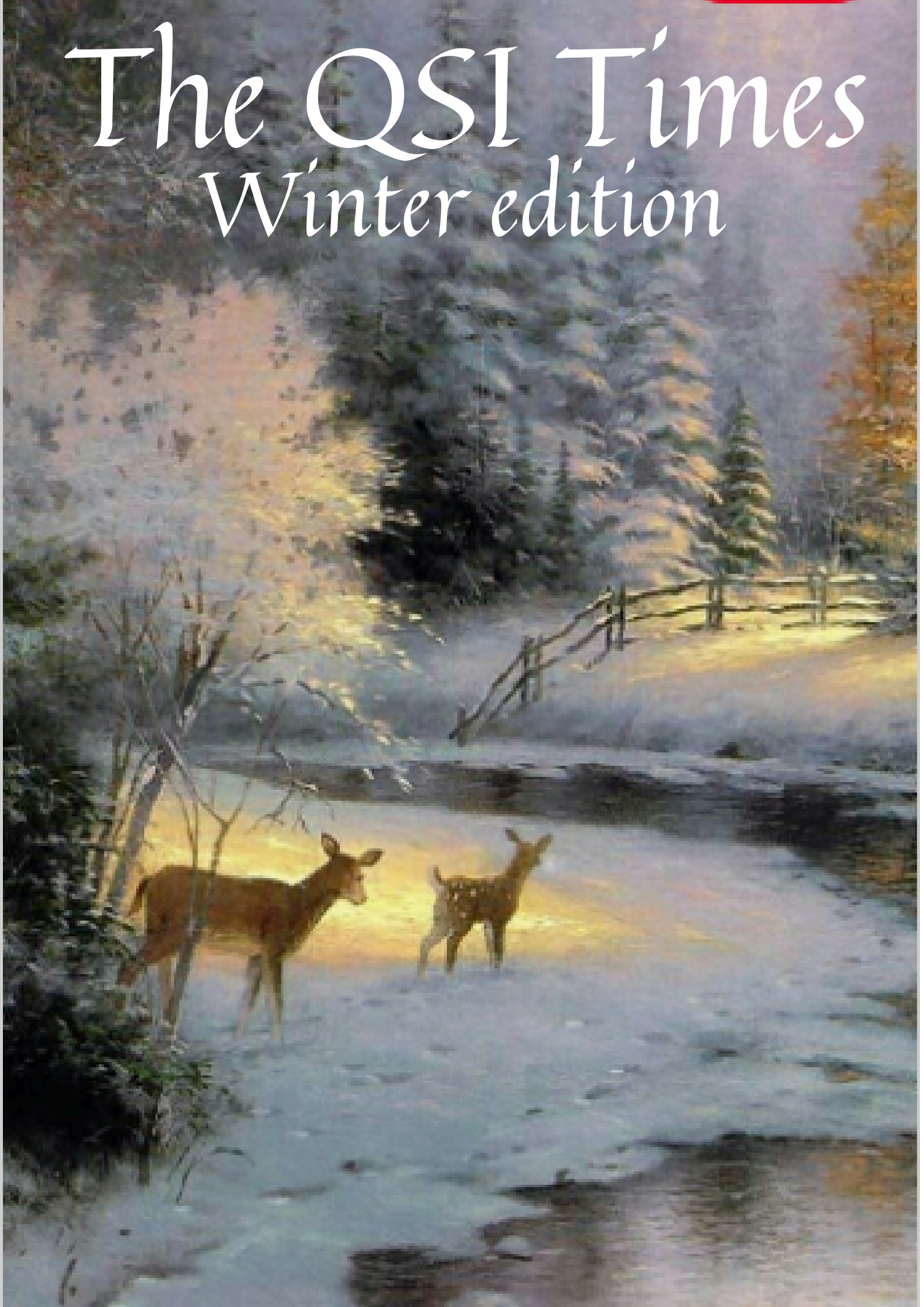
The QSI Times

Winter edition



Letter from editors

Hey QSI, thanks for reading our second newspaper edition this year! We are all super proud of the work we've put in, and hope that you enjoy reading all the amazing winter-themed articles! Stay warm!

-LJ

Dear QSIB community,

As senior editor of QSI TIMES, it is with both joy and sadness that I look at the changing seasons, knowing that this will be my last time experiencing them at QSIB. With universities slowly offering positions, it is becoming very real that this time will soon come to an end. So for us seniors, remember to soak up every moment of every day! As it will soon be over. For the rest of the community, remember to appreciate the time you have with your classmates, because while it may seem far away, the end of highschool approaches you too!

Diana

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Christmas Around The World

By Laura Jakubik



Did you know over 100 countries worldwide celebrate Christmas? That's more than half of all the countries in the world! All of these countries have unique traditions that some of us have never heard of. Ranging from Canada in North America to The Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station in Antarctica, the traditions vary from singing carols to racing each other three times around the South Pole.

Starting with Canada, the people share universal traditions such as decorating the Christmas tree (started in Germany) and houses with festive lights. However, Canada has its own unique traditions such as ice skating thanks to their cold climate, Santa Claus parades and a Christmas dinner consisting of turkey with cranberry sauce and tourtiere (meat pie). As for regional traditions, the Quebec natives like to do Reveillon Feasts (multi-course dinner celebrated by French cultures) and the Newfoundland natives like to do Mummering (the Newfoundland spin of Christmas carolling).

Moving to South America, Brazilians also decorate their homes and the outdoors, but they have unique traditions such as Secret Santa, Misa de Galo, Presepios and a late night feast. Most Brazilian Christmas traditions are rooted in the Christian faith. The Misa de Galo is the midnight mass celebrating Jesus' birth, and the Presepios are Christian displays of Jesus' birth; carefully crafted by hand from materials such as clay and wood. As for Secret Santa, this is a tradition seen in many places around the world. Secret Santa is essentially a gift exchange with your loved ones where the gift giver knows who they're making a gift for, but the gift receiver doesn't know who they're getting the gift from. In Brazil, Secret Santa is known as Amigo Secreto and works slightly differently. Instead of one big gift exchange on Christmas Eve, small, anonymous gifts are given throughout December, and the big reveal of who gave what gift is done on Christmas Eve.



