A magazine for kids ages 6–12 by the Teen Reading Ambassadors of The New York Public Library
WELCOME!

Welcome to the first issue of PORTAL! We're so glad you're here. PORTAL is a new magazine for kids just like you created by the Teen Reading Ambassadors at The New York Public Library.

The word portal means a "doorway or an entrance to somewhere new." We chose this name for our magazine because we believe that books and libraries are portals to exciting new worlds. No matter where you are, when you open the pages of a book you become a part of that world. That world could be 1920s Brooklyn as you race to solve a mystery, the back of your papi's motorcycle as you explore your colorful neighborhood, or a forest filled with moonlight and magical powers.

Our theme for this issue of PORTAL, though, sticks pretty close to home. In the following pages we're celebrating everything that has to do with New York City and the vibrant and diverse communities that make our city so special. We explore this theme through comics, activity pages, fictional stories, fun facts, and so much more. So let's not waste any more time — flip the page and step through our portal. We'll see you on the other side.

Rachel Roseberry and Jenn Oliva, editors, and the 52 Teen Reading Ambassadors who participated in this program in spring 2021

THANK YOU

We couldn't have put PORTAL together without the support of many wonderful staff members and departments at The New York Public Library including our program mentors: Mleeka Khan, Crystal Chen, Michael Kirby, Genee Bright, Kaitlin Messina, Elizabeth Devora, Susen Shi, Amber Certain, Anthony Murisco, Tabrizia Jones, Emma Eriksson, Olisha James, Elisa Garcia, Andrew Oppenheimer, Jennie Mayfield, Michelle Vacchio, Grace Loiacono, Jenny Rosenoff, Anne Serena, Aimé Casillas, Jeremy Heuler, Anne Rouyer, Mariel Matthews, and Sara Milstein. Thank you to everyone who helped us imagine new worlds and make this magazine a reality.
HOW TO READ PORTAL

Along the top of almost every page is a bookmark that is your guide to what is on the page. Flip to the orange bookmarks for activities, the green bookmarks for nonfiction articles and fun facts, and so on. We hope these bookmarks will help guide you through the many types of content in our magazine!

GETTING MORE FROM THE LIBRARY

Our hope is that you will not only read our magazine but that you will also check out all of the amazing things The New York Public Library has to offer kids! Visit nypl.org/kids to learn about fun programs, cool online tools, and so much more. If you don't have a library card yet, visit nypl.org/librarycard (with a grown-up!) to get one. If you want more information about this magazine specifically, visit nypl.org/portalmag.

See you at the library!

MetroCard Scavenger Hunt!
By Isaiah Caines, 10th Grade, Manhattan

New York City can be a challenge to travel through! This exciting scavenger hunt will not only help you navigate through this magazine, but it will also help you navigate through the joys of reading.

Your task is to find hidden MetroCards like the one to the right on 14 pages throughout the magazine. They are hidden throughout the pages so take your time. When you find them, write them down in the order of the pages.

Example: If you find a MetroCard with the letter A on page 1, and letter B on page 2, put them in the order: AB.

After finding all of the hidden MetroCards you’ll have the answer to the riddle!

Here is what a card may look like. (This one doesn't count.)

Question: Have you read the book about hands?

Answer:

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Crossword Puzzle
Answer Key

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<td>7: Harlem</td>
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<td>10: Staten Island</td>
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<td>12: Greek</td>
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<td>13: Madison Square Garden</td>
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NYPL Kids! Scavenger Hunt
A Tale of Jackson Heights

By Aima Riaz, 11th Grade, Manhattan

My eyes burst open like a crack of lightning, my breath shaking with long pauses in between. The sound of my heavy breathing and croaking filled the room, echoing into each of the four corners. I lay wide awake, staring at the window as the sun rose, providing light for my dim bedroom. I couldn’t sleep all last night as today was the day my mom, Seema, and I were going to finally move to New York City. Today would be the last time I would ever see my friends and my classmates. How could I just restart my life all over again? I finally got out of my bed after some hesitation and began to get dressed before my mother could barge into my room. As I marched downstairs, my mother was already sitting at the table having cereal for breakfast. I grabbed the cereal and poured myself some, only thinking about how we would be leaving soon after...

We had a long day ahead of us as we traveled from Pennsylvania to New York City in my mother’s 1982 Civic. As we embarked on our journey, my mother and I stared at our windows and observed the sights passing by. We each gestured to the other to look at their side of the window as we took in the breathtaking bodies of water that passed us by.

After what seemed like forever, my mom’s car finally pulled into our new neighborhood. I looked above and read a sign: “Welcome to Jackson Heights.” This would be my new home. I stared through my window at the bustling streets, which seemed to be filled to every inch by people of various colors and sizes. My leg bounced rhythmically to the faint sounds of the Bollywood songs playing in the back as I waited for my mother to return from Maharaja Sweets, a go-to spot for North and South Indian vegetarian snacks and sweets. The quiet of my old neighborhood was nothing like the pulse and excitement that filled the streets of Jackson Heights.

An older man with sleek grey hair exited the local supermarket, greeting a woman who met him with open arms. Across the street, the sound of shrieking children blended with the sound of the honking cars which paraded the streets. As the sun slowly disappeared into the background, I momentarily stared, not at anything in particular, just simply taking in the moment. I took in a breath that released the words which I had been dwelling on, gliding off my lips swiftly, “I think I love my new home.”
What’s a racket to your ears is not to mine
The sounds of my city to me are sublime
The city may never sleep but how do I
With a landscape of bustle my dearest lullaby

I hear the horns of yellow taxis now replacing the sun
In New York City streets where the day has just begun
The people who just hours ago were clad in their suits
Know that somehow there’s always more to do!
Like hearing music at Carnegie or seeing a Broadway play
That must be why restaurants serve coffee all day!

Even the basement of the city roars on:
I hear the trains rattling the tangled island miles beyond
Disruptive, you’d think, but never to me
It sets the scene for my adventure-filled dreams
Where the vibrations mean dinosaurs approaching in 1...2...3!
Or, if I close my eyes real tight
I too am on the subway headed anywhere tonight

Silence here means the neighbors on all four sides are awake
Laughing about the oddities of this very landscape
But that’s just one part of the city’s quiet voice
Another is the talk of passersby whose shoes make that
clacking noise
And though I don’t understand all that they say
The melody of languages takes me ‘round the world in less
than a day

And this symphony orchestra of cars and horns
and music and chatter
Steadily sound so I know nothing’s the matter

Before I fall asleep, I do say goodnight
To New York City, my audible nightlight

Written and illustrated by Kassidy De Nobrega, 11th Grade, Queens
Books are like portals. They can bring us to space... the ocean... or even adventurous lands. All without moving an inch.

By David Medina, 11th Grade, Bronx
It was a clear spring morning in New York City when Jesper woke up to the loud honking cars on Seventh Avenue. The smell of maple pancakes and scrambled eggs filled Jesper’s nose as he walked to the kitchen where his mom was making breakfast. After filling his tummy with food, Jesper saw the good weather as a sign to have lunch at the park. So he packed a basket with sandwiches, cookies, juice, and some bread for the birds and walked through the maze of buildings that made up the city into Central Park: a wonderland for animals and humans alike.

As Jesper ate his lunch by the pond, a flock of pigeons caught his attention and he went to feed them. Suddenly he heard small voices talking. He walked closer in curiosity and realized it was the pigeons speaking! Jesper went up to one of the birds and asked for his name. The bird was shocked but still replied, “Cooper.” Jesper asked Cooper where he lived. Cooper responded, “I am a traveler but I’m currently living in Chinatown.” Jesper had never been to Chinatown so he asked Cooper if he could come along for the day. Jesper offered Cooper some bread before they left, but when Cooper’s beak touched Jesper’s hand, Jesper felt everything spinning, and himself getting smaller, the perfect size for a ride on Cooper’s back.

Jesper and Cooper took off from Center Park and flew through the skies, past the food truck on the corner of the street and past the skyscrapers. From up in the sky everything looked tiny. When they reached Chinatown, Jesper was amazed at how colorful the streets were. Every shop sold something different and the smell of food cooking made him hungry again. Cooper took Jesper to meet one of his friends, Ryan. Ryan grew up in Chinatown and knew the area very well, so they decided to go to a restaurant close by called “Spicy Village” where they laughed and stuffed their bellies with dumplings, sushi, hand-pulled noodles, and mochi.

By the time Jesper returned from his journey in Chinatown, the sun was already setting. Jesper thanked Cooper for the ride, promised him they’d meet again, and went to tell his mom about his adventure. Jesper was thankful that he got to make a new friend, and he realized it was important to see the world from a different point of view. Plus the noodles were delicious!
It’s Friday. And by Friday, I mean Familial Obligations Friday.

Not so TGIF now, huh?

But TGIF to my friends, who are going to a Red-Carpet fantasy, to see the legends of Hollywood, to have fun. Without me.

I sulk at the corner of my S79 bus stop, my lime green metrocard melting into the sidewalk. I wish I could melt into the sidewalk too if only to avoid Familial Obligations Friday, the worst day of the week. I have to visit my grandmother and listen to her endlessly ramble about her past.

The S79 bus in its bulky glory arrives, and I hop on. The vehicle jolts in motion. I bang my head. I give up.

A few minutes into the ride, I hear something unusual. The regular announcements are descending into static until a voice says, “Welcome to the 1700s. Take a look at your left to see Richmond Town.”

The 1700s? We’re in the 21st century, not in a textbook.

But lo and behold, the modern cars, concrete roads, and residential houses are replaced by farmhouses and buildings with gambrel roofs. Competing with the bus’s noise is the hustle and bustle of people. Women in petticoats and bonnets are pushing baby carriages. Others are in their homes, sewing and making baskets. The men are opening up the barns, and the ironsmiths are hammering metal. A faint melody of a folk song accentuates the air.

This isn’t—The bus brakes. I bang my head.

“Doors opening.”

People, from my time period, enter, and they don’t see what I’m seeing... I must have female hysteria, like the Victorian doctors used to say. I turn my head to the window, and it’s — “A sunny day in 1895, so enjoy!”

