

Student Reporter



Ashley Seong  
Grade 9  
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## The Representation of Dance Through Ayala



The various programs within the Ayala Dance performing at the Spring Dance  
[Source: Author, Ashley Seong]

Entering High School extends a larger range of interests that may be pursued through assistive communities and teachers. As students navigate through this opening perspective, they stumble upon various forms of art accommodated by admirable performances. Clubs unite to gather intrigued newcomers, inducing a friendly community seen within large unifications, such as choir, band, drumline, and dance. Ayala’s outstanding dance group compiles great talent, passion, and alliance to formulate cohesive performances in sports events, as well as their own concert.

Ayala’s Spring Dance, City Lights, brought dancers of varying experiences to showcase their devotion and aptitude to learn the techniques of dance, within numerous numbers.

The Ayala dance program divides students by levels of experience, where bonds are made throughout the year. Each group begins to gain knowledge and skill to match their style of dance, ranging from jazz to pop, broadening their proficiency. The beginner dance group performed three new numbers that showcased clean dis-

plays of technique and intriguing costumes, astonishing audiences through the knowledge that these students only began to pursue their interests recently. The Intermediate dance program at the Spring Dance truly showed all of their emotions and continuously growing proficiency for dance in alluring flows and spins within their remarkable numbers. Performing emotional plays of spring from their lyricals, with floral costumes to dewy makeup, the audiences awaited and held on to the passionate expressions and adhesive technical spirals of movement. As the members of this group share a bond that stemmed from the beginning of high school, they share a collective fondness that is displayed whenever they perform. Sparkling garments on these delicate dancers glisten as they show up on stage, earning supportive cheers from audiences and friends. The concept of City Lights was also incorporated into the intermediate community through backdrops of starry urban landscapes that matched French musical notes to

give off an intricate flow of steps. The continuously growing members of this group showed great pride/accomplishment that earned them applause and compliments throughout the night.

The advanced dance program wrapped up the entire show for Ayala’s Spring Dance concert. Their expressive steps and glorious moves all cemented a bitter-sweet accordance, with members being seniors in their high school years. The hard work and long-bonded clusters of these mentors, students, and friends were all seen by the various aspects of their dancing. They brought out gemmed costumes with enlightening makeup as well as dramatic poses to the stage, rendering a loud reaction from audiences. They ended with tearful bows and words of encouragement for those still pursuing this wonderful form of art. The stage was soon full of families, friends, dancers, teachers, and flowers prospering everywhere, bringing Ayala’s concert of dance concert to an end.

Student Reporter



Seoyoon Kim  
Grade 7  
South Lake Middle School

## Beyond the Golden Gate: The Homelessness Epidemic in San Francisco

San Francisco is a city of diversity and technology, as it is one of the bay cities of Silicon Valley. It was listed as one of the 28 Top Cities in the World according to PlanetWare. San Francisco was considered a city of wealth and success, however, it is now more like a “city of homelessness.” Under the 2022 PIT Count, 7,754 people were experiencing homelessness in San Francisco. This is a vast number considering that the population of SF is 811,253.

One of the reasons why San Francisco is suffering from the homelessness problem is expensive house prices. Houses in San Francisco are notorious for being expensive; oil and other products are skyrocketing. San Francisco’s market price is the 3rd most expensive, right after New York and Boston. It does not help that California also has the highest state tax in the U.S. The city’s rapid economic growth and the influx



Homelessness is a huge problem in San Francisco, causing many visitors and residents fear.  
[Source: Author, Seoyoon Kim]

of highly paid workers and engineers from Silicon Valley have further strained the housing market, causing a shortage of affordable units for low-income individuals and families. The lack of accessible housing options leaves many people at a high risk of homelessness. Long waiting lists for subsidized housing exacerbate the situation, leaving individuals without immediate solutions or support.

While San Francisco provides community services and support networks, the scale of the home-

less population often overwhelms the available resources. There is a shortage of mental health facilities, addiction treatment programs, and affordable healthcare options, making it difficult for homeless individuals to access the assistance they need. Limited funding and budget constraints can hinder the establishment and expansion of these programs. Public funding for mental health and addiction services may be insufficient to meet the growing demand, leaving a gap in available resources and limiting the capacity to provide compre-

hensive care. Additionally, navigating the complex web of social services can be challenging for individuals who lack support or face bureaucratic barriers.

One of the ways to solve this problem is increasing the availability of affordable housing through investment in low-income housing programs, rent control measures, and partnerships with the private sector to create more affordable options.

It is essential to know that the homeless problem is not only the result of personal choices or behaviors but a complex interplay of economic, social, and systemic factors. Addressing the issue requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses affordable housing initiatives, economic opportunities, mental health support, and community collaborations to ensure the well-being and stability of all individuals in the city.

