," Ms. Doll said warmly.

"Great, see you later ma'am" I said.

I smiled widely. My plan was being put into motion.

Until next issue...

- A 🐾



Boys Girls and in between

Two pedestals
 Raised so high
 One pink
 One blue
 Curvy body
 Long hair
 Painted face
 Strong body
 Tall structure
 No emotions
 All these views
 Shadow over us
 The rainbow spectrum
 The ones in purple
 Both sides
 Those in orange
 Who don't decide
 Those that dance in the colors
 Embracing each one
 And those
 Who don't want to wear colors at all
 Why is it only boy and girl?
 When there's more in between?

What am I?

So tell me
 What am I to you?
 A child?
 An adult?
 Make up your mind
 When your disappointed
 I'm an adult
 When your mad
 Im a kid
 My opinions don't matter
 Because I'm a child
 But I'm supposed to be the future
 Because I'm an adult
 Make it make sense
 Tell me
 I'm old enough to understand
 Speak to me like I'm five
 What am I to you?
 What am I?

The Cyberbully

Sadie Rogers was new at Hamilton Middle School. She just moved from Utah because of her mom's (Penny Rogers) new job. Also, because of dealing with a recent divorce. When she got there, she was really nervous. Her first class was science with Mrs. Silversmith.

"Class, this is Sadie Rogers. She is going to join our class. Can someone be her buddy to show her around the school?"

Everyone raised their hand, except for Amanda Thompson,

Nicole Lewis and Megan Campbell. They were always the most popular girls in the school. They were obviously jealous.

There was this app called KlikClok. 90% of the school had it. Since Sadie had just joined the app and she was popular in school, she had 2000 followers in minutes. On KlikClok you can only follow 300 people. Since a lot of people wanted to follow Sadie, they all unfollowed Amanda, Nicole and Megan.

"That's the last straw, we have to do something," said Amanda.

The next day, the trio stole

Sadie's phone from her locker, and posted a embarrassing picture of her doing homework. They edited it to be really embarrassing, hoping it would take Sadie down.

But people didn't laugh at it or make mean comments. People started to ignore the trio, because it was so mean. Amanda, Nicole and Megan got in trouble and had to apologize to Sadie, and they had to stay after school to clean Mr. Zeno (the principal's) office until 6:30! The worst part is they got even angrier that their trick didn't work.

Only Megan felt bad, so bad that she decided to make a change. Nicole and Amanda were mad at Megan for ditching the trio to become friends with Sadie.

Sadie posted on KlikClok that she was heading to a coffee shop called "Game of Scones" with Megan and Kristin. There, Mandy (Amanda) and Nicole would plan something else. When Mandy and Nicole got there, they saw something shocking. There was a NO ENTER sign with Amanda and Nicole's faces and information on the poster.

"Sorry, Amanda and Nicole, because you were accused of Cyberbullying on KlikClok, you are no longer allowed in Game of Scones until we see proof that you are sorry for being mean," said the manager. "We have a strict 'no bullying' policy."

They were literally carried out by bodyguards. Amanda started to feel bad about making fun of Sadie. Nicole was like the ringleader of the trio, so Amanda left Nicole and apologize to Sadie. Nicole just ignored Mandy and Megan. The video on KlikClok was viral so all her favorite restaurants and places to go didn't allow her in. Amanda and Megan recorded a video of them apologizing so they were allowed back in their favorite places to go. They learned the hard way to never cyberbully ever again. 🐾

The Spartan's Story

By: Christian Booker

It was boiling hot outside, so I was super grateful to jump in the pool we had in our backyard. It was great! My best friend, Mia, always said I was the happiest guy in the world. Honestly, that statement didn't really last. Well, back to my story.

Here's some stuff about me. Until I turned 7, my father played pro football as a defensive back, most of his career on the Eagles, then some on the Broncos and a year on the Ravens. He has 4 Super Bowl rings, 12 Pro Bowls out of his 13-year career, 7-time defensive player of the year, 1 MVP, one super bowl MVP, and he entered the hall of fame 4 years ago. I took after my father, and now I play varsity football. I'm the starting quarterback. I'm a big build, 6'1", weighing in at 205lb. My coaches all say I am a physical monster.

My mother worked as an actress, but she stopped acting years ago to take care of me and my 12-year-old brother. I'm not sure if it was the drinking, or my brother, or me, but last year, depression overcame her, and she took her own life.

