

POLARIS



FALL EDITION, 2025



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STAFF PHOTO



Pumpkin Spice Banana Bread

By: (Aash)Vi Lloyd

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice*
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar
2 large eggs

Time: 1 hr 15 min

2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 medium bananas mashed
1 cup canned pumpkin puree
1/2 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

- Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9×5 inch loaf pan.
- In a medium bowl whisk together the flour, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder & salt.
- In a large bowl whisk together the oil, sugars, eggs & vanilla extract until no lumps remain.
- Stir in the mashed bananas & pumpkin puree.
- Carefully stir the flour mixture into the wet ingredients using a rubber spatula or wooden spoon. Then stir in the chocolate chips
- Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 50-60 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean and the top feels firm to the touch. The loaf shouldn't wobble if you nudge the pan.

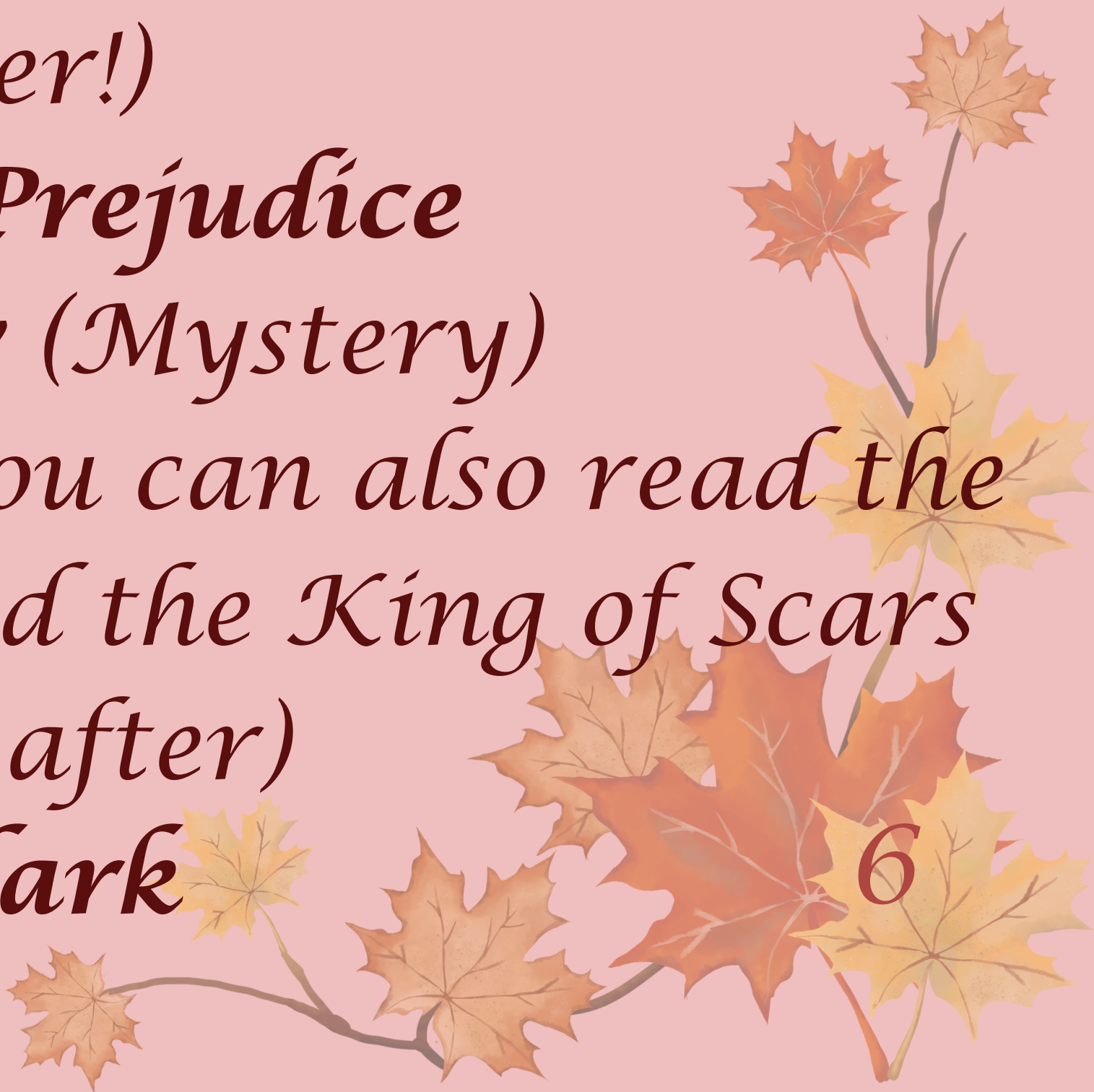


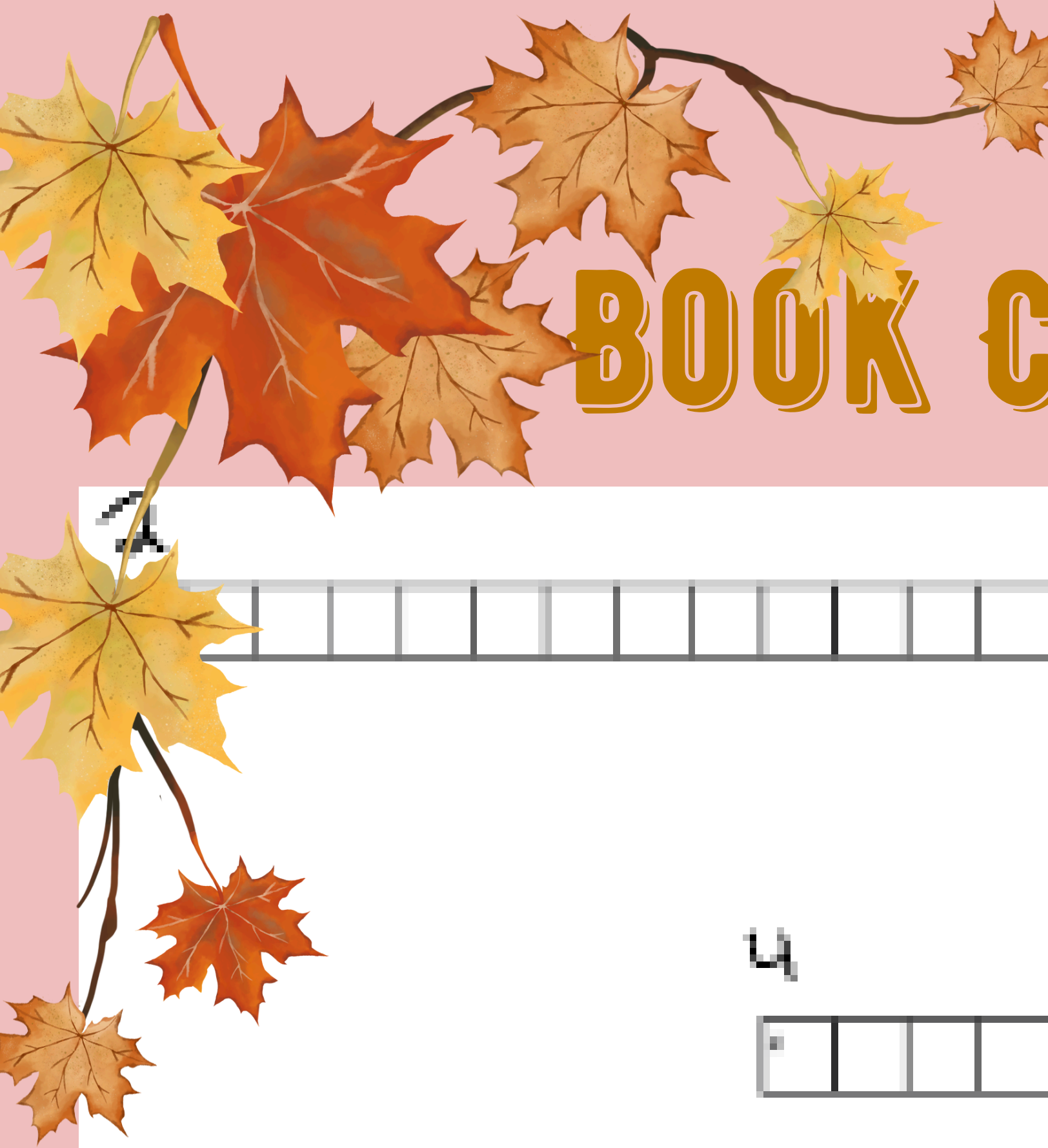


FALL BOOK RECS

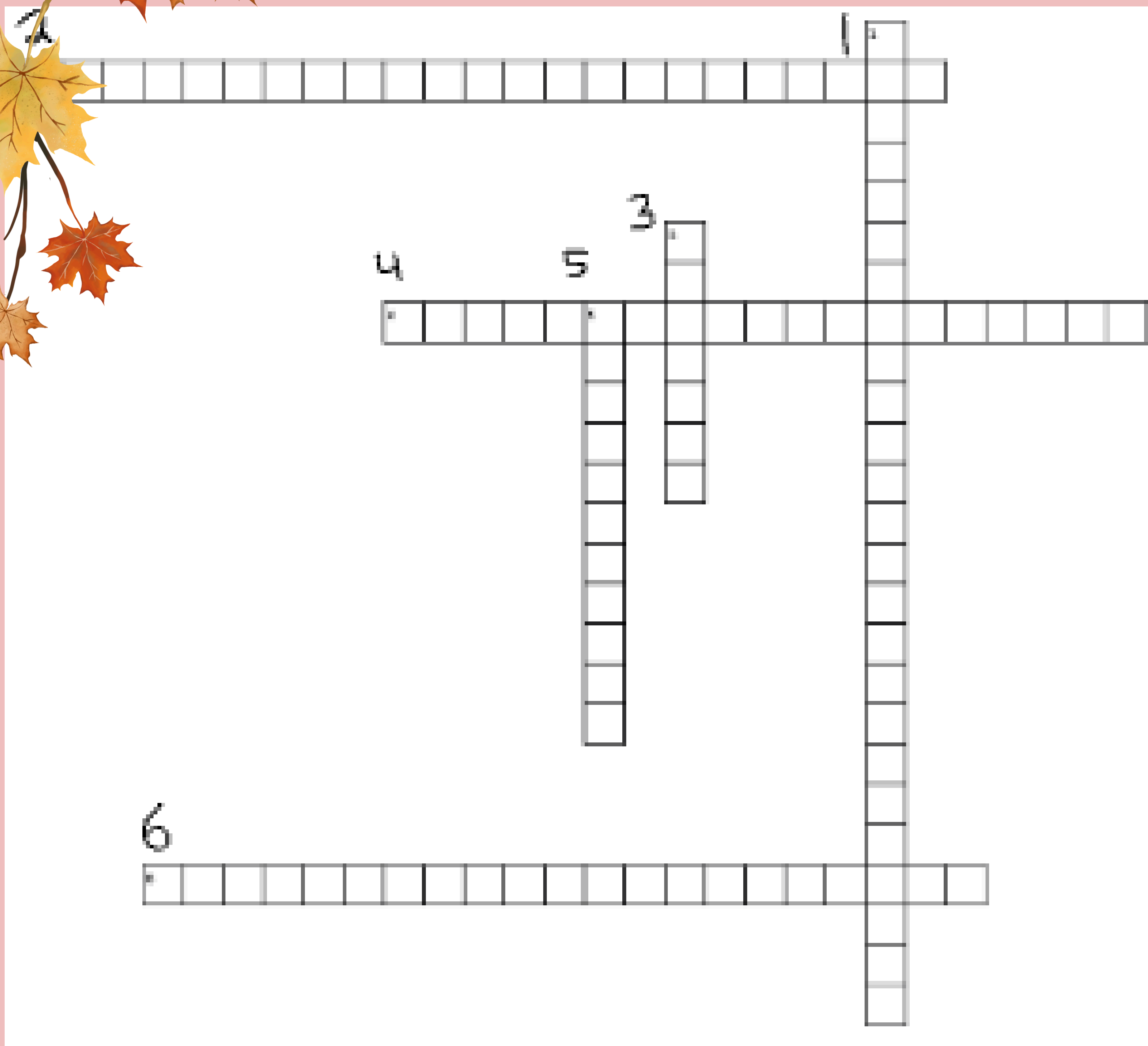
