

November 2023



By Cecilia Havre

Home Instruction Teens

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November



DECEMBER ISSUE DEADLINE:
December 20th, 2023

Read HIT MAGAZINE online at:
www.homeinstructionschoools.com

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* Special thanks to Todd Alessandro & our WONDERFUL Principal Ramona Pizarro for all their help in producing this magazine!!

HIT MAGAZINE

Home Instruction Teens Magazine

*Welcome back to another year of HIT MAGAZINE
These magazines are written by Home Instruction students for
Home Instruction students. They provide an opportunity for
students to communicate and share ideas.*

**All students (K-12) are invited to participate in the
production of these magazines.**



**You don't have to be a great writer to be involved.
There are all kinds of things that will help in the
production of each issue.**

CONTESTS

Every month we try to list contests. Hopefully you will enjoy entering some of them. If you do, please let us know and also send us a copy of your entry so that we can print it in HIT. A number of our students have won these contests so you should really try. Let us know if you win so we can mention that in the next issue.

If you have any questions please contact us at:

MKANE6@SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV

SCHOLASTIC ARTS AND WRITING AWARDS

If you are seriously interested in art or writing you SHOULD enter this contest.

Prize: There are national and local awards

Grades: 7-12

Information: **<http://www.artandwriting.org/>**

2023 AFSA High School Essay Contest

Sponsored by: American Foreign Service Association

Theme: WHY DIPLOMACY & PEACEBUILDING MATTER

Ages: Grades 9-12

Deadline: April 1, 2024

Grand prize: \$2,500 & a trip to Washington DC

Information: **<http://www.afsa.org/essay-contest>**



2023-2024 19th Japan Center Essay Competition

Sponsored by Canon U.S.A.

Organized by the Japan Center at Stony Brook University

Aim:

The aim of the competition is to provide young Americans with an opportunity to think creatively and critically about their lives by relating them to some aspect of Japan so they can broaden their horizons and develop global citizenship.

Awards:

Best Essay Award in the High School Division:

1st Place: \$3,000 and a Canon product

2nd Place: \$1,500 and a Canon product

3rd Place: \$1,000 and a Canon product

Best Essay Award in the College Division:

\$3,000 and a Canon product

Uchida Memorial Award:

\$1,000 and a Canon product

Essay Topic:

Contestants should discuss one or more aspects of Japan including art, culture, tradition, values, philosophy, history, society, politics, business, and technology in relation to their personal experiences, views, and/or future goals. (Contestants do not need to have any experience in visiting Japan or studying Japanese.) The judging criteria and additional guidance (FAQ) can be viewed at the Japan Center's website: www.stonybrook.edu/japancenter

Entry Qualifications for Contestants:

1. They must be 13 years old or older and enrolled in high schools or undergraduate programs in the New York Metropolitan area during the 2023-2024 school year.
2. They must be able to release the copyright of their essay to the JCSB and present their essay orally at the award ceremony.
3. They must be U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents of the U.S. except void in Maine and wherever prohibited by law.

Judging:

Submitted essays will be evaluated by the JCSB Essay Competition Organizing Committee and the panel of Stony Brook faculty judges (Chief Judge: Sachiko Murata, Director of the Program in Japanese Program) on the bases of their insight, creativity, and originality of expression as well as their style, form, and organization. (See the judging criteria and FAQs posted on the JCSB's website.)

Honorary Judges:

Mikio Mori, Ambassador and Consul General of Japan in NY
Kevin Ogawa, President and CEO, Canon U.S.A., Inc.

Submission: Submit your essay by **January 8, 2024** through the official *Essay Submission Form*, found on the JCSB's website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/japancenter>

Acknowledgement of receipt will be sent automatically after submission. If you do not receive it, please contact us by e-mail (japanessay@stonybrook.edu).

Rules:

- Your essay must be written in English, typed (12 pt., single space) and saved in MS Word or RTF format (doc, docx, or rtf).
- The file name should have the division code (H for high school; C for college), author's first and last name initials, an underscore (_), and the first three words of the essay title. (Use only letters. Do not use symbols or spaces.) For example:

HJS_TeaTheEmbodiment (High School Division, John Smith, *Tea: The Embodiment of Japanese Values*)

CEK_JapansLanguageof (College Division, Ellen Kaplan, *Japan's Language of Art and Music*)

- Your file must include only the following:
 - File name (see above)
 - Full essay title
 - Essay body (500 - 750 words)
 - Works cited, if any
- Do NOT type your name or your school name in the file. You can enter the author's information in the designated fields in the official *Essay Submission Form*.
- All use of external information must be properly attributed in the essay body and their sources must be listed. Plagiarism will result in disqualification.
- Do not use footnotes or endnotes.
- Do not include photos, illustrations, diagrams or tables.

Recognition of Award Recipients: The award recipients and their essays will be posted on the JCSB website (www.stonybrook.edu/japancenter) by the end of the first week in April in 2024. The award recipients in the Japan Center Essay Competition will be formally recognized at the Charles B. Wang Center at Stony Brook University on **Saturday, April 20, 2024**.

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REFLECTIONS

Is the American Dream Still Possible?

By Clayton Holness

Teacher: Yevgeny Ginzburg

Is the American Dream Still Possible? by David Wallechinsky, *Parade*, October 2014

1 *To be “middle class” in America once meant living well and having financial security. But today that comfortable and contented lifestyle is harder to achieve and maintain. PARADE commissioned Mark Clements Research Inc. to survey Americans nationwide about their finances and outlook for the future. Contributing Editor David Wallechinsky—author of recent articles on where your tax dollars go and on pork-barrel spending—interprets the results.*

2 The traditional American Dream is based on the belief that hardworking citizens can better their lives, pay their monthly bills without worry, give their children a start to an even better life and still save enough to live comfortably after they retire. But many average Americans are struggling—squeezed by rising costs, declining wages, credit-card debt and diminished benefits, with little left over to save for retirement. (See the following statistics.)

3 Does the dream survive? Do most Americans still believe they can forge better lives for themselves?

4 PARADE surveyed more than 2,200 Americans, of whom fully 84% described themselves as belonging to the middle class, regardless of where they live (living costs are higher in some regions) or the size of their household.

