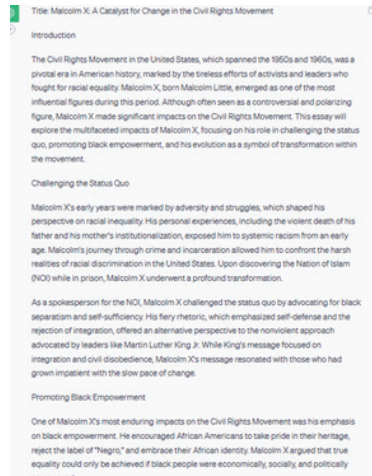


## Editors Column

## The Breakthroughs and Caveats of AI



Jeremiah Chun  
Grade 12  
West Ranch High School



AI platform Chat GPT is able to write an essay off of a simple prompt.

[Source: Author, Jeremiah Chun]

Artificial intelligence, or AI for short, is a machine or a software's ability to perform complex functions that require human-level intellect. The idea of programming has already contributed so much to today's society, making our work-related tasks easier in fields such as finance or medicine. However, the computer has never been at the level of outperforming humans on a scale that impacts global economies. Currently, artificial intelligence is termed as "limited" because of the restricted capabilities that developers have

been able to program thus far. AI cannot think for itself, so its performance rests at the same level as average human intelligence at best. However, considering the growth rate of technological advances and their social-shifting contributions to human society, it shouldn't be surprising that AI will soon perform more tasks that mimic human-level behavior and eventually become so smart that they can think for themselves, conceiving new ideas that humans have never thought of before.

We know that AI will evolve to a sophisticated level very quickly, but what does that mean for our society? AI can revolutionize society, just like devices such as phones or computers have. Jobs will become more efficient due to significantly reduced human error, but is that always a good thing? Because of such accuracy, AI could very well be preferred over a human workforce and, as a result, lead to unemployment. Another seemingly efficient aspect of AI is its ability to engage in unbiased decision-making, removing human assessment and relying solely on data to determine outcomes.

However, if the data itself that the AI is viewing is already biased, then the fact that AI will make an unbiased decision is useless since the data that it's using is skewed and unreliable.

In terms of innovation, AI's ability to ponder novel ideas and concepts should greatly increase the threshold of intellectual capacity beyond anything we've imagined. But can AI even think outside of the box? If AI is based on previously established human data, then how can it be able to generate new ideas and patterns? Just because AI can predict new possibilities based on patterns from the data doesn't necessarily mean that the conditions surrounding that dataset won't change; AI cannot make plausible predictions of conditions that don't exist yet. If AI is indeed successful in creating new ideas, what will that do to human creativity? When AI is perceived as developing "more creative" propositions than humans, that could sabotage innovation and originality, especially in artistic fields such as paintings or music. Do we really want the world's future innovations to be controlled

by machines with no conscience?

There is no doubt that AI is better than humans at processing and analyzing data, but we must always consider where that data is coming from. The only possible source for realistic data is people actually living in the real world, but what does a collection of this information mean for data privacy? As we become more reliant on AI, will humans be required to supply specific data about themselves so that AI can rapidly be trained? How will the consent of consumer data privacy even operate at that point?

AI is only going to get more sophisticated from this point on, and there is no sign of its impact slowing down. Just as the functions of phones, computers, and other smart devices have exponentially increased over a very short time, it is likely that AI will go through the same process. Saying that AI will rule over the world might be somewhat overstated, but we must seriously think about what a society increasingly reliant on artificial intelligence will look like. It's up to us to decide to what extent AI will benefit our society at minimal cost.

## Student Reporter

## 50th Korean Traditional Music Institute Anniversary Event



Dion Jung  
Grade 12  
Larchmont Charter School

Taking place on the last week of September, a massive performance was held at Barnsdall Theatre. This event—Korea Traditional Music to Please the Spirits—showcased multiple beautiful performances, ranging from the traditional Korean instrument (gayageum) to vocals and dances. The performers took turns playing their pieces in front of a large crowd in order to appeal to the spirits, showing off their hard work and culture. "The ticket was a bit pricey at \$20, but the performances made up for it; I would definitely come back!" stated Ha-jun Lee.

This event was one of the many posted on Korean websites; from KAYPA to ktmia, the Korean community wanted to introduce their culture to the world. Specifically taken from the KAYPA website, the main motto is to control your culture in order to control your



The Gayageum team at the Korea Traditional Music to Please the Spirits event.  
[Source: Esther Kim]

world and demonstrate the world you live in through books, music, and art.

A more specific name for the performance that took place is a Congratulatory performance for the 50th anniversary of the Korea Traditional Music Institute of America. After interviewing a gayageum performer, Esther Kim, she said, "I have performed in this event two times in a row,

and it is one of the most honorable things to accomplish. Not only am I showcasing my music skills and talents, but I am also given the opportunity to share my culture with the whole world and everyone watching."