Travelling north now, in Slovakia the Christmas traditions are slightly different from Brazil and Canada. Slovak people also eat a Christmas dinner on Christmas Eve (it is customary in some households to fast beforehand), but rather than being late at night or consisting of turkey with cranberry sauce and tourtiere, it consists of carp (a local sweetwater fish), cabbage soup and wafers, which are eaten with honey in the middle (meant to symbolise unity and the sweetness of life). Other traditions include decorating the Christmas tree and the midnight mass. There is a difference in Slovak traditions compared to those of Canada and Brazil in who brings the gifts. In Canada and Brazil, the gift bringer is Santa Claus (name varies in French and Portuguese), while in Slovak, children are taught it is Jesus who brings the gifts.South of central Europe, South Africans have traditions that are distinct from the countries mentioned so far due to the warm climate around Christmas time. South Africans like to celebrate Christmas with outdoor braais, which are essentially outdoor barbecues, where families and friends grill meats and enjoy the warm weather on Christmas day. Along with the outdoor braai, South Africans have an official Christmas dinner consisting of turkey and gammon. Leading up to the dinner and the big gift exchange the next day where Kersvader (Father Christmas) fills the stockings hung up for him with gifts, South African families tend to spend time outdoors, whether that be at the beach or by the pool!



Looking east now, the Christmas traditions in the Philippines span up to four months, beginning with the Ber months marked by the installation of parols and Belen! Essentially, Christmas decorations go up as early as September, and Simbang Gabi (a series of nine pre-dawn masses) are held from December 16th to December 24th. The Misa de Gallo, or midnight mass, is also celebrated, like in Catholic communities around the world. The family feast on Christmas Eve is called the Noche Buena (directly translated to the Good Night), and some communities like to play a gift-exchange game of Manito-Manita. Manito-Manita is essentially the Filipino variant of Secret Santa. First, a name is drawn from a hat and that person is the gift recipient with no idea who is giving them their gifts. Small gifts are given leading up to the big Christmas party where the gift givers reveal themselves and give their manito or manita a final, grand gift. The term manito-manita could have been derived from the diminutive term for brother and sister (hermanito/hermanita), or from the diminutive term for a monkey (monito/monita).



The famous archipelago southeast of the Phillipines, New Zealand, shares a similarity in its Christmas traditions with South Africa in the sense that they are focused on the warm climate. For example, summer beach celebrations, barbecues, and the pavlova and seafood meal are customary in locations all over New Zealand. The pohutukawa tree is a symbol of Christmas across the country due to the crimson flowers that bloom around Christmas time. Other traditions include playing backyard cricket, viewing Santa parades and cooking and eating the Maori hāngī feast. The feast is cooked by a traditional Maori method in which food is prepared in an underground oven using heated stones.



The food is later enjoyed with friends and family, and the tradition is a key element of Maori and Kiwi cultureLastly, believe it or not, Antarctica also has its own Christmas tradition! For Christmas (and New Year's), residents at the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station host a Race Around the World. In this race, participants have the option to run, ski or bike three laps around the South Pole marker, meaning they race through every line of longitude on the globe. Because of this, the tradition coined the term Race around the World!



Gift giving is universal around the world, but the traditions that together define Christmas are different everywhere, which is what makes Christmas unique. This holiday season, remember to not get caught up in the gifts, but focus on the true spirit of Christmas and what it means to you and your loved ones!

Everything to know about the SAT

by Sally Kim

What is SAT?

SAT is a standardized test widely used as a parameter of academic capabilities, taken among high school students for university applications. It requires high level academic skills and cognitive abilities, which are the foundations of what the students are being tested on for their aptitude for college-level studies. College board organizes the test every 1-3 months on Saturday, taken in several institutions in Slovakia. Our school, QSI Bratislava, is one of the test administrators, in which the high school students from all over Europe gather to take the exam.

How is SAT structured?

The SAT is divided into two sections: reading and writing / mathematics. You are given 64 minutes to compete the reading and writing section and 70 minutes to complete the math section, for a total of 2 hours and 14 minutes of testing. The two sections are both digital and are divided into two modules, in which the performance on the first module determines the difficulty of the second module. Given that there are a total of 54 questions in reading and writing and 44 questions in mathematics, the time allotted for each question is approximately 1.185 minutes and 1.591 minutes, respectively. There is no break in between the modules, but there is one 10-minute break between the sections, after reading and writing, before starting the mathematics section.

All the questions are in multiple-choice format, where the students are given 4 answer choices and are asked to select the correct option from (a-b). In the first section, reading and writing, students are evaluated on their skills of English language comprehension and knowledge of grammar standards that Collegeboard considers standard. The four main divisions are the following - information and ideas; craft and structure; expression of ideas; and standard English conventions.

In the second section, mathematics, students are evaluated on their skills of mathematical operations and analysis. The four main divisions – algebra; advanced math; problem-solving and data analysis; and geometry and trigonometry.



What does your SAT score tell you?

SAT is a worldwide standardized test with its long-standing reputation as a reliable measurement of the academic abilities of high school students. Collegeboard creates and uploads an annual report of SAT assessments at the end of each year. Below is the chart of total and section score statistics for test-takers from around the world, provided by Collegeboard. The chart indicates that the worldwide average SAT score lies between 1000 and 1190.

How do I register for the SAT?

- 1) Sign up to collegeboard.org
- 2) Go to 'my SAT' page
- 3) Choose the administration timeline/institution
- 4) Pay

You may sign up for a test at least two weeks ahead. Two weeks after taking the test, your score will be uploaded to collegeboard.org - My SAT tab.

real-life SAT tips from high schoolers

Practical SAT tips were gathered anonymously from the three high school students from QSI Bratislava who have taken at least three SAT tests in the administrations of August 2025 – November 20.



