

Sir John A. Macdonald “We’ve Got You Covered.”



Welcoming The New Principal

Marian Farra

On November 2nd, the Mac News head of layouts, Betty Guo, and I had the opportunity to interview our new principal, Ms. Vokas. We asked her a series of questions to give Mac a chance to get to know our new principal. Ms. Vokas first introduced herself as an alumna of Mac, “I am a former graduate of Mac; I grew up in this community and I loved going to high school here. I got an excellent education and was involved in a lot of co-curricular activities going on here, specifically in athletics. I value the co-curriculars and the extracurriculars at school, and I think it's important all the kids get involved outside the classroom.”

After Ms. Vokas’ self introduction, we continued the interview by asking what her favourite thing about the school was so far.

“The kids, the students. Everybody’s very polite. They’re not shy; when I walk the halls, they say hello to me and we have conversations. It’s a really great atmosphere.”

When asked if she had anything to say to Mac students, she shared her thoughts regarding school during these unprecedented times.

“It’s a different year this year, so we’re trying everything virtually, but hopefully we’ll return to normal soon. I think that it’s a different start to the year, but September and October have gone really smoothly. I’m hopeful that by working together as a team, we will get through this [difficult time] and we’ll all be better off in the future.”

On behalf of Sir. John A. Macdonald C. I., I would like to welcome Ms. Vokas to our school, and wish her luck at Mac. I speak for everyone when I say we are all very excited to show her how amazing our school is, and to see her leadership in action.

Why Remember Remembrance Day?

Sachi Taploo

November 11, 1918 is a significant day in Canadian history. On this day, the Allies and the Germans signed an armistice at 5:00 a.m. in a railroad car in Compiègne, France. All fighting was to stop at 11:00 a.m. Although this was a victory for the Allies, World War I resulted in approximately 40 million military and civilian casualties. Of that total, 172,950 Canadians were wounded and 66,655 Canadians died. Every year, on November 11 at 11:00 a.m., we take a moment of silence to remember those who fought to protect us during World War I.

You might be thinking, why should I remember this war and the soldiers who took part in it? Victoria Lin, a grade ten student, answered, “The soldiers sacrificed a lot to fight for freedom. It would be really hard for them to be away from the people they love, and they wouldn’t know whether they would live or die the next day.” Kamilla Moyd, another grade ten student, talked about a battle: “I know about the Battle of Passchendaele from WWI. It was a big loss for Canada. Even though land was gained in the thick bog and mud, the Germans quickly recaptured the town.”

Though Canada and the Allies suffered many losses, they won significant battles as well. If you want to know more about Canada’s contributions to World War I, then you’re in luck! I have a mini-history lesson prepared for you!

The Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) first arrived on the Western Front in February 1915. The Western Front was an area of land in Europe where the majority of the fighting occurred. There were many inconclusive battles, resulting in heavy casualties on both sides. Trench warfare was a tactic heavily used in World War I which involved soldiers on both sides digging a series of trenches. These trenches, six to eight feet in depth, were protected by barbed wire and mines, and spanned 6,250 miles from the English Channel to Switzerland.

The conditions in the trenches were terrible. The soldiers resided in small dugouts which were constantly soaked and muddy. Rats as big as cats, lice and diseases like trench foot ran rampant due to the unsanitary conditions of the trenches. Trench foot would swell soldiers’ feet up two to three times their normal size, with the only cure being amputation. Shell shock, also known as post-traumatic stress disorder, afflicted many soldiers as well.

The CEF fought in many battles, but a major one was the battle of Vimy Ridge. In 1914, the Germans controlled Vimy Ridge, a key position in Northern France. If the Allies captured this position, the vantage point would give them a clear view of the countryside and enemy positions, as well as better access to supply routes. Allied forces had tried to capture this point for more than two years, before assigning Canadian troops, led by British officer Lieutenant-General Julian Byng, to lead the assault on Vimy Ridge. Unlike other battles, the troops rehearsed the battle and trained for many months under Byng’s guidance. Before the attack, the German positions were bombarded by heavy artillery for almost a month to distract them from the Canadian army engineers’ construction of tunnels, through which troops could move discreetly into position. On April 9, 1917, Canadian troops moved into position and were ready to fight. They used a tactic called the “creeping barrage”, a tactic which required the Canadian troops to advance while they shelled the German forces simultaneously. This was very dangerous because the Canadian troops were at risk of being shelled as well. Within two hours, they completed their first objective. On April 10, the Canadian troops captured Hill 145, the highest point of the ridge. By April 12, they captured the last German position.

