

The Tiger Times

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20TH EDITION

Email jacob.abroon@esmsnyc.net
to join or contribute to the Tiger Times!

See this Tiger Times Issue for the all-new page of Unanswerable Questions, a poll showing how many students at ESMS come from each elementary school, a description of aquaponics, reasons why reading is good for you, an overview of COVID-19 vaccine, a description of American Sign Language, an overview of female representation in the media, a description of No Name Calling Week, the ESMS Book Recommendations Page, the ESMS Debate Page, the ESMS Cartoon Caption Contest, the ESMS Theme of the Month, and much, much more!

April
2021

Does the Internet Make Us Smarter?

By: Jacob Abroon

How far is the Moon from Earth? How many original songs has Taylor Swift made in her adult life? What was the worldwide box office earnings for *Star Wars: A New Hope*? Odds are that you probably don't know the answers to any of these questions. If someone asked you any of these questions, you first thought would most likely be, "I'll Google it," or maybe, "I'll look it up." Any and all information one would need to know can be found on the internet. From the distance between the Earth and the Moon to the amount of hearts an octopus has, someone can find the answers to nearly all of their questions on the internet. Searching the internet for an answer to a question has become so common, that the word, "Google," is a verb that is defined as, "search for information about (someone or something) on the internet using the search engine Google," according to Oxford Languages. Of course, the internet has helped society tremendously for years. However, many of the disadvantages to having access to



No Name Calling Week

By: Dale Heller

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 20.2% of students, meaning approximately one in five, report being bullied. Now, think about how many groups of five are in your class, your grade, your school, your neighborhood. It really adds up. That estimation does not include those who are the subject of bullying but do not report it. However, it does not have to be this way. In order to understand how to prevent bullying, let's dissect what "bullying" really means.

Bullying: Repeated aggressive behavior that makes the target feel uncomfortable and/or unsafe. It can be online or

ASL: A Language Like No Other

By: Anna Hsu

American Sign Language, or ASL, brings learning a new language to another level. And no, not because of the pronunciation. American Sign Language consists not of verbal communication, but hand signs. American Sign Language is used by the deaf community and it is the third most commonly used language! ASL has its own rules, and even its own alphabet! There are three versions of sign language: Pidgin Signed English (PSE), Signed Exact English (SEE), and American Sign Language (ASL). Pidgin Signed Language is most commonly used, but the vocabulary is based on ASL. Students may not realize it, but American Sign Language is even used in classrooms!



such an enormous amount of information are hiding in plain sight.

Our access to the internet has had a clear, negative impact on our knowledge. You may ask, “how could the internet have negatively impacted our knowledge? Every day we have access to more and more knowledge than people 60 years ago.” However, while we may have access to more information, we do not *know* more information. This is an important comparison, however one that is overlooked by many. For example, refer back to one of the questions asked in the beginning of this article. One may not know the distance between the Moon and the Earth, but all it takes is a simple internet search. If one was asked that same question a week later, they probably would not know the answer. Why? The internet has given us a sense of permanence.

When someone Googles something on the internet, they know it will always be there. Whether they forget one hour later or 2 years later, a person knows that if the internet will always have the answer. Therefore, why would someone bother to *know* something if the internet can provide them with the answer? One has access to the internet in nearly every populated area, so what would be the point in knowing something? Unfortunately, this mindset has been used many times thanks to the internet.

As stated previously, the internet gives us all of the answers we need about the world. From the amount of cells in the human body to the amount of stars in the known universe, the internet can give us the answer. Clearly, this is a problem. How so? If someone were to be asked a series of questions without using the internet, for example, “how many oceans are on the planet?” or perhaps, “what is the easternmost state in the US?” many would have trouble answering, while 60 years ago, before the internet was established, the answers would not be as difficult to answer. This would be because people 60 years ago would *need* to retain more knowledge than most do today.

Understanding that the internet knows everything, millions of people choose to rely heavily on the internet. This is because of the permanence of the internet, as

emotional harassment, physical violence, negative labeling, or prejudice. Of course, there are more types of bullying, but these are the kinds that are specifically addressed during No Name Calling Week.

But what is No Name Calling Week? Maybe it sounds familiar to you because you have participated in it in previous years. Maybe it’s because you read *The Misfits*, by James Howe. Or maybe you have never heard of the term and are interested in learning more about it. No matter the circumstances, we will be exploring No Name Calling Week’s origin, purpose, and much more!

Let’s start from the beginning: *The Misfits* by James Howe. The book, which you may have read as your sixth grade summer assignment, centers around a group of four friends: Bobby, Addie, Skeezie, and Joe. They are called names and taunted because of what makes them different. To combat this, they initiate a school-wide event called, you guessed it, No Name Calling Week. They begin to see a positive difference in how they are treated by their peers because of the week focused on anti-bullying.

Schools all around the country have adopted the tradition of having a No Name Calling Week, including ESMS. This year, No Name Calling Week was from April 26th to May 3rd. During homeroom, students participated in a variety of activities that educated them about bullying.

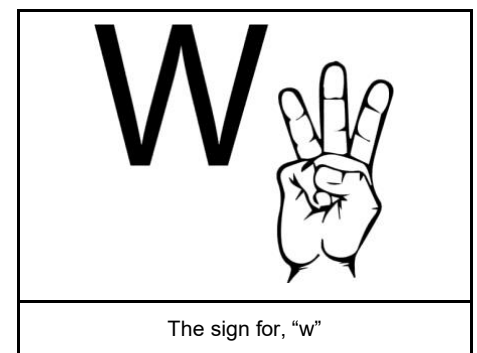
Monday served as an introduction to No Name Calling Week. Students watched a video on what bullying is and had a class discussion about topics like the harmful effects of bullying, strategies that can be used to prevent bullying, and different types of bullying.

Tuesday focused on cyberbullying, a growing issue in an increasingly digital world. Students participated in an interactive online story that had them decide what their character would do when faced with multiple choices, some involving cyberbullying, others preventing it.

Thursday was devoted to shifting from negative labelling to positive labelling.

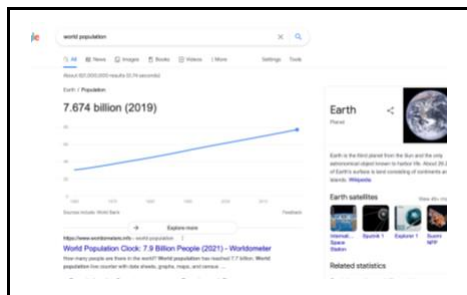
A common misconception is that ASL is universal. However, in different places, sign language can be different. American Sign Language can be both difficult as well as easy to understand. It uses shapes and movements to better understand what each sign means. For example, for yes, take an upright fist and move it up and down. This is like the nodding of a head. ASL can be a fun new language to learn during the pandemic. There are many videos and websites including one from Signed With Heart, where you can learn to spell your name (See this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiS1dbsxP-Q>). Just like any other language, ASL can be difficult to learn at first, but with practice the signs can come easily. For instance, interpreters are able to sign extremely quickly in order to keep up what is said in English!

American Sign Language is quick and easy to learn. One sign can convey an entire sentence! ASL is even used in some classrooms. For example, students sign “w” if they need to grab a drink of water or use a sign if they need to use the restroom. This makes it easier for teachers and students, because it doesn’t disrupt the class. According to *Lead With Languages*, “Studying ASL promotes better awareness of and sensitivity to the deaf and hard of hearing community.” Learning ASL can help many feel welcome across all places.



stated before. Knowing you can always go back to your search history, or just look at the pages you bookmarked, people start to know less and less. Therefore, if someone were in a situation where they need to use their own knowledge, it would be very difficult.

However, the disadvantage does not stop there. Many have explained the difference between knowing and understanding, and the internet has clearly shown that. *Knowing* that, for instance, about 113 million people live on the East Coast, does not explain *why* so many people live in the same area, thus causing people to have a lower understanding of where humans colonize. Knowing that there is water pollution does not explain why companies have even chosen to harm water. Googling the population of the East Coast allows someone to *know* something for a period of time, but understanding *why* is something the internet struggles to provide. With our extreme reliance on the internet, people have chosen to not bother to investigate *why*, but just know, which, as described, might not last long either. The ability to understand information is one that is necessary in jobs, everyday life, college, etc., and yet the internet is depriving many of this skill.



