

2024-25

A Collection of Personal Narratives  
& Data Stories

# The Storytellers' Anthology

Everyone has a story ...  
There is power in stories ...  
Here are ours ...



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6401 Linda Vista Road, San Diego, CA 92111  
[www.sdcoe.net](http://www.sdcoe.net) | 858-292-3500

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*Please note that there may be grammatical errors, etc., but since this is narrative writing, we chose not to edit them in order to retain an authentic student voice.*

## FOREWORD

JCCS is committed to empowering students to develop their own agency, to foster their sense of belonging, and to honor their cultural and linguistic assets. Throughout the year, students have opportunities to present their work to others and engage in relevant and meaningful experiences. The Quarter 1 theme is “What’s the Power of Stories” because as Phillipp Humm said, *“Through the art of storytelling, we can preserve our heritage, educate future generations, and inspire change.”*

Here are our stories...

**PERSONAL NARRATIVES • DATA STORIES  
SIX WORD STORIES • HISTORY RETELLS • ART**



San Pasqual Academy Student Artwork

# EAST REGION

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## CUYAMACA A.M.

### ROAD TRIP TO LAUGHLIN

*By Leonard T.*

We had driven for about five hours from Victorville to Laughlin to reach our hotel. My dad, his girlfriend, her daughter, and cousin packed everything into the truck, while my brother, sister, and I crammed most of our stuff into the back of my dad’s car. The car was so packed that my brother didn’t have any space left to ride with us, so he had to go up in the truck with my dad. The drive was actually pretty nice. We left just around sunset, and about 20 minutes into the drive, the sky transformed into a stunning bright orangish red. It was absolutely beautiful.

As we drove on, I felt a bit uneasy because my sister drives like we have nine lives. When we needed to stop for gas, it gave my dad a chance to catch up with us. We rolled into Laughlin, seeing the bright lights from afar, kind of like Vegas. We excitedly navigated through the town to our hotel, only to be greeted by a surprising 98-degree night. My siblings and I exchanged looks of shock, and my dad, laughing, said, “It’s going to be hot all the time.” We then began unpacking the cars and headed up to our rooms.

After settling in, we were all pretty hungry and decided to grab some McDonald’s at the hotel. We also visited one of the cousins who had booked a big suite. It was amazing, with a crazy view, a bar, and two or three rooms. It felt like a mini apartment within the hotel. Eventually, we were all exhausted and decided to call it a night, getting ready for the busy day ahead.

Morning came, and my siblings and I fought over shower time, but we eventually all got clean and dressed for the day. We made our way to the lobby to meet my dad and the others. Our first task was to get gas for everything from the truck to the skis. Then we headed to Costco and a few other stores to grab all the food and supplies we’d need for the next few days. We stopped for lunch at a buffet before returning to the hotel to unpack and organize everything for the following day. We spent the rest of the day relaxing since we knew the next day would be intense.

The next day followed a similar routine. We got ready and met my dad in the lobby. We all piled into the truck and headed to our destination. Once we arrived, we started unloading the cars and setting up our tents and chairs. It was scorching hot, probably around 110 degrees so we made sure to set up plenty of shade.

Once everything was in place, my dad and the others began backing the skis into the water, and the fun really started when they hit the waves. When it was my turn, I took off with the Sea-Doo, pushing it to about 30 mph, and I couldn’t stop smiling. Besides riding on the skis, I spent most of my time either cooling off in the water or relaxing in my chair, because the heat can be draining if you don’t stay hydrated and cool.

One of the kids there, named Jr., also loved the jet skis. He had a twin-turbo, black and yellow one, and we took turns riding it. Every time I held onto his back, he’d try to fling me off by speeding up and making sharp turns. When it was my turn, I decided to go full throttle. I think we hit speeds of 60-80 mph, but I didn’t want to look down because it was hard to control. Jr. was yelling for me to slow down as he seemed to be losing his grip, so I eased off and burst out laughing. We switched back, and he took it slow on the way back to shore.

We kept doing the same thing for the rest of the week till it was time for us to go back home. Once we got back to the hotel we started to pack and get ready for the drive back to my dad’s. My sister was driving my dad’s lowered car out of the parking garage when “clunk” the car jerks back and starts making a strange noise as we roll forward so outta fear I tell my sister to get out and look for damage as I cut the car off. She ended up breaking the axle by catching on the part of a parking structure that connects it together as you come down levels.

This ended up leaving us stranded in Nevada while it was 100 degree weather with 1 too many people to fit in the truck. So we had to have my dad’s girlfriend’s daughter go back with the grandma and we all squished into the truck with one of the cousin’s after waiting hours for a tow truck to take the car back to victorville. The road trip was alright. The best part was when we stopped at Cane’s to get food.

We got back to the house and not too late after the tow truck followed with the car on the bed looking great. We had our food, said goodbye to their family and started on the road with my dad to meet my mom. During the ride my dad asked if we had a good time and stuff and we made some jokes and before I knew it we were with my mom heading down the freeway on our way home.



## A STORY ABOUT PUPPIES

*By Erik L.M.*

I wake up in the morning, get ready, and feed my dogs. After that, I relax for a bit and play with them until it's time to go. My stepdad and I get on our bikes to pick up a puppy we paid for. He has a lot of tattoos, is muscular, and comes across as strict but calm. We need to meet our family friend all the way by the El Cajon trolley station. About 15 minutes into the ride, it starts to get bumpy. I get off the bike to check and realize I have a flat tire. I get mad, but I know we have to fix it quickly, so I can't dwell on it. We stop somewhere to fix it because it's urgent to get the puppy. Luckily, we have the supplies in our backpacks, and my stepdad patches it up in about 10-20 minutes. We hop back on our bikes and keep heading toward our destination.

After 10 more minutes of riding, we pull up in front of the house. My stepdad goes inside while I stay outside. In the front yard, there are two families of dogs, each with five puppies. I play with all the puppies while they're talking inside. As I'm playing, I feel really happy and excited to take one home. A little later, they come out with the puppy that's already been trained. When I see him, I'm even more excited. He's mostly brown with some white and black fur mixed in.

I think we're about to leave, but suddenly the family friend tells my stepdad that he has another puppy he wants us to train. This puppy is white with black stripes. To my surprise, my step dad agrees, even though he said earlier that we were only getting one. So, we end up leaving with two puppies: one to keep, who's 3 months old, and one to train, who's just 1 month old. We carry the younger one in a dog carrier, while the older one follows behind us as we ride our bikes home.

After 10 minutes of riding, we stop at Jack in the Box to get a cup of water for the puppies because it's been quite a journey for them. Once they've had some water, we start heading home again. After another 30-35 minutes, we finally get home and introduce the new puppies to our other dogs. At first, the older dogs growl at the new puppies, but after a while, they calm down. All the younger dogs immediately get along with the new puppies, and seeing them all play together makes me feel really joyful.

## FINALLY GETTING MY ANSWER

*By Anonymous*

It was a warm and calming day in El Cajon, California. I hadn't been going to school for weeks, but I was going to be starting the next day. At first, I felt confused and nervous, knowing I wouldn't know anyone who attended. It really sank in—this is how it was going to be for a while. It was me, my mother, my sister, and my counselor all in one small, well-kept room, with chairs and couches in every corner.

My mother and sister came with me because they knew I wouldn't be able to handle this on my own; I don't adjust to new things easily, and this was definitely new. Finally, we arrived, and

I saw the front doors. Me, my mother, and sister met the front desk attendant. She was calm and upbeat, which made me feel relieved, knowing they weren't as strict as I had imagined. We walked toward the end of the hall, signed in, did some paperwork, and then I went into the room to meet my teacher and counselor.

This was the moment that really hit me—if they were strict or unkind, I would be stuck with them for almost a whole year. Mr. Aaron and Miss Alicia, my counselor and teacher, were there. A wave of emotions hit me—this was real, and I would have to go through this big change in my life. I realized I would need to get to know these people, and show them I was prepared and ready to start and finish the year strong. It was a confusing step, but I managed to work through it since my sister and mother were by my side.

It was the middle of the 10th-grade quarter, and everything was going well—until it wasn't. One day, everything changed when I got in trouble after school, leading my family and me to face a big shift. For months, we communicated only through cell phones. Hours turned into days, days into weeks, and before I knew it, three months of my life were gone. Juvenile hall wasn't easy, especially with my short temper, dealing with other kids who were mostly childish and annoying. I kept trying to figure out how to get out of that situation, but all the higher-ups would say, "Be patient, you'll be fine." Wanting answers, I grew frustrated. Patience wasn't my strong suit; I always wanted clear answers to calm myself.

At first, it was really scary. In my first Zoom meeting, I didn't even know how to join the classes. I logged into Gmail, and it was a mess at the start, but gradually, it got easier. I was joining classes, finishing my work, and getting the help I had always needed. I won't say that not getting my work done wasn't partly my fault, but having 1-on-1 classes with Miss Salem truly changed me. I had a better understanding of the work, got breaks when I needed them, and knew that Tuesdays and Fridays were my tutoring days. Miss Salem understood that I was working hard and trying my best.

Looking back, it's funny to think that I thought everything would stay chaotic, but I had good people around me who helped me grow. As the experience was finally coming to an end, I started calling and texting the higher-ups about my return to in-person high school, but I didn't hear back for over two months. Then, one day, I finally got a text with my exact date and time for returning to school. A wave of relief spread through my body—I had finally found my answer.

## MY FIRST ROBBERY

*By Jesus V.*

When I was 13 years old I robbed a house for the first time. It was the most paranoid I have ever been in my life. This is the story of why I will never rob a house again.

One chilly December afternoon, me and my 18 year old cousin and my 19 year old best friend



left my house and went to the laundromat to smoke. We met this guy at the laundromat who gave us free weed and asked me to go inside to get my scale, because he needed to use it. Once I brought the scale he gave us weed to check out and once we did we realized it was really high quality, by the texture and smell. He then started talking about having two pounds more in his house. He told us about the things he owns and showed us pictures of him with a lot of money. At that moment, I thought we could be friends with him, until he said he was from a rival gang. Afterwards, we went back to my house, and I brought up how I think we should rob him. I didn't think we actually would, but in all of the excitement, it seemed like a great idea to me. To my surprise, we ended up doing it four days later.

We are at my house looking through my window, waiting for him to go somewhere. After a long wait, we finally saw him leave. We went straight to his door. We knew his door was always unlocked so we walked right up, gave it a little push and it opened. As soon as the door opened his dog escaped. I felt bad, but I knew we were on a short time schedule, so I did not chase after him.

When the neighbor came back we told him that we saw his dog running away. He immediately took off to look for his pet. While he was searching for his dog we put on the masks and went inside his house trying to find his valuables that he was bragging to us about. I stayed with the 18 year old because he was my cousin. The 19 year old was in the other room looking for his own stuff to steal. While looking through the stuff I felt like someone was staring at me. It was like a warning I could feel in my gut, but I ignored it. After nine minutes in the house we heard a knock on the door. It was a sheriff. My heart immediately froze. I stayed frozen until my cousin yelled, “Hurry up”. We began throwing the valuables out the window so the homie and my cousin could get them. Once we were done, we jumped out the window. I tripped and nearly fell as we jumped his backyard fence. We ended up in some trailer homes, so we started running with the shoe boxes in our hands. We ran

until we found bushes and hid everything, so no one could see. We jumped another fence, and we were all out of breath, but we finally made it to my cousin's house. We changed our clothes and headed to the liquor store because we were thirsty. We ran into the guy and asked him if he needed help finding his dog. He accepted our offer so we helped him find his dog. The dog was never found. I regret letting his dog out because it seemed he cared more about the dog than the stuff we robbed him for. Everything we do comes with unexpected consequences.

**TRUE COLORS**

*By Anonymous*

September 2nd, 2023

I'm sitting in the back of a cop car, thinking to myself, I never imagined someone I value and love so deeply could make me feel so small.

September 1st, 2023

It's a hot Friday night. The kind of heat that makes you feel like a snake shedding its skin in the Grand Canyon—dry and silent, with not much happening for a Friday night. I'm with my best friend, Charlotte. We've known each other for two years, bonded by our dominant personalities, down-to-earth habits, and similar perspectives on life. She lives just down the street, so it's easy for us to hang out. Our friendship has grown over time, so much so that I'd do anything for her. Charlotte is the closest friend I've ever had.

We're walking back to her place when she spots some people we know from the past, sitting in a car with new friends. She taps my shoulder to show me and once I see, we both burst into laughter. After a few minutes of walking under the blazing sun, we finally reach her house and let out a sigh of relief. Isabella greets us at the door with hugs and smiles. I'm happy to see her since it's been a while. Her calm, passive demeanor always makes me feel at ease.

As they prepare to go out, I lay on Charlotte's bed, knowing I won't be invited. This always happens—she takes my money, goes out, and returns with empty pockets, leaving me behind. It makes no sense. I feel a familiar pang of sorrow in my gut, wondering why I'm always excluded. Charlotte tries to separate me from her other friends, and I can't help but feel confused.

This time, when she asks for money, I say yes, but also let her know I'm coming along. Her face flushes with anger, but she agrees. A thrill runs through me; finally, I get to go out with her, Isabella and her friends.

We slip into comfortable outfits and wait for Mia and her boyfriend, Brandon. Mia and I get along well; we often bond over the fact that we both have freckles. She's blunt but grounded, and I appreciate that. Brandon is fit, good-looking, and always makes sure we know he's around.

When they arrive, we pile into the car and head up a hill to drink. The view of El Cajon and Santee is stunning. Brandon opens the bottle and we start taking shots. I feel relief and satisfaction wash over me. Mia, Brandon and I gravitated towards each other throughout the night. We were catching up while Isabella and Charlotte were talking on their own. They then mentioned that we should go to someone's house. Brandon offers, and soon we're on our way to Ocean Beach, where the breeze is cool and refreshing.

At Brandon's place, Charlotte leans tipsily on my shoulder as we head to his room. We then decide to play a drinking game around the dining table. Brandon's brother, Alejandro, quietly joins us, sitting next to me. As the game continues, everyone else eventually leaves the room, leaving Brandon and me alone. The silence is heavy. Brandon breaks the silence and asks if I want to smoke with him. I agree and move closer to him. When the others return, Mia comments on me sitting with Brandon. She said “what is she doing right there,?” This upset me because Mia knows I'm a boy and still referred to me as a girl. I ask Charlotte to address it, and thankfully, she does. But by now, I feel uneasy, and unsure of who I can trust.

Things spiral quickly after that. I sit down, my head spinning. Isabella approaches me, trying to act like everything's fine, but I can't ignore that she previously stole from me. Suddenly, Alejandro gets in my face, and we start arguing. I don't even know him, and yet here we are, ready to fight. Brandon jumps in to defend his brother, and before I know it, Brandon picks me up and throws me over his shoulder, saying he's going to take me home.

In the car, words were exchanged and misunderstood to the point Brandon and I started fighting over the middle consul of the car. Frustrated, I decide to get out and walk. Charlotte calls after me, telling me to come back, so I reluctantly do, hoping for some sense of safety. But as soon as I get in the car, Brandon starts making sarcastic, homophobic remarks. I snap. I get out again, arguing with Charlotte, and Brandon sneaks up on me, throwing a punch. I hit him back, and chaos ensues.

As I was fighting Brandon it almost felt like I was fighting flashing lights because of how disoriented I was. Charlotte noticed that, so she told us to stop fighting and we did. They then offered to drop me off but instead of taking me home, they drop me off near the Mission Bay trolley. As I walk away, I notice them talking to someone in a similar car to Brandons.

The warm summer breeze glided along my body. No communication, no transportation, no physical or mental awareness. I felt like a whole bunch of knives were stabbed in my back and my organs were ripped out. I felt so numb and emotionless. Trying to connect the dots as to why everything escalated so severely. Questioning myself, everything, and everyone around me. I didn't know where to go or who to trust. I didn't even know where I was. The pain was so excruciatingly devastating that I started to laugh. The kind of laugh that comes when you've hit rock bottom.

Not understanding the circumstance that I'm in, when I see a white car's lights flashing at me I approach it thinking that it was Brandon's, it wasn't. Oddly enough me and this random stranger started to have a conflict. With my memory slowly fading away, that's the last thing I remembered. The next thing I know, I'm walking up on a sidewalk near the freeway, wearing nothing but my underwear. A variety of conspiracies bolted through

my mind as to why I was almost fully naked. I panicked and realized I needed to find my way to the trolley. As I was walking, two cops in a cop car slowly pulled up beside me. Panicking because I surely thought they were going to arrest me I complied with everything they were saying and mentioned that I was intoxicated and don't have any memory of what happened beforehand. Nevertheless it didn't stop them from trying to book me for indecent exposure. I was so flabbergasted that even the cops didn't believe me. Despite their initial skepticism, they eventually show empathy, giving me a blanket and taking me home.

As I sit in the back of the cop car, watching the world pass by outside the window, I reflect on the night. I realized that no matter how close you are to a person and how much you value them in your life, what they show on the outside isn't always who they truly are on the inside.

## LOSING ZEUS

*By Avery S.*

I thought it was just gonna be a regular day but i was wrong.I love all my dogs and every time i come home seeing them is one of the things that I look forward to the most.me and my dad had just returned home from our daily tasks and went about our regular routine which consists of taking care and feeding all of our animals (dogs and chickens at the moment)so i went to gather there food and water that they needed.We keep 2 of our dogs together and one of them separate because they don't all get along the best but when i went to check on Zeus he was hanging by the neck from a rope lifeless.i dropped all the food and water and rushed to get him down from the rope but when I grabbed his body it was all stiff from rigamortis.at that moment i knew it was to late and i called my dad for help to get him down and to prepare a burial for him.The next day we built his coffin and i had to go to court. I went to court thinking they were gonna take me into custody that day but luck was on my side and they let me go afterwards we went home with a friend of mine and began digging the hole which took us about 7 hours 4 feet wide and 5 feet deep.A jack hammer was required to get through all the hard granite as the dirt had solidified from all of the dry weather.I lowered his coffin in and we had our little service for him then began sealing him in his resting place.

## THE UNEXPECTED OPPORTUNITY

*By Tomas G.*

Like most weekends I was heading to practice on Grossmonts field. Today it was pretty hot and humid with the sun beaming on my back as I practiced. As I walk up to the field I see the scout for my favorite club team sitting in the stands. At that moment I started to feel nervous, however I knew that I had to show him how good I was. Once I sat down at the goal I started to think to myself about the drills I needed to do. Then I started to stretch so I could warm up for training. Once I was done warming up I got my cones from my bag and put them at the 25 yard line and started to begin my shooting drills that I normally do. I lined up the ball and kicked. The ball rolled on the floor into the middle of the goal and went in. This was bad, because in a game the goalkeeper would have saved it. That was a bad first impression I thought to myself. Now the pressure started to weigh on me and I knew that the next one had to be better. I lined up the ball and kicked, as I kicked the ball with power, it floated into the top right corner of the net and went in. After this the rest of my goals were pretty decent as they went in the corner of the goal and I knew that most of them were unsaveable. As I was moving on to my next drill I felt confident that I would keep up this pace. At this point of my practice I am starting to sweat. However, I felt less anxious than I did before.

I placed 6 cones in a straight line about 1 foot apart. Then, I started to dribble in between the gaps of the cones to get comfortable with the ball and dribbling. As I'm dribbling I look over my shoulder and I see the coach watching me. I quickly looked forward again and made sure not to

humiliate myself. For the rest of my drill I did pretty well.

At the end of my practice, I start to pick up my cones and get ready to leave. As I am starting to take off my cleats I see him walking up to me. At this moment I felt shocked, scared, and excited all at once. Once he got to me he started asking me questions about myself, and after the conversation he offered me a spot on the team. I felt proud of myself for working hard and training and the fact that it didn't go to waste. Now I have played on the team for 2 years and I am so grateful that I got this opportunity. It has been a great experience and is helping me move toward my dream of playing in the Premier league.

**TEEPEEING HOUSE VIBES**

*By Emmanuel J.*

It was during Halloween. It was a cold night around 2am. I was with four friends. We had driven to Adams Ave and parked the car at a nearby street. The neighborhood had a big house with large yards. I was with four of my friends; Lucky, Philly, Edwin, and David. We were wearing all black, and face masks because our plan was to teepee houses. We had three rolls of toilet paper for each house. There was a Costco family size box in the car, which we continually ran back to, in order to replenish our supplies. We started teepeeing the houses, wrapping everything in sight, including toys, bushes, trees, porches, and cars. It was exciting to see how much we could cover before getting caught. I was surprised that no one heard us even though we were all laughing hysterically. I almost wet my pants. After we were finished Philly ran up to the last house and pounded on the door, bail bond style. Then we all ran down the street and jumped in the car. We were elated that we accomplished our mission in record time. We were also very very hungry, so we treated ourselves to Mexican food at our favorite 24-hour restaurant. That burrito never tasted so good!

I look forward to teepeeing every Halloween with my close friends. We never got caught, and it's always exciting to go out every year. Where do you live?

**NEARLY DEAD**

*By Brannon D.*

Have you ever seen your life flash in front of your eyes, or felt a desperation that held your breath? These feelings happen when someone is going through a traumatic experience. An experience that is etched in your memory for life. Such an experience happened to me.

When I was a young kid, I had never so much as even briefly thought that death would ever even so much as look or breathe in my direction. But as a lot of us are sometimes in life, I was wrong. Due to covid cases, my parents decided to let my sister and I stay at my grandma's house in this small town called bishop. I woke up that day as if it were any other day at my

grandma's house. Since it was just a regular day, I had planned to go to the pool with my sister as I had done for the past few weeks. I did my school work, attended my zoom meetings, and then waited for my sister to be done with her meetings, and then we got changed before our grandma took us to the pool. When we got to the pool, we had these cards that they hole punched. We hung out for about 30 minutes, waiting for my friends to get there. Once they got to the pool, My friends and I went to the waterslide. We would hurl ourselves down as violently as possible, and whoever got the most hurt was the winner. I was with my friends for a few hours until I realized that I had not checked in with my sister, so I left them and went looking for her. My friends and I were up on the waterslide, and from there I was able to spot her. I went down the waterslide and then swam off to where she was, which was over at the deep end up against the wall. Once I got over to her, I tried getting her attention by shaking her shoulder a few times, but she ignored me, to which I was a little annoyed. So I wanted to be funny and go underwater and tug on her leg to try and get her attention. Bad idea.

All I wanted to do was get her to talk to me, but for whatever reason, after I let go of her ankle and tried to swim back up, she put her hand on my head and pushed me back further down. Then pushed me even further with her foot. Then I tried to swim up again but she pushed me down again. By this time I was almost out of air, so I frantically grabbed her and tried to use her to climb to the surface.I felt like I was about to take my last breath, like I was not going to survive this. My body felt as if it was in a state of resistance, even though I was fighting to get air back in my lungs. At this point I knew that I had to fight for survival. Even though my sister had her feet pushing on my shoulders, I found the strength to get loose and climb behind her and up her back. I found my way out of the water, only to barely hear her say “what the fuck man?!” The rest was blocked out because I was too busy coughing up water on the pool deck. She saw this and realized this looked bad for her, so she wanted to act like she cared about what happened to me. She kept asking if I was okay, but deep down I knew she was only doing this because the lifeguard was there. She could've let me die and wouldn't have cared any more than she did when I climbed on her. That was how she always was; not a care in her mind for how what she does might impact others. I hated her for that. She was always doing things like that, ever since I was ten years old. I would come home from school some days and she would just beat me up, another time she kicked me as hard as she could in my ribs for no apparent reason. I should've known better than to put myself in a situation like that with her.

In conclusion, I learned that it's not safe to swim in the deep end with a sister that would end your life just because she felt like it.





SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## NORTH REGION

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### NCTA INDEPENDENT STUDIES REINA

#### UNTITLED

*By America A*

Have you ever wanted to relive a day over and over again? On February 19th, 2023, my two cousins and I woke up very early for the Famoso Dragstrip car show. My aunt was already outside, cleaning her Honda Civic type R and making sure it was in good shape for the show. Luckily, we hurried and got in the car quickly, my body filled with excitement and my heart rapidly pounded out of my chest. Then In a flash I remember, we finally arrived at our destination.

I was amazed at all the different types of cars, I was speechless. “OoOo look at those” my cousin pointed out a group of different Nissan Skyline models. After walking around twice and taking pictures, it was finally time for the drag races. On the way to the drag strip, I could smell the burning tires, but I could also smell the delicious food. With a frozen lemonade and a burger in my hand, I stood at the front of the race line. Next to me I heard my cousin say, “who do you think is going to win?”, it was a little old buggy racing a newer model BMW ... the buggy won. After standing at the front for hours, the smoke and burning smell was too much, so we headed to the car.

To end the event, I spotted a large group of people gathered and the contests began. There were different competitions like Limbo Limbo that includes a rope held straight between two people and it goes lower each time to see who has the shortest car. Also, Bass Sounds where people compete to see who has the loudest bass. My favorite was the exhaust contest to see who has the loudest car, especially seeing the flames shoot out.

“Cover your ears” my cousin said. I was a little nervous. I looked around and saw people doing just that, so I covered mine. It was the GTI’s turn to show off, “Vroooooommm” my ears popped and started ringing. The crowd went crazy and cheered, but then got angry because the GTI lost.” bro what the heck!” I told my cousin; we both looked at each other and knew it was favoritism. Disappointed, I began to hear whispers and yells about the unfairness, and random strangers started having conversations with each other. Even though the outcome was negative, the event still brought people together in some way.

Even now, I remember that day as if it were yesterday. The whole experience brought me joy and happiness. It made me realize that I should enjoy every part of life and make the best of it. I'm grateful for every part of life that is given to me, even the worst.

## TRUST NO ONE

*By Azul A.*

It was the day of April 27, 2024, me and my best friend Dana had been planning to hang out. It's all we had really ever talked about. I had not seen her for over two weeks. Which to us felt like a very long time. Her mom dropped her off at my house. I hugged her and my sister was behind me, so I turned around and said bye to my sister. Seeing her made me feel excited. Once she got to my house we decided to go to the park, but we also wanted snacks. Where I live there is a guy who sells snacks. At that time, we went and got a bag of Takis and two Arizona's teas, specifically the mango ones. We went to a little park that was close to my house, probably a five-minute walk.

Once we got to the park, I remember we sat on the grass. I had a backpack with me with a blanket inside. We laid the blanket out and opened our snacks. We were just talking about our problems while lying on the blanket and enjoying our time together. Somehow we started talking about my old best friend Rose. I was telling Dana how I felt my old best friend was always weird, but I never thought too much about it. That's when my Dana told me "Can I tell you something, but you can't tell anyone? Without thinking too much about it I said, "Yeah you know you can trust me." She started telling me that one of her other friends was texting her that Rose, my old best friend, was talking about me. She continued saying that Rose felt bad for me and only hung out with me because of my brother. Dana had given me her phone to look at the message and she was telling me this while I was scrolling looking at the messages, with a Taki on the other hand. During that time, I was a little hurt but it was mainly anger. What made me angry was that she would never run the fade or tell me this directly to my face. I was just mostly mad at myself because I had let Rose into my house and all those good memories we had made me realize she was never really who I thought she was. Time passed fast and her mom was on her way to pick her up, so we were waiting on her mom. My best friend Dana told me "Girl, I'm sorry. I know you and Rose were close, but sometimes the closest people to us are our biggest haters." I hugged her, and her mom got there, and I said bye to her and her mom.

This moment will forever be a strong memory I carry with me. Out of this memory I've gained a lot of negative character traits like I don't trust a lot of people; I think people talk bad about me when they really just want the best for me, and I've distanced myself from my friends. So I feel this helped me grow as a person and become who I am today, even if it's in a negative way. I look at old pictures now and ask myself how someone can fake a two-year long friendship. This just shows that there are no real friends in life, and we can only trust ourselves.

## A DAY TO REMEMBER

*By Bryant*

In July 2015, I had to get a flight to San Diego all the way from the City of Puebla to meet my dad for the first time after years. I was in the airport with my sister, really nervous. I was shaking, felt like I couldn't breathe right. I was waiting for the plane for two hours. Thinking too much, mad but happy at the same time.

I landed in San Diego around 2:00 in the afternoon. I walked out the plane and headed straight to get my bags. Once I got my stuff I walked out the airport and saw my older brother standing waiting for us. We both looked at each other and didn't know what to say, it was really awkward, I was really angry at him and upset at the same time. Me, my sister and brother all got in his truck. It was nice he was driving a Cadillac. Then we got on the road and started heading to Escondido, California. The drive took us almost an hour but felt good because we were listening to music even though we didn't talk at all. It felt good to be back home.

When I got to my brother's house my dad walked out to see us. My sister ran to him and gave him a hug; they both started talking to each other right away and then it was my turn. I just looked at him and didn't know what to do. I felt sad and mad because I had spent many years without him and we hadn't been in communication.

After I met my dad, I had to meet my mother, brothers and sister. I never expected them to be there. My surprise was when she walked out and my siblings right after my dad came out. I was lost and it didn't feel real having my family right in front of me. I just ran to my mom and gave her a hug. It felt good to be in my mother's arms after many years.

Now I get along with my parents, brothers and sisters. I still wonder about many things and ask myself why I had to go through that, why I had to be in Mexico for many years and without communication with my family. Sometimes I sit and talk about it with my brothers and sisters because our parents don't really have an answer, or don't know what to tell us, or don't feel comfortable talking about the past. Now I live with my mother and siblings and my dad moved to Mexico with my two little brothers.

## THE DAY I GOT EXPELLED

*By Manny S.*

I was nervous when class started. I was sitting there thinking what I was doing. On December 13th, my friend and I jumped someone and I was regretting it. As my friend and I were messing around there was a knock on the door. The staff said "follow me to the office."

As I was walking through the hallway to the office my stomach started to hurt. The lights were

bright. The principal's office smelled like coffee. The principal was looking at me and my friend with a disappointed face. He said "Were you the one that got into a fight?" and I kept denying that it was me so he sent me back to detention with my friend. At the end of the day the principal called me into his office again. As I was walking into the office he was on the phone with my mom. I could hear my mom's loud voice and I could tell she was frustrated. My mom picked me up and yelled at me and said "why Manny why?" and I sat there quietly while she yelled at me the whole car ride home.

Looking back I regret doing what I did. What I am going to do differently is I'm not going to get into any more fights, I am going to be more calm.

## MY FIRST SOCCER GAME

Celeste A.

I had been waiting months for this day to come. August 9, 2024. My favorite soccer team, Club America, was going to play 30 minutes away from my city. I have never purchased soccer game tickets ever in my life. It felt like my life was going to be complete after buying these five tickets. I finally got to wear my favorite dark yellow, number 5 jersey to an actual in-person soccer game instead of being behind a television screen.

My dad, my brother, and I arrived at the stadium two hours early. I wanted to get here three hours early, but two is also enough to make unforgettable memories, I guess. After parking, we got out of the car. Wow! There were so many fans wearing the team's color, yellow. My stomach had butterflies. Finally walking into the stadium, I could smell the hotdogs, beer, and freshly cleaned stadium. Seeing the nicely cut green grass, the clean nets, and the sound of the fans It made me feel a rush of excitement. As we were looking for our seats, my sister called. "We are here; send me our tickets," she said. We found our seats. We were able to see the whole field. On the right, there was a crowd of the opposing team's fans. I didn't mind though because they were nice. *OMG, look there they are!* I could feel my excitement. The seats slowly filled up as the time for the game slowly got closer to seven o'clock. My sister and her husband arrived; they got tickets right next to us. The game started, and my heart was pumping out my chest. You could hear the yells of every fan in the stadium. Every save, pass, shot, and foul had me jumping out of my seat and cheering. Our team scored one goal. *GOLLLLLL!* After we took the lead in the game. I noticed that fans from both teams were still enjoying each other's company with no animosity. Ten minutes later, the referee blew their whistle, which meant our team won the game! Even though the opposing team lost, it still looked like their fans enjoyed it. The fans from both teams were still cheering and sharing laughs. Finally leaving the stadium tired, I felt a sense of joy, not just because my team won but for every person in the stadium, even the opposing team. On the way home, I was exhausted but somehow couldn't stop talking about the game. I showed my brother every picture I took.

As the car got quiet, I was just thinking about my experience and all the moments from that

night, but one moment that stood out to me was after the whistle was blown to end the game, the fans from both sides clapped, and there was no animosity. This made me realize that at the end of the day, we are all there to enjoy the soccer game and share the love we have for it even after losing a game. *And that is something to celebrate.*

## FATHER'S BIRTHDAY

By D.C

Do you get excited for a loved one's birthday? Most people would, and I was no different. It was my Father's birthday. His Birthday is on November 16th. I was seven years old and in Mexican households everyone was happy to say happy birthday early in the morning. I was excited to say Happy Birthday and I wanted to be the one to say it first. But I overslept and I was the last one to say it before he went to work.

After my father left for work my Mom did her usual routine like a well runned machine. Making us breakfast and usual cleaning with ease. After breakfast my two sisters and I got ready to head out for birthday groceries. Every birthday we celebrate by either going out to eat at a restaurant or making their favorite dish. I guess my Father chose making his favorite dish for a reason.

Once we were prepared to head out to the store my mom got her purse and asked us "Are you ready?" We said "Yes Ma." *Where are we going?* We walked to the store like ducklings with the mama duck in the front and the oldest in the back. We arrived at the store and that's when the formation disbanded. *This is where we ended up, it's my favorite place in the world "North gate."* We all stood near my Mother and waited for her orders to go get something. We got everything needed for the birthday dish and a small cake.

We arrived home and we all started unpacking the groceries. Just like factory workers we started placing the groceries in their designated spots. My Mother started cooking just like a pro chef. She was working on three things all at the same time. Most of the food was ready in ten minutes. All three of us couldn't wait for a taste just like a pack of lions that are starving looking at a gazelle. Now we all waited for him to get out of work, but my mom decided we should eat a little bit while we waited for him. As time passed, the candles on the cake started to drip onto the frosting. My mother decided to put it in the fridge and we waited. It felt like time didn't even pass.

*I know he went to work but it's already dark out.* My mother's patience ran thin like thread and so was mine. My Mom called my Aunt and asked for a ride to where my Dad goes after work. *It's dark out, why is he working this late?* We arrived and my mom rushed out of the car and jumped the fence. I couldn't see very well and soon the darkness engulfed her. The next thing I saw was a car light beam driving through the gate and my Father emerging from the darkness looking defeated just like a dog with its tail tucked. He started running towards the other car, a White



Honda, like it was a liferaft. He hit head on the roof while looking towards us with eyes of regret and shame. There was white lady I didn't know in the driver seat.

My Mom emerged from the darkness with blood on her shirt and a shovel in hand. Everything I saw was flooding into my head and I couldn't do anything but cry in the back of the car. The Honda sped off and my Mom broke down, *what is happening why where is he going who is that why she bleeding what can I do dont cry mom I wish this not true why is he leaving us I wish I wasn't here*. My Mom entered the car and my aunt tried to tell her things and cheer her up. We all cried while going home. We arrived home and threw away the cake and saved the food for the next day. We all went to sleep because of how much we cried.

The day went from exciting, irritated, to sad. People can have the highest expectation for the day, but unfortunately we don't know what awaits, and should always expect the unexpected. One thing my mother always reminds us is not to depend on your lover for everything, to work hard, and trust God for things you want in life.

## THE NO GOOD, VERY BAD PLANE RIDE

*Daniel V.*

In the middle of January in Washington state, my mother came into my room. "Sarah is kicking us out and we have to pack our stuff." My mother and I packed our clothes and stuff. We managed to walk to a convenience store and my mother and I waited in the cold. I couldn't stop shivering, even though I had three jackets on.

After two hours of waiting, we finally caught a cab. The air was cold, damp and icy, tasting like salt.. I hated every second of it. We managed to get a motel. It was a bit old and worn out but it was livable. My mother told me "I got us plane tickets to Arizona." "I'm so excited to ride a plane," I told my mother and then she said "I hate heights and I hate planes." "But why Arizona mom?" I asked, then she said "because that's the only family we have left." I just nodded.

The next day we managed to get to the airport. It was crowded with people talking, children screaming and babies crying but eventually we boarded. The plane looked ordinary, like it was built yesterday. It smelled like Febreze or like a fresh coat of paint and the seats were bright blue. My mother was terrified; she wouldn't stop shaking and looking around, but I calmed her down. I was excited, but then I realized it was a row for three people. I was stuck in the middle with a man on my left and my mom on my right. Not even 20 minutes went by and the man on the left and my mother were sleeping, one on each shoulder. The pain was agonizing; their heads were heavy on my shoulders.

Finally, after three hours we got off the plane. I told my mother I hated the plane ride and I couldn't stand it. She said she was glad that it was over. We caught a ride to go to our new home, a warm nice house. I learned that I really don't enjoy crowded spaces like airplanes, and I

need to fall asleep faster than the people around me. Other than that, I find it a funny memory and I'm glad to have that experience.

## MEXICO

*By Jair*

I greeted my grandpa and he looked kind of like my mom. I saw him lying on a hammock outside on the patio. He looked so skinny and sick. He was already in a far stage of cancer when I arrived. I still remember his voice telling me "hola mijo como estas?" I'm glad I still got to see him and spend time with him while he was still alive. He was the reason that I went to Mexico and stayed for two years; my grandpa had cancer.

I walked into my grandpa's house and was greeted by my family. I smelled the air and it just felt different. The air felt more natural and fresh. I had brought some white shoes and got them dirty when simply walking on the road because the roads are just dirt, no cement or concrete.

Once I got to Mexico I quickly realized that Mexico is totally different. It was as if there were no laws and if something happened, you would rarely hear about it. I also had to go to school over there. I had to wear a uniform for a public school and girls wore skirts. I remember they had like a little event at school where girls would dress in a beautiful kind of indigenous hand made type of dress with flowers on it with green and red and blue type of colors and they danced some Mexican type of dances. I then realized that I was in a place with a Mexican indigenous background. School was different from school in the US. It was just less advanced and people would just copy each other's work.

This was a powerful moment because it made me look at life differently. It made me appreciate my family more and the smaller things in life. It made me appreciate that I am lucky to be living in the USA because I witnessed that others aren't as fortunate as me.

## PROJECT SAFE NORTH

### TEEN PREGNANCY

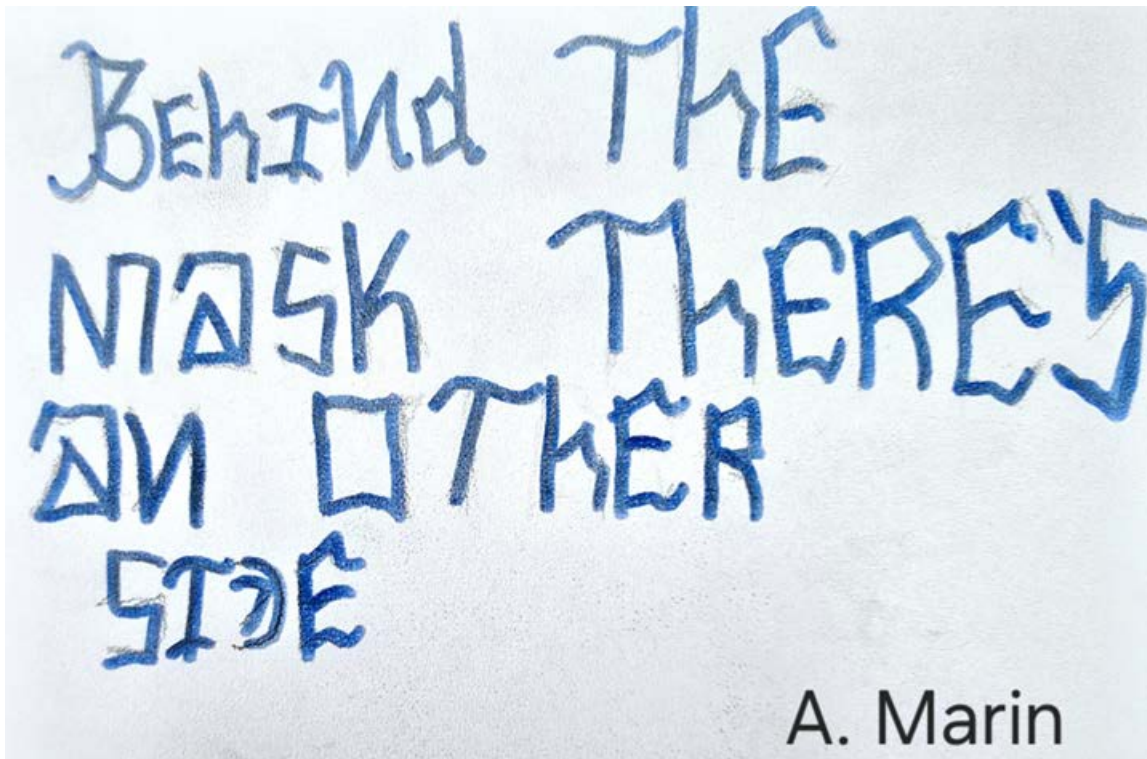
*By Kaili A.*

The moment I found out changed the course of the next nine months of my life. I was sixteen, soon to be homeless, and felt frustrated and confused. This was a very difficult and emotional time in my life. Additionally, being a pregnant teen was not on my list of life accomplishments. But ended up being my biggest blessing in disguise.

It all started while working at my minimum wage job at Chuck E Cheese at sixteen years old. During work shifts, I noticed changes in my ability to work. I was getting hot flashes, was very dehydrated, had random sickness, and often had to leave or call out of work. I knew something wasn't right, because I hadn't gotten my period. After what seemed like a never-ending work shift I went home and took two pregnancy tests. I was anxiously waiting, those three minutes felt like forever, but sure enough, they were both negative. Fast forward a week later I still hadn't gotten my period. I took another test, this time a digital one. Within less than thirty seconds two bright blue lines and the word PREGNANT popped up. My heart dropped. I didn't know how to feel or what to do. I told my boyfriend and my dad. Both were very supportive considering the fact we were about to be homeless.

At fourteen weeks of pregnancy, I found out I was having a girl. I was no longer living at home; I was just couch surfing. Jumping from house to house was not easy, but I was determined to have a healthy pregnancy. This meant being stress-free, no drinking, no smoking. Everything had to change. This was a difficult step for me considering my past. I had to make a big change in my lifestyle for my daughter. This included losing many friends and family members. Although I was on my own, I knew I was doing the right thing for me and my baby.

Nine months later, she was finally here. A healthy seven pounds and two ounces. Kimberly Elle Castillo is named after my mother. Pregnancy was hard but it changed my life for the better. I can't wait to grow with my daughter, watching her experience all her firsts in life. If I could take back time, I wouldn't change a thing.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## PULLING HAIR

*By Lupe L.*

When I was in 3rd grade I had a group of five friends. We already started to have a little conflict on who could go first playing jump rope and who would be the jumper. One day at lunch I had gotten the jump rope. The first two of the girls didn't like that I got it before them. They decided to not invite me to their game of tag and I felt left out and upset. The next day I decided to bring cookies as a snack. I didn't want to share with the group because I still felt upset from the day before and they decided they didn't want to hang out with me during lunch. I felt hurt because the next day was going to be picture day and I wanted to hang out before we got our picture taken. Picture day, my mom always did my hair but on this day she would do the cutest hairdos like a princess. My mom did a fishtail braid for picture day. I came to school all dressed up and my hair done. One of the girls was behind me while we went in the classroom when I started to feel like something was pulling my hair. I also noticed hairs undoing from the braid. I turned around and saw the girl pulling and trying to undo my hair. I was upset and wanted to cry because I knew my mom would have been upset. I decided that I would wait to tell the teacher but I knew we were going to sit together on the mat for reading so I didn't tell. The girl sat behind me when I started to mess around with her hair clips. Right after I started to pull hairs to undo her hair little by little I started pulling harder. The girl started to cry and told the teacher I got in trouble for pulling hair and got sent home. I wasn't able to hang out or sit next to the girl afterward.

I learned not to put my hands on others and to tell if someone else is putting their hands on me. This lesson stuck with me my whole life. I also learned about friendship. I shouldn't hang out with people who make me feel less than or hurt me and don't respect boundaries. This has helped me too with picking friends who aren't bad influences and who respect boundaries. I also learned not to have big friend groups because there's always drama and conflict. Now when I look for a new friend I always look for respect, kindness, honesty, encouragement, and non-judgemental.

This experience happened when I was eight years old. It was a good lesson to learn at eight years old. I wish I could've learned sooner than losing a friend and getting in trouble. This lesson also shows me how to pick my friends. Looking back at this experience it made me laugh because I wanted revenge by pulling the girl's hair and I poorly handled the situation.

## MEXICALI

*By Cota H.*

My grandpa's funeral was a truly important part of my life. I remember everything like it was yesterday. There were many flowers, the weather was humid because it was raining. The sky was gray, my grandma's patio was dark. My extended family was sitting outside. My cousins

and brothers were inside eating pan dulce and coffee. I wasn't really hungry, my stomach was all over the place. It had been a long time since my tias had seen each other, so they were catching up. Later on, they started to play my grandpa's favorite music. His co-workers arrived in the police cars. They closed the street just for him. My grandpa was a well-known cop in my beautiful Mexicali.

It was time to go to the cemetery and bury my grandpa. When we arrived, my tia Laura began making a scene by screaming and throwing herself on the ground. I was upset about that because she would always disrespect my grandpa. One of my uncles told her to stop and she did. We threw roses at his coffin and then we buried him. It was sad, the only thing on my mind was, "this is the last time I'm going to see my dad, my friend, my counselor, my everything. I couldn't take it as much as I tried. I was holding my tears back, I couldn't anymore and I started sobbing into my brother's shoulder. He just hugged me and said that everything would be okay. My grandpa always said, "When I die, bury me in El Centinela next to my viejito." Centinelas is a cemetery in Mexicali. It's very peaceful. It looks like the desert, old and boring but now it is one of my favorite places.

My grandpa had a big impact on my life. He was like a father figure to me. He was a very special person. He was an artistic person, very funny and charming. He used to drink all day, but he wasn't mean. He loved my grandma's tortillas. When I saw him for the last time, we ate some tacos with beans that my grandma had made. She also gave him a pack of tortillas. I remember him as a very strong person with a strong personality. You felt his presence in any room. He was a natural-born leader who was funny, blunt, with an old-school soul. To this day, I got my personality from him.





SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## ESCONDIDO COMMUNITY SCHOOL

### COMING TO AMERICA

*By Jesus "Armando"*

My experience that I remember most about wanting to move to Escondido, CA was something that caught my attention since I had never lived in California and it caught my attention but there was a problem, my dad didn't give me permission to come live in California before. I didn't agree until one day I talked to him and told him to give me a chance and he looked very upset but accepted. My growth here in Escondido I feel like at first it was bad because I didn't control my emotions but now that I have spent a great time here I try to do my best so that in the future I can have the reward that I want so much for not giving up. I remember the trip that I crossed the line by walking and I was a little nervous but I felt more sadness knowing that little by little I am moving away from my country from my friends and family, after crossing the line we headed towards Escondido and arriving in the city of San Diego, the first thing we did was go to my stepfather's work to grab some mattresses and a TV to take to the new apartment we had in Escondido. Also, a memory that I won't forget was when I arrived for the first time and saw the big sign that said Hidden and that's when I screamed, we arrived at the "found" and my sadness went away a little bit because I started laughing with my mom about it.

My environment before the move was very close to my family and friends and at that time I did not know depression and anxiety. I believe that that time I spent was the best I could have lived in Mexicali, always surrounded by my loved ones and I looked at my dad every Sunday, everything was beautiful. The last moments I lived there, I went out with my cousins on a skateboard or a scooter for a walk. Later was when the idea arose to get a green card for me since I was 14 years old and small and the green card was a good future for me and I made the decision to talk to my father so that he would give me permission to leave the country. from Mexico to be able to live in California I was excited to know that I was going to live here but I never thought that I would suffer from depression and anxiety here in Escondido I think that this happened to me because I felt alone I always felt sad and discouraged without wanting to do anything nothing, there was no spark in my life, I felt like nothing made sense since I had lost my close friends and family and I could no longer see them only by video call, it was something strong for me. While I was already in hiding, I went out to see my surroundings where my new place was. It was at night and everything made me sad because it looked beautiful but I felt alone. I found a place where I could see my apartment and it also had a very nice view of the sky and I couldn't see the Walmart and the streets there.

My feelings before moving, I already knew that my days were numbered before I could come live in another state, so what I did the last few days was be with all my friends, we went out to many places, I also visited my girlfriend and every day she cried because she knew that I was going to leave and that also made me sadder knowing that I was going to leave my girlfriend alone.

My feelings here were beautiful experiences but that only happened when I was away from home because when I was at home I felt that everything was sadness inside me, I started to get angry because I couldn't control my feelings knowing that I wasn't where I wanted everything.

That went to my mind and caused me anxiety and problems talking to people my age until after 2 years I was able to adapt to the language and my environment that I lived in since I knew that the best thing I could do was start getting to know my environment What I like and what I don't like and when I got used to it everything was a little easier except my anxiety. Yes, I struggled a lot because every time I had a big problem it stressed me out so much that I wanted to return to Mexicali but if I returned I would lose the opportunity to have the green card and I would still be punished for leaving the country without any permission for that. It was also very difficult for me.The last hours in Mexicali I was very relaxed driving around in my housewife's red car with my uncle Sergio and my friends.

It was a day with little sun and the sky was beautiful with few clouds and I was in front with my uncle and I felt with a happiness that I will never forget. And the clothes were the fighting jackets because they were very well known in Mexicali and all my friends had them and I remember a lot about my friend who lotus when I said goodbye to him now that I can go to Mexicali I have no longer been able to see him that he went to the State of Sinaloa to the part of La Cruz that is half of Mazatlán and half of Culiacan.

I learned a very valuable rule and that is that we should never be desperate for what we want so that everything will arrive in its proper time. For example, if it is not today, it will always happen tomorrow. Keeping your mind calm is the best thing that will help you to be able to think about the things you want and the things you don't want, I also learned that I have to tell my problems to vent and be able to think about what I will do about it to improve it or change it. I learned that the mentality is very strong if you let yourself go with depression and anxiety. Things happen because you will find a bad way to do everything you want, such as sadness or not wanting to do it, so it is good that if you are realizing that you no longer feel good in the place you are in, you should change it for the good. of you and your health. And the important thing is to always be in contact with your family because sometimes the family can be very helpful and sometimes not.

**2090 THE YEAR OF THE ZOMBIES**

*By Juan*

Global warming and the climate has changed and has destroyed the world as we all know it. This year is 2090, in San Marcos its a wet city san marcos was once of the thriving community

now submerged and ruled by the relentless zombies. But there is a young man that they called the zombie killer whose real name is Mr. David to take the zombies out. Mr. David is a strong and a very good zombie killer who embodies hope for the remaining humans. So Mr. David started getting ready as he was hearing the news about these strange creatures that they were calling zombies.As David witnesses the suffering of his community under the zombies rules. But there is something that can fight those zombies, which is a resolve to form a secret revolution organization that's called Ashley, and they are gathering a group of survivors committed to reclaim their home. Ashley is a team of scientific group that is going to find the cure for the survivors so that they can't get infected but there is something on there way that doesn't help Ashley at all her team members were infected so she needs to do it by her own. And as Ashley is trying to find the cure for the people, David finds a group of people and begins planning a series of missions to secure vaccines and supplies to help protect the remaining humans.

During the mission to gather resources, David is betrayed by one of his team members that is called Sr. Rodolfo is sick, a rude painter who secretly collaborates with the zombies, leading David into a very dangerous trap. As they walk they are attacked by 20 zombies and David tries fighting to take them out but as that happens Sr. Rodolfo pushed him and David fell and the zombies hurt his legs, leaving him unable to lead the Ashleys effectively and causing doubt among his followers. But David does not give up that easily, which musters his determination and inspires his group to keep on going, And inspires Ashley to launch a bold offensive against a zombie stronghold, armed with protected gear and the vaccines they've managed to acquire. The battle is hard and is getting really intense, showcasing David's leadership as he coordinates his team to fight off the zombies while overcoming his own physical limitations. But with his ride beside him they all dont give up and keep and keep fighting with teamwork and resilience, The Ashley successfully clears out the stronghold and distributes vaccines to survivors, restoring a sense of hope in the community. David, though injured, realizes that true leadership comes from inspiring others and that together, they can reclaim their homes.

But as the sun rises over the wet ruins of San Marcos, David reflects on the journey ahead and the determination of his team to rebuild their world.At this point the zombies were defeated and now the people are working hard to fix their houses and davids team helps all the survivors to rebuild their house all the survivors thank david and his team save the community and Ashley so they ended up being a normal city now.

**SOCCER**

*By Juan N.*

It was a really cloudy day when I woke up for my first high school soccer game. I felt nervous, scared and excited all at the same time. It felt like I had knots in my stomach. I was really happy because I was a starter and I got to choose my own jersey number and just so all you guys know my favorite number is 10.