This battle was a victory for the Canadians. Within three days, the Canadian troops captured Vimy Ridge. They gained more territory, captured prisoners, and took more artillery than any other previous British offensive. Though it was a success, 3,500 men were killed and 7,000 were wounded. However, the number of losses was low compared to any other Allied offensive. The Battle of Vimy Ridge gave Canadians a sense of national pride for the first time. They were known as an elite fighting force after this battle.

So, the next time you wear a poppy and take a moment of silence on Remembrance Day, think about the struggles of the Canadian soldiers; consider how difficult it was to spend their days in the muddy trenches, cold and alone; consider how it must have felt to watch your friends or family members die in battle. During that moment of silence every year, think about how happy the soldiers felt when the war ended, and how proud they felt after the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Remember how they sacrificed their lives to protect our freedom and future.

Learn more Canadian history: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en>

Positivity Corner

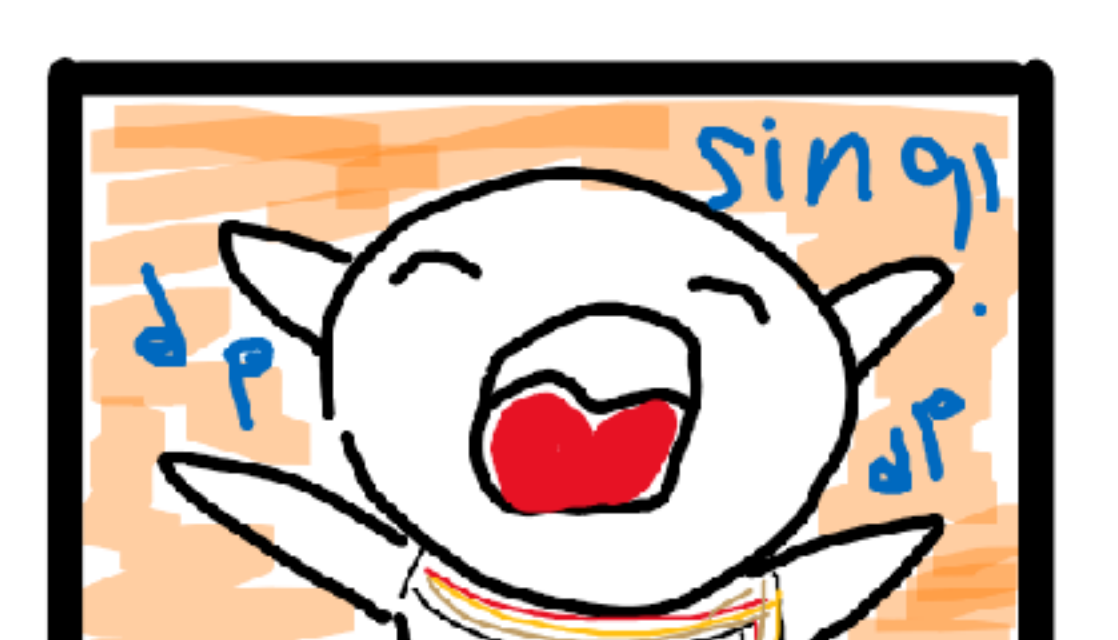
Maliha Mahjabin

If you need a mood booster, then this article is for you.

If you are feeling stressed with all the changes to our lives this year, whether it is at school or at home, take a break and slow down. Too much homework or no motivation to work? That is perfectly okay. Spend time for yourself: give yourself a facial with a mask, read a book, or do any other activities you enjoy. Get some fresh air by opening your windows or going for a stroll. All of us need a break once in a while to refresh and re-energize ourselves!

