

Student Reporter

Changing the World Eye by Eye



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Watching YouTube videos can be educational rather than just for entertainment, as seen in some with MrBeast. [Source: Author, Alex Byun]

Millions of people have heard of Jimmy Donaldson, better known as MrBeast, who is known for his massive 131 million subscribers and incredible philanthropy on YouTube. On January 28, 2023, MrBeast released arguably his best video yet: “1,000 Blind People See For The First Time.” In this eight-minute video, MrBeast cured 1,000 blind people across the world by paying for their ex-

pensive eye surgeries. He collaborated with SEE International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring sight to as many people as possible. Through his initiative, MrBeast widened millions of people’s perspectives on blindness, impacted tons of lives, and informed people about this simple, yet intricate process.

According to the video, around 200 million people see the world as blurry and desolate. Even though 200 million may sound like an enormous number, a surgeon from SEE International stated that half of all blindness in the world can be cured by a simple 10-minute surgery, that they conduct in the video. However, many people are not able to afford this short surgery because of the lofty price that comes with it, which is why MrBeast provided all the financial support.

Many people probably wonder

how blindness works. MrBeast explains that the lens in blind people’s eyes can be clouded up, which deactivates the function. The surgeon utilizes a vacuum sucker, which is able to remove the cloudiness in the lens, allowing a person to see again. Then, the surgeon inserts an artificial lens. Although the surgery may sound too straightforward, it is a delicate, and often successful procedure that transforms millions of lives each and every day.

Throughout the video, MrBeast visited the blind patients and waited until the end of the surgery to watch their reactions. One person, Charlie, wasn’t able to work anymore because of the arduous conditions blindness put him in, which affected his and his family’s life. Charlie wanted to get his eyesight back so that he could go work again and provide for his family, which made his surgery more stirring. Luckily,

the surgery went well and rebuilt his vision, which brought tears to his family. Charlie thought that he was never going to see again, but because of MrBeast and SEE International, that didn’t happen. Additionally, MrBeast kindly gave him \$10,000 out of generosity to help him get settled in his new life.

After the surgery was finished, the eye patches would be removed. Most of the patients either became emotional because they were able to see their loved ones or were shocked that they didn’t just see a blur anymore. Both reactions were positive, and MrBeast was able to travel across the world from the US to Indonesia, Vietnam, Brazil, Jamaica, and many more countries. His widespread influence has forever reworked tons of lives for the better, and the surgery has become more well-known to the general public because of MrBeast.

Student Reporter

Problems with Shared Electric Bicycles and Scooters



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Everywhere you look in South Korea, since 2018, you can encounter shared electric bicycles or scooters. They are easily accessible to anyone who has cash and a phone. To use electric bikes or scooters, you download the vehicle company’s app to find it. This simple step, the availability of bicycles and scooters, and their quick speed are the benefits. Some problems associated with these are how customers park them and the dangers that come with them.

Some irresponsible customers park their vehicles on crowded sidewalks. This causes an inconvenience for pedestrians and for people who use the services to get from one place to another. Some other dangers are the speed and the battery pack. The law passed by the South Korean government restricts the speed of the vehicle to less than 25 km per hour. However, the speed of the vehicle can be



Share electric bicycles creating a mess on the sidewalk. [Source: Author, Jiyong Kwak]

pushed up high, to the point where it could be threatening. There were also instances where the batteries of the bicycles and scooters exploded or caught on fire, causing collateral damage. The requirements you need to ride an electric scooter are that you must have a driver’s license, two people can not ride together, and you must wear a helmet.

When a group of pedestrians were interviewed online about a

question on shared electric bicycles and scooters, Sean Na Kim replied, “[Share electric scooters and bicycles are] very nice. It is very convenient, and there are messages on the bikes that are very encouraging. The only downside is that some people randomly leave them on the street, causing it to be a major inconvenience for others.” When they were asked about what action the government could take to prevent this inconvenience,

Sean Na Kim replied, “The government should imprison people for about a week, so it is just enough to bother their day-to-day lives.” Even though some ideas suggested by the online pedestrian might seem radical, it comes to show how it is inconvenient for him and other pedestrians when they encountered the same problem making them think of new ideas.

For example, in Paris, because of the increase in accidents relating to electric scooters, the citizens are voting to decide if they should permit the action of sharing electric scooters at all, hoping it would make a safer street. These global changes in the view of shared vehicles should be considered by the government so that they have stronger regulations and restrictions against these vehicles to maintain peace and order in the streets.

Student Reporter

Back to school - Spring semester



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Most schools finish their first semester, or fall semester, around Christmas and resume around mid-January, with the Spring semester presenting a greater academic challenge. School subjects tend to become more difficult, but there are also benefits for these times too.

Many subjects explore deeper concepts and challenge students with distinct lessons in the second semester, resulting in tests and quizzes rising in difficulty. To make matters worse, there is no ‘grace period’ for the first few weeks, since there are barely any subject changes in the spring. However, some factors help reduce the difficulty of these assessments. By already being together with the teacher for half a year, students tend to know what they are looking for in their answers, and their grad-

ing style. This is especially helpful in English or history subjects, where many free-response or essay types of questions are given to students.

