Why Is Spring Break Much Needed for Franklin Mentally and Physically?

By Noah Eaton

We have never really stopped to ask this specific question, “Why is Spring Break so important?” In this case, we’re specifically exploring how teachers and students feel about this issue. According to the website of Texas-based psychiatrist Dr. Messina, “Spring Break is typically scheduled around the middle or end of the month of March so that students can get a bit of respite from hectic school responsibilities before finals and the last half of the school year. Spring Break is often idealized as being a week of nonstop fun and traveling, and while it can be those things, Spring Break does have a ton of other mental and physical health benefits, too.” Not only does it mean so much to students from grade school to college, but the teachers also get a mental and physical break as well. Teachers are honestly drained out from lesson planning and making sure that they have assignments ready for students, providing tests and quizzes, and handling large class sizes. We asked Franklin teachers and students how they are going to spend their upcoming Spring Break as well as what their opinions are about the extended period off from school.

**Spanish Teacher** Ms. Creamer said, “I am going to spend half of my Spring Break in Montana with my college friends, visiting another one of our friends who just recently moved there. I am very excited because it is the first time we will all be together since before the pandemic. Spring Break is a chance for everyone to recharge, mentally and physically, before finishing out the last part of the year. We all need some time to not think about school for a little while! I don’t plan on sleeping too much so that I can make the most of my time. But when I am back home, I am definitely going to catch up on some sleep!”

**Junior** Breanna Alcindor told us, “I will be spending my Spring Break visiting colleges, and I’ll also spend a day or two in D.C. Spring Break gives everyone a break from constant schoolwork and studying to just relax for a while and rest. I’ll probably sleep just to catch up on a lot I missed during school, but I’ll also get up to do a lot of activities.”

**Sophomore** Jiya Saini said, “I will be spending my Spring Break at home, unpacking boxes in my new house. People really need a break from what they are doing at work and school because they get stressed. Spring Break gives them time to cool down and recoup. I’ll probably sleep because most days of the week, I am waking up at 6 to go to school.”

**Sophomore** Khushi Desai stated something similar telling us, “I will be spending time outside and catching up with my friends and family. Students and teachers have been working really hard this portion of the year, and it’s important to be able to rest and reset before finishing off the year. At first, I’ll be sleeping a lot to catch up, but I’m probably going to use most of time further in break to do some things I don’t typically have time to during the school year.”

According to these responses, it seems that Franklin staff and students will not be wasting anytime over break since they have a lot to look forward to. Even if you do not plan on doing anything while we are on break, just use this time wisely to just relax and refresh your mind, because we all need it! Have a wonderful break everyone!
Sun’s Out, Mask’s Off

By Kierra Richardson

On March 1st, 2022, the mask mandate in BCPS was dropped, as board members voted 12-2 to lift the statewide masking mandate for our schools. Originally, in March 2021 when students first returned to school buildings, masks were required and that continued into this school year. However, during the winter sports season, there was a big uprise of students getting Covid, causing many additional restrictions. Just a few months ago, it seemed as if we were heading back to stage one, before cases eventually fell.

This change was viewed as suspicious by some. Still, Covid is less severe in many cases than before. It’s starting to be the cough and cold everyone gets occasionally. We must ask the question - if we’re not taking Covid seriously enough, will that lead to another surge? Some may say that the Board of Education and the CDC took the first dog bone that came to them by dropping the mask mandate, instead of waiting for the right time to get things running again, while others believe there might not be a right time to drop mandates, and that you just must go with the flow and take it slow. “I feel like it’s a good change for some people,” freshman Alexis explains. “But in my opinion, I feel like they should have waited a little longer, especially due to allergy season where people are sneezing and spreading germs.”

The pandemic isn’t truly over even though we have seen numbers dropping. Expert Dr. Meyer believes the mask mandates dropping is indeed just for politics. The bigger question that this leads us to is whether the government is trying to drop restrictions and mandates to make the country look good in comparison to others. While it’s clear that masks reduce both the risk of spreading and the likelihood of contracting the virus, the question remains of how much, right now, the incidence of disease is going down. Still, there could be another variant. There is just so much uncertainty, and what is right this week might not be right next week,” Yale medicine infectious diseases expert Jaimie Meyer said.

There have been some positives for people who like the idea of the mask mandate being dropped, as people can breathe better, talk more clearly, and hear others easier.

“Yes, it’s fine because I can breathe better,” said Omar a Franklin sophomore. Omar also goes on to explain that he’s more comfortable without his mask so he can be seen laughing when something is particularly funny to him.

While some are generally happy about these changes, we still have others who feel that their safety is being put in jeopardy.

Another issue we may face in the future is the confusion of whether to wear a mask or not if the numbers rise again. Before, we had lots of concern with people not wearing their mask or not wearing it correctly.

“But I also think people don’t like mandates,” expert Jaimie Meyer explains. “They are tired of being told what to do. I think that really frustrates people.”

“I don’t feel as though it should have dropped,” senior Robyn Glover-Bay described. “The school hallways are extremely crowded, and those kids don’t care about where they go outside of school, so they should still be wearing their masks.”

Picture this - you hear someone coughing excessively. Would you rush to pull up your mask like Alexis, Omar, and Robyn? Trying to stay healthy in Franklin High School is a hard thing to do from the time of the rising cases bringing health scares on many students who cannot fully trust the school without their mask.

“I don’t feel safe and healthy walking in the hallways without my mask,” added Glover-Bay, who had Covid herself. “Since I already had Covid from this school, I don’t want to get it again”
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The Story of the Gay Montanye Plaque

By Fiona Durante

The plaque of Gay Montanye, located by the benches by the auditorium. This plaque was rendered to honor her following her death back in ’71.