Set goals, manage your time well, and learn to prioritize so you do not feel overwhelmed. Find and connect with yourself because at the end of the day, the relationship you have with yourself is more important than anything else. Remember that tomorrow will be a better day even if today was not the greatest, so keep your head up high, because you are doing amazing.

POSITIVITY CORNER



Comic Credits: Leilani Xue

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Activities

Quarantine Hobbies

Marian Farra

As another wave of COVID cases approaches, all of us remain quarantined at home, most likely bored out of our minds -- especially when Christmas Break is right around the corner. Luckily, there's no wrong way to spend your time during quarantine, so long as you are staying at home and following the safety guidelines! If you are looking for something to help take your mind off of the mess that has been 2020, quarantine provides lots of spare time to try something new!

Through an Instagram questionnaire, Mac students shared how they have kept busy over these past eight months. This list is a compilation of activities popular amongst Blackscots, so if you are looking for a new hobby through which you can also connect with others, you are in the right place!

Working Out

Obviously, gyms are closed due to the pandemic, so there are many more hurdles to jump to stay active. However, the pandemic should give people all the more reason to start working out. No commute times, an accessible shower and privacy make exercising from home a rather appealing alternative to public gyms. Plus, your "exercise" could be whatever you make it, whether that may be following home workout routines, picking up yoga, or just dancing around your room to music. If you are craving some nice fresh air, remember that you can always go on a walk or run a couple times a week, provided you are abiding by COVID guidelines. Remember to stay active (and hydrated)!

Arts and Crafts

If workouts do not suit your fancy, art might! If you are more of an artistic person and you are itching to create, consider picking up a new hobby in the arts. These include: scrapbooking, where you can create visual collections of your friends and family; painting, just for fun or to kickstart your career to rival Van Gogh; and even embroidery, to add a personal flair and make your sweaters look cooler than everyone else's. If you are just starting out and do not know where to begin, YouTube tutorials act as great guides, especially if you are like me, and do not have a single artistic bone in your body. especially if you are like me, and do not have a single artistic bone in your body.

