

TEENS **in** PRINT

BOSTON

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT JAN/FEB 2016™

WORDS TO LIVE BY

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN?

HIGH GRADES, LOW MARKS **PAGE 8** • A NOVEL APPROACH **PAGE 19** • ICE'N'EASY **PAGE 20**

BOSTON TEENS IN PRINT is hosted by Northeastern University and is a program of *WriteBoston*

TEENS in PRINT

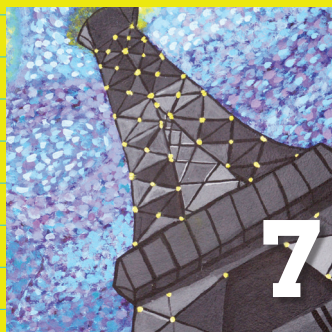
JAN-FEB 2016

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Cover artwork by Coliesha Turner



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WORDS TO LIVE BY

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN?

BY HILLARIE PILIER // STAFF WRITER

To see the change, as they say, you must be the change.

If you don't love yourself, you can't love others. You can't give what you don't have.

Picture this: You love yourself and you start a relationship with someone. You both have self-confidence and have built a strong bond. When it comes to making decisions, you think about not only what you want but also what your partner wants. You want to balance the situation to please both of you.

When you get to the point where you constantly do this, eventually you'll do the same thing with every person you meet. Your perspective about life changes.

Once you're able to love yourself and therefore love others, your decisions will always be based on both your desires and

how other people could also benefit. You will realize that those choices are born in your heart. And that is when you start to experience happiness and enjoy life. There's nothing more satisfying than that.

Even as many people nowadays strongly identify with the idea of doing just what their own minds want and not worrying about others, when it comes to social issues and things that affect us all as human beings, we must determine how the whole world would benefit.

As we aspire to be better human beings every day, we can start the change with small things. Since we all make mistakes, if we at least try to do what's right, that's all it takes to contribute to the idea of creating a better place.

WORDS TO LIVE BY

WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN?

"Always take responsibility for what you have done; never put the blame on someone else."
-- Kevin Predestin

"Because there is no right answer, you must question everything -- even what you think is absolutely right."
-- Betiel Brhane

"All humans should be kind and help each other. We should not only do things that benefit and satisfy ourselves but benefit our surroundings, too."
-- Sydney A. Napoleon

"We cannot be speechless when humanity is being taken away from us. Being silent only encourages the tormentors to do more harm."
-- Sherley Valeus

"You will never reach what you want as long as you don't wish for others to reach what they want. Stay humble and pray for each other."
-- Mohamed Abdi

"It's our responsibility to help those who can't help themselves."
-- Adilson Pina

"It is right to help poor people; it is wrong to show off what you did for poor people."
-- Rosadys Pujols

"Everybody who has money should respect and care for people who are poor."
-- Marie Lourdes Louis

"We must fight for equality of human rights."
-- Ida Alves

"Believe in who you are not what others think about you."
-- Sylvania Rodrigues

"Life is like a song; if we skip a part of it, we will lose the meaning and beauty of it all."
-- Jessy Vaz

"We should think with our minds and also our hearts because our decisions may satisfy us but harm others."
-- Jessica Andrade

"We should be meditating in our lifestyles so that we can have a better future for the whole world. Live, think, and act positively."
-- Carla Miranda

"It's right to have patience. Otherwise, you will not achieve your goals."
-- Amal Ibrahim

"Sometimes, we should disconnect from technology so that we can connect with people. It is right to create a nexus between human and human."
-- Dan Huynh

"We as fellow human beings should always act as one and work for the good of all and not for selfish needs. Become heroes, not criminals."
-- Claudio Ribeiro

"You have to make decisions on your own because nobody can help you choose the right thing to do in your life."
-- Yahirianis Wilson

"It is not right to judge anyone based on physical appearance."
-- Jing Chen

"We should always respect and protect each other for a safer society."
-- Johana Sainma

"We need to be mature enough to understand the importance of not hurting others and treating them the same way we would like to be treated."
-- Jesuina Fernandes

"What is right is when you never care only about yourself. Although there are many selfish people in this world, there are many others who are willing to sacrifice themselves for the happiness of others."
-- Merline Mathieu

"We must not neglect to do good for others even if it's not to our own advantage."
-- Shelove Adelphin

"Always listen to what your parents say."
-- Maria Araujo

"People should always be nice with their best friends and not share their secrets."
-- Eriken Calderon

"Because we make choices in our lives every day, we must think wisely for the good of all."
-- Witney Clervil

"We should not let viciousness and payback manipulate us. As people say: 'What goes around comes back around.'"
-- Nandley Charles

"You should never judge someone until you walk a day in their shoes."
-- Aguinaldo Gomes

"Appearance is not reality."
-- Candido Pina

"It's OK to think in a different way because that is what makes us all humans."
-- Carolaine Ribeiro

"Being selfish is inane. We all have the same blood color. Therefore, it is ethical to give hands to whoever is in need because your support may change the entire society."
-- Charles Rubens Victor

"It is good to have fun but not to play with other people's feelings."
-- Nicol Casilla

"Everyone makes mistakes. You can learn from them and understand life better."
-- Gissel Santos

"It is wrong to bully anyone. We should show that we support them."
-- Elsa Tejeda Guzman

"How can we have a good society if we do not treat others the same way we like to be treated?"
-- Felizmina Cardoso

"It is wrong to do something unfair just to help others."
-- Lucia Barbosa

"We should always show positivity towards each other."
-- Marlice Martins

"It is our obligation to help those who are lost to get back on track."
-- Ronny Pimentel

"We should always look for the best solution to a problem in the real world."
-- Victor Depina

"We need to be aware of our society and how each one of us makes a difference in it."
-- Eriberto Perez

"Never take what people say to you as a big deal."
-- Jhon Wilky

"It is right for people to help each other as a team."
-- Alfredo Frias

"We should always care about each other."
-- Danes Bien Aime



AFH PHOTO // KIARA MAHER

TEENS DUMP ON TRUMP

BY SOFIA MEADOWS-MURIEL // STAFF WRITER

Albana Hysa, 16, from Boston Latin School, believes that Donald Trump is not qualified to be president because he can't relate to the average American.

"He is in the upper class of society," says Hysa. "He thinks he can be disrespectful to people who don't have the same amount of money or isn't the same race as he is."

While many mainstream media members and fellow Republicans are afraid to take on the despicable me that the Republican frontrunner appears to be -- from being rude and crude to everyone from Muslims to Mexicans, women and African-Americans -- many teens have no problem dumping on Trump.

Takeshi Kumasaki, 15, from BLS, feels that Trump's apparent need to insult those he disagrees with would not play well on the

domestic or world stage.

"The president has to unite America and the other continents because, then, what is the point?" says Kumasaki.

Kevin Nguyen, 15, from BLS, says that Trump has displayed a toxic reaction to the traditional melting pot of American immigrants, urging them to speak English.