BECAUSE LETS BE HONEST, FALL IS THE BEST SEASON FOR READING SO HERE ARE SOME FALL THEMED BOOKS

1. *The Inheritance Games*
2. *Powerless* (You probably see this a lot but its actually soo good!)
3. *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*
4. *Twilight* (This is also a bit winter vibes)
5. *The Hunger Games* ("are you?" are you?"
"coming to the tree?")
6. *The Adventures Of Sherlock Holmes* (Like/
Love Enola Holmes, read this OG about her
brother!)
7. *Pride and Prejudice*
8. *Nancy Drew* (Mystery)
9. *Shadow and Bone* (You can also read the
Six of Crows series and the *King of Scars*
duology after)
10. *Lightlark*





BOOK CROSSWORD



Across

- 2.** A girl listens to too many true crime podcasts and says I'm going to do that. (AGGTM acronym)
- 4.** A girl randomly inherits a large fortune from a random old man, who had way too much free time.
- 6.** Elves...Goblins...Dwarves...Ogres...Gnomes...Hint:KOTLC acronym

Down

- 1.** Boy joins a camp for kids that have family issues. Ends up becoming enemies with his grandfather and getting in a fight with his uncle.
- 3.** Is this just a part of the game? Hint:Sounds like "Carnival"
- 5.** Boy learns he's a wizard and then becomes enemies with a 70 year old man. Turns out they are distant cousins.

