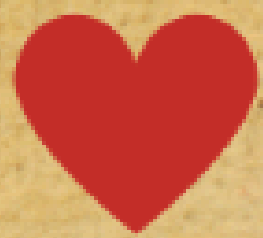


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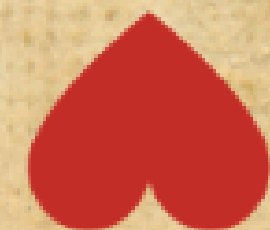
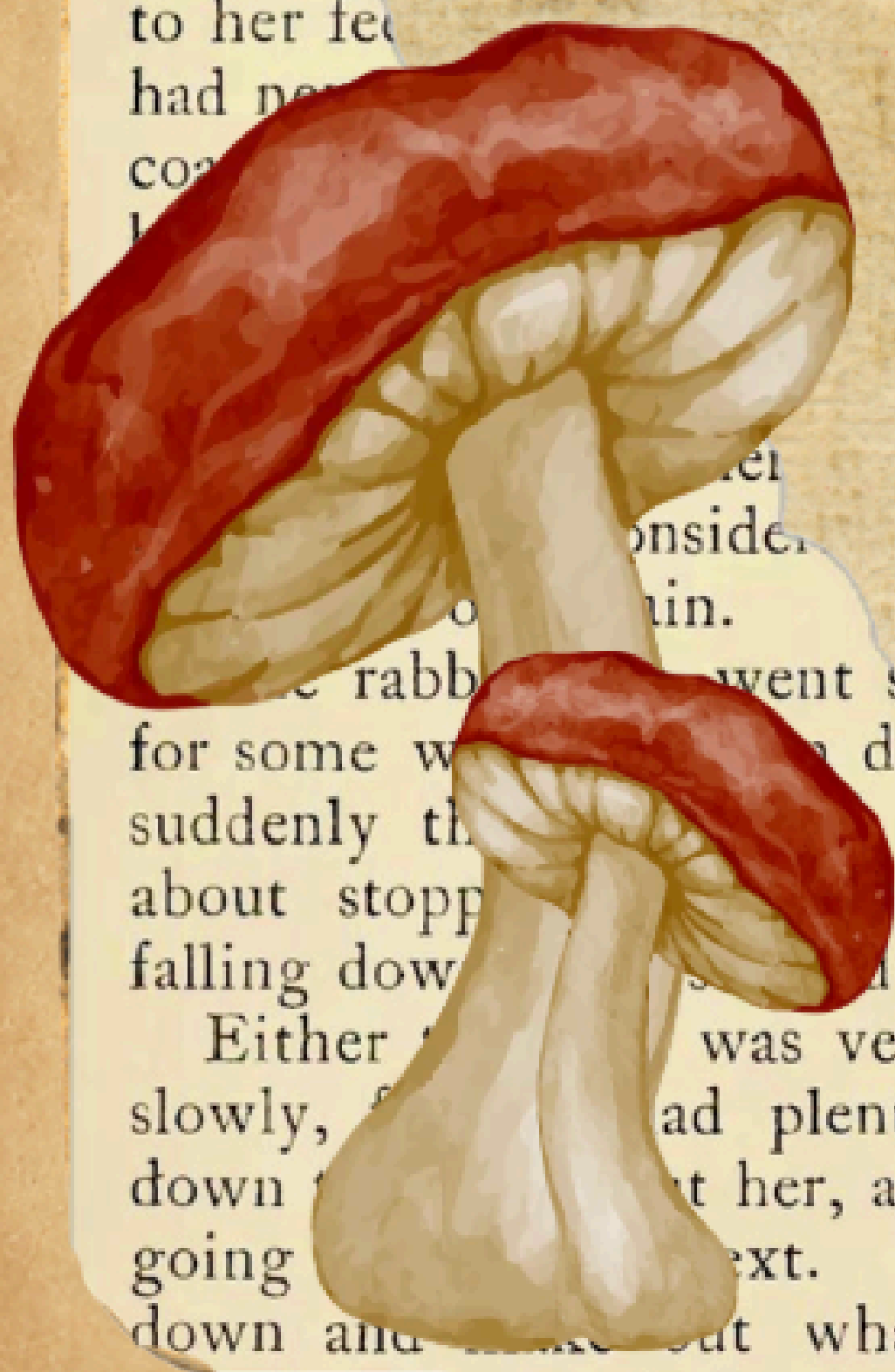


THE SCOP



WHERE TIME AND MEMORY INTERTWINE

COLEGIO LAS
PACHAS



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Editor's Note

For all along, The Scoop has occupied a profound meaning for me. It has and will always be, the space where we, as Pachas, have the possibility to shape our thoughts into something lasting. Where the writers within ourselves have the courage to express an opinion and allow it to exist beyond them.

The Scoop has never been just a bunch of articles printed in nice covers, it has been a lot more. It is the space where we can shape our ideas and where perspectives are questioned. It is an exercise where writing becomes a dialogue with others and we are capable of uncovering our stances.

Each time we receive an article, we know it carries more than words. It carries curiosity, position and a willingness to be heard. With every piece, we are reminded of the impact The Scoop has had over time. It has shaped narratives, influenced perspectives, and created space for our voices to unfold. What is written here does not disappear, it becomes part of a larger continuity, one that connects generations through thought, reflection, and a commitment to being the young girls who raise a voice towards the world.

This edition, where time and memory intertwine, we invite you to remain engaged with that purpose. Because writing is, in many ways, an act of preservation and authenticity. It allows us to hold onto ideas that might otherwise be forgotten, and to give permanence to what was once nothing more than a quick thought.

This latest 2025-2026 edition, The Scoop is more than grateful for what you've contributed to this aim, and looking ahead to our upcoming releases, we invite you to be part of this story that continues to be written.

A story in which we wish for everyone to be seen and heard.

Because long after the pages are turned, what remains is not only what was written, but the ideas that chose to be heard and the care with which they were received.

5:30 a.m

By: Sara Pérez 11ºB

I walk through the hallway
like I do every morning,
laughing with my friends
as if this day is ordinary too.

Suddenly, my heart skips a beat,
and I fall.

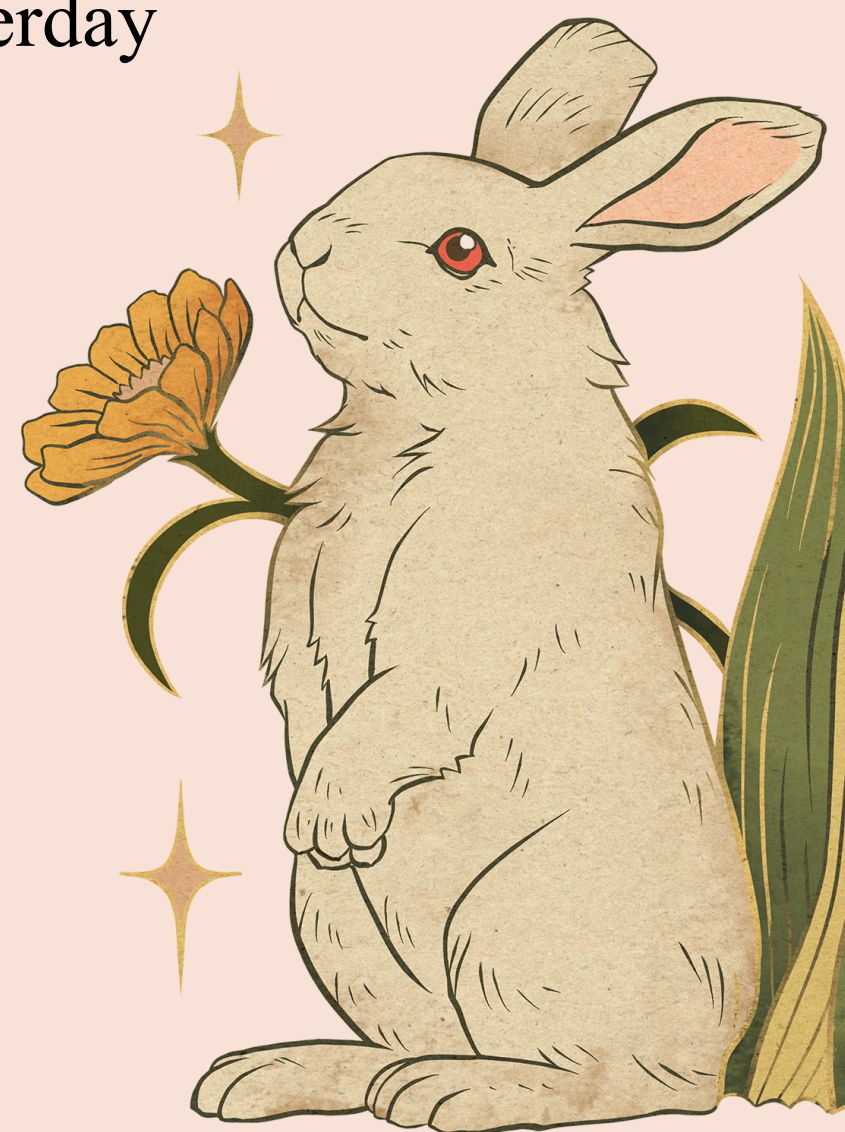
Suddenly, my legs start to fail
as I approach my class.

Suddenly, I become a watcher
in the back of my own mind.

I don't know how, nor why,
but I keep pushing
to make it before the bell rings.

7:45, my teacher's at the door.
I try to ignore the feeling in my soul
“Pursue the writing”, my classmates say,
but my hands are going numb from writing yesterday

My hair's undone,
and I can't seem to care.
But I must produce.
How will I be valuable
in any other way?



A Love Dream

By: Valentina Márquez Jurado 7ºA

Dreaming is dangerous.
You feel it calling,
filled with vigorous longing.
You feel it trapping you
with its painful fangs.
It suffocates you,
kills you slowly
with deceitful desires.
You believe you are loved,
you believe you are happy,
but when you wake up,
you find yourself alone,
your soul turned gray.
Awaken from this cruel dream,
from the drowsiness that holds you,
and return to yourself
with strength and resilience.

