The 5th to 6th Grade Transition, by Bridget Mestepey ‘26

Do you remember becoming a sixth grader? What was it like? Now imagine doing all this, but with COVID-19. That is what I’m going to explore in this article. I surveyed the sixth grade class, and their responses were very interesting. The majority of them said it was nerve-racking, especially because it was virtual school. A lot of them said it was because they didn’t know anybody.

One person said, “When I first started, I was very nervous and stressed because I was meeting all these new people online.” Another person said, “I felt lost in all the new technologies that the school used for REmote studying and all the new buildings schedules and teachers.” However, a couple were totally fine with it. One sixth grader said, “I actually didn’t feel...
nervous at all! I was ready to start a new year, and make new friends.” I asked them what it was like keeping up with homework and figuring out where their classes were. Some of them said it was easy. Others said it was hard. One student said, “So far, so good. Ransom is a challenging school and it is keeping me on my toes. The homework load varies sometimes, and there are days when I barely have any, but some days I can have so many assignments.” I feel like this is something we all experience.

I also asked them whether, or not they missed elementary school, and if they enjoyed the freedom of middle school. Most people said they didn’t miss elementary school at all, and they were excited to start at a new school. However, a couple of them said they missed elementary school, mainly because they weren’t with their friends anymore and they missed them. One student wrote, “The two things I miss about elementary school are the 4th grade friends, and the 5th grade friends that didn't end up going to Ransom.

I also really miss my amazing teachers that taught me.” I thought that this was so nice! When I asked people if they enjoyed having more freedom, they unanimously said yes. One sixth grader wrote, “I do enjoy having more freedom because I have more liberty. I understand that having more freedom can also mean having more responsibilities, and it can be hard to manage it all, but I believe in myself to keep myself on track.” I think they make a good point here. In the end, it sounds like they all all enjoy middle school more than elementary school.
Thanksgiving this year will obviously be very different, but we have some great plans so that this year. We can still have some fun and help other people have fun too. Ransom Everglades is making sure other families less fortunate than us can still be able to have dinner with their families. To make sure this happen each advisory will have a total of $50 in a gift card which everyone will contribute to. This money will help families buy the food they need and decorations they need to celebrate Thanksgiving. Ransom Everglades will also be doing a toy drive where all students can contribute books and toys to give back to our community. Thanksgiving is all about giving back and being grateful and thankful. Remember this year to thank your parents, friends, grandparents and teachers for their hard work and helping you even through these difficult times. Have a great Thanksgiving, and don't forget to help Ransom Everglades give back to our community.

By: Isabella Rojas Cueva ‘26
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR CLASSES

By: Lily Poses ‘26

**English Classes** Ms. Alexander- The seventh graders in Ms. Alexander’s class just had a very intense debate about Johnny Cade in the book *The Outsiders*: should he be convicted of murder, manslaughter, or criminal charges? The students did a very good job finding information to support their reasoning!

Ms. Araripe- English 8: Ms. Araripe’s class is right now reading an excellent work of literature, *The Odyssey*. Students will also be presenting their Pandemic Journal Writing Activity, where each student will show a different writing style to cover the entry of their work. English 6 is working on a super fun, and traditional, World Mythology Project! These students also have made a google slides presentation about themselves for everyone to get to know them!

**More English!** Mr. A- Students in Mr. A’s English 8 class are diving into classic literature. These students have started the year by reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and are understanding the equality and justice in the book, and the world today. They have looked at racial justice and the deaths of George Floyd and Breanna Taylor, and even created an “And Justice for All” museum! Right now, they are also reading *The Odyssey*, and discussing culture and values, the Seven Deadly Sins, temptation, and vices. Gender roles have also played a big part in the 8th graders class discussions and comparing to greek gods and goddesses.

Ms. Castle- Ms. Castle’s seventh graders are having Harkness discussions about *The Outsiders*. Students are also looking at the characteristics of the characters from *The Outsiders*
WHAT’S HAPPENING IN OUR CLASSES (CONT’D)

Ms. Hyde The VA7 classes are working on sculptural portraits made from oil-based clay. They are also studying the anatomy of the human head to craft a convincing human head, before adding accessories like a hat, jewelry, shirt collar, and more to create character and visual interest.

