

Editors Column

“Selling” Your Slide Deck: Wow Judges Fast



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Slide Decks offering visual insight into a business often accompany digital pitches entered in Business Competitions. [Source: Author, Audrey Park]

When picking up a book, most readers instinctively look at the cover page to formulate a first impression. As the study of psychology has commonly found, the phrase “don’t judge a book by its cover” is not always held true, as humans are highly influenced by preconceptions due to Rapid Visual Information Processing

(RVIP). This behavior is both an advantage and a hindrance to entrepreneurs, as graphic design often determines if investors are drawn in. In modern times, one way that investors allow entrepreneurs to pitch their businesses is through slide decks. Through this potential competitive edge, it is vital to keep sim-

plicity and visual tools in mind to ensure that the right message about a product or service is delivered.

Throughout various business pitch competitions in past years, my partner and I have kept these elements in mind in order to place in finalist positions. Business pitches serve to deliver an offer that is compelling enough to leave a lasting impression on investors’ minds long after the end. These pitch competitions provide an opportunity to test how judges in the field view more ambitious business ideas before finalizing such models for real meetings. Above all, our experiences have shown that simplicity in competition slides is not only an aesthetically pleasing addition, but a necessity. It’s difficult to gauge how much a product or service’s details were absorbed by investors. So, allowing minimal information to register is crucial to make the pitch’s content memorable. This means not replacing bullets with paragraphs, not letting anxiety about articulated words consume the rest of the process, and not adding more details than necessary. This practice allows intentional structure and impact to weave around each word, empha-

sizing the pitch’s winning points.

While simple word choice elevates a business pitch’s message, so do straightforward visual cues. One universal language that dictates first impressions is colors. In business pitches, advertising, and more, color palettes help accentuate impactful points with subconscious cues. Commonly, green hues are associated with nutrition or self-care, while blue objects display formality or reliability. Furthermore, another visual tool that can be used to narrow in on an idea is by using flowcharts or boxes connected by arrows, with each point becoming more specific. This method ensures that the least amount of transition words are used between different ideas while instantly showing investors what type of information to expect, structurally, in the slide. Also, to show the business collaborators’ credentials, rather than listing activities, a slide can feature pictures to prove achievements or minimalist icons of the qualifications alongside captions.

So, whether you’re creating a slide deck for a class assignment or business competition, always keep in mind: your first slide is your first impression, don’t make it your last.

Student Reporter

More Than Just a Music Festival



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Held every year in the sunny California desert, Coachella is one of the most famous music festivals in the world. Although Coachella is mainly a music festival, it is also a place where fashion and art intertwine with music for two weekends in April. Though it may seem like an event for adults, Coachella also draws teens and young adults from all over the country who are interested in music, pop culture, and self-expression. It is more than just a concert, but an experience that many dream of attending at least once.

One of the biggest reasons people love Coachella is the variety of music. From global pop stars to rising indie artists, the festival features a lineup that has something for everyone. There are multiple stages with performances happening all day, making it easy to discover new artists or see popular ones live. In the past, major acts like Billie Eilish, BLACKPINK, Ariana Grande, and Beyoncé have headlined the event, making it a major moment in music culture.

Besides the music, Coachella is also known for its color-



Attendees at Coachella dress up in creative outfits, and it is becoming a trend online to have fun creating looks. [Source: Emily Ha]

ful fashion and art. Attendees dress in unique, creative outfits that show off their Eros Ali ties. It’s not unusual to see flow-

er crowns, sparkly face paint, or outfits inspired by different decades. Around the festival grounds, giant art installations

and interactive exhibits add a fun and imaginative vibe to the event. These visual elements make the experience feel like stepping into a different world, perfect for taking fun photos and making lasting memories.

Even though Coachella is exciting, high schoolers need to know that it’s a big responsibility. The festival takes place outdoors and lasts all day, so staying safe, hydrated, and aware of your surroundings is a must. It’s also not cheap since tickets, travel, and food can add up very quickly. That’s why some teens decide to wait until they are a little older before going, or they choose to follow along from home through free livestreams and social media.

