Tiger Prints

June 2026

The Official Newspaper of Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School

Vol. 5

5 Fascinating Fun Facts

By Lily

Since 2024, each spring has seen another edition of the *5 Fascinating Fun Facts* article. Welcome to year three–this one is full of jaw-droppers!

1. Days are getting longer

Ever feel like each day is getting faster and faster? Contrary to what you might think, Earth's rotation has actually been slowing down in recent years, meaning days have been getting longer! To fully understand the science behind this, one must first know that a day is how long it takes for Earth to complete one full rotation around its axis. Scientists found that, on average, the length of a day increases by around 1.8 seconds per century, meaning that 600 million years ago, a day lasted just 21 hours! The speed of Earth's rotation–and therefore the duration of a day–is impacted by many different factors. For example, the gravitational force the Moon exerts on Earth has lengthened the day from 19 hours as of 1.4 billion years ago to the 24 hours we know today. However, Earth also goes through short-term periods in which its rotation speed fluctuates, speeding up or slowing down over the course of decades. Ever since 2020, the planet has been slowing, and thus days grow longer.



2. There are more possible variations of chess than atoms in the observable universe

Scientists have estimated that there are between 10^{78} (1 followed by 78 zeroes, also known as ten quadrillion vigintillion) and 10^{82} (1 followed by 82 zeroes, or one-hundred thousand quadrillion vigintillion) atoms in the observable universe. This range can seem massive at first, but it pales in comparison to the amount of total possible variations in a chess match. Believe it or not, it is estimated that there are between 10^{111} and 10^{123} different ways for a game of chess to play out, including illegal moves. This amount is represented by the Shannon Number, and was first calculated by American mathematician Claude Shannon in the mid-1900s. However, it is worth noting that if you discount illegal moves, that number drops drastically to just 10^{40}.

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The Truth About Entertainment Agencies

By Sarah and Ally

Many of your favorite artists are under a label or entertainment agency, and many of these companies have conducted shady behavior, faced controversies, or even hurt their own idols.

Let's take HYBE industries for example: the company for KATSEYE, BTS, NewJeans, LE SSERAFIM, and many other groups. It's very likely you've heard music from these groups before, but do you know the truth about their company? The biggest boss at HYBE, Bang Si-hyuk, lied to investors, committing stock fraud. He allegedly lied that the big stock market debut would be put off for a little bit, which caused them to sell their stocks to people close to Si-hyuk, illegally gaining him $129 million. There was also evidence that was displayed in court showing how HYBE used illegal marketing back when their company was under a different name. HYBE even admitted that they sold thousands of records to people with a deal allowing them to return the records later, all while HYBE included these numbers in their "first week sales", lying in their ads.

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The Truth About Entertainment Agencies

continued

It was also found that HYBE sent secret reports to their young idols that were very rude, calling them "shockingly unattractive" and even suggesting plastic surgery. These comments may break the laws protecting children and teens in the entertainment industry. There was also a vice president in HYBE that pressured a female employee to go on a date with him, and she felt very uncomfortable. HYBE also tried to fire Min Hee-jin, the old boss of NewJeans' label, and refused to pay her the money she was promised. Hee-jin took this to court though, and they ruled against HYBE. HYBE would end up having to pay this former employee $17 million.



If you like K-pop, you have probably also heard of SM Entertainment. They control EXO, Red Velvet, Hearts2Hearts, Aespa, and more, but are also a very problematic label. SM Entertainment has been known to sometimes set their contracts to last for 12 to 13 years, making it extremely difficult to terminate. Even more recently, members of boy group EXO have filed lawsuits claiming their contracts lasted 12 to 13 years, which definitely exceeds the 7 year limit that was set by the South Korean Fair Trade Commission. Sometimes contracts even include extensions that could change the commitment time to 17 or 18 years. Idols have also claimed that they have very poor living conditions, getting as little as 4 hours of sleep per night while travelling to excessive events despite not having the physical strength to do so. This has caused health issues for some artists that include kidney problems and disk herniations. Trainees also have it hard, with tiring, long schedules. Some have been known to start at 6 am and end as late as 10:30pm.