We have all been taught the importance of books. They are what teach people history, mathematics, science, engineering, and more. While books are not as updated as the internet is as each day passes, books, non-fiction books specifically, provide us with insights and knowledge that cannot be found anywhere else. However, with the internet becoming more and more popular every day, books are starting to gradually become less and less common. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, book sales in late 2020 were down 28.8% when compared to 2019.

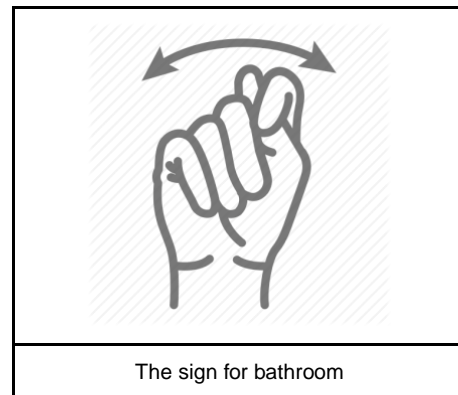
Students created virtual post-it notes for themselves and five other students that acknowledged admirable traits in their and others' personalities. To add substance to the compliments, students provided an example of how the designated person fit the positive description. They had the option to leave the compliments anonymous or to sign their name.

Friday's task was learning about prejudice or identity-based bullying. Prejudice/identity-based bullying means bullying because of one's race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, physical appearance, etc. Students were given scenarios that involved prejudice or identity-based bullying and were instructed to analyze what part of the subject's identity was being targeted, what actions could be taken by those surrounding the subject, and how the subject feels.

The next Monday was the last day of No Name Calling Week. Its activity took into account everything students learned during the week and had them create a class contract with "I will..." statements.

Why are we having students partake in these activities? What is the value of it? The purpose of No Name Calling Week is to educate students about how to end bullying. In addition, it is to ensure that students are conscious of the profound affect their actions and words have on others, and the ways in which what they say and do can be perceived. Clarissa Kunizaki, a member of the No Name Calling Week Committee in the Student Council, said it best. She said, "I think NNCW [No Name Calling Week] is valuable to students because a lot of people may not understand the impact of their words on others, whether their intention was bad, and NNCW helps them recognize that."

A critical thing to remember is that even though No Name Calling Week is only five days-worth of activities, the lessons learned during it should be kept in mind no matter time or place. Not only should you remember what you learned, you should also take some time to impart this new knowledge to those around you.



Even some famous celebrities use American Sign Language. Marlee Matlin is an actress, author, and deaf activist. She won the academy award in 1987 after performing in *Children of a Lesser God*. Nyle DiMarco is also an actor and deaf activist, as well as a model. According to *Deaf Unity*, "In 2016, he launched the 'Nyle DiMarco Foundation' a non-profit organisation that provides access to resources for deaf children and their families." He has also won season 22 of *America's Next Top Model* and season 22 of *Dancing With the Stars*. Now people may be wondering how he had participated in *Dancing With the Stars* without hearing the music. In an interview with *Inside Edition* his partner Peta Murgatroyd revealed that they stayed on beat using, "lots of little tricks that we do and lots little hand signals." ASL has helped many accomplish their goals, even if they can't hear things many of us can. There are many people who use ASL throughout their daily lives, celebrity or not.

Hearing is something many people haven't really thought about. It is part of our everyday life and it's important to acknowledge that not all of us are granted with sound. That is what's special about American Sign Language; it's able to give hard of hearing or deaf people a similar experience that we have. With ASL, many are able to convey emotions without being able to hear tone or music. During these times, it's important to welcome everyone, even if they may be a little different. Besides, words come from our brain and heart, not just the sound.

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<https://signsoflifeasl.wordpress.com/2013/02/27/3-forms-of-sign-language-asl-vs-pse-vs-see/#:~:text=There%20are%20three%20major%20>

Why read a 400-page book about electrical engineering when you can simply search up the information that you need to know on the internet? Once again, this easy mindset has been adopted by millions worldwide, and that has one clear yet often ignored effect: the decreased need for non-fiction books. The internet provides us with information that in some cases, cannot be found anywhere else, which causes people to abandon non-fiction books. If you want to know what the fastest land animal is, would you rather read a 100 page book about the anatomy of the fastest animals and see which one is the fastest, or would you simply look up, "fastest land animal"? Most people would choose the latter for obvious reasons. But if the internet can provide people with immediate and clear information, why is it such a tragedy that it is replacing non-fiction books?

One of the main reasons why non-fiction books are so important, and why it should be noted that they are starting to lose value due to the internet, is that books explain knowledge in ways that Wikipedia cannot. Non-fiction books can help explain, for example, what makes a cheetah so fast, by analyzing all of the body parts of a cheetah in detail. If someone were to do research on their own, in order to completely understand what makes a cheetah so fast, a book would be the best and only option. A book can explain how muscles in a cheetah's legs are the best ones for reach speeds as fast as cars normally travel. In order to completely understand the theory of evolution, a book would be the best option. What do all of these examples have in common? Books allow readers to understand information.

As detailed multiple times, understanding information is one of the most valuable skills. As Albert Einstein famously said, "any fool can know. The point is to understand." Books provide people with a wealth of understanding that cannot be found on the internet, yet the internet is starting to make non-fiction books less and less prominent.

Of course, the internet has helped us in more ways than we can count. Some can argue that people today are in fact smarter than people before the internet, because the latter group did not have as much access to knowledge as we do today.



The Misfits, written by James Howe, is the inspiration for No Name Calling Week

Photo Credit: books.simonandschuster.com

Are you interested in learning about inspirational and powerful women in history?

Then visit the Womenaki website at www.campwomenaki.com. Hellen Keller, Harriet Tubman, Eleanor Roosevelt, and more are featured here! From detailed descriptions of powerful women to fun arts and crafts, [Womenaki](http://www.campwomenaki.com) has it all!

Different Genres Of Books

By: Liya Choi and Chloe Comisarow

Reading is one of the most educational yet enjoyable pastimes. What makes reading so different compared to other fun yet educational activities is that there are hundreds of genres that you can choose from. Whether you want to read about the thrilling adventures of a boy who lives in a world full of wizards, witches, and magic, or read about crocodiles, there are countless genres to choose from.

Fiction and Nonfiction

In reading, it seems like there are two main categories, fiction and nonfiction. When you read fiction, it's like stepping into a world unlike the world we currently live in. You're taking the perspective of

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Aquaponics

By: Matthew Huang

Have you ever wondered how you could be more sustainable? Well, aquaponics is one easy way to be sustainable. In this article, you will learn about what it is, why it is sustainable, and more.

So, what is aquaponics? Aquaponics is a way of growing plants and raising fish together. The fish's holding container is connected to a place where the plants can grow. The ammonia the fish produces from excreting waste helps fertilize the plants. This mimics a natural ecosystem. There is a debate on where aquaponics originated. According to allaquaponics.com, "Its exact origin is a debate until now, with two major branches of thought. The first looks back at the Aztecs in 1000 AD who grew their plants on rafts on the lakes' surfaces. The Aztecs worked out a system of artificial agricultural islands called 'chinampas.' They used the fish waste to fertilize their crops and were able to grow squash, maize and other crops. The second branch argues that early aquaponics systems were used in South China, Indonesia and Thailand. They grew rice in fields with fish and other aquatic animals."

However, is having access to information the same thing as knowing that amount of information? The decision is up to you. It is up to you to decide what you think the effects of the internet will be, and how it will impact you.



Are the effects of Google as positive as you think?

Photo Credit (bottom): wikipedia.org



The Future Of Broadway

By: Camille D'Silva

When people think of "Broadway", they don't typically think of Broadway Avenue. That's because Broadway has become synonymous with the theatrical performances which are presented in the 41 professional theatres located in the Theater District and Lincoln Center along Broadway Avenue, in Midtown Manhattan. There have been over 300 productions on Broadway in its over 250 years of existence. To be able to perform on a Broadway stage is an incredible honor, and many people aspire to perform in one of these shows, or even have the privilege of watching one.

children going into a closet, only to find yourself in a kingdom called Narnia. When you read nonfiction, you're slowly gaining more knowledge. Nonfiction books can be all about a certain place in the world, or even about a battle that happened centuries ago.

