



First year at UC Berkeley with Hiro Fu.

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G7s share their insights on books they read!

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Senior Calvin Pan shares his thoughts on his final year in Varsity Soccer.

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THE DOMINICAN TORCH

STUDENT NEWSLETTER

"vincit omnia veritas"
—
Truth conquers all.



Issue No. 1 2018-19

DIS Foundation Day: We are One at 61!

By Angela Dao, Gr. 8 St. Catherine of Siena
Photographers: Claire Ko, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano; Silva Lin, Gr. 8 St. Catherine of Siena

"We are 1 at 61!"

DIS celebrated its 61st founding anniversary! The celebration took place in our new gym, and included blessings to another year and a fun program brought by teachers and students! Faculties, students, and parents gathered to celebrate this significant day. We began with a short mass, then watched an emotional rewind video of DIS over the years, and to a fun dance program brought by teachers. Another year signifies the hard work of the DIS family. DIS means a lot to me, and to many others too, for I had been here since kindergarten, and to watch it grow and be very successful warms my heart.

I feel thankful to receive an education in an environment where I feel safe, surrounded by the DIS family. Thank you to our principal Sr. Zenaida Ancheta O.P. and our teachers, faculties, students and parents for helping DIS come this far.



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NJHS Middle School Chapter established!

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Rachel Lee's first year in JV Girls Volleyball!

Behind the Scenes: Preparing the Holy Rosary Culmination

By Nga Voon Helen Ho, Gr. 10 St. Peter of Verona
 Photos: Sr. Rosa Dahbi, C.C.V.

The Dominicans advocate the D'TORCH values, which evince the virtues of us." Like most teenagers and youngsters, whenever I hear these advice, the rebellious nature of me refuses to put those words into my heart. However, during the preparation for the celebration of the most Holy Rosary, I finally realized how Christian teaching and Dominican values have a profound impact on students in DIS.

I first heard of the Rosary activity in early October. Sister Rosa suggested that the students of Grade 10 should organize and plan the activity all by themselves. A few students bravely volunteered.

I spoke to my classmate after class, "I have always admired their courage."

"Do you want to try to plan the celebration?" she replied.

I hesitated, "Maybe, but I am not sure if I can handle such an important event."

"Hmmm...you should try. You know that we are all nice people who will help you if you ask...and most importantly, I believe in you." she encouraged me with a pat on my back.



Although she and I barely know each other, when I was being indecisive she immediately supported me and helped me to regain my confidence. It's another reason that I'm proud to be a Dominican, and proud to be part of this DIS family. Every member of this family is courageous and will encourage those who are not confident in themselves. I have never experienced such heartwarming support outside DIS...

Grade 10s Giving Warmth and Delight to the Elderly

By Jasper Chang Gr. 10 St. Peter of Verona
 Photos: Sr. Rosa Dahbi, C.C.V.

On November 29th, 2018, just one day before the Young Shakespeare Competition, the Grade 10s had the privilege to visit an elder home at Bali, Danshui. Under the supervision of Sr. Rosa Dabhi, CCV, the Grade 10s provided various performances for the elderly, ranging from singing songs to dancing. The Grade 10s brought the joyful Advent spirit to the elders at the Taiwan Catholic Home of the Aged. The participation of the students was unprecedented in the activities we have done before. All Grade 10 students were able to collaborate with each other, volunteer to do specific tasks, and to do their assigned jobs with compassion.



After the visit, all of us felt enlightened. The visit made us understand the circle of life even more profoundly. Furthermore, it helped us acknowledge that there are a lot of people in need in this world. The elders situated at the elder home are already walking to the end of life and often at the last leg of their journeys. However, their attitude towards life is quite astonishing. Instead of sadness, there were smiles everywhere. The positivity of the elders from our performances and their spirit truly made us happy. As we left the elder home, it made all of us reflect that we should lead with a positive attitude in life.

Behind the Scenes: Preparing the Rosary Culmination

By Nga Voon Helen Ho, Gr. 10 St. Peter of Verona
 Photos: Sr. Rosa Dahbi, C.C.V.

(continued from Page 3) "I nodded, "Next time." I aspire, "Next time..."

Time flew and soon we were gathered together to discuss the celebration. The organizers explained each program carefully in great detail. I was stunned, considering their high level of efficiency in such a short period of time. DIS have really trained their students to become great leaders in the future. I looked at the student leaders in the center, admiring their abilities.

I was reminded of my earlier aspiration and volunteered myself to write the script for the MCs. After some discussion, a few fellow classmates and I were appointed.

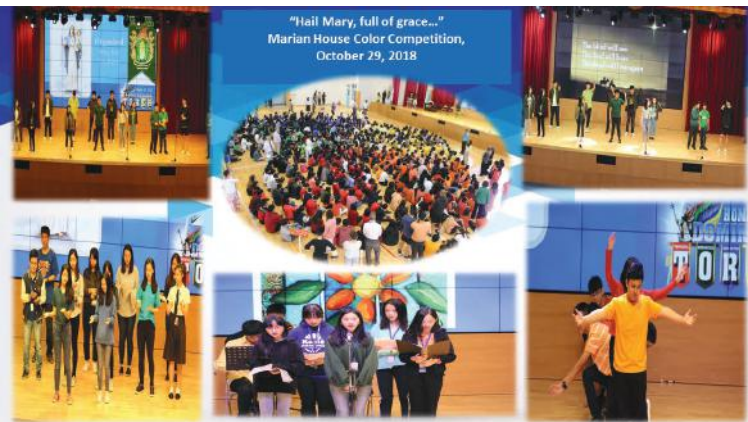
While researching for the Rosary, I realized my ignorance. Growing up in a non-Christian family, I did not know much about Mother Mary, nor the rituals involved. A lot of religious terms confuse me. Sometimes reading English books related to the Rosary makes me feel as if I am reading Latin. I had to search for every single term I encountered and this annoyed me to no end. At the end, I decided to pluck up my courage and asked my Christian friends for help. This act of



The first draft was finished within a week's time. According to the original plan, the MC and student leaders will read the draft first before rehearsing it in front of the class. I nervously fiddled with my fingers as I sat at the edge of my seat and waited for the comments. As it turned out, a lot have to be changed: too many audience interactions, grammatical mistakes...Although I was disappointed and frustrated at myself for making these mistakes, I was relieved at the same time, as God reminded me to be reflective, and not to be too prideful of myself and my abilities.