5 For this report, we focused on U.S. households earning between \$30,000 and \$99,000 a year. Most of those surveyed describe themselves as married and having a family. More than 64% say they are employed full-time or part-time. Most say they are in reasonably good health and have a satisfying religious or spiritual life. They own a home and at least two cars, and they are able to take vacations. By international standards, they live a life of prosperity.

6 Yet behind this prosperity is a growing unease. Half of the employed respondents say that they've experienced either increased health-care costs or a cut in health benefits over the last three years, and 39% have had cuts in their overtime, raises or bonuses. Almost two-thirds say they live from paycheck to paycheck, and 47% say that no matter how hard they work, they cannot get ahead. More than a third worry about job loss.

7 Richard Oden of Conyers, Ga.—married, with five children—worked in the beer industry for 23 years. Last year, he developed pneumonia and required major surgery. When he was unable to return to work by a given date, he says, his company terminated him at age 54—even though he had a perfect attendance record and no performance problems.

8 To help support his family, Oden had to dip into his 401(k) fund, paying a penalty for premature withdrawal. “This was very stressful,” he says. “Everything had gone up—except wages.”

9 Oden has since started his own business, a “leadership and personal development” consulting firm. His wife, Josett, works as a representative in the health-care field. “I do believe I will recover financially,” Oden says, “and that I will realize a decent retirement. But the traditional American Dream? For most Americans, it’s still a dream—a pipe dream.”

10 Having drawn on his own retirement fund, Oden knows that saving can be a big problem. In the survey, nearly 83% say that there is not much left to save after they've paid their bills. Statistics from the Commerce Department bear this out: The savings rate for Americans is the lowest it has been in 73 years.

11 Self-reliance and sacrifice. Most of those interviewed display qualities common to American success stories: determination, flexibility, pragmatism, willingness to work hard and especially self-reliance. Almost three-quarters of the middle-class respondents surveyed say they take responsibility for their own financial destiny and believe that they will succeed or fail based on their own efforts. Still, many are downsizing their dreams.

12 Shelly Comer, 43, of Dos Palos, Calif., is a divorced mother of three who also takes care of a friend of her oldest child, Michelle. She is going into debt so that Michelle can go to college. Shelly has worked her whole life—as a receptionist, janitor, preschool teacher and activities director at a hospital. Recently, she became a registered nurse and now works the night shift in obstetrics at another hospital. Her annual income is \$70,377.

13 Michelle, 19, is a freshman at the University of California at Merced. She says she is concerned about the financial burden her education is placing on her family: “In order to meet our expected family contribution, my mother had to borrow the entire amount of her share.” For her part, Michelle earned six small scholarships, two of which are renewable for next year, and took out a federal loan. She also works 16 hours a week in the financial-aid office at the university.

14 Shelly has a retirement plan through the hospital. “But I have nothing saved for me,” she says. “I’m putting it all into the kids, so that they can succeed in school. Our parents did everything for us, and I hope to do the same for my kids. I don’t count on anyone else to help us get to where we want to go. It’s all up to me and my family. And I trust in God to help us.”

15 Who is responsible? One of the most intriguing results of the Parade survey is that 89% of the middle class believes that businesses have a social responsibility to their employees and to the community. Yet 81% believe that, in fact, American businesses make decisions based on what is best for their shareholders and investors, not what’s best for their employees.

16 Randy Omark, 55, and Cherie Morris, 58, of Stroudsburg, Pa., husband and wife, are former flight attendants for TWA. Cherie took a buyout in the late 1990s—before American Airlines bought TWA in 2001. After the acquisition, Randy was put on “furlough” (as were about 4,000 other former TWA flight attendants) and never rehired. After 26 years with the two airlines, his pension was frozen and then taken over by the government. Now he gets \$324 a month in payments.

17 Today, despite having a college education, Randy works for \$9 an hour finding community jobs for mentally challenged adults. Cherie works for a greeting-card company for \$7.25 an hour. Randy was put on “furlough” (as were about 4,000 other former TWA flight attendants) and never rehired. After 26 years with the two airlines, his pension was frozen and then taken over by the government. Now he gets \$324 a month in payments.

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18 “It used to be that if you stayed with your job, you would be rewarded,” says Cherie. “Now there is no guarantee.” As for retirement, Randy says, “Eventually, we will just downsize everything, sell our house and move into a smaller one.”

19 Is the dream changing? Simone Luevano, 46, and Miguel Gutierrez, 44, run a garage-door installation and repair business in Albuquerque, N.M. While the business grossed \$453,000 last year, they took home just \$50,000 net to live on. They have a daughter—Marilyn, age 7—who is deaf in one ear and goes to a private school that costs \$3600 a year.

20 Simone says that financial stress is part of their lives: “It comes from the ‘maybe, could be, should be’ nature of our business.” When the economy is down, people don’t buy a new garage-door system. The cost of gas at the pump is a major factor, she adds: “When the price of gasoline goes down, business goes up.”

21 Have they prepared for retirement? Simone laughs, then replies, “The words ‘retirement’ and ‘vacation’ are not in our vocabulary. You know that old Tennessee Ernie Ford song: ‘I owe my soul to the company store’? We don’t think about retirement. They’ll have to take me out of here with my high-top tennies on.

22 “The American Dream is a bygone thing,” she adds. “It’s not the way life is anymore. I used to believe I was responsible for my own destiny. But it’s not that simple. Now it’s faith and fortitude.”
What Can You Do?

23 In this (and every) election year, many politicians rev up emotions that keep voters from focusing on the pocketbook and daily-life issues that truly matter. You know what really touches your family and life: The cost of milk, gas and prescription drugs. The quality of schools. The hope that the government will step in fully prepared to keep you safe and secure if a disaster hits your neighborhood.

24 Don’t leave decision-making and priority-setting to zealots who have an ax to grind—or to the blindly ambitious people who emerge in every generation. For more than 200 years, our system of government has encouraged power to the people. Be an active citizen.

