

# visions



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## REFLECTIONS ON WOMEN

The dream was an illusion, holding sweet blasphemy and poisoned thoughts. It was nonetheless the reflection of the deeper inner part of the twisted mind, the mirror to the unconsciousness. The forbidden pleasures found their home in its beauty, but so did the regretted memories and deepest fears that haunted its darkest corners, pursuing the tortured, devouring the last pieces of sanity he had left.

The shadows from the hurtful past surfaced in the ugliest, most unimaginable forms, twisting the knife in the wound, leaving irreparable damage behind. His bleeding couldn't be stopped, his eyes and hands already stained with his own permanent blood he was



desperately struggling to hide for fear of being caught. His unforgivable crime must remain in the shadows of his memory, burdening his entire existence and dreams, shattering the last piece of hope he had left. He was already surrounded by hatred himself. The expected punishment must never come. The crime must never be revealed at any cost. But it was already too late.

Rita Bou Ghosn -S3LH



Lundy Bancroft once said, "Has he ever trapped you in a room and not let you out? Has he ever raised a fist as if he were going to hit you? Has he ever thrown an object that hit you or almost did? Has he ever held you down or restrained you? Has he ever shoved, poked, or grabbed you? Has he ever threatened you? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then we can stop wondering whether he'll ever be violent; he already has been."

Women don't deserve any of this. They should be the queens of the

homes they make for their children. Never let a man lay his hands on you without your permission. It's your body not his. Raise your voice and tell him NO! You are as strong as he is and even stronger if you believe in your power to change the way you are treated. A woman is not less than a man and vice versa. We are in the 21st century and this is not acceptable anymore. A man who believes that he has the right to do anything he wants to a woman as if she were an object has to be stopped immediately. This is not the society we want to be living in. This is not how we want our children to be raised. We neither want aggressive men nor weak women. Please, don't sit around waiting for him to feel remorse because he's clearly not going to leave you alone until he harms you. Don't be afraid to look out, leave, and search for your happiness. Trust me; there is a better life out there you should be living.

Joy Jreije- S2H

### TIME TO BREAK SILENCE

A swollen arm, a broken smile, bumpy walks... Bad accidents and pitiful looks! They say when you love someone, you are ready to go through the worst for them. But then, he starts raising his voice and hands, hurting you and claiming it's your fault. Is 'love' still worth it? Nothing would justify violence. Not the slightest cause would give him the green light to touch you without your permission. Violence is never a solution; it just shows how weak the person is. Fight back! break the silence, say No to violence instead of dying every day, slowly and silently.

Myriam Khairallah-S2H



He says  
it won't  
happen  
again



# WHEN THE WORKPLACE BECOMES A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE

## LIFETIME EXPERIENCE



In our modern world, the idea of doing something for free sounds very strange. The societies have oriented themselves toward success and profit, and people using their skills to sell and advertise. Though the idea of working for free is not encouraged, volunteering is the greatest example of how working pays in experience rather than in money. It can be said that everyone should try volunteering at least once in a lifetime. Volunteering is one of the easiest ways to obtain work experience for future employers to hire us. Statistics show that most employers prefer to hire a person with work experience.

Moreover, volunteering is a great way to socialize and meet people with similar aspirations though the majority of teenagers would rather stay at home and watch a movie, or go out with their friends to have some fun. As Elizabeth Andrews said, "volunteers do not necessarily have the time, they just have the heart." In fact, surprising research studies connected with helping other people show that people involved in helping others undergo a beneficial therapy. According to some research, about half of those involved in volunteering in the last two years felt relief and improvement in their mental condition. As stated by CVS's research, volunteering helps reduce work-related stress and boosts productivity.

All these facts prove that volunteering is a great alternative to a number of other activities and can help score a future job. At the same time, it makes us more sociable even though we would rather do something fun. It also decreases the levels of stress we are exposed to in our normal daily life. Therefore, we might want to take volunteering into consideration as soon as possible.

**Mariam Fakhry -S1G**

## COLLABORATION IN THE WORKPLACE



Georges B. McClellan once said, "The union, which can alone ensure internal peace and external security, must and shall be preserved." Since the beginning of time, people have created close-knit communities to increase their productivity. With union comes strength, and this strategy is rather effective on both mental and physical

states. Teamwork enables employees to be more effective in their work, as compared to people who work on projects of their own. Collaborating also makes employees more responsible, which helps raise their motivation levels.

In the first place, teamwork increases productivity because the employees work as a group contributing to the general welfare of the place by using their unique skills and mindsets. When members of a team collaborate, they are able to utilize the knowledge, experience and skills of everyone involved. Most successful businesses today are built on the collaborative work of different team members. For example, Steve Jobs did not work alone on the ideas; his friend and co-founder Steve Wozniak helped him engineer and design the first apple computers. Let's also consider Bill Gates, the great chairman of Microsoft. He, at first, got support from his friend Ben Allen who played a crucial role in Microsoft.

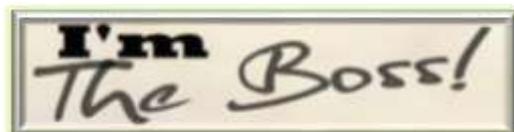
Secondly, teamwork not only divides the tasks among the employees, but also assigns each task to the most qualified person; therefore, the quality and the productivity of the work will increase. Generally speaking, productivity is the combination of both intelligent planning and focused efforts. Thus, collaboration provides every team member with equal opportunities to share his ideas.

To sum up, working with other employees not only boosts the effectiveness of the work, but also increases its quality. In my opinion, through teamwork, we can achieve a brighter future; and if employers want to see their businesses prosper and turn their employees into productive superheroes, it's high time they fostered a collaborative spirit among them.

Robin Karaa -S3SG

## ADVANTAGES OF BEING SELF -EMPLOYED

Aaron Patzer once said, "Turn a perceived risk into an asset." Many young people are faced with the dilemma of "to be or not to be." Life is challenging and risky. Every



constitution or rather every country in its civil rights keeps “the right to work” to all its citizens. Nowadays, we all have equal opportunities. The question lies in which path to follow.

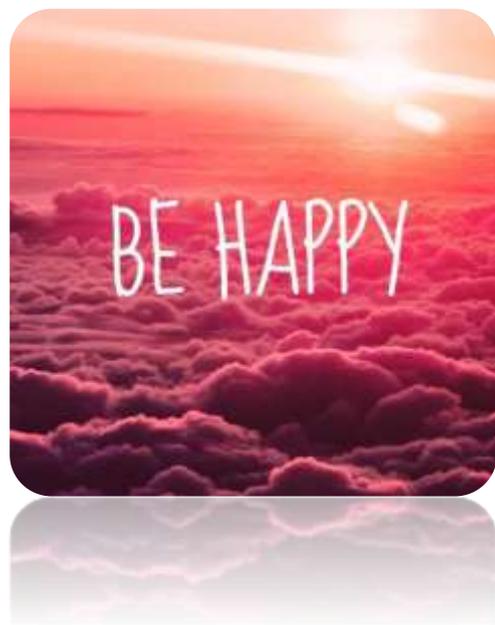
First, being self-employed grants you the opportunity to be the boss and impose your own rules. A freelancer will never be shouted at or have a reduction in his salary. Moreover, owning a business gives you the chance to follow your goals, to dream bigger and to achieve success faster and more efficiently. For example, a young entrepreneur in his thirties or mid- forties can have his own company and open multiple businesses with a greater income and much more resources. The longer the time you spend in self-employment, the more confident you become in your ability to survive and thrive on your own, regardless of the situation. When you work for yourself, you’re in control of your own destiny.

