

# The Tiger Times

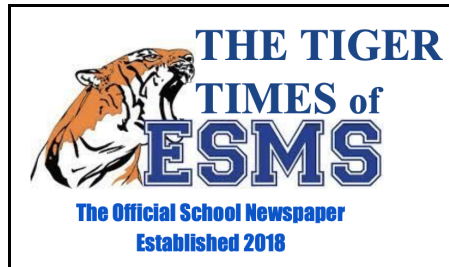
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| <p>Special Thanks To: Mr. Getz, Ms. Hyman, Mr. Duffey, and Beth Servetar</p>  |                    |
| <p>Email <a href="mailto:jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net">jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net</a> to join or contribute to the Tiger Times!</p> <p>See this Tiger Times Issue for the all-new Theme Of The Month page, an interview with a Harvard professor, a reflection of a year of the pandemic, a description of how cloning works, an overview of standardized testing, a description of Claude the tortoise, the ESMS Sports Page, an interview with Ms. Mainhart, the ESMS Art Teacher, the ESMS Book Recommendations Page, the ESMS Debate Page, the ESMS Cartoon Caption contest, and much, much more!</p> | <p>March 2021</p>  |

## Jane Ferguson Of PBS NewsHour Visits ESMS

By: Jacob Abroon

Thursday, March 4th, 2021 may have been another normal day for in-person schooling at ESMS. It was a Day 1 schedule, and many of us were looking forward to the upcoming weekend. But Thursday, March 4th was unlike any other day at ESMS, let alone during remote learning. Jane Ferguson, a journalist from PBS NewsHour visited East Side Middle through Zoom that day to answer questions from ESMS students. During second period, the extraordinary journalist talked to the entire 8th grade, and detailed her experiences as a journalist, and an example for many, being a female role model. But it didn't stop there. During third period, Jane Ferguson joined a much more intimate Zoom meeting, with members of the Tiger Times, GLO, and the Student Council. Learning from a journalist is an extremely valuable experience, and ESMS had that exact privilege thanks to Mr. Getz. Thursday, March 4th, 2021, was unlike any other day at East Side Middle.

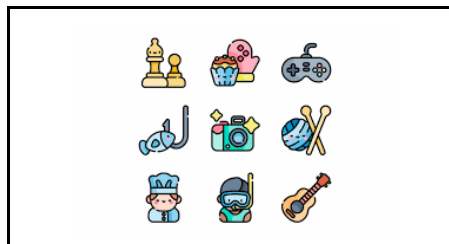
Jane Ferguson is not an ordinary journalist. While many might cover a local story about a new transit system, or a domestic issue such as protests, Jane



## Why It Is Important To Have Hobbies

By: Liya Choi

Ever since this pandemic, many people have had no idea how to spend their free time. Everything seems to be the same and feels dull. However, hobbies are a great way to make your day more exciting. Having activities to do can help improve mental health as well as physical health.



Hobbies Nowadays

## The Filibuster

By: Darragh Boyle

At the moment, there is a heated debate in the Senate between Democrats about filibusters and whether the use of filibusters should be reformed. Joe Manchin III of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, both Democrats, have said they would not vote to remove the filibuster, but would be open to changing it. President Joe Biden has said that he believes the filibuster needs to be changed.

The filibuster is a procedure that is used in the Senate to stop a law from being passed. When a senator wishes to delay a vote, reach a compromise, or kill a bill, they can filibuster. When performing this action, they would give a speech. As long as they stay standing on the Senate floor, they may talk for as long as they would like. In the past, senators have recited Shakespeare plays and read telephone directories, as the topic does not need to be relevant to any current debates, topics or arguments. The filibuster has been used to block civil rights legislation and to stop the nomination of Abe Fortas as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The only way for a

Ferguson mainly does her work in the Middle East. She covers issues from wars that could tear apart a nation, to seeing the first hand effects of violence due to terrorist organizations. Recently, Jane Ferguson covered issues in Afghanistan, and how the civilians are the victims of recent assassination attempts. Additionally, she has done work in Syria, where she put herself in grave situations to report crucial information. Jane Ferguson's reputation and her commitment to her work is not very common, which means that when she visited ESMS through Zoom, it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



Jane Ferguson, a journalist from PBS NewsHour

In preparation for the Zoom meeting, the entire 8th grade responded to a Google Form, in which they would type their questions for Jane Ferguson. During the meeting, Jane Ferguson would go through the questions, and choose a few that she would answer in front of ESMS's graduating class. These questions were an incredible opportunity for the students of ESMS to see what the life of a journalist was like. Jane Ferguson detailed how being a female journalist impacted her job. She talked about the danger of her job, and how traveling to Middle Eastern nations that were in the midst of a war put her in situations where she almost died. Jane Ferguson also detailed her experiences as she was smuggled from one territory to another, and what a nerve-racking experience such as that one was like. Clearly, Jane Ferguson's experience as a journalist has been nothing short of extraordinary.

When the Zoom meeting began, Jane Ferguson first talked about her past and how she became a journalist. She explained that as a child, she grew up in a time of violence in Ireland. As we all have

Everyone should have a hobby, especially now. Instead of focusing on work all the time, people should do something they enjoy as a stress reliever. Whether it's drawing, animating, building or playing sports, people have many things they love to do. After asking other ESMS students to see what they thought, the majority of people felt that hobbies helped them somewhat, especially during these tough times. 6th grader Siroos Pashdar wrote, "My hobbies have kept me busy and active during quarantine. This helps me stay busy during the day, and it is something I enjoy doing." Most people who replied felt that hobbies motivated them to go outside or work harder.

### How Do Hobbies Help?

Hobbies can help not just physically, but also mentally. According to *The Case of Having a Hobby* by Jaya Saxena, people with hobbies have lower levels of depression and stress. Many old and new studies have been performed on this topic. Most tests came to the conclusion that people who had something to do in their free time were more emotionally stable. Physically, people had lower blood pressure, less diseases, and overall better function. Mia Golant, a 6th grader at ESMS, said, "I think that I put more energy into my hobby than worrying about the pandemic. Taking my mind off things helped me relax." Having something you love doing is important. It can give you a sense of purpose in life and confidence in yourself.

### Finding A Hobby

Many people often wonder how to find a hobby. First, try to find some free time. Everyone has at least 10-20 minutes when they can do anything they want, but many don't spend it wisely. Creating a schedule can also help to keep everything orderly and help make sure you still complete the necessary work. After that, think of a few things that you might want to do. Two ways to do this is simply trying multiple things that may interest you or see how you like to spend your time. Finding a hobby is all about trying new things and then choosing one or multiple activities that are enjoyable for you. If you enjoy one thing, try something else that connects to it somehow.

filibuster to be stopped is if 60 Senators vote to stop it.

For years the Senate has argued about the filibuster and have come close to abolishing it two times. Senators who are pro-filibuster argue that the filibuster makes the Senate compromise, while anti-filibuster Senators believe that all the filibuster slows down legislation and makes it hard for any meaningful laws to be enacted.

Right now, Democrats have a lot they want to do, but with a 50-50 Senate (Vice President Kamala Harris being the tiebreaker) the filibuster stands in their way. With what many believe to be the most divided time in American history, trying to get 10 votes in the Senate from an opposing party is almost impossible. So many Democrats plan to make the filibuster more than just a simple signal. One way they could do this is by changing the filibuster from a signal to a speech where the person who opposes the law would speak for the full session instead of signaling. Another way Democrats want to make the filibuster harder is by requiring all members of the party that the individual who is filibustering belongs to to stay in the chamber for the entirety of the filibuster.

These ideas would serve to slow down the Senate when a filibuster is happening, making senators from both sides pick their battles when deciding to filibuster against a law. Stay tuned to future Tiger Times issues for more information on the filibuster.



The debate over the filibuster is very heated

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witnessed, living in a time of a crisis requires people to know important facts, who is more fit to relay that information than journalists? During the Zoom, Jane Ferguson said, “two things influenced [her],” as a child that contributed to her choice to become a journalist. The first was that, “everyone watched the evening news.” In a time of violence, watching the news and staying consistent with information is vital in order to be conscious of your situation. Jane Ferguson also stated, “everyone needs to know what is going on.” As Jane Ferguson witnessed the importance of learning information through the news, she realized that being a journalist is a very important job which deserves a great deal of recognition.

However, it was not only the importance of journalists that affected Jane Ferguson. She also noted that she was inspired by female correspondents that were relaying information. They proved that Jane Ferguson would be able to succeed in the world of journalism despite the fact that she was growing up in a time where there were relatively few female journalists.

Additionally, Jane Ferguson revealed yet another one of her motivations for following the path of journalism. She explained that she wanted her work to have purpose, and her childhood experiences proved journalism offered nothing short of that. As she said, “I found a sense of purpose in my work.” Jane Ferguson also said that she always wanted to work with people and travel, and journalism offered everything that she desired. It is no wonder that Jane Ferguson mainly reports from the Middle East - she enjoys traveling from location to location, and from country to country. Additionally, the fact that Jane Ferguson wanted to work with people is another clear explanation for why she became a journalist. Gathering information, talking to officials, and interviewing regular people are just a few tasks journalists have to accomplish, and the only way to do so is by talking to people.

While journalists played an important role in Jane Ferguson’s childhood, it wasn’t until she graduated from college that she knew she wanted to become a journalist. Clearly, she made the right decision.

Hobbies are a great way to spend free time and relieve stress. There are many activities you can choose from and they are all free to try! The next time you have time, try something you’ve been wanting to do.

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to contribute to the Tiger  
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<https://www.cop.senate.gov/about/powers-procedures/filibusters-cloture.htm>

Photo Credit: senate.gov



## Hidden Treasures In The ESMS Neighborhood: The 92nd Street Y

By: Nora Cassetta

As one walks around the ESMS neighborhood, nearly every block is home to at least one unique and historic building. Some are obvious, but others are truly hidden treasures that barely reveal their amazing past and present contributions to our community. One of these special structures is the twin, eleven-story adjoining buildings located at 1395 Lexington Avenue, between 91st and 92nd Street, home of the 92nd Street Y, also known as 92Y, where the ESMS 8th grade graduation is held annually. Founded in 1874 by a group of pioneering German Jewish professionals and businessmen, the 92Y (originally known as the Young Men’s Hebrew Association) was created in an effort to serve the American Jewish community of New York City. Initially located at 112 West 21st Street, by September 10th, 1874, the YMHA was officially recognized as an institution by New York City and was able to expand to a larger physical location at 110 West 42nd Street. In 1886, the YMHA moved to 721 Lexington Avenue at 58th Street. However, in 1895, due to financial difficulties, it moved to a smaller location at 111 East 59th Street. Later, new board leadership was able to expand community support prompted by a generous gift from Jacob H. Schiff, a successful German-born Jewish American banker, businessman, and philanthropist, who

Once Jane Ferguson had finished explaining her inspiration for becoming a journalist, it was time for the 8th graders to ask their questions. Throughout the period, the journalist emphasized many of her clear values. She explained that a large part of her job is to help people, “empathize,” and bring people, “together.” She does not want to solely report facts, but report facts that have a meaning, and that make an impact. That is the entire purpose of journalism. To show people how we are all alike, and that, “we are all humans,” as Jane Ferguson put it.

