

the RUNNERSSTONE



pp. 4-5

Paper Shortage

pp. 6

Climate Change

pp. 7-8

Fashion Trends

pp. 9-10

SAT Online

pp. 11

Silenced Anger

pp. 12

Coming of Age

pp. 13-14

Formula One

pp. 15-16

College Classism

pp. 16

Sincerely, Lena

pp. 17-19

Dance Moms

Table of Contents

The Runestone Staff

Piper Wilson Editor in Chief
Angel Tang Editor in Chief
David Wang Layout Chief
Grace Bennett Layout Chief
Mrs. Curtis Advisor
Mrs. Muoio Advisor

Staff Writers

Grace Chihoski • Nakai Chinogwenya
Rena Li • Jisu Oh
Yasmeen Rifai • Julia Sun
Lena Tan • Josiah Thomas

Staff Editors

Leah Charatz • Andrew Shen
Grace Chihoski • Nakai Chinogwenya
Lauren Gerew • Rena Li •
London Lindley • Jisu Oh • Vinay Pendri
Yasmeen Rifai • Josiah Thomas

Staff Layout

Holy Kim Cover Art

Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

We are so excited to bring to you the 10th edition of The Runestone! This edition addresses the ongoing paper shortage (and other Junior Struggles, brought to you by Angel). We examine how to help climate change and follow fashion trends, as well as the changes to the SAT and to Formula One racing. The rising popularity of *Euphoria* makes its way into Nakai's Coming of Age article, and we examine the role of anger, privilege in the college search, and drama in our lives. As always, we welcome you to submit to pmhsnewspaper@gmail.com. We would love to feature your unique voices, Mendon!
—Piper Wilson

The Great Paper Shortage

By Angel Tang

Hello again. I really need to find a new way to start these. “Hello” was so 2021. Maybe howdy? That’s the COVID talking—just ignore it. (Not only do you lose your sense of smell to the virus but also your sense of humor; my brother is living proof.) I am back and unhealthier than ever.

I heard that Mr. Yager has been ranting about the paper shortage as much as he does the Mongols (and his trip to Japan), which means at this point the shortage is pretty much part of the AP World curriculum. Maybe it can replace the Mexican Revolution? I bet the shortage was caused by the extra blank page that was in all of the winter editions of the Runestone. All I know is it was not caused by my computer science teacher, because she is nice enough not to make us write our code by hand. It’s a very environmentally friendly class.

If you guys are reading this article, let’s all bring in a stack of printer paper tomorrow, so I don’t need to take any more hot pink bio tests (there is only colored paper left). Just so you know, a hot pink powerhouse of the cell is just as blurry as a black and white one (image quality matters Mr. Smith, please stop choosing 140 x 220 images off Google). Also, so my teachers don’t have to continue printing out our unit packets on toilet paper. I would like to be able to erase my mistakes (which are many) without worrying about ripping the page.

A major change has happened in my life. My favorite class used to be 4-minute passing time, but now it’s officially gym. Meditation for life, baby! They finally answered our cries for nap time. Even

though we sleep on paper-thin (the irony) yoga mats and there is some 33-year-old Aussie guy sitting in the dark on a mattress in his mom’s basement speaking into his Samsung mini-fridge in the background (his life may be falling apart but at least he

meditates!) telling us to find our inner sheep (tbh, mine is just a really thin goat)* and to let our cheeks sag (I get it in the name of relaxation, but I will take stressful cheeks over saggy couch cushion ones any day), it is still amazing. There is no sweeter heaven than a recently disinfected yoga mat laid on by 7 students before me, my winter coat laying on my body, the hood over my face, music in my ears, and being shaken awake

by Ms. Thompson after 40 minutes. The only complaint I have is the shaking. But still: 10/10 would recommend you try the meditation unit in gym.

Oh, another update. I got my license. If I, Angel Tang (who is on a first name basis with the federal authorities), can get my license, you can too. Just make sure to tell the instructor her nails are nice, so she doesn’t take points off when your airbags chip them. Also make sure to look through the windshield when driving, not the passenger window even though the kids



My driving instructor’s nails. They are honestly too glittery for me, but I really needed that license.

in the house are watching Cocomelon's "Are we there yet?". Also know how to get from the village back to Mendon so you don't "accidentally" end up at Taichi during 5th period and "accidentally" order a large taro milk tea with popping boba.

Apologies to Ms. Labarr, my CS teacher, who has



Microsoft Word's AI put this stock image in to "help further my argument." So here it is for your viewing pleasure and so you can understand my argument better. Thanks Word. Where were you when I was writing my Scarlet Letter essay?

to deal with me mourning my math grade every time we have a math test because I have CS right after math. She has seen my lowest lows because of these tests and that's saying a lot seeing as I code in her class (she has seen me struggle with making a list of the characters of the alphabet (what comes after the letter k?)). I even made an infinite campus program in CS (I like to call it finite campus) so I could calculate my math grade before my teacher puts in test grades but I'm not a good programmer and so my math grade kept on coming out as negative but I was not in a state that could logically process that a negative grade is physically not possible (but emotionally it is) so I was just over there sobbing about my negative 23 in math (pretty sure that is equivalent to a U for UFI: unidentified flying idiot. Or J for Jesus will always love you. Or maybe it's equivalent to an M aka McDonald's is always hiring. Or K. For ketchup.). Plus, I still didn't know what letter came

after k (luckily no one could see my snot because we are wearing masks.)