Tip 1: Use available test resources, websites for access to SAT suite questions

Actively use these free websites for quality questions that will let you get ready for the actual tests. In the websites with official College-board connections (Khan Academy) or the Collegeboard official websites (Collegeboard.org & Bluebook), there are plenty of questions that may appear on your real test. Remember – practice is the key!

1) oneprep.xyz -> question banks -> SAT suite question bank
2) cracksat.net
3) khanacademy.org
4) install bluebook -> take SAT practice tests
5) prepscholar.com

Tip 2: Get used to DESMOS (or know the hacks)

The math section of the SAT will let you access to the graphing calculator – DESMOS.

Because the question types provided in SAT highly overlap over past administrations, it is highly beneficial to memorize "Desmos hacks" for the frequently repeated questions. One of the students who achieved a score of 700+ pointed out those hacks available on the internet for his "Secret Key" to success. The three videos above will guide you through them, allowing you to smartly use the tools given to solve difficult math questions.

Tip 3: personalize your way of problem-solving

As mentioned above, SAT tests do not vary much over the administrations. That is, the exact question types repeat over and over again. Take plenty of practice tests and personalize the way in which you can solve the problem the best. For example, one senior student who achieved 1550+ always start reading and writing section from the back. Because the writing section, which constitutes the second half of the test, is easier for that student, completing it first and having the rest of the time for the harder questions make the test much manageable and efficient for that student. The student added that this also enables tracking exact time for the questions left of the harder science questions.

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Prep for the Next Step: UNIVERSITY

Claudia Yoder

As a senior in high school, I can attest to the fact that one of the main stressors every high school student may be facing right now are university applications, or university in general. For a large majority of the students, it's the first time they'll be away from their parents for an extended period of time, the first time they'll have unbelievably rigorous coursework, and for some possibly the first time they'll be living in a completely new country, possibly even one where they don't speak the native language. Overall, it's a stressful idea, not to mention the process of actually getting accepted into university. However, as a high schooler, there are ways you can manage this stress. I don't mean breathing exercises or meditation, though that definitely helps - you can take academic steps that will aid you in making life a little bit less stressful for your future self.

Do NOT Underestimate Your Secondary II/III Years

Many students often like to think that, as Secondary IIs and IIIs, they do not have to worry about university applications just yet. This could not be farther from the truth. As you're continuing your studies in high school, you begin to be able to choose what you want to study. Let's set an example. Student A, as a Secondary II, knows that he wants to study something related to History in the future. So, as a Sec. II, he decides to take AP World History, on which he earns a 5 at the end of the year. Student B, as a Secondary II, also knows he wants to study something related to History. However, he's intimidated by the course-load the AP curriculum requires, and decides not to take any APs until his Secondary IV year. Which student's academic resume will look more impressive to universities? I'm sure you can answer that for yourself.

Taking challenging courses as a younger highschooler sets you up for success - not only does it show universities that you're able to challenge yourself with higher level studying and education, but that you're committed to it. A student that takes APs for all four years (or a student that takes the available APs for the first two years and then goes on to pursue IB) will seem much more impressive than a student that only does AP classes for the last year of high school.

Set Deadlines

Let's introduce another example. Student C, a Secondary IV, is applying to university in the UK. They know that the deadline for UK university applications is January 14th, but even though it's still September, they don't want to risk everything piling up. So, they set a rigid schedule: "Course - chosen by Sept. 4th; 5 Universities - chosen by Sept. 30th; First Draft of UCAS Application - written by Oct. 25th.." and so on. Student D, also a Secondary IV, decides to keep everything for university until December.. When there's only two weeks left before winter break.. Do we see what I'm getting at? Setting deadlines allows you to appropriately pace yourself, while also leaving time for schoolwork and extracurriculars.

If you leave everything for the last month before deadlines, the likelihood of both you and your university counsellor being unable to help is much higher.



DON'T OVEREXERT YOURSELF.

I've been talking about the importance of setting deadlines, taking more challenging courses earlier, and so on - this is all in order for you to not overwhelm yourself in the span of one year.. Or less. University applications are not supposed to be the main stressor of your last year. The last year, while obviously being stressful, is also the year you're meant to finalize your memories of high school. It's the last year you have with the people you've surrounded yourself with for four years (and in many of our students' cases, much more)! Your friends, your teachers, even the people you love to hate at school will be gone within the next few months. The realization of this is already too much - adding uni stress on top of that.. It's not good for you.

In order to minimize this university stress, do the things I've mentioned previously! Set those deadlines. Take those APs or IBs early on in your education. But also, practice regular selfcare - watch films you enjoy, read something good, even doomscroll for a bit! It's not the most productive, I know, but at least it destresses you. Balancing the preparation for university with time allowing yourself to simply exist is just as important as the steps taken to prepare for university themselves. I'll leave you all with one last message. Studying isn't meant to be a bore. It's not meant to be something you have to dread doing. It's supposed to move you forward, be a stepping stone for the change and impact you want to see in the world. So, try to find ways to enjoy preparing for university (aka, this massively important stepping stone) - don't put unnecessary pressure on yourself. Make your future in university something you look forward to, not something you begrudgingly complete because your university counselor and parents are begging you to.



Back to School Picnic

by Nina



Teachers, students, families and friends all gathered together on 27th September at QSI International school of Bratislava for the annual Back to School Picnic. Our whole community worked together, parents brought their favourite dishes, the PSG prepared soft drinks and snacks, and the cafeteria staff sold different variety of refreshments and snacks. Children of all ages could enjoy activity tables hosted by the PSG and Secondary volunteers.



The event started around 4:30 p.m. and lasted for 2 hours. Events like these are important because they bring the community together. They give us a chance to welcome new students and get to know them more, make new friends, and simply enjoy spending time with others. Celebrating the new school year strengthens our school spirit and remind people that no one is alone, we are a community.