Djo

By: Manuela Angulo 10ºA

I love how you make me feel,
Your music moves something inside of me.
From the moment I start a song,
To the moment I finish an album.



All I can do is feel,
And think,
And feel,
And think,
I think about my life,
My path,
My future.
I think about how I'm gonna live
In a world full of fear, hate and pain,
But in your music I find comfort,
A feeling of nostalgia that I can't quite explain.
Which in a world so dark, it's very nice
To have a calm time,
To get lost in the melodies stuck in my mind,
And to finally get some peace of mind.
So thank you,
Thank you for being that ray of sun in this dark world.

The First Snow

By: Mariana Prada 7^oA

To that trip from December 9th of 2024 to January 12th of 2025 that marked my life.

Blue sky,
Ground white.
That's what I saw ten days after
I arrived in that foreign land.
Family around,
Marshmallows flooding my mouth.
Watching my new friends singing
through that screen that felt so close
but so far from my hous



Wishing to be there,
but also enjoying that feeling
of touching new snow-filled grass.

Oh Mother Earth,
what beautiful places you got.
A whole planet to explore
and many places to go.

Oh dear Germany,
not my original home
but know that everytime
I'd know my way around.

First snow,
first time in Europe.
And beautiful country
that will forever have
a special place in my heart.



Behind the Veil of Conflict: Afghanistan, a Silent Story

By: Ana María López Sánchez 8ºB

Talking about women in Afghanistan is not just about a political or religious conflict; it is about millions of lives marked by inequality, fear and resistance.

The history of Afghan women has been tainted by both progress and oppression. Over the past decade, Afghan women have experienced periods of remarkable freedom, during which their rights were protected and they had various opportunities in academia and the workforce; however, they have also endured years of strict control and inequality, during which their voices were silenced and their suffering was the result of an unjust regime. Their history reflects not only Afghanistan's political instability but also the global struggle for women's rights and gender equality.

In the 1920s, King Amanullah Khan and Queen Soraya Tarzi spearheaded reforms that promoted women's education and participation in society. Queen Soraya became a symbol of women's rights because she publicly supported female education and argued that women should have a voice in the future of the country and society. Although many conservative groups opposed these changes due to their radical belief that women should be granted only limited power, they also spurred one of the first movements aimed at improving women's rights and participation in Afghanistan.

During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, Afghanistan underwent another period of change, particularly in urban areas. Many women began attending universities, entering the formal workforce, pursuing careers as doctors, working in the public sector, and even participating in politics. One of the greatest advances for both the country and women's history occurred in 1964 when the new Afghan constitution officially granted women the right to vote, a very significant step forward for the time. In Kabul (the country's capital) and other cities, it was common to see women studying or working without the extreme restrictions that would exist years later. However, this progress was not uniform across the country. While cities moved toward greater equality, rural areas continued to hold onto conservative ideologies which limited women's freedoms and access to education. This disparity between urban and rural parts of Afghanistan created social tensions that would later lead to political and social conflicts, ultimately shaping the country's governance and identity.

The situation changed dramatically after the Saur Revolution in 1978, when the communist party seized power in Afghanistan and attempted to impose drastic reforms related to education, land redistribution, and women's rights. Although some of these reforms sought to modernize the country and expand opportunities for women, many religious and conservative groups rejected them as a threat to Afghan traditions and Islam.

The rise of opposition sparked a significant political and social crisis that led to the Soviet invasion in 1979. The war between the Soviet Union and mujahideen groups brought destruction, poverty, and instability throughout Afghanistan, affecting the lives of millions of women and families. After the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, the country suffered considerable instability and internal conflicts, which paved the way for the rise of the Taliban years later.

Amid the chaos, the Taliban emerged, consisting mainly of religious students and soldiers who promised to restore order and stability to the country.

The word “Taliban” comes from “talib,” which means “student” in Arabic. Many of the students were young Afghan refugees in Pakistan who were studying at Islamic religious schools called madrasas. These schools taught a very strict interpretation of Islam.

In 1996, the Taliban took control of Kabul and imposed an extremely strict regime based on their interpretation of Islamic law. Under their rule, women lost almost all of their fundamental rights. Girls were banned from attending school, and women were barred from working in most professions. They were also forced to wear the burka in public and to be accompanied by a man, who could only be their husband or a close relative. Women could not freely participate in public life or receive adequate medical care in many cases. Those who disobeyed the rules could face consequences such as severe physical harm, imprisonment, or even death. These restrictions completely excluded women from society and marked one of the most critical moments for women’s rights in the country’s history.

Following the 9/11 attacks in the United States, the U.S. government invaded Afghanistan with the aim of eliminating Al-Qaeda, a terrorist group with a history of extreme violence, led primarily by Osama bin Laden. The United States focused primarily on removing the Taliban from power, and with international support, a new Afghan government was established. A period of reconstruction then began. Over the next twenty years, millions of girls returned to schools and universities. Women began working in formal roles again as journalists, teachers, doctors, or politicians. Some even held important positions within the Afghan government. Besides, organizations that defended human rights and promoted girls’ education emerged, and the majority were led by women.

Figures such as Malalai Joya and Fawzia Koofi became international symbols of resistance and bravery. Both publicly denounced corruption, violence, and discrimination against Afghan women. In addition, organizations such as the United Nations and Amnesty International supported educational programs and campaigns to protect the rights of Afghan women and girls. But this was just a temporary lull. Many women continued to face threats, social judgment regarding their freedoms and self-expression, domestic violence, and discrimination, especially in rural areas.

The progress made over those twenty years came to an end in August 2021, when U.S. troops withdrew from Afghanistan and the Taliban regained control of the country. When the United States pulled its forces out of the country, they brought with them not only weapons and soldiers, but also the hopes and lives of millions of women. Although the Taliban initially promised to govern in a more moderate manner and with fewer restrictions, they quickly began imposing brand new constraints on women. Girls were once again barred from secondary schools and universities, many women lost their jobs, and new limitations were imposed on their freedoms in public spaces. Strict rules were also imposed on women's dress and the requirement for them to be accompanied by a male guardian.

Furthermore, factors such as economic decline, humanitarian crisis, and political instability fueled forced marriages, resulting in underage girls being forced to compromise their lives and sacrifice their freedom to secure a stable future. It is estimated that forced marriages are becoming increasingly common, and women's rights regarding divorce are being ignored and remain vulnerable. These actions drew strong international criticism and were considered by many organizations to be serious violations of human rights.

From a feminist perspective, the situation in Afghanistan demonstrates how control over women is often linked to political and social control. Restricting women's access to education, economic independence, and public participation has enabled the maintenance of authoritarian, unequal power structures rooted in highly questionable and often painful conservative ideologies. The ban on studying or working does not only affect women individually but also hinders the economic and social development of the entire country. By excluding half the population from basic rights such as education and participation in public life, society loses talent, knowledge, opportunities for progress, and purpose.

This shows us that women's lives in Afghanistan have never been secure, regardless of civil wars or foreign interventions, women have always been vulnerable and viewed as strategic assets in their country. From a more reflective perspective, we can see that Afghan history has not only been marked by political or religious conflicts, it has reflected the callousness of a person's worth, slanted in their gender, fertility, and motherhood. No matter how important they may be, the country's history has carried not only memories, but also tears, suffering, hope, and the voices of people who were too brave and capable of changing the world, yet who were also far too vulnerable.

Despite the difficulties, Afghan women continue to resist every day. Many female teachers secretly hold classes for girls in their homes, journalists continue to expose injustices, and activists risk their lives to defend human rights. Some women use social media to share their stories and show the world the reality they face in their daily lives. Others participate in small public protests, even knowing they could be arrested or punished. Their resistance demonstrates tremendous courage and a deep desire for freedom and dignity. It is important to note that most of the time, women who dare to speak out are silenced all too quickly; thus, even though the information shared by local women is scarce, it is highly valuable and deserves to be respected.

In conclusion, the history of women in Afghanistan is a story of constant struggle between progress and oppression. Over the decades, Afghan women have experienced moments of hope, education, and social participation, but also periods of extreme inequality and violence. However, even in the face of repressive governments and armed conflict, they continue to defend their rights and fight for a better future. Their story serves as a reminder to the world that women's rights should never be taken for granted and that equality requires protection, commitment, and constant resistance in the face of injustice.

Finally, I'd like to invite you to take a moment to reflect on all the opportunities you have right now. Every time you feel tired of classes, when you don't want to get up to study because you didn't get enough sleep, or every time you judge another woman for her appearance, clothing, or the way she expresses herself, remember that on the other side of the world, there are girls wishing they could learn. Millions of women with enormous dreams and talents aim to fulfill them, but due to an unjust regime and society, the light of their future is dimmed. At Pachas, we've always been taught to be women leaders and to shine for the world, but what if that light from the Zarza one day simply went out and ceased to exist?

Most of the time, we don't realize how lucky and privileged we are to be able to express ourselves, laugh in public, or go out without being judged. It's important for us to remember that as women, we are a community. No matter how far apart we may be, we must always support and stand up for one another, and especially speak out for those who are silenced. Always remember to be grateful, appreciate what you have, and never judge or undermine other people's lives. On the other side of the world, a little girl's smile can be worth more than hundreds of stacks of money, and even if we don't realize it, these simple things are worth more than thousands of riches.

Even if we have no control over the policies of a government in another country, we can still change the world by speaking out, taking action, and educating ourselves on behalf of those who cannot, and above all, by honoring the identity of women around the world.

Frida Kahlo

**By: Valentina González and
Juliana González 5ºA**



Frida Kahlo was a very famous artist that painted beautiful artworks. Her story started in a small town in Mexico where she lived with her family. Sadly, she had poliomyelitis. For that reason, her classmates bullied her, so her best friend was imaginary.



At 18 years old, she had a serious accident with a bus, immobilizing her. At the hospital, her father gave her a paint kit and a mirror. Years later she got married to another famous artist called Diego Rivera, but after a few years they broke up.

She made more than 200 artworks, and the last one was of some watermelons with "Viva la vida" written on one of them. At one of her art expositions Frida couldn't walk so she asked for a truck to take her there. Months after the exposition she sadly passed away.

Music History

**By: Mariana Camila Montoya and Ana
María Mariño 7ºA**

Have you ever thought about how music has changed since the beginning of time? In this article we are going to tell you about the change music has endured over the centuries.

