



ISSUE #1
NOVEMBER, 2023

ORATOR

YOUR SCHOOL,
WORLD, AND
ENTERTAINMENT **NEWS,**
ALL IN **ONE PLACE.**

TOR



ISSUE 1

EDITOR'S LETTER

As the school year kicks off, change is in the air, and the Orator is rolling with it.

Flip through our first issue to find extensive coverage on scholarships, volunteer opportunities, sports, and entertainment inside and outside of the school.

Many thanks to our dedicated, passionate team of writers, editors, photographers, artists, and graphic designers who made the production of this issue possible! We hope for another year of many interesting and informative editions of the Orator.



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SBA JUNIOR GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM WINS LANDSLIDE VICTORY

Dominant performance leads to incredible victory 35-11
Markham, October 27, 2023

By: Erill Alvarez

The St. Brother Andre Junior girls' basketball team has reason to celebrate as they emerged victorious in resounding fashion at the tournament held on October 27th, 2023. With an incredible amount of determination, ferocious offence, and brick-wall defence, the team triumphed against formidable opponents, securing the tournament first place.

The championship game saw the SBA Junior girls' basketball team deliver a dominant performance that left spectators in awe. They outscored their opponents with an incredible victory of 35-11, demonstrating their chemistry on both ends of the court.

Elaine Z. Gwen M. Evi Z. Nadia, and Emma, the key players of the team, showcased their individual skills and team spirit throughout the game. Elaine and Gwen's strong drives in the paint were excellent shows of chemistry for the team. Evi, Nadia, and Emma showed strong defensive plays, halting the opposing team from gaining any momentum.

The team's offensive efficiency was highlighted by exceptional three-point shooting, with Lauryn P standing out, with remarkable contributions for the entire team. They played at a dominant level, as every member of the team did their part. Congratulations to the entire team on their well-deserved tournament win, and may their success continue to grow in the future.



VOLUNTEER HOURS: OPPORTUNITIES AND APPROVED SERVICES

By: Kaitlyn D'Andrea

Overview: to graduate high school, all students in the York Catholic District School Board must mandatorily complete a total of 40 community service hours between July 1st of their Grade 8 summer, until the end of their final year in grade 12. These hours can only be completed outside of school hours, including during lunch breaks, after school, on weekends, and during holidays or school breaks (i.e. Christmas break, March break, summer break). In addition, these hours must be unpaid and solely have to be volunteer based. As hours are collected, students are expected to fill out a sheet recording each volunteer hour, the activity they performed, and the signature of the overviewer and the number of hours they collected. Included down below are multiple sources that you can use to find a place to volunteer!

- Salvation Army:** <https://salvationarmy.ca/volunteer/>
- Markhaven Home for Seniors:** <https://markhaven.ca/volunteering/>
- Richmond Hill Community Food Bank:**
<https://www.richmondhillcommunityfoodbank.ca/how-to-help>
- Vaughan Food Bank:** <https://www.vaughanfoodbank.ca/>
- Vaughan Public Libraries:** <https://www.vaughanpl.info/volunteer>
- Ontario Volunteer Centre Network:**
<http://ovcn.ca/volunteering/find-my-volunteer-centre>
- Volunteer Markham:** <https://volunteermarkham.ca/i-want-to-volunteer/>
- Volunteering in York Region:**
<https://www.yorkregion.com/community-static/7327147-volunteer-opportunities-in-york-region/>

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES WITHIN REACH!

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOUR:

- Mowing the lawn
- Shovelling snow
- Shopping or meal preparation for the elderly
- Childcare/babysitting
- Tutoring/homework help

HELP YOUR COMMUNITY:

- Volunteer at a seniors home
- Volunteer at food drives/banks
- Sign up for environmental initiatives (community or park clean-up, planting trees, etc)
- Volunteer at places of worship (i.e. Church)
- Volunteer to help with sports teams (i.e. community house leagues)
- Volunteer at hospitals
- Volunteer at animal welfare agencies
- Assist with literacy initiatives (local libraries, daycare centres, community centres, etc)

HELP YOUR SCHOOL

- Help with sports teams or sporting events
- Help in the library (shelving books, cleaning up, changing bulletin boards, etc)
- Tutor other students
- Assist students with special needs
- Assist Chaplaincy with events (i.e. retreats)
- Assist with school events (i.e. student orientation)
- Participate in charitable or environmental initiatives
- Serve on school councils or committees

UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE APPLICATION DEADLINES

By: Aline Brennan

University Undergraduate Programs

Application Deadline: January 15, 2024. Target date for Ontario universities to receive all application data and grades for applications submitted.

Semester One Marks Submission: February 22, 2024. Target date for Ontario universities to receive all final grades available for 4U/M courses and current full-year grades for 4U/M courses.

Semester Two Midterm Submission: May 2, 2024. Target date for Ontario universities to receive all midterm or final grades available for 4U/M courses and interim grades for full-year courses.

Expect Acceptance: May 29, 2024. The latest date all current Ontario high school students who submitted their application by the January application deadline can expect a response from an Ontario university.

Other Admission Expectations: June 3, 2024. The earliest date a current Ontario high school student may be required to respond to an Ontario university offer of admission and give a financial commitment.

All Information From:

Ontario University Applications Center

www.ouac.on.ca/guide/undergrad-dates/

College Programs

Application Deadline: February 1, 2024. The deadline for applying to highly competitive programs. NOTE: Applicants for all programs are encouraged to apply before this date.

Semester One Marks Submission: February 16, 2024. The deadline for first semester final marks and currently enrolled second semester courses.

Semester Two Midterm Submission: April 26, 2024. The deadline for second semester midterm marks.

Expect Acceptance: May 1, 2024. The most common deadline but applicants should check their offers of admission for exact deadline dates.

Other Admission Expectations: June 1, 2024. The earliest date that colleges may require payment of tuition fees.



All Information From:

Ontario College Application Center

www.ocas.ca/support/high-school-partners/important-dates-fall-2024

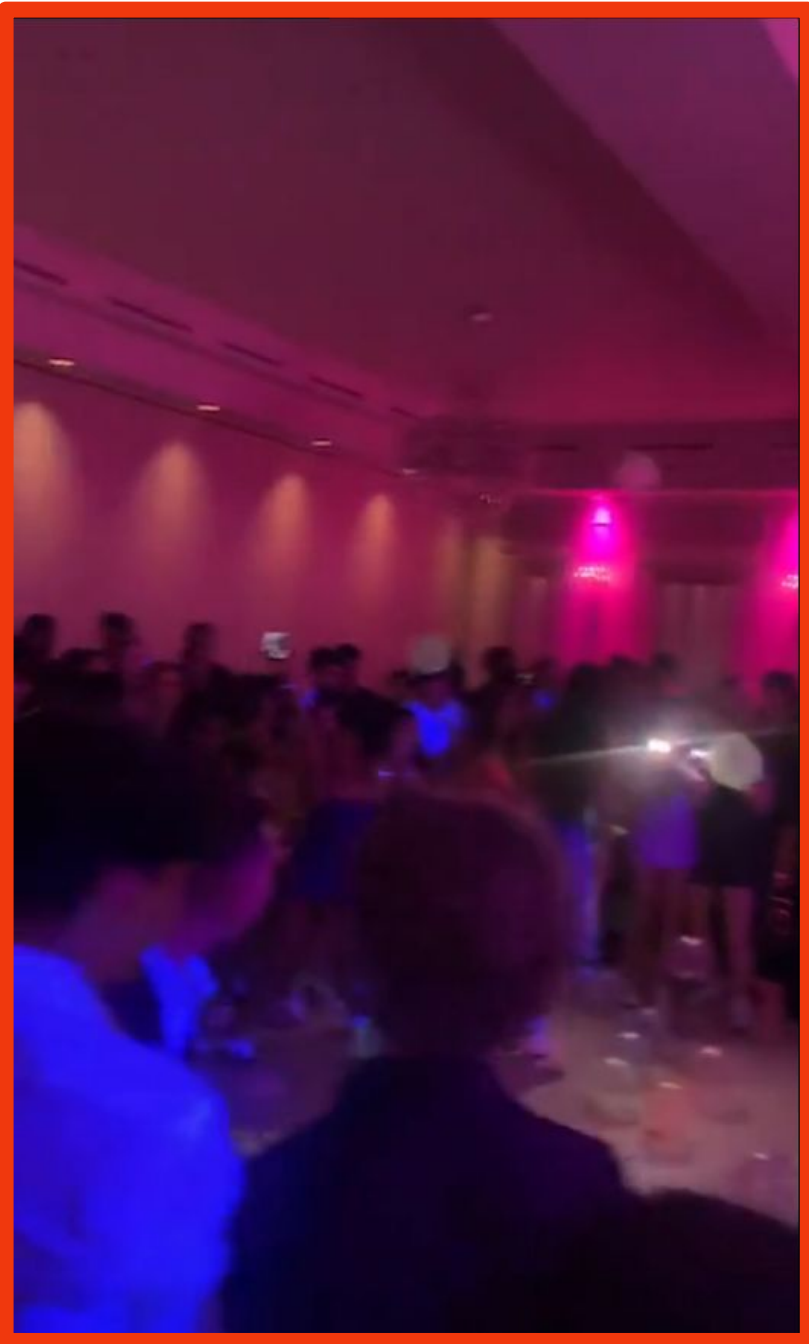
ORATOR'S SEMI-FORMAL SURVEY

By: Michael Barry
Semi-formal: Nov 10, 2023

From a survey of **50** grade 11s, **48%** are not attending the grade specific semi-formal this November.