Being self-employed has its privileges, its power and its glory. It offers a potential lifestyle you’ll never realize as an employee, but if you don’t have the capability or the resources to run your own business, will you be forced to give up on your dreams?

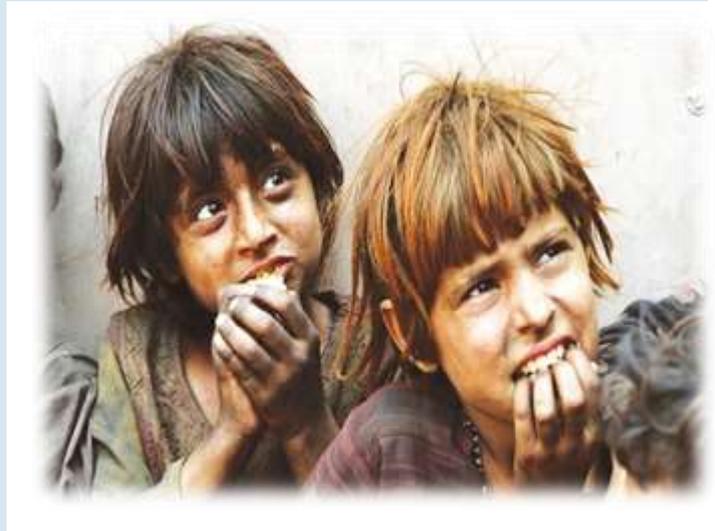
Michel Chbeir- S3SG

## THE HAPPIER THE HEALTHIER

**S**teve Jobs once said, “The only way to great work is to love what you do”. Most people spend their lives doing work they hate. It is of prime importance that you learn early what you want to do, and whether or not the world needs this service. Income is not money. It is satisfaction, creation and beauty. To begin with, the most important thing a worker should feel when he gets home after a tiring day of work is satisfaction. He needs to be satisfied with what he has accomplished throughout the day. For example, doctors save lives daily; all they do is help people to be healthier and safer. The satisfaction that a doctor feels when he thinks about his job should be what you feel when you think about yours. In fact, being happy at work attracts more acquaintances because people want good hospitality. No one is going to visit a restaurant if the waiters are frowning and serving cold dishes. Moreover, your job should be the place where you develop your creativity. At the end of the day, when you look at your creation, you will feel you have helped improve the world. For instance, when a fashion designer dresses his models and people see his clothes fitting them perfectly, he will feel rewarded.



Furthermore, beauty comes after hard work and love. If a worker doesn't love what he does, the masterpiece won't be attractive. Ultimately, your happiness depends on how good you feel about yourself at work. As an illustration, when a choreographer trains his dance crew to produce a choreography he loves, the audience will be dazzled on show day. Everyone will see the love they put in their dancing to create beauty. To sum it all up, the most important thing is to realize that your job does not define you, but how you do it does. Do your job with compassion love, and excitement. Find the significance in what you do and remember: while you are searching for that perfect job, enjoy the way you are doing your present one.



Jana Obeid -S2H

## THE WORLD OF LOST HUMANITY

A famous writer once said, "A person's most useful asset is not a head full of knowledge, but a heart full of love, an ear ready to listen and a hand willing to help others!" This quote depicts the importance of humanity. These days, I hear news on women's violence, child abuse and other inhumane acts reported all over the world. All these incidents make me think: do we, humans, still have humanitarian roots? Do we still have faith in the good?

We are all born receptive to love, kindness and hope. However, as we grow older, we begin to lose our feelings and be more materialistic. We all know that racism, discrimination, slavery, terrorism, torture, and abuse are unacceptable, yet we do nothing to end them. People have lost their human values. They are just like machines. They behave like ones: obey the superior commands blindly-without feeling anything, thinking about anything, or questioning anything.

Let's not pretend that we can't see, hear or feel it. Let's not let problems become mundane and we sit arms-crossed. Let's open our eyes and stop being bewildered by money while walking into an endless maze! Let's give a hand to help since we have two: the former for helping ourselves and the latter for helping others. While we can't help everyone, everyone can help at least someone. Let's not be proud of our achievements unless we achieve some victory for humanity!

After all, we are here to heal not to harm, to love not to hate, to create not to destroy. Change depends on each one of us. We, young people, just have to get rid of materialistic things, unite with our souls and equip ourselves with high ideals.

**Samantha Daige- S2S**

## REMEDY TO MIND AND SOUL

People have always been surrounded by the sounds of nature from birds chirping to raindrops falling down. Symphonies have all along accompanied them and been an important part of their lives. Their voices were used to express their emotions, whether they were happy or sad. Music was used to thank the gods for their gifts or to declare the start of wars with trumpets and drums, flooding the veins of the warriors with adrenaline, encouraging them to obtain victory. People have always turned to forms of art whenever they felt the need to express emotions. Music is indeed one of the innumerable forms of art. It has actually a unique language that reaches out to people's hearts and souls touching them with this unexplainable aura. Music



nowadays has proven to be beneficial because it is an effective way to express feelings, release stress and even increase intelligence and concentration.

Songs, nowadays, spread worldwide messages that generations can relate to through expressing the hardships of heartbreaks to the beauty and magic of love. Songs grab people's attention and express deeply-buried feelings. Some songs, for example, give the listener a piece of hope to hold on to, thus prevent suicide.

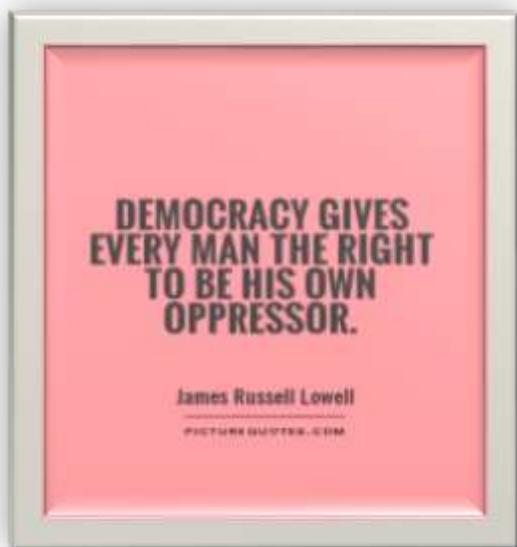
Furthermore, Music is the best way to unveil emotions because it touches the soul. Not only does it help to focus better, but also helps overcome other thoughts. The mind often looks like a cluttered room, with no free space and no place to move. When you empty your room, it will look bigger, tidier, and more pleasant. You are not probably always aware of the restlessness of your mind since you got accustomed to it. However, listening to music when you're in bed on a late night, banging your head against the wall trying to sleep, will help you stop the flow of

thoughts and wind down. It is widely known that listening to classical music before important tests will increase your chances of having better results.