One of the forms of music was created using bone instruments, which were used in rituals, war and hunting. Later, during the Middle Ages, Gregorian chants emerged. They were preserved through oral tradition and memory, meaning that musicians had to memorize more than 2,000 songs. During the Renaissance, musical forms such as the madrigal and mass became popular, introducing more complex vocal music. Around this time, instruments such as the violin, also began to develop. After some time, during the Baroque period, opera and instrumental music blossomed.

During the Classical period, many important developments happened in music. One of the most influential composers of this time was Mozart, who revolutionized music and composed many famous pieces for the piano. Then came Romanticism, this period gave way to quite emotional musical pieces. Music started including drums, has a constant rhythm and is similar to rap, an example of this is Without Me by Eminem. Then there's electronic music, characterized by a sound similar to that of an electronic device, one example of this type of music is Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger by Daft Punk. And even reflected nationalism. This period also gave way to the first grand orchestra.

The 20th Century, music changed greatly. First we have jazz, one example of it is Take 5 by Dave Brubeck, this song does not have lyrics. The majority of jazz songs do not have lyrics.



In Blues, the rhythm is sad, one example is The Thrill Is Gone by B.B King. Rock and Roll, contains guitar and drums, one example is Blue Suede Shoes by Elvis Presly. Pop-rock is a kind of soft rock, an example is Hey Jude by The Beatles. Hip Hop

The contemporary era, this era, is the time that we are living in. Alternative music has similarities to rock, one example is Smells Like Teen Spirit by Nirvana. Modern Pop uses many types of music like jazz, electronic and hip-hop. An example of this is bad guy by Billie Elish. Reggaeton has a predetermined rhythm and a lot of the time it can sound a bit rude, an example of this is Soy Yo by Bomba Estéreo. Kpop is Korean pop, an example of this genre is What is Love by Twice. Jazz-pop, this type is a mix between jazz and pop, is soft like jazz but with a rhythm like pop. An example of this is From the Start by Laufey. Trap is similar to hip hop but softer, an example is Sicko Mode by Travis Scott.

In conclusion, music has changed a lot over the years but something that does not change is that style gets in the hearts of the people who listen to it.

The Dark Side of Beauty in History

By: Luciana Enriquez Reyes 8B

Imagine looking elegant and being admired on the outside while silently suffering inside. Throughout history, this was the reality for many women. Beauty has represented elegance, status, and perfection; however, many of the beauty standards celebrated in the past were based on painful practices, unhealthy expectations, and toxic substances.

To understand what “beauty” and “perfection” truly meant in the past, we must look beyond appearance and step into different parts of the world. Imagine being in Ancient Egypt: beauty was expressed through the use of kohl, a powerful pigment used to outline the eyes. Thanks to this ancestral cosmetic, a distinctive appearance was created, which became a symbol of elegance and identity between the Egyptians.

However, this cosmetic often contained toxic substances, especially lead based compounds such as galena. Although it was widely used and admired in Egyptian society, it also meant that something associated with beauty could carry hidden risks, such as poisoning. It is difficult to imagine that the women of this ancient place lived within this reality, but Ancient Egypt was not the only place where the search for perfection came at a high cost.

Centuries later, in another part of the world, similar ideas would take on a more physical and painful form. In ancient China, beauty standards focused on elegance, status, and femininity. The most extreme of these standards was foot binding, where young women's feet were bound tightly to keep them small. The reason for the desire for small feet was because they were considered a sign of grace, refinement and a higher social standing including a better marriage prospect, but this practice caused terrible pain and damage in feet and legs. It shows to what extent the ancient societies would go for beauty and perfection.

Geographically far away from China, as well as being separated by centuries, Europe in the Victorian Era held standards of beauty that became more and more restrictive and artificial. Women were expected to be a vision of delicacy, refinement and fragility, often expressed in their clothes, wigs and make-up. One of the most notorious was corset-wearing, laced tightly to nip the waist and create an exaggerated silhouette. Corsets were elegant and stylish, but often caused breathing problems, sudden fainting and physical damage. Victorian makeup was meant to create a pale, natural and delicate look that was a sign of status and beauty. However, to achieve this look, highly toxic ingredients such as white lead, mercury, arsenic and ammonia were often used to whiten the skin—all of which were extremely toxic substances. Once again, beauty was closely linked to sacrifice, revealing how the pursuit of appearance was valued a thousand times more than health.

These are only some of the methods used throughout history in the pursuit of beauty and perfection. They may seem worlds apart: Ancient Egyptian cosmetics, Chinese foot binding, Victorian corsets and makeup, but they all share one thing: the idea that beauty is tied to suffering, restriction or even harm. Societies throughout history have generated ideals about how people, particularly women, should look, and many of these ideals demanded physical sacrifice in a variety of ways.

Many may think that today's beauty is not connected to such extremes, but maybe it's worth questioning that idea twice. Today, although beauty standards have changed, the pressure to achieve a certain ideal remains strong. In many cases, people still turn to cosmetic procedures and surgeries in order to fit these expectations, sometimes undergoing difficult and even risky processes in the name of appearance and acceptance. I would pose the question: does beauty sometimes matter more than health and comfort, today?

Female Empowerment in K-pop

By: Julia Hup 5C

The empowerment of female groups in K-pop is really inspiring to the people. Girl groups show that girls can be strong, confident, and independent. In many songs, they talk about loving yourself, being brave, and not letting others control your life. This makes a lot of fans feel confident, motivated and happy.

Also K-pop girl groups work very hard to achieve their dreams. They practice singing, dancing, and performing for many years. This shows that girls can be successful if they believe in themselves and never give up. Groups like this also support each other, which shows the importance of teamwork and friendship.

A good example is TWICE because they show us that self-love and confidence are very important. They didn't have a perfect beginning, but they keep working hard and improving little by little. Because of that, they became one of the most loved groups.

Through their music and history, they teach us that loving yourself can take time, and that it's okay to grow step by step. They also show that being strong means to not give up, even when things are hard. The way they support each other makes their friendship feel real and special. Because of this, they inspired many fans around the world to believe in themselves, to be patient, and keep going no matter what. Some of their songs like "Feel special", "Yes or Yes", "Breakthrough" and "I can't stop me" show these messages about confidence, self-love, and being strong.

The Scully Effect

By: Sofía Gaitán 10°B

Stories rarely tell us about their influence. However, sometimes, without anyone noticing at first, they redefine the limits of possibility. In the early 1990s, millions of viewers, men, women, and young people experienced for the first time The X-Files, perhaps expecting conspiracy theories, aliens, and unexplained phenomenon, as the series of the time foreshadowed it.

What many didn't expect was that one of the series' most remarkable impacts would have nothing to do with aliens, but rather with the cultural and generational shift created by a woman in a lab coat and with an FBI badge.

Dana Scully was not intended to cause such a stir. She was simply a young scientist with a degree in forensic medicine who worked for the FBI in the “most unwanted section” of the department. She was a character whose intelligence and skepticism was so intense that it made you question your own certainties. But even more, she was an inspirational woman who drew many young girls into pursuing STEAM careers. For countless girls and viewers watching from their living rooms, she was the proof that curiosity and scientific ambition could also be theirs. Years later, researchers would give this phenomenon a name: the Scully effect.

The Scully Effect wasn't discovered by a single person, but rather emerged as a fan, journalist, and cultural observation over decades. It was officially popularized by a 2018 study from the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, a non-profit research organization founded in 2004 by actor Geena Davis to fight gender stereotypes and reduce negative portrayals of women in TV.



The study was given the name: The Scully Effect: I want to Believe in STEM. Which made a reference to the famous line from the series: “I want to believe,” featured on Dana Scully’s partner office. This line represents the deep need for hope in an inexplicable world and the choice to hold onto it despite the lack of concrete evidence. What ends up being deeply meaningful in a context where science is often seen as distant and exclusive, especially for women, who, despite stereotypical segregation, seek to find a way to excel.

Since then, Dana Scully’s influence has been acknowledged and, above all, appreciated by thousands of women who are now scientists. More into the stats, the report showed that almost two-thirds of women in STEM were inspired by the character. That was nearly about 908,000 women in core STEM roles in 2018 according to the WISE Campaign in the UK. And almost a 25% increase in the number of professional women engineers within the past 5 years since 2018.

The research showed, in partnership with 21st Century Fox, that 63% of women who were familiar with the character had greater confidence in their capacity to excel in a male dominated profession, and when asked about the attributes Agent Scully embraced, the most frequent words used to describe her were “smart”, “intelligent” and “strong”. But that wasn't all. Actress Gillian Anderson, who played Dana Scully, delivered a deeply inspiring speech at the 1997 Golden Globe Awards, where the series won three categories, including Best Television Series, Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series, and Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series. In front of hundreds of celebrities in the awards hall and millions of people watching on television, Anderson thanked director Christ Carter for “having the foresight and sensitivity to create, and to introduce into our lives, a character, a woman, who is strong, intelligent, an advocate for equal opportunity, and employed.”

And that’s how a fictional FBI agent became much more than just a TV character. Dana Scully embodied the possibility of being intelligent and successful in fields where women had long been underrepresented. Her influence demonstrated that television and other communication means not only entertain but can also inspire change and redefine what young girls and women believe they are capable of becoming.

“Interpretations are ilimitable”: Deciding the Greatest Novels

By: Kieran Duffy

It’s sometimes tricky to explain why we prefer one book over another; our responses to any work of art are usually emotional and subjective, and so many of the things that make a book great cannot be measured by any clear metric. All of this becomes even harder when we set out to decide which book is the greatest of all time, but it never seems to stop us from trying.

On May 16th, the British newspaper *The Guardian* published the last in a series of articles listing the “hundred best novels of all time”. The list was selected by vote, with more than 170 authors and critics picking their top ten, and these lists then being compiled to form a top 100.

Needless to say, the final list has provoked lots of debate. Many Pachas students will recognize several of the novels that made the final cut- *Frankenstein*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Handmaid’s Tale*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, and *Things Fall Apart*. I myself see some books that I know and love (I was very happy to see *The God of Small Things* on the list), some that I have long meant to read (I was supposed to read *Nervous Conditions* for a university class in 2012 and still haven’t done so), and many that I wasn’t aware of at all.