Once the second period Zoom meeting had been completed and it was time to start third period, about 20 total students from all grades at ESMS joined a separate, much more intimate Zoom meeting with Jane Ferguson. Unlike the second period meeting with 150 8th graders on the same Zoom, this meeting was for members of the Student Council, GLO, and yes, you guessed it, the Tiger Times. These three clubs at ESMS are ones that can learn from Jane Ferguson, as she is a role model for anyone who wants to make a difference.

During this smaller Zoom meeting, Jane Ferguson went more in depth about what her job was like, and her experiences in other countries. When referencing a recent issue that she covered in Kabul, Afghanistan, Jane Ferguson explained, “I can’t bring them [her viewers] to Kabul, but I can bring Kabul to them.” Part of the job of a journalist is to allow people to experience an event or a situation from their own homes. Jane Ferguson makes sure to make people feel as if they are there themselves, walking alongside her as they travel through areas of violence, and interview regular people of a foreign nation. By making people feel as if they are with Jane Ferguson in Middle Eastern countries, the viewers start to emphasize with the people living in certain conditions, which is exactly what Jane Ferguson aims to accomplish. She wants to show, “how decisions affect real people.” Many actions that seem to benefit one group also end up harming another group of people. Jane Ferguson wants to show perspectives that are not completely recognized, and allow people to see both sides of an issue. Decisions by countries across the globe that affected the citizens of these countries

## DNA And Cloning

By: Samuel Stevens



A black-footed ferret brought back to life after 30 years!

The black-footed ferret has been an endangered species in the U.S. for many years now. On January 29th, 2021, scientists successfully cloned the first black-footed ferret from an animal that died over 30 years ago. She is an exact genetic copy of a ferret named Willa, who died in 1988. Willa’s remains were frozen in the early days of DNA research, waiting for this moment in time to be cloned. Willa’s successful rebirth means that cloning could eventually bring back extinct animals! This is great news for extinct animals. However, have humans gone too far tampering with the natural order of life? Where do you draw the line?

As long as life has existed, there has always been DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid). DNA is the part of a cell that has the building instructions for every living organism. DNA produces thousands of different proteins which are used in more than 200 different types of cells. This makes dozens of different tissues that make up all living things. Each piece of “instructions” is stored in a different section of the DNA. These sections are also called genes. Humans have about 30,000 genes that are passed along through the family from generation to generation.

When was DNA discovered? In 1869, Swiss researcher Friedrich Miescher was studying the composition of a cell. He unintentionally isolated a new molecule that he called the nucleus. This molecule he discovers was associated with DNA and different proteins. It was not until

invested \$150,000 to create a new building for the institution, leading it to its present day location. In 1900, the original building on 92nd Street and Lexington Avenue was opened. Fast forward about 30 years, and the new and improved building was opened, as well as the renowned 92Y Art Center. After World War II, the YMHA reorganized as the 92nd Street Young Men’s and Young Women’s Hebrew Association (YM-YWHA), which over the years has evolved into a world-class cultural and community center guided by Jewish principles and serving people of diverse racial, religious, ethnic and economic backgrounds.

The 92Y offers endless opportunities for personal growth and enrichment for all age groups and all levels through its numerous and diverse classes, workshops, lectures and concerts. The range of notable figures, such as Nobel laureates Kofi Annan, Henry Kissinger, and Elie Wiesel, the renowned poet Maya Angelou and the extraordinary Yo-Yo Ma, who have performed, lectured or spoken on the stage at 92Y, is truly impressive. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the inevitable disruptions, 92Y has been a trusted companion and an essential resource to many, reinventing itself by offering as many as 1,500 online programs and creating new programs which have garnered as many as 4 million views from all over the world. Many ESMS students and their families are among those who take advantage of what 92Y has to offer. Some use it for the numerous sports programs, such as swimming and gymnastics, others for dance and music lessons. I interviewed 8th grade students, asking them about their experiences at 92Y. Anna Eliasson said that she has been at “the Y for many years, doing things like Jewish activities, piano, and dance.” She loves the 92Y because “it has so many things to offer.” Zoe Levitt, also in 8th grade, remarked that she “could never see [herself] going anywhere else.” Like Anna, Zoe has participated in many programs at 92Y.

I also interviewed Mr. Getz about his experiences at 92Y. Mr. Getz remarked that 92Y is “so nice and so convenient,” and explained that the annual ESMS graduation has taken place there because it can easily manage the growing number

are brought to view through Jane Ferguson's work.

When Jane Ferguson was asked how she thinks the United States should make decisions based on her experiences, the journalist made sure to stress one thing: diplomacy. Seeing the tragedy and the turmoil in many countries, Jane Ferguson believes that diplomacy is always the best way to settle disagreements between two nations. She has witnessed how war and violence emotionally and physically affected people, and she does not want that to continue.

During the meeting, I asked Jane Ferguson my own question about her work. When I asked her how she tries to accomplish her goal of allowing people to relate with one another, she answered by saying, "the most important thing to do is to let people speak for themselves." When conducting an interview, letting people speak for themselves allows them to express their true thoughts, desires, and opinions. This way, they can reveal more about themselves, which makes it easier for people to empathize with each other. By allowing people to speak for themselves, it is easier for you, the viewer, to put yourself in their shoes and feel what they are feeling. Additionally, she said that she does not speak for them, and she lets them talk. Jane Ferguson does not want to put words in the mouth of the people she is interviewing, which once again allows people to speak their mind and express their real thoughts. To add on, Jane Ferguson explained that she wanted to have long, "sound bites," which she said are another way of saying, "quotes." Jane Ferguson explained that having long, "sound bites allows people to see and talk with each other." Viewers that will listen to the interview will be able to connect more with these people who live halfway across the globe, which, once again, allows you to empathize with the people she is interviewing.

Continuing with her response to my question, Jane Ferguson also explained that she makes sure to interview certain people. She stated that she wants to find people who, "represent," different, "perspectives." As she stated, part of her job is to bring different sides to an issue into view. By gathering people who have

more than 100 years later, with the help of modern-day computers, that scientists really started to understand how to decode DNA. Once scientists decoded DNA, they could study how many ways it could be used and developed.

While cloning seems very advanced, scientists are able to do it. How? In order to make a clone, they transfer the DNA from an animal's cell which is placed into an egg cell that has had its nucleus and DNA removed. That egg develops into an embryo that contains the same genetic code as the cell donor. Then it is used to impregnate a female in order to grow the clone.

DNA and cloning have many benefits. DNA can be used to create missing organs, solve crimes by matching DNA to criminals, cloning plants and animals for agriculture, predicting and treating hereditary diseases, tracking our ancestors, cancer therapy and archaeology. There are so many positive uses to this science and process, with many benefits to still be discovered.

In spite of all of these obvious benefits, cloning raises many ethical questions. If we allow the science of cloning to advance to the point where it is possible to clone humans, there is a high potential for unethical and dangerous use. Does it even make sense to tamper with the natural order of life and evolution? What are the possible consequences of playing God? For these concerns, the U.S. government has put restrictions on federal funding for human cloning research.

Do we continue to develop DNA technology until the cloning of humans is possible? There are so many clear benefits to DNA and cloning research, but is it pushing the boundaries of the natural order of life too far? What if cloning technology gets into the wrong hands? Where do you think the line would be drawn between continuing cloning research and government regulation?

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Photo Credit: nbcnews.com

of students and family members since the school moved to its current location. Generously, Mr. Getz also shared an anecdote about the 92Y that underscores the kinds of personal connections people have with this special place. He said, "When I was in 4th grade, my teacher, Mrs. Jacobson, brought us to the 92nd Street Y to see the play, Thomas Jefferson, the Man and the Myth. I was seated a few rows back with my class, and at some point, I realized that there was a plot against Thomas Jefferson that he was unaware of. As this plot developed and the American revolution became endangered, I became more and more upset and eventually felt it was my responsibility to warn Thomas Jefferson. So I stood up on my seat (I was very short) and shouted to Thomas Jefferson that the man with the wig and the funny pointed shoes was out to get him and ruin America's chance for independence. Thomas Jefferson stopped what he was saying, turned to me and said, 'Thank you, young man. You are a true patriot.' Mrs. Jacobson, however, got so upset with me that she made me sit in the school bus until the play was over. After the play, when our class got back into the school bus, my friends told me that if I hadn't warned Thomas Jefferson, the Americans would have surely lost the war." Mr. Getz's amusing story makes one wonder what other amusing and remarkable stories people who have visited the 92Y over the years share.

For certain, the 92Y is an iconic institution with a rich history in the ESMS neighborhood, and the fact that ESMS traditionally holds graduation there establishes a personal connection to our school community.

Sources: <https://www.92y.org/about/timeline>  
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Photo Credit: Wikipedia

different perspectives, Jane Ferguson makes sure that many or all sides of an issue are presented to you, the viewer.

For example, in Jane Ferguson's coverage of the violence in Afghanistan (Press this link to see the video: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/target-ed-assassinations-against-civil-society-create-a-climate-of-fear-in-afghanistan>), she originally presented the point of view that the Taliban was assassinating Afghan citizens. However, she did not stop there. In the clip, we see that Jane Ferguson traveled to a Taliban stronghold to interview some of the people there, and ask them questions about the issue she was covering. In the interview, the Taliban presented a completely different perspective, which was that they were not responsible for the recent assassination attempts Jane Ferguson was inquiring about. Here, Jane Ferguson was not afraid to travel to a potentially dangerous area to provide her viewers with a different perspective, one of her main goals as an impactful journalist.



Jane Ferguson as she interviews members of the Taliban

Jane Ferguson went on to explain that not only does she talk to people from different backgrounds, but she does not worry about whether or not the people she is interviewing speak English. As you can see the video, there are many instances where Jane Ferguson is interviewing locals, and a translator gives an English voiceover. She explained that this does not limit who she interviews, which is crucial to presenting all vital information and providing every point of view on an issue.

In addition to my own question, other members of the Tiger Times including Nora Cassetta and Rhone Galchen asked Jane Ferguson a question. Rhone Galchen, asked, "are people you interview shaped

The East Side Middle School  
Helping Homeless Women Committee supports

DAWA 91

In recognition of their generous contribution to the  
Urban Outreach Center

Remember to check out their location on 1748 2nd Ave  
and grab a bite!

## Reading During The Pandemic

By: Ahana Chandra

When was the last time you picked up a book and sat down to read for your own pleasure? Well, researchers across the world have been trying to figure out the answer to this very question ever since the pandemic began. They want to know how this crazy pandemic has impacted all of our reading habits and how it affects us. Considering that the pandemic has changed almost every aspect of our lives, this does sound like a reasonable question, but there may not only be one answer. Different people have been impacted differently throughout this rough time and that was reflected in their reading habits. Through research and a very interesting survey, I was able to find this out for myself.

Researchers have found that people have been reading more during the pandemic due to being at home more often and trying to look for refuge from all the chaos of the pandemic. Lit Hub found that, "Research compiled by writing and proofreading service Global English Editing shows that 35% of people in the world have read more books than usual since COVID began." 35% is quite a shocking number, but not after you consider how many of us have found that reading calms us and so that is what we turned to for peace during the pandemic.

I interviewed Mr. James S. Kim, an expert on literacy and research and a professor at Harvard University who has a similar point of view. He told me, "I think



## The ESMS Debate Page

By: Rhone Galchen and Jacob Abroon

This is the ESMS Debate Page. In every issue, two students write arguments defending one side of a topic facing ESMS. The opinions argued in the debate page do not necessarily represent the opinions of the writers themselves. This month's topic: Should the penny be banned?

