

# paper\*

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## The Longest Spring Break Ever

On the morning of March 12th, I didn't expect that I would be finishing my junior year. I went through my day as normal: nodding off in APUSH, feverishly trying to keep up with Ms. Suarez in Pre-Cal, and joking in English about the absurdity of school getting cancelled with Ms. Seward. However, as the day progressed, the only topic of discussion became the Coronavirus. In a matter of hours, what was once a joke following someone's cough in class evolved into a sinking feeling in the back of everyone's minds. As the news of school cancellations arrived, things became serious.

What started off as a "two week spring break" rapidly extended to a cancellation of one school year and the delay of another. In my wildest dreams, I never thought I'd see an early, extended summer vacation. However, this didn't feel as good as I would've thought. Normal summer activities were cancelled, and I couldn't even see my friends. Tik Tok and Twitter could only keep me occupied for so many hours a day, and my island in *Animal Crossing* soon became so perfect that I couldn't find anything else to add. As someone who works best with some form of structure in their day, this free reign for multiple months on end wasn't the best. I dreamed of going back to school, seeing my friends and creating once again.

The summer months passed slowly, as they do in 2020, and September finally arrived. I'll be honest: I came in with low expectations for the virtual school year. How was I going to enjoy my senior year if it was all on my laptop? Despite these worries, I did find myself enjoying learning at home. The structure of the school day was surprisingly chill. However, when the option to return to school came, I made the choice to come back to face-to-face learning. At home learning was relaxing, but I felt trapped while working in my room the entire day. As someone who actually enjoys school and learning a fair amount, I thought it'd be nice to return back to campus.

On the morning of October 19th, I woke up early and eager to return

back to face-to-face learning. I got dressed, ate breakfast, and made my drive to school. I felt conflicted, both nervous and excited to return. I walked up the stairs from the student parking lot, got my first in-school temperature check, and began my first in-school day of my senior year. The COVID restrictions were definitely prevalent: hallways can only be travelled in a clockwise direction, masks must remain on at all times, and students must remain socially distant from each other as much as possible. However, the student body hasn't found these steps difficult to abide, as everyone is considerate and is doing their part to stay safe.

While going through my day, I don't know why, but I was so excited yet overwhelmed with the amount of people around me that I exploded with extroverted energy. I waved or said hi to nearly everyone I passed. In class, suddenly every joke was the funniest I had ever heard, and the tiniest things would make me belly laugh. Maybe I was subconsciously trying to compensate for the lost months of social interaction, or maybe I was just excited to return to school. Regardless, it feels good to be back in the building, and it's even more amazing to see people again.

by Luca Jarosz





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# Go Vote!!!

By Rebecca Rock

Welcome to voting season! Personally, I can't vote. (Summer birthdays are the worst at times.) Many PVA seniors can. Many of your family members can as well. Many other people that you know probably can too. In fact, Texas is seeing record numbers of registered voters. 1.8 million voters have registered since the 2016 presidential election. The process seems simple enough: register to vote when you turn 18 (or 17 and 10 months) and then wait in a line to click buttons on a voting machine. Yet only around 58.1 percent of our population actually voted in the 2016 presidential election, according to Penn State University Libraries. This statistic reveals a hidden truth behind voting: the nonvoters.

My intention with this article isn't to call out those who do not vote in an election. Rather, I'll try and solve some of the problems that I foresee hindering you (or any eligible family member) from voting in this election. I'm focusing on in-person voting for this article, but if you're mailing in your ballot, make sure to follow instructions on the ballot carefully. Do exactly as they say! Remember, there's only one ballot drop off box in Harris County at NRG stadium, so give yourself time to get over there to drop off your ballot. Now, onto the juicy in-person voting information.

Firstly, you must locate your polling location. Once you've registered to vote, you'll need to determine where

you should vote. Don't automatically assume that your local school will be converted to a polling location; many are, but some are not. I found the nearest polling location to me at the following website: [www.harrisvotes.com](http://www.harrisvotes.com). Luckily, in Harris County, registered voters are eligible to vote in any polling precinct. If you can't drive, take a METRO or bike to a place. Text a friend; I'm sure that someone will be willing to give you a ride to a polling location.

The only step left is voting itself. Learn your facts; please don't rely solely on Instagram infographics for your information. We are incredibly lucky to have a say in who we elect as our president, and it is your duty to vote if you can. Yes, I know, electoral college drama makes this a little more complicated, but still. So far 62 million individuals have already voted in early voting (as of 10/26/20 according to NBC News). This is a record number, but there are still millions and millions of people left to vote. Please do so! As many wise people have declared, "You cannot complain about a president if you didn't vote in the election."

**All information regarding polling places, mail-in voting, and other voting related queries can be found on [www.harrisvotes.com](http://www.harrisvotes.com).**

# Carnaval: A Virtual Festival

By Valentina Avellaneda

*Pues no*, we didn't have long lines of people waiting to get their sopapillas or arroz con leche, nor the blasting of upbeat music through the halls. We simply couldn't have the festival vibe without PEOPLE, but that didn't stop us from creating an event to celebrate Hispanic Heritage and Culture!

Even though Carnaval was virtual, the other leaders and I led and developed six interactive sessions using our different art area backgrounds, passions, and skills to educate and celebrate Hispanic culture. We managed to create the "PVA experience," even while virtual.

From the visual arts department, Tania Vega (Visual Arts '21) led an "Art Appreciation at PVA" station that included a Hispanic Heritage Visual Art Show and live "meet the artists" sessions with Jordan Ray, Sam Nunez, and Phoenix Perez. Getting to see amazing art work through a virtual gallery was the closest we could get to PVA's own art gallery, and the results were as beautiful as they were accessible to the public.

Despite the lack of actual food at Carnaval, Lily Afghani (Theatre '22) created a virtual cookbook, filled with teacher and student recipes that are to die for. Craving an arepa, some cuban-style black beans, or a Fideuà? Beatriz Copello, Dr. Straus, and Dr. Soria (plus many more!) contributed recipes, even your *abuela* would approve of.