"It is hard to learn another language when you have to grow up with one culture and to integrate quickly into another," says Nguyen.

Hysa thinks that Trump has a problem telling fact from fiction, and from not blurting out whatever offensive and outlandish idea pops into his head, because he's just an entertainer.

"He [had] a TV show," Hysa says. "He's a celebrity like Kanye West -- who would still be the better president."

SYRIAN REFUGEES: "TO LEAVE THEM OUT TO DIE IS HORRIBLE"

BY SABRINA MOHAMED // STAFF WRITER

Eighteen-year-old My Nguyen understands the need to be cautious about who the government lets into the country -- especially after the recent terrorist attacks in Paris -- but doesn't see the need to close the doors completely to refugees fleeing the Syrian Civil War and ISIS.

"We should still be careful but that doesn't mean we shouldn't be helping," says Nguyen, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science. "Humans are humans and they all deserve a right to be safe and have a home."

President Barack Obama has vowed to welcome some 10,000 Syrian refugees into America over the next year while many Republicans are calling for a full-on refusal.

The issue took on added urgency after it was reported that one of the Paris assailants had posed as a Syrian refugee.

According to a Quinnipiac University poll released last month, US voters by a 51 percent to 43 percent margin oppose accepting Syrian

refugees into the country.

Still, many teens say they are outraged that anyone would want to declare the US out of bounds to Syrian castaways.

"There are many women and children along with them in fear of their lives -- to leave them out to die is horrible," says Mary Flaherty, 17, from Boston Latin School. "These people are actually fleeing ISIS so for us to shut the doors on them would mean ISIS actually had won."

As for Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's pledge to temporarily bar all Muslims at the border if he is elected, 17-year-old Luul Hassan, from Boston Green Academy, has a blunt response.

"He's disgusting," says Hassan, who is a Muslim, "and the fact that people are supporting him makes me sick."

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

#PRAYFORPARIS

WHY SOME PEOPLE OF COLOR DIDN'T SEND SYMPATHY CARDS TO FRANCE AFTER THE TERRORIST ATTACKS

BY XAVIA SIMPSON // STAFF WRITER

Not everyone hoisted the French flag on their Facebook page after the November terrorist bombings and shootings in Paris that ended up killing 130 people.

Across social media, there was a backlash from some people of color who felt the international rallying cry #prayforparis underscored a double-standard of sympathy for their own recent series of killings by police and others in this country.

"Notice how white people easily empathize w/victims of international terrorism while denying the domestic terrorism inflicted upon us," one black activist tweeted.

Other postings pointed out France's involvement in the slave trade, such as this one that wondered how "black people are praying for a country that is responsible for the enslavement of their ancestors."

Young people interviewed, including teens of color, said they understood the anger directed at the French but felt it was misguided.

"Just because we're not being supported doesn't mean you guys shouldn't be supported," says Sarskiyya Wallace, 16, from Margarita Muñiz Academy.

Seventeen-year-old Amina Mason, who goes to school in Jamaica Plain, says blacks should have mourned for the Paris victims despite France's racist legacy.

Staphanaika Janvier, 16, from Muñiz Academy, feels that people in America were right to be there for the French since they helped the US after the attacks of 9/11.



AFH ARTWORK // ELIDALIZ DEJESUS

FOR PARIS

BY NADINE THOMAS // STAFF WRITER

One-hundred-thirty souls lost.
In the city of love, hate has been planted.
And violence sprung.
Where oh where is the light?
A brightness shall appear in the darkness.
In the world's eyes, the hurt will be healed.
O, await that beautiful spring day.
For Paris, I pray.

BSAC BUZZ

BY KENNY FENG // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For many students, school suspensions simply make no sense. At the end of the day, that same student who was suspended could have just stayed home.

In October, the Boston Student Advisory Council conducted its fifth annual Listening Project, collecting data about school discipline.

Among the key findings from the survey of over 240 students:

- 60% said they felt their race, ethnicity, physical appearance, gender, gender expression, sexuality, sexual identity, disability, or English Language Learner status influenced how often they get disciplined at school;

- 75% said they think out-of-school suspension is not effective as a disciplinary tactic;

- 60% think out-of-school suspension should end entirely as a disciplinary tactic;

- 50% did not know how disciplinary hearings work at their school.

In many cases, schools are supposed to try alternatives before suspending or expelling students. These include: peer counseling, student-teacher conferences, mentoring, community service, and other restorative justice measures.

If schools continue to eject students, the downward cycle will continue and could lead to a permanent escape from classrooms, also known as dropping out -- which can be one stop on the school-to-prison pipeline.

If you would like to help promote change in your school or community, BSAC holds steering committee meetings twice a month. Contact Arthur Collins at acollins3@bostonpublicschools.org if you're interested.



AFH PHOTO // DOMINIC DUONG

HOMework ASSIGNMENT: CHOOSING NOW OR LATER

BY CLINTON NGUYEN // STAFF WRITER

Maryan Khalif, a senior at the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, prefers to do her homework while still at school when the day's lessons are still fresh in her mind.

"It just makes everything more effective," she says.

For serious students who know that their homework requirements won't simply disappear, one of the major questions surrounding it boils down to this: do it now or do it later?

As the long school day ends, some students say they need a break before hitting the books again. Others, meanwhile, feel they better get to it right away.

"Homework is just one of the most boring tasks one could do," says Natakki Jones, an O'Bryant senior, "so it's best I finish it ASAP."

Kiana McLean, a sophomore at the O'Bryant, chooses to do her homework in a setting away from school.

"It makes me more productive," says McLean, "to focus on the task in my quiet home where distractions are limited."

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

CHARTING A COURSE TO COLLEGE

BY ELEBETEL ASSEFA // STAFF WRITER

Malyun Hassan, a senior at the John D O'Bryant School of Math & Science, says she wants to be fluent in Arabic as part of her college experience because she already reads and writes it.

"The college's majors, in particular the language portion, is what I focus on," she says.

The mindset of students when looking for colleges is varied. Seniors can focus on everything from location to enrollment, diversity to range of courses.

Eric Thomas, a senior at the O'Bryant, says he has already pinned down his first choice from the endless options: Northeastern University.

"They have majors in criminology, and programs providing you with internships," says Thomas, who aspires to be an FBI agent.

Many teens are faced with the difficult choice of whether to leave their childhood neighborhoods for far stranger ones. With an already challenging atmosphere in college, some students don't want to add to the stress by leaving their family obligations. It can also be a financial hardship to live on campus.

"I want to stay close to home," says Heven Wolde, a senior at the O'Bryant. "One, it will reduce the spending in food and room. But also my mom needs me around for certain things because she can't speak English well."

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

FAKING THE GRADE

BY YVONNE A. DUNKLEY // STAFF WRITER

Fifteen-year-old Markanthony Williams, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science, thinks that school grades do not reflect real intelligence.

