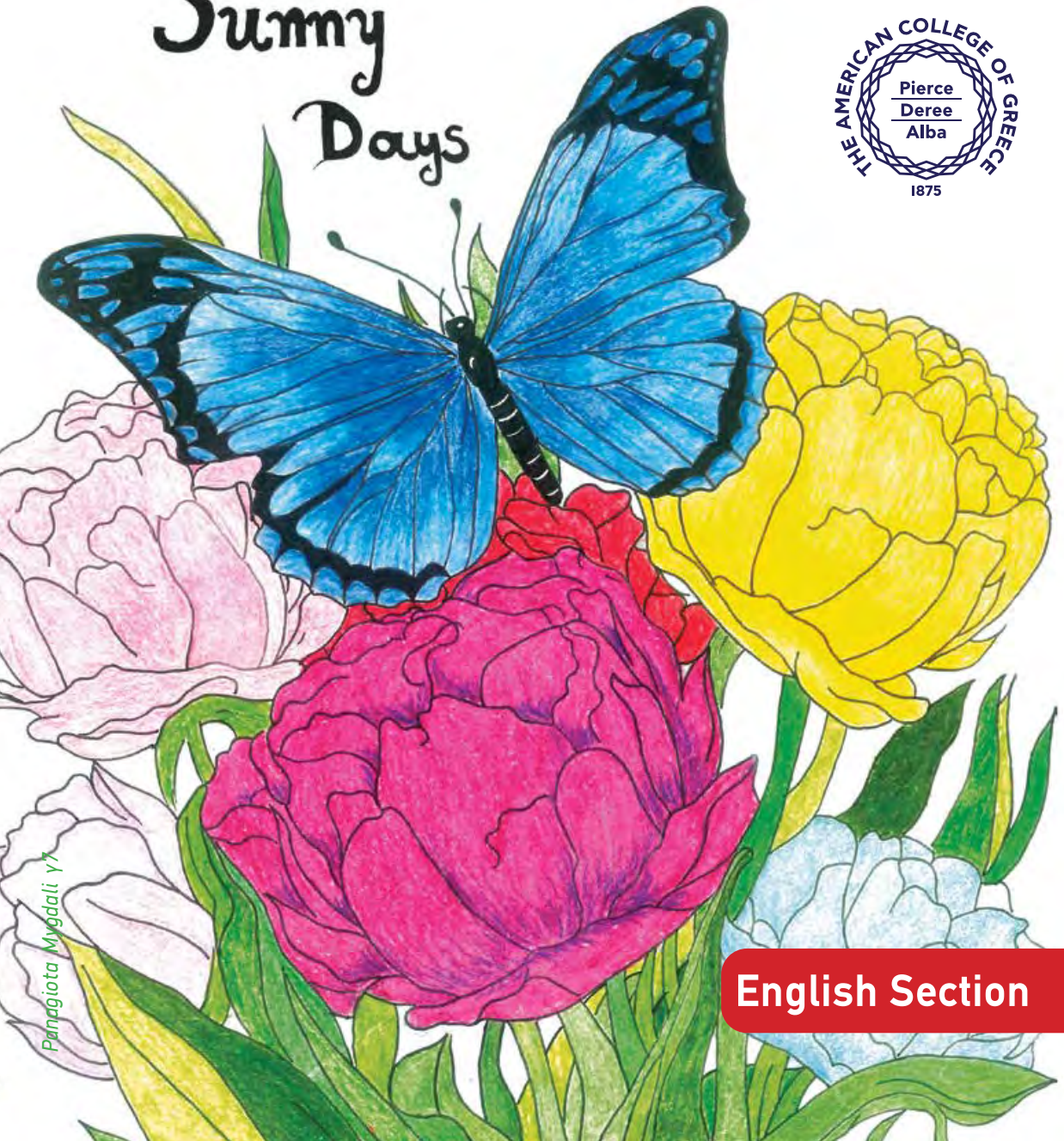


ΓΥΜΝΑΣΙΟ 2024

Ήλιες Ημέρες
Sunny
Days



Παναγιώτα Μυγάλη γ'Υ

English Section

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Dear readers,

welcome to the 2023-2024 edition of the "Sunny Days Magazine"!

I had no idea what this was until my English teacher in A' Gymnasium recommended I join. And it was the best decision I made. At the beginning, I only thought it was an interesting activity, but it quickly became so much more to me, and eventually, after three years of being a member, it holds, and will hold, a special place in my heart. I will be forever thankful for the impact made on me and filled with gratitude for the chance to be a part of this wonderful journey.

Sunny Days Magazine is not just a group of students, but a group of young creative people striving to make a change through their writing. We have created many memories together, thanks to the interviews we have taken, the events we have been to and the hours we have spent together over texts and poems. We are so much more than just a club. We are a safe space for every student to articulate thoughts and feelings.

This year we have covered a variety of topics, and we hope you will enjoy them all! Each of these topics has woven its way into our magazine.

"Tempus fugit"

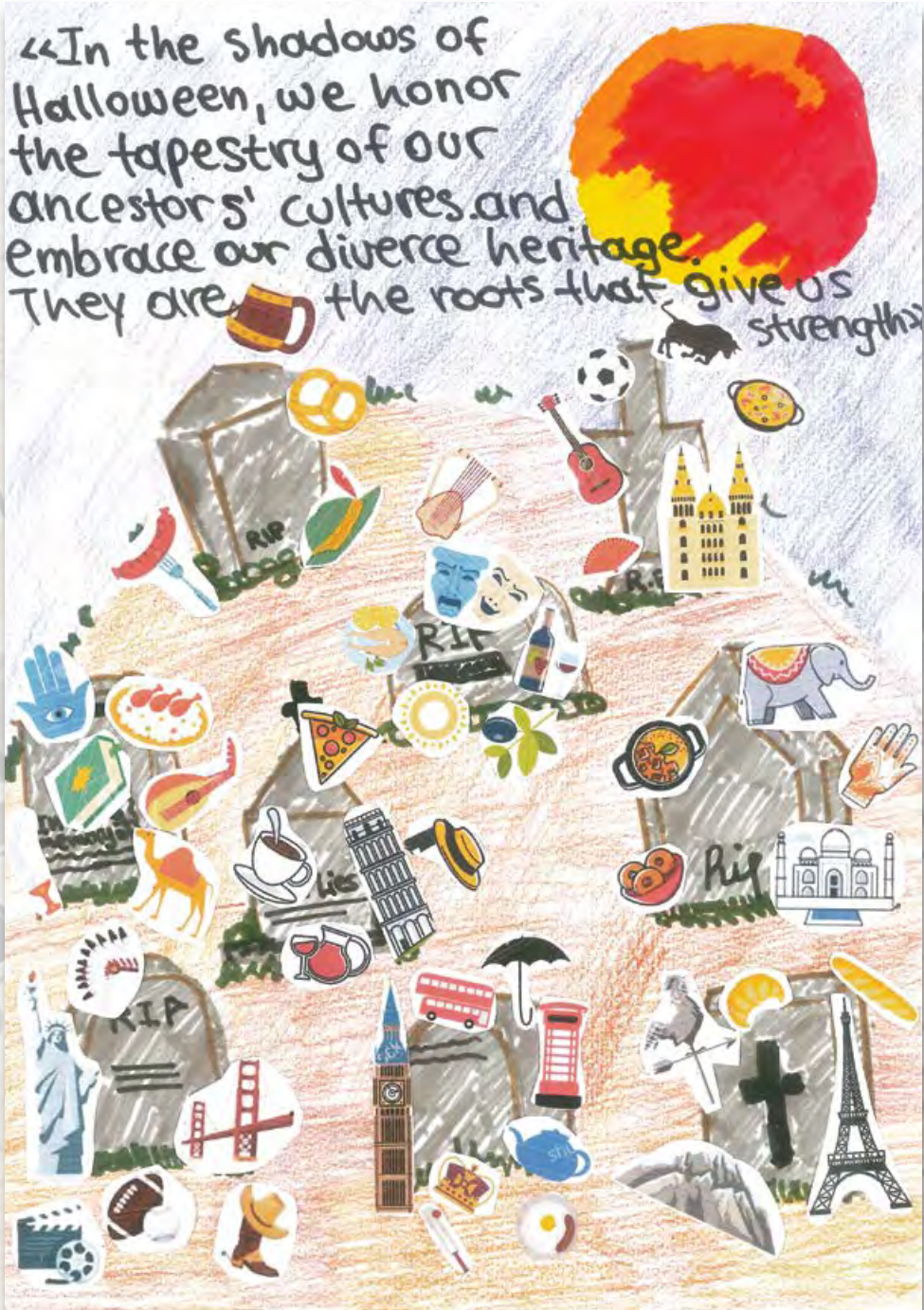
Time flies, so it is important for us to be aware of how we spend it and take advantage of every moment. Let us not be solely spectators, but also active participants in this journey, with the aspiration to create melodies that will last long after our mortality has expired. This sentiment resonates with each and every member who ultimately created this magazine.

I would like to thank our advisor, Ms. Giannopoulou, who is always there for all of us, my co-editor Helen Madjioannou, who contributed to every meeting, and of course, all members, who made this magazine what it is today.

Thank you all for this wonderful school year!

Nikoletta Roussaki, γ7

«In the shadows of Halloween, we honor the tapestry of our ancestors' cultures and embrace our diverse heritage. They are the roots that give us strength»



Xanthippi Malagardi, y9

SUNNY DAYS

Halloween

Halloween is a celebration observed in many countries on 31 October, the eve of the Western Christian feast of All Hallows' Day.

Halloween Costumes

Halloween costumes are traditionally based on frightening supernatural or folkloric beings. Halloween costumes have tended to be worn mainly by young people, but since the mid-20th century, they have also been increasingly worn by adults.

Three Interesting Facts

1. The holiday dates back more than 2,000 years.

Halloween is even older than Christianity itself. It all started as a pre-Christian Celtic festival called Samhain, which means "summer's end". Held at the beginning of November, the feast recognized the last day of the fall harvest and spirits crossing over, since they believed the veil between the living and spirit world grew thinnest then. People in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Northern France used to ward off ghosts by lighting sacrificial bonfires, and – you guessed it – wearing costumes to trick the spirits.

2. Some Halloween rituals used to be geared toward finding a husband!

(Girls this is for you!) During the 18th century, single ladies devised Halloween traditions that were supposed to help them meet their romantic match. Women used to throw apple peels over a shoulder, hoping to see their future husband's initials in the pattern they made when they landed. When bobbing for apples at parties, the winner would supposedly marry first. Most spookily, they even used to stand in a dark room, holding a candle in front of a mirror to look for their future husband's face to appear in the glass. Bloody Mary who?

3. The most popular kid's costumes are: Princesses and superheroes and the top Halloween candy are... Skittles!!

Foteini Konstantina Apostolaki, a9

“Trick-or-Treat” at Pierce!!!

Halloween is a popular celebrated holiday, which falls on October 31st each year, with a spooky and festive atmosphere. It has its roots in the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain which marked the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. Nowadays, people enjoy haunted houses, costume parties, trick-or-treating, decorations, and festive activities.

On October 31st, 2023, we celebrated Halloween, too! All students embraced their creativity, dressed up in fun and sometimes scary costumes, and indulged in delicious treats. We celebrated the supernatural, with a focus on ghosts and especially witches! We also carved creative designs and spooky faces into pumpkins. The decoration was amazing! We participated in many festive activities and had fun in escape rooms prepared by teachers and others. The English Drama Club presented a great play to the students and the actresses were fantastic! Well done girls!!! It was truly a cherished occasion for all of us. Thank you, Pierce!

Eirini Anna Pouliou, a2



Dimitris Bournousouzis, a4

Halloween Night

In the dark of night,
When you try to hide,

The ghosts arrive,
And you strive to stay alive!

The witches' broomsticks are ready to fly,
As you run away to save your life,

Cats and rats fighting with bats,
Going after all naughty brats!

Jack-o'-Lantern begs for treats,
And the fun repeats,
As we go door to door for sweets!

Nefeli Stathopoulou, a4



Loukia Katsoufi, y9

Trick or Treat?

Trick or Treat?
Give me sweets!
And if you don't,
I'll scare you off!

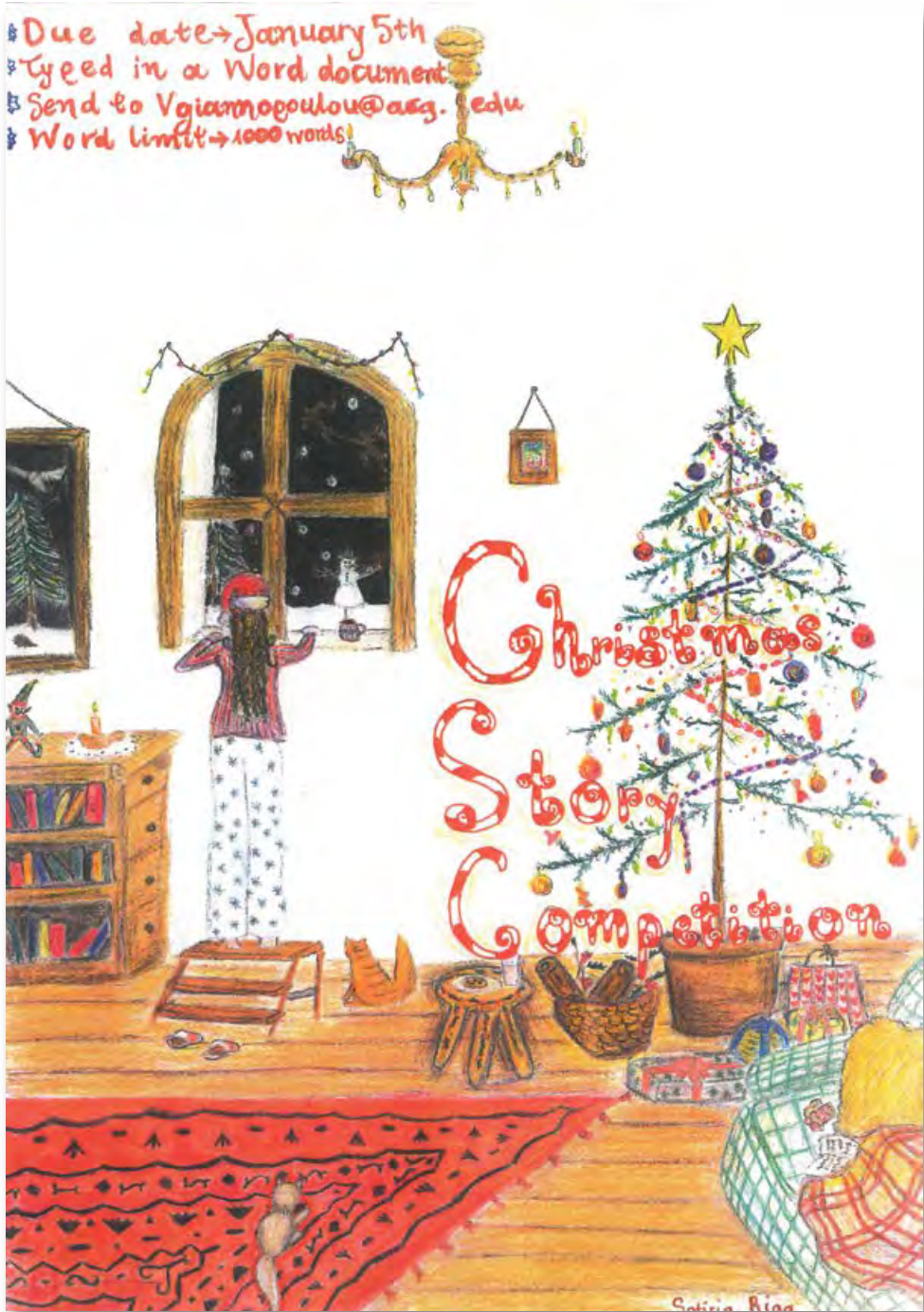
This chocolate bar,
Is the best by far!
It's so tasty,
But it makes me thirsty!

On this creepy night,
The only thing that looks right,
Is the chocolate given,
And the happiness of children!