*Yes - Rhone Galchen*

The penny is ingrained in American history and it has been around for as long as anyone can be remembered. However, if you want to see why the penny has become an outdated currency and why it should be abolished, read on! The penny should be banned for a multitude of reasons. The first one that I will go into is that it is expensive to manufacture. In fact the penny costs 1.56 cents per penny has resulted in a 46 million dollar loss. That means that if we abolish the penny, the government would be saving millions of dollars that could go into more important facilities. Now though you may ask, "well isn't the penny worth the money?" The answer in short, is no. The reason is because the penny is obsolete. At the moment, not much can be bought for less than 5 cents. You can't buy anything with just pennies anymore, not even thoughts. Even if you have numerous pennies, you can't just pay for something with all pennies without either getting dirty looks or just outright getting rejected, and it is more likely that your pennies will just rot away in a jar or bag to never be used again rather than to actually pay for something. Further proof that it is obsolete is through the half cent. The half cent was a coin that was rendered useless in 1857. However now, that value, if adjusted to inflation, is worth 14 pennies, which shows that the penny does not have any value in today's US market (I am not saying the nickel and the

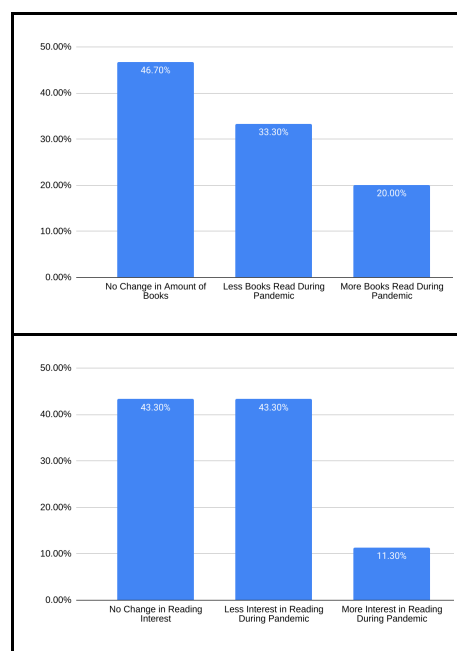
by war?" Jane Ferguson responded by stressing an important point. She explained that nearly everyone was looking out for their child, and their main concern was giving them an education. They know that education is, "their future," and people are very concerned about whether or not their children are provided with the education they deserve. Education is an opportunity that no one should be denied, and Jane Ferguson has witnessed how much it is desired. Nora Cassetta, another member of the Tiger Times, asked if Jane Ferguson uses, "special techniques," in her interviews. The journalist responded by explaining that she spends time with the people she is interviewing besides the interview itself. She wants to see their life in her own eyes. Rather than, "ask a question," and leave, Jane Ferguson wants to film their lives. This gives her viewers an opportunity to truly stand in the shoes of people they have never known of before.

Throughout the rest of the meeting, other members of GLO and the Student Council asked Jane Ferguson questions that allowed her audience to learn a great deal about her process of gathering facts, and the impact her work has had on her own opinions. She detailed that when she talks to traumatized people, she is very mindful to them, knowing it could traumatize them once again even thinking about an experience. Jane Ferguson said that while she is usually aggressive with politicians, she is very passive with traumatized people that she interviews, and she always lets them speak. By allowing them to speak for themselves and not pushing them to say anything, Jane Ferguson allows the person to not only have their space and say only what they desire people to hear, but also they can take their time to answer questions, and regain composure as they recall a scarring event. While gathering information is a crucial aspect of journalism, Jane Ferguson also makes sure to be respectful of the people she talks to.

Jane Ferguson is clearly an incredible journalist and role model. Presenting all of the aspects of gathering information, Jane Ferguson has taught the students of ESMS an important fact: we are all human, and we all have more similarities than differences. Jane Ferguson's work is to allow people to empathize, something she

kids are probably reading a lot more just to escape and to overcome the strong feelings of sadness and loneliness triggered by the pandemic." Mr. Kim believes that it is important for students to continue reading during the pandemic because of its many benefits. He says, "Reading helps you grow stronger intellectually, emotionally, and socially. Reading allows you to grow your knowledge and vocabulary. It also helps your mind focus and concentrate on ideas, themes, stories, and arguments." He also believes that reading is extremely pleasurable for us, saying, "Reading can be a form of entertainment. We don't just read to get our work done, or to read a recipe. We read for the intrinsic joy of it. That's probably more true than ever."

Although many arguments support the fact that many of us have been reading more during the pandemic, one survey provided an extremely different perspective. I conducted a survey with class 701 about how their reading habits have been impacted by the pandemic. Surprisingly, the results did not support these arguments at all. I found that most students admitted to having either had no noticeable change in their reading, or that their interest in reading and their amount of reading decreased during the pandemic (see the charts below for more information).



dime are obsolete as well).



Approximately 30 million pennies are minted per day, which means that the US produces more than 13 billion pennies per year.

Furthermore, the penny is bad for the environment. According to the New Yorker, "Making pennies from zinc and copper means mining for those materials. Red Dog Mine, which is the largest zinc mine in the U.S. is by far the #1 polluter on the EPA's list, because of large quantities of heavy-metal and lead rich mining tailings. The process of refining both metals can release sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), lead and zinc into the environment." The process of making the penny is harmful to the environment as well-meaning not only is it useless but it also jeopardizes our future by contributing to climate change. People might say that there would be high inflation if the penny was abolished. However, in Canada and Australia, who banned the production of the penny in 2012 and 1992 respectively, had no such problems of inflation. Therefore, it can be inferred that there would not be inflation in the US as well considering the common use of credit and debit cards. Furthermore, one may also say that the penny is a tribute to Lincoln and that it is a nostalgic piece of American history. But my question to you is if that nostalgia is worth the 46 million dollars and the further detriment of our environment? Obviously it is not because nostalgia won't be a great comfort once climate change is raging in the US, and the addition to our rising debt. All in all, I argue that it should be that the new phrase should be "A nickel for your thoughts".

Thank you for reading this argument and whether the penny is abolished or not will either take away or keep something that has been used in the US since 1793. But in my opinion, and hopefully by now is yours as well, is that the penny is not worth its impact on the climate and its 46

stressed multiple times throughout both Zoom periods. She shows what people's lives are like, and what they experience. Through this, she uncovers what we all have in common. No matter what continent we live on, or what leader governs us, we all care for each other. We all want to feel safe. We all want a proper education. We all want to be with family. Jane Ferguson's work has shown all of us these similarities. By uncovering that we all hold the same core values, we start to care for the people Jane Ferguson is highlighting. While many may seem different, we clearly see why we should care for someone living in Afghanistan or Syria. We start to see that they hold similar values to us, and we would never want to be in their position. This leads all of us to form a stronger community and see eye to eye. The work of journalists such as Jane Ferguson is what helps us all understand one another and form a strong community, knowing we are all looking out for each other, everyone understanding what the other is going through. As Jane Ferguson said, "we are all humans."

Photo Credit: (top) humanities.princeton.edu  
(bottom)  
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/targeted-assassinations-against-civil-society-create-a-climate-of-fear-in-afghanistan> (screenshot taken from video)

## What A Sporting Day!

By: Rhone Galchen

It has been an eventful month in sports to say the least. Have you ever watched a TV show or supported a team only for victory to be snatched out of someone's hands by their bitter rival? Well, read on to find out more about Celtic conceding the league title to Rangers. In the following paragraphs, you will read about the first rounds of a maddening (pun intended) tournament, a Champions League roundup, Zlatan saying that sports players should not talk about politics, the miraculous comeback of Dinamo Zagreb and much more!

First up we have Zlatan Ibrahimovic's controversial and frankly wrong comments. One never to shy away from outrageous quotes such as, "I can't help but laugh at how perfect I am." He surely fit the billing for yet another outrageous quote when he said, "[LeBron James] is phenomenal at

To find out why this was happening, I talked to Emma de Swaan Arons who had reported on the survey that, "I feel as though dealing with COVID-19 is such a crazy experience and online school is as well and I never really find the time to sit down and read a good book anymore in between all the craziness." When asked why she felt this way, she listed multiple reasons, one being that, "Everything is changing ... it's so hard to finally sit down and relax." She also mentioned having so many distractions around that made it difficult for her to even think about reading. She told me about how watching about all the COVID-19 deaths on the news and having other distractions like her phone, Netflix, and Youtube during remote learning took her attention away from things like reading. A final reason she mentioned was guilt. She told me, "How is it fair that I can sit down to read a book when others are dying?"

Overall, there is no one way in which the pandemic has influenced our reading. Some people have found themselves reading more, while others have found themselves without a book in hand more than before. In any circumstance, it's important for all of us to try as hard as we can to continue reading even if it seems difficult at times. Like Mr. Kim says, reading will help us throughout our lives, and it is especially crucial for students at such an early stage in their lives. So, if things are feeling chaotic and uncertain to you during these times, try picking up a book to help you find peace and assurance.

Source: <https://lithub.com/35-of-the-world-is-reading-more-during-the-pandemic-thanks-pandemic/>

## Theme Of The Month: Earth

By: Siroos Pasdar

Here you can find the Theme of the Month. Each month, a theme will be selected that is relevant to current events around the world. Each Tiger Times issue will feature a few articles about the Theme of the Month. The goal of the Theme of the Month is to spread awareness about certain topics, and give Tiger Times

million dollar loss given the fact that the penny has become obsolete.

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*No - Jacob Abroon*  
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The penny should not be banned for a multitude of reasons. While the relatively low value of the penny has sparked campaigns to eliminate it from existence, the penny needs to be kept in the United States. My argument in defense of our one cent coin boils down to four main reasons:

- 1) The penny is a way to honor America's past
- 2) A majority of Americans want to keep the penny
- 3) Banning the penny would cause major rocks in the economic system
- 4) The face value of the penny could be invaluable in certain economic situations.

1) The penny is an American symbol  
When you think of a coin, what do you think of? A one dollar coin? A John F. Kennedy 50¢ coin? Odds are that you first thought of a penny. The second-smallest American coin, with its recognizable and unique copper material. American has no coin like the penny. The penny is one of the many American symbols, and it only seems fit to have who is considered one of America's greatest presidents on the front. Abraham Lincoln has been one of America's greatest and most recognizable presidents according to a study performed by Siena College Research Institute. The penny is one of the ways the United States can honor the 16th president. By taking away the penny, we are clearly stating that we do not want to honor Abraham Lincoln.

What if you do not want to honor Abraham Lincoln? The penny is the perfect place to honor other people who had drastic impacts on American history. Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass or Eleanor Roosevelt can be put on the penny in place of Abraham Lincoln as well. The possibilities are endless. Yet, by

what he's doing, but I don't like when people have some kind of status, they go and do politics at the same time...Do what you're good at. Do the category you do." This is just blatantly wrong. Just because you are a sports player with great fame does not mean that you then have to be quiet. You should keep on speaking about what you believe in (given it is not something that is sexist or prejudiced of course) and spread the right message. LeBron James is speaking about issues that he knows first hand and should use his fame to raise awareness to these issues just like he is doing right now. So in this case, Zlatan is wrong.