Finally, the day had come. I sat in the crowd to enjoy the shows performed by my schoolmates. I could see that the audiences were deeply moved by the performances: students from different houses danced and sang songs together, praising the kindness and compassion of Mother Mary. She, who is the Mother of all, must be very proud of our Rosary celebration dedicated to her.

I believe that these memorable performances will engrave in our hearts and when October comes next year, everyone will remember that it's the month of the Most Holy Rosary. Moreover, through this activity Grade 10 students were able to demonstrate their skills and embodied the D'TORCH values. I believe that we will be more prepared to explore unfamiliar areas and knowledge by ourselves now. Hopefully these challenges enrich our experiences and brings us closer to God and Mother Mary as their light guide us in the dark. May God and Mother Mary bless us!



seeking help might seem normal for most people, but it is actually a very big step for me. I am actually a very prideful person. I hate to expose my weaknesses and always think very highly of myself. However, after learning the beatitudes of Jesus, I realized that these worldly values will not lead me to happiness and will prevent me from having a loving relationship with others and with God. Hence I chose to be honest and truthful, just as Dominicans are.

The best YSC play goes to...

By Elton Shih, Gr. 11 St. Anthony of Florence

Photographer: Christina Chuang, Gr. 10 St. Peter of Verona (MIT)

On January 14th, 2019, a momentous event struck our gym as if precious treasure has been found. It was the annual Young Shakespeare Competition's (YSC) awarding ceremony, one which yields astonishing results, leaving every Middle and High School student awestruck. Once all the students gathered in the gym, the ceremony begun. The Grade 8 Language Arts teacher, Mr. Elliott Wakeling was in charge of distributing the awards. "The winner of the play is....." This is a sacred quote, marking the beginning of the awards ceremony. Everyone started to get excited. The Middle School awards were given first: The winning play was "The Parallel Universe" by Grade 6 Bl. Ceslao. The runner-up was "Lost in My Mind" by Grade 8 St. Agnes. Those plays were both comprised of fantastic plots. The best actors and actresses of Middle School were: Kimi Chen, from Grade 7 Bl. Jordan and Minkie Mabasa from Grade 8 St. Agnes, respectively. There were also the awards for the best costumes and props, both were given to the play "The Curse of the Artifact" by Grade 7 Bl. Jordan. The play with the best sound effects and best script was "Lost in My Mind" by Grade 8 St. Agnes. The Middle Schoolers were all talented actors, as were the high schoolers. The best High School play went to "The Virus", by Grade 9 St. Raymond. Next, the best actresses were announced: Cindy Cheng, of Grade 11 St. Anthony, along with the best supporting actors and actresses, Ethan Weng, from Grade 9 St. Rose, and Melissa Zhao, of Grade 10 St. Albert. In addition, the best costume and staging was rewarded to "Playing with Fate" by Grade 10 St. Albert. The best sound effects award was rewarded to "The Key to Salvation", a co-production between Grade 11 St. Anthony and St. Louis. The play "The Virus" by Grade 9 St. Raymond attained the best musical award and best script, aside from being the best high school play this year. In retrospect, this ceremony was undoubtedly an unforgettable one.



From left to right: Ms. Chanting Lee (YSC 2018 Coordinator), Dr. Mercia de Souza (Head of Communication Arts), Sr. Socorro Teofilo O.P. (Vice Principal), Minkie Mabasa, Gr. 8 St. Agnes (Best Actress), Angela Dao, Gr. 8 St. Catherine (Acting Achievement, 3rd place), Ocean Tang, Gr. 6 Bl. Ceslao (Acting Achievement 2nd place).



From left to right: Ms. Chanting Lee (YSC 2018 Coordinator), Dr. Mercia de Souza (Head of Communication Arts), Sr. Socorro Teofilo O.P. (Vice Principal), Ethan Weng, Gr. 9 St. Rose (Best Supporting Actor), Devin Chang Gr. 10 St. Peter (Acting Achievement, 2nd place), Justin Chen Gr. 10 St. Albert (Acting Achievement, 3rd place).

The First NJHS Chapter at DIS is established!

By Tonia Pao and Nandita Chennakrishnan, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano

The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is an organization that not only recognizes students who have achieved academic success, but also other characteristics essential to citizens in a democracy. More than just an honor roll, NJHS serves to honor those students who demonstrate excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Character, and Citizenship.

As a WASC accredited school, the D'TORCH Middle School chapter of NJHS formally began this school year, with Mr. Elliot Wakeling as the Chapter Adviser. The induction ceremony of the new members was held on April 26, 2018 of the previous school year. It formally recognized the students who have been selected by the faculty of DIS for

successfully completing their candidacy and are being inducted as a new member of our NJHS chapter. Silva Lin was elected as the chapter president, Rosemary Ho as the vice president, Nandita Chennakrishnan as the secretary, and Tonia Pao as the treasurer. The other members inducted were Angela Dao, Amber Huang, Claire Ko, Elaine Fang, Kimi Chen, Chelsea Yu, Ethan Hsieh, Jennifer Wang, and Mia Tsai.



The inductees of National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) D'TORCH Chapter with Chapter Adviser, Mr. Wakeling at their induction ceremony on April 26, 2018.

Throughout this school year, NJHS conducted several activities, such as having a donation booth to the WE charity during Masquerade Night. They raised over \$800 US dollars which was then donated to the WE charity with the main focus towards providing education in Ethiopia. NJHS also had a Valentine's Day fundraiser where they donated the money to the same charity, please look forward to our report in the second issue of the newsletter!

Other than fundraisers, NJHS has several projects still in the making and sincerely hopes to complete them in the near future. The NJHS family hopes that their actions will improve not only DIS as a school, but also as one big family. NJHS has also recently selected several students that have proved their ability to serve our school through NJHS. An induction ceremony for the new members for the school year 2019-2020 will be held soon.

If you have any suggestions for our school, NJHS will be glad to hear and respond to them to make our school a better environment for everyone.



The NJHS D'TORCH Chapter raised \$800 USD at DIS Masquerade Night 2018 that was donated to the WE Charity.

Learning Chinese culture through arts and food

By Ms. Chanting Lee
Photos: Ms. Susan Wu

Leading up to Chinese New Year, the Chinese Department invited professionals making dragon-beard candy (龍鬚糖) and dough figurines (捏麵人) to DIS for the Middle and High School students. Teachers were also welcome to listen and participate in making the candy and figurines. In Ms. Susan's Chinese classes, students also had a chance to write their own spring couplets (春聯). Happy Year of the Pig!