Danae Stavropoulou, a6



Sotiria Riga, y4



Sotiria Riga, y4

Susan's Christmas

She had just moved, so she didn't know anyone, and she was really scared. She hated this village. Nobody welcomed her, nobody gave her a tour of the town, and no one cared for her. She had no one. All alone in a tiny apartment above a shop that sold antiques, Susan could not be more miserable.

She could always hear the family next door. The Smiths. They always laughed while playing in their backyard. They had four kids, a girl, twins, and a boy just five years old. They always seemed so happy! Susan had lived alone for almost a year, but she had never been lonelier.

Susan always liked routines. The little rituals that she held on to. The little bits of the day, which were the same, brought her comfort. She would always buy the same sandwich at work, and she would sit every day before dinner and read a chapter of her book and she would always stay at home on Friday nights, watching a movie with her dinner. Susan had all sorts of little rituals. She always woke up at six o'clock to go jogging. Then she would get a salmon bagel from a little bakery downtown and walk around a bit, do the groceries, and relax for a bit before work.

Susan woke up one December morning to find the whole village covered in snow. She saw the Smiths next door, who were trying to catch snowflakes with their tongues. They were preparing their sleighs and throwing snowballs at each other.

She sighed, put on her parka, and started walking to the bagel shop. She decided that snow was not the best weather for running. Susan loved running but she was careful, she was extremely careful.

In Old Janley, every year there was the most amazing Christmas festival. Or so it seemed from the flyers that were all put up around town. This year, there would be food stands, trampolines, carousels, fireworks, a photo booth an ice-skating ring, three concerts and so many more stands and surprises at the festival. There were lights everywhere and everyone was outside excitedly buying presents, meeting friends, and ice skating.

She decided to walk across the village and admire the decorations. There were lights everywhere, small Rudolphs and Santa Clauses. There were Christmas trees in every house and a huge one in the middle of the park, surrounded by candles. Across the village, there was smoke coming from the chimneys. The Christmas market was open and there were so many food courts and so many incredible smells that Susan could not resist trying samples from every single one of them. As she was walking through the part of the market, she saw the Smith girl! She was all alone. She was sitting on the street, crying. Susan walked up to her:

"Hello sweetheart, where are your parents?" Susan asked.

"Uh..I", she was speaking through sniffles and tears and she seemed upset.

"I can't find them..." she whimpered "I lost them. We were going to see the Christmas tree but ... But..."

Then she started crying loudly.

"Shhh, honey! Don't worry, we'll find them, just tell me what happened." Susan said softly.

The girl sniffled and explained how she had gone to the park with her parents and siblings, but they did not stay all together because Luke (the youngest boy) wanted to play air hockey. She was so absorbed in the game that when she looked up, her parents were not there.

"Don't worry honey, we'll find them" Susan reassured her "I'll take you home!"

Susan walked Janie home. She liked her. Janie was smart, funny, and she was kind of sarcastic and cocky. Susan enjoyed Janie's company. Janie was playful and was running up and down, jumping throwing snowballs, playing, asking thousands of questions, and was filled with joy and excitement!

"You know Ms. Susan," said Janie "I like you."

"Thanks, Janie" answered Susan.

"I am your friend now and as your friend, I have to say I am really worried about you."

"What? Why?" said Susan, confused.

"Because you are all alone. And to be honest, you don't seem to be the kind of person who likes to be alone, like Scrooge or the bad guy from "The Lion King". What was his name again? Mufo? Mufis? Mufoso? Mufaso? Muf... Anyway, that's not the point. The point is that I care about you, Ms. Susan. And I want you to be ok. So, from now on, you should make friends and to celebrate the grand opening of Ms. Susan trying to make friends, I will be your BEST friend! See, you are already making progress!"

Susan smiled to herself. She liked little Janie Smith. Susan nodded to her, and then they started getting to know each other. By the time they reached Janie's house, they had laughed so much that Susan was crying.

"Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!" Janie shouted and ran to her mom.

"Sweetie! Honey, where were you? I was so worried" Mrs. Smith said "Did this nice lady bring you home? You are such a good person, um... What's your name?"

"Hi, I am Susan! I moved next door about a month ago," said Susan.

"Mommy, mommy," said Janie, "can Susan please eat with us? Please, Mommy!"

"Yeah, sure. Thank you so much for taking care of her!" said, Mrs. Smith.

Susan walked Janie to school every day and Janie spent most of her afternoons at Susan's house. Janie liked talking to Susan, and Susan enjoyed Janie's stories, games, and company. And Susan was finally happy.

Maya Anastasakou Dalla, β1

Festive Turn of Events

Inside, in the warmth of a woodshop, a middle-aged carpenter was hard at work. He was short, and strongly built, with curly salt and pepper hair and hazel-colored eyes. His skilled hands were currently working on this little wooden statuette with moving hands and legs, a craft of no small difficulty, and so it took hours to finish. To add to this, his boss had been superbly demanding these past two weeks; it was the time of year when business was bussing, and everyone was doing all-nighters to meet “The Deadline”. Even if he loved his job, he could not help but miss his family...

He said to himself, “Last one, last one. After this, I will punch my card and go home.” And so, he continued, thinking of the sweet smell of the honey roast that would have been filling the house by now and his two little boys laughing by the fire playing with some of his finished work. His wonderful daydreaming was disrupted when the door burst open bringing in mounds of cold. And shortly after his supervisor, a short, potbellied man with rosy cheeks, came in all worked up. “The big boss needs to see you Charlie, it’s rather urgent,” he said and then quickly hurried out.

Charlie hastily packed his equipment and left his cozy woodshop. He walked through his small town, lit up by the thousands of colorful little lights from houses and shops which made the freshly laid snow sparkle. He went past the town square and headed straight for the big wooden building decorated most extravagantly, with two tall trees “guarding” the entrance and massive garlands wrapping the whole building making it look like it was glowing.

He pushed through the doors and walked into the red-walled waiting lobby. He greeted the sweet old reception lady, wishing her happy holidays, and then proceeded to knock on his boss’ door. “Come in,” said a deep voice. Charlie entered the room to find the owner of the voice sitting comfortably on a reclining chair. His boss was a very tall man, rather overweight, with a pudgy but pleasant round face and kind blue eyes.



Myrto Fragopoulou, a3

“Hello, Charles. I need to talk to you. I need you to work extra shifts tonight and repair my trusted old vehicle of operations! And before you say anything, you must know that you are the only one I trust to do these important deeds.”

“But Sir... I, I promi-” he was cut off by his boss’s pleading voice.

“Please Charles, you are the only one! You can take care of all your other responsibilities tomorrow.”

The poor guy tried to utter a word of protest, but his boss just ushered him out of his office and into the reception hall. Charlie grumpily walked out of the building and to his lonely woodshop where he was destined to spend the rest of the night. “I am doing this for the benefits, I am doing this for the benefits” he kept telling himself though it did not make him feel any better.

So, he went back to work making his little statuettes, sipping a bit of that eggnog his wife had made, continuously looking at the clock ticking away the hours. By ten thirty he had finished his carving along with the bottle, leaving him noticeably tipsy and quite giddy.

Charlie quickly got his tools and went out, stumbling now and then, to fix up his boss’s favorite vehicle; a beautiful sleigh of extravagant proportions made with red-colored wood, glimmering solid bronze finishes, and dark brown leather seats. Since it had not been used for almost a year it was in serious need of a few repairs, nothing his many years of experience could not handle. Even though his mind was a bit foggy, he managed to make it look brand new, but in doing so he had seriously tired himself out and without being able to control himself, he fell asleep in the back seat.

He woke up with a slight headache, feeling very dizzy as if the ground underneath him was moving. He then opened his eyes to see that everything was indeed moving because, to his incredible surprise, he was on the sleigh while his boss was making the big deliveries!

“Sir! Sir!” he screamed in the back, but his boss could not hear him. “Mr. C please!” no response... The great rustling of the wind had effectively

deafened him, so Charlie had nothing better to do but to hold on for dear life and hope that his boss's route did not involve midair summersaults.

At Mr. C's next stop, he mustered the courage to speak up again.

"Sir! Sir! I'm back here, please get me home!" he half shouted half whimpered.

His boss's eyes slowly focused on his very pale face and then burst out laughing, pleasantly surprised.

"Oh, Charles! Isn't it a very nice day for a midnight sleigh ride?" he said jokingly "Don't worry I have a couple more deliveries to finish and then I'll take you home."

Now and then, Mr. C would "pull over" by a house and then proceed to slowly tiptoe on the roof and go through a hole far too small for a man of his stature, but he managed to do it all with surprising grace and agility.

Each bump or turmoil along the way made poor Charlie shiver but somehow, he managed to survive the journey without passing out. Glancing off the side, seeing the white specks of light emitted from the myriad of houses below through the cotton candy clouds, brought him vertigo but it was too beautiful for him to look away.

With the sun starting to rise on their right, Charlie finally saw those familiar bright lights of his small hometown, and relief flushed over him. Moments later, the sleigh landed near his house causing a commotion; lights were turned on, voices were heard, and within seconds his whole family was outside dressed in matching holiday robes.

As Charlie slid off the side, he received a massive hug from his two boys and a gentle kiss on the cheek from his wife, who was rather worried but not at all surprised. He then turned back to thank his boss, but he had disappeared.

Later, as he was going into the house, he suddenly heard a deep voice: "Merry Christmas Charles and see you on Monday!"

Eleni Hadjioannou, 16

Claus

Mary woke up. It was the 24th of December! She would find out if her feelings and her beliefs were true. Today was the day that her big question would be answered! Is Santa Claus real?

Of course, everyone seemed to know the answer except for her. Her friends said “Come on Mary, forget about it! You’re 13 years old, you know that he doesn’t exist!” Her relatives said no different things “Mary, we know how much faith you have inside you, but you must let it go, you are old enough to know how it works! Besides, no one has EVER seen him”. But Mary was a stubborn kid. She used to answer “How can you say this? It’s alright to believe in something even though you haven’t seen it!” However, today she would stay up all night and get her question answered by herself. She could not stand another Christmas day with her parents telling her that they had bought her presents. Mary knew that she was smart, but there was something that made her believe and believe and believe! She would not quit.

It was nine o’clock. Time for dinner! She quite enjoyed her favorite dishes, until Mary’s mother said:

“Mary, honey, do you think we should make some things clear? Can I talk to you for a second?”

“Yes, if it is for a second” Mary answered.

“Alright,” said her mother and looked at the others awkwardly.

“You know, every year, we have a discussion. About... something you ... you... really like and believe.”

“If this is another way for you to convince me that he is not real, then it won’t work,” said Mary angrily.

“But honey you MUST understand! Santa Claus is...”

“Mum, please, and everyone else. Why do you want to change my beliefs? Does it

bother you that much? I mean every Christmas Eve we sit here, at this very table and you tell me the same thing! I know that he is real, I just know! I can feel that...”

“ENOUGH MARY!” her mother interrupted her. She was now furious; Mary could see that in her face. Her eyebrows had gotten to the center of her face, over her nose, her eyes were big, and she was looking at her with a frustrated look. “I CANNOT STAND THIS ANYMORE! LISTEN TO ME CAREFULLY. THERE IS NO SANTA CLAUS. SANTA CLAUS WAS ONLY A



Aikaterini Chrysagi, a9

TALE TO MAKE CHILDREN BELIEVE IN MAGIC AND PARALLEL WORLDS. PARENTS TELL THEIR CHILDREN THE TRUTH WHEN THEY GROW UP. YOU KNOW THE TRUTH, MARY! JUST STOP TELLING US EVERY YEAR THAT YOU CAN FEEL THAT SANTA CLAUS IS REAL!"

There was an awkward silence. She was just looking at her mother, her father, and her aunt. Her mother was upset. She did not want to talk to Mary like that. She looked at her and she caught her hand tenderly.

"Honey, I am so sorry for talking to you like that. But you must understand, I am just trying to protect you! You cannot go out in the world believing in fairytales. I just... don't want you to be disappointed. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, mum. I understand. I am sorry."

The family was okay after that. They stayed together until eleven o'clock. Then they all went to bed. But Mary waited until everyone was asleep and she tiptoed down the stairs. She hid behind the couch and waited.

About ten minutes later, Mary heard someone walking on the second floor. She was very silent and did not even breathe. She waited and waited, and then, someone came down the stairs. It was her father. He carried a bag with Christmas presents. He stopped in front of the Christmas tree, placed them underneath, and went up the stairs to his bedroom.

Her father had left all the Christmas presents, for her, her little brother, her aunt, her uncle, and her mother. Mary was now in a dilemma. What could she do? She saw it with her own eyes. Her father brought her presents, not Santa Claus. Nevertheless, something was still inside her. Her belief was stronger than reality. She knew something, she could feel it. And for Mary what she felt was what was real.

"Okay then. I'll just wait until midnight. Then I will go to sleep." Mary said.

The clock struck midnight. Nothing happened. Mary was disappointed. She was just going to go up the stairs when she spotted something from outside the window. She got closer. She saw something again! It was something floating in the air. She grabbed her coat and went outside. She could not see anything. But when she looked up, she saw it! She went up through the back door. And she stayed still, admiring.

It was a sleigh. A reindeer sleigh, but without any reindeer. The color was dark red, and it had some golden features. And an old man wearing green clothes. He turned his head and looked at her. Mary got closer.

"Hello, Mary. It is so nice to finally meet you. Sit here, come on! Don't be shy."

Mary got even closer and sat on the sleigh, next to the man.

"How... how do you know me? Who are you?" said Mary.

"Dear, I know everyone. Everyone in the world. Every baby that is born. My name is Kris Kringle."

"Um... Santa Claus?"

Kris laughed. He looked at her.

"Well, it makes no difference. Every country has a specific name for me. Kris Kringle (my birth name), Santa Claus, Papa Noel, Sinterklass... It is a pretty long list but the list that is not long is my believers' list."

"Your believers' list?" asked Mary "What about the good and naughty list?"

"Oh, my dear Mary. There is no good and naughty list. There is only the believers' list. Why would I even make a good and naughty list? Sometimes people are good, sometimes they are naughty. They are humans and humans are complicated. No one should be marked either good or bad."

Mary stood still and looked at him. She was right. She admired the way he talked to her.

"So, am I one of your believers?" said Mary smiling.

Santa Claus smiled "You Mary? Oh, ho, ho ho! Of course, you are! You are one of my truest believers."

"So that explains why you are talking to me. Because I believe in you, right?"

"Not exactly. I am talking to you because you keep believing in me, Mary. And you have done so ever since you were born. You know, many people, your parents included, have lost the meaning of Christmas. It was never about the presents. It was about the joy. That is why I started it."

"I can't be the only one that keeps believing in you, Santa! I mean, from all over the world. The only one? It sounds impossible."

"Mary, you may not be the only one, but you are the truest one. You have never stopped believing in me and trying to prove that I exist even though you know that your parents bring you presents, not me. I can't make it on time. I hope that your parents will let it go, have some faith, and will not put the presents under the tree before me. But has always been like this."

Mary looked at him sadly and then asked him.

"Santa, why have you come to me? Why are you talking to me? Why am I seeing you?"

"I wanted to thank you, Mary. I always knew you were special. I knew you had a kind of faith no one will ever have. You keep believing Mary. Never stop believing. That is how you will succeed. Faith is the only true thing that is left for people. The only thing that can grant them happiness. Never let anyone bring your faith down. Even if they judge you, you must cherish your faith. Never stop believing."

Mary smiled. She answered to him joyfully.

"Thank you, Santa Claus. For proving to me that faith is always right."

Santa looked at her. He smiled and hugged her. He then snapped his fingers twice and Mary closed her eyes. She opened them and she was lying in bed. She sat back and slept not knowing what she had to do for the rest of her life. She went straight to bed, murmuring the last words of Santa Claus, "Never stop believing".

Peggy Tourtourpoulou, B7

A Special Christmas Wish

It was a snowy day on Christmas Eve when little Margaret Collins decided to make up the best plan to trap Santa. Some may ask, "But who would do such a thing to the man that brings joy to all the children of the world?", but Margaret only meant good.