Fantasy and Mystery

One genre categorized under fiction is fantasy. This is one of the most popular genres and there's a good reason, too. It is exciting and gives a certain thrill to reading it. Reading a book from a magical perspective and being pulled into a whole different world is what makes fantasy, fantasy. You could be anywhere and any place in the world. When reading fantasy, you're not on Earth anymore. Now, you're in Panem, and you're being selected for the Hunger Games. A few great fantasy books would be *The Unwanteds* by Lisa McMann, *Harry Potter* by J.K. Rowling, *Percy Jackson* by Rick Riordan, and *The Skull of Truth* by Bruce Coville.

Another genre categorized under fiction is mystery. While fantasy is all about traveling to a whole new world, mystery is different. In a mystery book, a crime has been committed, and there are multiple suspects that seem suspicious, each with their own motive for committing the crime. As you progress, suspense and tension gradually piles up, and once most of the suspects have been eliminated or killed, the true villain is revealed.

Whether it be about a criminal escaping from police officers or a magical land where dragons live, fiction is a great way to escape from reality.

Biographies, Autobiographies, and Memoirs

Nonfiction is a great genre when it comes to learning new things. There are many different ways to learn about people, historical events, or countries. If you want to learn about something, you can always pick up a book from the nonfiction section.

An autobiography is an example of a nonfiction book. It's about a person's life and the author is the actual person. Biographies are the same thing, except the author is someone else and researches the person's life to write the book. A book series that is great for

Aquaponics was further developed by people in the 1980s. Dr. McMurtry and Professor Sanders of North Carolina State University were some of the people who did research on aquaponics. According to thelifeaquaponic.wordpress.com, "Their research introduced the idea of separate grow beds (they used sand as their growth media), and popularized the use of tilapia, which is still the most widely used fish in aquaponics today. This was the most probably the first closed-loop aquaponics system: meaning that it did not rely on external factors to function (although technically fish food was required)." Later on, aquaponics became known worldwide and became both a hobby and a commercial force.



An example of a home aquaponics system

Aquaponics, like all things, has advantages and disadvantages. Some advantages of aquaponics over traditional soil gardening are that aquaponics requires less hard work like digging and eliminates soil related problems such as not having enough nutrients in the soil. Furthermore, aquaponics doesn't need a lot of expensive, man-made nutrients like hydroponics and doesn't have high levels of ammonia (a chemical compound toxic to fish) in the water like in recirculating aquaculture. Even better, aquaponics doesn't only produce one product, it produces two: fish as well as fruits and vegetables and also saves water and land - it uses 90% less than regular agriculture.

Some of the major disadvantages of aquaponics include the initial cost, the high consumption of electricity, and the fact that some plants aren't available for the method.

So, why does this even matter to you, a middle schooler living in New York City? Well, aquaponics is one way you can

This has become impossible in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Broadway closed its doors on March 12th, 2020, and hasn't reopened since. Several productions have been postponed as a result the pandemic and closure stretched on far past the original reopening date of April 12, 2020. These shows include the highly anticipated Hugh Jackman and Sutton Foster musical, *The Music Man*, *Flying Over Sunset*, *MJ* (a musical on the late King of Pop, Michael Jackson), and several other musicals that didn't get to begin their run. Shows have also been canceled altogether, such as *Mean Girls*, *Beetlejuice*, *Frozen*, and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*. Even the Tony Awards, which recognize excellence in Broadway shows, were postponed last year, and have been forced to move to an all virtual format for their 2021 ceremony. Though voting opened in late March of this year, there is no definitive date of when the ceremony will actually happen.

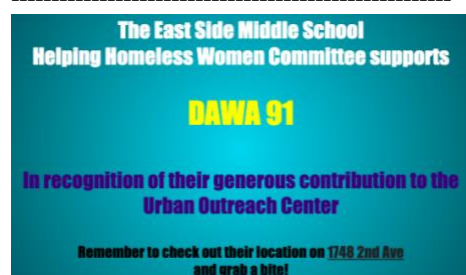
However, some progress has started to be made. As of April 2nd, 2021, ticketed live performances have returned to NYC. Some off-Broadway performances have even been able to start performing again, like *The Office! A Musical Parody*, which was actually the first musical to reopen in Time Square. Other non-Broadway performances have also started running, like *Blindness*. Audiences sit in pods of two as they wear headphones and listen to a recording, which tells the story of the world being overcome by an epidemic of sight loss. COVID-19 may have brought changes to the theatre, but these shows are still constantly selling out, with the people of New York aching to get back to normal and see their favorite shows in live theatre.

When will this actually happen to Broadway, though? With the pandemic going on, everything is tentative at the moment. Broadway will remain shut until May 30th of this year, so ideally, it would be back in business by June. However, even with the government working on getting Broadway reopened, it will probably be reopening by this fall, according to Dr. Fauci, the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the chief medical advisor to the president. He said on March 23rd that if enough people get vaccinated and if we

biographies is the *Who Was?* series. There are also multiple autobiographies such as *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Memoirs are similar except it must be one event that changed the author's life. For example, it could be about when somebody went on a field trip to an amusement park. At the amusement park, they were too frightened to go on one of the scariest rides. However, they were able to muster up the courage to do so. Even if the event is unimportant, in a memoir, there is always a hidden meaning to that event.

Reading has a wide variety of genres to choose from and it's hard to become bored of one genre. Each author has their own way of writing and you'll never run out of books to read. Fiction is a great way to relax or get energized. It is very engaging and can make you get lost in it for quite some time. Nonfiction needs a bit more focus, but if you enjoy what you are reading, a few hours can feel like a couple of minutes. Not only that, genres like historical fiction can teach you about what life was like a long time ago but at the same time entertain you by making it feel like you time traveled. In conclusion, reading is a great way to pass time and it can never hurt to read different genres instead of what you are used to.



Where Did ESMS's 6th Graders Go To Elementary School?

By: Maeve Redmond

Did you ever wonder where kids who are new to East Side Middle School went to elementary school? I surveyed class

become more sustainable. Aquaponics enables you to save water while producing food for yourself and/or others. This reduces the amount of carbon dioxide that is put into the atmosphere because you wouldn't have to get your food from far away, which requires many vehicles. Furthermore, aquaponics produces food faster – 25% faster than traditional agriculture and doesn't require any man-made fertilizer or plant food. All in all, if you are a person who wants to be more sustainable and likes growing things, aquaponics is a good choice for you.

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 Photo Credit: modernfarmer.com

Female Representation In The Media

By: Ahana Chandra

Have you ever wondered why the character is female in many cleaning product commercials? Or why your favorite song may be biased against the female community? Well, it all has to do with female representation in the media. Female representation has evolved over the years, but there are still many areas to improve on. The media covers advertisement, music, films, and much more. And in each of these categories, the female community is represented in different ways. This article will explore these ways in which females are portrayed and why they matter.

Students at ESMS may remember learning about representation in math and what it means to have an unbiased sample when conducting an experiment. In many ways, representation in the media is very similar. Choosing to be unbiased in a film, commercial, or musical piece can impact the message sent to the audience, or those on the receiving end of these branches of media. However, many branches of media do not choose to be unbiased, or do not realize they are being biased at all. A lot of media is biased when it comes to representing females specifically.

are careful with reopening, this could definitely happen. Some are predicting that *Hamilton*, the famous musical by Lin Manuel Miranda, will be the first to give a performance, a socially distanced one on July 4th. Nothing is guaranteed, but as long as we adhere to guidelines, Broadway could be back, with the audience socially distanced and masked, in just a few months.

In the meantime, here's what we can do to help Broadway reopen faster, so that we can get back to watching shows, and the cast and crew can return to work. Since a significant portion of the people need to be vaccinated in order for Broadway to reopen, we should do our part by encouraging people to schedule vaccination appointments. You can do so at this link: <https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/>. As always, continue to wear masks and practice social distancing. Reinforcing these rules will help Broadway open sooner, and help the aforementioned cast and crew, who have not had work since March of last year, come back at last. Also, donations can be made to entertainment industry charities to help the people who are on Broadway (and currently are unemployed and struggling). Broadway's doors have been closed for too long, and it has been hurting those who work there. It is up to us to ensure that those doors open again, and stay open.