Now let's get into Celtic. I have touched on this in previous issues, but now it is official (though to be fair, to say Celtic had a chance with around half the season left is like saying the Chiefs could still have beaten the Patriots with two minutes to go). Rangers have beaten Celtic to the Scottish Premiership title. Liverpool and England legend, Steven Gerrard, have been able to prevent Celtic from getting a record breaking 10 league titles in a row which will surely cause some heartbreak in Celtic fans (some of which are among the students and staff). However, from one mourning team to another, let's get into Tottenham Hotspur. Tottenham Hotspur were playing against Dinamo Zagreb in the second leg of the round of 16 in the Europa league. They had won the first leg 2-0 at home and just had to avoid losing by two goals and not scoring. To add to the advantage to Tottenham Hotspur, Dinamo Zagreb's manager was just imprisoned for fraud causing Dinamo Zagreb to play with an interim manager. The first half was played ending in 0-0 and Tottenham Hotspur looked set to make the quarterfinals. However, Miroslav Orsic clearly did not read the script. It was the 62nd minute, he was given too much space to shoot and released a wonderful shot into the top corner. Dinamo Zagreb had pulled one back, but fears of a comeback were not yet on. Then, in the 82nd minute Miroslav Orsic gets on the end of a cross and shoots and scores, tying the game and making it go to extra time. Tottenham fans at this point were sweating, but they still thought they would eventually pull it off. Then finally, it was the 106th minute when Orsic dribbled past numerous Tottenham players to release a

articles a specific focus each month. This month's theme: Earth.

Earth, a planet inhabited by nearly 8 billion humans, faces a challenge. A challenge that will ultimately determine the fate of the world. It's no secret that as each day passes, our environment is being threatened. What is our environment? By definition, environment means "the natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity."

Right now, our environment and planet are under siege. The threats can be invisible, like gases destroying our climate, or they can be visible substances. Unfortunately, humans aren't the only ones harmed. Plastic poses a threat to wildlife globally, despite being miles away from its victims. Pollution from cars and factories fills our atmosphere up with carbon dioxide. This gas traps heat in our atmosphere, which leads to global warming. All of these problems are a direct cause of human occupation of our planet.

### **A Path Forward**

A big problem calls for a bold solution. Protecting our environment and planet calls for large investments in infrastructure, something many countries or people cannot afford. However, a weapon in which everyone can use to combat this problem is their voice. Earth Day, which is celebrated on April 22, was created for this very reason. The goal of Earth Day was to promote people's voices and create a special day to highlight our environmental issues. It was started by U.S Senator Gaylord Nelson. His attention to our environment has now grabbed ours.

However, pollution wasn't always a big concern for humans. In fact, over 20 years ago, when sixth grade science teacher Lillian Grippo started teaching at ESMS, things were very different. "When I first started at ESMS, there were no recycling bins." Ms. Grippo told me. Now, the classic green bin has become a standard in most classroom settings.

### **The Battle Against Plastic**

Since attention has been called to the problem, public officials have started to propose new ideas and laws in an attempt

eliminating the penny, we completely dishonor Abraham Lincoln, and destroy our own opportunity to honor other people from American history that do not receive the credit they deserve.

Losing the penny also means that America would be losing a patriotic symbol. Pennies are ways for us to remember our history. A 1943 steel penny reminds us about the sacrifices our nation needed to make during World War II in order to defeat the enemy (copper was needed in the U.S. military, so most pennies in 1943 were made of steel). The 2009 Lincoln Penny Set reminds all of us of the American dream. Someone from humble or poor backgrounds can work hard to the highest office in the nation (the 2009 Lincoln Penny Set was a set of four pennies to mark Abraham Lincoln's 200th birthday. The back of every penny from 2009 shows a moment from Abraham Lincoln's life, from his childhood log cabin to President of the United States). The Lincoln Memorial on the back of nearly every penny reminds us of the historic events that took place on those steps, such as the March on Washington. The list is endless. The penny reminds us of our history more than any other coin. Showing us what America has been through as a nation, and how we can move forward together, eliminating the penny would eliminate parts of American history.

2) A majority of Americans want to keep the penny

America is a nation that is run by the people. While that sentence may seem cliché, it is definitely true. The people elect politicians to make decisions for them, and the people can vote these politicians out of office if they are unhappy with their choices. With that logic that has allowed America to thrive for generations, it makes sense that the decision to abolish the penny should reflect the views of the American people.

According to a poll performed by Harris Interactive, a research company, 59% of Americans support the penny, while just 23% wanted to abolish the penny. The statistics speak for themselves. The support for the penny is more than double of that to abolish the penny. In a country where the opinions of the American

beauty of a shot from the edge of the box into the bottom left, prompting wild celebrations from the players on the field and on the bench. Tottenham pressed on in an attempt to score and win the game, but ultimately failed due to outstanding play by Zagreb goalkeeper, Livakovic.

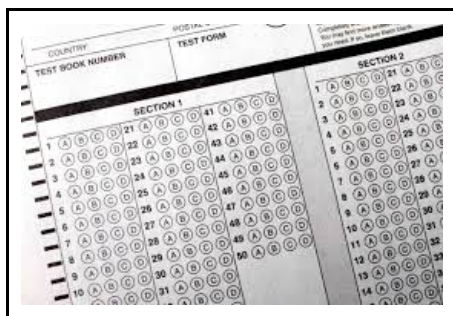
From one great comeback to another, let's look at the West Ham-Arsenal game. While City has steamrolled their way to the title due to a luxurious run of 21 consecutive wins (which was broken in a 2-0 game to their rivals Manchester United), the battle for top 4 is more congested. One of the surprise contenders in this race is West Ham, who needed a win against Arsenal to be able to get into the top four. In the game, West Ham cruised into a 3-0 lead within the first 32 minutes and a comeback seemed unthinkable. Right? Well wrong. Through two own goals, the latter coming in the 61st minute, Arsenal was able to come within one. Then, West Ham had the chance to win the game with the ball going to Michail Antonio, who had the goal at his mercy. However, he somehow hits the post and Arsenal is still in it. Then, an exquisite cross from Nicholas Pepe finds Lacazette who heads it in to tie the game and to complete a miraculous comeback. In Germany, Bayern Munich and RB Leipzig are battling it out for first place, with Bayern, who have a four point lead, the favorites to win it.

In Italy, Inter Milan has run away with the title, though this could not have happened without help from rivals AC Milan. The stage was set for both Milan teams to battle it out at the top until the end of the season, but AC Milan had since then collapsed. AC Milan had failed to win four of their last six games in the league, including an embarrassing defeat to 15th La Spezia and a 3-0 loss to title and generic rivals Inter Milan. In Spain though, the title is much closer. Atletico Madrid, with what once seemed an insurmountable lead, have faltered and now have Barcelona and Real Madrid on their tails. Real Madrid has been winning close games through late goals and has been heavily relying on Karim Benzema, which makes it seem that they can't overcome the six point gap. However, Madrid had a lot of experience and knows what it takes. Barca, despite Champions League humiliation, have won their past 12 out of

to lower plastic pollution. New York state currently has a state-wide single use plastic ban. While there are a few exceptions to this ban, most single use plastics are now illegal in New York.

In the meantime, Ms. Grippo told me, cities, states, and public schools should start moving towards more reusable and environmentally friendly materials, as well as limit their carbon footprint.

See page 16 for another article on the Tiger Times' Theme Of The Month!



## Standardized Testing: The Good And The Bad

By: Camille D'Silva

Recently, the Specialized High School Admissions Test, or SHSAT, was administered to eighth graders all over New York City, and here at East Side Middle School. The year prior, in seventh grade, those same students spent countless hours studying and preparing for a test that could choose their future high school. Even sixth graders have started preparing for what is considered to be the biggest standardized test you will take in middle school. So much focus has been put on the SHSAT that it got me thinking about whether these standardized tests are really beneficial or not for students. Are they fundamental and objective to your learning, or are they just exclusionary of other students and their abilities?

First, we need to start with the basics. What is a "standardized test"? A standardized test is any form of test that requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or a selection of questions from a common bank of questions, in the same

people should and are put first, the opinions of a majority of Americans cannot be ignored. Most Americans want to keep the penny, and in America, that means we should keep the penny.

These statistics are irrefutable. Nearly 6 in 10 adults in the United States do not want to abolish the penny. If the penny is abolished, an incredible amount of Americans will be displeased. We live in America, where the opinions of the people need to be represented, and in the case of the penny, we cannot abolish it.

3) The loss of the penny could ruin the economy

*"Bag Of Chips! Only \$1.99!" "Buy one slize of pizza and have the other for 99¢!"* These advertisements are ones that we can all recognize. Low cost products such as chips and pizza often have a dollar value, and then end in, "99 cents." The idea to value a bag of chips at \$1.99 rather than \$2.00 has been a business tactic used by the most profitable businesses. When a consumer sees the, "1" in a price, they are more inclined to buy the product than if they saw a, "2," even if the prices are separated by one penny. For example, recently, I saw a product that was valued at \$19.99. At first glance, I associated this product to be cheap, because I saw that it started with a, "1." However, looking closer, I would see that the value is practically \$20.00. Nonetheless, the idea that the product was relatively "cheap," was seared in my mind, and I could not reverse the association. This tactic could have been what has allowed companies to thrive, or even keep their head above water. Yet, by abolishing the penny, this decades-old business tactic will be written in the history books and forgotten.

With no coin with a face value of one cent, every price needs to be rounded to the nearest nickel. Expensive clothes that were once \$99.99 would have to either round down to \$99.95, or round up to \$100.00. Both of these, "solutions," would cause major defects in the economy.

If businesses round a price up to the nearest dollar (such as \$100.00), the entire psychology of 99¢ would be eliminated, and who knows how that will affect the profits of these businesses.

13 games in the league and lost none. They are in great form and Atletico are definitely starting to sweat about the gap that has diminished to only four points between them. Barcelona at the moment definitely looks like the team that Atletico have to worry about the most.

Now let's go to France. France has been dominated by one team for the past few years: Paris Saint Germain. However, this year the race to the top promises to be much closer. Lille are equal on points to PSG and Lyon and Monaco are within three and four points respectively. Even though it is closer than usual, PSG are still the favorites to win, but on April 3rd (which is after the time of writing), PSG will be facing Lille in a game which could decide the winner of Ligue 1. Although PSG is the favorite, let's hope that an underdog will be able to snatch victory from their hands.

Now let's get into a quick Champions League roundup. In the Champions League, Bayern Munich and Manchester City both cruised through to the quarterfinals in a 2-1 over Lazio and 2-0 win over Borussia Mönchengladbach respectively. Liverpool also recorded an emphatic 2-0 win over RB Leipzig to reach the quarterfinals and Chelsea impressively beat a drab Atletico Madrid side to advance to the quarters as well. PSG and Barca fought out a 1-1 draw that was more a psychological hurdle of overcoming the scars of the Remontada (when Barca lost the first leg 4-0, only to win the second one 6-1 with a last minute winner) rather than an actual battle due to the 4-1 win they recorded at the Camp Nou. Dortmund saw off Sevilla in a 2-2 draw while in Madrid they needed some luck. In order to get their first goal, Marco Sportiello (the Atalanta goalkeeper) passed the ball straight to Modric who laid a brilliant pass to Benzema who drove the shot into the bottom left corner. After that, Sergio Ramos scored a penalty to secure the victory. Later in the game, Luis Muriel scored a brilliant goal from a free kick to which Madrid responded by scoring a goal one minute later through Marcos Asensio.