Her mother had been battling cancer for a year and doctors were unsure if she would make it to New Year's. Her father had to work hard to support them, and parenting alone was another challenge. Therefore, she only wanted a chat with the big man, just an exchange of words, because she was planning to make a deal to save her mother's life. With that in mind, she began to sketch and draw and think and plan how she would trap Santa Claus. She would make a trap with the help of her dad's tools and the plate of cookies. She imagined it would roll out like this: at midnight everyone's asleep. Santa comes in through the chimney, grabs the plate of cookies, only to be unexpectedly hoisted into the air and covered with Dad's fishing net. That, though, was only Margaret's contraption of the interior. On the exterior (her roof), she had managed to make slots where the sleigh legs would go (after Santa landed it) and would trap it in place. Finally, she would sprinkle the roof with carrots, since she could not know which way the sleigh would be facing when it landed, for the reindeer to enjoy while she was busy talking to the world-renowned "man in the red suit". That's exactly what she did. She set her plan into motion, and it turned out better than expected.

She went to bed at nine o'clock. The anticipation started to kick in. Would she be able to trap Santa? Would he listen to her? Is there a possibility she could end up on the naughty list? Could she go to jail? And worst of all: Would her plan even succeed or is it pointless?

Jolting awake she was sure she heard a sound coming from the living room. She checked the time: 00:03. Did her plan work?

Sure, enough right above the fireplace hangs a man in a red suit.

"Santa? Is that you?", asked Margaret.

"HOHOHO! Yes, my child who else?", replied the booming voice coming from above." But may I ask you: Why have you trapped



Evi Mavragani, a7



me? To take pleasure out of knowing billions of children will get no gifts? For some type of personal achievement? Or maybe something you want to tell me...”, his voice now sounding fiercer and angrier than before.

“Well... you see my mother has been fighting cancer for a year and doctors say she will not make it to New Year’s, and I wanted to ask if it is possible to make a deal with you. Have a few years of my life transferred to my mother so that she could live a bit more... I am not ready to say goodbye...”, said little Margaret.

“Child,” boomed Santa, “I understand your pain, but I am afraid I cannot do such a thing. I specialize in offering toys, making children happy, and giving them hope. Is there anything else I could do for you?”

“No, I should let you go now... I am sorry for wasting your time, Santa.”, she said, while the last ray of hope vanished.

“You have not wasted my time, child. But you should know Margaret, try to find the light in your darkest times and all will turn out well”, said Santa after being freed.

Margaret was left alone staring at her gift lying underneath the tree. With all hope gone, she found no use in waiting till the next day for a dumb toy since that would not make her any happier than if her mother were cured. Slowly undoing the bow, ripping the wrapping, and opening the box, she was surprised with a letter instead of a toy. Not any letter though, a formal-looking one with the name of the hospital? No. It couldn’t be. She opened it as fast as she could and started reading it. She was cured! Santa’s miracle!

The next day they visited her mum at the hospital and got the good news that she would be out by New Year’s, ready to celebrate!

Never give up on your hopes and dreams! Remain faithful and add a little bit of magic!

Elektra Theodorou, β4

CHRISTMAS

See,
how time leaves.
and Christmas Eve begins!
It is a holiday, it is a season,
it is a playful mission.
Kids, mothers, and fathers
all gathered around a table filled with love.
Trees, candles, and patterns
fix kids with suffering.
How else would Christmas begin,
without a small drink?
Siblings, grandparents, and parents
fill the atmosphere with warm laughter!
How else would Christmas begin?
without a small kiss
on the rose cheek?
How else would Christmas begin,
without a big tree?
See,
when you bring the light
when you feel the light inside
giving joy, love, and happiness,
then,
"that is Christmas for me."

Areti Zacharopoulou, a7

TOP 15 BEST CHRISTMAS SONGS

CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST

Underneath the Tree, Kelly Clarkson

Let it Snow, Jamie Cullum – Michel Legrand

Jingle Bell Rock, Bobby Helms

Santa Claus is Coming to Town, Jackson 5

Driving Home for Christmas, Chris Rea

Mistletoe, Justin Bieber

Last Christmas, Wham

Feliz Navidad, Jose Feliciano

Santa Claus is Back in Town, Elvis Presley

It's the most Wonderful Time of the Year, Andy Williams

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas, Michael Buble

White Christmas, Bing Crosby

Rocking round the Christmas tree, Brenda Lee

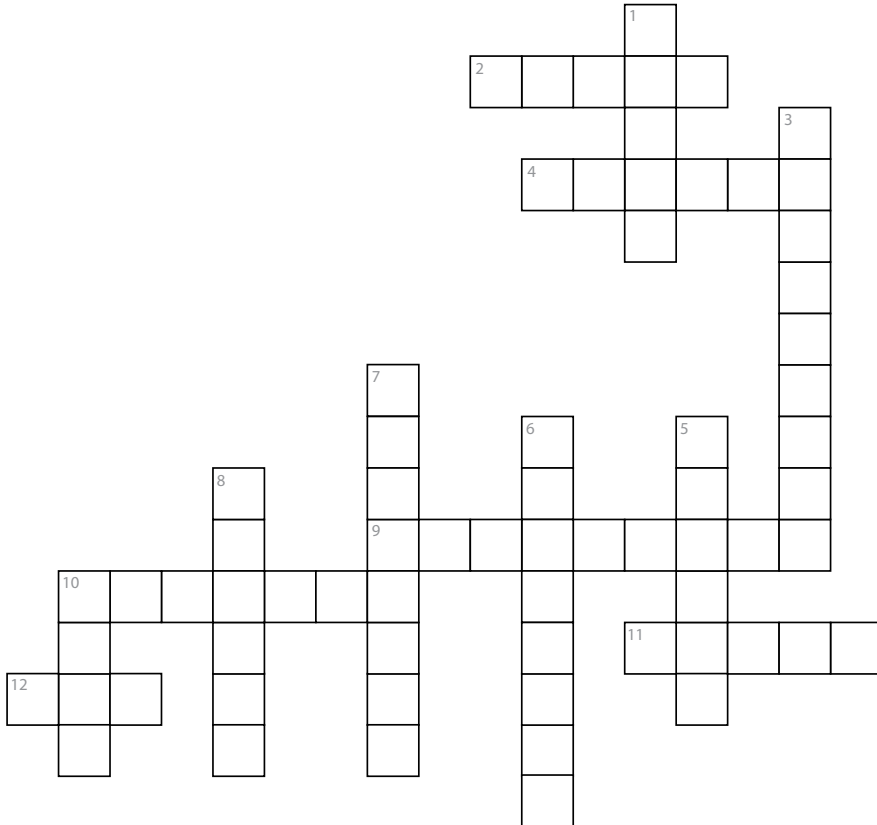
Santa Tell me, Ariana Grande

Peggy Tourtourooulou, B7

Name: _____

Christmas

Complete the crossword puzzle below



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

- 2. Deck the halls with boughs of...
- 4. Circular Tree Branch
- 9. ...were hung by the Chimney
- 10. Christmas Hater
- 11. ...Navidad
- 12. ...to the World

Down

- 1. Santa's Helpers
- 3. December 25th
- 5. Under the Tree
- 6. Month
- 7. Shiny Thin Tree Decoration
- 8. "The" Snowman
- 10. Let it...

Evaggelia Konstantina Manelou, β1

Z G
 W S
 E M N Q
 Y E O F
 F W P W S O
 N M W M X A
 S L E I G H J H T Y A R E I N D E E R W
 L V O B Q M Y D M S N Q U O L D T G V I
 U F K C S C R O O G E P R K N I H R
 P C A R O L S N K M U N C G D Y
 G N C A J I M A T F A F B V
 D P R E S E N T S M I C
 S Y M I S T L E T O E E M X
 C C H I M N E Y X P N L E G
 L U P H B D J G Q N C T F R G S
 D E R E X X B H I S Y R N P
 Z T Y U U K Y E Q B Y G H Y
 S N V E P K V A D I
 F U O L O K J V
 R F L J

CANDY
 ELF
 ORNAMENTS
 SCROOGE

CAROLS
 MERRY
 PRESENTS
 SLEIGH

CHIMNEY
 MISTLETOE
 REINDEER
 SNOWMAN

Eleni Hadjioannou, y6

Giannis Antetokounmpo

Giannis Antetokounmpo was born on December 6, 1994, in Athens. He is the son of two Nigerian immigrants, who had no legal status in Greece. That made it very difficult for them to find jobs, since they could not be considered Greek citizens. That led them to poverty, making the provision of food for their family their only objective.

Giannis did everything he could to provide money for his family and help his mother and father. From an early age, he would sell things on the streets, like watches, DVDs, and CDs. That happened until the age of 17 because he had no choice.

Unknown to most, Giannis Antetokounmpo wanted to become a football player like his father. That is why when coach Vasilis Xenakis tried to put him on the basketball team, he had no interest in playing with them, as basketball was not his dream sport. Vasilis Xenakis then told Giannis that he would get money with basketball, to buy food and other supplies. He also promised him that if basketball was not good for him, he would find a football team for him. That, of course, proved unnecessary because Giannis Antetokounmpo proved to be a star.

Right now, Giannis Antetokounmpo is one of the best basketball players of all time thanks to his skills, he was drafted by the Milwaukee Bucks in 2013. In 2016-2017 he had a breakthrough season, winning the league's "Most Improved Player" award. Antetokounmpo was named the NBA's MVP, averaging 27.7 points, 12.5 rebounds and 5.9 assists.

Antetokounmpo's story is inspiring for everyone. He is a role model of success, generosity, confidence, and self-esteem. He is and will be known through the years and will never be forgotten.



Peggy Tourtouroupolou, β7

Venus and Serena Williams



“The only place success comes before work
is the dictionary.”
Vince Lombardi

There are countless books about success and just as many ways to explain it. Success means different things to different people. For someone, success could mean getting a promotion while for somebody else it means getting married and having a big family. Success

also comes in different forms, such as academic success, professional success, and many others. Although people often come to disagree about its meaning, what we can all agree on is that it takes hard work, determination, and perseverance to achieve it.

To me, success is having a goal for yourself and doing everything you possibly can to reach it. Last week, I watched a documentary about Venus and Serena Williams, two very successful tennis players in the USA. But what is it that makes them so successful? They were born in the early 80's in one of LA's most infamous suburbs. Their parents had decided before they were even born that tennis was the only way to become successful. When their daughters turned five, they started training them at a local country club every day for about two hours. By the time they were eleven, their dad was sure they could easily win state championships. There was only one problem, they could not enter any competitions without a coach and were unable to afford one. Finally, their dad signed a contract with a coach who would train the girls for free if they competed in junior championships, so that is exactly what they did. When Venus won over 50 state championships in a row, her dad to pull his daughters out of any competitions so that they could focus on school. They still trained but without participating in competitions. No coach believed they would make it professionally after school. Proving everyone wrong with her hard work and determination after three years of not competing, Venus had her first professional match in 1994. She played against a tennis champion and beat her in two sets. Serena had her first professional match a year later and became a successful tennis player by the age of sixteen.

Today the Williams sisters are of the most well-known players of all time. Venus and Serena Williams were ranked world No. 1 and No. 2 respectively, in the world, marking the first time in history that sisters occupied the top two positions.

To me, their commitment and dedication to their goal is inspiring and what has made them so successful. Their story shows the world that they can achieve anything they set their minds on, no matter the circumstances.

Margarita Sfakianaki, y8

The Three Keys to Succeed

It is indisputable that people crave success; it is something we all strive for. But what does success mean? To some, success could be money, fame, or finding true love. But to me, being successful means looking back to where you come from and seeing progress, it means people being able to see your self as you are standing at the top, it means that all your hard work has paid off and all the things you sacrificed on the way there were worth giving up. It means reaching the point where you have achieved your goals and accomplished your dreams and aspirations.

What does it take to be successful though? It is a complex question that entails a variety of factors. Although it is possible to achieve it in different ways, self-discipline is an essential trait. This means being consistent in our efforts and staying motivated, even when we experience failure. Ambitious people have perseverance, and obstacles do not stop them from moving forward. But self-discipline is not only a habit but also a way of living. As Abraham Lincoln once said: "Discipline is choosing between what you want now and what you want most". Besides, this attribute is considered the bridge between setting your goals and achieving them.

The second most important quality one must acquire to reach the top is confidence. First, self-confidence helps individuals believe in their abilities and potential, resulting in taking risks and stepping out of their comfort zones, which can lead to new opportunities and experiences. It also enables them to overcome fears and self-doubt, allowing them to pursue their passions and interests with determination. It is also proven that low confidence leads to inaction, thus, to increase the possibility of being successful, your first mission is to increase your level of self-esteem, by setting clear goals, by embracing your strengths and weaknesses, and by acquiring a positive mindset.

Finally, resilience plays a crucial role in obtaining a lifetime of achievement, as throughout your journey, failure is something inevitable. There may be imponderable factors and adverse circumstances that you will have to surmount, but as we go through the challenges of a rapidly changing world, the ability to bounce back from setbacks and adapt is critical.

All things considered, success is not a single moment of pride, but rather a continuous journey that requires motivation, hard work, dedication, and perseverance. By setting clear goals, staying disciplined and persistent, being adaptable, believing in yourself, being surrounded by positive people, and learning from your mistakes, you can take advantage of your full potential.

Christina Koumasi, γ3

Success is more than Fame

One day you hype me up.
One day you bring me down.
That's what I am told success feels like
But is success attached to fame?
Is it a dangerous game that people play?
Or is success a beautiful thing, a fulfillment of a goal you
once dreamed of?
Success is often portrayed as only fame and money.
But success is way more than that.
Success is choosing to work for what is best for you.
Success is every time you get out of bed and take a step
towards your future.
Success is stopping a hurtful habit and taking time to love
yourself.
So sometimes success may seem to be out there when
it is just standing between me and you.

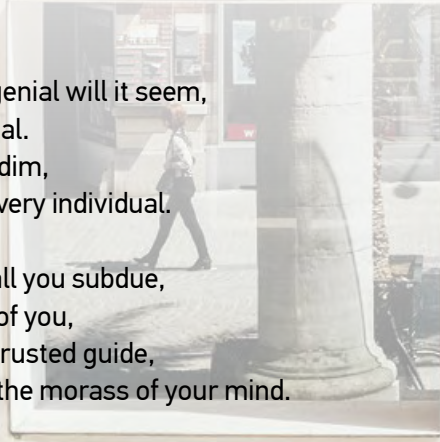
Maria Mouzaki, B9

The Path to Success

The road will be full of junctions.
And that's for sure,
But rigid shall you stay,
And opt for more.

The right path uncongenial will it seem,
And its end is perpetual.
All the figures will be dim,
You; fastidious with every individual.

But those qualms shall you subdue,
As, ten steps in front of you,
Success will be your trusted guide,
Leading you through the morass of your mind.



Sotiria Riga, γ4

The Pursuit of Success

Success is like a shining star,
It takes challenging work; it is not too far.
With passion and determination in your heart,
You will reach new heights; you will play your part.

In the dance of life, success will gleam,
A shimmering dream, a distant stream.
It calls to hearts with a whispered voice,
And bids them strive,
And dare rejoice.

Success, a mountaintop so high,
Where eagles soar, where dreams can fly.
It is not just wealth or fleeting fame,
But finding purpose, stoking flame.

So, chase your dreams, with heart afire,
Let passion be your guiding choir.
For in the quest, we find success,
In every stumble, and each caress.

Evaggelia Konstantina Manelou, β1

The Secret of Success

Success is nice,
But it takes some time.
You must work hard,
And never cry,
To bring your dream to life.

It is difficult to succeed,
But do not give up,
Because that's when failure will come.
It will chase you around,
until you fall down.

Always keep in mind
To get up,
Cope with it,
And try one last time,
Because that's when you will thrive!

Konstantinos Spiliopoulos, y4

On Success

Success is all you need,
Even if there are ambitions to fulfill.
Every single day we all try hard,
Since success is in our hands.

Failure might be on the way,
But we must run away.
Run, run, run so you can go,
Much further than you know.

Every big or minor win,
Brings you closer to your dream.
Work with passion and excel,
So that no one can tell.

Have you achieved what you really want?
Or has anxiety taken control?