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Photo Credit: townandcountrymag.com

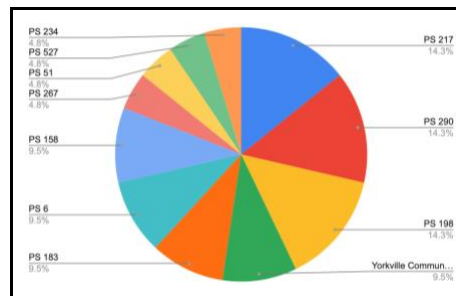
Mayor's Race Series

By: Siroos Pasdar

The New York City mayoral race is something that will affect everyone in NYC. From subway system changes to the education system or infrastructure, every New Yorker will see the difference, positive or negative.

603 and class 605 about this very same question. Digging a little deeper, it is possible to find where someone went to elementary school, and the distance between ESMS and their school.

I found out that East Side Middle School is very diverse in the schools that students come from. It is important to note that there were only 23 responses, from a survey of 2 classes. The results are as follows: there were three students each from P.S. 217, P.S. 290 and P.S. 198. There were two students each from Yorkville Community School, P.S. 183, P.S. 6, and P.S. 158. Lastly, there was one student each from P.S. 267, P.S. 51, P.S. 527, and P.S. 234. Refer to the pie chart below.



These homerooms were also asked how far away their elementary school is from ESMS. Nine students, or 40.9%, of people went to an elementary school that is less than a mile from ESMS. Five students, or 22.7%, went to an elementary school that was more than four miles away. Four students, or 18.2%, went to an elementary school between one and two miles away.

The last thing asked was what part of New York City their school was in. Four students didn't specify exactly where their school was but they said that it was in Manhattan. Eleven students said that their school was in the Upper East Side. There was one student that said their school was on the West Side, and there were three people that went to school on Roosevelt Island. One student went to school in Chelsea and one student went to school in Tribeca.

These students live all over this city but they come together every day either on Zoom or in school. These times are hard but seeing how people can come together

Harvard Business Review found that, "women made up a mere 19% of experts featured in news stories and 37% of reporters telling stories globally." Jane Ferguson, a female journalist reporting on the war in Afghanistan met with ESMS students in March. At the meeting, she talked about being inspired by watching female journalists on the news as a child. She mentioned looking at them as, "human, tough, brave, and empathetic." This led to her becoming a journalist as well. Right now, as Harvard Business Review noted, there are not enough females being represented in the field of journalism. Perhaps, if there was better representation, it would lead to more young girls aspiring to become award-winning journalists like Jane Ferguson.

But underrepresentation is not the only issue. Much of the media we have today also misrepresents the female community. According to the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, "Nearly twice as many male characters are shown working as female characters in ads (22.2% compared with 13.3%)." For viewers, this can convey the idea that females are not expected to be a part of the workforce as males are.

To get a better understanding of this issue, I talked to Ms. Diaks, the teacher who leads Girls Leadership Organization (GLO) at ESMS. When asked what improvements could be made to female representation in the media, she said, "One improvement would be to show more diverse female stories and experiences. Too often we see similar narratives for women, and this is just not representative of the lives that women in the real world lead!" Ms. Diaks also stressed the importance of eliminating stereotypes that may be adopted by viewers. She told me that, "when we see the same narratives over and over again, we as the audience may internalize those narratives and believe that there is one way for a woman to be, when in reality, there should be no limits to how a woman wants to live her life and what she can achieve."

Dale Heller, one of the student leaders of the Helping Homeless Women Committee (HHWC) had a similar opinion on the issue. She told me that while we

What Is The Mayor's Race?

As middle school students, we may not be of age to vote, but that shouldn't stop anyone from educating themselves about the NYC mayor's race. This important event will determine who will be New York City's next mayor. Every four years registered voters that are 18 years of age and above can vote for New York City's next mayor.

A mayor in New York City can serve for three consecutive four-year terms. The law was changed from two consecutive terms to three when the city council voted to extend the limit on October 23rd, 2008. One may, however, run for mayor again after a four year break.

In this year's general election, a new concept known as ranked choice voting will be used. This means that you can rank your candidates. If your first candidate loses, your vote will transfer to the second candidate you picked. This will only be used in the primaries, and not in the general election, however, where the Democratic and Republican nominee face each other.

Mayor Candidates		Choice Options				
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Candidate A Candidate's Party	A	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate B Candidate's Party	B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate C Candidate's Party	C	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate D Candidate's Party	D	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate E Candidate's Party	E	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Candidate F Candidate's Party	F	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

You don't have to put something down for every candidate, only choosing a few candidates is also valid.

In the example seen in the picture above, this person has casted their first choice for Candidate A, their second choice for Candidate C, their third choice for B, and their fourth and fifth choices for candidates F and E (respectively). Note

as one from so many places can be comforting.



Vaccines: The Road Back to Normal

By: Nora Cassetta

Could the road back to normal be just around the corner? COVID-19 vaccines for Americans aged 16 and over have been offered for several months. The CDC just announced that 200 million Americans have now been vaccinated, but according to new test results on a group of 12-15 year-olds, middle schoolers may be next.

On Wednesday, March 31st, 2021, at 6:45 AM, Pfizer-BioNTech announced positive results of a "pivotal COVID-19 vaccine study in adolescents." According to the official site of Pfizer-BioNTech, the trial consisted of participants aged 12-15 years old. In this group, the Pfizer vaccine (BNT162b2) resulted in "100% efficacy and robust antibody responses." These results were even better than those for the 16-25 year old participants in an earlier trial. This is breakthrough information that can help speed up the fight against COVID-19.

Is it time for adolescents to get the vaccine? In light of these new results, the answer from health experts is a definite yes. I talked about the COVID-19 vaccine with Dr. Rigmor Spang, a prominent Upper East Side pediatric specialist. Dr. Spang strongly recommends getting vaccinated as soon as it is approved for "middle school and early high school students." Additionally, Dr. Buddy Creech, a pediatric infectious disease expert at the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee, said that, "Vaccinating our teenagers is the next step in seeing our way through the pandemic."

have made a lot of progress regarding representation, "there is still more to be done." She explained, "Females are often portrayed differently in the media than males. In pop culture, a woman could be called a 'diva' while a man doing the exact same thing could be thought of as reasonable, or even be praised." Dale believes that female representation also impacts young girls by changing how they view the world. She said, "Seeing more females in the media as a positive inspiration can broaden their perspective and even affect their future, career-wise." Dale also believes that in order to limit inaccurate stereotypes about women, people can educate themselves on inspirational females in real life. She told me, "A large amount of people becoming invested in and supporting powerful women can impact what media says about females, as well as how often they are mentioned."

Overall, we now know that the way the media represents females impacts what happens in real life, not just for a couple of people, but for the whole of society. Making sure females are not underrepresented or misrepresented in the media can help to improve today's world significantly, especially for children, whose future decisions may be impacted by what they see in the media today.

Sources: <https://hbr.org/2019/06/tackling-the-underrepresentation-of-women-in-media>
<https://seejane.org/research-informs-empowers/bias-inclusion-in-advertising/>

The ESMS Sports Page

By: Rhone Galchen

It has been a crazy month in sports. In this article, we are going to look into the greed that was shown by the Super League managers, The Masters, the March Madness final, the first leg of the Champions League semi-finals, and more.

The first thing that I will mention is the Super League. In case you are not a soccer fan, the Super League was an idea where 12 of the best (and in Arsenal and Tottenham's case, the wealthiest) teams were going to form their own league called the Super League. The teams that partook in this were some of the biggest names in

how they did not enter anything for candidate D, but their ballot is still valid. If any candidate has more than 50 percent of the votes in the first round, they automatically win the race. If nobody has 50 percent, however, the person in last place is eliminated. In our example, that would be candidate A. After this happens, everybody who voted for candidate A would have their vote transferred to their second pick. In this example, that is candidate C. This process continues until only one candidate remains.

As the primaries are approaching, candidates are starting to step up their game and ramp up their in-person events. On April 9th, Coney Island reopened after being closed for a year and a half due to the pandemic. "New York City! Can you feel it?" said former presidential candidate, Andrew Yang who is now running for mayor.

Each candidate is hoping to bring their expertise and experience to improve New York City, and address pressing matters such as climate change, law enforcement and the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. In the next Tiger Times issue we will profile the different candidates.