A lot of the discussion of the list has focused on how representative it truly is of the very best of world literature, although, interestingly, there hasn’t been much focus on gender. Five of the top ten novels are by women authors, including the number one pick *Middlemarch*. Rather, there has been a lot of debate about the linguistic and regional diversity of the list. It specifically states that books must have been published in English, but this includes translations from other languages.

Nevertheless, it seems to be very Anglocentric.



One thing Latin American authors might notice is how few books from the region are included: one from García Márquez (Who would undoubtedly have several on a list created by a Spanish-language newspaper) and one, near the very end, from Juan Rulfo. Authors like Mario Vargas Llosa, Carlos Fuentes, Isabel Allende, and Roberto Bolaño are conspicuously absent. While some of the voters are Latin American, such as Colombia's Juan Gabriel Vásquez, their votes will be drowned out by the many more from English-speaking nations.

Also missing are Brazilian authors such as Clarice Lispector and Machado de Assis. In fact, not a single novel on the list was originally written in Portuguese, and it's far from the only major language this can be said of; there are also no novels written in such widely spoken languages with strong literary traditions as Arabic, Chinese, and Japanese. Even French or Russian speakers might be upset to notice that, despite some books in those languages ranking highly, some very famous authors like Zola and Turgenev are not included.

Even aside from debates about language, many people from the US were quick to say the list was overly British and didn't include a lot of books that are regarded as classics on the other side of the Atlantic. Some genres are also underrepresented or completely absent. While there are some Science Fiction examples, big names like Ray Bradbury (Another Pachas favorite) and H.G Wells do not feature, and there are no examples of fantasy, not even J.R.R Tolkien, the giant of the genre. With all of the list's very obvious shortcomings, does it, or any list like it, really serve any purpose other than fodder for debate? Well, for one, it might make people aware of highly regarded books that they hadn't heard about before. I certainly intend to check out some of them.

Also, given what I said about responses to art being so personal and subjective, I believe that the lists submitted by voters are actually more interesting than the final results. In these lists, we can get a glimpse into their influences, their interests, and, perhaps, how they want to present their tastes to the world. In that sense, this undertaking has been very worthwhile and revealing. What it certainly hasn't done is establish that *Middlemarch* is the greatest novel of all time. Indeed, nobody should treat any such list as a definitive guide to what books are most worth reading. To quote Haruki Murakami, another author who didn't feature, "If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else is thinking".

The Same Four Phrases as Yesterday

**By: Estefanía Silva and María Luisa
Borrero 8B**

The sunset light entered through the half-open classroom window. Since the room was so quiet, I could hear the voices of the girls playing outside in the park. All the chairs and books were scattered around, as if whoever had been using them had suddenly jumped away recklessly.

BAM! The door swung wide open and cheerful laughter echoed through the classroom. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw my friend Miranda come running in, smiling as if the best thing ever had just happened to her.

“Hey! How are you? What are you doing?” she asked, walking up to me.

I was sitting on the wooden chair with a book thicker than the sandwich my mother had prepared for me that morning with five layers of cheese. Slowly, I lifted my hands and showed her the cover of the book.

“Percy Jackson and the Olympians: The Sea of Monsters,” I said.

It was a book I remembered reading around five times.

“Oh my God, I’m a fan of the series! Are you starting it?” Miranda asked with a cheerful expression.

And suddenly, it began. I felt my vision breaking apart, and Miranda’s innocent smile starting to distort... Or maybe not...? It was no longer Miranda standing in front of me. All I could see was an empty silhouette pretending to be human, when in reality, it was just a little voice box repeating the same four phrases.

There I stood, incredulous at how many times I had already talked to her about the book I held in my hands.

I pressed the small button on the voice box's chest, and once again it repeated:

“How are you? What are you doing? The weather is so nice today! What do you think we're having for lunch?”

As I kept pressing the button, I couldn't imagine how many times that tape hidden inside her body had replayed itself, pretending to show genuine interest.

As I stared in horror at the figure in front of me, I failed to notice that the objects around me had begun to change. By the time I looked away, the classroom had become completely unrecognizable.

The chairs scattered around me became market products, promising to make schools more efficient and comfortable, even though they were identical to the ones being sold next door. The books lying on the desks transformed into piles of paper, pages on which someone's imaginary world had been captured: a world without limits, a world far more wonderful than the rigid box of judging eyes we call society.

Suddenly, the sunset behind me became a scientist's laboratory, full of promises of instant solutions to problems humanity had endured for millennia.

In an instant, I felt my spirit, my ideas, and my thoughts detach themselves from my body. Less than a second later, the body I had once called mine began to repeat the same mechanical sound: “How are you? What are you doing...?”

I had just entered a world that had lost its capacity to feel and, more importantly, to embrace authenticity.

A fun , relaxing, and nostalgic time

By: Gabriela Martínez Dangond 5B

Have you ever felt bored and like you have nothing to do?

Well I have felt like that many times, especially on vacations.

But what about if I told you that I have 5 relaxing, fun and nostalgic activities that can keep you from feeling like that?

Let 's start!

1. You can go hiking in a nearby reserve. Try kayaking, or canoeing. These activities are relaxing, especially for those with an adventurous lifestyle.
2. You can go on a camping trip into the woods. Enjoying outside in your backyard and marshmallows in a cozy campfire to warm you up.
3. You can master a new skill... cooking, pottery workshop, painting, or knitting. And then you can show off your new skill to your friends and family.
4. You can be a tourist in your own city for a day! Isn't that fascinating? You can just explore your town and go to a restaurant, a botanical garden, or a museum.
5. Finally, you can stay home and play video games, read a new book or just curl up in bed with some hot tea and a movie night.

Hope you have a fun, relaxing, and nostalgic vacation.

Kind regards, Gabriela.

A Power Consumed in Flames

By: Sara Sofía López Rodríguez 7B

It was 6:03 a.m. and everything was quiet in my city. Through the window, I watched taxis go by, people rushing to get to work on time, the subway rumble along the tracks. Strange as it may sound, the concept of tranquility is true; that's New York. All the different noises could be a headache, but to me, they were music to my ears. I've always thought of New York as the city of dreams, until one day I had to question it.

We all know that there are two types of people in the world: good people, who act for the benefit of all, regardless of what others think of them, and even when they make mistakes, they accept and acknowledge them. And bad people, who probably don't have enough temperament and character to defend their own ideas without being manipulated by others, and who let themselves be influenced by people who only try to do evil. Sadly, every day there are people who try to do evil. Like, for example, the terrorist Osama Bin Laden, who was in the terrorist group Al Qaeda.

That same day, September 11, 2001, everything changed. At 8:40 a.m., everything felt normal; we were all enjoying another day in New York, feeling the breeze, the warmth, and the typical voices of people talking on their phones. But... suddenly, at 8:45, we saw a small plane coming this way; it was strange because... it was very close to the ground and going too fast. It kept getting closer and closer. I started to think that it wasn't just any flight. So many thoughts raced through my head at that moment; it's very difficult to write down all the millions of ideas I could imagine. And a minute later... BOOM! My heart was racing. Seeing everything that was happening, the only thing I could think of was to run. When I was quite far away, I saw one of the Twin Towers collapse. Through the smoke that was spreading throughout the city, I could only make out a bright orange light that illuminated everything in an exaggerated way. My ears were still ringing from the loud noise of the explosion at the World Trade Center. I could see the anguish on everyone's face, the high probability of a second, third, fourth attack. The whole city was terrified.

Around 9:02 a.m., I caught a glimpse of a small plane very similar to the previous one. I was almost certain of what was going to happen. Unfortunately, I wasn't far off the mark. I heard a loud... BOOM! I turned my head and realized that the second tower of the World Trade Center was about to collapse. I couldn't believe what was happening; reporters, paramedics, firefighters, and many other professionals arrived to attend to the injured. I decided to go to the store farthest from the site to take shelter until I felt safe enough to leave. Frankly, fear, the chaos, the worry, and a million other emotions were consuming me. I called my family; I had no idea if they were still alive, or... if they were there at the moment of the explosion. I couldn't stand the anxiety anymore. I waited a minute for them to answer, and just as I was about to give up and hang up, I heard through my phone's speaker, "Are you okay, honey? We heard what happened. We're okay." After hearing that, I started crying tears of joy. With almost all my tears flowing, I told them I was fine, that nothing had happened to me. As I left the store, trying to find a way home, I saw people screaming, crying, running, and recording everything that was happening. Thankfully, I made it home. I felt safe, but at the same time, worried about the future of New York.

At that moment, all we could do was wait. We really didn't know what was going to happen to all of us Americans, and it wasn't easy to accept that one attack after another would be the only thing attacking New York.

I truly believe that what I felt after this event was that I learned more than anything else: that life must be lived one day at a time, having plans and expectations for what will happen, but without failing to seize the present moment. The world is not as we would all like it to be, and the only thing we can do is adapt to our present, build a future, without forgetting that family and friends are the closest thing we have, and that God provides us with love, health, hope, and in my personal case, the desire to continue writing about experiences like these.

A Glance

By: Daniela Estrada 10B

She had begun to forget her grandchildren's names and, although they visited her every Sunday, she still failed to recognise them. She had forgotten her home address and the names of her medicines, though she sometimes had lucid memories of where she lived.

There was no one left to water the plants. The landline had been ringing for weeks with no one answering. And the letters, little by little, became a mystery, a monologue.

But amidst all that forgetfulness and scarcity of memories, she recognised a scent for a moment. It wasn't exactly salty or caramel-like, but it stirred a memory of her past. She remembered the moments with her, like a good movie playing on repeat after a long time.

Like a jazz dance in the middle of the night and an "I'll always love you" that had survived until that night. Because even though she had already forgotten that beautiful symphony, she was still keeping her promise faithfully, unlike Sebastian and Mia's story.

But that wasn't the only memory; she remembered the contradictions of the moment. She hated having forgotten so many names, so many people, but never the love she held for all of them. "I hate the way I can't hate you. Not even a little. Not even at all." And just as she used to tell her before, she still hated it all.