Hylan Boulevard is barren, except for the bus and a troupe of ladies in long black dresses and bustles.

“Passing by us is the Staten Island Bicycle Club, founded by Alice Austen and Violet Ward.”

Alice Austen is at the front of the group, carrying camera equipment and a tennis racket on top of her voluminous clothing. Behind her is Violet Ward, who smiles sternly as she instructs the women struggling to balance on their bicycles.

I click the button to request a stop, hoping that I can become a member of the club and teach them a thing or two. Like how to wear more comfortable clothes.

The bus slows.
“We are entering 1661. To your right is Oude Dorp, the first successful settlement on Staten Island.”

And this time I don’t hit my head. But the women disappear before I can leave.

Stone and brick houses line up along the coast. The tallest building showcases a clock, and from the church tower, the bells ring. The dawn is starting to unravel its rays, and the settlement is waking up. Ships are getting ready to sail, doors of physician offices are opening, and the spool is winding on the loom.

I almost click the button, but I remember. I am a passive observer. Nothing more.

“This is Narrows Road Street and Fingerboard Road.”

The bus eases into a stop, and more passengers file in. They still don’t see what I’m seeing.

“It is 1783. The final shot of the American Revolution is fired on Fort Wadsworth.”

A resounding crack pierces the air, and it is followed by a rallying cry.

I press my nose to the window to get a glimpse of red, white, and blue.

The rallying cry transforms into... honks?

The bus is swarmed by cars. People are standing on their seats, hollering. One vehicle has a banner that reads “First Over the Verrazzano Bridge” draped across its body. And the men in the car have these goofy grins on their faces.

“The Verrazzano Bridge opens in 1964.”

This traffic jam is euphoric, and I try to open the window to join in the revelry, but the bus barrels through the cars with ease.

“This is 92nd Street and Fort Hamilton Parkway.”

I frown. Time marches on, and I keep running to catch up.

“Margaret Okayo of Kenya is setting a record for the 2003 NYC Marathon.”

The woman blazes ahead of the other elite runners, her F-5 shining like a trophy. I catch Margaret’s eye, and she winks at me before leaving the bus in the dust.

“Please exit through the rear door.”

In a trance, I step outside. I have returned to Familial Obligations Friday, but my sense of dread has receded. There’s a pep in my step as I walk to my grandma’s apartment. She isn’t the only one with historical stories to tell.

By Tara Isabel Lago, 10th Grade, Staten Island
“Come on, Spot!” Amy calls, putting a blue leash on the dog’s collar. Spot barks happily as Amy and her mom leave their apartment. They start to walk around the neighborhood.

"Good morning, Miss Pérez!” Amy waves to a young Mexican woman living next door. Miss Pérez looks up from planting flowers in her garden with a bright smile.

“Buenos días, Amy! Come here,” she says, gifting Amy a pretty pink flower.

“Thank you!!” Amy giggles and skips away.

Next, she stops by a dainty house with blue walls. An old Chinese man swings open the gate. His hands are full of groceries.

“Hello, Mr. Li!” Amy immediately runs up and takes a few bags from her neighbor.

"Xièxiè, Amy!” He sighs in relief as Amy helps him. She carries the heavy items into the house.

“Alright Spot! Let’s go home now!” With a loud howl and an excited wag of his tail, Spot begins to run very quickly. Amy laughs and lets herself get dragged all the way back home.
"Oh, I'm going to the Botanical Garden! The flowers are beautiful!"

"I've got to return this book to the library today, but I can't put it down!"

"I'm heading to visit my cousins in the Bronx."

"Central Park! For good music, duh."

"I'm going to have fun at Coney Island!"
Shola Lynch is a filmmaker and curator for the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a part of The New York Public Library. Her job focuses on collecting videos, music, and more that highlight the experiences of people of African descent.

As an established filmmaker, where do you get your inspiration from? Can we expect more films from you in the future?

I’m inspired by the world around me. As the curator of the Moving Image and Recorded Sound Division I’m literally surrounded by the movements and sounds of Black history and culture. It is endlessly inspiring. My work as a curator is not only about growing the collection but ensuring what is here is accessible for research by anyone with a public library card. It is my hope that this act spurs more cultural production, from scholarly papers and high school reports to poems, films, music, and art. In terms of my personal, cultural production — I’m always working on a film! It is the other side of the coin with my Library work and gives me the freedom as an artist to express myself creatively.

What’s something you’ve learned from your research over the years that you’ll never forget?

It is not one fact or experience but so many. I’m constantly amazed by how much more there is to learn, see, and hear. It is humbling. It also goes to the core of NYPL’s mission of lifelong learning.

Tell us something about your job that often goes unnoticed!

The work of librarians, archivists, and curators — culture workers — is often invisible to the public. It is administrative and often bureaucratic, but that doesn’t mean that it isn’t work. In fact, when it’s invisible it can mean we are doing our work well, or as well as we can with the available resources. I miss feeling that the days are endless and full of possibility. I miss daydreaming as a legitimate way to pass away the time! Maybe that’s why I always make time in my day for my art, filmmaking.

By Lisa Wong, 12th Grade, Staten Island
Hey My name is Sean and today I’ll be giving you a tour of my neighborhood in Harlem.

This is a row of brownstone houses. Harlem is famous for these buildings. They became popular in the early 1900s because they gave the city a more connected look.

This is the Apollo Theater. It was one of the first theaters in America to allow Black artists to perform. It remains a cultural gem in Harlem and a symbol of Black culture.

This is the 12th Street train station. It connects Harlem to all parts of the city. You can take the train downtown to go sightseeing or take it uptown to the Bronx.

For the last stop in the tour, I want to show you a very special place. My NYPL branch. I go to this library to check out and read my favorite books. The George Bruce branch was named after George Bruce, an immigrant to America who became famous for starting printing machinery.

This is the Schomburg Shop. It is a bookstore that celebrates Black authors and their achievements. It is connected to the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, a research library that is a part of the New York Public Library. Our community loves to support small businesses like these.

By Adnaan Elahi, 11th Grade, Manhattan.
The Stephen A. Schwarzman Building

Patience & Fortitude: Interview with a real-life Stephen A. Schwarzman Building librarian!

By Bianca Martinez, 10th Grade, Brooklyn

On Fifth Avenue, near the 42nd Street station, sits a building made entirely of white marble and guarded by two fierce lions. No, the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building is NOT the White House! Although the library looks wildly unapproachable and grand from the outside, after talking to Jenny Rosenoff, a librarian at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, a normal building has become a welcoming place filled with imagination and fun.

1. What do you do as a librarian at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building?
I’m a children’s services librarian, which means I am part performer and part book detective. I can be found either putting on a show (we call it Toddler Time) or trying to puzzle out the answer to: “I read this book one time. It had a blue cover and there was a kid who got stuck in a cabin during a blizzard.”

2. Where do the libraries get books? Do libraries receive their books for free, or do they have to pay?
Libraries do have to pay for their books, but since we buy a lot of books, we tend to pay a little less than you would at a bookstore. We do receive some donations, but often those books are sold and we use that money to buy new books.

3. What’s your favorite room in the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building?
It isn’t a fancy room, but I love Room 100 because it has the Picture Collection. They have tons and tons of folders that hold pictures of things — everyday things and exceptional things. They are organized by type. So there is a folder of waterfalls or whales or balloons or whatever you can think of. It’s so cool. I can get lost in there.

4. Can you explain to me how the lions in the front of the library got their names?
Sure! During the Great Depression, New York, like the rest of the country, was hit hard. People had lost their jobs and were having trouble feeding themselves and their families. During this time, Mayor La Guardia gave a speech on the front steps and said that New Yorkers would need patience and fortitude to make it through this tough time. From that day on, they were called Patience and Fortitude. (Fortitude is the lion closest to 42nd Street — Fortitude/Forty-two.) Prior to this historic speech, they were called Leo Lenox and Leo Astor for two of the founders of the Library.

5. What’s the best hiding spot in the library?
I love this question! If I were to need to hide in the library I think I would hide under the Picture Gallery. This is on the second floor. It is a ledge with historic pictures showing the library when it was being built and even holds the ceremonial key from opening day. It overhangs a railing that looks down onto Astor Hall. I’m a bit of a people watcher and would love to just sit under this ledge and watch who comes and goes and see their looks of wonder as they enter.
Telling Stories Through Study: Meet Librarian Carmen Nigro!

By Marian Caballo, 11th Grade, Queens

Have you wondered about how New York City came to be New York City? Were you ever curious about your family roots in the city? At The New York Public Library’s Stephen A. Schwarzman Building, you can find out for yourself! Carmen Nigro is the Managing Research Librarian for three amazing divisions of the Library: the Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History and Genealogy; the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division; and the Dorot Jewish Division.

She oversees different research services and helps manage the hundreds of thousands of New York City documents, photos, and artifacts tucked away at NYPL’s iconic flagship building.

1. What inspired you to work in this field?
I studied history, and as a librarian I started out at NYPL in the division of US History, Local History and Genealogy. It was a great match for me since I love helping people learn more about history, whether it is big themes like immigration patterns to the US or personal themes like one’s family history.

2. How do you manage and sort through all that information?
One issue, or rather, one research question at a time!

3. I want to learn about my family lineage! How does that work at the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building?
During regular times, you could just walk right in and someone would help you get started. But during pandemic times, there are ways to get started remotely — our team has put together a Research Guide, and there is a video recording of one of our Getting Started classes.

4. How can we practice being archivists, and documenting history, in our own lives?
Definitely start with your own family documents, like your family photo collections and papers that are important to your family like birth certificates and personal journals. We have guidebooks that can help you get started archiving family photos and family keepsakes, but the big important takeaways are: keep them in a safe place, label things, and keeping a journal is always a good idea.

5. What are your favorite NYC historical artifacts or fun facts that you have come across?
So many. Image collections like the Tenement Photos and the Subway Construction photos come to mind, as I am a very visually oriented person. Regarding fun facts, I sometimes write blogs about the stuff that strikes me as the most interesting. You can check them out on NYPL’s website!