When I was on my way to my school to get everything ready my friend needed a ride so, me and my mom took him with us. Ethan was a starter with me too. On the way to school, we were talking about how it took us so long to get here and to be one of the chosen ones. The tryouts were really hard because there was a bunch of kids trying out for the soccer team, but we got there. Once we arrived to school campus we went straight to the locker rooms, I said “hi” to all of our teammates. Then I started getting ready to warm up for the game. At that moment, I felt a feeling that I never ever felt in my life. It was a really weird feeling but I was happy. Being there with my teammates and the coach called all of us to get ready because we were going to go down to the field to warm up. We all went down the long stairs and started warming up and while we started warming up we saw the other team coming down the stairs. They all look like they were ready to win against us but we kept warming up to our routine. We had five minutes left of warm ups and then it was game time. I found out I was going to start at this point, I was really nervous. I was hearing people already cheering, then I saw my family looking at me that’s when I got hyped up. I tried to calm myself down by thinking to myself, “I got this!” The game was about to start coach called all the team over and told us our positions for the game. Right away the referee called the captains from both teams over and asked them head or tails to see who was going to start with possession first. My captain picked heads and it landed heads. Our team was pumped! Jumping up and down. We started the game I got the ball and started running to try and score. I passed it to my teammate and he gave me a far pass and once I was getting close to score one of the other team slide tackled me and I landed wrong. I heard a loud SNAP! I knew right then that this was not good. I landed on my hip and I was feeling a lot of pain. I was trying to get up but I couldn’t, the pain was too much. There was a lot of emotions going through my mind. I felt frustrated, mad, and I was in a lot of pain. This was my first game as a high school player and to go out like that I just felt mad. My coach ran out on the field to me and told me that I needed to go to the hospital because literally I couldn’t get up. The trainer put me in a golf cart and took me to where my mom’s car. I went straight to the hospital. I was still feeling a lot of emotions because the doctor told me that I was going to be out the whole season. Due to I had a hip injury and it needed time to heal. All that work of training and trying to make the team didn’t work at all, but we ended up winning that game 2-1. My first high school game was a really bad experience for me and for the rest of the season I had to watch all the other games from the bench. I guess these are some of things all soccer players go through. This was my story.

After all that, I really felt devastated because the season ended, but that didn’t mean that my career ended. I was motivated to tryout next year and try to heal faster to start working out again. I told myself, “I will be ready for the next season.” I would come back better and stronger. My team ended up winning the season and our coach took the trophy. We all celebrated even though I played in only one game. I still got to be there with my teammates and I was focused on training for the next season.

## MY BOXING JOURNEY

*By Adrian G.*

Imagine stepping into a boxing gym filled with the sounds of heavy punches hitting a heavy bag making the chains shake and clash together that hold it up and the excitement of people sparring all this is what I heard and saw. I’m going to tell my journey into boxing, it started about six or seven months ago on a Saturday in the afternoon the sun was still beaming down at me and when I got to the boxing gym I walked in and it felt ten times hotter than outside I saw many people training hard and hitting a bag with power and speed I got excited all while sharing this experience with my dad and mom. When I saw the boxing ring for the first time with my own eyes it made me feel like I was in a dream. And for the first month I was training it was hard my dad pushed me every day to not miss a day. I would train 5 days a week.

It was unbearable every day. “I thought to myself I can’t do it, I need a break” but I kept going without missing a day and I kept going because I love boxing ever since I was a kid I wanted to box every time I watched matches I would get excited and now that I’m in the sport I’m going through challenges that come with the sport that I never knew how hard it was to box and so I train my hardest not only because I have the desire to do the sport but because I also want to get better at self-discipline. Especially with my dad there helping me get better and pushing me to train with all my effort. It helps me stay focused in sparring because seeing him stand there and watch me makes me feel like I need to do my best to show him I’m good and when I’m sparring and I’m comfortable. The first time I was spared I was anxious.

My stomach was spinning and my head felt like I was under water. I was scared but at the same time I was confident I was going through so much emotion I didn’t even know what I was feeling at the time I felt the same way on the first day of training because of the sounds of punches hitting the bags the sight people crowded and the site of the ring that day was overwhelming that day I was wearing shorts and a short sleeve because it was blazing hot. But even though it was scorching hot right when I stepped into the ring I didn’t even think about the heat and the excitement I had when I stepped on the mat of the ring slipping through the ropes. I finally was living my dream but it was hard training hard every day with little rest I got sick because of the temperature changes from hot to cold because the gym was hot and outside was cold then I had to take antibiotics it started messing up my body but I still told myself to push and then I started to cramp up and this happened this month of boxing but I had challenges before to and it was learning how to get better. The way I overcome those challenges was by listening to my coaches and trying not to push myself too much if I can’t take the pain from the cramps and to eat good every day because getting protein in my body is important.

It made me feel accomplished for the things I did in training and not just me but my parents on how much I’ve grown as a kid I think I’ve matured better than the person I was back then I would complain about little things for no reason and now I know what to do in hard time all because of boxing. Boxing taught me many things and it is still making me learn more. It’s made me learn



how to think before I act and to control my anger and it taught me discipline as well but it's making me work on things I need to work on still which I'm thankful for. So I'm looking forward to continuing my journey into boxing because I want to learn more and become better at the sport, maybe even going pro.

For me boxing is everything and i think the importance of pursuing one's passion is when you do something that's fun and you wanna do you will put more work into it to do good in that passion. Even faced with challenges, if you really want to reach your dream then you will go through those challenges to reach it. That can lead to surprising personal growth because when you face hard challenges in life and when you beat them it can help you grow because you learn new things. And so I think that doing your dreams in life will be good but you need to go through the challenges that come with that dream to grow and become better.

**2090, YEAR OF ALIENS**

*By Jose T.A.*

Global warming and climate change has destroyed the world as we know it.

The year is 2090. Miami is now an underwater place now and ruled by the aliens. Once a beautiful place now a soggy underwater place where aliens live and rule over the place.

Earth saviors, Dave Smith is humanity's only hope. Dave smith builds up the bravery to make a secret revolutionary organization to help out the people that are in need of help and their name is the messengers.

The fight was jeopardized when Dave smith walked in a trap, ricked by the wicked alien who wants to destroy the world and control the world called, tomas junior and he injures dave smith left arm.

But despite his injuries Dave Smith is still trying best to get the main alien to get killed and but right now dave smith is hurting from that injury.

The messengers armed with deadly weapons and nets, finally disrupted the aliens. Now the messengers have a fighting chance with the alien who controls all of the other aliens.The messengers try their best to save mankind.

Dave Smith defeats the alien, The water begins to recede in some areas, Dave Smith reflects on the importance of a bigger and better future for mankind, igniting hope for the restoration of Florida.

**MY WRITING OF MY LIFE**

*By Rebecca P.*

It was a dark cloudy Wednesday morning and it looked like it was going to rain. The clouds were very dark and cold it was a very nice weather though. I was with people from program at a fun event it was a really fun experience to me and all of us.

This program is called, "choiceline," and consists of taking people out to places. For example they took me out to San diego seaworld. It was a really fun day. We got to get on rides which were really fun. I heard kids screaming, laughing. I was really nervous to get on the rides. My heart was pounding and felt like I was going to have a heart attack. It was a really fun experience for me though.

How it first started we all drove cars to seaworld and were ready to get on the rides. We got snacks and watched some shows of dolphins, orcas. After we got on the rides which was a really fun experience for us we were scared, nervous, and curious how fast the rides went. These events are really fun for us kids who deserve it who go to school. It made me feel happy that i got chosen to go to seaworld because i really deserved it i had so much fun at SeaWorld i heard so much kids having fun running around to get on the rides heard them screaming for their life and watching animals shows where really awesome got see animals do some really cool tricks. It made me feel happy makes me wanna go to other theme park sand get on rides, and watch more shows of animals like dolphins ,orcas, penguins, and other types of animals.

**DYSTOPIAN FUTURE**

*By Leti*

Esco, was a flooded and decaying city where a musty mall showed hope and community, now is a stronghold for bad humans. Ms. Ellie Sandoval, a brave zombie killer and the unlikely leader not letting nothing stop her to bring about change and protect the remaining humanity.Ellie observes the suffering of her community underoppressive rulers and decides to form a secret group called The Saviors People, composed of diverse individuals united by a shared goal.. The Saviors show their unique talents and backgrounds that contribute to the group's mission.

As they plan their first operation to disrupt the mean leaders' control, Ellie feels the weight of responsibility and the urgency to act.During a critical mission to secure supplies, Ellie is betrayed by Sr. Urban Decay, a cunning antagonist posing as an ally, leading to a trap that results in Ellie injuring her finger.

This injury make her doubts group about her ability to lead them effectively against their my opps.Despite her injury, Ellie inspires The Saviors People to go attack the mall, using police cars and blocks of ice to create objects and disrupt the mean regime's operations.The fight was intense, as Ellie leads her team through challenges, demonstrating her determination

and courage. Through teamwork and strategies, The Saviors People manage to outsmart their enemies, taking parts of the mall and restoring a sense of hope to the community.

Ellie, despite her injury, realizes that their strength lies in unity and that even the smallest acts of defiance can spark significant change. As the sun breaks through the clouds over the new mall, Ellie reflects on their journey and the power of hope and resilience in the face of adversity.

**YEAR OF FISH PEOPLE**

*By Daniel C.E.*

It's 2230 and global warming has harmed the planet to the point where all the ice has melted. Escondido has been flooded. Evolution has taken the worst with these FISH PEOPLE!!!! Fish people have taken a step into evolution; they are way faster swimmers, stronger, and bigger. John Booker a fierce hunter and also a very good swimmer often mistaken for fish people because of how fast he was.

John Booker was out on a cruise and he saw something poking out of the water. He used his binoculars to see closer and he saw fish people on top of the dome. John heads back to Dixon Lake and tells his crew to ready up. His crew are called The Fishers their goal is to take back their city. The fish people want to be the only kind of humans. They want to wipe out or enslave them.

John and his crew the fishers get on a boat. John is sailing the boat towards City Hall. They arrive and are shot at with an arrow. Nobody was pierced but Fish Eye the leader of the fish people leaps out of the water and slices John's arm off. Fish Eye leaps back into the water. John and his crew sail back to Dixon Lake. Fish eye is a very violent scavenger and tracker. John gets back to Dixon lake and has to put the rest of his arm onto a hot iron. He puts a fake arm on, gets his gun spear and starts sailing back to city hall.

John is going as fast to city hall ready to take revenge. They get on top of the dome looking into the water. Fish Eye leaps out of the water and so do the fish people. They all start fighting and getting thrown into the water. Fish eye and John fell into the water. Fish eye didn't expect John to be this quick in the water. He doesn't know where John went. He came from the back and sliced his head off.

John and The Fishers get back to Dixon lake and tell all the ppl that they can take their city back. Everyone gets into boats and starts building a wall. They struggle the most taking out the water of the walls.

John thinks of his arm everyday. If it was worth all the pain. John goes on top of the wall he created; he looks down and jumps in. He swims away knowing he did something good in his life.

**ESCONDIDO 2225**

*By Rebecca*

Back in 2225 Escondido, was overrun by zombies, it was a moldy wet place that got ruined. Stores got ruined like sprouts, it was a really nice looking place before global warming, for people to be at. Mr. Raul Espinoza, is an energetic and determined World Savior dedicated to finding a way to reclaim humanity's future. He was a person to depend on, a loving kind person who helps others who survives people's lives from danger. Raul witnesses the devastation caused by the zombie apocalypse and feels compelled to act, forming a secret group that wants to change called The Alliance People. It was survivors ready to fight back. The alliance people had so many cool skills like oxygen and rocks. The alliance people will try their best to save mankind, but, can they defeat mean zombies and restore sprouts to its former glory? These skills gave them power over the zombies.

As they plan their first operation to secure supplies and gather intel, Raul emphasizes the importance of unity and strategy in their fight against the zombies. During a crucial mission to gather resources, Raul is deceived by Sr. Luis Rodriguez, a sneaky antagonist who pretends to support their cause but ultimately leads them into a trap. In the chaos, Raul injures his mouth, leaving him unable to communicate effectively and causing doubt within The Alliance about his ability to lead.

Despite his injury, Raul rallies The Alliance People for a daring attack against a major zombie stronghold, using oxygen tanks to create distractions and rocks as makeshift weapons. The battle is intense, showcasing their bravery and determination as they face overwhelming odds, testing their resolve and resourcefulness. Through clever tactics and teamwork, The Alliance People manage to defeat a significant portion of the zombie horde, reclaiming parts of Sprouts and instilling hope among the remaining survivors.

Raul, despite his injury, learns that effective leadership is about inspiring others and that resilience can turn the tide in dire situations. Through clever tactics and teamwork, The Alliance People manage to defeat a significant portion of the zombie horde, reclaiming parts of Sprouts and instilling hope among the remaining survivors. Raul, despite his injury, learns that effective leadership is about inspiring others and that resilience can turn the tide in dire situations.

**THE COASTER OF FUN**

*By Mateo S.M.*

As a kid I never understood the fun in roller coasters people had. People seem to enjoy it a lot somehow, they scream, laugh, and cheer when going extremely fast when on a roller coaster. With faces laughing as if they heard an extremely funny joke or faces that look petrified from going so fast. While this seems fun and all from the outside, to someone who has never rode a roller coaster would seem scary.

And I was that “someone,” because I never took an interest in roller coasters, maybe I would never go on one, I thought, or maybe it’s just something not really scary, but people make it look like it is. Passengers always seem to shout in fear, excitement, maybe both, whenever those speed machines flip and turn.

Until this day I thought roller coasters were something I would never get on but little did I know today something was going to change. I went to church today and heard the church members were going to an amusement park. Belmont park was the name, and when I heard this I started to feel tingling in my stomach because of so much excitement, my thoughts ran everywhere thinking about all the fun things I’ll do.

Once we were at Belmont Park I was surprised by what I saw, the park was great and all, with food and games, but what amused me the most was the roller coaster. It was big and terrifying so it reminded me that this is something I’ve never experienced before so it was going to be scary/challenging. I ended up getting on one of the rides with two of my sisters that went to the amusement park with me. As we sat down on the roller coaster, I felt a little scared and excited, both at the same time, as if I got a mystery gift. Once it took off, my sisters and I were moving so fast, they were screaming in fear and laughter, as I sat quiet and excited. The ride seemed to get more exciting the longer I was on it. It starts to slow down once we are near the line.

Once I got off the roller coaster I felt happy and surprised by how the ride was a blast. I felt excited and nervous while on this ride and it made me think I was going to pass out because of its speed, but instead it’s just a rush of excitement and fear playing tricks on you because nothing is really going on. On this ride I felt more awake, even my sister’s asked me, “do you feel ok,” and I replied saying, “yes, I’m good, I’m just a little lightheaded,” and I was, because the roller coaster had felt like a stomach ache after eating.

After we were done with the ride, we decided to get something to eat. I enjoyed the roller coaster, but I didn’t really want to try another ride, because I wasn’t used to it much, besides in the future I will try it again. My sisters and I ate some food, I had a hotdog and my sisters had nachos. After we were done eating, we prepared to go home, our church friends gave us a ride home and that night I felt brave and optimistic about riding a roller coaster. During the ride I was thinking if I should’ve considered getting on the ride, because I thought, “what if I pass out?” or “what if the roller coaster tips over?” Now that I’ve been on a roller coaster, during the experience I was breathing hard, wondering why I’m feeling like this and what is this feeling, I try to calm down and not let my fear take over, and just enjoy the ride in general as it was moving as fast as the wind, with fast turns, ups and downs, and people shouting to the top of their lungs. This has made the experience memorable and roller coasters are now fun for me.

## A SURPRISE DAY!

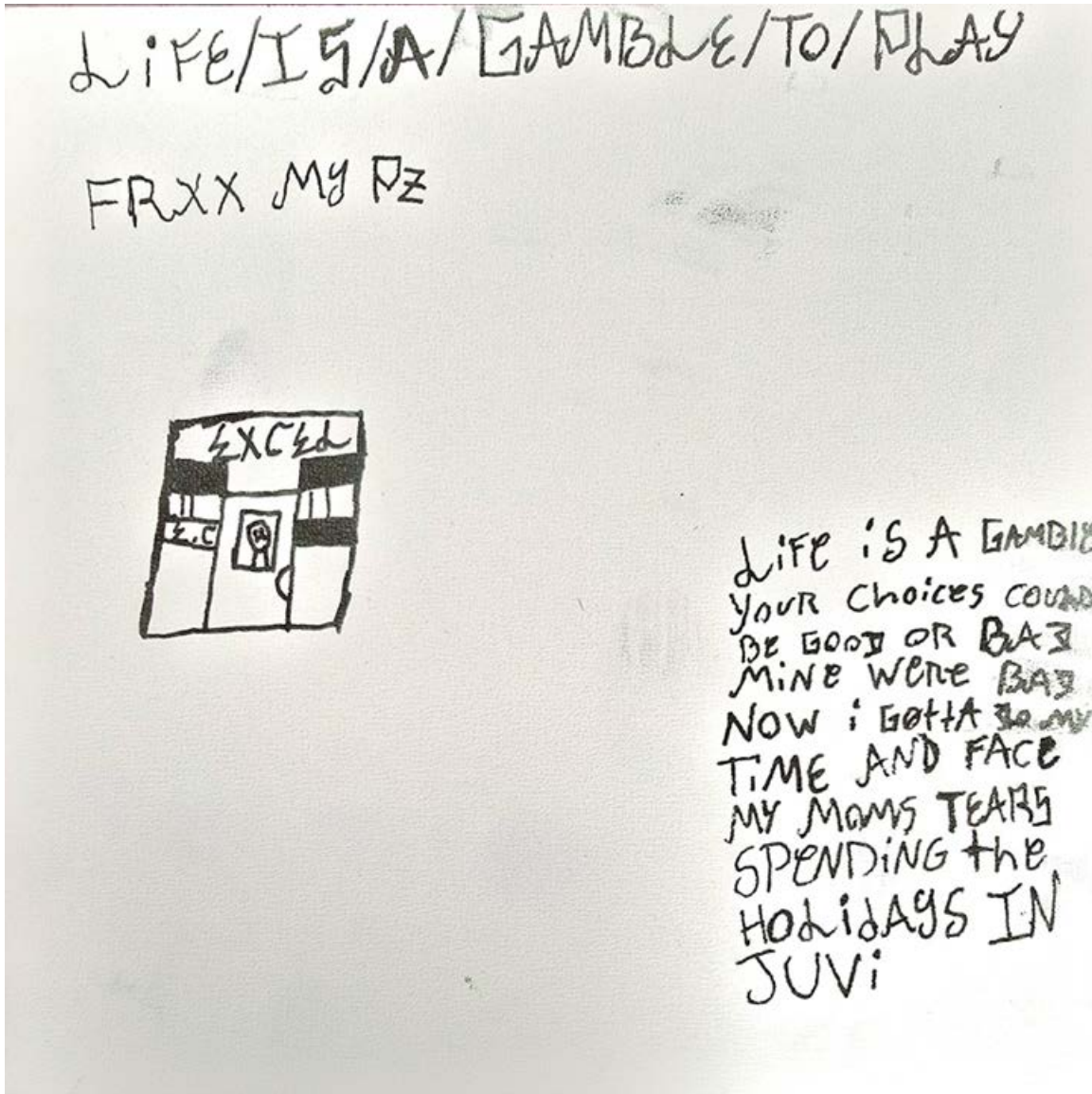
*By Leti N.*

When I walked into my room I heard something moving and making noises. I heard scratching sounds. I also saw something moving behind her. I was worried something was going to jump out and scare me. As I was looking around for the noises I saw a kitten peek and meow at me. I was shocked ,surprised and excited !

I always wanted a cat. I told my sister that I always wanted a cat. She said “if our parents let us get the cat, I would get it.” I had no idea my sister was going to bring a cat home. I found out that she got the cat without my parents knowing. My cat didnt have a name for two months because we couldn’t agree on a name. When my cat is awake he runs and jumps everywhere. Finally my sister picked out a name for my cat Leo.

After a while of having Leo he got comfortable with me and my sister. I went out and bought him treats, a fresh new litter box and toys. Leo likes to play with my dog Max and they get along really well. “Do you like Leo ?” My sister said when we were at the store buying him new stuff. Leo also likes to do muffins on his bed when he’s relaxed and when he feels safe.

Now that I have Leo for a year and a half I know that when he meows he's asking for food or for something. He likes to purr when he's happy and comfortable. Leo also likes to sleep in the daytime and at night time he likes to run around my house. I’m thankful that my sister loves me. I liked getting surprised by my sister by getting me a cat and it was the best gift.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## INNOVATIONS

### UNTITLED

By Brandon L.

My name is Brandon Luna, I was born in Vista, California. My parents are from Jalisco, Mexico and Oaxaca, Mexico. I grew up with three siblings and I am the second youngest. I like to watch combat sports like boxing, kickboxing, and mma. I started watching combat sports with my brother. I want to make good money and get a good job so I can move my family to the middle class.

As a teenager I enjoyed hanging out with my family. As a family we enjoy playing board games and having family dinners together. Our favorite board game to play as a family is monopoly. Currently the apartment that we live in, we have lived there since I was six years old. We picked that apartment because it was right next to our cousins. They are related to us through our mom, my uncle is her brother.

I enjoy playing video games like Fortnite and Call of Duty. I started playing video games with my two older brothers. We'd usually play games like Borderlands, Mortal Kombat, and Street Fighter. Playing video games with my brothers as a kid made me very competitive. One of my earliest competitive memories of playing video games was with my brother's friend. I was button-mashing on mortal kombat and he started getting upset because he was losing.

In the summer between 8th grade and high school, I started watching Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) weekly with my brother. It was around the coronavirus outbreak time and we'd always bet on fighters against each other. I think this is when I started liking gambling and got into poker and blackjack. My brother doesn't keep up with the sport anymore, he only watches the big fights. I make it a habit of watching the weekly UFC fights, working out, and doing my laundry on Saturday mornings.

Lastly, when I graduate high school my plans are to get a trade job. Preferably I'd like to be an electrician because I feel that's a type of job that won't be as physically demanding. If being an electrician doesn't work out for whatever reason I would join the Marine Corps. My end goal in life is to apply myself, work hard, and set up my family for better opportunities. I'm going to graduate high school very soon so only time will tell how far I'll go.



## UNTITLED

*By Newland T.*

Good afternoon, my name is Newland T and I'm from Vista CA. My parents are from California and Vietnam. We enjoy going to Las Vegas together. I like to eat food and stay in the hotel. I have one sibling and he's annoying because he talks too much. He's the same age as me and is shorter. I enjoy soccer, skating, and TV.

In my free time I usually watch TV but I mainly enjoy watching Soccer highlights and soccer games. I think TV helps me release stress when I'm busy. I would lay down and watch TV till I sleep.

Secondly, soccer for me has to be the most important thing in my life. I see it as entertainment, a career, and a stress reliever. It is my dream to play professional soccer for Barcelona. I play forward and center-mid in soccer so it's my dream to play as a striker for Barcelona. I was inspired when I was ten by Neymar Jr and my friend's to start playing soccer.

Now for my final hobby, I enjoy skateboarding. I first started skateboarding two years ago. I remember in 6th grade my friend Mason was looking at skateboards online and I thought it was interesting. I asked my dad later to buy me one and he did. I was excited that I finally got a board. I started to skate everyday more and more. It was my source of transportation and entertainment.

In conclusion, I enjoy playing soccer at the park, skating, and watching TV at home. Some reasons why I think they are fun is I enjoy dribbling in soccer a lot. Skating is my transportation without a car and it helps me feel the wind, and TV is entertaining. TV helps me relax and I enjoy the storyline of show's because it show's a story.

## UNTITLED

*By Christopher C.*

Good afternoon my name is Christopher C.. I am 13 years old. I am from Vista California. I have three siblings, one older brother and two older sisters. My mom is from Ensenada, Mexico, My dad is from Hidalgo, Mexico. We currently live in Vista CA. As a teenager I enjoyed hanging out with the homies, playing video games, and listening to music.

First, I would like to talk about hanging out with my friends. My friends and I hangout at a local spot in the community. We just hang around there and talk about how we are doing. We walk to the park and chill on a bench. We also go to Oceanside to the beach or downtown and I ride my bike to relax. I also like to go on the pier and walk and look at the fishes that people have caught at night. It's better when it's dark.

Secondly, I enjoy playing video games. I like to play Call of Duty because it's fun. It's a shooting

and war game where you can play multiplayer with friends or family. I also like to play Grand Theft Auto. It's fun to talk smack to other people and mess with other players. You can also play online or offline you can drive around the map, do missions you can also kill and shoot other players in your lobby.

Thirdly, I like to listen to music when I'm by myself. I like to listen to rap and old school music. When I listen to music it helps me to focus on my school work and it gets my brain going. It also helps me to relax when I'm stressed out. I go to my car sometimes and just listen to music in my car or I walk with my speaker around Vista or my neighborhood.

In conclusion, as a teenager I enjoy going outside and hanging out with the homies and walking around. I like to play video games when I'm bored like Call of Duty and GTA. They are good games to play online. Lastly, I like to listen to rap and old school style of music when I'm stressed out and I like to listen to music when I'm by myself.

## UNTITLED

*By Arthur D.*

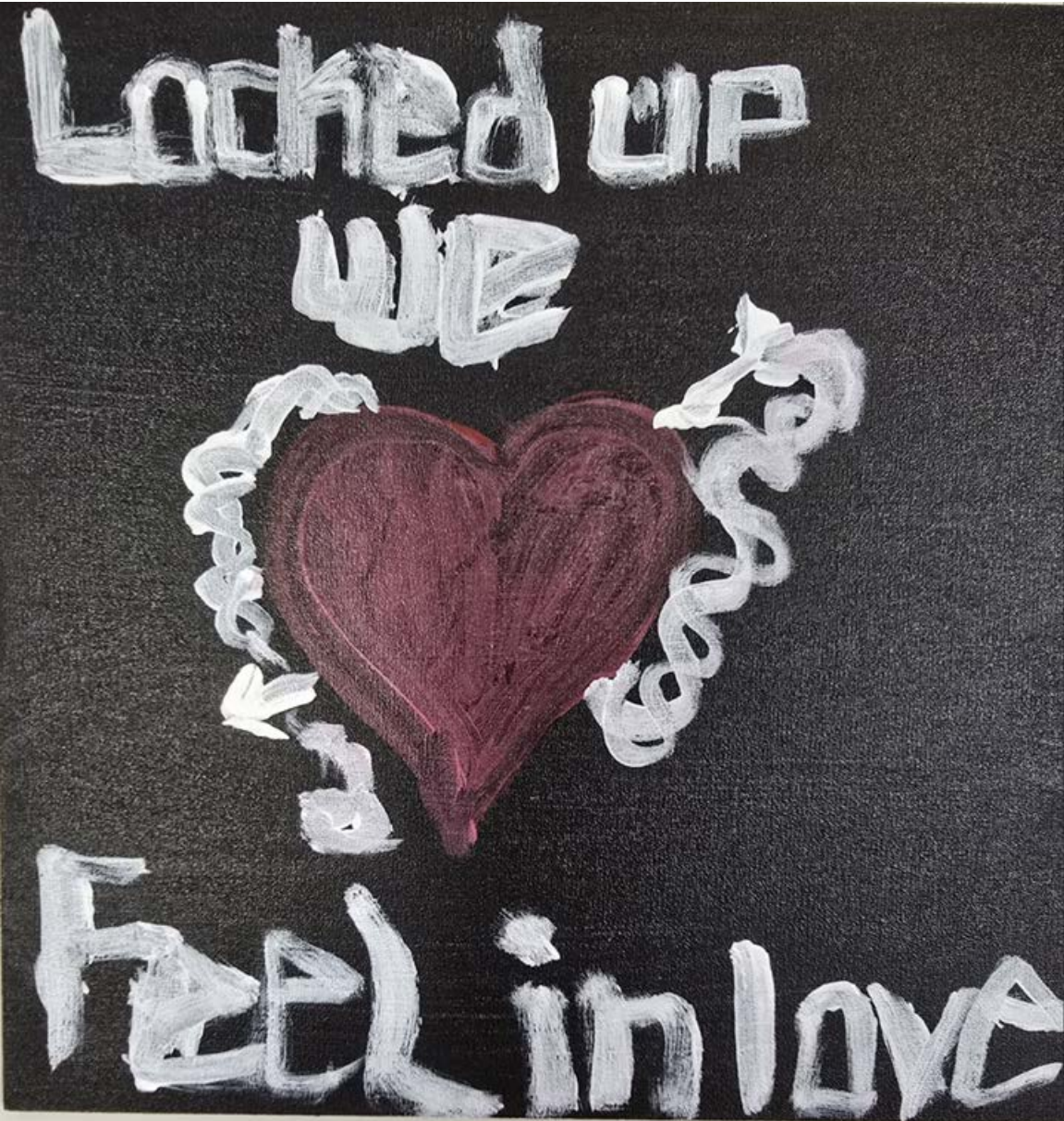
Good afternoon my name is Arthur D. and I am 16 years old. I was born in San Diego California in 2007. I have a brother and sister who are twins, I am the oldest sibling. My parents are from San Diego California. Currently I live on the coast with my Dad in Del Mar and my mom lives in Sorrento Valley. Being a teenager, I like to do many things including Boy Scouts, surfing, and photography.

First, I am a Boy Scout for troop 782. I am a first class scout in the glowing alien patrol. With the Boy Scouts, we have gone on many hikes and camp outs around the United States and in Mexico. Camp outs can be hiking with a tent or can be just driving to a camp site and setting up a bivouac for the night. We do a big fundraiser once a year, where we sell Christmas Greenery including wreaths, garlands, and centerpieces. We also do community service such as cleaning up memorials, beach clean ups and helping out at food banks. Over time you can move up in position by completing requirements for the different rank structures. The Boy Scouts have taught me survival skills, responsibility, and leadership skills. Also I enjoy the challenges, adventures, and components of becoming a better person through Scouting.

Secondly, I enjoy Surfing with my friends or by myself at beaches along the coast of California. I find surfing very relaxing just being out in the water taking in the sun while waiting for the next big wave. I usually ride an 8 foot longboard. After surfing, I love to eat large meals with plenty of calories to replenish the energy I expelled during the day. I try to surf at least 1 or 2 times a week, but most of the time it's every other week that I get out in the surf. The ideal wave for my longboard is a 3 to 6 foot wave that barrels. One of the best feelings is riding a 3 to 6 foot wave when it starts barreling. Being in the barrel of a wave you forget about all the pressure and stresses of life.

Thirdly, my love for photography has inspired me to capture the beauty of nature and take personal portraits. I have been a photographer for around 3-4 years. During my freshman year, I took a Digital photography class. While in digital photography, we practiced editing, understanding how the camera works, some history about photography, and also made websites with our best photos. On my website, I have slides of various nature scenes, birds, beaches, and flowers. I own a Nikon D3200 DSLR camera and I have a variety of lenses. Some of the lenses I have include an 18-55 mm, a 55-200 mm, and my largest current lens a 200-400 mm manual focus lens.

Finally, my life as a teenager has had its ups and downs but it has been good for the most part. Some of my goals for the future are to graduate High School, get to eagle scout, and pursue my passion for photography. Maybe one day I could be a professional photographer. I'd love to work at national geographics or be a wedding photographer. I also want to travel around the world someday and have a family to experience it with me.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

# NORTH COUNTY TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY (NCTA)

## PEN

*By Anonymous*

My father has been always in and out my whole life. He has only been in my life 3 years in total. He got released after serving 5 years in prison , it was a long time and everyone was happy. My family made food, the whole house smelled like Thanksgiving and he was happy to be out. I was spending a lot of time with him because it had been awhile.

After a year passed, out of nowhere my dad got arrested again. I still remember that day, it was a sunny day. It just got done raining outside, the air smelled wet, the clouds were going away, everything and everyone was sad. This time he was caught up in a more serious crime . My family and I were sad, in shock, and mad that he would mess everything up again. I was just like “wtf” in disbelief.

He recently got sentenced to serve a long time, I probably will not see him for years. I visit him whenever I get the chance to, but it's not the same as having him physically present. I can't wait for the day that he will be set free. One thing I did learn from this experience was to enjoy things while you still have them and while they last.

## UNTITLED

*By Anonymous*

I had just got out of Juvenile Detention at East Mesa on May 17, 2024. I knew I was very behind in school, basically a whole year, since I never went. So when I got out, I knew I had a lot of catching up to do. I stayed motivated to get things done and I was determined to get back on track.

School was out already and summer time had just started. I knew I had to do summer school so we got in contact with the district and we were trying to see what school I was going to start attending. A couple weeks went by and we got a call back. They told my mom I was going to start school on July 8th at JCCS in San Marcos, and that we have a meeting with Ms.Kate, who is one of the teachers there.

The day of the meeting came and when we got there it was a big building I have never seen before. We walked inside and we went into a room with Ms.Kate and we sat.

She introduced herself, “Hi I’m Kate and I’m a teacher here and.....”

She proceeded to tell me the rules at the school and her expectations and to be honest I didn’t care, I was already planning to focus on myself and just get my shit done and go back to Vista district. At first, I thought Kate and the other teachers were going to suck and just be annoying, but this wasn’t the case, thankfully. The whole meeting I was zoning out and not paying attention. I already had my mindset on focusing on myself and getting my stuff done and catching up with my grade.

The next day came and it was July 8th, 2023. My first day back at school, I was really nervous because I was new to the school and I had no idea what to expect or who would be there. When I walked in the classroom it looked different than I expected. They told me everything I needed to complete in order for me to catch up with my sophomore year. It was a lot, a whole year’s worth of work since I needed to do my freshman year too. I was feeling overwhelmed and stressed. The teachers ended up being really helpful towards me and continued to push me to do good and to not give up. I was and have been very determined to get it done and to catch up.

Now, Oct 15th 2024, I am almost caught up and on track. I have good grades and I’ve been staying “out the way.” My probation just started yesterday, after doing 6 months of dead time. I’m planning to do even better than I was. I want to only move up from here, no more back tracking. If you are reading this then remember, you can do anything you set your mind to. Don’t give up when shit gets hard and when you start to feel overwhelmed, keep pushing.

## MY FIRST DAY OF 9TH GRADE

*By Cesar P.*

The night before my first day of high school, I felt overwhelmed! I was worried about who I was going to hang out with because it was not my school district. I did not know anybody at Orange Glen High School and I was panicking that I would sit alone. Finally I fell asleep without knowing. The morning arrived and I started getting dressed. I was running out of time so I decided to skip breakfast in order to get to school on time. I got in the car and my mom drove me to school and asked me if I was excited for my first day of school. I said yeah but deep down I was very nervous. When we arrived at the school I hesitated to get out of the car because I knew I would not have anyone to hang out with.

When I walked in the school I thought I was gonna have 6 periods with 6 different classes but I was quickly disappointed because the assistant principal told me “You will earn classes by having good grades,good attendance” and at the time I was in disbelief & angry because i thought it was a “special” class.



I noticed that I was in one class the entire day. The only period I would be able to go out and interact with other students was lunch. The rest of the period I would have to stay in one single class for all my school subjects.

## **A DAY AT SOCCER TRYOUTS: SET A GOAL FOR MYSELF**

*By Andrea M.*

One day late in the evening, around 6:30pm, I had soccer tryouts at Vista High School and another one at San Marcos Middle School . My tryouts were on weekdays. I'm pretty sure it was on a Friday during summer break in 2022. It was raining heavily outside, and it was late at night. No one knew it was going to rain. The coach assumed that nothing was going to happen and that it was not going to rain. Everyone was angry because they made us try out in the rain. It's harder playing soccer in the rain. After tryouts, they told us that the coach would be giving our parents a call that following week.

My dad got the call and they told us that I made the team! I didn't feel good at all. I didn't even want to be on the team anymore because I didn't know anyone. I joined anyway because I promised my dad. My first game was two weeks later, on a Saturday morning at 9:00am. My team was challenging because they all knew how to play, and they were already on that team from the previous year. It was my first time on a team and I didn't feel welcome. Regardless, I set a goal for myself, the goal was that I would score one goal each game. My dad was always there to support me through something positive every weekend.

I always ended up scoring a goal because everyone there motivated me and they were always there to cheer me on. After all, everyone should always try their best even if it's something you're not good at. One game that really stood out to me was my last game at San Marcos Middle School. This game was special because all my family came to watch and kept me going throughout the whole game. The best part was celebrating the end of the season with a victory at a delicious restaurant. I learned that even if you don't get along with your teammates, you still have to do your best and achieve your goals.

## **THE TIME I ALMOST WENT TO THE HALLS**

*By Anonymous*

Boredom is my worst enemy. One night, I was bored at home, so I texted one of my homies and asked: "what are you doing?" He called me minutes later, and some of the homies told me to come out, so I went to the set. Six of my homies and I were walking back to the park after we went to get chips and sodas, and it smelled like grass and trees and the night sky was clear. We saw and heard the bells of the ice cream man walking through apartments, since it was a warm

night. Suddenly two police cars stopped on the side of the road, and told us to sit on the curve. All I saw was bright blue and red lights. I heard sirens and my heart raced as we yelled: "we haven't done anything!". The cops ignored us, and they started to take out their cuffs. When we saw that they were going to handcuff us, we all started running because we didn't want to be harassed by them. We didn't even do anything! We all ran through different apartments and 20 minutes later we hadn't heard anything so we thought they left.

I called one of my homies and he was by Pico Park so I called the rest and told them to meet us there. We started walking through these apartments and all of a sudden, we saw the entrance of the road and we all hid in a big garbage container, it smelled like rotten food and death. There was a lot of space in there so we hid behind the garbage and we stayed approximately for like 30 minutes. We suddenly hear the cops walking through the apartments with their K9's. They yelled "if anyone is in there make yourself known ""We have our K9's". We all looked at each other and we panicked, my heart was pumping fast and we all whispered to each other to "run". When we were about to start running; they opened the doors and all their bright lights pointed at our faces and they had their guns drawn. They told us to lay on the floor and they shoved us to the side of the road and they checked if we had warrants.

One of my homies did, so they took him in and we all started to yell at the cops. Since they arrested my friend, they said: "you guys got lucky we are letting you guys go because there isn't enough space for all six of you guys!" I felt relieved because it was midnight and my mom would've gotten scared. After they let us go, I went back to my pad and I was just glad I made it back. I thought to myself that it was so dumb of us to run. And next time, I'm just going to face my consequences and follow instructions. I was lucky that the night did not end in a tragedy.

## **ANGEL**

*By Anonymous*

One of the best days of my life was getting my very first dog. A friend of mine had two Puggles that gave birth, and he was rehoming the puppies. Of course, he was selling them. Times are tough and people like to make money but they weren't too expensive. He said he was going to give us the cutest looking puppy for cheap. At first he only wanted \$100 dollars, but then he was \$200 due to him getting all of his shots.

I remember going to his house to pick up the dog. I was very excited and nervous because this was going to be my first dog. I couldn't wait to meet him, I wondered if I was going to know how to take care of a dog, especially how I was going to potty train him and if he was going to cry all night and keep me awake. He was only nine weeks old and about the size of my hand. He was tan with a black nose and ears, his fur was soft and he had that distinct puppy look. He chilled on my lap on the ride home. I was going through potential names in my head but my family decided to name him Angel.



He started growing fast by 2-3 weeks, he was already running around and switched him from wet food to kibble food when he was a couple of months old. His first veterinarian appointment was three weeks later and he got his updated shots. I was embarrassed because Angel peed on the vet. I was like: “No, no, no, I’m so sorry!” He’s pretty much a couch potato now and he’s three years old now.

Angel is a part of our family and my friend. They say, “dogs are a man’s best friend,” and he is definitely mine. I learned that it is a lot of responsibility to take care of a dog, but at the end of the day it is very rewarding.

**GAINING FREEDOM**  
*By Anonymous*

Most people nowadays don’t truly remember what it feels like to be free. Freedom is one of, if not the most important aspects of life. When you are free, you are in control—not only of your own life but also of the lives of those around you. Unfortunately, freedom is often overlooked or taken for granted. Many people do not know any better, or they have never experienced true freedom. This is why it is important for young people to step up and earn the freedom they deserve.

I have always wanted to drive. As a kid I’ve always asked my parents if I could drive their car or do things that would grant me more freedom. However, as I grew older, I began to look around and notice, no one is free. Most people seemed trapped in a monotonous routine: waking up, getting ready, working for 8 to 12 hours, returning home, preparing dinner, going to bed, and repeating the same cycle day after day. Many individuals lack a true understanding of what it means to fully live. I decided I wanted to change that and try to become as independent as I could be, or at least what I perceived independence to be. Consequently, I decided to achieve my freedom by obtaining my California driver’s license.

The process was much easier than I had anticipated. The first phase for obtaining a learner’s permit required a mandatory 30-hour instructional period before I could take the learner’s test. I decided to dedicate myself fully to this so that I could complete it quicker. It was important to me to achieve this, not only as a personal challenge but also to demonstrate to others that I could succeed. After passing the test, I had to hold my permit for six months while driving with a parent before I could apply for my license. Additionally, I needed to accumulate 25 hours of driving time, which provided me with the opportunity to practice in a comfortable setting. Once I fulfilled all the requirements, it was time to take my driving test at the DMV.

The driving test itself wasn’t actually too hard. What was worse was the lines. It took nearly an hour just to speak with a representative about my appointment, which I almost missed. By the

time I reached the front of the line, I had all my paperwork ready. I entered and spoke with the attendant about where to wait, when he told me “Go wait in your vehicle and get ready for inspection!”. Once they were ready, I was called for the pre-vehicle inspection to ensure I was familiar with the vehicle and to check for any potential issues. After the inspection, the driving instructor instructed me “You are free to start driving, just pull out and make a right.”

I felt nervous at first, but I had enough confidence in my driving abilities to push through without a hassle. The road was slick due to it just raining, but the drive remained smooth throughout. As we were about five minutes in, the instructor kept telling me “Make this turn here, then left at the light, then come to a complete stop and make a u-turn”. At the time, it was very chaotic, but the instructor kept on. As we were about to head back to the DMV the instructor asked me to perform a straight reverse. We were on a back road with little to no cars where she asked me “Please pull over next to that curb and come to a stop. Then put the vehicle in reverse and without hitting the curb, reverse as straight as possible. Once I completed that, she told me to drive back to the DMV. When I arrived and received my driving report, it actually turned out better than I thought. I was only marked down for maintaining the speed limit in the rain instead of slightly reducing my speed due to the conditions.

I was overjoyed when I learned that I had passed. The moment I truly experienced the freedom and independence I had talked about is when I purchased my first car. I no longer had to ask for permission for everything or rely on others for rides. Instead, I was able to manage my own time. This truly helped me understand the importance of maintaining my independence, so I wouldn’t always have to depend on or listen to others when it wasn’t necessary. It provides a sense of independence like no other, and it is reassuring to know that people can rely on me without my need to depend on anyone else.

**DAT ONE TIME I DID SUM I LATER REGRETTED**  
*By Anonymous*

I could have avoided getting put on probation but I didn’t. When they first wanted to put me on probation they offered me some group sessions with other kids to take and if I completed those group sessions they would take away my felony and not place me on probation. They assigned me to take 12 of those sessions every Wednesday. I decided to go even though I didn’t want to. I remember going to ten of those sessions and had only two more sessions to go and my record would be clean.

I remember going to my 2nd to last session, but who knew that would be my last session.

I walked in and saw one new person in the group session. We were both mad dawging each other and I thought I would be the tougher person and decided to start a problem with that person in front of the mentor. I said “whats up foo you tryna get down or what” The mentor stopped me from “getting down” with the new student. He took me to the back and started

talking to me about how I couldn't be doing stuff like that. I got sent home that day and decided not to go back. Later that day,I got a call from my case manager telling me they would give me 1 more chance and if I didn't start going again they would dismiss my case. I didn't listen, two weeks passed and I got another call from my case manager saying that they dismissed my case and that they couldn't work with me anymore.

Once my case got dismissed and sent to court I stopped caring about what I was doing and I wouldn't listen to anyone anymore. A couple of weeks passed by and that's when I finally got the letter that I had to attend court. I was thinking of not going, but something inside me was telling me to go. I ended up going, I remember when I walked in I saw a lot more people waiting for their turn to go up in front of the judge and fight for their freedom. I wondered to myself what their story was and how they ended up here in the first place. I took my seat and waited a couple hours before my lawyer showed up. She told me they were going to send me to YTC but she was requesting to put me on probation for six months and give me some ground rules.

Finally, I heard my name get called not knowing what to expect. For some reason, I felt calm. I thought that was weird because most people would be nervous, but maybe it was because I knew I couldn't do anything. I got up and walked into the courtroom. I saw the judge and saw a police officer standing beside me. I took my seat and hoped for the best. The judge told me: "Don't think I won't send you in". If I messed up once, he would send me to YTC, I didn't doubt it. They ended up placing me on probation for six months, and I couldn't get in any trouble. Now, I'm five months in, on probation and my last and final court date is next month. I really don't know what to expect because I have been getting in trouble, suspended, and also violating my probation but I have to hope for the best. There's a possibility that I am going to get sent in. If I do, then "oh well" I can't do anything about it. It was my fault I didn't take the opportunity my case manager gave me. If you can't take the consequences of your actions then re-think what you're about to do.

**BEST DAY EVER**

*By Anonymous*

I was waiting for this day, today was finally the day I got my two puppies that I had been waiting a long time for. In the summer of 2023, I really wanted two dogs so I could go outside on walks and play with them too. One day, while scrolling on TikTok I came across a dog breeder that was selling pomeranians so I contacted them. Shortly after, we set up a plan to meet. I knew the prices of these dogs were insane, but I really wanted to get them badly.

It was finally the day that I bought both of the dogs. I met the breeder halfway, we drove to Bakersfield, he was driving from San Francisco. The excitement I had when I saw both of my new puppies in front of me was out of this world. They were eight weeks old and so soft. The white one looked like a cotton ball and the other one was an exotic merle color with crazy eyes,

a blue one and a brown one! It was love at first sight! I was surprised that they were calm and snuggled all the way home.

When we arrived home, they had so much energy! They wanted to play and ran around the back yard. Once they got situated, we took them to the park so I could run around and play with them to get to know my dogs more. Their personalities came through right away. We named the Merle one "Buchys", she is a scaredy cat. She is cautious of meeting new people and backs away whenever anyone tries to pet her. The white puppy was named Bunny, she is playful and friendly, she will play and lick you anytime. Later that day we brought the dogs back home and they slept comfortably.

It's been a year, and everytime I remember this day, I am so happy I came across the ad on TikTok. Every time I get home, they are always happy to see me and they look at me with sad puppy eyes begging me; "Dad, take me on a walk." They wag their tail and lick me to death. I learned that dogs are a man's best friend and that they depend on me for a happy life so I have to be a good pet owner.

**X**

*By Anonymous*

When I was in 5th grade, we had a trip to legoland. I was scared as hell because I had never been on big rides. It was a gray cloudy day, my friend Chente and I decided to get in line for X, the biggest roller coaster I'd been on. The blue mountain filled with speedy drops and swerves, kids screaming and crying made my stomach drop. I had crazy butterflies but my teacher said "you have to get on".

My friend Chente went on first, he sat behind me and I went on the ride and got tucked into the race car. The boy sitting next to me started crying. We were waiting for the green light for take off. The car started clicking its way up and my heart started raising. When we got to the top I closed my eyes and prepared for the drop. My heart sank into my stomach as I felt the free fall and speed. Everyone in the race car was screaming, then after we went up we swerved hard to the left and the right, I could feel the wind on my face. I thought we were going to fly off the tracks, and die!

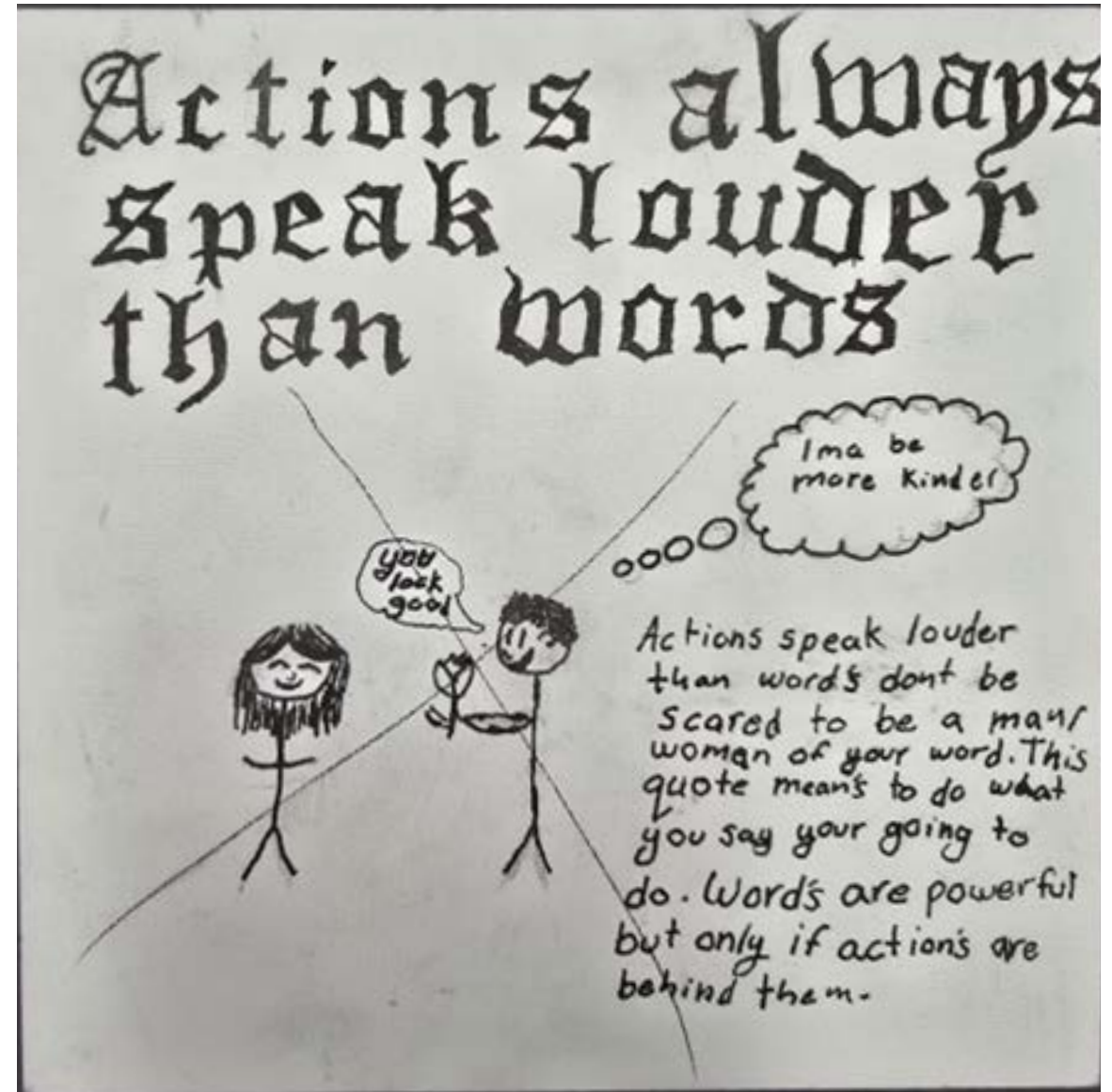
I couldn't believe how fast the ride was over. I survived! I was excited to get off the ride and the boy sitting next to me was still crying. I waited for the teachers and rest of the students to get off. Some students were excited while others were relieved that they were safe. I was proud of myself for going on a scary ride and facing my fears. My teacher told us it was time to go home and I couldn't wait.

## HOW I GOT LOST IN THE STORE

By Anonymous

When I was 6 years old, I went to Walmart with my mom to go shopping for groceries. I told my mom that I wanted to go to the toy aisle and she said: “no”. Me being a “kid,” I got mad because my mom said: “no,” so I decided to go and wander off to the toy section. My Mom was at the cereal aisle, and the cereal aisle was at the right bottom corner of the store and the toy section was across the store. I started to look around the toy section and wished that I could get all the toys I liked from the toy aisle. I came across an action figure and started to play around with the box. After about 10 minutes, I started to look around for my mom but I couldn’t find her. I went to the aisle. I last saw her, but she was not there! I started going to different aisles, I looked for her one after the other, and couldn’t find my mom.

I started to grow more worried and scared. I began to cry and felt like I was having a panic attack. I went to all the food aisles and nothing! Finally after what felt like forever, I saw my mom. I ran to her crying and my mom asked me: “What’s wrong, where have you been?” It took me a minute to settle down, I was still shaking and crying. I calmed down, and told my mom that I went to the toy section and got lost. I told her that I was scared because I thought I would never see her again. We got our groceries from the store and left.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## SAN PASQUAL ACADEMY

### THIS IS ME LETTING YOU GO

*By Anonymous*

This is me accepting that you're leaving. It's my acknowledgment that there is no further argument to make, no angle left to take, no plea or bargain I could wager that could get you to change your mind and stay. This is my subtle resignation to our downfall. This is the crack running between our two hearts that turned into a valley and engulfed us. It's my acceptance of all I couldn't bridge.

This is me knowing that we don't get do-overs. Not on the last night I spent asleep beside you. The last time I told you that I loved you or the first moment, I felt us start to drift apart. I know we don't always get second chances. I know I don't get to go back in time and kiss you slower, love you stronger, and linger five extra minutes in bed every morning that I wake beside you. This is me knowing that I can't rewind history and ask what was wrong each evening that you came home with a puzzle in your eyes but no answer on your lips. This is me knowing we don't get to go back. This is my acceptance that I'm going to miss you. There will be nights when I curl up into bed with a novel and a warm cup of tea and your absence on the left side of the bed. For a long time, I will see you everywhere - in second-floor windows, in the faces of strangers, in photos and memories that tear in my heartstrings for months after you are gone. This is the realization that missing you will become a second heartbeat in my heart.

### LOOKING IN THE MIRROR

*By Anonymous*

When I look in the mirror, I see a strong, powerful African woman. She knows her worth. She's trying her best to fit in but she is going through it. She is stuck, almost gone if you ask me, but she knows how to power through it. She was raised in Nigeria, but her mom wanted a new life for her in the U.S. It seems like the new life she was hoping for actually turned into shit. She is still fighting, though. She looks drained, but she still has faith. She is so so very beautiful, people tell her, but she doesn't see it. She doesn't want to be loved for her body; she wants to be loved for herself.



