



Messy History: The Timeline of Palestinian Conflicts

By: Sharon Liu

Hamas gunmen rushed past Israeli defenses and attacked towns in southern Israel on October 7, 2023 (Zhang). Israel has been in conflict with neighboring Arab countries since before its “independence” (Sicherman). In order to truly understand the problems between the two groups, it is necessary to delve into the history of the area. The area where Israel is located was once termed “Palestine”—an area largely populated by Palestinian Arabs under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire collapsed at the end of World War II, and the British were given the task of establishing a “national home” for the Jews in Palestine (BBC).

But why was Palestine designated for the Jews? During World War I and World War II, the world powers at the time made decisions for the land of Palestine without the consent of the inhabitants of the area. This

included the Balfour Declaration and United Nations (UN) Resolution 181, which detailed the British mandate on Palestine and the path forward to creating a country for the Jews. These decisions made against the will of the Palestinian Arabs caused tensions between Jewish and Arab groups in Palestine to worsen (Levs).

On May 14, 1948, the day of Israel’s independence, neighboring Arab countries launched an assault against the newly formed country, taking numerous parts of Jerusalem as well as other areas. Israel retaliated by seizing the Hills of Judaea. These areas were chosen because of their religious significance to both sides and their strategic position against each other. Israel reached armistice agreements with each Arab country a year after the fighting started. The fighting de-escalated, but conflicts were still frequent among the two groups (Britannica).

In 1956, the new Egyptian president, Gamal Abdel Nasser, a pan-Arab nationalist, expressed hostile attitudes towards Israel. Nasser went on to nationalize the Suez Canal and cut Israel off from Western maritime trade. France and the UK worked with Israel to fight this situation. Israel focused on fighting Egypt while the other two nations took over the Suez Canal. Israel took the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip during the fighting. They also captured thousands of prisoners of war during this time. The UN stepped in in 1957 and established a buffer zone of UN peacekeepers on the Sinai Peninsula (Britannica). Israel agreed to withdraw from the ground it had captured. This marked the end of the Suez Crisis. However, skirmishes between the opposing sides never truly ended.

The Six-Day War occurred ten years after the Suez Crisis when Syria began an intense bombing of Israel’s

Golan Heights. Egyptian forces joined the battle in support of Syria, and intense fighting ensued. Israeli forces retaliated with a sudden air strike that destroyed the Egyptian airforce on the ground. They also pushed back the Syrians from the Golan Heights, took the Egyptian Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, and assumed control over Jerusalem. A few months later, Israel withdrew from the territory it had gained in exchange for peace under UN Resolution 242 (Britannica).

Egypt and Syria staged a sudden attack against Israel on October 6, 1973, the day of the Jewish Yom Kippur. This became known as the Yom Kippur War which lasted for 20 days and ended with Israeli victory. In 1979, Egypt and Israel signed a peace treaty that concluded the 30-year state of war between the countries. Israel handed back the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt based on the treaty, and in return, Egypt (pg. 2 continued)

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recognized Israel as a nation (Levs).

This brings us to the most recent Israeli fighting: Operation Al Aqsa Floods and the subsequent war. Hamas, a Sunni Islamic political and military organization committed to the armed resistance of Israel, launched a surprise attack on Israel from the Gaza Strip, killing thousands of citizens and taking hostages of locals and tourists alike (BBC). Multiple parties have begun negotiations to end the armed conflict; however, as of December 4, 2023, the results of the conflict remain undecided

and situations for locals are still dire (Slow).

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Xi and Biden Meet in San Francisco

By: Jasper Lai



Despite the rising tensions between the two global superpowers, Chinese President Xi Jinping and US President Joe Biden met together for the first time this year on November 15th (White House). This is the first meeting between the two heads of state since the Bali summit in November last year. It is also Xi's first visit to the United States since 2017 (NYT). The summit was held at the Filoli Historic House and Garden in Woodside, California, about 35 miles south of San Francisco (White House).

