



MAC NEWS

March 2021

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



APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2 Good Friday	3
4	5 Easter Monday	6	7	8	9 Early Dismissal	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
April Break						
18	19	20	21	22	23 Quad 4 Begins	24
25	26	27 Early Dismissal	28	29	30	

Mental Health, Self-Care & Study Tips

Maliha Mahjabin

Between March 2nd and March 4th, classes at Mac held workshops presented by undergraduate students at the University of Toronto about students’ emotional and mental wellbeing. These workshops provided an opportunity for students who feel overwhelmed and burnt out from the pandemic to take a step back and pay attention to their mental health. This article provides insight into the topic of discussion with the tenth graders. Their presentation informed students on various aspects of mental health and methods to help students take care of themselves.

The workshop consisted of an interactive presentation on Mentimeter and a trivia game on Kahoot. The presentation informed students about the significance of mental health, mental illnesses, and healthy coping strategies. Throughout the discussion, the dual-continuum of mental wellness was introduced to explain that variations of mental state exist. A person with a serious mental illness can display no visible symptoms, while a person with optimal mental health can appear to have mental illness symptoms. The speakers also addressed that many people neglect the true cause of their negative emotions and thoughts by blaming the pandemic. People must learn to acknowledge and accept their mental state and take steps to look after themselves.

One of the presenters, Rose Talebi, stated, “Self-care applies to everybody as it is important for everyone to take care of their mental health regardless of their mental condition.” Students shared activities they found enjoyable as their forms of self-care, which included exercising, painting, singing, using face masks, hanging out with friends and more. Students were also asked to list any coping strategies they could think of. Responses from students varied from meditation, listening to music, reaching out to someone you trust, to journaling. These are all great examples of healthy, positive activities students can employ to deal with difficult emotions. Students should steer clear of using unhealthy coping mechanisms such as overeating, smoking, or drinking alcohol.

Furthermore, when asked the question, “What are some experiences in your life that are stressful?” many students answered school, assignments, and tests. To help alleviate the stress of school by becoming more organized, Kate Kim, one of the other presenters, advised students to use the *Notion* app. She said, “Every single day, you’d write down what you want to accomplish for the day and check it off after you’ve done it. I found that it helps me keep my work in an organized state.” Kim also recommended the app *Goodnotes* for students who like to study through handwritten notes digitally. Another suggestion was to study in groups with friends or peers over a call because it may help students focus better. Nevertheless, keeping a balance of physical activity and sleep in correlation to school is key to reducing stress.

While many people can manage stress on their own, students should not hesitate to seek mental health support when needed. MindBeacon is a free resource for Canadians to use for a limited time during the pandemic. Users can attend a personalized Cognitive Behavioural Therapy program with live therapy sessions to help their mental state. In addition, below are some mental health resources for anyone who is in a crisis or needs immediate help. Remember to always care for yourself and take well-deserved breaks.

LGBT Youth Line: <https://www.youthline.ca>

Canada Suicide Prevention Service: <https://www.crisisservicescanada.ca/en/>

Kids Help Phone: <https://kidshelpphone.ca>

Drug and Alcohol Helpline: <https://www.connexontario.ca/en-ca/>

Assaulted Women’s Helpline: <https://www.awhl.org/home>

Toronto’s Rape Crisis Centre/ Multicultural Women Against Rape: <https://trccmwar.ca>

Celebrating Women’s History Month

Sachi Taploo

Every March, we celebrate Women’s History Month to recognize the past and present-day contributions of women. Canada also celebrates female empowerment during Persons’ Day on October 18. But, how did Women’s History Month come to be? What is Persons’ Day? Why are these events important? Keep reading to find out!

In Canada, Women’s History Month was first proclaimed in 1992. Its purpose is to acknowledge women’s contributions to society and their historical struggles, as well as to bring awareness to issues surrounding women’s rights and freedoms today.