However, the real drama of the round was Juventus vs Porto. Porto, who won the home leg 2-1, took the lead in the 19th minute courtesy of a penalty scored by Sergio Oliveira. Juventus (after a red card

way. This test is scored in a "standard" or consistent manner. So when you take the English Language Arts (ELA) Test, the Math State Test, or even the SHSAT, you are answering the same questions that any kid in New York City would answer, and you are being graded by either a machine or a blind reviewer. But that doesn't sound so bad, and it isn't, until you dive deeper into the effects of standardized testing.

Some people who don't like standardized testing believe that it does not show an accurate picture of ability. For example, if you are good at other subjects outside of standardized testing subjects, or good at other activities outside of school, it won't make a difference, because so much focus is put on standardized tests. People could also be sick while taking the test, and that could affect how alert they are and their score. There could also be the problem of anxiety due to the enormity of the standardized test, and that could affect your score and how well you do. However, there is no definitive evidence that people have severe anxiety reactions directly correlated to standardized test taking.

Another issue people have with standardized tests is that teachers may start "teaching to the test." That means that instead of teaching other subjects that might be interesting or helpful, emphasis may be given on test prep and learning what questions and wording will be on the standardized tests. The question is, is this helpful to students when they go into the real world? Are we hurting their learning process? People against standardized testing believe the testing is not a clear indication of the overall ability (including academic) of the students. There is no concrete evidence that this has a detrimental effect on student learning and progress in other subjects, but it certainly does divert class attention from other, possibly more useful, topics.

However, many argue that standardized tests are not all bad, and can actually be an objective way to see and compare students' growth. When students take the same standardized test, it can be easy to see where the student needs help and where they are excelling, especially compared to others. For example, if

Consumers would then look at the expensive clothing, and see a \$100.00 value, which could deter people. On the other hand, if the penny is not abolished, a value of \$99.99 will seem more cost-friendly, and a person will buy the product, allowing the business to thrive. So clearly, businesses rounding their costs up to the nearest dollar would not be logical. That leaves rounding down to the nearest nickel.

If the penny is abolished and the same piece of clothing is rounded down to \$99.95, the psychology of \$99 instead of what is really \$100 remains. People will see the, "99," and be more inclined to buy the product. While this clever tactic can still be used by businesses across the country, rounding down four cents for most of their products might not be smart either.

For small businesses, every penny counts. We all saw the importance of every penny, quarter, and dollar to businesses during the spring of 2020, when COVID-19 had caused nearly every store to temporarily close, yet still pay rent. Every small business realized that they needed every penny they deserved. Even once the Coronavirus pandemic is over, businesses that are struggling to stay afloat will need every cent. So would abolishing the penny and forcing them to round their products down 4¢ really be logical for businesses?

Every time a product is purchased in a store, the store makes a certain amount of profit depending on their cost margins. In the previously stated example with a bag of chips costing \$1.99, the store might have made a profit of about \$1.00. In that case, where they make a profit of about \$1.00 per every bag sold, the value of the penny is not as relatively low as one may think. In that case, abolishing the penny would mean a 4% decrease in profits. If the penny were to be abolished and the businesses round all of the costs ending in 99¢ to 95¢, the decrease in profits could ruin the business, and potentially cause bankruptcy.

Abolishing the penny would have drastic and negative impacts on the businesses of America. The pandemic has taught us the importance of small

from Porto player Medhi Taremi) responded with two goals from Federico Chiesa to level the tie. In extra time, Sergio Oliveria scored a free kick with all three Juventus players turning away from the ball and thus, not seeing that the ball was going to go under them (which would have caused them not to jump and block the shot) and into the goal. Juventus scored immediately after, but could not score again and lost on away goals. The matchups in the quarterfinal are out, and here are my predictions. In Manchester City vs Dortmund, Manchester City should easily go through, although Erling Haaland will pose a problem. In Bayern Munich vs PSG (Paris Saint Germain), I am going to go for a shock and say that Kylian Mbappe and Neymar will be able to expose Bayern's sometimes leaky defense to win the tie for PSG. In Real Madrid vs Liverpool, I predict Madrid's experience to get them through the tie thanks to goals from Benzema and masterful performances from Courtois and Casemiro. Lastly, in Chelsea vs Porto, I think Chelsea will win due to the fact that they are in great form and are an overall better team than Porto.

Next, there is March Madness. There have been so many upsets that the people who made their brackets (including me) must be incredibly mad. First, I will go into the first round upsets. Ohio (13th seed) shocked the number 4 seed Virginia, North Texas (13th seed) shocked 4th seed Purdue, Oral Roberts (15th seed) shocked number 2 seed Ohio State, Oregon State (12th seed) beat 5th seed Tennessee, Abilene Christian (14th seed) beat 3rd seed Texas, and Syracuse (11th seed) beat 6th seed San Diego. In the second round, Syracuse (11th seed) shocked West Virginia (3rd seed) and Oregon State (12th seed) continued their dream run with a win over Oklahoma State (4th seed). Loyola Chicago (8th seed) were the first team to knock out a number 1 seed (Illinois), while Oregon (7th seed) and Oral Roberts (15th seed) beat Iowa (2nd seed) and Florida (7th seed) respectively. In the end, Baylor defeated Gonzaga with a final score of 86 to 70.

That is all for the sports page! As usual, it was an eventful month in sports. Keep an eye out for the Champions League games and the PSG vs Lille game. I encourage

teachers at ESMS wanted to see how well students were doing compared to another school, solely based on the standardized test, they could do so, and see where they needed to work on to do better. While some feel the content of the test is not worthwhile, the ability to provide benchmarks for students in core subjects and an objective measurement of progress can be appealing to some. This makes people feel like, even though the tests might have flaws, they could still be good for students.

Even though sickness, anxiety and other outside factors could harm the taking of standardized tests, advocates still say that they are unbiased. Teachers can play favorites when grading other students, or have different grading methods or standards, and that doesn't really make sense from a comparability standpoint. Not everyone has the same teacher. If you wanted to see how your school was doing compared to another school, you couldn't do that with teacher grades alone. Standardized testing, as mentioned before, is graded by blind reviewers and machines, which, from that view, makes it much less biased and a good way to find out how a student is doing with certain subjects in school. There is still unfairness in standardized testing though, because of how certain conditions can affect you, and so far, there has been no solid plan to breach this.

All in all, standardized testing has many ups and downs, but the experience you have really depends on *you* as a person. Maybe you like taking tests. Maybe they make you really nervous. It's all up to how the student feels, and many more are starting to lean in favor of the latter. The College Board (a non-profit organization to expand access to higher education) declared on January 19th, 2021, that it will stop providing the optional essay component of the SAT and that it will not offer subject tests in U.S. history, languages and math, among other topics. Not only can this help reduce stress, it can provide a more complete picture of student ability, as more colleges are becoming test optional. The ELA and Math State Test will still be administered this year, though. As well as that, for middle school students, the SHSAT is still required to get into one of the eight

businesses, and abolishing the penny could put hundreds out of business. With hundreds of businesses going bankrupt, the economy will surely do horrible, as it did during the spring of 2020.

4) The face value of the penny could be valuable in certain situations

One argument against the penny is that its face value of one cent is useless in today's world, and that it can easily be replaced by a nickel. While this argument can be made in an economy like the one our country is currently in, an economy with massive deflation would need the penny more than ever.

During the Great Depression (1929-1939), America went through deflation like never before. Prices dropped dramatically, and the penny became one of the main currencies we used. "That was nearly 100 years ago," you may say. "We probably will not have dramatic deflation again." However, in 2008, the United States experienced massive deflation once again. What does this tell us? It tells us that we do not know when America could experience great deflation, and we have to be ready. How? By keeping the penny.

If, in the future, America experiences extreme deflation, we will need the penny for low costs. For example, small items such as toys or small food boxes could drop below \$1.00, and the penny would be needed to pay for the items that are not multiples of five. Otherwise, prices will need to round to the nearest multiple of five, and the previous reason stated why that could be catastrophic for businesses.

If America is ever in deflation, the penny will not be a, "worthless coin," as many may say. The penny will be an invaluable coin for small items that could plunge below \$1.00, and rounding will not be an issue at all for small businesses. In our nation's relatively short history, we have experienced the most drastic economic situations, and the penny is a safety net for our economy if we ever find ourselves in a time of deflation.

Overall, we must keep the penny. It is an American symbol, and a way to honor one of our nation's greatest leaders. The penny is an incredible way for us to remember our history, and acknowledge

you to make your own predictions as well and also, I hope you enjoyed it!

## Comparing Life Before And After COVID-19

By: Gail Tromer

Before the Coronavirus pandemic started, there was a normal life. Meaning, we wouldn't have to go to school on a computer, and a person could actually be there, in the classroom, and experience other people around. There's also digital life, the life we started living after the pandemic had begun. In digital life, a person would use an electronic device to access homework, classwork, enter classes and talk to friends and teachers.

The thing about digital life is, no matter what you do in school, it's going to have to be with an electronic device. A person could take notes in their notebook, but to see or hear them, you would have to log onto Zoom, or look at a Peardeck or Nearpod. If someone wanted to talk to their friend or teacher, they would need to use Zoom. Six hours on your computer, every weekday. You wouldn't get to see anyone like you normally would or feel the person's presence at all.

There are also advantages to digital life. People could "talk" to people much faster. By that, I mean email people much faster. Gmail is like a substitute for talking. A person can just go up to a device, type in something quickly, and click send. Sure sometimes, it takes long for the other person to answer, but all that's done is typing and clicking a button. No one would have to walk over to anyone, no one would even have to open their mouth. Just click send. This strategy could work for anyone. If the person you're talking to is in another country, city, or really anywhere in the world, it's still possible to email them, which, as is also the case while speaking through technology, would be the same thing as walking up to that person and talking to them. On the other hand, it's not always possible to get a response right after, and that could sometimes be frustrating.

A lot of schools in New York use Google Classroom to hand out homework, classwork, and links to classes. Sometimes

specialized high schools in New York City. Do you think that specialized tests are necessary, or do you think we should find an alternative?

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Photo Credit: njea.org



## An Interview With Ms. Mainhart

By: Dale Heller

Two to three times per week while in the school building pre-COVID, ESMS seventh and eighth grade students got messy, socialized with friends, and created something incredible. They would transform a sketch of their shoe into something amazing! They would form masks out of plaster, and these would represent their alter-ego. During Color War, they would complete a wide variety of challenges, from designing a mascot that represents their team's color and values to naming a song title containing their color, as well as cartoon characters that are that color. However, perhaps the greatest challenge of all was passing the

what our country has been through as a nation. Additionally, an overwhelming majority of Americans do not want to abolish the penny, and in a country where the opinions of the people are the most valuable, we must acknowledge these statistics. To add on, if we abolish the penny, the economy will suffer tremendously, and businesses across the nation could go bankrupt. Finally, if America is in a period of deflation, the penny will become a valuable currency for everyday payments. If the decision to abolish the penny or not boils down to what is best for America, keeping the penny is the only logical choice.