"They show obedience," he says.

Even as standardized testing is being roundly criticized for not measuring true brainpower, some teens feel that grades also don't always reveal their smarts.

"Grades display the students who work hard from the students who don't," says Pablo Rodriguez, 16, from the Edward M. Kennedy

Academy for Health Careers.

Yet teens say there are those whose grades don't tell the true story of their skill level because they are not challenged by the work and simply tune out their teachers.

Naa-Juah Benton, 15, from Snowden International, says that her report card doesn't always match her wisdom because teachers grading systems can be inconsistent.

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

Dear leaders,

THE QUEST FOR EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

The issue has continued to swirl around young people: whether all those in the Commonwealth should receive reduced in-state tuition to attend public colleges. Critics say that it is an unfair burden on taxpayers to foot the bill for those who are not here legally. Supporters counter that it is only fair to support all hard-working students and that it would be a revenue boon to state schools, as well. Here, in letters to state officials, students make their passionate case for what they feel it really means for every immigrant to live in the self-proclaimed land of opportunity.



AFH ARTWORK // TOM TRAN

"WE ALL SHOULD HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS"

Dear Governor Baker, House Speaker DeLeo, and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Carmen Pereira. I am a recent immigrant from Cape Verde. I am writing to you today about why Massachusetts should allow undocumented immigrants to receive in-state tuition. Anyone dealing with the problem of the high cost of college should receive in-state tuition to help them pay for it. It is only logical that we implement this because all immigrant students should get it. Just because undocumented immigrants do not have papers does not mean they are animals. People are all the same; we all should have the same rights.

Undocumented immigrants work hard in school. They learn English. If they go to college and become educated they can help make Massachusetts great.

Sincerely,
Carmen Pereira

"THESE ARE HUMAN RIGHTS"

Dear Governor Baker, House Speaker DeLeo, and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Alenny Puello Rivera. I am a recent immigrant from the Dominican Republic. It does not matter where you live or come from, you should have a right to housing, food, a job, and a good education. These are human rights.

Undocumented students should receive in-state tuition because they have the same right to go to college at the same price as documented immigrants. As a result, many more undocumented immigrants might enroll at a state college and the colleges would make more money. The undocumented students would also benefit by having access to a good education. And if there is a victory, it will be a victory not merely for undocumented students but a victory for all students and immigrants in the state.

Sincerely,
Alenny Puello Rivera

"EDUCATION IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE"

Dear Governor Baker, House Speaker DeLeo, and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Christelle Narcisse. I am a recent immigrant from France. All undocumented immigrants who are familiar with not having in-state tuition would agree that it is unfair for them to pay more money than the legal residents of Massachusetts to go to college. Whether you are a documented or undocumented immigrant, education is the most important thing in your life.

All immigrants came to the United States of America for better opportunities. They want their children to have a better education than they had. The skills of the immigrants would make our state better.

If we continue to offer access to education only to some immigrant students, not everyone will have the same chance of going to college and this is not fair.

Sincerely,
Christelle Narcisse

"HERE THERE ARE SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES"

Dear Governor Baker, House Speaker DeLeo, and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Daniela Oliveira. I am a recent immigrant from Cape Verde. All undocumented students should receive in-state tuition because we all have the same rights to be an American.

Also, we provide free education through grade 12 for those students but then effectively deny them the possibility of pursuing a higher education.

Everyone has the right to go to school and college to be a wonderful person in this country because here there are so many opportunities.

Sincerely,
Daniela Oliveira

"IT WOULD MAKE MASSACHUSETTS GREATER"

Dear Governor Baker, House Speaker DeLeo, and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Angeris I. Fuentes Paz. I am a recent immigrant from Puerto Rico.

Massachusetts would get long-term benefits from educating these students because the more undocumented immigrants earn, the more they will pay in taxes and it would make Massachusetts greater.

If we continue to only offer only in-state tuition to documented students, future generations will have a population that is uneducated, which can cause countless problems in the future.

Sincerely,
Angeris I. Fuentes Paz

"FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL LIVE IN AN UNJUST WORLD"

Dear Governor Baker, House Speaker DeLeo, and the Joint Committee on Higher Education:

My name is Nicole Rivas. I am a recent immigrant from the Dominican Republic. Massachusetts should allow undocumented immigrants to receive in-state tuition because all immigrants want a new life and to see progress.

Undocumented students put all their effort into learning a new language and working hard to earn money for college. Meanwhile, the state would have more educated people with a profession.

If we continue to deny them, future generations will live in an unjust world.

Sincerely,
Nicole Rivas



ELEBETEL ASSEFA
 Favorite spice: Berbere.
 Favorite flag: Ethiopian.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Study."



MELANIE BAEZ
 Favorite spice: Adobo.
 Favorite flag: Pansexual pride.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo.
 Key to success: "A good attitude."



ADAMAJAN BAH
 Favorite spice: Cumin.
 Favorite flag: British.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mustard.
 Key to success: "Diligence."



ISABELLA CISNEROS
 Favorite spice: Tapatio.
 Favorite flag: AIM.
 Key to success: "Learning."



DJIBRIL CONTE
 Favorite spice: Adobo.
 Favorite flag: Black power.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo.
 Key to success: "Studying and memorizing."



JAMILLAT DOUMBIA
 Favorite spice: Chicken seasoning.
 Favorite flag: Dominican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mustard.
 Key to success: "Knowing when to mind your business."



YVONNE A. DUNKLEY
 Favorite spice: Butterscotch.
 Favorite flag: Jamaican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Never give up."



CHRISTINE FREEMAN
 Favorite spice: Salt.
 Favorite flag: LGBTQ.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo.
 Key to success: "There is no key; just do your best."



JACKY HANG
 Favorite spice: Cayenne pepper.
 Favorite flag: Parisian.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Saying the words 'You can achieve.'"



ROSE KOUMBASSA
 Favorite spice: Curry (Steph).
 Favorite flag: Haitian.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Follow your dreams."



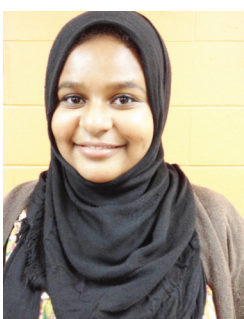
TYESHA MARIUS
 Favorite spice: Sofrito.
 Favorite flag: Haitian.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Hard work and dedication."



LAMAR MARTIN
 Favorite spice: Hot sauce.
 Favorite flag: Jamaican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "All will come to those who wait."



SOFIA MEADOWS-MURIEL
 Favorite spice: Adobo.
 Favorite flag: Puerto Rican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo and ketchup together.
 Key to success: "Hard work."



SABRINA MOHAMED
 Favorite spice: Pepper.
 Favorite flag: American.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo.
 Key to success: "Be kind and work hard."



KATELINE MONTEIRO
 Favorite spice: Red chillies.
 Favorite flag: Malawi.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo.
 Key to success: "Courage."