One of the biggest highlights of this year's Back to School Picnic was the food. Many families brought their favourite dishes, desserts and snacks. The picnic table offered big variety of different dishes, from traditional barbecue, cheeseburgers, to different cultural dishes brough by the families. Everyone could find something for their taste, whether they preferred sweet desserts or savoury snacks, no one left hungry.





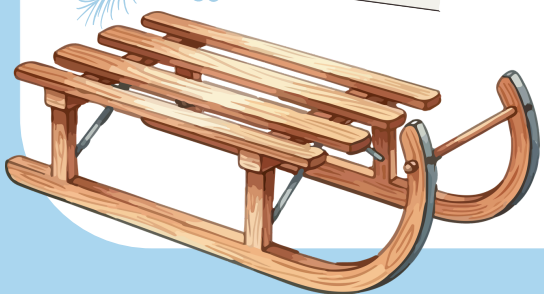
One of the most memorable moments for many, was seeing the new director, Doctor Hayward, smiling behind the grill, barbecuing and chatting with students, families and staff, bringing a warm, friendly and relaxing atmosphere to the function. This small moment perfectly reflected the welcoming spirit of the school,

While the parents were chatting, and catching up with each other, the kids had a blast with the secondary volunteers at the activity tables. Everyone had plenty of fun and found something to do. The children could choose from a variety of activities such as face painting, nail art, temporary tattoos or arts and crafts table. Many highschoolers also participated in the activities, letting their friends do their face painting or having many temporary tattoos. It was a memorable sight, seeing all the age groups have fun together.





The Back to School Picnic is a very important event for all the age groups, everyone will find something to their liking whether you are an adult, highschooler, in middle school, elementary school, or even younger. It is an event with great opportunities to catch up, eat great food, participate in awesome activities, and celebrate the school spirit and our community.



Fall festival

By Viola Drago

Have you ever wanted to enter a haunted house with your friends? Have you ever wondered who would get scared first? Well, now you could do so, in the hunted house. It takes place in the library, and secondary students can volunteer to dress up and scare people who enter. This specific event happens every year, as it is always loved by everyone who participates in it.

The festival also provides many different varieties of food and snacks. You even have an opportunity to bring food from home, decorating your favorite sweets with scary designs. There are also makeup artists available to make your costume even better. The school also offers all kinds of games in the gym. You can have fun with your friends bowling or playing beanbag toss. The school courtyard is also available during the festival, which gives excess to the soccer field and the basketball court.
Another traditional activity that happens every year is tricking or treating car trunks.

Every parent that wants to participate can bring their car and decorate how they like it. They can fill their trunk with sweets and chocolate, and students who want to participate can go around cars and take all the treats they want. In addition to all these options, every year only-teachers band performs songs in the atrium, dressed as their favorite characters, while creating a spooky atmosphere for all festivals.

Every year, many people attend the festival, and its popularity in the school grows every year. Participation in events like this one is vital for the student to feel at home in the school environment and with their friends. Students can also help by helping teachers organize activities for younger students.



As this festival is loved by many students, many of them have interesting or fun personal experiences that they can share. Sharing their thoughts about the festival can help new students understand if attending is something they might be interested in.

Fall festival

My personal experience at the Fall Festival
By Claire Yoder

Over the few years that I've been at QSI, there have been many events I always look forward to going to. For example, Pancakes with Santa, the International Picnic, Clash of Colours, but there is always one I'm most excited for. The Fall Festival. During the Fall Festival, QSI often provides Halloween themed goodies and activities like Trunk-or-Treat, the Haunted House, and games like ball toss. People often dress up in elaborate costumes and go around doing these activities with their friends.



Although, if I'm being honest, the activities set up at the Fall Festival are never the highlight of my experiences there. So, what is it that makes the Fall Festival so exciting? For me, the people I've gone there with have always made it for me. During my first year at QSI, my time at the Fall Festival wasn't memorable, but I see now that it was because I went on my own. I sat around eating pity candy and doing the activities on my own, which, speaking from experience, lasted for half an hour before it got boring.

During my second year, I decided I would go with my friends. The time I spent there with my friends flew by in a blur of laughter and exhilaration. We went from each attraction, more eager to have fun together, and we went from activity to activity, while minutes passed by like seconds. Before I knew it, it was dark outside and we had to part ways.



In fact, as I'm writing this, I can't help but smile at the memories brought up. And while I don't have any memories from my first Fall Festival, I can remember my second one clearly. So, is it really all that worth going to the Fall Festival? Yes. Make the most out of the Autumn season in QSI, have fun, and enjoy what the Fall Festival has to offer.

S&D

Claudia Yoder

Speech and Debate has been an activity at QSI for the past decade, but one that has not gotten that much exposure, which confuses us here at the QSI Times, because of how essential S&D is to many students' futures - the activity is one which helps students develop thinking on their feet, detailed planning and arguing, and learning how to work towards a certain goal.

Many students at QSI find joining S&D intimidating, because they think it's too complicated or too time-consuming. However, as someone who has been doing it for three years now, I can attest that if you manage your time wisely, S&D is not only fairly easy, but also something enjoyable and educational. So, in order to try and make it more approachable, we've decided to explain each of the categories you can participate in!

The good thing about S&D is that there's a total of five, meaning that there's usually something for everyone, even if you're not necessarily the most extroverted of people!

ORIGINAL ORATORY

Original Oratory (OO) is an argumentative, six-minute speech you write yourself. Beyond time limits, eye contact, and some gesturing, the rules are simple. It's great for people who prefer preparation over improvisation; you choose your topic (anything from book burning to climate change or even Taylor Swift) and can spend months refining your speech without needing to memorize it. The only potential drawback for introverts is performing in front of judges and peers, but that's true for every S&D event. OO is also one of the smaller categories, so it can be easier to win a medal.



And if OO still feels a bit intense, you might enjoy Oral Interpretation instead.