Text	Analysis of How Text Relates to Claim
“By international standards, they live a life of prosperity. Yet behind this prosperity is a growing unease. Half of the employed respondents say that they’ve experienced either increased health-care costs or a cut in health benefits over the last three years, and 39% have had cuts in their overtime, raises or bonuses.”	<p>Is the American Dream Still Possible?</p> <p>The American Dream is still a possibility and I believe this because even if the prices of everything increase and always profit in some way because someone always is.</p>
“Shelly has a retirement plan through the hospital. ‘But I have nothing saved for me,’ she says. ‘I’m putting it all into the kids, so that they can succeed in school.’”	<p>The American Dream is always changing so it is possible for her new dream to no longer mainly focus on her and she is now focusing on the possibility of success for her children.</p>
“Today, despite having a college education, Randy works for \$9 an hour finding community jobs for mentally challenged adults.”	<p>Randy’s American dream is over and it is also over for many people and achieving the American Dream is all about Hard work and luck, and if your cards don't line up there is no security net to fall in when everything crashes.</p>
“While the business grossed \$453,000 last year, they took home just \$50,000 net to live on. They have a daughter—Marilyn, age 7—who is deaf in one ear and goes to a private school that costs \$3600 a year.”	<p>The American Dream is built on the principles of hard work and dedication and a part of that is seeking out other methods of revenue. No successful person has one stream of income, it’s one of the many sacrifices u have to make in order to get what u want.</p>

- Transition words and phrases are important for argumentative writing. As in other writing, transitions help the reader navigate the text. Transitions like however, still, despite, and yet can signal that the writer is refuting opposing arguments. In the examples from the chart, identify a transition word the author uses and briefly explain how the transition word signals a relationship between ideas.

Write:

Write a paragraph that defends or challenges the author's claim that the American Dream is a bygone thing. Use relevant text evidence to support your answer. Be sure to use transitions to help signal purpose and the relationship between ideas in your sentences.

Is the American Dream still a possibility? It is a possibility for all but not everyone achieves it. This dream Americans strive for is idealistic and is always changing, no one person has the same dream. Their concepts could be very similar but they all have their own uniqueness. The American Dream was advertised to immigrants all over the world that America is the next Eden. To this day millions come to America to achieve this dream that is advertised, that they see through all forms of media.

The American Dream isn't always positive though. This dream that millions of immigrants are advertised is not as easy as it appears. Making a stable enough income to barely support what's important to them is something that the average American struggles to achieve. The American Dream is built on the principles of dedication, and hard work. That's not always enough as we see what happens to Randy in David Wallechinsky's "Is The American Dream Still Possible? Randy worked hard for an airline. After 26 years with the two airlines, he was put on furlough and not rehired. His pension was frozen and then taken over by the government. They took away his only source of income. Now Randy only gets \$324 a month in payments from the government. Today, despite having a college education, Randy works for \$9 an hour finding community jobs for mentally challenged adults. Cherie works for a greeting-card company for \$7.25 an hour" (paragraph 17). The American dream is not guaranteed, there are no guarantees in life, and this line in paragraph 18 supports this idea. "It used to be that if you stayed with your job, you would be rewarded," says Cherie. "Now there is no guarantee." According to paragraph 22, "The American Dream is a bygone thing," she adds. "It's not the way life is anymore. I used to believe I was responsible for my own destiny. But it's not that simple. Now it's faith and fortitude." This quote came from a couple who makes nearly half a million dollars a year installing garage doors but only makes \$50,000 to live on. The American Dream has no safety net and is unforgiving to those who fail.

Nevertheless, this is not an impossible dream. The American Dream is something you can obtain and there are plenty of examples. Kai Cenat was a young man born in a struggling family in the Bronx. He did not come from a family with money nor did he have the best education. He had the mighty work ethic needed to get where he is today. Kai Cenat is a 21 year old content creator who live-streams on the popular streaming platform Twitch. Kai became an online influencer in 2018 and since then has grown his media outlets to generate millions of followers. We say that the American Dream is built on hard work and

dedication but people don't recognize the importance of luck. Kai Cenat was one of the lucky few who through producing hundreds of videos eventually caught the attention of that one special person . All it took was one person to change Kai's life. Eventually through hard work millions of others were drawn to his channel. He rose in popularity bringing more people to follow and continuing the spread. He has transformed from a young man in college struggling to buy food to now a multi-millionaire. This is not something you can't have complete control over. Hard work gives you the opportunity for luck to find you. He captured his audience by showing his life to the world and filming many humorous prank videos. Kai Cenat is just one example of a rags-to-riches story.

The American Dream isn't just about becoming insanely rich, it can also be to make a stable living and have a family. My dad was born in Jamaica and moved to the US when he was 3 years old. He practically spent his whole life in America. Growing up in the 1980's NYC, he has been subjected to the harsh environment. His old living conditions when he came to New York City weren't that great and because of his father and mother working to make ends meet he had to provide for himself for anything he wanted. He and his siblings never got to enjoy the luxuries that other families had. Being an immigrant gave him the motivation to push himself in everything that he did. If there was a way to be great at something, he would figure out how to become amazing. The New York school system didn't present many opportunities for people of color, so my dad took it upon himself to do everything he can to succeed and show the colleges he applied to why he is a good pick for their institution. Through all odds he has created a life for himself beyond the expectation placed on an American black male. He uses his life experiences to create the ideal life for his children.

To conclude my ideas on the American Dream I want it to be known that the expectations of the American Dream are dampened by the reality of life in America. Everyone who has become successful in America has realized what it takes to make those dreams come true. You can't move forward without leaving others behind. The American Dream is possible but the view of it is a false depiction of what is advertised. It is not the new Eden. This dream is a possibility that can only be made real to those willing to sacrifice blood, sweat, tears and morals.



Jayson Ordonez -- Trip to The Bronx Children's Museum
Teacher: Jackie Perez-Garcia

Last year Jessica Colon informed the HI community about a free student trip opportunity to 'The Bronx Children's Museum'.

Jayson Ordonez loved it so much he could not wait to go again! He had a phenomenal time and learned so much about the borough he lives in.

Through the generosity of many donors, this museum is still free. Reserve your tickets today: <https://www.bronxchildrensmuseum.org/tickets>







Untitled

By Karmelo Worrell (Grade 7)

Teacher: Chantal Eustache

I started Home Instruction because I broke my hip while I was at football camp. I wanted to go back to school and do the same things as my peers, but I couldn't. While being home schooled, I was assigned to read a book called, 'Letters to a Young Brother' by Hill Harper. That book has really inspired me to always follow my dreams. Even if things are not looking good, I should stay focused.

What I'm really enjoying the most is learning things that my peers may not know. For example, I learned that 15 squared means 15×15 which is 225. I spoke to some of my friends in school and they told me they had not learned that. That made me feel empowered because Ms. Eustache, one of my teachers, taught me the first 15 perfect squares the first day of class! She is helping me with my writing and reading comprehension. It's a lot of work but worth it.