Katie Martin

Quick Ad Break

From our Sponsor

Dehydrated Water!



You might be asking, why should I buy this. Well, this one can will last you forever. The only thing you have to do is add some water so that you can rehydrate your water and get water!

Such an amazing Idea!

Go buy it now!

All water sold seperatly

Catskill Mountain

By: Libby Stering

Amalie was a curious fourteen year old girl, who looked at the world in questions.

Her shiny red hair, always tied back, accentuating her deep green eyes. Her skin, soft, yet tough from experience. Sorrow filled her eyes, years of bullying and pent up pain. Her fingers were fast and agile, similar to her body. Both of them were

always on the move, from typing to running. Always the best at what she does, medals lining her room. Her straight A's a persistent reminder of her determined work ethic. Her kind gestures were constantly drowning in her quiet nature. Her body, continually hidden in deep baggy clothes, ones that barely fit her small frame. She liked to observe others, seeing and noticing all details. Little did she know that this might come in handy soon. Her only friends were Lily and a newfound friend Janet. Lily was also a fourteen year old girl. Lily's tall figure contradicted her tall figure.

Her brown hair, just short enough to stay out of her face when she read. A chipped front tooth carries a secret that she had never told. Her olive skin often shimmered, normally in the fluorescent lights of the library, her safe space. Her brown eyes are deep enough to fall into, yet still filled with loneliness. She did not have many friends as her smarts and dedication generally set her apart from others. Her dainty hands usually softly grip a book, her eyes covered by black glasses. She used the glasses to help blend in, to not be seen by others, and this always worked. Not many people noticed her, and when they did, they would ignore her. Janet was a new student to Country High, also fourteen, or so others thought. Janet was actually a twenty-two year old woman, not many people knew this because it was something she always hid.

Continue reading at [this link](#)

Ten Songs to Add to Your Fall Playlist for Fall Vibes!

By Lulu Bolstad



Gold rush (Taylor Swift)

*California Dreaming (The Mama's and
Papa's)*

Deeper Well (Kacey Musgraves)

Sailor Song (Gigi Perez)

Happier (Olivia Rodrigo)

Ordinary Things (Ariane Grande)

My God (Killers)

First High (Nikki Lane)



*Leaving Louisiana in the Broad Daylight
(The Oak Ridge Boys)*

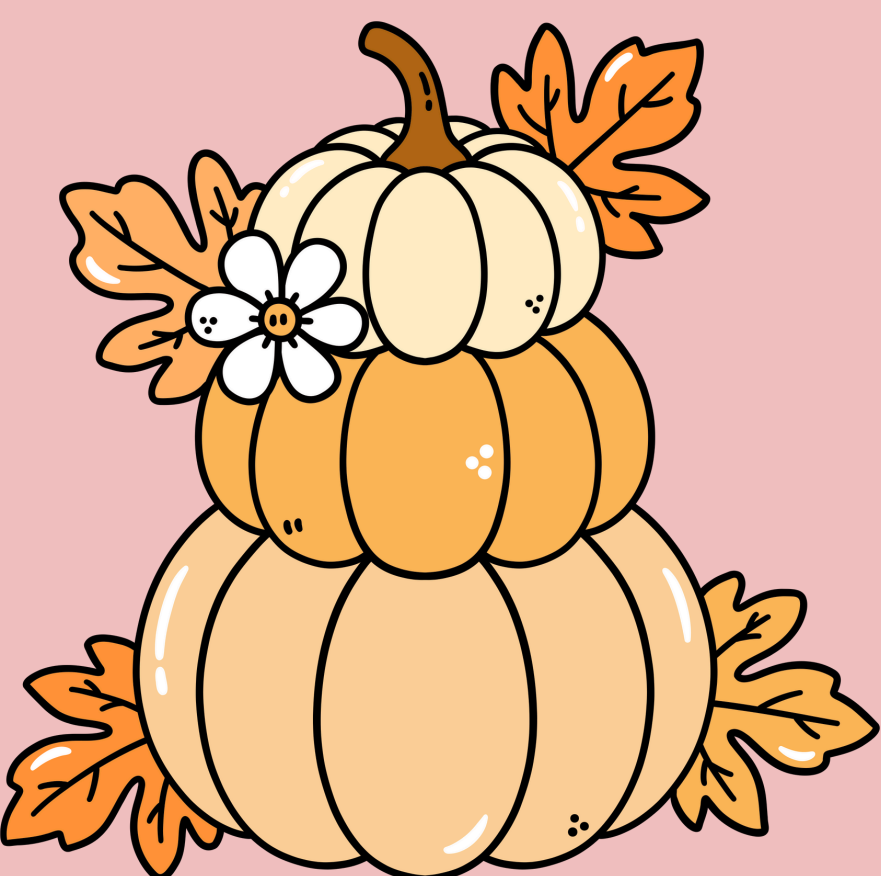
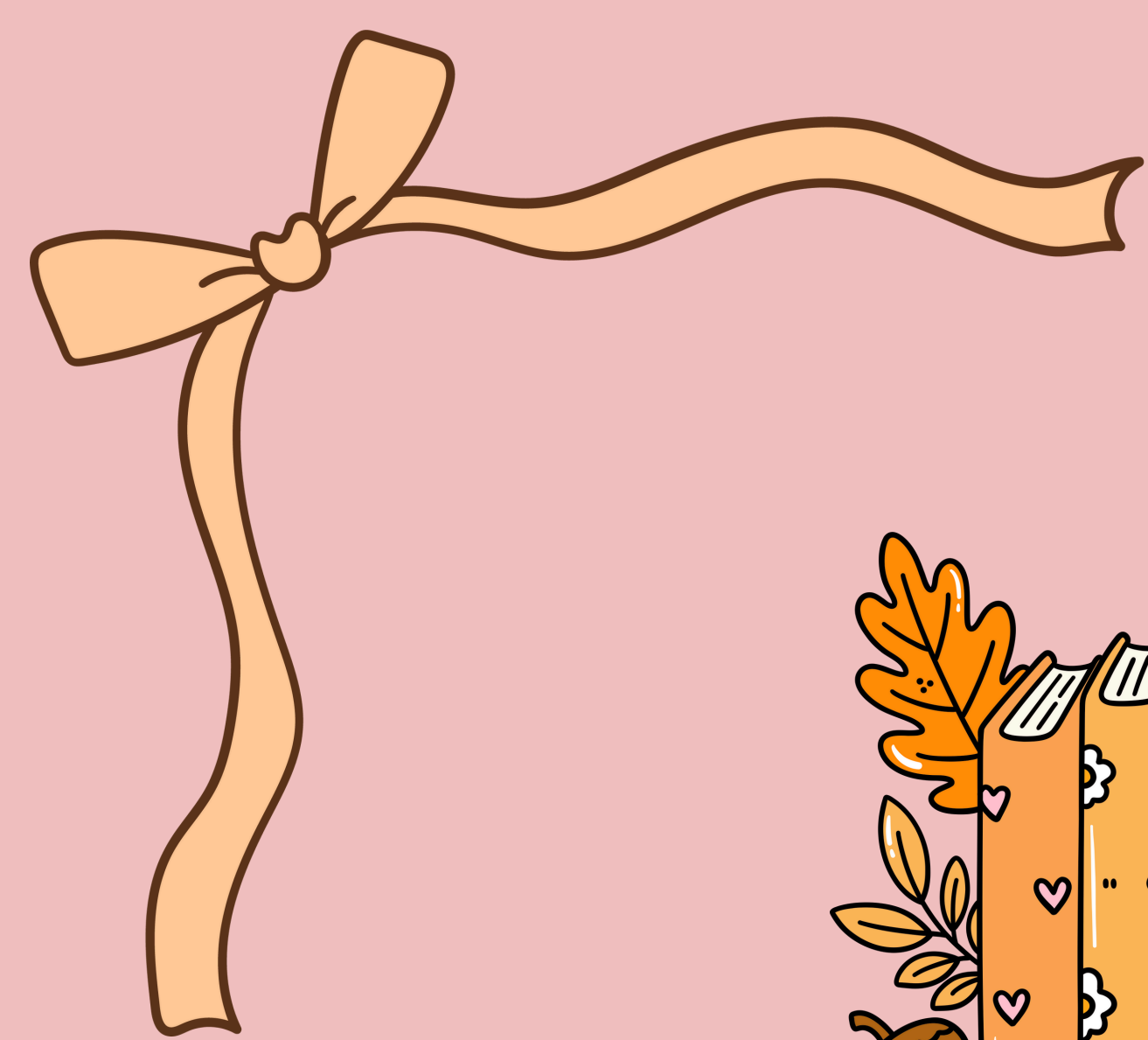
*Last Great American Dynasty (Taylor
Swift)*