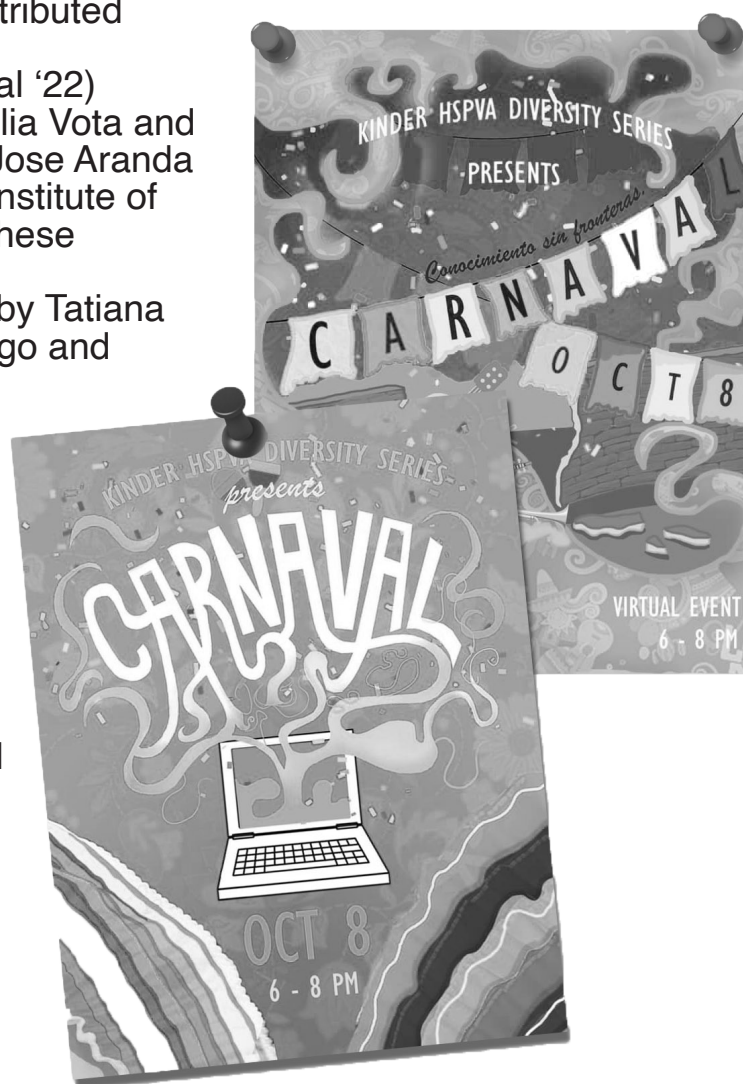
In terms of Hispanic History & Culture, Elena Oliveira (Vocal '22) coordinated a *Make Your Voice Heard* presentation with Mi Familia Vota and reached out to three local Latinx organizations and experts: Dr. Jose Aranda from Rice University, TEATRX Latinx theatre company, and the Institute of Hispanic Culture of Houston. More than just being educational, these sessions showed PVA's involvement in our larger community!

We also had Latin Fusion Dance Workshops, coordinated by Tatiana Jacksis (Dance '21). Dance students taught salsa, Argentine tango and merengue. It was truly a way to get people out of their seats!

Lastly, there was a Poetry Busking session I led where creative writing students wrote personalized poems in response to a given topic. From unicorns to COVID-19 get well soon poems (in Spanish and English), there was something for everyone!

And what better way to close the night, then with some AMAZING student performances? Thanks to our talented student body, Carnaval leaders and editors, Spanish NHS, Mr. Perez, and Mr. Tellez, Carnaval 2020 was a success and one to remember! Afterall, it's not the food or music that made Carnaval so amazing. It's the performers and the public's willingness to embrace and learn more about Hispanic Culture, whether in the school setting or outside world. It certainly wasn't our past version "normal," but who knows what normal means now anyways?

**If you loved Carnaval, be sure to tune into PVA's next Diversity Series, Alphabet Soup: Celebrating the LGBTQ+ Community on November 12th.**



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# The College App Diaries

By Shelby Edison

I think I speak for all our very stressed out seniors when I say that college applications are, well, a lot. Especially during a pandemic and the age of online school. From requesting letters of recommendation to overcoming the hurdle of actually submitting those pesky applications, PVA's seniors get the jolly task of preparing for their future in an age where the future is all but nonexistent. Yay! Here is my experience with the college application process:

**DAY 1:**  
I've made a big Excel sheet of all the colleges I'm applying to, all the deadlines, and how many supplements I need to write for each school. I'm totally on top of it! Just for the fun of it, I decided to tally up how many supplements I need in total, and... I need to write 20 supplemental essays. \*cue the sound of existential dread\*

**DAY 8:**  
I'm making my way through the supplements, and it's not all that bad. I did just find some amazing hidden supplements in my application though (aka more essays required to submit the application but not put in the writing section of the application). So, now I have to write 23 supplements! Common App is playing cruel tricks on me.

**DAY 12:**  
Common App is asking me for way too much information. Why do they need to know every detail about my life? I've given them my parents' educational information, a list of activities I might want to pursue in college, and even the name of my favorite teacher from junior year! What do they want now? My blood type?

**DAY 16:**  
I've written so many essays about myself that I don't know who I am anymore. I'm at my breaking point. Now I'm writing about my favorite animated movies...

**DAY 20:**  
I submitted my first application! I kept my mouse hovering over the submit button for like 20 minutes while I reevaluated my life choices, but I submitted my application! Common App even provided me with virtual confetti to celebrate getting my application in (and probably getting rejected from the college that I just applied to).\*

**DAY 21:**  
I'm so relieved that all my early action applications are in. Now I get to start the whole process over again for my regular decision schools!



# We're Never Going Back to Normal

Opinion by Lucia Maynard

As we closed schools in March, we folded into ourselves, slowing down long enough to realize we did not have the imagination to envision what lay ahead. "Pandemic", a word reserved for science class, evolved into the word and state of life we are abundantly familiar with now. COVID-19, a global pandemic attacking the respiratory system, making it hard to breathe, made its entrance into our lives. By April, we heard first reports on the disproportionate ways this virus was harming and often killing those in Black and brown communities.

Ahmaud Arbery's death came February 25th with footage of his killing leaked May 8th. Breonna Taylor died in the early morning hours following news that schools were closing. Little was said about her killing, initially. Then came the video which stopped everyone in their tracks on May 25th. The video from Minneapolis showed a police officer kneeling on George Floyd's neck for eight minutes as he gasped, "I can't breathe," and begged for his mother. After his death, I read about this fellow native Houstonian. I wanted to learn more about Mr. Floyd, the father, the musician, the son, the person, as the world continued to unravel. The cause of death for Ahmaud, Breonna, and George is the 1619 Pandemic, the one we don't name but is the

cause of disproportionate deaths of Black individuals at the hands of police and explains the prison industrial complex, health disparities, the school-to-prison pipeline, and much more.

In May, wildfire season in California kicked off, raging into August and September as schools were making plans for the year ahead. All of this as hurricane season started in our backyard, reminding us of the ongoing global climate crisis, making it hard to breathe, and disproportionately affecting communities of color.

To me, it feels like the wind got knocked out of us. We were confronted with our own humanity and the need for us to refrain from business as usual. Because business, as usual, is the dehumanizing of BIPOC individuals, the normalizing of systemic inequity, health disparities, family separation (not only at the border but also in our child welfare systems), inequitable outcomes, impunity, and harm. At this moment in which we are forced to slow down, we must fold into our vulnerability, our shared humanity, and demand that we cannot ever go back to a normal that isolates, fractures, and divides us. We must create systems where everyone can breathe.