Likewise, Persons’ Day was established in 1929 to commemorate women being legally defined as persons. In the past, only men were legally defined as people in the British North American Act (BNA Act). Women were not allowed to participate in political affairs or run in elections. As a result, women had very little influence in Canadian politics.

This all changed when the Famous Five challenged the BNA Act. The Famous Five were comprised of five women: Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby and Henrietta Muir. These women were journalists, activists, and reformers from Alberta. They asked the Supreme Court of Canada one question that would forever change the lives of women in Canada: “Does the word ‘person’ in Section 24 of the BNA Act include female persons?” After much debate, the Supreme Court of Canada concluded that women were not legal persons.

The Famous Five were shocked by this decision and decided to appeal to Canada’s highest court of appeal: the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council of Great Britain. John Sankey, the Lord Chancellor of Great Britain announced the final decision on October 18, 1929. He stated, “The exclusion of women from all public offices is a relic of days more barbarous than ours. And to those who would ask why the word ‘person’ should include females, the obvious answer is, why should it not?”

Ever since that day, women have been recognized as persons. Thanks to the Famous Five’s efforts, women are allowed to partake in affairs that were once exclusive to men, such as voting and running in elections.

So, why is it important to recognize Women’s History Month? As mentioned earlier, women fought to be recognized as persons and it took many years for the legal change to occur. Celebrating Women’s History Month gives everyone the chance to learn how women changed and continue to change the world. Many Canadian women, such as the Famous Five, have contributed to Canadian history. Below are some short descriptions of women who are significant in Canadian history:

Mary Shadd Cary was the first black woman to be a newspaper editor in North America. She was an advocate for women’s rights, black rights, and the freedom of education. In 1851, she founded the newspaper *Provincial Freeman*, which focused on women’s rights and abolitionism. In 1994, Cary was recognized as a Person of National Historic Significance in Canada.

Pauline Johnson was a poet and public speaker, famous for her poems about the history and excellence of Native Canadians. She wrote many stories that celebrated Native heritage and culture. Her work was featured in *Songs of Great Dominion*, a French-Canadian and Native anthology of poems by W.D. Lighthall. Johnson travelled across North America and England to share her poetry and give speeches.

Marie Lacoste Gérin-Lajoie was a lecturer, educator, author and social activist. Because women were not allowed to attend universities in Quebec, she decided to educate herself by reading the many books in her father’s library. In 1908, she established a girls’ school to allow young women to pursue a career and higher education. She also led *Le Fédération Nationale Saint-Jean-Baptiste*, an organization that fought for women to have the right to vote and be treated equally under the law. Her work had a great impact on Quebec’s society during the Quiet Revolution.

Therefore, women changed our society in Canada and throughout the world. Although the month of March is dedicated specifically to women and their historical struggles, we should commemorate the sacrifices of women who fought for equality no matter the month. Nevertheless, happy Women’s History Month!

Sources

<https://www.canadashistory.ca/explore/women/canada-s-great-women>

<https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/commemoration/whm-mhf/persons-personne-en.html>