Large music labels have hurt their idols, and committed numerous crimes. Can they hide from the law forever? HYBE has recently become so rich that it were placed on a "watch list." Conditions for idols may be bad, but it can always get better.

Anteaters

By Sebastian

Anteaters are insect eating mammals. They live in tropical grasslands and forests across a wide range stretching from Southern Mexico to Northern Argentina and Paraguay. They are furry, long-tailed animals with long heads. Their mouth openings are pretty small with no teeth. They have long and slender tongues. Anteaters feed mainly on ants and termites. They use the long, sharp, curved claws on their forefeet to tear open insect nests. They use their long, sticky tongues to get into the nests to get the bugs out.



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3. Your voice is higher than you think

Have you ever noticed that when you record yourself on camera, your voice might sound higher-pitched or squeakier? Your voice is created when air from the lungs passes through your vocal cords in the larynx, or voice box. The vibration of these vocal cords produces sound waves, which are shaped by your mouth, tongue, and nasal passages to form words and speech. When you speak, these sound waves travel in two main directions: firstly air conduction, where sound waves travel out your mouth, through the air, and are picked up by the ears. The second route the sound waves travel to is called bone conduction, in which the vibrations are transferred through your skull bones to your inner ear. When you hear a recording of your voice, you're only hearing air conduction: the sound waves traveling through the air and being picked up by the microphone, then played back to you. Without bone conduction, which amplifies the lower frequencies of your voice to give it a deeper tone, your voice sounds higher-pitched and less resonant.

4. Sharks are older than trees

The earliest known species that can be classified as a "tree" is the Archaeopteris. Now extinct, it lived around 350 million years ago in forests located in the present-day region of the Sahara desert. You might not believe it, but sharks have actually been around for 400 million years, making them collosally older than trees. And they're a resilient animal too: sharks have survived through four global mass extinctions!

5. The average human's scrolling time per year

According to the University of Maine, the average human being spends 2 hours and 24 minutes on social media each day, equal to exactly 10% of a 24 hour day. This means that the average person spends a staggering 36.5 full days each year scrolling. So in a decade–or over the course of ten years–the typical person will have spent a full year on social media.



Bonus: A trillion seconds in years

In the US, the number known as one trillion: 1,000,000,000,000, is a 1 followed by 12 zeroes. To give you context at the grand scale of this number, NASA calculated that a trillion seconds is equal to 31,546 years!



America's Favorite Ice Cream Flavors

By Lily

According to the IDFA, or International Dairy Foods Association, 97% of Americans love or like ice cream. Every two years, the IDFA organizes the "Ice Cream & Frozen Novelty Survey" in partnership with Morning Consult to determine the general public's favorite ice cream flavors in the US. In the 2026 survey, over 2,200 adults were polled. Here's the scoop!

2026	2024
1. Chocolate 2. Butter Pecan 3. Vanilla 4. Cookies & Cream/Oreo 5. Caramel/Salted Caramel 6. Brownie 7. Chocolate Chip 8. Cookie Dough 9. Birthday Cake 10. Mint Chocolate Chip	1. Vanilla 2. Chocolate 3. Strawberry 4. Butter Pecan 5. Cookie Dough

The survey also asked members of Capitol Hill **what flavors best describes the U.S. Congress...**

46% Rocky Road:
Anything but Smooth

10.6% Cookies n' Cream:
Greater than the Sum of its Parts

8.3% Banana Split:
Split Down the Middle

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All About Dolphins

By Flora

Dolphins are amazing creatures. In fact, scientists believe that they may be the smartest animals–maybe even smarter than humans! Dolphins may be water creatures, but they are also mammals that have to come up for air. They are aquatic animals and are closely related to whales. Mostly, you have probably heard that dolphins live in oceans, but they can live in rivers, too!

Most dolphins live in social groups called pods, because they don't do as well by themselves. Pods can be as big as thousands of dolphins or as small as only four. Dolphins eat fish, squid, shrimp, crustaceans, and more! They are carnivores and don't really have predators except for shark species including great white, bull, and tiger sharks, and sometimes even other pods that are large! Dolphins that live in the ocean can drink small amounts of salt water but most of the water they get is from the sea creatures they eat.