While both sides did not expect significant breakthroughs before the summit, analysts suggest the meeting was successful as both sides are willing to continue dialogues and improve their relationship (BBC). However, in a news conference after the summit, Biden said he still considers Xi a dictator despite their progress throughout the meeting. It continues to raise questions about the tense relationship between Washington and Beijing (CNN).

Most of the progress made in the summit were issues concerning restoring channels of communication and fentanyl trafficking (NYT). When former House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taipei last year, China responded by cutting off all military-to-military communications with the US. The consequences of the cut-off could be seen when relations deteriorated after a suspected Chinese spy balloon floated across the continental US earlier this year (BBC). Top US officials say that communication is essential for peace between the two superpowers. During the Cold War, the US and Soviet Union often relied on military-to-military communication to avoid any accident or misunderstanding of intent that could start a war between the nuclear powers. Biden and Xi agreed that military communications would resume after the summit, an agreement that US officials see as a victory. In addition, both leaders agreed to establish a direct line of communication with each other (CNN).

Fentanyl, a powerful synthetic opioid around 50 times stronger than heroin that took more than 75,000 American lives last year, was also a major concern for the White House. Chinese manufacturing companies are big suppliers of fentanyl to the US; they also supply chemical precursors to produce the drug (NYT). Although China has already attempted to clamp down on direct Fentanyl shipments to the US, most of the trades have shifted to routes through Mexico before entering US soil. Biden said that Xi assured him that China would restrict shipments of all the chemical precursors used to produce fentanyl to Latin American countries. However, officials in Washington are still skeptical about China's promise, saying that they will need verification from Beijing to follow through with their promises (CNN).

There are still disagreements between the two leaders regarding various topics. In the Middle East, Biden hoped that Beijing could continue to put pressure on Iran not to escalate the ongoing Israel-

Hamas War in the region (Reuters). Though Chinese officials assured that they would discuss the matter with Iran, they refused to take on a more prominent role in the region (NYT). The rise of China has been seen as the biggest threat to the United States in the twenty-first century (Post). With Washington preoccupied with the ongoing conflicts in the Gaza and Ukraine, analysts believe they will find it difficult to challenge China's dominance in Asia this year. US officials hope no further conflicts in the Middle East region will further divert its attention on responding to the rising Chinese economy (Post).

Regarding the issues in Taiwan, Xi said that "Taiwan was the biggest, most dangerous issue facing the two superpowers" (Reuters). Though he also said there are no plans to invade Taiwan in the near future, he listed out conditions where military forces might be deployed. Biden repeatedly stressed "the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan strait;" he hopes Beijing will respect the upcoming democratic election on the island next year (Reuters).

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JFK's Assassination Records, 60 Years Later

By: Audrey Wang

It's been sixty years since 35th US President John F. Kennedy (JFK) was assassinated on November 22, 1963. The assassination of Kennedy was questioned internationally, the classic "whodunit?" that eventually became the American nation's biggest conspiracy theory.

JFK was assassinated in Dallas, Texas, with the purpose of rallying and uniting supporters for the Democratic Party. He was shot twice, one of the bullets hitting his lower neck and piercing through his throat (Britannica). Kennedy's abrupt death threw most Americans into shock. The newly dominant form of media via television helped transfer the most recent news regarding the young president's assassination to American citizens, and Kennedy's supporters quickly lost optimism for the country's political future (Britannica). While America panicked over JFK's murder, Lee Harvey Oswald was declared as the alleged perpetrator.

The Warren Commission—authorized by President Lyndon B. Johnson, who took place in office after President Kennedy's death—investigated the assassination and disclosed that Oswald acted in the murder of Kennedy alone (Independent). FBI reports reached a similar conclusion. There was no evidence to present that Oswald was

part of a conspiracy and no reports on the motive of Oswald's motive to shoot Kennedy, as Oswald was killed during his transferral to a more secure county jail and never went to trial.

American citizens remain fascinated with the 1963 assassination. There are books and movies inspired by the event, numerous tourists visiting the Dealey Plaza (the place of JFK's assassination) daily, and polls created to ask citizens whether or not there was only one man—Oswald—behind the murder. Despite reporters continuing to seek evidence and research events surrounding the president's assassination, the government refuses to give America a cogent explanation, thus fueling the American citizens' lack of faith in their government. The American nation started to grow skeptical towards the version of the story they were told—they believe that Oswald was not the sole perpetrator of the murder.