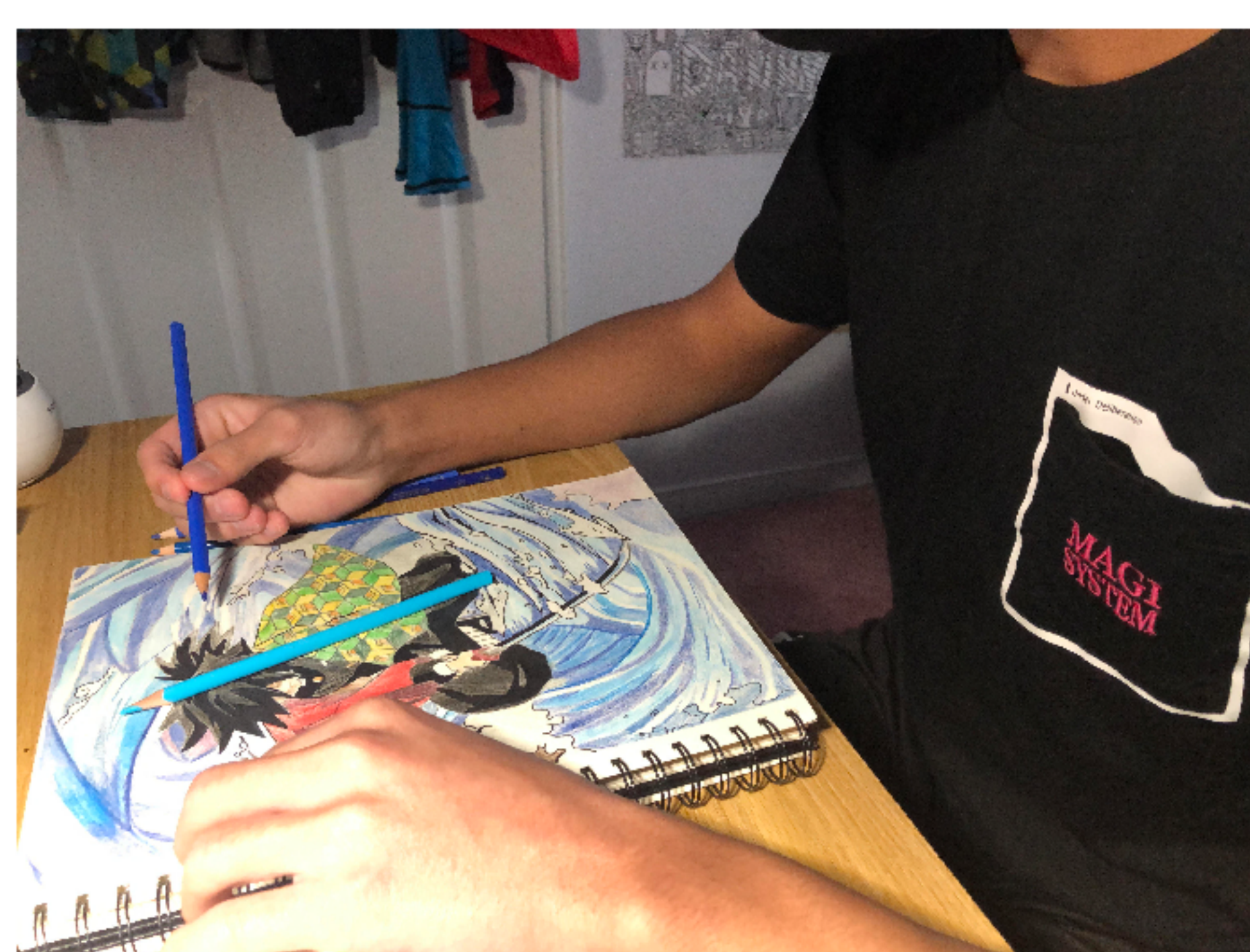


Photo Credits : Hanson Law

Cooking/Baking

Are your parents tired of constantly cooking for you? Are you trying to eat healthier but only feed yourself instant foods? Are you worried about moving out because you cannot cook for the life of you? Well, quarantine might be the best time to start learning how to make yourself some homemade meals. You get started by simply helping out in the kitchen when dinner is being made, or you could find some recipes online of easy meals and try cooking on your own.

Reading

Reading. Some of us adore it, while others cringe at the thought of it. Regardless of which end of the spectrum you are on, I promise you that there are so many good stories worth your time. You can start with some fun quick series like *Percy Jackson* and *Harry Potter*, or if you're into contemporary novels, I recommend *Anna and the French Kiss* by Stephanie Perkins and *They Both Die at the End* by Adam Silvera. If you are looking for a long read to get you through the break, the *Throne of Glass* series by Sarah J. Maas is a great way to pass your time.



Photo Credits : Hanson Law

Netflix

If you are the type of person who wants to do nothing but sit down all day, I recommend spending your time binge-watching shows and movies. I am not going to lie, I myself am guilty of spending a full month just sitting on my bed and marathoning *The Office* and *Schitt's Creek*. Netflix is a great way to pass time when you want something to entertain yourself when you want to be lazy.

Among Us

Among Us is a game that has swept the entire world off its feet and connected people from all walks of life, from Twitch streamer Corpse Husband to US Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, to engage in a fun, suspenseful game. It is a great way to play with and make new friends during quarantine. Gather a couple of friends and work together to find out who the imposter is, or try to eliminate everyone before you get voted out.



Photo Credits : Hanson Law

Whether you attempt all of the hobbies from this list, make up your own new hobby, or decide to do nothing during quarantine, make sure you are staying safe and hydrated. Do not pressure yourself to be as active or as productive as other people since these are difficult times for everyone. It is enough to simply focus on yourself and find your own pace.

Movie Recommendations

Maliha Mahjaban

Being quarantined for the holidays means more opportunities to let loose in your downtime. Seeing as Christmas is right around the corner, there is no better way to spend your free time than unwinding by grabbing some popcorn and hot chocolate to binge watch Christmas classics with friends and family.

