

Speak Out

DECEMBER ISSUE



Chinese Re-education Camps

The Chinese region of Xinjiang has been home to millions of Uighurs for decades. However, now they are being placed in camps without being trailed, but China is claiming that it is all voluntary. The Uighur's are ...

(Full article on page 3)

Winter Solstice

As the Winter Solstice draws close, some may wonder how an event like this can be possible and better yet, the origins of its symbolism. The Winter Solstice takes place in the Northern Hemisphere between the 20th and 23rd of December, depending on the year. It marks the beginning of winter, and shortest day of the year.

(Full article on page 12)

Influence of Hip Hop on Modern Society

Hip-hop is the people, not the music. Since its arrival to mainstream media, the culture has risen to tremendous heights and shows no indications of stopping, as "rap" today, has surpassed all other genres of music. The branches of hip-hop for decades...

(Full article on page 22)

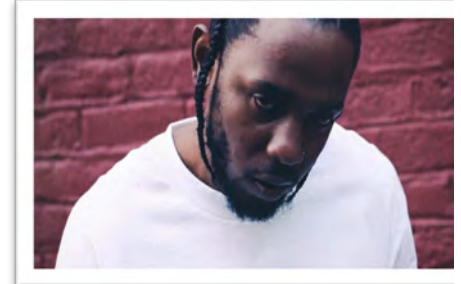


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CHINESE RE-EDUCATION CAMPS

JOYA KHOURY - IB1

The Chinese region of Xinjiang has been home to millions of Uighurs for decades. However, now they are being placed in camps without being trailed, but China is claiming that it is all voluntary. The Uighur's are Turkic-speaking Muslim minority in China. They are labeled as "bad" according to the Chinese communist party just because they are different. The Uighur's are Chinese and are being systematically suppressed by their own government. So why aren't the people against the communist party when they are destroying the lives of around a million Uighur's? The communist party is the only thing keeping China from total chaos, and the communists are determined to crush the Uighur identity. They have banned their language in schools and are slowly wiping out their heritage. In the camps, mothers are being separated from their children, the people are monitored all the time, and their religion is being restricted. The worst part is, they are being brainwashed into accepting that as normal, and the Chinese are "teaching" them how to be more "Chinese." The Chinese state that by doing that, the Uighur's mindset would undergo radical rebirth and reform



Extension programs in camps are meant to re-educate people, which is why the Chinese claim to have established those camps, as well as fight terrorism. They refer to the Uighur's shooting spree and killing of 31 Chinese citizens, though such a generalization is unfair and does not suffice to judge an entire race for some bad choices others had made. Even the punishment does not compare and goes deeper than that. In fact, Xinjian is central to Xi Jinping's grand project, the Belt and Road Initiative, and so they must have that area under control.

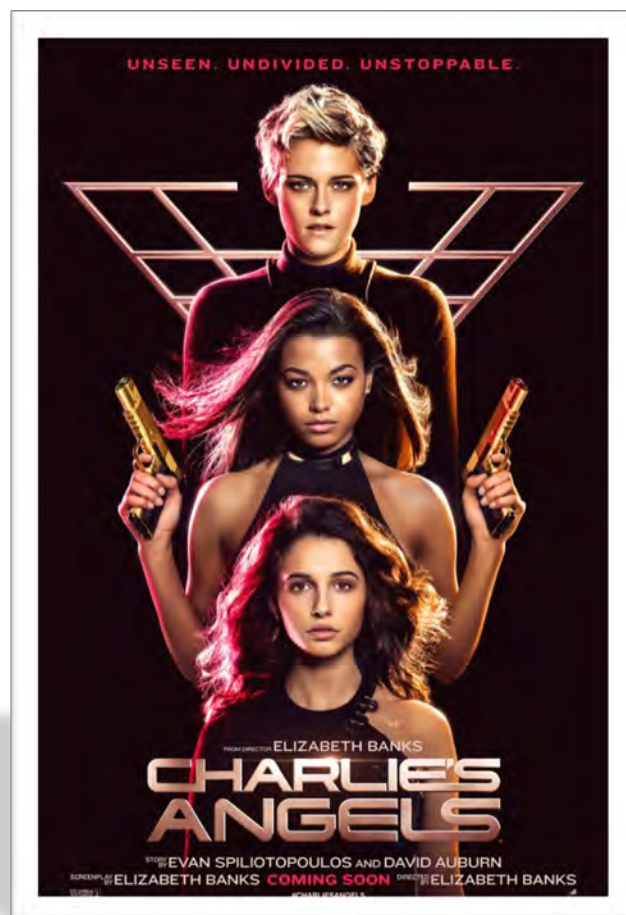
CHARLIE'S ANGELS REVIEW

STEPHANIE CHAKAR – 8IP

Was the Charlie's Angels reboot unwanted by many? Definitely. However, the movie ended up being worth watching. The message behind the film was "Women can do anything," as stated by Sabrina, played by Kristen Stewart. In today's world, feminism has become a global issue, and the raising awareness on this issue reinforces the importance of such movies such as this one. The actors of the movie are all well-known and influential celebrities. They have played many leading female roles in other movies as well. Some of the famous actresses are Kristen Stewart, Naomi Scott who played Elena Houghlin, Jane Kano who played Ella Balinska, and Elizabeth Banks who played Bosley, in addition to having produced the movie too.

Synopsis:

When a dangerous and deadly weapon gets in the hands of the wrong people, a group of women go out to save the day. While trying to retrieve this weapon, they discover a shocking truth regarding who John Bosley truly is (played by Patrick Stewart). At the end of the movie, we find out who the mastermind behind the whole Charlie's Angels corporation really is. The soundtrack for the movie was composed by Ariana Grande. One of the main songs defining the movie is "Don't Call me Angel", written by Miley Cyrus, Ariana Grande, and Lana Del Ray. Overall, the acting and the roles are incredible. The movie is suitable for an audience of 13+.