Now, I'm 16.

I was swimming for a while when my father called me to the front. Obediently, I went. I was frustrated since I was midway through a lap. My spirits were immediately lifted when I saw Mia talking to my dad in the front yard.

"Let her go." I called to him. He told us to have fun, and Mia jogged over to me. I quickly said hi and cannonballed into the pool, completely soaking her. We played around in the pool for a couple of hours, then she left, and I went inside to take a shower.

After that, I went downstairs and watched some TV. A couple of hours went by and I noticed the clock. It was getting late, so I went to bed. I dreamt of my mother, our last few memories together. My favorite was when we went to Hershey Park. It was a super fun trip, my smile never faltering those three days. All of a sudden, the memory of her dead body flashed up, and I woke abruptly. I was distressed when I woke, so I decided to

The future that lies ahead is brighter than the past you left behind

put on Deadpool.

The date was July 13th, 2017. I will always remember this day.

I finished Deadpool and went to have some scrambled eggs. My family were all there, eating as well. I had a quick discussion with them about football upcoming this year, how the Denver Broncos would be super good (I'm a Broncos fan) then I headed to my car and drove off, my destination being the football field. Long story short? I never got there.

He was drunk. At 11:30 in the morning! He was swerving all over the place, and my stomach contracted when I noticed he was headed straight for me. I tried to turn, but I guess I wasn't quick enough. He ran head on into me, and I lost consciousness.

The next time I woke up, I was in a dark room. I had no idea what it was, but I was in pain. My leg was throbbing, as was my head. My hands were cuffed to a chair.

"I don't know this place," I said, thinking aloud.

"No, you don't." A deep voice from a speaker above my head.

"Where am I? Who are you?" I desperately asked questions, unaware of what the answers would be.

"My identity is not a priority. As for your location, you are in an underwater Spartan facility."

I was extremely confused. "What is Spartan? And why am I here?" I shoot back.

"You will be training for the next three years to become a Spartan." the voice said.

Suddenly I was in my house, out of my chair, feeling absolutely no pain. I spotted my father.

"Thank god, dad. You won't believe--" I tried to hug him, but I went right through him.

"Wha-" I sputtered. The voice came once again:

"First rule: never go home. Never try to escape. We will not hesitate to publicly terminate you."

Then everything went dark.

To be continued... 🐾



By: Ava Ritterman

Amazing Pixar Short Films

By Eliana Lieber

Pixar is an amazing film company, known for their breathtaking animation and heart-wrenching storylines, but their projects don't just stop at movies. Did you know the studio started out with short films, and then went on to movies? They still hold to that tradition with amazing shorts, both old and new. They have a Spark Short program, where animators make shorts with limited time and budgets, and all of them are beautiful. The shorts listed here are only some from the long list, but they are all amazing and inspiring. All of these, and more can be found on Disney Plus or on YouTube.

Bao- This is a very creepy short. I know it's a metaphor, but... Her son IS. A. DUMPLING. The end, though. I get the idea for this short, but why?! Let us know what you think after watching. Enjoy!

Purl- Why do spiders weave webs? Because they don't know how to crochet! Ahahaha...no? This is a really sweet Spark Short about being yourself. The animation is beautiful, and the premise is adorable! There are actual life lessons knit into it, and it is unbelievable that they made it in 6 months! Hehehe. Okay, I'll stop.

Lava- This one is a song! It is about a volcano that want to find 'Lava'. It is animated gorgeously and has a beautiful song. It is really sweet. The volcano is lonely, and sings about it, losing hope after many years. But 'Lava' always wins!

Kit Bull- Oh. My. Goodness. This is the sweetest thing I've ever seen. I definitely watched this more than 8 times, and I plan to watch it many more times. This is my favorite over all of the Pixar short films, it is just so heartfelt! As you might be able to tell, it is about a kitten and a pitbull. In true Pixar fashion, it will make you cry,

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but it all works out in the end. If you are going to watch anything on this list, watch this.

The Blue Umbrella- This short is adorable! The animation is amazing (as usual), and the music! I'm going to have the song stuck in my head until the end of time! We have the two umbrellas in love, and the other inanimate objects working together to get them together! The happy drains are the cutest things!