Sixty years later, there are still documents regarding the assassination unreleased by the American government. Previously, Congress had enacted the President JFK Assassination Records Collection Act, which stated that all materials related to JFK's death be released by 2017. However, Trump and Biden Administrations have repeatedly

delayed release dates for any classified documents, with the most recent postponement date in June of 2023 (Time). Combined, both presidents have released thousands of documents, yet some documents are yet to be made known to the public due to "national security, law enforcement, and foreign affairs concerns" (Spectrum).

In the week of November 21st, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., an American politician and nephew of JFK, spoke up against Biden's decision to withhold certain records of JFK's assassination. Kennedy Jr. petitioned for the full release of all JFK-related documents and emphasized America's growing mistrust of their government. As never-before-seen reports and new eyewitness accounts begin to surface, it becomes increasingly clear that Lee Harvey Oswald may not be the only man behind the assassination (Robenalt). As of November 2023, half of all Americans believe that the assassination of JFK was a conspiracy composed of multiple people. Within that fifty percent, most believe that the US government and FBI were involved. Conversely, only twenty-eight percent believe that Oswald acted alone in the murder (Redfield & Wilton). President John F. Kennedy's assassination continues to be one of America's biggest unsolved mysteries.

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ChatGPT CEO Fired and Rehired

By: Derek Lee

OpenAI, the visionary force behind ChatGPT—arguably one of the most groundbreaking innovations of the 21st century—recently found itself thrust into the media spotlight. In a perplexing turn of events, the tech giant has recently fired, then rehired its CEO Sam Altman within the span of a week. This bewildering sequence of events has baffled many, prompting questions about Sam Altman's qualifications. However, those do not seem to be within the scope of the question, as Altman held a pivotal position throughout the history of OpenAI as a co-founder and played a major role in the entire programming process of ChatGPT (OpenAI).

In a company blog, Open AI issued a statement declaring that it would be firing Altman. The statement explained, "Mr. Altman's departure follows a deliberative review process by the board, which concluded that he was not consistently candid in his communications with the board, hindering its ability to exercise its responsibilities, the board no longer has confidence in his ability to

continue leading OpenAI." (OpenAI Blog).

Following the report, Altman issued a short response on X (formerly known as Twitter) stating "I loved my time at OpenAI. It was transformative for me personally, and hopefully the world a little bit. Most of all I loved working with such talented people." Similarly, another co-founder of OpenAI, Greg Brockman, also quit shortly after the news of Altman's dismissal.

In a post on X, Brockman showed the world the message he sent to the OpenAI team after learning of the news: "I'm super proud of what we've all built together since starting in my apartment 8 years ago. We've been through tough and great times together, accomplishing so much despite all the reasons it should have been impossible. But based on today's news, I quit." The message clearly shows Brockman's disappointment in the board's actions and explains his rationale for his discontentment by explaining his long tenure with the

company.

OpenAI's report underwent scrutiny from both employees and fellow OpenAI users who admired Altman for his personable approach, unique delivery style, and the consistent updates he rolled out for the website. Initial media reports suggested potential discord within the boardroom, given Altman's esteemed standing among his employees regarding his leadership (Lawler).

Indeed, confirmation of boardroom collusion surfaced through company-wide protests, where employees passionately pleaded for Altman's reinstatement. Further investigation substantiated the board members' desire to remove Altman from the team, planning a kind of coup-d'etat to relieve him of his duties. However, faced with the imminent threat of employee resignations unless Altman was reinstated as CEO, the board had no option but to reemploy him (Levy). This vividly underscores the profound respect OpenAI employees hold for Altman, affirming

his leadership as illustrious in various aspects.

Though the controversy is ongoing, Altman has made his discontentment clear against poor management by firing all but one of the board members. Altman and Brockman's return was marked with contentment among the employees and OpenAI announcing more future plans (Perrigo).