Also, did I mention I got my SAT score? No? Yeah, probably because I did worse on the math section than I did the English. But who cares what the ratio of male deer to female deer is? Now that I have my licenses, that ratio is about to be 0 to 0. And why is it wrong that I calculated the ratio of male to female deer instead of female to male deer? Gender is a social construct. The deer I was working with are non-binary.

By the way, the Costco version of CollegeBoard



This alfredo is in the top 99th percentile in the nation for the PSAT. As it should be.

(aka me) just announced that the SAT now stands for Stuck At Target. So, if someone could come get me from Target, that would be greatly appreciated; I ran out of gas. Oh, and the PSAT of course stands for Pasta Sauce Aptitude Test. Alfredo can get a 1530 and Marinara can get a 10.

*search up "Guided Meditation by Sleepy Sheep if you don't know what I'm talking about (Spanish 2 kids know what's up)

Climate Change



Climate change. We can't seem to go a single day without hearing about it. From the wildfires in California to our melting glaciers, climate change is everywhere we look. We can't avoid it. Even now, our oceans are being polluted with waste such as plastic, petroleum waste, agricultural runoff, algal blooms, and so much more. Our earth is barely surviving. The ozone layer is deteriorating. We ALL have to do something. If we do not, countless ecosystems will die. That is the harsh reality of it

By Julia Sun

all.

In 2020, ocean temperatures increased a 0.13% degrees Fahrenheit. Now in 2022, we are at more than double that rate...

You see if we don't do something now, it'll only get worse. You might be thinking, "what can I do to slow down climate change?" Well, if everyone just got electric cars the ozone layer probably wouldn't be "disappearing" as rapidly as it is right now. Of course, not everyone can afford to buy an electric car, but there are many other ways you can help stop climate change.

1. Walk/bike whenever possible. This will lessen your carbon footprint as cars release many fossil fuels.
2. Buy local meat and milk—this will also lessen your carbon footprint as a car won't be needed to transport these foods to stores.
3. TURN OFF THE LIGHTS.
4. Take shorter showers. You really don't need to be in there for more than 3 hours...
5. If you are able, power your home with renewable energy using technology like solar panels.

These are just a few suggestions. You can do so much to help this world as long as you are conscious of how your actions affect our environment. So, the next time you are eating a burger, think about all the carbon footprints that it has left on this world and then think about how the ozone layer is like dying and maybe, just maybe, you will eat fewer burgers so that whole series of carbon footprinting will happen a lot less often.



Fashion Trends of 2022: How to be Trendy Without Over-Consuming

With a new year comes a new set of trends, and while it's by no means required to follow them, it can be fun to try them out

By Yasmeen Rifai

yourself. Unfortunately, it is not so fun for the planet when everybody rushes out to buy new clothes that will end up circulating out of their closets and into landfills as soon as different trends emerge. That's why I'm here to fill you in on the upcoming trends of 2022, and ways to participate in them without hurting the planet. Because nothing looks better than a green outfit.

The Trend: Oversized Blazers

<http://www.laiamagazine.com/best-looks-with-blazers-fall/> <http://www.laiamagazine.com/colorful-blazers-trend-spring-2021/> <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/714834722861555693/> <https://www.whowhatwear.com/oversized-blazer-outfits>



The blazer is no longer reserved just for the office, it can now be worn in the hallways. Blazers in all different styles are in this year: bold colors, muted tones, plaids, and prints. The similarity between all the blazers we're seeing is an oversized cut and fit. Luckily, you can achieve this baggy yet put-together look by raiding your parents' closets (with permission, of course). Throw it over a collared shirt and



some jeans, or try dressing it down, pairing it with leggings and sneakers. Whatever way you wear it, with the right accessories, this trend works for everyone!

The Trend: Leg Warmers

<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/806496245721521743/> <https://www.whowhatwear.com/winter-accessory-trends-2022/slide35> [https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=outfits%20with%20leg%20warmers&rs=typed&term_metal\]=outfits%20with%20leg%20warmers%20typed](https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=outfits%20with%20leg%20warmers&rs=typed&term_metal]=outfits%20with%20leg%20warmers%20typed)



This comfy trend is one we'll be seeing a lot of this year. Knit leg warmers are a great way to look cute even when it's chilly outside. They instantly tie an outfit together and can be paired with platform boots, loafers, and even chunky sneakers. Instead of buying a pair, use what you already have to DIY your own. An old pair of thick winter socks or knit tights can be transformed into leg warmers with just a few snips. If you want to go the extra mile, there are lots of great tutorials online on how to knit your own. You can style your new



leg warmers with a skirt for a more preppy look, or with leggings for a day when you're feeling more casual.

The Trend: Faux Fur-Trimmed Coats

https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=Fur%20trim%20coat%20y2k&rs=srs&b_id=BMNrsFCFL_KmAAAAAADAADbKXUJwd2l8cCUQ-7j-JGmsRkhw8tixmyino_WiaU73JCh-CXaxwXH2yfa0e6l&source_id=fp_7L4X55ow



This early 2000's trend is having a major resurgence in 2022. These fur-trimmed jackets balance the line of being classy yet still fresh and fun. This timeless piece is a great staple to have in your closet. The good news: you don't have to break the bank to get this look. Most thrift stores and Goodwill's have a coat section, and with a little digging, you can find one lightly used for an affordable price. Scoring a find like this at the thrift store can sometimes be even more satisfying than buying something new. Since this coat is versatile and will go with almost anything in your closet, it's sure to be something worn daily.