San Pasqual Academy Student Artwork



## IT'S OK TO FEEL HOWEVER YOU FEEL

*By Anonymous*

If I could meet the girl I was when I first met Grief, I'd pull her in close and hug her.

I'd cradle her in my arms and let her feel the safety of my embrace. I'd wipe every tear away from those big blue eyes and tell her that *someday* it won't feel like this.

One day, you'll wake up, and your eyes won't be swollen from yesterday's grief. One day, you'll be alone and feel less riddled with sadness.

One day, you'll remember what it is like to hope and to dream as you learn to put one foot in front of the other.

*But for right now*, I'd tell her, "It's okay to be a mess. It's ok to feel your heart has been stolen away from you. It's ok to feel like no future lies ahead of you."

I would also say, "It's ok to feel however you feel." I'll tell her she places her head on my lap, and I stroke her hair until she falls asleep.

"It won't be like this forever."

## SOMETIMES, WE HOLD ON BECAUSE WE HAVEN'T HEALED

*By Anonymous*

Sometimes, we hold on because we haven't healed, because we would rather sleep beside someone who makes us feel lonely rather than to be alone. Sometimes, we hold on because it is easier to fill our voids with another human being. Even when they do not understand us; even when they cannot value us because we are still learning how to value ourselves. We hold on to those who cannot love us for many reasons. Letting go is one of the hardest things you will have to do. But at the end of the day, keeping someone in your life who makes you question yourself, who makes you feel like you are too much, who asks you to quiet your soul, is the greatest injustice you will ever impart on your heart. That is doing yourself a deep disservice. You deserve to be surrounded by people who make you feel seen you deserve to be surrounded by people who nourish you, challenge you, and dizzy you in the best way possible. It is important to learn how to stop romanticizing the things in your life that hurt. It is important to cut those ties even when it is hard, even when you do not want to face the loss, because it is within the hardship that you will learn how to choose your heart. That way, you know how to stand up for it, and it deserves to be defended and treasured.



San Pasqual Academy Student Artwork



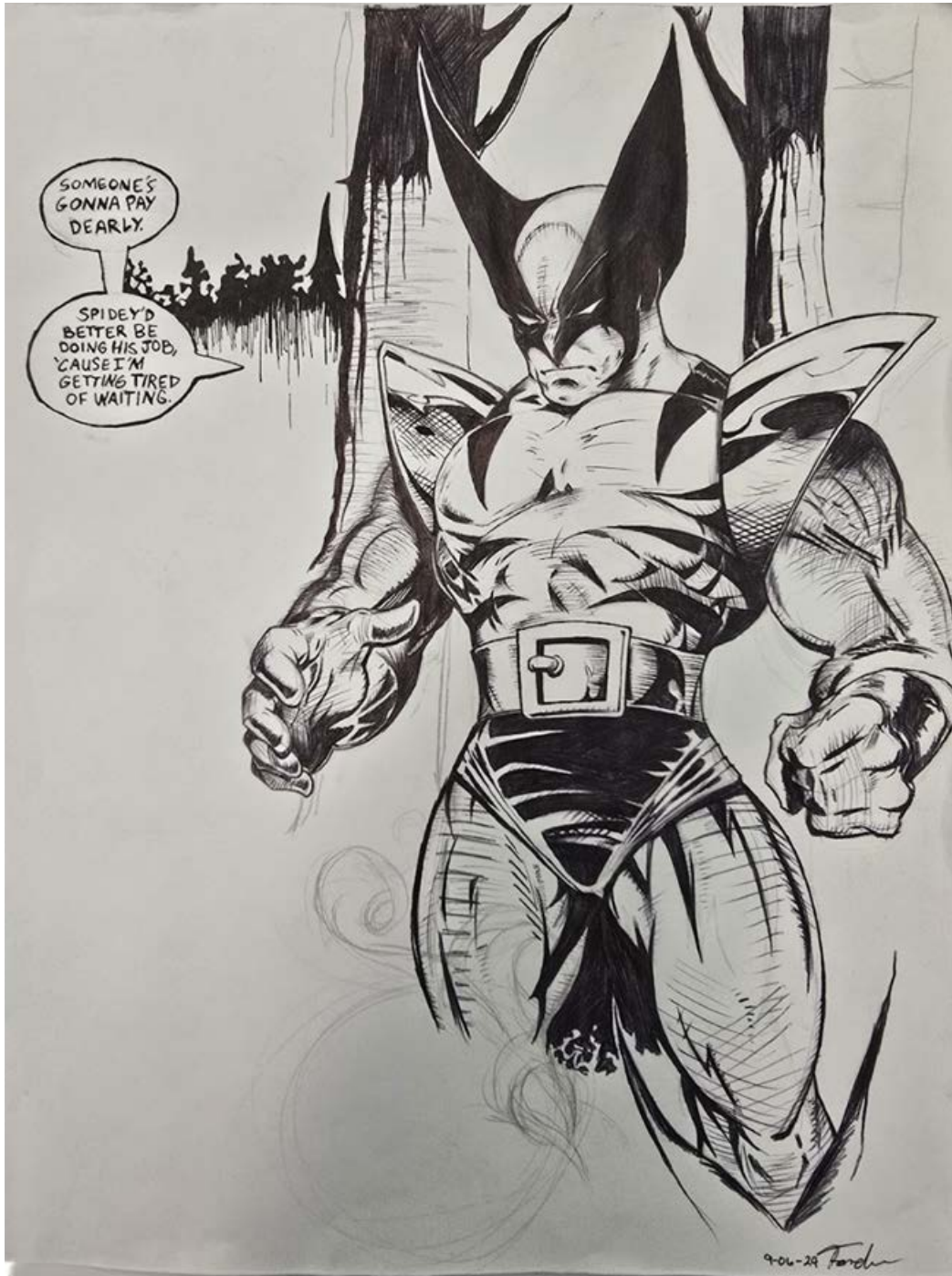
San Pasqual Academy Student Artwork

## BLACK PANTHERS COUNTER NARRATIVE

*By Anonymous*

The Black Panther Party was an organized and well-educated group. The Black Panthers wanted nothing more than for the people to be treated like equals. The goal of the Black Panther Party was to protect their own people because the state and the police weren't doing their jobs. Instead of helping and protecting they only inflicted pain and violence to the black people in the community. The state made it so that no black people could get help, the hospitals wouldn't help and the schools refuse to teach them their history. The Black Panthers did it all by themselves. The Black Panther Party fed hundreds of kids in the Breakfast program and helped them to read and write about their history and culture. Thanks to the Black Panther Party, we now have lunches at school. Thanks to the fast-growing population of Black Panthers Black people of the late 1960s had more hope. Fred Hampton started the breakfast program in Chicago and opened free clinics to help the sick and injured. The police, the government, and the FBI found out what a great and positive work they were doing and they were scared of their Black Power. They accused them of being violent but that's because they didn't want black people protecting themselves. They didn't want them thriving, so they plotted to get rid of the Panthers. The fact that the government and the FBI thought a black man helping another black man was wrong and horrific shows that they just fear the power that the black community has. With all these facts, it is clear to see who was the real violent and militant group.





SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## MONARCH SCHOOL

### I WAS HUNGRY

By Fernando G.

I couldn't sleep at night because I was hungry, my stomach was rumbling and I was begging for food all night long, but I could not eat because I had to weigh in in the morning. I heard my trainer knocking on the door.

"Are you ready?"

"Yes," I said.

I grabbed my boxing stuff and got in the car. I was falling asleep in the car. We got to the place where the weigh-ins were going to be. I got out of the car and went to weigh in. I was so happy to make weight because I knew I could eat. Finally, some friends and I went to eat at a great Mexican food place. That meal was the best thing of the week because it was my first meal after not eating for 24 hours.

I fell asleep in one of my friend's cars and shortly after it was finally time to fight. They bandaged my hands, but I felt something strange. I was afraid of fighting and that surprised me because I had never felt that before.

They called my name and I started walking to the ring next to my trainer. I saw my opponent in front of me. I saw the confidence in his eyes and his smile. Yet, I still had the feeling of fear. My trainer patted my shoulder.

"Work hard, you can do it, you will win!"

After three rounds of fighting, the fight ended and the winner was announced. But before they announced the winner, I knew I was going to persist no matter the winner because I didn't give it my all. I didn't feel that exhausted. I knew I could have done better. The winner's name was called, and it wasn't my name.

I lost the fight but I learned that if you show your feelings of weakness, you already lost the battle before fighting. If you don't believe in yourself after all you worked for then it is not worth working so hard.

You are just making it easy for your rivals.

## SILENT TREMOR

*By Daphne A.*

On Thursday morning, I woke up to a slight toothache, a dull throb pulsing through my jaw. The sunlight filtered softly through the curtains, casting a warm glow across the room, but the gentle light couldn't quite chase away the discomfort. It was the ache that initially seemed harmless, like a subtle warming whispering from the depths. As the minutes got longer, it hinted at a hidden discomfort brewing beneath the surface but the dull pulse remained, reminding me that the day ahead might not be as easy as I had hoped.

When I returned home that evening, the search for oral relief began. After tearing through the car, rummaging in the garage, and scouring every corner of the bathroom and even the kitchen cabinets, there was still no sign of the relief I desperately needed. Each empty search only fueled my growing dread. My heart pounded harder with every passing second, my breaths quickening as panic tightened its grip, while the pain throbbed sharper and deeper, refusing to be ignored. I sank onto my bed, hoping it might soothe my nerves, but the tension refused to fade. Instead, the pain and panic seemed to intensify, pressing down even harder. My breath got shorter and tears began to run down my face. My hands trembled uncontrollably as I stared down at them, my fingers twitching with a life of their own. I slammed my bedroom door shut, the loud thud echoing through the room. But even in the silence, I could hear the faint rustle of my breaths and the rapid thumping of my heart pounding in my ears. My heart pounded so loudly that it drowned out everything else, while my mind felt numb and empty. A few minutes later, my little sister walked into my room and found me in tears. She quickly turned and dashed out of my room, racing down the stairs to tell my mom.

I heard my brother, sister, and mom coming up the stairs, and I sighed, already bracing myself for their overreactions. As they crowded around me, my brother blurted, "What's wrong?"

"Are you okay?" my sister asked, worry engraved across her face.

"Do you need anything?" Mom chimed in, her voice filled with concern.

Taking a deep breath, I replied, "I.. I don't.. know."

But they didn't let up.

"What's the matter?" my brother pressed.

"Are you sure you're okay?" my sister repeated, her brow furrowed.

"Can I help with anything?" Mom asked again, her eyes searching mine for answers.

I sighed, feeling overwhelmed. "I don't know," I said, and they kept circling back, asking the same questions repeatedly, leaving me feeling more trapped than ever.

After a few minutes, My mom noticed that my breathing hadn't steadied, and the tears kept coming.

She insisted, gently but firmly, "Come on, why don't you try going outside for a bit?"

Reluctantly, I nodded, and made my way down the stairs, each step feeling heavy as I fought to catch my breath. My chest still tightened with anxiety, and tears continued to stream down my face.

A cool breeze swept over me, brushing against my skin like a soothing hand. The movement of my foot landed on the door. I let my lungs fill with the crisp evening air with each calculated inhale.

For the first time all day, there was a hint of relief. I wandered slowly to a spot on the porch and sank, letting the world outside wrap around me. The distant sound of the wind swirled through the trees, with the sound of cars driving.

For about thirty minutes, I sat there alone, feeling the cool air against my damp cheeks, the steady rhythm of the breeze calming my nerves. Gradually, the tension in my chest eased, the weight lifting bit by bit until I could finally breathe freely again. I got up and felt lighter as though a little piece of life had finally fallen back into place. Every moment that passed brought more relief and the realization of being mindful of physical and emotional health.

## A NEW LESSON LEARNED

*By Ethan Lee M.*

The date is December 12th 2023, a very cold day in winter. This day was special. We had a basketball game against a well-known school called Foothills Christian in El Cajon. A David vs Goliath-type game nobody thought we were going to win this game, but Monarch, a Division 5AA team vs a Division 2 team, were determined to put up a fight. Everyone was excited for this game. Our team had all the spirit and energy we had. All the stands were full. Everyone was present. We were all ready for a great game to take place on our home court.

Boom tip off game starts fast with them scoring right off the bat but we respond with a point of our own this is how the game goes until the half everything was close all we needed to do was keep our composure. Coming into the half the energy starts to die off and we go down about 15 points, and the deficit keeps growing. At this point, all of us started to get mad and our team started to fall apart point by point. Our team including myself started putting our heads down and getting mad. Several people know me as a very competitive person. I had a lot of rage built in also by this point we were down 25 points in the 4th quarter. The clock had 6 minutes remaining.

Someone on the other team, number 23, started heckling me. I knew I did not want unnecessary



problems, so I just ignored him. So after a little back and forth of him trash-talking and his words start getting into my head. I gave him a push at the free-throw line and he got mad. Last play of the game me and him are at the free-throw line and he starts calling me a bunch of bad words. I walk back to my bench and he shoulder-checks me. The rage surfaced. Both of my hands made full contact with his body, but it did not last as long as I wanted it to. My coach swoops in and grabs me. And he screams at me.

“WHAT are you doing!?”

“Coach he shoved me I was just doing it back”

Suddenly, my 6’2 body was a little above ground. My eyes met his. I could see the frown lines across his beaded forehead.

“Son, It’s not about what he does, it’s about what you do.”

That stern talk and game suspension was eye-opening. I no longer felt the need to respond to someone else’s immature behavior. This is the same message I began to share in my junior year as the captain of the team.

**THE LIGHTENED PATHWAY**

*by Marcel W.*

Me and my brother were about to leave the school, heading for the stairs as we had a conversation.

“Jaelon, what are we doing when we get home?”.

He looked up at me, half-lidded eyes as he yawned slowly.

“I don’t know, maybe we could play Roblox?”

But one action on that same day turned the tables on my life.

“Ring, Ring!”.

I got a phone call from our mother, confused at first because she doesn’t call me when school ends.

I answered with a peak of wonder.

“Hello?”

I began looking at the old painted walls of the school as I waited for her to speak to me.

“Aliyah, what I need you and your brother to do is get outside and in the car now.”

Something felt off, she almost never told me to get into the car with that tone, the impending anger just told us this wasn’t gonna end very well. We moved towards the stairs with anxiety as the air began to tense around us. But then our dad steps out from the thick, green, rusty doors with Mrs. Daley.

“Don’t go out those doors, I need you guys to stay with me real quick.”

He put us at a halt, stretching his arm out. I was beginning to feel the panic crawl up my throat, clotting it with aching fear. It was an out-of-body experience that trapped me in the Matrix trying to decide which parent was the blue pill and which one was the red pill. My youthful brain was aware enough to know one led to a change in life, and the other to an endless cycle of pain and agony.

Tears stormed from my eyes as I tried to get to the exit, all I knew was to try to make it over there, but he blocked my way, using his arms to push me back from the stairs. After many tries of trying to push against him, I eventually gave in and accepted it, too tired to continue doing this.

My mind was blurry as he tried to emphasize and express his feelings about what really happened and why it happened. It seemed as though a few hours ago their arguing roared in my ears. The more they argued the worse their relationship became. The legal papers finally kept us from her cruel care.

Though I had the freedom and privilege to live my own life, the torment, and torture still stayed in my mind for years, unknown if it'll fade away or drown in the horrors of the back of my mind like a parasite. I was grateful that he did this.

**FINAL TIME**

*By Karina L.*

“Yes I’ll be there.”

Hearing the familiar jingle of my moms keys jingle of my moms car keys. Like clockwork my older sister Samantha’s lively voice had been heard over the phone. She had asked to be picked up from her work, like usual everyone was resting or on their devices. Overhearing the conversation my mom had with my sister I paid no attention to my mom getting ready to go out. My eyes began to close exhausted from a tiresome day at school until I was interrupted.

“You better wash those dishes, I don’t want to see you asleep before you do!”

My eyes opened up almost immediately hearing my moms firm voice, I nodded dismissively in response before dragging my body out of bed, the feeling of the soft blankets warmth no longer on my skin.

My feet felt heavy as I walked over to the kitchen. The cold linoleum floor against the souls of my feet had done nothing in the effort to wake me up.

“Why me?”

Muttering under my breath and approaching the pile of unwashed dishes in front of me growing more annoyed hearing the distant chatter of my brother Armando playing on his video game and laughing with his friends. It left me wondering why I was chosen to do a chore my mom knew how much I despised washing dishes. Looking back at the stained dishes I shivered with disgust finally stepping back refusing to touch any porcelain plate or glass cup. Retreating into the living room and sitting onto the couch with a tired sigh my mom was already gone for only 10 minutes giving me a false sense of confidence that the dishes could wait to be washed for just a bit more. Taking out my phone and quickly finding more ways to occupy my time desperately wanting to do anything other than washing dishes. My sitting position on the couch soon turned into lying down, completely glancing at the time on my phone. My inner voice urged me to wash the dishes but my body didn’t budge ignoring the warnings. As the minutes passed by my body sunk into the couch my sleepiness had returned and was slowly losing the small amount of motivation to complete the task my mom gave me.

“Didn’t mom tell you to do the dishes? You always wait till the last second to do something,” my older brother Armando asked with his voice loud enough to stir me awake.

Just hearing his voice caused me to roll my eyes not wanting to listen to him. Now taking out my phone my mom was due to get back in the house at any moment.

“Okay! Mom already said to do it so mind your business.”

I replied, raising my voice at him. Armando lets out an annoyed huff walking away and leaving me alone in the living room. Before I could wake up fully the creaking of the front door opening and the chatter of my mom and my sister Samantha made my anxiety rise.

“Karina! Why aren’t the dishes cleaned?!”

Before I had the chance to respond, I saw my mother’s face metamorphosis. Her face became pale and flat. Her eyebrows furrowed while her lips were tightly pierced.

“You better get up right now, I’m tired of you falling asleep!”

My mother’s booming voice echoes through the entire house even catching the attention of my brother Armando in the next room. I rushed over to the sink taking a deep breath and washing the dishes after fighting back my gags of disgust. My mother stood behind me watching my every move, her eyebrows furrowed with anger as she lectured me about every pot, pan, plate, and cup I washed.

“How come I always have to force you to do a simple chore that takes no more than 10 minutes

to do? I’m not gonna ask and remind you over and over again! When I ask you to do something you do it!”

My head hung low as my ears rang from the constant yelling my time had wasted and there wasn’t an excuse or plan to weasel my way out of the consequences. My negligence of such a simple thing had caught up to me for the final time.

## THE RACE

*Edgar R.*

It was a very hot day, sweat on every part of my body, the last meet of the season, it smells like sweat and armpits. I had run countless meets with every ounce of strength I had to lead up to League Finals. I was off to an amazing start. I trained endlessly to run the 1600 meter. This time around I made sure I was composed and finished in under 5 minutes. Although I still landed in fourth place, I still beat my best time in my season. I still felt so much pride and joy. Because I pushed myself to do my best by pushing every tired muscle in my body to keep going and continuously telling my mind that I’m never going to give up. About 30 minutes after that race I was sitting down quietly by myself focusing on my next race. Minute after minute passing all I hear is the wind blowing the leaves across the pavement floor, while my fingers are wrapped tightly around my spikes, and all I’m thinking about is me qualifying for that bigger final. After a while of me trying to concentrate I took a short bathroom break. As I’m in the bathroom fixing my tight Adidas running shorts and very tight and thin spikes I had on, I hear one of the officials on the big mic near the track say...

“3200! Last call 3200!”

I jump up in confusion and sprint towards the check in table that’s in the middle of the field with my spike half way off. As I’m arriving at the table gasping for air I think to myself what to tell the official.

“Check in for 3200?” I asked.

“Name?” the official responded.

“Edgar R.,” I responded.

“I’m sorry, but we already gave your spot to an alternate.

You’re too late.” the official responded.

“Yes ma’am” I responded.

As soon as I finished my sentence I ran to the edge of the start line planning to talk to the officials there. But as I’m arriving there I’m cut off by a coach.

“You can’t be here,” He tells me.

“You need to leave this area!” another coach shouts from a distance.

After a couple of people stop me without me even being able to speak to anyone I simply turn away in sadness and confusion and walk off the field. As I’m walking off the field I grab my heavy backpack and duffle bag to leave, and as I’m walking I feel a tear slide off my cheek, and I ask myself why did this happen.

**SUMMER HIGH**

*By Maria D.*

Beads of sweat went down my face as I dealt with a whirlwind of emotions in the summer of 2023. My father and I would always argue. When he disrespected my mother, I always stood up for her, which led to more disputes. My mother would repeatedly come back to him when he acted vulnerable, which led to the same thing.

“You would never leave,” he always says.

“Don’t you dare me because I will,” I replied.

Our housing situation was unstable. The car we went to appointments in was the same car where we slept. The vehicle was an SUV, but it still felt crowded. Both front seats were taken by my parents. The back seat on the right side by the door was the area that I chose unconsciously. The middle and left side of me contained thick and thin blankets alongside three pillows. Three medium suitcases filled with clothing, one small luggage loaded with documents, and a white kitchen trash bin that was overfilled with food occupied the trunk. Sometimes, the car would be disorganized with clothing out of place, blankets unfolded and shoved to the corner in the back seat, and papers that needed to be signed crammed behind the seats in the small pockets.

Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday were the days my dad would go to dialysis. We would wake up at 2 A.M. to guide him in the dark and stay in the center parking lot until my dad finished dialysis at 7 A.M. On the weekdays, we would stay under a bridge near a park, and on the weekends, we would park near a church that my dad attended. We would watch the days go by as people passed by.

Later, my father started to bombard me with questions concerning employment.

“Why don’t you have a job yet, you know how much we are struggling,” he said with a harsh voice.

“I’m trying to find one,” I told him in a soft voice.

My mind immediately crashed. My father made me feel pressured regarding my employment

and contribution to the situation. I left with nothing in hand.

I did my best to provide information for more opportunities. Research is not one of my strengths. I felt isolated and scared, with no clue about what to do. I was worried about messing up or falling victim to fraud. A long walk I had used to think about the next steps did not settle my mind this time.

Instead of returning to my parents, my older brother helped me for about three days, but then I felt like a burden to him as he was living with his in-laws. I began to do research differently. So, I started reaching out to find a shelter for youths and found one called StoreFront. Storefront is a shelter for homeless youth providing the tools and training they need to create a healthy path in life.

The shelter contained girls and boys in one big room, bunk beds lining the left and right walls with a curtain in the middle of the living space, splitting us apart only at night. There were four bathrooms, a living room, and a kitchen where we sometimes dined when the staff wanted to buy us dinner. Even though the staff tried their best to provide a homey place, I still felt unsafe, as it was packed with unknown people and a mysterious environment.

While away from my mother, I realized my actions impacted my mother heavily; she didn’t have the same spirit as before. We would always bond together through the challenges, so I knew immediately her spirit was broken. She was putting up a strong front. Her gentle and caring demeanor was crumbling into pieces. I then regretted my actions; I couldn’t just think about myself. My mother relied on me mentally and emotionally.

“Por favor cuídate hija”

I’ve become more open to telling her my opinion and sharing my thoughts. If I wanted to become better at controlling my feelings and thoughts, I would need to communicate with someone and learn how to better control my impulsiveness and emotions.

**CRACK OPENED**

*By Estefani G.P.*

The most terrifying experience happened to me when I was little.

It all started when my older sister Julieta was playing outside near the sand. There was a big beautiful tree surrounded by multiple medium sized rocks. It was our little playing area growing up. I was standing near the bathroom when she made eye contact with me and asked me to come over and play with her. When I began walking towards her, there were some glass bottles on the side near the black gate we had. She looked at me so I already knew what that meant. I picked them up and continued walking towards her. Once I got there she said, “ y si le ponemos arena a las botellas.” “ a que hacerlo.”



We began filling up the bottles with sand. My sister was making sure she didn't add any rocks. On the other hand, I didn't really care. Once they were filled up I noticed Julieta taking out the sand by flipping the bottle upside down. She seems patient while doing it. She has always been the opposite of me. So you can imagine what I did. I tried to do the same even though mine had rocks of various sizes. It was difficult to remove the sand. I didn't have the patience to wait for it to come out on its own, so I got up and started banging the bottle on the rock until it exploded.

Glass pieces went everywhere. When I turned towards my sister I noticed her face going pale. In that instant I knew something was wrong. She started screaming.

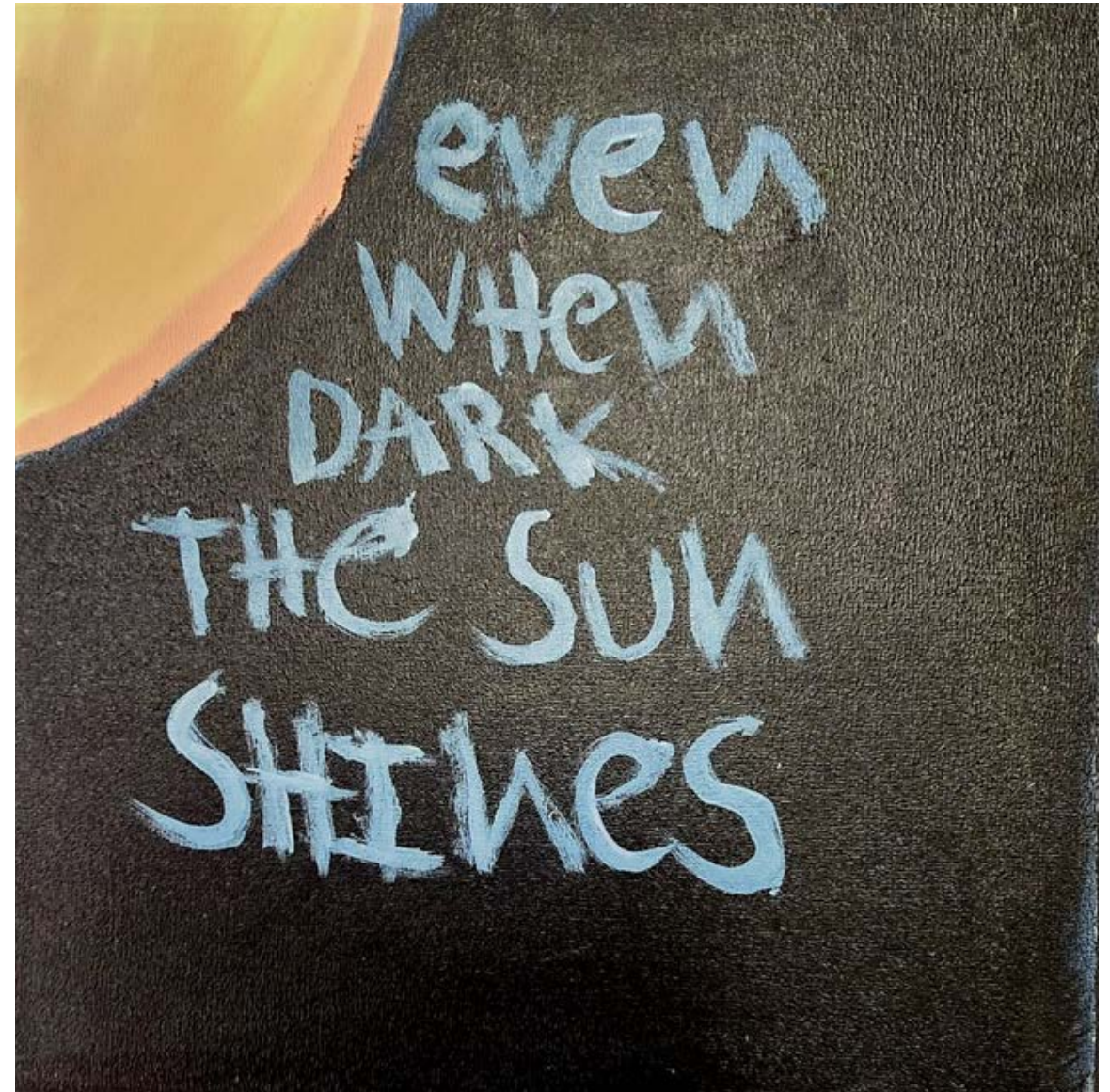
“Ma, ma correle ven”.

You can hear it in her voice, she was terrified.

“Qué son esos gritos hombre” while she was running towards us.

” Estefani que te paso?!”

I was all confused because I didn't know what she was talking about. I noticed they were staring at my hand so I looked down. It was disgusting, blood dripping on my shirt and shoes. You could see my wrist bone. I was calm just holding my hand and looking at it. I wasn't responding to what my mom was saying. I could hear her but her voice was faded. She called my aunt to come over and take care of my other siblings while she took me to the hospital. When we got there I was immediately taken to a room. Since that moment, I have never gone back to the hospital again.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork



CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER  
(CTEC)

FIRST TIME PLAYING FOR A FOOTBALL TEAM

By Emilio R.T.

I remember walking to the field tying my shoelaces and looking up and seeing that it was a cloudy day I thought it was going to rain. I remember seeing the field full of kids trying out for the team we were at least 25 or more. The first thing the coach had made us do is line us up in a line and timed how fast we each ran. I remember I ran in the top 5 fastest. Another thing that had happened was it was cloudy and out of nowhere it's raining and i thought are coach was going to sent us home because it was raining but he asked us if we still wanted to keep going or just come back tomorrow and everyone said they wanted to stay. Something so cool that happen was the last hour are coach lets us play a big game it was like 10 against 10. And the whole field was full of mud and every one was falling because the field was slippery getting their clothes

full of mud. It was one of the best experiences of my life so much fun after the game we all left first tryouts were over. After the first tryouts we had one more tryout and we did drills and these new workouts i didn't know we were all trying are best the coach had told us this was the last tryouts and that he was going to lets us know the next day who made the team. The second tryouts were over and i was really looking forward to seeing the team roaster to check if i made the team so the next day i go to the pe room and check if i had made the team roster.

THE WORST FRIDAY

By Adrian H.

It was Friday, and I was coming back from getting a haircut. The weather was cloudy and gray and I was driving back home. I was cruising on the freeway laughing feeling the wind blow in between my new haircut. I put on a quick song and started jamming to the beat when suddenly

traffic stopped instantly like the speed of light.

I looked at my mirrors and rotated my head when suddenly I stomped my brakes as if I had seen a mouse on the floor mat. It was too late and my wheels were crying until I hit the car in front of me. I was shocked and scared as if my soul left my body.

My heart dropped, I was zoning out, and was speechless. I couldn't believe this was real, that it was happening and it wasn't just a bad dream. I knew this was real because from there, two highway patrol officers got out their Dodge Charger and said, "What's going on here?" I said I crashed and hit the car in front of me. He started to write notes in his notebook and asked me my name, age, and license. I told him, "I only have my permit."

The officer said, "You know that's not a license right?" I agreed and the officer said, "I'm gonna have to give you a ticket for that, you know that?" I agreed again and said, "Yeah yeah." From there we had to wait till my brothers came to pick me up and the car. After the officer gave me a ticket I had learned my lesson.

I felt horrible because it wasn't my car. I had gotten a ticket so now I have to work just to pay for my ticket and won't be able to spend on what I want. I finally realized the lesson I learned because the car couldn't be driven for a couple of weeks. I had to work my ass off to pay for the damage I did to the car.

MI PRIMER VIAJE A DISNEY

By Abraham P.

Cuando era un niño pequeño y tenía 7 años mis papás eran jóvenes mi mamá muy hermosa como siempre y mi papá fuerte recuerdo que ese día viajamos con mi tia y mi tía que nunca habían visitado el parque al igual que yo era el nino mas emocionado y entusiasmado estaba desesperando por llegar pero apenas partíamos el viaje y en cuanto partimos el viaje gracias a dios me dormí casi todo el camino iba despertando cuando se miraba el parque a lo lejos.

Al llegar nos estacionamos y obviamente nos bajamos con mucha emoción y yo corrí a toda prisa a la entrada del parque había mucha gente asi q mi mama se apresuró para tomar mi mano desde la entrada lucía genial el parque unas decoraciones grandes y muy imponentes muy atractivas a la vista con una música de fondo muy temática al pasar revisaron nuestras mochilas y nos dejaron pasar fue un paseo muy divertido.

Nunca había ido a un parque temático como disney me encanto el juego de los piratas del caribe porque desde muy niño siempre fui muy de sus películas hasta el punto de subir dos veces las colas eran largas y algunas lentas pero valió totalmente la pena las espera la compensaba la gran experiencia en los juegos recorrimos todo el parque obvio nos faltaron algunos juegos teníamos el pase regular pero me divertí mucho con mi familia y tíos fue un paseo muy agradable y divertido.

Los desfiles de los personajes de Disney eran grandiosos y muy divertidos luego comenzó el espectáculo de fuegos artificiales fue algo magnifico nunca había presentado un espectáculo así de grande y bello no había pasado de luces de bengalas o tronar cohetes en navidad con mis primos y eran unos muy chafas nada que ver con ese espectáculo aunque el parque lo cierran a las 12 ya estaba cansado fue mucho que caminar y recorrer muchas filas largas pero todo ese cansancio habría valido la pena por que pase uno de los días más increíbles de toda mi infancia.

MEXICO

By Ulysses A.

It was a sunny Wednesday when I was getting out of school and when I got picked up. I got home and I got told that we had to go to Mexico to visit family. It was a Wednesday night and we've just arrived at the airport and we waited for the plane. We sat down and waited to get called. It was crowded and noisy when we got called.

They checked our papers. I was excited to get on a plane. I'd never been on before and got nervous when we started to take off. It was a long flight we had just landed we got our bags and head out to get to a bus and got on it took us around a mountain taking us where we needed. to go then we got there we settled and we stayed for a week.

We went out and It was a good experience going to a new area I'd never been to before. and trying different stuff from the place I was visiting. Once the week passed we packed up and headed out. It took us 2 hours to get to the airport. When we got there we said our goodbyes and left back home.

PERSONAL GROWTH

By Lily A.

Growing up, I never had many friends. My world was small, filled with quiet moments and solitary adventures. I remember spending hours at the park, The rustling leaves whispering secrets only I could hear. The few friends I did have were like rare gems, precious and irreplaceable. We shared simple joys, like beetles with their wings flaring around sounding like a busy road full of motorcycles in the city of San diego.

As we grew older, Life took us in different directions, and we slowly drifted apart. Mark, who once shared my love for exploring hidden trails, abandoned places, and nice views, got locked up. Sarah, whose calm presence was a source of comfort, found new circles to belong to. Emily, with her vibrant creativity, pursued her dreams far away. Each departure left space in my life, a quiet echo of the laughter and adventures we once shared.

Despite the distance, the lessons I learned from those friendships stayed with me. I learned the

value of genuine connection, The beauty of shared moments, And the strength found in solitude. The experiences shaped me into the person I am today, teaching me resilience, empathy, and the importance of cherishing the present. Even though we drifted apart, the memories of our time together remain vivid, like tapestry woven with threads of laughter, tears, and growth. As I navigated through life the ability to be content alone became a strength. It helped me focus on my personal growth, I became more empathetic, understanding that everyone has their own struggles and that genuine friendships are built on mutual respect and understanding.

The friendships I did have though they eventually drifted apart, taught me a life lesson the importance of cherishing moments and being present. These lessons have guided me in forming new relationships, ensuring they are built on a strong foundation of trust and shared values. In essence, growing up with few friends shaped me into a resilient empathetic and introspective person, capable of forming deep and meaningful connections.



San Pasqual Academy Student Artwork

## BAYSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

### COLD CRASH

*By Lorenzo R.*

My family and I often go to the gym together to work out. On one regular chilly night in Fall, we were walking out of a cold, air conditioned gym towards our cars. There was a breeze and I could smell the restaurant next door. My family consists of me, my mom, my dad, and my sister.

Once we made it to the car, my dad said to us, “You guys can ride with your mom, unless you want to ride with me or we can split up?”

Since me and my sister were already comfortably in the car with my mom, that’s what we stuck with. Once we were all ready to leave, my mom said, “Put on your seatbelt please.” Usually I wouldn’t put it on, but today was different. I listened to my mom and put on my seatbelt and we started driving towards our house.

My mom drove onto the freeway. I was playing a game on my phone in the backseat, not paying attention. My sister was in the passenger seat and my dad was driving his own car further ahead of us.

Out of nowhere, a dumb driver in a red car who was driving too fast, started swerving towards us. The other car was going to hit us. My mom tried to get out of the way, but she ended up losing control of the vehicle.

“I can’t get control of the car,” my mom screamed out loud to my sister and me as our car started to spin out.

“Damn” I murmured to myself. I felt the pull of the car and everything went into slow motion as my adrenaline kicked in.

When I looked up, I saw a concrete electrical pole then BOOM, everything went dark!

I opened my eyes and saw smoke coming from the hood of the car. My mom and sister were still in the front seat so I took off my seat belt and climbed outside. By the time I got out of the car, I saw my mom and sister standing there too.

“Why did this have to happen?”my mom exclaimed.

We were all stunned and speechless. People stopped to help. When I came to my senses, I saw we had hit the pole on the passenger side and the car was completely totaled. My mom was okay and my sister had cuts on her knee. The airbag had opened up and hit my sister and mother in the front.

“I have a slight pain in my chest and a bruise from the seatbelt,” my sister said as she sighed. “Good thing everyone is ok.”

Later, my dad arrived and the police too. Finally, my dad drove us home. The car ride was quiet. Thank God I wore a seat belt that day or it could’ve been worse.

### EXPERIENCING LIFE FIRST HAND

*By Aiden R.*

“Get Out” an aggressive voice said loudly. It was my mom.

Just 10 minutes earlier, we were in the car, driving on a main street, telling jokes, and laughing.

“Should we bring food home?” my mom had turned and asked me.

“Sure,” I replied. I was as hungry as a horse.

Finally, mom and I together decided what place to get food from, Jack in the Box. We approached the freeway ramp, it was the fastest way to get there. Just as we were about to get off the on-ramp to merge into traffic, I felt the car tires start to slip.

“Mom, watch out!” I said as I saw my mom drive towards the oil spilled on the road.

She was too busy trying to regain control of the car to respond to me.

The car started to spin into a hydroplane. Oil on the road had caused our tires to lose traction. I thought to myself, how unlucky we are as the car slid into an uncontrolled spin across three lanes of traffic.

When I looked up, we were headed into the traffic concrete barrier.

I shouted, “Watch out!”

For a second I didn’t realize what had happened. It happened so fast and I was in shock. At some point, I passed out. When I came to, I tried to open my door without realizing it was pushed all the way into itself.

I crawled to the passenger side of the car to try to open the other door. It finally opened. I was 2-3 feet above the ground. We had crashed into the concrete in the middle of the freeway and the back of our truck was smashed in and had jumped over the barrier and was sitting on top of it.

I climbed out of the truck and onto the ground.

I lightly yelled, "Mom, are you ok?"

I heard a faint, "Yeah," in response from her.

Other people seeing what happened, had pulled over and called 911. Someone checked on me to see if I was okay and then tried to break open my mom's side door.

Once her car door was open, a bystander safely dragged her out of the car. The paramedics arrived at the same time as the firefighter and put out the small flame that was coming from the car's engine. The E.M.Ts scanned her and asked her many questions. One of the EMT responders said to my mom, "Ma'am, ma'am, are you ok?"

"Yeah, I'm fine. Did you check on my kid?" my mom replied.

"Yes ma'am, he's fine. He is getting into the ambulance safely," the EMT responder said to my mom.

"Thank God!" she whispered and fainted from shock.

The EMT quickly put her on a stretcher. Then loaded her into the back of the ambulance. On the way to the hospital, I rode in the front seat, in shock, wondering what had just happened. Finally, we arrived and my mom woke up. I was so relieved that I just cried.

Looking back, I realize that life is short and can be taken away in a flash. I try to live everyday to the fullest.

**SEA THE TERROR OF THE WORLD**

*By Carlos G.*

My friends and I had been planning a trip to Seaworld for weeks. The plan was to go there, but what was supposed to be a fun, chill day, turned into a terrifying day of conquering my fears. That day I had my life flash before my eyes.

My friend, Stavon, is usually the friend who gets confused, but he's still cool. He is as tall as a giraffe. Omar is the shortest in our friend group, but I don't know him very well. I kept reminding Stavon to get the tickets for Seaworld because he works there and is granted free tickets, but he kept forgetting. I'm convinced he's got the mind of a goldfish. He always seems to forget. Stavon finally got the tickets and told everyone to save the date. We were going as a group of friends.

When I woke up the morning of our Sea World trip, I was excited for the day. We met up and waited at the trolley for the orange line. On the trolley, we talked about the rides we would go on and the sea life we would see.

My idea of what the day would be like was innocent. I thought we would look at penguins and say hi to the otters. I had no idea of what was to come. I thought to myself, I hope we aren't going on scary roller coaster rides! I haven't really been on roller coaster rides, especially ones made for giants. I've only been on small Belmont Park rides once at as a kid. I wasn't mentally or physically prepared for the torture of roller coasters. After two trolley rides and a bus ride, we finally made it to Seaworld. When I first walked into the park, I saw the huge rides and tried not to think about them too much.

Stavon said to us, "Let's go on a roller coaster."

It looked like this roller coaster ride went up ten thousand feet in the air. I'm a very fearful person, so I was terrified to go on it. I sighed and said, "Really!"

On our way walking to the roller coaster, we saw all the animals. First we saw the otters and seals. "It was good knowing you mr. otter and mr. seal," I said as they looked at us not really caring.

We got to the small roller coaster first and waited in line. The whole time I was waiting, I was thinking to myself, "What am I doing and am I right in the head to do this?!"

It was finally our turn. I sat in the seat, put on the shoulder straps, and took a small deep breath. I was trying to calm my mind. The roller coaster took off. It was a fun overexaggerated ride. I actually enjoyed it, unlike my other friend who kind of looked like he was fighting for his soul, yet he denies it.

But the real horrors hadn't happened yet. As we walked to the next rollercoaster, I saw that it had a very high structure with a drop that went straight down. It dropped like someone was rowing straight off a waterfall. If you think that is bad, it got even worse because it went upside down in a loop at the end of the ride. Just when you think you survived it, you end up upside down. Good luck surviving that!

I really let my cockyness get to me as I waited in the next line. It was a humongous roller coaster. I could feel the hair on my arms move and a shiver down my spine.

I started questioning again why I was going on this ride. "WHY AM I DOING THIS TO MYSELF?" I said out loud to my friends.

But then two random kids started talking to me because they heard my concerns. They were half my height and these kids must have survived WW2 because they had so much bravery as they said to me in their squeaky voices, "It's nothing. It's not even scary, you got it."

After that, I felt the need to actually to do it and I finally gained the courage as I sat in the seat of torture. I closed my eyes and breathed, then it started. The roller coaster car was slowly climbing upward. I was listening to the sound of metal and wind blowing on my face. I accepted my fate as it turned and I saw the drop to hell. It started stalling as my friend screamed in fear,



“JUST GO ALREADY!” I looked at the drop and grabbed tightly onto my seat and breathed out. Then BOOM it went down as with the speed of light. I felt the tightness in my stomach and it felt like the blink of an eye and I was upside down holding on tightly for my life. It finished fast.

When the ride was over, I got up shaking a little, relieved and proud of myself.

I thought to myself, “Wow, I really just survived that!” I felt proud of my achievement. I didn’t know if I would ever go on it again though.

Well, I thought wrong because I think being upside down may have messed up my friend Stavon’s head, because for some reason he yelled out, “We’re doing it again!”

I loudly yelled back to him, “AGAIN!” We got back in line. The first time was not good enough so here I was in the line of my death sentence again. I saw those same kids again just laughing and knew if I did it once, I could do it twice. I was still equally terrified, but after getting on the ride again and somehow surviving, I just wanted to look at the cute animals. I was peacefully proud of myself. I never once thought I would do something so crazy. I learned I may have had fear, but fear can’t be overcome, but instead persevered through. Bravery isn’t about not being scared, but dealing with your fear. I will be jumping off a plane next year. Wish me luck.

## **SPICY SALSA AND AN ORDINARY TUESDAY AFTERNOON**

*By Joseph L.*

It was an ordinary Tuesday afternoon and my mom and I were hanging out at the house. It was summer break and my mom was off work.

“Mom, where do you want to go to get some food?” I said to my mom.

“Some taco shop sounds good,” my mom replied.

“Which taco shop?” I asked.

“The one with the spicy salsa,” my mom added.

“I think I saw your car keys in the car,” I mentioned to my mom.

“Ok let’s go,” my mom replied.

We walked outside and got in the car. We started to drive to Alberto’s taco shop. It was about 10 minutes from where we lived.

About five minutes into the drive, my mom approached a stop light. The light turned green and it was my mom’s turn to go. She started to drive through the intersection when all of a sudden I saw a car coming towards us head on fast.

“Mom, WATCH OUT!” I yelled out loud to make sure she saw the car coming towards us. Unfortunately, it was too late.

“BOOM! BAM! POW!” I heard as my phone flew out of my hand.

The car air bags popped open and the car started to spin out. We spun about 4 times before one last big ‘BOOM’!

When the car stopped spinning, I immediately took off my seatbelt and jumped out of the car. Then I realized my mom had not gotten out of the car, I rushed back in to help her. “MOM, are you okay?!” I worriedly asked her.

“Call the ambulance!” she whispered to me in a low voice.

I sat there by her until the ambulance came. I looked over and saw the other car that had hit us. The man had gotten it way worse than us. The front of his car had smacked into the pole and the hood of his car was dented and wrapped around the light pole.

The ambulance finally arrived. “What happened and who hit who?” a paramedic asked me, but I was too worried about my mom to answer him. I shrugged my shoulders and the paramedic led me into the back of the ambulance so I could be with my mom.

When we arrived at the hospital, I got checked out by a doctor and he said I was fine. I wondered how my mom was. I was really worried. The doctor put me in the waiting room. I sat there waiting for what felt like forever. My family finally arrived so I got up from my seat, but before I could greet them, they hugged me and told me to sit back down.

A doctor finally came out into the waiting room and said to us, “Ms. Martinez has dislocated her right shoulder bone. She’ll be fine but she won’t be driving for a while.”

I was relieved that mom was okay, but a little bummed I never got my spicy salsa.

## **CRASH BY THE BEACH**

*By Pedro R.*

It was a beautiful, sunny morning and I felt like going on a ride. I went to my friend Angel’s house two blocks away and knocked on his window.

“Wake up,” I yelled and I kept knocking. Finally, the window opened and I said “Get up, let’s go to the beach with Marcos.”

Angel responded, “Give me 30 minutes, I’m going to shower.” Angel showered and Marcos drove over to his house so we could all go together.

When Angel got out of the shower, Marcos said “See you guys there,” We couldn’t drive together

because we all couldn't fit on Angel's motorcycle.

I shouted to Angel, "Hurry up, Marcos is leaving already."

After Angel was finally ready, we got on his motorcycle and started driving to the beach.

On the way there, I said, "Go faster! We can still catch up to Marcos."

We were still twenty minutes from the beach when all of a sudden, a dog ran in front of the motorcycle. Angel swerved and the front wheel of his motorcycle hit the sidewalk. SCRAPE!!!! The motorcycle fell on its side and started to slide. We slid off of it in a different direction. The bike ended up in a ditch.

When I looked up, I saw a car heading towards us. I stood up as fast as I could and yelled to Angel, "Watch out there's a car coming!"

After we got out of the street, I asked Angel, "Are you ok?"

Angel replied, "Yea, I think I'm fine. You're scraped up pretty badly, you should check on yourself."

I reached into my pocket for my phone, but I couldn't feel it.

I said to my friend, "Can you help me look for my phone?" I never found it.

As we were picking up the motorcycle from the street, I felt my elbow burning. I looked down and saw blood on it. I had cut it open during the crash. After the accident, we sat on the sidewalk waiting to see if anyone passing would stop to help us. The motorcycle was too damaged to drive. I checked my knee and saw it had a deep gash on it. I knew I was going to need to get checked out.

Finally, we saw Marcos passing by. When he saw why we never made it to the beach, he stopped and said, "I'm going to get help. I'll be back real quick."

While we waited for help to come, we laughed and gave thanks to God for not taking one of us that day.

**ACCUSED**  
*By Anonymous*

It all happened on a normal day, at least that's how it started. It didn't stay that way though. The beginning was like any other day. I woke up and went to school after getting ready.

When I arrived at school, I met up with my friends in the auditorium. We usually hang out there in the mornings until class starts.

We were just sitting down at the tables when Daniel said to us, "What are we doing today?"

"I don't know," I replied just as the first bell rang and then I added, "I guess we're going to class then."

We were in 6th grade so we only had one class. We stood and walked through the auditorium and up the stairs to the main lobby of the school to our classrooms..

When class started, we immediately got on our computers and played games. We would do this instead of doing our actual school work on the chromebook. The teacher knew what we were doing because he could see our screens, but most of the time he wouldn't care. That day we chilled there until lunch.

Just about a few minutes before lunch was over, Daniel and I were chatting at a lunch table when I asked him, "Hey, are you trying to ditch class with me?"

Daniel replied, "How are we supposed to ditch class?"

When the lunch bell rang and it was time to go back to class, I ran behind the bleachers to hide before anyone noticed I was gone. About a minute later, Daniel showed up and we both ducked down as to not be noticed. We just chilled there for about 2 hours until we got bored.

At 1:30PM, we went back to class. As soon as we walked into the room, the whole class stared at us. The teacher stood up from his desk and walked towards us with an irritated look on his face.

"Where were you two? You're late!" he said to us. "You two need to go to the principal."

"Oh okay," I said and then we walked away.

We made our way to the principal's office. I was thinking to myself why was everyone staring at us when we walked in? 'We just ditched class? What's the big deal'.

Once we arrived at the principal's office, we sat down on the bench outside the door because we noticed he was already in a meeting. About 20 minutes passed, then he came out and asked, "Can you come in please?"

We walked into his office and sat down at the table next to his desk. He sat across the table from us and asked, "Do you know why you guys are here?"

"We ditched class," I replied.

"And?????" he asked us in a skeptical tone.

We both looked at each other confused by the question. Daniel then asked, "What do you mean?"

“What about smoking?” he replied.

We turned and looked at each other again with puzzled faces and said, “We weren’t smoking.”

He looked at us, waited a second, and sighed as he said, “There are multiple people saying they saw you smoking behind the bleachers.”

We paused for a moment and then laughed because we both knew we weren’t smoking.

He asked if he could search our backpacks since we denied the claim. We agreed so he rummaged through our bags and found some contraband.

Since we had stuff related to the claimed incident, he assumed we were guilty and we got suspended for almost a week.

Looking back, I think it was a moment in my life where I realized that in society even if you are innocent and a decent person, if there are enough people against you, you can still be wrongfully accused and convicted of a crime. I believe these moments in my life don’t define me, but instead have molded my character and knowledge of the world.

## **AN UNUSUAL DAY**

*By Jesus S.*

It was 8AM on a cold summer day and I was getting ready to go to work with my dad. I was excited to earn some money helping my dad at his construction job.

“Alístate pa irnos a trabajar,” my dad said to me.

“Si,” I replied.

When we arrived at work, my dad spoke to the owner and he told my dad what we would be doing that day. Then we started to work.

The hours passed and my dad turned to me and said, “I’m hungry, let’s go eat.”

“Okay, I’m hungry too,” I responded in a tired voice.

“Open the gate door so I can get the truck out and we can go to lunch,” my dad said to me.

I slid open the gate door, and when my dad drove out, I closed it again.

We drove to “Las Tortas” and I said to my dad, “I would like a sausage torta.”

He ordered one for me and one for him. While we were eating, some friends of my dad arrived and we all laughed for a while while we enjoyed our food.

After we were done eating, we drove back to the construction job.

“Open the door so I can put the truck in,” my dad said to me.

That door weighed approximately 1000 pounds. It was a white metal sliding door. It had a rail that it slid on and hooks on top that stopped it from sliding open on its own. I got out of the truck and slid open the garage door. My dad drove in and parked the truck, but he didn’t see what had happened to me. When he got out of the truck, he saw the door lying on top of me. I was laying on the ground with blood coming from my head and on my clothes.

“What the hell happened?” my dad yelled. I didn’t answer.

When I opened the door, the hooks on top had broken and the door had fallen on me. Then I fainted.

My dad, tried to move the door to one side, but it was too heavy. A man who was walking by helped him lift the door off of me.

My dad started his truck and drove me to the hospital. On the way there, the truck was not running well, even when my dad stepped on the accelerator, the car would not go very fast, but we got there. When we arrived at the hospital, my dad didn’t turn off the truck because he was afraid it wouldn’t start again.

“I need help right now. My son is bleeding out!” my dad said to a nurse in a loud voice.

The nurse took a towel and cleaned the blood off of me, but the doctor did not arrive.

In desperation, my dad took me to another hospital. At the second hospital, a doctor was waiting at the door to help me. He cleaned and disinfected my cuts. I got about 50 stitches. When the doctor added the last stitch for me, I finally woke up and it was like being born again. After I got bandaged, the nurse took me on a stretcher to a room.

After that, I had to wait until I was discharged. My dad told me that he left the truck running so he could take me inside the hospital quickly.

A friend of my dads saw me go into the hospital and when he saw my dad’s truck still running and the door open, he got out of his car and parked it for him. After that, he came in to see what had happened.

When we arrived home, my head and arm were bandaged. My mom didn’t know what had happened. “What happened to him?” my mom asked my dad nervously.

My dad told my mom about my injury and she listened quietly.