My other teacher, Mr. Valery, helps me to develop my algebra skills. He's also helped me to think about the type of high schools that would be best for me. And, that it's not too early to think about this.

In conclusion, even though I broke my hip and I'm out of school, I'm grateful for Home Instruction. I know that when I do go back to school, I'll be more confident, prepared, and in some areas even advanced.

Cooking Corner

Lemon Cake Discovery

By Jayla Douglas

Teacher: Gwenddyn Edwards

When it comes to my Lemon Coconut Cake my 5 senses come into play: sight, smell, taste, hearing, and touch. For example, the aroma from the lemon cake captivates me. The air is filled with a citrusy fragrance that instantly lifts your spirit and makes your mouth water. The lemon cake is a ray of sunshine on a plate. Its golden-brown outer layer is baked to perfection, with a light lemon glaze or cream cheese frosting. When you cut into the cake, the inside reveals a moist and tender crumb with tiny specks of lemon zest. As you run your hands over the cake, you can feel a slight resistance from the delicate crust, which gives a soft, spongy texture underneath. The cake has the right amount of moisture, offering the pleasant velvety sensation in your mouth as you take a bite. While not directly related to taste, the feeling of cutting into the cake produces a satisfying sound - a gentle, subtle crunch as the knife breaks through the outer layer and then a soft, almost imperceptible squish as it glides through the tender crumb cake beneath. Although, the lemon cake is a sensory delight that engages all your senses, making the cake a truly unforgettable dessert experience.

Lemon Cake Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter (softened)
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 large eggs (separated)
- 3 cups all purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Cream cheese frosting
- 2 cups sweetened coconut flakes
- Lemon filling



Directions:

- Beat butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until fluffy
- Add butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture
- Beat at low speed until blended
- Stir in vanilla extract
- Beat egg whites at high speed with electric mixer until peaks form
- Fold one third of egg whites into batter.
- Gently fold in remaining beaten egg whites just until blended.
- Spoon batter into 3 greased and floured 9 inch round cakes pans
- Bake at 350 ° for 18-20 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.
- Cool in pans on wire rack for 10 minutes
- Remove from pans and cool completely from wire racks
- Spread lemon filling between layers
- Spread cream cheese frosting on top of and sides of cake
- Sprinkle top and sides with coconut

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Comparing Three Poems

By Clayton Holness

Teacher: Yevgeny Ginzburg

Write a short piece (3 paragraphs) comparing and contrasting how the three poems “I Hear America Singing,” “I, Too” and “I, Too, Sing América” use the image of singing. Think about both the denotative and connotative meanings of the word sing. In your writing, be sure to:

- Begin with a clear thesis that states your position about what the three poems mean by the word sing.
- Include *examples of diction and imagery* from all three texts to support each claim you make about similarities and differences in meaning.
- Include clear transitions between points and a concluding statement that reinforces your thesis.

I Hear America Singing

BY WALT WHITMAN

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
Those of mechanics, each one singing his as it should be blithe and strong,
The carpenter singing his as he measures his plank or beam,
The mason singing his as he makes ready for work, or leaves off work,
The boatman singing what belongs to him in his boat, the deckhand singing on the
steamboat deck,
The shoemaker singing as he sits on his bench, the hatter singing as he stands,
The wood-cutter's song, the ploughboy's on his way in the morning, or at noon
intermission or at sundown,
The delicious singing of the mother, or of the young wife at work, or of the girl sewing or
washing,
Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
The day what belongs to the day—at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

I, Too
BY LANGSTON HUGHES

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.
Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

I, Too, Sing América
by *Julia Alvarez*

I know it's been said before
but not in this voice
of the plátano
and the mango,
marimba y bongó,
not in this sancocho
of inglés
con español.

Ay sí,
it's my turn
to oh say
what I see,
I'm going to sing America!
with all América
inside me:
from the soles

of Tierra del Fuego
to the thin waist
of Chiriquí
up the spine of the Mississippi
through the heartland
of the Yanquis
to the great plain face of Canada —
all of us
singing America,
the whole hemispheric
familia
belting our canción,
singing our brown skin
into that white
and red and blue song —
the big song
that sings
all America,
el canto
que cuenta
con toda América:
un new song!

Ya llegó el momento,
our moment
under the sun —
ese sol that shines
on everyone.

So, hit it maestro!
give us that Latin beat,
¡Uno-dos-tres!
One-two-three!
Ay sí,
(y bilingually):
Yo también soy América
I, too, am America.

These three poems share a common theme of discussing how the uniqueness of the American citizens is what makes America beautiful. Each poem displays this by mentioning the various differences of people and their individual identities as they fit in as a larger group of Americans. All three poems mention people singing. Although there is a hidden meaning behind their singing. It is implying the harmonization of the many citizens of all different cultural backgrounds doing what they love and inviting people to

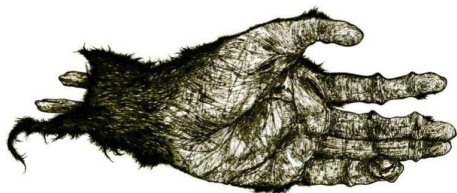
witness and experience it with them. *It is clear there is a difference in the poems in how the people of another culture may react to their song(s).* The connecting theme in these three poems convey is that America could never succeed as a country without all of the different people coming together. In the poem I too sing America by Juilia Alvarez uses the word singing as a means to describe people from all over the world who are coming to America. All feel passionate about this country and although their skin colors and cultures are different they share this love for this land. In I, Too By Langston Hughes his use of the word singing in his poem is more to show that African Americans too, belong in America and should be treated the same as the rest. In I Hear America Singing By Walt Whitman he uses the words singing to describe the citizens interacting with each other and each song is wonderful to his ears even though they are almost nothing alike.

Each poem conveys a theme of unity and overcoming the cultural divides that exist between the immigrants coming to America and the American citizens that are now meeting them. A great example of this is seen in Julia Alvarez's poem I too sing America by her conveying the images of people dancing together and in what gives the feeling of a parade with people of different ethnic backgrounds. Using Spanish words contributes to the diction of the poem in a way that makes you want to move and dance.