STAR WARS: EPISODE IX REVIEW

TAMER SALEH - IB1

***minor spoilers**

The Rise of Skywalker is an intense and unique movie, filled with beautiful references and new characters. Regardless of a few avoidable downsides that make it slightly weaker than its original predecessors, the ninth episode gives the *Star Wars* saga an epic ending.

J.J. Abrams directed one of the most anticipated movies of 2019, and fortunately, he delivered. While the movie is not up to the standards of *The Force Awakens*, it maintains the *Star Wars* essence of the original trilogy. Being the finale of the legendary series, many aspects of the story had to be explained and wrapped up in only 2 hours and 20 minutes.

As Rey and Kylo Ren's battle continues, their story is taken to another level with the return of Emperor Palpatine. In the end, their force-bound and complicated relationship determines the fate of the Resistance. We are introduced to new characters such as Zorii, Jannah, and even a new droid called D-O. Each character has his own unique backstory that adds new depths to the *Star Wars* lore, but their stories are curtailed by the main plot and limited screen time.

The movie makes a swift start in the first 15 minutes to explain the present situation of the main characters Finn, Poe, and Chewbacca. However, the flow of the movie becomes smoother and more comprehensible after that, leaving more room to highlight the characters instead of the setting. Some character arcs are fulfilled, especially Kylo Ren's, but there was definitely room for further elaboration, especially about Finn's backstory or Rey's family. The structure of the movie could be compared to that of *Avengers: Endgame*, both being finales of a series of movies and having similar story endings.

The late Carrie Fisher had less of a role in this movie than what fans would have wanted but hats off to the producers for doing as much as they could with deleted scenes from *The Force Awakens*. General Leia's presence in the movie ends up being a little irrelevant, but this is expected under the circumstances. This situation brings up a lot of questions concerning how the series could have ended differently if Fisher were still alive.



The movie has multiple references to the original trilogy, with scenes that are guaranteed to make the audience shed a tear. Billy Dee Williams' return as Lando Calrissian and his reunion with Chewbacca are bound to bring a smile to the audience's face. Of course, John Williams never disappoints with his music, accentuating the moment in every scene perfectly and completely capturing the audience's emotion throughout the whole movie.

The Rise of Skywalker is a definite rollercoaster of emotions, and it is safe to say that the ending is uniquely satisfactory. It is packed with crowd-pleasing and emotional moments, despite the slightly disorganized storytelling and possible alternative endings. It is an unforgettable finale to a series adored by millions and a reminder that the force will always be with us.

FOOTBALL MATCH - BHS vs. ROSAIRE

MARC EL KHAZEN - IB1

Line up:

- Raji Samaha
- Tamer Saleh
- Teddy Joe Naked
- Fadlo Abou Fadel
- Anthony Merheb
- Jason Habib
- Ralph Nasr
- George Khazoum
- Friedrich Al Aswad
- Antonio Sawma
- Yasser El Shojairi
- Malek Hamzeh (Injured)
- Christian Ashkar (injured)

The team arrived at 4:30. They all warmed up and got ready for the match to start, which kicked off at 5:15 with Tamer. The starters of this match were Raji, Jason, Teddy, Tamer and Friedrich. The team took it slowly for the first few attacks to see and play accordingly with Rosaire. The first shot of the game was taken by Friedrich, but it bounced off the crossbar. Tamer got fouled and was given a freekick, but he missed the shot. Teddy had extraordinary defence saving multiple shots throughout the game and stopping multiple attacks. Jason got substituted by Yaser, making him the main striker, and Tamer was replaced by Antonio. The opposing team had two attacks after each other, but because of our great defence from Antonio and Teddy, we blocked both. When Rosaire scored their second goal of the match, Raji was replaced by Fadlo. After Number 10 on the opposing team got caught using his hand, we earned a freekick right outside their box, which we unfortunately didn't score. Teddy then tried taking a shot from midfield to get a point before the end of the first half but wasn't able to make it. The first half came to an end, and the score was in favor of Rosaire by 2 goals. During half time, Coach Micky and the team worked on coming up with new tactics and ways to improve the performance of the team.

The mid-game starters were Michael, Ralph, Raji, Friedrich and George who started off with an attack, and scored the first goal of the game. The attack after that, George almost scored but was unlucky. Friedrich's goalkeeping was amazing, blocking two open goals back to back. Number 22 from the opposing team scored a shot, at which point they were beating BHS by 4 goals. Raji then got subbed out with Teddy and George by our captain, Jason. Unfortunately for us, Rosaire managed to score two goals right after the other. Ralph was then substituted with Tamer. Finally, Fadlo managed to score and helped Tamer score a goal. The final score of the match was 3:6 in favor of Rosaire.

MUSIC AND MOVIES OF THE DECADE

AYA ZEIN - 9IP

Our decade is coming to an end. The past decade has brought a wave of change, and we have watched the music world change. We have listened one hit after another, becoming the best songs of the decade. They are numerous, but each one of them holds memories to almost every one of us, not to mention the dance trends that arose from them. In 2010, “Bad Romance” by Lady Gaga and “Love the way You Lie” by Rihanna and Eminem quickly rose to popularity. 2011 was home to “Party Rock Anthem” by LMFAO and had us shuffling and jumping for the whole year. 2012 held a song we have all replayed over and over: the infamous “Gangnam Style” by PSY. That song was stuck in all of our heads for years after its release. 2013 brought to us the hit “Call Me Maybe” by Carly Rae Jepsen. 2014 gave us Ariana Grande’s song “Problem”. “Can’t Feel My face” and “The Hills” by the Weeknd and “What do You Mean?” by Justin Bieber all came out in 2015 and are to this day, very popular. But the most replayed song of 2015 was “Hello” by Adele. 2016 was without a doubt a year of dance music. “One dance” and “Hotline Bling” by Drake, “Work” by Rihanna, and “Closer” by The Chainsmokers were all released that year and were ranked as the best songs of the year. Ed Sheeran’s “Shape of You” came out in 2017 and was found all year on the Hot 100’s chart and was one of the greatest hits of the decade. 2018 was Drake’s year as he released one hit after another. His best songs were “In my Feelings”, “God’s Plan”, and “Nice for What”. 2019 year was full of hits and new upcoming artists. Ariana Grande released countless hits that year and 2 full albums, “sweetener” and “thank you, next”. Overall this decade has shown great style and eclectic genres in the music industry.