Books for Thought: G7 Chinese Book Reports

By Grade 7 Chinese students
Grade 7 Chinese—Q2, Book Report

No. Heidi Hsu

雲吹散，會讓我們的星空更美，更高！這句話展現出了	顯星星，有些星星會被烏雲遮住光。如果我們能幫忙把烏	我認為這篇文章的佳句就是「如果每一個生命都有一	祥的身體開始好轉並能夠過著更像正常人的生活。	知祥祥的情況決定要給予他學習及康復的機會，慢慢的祥	總是期盼能夠融入外面的世界。直到有一天一個基金會得	祥打倒，單純的他總是以微笑來回應一切。渴望自由的他	，還因此無法擁有普通的教育。這些種種難關並沒有將祥	人的身體，不僅成為家人的負擔，也遭受到外界的異樣眼光	的不舒服，卻總是以樂觀的心情來看待自己。他不像一般	而無法說話還缺乏力氣來助於手脚活動。之後因為祥祥	管子來幫助他進食和呼吸。由於這個痛苦的疾病，祥祥不	的重度唇顎裂疾病導致他的鼻子上必須要插上一根長長的	的外號「大象男孩」，他會有這個名字是因為他先天性	既天真又善良的小朋友。但是祥祥從小到大就有一個奇怪	這本書主要是有關一個名叫祥祥的八歲男孩，他是個	出版社：格林文化	書名：大象男孩	讀書心得	詩柏歆
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20行 x 25格 = 500字

“The Elephant Boy (大象男孩)” - a story of a boy learning how to live with his physical disability.

By Heidi Hsu, Gr. 7 St. Thomas of Aquinas (Page 1 of 2)

Books for Thought: G7 Chinese Book Reports

By Grade 7 Chinese students
Grade 7 Chinese—Q2, Book Report

高	我	們	他	生	卻	朝	身	選	為	而	有	面	了	嗎	如	芒	整
他	想	該	們	活	當	著	心	擇	我	更	許	對	解	？	果	芒	篇
們	以	給	努	下	面	前	障	迷	應	加	多	社	了		我	，	文
的	我	予	力	去	對	方	礙	避	該	堅	缺	會	身		們	，	章
燈	的	的	過	，	難	的	的	一	要	強	陷	從	心		幫	，	想
光	奉	並	了	但	關	微	人	切	向	的	，	障	，		助	有	要
，	獻	不	，	最	只	弱	們	，	他	他	但	破	，		他	些	傳
讓	來	是	這	自	會	光	總	我	們	不	會	，	我		們	人	達
星	為	真	是	身	不	芒	是	不	會	願	因	有	，		閃	無	給
空	他	心	我	的	停	繼	試	願	為	去	為	了			得	法	讀
變	們	展	也	光	的	續	著	去	這	面	這	一			更	讓	者
得	的	露	想	芒	後	行	從	面	些	對	些	些			高	自	的
更	世	強	擁	還	退	駛	充	擺	缺	擺	他	些			，	己	意
美	界	毅	有的	是	。或	。相	滿	在	陷	在	們	弱			不	的	思
更	帶	力	的	無	許	對	絕	眼	而	生	雖	勢			可	光	。每
高	來	的	身	法	他	的	望	前	放	活	然	族			以	被	個
。	希	身	心	被	們	活	的	的	棄	在	身	群			讓	釋	人
	望	障	障	世	不	在	世	現	生	幸	心	是			世	放	都
	，	破	破	人	管	幸	界	實	命	福	方	如			界	出	擁
	我	之	之	肯	多	福	裡	。這	，	環	面	不			變	來	有
	想	人	人	定	麼	境	挫	些	我	的	，	只			得	。這	自
	為	點	們	。但	努	的	托	擁	始	相	反	不			更	時	己
	他	。	，	起	力	我	出	有	終	對	面	只			美	，	的
	人			碼	的	，	來	，		的	，	不			好		光
	點									我	反	不					

“The Elephant Boy (大象男孩)” - a story of a boy learning how to live with his physical disability.

By Heidi Hsu, Gr. 7 St. Thomas of Aquinas (Page 2 of 2)

Books for Thought: G7 Chinese Book Reports

By Grade 7 Chinese students
Grade 7 Chinese—Q2, Book Report

謝明蓁 Isabella

NO.

我	和	失	了	找	決	燕	完	給	紅
覺	燕	了	兩	王	定	子	時	鎮	寶
得	子	，	半	子	留	把	，	上	石
這	的	所	。	時	在	他	他	其	送
本	屍	以		，	王	身	卻	他	過
書	體	他		牠	子	此	還	需	去
的	被	請		卻	身	被	是	要	給
住	天	人		在	邊	王	不	幫	他
句	使	把		王	當	子	忍	助	，
是	帶	快		子	他	的	心	的	並
：	到	樂		腳	的	神	看	人	請
：	了	王		邊	雙	情	著	，	燕
：	天	子		凍	眼	與	那	些	子
：	國	拆		死	，	那	善	老	也
：	。	掉		了	，	良	的	百	把
：	。	。		。	王	的	心	姓	一
：	。	而		。	子	而	打	受	對
：	。	據		。	的	動	窮	苦	藍
：	。	說		。	心	，	人	，	寶
：	。	，		。	也	所	家	所	石
：	。	王		。	瞬	以	。	以	眼
：	。	子		。	間	他	。	他	睛
：	。	的		。	裂	也	。	都	送
：	。	心		。	成	請	。	送	去

25字 x 12行 = 300字

NO.

快	到	，	他	突	城	大	雙	家	這	快
樂	他	他	們	然	市	紅	眼	把	本	樂
王	變	什	因	間	時	寶	是	他	書	王
子	成	麼	此	！	，	石	是	稱	在	子
看	了	都	認	一	有	。	用	之	敘	
到	快	不	識	滴	一	快	一	為	述	
了	樂	會	了	珍	天	樂	對	1	一	
一	王	，	彼	珠	色	王	價	快	座	
戶	子	並	此	般	已	子	值	樂	城	
窮	，	不	，	的	暗	很	連	王	鎮	
人	他	知	王	眼	，	受	城	子	上	
家	才	道	和	淚	所	當	的	。	有	
，	看	外	燕	從	以	地	藍	。	一	
：	清	面	子	王	牠	人	寶	。	位	
：	了	的	說	子	去	的	石	。	王	
：	現	世	：	眼	埃	尊	做	。	子	
：	實	界	：	裡	及	崇	成	。	的	
：	。	是	：	滴	過	。	的	。	身	
：	。	如	：	到	冬	。	，	。	上	
：	。	何	：	燕	，	。	劍	。	貼	
：	。	運	：	子	當	。	柄	。	滿	
：	。	作	：	的	他	。	上	。	了	
：	。	的	：	頭	還	。	有	。	著	
：	。	，	：	上	活	。	著	。	一	
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：	。		：	晚	時	。		。	。	
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25字 x 12行 = 300字


“The Happy Prince(快樂王子)” - a story about selfless contributions to the poor.

