



# THE VOYAGER

SEPTEMBER 2022



## A NOTE FROM THE NEWSPAPER STAFF

HELLO VIKINGS, LET'S GET READY FOR AN EXCITING YEAR!

IN THIS MUST READ EDITION OF THE VOYAGER WE TELL YOU HOW TO GET BACK TO SCHOOL THE VIKING WAY!!

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*On the front cover: The PHHS Lacrosse team celebrating a win taken by Keshav Khandelwal.*

# **EXTRA! EXTRA! IS NEWSPAPER CLUB RIGHT FOR YOU? BY UMASOFIA SRIVASTAVA**

Hello Vikings! My name is UmaSofia, the new Editor in Chief for The Voyager. Don't worry, I'm not going to make you take a 16 question personality test (although I'm sure all of you "what bread am I?" quiz takers would love that) because I already know the answer to my title's question. It is an astounding and definitive... YES! Obviously, I can proudly say that the Newspaper Club has something for everyone, and I'm here to prove it. Not only am I confident you'll be convinced after my recap of the past year in Newspaper Club, I've also gotten some of the staff and our Hall of Fame - ers (the wonderful seniors) to tell you a little bit about their experience as well.

## 1) Freedom

Before the Newspaper Club, I was feeling so burnt out and uninspired with my writing. Everything was so clean cut when I had to write for other classes, so when I joined the Newspaper Club, it became an amazing outlet to express myself. I got to write about whatever I wanted, whenever I wanted, as short as I wanted: as long as I kept my promises when there was a deadline. But these 'deadlines' weren't stressful like the ones in class, they pushed me to pursue my passion for writing and even try new things! Not only did I write about some of the topics that interested me - feminism, societal relationships, and pop culture - when Mr. Pavese assigned me an article on cryptocurrency, something that I had only heard about, I got to learn about something new and out of my usual comfort zone. There are so many opportunities to become a better writer, and overall a more well rounded person because it is our job (and hopefully will be yours) to stay informed!

2) Writing is not everything. I promise.

Writing articles not your thing? Look no further! Like I said there's something for everyone!

Do you have the best Insta feed and/or are into all things aesthetic? Then photography might be for you! Keshav, our talented photographer says: I love taking photos and practicing photography, because I love that I can capture a special moment, or action, or event, and share it with others, making people happy. It's a really versatile thing to do, and the best part about is that it can represent so much, and mean something to someone. And now, thanks to the Voyager, more photos and special moments can be shared with others!

If you're better suited at working off a foundation and a stickler for details, then you might like to be a copy editor! Our amazing former editor Dominick Ciccotelli says, "I joined the Newspaper Club because of the amazing opportunity I would get to express my voice to the rest of the student body. As I graduate this coming week, I will never forget the valuable lessons I was taught in multiple facets of writing."

I've also had the pleasure of taking on, the role of copy Copy Editor, and it's another great opportunity to learn new things and get to know your colleagues. By the end of the year you'll be able to tell apart everyone's writing style, and reading through different articles ranging from politics, to sports, to pop culture might make you the most interesting person on the planet. You didn't hear it from me.

## 3) BAGEL PARTIES!

This is possibly my strongest point(I promise this is not a bribe... but if nothing I said has convinced you, I hope this will) Mr. Pavese, our amazing Newspaper Advisor, occasionally treats us to bagels during our meetings at lunch and in the morning. Name a better way to start your

day than to feel the satisfaction of putting out a new newspaper edition and enjoying a soft bagel with your newspaper team.

I hope that this has thoroughly persuaded you to join and I can't wait to hopefully see a bunch of fresh faces, and maybe some old ones too at our first meeting. Have a great first day, and Go Vikings!

## **ADVICE FOR FRESHMEN: BALANCING SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC LIFE BY SIDDHI PATEL**

The biggest problem with a question like “how do you balance your social and academic life?” is that there is absolutely no perfect answer, which is why the general attitude towards it is that it is virtually impossible to answer. However, it is important to understand the fact that there is such thing as a balance, it may not be perfect, but each person needs to find it on their own. Building effective skills, habits, and self-discipline will set us on the right path to not only find that balance in school, but as well in the future, whether that is at college, work, or just during everyday tasks. It will teach you to manage your time effectively and as a result, regulate any anxiety you may experience during stressful times. Many high schoolers are affected by a variety of mental health issues and so maintaining a balanced lifestyle has been shown to improve those illnesses.

When it comes to the two largest parts of a teenager's life, work and social life, it's hard to decide what is essentially “more important” than the other. The truth is, it's neither because they both add value to your life, albeit in different areas. One's social life includes family, extracurricular activities, sports, and friends, all of which play a major role in emotional growth. On the other hand, as students, it is important to acknowledge schoolwork and its significance. It not only provides our necessary education, but enables us to earn a good livelihood by shaping us for our professional life. Overall, when it comes time to choosing between the two at certain times, it becomes your responsibility to choose wisely depending on what's best for yourself.

As I talked about, finding the balance is up to you, but I can include some tips to make your life a little easier!

- 1) Creating a schedule and being more efficient
  - It can be homework, a project, or a big test. Lay out everything you have to do and when to make sure you can get everything done on time while still making time for other things.
- 2) Communicating with everyone
  - Let people know what you are dealing with; you are never alone. It can be friends and families, so plans aren't made when you have work or explaining to teachers why you need an extension.
- 3) Combining social and academic lives
  - This can be done as simply as meeting up with your friends or classmates to work on homework or study for something, similar to a study group.