The past decade did not only bring us a lot of amazing hits but great movies too. In the past 10 years, we’ve had so many new movies come out and many have turned into ‘classics’ which we will still talk about for years to come. The movies that will be mentioned were very successful on the charts and among viewers. The most influential movies of the decade were *Frozen*, *Moonlight*, *Okja*, *Star Wars*, *Get Out*, and *The Hunger Games*. These movies have touched and taught the old and the young. *Frozen* made us smile and sing, and “The Hunger Games” has had us at the edge of our seats. For musicals in the 2010’s, we had countless masterpieces like *Mamma Mia 2*, “The Greatest Showman” and *La La Land*. All 3 movies were hits when they came out. When it comes to action movies, *Mad Max: Fury Road* was a whopping success. Millions were spent on stunts and scenes and it paid off since the film received so much praise. The best horror/ thriller movie of this decade was *Get Out*. It ranked #1 in the box office. Last but most definitely not least, the people’s favorite movie series of the decade was *The Avengers*. This marvel movie series was loved by so many people and it ended this year with a bang. Other phenomenal and unforgettable mentions are the “Star Wars” and *The Hunger Games* series films. All these movies have had us waiting year after year and never failed to entertain. Overall, the past decade has given us masterpieces that made us laugh and cry, and there are definitely more to come out in 2020.

FAVORITE CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS & SONGS

AYA ZEIN - 9IP

In this segment of the newspaper, we will be speaking about how the students feel about Christmas activities and traditions. The first question the students were asked was about their favorite Christmas activity. The majority of students had heartwarming responses like “spending time” and “baking gingerbread cookies” with the family. The follow-up question was regarding the students’ favorite Christmas songs. The results show that the songs that make students feel the most merry and bright are “Jingle Bell Rock” and “All I Want for Christmas Is You”. The other songs mentioned were “Baby It’s Cold Outside” and “Feliz Navidad”. The final Christmas question we asked the students was what their favorite Christmas treat is and almost all chose gingerbread cookies. On a more serious note, a poll about the bus routes was asked in order to help students get to class fast and conveniently. Students from grades 7 to 12 are having trouble reaching their classes in the rain. 90% of students think that they should be dropped off in Upper School if they are Upper School students. That’s all and Merry Christmas!



SENIOR Q&A

MAXINE AL ASWAD - IB2

There have been a lot of projects happening throughout Brummana High School, in hopes of improving the school environment. What is one thing that you wish BHS had, during the time you attended?

Firstly, I wish that they took recycling more seriously because our campus is so beautiful. In addition, I found that the student council was not fair. Therefore, I wish that they took the council seriously, and I wish that things that the council promised were actually implemented.

- **Thea Haddad (2019 IB Graduate)**

As a former BHS student, the school offered a lot of services, yet, was lacking in many other fields. The school has improved tremendously with the services that are being provided right now- such as an indoor gym and new desks. Yet sometimes during class hours, many of the students would want to buy something from the cafeteria or tuck shop and it is closed. Therefore, I think that the school should invest in vending machines. I am currently at university where vending machines are present throughout the campus. This is a very efficient way to grab a small snack during the day, especially if the tuck shop is closed.

- **Rita Abou Samra (2019 LP Graduate)**

Whilst my past years in Brummana High School were fun, I just wish a couple of things were different, such as having air conditioners in classrooms and not just in the computer lab. The weather tends to be pretty bipolar in Brummana: it gets too cold or too hot. Another major point I would like to address is hoping that the tokens being sold would not be sold by one person, but by two, to make it easier for the students who spend their entire break waiting in line and enduring a massive crowd. It would be better if the job was handled by two people.

- **Myriam Tayah (2019 IP Graduate)**



JANUARY/ FEBRUARY CALENDARS

TIA KHALIFEH - 9IP

January 2020	
Date	Events
1-6 Jan	School closed (Jan 6: Return of Boarders)
7 Jan	Classes Resume
10 Jan	Intermediate section Parent/Teacher meetings
11 Jan	Extra School Day operating as Tuesday Schedule (G4-G12)
17 Jan	Secondary Section Parent/Teacher Meetings
21 Jan	Grade 8 IP Parents and Students orientation + round tables
23-24 Jan	Upper School Academic Fair; set up
25 Jan	Upper School Academic Fair for parents

February 2020	
Date	Event
3-7 Feb	Mid-Year Exams for all Intermediate students, G10-12LP, IB1
8 Feb	Extra School Day operating as Wednesday schedule G4-G12
9 Feb	Mar Maroun Holiday: School closed
10 Feb	Acer exams for G3, 6 and 8 Distribution for term 2 report cards for G10, 11 and 12 IP
11 Feb	Term 3 starts for grade 10-12 IP
17 Feb	Governors' Meeting Education
20 Feb	Governors' Meeting property
22 Feb	SAT Trial Exams G9, 10, 11
24 Feb	Governors' Meeting Finance
27 Feb	Governors' Meeting Full
28 Feb	End of Term 2 for Lower school, Intermediate students, G10-12 LP, IB Upper school International Day

WINTER SOLSTICE

ANNA YAGHI - IB2

As the Winter Solstice draws close, some may wonder how an event like this can be possible and better yet, the origins of its symbolism. The Winter Solstice takes place in the Northern Hemisphere between the 20th and 23rd of December, depending on the year. It marks the beginning of winter, and shortest day of the year. It is a celebration for many cultures around the world, who hold feasts as the holiday season approaches. The traditional symbols of celebration for the Winter Solstice are fire and light, both representing the shortest day and longest night of the year.