In a nutshell, music is a soul healer. It helps people relax and express their own worries. And indeed the differences in humans' characters become similarities when music comes in between to generate people's self-confidence, self-esteem and sense of joy. It is one of the most powerful remedies to heal wounds and open up the senses. Shouldn't we introduce music more in our educational systems at schools, for its magical power to change the world?

**Rita Abou Ghosn/ Jonar Salameh- S3LH**

## THE BEST POLITICAL IDEOLOGY



Since the evolution of mankind, sedentism has taken on a different meaning. From nomadic societies to living in groups permanently, Man has found it necessary to create fair rules to organize things around him. It all began when Confucius, a Chinese philosopher, initiated political ideas preceding the Romans. These ideas gave birth to various ideologies. The most important ones are: democracy, which makes the citizens the rulers, and dictatorship, which uses violence and force to define itself. Democracy is beneficial for a better world

because it gives everybody equal rights and some power regardless of anyone's social status. However, dictatorship is advantageous, for it controls people's lives in a disciplined way.

First of all, democracy is favorable for a better world because it gives people equal rights. In fact, citizens can vote for their political party and choose their leader. For instance, in the United States of America, both the Democratic Party and the Republican one can elect their leader from among their members. Then, the leader represents the party in political elections. The elected representatives serve the party's interests. In other words, democracy gives the people some sort of power. When the citizens don't get their rights, they will lead a revolution. In Tunisia, for example, the revolution pushed the people to revolutionize against their ruler; consequently, revolution gave the citizens the right of rebellion, and citizens became stronger than their ruler.

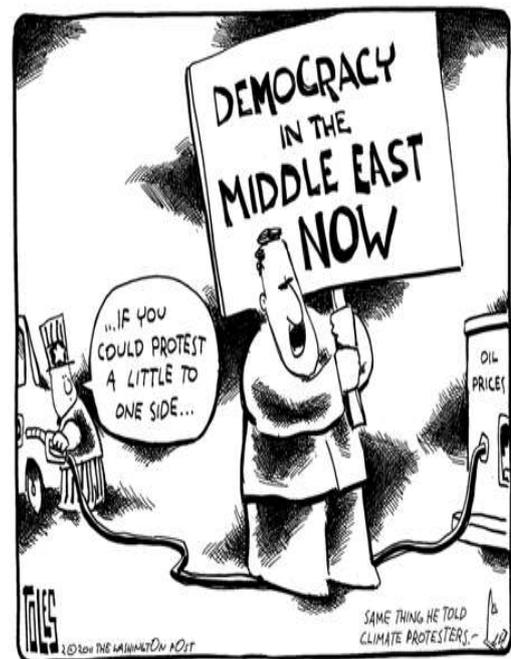
However, I believe that dictatorship is a better system of development.

Dictators focus more on their goals and vision of running progressive countries. They are more capable of modernizing their countries. Confucius once said, "The rulers are the wind and the citizens are the flowers. The superior man does what is proper to the situation in which he is; he does not desire to go beyond this. In a position of wealth and honor, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honor. In a poor and low position, he does what is proper to a poor and low position. Situated among barbarous tribes, he does what is proper to a situation among barbarous tribes. In a position of sorrow and difficulty, he does what is proper to a position of sorrow and difficulty. The superior man can find himself in no situation in which he is not himself." This quote depicts the

importance of a good ruler. The dictator organizes people's lives and compels them to work for the benefit of the society. As an illustration, Kim Jong Nam, Former Chairman of the Workers Party of Korea, placed Korea on the world's top economic scale before his sudden death on his way to hospital. His dominating personality and complete power defined North Korea and made it the country it is now.

To conclude, both democracy and dictatorship have their advantages and drawbacks. The world is increasingly moving forward, and democracy remains the best ideology that runs the world. It is better to live in a state that gives rights than to live in a society that treats people like robots.

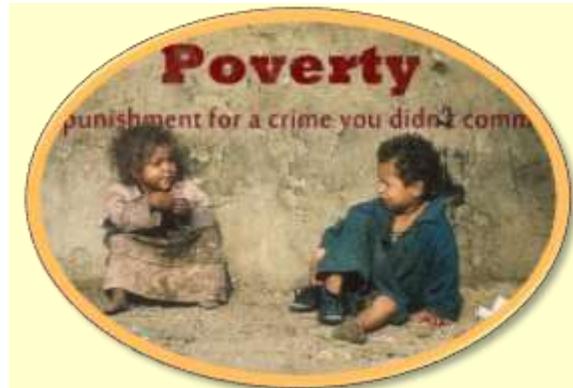
**Tina Hourany- S3SV**



## PROBLEMS OF OUR WORLD

### POVERTY AND STARVATION IN THE WORLD

**N**owadays, the world is facing severe problems some of which are drug abuse, population growth, climatic changes and refugees' crises to name some. However, poverty is the principal cause of hunger. Most people eat five times a day, but the food waste is enough to fill the stomachs of these poverty-stricken people in the world. Do you know what being starved feels like? Do you know that there are people out there specially kids sleeping with empty stomachs? Do you know that every 6 minutes, a



child dies in Africa? How can you sleep at night, stomachs full, knowing that in the other part of the world some starve to have a bite? You should appreciate what you have: good health, a happy family, sweet friends, and a full fridge.

Dr. Norman Ernest Borlaug once said, "you can't build a peaceful world on empty stomachs and human misery." You certainly need to do something about it and make the world a better place to live in.

*Gaëlle Menassa - S1G*

**T**he most dangerous problem we're facing nowadays is the indifference and the neglect regarding the excessive waste. What are we breathing? Definitely not clean air! We're facing daily problems because of this. In my opinion, recycling should be a main priority in our houses. So let's clean our streets for a better Lebanon.

*Melanie Ammar- S1G*

**C**arefully recognize that the homeless man we run into each day is in fact a human being. Through choices of his own or circumstances out of his control, he ended up in this situation, but that makes him no less human. Passionately greet him. Treat people equally, no matter how you interpret their social standing. That is how you'll be taking part in changing the world to a better one!

*Marion c Chouckair -S1G*



## SECRET BULLIES

**W**hat does a cyberbully want from his victims? What makes a person stronger? Being anonymous? Does cyberbullying bring a feeling of satisfaction at the expense of someone's misery? Being hidden behind a screen doesn't make cyberbullying harmless. It's still called bullying. Cyberbullying reduces the self-confidence of the victim and sometimes may lead to suicide; that's why schools must expel students who commit cyber bullying for several reasons.