Christmas staples like *Home Alone*, *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*, and *Elf* are crucial to get into the holiday spirit. If you prefer animated works, some quality classics include *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *The Snowman*, and *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, to name a few. Fans of *Home Alone* would certainly enjoy *Christmas Break-In*, while for fans of *The Parent Trap*, *The Princess Switch* and *Switched For Christmas* would be must-watches. *The Christmas Chronicles*, *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*, and *A Cinderella Story: Christmas Wish* are certainly some other festive movies to give a try. While most of these movies can be found online or on Netflix, Hallmark's rom-com/family movies such as *A December Bride*, *The Christmas Calendar*, and *Snowed Inn Christmas* are also worth your time. If you are itching for a new holiday movie, newer comedies such as *Daddy's Home 2* and *Love The Coopers* are a great, refreshing experience, with plots revolving around the chaos of spending the holidays with extended families.

Many more films are waiting for the Christmas season to release, so stay tuned, get cozied up on your couch, and let the Christmas movie marathon begin!



Photo Credits : Aaron Prince



Photo Credits : Aaron Prince

Information

High School and Homework Tips

Ivy Guo



MEAC's Past and Updates

Leilani Xue

MEAC is Sir John A. Macdonald's Environmental Action Council. We strive to manage and implement new ways to encourage fellow students to be environmentally conscious. Due to the past efforts of MEAC and Blackscots, our school was a Certified Eco-School! We had a Gold and almost Platinum certification. In fact, we were reaching a Platinum status before 2017, with 2017 being our last certification as a Gold Eco-School. Soon after that, MEAC's initiatives as an Eco Council began to die down.

In an interview with Humza Naushad, President of MEAC, Humza expanded on MEAC's goals as an Eco Council: "MEAC's primary goal has always been educating the students of Mac about environmental issues and how they can make a change by becoming more environmentally friendly. [In previous years,] our council hosted events throughout the year that would entertain and, more importantly, educate the students at Mac about monthly environmental issues. In the past, we held fundraisers, such as Honey Lollipops and Metal Straws, to donate to conservation foundations."

Regarding plans to work our school up to an Eco-School Certification, Humza shared, "With an active body of students trying to create a sustainable environment, not only is an Eco-School Certification achievable, but an impact for the environment on a larger scale is possible. Together, a large body of students can reach out to a community level and create a bigger change than just within the school. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, MEAC cannot function like it used to because of the many restrictions in place. Reaching the entire student body has become less achievable. That makes our goal of an Eco-School Certification difficult to obtain."

When asked to elaborate on how they would successfully achieve MEAC's goals while virtual, Humza answered, "We, as a council, have decided to work around that barrier [of virtual school]. In the current circumstances, the council believes that making a direct positive change on the environment is the focus. Our main goal this year will be to reach out to the community and government officials to express our voices. This initiative will provide an opportunity to encourage an even larger audience to take action to improve the environment. This large audience could also help MEAC fund even more organizations that have a goal to aid the environment. Council members are also educating one another about current environmental issues alongside presenting research on environmental topics. This year, MEAC will be looking at the big picture."

A new executive member of MEAC, when asked why they wanted to be part of MEAC, responded, "I like to keep the environment clean, and that is why I decided to join. I want to inspire others to care alongside myself. As part of the upcoming Eco Fair, I was able to see Manna Wong (virtually), and she supported our ideas for our Eco Fair; we hope that the Eco Fair goes well."

With that being said, due to the current pandemic and the limitations put on in-person interaction, MEAC's usual activities must be put on hold - however, MEAC will continue operation virtually! Every Wednesday, MEAC hosts a meeting, during which we discuss environmental topics, examine connections between the environment and philosophical questions, present informational slideshows, and watch documentaries. Although we cannot promote in-school and showcase our initiatives in person, we hope to find like minded students who may find these similar topics of interest!