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/womens-history-month>

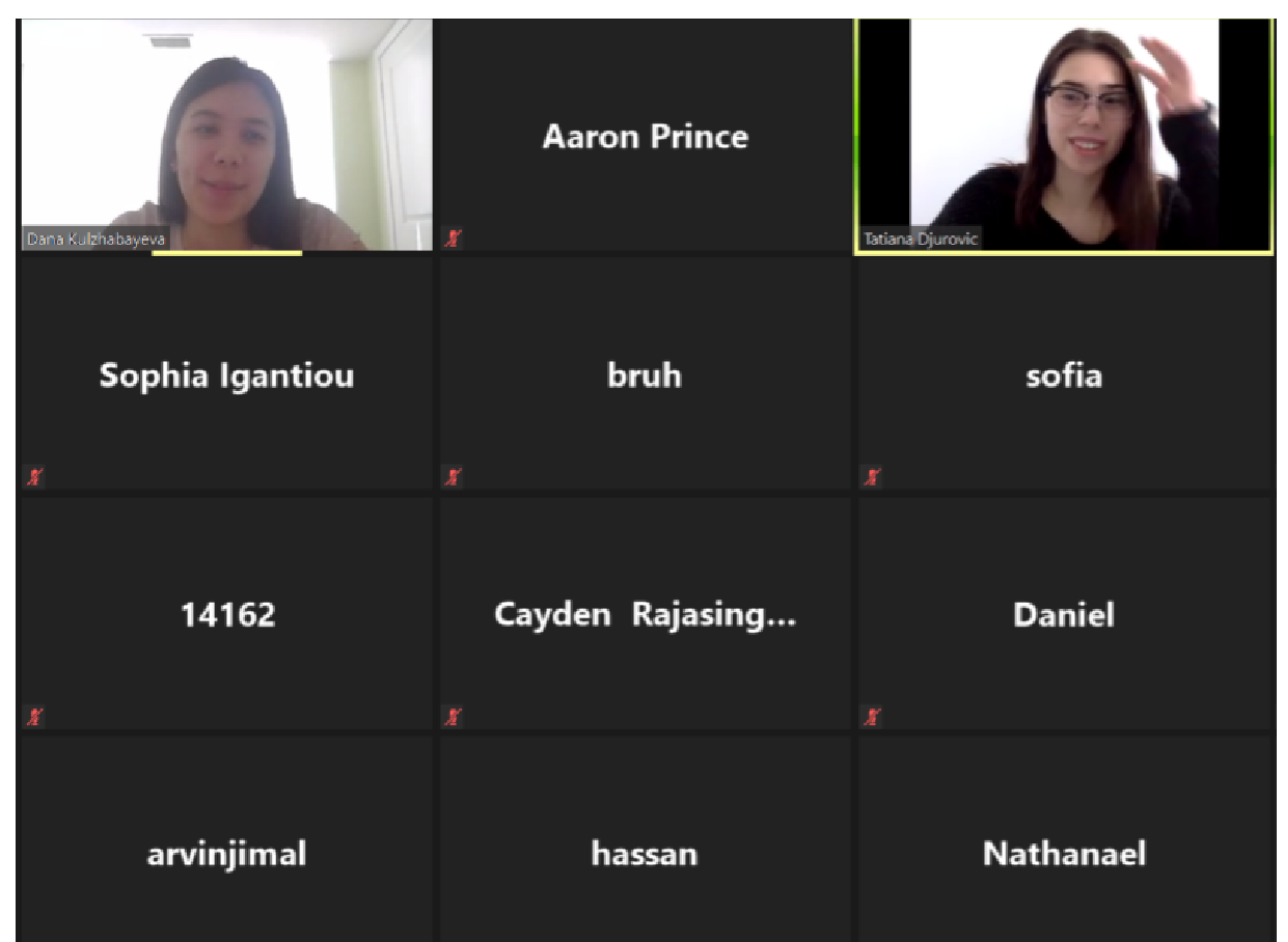


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Fun Recommendations

March Book Recommendations

YiLin Luan

The delay of March Break may be disappointing to many; however, reading can always be a ray of light on a gloomy day. To help you dig into some fun reads, I asked Blackscots to share some of their personal book recommendations, ranging from comedies to Gothic novels. I hope everyone finds something that interests him or her!

One of my favourite books is called *Red Queen*. This book is set in a world that is divided by the colour of one's blood: the elite silver-bloods who rule the world with their supernatural powers, and the second-class red bloods who are powerless. Silver and red bloods are long-standing rivals. The story follows Mare Barron, a red that serves the silvers until she discovers she has powers despite her blood. To keep news of a red with powers from spreading, silver royals force Mare to become a fake silver princess and have her betrothed to a silver prince. Her two only choices are to lie to live or to die honestly; there's no in-between. I strongly recommend this book to people who love fantasy, fiction, or lighthearted romance.