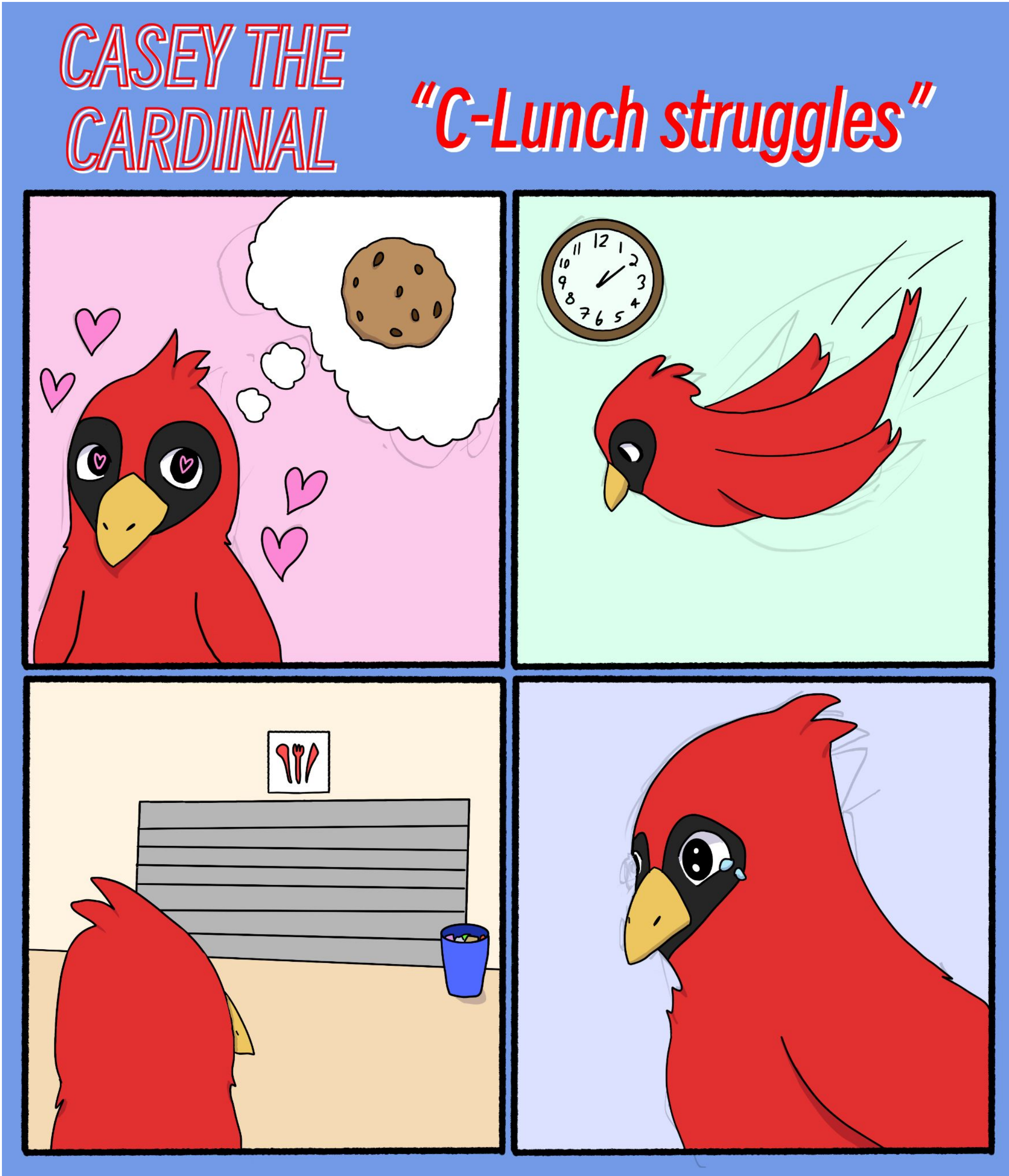
In comparison, **42%** of people will be attending. Students have explained why they are deciding not to attend, saying that the price was **excessive and unaffordable**.

While another student, Christina in Grade 11, said that she was going to dance and have fun.



COMIC SECTION

By: Wilhelmina Harker





WHAT IS THE SCHOOL LISTENING TO?

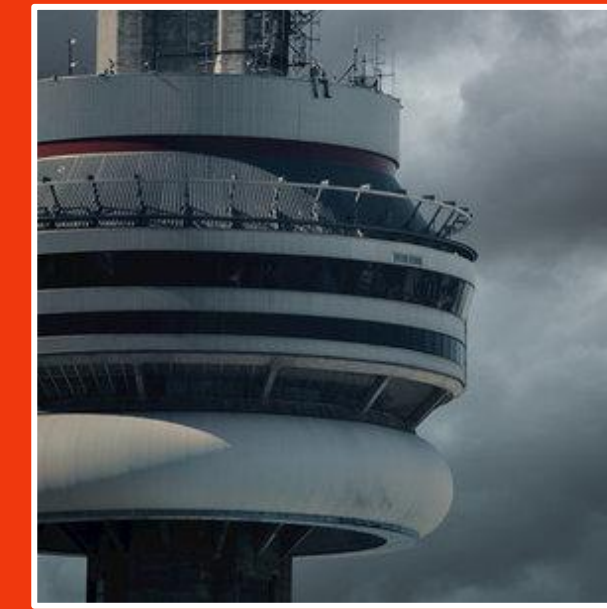
By: Christian Ramos

Music is a part of billions of people's lives, whether that may be by being a casual listener, or by pursuing a career in the music industry; it has an affect on everyone. Its effects on people can vary from leaving a profound impact on someone, influencing an entire generation, or amplifying someone's emotions. Music is something that differentiates not only our likes and dislikes but who we are as people.

People may listen to a band or musician for different reasons and in different ways, whether that be by linking personal experiences to a song or by simply enjoying vocals and instrumentals. According to a survey taken by the students, people's taste in music at our school ranges from several diverse artists and genres. Students were asked who their favourite band or artist was at the moment and while some people shared the same tastes, people had different reasons as to why they liked them. Their favourite artists ranged from indie artists, that have with great vocals and production, like Rex Orange County, TV Girl, Lana Del Rey, and Nico.

Students also seemed to enjoy rock bands with unique guitar like The Clash, Metallica, Radiohead, Fleetwood Mac, and Pierce the Veil. They were also familiar with the mainstream music genre of hip-hop which had artists and producers like The Wu-Tang-Clan, JPEGMAFIA, Kanye West, Drake, and Sza. While there was plenty of diversity, the artist most students had in common was Taylor Swift. People seem to enjoy her music thanks to her vocals and relatable lyrics. With her album 1989 (Taylor's Version) being released at the end of October, it wouldn't be a surprise if others became "Swifties".

In life, music serves as a universal thread that binds us all together, whether we're passive listeners or aspiring artists. The survey that was taken at our school offers a look into the diverse and interesting tastes that define us, reminding us that music is a reflection of our individuality and shared connections.



THE 2023 TORONTO BLUE JAYS: A BASEBALL TRAGEDY

By: Hannah Thompson

After the disastrous season that the Blue Jays had, the question remains: Who is to blame? John Schneider? Ross Atkins? Guillermo Martinez? Despite having the 7th largest payroll in the MLB, the Blue Jays organization does not have a sufficient amount of stamina to keep their managers, coaches, or players going.

Throughout the season there was a serious struggle with hitting, especially when runners are in scoring position. George Springer went 0-for-35 hits in July despite being in the leadoff position. His leadoff spot was then replaced by Whit Merrifield until Merrifield started to slump and Springer began to pick up his pace. When their top players are underperforming it's not a shock that they didn't make it farther in the playoffs.

On a more positive note, the Jays 2023 bullpen has had a significant improvement compared to 2022. Yusei Kikuchi had a 5.19 earned run average (ERA) in 2022 which changed into a 3.86 ERA in 2023, winning 11 of the 17 games he started. Thanks to the acquisition of Jordan Hicks and Genesis Cabrera during trade season, (one of the top decisions that management has made this year in my opinion) it made the bullpen even stronger. Hicks has a 3.29 ERA and a four-seam fastball averaging 100.4 mph this season; one of the best in the league.



Together, with Kevin Gausman - one of the best starters in the American League - the bullpen was classified among the finest in the MLB. One primary issue within the bullpen was Alek Manoah's performance throughout the season (I'll save the Anthony Bass stuff for another time). The Blue Jays won only 3 of the 12 games where he started, but he allowed the opposing team to score runs. Although he had a strong 2.24 ERA in 2022, his ERA increased to 5.87 in 2023. He was demoted to the Florida Complex League in late June where he allowed 11 runs in one game. Not long after, pitching staff and management deemed he was ready to return, which he did in July. Since then, he was demoted to AAA Buffalo Bisons where he failed to report in. According to the Sportsnet podcast: Blair and Barker, he didn't report in as he "... was upset at the Toronto Blue Jays' decision to sideline him in favor of the team's other starting pitchers."