Source: The New York Times
Photo Credit: The New York Times

Theme Of The Month: American Sign Language

By: Siroos Pasdar

On April 15th, every year, national American Sign Language day is celebrated. American Sign Language may appear to just be sign language. However, behind the facade, it is a rich and diverse culture that has many roots, and is certainly more than a language.

Sign language, an alternate way to communicate for people who are deaf, is a form of communication through visual indicators and gestures. Additionally, sign language can differ from country to country. People who understand American Sign Language might not understand British Sign Language and vice-versa.

The answers of the experts are crystal clear, but what do students at ESMS have to say about it? I talked with several ESMS students, asking the key question, "If given the opportunity to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, once it is FDA approved, would you get it?" The respondents all said they would get the vaccine if given the chance. "I would definitely because I want to go out and do more things, and also feel safe at the same time," Anna Eliasson, an 8th grader at ESMS responded. Alexandra Brinker, another 8th grader said, "I would because while a vaccination does not guarantee that you are safe from getting COVID-19 it would give me a sense of security and make me able to see more friends and family."

Pfizer-BioNTech plans to submit these results to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) as quickly as possible to seek permission to expand the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) and EU Conditional Marketing Authorization for the vaccine (BNT162b2) for use in adolescents. If granted, the EUA will allow Pfizer to begin distributing its vaccine to middle schoolers, hopefully in time for the next school year.

Until then, it is crucial that people continue to wear masks correctly, social distance, and encourage loved ones to get vaccinated. By taking these precautions seriously, the world will be one step closer to "getting back to normal."

Sources: pfizer.com, NBC News
Photo Credit: paho.org

The Benefits Of Reading

By: Liya Choi and Chloe Comisarow

When was the last time you read? Was it two days ago for a school assignment? A week ago for work? Whenever it was, if you're like the countless people that only read when instructed, you should consider reading daily. Most people are unaware that reading is beneficial to the brain. It improves grammar skills, fluency, expands your vocabulary, can be a form of

soccer, such as Real Madrid, Tottenham Hotspur, AC Milan, Inter Milan, Juventus, Atletico Madrid, Barcelona, Arsenal, Manchester City, Manchester United, Liverpool, and Chelsea. You may wonder what is so bad about this. Would seeing the best teams play each other often not be exciting? In short, the answer is a big no. Even if PSG, Bayern Munich, and Borussia Dortmund did join, thus completing almost all of the biggest names in soccer, it would still be a horrible idea. Soccer is all about the idea that the little guy can still make it. Although that is rare due to sizable gaps in money between teams, it definitely is still possible. Leicester City won the Premier League in the 2015-16 season and are currently on course to reach the Champions League. West Ham United are also fighting for a spot in the Champions League and are going to at least get the Europa League. These teams are fighting to get to these seismic competitions by merit, and taking away the merit to just form their own league would ruin the whole point of soccer. Although it is true that five teams would make it on merit, that is not nearly enough in a league where 75% of the teams will just be there no matter how bad it is. The Super League would be taking away the best element of soccer and would be hanging the majority of soccer fans out to dry. This opinion was reflected among the fans.

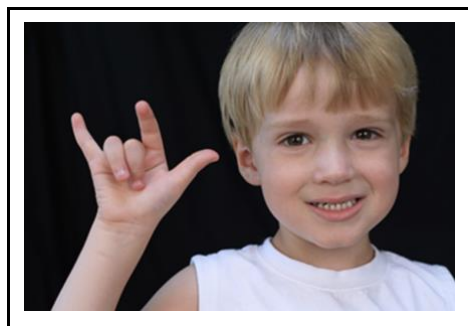
There were massive protests in the Chelsea game which caused club legend Peter Cech to have to come out and calm down the fans. These protests caused Chelsea to pull out within just two days of the Super League announced and all the other teams soon followed suit. Within 48 hours, only Madrid, Juventus, and Barcelona remained in the Super League (just imagine how bad an idea has to be for it to collapse within two days). It has now collapsed, and it is now Super League: 0, all of soccer: 1.

In other news we have the first legs of the Champions League semi-finals. In Real Madrid vs Chelsea, Chelsea dominated the opening proceedings (with the help of Madrid playing like they were sleeping), which culminated in a goal by American Christian Pulisic to give them a crucial away goal. Then, Real Madrid scored a goal out of nothing. They took a

American Sign Language, or ASL, is a language native to the United States and some parts of Canada. It is widely used amongst deaf people in this area. Just like other sign languages around the world, American Sign Language relies on visual indicators and gestures to communicate a message or idea to others. It is a fully fledged language, with grammar rules that are different from English. It is unclear when ASL was invented, or who started it, but some estimate that it started over 200 years ago by mixing French Sign Language with other local sign languages. Now, ASL and French Sign Language, or LSF are distinct languages that cannot be recognized by users of the other language.

Just like English, ASL has different accents. Different cultures and countries influence how one might sign something. People in the south might sign things different than people in the west, or east. Black hearing communities have also influenced ASL, and as a result, Black ASL, with modified phrases exist. The influences on how you sign something in ASL can even be from a different country.

In a video published by NPR, different deaf people describe their experiences with ASL, and different things they want people to know. One person describes how they wish family members and other people could learn basic signs, such as, "how was your day?" and the responses for those questions. Another person describes the term "deaf" versus the term "hearing impaired."



A boy signs "I love you."

"People call me hearing impaired, and I have to tell them, for example, that's not a term that I accept," Felicia Williams signed. "I am deaf. They don't understand that deaf people have a culture. They think that

entertainment, and also improves your mental health.



How can reading improve mental health?

Reading daily actually improves your mental health. Studies show that people who read daily sleep better, have lower stress rates, more confidence, and lower rates of depression than those that do not read daily. According to a study in 2009, "30 minutes of reading lowered blood pressure, heart rate, and feelings of psychological distress just as effectively as yoga and humor did." The scientists that conducted this experiment were researching how yoga, humor, and reading affect students. It was proven that reading for a mere 30 minutes can be just as relaxing as yoga and comedy.

Hobby/Academically

Reading is a great hobby, or form of entertainment. While reading, one may often find themselves getting "lost in a book". While reading an engaging book, getting engrossed in it is not a rare occurrence. Since there are countless genres to choose from, you'll always find the right book that suits you. Not only that, you may come across a word that you aren't familiar with, or perhaps a phrase. By looking the word or phrase up or asking a parent, you're learning more. This is helpful because it expands your vocabulary and grammar. In addition, it also makes you a better writer because when you look at the way the author of the book writes, you'll learn how to improve your writing by incorporating those new phrases.

Child Development

Books may help with grammar, spelling, vocabulary, fluency, and many other areas. However, reading at a young age can also help with developing empathy or creative thinking. Stories

short corner kick and passed to Marcelo. He then lobbed into the box where Casemiro headed it to Militao who headed it to Benzema, who chested it and unleashed a beautiful volley into the net to equalize for Madrid. There were no real goals after that making for a quiet second half.

Whilst the first game had a quiet second half, PSG vs Manchester City had anything but a quiet second half. PSG took the lead in the 15th minute through a Marquinhos header after the Manchester City defenders forgot that they were supposed to be marking people. PSG had a further onslaught in the remainder of the first half but failed to capitalize. Then, in the second half, Manchester City, just like their crosstown rivals against Roma, improved a lot. They were suddenly leading the one way traffic whilst PSG were starting to look like Sheffield United. Eventually, Manchester City equalized in a peculiar way. Kevin De Bruyne put a ball into the box, expecting a Manchester City player to hit it. Keylor Navas (the PSG goalkeeper), expected a PSG player to kick it and therefore did not go to save the ball. In the end, no one hit it and once Keylor Navas realized that that was going to happen, it was too late, and the ball went into the net. Seven minutes after, Idrissa Gueye gave away a reckless foul in a dangerous area. Riyad Mahrez took the ensuing free kick which went right in between the wall and into the net leaving Keylor Navas livid at his defenders for not blocking it.

Lastly, we have the Europa League semi-finals (which would not really be a thing if the super league happened). In the Roma vs Manchester United game, Manchester United took the lead through Bruno Fernandes, but Roma retaliated through two goals to get a 2-1 lead going into halftime. But after that, they collapsed like a table if you cut off all of its legs. Manchester United scored five further goals to win the tie 6-2 and to seemingly ensure their first trip to a final under Ole Gunnar Solskjaer. Arsenal on the other hand, did not have such a great night.