By Isabella Hsieh, Gr. 7 St. Thomas of Aquinas (Page 1 of 2)

Books for Thought: G7 Chinese Book Reports

By Grade 7 Chinese students
Grade 7 Chinese—Q2, Book Report

NO.



生活於貧窮線下的人們給予關懷並伸出援手。像快樂王子這種施比受更有福的真意，不求回報而付出，自己卻得到了那份最純真、乾淨的快樂。有時候我太以自己為中心，並忘記了幫助別人的道理，一心只想著「好煩，可以趕快結束嗎？」我以這種態度來幫助別人，真的是非常差勁，也同時讓我反省了自己的錯誤和無知。所以，「請別讓任何人欺負了你的善良和真誠！」

25字 x 12行 = 300字

NO.

不住要落淚。當他知道這個世界是如何運作時，他雖然是一個雕像，不過卻比我們還更心疼那些需要幫助的人，真的十分感動。

讀完這本書後，我覺得人人都該向王子學習，他是一位擁有仁厚腸心的王子，但他一開始並不是這樣子，在他仍為人時，只知道「歡笑」，並不知道「眼淚」是什麼，死後的他可能才是他真正的生存價值所在吧！因為他發現了自己的無知、無能，這一點是我們最需要領悟的，他讓我自己明白了「一個善良的人就像一盞燈，照亮了別人，也溫暖了自己，不需要任何強迫，只會互相傳播，所以做人不一定要頂天立地，但一定要善良、真誠。」

現今世界貧富不均，我們不但該珍惜一切，更加要對

25字 x 12行 = 300字

“The Happy Prince(快樂王子)” - a story about selfless contributions to the poor.

By Isabella Hsieh, Gr. 7 St. Thomas of Aquinas (Page 2 of 2)

Take everything one step at a time: Hiro Fu (2018 Alumnus)

By Ginny Hwang, Gr. 12 St. Vincent Ferrer

Please give us a brief introduction of yourself, the university you currently go to, and your major (area of study).

I'm Hiro Fu, currently a freshman studying at UC Berkeley (Go Bears!), double majoring in (intended) Political Science and Media Studies. I graduated from DIS Taipei in 2018.

How does college life compare with your initial expectations of it?

College life is quite different from what you'd expect in high school. After years in DIS, there's an unfamiliar sense of freedom that you now have as a college student. You are provided with resources, such as your professors and academic counselors, as well as a wide range of clubs and



Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

extracurricular activities which are also available for you to

explore. The sheer amount of opportunities is almost overwhelming as you find yourself beginning to plan your schedule weeks beforehand so that you can best utilize your time. I always knew that college life would be different, but only after actually being here did I realize how immensely narrow my perspective on university had been.

What is the best part/worst part of college life?

The best part of college life is definitely the people you are exposed to. This includes your professors, TAs, and your peers. The friends you meet in college may come from all walks in life. While different from your high school experience, they may become your closest friends, or even important people who will help you widen your social circle in college and later in your jobs and careers. On the other hand, socializing is not only as simple as making friends in class. Another aspect of socializing in college is connecting and networking with professional recruiters and alumni. Similarly, reaching out to professors for help and opportunities is equally essential. Hence, stepping out of one's comfort zone may be hard, as I have come to find, especially when initiating a conversation in a professional setting.

How has your high school education affected your life in college?

High school in DIS has certainly given me a lot of time to prepare for college. The tight-knit community is one that I will always remember. In my opinion, your friends from college may be close with you, but it will still be different from those you've spent time with in DIS, especially if



you've studied here since a young age. I think that keeping in touch with my friends from DIS has been very important to me in college.

What advice or word of encouragement would you like to give our current Dominican students regarding their preparation for college?

I think that one can only prepare so much for university—the rest will simply happen. In high school, especially towards senior year, it is easy to worry about how you will adapt to college life, especially when doing senior project as well as advanced placement courses. Honestly, college will throw at you challenges that you've never imagined but worrying about it in advance won't help you. My advice would be taking it one step at a time, stay on track, and you'll do great with all the experience you've gained from DIS. a young age. I think that keeping in touch with my friends from DIS has been very important to me in college.

What advice or word of encouragement would you like to give our current Dominican students.

I think that one can only prepare so much for university—the rest will simply happen. In high school, especially towards senior year, it is easy to worry about how you will adapt to college life, especially when doing senior project as well as Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Honestly, college will throw at you challenges that you've never imagined but worrying about it in advance won't help you. My advice would be to take it one step at a time, stay on track, and you'll do great with all the experience you've gained from DIS.

Adventure on the Moon

By Chloe Fang, Gr. 7 St. Thomas of Aquinas
Grade 7 Language Arts—Q1, Science Fiction.

“Bye!” said the father. The family lived in a moon shelter on the countryside, where there were many crater holes and not many houses. The father worked as an engineer on the moon while the mother worked as a teacher. The parents were going to the city to buy food and water, leaving two boys back at the shelter. It was already past midnight and the parents had warned the boys not to go out.



“Let’s go out and play!” said Stanley, the older brother. He was strong and filled with daredevil maneuvers. “But dad told us not to,” warned Hector, the younger brother. He was two years younger than Stanley but more sensitive and careful. “I don’t care!” said Stanley. Hector sighed, he had a stubborn brother. The boys got in their spacesuits and went out of the shelter.

On the moon surface, the boys were jumping over craters. When Stanley was about to jump over an enormous crater, he slipped and hit the side of the crater tumbling down, out of sight. Hector rushed to the edge of the gully and saw Stanley lying on the ground. His right leg was squished under his body. Hector immediately jumped into the crater to help Stanley.