The winter solstice was first observed as early as the Neolithic period- the last part of the stone age- in about 10 200 BC. Some Neolithic monuments are even aligned with the sunrise on the winter solstice. With this, archaeologists have theorized that these tomb-like structures served a religious purpose for rituals to capture the sun on the shortest day of the year during the Stone Age. Stonehenge is amongst these monuments.

Ancient solstice celebrations are many in number, going by different names and religions. The ancient romans held several celebrations along the time of the winter solstice. Additionally, the ancient Norsemen of Scandinavia celebrated Yule from the winter solstice through to January, and the Inca empire paid homage to the sun god, Inti, during Inti Raymi at a winter solstice celebration.



Due to the presence of 24 different time zones, the Winter Solstice was not a lone event, but rather occurred at 24 different times of the day, depending on your geographical location. For those of us who spent winter in Lebanon, our Winter Solstice took place on Sunday 22nd December at 6:19AM. How did you celebrate the Winter Solstice last year?

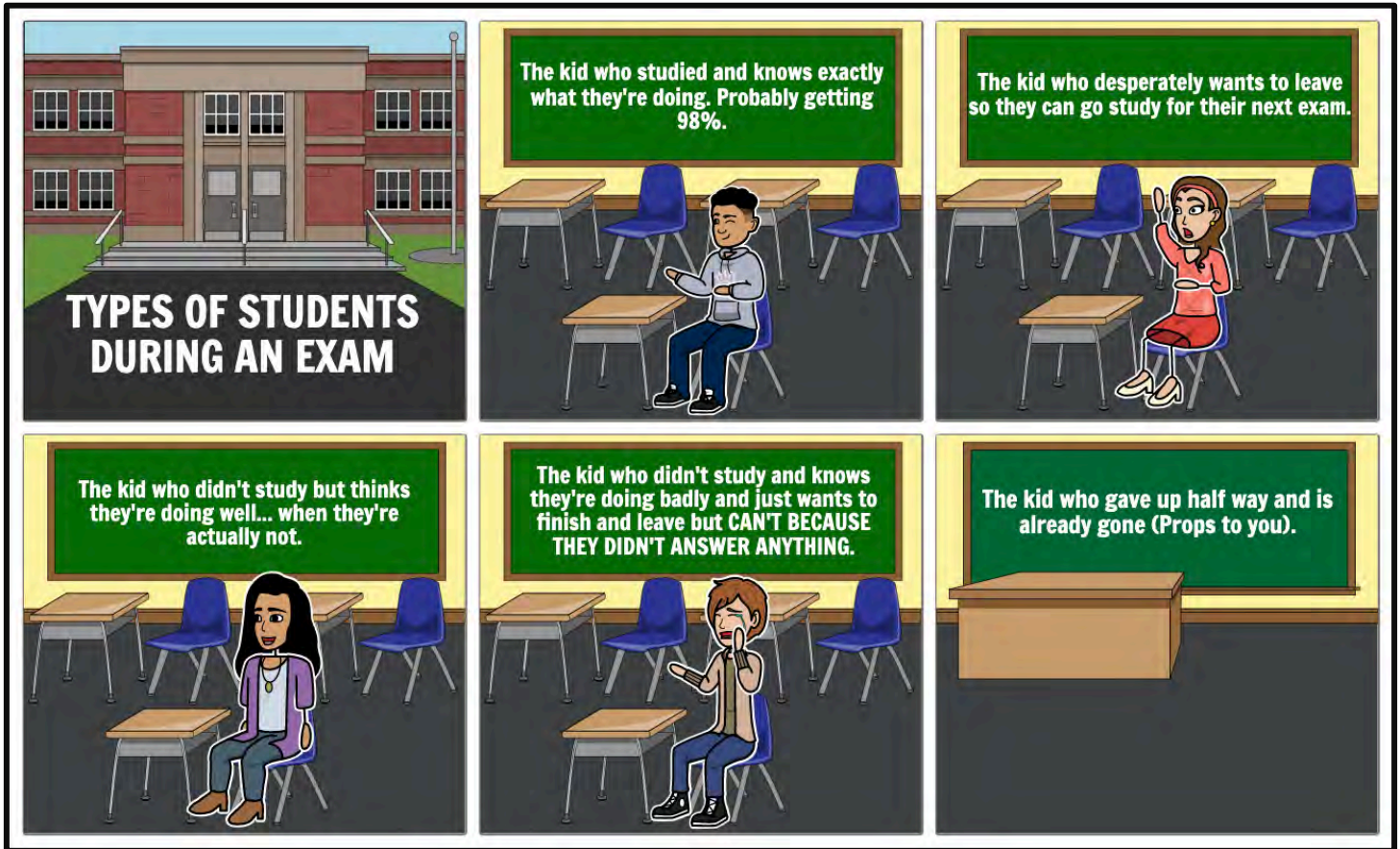
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MEMES

ANNA YAGHI - IB2



KINDNESS AT CHRISTMAS TIME

NATALIE ASHKAR - IB1

The little boy dreamt about Santa commanding his reindeer through the luminescent night sky and the presents that would welcome him the following morning. He had left a meticulous list of what he wanted for Christmas by the fireplace, which included a Spiderman action figure. As the sun rose and Mother drew open the tattered curtains, the boy yawned, stretched, and jumped out of bed with a jolt, remembering that it was Christmas morning. He sprinted to the fireplace and he skidded to a stop in front of the small Christmas tree that stood timidly in the centre of the living room, as though it was shying away from the attention that the nearly bare room was imposing on it.