Scan the QR code to learn more about getting started in genealogy!
Library Fun Facts!

By Jessica Wu, 11th Grade, Queens

New York City is filled with libraries! Our brightly colored orange and red lion flags are sprinkled throughout the city. But have you wondered where the “headquarters” of the NYPL is located? It’s the Stephen A. Schwarzman Building on Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street! It’s a monumental building, right in the heart of New York City! With over 75 miles of bookshelves and 15 million pieces of art and literature, the Schwarzman Building is truly a sight to behold! Come with me as we explore the history and architecture of the Schwarzman Building!

Fact 1

The Schwarzman Building was completed on May 21, 1911, and opened to the public on May 23, 1911. Over 30,000 people arrived at the event to celebrate the opening of the building! Even William Howard Taft, president of the U.S. at the time, came to celebrate!

Fact 2

The Schwarzman Building is designed in the style of Beaux-Arts Architecture, a very important type of architecture in 20th century France! The Beaux Arts style can be widely seen in all aspects of the building: columns, statues, very decorative surfaces, and the use of stone materials. In fact, the construction of the building was the largest marble structure ever to be attempted in the U.S.!

Fact 3

Standing proudly in front of the Library are two wonderful Lions: Patience and Fortitude. They have watched our world since 1911! Wondered how they got their names? They were named by NYC Mayor Fiorello La Guardia who felt that people needed “Patience” and “Fortitude” to get through the Great Depression, a very challenging time for New Yorkers.

Fun Fact: There’s an urban legend that the lions get up at night and prowl the library. Better watch out!
But the Schwarzman Building holds more than just books! There are over 15 million items housed here, including medieval manuscripts, ancient Japanese scrolls, antique maps, music scores, and rare books! Even a locket of Mary Shelley’s hair and the original Winnie the Pooh dolls live here. These can date back to the 15th centuries! The building holds so much history.

Fact 4

The Schwarzman Building was built on top of a reservoir! The plot of land it sits on is the old home of the Croton Reservoir, which supplied New Yorkers with water up until 1890. Although the reservoir is long gone, parts of it can still be seen within the building! The reservoir walls are still a part of the Schwarzman Building, making up part of its foundation. Next time you head there, look out for the reservoir walls! Pssst, they can be seen in South Court.

Fact 5

The Rose Main Reading Room measures 78 ft by 297 ft, the length of almost two city blocks! It is the first room of its kind without pillars, domes, or arches to support the ceiling. Instead, it’s supported by the internal structure of the building: the bookshelves!

Fact 6

But the Schwarzman Building holds more than just books! There are over 15 million items housed here, including medieval manuscripts, ancient Japanese scrolls, antique maps, music scores, and rare books! Even a locket of Mary Shelley’s hair and the original Winnie the Pooh dolls live here. These can date back to the 15th centuries! The building holds so much history.

Fact 7

There are lots of surprises hidden within the Schwarzman Building’s architecture. Astor Hall is filled with fruits, leaves, and even animal parts within the architecture! Deer hooves can be seen in a candelabra. Remember to look closely!
Hey, my name is Ibtihaj, but you can call me Ibti. I'm 11 years old and in 6th grade. You know what that means? I just started middle school! Yup, I'm a big kid now. I like going to school. I've got great friends to hang out with and pretty chill teachers. I live in NYC so I meet different people every day inside and outside of school. My best friend is Marsiha. We're both Bengali and can speak in our own language. It's fun, like having our own secret way of communicating. We can literally talk about anything in public and no one would understand. Today, a new kid transferred into my school.

She introduced herself, “Hi I'm Annya! I'm Taiwanese American. I love to draw and it's nice meeting you guys.” She sat at my table group. I wanted to be friends with her so that she didn't feel uncomfortable being the new kid.

“Hi, I'm Ibti.” She seemed relaxed talking to me. “Hey...so where is Taiwan specifically?”

“Oh, Taiwan is in Asia.”

Wait a minute...that means she's Asian American... I'M ASIAN AMERICAN AS WELL! So I said, “That's so cool, I'm Asian American too!”

“No way, where are you from?” she asked.

“My parents are from Bangladesh,” I said.

“Wait, you're Asian too, Ibti? Then why do you look so different? Are you sure about that?” my classmate Tyler said.

Why do we look so different? I thought. I don't look Asian? Am I not Asian? I guess we aren't as similar as I thought...

The day went by and I noticed Annya and I didn't have much in common. We didn't watch similar TV shows, we didn't read the same books, and we didn't have similar hobbies. We really are different, I thought.

I went home and told my older sister about the new kid in my class. She was excited for me as she thought I made a new friend. I gave her the news flash.

“We're SO different, we act different, like different things, don't have anything in common and we look SO different. I thought since we were both Asian Americans, we would have a lot of things in common.”

My sister laughed at me, which annoyed me. She always does this, she laughs at me, then sits down and gives me a huge lecture explaining her perspective on things. So she sat down 'as expected' and said, “Well yeah you're different, you're you and Annya is Annya. You like to read because that's your way of zoning out and relaxing. She loves to draw because that's probably the way she enjoys passing her time. You both love different shows because you have different priorities on what you want to see. You're different people, with different values and experiences.”
“Why do we look so different then?” I asked.

“Because! You’re SOUTH Asian and she is EAST Asian. Asia is HUGE you dummy. And just because you’re both Asian Americans doesn’t mean you’re twins. We are literally siblings, and we have so many differences.”

I never thought of it like that.

“I understand that, but we have literally nothing to talk about together. It’s hard,” I told her.

She looked and laughed at me again. “You love painting. I don’t. You love milk chocolate. I love dark chocolate. You don’t watch the shows I watch and vice versa,” she said.

“So what?” I asked.

“But do you spend time with me? Do you like talking to me?” she asked, with a knowing look.

“Oh... I understand now,” I realized.

“Exactly, you just met her and you have the whole year to hang out and find out your similarities. Even if you find nothing, just remember being a nice person is a good enough reason to be friends.”

***

Next day at school I met Annya. “Good morning,” we both said. I decided to be more open-minded today and think about my sister’s words. At lunch time we talked about our favorite foods. It turns out we both love eating a lot of the same snacks, but we also play-fought about chocolate vs. vanilla.

“You can’t make chocolate ice cream without vanilla!” I said.

“Well you need the basic blueprint to make the amazing final product!” she said.

At recess we played badminton together, and it turns out we both love that game. Later on, I also found out that she loves horror movies, like me!

It was the end of the school day, time to go home.

“So, come over at 5pm ok?” I said.

“Yeah, I’ll bring chips and juice,” said Annya.

She is coming over to watch a scary movie at my house with me and Marsiha. We’re gonna have a lot of fun.

And that’s how I learned that everybody is different, some more than others, but that shouldn’t stop you from trying to get along, especially if you live in NYC.
Flip the page to read horizontally and complete this fun activity!

By Yuneydy Paredes, 11th Grade, Bronx

Where you at?

Find all the items:
1. The Big Apple
2. The Honeycomb Building
3. The deli cat
4. The bus station
5. The 6 train station
6. The pizza box
7. The lady sleeping
8. The old lady calling a cab
9. The Statue of Liberty
10. An alien
11. The person with a mask
12. The fire hydrant
13. The Puerto Rican flag
14. The Dominican Republic flag
15. The dog in the hexagon
Smoothies From Around the World!

By Nayesha Krishna, 11th Grade, Manhattan

For all of these recipes, you will need an adult to help you use a blender.

**Mango Smoothie from India (Mango Lassi)**
- 1 cup frozen mangoes
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tbsp honey or sugar
*Optional: cardamom for decoration*

**Fig Smoothie from Morocco**
- 1 cup of figs
- 1 banana
- 1/4 cup vanilla yogurt
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
*Mint leaves + one chopped fig for decoration*

**Smoothie Aux Framboises (Raspberry Lime Smoothie from France)**
- 1 cup fresh raspberries
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 2 tbsp honey
*One mint leaf + a few raspberries for decoration*

**Chocolate Peanut Butter Smoothie from the USA**
- 1 cup of chopped bananas
- 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp creamy peanut butter
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/4 cup milk
- 4 tbsp chocolate syrup
*Whipped cream for decoration*

**Instructions for Each Smoothie:** Place all of the ingredients in a blender and blend until well combined. Pour into a glass and add any items for decoration. Then enjoy your smoothie from around the world!
Debesmanna is a super yummy dessert that my mother makes on summer holidays, birthdays, or just whenever she’s feeling happy! It’s a fluffy pink cranberry mousse, traditionally served chilled with cool milk on top.

Latvia, where debesmanna comes from, is a country in Eastern Europe, right next to Estonia and Lithuania. Debesmanna translates to “celestial cream of wheat.” Celestial is a word for heavenly or relating to the sky, so basically, this is the food of the fairies! I tried my best to write the recipe down with measurements, but because this recipe comes from my mom it’s not exactly exact. Don’t be afraid to taste often and add what you think it needs!

**Ingredients needed:**

- 1 bag cranberries
- 1 cup sugar + more to taste
- Milk
- 1/2 to 1 cup cream of wheat or semolina flour (use less if semolina)
- Water

**Follow these steps:**

1. Pick through your bag of cranberries and make sure they are all in tip-top shape! If any are mushy or brown or look gross, toss them out!

2. Put cranberries in a pot, and add water until it just covers them. Bring to a boil, and boil for 5–10 minutes. Smush the cranberries with a wooden spoon, then drain and press out the juice, and save it for later.

3. Take the cranberries and add 4 cups of water. Boil again, but this time add 1 cup of sugar.

4. When it’s boiling, add ½ to ¾ cup cream of wheat or semolina flour (if using semolina, use less). The consistency should be fairly thick, but not SUPER thick.

5. Cook for 5 minutes until it thickens, and add a pinch of salt. Give it a taste, and add more sugar if you think it needs it!

6. Bring off the stove, and transfer to a big bowl. Mix with the juice you set aside earlier, and using a stand or hand mixer whip the mixture until it triples in size (about 15 minutes). When in doubt, keep mixing!!