Manu Trigueros and Raul Albiol gave Villareal the lead. But Nicholas Pepe pulled one back from the penalty spot for Arsenal to give them hope in the second

hearing impaired is more politically correct, but actually, it's more offensive."

Now, our country is moving towards involving ASL interpreters in different events. President Biden has included an ASL interpreter in the White House Press Briefings. "The president is committed to building an America that is more inclusive, more just and more accessible for every American," the White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki told reporters.

Sources: National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), asl.org, NPR

Bits and Pieces

By: Siroos Pasdar

- Prince Philip, a member of the British royal family and the husband of Elizabeth II, passed away at age 99, just weeks from his 100th birthday.
- The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine will resume after being halted by government officials when some people developed rare blood clots.
- COVID-19 cases in India have just reached record high levels, with dangerously low oxygen supply.
 - On April 24, Indian officials reported close to 350,000 new cases.
- Derek Chauvin was convicted on all three charges of murdering George Floyd last May.
 - He was convicted of second-degree unintentional murder, second-degree manslaughter and third-degree murder.
- The European Union is set to allow vaccinated American tourists to come and visit this summer.
- NASA's Ingenuity, a small helicopter, made history by being the first powered aircraft to fly over the surface of Mars.

Source: The New York Times

about protagonists who struggle but overcome obstacles or fears creates an understanding of what a person could be feeling. Also, if reading about a superhero saving people or being kind, the reader could feel as though they should do that too. Reading early on can especially change somebody because their minds are more flexible when they're younger. Sometimes, if a child is mentally struggling, by finding a book about a character that faces similar problems, they are able to "connect" with the book better and empathize with that character, which develops their empathy skills. If that character ends up solving their problem, the child may also solve their problem as well. This means the child will be able to solve their mental struggles, while also developing empathy skills.

Overall, reading can improve mental health and skills greatly. It can serve as a hobby, be a form of entertainment, and it lowers stress levels. Not only does reading help people academically, but it can also help grow empathy skills. By reading more, you can expand your knowledge of the world around you and even discover new things about yourself.

Sources: -
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Photo Credit: The New York Times

leg. My personal prediction is that Villareal will hold on to set up a final with Manchester United.

Moving on, we have The Masters. Hideki Matsuyama became the first Japanese male golf player to win a golf major. The 29 year old had a comfortable lead throughout and really proved his class on the day.

Finally we have the NCAA Men's Basketball final. This final was so disappointing that they would put the game as an example of what anticlimactic means in the dictionary. Baylor dominated from start to finish to make their fans go crazy (Baylor is in a town called Waco). Baylor was able to prevent Gonzaga from getting into a rhythm and prevented Gonzaga from going undefeated the whole season and winning the NCAA tournament. All in all, it is quite ironic how in a year with so many upsets that the final was two number one seeds and it just shows how it really is true that the more things change, the more they stay the same.

That is all for today, I hope you enjoyed it.

The Return Of The State Tests

By: Jacob Abroon

"Tomorrow is the ELA Test." That is a phrase that many at ESMS and in New York were unaccustomed to hearing. While it might not have been a *sound* for sore ears, all students in New York State, from 5th grade to 8th grade, started to remember what it was like to have the ELA Test arrive.

As nearly everyone knows, the ELA and Math tests were cancelled in the spring of 2020 due to COVID-19. Students were given a break from the state tests that would make many of them nervous in the coming days, and uneasy the morning of the test. However, that "break," did not last long, as the option to opt-in to the ELA test was presented to all families in the state, and many students accepted the offer. Through this article, we will go through the advantages and

Inspirational People

Megan Rapinoe



Megan Rapinoe is the captain of the United States Women's National Soccer Team and part of the LGBTQ community. She has won two World Cups and is a force to be reckoned with on the soccer field. Off the soccer field, however, she is an activist for gender pay equality, racial equality, and for the LGBTQ community. Currently, the U.S. men's soccer team has a higher pay, despite being less successful than the women's team. With the current gender pay gap between men and women, Rapinoe hopes to make a change and have a more fair and equal world.

"This is my charge to everyone: We have to be better. We have to love more and hate less. Listen more and talk less. We've gotta know that this is everyone's responsibility."

- Megan Rapinoe

Sources: Times Magazine, NBS Sports
Photo Credit: Forbes

The More You Know, The Less You Know

By: Samuel Stevens

These days, it is so easy to find answers to questions. All you have to do is look it up on Google. Even though it may seem like humans know everything, there are still many unanswered questions! One of which is the question of time. Everyone knows that every minute contains 60 seconds and that every hour contains 60 minutes, but do you ever think about what time really is? Or do you ever think about what existed before the Big Bang created



The ESMS Debate Page

By: Rhone Galchen, Jacob Abroon, and Gail Tromer

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 issue has two new debate topics. Read on to see what they are.

Topic #1: Are zoos unethical?

Let's all think about when we were toddlers. If you have, then probably one of the memories that came up were zoos. Zoos are something that every child has fond memories of going to, but is the reality of what the zoos are doing darker than it seems? In this debate topic, we are going to debate whether zoos are unethical or whether they are ethical.

Yes - Rhone Galchen

Although you may have fond memories of zoos as a child, what is going on behind the scenes with these lovely animals is actually quite sinister. For one, zoos don't provide enough room for animals to live a healthy life. Animals are confined to a small area that does not allow for them to prosper and live a happy life. An example of this is zoos' aquatic counterparts in whales. Whales can barely do any strokes in a tank before hitting a wall. Furthermore, their tanks are shallow as well. Therefore, instead of spending only 10% - 20% of their time above the surface like they usually do, whales spend over half their time above the surface of the water. This unnatural tendency forced upon them in the zoo can cause skin problems to these animals. Furthermore, this causes the dorsal fin of orca whales to collapse because it is without the support of water that it usually gets.

Whales also have a shorter lifespan in captivity than they do in the wild. You may

disadvantages of the return of the state tests.

First, there is the overview. The ELA test, which was administered from Tuesday, April 20th to Thursday, April 22nd, was nearly unrecognizable to many middle schoolers. Each of the three days of testing was reserved for a different grade, as the 6th graders completed the test on the 20th, and the 8th graders on the 22nd. This means that each person only had to complete Day 1 of the ELA test, when normally every person in the state would have to take two days of the test. What is, "Day 1"? As nearly all middle-schoolers know, Day 1 of the ELA test has always been solely multiple choice questions, with four options for each question. Widely considered the easiest part of the entire state, the multiple choice was all that students had to complete, and the ELA test was cut in half in length. To add on, the amount of questions on the multiple choice portion of the test also decreased. As all middle school students might have noticed, there were about 30 questions on the test, when on a normal Day 1 of the ELA test, there would be more questions. This is because when the state was required to administer the test this year, they were allowed to lower the amount of questions, which would save time, energy, and money. Additionally, as many know, families had to proactively opt-in to take the test, meaning, of course, that many students did not take the test this year. While all of these new aspects to the ELA test may seem beneficial, there are disadvantages.

Many of the advantages (besides the fact that the test was arguably easier) of the ELA test this year are centered around seeing how students are thriving academically, and for the state to know a snapshot of how its students are performing.

According to the Washington Post, the education secretary said that administering the state tests is, "necessary for schools to see where students are academically after the chaos of the pandemic school year, and that the test scores will show where to target billions of dollars," as the Washington Post paraphrased. Based on the scores of the ELA test, the state of New York and the

our universe? Humans only have theories about these questions, but we still to this day don't know all the correct answers.

We record time through clocks, calendars, or even a phone. Is time a human construct? Why does it only move forward and not backward? In order to understand this, let's go back thousands of years to the cavemen when they measured time by the number of moons or by the seasons. In modern times, we count by seconds and minutes, but what does all this really mean? Albert Einstein's theory is that time is simply an illusion. He said that it could vary from different points of observation according to how fast they are moving in relation to each other. Let's say you are moving at the speed of light. You would basically be paused in time. The mystery of time is very closely related to space and the Big Bang. Before the Big Bang, there was no space or time. Or was there?