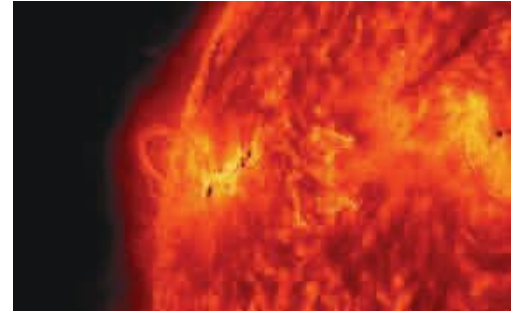
“What happened? Are you OK?” asked Hector.

“I fell down! There’s no electricity in my suit!” cried Stanley, his voice was shaky. “But somehow, the radio isn’t broken.”

“There’s enough oxygen inside the suit for couple hours, I think.” said Hector. “Lean on me. I’ll help you back to the shelter.” Grunting and staggering, the two boys got their way back up to the top of the crater.

Oh my gosh,” said Stanley, “the sun.”

Without electricity, Stanley’s cooling system would not work. Once they were in the sunlight, the temperature would soar up to 250 degrees. “I’m going to boil in my suit!” cried Stanley.



Hector kept on walking. If he stopped for a rest, Stanley might die. Behind them, the blazing sun crept closer and closer to them across the bumpy crater floor. With each every step, Stanley seemed to get heavier. The roasting sun became hotter and hotter. They trudged along for what seemed like hours, the bright sun was burning behind them.

Stanley coughed, “Hard.....to breathe...” he gasped.

“We are almost there! Just a few more minutes!” said Hector. He could see the triangular roof of the shelter in front of them.

“No... air...” Stanley collapsed.

Hector fell down under the full weight of his brother’s unconscious body.

Blinking sweat and tears away from his eyes, Hector stood up again. Grunting, puffing hard, he dragged his brother towards the shelter.

As he pulled his brother into the shelter, he saw their parent’s moon buggy coming towards the shelter slowly.

Stanley woke up. “We made it!” he said. “You saved my life, Hector!”

“Dad’s on his way back.” said Hector. Their parents entered the shelter.

“Did you go outside?” he asked.

Stanley and Hector glanced at each other and smiled. “Nope!”



A few days later, the parents found a broken space suit. Stanley and Hector admitted that they went outside and they got their punishment.

My Final Play for Middle School

By John Michael Ramos, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano
(Middle School Runner-Up Play—Lost in My Mind)
 Grade 8 Language Arts—Q2, Nonfiction Narrative, YSC
 Reflection



"Better three hours too soon than a minute too late."

A quote from the Bard of Avon, otherwise known as William Shakespeare. Shakespeare has always been accredited for having a profound influence on language, literature, theater, and other elements of culture. He was so influential, that our school has established a competition, based on Shakespeare's themes and morals. This competition really challenges students' skills of acting, writing, prop-making, and much more. This event has happened every year since 2007, and every year they announce a new theme for us to compose a play. For this year, the theme given to us was mystery and suspense. My initial reaction was excitement, due to my love of mystery and suspenseful movies and TV shows. However, my time of excitement was cut short after realizing the reality of the situation. Our teachers had reminded us of the rules that were accustomed to us. If the play had any physical fighting, killing, and other forms of violence, the play would consequently lose huge amounts of points, or even be disqualified. Some of us had to tone down our original ideas.

The first thing we had to plan was the plot of the play. A handful of us had suggested some ideas, however, I only really started contributing a lot after we had chosen an idea. I presented my recommendations and attempted to direct the plot onto the best path. Then we had to go through the casting stage, where we all had to choose our jobs for the play. My official jobs were a writer, a minor actor, and a prop maker. I also supported other jobs like sound effects, and assisted the director when in need. I believe that my most productive job was being a writer. At first, I didn't contribute that much, but as I got comfortable with the plot, I was able

to give suggestions and work on problems required to be fixed. I regretted not participating a lot in the beginning, because we could've progressed a lot farther in a shorter amount of time.

At first, our practices weren't very good, because not everyone was focused or motivated. Sometimes we weren't working as a team, we would be working as individuals. I assume those were the forks in the road. The week before dress rehearsals, I believe we were about three to six minutes over the 10-minute mark. Three to six minutes is a lot, so as you can expect, we were a bit stressed out. In order to shorten the time, we decided to cut off the least important scenes of the play. Fortunately for us, this got us on time for the dress rehearsals.

On the day of the play, I felt uneasy for three reasons: 1) *I was worried that our play would go overtime.*

2) *I was bothered that our play was not as good compared to the other classes and that the audience would not like our play.*

3) *I was fretted that something in our play would go wrong, for example, the sound effects not working.* During the play, I was on alert watching what was happening on the stage and making sure that nothing was improperly placed. At the conclusion of the play, I felt satisfied. We didn't have to stress anymore about working for YSC. At that point, everything came to an end, but it felt that it all happened so fast. In comparison to last year, the whole journey seemed a lot shorter.

In conclusion, the Young Shakespeare Competition is a really good way for us to show our talents in theatre. However, this year I don't think we worked as a team as much as last year. It felt more like it was an individual task for most of the intervals. I would like to go back to a quote from the Bard of Avon, "Better three hours too soon than a minute too late." The application of this quote is that being three hours early, you have the time to correct your mistakes. Being one minute late means it's too late to fix the mistakes. My advice for future students participating in YSC is to work continuously, don't leave it to the last minute.



My Young Shakespeare Experience

By Rosemary Ho, Gr. 8 St. Catherine of Sienna (YSC Play: *All in White*)
Grade 8 Language Arts—Q2, Nonfiction Narrative, YSC Reflection

What is suspense? According to the dictionary, suspense is the feeling of anxiousness and excited uncertainty about what may happen.



Speaking about suspense, people might think of mysteries, horror, and murders too. However, if you really think about it, suspense is everywhere: in a love story, a science fiction, even a history textbook! I believe that one can find suspense as long as one is interested in the topic. One of the lessons I learned from this year's Young Shakespeare Competition (YSC) is that suspense is everywhere, how to create that suspenseful feeling all depends on the writer's skills.