In the end, Coachella is more than just a festival, but a cultural event that brings people together through music and creativity. For high school students, it represents freedom, fun, and the power of self-expression. Whether you’re watching from your screen or planning to go someday, Coachella is a reminder of how music can connect people and create unforgettable moments.

Student Reporter

AP Season is Just Around the Corner



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Competition is often inevitable living in a rigorous and greedy environment, where people often define success as being “better than others” rather than comparing it to themselves and their own achievements. According to author and lecturer Kohn, “Competition by its very nature is always unhealthy.” In an environment such as this, stressful times like the AP season can drive students to their maximum levels of stress. With most AP tests approaching in less than a month, many students cram up their last few days in academies, solving problem sets after problem sets.

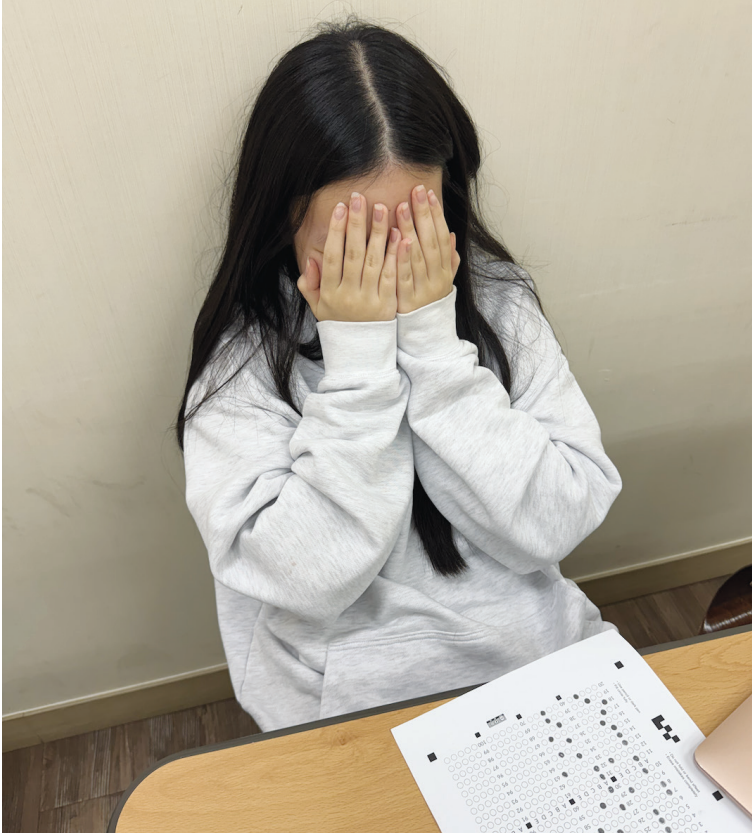
With prestigious schools come high expectations, and with high expectations come pressured environments. In a school where the expectation score is a five and a four is considered a “bad” score, students are very harsh on themselves. Not only do they feel the burden, but parents also do as well. They not only feel the need to help their children with as many resources as they can supply, but also work hard to make sure their kids alleviate their burden.

One struggle that many students encounter is balancing time. As most AP exams are crammed into a single week, it leaves the students to consider

how much time they should devote to each subject. One of the juniors at Seoul International School, Jiah Hwang, said, “The way most APs are concentrated into just a single week or even consecutive weeks leaves me feeling helpless and stressed out.” As Jiah mentioned, the scheduling not only leaves students with stress but also results in bad outcomes. Moving into junior year, most students are taking two to three more APs than they took during the previous years, which is also a huge jump in terms of the workload. Many students also expect a similar amount of studying as in previous years, and end up beginning late, which escalates to last-minute cramming and ineffective division of study time.

Though the process itself is tiring and draining, seeing the score during the summer often presents a sort of happiness that feels both rewarding and makes the process seem better than it actually was. Many students envision themselves after the test, which serves as a motivating factor for the months leading up to the AP exams. Having an ideal vision or ideal goal often makes the process seem more approachable and desirable.