It is still not too late to become an executive member of MEAC. If you are interested in being a part of Mac's environmental journey with MEAC, we welcome all! Fill out this form linked below, and we hope to see you soon!
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdbs_WvQhz_Nefw6Ez4wxOSLKQiNezr1j5H52GWdficYgauQ/viewform

Soap: From Cooking By-Product to Virus Killer

Sachi Taploo

COVID-19 is causing devastation around the world. Doctors around the world are frantically trying to develop a vaccine that will treat this virus, while relaying the message, "Wash your hands well with soap and water". You may wonder, why is soap the go-to solution for an unprecedented disease? However, before we learn about how soap combats viruses, it may be helpful to first dive into soap's history.

Soap, a product of fat and oil, is speculated to have originated as a by-product of ancient cookouts. As meat roasted over a fire, fat dripped into the wood ashes and caused a chemical reaction that created a slippery substance great for removing dirt off the skin. Soap has long been a part of society. During an excavation in the ancient Mesopotamian city of Babylon, clay cylinders containing a soap-like substance were discovered, along with inscribed instructions on how to make soap. In Egypt, a scroll dating back to 1550 BC called *Ebers Papyrus* states that Egyptians bathed in a mixture of vegetable oils and wood ash.

Now you might be wondering, how does a by-product of cookouts and an age-old formula protect us from COVID-19? The answer lies in the chemical structure of soap and the virus.

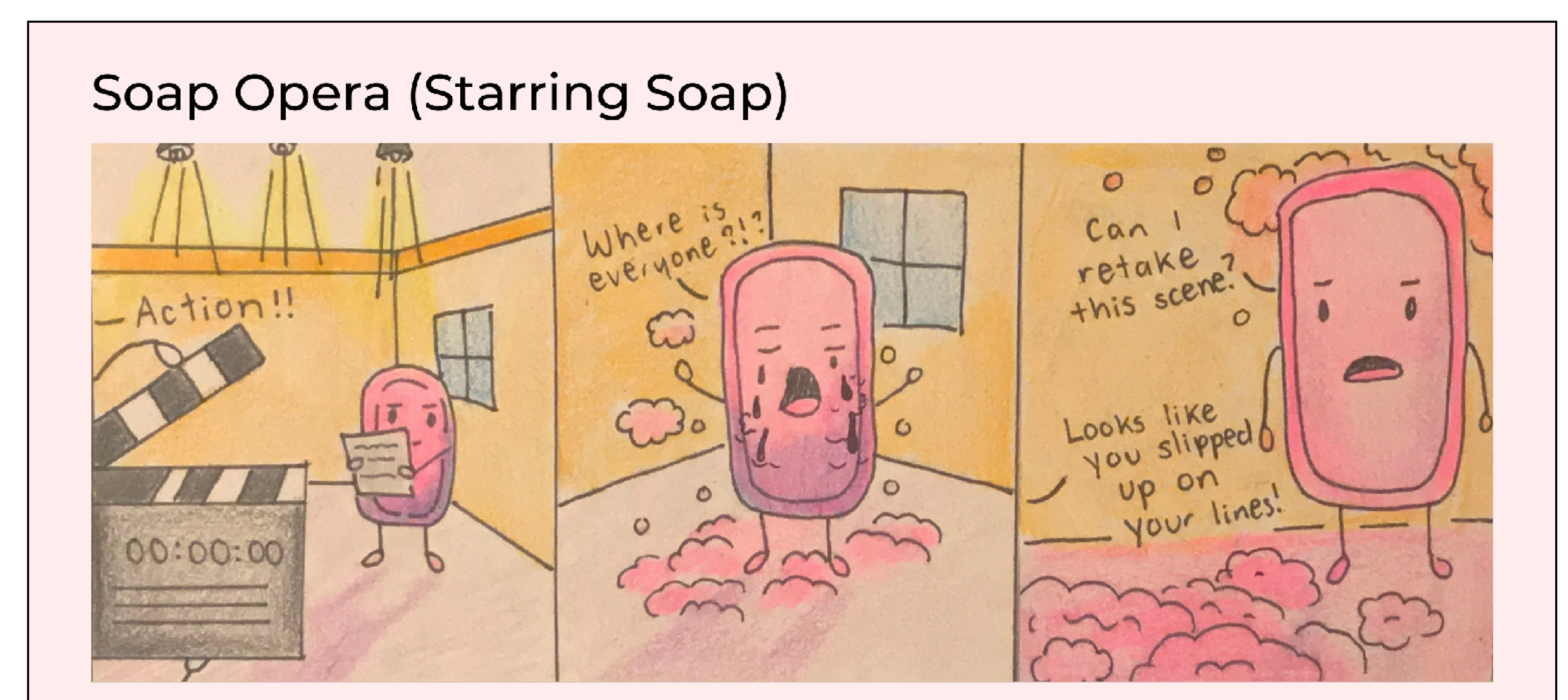
Viruses are composed of two main components: an inner core of genetic material and an outer layer of protective lipids. This structure is why washing your hands with soap and water deactivates viruses and prevents further spread of harmful genetic codes. Soap contains substances called amphiphiles, which are similar to the fat-like substances in the virus membrane. They loosen the virus from the skin, separating the proteins, lipids, and RNA which hold the virus together. While disinfectants or alcohol-based products kill viruses as well, soap is much more effective as you only need a small amount. Who would have thought that cooking over fire 5,000 years ago could provide something so revolutionary?