Panting, he looked up at the star and remembered how Mother had sadly withdrawn it from the bottom of the decoration box a few weeks back, and he sniffled. When he asked her why she was crying, she simply shook her head and went to fetch a stepping-stool to reach the top of the tree. This surprised the boy, firstly because he had never seen his mother cry, and secondly because his father had never needed the stepping stool to hang the star on the tree - he was so tall. The little boy secretly hoped to be as tall as his father one day so that Mother would never cry because of the horrid stepping stool again.

With a tired twinkle in her eye, Mother urged her son to open his presents. He excitedly unraveled a box that rattled when he shook it. As he tore off the final strand of wrapping paper, anticipating what was inside, the young boy's smile suddenly faded away. It was indeed a Spiderman action figure, but the paint was so faded that Spiderman's red suit had turned pink, and he was missing half his mask. He turned to Mother sadly with his lip starting to quiver and wondered if he wasn't good enough for Santa's elves to make him a brand new gift. Her eyes welling up with tears, Mother tried to reassure the young boy that the elves were simply tired and that he had been nothing but a good boy all year. Envisioning the action figure of his dreams, the boy insisted on using his piggy bank savings to buy a newer toy after church.

With the piggy bank tucked safely in Mother's purse, they went to church. The little boy was awestruck by the church's tall Christmas tree proudly teeming with sparkly ornaments. He thought of his own Christmas tree and how it seemed pathetic in comparison. He looked away from the tree, rather sadly, and instead focused his gaze on the bright white basketball shoes of the boy in front of him. His classmates would know which player designed those shoes, but he always got the players' names confused because he had not watched any basketball games since Father left and Mother sold the TV. She explained that it was so they could live comfortably, but this confused the little boy because he had always felt comfortable watching TV after school. He glanced down at his own shoes and, mortified, tucked his ankles inwards to hide the holes in the soles. Tears welled up in his eyes as he thought about his shoes, his too-pink Spiderman figure, his shy Christmas tree, his tattered curtains, and his empty house... why did everything he owned have to be old, small, or damaged?

When the mass ended, White Basketball Shoes got into a car with his parents and sped off, while the little boy and his mother walked to the bus stop. They passed by a wrinkly old man sitting on the sidewalk with a tin can. His frail body was covered in thin blankets, and his face was hollow and sickly. The young boy stopped and stared at the old man. He gazed up at his mother with a longing look in his eyes. They had to help this old man who looked a lot like grandpa; he seemed cold and hungry. Mother rummaged through her brown purse for some money and was only able to find the young boy's piggy bank. She shook her head apologetically at the young boy and started to put the piggy bank back in her purse, but the young boy instinctively grabbed the piggy bank, crouched down on the sidewalk, and shook out all the contents out onto the pavement. He picked up all his money and coins and deposited them in the surprised old man's tin can with a smile. Then, he returned his empty piggy bank to his mom's purse, held her warm welcoming hand, beamed in her proud smile, and returned home to play with his too-pink Spiderman action figure.

Dear all, please remember, especially during the holidays, to be grateful, generous, and loving. Particularly with our current financial situation in Lebanon, there are many families struggling to make ends meet. Please think of them during the holidays and consider making a donation (food, money, clothes...) to any local organizations, centres, churches, or public schools. If we all opened our hearts just a little bit, we can ignite hope and happiness all around the country. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



HOROSCOPES

LARA EL HELOU - 12 LP

ARIES



This January may bring forth feelings of anticipation for the year ahead—rejoice! New experiences abound this month, making you feel alive. Electric. Savor this energy and channel it into taking on new challenges or breaking new ground in relationships, romantic or otherwise. Lean into newness and learning. A beginner's mind and strong foundation will serve you now more than ever before.

Love Days: 12, 16 // **Money Days:** 5, 22 // **Luck Days:** 2, 20 // **Off Days:** 14, 17, 27

Identity is a hugely important aspect of a person's life, and your identity may come into question this January. Remember that identity is formed, not found. You can love football and be a vegan and a passionate coder who also enjoys 10-pin bowling. It's all up to you. Aesthetics are fine for Instagram—but not everything in life will fit neatly into a box or pre-packaged personality.

Love Days: 14, 17 // **Money Days:** 7, 24 // **Luck Days:** 5, 22 // **Off Days:** 2, 16, 20

TAURUS



This month will have you thinking about the future in new and exciting ways. Your old ideas of self may no longer fit into the vision of the life you have now—and that's OK. Stay flexible and open. Continue to play to your strengths (extroversion, intelligence, wit, and communication) to find out what works right now. You can fix it all later.

Love Days: 16, 20 // **Money Days:** 27, 10 // **Luck Days:** 7, 24 // **Off Days:** 5, 17, 22

GEMINI



This month will have you thinking about the future in new and exciting ways. Your old ideas of self may no longer fit into the vision of the life you have now—and that's OK. Stay flexible and open. Continue to play to your strengths (extroversion, intelligence, wit, and communication) to find out what works right now. You can fix it all later.

Love Days: 16, 20 // **Money Days:** 27, 10 // **Luck Days:** 7, 24 // **Off Days:** 5, 17, 22

You're ready for something new, but you're not sure what. Higher education is one option, but so is dating, taking up yoga, or telling a bad friend that you love them but no longer feel the need to raise a grown adult. If you're not sure what you need, pause to think. The answers will come exactly when they are supposed to. Remember that a challenge is all in perspective: Dread will almost always make it awful, and a healthy mindset can be transformative.