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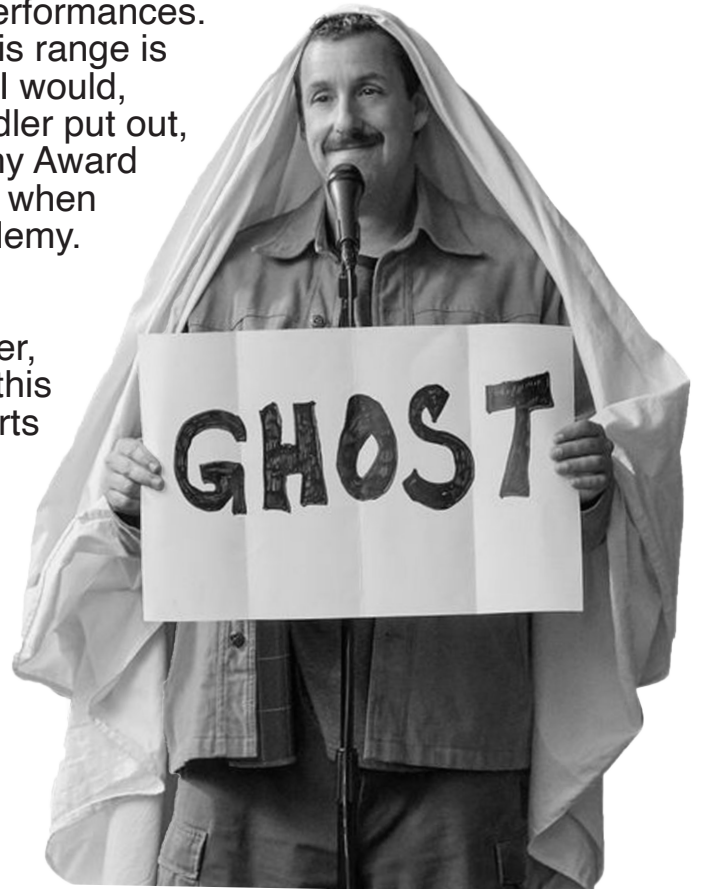
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\*we at paper\* do not approve of this negative outlook.



The songs are bangers, the game play is fun, and the outfits and modules are so cute. This game is a great introduction to the world of rhythm games, and I recommend checking it out. I'm already planning my life as a future professional rhythm game player. Also, please check on your island: your flowers are dead; there are cockroaches in your floorboards; and Tom Nook turned it into a capitalist hellscape.

Not getting actual  
autumn weather  
because we live in  
Houston



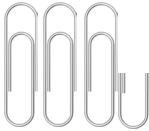


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# Apps

## Nextdoor: The Worst of Your Neighborhood Right at Your Fingertips



By Pieper Grantham

You may think you know everything there is to know about social media: your Instagram feed is immaculate, you get a notification from Snapchat every 24 seconds, one of your TikToks is almost at 10k likes, and you even update your Facebook profile pic once every 2 years. You are a tech guru, a rising influencer, but there may be one hot social networking site that's sliding under your radar: Nextdoor.

Nextdoor is a hyperlocal social media site that connects you with your real life neighbors. After submitting your name and address, Nextdoor links you to the posts of your surrounding area, and ever since 2011 it's been bringing the hottest gossip of your neighborhood: recommendations for reliable roofers, butt-ugly couches for sale, "hey the power's out," lost and found dogs, "stop driving so fast," local package thieves, and, more recently, "someone stole my political sign."

What, you might ask, would I find enjoyable about the inner musings of the 45+ age group? Well amongst the piles of business inquiries and virtual "get off my lawns," there are some serious gems. Without Nextdoor

### ***Some actual things that Pieper has seen on Nextdoor:***

Question: Where will the Cafeteria Catholics eat now that Luby's is shutting down?

You are absolutely part of the problem!

Adrienne, I am getting tired of your President bashing. This is not the place for calling him racist or talking about his taxes!

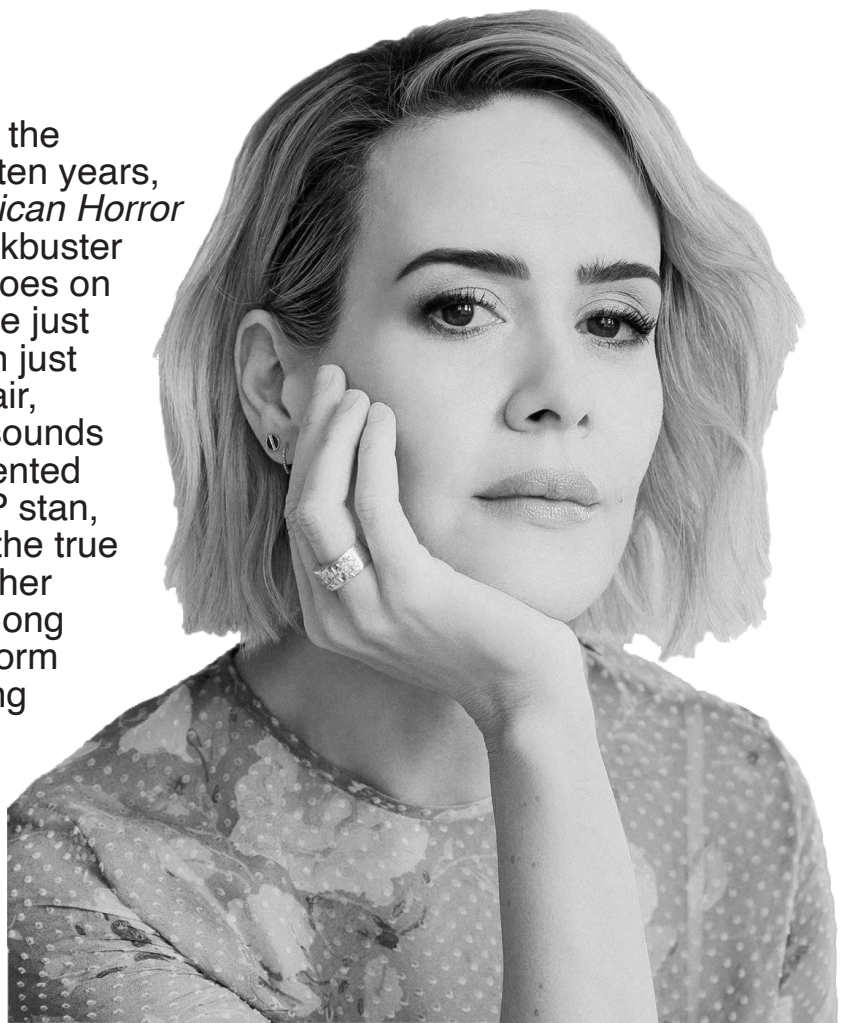
A neighbor threw their dog poop bag at the base of a political sign in my front yard. I have their photo on camera and would like to post it. People need to realize that there are cameras everywhere.