Although there were many lows throughout the season, it wasn't all bad. In July, Vladimir Gurrero Jr. won the Home Run Derby during the MLB All-Star Game in Seattle. The Blue Jays swept a series 9 times during the 2023 regular season and in the current postseason, they have 5 players who are Gold Glove finalists. In June, Bo Bichette led the American League in total bases, multi-hit games, and batting percentage. Whit Merrifield was named to MLB's Team of the Month for July in the position of 2nd base.

In August, Davis Schneider - who was a part of AAA Buffalo - was called up during the Blue Jays' series against the Red Sox at Fenway. He did the best possible thing a rookie could do at his first MLB at-bat, score a home run. Davis Schneider quickly became a fan favourite, along with two other AAA call-ups, Ernie Clement and Spencer Horwitz. Quickly from there they got the nickname "The Buffalo Brigade". They scored a total of 9 runs and had a total of 10 RBI in 4 games. This was before Schneider began his slump in September, batting an average of .276, and both Horwitz and Clement were demoted to the minor leagues. All I know is fans cannot wait to see them back together and hopefully on the 40-man roster, next season.



Many people might say April 2023 was the month of Matt Chapman. He was named the American League Player of the Week after hitting 2 home runs, allowing 12 runners to be batted in (RBI), and had a .464 avg as well as a 1.373 on-base plus slugging percentage (OPS). He was named to MLB's Team of the Month for March/April 2023. Not only was he Player of the Week and a part of Team of the Month, but was also named the American League Player of the Month. By the end of April, he had hit 5 home runs, had 21 RBI, had a 1.152 OPS, and a 2.0 fangraphs wins above replacement (FWAR). It goes without saying that Chapman had a brilliant April, and all the team could hope for is that he continued to play like this the whole season.

As we learned by being Blue Jays fans, not all good things last. After April, Chapman's batting average turned into a .240 for the 2023 season and then .167 within the last 15 games. With a total of 509 at-bats and 165 strikeouts, Chapman is no longer regarded as one of the star players on the team, but as a player where fans already know it's over when he is up at-bat



With seven free agents this upcoming break, it is crucial that the team takes a look at what they need to improve on. During the 2023 wildcard series against the Minnesota Twins, the Jays' management made some very questionable and impactful decisions. The decision that possibly cost the Jays the World Series was pulling out starting pitcher José Berríos in the 4th inning, during the second Wild Card game, to replace him with Yusei Kikuchi.



If there were players that could hit properly with the current bullpen, the Jay's would have been able to advance in the playoffs.

The players are not only to blame for the disastrous 2023 season, but also coaching and management. Many fans wanted Manager John Schneider to resign or be fired due to the many important losses that occurred during the season (when the Jay's were swept by Texas in september is a primary example). To fans' dismay, he announced - in a press conference after the Wild Card loss - that neither of those options would be happening and that he will be staying as manager in 2024. Ross Atkins, the Jays' General Manager, announced that he will also be returning in 2024. During Atkins' press conference, he threw John Schneider under the bus for pulling Berríos from the 4th inning. He stated, "When that decision occurred, I found out about it when you did." Atkins' was very quick to dismiss the fact that he had anything to do with the decisions made during that game in an attempt to remove the target off his back.

Mark Sharpio, President and CEO of the Toronto Blue Jays, stated "Ross needs to get better, but he's done a good job." Many people would find this statement false, as this so-called "good job" does not include the way the organization handled the Manoah situation. Another example is when the organization had Jay Jackson optioned to AAA a total of 5 times this season, then had to designate him for assignment. Additionally, during the trade season, Ross Atkins took in Paul DeJong for the Blue Jays. DeJong went 3-for-44 and had a .068 batting average. Just after 18 days of being on the team, he was designated for assignment. Rogers Media still owes him approximately \$2 Million, money that could have been better used on the payroll.

Being a Jays fan in 2023 could not have been more stressful. They are the prime example of what people would call a "baseball disaster-class". Until something is changed in management - and the players become stronger hitters - it looks like we will be seeing a lot more seasons that look just like this one. As the Jays' social media admin would say: thank you fans and see you next season.

THE DISAPPOINTING SEASON OF CHECO PEREZ

By: Hannah Thompson

Despite starting the 2023 Formula 1 season on a very good note, Sergio Perez aka Checo Perez has been showing clear signs of struggle in recent months. Ever since landing 16th place in Monaco, he has been struggling to keep up with his teammate Max Verstappen. Perez is clearly facing pressure as Verstappen already won the championship in Qatar whilst Perez got 3 penalties. He has been constantly delivering mediocre results in contrast to Verstappen, who has been busy setting world records. Considering they are both using the same car, it has people wondering why Verstappen can achieve such amazing results but Perez cannot.

Although he has won 2 of the first 4 races of the season, Perez has not been showing consistent results in the past few races. Perez landed 8th place in Singapore, He did not finish (DNF) in Japan, in Qatar he got 10th place, and in Mexico, he crashed into Charles Leclerc. Perez has also received multiple penalties in recent races, including 5-second penalties in Japan and Singapore. He also received three separate 5-second penalties in Qatar.

Perez was only 6 points behind Verstappen after the first four races of the season. He then fell behind by enough points, that it allowed Verstappen to take home the Drivers Championship early on in Qatar. There is also Lewis Hamilton, who has also been quickly working on closing the gap between him in third place and Perez who stands in second. Red Bull senior advisor Dr. Helmut Marko explained “Qualifying is the weakness of Perez. We have to defend second place because Hamilton - unfortunately - is getting closer and closer,...”. If Perez continues to perform the way he is - there's no doubt that Hamilton will take second place by the end of the season.



Perez has been dangerously underperforming considering his contract is up in 2024. Red Bull reserve driver Daniel Ricciardo is posing a clear threat to Perez’s seat - as he was promoted to Red Bull's sister team - Alpha Tauri as a driver when Nyck de Vries was fired. Red Bull team principal Christian Horner is claiming that his 2024 seat is safe - but after 2024 Perez’s seat is not definite. There are also plenty of other drivers whose contracts are up in 2024 including Carlos Sainz, Charles Leclerc, Yuki Tsunoda, and Esteban Ocon - drivers who are much more deserving of the 2nd Red Bull seat.

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner told the media “We really want to see him achieve what we know (Checo) is capable of [...]”. Even though Perez has stated that he is “100% sure” about keeping his seat, most people are not convinced after his disastrous 2023 season. At the end of the day, rumours are rumours, and fans will just have to wait until 2024 to see if Perez has secured a seat for upcoming seasons.



IMPACT OF THE ERAS TOUR MOVIE (AND SWIFTIES)

Written by Cecilia Vong

Talk all you want about Taylor Swift, but no matter how much you like her, you can't deny the impact that her most recent concert film has had on global economies and societies. With the exclusive Eras Tour that has been slowly making its way around the world, Swifties scrambled to get these coveted tickets. Unsurprisingly, millions of fans were left devastated, but Miss Swift came to our rescue, with *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour*, a revolutionary concert film.

Approximately 2 hours and 49 minutes in length, Taylor's team recreated the magic of the tour and brought it to theatres worldwide. Though it is more accessible than the concert itself, it does come with a hefty price tag of \$13.13 for children's tickets and \$19.89 for adult tickets. Exhibit A: Taylor's impact on movie theatre tickets. At Cineplex, movie tickets are normally \$8-9 for children's tickets and \$12-13 for adult tickets. However, for her concert film, Taylor jacked up the prices to fit the theme of her favourite number (13) and the title of one of her albums (1989 (Taylor's Version of course)).

Years ago, there was no way that Taylor Swift could have generated over \$123 million worldwide, yet in 2023, this number is expected to increase. Exhibit B: the insane profit garnered by Taylor and her team. With production costs coming out to \$15 million, the profit margin is quite substantial. As suspected, the Eras Tour garnered so much attention and fame, in part due to the post-pandemic mentality. With the COVID-19 pandemic just recently dwindling, Swifties and non-Swifties alike flocked to Ticketmaster with the opportunity of a spectacular concert.

Taylor and her team capitalized on the success of her tour by releasing a film version. This concert film serves two main purposes: to satisfy (to a degree) those who were unable to get tickets to the real thing, and for those who went (or are going) to a concert but who want to relive such a magical night. The profits from this movie are incredibly impactful.

Like millions of others, many of our own SBA students went to see the movie. Here's what some students had to say about their experience and the impact that *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour* has had on them.

"It was super cool to see how she gave fans who missed out a way to experience the tour. I didn't expect people to go through with the normal concert traditions, but half of my theatre was up singing and trading bracelets!" - Eli

"The Eras Tour Movie was like a redemption almost for me because I didn't manage to get tickets. But the entire experience was almost like I was actually going. My friends and I planned and made our outfits, made friendship bracelets and just were so excited like it was the actual concert!!" - Leona

"The atmosphere was so fun! Everyone was dancing and singing. When the film was done we got to trade bracelets! The cinematography was brilliant and her dancers were amazing." - H.T.

"This was an amazing experience! I didn't know I was into something like this, but when I watched it, I felt so much joy!" - T.H.

The Eras Tour Movie made me realize the community that was created by the love of Taylor Swift. It was really good and it felt like she was actually looking at our crowd and there in person. 10/10 recommend!" - A.