Mariangela Panou, γ8

An Acrostic Poem

Skepticism may bring you down,
Understand what your heart desires and
Concentrate on the requirements!
Crisis will put you down, but you will survive!
Everyone can be successful; but
Standards are different.
Self-confidence will help you rise and shine.
Fame is not everything, but you should
Uncover who you are,
Love what you do and come closer to you.

Maya Anastasakou Dalla, β1

Success and Failure

Truth be told, the most successful people (according to Google) are Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk, who are also the richest. It seems that society defines success as a combination of money and wealth, and I agree with that. Money is not only about luxurious cars, expensive clothes, bags, and vacations. Money may bring happiness if spent wisely. You can share, donate to charity, and help those in need.

Natalia Konstantina Vergi, 89

The most important success is to affect the world positively. It may seem difficult, but it is not. Buying a house or a new car are achievements but nothing is close to the feeling of knowing that you have contributed to changing the world, that you have helped a person in need... True success means putting your ambition for power, your thirst for money, and your aspirations aside, to help others and actively participate in making the world a better place for everyone.

Victoria Vytogianni, 86

From my point of view, success is not just a life goal that I strive to achieve but lots of other minor things. For example, if I manage to cook for my family once a week, I feel that I have achieved a goal. Success is a way of thinking because as a way of thought, it positively affects people and boosts them to pursue their dreams.

Sotiris Avgerodimos, 83

Being successful means that you have accomplished something after hours and hours of hard work. Even if you do not do it perfectly - someone will always do it better than you - the satisfaction of completion will make you happy. Success is the relief that you feel when you make it through after hard work and dedication.

Gerasimos Efrain Marketos, 88

A successful person is someone who has achieved his goals or someone who has managed to overcome a challenge or someone who has helped others in need.

Andriana Tzertzeveli, 14

As a student, I would say that success means that you have received an award or that you have taken part in a competition. Success in school is not only high scores, but also the power of knowledge.

Argyro Karapidaki, 13

Success means being satisfied with what you have achieved and done for yourself and the world around you. It means contributing to your local community, realizing that you have found the right path in life, and becoming a better version of yourself. The only thing that counts is if you have tried to make this world a better place for everyone.

Nefeli Giannaki, 11

It is easy to set goals but hard to make them come true. Some people think that success is money or fame. I do not agree. Success is the choice of the right path, the feeling of achievement and power. You are successful the minute you feel good and proud of something you have accomplished.

Ioli Georgiou, 11

I believe that success is when you achieve your personal goals, and when you improve your weaknesses, as there is always space for a better version of ourselves.

Eleni Koralia Fragkou, 17

When you fail you should not complain or blame others. Learn from your mistakes and keep trying. There are various things that you can do but you should never let your disappointment define you.

Fotis Lidorikis, β6

I do not see failure as something negative but as an opportunity for personal growth. I agree with the saying: "what does not kill you, makes you stronger" since you can learn from your mistakes, which is a necessary step to success. Failing does not mean that you are bad at something, it just means that the outcome of your actions is not the desired one.

George Korres, γ5

Unfortunately, only a few people manage to be equally successful in all aspects of modern life. However, we should not forget that everybody can be successful as success reflects our own desires and what brings us joy and fulfillment.

Erika Sason, γ3

The Meaning of Success

Rich, smart, powerful,
A person so successful,
But is that the way,
To succeed?

What about fairness,
Having morals and manners,
Generosity and kindness,
Helping people in need,
While trying to live happily,
And showing some respect?
Isn't it the way to succeed?

A person wealthy,
but without kindness,
That is not success.
Follow the path of virtue,
And feel content.
Follow the path of justice,
and deep concern.

Let's reconsider
The meaning of success,
Because we forgot
Its true essence.

Mike Alexopoulos, γ7



Screening of docudrama “The Students of Umberto Primo” on the occasion of The Holocaust Remembrance Day 2024 at Pierce – The American College of Greece

Pierce – The American College of Greece organized for the second year a series of events and activities to commemorate the Holocaust in Greece on the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day. This year’s focus was the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki.

We learned about the history of The Jewish Community of Thessaloniki from the

15th century to the present day. Most of the students were impressed by the fact that Thessaloniki was also called “Jerusalem of the Balkans” or “La Madre de Israel”, as the great majority of the community consisted of Jews, expelled from Spain in 1492, the so-called “Sephardis”, which means “Spanish” or “Hispanic” in Hebrew.

After last year’s successful Holocaust Remembrance Day event, I was on the lookout for an equally impactful, yet appealing material. The previous year I had read a film review of an award-winning docudrama; *The Students of Umberto Primo*. Once I read it, I realized this could be useful material for next

year’s event. I was right. After watching the docudrama, I realized this was not just another documentary about the Holocaust. It was an ode, sarcastic as it may seem, to life.

The Italian professor, Antonio Crescenzi, found students’ essays, graduation diplomas, and other documents of historical importance, that had been long forgotten in the basement of the Italian Institute of Thessaloniki (formerly the location of the Italian School of Umberto Primo). Sadly, these students never received their graduation diplomas, or their papers, because of Nazi persecution. Thanks to Crescenzi’s discovery and meticulous research, 157 diplomas were presented to survivors and/or their families in January 2017.

This film is the end product of the 20-year research conducted by Mr. Crescenzi. It successfully created an immersive experience that triggered strong emotions among our students who learned about one of the darkest periods in human history through the eyes of 9 students. The students of Umberto Primo had their lives shattered by the brutal war. This special genre, the docudrama, allowed the audience to deeply experience the inhumane treatment of the 9 students, bridging the gap between the past and the present.

The reflections that follow state the impact this film had on our students.



Gisela Iosif, English Department Faculty

Prompt: Write a letter to your favorite character describing the emotions their story evoked and what resonated with you.

Dear Ms. Maioretta and Mr. Crescenzi,

We watched the docudrama "The Students of Umberto Primo" as part of Holocaust Remembrance Day. Personally, the film spoke to my heart and your direction helped us better understand the terrible events that occurred during the Holocaust while also giving us a new perspective through the experiences of the students who lived in Greece and the struggles they had to go through. Moreover, I loved how each character was introduced and the timeline of the docudrama

since you narrated the stories of nine students all in one film. I also noticed that the emotions of the students and the characters are expressed and transferred perfectly to the audience. It is a heart-wrenching documentary that speaks to the hearts of the audience and that will help future generations understand the inhumanity, racism, and torture people went through during the Holocaust.

Sincerely,

Catherine Stratigopoulou – Kappa, γ1



Dear Alberto Modiano,

I wanted to take a moment to express the strong emotions your story in "The Students of Umberto Primo" evoked within me. Firstly, I was taken aback from your journey because it resonated deeply with me, stirring a range of feelings from empathy to inspiration. Your resilience in the face of challenges and the growth you experienced throughout your life left an indelible mark on my heart. Thank you for having the courage to share your captivating and meaningful story with everyone so we can learn more about these events.

Warm regards,

Konstantinos Ftoulis, γ3

“The Students of Umberto Primo”: Summary and Film Review

“The Students of Umberto Primo” was a private production film presented at the school’s theatre for Holocaust Remembrance Week. To that end, the film seemingly aimed to shed as much light on the lives of victims as on the lives of survivors, both before and during WW2, more specifically focusing on the atrocities committed during the Holocaust.



The film achieves this goal through its narrator and Co-Director, Antonio Crescenzi, who accidentally happened upon a collection of personal essays written by a group of Jewish students. Throughout the film, the audience can learn about what kind of lives those students led during the specific period, and in doing so, hopefully gain a new perspective on the horrors inflicted during the Holocaust.

This is mainly done by following the lives of each of the nine individual students that the film places under the spotlight. Seeing what kinds of lives these people separately led, how it all tied together, and how quickly it fell apart during the events of the Holocaust, presents a new point of view to those not already aware of the repercussions on a personal scale, in addition to highlighting the Holocaust’s effects on the collective. Typically, each minor section of the production follows the life of one of these students during the WW2 period, with Crescenzi narrating their stories and often reflecting on them.

The film is a docu-drama, and in that sense, it achieves its purpose by educating the audience and somewhat highlighting the drama aspect by focusing so much on the personal lives of these students, their hopes, their dreams, and their fears, all revealed through their essays. Knowing about their personal lives and how they were prematurely ended by the Holocaust, either literally or metaphorically, it becomes that much easier for those in the audience not deeply aware of the horrors of that time to put the event into perspective and gain an understanding of its effects on separate people.

The film’s success as a docu-drama is largely reliant on its capability to tell a story while still being educational for the audience, and in that sense, “The Students of Umberto Primo” is a resounding success. The story is partly told through Crescenzi’s narration of the students’ essays and his occasional reflections on the events, but the students introducing themselves to the audience and narrating their own experiences, made possible by the actors, adds a personal side to the film, allowing



it to explore the lives of these students in depth. This choice of narration and overall storytelling allows the audience to better understand their struggles, especially during the time of WW2.

On that note, the actors' performances manage to adequately present the students in question, and as it was said before, enhance the drama aspect of the production. The actors'

representations of the passions and dreams of these students succeed in highlighting the fact that just like us, these students are humans. What the actors achieve through their performances is an in-depth representation of how these students lived and the experiences they had with each other, as well as of what they lost during Hitler's rule.

It is also important to mention how this film is linked to the theme of this year's literary festival: *Loss of Innocence*. The loss of one's innocence is quite a broad term and not easy to define, however, in the broadest context, it means to lose the naivete that comes with a young age and gain a mature understanding of the world around oneself, for better or for worse. This could mean simply growing older, or it could mean a traumatic experience prematurely taking away the sense of childlike wonder.

When considering what loss of innocence means in this context, it quickly becomes apparent how the production is related to it. It is something each of the students went through, quite prematurely in fact, to an extent that for the survivors, their lives were never the same afterward. The atrocities committed by Nazi Germany during that time, persecution, and deportation, all inevitably left a mark that would not fade.

While not an intrinsic element of the film itself, its relation to the loss of innocence on such a deep level is what makes it stand out as a great choice to present to the students at this school. It highlights the theme of this year's literary festival and manages to put into perspective just what the loss of innocence may look like on an individual scale.

Overall, "The Students of Umberto Primo" is highly successful as a docu-drama exploring themes crucial for future generations while sustaining historical knowledge and memories alive.

Konstantinos Matthaiou, γ10

I enjoyed watching the docu-drama film. I liked the fact that we saw mostly through the students' eyes. The message was clear along with the story's plot. I found the swapping from one language to another interesting, as well. Even more, my favorite part was the ending. This movie was one of the best regarding the Holocaust.

Aliki Katsifou, B2

I liked the movie because we understood the characters' thoughts and feelings. The movie made me realize how bad the situation was and I felt bad about the Jewish. In the end, I found myself crying as the good friendship among students who were thirsty for knowledge fell apart...

Monika Sofia Alexandra Makrakis, B4

I liked the movie, and it made me feel very sad for the people who lived in that period. I also enjoyed the fact that the stories of the nine students were based on real events. The film was very good because it keeps these moments alive in our memory and we should not forget them.

Eirini Tselepi, Y1

I really enjoyed the film for many reasons. More specifically, it informed us about many facts that we did not know, and we heartbreakingly learned them. Whoever watched this film is aware of the facts and this is significant because we should make sure that similar events will never take place again.

Merai David, Y10

I liked the fact that the movie was a docudrama and the way it presented the students' lives. This movie can raise awareness about the Holocaust for young people. This movie was truly splendid!

Dimitris Plapoutas, Y2

I enjoyed this film because it was neither a documentary nor a drama, but it was a combination of the two genres, and that made the film unique. The stories of these nine students were touching and I almost cried when I realized their tragic end.

Stella Koufi, Y4

Loss of Innocence

The Scarlet Ibis

This year's theme for the Literary Festival at Pierce was Loss of Innocence; a very interesting thematic choice that perfectly reflects the mindset and mood of our teenage students who go through a number of transformations at this time and age. I taught the short story



Niki Papageorgiou, β5 & Ioanna Spyridogiannaki, β3

“The Scarlet Ibis” a long time ago and I remember the impression it made on my students then, and I am glad to say that this story still has an impact on the young reader today. James Hurst wrote the short story “The Scarlet Ibis” in 1960. This tragedy, set in the 1910s in the American South, chronicles the sad story of the narrator’s younger brother, who died as a child. The story quickly became an American classic, with numerous reprints in short story

anthologies and other collections. “The Scarlet Ibis” is a story of pride, brotherly love, and loss of innocence that is rich in symbols and allusions. The students helped me analyze the theme of the story and were active and interested throughout the presentation. After analyzing the story’s theme and rhetorical devices the students had to create a cover and blurb for the book or write an alternative ending for the story. I spent days going over their work and I was impressed by the impact the story had on them. Some of their work is displayed here. I wish we could include all of them!

Eva Kyriakidou, PhD, English Department Faculty



The Loss of Innocence



Literary Festival



12-16 February

2024



Tonia
Ioannou
Tonia

Alternative Endings



Arianna Lachana, β9

I had been running for some time when I realized I had no idea where Doodle was. What if he had fallen? What if his weak legs had not supported him? What if?

I ran towards the place where I had last seen Doodle. After a while of searching and as I was about to give up, I saw him! He was sitting by a tree, hugging his legs, and screaming: "Brother, brother! Please come back!"

"Doodle!" I said gently. "Doodle, please forgive me!"

"You were only trying to help me. I am sorry but I failed" he whimpered.

"NO," I said firmly. "Don't say that again! It was my fault."

We walked back home, and I took care of him. He never learned to fight or swim, but he was perfect to me.

Maya Anastasakou Dalla, β1

I ran as fast as I could, leaving him behind me with a wall of rain dividing us. I could not hear his voice anymore. I realized my mistake. I would be responsible if something bad happened to Doodle.

I decided to run back. I was shocked when I found him. He was trembling in fear.

"Doodle, I am so sorry," I said while praying for his forgiveness.

"Why did you leave me? I am sorry I was not good enough" Doodle whispered.

I was unable to respond. I picked him up and we went back home.

After that, nothing was the same. Our parents never found out what had truly happened. I never recharged my brother. Yet, he never fully forgave me, even if I realized my mistakes after the incident.

I loved him for what he was and who he was, and I doubt that I will ever forgive myself.

Fotis Lidorikis, β6, Victoria Vytogianni, β6

Innocence. Love. Brotherhood.

The above themes play a significant role in the story "The Scarlet Ibis" by J. Hurst.

But what is love? How strong is a bond between brothers? And what happens when innocence disappears? What happens when a scarlet ibis meets the wind? Is a child innocent? What happens when a child faces the cruelty of adults? Through the journey of a young, teenage boy, and his younger, disabled brother, all the above questions are answered.



Marilia Christodoulou, β4



Doodle is a disabled kid that can't even walk, but his older brother wants to transform him to a regular one. Together they train and learn how to walk and run. But is it a story of true love or hate? One day, everything goes wrong. Will they both escape death or will one not make it back home?



John Maniatis, y10, Dimitris Kaliakmanis, y3

During the Literary Festival, we attended a presentation by Mrs Calbari, who is a painter, scenographer, and costume designer. She presented three groups of paintings. Her main goal was to focus on the reasoning and thoughts behind the painting. She tried to train us to understand our thoughts and emotions by seeing a painting. While the paintings may appear simple, under a careful look a lot can be revealed. Her presentation was inspiring and thought-provoking!

George Korres, γ5



Lake (night), 2020, oil on canvas, 185x300cm

“Παίγνια” by Christina Calbari

This painting by Christina Calbury is one with numerous meanings. In a playful but dark way, it symbolizes the massification and loss of individuality that comes with growing up. It shows that the transition from childhood to adulthood is filled with insecurity, self-doubt, and distrust. In the painting, there are girls who all look the same and are facing the same struggles. However, they are not looking at each other, instead, they are trapped, trying to escape the cages they have set for themselves. They are all together but are not communicating or helping each other. In the painting, the braids that are usually a sign of childhood seem to be what is holding the girls back from being free.



Margarita Sfakianaki, γ8

In the event of the exhibition “Paignia” in 2011, Christina Calbari invited several writers and poets to participate in a visual literature “experiment”: The participating authors were asked to write a story, a poem, a short narrative, triggered by Calbari’s visual imagery. The 18 writers contributed their writings to the book “Games” published by Futura.