7. Serve with cool milk and enjoy!
Making Tanghulu

Growing up in an Asian American family I have had my fair share of snacks, but by far my favorite snack out of all of them is tanghulu. My mom used to make it for me when I was a kid, and I would love to help her do it.

My family makes tanghulu with hawthorn, but you can use any fruit you want. Making them is so simple. It takes no more than 30 minutes, and afterwards you will have a tasty sweet and sour treat!

Instructions

Step #1
Prepare the fruits that you would like to use. Make sure to thoroughly wash them. Don’t be afraid to get your hands wet.

Step #2
Stick bamboo sticks through the fruits, about five to a stick.

Step #3
Combine all the sugar and water and mix well in a pan.

Step #4
Have an adult heat the pan up to medium heat or until bubbles appear and change color. You can test if it is ready by taking a spoon and dipping it in cold water and then dipping it into the mixture. If it hardens right away it is ready.

Step #5
While the mixture is still hot, dip and cover all your fruits with it and let it cool and harden. Then enjoy!

Ingredients

- Fruits (traditionally done with hawthorn but you could also use strawberries, tangerines, apples, or raspberries)
- 1 ½ cups of sugar
- ½ cup of water
- Bamboo sticks

You found a letter!
ACTIVITY

LET'S MAKE PANI PURI!

Ingredients
- Flavored chickpeas (can be found in a South Asian restaurant)
- Cucumbers
- Potatoes
- Eggs
- Chutney sauce (can be found in a South Asian grocery store)
- Puris (can be found in a South Asian grocery store or make them yourself by watching a YouTube video!)

How to Make Them:
1. Grab an adult and tell them you want to make a delicious Indian snack.
2. Gather all of your ingredients.
3. Now get a puri and crack a hole in the top (not too tiny and not too big).
4. Pour the chickpeas, or chotpoti, into the cracked puri.
5. Make sure you boil an egg and potatoes and cut them into really tiny pieces — or you can shred them!
6. Now put in the boiled potatoes, eggs, cucumber, and pour chutney sauce on top.
7. Stuff it into your mouth and enjoy!

Pani Puri is a popular street food in India and other South Asian countries! It is usually eaten during special occasions, such as holidays.

Crisp fried dough balls (the puri) are filled with cooked chickpeas with, tangy flavored water, boiled eggs, boiled potatoes, cucumbers, and a chutney sauce — very flavorful!

You can add many more things inside a Pani Puri, but this is how most eat it. Now let’s make one!

By: Shazia Chowdhury, 11th Grade, Queens

A NORMAL DAY

By Sarnale Rahman, 10th Grade, Queens
WELCOME TO KOREATOWN

Written by Izabell Mendez, 10th Grade, Manhattan
Illustrations by Emma Smith, 10th Grade, Brooklyn

How did Koreatown come to be?

In the mid-1900s, Koreans began immigrating to the United States. Walking down West 32nd Street in Manhattan at this time, you could see small shops and stores popping up. These small Korean-run book shops and restaurants gained attention because of the nearby Empire State building. It was the ideal place to develop a business.

With the increasing number of Korean people in the area, 32nd Street was named Korea Way in 1995. The area gained more and more popularity, turning it into the Koreatown we know today!

Some Korean Foods

First, there’s **banchan**. Banchan is actually a collection of many small side dishes! From kimchi pancakes (kimchijeon) to pickled radishes and soybean sprouts, these small plates can be eaten on their own or enjoyed with your meal! They are usually served wherever you eat Korean food.

Next up, served in a sizzling hot stone bowl (be careful!), **bibimbap** is a yummy rice dish. Rice is mixed with meats, like beef, along with a variety of bright vegetables, like spinach and carrots. This is topped with a fried egg or a raw egg that cooks as you mix it into the hot rice! Visit the restaurant New Wonjo for a taste.

Following that, **japchae** is a slightly sweet noodle dish, often mixed with different kinds of vegetables. Soy sauce, sugar, and beef are also thrown into the mix, creating a flavorful and delicious dish.

Finally, there’s **tteokbokki**. Tteokbokki is a chewy, sweet-and-spicy rice cake and fish cake dish, made with red pepper paste. Buy ingredients to make this at the 32nd Street H Mart.

Places to Go

**New Wonjo** (restaurant), H Mart (supermarket), The Face Shop (skincare store), Grace Street (food shop), Food Gallery 32 (many food shops). Go and explore everything else Koreatown has to offer!
Walking down the streets of Washington Heights, you notice that there's no pattern to the way the buildings are placed or painted. The people are what makes the community lively and full of never-ending fun.

Riverside Park is definitely an important part of Washington Heights. Everyone gets along and makes memories!

Popular festivities in Washington Heights are the street parties that happen every once in a while. All the kids come and enjoy being together!

The library is the best spot on the map. The brightest ideas come from the quietest place. There are no boundaries to the discoveries made in the library. Books hold the best information and imagination. After school was over, visiting the library just across the street was my favorite part of my day.

Washington Heights is known for its delicious food. The best food comes from the people selling from their carts. The most common foods seen are pastelitos, tamales, and arroz con leche. They give you a taste of the Dominican and Mexican cultures in the neighborhood.

By Yesenia Lopez, 11th Grade, Manhattan
A music producer helps artists record their songs. The job varies depending on the artist's needs but generally, there are a few big areas to cover. There's the technical aspect of recording, operating the studio, that is as fun as you imagine! Then there's the musical aspect where it's my job to help the artist choose the best songs and best arrangements, always making sure it fits their style.

What is your favorite part of your job?
I love the whole process of making recordings. You can start with a little spark of an idea so weak that the slightest wind will kill it. But if you take good care of it and feed it carefully, you can set the world on fire. I also love crazy creative people. Hanging out with them is almost always worth all the sweat and tears.

A teacher works with children and their families to further their love of learning. In reading, this might include using music and rhymes to learn the alphabet. In math and science, it might incorporate experiments and hands-on activities to expand knowledge.

What is your favorite part of your job?
Seeing the excitement in a child's eyes when they understood something new.

A city planner advises elected city officials and works with citizens on how a city should grow and change over time, including choosing where and what type of housing, retail shopping, manufacturing facilities, offices, and parks should be built. These different parts of a city are referred to as land uses. A city planner forms the rules (regulations) that land developers follow to create the land uses. A city planner analyzes the types of people living in a city and identifies trends and future needs that new land uses should address.

What is your favorite part of your job?
I love seeing the end product of the communities I help make.

My specialty is helping patients with cancer. We help take cancer out of people's bodies.

What is your favorite part of your job?
When a patient comes back to visit a few years later and has been cured!
WHAT'S IN OUR WATER?

By Victoria Siebor, 11th Grade, Brooklyn

Have you ever wondered what’s in the East River? How about the Hudson River, the Bronx River, or Jamaica Bay? No matter where you live, New York City has many water sources spanning all five boroughs, but do you know what can be found beneath the surface?

Our NYC waterways mainly house sunfish, American eels, horseshoe crabs, and river herrings. Sunfish are most commonly found in the city’s freshwater lakes. There are two varieties, pumpkinseed and bluegill sunfish, which both have tall, flat body shapes. They’re extremely colorful, appearing in shades of red, orange, yellow, and green. They also like to hang around peaceful, shady areas near trees or aquatic plants. If you ever see a moving shape of metallic yellow or olive green, you may have just found a new friend!

American eels can also be found in freshwater rivers and streams, but these fish are first born in the North Atlantic Ocean, where they only return to reproduce at the end of their life cycle, bringing new generations of American eels to New York City.

Horseshoe crabs live in coastal waters, so they’re most likely to be found in Coney Island and similar beaches, which is actually where they lay their eggs. Fun fact: horseshoe crabs as a species existed long before dinosaurs evolved! How cool is that?

River herrings like to visit our city’s freshwater rivers and streams from saltwater connections — the two most common species are the alewife and blueback herring. The Bronx River is one of their favorite homes, but sadly overfishing and habitat loss has prevented these herrings from living happily. To fix this issue, the NYC Parks Department has partnered with the Bronx River Alliance to restore the fish population.

If you’re interested in getting involved with protecting aquatic wildlife, be sure to talk to a trusted adult and consider volunteering! If you spot one of these animals in a river or other waterway, feel free to take pictures and observe. However, please don’t disturb the wildlife by touching or feeding them. They like their home, and want to swim peacefully.

So next time you’re at Flushing Bay or Rockaway Beach, keep an eye out for these creatures!
The Heron’s Harp

By Ciana Meyers, 11th Grade, Manhattan

My mornings begin the same. The city rambles to a start and the early hours are often wintery. I walk in the park opposite my apartment and breathe in the cold. Soon I enter the cove of red oak. They whisper in both leaf and branch but I tell them that my girlhood will never make me their queen. They stare at me as I walk and only attempt to rake their hands through the sky when the wind picks up. I hurry down to the river to find a murmuring bunch crowded near its edge. There’s a heron, two geese, and a robin whispering away to themselves as if something’s concerning them all. I move towards them, carefully, not wanting them to fly off. I stop when the heron snaps, “Why of course I didn’t make it,” with a shake of his wings as if to roll his eyes. He continues, “I found it beneath the cherry blossom tree on the bank.”

Distant chatter can be heard and the creatures instantly leave as if they’re the ones who caused the unrest. With them gone, I notice a small harp. Lying on the grass, it’s made from twig and ivy. From the base to its crown there’s a daffodil, the color of a blazing midsummer sky, so yellow my hands seem to thaw. The strings are silver, probably found in a bird’s abandoned nest, and the pegs are broken seashell, bits of washed purple and running blue. Suddenly I realize how late it’s become and reluctantly go home. When I return that evening, the magic is different for the city goes to bed more loudly than it wakes. I make my way through the sea of picnics and readers on benches. When I turn to pretend the river is the sea somewhere very quiet, I see the heron with the daffodil harp in its beak. I don’t wince to see it crushed, he holds it so carefully and takes off as if he’s delivering it to a dear friend very far away.
MANNAHATTA SITES

Some important sites to the Lenape are among those that we pass every day, like Bowling Green, Governors Island, and even Broadway!

