

# THE JAMS JOURNAL

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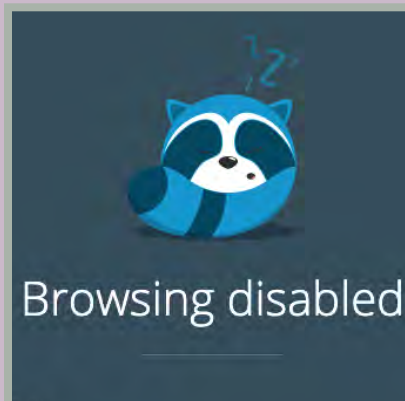
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## The Benefits of Being a Student Actor

According to the American Alliance for Theater & Education, “Numerous studies have demonstrated a correlation between drama involvement and academic achievement. In addition to having higher standardized test scores than their peers who do not experience the arts, students who participate in drama often experience improved reading comprehension, maintain better attendance records, and stay generally more engaged in school than their non-arts counterparts. Schools with arts-integrated programs, even in low-income areas, report high academic achievement.” This shows that students who participate in middle-school acting showed higher academic performance even if they live in low-income areas.

If reports of high academic performance are not enough, research shows that student actors gain life skills from school plays! The Department of Theater and Dance at Appalachian State University list 25 life skills learned from theater and dance including “Oral Communication Skills, Creative Problem-Solving Abilities, More than “get it done,” Motivation and Commitment, Willingness and Work Cooperatively.” These are just a few of the reasons, Tschreiber.org lists four other life skills; “Seeing Different Perspectives, Listening, Gaining Confidence, and Adaptability.” These are just a few of the benefits that come with theater.

Because of last year’s Matilda Musical, the theater lost all of its profits. But this year the Annie musical has raked in over \$20,000 from over 2,000 tickets, and a massive profit! Students can even help out by signing up for theater next year and be involved.

The play’s producer, Ms. Beeman, has some advice for those interested in joining the theater group next year, “My advice is to think about whether you want to be a part of next year’s musical on stage or on the tech team, and whether you will be able to fit in the rehearsal commitment. We do have a strict attendance policy and put in 70+ hours, but it’s worth it!” Ms. Beeman also mentioned that most of the students who participated in the previous year usually come back to do it again.



Photo: Kira Bretsky

## Behind the Scenes

A backstage look at this year’s school musical, Annie

By CHARLIE COHEN

Since the beginning of the year, JAMS Students have been excited about the new JAMS Performing Arts Center that has been towering over the school. This April, it had its first musical production. The cast of Annie sang, acted, and danced across its stage in front of family, friends, faculty, and the community. The new JAMS PAC was the perfect place for a musical to take place. The sound, lights, and overall facility are top of the line and according to Ms. Beeman, “It was wonderful staying at JAMS rather than taking 10 field trips to Lincoln for dress rehearsals, and that also enabled students to stay in class rather than leave early to shuttle across town.”

Acting in the school musical may seem like a dream and may seem very easy, but how hard was it to be part of the musical? According to Ms. Beeman, the producer of the musical, they had to rehearse for two hours two days a week, and after spring break five hours five days a week. This was a big commitment, especially for middle schoolers, so after all this practice they were certainly prepared.

Middle school musicals might seem like an excellent idea, but even high schools could get carried away with it, so is having a younger cast a more difficult task? Ms. Beeman said that middle-schoolers are the perfect age for this, they are disciplined enough to act well and are young enough where they can quickly learn the ropes of acting.

Ms. Beeman has been the producer for the JAMS theater for over five years and doesn’t want to stop any time soon. Every year the theater makes a profit off of ticket sales and never loses money, but in the Matilda musical everything changed. Because of the COVID pandemic, money was spent on the musical and the school had to go on lockdown, all the profits they made from previous shows dissipated, and instead of an onstage musical the only option was a Zoom performance.

*“Acting means living, it’s all I do and all I’m good at. If I weren’t getting paid well, I would still be acting in a small troupe somewhere.”*

-Morgan Freeman

JAMS Student Teddy Telanoph said “The show was very good, the actors did an amazing job, the tech crew did an amazing job, and the new Performing Arts Center was amazing.” Student impressions of the musical were very good and many of them

liked the new JAMS PAC. Ms. Beeman felt the musical was a huge success, “I felt great about the show. The students in the cast and in tech did a wonderful job. And the parent community played a huge role, taking charge of costuming, concessions, the raffle, buying and serving 800 meals for our students, building and striking the set, among other things. It brought people together for a joyous event.”

To conclude, this year’s school musical helped the cast artistically, emotionally, and professionally. This performance might have taken a while with a lot of effort, but it was certainly worth it. Now, the only question is what musical they perform next year.



# Lights, Camera, Action!



Ansel B-ewitches the audience.



One of the orphans holding a pose of shock.



Curtis D. preparing to act his heart out.



The Boylan Sisters singing jams at JAMS.

All Photos: Kira Bretsky

# Are Grades a Reflection of Intelligence?

By WYATT BROWN

Do you ever wonder if you're smart enough? Do your grades actually tell you how much you really know? Guess what? Tests may not always be the best benchmark to determine your academic brilliance.

Student scoring has been around for many years. The earliest known form of grading was by the ancient Greeks and they used an assessment based system. After grades started evolving over time, the most used one started in the 1940's in the US and it was the letter grade system.

Typically, the letter grades were only used from grades 6 and up. Even now, it is still the most used system for student grades.

Although it has worked for a long time, people are starting to find new ways to grade. Some people argue that letter grades don't show how much the students actually learn.

There are already schools that use other grading systems. For example, some schools in the US use a grading scale called standards-based grading, which shows how much the students are mastering the skill and it also includes specific teacher comments. There are many different ways of grading in the world, but as long as one learns and does well in school, it should help tremendously.

One of the most controversial school topics is grades. Oftentimes, students complain about them and it can ruin their morale and excitement to learn.

When students start to see poor letter grades splashed all over their report card, they can start to lose confidence in their academic ability. It can lead to students giving up and having a negative mindset.

Effort plays a big role in getting good letter grades. Eighth grader Alex Beekman said, "As long as you put in the effort to complete assignments, you should get good grades. Students should take school seriously because they can have a big effect on your future so you should try hard." To add, according to the Washington

Post, "Grades matter in college admissions because they are a signal of a student's effort, grit and determination."

Despite the fact that many students today believe that grades are pointless, that is not true. Grades may not define intelligence but they can define memorization skills, focus, consistency, and work ethic. These are all important skills for life so when people hear the common phrase, "Why do I need to learn this, I'll never remember it?", Students should know that it is not always about the specific details but instead what ways it can help in the future on a daily basis. For example, many students strongly dislike English class and

*"As long as you put in the effort to complete assignments, you should get good grades."*

-Alex Beekman, 8th-grade

do not think that grammar is important, but it really is. What if there was a job interview and the person wasn't hired because they couldn't speak properly, using correct grammar?

That is why it is important to learn it in school and excel. When asked how to get better grades, 7th/8th grade JAMS math teacher Ms. Alexopoulos said, "Study for assessments and finish all of your classwork. What you are going to be, you are now becoming. What you do now is contributing to your future so make good decisions and stay on task." Also, with the end of the school year near, students should really push to get their grades up before summer to gain confidence and readiness for the next school year.

A student usually has many struggles in school but they shouldn't lose hope. There are many resources, especially at JAMS. These resources include the Paper tutoring app, helpful and supportive teachers, technology, intervention classes, and much more. All of these resources are accessible to every student at JAMS.

In the end, the key to good grades is hard work and focus. If students have that, there is no limit to success in school. Grades may not define intelligence, but they sure help one succeed in the future.

# Wordle!

A New York Times Best Seller!