Most people looked forward to the annual YSC, that included me. Although we were excited, we struggled through the planning stage. We had to think about a "non-lethal mystery". The teachers encouraged us to think outside the box. We successfully came up with an idea about the mystery. As a writer, I thought the storyline wasn't clear enough to "translate" into a script, so some of the writers sat together for every

practice to discuss the details. As a result, our script turned out pretty well. I learned that communication is very important when it comes to group work, because people might have different ideas, and as a director (or any member), it is very important for me to organize everybody's role so that they can work together. I tried my best to make things organized and well-prepared. However, our first dress rehearsal didn't go well. There were some people who weren't on task, or just didn't want to do the work. My job was to make sure everybody is productive and motivated, so I needed to



push them and be strict. As a director, I started to question whether I should push them strictly or ask them nicely. I chose to be nice and encouraged people to do their work, but they didn't listen to me. Through this experience, I discovered two questions for me to reflect upon: what is the most efficient way to communicate with people (as a leader), and when I am communicating with others, should I push them or not. I also realized how difficult it is to be a leader, and learned some directing skills.

What is motivation? Is it just the passion of doing something? I think motivation also includes the willingness to take the work seriously. For example, everybody likes YSC, but not all of them wanted to do their best or complete their work. I believe that if everybody is motivated, it will improve our group work. Aside from this, there were some people who didn't listen to the feedbacks and comments, this might also be one of the reason why our play wasn't well-prepared. Our play was unprepared: we didn't finish our props, some of the actors still need to improve on their skills.... I think I should've pushed people more, because when they're not motivated, the only source for them to work hard is the harsh leader. I think I've learned my lessons

as a director, and I hope I can avoid the same mistakes in the future.

Although there much difficulties, I still have confidence in our play. I think our play turned out alright, but there are still many parts that we could've improved on. I was amazed by some plays from the other classes, also the fact that their classmates were so humble about the results when they were announced. Through the

experience of YSC this year, I learned an important lesson: have confidence and trust in yourself; at the same time, be humble and reflective.

The Swazi Oracle

By Nandita Chennakrishnan, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano
Grade 8 Language Arts—Q1, Short Story

A long time ago, there was a man named Lwazi. He was one of the Swazi people. He was an ugly, crippled man. He was shunned by everyone in his village and even his own father, Chief Sibusiso, wanted to abandon him. Lwazi was forbidden to touch any hunter weapons because it was said that it would bring bad luck to the tribe. As he couldn't hunt, Lwazi was sent to do the women's work while his brothers would go and kill beasts for the family. Although Lwazi couldn't hunt, he had a secret: he wanted to defeat the Jaguar.



The Jaguar lived in the swamp in the jungle. He spoke prophecies, but only to the man who defeats him. The jungle was very dangerous and any man who tried to defeat the Jaguar had never come back. Although Lwazi knew the tales of those brave men, Lwazi still wanted to try and prove himself. He knew that he could do it. Something was telling him so.

Lwazi had gotten the spectacular idea while he was weaving. Because he couldn't hunt, he would weave baskets with the women. His brothers always laughed at him. Lwazi had so many thoughts running in his mind, and he was grinning so wide that everyone stared at him.

Lwazi immediately got to work. He went to his secret cave and started weaving. He was weaving the biggest net-trap anyone could imagine. Lwazi couldn't fight, but he was intelligent. His plan was to set his trap where the Jaguar would be and the net would spring when the Jaguar woke up.

Lwazi spent the rest of the day working on the trap and when night fell, he started his journey through the jungle. He knew that what he was going to do was dangerous, but he didn't care. He wanted to prove himself worthy.

Lwazi walked very slowly to the swamp. Carrying the huge trap was not helping. He stopped several times. Lwazi was surprised that nothing came to attack him in the treacherous jungle. It was as if the creatures were told not to attack him.

As Lwazi moved deeper into the jungle, he began questioning himself, wondering if he was attempting something impossible.

At last, he reached the swamp and Lwazi could see the mighty Jaguar on a rock, sleeping. As quiet as possible, Lwazi started working. He hung the net on a tree branch just above the rock. It took time, but by dawn, the trap was ready.



Lwazi hid by a tree and heard the mighty Jaguar wake with a roar. He was terrified. He didn't want to think of the bad things that could happen. The Jaguar then stretched its legs and finally stood up. Lwazi let go of the vine and the trap landed on the Jaguar. It kicked and tried to get the net off but the vines from the net wouldn't give.

"Let me see the face behind this!" thundered the Jaguar.

Lwazi came out from the trees and said, "It was I."

The Jaguar was astonished, "Get me out of this so you may hear the prophecy," he snapped.

"Yes, of course!" replied Lwazi and he started to cut the vine.

Lwazi worked slowly and carefully, he didn't want to harm the Jaguar. When he finished, the Jaguar growled so loud, he was sure the whole of Africa heard it. Then it narrated the prophecy.

"There comes a day when the horned-one returns, and a surrender shall mark an age of death."

Lwazi thanked the Jaguar and returned to his village. When he got back to retell the story, everyone was astounded. All the villagers congratulated him, including his brothers. Lwazi narrated the prophecy and it was carved on the sacred rock where it remains till this day.

Deagon Donalds Drought Buster

By Amber Huang, Gr. 8 St. Catherine of Sienna
Grade 8 Language Arts—Q2, A Tall Tale

“I can’t bear this anymore,” said a little girl standing out her porch, staring out at the scorched lands. After incredibly long months of the water sucking drought, the people of Australia were losing hope and couldn’t wait anymore for just a speck of rain. *The crops were dying, the farmers and people were panicking,* “What are we going to do?” they screamed inside their heads. They gathered together and discussed this.

The little girl’s father whose name we don’t know said, “I know a person who can help.” “Who?” asked someone in the crowd. “Deagon Donalds,” the man replied.

This man was once friends with Deagon’s parents, sadly they had died, but nevertheless he had contact with Deagon. The man sent him a post saying that they needed urgently, his help and support.

So Deagon Donalds set out from his small (rather large) home in Arizona to Australia. He couldn’t fit into the plane, so he went by boat, but the crew had to knock down a wall between two rooms and add two more beds for him to sleep comfortably. He was thrice the size of a normal person of 170 centimeters (510 centimeters). Despite these problems, he finally got to Australia.

When he arrived, the old man told everyone to gather around.

“This is Deagon Donalds, he will help us with the disastrous droughts with his great jumps, big hands, and the ability to talk to animals.” he said.

A lot of people doubted him. Deagon Donalds got to work thinking with his great brain. He knew he couldn’t do this alone, so he called his great friend the Steel hippo (Steely). She listened to his ideas and agreed to help him.