Ten Fun Facts!

By Lulu Bolstad

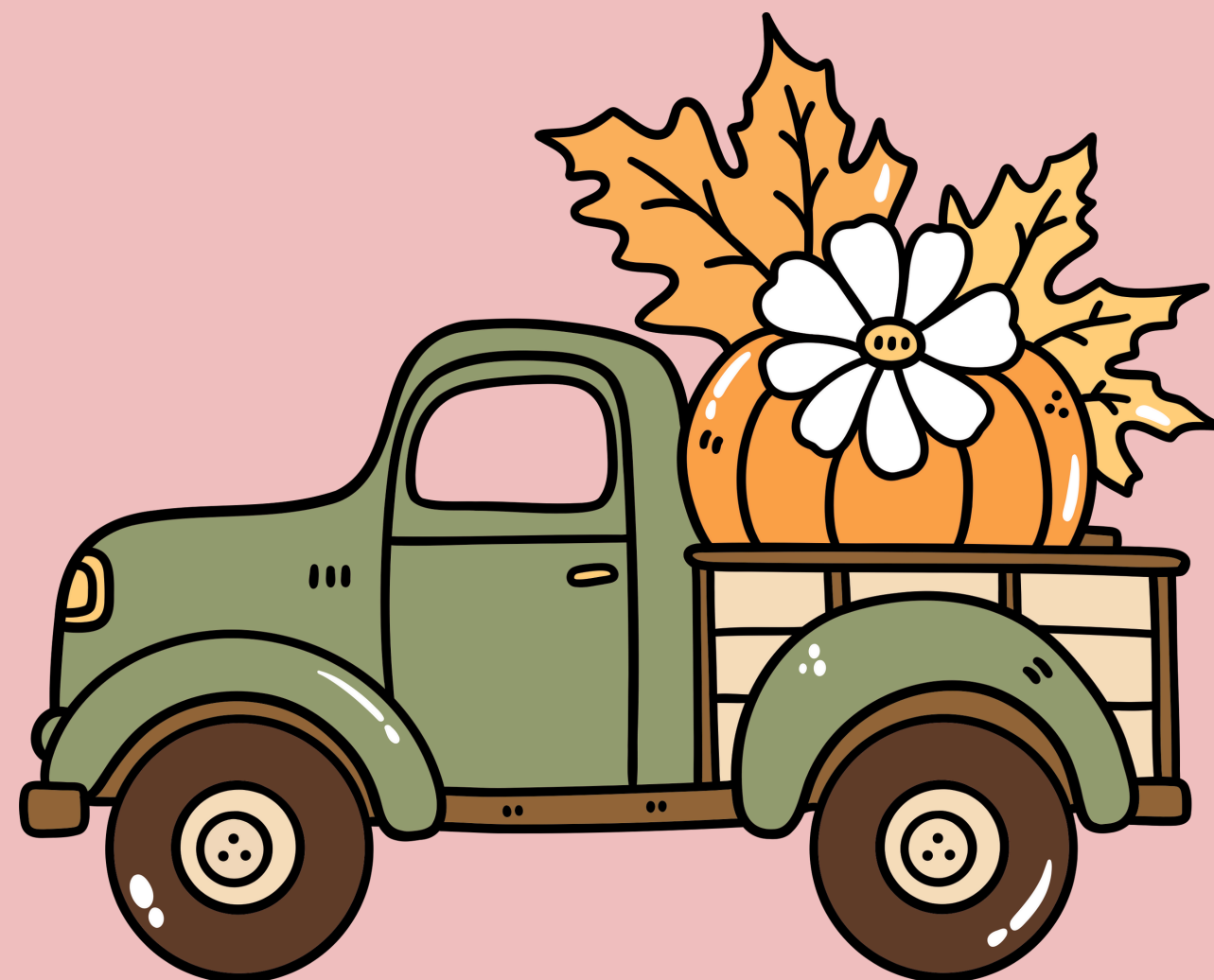
- 1. Dolphins name each other*
- 2. Cows have best friends*
- 3. You cannot breath through your nose while sticking your tounge out*
- 4. You are sticking out your tongue right now*
- 5. You are really annoyed with this list right now*
- 6. You tried number 3 and found out it was possible, but now you look like a dog*
- 7. You skipped fact number five*
- 8. You just checked and realized there is no number five*
- 9. You just checked and realized there is no number five*
- 10. Ha- fooled you! These aren't fun facts...*



By: (Aash)Vi Lloyd

It's Fall!

Top 10 Reasons to Love Fall!
(In no particular order)





1. *It's Cozy!*
2. *Beautiful Colors Everywhere*
3. *It's Sweater Weather*
4. *Not to Hot But Not To Cold*
5. *Pumpkins*
6. *Pumpkin Pie*
7. *Thanksgiving! (If you celebrate it)*
8. *Hayrides!*
9. *Apple Picking*
10. *Halloween(If you celebrate)*



By: Nikki Jones

Join Writers Club!!!