Here are some recommendations from Mac students:

Good Omens

By: Niel Gaiman

Good Omens is a comedy about the birth of the son of Satan and the coming of the End Times. The angel Aziraphale and the demon Crowley want to prevent the coming of the End Times, having grown accustomed to their comfortable surroundings in England.

"I like *Good Omens* because of its interesting plot and pleasant writing style. In my opinion, the characterizations of the protagonists, Aziraphale and Crowley, are really gripping. They are dynamic characters that I find relatable and funny. Their relationship is well-defined and readers can feel the chemistry between them. Not only that, throughout the book, the jokes and biblical references bring the comical events to life. I find the parodies amusing and witty, especially with me being a Christian. This is why *Good Omens* is one of my recent favourites that I recommend to students at Mac!"

---- YouYou Wu, Grade 11

Rebecca

By: Daphne du Maurier

Rebecca is a Gothic novel that talks about an unnamed young woman who marries a wealthy widower. She discovers that her household is haunted by her husband's late first wife named Rebecca.

"I like *Rebecca* because it's very thrilling and interesting. The characters all have depth in them. I especially like Rebecca because she is one of the most fascinating characters I've ever encountered."

---- Jessica Mu, Grade 10

Sleeping Freshmen Never Lie

By: David Lubar

This book follows a boy named Scott Hudson during his first year of high school. He faces different challenges, both in school and at home. When Scott hears that he's going to have a baby brother, he wants to give him a gift: a guidebook on how to survive high school. He gets involved in various clubs and encounters supportive people who are just like him.

"This book was very humorous and takes the reader on a coming-of-age journey. I think it is very relatable for some students and nostalgic for older students. You get to watch the main character, Scott, navigate his way through his first year and mature along the way. The stress and confusion he experiences may be familiar but I hope the enjoyment he feels when looking back at the memories he made is recognizable as well. This is a fun read to enjoy during these tough times."

---- A Grade 11 Mac student

The Giver

By: Lois Lowry

In a monotonous world without emotions, colours, memories or choice, 12-year-old Jonas is chosen to become the next Receiver of Memory. Jonas receives all kinds of memories and emotions which make him yearn for the colourful life that once existed. Alone, through struggles and fear, he decides to break the norms and return the memory back to his community.

"I have many books that I enjoy reading, however, one of my favourites is *The Giver*. If you love reading mystery and dystopian novels, this book is the perfect choice for you! *The Giver* has a gripping storyline and is quite the

page-turner. It informs the reader of an important lesson that is sometimes overlooked: the importance of having a balanced life. To endure the pain and to enjoy the good moments; the importance of memories and emotions, because this all defines what it means to be a human. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys cliffhangers and ambiguous atmospheres, leaving you with the opportunity to create a happy ending."

---- Sachi Taploo, Grade 10

That's all the recommendations for this month. Enjoy reading, everyone!

MHC and SAC Cooking Competition

Marian Farra

On March 11th and 12th, the Mac Health Council and Student Activity Council collaborated to host Mac's first cooking competition. The rules were simple: students had to head on over to the Mac Health Council Website (which can be found on their instagram page @machealthcouncil, or at <https://sites.google.com/student.tdsb.on.ca/machealthcouncil/home>), and pick a recipe to cook from their cookbook, follow the steps, and send in a picture of their final result. The recipes ranged from Acai Bowls, an easy and convenient on-the-go breakfast, the fan-favourite egg salad sandwiches, to original banana chocolate chip cookies recipes, a perfect option for a healthy dessert. The winner of the competition, grade 11 student Katie VanDerToorn, made banana chocolate chip cookies and won a \$20 Amazon gift card.

When asked why she joined the competition, Katie said, "Baking has always been a fun hobby of mine, especially during quarantine with not much to do. I've been baking a lot more and learning all the tips and tricks that come with making a great recipe. The process of baking cookies is always fun and better with music playing and I find baking to be a nice break from school and the internet."