Welcome David. Forgive me in advance as I often oppose your viewpoint. :)

## Sarah Paulson and Gen Z's Weird Obsession with Her

By Jordan Sheldon

Well, I wouldn't say "weird." More like, "out of the blue," for the *Ratched* star has persisted as a prevalent actress over the past ten years, establishing a strong name for herself in the Hit T.V. show, *American Horror Story*, starring in *American Crime Story*, and acting in many blockbuster thrillers: *Bird Box*, *Ocean's 8*, *Glass*, *12 Years a Slave*. The list goes on and on, but my question persists. Why is my Tik-Tok for-you-page just now overflowing with young adults obsessed with Sarah Paulson just within the last couple weeks? Whether it be her walk, fashion, hair, makeup... or even her on camera cry! (which, if you listen to it, sounds like a dolphin wailing), Gen Z'ers just can't get enough of the talented actress. I mean... I'm not complaining, and I'm a fully fledged SP stan, but why now? Is our generation finally waking up to understand the true genius of this iconic woman, or is this woman finally opening up her arms to younger generations, hence becoming more popular among them. After all, she has taken up to using social media as a platform more often in recent months. But whether you're just now learning about the actress from some oddball Tik Tok user or have loved her since her intense, stunning portrayal of fictional lesbian journalist Lana Winters, in *American Horror Story Asylum*, Sarah Paulson is here to stay, and I think we can all be thankful for that.





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# What Your Favorite Fall Activity Says About You

By Alexandra Champion

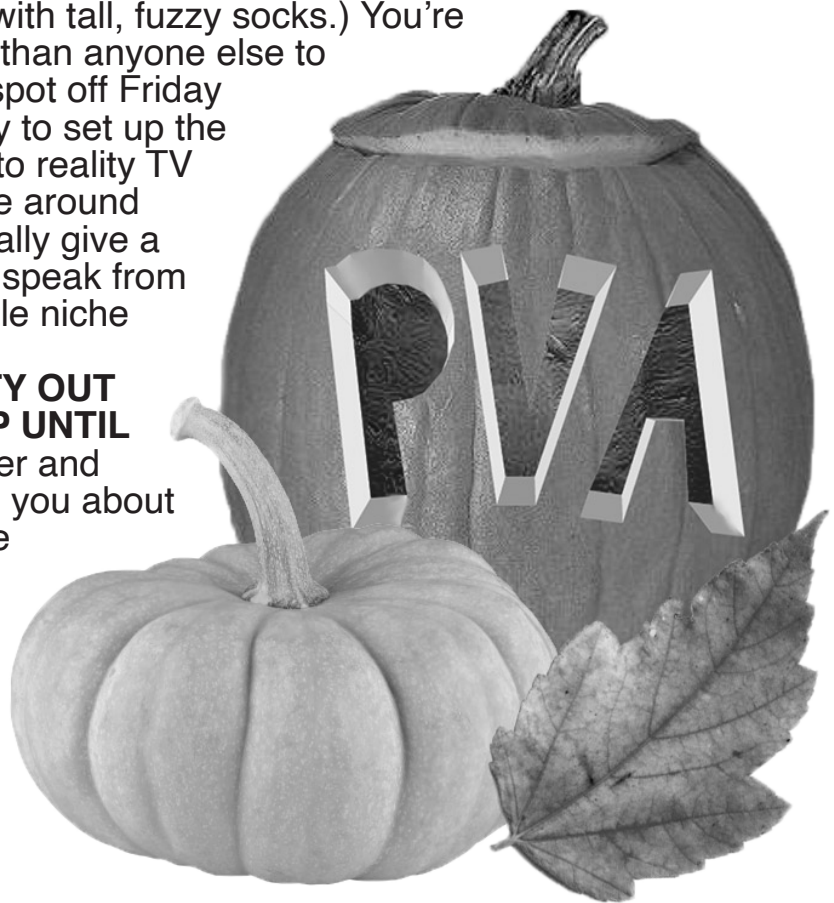
As the self-proclaimed expert of all things fall, I am here to tell you about yourself based on the activities that you partake in during this lovely season of crunchy leaves and overpriced pumpkin-flavored food.

If your favorite fall activity is going **APPLE PICKING OR GOING TO THE PUMPKIN PATCH**, you definitely have at least one pair of UGG boots. You probably were first in line when Starbucks released the pumpkin spice latte and are well on your way to driving your future kids to t-ball or ballet in your white Range Rover. Truthfully, there's no shame. While some may call you "basic", remember things are called "basic" because lots of people like them. Keep doing you and take those adorable Instagram pics.

If your favorite fall activity is going to **FOOTBALL GAMES**, first of all, you're me. Second of all, you have two pairs of cowboy boots. (One pair for the warmer games in September and October, one for the cooler games in Nov-Dec. These are to be worn with tall, fuzzy socks.) You're an experienced tailgater and probably arrive way earlier than anyone else to events because you've been raised to rope the tailgate spot off Friday at noon, get to the spot at the crack of dawn the next day to set up the tents and the pit, all for the game to be at 6:00. You talk to reality TV shows as if the people can hear you, because the people around you in the stands yell at the players like the players actually give a darn what the fans think, and it's a hard habit to break (I speak from experience). However, you're super passionate about little niche topics and are a source for "little known facts."

If your favorite fall activity is **MAKING AN ACTIVITY OUT OF LEAVING YOUR HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS UP UNTIL DECEMBER**, you had those decorations up in September and felt the need to tell everyone who made eye contact with you about it. You take Halloween very seriously and "Calling All The Monsters" by China Anne McClain is on repeat in your car. In general, you take your hobbies very seriously and don't understand when people fail to share your level of commitment to the things they care about. At the end of the day, you're super reliable and the life of any party.

Obviously, there's tons to do in the fall and no right or wrong way to go about it. Do your thing and look good doing it!



## 5 Books You Should Be Reading

by Anna Grace Hethcox

Here are five books I've read or am currently reading that I think will help our generation understand more about the world we're living in.

### 1. *The New Jim Crow* by Michelle Alexander

This book discusses the epidemic that is mass incarceration, the issue of colorblind language, and how racism is becoming more and more discreet yet extremely powerful. Governments, both federal and local, changed their methods of oppression from far more obvious racist rhetoric to systemic oppression. What I have read in this passionate yet highly effective analysis has opened my eyes to the history of my privilege and the birth of racism itself.

### 2. *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel

If you were in Mr. Lozano's Pre-AP English II class, chances are you've already read this somewhat eerie prophecy. The book goes back and forth in time, but at its core describes the life of a traveling Shakespearean troupe in the aftermath of a pandemic. I recommend this book to all PVA students because it wonderfully explores the importance of art in times of crisis.

### 3. *There There* by Tommy Orange

This criminally-underrated novel tells the story of thirteen Native American individuals and their preparation for a powwow in Oakland. The story connects each character together as well as conveying their shared experience of hardship. I have never read anything that so expertly depicts the modern Native American experience. We see these characters struggle in a world where their identity as Native people is usually hidden away. This is a heartbreaking novel and a fantastic debut by Tommy Orange.

### 4. *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood

This classic novel details the life of a woman living in a highly oppressive dystopian society. Atwood said that she "wrote The Handmaid's Tale about the Harvard English Department" which she attended in the late 1960s, a time when gender discrimination was so rampant that there were certain libraries female students couldn't enter. Atwood took inspiration from actual oppressive laws towards women from everywhere in the world throughout history. The experience of reading this work is remarkably immersive, and the world-building is fantastic.

### 5. *Ghost Wall* by Sarah Moss

This one isn't quite so well known, but it's an absolute favorite of mine. A girl, an overbearing father, a nervous mother, and several college students live like a prehistoric village in Northumberland, England to engage in an archeology experiment. This novel discusses themes of identity, sexuality, our reliance on technology, and the difference of right and wrong, all in 160 pages.