By JAKE BROMELL

**W**ho is Wordle? What is Wordle? When is Wordle? Where is Wordle? How is Wordle? Why is Wordle? These are all questions that I will do my best to answer for you, right now.

## What is Wordle?

Wordle is a very popular online game in which every 24 hours there's a new word of the day, and it's up to you to figure out what it is. The rules are simple; you have six tries to guess the correct word of the day. After each guess, the color of the tiles will change to show how close you are to solving the word. Green means that the letter is in the word, and in the correct spot. Yellow means that the letter is in the word but in the wrong spot. Finally, if the letter tile turns dark gray then the letter isn't in the word at all.

## Why is Wordle so popular?

To answer that question we first have to look back to the beginning of the game creation. Wordle was created in 2013 by Josh Wardle, a software engineer from New York. He created a prototype in 2013. Later, during the pandemic, he took that prototype and introduced it to his peers. This started the game off and it has been gaining popularity ever since, eventually being bought by the New York Times and is now displayed on their website. The game has over 300,000 plays every day!



## Is Wordle Educational?

Now that we know what Wordle is and how it came to be, is Wordle educational? English teacher, Ms. Beeman Solano, states that, "I think Wordle is a good option for an activity for students to do when they have finished their assigned work or while waiting for class to get started, or in advisory for example." She says that she doesn't have enough space in her curriculum to make Wordle an official assignment and therefore thinks that it is a very good activity for students who have finished their assignments. "It is really good for helping us recognize spelling patterns and to use deductive reasoning to narrow in on a solution. Sometimes I see students playing it on GoGuardian and I

## A student struggles to complete the day's Wordle.

Photo: Wyatt Brown

say, "Hey Tommy, that's a terrible strategy. Don't waste your guess on letters that you know are wrong. Take your time and think of a better word."

However, teachers have so much to teach that is directly related to the CA State English Language Arts Standards that they don't have time to make Wordle an official assignment. Ms. Beeman actively gives students small hints and encouragement through the GoGuardian chat and seems to be delighted that they have found a game that both helps them problem solve and is fun to play. So in Beeman's case, she thinks that Wordle is indeed educational.

Ms. Scotland, a 6th-grade humanities teacher, has a very similar opinion. In a recent interview, she said, "Wordle is a great game for students who read as a habit and have a high vocabulary. However, if you are not a reader of English, are learning English in school, or have a specific learning disability in the area of reading or writing, it can be very challenging." She essentially stated that students should play Wordle, but only as an extracurricular activity or entertainment only, and an activity in place of school work. In the case of the JAMS community, many agree with the teachers. As of May, the vast majority of students agree that Wordle is educational.

JAMS staff, administrators, and students aside, we now must look at this from a different view in order to understand why it's educational. A professor of psychology from the University of California in Riverside, Aaron Seitz, does agree with the statement. Although, he says, guessing the Wordle in less tries than someone else doesn't make you smarter than them. He also says that playing Wordle only makes your brain remember a small amount of information and this means that you will only get better at guessing words in the Wordle format. To sum it up, he only thinks that playing a lot of Wordle will only make you better at Wordle. After considering the evidence and different opinions, what do you think? Is Wordle educational, or is it just another mind numbing game?

## Why is Wordle so fun?

Since October of 2021, people have enjoyed playing it and it has been trending online ever since. Some have speculated that the game's popularity is due, in part, to its easy gameplay and simple mechanics. Wordle has become a very popular site to play with family and friends by creating friendly competitions. In a recent JAMS survey, many students prefer to play with either friends or alone, few like to play with their family.

## Did You Know...

- The name Wordle is actually based on the original developers name, Wardle.
- Wordle has a hard mode, the hard mode makes it so that each correct letter must be used in a subsequent guess.
- The feature to do the emoji grid share was not in the original game, in fact it was only until two months after the launch that a Twitter user by the name of Elisebeth S. inspired the spoil free way of sharing your Wordle results!
- There are 2,315 different words on the Wordle list, this means that the game will go for about 6 years, or on October 20, 2027.

## Tips and Tricks For Guessing the Wordle

You need a good starting word! Try something with a lot of vowels, or very common letters. Like "A", "E", "C", "T", "I", and "O". The best starting words are: crane, audio, adieu, cameo. Some people say that 'stare' is the best Wordle starting word, some say it's 'slice', the list goes on and on. NEVER Google the answer! This ruins the game for you and if you brag to your friend about "getting if first try" that's just dishonest. The game is a puzzle, play it like a puzzle. You have to look at the information that you have uncovered and use it to find the correct answer.

# MYSTERY OF THE METAVERSE

A virtual reality space where it's not only fun and games, but it can also be used for physical fitness

By **DESMOND BRENNER**

Since the release date of Oculus (March 28, 2016), it has slowly risen up to the top of virtual reality (VR) headsets. It has slowly grown from a small company to the best VR space and it is now partnered with Facebook to create the best VR experience for its buyers.

This VR system has partnered with Facebook which got Oculus many more users. Facebook founder, Mark Zuckerberg, is working on upgrading the VR space by being able to contact people in real time, using Facetime, on the Oculus. They're also working on getting more age groups on VR.

Since virtual reality is very interactive, users often need to move around and there's potential for exercise. Zuckerberg's goal is to push fitness into the virtual reality space. "Think about it like Peloton, where you have a subscription, but instead the device is VR and you put on your headset, and you're in this amazing environment and you're doing a boxing class with an instructor, or a dance class," Zuckerberg said.

VR is the perfect



space to combine gaming and exercise. One can get a surprising amount of exercise by accident, just from playing interactive games in the VR world. There is also an app on Oculus called Oculus Move which can track calories and set fitness goals. While there are a lot of apps where one can exercise, there are some games that specifically target physical fitness, such as SuperNatural and fitXR.

The Oculus Quest 2 is the most popular VR device with about 10 million of them sold by February of this year. According to a recent JAMS survey, about 27% of students at JAMS have an Oculus, but 39% use the device but don't own one. Currently, the #1 game on the Oculus is The

Walking Dead: Saints & Sinners. The reason this game is so popular is because of the amazing campaign and arguably the best graphics out of all the games in VR. But at JAMS, the most played game is Beat Saber (39%), coming in second place is Super Hot (10%), Gorilla Tag (9%) and Population 1 (9%) tied for third. One of their top games is Beat Saber which is made to be fun, but also an upper body workout.

Eighth grader, Jonah Dworkin said, "I like to scream at little kids on the Oculus," he said. "It helps me let off a little steam."

There are many reasons why Oculus is taking over. From partnering with one of the biggest companies like Facebook, to upgrading graphics and improving the VR space for the future, the Oculus is changing the world as we know it.

# Mask On, Mask Off

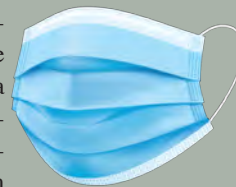
Student reactions vary after California lifted the mask mandate in public schools

By **SENAM TURNER**

On March 11, 2022, the mask mandate was lifted. People were not required to wear a mask indoors in places such as schools, stores, gyms, and restaurants. After the mandate was lifted, people stopped wearing masks, but because of the COVID numbers increasing, some people still wear masks due to uncertainty. Over 70% of people in the school wear masks because it is a habit, to keep others and themselves safe, cover up blemishes, as an accessory, conforming to the majority and many more reasons. Masks are not a big deal for many people, but for some, wearing masks has been inconvenient and very uncomfortable. It made it dif-

ficult to breathe, communicate clearly, recognize faces, and it even irritated skin, fogged up glasses, and didn't allow others to see facial expressions.

