

# Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

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## The AP Exam (And How it Applies to Your Life)

Kyra Veprek, Sophomore Reporter

One of the most exciting (and only) milestones of moving into one's sophomore year at MHS is the option to take an AP course, specifically AP World History. I, allowing myself to become engrossed in the academic competition amongst my peers, jumped at the opportunity to take this higher-credit course. However, much like most of those entering the course, I was unaware of the small hell I would experience during the AP Exam and the weeks leading up to it. The thought of the Exam now makes me nauseous, but after decompressing during the following weeks, I can now recognize the lessons I've learned and look to apply them to exams in the future.

Firstly, it's important to prepare for the worst. Since I felt little to no confidence in my overall knowledge of the history of the world, I found comfort in the fact that fifty percent of my score lay in the multiple choice portion of the test. Of course, I could not have been more incorrect. I can confidently say that throughout my student career, I have never faced a more persistently cruel set of multiple choice questions; many were indecipherable and every question seemed to bear multiple correct answers. Going into anything - be it an interview, a test, or a new group of people - everyone wants to feel confident. To this I advise one thing: be confident in nothing other than that there will be challenges. It's not the most encouraging advice but at least you'll expect all the curveballs thrown your way.

Secondly, the AP Exam taught me that self-discipline and self-motivation are the keys to success. During the weeks leading up to the AP Exam, almost all of my friends were in over their heads with studying, leaving me to manage myself. Much like many students my age,

I lack self-motivation and find self-discipline near impossible; I eat, sleep, exercise, and study when I want to, not when I need to. However, the AP Exam was a rude awakening to the fact that the key to success is driving yourself to your full potential. When left to your own devices, it's more than easy to choose the comfortable choices in life, from sitting on the couch instead of going for a run to choosing to watch *The Bachelorette* instead of studying for your chemistry test (oops). At my age, it's simple to forget that the only person responsible for your actions is yourself and it's in your hands to make the choices that will lead to a happier, healthier and more successful life.

Finally, the AP Exam showed me that the world doesn't end with one mistake. Taking the World History Exam felt like being in a boxing match, except my opponent's weight class was two above mine and she felt no shame in beating the daylights out of me. If asked if the World History Exam was a failure for me the answer is simple: yes. I made mistakes; I procrastinated, didn't study hard enough, didn't plan in advance, and ended up feeling really crappy after completing the test. But much like with most of the mistakes I make, I'm okay with it. In a few months time, my peers and I will receive our scores and I'm sure my friends will be more than enthusiastic to share their above average scores with me. Despite my regrets about my lack of preparation, I understand I will earn the grade I deserve and there is no reason to be displeased with that.

Often in the hyperactive society we live in today, people neglect the value of mistakes. This drive to achieve leads to a lack of appreciation for the actual learning process. I say, it's important to target your weaknesses and work on them every day. Make mistakes, get messy, and enjoy every step of the never-ending learning process. Besides, there will always be plenty of tests to redeem yourself on and thousands of opportunities to prove you're only moving onwards and upwards.

## Grapes, Cinnamon, Freshmen, and Seniors

Kathleen Alexandrou, Freshman Reporter

Grapes and cinnamon. When you think of these two foods, you probably don't automatically connect them to each other. Strangely, they are more similar than you might realize. Though grapes and cinnamon may not be your favorite combination (yet), you might be surprised to find that not only are they a tasty snack, but they've been considered nutritional, natural medicines since the time of the ancient Greeks!

The spice we call cinnamon has been known around the world and in many different cultures for thousands of years. The word comes from at least four languages including Old French (cinnamone), Latin (cinnamum), Greek (kinnamomum), and Phoenician (qinnamon). The spice is from the bark of cinnamon trees, which are commonly found in Sri Lanka, China, north India, Ethiopia, and Arabia. Cinnamon, one of the top ten favorite spices worldwide, imparts a warm, spicy flavor that enhances nearly any kind of dish. It's also used as a seasoning in different kinds of desserts around the world (Mexican chocolate for example).

There are over 8,000 varieties of grapes, a surprisingly colorful berry. Grape color can range from red and pink to yellow, green and even black! One of the main uses of grapes is to make wine. Grapes are berries that grow on vines, not on bushes like blueberries or raspberries. Grapes are one of the most commonly consumed foods in the world.

Cinnamon and grapes are well known and loved worldwide as a popular spice and fruit, and some chemical compounds they share have made them highly sought after by health seekers as well. Both have high amounts of resveratrol, a phenol found in a variety of foods. As of yet, resveratrol has no clearly demonstrated health benefits; it may work against cancer, but human and animal studies have been inconsistent. Resveratrol is a fairly new discovery, and the benefits are only just being explored. If it does assist in staying healthy, we may be rediscovering something that was used in ancient times. Cinnamon and grapes have been used as natural medicines for thousands of years. Grapes were used to cure skin and eye diseases, and grape leaves were used to treat bleeding, inflammation, and pain. Cinnamon was commonly used as an antidote to different poisons. In ancient Rome, where most nobles lived in fear of death by poison, this was especially useful. Grapes were used to treat just about every medical issue one could have. In addition to saving the lives of Roman nobles, cinnamon was indirectly used to cure illness by offering it to the gods. Cinnamon would be burnt, prayers said, and hopefully, the gods would use their godly powers to cure the victim.