You can read the book here: <https://www.calbari.com/news-other.html>

The Most Beautiful Destinations

FRENCH POLYNESIA



French Polynesia, which stands as a testament to nature's magnificence, is a unique place in the South Pacific. Renowned for its crystal-clear turquoise waters, vibrant coral reefs, and lush landscapes, it embodies exotic beauty. There are over 100 islands, including Tahiti and Bora Bora, and each one of them offers a variety of activities.

FIJI



Fiji, a tropical jewel in the South Pacific, is a premier travel destination. The warm and friendly locals, coupled with a rich Melanesian culture, create a unique and immersive experience. Fiji offers a diverse range of activities, ensuring an unforgettable and exotic getaway for those seeking paradise on Earth.

THE MALDIVES



This archipelago of over 1,000 coral islands boasts crystal-clear turquoise waters, powdery white beaches, and overwater bungalows that redefine luxury. With thriving marine life and vibrant coral reefs, the Maldives is ideal for snorkelers and divers.

CAPPADOCIA

Cappadocia is a top travel destination in the heart of Turkey. The landscape, characterized by fairy-tale-like chimneys and unique rock formations, creates a romantic atmosphere. Visitors can explore ancient cave dwellings, take hot air balloon rides, and explore the rich history of the region. It is a must-visit for those seeking extraordinary travel adventures.



HOBBITON

Hobbiton, nestled in the rolling hills of New Zealand, is a fantastic and enchanting destination, celebrated for its exotic beauty. Inspired by J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle Earth, this village immerses visitors in the charm of hobbit life. Quaint hobbit holes, vibrant gardens, and the iconic Green Dragon Inn create a whimsical atmosphere. You should visit this place if you are a fan of "The Lord of the Rings" and your heart desires a real-life journey into the magical realm of Tolkien's imagination.



George Korres, γ5

Top 3 Summer Destinations

SANTORINI, GREECE



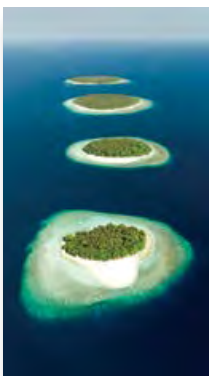
Santorini (or Thira) is a Greek island located in the Aegean Sea. It is widely known for the eruption of the volcano a long time ago, an eruption that tore the island apart and made it the way it is today. Santorini is considered one of the top summer destinations. Visitors enjoy the amazing view of the Aegean Sea, and the nightlife but mostly, the amazing sunrise that can be seen from certain places on the island.

BALI, INDONESIA



Bali is an island located in the Indian Ocean, one of the many islands of Indonesia. Of course, when we talk about summer destinations, Bali is certainly in the top 3! Especially for families, Bali offers a lot of amusement parks and animal parks. And for the “adrenaline junkies” and lovers of exploration, Bali is more than just a beach party destination. Surfing, scuba diving, searching for hidden villages, visiting ancient temples, and ascending the summit of a volcano combined with peace can make Bali the perfect summer destination!

MALDIVES



The Maldives is a nation of islands in the Indian Ocean, that spans across the equator. The country consists of 1192 islands that stretch along a length of 871 kilometers. The Maldives are mostly known for the plethora of sea activities, like snorkeling safaris, sunset cruises, bodyboarding, wakeboarding, SUP, windsurfing, catamaran sailing, or kitesurfing.

Top 3 Summer Destinations

LAPLAND, FINLAND

Lapland is the most northern part of Finland, located in Europe. A lot of travelers and tour guides support that Lapland is the best place to travel in winter, especially with family. In Finland, Lapland is over the Arctic Circle and two of the most common cities to visit there are Rovaniemi and even higher up, Ivalo. These cities have special hotels deep in the snow, which offer many activities, like Santa search, riding on a sleigh with huskies and reindeer, and most of all, the Aurora search (Northern Lights).



ICELAND

Iceland is an island in the North Atlantic Ocean located in the north of Europe. It is very famous for the Northern Lights, but mostly for Jökulsárlón, a glacial lagoon, which in winter is filled with glaciers, and offers a spectacular sight. Iceland with the view of the Northern Lights, the glaciers and the ice caves, the whale watching, the traditional cities at Christmas, and the skiing and snowboarding resorts certainly take this country to the top winter destinations.



PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

Prague is the capital city of the Czech Republic and is in central Europe. The one thing everyone will say about Prague is that in winter, "it looks like a city taken from a fairytale". The traditional architecture of the city, covered in snow, the small quiet paths from which laughter and joy can be heard, the exquisite San Vito Cathedral, and the astronomical clock are certain sights that especially in winter, make Prague a beautiful city.



Panagiota Tourtoupoulou, β7



Fifteen 3rd Gymnasium students and two English teachers, Ms. Giannopoulou and Mr. Tatsis traveled to Boston, USA (26th April- 4th May 2024), as part of a Pierce-ACG collaboration on an interdisciplinary educational project on “Disease and Equity”, with Needham High School, Massachusetts, USA.



We created three presentations, each of which covered a different aspect. The first one was a presentation about Greece as a country, and it included facts about Greece, the influence of the Greek language in the terminology of Math, Science, Biology, and English, and the best part of the whole thing was a Kahoot!

Next, was a presentation about the Healthcare System in Greece, as it is today. Lastly, we prepared a presentation about medicine and healthcare in ancient Greece. The presentation included information about the plague of Athens, a deadly disease that appeared in around 400 B.C., and about three very important ancient Greek personalities that largely influenced medicine, Hippocrates, Alcmaeon, and Asclepius. The presentation included two videos showing the life of two of them, in a form of a play.

Although it was challenging to create all these things, we worked very hard to achieve our goal, by seeing the result, and our expectations were met. All three presentations turned out wonderful and while we were presenting to the students at Needham High School, we were confident that we had done an amazing job.

*Photos taken by: Rafaella Panagiotou Dimopoulou, γ5
Natalie Charalampopoulou, γ10*



BOSTON DUCK TOUR AND PRUDENTIAL CENTER



We took advantage of our free time and visited a few interesting places in the city. We visited the Prudential Center, which is a big building with many stores and restaurants. There, we had a chance to buy some souvenirs. We used an elevator that took us to a 360° observation deck offering breathtaking views!



After visiting the Prudential Center, we went on a “Duck Tour”, which was a tour with an amphibian vehicle. That vehicle is unique because it is a bus that turns into a boat! It was an unforgettable experience, as almost everyone got the chance to “drive a duck”, which means driving the boat for a while. The view was amazing!

Generally, our day was full of joy and fun! After all, happiness lies in simple things!!

Matina Filippousi, y5 & Maritina Mamangakis, y10



PLYMOUTH

We drove to Plymouth, a port city in Devon, Southwest England, to visit the “Plimoth Patuxet Museum”, an open-air museum. Firstly, we watched a short documentary about the Pilgrims and the other exhibits. After that, we took a walk in the woods where we saw a replica of a Native American house and learned how they cooked, hunted, and lived in tents. Following our walk in the woods, we entered a space where the museum has replicated the original settlement of the Plymouth Colony, established in the 17th century by the English colonists. In this small village, trained actors and actresses speak, act, and participate in everyday activities such as cooking, cleaning, and planting. The combination of historical exhibits, the replica settlement, and the interactive experiences with actors and actresses made history come alive. Our visit to the “Plimoth Patuxet Museum” was fascinating, memorable, and educational!



Rafaela Panagiota Dimopoulou, γ5

NEEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Our collaboration with the Needham school began on Monday when we shadowed certain students and participated in an interactive lesson concerning Boston's West End. The shadowing helped us understand in depth the educational approach in the USA. More specifically, we interacted with grade 12 students, discussing the topic of the destruction and the reconstruction of the West End. Thus, we understood the significance of the oppression of the community in that area. Later, we met the students with whom we collaborated on our project and did some activities to get to know each other better. We participated in many interactive games with them and enjoyed our time. Afterward, we headed to lunch with the students whom we were assigned, and as a result, we fortified our bonds with them. Lastly, we all shadowed different students during the last two periods, to further understand the American educational system. We spotted the differences between our lifestyles and experienced a typical day of an American teenager in



school. To sum up, it was an unforgettable experience, which set the ground for a better collaboration the following day.

Our American dream was finally fulfilled, and we are forever grateful for this opportunity. Let's all hope that this collaboration was just the beginning of a long-lasting cooperation.

*Evangelia Konstantinou, γ5, Elisavet Kesoglou, γ5
Anastasia Moutafi, γ3, Maria Chrysovalantou Theodora, γ9*

I found collaborating with the Needham High School one of the best moments of our school trip. Everything was amazing. I liked every aspect of it. Through the presentations we had created, we had the opportunity to get to know more things



about the Greek healthcare system and. Our American friends had prepared amazing videos and we learned interesting facts about some diseases. Apart from the educational part, the highlight of this day was the activities with the American students. We had the opportunity to play sports with them and socialize. Something I also liked, was the group project. All in all, this was an experience I will never forget. I would be very happy, if they could visit us, too. I hope that our collaboration with this school will keep going and that we will keep in touch with these students. Thank you!

Ermina Garini, y6

The first day gave us a glimpse, but the second day gave us experiences that we will never forget!

When we arrived at school, we started with our presentation about Greece. It was informative and fun, as we also had a Kahoot at the end, which we all enjoyed! After that, it was the Needham students' turn to present their work, so we split up into groups of two or three Pierce students, per eight Needham students and watched the documentaries that they had prepared on different diseases. Each disease group



SUNNY DAYS



consisted of four students, so every Pierce student watched two documentaries. We filled in an evaluation sheet and proposed ideas to improve the documentary. After that, it was our turn again!

We presented the current healthcare system, we proceeded with the second disease group, and followed the same process.

After we finished with the documentaries, we changed location and had a quick lunch break, which gave us the chance to socialize and get to know the Needham students better. Then, the students took us out to the fields to play some sports and taught us the rules and procedures of baseball to prepare us for that evening's game. The last presentation took place just after that, the presentation about Ancient Greek medicine, which impressed everyone and caused laughter as we had technical issues with the plays that we had prepared, and they carried a little comedy on their own. Lastly, we got the chance to cooperate and work with them, as we split up into groups, based on the documentaries that we had watched earlier, and had an hour to prepare and present some posters and videos which promoted protection from these diseases in the upcoming Olympics in Paris. All in all, it was an amazing experience! Thank you, Needham, for your hospitality and warmth!

Constantia Cronje, y1



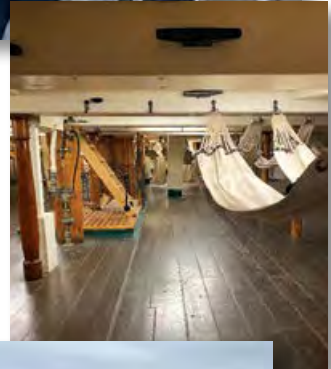
USS CONSTITUTION

The USS CONSTITUTION is the oldest commissioned warship afloat in the world today. During the War of 1812, the ship gained fame. Nowadays, she remains both a training and ceremonial ship for the Navy, as well as an educational experience for visitors.

To begin with, we went to the museum, where we had free time to play some of the museum's interactive games that helped us learn more about the ship. As soon as our tour guide arrived, we went to a conference room, where she explained the ship's history and the conditions under which sailors used to live. She also gave us a cookie and a rock they used so we could better understand the life on the ship.

After that, we left the museum and went to the ship to take a tour on board. It was fascinating and unique to explore the different decks as we saw a lot of objects from the old times like cannons, hammocks, and old equipment. Lastly, we met three navy cadets with whom we had a friendly chat!

It was such a pleasant and unique experience to learn about such an old ship and the way people lived on it. The highlight of the day was the constructive discussion we had with the Sea Cadets. It is mind-blowing to think that this ship is still active today after so many years of service!



*Petros Markoulatos, γ8, Panagiotis Tsenes, γ9
Mike Alexopoulos, γ7*

HARVARD UNIVERSITY



Presentations

Every single day was exciting; however, the highlight was our visit to Harvard. On its premises, we attended a series of presentations by undergraduate students on several topics. Those topics varied, which is why we broadened our horizons and became familiar with world matters. Most of them were related to education, for example, teacher shortages, lack of

facilities and resources in schools, gifted students in American high schools, and the problem of school shootings in the US.

We also explored other matters, such as the rise of Artificial Intelligence, a hot debate issue today. We discussed with the professors and students and shared our thoughts on the issues. Lastly, we observed life at Harvard University and the profile of the students.

All in all, we are very grateful for the experience!

Constantia Cronje, y1, Tsampika Koutounidi, y1, Ermina Garini, y6

FREEDOM TRAIL



The Freedom Trail was for sure a unique experience. Something that caught my attention was the Massachusetts State House, which was our first stop. The building itself was amazing, being spotted from everywhere with this golden top. Designed by Charles Bulfinch, the State House has been the government's mansion since its opening in 1798. Despite its history, it is very well preserved and continues to be one of a kind. Moreover, the Park Street Church was astonishing. Founded in 1809, the church was once the first thing to be seen approaching Boston. Last but not least, what I found interesting was The Granary Burying House. It



opened in 1660 and since then various famous people, founding mothers, and founding fathers have been buried there. Furthermore, several coins are put on the graves, either as a sign of respect or because it is said that the dead ones had coins on their eyes. Finally, depending on your relationship with the dead one, you put a different coin. For example, if you were in the army together, you would leave a quarter. In general, The Freedom Trail was an unforgettable tour, that combined both learning history and having fun.



Anastasia Moutafi, γ3

The Freedom Trail was one of the most interesting activities that we did during the trip. It was interactive, and enriched with plays and costumes, which is why it captured our attention and helped us understand and learn more about the history of Boston City.

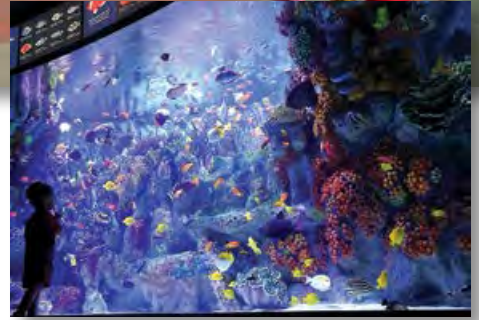
Tsampika Koutounidi, γ1

The Freedom Trail was exceptional! I never knew that Boston had such a great history, and I am very glad that I had the opportunity today to learn more about Boston's history and extend my knowledge.

Constantia Cronje, γ1



NEW ENGLAND AQUARIUM IN BOSTON AND A BASEBALL GAME



The New England Aquarium opened its doors to the public in 1969. Since then, they have been working to inspire people to love the ocean and take action to protect it.

Our visit was an enjoyable way to spend the evening!





Even if we were not familiar with baseball, we had a lot of fun while watching the baseball game at Fenway Park!



CONSULATE GENERAL OF GREECE IN BOSTON

During our stay, we were honored to visit the Greek Consulate in Boston and had a meaningful conversation with Mr. Symeon Tegos, Consul General of Greece about the City of Boston, university studies, and life values.

Consul General Symeon Tegos assumed his duties in Boston in August 2022. He is a career diplomat with twenty-three years of experience on a diverse range of issues, including the UN, Latin America, bilateral relations with Turkey, and human rights. He holds an LLB and LLM from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Law School and an MA in International Relations from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He is fluent in English, Spanish, French and Portuguese.



This project helped me experience many new challenges and live core memories with my classmates and teachers. Thanks to our collaboration with the Needham High School and our adventures during our stay in Boston, we created many new memories and unlocked different aspects of our cooperation!



Elisavet Kesoglou, y5

Our trip was one of the most interesting experiences of my life. While we faced some challenges and difficulties, we had a great time and we made lots of pleasant memories. My personal favorite experiences were the recreation of the English village we visited in Plymouth and – of course – our two days in Needham High School. I also felt happy that I was able to visit Harvard University and visit two very good friends of my parents who are also professors at the university. While it was not my first transatlantic trip, it felt like a completely new experience thanks to the people I was with and the places I visited.