Love Days: 17, 22 // **Money Days:** 2, 12 // **Luck Days:** 10, 27 // **Off Days:** 7, 20, 24

CANCER



LEO



After the holidays and new year, you may be feeling a little wilted—but determined. Remember that even at your worst, you are magnanimous and wonderful. Over time, slow and steady almost always wins. Even if you don't feel the momentum of this month as much as you want, keep going. Even if it's at a snail's pace, it's something. Your mental health and self-worth deserve your attention just as much as any future dream.

Love Days: 20, 24 // **Money Days:** 5, 14 // **Luck Days:** 2, 12 // **Off Days:** 10, 22, 27

While on the outside, your circumstances may not look that different from the month or year before. A lot is brewing beneath the surface for you, Virgo. The mind needs to be stretched and worked just as much as our bodies do to stay limber and healthy. So practice mindfulness and positive self-talk. Do the hard, slogging work of getting your brain to be healthy and helpful to you. Real change comes from the inside, out.

Love Days: 22, 27 // **Money Days:** 7, 16 // **Luck Days:** 5, 14 // **Off Days:** 2, 12, 24

VIRGO



LIBRA



Patience, sweet Libra. Things are moving, maybe quickly and maybe not. The point is as long as you're moving forward, let the pace continue as-is. You will get to your destination, but it's possible you aren't ready yet. Try not to rush and pull at strings and situations that require time and reflection. Trust that the abundance of the universe will provide, as long as you are doing your best and living up to your values.

Love Days: 24, 2 // **Money Days:** 10, 17 // **Luck Days:** 7, 16 // **Off Days:** 14, 5

Your hard work will be recognized this month, Scorpio. Try not to brush it off or qualify all that you do for yourself and others. Celebrate in whatever ways seem meaningful to you and remember that the things that you are proud of and bring you joy do not have to make sense to other people.

Love Days: 27, 5 // **Money Days:** 12, 20 // **Luck Days:** 10, 17 // **Off Days:** 2, 7, 16

SCORPIO



SAGIT -TARIUS



Familial relationships might be on your mind this month, because of all the shared family history, shared highs and lows, and your behavioral and mental patterns. We can sometimes avoid family for fear of judgement or having someone we care about be disappointed in us. I think, in a lot of cases, our relationships with our families can reveal a lot about how we relate to everyone else in the world. If you are withholding, oversharing, co-dependent or non-forgiving with your family, how do you treat yourself?

Love Days: 2, 7 // **Money Days:** 14, 22 // **Luck Days:** 12, 20 // **Off Days:** 5, 10, 17

This is YOUR YEAR, Capricorn! First of all, happy birthday month! You are wise and wonderful, and your steady presence in others' lives does not go unnoticed. I hope you feel good this month, and that you have plenty of time to spend with the people who love you. Articulating your feelings may not always be easy—you may prefer logic and spreadsheets and spending quality time to not talking. But use your voice. Say *I love you*. The more you say it, the more real it becomes.

Love Days: 5, 10 // **Money Days:** 16, 24 // **Luck Days:** 14, 22 // **Off Days:** 7, 12, 20

CAPRI - CORN



AQUARIUS



You have big plans for this year. And given Saturn's placement and Capricorn's energy, you'll probably succeed. Remember that to change your life, you have to do more than want it very badly. You have to do things differently, every day. You have to persevere even when you are tired and sad, and nothing seems to be moving forward. It is so hard, I know. But on the other side lives the life you truly want and truly, *ohmygod*, deserve.

Love Days: 7, 12 // **Money Days:** 17, 27 // **Luck Days:** 16, 24 // **Off Days:** 10, 14, 22

Work may be at the forefront of your mind this month, and what great timing! You have a big, emotional desire to get issues resolved and try new things. Avoid friction with co-workers by having realistic expectations and keeping things light this month. I am all for the nitty-gritty in life, but keeping work professional and pleasant will yield many more returns.

Love Days: 10, 14 // **Money Days:** 20, 2 // **Luck Days:** 17, 27 // **Off Days:** 12, 16

PISCES



INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCIPAL, MR. DAVID GRAY

LEA LAHOUD – 9IP

"There must be a beginning of any great matter, but the continuing unto the end until it be thoroughly finished yields the true glory" Francis Drake

Mr. David Gray quoted Francis Drake to explain his method of life. Mr. Gray aims to raise the standards of our school. He has already accomplished many projects and is still working on many.

Accomplishments

Mr. Gray has already accomplished the following, varying from big accomplishments to small ones:

1. Student body is now more involved and have a say in certain matters.
2. We now have a wider range of facilities such as:
 - a. an indoor sports hall
 - b. a multi-gym (starting January 7, open for the secondary from Monday to Friday, 3:30-5:00, with a personal trainer available)
3. Music in BHS is lately more encouraged; therefore, we now have:
 - a) 2 choirs
 - b) 60 students learning musical instruments
 - c) school band that consists of around 12 students (meet-up every Tuesday)
4. The students taking the IGCSE programme now take 7 courses rather than 4 over 2 years.
5. In 2 years, grade 11 students will have the opportunity to choose to either take IB or A/AS levels which will soon be introduced
6. BHS now has a Head of Careers, Mr. Fareed Halabi, whom Mr. Gray. He helps students make decisions about subject choices, universities and registration procedures.
7. We also now have a Head of Support for Learning, Mrs. Ruba Aboul Hosn, who helps students with learning difficulties and supports them so that they can succeed in life.
8. A new vice principal, Mr. Sage Ball, was also appointed and is responsible for pastoral care (which covers child protection, the advisory program, etc.)
9. BHS now has a marketing manager, Mr. Richard Bamfylde, who is also involved in the sustainability of the school such as:
 - a) ecology
 - b) conservation
 - c) recycling
10. At our school, we have begun recycling all our garbage. There are also several small conservation and recycling projects taking place
11. There is a gardening club that teaches students to be eco-friendly.