## **SHOULD YOU REALLY TAKE THAT AP EXAM? BY AITAI**

For any high-achieving or highly-driven high schooler, AP courses are seen as a must. They are a natural progression from honors and advanced courses with the added allure of potential college credit. I am not the most prolific AP student by a long shot, having only one class and exam under my belt so far. Still, I will say that I saw a lot of value in the course I took, AP Human Geography. That class has been the only one I have taken where we not only studied the content of a test, but also practiced for the mechanisms of the test itself. FRQs and MCQs are acronyms which would have meant nothing to me my freshman year, along with the terms “stimulus” and “task verbs.” I might never use the information I learned for the exam, but just learning how to take it was worth the course. Not to mention colleges love applicants with rigorous course loads.

However, the exam itself will likely not affect your college

admissions since they are not part of your transcript and you are not required to send them in. The test only rewards you once you have reached your higher education destination by giving credits or allowing higher placement. As in most high schools, colleges will require each student to reach a certain amount of credits by taking classes in different fields, depending on the degree program. You may be able to earn these credits in high school if you score highly enough on an AP exam which corresponds with a class you would have taken. The institution could also award placement instead, allowing you to skip a similar class as the one you aced the AP exam for and go straight to the next level of the course, but without giving any credits.

Of course all of this is contingent on if you actually pass the exam. College Board scores them on a five-point scale and while 3 is technically considered passing, a 4 or 5 is much more likely to get you the advantages you're taking the test for in the first place. Therefore the greatest determinant to whether you should take an AP exam is if you grasp the content well and/or will actually care enough to study for it.

Unfortunately, College Board has set the AP exam sign up deadline closer to the start of school, so you will have less time to gauge your comfort and interest levels with the subject matter than in years past.

If you can't figure it out by November, then here is another essential question to ask yourself: Is this class at all related to what I want to pursue in college? You might qualify for AP Chemistry, but if you plan to major in web design the stress and time sink of an AP Chem exam may not be worth it. Even if you score high enough to get credit or placement, it might not fit with your degree program and end up useless. The course is still valuable in of itself, but the exam may just detract from your other academic or extracurricular focuses.

Overall, whether or not to take an AP exam is very much dependent on your goals and ability. Maybe you are in a course that has nothing to do with your future plans, but you want to take the exam in case you can exchange it for elective credits. Go straight ahead. Perhaps you find the course interesting, but know you will want to focus on other AP exams when spring rolls around, so you pass up on it. That's fine as well. I would advise everyone to take at least one AP course in their high school career if possible, but hey, that's up to you too!

Always remember that AP courses, exams, and exam scores are not the end of the world nor the make-or-break factor of your life (just like everything else in high school). Manage your stress and expectations, study hard, try your best, and you will be okay.

## ***CURSE ON CURSIVE* BY PARIDHI BHARDWAJ**

“Wow, I love your handwriting, it's gorgeous.”

Most of my teachers throughout my school life have told me this. Well, it's because I not only write in cursive, but am also able to do calligraphy, and you don't find many people who are able to do so.

It is kind of shocking that kids throughout the United States are losing the art, and in my opinion the power, to write in cursive. Students are unable to even read any script written in cursive. It makes me sad that they will not be able to read their grandmother's diary or their parent's love letters in the future.

The traces of cursive go back far into history, dating to the Roman Empire when the written language was first developed. Many types of cursives evolved and flourished from medieval times to the Renaissance when the Carolingian script became the first cursive style that was of standardization. How cursive is written now is from the Copperplate style, by calligrapher Timothy Matlack for Thomas Jefferson's speech on the Declaration of Independence.

Cursive or script, was historically associated with good character and virtue. It was widely taught in the 19th century. When the schools were first established in the U.S, they taught cursive to their students. It was considered a Christian ideal, occasionally credited with disciplining the mind. But with the advent of technology, people in the 20th century shifted to typewriters. This is almost similar to today when we do not want to write anymore be it in script or print, thus making our devices do the work.

Well, now many will ask why do we need to write in cursive when almost everything we do is done through our computers?

Should teachers be emphasizing cursive and teaching it to each and every kid or be focusing on the curriculum? The answer to all of these questions is easy. Writing in cursive can lead to plenty of cognitive and academic benefits. Brain scans reveal neural circuitry lighting up when a young child first prints letters and then reads them. Knowing how to read and write in cursive can appear to be hardwired for versatility. Some evidence suggests that cursive helps students with dyslexia learn to read and write because it integrates hand-eye coordination, fine motor skills, and other brain memory functions. If a child wants to go into the field of archaeology or history, they need to know cursive to interpret artifacts and historical documents. Without cursive, students will be locked out of doing research with literary papers and archival collections. Also, to add, with cursive comes speed, thus while giving tests, knowing cursive might save you some time for revision.

Having good handwriting in the tech world is a blessing, and when you write cursive then you have a gift! A reasonable amount of research suggests if your handwriting is not very legible, people will form opinions about the quality of what you say. The more legible and neater the paper looks one can ensure higher scores for writing than the less legible paper of the same quality.

Cursive has indeed seen its downfall in schools. It isn't a requirement to graduate from elementary school anymore. Our older generation, who were dependent on reading and writing cursive may be disappointed to see our dependence on technology.

Thus, to not make cursive a thing of yesteryear, some states, such as Tennessee and California have added cursive to the standards. Louisiana even took one step further by mandating that students get instruction in cursive every year from the 3rd through 12th grade. I think learning cursive may not be a must now, but knowing it when the majority does not know makes you special. Being able to do calligraphy or writing your loved ones in cursive makes it more special for them. Therefore, making your ability to write in this script a part of your identity.

## ***ADDITIONAL PICTURES***

*Pictures taken by Keshav Khandelwal*