And even though she would forget all of that after just a moment, she promised never to forget the feelings she had for her. “He looked at me,” she would always remember, and “I couldn’t stop thinking about him”. Would all remain with her until her next December?

Because many things fade into oblivion, but a “You’ve cast a spell on me, body and soul” will always stay. Because in a heart with such dimension, it gives the feeling that she had never left.

A Prison in White

By: Gabriela Gomezcasseres 8A

I woke up, feeling dizzy at first. I look around me and observe the things I have seen over, and over for the past months: white walls, a toilet, a water dispenser with a glass, a little bit of food, and a bed. My home is small, it is a room of about 20m² filled with cameras in every corner. It felt uncomfortable at first, but now, it is everything I know. I can't even remember how many time I have spent here, maybe 4 months, or more. I don't really know. I don't even know how I ended up here.

I dream about freedom every night. I see faces that start to look blurry to me, I walk through grass and pavement with cracks, two things I thought were completely normal, but now seem like distant memories from past lives. I used to laugh, I used to be happy; but all the colours, all the love, have been taken away from me. All I have left is to wait for this hell to end, but I know it won't in this lifetime as I am condemned to spend the rest of my days going crazy in this prison.

Why does humanity do this? Why do we take other living things and make them suffer for our own benefit? I know I don't want to let the scientists succeed, they expect to know how long a person can live without going crazy, they want to know what humanity is capable of doing if they are completely isolated. That is not all, they believe they can make a machine comprehend human minds and emotions to the point of recreating them almost exactly, and I know I will have to die without showing any type of feeling if I want the experiment to fail. However, I think I am losing my mind already.

I let all the feelings of the past months out. I know I betrayed myself, I thought I could contain everything forever, but this is what makes me human. I start crying at first, soft and gentle sobs turn to anger, and I start yelling to nobody. No. Not to nobody. I am yelling to whoever did this, I am yelling to the people who stole my life, who stole my laughs. I get frustrated after 15 minutes, because I know I am not being heard. Showing that much makes me feel exhausted and I pass out. For the first time in months, my mind goes empty, and I feel nothing.

I open my eyes in hopes of being awake from a bad dream, but I am not. I am surrounded by white walls once again. Thinking about what happened earlier, I feel frustrated, I didn't control myself, and now, the whole of humanity is lost. I failed, not only to humans, but to me. As I am slowly losing control of myself again, I remind myself that there is one feeling they can't get from me here, love, the most important of all. They can do whatever they want, but they will never get to recreate love.

An Ode to Memory and Remembrance

By: Camila Uribe Gutiérrez 12^oB

Few things take up as much space in our heads as memory does. The monotony of daily routines is broken by a sudden spark, the sudden recalling of the past that reminds you that you don't only exist in the present, but that a part of you has remained in the past and you yourself are partly a memory. Remembering usually brings with it a certain nostalgia, because it reminds us that there are things worth missing and it makes us yearn for a time that will no longer be.

But beyond this, memory is an act of resistance, a way to establish identity, and a philosophical puzzle that will probably remain unsolved.

When those in power seek to erase the knowledge and traditions of a group of people, or erase the people themselves, those who remember what they shouldn't, resist injustice because they refuse to give up the knowledge that represents who they are, what they believe in and the experiences they've had. An example of this are the Argentinian mothers who demanded to know the whereabouts of their children who had been kidnapped by Videla's dictatorship.

In regards to this brave group of women, Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano said “In Argentina, the madwomen of the Plaza de Mayo will be an example of mental health because they refused to forget in a time of mandatory amnesia”. This quote perfectly encapsulates memory as an act of social and political resistance.

Furthermore, memory acts as the bricks that build identity. It generates a sense of continuity so that who we were in the past reaches out to us through memory itself. Beyond that, it is the foundation of who we are, because the stories, experiences and beliefs that act as the foundation of our identity are all held together thanks to our capacity to remember them. These memories become part of a broader network of remembrance that interacts and intertwines as we live as members of society. So, ultimately, our shared capacity to remember also builds a collective identity that acts as the fundamental pillar of culture and community. This was best described by writer Saint-Exupéry when he said “I am who I am, because of who we all are”.

Lastly, from a philosophical standpoint memory is often conceived as a double-edged sword. On one hand, it is a tool that helps people learn and build their own will. On the other hand, it can be a burden that causes us to live in the past and prevents us from growing, maturing and changing. The philosophy of Nietzsche urges us to remember, but to also be aware of our duty to forget so that we won’t forget to live in the present and evolve accordingly. Memory as understood by Saint Augustine is a pocket within the soul that holds not only memories but also abstract ideas and feelings.

All of these facets about memory prove just how fundamental of a place it holds for the human mind and its individual and collective experiences. The urge to reflect on memory and remembrance, I must confess, stems from the fact that this is the last article I’ll be writing for the paper because I am graduating. As I desperately wrecked my brain to recall every last detail of the past fourteen years of my life, I realized how important remembering is, and how significant memory becomes when parting ways with a phase of life that will, eventually, become no more than a beautifully complex memory.



The Fear of Endings

By: Gabriela Cantor 11B

Best friends forever. An old-fashion idea for most of us, one that probably brings us back to the first grade and to the person we once believed would remain in our lives forever. With them, we shared laughter, games and dreams, yet in most cases, we no longer hold that same title till this day. We cherish these memories with deep nostalgia, as if they had been the best moments in our lives. However, as we revisit those beautiful fragments of the past, we often forget the child we once were, proving that, as a society, we long for a permanence even while knowing it will never truly last.



As human beings, we often hope for a forever. Consciously or unconsciously, we appeal to the idea of eternity as a source of both control and comfort. Think of the traditions and routines that we have normalized: pinkie promises, childhood memories, marriage vows, photos, videos and much more all reflect our desire for permanence. What these examples share is a longing for durability. Yet among all these attempts to create stability lies a question: Why do we cling so desperately to the idea of a forever, when in reality, it is unattainable?

I know that the question may seem abrupt, but genuinely take a minute to think about it. Think about your current friends, fears, expectations, knowledge and desires. Have they changed from what they were a year ago? Have you changed from who you were a year ago? Since I am almost certain your answer was yes, I want you to question your assumptions. You know that everything eventually changes. You know that people leave. You know that time passes. And yet, you still hope for a forever. Why is that?

Maybe that is the beauty of forever: the fact that it does not truly exist. There is something deeply fascinating about trying to obtain what can never fully be ours.

In this society we value possession, possession of wealth, status, knowledge and power. Because of this, we attempt to hold onto even the unholdable: our moments. Through this desire of control is where nostalgia is born. From this desire for control nostalgia rises, defined as “ *A sentimental longing for a period in the past.* ”

I want you to think about your memory box (if you have one), or the place where you keep your physical memories: photos, letters, or gifts. It is probably one of your most valuable possessions, not because of its monetary worth, but because of its emotional significance. Within that value lies one of the biggest reasons we long for that unattainable forever. Humans do not simply want to live moments, we want to preserve them.

Lastly, this concept emerges from a fear deeply rooted in every one of us: the fear of saying goodbye.

Life and its experiences are among the most precious things a person could have, and the idea of leaving them behind is often daunting because they were once the moments that kept us alive. Moments like meeting your first real friend, laughing until your stomach aches, receiving an unexpected birthday surprise, or having a deep talk, are beautiful moments that are difficult to let go of.

However, it is important to recognize that the impossibility of that forever is precisely what makes the present so meaningful. If we had the ability to relieve every moment endlessly, would they be as important?

After all, humans are not obsessed with forever because we believe in permanence, but from fearing the inevitability of change. That is why moments must come to an end: it is the only way they can become meaningful in the first place.

The Vaccine Against Sadness

By: Valentina Gomez 9A

The first advertisement appeared on every screen in the city at 8:00 p.m. A smiling woman looked directly into the camera while soft music played in the background.

“Imagine a life without sadness,” she said calmly. “No grief, no pain, and no anxiety keeping you awake at night. Thanks to NovaMind Laboratories, emotional suffering can finally become part of the past.”

At first, people laughed at the idea. It sounded impossible, but within a couple of months, clinics opened across the country. The procedure was simple: a small neurological device would inhibit the brain’s ability to process painful emotions. Patients described the experience as feeling “light as a feather.”

Soon, sadness became outdated.

Schools recommended the treatment before exams, companies offered it to employees, and therapists slowly disappeared. Sadness itself began to seem like a disease, and the treatment became its vaccine.

By the time I turned eighteen, almost everyone I knew had already done it.

I had always refused the idea, I thought it was phony. But after my father died, everything changed. One moment he was alive, and the next he was reduced to photographs and memories. After that, sadness followed me everywhere like a shadow.

One evening during dinner, my mother looked at me and said, “Just think about it. No more overthinking. No more crying yourself to sleep. Don’t you want peace?”

And maybe I did.

That was how I found myself sitting inside a NovaMind clinic on a gray Thursday afternoon.

“The procedure doesn’t erase memories,” the doctor explained, “only the pain attached to them.”

“So I’ll still remember my father?”

“Of course. You simply won’t suffer because of it anymore.”

The procedure lasted less than twenty minutes. There was no pain, only a warmth sensation behind my eyes before everything faded black.

And for a while, it worked.

The world felt lighter. I stopped crying during movies. Songs that once meant everything to me became ordinary noise.

One evening, I entered my father’s room expecting the familiar pain in my chest.

There was nothing.

No grief.

Only emptiness.

At school, everyone seemed happier than before, but their happiness felt artificial, almost forced. Nobody talked deeply about fear, heartbreak, or dreams anymore.

One afternoon, my friend Jane showed me a poem she had written before her treatment. “I can’t write anymore,” she admitted. “Every time I try, it feels empty.”

That night, I opened my old journal. The pages were filled with grief, sadness, and desperate thoughts.

And suddenly, I realized something terrifying. Something that couldn't let me fall asleep. The person who wrote those pages felt more alive than I did now.

A week later, I visited my father’s grave alone.

“I miss you,” I whispered.

But the words felt artificial, like lines from a script.

And for the first time since the procedure, that terrified me.

Because grief hurts.

But it had also proved that love existed.

I suddenly understood the truth that NovaMind Laboratories never mentioned. Sadness was never the enemy.

It was proof that something mattered.