Students have reacted differently to the lift of the mask mandate. In a recent survey students gave their opinions and feedback on the mask mandate being lifted. A 7th-grader stated, "It is risking the lives of immunocompromised people to do stuff like that, so maybe let's not? Everyone's acting like it's a huge relief that "oh only x people with x will die" but those are still people! Generally just wear your mask and



don't be a selfish jerk! The pandemic is still on and people are still dying every day!! We cannot "return to normal" so quickly and so soon after an event of such weight." This gives us one perspective on the way kids have reacted to the mask mandate since it has been lifted. Many think it could lead to more people getting COVID.

There are a lot of people who want things to go back to normal and overjoyed that the mask mandate is being lifted. They were able to see their friends' and your classmates' faces and feel safe when they are at school and not have to

worry about COVID. As another student said, "I don't mind the mask mandate being lifted. I feel it's a way to get things back to normal like they used to be before the pandemic. Although I personally think it is a bit awkward walking around without a mask and seeing a different perspective of others who still wear a mask." This tells us how some people like the mask mandate being lifted and how things are going back to normal. In conclusion, there is a lot of controversy to the lift of the mask mandate in the school, there are kids that like when the mask mandate was lifted but there are also people who still want to stay safe by wearing masks.



## Space Tourism and its Effects and Developments in the Future

By EITAN PUCHALT

Just last summer, Jeff Bezos, the owner of Amazon, went to space with three others, and he, along with other owners of space tourism companies, plan to do so again. As time goes on, space tourism will become more popular. But is it potentially dangerous? Does it cost too much? What does this mean for the students at JAMS in the future?

Space travel costs a lot, which is why so many millionaires and billionaires are doing it. According to Visual Capitalist, “For a suborbital trip on Virgin Galactic’s SpaceShipTwo and Blue Origin’s New Shepard, seats typically cost \$250,000 to \$500,000. Flights beyond that to actual orbit—a much higher altitude—are far more expensive, fetching more than \$50 million per seat.” That is a very high price that most of the students’ families at JAMS can not afford. Some trips can even cost over a billion dollars.

*“I think the price is fair for space tourism. After all, it funds the companies that take you to space.”*

—Connor R., 6th-grade

In 2021, an announcement was made about a space hotel to be released 2027. It is called the “Voyager Station”, and is very expensive. A three-night stay costs \$5 million. The construction of the hotel is due to start in 2026. According to Interesting Engineering, “To ensure that tourists don’t float away, the ring-shaped hotel will have artificial gravity. Voyager Station will spin like a Ferris wheel and use centrifugal force — the apparent outward force on a mass when rotated — to simulate moon-like levels of gravity.” This is different from any space structure before. They even have a gym with a basketball court and a trampoline where visitors can jump very high since it is in low gravity. However, tourists will be required to take a challenging space training course before their stay.

Space travel has undergone some serious dilemmas in the past. On January 28, 1986, the Challenger space shuttle took off from Cape Canaveral, Florida. It had seven crew members on board, all of them



## The Case Of Space



The Voyager Station. Photo: CNN

civilians. After a bit over one minute into the flight, the spacecraft exploded, shocking America. This is why space travel can be very dangerous, and it is better to take extra precautions. To make sure this accident doesn’t happen again, scientists are putting a lot of effort into the safety of future designs. Still, some people choose to be on the safe side, and not go to space at all.

As time goes on, space tourism will most likely become more common. This means that it might be a big part of a JAMS student’s future. They might even go to space themselves, but there is no telling. Most likely, in the future, space tourism will become cheaper than it is now, but it will still be somewhat expensive. There was already a historic moment last summer when Jeff Bezos went to space. His trip included the richest person to go to space (Jeff Bezos), the oldest person to go to space (Wally Funk), and the youngest person to go to space (Oliver Daemen). Richard Branson, the owner of many important companies (including a well-known space tourism company called Virgin Galactic) said this



Spacecraft for six-hour tours from “Space Perspective” space tourism company.

Photo: DeZeen

while on a trip to space, “I was once a child with a dream looking up to the stars. Now I’m an adult in a spaceship looking down at our beautiful Earth. To the next generation of dreamers, if we can do this, imagine what we can do.” Several space tourism companies like SpaceX, Virgin Galactic, and BlueOrigin are working with scientists from N.A.S.A to develop more technologically advanced spacecraft for a safer and more eco-friendly design for the future. A lot of pollution comes from space travel as well, but scientists are trying to find a solution. With these new designs, there is more hope for making space travel more common in the future.

Space tourism has the potential to be fun and educational, but it still suffers from two major problems: expense and safety. Until these obstacles are overcome, space travel might not be fully successful. Still, other technological advancements that once seemed impossible are now common and affordable. One day, even JAMS students may be able to take a vacation in orbit and see Earth from above.

# Pride or Pandering?

By VIOLET PARR

The month of June commemorates the raiding of the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City back in 1969, and the riots that followed. These said riots started the gay liberation movement and helped further the rights of gay and transgender people. In more recent times, PRIDE has become more of a retail event than a riot. Brands buy large floats for parades and deck out their products and logos in rainbow. But when hypocrisy and homophobia are so deeply ingrained in companies, do they really care about the LGBTQ+ community or is it just a marketing strategy?

The LGBTQ+ community has been pushed into mainstream acceptance in the past decade. Since then, brands have profited off PRIDE without actually supporting the community. For example,

Walgreens donated \$28,000 in support of the “don’t say gay bill”, but still changed its logos to rainbow during PRIDE month (source: Los Angeles Blade). On the other hand, some brands have executed PRIDE merchandise well, by putting their money where their mouth is. In 2019, Target partnered with GLSEN, a resource used here

at JAMS for the Queer Student Alliance (QSA) and donated 100k to the education organization. When asked what she thought brands should do with the money made from selling PRIDE items, QSA Advisor,

Spanish and ELD teacher, Ms Buccioni, stated, “I think that if corporations are making money from Rainbow Capitalism, they need to be giving some of that wealth back to the community”.

The rainbow flag which represents the LGBTQ+ community was created in 1978 by artist, designer and activist Gilbert Baker. It was created to give a symbol of pride and resistance to the queer community. Today, brands put it on merchandise without raising awareness about the less glamorous aspects of

being LGBTQ+. They choose to ignore the higher rates of homelessness and depression and the average life expectancy of black trans women being just 35, instead, watering down the message and using PRIDE

as a marketing strategy. However, some believe PRIDE campaigns are a good way to show acceptance. Ms Buccioni stated, “I wish there had been more representation and visual support for LGBTQ+ kids when I was growing up.” Seeing a visual representation of support from a popular brand could have a positive impact.

While wearing and purchasing PRIDE merchandise feels like a good way to show support, it’s important to know who is profiting. It can be difficult to differentiate a hollow cash grab from a show of support from corporations, so make sure to do research before clicking “Buy.”



The Marks & Spencer LGBT sandwich with lettuce, guacamole, bacon and tomato received mixed reactions.

Photo: Google Images



Scan The QR code for a list of brands giving back for PRIDE month.

# Artwork for a Cause

By ORLY WILKINSON

For the past 14 years, Santa Monica has held an annual art competition known as the Sustainable Santa Monica Poster Contest. Each year, there is a theme related to the environment’s wellbeing. This year’s theme, “Do your part, be water smart” hits especially close to home for anyone familiar with the drought that California has been struggling with since 2011. Although the drought officially ended in 2019, it is still a lasting issue that must be addressed.

Three JAMS students placed at the recent Sustainable Santa Monica Poster Contest, winning 1st, 2nd, and Honorable Mention.

## Grand Prize

Sahana Lindsay, 8th grade

“I wanted to create something that showed the importance of saving water and the impact it has on the environment, so I decided to depict part of it with a canyon and a river with the water level lowering.”



## Second Place

Alisa Fox, 6th-grade

“My favorite thing about my artwork is all the plants surrounding the slogan, I don’t draw plants often, so I found it fun to learn more about them while doing the poster.”