We see in the poem I, too, that Langston Hughes doesn't convey very strong imagery but there is one line that paints a strong picture. " They send me to eat in the kitchen, When company comes, But I laugh, And eat well, And grow strong. Tomorrow, I'll be at the table When company comes. Nobody'll dare Say to me, "Eat in the kitchen" The picture this line paints is a man tired of being second class because of his skin color.

Langston Hughes poem I, Too was a homage to Walt Whitman's poem I Hear America Singing, and was remade in a way to address how the black people who live in this country are apart of it just as much as anyone else, which Langston Hughes implies with the line "I too am America". We do see in Walt Whitman's poem I Hear America Singing that he creates the image of people of many different professions in harmony together. The actions of their work even without singing in a literal sense create a feeling of America.

All three poems discuss people finding peace through banding together as a community which they used the word singing to symbolize this. The three poems carry the theme of America running on its people working together and respecting one another in order to move toward a greater task. We as people are born with the fear of the unknown which is why it's so crucial that we make the effort to explain and understand our differences to each other, to allow us as Americans to grow into one massive band.



A Prequel to the “Monkey’s Paw”

By Jazmine McKissick

Teacher: Esther Stark

In 2000, an old man lived in India but around Halloween time, a big cyclone was coming his way. He decided to pack all of his belongings including a magic monkey’s paw that grants 3 wishes but comes with consequences. Old man bought a ticket to New York before the big storm hit India. While the old man was on the plane, he started to feel sick and felt like his time was going to end soon. When he arrived in New York, his hotel wasn’t ready so he decided to walk around Springfield High School. When the students got out of school, the old man decided to give one of the students the monkey’s paws before he died. The old man stopped a student named Kevin and said “Hey, you, come here, I got a little gift for you”. Kevin asked “ What is this? “. The old man said “just make three wishes and they will come true BUT it’s more of a curse than a blessing “. Before Kevin could ask any more questions the old man just gave it to him and ran off.

Kevin always wanted to have better grades. When Kevin finally got home, he went and showed his family the Monkey’s Paw. His family all said “KEVIN WHAT IS THAT?”. He said relax guys if I make three wishes they will all come true but it may have some consequences when I make my three wishes. After Kevin went up to his room and made his first wish. His first wish was to have better grades. Kevin went to sleep after making the wish and he woke up excited to go to school because he knew his grades would get better. While Kevin was working hard at school making straight A’s, he got a call that his house caught on fire. His whole mood changed immediately and left school so fast he ran all the way home in 5 minutes.

When Kevin finally met up with his family on his block, he realized that he had the monkey’s paw in his pocket. He pulls it out of his pocket and walks away from everyone while he makes his second wish. “I wish for a nice big house for me and my family “. After making the wish, he walked back to his family and said “so where are we going to live until my wish comes true “. Kevin’s dad, Keith said “Kevin do you really think that monkey’s paw is going to work?”. Kevin said, “yes dad”. The entire family shakes their heads while they are still deciding where they are going to live for now. Kevin’s little sister, Jenay said “let’s go live next to

grandma and grandpa, nobody lives there “. Kevin said “ohh yes nobody lives there and it's a nice big house like what I wished for “. Within two weeks they received insurance money to purchase the house of their dreams. The next day Kevin's family was moving the new furniture into their new house while Kevin was at school. While moving the new furniture for the house a truck ran over his brother, Dad and sister, while backing up into the house. Kevin's father, brother and sister had to go to the hospital. At the time Kevin was already on his way home from school. When he got home, he looked so shaken because he didn't know what had just happened. The movers said “Hey Kevin we got some real bad news for you “. Kevin said “WHAT IS IT WHAT IS IT TELL ME”. “Your family got hit by the truck and now they are in the hospital “. Kevin rushed to the hospital but by the time he got there, they had already died. Kevin began to realize the Monkey's Paw was cursed. “After my first wish my house caught on fire and then after my second wish my family died “he said to himself.

As he arrived at the new house, he went next door to his grandparents' house and told them the news. Kevin and his grandparents started crying together. Kevin said to his grandparents "now I have this big beautiful house to myself what am i supposed to do now?". The grandfather said “hey maybe you could see if some of your friends from school want to move in with you”. Kevin said oh wow granddad that's a great idea. The next day Kevin went to school and asked his closest friends Sergeant- Major- Morris if he wanted to move in with him and he said sure I'd love to. Kevin asked two more of his friends and they both said yes. His friends told their family the news and they were excited for them. Within the next 3 weeks, the friends moved in with Kevin. At that point, Kevin didn't like going to school anymore so Kevin never returned back to school. The next day after his friends moved in, Kevin took the monkey's paw and made his final wish which was death because he wanted to be with his family.

After making the wish Kevin called Sergeant- Major- Morris to his room. Once he got to his room, Kevin said “Here a monkey's paw, take it, If you make three wishes it will come true with some consequences”. Morris asked what were the consequences? Kevin said find out on your own Morris. Morris exited the room and went back to his room staring at the paw and wondering what wishes we wanted to make. Kevin went to bed and never woke up.

Analysis of The Raven

By Ariana Nicotra (Grade 11, Queens)

Teacher: Rob Cipriani

The Raven written by Edgar Allen Poe is a classic example of dark romanticism which was a literary era that was prominent in the 19th century. It was a rejection of the rational era which mostly concentrated on logic and reason, the dark romantics Poe included tended to concentrate primarily on the supernatural, nature, emotions and individuality.

Poe sets the tone of the raven immediately. It is a dreary December evening and we find the narrator in a cold and dark library. He is described as weak and weary and is just beginning to nod off while the fire is dying out. The symbolism of the fire dying out is important. We read how he's watching the embers from the fire slowly disappear, these events help establish the aura and mystery of the poem.

The central themes of the poem are grief and sorrow. Poe emphasizes the central themes with the famous first line "Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered weak and weary over many quaint and curious volumes of forgotten lore." Poe's narrator is exhausted, tired and wants to sleep, all of these outside influences that the narrator cannot control are leading us to one emotion. This man is suffering, grieving and is in a disturbing sense of hopelessness.

He is eagerly wishing for the "morrow" hoping that it will relieve him of his unrelenting grief for his lost love Lenoir. He hears a tapping at his door and opens it to see nothing but pitch black. This reinforces the emotions the narrator is feeling, he's terrified, fearful and afraid. He then goes back to sleep until he hears a tapping at his window. He opens the window and in flies a raven as described in the poem "As a Stately Raven." The raven is the most symbolic emblem in the poem. It shocks and frightens as well as mystifies the narrator. The raven then flies upon a Pallas bust which symbolically represents Athena the goddess of wisdom. The raven could be considered a metaphor for the heaviness of death.