ORAL INTERPRETATION

Oral Interpretation (OI) and OO are often seen as two sides of the same coin - if you've done OO, you're likely to at least think about doing OI. However, OI is generally less stressful. You still get months to prepare, but instead of writing a speech, you interpret an existing piece. Each season, OI is designated as either serious or light, and you choose a six-minute piece that fits the category and resonates with you. For example, with a light category this year, I chose a monologue from Fleabag because I connect with the speaker and understand the context. Like OO, you don't need to memorize your script. One of the best parts of OI, for introverts that is, is that judges don't watch you (they face away and only listen), so you can focus entirely on your voice without worrying about how you look.

DUET ACTING

Duet Acting (or, Duet) is similar to OI, but with two people instead of one. In Duet, you are also given whether the year's category is serious or light, and then you're on to choosing your piece. With your partner, you find a seven minute excerpt from a book, play, or TV script that you believe fits.. Well, you. With Duet, the judges will be looking at you, and will judge you based on your ability to act your script out - this includes tone of voice, pacing, and the part people often forget about, blocking. Blocking means how well you're able to use the space around you with what you've given (two chairs and a table). Using anything other than the given props can result in disqualification, so it is a relatively risky category. However, it's one that I've done every season, and have enjoyed more and more over the years.

IMPROMPTU

Impromptu is a favorite among more extroverted participants and requires quick thinking.



It's arguably the most challenging event because you can't truly prepare (other than building strong general knowledge). You choose one of two given topics, get ninety seconds to structure your speech, and then deliver a three-minute speech in front of judges and peers. If you prefer lots of preparation, this might not be your favorite. But if you're confident in your language skills and ability to argue on the spot, Impromptu can be both exciting and impressive to watch, especially when speakers know how to engage their audience.

DEBATE

Debate is known to be the king of all S&D events. At the beginning of the season, you're given a topic, for which you and a partner must prepare a carefully planned outline and argument for an offensive (against) and defensive (for) side. At the competition itself, you don't know which side you'll have to argue for until the moment you start debating the other team,



so you must have effective arguments for both sides, even if you may not agree with one of them. The most difficult part, though, is when the other team is allowed to ask questions about your argument; this is known as the "cross-examination". Again, I've never participated in Debate, so I may not be the best source on the event. However, as someone who's watched it every year, I can attest to the fact that it is certainly the most intense event to see (don't let this put you off though - it is still an amazing learning experience)!

2025 COMPETITION + PROCESS

Now, lastly, I would like to cover the competition - this is an arduous process that spans about three months, from the beginning of the school year until around mid to late November. You need to choose your category (or categories!) relatively quickly, if you want to sufficiently prepare. However, after that initial choice, it's a lot of fun! We're lucky to have two amazing S&D coaches (Ms. Lucka and Ms. Valerie), who have time and time again provided me with useful feedback. Because of them, QSIB students have placed in the finals every year, and sometimes even with one QSIB competitor in every category. With their help, I myself have been able to place in the finals multiple times!

The competition itself usually spans over two to three days, with the first days being in order to go through preliminary rounds and semifinals, and then the last half of the last day is typically for finals and awards. It's not just competition though - along with being exposed to the host country's culture, you get to meet like-minded people and connections, who may also be interested in the same fields that you are! I've met people who are also greatly interested in history and political sciences, which has been able to help me in preparing for university applications. Speech and Debate is not only amazing because of its presence on your CV, but also because it gives you friendships you never would have gained otherwise.

This year, the competition took place in Prague on the 20th - 23rd of November. Speaking as someone who went, it was not an easy task, but it was an indescribable amount of fun! Though the food served was.. Interesting, and some of the judges present were.. Also, interesting, the team itself made amazing progress, with five out of the eight members who went even getting into finals! Every category that QSIB participated in, we had a slot in the finals for. One of our students even won silver for OI. Overall, S&D this year was amazing, and I strongly encourage all those who did it this year to do it again next year.. But I also implore those who haven't given it a shot yet! Please, join Speech and Debate - it's truly changed my life for the better.



BratMUN 2025

Sally Kim

The students from the MUN club participated as delegates of the conference of Bratislava Model United Nations 2025. After four months of dedication, practice, and preparation, our members have excelled with unbelievable results, despite the fact that it was the first MUN conference for the majority of students. As such, they all lit up the lights on behalf of the QSI delegation in this year's conference.

The preparation stage consisted mainly of two parts: the preparation of debate and public speech skills and the building of expertise on the agenda. The members of the MUN club were assigned to a country to a specific committee, and had to engage in the creation of a position paper. They thoroughly reviewed the stance of their country regarding the agenda, making themselves diplomats participating as delegates in the UN conference. Background research on other member states was also crucial in order to draw a reasonable resolution for the means of the United Nations. Building up skills for public speech and debate was also crucial to standing out among the skilled young diplomats.



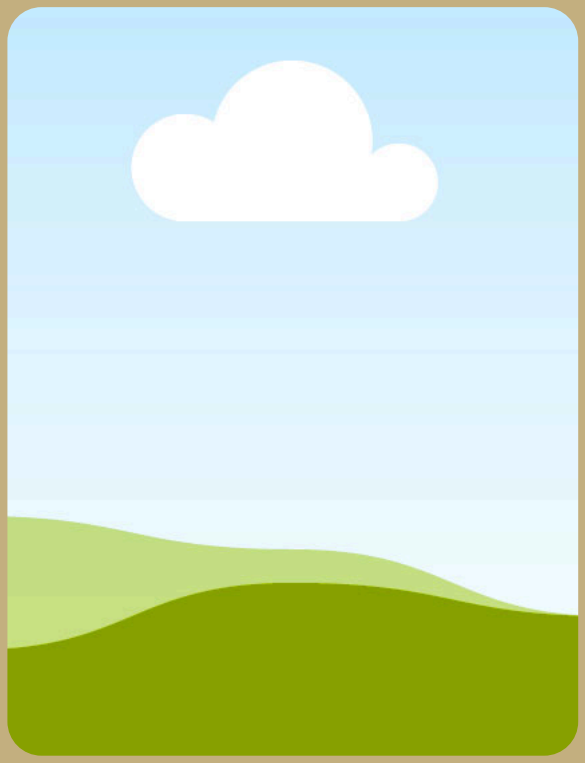


After months of preparation, the members finally attended the event of BratMUN 2025. The three-day-long conference marked its opening on Friday, November 29. All the members were required to be fully prepared with documents and formal attire, being called "delegates" instead of "students" or "members." Two of our members also engaged as journalists, out of the formal MUN debate process, but actively engaging in crafting journalism materials and articles for the conference as part of the Press and Media committee.