**What do you think? Should the penny be abolished? Send in your answer to [jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net](mailto:jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net), and the results will be shown in the next issue!**

Photo Credit: (top) amazon.com (bottom) CNN

Sources: American Express, illinoistreasurer.gov, The New Yorker, BBC



## Basketball During COVID-19

By: Tali Ben-David

Basketball has definitely not been the same since COVID-19 started. However, because games are starting again, things are looking up! As the arenas open up, new rules are created and enforced. The rules don't affect the game too much but it is certainly not going to be the same as it was before the pandemic. Indoor practices have been allowed for some time, but COVID greatly limits what we can do during them.

it's hard to keep track of homework and if you really lose track of an assignment, it just makes it easier to miss it. In Google Classroom, also a great part of digital life, all of the work is organized by due dates from done assignments, to unfinished ones, to tasks assigned for that day. There's also a To-Do list in the left corner of the classes section.

The greatest advantage to digital life is, and this digital life was made for this advantage, is the fact that there's a very low chance of getting sick. Think about it. A person using digital life would be alone in their room, only maybe with family, and not moving or going outside, just learning. There's really no harm in that.

Last but not least, there's normal life. There's different names for it, but personally, I call it normal life, because digital life is weird for most people, and if we went 500 years back, year by year, there would be no digital life. Only normal. If we went back only 40 years, there wouldn't even be internet nor personal computers.

Like I said above, if we went back 500 years, there wouldn't be a digital life. Everyone knows how normal life is. Starting with the fact that, you wouldn't have to worry about any technical problems, like your computer screen freezing or seeing a little black square on top of your screen saying "no internet." Also, the best thing about normal life would be the fact that you can walk up to someone, meaning move and talk to them. A person in normal life could hug their friends, which would be appreciated if we ever went back to normal life and you could see people up close, and play games you can only play in normal life, and classes would go back to normal. By that, I mean everyone in the same room, not half the people in the classroom, the other half in Zoom.

In conclusion, if you put both lives in a race, normal life would win. Everyone I know prefers normal life, and everyone is used to normal life. In my opinion, normal life will always be better.

paintbrush test, a test administered by a different classmate every week, that consists of washing every last drop of paint off of a paintbrush, then wiping the paintbrush on your arm to show said classmate how clean it was. Of course, the classmate responded that there was still a miniscule blue spot on the brush, and you retreated back to the sink to repeat the cycle. All of this is worth it when your table wins brownies baked by Ms. Mainhart, the exceptional ESMS art teacher. If you want to know everything from a project she would love to do with her students to what she has binge-watched and baked during the pandemic, read on!

Q: How long have you been working at ESMS?

**A: This is my 19th year at ESMS**

Q: What inspired you to become an art teacher?

**A: Everyone in my family (my parents, uncles, aunts, etc.) were teachers, so it seemed only natural to follow in their footsteps. And when I was in high school, I got a job as an assistant teacher in a cartooning class at a local college, which I loved, and definitely contributed to my wanting to teach art.**

Q: Who is an artist—dead or alive—that inspires you and why?

**A: I absolutely loved the comic strip Calvin & Hobbes as a child and continue to draw upon it as a reference for how to create strong characters, hilarious dialogue, and breathtaking visuals.**

Q: What are some of the challenges of teaching art on Zoom?

**A: It's so hard teaching a hands-on, materials-heavy subject like art via zoom! First off, I can't give out any materials, so I'm relying on all the students to get their own materials. It's also hard to see everyone's artwork, or to watch everyone creating. There's a lot of trust, and a lot of "holding projects up to the camera." It's also hard to get messy with a computer right there!**

Q: What is your favorite type of art? Ex: Painting, sculpting, drawing.

To get a better understanding of the new rules and requirements I interviewed my basketball coach. He said that he is excited that leagues are opening again and it shows that things are starting to get back to, or closer, to normal. Something that might be hard to adjust to is wearing masks during games. Although masks are not required for all programs, spectators are required to wear masks. Another issue the coach mentioned was that the number of spectators may vary depending on the court where the game is being played. As the number of vaccinated Americans increase, so will the amount of spectators allowed at a game.

Basketball can do a lot for people, as it has a wide variety of benefits. It can be a way to socialize and a way to get exercise, and it is also something people look forward to every week. However, due to the COVID pandemic, many big changes were made. During the national lockdown, basketball stopped entirely. Most people have to wear masks, which makes running harder because it is harder to breathe and you get tired faster. You also can't get too close to your teammates because of social distancing rules. There is also a limit to the amount of players allowed in gyms. Some coaches are also strict about other equipment being shared, besides the basketball. All these rules and regulations make it difficult to socialize and get as much exercise as we would pre-COVID.

COVID has affected so many aspects of our lives, including sports. Hopefully we will be back playing basketball indoors normally soon. Until then, we will have to play with these rules until the Coronavirus pandemic ceases.

Photo Credit: bu.edu

## An Amazing Birthday Cake

By: Maeve Redmond

My birthday was at the beginning of March. My mom made me an amazing cake and I would like to share with you how it came to be. This cake is two strawberry cakes with a cheesecake in the middle. There is strawberry curd in



## The Life Of A Plastic Bottle

By: Siroos Pasdar

Plastic. It is a material we use daily, whether you realize it or not. Maybe your water bottle is plastic, or your bags and containers. It might seem like a harmless material, and if used properly, it is. However, plastic pollution has been destroying our planet. Each bottle carelessly thrown on the streets of New York poses a threat to wildlife that could be miles away. It is yet another environmental issue our planet faces, and one we hope to overcome.

Plastic has many uses. It can be used to create plastic bottles, cars, toys, bags and much more. In many cases, products like plastic bags and bottles can be thrown onto the street. These plastics can eventually make their way to our oceans, and harm wildlife. Sea life can drown in plastic bags, or mistaken bottles for food, and die after eating the toxic substance.

As a result of this, over one million marine animals die every year. According to yale.edu, "Scientists have found microplastic in all of the most-consumed mussel species around the world. One gram of mussel meat purchased from a grocery store contains between 0.13 and 2.45 microplastic particles, according to a new study, with organisms harvested in the North Atlantic and South Pacific the most contaminated." Essentially, "If you eat mussels, you eat microplastics." This not only shows the severity of the issue, but how everyone, humans and animals alike, are affected.

### The Journey of a Bottle

Where does the life of a plastic bottle begin? Polymers, chains made up of many

**A: I'm naturally drawn to cartooning, because of the storytelling, and how funny and expressive it can be. I'm also a huge fan of painting, especially when I want to make art that is loose and a little less controlled.**

Q: If you had unlimited resources and time, what art project would you do with your students?

**A: Well, if this were a dream, and we really had unlimited money and space, I'd love to have several pottery wheels and run a ceramics class. It would be amazing to have the technology to run a classroom animation studio, and I have visions of students getting to blast music and create oil paintings on giant canvases. I also think it would be a great experience to have a space in the school that functions as an art gallery, and students can have the opportunity to curate their own shows around themes and materials of their choosing.**

Q: How do you feel when your comics are published? What thoughts do you want people who see your comic to have?

**A: It's pretty exhilarating. I still can't believe that it's happened. Mostly, I want to entertain people with my comics, make them laugh, or highlight an issue that I feel is important.**

Q: What do you think is the most important thing an artist can do to improve their craft?

**A: This might sound cliché, but honestly, making art is the best way to improve their craft. Keep a sketchbook and just draw- from observation, from imagination, anything that looks interesting, even if the drawings are doodles, or unfinished, or not perfect. The more you do any activity, the better and more confident you get. And don't be afraid to try something new, even if it doesn't work. The first time I ever tried using a pottery wheel, the clay flew off my wheel and smacked the kid sitting next to me in the face. But I practiced, and practiced...and I'm still terrible at it! But it's still really fun to work with, and I don't care if all my pottery is lopsided.**

Q: What would ESMS students be surprised to learn about you?

between the layers and lemon cheesecake frosting on the outside that is easy to dye and I dyed it pink.

The first step is the strawberry cake:

14 ounces (397 g) all purpose flour  
1 ½ teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
8 ounces (226 g) unsalted butter room temperature  
10 ounces (284 g) granulated sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
½ teaspoon lemon extract  
1 ½ teaspoon strawberry emulsion or extract, I use LorAnn oils bakery emulsion  
Zest one lemon  
1 Tablespoon lemon juice fresh  
6 ounces (170 g) egg whites room temperature  
4 ounces (113 g) strawberry reduction room temperature  
6 ounces (170 g) milk room temperature, whole milk is best  
½ teaspoon Pink food color

Here are the ingredients for the strawberry reduction mentioned in the recipe:

I recommend making this reduction the day before you're ready to make your cake.

Place fresh or thawed, frozen strawberries into a medium saucepan. Optional: blend strawberries with an immersion blender if you prefer a smoother texture of strawberry reduction.

Heat on medium-high and add in sugar (if desired), lemon zest, lemon juice and salt. Stir occasionally to prevent burning. Once bubbling, reduce heat to medium-low and slowly reduce until berries begin to break up and the mixture has reduced by about half. This will take about 20 minutes. If your mixture has reduced by half and is still watery, continue to cook until all of the liquid is out.

Occasionally stir the mixture to prevent burning. You should end up with about 2 cups of thick strawberry reduction that looks like tomato sauce. Transfer to another container and let cool before use. You will use some of the reduction for the cake batter, some for the frosting and the rest for filling between the cake layers for

units, are the basic building blocks of plastic. The word polymer consists of poly-, meaning many, and -mer, meaning units. The chains form plastic, in the form of millions of pellets. The plastic is later melted and casted into a mold. The bottles are filled with liquid, used, then abruptly discarded.

From there, the bottles, now discarded and empty, await their fate. Some might find their way to a stream, and slowly trickle down until they reach a river. Like most bottles, they will eventually be met by an ocean. These bottles can be mistaken as food for many animals, and will be consumed by them. Plastic is toxic and deadly to some marine life. When eaten, plastic makes animals think they're full when they aren't, and will lead to animals starving and ultimately dying. The water currents sometimes pull these bits of plastic and trash into what is known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is an area double the size of Texas, and it is the largest of the five plastic accumulation zones around the world. Furthermore, due to most plastic bottles not biodegrading, they will just break down into smaller bits of plastics. These small bits of plastic are known as microplastics. Microplastics are destined to rotate in the sea indefinitely.

But some bottles are spared the cruel and sorrowful life that most bottles experience. Some bottles are thrown into a recycling bin, where a truck will pick them up and take them to a plant. These bottles will be compressed and squeezed into blocks, then shredded and washed. The bottles then become raw plastic material again, ready to be made into something new. The power of recycling can do wonders. Yet, it only takes a simple action. So next time you are walking down the street with an empty plastic bottle, find the nearest green bin and recycle the bottle. Suddenly, a small gesture has made the sky the limit.

#### Overview of The Life Of A Plastic Bottle

1. You are constructed in a factory where your life as a plastic bottle begins.
2. You are shipped to a grocery store.

**A: Hmm...I never took any art classes until I was a senior in high school. I didn't major in art in college, but got a degree in science (my dad was a science teacher, so he was pleased). And despite not being particularly athletic, I played a ton of sports in high school and college, and played soccer for a long time.**

Q: What have you binge-watched or baked during the pandemic?

**A: I watched every season of Kids Baking Championship with my daughters, and then we tried to make a red velvet cake with homemade buttercream. It came out...sloppy?**

Q: How did you come up with the idea for the brownie system?

**A: Haha, I noticed that students are very competitive, even with things like cleaning. And I made brownies for a bake sale once that went over very well, so I decided to combine the two things and have the students compete for "brownie points" during clean-up, and I would bake for the winners. Students seem to think it's worth it!**

Even though we have traded plaster masks representing our alter-egos for protective face masks, Art at ESMS still remains 45 minutes of fun! Thank you, Ms. Mainhart, for letting us learn more about you!