Student Reporter



Subeen Yu  
Grade 7  
Juniper Christian School

## Classical Music in Modern Society

What kind of music do you listen to? What is your favorite song or piece? Most people listen to Pop songs, or it might change over time as trends flow. However, when it comes to classical music, people who only understand classical music enjoy it. Most people shut their ears or say that classical music is boring, long, and does not follow modern trends. Classical music should not stay in the position where only a few people enjoy it, but everyone should at least try to listen even though there are different preferences.

First of all, what is classical music? Classical music is traditional Western art music. It also has numerous genres, such as opera and symphony. Countless modern people say that classical music is boring, calm, and simple. However, people have to know that not all classical pieces are calm and relax-

ing. There are these types of pieces, such as “Liebesleid” by Fritz Kreisler, however, there are loud ones, such as “Mars” from “The Planets” by Gustav Holst. Classical music is not boring, since it combines pieces of challenges and exhilaration.

Modern society has to throw away hard feelings about classical music. There are two reasons why people should give it a chance. The first reason is to respect classical musicians. Some people say it is easy to be a musician since they only have to do what it says on the music sheet. However, every musician must know how to phrase and express each note musically so that the audience can enjoy it. Listening to and enjoying classical music can be one way to respect the musician and the composer. The second reason is to break the wall of classical music and try to listen to what each piece is expressing.



ChungManHan Church Orchestra playing Arirang Rhapsody for the entertainment.  
[Source: Youngjin Yu]

Classical music is not just composed of random notes, but it expresses numerous things, such as emotions.

One of the ChungManHan Church Orchestra members said, “These days, people do not listen to classical music. In fact, lots of them hate it. If people knew the beauty behind each piece, they would change their minds. Classical music is like a language and best friend for me. It speaks kindly

to me and understands me.”

Classical music in modern society is stuck in the boundary of musicians. People should try to understand and listen to classical music. Understanding and listening to it not only opens your ears but your heart as well. Beautiful melodies and true meanings behind the melodies will open our hearts. Do not close your heart when you hear classical pieces, but try to listen and understand them.

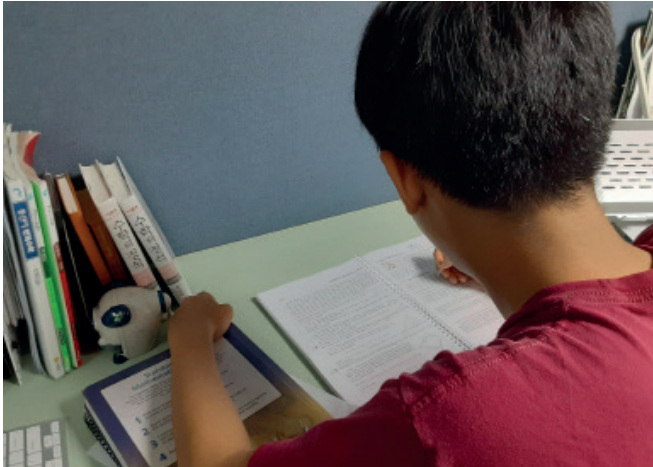


Student Reporter

Participating in the Purple Comet Math Meet 2023



Jiyong Kwak  
Grade 8  
Juniper Christian School



A student studying for the upcoming PCMM competition.  
[Source: Author, Jiyong Kwak]

Every year, Juniper Christian School’s math club participates in the Purple Comet Math Meet. This is an online team contest where students all around the world compete. The competition is designed to make math contests accessible to all students by making the test free, giving ten days to complete it, and translating the test into multiple languages. According to Purple Comet, in 2022,

over 12,000 students competed on over 3998 teams from 62 countries. While preparing for the test, students were able to cooperate with others in learning essential concepts and finding solutions to challenging problems.

Two months before the test, the math club members gathered in a room. The captain of the team gave us a math packet that would

test us on our different abilities. After solving the test, we were split into groups based on the results. After two months of relentless preparation, we were ready for the challenge. On the test day, the teams gathered as the contest began. The problems required rigorous attention. After an hour and a half of wrestling, the test ended, and everyone was glad to finish successfully.

I interviewed the chair of our math club, Noah Kim, who will go on to Carnegie Mellon University next year to study the mathematical sciences, on the journey of participating in the Purple Comet Math Meet (PCMM). When he was asked what it was like to participate in the meet, he responded, “It was certainly challenging to participate in the Purple Comet Math Meet (PCMM). The difficulty of the problems ranges from very elementary to national Olympiad

problems, so everyone can play some part in it. I also did not have as much time as I would have liked to train the school’s representative team.” When asked if he had any goals before going into the test, he said, “Personally, I hoped to have a team score higher than last year, and we exceeded this goal by two points. Above all, however, is the hope that all participants had the opportunity to think deeply about math - even if it were only for 90 minutes.”

While the two-month of preparation was short for all of us, it was a time when students from different grades could interact. This math meet helped beginners talk with experienced seniors about questions they had in math. Through this article, I hope more students will be motivated to study math to be a thinker who can solve not only math problems, but issues we face in society, and the community.