As they were putting me to bed, I thought to myself how lucky I was. I thought about what and how it happened. I could have died and it would have caused a lot of pain for my mom and my family.

My dad felt guilty because I went to work with him and he didn't know if I would survive the next few days. Fortunately, thank God, that didn't happen. I have a scar on my head that will be with me the rest of my life.

## HORROR MOVIE AND STITCHES

*By Mariel B.*

In 2016, I was 10 years old. It was rainy Friday night and I was bored so I called my brother's cell. "Do you want to watch a scary movie with me?" I said into the phone.

He replied, "What movie are we watching?"

I suggested, "The Nun."

After agreeing to watch a movie with me, my brother came into my room and sat down on the couch next to me. We started watching the movie. Ten minutes into it, I felt restless so I started to jump from the couch to the table in front of it.

My brother was annoyed and said, "Stop jumping! You are going to get hurt!"

He is my older brother and has always been protective of me. I said to him laughing, "Nothing is going to happen."

I kept jumping from the table back to the couch. Everything was fine until I felt someone push me from behind. I turned around and saw no one. I was already scared because of the horror movie that we were watching so I wasn't sure if I was imagining it or if it really happened.

All of a sudden, my brother screamed "Mariel!"

I was already on the floor with blood dripping from my head. I was freaking out because of the blood so I jumped up and ran into the living room where my mom was.

My mom screamed when she saw the blood on my face, "What happened?"

I was crying so my brother told her what had happened. He told my mom that I was jumping back and forward from the couch to the coffee table and fell.

My mom drove me to the hospital. The doctor checked my head and stitched close the cut.

"You're all good now," the doctor said to me.

My mom drove me back to the house to rest. Once home, I thought to myself that I was never going to jump from the couch to the coffee table again. It was not a safe thing to do. I hate to admit it, but my brother was right and I should have listened to him.

## NIGHT FULL OF FIRE

*By Samantha L.*

When I woke up that morning, I didn't realize today would be the scariest day of my life. What happened that night was the worst thing that has ever happened to me.

My mom and I were hanging out outside. It started to get cold like an ice cube so my mom said to me and my sister, "Let's go inside."

We all walked into the house and I took a seat next to my mother and sister in the living room. My youngest cousin went into my brother's room to play.

"Do you want to watch a movie?" my mom asked my sister and me.

"Yes," I said, "a funny one."

At the same time, my sister said, "Let's watch a horror movie." My sister liked to watch scary movies.

My mom decided to put on a funny movie. We started watching the movie and halfway through it, my cousin ran out of my brother's room and sat down to watch the movie with us. We were all laughing and enjoying the movie when all of a sudden, I saw smoke coming out of my brother's room.

"Mom, there's smoke coming out of the back bedroom!" I yelled to my mom, pointing to the smoke.

"I don't see any smoke," my mom replied. "Are you crazy?!"

"Look carefully!" I told her again.

All of a sudden, my mom yelled, "It's true!"

My mom jumped up like a kangaroo and ran towards the back bedroom to see what was happening. Then she screamed, "Go outside! Your brother's room is burning!"

I was terrified. I yelled back at my mother, "I told you!"

We went outside and the neighbors ran over to help us put out the fire. Right then, my brother arrived.

"Your room is burning!" my mom said to my brother.

"How did it catch on fire?" he asked her.

"I don't know," she replied. There was a lot of smoke coming out of the house now.



When the fire was out, we went into the room to see what had happened. As soon as we entered, we saw a box of matches on the floor. A handful of matches were in a box with clothes in it.

I remember thinking to myself that the only person who was in that room was my little cousin.

”What happened?” I asked my cousin.

“I was just playing and a match lit and I got scared and threw it into the box of clothes and the box caught fire. Then I ran away because I was scared,” she told me in a frightened voice.

We told her never to do that again because she could have burned down the whole house. That was the scariest night of my life!

## A FREAK ACCIDENT

*By Josue G.*

It was a cold and rainy night and me and my two friends, Jonathan and Ethan, were heading to a concert. We were excited to go. We loved this band. I had done chores and saved up money to buy my concert ticket.

Jonathan and I have been very good friends for a couple of years. We met when I was 12 and he was 16. We used to play baseball at Memorial Park together. Ethan and I met in 6th grade. We both loved playing basketball at school. On this particular day, Jonathan offered to drive. He had an old beat up Honda Accord with worn down seats.

“Josue, you get in the front. Ethan, you get in the back,” Jonathan yelled to us while we were walking towards the car.

“Okay,” I responded and hopped in the front seat. We were enjoying our time in the car, having fun listening to music and singing along as we drove from San Diego to Orange County.

“I’m starving,” Ethan said.

“What should we eat?” I asked.

Jonathan replied, “Taco shop.”

We found a taco shop right off the freeway. Ethan, Jonathan, and I walked inside to find a table. We ordered 2 plates of carne asada fries to share. We took our time eating the food. When we were done eating, Jonathan said, “I’m so full.”

“Me too,” Ethan added.

“Let’s go back to the car,” I added. We got up from the table, walked out of the taco shop, and

got in the car. Jonathan started up the car and we continued driving to the concert.

About 20 minutes had passed and we were listening to Junior H on the radio and singing along. We were anxious to get to the concert.

Finally, we arrived and parked one street down from the concert so we didn’t have to pay for parking. The concert was amazing.

“That concert was crazy,” Jonathan shared as we walked to the car.

“I know, it was the best concert I’ve ever been to,” Ethan commented.

“Everything was better than I expected,” I added.

On the way back, I sat in the front seat again. We were still about 3 or 4 hours away from home when we got off the freeway and stopped at a gas station to get gas and snacks.

“Get me some hot fries,” Ethan yelled from the car, while me and Jonathan went into the gas station.

“Can I get \$50 on pump 5 please,” Jonathan said to the lady behind the counter.

I went to go grab Ethan’s hot fries, then paid, and got back in the car.

We pulled out of the gas station and started driving towards the freeway. We made it about 2 blocks when we stopped at a red light. When the light turned green, Jonathan pressed his foot on the gas and “BAM!” A car came out of nowhere and hit the driver’s side of Jonathan’s car. It happened so fast Jonathan didn’t have time to react.

I turned my head and looked at Jonathan to see if he was okay and all I could see was blood coming out his nose and a big cut on his forehead. Then I tried to turn around and look in the backseat to see if Ethan was okay, but I couldn’t. My back and neck were hurt from the impact.

I heard Ethan groaning in pain and Jonathan was unconscious. My vision was a little blurry. I opened the car door and got out, but my legs felt weak and I couldn’t stand up completely. I reached in my pocket, took out my phone, and dialed 911 to call for an ambulance.

Once the police and ambulance got there, they pried open Jonathan’s door because it was jammed shut from the impact. Then the paramedics lifted Ethan from the back seat. I saw that his leg was broken. The people in the other car were all unconscious. We were all rushed to the hospital.

I felt better in about a week. Jonathan stayed at the hospital for 4 weeks. He got stitches on his forehead. Ethan stayed there for 2 weeks and left with a cast on his leg.

After we all were out of the hospital, we met up again and talked nonstop about the accident.

“Bro, I was in so much pain. I still am, but I feel a little bit better,” Jonathan told us.

“Bro, my leg is broken and I feel so much pain when I put even a little pressure on it,” Ethan added.

“It feels like my back is torn in half and I still feel a lot of pain in my lower back.” I told them.

That night we ended up staying the night at Jonathan’s house, playing games all night. Looking back, I realize that driving late at night is not a good idea especially when you’re tired. I’m just glad we all had our seatbelts on.

## **BANG!**

*By Valeria S.*

I always thought if I never interfered with chaos, it wouldn’t interfere with me. It’s what I always heard my whole life when my mom was constantly struggling with my sister who had a raging desire to go out and little me promising my mom I wouldn’t follow in her footsteps.

My mom always said, “You’ll stay out of trouble right? You won’t act this way with me?”

I always promised her, “No ma, I won’t even let go of your hand.” And of course, that’s not true because everyone grows up. Now I was much older and I understood my sister’s actions. Even though I loved my mother, we never seemed to agree on much anymore as I got older. Now as my fifteen year old self, I had a choice to make.

The phone rang at around 12 AM and it was my boyfriend, Irvine. I answered the phone and he said, “I’m going to that party around the block. Do you want to come?”

I knew what party this was because earlier I had seen my friend, Salimah, at the liquor store, and she had told me she was going to a party nearby. I quickly replied to him, “Don’t go. It’s already late, just stay home.”

He insisted and said, “I have to go since my sister is going.”

I felt annoyed knowing a lot of other people would be there too. Still upset, I said, “If you go, I won’t speak to you.”

He replied, “Just come. I want you to be there too.”

I was infuriated, at this point, that he could suggest such a thing, for me to sneak out and join them. Looking back, I remember being torn between calling it a night or sneaking out.

I was finally persuaded to go to the party because my boyfriend’s sister, who was also my friend, was going too. I climbed out the window and started walking towards the party. I felt a pit in my stomach like I knew what I was doing wasn’t good and it would probably end badly.

When I arrived at the party, I saw Irvine and some other people I knew. I was still upset so I mostly hung out with my friends.

By 3AM in the morning, we finally left the party. It was just me, my boyfriend, and his sister.

Irvine insisted on walking me home. I remember turning onto my street and my boyfriend saying goodbye.

All of a sudden, we saw a truck pass by and someone yelled out the window, “Where y’all from?”

We didn’t think much of it, but then the car made a u-turn and stopped near us., Next thing we knew, some older looking, big guy wearing a hooded sweatshirt got out of his car and started walking in our direction. I could see him clutching something as he came closer. It didn’t feel real. Out of nowhere, the guy slapped my boyfriend who was caught off guard.

I screamed out loud, “Leave him alone!”

My boyfriend fell against the wall, but then quickly jumped up because he saw the guy clutching something in his hand.

As my boyfriend stood up, the guy pulled out a gun and pointed it at him, saying,, “Run yo pockets, what you got?” The stranger was trying to rob my boyfriend and seemed mostly interested in him. The guy didn’t even acknowledge me or my boyfriend’s sister.

Suddenly, the stranger started shooting in my boyfriend’s direction. It looked like the guy was aiming more at the floor, but still it was pretty close to where Irvine was standing.

Me and his sister started screaming, “Leave him alone!” We just kept screaming at this random man who was chasing my boyfriend around the street and still trying to shoot him. His sister and I were crying at this point with all the shots and commotion going on.

I was surprised to see my neighbor from across the street come out just as the hooded guy hopped back in his truck and drove off. I ran up to my boyfriend. At that point, he was speaking to my neighbor, telling him what had happened.

As I walked up, my neighbor said, “ Are you guys alright?”

Irvine answered, “I was just trying to walk my girl home and I’m with my sister. I wasn’t looking for any trouble.”

As we explained to my neighbor the details of the event, I felt myself tear up. I noticed Irvine seemed on edge too. It never sat right with me how people treated him because of his looks.

I finally said to him, “Are you okay?”

He looked at me with empty eyes. I hugged him tight.

My neighbor tried to calm us down and was nice enough to let us stay at his house for a bit. He gave Irvin a drink to cool off while me and his sister comforted each other.

As we were saying our goodbyes, I thought to myself about how everything could have turned out differently. Any one of us could have been shot that night! I made a promise to myself to not go against my mothers wishes anymore and to make safer choices in the future.

**NEVER AGAIN**

*By Natalie B.*

It was summer break and when I woke up that morning at 10AM, I was really bored. My mom had fallen asleep and I was all alone in the house. I've always wanted to drive, but I was 14 years old and didn't have my license yet.

I saw my brother's car keys hanging on the key holder on the wall in the kitchen. My brother wasn't home, he was at work already.

I thought to myself, what if I took my brother's car? I would just drive around my block and take it for a little spin. I took the keys off the hook and walked outside towards my brother's Mercedes. I hopped into the car and turned it on. I knew how to drive because I always paid attention to the way my dad drove. I left.

I FaceTimed my best friend, Ethan, from the car, and said, "Hey look, I'm driving my brother's car."

Ethan replied, "Yo sick, come pick me up."

With no hesitation, I said, "Alright bro, I'm on the way."

I picked him up and we were just driving around. We called our other friend, Junior, and he wanted to ride with us too. I drove over to Junior's house and he climbed into the car too.

Everything was good. We were listening to music and just having a good time.

It was around 1PM when Ethan asked me, "Yo, can I invite some other friends?"

I didn't really mind because I knew this would be the only time I was going to be able to drive the car around.

"Yeah that's fine," I said.

I dropped off Ethan because he needed to help his mom at home, but before Ethan left, he called two more friends, Lilly and Alexa. I drove over to their house and picked them up.

I drove to the beach and we walked around the sand and water for 30 minutes. Then we left.

On the way back, right after we got off the freeway, Lilly noticed my brother's tire had a bump on the side of it.

"I can help you change it," Junior said to me. "My dad can take the car and change the tire real quick." I drove to Junior's house and his dad fixed the tire for me.

We decided to grab some food. I drove us to Raising Canes and we parked and ate. After we ate, it was already like 10:00 PM. At this point, we were just goofing around, not thinking straight. I was sitting at an intersection because the light was red and when the light turned green, I took my foot off of the brake. The car started rolling forward but I wasn't pressing on the gas too much.

All of a sudden, I saw a SUV coming towards us.They were going straight, but they didn't have their turn signal on. I didn't think they were going to turn til they swerved and hit my headlight.

"OHHH SHOOT" I yelled out loud..

The car that hit me, didn't stop. They just drove off. I thought to myself, they were probably a drunk driver.

I asked everyone, "Ay, are y'all okay?"

Everyone at once said, "Yeah, we're fine."

I had no other choice, but to drop them off and go home. Then I went home too.

When I got home, my sister was outside. She was pretty mad and my mom didn't want to talk to me. My brother wasn't home yet, but my dad was. He was the only one really mad, but I didn't get grounded or anything.

**EL CAMINO AL POZOLE**

*By Sherlyn B.*

It was a sunny Saturday morning and my brother had just arrived from Los Angeles. He got in at about 10AM and told my mom that he wanted to eat pozole.

My mom said, "Go to the store and get some of the ingredients I'm missing and I'll make it for you."

"Okay, I'll go to the store," he said.

I wanted to go with him so I asked him, "Armando, can I go to the store with you?"

"Yes, let's go," he replied.

My mom said to my brother, “Drive safe. You have your sister with you.”

“Ok mama,” he said to her.

We walked out the door and got in the car. When we were on the way to the store, my brother said to me smiling, “Don’t be scared.” Then he started swerving recklessly.

I thought it was funny at first and I was laughing, but then he kind of lost control of the car.

I said to him scared, “Armando, stop driving like that!”

The car went to one side of the road and then to the other. It almost flipped over. That’s when I got really scared and he did too.

Nervously he said, “Damn, that was close!”

All I could think about was crashing and the car flipping over. I thought about how mad my mom would be. After a few seconds, the car started to go straight again and my brother stopped driving recklessly.

After the scary situation, we calmed down. We drove to get the things that my mom needed from the store. When we got back home, we told my mom what had happened.

My mom scolded my brother, “Te dije que manejas bien traes a tu hermana contigo!”

Then my mom said to both of us, “I’m glad nothing bad happened.”

We both learned a good lesson that day. Him to not drive recklessly, and me not to take any rides from my brother unless he promises to drive carefully.

**A DIRTY MOVE**  
*By Mercedes S.*

It was a hot summer day and I had a game. I was nervous to play because the team we were going against was really good, but I didn’t let that get in my head. My mood was right and I was focused on how I needed to play that day.

I woke up that morning and started getting ready for my game. After I finished, my brother said to me, “Do you need a ride?”

“Yes please,” I responded.

Once I got to the field, I started looking for my team, but I was having trouble finding them because it was crowded with other teams. Then I saw one of my teammates so I yelled, “SANDY!”

She looked back and screamed back, “MERCEDES???” and then waved and waited for me. We both started walking towards the team.

When we got there, we started putting on our cleats. Then we jumped up and joined everyone for warm ups.

The game started and I was playing Striker. During the game, my teammate made a good pass to me so I ran as fast as I could to get to the ball. After I caught up to the ball, I had to fight a ‘1V2’ with the other team. This is when a striker is fighting against 2 defenders. Then I saw my teammate who was open on the other side of the field and she yelled “I’M OPEN!”

I passed her the ball and cut to the other side of the field and she yelled out my name, “MERCEDES!” and then passed it back to me.

I had the ball and I was about to score a goal when I turned around fast and saw the other team’s players behind me. I tried to run as fast I could with the ball to outrun them.

All of a sudden, one of the girls caught up to me and slide tackled me. I fell so hard on the ground that the ref stopped the game. I just lay there in pain. The ref pulled out a red card and gave it to the girl because what she did to me was a dirty move.

My coach and brother ran onto the field to me and both nervously asked, “Are you okay?”

I responded, “NO, I can’t move my ankle!”

They both helped me up, carried me off the field, and sat me down. I took off my cleat and saw a bump on my ankle as big as a bowling ball.

My coach turned to me and said, “I’ll get you an ice pack.” and ran off to get it.

I thought to myself, I’m so upset! I knew because of my ankle injury I would be out for weeks. The girl came up and said sorry and felt bad, but I was still upset and knew I wouldn’t be able to play the game I love for a long time.

**SCARRED FOR LIFE**  
*By Adrian L.*

When I woke up that day, had I known I was going to be scarred for life, I would have stayed in bed. One day after middle school, I was leaving my math class and my friend Diego said, “Do you want to go to the park and play some soccer after school?”

I replied, “Yeah, I’d be down.” I went to my last class which was English and it was fun because the teacher gave us free time and let us play any activities we wanted. After class was over, school had ended and me, my friend, Diego, and his friend, Nathan, were hanging out.



“Do you want to walk to the park near my house a couple blocks away?” I said to my friends.

Diego replied, “Yeah, my house is close by so it should be fine with my mom.”

Me, Diego, and his friend, Nathan all headed to the beautiful park. Outside, it was as hot as a burning fire. When we arrived at the park, I said to my friends, “Let’s play a game called 21.”

It’s a basketball competition game where you have to get to 21 points before the other person and it gets intense if there’s a lot of people playing because you have to compete to get the ball and make 21 points before the other players do.

Nathan replied, “Yes, we should play it. I’ll beat both of you in that game.”

Diego added, “No you won’t, we’ll just have to see right now. ” We started playing and we were going back and forth, taking the ball away from each other.

“I made it!” Nathan shouted as he made a shot.

Nathan ended up with the most points after 15 minutes. We got tired of playing 21 and moved onto the next game.

“Let’s play soccer next,” I said to the guys. I was goalie for a while, but after 15 minutes I said to Diego, “Let’s trade spots.”

We traded spots and he became goalie. Nathan and I were playing aggressively against each other.

Nathan angrily said to me, “Watch out, homie.”

I was about to kick the soccer ball when he tripped me.

I yelled out loud, “Ouch!” I thought to myself, I should trip him back, but I was bleeding, so I didn’t.

I got up after being tripped and I was mad. I didn’t feel like playing anymore so I said to Diego, “Bye.” I didn’t say bye to Nathan because of his horrible actions. I ended up walking away, down the street to my house.

“Mom,” I said when I walked in the house, “I was at the park playing with some friends from school and I got hurt playing rough.”

My mom replied worriedly, “Oh my God, Adrian, are you okay?!”

“Yes I am, but I’m bleeding and have a cut under my lip,” I told my mom. She hurried to get her keys from her room and we got in the car and drove to the hospital. When we arrived at the hospital, they took me right away to a room.

“This cut is bugging me,” I told my mom. While I was waiting to get stitches, I shouted, “Ouch, it hurts!”

My mom gave me some numbing cream and it helped with the pain, but it felt weird at the same time. I wondered how bad the cut was.

I ended up getting 8 stitches under my lip, a scar I would have for life. We went home, and I laid down on my bed, thinking to myself, why didn’t I just go home right after school.

## LOST WATERPARK

*By Zion J.*

It was a warm sunny day. It was just me, my sister, Leslie, and my brother, Oscar. We were chilling at home, plotting our next moves, when my sister checked the weather. It was the hottest day out of the week. That’s how we came up with a plan to go to a pool to cool off, but most of the pools by our houses were packed so we just decided to go to Aquatica Water Park.

It was a green light to go because our aunt had some family passes so we could get in free.

My sister said to my brother and me, “Let’s get ready to go pick up the passes from auntie’s house. Then we can go to the waterpark.”

I replied, “Okay,” and bolted to my room to get my swimming shorts on. As soon as I was dressed, I asked my sister. “How long are you gonna lag it for?”

Of course, I had to wait for my sister to get ready. In the meantime, I prepared my backpack with what I needed. Soon after I was done, my brother and sister were ready to go.

We got in the car, it was already scorching and my sister said, “Let’s get rolling, it’s too hot.” My brother’s car’s AC was blown so all the cool air we could get was from driving with the windows down.

Once we arrived at the water park, surprisingly, the lines to enter were not that long so getting in was a breeze. After entering the park, we went straight to the lockers to put our stuff away.

Then my sister asked, “What ride should we get on first?”

I responded, “The Wave Pool!”

As soon as my feet touched the water, my brother picked me up and dunked me under the water.

I screamed at him, “Yo chill.” He laughed and tried to do it again, but I got away in time.

After like 2 hours passed by, we had gone on every ride at least 3 times already. My brother and

sister were pretty tired and wanted to chill. My sister said, “Let’s get into the lazy river.”

I grabbed a raft followed by Oscar and Leslie. I was floating in my raft around the river and mostly stayed ahead of them.

Before my sister and brother got out, my sister said to me, “Get out at the next stop.” I didn’t hear her because a few minutes later I looked back and I didn’t see them. Immediately my heart dropped. I waited to see if they were further behind and they weren’t so I got out and went to the kids area of the water park to see if they were over there. I had no luck so I just stayed over there in case they came looking for me.

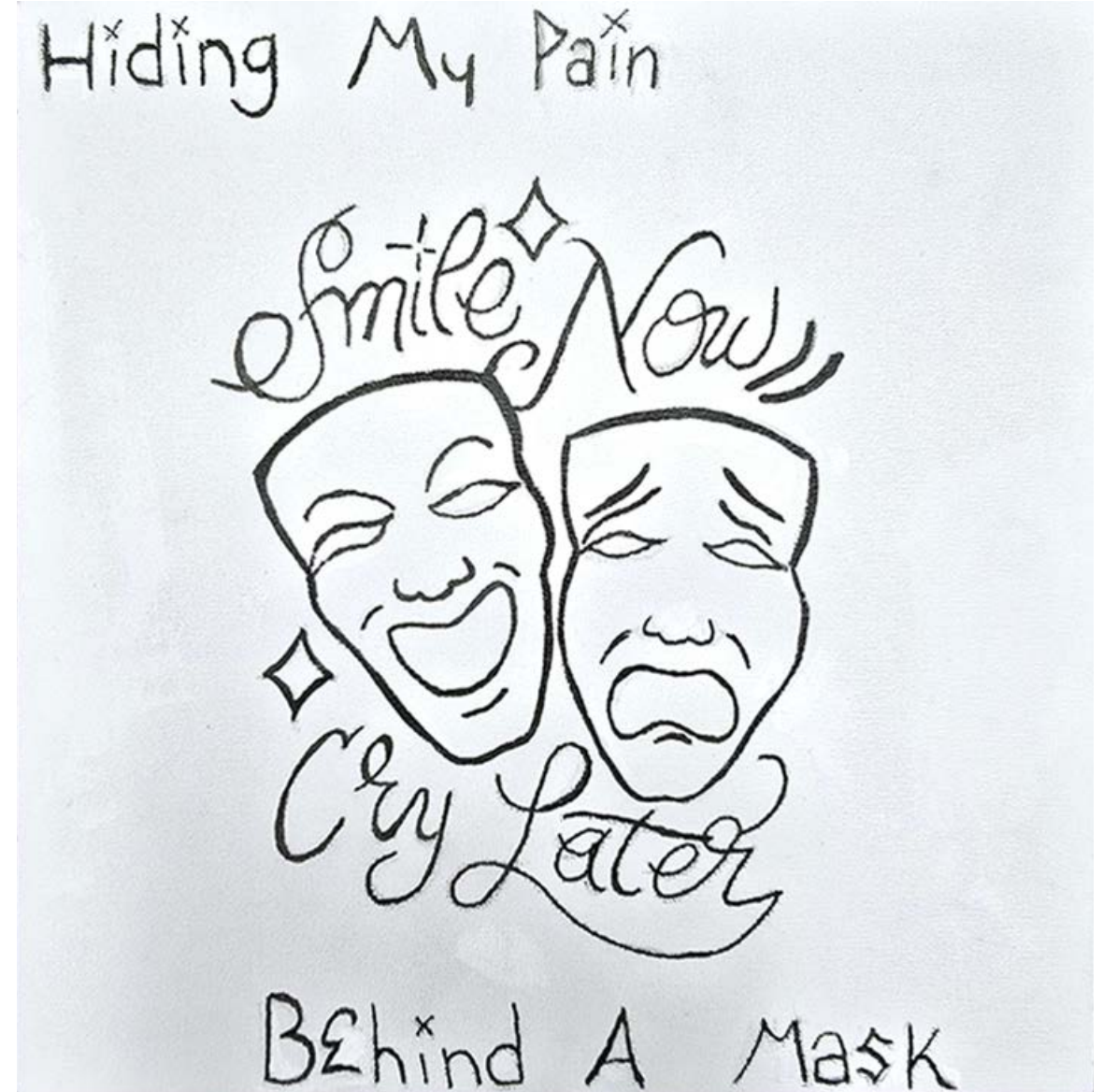
Eventually, my brother and sister came over there and found me. I ran straight to my sister and in a worried voice she said, “What happened? I told you to get out!”

“I’m sorry, I didn’t hear you.” I told her.

“Come on, we’re going home.” she replied.

The whole way home, she was basically ranting about how I should listen and pay more attention. As we got closer to our house there was an In N Out so we stopped to get burgers.

When we arrived at home, we ate peacefully and my sister didn’t tell my mom because we all would’ve got into trouble. Ever since, it’s just been a memory we all share and can laugh about.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

# SOUL ACADEMY

## THE ACCIDENT

*By DeShawn*

I was sleeping in the back of my dream car when my leg was crushed by a semi-truck because the driver lost control of the car before landing in a ditch and hitting a tree.

To begin my story, it was a cool and breezy day. I was with my girlfriend, my cousin, and a very good friend of mine. We were in Los Angeles for my friend's birthday and we went out to eat and to Venice Beach. Everything was perfect for the day. However, things were about to take a turn for the worst.

Next, we were heading back to San Diego and I'm riding in my cousin's 2020 Dodge Charger Scat Pack. This beast has 485 horsepower and it's my dream car. So, I felt like I'm living it.

"Cousin, why does the car make that scraping noise?", I asked.

"The transmission is broken so when it drives it makes that clanking sound", she answered.

"It's scary. Are we going to be okay?", I asked.

"I don't know", she answered.

Soon after, I went to sleep in the back passenger seat because I was tired. I woke up by the car swinging in circles, then we were hit by a semi truck that ended up ramming us off a ditch into a tree. When I tried to get out, my door was crushed in so it wouldn't open. Then I had to try to get out on the other side and that's when my leg locked up and I knew it was broken.

"Help!!!", I screamed.

I was in so much pain. Luckily, my girlfriend was able to help me out. She had to drag me out the backseat and carried me out the ditch and laid me down on the ground on the side of the highway. She sat there hugging me until the EMT arrived. She was my hero that night.

In the end, I learned that cars can be dangerous. You have to make sure that it's maintained properly and in working conditions when driving it. I'm just glad that I made it out of that wreck and alive to be telling the story.

## GO LOS TOROS!

*By Raevon*

Have you ever experienced the feeling of winning something, like a sports game that you worked hard for? I have, and it is my proudest moment because it wasn't just one game but four games in a row in a football tournament. I was playing for Los Toros Bulls, an intramural football team. It was a football tournament at Mt . Miguel High school and our team had won four straight games!

First, we played the SD Bolts. It was an easy game. They weren't good at all. Their quarterback didn't pass the ball that much, and they didn't run any significant routes. Also, they were slow. So, it was an easy victory for us.

Second, we played Steele Canyon. For sure, they didn't know how to run routes and their quarterback didn't know how to throw. He threw a lot of interceptions. As a result, we scored a lot. We won that game to a score of 35 to 19.

Third, we played the South San Diego Imperial Beach (SSDIBC) youth team. It was a close game and the score was 29 to 23. They were one touchdown away from tying with us. But they didn't get that touchdown, they had a bad pass. They were good but they weren't fast enough to get their plays in.

Finally, the Balboa Raiders. They weren't even close; the scoreboard was 34 to 9 they really sucked. The quarterback tried to throw a hail mary but he couldn't throw that far. They didn't know how to run routes because the tight end kept tripping. Also, their running back was slow and their wide receiver was not in the game. He was a bench warmer, their whole team were benchwarmers.

In conclusion, I think my team is the best because we won the championship without losing a single game. I learned that winning takes a lot of determination and teamwork. I am glad that I get to experience that.

## K.O.

*By Dom*

As I put my feet in the right position with my hands blocking my face, I let go of all my anger in just three rounds. I feel all of the frustration of the events that took place this past week. It didn't matter that he was older, or more than a foot taller, I knew what I had to do to get the job done. "Everybody, make sure you have your mouthpiece and gloves on," the coach yelled.

My partner is someone I usually spar with; he's a few inches taller than me and has been boxing

longer than me. The clock rings and the round starts. The beginning of the round is rough, but by the second round, I start landing almost every hit. Just as I am about to throw the most vicious left hook of all time, the coach calls for a water break. After the water break the coach tells us to go back to the same partners we were with, and I know I am ready for this second round.

The round starts and he hits me with an uppercut. I don't know how to react, so I just start hitting him with combos. "Left right, left, right" and "boom" I hit him with an uppercut immediately as soon as I see him open. He falls back, but doesn't hit the ground with his lip bleeding. Right after I strike him, the coach tells us to switch partners. The round and opportunity to spar him has ended and I feel the weight of my anger has left my body.

Ultimately, I learned that letting go of all my aggression in a controlled environment like a boxing ring is good for me. I am able to not get into trouble because I have a way to release the anger safely.

TIME I SNUCK OUT

By Areyella

So one time during summer I decided to sneak out and go to a party. My homegirls Bree and Sophie called in group chat.

"Hey yall wanna go to a party tonight?" Sophie asked.

"Oooo yes, what time does it start?" I asked.

"It starts at 8 tonight in National City", Bree answered.

So, now everything is set. Or at least I thought it was. First, I had to ask my mom, but the problem was that I had gotten into trouble.

"Mom, can I go to a party with Sophie and Bree tonight?" I asked her.

"Areyella you can't go out till next week because you got into trouble when you were out last time", my mom said.

"Please mom I promise I'll be good and I won't ask you for nothing else, please mom?" I begged her.

"Areyella, I said NO!!! Please stop asking me", my mom replied.

Soon after she said no, I snuck out of my window that night when my friend picked me up for the party. Shortly after I arrived at the party, my mom texted me asking where I was. That followed with a call that went to voicemail.

Ultimately, I was grounded. My phone and other electronic devices were taken away. She had

acted on the consequences that she left on that voicemail when I was at the party. Looking back on this, I think I am going to start listening to my mom.

TRIP TO THE FAIR

By Antonio

Have you ever been in a shooting? Well if you haven't, let me tell you about a time where I was once in one. It all started in this nice city named City Heights. They had a fair at the park for the community to get together and enjoy their time. So one night I decided to go to the fair with some friends.

Next, we hit up on the rides.

"Let's go on the UFO", said Bob.

"Yeah", I replied.

The UFO is a ride where you are in a flying ship and you can't see or hear anything that's happening outside. Once the ride is over, the guy goes to open the door and everyone in the ride looks confused. There were people running and screaming, bumping into each other.

"What is going on?" Bob yelled.

There were no answers. But, in no time we realize it doesn't matter. We saw people jumping fences and squeezing through broken fences and that was our sign to get out too.

In the end, the cops arrived shortly after we squeezed through the broken fence. There was a crowd around the cops and two kids were arrested for the shooting that occurred when we were in the UFO ride. Looking back on this, I learned that you just have to be aware of your surroundings to keep yourself safe.

SEIZURE AT THE MOVIE THEATRE

By Darnel

"Someone call 911!" Yeah, you heard that right. That's what I heard in the movie theater. A person had a seizure when my family and I were watching The Minions: The Rise of Gru at the AMC months ago. I will never forget this experience.

It was a calm Saturday with my family at AMC movie theaters, and I was in line to get food. I remember I was getting a Blue Icee and curly fries. Once I got my food, me and my family started walking to the theater. Once we were in the movie theater, I started eating my food and watching the movie. Thirty minutes into the movie, I started to get tired and I ended up falling asleep. Then I woke up to "someone call 911!" I was lost and confused when I heard this.



The next thing I knew, I heard my own mom’s voice. “There’s a man having a seizure.” She wasn’t talking to any of us because she was on the phone and by now I assume it’s the emergency dispatcher.

“He’s 30 years old and not foaming at the mouth,” said my mom.

Shortly after the call, EMTs showed up and assisted the young man. Then we were evacuated from the theater, and waited in the lobby patiently. Luckily, they got to him in time, and we even got a refund because they cut the movie short. A few weeks later, we went again to finish the movie.

Lastly, I learned what to do when someone is having a seizure. But, the most important takeaway for me was that I learned to really care and show love towards my loved ones because tomorrow is not promised. So, we all should be kind to everyone.

**RUNNING AWAY**

*By Liliana*

Have you ever seen kids running away from home? Well, I have and not only that I was the person who ran away. I snuck my boyfriend into my room and got caught. Afterwards, I didn’t want to deal with the arguments with my mom because I knew she would say things like “vas a ver pendeja”! So, I ran away.

Let’s start from the beginning. It was just an ordinary weekend and I was bored out of my mind. So, I called my boyfriend.

“Hey baby you tryna come over?” I asked.

“Yeah baby I’m down but what time?” He quickly responded.

“Is 10:00 good my love?”

Later on that night, he arrived half an hour late. But, that’s fine because he’s here and the night was calm and beautiful with the stars and the moon light shining through my window.

I carefully snuck my boyfriend into my room without my step dad catching us. One thing led to another, my boyfriend was there until 6:00 the next morning. Which is the time that my step dad gets up. Now, getting my boyfriend out of the house was a tough job and it didn’t go our way. He was caught. That’s when I decided to run away because he’s going to tell my mom and I didn’t want to be around for that.

It was about 4:00 pm, with my backpack in tow and my best friend, Alondra, with me we were on the trolley. Destination. Old Town.

“I can’t believe we are running away!” I exclaimed.

“I know huh girl” Alondra replied.

“Girl the trolley was all bad, there were homeless people peeing on the floor. It’s funny and weird at the same time”. I told her.

“Low key, I’m scared”, I quietly whispered.

That night we slept on the streets. It was so dark, frigid and eerily quiet.

By now, the words were out and we were considered run-aways. The police and sheriffs were out looking for us.

Eventually, we were caught and brought back home to our parents. Through all that, I realized that it wasn’t worth it. I had put my mom through hell and a lot of unnecessary danger to myself. I had stolen clothes and other things because I needed them and was caught by an undercover cop. In the end, I appreciate everything that I now have.

**THE CHASE**

*By Guardian*

When I was twelve years old, I was involved in a pretty crazy incident. It was my fault, but I was young and I learned my lesson. To begin, I was with my brother and some of our homies. There was an oncoming car and I threw a rock at it. Next, that car stopped and a person in that car got out and started to run towards us.

“Let’s go!”My brother yelled.

So, we took off running. We ran so hard and fast that eventually we couldn’t see him anymore. Soon, we saw his car again. So, we ran into the nearby Plaza. We also saw that he ran after us. At this point we snuck out and were able to get on the bus.

Finally, we arrived home safely. It was scary and I told myself that I will never do that again.

**CAUGHT UP**

*By Adrian*

Have you ever stolen a car? I have and I know it sounds bad but hear me out. When I was thirteen I snuck out of my house and took my sister’s car to pick up my friends to go to a party. It was a blast!

To begin with, my friend Alex kept pressuring me.

“Drive faster, the person in front is driving so slow”, said Alex.

“Ok then put your seatbelt on”, I exclaimed.

I was going so fast on the freeway that we arrived at the party in no time.

We were having so much fun talking to everybody that it was one of the best parties that I have ever been to. I met a girl named Alyssa and we ended up leaving the party early together.

“Hey Alex, I’m going to bounce with Alyssa”. I said.

“Alright, I’ll find a ride home”, he responded.

“Call me, if you can’t get another ride and I’ll come back to get you”, I told him.

“Okay”, said Alex.

Soon after Alyssa got into the car, we were on our way to my pad. But, I had to stop to get some gas. After I’m done pumping gas, and right when I entered the freeway, I floored the accelerator. Then out of nowhere a cop turns their lights on and pulls me over.

I kept thinking to myself, “they’re going to take my sister’s car because I don’t have a driver’s license”.

The cop pulled me over and one thing led to another, I was on the phone with my sister listening to her yell at me at the top of her lungs. The cop was kind enough to let me call my sister. She arrived at the scene about ten minutes later.

Ultimately, the cop gave me a pass. He let me go with my sister. Her car wasn’t impounded and I wasn’t locked up or charged. After all this, I learned not to act impulsively, not steal, and that my sister is the coolest person.

LEFT HANGING

By Valerie

I hate when people leave me hanging! I remember when I had to go to a work related meeting at a location that was far from my house. I got there, but it was canceled. I was pissed.

Initially, it was a hassle for me to get a ride to a meeting for my job because of the distance. My mom dropped me off, and afterwards she had to rush to make it on time to her work. Next, I waited for about half an hour there until I got a text message from them that it was canceled. At this point, I was furious. The only thing that kept going through my mind was, “F..k! F..K! F..K!”

“How could this happen?”, I thought to myself.

“Why didn’t they call me ahead of time?” I asked myself.

Finally, I got on the bus to make my way home. It was a long ride but it gave me time to cool down. I realized that communication is important for everyone.

THE TIME WHEN I FIRST STARTED SKATING

By Sebastian

It all started when I was 10 years old. It was Christmas and I was exploding with joy when I realized that my dad had gotten me a skateboard. He said, “I was your age when I started skateboarding.” So, my dad was the one that introduced me to that lifestyle, and I am glad he did.

To begin with, my dad would talk about skateboarding and how he used to do tricks. He would say things like “I can ollie over trash cans”. “I can do a 360 on a launch ramp”. Those stories made me want to explore the skateboarding community. Soon after, my dad took me to my first skate park at Memorial Park in Logan. I remember him giving me advice.

“Look at the other skaters and observe how they skate”.

My older brother, who was also there and already had a skateboard, joined in and gave me some more advice. I remember him saying, “when you ollie, make sure you are light off your feet after the kick”. He was trying to teach me the most important trick in skateboarding. The Ollie.

At the end, I learned that skateboarding takes practice and that’s what I did. I kept going to the skatepark every day for four years. All that paid off when I was sponsored and that’s when I realized that I was really good. Now, I have people looking up to me and all that is due to my dad introducing me to skateboarding.



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## SOAR ACADEMY YOUTH TRANSITION CAMPUS

### UNTITLED

By G.P.

I am kinda lost

I wonder what my life will end up to be

I hear what people think I will end up to be

I see what I want to see

I want what will bring me peace

I am finding myself

I pretend to be okay

I worry but not willingly

I cry with a smile on my face

I am trying to find my way

I understand what my life has become

I say what I think

I dream of happiness

I try to stay positive

I hope I will get everything I want out of life

I am kinda lost

## THE TASTE OF DEATH IS IN THE AIR

*By Jacob C. and Elijah B.*

As they quickly reversed  
He got hit in his top  
He was in the car with one of his thots He proceeded to get scared  
Cuz they let out some shots

The Duchess were crying and praying to God As she slid off the seat  
She laid on the floor of the car  
With her face between his knees  
I think he was low key hard

She will never forget this day  
Because it left her scared  
But they both died right after  
With their bodies apart  
The highness said  
*Sophie don't die*  
*Stay alive for the kids*

If only the Duke didn't get hit in his lid And when you think about the shooter Split Sophie's wig  
Come to think about this story  
Is now past tense the Duke is history How his body is in a casket  
Everybody was scared  
And didn't know what to do

The Taste of Death is in the Air  
Its spreading like a flu  
Aint talken about the plague  
The way they were kids  
Saying achoo  
There might've been some Native Americans there  
Saying *salud*

The husband and the bride died  
That's a double homicide  
Long Live the Duke and Sophie  
Forever on my mind.

## UNTITLED

*By David E.*

The day I found out what my favorite food was.

The day I found out what my favorite food was happened recently when I was hanging out with my cousin. We were hanging out for a couple hours, after awhile we got hungry but we didn't know what to eat. We were just walking around looking for something to eat. After around 10-15 minutes we saw a wings place called Wings Mix. We went in and ordered buffalo fries with two Dr Peppers (the best soda ever) five minutes later we got the trays and it looked delicious for something that I had never eaten before. I took the first bite and the chicken was hot and tender with a little bit of spice to it. The fries were soft and hot as well, not too soggy or soft, but I could taste the seasoning. And with ranch it was 10x way better. It was just one of the best foods I had ever eaten and it became my favorite that exact day. After that day, I knew I was gonna keep going back to that same place.

## UNTITLED

*By Aubrey B.*

I am me  
I wonder if one day i'll be someone really important to people  
I hear myself saying inspirational words to my kids  
I see myself being very rich when i get older  
I am proud to be me  
I pretend im okay when i'm really not  
I worry if i'm going to make it in life  
I cry when i don't see my man  
I am beautiful  
I understand the things i can not control  
I say people are not really your friends once you get locked up  
I dream of being very rich with my man  
I try to understand myself in ways i am yet to learn about myself  
I hope my man thinks about me  
I am me and i love it



UNTITLED

By Nestor

I was going fast, I was exiting the freeway, I was going fast and trying to break. Before I knew it, my car had crashed into the rear end of a van that was moving.

In the beginning, I had woke up. Not thinking much, like any other day I grabbed my phone. Checked who had texted me while I was asleep. Trying to find what the move was-find something to do-and my friend Antonito had texted me. He had texted, “what you on” in other words, what are you doing.

“Im at the crib wtm”

“Tryina get swooped”

“Hell yeah come threw”

So I was getting ready, putting on a fresh fit. I put on a white pro club, black Dickies pants, white Air Forces, a shiny gold necklace, a bracelet, and some rings. I packed up my bag with some weed, beers for later on the night, and a knife. While I was in this my mom and grandma were making some food. Eggs, beans, and tortillas. I sat down at the kitchen table, and I was asking my mom if I could go out with my friends. She started telling me how I go out everyday, and how I should stay home today. As always, I argued with her and told her I’m fine and I’ll be okay. She finally gave into it and she said it’s fine but I needed to get my homework done.

Antonio was already outside. I was ready, and told my mom I'll be back. She knew damn well I'd be out for a minute.

UNTITLED

By Apollo

I am young  
I wonder what possibilities can come  
I hear sirens drowned out by drums  
I see light emitting through a crack in the slums  
I want riches but I also demand loyalty  
I am the air that my enemies breath  
I pretend everything is okay  
I worry that my heartbeat will take a break  
I cry until my tears fill a lake

I am whole and bright as day  
I understand concepts I do not yet know  
I say my vision is clouded by snow  
I dream to learn and grow  
I try to grow up  
I hope to soar high and not stoop low  
I am still young

THE TIME I GOT LOST AT THE AIRPORT

By Fatima M.

This one time we were at the Turkey airport with my mom and sis and we were going to Iraq and I told my mom “I’m going to the bathroom”, and so I did and the airport in Turkey is so big, like so big! I came out and I didn’t see my mom anywhere, I kept looking for her and looking for her and could not find her. I started to get worried because our plane was going to board soon so I got help and out of nowhere I saw my mom and she ran to me, she was scared and crying very much. I am going to be careful not to get lost anymore.

“Sister get off of her, that’s enough she is already bleeding.”

That’s what I heard one day when I got really mad at this girl. One day I was in downtown San Diego and I was bored and I wanted to play a prank on my friend. My friend always wore a mask so I wanted to take it off her. So I went up to her and pulled it off her face and she got mad. So she threw orange juice on me and I got mad at her. So I went up to her and punched her in her face. Then she grabbed my hair. I told her to let go of my hair but then I got her grip off me. Next I grabbed her by her shirt and swung her to the floor. Then I got on top of her and started to throw many punches to her face. Then my brother pulled me off her. Next thing I know this girl was running for her life but knowing me I was still mad so I started chasing this girl down the street. Then I caught her and while she was running I threw her hard and she tumbled to the floor. Then I started stopping her. And then I was really mad she ran so I pulled out my switchblade and my brother told me to calm down. During him saying that she ran To the trolley station. If my brother would have told me to stop I would have killed her. I learned from my brother how to stop and calm down. I’m so thankful for my brother. If it wasn’t for him I would be doing life. I love fighting tho so I guess it was a win win.

GETTING LOCKED UP

By Anonymous

Getting locked up was a stressful part of life because when I was out I was not making the best choices. I was out all night smoking, drinking and fighting. I was thinking all this was fun

and games, and didn't care about any of my family's feelings. I was being selfish and was just always on the run and I didnt realize it was affecting my mom and my brothers because my brothers started picking up behaviors from me. I liked the way I was living. It was fun and I made memories with the homies and homegirls. And once I got locked up everything changed, I realized that homie love was fake, the only person that was there was my mom it took us a minute to talk but we did. I've been locked up for 4 months and haven't got any letters, no phone calls, none of that. Shows a lot about their personality. People really don't have love when you are jammed up, so once I get out nobody is getting a "hi", from me I just wanna focus on myself and my man because at the end of the day the way I was living it is gonna leave me dead or locked up for life and I don't want that for my life. I wanna get a job and go to school and do good in life, all this troubled life living is not cute and doesn't have a purpose. I am too smart and can do a lot with my life and become something I wanna be, a behavioral health assistant and have a family and just have a good life.

UNTITLED

By J. J.

"Are we there yet?" I said entering 6 Flags in LA. It was a hot, sunny day and we could smell the food at the amusement park. We rode lots of scary rides. Smoking and drinking it felt like we were flying lol. The homies phone fell out while we on a ride. After the ride finished we start looking for the phone. We talked to the security and they found the phone but it was broken. After that we finished our day and went back to the Air bnb and went to the mall to get the phone fixed.

A BROKEN HEART

By Anonymous

The day I found out I was being cheated on the whole relationship. 2 years long, how I felt then was horrible, I felt like my heart was melting as quick as ice in the heat. I couldn't even think it was like my brain stopped. He continued to sit there and look at me all he could say was "I'm not gonna stop cheating maybe we should break up". I could just feel my hands squeezing into a fist. I was gonna do something so bad to hurt not only his feelings but him physically. I had stopped to think about my actions, the room was blank. I could smell the food cooking in the kitchen, I could hear the movie playing in the background, I could feel his rough hands, and I could taste the blood in my mouth from biting my tongue out of stress. This period of time changed my life completely. My life started going downwards. I stopped caring about anything and everyone, but yet I continued to give him chances until one day it was over.

GARCIA'S LOVE STORY

By E. G.

I would like to start by saying this story has no ending. I met the love of my life at an unexpected place. It was a hot day in San Diego. I was walking to a park. When I say hot I mean there were lots of cops. I was smoking weed and a cop pulled me over and tried to search me so I ran. The only thing going through my head was not getting locked up. I'd never been locked up before.

Sweating out of breath, it was getting harder to breath, every step I took felt like I was running on hot coals. I hit a left and jumped over a fence. A cop stopped and he started to ask people if they saw a kid running. They were speaking low so I couldn't hear them but more cops were coming. I could hear more cars pulling up. There was a drone flying around me. I heard yelling and dogs barking. I caught my breath I said "f\*#@^ it, ima run if they get me then, they got me".

I got out of my hiding spot and jumped the fence well before I said anything. I forgot to mention that there were gunshots before I arrived at the park and I had a gun on me. I knew the place well so I know where to hide stuff if I needed to. I hid the gun before I saw the cop so I was just running because I had weed on me, like 2 ounces. I stopped running because I didn't hear them anymore. I got on the sidewalk and I made a wrong turn and there were cops all over the place.

They pointed their guns and told me to get on my knees. "F\*%\$ I'm caught", I got on my knees, my heart pounding, hands shaking . Two cops ran up to me and put me in cuffs. They took me to the police station. They find the weed but also find bullets. The cop kept asking questions and I just kept saying, "no,no,no". They asked if you had been to J-H. I said no and they drove me there. I spent 3 days in a holding cell. There were 4 units B, C, D, and E. I went to E where the kids went. There were lots of new faces. I was going to have to get used to them. I didn't know how long I was going to be here for. Every night felt like I was losing a peace of myself there food wasn't good but was not too bad. But my bed was the worst. It was small and hard. The

showers were cold and we could only be in there for 7 to 10 minutes. Day after day I had to fight and go to court. With no hope there was this bright little shine of light the judge gave me hope that I might get out soon. I was sentenced to a 130 day commitment. I was happy to be leaving soon. I got moved to a different facility. It was more open and I got to see more people and girls but out of all the girls there was one that caught my eye. She had a mean attitude. It was like a mean phoenix and her face was like an angel but she had a look like

if you did her wrong she would kill you and everyone you loved. I fell in love at first sight. But did she feel the same is what was going through my head when she saw me our eyes locked.

THE TIME I STOLE SUPERHERO TOYS WITH MY COUSIN

By S.V.

I was at my grandma’s and my cousin Isaac was there. He was five. It was 2016. We were playing with toys and my grandma took us to Dollar Tree for snacks. She drove us. I was sitting in the back. I was in Fallbrook. She parked in front of Dollar Tree. My cousin and I got out first and we walked into Dollar Tree. There was no music. The door opened, and the fan above the door blew fresh air. We walked to the Toy aisle first to look at toys. I saw little superhero toys.I thought to myself, “I want those. Isaac and I can play with those.” So, I turned to my cousin Isaac and I told my cousin we should grab some of these.

Then we stuffed our pockets with the superhero toys—Marvel. We walked to the chip aisle. I saw spicy chips. I grabbed the spicy chips and we went to the blue Gatorades. My cousin and I grabbed a blue Frost Gatorade each. We went to my grandma and then we walked with my grandma to the cash register. If she knew, she would have been upset and made me return them. We were walking out with the snacks in our hands and the superhero toys in our pockets. I felt nervous that I might get caught. I liked that I could grab it without paying and my grandma didn’t have to pay.

We got into the car and we drove home. We walked to my grandma’s house. My grandma walked to her bedroom while my cousin and I took out the toys and opened them and we played with them as we enjoyed our snacks.

On that day, I learned it was easy to steal from Dollar Tree and I liked to be able to get toys without paying. It felt good because my grandma didn’t have to pay. She works hard. She would have bought it for me, but I lost my toys often, and I didn’t want her to buy just for me to lose it.

UNTITLED

By P.W.

I am a young man

I wonder when I’ll be a factor to society  
I hear good things about my future  
I see light at the end of the tunnel  
I want the best for you and I  
I am a young man

I pretend I will be a successful family man  
I worry I won’t see past 23

I cry when I see how far I’ve come  
I am a young man  
I understand nothings free  
I say I’m gonna climb the ladder  
I dream I level up  
I try putting the past behind me  
I hope we make it  
I am a young man

UNTITLED

By H.P.