Petros Markoulatos, y8

The trip to Boston was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. From the interesting tours and the skyscraper views to the collaboration with Needham High School and the visit to Dr. Iizer's house, everything was wonderful. Watching and deeper understanding this different educational approach was purely amazing. Living a day in the life of an American teenager was my dream!

Evangelia Konstantinou, y5

The trip was amazing, and it was a unique experience to collaborate with a school from the USA and make new friends. It was my first time doing such a long trip. We did a lot of interesting activities and visited many beautiful places. My favorite part was visiting the school and seeing how American schools are and understanding more about the educational system in America. I would love to collaborate again with this school and invite them to visit us in Greece so we can spend more time together!

Panagiotis Tsenes, 19

The trip was an interesting mix of different things for me. There was the academic part of the collaboration with Needham and our visit to Harvard, the tourist experience with Boston's historical sites, the social part with the people we met throughout Boston, from Needham to the professors from Harvard, and the fun part of walking and shopping. All in all, I found a very different culture in the USA. The trip had its fair share of highlights, primarily the tours throughout the city (Duck tour and Freedom Trail) and the time we spent at the school. It was one of the most memorable and entertaining trips; I had a lot of fun and was happy. The trip to Boston was special thanks to the amazing combination of everything we got the chance to do.

Dimitris Morfopoulos, 18

Our trip to Boston was undeniably an unforgettable experience. Throughout our stay, I gained new knowledge and had lots of fun. It was amazing to see the entire city from the top of the Prudential Tower. We visited Cape Cod, which was a beautiful natural landscape. We visited the Plimoth Patuxet Museum, where we learned about the way of life of the Native Americans. A memorable experience was the time we spent at Needham High School. We presented our project on the Greek Healthcare System and the American students presented their documentaries on various diseases. We explored the equity in each case. Through this collaboration, I met new individuals, saw the difference between the two educational systems, and spent two days in an American high school. I enjoyed going to Fenway Park, where we watched a baseball game because I had never watched this sport and it was a new experience. Visiting Harvard University and watching the students' presentations made me realize that studying at such a university would help me grow and have access to

resources that are not offered in other educational institutions. I loved discussing with Dr. Stuart Rizer and Dr. Barbara Rizer. I admired their passion for psychology, and they inspired me. During our stay, I did lots of shopping and ate tasty food. Overall, our trip to Boston was an amazing experience. I am very thankful that I had the chance to participate in this project and collaboration.

Rafaela Panagiota Dimopoulou, y5

At first, it just seemed like a great opportunity to visit the city of Boston, to work with new people, to participate in a project in cooperation with an American school and generally broaden my horizons. But now I realize it is so much more! I think that all of us will remember the 3-hour flight to Munich, the 8-hour flight to Boston, the movies we watched during the flight, and our bus drivers, especially Gary, who would always propose new ways to fill a day by visiting all kinds of different places. We will all remember our visit to the Prudential Center, the "New Boston" tour, the Duck tour (where we "drove a duck"), the day at the beach, and the Pilgrim Village. We will always remember the hours and hours of preparing and practicing for our presentation, late in the evening with almost everyone trying not to fall asleep. We will always remember the two days at school, the new things we learned and saw, the new friends we made. We will all always remember the baseball training at school, the baseball game we watched, and the Boston Aquarium with the penguins and all kinds of different fish. We will always remember attending a course at Harvard and visiting two of Harvard's professors, who were so kind and hospitable. We will always remember eating Dunkin' Donuts, walking in a park in Boston, then going to the Freedom Trail, and shopping in so many different places. We were all together as a team to face the difficulties and move on. We were all together, as a team to laugh and have fun and have a great time. We are a team and I believe that even years later we will remember this. We will remember that this trip changed our lives in some way. It made us stronger. And I hope that it will happen again in the future! For me, it wasn't just the "Boston Project", it is so much more! And I'm grateful to have been there, to have been part of it.

A special thanks to our wonderful teachers who were there for us, next to us, and made us feel like a family!

Maritina Mamangakis, y2

These few days were an experience that will be imprinted in my mind for the rest of my life!

First, Boston is a place of huge importance with so much history, and in these past few days, I had the chance to explore it. We had the honor to meet some respected people, such as Consul General Symeon Tegos, Dr. Stuart Pizer, and Dr. Barbara Pizer.

We got the chance to live a two-day experience of life in an American High School and I must say I was impressed. The approach to education and the whole system was completely different from the Greek, in a way that they gave more freedom to the students. Also, the hospitality was amazing, and it made me feel confident on the school grounds as if I was a part of their community. In addition, the people were so nice, and kind and I would like to collaborate with them again. Lastly, I made friendships that I really hope will last a lifetime.

But the most important factor that made this trip unforgettable was the people. I would first want to thank our teachers Mr. Tatsis and Ms. Giannopoulou for everything that they did both during and before the trip. Thank you for your patience and your support through the tough and the easy times. You made the trip so fun and without you, it would not have been the same. I made new friends and I think it is safe to say that I have never laughed so much in my entire life. I love you all dearly.

All in all, I am so thankful for the experience. It was worth it one hundred percent and I am sure that I would do this again in the future. But if I don't get the chance, I just want to advise everyone to grab this opportunity because it will change your life. Thank you all!

Constantia Cronje, y1

Our trip to Boston was one of the most life-changing experiences in my whole life. One of my favorite moments was the "Duck Tour" since it was fun and interactive. The presentations at Harvard University gave us the chance to discuss issues about education and teaching resources since those are problems that affect us directly. However, despite all those wonderful experiences, we cannot overlook the variety of challenges we had to face. We had to wake up early, which was difficult because we had tiresome days with a variety of activities, which left us exhausted. Furthermore, the long trip and the distance between us and our families were challenging, but we managed to overcome these issues and have a lot of fun! Overall, our experience was amazing, our classmates were

amazing, and the collaboration with Needham School was constructive. It was a wonderful trip, and I would not change it for anything.

Tsampika Koutounidi, y1

I believe that this trip was a lifetime experience. Everything was perfect. We had the chance to meet a new culture, totally different from ours. I noticed that they had different values and manners. Through our collaboration with the Needham High School, not only did we learn new things about the educational system in America, but we also made new friends. In addition, we visited many historical monuments and museums and as a result, we learned more about Boston's history. Apart from the educational part, we went shopping and tasted new dishes like burgers, pizza, hot dogs, donuts, and lobster. Something I will never forget is the baseball match. We had so much fun, even though we did not know the rules. For me, it was a unique experience!

Ermina Garini, y6

Our trip to Boston was amazing! During the two days at school, we met some incredible people and made friends. With the subject of disease and equity, we presented our job and watched their documentaries. We worked in groups for a final project creating a Public Service Announcement for the Olympics in Paris. The whole experience was unique. For me, the highlight of the trip was the baseball game, because sports always make me happy. The atmosphere at the stadium was amazing. In general, this trip was the experience of a lifetime, and I will always keep it in mind as a wonderful memory. Although the main purpose was educational, I had the best time ever, being in the best place with incredible people. I am very grateful to be given this opportunity and I am looking forward to the next ones.

Anastasia Moutafi, y3

We had an amazing time during our trip to Boston. We collaborated with the students at Needham School and had a lot of fun together exchanging ideas about our projects and talking about our diverse cultures. We created a strong bond, and we hope that the collaboration between our schools will go on. We enjoyed shopping and exploring the

beautiful town of Boston. Overall, it was an unforgettable experience, and I am grateful for this opportunity!

Maria Chrysovalantou Theodora, y9

I enjoyed the days we spent in Boston. I especially liked the baseball game which was a unique experience since I had never seen one before, not even on TV. So, watching it live was amazing. I also enjoyed our collaboration with Needham High School because we interacted with people who had a different culture and experienced a day at school in the USA.

Matina Filippousi, y5

During our trip to Boston, we visited a lot of places, and we had a wonderful time. Among the highlights, I must mention our visit to Needham High School, the Prudential Center, and the Boston Duck Tour.

There were some difficulties and challenges, especially while we were traveling. But we managed to find solutions!

The thing that I enjoyed the most was our collaboration with the students at Needham High School. Apart from meeting all those new people, we had the chance to get to know more about the American culture and the education system.

It was an amazing experience, and I would do it again!!

Natalie Charalampopoulou, y10

There were lots of constructive and pleasant things we did during this trip! The collaboration with the Needham High School was wonderful. To be more precise, the students there were exceptionally helpful and friendly, and we made lots of friends. We also exchanged ideas about different topics, and we shared cultural elements. Overall, this trip expanded our horizons decisively!

Mike Alexopoulos, y7

Dear Colleagues and Perce students,

This was an extraordinary year for my C gymnasium class and myself. Drawing inspiration from the topic and material of UNIT 5 in our textbook, entitled "Finding Your Path", we decided to embark on a project to explore and better understand how teenagers set out to find their path and what obstacles they might encounter and might have to overcome.

The educational purpose of the project was triple. First, it was designed to motivate students to become more self-aware by understanding teenage identity better and exploring all the different reasons that cause them anxiety. Second, it aimed at making students more empathetic, resilient, and accepting towards their peers. Finally, it was meant to sharpen students' research, presentation, and creative skills.

It contained a group-work component and an individual contribution one. Students were assigned different kinds of texts (fiction, poetry, argumentative, informational) and were asked to present, analyze, and respond to each text, educating their classmates about the literary value and concerns of each. In addition, students were given a choice board with activities they could choose from to work on individually. The choice board included a wide range of language activities - essays, questionnaires, and articles - as well as artistic products that included, but were not limited to, creative writing, drawings, videos, audio recordings, and oral interpretations.

The project culminated in an interview with our school psychologist, Ms. Zimovia Vasileiadi. She agreed to answer students' questions on different issues adolescents must deal with to find their path in life and adulthood. Not only that, but she also agreed to attend my students' presentations, providing all of us with valuable insights and advice in the lively Q&A session that followed.

In the next few pages, you will witness some of the amazing work students produced for the project as well as the interview Ms. Vasileiadi, so kindly, gave us. I hope you enjoy reading these pages, as much as we enjoyed working on their content.

We are indebted to Ms. Sophia Dimopoulou for approving, supporting, and making this project possible. Ms. Vasileiadi for her time and willingness to share her expertise and Ms. Giannopoulou

who was very eager to save some space in this year's English Sunny Days for my students' wonderful work thus offering them the opportunity to leave their mark in the long history of our school. Last but not least, we are grateful to Ms. Veralisa Miliaresi and her highly interactive class who participated in our presentation session with great enthusiasm, proving that when students share knowledge, they understand the real value of learning.

Finally, my class and I would also like to thank all of you, Sunny Days readers, for your kind attention and we hope that you follow in the path we carved, become more aware of your own identity and concerns, and produce amazing pieces of work when your time comes to explore the relevant material in C gymnasium. I know that the teachers in the English Department, myself included, will be there every step of the way, to help you find your path into adulthood.

Forever grateful for your time and attention.
I hope you enjoy the material!

Zinovia Pissari, M.A. English Department Faculty

Anxiety

Wish I could mute the voices,
That brings me down,
Cause right now I feel like I'm not enough,
Anxiety is so tough.
But it's impossible to find my peace in a world so harsh.
Always mad, always sad, and can't really catch a break.
But I'm holding on for my own sake.
I'll find my way through a haze,
Teenage anxiety is just a phase.

Angelina Darzenta, y4



Aggelina Dimolitsa, a3

Being a teenager
What does it mean?
Being anxious?
Being keen?
Feeling nervous in any case,
Everything seems all over the place,
Not knowing what's right or wrong,
Every day seems too long.
What does it really mean?
Being happy?
being free?
or stressing over something mean?

Ismini Skotti, y4

“Lost in my Thoughts”

Looking out of my window
Lost in my thoughts.
Admiring the beautiful day
Even though I am lost.

Beautiful whispers of beards coming through my window
But the only thing I am hearing is my thoughts.
Voices in my head running around,
“Time is running, time is not enough.”
“Failing is not an option.”
“Don’t look at the mirror”.

Still looking out of the window lost in my thoughts.
Thinking of my future
Thinking of myself.
Wanting to go out, and enjoy the day!
But my thoughts are holding me behind.
Like a big heavy chain.

Looking out of my window, seeing my reflection
Wondering “Why don’t I have eyes like the sky?”
The sky that everyone admires.

“Why don’t I look shiny like the stars
in the sky?”
The stars that make the night bright.

Looking out of my window
The day is now gone.
My thoughts have won again.
But the battle is still on.

Clio Kitsili, y1



Marilia Christodoulou, β4

Just a Teenager

I'm just a teenager,
I listen to music loudly,
I wear my baggy pants,
And I stand out in every crowd.

I'm just a teenager,
My dreams are big and bright,
I'm searching for my purpose,
And trying to do what's right.

I'm just a teenager,
Navigating through this phase,
With laughter, tears, and
friendships,
And memories to embrace.

I'm just a teenager,
Learning as I go,
Finding my own path,
In this world, I call my own.

Michalis Rallis, y5

It is Late

It's late at night,
and they fight.

The walls have ears,
the doors have eyes.

The trees have voices,
and there's a cracking floor,
they can't ignore.

Now it's midnight,
and dreams take flight,
eventually,
they stop,
the lights are off.

A mystery blooms
in the night's gloom.

Ermina Garini, y6



Marilia Christodoulou, β4

SUNNY DAYS

A Teenager's Life

In teenage hearts, worries brew,
Invisible burdens, old and new.
School's pressure, friendships' test,
In a world where fears never rest.

Mirror's reflection, a critical eye,
Yearning for perfection, questioning why.
Online likes, a measure of worth,
In a digital world.

In the maze of youth, doubts may abide,
Yet within, a spark of hope will reside.
In teenage storms, we learn to be brave.
Seeking calm beyond the wave.

Thomas Villiotis, γ7



Maya Anastasakou Dalla, β1
Elektra Theodorou, β4

When Life

When life gives you challenges stand tall
and brave,
With sweat and brains!
You'll conquer the waves.

Rise up,
and reach the stars!
Believe in yourself
and then you will go far.

Hold on to your dreams,
with dedication and might!
Smart and steady wins the fight.

Embrace the journey,
Do not gloat!
It's not the destination but the journey's
road.

Every day we create history,
With each step, we create our legacy.

Every leader dies with glory,
Knowing every man will tell his story.

Jonathan Perri, γ3

The Mystery of Life

Something pulls me to a place,
To that mysterious space.

I turn around,
But nothing can be found.

The only thing that I can see,
Is a reflection of me.

Then my mind starts to think
Of places I have never seen.

Sun, clouds, flowers, and trees
Different from the ones we have seen.

There's more to life than eyes can see,
Something brings these things to me.

Maria Lydia Vergopoulou, γ3



Myrto Christodoulou, β4

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST MS. VASILEIADI



Zinovia Vasileiadi is the school psychologist in the Gymnasium at the American College of Greece. She studied psychology at Athens University and her master's degree was attained at UCL University, gaining a rich understanding of psychoanalytic studies for children and adolescents. She has obtained a master's degree in special education, and she is a psychotherapist in Group Psychotherapy- Psychodrama, and Family Therapy. Recently her passion for working with children inspired her to write fairy tales (one published and two to be published). Her dream is to help as many children as possible!

Q: What is anxiety and is it as destructive as most people think?

A: Let me start with the fact that anxiety, despite the common understanding, is not something entirely destructive and negative for a human being. Anxiety is a motivating factor for all people. It pushes us to do better in our daily necessities. As part of our most basic instincts since pre-historic times there were three responses to a stressful situation: Fight, flight, or freeze. In other words, when a bear came close to a caveman's house, the prehistoric human would have been forced to find his way out of that stressful situation. What I am trying to say is that stress makes people solve their problems; it makes them push harder and force themselves to get out of the situation causing them this feeling.

Q: If anxiety is a natural response for people and, of course, teenagers, how did it acquire its "destructive" reputation?

A: The teenagers of your generation are required to be able to do things people could not imagine they could do twenty years ago. The stakes are high, and the demands are increasing for adolescents and adults alike. This means that we live in a stressful society with toxic expectations, especially for young adults. The pandemic has affected people's daily levels of anxiety since it has brought to the surface deeper issues. Most family members used to have a way to escape from reality before the pandemic (like going for walks, going to parties with friends, etc.) During the pandemic, they realized that they did not have the space to do things in their own home. They were unable to escape even for a few minutes, which made matters worse.