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The opening ceremony took place in the historical building of the National Council, with several members from the Slovak government and the former and present representatives of the United Nations holding speeches. This was followed by the General Assembly, where the delegates could take a first glance at a formal UN debate procedure. The transition then took place to the building of Comenius University Faculty of Law, where the delegates were separated into each committee and having had started their official conference in the committee subunits. Along with many other prospective diplomats from all over the world, the first day ended with all kinds of emotion, a sense of fulfilment, exhaustion, and a heartfelt expectation for the next full day of debate.

The second day of the conference was filled fully of debates held in the committee rooms. As representatives of the delegations of each country, the members of the QSI MUN delegation engaged in the debate and were tasked to produce a committee resolution. As part of a formal simulation of UN conference, the delegates were required to be polite and strictly follow the official rules and procedures. The formal debate procedure ended after straight nine and a half hours of dedication. The intense debate between the delegates ended with a special social event at night, where dancing and socializing took place.



The closing ceremony took place on the last day. The last general assembly consisted of the presentation of committee resolutions and the conference-wide vote that engaged all the participants of the event. Fortunately, all the resolution papers passed. The general assembly was followed by the award ceremony, where all the delegates received their certificates. Among our QSI delegation, there were two delegates who won the awards: Sally Kim and Kevin Kim. Sally won the best delegate award in the UNDP committee, and Kevin won the honorable mention award in the FIFA committee.

VOLLEYBALL

LJ Horvath and Laura Jakubik



FESTIVAL 27.09

This year's high school girls volleyball team began showing their great potential already during the first few practices. For most girls, this is not their first year wearing a QSI jersey, though there are a few new players, making for a diverse yet encouraging environment in the gym!

At their first festival on the 27th of September at the University of Cambridge, they made QSI proud by placing second among 4 teams, having won 2 games against VIS and BBIS, and only having lost to the hosting team, Cambridge. All day long the team fought hard for every ball, cheering each other on no matter the score, and had the best time playing the sport they love!



OPINION PIECE:

As someone who has been playing volleyball her whole life, I always jump at any opportunity to be a part of the positive and fun atmosphere that is created on the court, and we definitely made our mark at the festival by doing so! I played for the team last year as well, and I can say with absolute certainty that every single player has improved since then. I absolutely loved playing with this team- they're so full of energy and optimism, and I believe we all had an amazing experience at our first competition of this season; especially with Amelia as our new captain this year!

TOURNAMENT 15.11

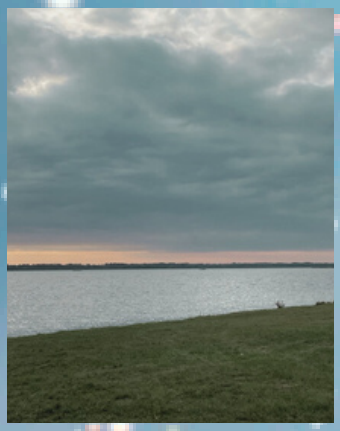
The Bears volleyball team ventured out to the International School of Vienna for their first and only tournament of the season! With both losses and well-earned wins, the players supported each other through the good and the bad, worked as a team and ended the season with a bang!

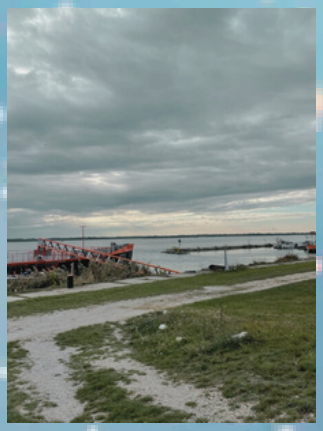
Amazing job bears!



CROSS COUNTRY

CLAIRE YODER





First of all, what do we do at Cross Country? For a short explanation, during Cross Country we tend to run on a path that is both out in the open and guarded by trees, which has nice diversity. Most of the time, we run to the Danube. Since it happens during autumn, the path isn't the only thing diverse, so is the weather! From hot and sunny, to rainy and cold, you can gain endurance from the constant changes.

But why is it worth it to do Cross Country? Well, besides the short-term exercise you get from it, there are a few reasons. For example, increasing your stamina, getting better at breathing techniques, getting used to different weather, better strides. But what if you don't care about all that? That's what some of you are thinking, right? Well, besides the physical benefits, I assure you that there are some mental benefits from Cross Country as well. For example, clearing your head.

While running, you tend to have some free time to think as well, but the more you run, the less you think of what's concerning you. You start to think about your breathing, or how peaceful your surroundings are, or how much distance you have ran or have left. So, while running you stop overthinking while getting exercise! But that isn't the only reason, another one is making friends. Like all sports, you can strengthen your bond with friends if you do the same sport. You support each other, motivate each other to constantly do better, and have more fun. I suggest inviting your friends to Cross Country with you! It will definitely make it more enjoyable.

In conclusion, it is worth it to do Cross Country because you get a daily portions' exercise, you gain stamina, and you can strengthen bonds with your friends and teammates.



Comic salon

By Lili Oravcova

Every year, fans of anime, video games, K-pop, and pop culture come together to celebrate what they love at a special event called Comic Salon, also known as AnimeCon. This event brings people of all ages together and allows them to enjoy cosplay, panels, and merchandise from their favorite series. It includes diverse performances, attractions, and events that'll keep you busy every second.