Shatemuc (Hudson River)
Did you know that the Hudson River was once full of whales and dolphins? Shatemuc means “the river that flows both ways” and was a really important part of trade!

Lenape Walking Trail (Broadway)
Once the start of a trail, Battery Park led the Lenape to Boston, Massachusetts, as a trade route. It was once called Wickquausgeck, then the Dutch called it Brede Weg. The English then took this and called it Broadway.

Lenape Shell Heap (Pearl Street)
The New York Harbor was once filled with tons of oysters and this area was covered in left-behind shells and pearls. The pearls they discarded gave the street its name by the Dutch.

Kapsee (State Street)
Kapsee used to be the southernmost tip of Manhattan and was home to the leaders of the Canarsie Lenape. Kapsee means “sharp rock place” as it was a difficult place to fish and launch canoes.

Pagganck (Governors Island)
Governors Island was once filled with chestnut trees. So much so that the Lenape called it “nut island!”

Kintecoying (Astor Place)
Also known as the crosspoint of three nations, Kintecoying was a gathering place for the Canarsie, Sapohannikan, and Lenape for meetings, trade, games, and politics.

Who were the Lenape?
The Lenape were the original people of New Jersey and Lower New York. They spoke one of the 20 Algonquian languages and, in their language, Lenape meant “the people.”

Where did they live?
They inhabited most of Mannahatta, now called Manhattan, meaning land of the hills. Families lived together in dome-like houses covered in bark! The Lenape moved seasonally and followed the animals they hunted and ate.

Washington Square Park
Serving the same purpose as now, Washington Square Park was a center for gathering, trade, and sharing cultures. Some games that took place here were lacrosse, played only by men and boys, and a game similar to soccer that was played by everyone.
WHO THEY ARE

Surrounded by water on all sides
They fish when the sun decides to rise
Home they bring salty oysters and clams
They are fishermen.

Green and brown is all they see
With spears and bows they fly free
Animals relieve their families’ hunger
They are hunters.

Exploring and collecting is their game
Taking too much brings great shame
Berries and nuts are all scattered
They are gatherers.

They tend to the golden soil
Learning more as the plants grow
Corn and beans are just the starters
They are farmers.

Their hands are machines
And crafts are tradition
Forging stones and shells are their passion
They are craftsmen.

If they see many deer they only kill one
As they thank the earth and complete their hunt
They won’t waste the environment, it’s so beautiful
They are resourceful.

Home is their people
Faith is their land
They will never forget their heritage
They are the Lenápe Native Americans.

By Julianna Raimonda, 11th Grade, Staten Island

How to Learn More

- Visit the website of the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).
- The American Indian Community House (AICH) serves the needs of Native Americans living in New York City today.
- Visit The Poetry Foundation’s website and search for their “Native American Poetry and Culture Collection.” This collection includes Jack D. Forbes, who was of Delaware-Lenape lineage.
Yes, I Am From New York

Search for the New York City–themed words in the word search below. Words might run vertically, horizontally, or diagonally!

By Akalah Esson, 11th Grade, Bronx

Statue of Liberty
Chopped cheese
Jolly Ranchers
Breakfast
Takis
Cab
MetroCard
Boroughs
Winter
Train
Zoo
Empire State
Manhattan
Diverse
Pizzeria
Central Park
Iced coffee
Library
School
Deli
Suki's Magical Journey

By Ianna Banfield, 10th Grade, Brooklyn

If Suki could turn back time and stop her family from moving to the city, she would in a heartbeat. She missed everything about where she grew up. She loved the tranquility and how the only sounds she could hear at night were the calming noises of crickets chirping. Most of all, she adored gazing at the stars that decorated the night skies. She wouldn’t have exchanged it for the world.

Alas, now she was in Manhattan. The big “magical” city as her parents liked to call it. Where everything was too loud and too busy for her to find peace. The skyscrapers were too tall and intimidating as they towered over her. And the worst part was that at night, she couldn’t see the stars. No matter how long she peered into the sky, she could probably only make out a few if she was lucky.

*How could I ever call this place home...?* Suki thought to herself as she descended down the stairs to the train station.

It had been five months, and she still couldn’t find anything to love about this place.

She maneuvered between the crowds of people and cringed. It was particularly crowded today. Unfortunately, her parents were too busy working to drive her home from school. This left her no choice but to take the train. Music was the only thing that kept her sane since it drowned out the city. With a heavy sigh, she turned the volume as high as it could possibly go.

Five more minutes before my train arrives, Suki told herself. Five more minutes and I’ll be able to go back home — or whatever I’m supposed to call that awful apartment.

She surveyed the area again with a mix of disgust and boredom. A group of boys were roughhousing, a man played a tune on his trumpet, and some girls giggled and gossiped. Suddenly, a glint of something caught her eye from afar. *Was it a piece of jewelry?* No. It was too small to be a piece of jewelry.

It was a coin, sitting on the floor in the distance. But it was too thick and golden to be just any ordinary coin. Without hesitating, she made her way towards it.

“Excuse me, sorry...” Suki murmured as she slipped past the crowds, “Excuse me...”

Some people glared at her as she pushed past them, but she didn’t care. After plowing through a few more people, she was finally in front of it. She picked it up. It felt odd as it touched her hand.

“Why hello there!” exclaimed a cheery female voice that pierced through the music on her headphones.

Startled, Suki looked up and saw a man and a woman appear seemingly out of thin air. The woman held a velvet red parasol over her head and was clothed in an old-fashioned matching dress. Her arm was looped around the man’s, who was tall with a long goatee and a green shirt. They weren’t dressed like they were from this time period, but that wasn’t the oddest thing about them. Their feet didn’t touch the ground and they appeared almost transparent... like ghosts. Was Suki seeing things?
“Who are you...?” she asked cautiously, "...what are you?” She looked down and was met with the shocking realization that she too was floating.

"My name is Madeline!” the woman exclaimed and then motioned to the man standing next to her, "And this is Edgar!"

"What's going on...? Where did you people come from? And why am I floating?" More and more questions tumbled out of Suki's mouth as her anxiety and impatience rose. As if she thought being here couldn't get any worse...

“Don't fret! You'll be returned to your normal state eventually!” Madeline reassured her. “Just as long as you do what I say! Edgar and I are the magical beings of New York City. We are summoned here to show individuals who do not feel at home here — such as yourself — the magic of this fabulous place!”

She grabbed the coin from Suki’s hand. “We lured you in using this magical coin. It works every time.”

Suki rolled her eyes.

“Sorry, ma’am, but there is no New York City magic,” she replied with a scoff. “Trust me, I've tried and looked everywhere. There’s no place for a girl like me in this freakishly large city. Everything’s too busy and too loud. I appreciate your concern, but I will never consider this place my home.”

Madeline frowned, “You just haven't looked hard enough! There’s a place for everyone here! C'mon don’t be such a downer...”

Guessing that all of this madness would be over faster if she complied with these strange people’s requests, Suki sighed exasperatedly before replying, “Fine.”

“Yay!” Madeline cheered, “Now let's show you the magic of New York City...”

Reluctantly, Suki grabbed Madeline’s hand. Madeline launched the three of them and flew, up, up, and away for a long and exciting adventure around New York City.

They first arrived at Central Park.

“Is this the place that I’m supposed to love?” Suki asked. “It’s still way too crowded here.”

“Shhhhh,” Edgar whispered.

Taken aback, Suki stared at him blankly. That was probably the first peep out of him that she had heard.

“Yes. Shhh. You didn’t let me work my magic yet!” Madeline hissed.

With one swish of her finger, Madeline swept them off their feet and transported them elsewhere.

As soon as Suki’s eyes met this new place, she finally felt something other than boredom and disgust. She felt genuine shock and admiration. For a second, she forgot that she was in the city as she gazed at beautiful flowers and green grass. There was no longer that suffocating sense of urgency that she felt when she went anywhere else.

Everything was still and quiet. Just like where she grew up. “Whoa — what is this?” Suki gasped in awe.

“This right here is the Conservatory Gardens. It’s right in Central Park!” Madeline announced.

“But I’ve never seen this before!” Suki exclaimed. “And I’ve been to Central Park like five times since I moved here.”
“I told you this before, and I’ll keep saying it. You do not look hard enough!” Madeline called after Suki. However, Suki was not listening. She was too busy admiring the breathtaking area. She started imagining spending her weekends reading or playing with her little sister here. She could really turn this place into her home. Yet, something still bothered her. She ran back up to Madeline and Edgar. “Okay, sure, this place may be beautiful. But I’m positive there are no other places in New York City like this.”

“That’s what you think,” Madeline said with a smirk, “First of all there are many other places in Central Park that are exactly like the Conservatory Gardens. There is the Shakespeare Garden, the North Woods, the Loch, the Ramble, and the Ravine. But there are still other places outside Central Park that I think you’d love!”

Before Suki could say anything else, Madeline grabbed her hand and teleported her to their next destination.

Suki was expecting the same old thing. Another garden or some wildlife. Only, instead, she was greeted with darkness. She could barely make out Edgar and Madeline’s faces. The fact that they were transparent didn’t make it much easier.

“Ummm guys? Where are we?” Suki asked, squinting in the dark.

“You’ll see...” Madeline whispered slyly, “I suggest you look up.”

The three of them looked in the sky. A blank ceiling stared back at them. What is it that Edgar and Madeline wanted her to see? There was absolutely nothing! But just as Suki was about to say something, the ceiling lit up. Filled with...

“Stars?!!?” Suki shouted, in complete shock.

“We’re in the Hayden Planetarium. It was Edgar’s idea,” Madeline beamed.

Edgar gave Suki a slight wink.

“But how did he know?”

“He has his ways... Now, sit back and enjoy!” Madeline answered.

At last, she saw every single star illuminating the sky again. Of course it wasn’t an actual sky, but it felt so real. She was convinced that she would never see her stars again, that she would never feel the tranquility and brilliance of the night sky. This felt exactly like... home. And for the first time in months, Suki genuinely smiled.