Aims

Mr. Gray aims to do the following within the time he is principal of Brummana High School:

1. Raise standards of the school.
2. Raise expectations of the students (basically, have students expect more of themselves in order to accomplish more).
3. Provide support for all students.
4. Provide more opportunities for BHS students.
5. Turn the school into a botanical garden.
6. Create balance between math, science, languages and arts.
7. Enable the grade 8 students to perform a Shakespeare play in order to encourage arts in the school.

On a separate note, Mr. Gray has been working on the football field in the kindergarten area and is transforming it entirely. The field used to only be a layer of thin sand whereas by spring, we'll be playing soccer and running in a field that has a professional athletic track along the outside and in the center. There will be artificial grass making it an all-weather pitch.



UPPER SCHOOL CHRISTMAS CONCERT BY OUR PERMANENT CHOIR

GABRIEL KHABBAZ – IB1

As we wrapped up the last days of school before the Christmas vacation, the choir gifted us with a magnificent performance. And for the first time, the choir was filled with teachers in addition to the students. We owe this beautiful performance to the choir conductress Ms. Cheryl Khairallah, who presented loved ones with a very organized show filled with joyous spirits.

The repertoire went as follows:

Minuit Chretien,
Hallelujah,

Santa Claus is coming to town,

Mary did you know,

Silent Night,

White Christmas,

Little Drummer Boy,

Last Christmas x All I

Want,

Adeste Fideles,

Go Tell it on the mountain,

Have yourself a merry

little Christmas,

Jingle bell rock x Rocking around,

And the medley.

In addition to the choir, readers from grade 9 were asked to read quotes to remind everyone about the true Christmas values that we should all instill in our hearts.

We look forward to seeing some new faces in the Easter choir rehearsal!



INFLUENCE OF HIP HOP ON MODERN SOCIETY

RAWAD EID - IB1

Hip-hop is the people, not the music. Since its arrival to mainstream media, the culture has risen to tremendous heights and shows no indications of stopping, as "rap" today, has surpassed all other genres of music. The branches of hip-hop for decades has provided the means for groups of people to own a voice and deliver their message. In the inordinate amount of time since its creation, hip-hop has showcased a platform for artists to own a voice for the voiceless.

Like humans, genres evolve. In the beginning, hip-hop's main intention was to simply please its audience. Nowadays, "rap" has been utilized to raise awareness regarding racial issues, corrupt governments, and mistreatment of minorities. Although songs may carry the simple themes of "nothing is impossible", and "follow your dreams", the way an individual consumes that message is truly incredible. Hip-hop has developed to a point where it relatively conveys principles and values.

Unlike other genres of music, hip-hop can easily be listened by people of all ages because of the idea each track holds. It is quite difficult to discover a song written from the same perspective as another song, whilst simultaneously grasping similar connotations. It is this element that makes hip-hop such a well listened to type of music. For a long period of time, rap music has maintained a reputation of expressing and representing violence, drug abuse, gang-related issues, excessive alcohol consumption, lustful desires, and strong profanity consistently being mentioned in the lyrics. Despite these supposed hurdles, Hip-hop has managed to gather a large fanbase, transforming from once and underground show to the multi-billion foundation it is today. Rap is in fact significantly misinterpreted and viewed by the majority of media negatively. In reality, Hip-hop has unified diverse populations worldwide! It began as a division of African American communities and converted to a global marvel.

Hip hop is highly acknowledged as an outlet, highlighting social and political matters, especially for the youth. It has given the listeners the capability of speaking freely while educating viewers of the world they live in. Music discusses may tackle many undergo through their daily lives, thus giving individuals the opportunity to debate ways in which solutions





could be formed. Through the themes reflected in rap music, awareness of discrimination, education, and countless other motifs have spread like wildfire, bandaging many precious wounds in the process. Hip hop has been astonishingly hoisted, that it frequently seems therapeutic to listeners who are able to express their emotions through it, and troubles that patient is being exposed to. On occasions, artists portray a picture of a character through their lyrics. That character is what that entertainer believes they are or wish to be, all in the name of show business.

Yet, whether new, or old listener to the genre,

it is undeniable that it has influenced an individual's decision making, language, and life to a certain extent, is unavoidable. Hip-hop has not only altered the lives of its musicians, but the lives of its listeners.

IMPACT OF CLASSICAL MUSIC ON OUR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

ADRIANA GORAIEB – IB1

Classical music has formed the foundation of modern music as we know it, be it in the form of ballads, sonatas, or etudes, and has given human emotion a voice which better allows listeners to connect with and understand one another. Now, before stereotypically dismissing it as ‘boring’ or ‘repetitive’, at the height of the Medieval and Romantic eras, classical music was considered among the most enriching and expressive forms of art, and to this day, 21st century musicians learn to appreciate its raw and emotionally moving power. On another note however (catch my pun there?), did you know that it has scientifically proven beneficial for our mental and physical health?

In 2016, a study was published in the journal *Deutsches Aerzteblatt International* which showed that listening to Mozart and Strauss lowers systolic and diastolic blood pressure as well as heart rates more effectively than listening to, or instance, ABBA’s music. This is attributed to the harmonies and rhythms of classical music which provide a calming effect, lowering blood pressure.

Additionally, the empathetic response it triggers in people renders them more emotionally available. A neuro-therapist noticed that when she plays classical music while engaging patients in deep breathing, they feel more comfortable to open up and share when discussing emotional content.

Fellow BHS students, this benefit goes out to you! This type of music has been proven to be an easy remedy for lack of or improper sleep. Music with words and upbeat tempos requires your brain to multitask, thus it may be difficult to sleep. On the other hand, light classical music, which typically has a regular rhythm, low pitch and tranquil melodies, better prepares your brain and body better for sleep.