Before the pandemic, most of us took soap for granted. The next time you wash your hands, make sure to scrub every square centimetre with soap and water. Washing your hands may seem trivial, but this small step can save not only your life but the lives of others.

Learn more about the virus: <https://www.who.int/>

Soap Comic

Nikki Guo



Fun Tidbits

Word Search

Yilin Luan

November Word Search

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

Find the following words in the puzzle.
 Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|-------------|
| AUTUMN | FROST | READING |
| BREEZY | LEAVES | REMEMBRANCE |
| CHESTNUTS | NOVEMBER | SACRIFICE |
| COFFEE | ORANGE | SHIVERS |
| CORN | POPPY | |
| | RAINY | |

Piano Performance

Catherine He

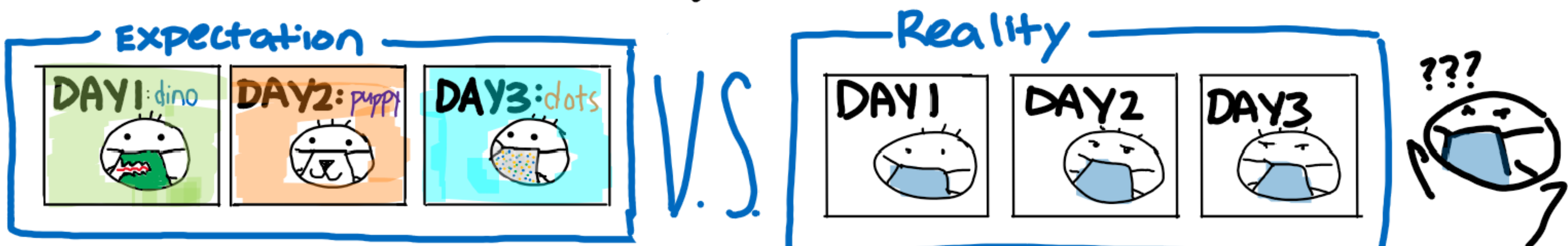


Scan this QR code to listen to Domicile Adoré, an original piece composed by Catherine He

Mask Fashion

Leilani Xue

mask fashion ft. reality



Fall Recipes

Claudia Poon

"want to make caramelized candy apples with me?"

"yes!"

INGREDIENTS
 - 6 apples
 - 1 (14 ounce) pkg OF CARAMELS
 - 2 TABLESPOON MILK
 - 1 BUTTERED BAKING SHEET

STEP 1
 wash the apples and replace stems with crafted sticks

STEP 2
 place caramels and milk into microwave safe bowl and microwave for 2 minutes, stir once and allow it to cool briefly

STEP 3
 roll each apple quickly in the caramel sauce until well coated. place onto prepared sheet to set

* for better cooling, place into the fridge

"That was so fun to make!"

"yes! I can't wait to eat it"

Fun in the Snow

Vivian Guo



Awards

Vivian Guo