Books can bring so much light and give so much understanding, especially in these crazy times. Read on!

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# Subgenres to Expand Your Music Taste

by Julian Cotom

Bored of listening to the same playlist? This list will introduce you to some subgenres to add to your taste. I’m not going for obscurity points; these are to get you started with the subgenres.

**Neo Soul:** A modern adaptation of soul music that carries traits from other genres like Rap, Rock, and Electronic while still having elements from 70’s Soul. Early artists like Erykah Badu and Ms. Lauryn Hill, and modern artists like Anderson Paak, Thundercat, and Solange all contributed well to the genre. Albums, artists, and songs to start with: *Drunk*, Thundercat, “Show You The Way” and *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill*, Ms. Lauryn Hill, “Final Hour”

**Art Pop:** A genre that combines Pop elements with aspects of performative arts. This genre utilizes aesthetics like fashion, theater, and artistic statements to enchant the listener with vivid pictures in audible form. The likes of Janelle Monáe, Gorillaz, Madonna, and countless others have flourished this genre into a spectacle of sight and sound. Albums, artists, and songs to start with: *Post*, Björk, “Hyperballad” and *Hounds of Love*, Kate Bush, “Running Up That Hill (A Deal With God)”

**Math Rock:** Rock music with very complicated instrumentals and complex polyrhythms and time signatures. Everything needs to be calculated and executed correctly in order for the music to work, which is why it has “math” in the name. Slint is one of the earliest groups from this genre, inspiring later modifications of it with artists like Tera Melos and Don Caballero. Albums, artists, and songs to start with: *American Football*, American Football, “Honestly” and *T H E*, tricot, “Swimmer”

**Funk:** Funk is a genre that has a plethora of branching types of Funk, maybe the most musical variety out of any genre on this list. It combines soul, jazz, and rhythm and blues to create a ship with instrumentalists commanding at the helm with an energetic vocalist captain. Artists like James Brown, Funkadelic, Parliament, and Herbie Hancock have influenced the genre to a great impact. Albums, artists, and songs to start with: *Mothership Connection*, Parliament, “Mothership Connection” and *Maggot Brain*, Funkadelic, “Hit It and Quit It”

**Experimental Hip-Hop:** Hip-Hop, but experimental. By far, the most abrasive and least accessible on this list. Experimental Hip-Hop still has the beat sampling and lyrical flow of Hip-Hop, but it also adds elements from Goth, Ambient, and Rock. The most well-known perpetrators of this genre are Death Grips, Earl Sweatshirt, and JPEGMAFIA. Albums, artists, and songs to start with: *Atrocity Exhibition*, Danny Brown, “Really Doe” and *The Money Store*, Death Grips, “Blackjack”

## Teacher Talk

by Mr. Landry

There is a lot going on. There are so many important things to talk about and not enough time in the day to address them all. What can you do about it? In this teacher talk we solicited some candid comments from teachers on what they do to help them process/act/cope when things in their lives and the world around them are not going as they would have expected.

**Mr. Landry (Science):** I tend to be a very logical person, so I try my best to “step outside of myself” in a given situation and reason through all of the factors currently impacting me and those around me. While it may seem overwhelming, when things just don’t seem to be making any sense, I zoom way out and view Earth as a beautiful tiny blue marble drifting through the blackness of space and take in the beauty of so many other things that are outside of my control.

**Ms. Lunnon (English):** What I have found that helps me most is the cliché “we are all in this together.” I have amazing friends (outside of school) and amazing co-workers that have been more than willing to help me in areas where I am weak (technology indeed!). Also, my belief is that prayer changes things, so I certainly add that to my daily routine.

**Mr. Waddell (Visual Arts):** Going back to the campus has been both difficult and challenging in seeing the way that the school structure has shifted so dramatically and limitations are being put on everyone. My relationship with my own mother and taking care of her well-being is particularly strained with preventative measures of keeping her healthy. As part of my own well-being, I have turned off the computer each Saturday. Doing something separate from work and technology has been helpful and necessary. Separating the workday from home life has been important and I encourage that with students as difficult as that can be. We all have a certain amount of work and expectations that we must fulfill as students and teachers.

**Ms. Williams (Math):** I try to give myself time to think. I turn off the radio on my drive to or from school, and when I am at home I will sometimes go for a walk with my phone set to “emergencies only.”

**The paper\* staff reminds you to be nice to your teachers!**

***Send them an email to let them know you’re thinking of them, or give them a smile during class (either through a mask or through the screen)!***

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# Ruth + Denney: PVA’s Best, Worst, and Only Advice Column\*

I want to go into my art area when I grow up, so whenever I don’t get into a program I applied for, I don’t get the chair I want somewhere, my solo recording doesn’t sound as good as I want it to etc., it’s easy to feel defeated and lost. How can I learn to better deal with it?  
—Accepting Shortcomings

Dear Shortcomings,  
Dealing with our inner critic and sitting in the disappointment it brings is extremely difficult, especially if you add being an artist to the mix. The competitive environment at HSPVA will never cease to exist— but this is only ONE stage of your life! It’s easy to feel defeated when you attach your worth to an achievement or a title (like wanting to be the president of whatever club) and are surrounded by high achievers like our amazing student body is. However, I will say that no matter your art area, critiques are subjective and prone to personal bias. Whatever your art area teacher says about you as an artist, they’re only offering you one perspective. There will always be someone who thinks your art is godly and others who will disapprove of it, no matter how hard you try. This is the meat of my advice: the only person you need to love and learn to have compassion for is YOURSELF. I know this sounds cheesy, but embracing this cheese will take you far in life (what’s your favorite cheese? mine’s mozzarella!). Just because you didn’t get the chair you wanted or your recording doesn’t sound as good as you want it to, doesn’t mean you are any less of a person: these are all superficial achievements you have put on yourself. The people who truly love and care for you don’t care how “bad” your recording is (I bet it’s chef’s kiss though, don’t be so hard on yourself!!) and will not change their views of you as an amazing human being. In regards to your future, take a look at all your favorite artists (musicians, singers, actors, etc.). You did this? Cool. Let’s move on. 90% of these people were rejected by agents and record labels multiple times before gaining fame. It’s all a matter of patience, time, and a sprinkle of self-love.  
Yours,  
Ruth

Dearest Shortcomings,  
Now I may be pointing out the obvious here, but if you don’t like your chair then you ought to go out and buy another one. Although Ikea offers a wide range of chair styles all at affordable prices, the Swedish minimalist style simply does not match my cottagecore aesthetic. For well-made and beautiful chairs I search local antique shops or garage sales — those old people always have something nice hiding in their ferociously outdated bungalows!

EDIT: Oh my, I have been informed that this question isn’t about dining room furniture at all! No worries, we can steal another tactic from the elderly, like how we steal their sturdy furniture. That’s right, it’s time to graduate from snot nosed student to a chunky-highlight Karen. Nothing will impress your teachers more than going toe to toe with them (with masks and social distancing of course) and insisting that they are wrong. Refuse to accept those dreaded rejection letters; lay siege upon their campuses and demand to speak to the manager (possibly referred to as President at your intended university). If your recordings sound icky then plaster on your signature sneer and return the whole recording studio to the manufacturer and insist that a full refund is required. You have not failed the world with your art, the world has failed to recognize your genius! The world revolves around you, sweetie, it’s time

to seize the moment!  
  