Time and space

This brings us to the next question, "What was there before the Big Bang?" The Big Bang is what created all the matter, planets, solar systems, galaxies, and time itself. So what was there before the Big Bang? Could something really come from nothing? Was there nothing? The theory is that all existing matter in the universe was at one time smaller than an atom! Then, something happened billions of years ago, all that matter exploded, and expanded to create the universe that we know today. And this even begs the question, what is beyond the universe? All we know is that the universe is expanding into a void. What is that void? And what is beyond that void?

Unanswered questions lead to more unanswered questions! Even the most brilliant minds in this world can't make sense of it all. They can only come up with theories. Maybe one day we will finally

say, however, that whales are an extreme example due to their large size. This cruel treatment though, is not limited to whales. The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), found that hundreds of zoos were violating welfare laws such as making big cats perform in gladiator style shows, elephants being forced to play basketball, and diapered chimpanzees riding scooters. These actions are extremely inhumane which proves that the restrictions placed in these zoos are not effective and are unethical. Therefore, instead of leaving them in captivity and hindering their mental and physical status we should release them from their captivity to natural parks. This will allow them to live in their natural habitat and to be free to do what they are naturally supposed to do. Instead of relying on humans for food like they do in zoos, they will learn to rely on themselves and to be the beautiful animals that we know them to be. Some may say that the wild is dangerous. However, if we put them in natural parks where they will have space to roam and do what they want, we can make sure that there are good measures protecting them from hunters and the challenges that they face.

All in all, zoos are unethical because they don't provide enough space for the animals which hinders mental and physical health, some treat them inhumanely, and it prevents them from being in their natural habitat in the wild.

No - Rhone Galchen

No zoos are not unethical. There are multitude of reasons for why zoos are ethical ranging from education to animal conservation. One reason for this is due to the fact that the wildlife has unfortunately become dangerous. Animals in the present days are in danger of many factors that make it unsafe to live in the wild. An example of this is pollution and climate change. One example how this directly affects animals is the rising temperatures which melt the arctic sea ice. This ice is essential to polar animals such as polar bears and walrus. But these are not the only animals that climate change is affecting. Furthermore, some pathogens get even stronger in warmer climates (which as we all should know by now are a result of climate change), which could lead to disease among animals. The

U.S. government would be able to organize the data of the scores, and see how the students in the state are performing. However, it is not only the state, but also can be used for the city, and ESMS itself. The statistics can be used to compare students, schools, cities, and states throughout the state and nation.

As the Biden Administration said, the statistics for the state tests will also give the federal government an image of how the pandemic affected students across the nation. Remote learning does not always offer the same instruction and opportunities as in-person learning, so administering the state tests would provide them with an idea on how to spend government funding, and how to analyze the long-term effects of COVID-19. However, many argue that these advantages do not outweigh the multiple disadvantages.

While it is argued that administering the state tests will provide the government with an idea of student progress, there are many variables that are not controlled, thus causing the results to be inaccurate.

Many people who are against administering the state tests argued that the statistical results of the state test scores would not present an accurate representation of the state, because of the amount of students who are choosing to not take the test. Whether it is for fear of exposure to COVID-19, the fact that families needed to proactively opt-in to the testing, or that many students saw no point in taking a test that would not have any positive or negative implications, a very low number of the students took the test. The consequences of this are obvious. With a very low amount of people taking the test this year, any statistical result would be inaccurate and could have negative consequences. With the results of the states tests being used to guide government funding, with inaccurate results, government spending could be negatively affected. However, the disadvantages do not stop there.

With the fact that the results of the state tests would not affect students at all, and people were unsure if the state tests would be administered this year, many

know the answers to some of these fascinating questions as well as what came first, the chicken or the egg, but that's a whole different story.

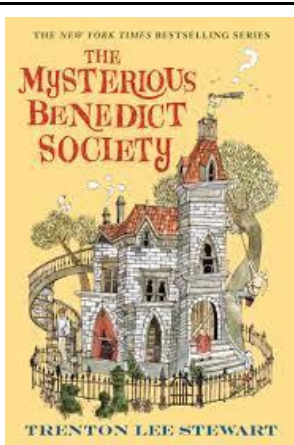
Sources: sciencedaily.com, space.com, National Geographic
Photo Credit: medium.com

ESMS Book Reviews

By: Julian Fernandez-Sasso

*The Mysterious Benedict Society by
Trenton Lee Stewart*

The Mysterious Benedict Society (released 2007) follows a group of intelligent young children tasked by Mr Benedict, a smart and calm centered man, to figure out what the mysterious Ledrothpa Curtain is doing. The group includes Reynie, a puzzle solver, Kate, who uses athletics to solve problems, Sticky, a technical thinker, and Constance. All incredibly intelligent children who had to pass a test to be selected. Ledrothpa has a machine that uses children to send subconscious messages to your brain. As of the moment he isn't using it at its full capacity. The children are sent to his school for special children where he recruits children to send his messages. What will they find out? Read to see!



*The Mysterious Benedict Society by
Trenton Lee Stewart*

I give this book an 8/10. It has an interesting story, and is well written and entertaining. The book became a New York Times bestseller in 2008 and won multiple awards. The book received critical praise, and Rick Rordian, author of *Percy*

higher temperatures will also lead to a drier climate which would diminish the amount of wetlands such as the Prairie Pothole region which serves as a primary breeding ground for the North American Waterfowl.

Animals are also experiencing habitat loss, the hunting of them for food and clothing, and much more. They also face invasive species such as the lionfish. 42% of threatened or endangered animals are at risk due to invasive species. This all relates to whether zoos are unethical because they prevent this from happening. Zoos can separate endangered species from hunters, invasive species, the destruction of their habitat and the worrying effects of climate change and pollution on their habitats, and to a lesser extent, disease. Therefore, zoos are actually helping save endangered species and are thus not unethical.

A good example of this is the Arabian Oryx. The Arabian Oryx was nearly hunted to extinction in 1972. However, zoos took them in and thus saved them from extinction with there now being over 1,000 oryxes in the wild. Furthermore, zoos help educate people about animals. David Attenborough, a British broadcaster and a natural historian (which means someone who studies the history of natural things such as organisms not someone who naturally is a historian), says that "People ought to be able to see what an animal looks like. And smells like. And sounds like. I think that is quite important. Actually, very important." Seeing these animals helps people to form attachments to them, much more than through a documentary. How are we supposed to raise the next generation of people who are fighting for better animal protection if we outlaw zoos and thus making it harder to feel a deep connection and bonding for these animals? Zoos teach visitors important lessons on habitat conservation and the threats that animals face today. These lessons raise awareness to young and old minds alike to do something about these problems and also may inspire young minds to pursue a profession that would help protect animals from the many challenges they face today.

students were caught off guard with the ELA and math tests. Many schools did not prepare their students for the tests considering the low amount of people taking the tests, and many students who decided to take the tests also chose to not prepare much. This then affects people's future perceptions on state tests. 3rd and 4th graders who have never taken the state tests before this year had no idea what to expect, and when they were presented with the mindset to not prepare much for the state tests, it will be harder for them to prepare for the state tests next year when they truly count. Many 6th graders, who have not taken the test since 4th grade, will have a harder time adjusting to state tests next year that could count for high schools.

With the option to not take the state tests this year, there will be students who will have a very hard time adjusting to state tests next year. Next year, there will be 5th graders taking the ELA Test for the first time, and 7th graders taking the ELA test for the first time since 4th grade. These thousands of students could potentially be unable to perform well on the state tests next year when they will have real impacts on high schools, middle schools, and placements in other groups and schools. Additionally, 7th and 8th graders who did not take the tests this year will also be negatively affected in the future. Many current 7th graders are preparing for the SHSAT next year, which could be influential for their high school offers. The state tests this year were good opportunities to prepare for the SHSAT, as the best practice for a standardized test is a standardized test. However, many 7th graders who chose to not take the tests this year could be caught off guard next fall with SHSAT. It would be nearly two years since they had taken a standardized test, so preparations could be difficult. Additionally, current 8th graders could use the practice this year for the Algebra I Regents next year, and any other standardized tests that will be important in future years. That is one disadvantage of the opportunity to opt-out of taking the state tests this year.

Overall, the return of the state tests is one that should be analyzed completely. While the conditions were favorable for people who did not want to be exposed to

Jackson said this about the book "I enjoyed it very much -- great cast of characters, lots of cool puzzles and mysteries. The book made me feel nostalgic, because it reminded me of some of the better children's books I grew up with, like Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and The Phantom Tollbooth." The Mysterious Benedict Society is a collection of four books and one prequel.