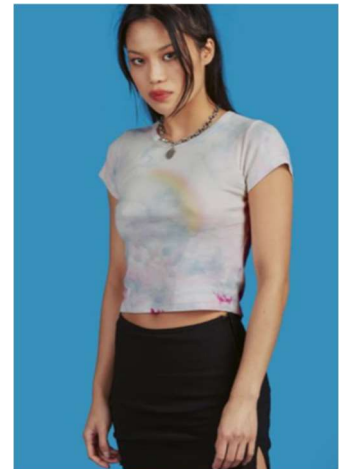


The Trend: Baby Tees

[https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=baby%20tees%20outfits%20aesthetic&cs=typed&term_meta\[\]=baby%7Ctyped&term_meta\[\]=tees%7Ctyped&term_meta\[\]=outfits%7Ctyped&term_meta\[\]=aesthetic%7Ctyped](https://www.pinterest.com/search/pins/?q=baby%20tees%20outfits%20aesthetic&cs=typed&term_meta[]=baby%7Ctyped&term_meta[]=tees%7Ctyped&term_meta[]=outfits%7Ctyped&term_meta[]=aesthetic%7Ctyped)



Yup, baby tees are a trend that will be continuing into this year. Easy to throw on, these tees emulate the early styles of Paris Hilton and Britney Spears. This look may already be waiting for you in your closet, but may take a few steps to achieve. Any t-shirt, if it's made of cotton or some other stretchy fabric, is sure to shrink. Just throw your tee of choice into the washer and dryer, and after a few times, you'll



have a top that can be worn in a revamped way. If you feel the shirt is still at an awkward length, you can also crop the shirt yourself. The baby tee can be worn with any pants, but if you really want to go for the whole ensemble, pair it with low-waisted jeans and some Converse.

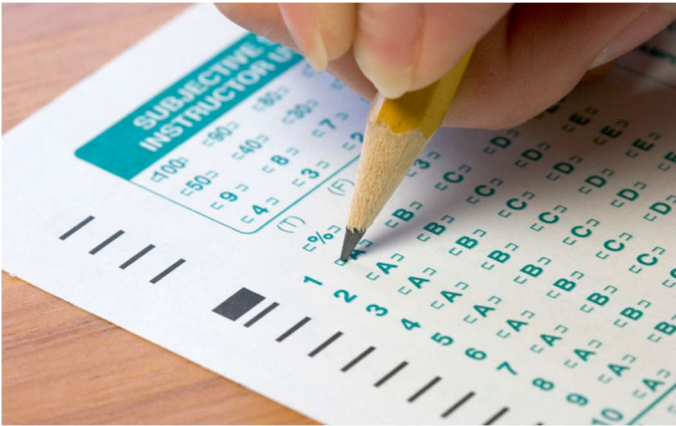
There are lots of alternatives to buying when it comes to the latest trends. All it takes is a little creativity and willingness to think outside of the box. This small amount of effort pays off in the long run, and you can feel good about knowing that your choices are benefiting, not hurting, the environment. Trends come and go, but our planet will be here forever.

SAT Going Online:

Is this the End of Standardized Testing?

When you think of the SAT, what do you imagine? Hordes of stressed high schoolers clustered in a room for three hours, nervously scribbling through a thick packet of answers? SAT—these three letters hold so much weight in the academic world.

By Rena Li



I wasn't very old when I heard about this test for the first time. To a young child at that time, it seemed like the "test of all tests," the prerequisite to get into college. I knew about older kids who had started prepping, who took practice test after practice test, chasing after a score that they would deem acceptable. You might have siblings, friends, or neighbors that have taken it. After so many years, this universal experience for high school students may be fading into obscurity.

Of course, as time passed, I began to realize how drastically the SAT has changed over the years. College admissions have also evolved, raising the question: how important are standardized tests, really? Standardized tests like the SAT are one thing that sets our admissions process apart from other countries, where a major test essentially decides your future. Take South Korea for example, where students take the CSAT, or "Suneung." Your merit is determined by score; no essays or extracurriculars come into play here.

In contrast, at American universities, applications take a more holistic approach, considering everything from GPA and test scores to extracurriculars, essays, and interviews. How stressful would it be if your entire future depended on the SAT alone?

In recent years, college admissions in the US have undergone some major changes. With the COVID-19 pandemic hitting schools all around the nation, we saw our lives turn around in a matter of months. SAT testing centers were reduced drastically, and the number of students taking the test dramatically decreased. It was inevitable that universities and their admissions offices took this huge shift into account. Many schools decided to go "test-blind", where scores aren't considered no matter whether they are sent or not. Schools also went "test-optional", where you could choose to send in your score. Sources have shown that out of about 2,300 four-year universities, 80% did not require the SAT for this year's

“SAT - three letters that held so much weight in the academic world.”

graduating class. As a result, the importance of the SAT has faded, placing more importance on other factors in college applications.