CHRISTELLE NARCISSE
 Favorite spice: Curry.
 Favorite flag: Ugandan.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mayo.
 Key to success: "Perseverance."



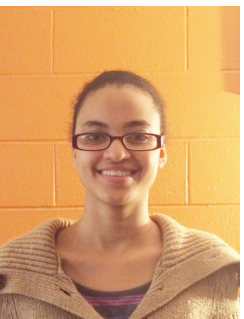
CLINTON NGUYEN
 Favorite spice: Nutmeg.
 Favorite flag: South Vietnamese.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Sriracha.
 Key to success: "Keep your eye on the target."



HILLARIE PILIER
 Favorite spice: Gummy bears.
 Favorite flag: Mexican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Perseverance."



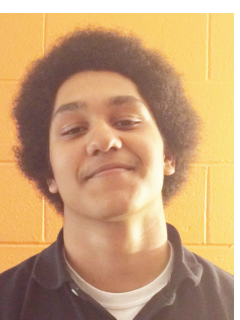
MARLEY PUSEY
 Favorite spice: Cajun.
 Favorite flag: Japanese.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Honey mustard.
 Key to success: "Live for money."



ANILDA RODRIGUES
 Favorite spice: Red pepper.
 Favorite flag: Cape Verdean.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Staying after school for help."



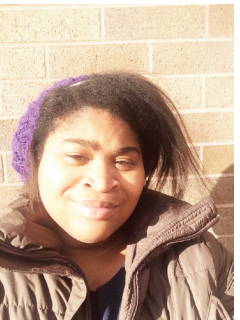
ROSA SANCHEZ
 Favorite spice: Hot sauce.
 Favorite flag: Dominican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Live life to the fullest and don't regret your actions nor decisions because they are part of the past and the past doesn't return."



SABIEL SANZ
 Favorite spice: Chipotle.
 Favorite flag: Japanese.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Mustard.
 Key to success: "Doing what you love."



XAVIA SIMPSON
 Favorite spice: Curry.
 Favorite flag: Jamaican.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Ketchup.
 Key to success: "Hard work."



NADINE THOMAS
 Favorite spice: Cinnamon.
 Favorite flag: American.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Gravy.
 Key to success: "Resilience, determination, kindness."



ANTIAH THORNTON
 Favorite spice: Adobo.
 Favorite flag: Japanese.
 Mayo, ketchup, or mustard? Catch-up.
 Key to success: "Patience, dedication, and discipline (three things I don't have)."

TEENS

in print

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unites the city's teens to create an outlet to inform, communicate, and provide positive change through written expression.

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Whatever you submit has to be YOUR OWN CREATION. We only print original work. You will not get it back, so please KEEP A COPY for yourself. Teens in Print reserves the right to EDIT your work for length, content, or appropriateness.

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Let Teens in Print know what's on your mind by sending an email to TiP coordinator Ric Kahn at ric.kahn@boston.gov. Please include your full name, school, and grade and we may run your letter in an upcoming edition. Thank you.

To join the Teens in Print staff, please express your interest in an email to the TiP coordinator at ric.kahn@boston.gov

Boston Teens in Print is the only citywide newspaper written by and for high school and middle school students from Boston. Launched by WriteBoston and The Boston Globe in 2004, and published five times a year, TiP is a platform for student journalists, essayists, poets, and artists.

It is delivered to Boston high schools, libraries, and community centers. But it is not just a newspaper — it is also, for urban teens, an afterschool program and summer journalism institute, both free. TiP gives a voice to Boston's youth, a voice that bellows from one end of the city to the other, across the boundaries of neighborhood, class, and ethnicity.

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Send submissions by mail to:
 Boston Teens in Print
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 2300 Washington Street, Floor 6
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AFH PHOTO

LANGUAGE LESSONS

BY JOSEPH PIARD // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Many perspectives have been discussed in the United States about how immigrant students should be taught.

Some schools are addressing the situation by giving students courses in their native languages. Others argue that teaching classes only in English will be better because students will have the opportunity to learn the language of their new country.

Some believe that hosting English-only classes will make immigrant students suffer academically and emotionally. They can lose time trying to master subjects because they cannot understand the lessons. This can lead to discouragement and dropping out.

Further, it may send a message that their native languages are not worthy.

However, I do not throw my culture away for a language. I am from Haiti. I still keep the routine of speaking Haitian Creole with friends and family. It is important to stay connected to your country by keeping your native language.

Still, to graduate and move on to college, you need to take tests in English. Speaking English as much as possible in school allows you to expand your chances of finding a job. Being bilingual allows you to help more people.

The faster you learn English, the quicker you will have a chance to succeed.

THE LONG TREK TOWARD USEFUL CLASSROOM TECH

BY MELANIE MORA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Nowadays, the use of technology is essential for learning. Teachers use email to stay in contact with students. Texts and lessons can be found online. YouTube is employed to illustrate skills.

Meanwhile, students do not seem to be able to live without Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, etc. Not only are they social-media sites, but students use them to gather resources and detect any movement that society is having -- in other words, they can also be helpful for interactive educational purposes.

Technology is a spectacular tool but many worry that it can also hinder true learning. For example, students can avoid reading texts and instead look up answers on the Internet. Also, spending so much time on computers or smartphones can lead to youth being disconnected from reality -- and from themselves.

Technology is crucial for school use but it needs to be thoughtful so that it can facilitate efficient learning without becoming a barrier to face-to-face interaction.

SCHOOL OF ROCK-AND-A-HARD-PLACE PUBLIC OR PRIVATE COLLEGE?

BY CRISMEIRY MEJIA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Today, the argument continues: Which college is better, public or private? Supporters of private colleges claim they are a better investment because of prestige and job prospects. Backers of public colleges say private schools are not worth the outrageously high tuitions and can lead to a lifetime of student debt.

On the private side, students are attracted to the school's reputation with potential employers, strong alumni connections, more and varied classes, and roster of world-class professors.



However, those well-known professors are often occupied with other endeavors, leaving the teaching to lesser-qualified educators. And those other lures may also turn out to be less than advertised and not worth the price.

In the end, the school you attend doesn't determine who you are or who you are going to be. Having a vision of what you will do after graduation is worth more than the name of the school you attend.

If you work hard, you will get a fine education and diploma. Then it's up to you to determine what you do with all that you have learned.

AFH PHOTO // KIARA MAHER

SAVED BY THE BELL

THE DOWNSIDE OF STARTING SCHOOL LATER

BY ALI SATTAR //
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



School is something essential for every kid, but does that mean they shouldn't have enough sleep? Sleep gives us the ability to concentrate in school and helps our memory and ability to learn. Lack of sleep can cause drowsiness -- a detriment both inside and outside of school.

But because many teens end up arriving late to school -- either due to transportation troubles or the chance to capture more sleep as they juggle homework and jobs -- some want to start the school day later.