At first, the narrator finds the raven quite interesting and strikes up a conversation with the raven. He asks a series of questions to which the raven only replies with the word “Nevermore.” As he interrogates the raven further, he becomes more desperate to relieve the pain, sorrow and suffering that he is feeling to which the raven without emotion coldly replies once again “nevermore.” This shows us that nothing will change the narrator's situation and that Lenore will not be coming back as she doesn't exist anymore.

In the final analysis, The Raven is a classic example of the dark romantic literary era. The use of the raven in the poem is symbolic of the dark romantic's obsession with the supernatural and death. Poe focuses on these emotions rather than on logic and proven fact that form is the first and foremost pillar of dark romanticism. Each time the narrator asks a hopeful question, hoping to be relieved from all this pain, sorrow, and grief, the raven coldly continues to tell him without regards to the man's feelings the word “nevermore.” The reason the man keeps asking these hopeful questions is that the facts don't matter to him since he's a romantic. This eventually leads him to one last emotional response. When his emotions overwhelm him with grief and sorrow, as the raven's shadow casts over him, he realizes that he will never be free of this sorrow, and the raven's “nevermore.”



"You've got a friend in me."

Top Chronicles

Andy's Room

VOL. I . . . No. 1

SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

ZERO DOLLARS

MYSTERIOUS SPACE RANGER TOY ARRIVES

By MR. POTATO HEAD

BREAKING NEWS! A brand new toy has just arrived. The irregularly-shaped box, lined with blue shapes and paper wings, indicates it may be an action figure of sorts. The packaging boldly labels itself "Buzz Lightyear" in heavy black writing that jumps out at you. This is no run-of-the-mill toy, and may even pose a contender to Woody for the famed position of Andy's favorite toy! The action figure inside of the packaging seems to be a large space-man, whose armor is lined with high-tech gadgets with a green undertone, donning a purple cowl. This toy seems to be made with high quality plastic, and must be of the highest caliber quality. It's intricate features practically jump out of the box, giving the toy a serious advantage over it's competition to holding the revered spot of Andy's favorite toy. For low-to-medium priority toys, we're happy to say there should be a drastic increase in your playtime with Andy, given that a new toy of this caliber surely indicates a reignition in Andy's creativity and desire to play with all his toys. We, at the Toy Chronicles will keep you updated on this rapidly developing story. And, as always, we wish you a happy playtime and a happy birthday to Andy!

ANDY'S BIRTHDAY

By ETCH A. SKETCH

Today, our beloved owner Andy is celebrating his birthday. We are all very excited to see what new toys he will be getting. We are also excited to see what new adventures we will be going on. Based on the attendants from last year, it's safe to say this is going to be his best birthday yet! Our kid is growing up, slowly but steadily, and we should all be proud that we have been there for him. As for the news I'm sure most of you are waiting for, the toys! So far, this year has had, as many of you will be relieved to hear, only one new toy. Andy has not yet unboxed his new toy but, based on evidence from the previous few years, we are expecting a small or medium sized toy. We are also expecting a toy that is not a toy that Andy has already. Having relieved everyone's panic, we at the Toy Chronicles wish you a happy birthday Andy!

TWO SOLDIERS MISSING

By SARGE

Two brave soldiers have been reported missing after today's excursion downstairs

for a reconnaissance mission on Andy's birthday party. It is vital that these brave souls are found, as they hold critical information regarding the type of cake Andy had eaten, as well as vital information regarding the poor souls trapped in the ravenous dungeon we call Sid's house. We suspect they may be within a flower pot, or, if we're lucky, in the kitchen. If you have any information regarding the whereabouts of these two brave soldiers, please contact the Toy Chronicles immediately. We thank you for your support, and wish Andy a happy birthday.

POSSIBLE GARAGE SALE

By SLINKY DOG

Today stands as a worrying day for all toys, as a few brave Toy Soldiers reported overhearing Andy's mother speaking on the phone about a possible garage sale she has been considering, likely taking place within the next few months. Fortunately, we believe this garage sale may be a failure, as Al's Toy Barn reports a massive increase in toy sales over the past few days, indicating there may not be any demand for used toys in the neighborhood. We will keep you updated on this developing story.

Toy Chronicles
By Vasilis Raptis (Queens)
Teacher: Renée Sandie

PROJECTS & PUZZLES



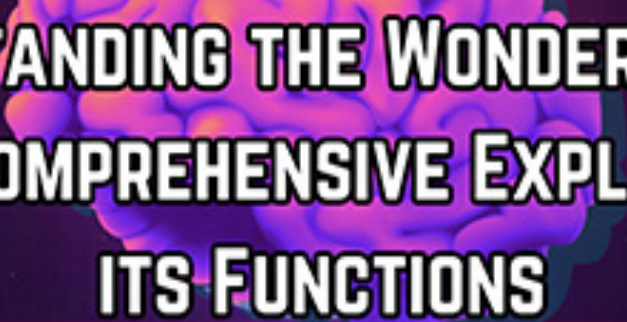
A Purple Harvest Basket
By Cecilia Havre (Manhattan)
Teacher: Anne Duquette



A Cornucopia
By Cecilia Havre (Manhattan)
Teacher: Anne Duquette



Thanksgiving Turkey
By Athena Cruz (Manhattan)
Teacher: Anne Duquette



UNDERSTANDING THE WONDERS OF THE BRAIN: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF ITS FUNCTIONS

BY ALBEXANDER TORRES

Teacher: Marsha Saunders

INTRODUCTION

In every human being, we have a brain and without it, everything else in our bodies would be useless and we wouldn't even be alive. The brain controls our cognitive functions which allows us to learn, develop, understand and relate to the world around us.

With this presentation, the importance of the brain will be shown by its anatomy, it's cognitive functions, it's regulations over behavior, the interconnectedness of the brain, and some of the brains clinical implications.



Read left to right



Understanding the Wonders of the Brain
By Alexander Torres
Teacher: Marsha Saunders

SECTION 1: ANATOMY OF THE BRAIN

The brain is the most complex part of the body and being complex, it has many parts to it. The brain's major parts include...



Old Brain

Located within the cerebral cortex, it is made up of many other parts that all together control the basic yet very vital functions in the body.