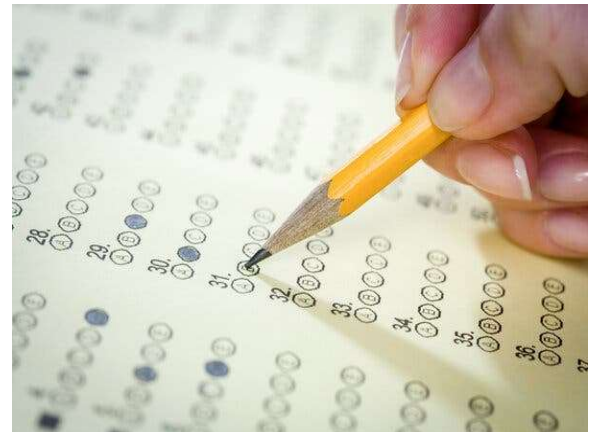
You may have heard about it from the news or word of mouth, but the latest big change to the SAT is approaching sometime in the next 3 years. What was once a paper test will now be transformed into an online exam, effective 2023 for international students and 2024 for USA students. For you lucky freshmen who hate standardized testing, 2024 might be your year. The new SAT will be 2 hours instead of 3, with shorter reading passages and an overall shorter

“Only time can tell, but it is evident that standardized testing is seeing a decline in its importance.”

reading section. The math section, which was once split into a non-calculator and calculator portion, will allow calculators on the entire thing. Additionally, the test will be adaptive, which means that the questions will change in difficulty to align with your progress. Unlike before, scores will be visible in days rather than weeks. The huge transformation to the SAT also factors in the debate about its equity, as marginalized groups such as minority and low-income students suffer from disadvantages due to standardized testing. These students may not have access to tutoring, resources, or

experiences due to uncontrollable factors.

As we see these huge changes taking place in the foreseeable future, there is a question to be raised: what about the other standardized tests? Some other notable tests, also administrated by CollegeBoard (thanks, blue acorn!), include the AP exams and the ACT. Certain states and school districts also utilize standardized testing, such as the SHSAT in New York City to test into specialized high schools. The SAT may be the first step forward in the elimination of standardized testing. During COVID, the AP exams were heavily modified to be taken online, and that window for change is still open.

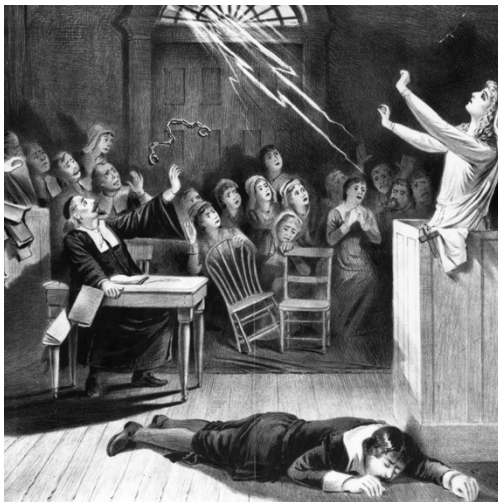


Silenced Anger

By Jisu Oh

Anger is invested in the world. It's a passionate response to injustice and violation and reflects your own morals and beliefs. Anger is experienced internally but is influenced by cultural and external factors, such as societal expectations and prohibitions. It's a natural feeling everyone has felt, shared across race, gender, nationality, and throughout generations. Then why is it taught differently? Girls, specifically, are encouraged to repress their anger, to swallow it down and neatly tuck it behind silence or calm or politeness or awkward laughs or tight-lipped smiles or timidity or—

I could continue that list for a long time. I think anyone could. We learn from a young age to regard anger as unfeminine and unattractive: angry girls are seen as crazy and uncontrolled, while traditional masculinity is reinforced by anger. Girls are expected to hide their anger, while men's emotions (anger, all of them, or just too much of them) are able to be released, seen, and acknowledged. This is evident in how society views display of anger between race and gender, particularly in the U.S. White men are portrayed as "justifiable and patriotic" in their anger, while black men are criminalistic, and black women threatening. Men, in general, are often praised for displays of their anger—they are taught to be righteous and unashamed of their rage, painted as chivalrous and confident for the unsolicited brashness society shames women for.



Anger in women is constantly associated with "madness" and abnormality. A human emotion, seen as abnormal when displayed by a woman. When anger is separated from what is considered "natural" and "proper" womanhood, women are separated from the very thing that protects against danger and injustice. Instead of being taught to acknowledge or manage our anger, women are taught to fear, hide, and transform it. The fact that women continue to trivialize and ignore their anger demonstrate our knowledge of the consequences when we do share our rage.

When did I start referring to girls as women? How long have our girls been women? We've certainly been treated like them since childhood. More mature, more controlled, more polite, more reserved, less angry. Or not angry at all. Leave your raw, vulnerable anger behind your ribcage and etch every unsaid word into the bottom of your tongue.

Anger is always accessible, but it might take a great deal of pain and fear to actually let it out. A hitch of breath before a shout, a demand, a complaint. Your courage was left behind when a boy whispered she's so dramatic or god, she's overreacting, what a bitch. But anger has always stayed with you, a relentlessly loyal wave pulling back, crashing. Pulling back, crashing. Swallowing down, breaking. Pulling back, crashing.