The VA6 classes are drawing organic forms, like fruits, vegetables, foliage, shells, and more as they study line variation, contour, contour lines, texture, and value.
## Covid-19 word search

Play this puzzle online at: https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/1632365/

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- **Quarantine**
- **Corona Virus**
- **Isolated**
- **Spread**
- **Pandemic**
- **Symptoms**
- **Six Feet**
- **Tissue**
- **Masks**
- **Stay Safe**
- **Wash Hands**
- **Lockdown**
- **Health**
- **Respiratory**
- **Risk**
- **Sneeze**
- **Infection**
- **Cough**
- **Immune System**
- **Wipes**

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**Coronavirus Disease 2019**

(COVID-19)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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**Social Distancing**

It may not be for you, but it is for everyone.

**COVID-19 High Risk Categories:**

- Elderly
- Those with weakened immune systems
- Pregnant women
TECHO IN ACTION
TECHO is an organization that builds houses for people. People that live in houses made up of old tin and recycled material get the opportunity to get a house made by the volunteers of TECHO. Volunteers gather around countries in South America and begin the house building from scratch. Every trip provides you with new opportunities; you also get to make new friends and learn new things. If you have ever wondered what helping someone the biggest way possible, you’ll definitely enjoy working with TECHO.

There are two types of trips and the location differs. Each trip can take place in a country in South America. The first type is without the full experience. You stay at the hotel and eat the food given to you at the hotel. The second type is the full experience that is only available to people above the age of 10. You stay at a school for two nights and eat food that the guides cook for you, you walk a bit to get to the destination with all the materials instead of taking a cab directly to the building site. Each building site belongs to a family and a group of volunteers.

For more information go to the TECHO website and learn as much as you’d like. On the website, you can find detailed information about the trips and other events that TECHO hosts. I have worked a lot with TECHO with their building trips and other events. I have done speeches to motivate people into donating money for the materials.
Mr. Siegler's S'more Brownies:

Ingredients:
- A box of Ghirardelli Brownies (and the ingredients needed to make them)
- Chocolate chips
- Mini marshmallows
- Graham crackers

Directions:
1. Make the brownies
2. As soon as they’re ready take them out of the oven and immediately layer the marshmallows and chocolate chips over the top.
3. Layer graham crackers on top
4. Put back into the warm oven until the marshmallows and chocolate chips melt and the graham crackers are stuck to the brownie. Do Not turn the oven back on
5. Take out, let cool, and cut into pieces
6. Enjoy!
Ms. Johnson’s Drop Biscuits:

Ingredients:
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 to 3 tablespoons sugar (depending upon how sweet you like them)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup butter, melted
- 1 cup milk

Instructions:
1. Heat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Mix together flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt.
3. Add melted butter and milk. Stir just until moistened. (Best to let melted butter cool a bit before adding)
4. Immediately drop by heaping tablespoons (15 biscuits) onto a lightly greased baking sheet or large cookie sheet.
5. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes or until the edges turn golden brown.
6. Let cool and enjoy!
Baking Ideas for the Holidays

Yes, it’s that time of the year, (in my opinion) the best season and holiday of all time. Christmas is honestly a great holiday to gather with all the family you can and what’s Christmas without sweets and baked goods? If you want to impress your holiday guests this year for Christmas, here is a great place to start.
BAKING IDEAS FOR THE HOLIDAY

PEPPERMINT BARK

INGREDIENTS
12 oz. semisweet chocolate, chopped
12 oz. white chocolate, chopped
1/2 tsp. peppermint extract
8 candy canes, crushed

DIRECTIONS
Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Fill the bottom of a large pot with 3” water and bring to simmer over medium heat. Reduce heat to low, then place a large heatproof bowl on top. Add semi-sweet chocolate and stir occasionally until chocolate has melted. Stir in extract. Pour into prepared baking sheet and spread into an even layer with an offset spatula. Refrigerate until set, about 20 minutes.

Over the same pot of barely simmering water, place another large heatproof bowl. Add white chocolate and stir until melted. Pour over set semi-sweet chocolate then top immediately with candy canes. Refrigerate until set, about 20 minutes.