Avenge yourself!  
Love,  
Denney

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How can I make friends as a freshman when I’m in virtual school and I know nobody?  
—Friendless Freshman

Dear Freshman,  
Goodness, does your class have it rough. Not only are you dealing with all the normal stressors starting HSPVA brings — new classmates! Impostor syndrome! Time management! — but you’re also wrangling Teams meetings, HUB crashes, and separation from your potential peers. This answer will probably be the most technical this column ever gets: Microsoft Teams has a chat function! Over on the big sidebar on the left, under “Activity” and above “Teams!” You can start a new chat with one (or many) of your classmates to ask a question about homework and exchange outside-of-school contact information. Clubs are also starting up soon (if they haven’t already), which will hopefully provide an opportunity for some non-academic socialization. Social media, if you have it, may also be useful — figure out which of your classmates follow @hspvapaper on Instagram and Twitter, for example, to track down cultured individuals with wonderful senses of humor. I’m sure your fellow freshmen will appreciate you taking the initiative to make this year a little less lonely. There is hope yet, my friend! I wish you all the luck in the world.  
Yours,  
Ruth

My loveliest Fish...er...Freshman,  
The best advice I can give you is that friends are entirely unnecessary and will only hold you back in the end. What you should be cultivating right now are enemies. The greatest motivators in the world are spite and hatred, and there is no better place to find spite and hatred than in a healthy rivalry among enemies. Would Harry Potter be The Chosen One without Voldemort? No. Would the US have cool things like portable cameras and hydrogen bombs without The Soviet Union? No. Enemies breed innovation and an inflated sense of self-importance, two critical components for surviving high school. What can friends give you? Support? Get a therapist for that. Camaraderie? A myth created by communists. A social life? Ha, that’s cute; now go and finish your DeBlij chapter. All in all, the best way to make friends is not to. The best way to make enemies...well you might consider eating an entire jar of crunchy dill pickles while unmuted, I’m sure someone will hate that (I know I would).  
Best of luck,  
Denney

Do you have some advice you want Ruth and Denney’s commentary on? Fill out the form here!



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\*paper\* doesn’t endorse any of Denney’s advice



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# Zan's Mixtape

by Zander Tate

Even if Houston's ninety degree temperatures don't make it seem like it, fall is coming. Here's a collection of songs with some immaculate autumn vibes.

**"Heart of Glass" by Miley Cyrus** — Okay, maybe I was lying about the fall vibes with this one, but I had to include this gorgeous cover. Miley's vocals are insane and she truly does justice to Blondie's original.

**"Wide Open Spaces" by The Chicks** — While they may have a new name, this classic track still makes you want to roll your windows down and enjoy a good country sunset.

**"My Dawg" by 21 Savage and Metro Boomin** — With Savage Mode II, 21 and Metro delivered what the rap game needed: pure energy. This intense track (and the whole album) is filled with grim, Halloween core production.

**"Long Violent History" by Tyler Childers** — Tyler Childers is popularizing Appalachian bluegrass music and bringing his fiddles, banjos, and social commentary to a national stage. His recent album contains 8 pure instrumental tracks before this song with insightful lyrics reflecting on the racial and class tension in the rural south.

**"The Gambler" by fun.** — This song is just a cute song to play as you cuddle up and enjoy the cooling weather.

**"Forrest Gump" by Frank Ocean** — While Frank Ocean's newer work is more moody, this classic off of Channel Orange provides perfect background music for late night drives and talks with friends.

**"Dear Maria, Count Me In" by All Time Low** — What's there not to love about some good 'ol pop-punk? The chord progressions, melodies, and creative lyrics are just so energetic and fun; take a trip down memory lane with this classic.



**"Allergies" by Stella Donnelly** — On this melancholic track, Stella Donnelly's soothing vocals create a graceful and cozy soundscape as she details her lost relationships.

**"Between Us- Chopnotslop Remix" by dvsn ft. Snoh Algera** — The recent popularization of chopped and screwed remixes is great, and this smooth track just makes you want to cruise around downtown Houston at night.

**"Heather" by Conan Grey** — Tiktoks aside, this song is actually beautiful. The clever writing and minimalist production create a true expression of intense feeling that will put you in your fall feels.

Listen to the playlist on Spotify using the qr code below!



Hey YOU! Yes, YOU!

***Send in your favorite HSPVA photos to the yearbook!***

Download "Image Share" on your phone and share your photos to project number: 108859

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# 5 Small but Delightful Things

By Kate-Yeonjae Jeong

**1. Rain —**

This is the weather at one of its peak points. Rain sweeps away settled dust, brings on the fluffy clouds to cover the scorching sun (while still leaving room for some sunlight to peek through), and leaves the after-rain scent lingering in the air. Singing and dancing? There’s a very good reason why people do that while it is raining in the movies\*.

**2. Sunrises and Sunsets —**

Needless to say, sunrises and sunsets are two of Mother Earth’s greatest gifts. They’re beautiful, breathtaking performances filled with color and awe. Extra points for when you weren’t expecting to see one, and you live in the moment.

**3. Perfectly Ripe Fruit —**

I don’t know about you, but seeing a mushy, squished, burst-open berry just about ruins the appeal for me. Imagine you’re trying to eat, say, a blueberry, but it just has this clammy texture. Immediately, it loses all rights to call itself a blueberry. On the other hand, let’s now imagine a firm, indigo-hued blueberry with a balanced amount of flavor: the perfectly ripe fruit. Definitely changes the tone.

**4. Yummy Scents —**

If you don’t have an obsession with Bath & Body Works, you just simply haven’t been inside one. That’s the only plausible explanation, because everyone is obsessed with BBW. That’s just how the world works. Sure, it’s the epitome of a middle school girls’ locker room, but who doesn’t love a good whiff of nice smelling things? Just the names of the items sound deliciously amazing. Here’s a few for starters: Eucalyptus Mint, Teakwood, Mango Mai Tai... need I go on? It’s always a delight!

**5. Deep Breaths —**

Lastly, for the smallest thing on this list that is most likely overlooked-- taking in a deep inhale and exhaling it out slowly. I often forget the power of taking deep breaths; I find that they give some clarity to the mind. Find the joy and peace in exhaling out the grey and inhaling in the good, and fill your days with the delights!