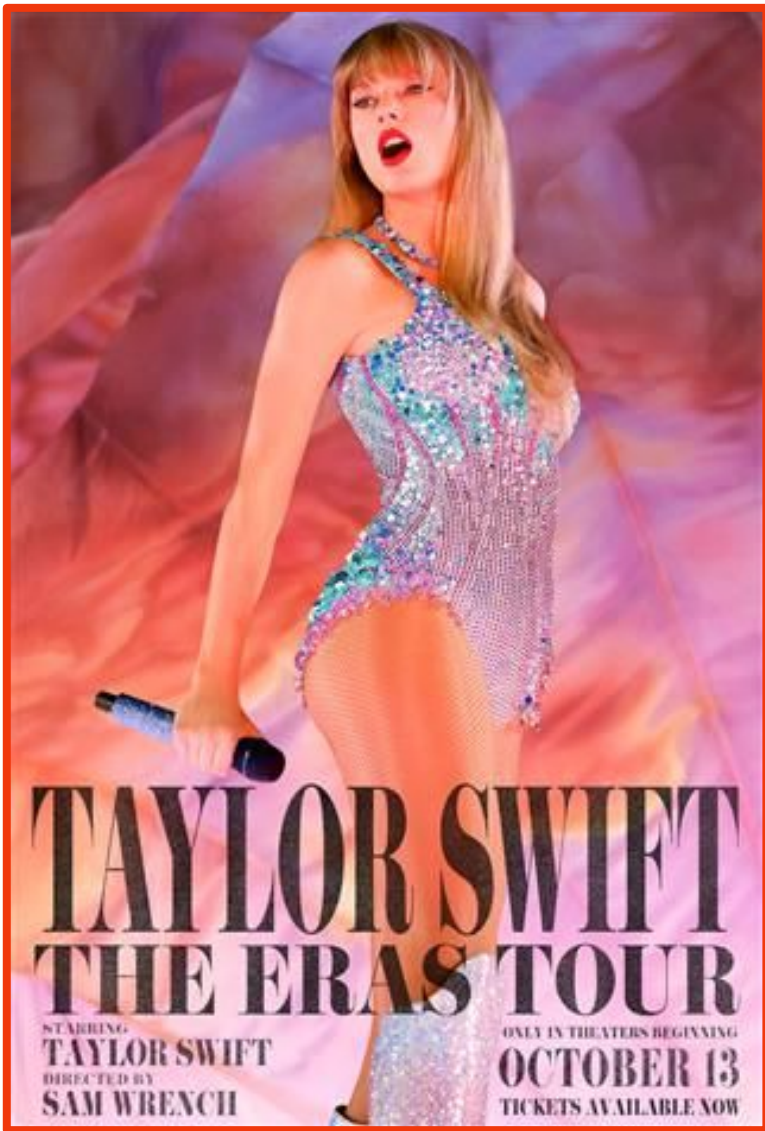


“The atmosphere was so fun! Everyone was dancing and singing. When the film was done we got to trade bracelets! The cinematography was brilliant and her dancers were amazing.” - H.T.

“The Eras Tour Movie made me realize the community that was created by the love of Taylor Swift. It was really good and it felt like she was actually looking at our crowd and there in person. 10/10 recommend!” - A.

Of course, it wouldn't be a Taylor Swift concert experience without some merch. The popcorn bucket and drink cup gained lots of popularity, with most theatres selling out of them in days, if not by the end of opening night. At Cineplex, both items cost a total of \$27.10 with tax, making it quite a splurge for some cheap plastic and improper colouring. Exhibit C: the insane reselling prices of these buckets and cups. On reselling sites like eBay, you can easily find a bucket selling for \$50 each and even as high as \$100. The chokehold that Taylor and her exclusive merch have on people is clearly evident with the reselling prices of not just her concert tickets, but even cinema popcorn buckets.

Rather than leaving her fans with no concert experience, Taylor Swift and her team graciously created the concert film to give Swifties a concert-like experience, even encouraging singing, dancing, trading bracelets, and dressing up. It truly is mindblowing to think about the impact that Taylor Swift has on a global scale, even with a movie such as the Eras Tour film. As demonstrated by these facts and testimonials from our very own SBA students, this concert film has truly impacted us all in ways we could have never imagined. Long live, Swifties!



MUSIC AND SOCIAL MEDIA: THE MOST INFLUENTIAL POWERS OF OUR TIME

By: Rebecca Varghese

Music possesses great power. Given how music alters the aesthetic or feel of a place, time, and event, it would be tragic to dispute that fact. Music plays a significant role on the impact of social media trends as well. Every trend is accompanied with a popular song. Whether it's a dance, lip syncing, or another form of performance, music profoundly influences the way social media and the internet coagulate. Musicians frequently target the audiences that are engaged in these audios because when a song has enough popularity to become widely shared, both the artists and the record labels that distribute it profit significantly. Also, the majority of an artist's catalog promotion happens on social media. Artists start promoting songs when they have a sizable fanbase, and social media helps them to earn revenue, and to cultivate their personal reputation alongside promotion.

We can easily get so immersed in social media that we forget that we feed the algorithm our interests, which leads to the algorithm reciprocating our interests through trends. Social media is a vital aspect of life, particularly for teenagers between the ages of fourteen and eighteen, who are particularly prominent on the platform. A survey was conducted at SBA to find out how many social media apps students use and how much time they spend on them each day. According to findings, ninety percent of students have at least four social media apps on their phones, and they use them for more than five hours per day. Additionally, more than eighty percent of the students surveyed said they enjoyed hip-hop and/or pop music. Hip-hop music and pop music as a whole have a strong presence on social media. The majority of the students who participated in the survey found these songs through Instagram and/or TikTok. Speaking with students, I learned that one was listening to Taylor Swift's "Cardigan" and another was listening to Drake's "8am in Charlotte."

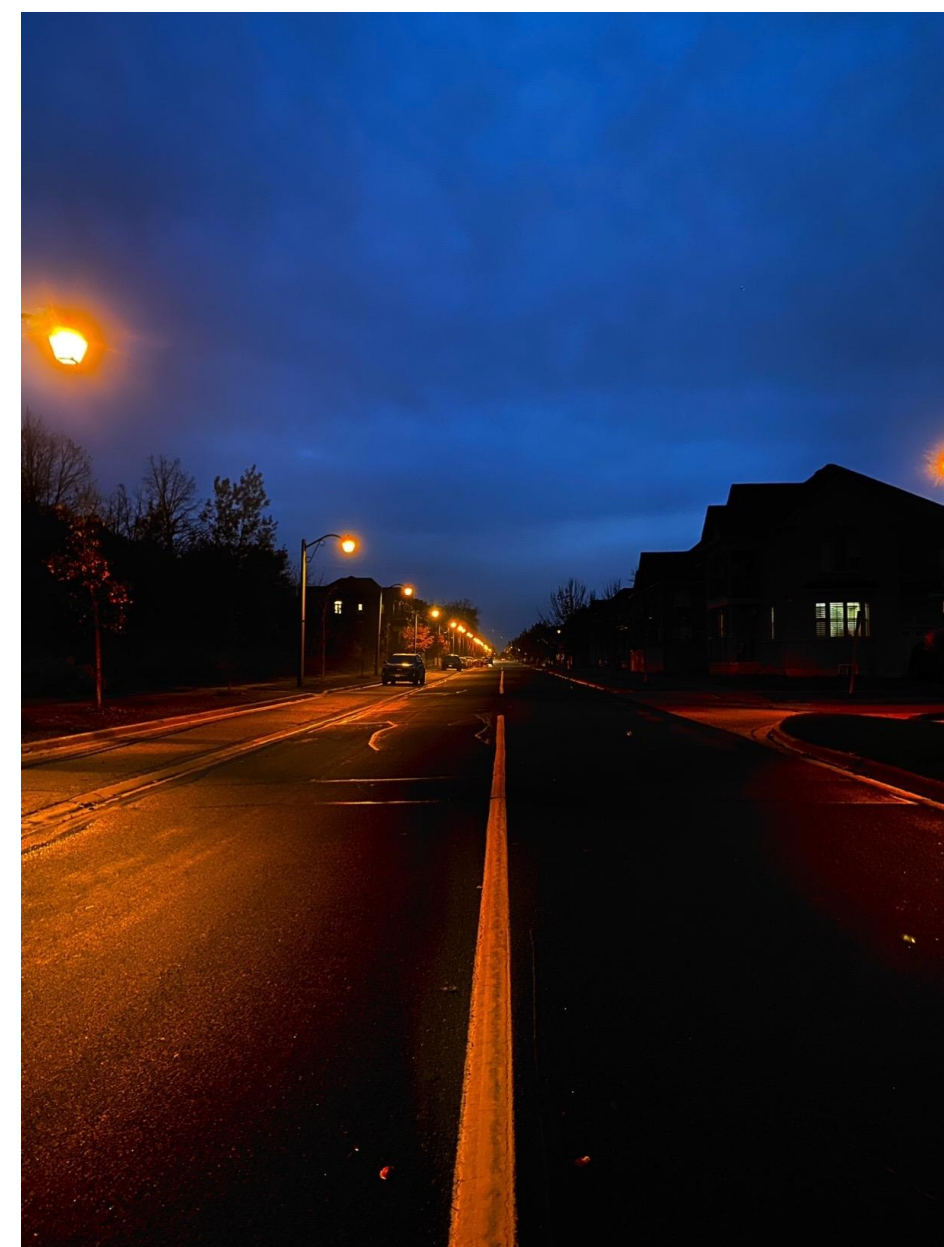


Unbeknownst to us, companies and entrepreneurs alike use our "for you page" as a marketing tool. Additionally, the content on apps like Tik Tok is almost like a melting pot of videos, with some songs becoming increasingly famous. This has made it possible for TikTok's owners to profit billions off of the engagement on their platform. Alongside enhancing user activity, engagement, and sales on social media platforms, music also helps certain people develop fan bases to whom they may promote their services and goods. Furthermore, music and social media both provide consumers with entertainment value.