Another really important benefit of classical music to students is pain relief. Research published in the *International Journal of Critical Illness and Injury Science* in 2012 states that classical music relieves anxiety and depression, by improving oxygen saturation, reducing perception of pain, and decreasing heart rates. It also lowers cortisol levels and increases the release of dopamine in your brain, inducing relaxation and stress-relief. Which - I think I speak for most of us when I say - is much needed.

Last but not least, classical music sharpens memory, improves cognitive skills, and has been scientifically proven to have a correlation with an increase in IQ (it impacts how we feel, which in turn impacts how we perform academically). And this is not exclusive to listening to classical music; music lessons and practicing “contribute to brain plasticity and neural-network development, which can enhance learning and memory,” as stated by neurologist Dr. Michael Schneck.

As students should not undermine the power of classical music when it comes to improving their physical and mental health. They should try taking up music lessons of any sort, or even just create a playlist of classical music which I will recommend below and play it in the background as you crack your brain for your next big assessment.

Here are my top picks:

Minuet 2 – Bach

Cello Suite No. 1 – Bach

Clair de Lune – Debussy

Waltz in A minor – Chopin

Moonlight Sonata – Beethoven

Pavane – Gabriel Faure

Serenade – Schubert & Liszt

Etude Op. 10 No. 4 in C sharp minor –
Chopin

Mazurka in B flat major – Chopin

Resources:

<https://www.thehealthy.com/mental-health/classical-music-effects/>

POEM

ANNA YAGHI – IB2

Au revoir ciel éclatant, bonsoir nuit étoilée.

Je lève mes yeux pour voir les couleurs briller.

Le temps s'arrête tandis que j'admire,

Un moment dans mon cœur à jamais partir.

Three Simple Ways You Can Help in Decreasing the Consequences of the Economic Crisis on a Minor Scale

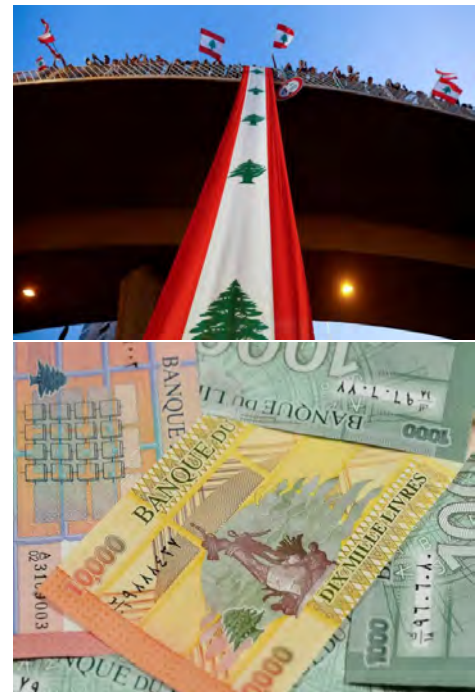
ANGELA SAADE – IB1

Whether you are a Lebanese citizen or a foreign student residing in Lebanese territories, the economic crisis our country is suffering from not only affects you and your family members, yet majorly impacts your friends, teachers, and nation as a whole. However, there are some simple steps you can take as a student in order to help out on a minor scale.

1. MAKE LOCAL PURCHASES:

We all enjoy buying clothes and other products from international shops in Malls and known stores, yet at this point, our local firms need us. Even though you might enjoy buying your products from the same mall, benefiting local shops in your area is essential. Over 40 companies and businesses have shut down since the commencement of the crisis, and more and more of them are closing daily. Your minor purchase may have a major impact on the firm owners and employees. Also, buying food from local companies instead of opting for international ones would help boost the Lebanese economy. (Opt for Unicorn, not Starbucks for example)

When it comes to transportation, make sure to rely mostly on local taxis and you can even use public busses or cars (service), where you can tip the driver as much money as you want. A few Lebanese liras may mean little to you, yet to the drivers might mean being able to pay their rent, their children's lunch or clothes to keep them warm in the winter. So, make sure to keep that in mind next time you order a cab!



2. SAVE UP: SPEND, BUT DON'T WASTE MONEY

I know many of you would rather spend your time at a party than at home or at a less expensive place, but at this point 'mish wa2ta'. It's not the right time to prioritize an exaggerated social

life. Try to reduce the amount you spend on going out or buying products that are not essential at the moment. I'm not saying you should stay at home doing nothing all day to help in solving the crisis, yet if you are capable of saving up money, do so. Your parents might not be affected by the crisis today, yet you never know what might happen. In fact, everything might end up becoming so much better and the crisis might be resolved, yet for now, it is an ongoing crisis and its impacts are major and devastating. Additionally, electricity and water bills are very expensive, especially at that time of the year where a higher amount must be paid for heating purposes. Thus, make sure to keep the lights off in rooms you are not sitting in and decrease your consumption of electricity and water as much as possible. Bills aren't easy to pay, and you must keep that in mind, whether the country is in the midst of an economic crisis or full-on prosperity.



3. DONATE: To those in need

Lebanon already suffers from a big percentage of individuals living below the poverty line. With the rise of this economic crisis, the poor became poorer, and the consequences they are dealing with are brutal. For that reason, you can help by donating unneeded clothes, canned food, blankets (since so many people are homeless and cannot even afford shelter and warmth), books, warming equipment and even toys for children that need some sort of distraction during this devastating time. You could contact several NGOs that are working towards this aim, such as:

Foodblessed: 70 159337, info@foodblessed.org

Lebanese Food Bank: 01 510499, 03 714401, info@lebanesefoodbank.org

Save The Children: 09 212077, 09 212081, hgsd@hgsd.org

You could also contact municipalities to be informed about the poor families of a certain region and help them out yourself.