The elaborate performances taking place were a sight to see; after each performance, the stage would be efficiently taken down, and only after a couple of minutes

the next performance would take place, with a whole new stage built. The beautiful Hanbok—traditional Korean clothes that are usually bright colors—worn by most on the stage emphasized their passion and pride in Korean culture. The contrast between the elegant dances with bright shades of red and pink with the calm, collected stringed instruments, with Hanbok of a neutral color, yellow and blue, allowed for a clear definitive division between the colors.

The Gayageum team performance was one of the best well-planned, well-coordinated performances of the night, with multiple teams playing the melody and the base. The base provides the foundation for the melody to play off of, providing a gorgeous tune of harmony and the sounds of waterfalls.

## Student Reporter

## The Importance of Sunscreen



Anthony Park  
Grade 10  
Northwood High School

What's your favorite thing to do on a warm, sunny day? I like to go to the beach to swim and sit under the sun for a few hours. These types of days are great for outdoor activities, but there is one thing you shouldn't forget when you're going out on a clear day. It's sunscreen!

Many people love to lie down at the beach without sunscreen to get a nice tan. However, exposure to direct sunlight without any protection can increase the risk of severe skin damage. UV rays from sunlight can cause skin cancers such as melanoma, the aging and wrinkling of the skin, eye damage, and more. To prevent this, sunscreen is essential when going out on sunny days.

So, when should you wear sunscreen? According to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), sun protection is encouraged on days with a UV index of 3 or higher. UV indexes

represent the strength of the sunlight on a specific day. The higher the index, the faster your skin will burn. UV indexes 1-2 are considered "low," and most people don't need sun protection on these days. UV indexes 3-5 are considered "moderate" and take about 40-50 minutes until skin damage, so sun protection is recommended for moderate levels of UV rays. UV indexes 6-7 are considered "high," and it takes less than 30 minutes for the skin to burn! Sun protection is essential, and even long sleeves and hats are recommended for days with high UV indexes. Finally, UV indexes of 8-10 are considered "very high," and indexes of 11+ are "extreme." These days, avoid going out from 10 am-2 pm, even with sun protection, since your skin burns in less than 15-20 minutes. Information about UV indexes is easily accessible on the weather app on your phone, or even on Google.

Then the question is, which sunscreen should I choose? Sunscreens are categorized by the amount of sun protection they give, measured by SPF (Sun Protection Factor). The strength of the sunscreen should be labeled on the bottle as a number. The higher the number, the more protection it gives. For example, if a sunscreen is SPF 30, it only admits 1/30 of the UV rays that come into contact with your skin. So, even a SPF 10 sunscreen will block 90% of the harmful UV rays. Sunscreens generally have an SPF of 10-50, which can be used for various situations. Choose the one that will suit your needs!

Now that you learned more about sun protection, you should think twice before going out on a sunny day, even if it isn't super hot outside! Once when I was young, I got badly sunburnt in Thailand during my vacation, and I remember the skin all over my body peeling off. Sun damage will build up



Wearing sunscreen on sunny days can prevent skin damage.

[Source: Author, Anthony Park]

over time, so even if you don't see the damage on your skin at the moment, it could affect you later. Sunscreen isn't the only option for sun protection, though. Wearing long-sleeved shirts, pants, or a hat are also great options to combat sun damage. Applying sun protection only takes a few minutes, but will definitely help you in the future!



Student Reporter

## The Trial of the Pilot Schedule in La Canada



**Joanne Kim**  
Grade 10  
La Canada High School



La Canada High School has temporarily changed its schedule to participate in the Challenge Success Program.  
[Source: Author, Joanne Kim]

During the last week of September, La Canada High School decided to start testing out the Pilot Schedule, planned out by Stanford University's Challenge Success Program, for three weeks. Challenge Success is a program that collects data from students about their thoughts on their school system and uses these so that they can help create a better learning environment. La Canada High School has been a partner of the Challenge Success Program for several years now and has been working towards implementing the plans

produced by them.

Before, the program suggested mental health checks during class. This was done through watching educational videos about the struggles of mental health and reassuring the students that they are not alone. Teachers were highly encouraged to lessen the tension around the need for spectacular grades by expanding their office hours and providing additional resources to help the students. However, the district decided to change the schedule to see how the

students would react to it.

Our prior schedule included two block days, which were days where we would only have either our even or odd periods for one hundred and four minutes. The other days required us to go to all six classes for fifty-six minutes. There was also a fifteen-minute break between the second and third periods with six-minute passing periods. However, the break was split to make each passing period four minutes longer. According to the pilot schedule, we now have block days three days a week, each with four out of the six periods for seventy-two minutes. The pilot schedule aimed to extend the time we have for lunch. On our normal schedule, we had thirty-minute lunch periods, but the new schedule allows us to have five more minutes to re-energize and prepare for our next class.

Generally, the reactions have not been too positive, as it has affected the plans of both teachers and students. This change is arguably harder on the teachers, as it has

caused them to have to replan their schedules for each class. In some cases, their teaching has declined as they are struggling to adapt their lectures to fit the new duration of a class period. This, as a result, negatively impacts the student as the last points of a normal lecture are often rushed and not thoroughly reviewed.