The psychological impact of music is shown to be essential to the success of social media, as the popularity of these platforms keeps increasing. People are more inclined to use that platform again when they identify a trend with a song and enjoy that specific song. This is a result of the reward system that has been implemented in our brains, causing the release of dopamine, a hormone that makes us feel good whenever we do something enjoyable. Dopamine is also addictive. Your brain becomes increasingly addicted to the energy you get from doing things you enjoy, like aimlessly browsing through Tik Tok or listening to music. As a result, completing that activity becomes vital, diminishing the value of other pursuits. Numerous businesses take advantage of your dopamine addiction and make money off of your interests.

Surprisingly, a person's "for you page" can reveal more about their character than their political views. Considering all of these factors, it wouldn't be a stretch to claim that social media and music are the two most influential powers of our day.

PHOTOGRAPHY CORNER





**MORE
PHOTOS**



REAL TIPS FROM REAL TEACHERS

By: Isabella Vignando

English can be very subjective material; the art of writing might seem like something unattainable or maybe even not that useful. I'm sure you've heard from your English teachers every year about the importance of English in your everyday life and future career paths, no matter what road you may be taking. No matter how many times you hear the speech, it's easy to dismiss its substance and fall back into a mindset of "English is too subjective", "I already know how to speak English, why do I need an English class?", "I'm just not a very strong writer" or even "I just never know what my English teacher wants me to write; why is the stuff we're reading even important?"

Well, gone are the days of disconnect between students and teachers here at SBA. I've compiled a series of interviews from your very own English teachers to let you in on the secrets to better writing and communication skills.

1.

What are the fundamental components of a well structured essay? What gives an essay better flow?

Mrs. Dunlop - "There are basically three distinct aspects to good essay writing: structure, content, and style. In terms of structure, a great essay needs to provide a clear framework so that the reader can follow the content. Structure-wise, that means an interesting introductory paragraph that includes a thesis; without a thesis that indicates the key concepts that the writer will explore in the essay, it's likely that the whole essay will be kind of a mess. There should be a series of paragraphs that are logically ordered to address the thesis concepts and, of course, a concluding paragraph to wrap it all up."

Ms. Sloane - “Start with a specific, opinionated thesis. Keep in mind that there should be people who disagree with what you’re trying to argue in order for the thesis to be compelling. Once you’ve gotten started, the intro paragraph should provide the necessary context; a title, the author and a specific theme to be elaborated on,” she said. “I like when the students go over their argument, briefly,” she mentioned, but cautioned against repetitive vocabulary. “Touch lightly on each argument so that your intro doesn’t render your essay redundant. Throughout body paragraphs, use transition sentences to address either a point made or a contextual piece of evidence mentioned in the previous paragraph before moving to the next topic in order for the essay to flow smoothly and address how your argument will back your original thesis within the first few sentences.” In terms of structure, Ms. Sloane says that “when you leave high school and sort of just enter the real world, the five paragraph structure is hardly found anywhere [...] you have to learn [the structure] before you can break the rules.” To keep a consistent flow throughout the essay, avoid contractions, slang and general language (ie. “thing”, “stuff”, “happy”, “bad”). Instead, use more specific language. See Ms. Sloan’s emotion’s wheel to find appropriate synonyms to fit the tone you are trying to give. Before handing in your essay, read through it a few times and let it sit with you. “You can’t really get a sense of [the flow] if you don’t read it in one go.”

2. What are the foundational skills of essay writing -past grammar and punctuation- that make a compelling and interesting essay?

Mrs. Dunlop - “Writing that’s compelling and interesting typically has insightful content but it always has amazing style. The best way for someone to improve their writing style is to read. A lot. Not only will reading [...] increase a person’s vocabulary, it will also familiarize them with more interesting and varied sentence structures that they can mimic in their own writing.”

Mr. Samuel - Writers, at the highest level, need to be intentional with and aware of their structure. “When a writer shows an awareness of what her argument requires to be strong, or a writer shows an awareness of what weakens her argument, and then just I think the term is metacognitive skill which is radical reflexivity where a writer is aware of everything she's [written] so that [...] the tone of the consciousness, being sentence by sentence, at any point in time, the writer can refer to past claims, past propositions, because it allows the reader to feel completely encompassed by the rhetorical presence of the writer.”

3.

What tools or strategies do you believe students should use more often to enhance analysis/reading comprehension skills?

Mr. Huh - Before you are able to write, you have to be able to read. Read for at least 30 minutes a day; pick up a non fiction, opinion article about the happenings of the day. Read more often; read everything. “By the time you graduate, you will be a really great writer,” he says.

Mr. Samuel - “Definitely it's the use of changing [narration] into noun concepts.” Instead, for example, of saying “this character was angry at this other character”, change the statement to say “this character’s anger”. This structural change from the narrative event to a noun allows us to properly analyze. “Narration doesn’t ask for analysis,” he says, “The tone of your writing when you are retelling [...] is just a bad shadow of the original.” Rather than just retelling the story, analysis of a noun concept allows for the reader and the writer to think together about the implications of the behaviors and emotions and interactions between characters in a critical way.

4.

What would motivate people to be more engaged with their English classes?

Mrs. D’amelio - For all the STEM career hopefuls out there: "A lot of STEM related companies are hiring humanities grads [...] because science kids can solve a problem, sure but [...] they say that they're lacking that innovative thinking." Creative thinking might just be a skill worth brushing up on in order to stand out in the crowd.

Mrs. Dunlop - Presentations will come up in any line of work—if you’re a doctor, you have to present news to your patient, if you're going into business, you have to present to your clients—and what makes or breaks your presentational skills is your vocabulary. If you plan on using visual aids, Mrs. Dunlop has a word of warning: "If you’re just going to say what’s on your slide, you’re kind of late to the party" (because your audience has already read it). Paraphrasing the material makes the information you’re sharing seem different enough so that the presentation is more intriguing. To consider the practical side of things, "On the most basic level, it doesn’t matter what you intend to do with your life, you have to use your grade 12 English credit." She adds: "It’s the only mandatory mark." So, if nothing else, there’s a mandatory reason to stay motivated! "You cannot just be emotionally [and] mentally absent [from your English classes] in grades 9, 10, 11 and think you’re going to turn on the jets in grade 12 [and start] getting nineties." At that point, Grade 12 English might be the most important course you take, no matter what pathway you plan on taking; "if your [other marks] are amazing and your English isn’t even a 70, you’re probably not going to get [in]."

Ms. Sloane - Communication is the basis of everything we do in life. Ms. Sloane emphasizes that within friendships, or romantic relationships, or in a job interview, "being able to properly express yourself is really important." Communicating clearly can make or break these scenarios and can shape the quality of your life. Simple tools like expanding your vocabulary to really encapsulate what you say, otherwise you limit yourself to a smaller spectrum of words that won’t always cut it.

In terms of analysis, it doesn’t just teach you how to analyze text, it trains your brain to develop skill sets we develop in everyday life. "A coach might tell people to lift weights even if the sport doesn’t involve throwing dumbbells", she metaphorizes that English works the same way; you have to exercise and build up strength in that skill. "We analyze people on a daily basis," she says. Learning to analyze the character of what authors show us about a character can expand our social awareness skills in the real world. Literature, she says, also teaches the critical social skill of compassion. Reading, more so than movies or tv shows, allows you to really put yourself in other people's shoes and feel and understand what they’re feeling. All in all, literature makes you a well rounded individual and having a little something to say about everything makes you a more interesting conversationalist.

5.

Above and beyond good grammar and punctuation, what should students be getting out of their English classes?

Mr. Samuel - "Easy; if English was only about information, we would write in point form. It's not data management. English is about the relationships between [...] data or knowledge. That's typically called wisdom." The information we learn in English class doesn’t just relate to a specific text, it relates to the general idea of human concepts and values. There is no way to relate to those things without prose. French philosopher Michel de Montaigne who originated the genre of the essay by wanting to "write a literary self portrait of himself". It was invented as a method of self assessment, thus giving purpose to the modern literary essay as an assessment of text. The mindset you go into English class with is the experience you will take from it; total ignorance versus an approach to wisdom. Those who have the latter in mind seek to learn what we do, as a society, with everything that we know. "English takes you to the qualitative aspects of life which cannot be quantified in a spreadsheet."



6.

What is something that you know now about essay writing that you wish you knew in high school?

Mrs. D'amelio - Some people are just natural writers while others aren't. "I had to grow into my writing," she told me, "I didn't think I was a good writer [in high school] and looking back I wasn't a good writer". She encourages students to take the time to figure out what their "voice" is, even if it takes them until college or university to do it.

Mrs. Dunlop - "If there [were] something I wish I'd leaned into a bit more with my own writing in high school, it would be prewriting and drafting. It's easy to dismiss the whole "first draft, peer editing, final copy" thing as being annoying or just taking too much time but understanding that writing really is a process --and investing in that process-- always results in a much better essay." To let students in on some insider information, if you find yourself wondering why learn the five paragraph essay if you rarely find it outside of a high school setting; "[Teachers have to] teach a template because there's such a broad spectrum of skill levels for the students we teach." So, while the template is broad, it also gives you more leeway because you're not necessarily locked into it for life. Write as many paragraphs that suit your purpose as long as you can get your point across clearly and concisely.