## Honorable Mention

Ruby Krekelberg, 6th-grade







Focused on her art, Jordyn S. blends colors for her mandala, a geometric configuration of symbols.  
Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Enjoying their popsicles, Mina A., Enrique J., Ariella C., and Aiko D. cool off on a warm day at school.  
Photo: Isabella Hillier



In the spotlight, Haeliyah H. performs for the audience in the Annie musical as Bertha Healy.  
Photo: Kira Bretzky

*Dignified Dragons*  
*Doing Daily Duties*  
**JUST JAMS**  
KIND  
CONNECTED  
COMPASSIONATE



Annie is here! Kirby W. and the cast light up the Performing Arts Center with their presence.  
Photo: Kira Bretzky



Practicing soccer, Anton S. kicks the ball past the goalie to score one for the team.  
Photo: Desmond Brenner



Two thumbs up! D'Anna B. and Wisdom W. love Food Truck Day.  
Photo: Isabella Hillier



Preparing for the mob, Ben S. and Charles W. get ready to sell Menchie's frozen yogurt.  
Photo: Katherine Barba





Catching up, Boadicea C. and Ciela H. enjoy snacks on the field during lunch.  
Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Proud of her work, Paisley P. shares her assignment after reading *The Giver*.  
Photo: Mr. Miranda



Happy students, Gus R.G. and Sigurd K. pull down their masks to reveal their smiles.  
Photo: Eitan Puchalt



Waiting for the bell, Riley C. and Sam J. share a moment of friendship.  
Photo: Jake Bromell



Spreading positivity, Anna G. paints "JAMS Be Kind" during the lunch time art activity.  
Photo: Mr. Miranda



Kind and caring, Layla D., Ophelia H., and Livia N. enjoy their moment of togetherness.  
Photo: Addelyn Fiore



Dream Team. Matteo T., Max G., and Brooklyn M., cheerfully celebrate after scoring a point in P.E.  
Photo: Jack Segal



Intercepted! Jack W. and Jacob B. eagerly compete for the football during a friendly game of catch.  
Photo: Desmond Brenner



# Make It Sing!

Why participating in music may just be the key to a more fulfilling life

By ORLY WILKINSON



For centuries, music has been a vital part of culture and community. Over the years, it has brought people together for numerous reasons, whether it be for religious beliefs, cultural celebrations, dances, or purely for entertainment. In the Santa Monica and Malibu School District, music is heavily emphasized, and for good reason. Music not only benefits the brain, but it also has the ability to improve countless other aspects of everyday life.

According to Mr. Garnreiter, the Assistant Director of the JAMS Instrumental Music Program, the program, established in 1915, has now grown to where nearly half of the student population participates in some form of performing arts. But why? Mr. Garnreiter says, "Many schools in the area have good music programs, but they don't have the same level of community support or the number of students needed to make a program like we have in SMMUSD."

## Skills Surrounding Literacy, Communication, and Learning/Education

Participating in music has many educational benefits. For example, music students must learn to read sheet music confidently and efficiently, which in turn improves reading comprehension. According to Inc. Magazine, "Music and reading are related via common neural and cognitive mechanisms." Put simply, music can improve one's overall reading abilities. However, reading is just one of many educational benefits, music also helps early communication skills, developmental to advanced math skills and so much more! Combined, these skills can be influential in one's professional life. JAMS Choir Director, Ms. Blanchard stated, "In addition to being performers or teachers, many of our music department alumni are now doctors, lawyers, engineers, etc. who studied music throughout their education and this now helps them be more successful in their careers."

## Improves Ability to Process Sensory Information

Music not only helps improve reaction time, which can be beneficial later in life as reaction time slows with age, but it also improves auditory and speech processing skills, as well as one's understanding of subtle tone changes and sound recognition. These changes can improve one's ability to operate well in both casual and professional settings.

## Changes to the Brain

When learning music, there are incredibly profound effects on the brain. For instance, the corpus callosum, a bundle of nerves that keep the two hemispheres of the brain communicating, are somewhat larger in people who participate in music versus those who don't. Moreover, the brain also has more gray matter in some areas, which enables people to better control movement, memory and emotions. However, sometimes, even just listening to music can have benefits! When someone sings, plays an instrument or listens to music, the brain forms new neural connections which enables one to think with higher reasoning.

## Improved Fine Motor Skills

When musicians play instruments, the mind and body have to constantly work together to be precise and in-tune, this helps to develop fine motor skills. This can greatly help many groups of people, especially stroke patients who have lost varying degrees of movement and coordination due to brain damage. According to the National Library of Medicine, after having a stroke, when patients participated in a series of musical activities, their motor skills improved.

## Mental Health Benefits and Self Expression

For many who participate in music, it can be an amazing form of self-expression and an outlet to unleash creativity. Moreover, it has also been shown to improve anxiety and depression levels in people of all ages. This happens for many reasons and one of them is because when someone plays an instrument or sings, their mind must be very focused on that task, this is especially helpful for anxiety. In addition, when playing or even listening to music, the brain releases more dopamine, which in turn lessens depression.

## Discipline and Focus

Self-evidently, learning an instrument or learning to train the voice is not an easy task - it takes time, practice and patience to improve. Therefore, music can help with overall concentration and self-discipline. Additionally, in setting up routines and regular practice sessions, students will develop important skills for later in life. Put together, students can and will improve their musical abilities, and see the outcomes of hard work, good habits, and goal-setting. As 8th grader, Lila Subin said, "I love when we learn the songs, and at the end it all comes together and sounds amazing!"

## Social Skills/ The Community Aspect

When children participate in a choir, band, orchestra, or any other music class, they are working together and collaborating. This not only improves their social skills, but also their ability to understand emotions and feel empathy towards others. JAMS Instrumental Music Director, Ms. Woo agrees, "The most important benefit to learning music is that it builds connections and strengthens relationships with other humans. Music brings people together for a collective artistic experience. Through music, everyone can establish personal friendships and meaningful relationships that will enhance our lives."

At JAMS, the music program is a place where students can connect, collaborate and improve their mind. 7th grader, Mia Pulido-Vila, recognizes this by saying, "I think everything about this music program gives off a great energy; from the teachers and the organization to our community and the talented musicians in it. I am very fortunate to be given all these opportunities to explore not only how I can be a better musician, but to also explore all the different colors and shapes of the sound each instrument or voice has." All in all, music is an amazing elective full of new opportunities and growth.





Students in Girl's Chorus work hard to prepare for their upcoming performance. Photo: Ms. Blanchard



Violists in Chamber Orchestra synchronize their bows as they play a fast-paced melody. Photo: Ms. Woo



Photo: Ms. Woo

Melina M. plays the violin.



Choir student, Rex P. practices a vocal exercise. Photo: Ms. Blanchard

# MUSIC PROGRAM SNAPSHOTS



Photo: Orly Wilkinson

Two Concert Band students practice with their sectionals teacher.



Symphony Orchestra's cello section. Photo: Ms. Woo

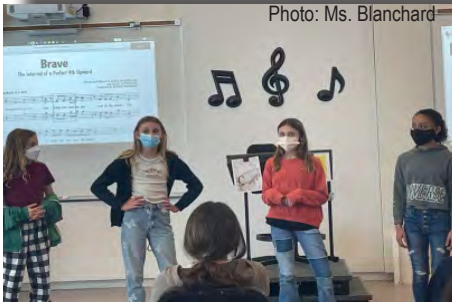


Photo: Ms. Blanchard

Four students in Girl's Chorus practice their solo pieces.



Photo: Mr. Garnreiter.

Concert Band student Alyssa V. silently counts her rests before her next entrance.