Student Reporter

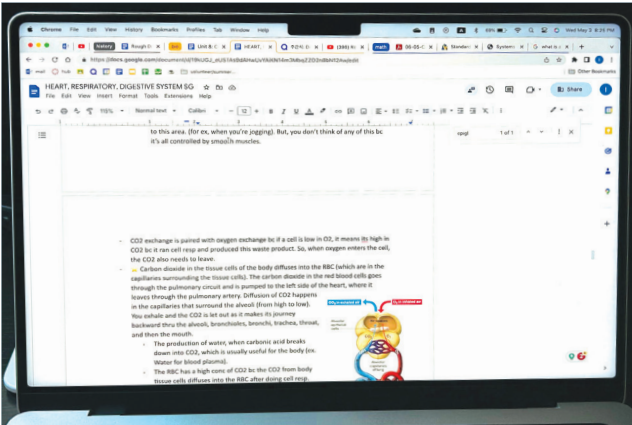
High School: Through its “Thick and Thins”



Isleen Lee  
Grade 9  
Harvard-Westlake School

Do you ever wonder why adults say that high school is ultimately, “the best time of your life” and automatically think, “I’m not too sure about that.” Many, if not most, students will have experienced this at least once during their high school years. So, why do adults keep saying it will be the best years of our lives? On the other hand, why do we, as students, feel so stressed all the time?

I believe that the high school experience is often glamorized because of the recent trend on social media that romanticizes school. The content shown on social media only displays the best version of the creator, making viewers feel as if their lives should seem exactly the same way. This is controversial among students, however, as there are many different reactions to this issue. Yet, I believe that romanticizing school often means that we only focus on promoting an extremely high-achieving student lifestyle, which may temporarily encourage teens to work hard, but lead to negative effects



Another perspective of the chaotic student life includes having many tabs open at once. Romanticizing school emphasizes always being organized, but that is not always the case for many students.  
[Source: Author, Isleen Lee]

later on.

High school isn’t like the curated picture that you see. You may not always be productive or the highest-scoring student in your class. Chances are, you will be overwhelmed with the number of responsibilities you have for school — not to mention extracurriculars and sports — that you will want a break to simply do nothing. This lifestyle that social media emphasizes does not focus

on the right aspect of school. It is difficult to be productive all the time — you need breaks to keep going! The holistic truth that many people have to accept is that it’s okay not to be “the perfect student.” It is unhealthy to compare yourself to someone that is not you (aka, the people you see on social media). Everyone is different, with varying strengths and weaknesses. If everyone had the same exact skill sets, there’d be no point in trying to be the best,

right? This is the “thick” of high school — struggling to be true to oneself and trying to become someone else.

The good news, on the other hand, is that the adults are right. High school is the best years of your life, despite the pressure it puts on you. These four years are like the vacation part of your photo album; you need to get through the hassle of packing, standing in line, and flying for hours in an uncomfortable seat in order to reach your wanted destination. During high school (and similar to an airport), everyone struggles to find their way through. You’ll have the chance to meet like-minded people and make lifelong friends because of this. There isn’t anyone that is the exact same as you, but there will be those that are similar to you. It’s all about tackling the obstacles, but you get to do it all together with those who support you. This makes it much easier to endure, making school much more enjoyable, rather than “romantic.”

Student Reporter

What is Turtle Neck?



Hajoon Song  
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International School of Beijing

As many students are facing a lot of assignments in school, the time for sitting at the desk and finishing homework increases. The majority of students put their heads down, spending all of their free time looking down to look at books, worksheets, and laptops. Believe it or not, those continuous actions create a turtle neck syndrome. Not only does turtle neck syndrome happen to students, but recently we are also seeing adults having more severe symptoms.

A simple definition of turtle neck syndrome is a forward-neck posture that is created by either hanging the neck down or forward when studying or looking at electronic devices. It is called turtle because people who are enduring this syndrome have a tendency to look like they have the shape of the neck of a turtle.

Turtle neck syndrome is very harmful to the body and bones. Firstly, the cause of this symptom, always staring downwards, can make our posture curved. It is often considered an ideal posture when the spine and the neck bones are straight. However, turtle neck syndrome causes rounded shoulders and curved back. Furthermore, the stress put on the neck due to this type of posture results in chronic pains in the neck and shoulders. According to Benevida Healthcare, approximately 66% to 90% of the U.S. population suffers from turtle neck syndrome. This is worrisome since this can affect physical health, which then can lead to mental health issues.

The best thing to do to cure turtle neck syndrome is to prevent it. It is very important to be aware of how



The figures demonstrate the bad posture that people have when they suffer from Turtle Neck Syndrome.  
[Source: Author, Hajoon Song]

one is sitting/standing, and make sure to maintain a straight posture. Also, exercises on the neck and soft massages to the shoulders can help people significantly. For me, I also have suffered from mild versions of the turtle neck syndrome. The muscles close to

my neck and shoulders were very painful due to constantly looking downward to study, so I decided to do some exercises and self-massage my neck. Now, I have a better posture than before, and I will keep making sure not to turn back to the bad posture I had.