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An Update on Ukraine and Russia

By: Michelle Huang



Valery Zaluzhny, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, in his office in the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine building in Kyiv. (Oksana Parafeniuk, *The Washington Post*, Getty Images)

Attention regarding Ukraine's resistance against Russia has waned in recent weeks as the world regathers its focus on the Middle East and the possibility that Israel's war with Hamas would erupt into a greater regional conflict. Recently, Ukrainian counteroffensives resulted in only small, incremental gains, and military support for Ukraine seems to be met with increasing opposition. The issue of authorizing more funds for Ukraine has been met with some disapproval in the US Congress (Kapur and Tsirkin).

Ukraine's counteroffensives have been both draining and slow. For months, Ukraine's strategy has been to weaken the readiness of Russian defenses, reducing Russia's ability to withstand major assaults. This painstaking bid encompasses explosions at fuel depots, headquarters, and on railway lines. No strike is absolute, but a gradual accumulation of damage may eventually lead to cracks in the Russian defense network and affect their functioning ability at a basic level (Walsh). Ukraine launched a counteroffensive along the front lines in eastern and southern Ukraine this summer that resulted in only incremental gains and recaptured small settlements. These advances were stalled by mines and forts that had been prepared months before by Russia; though Ukraine has successfully hit Russian warships around the Black Sea and launched drone attacks into Russian territory, the front lines mostly remained static (Hodge).

Ultimately, the counteroffensive proved to be tough for Ukraine and Russia, with both sides taking heavy losses. President Zelensky

acknowledged that progress has been "slower than desired." (Scuitto).

"We would definitely like to make bigger steps," said Zelensky in an interview with the BBC. "But nevertheless, those who fight shall win and to those that knock, the door shall be opened." (Walsh).

In general, Ukraine's prospects with its resistance against Russia in recent months can be assessed in two aspects: by the commander in chief declaring the current situation as a stalemate, and by President Zelensky's exhaustion by the constant effort to persuade allies to not give up (Lister). The Commander in Chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces Valery Zaluzhny, in an interview with the *Economist* magazine, acknowledged that they have failed to achieve a breakthrough of Russian defensive lines. He said that "there will most likely be no deep and beautiful breakthrough", and that every day that passes gives Russia more advantage over them. According to Zaluzhny, instead of a major breakthrough, a stalemate with losses and destruction on both sides is more probable. Comparing the current predicament to an analysis of World War I battles, Zaluzhny said, "Just like then, the level of our technological development today has put both us and our enemies in a stupor." (Hodge).

The counteroffensives against Russia face obstruction as the cruel winter rolls in. To date, Russia still inhabits nearly twenty percent of Ukraine and the front lines are mostly unchanged while both nations continue to get soldiers through (Vlasova). Zaluzhny further cautioned that Russia, for a sizable amount of

time, will be superior in weaponry, equipment, missiles, and ammunition and that Ukraine must develop "new, innovative approaches." (Vlasova et al.). General Zaluzhny's assessment was met with disagreement, both from the Ukrainian President and the President's deputy head of office (Vlasova et al.).

"I am sure that everything has been carefully read, noted down and conclusions drawn by the Russians," said Igor Zhovka, the deputy head of office for the president of Ukraine, further stating that there had been calls from partner nations "in a panic", inquiring if the war is truly at a stalemate (Vlasova et al.).

Ukrainian President Zelensky also disagreed with Zaluzhny's assessment. In a news conference with European Commission President

Ursula von der Leyen, he said "This is not a stalemate. I emphasize this once again. We have already talked about this. This is not some kind of news." Zaluzhny's view on the circumstance was a stark contrast to the more optimistic messages from Ukraine's political leadership. Almost daily, Zelensky calls on the public to be hopeful of Ukraine's potential victory (Vlasova et al.).

But for many Ukrainians, that goal seems to be out of reach.

"There seem to be two realities: one is the optimistic one broadcast by the national telethon," said Vitalli Shevchuk, referring to the only official news broadcast conducted by multiple Ukrainian television channels. "The other is about the true reality."