Most importantly, it's a place for fans to connect and interact with each other openly without fear of judgement.
When someone says "Comic Salon" most people think of cosplaying and buying merchandise, but it is much more than that. While dressing up and shopping are major factors, Comic Salon also has other awesome activities and events. Cosplay contests let fasee their favorite characters come to life, while gaming in gaming areas people can compete in tournaments or try out new releases. The convention also includes huge artist alleys where people can support independent artists by buying unique artworks, keychains and stickers inspired by popular shows and characters.

However, attending the comic salon in person was a completely different feeling! The moment I stepped inside, I was surrounded by so many different characters from Demon Slayer, Jujutsu Kaisen, and Genshin Impact, just to name a few! Though the weather that day was gloomy and cold, the smiles and laughter of all the people made up for it. I got to meet so many different people that enjoy the same things as me and take tons of cute pictures with my favorite characters. Of course, I couldn't forget to buy some merch from my favorite shows and K-pop bands. Keychains, pins, figurines, posters, photocards, everything you could think of was there. Everyone there was super friendly and welcoming, creating a space where fans could just relax, have fun, and be themselves. The atmosphere was energetic, full of life and excitement.



Comic salon

What makes these Comic Salons so great is that they create a chance for people of similar interests to come together and have fun without judgement. It doesn't matter if you're a casual gamer, die hard anime fan, or a baby K-pop fan, there's bound to be something for everyone! Comic Salons provide a safe place for people to be themselves and connect with others with similar interests. It allows fandoms and communities to come together, building a sense of belonging and acceptance for all.





Overall, the Comic Salon is a unforgettable experience for fans of all ages and interests. From cosplay contests, to live performances, and artist alleys, there's something for everyone to enjoy. The convention creates a special atmosphere for all to share interests, make new friends, and celebrate what they enjoy openly. Some people have been attending for years, while others just went to their first one, either way, going is a wonderful and enjoyable experience for everyone and I can't wait to go again!

HOLIDAY RECIPES

Mauro

We will be showing our Christmas cheer for this edition of the newspaper by spreading cookies, cakes, and pastry recipes. We will have four different cookie recipes coming from different parts of the world. One from Italy, one from Serbia, one from America, and one from Slovakia.

1: The Italian Cake



Ingredients:

- fresh egg |5 PL
- granulated sugar |500g
- Mascarpone | 1 package
- Savoiardi biscuits (long pastry) |1 cup
- strong coffee |1 dl
- Amaretto liqueur |1 PL
- Cocoa

Directions

1. Separate the egg yolks from the whites into two bowls. Beat the whites until stiff peaks form.
2. Add sugar to the egg yolks and beat until the sugar dissolves. Add mascarpone and beat into the egg yolk cream. Finally, carefully fold in the egg whites, making sure to leave as much air as possible.
3. Mix the cooled coffee with Amaretto and pour it into a bowl with a wide enough bottom for comfortable dipping of the sponge cakes. Dip the sponge cakes one by one in the liqueur coffee on both sides, but briefly so that they do not get soggy. Place them in a square bowl (approx. 30x30 cm).
4. Once the first layer is in place, spread half of the cream on top. Then place another layer of soaked sponge cakes and cover with the second half of the cream. Dust the surface with sifted cocoa and refrigerate for at least 4 hours (ideally overnight).





2: The Serbian Cookie.

Oliver

Ingredients



- 2 sticks (226 g) unsalted butter, softened cup + 2 tablespoons (250 g) granulated sugar
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 large egg + 2 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon (13 g) vanilla sugar (1 kesica, as we say in Serbian. It means spoon.)
- 1/2 teaspoon (3 g) salt
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) vanilla extract
- 2.5 cups (250 g) ground walnuts
- 4.5 cups (600 g) flour

For Rolling & Filling

- Powdered sugar
- Apricot preserve (or jam) - about 1/2 cup (150 g)

Directions

1. In the bowl cream the butter and sugar until smooth with a mixer.
2. Add in the whole egg and egg yolks and whip until incorporated, then add in the lemon juice, lemon zest, salt, and vanilla sugar. Mix until fully incorporated.
3. Turn off the mixer and switch to a spatula. Add in the walnuts and stir, turning the mixture into a thick batter.
4. Add in the flour and form one ball of dough with your hands.
5. Place the dough on a piece of plastic wrap or in a plastic bag and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, or until the dough is completely cold.
6. When the dough has completely chilled, take it out of the refrigerator and preheat your oven to 350 F (200 C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
7. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to a thickness. Use a cookie cutter or small cup to cut out small round pieces.
8. Using a small knife or angled spatula transfer the cut-out cookies to your baking sheet. Bake for 15-20 minutes until the bottom of the cookies begin to slightly brown but the tops remain light in color. Do not let them brown on top.
9. When baked, remove the cookies from the baking sheet and transfer to a cooling rack or tray to cool.
10. Re-knead the scraps of the remaining dough into a ball and roll it out again. Repeat the above steps until you've used up all your dough and baked all your cookies.
11. When the cookies have cooled, spread a very small amount of apricot jam on one piece and place a 2nd piece on top, making a sandwich cookie. Roll the cookie in powdered sugar and enjoy!

3. American Cookie

Oliver

Ingredients:



- 1cup sweet unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1cup sweet creamy peanut butter
- (do not use reduced fat versions
- – I use Jiff or Peter Pan brands)
- 1cup granulated sugar
- 1cup brown sugar or 1 cup light muscovado sugar, packed
- 2large eggs
- 2cups all-purpose flour
- 1teaspoon baking soda
- 2cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.
2. Have ready at least 2 baking sheets lined with parchment paper.
3. Cream butter until smooth.
4. Add peanut butter and both sugars and beat until combined well.
5. Add eggs and beat them well.
6. Stir in flour and bake soda gradually until well combined.
7. Stir in chocolate chips by hand.
8. Using a meatball scooper or a spoon, scoop out small portions of dough and drop onto parchment lined cookie sheets, leaving a 2" gap between each cookie.
9. Bake for about 15 minutes or until cookies are just firm around the edges– don't overbake– if you wait until they are brown on top, they will be too hard.
10. Slide parchment sheets, cookies and all, carefully off pan and onto your counter, set a new piece of parchment paper onto your baking sheet and repeat until all dough is baked.
11. Meanwhile, as the next batch bakes, remove baked cookies from the parchment and let cool completely on wire racks.
12. Wipe off the crumbs from the old sheet of parchment and you can reuse it for your next batch.
13. These will keep about 3 days stored in a cookie tin (for crisp cookies) or an airtight plastic container (for softer cookies).