To begin with, cyberbullying causes low self-esteem. The victims will feel rejected in a society. Moreover, it causes a lack of communication. One such incident happened to a 16-year-old student who locked herself inside her room for nearly one week without even talking to her parents or her friends for unknown reasons. After a short period of time, her parents found out that she was the victim of cyber bullying. In recent studies, more than half of the teens surveyed said that they've experienced abuse through social and digital media and have developed weak personalities.



In addition to that, cyberbullying can lead to suicide. Nowadays, studies show that nearly half of the deaths among teens are caused by suicide due to dangerous bullying. The victims will no more look at the positive side of their lives. They will be living in a world full of harassment and intimidation. They will no longer handle the aggressiveness and the insecurity they feel, so they find it easier to end this in a few seconds rather than live with it for the rest of their lives.

All in all, our society must put an end to any kind of harassment. Janna Cachola once said, "Replace cyberbullying with cyber-believing. Let us build each other up instead of bringing others down."

Nour Khalil- S1G

## DEALING WITH CYBER-BULLYING

**A** Wise man once said, "Cyberbullying is a form of bullying. Hiding behind a pretty screen doesn't make it less hateful, written words have power." In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cyberbullying has

really evolved and ways of bullying have duplicated.



Cyberbullying is mainly committed by school children who have early access to social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. However, schools should suspend students who commit cyberbullying because it creates a lack of self-confidence, and may sometimes lead to suicide.

Firstly, cyberbullying aims to criticize someone's weakness. Studies have shown that most of the bullied ones have a weak personality. That is why cyberbullying affects a child's self-confidence as he may begin to be concerned about what others think of him and about everyone that is making fun of him. For example, if everyone is criticizing his haircut, he will feel ashamed and his concentration at school will be affected.

Secondly, cyberbullying sometimes leads to suicide; that's why schools are really concerned. When someone

begins to feel that he's far inferior to others, the first thing that comes to his mind is suicide, and it's the only way of getting rid of his weakness. Studies have shown that a large number of suicide cases are directly linked to cyberbullying, and the number of teenagers committing suicide remarkably increased between 2012 and 2016 in the U.S.

All in all, cyberbullying is all bullying, and can even get more aggressive due to hiding behind a screen. If you are a victim, you can deal with cyberbullying to some extent by limiting computer connection time, not responding to threatening or defamatory messages, and never opening e-mail messages from sources you do not recognize; therefore, I strongly urge schools to take this matter into consideration and to suspend those who commit cyberbullying.

**Anthony Badran- S1G**

**S** tay away from bullies.  
**T** ell someone.  
**A** void bad situations.  
**M** ake friends.  
**P** roject confidence.  
**OUT BULLYING!**

**what's the point of  
bullying?**  
TO FEEL BETTER? LISTEN, YOU'LL  
NEVER FEEL ANY BETTER IF THE  
ONLY THING YOU KNOW IS TO MAKE  
THE OTHERS SUFFER.

## OUR BEST SHORT STORIES

### FROM A TO Z



My daughter asked me one day:

"Mum... how was it? How did you get up after this mess? How did you get over it? Your first love..." I was scared to answer her back. I was shy. I was humiliated. What was I supposed to tell her? Huh? That it was nothing? You'll get over it real quick? You'll forget the guy who made you feel the most alive in seconds, hours, days and that's it? Or was I supposed to tell her that you're going to cry yourself to sleep multiple times? I didn't want to lie to her. So, I told her the whole story from A to Z. "Listen up my child. I won't lie to you, and give you all the nonsense in life. No. I'll be completely honest. The first day after your break up, you'll feel free and careless. The second day, you're even happier. A week goes by and you're the happiest girl on earth. And then it hits you. It hits you harder than before; you start getting flashbacks of your first date, first hug, first kiss...Then it hits you even harder and you start



remembering every single conversation, every phone call, every date, every time you met. You rewind your acts ...having second thoughts, thinking and questioning your break-up. Couple weeks later, you're living in a nightmare. You're faking your smile ... you're faking everything. Then after, you're living in an illusion, that's when you know that you got your heart broken. That's the time when you finally get it. You finally get you're depressed. I tell you my child... I haven't forgotten about my first true love...Every time someone mentions his name, I relive that same and exact nightmare. I'm not going to lie to you and tell you it's okay. You got to be strong. You got to fake it. Be strong. Be brave. Be courageous. Wait. No. let me tell you one more thing... I mean, I'm not sad. But I'm not exactly happy. I can laugh and joke and smile, but sometimes when I'm alone at night, I know how I feel... See... it's okay not to be okay. You don't have to pretend anymore. I'm here to help you through it. Lean on me my child.

**Thea Massaad -S2H**

Last month, I travelled with my family to Dubai. While there, we went to a mall next to an amusement park. After a long day of shopping, we were heading to the exit when someone yelled, "Sir, Sir! Please come, try this new technology".

My family was tired but I wasn't, so I tried it alone. The man took me to a dark room and placed a headset on my head. Suddenly, the inevitable happened. The screen of the headset turned on and I found myself in the entrance of an old house, but the door behind me was shrieking. I turned to the left then to the right and found a walking doll with red eyes in front of me on the floor. I started shouting, and fear invaded me. The man removed the headset muttering that I was as white as a sheet, and he added that I had tried virtual reality.

To wrap up, it was the most frightening experience that has ever happened to me.



**Adib Fayad – Charbel Antoury Grade 9 B**

On Halloween's eve 2015, I went trick or treat with my classmates wearing our horrifying masks, collecting candies and having fun scaring people.

On my way back home, I bumped into a killer clown gazing at me. Mind you that "Killer Clowns" are armed people who wear a clown costume, and attack the defenseless.

He was walking slowly then rushed his pace. At that moment, I was as white as snow. I looked around me and realized that my friends had escaped. I went like a flash toward a shelter but he caught me, and showed his dagger. I was about to have a heart attack. But surprisingly, he removed the mask and I found out that he was my

cousin who was pranking me: "HAHA I scared you!" He yelled. I will never forget this eve but still it was funny. It was the most frightening thing that has ever happened to me, and I hope it's the last.



**Elissa Abi Nakhoul - Gebran Imad-Grade 9 B**

Last winter, my friend dragged me to the movies with her to watch the new horror movie which I didn't bother to ask for its name.

A couple of minutes into the movie, I was scared to death. Swearing to my best friend that I will never go to the movies with her again, I went home cursing. But still, once inside, I locked the door twice for more safety. I then proceeded to my room with some snacks, wanting to watch a kids' movie, so I would sleep peacefully that night.