I am capable

I know I will be okay regardless the circumstances

I hear myself saying I can  
I see myself achieving  
I want more for myself  
I am intelligent

I will focus on making progress, not achieving perfection

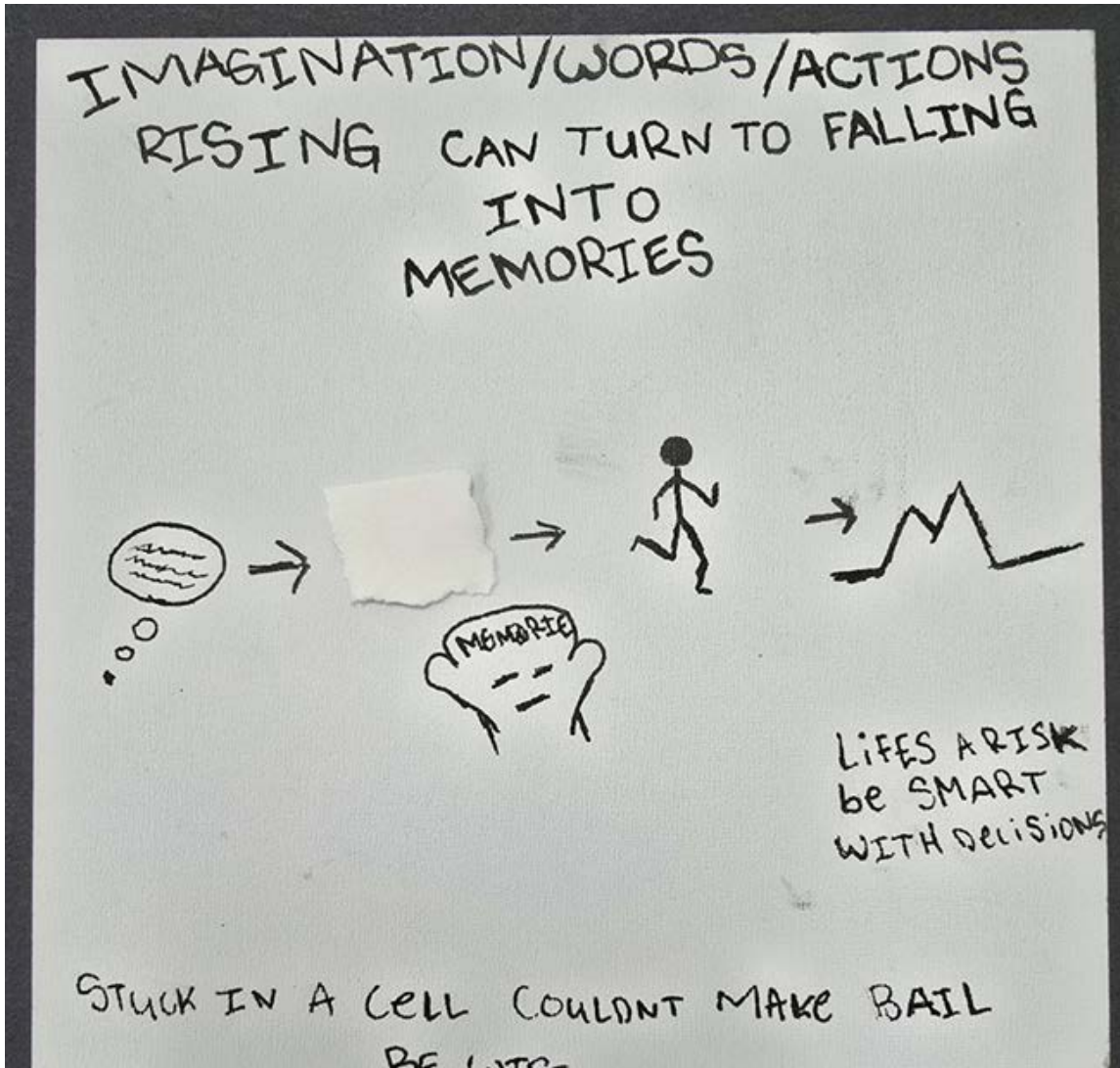
I will not let my mistakes define me  
I cry out failure is not an option

I understand patience is necessary in order to succeed

I say it is possible  
I dream of a new reality

I will make a way, by any means necessary

I am worthy



SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## SOAR ACADEMY EAST MESA

### UNIT GOLF/JULIET

#### MY LOYALTY TOWARDS MYSELF

*By Anonymous*

To begin, What changed me was when I took the wrong path that I grew up in. Also, this life I chose made me go through stuff I never knew I would. Therefore, I had to really thug it out myself when I was younger and do what I needed to do to feed myself now for those actions I am doing time locked up and for my ways and for my behavior.

Going Forward, My path in life led me to a radical change when I started doing stuff to help me and my siblings to get us off our feet and to have food on our table. Next, my parents were never home so I had to really be the man of the house for my siblings and be here for them in many ways. Now as I am growing up I had to get a job and I had to earn money and to have my day's structure.

To Continue, Having a job didn't solve all my problems. I was earning money but I was still hanging out with the wrong crowd and gang banging and didn't care what I was wasting my money on. Sooner or later I got locked up and also got fired from my job.

In Conclusion, In my path I chose I had to really make it out in the rain and earn money in many ways to gather money for my siblings and for myself as well. Going Forward, no one was there for me to give me affection or love so I chose the Gang to give me the love I needed and to help me when I was coming around. Now What I think about my future is how am I gonna be out of the way of my style and gonna be working, have a good family and not do stuff to take me out of the system and not get locked up again.

#### MY STORY

*By Anonymous*

Growing up, I have good memories that shape who I am today. These memories are still strong in my mind that it is a guiding light for what I want to do with my life. When I was around eight,



My family gave me a dog that helped me appreciate animals and they also helped me guide me by explaining things and guiding a sense of belonging.

When I was younger, My parents got a dog that changed how I looked at things.

In the beginning I didn’t know what to do because he was still a puppy. But after a while, I began to be more comfortable with him. I would take Moto on walks and go to the park. We would play with other dogs. He’s a big baby because if you stop petting him he will start whining and nudge you to start again. Getting to raise a dog on my own has been good for me because he has shown me how to take care of another living being.

When I was young it was important to my family to learn to take care of things. My family would show me how to ride dirt bikes and take care of them. We would go to the desert and camp. We would drive up dunes, go to the drags and go to the pumpkin patch where we would hang out and walk around. Also, My dad helped me appreciate animals and how to take care of them. He would tell me how dogs were smart and could learn tricks. When he finally got me one I was very happy because I always wanted my own dog. All of this together has made me the person I am today.

In conclusion, if it hadn’t been for my family and their guidance, I may not have the same appreciation for animals or that sense of belonging my family gives me. Overall, raising dogs has helped me be more caring toward animals. My family has been a big part of this. For that, My story is about how appreciative I am for my family. Going forward, I would like to go to community college. I’m not too sure what I would like to study but I’m sure I will figure it out somewhere down the road.

**BEING RESPONSIBLE**

*By Anonymous*

What you have been through and what you have experienced makes you the person you are today. I have had a big case of both my mom and dad being absent during my younger phase of my life. Therefore making me more likely to have mental problems and for me to maintain a healthy lifestyle. But what i have learned is that nobody can control what you or what you do so i chose to stay strong and do good but nobody is perfect and everybody has flaws.

First I find it important to stay strong mentally when things go bad. Staying strong during times of mental distress will make it a lot easier to overcome your current struggles you face in the moment. Having a good mindset will open the ability to see the good in the most negative situations or environments

Secondly self control can also benefit you and have less possible consequences. Self control is a very important skill that I think everyone should learn. Making your own decisions is better than having someone make them for you. Like an example is a bad influence listening to others

making decisions they want you to make which can lead to consequences.

School is a mandatory thing for all people and this is why. School is good for you because it will benefit you in the future and that is where making your own decisions comes in. You decide to go to school and you decide what you want to do with your life. Finishing school will make it a lot easier for you to find a job therefore making it a lot easier for you to survive in our modern world. Being self responsible plays a big role in school which therefore proves my point about being self responsible and why everyone should do it.

**“YOUR STORY”**

*By Anonymous*

What do you think of when you hear the word loyalty? When I hear that word I think of being honest with yourself. Being disloyal in our relationships can cause problems that can cause harm to those relationships. That’s why I believe that loyalty is so important.

I believe loyalty is important. Being disloyal in our relationships can cause problems that cause harm to those relationships. Relationships can be a girlfriend, friend or family member. I’ve seen loyalty save a relationship but I’ve also seen being disloyal can crash them.

Creating a healthy relationship takes work. One way to create a healthy relationship is understanding each other. The best way to understand someone is to communicate openly and be honest with them. For example this one time I had a friend of mine come talk to me and communicate instead of walking away and making a big deal out of something we would have a better relationship today.

In summary, being disloyal is what can cause that most harm in a relationship. Overall you can avoid problems in disloyal relationship by being understanding, having good Communication skills and being honest. These steps can prevent people in our relationships from being disloyal which would prevent relationships from ending. In the future, I want to be open with people to communicate with me about how they’re feeling. This way, maybe disloyal people won’t be an issue anymore.

**WHO I AM**

*By Anonymous*

Your past is what makes you... Certain things that you go through throughout your life is what makes you who you are, every good and bad thing, it all leads up to the way your life is and how you are, It makes you stronger. Everything I went through in my life made me who I am and I can’t change anything about my past, only my future.

One of the things that affected me and made me who I am today is being in the juvenile

system. In a certain way it made me more mature , it made me stronger and showed me when you're in a bad situation to make the most of it. It also showed me to be more appreciative of what I have and when I am out to cherish what I have like family and friends. I miss out on a lot of things while being incarcerated and I'm just messing up my future when I catch new chargers that stick with me.

Another thing that affected me and made me who I am today is drug use. When I'm intoxicated I end up making really bad decisions that affect my life. I always end up only surrounding myself with people who use it as well. While intoxicated I tend to get distracted from things I should really be focused on like school, family, and staying out of trouble. All those things end up being main factors of what made me “me”.

My past is what made me and all the decisions that I chose to make. Only thing I can change is my future and how I choose to live my life from now on. I choose to learn from my mistakes instead of repeating them.

**UNTITLED**

*By Anonymous*

School was never really for me. All my homies have gone to the same school as me since the first grade. In school there were also kids that we don't mess with. You could tell that the homies and I didn't like school or the teachers. We missed a lot of school hours even if we went.

My homies and I were always together during school, when we were there. It's obvious we never actually took school seriously or thought of it as a priority. So we would skip class or the whole school day entirely. When we did that, we walked to the homies house who had already graduated and stayed there until the school day was over. We still went to school but rarely. When we did we would still skip most of our classes.

We would spend the day skipping, running from teachers, and smoking in the bathroom. There were occasions that we would chill in a staircase that didn't have a camera. Sometimes the kids that we didn't mess with would come down the stairs. When that would happen it turned into an all out brawl. It would either turn out good with them leaving the stairs with none of us getting caught, or it would last so long and be so loud that a teacher would come in and all of us would get in trouble.

So, knowing school isn't really for me, I wouldn't choose college in my future. I also wouldn't even consider trade school if it wasn't for my mom. Trade school isn't really that strict so I think it could work out. I also want to weld and my mom knows Trade schools that would teach me. So Trade school is a possibility for me and is looking like a bright option in my future.

**ME AND MY BROTHERS**

*By Anonymous*

Do you have close connections with your family members? Personally, I have a very close bond with my two brothers. Throughout thick and thin me and my brothers have had each other's backs since we were born. My brothers are not just my family, they are my closest friends. The loyalty we share is something I'll value over anything.

Me and my brothers turned our relationships from family to best friends. When we were younger, there wasn't much holding us all together except for the fact we were brothers. As we grew older though, we learned to stick together no matter what. If one of us was in trouble, then we all were. People would try to hate on one of us and have to deal with all three of us. By going through important parts of our lives together, we realized that we didn't have much in this world but each other.

The bond between us molded me into the man I am today. Ever since we decided to stick together, there's been times we've had to hold each other accountable. Times where I would get me and my brothers into trouble taught me to think before I act. My two best friends have never turned their backs on me, which made me realize the importance of loyalty in our lives. We aren't strangers to mischief, and there have been many times where we have had to think on the fly. These times made me learn how to make the best out of every situation, and to know how to read a room.

The bond between my two brothers and I is the most important thing in my life. Through the dark and the light, the good and the bad, we have never turned our backs on each other. As long as we are alive, me and my brothers will always be together. Our bond will only continue to grow stronger as time goes on.

**“MY STORY”**

*By Anonymous*

Have you ever been incarcerated? How do you think people who live the street lifestyle end up in jail? I've lived this lifestyle and I'm still living it. I know what can happen to a teenager who chooses this life. The morals & principles that I've lived by have guided me to where I am today.

Since a very young age I've been around what some would consider the “gang lifestyle”, but I just know it as my everyday life, the only way of life I know. I didn't know much about how my family members and other relatives around me lived their lives until I got older and when I came to see what life they led that's when I realized that that's the same lifestyle I would come to live as well. When you grow up around something and see the people that are supposed to be role models in your life doing something, you as a child are automatically going to follow in the same direction. You get the sense that it's a regular part of life. I didn't know that what you do in the

streets was looked down upon, not the taking from others, violence or any of it. I thought it was normal, at least till I got a real look of what the “normal” was. That’s when I realized that the life I live is far from normal.

But that’s enough about the lifestyle I live and how I came to walk this path. Let’s talk about the moral code & principles you have to live by in order to keep your head above the water. Say you choose the same path to walk as me, like i said you have to live by principles and if you value your life that would be your top principle or priority. Morals are just about the same thing, basically terms or guidelines you live by like loyalty, if you have none or nobody is loyal to you you can’t get very far in this lifestyle.

In conclusion, being so young and getting into the “gang life” helped me create the moral code and principles I live with today. Feeling that sense of normalcy in the people I surrounded myself with or gang led me to the top principle I live by today- staying alive. Going forward, I don’t know what i will do with the rest of my life i wouldn’t mind changing my ways but I don’t think that would change others perspective on how they see me because if you’ve seen the version of me that is cold hearted and has no regard for any life or feelings would you look at me as a new person after the change is done or the same heartless person i once was.

**UNTITLED**  
*By Anonymous*

How much pain can you take?

My early life was filled with pain.

At a young age I had to learn not to show pain or emotions because if I showed I was crying or that I was showing pain I would get hit harder than I did. Constantly being worried not to show emotions has stuck with me.

My teen life pain.

Now that I’m 15 and had to learn at a young age that showing pain is for the weak and real man doesn’t show emotions or pain cuz men have other things to worry about like work and pay bills and provide for the family.

What happens when you don’t show emotions or pain? For example when you gang bang everyone is an enemy to you so when you get jumped or fight you have no care and show no pain or emotions.

In conclusion, my early life was filled with pain. I had to not show emotions and pain and constantly being worried not to show pain and emotions that has stuck with me.

**MY STORY**

*By Anonymous*

What would you do if your world turned upside down because mine did. It all started on May 21st my 5th birthday as a kid i was very observant so anything little thing that was off I would notice. But on my birthday it was something that was very noticeable, my father wasn’t there and he is usually present for special occasions like this one. Sometime go by and all my family is there but my father was nowhere to be around and me and my brothers notice that, it gave me an uncomfortable feeling also a sharp pain like abundance that feeling is still with me till this day. I’m still feeling the repercussions of the absences of my father.

My world was upside down at an early age, sending emotions that I couldn’t understand through my body. When my father didn’t show up at my birthday party i felt abandoned like why me. A few days later after my birthday I hear my mom crying so I’m confused. I’m wondering what brings my mom this much pain for her to break down like this so me being curious i walk into her room. And ask her whats whats wrong then she started to break down even more and now i’m wondering it has to be no good news then she finally fixed herself and broke it down to me. My father will be gone for a long time i really never knew what jail was i just knew it wasn’t a good place for people. So as I’m growing up my brothers raised me and as a youth im looking up to them like they’re the coolest people ever. They have nice cars, all the girls and lots of money. All i wanted to know is how they got that so as i’m getting older im asking them constantly how they got all of this.

Me being around my brothers and watching them made my destiny to live like them and that type of things they were doing shouldn’t have been my destiny. So to them i got to the right age for them to teach me the game and how to survive and it was definitely what i expected. Me being how young I was it really took a lot of my mind. It really changed me from a kid to a man , that’s what I thought at least. Now I’m making myself grow up faster. I had to stop going to school and dedicate myself to a corner. Everything I wanted to do as in playing football or basketball was gone. I felt like this was what I was destined to do. My first year as a “gang member”we were all chilling at my house smoking and drinking with our friends. And then we hear a sudden bang on the door and we were wondering who it was so they told me to open the door, as I’m going to open the door it flies open and tells everyone to get on the ground. When they saw my brother they instantly grabbed him and put him in handcuffs. I was confused and scared, hours later my brother told me that Elijah has been arrested for Murder also Attempted Murder. A few months later there’s me and my brothers friend name dede and were on the same corner i devoted my life to, as me and dede were there for a few hours he tells me he is going to walk home i dap him up and say bye moments later i hear gunshots so i run towards then and there’s dede laying there and me a little boy doesn’t know what he’s doing gave me a rude awakening.

In conclusion, I feel the absence of my father has a large effect on me. Overall I can say that I grew up without a father figure and being influenced by my brothers.They played a valuable role in my life that turned me into. Someone that was never supposed to turn in. What my thoughts are on about my future is very bright. I wanna go to college and try to be an therapist and go back into my community and help kids out that are in the position I was in.

**UNTITLED**  
*By Anonymous*

Imagine your 9 years old taking care of two kids and taking them to school every day. That is exactly how my day started. During the 4 years I did this I experienced many emotions and believe is the reason I am where I am.

My experience of taking care of kids started when I was 9 years old. At 9 years old I walked my 8 year old brother and 4 year old sister to school. After I walked them to school I had to feed them and myself. These are things most 9 year olds don't have to do.

I truly believe this is why I'm in jail right now. A 9 year old is still a child and having to take care of other children forces them to be an adult too early. Being responsible caused me to be stressed and made me act out. Not being able to experience my childhood made me resentful and led me to being locked up.

In summary, for the 4 years I took care of my siblings I believe that's the reason I'm here today. At 9 years old I walked my 8 year old brother and 4 year old sister to and from school every day. A 9 year old shouldn't have that type of responsibility at that age. I think my future is going to college to get a good job.

**“YOUR STORY”**  
*By Anonymous*

First, have you ever been shot at? Well I have. I Know most people probably haven't. It depends a lot on your environment. Had I grown up in a different place where gangs aren't around I wouldn't be in the predicament I'm in today. The old quote “ you are who you hang out with” makes sense. If you live in a neighborhood with gangs you'll probably be from one but if you're not it's easier to stay away from them.

I was young the first time I saw death. Bullets were flying everywhere. My heart was racing like a nascar driver on his last lap. I heard children screaming and glass breaking. My ears were ringing as the shots stopped. Suddenly, I saw two people laying on the ground with a puddle of blood around them. Living in my community anything can happen. When I say anything I mean anything. I sometimes wonder what my life would be like if I grew up in a different area.

I wonder what my mindset would be like and the type of person I would be like. I have hope for the people stuck in the activities my community offers and hope they realize there's more to life than gang activity.

Lastly, Living in a neighborhood with gangs can change a person's mentality and the way they preview the world. Seeing the things I have growing up has affected me and has made me the person I am today. For my future I have hopes that it's positive and beneficial. I'm very optimistic and confident that I will fulfill my dreams. I hope to one day own homes and rent them to families in my community to make sure they have affordable housing.

**MY STORY AND MY FUTURE**  
*By Anonymous*

What do you think is more important? Is it being loyal or having good friends? I think both are important and these traits guide who I am today. In my life, I find these traits as important as anything except for my family.

The two principles I live by are loyalty and friendship. I am loyal because I will never switch up on my day ones. They would never switch up on me and I would never switch up on them. This upsets me because I don't like people that snitch or say and do the other.

Lastly and most importantly is my family. There is nothing more important than family because they will always be there for you and have your back no matter what and will always love you. This is important because it feels good to have someone.

In conclusion, being loyal and having family is what drives me. In my life being loyal and having a family that supports me is what makes me who I am today. In the future, I plan to go to a vocational school because it's faster and you start working right away in either plumbing or construction.

**LIFE STORY.**  
*By Anonymous*

In life , people make mistakes. Sometimes people have to pay a heavy price for something you do that can stay without you for life. For me I want to do the time and start my life by taking care of my family. I feel like my time incarcerated has made me an adult at an early age that along with my son makes me feel like I need to be an adult.

First of all, being incarcerated has made me grow up faster than I should. Me learning more things and knowing what's wrong and right made me mature. I've learned from different people that made me feel like I have grown fast being incarcerated.

As I know I have a son, I keep myself motivated so time can go by fast. My son keeps me



motivated and my biggest priority in life so I can come home early and complete my program. It helps me learn my rights and wrongs being incarcerated so when I come home I can be ready for the outside world.

You can try to do everything right in life, but you are going to have mistakes. I have learned a lot from many people, including people that I have met being incarcerated . My son is five months old and I want him to grow up right . I can use the things I’ve learned from everyone to teach him the right things.Im not sure what I want for my future, but I want to be a good father to my son and keep him out of danger and make sure he gets educated.

**MY STORY**

*By Anonymous*

Have you ever had to change schools when you were young? I did and it exposed me to many challenges but also exciting experiences. My life was not static, rather I was exposed to many different cultures and experiences that have made deep impressions on me. However , there were also many challenges I had to endure that made me the person I am today.

When I was younger I would move a lot to new places like Chile. Chile was a beautiful place I saw and experienced so much while I was out there. New foods, new traditions, and beautiful places/ views. The schools were different out there too; it would be all boys or all girls. The school would have kids from first grade all the way to senior year. The beach water was warmer than it was in California and everyone out there spoke spanish.

When I moved over to Chile I had to learn how to speak spanish. Learning Spanish was challenging but also fun because I would know two languages. I got fluent in Spanish and would speak to everyone out there just because I could speak spanish. While I was out there I explored and saw beautiful places like where I lived right in front of the beach. I had the best view in the morning and would eat at the view of the beach almost everyday.

In conclusion, if it hadn’t been for my experiences living abroad and the challenges I have faced, I would not be the person I am today. Overall , I feel like I’m living in Chile. I’ve seen how people in another country live day by day and seeing how different it was from California. This has given me a unique perspective at an early age that I will carry with me throughout my life. In the future, I want to go to college to get a good job that might involve me traveling the world. Like I did when I was younger.

**“MY STORY”**

*By Anonymous*

Is it a good thing to grow up fast? I had to. At a young age I was thrust into doing adult things. It actually wasn’t until I was incarcerated that things changed. I started taking bigger risks and

being put into situations that were life threatening.

First of all being incarcerated was the start of when I began to lose my youth. I was forced to adapt to the environment. It wasn’t normal for a 12 year old to be kicking it with 18-19 year olds hitting licks. I was getting more attracted and involved. It forced me to mentally grow up at a young age.

Suddenly I found myself taking bigger risk. I would want more money and more stuff so that would mean I had to take more risks. Now that can mean a longer jail term or more consequences. But the rush that would come with it made it even more addicting.

Most kids in my situation are forced to grow up fast.The mental effects this has on you. The situations you go through molds you into the person you become. I feel like my future isn’t going very far but I’m going to make the best with what I got.

**“YOUR STORY”**

*By Anonymous*

Have you ever had challenges in your life that made you stronger than you were before? I will talk about what I experienced and how it helped me overcome my challenges. I believe that the struggles you go through helps you become stronger and makes you a better person.

Challenges in my life made me a stronger person than I was before. One of the many challenges I’ve faced is when I was unsure of what I wanted in life so I was acting like I don’t care now I’m in jail so now I want more in life.

Sometimes we make wrong choices during a challenging time in life, but the mat also makes us a better person because we also learn from our mistakes. An example I have is when I was stealing because I didn’t have much, but I was also stealing from others who didn’t have much so once I realized what I was doing I felt bad because they are also in my shoes and they are trying to make the best of what they got. Once I realized I gave back what I stole. Since then I've learned not to steal.

In summary the struggles you go through helps you become stronger and makes you a better person. Therefore the struggles I went through did nothing but make me a better person. Going forward, what I think about my future is how I am gonna be out of the way by having a job and doing good for myself and not going back to my old ways.

What doesn’t kill you makes you stronger. This is a feeling I have now that I find myself locked up. Before I landed in East Mesa I didn’t think much about what I could accomplish. Now, I can see a future. Over the years that I’ve been incarcerated, I have realized there is more to me. One thing is that I enjoy writing. The second thing is I want to go to college.

Being incarcerated has had a silver lining for me. First I realized that writing is easier for me than it is for other people, writing almost comes naturally to me. I never knew that I enjoyed writing until I got here. Second, I've realized what I think matters. I've realized that the perspective I have is based on all of my experiences- good & bad. These experiences give me a perspective of life not many others share. My unique perspective will be with me until the day I die. It's a part of who I am now and I will see things through this lens forever.

I didn't like school before I got locked up but now I see that school can help me. I'd rather be in class than be in a dayroom with officers. Realizing that I like getting an education has led me to want to go to college. Though I do like writing, I hope to learn about business and other topics that interest me.

Finally I feel like despite being locked up, I have been able to learn things about myself I hadn't known about before. Overall having a perspective of being locked up has given me more to think about who I am and what I can achieve. In the future, I wanna go to college.

**MY STORY**  
*By Anonymous*

Living in a neighborhood where gangs exist leads to some serious choices at an early age. Encounters with gang members lead to friendship which leads to ties that only gang members could understand. Being loyal has its pros and cons and when you hear “snitches get stitches”, you realize there's only one choice. Whether you've built the foundation or contributed, you only have one road to follow. This is what creates my perspective.

Many people would say being loyal is a good thing, but I think being loyal has its ups & downs. Growing up around gang members has given me a whole new perspective on the word “loyal”, I used to think it only applied to relationships but as I got more involved I realized It has more meaning & its not always a good meaning. Loyalty to a gang gets you many things good & bad, which includes respect, acknowledgement, trust, dependence, obstacles & compelled. For instance showing my loyalty by representing got me respect but also has me compelled to represent no matter what or who I encounter. Following on is acknowledgement for the stuff I've done to prove my loyalty not only to other members but also to rival gangs which brings obstacles that can occur even with or around family. These experiences have made me realize the ups & downs of loyalty.

The idea of loyalty has created & altered my perspective continuously throughout my life. In my perspective being loyal to a gang can blind you as love can blind a stubborn person. I've faced many obstacles incarcerated & on the outside; It is truly a blessing % a curse, I've made many friends & lost as many. I've also been acknowledged for bad & good reasons; Reasons one should not be proud of. Your friends rely/depend on you to be there & at the same time you

depend on them for certain stuff; Sometimes you feel compelled to retaliate in risky ways & end up in jail time but also respect.

In conclusion, being loyal is a double edged sword that nobody can wield no matter how much experience they have with it. There are good and bad to being loyal; But this has helped build my perspective & helped wield the double edged sword. Overall, in my life I've seen being loyal as a bipolar thing that can drag you into good or bad situations. In the future I plan on pursuing a college degree in psychology so I can help troubled youth follow a better route than they're given.



San Pasqual Academy Student Artwork

# UNIT CHARLIE

## MALALA YOUSAFZAI THE STRUGGLES OF POVERTY

*By Anonymous*

Who new Malala Yousafzai  
She faced challenges at an early age  
So she can help others turn the page  
Advocating to educate  
To fight those who would rather eradicate  
Survived a brutal attack  
Just to fight back  
Co Founded projects to fight for your right  
To help see the daylight.  
Won numerous accolades  
Including a Nobel Peace Prize  
She fought for what she thought was right  
To almost not see the daylight  
Believed in hope  
And that is dope.  
Malala Yousafzai, the struggles of poverty

## BILL GATES

*By Anonymous*

Dedication to the people  
Trying to make it peaceful  
Bill Gates said were all equal  
They say no more evil  
Trying to solve global health  
With their wealth  
Invested billions  
To try and help these civilians  
Fighting these diseases  
While they take over like demons  
Improving education by investing  
There was no time for resting  
Bill Gates owned, Microsoft  
Which in this world is a lot.  
Bill Gates helped a lot from poverty  
With them; the world hit the lottery

## JAY-Z

*By Anonymous*

Jay-Z was broke he was facing poverty  
Facing many challenges he made this a priority.  
Deciding to focus on society  
He helped him focus on his philanthropy.

People were in need  
Helping those to succeed.  
Donated over 1 million  
To help the civilians.  
It took a lot of dedication  
Giving him a good reputation.  
His efforts to combat poverty  
Showed in his generosity.  
Helping those to read  
Will set them free.  
Used his platform to raise awareness  
For those who felt helpless.  
Jay-Z is an inspiration  
That had a revelation.

**ANGELINA JOLIE**  
*By Anonymous*

Angelina Jolie  
Helped a bunch of refugees  
Star by night  
Savior by day  
Committed to help poverty  
A goodwill ambassador  
She loves to help other  
Fought to improve living conditions  
Now it's becoming her tradition

She helped 20 countries fight poverty  
For those it's like winning the lottery  
She helped by building schools  
To give them tools  
Helped them with their education  
Just to help those in need and her name was Angelina Jolie

**JAY-Z**  
*By Anonymous*

Jay-Z- Who was he?  
Born in the late 1960's  
He donated to help those in need to read  
provided money for disaster relief  
to support his philanthropy  
Efforts to combat poverty  
donated 1 million to help other country  
Raises over 250,000  
address water shortages  
Promoted social justice  
This left many speechless  
Helped economic quality  
created opportunity for equality  
helping those in need to succeed  
It has been a lifelong journey  
to get where he needs to be  
and that's the man that we know as Jay-Z





SOAR Academy Youth Transition Campus Student Artwork

## UNIT DELTA

### Personal Narrative

There I was again, letting my emotions get the best of me. I had ASSAULTED A man at the church I go to I was in Handcuffs, Thinking Back at the choices I had made. In the past asking myself How I got Here.

I ended up In the police station got Booked And Taken to Ytc. I was there for 13 days. Then Brought down To East Mesa. It is my first Time Being Locked up... Ever Since I got locked up I think about things at Night Asking Myself Why I did what I did. I miss home, I miss Being Free. Sleeping in my bed and not a Flat Mattress It's not the best place to Sleep.

IN Summary I Did something I should have not done. I Regret not being with my family, and The people I miss. From here on out I am A New Man.



## The beach with Riko

On a late August day I'd been waiting for my mom to come back from the storage place, having been bored out of my mind because my phone just died and it was moving day so finding a phone charger was just something that wasn't gonna happen. Then something told me to leave. But for whatever reasoning I didn't listen to my gut and I continued waiting for my mom to come back. Soon after I was I heard crunching on the rocks in the driveway, per usual I just assumed it was my mom's 2011 Honda Accord. "LEAVE" the instinctual voice told me again yet at the same time the feeling in my stomach told me I was too late and I should have left when I first had thought of it. "Where is he, is he inside the home?" I heard a voice in a fraction of a second it resonates...

• Sometime earlier

Having started living with my sister for about 2 weeks now I had gotten used to the beach trips, waterparks and being on the road all day from one end of San Diego to the other. Once that 3<sup>rd</sup> week came everything came crashing down. "I'll see you when I come back home, I love you" "Kay I love you most" later said she gave me a kiss before I headed out the door to go handle myself as a man should in the streets. That was my usual morning only thing different this time was that the night before I'd been with Andrey who still had my sweater and it was my signature hoodie everyone knew

El pensar que viajaria solo me ~~hizo~~ ateraba, pero tenia que salir. Tenia que buscar un futuro para mi. Dejar a mi familia me llenaba de ~~dolor~~ dolor y tristeza, aun recordo las ultimas palabras de mi abuela llorando con lagrimas en sus ojos. Y mi abuela me dijo que me cuida mucho y me dijo que cuando llegara en los Estados Unidos me subiran un carro con extras mas y un guia que nos llevaria en la frontera. todo iba bien hasta que en Que Retara el guia nos bajo en el desierto y caminamos 6 horas, Fueron las 6 horas mas largas de mi vida. Y cada paso se volvia mas pesado. me detuve un se quede para estirar me sintiendo como la tension se libera de mis piernas. el guia regreso a recoger nos mi rostro el peligro habia pasado y habiamos es qui bato a la migration. la adrenalina aun corria en mis veins pero habia un nuevo sentido de calma en el grupo. Y pasaron dias hasta que el guia nos ~~avisó~~ avisó que ya era hora de cruzar. el muro ~~se~~ miraba gigante impenetrable. Y respire profundamente sintiendo el peso lo que iba hacer el muro podria ser gigante pero mi voluntad era mas grande en saber que lograria mi meta que era llegar a los Estados Unidos y reunirme con mi madre. hoy en dia mi ex periciencia no me gustaria vivirla de nuevo y tampoco le recomendaria a ~~nadie~~ nadie.

An event that happened in my life was when i got my dri. I was drinking w/ my homiegirl at a vein spot, just talking about life and what we been up too cause we havent seen each other for some month. I learned here that drinking and driving was a bad decision cause, it can change your life.

I drank about a good amount that i had to take a little nap to sober up, also did my homiegirl, but after i woke up, i got less drunk, and felt more tipsy than drunk, that i could drive and take my homiegirl home safe cause she was passed out. I started to drive to her house, which was 5 mins away, but going to the street her house was on, there was two cop cars in the middle of the road, that i couldn't go around. The cop then came to my car and told me to turn off the vehicle and roll down my window. Then the cop walk towards my window and could smell the alcohol in my breath, and saw the bottle in my back seat along w/ my homiegirl passed out, so the cop told me to step out the vehicle w/ my hands behind my back and to walk towards their car. Then the officer did some sobriety

After failing the tests, things changed, got a dri, license got suspended till im 23 years old.

In conclusion it impacted my life, cause i couldn't do as much, lost my parents trust, so learned that drinking and driving isn't a good idea even if you think your sober enough to drive.



Edwin C.B.

As soon as I found out epd was at my school I knew I was getting locked up. The day started out like any other day but this time I had a bad feeling something was going to happen. But I still showered and got ready for school after getting ready I walked to school like any other day. That was the day I knew my actions had caught up to me, and that those actions would have consequences.

I was in class when a staff pulled me out of class telling me epd wants to talk with me they put me in a room and asked for my last name I asked for what and they said a detective wants to talk to me. After I give them my last name and they told me to put my hands behind my back and told me we were going to the epd station. As soon as I got to the epd station there was a cop that told me I was under age so he couldn't talk to me but I'm getting locked up.

In conclusion I think that every action we take has a consequence. Being locked up is not worth it for any reason because it takes away your freedom and it also takes you away from your family.

## My Crazy Dog

She was biting the broom I had pointed towards her face, nobody was home & I thought I was gonna die. This is a story of my dog, my crazy dog Elli. Elli was a pitbull that we had for 2-3 months. She was a good dog but I always had a bad feeling about her because of my smaller dog Daisy. We had to get rid of Elli. We should have put more thought into the dog we chose.

We got Elli when I was 14 & didn't want a dog most definitely not a pitbull. My Mom has always been a dog person. She's had dogs ever since she was a baby living in Sierra Vista, Arizona where dogs are very common. My Mom wanted a new dog.

I didn't end up choosing what dog we would want even though we would all live with it. I was at my dad's house when I got the news we had a new dog. I was mad & worried because we already had a small dog Daisy, and I was worried for her after getting a fucking pitbull. After we got Elli, her & Daisy would constantly fight. Sometimes violently. After 2 months of non-stop fighting it happened.

I was in my room smoking a blunt & my Mom & her friends were drinking & watching TV, then I heard it. Daisy was crying worse than I've ever heard before. It broke my heart when I had heard what happened. Elli had bit Daisy by the neck & tried to kill her. She threw Daisy around like a toy. I blamed my stepdad for getting that bitch ass dog & they even wanted to get rid of Daisy after the incident. I fought my stepdad & we got rid of Elli for good.



there I was standing with my sister and the home girl walking out side the house because we were waiting on my dad to get back because we had to go to my sister's birthday so while we were waiting for my dad and then out of nowhere a bunch of cops come out of nowhere like I'm talking like 8 cop cars and one SWAT car and they tell us to get down on our stomachs and hands on our heads and cross our legs and don't move so while we are laying there they run up to us and handcuff us and then taking us one by one they took my sister first and then her friend and then they took me last.

As they taking me and my sister in the car they let her friend go so while they searching the house me and my sister is in the cop car but different cars so we waiting in the car for 2 hrs they come back and they say your ready and I say for? he says to go to jail and then I go quiet and then they take me to the police station while my sister is in the other cop car.

So I'ma tell you how it ends so we waiting in the car for another 2 hrs and then they put my sister in the same car as me and then the two cops get in the car and we leave the police station heading to JHC and then they have us in the holding cell and then they book us in and then that was the last time I saw my sister. ON 06/9.

It was like impossible that they would take me to don't do stuff

All started MAY 31ST 107 the day I was born and I would say I had a good childhood and by that I mean I never miss a meal. But I did have to go through something that made me grow up faster then I did by that in saying my life still was much faster then my age. 2019 my dad past away and that's when my life kinda went down hill my family started to show their true colors to me and my mom and to top it off my middle brother was in prison at the time and my oldest brother had two kids to worry about and had to explain where their grandpa went and why grandma is crying as well as everyone around them and me only being 22-23 years old staying strong or mom's trying not to break down in front of her because someone has to stay strong for her. Then not that long after my dad father gets out of prison keep in mind he knew me when I was baby and got locked up when I



beat him But shortly after he got  
no drugs and started fucking up  
w/ being on a sick on all day  
and doing stupid shit and got  
older brother and mixio carla  
punch up with a gun And if I didn't  
say it already I lived in Redondo,  
and it's to say the least it's not such  
a go by the book type place you  
know so back to the story all got  
them got busted for a strap and  
because we wanted to get my brother  
out first he got on but hurt then  
then the other two got out and  
unt's (my god father) is on but hurt  
and still on a sick one and told  
he fucking balls to threaten me  
and my mom telling us to "Get  
the fuck out of here you got 2  
weeks or I'll kill you both" and  
let's telling us we have to leave the  
same house my mom and dad built  
from the ground up with their bare  
hands with blood, sweat and tears  
and now we have to leave our  
own home because some smacked  
out mother fucker just feels

2 weeks to get out of the house now my  
mom is stressing about where we are  
going to go live and we ended up coming to  
live over here in San Diego with my grandma  
and everything was going good until I  
started being around Gang members and  
started to like the lifestyle of Gangbanging  
and I was slowly following in my brother's  
foot steps I started wearing baggy pants,  
big long socks blue mags and all that  
other shit I started pushing the east then  
after a while I got jumped in to the  
urf. I was part of the family now  
these are the people I was going to  
sleep, eat, stick it through with where  
there's no where to go at night  
these are the people I'm going to spend the  
rest of my life with. Now I'm  
outside with the homies everyday just  
being dumb or you can say I was being  
active" But doing all that shit being  
burnt out just being dumb and then  
that's when I got caught up for a  
shootin with the homie in Sep/22  
and did nine to ten months  
because I beat up the and got a 250  
I.C got out Jun/23/23 and now



My life in prison so now I'm in here  
doing my best to stay in Juv. But  
I'm in here helping other kids out  
in here when they are having bad  
days or about to fight and mess up  
the program in the unit or mess up what  
ever they get going on with there  
stuff so I guess I'm kinda like a  
mentor for some of the kids in  
here so I just be trying help some  
of that need help or at least want  
+ so long story short this is my  
life story.

It's always best to expect the unexpected.  
I was at school, the place I least expected to  
get arrested. That goes to show anything and  
everything can happen at any place or time.

My day started just like every other I wake  
up get ready for school and went to my classes.  
Until about ten minutes into my second period  
class security came in my class to escort  
me to the office to with my belongings, which  
made me think it was going to be a simple search.

Up until when I was told to enter a conference  
classroom which two cops were inside and immedi-  
ately I was told I was being placed under arrest,  
and they took me to the station where I  
was taken to YTC after a couple hours of being  
at the station. Then less than 24 hours later  
I was taken to East Mesa.

My expectations for East Mesa were bad  
I thought life was going to be tougher  
than what it was, like more fakes and jumps.  
But I realized life here isn't so bad. The  
lesson I learned from this situation is to  
always expect the unexpected.

9-12-24

One day there was this kid that just wanted some friends or family as he grew up he found that but not with the best people, so he started doing things to stand out from the crowd & little by little he got what he wanted, got into situation where things couldn't go really bad but to him it was all worth it like one time someone ask him where he was from & with his chest out said his varrio then the guy pulled out a gun and shot him and his homie, his mom had hurt before since he was in and out of jail and started getting gang tattos but when she walked into that hospital room & seeing her son shot destroyed her, but you know theres no going back for this kid a week or two later he was back out with his crowd and got back locked up again for six months and caught another charge for fighting in jail. He got out, doing pretty "good" or atleast on paper until one day he ran into someone then he went back to jail but this time probation wants to send him to adult & he tries to do good but sometimes he has to do what he has to do he doesnt want his family to hurt but the gang and family is all he has.

~~XXXXXX~~  
I Never Thout I'll be in juvenile hall  
I made a lot of mistakes in my life  
this is my most one never coming back  
it's boring cuz have have to be in my  
room most of the time. I have  
to take a 7m shower and I  
don't like taking 7m showers  
I like to take my time.  
I got here cuz I rob a person  
at a trolley stop and then I  
let and want some were  
as and then the cops  
came to get us then they  
take us to downtown and  
put us in to a room.

This experience is that I  
don't want to be here.

I was at home with my cousin  
and we want to go to the store  
and get some spray paint.  
and then we got to the trolley  
stop and see 2 homes  
and were all just kick it.  
there and then the kid  
comes and trying to sell stuff  
so we just rob him and  
then the cop caught us  
and then take us to down  
town.



I was running from the scene as the security mall was following me in his car while on the phone with 911. I tried hiding under a car. Minutes pass as I try to make a run for it... the car sees me again and a minute later 3 cop cars pull up on me. One of the cops pull his gun out and says "Get to the ground or we will shoot, while the other searched me, as I get arrested and thrown in the car. At this time I learn to not make a decision without thinking it through first. I had woke up and got on my phone to see what was the deal today. The homies hit up the groupchat to hit the mall. I had said I was trying to go, so the homie told us to get ready because his dad was going to pick us up. As we got picked up we were deciding to go to two malls, first we went to the closer one as we arrived. We had entered the mall with masks we headed straight to the store and got what we needed they were already on to us as we seen undercover. We had left the store and that's when it went downhill. The undercover pull up from different direction and try to grab me so I illegally pulled a shark to defend myself because I wasn't thinking so one got scared but then I dropped the stuff and fled, all this allegedly. All this had led to me juvenile hall where I went to Kearney mesa/YTC first where I was at for a week then came to East Mesa Juvenile Detention facility and been in total almost 2 months waiting to get sentenced. At this time I learned to not make a decision without thinking it through first.

The day of my arrest I woke up to my brother telling me to "get up the cops are here." I was so tired I thought I was dreaming & fell back to sleep. I woke back up to my name being called on the megaphone "Jordan Fold come out with your hands up - we have a warrant for your arrest." I instantly got up & got dressed & yelled out that I was coming out. I then grabbed everything I had that could get me even more in trouble & hid it. I then walked out my house. I was told to keep my hands up & turn around & walk backwards into the street all while I was at gun-point & multiple K-9 units barking at me. I was told to drop to my knees cross my legs & to lie on my stomach. I was then held down & cuffed. The officer's picked me up & walked me to a Squad car. While I was in the Squad car I looked out the window & saw my whole family on a side walk curb in hand cuffs. The officer took me out of the car & placed me in another Squad car with my co-defendant & drove away. I chose to write about this event because my actions didn't just affect me it affected my family. In conclusion the reason this event is important is because it is reason I am incarcerated & away from my family.



I was in the car with the homies  
trupper near my moms pool on  
February 2nd 2020. We heard the sound  
of a helicopter then seen one 30 seconds  
later. My mind starts to panic knowing  
what I did was going to get me locked  
up. I was up to no good that night when I  
could've been home that night with my  
family doing the right thing.  
My day started just as any other gangbanger,  
hitting up the homies seeing what's gonna go  
down tonight. As soon as I knew what  
was up, I took a shower and changed.  
30 minutes later come by and here I am  
in the car with my homies ~~from~~ from  
my head, patrolling up to no good. I needed  
money or fear as the homies say maybe  
I could come up on it knowing we  
had a gun to our advantage.  
Moral of the story I was in the wrong  
doing the wrong. I ended up in  
Juvenile detention for a couple  
weeks writing letters.

I event that changed my LIFE was moving  
to America from Japan. For me coming to  
U.S was a huge impact in my life because  
I didn't know anything, like I didn't even know how  
to say Hi in English and also huge difference on  
life style like school is so different, in Japan you never  
use computer for school work but here in U.S you do.  
Also the food I eat in here and Japan is different.  
In Japan You eat healthy but here it's normal to  
eat fast food.

## Personal Narrative

When I was 14 the summer of my freshmen year  
my father took my sister and I to Cancun in Mexico.  
We had to drive to the Tijuana airport to fly there  
and we stayed for a week. It was a all expenses  
paid trip, so free room service and almost everything in  
the resort was free, the only thing we paid for was  
tips for the workers. I would order almost everything  
on the menu and only had to give a couple dollars  
for the person delivering it. We went to one of the  
beaches and the water was so clear even neck deep  
into the water I could see the bottom of the pool.  
Also, we went to a new restaurant almost every night  
and those were free of charge as well. Then, we went  
into this jungle where we ziplined all through the trees  
and forest which was very exciting. It was one of the  
best times of my life and I hope one day to experience  
something like that again.

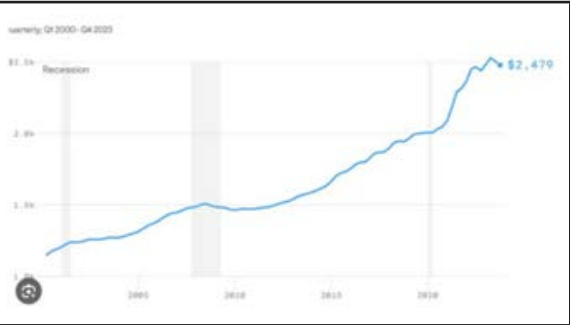
SOUTH REGION

VICTORIA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

NEED FOR HOUSING

By Jerson B.

**INEQUALITY:** What is the inequality you are focused on The inequality that I am focusing on the price of housing is getting higher. This data and issue is interesting because I don't want people I know to be homeless including myself. I wanted to explore more about this inequality, so I did my research and made a presentation.



**OBSERVATIONS AND DATA:** From the graph I notice rent prices have doubled According to the rent prices skyrocketed during quarantine The data points that stands out the most most people pay 2,479

Data could represent that most homeless people don't have houses because of inflation This matters because vast majority of the population is homeless This connects to our community because it shows how some people lose their housing because of high prices

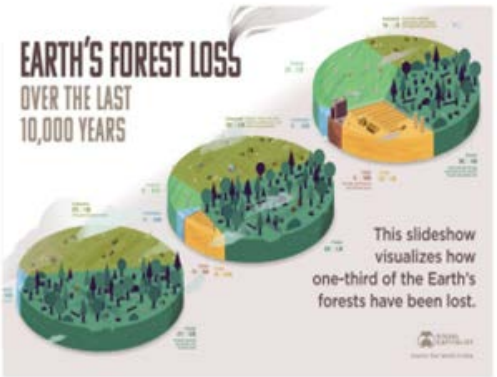
**METACOGNITION:** My Thinking about the inequality Researching helped my thinking because I had more information to work with. I wonder if inflation is gonna keep rising or lower. My next step is to add more information and photos. My thinking has changed because I used to think that homeless people mostly use drugs but they are only homeless because they had inflation.

NEEDED FOR TREES

By Jose M.

**INEQUALITY:** What is the inequality you are focused on? San Diego needs more trees. The inequality that I am focusing on is that we need more trees in San Diego. This data and issue is interesting because we can have more trees and air. I wanted to explore more about this inequality, so I did my research and made a presentation

Percentage of Habitable Land	1700	1800	1900	1950	2018
Forest	52%	50%	48%	44%	38%
Grassland	38%	36%	27%	12%	14%
Grazing	0%	9%	16%	31%	31%
Crops	3%	4%	8%	12%	15%
Freshwater	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Urban	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%



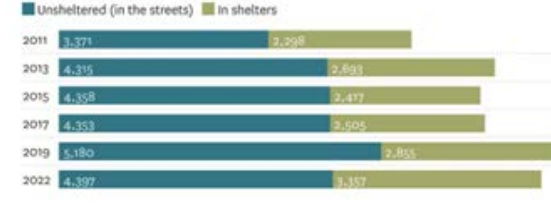
**OBSERVATIONS AND DATA:** From the graph I notice over the years we are losing trees. According to the data there are only 1/3 of trees on the earth remaining. The data points that stand out the most are 1/3 of forests have been lost.

Data could represent people using forests and that's why we are losing trees. This matters because trees make cooler temperatures and improve mental health. This connects to my community Due to the negative impact that eucalyptus trees have had on San Diego, efforts have been made to manage their population and re-establish native oak trees. Many projects are underway to remove tens of thousands of eucalyptus trees, as well as other non-native trees, to reduce the risk of wildfires

**METACOGNITION:** Researching helped me find out that trees help out with that trees help out with people's health and out it helps out so many things in life. I wonder if there will be more trees in San Diego. My next steps will be to tell people that in San Diego we need more trees and to find a solution to make more trees. My thinking has changed about trees because now I know why trees help out people with their health and how it helps the environment.

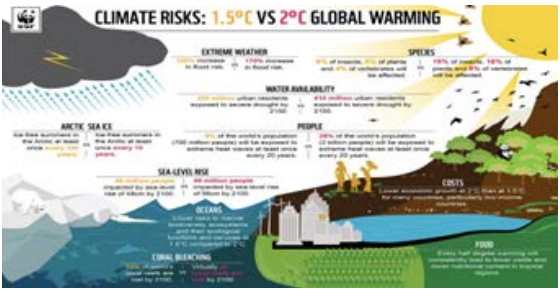
HOMELESSNESS AND JOBS

By Jesus M.

<p><b>INEQUALITY:</b> What is the inequality you are focused on? The inequality that I am focusing on is homelessness in the city of San Francisco. This data and issue is interesting because many people take having a roof over their heads for granted . I wanted to explore more about this inequality, so I did my research and made a presentation</p>	<p><b>People experiencing homelessness in San Francisco</b> Estimates from point-in-time counts</p>  <table><tr><th>Year</th><th>Unsheltered (in the streets)</th><th>In shelters</th></tr><tr><td>2011</td><td>3,371</td><td>2,298</td></tr><tr><td>2013</td><td>4,316</td><td>2,893</td></tr><tr><td>2015</td><td>4,358</td><td>2,417</td></tr><tr><td>2017</td><td>4,353</td><td>2,505</td></tr><tr><td>2019</td><td>5,180</td><td>2,855</td></tr><tr><td>2022</td><td>4,397</td><td>3,157</td></tr></table>	Year	Unsheltered (in the streets)	In shelters	2011	3,371	2,298	2013	4,316	2,893	2015	4,358	2,417	2017	4,353	2,505	2019	5,180	2,855	2022	4,397	3,157
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<p><b>OBSERVATIONS AND DATA:</b> From the graph I notice the different amounts of homeless people sheltered and unsheltered. According to the graph , both amounts of data show homelessness , the difference is those who are in shelters and those who are on the streets. The data point that stands out the most is the greater number of unsheltered homeless people. This contamination could mean mental stress for the homeless which could lead to drug addictions , poverty , violence etc. This matters because this could mean it won't only have an effect on themselves , but on the public as well .</p>	<p><b>METACOGNITION:</b> My Thinking about the inequality choose 3 Researching helped my thinking because I always wondered how many homeless people there actually were in San Francisco. I was born near San Francisco , so seeing homeless people in San Diego would make me think about the place I was born. I wonder if this will continue to be a problem in the future with all out technological advancements. My next steps are helping homeless people as much as I can , I always attempt to assist them in any way they need.</p>																					

CLIMATE CHANGE

By Donzell C.

<p><b>INEQUALITY:</b> What is the inequality you are focused on? The inequality that I am focusing on is Our world Climate change This data and issue is interesting because it shows you what is going on with the weather and what to expect. I wanted to explore more about this inequality, so I did my research and made a presentation</p>	
<p><b>OBSERVATIONS AND DATA:</b> From the graph I notice 170% increase in flood risk According to the data the hotter the world gets the more the flood risk increase The data points that stands out the most that 410 million urban residents exposed to severe drought by 2100. This could mean the end of earth. Data could represent why the world is falling apart. This matters because the weather revolves around us so people,plants,animals,insects can die if they don't adapt to the weather. This connects to the flood risk increasing over 2100.</p>	<p><b>METACOGNITION:</b> My Thinking about the inequality - Choose 3 to complete Researching helped my thinking because I I wonder if we can stop the weather from changing so much in a short period of time My next steps see what's the reason of climate change My thinking has changed because of my research and from learning climate change</p>



## AIR POLLUTION

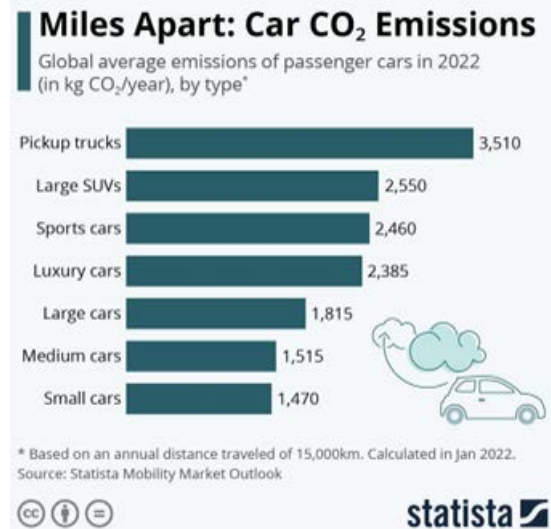
By Gael M.

**INEQUALITY:** The issues and social change that I am focusing is car pollution because the

The government isn't keeping us protected.

This data and issue is important, but most people want to buy fast cars, big trucks, and luxury cars even though they pollute the most.

I wanted to explore more about this issue, so I would share this with others to show them how important this is, and what the government can do



**OBSERVATIONS AND DATA:** The properties of this graph are: car emissions, the type of cars And how much they pollute.

From the graph I notice that big trucks pollute the most, According to the chart small cars are better for the environment .The data points that stands out the most are that the most expensive cars pollute the most.

**MAKING SENSE OF DATA/INFORMATION:** I think it is an important issue because we inhale the emissions everyday and it is not good for our health.

My hypothesis is to make better electric cars, safer electric cars, and more charging stations.

The data graph shows that cars cause harmful air pollutants. Based on evidence the government should encourage cleaner vehicles, and develop clean energy.

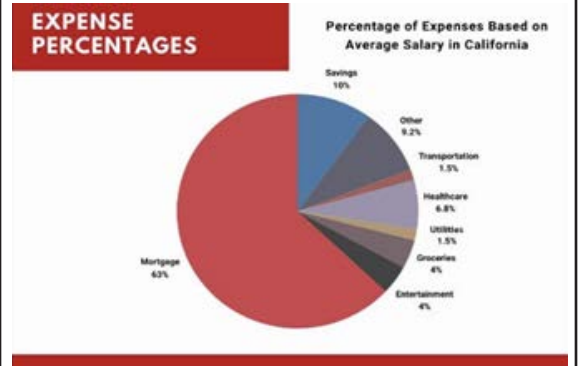
**METACOGNITION:** Researching helped my thinking because I didn't know how much we pollute with vehicles. I wonder if people know about how much we pollute day to day by

using vehicles that cause a lot of emissions. My thinking has changed since I thought about getting cars that were fast or getting a big truck but now I'm thinking of the consequences because what if pollutants get worse in the future.