Balancing school work and



Students are locked in academic studying from day to night while preparing for their AP exams. [Source: Author, Yerin Park]

AP studies is a struggle many students deal with, as it is hard for students to decide which to devote more time to. With school subjects growing harder as the

year passes, students sacrifice other things, such as sleep and free time, as they believe it is the best way to fit both school work and AP work.



Student Reporter

Stacey Lee: Sharing Culture Through Literature



Audrey Choi  
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The Nueva School



My personal collection of Stacey Lee books, which made me even more excited to hear her speak at my school.  
[Source: Author, Audrey Choi]

At my school's annual book fair, rows of new hardcover books lined the blue tablecloth-covered stations. While looking around, I noticed a corner dedicated to the author Stacey Lee. There was only one copy left of her newest book, Kill Her Twice. I quickly purchased it, unbeknownst to the fact that she would be visiting my school later that week. The day after, my teachers announced the coming of her visit and en-

couraged us to read some of her books. At the visit, I was inspired by her storytelling skills and her story, and wanted to learn and read more from her.

Stacey Lee is the author of several young adult novels, such as Under a Painted Sky, Outrun the Moon, The Downstairs Girl, Luck of the Titanic, Kill Her Twice, and many more. Her writing has received several awards, such as the California Golden Poppy

Award, the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature, and the PEN Center USA Literary Award. A large portion of her books are historical fiction, including The Downstairs Girl and Luck of the Titanic. The historical events in these books directly relate to the Chinese-American experience, as Lee is a fourth-generation Chinese-American who grew up in Southern California.

Before Lee's visit, I had already read The Downstairs Girl, which highlights a Chinese-American teenager named Jo Kuan who secretly lives in the basement of a newspaper-printing family. Now with the chance to directly get further historical insight, I asked what inspired her to write The Downstairs Girl during the school event. She replied, saying that a relative of hers had sent her an article about Chinese immigrants living in the tunnels of Moose Jaw, Canada, to escape anti-Chinese prejudice. Many of her books include historical events such as these that are the setting of the story. Similarly, in the Luck of the Titanic, the main character, Valora, sneaks onto the Titanic hoping to make a living in America. Due to the Chinese Exclusion Act, she is not allowed to enter America

and hopes that if she can prove her acrobatic skills to a circus owner, he'll help her enter America.

At the visit, Lee described her two children's books: Winston Chu vs. the Whimsies and Winston Chu vs. the Wingmeisters. I was intrigued that she had also written a children's chapter book in addition to her many young adult novels,; Lee has also written a duology. These books follow a twelve-year-old boy who learns to control his impulses. The plotline includes several pieces of Chinese folklore in a modern-day setting. The books are published by Rick Riordan Presents, a book imprint by Rick Riordan, bestselling author of the Percy Jackson series. Rick Riordan Presents highlights books with folklore and mythology from underrepresented heritages. The duology is a fun combination of folktales, magical events, and themes of friendship and family.

Stacey Lee is an amazing author and weaves culture and funny or moving plots together. Her work has been praised and loved by a wide range of readers and acknowledged by many other authors. I, for one, can't wait to see what she writes next!

Student Reporter

Taking a Bite Into Food Frenzies



Emily Lee  
Grade 10  
Sunny Hills High School

Dip, crunch, stretch, repeat. Chili's has been taking the food community by storm with their Triple Dipper appetizer, which consists of mozzarella sticks, chicken crispers, and mini sliders or Southwest egg rolls. Whether on Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, I have seen countless videos of mukbangers, as well as everyday people eating the Triple Dipper. Assuming that this frenzy would be another overhyped and short-lived trend, I never tried it. However, videos of this dish have not stopped bombarding my feed from September 2024 to February 2025. Therefore, on Saturday, March 1st, I finally tried the Triple Dipper.