Have you seen the one huge plaque by the benches outside of the auditorium? It’s the plaque that says Gay Montanye on the front. If you have, have you ever wondered why her name is Gay? Have you ever wondered whatever happened to her? Well, if you think Franklin faces tough times now, wait until you hear about the murder case of Gay Montanye, a former student of FHS in 1971. Back on September 29, 1971, a junior at FHS named Grace Elizabeth Montanye, who held the name Gay as her nickname for her positive, happy personality, was murdered.

She had gotten a call about a modeling gig and would get picked up by the agent, or so she thought. She was later found beaten to death behind the Mount Auburn Cemetery. The last time Gay was seen by the high school was as she met up with the stranger at the Reisterstown Shopping Center (which is right across the street).

After her death, it has been a mystery up to this day for who killed Gay. One theory centered around a man named Charles Edward Brent. Another theory was that a group of priests harmed Gay since they were linked to an ongoing murder case of young girls in the area.

Gay was known as a happy, popular student at Franklin, who was also a beauty queen and a cheerleader. “The Montanye girl was described by one of her teachers, Mrs. Sheila Study, as quiet, but intelligent in class. She had even been named ‘the most likely choice to lead the cheerleaders next year.’”

Even though this incident happened almost 51 years ago, this case should still be known to the FHS community, so that people can learn about safety measures when meeting with strangers (even though we have high technology as a means of defense). This case still holds relevance today. Plus, it’s important to know why that plaque still sits inside Franklin.

Not many people know about this incident, so the community should know. “It’s interesting to hear about it,” sophomore Falone Motouom said. “The school could make it a bigger thing so students can learn about safety.” A junior, Kayla “Lynn” Fehr, knew about the case through a friend of hers. In fact, she researched this case for an English project. “My reaction was shock; I couldn’t believe something so malicious happened so close to home especially since it was unsolved,” responded Fehr. “I think more people should know about this because it happened at this school, and I even think a lesson could be taught from it.” After hearing Gay’s story, one other student found it emotional and was in shock. “It’s really sad, and I feel like it’s bone chilling because she was in my grade at the time,” junior Mushtariy Ishmukhamedova reflected. “And it’s sad not that many people know about this.”

Gay’s story was also an inspiration to Netflix’s “The Keepers.” This story is very interesting at our school, especially if you were to hear it for the first time. It creates an insight for students that our school has quite an interesting past. Therefore, it should be shared more in our community. “I’m definitely glad I heard this story ’cause I grew up here, and I’ve heard this story before,” Mushtariy added.

As the decades went by, it seems like Gay was respectfully remembered, especially with the plaque that’s built by the auditorium. Hopefully, more people at school will learn about the story of Gay, especially since she was brutally murdered. “I think Gay Montanye got the attention and remembrance that she deserved, but I don’t think justice was served,” Fehr explained. Hopefully Gay would be more known in the future, if people were to spread the word about it. Falone and Mushtariy both agreed that they’ll inform other curious peers about Gay. Even though it is possible for another incident in Reisterstown to occur like this again, let’s just hope another murder case here would not happen anytime soon.

Gay’s yearbook picture in her junior year. This photo can be found in the 1971 FHS yearbook.
And Just Like That... Here Comes the SAT

By Laila Roodbari

When we were in elementary school, at some point we have probably heard of the word SAT. Our young minds would wonder what could that possibly be? But now here we are juniors in high school, preparing for SAT Day.

The SAT stands for Scholastic Aptitude Test, which seems like such an intimidating word as they are part of the key to getting in colleges. However, some colleges in the United States are now not requiring SAT scores, although juniors still need to take the test.

On Tuesday, April 26th, will be the day juniors take the SAT. Time is flying by, meaning that day will be here in no time. Within this time, students still have a lot of schoolwork to do, making some students overwhelmed.

“I’m nervous and very unprepared due to the amount of schoolwork I have,” junior Margarita Alperovich says.

Two other juniors have had similar responses about their thoughts on the SAT. Frequent responses being that they are “unprepared” and “overwhelmed.”

On top of this, some even think that the SAT shouldn’t be taken at all, with the change of some colleges not requiring the scores.

“The SAT’s are a prejudiced test, and they cannot show the full intelligence of an intellectual,” Margarita says.

“The SATS aren’t a judge of anything but the ability to remember and regurgitate things you won’t need,” another junior Taleya Younger states. “You simply don’t need them as they’re unnecessary stress added to high school students.”

Many students feel the same way these juniors do, that the SAT doesn’t prove how smart one is and only adds more stress to a student. However, the only benefit it has is getting students into college.

“I think it is worth it because if you do well, it can give you college applications a boost and a better chance at getting accepted,” junior Clarke Roberson explained.

“Don’t get down on yourself when you struggle with a weakness. You’ve got this,” Mr. Sommer explains.

With as much time and effort as students put into their studies, the SAT is either a perfect chance to show off their talents, or a stressful, unnecessary experience. But nevertheless, best of luck to all the juniors taking the SAT on April 26!

Clarke is studying for the SAT’s with the SAT review book she bought.

Either way, students are still required to take it, but things can be done to help you prepare, which is studying. If you have time, a couple weeks before the test you could start going over topics for English and Math, looking over topics that you may not fully understand.

“Start to come up with a study plan early and chip away at reviewing a little at a time and be consistent with it,” English teacher, Mr. Sommer says. “Focus on what you are good at and maximize that talent.”

The SAT may bring you a lot of stress, but it’s very important to focus on yourself, too. Take time to relax and take care of yourself.

SAT Score chart from PivotTutors.com. Based on what you score, it tells you the equivalent letter grade and the percentile you are in. A passing score would be anything above 1000.
The morning announcements at Franklin have been in multiple forms. They did somewhat live on TVs in the school. They are now uploaded on Franklin’s YouTube channel.

This is an interview with Andrew Hooper about the morning announcements, how he started doing them, and how his older brother Chris Hooper used to also do the announcements. Find out here what they do behind the scenes.