Q: How does anxiety affect teenage goals and aspirations?

A: I think being ambitious about the future is wonderful. Many children come to my office with serious future goals, such as going to a prestigious university and getting their dream job after years of studying. When their first bad grade comes along, their image of the future changes completely. Many teenagers think that failure in school quizzes determines the rest twenty years of their lives! What they have not thought of is their plan B or even their plan C. That is the true solution for relieving failure stress: having realistic and not absolute goals.

Q: Why do you think teenagers fear failure so much then?

A: The problem in today's reality is the fact that we exaggerate failure. We need to normalize bad grades and unlucky incidents. Failure redefines us and it puts us in orbit. It is important to remember that success does not mean counting victories. As humans, we have the right to be wrong. Teenagers tend to think that a bad grade can destroy their overall image of the teacher. It does not work like that. Most teenagers focus on something minor giving it unrealistic dimensions. The true value of failing is to make up for your mistakes and not succeed from the first time.

Q: Do you think that other factors, like social media, have contributed to teenage anxiety?

A: Indeed. The access and use of social media play a significant role in fueling adolescent anxiety by perpetuating unrealistic expectations of success and magnifying social pressures. Through the depictions of achievements and lifestyles, social media often present an idealized version of reality, fostering feelings of inadequacy and comparison among teenagers. Moreover, the constant exposure to carefully crafted images and narratives can distort perceptions of success, leading to heightened anxiety about one's accomplishments and worth. The pressure to conform to these standards set by social media can contribute to a cycle of stress and anxiety, further impacting adolescent well-being. Thus, teenagers need to develop healthy coping mechanisms and critical thinking skills to navigate the influence of social media on their mental health effectively.

Q: "Coping mechanisms" is a term often used by the adults in our lives. What are they?

A: Coping mechanisms serve as invaluable tools for adolescents to manage and alleviate stress and anxiety effectively. There are various strategies available to help teenagers navigate challenging situations. For example, they may seek support from trusted individuals such as parents, teachers, or psychologists.

Q: Why are coping mechanisms so crucial?

A: By identifying healthy coping mechanisms that work best for them, adolescents can build resilience and develop adaptive responses to stressors. It is essential to emphasize the importance of proactive coping strategies, such as mindfulness techniques or taking part in hobbies and activities that promote relaxation and well-being. Encouraging adolescents to cultivate a diverse repertoire of coping mechanisms equips them with the skills necessary to navigate the complexities of adolescence with greater ease and resilience. Additionally, recognizing the signs of stress reaching an uncontrollable peak is crucial. Teaching adolescents to recognize when stress levels become overwhelming and encouraging them to utilize coping mechanisms before reaching this point can help prevent crises and promote overall well-being.

Q: What would you advise the readers of our magazine to remember?

A: I believe that what they must remember is that humans have the right to fail. They have the right to find out what went wrong and find remedial mechanisms. Failure is part of human life and an opportunity for personal growth. By fostering a culture that encourages self-reflection, resilience, and proactive coping strategies, we can empower adolescents to navigate the complexities of stress and anxiety with confidence and perseverance. Together, let us prioritize the well-being of our youth, ensuring they have the tools and support they need to thrive in today's world.

Christianna Papaioannou, γ9

Konstantinos Andreou, γ3

Teenagers and Stress for School Performance

Adolescence is a critical period where plenty of changes take place. When children become teenagers, they are most susceptible to stress. “Stress can be defined as our physical and mental responses to some external event”. According to Credo Reference, “Stress is the nonspecific response of the human body to a demand. It is not simply nervous tension but a physiological response of the body. Stress occurs in all living organisms and is with us all the time. Stress comes from mental, emotional, and physical activity.”

Stress does not only come from mental activity but also emotional and physical. However, in school environments, stress leads to emotional reactions. We observe that some students are bothered more than others even though they seem to have the same stress stressors. The effect these stressors have on different students depends mostly on two things. First, the amount of pressure and demand to do well and how everyone perceives it, and second whether the individual can handle/manage stress.

Stress is caused by many things, but the most common cause among teenagers is school performance. According to Oxford Learning, stress for school performance can come in the following categories: upcoming tests, heavy workload, lack of organization, participation in class, and lack of support from parents/family members. Sometimes, tests become too frequent, and teenagers feel that they cannot study for all of them. Also, some classes assign too much homework, even during exam periods. Some teenagers, though, do not understand the importance of organization and end up procrastinating. Additionally, some students are terrified to speak in class, especially if they do not perform well in the subject. Lastly, teenagers can feel that their parents and family do not support them and, even if this is not true, it can create more stress and make them feel as if they are forced to excel to finally have their family’s attention and support. According to Edward W. Schultz and Charles M. Heuchert, stress can be self-induced by the students, for all the reasons stated above but, also, pressure from their everyday environment. That includes the family environment, the school, and sometimes the social circle of a student, and their friends. Parents, siblings, teachers, and even friends can add a lot of stress to a teenager. Self-induced stress can be caused by a student thinking that, to be accepted by society and their environment, they need to perform well in every subject.



Nikolas Konstantinidis, a7

As stated by Pamela Reynolds, another stress factor is the recent pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic shocked the world and changed our perception of many things, including schools. Children had to adapt quickly to a new reality, where they had to attend online lessons and were required to have basic computer skills, even at young ages. In 2020, a little less than 50% of high school students in America reported that they were feeling more stress than in the past years, due to not only having the usual stress about school but also stress about the pandemic and the changes that followed it.

Students exhibit their stress in many ways. According to Edward W. Schultz and Charles M. Heuchert, one way is through some behavioral patterns. Teenagers often use overeating as a coping mechanism to deal with stress. Food can provide comfort and help them forget about school and grades, but eating more may result in negative feelings and can be harmful to their health. In addition, constant stress can contribute to the development of depression or chronic anxiety. Both mental problems will “haunt” teenagers even through adulthood and they will not be able to ever escape them, thus leading to constant inner conflicts and mental exhaustion. One of the most common results of school stress is angry and explosive behavior. Students who are under pressure need “a way out” and they often find it through emotions like anger and exploding at the slightest provocation. That can be harmful to their social lives. Lastly, stress can lead to low self-esteem, as teenagers often associate their value with their academic performance. This can lead to having low expectations of themselves and eventually poor performance. Nevertheless, that can be dangerous since low self-esteem will probably affect them in the future.

However, except from mental, the results of stress can also be physical. According to Edward W. Schultz and Charles M. Heuchert, stress can lead to changes to a person’s functions like sweating, tremors, headaches or weakness, tiredness, freezing and even going blank.

Whoever suffers from school-related stress should have access to professional help. Stress can affect them even through adulthood and lead to mental exhaustion, which is avoidable.

Fotis Lidorikis, β6, Victoria Vytogianni, β6

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“Child stress and the school experience” by Edward W. Schultz and Charles M. Heuchert

Eating Disorders and Teenagers

Today, many teenagers are struggling with eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder.

The most common one is anorexia nervosa. These disorders start between the ages of fourteen and nineteen years; never earlier than eleven years but with no upper age limit. Research has shown that 2.7% of adolescents will experience an eating disorder in their lifetime and 13% of teenagers will develop an eating disorder by the age of 20. Johns Hopkins Medicine defines an eating disorder as a form of self-starvation, in which individuals are becoming familiar with starvation, which leads to over-exercising, and nutritional deficiencies.

Classical anorexia nervosa is a reaction to puberty but sometimes a serious factor is anxiety. In the first stage of an eating disorder, adolescents refuse to eat enough to keep anywhere near a normal weight. Then, the patient starts to diet and at the same time, he/she begins to exercise excessively as an additional help in losing weight. The patient is aware that he/she is too thin by normal standards, but emotionally he/she still feels very fat. Secondary anorexia nervosa affects older girls in their late teens or twenties. These patients frequently have digestive symptoms and a genuinely poor appetite. They pursue thinness to be accepted by others.

Another serious eating disorder that needs to be addressed is bulimia nervosa. Bulimia can be a form of anxiety disorder that combined with daily factors makes the person generally dissatisfied. In this case, the teenager desires to “enjoy” the food and “express” feelings through food.

In conclusion, if these disorders remain untreated, they may cause damage to the patient. Teenagers should focus on healthy relationships and eating habits and turn to professionals for support!



Myrto Karystinani, γ4

Argyro Karapidaki, β3, Monica Makrakis, β4

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Teenagers and Procrastination

Nowadays, it is common for teenagers to procrastinate, but why? Firstly, we need to understand the term “procrastination”. According to a study conducted by the Chinese State Office for Education Sciences Project, which dates to 2022, procrastination is “the intentional delay of action despite knowing that one will be worse off due to the delay”.

In this study, it was found that the sex of the subject had an impact on the “score”. It was found that girls on average had a slightly higher chance of procrastinating. This is caused because during puberty our body rapidly changes and while this is happening females report a slightly more stressful life, which can easily create unhealthy habits, symptoms of anxiety, and depression (keep in mind this study was taken in East Asia and these results can vary wildly depending on the region).



Aggeliki Pashali, y4

Another variable that increases procrastination is the age of the subject. In these studies, it was shown that procrastination was most prominent in subjects aged 13-16. This is probably because younger subjects are more likely to be examined by their parents. Similarly, young adults are mature

enough to understand that their responsibilities should be taken seriously and that everything has a deadline to meet.

Although procrastination has been widely studied, not much is known about this phenomenon. In a study by “BMC PSYCHOLOGY” in 2021, the conclusion was that “there are moderate-to-large ethnic differences and smaller sex differences in procrastination among New Caledonian adolescents. These results may have important implications for educational programs in New Caledonia.” Also, students who like and are used to procrastinating more than usual, “for instance every day”, those students are linked to below-average academic performances and results.

On the contrary, a study by the “American National Library of Medicine” (ANLM), involving high-school and junior high school students, over 56.4 percent of junior high school students were used to and procrastinated regularly, while only 10.9 percent of high school students procrastinate. But why? Most students stated that they needed to pass important exams to go to college, but the answer is far more complicated than it seems to be. Well, at the end of puberty, the surge of hormones eventually stops, and one of the hormones is dopamine, which is the main cause of procrastination.

In conclusion, procrastination is common among teenagers. At the same time, it is important to avoid procrastination, because the consequences of over-procrastination could deteriorate someone's image, academic performance, and personal growth.

Sotiris Avgerodimos β3, Phillip Kardiakidis, β1

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Teenagers and Team Sports

Teenagers and team sports are two subjects connected in many ways. Firstly, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we have discovered that in recent years, diagnoses of depression among teens have increased. However, teens who play team sports have fewer diagnoses of depression. Teenagers who play sports have better health and better physique than most teens who do not play any sports. Although team sports have a good impact on teens, not everything is good. Research shows that teens who play team sports usually have no free time or suffer from anxiety because of competition.

The Sports Financial Literacy Academy (SFLA) of the World Health Organization (WHO) states that teenagers are more likely to have mental health issues during adolescence. The good news is that playing sports is seen to be a useful strategy for managing mental health issues. The medical reason is that endorphins, which are brain chemicals that reduce tension and pain, are released during exercise. Moreover, it positively affects serotonin, which has been described as the chemical that regulates mental health. Teenagers learn through team sports that the power of teamwork and a positive mindset can solve many problems in their everyday lives. Sports have an immense impact on a person's daily life and health. They do not just give you an interesting routine, but also a healthy body. Engaging in physical activities like sports improves your heart function, reduces your risk of diabetes, controls blood sugar, and lowers tension and stress levels.

But like everything, sports have drawbacks and an adverse effect on youth. All athletes run the inherent risk of injury when they play sports. During teenage years, young athletes are susceptible to a range of overuse and severe injuries. Sports-related injuries have been linked to rising youth sports involvement; individuals aged 5 to 24 make 2.6 million ER (Emergency Room) visits annually as a result.

Despite alarming trends in youth sports culture, sports, and recreation should be an integral component of children's lives. Encouraging physical activity is essential for teenagers' health and well-being. It is often known that children of all ages who engage in intensive physical activity have numerous health benefits. To sum things up, we can infer that despite having some negative effects on youth, team sports are one of the best ways for children and teenagers to grow physically and mentally.

Aggelos Aposkitis, β1, Odysseas Kanavos, β3

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Rise Above the Whispers

Human nature, oh so kind,
We live through ages, and we survive.
This year we're teenagers, with a lot of drama in our lives.
But if we work together, it is sure that we won't ignite.

Lost in the shadows, searching for my light,
In the maze of confusion, I'll take flight,
Through the noise and the haze, I'll make my stand,
In the heart of this storm, I'll find where I land.

Don't be scared folks this is just the life cycle.
And when you experience that you should notify Michael,
Then Michael talks to Fanis and then Fanis talks to Vlassis,
They all work together and then your problem has vanished.

Lost in the shadows, searching for my light,
In the maze of confusion, I'll take flight,
Through the noise and the haze, I'll make my stand,
In the heart of this storm, I'll find where I land.

In the darkest nights, when the whispers sting,
Hold onto hope, let your spirit sing.
Through the pain and tears, you'll rise above,
In your strength and light, you'll find your love.

Lost in the shadows, searching for my light,
In the maze of confusion, I'll take flight,
Through the noise and the haze, I'll make my stand,
In the heart of this storm, I'll find where I land.

Theofanis Vitzilaos, y6

What is Poetry?

To me, poetry is like a magical realm where words come alive, and emotions take flight. It's a symphony of language that paints pictures in the depths of the soul. Poetry is the gentle touch of a feather, evoking sensations, and thoughts. It's a dance of rhythm and rhyme, weaving together the threads of human experience.

Poetry is a part of self-expression. It's a window into the world, offering glimpses of understanding. Poetry is a journey of self-discovery, a celebration of the beauty and complexity of life.

Odysseas Kanavos, β3

For us, poetry is an art of passion, raw feelings, and a way to find beauty and peace in the world. Through poetry, people express themselves, get closer to how they feel, closer to the truth. Poetry for us is a way to find truth, beauty, and love in the world, through words. With poetry, you can use your words to express things you don't know how to describe even to yourself.

Maya Anastasakou Dalla, β1 & Elektra Theodorou, β4

Poetry is not just plain lines with words on them. It is more like a big journey through the poets' way of thinking and the way they understand the world around them. With just a few lines but with very specific words a reader can easily understand how the poet feels. To conclude, for me poetry is like a long trip that you take to discover the poet's personality and to get away from the real world and go to a better place.

Stella Koufi, γ4


For me, poetry isn't only about words that rhyme when combined or the use of figurative language. Poetry can creatively express your feelings and emotions. Poems can express happiness, sadness, grief, terror, or excitement. Poetry can also reveal something about a person or the culture and beliefs of a country. It's a form of communication in some cases.

Argyro Karapidaki, β3

When I write or read poetry, I feel a connection to my inner self and to the world around me. Poetry helps me navigate joy, sorrow, and love offering a way to articulate what often feels inexpressible. It's my way to celebrate the extraordinary moments that define our existence.

Mariangela Panou, γ8

Scaringly Beautiful

Three roses are arranged vertically on the left side of the page. The top one is a dark red, almost black, rose. The middle one is a vibrant red rose. The bottom one is a light pink rose. They are surrounded by green leaves and stems. The background is a dark, textured blue-grey color.

The beauty of space.
It is huge,
It has no limit.
You can drift around in it,
In a space craft that,
gives you a trip,
to the land of aliens,
and weird colorful elements,
with peculiar chemicals.
And the stars singing,
Tunes and melodies.
But the spacecraft ain't,
always nice and good.
It drifts you,
around space and galaxies,
but sometimes,
it goes faster and faster,
and it twists you around.
When it stops
The voices of loneliness
get louder,
And the fuel is lowering,
While the chances of death
Rising and rising,
And you can see,
The stairway to heaven,
And the highway to hell.

Niki Papageorgiou, β5

The Black Sea

I've been there many times,
And all I've returned.
It wasn't always going clockwise,
Neither was it too intense.