Partly Cloudy- This short takes place in a universe where babies are brought by storks. But humans aren't the only ones who need children. Animals do too! And not just puppies and kittens. What does the stork who is entrusted to take care of the dangerous animals do? Spoiler: He gets injured. A lot.

Lifted- "Oops." In this short, a cute little alien is trying to abduct someone (yes, he is our protagonist) and is failing miserably at it. There are just so many buttons, and he has only 2 arms! Let's just say, it is amazing that the human is still alive and leave it at that.

Geri's Game- This one was released in 1997, after Toy Story, but before Toy Story 2, and you can tell. Anyone who's ever watched Toy Story can tell you that the humans don't look very realistic. Compared to today, they look like toys, which is why Pixar started with a story revolving around them. Geri's game was something that really impacted Pixar, allowing them to branch out into movies revolving around other creatures. This expansion into making realistic humans was very impressive, just showing how groundbreaking Pixar can be. Okay, enough history. This short is... interesting. It tells the story of a lonely, senile, senior citizen playing a chess game against himself. He switches sides, playing

both black and white pieces, and his personality differs from one side to another. It is a beautiful short, with an intriguing story. I recommend this.

For the Birds- Okay, these little birds may be mean and annoying, but they sure are cute. This short tells the story of karma, and how you should not leave others out or they will make it so that all of your feathers fall out and laugh at you. (Watch the short, it'll make sense. Or not. I'm not sure.)

Burrow- This is a cute, detailed, short about asking for help, and opening up to people. We have our little bunny, making her first burrow, but she runs into other animals who try to help her, but she wants to do it by herself. Eventually, she needs to learn how to ask for help, or everybody is doomed. 🐾

Kate's Top Disney Picks

By: Kate Abrams



Disney Movies Trough the Decades

By Isabella Arco and Sophia Levy

Disney is an amazing film company, with some incredible movies and an amazing creative style. They started with shorts, such as Steamboat Willie and Silly Symphonies, but in 1937, they created the first animated feature-length film ever, Snow White! Since then, they have produced many features, from hand-drawn animation, to live action, to CGI! They bought Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars, National Geographic, and other studios, and continue to make stellar movies to this day. Here are some of our favorites by the decade, from the 30s to now, and some fun facts!

1937- Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs:

- Walt Disney wanted to keep Snow White, played by Adriana Caselotti, voice as a special one-time sound and had a necessary signed contract that she would never have a real singing part in any movie, even though she was a trained singer.
- All the dwarfs were modeled after real people.



1940- Pinocchio:

- Working models for all Geppetto's cuckoo clocks were built as guides for the animators.
- The budget for the film was originally \$500,000 but turned into being one of the most expensive films at the time costing \$2.5 million.

1951- Alice in Wonderland:

- This animated film has more characters and songs than any other Disney film.
- The voice of Alice, (Kathryn Beaumont) also narrates the "Alice in Wonderland" ride at Disney.



1961- One Hundred and One Dalmatians:

- Clarence Nash (voice of Donald Duck) did the dog barks for this film.
- The dogs are not white, they are very light grey. White would have been too bright on screen.

1976- Freaky Friday:

- Actress Jodie Foster was offered the Princess Leia role in Star Wars: Episode IV- A New Hope when she was still under contract for Disney. She could have gotten out of the contract but chose to stick by Disney.
- The date of the "Freaky Friday" in the movie was on a Friday the 13th.



1989- The Little Mermaid:

- The Little Mermaid is the first Disney film based on a fairy tale since Sleeping Beauty (1959).
- Ariel is the first Disney princess to have biological siblings.

1992- Aladdin:

- During the song "A Whole New World", the Carpet flew over the mainland of the Lion King.
- According to the production designer, Gemma Jackson states that the courtyard of the palace contains a thousand-year-old olive tree that is still living.

2008- Iron Man:

- Stan Lee originally based Tony Stark on Howard Hughes because of all experiences he has experienced as an inventor, an adventurer, multimillionaire and other characteristics.
- A draft of the early script had Tony Stark as the creator of Dr. Otto Octavius tentacles from Spider-Man 2 (2004).



2016- The Jungle Book:

- The thousand of reference pictures of the jungle came from remote jungle locations in India which were photographed.
- This version of the movie was released in 2016 which was about 1 year away from the 50th Anniversary of Walt Disney's classic and the original Jungle Book (1967).