## Is *Nightmare Before Christmas* a Halloween or Christmas movie?

Poll conducted by Irene Roddy

69% of PVA students said HALLOWEEN  
31% of PVA students said CHRISTMAS

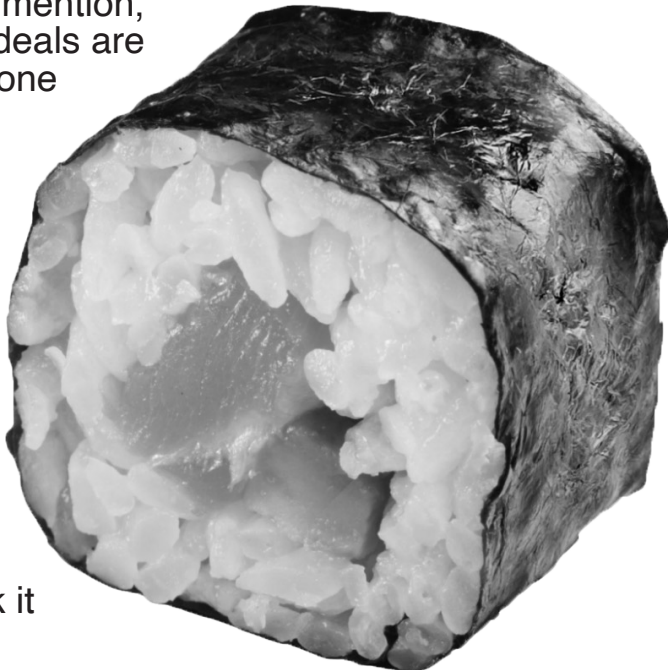
# Take-Out with Maddie

By Maddie Strug

I’m back to highlight some of the best, local take-out options in Houston, because a lot of us don’t really feel safe dining in right now. It’s important to support our local businesses in this pandemic, because these restaurants are some of the best in Houston, and maybe the country! I hope y’all try some of these out, and I’ve tried to include something for everyone.

**Oishii:** 3764 Richmond Ave, Houston, TX 77046  
\$

**What to get:** ANYTHING... but if you want some guidance, I’d recommend the Sake Salmon Nigiri, the Fuji Maki Roll, and Gyoza  
I’m gonna say it! This is the BEST sushi spot in Houston. I have yet to find another sushi spot with such good prices and quality. I get takeout from this place about every week and my meal has never cost more than \$8. The salmon nigiri is my personal favorite, and the quality is insane. It practically melts in your mouth, and it only costs \$1! Not to mention, the happy hour deals are crazy (did someone say buy one get one free?). I honestly can’t recommend this place enough; it’s affordable, there’s something for everyone, and they’re a charming, family owned business! Check it out!



**Spanish Flowers Mexican Restaurant:** 4701 N Main St, Houston TX 77009  
\$\$  
**What to get:** Taco Salad, Cheese Enchilada  
This is the cutest, outdoor Tex-Mex place in the Heights. Whether you’re ordering to go or enjoying a socially distant meal on the gorgeous patio, this place is sure to deliver. They have a huge menu with classic Tex-Mex dishes and some unique ones as well. I’m not gonna lie, though, this place isn’t as affordable as others. However, that’s not to say that the quality isn’t worth the price! I got the Enchilada Taco Combo which was \$13, but it came with an enchilada, taco, and all the fixins, so you do get a lot of food which could definitely be eaten for a 2nd meal. The food was fresh and delicious, and service was fast! With that, they also have a great amount of vegetarian options. Great Tex-Mex spot.

**Fellini:** 5211 Kelvin Dr, Houston, Texas 77005  
\$  
**What to get:** Iced almond milk latte with caramel or pumpkin spice  
To give you a little insight as to how good this place is, I’ve visited 4 times in the past week. Fellni is a little, Italian cafe that serves every drink imaginable, fresh pastries, cannolis, gelato, you name it! The coffee is so delicious (and cheaper than Starbucks... just saying). When it comes to gelato, I love the Hazelnut and Stracciatella gelato. This place also has lots of outdoor seating if you want to eat outside. They also serve fresh paninis around lunchtime, which I haven’t had the chance to try yet, but I’m eager to try. This is for SURE my new go-to coffee place

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\*see: Singin’ in the Rain (obviously), The Sound of Music (“Sixteen Going on Seventeen”), Mamma Mia (“Take A Chance On Me”)



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# Quiz: Which Resurrected Game/Show Should You Watch?

By Addie Fairbanks

While being cooped up in our houses over quarantine, we have been consuming media at an alarming rate, and many studios and networks can't keep up because of necessary, yet restricting safety measures. So, we've been turning to the movies and games that we've obsessed over in years past. The resurgence of certain older shows has been ushered along by the internet, reboots, and good old nostalgia. Take this quiz to see which piece of media you should watch (or re-watch) that has taken off again in the past few months.

1. Which quarantine activity did you start but eventually drop?

a. Journaling

b. Family walks

c. Communicating with friends

d. School

e. Working out

f. Baking bread
2. What did you want to grow up to be as a kid?

a. Teacher

b. Astronaut. Oh to be able to dream like that again.

c. You didn't want a job.

d. A cop. This has since changed.

e. Whatever your art area's profession is.

f. A vet. Little did you know, there is a lot of science involved.
3. Pick a Megamind quote.

a. "I knew you'd come back." "Well, that made one of us."

b. Unfathomable. It's.....without fathom."

c. "I'd be watching you, like a dingo watches a human baby."

d. "Still, things could be a lot worse. Oh that's right. I'm falling to my death. Guess they can't."

e. "Okay, Minion. You were right. I was... less right."

f. " There is no Easter Bunny, there is no Tooth Fairy, and there is no Queen of England!"
4. Pick the department you secretly wish you were in.

a. Vocal

b. Dance

c. Instrumental

d. Creative Writing

e. Theatre

f. Visual Arts
5. Which overplayed TikTok song has been bugging you all summer?

a. "If The World Was Ending" — Madism, JP Saxe, Julia Michaels

b. "Backyard Boy"— Claire Rosinkranz

c. "Savage" — Megan Thee Stallion

d. "ROCKSTAR" — DaBaby, Roddy Ricch

e. "ily (i love you baby)" — Surf Mesa, Emilee

f. "Say So" — Doja Cat
6. Pick a plant to grow:

a. A bonsai.

b. Succulents :)

c. Cactus. They can't die easily.

d. Some herbs.

e. None. It will die in my hands.

f. Some flowers.
7. Pick a famous 2000s celebrity scandal:

a. Kristen Stuart cheating on Robert Pattinson with a married man.

b. "Miley, what's good?"

c. Ryan Seacrest trying to high-five a blind kid

d. When Ariana Grande licked a donut and said she hated America.

e. Wen from Lemonade Mouth being arrested for armed robbery.

f. Kanye crashing Taylor at the VMAs and saying Beyoncé should have won.

**Mostly A's: Twilight**  
It seems to be the revival of Robert Pattinson. From saying that there is both a ballerina and a little gremlin inside of him to boring his own stalker, Rob has captured the world's attention once again. So why not revisit his least favorite project, and watch as he and Kristen Stewart stare at each other for 30 minutes.

**Mostly B's: Avatar: the Last Airbender**  
In these trying times, you need something to make you laugh, cry, gasp, and question Euro-centric ideals. Avatar has it all. Character arcs, friendships, action, and the ability to make you obsessed with a children's show from 2005. There is also a ton of commentary on complex issues from abuse to colonialism. So sit back, relax, and enjoy the music, animation, voice acting, and story telling of the Last Airbender.