In my opinion, the school day seems a lot longer, but it doesn't seem to be helping me learn more. The schedule change has thrown me off my usual routine at school. Similarly, sophomore Dana Rhee negatively comments on the extended passing periods as she says, "It's not enough time to take a break, but too much time to go straight to class."

In addition to throwing the teachers and students off their flow, the bell schedule has now changed, causing the office to have to manually ring the bell. In the midst of their bus schedules, they often miss the correct time, causing the teachers to fall even more behind in their schedule.

Student Reporter

## Sleep? Don't Skip It.



**Hannah Lee**  
Grade 11  
South High School

Time has already flown by, and it's impossible for me to believe that I'm one year closer to graduating. There's an infinite amount of advice that I have heard from upperclassmen, and there are bits and pieces that I still need to experience and learn for myself. But one thing I have found out firsthand is that going to sleep at 4 a.m. is not worth it.

To be fair, there are only a few of us who actually go to bed in the wee hours of the morning, studying every single second along the way. We all have devices that are hard to put down once they're in our hands. Some of us hop into the shower and don't want to leave. You constantly get up from your desk to do something else. And while procrastinating... well, 4

am does come quickly.

But falling asleep at 4 am and waking up at 7 am, surviving on only three hours of sleep, is not going to help you learn with an alert mindset. An article in the New York Times said that the most important sleep occurs after 10 pm to the early hours of the day. Nevertheless, students are up and awake, and studying so late that night begins to seem "early" for them.

Last year had to be the worst year of my life in terms of scheduling. Balancing out one of the hardest classes I had ever taken, as well as my sport... sleep didn't make it very high on my list of priorities. Staying up until 2 or 3 am for a month, I moved around like a zombie at school and almost fell



Leave your phone in a different room, it definitely works to give you more time, allowing for more sleep later!  
[Source: Hannah Lee, Author]

asleep during half my classes. You learn and understand what your teachers expect from you during classes, so you don't want to be dozing off in there. I learned that the hard way.

Now, as a junior, one of the most

important things for me is my sleep schedule, and when I feel fatigue returning to me, I make sure to concentrate, leave my phone in a different room, and finish my work before the clock hits 12:00. It's difficult to fall asleep so early for some students though, especially those with busy extracurriculars such as band or sports. Spending four years glued to a desk is not the best way to spend your high school career either, because there are so many fun events going on, from football games to dances and spirit weeks.

Sleep. Don't miss out on it. You may think that you'll be able to catch up on more rest in the future, but life just gets busier the more you live it. Sleep while you can, and live your life to its fullest!

Student Reporter

## Political Pandas



**Derrick Ahn**  
Grade 11  
Oxford Academy

What do you think of when you think of a panda? While most think of pandas as adorable, chubby bears, the rivaling superpowers, the USA and China, think otherwise. To both governments, they are merely a diplomatic strategy.

Many have been aware that pandas are being returned to China from zoos by December of this year, but why the sudden good-byes? Due to the partnership contracts ending between the US and China, pandas are set to leave the Smithsonian Museum in D.C., as well as the Zoo Atlanta later in 2024. So why aren't the contracts getting renewed? Politics.

Politics have partaken in all facets of the world; developed, the undeveloped, and everywhere in between. Pandas are no exception, being a lucrative cash cow for the Chinese government. Pandas have served as diplomatic gifts since the Imperial Age, but were conventionally used after

the Republican Era and the Cold War; after 1984, they were leased for money over long-term deals. Meanwhile, the two titans' diplomatic relation has struck an all-time low. With similar interests to compete with and the economic strife between the two, pandas loaned to the US have been used as a bargaining chip, a stalemate. With the stalemate in full swing, this brings up the necessary question: "Are pandas really a diplomatic gift, or is there an underlying cause?"

While the situation is murky, there are definite pros and cons regarding the loan. These loans have often been seen as a symbol of intimacy and amicable relations. On the other hand, expenses are sky-high to take care of even a single panda, as China demands strict and regulated care, in conjunction with the cost of bamboo and rental fees. The cost adds up, and zoos like the Calgary Zoo in Alberta, Canada, returned pandas early due to the



Pandas are really picky with their food, with bamboo being their favorite!  
[Source: Patche99z]

inability to keep up with the lofty costs of habiting the animal.

Many consider if the pros, indeed, outweigh the cons. Daniel Rodriguez, Treasurer of the Animal Care Club of Oxford Academy, feels that "...it's important to recognize endangered species and conserve pandas. Taking care of pandas takes dedication and exhausts resources, and I feel that ethically, [their] physical and psychological needs should be addressed properly. In contrast, we should note that it's a complex matter regarding

trade, rights, and ideological differences." Concerning the popular opinion, I interviewed Michael Nguyen, an avid panda lover who also attends Oxford Academy. He states, "Although it is hard to see pandas leave the zoo, to prioritize their well-being and conservation, I think their return to China is essential for their long-term survival."

All in all, pandas have been the subject of controversy. What is your stance on pandas and the political stalemate?