He set his plan into action, but needed a pair of heat resistant gloves. The factories almost ran out of leather, because it needed to be durable, extremely heat resistant, and able to fit his big hands. The workers made and remade so many gloves that they had to stop making other gloves for sale and stay overnights for almost a whole month. Finally they produced the largest and most durable heat resistant leather gloves anyone has ever seen. He put them on as easily as putting on a ring. Using his great ability to jump, he bounded from Earth to the sun and using his leather gloves, pushed the sun a little bit closer to Earth that led the oceans to evaporate a little quicker. Then, Deagon bounded back.



The next thing on the list was to build some dams and water reservoirs. People were asking why.

“Because the Sun is evaporating the oceans around Australia at a quicker pace, so we need the dams and reservoirs beforehand.” replied Deagon.

“So?” asked the father. “Then I will ask my friend, Steely, to help me.” said Deagon. The old man’s eyes widened, “The Steely? The hippo who could make the sky tremble with her ferocious stomps?”

“Yep, that’s her, but she isn’t ferocious.” defended Deagon.



The old man looked very tiny and small staring up at the giant. Deagon was so tall and big that he had to bend down very low in order to be able to talk and listen to the people.

Deagon called the Corps, who were a group of animals who could build anything you want. There were elephants, zebras, kangaroos, giraffes, beavers, horses, and many more. Each

of these animals had their own part to do. All the work was done in a few weeks because they cooperated so well.

The final move was rain. Steely began to stomp, jump, and even rolled around. Everybody held dearly, onto something that was rooted to the ground. The ground shook like an angry earthquake and the sky trembled so much. There were too many water droplets for the clouds to withhold, so down they went. The people leaped, laughed

and cried with joy. *At last, beautiful rainwater!*

The people and animals threw a thank you party for Deagon Donalds. The drought was so bad that even the animals were grateful. The people learned that farmers were very important and played an important role in the society. The people respected them and knew how hard working they were, without them, there would be no food. This is why there are some floods, storms, and earthquakes in Australia.

Bulletproof

By Vera Pao, Gr. 8 St. Catherine of Sienna
Grade 8 Language Arts—Q1 Short Story

I sit in the last row of Algebra with my best friend Jenna, scribbling ideas for the march I'm organizing for my senior project. Ms. Archis is rambling something about formulas and suddenly, *I hear the scariest noise on Earth – BANG BANG!*

The class becomes so quiet you could hear a pin drop. We look at each other in horror, scared to confirm what we just heard.

I snap to my senses. I've read about these situations. "What we just heard were two gunshots. Everyone stay calm- switch off the lights and lock the door." Someone scrambles to the light switch and I lock the door.

"Stay on the floor. We have to evacuate the school." I command. I feel cold, as if my whole body is being dipped in icy water.



I feel goosebumps crawling up my skin. "Let's use the school map to check which emergency exit we're closest to. Ms. Archie hands me the map. I glance around the classroom: students are backed up on the wall- texting their families, trying to stare a hole into the walls, crying.

"The closest exit is at the end of the hall." I want to sit with the others and sob in my own corner, this is too overwhelming. "Okay, we're going to just run and if you see the shooter, throw anything you can find at the shooter!"

We are just about to leave the classroom when we hear footsteps. They're getting closer- *Boom. Boom.* No one dares to breathe. I feel a tear fall and I taste the saltiness, trying desperately to stay calm.

We wait a few minutes and the footsteps fade. Jenna peeks through the window. "It's clear- let's go." She whispers agitatedly. We quietly open the door, clutching scissors, textbooks, doorstops- everything. We run towards the exit.

Everyone throws everything at the shooter. People are throwing bags, chairs even. It's chaos.



I wait for Jenna at the exit as I help other students escape. I motion for her to move, and suddenly, it's like time is frozen. I scream for her to stop but it's too late, Jenna's already running. All I see is a figure holding a rifle and Jenna's petrified face as crimson explodes from her leg. "CECILIA!" She screams my name. My face becomes pale, and I look like I've just seen a ghost.

I run as fast as lightning out of the school. "My friend's in there, and she was shot in the leg. Please go help her; the shooter is still in there!" I look up at the officers pleadingly as someone puts a blanket around me.

The officer speaks into his walkie-talkie, "There's a girl in there." I hear a buzz, and ten SWAT officers carrying huge guns rush into the building.

I'm trembling, and the image of Jenna keeps replaying in my head- her petrified face, the crimson blood gushing out of her leg, her scream for help. And my first instinct was to RUN. What kind of friend am I?

Jenna's father runs toward me and the veins in his neck are exploding. "Where's Jenna? Is she inside?"

"Yes, she's still inside. It's all my fault, I'm so sorry!" I stammer as my mom puts her arm around me.

Jenna's dad collapses onto the ground. The look in his eyes is empty, lifeless. Suddenly the paramedics next to the ambulance push a stretcher towards the exit. I stand up, the blanket falling to my feet. Two SWAT officers are carrying Jenna, whose leg is covered in blood. Jenna's father runs to the stretcher and they get her in the ambulance.

The next day, the whole class visits Jenna at the hospital. Everyone brings balloons, teddy bears, and flowers. We're all still a little traumatized, but we will get through it together. "Hey, there's a march tomorrow for gun control- anyone in? We have to share our experience as victims." Everyone raises their hands, and we grin at each other.

I only have three words left to say: *we are bulletproof.*

JV Girls Volleyball with Rachel Lee

By Michelle Hsu, Gr. 11 St. Anthony of Florence

Describe what a typical day at volleyball practice was like.

Typically, we would start the practice with cardio workout first to strengthen our physical strength and core. For example, we would do suicides, run up and down the stairs, and so on. After we are done with cardio workout, we would start bouncing the volleyball on the ground with a partner. We would use our full strength to bounce the ball on the ground. This helps our arms to get stronger which is essential in spiking. Then, we would bump and set with our partner. After our warm up, we would actually get into skills training like spiking, serving, receiving, and dives. Then finally, we will play mini volleyball games against each other.

Describe your coach and teammates.

Coach Erwin is very enthusiastic and eager to help the players improve. He is very chill and always tries to think in our shoes. My teammates include seniors, juniors, sophomores, and freshmen. They really are the most amazing and lovely group of girls.

What have you learned about teamwork from being on this team?

This is my first year in this school, meaning that I worked with new coaches and teammates this year. I was afraid that our teamwork wouldn't be good. However, my teammates helped me adjust and fit well into the team. From this, I learned that teamwork really is important and that it is one of the factors that leads to the success of a team.