Photo: Ms. Woo

Grayson F. and Nina S. focus as they play their scales.



Tehmina Z. practices a new piece on her french horn. Photo: Mr. Garnreiter

Honor Choir students smile in their performance uniform. Photo: Ms. Blanchard







Iris C., Mia C., Leona J., Arata S., Alyssa A. and Madison T. get together for a photo while waiting in line for food on Food Truck Day! Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Amir N. and Nyah B. enjoy some afternoon conversation as they munch on some chips.

Photo: Karah Alcalá



Jonah D shoots and scores during the basketball unit in PE.

Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Photo: Aislin Gutierrez

# Goodbye 8th Graders!

By ORLY WILKINSON



Photo: Eitan Puchalt



Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Photo: Katherine Barba

Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Photo: Aislin Gutierrez



Photo: Orly Wilkinson



Photo: Kira Bretzky



### What will you miss most about JAMS?

- 1. My Friends - 69%
- 2. The Teachers - 46%
- 3. The Campus, The Electives, One of my classes - 29%

### Are you ready to move on to high school?

Yes! - 73%

No! - 27%



Photo: Orly Wilkinson

Photo: Kira Bretzky

Photo: Mr. Miranda

### Do you wish you could do middle school all over again?

Yes! - 29%

No! - 71%



Photo: Wyatt Brown

### What is your favorite memory at JAMS?

*"My favorite memory from JAMS is performing Annie in the new auditorium."*  
 - Karin C.

*"My favorite memory is talking with my friends during advisory."*  
 - Aaliyah M.

*"My favorite memory at JAMS is going to Catalina with friends"*  
 - Guadalupe D.



Photo: Orly Wilkinson

Photo: Orly Wilkinson

Photo: Orly Wilkinson

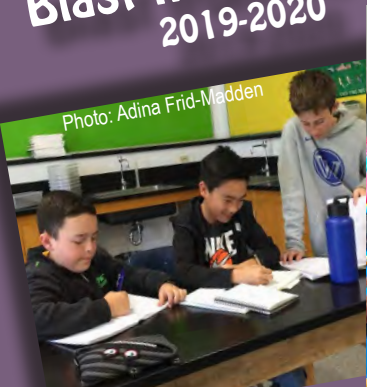
### Blast from the Past 2019-2020

Photo: Adina Frid-Madden

Photo: Mr. Miranda

Photo: Mr. Miranda

Photo: Mr. Miranda







# THEY'RE WATCHING YOU



What is GoGuardian really guarding?

By TESSA LEVINE

**G**oGuardian - an easy solution to keep kids on track, or a divisive software with little impact? Teachers and students feel very differently about this classroom tool that allows teachers to monitor and control students' online activities during class.

"I use GoGuardian as a way to keep students on task during class time. Not all students need GoGuardian as a motivation to stay on task, but some do. GoGuardian is also a way to keep a record of what students are doing electronically on a school-issued Chromebook," said Ms Jurewicz. Like Ms Jurewicz, 86% of teachers surveyed use GoGuardian. They stress that it helps students that can't self-monitor, and that some features of GoGuardian make the classroom experience better for teachers, such as creating scenes where they are able to block certain sites and only enable those used for working on the assignment given.

It seems straightforward that a school issued device should be used only in the way the school intended, and that it's the school's right to monitor all activity. With all the web offers, it only seems like the right thing to do to help students avoid distractions during classtime. Just like phones aren't allowed in class, why would students be allowed to play games on their computers? Plus, the survey

shows that it allows teachers to spend class time teaching versus spending time walking around and monitoring students' computer screens.

So, if GoGuardian is such a helpful classroom tool, why do some teachers use it and some don't? Some teachers haven't felt the need to, while others haven't had the chance to set it up. What tools do the teachers that don't feel the need to monitor students' screens use instead? And why do students overwhelmingly disagree with the benefits? Eighty percent of students surveyed say GoGuardian is unnecessary and 60% say it really doesn't prevent them from being off-task. Who are the 20% of students that

find GoGuardian necessary and useful? And the 60% that say it doesn't prevent them from being off task - are they always concentrating, or are they finding ways around GoGuardian? "I don't really like GoGuardian, because it is distracting to me to feel that somebody is monitoring me as I write - kind of like a teacher standing behind me and looking over my shoulder," one student says. Another weighs in and says that just like kids manage to get around screen time limits on their phones, students

find ways to hack the system anyway.

Should we open a conversation about why kids are distracted so easily? Are there ways to build trust between students and teachers without a tool that feels to kids like they are being controlled, or is that a fantasy so unrealistic that it's laughable?

Another issue is that GoGuardian can be used outside of school hours. Proponents say that as the Chromebooks are school property, that's ok. Others say that it's

an unnecessary invasion of privacy. Some parents have voiced concerns that GoGuardian follows the Google Classroom accounts, and that it

then can see parents' activity if a student accidentally stays logged on in the Chrome browser on their personal laptops.

The fact that after doing two surveys and hours of research, more questions have arisen than answers to the pressing questions of how much surveillance is helping or hurting students, says a lot. We need to start talking about how to help students engage, and where the limits of surveillance should lie.

## Why do teachers use GoGuardian?

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*"Using GoGuardian, especially during advisory, encourages students to stay on task during this time."*

-Ms. Duff

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*"Many students have learned bad habits over the distance learning year, and although I believe that students are perfectly capable of self-monitoring, many have not been doing so."*

-Ms. Buccioni

---

*"I use GoGuardian to keep students focused on the given assignment or task."*

-Mr. Mauck

---

*"I use this some of the time to check progress on assignments."*

-Ms. Schwartz

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*"Improving education is the single highest point of leverage we have in improving society in the long term."*

-Advait Shinde,  
Founder of GoGuardian



# Schools, Students, and Secondary Languages

By KARAH ALCALA

The world is changing and people from different backgrounds are interacting, but not many people are ready to communicate properly. That is why students should learn a foreign language in school. Twenty percent of students learn a foreign language in TK-12, and 8% of students learn a foreign language in college. This shows that a small percentage of people learn a language in school. If such a small number of people know a foreign language, how are they supposed to interact with others outside of their country? "I'm learning a new language. I find it fun and enjoyable," seventh grader Elfi Book-Kastner.

## The benefits of learning a foreign language

There are many benefits of knowing more than one language. When someone learns a language it allows them to be able to communicate with a wider range of people. If someone only knows one language, they will only be able to communicate with people who know that language, but if someone knows two languages they will be able to communicate with more people than they could before. Being fluent in more than one language allows one to live and work in another country and travel to many destinations while respectfully communicating with the locals. Knowing more than one language also looks good on resumes. Students

believe that if someone knows more than one language, companies will want to hire them more than someone who only knows one language. Sixth grader Giana Aimonetti believes schools should teach a foreign language. She said, "It's just cool to be bi-lingual."

## What language should schools teach and when?

Aside from Spanish, 14% of students believe that Japanese should be taught, and another 14% believe that French should be taught. Most students believe that it will take over a year to fluently learn a foreign language. If learning a language was required, students believe that they should be able to choose their language and that it shouldn't be selected for them. Students believe it is helpful to know a foreign language. Thirty-eight percent of students believe that foreign language classes should start in middle school, and 25% of students believe that foreign languages should start in kindergarten.

## Ways to teach a new language

If languages were taught in middle school, would students need another period? In elementary school, each class

only has one teacher, and they don't switch teachers for different subjects. The majority of students think that there would be a separate class for elementary schools that teach foreign languages. If foreign languages were taught in elementary school they would not affect the length of the school day. Classes would be shorter, and students would be taken out of class before lunch to go learn their chosen language. Then, they would go back to their regular class after lunch. If learning a language in middle school was mandatory, most students believe it would be implemented as a class period. Some students believe that ELA would be taught in their chosen language, such as Spanish. Instead of learning grammar and writing skills in English, they'd learn grammar and writing skills in Spanish. "Incorporating a world language in the academic curriculum can increase the expenses that a school may have. The first couple of years of introducing a world language to school may require purchasing a variety of resources, and qualified teachers -- however, all that can be a positive investment in the long run," said Mrs. Cruz, Humanities Immersion teacher.