Dolphins are divided into four different families: the biggest being Delphinidae, or ocean/marine dolphins. Scientists don't really agree on the exact number of dolphin species in this group, but most say there are at least 32. There are also three types of river dolphins including Platanistidae (Indian river dolphins), Iniidae, and Pontoporiidae. Sadly, there are only 4 known living species within these three families. Another great thing about dolphins is that they are generally very friendly to humans! Dolphins have been known to swim alongside boats, and even save humans who have fallen off their boat, or are in distress at sea, to the best of their ability. Dolphins breathe through one blowhole at the top of their head, and like whales are conscious breathers. This means that they have to think about breathing in order to do it, and that is the main reason why when dolphins sleep, half of their brain stays awake. The other reason is so that dolphins can watch out for predators. Believe it or not, an orca also known as a killer whale is also a dolphin species! It is the largest species and has the longest life span. Females can live for about 90 years and males for about 50 or 60.

Climate Change

By Polina

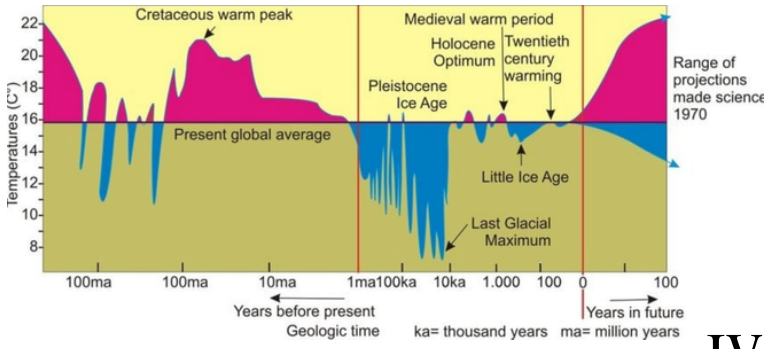
"*Climate change is killing the world and humans are at fault!*"

"*We are all going to die because of our own foolishness!*"

How many times have you heard someone say that? Is climate change really all that bad, or is the media simply exaggerating?

In recent years, the planet has seen a rise in temperatures. But when you look at it from a different perspective, the Earth has gone through huge temperature changes over the course of its long life. In comparison to the Medieval warm period which took place 1,076 years ago, what Earth is going through now is minor.

While some may argue that climate change is manmade and 97% of scientists agree, looking into the individual studies of scientists who agree shows that a large amount of these studies say it is no big deal. Greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide and methane, are often argued to be a cause of global warming. In reality, methane makes up only 0.00018% of the atmosphere and carbon dioxide is 0.04% of the earth's atmosphere.



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The Reason For the School Season

By Lily

For many students (teachers, and staff alike,) summer vacation is one of the highlights of the year. A glorious break off from school that always seems to go too fast...An escape from ten grueling months spent studying for exams, doing worksheets, completing homework…But this also raises the question: why summer? How come our beloved vacation is placed smack in the middle of the year? And why exactly does school start and end at such odd times? If you've ever wondered about why the school year is shaped the way it is, and the reason for the placement of summer vacation, then you've come to the right place!

The arrangement of the modern school year we know today can be traced back nearly 200 years ago, to the mid-1800s. At this time, America was a mainly agrarian society, meaning it was heavily based on agriculture. Farming was such an important, central part of many Americans' lives that it took precedence over school. After all, children needed to be at home to lend a hand on the family farm during the growing and harvest seasons, so they were absent from their schooling during this period, from spring to fall. In winter, though, nothing could be planted or harvested, so these students were free of farm work and able to go to school. Meanwhile, in major urban areas–where cities didn't rely on farming to make a living–students were able to attend school almost the whole year: between 251 and 260 days, with only a few short breaks. Because of these vast differences in the education systems of rural and urban areas, there was a lack of one uniform, standard education system. Districts operated on their own calendars, which varied from region to region depending on the community.