What made you start doing the announcements?
Andrew: I started doing the announcements because of my brother mainly, actually. The athletic director would call me last year and ask for help while he did the announcements. And I was involved with him through my brother, so he recommended me for the announcements. I was emailed over the summer about helping with the technical sides of it. And when I showed up, I was asked if I was camera shy, and when I said no, I was handed a script and thrown on there.

How long do they normally take to film?
Andrew: They normally take anywhere from 2 to 7 minutes depending on the length and how many times we mess up.

How do you like doing the announcements?
Andrew: I enjoy doing them and will be doing them again next year.

Is there a process to do the announcements?
Andrew: To be a part of them, you must have a sort of personal recommendation, so talk to me and then I can get people into the class. If you’re asking how we do them, then here’s the other answer. There is a slight process — it’s just really recording, edit, upload, just like any other movie or video.

Are guests welcomed?
Andrew: Guests are always welcome.
Information Regarding BCPS Password Changes
By Aryaan Khan

On February 26th, 2022, Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) declared a password change for all students, because the BCPS credentials for students is very important. The plan was put in place due to the ransomware attack in November 2022. The plan includes protocols to help keep the BCPS network safe and secure.

The original password layout for BCPS students was usually a seven-letter passcode with a one-digit number at the end. The new password layout is a three-letter passcode with a three-digit number accompanied with a hashtag symbol (#). “I’ve had this password memorized since 6th grade and having it changed now, makes it a lot more difficult to remember” said Hamaad Abbasi an FHS Junior. The new password layout has made it harder for students to login and sometimes they can’t get access to the internet because of the change.

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Enter you BCPS username accompanied by the @bcps.org email and then enter your old password, then proceed to click “Sign in”

Once you log into your student portal, click on the “My Information” tab and then proceed to the “New Password”

“...I had to re-log into the BCPS network, because it wasn’t working the first time due to the password change,” said Ibaad Abbasi. For students to gain access back to the internet they must first select “forget” on the (BCPS SECURE) network. The quickest way is to left click on the checkbox that states “Use my windows user account”. If this doesn’t work, you can do the manual way. The manual way is to log into the network with your existing BCPS username and new password.

If students don’t have their new BCPS password for some reason, some teachers can access them through their computer. For students to access their password they must access the BCPS student portal website. From there, they must access the “My Information” tab on the left-hand side of the portal. Then they can access their new password by selecting by “New Password” button which is also located on the left-hand side towards the middle.

“I definitely liked the old password’s better, because I’ve had them for years but I’m more comfortable being safe from another ransomware attack happening to us.” said Alec Nahum.

Enter your BCPS username accompanied by the @bcps.org email and then enter your old password, then proceed to click “Sign in”

Your new password will be located on the right hand side, make sure to write it down on a piece of paper or on your phone. Try to keep the password as confidential as possible, never tell any other BCPS student you username or password.

There was nothing wrong with the original BCPS passwords, but BCPS has decided to change them because of last year’s major ransomware attack that shut down the BCPS website and nearly hacked every student’s account.

This password change allows students and staff who attend BCPS schools to be reassured that nothing like this can happen again. The two password’s aren’t much different from each other, so it allows students to be able to quickly memorize them. The new passwords are also shorter than the original ones, making it less complicated for students who easily forgot them.

Students who are still finding a hard to in trying to get there new BCPS password can head to library for extra assistance if needed.
Franklin High School Students Preparing for Next Year

By Aryaan Khan

Preparing for next year’s classes is a tough decision for freshman, sophomores, and juniors. Seniors of course will be going to their selected college or not if they haven’t decided to take that path. Juniors who will be becoming seniors of next year will be choosing classes that they are required to take and additionally take classes they are interested in. “I have to take health next year because of the credit requirement, but also I’m interested in taking AP Statistics” Ibaad Abbasi a Junior attending Franklin High.

The types of courses juniors can take in senior year are art, business education, dance, English, health, JROTC, library media, and physical education. Most of these courses allow students to earn one credit, but some are only half a credit due to the type of course and involvement. Franklin High School reserves the right to alter the course request of any student if they have not met all state testing requirements.

Students who are interested in taking college courses while in high school can apply for the CCBC Early College Access Program and can attend the information session on March 16th. They can also contact Mrs. Jones who is the college counselor.

Students who are interested in a “released time” schedule must have met all state testing and SSLH requirements. Students who are unsure of SSLH requirements, can contact Mrs. Darleen Gilberto: dgilberto@bcps.org

There are many options that juniors have for senior year. They also have a bit freedom, because they can decide if they want a full schedule or half-reduced schedule. “This is great for me, because I’ll definitely have a job by senior year and it’ll open up my schedule for more things” Hamaad Abbasi said. Having less than eight classes allow students to have the ability to do other activities in their day to day life.

“I’ve decided to take a full schedule, because I’m still interested in a lot elective classes such as science and social studies and I’ve also wanted to participate in various clubs next year.” Aidan Nahum said. Those who choose a full schedule will have eight different classes, almost feeling as if they are repeating junior year with a new schedule.