Medulla

At the base of the skull and it's where the brain and spinal cord connect. The Medulla controls most of the body's automatic functions such as breathing and heartbeat.

Thalamus

On top of the brainstem, it's the brain's sensory control center. It takes in sensory information related to seeing, hearing, touching, and tasting. The thalamus is also significant in taking information from higher regions of the brain and forwarding them to the medulla and cerebellum.

Brain Stem

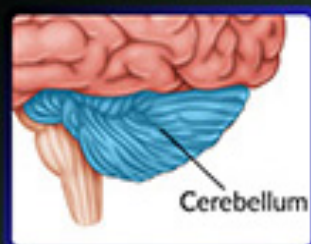
Anchoring the old brain, it's the brain's oldest region. It connects the brain to the spinal cord. The brain stem is responsible for sending messages to parts of the body.

Pons

Above the Medulla, it coordinates our movement and our sleep cycle. The Pons also work with the cerebellum to carry out its functions or other functions.

Reticular Formation

Inside the brainstem, it's a nerve network that relays important information from sensory messages traveling from the spinal cord to the thalamus to other parts of the brain. It is also essential for arousal.



Cerebellum

At the bottom of the brain stem, it controls balance and the ability for non-verbal learning and memory. It also controls our perception of time and it modulates emotions.

There are many other major parts of the brain but the others will be more heavily touched on in other sections. These parts are especially important to mention now because these functions occur without conscious effort which is very significant when our lives are all over the place at times. These functions keep the human body running when we forget that these things are even happening



Understanding the Wonders of the Brain

By Alexander Torres

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SECTION 2: COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS



Cognitive functions are complex brain activities which involve acquiring information and knowledge. Some of these functions include, memory, attention, perception, language, and problem-solving.



Memory

A cognitive function everybody relies on.

Memory is used to store all kind of information, important or not.

[Source for cognitive information](#)
[Source for some functions information](#)

Attention

A function what is very important in human behavior. Attention is a selection process for external and internal events

Language

We use it every day to often express ourselves, ideas, and understand each other. I'm using language right now to explain language to you right now.

Perception

It the way humans organize and interpret information and put it into context. It's how we can distinguish things from each other.

Problem-Solving

A function used to solve problems in our lives. The act of taking a problem, understanding it, and finding potential solutions to this problem.

NOW, HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE BRAIN?

The brain is the main reason these cognitive functions happen and work for us to use. Some parts that relate and work to bring us these cognitive functions are as mentioned before, the cerebellum. Its a key part in storing memories for things you can't consciously recall.

Other parts that relate to cognitive functions include the hippocampus which is located in the limbic system. The hippocampus helps store conscious memories of facts and events. Though, the frontal lobe (a part of the cerebral cortex) has the most to do with cognitive functions. Handling speaking, planning, and judgment, it connects to how we can use language and problem-solving in our daily lives.



Understanding the Wonders of the Brain

By Alexander Torres

Teacher: Marsha Saunders

SECTION 3: EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL REGULATION



A region of the brain that is very important to emotions and behavior is the limbic system. Its a border region for the brain which separates the old brain from cerebral areas.

The parts of the limbic system include...

Amygdala

The main contributor to a humans emotions. Being two clusters of neurons, it can enable ones aggression or fear as specific parts of the amygdala can trigger certain emotions.

Hippocampus

As mentioned before, it helps store conscious memories of facts and events. It could be considered to be located at the ends of the limbic system. It also plays a part in decision-making.

Hypothalamus

Below the thalamus, it directs several maintenance activities in the body such as body temperature. It is linked to emotion, reward, and regulates sexual behavior.

THE CASE OF JP (SUMMARIZED)



To understand more on how that brain can effect ones behavior, the case of JP demonstrates perfectly how early damages to the frontal lobe can affect ones behavior for their lifetime.

Around the 1910s, JP was born and begin life normally until the age of 2. He begin do very weird and dangerous things such as walk miles away from home. At age 4, he fell out of bed one day and got a head injury but seemingly recovered. Although, he begin to act very incorrigible at school by defecating on others belongings and exposing himself. These behaviors only got worse when getting older as at age 13, he begin to steal money and excuse me for bring this up, masturbated in front of other kids. Being transferred to many schools and clinics, it was found that quote from my second source, ""his planning ability and capacity to modify behavior by experience" were described as "not equal to that of the average 7-year-old child.""

Long story short, his horrible and rude behaviors continued all through his life and once being examined, he was found to have a large cyst likely present from birth. This caused damages to his frontal lobe which affected his ability to judge, plan, and overall personality.

source 1 for the case of JP
source 2 for the case of JP

Understanding the Wonders of the Brain

By Alexander Torres

Teacher: Marsha Saunders

WITH THESE DISORDERS, HOW DO WE FIND WAYS TO TREAT THEM?

There's only really one good and practical way of doing that which is, understanding the brain's functions to diagnose and treat disorders. With our understanding of the brain improving throughout the years, we can more easily figure out where a problem within the brain is according. We also take our understanding of the brain to run tests to find treatments for these disorders and not just understand the brain more but how disorders work within as well.

With our understanding of the brain growing over the years, we have ways to solve more mental disorders that can't be easily fixed with some medications (in most cases). This is with the help of psychology where mind and behavior is studied to understand how one thinks or with mental disorders, how does one develop anxiety or depression.



CONCLUSION



Throughout this presentation, we went through most of the major parts of the brain which control your basic survival skills, understood cognitive functions and how most of the brain's parts work to perform these functions, the emotional and behavior regulation that some of the brain's regions have to do every second with a case study demonstrating the brain being related to behavior.

In addition, we went through the interconnectedness of the brain when performing complex or even simple tasks, and understood the clinical implications of all of this when taking into account the disorders relating to the brain and how we treat them with our growing understanding of the brain. Overall, understanding the brain as a whole can really benefit a human's well-being with the understanding of why you do the things you do and would overall give you a better understanding of yourself.

Understanding the Wonders of the Brain

By Alexander Torres

Teacher: Marsha Saunders

Mars

Interesting Facts

It is the 4th planet from the sun

It orbits the sun 687 days

Mars has the biggest mountains

Humans have visited Mars

Mars can be seen with our eyes at certain times of the year.