Katie expanded on her experience in the cooking competition: "The cookies I baked for the Health Council Challenge turned out better than I thought they would, which was amazing! It was a new recipe so I wasn't sure how they would turn out, but they were fantastic and very addictive! I would recommend the Heath Council's website 100% , but also to use it as an inspiration to find other delicious recipes that are nutritional but tasty."

If you missed out on the competition, you can always check out the MHC's website to indulge in their hand-picked recipes and cook for fun! Recipes drop periodically, so keep your eyes open! The SAC also plans on collaborating with more councils for the remainder of the year to bring you fun events and more chances to win prizes. With that being said, both the Mac Health Council and the Student Activity Council continue to encourage students to eat healthy and to drink water regularly!

Side Project Ideas

Nikki Guo

side project ideas

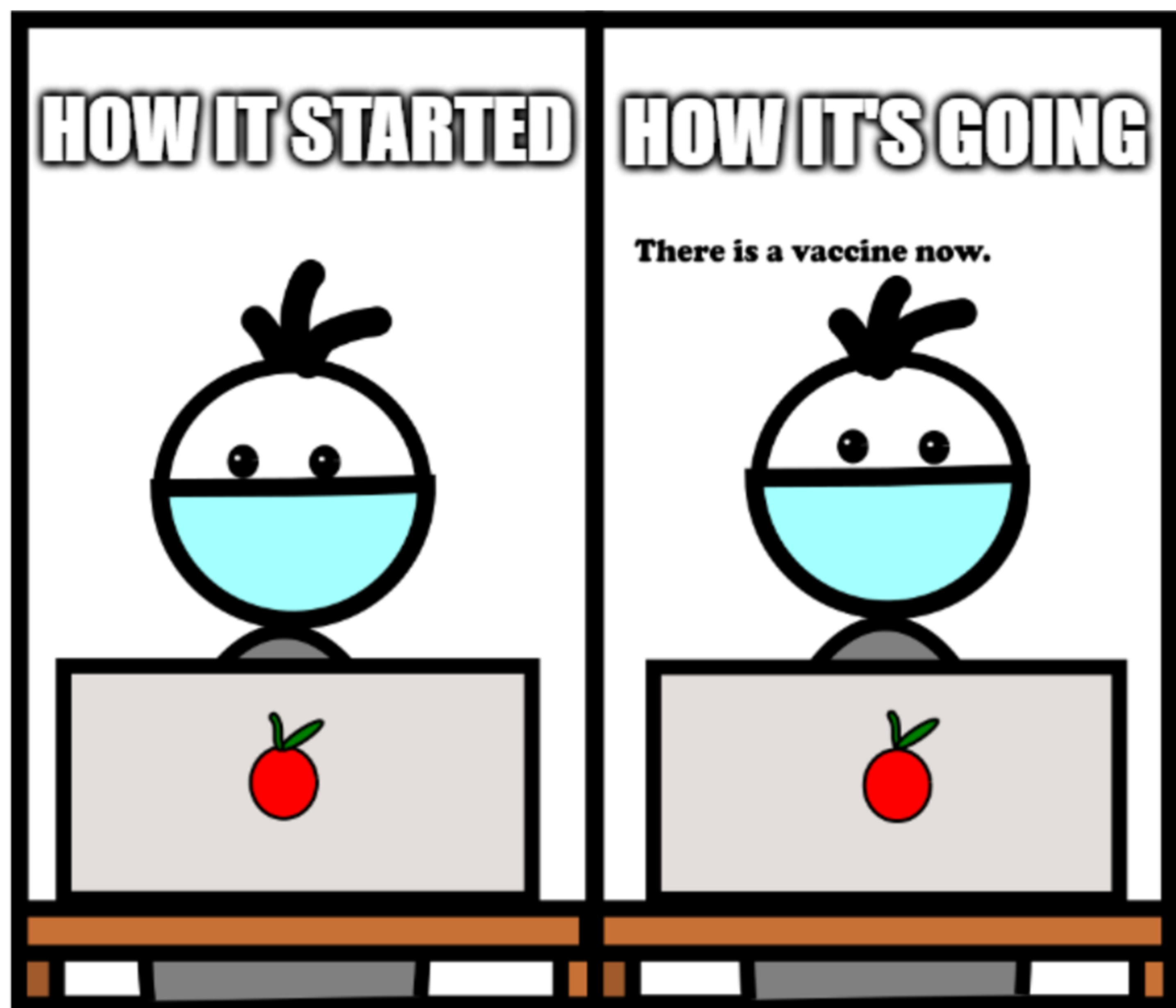
unleash your creativity and learn something new