However, if school districts push back start times, many parents will not be able to get their kids to school and also make it to work without being late.

In addition, it would also have an effect on extracurricular activities. Many youth participate in afterschool programs, including sports. Increasingly, colleges are looking beyond academics to locate well-rounded students.

Also, many students have jobs to help contribute their fair share and a later school day would cut into their hours. If we start schools later, whole families may end up suffering.

AFH PHOTO // KIARA MAHER

COPS ON CAMPUS?

BY CELESTINA VAZ ANTUNES // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Police can solve a problem or become a problem. School should be a safe place for students where there are no guns because it's a place to learn. Seeing armed police might make students feel there is a danger in school. Yet, police can also protect the students and the staff. With every mass shooting there is a call for more law enforcement officers with guns.

School officers are supposed to make necessary arrests, provide security, and prevent crime. Yet it's clear that some officers don't have the training or temperament. In October, the shocking video emerged of a teenage girl sitting at her desk in South Carolina who was angrily flipped and tossed by a school officer after she refused to leave a classroom where she was being disruptive.

That student and others should look at school cops as role models. But many students in urban schools come from communities where police are not trusted, and they may have trauma from seeing police abuse citizens outside of school.

Cops can be on call if trouble strikes. But teachers, headmasters, and counselors are the ones who can help students be safe. Students should feel like they are in school -- not prison.

ZERO TOLERANCE = BIG ZERO

BY ROOBY DENAUD // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Zero tolerance is when they crack down hard on students for breaking rules at school. Originally intended to make schools safer by taking action against youth caught with guns or drugs, sometimes the policy has gone too far, punishing students carrying headache medicine, for example.

In some communities, critics also say that kids of color have been unfairly targeted.

Adopting zero tolerance policies are far easier than taking the time to build real relationships with young men and women and counsel them, or find the root reasons behind their misbehavior. These clampdowns can push students to drop out of school by filling their records with suspensions and failing marks and making them repeat grades.

Once on the street, these youth often make bad decisions and turn into full-time outlaws. Instead of becoming lawyers or doctors, they wind up needing the survival services of doctors or lawyers.

We all want peace on the street. To have peace, we should not take away the very tool that allows for success.

Education is that tool.

THE CASE FOR SEX ED IN SCHOOLS

BY CACIANA ROSA // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Public schools should teach sex ed to inform young people about human reproduction, lower the risk of spreading diseases, prevent unwanted pregnancies, and encourage healthy relationships.

Opponents say that teaching sex ed in school will encourage young people to become sexually active before they are really ready. Furthermore, they say that teaching children about sex is for parents, not schools.

But every public school student should have access to sex ed because it's a way of maintaining a healthy society and lowering the risks of poverty.



AFH PHOTO // JESSICA PAN

SCHOOL AGENDA: GETTING PARENTS ON BOARD

BY KATHERINE URBAEZ // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Disengaged parents are not aware of what their children are doing at school. They often don't help their kids with homework or participate in school activities such as open houses, parent-teacher conferences, and college fairs.

Some argue that parental disengagement doesn't impede a student's progress because students have teacher support and programs that are able to help them academically. Sometimes, students have better relationships with teachers than they do with their parents.

However, if mothers or fathers are not attending any school activities, they are not assuming their responsibilities as parents. Parental involvement makes school better in aspects such as activities, expectations, learning environments, and overall performances.

Many parents are busy with work and raising children. Often, they are hindered by language barriers. Still, for students, it's essential to be pushed by the person who has been with them while they've developed mentally and physically. The parent's presence in a child's classroom life not only benefits the student but also themselves, the teachers, and the school.



AFH PHOTO // MICHELLE NGUYEN

COLLEGE TESTING 1, 2, 3

BY TARANNUM RAHMAN // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Like many things traced back in time, it is said that perhaps the first recorded use of standardized tests originated in China, according to Time magazine, where applicants looking for government jobs were quizzed on their knowledge of the canons of Confucianism.

More known in today's world are those SATs and ACTs used by colleges to measure student achievement.

Recently, a new trend has emerged with many colleges going "test-optional." The supporters of colleges not requiring standardized test scores believe that those exams are biased toward wealthy families that have more access than others to resources such as better schools and prep classes.

As an immigrant and first generation college applicant, I consider standardized tests to be highly unfair. I believe that they are stripping me of many opportunities and holding me back.

I would love to apply to elite, Ivy League schools but I'm afraid to even try. I feel that I don't even stand a chance because they will put me in the "no" pile simply by opening my test scores.

I'm not the only one feeling so pessimistic. Despite having excellent GPAs and a broad range of extracurricular activities, many of us feel locked into applying to other colleges because our test scores are not up to the supposed standard marks. We don't even get a chance to convey who we are to colleges before getting pushed to the sidelines.

If we compare ourselves with privileged kids, we see that they have been preparing for their futures from an early age. If all colleges made it optional to submit test scores, students would get a better chance to show what they're capable of doing in a school environment rather than filling in bubbles in a matter of a few hours.

CAN YOU RESIST TEMPTATIONS? HOW?

BY ANILDA RODRIGUES // STAFF WRITER

Kathy Lee says she is lured in by things that have a great price.

"I can't resist free temptations," says Lee, 15, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Oh yeah, she also can't keep her hands off yummy spicy food.

"I'm not supposed to eat it," she says while giggling.

Lee says that if she doesn't learn to control herself better, she's mostly worried about her weight and her money.

Temptations are desires that provide enjoyment, though they can become distractions.

Wanjing Li, 16, from the O'Bryant, says that falling into food temptations is not much of a problem.

"I try to eat healthy," says Li, "but I would still get it if I want it. I'm still young so I don't have to worry about old people stuff."

Sonny Mei, 15, from the O'Bryant, says that on weekends he would spend about 12 hours playing video games.

But after missing a homework assignment, he says he decided to quit because he was hoping to win an academic school award.

"It interrupts your time for other things," he says of temptations.

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

AFH ARTWORK // SAMARA HAINES

NATIVE AMERICANS: BEYOND THE STALE STEREOTYPES

BY ISABELLA CISNEROS // STAFF WRITER

Maybe it's because they've been here longer than anybody. But Native Americans today are seen as relics of the past -- if they're seen at all.

"Indians are not around anymore, so why should we care about cultural sensitivities?" says Jamari Williams, 17, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

Behind the stale stereotypes and racist sports symbols, advocates say, Native Americans still suffer the generational aftereffects of isolation after being forced from their families, for example, and placed into boarding schools bent on assimilation by the government and their surrogates. These include high rates of poverty and youth suicide.

Still, after years of cultural suppression, Native American advocates say many of their people remain spiritual and philosophical and very much in tune with touchstones like natural meditation and rites of passage.

"I used to think about things like Thanksgiving and alcoholism when I thought about Natives," says Wood Jerry, 18, who goes to school in West Roxbury. "But when I met a close friend of mine who is Alaskan Native, she showed me the pride held for her culture...She shaped my understanding to seeing the duality in a people we usually forget."