## BASIC NEEDS INFLATION

*By Jakob S.*

**INEQUALITY:** The inequality that I am focusing on the cost of basic needs inflation. This data and issue is interesting, because in my future I don't want to pay lots of money. I wanted to explore more about this inequality, so I did my research and made a presentation.



**OBSERVATIONS AND DATA:** From the graph I notice 63% of people spend their earnings on homes then other things. According to the graph people only save 10% on their savings

The data point that stands out the most is the mortgage because it has more percentage. This data could mean based on the cost of housing people can become homeless easier. This matters because it's hard to earn money, and finding work can cause mental health issues.

This connects to our community San Diego County is more than 134,500 homes short for low-income renters. There has been a 13% decrease from the last year in state and federal funding for housing production and preservation. For people experiencing homelessness in San Diego, there are 800 fewer beds available than there were just a year ago.

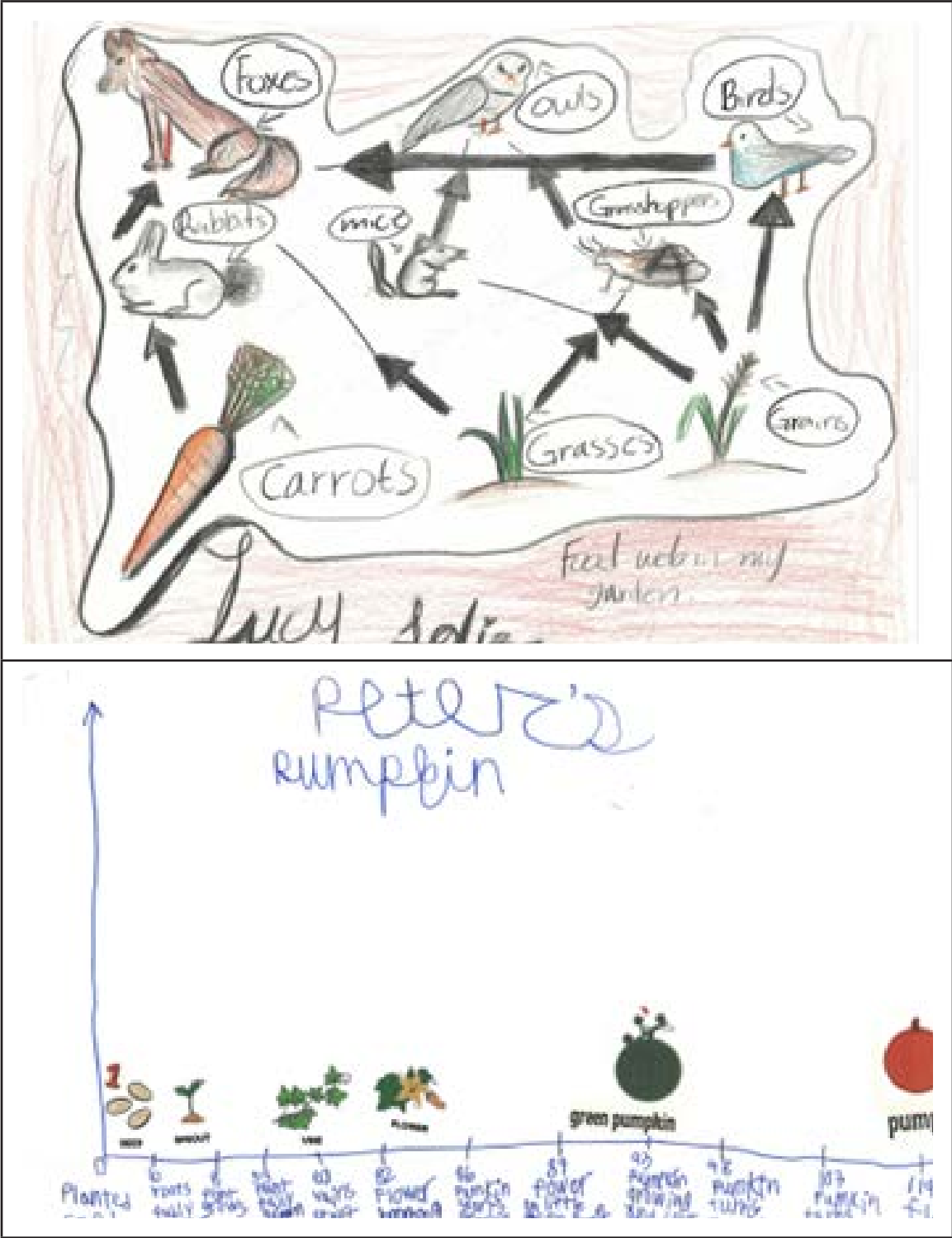
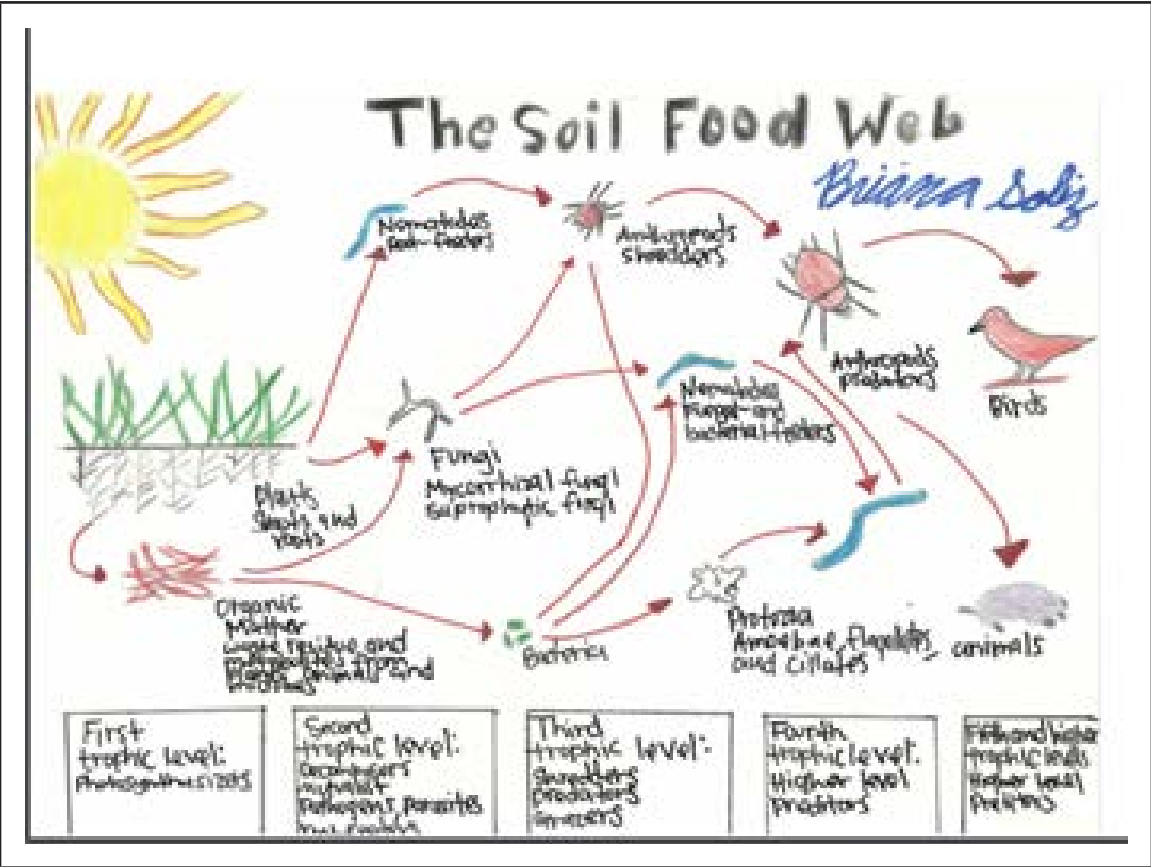
**METACOGNITION:** Researching helped my thinking because getting a good job to afford a

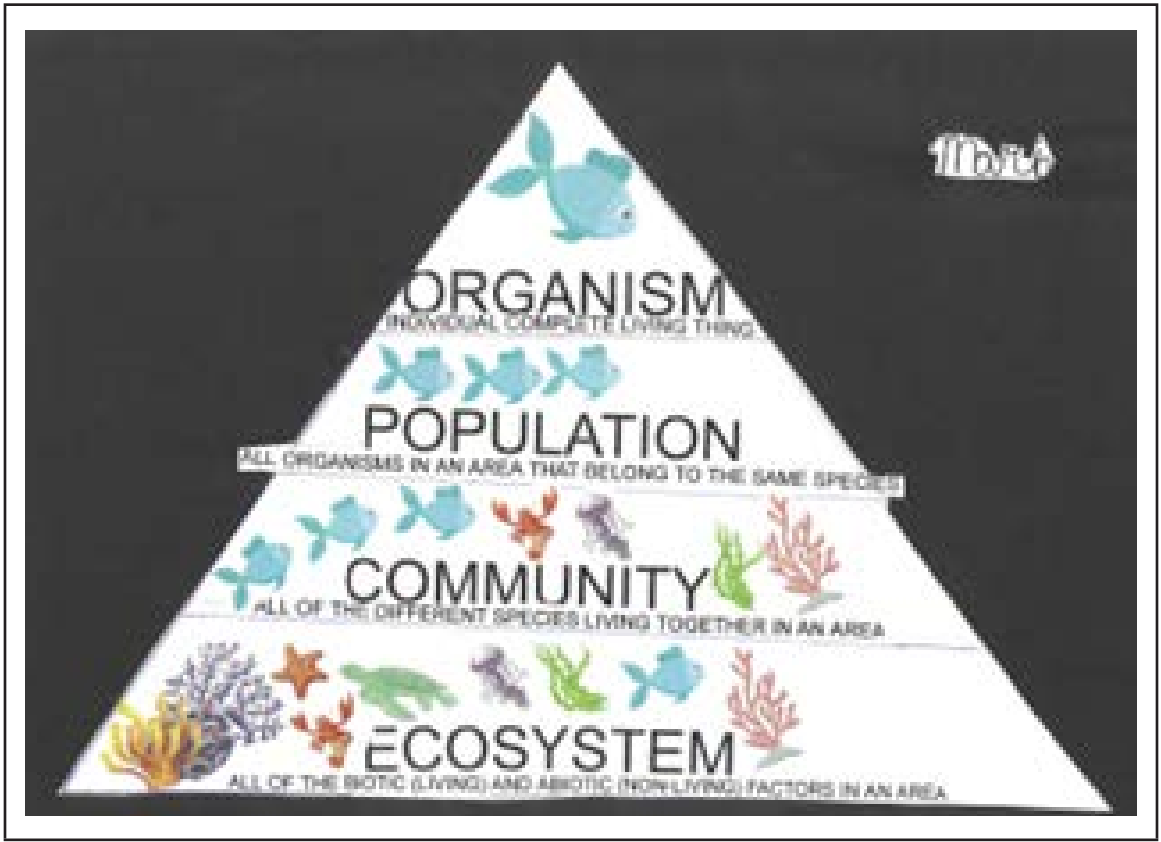
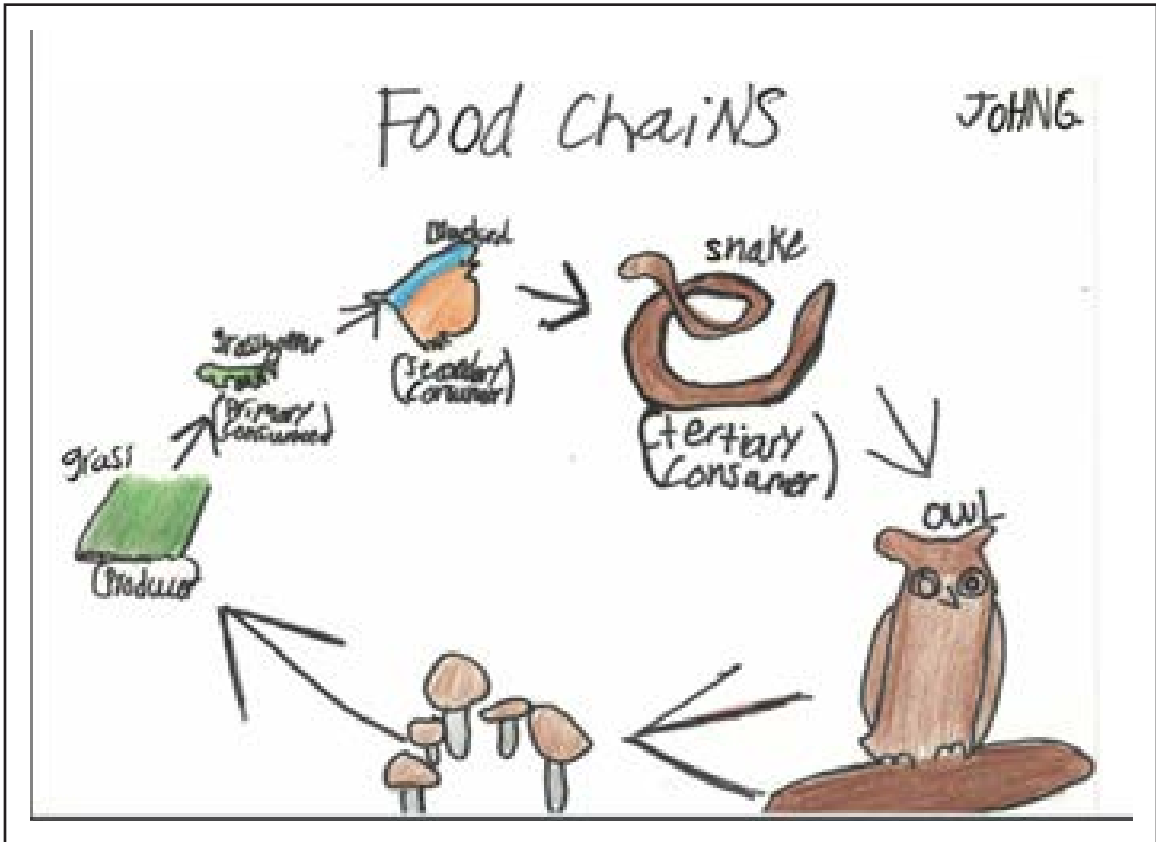
a nice house and to also afford food and clothes would be what I want. I wonder if how many people became homeless from house inflation in

San diego. My next steps are try to help people who have no homes

INNOVATIONS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

SCIENCE DATA STORIES

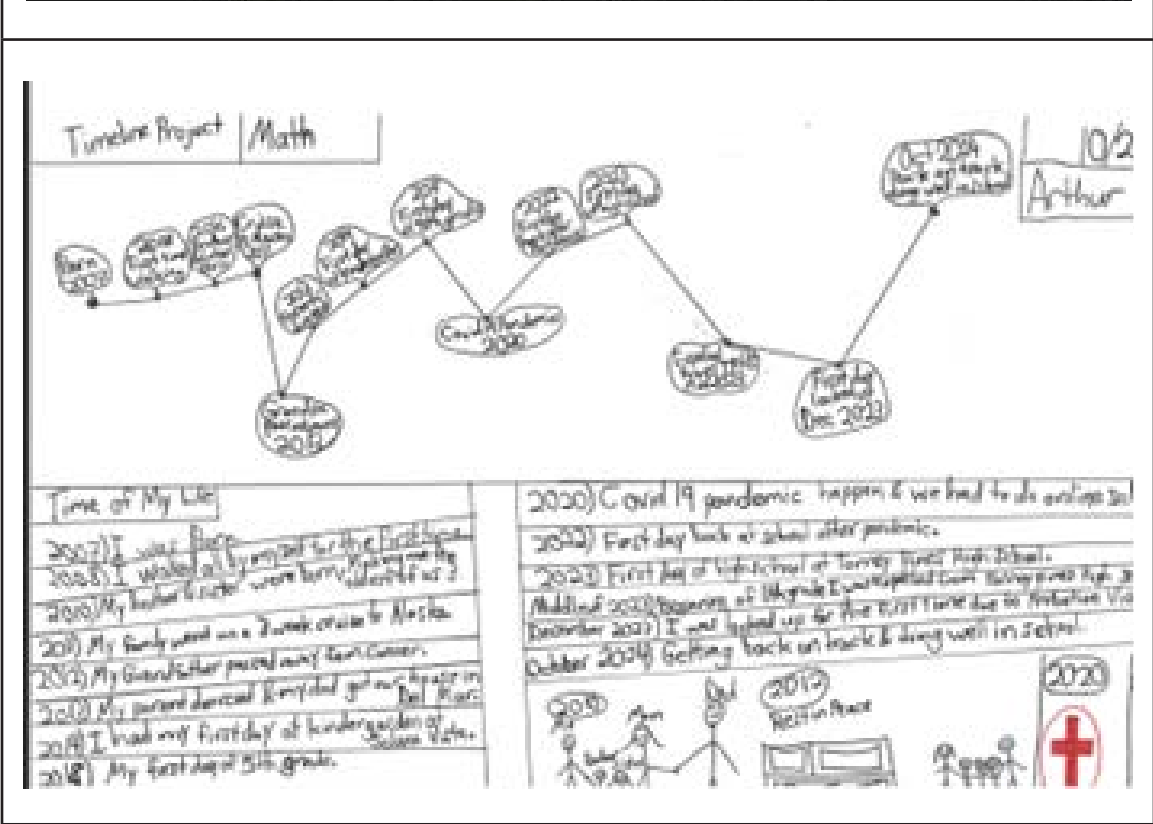
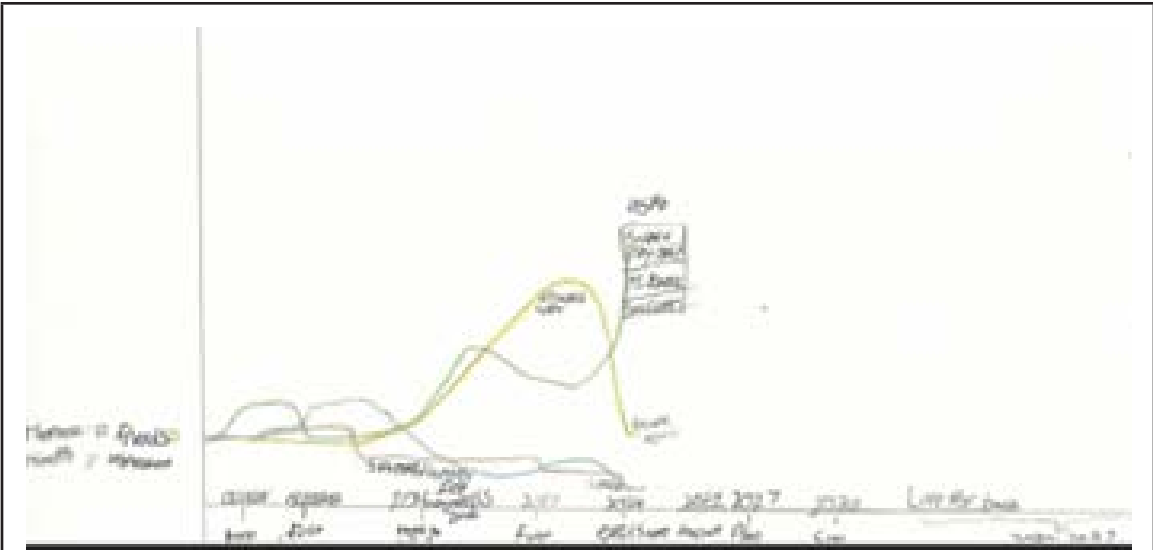
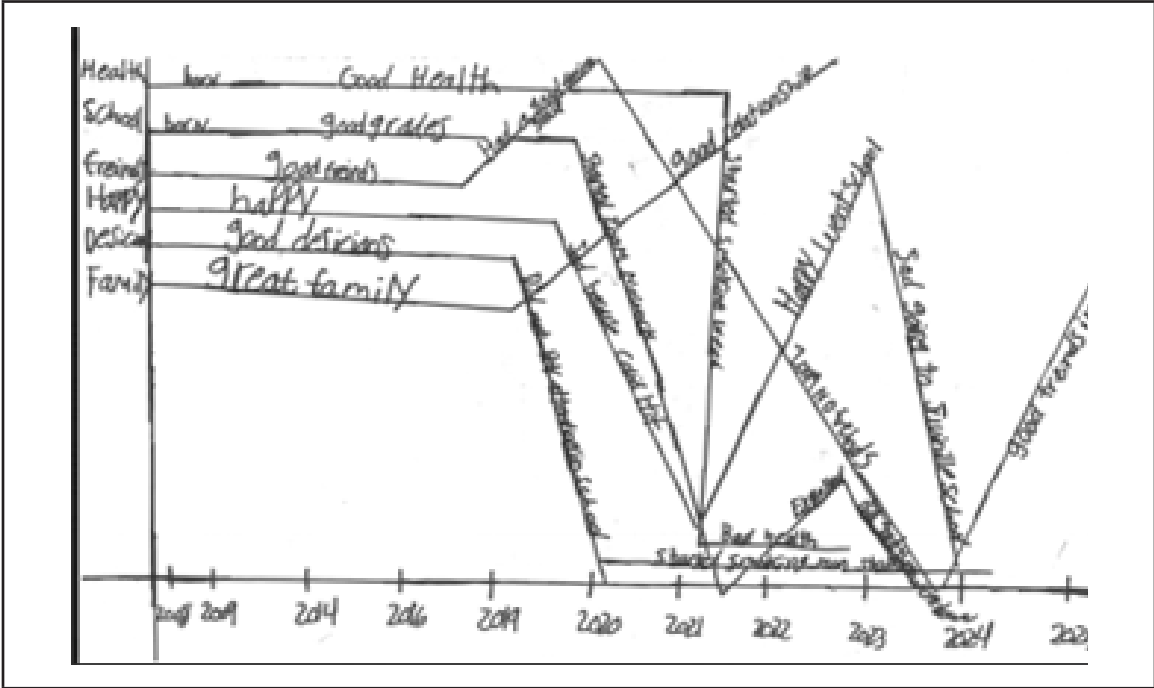
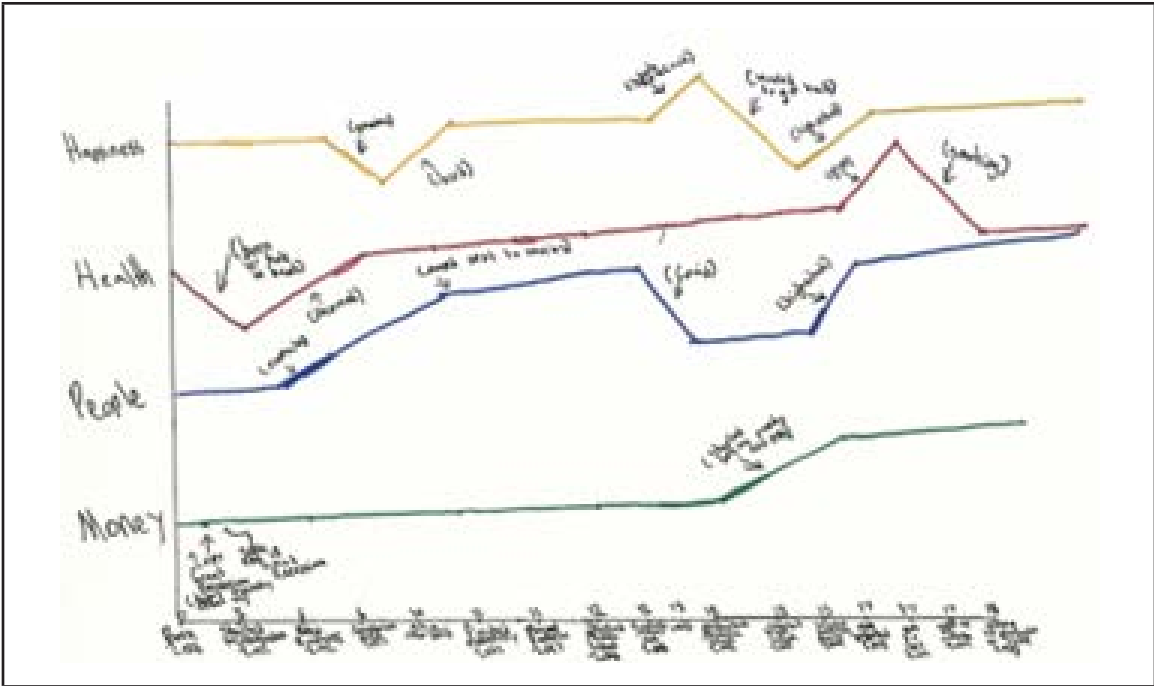












NORTH COUNTY TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY  
(NCTA)

NETFLIX DATA STORY by Rudy

LULULEMON DATA STORY by Ulisses

Arthur D.

10/28/24

Timeline

Topics

Life on a timeline

Date or Event	Description
2007	Born
2008	Walking for first time
2010	Brother & sister born
2011	Cruise to Alaska
2011	Cruise to Alaska
2012	Grandpa passed away
2013	Parents divorced
2014	First day of kindergarten
2018	First day of 5th grade
2020	Covid 19 Pandemic
2022	First day back after pandemic
2023	First day of high school
Almost end of 2023	Expelled from Torrey Pines High school
Very End of 2023	First time incarcerated
Oct 2024	Back on track & at school

© Freetology.com

LEVI STRAUSS

1892-1929

1929-1943

1943-1949

1949-1954

Levi Strauss operates worldwide. It has the most retail stores in the Americas followed by Asia and Europe.

Total number of Levi Strauss company-operated retail stores worldwide as of 2023, by geographical region

The company Levi Strauss makes 16.3 million a year.

The 1906 San Francisco earthquake and subsequent fires destroyed Levi Strauss & Co.'s headquarters and two factories.

Levi Strauss was founded in May 1863 when German Levi Strauss moved to San Francisco and the company first started as a dry goods company

lululemon

I INVESTED \$14,541 IN LULULEMON AND BOUGHT 54.88 SHARES

Where did Lululemon start?

First Product

Lululemon started off as a design studio in the day time and at night time a yoga studio in 1998.

Lululemon's first product was little black stretchy pants that was made with a unique technical fabric that felt like cotton but is squat proof and durable.

Lululemon Economics

Lululemon Revenue

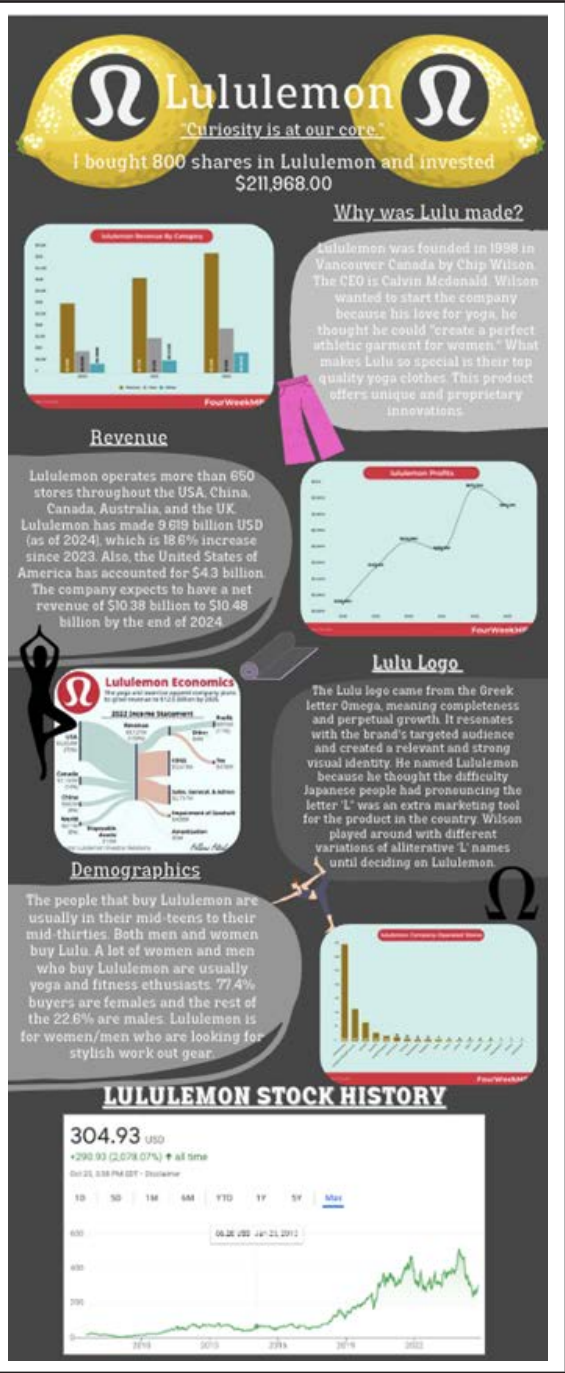
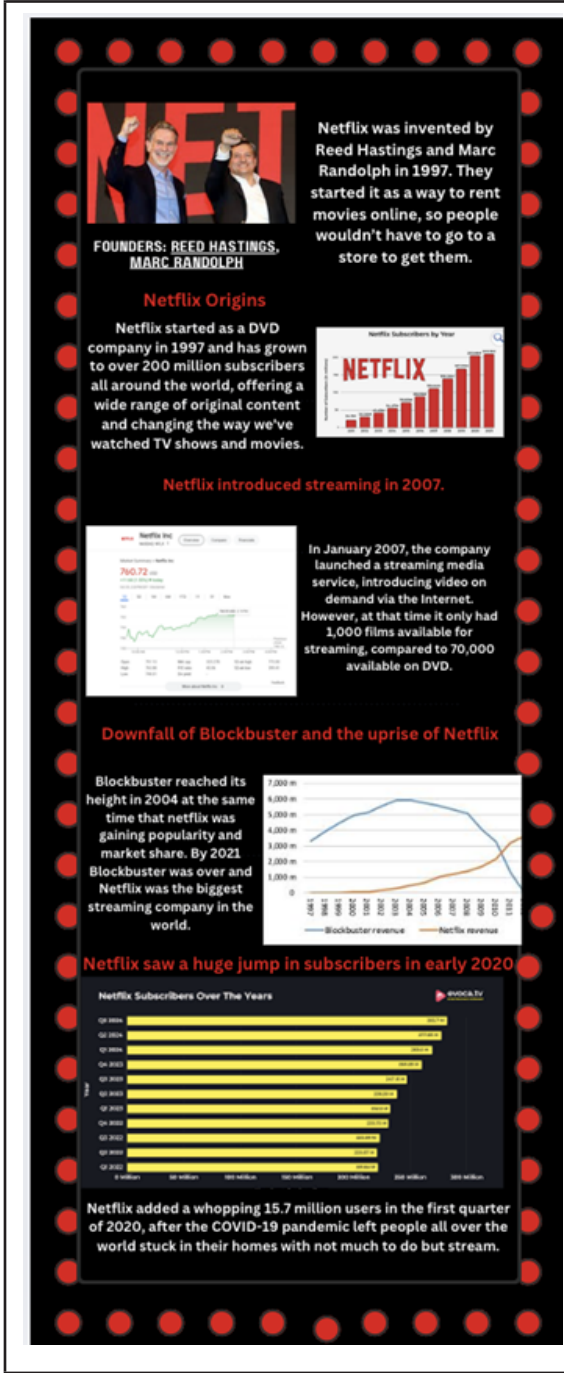
Lululemon Has Built An Athleisure Empire

Lululemon's Stock History

Lululemon Stores Worldwide

Lululemon has 711 stores open worldwide







# LEVI STRAUSS

Levi Strauss the owner never wore his own jeans because it was meant for apparel and for cowboys and miners.

Levi's pants didn't have back pockets until 1901.

Levi Strauss opened a whole sale dry goods in San Francisco in 1853.

Levi Strauss is known for his blue denim jeans.

Levi Strauss gave a lot of his money to charity to help out poor people and orphans.

Levi Strauss got his fortune during the gold rush, he went to San Francisco to sell dry goods but then switch to pants for miners.

Levi Strauss is still considered a symbol of american fashion.

Levi Strauss was never married and left his business to his nephews.

His birth name was Loeb but he went by Levi.

Levi Strauss & Co. is one of the world's largest apparel companies and a global leader in jeans.




# Mercedes Benz

Mercedes-Benz

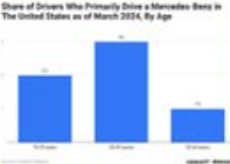
## Company Logo Evolution

Mercedes company logo has evolved a lot through out the years since 1902-2011. The Three points of the star represent land, Sea, and Air, which are the areas that the company's engines were designed to power.




## Who drives Mercedes Benz?

Most Mercedes Benz drivers are 33-45 years old. Mercedes-Benz is a truly global brand, with production facilities and dealerships in countries world wide. The brand is in over 200 countries and sells over two million cars annually.



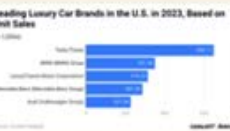
## Mercedes Benz Car Evolution

From starting off with a Daimler motor car candle lamp in 1886, to a MULTIBEAM LED with 18 individually controlled high performance in 2018, Mercedes has evolved a lot from also originally being an independent firm to becoming an official division of the company.




## Why its one of the best Luxury car brands


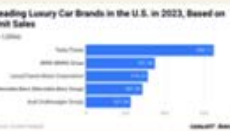



Mercedes Benz cars are designed with the latest technology, highest quality material, and exceptional craftsmanship. Because of the great detail of the Mercedes Benz cars it is the best luxury car brand.



## Mercedes-Benz interior design

Here is an example of the interior of a Mercedes Benz. You can change the interior lighting to your liking and has a luxury feel

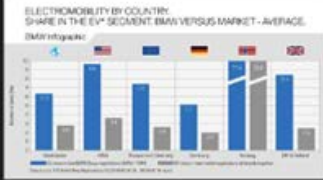




# BMW


DOMINANT COMPANY

This data shows how BMW's electric vehicles are dominating sales worldwide. The United States owns a lot of these luxury German cars the public loves them BMW has large sales all over Europe as well. This is just due to the success of the company to people and the many cars they make like BMW's best selling car of all time is the 3 series. The 3 series was born in 1976 and the 7th generation 3 series was launched in 2014.



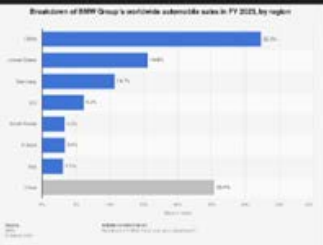
## BRIEF HISTORY OF BMW

BMW logos showing the evolution and journey that came with this company. BMW was founded in 1916 in Munich, Germany started off making aircraft engines now a leading car company globally. BMW stands for Bayerische Motoren-Werke which in English translates to Bavarian Motor Works. BMW originally built plane engines. BMW together with Junkers Flugzeugwerke AG have built the first plane in history that was powered by a gas turbine. Weirly the Treaty of Versailles was responsible for BMW manufacturing cars. BMW once produced aircraft engines for the Germans in WW1 due to a shortage.




## BMW AUTOMOBILE SALES


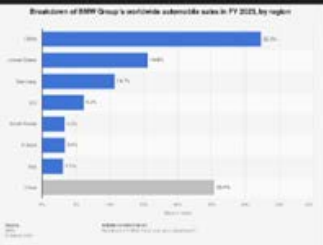

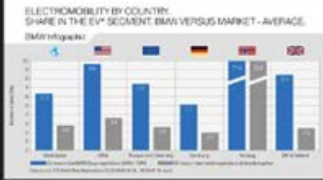

According to Statista, China is the top consumer when it comes to buying BMW's as of 2023. Even though Germany is the one that made BMW it seems to be more popular in nations like China and the US.



## THE EVOLUTION OF BMW MOTORCYCLES

BMW manufactured the world's fastest motorcycle. In 1937, BMW built a motorcycle with a superhuman engine. Designed to be extremely aerodynamic, the motorcycle reached speeds of 173.7 miles per hour. BMW continues to make top of the line bikes. The company set new records for sales in 2016.






# COSTCO

## HOW COSTCO MAKES MONEY

COSTCO MAKES MOST OF ITS PROFIT FROM MEMBERSHIP FEES


## COSTCO SHARES

I BOUGHT 800 SHARES OF COSTCO'S STOCK AT \$879.33 PER SHARE. I INVESTED \$703,464.00.



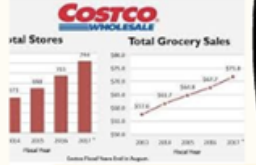
## COSTCO MEMBERSHIP

COSTCO HAD 132.0 MILLION MEMBERS AND 71 MILLION PAID MEMBERS AS OF 2024.




## GROWTH OF GROCERY SALES

FOR THE 52-WEEK FISCAL YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 1, 2024, THE COMPANY REPORTED NET SALES OF \$249.6 BILLION, AN INCREASE OF 5.0 PERCENT FROM \$237.7 BILLION REPORTED IN THE 53-WEEK FISCAL YEAR 2023.




## COSTCO'S GLOBAL PRESENT



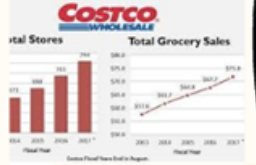




AS OF JULY 2024, COSTCO HAS 871 LOCATIONS WORLDWIDE, INCLUDING 600 IN THE UNITED STATES AND 271 ABROAD.

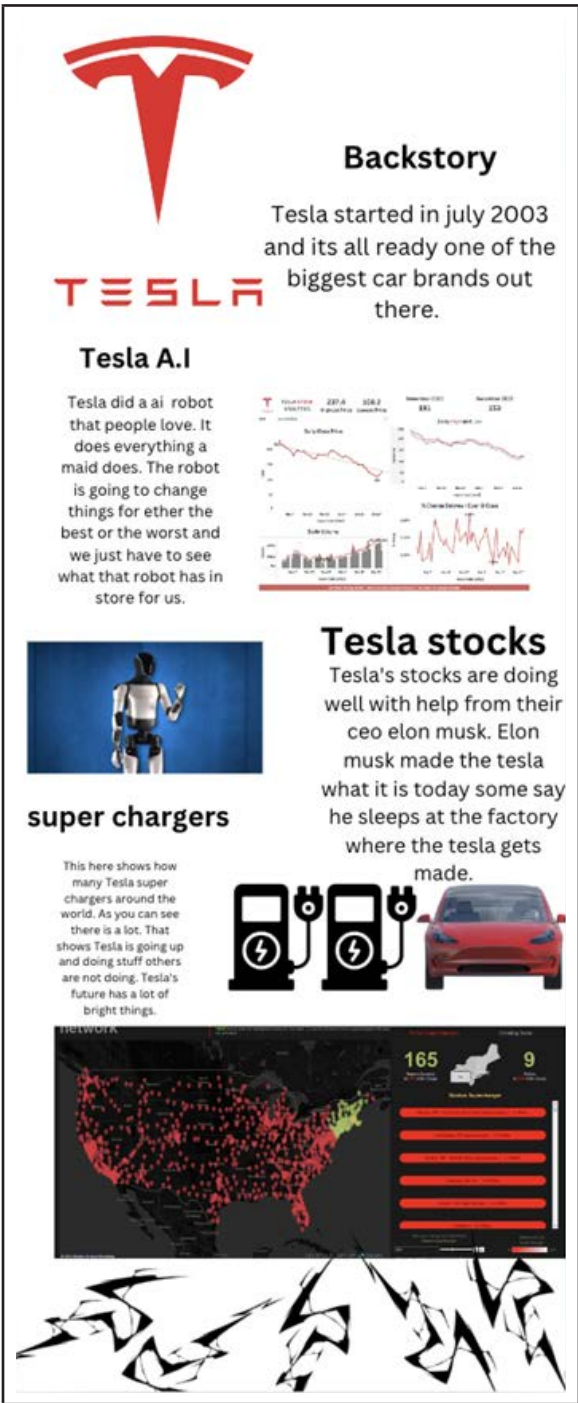


## TIME SPENT IN COSTCO

PEOPLE SPENT AN AVERAGE TIME OF 37.3 MINUTES IN COSTCO AS OF 2024, BEATING WAL-MART (31.8 MINUTES) AND TARGET (28.7 MINUTES).







CHEMISTRY CLASS DATA STORY

<p><b>History of Slime</b></p> <p>In 1976 the Mattel Toy company mixed guar gum (a kind of glue) with a chemical called sodium tetraborate and it made the crosslinking chemical reaction. Slime is a NON-NEWTONIAN FLUID. It acts like a solid and a liquid. If you hit it hard it will act like a sold and if you hold it softly it will ooze through your hands</p>	<p><b>Use and Benefits of Slime</b></p> <p>Slime actually has many uses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. It can be used for entertainment because kids can make many types with colors and adding glitter</li><li>2. It can used to calm people down by using their hands ands it feels good</li><li>3. It can be used to teach reading a recipe and instructions</li><li>4. It is good for therapy because it is hard to mess up and everybody's slime is different (unique</li><li>5. It can be used to clean dust off hard to reach places like computer keyboards</li></ol>
<p><b>Chemistry of Slime</b></p> <p>What chemicals make up slime? There is more than one method of making slime. You can use a lot of chemicals from the grocery store. Some ingredients can be substituted for the other one. You can use either Contact lens solution or you can use Borax mixed with water. Glue is necessary -It is a "poly vinyl alcohol which has the same chemical pieces in a long string.</p> <p>Anything with borate (Borax, Contact lens solution) makes the glue crosslink meaning they join together with flexibility. The amount of borax will affect how gooey (liquid) the slime is. We use baking soda to make the borax react better. We use shaving cream to make it fluffier.</p>	<p><b>Slime Experiment Design and Hypothesis</b></p> <p>When we normally make slime, we add different amounts of baking soda, glue, shaving cream and borax by feel.</p> <p>In this experiment we wanted to measure these amounts to be more scientific and to be precise with our recipes. To measure " gooeyness" we called it VISCOSITY. We held the slime in our hands with fingers separated and measured how far the slime fell in 10 seconds. We had to time it so we could isolate the variable for distance.</p>



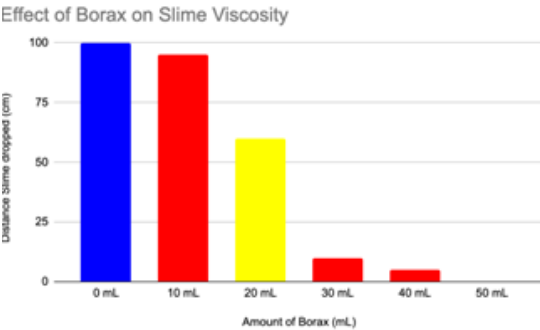
Design and Hypothesis

The variables we chose were the volume of contact lens solution added to the same amount of glue, baking soda and shaving cream.

Our Hypothesis was that the more borax solution we added would make the slime less gooey (Viscous). We made 6 bowls of:

- 100 ml Glue
- 10 ml baking soda
- 10 ml shaving cream

Graph of Data



Data

Amount Borax	Distance Fallen
Borax 0 mL	100 cm
Borax 10 mL	95 cm
Borax 20 mL	60 cm
Borax 30mL	10 cm
Borax 40 mL	5 cm
Borax 50 mL	0 cm

Results

The glue mixture with no borax fell straight down. A little bit of Borax still made it fall fast. When we added the 20 mL of borax it started to thicken up. Then the last 3 amounts made the slime too hard to fall.

Conclusion

It was interesting to see how increasing the amount of borax made it thicker really fast. This shows that the chemical reactions that make the crosslinking in the glue work fast, not a little at a time.

The slime felt the most fun to play with at 20 mL of borax

The errors involved were finding a way to measure the viscosity.





Soda	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Raspberry-Rose Soda	1	2	1	1	2	3	1
Cherry Cream Soda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pineapple Soda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Strawberry Soda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Apple Soda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Orange Cream Soda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lemon-Lime Soda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

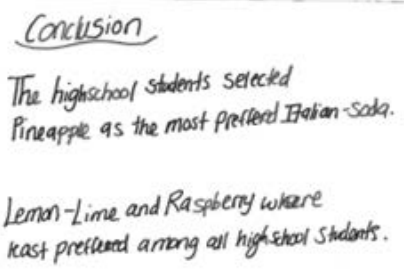
Observations

This beverage had a mostly low rating and was not favored by anyone. If everyone participated correctly the data would be different but some people answered with 0's or above the number 7.

Conclusion

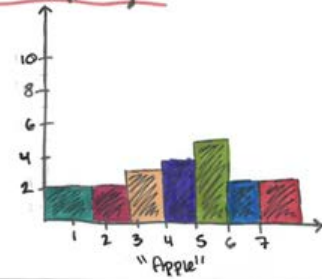
The highschool students selected Pineapple as the most preferred Italian Soda.

Lemon-Lime and Raspberry were least preferred among all high-school students.



This beverage had a mostly low rating and was not favored by anyone. If everyone participated correctly the data would be different but some people answered with 0's or above the number 7.

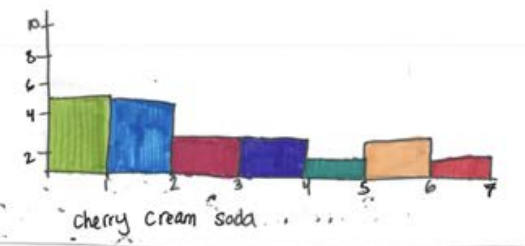
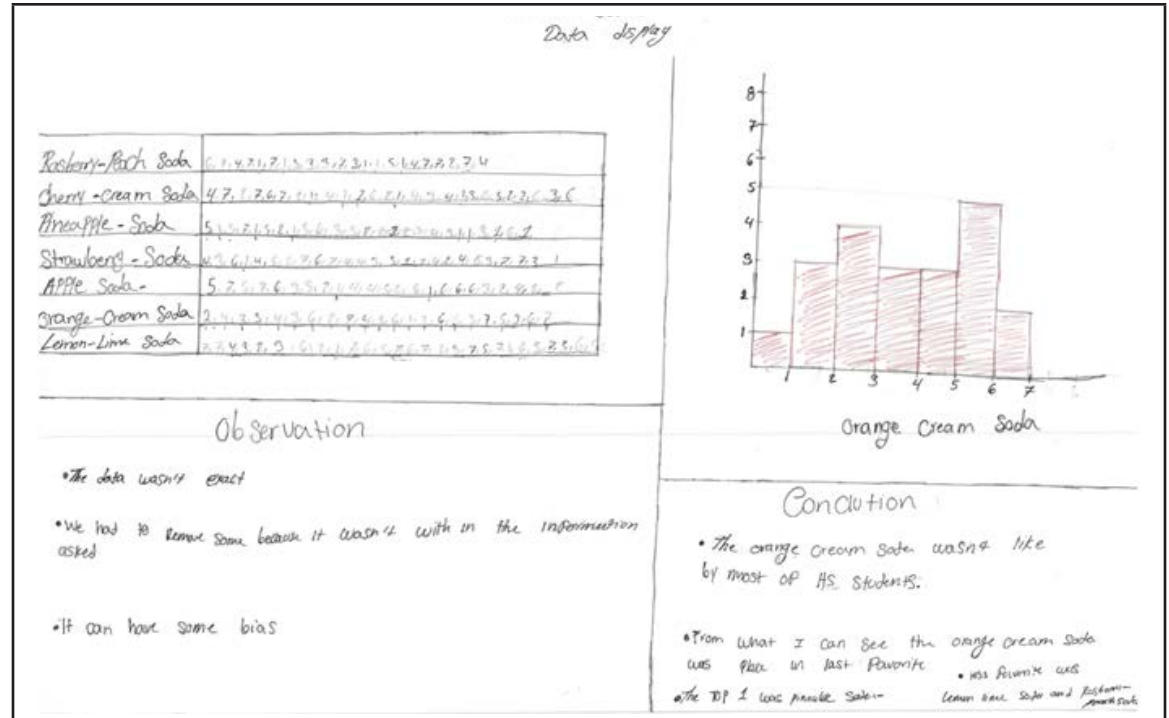
The highschool students selected Pineapple as the most preferred Italian Soda. Lemon-Lime and Raspberry were next preferred among all highschool students.



This flavor had a pretty even amount of votes for each number. Apple was not the most preferred but it also wasn't the most disliked.

The highschool students selected  
Pineapple as the most preferred  
Italian-soda

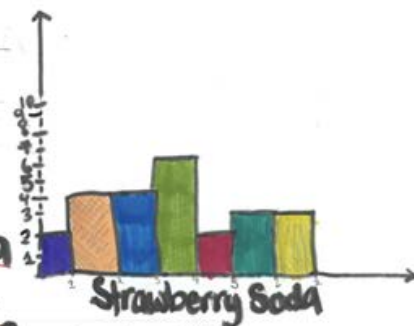
Lemon-lime and raspberry were  
least preferred among all  
high school students.



- H.S participated = 24
- There were some outliers. We removed them.
- For X and if not 1-7 then Remove or 0
- Flavor was not enjoyed as much.

- The H.S. students selected the pineapple soda as their favorite.
- They also selected lemon lime as their least liked.

Raspberry-Peach Soda 6,7,4,7,7,5,7,3,2,1,1,3,1,1,1,1,7,7,4  
 Cherry Cream Soda 7,7,2,7,6,7,1,1,1,4,6,7,2,4,1,1,3,5,2,2,2,6,3,2,6  
 Pineapple Soda 5,1,5,7,5,5,2,6,5,1,5,2,4,1,5,2,1,1,1,5,7,7,1  
 Strawberry Soda 4,3,6,6,1,4,2,5,1,6,7,5,4,7,4,2,4,4,3,7,2,3  
 Apple Soda 5,7,5,7,7,4,5,4,5,6,2,4,2,6,1,1,4  
 Orange Cream Soda 2,4,3,3,3,5,4,7,7,1,2,3,6,6,5,7,6,5,3,7,4,1,6,5,1  
 Lemonlime Soda 7,7,4,3,2,2,2,3,1,7,6,6,5,2,7,3,4,7,5,7,1,6,5,1,1,5



## \* Italian Soda Data Display \*

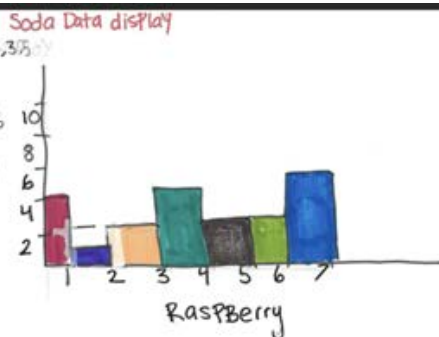
### \* Observations \*

- HS Participated = 24
- There were outliers that had to be removed.
- Any number higher than seven or lower than 1
- Any number we couldn't read.

### \* Conclusion \*

The high school students selected Pineapple as their favorite Italian soda. And lemon lime and Raspberry were the least liked.

Lemon Lime 7,7,4,3,2,2,1,3,7,6,6,5,1,7,3,6,7,5,7,6,6,3,5  
 Raspberry 6,6,7,4,7,1,1,5,7,3,3,1,1,7,5,1,4,7,7,4,7,2,4  
 Cherry 4,7,7,6,1,7,4,2,1,1,4,6,3,2,4,1,3,5,2,2,2,6,3,1,6  
 Pineapple 5,1,5,7,1,5,5,6,2,3,1,5,2,5,2,4,1,3,1,5,3,1,6,1  
 Strawberry 4,3,6,1,6,5,7,6,3,7,5,4,2,2,2,4,4,6,3,7,7,3  
 Apple 5,7,5,7,7,5,6,1,3,4,4,2,6,5,1,6,6,3,2,4,2  
 Orange 2,4,3,3,5,6,4,2,7,1,4,2,3,6,6,5,7,5,6,3,7



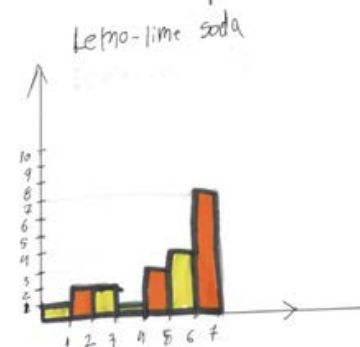
### Conclusion

- HS Participated = 29
- There were some outliers we removed
- During this project we ran into some errors. Students had a direction to rate sodas from 1-7 and some didn't do that so we had to cross out some that were either too low or above what was asked.

The h.s students selected the Pineapple as their top choice. The least favorite was lemonlime.

## Italian Soda Data Display.

Raspberry-Peach Soda 6,6,7,4,7,2,1,1,5,7,3,3,1,1,7,5,3,7,4,7,7,4,7,2,4  
 Cherry Cream Soda 4,7,2,7,1,4,2,1,1,4,6,3,2,4,1,1,3,5,2  
 Pineapple Soda 5,1,7,7,6,5,5,7,2,5,2,4,1,3,2,1,2,1,2  
 Strawberry Soda 4,3,2,6,4,2,5,7,6,3,7,5,4,2,4,2,6,4,6  
 Apple Soda 5,7,5,7,7,6,5,1,3,4,4,2,6,5,7,6,6,3  
 Orange Cream Soda 2,4,5,3,6,4,2,7,1,4,2,5,6,6,6,5,7  
 Lemon-lime Soda 7,7,4,3,3,2,1,7,6,6,5,2,7,3,6,7,5,7,7,6,5



### Observation:

- HS Participated = 25
- There were some outliers we removed
- Participated did not use the right number that we ask.
- Some of the papers were not complete.