Photo Credit: canyonechoes.org

## Swimming During The Pandemic

By: Anna Hsu

Competitive swimming. It may not be the most popular sport, but just like any other sport, it keeps our body in shape. Not only that, but it also gave us an opportunity to meet new people and possibly make new friends. Exercising is a great way to get some fresh air after being stuck in the house, even if it's only a mere walk. According to ChoosePT.com, sports can even, "Improve your quality of sleep. Reduce feelings of anxiety and depression." It may sound strange, but

extra moisture. Leftover reduction can be stored in the fridge for up to one week or frozen for 6 months.

Now for the cake recipe:

Make sure to take your strawberry reduction out of the refrigerator one hour before making your cake so that it comes to room temperature.

Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and preheat to 350°F/176°C.

Grease three 8" cake pans with cake goop or preferred pan release

In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the milk, strawberry reduction, strawberry emulsion, vanilla extract, lemon extract, lemon zest, lemon juice, and pink food coloring.

In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.

Add room temperature butter to your stand mixer with the paddle attachment and beat at medium speed until smooth and shiny, about 30 seconds.

Gradually sprinkle in the sugar, beat until mixture is fluffy and almost white, about 3-5 minutes.

Add the egg whites one at a time, beating 15 seconds in between. Your mixture should look cohesive at this point. If it looks curdled and broken, your butter or egg whites were too cold.

Mix on low speed and add about a third of the dry ingredients to the batter, followed immediately by about a third of the milk mixture, mix until ingredients are almost incorporated into the batter. Repeat the process 2 more times. When the batter appears blended, stop the mixer and scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula. If it looks like ice cream, you did it right.

Divide the batter evenly between the prepared pans. Smooth the tops with a rubber spatula.

Bake cakes at 350°F/176°C until they feel firm in the center and a toothpick comes out clean or with just a few crumbs on it, about 30-35 minutes.

Place pans on top of a wire rack and let cool for 10 minutes. Then flip your cakes onto the racks and cool completely.

Once cooled, wrap each layer in plastic wrap and refrigerate or freeze before assembling your cake.

This recipe is for both of the cakes that

3. You are bought by an eager human, ready to guzzle the liquid you hold.
4. You are consumed and discarded.
5. You find your way to a stream.
6. You fall to the bottom of the ocean.
7. From there, multiple new doors of possibilities will open, all of which will determine your fate.
  - a. You may break into smaller pieces, known as micro plastics, and are destined to rotate in the sea indefinitely.
  - b. You could be eaten by marine life, and the plastic toxins will be passed up the food chain.
8. You have now become an elder bottle, reaching your final moments in life.
  - a. You may be drawn into a large vortex, where the oceans currents trap millions of pieces of plastic and trash.
  - b. A lantern fish might eat you, which might be consumed by a squid, which could be eaten by tuna, which would be enjoyed by humans.

Sources: earthday.org, Ted Talks, forbes.com, plasticoceans.org, yale.edu

Photo Credit: The Guardian

## The Evolution Of ESMS

By: Tayden Eagle-McAvoy

ESMS is an amazing place. We have all learned new things from our incredible school, yet we haven't learned about how ESMS evolved or how it started. Well, in this article, you will gain some insight on how our school came to be.

exercise can give us the energy boost we need to get through the rest of the day!

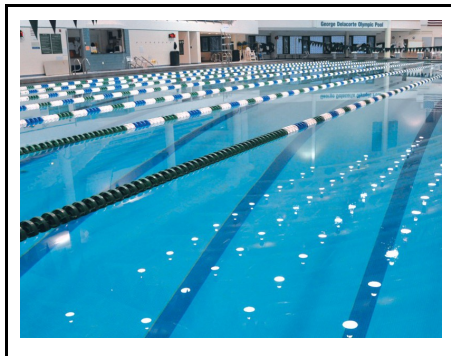
Swimming and many other sports have been changed greatly due to the pandemic. The amount of swimmers allowed in the pool has decreased greatly, while more safety protocols have been added to the schedule. Masks are kept on (except for in the pool) and of course everyone has to stay socially distanced.

I interviewed competitive swimmer and seventh grade student Turo Gereltod and he said, "I would say that swimming in the pandemic has changed for me since I can't freely mess around with my friends like I used to. It has kind of killed the energy of my swim team and the practices that come along with it."

During the pandemic, swimming has had its ups and downs, but one positive is that swimming is actually one of the safest sports to participate in during the pandemic. For example, chlorine (the chemicals in the pool) can kill several germs, bacteria and viruses including COVID-19.

Hackensack Meridian Health states, "When the proper amount of chlorine is added to pool water, it kills germs, including viruses."

Swimming facilities also have ventilation systems, proving that the Coronavirus is not easily spread in swimming facilities! This helps many feel safe, while also allowing them to have some fun in the pool!



Even with the pandemic, attending swim practices (and exercising in general) has definitely improved my mood. Practicing sports can not only improve our bodies, but also our minds. Turo Gereltod

you will have to make. Next is the cheesecake. I recommend making this a day before you make the rest of the cake:

Four 8-ounce blocks (904g) full-fat cream cheese, softened to room temperature  
 1cup (200g) granulated sugar  
 1 cup (240g) full-fat sour cream, at room temperature  
 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice (optional but recommended)  
 3 large eggs, at room temperature

Now here is the recipe:

Adjust the oven rack to the lower-middle position and preheat the oven to 350°F (177°C).

Prepare the simple water bath (see note): Watch my video tutorial above; the visual guide will assist you in this step! Boil a pot of water. You need 1 inch of water in your roasting pan for the water bath, so make sure you boil enough. I use an entire kettle of hot water. As the water is heating up, wrap the aluminum foil around the springform pan. Pour the cheesecake batter on top of the crust. Use a rubber spatula or spoon to smooth it into an even layer. Place the pan inside of a large roasting pan. Carefully pour the hot water inside of the pan and place in the oven. (Or you can place the roasting pan in the oven first, then pour the hot water in. Whichever is easier for you.)

(Note: if you notice the cheesecake browning too quickly on top, tent it with aluminum foil halfway through baking.) Bake cheesecake for 55-70 minutes or until the center is almost set. When it's done, the center of the cheesecake will slightly wobble if you gently shake the pan. Turn the oven off and open the oven door slightly. Let the cheesecake sit in the oven in the water bath as it cools down for 1 hour. Remove from the oven and water bath, then cool cheesecake completely uncovered at room temperature. Then cover and refrigerate the cheesecake for at least 4 hours or overnight.

Use a knife to loosen the chilled cheesecake from the rim of the springform pan, then remove the rim. Using a clean sharp knife, cut into slices for serving. For neat slices, wipe the knife clean and dip into warm water between each slice. Serve cheesecake with desired toppings. Cover and store leftover cheesecake in



ESMS has gone through more change than you think

In the mid 1990's East Side Middle School was founded. ESMS shared the building with PS 185, taking over only the 4th floor, getting the short end of the stick.

Ms. Grippo, an original 6th grade Earth Science teacher, has been teaching at ESMS for over 20 years! She remembers when there were no science classrooms and no library at ESMS.

Students back then came to ESMS from all five boroughs. During the spring and summer, every classroom was blistering hot, students sat sweating with no air conditioning.

In 2003, when Mr. Getz became principal at ESMS, there were only 15 teachers. Our school had a tiny, cramped gym with padded columns in the middle of the basketball court. It was easy to run backwards into them and injure yourself. The kindergarteners from PS 158 got the big gym in the school when they could have easily fit in the smaller gym that our school had to use. Everyone was squeezed in the tight small gym with ceilings low, so you couldn't arc a shot or play volleyball.

In 2010, ESMS - and its community - moved to a location on 93 Street. Due to this transition, sports teams began to develop. Soon after, ESMS moved yet again, but to the present day location that we all love and know. Basketball was coached by regular teachers and Mr. Getz's friend from Yugoslavia was the soccer team coach.

Eight years ago, ESMS began to work with Manhattan Youth. Sports teams began to flourish, and many programs, such as

claimed, "It's always good to be mentally and physically healthy. I think a way to stay positive during the pandemic is to find a hobby and create friends whether you live in the same area or online."

Participating in sports is definitely a fun way to destress after a long day of online school. Exercise can also have a big impact on our well-being. Turo said, "Swimming has improved my well-being by giving me more confidence and by keeping me in shape." From personal experience, the adrenaline (energy rush) I get from exercising helps me feel more motivated to complete things like school work.

During the pandemic, it's best to stay positive and I like to do that by exercising. I feel that seeing my friends and doing things I enjoy gives me both a better mood and more energy. Swimming has definitely helped me keep my mind off of all the negative things that have happened recently. It's always great to get to see my friends while also doing an activity that I love. Chuck Norris once said, "A lot of times people look at the negative side of what they feel they can't do. I always look on the positive side of what I can do."

Sources: <https://www.sportsrec.com/olympic-swimmer-train-4759810.html>  
<https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/Health/U/2020/06/08/does-chlorine-kill-coronavirus/>

Photo Credit:  
<https://www.asphaltgreen.org/ues/membership>

## One Year Of COVID-19

By: Anna Rodriguez

Where do I start? Where to begin? How are you supposed to describe the past year when all you have wanted to do was forget that it ever happened? I guess I have to start somewhere, so let's go back to the very beginning, March 2020.

The last day of completely in-person school; whether you were in 6th, 7th or 8th grade. It was all the same. You left the classroom that day, thinking things were normal, that you would come back. Then you were told that you weren't going back. That you likely wouldn't be back till next year. Perhaps you thought it would be over soon. Perhaps you thought it would

the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

The next step is the strawberry filling that goes in between the cakes. Here are the ingredients:

1 cup water  
 3 tablespoons cornstarch  
 2 ½ cups frozen strawberries, thawed and cut into bite size pieces  
 ¾ cup white sugar

Here now is the recipe:

Whisk water and cornstarch together in a large saucepan.

Stir strawberries and sugar into the water.

Cook strawberry mixture over medium heat until thick, about 10 minutes.

Allow to cool completely before use.

Her are the ingredients and recipe for the lemon frosting:

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened

¼ cup butter

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 teaspoons lemon zest

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

5 cups confectioners' sugar

Beat cream cheese, butter, lemon juice, lemon rind, and vanilla together until smooth and fluffy. Add confectioners' sugar in 2 additions. Beat until creamy.

Add more icing sugar or juice as needed for easy spreading. Makes about 3 2/3 cups.

Now you have to build the cake. Lay a strawberry cake onto the dish that you will want to serve the whole cake on. Now take part of your strawberry filling and spread it generously around the top of the cake. Now take your cheesecake and put it on top of the strawberry filling. Now take the rest of the filling and spread it on top of the cheesecake. Now take the last strawberry cake and put it on the top. Now spread the frosting to cover all over the cake and cover it completely. Now you are done and can eat your masterpiece. This cake is a perfect birthday cake but this cake is great for anything as well. Have fun!

debate, robotics, and theater, were added to the growing list of ESMS extra-curricular activities. With the addition of these great programs, more and more students were attracted to the opportunities that ESMS had to offer. The number of students increased from about 360 students to approximately 450 students. An increase in students means that there is a need for added teaching staff. Our amazing ESMS staff added educational programs, such as Resilience, Anti-Bullying, Sexual Health, Healthy Relationships, Mindfulness, Financial Literacy and more. ESMS also added its weekly Skype Kenya program, which had students communicating once a week with students in ESMS's sister school in Kibera, Kenya.