Some colleges don’t seem to like when students take an early release schedule, especially when there are classes taken in High School isn’t great. The choice is up to the student, but students should analyze such factors to proceed with the best decision they can take. “I’m taking a half schedule for time management and because my history throughout High school has been great, I’ve scored high grades while taking AP classes so colleges shouldn’t mind that” Hamaad Abbasi said. Hamaad believes that if a student has good records than a half schedule if fit for them, but if they have a bad record they should stick to a full schedule to redeem themselves.
Outdoor Track Reaches Mid-season with Coach Vales

By Jayden McClung

Early Season Preparation
As Spring sports started to come back around, the Franklin outdoor track team planned to have a good season and a normal season since Covid. Head Coach Joe Vales prepared to have a great track season and to take his team to get a state title. Coach Vales explained how he prepared for his track season and making it to states. “To prepare I try to recruit as many people that are eligible for both running, jumping, and throwing events. I try to map out the first couple weeks of training.” I asked Coach Vales if he thinks that Covid will affect the spring track season. He responded saying, “Since we are going to be outside majority of the time, I do not think Covid will have as great as an impact that it has had in the winter, but we still need precautions in place to keep the season going and avoid any shut downs.” I asked if the number of ineligible students would affect how well his track team will do. He said, “There are always kids that would benefit our team. The more kids you have to chose from, the more talent that is available, but you have to be a student before an athlete.” Finally, I asked how Coach Vales prepares to make it to states. He responded by saying, “we have a great opportunity to send a lot of kids to states and hopefully compete for the overall team title. We are returning the winter track state runner up Myles Taylor and state-runner-up hurdler Mekhi Workman. We have state-runner-up 200 and 100 Gavin Nelson coming back, and his brother Rodney is returning from a hamstring injury, who is going to help a lot. We’ve added a couple throwers that we haven’t had in awhile. We are going to do big things in the jumping events this year. If everyone buys in and stays healthy and sticks to the plan, things can get pretty exciting at the end of May.

Mid-season Follow-up
As the Franklin outdoor track team enters the midway point of their season, I catch back up with Coach Vales to find out how the track season is going so far. After the first two meets, he said, “track is going well. Still finding out what everyone is best at and solidifying our relays.” Coach Vales talked about how the county opener track meet went very well. “We had a lot of success from our veteran runners and a couple real strong performances from some of our younger and new athletes.” Coach Vales said the team’s biggest strength right now is the team’s sprinters. He said, “anytime you can bring back multiple state champion finalists, you are going to have success.” To prepare I try to recruit as many people that are eligible for both running, jumping, and throwing events. I try to map out the first couple weeks of training.”

Track athlete Myles Taylor

Myles Taylor, and asked him a series of questions about his season so far. Myles said that so far, his season has started off slow since he had a hamstring injury that caused him to miss the first track meet. Looking ahead, Myles said, “my biggest goal for the outdoor season is to PR [personal record] in the high jump, long jump, and triple jump.” He also said his biggest goal was to win those three events in the state championship. Myles said he does feel the varsity team could be doing better, but he is pleased with how the JV team is doing. Overall it seems that the track team is doing well right now and that they have some big things in store for the rest of this season!

Outdoor Track Head Coach Joe Vales

Vales believes his track program is underway and that they have a couple strong returning jumpers and that the new throwers will help them get far this year as they improve every meet. I asked how he plans to prepare for Penn Relays, a popular track invitational. He responded saying, “to get ready for the 4 x 100 at Penn Relays, we need to rep our baton passing. In short events, the hundredths of a second matter, so making our exchanges is critical.” He said, “as of now, our 4 x 100 for Penn Relays spots are still open.” He plans on using his best four 100 runners with the best practice habits and performance to earn a spot on that 4 x 100 at that big invitational. To close out the interview, Coach Vales talks about how happy he is with his team’s performances so far. “We have a good number of newer runners suffering from shin splints and general soreness from never running, so practice has had to be modified for some athletes. The ones who are dedicated and working hard every day, their efforts will be rewarded. I also interviewed state runner-up for high jump during the indoor track season, Myles Taylor, and asked him a series of questions about his season so far. Myles said that so far, his season has started off slow since he had a hamstring injury that caused him to miss the first track meet. Looking ahead, Myles said, “my biggest goal for the outdoor season is to PR [personal record] in the high jump, long jump, and triple jump.” He also said his biggest goal was to win those three events in the state championship. Myles said he does feel the varsity team could be doing better, but he is pleased with how the JV team is doing. Overall it seems that the track team is doing well right now and that they have some big things in store for the rest of this season!
Out with the Old: Are Classics Still Relevant?

By Lindsay Adjei

The classics are a staple of education in school systems all around America. The classics are supposed to depict timeless ideals and create discussions among people about topics we still need to talk about and debate over today. In the classroom, teachers use the classics as an instrument for conversation, and students find themselves cycling through books like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Lord of the Flies*, *Of Mice and Men*, and many other iconic titles. I have wondered for a while about their purpose and their importance to us as students and decided to canvas for different opinions.

When reading these titles, these questions often come up: What is the value of these titles? Why do we read them? And what is their purpose?

The answer to these questions is very different among certain people, but they are important to discuss, especially when thinking about their place in our education.

“I think we need to have classics because it is part of a larger fabric that we are all a part of. There are allusions that we make in our culture, and if we have a collective knowledge, it binds us together as part of that knowledge [of the classics],” responded Mr. Showalter, English and Creative Writing teacher.

This is important when discussing classic literature because the reason many are considered classics is because of their timelessness and the fact that they can be relevant over long periods of time. Using the classics, we are able to look back and see how people thought in the past but also discuss how it applies today or could potentially apply to us in the future. These books are also able to appeal to wide ranges of audiences because of the universal topics within them and the fact that they are able to be read by many.

“I think everyone should read *Of Mice and Men*; The thing I love about that is that I can teach it to my highest and lowest level learners and everyone can get something out of it. I think it also speaks to a time where we were in America, and there’s a lot of humanity within it,” explained Mr. Showalter.

While there is good in these books, when do we find ourselves moving on from the old and into the new? Students every year buy copies of *To Kill A Mockingbird*, but how does it serve them in their learning? It explores themes of racism and how it affects everyone involved and how Atticus, one of the protagonists, decides to go against the racist nature of his town and community and defend a black man wrongfully accused. This book has been taught to classes over the years, but how does perspective change people's viewpoints?