Mr. Samuel - "That writing is reading. At least in English, essay writing is 95 percent the quality of one's reading. Students typically think they can get an idea, read a few sentences from a book [...] but that's just an attempt to [...] not get a zero." The former practice, he says, makes essay writing the easiest thing because all the information is at your fingertips. "Writing essays is not for tourists; it's for serious people and serious people are willing to read."

Ms. Sloane - "I think in high school, I was attached to the very specific instructions that the teacher would give." Oftentimes, the "big picture" of the 5 paragraph structure can overshadow the skills that essay writing is supposed to teach. "[...] I remember [at UofT] I got a 60 on an essay and I remember I started crying." The critique she said she received from her TA was that the essay was "too robotic". It is vital to have a clear idea of what you're really trying to say in your essay and make sure your statements are cohesive. To her students, she recommends that you don't get lost in the rules but to focus on keeping your ideas clear.

7.

What do you find is lacking from most of the essays you read from your students?

Mrs D'amelio - It may seem redundant, but having a firm grasp on the basics of sentence structure is vital. "You have good ideas," she implores all students to know, "but we're losing our natural ability to form grammatically correct sentences" which may just be where we're losing marks. Mrs. D'amelio also advises that students go into their essays knowing what they want to talk about, "even before you start the writing process." She also advises students to rely on their own resources; ChatGPT just won't cut it! "Your own thoughts are enough."

Mrs. Dunlop - "Sometimes students forget to fully develop the content in their essays. It's really important to provide depth of analysis, especially after including a quote, for example." Context without critical analysis is just a summary; an essay should provide further insight into the text. "Remember to keep the goal in mind, which means being [sure] to prove the thesis. If there's not enough critical thinking evident in an essay, the finished product is pretty superficial. Will that get a passing mark? Potentially. Will it get a great one? Nope."

Mr. Huh - Your writing reflects your thinking. To understand the text is to read the text. That is the only tool that allows you to say something intelligent about the topic. Simply the lack of willingness to read the material becomes evident when virtually nothing is being said with your writing.

Ms. Sloane - Entering high school, students need to take a new approach to their English classes. That's what really makes a high school English class; "it becomes a literature course [at the highschool level], it's [no longer] a language course like in elementary. Generally, she implores students to take more care in general organization of ideas. At the grade 9 level, focus on structure and basic writing skill. "With Grammarly and AI, I do find that a lot of the content that gets submitted [...] it almost comes off perfect, but then I see in tests that [that skill is not there]." For the senior grades, she urges you to hone in on your abilities to analyze deeply. "It's a difficult thing to teach," she admits, "because there's not a specific way of doing it." While making a connection to the context is good, she recommends that to "really take it to the next level", you should focus more on the analysis of diction, of specific words. Try not to lose the argument while you're analyzing; be sure that everything connects back to the thesis so that the point of the essay is not lost.

As you can see, there are many aspects of English that are applicable outside of the English classroom. The communication skills we learn in English class, for example, are essential to our everyday lives. In this day and age, we are always finding new and improved ways to communicate, especially through the internet and social media. It's no secret that we also use these tools to connect to people around us.

At the end of the day, communication is a fundamental skill that everyone needs in their daily lives in order to connect with the world around them. These skills are fostered by foundations of grammar and sentence structure and writing technique, but they are amplified by the research and analysis skills that give depth to not only our writing but our everyday lives.

To dismiss English class as a course that won't be useful in your future is not only untrue but it creates a limiting future in which people's lives are lacking in enrichment because the inability to think critically and analyze information and have an intelligent argument makes the world around them two-dimensional. Books, movies, even albums will become valueless pieces of media to be consumed without further thought because we have conditioned ourselves to believe that to listen is the same as to know, and in doing so we rob ourselves from experiencing the fullness of life. It is the fundamental human experience to want to be known by those around us, which is why people write songs and make movies and tell stories; it is what makes the classics you read in your English classes classic because people have had their experiences, their emotions, their ideals seen and known through those stories.



As much as these words may sound like the ramblings of just another future English teacher, do not mistake them for baseless, dramatic, over-exaggerations. To lose that ability to connect and communicate with the world around us by deriving ourselves of these fundamental skills is to deprive ourselves of a richer life of knowing and being known. If you've read this far, I can only hope that the words of your teachers and my words alike have meant something to you and have let us all come to know each other.

BOOKS THAT WILL TRANSFORM YOUR THOUGHT PROCESS

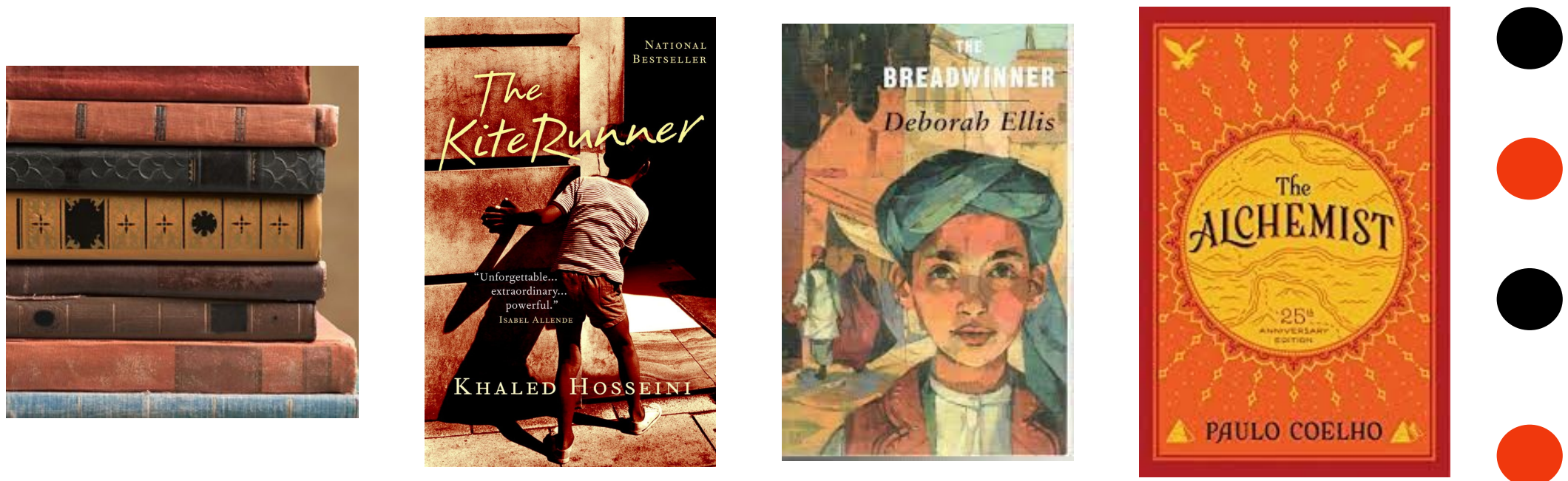
Written By: Sai Srija Myneni

The concept of reading books is not as prominent in our lives as it once was. Reading is now associated with dreadful chapter analyses and essays. However , I think we’ve forgotten to appreciate what books can do for us. Novels, comics, and short stories filled our childhoods with laughs and maybe even tears. They’ve led us to understand and connect with characters from different worlds and taught us lessons applicable to our lives. Whether directly or indirectly, literature provides new insights that change how we perceive ourselves and the world. Here are some specific pieces that may evoke new thoughts and beliefs within you.

Reading historical fiction tends to make us feel more compassion for the world around us. While reading compelling stories, we learn more about what the world was like before modern life and how certain events have contributed to our society today. We’ve become more educated and have slowly begun to care for events and issues taking place thousands of kilometres away from us.

The Kite Runner – Khaled Hosseini

The Kite Runner, by Khaled Hosseini, is a historical fiction novel that begins in Kabul, Afghanistan. It depicts the friendship and life experiences of two boys from different social classes. The story coincides with a series of events, such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the struggles faced by the nation as it begins to collapse. This novel incredibly depicts the relations and the adversities of characters while deriving valuable lessons for readers. As we connect with our main character and empathize with his hardships, we feel more gratitude towards aspects of our lives taken for granted. We also begin to appreciate and find happiness in the simplest moments of even the slowest, and dreariest days.



The Breadwinner – Deborah Ellis

Another example of incredibly-written historical fiction literature is *The Breadwinner* series. These novels follow the story of Parvana and her journey in taking care of her family after the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan. This series shows her development as a character and how she bravely tackles the challenges she’s faced with. Though this series portrays similar settings and themes to *The Kite Runner*, it's less heavy and a faster read. The books are short and fast-paced, with simple and smooth writing that makes the story feel less like a book and more like a movie. It is a better alternative to *The Kite Runner* if you want a lighter and easier read.