It's okay to embrace every one of your emotions—no matter how despising, no matter how resentful, no matter what people (or you) will think of yourself. To understand, validate, and acknowledge a feeling is one of the most important ways to love yourself, as cheesy as that may sound. Who will be kind to you if not yourself? Who will love your anger, unkept and wild, if not yourself? Continuously repressing a genuine feeling—a sincere reaction—only harms you. If we are to be women, we have to learn as girls to be able to acknowledge our anger. To have the freedom to express it, to learn to control it. How will we learn now, if hiding and ignoring is all we can do?

Coming of Age

By Nakai Chinogwenya

Being seventeen is an extraordinary time in your life. You're on the edge of becoming an adult. With this comes independence and newfound individuality. We listen to evocative songs about falling in love, watch sentimental TV shows, connect to the experiences of the characters, and read captivating books that let us limitlessly expand our imagination. I often label the most boring events in my life as euphoric when they are far from it, aspiring for that picture-perfect life at 17. Not only do I romanticize boring events, but I also actively try and make my life more interesting. This has landed me and plenty of others in a lot of trouble. But that's the fun of it: stories to tell your kids and grandkids about all the insane things you did as a teenager.

Even though the reality of our teenage lives doesn't match the ones depicted on TV, don't let yourself be confined by the norm. Lead the life you want. If you want your life to be more like the ones on TV, what's stopping you from living out your dreams? Turn all those mundane, dull moments that are currently clogging up your life into something spectacular. Listen to your favorite song or soundtrack from a favorite movie or TV show while walking to class. Make Pinterest boards or do your homework at a cute café in the city. From personal experience, actively trying to make your life better will make you feel more productive and a more interesting person. Making yourself seem more fascinating poses a lot of benefits including better chances of making friends, deeper conversations, and it makes you stand out. When you invest time and energy into yourself, life can go from gloomy to sunny in a matter of seconds.



Personally, my favorite thing to do is go driving with friends, music blasting as we cruise down the road, not a worry in sight. Remember earlier when I said sometimes, I get myself into trouble? Well, this is one of those times. As me and my friends are driving and singing, I stick my head out of the car window, hoping to have a *Perks of Being a Wallflower* moment. My head goes out the window, my glasses go flying off into the night. As stressful as it was, I felt a sense of gratification, knowing that my older self would look back at this moment and laugh at my youth. Because that feeling you get when all the windows are down, your hair is flying in the wind, your favorite songs are pounding through speakers, all your problems fade away, even just for a little while.



The last thing I would like to stress is taking photos. Take videos. Not to post, but just to have. Even if you feel nothing interesting is happening. A lot of people save photo taking for momentous events which have led documentation to hold a lot of significance. But what a lot of people do not recognize is that every moment is important. Every moment is a celebration. Every moment is a core memory.

New Season, Big Changes

By Josiah Thomas

The new season of Formula One brings a new generation of cars to the sport, including the biggest changes since 2014. New cars, new rules, and a new driver lineup have this season of F1 racing anticipated to be the most exciting season yet.

The Last Gen

Physical changes are one of the driving forces for the evolution of any sport, especially motorsport. The generation of cars that have been thriving from 2014 to 2021 were outstanding when performing alone on track, but difficulty arises when they race against other cars. They had a great run with their barge boards, over-body aerodynamic components, and thirteen-inch tires. This generation of cars create immense



amounts of downforce to keep the car on the ground during high-speed cornering. The only problem with this downforce is that extreme amounts of “dirty air” (turbulent air that proceeds from the back of the car) highly deter close racing and passing, as it causes the following car to have lowered downforce as a result. This major problem was originally caused by the extensively complicated aerodynamic components such as the front wing, bargeboards, and rear wing; these are now all being drastically changed for the 2022 season.

(The w12, Mercedes’ last iteration of the previous gen car,

seen on left)

New Car, Who This?

The new aerodynamic components include a simpler front and rear wing, side skirts, floor tunnels, wheel covers, tire winglets, and an improved rear diffuser. These components all have one goal: maintain downforce while decreasing dirty air. The components only reduce the downforce of the following car by 4% at 20 meters (65.6 feet) and an 18% reduction at 10 meters (32.8 feet) compared to the respective 35% and 46% reductions of the previous gen cars. The cars use the Bernoulli principle (as speed increases, pressure decreases) through the tunnels in the floor to replace the downforce lost through the simplification of other parts.

The aero isn't the only thing changing on the physical car—wheels and tires will be changed for the new season, too. The old cars had 13-inch wheels that were encased in tires with hefty sidewalls. These tires did part of the job of the suspension—the tires absorbed small bumps and inconsistencies in the track. But with the new design, it has 18-inch wheels enclosed by tires with lower sidewall profiles, forcing teams to improve suspension systems to maintain proper contact with the track. The cars will also now have air pressure sensors, preventing teams from running pressures that are below the recommended pressures, which were potential causes of two of the crashes at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix last season. The modification of the wheels and tires is not focused on aerodynamics, but a simple effort to make the cars more modern. The one major carry-over from the last season is the 1.6 Liter turbo hybrid engine. This will only be slightly modified for the upcoming season, as no new regulations have been made. Most teams will run improved versions of their previous generation engines, and the intense research and development teams have been doing for the past nine years will surely come into play when deciding the most powerful engine on the grid this season.