Standing there in the rain, I realized the procedure had not removed pain. It had removed part of what made us human.

My Dearest, Cicada Boy.

By: Sara De la Rosa 10A

An excerpt from a diary titled “Aunque esto se acabe”
found at a mini-golf course in a remote corner of Usaquén.

I hope that when you learn to say *I miss you* in another language, your mouth still remembers me first.

I love you now in the exact way I will miss you later.

Why did I have to fall in love with you?

There is something unbearably cruel about falling in love with someone whose life already sounds like a departure gate. Even when you hold them, there are always rolling suitcases somewhere in the background. Every touch feels temporary before it even ends, you avoid them, eventually, because they all sound like a goodbye.

And still, I loved you.

Worse, I love you more each day.

Which feels almost irresponsible considering time is already shortening itself around us. Most people love like they are building permanence. I loved you the way airports exist at dawn. Illuminated, exhausted, aware that everyone inside is about to leave someone behind. You taught my soul what tenderness sounded like. You made ordinary things holy. A grocery store aisle. The passenger seat. The pause between songs. The way your fingers tapped the steering wheel when you were thinking too hard. I did not know love could exist in such quiet places until you arrived and filled them with yourself.

And now everywhere I go feels abandoned. As if the void you used to fill spilled all over everywhere I walked. I slowed my steps for you without realizing it. I took longer routes home. I lingered in doorways pretending to care about price tags on things I would never buy, just to remain in places where you might still appear. I silenced every notification on my phone because I wanted my heart rate to react only to you. And it does. Even now, after all this time, as soon as a notification pops, I can know it's you. It has always been you.

There are some people who begin leaving long before they are gone. I know that now. But I did not know it when your voice softened around my name. I did not know it when your eyes searched for me in crowded rooms before I constantly thought of you in a departure one. That is the memory that destroys me. Not losing you. Watching you slowly stop reaching for me while I still had both hands extended.

I love remembering how natural it felt to be wanted by you. How safe the world became when your attention rested on me. Sometimes I revisit those memories with the tenderness of someone touching a bruise they secretly hope still hurts. Because pain is proof that it happened. That you happened.

I started treating ordinary moments like final moments. How dare you replay a song just because you were distracted? Don't you understand we are running out of time to discover new ones together? Soon there will be entire albums you will love without me.

32 Entire streets hearing your laughter before I do. Sometimes, while sitting beside you, I would already miss you.

That is the kind of love this was. The kind where a heart break enters the relationship long before the ending does. You spoke about the future with the calmness of somebody already halfway gone. And I listened to the way stranded people listen to weather reports, praying reality might suddenly change direction. But it never did.

So I began loving you archivally. With yearn. Desperately. I memorized the cadence of your footsteps, the exact shape your mouth took whenever you were about to say something honest, the way you switched the fork between your hands while eating. I memorized you the way people memorize emergency exits. Because somewhere inside me, I knew. I knew one day your life would fit neatly into luggage while mine would stay unpacked beside the memory of you. I knew there would come a morning where you would stand at an airport carrying everything necessary for your future, while I stood there loving you with things too heavy to declare at customs.

And I wonder if, speaking in another language, you will still recognize how deeply I loved you in ours.

I wonder if one day, exhausted and far from home, you will hear someone laugh like me and turn around looking for me. I wonder if at reckless hours of the night and embarrassingly ordinary moments of the day, my absence will still interrupt your life briefly before letting you continue.

I hope when you walk alone, you step on every line in the pavement because somewhere inside your body you still remember that I used to avoid them, and you used to step on the ones I missed so our footsteps could complete each other.

I hope one day another city loves you well. I wish you a soft candle glow, slow music, and a room spinning, because I had never been so fragile. I truly do. I hope it gives you soft mornings and beautiful views and people who pronounce your name correctly (LTM13YOS). But I also hope there are nights where my name still rises suddenly into your throat and stays there. Unspoken. Heavy. Like something too intimate to swallow and too painful to say aloud.

And I know it is selfish.

But when you cross immigration and look back at your city one final time, I hope you do not just remember the streets. I hope you remember who walked them beside you.

I hope I do not take up space in your luggage.

Read Banned Books!

By: Camila Uribe Gutiérrez 12ºB

Books are, in my opinion, the very soul of humanity itself. Through the pages of books we can see the evolution of human ideology and history; we can see the way we have lived as species throughout the centuries, and the patterns in our collective behaviour. Precisely because of their deep significance, books have often been burned or banned, erased in some way to control the knowledge we can keep and learn from.