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

HOW COMMON IS COMMON SENSE?

BY MARLEY PUSEY // STAFF WRITER

Seventeen-year-old Brandon Tejada feels that common sense is not very common at all. The more we strive for the next best thing, he says, the more our basic thinking decreases.

"People in society today are getting dumber and dumber because people get too lost in technology," says Tejada, from the John D. O'Bryant School of Math & Science.

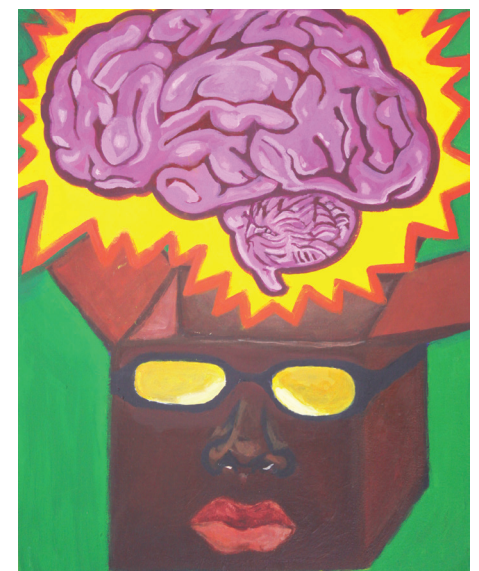
Jason Thai, a junior at the O'Bryant, believes that our sound judgment is being eaten away by our super-specialized culture.

"Nothing is common in this world," says Thai.

But, teens say, it's not too late to find a core direction.

After all, says 16-year-old Margaret Anne Fortune, from the O'Bryant: "It's something you learn."

This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.



AFH ARTWORK // FREDERICK PLOWRIGHT



DRAWING PARALLELS

SKETCHING VS. SKECHERS

BY MELANIE BAEZ // STAFF WRITER

Artists have it tough out there. Some artists are restricted to a brand or a medium and some fluctuate between the two. But just because one artist can create like a Picasso using only Crayolas doesn't mean that just any artist knows how to use cheap instruments to his or her advantage.

For example, my Copic markers range from \$6 to \$8 each and you need a set of at least six to produce mini-masterpieces that display a smooth blending of colors. When I give out this information, heads snap towards me and eyes go wide.

"Why the heck are you paying \$8 dollars for a marker!?"

Then I have to explain the same thing every time: These are professional markers, they are brand name. And even after that, the doubters still look confused and even repulsed.

But the people that look disgusted by the fact I invest so much in my art supplies are the same ones who buy \$300 to \$600 sneakers they only wear once.

Like students who save up for a good laptop, I put my money into something I will use. If you were an artist, you would understand that you use these tools frequently.

Meanwhile, the people who like to judge spend hundreds on a pair of shoes that are going to collect dust inside a closet.

I find it offensive and awfully hypocritical for them to say: "Why would you waste your money on some markers?"

My fellow artists, don't be discouraged. I encourage you to respond to anyone who says this with the same answer: "Why would you spend so much money on [insert expensive luxury item]?"

RELIGION: FEEDING NEED OR GREED?

BY ANTIAH THORNTON // STAFF WRITER

A University of Chicago study published in November found that children brought up in atheist and non-religious families were more generous than kids from religious households.

Before reading an article on the study, I -- like many others -- was under the impression that the opposite was true, considering how many religious parents have told me that "God is love."

Of course, we don't hear a lot about the non-believers out there, so those thoughts are one-sided.

However, the study said: "Since 5.8 billion humans, representing 84% of the worldwide population, identify as religious, religion is arguably one prevalent facet of culture that influences the development and expression of prosociality. While it is generally accepted that religion contours people's moral judgments and prosocial behavior, the relation between religiosity and morality is a contentious one."

Indeed, I believe that every child's kindness and motivation to share stems from how they are raised by their parents and not necessarily from the religion they're introduced to.

MY HIGH SCHOOL BUCKET LIST

BY JAMILLAT DOUMBIA // STAFF WRITER

Before high school ends, I want to:

- Earn honor roll;
- Come to school on time for a week;
- Quit biting my nails;
- Finally accept a compliment; and
- Make DR and AJ believe that they are beautiful.

My list was bigger, but I have accomplished these already:

- Tour at least five colleges;
- Win a basketball game against my little brother;
- Stop chewing gum for a week;
- Make my friend fried chicken; and
- Finish my "I Heart Diversity" project.

This one is still a work in progress:

- Spend as much time with my friends as I can before we part ways.

ANGRY BIRDS: A TRUE STORY

BY NADINE THOMAS // STAFF WRITER

I remember the bird war like it was yesterday: the arrival of the evil robins, like an alien invasion.

They hovered over us like the "Death Star," swooping down the moment we left our home. "They must be protecting their young," my father had said.

From early spring to late summer, our front yard was a battlefield. Going to school meant ducking from winged bombs. Taking out the trash was like escaping a booby trap from "Indiana Jones."

One hot August morning, all was quiet. The sun was up and the sky was a great blue. Not a robin was in sight to pick a fight.

My dad slowly peeked his head out the door. When he was sure the coast was clear, he made his way with a hurried pace to his car. He retrieved some possessions he had left behind, including an air freshener.

He was returning to home base when he heard the enemy's anthem. The robins swept in and had him trapped.

My father picked up his war weapon and sprayed a clean path to the front door. Once inside, he slammed it shut and heaved a sigh of pure relief.

He had won the battle for now -- until the robins take flight again come spring.



AFH ARTWORK // NGAN LE

SOUP JOUMOU

BY TYESHA MARIUS // STAFF WRITER

Soup Joumou (joo-moo), also known as Soup of Freedom, was once the province of white masters but was barred from the lips of the black slaves who cooked it. Now this symbolic dish is served to all year-round but especially on January 1 -- both New Year's and the anniversary of the day in 1804 that Haiti became the world's first independent black republic, after defeating the French.

Here is a favorite recipe from saveur.com:

Ingredients (to serve 6 to 8)

- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 scallions, sliced, plus more for garnish
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped parsley
- 1/2 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 medium shallot, sliced
- 1 scotch bonnet chile, stemmed and seeded
- Juice of 1 lime, plus wedges for serving
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 lb. beef chuck, cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 8 cups beef stock
- 2 carrots, cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 2 stalks celery, cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1 small leek, trimmed, halved lengthwise and cut into 1 1/2" pieces; rinsed
- 1 small yellow onion, cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1 large Yukon gold potato, peeled and cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1 medium turnip, peeled and cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1/2 small green cabbage, cored and cut into 1 1/2" pieces
- 1/2 small kabocha squash, cut into 1" pieces

INSTRUCTIONS

Puree garlic, scallions, parsley, thyme, shallots, chile, juice, salt and pepper, and 1/2 cup water in a blender until smooth; mix with beef in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight.