After they left the planetarium, she somehow knew it was time for Madeline and Edgar to go. Madeline had tears in her eyes and gave her a big hug. Edgar gave her a warm smile with a slight twinkle in his eyes as he politely nodded farewell. As soon as Suki thanked them one last time, she was teleported back to her spot on the subway.

Nothing felt grey and suffocating anymore as she scanned her surroundings. There was a new, vibrant feel to everything. Before boarding her train, she stole one last glance at the place where she met Edgar and Madeline. A warm smile came to her face. Thanks to them, she had finally seen the magic of New York City. Maybe she would finally be able to call this place home.
Waking Up On My Block

By Tsering Diana Sherpa, 10th Grade, Queens

The rays of the sun hit my skin
As I rise up from bed
It’s so warm and comforting
I know it will be a good day
I look out my window
Looking at the other kids at the park
I smile and join them

I head outside
Looking at the tall trees
Near my house
The green in the trees always blessing my eyes
The birds gracefully flying around me
As I slide my fingertips through the grass

When it rains
The smell of wood, moisture, and soil hits my nose
Not the smell of disgust
But rather the smell of life
The flowers blossom ever so much
As the bees spread pollen
Flower to flower

And in the night,
As my mom tucks me in
I hear crickets
CHIRP CHIRP CHIRP
I glance up at the night sky
With no visible stars
But I do see the bright moon
And think
People all around the world
Are looking at the same thing
As we all fall asleep

As I Step Out of My Building

By Depa Saha, 11th Grade, Bronx

I see
Bustling bodegas around the corner
Dancing bachata dolls
And brown faces greeting me
With warmth

I smell
Crispy samosas with green creamy sauce
Savory mangú
Mouthwatering falafel gyros
And flan that never smelled so sweet

I hear
Hindi music in the air
Birds chirping to the beat of Bad Bunny
Feet dancing to the rhythm of "Te Boté"
Giggles while being spun
And words of kindness exchanged
In this place of beauty we call Da Bronx
Times Square

By Princess Agoha, 11th Grade, Bronx

Oh so beautiful!
Oh so loud,
bright lights shining so proud.
What is the sky without towers,
Stretching so high that I cower

So much to see yet not enough time to blink
My eyes are taking so many pictures for me
People are streaming by,
It’s all just a blur to see
Where do they come from?

Tourists of every shade walking down the street
Their eyes full of wonder for the world to see
Like this little girl with her parents seems to be
I know that it’s such a great sight to see

Hey look! An artist is drawing a cartoon portrait
of me
Come take a bite or two with me
Vendors are creating cool foods for me to eat
From a classic hot dog, to a falafel with rice or
even a churro
They have so much to offer me

My curiosity is trying to get the best of me
I think I see a train stop ahead of me
The city is just opening up and
I think it’s just a splendid sight to see
I hope you can explore the big city with me!

Home

By Ruth Kendall, 12th Grade, Brooklyn

Helga colored images on the wall
Onyx was the oldest of them all
Muna’s mom made mocha
Eva’s cousin cooked curry and daal

Some call it a Big Apple
a city that never sleeps
others see opportunity
home is NYC
What made you want to become a dancer?
I’ve always been artistic and liked expressing myself in different ways. And when I started dancing, when I was little, it really just helped me escape.

What do you like about being a dancer?
I like the way you can just get into your own world and not worry about what’s happening on the outside. When you’re in dancing mode, it’s just you and the music. You can just go along with the music and express your desires.

Who do you know who inspires you and why? It can be a person from the past or present.
My mom, my grandma, and my siblings inspire me. They inspire me because they are so outgoing and so tough in what they do. I have about 13 siblings, and I’ve watched them just all make it through. They’re so tough and powerful.

What does it mean to you to be a dancer in New York City? What is special about dance here?
Think of it this way: New York City is a place where dreams come true and you have the chance to make your mark. New York City is the place to do it because of the challenge of having so many people that love doing the same thing as you. Why? It’s the energy of the people, the energy you surround yourself with, the way you go about it that helps you with your mindset and helps you achieve your dreams.

What advice do you have for kids who are interested in dance?
I would say start now, because you want to get used to what you’re doing. Always chase your goals, make sure to set goals for yourself, and don’t listen to what other people say. You’re always going to find somebody who doesn’t think you’re good enough, there are always going to be rejections, but don’t let those rejections stop you from achieving your goals.
New York is a city filled to the brim with different styles of music. It is the home of genres like jazz, rock, soul, and hip-hop. As a result of this, many talented and famous musicians grew up in New York. They swiped their MetroCards, took the train, and pushed their way through busy streets, just like you! There are musicians from every borough in the city, from Queens to Staten Island.

While some musicians in New York have larger fan bases, others are lesser known and still carving their way into the music scene. Here is a list of young musicians based in New York. The music that they produce is creative and inspiring, showing the enormous amount of talent that this city has to offer.

**War Violet**

Jummy Aremu is an African American folk rock musician in New York, and if there’s anything that she wants you to take away from her music, it’s that magic is real. She started playing music by going to concerts in the city, which gave her the courage to start creating music and performing herself. Contrary to her stage name, War Violet’s unique sound is soothing and dreamy. On her EP called Getaway, her lyrics and instruments come together to tell stories about love and optimism.

**Otis Infrastructure**

Otis Infrastructure is a Brooklyn indie rock band made up of guitarist and singer-songwriter Dean Essner, bassist Mike Perri, and drummer Alex Torres. Their sound is creative and experimental, with unforgettable drumming and vocals that’ll have you bobbing your head to the music in no time. Otis Infrastructure’s most recent album, Wind-Down in Wrinkle Town, perfectly captures the sound of the city. Their songs are honest and are filled with meaningful lyrics that talk about the reality of living in such a restless place like New York City.

**Lightning Bug**

If you like the quietness of a rainy day, you’ll love Lightning Bug. This New York–based band is made up of Taiwanese American singer Audrey Kang, producer Logan Miley, and instrumentalist Kevin Copeland. Lightning bugs, or fireflies, are often said to represent inspiration and awakening, and the same can be said about the music of this talented trio. Lightning Bug’s latest album, called October Song, is full of beautifully faded vocals that make it feel as if the world has ended for a minute, and the only thing left in it is you and the music.
Aya Ito, the new transfer student from California, was silently sobbing once again.

Her tears flowed down her cheeks as she sniffled, struggling to wipe those very same tears with the edges of her sleeves. A crowd of her seventh-grade classmates began to surround the round lunch table in curiosity.

“Eww, what, are you a baby now?” Narelle Martin, one of the most popular kids in Soundview Middle School, asked in a condescending tone.

Her best friend, Lucille Celestino, whipped her head around in puzzled astonishment. She struggled to understand Narelle’s actions. And she was terrified of the person Narelle was becoming. She certainly did not act like that last year, and Lucille had no clue as to what shifted. “What?” Narelle muttered in response to Lucille’s stare and then emphasized loudly, “It’s not that she matters anyways.”

Aya’s eyes widened as more tears threatened to spill out as loud gasps echoed one another. She quickly grabbed the remains of her carefully crafted lunch from home that Narelle did not dump in the trash and excused herself, entering the growing crowd for refuge.

Narelle let out a loud laugh. Her laughter spread like wildfire around the crowd of students and soon the boisterous nature of the cafeteria returned as if something awful had not happened just moments before.

Lucille, however, crossed her arms and furrowed her eyebrows deep in thought — and guilt. Her thoughts were racing as if they were in competition with one another. She was crying. This is not funny. Should I say something? Is that even my place? What would — she was interrupted by Narelle nudging her arm.

“Don’t tell me you are feeling sorry for her,” Narelle rolled her eyes immediately understanding the expression on Lucille’s face, and then added, “It was just a funny joke.”

Lucille frowned while touching her black curly hair and whispered inaudibly, “Is it really?”

***

The next morning, Lucille let out a frustrated sigh as she rubbed her eyes on the Bx27 bus that she used to go to school. Her mother, who decided to ride the bus to work that Wednesday morning, asked, “What’s wrong, mi hija?”

“Nada,” Lucille paused for a second and then continued, “actually, what would you do if you saw someone being mean to someone else?”

Her mother gave a questioning look and placed her hand on Lucille’s shoulder, “I would say something about it, and stand in solidarity,” she stated in a comforting manner. “Never be afraid to speak up and say something about it querida.”
Lucille gave her mom a look and then glanced out the bus window trying to distract her brain. The run-down and new apartment buildings, the restless cars continuously honking to get onto the Bronx Expressway, the train thundering against the tracks. Maybe mom is right. Maybe I should say something about it? Narelle will get it... right?

After getting off the bus and saying bye to her mother, Lucille sluggishly walked up the granite stairs into the school heading straight for her homeroom class. And that’s when she saw her. Is she crying? There Narelle sat, isolated, wiping her tears with her sleeves.

Lucille apprehensively approached her and softly called out her name, not sure what was running through her best friend’s head.

Narelle heard Lucille’s call but chose not to respond. Lucille pulled out the orange chair next to Narelle and sat. Before Lucille could speak again, Narelle whispered, “Do you think I am a bad person?”

Lucille tilted her head, and said, “Of course not.” She paused for a second wondering about the change in Narelle’s demeanor and heart. “We all sometimes make bad decisions but that does not automatically mean that we are bad.”

Narelle looked at her as she continued. “You can always try to change and better yourself starting now and then into the future. All that matters is that you are aware of the impact of your choices and that you are honest with yourself.”

Lucille gave her a smile, hoping that Narelle really heard what she said. “I just wanted what she had so I thought if I hurt her a little bit, I would feel better about home,” Narelle murmured.

And that’s when Narelle told Lucille everything. About her parent’s constant fighting and their future divorce. How she wished she had those homemade lunches and those frequent phone calls from her parents that Aya had. About how she never felt any better than the last day when she would say something mean and that in the end, nothing changed at home.