"I believe in Ukraine's victory, but we have to take into (pg. 5 continued)



On June 19, 2023, Ukrainian soldiers shoot into Russian positions outside Bakhmut, Ukraine. (Wojciech Grzedzinski, Anadolu Agency, Getty Images)

account the objective reality... As for Zelensky's positive predictions, they made sense. Because if we all walked around with our heads down, saying that everything is bad, everything is wrong, then eventually it would have happened," said Shevchuk. "Zelensky's role was to raise morale, and if this spirit was not there, what would people have been holding on to?" (Vlasova et al.).

An anonymous deputy commander of an Ukrainian artillery near Bakhmut said, "Where we are standing, we constantly feel the superiority of the Russians, both in reconnaissance and firepower. They have a huge amount of cannon artillery. They are inferior in accuracy, this is a fact, but they are superior in the number of shells. Especially recently, the difference is noticeable, as

we receive less and less ammunition." (Vlasova et al.). Zaluzhny, in the Economist interview, admitted to his mistake, that the strategy to deal a heavy blow to Russian troops in order to bring them into negotiation may have failed. "Russia has lost at least 150,000 dead. In any other country, such casualties would have stopped the war." (Vlasova et al.).

In a TIME interview with Simon Shuster, Zelensky says that he firmly believes in victory. Zelensky was described by Shuster as exhausted, sometimes ill-tempered, and constantly worried about the decreasing allied commitment (Lister). But Zelensky is dedicated to victory and would not tolerate a truce or negotiations. "For us, it would mean leaving this wound open for future generations," the president said

in the interview (Lister).

However, according to Zaluzhny, this war will be difficult to win, meaning that the wound would be hard to close. "This war cannot be won with the weapons of the past generation and outdated methods," stated Zaluzhny. "Sooner or later we are going to find that we simply don't have enough people to fight." General Zaluzhny's greatest fear is that of an attritional trench war against a country with thrice the number of armed men (Lister). He said "The biggest risk of an attritional trench war is that it can drag on for years and wear down the Ukrainian state." The Ukrainian general portrays Russia as "a feudal state where the cheapest resource is human life. And for us... the most expensive thing we have is our people."

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Gaza and Boycotting Popular Companies: What's under the Surface?

By: Euri Beja

On October 9, 2023, Starbucks Workers United tweeted, "Solidarity with Palestine!" which led to Starbucks Corporation eventually offering a response. Soon after the later-deleted tweet, Starbucks sued the group for "copyright infringement" as their green, circular logo is incredibly similar to the corporation's logo. The lawsuit will also explore the rights of the group's usage of "Starbucks" in their name. Executive vice president and chief partner officer of Starbucks, Sara Kelly, shared a complimentary statement to the lawsuit, stating: "We strongly disagree with the views expressed by Workers United, including its local affiliates, union organizers and those who identify as members of 'Starbucks Workers United' — none of these groups speak for Starbucks Coffee Company and do not represent our company's views, positions, or beliefs," (Terasaki, Zahn). Following the two statements from Starbucks Corp., the public also had statements of their own. Many organizations started calling for a complete boycott of Starbucks products. This was after the lawsuit and Sara Kelly's statement, after the public, workers, and customers alike, claimed that this was another union-busting move from the corporation. The boycotting movement is further continued with the ongoing popular hashtag, #BoycottStarbucks (Terasaki).

On October 12, a McDonald's branch in Israel announced free food for the Israel Defense Forces and Israel's citizens. This announcement along with several videos coming from the staff was released right after the first attack. The post also indicates

that even before the announcement, they had already been distributing thousands of meals to both parties during the ongoing conflict. Along with the free meals from the Israeli branches, soldiers are also encouraged to come to surrounding branches for a 50% discount. During this free meal announcement, Israel Energy Minister Israel Katz tweeted, in a translated post, "No electrical switch will be turned on, no water hydrant will be opened and no fuel truck will enter until the Israeli abductees are returned home. Humanitarian for humanitarian. And no one will preach us morals," (Impelli). Consequently, many, many citizens, particularly Pakistanis, called out for the boycott of McDonald's and encouraged Pakistan on X (formerly known as Twitter) to remove all the McDonald's branches in Pakistan. In comparison to the boycott call, many others on the Israel branch's post on Instagram showed support. One commented, "People are gold! Well done to you guys! Sacred work," while others simply commented, "Well done McDonald's Israel," (Impelli).