[New Rules, If They Even Matter...](#)

New policies are being implemented to the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) rulebook. The amount of new, yet small, innovations that are allowed to be implemented into a car just before a race weekend will be reduced. Some of the parts are newly standardized and will be given exact specifications for parts like the gearbox and fuel system. Not only are the parts standardized, but there is also a reduction in the number of times certain components of the car, like brake pads, can be replaced. A spending limit for teams will be included in the new rules, with a \$175,000,000 cap for teams for anything regarding performance on the track, this does exclude certain aspects like driver pay, marketing costs, and high-ranking team members' pay. This would stop bigger teams from spending much more money on research and development to get an advantage. The race weekends themselves will be condensed to improve fan experiences and assist teams in adjusting to the extended calendar. However, all these rules could easily be thrown out the window on the whim of Michael Masi, the now-former race director for F1 races, who did exactly that on the last race of the 2021 season where he cost Hamilton the championship because of a loophole in the rules that states that the race director can not only ignore all the rules if he chooses to but make new rules on the fly that must be followed.

[New Lineup, New Winners?](#)

With the new season comes a new lineup of drivers. 10 teams, 20 drivers, and a new set of potential race winners. 7-time world champion Lewis Hamilton and former Williams, newly Mercedes, driver George Russell will be racing for Mercedes-AMG Petronas. 2021 world champion Max Verstappen and 2-time race winner Sergio Perez will both be continuing for Red Bull Racing. Scuderia Ferrari continues their strives at the constructor's championship with the combined efforts podium king Carlos Sainz Jr. and Monaco raised Charles Leclerc. Daniel "The Honey Badger" Ricciardo and young talent Lando Norris continue their endeavor at McLaren. Alpine maintains their current drivers of 2-time champion Fernando Alonso and race winner Esteban Ocon. Scuderia AlphaTauri will retain their drivers as well, keeping race winner Pierre Gasly and avid profanity user Yuki Tsunoda in the cars for the upcoming season. 4-time world champion Sebastian Vettel and extremely rich kid Lance Stroll will continue their racing at Aston Martin Cognizant. Williams Racing will see the return of chocolate loving Nicholas Latifi and the return to F1 of a former Red Bull driver, Alex Albon. Alfa Romeo will have a completely different lineup for the new season, taking former Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas and former Formula 2 driver Guanyu Zhou in hopes of a better season. The son of 7-time world champion Michael Schumacher, Mick Schumacher, and the shocking yet very welcomed return of Kevin Magnussen will journey with Haas F1 Team, hoping for at least one point for the team.

[The New Season, Predictions...](#)

The new season will prove to be unpredictable, but I'll make some predictions anyway. Mercedes have been aero and engine kings of the sport since 2014: they have the engineers to properly bring about the new aero requirements, their engine is already perfect, and they've added Russell and still have Hamilton. I assume they won't have any issue remaining at the top of the grid for the season. Red Bull will also probably maintain a high position in the grid for most of the season, with Verstappen and Perez; they'll at least have Verstappen up at the top often. Some of the other teams can't be predicted in terms of placement because of all the changes that are occurring; however, I do expect Haas to get some points and Aston Martin to improve. Despite my semi-biased predictions, only one thing is true, this season will be a spectacle like no other and I highly recommend you watch along with me.

College: Classes and Classism

By Grace Chihoski

During this time of year, one topic dominates all conversation in high school hallways: college. From sophomores realizing it's time for their first PSAT to juniors rushing around the country to tour schools to seniors finding out where they will be spending their next four years, it's all anyone wants to talk about. For the most part, these conversations are well-intended and easygoing. However, many others are condescending, judgmental, and classist.



Most simply defined, classism is when people hold prejudice against someone simply because of their socioeconomic class. At Pittsford Mendon High School, which U.S. News and World Reports claim is only 3% economically disadvantaged, it is easy for many students to make classist statements unintentionally. People repeat things they have heard from parents and peers for their entire lives without realizing the impact those statements could have on others.

One student that I spoke to recalled a fellow student saying, "If college was free it would be far too competitive." Sentiments such as this one can be insensitive as they make it seem like those who can afford to attend highly-ranked, private institutions are in some way better than those who cannot. This student went on to say, "It's not your fault for being born to two doctors just as it's not mine for not." Socioeconomic class is something that students have no control over, making it nonsensical to judge others for factors such as their family money or household income.

Additionally, these massive college expenses are not simply limited to tuition. Many schools, especially elite private colleges and universities, require an application fee which can sometimes tower above \$50. This is a significant amount of money to the vast majority of people, making the concept of paying such a high fee to apply to schools with low acceptance rates seem illogical as the money could potentially just lead to a rejection or waitlist. Not only is it an extreme luxury to be able to consider elite academic institutions, but it is also a significant privilege to even have the opportunity to apply to them without having to stress about potentially wasting money.

Another student detailed their fears about even discussing the schools they applied to, saying, "I mostly applied to SUNYs for financial reasons. I didn't want high application fees or massive student loans that I'll be paying off until I'm 60. My parents can't help me pay for school, and I'm trying to be responsible. I mentioned being excited about getting into SUNY Albany, and a kid in one of my AP classes asked me why I didn't apply to a 'better school-like GW or Tulane.'"