Students being able to learn a foreign language in school would be very beneficial if implemented properly. Learning it can allow a wider range of communication, more work opportunities, wider travel abilities, and it opens a new door for limitless possibilities.



## The Bookmark

JAMS students recommend these book titles that can be found in the school library. Check them out!

### Across the Desert by Dusti Bowling

One girl sets out on a journey across the treacherous Arizona desert to rescue a young pilot stranded after a plane crash in this gripping story of survival, friendship, and rescue.



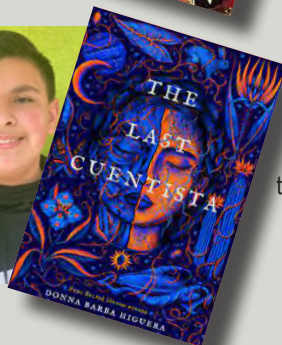
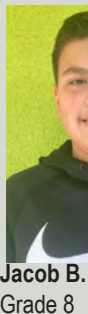
### All Thirteen: The Incredible of the Thai Boys Soccer Team by Christina Soontornvat

All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys' Soccer Team is a 2020 nonfiction children's book by American author Christina Soontornvat. It describes the 2018 Tham Luang cave rescue.



### The Last Cuentista by Donna Barba Higuera

The story follows Petra Peña who, along with her family and a few hundred others, leave Earth to continue the human race after a comet strikes the planet.



### Dragon Hoops by Gene Luen Yang

Dragon Hoops is a nonfiction graphic novel by Gene Luen Yang. Yang turns the spotlight on his life, his family, and the high school where he teaches.





Catching ON Campus



Food Trucks

Photo: Karah Alcalá

Photo: Jake Bromell



Photo: Addelyn Fiore



Photo: Desmond Brenner

Street food at JAMS! From ramen noodles to shaved ice, food trucks occupied the lunch area where students experienced delicious food.

CLOCKWISE: Roxy S. and Anna H. share each other's food.; Matthias L. chooses his favorite flavor for his shaved ice.; the Kona Ice truck is a favorite among students.; Trevor H. and Jasper K. sit to eat their street food.; Neelah B. hands out line tickets to Luke B., Aron W., and Noah P.; Mateo M.B. enjoys the sunny day with a cool treat.; Sasha O., Laila G., Quinlyn K., and Maron M. enjoy their time together.; the line at Shake Ramen wrapped around the lunch area.; Reed W. finishes their noodles before the bell rings.



Photo: Addelyn Fiore



Photo: Wyatt Brown



Photo: Mr. Miranda



Photo: Jake Bromell



Photo: Wyatt Brown



Ms. Joyce's art students visited the Building Bridges Art Exchange at the Bergamot Station where they met artist Walter Erra Hubert and worked together to create a group masterpiece.

CLOCKWISE: Students used various items to paint their masterpiece.; the group posed with Mr. Hubert after his art lecture and activity.; Walter Erra Hubert demonstrated his creative process to the students.; Zoe M., Ophelia H., and Layla D., used carrots and sponges to apply the paint on the canvas.



All photos: Ms. Joyce

# Bergamot Station



About JAMS 200 students and family members joined the trip to Joshua Tree National Park. They had two night sessions on astronomy led by parent and amateur astronomer, Yariv Levin (who is also married to science teacher Mrs. Levin). The group hiked to Mastodon peak, drove to the Cholla Garden, Octotillo Patch, and hiked and rock climbed at Hidden Valley.

Photo: Wendy Jaffa



CLOCKWISE: Lily M. and Zoey J. along with other students and parents, marvel at the rock formations at Joshua Tree.; Roman N. and Sakura K. lead the group in a hike across the desert.; Eva C., Lily M., and Stella H. gather around the campfire.; Ryan G., Jake L., and Roman N. rest on a roof and watch the sunset after a beautiful day in the park.

Photo: Mrs. Levin

# Joshua Tree



Photo: Zoey Jaffa

Photo: Mrs. Levin



Camping  
at  
Bergamot  
Station



# SKATEBOARDING TIMELINE



Photo : timesofera.com

1960's

Skateboarding began to sprout from the ground and show itself to the world. The skateboards were completely flat, so skaters were unable to do any variation of tricks. Decks were very tiny, and wobbled at high speeds.



Photo : skateboardingtransworld.net

1970's

The seventies wild style influenced the wacky outfits that skaters wore in the 70s. These included very high retro shorts with colored stripes, and hardcore skaters went bare-chested.



Photo: cvlnation.com

1980's

Boards became huge and bulky but easy to cruise around with. The 80s were a bomb for skateboarding culture. Street skateboarding is beginning to make its debut. The first skating videos or "parts" were released and sold on VHS tapes in the streets.



Photo: maxguide.org

1990's

The nineties are often considered the peak of street skating/street style. Baggy pants made its way into the community and many pro skaters were rocking them. With the personal computer now being held in many households across the US, skateboarding videos/parts were a way for skateboarders to make money off of people watching them.



Photo: skateboardingstartswihes.com

2000's

00s: Now modern skateboarding, skaters are wearing very tight jeans and beanies are in style. Video parts were released on YouTube and made a lot of money.



1. Keep your back toes on the board, and your front foot below the bolts.
2. Pop your back foot hard.
3. As the nose of the board starts to go up, slide your front foot to level it out.
4. Land back on the ground with both feet on the board.
5. Practice getting your ollies higher by popping harder, lifting up your knees, and sliding later.
6. Practice getting steezier ollies by watching videos on how to make your ollies look better.

**DID YOU KNOW?**  
 Skateboards were used by surfers when there were no waves to ride or the waves were flat. It was often called "sidewalk surfing".

Scan the QR code for a tutorial on how to ollie.



Scan the QR code for a video on skate history.





# Skateboarding Culture

Living in the birthplace of skateboarding - California

By MATEO MELIS-BEHRENS

Skateboarding has come a long way since the Venice Bowl era. From mini retro shorts to baggy jeans, skating has survived and thrived through all these changes, being one of the biggest sports and hobbies around the world. Skating gained massive popularity globally when the sport got added to the Olympics along with six others. But in the 80s, skating began to escape California and spread its wings to other states. World-famous skateboarder Tony Hawk became a professional skater in 1982 at the age of 14. Skating competitions with his presence had 30% more viewers from 1985-1989. Tony revolutionized skateboarding for the 80s/90s. But he wasn't the only popular skater. The Dogtown Boys, aka the pioneers of skateboarding, the

Z-Boys, the Lords of Dogtown. Unlike Tony Hawk, who skated vert, these guys skated bowls. The Z-Boys were notorious for winning skate competitions all over Dogtown. Those are some of the most-popular skaters of the last millenia. But skateboarding has still made an impact even today, with pros like Aaron Kyro, the leader of the Braille House, and Nyjah Houston who has won the SLS 19 times, making over a million dollars in prize money. But these skaters have an even different type of skating - street skating (view vocabulary). Transition (bowls), vert, and street skating are the three main types of skateboarding. Of course the list goes on, like downhill longboarding, mega, and carpet boarding.



Jack Segal boardslides a down rail.

Theo Carlson ollies down a stair set.

## SKATE SLANG

**Carve:** When a skater is riding a bowl, and they scoop their skateboard to touch the top of the side before going back down.