2020- Soul:

- An ad on the subway is for the startup company "Brang" which is the company that Riley's dad moved to San Francisco in the movie Inside Out (2015).
- This film had a traditional release in countries that don't have Disney+, where theaters have reopened. 🐾

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Underrated Animated Disney Movies You NEED to Watch

By: Angela Bediako

The Aristocats: When a retired opera singer leaves everything to her cat, Duchess and her three kittens, the butler kidnaps them and leaves them in the countryside to fend for themselves so he can inherit the fortune himself. Lost and helpless, the kittens meet Thomas O'Malley, an alley cat who is willing to help them find their home. Along the way they meet many odd characters, including two English geese and an alley cat jazz band. This movie was very fun to watch. It has great songs and even better characters!

Brother Bear: Kenai, an Indian hunter, has a strong hatred for bears. When his brother gets killed by one, Kenai retaliates by going after the bear himself. Suddenly, he's transformed into the thing he hates most: a bear! His older brother vows to kill the bear that he has become. To break this 'curse,' he must travel to a magical mountain. On the way, he meets a bear cub named Koda, who helps him on the journey. This movie is really funny and gives you a sense of what it's like to bond with a stranger!

Treasure Planet: Jim Hawkins is a fifteen-year old rebel and slacker whose life is filled with stories of other planets. When a map to the greatest pirate treasure trove in the universe is given to him by a pirate named Billy Bones, he becomes determined to find it. This movie follows him on his path to the mysterious

treasure island. This movie is action packed and full of adventure.

Emperor's New Groove: When a selfish 18-year-old Aztec emperor named Kuzco selfishly decided to destroy an entire village for his own personal water park, karma comes back around to get him. He barely avoids getting killed by his former advisor, but to their surprise, he turns into a llama. After escaping, he uses the help of of the representative from the village he was planning on destroying named Paca. This movie is all sorts of funny and it is just overall so fun to watch!

The Jungle Book (Original): No, not the live action one you've all heard of! This movie is about Mowgli a human boy trapped in an animal world. After being raised by lions he is sent out on his own. There he meets a bear called Baloo. Baloo teaches Mowgli the 'bear' necessities and how to live life the fun way. This movie has lots of great songs and dances.

Robin Hood (original): This is the story of a fox named Robin Hood and his merry animals. Robin fights against the taxation and harsh punishment of the Lion Prince John in Nottingham. At the same time, he's trying to win the hand of maid Marian. This involves so much singing, dancing, and action. 🐾



The Tigress

Question: "If you have a crush on a girl, and you have a feeling that she likes you back but gives you major friend vibes what should you do?"

Tigress: My advice isn't 100% guaranteed to work, but I can try to tell you what I can out of honesty. Tell her your feelings, when you're comfortable, but also make her feel comfortable to tell her true feelings, too. If she doesn't like you, oh well. Getting rejected isn't a bad thing, and if you do, it's not the end of the world. You'll find a girl you'll spend the rest of your life with one day - it doesn't have to be today!

Question: "What should you do if you can't see a friend anymore because somebody won't let you?"

Tigress: Again, my advice isn't 100% solid. It depends on the situation. If it's your parents telling you not to hang out with someone there might be a reason. They could want to protect you or maybe something else happened that they didn't like. On the other hand, a different friend could be keeping you from seeing your friend. Either way you should talk to them about it. Ask them why you can't talk to your friend anymore. Listen to what they have to say and determine whether it's a valid reason for not wanting you to see that friend. I hope my advice helped!

Question: "How do you ask somebody out?"

Tigress: Good question. You shouldn't make a grand gesture or make it a big deal unless they want it to be a big deal. I'd say ask them out face to face, even with the pandemic, just do it with your mask on. Personally, I don't like being asked out virtually. Don't make it a big deal out of it, you'll seem desperate and look crazy. Know their interests, ask them out for ice cream if your new friend likes ice cream. You could get advice from the person you're asking out's friends and see what they would like. People appreciate it when you care about them and take the time to do something for them. Be okay with the reaction you get. Don't try and put any pressure on the person you're asking out. Ask them to go somewhere, be calm about it and don't freak out. I repeat DON'T FREAK OUT! It'll be fine. 🐾

More questions? Fill out the form [here](#) to get some advice from The Tigress.