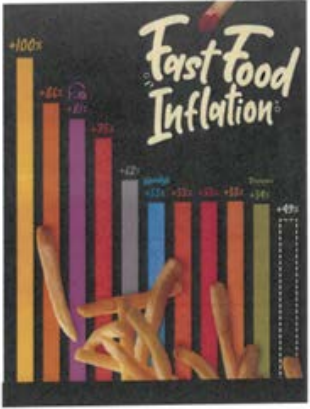
### Conclusion

- The high school students selected the Pineapple soda as their favorite soda.
- They chose the lemon lime soda as their least favorite soda.

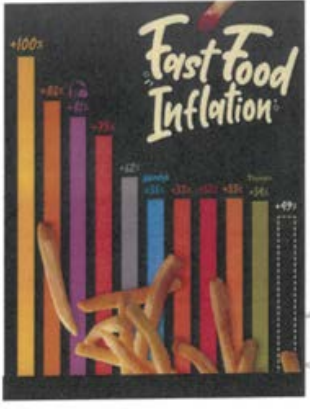
Fernando Galindo



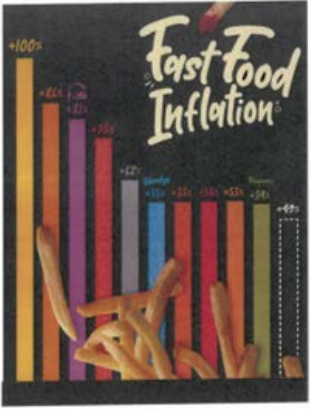
SOAR ACADEMY YOUTH TRANSITION CAMPUS



- What do you notice?  
french fries
- What do you wonder?  
NOT CLASS APPROPRIATE
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?



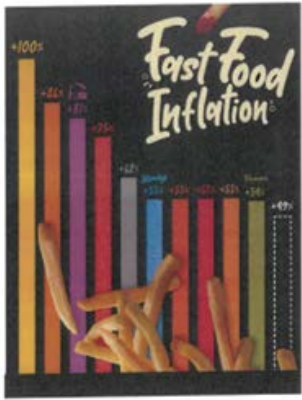
- What do you notice?  
French fries
- What do you wonder?  
French fries
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
French fries are getting up



7(5) = 35

- What do you notice?  
I see numbers, money, two bills.
- What do you wonder?  
I wonder what the other colors are.
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
How the prices go up.

Joe Jackson



- What do you notice?  
This is a poll for fast food inflation
- What do you wonder?  
Why are it made what are the numbers representing
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
How different fast food branches are making their prices



- What do you notice?  
Fast Food Inflation
- What do you wonder?  
How much does it cost per year
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
Fast Food inflation keeps rising every year and it's a big problem



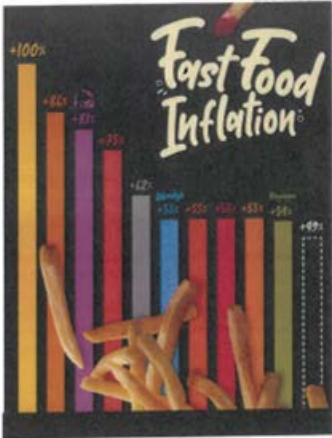
- What do you notice?  
Which, French fries
- What do you wonder?  
What the cost is for
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
The inflation through time



- What do you notice?  
French fries
- What do you wonder?  
Are those fries good? What do these numbers mean?
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
Who has the best selling fries.

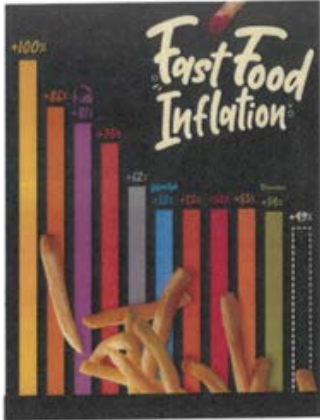


- What do you notice?  
The graph decreases the more you go right
- What do you wonder?  
Which has the least inflation
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
The fall on of fast food over time



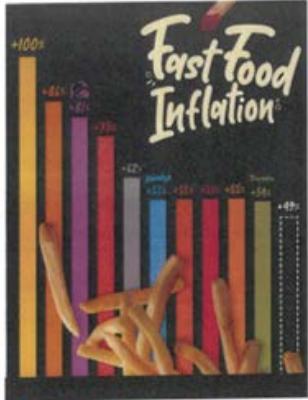
Item	Price Increase
French Fries	+100%
Big Mac	+84%
Soft Drink	+81%
Chicken Sandwich	+75%
Small Fries	+42%
Apple Pie	+33%
Hot Dog	+33%
Ice Cream Cone	+33%
Soft Pretzel	+33%
Shrimp	+33%
Donut	+33%
Salad	+49%

- What do you notice?  
The graph goes down to the right and it goes down why is there food
- What do you wonder?  
Why is there food
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
Fast food



Item	Price Increase
French Fries	+100%
Big Mac	+84%
Soft Drink	+81%
Chicken Sandwich	+75%
Small Fries	+42%
Apple Pie	+33%
Hot Dog	+33%
Ice Cream Cone	+33%
Soft Pretzel	+33%
Shrimp	+33%
Donut	+33%
Salad	+49%

- What do you notice?  
The graph decreases the more you go right
- What do you wonder?  
Which has the least inflation?
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
inflation of fast food over time and the increase in inflation



Item	Price Increase
French Fries	+100%
Big Mac	+84%
Soft Drink	+81%
Chicken Sandwich	+75%
Small Fries	+42%
Apple Pie	+33%
Hot Dog	+33%
Ice Cream Cone	+33%
Soft Pretzel	+33%
Shrimp	+33%
Donut	+33%
Salad	+49%

- What do you notice?  
The inflation is going up and the price is going up
- What do you wonder?  
Who do the numbers represent
- What's the story this graph is trying to tell?  
How much the prices are increasing

The picture gets even grimmer when all mammals currently endangered or threatened are added to the count. If those all disappear within a century, then by 334 years from now, 75% of all mammal species will be gone, says Barnosky. "Look outside of your window. Imagine taking away three-quarters of the living things you see and ask yourself if you want to live in that world."

The team extended the same methods of analysis to amphibians, reptiles, birds, plants, mollusks, and other forms of life. They found fairly consistent patterns: From amphibians to birds to mammals, about 1% to 2% of species already are extinct today, and 20% to 30% are threatened—numbers that approach those of the great mass extinctions of the past. "Our best guess is that the current extinction rate is between three to 80 times too high" even without counting all threatened species, says Barnosky. "Assuming threatened species would actually go extinct—which is not inevitable—puts the extinction rate off the charts."

5. What percent of amphibians, birds, and mammals are extinct today?  
1% to 2% of species is already gone today

6. What percentage of amphibians, birds, and mammals are currently threatened to go extinct?  
20% to 30% are threatened

"There's been a lot of general talk on this issue, but attempts to draw more rigorously on the lessons of the fossil record have been rare," says paleobiologist David Jablonksi of the University of Chicago in Illinois, who was not involved in the study. "It's really valuable to look at how current losses stack up against the past extinction events."

The silver lining in this dark cloud is that if humans work quickly to protect endangered and threatened species and their habitats now, the mass extinction can be prevented or at least delayed by thousands of years, says Barnosky. Adds Jablonksi, "This approach provides a way to gauge progress in walking the world back from that brink [of a mass extinction]."

Short Response: (4 sentences)

After reading this article, answer the following questions in complete sentences in a paragraph:

- Do you think we are in the middle of a 6th mass extinction that is being caused by humans? Why or why not?
- USE EVIDENCE from the article (extinction rates and trends) and the importance of biodiversity to support your answer.

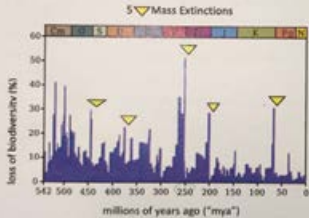
I feel like humans just want to be the only thing that live on this earth. If we are not going to stop until we see that we are the last ones standing we are the last ones standing. Strong I mean we are or we will be near.

Biology Population Dynamics – Extinction

5. Graphs tell stories about events. What story do you think this graph is attempting to tell?  
and events to do with extinction

6. Following the current trend of the graph, what predictions would you make about the next 50 million years? that another animal is going to go extinct.

Data Display #2



5 Mass Extinctions

loss of biodiversity (%)

millions of years ago ("mya")

7. This is another way to look at extinction data, by % loss of genera. How might we be able to define a "mass extinction" from this graph?  
25% or greater is considered a mass extinction

### Are We in the Middle of a Sixth Mass Extinction?

By Ann Gibbons

March 2, 2011 for Science Magazine  
(<http://www.sciencemag.org/news/2011/03/are-we-middle-sixth-mass-extinction>)

Earth's creatures are on the brink of a sixth mass extinction, comparable to the one that wiped out the dinosaurs. That's the conclusion of a new study, which calculates that three-quarters of today's animal species could vanish within 100 years. "This is really gloom-and-doom stuff," says the study's lead author, paleobiologist Anthony Barnosky of the University of California, Berkeley. "But the good news is we haven't come so far down the road that it's inevitable."

Species naturally come and go over long periods of time. But what sets a mass extinction apart is that three-quarters of all species vanish quickly. Earth has already endured five mass extinctions, including the asteroid that wiped out dinosaurs and other creatures 65 million years ago. Conservationists have warned for years that we are in the midst of a sixth, human-caused extinction, with species from frogs to birds to tigers threatened by climate change, disease, loss of habitat, and competition for resources with nonnative species. But how does this new mass extinction compare with the other five?

1. How does the article define "mass extinction"?  
Significant loss of species

2. What events are causing scientists to warn that we are in the middle of a 6th mass extinction? that are causing some of the human causes

Barnosky and colleagues took on this challenge by looking to the past. First, they calculated the rate at which mammals, which are well represented in the fossil record, died off in the past 65 million years, finding an average extinction rate of less than two species per million years. But in the past 500 years, a minimum of 80 of 5570 species of mammals have gone extinct, according to biologists' conservative estimates—an extinction rate that is actually above documented rates for past mass extinctions, says Barnosky. All of this means that we're at the beginning of a mass extinction that will play out over hundreds or thousands of years, his team concludes online today in *Nature*. (*Nature* is a journal or magazine that publishes some of the most popular recent findings by scientists.)

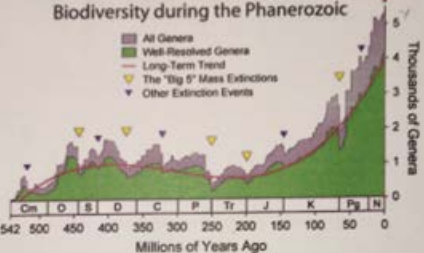
3. In the past 65 million years, how many mammals went extinct per million (on average)?  
less than 2 species per million years

4. How many mammals have gone extinct in the past 500 years?  
80 out of 5570

Biology Population Dynamics – Extinction

Data Display #1

### Biodiversity during the Phanerozoic



Thousands of Genera

Millions of Years Ago

5 Mass Extinctions

1. Referring to data display above, what do the x-axis and y-axis represent?  
x-axis: how many years ago, y-axis: how many genera

2. Looking at the x-axis from left to right, where is present time located?  
we are on the far right of the graph

3. Genera is the plural form of Genus. Genus species is used to classify organisms in the field of taxonomy. What is happening to the number of genera over time? it increases the biodiversity over time

4. Looking at the graph, what evidence supports the claim that extinctions of organisms has been happening over a long period of time? Cite specific evidence. they are happening about every 50 years



Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

77 percent of the shy fish survived while only 66 percent of the fish survived.

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

yes. the graphs shows that the shy fish survived better, but they grew smaller. Also the data showed the bold fish grew bigger but survived in smaller numbers.

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

fish can die  
Bacteria  
Condition of the water  
Predators what would be the effect or different or more predators

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data: a higher survival

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

Shy fish have a higher survival rate

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

cause it goes up and down

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

it increases and decreases

shy fish have higher survival

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

use it goes up and down

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

i already said it

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

i think it do

SUPP

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

ion got a question

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

Shy fish have a higher survival rate

Bold fish grew heavier and longer

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

Each of the three graphs supports our claims.

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

i already said it

it grew heavier than shy fish

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

i think it do

SUPP

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

ion got a question

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

Shy fish have a higher survival rate

Bold fish grew longer than shy fish

Bold fish are heavier than shy fish

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

We looked at the data from the experiment (graphs)

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

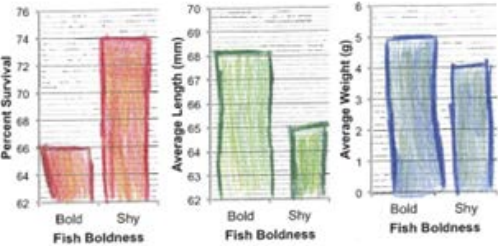
Each of the three fish graphs from the experiment supports our claims. The trade off between using cover or open water appears to be that fish that use open water grow larger, but do not survive as well. Fish use cover survive well but do not grow as large as the open water fish.

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

In general the data that I see does support the girl's hypothesis. The data shows that the shy fish survived in greater numbers, grew less than the bold fish. The bold fish grew heavier and longer but survived at a lower rate.

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)? What kinds of water were they in? What predators were there where did this take place? Were they fed by Melissa?

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.



Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

*shy fish have higher survival*

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

*because it goes up and down*

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

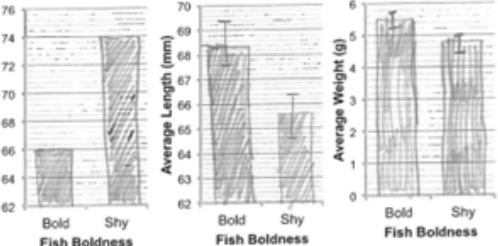
*i already said it*

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

*i think it do support*

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

*i am so confused*



Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

*Shy fish have a higher survival rate  
Bold fish grew longer than shy fish  
Bold fish are heavier than shy fish*

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

*we looked at the data from the experiment (graphs)*

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

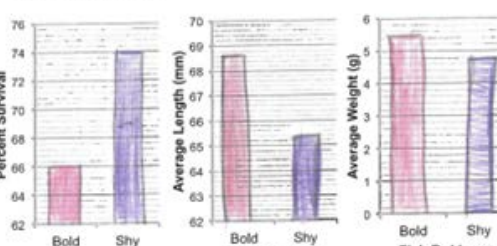
*Each of the three fish graphs from the experiment supports our claims. The trade off between using cover or open water appears to be that fish that use open water grow larger, but do not survive as well. Fish use cover survive well but do not grow as large as the open water fish.*

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

*In general the data that I see does support the hypothesis. The data shows that the shy fish survived in greater numbers, but grew less than the bold fish. The bold fish grew heavier and longer but survived at a lower rate.*

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)? What kind of water were they in? What predators were there? Where did this take place? Were they fed by Melissa?

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.



Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

*Shy fish have a higher chance to survive.  
Bold fish grew longer than shy fish.  
The bold fish heavier than shy fish*

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

*we looked at the data from the experiment (graphs)*

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

*Each of the three graphs from the experiment support our claims. we learned that the tradeoff between using cover or open water appears to be that fish that use open water grow larger, but do not survive as well. Fish that use cover survive well but do not grow as large as the open water fish.*

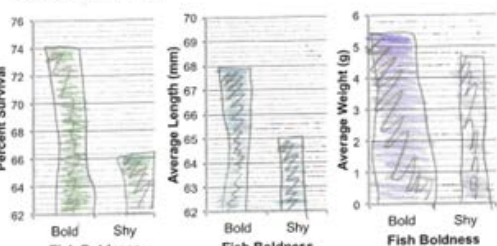
Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

*The data that was shown did support Melissa's hypothesis. The data shows that the shy fish survived more than the bold fish. Also the data shows that the bold fish grew heavier and longer, but survived at a lower rate than the shy fish.*

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

*I wonder what kind of water mattered? I wonder if*

Draw your graphs below: Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.



Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

*Shy fish have a higher survival rate  
Bold fish grew longer than shy fish  
Bold fish heavier than shy fish*

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

*I looked at the data and the graphs*

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

*Each of the 3 graphs from the experiment supports each claim. The trade off between using open water and cover appears to be that fish that use open water grow larger but do not survive as well. Fish that use cover survive well, but do not grow as large as the open water fish.*

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

*yes it did support for the hypothesis*

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

*How many fish were there? How many fish were there? How many fish were there?*



Draw your graphs below. Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

SHY FISH HAVE A HIGHER SURVIVAL RATE. BOLD FISH GROW LONGER THAN SHY FISH.

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

WE LOOKED AT THE DATA FROM THE EXPERIMENT. (GRAPHS)

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

EACH OF THE THREE GRAPHS FROM THE EXPERIMENT SUPPORT OUR CLAIMS. THE TRADEOFF BETWEEN USING COVER OR OPEN WATER APPEARS TO BE FISH THAT USE OPEN WATER IN GENERAL THE DATA SUPPORTS MELISSA'S HYPOTHESIS.

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

GRAN TALKER & WINTER, BUT SURVIVED AT A LOWER RATE THAN THE SHY FISH. WHY IS THERE MORE FOOD IN THE WATER?

Draw your graphs below. Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

Shy fish have a higher survival rate. Bold fish grow longer than shy fish. Bold fish are heavier than shy fish.

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

We looked at the data from the experiment (graphs).

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

each of the three graphs from the experiment support our claims. The tradeoff between using open water, or cover appears to be that fish that use open water grow larger, but do not survive as well. Fish that use cover survive well but do not grow as large as the open water fish.

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

In general the data supports Melissa's hypothesis. The data shows that the shy fish survived in greater numbers but grew less than bold fish. Bold fish grew heavier or longer, but survived at a lower rate than shy fish.

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

Why is it that the open water has more food sources? I wonder if the size of the body of water would effect the data? Would different predators change the fish behavior?

Explain your reasoning and why the evidence supports your claims. Connect the data back to what you learned about the tradeoff for using the cover and open water habitats.

Each of the three graphs from the experiment support the tradeoff between using cover or open water appears to be that fish that use open water grow larger but do not survive as well. Fish that use cover survive well but do not grow as large as the open water fish.

Did the data support Melissa's hypothesis? Use evidence to explain why or why not. If you feel the data were inconclusive, explain why.

In general the data supports Melissa's hypothesis. The data shows that the bold fish grew larger but did not survive at the same rate as shy fish. Shy fish survived in greater numbers but grew smaller.

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

I wonder if the size of the body of water would effect the data. Would different predators change the fish behavior?

Draw your graphs below. Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

shy fish have a higher survival rate. Bold fish grew longer than shy fish. Bold fish is heavier than shy fish.

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

we looked at the data from the experiment (graphs).

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In general the data supports Melissa's hypothesis. the data shows indicates that the bold grew larger but did not survive at the same rate as shy fish. also the shy fish survived in greater numbers but grew smaller.

Your next steps as a scientist: Science is an ongoing process. What new question(s) should be investigated to build on Melissa's research? What future data should be collected to answer your question(s)?

Why is there more food in the water? I wonder if the size of the body of water would effect the data? Would different predators change the fish behavior?

Draw your graphs below. Identify any changes, trends, or differences you see in your graphs. Draw arrows pointing out what you see, and write one sentence describing what you see next to each arrow.

Interpret the data:

Make a claim that answers each of the scientific questions.

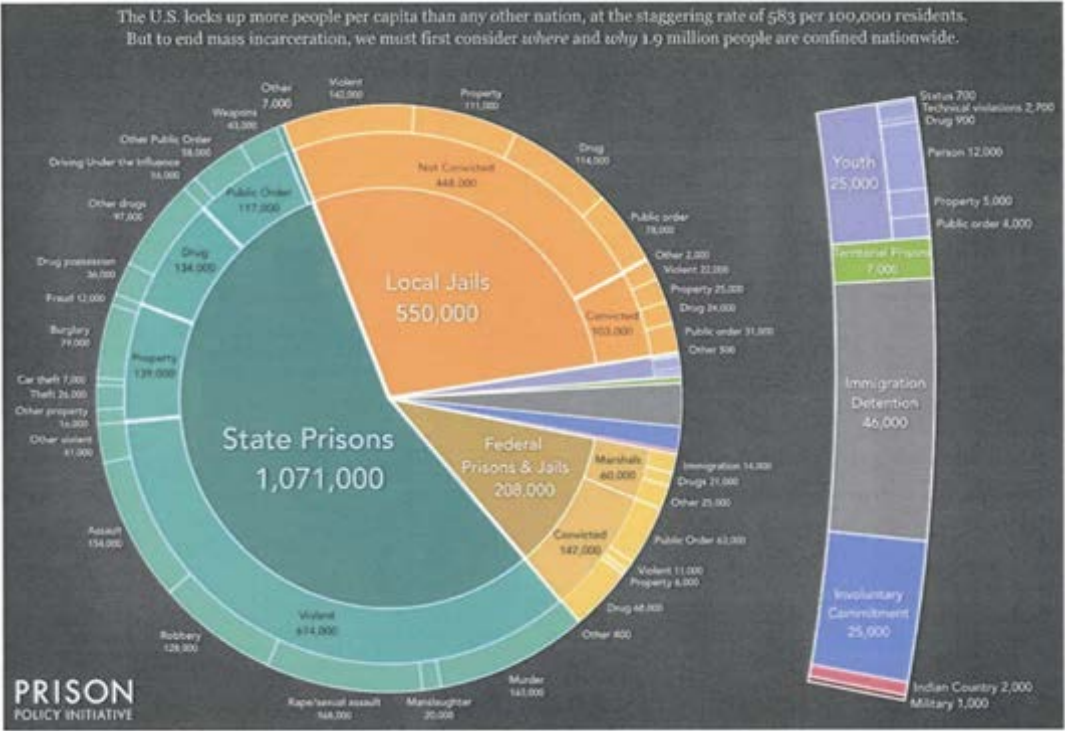
shy fish have a higher survival rate. Bold fish grew longer than shy fish. Bold fish heavier than shy fish.

What evidence was used to write your claims? Reference specific parts of the table or graphs.

we looked at the data from the experiment (graphs).



UNIT GOLF/JULIET



<p>1) What type of graph is represented? A pie chart</p> <p>2) What do you notice about the graph? its about valencet's and data of people that are in different type of jails</p> <p>3) What is the graph trying to tell? the different type of crimes that have been committed</p> <p>4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice? i notice there is 20,000 people locked up for man gods and 163,000 for murder</p> <p>5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey? to do better in life so we dont lose our kids to the system</p>	<p>Directions: Analyze and interpret the graph on the other side of this worksheet. Then, answer each of the following questions in a short 2-3 sentence paragraph.</p> <p>1) What type of graph is represented? The graph represented is a pie graph that is separated into sections</p> <p>2) What do you notice about the graph? i noticed that a majority of people are locked up in state prisons, and it shows why and where people are locked up.</p> <p>3) What is the graph trying to tell? The graph is trying to tell where and why and how much people are incarcerated</p> <p>4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice? i compared how federal is way less than state prisons, and the crimes are less</p> <p>5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey? it can help me by showing that they won't hesitate to lock me up again.</p>
<p>Directions: Analyze and interpret the graph on the other side of this worksheet. Then, answer each of the following questions in a short 2-3 sentence paragraph.</p> <p>1) What type of graph is represented? A graph that shows us the percentage of people locked up into different types of detention facilities also known as the pie graph</p> <p>2) What do you notice about the graph? there are different sections showing the percentage of people locked up split into state prison, federal prison, immigration prisons, military prisons</p> <p>3) What is the graph trying to tell? where and why each person is locked up and all the different crimes that were committed</p> <p>4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice? The difference of the state and federal prisons are the different crimes that are made by percentage</p> <p>5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey? Keep me out the system</p>	<p>Directions: Analyze and interpret the graph on the other side of this worksheet. Then, answer each of the following questions in a short 2-3 sentence paragraph.</p> <p>1) What type of graph is represented? Its a pie graph</p> <p>2) What do you notice about the graph? I notice how many people do and about the prisons &amp; jails</p> <p>3) What is the graph trying to tell? what its telling me is how many people are convicted and the crimes</p> <p>4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice? I notice so how many people are locked up in our jails and prisons</p> <p>5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey? It can help me from life's journey, because am still gonna live the way i live nothing gonna change me or this jail</p>

Directions: Analyze and interpret the graph on the other side of this worksheet. Then, answer each of the following questions in a short 2-3 sentence paragraph.

1) What type of graph is represented?  
They type of graph that is represented is a pi-graph.

2) What do you notice about the graph?  
From this graph I noticed it separates the different crimes people are locked up for.

3) What is the graph trying to tell?  
This graph is trying to tell that there are alot of crimes people are locked up.

4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice?  
Based on the data I noticed there more adults locked up than juveniles.

5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey?  
This information on this graph shou can help me by showing me all the things I can get locked up for.

Directions: Analyze and interpret the graph on the other side of this worksheet. Then, answer each of the following questions in a short 2-3 sentence paragraph.

1) What type of graph is represented?  
The type of graph that is represented is a pie graph.

2) What do you notice about the graph?  
I noticed about the pie grap is that it represented 9 different prisons.

3) What is the graph trying to tell?  
What I think this graph is trying to say is the information about prison and how there d divide.

4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice?  
two points from the graph is that there is a State Prison and also federal prison.

5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey?  
How can this information help me on my journey is that it shows that I dont want to be negative statiste and positive prison to my community.

Directions: Analyze and interpret the graph on the other side of this worksheet. Then, answer each of the following questions in a short 2-3 sentence paragraph.

1) What type of graph is represented?  
the graph represented is a Pie that is seperated into sections.

2) What do you notice about the graph?  
i noticed that majority of the people are locked up in state prisons and it shows why and where people are locked up

3) What is the graph trying to tell?  
the graph is trying to tell where and why and how much people are incarcerated.

4) Compare two data points from the graph. What do you notice?  
i compared how federal is way less than state prisons and the crimes are less

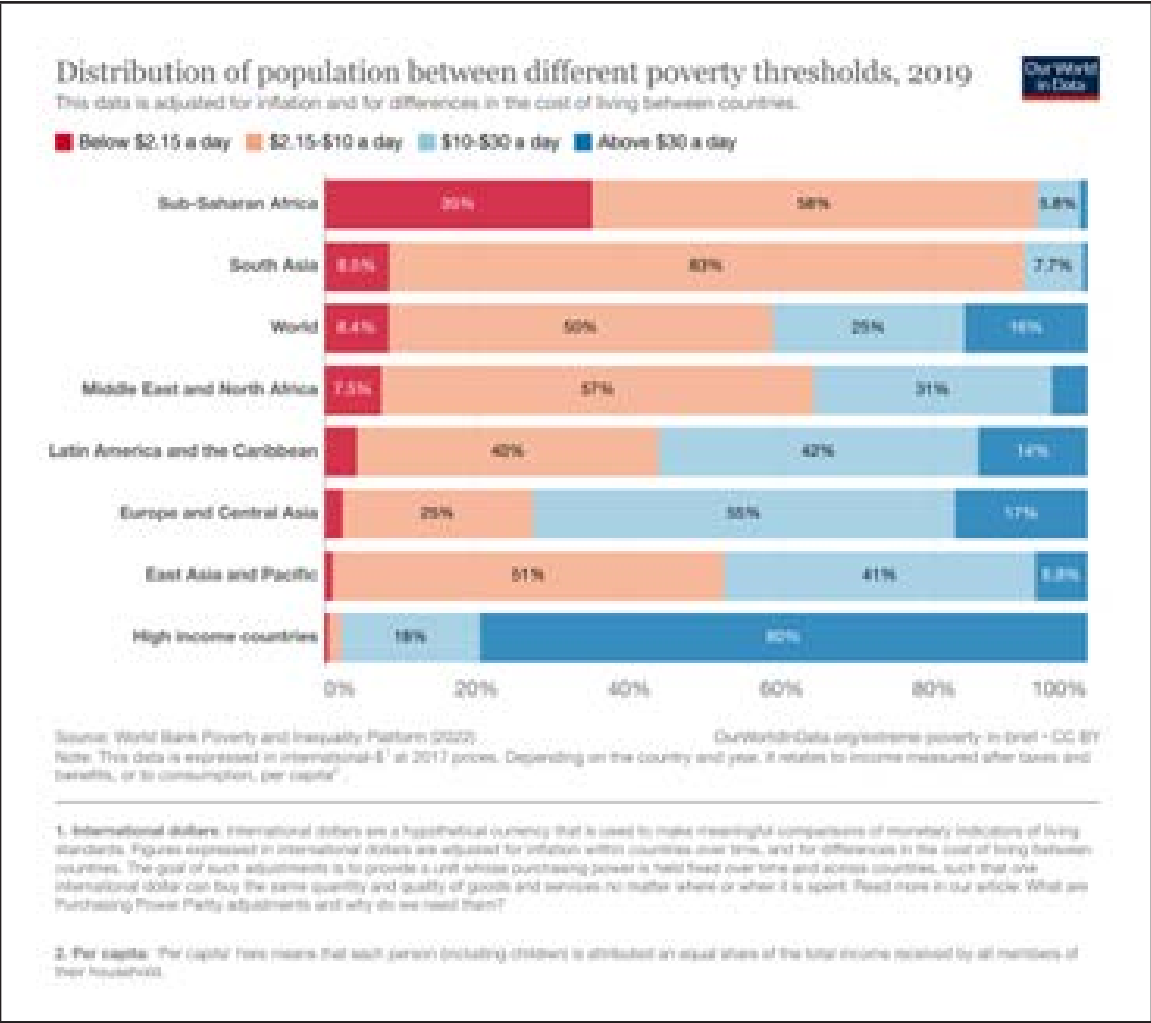
5) How can the information from the graph help you on your life's journey?  
it can help me by showing that they won't hesitate to lock me up again.

UNIT CHARLIE

POVERTY UNVEILED: STORIES AND STATISTICS  
SIX WORD STORIES

Insecurities of poverty; waking up homeless	Tent lined streets, crying; survival mode
Fight poverty Spread love, hope, peace	Rise Up! Fight Fight End Poverty
Pain experienced unaffordable housing better employment	Rise up toughen up combat poverty
feeling hopeless against odds tick-tock	Rise up toughen up combat poverty
stuck in poverty uphill battle hopeful	tired faces faces of poverty life
hardship, mental health, poverty doesn't discriminate.	Suffering from poverty; smell of defeat
CRIME unsafe for poverty stricken homeless	Struggle is real depressing days Poverty
Helping those in need ending poverty	Living in poverty challenges I face

POVERTY GRAPH ANALYSIS #1



When I first saw the graph, it was clear that sub-Saharan Africa is a place where living costs are low, but people earn very little. About 35% of the population makes only \$2.15 a day, which I believe isn't enough to live on. In contrast, in high-income countries, around 80% of people earn over \$30 a day. I think it's important for people in sub-Saharan Africa to have better job opportunities. The income in wealthier countries is significantly higher than in sub-Saharan Africa. It really bothers me that so many people work hard but still struggle to make ends meet. The graph shows a **right skew** and isn't balanced, indicating that income inequality is a big issue in sub-Saharan Africa and some Asian countries. The data reveals that poverty is mostly found in sub-Saharan Africa, making it an outlier since other regions have less than 9% of people earning below \$2.15 a day. In summary, the graph highlights that poverty is a major problem in sub-Saharan Africa, and we need to find ways to help them earn more so they can live better lives.

The graph shows that 35% of people in sub-Saharan Africa earn less than \$2.15 a day. It also highlights the big differences in population across the area. The graph is not **balanced; it leans to the right**, which means the data is not evenly spread out. This indicates that poverty is a major issue in sub-Saharan Africa. There's an **outlier** in the data, as some countries have less than 9.7% of their population earning under \$2.15 a day. Additionally, the article points out that there are significant income differences between countries in certain regions. Overall, the graph illustrates that there are large gaps in income levels around the world. I think this situation is really tough because people struggle when they don't earn enough money.



<p>According to the graph, most of the world is in poverty. One thing about the graph that surprises me is how in some countries, like Sub-Saharan Africa, there are 35% of the population making less than \$2.15 a day. Some parts of the world, the United States and other high income countries, have 80% of the population making more than \$30 a day. One thing about the graph that upsets me is that the people making \$2.15 a day probably do not have enough to eat. This graph makes me want to try to live off \$15.05 for a week to see what it is like. I know this would be really challenging. I would like to show this graph to the rest of the world because it is eye opening and it really shows that there are people being affected by inflation in the world. The most important number in this graph is the 35% of people making less than \$2.15 a day in Sub-Saharan Africa because it is an <b>outlier</b>. No other countries are as bad. It <b>skews the graph to the right</b> and shows the disparity in wealth. It really makes you wonder how people live on \$2.15 a day. In conclusion, the graph shows us that there are really people out in the world being affected by inflation and poverty. People need more jobs and economic opportunities to get more money.</p>	<p>According to the graph, I noticed that Africa has the least pay per day. 35% of the population only makes \$2.15 per day. The graph talks about the significant variation in population across different poverty thresholds in Sub-Saharan Africa and the world. Africa has the most people that get paid \$2 through \$10 a day. The graph serves as a valuable tool in understanding the dynamics of the global socioeconomic landscape. One question I have is that I wonder how much the people in the USA make. The graph is <b>skewed more to the right</b> than the left and is <b>not symmetric</b>. This shows that poverty is heavily <b>skewed</b> in some countries. One thing about the graph that confuses me is all the numbers it has. The graph shows that 35% of individuals in this region make less than \$2 dollars a day, indicating a high prevalence of extreme poverty. The data shows that poverty is heavily concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 37% of people make less than 2\$ per day. Sub-Saharan Africa is an outlier because the other countries have less than 9.7% of people who make less than \$2.15 a day. In conclusion, the graph shows us that poverty is real and it affects many people around the world.</p>
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<p>What I see in the graph is people taking surveys. It is clear that they are not thinking about how to help those people. According to the graph 8.4% of the people in the world make under \$2.15 a day. One thing about the graph that confuses me is how do you know how much everyone makes but they have not been there. The graph makes me want to know about how much people really make and not just about a rough estimate. When I first looked at the graph, I thought dang how do people make that little but then I was thinking how do they know? But after I thought that some countries need help for their people so there can be less poverty. Also another thing I noticed is that the graph is <b>skewed right</b> and that the Sub-Saharan is very concentrated and that most people make less than \$2.15. Also, according to the graph, every other country or region has 8.5% that makes less than \$2.15 which means the Sub-Saharan has three times more people who make \$2.15 or less. In conclusion, the graph shows that the Sub-Saharan region needs some financial help, or the people in poverty need programs or shelters.</p>	<p>The graph makes me feel a bit sad for other people in other countries. Knowing nobody is going to save them from poverty and the struggle they are going through. For example, look at Africa, 35% of the population are making under \$2 a day. How could you even survive off of that income? What can people do to help? I see no movement or people trying to help this in my country. If they are, they are not doing a very good job. I rarely even hear about it and there is a lot of wealth in my country. In high income countries, 80% of people make over \$30 a day. That is fifteen times more than Africa. Where do these people sleep or how do they meet basic needs to take care of their family? Also, what about medical treatment or how do they not starve to death? Do their countries even think about the people in need? Do they even offer them jobs at the least? Everything in this topic is dark. The more you look at it, it is clear that it should be taken more seriously all around the world. They are human as well. They deserve everything that we have. The median 50% of the world makes between \$2-10 a day, which is still a crazy amount to try and survive off of. Can you live with \$2-10 per day? Imagine trying to support a family with water, food, shelter, medical treatment, and hygiene. Imagine doing that with kids included, not just yourself. Take a peek at the graph. It is <b>skewed right</b> and it is <b>non symmetrical</b>. It shows that poverty is real and severe in the world. In conclusion, the graph shows us that there is a worldwide problem even if it does not affect you. Think about the families and about how they really feel. Maybe we can come together and stop this one way or another.</p>
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<p>One thing about the graph that surprises me is the amount of money they make in one day! I wonder how they buy their basic needs like food, water, shelter, etc, and how they even survive with such low income? Poverty is heavily concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa where 83% of people make \$2.15 a day, which I think is really hard to survive with that amount of money. Poverty is different in different places, but it is extreme and an <b>outlier</b> in Sub-Saharan Africa. In conclusion, people in Sub-Saharan Africa are struggling more than we are and poverty really changes things.</p>	<p>The graph shows that Africa and South Asia are the poorest regions. Africa earns the most money, with 58% of its income coming from people making between \$2.15 and \$10 a day. South Asia has a higher percentage, with 83% of its income in the same range. Both regions have small percentages of people earning between \$10 and \$30 a day, with Africa at 5.8% and South Asia at 7.7%. Inflation really impacts these countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where they often struggle to get the resources they need. The graph is <b>not symmetrical</b>, highlighting the severe poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. Africa stands out because in other countries, less than 9.7% of people earn less than \$2.15 daily. In conclusion, the graph clearly shows that inflation hits Africa the hardest.</p>
<p>When I first saw the graph, it was clear that sub-Saharan Africa is a place where living costs are low, but people earn very little. About 35% of the population makes only \$2.15 a day, which I believe isn't enough to live on. In contrast, in high-income countries, around 80% of people earn over \$30 a day. I think it's important for people in sub-Saharan Africa to have better job opportunities. The income in wealthier countries is significantly higher than in sub-Saharan Africa. It really bothers me that so many people work hard but still struggle to make ends meet. The graph shows a <b>right skew</b> and isn't balanced, indicating that income inequality is a big issue in sub-Saharan Africa and some Asian countries. The data reveals that poverty is mostly found in sub-Saharan Africa, making it an <b>outlier</b> since other regions have less than 9% of people earning below \$2.15 a day. In summary, the graph highlights that poverty is a major problem in sub-Saharan Africa, and we need to find ways to help them earn more so they can live better lives.</p>	<p>The graph shows that 35% of people in sub-Saharan Africa earn less than \$2.15 a day. It also highlights the big differences in population across the area. The graph is <b>not balanced; it leans to the right</b>, which means the data is not evenly spread out. This indicates that poverty is a major issue in sub-Saharan Africa. There's an <b>outlier</b> in the data, as some countries have less than 9.7% of their population earning under \$2.15 a day. Additionally, the article points out that there are significant income differences between countries in certain regions. Overall, the graph illustrates that there are large gaps in income levels around the world. I think this situation is really tough because people struggle when they don't earn enough money.</p>

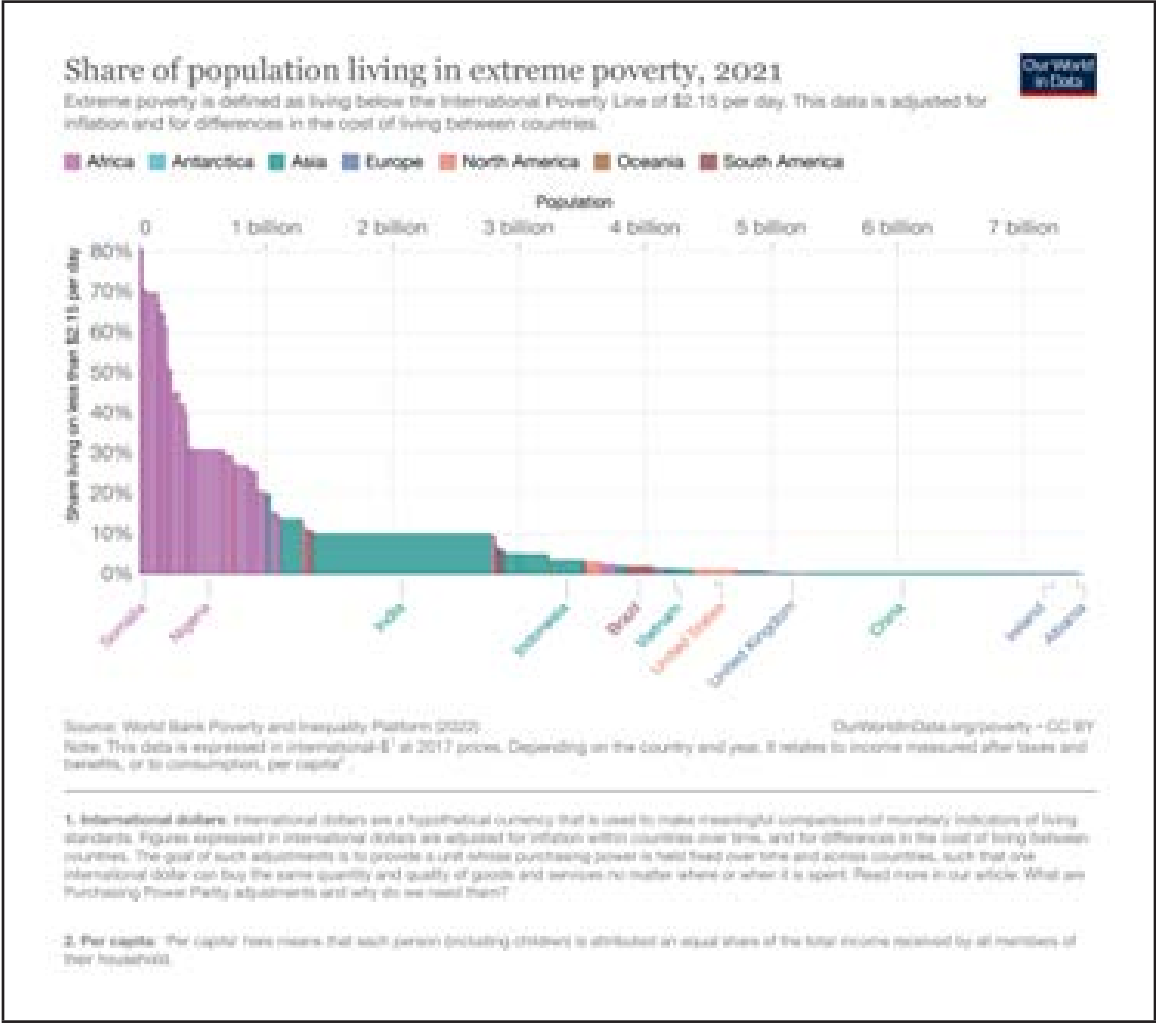
<p>According to the graph, most of the world is in poverty. One thing about the graph that surprises me is how in some countries, like Sub-Saharan Africa, there are 35% of the population making less than \$2.15 a day. Some parts of the world, the United States and other high income countries, have 80% of the population making more than \$30 a day. One thing about the graph that upsets me is that the people making \$2.15 a day probably do not have enough to eat. This graph makes me want to try to live off \$15.05 for a week to see what it is like. I know this would be really challenging. I would like to show this graph to the rest of the world because it is eye opening and it really shows that there are people being affected by inflation in the world. The most important number in this graph is the 35% of people making less than \$2.15 a day in Sub-Saharan Africa because it is an <b>outlier</b>. No other countries are as bad. It <b>skews the graph to the right</b> and shows the disparity in wealth. It really makes you wonder how people live on \$2.15 a day. In conclusion, the graph shows us that there are really people out in the world being affected by inflation and poverty. People need more jobs and economic opportunities to get more money.</p>	<p>According to the graph, I noticed that Africa has the least pay per day. 35% of the population only makes \$2.15 per day. The graph talks about the significant variation in population across different poverty thresholds in Sub-Saharan Africa and the world. Africa has the most people that get paid \$2 through \$10 a day. The graph serves as a valuable tool in understanding the dynamics of the global socioeconomic landscape. One question I have is that I wonder how much the people in the USA make. The graph is <b>skewed more to the right</b> than the left and is <b>not symmetric</b>. This shows that poverty is heavily <b>skewed</b> in some countries. One thing about the graph that confuses me is all the numbers it has. The graph shows that 35% of individuals in this region make less than \$2 dollars a day, indicating a high prevalence of extreme poverty. The data shows that poverty is heavily concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 37% of people make less than 2\$ per day. Sub-Saharan Africa is an outlier because the other countries have less than 9.7% of people who make less than \$2.15 a day. In conclusion, the graph shows us that poverty is real and it affects many people around the world.</p>
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<p>One thing about the graph that surprises me is the amount of money they make in one day! I wonder how they buy their basic needs like food, water, shelter, etc, and how they even survive with such low income? Poverty is heavily concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa where 83% of people make \$2.15 a day, which I think is really hard to survive with that amount of money. Poverty is different in different places, but it is extreme and an <b>outlier</b> in Sub-Saharan Africa. In conclusion, people in Sub-Saharan Africa are struggling more than we are and poverty really changes things.</p>	<p>The graph shows that Africa and South Asia are the poorest regions. Africa earns the most money, with 58% of its income coming from people making between \$2.15 and \$10 a day. South Asia has a higher percentage, with 83% of its income in the same range. Both regions have small percentages of people earning between \$10 and \$30 a day, with Africa at 5.8% and South Asia at 7.7%. Inflation really impacts these countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, where they often struggle to get the resources they need. The graph is <b>not symmetrical</b>, highlighting the severe poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. Africa stands out because in other countries, less than 9.7% of people earn less than \$2.15 daily. In conclusion, the graph clearly shows that inflation hits Africa the hardest.</p>
<p>When I first saw the graph, it was clear that sub-Saharan Africa is a place where living costs are low, but people earn very little. About 35% of the population makes only \$2.15 a day, which I believe isn't enough to live on. In contrast, in high-income countries, around 80% of people earn over \$30 a day. I think it's important for people in sub-Saharan Africa to have better job opportunities. The income in wealthier countries is significantly higher than in sub-Saharan Africa. It really bothers me that so many people work hard but still struggle to make ends meet. The graph shows a <b>right skew</b> and isn't balanced, indicating that income inequality is a big issue in sub-Saharan Africa and some Asian countries. The data reveals that poverty is mostly found in sub-Saharan Africa, making it an <b>outlier</b> since other regions have less than 9% of people earning below \$2.15 a day. In summary, the graph highlights that poverty is a major problem in sub-Saharan Africa, and we need to find ways to help them earn more so they can live better lives.</p>	<p>The graph shows that 35% of people in sub-Saharan Africa earn less than \$2.15 a day. It also highlights the big differences in population across the area. The graph is <b>not balanced; it leans to the right</b>, which means the data is not evenly spread out. This indicates that poverty is a major issue in sub-Saharan Africa. There's an <b>outlier</b> in the data, as some countries have less than 9.7% of their population earning under \$2.15 a day. Additionally, the article points out that there are significant income differences between countries in certain regions. Overall, the graph illustrates that there are large gaps in income levels around the world. I think this situation is really tough because people struggle when they don't earn enough money.</p>



POVERTY GRAPH ANALYSIS #2



According to the graph, many people in Africa live on \$2.15 per day. One thing about the graph that surprises me is some people can live on \$2.15 a day. One question I have is how does someone live on \$2.15 a day. The graph is shifted to one side and is **not symmetric**. The data shows that poverty is heavily concentrated in Somalia, which is in Africa, where up to 70% of people make less than \$2.15 per day. Africa is an **outlier** because the other countries have less than 10% of people who make less than \$2.15 per day. When I compare I see that Africa on the graph is higher and South America is lower. In conclusion, the graph shows which area has the most poverty.

The graph displays the levels of poverty across various populations. It also indicates the percentage of people affected and the regions they belong to. One surprising thing about the graph is how individuals can work for such low wages, especially since a significant amount of poverty is found in Africa. It's shocking to see that people there earn so little despite their hard work. I wonder why their jobs do not pay them more. Another confusing aspect of the graph is why most of the poverty is concentrated in Africa, and I am curious about how people manage to live on such low incomes. What do they spend their money on if they earn so little? In summary, the graph highlights the struggles of those living in poverty, showing that many people are affected and providing various statistics about different regions and populations.

According to the graph, Somalia is the poorest. I wonder why this is and what happened to their money. Out of 8 billion people in the world, Africa is the poorest. Africa is an outlier because the other countries have less than 10% of people making less than \$2.15 per day. The graph shows rates of poverty in Somalia, Nigeria, and India. This graph shows what the presidents in Africa have to deal with how poor they are. The graph highlights the urgency to address the causes of poverty and the need to also implement effective and comprehensive measures. Graph suggests that Brazil's poverty is nearly negligible. One question I have is what are the people of power doing to help this nationwide poverty. How will they deal with this social problem, if they ever do?

A lot of people earn more than \$2.15, according to the graph. What surprises me is that nearly a billion people actually live on just \$2.15. I'm also puzzled about why there's no data for Belarus, South Africa, and Ethiopia. It makes me wonder how we can still have such extreme poverty. When I look at the comparison, I notice that the graph for Africa is higher, while South America's is lower. The graph is **skewed to the right** and isn't balanced or **symmetrical**. The data shows that poverty is mostly found in democratic Africa, which stands out because in other countries, less than 10% of people earn under \$2.15 a day.

<p>The graph indicates that 35% of individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa live on less than \$2.15 daily. What really stands out to me is that in high-income countries, 80% of people earn over \$30 a day. When I compare the disparities between Sub-Saharan Africa and high-income nations, the difference between the red and blue sections is striking. One factor contributing to poverty in Africa may be the legacy of slavery. In conclusion, I believe we should be more concerned about poverty, as it is a horrible aspect of how the world operates.</p>	<p>One surprising thing about the graph is that it shows really high poverty rates in Somalia at 70%, while Nigeria has a lower rate of 30% and India is even lower at 10%. It also indicates that Brazil's poverty rate is almost non-existent, which supports what many people believe. Another part of the graph points out that poverty is still a big problem in Africa, with some small improvements but still a lot of people affected. It stresses the need to tackle the root causes of poverty and to put in place effective and comprehensive solutions to help reduce poverty in Africa. The graph is <b>skewed right</b> and isn't <b>symmetrical</b>. The data reveals that poverty is especially severe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where around 70% of people live on less than \$2.15 a day. Africa stands out because in other countries, less than 10% of people earn that little. This graph makes me feel motivated to help those in poverty since it shows that many people are struggling and need money for basic things like food, shelter, and hygiene.</p>
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<p>Poverty impacts all of us in some form or another. Poverty does not discriminate based on race or gender. Poverty is a vicious monster that can rip happiness from the soul. When I first experienced poverty, I was 12 years old. I remember the sight of unpaid bills and the smell of TV dinners instead of home-cooked meals. I remember the taste of the bland, lukewarm mashed potatoes from the microwave and feeling the roughness of the hotel bed sheets. I recall hearing the deep, stressful sighs, wondering how they would get through the next month. It was disheartening to experience aspects of poverty and struggling to live day to day. Seeing others in society facing poverty was also difficult, especially seeing children. That hit me like a bad night with the stomach flu. I suddenly started to notice that poverty is like a leech that would suck every ounce out of you. I spoke to my friend about the challenges of poverty and how people are impacted, and I remember them saying, "that they were grateful and sad that they went through those struggles because it made them the person they are today but hated that they had to endure so much sadness". I told them, "That enduring those experiences got them to the point they are right now, that God always has a plan for you, but he will put you through the toughest of tests to test your faith. He will bless you tenfold if you endure and have strong faith". Lastly, to help end or reduce poverty, we must support each other through prayers, faith, community, love, acceptance, support, and compassion.</p>	<p>Poverty is a challenging issue that impacts many. What is poverty? Poverty can be defined as the lack of resources to meet basic needs. For example, not having enough money to buy food, clothing, and shelter and, not having access to education, healthcare, or a stable job, not being able to participate in activities that others do. People may experience poverty differently, whether they observe it or experience it firsthand. I remember growing up and remembering when I fell into poverty. My first run in poverty, I recall seeing a lot of homeless people living on the streets. They lived in tents, on the street, in canyons, near ditches, and near the roads. I remember talking to my mom about it, and she told me, "She saw the same thing: many people with no houses. I asked her, "Why do people not have money for housing?". She said, "People do not make enough money to pay bills". I feel that poverty is as dire as a storm, ravaging and creating havoc in people's lives. If we put our minds to fighting poverty, we can reduce it by educating people, which allows them access to better jobs and more pay.</p>
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Poverty impacts many people in many ways. How poverty impacts me, is when my mom struggled to get me what I needed. To start, when I went to school, I would see all these kids in brand new shoes and clean clothes. Christmas was another time. I would see other kids get more than 3 presents and I was lucky to get any. Poverty is a vicious monster that can rip through cities and neighborhoods. I recall a time when my mom and I would drive to the store. We would see a lot of people experiencing poverty. We would see a lot of homeless sleeping on the sidewalks and drug addicts doing drugs in front of kids walking by. I feel that poverty does not discriminate. Seeing others in society facing poverty, especially the children, hits me like a spear going through my heart. My mom and I spoke about the challenges of poverty and how people are impacted, and I remember her saying, “a lot are addicted to drugs and alcohol, that’s why they are in the streets.” I replied, “then people should take them to rehab so they could be sober and that might help them by getting a job so they won’t have to go through poverty like that.” Finally, I do not know what the solutions are, but I feel that we can make a difference if we support those who have addictions with more rehab facilities.

Poverty impacts people everyday in many ways throughout the world. Growing up, it was difficult at times in our house : living paycheck to paycheck was stressful for all. During the holidays as a kid was a very challenging time. Christmas was a difficult time growing up and seeing all the other kids with new toys and clothes. I was fortunate to get some presents but remember the struggle my family faced financially. There was a time, one Christmas when my brother and I only got one present. I remember my mom saying, “Sorry kids, this is all I could get you this year, I love you guys.”Not understanding at the time,it hit me hard, like a truck. To add salt to the wound I remember lying to my friends about what I got to make myself feel better about my situation.It was a sad depressing feeling, but not being able to do anything was the hardest part. Despite my mom doing her best, I still think back to that day, especially during Christmas time.Though I was sad that we didn’t get many presents, I was still happy because it showed me to be thankful for what you got and life isn’t always what you want. My mom would always do everything to make my brother and I happy and I appreciate and love her for that. Simultaneously, there are those who are not so fortunate, for example, children in Third world countries sometimes have it worse. I remember visiting Mexico when I was a child, and it made me realize that others are not so fortunate. When I saw the conditions that these children were living in such as having nothing, limited clothes, and even no shelter, it made me grateful for what I had.The suffering and pain made me realize I should feel grateful and blessed.