The Alchemist – Paulo Coelho

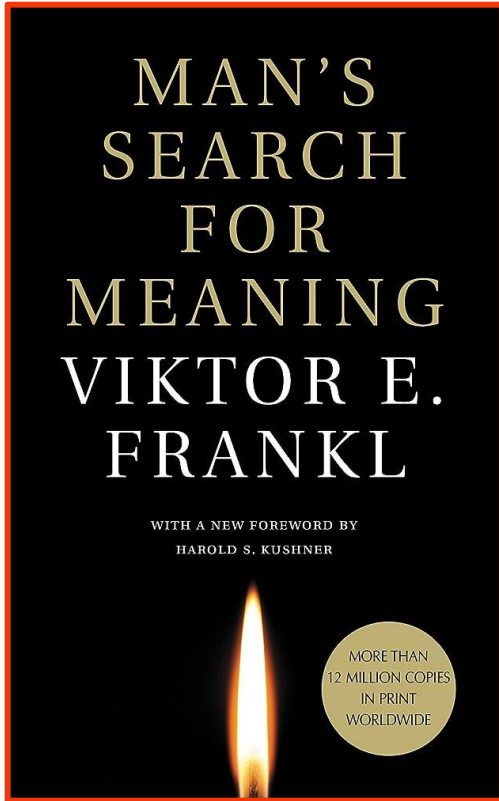
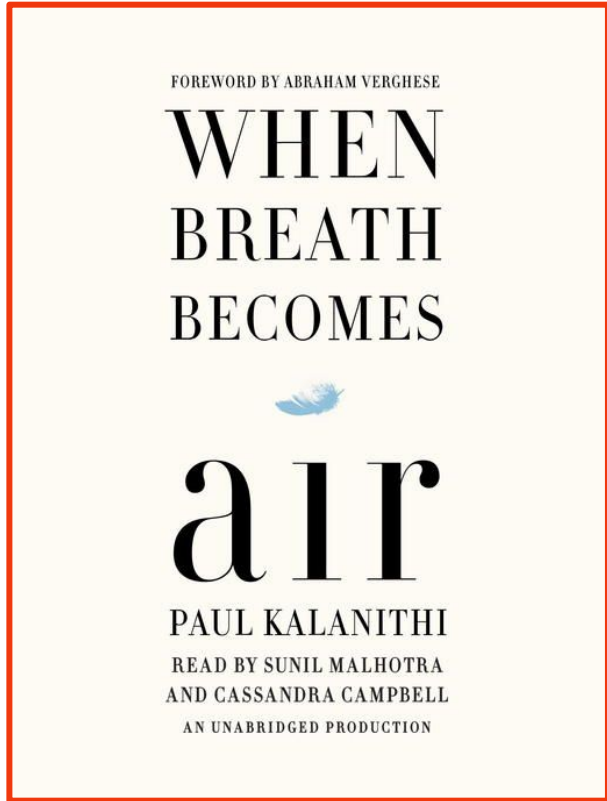
The Alchemist is a novel that can be interpreted as a self-help book in disguise. It takes readers along the inspiring journey of Santiago, a shepherd who travels across nations and deserts to find a treasure. Along his journey, our main character faces many challenges, meets new people, and even falls in love, overall leading to his development as a person. It is a simplistic and inspirational story that utilizes cliché tropes such as “chase your dreams” and “follow your heart” with meaning. The experiences of Santiago in *The Alchemist* teach us many life lessons and inspire us to be more brave and confident while tackling the many challenges of life.

When Breath Becomes Air – Paul Kalanithi

When Breath Becomes Air is a memoir of the neurosurgeon Paul Kalanithi’s battle with terminal lung cancer. The memoir dives into Paul’s passion for neuroscience and his relationships with family and loved ones while challenging the tall-tale question of life and death. Through the author’s personal experiences as both a doctor and patient, the book provides insight into life and what it truly means to be alive. It also tackles the concept of death and how its arrival is inevitable yet hard to swallow. This memoir compels us to question our priorities and values in life while prompting us to live every moment with meaning and purpose.

Man’s Search for Meaning – Viktor Frankl

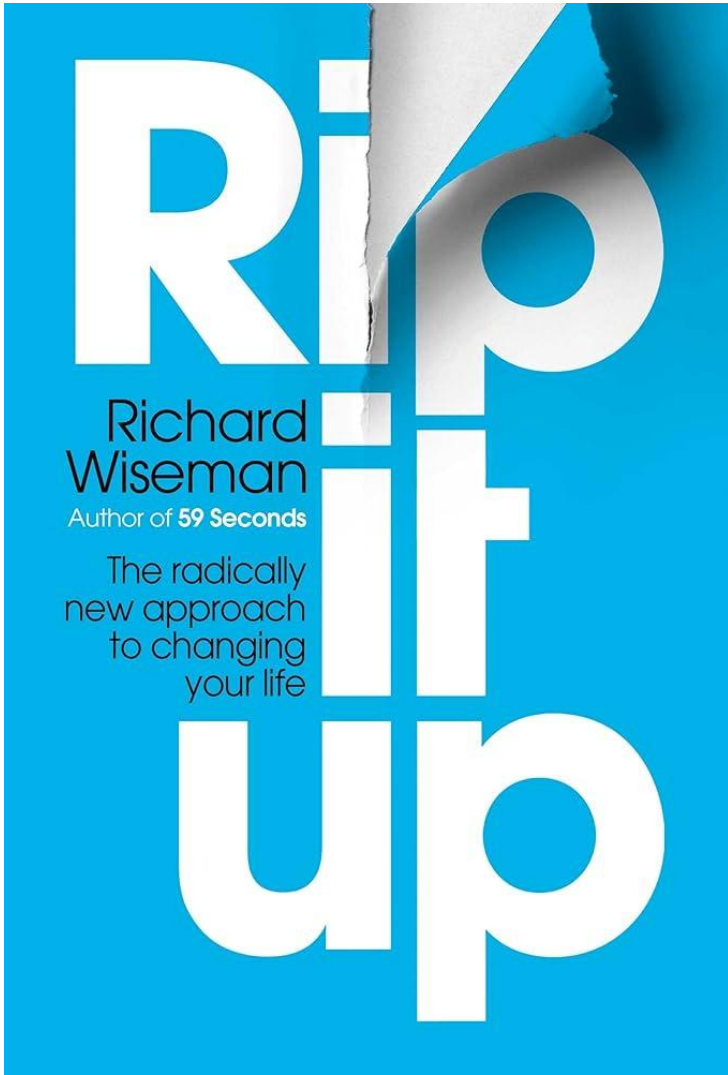
Man’s Search for Meaning is an autobiographical narrative that follows the life of the author Viktor Frankl as a victim of the Nazi genocide. The first part of the book describes the experiences of Viktor during his time in concentration camps; part of the book focuses on his path to recovery through finding personal meaning in life and surpassing hardships. Common themes found in this memoir include love, hope, and liberty. To conclude, this literary work connects us with the author, and inspires us to think about life’s challenges and values with purpose.



Rip It Up – Richard Wiseman

A list of book recommendations simply wouldn’t be complete without a straight-cut book on self-improvement, would it? However, I won’t make the mistake of suggesting a fluffy self-help book filled with long paragraphs of information and false hope. *Rip It Up*, by Richard Wiseman, is a clear contrast to this characteristic.

This book provides readers with small, simple actions that help improve your life. These actions can attempt to break a bad habit, build a good habit, or become more confident and happy. The author emphasizes the importance of our actions on our emotions and why taking the right steps every day will lead to a significant change in our daily lives.



There are roughly 130 million books in the world, written by several people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Either of these books could make us laugh or evoke a distinct thought within us. . Out of this vast sea of literature, these six works are especially worth your time. So, try giving them a read!

REMEMBRANCE

By: Islay Chidiac

Regardless of colour, race, national or ethnic origin, sex, age and mental or physical disability, Canadian citizens are guaranteed freedoms which enable us to thrive. We are free to think critically, to formulate our individual opinions and to voice our beliefs. We are free to peacefully assemble, to democratically vote and to pursue the gaining of a livelihood in any province. We are free to dream and free to pursue those dreams. We have power in our economy. We live without fear of state terrorism, show trials, the death penalty and prison camps. We are not politically repressed nor are we subject to government surveillance and mass censorship. We are also privileged enough to have peace accompany these freedoms. People around the world would die for such luxuries. In fact, they do and they have, for our sakes.

Countless Canadian service members have fought for and defended our rights as Canadians. Millions of which were killed, in the name of peace. Their lives - their hopes, dreams and very presence on our earth - were the price that was paid for our freedoms. This unfathomable sacrifice is recognized annually on Remembrance Day. However, such tragedies have become a nearly factual thought to many citizens. For many of us, war is only a phenomenon seen through a screen or a scene from a film. For others, it is the story of a grandparent or a terror that lies in the words of a journalist. Nearly for all of us, war is horrifying yet always distant. For many of the world's lost citizens, war was a cruel reality. Devastation, tragedy, injustice - words can be tossed around, but they will never be able to encapsulate what was lost during those conflicts.

As Canadian citizens, it is our moral responsibility to honour those who fought for our freedoms; remembering their sacrifices and reflecting upon the selflessness of their service. This is only a minute act of appreciation, as nothing could ever be sufficient enough to thank our service members - both those who remain and those who were lost. We honour them best by remembering what they died for: that future generations throughout the world could live in a nation where the human dignity and rights of all would be protected. A nation where people of different backgrounds and social circumstances could prosper together in mutual respect. A nation with a morally accountable, responsible and equal government. Their sacrifices gave generations the opportunity to establish the Canada - the home - we know today. We are called to stand up to injustice and tyranny, even in their smallest moments. We are called to advocate for the oppressed and offer hope to the vulnerable. In doing this, we work towards the social justice that many dream of. In doing this, we honour the supreme selfless sacrifice too many have made. May they rest in eternal peace. Lest we forget.