Furthermore, classes tend to be more fun in the spring semester. After spending a whole semester with the same class and teacher, it is natural that the class becomes more acquainted with each other. By this time, the atmosphere is relatively loose and comfortable compared to the beginning of the first semester. This makes school more fun and enjoyable, and it can also be a benefit academically, as classmates can study together for difficult exams.

School sports are divided into three seasons: fall, winter, and spring. Usually, the best matches of the season are the last matches, because it is often a regional ri-

Week 1	8 a.m. Local Time	12 p.m. Local Time	Week 2	8 a.m. Local Time	12 p.m. Local Time	2 p.m. Local Time
Monday, May 1, 2023	United States Government and Politics	Chemistry Spanish Literature and Culture	Monday, May 8, 2023	Calculus AB Calculus BC	Computer Science Physics Asian Language and Culture	
Tuesday, May 2, 2023	Chinese Language and Culture Environmental Science	Psychology	Tuesday, May 9, 2023	English Language and Composition Japanese Language and Culture	Physics C: Mechanics Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism	
Wednesday, May 3, 2023	English Literature and Composition	Comparative Government and Politics Computer Science A	Wednesday, May 10, 2023	Spanish Language and Culture	Biology	
Thursday, May 4, 2023	Human Geography Macroeconomics	Seminar Statistics	Thursday, May 11, 2023	French Language and Culture World History: Modern	Physics 1: Algebra-Based	
Friday, May 5, 2023	European History United States History	Art History Microeconomics	Friday, May 12, 2023	German Language and Culture Music Theory	Latin Physics 2: Algebra-Based	

AP exams are scheduled at the end of the second semester, adding academic pressure in the spring semester. [Source: collegeboard]

valry and crowd peaks. Although fall and winter seasons begin in the first semester, winter sports go all the way to the second semester, adding to the fun school spirit.

However, students are faced with a new academic task in the second semester that didn’t exist in the first: the AP exam. Many students take AP classes throughout their year, and, especially if they are a junior, they might have to take up to seven exams in May.

This could act as a stressful factor for students since they are pressured to get a good grade on them. Therefore, it is important to make sure that students follow the school curriculum well while preparing for AP exams.

It is true that the Spring semester is a harder semester academically, but it should be noted that there are academic advantages heading into the spring semester, along with school life being more fun.

Student Reporter

The Urgency behind visiting Nordic Countries



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Waterfalls and natural structures encased in Finland’s freezing temperature. [Source: Audrey Park, Author].

More often than not, individuals travel within the boundaries of their country when given the opportunity. Although convenience has made this the case for some, people have also favored visiting other countries. When this topic comes to one’s mind, Europe is a prominent option for

international travel. Over the years, Europe has been a popular tourist destination due to its medieval towns, seasonal delicacies, and sightseeing opportunities available during the spring. Although the Northeastern regions have been discouraged from tourist visits due to ongoing armed conflicts, the surrounding countries have also been able to offer opportunities: the Nordic countries being an underrated alternative. Consisting of sovereign states such as Iceland, Sweden, and Norway, the Nordic countries possess a rich culture due to it taking up a majority of Europe’s Scandinavian land. Upon first glance, you might expect their snowy environment and temperatures to keep you cooped up with five layers of blankets. Surprisingly, one can find a relatively equal amount of satisfied visitors during this season, as people have found that packing some heavy

winter clothes is a worthy trade for the Northern Lights, uncrowded travel, and memorable stop-overs. Moreover, the Northern Lights are available from November to April, both presenting a great opportunity for eager visitors, but also presenting a concern with time sensitivity. Due to the longer nights and clearer skies, the current months are prime time to view one of Earth’s natural wonders. Additionally, excursions are great in amount and not very time-consuming, meaning that you can return to the lights anytime on your trip while saving time for other activities. Furthermore, it would be worth looking into the unique activities that each country offers; especially after December and its holidays, certain sightseeing opportunities for waterfalls, caves, and ravines can be more enjoyable due to fewer visitors. Similarly, choosing to visit these

Northern countries can give you a memorable stay in London. While it’s common to have stop-overs before arriving at your destination, these short trips to London can be noteworthy, mostly due to the fact that its atmosphere slightly mimics those of Iceland’s. A family friend, Serena Park, who went to Iceland this season, noted how, “Stopping in London for a while before catching my flight to Iceland gave me a taste of what to expect in the next few days. While I had to get used to wearing my winter jackets, staying on cozy streets near historic buildings and lakes was a big payoff. Eventually, leaving Iceland and going back to London on another stop-over made it seem like I was being regulated into a more urban setting.” Unless you’d like to save these seasonal experiences for the coming years, consider traveling to the Nordic countries once in the next few months!

Student Reporter

2023 Pyeongchang Trout Festival



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After three years of being out of business due to COVID-19, the Pyeongchang Trout Festival finally returned, in Pyeongchang, Gangwon-do, South Korea. 2023’s Pyeongchang Trout Festival lasted from December 30th to January 29th, approximately a month. Plenty of programs and events were established for all ages, centering on their theme of enjoying the frosty winter season.