**Bowls:** A bowl in the ground where skaters can drop in and ride around on the sides

**Vert:** Vert standing for "vertical", is when two huge ramps that have a vertical drop are facing each other, so skaters can drop in and ride to the other side.

**SLS (street league skateboarding):** A competition where skaters compete in a street park for a cash prize.

**Street Skating:** Street skating is a type of skateboarding where skaters do tricks on stairs, ledges, and rails.

**Transition:** A type of skating where skaters ride around bowls and ramps.

**Steeze:** Giving tricks a little more style.

## PANTS BAGGY vs. TIGHT

### Baggy Pants

Baggy pants have been a skateboarding fashion style since the nineties, slowly losing popularity in the 2000's but rising back up again because of the "vintage 90s style". A lot of skateboarders say that baggy pants are very comfortable to skate in because it is a loose fit type of pants.

*"I prefer baggy pants because they're super comfortable. At first I thought it would weigh me down, but the pants are light and easy to skate in."*

- Sidney Dillon-King

### Tight Pants

Tight pants, or slim/skinny fit pants were increasingly popular among older skaters. And still are to this day. But slim fit dickies are one of the most popular brands among skaters. This is because they are built with a very durable material.

*"Wearing tight pants while skating is better for me because I can see the board easier. They also feel very lightweight."*

- Tanner Guth

By ADDY FIORE

In the 21st century over 3.6 billion people have used social media, probably including you. As many know, people can meet others on social media and stay connected with friends and family from across the world. Although this might sound fun and exciting, it can be detrimental and harmful to real-life friendships.

### The Positives Of Socializing Social Media

"I like social media because you can keep up with your friends without having to see them in person," said 7th grader, Jonathan R. Many people talk about the negative effects of social media, but people have met their best friends, spouses, and important people in their lives on different platforms. The most positive part of social media is getting to stay connected with friends and family, even from across the world. According to Pew Research Center, "More than 9 in 10 teens (94%) say they spend time with friends on social media." This shows that teens can use social media for good and it doesn't have to be harmful to their real-life friendships. Social media can also keep many others updated on other people's lives. Another positive thing that social media does is that people can express themselves in their most authentic self more than if they were with their friend(s) because they might be too embarrassed to do it in real life. Therefore, social media is their outlet to be themselves.

### The Negative Effects of Social Media on People's Real Life friendships

"I think social media can distract people from hanging out with their friends and to see what is right in front of them," said 7th-grader Mina A. Social media as most of the 3.6 billion users know, can be a toxic and negative environment for their real-life friendships. Looking at posts of your friends can be hurtful because they might be at a party that you weren't invited to. According to Pew Research Center, "A bit more than half (53%) of social media-using teens have witnessed others posting to social media about gatherings, events or parties that they weren't invited to." Therefore, feelings of betrayal, sadness, jealousy, or resentment can occur between friends - all from one social media post.

Social media consumes many people's lives. Ten percent of JAMS students spend six or more hours on social media a day, even though they might be connecting with their friends through a screen, they ar-



## Is Social Media Affecting Real Life Friendships?



The JAMS community comes together to take photos to spread awareness about social media affecting real life friendships. Photos: Addy Fiore

en't getting the real-life connection that humans need. In a New York Times article titled, "What All That Touch Deprivation is Doing to Us", it stated, "When asked what specific touch they missed the most, the answer was identical for everyone I interviewed: hugs". Although this might sound odd, there is such a thing as touch deprivation, this is when humans don't get as much physical touch that they are used to. Now that schools have been opened and mask mandates lifted, people have the option to see friends. It is important to hangout with them often and nurture the importance of personal friendships.

According to Pew Research, "Given the thorough integration of social media into the lives of the majority of American teens, it is no surprise that these sites play an important role in the establishment of friendships and the everyday back and forth of peer relationships."

In conclusion, social media platforms can help connect friends, but seeing

friends in person is much healthier in the long run. Since quarantining is over and mask mandates are lifted, people can safely see all of their friends and family again the old fashioned way, making meaningful connections without the use of technology.



"Depending on the situation it can harm friendships but it is not very likley to."  
Elliott S.  
8th-grade

"I think social media can affect real life friendships because If someone calls another a mean name online, it can cause the friendship to end badly."  
Destiny S.  
6th-grade





JAMS student, Theo Carlson catches a totally gnarly wave. Photo: Instagram



Professional skateboarder Aaron Homoki ollies 25 stairs. Photo: Thrasher Magazine



Olympian Shaun White does a huge backflip on snowboard. Photo: The Denver Post



Professional daredevil Evel Knievel successfully jumps over the Grand Canyon on dirtbike. Photo: BBC NEWS

**Did You Know?**  
 Skateboarding was the first extreme sport invented in the United States.

# WHAT ARE YOUR LIMITS?

## The Art of Extreme Sports

By JACK SEGAL

Skateboarding, snowboarding, surfing, dirt biking, you name it! These are just a few of the most popular extreme sports. Extreme sports have always been a common interest to middle school boys and girls, but it's not just middle schoolers though, people all over the world participate in extreme sports. People participate in these extreme sports to push their limits to the max.

Seventh-grader Colton Smith said, "Facing danger thrills me." Everyone has a reason they participate in these extreme sports. Doing these extreme sports forces one to face their fears. When doing this, the brain triggers a release of dopamine. Dopamine is responsible for allowing the body to feel satisfaction and motivation. When feeling good about accomplishing something, it's because the body gets a surge of dopamine from the brain.

Just starting or learning these sports can be very difficult. Beginners will have to really love it in order to persevere. They must be very dedicated and brave because in almost all extreme sports, failing is very common, but that is part of the process. Pushing limits is one of the most important parts of these sports, in order to overcome their fears.

These sports have their own close-knit communities. Some may be intimidated by them because they may tease or bully. This is a very common misconception. A lot of these communities are very welcoming and open to helping others.

Many schools and other institutions encourage people to participate in these extreme sports and face their fears. For example, JAMS has its own surf team that practices before school and after school and even has competitions. One of the surfers, Akiva Heller said, "I don't think about the fear because I know that once I have completed whatever challenge I set for myself, I will be a better surfer."

Extreme sports are rapidly increasing in popularity. For example activities like mountain biking, snowboarding and skateboarding continue to attract larger numbers every year. Extreme sports picked up popularity in the 1990s when they started to get promoted by the X Games, an annual extreme sports event organized, produced, and broadcasted by ESPN.

Facing your fears can be very important. It helps build confidence in many ways. An article from Explore-life.com states that, "Overcoming fears force us to learn. Embracing risk-taking also helps you to overcome a fear of failure."

*"Facing danger thrills me."*  
 -Colton Smith, 7th-grade



Professional surfer Kelly Slater catches a wave at famous surf spot, Teahupo'o. Photo: Surfer.com



# The Shark Misconception

Sharks have earned many reputations, but do they deserve all the hate?

By AISLIN GUTIERREZ

Sharks are one of the most misunderstood animals in the world. They can be found all around the world and in different sizes and shapes. In addition, sharks are apex predators, meaning they are at the top of the food chain and are a crucial part of the ocean ecosystem.

Sharks are labeled as dangerous, killers, and predators in the ocean which is why most people are afraid of sharks. In reality, according to World Wildlife, “Sharks are in all the world’s oceans, but shark attacks are extremely rare. One is more likely to be struck by lightning than attacked by a shark.”

According to a JAMS survey, 74% of JAMS students are afraid of sharks, and 31% are afraid because of movies and TV shows. Movies and TV shows create a big impact on people’s perspectives about sharks. Forty-three percent of JAMS students think that movies and TV shows make sharks appear different than they are. The fear started with the movie JAWS, the iconic thriller that starred a monstrous great white shark. After the movie was released, people developed a new, stronger fear of sharks creating negative ideas about this important sea creature. These shark horror movies make people believe sharks are monsters when in reality they are not.