Photograph

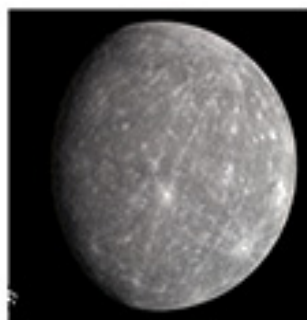


Mercury

Interesting Facts

Mercury isn't just a rocky planet. If you're on the hot side you would burn to death. If you're on the cold side you would freeze to death. And if you're in the middle then you can stay on the mercury as long as you hold your breath

Photograph





The Solar System
By Rehen Ahmed (Grade 6)
Teacher: Carole Murphy



The Solar System
By Rehen Ahmed (Grade 6)
Teacher: Carole Murphy



Learning About Bones
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Election Day
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Kaitlyn Loves Thanksgiving
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Scarecrow Pet Rock
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Veteran's Day
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia

Veterans Day



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Veterans Day Facts, Games, and Song for Kids | 11 NOVEMBER | Veterans Day



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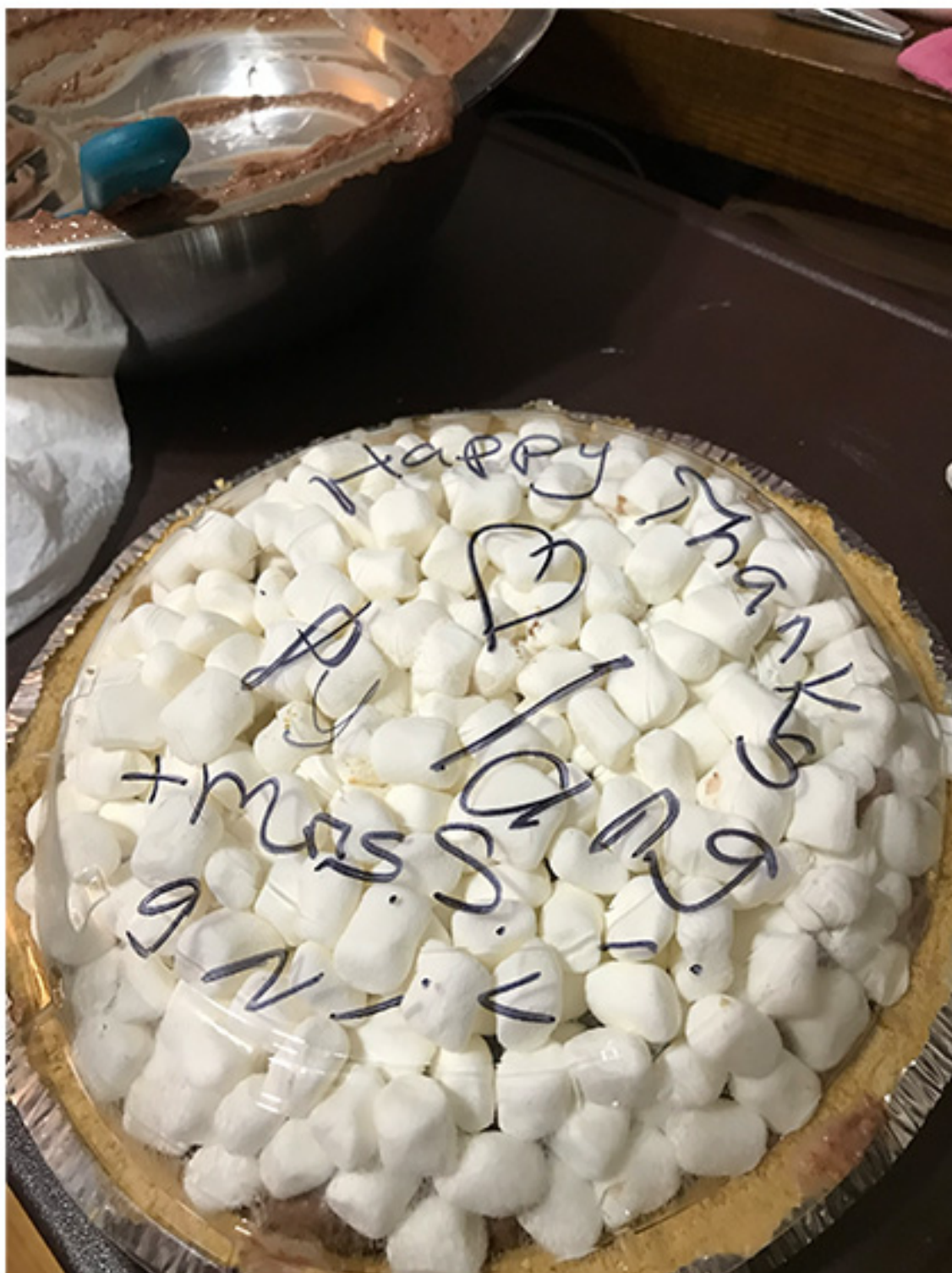
Veteran's Day
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Veteran's Day
By Kaitlyn Coscia (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Election Day
By Dylan Ragbir (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



S'Mores Thanksgiving Pie
By Dylan Ragbir (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Storytime Pumpkin
By Dylan Ragbir (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Thanksgiving Harvest Rock
By Dylan Ragbir (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Fall Colored Leaf
By Lurose Vargas (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



Thanksgiving Chocolate Marshmallow Pie
By Lurose Vargas (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia



**Thanksgiving Platter
By Lurose Vargas (Queens)
Teacher: Maria Strocchia**



The Letter "A"
By Amahia Rodriguez (Manhattan)
Teacher: Maria Sosa



The Letter "B"
By Amahia Rodriguez (Manhattan)
Teacher: Maria Sosa



**Thanksgiving Color By Numbers
By Amahia Rodriguez (Manhattan)
Teacher: Maria Sosa**

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puzzles
riddles
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stories
movie reviews
book reviews
video game reviews
sports reviews
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- **Sports**
- **Art**
- **Book Reviews**
- **Movie Reviews**
- **Current Events**
- **Poetry**
- **Puzzles & Games**

Almost anything that is of interest to a student who's dedicated to
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Photographer/Editor

All staff members should submit at least one article every month.

All Staff members should be encouraged to contribute ideas on:

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All staff members should be willing to help with production, layout/design of the magazine.

All staff members should also be willing to help proofread for incorrect, inappropriate material

All staff members might be required to submit at least one:

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