This is an essential question when learning classical literature and should still be important today. It gives us perspective when learning about how people viewed things in the past and how they apply to the future. I think it’s important to analyze these books in our lives and become more familiar with the themes explored in them. As students, this can help conversations about issues we’ve been struggling with since the time of Harper Lee or John Steinbeck and create more unity in our communities.

These are some classics we all have encountered. Which ones have you read?
Is Daylight Savings Time Helpful or Harmful?

By Kylie Beveridge

"Spring ahead, fall backward"... we all know the saying.

Daylight Saving Time-- created as a way to conserve daylight and save energy is a practice that dates back to the early 1900s. Most countries have adapted to the practice of turning the clocks ahead one hour in the spring, and then turning them an hour back in the fall. Yet, there's a lack of knowledge of how and why it came about, which has caused a lot of debate over whether it should end once and for all.

Recently, the U.S. Senate on Tuesday passed legislation that would make daylight saving time permanent starting in 2023, ending the twice-annual changing of clocks in a move promoted by supporters advocating brighter afternoons and more economic activity.

The National Association of Convenience Stores opposes the change, telling Congress this month "we should not have kids going to school in the dark."

Junior Maya Rodriguez said, "I am happy, it is going to permanent. It gets tiring when it changes."

Losing sleep is never fun, and Daylight-Saving Time (DST) doesn't help. This practice really needs to go, and there are plenty of reasons why. The most obvious one is inconvenience. Resetting clocks and fixing schedules is extremely irritating, not to mention losing that comfortable hour of sleep in the spring. Productivity is also lowered because those few minutes spent changing clocks could have been spent doing something else, like homework. Plus, the loss of sleep reduces concentration and brain processing speed, meaning tasks take longer to complete. It's estimated that every time the clocks are changed, the US economy loses almost half a billion dollars! That lost hour of sleep does more though, as there are well documented health issues that arise due to a lack of sleep.

"Changing the clocks twice a year can be a hassle, so some people in the United States want to permanently keep Daylight Saving Time."

Image from flowingdata.com

Standardized Testing after a Year of Virtual Learning

By Desean Walker

We all know about standardized testing, for example SAT and MCAP are the tests students take that determine their futures, but they also have effects on teachers as well. I asked some of my friends what effects the tests have on them, and they only told me negative aspects of it. My friend Jamari told me that he thinks we should not do the test because during virtual school, he feels that no one really learned much at all. Sophomore Kyran Harry says he feels the same. English teacher Ms. Hodskins explained, "I know students were very relieved last year when we found out that the requirement for standardized testing was waived. The pressure of standardized testing and endurance required to focus on tests for extended periods of time put more demands on exhausted students who need the time in the classroom this year to learn in person from their teachers and peers." These quotes show the overall effects the test has on students and teachers.
The World’s Most Important Invention: the Chicken Nugget

By Rachael Harbus

Chicken nuggets are one of the most popular foods and a main staple in the diet of Americans in 2022. Chicken nuggets are small pieces of deboned chicken breast that are breaded or battered and then deep-fried or baked. They are found at nearly every restaurant, whether they are considered the main dish or just an item on the kid’s menu. You can also find them in the grocery store, too. They usually can be found sitting in the freezer at the back of the store. They can come in many unique shapes. The original shape of a chicken nugget is circular or oval. However, companies have since gotten creative and made chicken nuggets that are shaped like dinosaurs, sea creatures, or even SpongeBob SquarePants!

An adult male being attacked and supposedly “scared” by chicken nuggets, conveying how popular the food is. Photo from carolinanewsandreporter.cvic.sc.edu.

The popularity of chicken nuggets makes it hard to believe that they are actually a relatively recent creation.

When World War II ended in 1945, chicken farmers had an issue. The United States had an overabundance of chickens due to the military. The United States economy and standard of living from the war. In addition, the war also opened up more jobs, allowing women to work outside of the home. This was a necessity during this time in order to keep the United States economy and standard of living from the war. At the end of the war, most women kept their “out of home” jobs, which made certain aspects of housekeeping (like cooking) harder. For most families, cooking a whole chicken took way too long. As a result, chicken prices began to fall.

These prices did not rise until the chicken nugget was created. The nugget was invented by a food scientist named Robert C. Baker in a laboratory at Cornell University in New York in the early 1960s. Baker had discovered a way to keep ground meat together without the animal skin and a batter that wouldn’t shrink when frozen or expand when fried. His first attempt at making a chicken nugget involved grinding the chicken meat with vinegar and salt in order to dry it and then adding powdered milk and grains as the outside exterior. The original name for these chicken nuggets was “chicken sticks,” and they instantly became popular in New York, selling

A common meal loved by the majority of Americans: Dinosaur chicken nuggets and French fries. Photo from thrillist.com.

We even see chicken nuggets here at this school. About once a week, the cafeteria offers chicken nuggets during all lunch shifts. Our school is also located next to a Chick-fil-A and McDonald’s, the two most popular fast food chains in the United States that happen to have chicken nuggets on their menus. So, it is not uncommon to see someone eating Chick-fil-A nuggets or McNuggets during school hours.

Most of our student body eats chicken nuggets. When asked if they eat chicken nuggets, two people answered in the affirmative:

“Yes, I eat chicken nuggets, and I eat them like wherever I can find them,” junior Jasmine Ama- ya said.

“Yes, but it depends on the type. There are bad chicken nuggets, and there are good chicken nuggets. Chicken nuggets from Chick-fil-A, Wend- dy’s, McDonald’s, and dinosaur nuggets are good. If the nuggets are not shaped like dino-saurs, they are not worth my time,” science teacher Ms. Nemoto stated.

However, not everybody eats chicken nuggets. Sometimes they cannot or sometimes they do not want to. One person answered in the negative:

“I don’t eat chicken nuggets because I am vegetarian,” senior Tithi Prajapati stated.