In this sea filled with starts,
We explored with our ships,
The cold filling our scars,
While risking our lives,
In this game of trips.

Many may think it's easy.
Many do think it's wrong.
But in this big black sea,
You simply fall.

Nicky and Thomas,
Sarah and Hogs,
All disappeared,
A bit after dawn.

John Poulos, β

Lifechanging Memories

When I first went on a mission,
I had to face many risks,
and sacrifice things.
I had to leave my family behind,
I had to change my routine,
I had to adjust but...
I took the risk and made it,
I made my dream come true,
I now remember the days,
I was in space,
Smiling and thinking,
About the obstacles I had to face.

*Bianca Bokota, β5
Nadina Konopisopoulou, β1*



Valeria Papanikolaou, γ6

A Poem for Her

A shiny veil of snow covering the ground,
A girl with long lustrous hair walking by.

The reflection of the sun on the snow,
And her marble eyes make her look like a
magical creature.

Her blue eyes were like fresh running water.
A beautiful flower essence surrounded her.

The fur covering her,
Keeping her warm,
In every step.

Colorful flowers come out of the ice.
She is the light in the darkness,
The last drop of hope.

Valeria Papanikolaou, γ6

A Poem from Him

Promising and acting,
Two very different notions.
Enough with your petty sympathies.

You say that you're sorry,
That you acknowledge,
All the suffering you've caused.
Yet you don't give us back,
What is rightfully for us.

Give us back our land,
Our mountains, our plains,
Our rivers and our bays.

Give us back our years,
The years that we spend as slaves,
In our own home.

Give us back our loved ones,
That died in your hands.

Eleni Hadjioannou, γ6



Leontios Tzazopoulos, γ2

From: A Terrified Turkey

To: Americans

November 20th, 2023

Only a few days left before I become a delicious dish on someone's table for Thanksgiving Day. How awful is this? Tell me. I want to scream but it is meaningless. I don't understand this tradition. How do people celebrate Thanksgiving? I wonder... There are so many ways to celebrate, remember, and be grateful!!!

Just like all the other turkeys, I am an inquisitive bird who enjoys exploring. I am intelligent and playful, just like dogs and cats, with a unique personality. I can fly, change colors, and show affection towards others. Why don't you make me a pet turkey?

Let me explain! Our dark meat is high in fat and cholesterol, and you don't want to gain pounds in one day, do you? Don't forget... Eating turkey makes you sleepy. Who wants to be tired on Thanksgiving or who wants to spend four hours cooking a turkey? I can easily name a million things to do in four hours! Also, some local people feel that eating us brings bad luck. Are you willing to take that risk? It will be worse than breaking a mirror! And, of course, if you kill me, you will have to face my family and friends. They will feel lonely and unhappy without me...

You know, I am not the only choice for this feast. I will not recommend eating other animals like sheep, rabbits, chickens, goats, geese, deer, or cows, because they are all my friends. So, I propose other traditional dishes that include bread stuffing, potatoes (sweet or mashed), cranberry or tomato sauce, pumpkin pie, spaghetti, vegetables, nuts, grains, milk products and eggs. Delicious!!!

I just want to play on the farm, just like you. I have rights. I want to live in a place without fear.

Enjoy Thanksgiving Day without a turkey on your table!

Eirini Anna Pouliou, a2

Dear Humans,

Greetings from the turkey community! I hope this message finds you well and full of the joy that comes with the Thanksgiving season. As a representative of my feathered friends, I am reaching out to you with a humble plea.

You see, we turkeys are more than just delicious feasts; we are sentient beings with feelings, families, and a desire to live peacefully. Thanksgiving is a time for gratitude and reflection, and I kindly ask you to consider extending that spirit to my fellow turkeys.

We understand the tradition of gathering around a table filled with delicious food, but I urge you to explore alternative options that do not involve taking the life of one of my kind. Countless plant-based and creative recipes can bring joy to your celebration without causing harm to us.

By making this compassionate choice, you not only spare a life but also contribute to a more sustainable world. Let Thanksgiving be a time of unity and compassion, where the spirit of gratitude extends to all living beings.

Wishing you a Thanksgiving filled with love, kindness, and delectable cruelty-free dishes.

Feathered Regards,

Samuel Karmaj, y10

A Different Thanksgiving Dinner

If I could choose to invite someone from history to our Thanksgiving dinner, that person would surely be Squanto, who was a member of the Wampanoag. So, who are the Wampanoag? They are a nation of Native people of North America who have survived until today. Why did I choose him and not just a random person from the Wampanoag or the Pilgrims? The answer is that Squanto was the one who managed to communicate with the Pilgrims and taught them basic surviving techniques, such as planting, fishing, and hunting. Later, he solved the conflicts between them. Without him, the Pilgrims could have died. So, all that being said, what would I ask Squanto during our Thanksgiving dinner?

How was the first Thanksgiving dinner between the Wampanoag and the Pilgrims?

How did you feel when celebrating the first Thanksgiving with the Pilgrims?

Why did you decide to help the Pilgrims when they first arrived, rather than simply let them figure out a solution by themselves?

What was the Wampanoag's first reaction when they saw the Pilgrims?

What are you personally thankful for?

Concluding, I believe that the Wampanoag are, even today, a symbol of kindness and support and that everyone should be inspired by them!

Flora Sofroni, a1

The True Meaning of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is defined as the annual celebration of the harvest and the blessings that individuals and communities have enjoyed during the preceding year. It is the time of the year in which families gather, to enjoy a big turkey dinner and express gratitude for everything that they have been fortunate to possess in their lives.

Unfortunately, not everyone can share and enjoy the Thanksgiving spirit. People lacking financial means fall within this group, as well as patients in hospitals without family support and the elderly who have no relatives to keep them company.

Organized societies could form social welfare structures, to provide help to their less fortunate members. Common houses, where the homeless can have a decent Thanksgiving dinner and spend indoors the night, could be an example of such social support.

Individuals can convey the true spirit of Thanksgiving Day, as well. Spending a couple of hours at a hospital, keeping company of patients with no family and relatives, or inviting an elder to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner together, could be the perfect way to share the joyful feelings of this day. Lastly, they could also donate money to charity. These kinds of actions would make each one of us contribute the most to sharing Thanksgiving's Day true meaning.

Erika Sason, γ3

Dear Editor,

I am writing to list the three most important qualities of a successful student. I believe that if an article regarding these qualities is published in your magazine, it could help many students who may be dealing with some difficulties. For me, the most important qualities are time management, paying attention in class, and always doing your homework. In this letter, I will explain these characteristics and provide examples for each of them.

Nowadays, you can't be a successful student without having good time management skills. Pupils are assigned a lot of homework, which can be overwhelming. Moreover, if a student has an organizer, or a calendar which helps keep track of homework, assignments, and their due dates, the problem of having stress and missing deadlines could be reduced.

Another important quality of a successful student is paying attention in class. Most students do not understand the value of the actual lesson. By paying attention in class and by being curious about the topic, studying at home takes way less time and it is sometimes even unnecessary. When I was younger, I did not use to pay much attention in class, but when I understood the value of it, there was no going back for me. I went from studying the entire afternoon to forty minutes a day or less. So, trust me, even when you think you do not learn anything in class, you do.

You should always do your homework. While doing your homework, you revise all the things you learn in class and the information is delegated from your short-term memory to your long-term one. I have always been doing my homework, so I do not know the difficulties and struggles behind not revising at home, but I am sure it could create major problems. Furthermore, you should not procrastinate, check your mobile phone or daydream. Just do it! All in all, if a pupil has these three essential qualities, they will thrive academically. If you efficiently manage your time, if you pay attention, and if you revise, school is not that hard.

I hope you find my suggestions useful and you publish my article.
Yours sincerely,

Danai Dandoura, y6

Dear Editor,

We are reaching the end of the school year and many students are struggling with academic success. This is why I had the idea to write this letter. I believe that if Sunny Days published an article about the most important qualities of a successful student, it would help many of my classmates. It would motivate them to continue studying and would make their lives easier with tips on how to produce better results at school.

Firstly, a particularly important trait of a good student is setting goals. Make sure that you study because you want to achieve something for yourself. If you do not study for yourself, you will soon reach a point where you will not value their opinion so much anymore and you will quit trying. You may get tired of trying to please another person and decide to stop. However, if you set goals for yourself and try to achieve them by getting good grades, you will stay motivated to keep working hard, since it will be for your benefit.

Another important trait is having a balanced schedule. It is not healthy or productive to study all day and never spend quality time with your friends and family. School should not be your entire life. However, not studying at all and only going out every night is not healthy either. This is why it is important to find balance. That way, you will not feel stressed, and you will still be productive and motivated. Students with a balanced life tend to get the best grades, while not being unhappy and maintaining a social life. A few ways you can achieve having a balanced life are the following: create a list of the things you must do and the things you want to do at the beginning of each week and try to do the most from each list.

Finally, it is important to stay focused while you are studying. It does not matter how many hours you study, if you are not focused. This is a problem many students face. To solve this problem, put away your phone while you are studying and work in an organized environment, free of anything that could distract you. Also, it is important to take breaks, so you do not get overwhelmed, and you maintain your focus. Try to divide your study hours equally: do not study a subject for too long because you will get tired, and you will not have the energy to study the rest. Unless you have a test, you should spend approximately the same time on each subject.

I hope you liked my ideas, and I would be honored if you published them, as I think they would help many students to be more successful.

Yours sincerely,

Margarita Sfakianaki, 18

Dear Editor,

The reason I am writing is to draw your attention to a serious problem. I have noticed that we have a litter problem in our school, which is truly upsetting as the environment has been at great risk in the past few years. Our campus is very beautiful, and it should not be ruined. Teachers, parents, and students can contribute to the solution of the issue mentioned above in different ways.

First, education is key to addressing most issues. Learning about something, in our case the rubbish issue in our school, makes you think about getting more involved and informed. For instance, the school could hold lectures, seminars, and much more, to educate students, parents, and educators on topics regarding recycling, pollution, and possible solutions.

Additionally, we could, for example, establish rubbish-picking days twice a month in a certain period, something like an environmental awareness program, during which we can help clean the school. Plus, the canteen should limit the use of paper and most certainly the plastic that they use, by replacing plastic with materials that can be recycled. Also, the teachers can talk to the parents and urge them to hold conversations with their children about the environment and to recycle daily. Lastly, we could remove the all-purpose bins, and replace them with bins that offer recycling options, while of course offering the option of non-recyclable materials and food remains.

To sum up, the environmental problem can be tackled by educating people, holding trash-picking days, limiting the single-use products in the school's canteen, and replacing our usual trashcans with those that also offer recycling options. In my opinion, if all the above are applied, the litter issue will no longer exist. It is important to add that the learning environment will be much more enjoyable. Researchers believe that a clean environment boosts happiness.

I hope that you will consider my suggestions.

Kind regards,

Danae Moutzouridou, y7

Dear Editor,

I am writing to suggest what I believe is the perfect destination for the next school trip. In my opinion, the capital of Italy, Rome has the optimal characteristics of the next city to visit.

There are plenty of things that make this city a better choice than its European counterparts. To begin with, it is only a short flight away and is generally affordable, bringing the overall cost of the trip down. Furthermore, it is renowned for its beauty and historical significance, which means it has great educational value as it allows students to enhance their knowledge of the Roman Empire through the various art museums and well-known sights present in the city.

As for the daily routine of students during their stay, I believe the two most important sights are the Colosseum and the Pantheon. The Colosseum will enable students to learn about the day-to-day life, traditions, culture, architecture, and technology of the Roman Empire while the Pantheon will help them better understand the religious beliefs of people at that period.

To conclude, Rome will allow students to acquire historical knowledge through fun experiences while being affordable.

I hope these ideas will be taken into consideration when you decide on the next destination for the annual school trip.

Kind regards,

John Rallis, y2



Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

- 100g sugar
- 360g flour
- 115g butter
- 2 eggs
- 160g chocolate chip
- 115g Nutella
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla essence

Steps

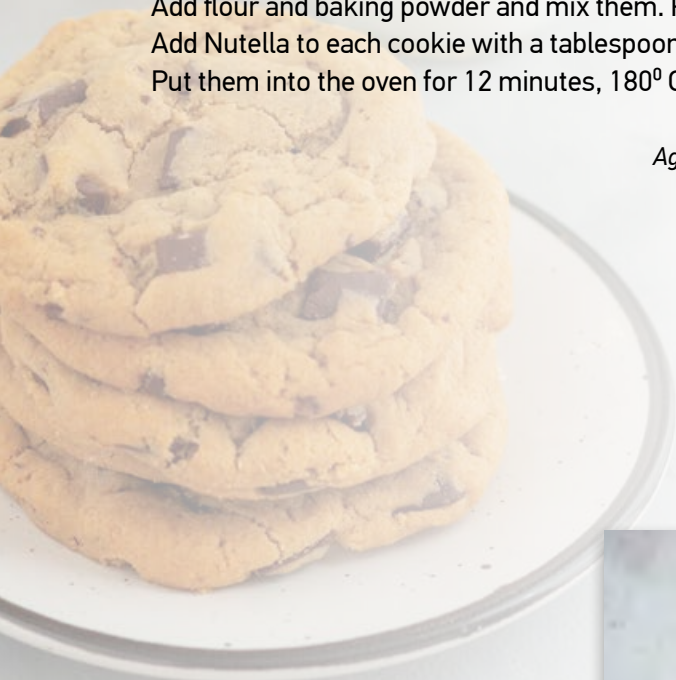
Put in a bowl the butter and the sugar and mix them till they are like a paste. Add the vanilla essence and the eggs and mix.

Add flour and baking powder and mix them. Put the cookies on a cooking tray.

Add Nutella to each cookie with a tablespoon and then another layer of dough.

Put them into the oven for 12 minutes, 180° C.

Aggelos Aposkitis, β1 & Odysseas Kanavos, β3



Cupcakes

Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup of vegetable oil
- 60 g of soft butter
- 2 pinches of salt
- 3/4 cup of sugar
- 1½ tea spoon liquid vanilla
- 2 large eggs (at room temperature)
- 1/2 cup of sour milk (kefir or yogurt at room temperature)
- 1½ cups of all-purpose flour
- 1-1½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Steps

Preheat the oven to 170°C in the air.

Sieve all the solid ingredients: flour, baking powder, and soda.

In a large bowl, beat the softened butter with the oil, sugar, and salt with a hand mixer for 1 minute on medium speed until creamy and fluffy.

Add the eggs, vanilla, and sour milk.

Beat for 30 seconds until the ingredients are homogenized.

Add the sieved solid ingredients and with the mixer on low speed. Mix the ingredients for a few seconds. Add the chocolate chips and stir lightly.

Equalize the mixture and fill the molds by 3/4.

Carefully place them in the hot oven and bake for 15-18 minutes.

Let them cool down for 10-15 minutes and then decorate them.

Victoria Vytogianni, β6 Fotis Lidorikis, β6



Halvas

Ingredients:

- 150 g almond slivers
- 3/4 cup sunflower oil
- 1 cup semolina, coarse
- 1 cup semolina, fine
- 1 teaspoon(s) cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon(s) ground cloves
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 4 cups water
- orange zest, of 3 oranges

Steps

Preheat the oven to 180° C (356° F) and set to fan.

Toast the almond slivers in a shallow baking pan lined with parchment paper for 5-8 minutes.

In a non-stick pot saute the vegetable oil with the fine semolina and coarse semolina, over medium-low heat.

Stir the mixture continuously for about 4-5 minutes, until the semolina becomes golden brown.

When ready, add the brown sugar, water, orange zest, cinnamon, and cloves.

Stir for another 10 minutes until the mixture thickens and starts to bubble. You will know it is ready when it starts to pull away from the bottom of the pan.

Add the almonds and stir.

Transfer the mixture into a 22 cm halvah mold pan and press it into the pan to give your halvah a nice shape. You can hit the cake pan on a hard surface to make sure the mixture settles, no gaps are left, and your halvah is nice and compact.

Turn it out after 5 minutes. Serve it with some Greek strained yogurt or ice cream, sprinkle some cinnamon, orange zest, and mint leaves.



Maya Anastasakou Dalla, β1



**Pierce**