What it is

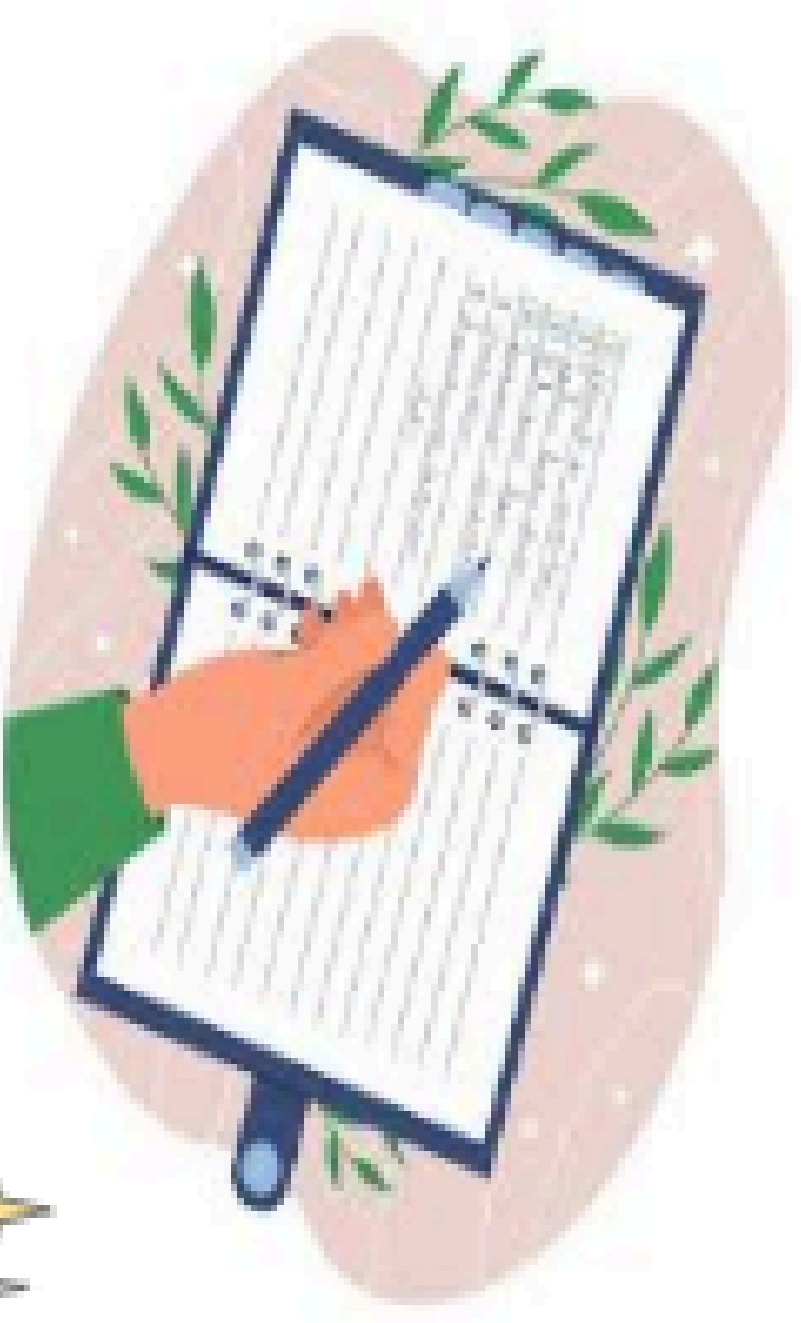
Do you love writing but not have enough time or any ideas? That's what Writers Club is. A place to get back into writing and project your writing into a safe and supportive space. It's also a place to meet more writers and get better feedback.

What we do

We do a variety of different fun creative writing activities, like Franken stories, mad libs and paper toss chains. But most of all, we write for the school newspaper, polaris, that you are reading right now!

How to Join

Just come! We meet every Wednesday in Mr Persons room (B205). We will very happily welcome you and you will have a blast!



Herself

By Tallulah Bolstad

*She wanted to be trendy, but not a follower
So she wore cowboy boots, trying to be country
But if she was country, she had to always be country
And she didn't want to be limited
She wanted to be unique, but not stand out like a sore
thumb
So she wanted to fit in, but be noticed
But noticed by who? Her peers, her friends?
None, in fact she wanted to be noticed by herself.
Herself who didn't know who she was or why she was
And she wanted to be defined, but couldn't find herself
She wasn't confused, she just didn't know the meaning of
life,
And did that make her dumb?
Dumber than the girls who were skinny as a pole and
got an A in math just for trying
And she didn't enjoy life, but she was too scared of
death
And she loved writing, but she wished she didn't
compare herself to the characters
The characters she wrote based on herself, so she wished
they weren't so sad
And her teachers liked poems about roses and the ocean
And she liked the thorns and the guilt of the tide*

The Blood on the Corset

By Elaina Sandick

“Take a palace in Vienna Austria, with its glistening white turrets and endless gardens, its beauty just a product of its perfection. Tourists flock for summer vacations at the palace. Locals aspire to always take a second of their precious day to appreciate its majesticness. “Something cannot be that great,” you scoff to yourself, “It could never be.” You’d be correct about that. Because, it is not the image of something that creates perfection, but what it contains. And what it contains could be the product of its imperfection”.

**A riveting tale blending
murder and wealth, beauty
and lies.**

Click here to read:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1x9KQsFcg2z-7DDmmPQVZb3OBpd8R32yn3V2nFQFoKlc/edit?tab=t.0>

Jokes!

How do you repair a broken
pumpkin?

A Pumpkin
Patch!

Why did the man bungee jump on
the first day of autumn?

fall!
Because he loved the

Who won the skeleton costume
contest?

Body!
No



By: (Aash)Vi Lloyd

everything you missed in pop culture

By Lulu
Bolstad

Grammy Nominations for
2026 are out, with hit singers
Katseye, Sombr, Sabrina
Carpenetr, and Lady Gaga aLL
up for awards!