These experiences are the ones that make you the person you are nowadays. For me it showed me an understanding of appreciation through humbling times. Let me end by saying, everyone struggles and goes through hardships but don’t judge someone for what they have or make fun of someone for what they get because you don’t know what they are going through.

I woke up. It’s 2018, and I am 11 years old. On the first day of school, I have to ride my bike to school with my mom and siblings. My mom says, “Hurry up, you will be late”. It is now the second week of school; I recall my mom getting into an argument with my grandma, which left us homeless. I still remember the day we got kicked out, like yesterday. I heard yelling and screaming, “If you do not like it here, leave then”. My mom came and told me, “Get your clothes and put them in your backpack”. The next thing I knew, my mom, three siblings, and I were walking away from a place we called home with only the clothes on our backs and the stuff in our backpacks. The next thing I knew, I asked my little brother, “What happened?” He shrugged his shoulders and said, “I don’t know”! At that point, it was pure silence, except for my baby brother crying and trying to calm him down. My baby brother is only one year old, not knowing what is taking place, and my little sister is as confused as I am. Over the next two months, we slept in a tent at my mom’s friend’s house. Every day, I wake up and ride my bike to school until one day, my mom says, “We are going somewhere with her friend”. I remember gathering all our belongings and the nice old lady coming to pick us up and take us to her house. She took us to her house for about two weeks. While at her house, my brother and I helped around the house and did chores. He was only eight then, so I did most of the chores while we talked. After the chores were finished, we would eat and then nap. This repeated every day for over two weeks until my mom told us we were leaving. We left as fast as we came, but I had a feeling that it wouldn’t be our last time there. We are back riding our bikes to school and eating from 7-11 because our EBT card has been replenished. This kept repeating until we couldn’t keep our tent in the same location. We picked up what we had and moved to the Tijuana River Valley near my dad’s work. The people who owned the property near the ranch let us stay in their RV until our welcome was overdue. I recall the day my mom and dad asked for more time to stay but was kicked out to the curb. Only this time dad came with us. We bounced around from place to place until finally, we ended up at a friend of the family’s house. That is when my little brother and sister asked me “When are we going home”? I sighed and said, “we are going home soon, I just don’t know when”. Consequently, once again, we had to leave but this time we went back to my mom’s friend’s house that we left some time ago. However, my dad didn’t go, and little did my brother know that this would be the last time we saw him for years. We settled in at the nice old lady’s house for the second time but we had an X-Box this time.We could play it if we earned it by doing easy chores. This time around, I felt different. Something changed with me. I started not going to school and when I did, I would fight.I was struggling but knew I had to try and stay strong for my mom. After visiting a while at the lovely old lady’s house, she took us to ECTIC. It was a church-run homeless shelter. We had to pay with our EBT car to stay. It wasn’t the best of places, but it helped us save on getting a car. I have experienced poverty, and it was challenging for me and my family. I did start committing crimes to get money to help my family, but I didn’t stop when they were stable. I am now in jail and realize that being in jail hurts those who supported and loved me. I tell my story because I know others struggle with similar situations but lack resources or do not know where to get help. I believe that there should be more programs such as the Church that helped us, that could help families who are homeless and help them save to get a car and get back on their feet.



<p>Poverty is a challenging issue that impacts many. Poverty is a lack of resources to meet basic needs of people. Many people living in poverty may experience fear, anxiety, or depression. People may experience poverty in different ways like not having enough money for food, clothes or medical care. I remember growing up and remember when I first saw the atrocities of what living in poverty can do to someone. I feel that it can take the soul out of someone's body and turn them into a zombie. I remember when I was a little kid and talking to my mom and telling her that "I wanted WWE figurines" and she responded, "no, we don't have the money, we need to pay rent". In addition to paying rent, what little money we had had to also put food on the table. The older I got, I realized that poverty is like a parasite that can eat you from inside out. As I became more aware of the impact that poverty has had on me and its impact on society. I realized that there should be more programs to help reduce poverty such as creating new jobs. Moreover, this can help those experiencing poverty be employed and make money to help with basic essentials such as food, housing and medical.</p>	<p>Poverty affects everything around us including crime rate, addiction, homelessness, mental health, and having basic essentials such as food and water which can be devastating to families. Many people are affected by poverty and struggle every day. There are those who we can see who are experiencing poverty who may be homeless but there are many that go hungry that we don't or can't see and go to bed on an empty stomach. That would feel like being punished for a crime you didn't commit. Some people live it and experience it day to day, others see it in the streets, or they hear about it on the news. It surprises me that in the United States how poverty impacts society as a whole and on so many different levels. The consequences of poverty include people suffering from resources, access to healthcare, wellbeing, and basic necessities such as food and water. I remember asking a Homie, "why do we see people suffering and living on the streets". He said, "people have struggled to find good paying jobs, and can't afford medication to help their minds and they go crazy". Knowing what I know now and having seen people suffering, I feel that we can make a difference if we can create more jobs, prepare ourselves for the future with "real world" jobs. In the end, it is not about what we have but it's about helping those in need.</p>
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<p>Poverty is defined as not having enough money to meet basic needs including food, clothing, and shelter. I recall when I was younger, seeing many homeless smoke crack right by my house, most being skinny like a twig. Others live in and out of their cars. Looking back, I would argue that the majority have some sort of mental issues and lack of resources to get the proper care that they need. Other obstacles that people face by living on the streets come from drug dealers that live in the same community and supply them with illegal drugs. Drug dealers often act as if they are friends to the homeless but in reality, they want to feed the homeless addiction so they can feed their family. I remember letting the homeless homie stay the night and the next morning my father was shocked, and screamed, "No more homeless people over!"</p> <p>I was dumbfounded and asked "why not?" Meanwhile, thinking to myself wondering why he would be worried about a child who needed a roof over their head and a meal. He responded "you wouldn't want them to steal from us, would you?" Eventually I understood his concerns but still felt the homeless homie needed help. To sum it up, I feel that we can fight against poverty by helping those in need and giving them a hand up.</p>	<p>Many people are affected by poverty and struggle every day. My experience with poverty was challenging. My mom worked two jobs, putting food on the table and clothes on my back. Every day was a struggle, and I love my mom to death for doing what she did and acting as both my mother and father. Poverty is difficult for me. I was moving from house to house and eventually had to move multiple times in a year. Some people deal with some form of poverty and experience it every day. Others see it in the streets or hear about it in the news. It surprises me that in the United States how poverty impacts society as a whole and on so many different levels. Poverty is awful and sad, and I wish no one had to go through it. Poverty has changed my life, but I promise I am going to pay my mom back one day for her trying her best to provide for us. One way to reduce poverty is to have better-paying jobs and more job training to get a better job and higher pay.</p>
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<p>Many people are affected by poverty and struggle every day. Most people experience poverty in one form or another daily. Unfortunately, some people have to live it while others see it as those who struggle. I question how we can live in the United States and why we have so many struggles and live in poverty. Poverty's negative impact on society often means that people have less access to health care and usually see people who live on the streets who struggle with mental health. In addition, children in poverty may be less likely to attend school, which can lead to dropping out, leading to lower-paying jobs and less income for housing, food, and essentials. I can recall when I was out with my family and saw a lot of poor people sleeping on the streets. After we got home, I was bothered by what I saw. I asked my mom, "We live in one of the richest countries in the world. Why are there so many homeless? She replied, " It is because of our government, and they are stingy with their money and often send it to other countries for wars". Once the conversation was done, we agreed that poverty was like a tsunami that could tear a city apart and leave people stranded. I now realize that poverty is a complex issue with many consequences. I feel some ways to reduce poverty is to Improve access for those who need mental health needs and provide education to help with higher paying jobs. Finally, let me end by saying that we need to bring more awareness to Poverty and help those in need.</p>	<p>Poverty is a growing issue that should be addressed. I recall growing up with minimal necessities, but I always had something. When I was born, I was taken away from my biological mother and brought into a foster family. This family ended up adopting me at the age of three years old. The woman who had adopted me was struggling but had a heart like a pot of gold for me and her foster babies. I remember waking up to fruit for breakfast all the time, my mom would holler from the kitchen and say, "Come eat my bowl of fruit breakfast." Though I was fortunate to have breakfast and a roof over my head, and I have never experienced poverty, I have seen it. As a child, I have never understood homelessness, but I remember the first time I witnessed homelessness was when I was in downtown San Diego. I remember smelling the aroma of pee and seeing tweakers dragging themselves out of the ditches. When you are young, you have many questions, so I asked every adult, "Why is he so dirty"? They often replied with "no access to clean water to bathe themselves with and no roof over their head." I do not wish poverty upon my worst enemy, but it's out there. One way we can reduce poverty is through loving foster care that supports, provides, and cares about those in their care.</p>
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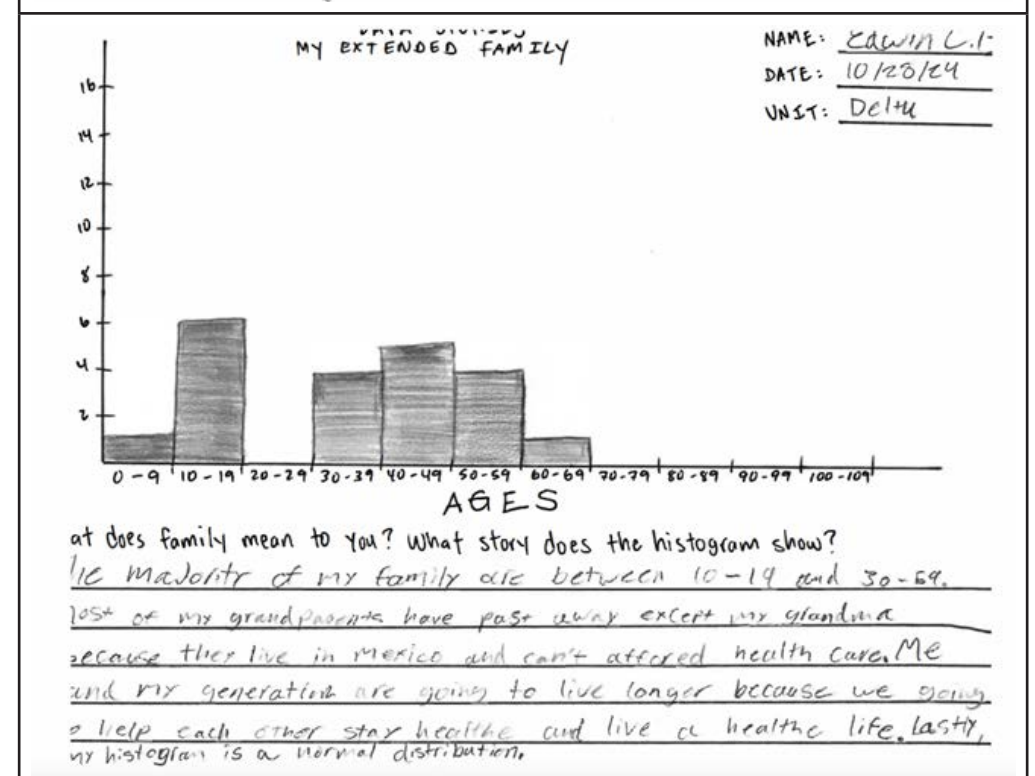
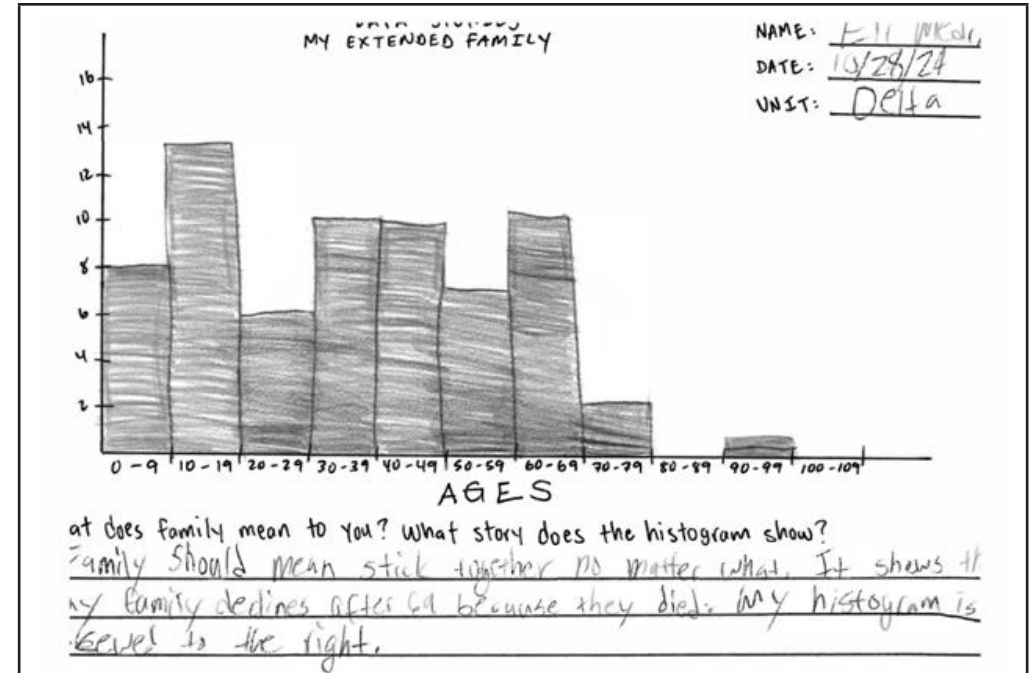
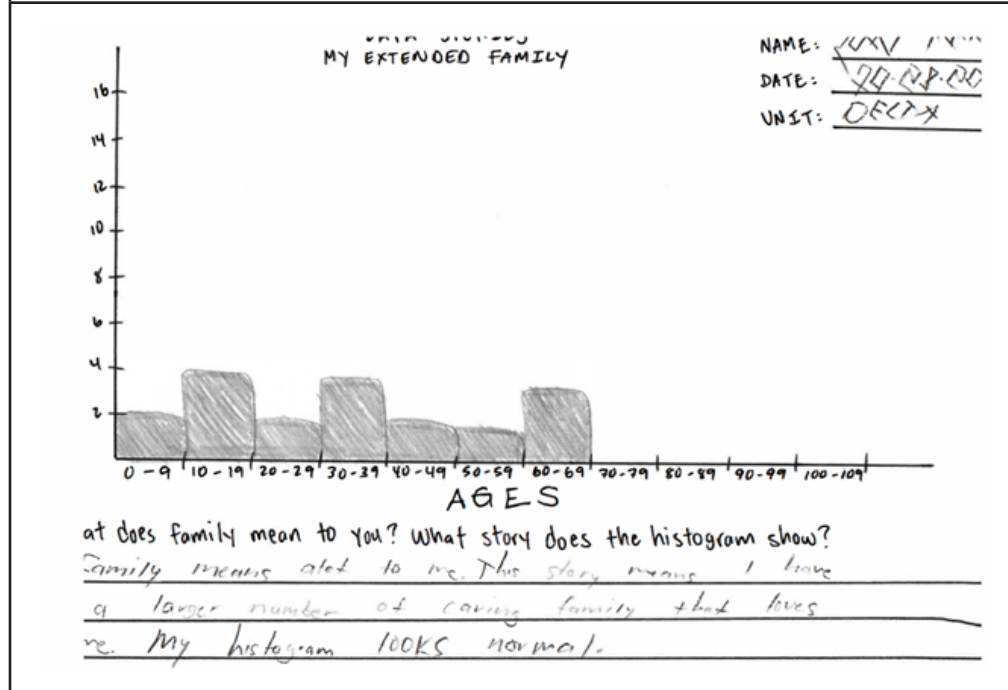
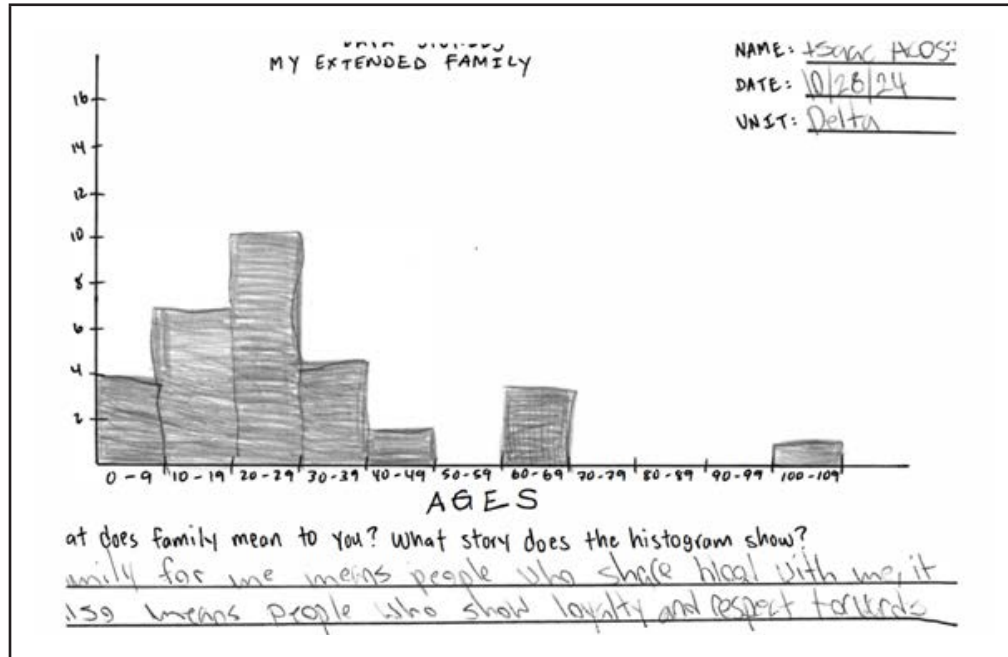
<p>Poverty is insufficient money to meet basic needs, including food, clothing, and shelter. Poverty affected me during my upbringing. At a young age, poverty taught me to fend for myself and get necessities in any way possible. Poverty caused me to grow up fast and live the life of a gangbanger because I felt like I had to make some adult decisions at a young age. I felt as if I was trapped and had no way out. There was a time when I was 8 years old, and I was left at home all alone; it felt like an eternity, but in reality, it wasn't that long. My head was spinning with negative thoughts about what could happen then. I could remember when someone knocked on the door, and I went and found protection in case it was an intruder wanting to harm. The knocking stopped and I was able to breathe a sigh of relief. When you are a kid, you can't understand why things happen the way they do, and being unable to control it doesn't help the situation either. I think we need to focus on reducing poverty by having people earn more money so they can pay their bills and not have to work all the time so they can spend time with their kids.</p>	<p>According to the graph, many people in Africa live on \$2.15 per day. One thing about the graph that surprises me is some people can live on \$2.15 a day. One question I have is how does someone live on \$2.15 a day. The graph is shifted to one side and is <b>not symmetric</b>. The data shows that poverty is heavily concentrated in Somalia, which is in Africa, where up to 70% of people make less than \$2.15 per day. Africa is an <b>outlier</b> because the other countries have less than 10% of people who make less than \$2.15 per day. When I compare I see that Africa on the graph is higher and South America is lower. In conclusion, the graph shows which area has the most poverty.</p>
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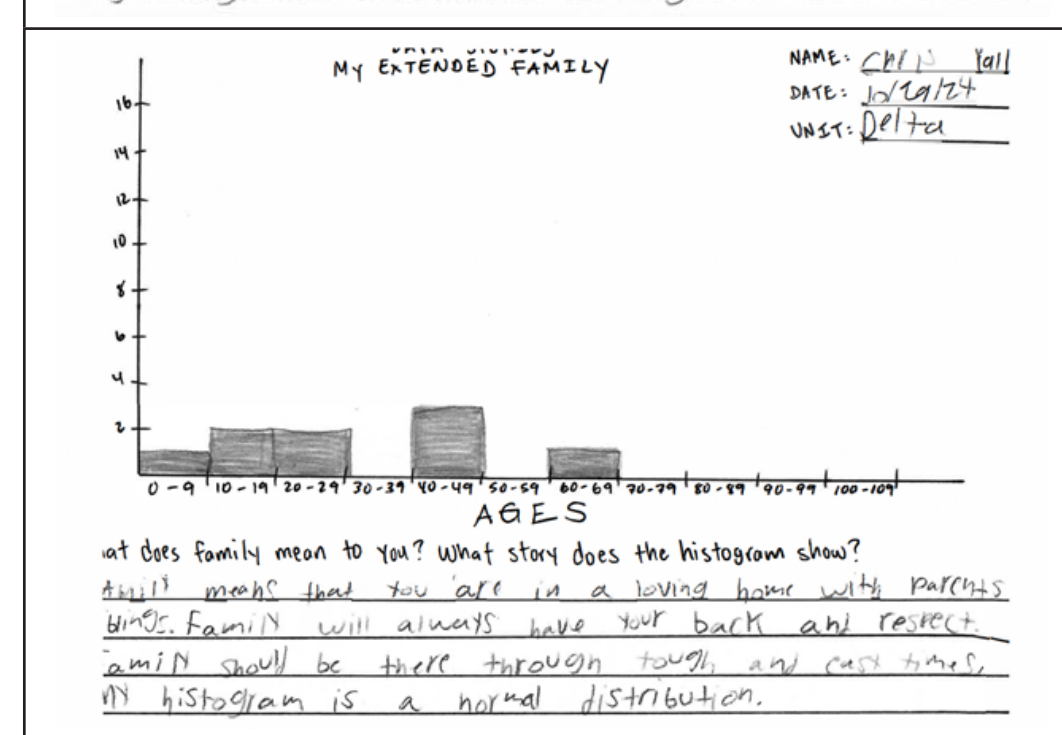
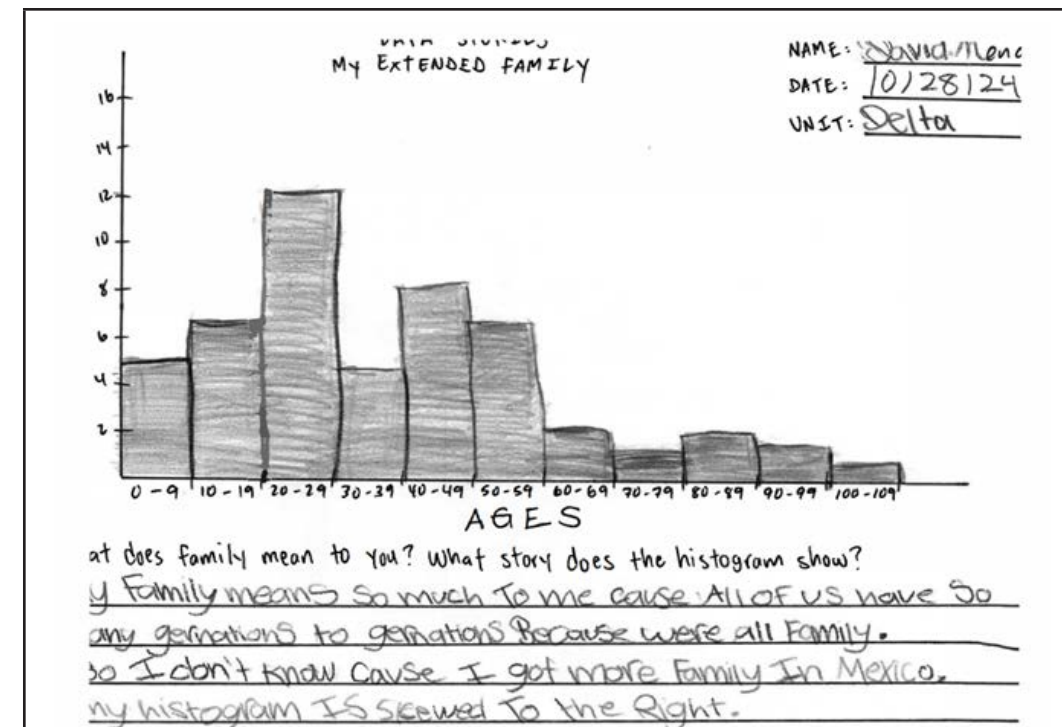
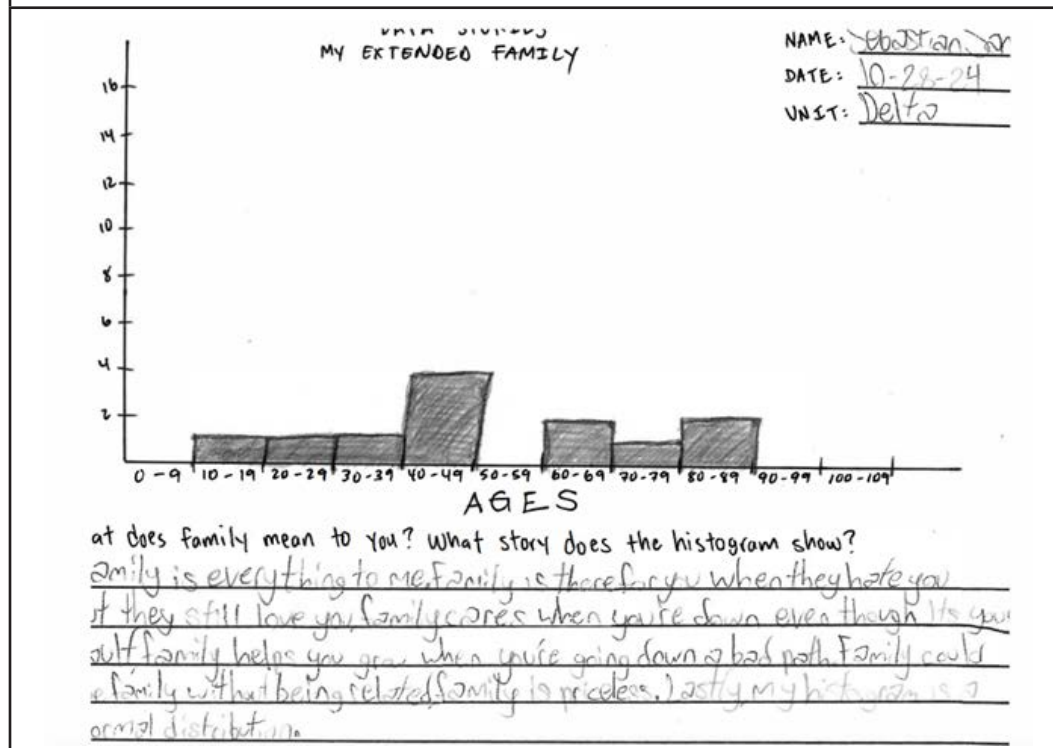
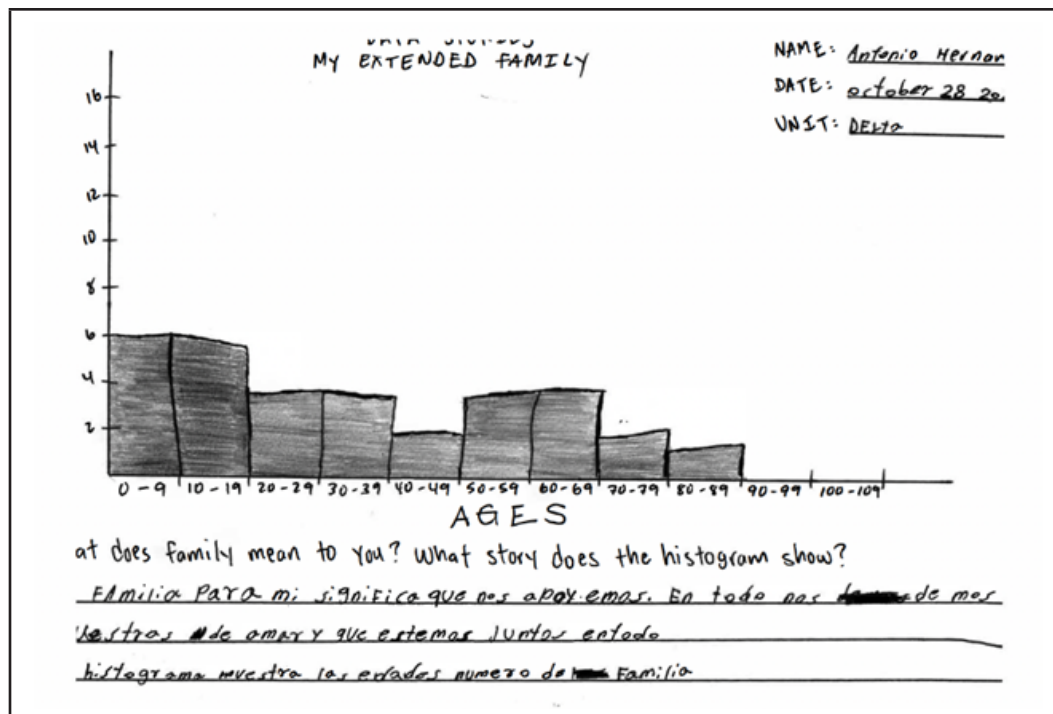
<p>According to the graph, Somalia is the poorest. I wonder why this is and what happened to their money. Out of 8 billion people in the world, Africa is the poorest. Africa is an <b>outlier</b> because the other countries have less than 10% of people making less than \$2.15 per day. The graph shows rates of poverty in Somalia, Nigeria, and India. This graph shows what the presidents in Africa have to deal with how poor they are. The graph highlights the urgency to address the causes of poverty and the need to also implement effective and comprehensive measures. Graph suggests that Brazil's poverty is nearly negligible. One question I have is what are the people of power doing to help this nationwide poverty. How will they deal with this social problem, if they ever do?</p>	<p>The graph displays the levels of poverty across various populations. It also indicates the percentage of people affected and the regions they belong to. One surprising thing about the graph is how individuals can work for such low wages, especially since a significant amount of poverty is found in Africa. It's shocking to see that people there earn so little despite their hard work. I wonder why their jobs do not pay them more. Another confusing aspect of the graph is why most of the poverty is concentrated in Africa, and I am curious about how people manage to live on such low incomes. What do they spend their money on if they earn so little? In summary, the graph highlights the struggles of those living in poverty, showing that many people are affected and providing various statistics about different regions and populations.</p>
<p>A lot of people earn more than \$2.15, according to the graph. What surprises me is that nearly a billion people actually live on just \$2.15. I'm also puzzled about why there's no data for Belarus, South Africa, and Ethiopia. It makes me wonder how we can still have such extreme poverty. When I look at the comparison, I notice that the graph for Africa is higher, while South America's is lower. The graph is <b>skewed to the right</b> and isn't balanced or <b>symmetrical</b>. The data shows that poverty is mostly found in democratic Africa, which stands out because in other countries, less than 10% of people earn under \$2.15 a day.</p>	<p>The graph indicates that 35% of individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa live on less than \$2.15 daily. What really stands out to me is that in high-income countries, 80% of people earn over \$30 a day. When I compare the disparities between Sub-Saharan Africa and high-income nations, the difference between the red and blue sections is striking. One factor contributing to poverty in Africa may be the legacy of slavery. In conclusion, I believe we should be more concerned about poverty, as it is a horrible aspect of how the world operates.</p>

<p>One surprising thing about the graph is that it shows really high poverty rates in Somalia at 70%, while Nigeria has a lower rate of 30% and India is even lower at 10%. It also indicates that Brazil's poverty rate is almost non-existent, which supports what many people believe. Another part of the graph points out that poverty is still a big problem in Africa, with some small improvements but still a lot of people affected. It stresses the need to tackle the root causes of poverty and to put in place effective and comprehensive solutions to help reduce poverty in Africa. The graph is <b>skewed right</b> and isn't <b>symmetrical</b>. The data reveals that poverty is especially severe in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where around 70% of people live on less than \$2.15 a day. Africa stands out because in other countries, less than 10% of people earn that little. This graph makes me feel motivated to help those in poverty since it shows that many people are struggling and need money for basic things like food, shelter, and hygiene.</p>	<p>According to the graph, I notice Somalia and Nigeria are much higher than Ethiopia, South Africa, Belarus, and Bhutan. The graph depicts high poverty rates in Somalia (70%) and relatively low rates in Nigeria (30%) and India (10%) which is surprising. The graph suggests Brazil's poverty rate is nearly negligible, corroborating my belief that there is less poverty there. The graph is <b>skewed right</b> and is <b>not symmetric</b>. The data shows that poverty is heavily concentrated in Democratic Republic of the Congo (Africa) where up to (70%) of people make less than \$2.15 per day. Africa is an outlier because the other countries have less than (10%) of people making less than \$2.15 per day.</p>
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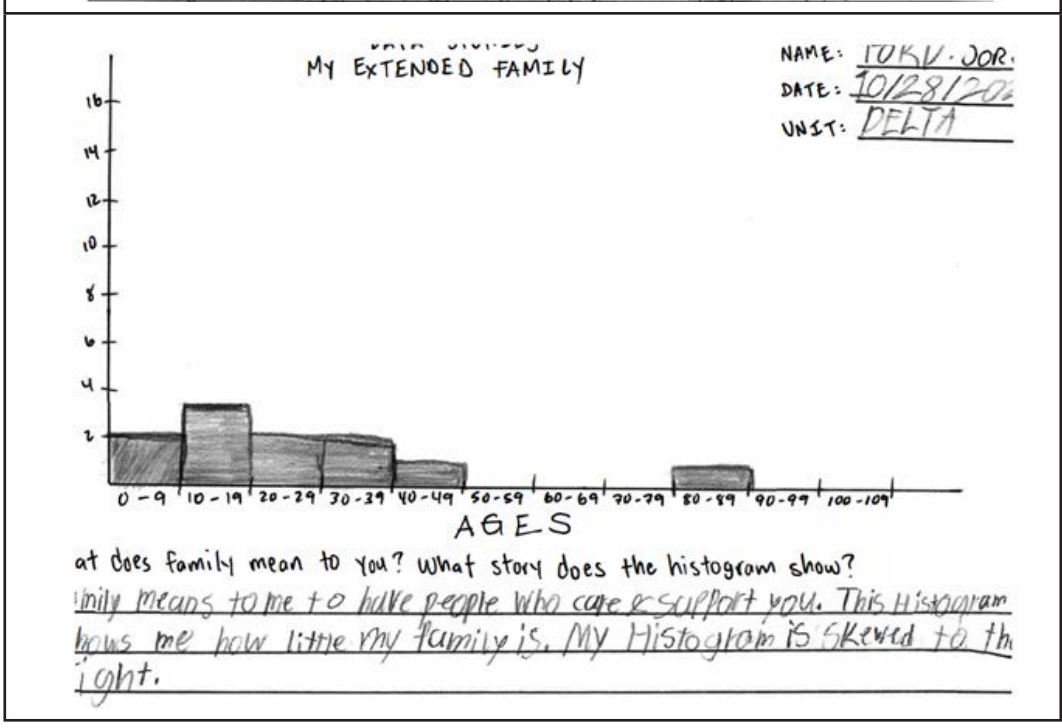
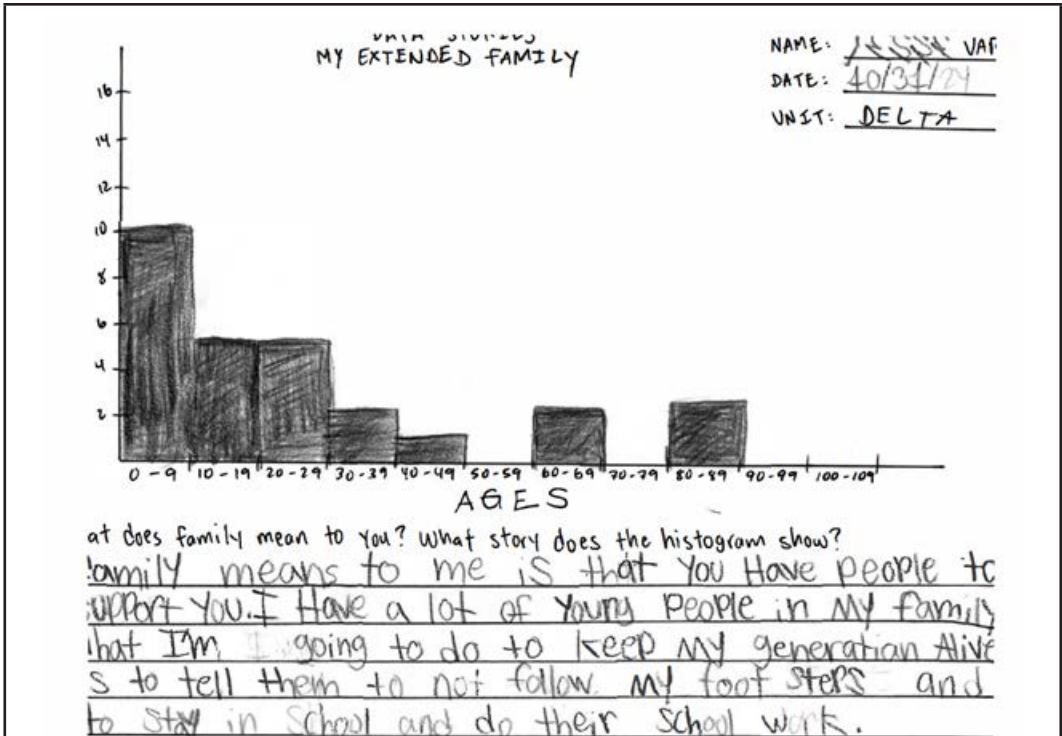
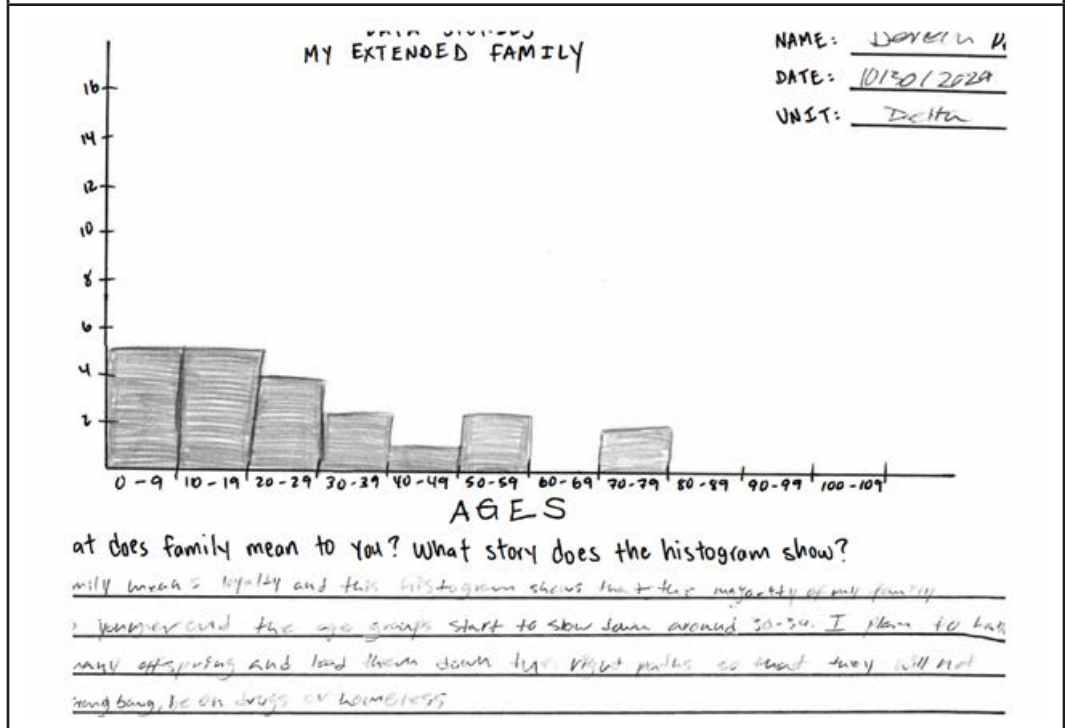
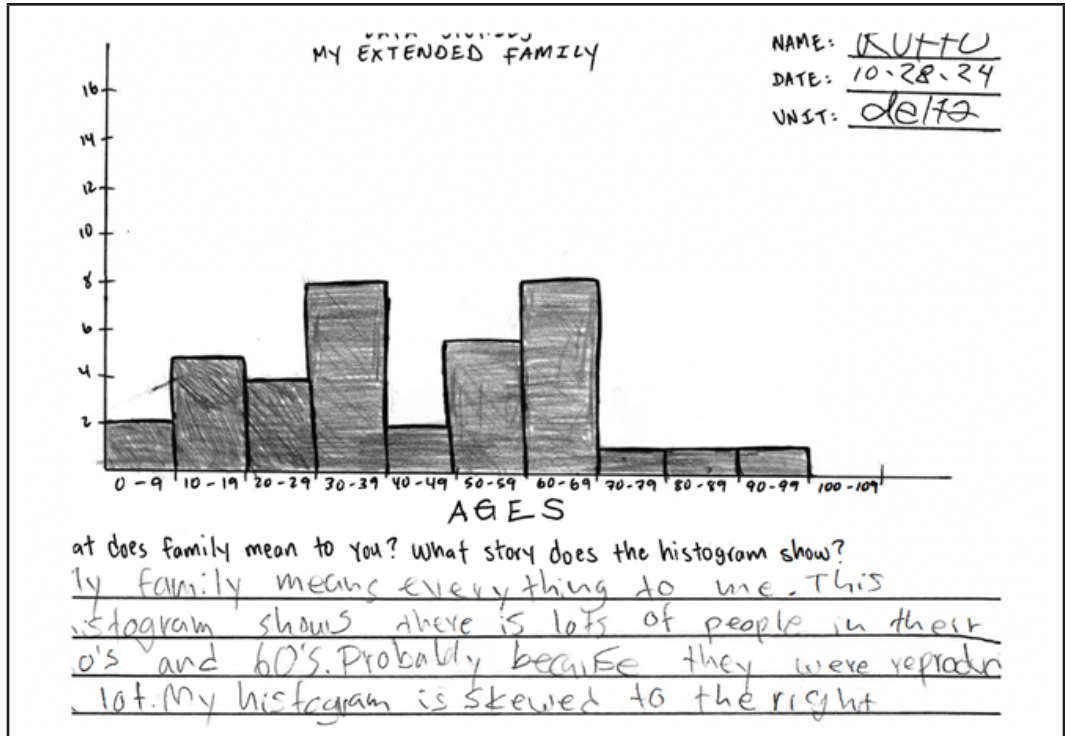


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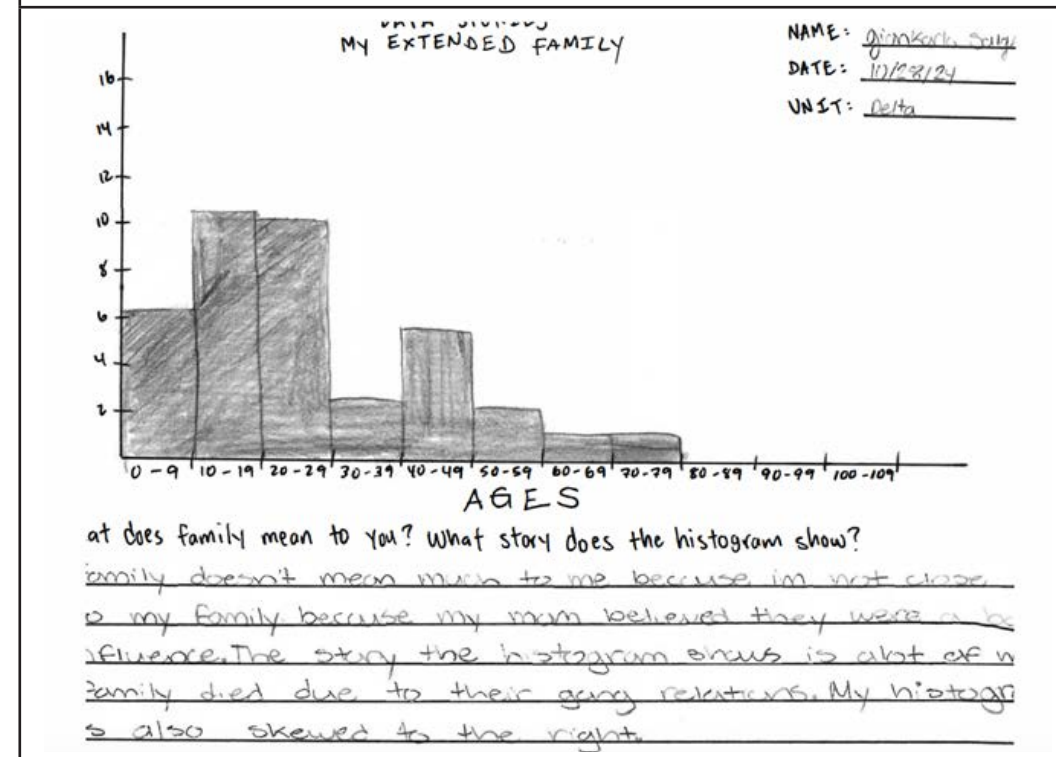
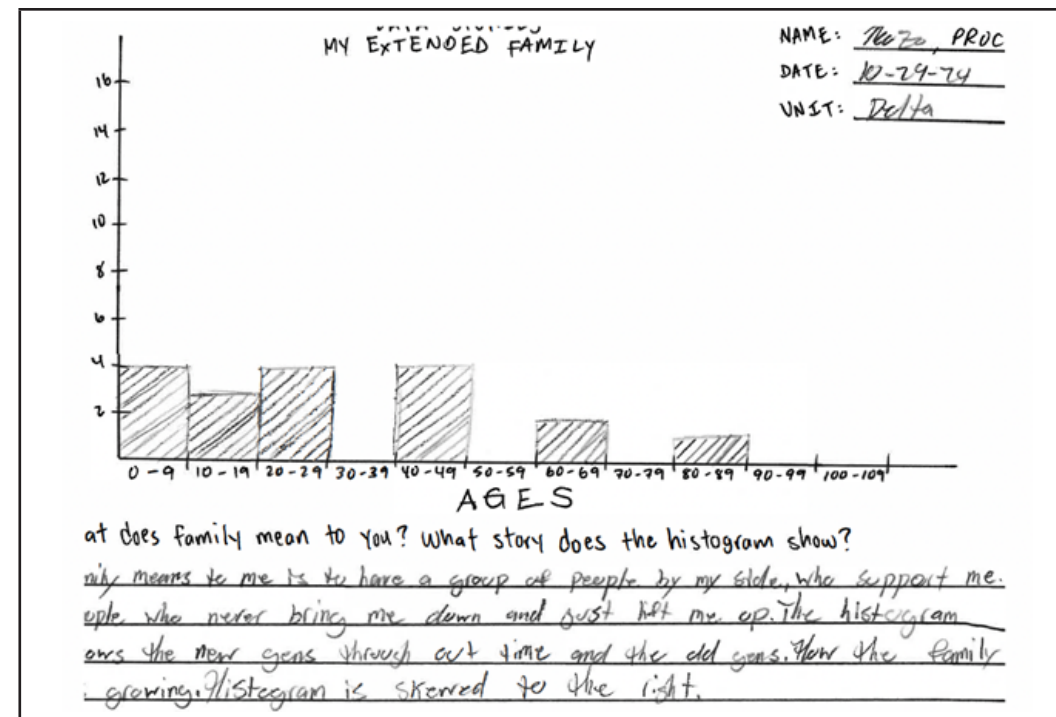
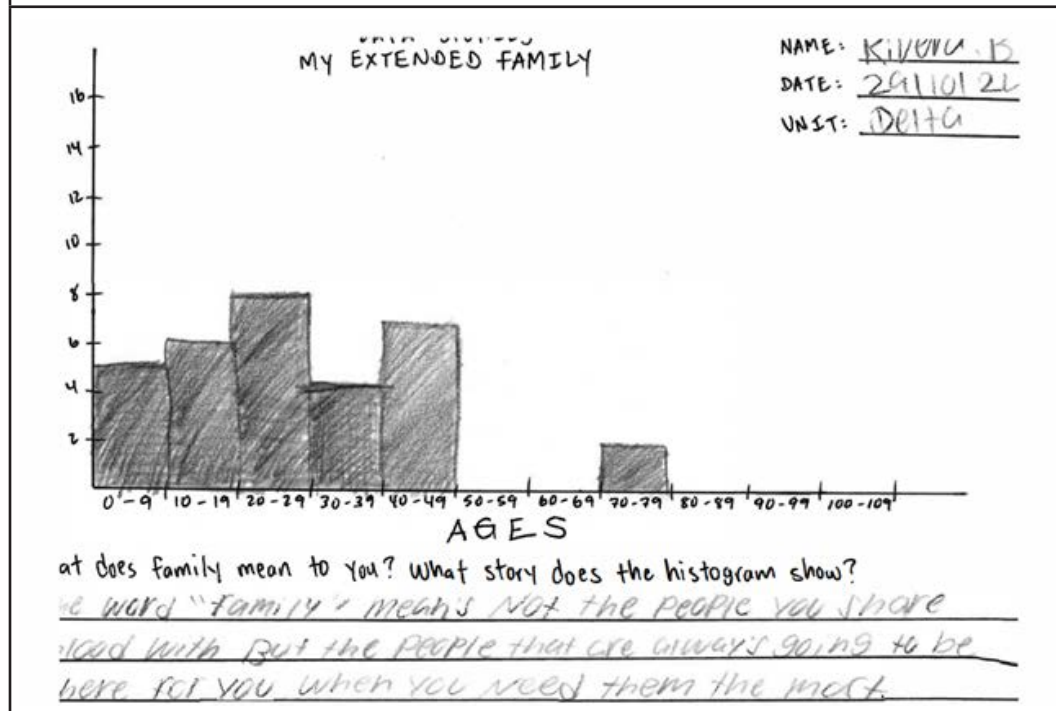
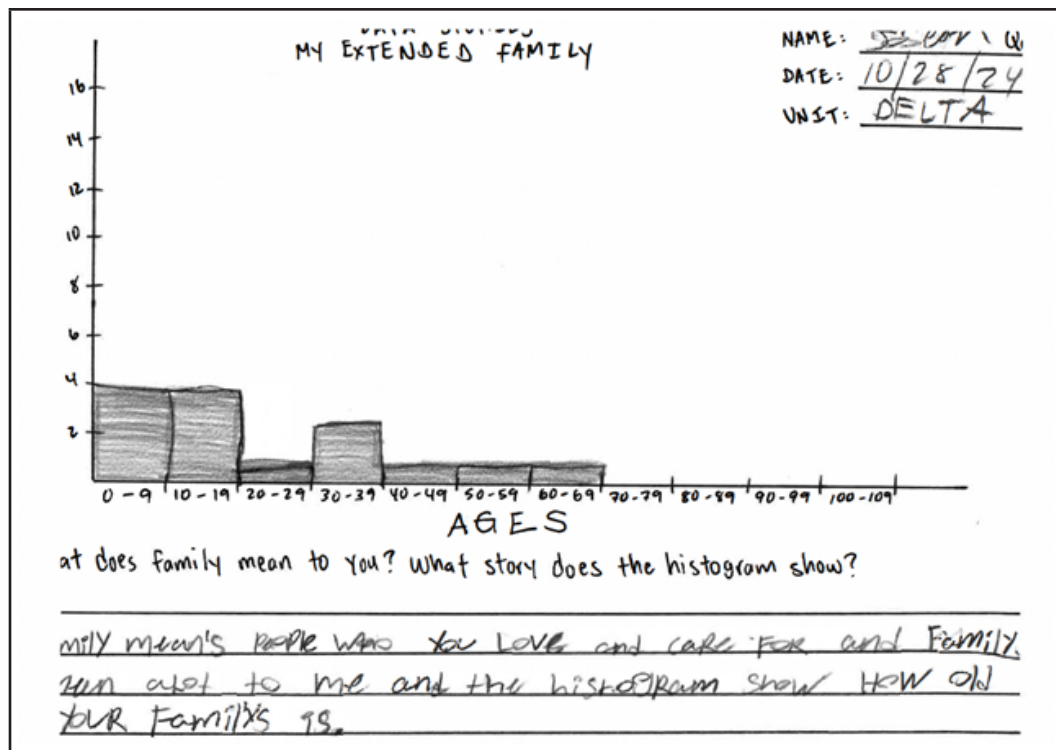












As our San Diego County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Gloria E. Ciriza said, “Every child deserves to feel accepted for who they are and to have the opportunity to share their greatest assets.” This anthology is a collection of personal narratives and data stories from our JCCS students countywide that showcases their strengths, critical thinking, identity, and resilience. The goal of this anthology is to build community, belonging, and ultimately connection. As Jimmy Neil smith said, “We are all storytellers. We all live in a network of stories. There isn’t a stronger connection between people than storytelling.”

## CONTRIBUTING SITES:

- BAYSIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL
- CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION CENTER (CTEC)
- CUYAMACA COMMUNITY SCHOOL
- ESCONDIDO COMMUNITY SCHOOL
- MONARCH SCHOOL
- NORTH COUNTY TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY INDEPENDENT STUDIES
- NORTH COUNTY TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY (NCTA)
- PROJECT SAFE NORTH
- SAN PASQUAL ACADEMY
- SOAR ACADEMY - EAST MESA
- SOAR ACADEMY - YOUTH TRANSITION CAMPUS
- SOUL ACADEMY