The movie's song was blasting through the speakers of my laptop as I was staring at Dori's cute face. I was so engrossed in the movie when a metallic sound rang in my head. Many other sounds were coming from downstairs and the movie was totally forgotten by my terrified mind. Cracklings were heard from the other side of the door and threatening words filled my head. Grabbing whatever bravery I had left, which was practically none, I took my unicorn slippers ready to hit whoever was behind the door. I was about to hit him on the head when I was cut off by laughter and screams. I took a look at my monster, only to find out it was my sister.

"Jackie! You scared me." I shrieked.

"Sorry, it was just so funny." She admitted sheepishly.

"Don't do it again." I snapped then walked to my room, heart thumping.

Jeanne-Marie Abi Akl -Myriam Haddad - Grade 9 A

Last week, I was invited to a party. But when I got there, the place was empty. I searched every inch of the house in vain.

I called the detective who came with five cops. As soon as they arrived, they started searching the place. When they came back, they had four pieces of clown costumes.

Then, one detective went to the camera room where he saw a killer clown moving around. He called for help. Finally, the police officers went to the garage where they found the criminal. They saved the victims and arrested the killer clown.



Imad Majd, Maria sawma, Lynn Salame and Charbel Khalil

Grade 7B

Last week, while I was with my dad driving home on the highway, we saw a car accident. People were screaming and running everywhere. The two men involved in the accident were fighting. At first, we stopped to see what was happening, thinking it was a small conflict. But they were shouting at each other. Suddenly, one of them grabbed his gun and pulled the trigger. He shot the other one in the stomach, and left him on the ground bleeding. At that

moment, my father decided to act fast; he called the emergency to come to his rescue. In the end, we were so pleased that the ambulance came to save the man and the police arrested the culprit.

*Clara Nader, Maria Ballan, Rita El Kayem and Charbel Ferekh- Grade 7-B*



### **Dearest Love,**

**T**his past year has been a complete roller coaster. Despite the ups and downs in our relationship, I love you more everyday. I remember every single moment we've spent together, every place we've been to, every hug we gave, and every kiss we shared.

Losing you could kill me like nothing else could. Imagine how heartbreaking it must be to suddenly stop talking to the person you thought would be "the one".

I want you to know I have been fighting daily for you, and forever if I have to.

I keep thinking about who is the luckiest one to have you. It breaks my heart to picture myself not being the girl you'll be laughing uncontrollably with, the girl you'll call beautiful everyday, or the one you'll tease endlessly.



When I'm with you, I'm a better person, and that's a debt I'll never be able to repay. You turn me into a better version of me. Hope, happiness and joy of life only exist when you're around.

If you think I'm leaving to find someone better, you are mistaken. Another reason for leaving you is to be in my own skin again like I was months ago.

I want you to know you're the best thing that has ever happened to me. You have no idea how happy, secure and safe you have made me feel. I am blessed to have met you, and if asked to say I love you, I will say it more loudly over and over again. I am thankful you have made me who I am now: A girl who is uncontrollably, deeply and madly in love with you.

***Jana Obeid -S2H***

**Y**ou know... It's hard to act normal. It's hard to act yourself out. See, from birth to death there's this awkward phase called life. It's basically all about finding yourself and accomplishing missions your ancestors failed to do. It's about living to the fullest. It isn't about making the world a better place for your grandsons and granddaughters. Worry about you. Worry about your beliefs. Worry about your life. Be who you want to be. Be this person you've always dreamt to be.

Take a deep breath. Think about yourself and your happiness. Do you think he loves you? Do you possibly think that he's your source of happiness? Do you think that he respects you and cares for you? Happiness is abstract. Embrace yourself. Your family, friends, boyfriends, best friends, strangers might love you, for they have no reason to hate you. They know the true you. They know when you are fake and when you're not. They conquer your personality, your

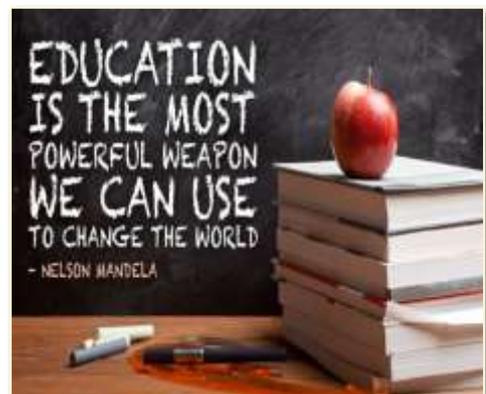
thoughts, your actions and your looks. They have no reason to judge you. Rewind your past, rethink your future, relive your present, and make the most out of it. Live each day as if it were your last. Retake a deep breath and let it go.

I sincerely want you to know that it wasn't your fault why I left, or mine. It was this feeling, this odd flame inside me, telling me to let go and walk away. It was a feeling. That feeling became a flame. That flame became a passion. That passion became an unconditional love. I was always searching for the "better" in every relationship. I was searching for the "perfect" in it. And somehow, I found perfection in a relationship that I never thought to risk. I also found grace, passion and above all true love. It's like the story of the beauty and the beast. Beauty found the perfection of great love in the beast that turned out to be her prince charming. He worshipped her, and so did she. Her unconditional love for him turned him upside down.

**Thea Massaad -S2H**

## **A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE**

**E**ducation is an eye opener for every person on earth. It is vital at an early age. Women in the past were enslaved and looked down upon due to their lack of education. Farmers weren't able to analyze the fertility of the soil and determine the kinds of crops to be grown. They used to believe in anything without reason and pray to the rain gods for a good harvest. As people became more informed, they learned what was right and what was wrong. While we

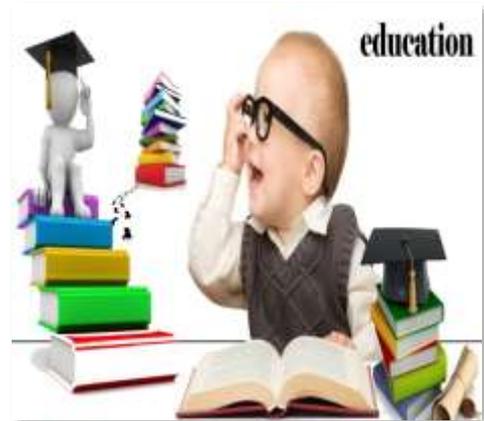


can't deny the fact that schools are important for our education, classrooms are not the only places to learn.

Sometimes, we don't realize the fact that every day we learn a new lesson. We learn lessons from parents, and these can be sometimes the result of being disobedient, or breaking the rules. Both punishments and rewards can also be ways of learning new lessons.

Secondly, any small act of kindness is a new lesson. We can learn new lessons from strangers on the street, just by smiling and saying "have a nice day!"

Every book we read, every movie we watch, every activity we do, can be a good lesson in our life. To conclude, studying in a classroom is an extremely small part in the world of education. Personally, I think that education is mainly based on learning manners and keeping values alive.



**Souraya Kanaan -S2H**

## **SELF-LOVE**

**I** am a woman in every sense, a complete human being.

Throughout my life I have learned to love myself, to appreciate who I am and to cherish every single part of my life, my personality and my body. And this has given me so much strength and boosted my self-confidence.