In 1852, Massachusetts passed the first compulsory education law, becoming the first state to require public schooling for both rural and urban areas. By the early 1900s, a compromise had been made between urban and rural school systems to run at the same times of year, beginning around Labor Day and ending around Memorial Day in late May. This way, kids could still help on the farm during the summer while receiving a standard education. In other words, this was also the birth of summer vacation–a few golden months of freedom sandwiched between the end and start of the next school year!

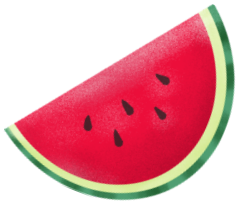


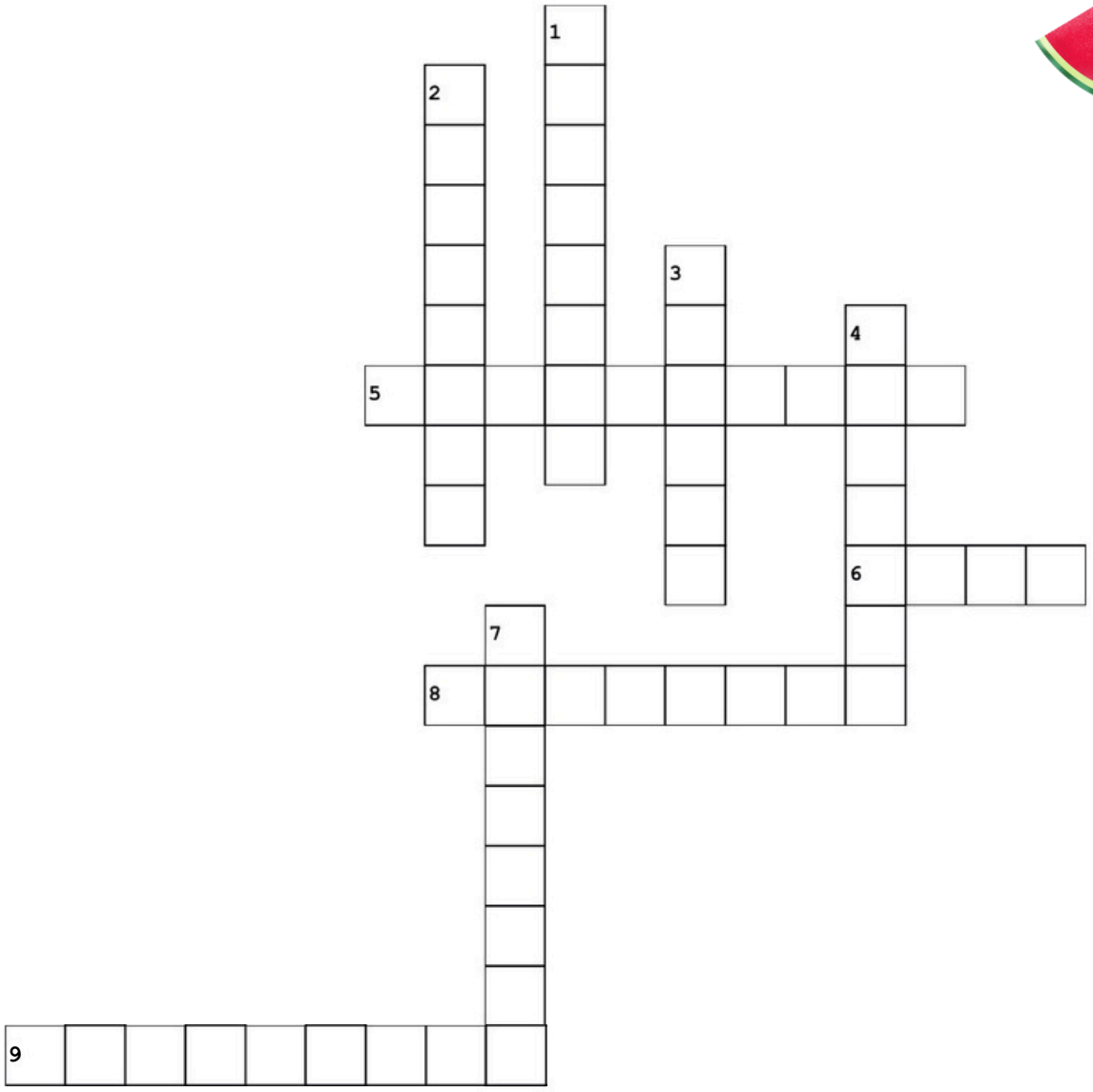
Fast Facts

Submitted by Dahlia

Since no one knows what dinosaurs sound like, the sound engineers of Jurassic Park had to get creative. The T-Rex, for example, was actually a mix of a baby elephant trumpet, an alligator growl, and a tiger growl!

Tiger Prints Crossword





Across

5. Popular summer fruit with many seeds
6. Famous four-letter entertainment industry
8. Amount of seconds equal to 32,000 years
9. America's general public's top ice cream flavor in 2026

Down

1. Long-tongued animal
2. Pat on the back for a job well done
3. Season after spring
4. Aquatic animal that lives in a group called a "pod"
7. To matriculate

Editorial

Lessons From a Graduating Eighth Grader

Thank you to all the readers who made it this far! This past school year, and the four I've spent at PVC have both been full of so many experiences and memories, and it's amazing to think how far we've all come! I still remember three years ago when I sat down for my first Tiger Prints Newspaper meeting in sixth grade…. Looking back, I could never have imagined just how far that would bring me. As I reflect back on my middle school experience as a whole, I've recognized what a large part of my happy memories stem from this club. In light of this, as I matriculate to high school and the next chapter of my life, I wanted to take the opportunity to share a few important lessons I learned throughout my time at PVC, especially ones that I learned in Newspaper Club.

1. **Collaboration:** In life, you will have to work with people on projects, assignments, and other aspects of life. Just like in a newspaper, everyone brings their own unique views, opinions, writing styles, and interests to the table. Without this diversity, the whole final product wouldn't be as meaningful or interesting.