Remove beef from marinade and dry with paper towels; set aside. Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add beef; cook, turning as needed, until browned, about 8 minutes. Add stock and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium, and cook, stirring occasionally, until beef is tender, about 1 1/2 hours. Add carrots, celery, leeks, onion, potatoes, turnips, and cabbage; cook, slightly covered and stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, bring squash and 2 cups water to a boil in a 2-qt. saucepan over high heat; reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered, until squash is tender, about 10 minutes. Drain, reserving 1/2 cup cooking liquid, and transfer squash and liquid to a blender; puree until smooth and set aside. When vegetables are tender, uncover, and stir in reserved squash puree; cook, stirring occasionally, until soup is slightly thick, 5-10 minutes more; season with salt and pepper and serve with scallions and lime wedges.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS

BY ROSA SANCHEZ // STAFF WRITER

Decisions are part of our everyday existence. They are not something we can get rid of for without them we wouldn't have a voice nor the liberty of choosing our life's path. We would just be puppets without a will.

Fifteen-year-old Bismary Tabera, from Dorchester, says that to make the best decision for yourself, you have to consider some factors that can differ from others depending on your persona.

She says her method comes down to: "Analyzing the situation and what the impact in your life will be."

For a small thing such as homework, she says, that means deciding to do it when she first gets home from school, knowing that she won't get it done if she procrastinates.

Sixteen-year-old Sasha Lugo, from Dorchester -- also known as Sunshine -- is the kind of person on the border of extinction. Instead of just giving quick answers to questions, she'll actually help you understand what's going on.

Lugo says that when she has to make a difficult decision, she'll ask for advice from people around her but also consider her own feelings.

"Make choices that are best for you," she says.

Rayven Frierson, 15, who goes to school in Roxbury, says that making decisions are just part of living -- they're like oxygen -- and that they are often based on our hearts' amendments.

"Life isn't perfect," she says. "You don't always have to make the right decision or the decision people want you to make. It's your choice."

Teens say that young people should not try to make the most obvious decisions but the ones that suit their personalities for they are going to live the outcomes. After all, they say, the decisions we make are part of who we become.

"I BECAME A ROCKER"**BY JOSUE FLORES // CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

I lived in El Salvador. But I wanted to go to the US. I wanted an opportunity in a different country.

In El Salvador, the gangsters began to kill people and took control. If you were a teen like me, they asked you to enter the gangster group and if you said no, they would kill you.

When I came to the US, I missed my best friends but I also felt happy to learn another language.

I began listening to heavy metal music. I became a rocker.

In El Salvador, if they heard me listening to heavy metal, they'd think I was Satanic.

But here, this helped me so much, how they expose their emotions: Don't give up. You are not alone.

"NOW, ALL IS VERY DIFFERENT HERE"**BY HEIDI HIDALGO // CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

In Ecuador, I went to high school every day because I was a good student and had many friends. When I had homework on the Internet, I had to find a cyber business because we did not have it.

Then I came to the United States, in 2014.

Now, all is very different here. English is very difficult for me, but I am learning.

I miss Ecuador. It's my country.

Maybe there is more opportunity here for my life, my future.

I want to be a psychologist.

People who have problems need a person who listens to them.

"NEVER FORGET WHERE YOU COME FROM"**BY ELIAN GONZALEZ // CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

When I lived in the Dominican Republic, my life was happy but my family was poor. When storms destroyed parts of our house, we did not have money to fix it. My mother had gone to the United States to earn money for the family when I was two years old. I lived with my uncles. They were old but had to work to keep me in school, which is expensive in DR. My mother was able to send about \$30 every month for my food, clothes, and other expenses.

Then, one day when I was playing video games, my phone rang.

"Hello, who's this?" I asked.

It was my mother.

"You are going to Boston," she said.

I stayed quiet for three minutes.

"Really, mom, that is great!" I said after my surprise had worn off.

Three months later, in November of 2014, we prepared for our move to the US. When we arrived in Boston, the officers asked questions in English but I could not understand what they were saying.

"Why did I come here?" I later asked my mother.

"Because you have more opportunities here than in the Dominican Republic," she said.

Now, when I think about it, I see that she was right. I can speak English and communicate with my teachers, my new friends, and my relatives in the US.

After high school, I want to go to MIT and study engineering.

I feel happy but I still sometimes miss DR.

I believe in the saying, "Never forget where you come from."

"I WANT TO BE A GOOD PERSON"**BY MARCOS TAVERAS // CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

I've always thought about my future.

When I was a baby, I wanted to be an astronaut because I saw in the cool "Star Wars" movies that they are like heroes and have many adventures. I thought that going into space would be so good because I could take a selfie, put it on a website, and become a famous person for this.

With all the money I was going to win, I was going to buy a big house, a Lamborghini, and maintain my family.

Then, I didn't want to be an astronaut anymore. I wanted to be an FBI SWAT because this has a lot of action. The problem is that you can die really quick.

I also considered becoming a professional chef. I like to cook and people would say good things about me.

Maybe I will pass high school, go to college, and become a computer engineer.

I want to be a good person and teach my family how hard it is to be successful.

"I HAVE MANY GOALS IN THIS NEW LIFE"**BY PAOLA ORTIZ // CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

When I lived in Guatemala, I always studied because my goal was to go to the university and be a professional person.

Part of me wanted to be a teacher; in my class, I saw how they helped others understand things so they could become something in their lives. I also wanted to be a nurse because they help people, too.

My life changed when my parents told me that I had to come to the United States to have a better life.

I was 15 years old when I came here. My first day of school, I was so confused because I didn't understand when someone wanted to talk with me in English.

Now I understand English and I know how to write and read. I enjoy my life in this country. I have new friends and I have good grades.

I have many goals in this new life because now I have more opportunities. I can be a nurse or a teacher in this country because I know Spanish and English.

"I CAME TO THE UNITED STATES FOR MORE OPPORTUNITY"**BY MELISSA GONZALEZ // CONTRIBUTING WRITER**

I lived a very happy life in the Dominican Republic. I got good grades in school. I went to the beach with my friends and family to have fun.

In 2014, I came to the United States for more opportunity. My life changed completely. People talked in English and I only understood a little. I missed my friends in DR. I wanted to go back but my mother told me that I have to get used to it here.

Now, I love this country. I am learning the language. I have resources: more food, a better economy. I go to parties and the movies.

Someday, I want to be a pediatrician.

ON MEETING SISTER SOULJAH

"All eyes were on her"

BY ANTALIYAH MAXWELL // CONTRIBUTING WRITER



PHOTO COURTESY OF
SIMON & SCHUSTER

The call went out from the Boston Public Library to young people: submit a piece of your own work and win two seats to the December 1 talk, and copies of the new book, by Sister Souljah (fan fiction or art based on the world in her novels or a compelling question you'd want to ask her). Here is a version of Teens in Print reporter Antaliyah Maxwell's winning poem (referencing "The Coldest Winter Ever") and her account of encountering the hip-hop recording artist and author.