I can tell the world now that only self-love can save you. Depend on yourself, and don't be affected by anyone's opinion of you. Give what you can, and don't expect much from others. I know myself and know that I deserve appreciation, love, and honesty.

I am a strong woman. I don't sit around feeling sorry for myself, nor do I let people mistreat me because nobody has the power. If I have become cold, hard and unbreakable, that's because I have learned to care for myself. I love 'me' before anyone else. I know that sounds a little selfish, but that's the truth. It's time to take the love that others hold for granted and invest it in yourself.

**Joy Jreije- S2H**

## HOW TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

The earth is running out of its natural resources. If we keep exploiting what is left, clean air and clean water will be a past history. Humans have exhausted a year's supply of natural resources in less than eight months, according to *The Guardian* in an analysis of the demands the world's population placed on the planet in 2015. The date is based on a comparison of humanity's demands – in terms of carbon emissions, cropland, fish stocks, and the use of forests for timber – with the planet's ability to regenerate such resources and naturally absorb the carbon emitted. That implies the excess demands being placed on natural systems are causing more permanent harm that cannot be reversed. Here are some concerns raised by our students:



I personally believe that garbage should be recycled and trees kept unharmed. I mean we should stop burning garbage and wasting water.

**Charbel Karam-Grade 9 B**

I believe that respecting the dignity of others and treating people the way you want to be treated as well as acknowledging the validity of humanity and being generous would surely make the world a better place.

**Paméla Sawma-Grade 9 B**



I think the world could be a better place when we respect nature and protect it.

**Youssef Antoury - Grade 9 B**

Living in this world is like going through a special library: it contains all kinds of books, i.e. all kinds of people. In my opinion, making this world a better place equals finding the perfect book. Honesty and selflessness are top priorities toward achieving this goal. If people were more honest and less selfish, they would not even try to make a promise if they can't keep it. **Jeanne Marie Abi Akel -Grade 9 A**



By respecting the law and respecting each other we can make our world a better place. If we take care of our nature and reduce the pollution that is killing us, we can save our world.

*Maria Moussa Nakhoul-Grade 9 B*



**I**'d like to highlight the researchers' suggestions:

**Using less paper:** Our forests are being cut down at an alarming rate. Conserve the trees by conserving paper. Send an email instead of a letter, and try to bring your own fabric shopping bag to the store.

**Driving less:** Take a moment to consider how you can use your personal vehicle. You could take instead the bus, ride a bike or even walk, so the world will be a better place.

**Conserving water:** Taking long showers and letting the water run as you brush your teeth are indulgences that negatively impact our world. So, try to limit your water usage.

**Donating used clothing:** There are so many places and ways you can donate your used clothing; donate them to a homeless shelter.

**Volunteering:** Volunteering with a local charity is a great way to improve the world around you. You'll be able to see the impact on the people you helped around you.

**Being nice and generous:** One of the best things you can do easily and everyday is to treat others how you want to be treated. Do something nice for someone as often as you can, set a good example for your friends and family members and educate them on the issues so that they can make good decisions too. It's easy to be selfish. Try being generous and see how your life will change and you'll feel less helpless about how to make the world a better place.

*Jessy Abi Lamaa- Grade 9 B.*

**A** lot of people may find the idea of changing the world daunting or confusing. But the tasks required are easier than they might appear. By being kind and generous to people around us, we are spreading love and lessening hate. A small act of kindness can bring so much to someone's life. A simple greeting can brighten a person's day.

Also, it would be a good move if we use less paper, control our water usage or even ride a bicycle instead of going by car to a certain place. In this way, we can reduce the suffering of the Earth and help change the world for the better.

*Celine Farah-Grade 9 A*

**T**he Mona Lisa is a half-length portrait of Lisa Gherardini by the Italian Renaissance artist Leonardo da Vinci. It has been described as "the best known, the most visited, the most written about, the most sung about, the most parodied work of art in the world".

The painting is a portrait of Lisa Gherardini, the wife of Francesco del Giocondo. It is in oil on a white Lombardy poplar panel, and is believed to have been painted between 1503 and 1506. Leonardo may have continued working on it as late as 1517. It was acquired by King Francis I of France and is now the property of the French Republic, on permanent display at the Louvre Museum in Paris since 1797.

The subject's expression, which is frequently described as enigmatic, the monumentality of the composition, the subtle modelling of forms, and the atmospheric illusionism were novel qualities that have contributed to the continuing fascination and study of the work from all over the world.



Compiled by Samir Gebeily- EB4 B



## ARE YOU A VEGETARIAN OR A NON-VEGETARIAN?

People all over the world eat meat products, while some choose a different lifestyle by becoming vegetarian. They think that eating meat is bad for the health. In fact, eating meat has advantages and disadvantages.

To begin with, meat is an excellent source of protein; it is very beneficial since it improves the overall health. Moreover, it contains all the amino acids your body cannot make and that are essential for developing muscles. What is more, meat contains vitamins A, B and D that promote good vision, stronger teeth and solid bones. It also supports the central nervous system and promotes mental health.



In contrast, meat is relatively high in saturated fat and cholesterol which increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases such as heart attack. Sodium is also a serious concern because too much of it leads to high blood pressure and increases the risk of stroke and heart failure.

To sum up, eating meat can have good and bad points. As far as I'm concerned, eating meat is good as long as I follow a balanced diet and take care of everything around me.

**Chloe Kassis-Grade 9 A**

Since eating is an essential need, people are killing animals to eat their meat. Nowadays, some say that eating meat is wrong, others say the opposite. Have you ever thought about the advantages and the disadvantages of eating meat?

To begin with, meat is a great source of protein and vitamins like vitamins B<sub>12</sub>, B<sub>13</sub>, and B<sub>6</sub>. It also contains a lot of zinc and creatine which are good for our health.

On the other hand, according to a report published by JAMA Internal Medicine, red meat increases the risk of heart disease. In addition to that, red meat doubles the risk of having breast cancer; it spreads sensitive hormones that help breast cancer to grow quickly.

In conclusion, meat is good for our health even though it can have negative effects. We should avoid eating too much red meat and enjoy more fruit and vegetables.

**Adnan Haddad Grade 9- A**

## A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

### FALLING APART

When all falls apart and you feel lost  
when all plummets to its final cost  
when the doors close up on your  
head  
and the light is still way far ahead,  
that is when you must fight.

How you choose to start the battle  
How you finish the climb with hassle  
How you know you'll have it all  
Only then it will affect your call,  
That is when you'll be alright.

**Tatiana Mattar -S2H**



My mother, my friend so dear,  
throughout my life you're always  
near,  
a tender smile to guide my way,  
You're the sunshine to light my day.  
I love you!