Clearly, cinnamon and grapes are two very different foods. However, they still share some similarities, and you can say the same thing about freshmen and seniors. They are two very different kinds of students, yet there are still some similarities (the most obvious being that both are people). I'm currently wrapping up my freshman year at MHS, and one of the most important things I've learned is that freshmen and seniors, people who are in two very different categories, can be a surprisingly good combination - just like cinnamon and grapes! (And as a side note, if you haven't tried eating cinnamon on your grapes, I highly suggest it). Just as both cinnamon and grapes have resveratrol, both freshmen and seniors have courage: the freshmen for having the strength to start the long journey through high school, and the seniors for finishing it.

I never expected that I would ever even say hello to any of the 'tall scary old people' I saw in bright orange shirts on the first day of school, yet by January, I had not only talked to them without collapsing from terror, but I had actually made friends with some. As refreshing as it will be to have new freshmen at MHS, I am absolutely going to miss seeing the familiar faces of the class of 2015, whether it's the face of the girl that sat next to me in Latin class a few times, or the boy who grew up next door. I wish them luck on their next adventures, and I'm excited to welcome the class of 2019 to MHS!

## Surviving the Last Week of School

Jack Krivit, Sophomore Reporter

The school year is almost over, and let's face it, as each day passes, so does every student's ambition to accomplish anything. There's no way around it. As the days grow longer and hotter, the last thing anyone wants to do is begin work on a thesis paper or take a test that their teacher somehow found a way to fit in their schedule. Some students from nearby schools have already been released, while we continue to suffer in our stuffy, dimly lit classrooms, only because of snow days that we all ignorantly looked so favorably on during the winter. Little did we know that what we begged for to keep us out of school at the time would only work against us, leading to the squeezing in of new lessons and assignments, and making the few weeks before summer the most annoying and tedious.

The main reason for this end-of-school-year slump is the lack of interest for actually doing any work, caused by the inability to resist the simplest of distractions, and not having enough time to decompress after working hard. For an example, take watching a movie, one of the most common forms of distraction. Although the desire to kick back and watch a television screen can be experienced at any time of the year, it intensifies as the summer nears, due mainly to the plethora of new things to watch. Summer is when some of the best movies tend to come out, and many of these selections have already hit the screens. Now, due mainly to home-

work, the only possible time to go to the theater is on a weekend. For most students though, with the buildup of assignments after a long five days of school, this can be the only time reserved for actually accomplishing work. By not enjoying their weekend and using it as a way to relax, many students still pine for even more time away from school, adding to the lack of interest in learning new concepts and completing even more work.

With the days growing more beautiful, staying inside can seem like torture. I often find myself staring longingly out of my classroom window, imagining what a day in June should actually feel like rather than paying attention to what I am being taught. And I'm sure that I am not the only one who does this. When school is finally released, I go straight home to begin working on my homework, just to get up early again the next day and keep the cycle moving until the weekend. Once again, it is this inability to find time to relax that only makes students resent what they do in school. Without an outlet through which to decompress, the desire to not do any homework only increases.

But even though the school year is almost over, it is important to not give in to these urges. With finals coming up, finishing strong in your classes can be very self-rewarding. As soon as the school year ends, you can take off as much time as you need to relax and recover from how hard you worked, but until that time, do not stop pushing yourself. Do your best to work past the distractions that might pull you back, and focus only on the work that you have to do, because when you complete your last final, you can look back and feel proud of how hard you tried. It will only make your summer vacation that much more enjoyable.

of this rule is to "decrease discomfort for all students" and make the high school "socially appropriate for all."

Recently, in a hypothetical conversation about a t-shirt image my sister had designed, Ms. Page told me that I would not be allowed to wear it in school because of its "graphic" nature. The drawing features two bare chested people, a man and a woman. On the man is written the words "society says ok" and on the woman it reads "society says not ok." The drawing is meant to state that in situations where men's bare chests can be shown, women's bare chests are seen as inappropriate. However, despite Ms. Page's approval of the message, she explained that the shirt could not be worn within school because it would make people uncomfortable.

However, many people told me that they supported the freedom to wear this shirt in school. They not only felt comfortable seeing the image, but believed the banning of it was based on sexism. Despite the administration's policy to ban all images of bare chested people,

regardless of sex, there has been a substantial amount of male chests seen in the school, such as in art projects and photographs of the swim team. Meanwhile, images of female breasts are easily recognizable and are likely to be targeted by faculty who believe them to be disruptive.

By banning breasts for being disruptive to the learning environment, MHS is not allowing students to express their views on breasts. Whether they are considered sexually explicit or obscene should be decided by the students, because the decision affects their learning environment. Since MHS is meant to protect children, it should consider the damage it may be doing by targeting images of the body that are often seen outside of school. By not teaching students to understand and respect people who show their breasts, students are more likely to be uncomfortable in the future. By creating a healthy environment to discuss breasts, members of the community may feel comfortable discussing them and the school will no longer need rules to protect people from possible discomfort.

## Shirts Off to You

Aaron Terentiev, Sophomore Reporter

The rules of Marblehead High School's student handbook are meant to make sure students can learn in a healthy and comfortable environment. However, these rules can be products of old ideas that might not necessarily still apply to the community. Our community should be open to discussing, reviewing, and challenging rules and their interpretations to fit our changing moralities.

One of these rules is part of the dress code and states that the dress of students "must not disrupt the educational process"; therefore, "clothing or jewelry that displays obscene [or] sexually suggestive... remarks or symbols... will not be worn at any time during the school day." According to Assistant Principal Ms. Page, the goal

## Headlight Staff 2015

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