When I first arrived at the Copley library teen center, it was noisy, with more than 70 people there. Ten minutes later, when Sister Souljah walked in, it instantly became silent. All eyes were on her.

Sister Souljah introduced her new Midnight book to us, "A Moment of Silence," and explained that the title represented all the danger, temptation, and adventure it contained.

After she asked for questions, a young woman stood up and started sobbing. "I don't have a question, but I wanted to say... your books helped me through so many struggles... Thank you."

Sister Souljah began to tear up herself and told the woman that she is a strong young lady. I got teary, too.

I was fascinated by how easily Sister Souljah presented herself and spread such positive energy.

"People say things like 'Don't judge me,'" Sister Souljah told the crowd. "This is one of the dumbest thing I've ever heard in my life... The creator gave each of us a mind -- so that we can think. Eyes -- so that we can observe. Thoughts -- so that we can measure things out. All day long, every single individual in this room is making judgments... You made a judgment about what to wear... who you want to be friends with and who you don't want to be friends with... Constructive criticism... I come from the era of free speech... It's OK if we don't agree. Let's debate it out."

Her statement made me realize that to judge people does not mean to put them down. It is to make an impact on their lives by having them open their eyes to the reality they need to face. As she was signing our books, I let her know that I admired her. She looked up at me and smiled and thanked me so genuinely.

After she inscribed my name in the book, she added these words: "An explosion in your soul!!"

WHO IS WINTER?

BY ANTALIYAH MAXWELL //
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Winter,
Winter is cold.
And I ain't talking about the weather.
She's a girl, a fierce young adult... who's all about herself.
Winter, the cold one.
She's stuck on Midnight.
And I ain't talking about nighttime.
I'm talking about a tall, dark, and handsome one.
And he doesn't pay Winter any mind.
Winter, freezing cold.
Had everything she ever desired.
Winter was spoiled and rotten.
Ricky Santiago got her anything she ever needed.
But she kept wanting more and more.
Then, day after day...
Night after night...
She ended up with nothing.
Hopeless... and in trouble.



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

JEM: A CINEMATIC MINI-GEM

BY CHRISTINE FREEMAN // STAFF WRITER

"Jem and the Holograms" -- not the old 1980s cartoon but the newer movie -- had a simplistic plot but was fun to watch.

In the film, you follow a girl and her sisters as they rise to musical stardom off of a video that was posted -- where else? -- on YouTube.

The sub-twists include takes on father-daughter relationships; family togetherness vs. celebrity individualism; saving the house (literally) from being lost; a mystical scavenger hunt; a mismatch that turns romantic; and a robot named Synergy.

The music was catchy and the movie stood out as a film for all ages. It teaches you a really good lesson of staying true to those closest to you.

I fully enjoyed it and wouldn't mind watching it again, on DVD.

A TiP of the hat to Universal Pictures for providing our teens with free tickets to the movie.

HOCKEY NIGHT IN BOSTON

"OFTEN, THE ATMOSPHERE MORE RESEMBLED A BOXING MATCH THAN A HOCKEY GAME"

BY JACKY HANG // STAFF WRITER

On November 3, I got invited to the most exciting sports game that I least expected. It was hockey. Me and my friends were invited to go to the Bruins game at TD Garden.

I've seen hockey games in movies and TV shows and I initially thought it was going to be predictable like many other sporting events -- a large crowd cheers on their team and boos the opponent.

However, I noticed some eye-opening moments during the contest.

There was a time, for example, when a hockey player was reaching for the puck and seemed so determined on scoring until the opposing player knocked him to the ice, causing his head to become squished into the barrier glass.

There were other instances when players got pushed really hard to the ice but quickly bounced up as if nothing had happened.

Often, the atmosphere more resembled a boxing match than a hockey game.

Though I enjoyed it, I was surprised how these hockey players would be so violent for something that was supposed to be so much fun.

A TiP of the hat to the Boston Bruins Foundation for hosting our teens to a night of entertainment, including a game that ended in a 5-3 Bruins loss to the Dallas Stars.

"PLAYING ON ICE GAVE THE SPORT A CERTAIN MELODY AND RHYTHM"

BY YVONNE A. DUNKLEY // STAFF WRITER

Get it, get the ball. Did I really just say that? I mean puck!

There was that kind of excitement electrically pacing through the crowd. The culture of the TD Garden spoke its own language that everyone, even someone new to the sport, could get.

As I sat down in the crowded stadium, um, arena, I couldn't help but notice that people were in their own kind of uniform. Not everyone wore a jersey, but many had familiar black-and-gold shirts for this event. There were mothers and fathers just hanging out with children, talking about everyday things. The environment was so genuine that anyone who could feel at home.

I didn't know a thing about ice hockey except that it was on ice. Still, I had my eyes glued to the game. I often didn't understand where the ball, er, puck, was. But that didn't stop me from engaging in something that was so original to me.

Playing on ice gave the sport a certain melody and rhythm. It looked very pretty and peaceful. Until the players smashed each other into the side "walls" -- make that "boards."

Besides that, it was really beautiful and everyone should experience not just watching it on TV but being there in the moment.



This article was prepared in collaboration with 826 Boston.

PHOTO BY STEVE BABINEAU/NHLI VIA GETTY IMAGES, COURTESY OF BRUINS.NHL.COM

"AT THE COLLEGE GAME, THE VIBE IS CALMER THAN AT THE PRO LEVEL"

BY MARIAM BAH // CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After watching a college hockey game involving Boston University a couple of years ago and a professional hockey game with the Boston Bruins in November, I noticed a few differences between the two.

At the college game, the vibe is calmer than at the pro level. They do not tolerate fighting, for example. And the crowd is less extreme. Many in the stands are not even paying attention. The news coverage is weaker, too.

Professional hockey action is a lot more intense. The players seem very passionate about what they do. Sometimes it results in fights, but they have an entire city, state -- even nation -- counting on them. The spectators all were on the edge of their seats when the Bruins were close to scoring a goal. Plus, there was an abundance of media trying to capture the best moments of the contest.

Overall, there's a lot more excitement at the professional game. Even if it was your first time, as it was for me, you are keener on following along because everyone is synchronized and hoping for a win.

If you ever have to choose between watching a college hockey game vs. a professional one, go for the pros. It's worth it!

"WHETHER ON OR OFF THE ICE, THEY CONSIDER EACH OTHER FAMILY"

BY JAMILLAT DOUMBIA // STAFF WRITER

When the game first started, I was extremely confused and didn't understand the concept. But then I began to figure out what was going on.

One of my personal highlights: We had the pleasure of fist-bumping the Bruins players after they left the locker room, to show them support.

The players fist-bumped one another, too.

This told me that whether on or off the ice, they consider each other family.

To protect members of their hockey family against the Dallas Stars, I counted at least three fights on the ice.