One example of a modern chicken nugget is the Chicken McNuggets created by McDonald’s in 1981. The owner, Ray Kroc, first thought of the idea. His motive was to offer customers another menu item that was different than a burger. To pursue his idea, McDonald’s hired chef Rene Arend, who had actually cooked for Queen Elizabeth II. He was asked to create the idea. Arend produced a fried chicken breast in sauce. However, the creation could not be mass produced fast enough to sell to the public. McDonald’s then hired Keystone Foods, a maker of frozen hamburgers, to create a batter for the chicken that could be reproduced quicker. The mass production of chicken nuggets was successful. Chicken nugget mania started in 1983, when McDonald’s introduced Chicken McNuggets nationwide.

“The story of McNugget mayhem from the early 1980s is the stuff of legend,” says Adam Chand- dler, author of Drive-Thru Dreams. “Local news broadcasts showed long lines and stores running out of chicken.”

Another example of a modern chicken nugget is the Chick-fil-A nuggets created by Chick-fil-A. The first Chick-fil-A opened in 1967 after the founder Samuel Truett Cathey had perfected his invention of the boneless chicken sandwich. Chick-fil-A began creating chicken nuggets in the early 1980s (around the same time as McDonald’s) after several customers requested the sandwich be cut into bite-size pieces of chicken for children. In addition, customers were requesting that the chain offer finger food at dinner or birthday parties.

Eventually, the trend grew and the chicken nugget became a menu item in 1982. The invention of the chicken nugget nearly 60 years ago plays a huge role in feeding the people of the United States and will continue for many years to come.
Who Influenced Modern Dance?

By Naza Nnagbo

“It’s important to learn about dancers and their dance style because they literally paved [the way] for the style; an example is Isabela Duncan. She essentially created modern dance; it wasn’t a thing before her,” explained Ms. Gibson, Franklin’s dance teacher.

Modern dance is a free and expressive dance style that started in the 20th century; it could also be considered theatrical dance that includes styles from ballet, folk, ethnic, and religious dances that arose in Europe and the United States.

Isabela Duncan was an American dancer whose teaching and performances in the late 19th and early 20th century helped free ballet from its conservative restrictions and let the development of modern dance go. Even with her long lasting impacts on the dance style, she brought corsets, petticoats, long sleeves, high collars, and heavy skirts that are still worn by many today.

She later died tragically in France by being strangled when her huge silk scarf got tangled under her car.

“All the genres of dance are intertwined because a lot of the vocab that are usually used, using the same terminology for ballet [such as spotting and second position] with jazz because they’re not all that different” freshmen Courtnee Strick says on her own experience of dancing.

Other famous modern dancers are Ruth St. Denis, Martha Graham, Gene Kelly, and Rudolf Nureyev.

Rudolf Nureyev is considered more of a ballet dancer than modern, but he still changed the image of male dancers. In his own works, male dancers received more choreography. He crossed the lines between classical ballet and modern dance. While working as a choreographer, Nureyev modified Swan Lake (Vienna, 1964). He died January 6, 1983 from AIDS, which was kept a secret till the morning of his death.

Another renowned modern dancer is Martha Graham who was also a choreographer. She basically created her own style called the Graham technique that is still taught worldwide today. It’s based on “contraction and release and uses basic human movement,” according to Martha Graham.org. With one of the longest dance careers, her most famous works were The Now historic Frontier (1935), a solo dance, and Primitive Mysteries.

She’s known for most honorable works which were Incense and Rah. She started performing in vaudeville and musical comedy shows when she was a teenager, and was inspired by Eastern cultures (also by Bernhardt’s melodramatic acting style). This may be considered cultural appropriation because it came about while she was touring in the last play. Denis saw a cigarette poster featuring an Egyptian scene of the goddess Isis.

Ruth St. Denis performing interpretive dance. Photo from dancebibles.com

Ruth St. Denis performing Rah in traditional clothing
Photo from marthaki.com

Rudolf practicing Swan Lake on stage
Photo from elegancepedia.com

Martha Graham performing solo dance
photo from marthagraham.org/
The Batman Review
By Matt Luniewski

Since forever, the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and the DC Extended Universe (DCEU) have never been comparable. The MCU, while having its fair share of flops, has been held by most as infinitely more creative and consistent than the DCEU. That is until fairly recently when The Suicide Squad was released in August of last year. It was highly praised for its creative characters, high octane and stylistic editing, and inventive camerawork, something that was never present in any MCU movie. While it was certainly deserving of its immense praise and success, the movie couldn’t have single-handedly moved the DCEU above the MCU in terms of quality. There was still an enormous difference in consistency between the two with the MCU’s streak of lukewarmness and the DCEU seldomly releasing a movie that sets a new standard for the superhero genre and puts the MCU to shame. In the DCEU’s sea of abominable movies lies The Batman, who is one of those rare movies that reminds its viewers that the superhero genre has room to be more than a corporate cluster of CGI.

When examining The Batman, it is impossible to pinpoint just one or two reasons in particular that exceed other superhero movies. However, what largely sets itself apart from the rest of its genre and sets itself up for exceeding in all other fields is the tone. Oftentimes, films will feel the need to make the story darker to cater to a certain demographic. Sometimes films will needlessly give itself an R rating with no clear intention of utilizing its vulgarity and maturity to improve the experience. Instead, it will use those abilities to achieve a seemingly mature sense of humor. The Batman doesn’t do this in the slightest however and doesn’t try to be anything it doesn’t need to be. While others use the PG-13 movie to exploit the ability to squeeze in sweat for giggles and gags, The Batman uses the rating to obtain a raw, violent, and unhinged aura that surrounds Batman and Gotham City. Thankfully, profanity has nearly nothing to do with this atmosphere as it’s only used to create emphasis in the dialogue. The rest of the world building is achieved through the movie’s brilliant lighting, set design and cinematography.