2. **Don't be afraid to go down rabbit holes:** One of the things I most appreciated about this club was how it encouraged all writers to research and learn about the things they're interested in, as well as share those findings with other people. Don't be afraid to talk about the topics you enjoy, or go deeper into the subjects you find fascinating. Sometimes, the weirdest and most out-of-the-way ideas end up leading to the most unique, memorable stories. On the same token, not all ideas have to become articles. I've had dozens of ideas I would excitedly write, then lose interest in or find something else I enjoyed researching more. Write what *you* want to write, how you write it. It's your work!

3. **Challenges:** Every writer has and will experience again in the future, at some point in their life, feeling "stuck" on a certain piece of writing. Whether it be suffering from writer's block, not being able to think of interesting ideas, losing motivation to write (don't worry, us at Newspaper Club definitely all understand these,) or simply looking at your blinking cursor on that empty GoogleDoc, not able to start typing on a blank page. What I will say is that the most important part is to remember that every writer, whether it be authors of great classics, students like you and me, or beginners who are putting pen to paper for the first time, have and will experience roadblocks or challenge like this, in writing and beyond. There will be times when you face hurdles and walls, and you don't know what to do. Remember that it's about the journey, not the destination. Sometimes, it not about the final, finished, perfectly polished product, but about what you learn, how you got there, the skills you picked up, what you improved for next time. Don't give up just yet! Some of the most challenging articles I've ever writing ended up being my favorites that I've written so far.

4. **Embrace challenges and broaden your horizons:** Try different types of articles: fiction, nonfiction, interviews. Try creating things that aren't articles: surveys, charts, or graphs, crosswords and puzzles, fun fact submissions or jokes. Try different topics: current events, science, history, whatever speaks to you! This also applies to life as a whole. Try embracing challenges and trying new things–you never know what you might enjoy!

Thank you for being a reader of Tiger Prints, the official school newspaper of PVC during this school year of 2025-2026!
Wishing you a great, fun-filled summer!



Editor Lily
All pieces edited by Lily
Newspaper designed by Lily