4. Slovak Cake

Mauro

Ingredients

Dough:

- 500g of semi-coarse flour
- 0.5 KL of salt
- 100 ml of lard or oil
- 1 egg (L)
- 30g of yeast
- 250 ml of milk
- 3 PL of granulated sugar

Poppy seed filling:

- 250g of ground poppy seeds
- 100 ml of milk
- 100g of granulated sugar
- 1 package of vanilla sugar
- 1 KL of grated lemon peel
- 50g of butter



Directions

1. Crumble the yeast into lukewarm milk and stir in a tablespoon of sugar. Let it activate for about 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, mix the flour with salt, the remaining sugar in a bowl, and add the egg and yeast. Mix and finally add the melted, cooled lard (oil). Knead until the dough is soft and pliable. Cover the kneaded dough with a towel and let it rise in a warm place for an hour.
3. Prepare the filling by heating the milk and sugar in a saucepan. When it starts to boil, remove heat and stir in the poppy seeds and butter. Let cool and finally stir in the lemon zest.
4. Divide the dough into two parts and roll each into a rectangle about 3 to 5 mm thick. Spread the filling and roll it up. Place the poppy seeds on a greased baking sheet and let rise for another 15 minutes. Brush with egg yolk and bake in an oven preheated to 180 ° C for about 30 to 35 minutes.

What to do during winter

By Claire Yoder & Lucy Kubesova

The majority of the people in our school cannot wait for school to end and winter break to begin as they can spend up to three weeks without the burden of homework. However, although it may not seem like it, three weeks is a long time, and many do not know what to do with all this freedom. We have compiled a list of things to do with family or friends, or even alone to not be bored over this break such as:

1. Bake gingerbread cookies OR make a gingerbread house

Baking with friends is a fun way to bond and pass time together, plus, you get a tasty treat at the end! You can find pre-made gingerbread "walls" if you would prefer that to making it from scratch in most grocery stores, and you can find cookie cutters in home supply stores anywhere.





2. Have a snowball fight

If you happen to be lucky enough to have snow where you are, enjoy it by doing fun activities you can remember! But remember, be careful — make sure to not hurt your friends or yourself.



3. Build a snowman

Again, if you happen to have snow, you and your friends can build a snowman! Give it a scarf, a few buttons, a carrot nose, and arms and it'll feel as if you have another member to your friend group.



4. Decorate a Christmas tree

This can also be a fun bonding experience — and can result in a beautiful tree! You can also paint or make ornaments for the tree as well. You can buy trees near the Christmas Market, you can find them elsewhere, or chop one down — which you must be careful during.

5. Winter movie marathon

When the cold weather comes, there's nothing better to do than cozy up on the couch with warm, blankets, hot cocoa, and a perfect lineup of movies. From Elf to The Grinch, there are tons of winter themed movies which give you a cozy feeling, especially if you're bundled up with a hot drink or a scented candle! Whether you are with friends, family, or even solo, a winter movie marathon is the best way to spend a cozy evening at home.

6. Read a book

Even if it isn't necessarily related to winter, I suggest passing time with sitting down and reading a good book. Any genre works, as long as you enjoy it!

7. Organize and Declutter

With all the free time at your disposal, spend some of it to clean out your belongings and throw away items you no longer need This can be a good way to organize yourself and create a fresh start for the new year.



9. Game Night

Host board game nights with friends or family as a perfect bonding experience filled with laughter and chaos. This is a good way to enjoy some good-old fashioned fun and create lasting and unforgettable memories

In conclusion, spending your winter break enjoyably is essential to rest. Remember to take a break from school by doing activities like these, or anything else that brings you joy. Whether you choose to relax, explore, or spend time with the people you care about, make the most of the time off so you can return refreshed and ready for the new year.

THE WINTER CONCERT

BY VIOLA DRAGO AND CLAIRE YODER

The Winter Concert is an event that takes place every year in the Samorin Theater. During this event, all elementary and middle school classes perform and sing Christmas songs. Secondary music class also performs, plus additional songs that are performed all together. The performances in the winter concert are organized by the music teachers, Ms. Nel and Ms. Glenda, which chose the songs for the classes. Parents are welcome to come and watch the performances on the day of the concert. Because all students will be there, parents usually sit in the back rows or remain standing. Students that are between the ages of five to seven perform their songs in the atrium, while the older students perform in the theater. Some traditional Christmas songs that are performed every year by at least one class are songs like Jingle Bells, Last Christmas, Jingle bell rock, and many more.



During the Winter Concert, students of all ages join and make a concert for parents and other peers. Usually, the high school music students are part of the backing track for some songs, while others include the music from the actual song. While they play, other students either sing with their classmates, have duets, or do solos. In my experience at going to the Winter Concert, the music performed always gives me feelings depending on what the song conveys, but usually happiness because of the way everyone joins together to sing. It makes me feel at peace and like I'm able to bond with people in my life through song. Although the process before the Winter Concert may be long, the product is definitely what makes worth it!

This year's Winter Concert had students from the four-year-olds to the seniors performing! We enjoyed winter themed songs like Rocking Around the Christmas Tree, It's Beginning to Look a Lot like Christmas, Little Snowflake, and Snowman. But winter songs weren't the only ones we got to enjoy! We also got to experience songs like Don't Stop the Music, Memories, and Can't Catch Me Now. With Ms. Nel and Ms. Glenda contributing to the performance by arranging the songs, we as a school joined together and held this amazing event! The 2025 Winter Concert was a major success, and we hope to have the same positive environment next year as well.



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