The set design in The Batman delightfully putrid. Gotham reeks of second-hand lung cancer, illegal nightclubs, and crime. Batman genuinely feels like the only thing that could possibly save this city. The designers found some way to make Gotham delectably regurgitating with its bleak and soggy streets, sprinkled with blinding reds that beam from the depths of Gotham’s underbelly. Yet behind that rancidity is a strange beauty. Those blaring reds bounce off of the vile puddles and illuminate the city gorgeous-ly. This peculiar elegance seeps from Wayne Manor in its gothic architecture. Batman’s presence echoes from the manor in how Gothic architecture and the cityscape similarly shares both aspects of beauty and horror. The only difference is that Wayne Manor holds more beauty than horror while the city is the opposite. This interesting concept of comparing and contrasting is ultimately what makes Gotham itself feel like a living breathing thing. The second half of The Batman’s tone is portrayed through its cinematography. If anything, this is what The Batman has that no movie in the MCU has. Unlike everything else, the cinematography isn’t an improvement from the MCU, it is just nonexistent in any MCU project. That’s not to say that the cinematography is doing the bare minimum, because that couldn’t be farther from the truth. It is clear that the director Matt Reeves and the cinematographers had an absolute field day with the cornucopia of ideas they were throwing at the wall. Thankfully, all of them stick and aren’t entirely just for looks, it’s not going for high octane stressfulness, it successfully captures the essence of Batman and Gotham through blurring and dirtying the lens.

One of the biggest assets of The Batman is easily the acting. Robert Pattinson gives arguably the best performance as Batman with the only other real competition being Bale’s Batman from the Nolan trilogy. His role as Batman is a textbook example of acting without speaking as Batman has less dialogue than he does in any other Batman movie ever, even with its 3 hour run time. His facial expressions with his eyes in particular speak volumes over any dialogue that could’ve been written for him. Even his footsteps feel like their own voice. On the other hand, Robert Pattinson as Bruce Wayne is good but leaves some things to be desired but that is in most part due to the director’s choice of focus for the movie’s tone. It chooses to show that all Bruce has is the Batman persona which had to sacrifice some of Bruce’s character in order to go through with. Other performances by Zoe Kravitz, Jeffery Wright, and Colin Farrel as Catwoman, Commissioner Gorden, and The Penguin respectively were also great in their own right. But easily the best performance of the movie was Paul Dano as The Riddler. The Riddler was prominent throughout the entirety of the movie’s story but wasn’t really in a big scene until the last third of the movie. Even then, Paul Dano’s acting is still unmatched by the rest of the cast. He dominates every scene that he’s in which is perfect for his sociopathic character. He fully realizes his character and knows exactly when and when not to put emphasis on his lines through psychotic maoirisms and screams.

One of the only general complaints that can be found in the movie is the relationship between Batman and Catwoman. Their romance has very little build up so scenes that explore their relationship feel almost entirely out of place.

With just that single complaint, The Batman is a near perfect superhero movie. It doesn’t try to be anything but a Batman movie and that’s all it has to be. It doesn’t try to reinvent the wheel as it is easy to see that it takes clear inspiration from past Batman movies. But that isn’t the only thing that makes it a perfect superhero movie. It has oodles of things to appeal like the acting, cinematography, and score. With the a squeal in the works, we can safely assume that this character and the city of Gotham have been put into good hands so that DC can finally put an end to the stigma of Superhero movies needing to be crowd pleasing and factory made in order to be successful.
Jujutsu Kaisen 0 recently got released in America on March 18th, 2022. It’s a prequel to the hit show Jujutsu Kaisen. The plot follows a young boy named Yuta Okkotsu who has a curse named Rika following him. He finds his way into a school called Jujutsu Tech, where he grows and makes new friends, all while trying to find a way to break the curse.

The movie itself was around 2 hours; it was quite enjoyable and very eventful, so it did not feel boring. The movie’s soundtrack was amazing; there was a nice key of suspense embedded into each song. My personal favorite was the opening song, “Greatest Strength” by Hiro Tsutsumi, Toft Willingham, Chez and Jessi. “One Way” by King Gnu was another one.

It was lovely to see characters that we know and love from the original series in the show that you couldn’t expect to see, like the third years and surprisingly Nanami (who isn’t in the original volume 0). Being able to see Maki, Inumaki, and Panda again, but as their first-year selves, was enjoyable. In the Jujutsu Kaisen, we do get to see them, but it didn’t go much in depth with them. Seeing first year Maki reminded me a lot of how Nobara acts now. A nice parallel in my opinion.

The movie was picked up by MAAPA studio, which is known for their good animation. The studio has picked up other popular series, such as Attack on Titians, Yuri on Ice, Banana Fish, and the soon-to-be-released Chainsaw Man. The animation in the move was spectacular. Controversial take here, but I normally don’t enjoy nor like fight scenes. Yeah. I don’t enjoy them because sometimes they just drag on for longer than it should be or because they’re too predictable, but the fight scenes in this movie actually got me hyped to see what comes next. It could just be the amazing animation.

Now my favorite scene out of the entire movie has to be Maki and Yuta training. That Maki scene was just a 10/10. Another enjoyable fight was the Inumaki one. We hardly see him use his curse in the Jujutsu Kaisen, so it was nice to see him in this movie.

Overall, the movie was a fun watch. I definitely recommend going with friends if you haven’t seen it yet! It will be available on DVD and selected streaming platforms sometime before the end of 2022, however as it is very new, it may not be till fall or winter. But the long wait will be worth it!

How a War between the Rappers Started

Major artist King Von, while on a live Instagram video, called out other huge artist NBA YoungBoy saying, “Man what he talking bout on this song? He all cap,” which means it’s all lies. This started off some tension between the two.

A picture then got leaked of King Von with NBA YoungBoy’s baby mom, Jania, which kicked off the tension ten-times more.