According to the Smithsonian Ocean, 100 million sharks are being killed worldwide every year, some of the reasons are catching, overfishing, and shark finning. Shark finning is the act of cutting off a shark’s fin and throwing the rest of the shark back into the ocean. The shark fin is then used for food, with the idea that the fin of a shark brings high monetary and cultural value. This affects our ocean’s ecosystem by causing the shark population to decrease, creating an unbalance in the ocean’s food

chain. Ms. Jurewicz said, “ Shark finning is an awful practice. Shark finning is just killing the sharks for a soup and I believe the rest of the animal is wasted. Sharks are an important part of the ecosystem and when you drastically reduce the number of a species, the entire ecosystem is endangered and could collapse.” Without sharks, unbalance in the food chain causes other creatures to overeat, and become overpopulated.

Sharks are in great danger, but as a community, everyone can make a difference. One way students can help save the sharks is by avoiding products such as jewelry, and souvenirs that use shark bones such as teeth or jaws. Another way to help save the sharks is by being aware! Being aware of the products one buys or uses can help limit the number of products used that might contain sharks in them. Finally, support shops or organizations that donate to help save the sharks, many others around the world want to help make a difference and as a community, if one can contribute, it is a very effective way to support the cause.

Our oceans would never be the same without sharks, they are the ones that guide the other creatures of the food chain to keep the ocean healthy. Shark thrill movies such as JAWS create unrealistic scenarios about sharks, but in the real world, these movies ruin sharks’ reputations. Some may think of them as scary, vicious, and cruel, but it’s time to start changing perceptions about sharks.

For more information on how to save sharks:

Shark Stewards



PADI AWARE



A shark after the proces of shark finning has been complete. Photo: awionline.org



The 1975 movie JAWS sparked fear of sharks in many people.

Photo: TheAtlantic.com



Reef sharks and coral reefs in danger of extinction because of a decrease in shark population. Photo: smithsonianmag.com



# Discovering Different Dreams

By ISABELLA HILLIER

Since the beginning of time, dreams have been part of the human experience. Dreams are a sensation, thought, emotion, and vivid imagery. We know this because of research, yet society still has so many questions as we can still barely comprehend dreams.

## How do dreams work?

Dreams are a stage of imagery that happen in our sleep. Specifically when we enter a stage of sleep called, "Rapid Eye Movement" or REM sleep. Before reaching REM sleep someone will go through three previous stages, once they reach REM sleep dreaming begins. During REM sleep the brain is active as if it were awake. REM sleep allows the brain to do tasks around the body such as repairing wounds. This duration on average lasts 5-45 minutes, one may have 4-6 dreams during this time. The part of the brain that activates dreams is the Hippocampus. During REM sleep 7% of JAMS students reported that they nearly always remember their dreams, 59% of students sometimes remember dreams, while 2% of students never remember dreams.

## Why does one have dreams?

There are so many theories about why we have dreams. Some believe that they are messages from deities, or that they are warnings from our brain. In most cases many believe we have dreams because of our true feelings of subconsciousness. The purpose of dreams is still unknown, there are only theories as to why we have dreams. JAMS 7th-grader Rufus Ekberg said, "I think that dreams can help you see inside of yourself" Many do believe that dreams come from the subconscious. "Maybe dreams help you store important memories and things you've learned, get rid of unimportant memories" said 8th-grader Ayush Chandra. This statement supports the fact that at night the brain processes what we learned every day.

## How can dreams psychologically affect someone?

When it comes to dreams affecting someone psychologically they have many different opinions. Sixth grader Lailia Ghaffari said, "I think that dreams can mess with people's thoughts and how they view the world." Similar to this one may have a fearful dream known as a nightmare. In

most cases nightmares are caused by stress, while some could lead to depression. There are many side effects to this such as quality of sleep being affected. Fifty percent of JAMS students agree that dreams can affect the quality of sleep. Although many have not experienced it, sleep deprivation is much more common than one may think, and most times it is caused by dreams.

## History of dreams

The first evidence of dreams goes back to the Mesopotamian period, when the Babylonians recorded dreams on stone tablets. Traveling to 1899, Sigmund Freud's theory was found. Freud founded this theory and soon started writing books about dreams. This intrigued scientists and they soon started researching dreams as well. Nathaniel Clightment and Eugene Azkraiński were the ones who discovered brain waves in sleep. Clightment recorded his son's brain waves when he was asleep, to discover his brain activity was very active. Many people were shocked at this new information.

Humans spend their whole life dreaming only to know nothing about it. Sometimes these dreams can affect people's choices in real-life situations. We are only yet to continue on to learn how dreams work.

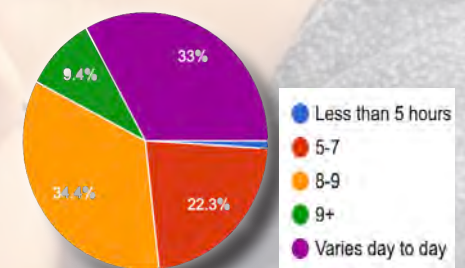
# The Importance of Getting Enough Sleep

By KATHERINE BARBA

Students sleeping in class is probably something teachers often experience on a daily basis. It may come off as offensive toward teachers, but why is it that students tend to doze off mid-lesson? Perhaps it's boredom or stress or the lack of connectivity with classmates. According to a JAMS student survey, most think it's because of stress and boredom. But without being aware, students could be partly responsible for their lack of sleep. Sleeping in class can have many effects on students such as missing important information which can later lead to getting bad grades. But are there any ways students can reduce their class nap times? According to JAMS students, setting a night time schedule for themselves and doing healthy mind activities before sleeping can be helpful. A few things one can do to start a night time sched-

ule are deciding on a set bedtime, minimizing the use of electronics at night, and taking time for oneself. Taking time for oneself simply includes doing skin care, reading a book, listening to soothing music, or doing yoga or a breathing exercise which can easily calm the body and mind to get ready for bed. In a recent JAMS survey around 20% of students normally get 5-7 hours of sleep when the body needs at least 8-9. "I definitely think that if students start sleeping earlier and get a healthy breakfast they can start getting more energy for throughout the day," said Ms. Shekhtmeyster, the JAMS psychologist. Getting enough sleep is very important because it helps the brain function, it provides a healthier immune system, and it increases productivity which is really handy for students. Getting enough sleep helps the brain function more health-

## How many hours of sleep do you normally get?



ily by flushing out toxins which provides a more flexible brain. According to UCLA Health, when we sleep, our bodies produce a protein called cytokines which helps the immune system to be more responsive which leads to a happy, healthy body and mindset. "It's important to get enough sleep because it's good for you and it helps you focus more," said 8th-grader Maximiliano Prieto. Although staying up on electronics or talking with friends sounds fun, it's important one is able to limit themselves and know when it's time for the body to get the rest it needs.



# THE ALARM THAT CRIED BEEP!

by Mia Pulido-Vila



The Illustrators



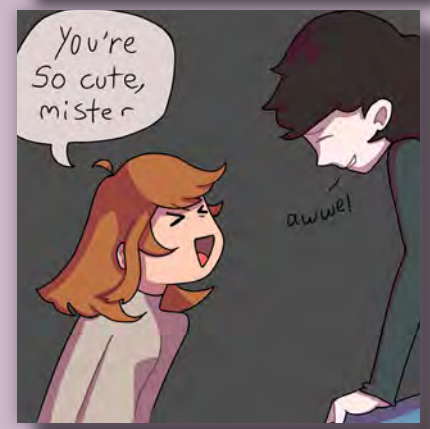
Mia Pulido-Vila



Liam Mason

# The Ripple

by Liam Mason



# The JAMS Journal

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