She then talked about her younger brother and how she had seen him crying in his room. How he had shakily explained to her the blatant bullying he had experienced from some upperclassmen in the bathroom stalls. As she comforted him and attempted to soothe his sobs, a sudden realization hit her like a pile of guilty bricks. At that moment, she felt like she was no better than her brother’s bullies. She knew exactly what she had done to Aya.
Lucille listened. Not judging or critiquing. This was the first time in months that Narelle had opened up to her, and there was no way she was going to let her close herself off again. Narelle fiddled with her fingers as she let out another sigh and said, “I know what I need to do,” pausing to let out a genuine smile. “Thank you, Lucille. I will be back soon.”

She pushed herself out of her seat allowing it to scrape against the floor, suddenly feeling a sense of responsibility. Lucille watched her go, feeling as if a weight lifted off her shoulders.

***

Aya sat in the courtyard nervously, dreading the day ahead of her. She wanted nothing more than to head home and snuggle up with her favorite book. She brought her knees to her chest and breathed deeply trying to ease herself of all anxiousness. She did not want to step a single foot into that school.

“Hey, can we talk?” Aya heard.

Aya’s eyes widened as she was very familiar with the voice behind her. She quickly turned around and profusely apologized, quickly collecting her things. She did not want any trouble that morning. “W-wait, I have something to say. Please, don’t leave yet,” Narelle cautiously spoke.

Aya stopped packing her things and slowly looked at Narelle.

Narelle motioned for her to sit and Aya, still tense, sat facing her head-on. “I’m sorry,” Narelle blurted out, “for everything.”

“Is-this a joke?” Aya stuttered, utterly bewildered.

Narelle frowned in remorse and once again apologized. She then added, “I know what I did was wrong and that nothing will ever excuse that but I hope that you know that anything I ever said was untrue.”

Aya said nothing for a while, noticing the glassy look over Narelle’s eyes. “I won’t ever do it again and I hope one day you will forgive me. If you want to know why I did what I did I can tell you... but that doesn’t excuse any of my actions.”

Aya dug through her bag and handed her a tissue. “Thank you,” Aya said, finally letting out a small smile, “an apology is enough for right now.”

Narelle smiled back and took the tissue. They both sat in a comfortable silence for a moment until Narelle got up and said, “See you in class, Aya.”

Narelle gave a small wave and walked away back into the school building feeling better than she had for the past few months. Feeling proud of herself for doing something she should have done long ago.

Aya let out a smile to herself, and for the first time in a while, she felt excited about what was to come next.
Al ver la vida de otra forma
(Seeing life differently)

Written and translated by Gabriela Vargas, 11th Grade, Bronx

No aproveché los momentos con mis padres en el parque, han pasado dos años y los videojuegos ya se están volviendo aburridos. Estar encerrado en mi habitación se ha convertido en una adicción y todavía me quejo de la vida. Será que volveremos a la normalidad!!!

7:30 AM es la hora de despertar, las clases en línea me han convertido en un zombie, ahora mis ojos se tornan morados al más allá... el abismo del cual si me preguntas por mis experiencias en el futuro, fui parte de una de las peores guerras del mundo.

He caído al abismo, las cosas que me divertían ya no me importan ni compartir con mis amigos los cuales ahora son totalmente desconocidos.

Con una profunda conexión con la soledad, sin el reflejo del sol. La habitación se ha convertido en una zona de guerra, sin enemigos, un punto muerto. Mi padre con las facturas, mi madre buscando trabajo y yo preguntándome qué elegir para cenar.

Pero si quedarme en mi habitación ya es una necesidad, no sé qué es compartir o dirigirme a una persona que no sea el repartidor, mis padres o el chico del correo.

Pero pensar en esos momentos me hace feliz... recreo en mi mente esos momentos tan comunes pero que me afectan tanto, coger el bus, subir las escaleras, realizar trabajos por escrito, bajar a la cafetería y hablar de lo rara que es la comida de la escuela lol... de pensar lo solamente... continúo

¡Totalmente radical!

Soy un chico común pero creo a veces que el mundo fue creado para mí, tal vez solo es una etapa que tenía que vivir para fortalecer mi futuro y no lo he hecho solo.

Iniciamos una etapa de destrucción llamada (2020)
Deforestación ambiental
Racismo
Enfermedades espontáneas
La extinción de especies
Y tú y yo todavía seguimos aquí, genial, no, somos esa especie rara creada por Dios.

Continuaré con esta lucha pacífica, sabiendo que se ve una luz al final del túnel.

I did not take advantage of the moments with my parents in the park, two years have passed and video games are already getting boring. Being locked in my room has become an addiction and I still complain about life. It will be that we will return to normality!!!

7:30 AM it’s time to wake up, the online classes have turned me into a zombie, now my eyes turn purple at most... in the abyss that if you ask me about my experiences in the future, I was part of one of the worst wars in the world.

I've fallen into the abyss, the things that amused me no longer matter to me and I share with my friends who are now totally unknown.

With a deep connection to loneliness without the reflection of the sun.

The room has become a war zone, with no enemies and a stalemate. My father with the bills, my mother looking for work, and me wondering what to choose for dinner.

My parents insist, they yell at me to get out of my room, catch the sunlight on my face and breathe the free air of pizza and fries.

But if staying in my room is already a necessity, I do not know what it is to share or address a person other than the delivery, my parents, or the mail boy.

But thinking about those moments makes me happy... I recreate in my mind that moment so common but that affects me so much, taking the bus, going up the stairs, doing written work, going down to the cafeteria, and talking about how rare the food is. school lol... just thinking about it... I continue

Totally radical!

I am an ordinary boy but I think sometimes the world was created for me, maybe it is just a stage that I had to live to strengthen my future and I have not done it alone.

We begin a stage of destruction called (2020)
Environmental deforestation
Racism
Spontaneous diseases
The extinction of species

And you and I are still here great no, we are that rare species created by God.

I will continue this peaceful fight, knowing that light is showing at the end of the tunnel.
Can You Find Them All?

Look for the items in the box inside a picture of Times Square on 42nd Street! Circle the objects when you find them!

By Nur Rahman, 12th Grade, Brooklyn
Did you know that the daffodil is New York City’s official flower? It’s a beautiful white, yellow, and orange perennial bloom that can be spotted in parks across the boroughs. Symbolizing rebirth, it commemorates the victims of September 11 and makes the city a more colorful place to live in. While this fun little experiment doesn’t use daffodils, there are still plenty of stunning blossoms involved!

What you’ll need:

A muffin / cupcake pan or ice cube tray  
Herbs  
Flowers  
Water

What to do:

1. Go to the nearest florist, supermarket, bodega, or farmer’s market to buy some herbs and flowers. A few examples of herbs that you can get are basil, jasmine, lavender, lemon verbena, mint, rosemary, and thyme. As for flowers, some options are bellflowers, crocus, daisies, hellebores, lantanas, marigold, and pansies. Make sure that they’re small enough to fit in the cups of the tray.

2. Arrange a few herbs in each cup and try out different combinations. Do the same for the flowers, and switch up the species and color. Or you could do a combination of both herbs and flowers. Make it your own little garden!

3. Fill up each cup in the tray with water. It’s alright if the contents float to the top, they’ll still freeze properly.

4. Put the tray in the freezer and let it sit for an hour.

5. Remove the tray from the freezer and let it sit for a few minutes. This will allow the frozen cups to melt slightly so that you can remove them from the tray.

6. Now that you have the frozen cubes, what you do with them is up to you. The herbal ones are edible and so you could drop them in a glass of water to add flavoring. Most of the flowers are also edible, but be sure to check with an adult! You could also experiment by watching how fast they melt. Depending on where you are and what you’re doing with the frozen cups, this could result in a mess. So be careful, and enjoy the frozen herbs and flowers while they’re there!

By Natalie Sturza, 11th Grade, Manhattan
Language is a big part of everyday life. In New York City there are almost 600 languages spoken! It takes a long time to learn a new language, but the hard work is worth it when you get to speak to someone new. If you’ve ever wanted to know some words in a new language then read or follow the images below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Hello!</th>
<th>Bye!</th>
<th>Good morning!</th>
<th>Good evening!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yes/no</td>
<td>Please</td>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>Excuse me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Oui/non</td>
<td>S’il vous plaît</td>
<td>Merci</td>
<td>Excusez-moi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASL STANDS FOR AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE. IT IS OFTEN USED BY DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE TO COMMUNICATE.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASL</th>
<th>Thank you</th>
<th>I love you</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE OR OTHER LANGUAGES PICK UP A BOOK AT NYPL WITH A PARENT OR GUARDIAN.**

*By Xiomara Williams, 11th Grade, Bronx*
The students of Jennings Elementary were giddy with excitement. It was field trip day!

“Okay, children. Time to go!” Ms. Clare said.

“Welcome, everyone, to our field trip! Now, this is no ordinary field trip. It’s a scavenger hunt!”

“A what?” a very confused George asked.

“A scavenger hunt, George! It is a game where you have to find items by solving clues,” Ms. Clare explained.

Eyes lit up around the bus at the word “game.”

“We will be divided into four groups and all groups will get a list of items and a set of clues. As we drive around the city, you will get the chance to check off the items when we see them. So the rules are: solve the clue, spot the item, check it off. Whichever group gets the most items wins!”

Choruses of “I got it, I got it” rang through the bus. All the clues had been solved by the children! Now the task was spotting the items!

“All the items are typical of New York City,” Ms. Clare told them.

She pointed out important buildings and places all around New York while her students tried to find their objects. Slowly down the list they marked everything off. After a hearty lunch of clue number three, it was time to head home.

By Simran Hassan, 11th Grade, Queens
CRACK THE CODE

Directions: Use the key below to solve the code and figure out the secret NYC message! Match each symbol to its corresponding letter. After this, you can practice making your own code!