This then lead the artist NBA YoungBoy to drop a song with King Von’s ex-girlfriend Asian Doll called “Meet da Reaper.” Von responded by unleashing a series of tweets, which can be summarized by him basically saying “I’m not going to fight over a girl,” and “Their new song is trash. If I dropped, I could destroy you both.”

Fast-forward a year later, King Von is at a nightclub in Atlanta. He sees NBA YoungBoy affiliate, another huge artist - Quando Rondo, and begins punching him. This lead to affiliate of Quando Rondo, Lil Timm defending the rapper and ultimately shooting King Von twice, after which he died 2 days later. Lil Timm went to jail for the shooting, but plead self-defense and was released because King Von’s crew attacked Lil Timm first.

Two months ago NBA YoungBoy re-sparked the beef by dropping his infamous song “Bring the Hook” which sits at 15 million views on YouTube. In the song, YoungBoy sings “OBlock Pack get rolled up, Atlanta boy get fold up” which is a reference to the deceased artist King Von, as he proudly hailed from “OBlock” Parkway garden homes, an apartment complex in southside Chicago that produces the biggest artists out of Chicago and generates the most crime. “Atlanta boy get fold up” is a reference to the location where King Von passed away.

“Bring The Hook” reignited the beef between the crews when other huge artist Lil Durk, King Von’s main man and second biggest artist in the industry stepped in. Now the country’s two biggest artists’ crews are waging a national war against each other NBA vs OTF. There have been multiple shootings across the US in the crossfire of these two crews’ feud. The violence needs to end.
To venture into Spring, South Korean girl group, Red Velvet, released their newest album, “The ReVe Festival 2022 — Feel My Rhythm,” on March 21st, 2022. The album consists of six songs, incorporating classical music with modern, and its success was heavily shown with a total of 516,866 pre-orders, making it Red Velvet’s most pre-ordered album. It also had more than 400,000 copies sold in the first week, making them one of the only girl groups to sell that many copies in a short amount of time. The concept of the “Feel My Rhythm” album felt like a fairy tale unfolding. Each member of the group was dressed in elegant pink dresses and placed in a gorgeous garden-like setting. Furthermore, they were portrayed as ballerinas in a music box surrounded by antiques that gave an exquisite impression. “It looks like something out of a Beatrix Potter illustration,” sophomore Patricia Alegria expresses. The title track, “Feel My Rhythm,” is a very lively song that expresses the transition from winter to spring and includes violins playing the melody of “Air on the G String,” created by the classical music legend Johann Sebastian Bach. The album was cleverly released on Bach’s birthday to show this as well.

Patricia recognizes his appearance on the song and states, “The title track has a very grand orchestral opening–I think it might be Bach—” then continues to explain the overall feel and melody of the song. She also voices out that, from the cold dark of winter to the idea of spring, Red Velvet was able to bring together their cutesy sound with darker concepts as they always do. Although the songs are in the Korean language, that doesn’t prohibit others from different language-speaking countries from enjoying and listening to their music. “Red Velvet is an amazing example of KPOP working its way around the world,” junior Brielle Shpigel says. “Having a language barrier is not really a problem when the music is amazing and the vocals are crazy.” Both Brielle and Patricia agree that the concept of Red Velvet’s newest album is different and that it is a perfect accompaniment to a new season. Congratulations to another hit of success, Red Velvet!

Red Velvet and their newest album featuring in an ad at New York’s Times Square!

Red Velvet members Irene, Seulgi, Wendy, Joy, and Yeri, dressed as ballerinas in a group photo

Concept photos from The ReVe Festival 2022 — Feel My Rhythm

Traveling into Spring with Red Velvet
By Dannah Tinio
It’s true that Disney’s new movie Encanto is now slowly losing its relevance, but its popularity and catchy songs allowed it to become an Oscar award nominee. Released in the month of Thanksgiving and of family gathering, this new movie tells a tale about an extraordinary family with each of the members having unique powers. They live hidden in a magical house, surrounded by the mountains of Colombia.

The movie starts by presenting a moment in the past of the main character Maribel when she was a young girl conversing with her grandma before an important ceremony regarding Maribel was about to happen. Her Abuela (Grandmother) Alma tells her the story about how their house and their Encanto, meaning miracle, came to be, the miracle of how their home and unique powers came to life.

After this scene we see Maribel getting ready to go out of her room as she gets supplies for a party as the first song of the movie starts to play. The connection between these two scenes has you not only left in awe to see magic in the works, but it has you wondering about what happened to Maribel in her ceremony. A little bit later after the first song, it is revealed that the ceremony was meant to give her powers. These types of scenes help capture the viewers’ attention into discovering the truth which is a great way to start a movie.

Almost near the finale, after Bruno’s prophecy of the Madrigal house falling apart comes true, Maribel runs away to a shiny and magical lagoon. Her Abuela finds her and tells her about the motive behind her strict mandates, and so begins another song. Unlike Encanto’s previous songs, this one called “Dos Oruguitas” (two caterpillars) reveals more about the Encanto by concentrating on Abuela’s past. This particular song shares Abuela’s melancholy on losing her old home along with her husband. You know how many save the best for last? Well, this song is one of these cases. The song might not be such a hit like “We don’t talk about Bruno,” but what makes it the best is the connection between the story portrayal and the song itself. Together you can feel the emotions it wants to communicate to the audience.

Overall, Disney’s Encanto is a story that can be understood by families that may feel broken and separated, as well as our own personas that might feel without value. What this movie teaches is the purpose of family communication because inside any type of family is where self-discovery begins.
April Word Search
By Mariana Noyola-Hernandez

April Fools
Spring Break
Rain
Birds
Bloom
Puddles
Umbrella
Baseball
Clouds
Sunshine
Picnic
Cleaning
Kite
Windy
Easter

Note: some words are flipped

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