Sabrina Carpenter's Short
N' Sweet tour has officially
ended, with it's last show
in Los Angeles on
November 23

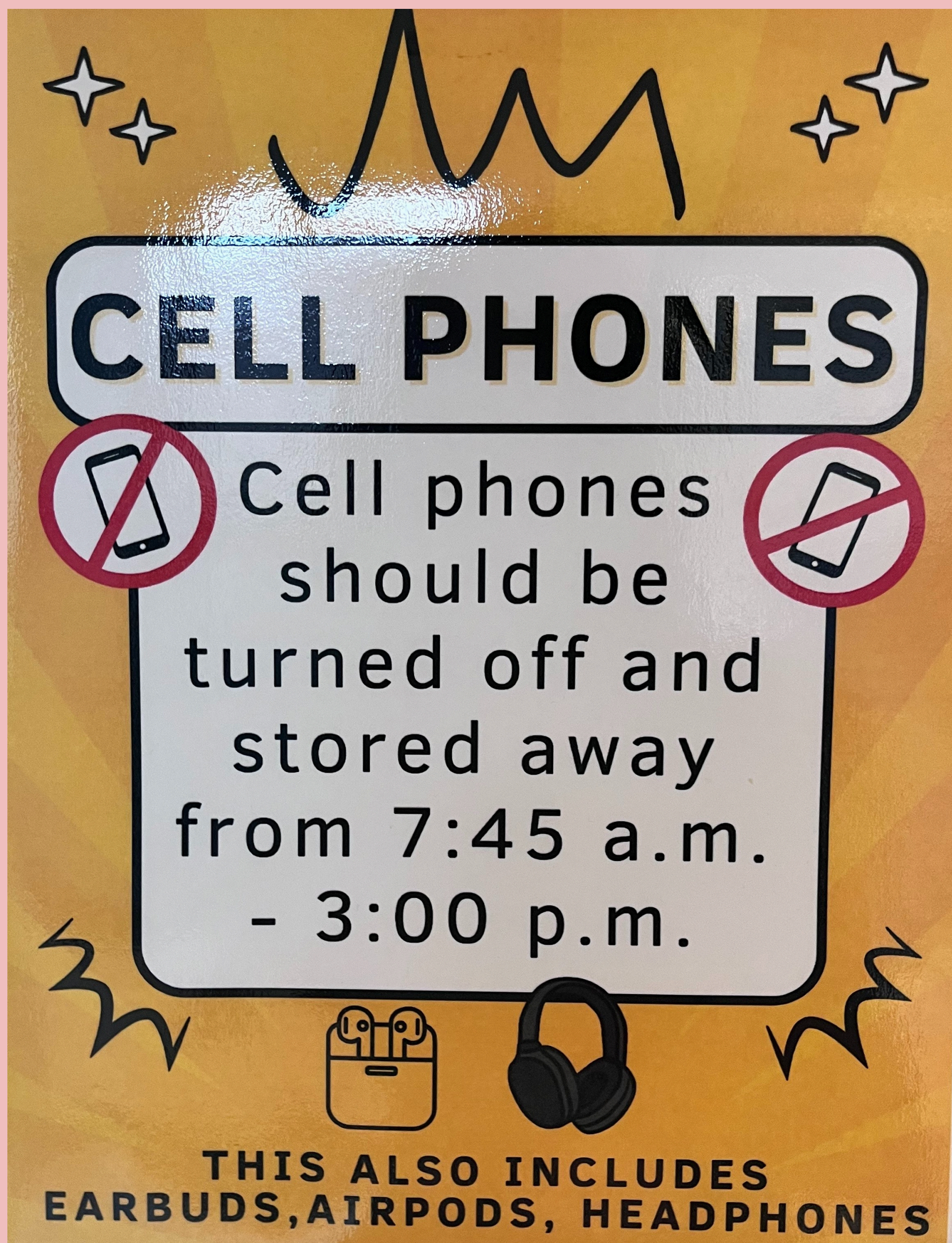
THE WICKED LIVE
SPECIAL AIRED ON NBC
AND STREAMED ON
PEACKOCK NOVEMBER
6-7TH

POP ARTIST SOMBR IS ON
TOUR WITH HIT SONGS LIKE
"BACK TO BEING FRIENDS",
"UNDRESSED", AND "12-12"

And yes, the 6-7 meme is still
alive and well- it continues to
dominate meme culture, and
middle school teachers
continue to complain.



PHONE *BAN*





NBMS FALL COLLAGE

Leaves change
And green gives way
to fall now
Pumpkin Spice
Lattes rule the earth
By Zoey Molina-Gray & Misha Sethi

what is NBMS favorite fall activity?

A: jumping in leaves



B: visiting pumpkin patches



C: carving pumpkins



D: all of the above

CHAPTER 1

BY: AARSHI

Beep! Beep! Beep! the alarm clock rang.

Alexa groaned. "Alexa, snooze," she mumbled. It was a bit annoying having the same name as an AI assistant. When she was little, people would bully her and ask her random questions because not only did she have the same name as a robot, she also had a 3.9 GPA.

She got out of bed and got dressed. Is something burning? she thought as she was brushing her hair. She hastily finished up in the bathroom and rushed downstairs to investigate.

"Something is burning..." Alexa muttered "Cassie, what did you do?!" she yelled as she ran down the stairs and towards the kitchen.

She came to what looked like an action movie explosion! There was smoke fuming out of the oven, embers jumping left and right. And yet, Alexa smelled the faintest hint of coconut and vanilla.

"What happened?" Alexa said as she saw her sister pull out a burned tray of goo.

"Well I tried to give you something for your birthday, so I thought why not just bake you a cake" Cassie said, her deep brown hair was tied into a ponytail and was unraveling itself that half of her hair was loose.

"Are you serious, you know you're a horrible baker!" Alexa said- this time it was definitely an angry tone,

"Why do you think I was watching a "How To Bake" video!" Cassie explained with a smirk.

"Well you should have been more careful in thinking, could this start a fire or something and why couldn't you -"

"Come on, she was just doing something nice for you, accept it" Ayden said. He was Alexa and Cassie's second cousin who they started living with after their parents died in a restaurant explosion.

"Okay, fine but you completely wasted your time because my birthday is on the 24th of May" Alexa consoled each of them.

"Uh... it is the 24th of May" Ayden said, taking out his phone and showing it to Alexa. Alexa couldn't believe it, she was 18. An adult. And that adult still had no clue what she wanted to do in her life. She felt trapped, between being a free person and well being a free person. It meant you could do whatever you wanted, no holding back but she had no idea what she wanted to do in life. She was majoring in business but that was for money, she had to provide somehow.

"Anyways we're going to the mall to celebrate Alexa sending her letter for college and Alize getting into college, and I already called an Uber" Cassie said. She organized, prepared and memorized everything from friends birthdays, celebrities anniversaries to Alexa's schedule every holiday.

"You girls go, I have work and you both know how Mrs. Peirce gets when I'm late" Ayden said. He worked as the assistant manager in the coffee shop downtown, they had the best sugar cookies.

Beyond the Mirror



A body image poem written by Olivia Morales, Neela Padgett, and Audrey Cooper

When I was seven, my hair would be pulled into pigtails,
My eyes still bright, not yet tarnished by the world's ails
"Be careful, watch how you weigh"

I still remember those words as if it were yesterday
My smile dropped, the apple in my hand quickly discarded
I walked home and looked at myself in the mirror, my expression guarded
It would be all too easy to become as she had said
Yet I still wondered later, what went through her head

When I was ten, people talked about sports. Never the women's sports, always the men's. My aunt never stopped talking either, she said soccer made me weird, less feminine. I didn't understand what she meant.

I was the star of my team and did well at every game, but I was doing something wrong, never something right, always wrong.

I quit soccer the next week, not because I wanted to, but because it was for boys. It made my body look wrong. My family told me that girls who didn't do sports appeared softer, more feminine.