A part from the food industry, many people also called for big tech companies to pick a side. Just a week after the first attack, one employee from Google posted a video of her singing in support of Palestine. She captioned the video, "a heartfelt tribute to my fellow Palestinians and the innocent children who have tragically lost their lives due to the ongoing Israeli bombings." Within a few days of the Google employee's post, her information was posted to the same post with another person commenting, "Your support for terrorism is being watched and

recorded, good luck finding [a] job in the future," (O' Donovan, Telford, Vynck). After the comments against the Google employee, many other employees at Google insisted on their bosses to pick a side. Along with Google, Amazon employees joined the move, calling for their superiors to pick a side as well. Other than inside business trouble, people on the internet have also made a move towards the people who picked and showed support for one side or the other. Many employees from both companies have faced harassment online and have had their names black-listed by both sides (O' Donovan, Telford, Vynck).

It seems that boycotting, threats, and lawsuits are being used against companies, unions, and individuals as a way to leverage the opposing viewpoint during the conflicts in Gaza. Whether companies will stand against anti-humanitarian rhetoric,

Palestine against Israel, or unions against companies is yet to be decided.

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New Teacher Interviews - Part 2

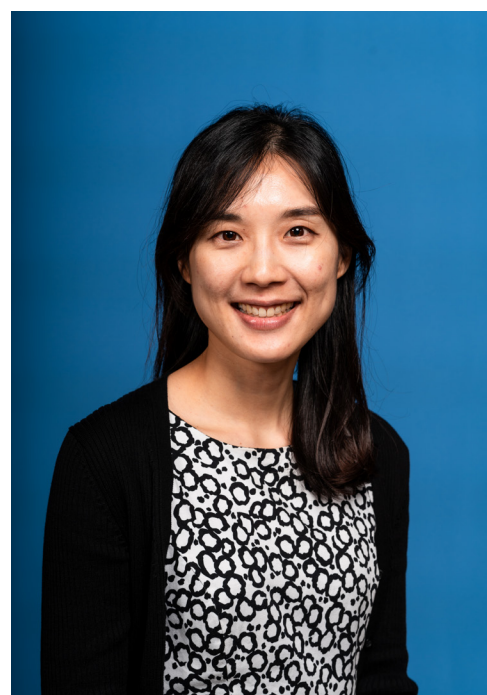
By: Abby Janssen



Ms. Heraldo

Ms. Heraldo came to MAK this year after Ms. Joyce Lee told her about MAK and a job opportunity the school was offering. Ms. Heraldo now works as MAK's health coordinator. Before coming to MAK, Ms. Heraldo was studying Chinese at Wenzao University. After she was hired, she was excited about meeting students and learning new things in a school environment that she hadn't worked in before. Ms. Heraldo has been in Taiwan for nearly two years; before coming to Taiwan, she lived in the Philippines. Some things that Ms. Heraldo likes about Taiwan are the food, the weather, and its convenience. Her favorite food in Taiwan is popcorn chicken, and her favorite drink is bubble tea. Recently, Ms. Heraldo has been re-watching old Disney movies for nostalgia and because they are more relaxing than intense movies. At the moment, Ms. Heraldo's favorite music artist is Taylor Swift and her favorite Taylor Swift album is 1989 (Taylor's Version). If Ms. Heraldo was to compare herself to an animal, she

would be a dog (with an owner) so that she could be taken care of and so life would be easier. An interesting fact about Ms. Heraldo is that her mom is also a nurse and wanted Ms. Heraldo to become one, too. However, during college, Ms. Heraldo went to dental school instead. Nevertheless, she ended up at MAK as the school nurse! If you have any additional questions for Ms. Heraldo, make sure to go ask her!