Upon entering the restaurant, I noticed how busy it was. Every table seemed to be filled, and the place was bustling with energy. The decor was a mix of Southwestern and sports bar aesthetics with dim lighting, wooden accents, and loud TVs playing sports games. I have not been to Chili's in years, but being surrounded by such an ambiance instantly reminded me of all the times my dad and I came together for a daddy-daughter dinner. Plus, the staff was patient and kind towards me as they helped me pick out the best items to get from the Triple Dipper.

Eventually, I decided on the



The Internet sensation Chili's Triple Dipper appetizer with fried mozzarella sticks, Nashville hot chicken crispers, and mini sliders.  
[Source: Author, Emily Lee]

mozzarella sticks, Nashville Hot chicken crispers, and mini sliders. The food took about 20 minutes to come, and it arrived piping hot. I immediately dove into the chick-

en crispers while they were still crunchy. The entire tender was soaked in the Nashville Hot sauce. Dipped into the ranch, these chicken crispers were extremely

crunchy and bursting with flavor.

Next, I tried the mini sliders, which were made up of a patty, bacon, grilled onions, and cheese. These tasted like standard burgers and were decent, but I do not think they are an absolute "must purchase" when coming here. Saving the best for last, I tried the mozzarella sticks. As soon as I bit into it, a loud crunch filled my ears, and with barely any effort, the cheese oozed out into the longest cheese pull I had ever experienced. Dipping it into the marinara sauce adds a kick of flavor, and overall, I definitely recommend these.

Having eaten the popular Triple Dipper, I would say that it is worth trying. I will admit that it gets very greasy, so splitting it with another person would make for a delicious meal. While I don't think the flavor of the meal justifies the fact that it has been trending online for several months, I see the appeal in the dish, especially in the seemingly endless cheese pull of the mozzarella sticks.

The unrelenting popularity of the Chili's Triple Dipper highlights the power of exposure through social media, as well as the unity that food provides. I left the Chili's restaurant with a stronger appreciation for food and a full stomach.

Student Reporter

The Negative Effects of Bullying on Teenagers



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Bullying is an issue that we face every day in our lives, especially in high school; it can happen anywhere and to anyone. Bullying is defined as intentional harm to people, and it can ruin a person's confidence and mental health. To demonstrate the severity of this issue, one must look at statistics: over 14% of high school students have considered suicide, and almost 7% have attempted it. It's more likely for the victims to attempt suicide than non-victims. As a result, half of the suicides among young people occur because of bullying. To analyze this issue, one must take a deep dive into public humiliation and how its victims, who were looking for a hand to save them, were neglected.

Public humiliation is a type of punishment that is meant to shame and harass people mentally. Public humiliation is a very cruel punishment because it wipes out the honor and self-esteem of an individual. One example of public humiliation is bullying. Bullying is an action that causes pain by continuously inflicting physical and psychological attacks on a member of a

group who is weaker than someone else, or against a person who violates the group's explicit rules. Bullying is a global conflict that many children will experience while growing up.

Bullying is a global issue that a lot of people go through and experience while growing up, and can relate to. The victims end up struggling due to the effects of the bullying, with experiences such as depression, poor health, and self-harm. Bullying is a conflict that needs to be prohibited because it affects mental health, self-esteem, and social relationships. Surveys have shown that 22% of students aged 12-18 got bullied during their school year. 1in 5 students ages 12-18 have been bullied at least once in their school years. Of the people who were bullied during these times, at least half of the suicides were because of bullying. There are so many types of bullying that students can go through, but the most common types of bullying are physical, cyber, and verbal. Physical bullying can be any physical harm from a person or multiple people. Cyberbullying is when an individual is isolated



Bullying isolates and harms people's emotions. [Source: Author, Chaewon Wi]

and receives hurtful messages online. Verbal bullying consists of spoken threats, like name-calling and rumors. Many victims who go through bullying experience depression, loneliness, anxiety, dropping out of school,

health complaints, and/or poor self-esteem. Bullying can happen to anyone, no matter the age, race, or gender. Therefore, it is important to prevent bullying by getting help from adults to protect oneself.