How did your team make you a better player?

My teammates made me a better player by encouraging me to work harder. Not only did they encourage me with words, but also with their actions. Sometimes, I really didn't want to do the workout, but my teammates always encouraged me.



Words of advice/encouragement for younger athletes.

JOIN THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM! JOIN THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM! JOIN THE VOLLEYBALL TEAM!
VOLLEYBALL IS THE MOST AMAZING SPORT YOU'LL EVER ENCOUNTER!

Did you have any time management issues ?

"I can't say I didn't have any time management issues. Volleyball is my greatest passion; however, time was really hard to manage. Log practices and people-packed MRTs would tire me out. When I get home, I really want to take a nap, but I showered first. After I showered, it was time for dinner (around 7:30 p.m). After I ate dinner, I would start on my homework, projects, and review for tests. However, time wasn't enough and my body was very tired. The cycle of not getting sleep kept occurring, but it was all worth it.

How did you and your team handle losses ?

Losses are always hard to deal with. They really aren't fun. However, what can we do except shake it off? When our team lost some games, we just had to shake it off and move on to the next game.

Describe your highlights during volleyball season

My highlight this season will probably be the Varsity tournament. It was really great working with the seniors and the juniors this year. They were all very nice and caring. In the Varsity tournament, our team had a lot of fun. We spiked, served, and received very well. I certainly can say that we really gave our best and enjoyed our time in Kaohsiung.

Funniest memory!

Probably, the funniest memory is the balls bouncing off of Coach Erwin's head.

Calvin Pan's final year in Varsity Soccer

By Michelle Hsu, Gr. 11 St. Anthony of Florence

How long have you been playing soccer in DIS?
5 years

What was your fondest memory of playing this sport?
The JVB Soccer Tournament back in Grade 9. At that time we did not have enough players to actually compete, so we had to ask random classmates to join and practice with us. While most of our team members were pretty new to soccer, they came to practice every time and were determined to win. We trained for one and a half months and attended the tournament. We played a total of three games and we won one and lost one, which gave us the opportunity to play for the bronze medal. We were up against KSS and it was a pretty stale game until they scored a goal which made us extremely worried. It was the last minute of the game and we earned a corner. Siwon crossed the ball into the box and everyone was just kicking around in all directions until the ball somehow bounced towards me at the edge of the box and I volleyed that ball top right into the goal, which tied up the game. After an intense extra time, it was all down to penalties. Even though I missed the penalty, the team was able to score every other penalty and our goalie, Junyi, blocked every penalty the opponent took. It was a surprise to everyone that a team with many beginners won 3rd place in their first High School tournament.



What is your biggest accomplishment? What do you hope to accomplish in the future?
My biggest achievement was being able to play in a soccer academy out of school. It was totally different from playing in school because of the level of difficulty and competitiveness. It was nice being selected to be a part of that team.

As a senior at DIS, what will you miss about being on the soccer team?
I'll miss being able to play soccer with my friends and have fun. It is unlikely that I will be able to continue playing soccer after graduating, so this is the last year I can actually play competitively.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your desire and determination to succeed in soccer? (10 = Extremely high; 1 = Non-existent)
10/10 straight up! At times I would go out alone at night just to practice some free kicks or just kick the ball in general so I can get more confident or better during games. I always try to do my best not only in practices but also in games.

If you could play for any professional team, who would you play for?
I would like to play for Chelsea FC!

Any advice for younger ones wanting to pursue soccer in high school?
Keep working hard even if you lose one or two games before the tournament! Always stay motivated and encourage your teammates to do their best. Soccer is very unpredictable so never stop running until the last whistle is blown.

How do you handle stress and pressure?
Playing soccer is my favorite way to relieve stress because I can just launch the ball at any direction as hard as I can, and the relief that I get after doing that is like dayumm son!! Skr skr!

If I called your coach right now and asked him what is an area that you could improve on, what would he say?
Probably stamina... My stamina is full on trash.

Out of all sports, why soccer?
I used to hate soccer until G5 when I started to play goalie for our school's soccer team back in Shanghai. I played goalie for three years and when I moved back to Taiwan, I decided to stop playing goalie because I thought it was boring. When I first joined the G8 soccer team at DIS, I told the coach that I played midfield, and somehow it worked out? From standing between two goal posts, I started to dribble past players and scoring. From that point, I realized that soccer is my favorite sport. The amount of creativity you can perform on the playing field is much larger than any sport. Soccer is unpredictable, the process of trying to score and the thrill of going past defenders is the reason why I love playing soccer.

Top 10 Movies of 2018

Compiled by Judy Ki, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano from IMDb

- 1) *Avengers : Infinity War*
- 2) *Mission : Impossible*
- 3) *Black Panther*
- 4) *A Star is Born*
- 5) *Incredibles 2*
- 6) *Crazy Rich Asians*
- 7) *Aquaman*
- 8) *Bohemian Rhapsody*
- 9) *Ralph Breaks the Internet*
- 10) *Annihilation*



Top 10 Books of 2018 For Teenagers

Compiled by Judy Ki, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano from Bookbub



- 1) *The Cruel Prince* by Holly Black
- 2) *Before I Let Go* by Marieke Nijkamp
- 3) *Truly Devious* by Maureen Johnson
- 4) *The Hazel Wood* by Melissa Albert
- 5) *The Belles* by Dhonielle Clayton
- 6) *Broken Beautiful Hearts* by Kami Garcia
- 7) *Honor Among Thieves* by Ann Aguirre and Rachel Caine
- 8) *The Traitor Prince* by C. J. Redwine
- 9) *Heart of Iron* by Ashley Poston
- 10) *People Like Us* by Dana Mele

Upcoming Movies in 2019

Compiled by Judy Ki, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano from IMDb

- 1) *Alita: Battle Angel*
- 2) *The Lego Movie 2: The Second Part*
- 3) *Captain Marvel*
- 4) *Dumbo*
- 5) *Shazam!*



Upcoming Books in 2019

Compiled by Judy Ki, Gr. 8 St. Agnes of Montepulciano from Bookbub



- 1) *Again, but Better: A Novel* by Christine Riccio
- 2) *Wicked Saints* by Emily A. Duncan
- 3) *Sorcery of Thorns* by Margaret Rogerson
- 4) *Romanov* by Nadine Brandes
- 5) *Two Can Keep a Secret* by Karen M. McManus

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