Mrs. Luk

Mrs. Luk works at MAK as the administrative assistant for Dr. Kim. She first heard of MAK through her sister, Ms. Wynne Luk, who previously worked in MAK's office. Her sister told her that MAK was a happy place to work, leading Mrs. Luk to decide to join the MAK community! Before working at the school, Mrs. Luk was a stay-at-home mom to her two kids (six and four years old). This year, Mrs. Luk is looking forward to getting

to know more people and learning new things in an accepting and loving community. She has lived in Taiwan for nine years; before living in Taiwan, she lived in Malaysia. Something that Mrs. Luk loves about Taiwan is its warm and welcoming people, as well as its scenery. Mrs. Luk's favorite food is beef noodle soup, and her favorite movie is Mission Impossible. Mrs. Luk's favorite song is You Are the Reason by Callum Scott, but recently she has been listening to Christmas music. If Mrs. Luk was to be an animal, she would be a fish because fish swim freely in the water, and she enjoys swimming. An interesting fact about Mrs. Luk is that one of her favorite activities is riding the U-bike around the city. If you have any additional questions for Mrs. Luk, make sure to go ask her!



Ms. Ireland

Ms. Ireland heard about MAK through Mrs. Edwards from MAC. Before

becoming a teacher, Ms. Ireland knew that she was interested in teaching abroad. Previously, Ms. Ireland lived in Alabama and worked in ministry with high schoolers and middle schoolers while also attending multiple overseas mission trips. Soon, Ms. Ireland decided that teaching at a Christian school overseas was the right job for her because it merged the two things she loved most: teaching and missions. When she started searching for overseas Christian schools, she found out about Morrison. Ms. Ireland had never really thought about Taiwan before, but she knew a missionary here, and when she reached out, they told her about Morrison and encouraged her to apply. Initially, Ms. Ireland applied for an elementary position at MAK, but after telling Mrs. Edwards about her passion for implementing technology into classrooms, she was told about an ETC position that would fit her interests. At MAK, Ms. Ireland works as the ETC coach for elementary as well as the 6th grade ELA teacher. Something Ms. Ireland loves about Taiwan is its variety of nature; nature is important to her, coming from Alabama. She loves how the mountains and beaches are both within driving distance of her. Ms. Ireland's favorite foods are Tex-Mex food and Chick-fil-A (in the United States) and seafood and sushi in Taiwan. Her favorite movies are the Harry Potter series, and her favorite type of music is rock alternative. If Ms. Ireland was to be an animal, she would be an otter because of her creativity and her love of relaxation. An interesting fact about Ms. Ireland is that she is an excellent baker of desserts! If you have any additional questions for Ms. Ireland, make sure to go ask her!

METAMORPHOSIS

Literary Magazine 2024



SUBMISSIONS OPEN!

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MAK Literary Magazine: Shark Review 2024 Issue

Calling all writers of MAK!

MAK's English Club is honored to announce that MAK's 2024 Literary Magazine, Shark Review, is now open for submissions to all grades K-12 and all staff members!

Our theme this year is Metamorphosis. What parts of your life have you seen "metamorphosis" in action?

Feel free to interpret Metamorphosis however you wish! Do you think transformation? The journey into middle school, high school, or adulthood? Or maybe you think of butterflies! Or you can submit a piece that isn't related to the theme at all! Either way, we welcome you to share your literary pieces with the MAK Lit Mag!

Don't forget to follow English Club on Instagram @makenglishclub :)

A Recap on the 2nd Season Sports Tournaments

By: Amy Tai

The beginning of the HS Basketball season at MAK marks the end of the women's volleyball season and men's soccer season. The Varsity Girls' volleyball team headed to MAT for their November 4th TISSA tournament in TES the Friday before. The JV girls and the Varsity boys traveled to Taichung early Saturday morning for their tournaments in AST and MAC, respectively.

When the JV girls and Varsity boys were traveling on the bus to Taichung, the bus driver had forgotten to pick up the players at the Tainan stop due to miscommunications. Fortunately, one of the JV girls' parents was able to drive the players to MAC and AST.