**Mostly C's: Clone High**  
The premise is the title. Clones of famous people in high school together. I swear, this show was made by a time traveler. I don't know how they managed to nail the humor of 2020 in 2002. Clone High really delivers on satire and comedic timing, while also making a million history jokes. Also the theme song is a bop.

**Mostly D's: Among Us**  
Ok, maybe this game isn't old. But remember playing mafia as a kid? Relive that thrill of killing your friends through little bean spacemen with Among Us. Run around and try to operate a spaceship, while one of your crewmates strategically kills you off one by one. There is a reason this game is so popular, and it's a great way to chat with friends over zoom!

**Mostly E's: Criminal Minds Matthew Gray Gubler**  
Ok, in my eyes, Criminal Minds is 2020's Supernatural, with Matthew Gray Gubler being the newest teen heartthrob. And I understand it! So if you want a new man to obsess over, and you've finished all your true crime podcasts, go watch Criminal Minds for a nice psychological over-glorification of the FBI.

**Mostly F's: Animal Crossing**  
The newest edition of Animal Crossing came out this summer, and it did wonders for my mental health. It's lovely, because there is no rush, and the game is just for you. The ability to build a little virtual island from the ground up is so soothing, and it gave me something to look forward to every day. :)



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# Horoscopes to Read in your Nuclear Bunker

By Maja Neal

Wonderful, silly little art students. Isn't the world wild right now? I think after this I'm going to eat a nice salad, take a hot shower, and then scream into my pillow until I can make sense of things. In the meanwhile, I will translate that screaming into help for you!

**Capricorn** — You've got a good sort of confidence that will help you set boundaries, talk to your superiors, and ask for what you want from relationships. If you've been waiting to speak up, do so now! Advice: keep your limbs inside the vehicle at all times.

**Aquarius** — Since this month is good for both creativity and career, it's especially good for you, who blends them. Don't throw away ideas you're passionate about because you think they're silly; you might be surprised. Advice: give a fish a little kiss.

**Pisces** — You're normally a little more introspective than most, but it'll become easier to take charge and get rid of unhealthy habits and people. Don't be afraid to take a little bit of a gamble on how people might react. Advice: join the clan of crows that sits on the electrical lines.

**Aries** — You're very driven this month, almost definitely in romantic or social pursuits. I can't recommend kissing anyone, for safety reasons, but maybe you can send them the head of their worst enemy? Advice: dance with your local motorcyclist.

**Taurus** — So, you're having problems with your relationships and are too afraid to talk about them for fear of conflict. A hint, from somebody with the same problem: Talk. It always helps. Advice: grow fairy wings and fly over the Bayou.

**Gemini** — Unfortunately, things might get drudgy and monotone this month. The hard truth is that there's no real cure for it. However, a feeling of satisfaction at the end will keep you at it! Advice: Bingus the cat.

**Cancer** — Take care of yourself this month by funneling feelings into art. Sometimes, taking care means paying attention to what you're feeling instead of bottling it up. Advice: pretend that airplanes in the night sky are like shooting stars.\*

**Leo** — I know you're itching to party or see your friends, but you can get that fulfillment without risking illness. I suggest watching movies on

Houseparty or a round of Among Us. Advice: steal the Golden Apples! Surely nothing bad will happen.

**Virgo** — One big decision or many small ones might pressure you this month, leading you to be type-A and stressed. Fortunately, the end of the month brings personal clarity, so remember not to miss the big picture by focusing on struggles. Advice: watch Clone High. Everybody should.

**Libra** — Your friends will be extra appreciative this month! Good for you, having relationships that are balanced and affectionate. If you don't, maybe this is a sign to look for people you're more comfortable with. Advice: Inhabit the nearest bog.

**Scorpio** — Of course, this month is powerful for you! Lean into your passion and growing motivation. But remember that big moments of energy aren't always reliable, so you should also make a habit of planning ahead. Advice: Collage anatomical diagrams into new creatures.

**Sagittarius** — Pay attention to your subconscious. What are you dreaming about? What do you think of when you space out during online class? Maybe some of the answers you're looking for are already there. Advice: Invest in more ChapStick. You'll always lose it when you need it.



## Little Known, (Sometimes) Embarrassing Facts About the paper\* Writers

Did you know that **Julian Cotom** once tried to go skinny dipping on a beach, but lost his trunks in the ocean?

Did you know that **Anna Grace Hethcox** had an extensive fedora collection and wore one every day for three years straight? For three years, there was not a single picture of her without a fedora!

Did you know that **Addie Fairbanks** won the Aspen Watermelon Eating Contest 5 years in a row?

Did you know that **Pieper Grantham** uses imitation breakfast syrup as a condiment on savory foods?

**SENIORS!** Do you have a little known, (sometimes) embarrassing fact? Email it to [hspvapaper@gmail.com](mailto:hspvapaper@gmail.com) for a chance to be featured in our next issue!

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\*because couldn't all of us really use a wish right now



# Overheard@PVA

May I be excused? My *dog just barfed* on the carpet. — Leaf Henry

Are you chillin by grillin or are you **grillin by chillin?**  
— Mr. Sneed

Croissant gossip, or **crossossip**.  
— Caroline Paden

I procrastinated all my work and instead made **spoon glasses**.  
— Alissar Youssef

I think **Midnight Sun** is God's gift to literature.  
— Charlotte Stallings

Write chili, *eat paper\** is more my style.  
— Eva Trakhtman

I'm terrified of y'all, you **little vectors of disease!**  
— Ms. Chase

You **own Cats** (2019)?  
— Luca Jarosz\*

I want to be *Mr. Bingham* when I grow up.  
— Riya Shah

I'm always on board for a bit of **old fashioned stabby stabby**.  
— James Garcia

I try to hold on to iPhones instead of upgrading *because of capitalism*.  
— Ms. McNeil

Gonna start wearing *fake vampire teeth* to all my classes. — Gnat Butler

The only part of the Air Force was **Ben Franklin and his electric kite**.  
— KM

I was gonna host online classes **through Twitch**.  
— Mr. Landry

I had this mental headcanon that what if they found a *cup on top of the Eiffel Tower*— like what would they do?  
— Erick Arakelian

Got a problem? **Add a gator!**  
— Eli Johns-Krull

Once you get no sleep, you're *in too deep*.  
— Seva Raman

**Yellow**. That's my **favorite number**.  
— Rebecca Bloome

I applied a **shakey shakey force** to my cookie. — Jack Rota

Why did my heart rate go up as if I have not been **graduated for two years?**  
— Eliza Pillsbury after seeing paper\*'s Instagram post about deadlines for submitting articles

If you put a face mask in your mouth will it *whiten your teeth?*  
— Jones Bowman

I can't wait to watch **Cats**.  
— Matthew Kalmans

Shoutout to the **freshmen creative writers** who submitted more Overheards than we had room to publish! Be like the creative writing freshmen; **submit your Overheards!**

Submit your Overheards and articles to ***hspvapaper@gmail.com!***  
Follow us on Instagram and Twitter ***@hspvapaper*** for more paper\* shenanigans!

paper\*  
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\*Shelby must admit that she unfortunately does own *Cats* (2019)