The compliments increased and I was considered pretty, but one comment stuck with me.

My best friend asked why I quit, "You played well," she said, "you were good at it."

I'd never heard that before, not about something that "ruined my body", not about something I loved.

When I was twelve, I logged onto my phone
That first video I posted was nothing special, but it was my own
With a ding, my phone lit up, as did my face
I checked it hurriedly, my eyes scanning the comment in a race
"Girls shouldn't look like that"

I checked the account, I didn't know them, a random boy, a random brat
What gave him the right? Was it true?

My friend later would tell me "boys will be boys"; that seemed to be everyone's view


I guess that gave you an excuse to be mean

Still, the words circled my head, what did it mean, how could I fix it? I wasn't even thirteen

I stayed in my room, the blue light illuminating my face, unblinking

Who was this new girl, sunken eyes, I remember thinking

Was this my new life?



When I was thirteen, my friends laughed at a girl
Running across the soccer field in a fast whirl
I had to admit, she looked quite like me;
Blonde hair, blue eyes, grin full of glee
But my friends mocked her legs, her muscled thighs,
Making tears form in my "beautiful" eyes
"Do not make fun of that girl," I said bitterly
When they ignored me, I decided to flee

When I was eighteen, I went to a party with my friends
After hours, I left, wishing that it never had to end
As I walked home in my heels and sparkly dress,
I heard men's voices behind me, and to me they addressed
They followed me for minutes despite my protests;
I only escaped when I climbed in an uber for rest
I gazed in the mirror at home and told myself
"Never again put a dress on yourself"

Now I'm older and wiser, watching my own son run down the field, laughing with his friends. Until a voice
behind me asks "Why is your boy so skinny? Doesn't he know boys should have muscle? You need to tell
him to work on his strength."

A part of me almost says yes, a part I've tried to bury, trained to comment and judge by the outside.
But another part knows it's wrong.

It was always wrong.

I think of all the compliments I've been given over the years.

"Cute"

"Skinny"

"Pretty"

I think of the times I'd cried or thrown up trying to fit into those terms, how he'd end up struggling into
his own standard.

I think of what I'd wanted to hear as a kid.

"Talented"

"Unique"

"Good enough"

"No," I say. "He's perfect as he is."

When I was thirteen, my friends laughed at a girl
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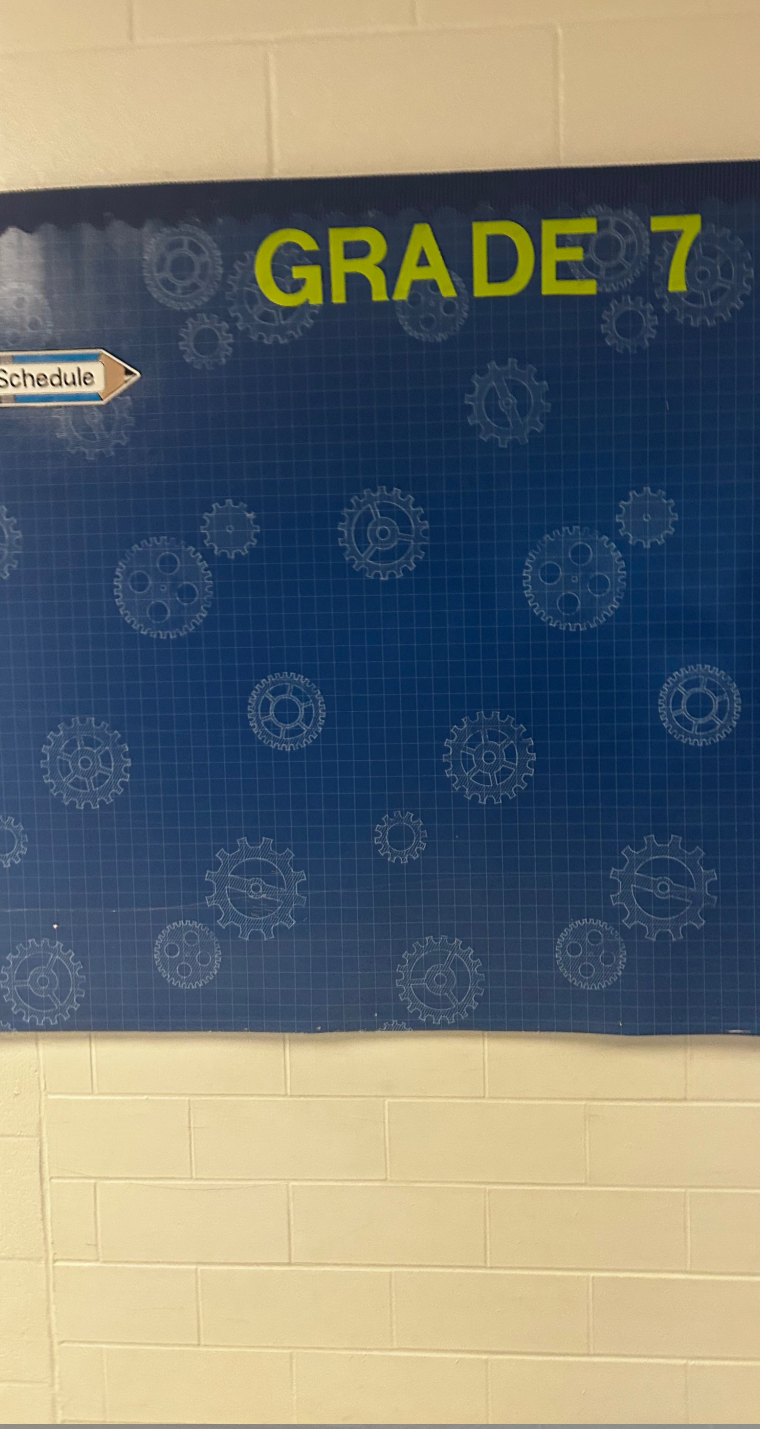
"No," I say. "He's perfect as he is."