**Rayssa Akiki -EB5A**

### POEMS TO MOM

You are sweet, you are tender  
You are my autumn and my winter  
My glowing spring, my summer  
sunshine  
I will love you for a lifetime

We share laughs, we share tears  
When I need you, you're always near  
I thank you for what you've done to  
me  
Forever in my heart you will be.

**Maroun Whaibé- EB4 B**

My mom is really GREAT  
She's as sweet as honey  
She is by my sideday and night  
She takes good care of me  
My mother is the best  
You are a friend so dear  
All my life you are always near  
Your lovely smile guides my way  
You are the light of my day  
I pick you flowers so wonderful  
As you are the most beautiful  
We share everything together  
And my love will last forever

**Ghady Haddad-EB4B**

## THE WHITE COVER

After a stormy day,  
Snow covers the way.  
School is closed for the day,  
Children run outside to play.



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## PICNIC DAY

We are going on a picnic to the  
wood,  
We fill our basket with treats and  
food  
It can be fun for me and you,  
As there is always a lot to do  
The forest is full of trees,  
I feel great watching the bees  
After we find a great seat  
We are ready to drink and eat

Karam Marc- EB5A

## FRIENDSHIP

**F**riends are two souls walking together. They share laughters and moments of madness... Friendship is a question of giving and taking, of being there when the other needs you. I like giving more than taking; in general, it lets me feel good. When it comes to friendship, particularly, I think that giving and waiting for something in return shouldn't be considered an act

»» A ««  
Friend  
LOVES  
you  
all the  
TIME.

PROVERBS 17:17

of care or generosity; it's for me worse than taking. Furthermore, friendship is about sharing, because the biggest gift of friendship is to know that there is a shoulder to rest on, a friend to count on and an ear to listen to you even when you're silent.

However, true friends are rare these days, and a "fake friend" can abuse your kindness. True friendship is not about having time, but rather making it together.

**Marie Wadih- Grade 8**



**M**aking a million friends isn't a miracle. But making a friend that will stay by your side when other friends are not is one. So never choose a friend without complete understanding, and never leave a true friend because of a small misunderstanding.

To begin with, good friendship is born when you understand and you're understood. From my experience, I can say true friends are the stars you don't see in good moments, but shine in the dark. I believe that friendship isn't something that you learn at school; it's experience gained and trust built. Friends are these rare people who accept you for who you are. I don't need money or pretty dresses; I just want a person who appreciates me for who I am. When it hurts, I look near and always find my friend.

To wrap up, the secret of a sincere friendship is trust. True friends are always frank, no matter what. They notice your mistakes and tell you about them because they love you, and want to see the best of you.

**Joane Nader- Grade 8 A**

## TEENAGE YEARS

**W**e go through different situations in life, but teenage years are a critical stage, moving from childhood to adulthood. These are the best years of life at some points.

To begin with, people say that this period is the most sensitive one because of teenagers' feelings and actions. This stage defines who they are going to be in the future. Furthermore, they encounter a lot of things around them including dangerous situations.

In addition to that, teenagers begin to be independent.



They start to go out with friends, and have some responsibilities. On the other hand, it's important to consider the stress caused by studies because teens have to juggle with their social life and their future. Moreover, I believe that teenagers do not have the courage to express their feelings to their parents because they think that they don't understand them. To sum up, I agree that teenage years are one of the best stages of life. However, adults have to listen to teenagers who need someone to understand them.

**Christian Kassar, Marie Wadih, Joe Antonios, Perla Ojail- Grade 8 A**

**S**chool is a place where students develop their way of thinking and analyzing. As far as I'm concerned, schools should teach knowledge and skills. Firstly, teenagers should have enough skills and experience to cope with their future difficulties and solve them. Furthermore, having some experience and being ready to succeed in their future careers, is an essential thing. Secondly, I am not convinced that people say it's a waste of time and that students should focus on the theory part of education. Moreover, there is no justification that an eighteen-year-old person can decide his destiny and the biggest chapter of his life without any idea about it. To sum up, schools should certainly afford a special education to improve students' knowledge and to develop their skills; this is the first step of a long journey!

**Paméla Sawma,  
Melysa Hajj, Kris Tamer,  
Gebran Imad-Grade 9 B**



## HOBBIES

My hobby is singing; I have been practicing it since I was eight years old. When I sing, I forget all my problems and get pleasure out of it. I practice alone at home. I think the most interesting thing about my hobby is that it dramatically improves my personality and character and helps me discover my talent and abilities.

**Angy Makhoulouf- Grade 6**



My hobby is playing the drums. It's a really hard activity and needs a lot of practice. I have been practicing the drums for two years. One day, I will be a popular drummer. This hobby makes me feel alive and happy, and I'm madly in love with it!

**Elia Sawma- Grade6 A**



My favorite hobby is playing football. I've been practicing it since I was six years old. Every Wednesday after school, my friends and I practice soccer at Fouad Chehab Stadium for three hours. I've never been a fan of individual awards because football is a team sport, and it is all about teammates trusting one another and working together. I am crazy about football because it's the reason for our success.

**Farid Abi Doumit- Grade 6**



My hobby is playing the piano. I have been practicing it for three years in the conservatorium of music with my teacher. When my fingers begin to fly on the keys, I can't stop them and when I play the piano, I forget all my sorrows.

**Karim Chemaly- Grade 6**

Biking is my hobby. It makes me feel free like a butterfly. I practice biking twice a week alone or with my sister and our friends. I think the main target of a hobby is to have a clear mind, a healthy life and the best pleasure of life.

**Leaticia Whaibé-Grade 6 B**

My hobby is gardening. I am the hero of flowers. The joy of witnessing flowers blooming fills my heart with a sense of achievement, and definitely gives me pleasure. I have been practicing this hobby since 2010 with my father. I always need to do it in my free time because I enjoy looking at the extraordinary flowers and green shades. I'm really into this activity because I love nature!



**Nadim Fayad-Grade 6**

My hobby is singing though I'm shy in public. I have been addicted to music since I was six. I usually sing with my sister, but sometimes if I am sad, I prefer to sing alone to lift up my mood. I am crazy about music, because this activity fills my heart with a combination of peace of mind, satisfaction and happiness. I think it is a good way to really discover my own personality.



**Suzanne Wadih- Grade 6 C**

I am interested in robotics. I plan to create new robots and discover more about them. I am also good at soccer and want to be a real goalkeeper. I enjoy rap songs because they deal with problems of our society. To wrap up, people say I am helpful. I always lend a hand whenever in need. My friends think I am a funny boy. I always make them laugh and spread positivity wherever I go. I think I am useful. I often fix and replace damaged objects. Talking without permission is my weak spot.