Although comments like these should obviously be seen as passive-aggressive and unacceptable, they are all too common at Mendon. Besides the student I spoke to, many of my other peers have mentioned that they do not plan to reveal which schools they are and are not applying to because they fear judgement from their classmates. Specifically, several expressed concern about negative biases people may have against SUNY schools, community colleges, and trade school/other non-university paths. There is no reality in which this is acceptable or appropriate in any manner. SUNY schools offer great programs for a variety of career paths including pre-med, teaching, and many others. Community colleges programs allow people to enter respectable career paths directly after graduation and offer a financially friendly transitional period for those who do eventually want to go on to a 4-year institution or transfer after receiving an associate's degree. Trade schools are also a fantastic option as mechanics, plumbers, cosmetologists, etc. are all occupations which we rely on at some point.

Overall, we must be more cognizant of our privileged environment. We must all think about what is and is not appropriate to casually drop into a conversation. Even if you feel like it is okay to tell someone your parent(s) are paying to send you to an expensive private school like Northeastern, Vassar, or Boston College, it may come off very differently to somebody who is making the decision not to pursue higher education or going to college with minimal help.

Sincerely, Lena

Q: This year has flown by, and I have to choose my courses for next year. There are so many options and different electives; I am not sure what to take. I don't want to end up with classes I don't enjoy, but I also want to take courses that are challenging and look good for colleges. Help!

A: Although the variety of courses at Mendon provides lots of different opportunities and experiences, the vast number of electives and courses available can be challenging to sort through. When picking a class, consider the following things:

1. How much work does this class entail?

This is a great thing to ask friends or siblings that have already taken the class you are interested in. It's essential to understand the amount of time you will have to put into the class to be successful. You're more likely to get an accurate answer from past students, and this can be extremely helpful in your course selection process. It's important to remember that everyone has a different experience, but this is an effective way to establish your footing.

1. Can I handle this class along with the rest of my courses?

When picking classes, it's crucial to consider how taking each class will impact the other classes you're taking. If you know that you'll be busy with your main core classes and will have less free time, then it's not wise to take electives that require your full attention. Make sure to think about your whole schedule and not just one period!

1. Will this class help me in the future?

Think about what careers or schools you may be interested in for the future and cater your class selections towards those areas! Even if you don't know where you want to end up, it is still vital to contemplate if this class will be helpful in the long run. There are many life skills that are necessary for every discipline (i.e., proficient writing skills, strong public speaking skills, etc.) Choosing classes that will cover these skills and serve you well later in life is something that is often overlooked. Do not just plan for now, plan for your future!

1. Am I actually interested in this subject?

Taking a class because you think it looks good and taking a class because you want to are two different things. Remember, these classes will be either a semester or yearlong, so don't put yourself in a position where you will dread 5th period every day because you signed up for a class you thought "looked good" but have no interest in.

After taking those things into account, you should be good to go! By following these guidelines, I was able to pick out courses that suited me, and hopefully this has helped guide you in the right direction as well! Remember, you can always talk to your counselor or teacher if you have further inquiries. Good luck!

Sincerely,
Lena

Dance Moms: Off the Screen

By Piper Wilson

Abby Lee Miller shocked people worldwide when *Dance Moms* first aired in 2011. Her teaching tactics were intense and often cruel. She screamed at 12-year-old dancers and insulted their body types on camera and made or broke dance careers based on how much she liked a dancer. While Miller's emotional range is much greater than that of my own dance teachers, the world of competitive dance—specifically in Rochester—is not all too different from *Dance Moms*. We tend to think that reality television is fictitious, staged, unreal, but our reality is more similar to the TV depiction than we'd like to admit.

There are still some clear differences between the show and local dancers' experiences. On *Dance Moms*, the dancers were in the studio for close to 30 hours a week. It became a full-time job for them—by contrast, most dancers in the area attend their studio between 10 and 20 hours a week. Many people question dance's status as a "sport", but we spend just as much time as other athletes practicing and perfecting our craft. Dancers spend their afternoon in the dance studio while other students participate in JV and Varsity sports. Instead of cross country or lacrosse, dance is our sport of choice.



Another unique aspect of *Dance Moms* was the pyramid: although a real experience for the girls on the show, most studios won't degrade their students in that way. Additionally, the girls on *Dance Moms* attended competitions essentially every week, meaning they would be attending up to 30 competitions per year. This is uncommon; on average, Mendon dancers attend an average of 4 competitions each year. Not 30.

On the other hand, the drama between moms on *Dance Moms* is very real. Though the mothers on the show were under intense, perpetual stress—they weren't localized events. Studios in our own backyard experience drama between parents, but it's much more discreet. Children have been pulled out of dance class and out of the studio because of unresolved conflicts between adults. The worst

is when parents believe they know what's best for the dancer: I've seen parents criticize the choreographer and argue with their teaching, totally out of their place. Part of our role as dancers is to respect our teachers, and when parents interfere, it's often humiliating and sparks even more unnecessary drama.