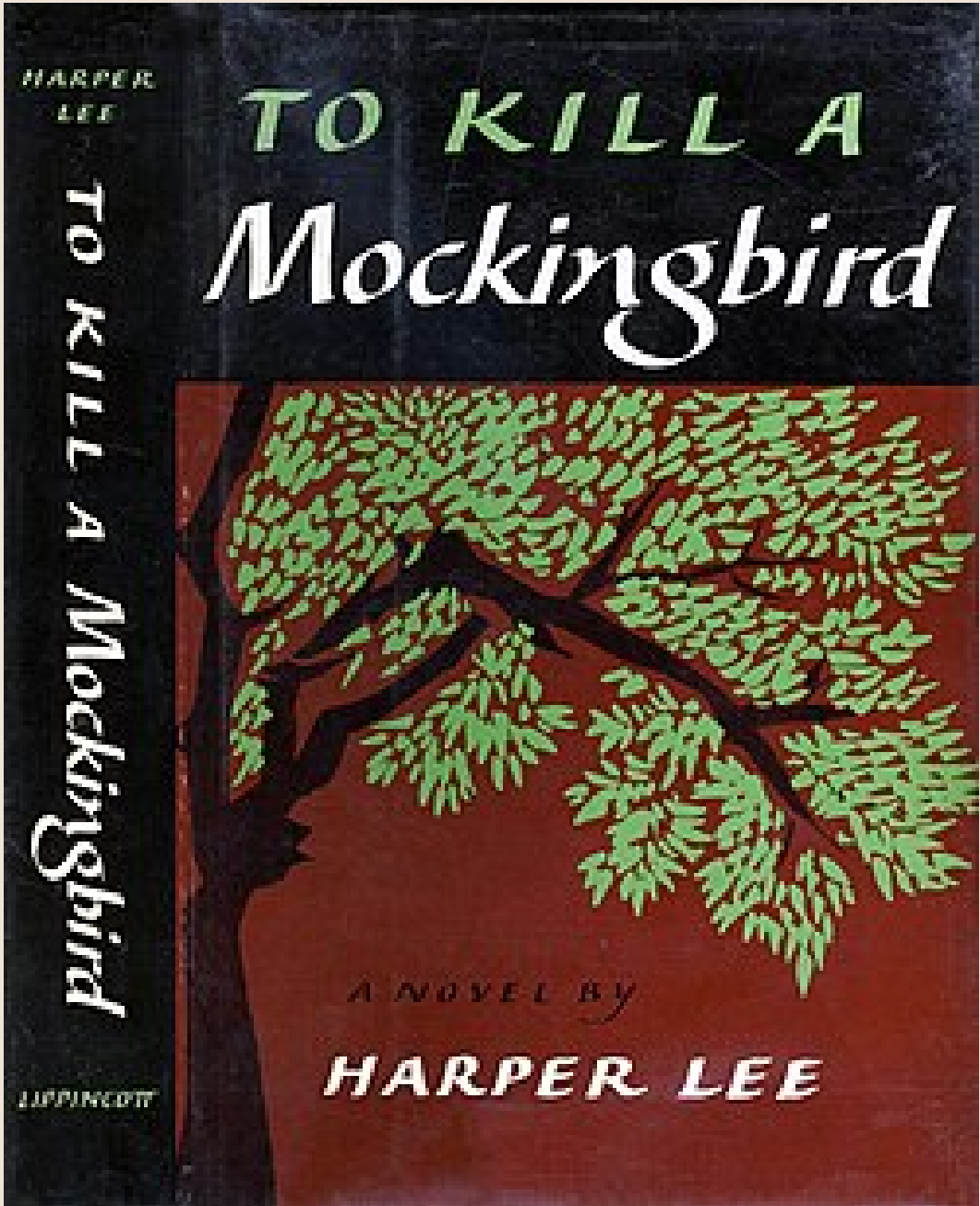
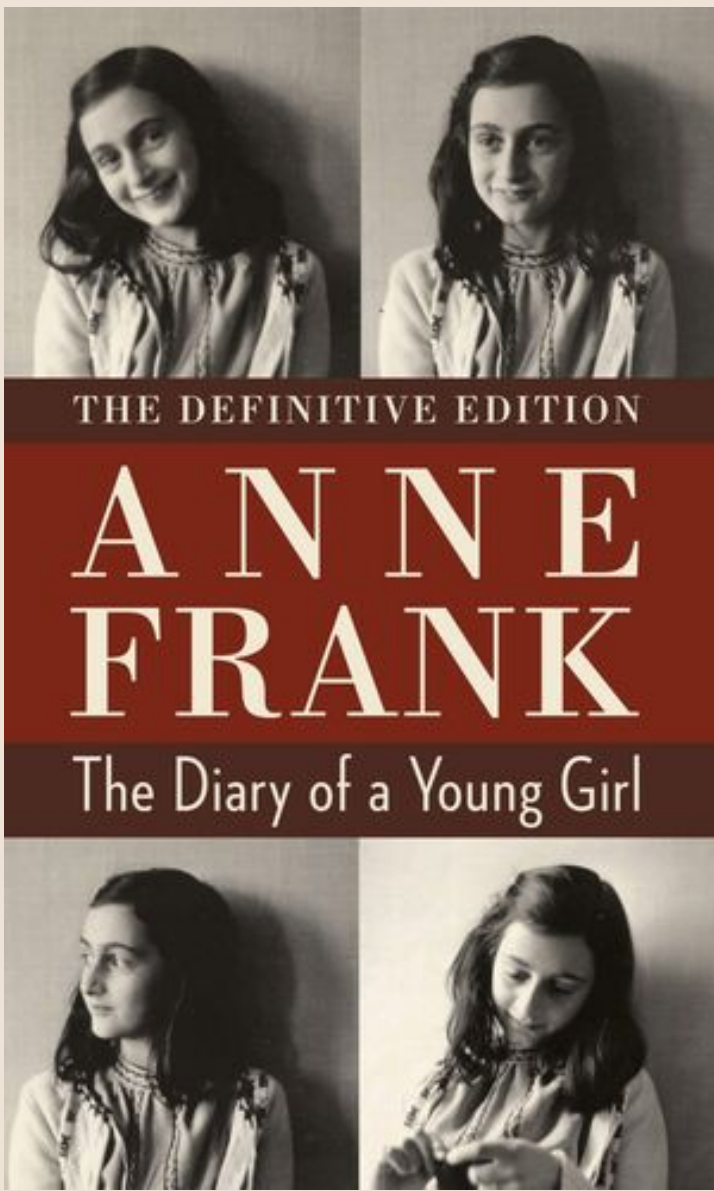
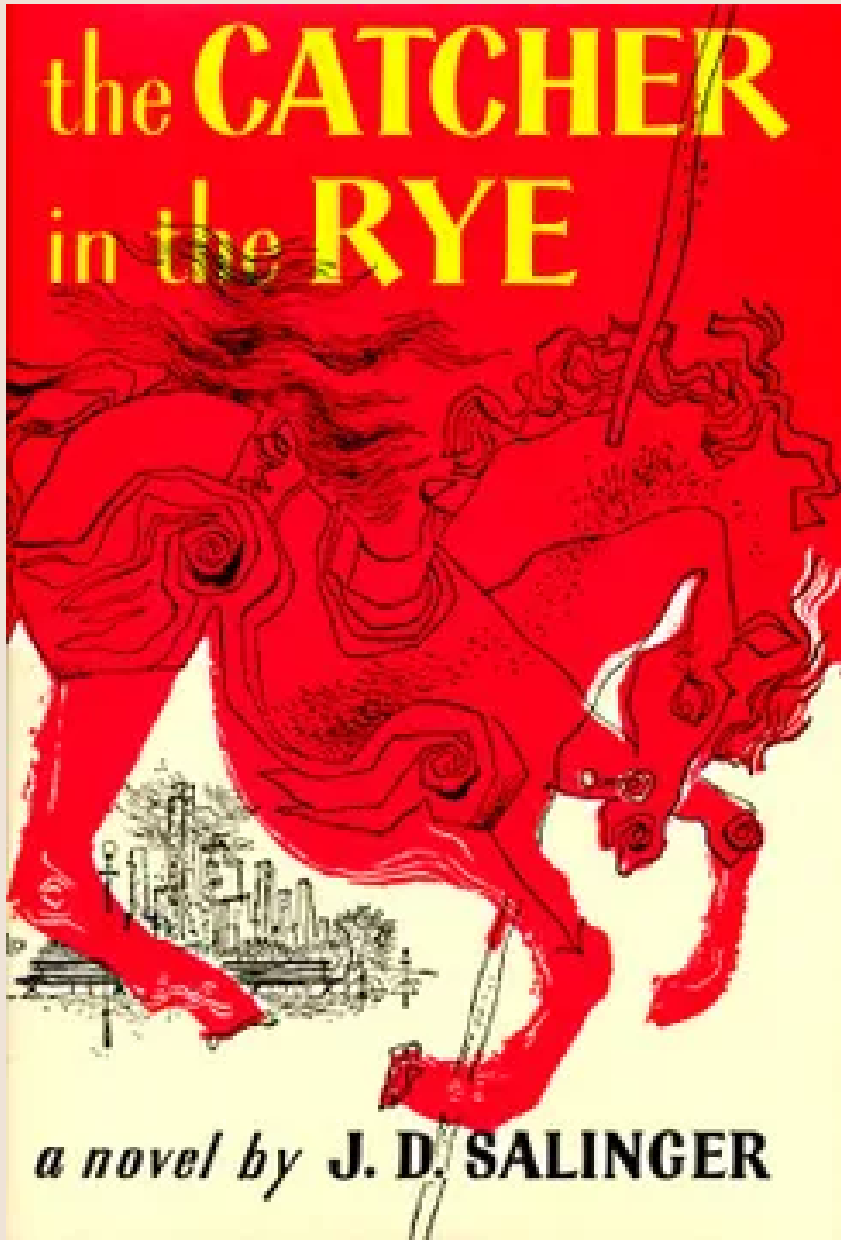
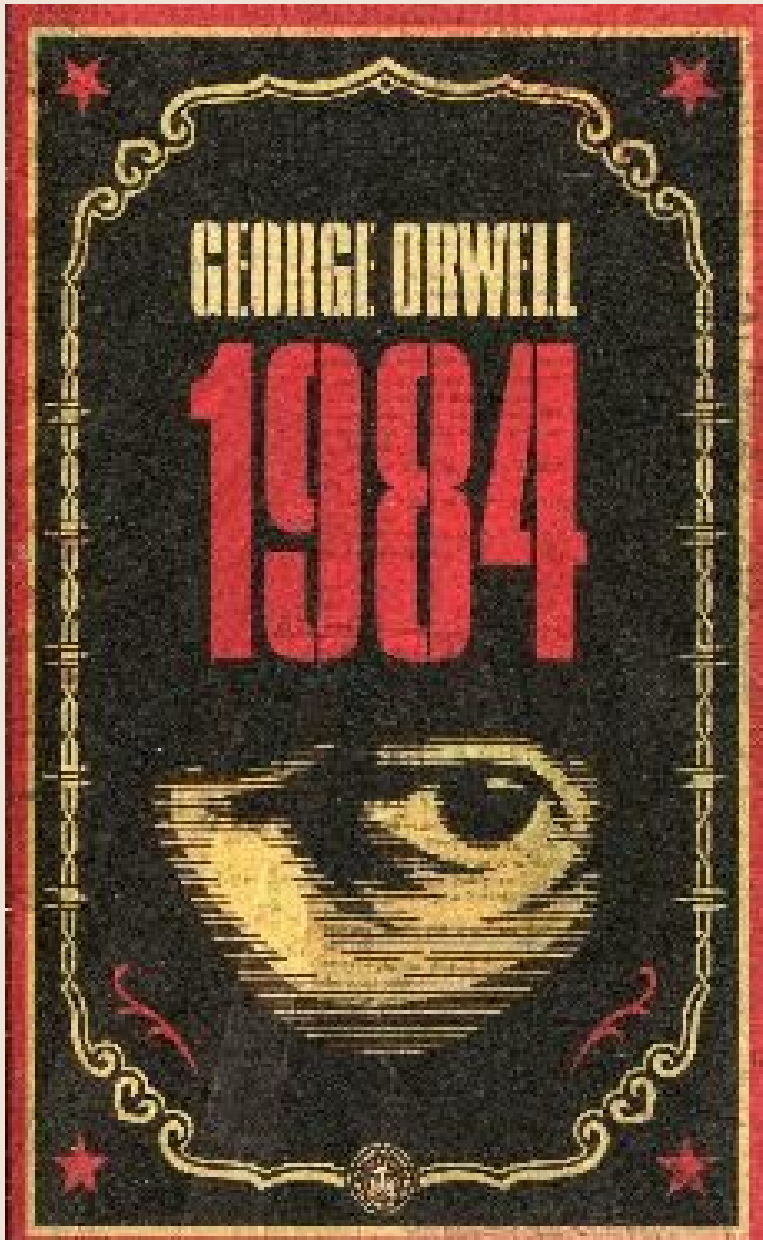
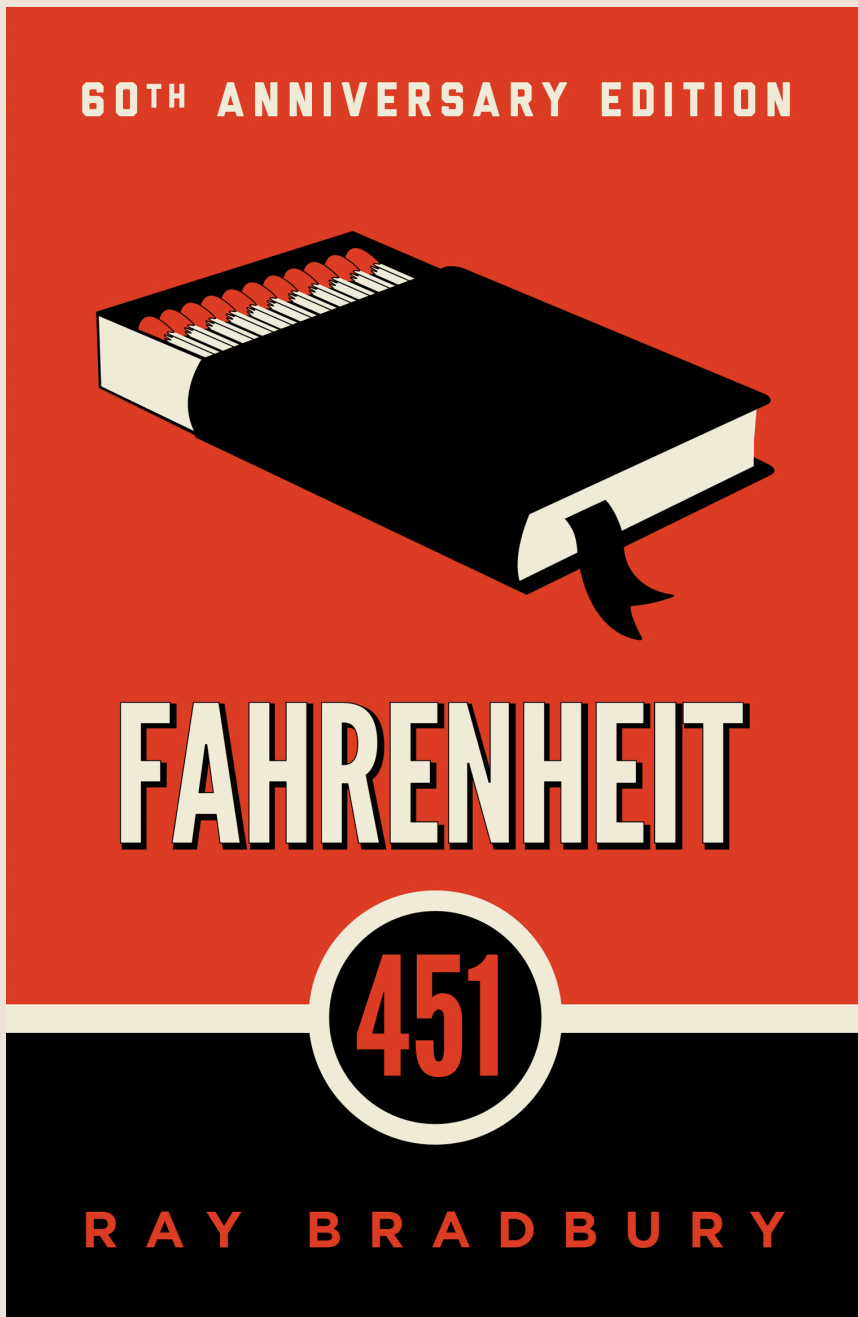
In times of political turmoil, governments have made an effort to create historical, political and social narratives that fit their needs in order to remain in power. Even when this sort of prohibition might seem archaic, the truth is that nowadays countries like China, Iran, the U.S and Russia have participated in these trend. With this in mind, one might ask what sort of knowledge are people being denied access to, what is the significance of this phenomenon and why should we care about it.