Isn't it incredible how much has changed overtime? Now ESMS has a vast gym for practically any sport and there are many after school programs that provide lots of opportunities for kids and teachers. All this has brought more than a hundred kids into this school, plus many amazing teachers. ESMS has grown into a beautiful, helpful place, and is welcoming to all people.

Photo Credit: insideschools.org

## Claude's Questions

By: Chloe Comisarow and Gemma Valentine-Anderson

Many students and faculty members may know Claude, 601's class tortoise. However, there is more to Claude than meets the eye. Recently, class 601 discovered that Claude just so happens to be full of questions. Every day, the class will receive a letter in the morning with about three questions in each letter. Together, the students that are in the classroom will answer the questions individually or together.

### About Claude

Claude is a desert tortoise, though some would be under the impression that he is a turtle. However, once you look closely, you'll notice that Claude has a thick shell, so he isn't a turtle, since turtles have thinner shells.

be resolved quickly. Perhaps you knew that this was only the beginning.

Slowly the months ticked by like a grandfather clock that went way too slow. You learned about how there was a virus sweeping through the world, claiming victims by the thousands. You endured the first months of remote school, endured learning to wear a mask and endured life with nothing to do.

Maybe you found a way to keep yourself in high spirits or you kind of just breezed through adapting to the "new normal." Whichever the way, you all felt the change in the world. You didn't know when it would end or even if it would end but you knew that the world would never be the same.

The summer came and went, the stifling hot days fading into the crisp fall and you wondered "am I going back to school? Are things going to change?" But deep down inside, you knew that nothing was changing, not for a long time. So you continued with your remote learning, meeting new friends or reconnecting with the old.

And then, "yes!" we are going back to school, finally seeing those we haven't seen or never met. If not every day then some days and we can enjoy the little bit of normal that we got. For a few weeks. Then the little taste of the life we once had was snatched away again, like giving a baby a lollipop and then taking it away, pushing us back to the life of quarantine.

Again we continued our remote learning, slowly losing all hope of this being over. But although it wasn't over, and hope was beginning to bloom. Vaccines to protect against the deadly virus were being tested and the accuracy was high. Perhaps now an end is in sight.

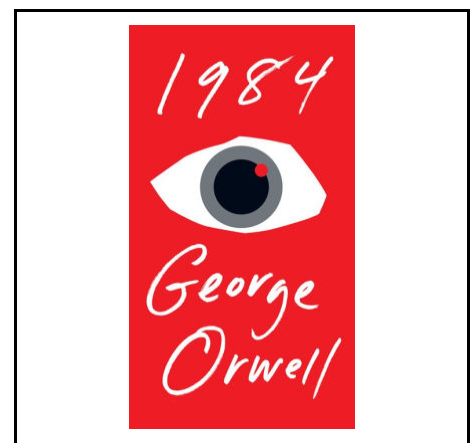
Now here we are, April 2021 about one year from when this started, but so much has changed. Our life has been torn apart and then pieced haphazardly back together. Finally there is a light at the end of the never-ending darkness. This will end. It will be over. Normal may not come for a while but we are on that path. The storm we have been forced to endure is ending and there are clear skies ahead.

## ESMS Book Recommendations

By: Julian Fernandez Sasso

### 1984 by George Orwell (1949)

1984 follows Winston Smith, a normal worker in the outer party for Big Brother, except he has a secret. Winston hates Big Brother and everything it stands for. Will this one man be able to navigate and survive in the totalitarian world that is Oceania? Similar to Animal Farm, Orwell wanted to show what power and greed can do to our world. Here he takes a much more realistic view to the world of deception and greed by showing it through human eyes. Although sometimes unbelievable, 1984 shows the lust for power and control that some people have. 1984 was a big eye opener to people when it was published, as they saw how superpowers can rise and control. I give this book a 10/10 for its great story and interesting concepts. In the year 1984, four million copies of the book were sold and a movie was made in the same year. 1984 became an instant classic and is still widely respected today. Sadly, this was one of Orwell's last books as he died January 21st, 1950 from complications caused by tuberculosis.



### Asterix Series by Rene Goscinny and Alberto Underzo

Asterix by Rene Goscinny and Alberto Underzo is a collection of 36 comics written between 1959 and 2015. The books follow two Gauls, Asterix and Obelix, living during Julius Caesar's era in Armorica. They've defied Roman

Though you might not know it, Claude is extremely smart. During feeding time, he knows exactly who will be feeding him and when he's hungry. He makes sure others are aware by banging against his tank. Sometimes, because Claude is so restless, Ms. Grippo will have to take him out of his tank and let him expend some energy by roaming the classroom. Of course, just for safety precautions, anybody who touches Claude will be wearing disposable gloves in order to prevent themselves from contracting salmonella\*.

### Questions

Due to the recent Grammy Awards, Claude has been wondering why he was never nominated for a Grammy. Confused, he decided to ask the class. In the letter, it asks, "Dear Reptiles, can you explain to me why I have never been nominated for a Grammy?" 601 was unsure about how to respond to this question, since they assumed that only humans could be nominated for the Grammys. After a few moments of brainstorming, one of the students suggested that Claude should consider writing a song.

After listening to the Beatles', *All You Need Is Love*, Claude wondered what exactly is rock and roll. In his letter, he asks, "Is it about igneous rocks? Is that where rock and roll comes from, volcanoes?" The class then answers that rock and roll is actually just a form of music, igneous rocks are something completely different.

### Claude's Questions

Claude's Questions is more than just answering his questions. It's all about students being able to take their minds off anything they're stressed about and just have fun.

In order to learn more about Claude's questions, I interviewed Skylar Borkowsky from class 601, who has been in in-person while answering Claude's questions. "It's a fun activity to do in the morning with the whole class. Everyone can have fun and socialize while doing it," she said. "Especially during the pandemic, answering Claude's questions has been a great way to get the day started." By answering Claude's questions, the students are able to relax and take their mind off things.

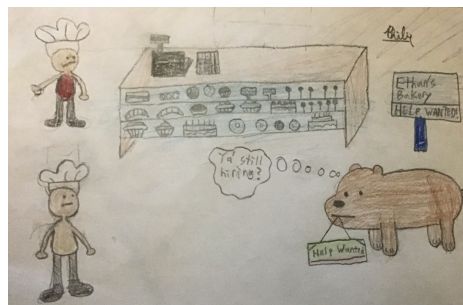
Life should be resolved in the coming months and we will continue but this year has shaped us, defined us, remade us. We are better for it.

**"Don't confuse your path with your destination. Just because it's stormy now doesn't mean you aren't headed for sunshine." – Unknown**

## The ESMS Cartoon Caption Submission

By: Philip Jow

This is the ESMS Cartoon Caption Submission. Every month, there will be a new cartoon, and you, the reader, will be able to submit a funny caption for the image. You can send it to [jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net](mailto:jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net) for your caption to be shown in the next issue!



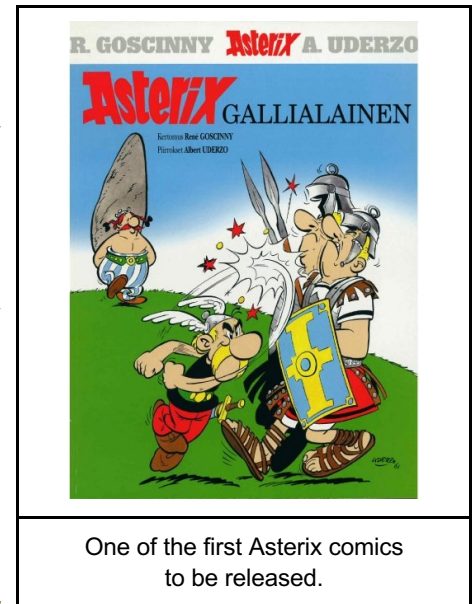
I made and thought of the image above. The idea for a cartoon caption contest came completely from the New Yorker magazine. I give full credit for the contest idea to the New Yorker. On the back page of every New Yorker magazine, there are cartoons with a blank caption. People from around the country try to make a funny caption for a cartoon. If they win, it is printed in the next New Yorker magazine.

### WINNER OF THE CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST FOR TIGER TIMES ISSUE 18:



**"My kids wanted him during Coronavirus."**

conquest for years by using their magic potion which gives them unlimited strength and energy. The books follow their journeys to foreign lands, and the Roman's plans to thwart them and take over the village.



Although it might sound childish, these stories are great for people of all ages. I've personally read these books multiple times and have enjoyed every one of them. In 1959, Rene and Alberto released the first book in France *Asterix, the Gaul*. It was a great success and the duo released more and more as time passed. Sadly, in 1977, Rene Goscinny passed away at the age of 51 from cardiac arrest. Alberto continued releasing books until he retired in 2011. Alberto Underzo passed away just under a year ago on March 24, 2020. The duo created two lovable characters that would be loved for generations. May they rest in peace.

Sources: The New Yorker, britannica.com

Photo Credits: (top) Barnes and Noble (bottom) [asterix.com](http://asterix.com)

To go even further, I also interviewed Liya Choi, also from class 601, but instead of being in hybrid, she is fully remote. "It's a fun activity and I'm sure it's something a lot of people can look forward to," she says. Despite not being able to reach those online, Claude's Questions still manages to be a fun activity.

\*Salmonella is a bacteria that can normally be found in food, but you can contract it by touching an infected animal or their feces. To learn more about Salmonella, go to:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/index.html>

## Inspirational People

By: Siroos Pasdar

### Bryan Stevenson



Bryan Stevenson is a widely acclaimed lawyer who founded the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI). The Equal Justice Initiative is a non-profit organization that represents people who were wrongly accused in court, facing the death penalty, abused in prisons or are facing excessive punishment. They started out by fighting for people facing the death penalty. Over time, as a result of exposure to other people facing injustices, the EJI started branching out to other clients. Additionally, the EJI started questioning life without parole to children as unconstitutional. In 2005, the U.S. Supreme Court banned the execution of children. On March 24, Virginia became the first Southern state to abolish the death penalty. This is a huge shift for them as Virginia has executed the most people in its past than every other state. The difference Bryan Stevenson has made in the U.S. Justice System by representing people and questioning unconstitutional acts has been heard everywhere. To learn more about EJI, you can watch this video: <https://eji.org/about/> and visit their website here: <https://eji.org>

"Each of us is more than the worst thing we've ever done." - **Bryan Stevenson**

Sources: nytimes.com, cnn.com, eji.org  
 Photo Credit: balitmoresun.com

## Bits And Pieces

By: Siroos Pasdar

- Two mass shootings in less than a week have left the country scarred.
  - A shooting in a spa in Atlanta left 8 dead.
  - Just six days after, on March 22, another person opened fire in a grocery store in Boulder, Colorado, leaving 10 people dead, including fallen police officer Eric Talley.
- A cargo ship blocked the Suez Canal, a vital passage which over 50 cargo ships travel through every day.
  - It blocked more than a hundred vessels.
- Virginia has abolished the death penalty, becoming the first Southern state to do so.
  - Virginia has executed the most people in the United States.
- There is now a border crisis amid a surge in border crossings.
- President Joe Biden hosted his first news conference.

Sources: cnn.com, nytimes.com, theatlantic.com, bbc.com