So much of the world of dance is captured in 4K: tension between the dancers, teacher favorites, high-pressure experiences. Being around your team for so much time each week, tension is

“Going to dance was a hit or miss experience.”

inevitable. But Livy ('22) shares that she “has experienced some of [her] best memories with them.” While these intense friendships bond dancers for the long haul, they have unintended consequences. As Peri ('22) adds, her class “had two completely separate friend groups that didn’t interact very much. It was very polarized.” On *Dance Moms*, we see just this: with the music video debacle, Nia and Jojo appeared entirely separated from the rest of their group.

Every studio struggles with favoritism. My teachers will claim they don’t have favorites, but we all know who they are. The “Maddie” of our group is placed front and center in almost every dance, and the “Chloe” of our group will always have some of the best choreography. As Hannah ('25) notes, “sometimes it sucks. But sometimes, it works in your favor.” “When you’re not the favorite [though], there is so much riding on every performance. It’s incredibly frustrating.” Lauren ('24) points out. To know that your every movement is watched and criticized is a terrifying feeling: it messes with your mind and your confidence, and the decline of both makes it even more difficult to improve.

If you talk with any dancer, they’ll tell you one of two things: dance is one of the most liberating places to be, or it’s one of the most stressful places to be—depending on the day. When I was younger, going to dance was a hit or miss experience. If we had an easy ballet class and cleaned up our tap dance, all was well. But if we had evaluations for the fouetté turn section in a dance? I would be paralyzed with fear all day long. Specifically, auditions are one of the most anxiety-inducing times for a dancer. We learn combinations rapidly—classes are usually an hour long—and have a single shot in front of a judges panel to perform. As we get older, though, it’s become easier. Senior Livy suggests “auditions should be treated like any other class, and [she has] begun to enjoy the adrenaline rush that comes with it.”



But not everything can be caught on camera. Girls from *Dance Moms* have shared that behind the scenes of the show, they struggled with body image. This is all too common in the world of dance. Every dancer I asked shared identical thoughts; struggles with body image are bound to occur. Abigail ('23) shares that “part of our role as dancers is to look in the mirror and notice every flaw and imperfection.”



It creates a perfectionistic culture in the studio, and anything less than perfect is “fixed.” Ballet is science, tap is math, and even contemporary—the freest form of dance—has a right and a wrong.

Staring at yourself in a mirror for hours upon hours gives you plenty of time to notice every part of your body. You see every freckle, every bone, every crease, and you see it in your peers, too. Our teachers grew up with instructors who said they could “see their lunch through their leotard” during ballet class. One of my teachers said her old instructor called her a cow. Thankfully, these

“teaching” methods are virtually obsolete now, but whiffs of this old mentality surface occasionally in a careless comment. “You have a really nice body.” “Suck in your stomach.” “Hide that ribcage.” In my studio, we have mini workouts in every ballet class. Push-ups, abs, feet, arms—there’s a caveat with each workout, a little nod that we’re supposed to always have a presentable figure.



So many dancers worry about being judged if they don’t look a certain way. The stigma is being broken down constantly: many teachers now consistently encourage healthy eating habits. My solo teacher last year would ask me every rehearsal if I had eaten before we started. It’s so easy to get lost in expectations—this mentality is structural and engrained in our minds. The entire art form is based around how you move your body; these ideas won’t disappear in an instant.

Even with stress and drama and food problems, dance remains a gratifying art form for many people. Part of the purpose of Dance Moms was to highlight how insane dancers seem to be, staying in these seemingly horrible environments. But from personal experience, the show only captured one side of dance. It shows you the side anyone could see—the side you see walking into a dance competition, the side you see in the hallways before dance. Dancers complaining that they ripped open a blister, echoes of teachers yelling through the walls, the smell of sweat mixed with hairspray hovering in the air. Why do we do it? Are we insane?

Some days at the studio really feel like reality television. Other days dance feels like a job. But what keeps me going is that moment: the moment when the world disappears. The moment when everything is silent—good silence. The moment when I can hear my heartbeat in my ears; the feeling where I can’t quite see straight, but when every breath exhales a smile. In that moment, drama is cancelled out, stress is negated, and the most cruel, broken parts of dance are made whole. Not even Abby Lee Miller could take that moment away from a dancer.



Pictures, in order from top of article to bottom:

1. Senior Livy Langstein performs her contemporary solo.
2. Freshman Hannah Wall performs her contemporary solo at In10sity Dance Challenge.
3. Sophomore Lauren Gerew performs her acro solo at Onstage Dance Competition.
4. Senior Piper Wilson performs at In10sity Dance Challenge.
5. Junior Abigail Strassner performs her contemporary solo.

ABOUT RUNESTONE

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mailing address: 472 Mendon Road, Pittsford, NY 14534

Email: pmhsnewspaper@gmail.com

Instagram: @TheRunestoneMHS

RESPONDING TO THE PUBLICATION

Letters to the editors may be submitted electronically to our email. Letters may be published in our print editions and may be edited.

ABOUT US

Runestone is the official high school news publication of Pittsford Mendon High School, an open forum by students, for students, distributed four times a year. This is the Spring 2021-2022 Issue – our 9th edition!

DISCLAIMER

This newspaper is a student-made publication of Pittsford Mendon High School. The publication is produced entirely by students – henceforth known as “staff” – under the supervision of staff advisors in a club learning environment. Students and editors are responsible for the content of this student publication, which may contain controversial matter.

Thanks for Reading!