Generational

Tallulah Bolstad

My grandmother has a way of twisting her words
When she tells stories of
An old blanket, or
The sweet flowers beaded on a dress that her mama made
Sweet honey on the tip of her tongue,
Stories woven together from memories she knows
And memories that I keep just for her
Like an old jewelry box
With a spinning ballerina
She photographs with her friends
And she laughs like a teenager when we go to Texas
I laugh like a child who is learning how to laugh
My grandfather is an athlete,
Soft spoken yet stern
Not strict, but he makes an impact
He often walks into a room,
and his presence is noticed
And
And my mother would joke that he valued his sports more
than anything
And after looking through his scrap book of every
Newspaper clipping and yearbook photo
I realize now that it is real
Their lives are a faded photo
framed in gold





Mental Health Awareness Week

| Wellness Wednesday 11/5 | Thankful Thursday 11/6 | Fun and Fitness Friday 11/7 | Saturday 11/8 |
|---|--|--|--|
| | | | |
| Spirit Theme: Pajama Day! | Spirit Theme: Wear Green in support of mental health awareness! | Spirit Theme: Wear a shirt/jersey of your favorite sports team! | The MCPS Mental Health and Wellness Fair |
| Activity: Come practice coping strategies at lunch, including "blowing your stress away" with bubbles! | Activity: Come "chalk about" what you are thankful for with chalk outside during lunch! | Activity: Try out our fitness coping strategies with athletic equipment during lunch! | Time: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Location: Gaithersburg High School 101 Education Blvd Gaithersburg, MD 20877 |



NBMS



NORTH BETHESDA MIDDLE SCHOOL
ALL SCHEDULES

Regular Bell Schedule

Period 1: 8:15 - 9:05 (50 min)
Period 2: 9:09 - 9:54 (45 min)
Period 3: 9:58 - 10:43 (45 min)

| 6 th Grade | 7 th Grade | 8 th Grade |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| LUNCH 10:46 - 11:16 (30 min) | Period 4 10:47 - 11:32 (45 min) | Period 4 10:47 - 11:32 (45 min) |
| Period 4 11:20 - 12:05 (45 min) | LUNCH 11:35 - 12:05 (30 min) | Period 5 10:52 - 11:22 (30 min) |
| Period 5 12:09 - 12:54 (45 min) | Period 5 12:24 - 12:54 (30 min) | Period 5 11:26 - 11:56 (30 min) |

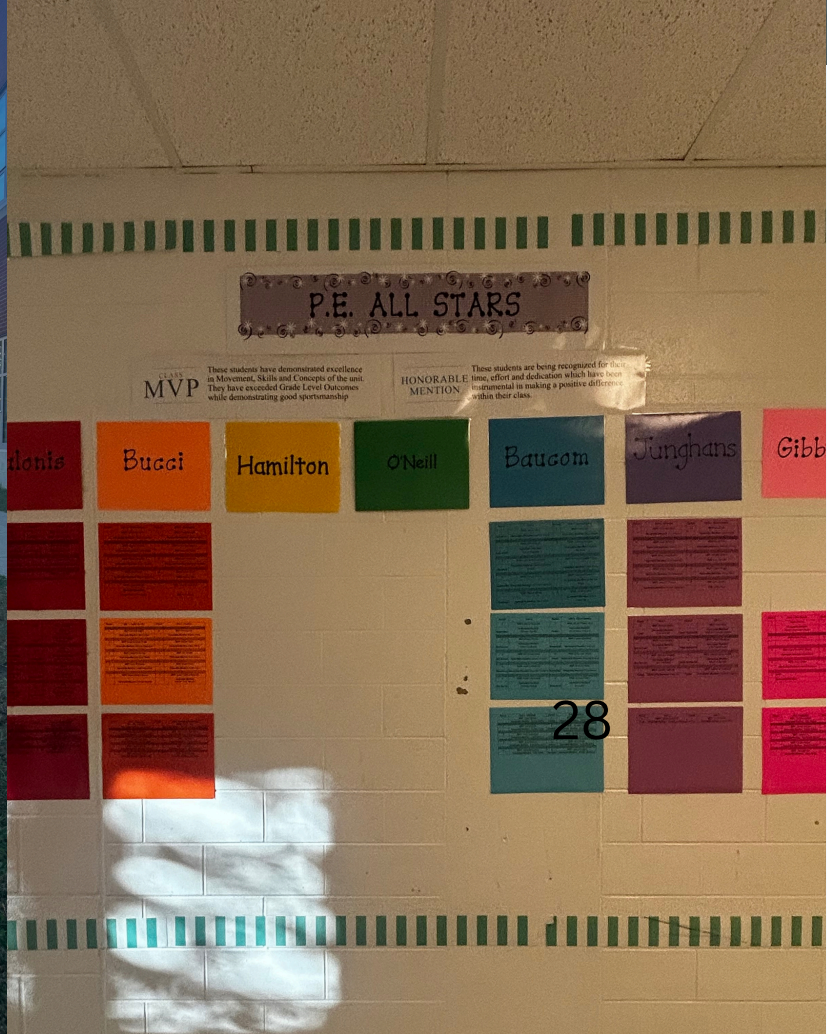
Period 6: 12:58 - 1:43 (45 min)
Period 7: 1:47 - 2:32 (45 min)
Phoenix Time: 2:36 - 3:00 (24 min)

Two Hour Delay (& Testing) Bell Schedule

Period 1: 10:15 - 10:50 (35 min)

Special Extended Schedule

Period 1: 8:15 - 9:00 (45 min)
Period 2: 9:04 - 9:45 (41 min)
Period 3: 9:49 - 10:30 (41 min)



Where are you going after North Bethesda?

By: Olivia Morales

The question everyone asks eight graders, where are you going for high school? In this article I tried to find out where and why the most popular choices are, well, popular. I interviewed a number of my peers to find out the most popular choices. Based on the data I collected, the top three answers were Walter Johnson High School, Montgomery Blair High School, and Richard Montgomery—specifically their IB program.

Starting with Walter Johnson, placing #820 nationally and #14 in Maryland. Walter Johnson was chosen for its accessibility, diversity in the programs, and area. With a graduation percentage of 94% those in WJ mostly felt prepared for college. With a total of 2,984 students WJ is by far definitely one of the most popular choices.

Second, Blair, despite placing #2,340 nationally according to US News and #42 in Maryland, at least from what I understand it is widely considered its students to be very smart. Blair was chosen for its specific STEM program making it a top pick for anyone wanting to go into a field of science, math, or engineering. Blair has a graduation rate of 87.3% with a total of 3,261 students making it the largest school in Maryland by population.

Lastly, Richard Montgomery, placing #640 nationally and 11th in the state. Richard Montgomery was prized mostly for its IB program making the ideal choice for students wishing to study abroad after high school. With a 10.4% acceptance rate it's extremely hard to get into although that definitely does not stop about thousands applying every year. Having a 95% graduation rate and a total student body of 2,450 making it slightly smaller than WJ.

Students aspire to go to many high schools, whether they eventually get in is the real test. Where are you going for high school?

Favorite Things Essay Results and Quiz

By Zelda Snellgrove

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nui9pj3yuaLPFwtT5u5OOw2YUlnFdEiF9Aj9Z1jjvcg/edit?usp=sharing>

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1wNQIVNiinjgvgxyDEenh8mx0beFP51jwGScFRtUXKo4/edit>

Letter to my younger self

Little girl

Don't let those other girls fool you
With your pretty blonde hair
Clothes that don't quite fit you anywhere

Little girl

Don't think you're less
When you walk down the street
People will try to tell you what to think

Little girl

Don't be stuck to people like a traffic light
Remember time will move on
Only if you let it

Remember little girl
no matter what you do

You will never be perfect enough for the mirror
Never let those thoughts linger
You will always feel the need to be thinner