Firstly, the kind of knowledge censored by book bans is linked to the ideas that governments want to eradicate from their country's cultural and political discourse. This takes place not only in idle readers, but also in the academic field. For instance, the United States has banned certain books from the curriculum of middle and high schools. Because of this, the University of Maryland sought to understand why books were prohibited and created a list which includes the following reasons: Sexually explicit, supernatural themes, ethnic stories, incendiary political themes, LGBTQIA+ content. This situation extends far away from the American continent, and Russia is an example of it. Even though censorship is prohibited by the Constitution, their list of banned books is no smaller than in the U.S. Some of the literature prohibited is labeled as "LGBT propaganda", "anti-Soviet propaganda" or "disloyal to the state".

This phenomenon holds a particular significance in the current political climate because the different social, political and military conflicts around the world are proof that society needs an absolute understanding of culture, history and politics in order to fight against the violation of human rights and the loss of human dignity. Even if book bannings are not current in every country, the fact that a single nation is driven by that kind of manipulation, reinforces the idea that there is knowledge to be hidden and silenced. This indicates that there is a deliberate effort to erase meaningful discourse on diverse issues and allow governments to shape the narratives they present to the public.

With all this in mind, as citizens of the world we must never forget what book bannings mean to us as a society. They restrict access to diverse perspectives, crush intellectual freedom, silence marginalized groups and make it easier for the general public to be controlled by misinformation and mass media. This is why we must care about this issue, because it impacts our very freedom of thought and our right to express, whether it is through a fact or an opinion. Just as George Orwell stated in the novel 1984 - another banned book, by the way-, “Freedom is the freedom to say two plus two makes four.”

To conclude: read banned books! I strongly invite you to never take the freedom you have for granted. Keep humanity alive through your thoughts and actions, and never give up your right to use your voice, or to think freely. A good way to start doing that is by reading banned books. So, here are five of my favorite banned books I think everyone should read. Enjoy!



The stars loved you

By: Sara Pérez 11b

I told the stars about you
And all I got were smiles
Maybe I was daydreaming
Or maybe I was just watching you,
Admiring the way you gazed at the sky

I told the stars about you
And they said I was very lucky
Because you could be one of them
And that you shone so brightly
That your eyes were comparable to their brilliance, even to that of the sun

(That's a nice compliment coming from a star)
The stars answered so sweetly
Because they were so happy that I finally had my half of a moon.

The Better Half

By: Sofía Gaitán Sánchez 10°B

“Love is simply the name for the desire and pursuit of the whole.”
Plato, The Symposium

If love could speak, it wouldn't whisper, oh no—it would shout at us . It would tell us we are looking for diamonds in piles of shiny stones, exhausting ourselves overthinking while ignoring what has been there all along. It would say that we have this knack for looking forward. For visualizing the ending, the promise, the finish line; when love actually keeps happening in the present.



Today, love feels less like a feeling and more like a race. The laps are longer, the expectations heavier and the prize (whatever we think we're running for) seems to lose its value the closer we get to it. We run faster, while trying to focus against the pressure. There are spectators, of course. Admirers. Critics. Voices that analyze love with certainty, despite never running enough for feeling its weight on their own lungs.

And the athletes, who focus on the goal and gaze longingly towards it, lose sight of the bigger picture. Sometimes I think about the blinders placed on horses—meant to keep them focused on what's ahead, for safety—yet they also block everything beside them.

Sometimes I wonder if this is where we go wrong. Wanting to love isn't the same thing as wanting to BE loved. They may look similar from a distance, but they aren't. They move in a completely different way inside us, and confusing the two might be where we lose ourselves the fastest.

Long before Valentine's expectations, the Greeks had a more simpler, and interesting idea. In *The Symposium*, Plato writes that love is simply the name for the desire and pursuit of the whole. Also, Aristophanes tells the myth of what that love once meant: humans were once complete beings, with two faces, four arms and four legs who moved through the world with a confidence that frightened the gods. Therefore, we were split in half, condemned to spend our lives searching for what was taken from us. Beautiful idea, isn't it? But here comes the twist: because if love is about finding our missing half, what happens to the parts of ourselves that already exist? I mean, are we incomplete? Provisional? Are we saving room for someone else's arrival? We often chase love as if it would complete us, while forgetting the parts of ourselves that were already a whole.

Maybe that's why love feels like a race now. We are not running towards someone, but instead, running away from the discomfort of being alone with ourselves. Ludwig Wittgenstein expressed it better:

“No cry of anguish can be greater than the cry of one man.

Or rather, no suffering can be greater than what a single man can endure.

The entire planet cannot endure a suffering greater than that of a single soul.”

Towards the finish line, the proof that we are chosen narrows our vision and we miss what is happening beside us: the growth, and perhaps the thought that love is supposed to accompany, not replace.

Maybe that's why wanting to be loved often overtakes wanting to love. We search for the "better half" not to share ourselves with, but to reassure us that we are desirable and able to be chosen. And so, love becomes proof rather than presence.

My Persepolis

By: Catalina Villate and Maria Paula
García



Busi

By: Sabrina Sofía Soto 8A



Paula Perea's Art

10B



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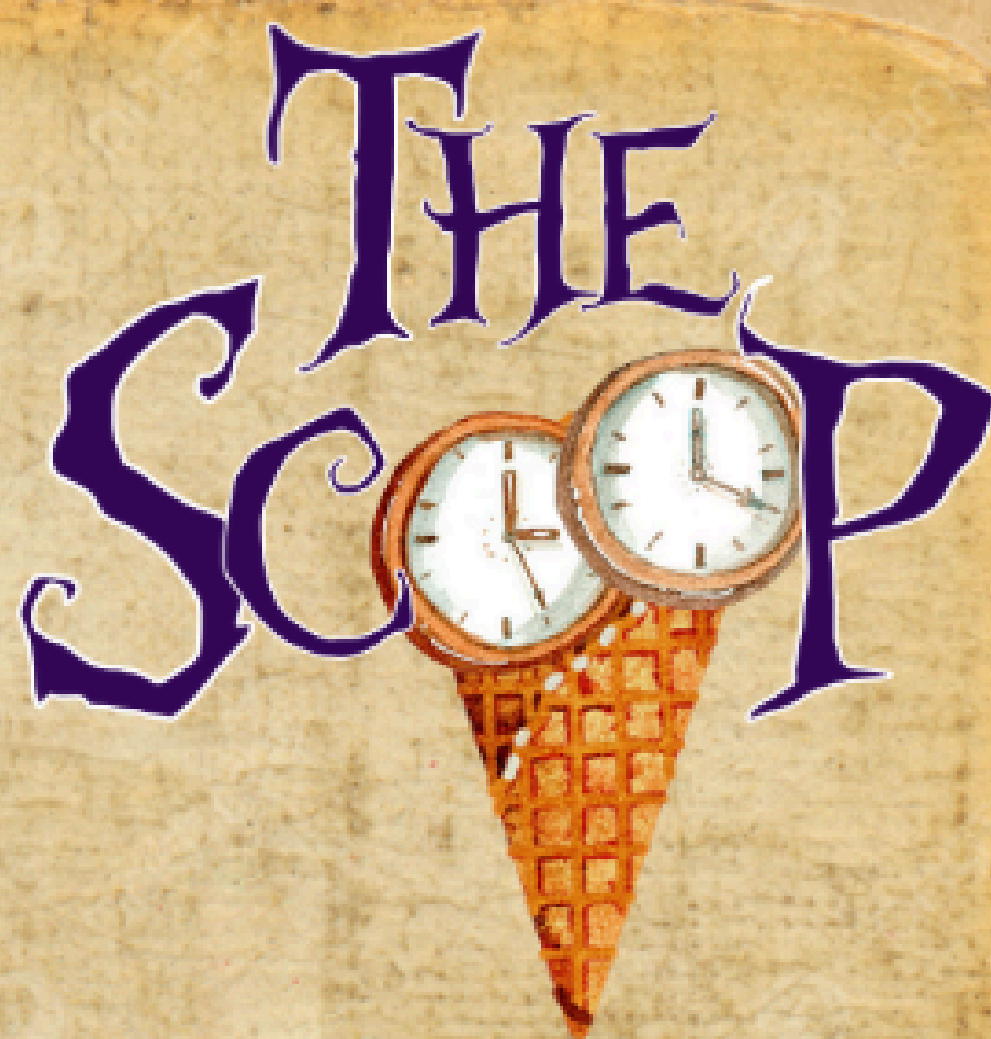
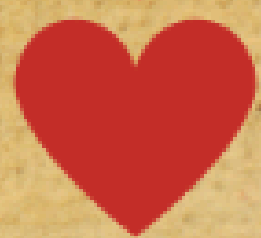
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All of the students who
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25'

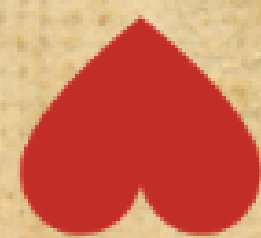


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