An Overview Of COVID-19 Vaccinations

By: Tayden Eagle-McAvoy

Do you know where to get the COVID-19 vaccine? Has anybody in your family had the vaccine? Do you know how the government has been handling this pandemic? You're in luck because today you are going to be informed on where to get the vaccine and how the government is handling this massive vaccination campaign.

Some places that are on almost every city block that provide the vaccine are Walgreens and CVS. Other places that are less popular but have the vaccine are Rite Aid, Kings Pharmacy and Downtown Pharmacy. If you get the vaccine you will add to the chart of people who have gotten it and help save lives!

Speaking of the vaccine, how is the government handling this and how many people have gotten vaccinated? According to the New York Times, 27% of the population in the U.S. have been fully vaccinated. A person is considered to be fully vaccinated when they have either received two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The Biden administration has been helping with this distribution by ordering 200 million doses so our world can recover.

Additionally, one of the scientists who studied the vaccine named Brian Gragnolatind was interviewed on the topic of government vaccine distribution. He stated that for him and his fellow scientists the, "Biggest issue so far has been getting the vaccines from the government. States have struggled with that and certainly that's trickled down to those of us who are

Some say that animals should be free and not in captivity. However, in the modern world, the wild is a dangerous place for animals due to the numerous threats they face, and we thus need zoos to help conserve them and to eventually release them back into the wild when we can make sure that they are going into a safe environment. We need zoos as a safety net for endangered animals with dwindling populations. Some may also say that zoos are cruel to animals. In most cases this is not true and they protect animals and give them the food that they need and take good care of them. In the small amount of cases where this is true, we can make stricter laws in zoos on how they can treat animals and make more frequent inspections to see whether this is carried out in order to ensure that all animals are being properly taken care of.

All in all, zoos are not unethical because they protect animals from extinction and the modern day threats, educate young and old minds about the threats animals face, and help inspire future generations of people to work in a profession that would help animals, thus making zoos ethical.

Sources: National Wildlife Federation, The Guardian, Kansas State University, BBC, Humane Society of the United States, National Geographic

Topic #2: Magic vs Science

Magic - Gail Tromer

Would students rather see a magician teleport 50 feet to the right, or would they rather learn about the periodic table of elements? Obviously, students are more fascinated with the magic trick. Though science may give a person more to think about, magic tricks not only give something to think about, but also fascinate people in a way science can't.

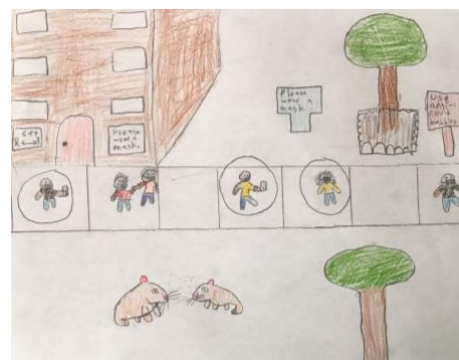
While learning about science, everything is explained and it seems that the more you're curious about something, the more it shows eagerness to teach more about the subject. With magic tricks, on the other hand, it avoids teaching about the subject. Meaning, if there was curiosity about a magic trick, it would be seen that the trick would change, so it's avoided to learn how it was done. That

COVID-19, the opportunity to opt-out of taking the state tests could have negative effects in the near and far future. While the disadvantages could outweigh the advantages, the return of the state tests in 2021 is one that many of us will remember.

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 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, and I give them full credit for the contest idea. On the back page of every issue, there are cartoons with a blank caption. People from around the world submit funny captions for the week's cartoon. The winner and runners-up are printed in a later issue.

delivering that vaccine into people. But this is part of a larger problem that we've had with the government, whether it started with testing and continued on through PPE [Personal Protective Equipment]. You can say their goal is to get everybody in this country who needs to be vaccinated, vaccinated as quickly as possible." He says this in the article "Distribution of the Vaccine" on the New York City government website. Hopefully we can all get the vaccine fast as possible. But first let's check out what these two sixth grade ESMS student's opinions are on how fast they think the distribution of the vaccine is.

Cole Scanlon thinks that scientists are creating the vaccine fast and the government is handling it with speed. He said, "The vaccine is helping so many people and it will be great when it's completely finished. However long it takes." Maeve Ramond's thoughts are a little different. She says, "The speed that people are getting the vaccine at is fast. If not enough people get vaccinated then this pandemic will continue."

My grandmother has gotten both of her shots. It was January 19th, 2021. She walked into a big building called Duke Hospital. She came up to a long desk up front and checked in. They told her to walk down a staircase that would lead her to a room with few people who were getting the shot like her. In a matter of minutes she was called to another room where she was asked a few questions. "Do you understand this is an experimental vaccine? Do you understand there will be side effects to this vaccine?" She said yes to both of them, a little nervous about the side effects. She was handed a syringe and told to go across the hall with it and her ID. She walked in, rolled up her sleeve, and prepared for the pain. "Done," she was surprised it didn't hurt at all and was given the thumbs up to leave. She walked out, happy and relieved. The only downside was she had a small headache afterwards. The good thing is it is healthy to have an after effect from the shot, because that means you have a good immune system.

Hopefully you understand how the government is handling this vaccine distribution, you know where to get the vaccine and what it is like to get vaccinated.

only makes people more interested in it. If a person was told to learn something, they would feel the need to learn more, which would be true. However, if a person would feel like that something is being avoided, it would only make them more curious. That is something only magicians can do. Science is always welcoming, eager to teach more. Magic tricks are mysterious and mischievous, but also somewhat welcoming.

Back to the first question; the magic trick would be better because watching a magician perform a magic trick is also fun to watch. True, watching a chemical reaction would be fun, but students would feel forced to learn about it. The more in science you learn about, the deeper you think about it, but you can't really go learning about it without digging deeper. In magic tricks, there is a choice. You could choose to try to figure out the trick, or you could just watch it for fun without having to think about it too much. It would be like a person watching their favorite movie, except that person would have both the options to keep on watching freely and for fun, but also pause and think about it. While in science, there is only one of these options available at all times.

In conclusion, magic tricks fascinate people in a way science can't. They give more options, and are far more fascinating than science. Magic tricks are better than science.

Science - Jacob Abroon

Imagine making a puzzle. You have the last piece, you place it into the empty spot, and it fits perfectly. Everything just clicks. That is what it is like in science. When dealing with science, similar to math, everything falls into the perfect place. There is a narrow room for debate, and someone can always explain a phenomenon. Unlike with magic, anyone can understand a phenomenon with the right teaching. My argument in defense of science boils down to one main argument: everything needs science, including magic.

As you walk along the street, moving forward with every step, science is involved. As many 8th graders know, physics is used to explain why people can even walk. Specifically, Newton's Third

Law of Motion explains why we don't sink into the ground when we walk. However, science has applications in more places than walking. Something people nearly always take for granted is transportation. Without a good understanding of science, humans would not be able to innovate incredible vehicles. Engineers need to know science to understand how an engine works in a car, and how gasoline can be used to make a car move forward at a faster speed than any animal on the planet. Engineers need to know science to understand how to build an airplane that can carry at least 45 tons in the air and travel at 500 miles per hour. Thinking about it, it seems impossible yet incredible. But thanks to science, humanity can accomplish what was once seen as impossible.

While magic can be used to keep people in awe for just a few hours, magic does not have any reasonable applications in the real world. Magic cannot construct artificial intelligence computers that have limitless applications. Magic cannot help cook your dinner at night, or protect an entire city from a hurricane. Magic cannot build buildings or power light bulbs. What can? Science.

The next reason science is superior to magic is that most magic tricks cannot exist without science. For example, optical illusions cannot work without understanding the science of how certain images are processed by the human mind and how we react. Many magic tricks use science such as light refraction and gravity to keep people in awe after a magic trick. Without science, magicians would have almost no way to make a good magic trick, making magic irrelevant to everyone.

Overall, science is much better than magic in every way. While magic can surprise someone for a few minutes and then the trick is forgotten, science allows all of society to function, from life-saving medicine to airplanes that can accomplish the impossible. So, the next time you compare the importance of magic and science, consider which one is more important to keep you healthy, safe, and entertained. Of course, it is science.