Through drilled holes in the frozen water, fishers awaited patiently for an amazing reward, Pyeongchang-gun’s succulent rainbow trout. [Source: Author, Kaylyn Yu]

Despite their theme, the stars of the festival are the trout. These freshwater fish species reside around rivers leading to the East Sea of Korea. Thriving in its cool, clear waters, Pyeongchang-gun is the top breeding ground for trout in South Korea. The rainbow trout are known for their delectable flavors, free of poison, and were named song’eo in Korean for their pine-tree-like color of flesh. They contain a number of nutrients and health benefits, including protein, vitamins A and D, age prevention, intelligence improvement, and are liable to prevent numerous other diseases. Trouts’ appearance are

small in size and silvery-white with a dark blue back, speckled black. Their taste and appearance are also comparable to a salmon’s, both with similar soft, rosy flesh. Tent, ice, indoor, and barehanded trout-fishing were all available this year, along with a special event called ‘Catch the Golden Trout.’ Out on the ice, where tent and ice fishing took place, up to 2000 visitors strove in order to bring home the finest fish. Once in a while, a truck drove onto the ice field to deposit new rainbow trout into the throng. Crowds circled around it, hoping to

snag a fish in the process or catch the brand-new ones. Fishers were allowed to either prepare their own fishing tools or purchase them from the vendors along the festival grounds, being permitted for all ages as well. However, only two trout were allowed per person. For bare-handed trout fishing, the tourists fought to grab live trout straight from a pool. If they caught a golden one, they were awarded pure gold. Freshly caught trout could also be prepared instantly; whether grilled or turned into sashimi was up to the purchaser. A tourist visiting the Trout Festival

said, “I’m here for the first time from Busan, on a holiday trip. I participated in ice fishing for trout, and I caught one, which is considered rare! It’s been a great, fun experience so far.” The tourist explained how jerking the fishing rod would give you a better chance of acquiring a catch. Other than fishing, many types of winter entertainment were present: snow sledding, traditional Korean sledding, Argo, snow rafting, bumper cars, ice cart, ice skating, and ice cycling. Every activity eventuated on either snow or ice was designed for enjoying winter to the fullest. Another area of interest in the 2023 Pyeongchang Trout Festival was the Food Village, intended to seem like a traditional Korean marketplace. Individual stores created a larger market, with delicious recipes from all over Korea. Overall, the festival was incredibly fun. And, hopefully, if you are in Korea next winter, you will be able to check it out!

Student Reporter

Dealing With Academic Validation

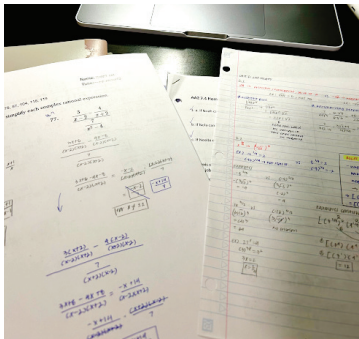


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So, your first semester is over. It’s most likely that you already know how all of your first semester grades turned out. Whether they were good or a bit disappointing, there’s one thing we all have in common when it comes to grades: the overload of pressure. As we advance in our academic careers, marks seem to be the most important thing in the world. Of course, with that comes the possibility of comparing yourself with others and, most of all, pushing yourself too hard to achieve academic validation. Academic validation takes many forms, and it varies with each person, but it is not always a bad thing. On one hand, the worry hanging over you like a dark cloud from potentially failing an exam can add unnecessary stress. Still, on the other hand, you might feel proud because

you were one of the few that aced the exam - surely everyone has felt these feelings at least once before. Academic validation, as stated before, can be a good thing. In fact, it is defined as feeling more accomplished because of a certain task regarding one’s academic career. However, with the recent rise of pressure on students, especially on those that are in high school, many are measuring their self-worth with academic validation. In other words, academic validation has become what many students rely on to feel proud. There is a clear line between relying on your grades to self-motivate yourself in order to become a better student and using your grades to define your abilities and capabilities in life. It becomes clear

that once students begin to measure their self-value by their grades, things start to go downhill. It impacts students’ mental health and, more specifically, their perception of themselves. As a student, it is very easy to feel that your grades define you, but in reality, that is not the case at all. Although grades may be the key to long-term success, it is truly difficult to reverse the “grades are everything” mindset, especially in an environment where everyone is constantly enforcing it. Allowing yourself to step back from thinking that grades define your self-worth will make you feel a lot more at ease and get back on track faster, even after your grade takes a hit. During the high school years, when grades seem to be inevitably life-defining, it is essential that you



With the overwhelming load of assignments and tests, getting lost and feeling pressured to do well on everything is easy. [Source: Author, Isleen Lee]

take a few moments to reconsider whether this single grade will truly be “life-changing.” It is crucial to emphasize the importance of putting your well-being and grades on different ends of the spectrum. Lastly, as always, remember that there is no such thing as a failure, just a learning experience!