- record a podcast
- write a novel
- develop an app
- start a personal blog
- research a topic of interest
- create new recipes
- write a song
- learn a new language
- build a website
- learn calligraphy
- film a documentary

PAGE 3 Holiday Activities

A Year Into Quarantine

Jenny Phung



Pi Day

Ivy Guo



Easy-Access April Break Activities

YiLin Luan

As waves of assignments and tests continue to come crashing down, be sure to find time to rest and enjoy yourself! Here are some fun activities to do with friends and family during the April break.

Virtual Activities: These activities can be played through online calls on Zoom, Google Meet, and other similar platforms. One friend can share his or her screen while the others participate.

Materials needed: Any device that has access to the internet.

Kahoot: A virtual quizzing game that includes all sorts of topics.

How to play: First, go to kahoot.it and find or make a Kahoot quiz on a topic of interest. Then, share the room code with your friends and create a name for yourself. Start the game and try to select the correct answers for each question --- the faster and more accurately you answer, the more points you will win. There is a score ranking at the end, so be ready to compete for first place.

Skribbl.io: A virtual draw-and-guess game.

How to play: Go to skribbl.io and create a private room. Then, copy the room link and share it with your friends. Customize your name and avatar, as well as the time limit and the number of rounds. Once the game begins, each player will have a turn to choose a word to draw on the whiteboard. While this player draws, others must try to guess the word being drawn. The first person to guess correctly will receive the highest points. With a final score ranking at the end of the game, this is another fun and competitive game to play with friends.

At-Home Activities: These activities can be played with your family.

Playing Cards: Unlimited fun with a single deck of cards.

Materials needed: A deck of cards, approximately \$1.60 CAD per deck (price from Amazon Canada).

How to play: Search up any card game that you like. Some simple two-player card games include War, Spit, and Slap Jack.

UNO: A hard to put down “shedding” card game.

Materials needed: UNO cards, approximately \$6.93 CAD per box (price from Amazon Canada).

How to play: Deal out seven cards to each player and place the remaining cards aside. Begin the game by flipping over the top card. The goal is to match the colour or number of your card to the previous card that was placed down. There are special cards that allow you to change colours, add cards to the next player, reverse the direction of the sequence, or skip a player’s turn. When you have one card remaining, you must shout “UNO”. If another player shouts before you, you need to pick up a number of cards from the unplayed pile, depending on the rule for your game. The player who first plays all of his or her cards wins.

Monopoly: A multiplayer fun-to-play board game.

Materials needed: A Monopoly board game set, approximately \$19.93 CAD (Classic version, price from Amazon Canada).

How to play: Players begin at the starting point with a playing piece of their choice. When it is your turn, roll the two dice, then add them up to determine the number of steps you are going to take. When you land on a property, you can choose to buy it so when other players land on your properties, they pay you taxes. When you land on your own property, you can choose to upgrade it to increase the amount of tax that a player needs to pay when they land on your property. “Community Chest” or “Chance” squares require you to draw a card from a pile, bringing either good or bad results. The goal of this game is to not go bankrupt and to stay on the board until the end.

Those are some of the activities students can enjoy during the April break. Remember to stay safe, and have fun!



Photo Credit: Aaron Anu

Easter

Claudia Poon