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Answer: where dreams are made of

By Emelyn Baez, 11th Grade, Bronx
How to Be a New Yorker

By Dewon Minza, 10th Grade, Bronx

G’day, folks! Do you want to know, at their core, what makes a true New Yorker? Well, you’re looking in the right place! Welcome to the small book for the Big Apple! To sweeten your core, just follow these simple suggestions:

• When at a park, give up your swing to someone who has been waiting for a while!
• Give a wave to anyone who seems like they are having a bad day. They might not wave back, but they could be smiling under that mask.
• Write a letter or note to a neighbor that you always see but never knew the name of. It always helps to familiarize yourself with the people around you.
• Help an adult you know with any chores or groceries. They will notice and appreciate how much of a help you are!
• See someone drop something? A MetroCard, perhaps? Simply say “Excuse me” to get their attention, and notify them about what they dropped.
• Save the planet by making sure trash goes in the right bin.
• Teachers, doctors, firefighters, construction workers, and more work tirelessly to keep us together and healthy. Greet, thank, or wave at our capeless heroes, so they know that their efforts really do matter.
• If you can, donate a book to your classroom library! Or offer to read a story to those willing to listen. Did you know that the dinosaurs did not know how to read? Yikes, you had better pick up a book if you don’t want to face the same fate as them!
• Create a list of homeless shelters, soup kitchens, or clothes drives and give them to someone who would really value that information.

The smallest things can leave huge impacts, even in a city as large as New York! And remember, an apple a day will never keep the New Yorkers away!
DIY BOOK BINDING!

Are you a writer? An artist? A poet? Let’s make a book to house all your ideas!

Materials: Paper (your inside pages and cover), binder or paper clips, scissors, pencil, a sewing needle, and embroidery floss or thread. Note: If using a needle and thread, make sure to have an adult help you. You could also use a hole puncher and yarn, instead of a needle and thread!

**Step 1:** Line up your pages with the cover page on the bottom and all your middle pages on top. Secure these pages together with your binder or paper clips.

**Step 2:** Lay your pages landscape style and make a line in pencil down the middle with 5 evenly spaced dots on the line.

**Step 3:** Take your needle and thread and pull the needle through the middle dot. Make sure to leave some thread behind on the other side of the hole!

**Step 4:** Sew up to the second dot on your paper then stitch through to the first. Now stitch back to the second hole and down to the third hole so you’re back in the center.

Illustrations and words by Elena Critelli, 12th Grade, Manhattan
New York City, also known as the city that never sleeps, is home to many people. The busy streets and bright lights are what we see everyday. Our pigeon friends roam around the city to find more sights to see!

Challenge: Use your creative skills and take your own pictures of New York City!!!
The Girl Who Drank the Moon
By Kelly Barnhill

Do you believe in magic? Where would you find it? In this novel, people in a small town give the forest witch a baby every year. What they don’t know is that the witch is actually kind and feeds the children starlight and brings them to another town. But one day, she accidentally gives a baby moonlight, along with wonderful magical powers. As the child's 13th birthday arrives, her powers start becoming dangerous. The lively story of Luna and the witch takes many twists and turns. Will you join them on their journey?

My Papi Has a Motorcycle
By Isabel Quintero, illus. by Zeke Peña

Have you ever ridden a motorcycle? It can zoom you anywhere while you enjoy the fresh air! In this book, join Daisy and her Papi as they take a ride in his motorcycle! Daisy lives in Corona, California, with her family. One fine afternoon, she and her dad (Papi) decide to hop on his motorcycle and take a tour of their city. My favorite part about the book is the beautiful relationship between Daisy and her father. The book is almost lyrical and the vibrant illustrations keep you hooked to the page!

Best Friends in the Universe
By Stephanie Watson, illus. by LeUyen Pham

Do you have a best friend? Don't you just love spending time with them? Then you have to read this book! It's about two best friends (Hector and Louie) who wrote the book together! They tell us all about their friendship and why they are best friends. But wait! Have you ever gotten into an argument with your best friend?! Oh no, Hector and Louie are mad at each other! What do you think will happen? You just HAVE to open it up and see for yourself! P.S. This book will make you giggle until your tummy hurts.

Hair Love
By Matthew A. Cherry, illus. by Vashti Harrison

Zuri has natural hair that has a mind of its own. What will she do? Read along as Zuri embraces her natural hair with the help of her loving father. She styles her hair and finds the perfect hairstyle that suits her. This book celebrates family bonds and embracing your own inner beauty.

Pokko and the Drum
By Matthew Forsythe

This book is a colorful adventure where a young frog explores one of her many dreams: drumming. Pokko's mom and dad are very supportive of Pokko's dreams, but even the kindest parents have their limits. In this whimsical world of colorful patterns and textures, the music, the animals, and the forest all come to life to hear Pokko's drum. But will her dad let her continue to play? What will her forest friends think? Follow the beat of Pokko's drum as she drums up the magic of the forest.

Stargazing
By Jen Wang

This is a graphic novel about two Chinese American girls, Christine and Moon. When Moon moves next door, they become friends almost immediately, despite their many differences. Moon is artistic and loud, whereas Christine is studious and unconfident, but together the girls form a beautiful friendship. Wang’s stunning artwork takes you on these two best friends' journey through things like K-pop, Chinese culture, and drama.
Do you love a good mystery? Do you enjoy the thrill of the Roaring Twenties? Well, if you do, you're in luck! This novel is the story of a former maid, Martha O'Doyle, as she recalls her childhood in 1920s Brooklyn. When Martha’s rebellious attitude gets her expelled from school, she is sent to work in the mansion of the rich Mr. Sewell, but soon, things turn sour. Despite their thrilling parties and outlandish wealth, there's something off. Though she was once a spirited party thrower, Mrs. Sewell now refuses to leave her room. In this thrilling and mystifying novel, Martha slowly discovers the true Mrs. Sewell and a hidden message amidst a world of luxury and splendor. Why are there holes in the apple? Why does Mrs. Sewell leave her food untouched? Is she hiding clues in the paintings? Follow Martha O'Doyle in this captivating novel as she embarks on a journey to reveal the truth.

¡Los Zombis no comen verduras!  
Por Jorge Lacera y Megan Lacera, ilustraciones de Jorge Lacera

Mo ama los vegetales. No sería raro excepto el es un zombi! Mo Romero es un zombi como cualquier otro. A él le encanta bailar en la noche con su mamá y perseguir a los humanos. Sus padres dirían diferente. A él no le gustan las empanadas de pati-panza, ni le gusta el arroz con tendones. Pero tiene un obsesión con los tomates y pepinos. Mo no puede dejar los vegetales pero también no ve cómo el puede ser un zombi si nadie más tiene su preferencia. Este libro habla de la aceptación, el poder de la familia y cómo amar tu mismo.

Mo loves vegetables. This wouldn't be weird at all except for the fact that he is a zombie! Mo Romero is a zombie kid just like all the others! He loves dancing at night with his mom and chasing humans with all the other zombies. His parents say differently. He doesn't like arm-panadas, nor rice and spleens. You see he is obsessed with tomatoes and peppers! Mo can't deny how much he loves eating vegetables, but he can't see how his vegetarian lifestyle and life as a zombie can come together when no one else is like him. This book talks about acceptance, the power of family, and how to love yourself.
Hey, my name is Kel, and I am 16 and from the Bronx. I've experienced many things throughout my years of life, and this guide is based on advice I wish I'd received when I was your age!

**Tip #1:** Do not feel bad if it requires you to put in more effort to make friends! Different people will adapt to new things and environments differently. It is okay if you are not making friends at the same pace as others.

**Tip #2:** Try an extracurricular activity, such as clubs or sports, or join an organization. This will provide you with new built-in communities where you can easily make friends because you will meet up with each other. You will probably make friends with these people because you see them a lot!

**Tip #3:** Talk and listen is the best advice. If you personally enjoy talking to people, talk about things you like with them, bond over struggling with classwork, or talk with other kids over recess. Doing little things like complimenting their name or hair helped me break the ice.

**Tip #4:** Don't feel pressured to fit into friend groups that do not fit your personalities or interests. Trying to communicate with people who are completely different from you will be hard for you at the end. If you want to make friends faster, talk with kids who like the same things you do.

**Tip #5:** Speak out when you are uncomfortable. If the behavior that makes you uncomfortable continues please leave the situation or the friends who are making you feel this way. Learning to set boundaries at a young age will save you.

**Tip #6:** Work on strategies to ignore peer pressure at a young age so you can practice that habit as you get older. Peer pressure is something I know that personally got me into situations I could have avoided.
CLUES

Across

4: This NYC neighborhood has the highest concentration of Chinese people in the Western Hemisphere.
8: The area near this neighborhood was settled by the Canarsee Native Americans.
9: This bridge is named after the first documented European explorer to sight New York and Narragansett bays. It is also the longest suspension bridge in the United States!
11: This art museum in Manhattan is the most visited in NYC.
13: The Puerto Rican Day _____, an annual celebration of Puerto Ricans in NYC and elsewhere.
14: _____ Heights, a neighborhood in Queens and one of the most diverse neighborhoods in NYC.
15: Langston _____, a prominent figure in the Harlem Renaissance.
16: The Big______, a nickname for NYC.

Down

1: Where you will find musicals like Hamilton and WICKED.
2: Pizza, pasta, and tricolor flags can definitely be found in this neighborhood.
3: A common form of transportation in NYC.
5: Music genre and culture formed in the South Bronx during the 1970s in NYC.
6: The _____ Building, a famous NYC landmark that was once the world’s tallest building for nearly 40 years!
7: The _____ Renaissance, a period of rich African American culture in NYC through music, stage performance, literature, and art.
10: The NYC borough with the lowest population.
12: Astoria, Queens, is known for its high population of _____ people.

Answers can be found on page 2.
Major support for educational programming is provided by Merryl H. and James S. Tisch.

Major support for children’s and young adult programming is provided by the Andreas C. Dracopoulos Family Endowment for Young Audiences.

Major support for youth education is provided by Arthur W. Koenig; Stavros Niarchos Foundation; Mr. and Mrs. Timothy R. Barakett Endowment for Children’s and Young Adult Programs and Services; The Gottesman Fund; the Bok Family Foundation; Lisa and Jeff Blau; The Hearst Foundation, Inc.; Verizon Foundation; The Joseph H. Flom Foundation; Good Samaritan, Inc.; New York Life Foundation; and the E.H.A. Foundation.

Additional support for the Teen Reading Ambassador Program is provided by the NYC Department of Youth & Community Development.