IN MEMORIAM - A POETRY COLLECTION

Curated by: Islay Chidiac and Saqqara Chidiac

"An Ode to Remembrance - For the Fallen" by Laurence Binyon

*"They went with songs to
the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye,
steady and aglow.*

*They were staunch to the
end against odds*

uncounted;

*They fell with their faces to
the foe.*

*They shall grow not old, as
we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
nor the years condemn.*

*At the going down of the
sun and in the morning*

We will remember them."

"In Flanders Fields" by Lieutenant-Colonel John A. McCrae

*"In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow
Loved and were loved, and now we
lie,
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we
throw*

*The torch; be yours to hold it
high.*

*If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though
poppies grow
In Flanders fields."*

"Ypres" by Geraldine Durrant

*"Did they return, those spectral
soldiers,*

*To the places where they fell,
To the dug-outs and canal banks,
At Ypres and Poelkapelle?*

*Did they haunt the gentle pastures,
Turned to cattle and to corn,
And the girls they should have
married*

With their babies gone unborn?

*And do they sometimes linger,
In the quiet of the night,
Uncertain outside windows
Uncertain outside windows
Warm and welcoming with light?
Can they see the hallowed places
Where their lives and loves were
laid,
And in reckoning their bargain
Do they think the price well-paid?*

*Do the fallen play at football
With the remnants of their foe,
As once they did in No Man's
Land
Once Christmas long ago?
In silent circled Ploegsteert
Do the restive graveless roam,
And trace with wandering fingers
Their names engraved in stone?*

*At Menin's blasted tribute, do the
halls of Heaven hush?
In silence we remember them, do
they remember us?*



“Dulce et Decorum Est” by

Wilfred Owen

*“Bent double, like old beggars under
sacks*

*Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we
cursed through sludge,*

*Till on the haunting flares we turned our
backs,
nd towards our distant rest began to
trudge.*

*Men marched asleep. Many had lost their
boots,*

*But limped on, blood-shod. All went
lame, all blind;*

*Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the
hoots*

Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

*Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of
fumbling*

Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,

*But someone still was yelling out and
stumbling*

*And flound'ring like a man in fire or
lime.—*

*Dim through the misty panes and thick
green light,*

*As under a green sea, I saw him
drowning.*

*In all my dreams before my helpless
sight*

*He plunges at me, guttering, choking,
drowning.*

*If in some smothering dreams, you
too could pace*

*Behind the wagon that we flung him
in,*

*And watch the white eyes writhing in
his face,*

*His hanging face, like a devil's sick of
sin,*

*If you could hear, at every jolt, the
blood*

Come gargling from the

froth-corrupted lungs,

Obscene as cancer,

Bitter as the cud

*Of vile, incurable sores on innocent
tongues,—*

*My friend, you would not tell with
such high zest*

*To children ardent for some
desperate glory,*

*The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.”*

“Epitaphs of War - Two Canadians

Memorials” by Rudyard Kipling

“We giving all gained all.

Neither lament us nor praise.

Only in all things recall,

It is Fear, not Death that slays.

*From little towns in a far land we
came,*

*To save our honour and a world
aflame.*

By little towns in a far land we sleep;

*And trust that world we won for you
to keep!”*

“Marching Men” by Marjorie Pickthall

“Under the level winter sky

I saw a thousand Christs go by.

They sang an idle song and free

As they went up to Calvary.

Careless of eye and coarse of lip,

They marched in holiest fellowship.

*That heaven might heal the world,
they gave...*

*With souls unpurged and
steadfast breath*

*They supped the sacrament
of death.*

*And for each one, far off,
apart,*

*Seven swords have rent a
woman’s heart.”*

*Their earth-born dreams to
deck the grave.*



*Careless of eye and coarse of lip,
They marched in holiest fellowship.
That heaven might heal the world, they gave
Their earth-born dreams to deck the grave.*

*With souls unpurged and steadfast breath
They supped the sacrament of death.
And for each one, far off, apart,
Seven swords have rent a woman's heart."*

"The Inquisitive Mind of a Child" by an unknown author

*"Why are they selling poppies, Mummy?
Selling poppies in town today.*

*The poppies, child, are flowers of love.
For the men who marched away.*

*But why have they chosen a poppy, Mummy?
Why not a beautiful rose?*

*Because my child, men fought and died
In the fields where the poppies grow.*

*But why are the poppies so red, Mummy?
Why are the poppies so red?*

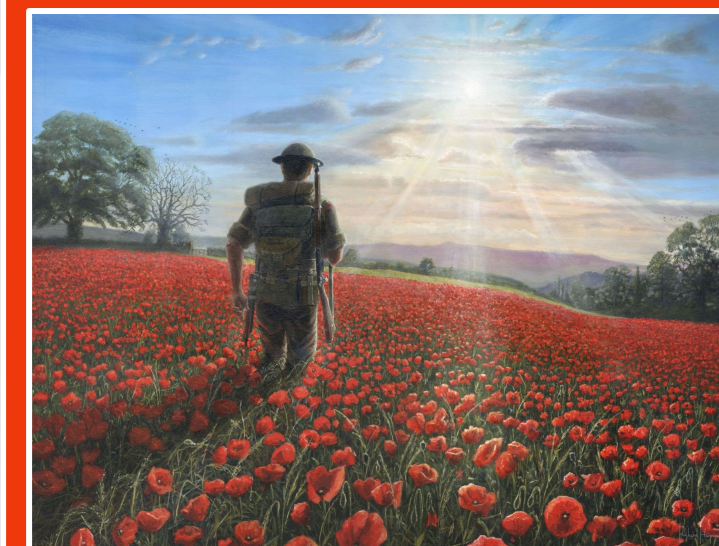
*Red is the colour of blood, my child.
The blood that our soldiers shed.*

*The heart of the poppy is black, Mummy.
Why does it have to be black?*

*Black, my child, is the symbol of grief.
For the men who never came back.*

*But why, Mummy, are you crying so?
Your tears are giving you pain.*

*My tears are my fears for you, my child.
For the world is forgetting again."*



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY: STAYING SAFE ON 16TH!

By: Bentley Huang

Did you know that in 2021 alone, around seven thousand pedestrians were killed due to traffic collisions worldwide? And that in order to just cross the road, people need about 26 different judgement skills just to be safe? Things, like predicting how fast a vehicle is moving or finding the right moment to cross a road, are needed just to get to the other side of the road. However, we aren't all physicists, we're just teens! That's why pedestrian safety should not be taken lightly but treated with the utmost regard!

Road-users, like pedestrians and cyclists, are especially vulnerable to collisions on the road. This is because these users do not have a protective shell of a vehicle or other safety equipment to protect themselves in case of a collision. This is why around 32% of all collision fatalities in 2021 were people from this vulnerable group. Furthermore, the conditions here in Canada do not help with this dilemma either. Every year, we Canadians have to deal with rain, snow, hail, and fog just to get to where we need to be! These conditions often make it a hassle for pedestrians as it puts a greater risk on their safety, especially regarding their visibility as well as their navigation (through traffic congestion). These factors affect pedestrians all the time and can affect their judgement and navigation through the streets.

Also, a significant number of these pedestrian traffic collision victims were teens! The youth are among the most vulnerable and this is due to a variety of different reasons; however, the most significant one is distracted walking. One reason why teen pedestrians are always involved in accidents is the fact that they are constantly using cell phones and other mobile devices! Using these devices while crossing the street or walking makes us miss important warnings or cues, increasing the likelihood of us getting struck. In fact, when asked what they were doing at the time of their crash, 47% of teens said that they were listening to music and a good 38% admitted that they were either talking on the phone or texting. We sure don't know how to use the road...

Well, when do we learn to use the road safely? How about now! There are lots of obstacles on 16th Ave, here is a guide on tips for navigating through this tricky road!

CARS

16th Ave is a busy road! There are always lots of vehicles on the road! That is why it is especially important to always **look out for cars before crossing**. Even though pedestrians have the right of way, it is important to make sure that it is absolutely safe before you cross. Furthermore, always make **eye contact** with the drivers. Looking "left-right-left" is not good enough, the drivers have to see you too! Always make sure that, before crossing, you make eye contact with incoming drivers. Use your laser eyes to get their attention!



TRAINS

Right beside Garden Basket lies another hazard for students and that is, train tracks. The GO Train runs frequently and passes by the tracks by our school every so often! Remember, **never cross the railroad tracks when the gates are down** and there are red flashing lights. This means that there is a train coming! Instead, wait on the sidewalk for the train to pass. Try to think about this next time you get Tim's for lunch...

CONSTRUCTION

Regardless of the time of year, 16th Ave seems to always be under construction. When walking through a construction zone, **obey all work zone signs, workers, and pavement markings**. They are all trying to keep you safe. Furthermore, be **alert of your surroundings**, who knows what can happen around you!

YOU!

The last few tips are all about you! When crossing the road, make sure that you are paying full attention to your surroundings. This means **no music, texting, or calling your friends when crossing!** Also, when there are no sidewalks available, always **walk facing oncoming traffic**. This helps you see the approaching traffic, making it less likely for you to get hit.

Wow, it sure is a war zone out there! Try to keep in mind these tips the next time you traverse 16th. Stay safe SBA!



FIN.