**Majd Imad- Grade 7B**

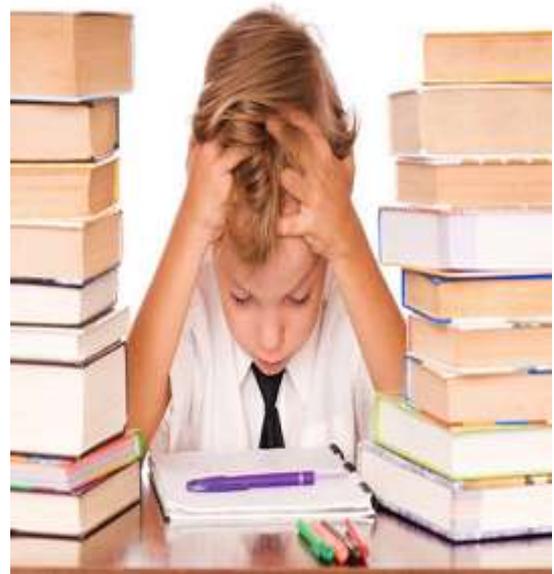
I love languages. They enrich my culture. I'm also crazy about music because it makes me fly to another world. I enjoy singing as well. People say I'm honest. It's true because I never lie. My friends think I'm loyal. I never betray them. My weak spot is that I'm stubborn. In the future, I want to be a lawyer.



**Clara Nader- Grade 7**

I'm interested in gymnastics. I go with my cousin to her school club every Saturday. My besties and I are really into singing, and we take personal lessons together. My parents think I'm a good singer because I sing a lot at home especially when I'm sad. My friends think I'm funny. I change their mood and make them laugh. I also keep secrets. I find myself a good sister because I always help my brothers with their homework and I take care of them. My weak spot is that I don't focus enough on my homework and I waste time.

Maria Issa -Grade 7



I am interested in ballet because it makes me feel free. I am also crazy about playing the piano. I practice it every week with my teacher. I enjoy listening to music and reading books to broaden my imagination. People find me polite because I have good manners. My friends say I am loyal because I never betray them. I am a bit stubborn and my phobia is darkness.

Sabine Hajj- Grade 7



**Puzzles**  
**Tennis**  
**Fishing**  
**Running**  
**Reading**  
**Football**  
**Chess**  
**Cricket**  
**Cooking**  
**Swimming**  
**Yoga**  
**Bowling**  
**Squash**  
**Travel**  
**Hockey**  
**TV**  
**Baseball**

## INVENTORS AND INVENTIONS

The first known use of heated metal to 'iron' clothes started in China. The electric iron was invented in 1882, by Henry W. Seely. I think it is an important invention because we use it in our daily lives.



Tania Al-Amiry -Grade 3 A



My favorite inventor is Pietro Ferrero because he was the man who invented Nutella. He was a pastry maker from Italy. Nutella was a smart solution to a tricky problem: the shortage of cocoa supplies following World War II. Ferrero ingeniously created a sweet paste made from hazelnuts, sugar and just a little of the rare cocoa. He named it "Giandujot". Pietro Ferrero's son, Michel, improved the recipe and created the first-ever jar of a new hazelnut and cocoa cream, and named it Nutella. Today it's the world's most famous chocolate spread.

Serena Eid- Grade 3 A

The most important device nowadays is the telephone. Alexander Graham Bell was the man who invented the telephone. It is an important device used to talk to people far away.



Marie-Therese Toumieh-Grade 3 B

My favorite inventors are the Wright brothers, Orville and Wilbur. They were the men who invented the world's first successful airplane. It is the most important invention because I like to travel a lot.

Celine Dina-Grade 3 A



## Magical Recipes

With ultimate love and devotion, our 6th graders prepared the recipes given by their English teacher, Mrs Amal Imad, to produce fresh lemonade, delicious jam, tasty pickles and exceptional olives. The project done throughout the year is entitled: Homemade Mountain Cuisine. The money raised will go towards the construction of the new school church.



### Homemade Mountain Cuisine

<p><b>Homemade Mountain Cuisine</b> Grade 6 Project Recipes Prepared with Love &amp; Devotion</p> <p><b>Dressed Olives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash the olives</li> <li>Drain every olive separately</li> <li>Keep in water for two days</li> <li>Change water from time to time</li> <li>Put the oil over the olives</li> <li>Add 2 tablespoons of lemon juice</li> <li>Add 2 tablespoons of vinegar and</li> <li>Add a pinch of lemon</li> <li>Close the jar tightly</li> <li>Let it sit for 17 days</li> </ul> <p>Don't apply!</p> 	<p><b>Homemade Mountain Cuisine</b> Grade 6 Project Recipes Prepared with Love &amp; Devotion</p> <p><b>Cucumber Pickles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash 1 Kg of cucumbers</li> <li>Put cucumbers in a jar</li> <li>Fill half of the jar with water and the other half with grape vinegar</li> <li>Add one tablespoon of salt</li> <li>Close tightly</li> <li>Let it sit for one week</li> </ul> <p>Don't apply!</p> 	<p><b>Homemade Mountain Cuisine</b> Grade 6 Project Recipes Prepared with Love &amp; Devotion</p> <p><b>Lemon Juice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash 2 Kg of lemons</li> <li>Squeeze them and pour them in a bowl</li> <li>Mix them for every one glass of lemon just two glasses of sugar</li> <li>For the rest of the sugar melt completely</li> <li>Fill bottles with the mixture</li> <li>Seal with cold water and air</li> </ul> <p>Don't apply!</p> 
<p><b>Homemade Mountain Cuisine</b> Grade 6 Project Recipes Prepared with Love &amp; Devotion</p> <p><b>Strawberry Jam</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash 1 Kg of strawberries</li> <li>Chop the strawberries</li> <li>Add 2 Kg of sugar</li> <li>Put the mixture in a pot</li> <li>Leave for 4 hours</li> <li>Add one tablespoon of lemon juice</li> <li>Bring to boil until the mixture dries</li> <li>Put the jam in jar</li> <li>Close tightly</li> </ul> <p>Don't apply!</p> 	<p><b>Homemade Mountain Cuisine</b> Grade 6 Project Recipes Prepared with Love &amp; Devotion</p> <p><b>Apple Jam</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash 2 Kg of apples</li> <li>Put the apples and chop them</li> <li>Mix them for every 1 bowl of chopped apples a bowl of sugar</li> <li>Put the mixture in a pot</li> <li>Leave for 4 hours</li> <li>Add one tablespoon of lemon juice</li> <li>Bring to boil until the mixture dries</li> <li>Put the jam in jar</li> <li>Close tightly</li> </ul> <p>Don't apply!</p> 	<p><b>Homemade Mountain Cuisine</b> Grade 6 Project Recipes Prepared with Love &amp; Devotion</p> <p><b>Apricot Jam</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash 2 Kg of apricots</li> <li>Chop the apricots</li> <li>Add 2 Kg of sugar</li> <li>Put the mixture in a pot</li> <li>Leave for 4 hours</li> <li>Add one tablespoon of lemon juice</li> <li>Bring to boil until the mixture dries</li> <li>Put the jam in jar</li> <li>Close tightly</li> </ul> <p>Don't apply!</p> 

The money raised will go towards the construction of the new school church.

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