The Varsity boys had their first game against DIST in the morning. With neither side scoring until the very end, they went into penalty shots. Unfortunately, they also lost their shootout which meant that their tournament had come to an end. Regardless of the game turned out, they dedicated their time and effort to the soccer season and gave

it their all at the tournament; that has made their soccer season a success. We will fight on, Sharks!

As for the JV girls, they quickly warmed up for their first game against DIST when everyone arrived at AST. In a quick match against DIST, the Sharks claimed a victory. Afterward, they played MAT, winning the game with 27-25 in the second set. In the final game against MAC, the girls were nervous. During their exchange, they had lost to MAC, and they wanted to turn the tables. After a hard battle, the Sharks lost in the third game 10-15. The girls were devastated about how the last game turned out, but nevertheless, they were still glad to receive second place. Throughout the season, the girls improved phenomenally under Mr. Lin and Mrs. Rodriguez's coaching. Don't worry, Sharks; we'll tame the Mustangs next year!

On Saturday morning, the Varsity girls defeated KSS in a swift victory, winning all three games with at least a 10-point lead in each game. Later on in the day, they also beat KSS

with no problem. This victory led them to the finals against MAC that night. Last year, the Varsity girls lost to MAC in the finals, and they were determined to get their title back. The game was broadcast live to MAK, and the JV girls and Varsity boys watched the game on the bus. Playing five sets in a two-hour game, the Sharks came out victorious with the last set beating

MAC 15-12. Tears were shed and the happiness could be seen on their faces as they jumped in celebration after MAC lost their serve at the game's set point of 14-12. Tabby Dang, Phoebe Liou, and Nicole Rodriguez received the All-Tournament Award at the tournament. The Varsity girls have reclaimed their volleyball throne.



Opinion

Are "Choose Your Own Adventure" Stories Good?

By: Hayden Brandt

As a kid, I loved reading this Club Penguin "Pick Your Path" book; as the plot unfolded, the reader could choose what actions they wanted the characters to take. This was quite novel to me as the idea that the passive reader could actually influence the plot was unheard of. However, it appears that in modern times the art of this unique brand of storytelling has been lost. Therefore, to breathe new life into this dead art form, this article itself will take form as an interactive argument. [If you believe that interactive storytelling is good, go to "C"]. [If you believe that interactive storytelling is a gimmick, go to "D"].

Because of the interactive element, the story no longer makes narrative sense due to the omnipotent God (the reader) controlling things behind the scenes. This fact alone can create a disconnect between the story and the characters. Can characters really be fleshed out if their choices are being manipulated? Can the story really be genuine and heartfelt if it's one of many? When the story is constantly being taken places by

an external force, which usually doesn't have any thematic purpose, the product as a whole can seem forced and lacking any real depth. In conclusion, while there may be some fun elements to interactive stories, the medium as a whole doesn't allow any room for genuine compelling storytelling.

Choose your own adventure stories are genius, and I'm glad you agree. Isn't the majesty of being able to confirm your own opinion unparalleled in modern literature? Other types of literature have to work for the reader to get immersed in the world and characters. Meanwhile, interactive stories force you to be immersed because the characters' lives are in the readers' hands. From the mundane to the life-changing decisions, the stakes feel instantly more personal as you, the reader, have to grapple with the consequences of your own actions. [If you think that the power the reader holds is too great go to "B"]. [If you think that interactive elements make a story more interesting, go to "F"].

Distinguished stories in the world of literature will never have "Pick Your Path" elements because it is merely a gimmick that kids can enjoy following along with. While the concept was first pioneered in 1930 with a one-off novel, the idea wasn't published to the masses until lawyer Edward Packard created his own interactive series in 1979. One literary scholar of the time, Copeland, went on to criticize its childish themes and characterization (Smithsonian); he claimed that everything that made a regular book compelling was nowhere to be found in Packard's book. Thus, the gimmick of interactive storytelling has its foundation in children's literature and will never grow beyond that. [If you think that is a bit harsh, go to C]. [If you think that there are even more reasons why interactive books are trash, go to B].

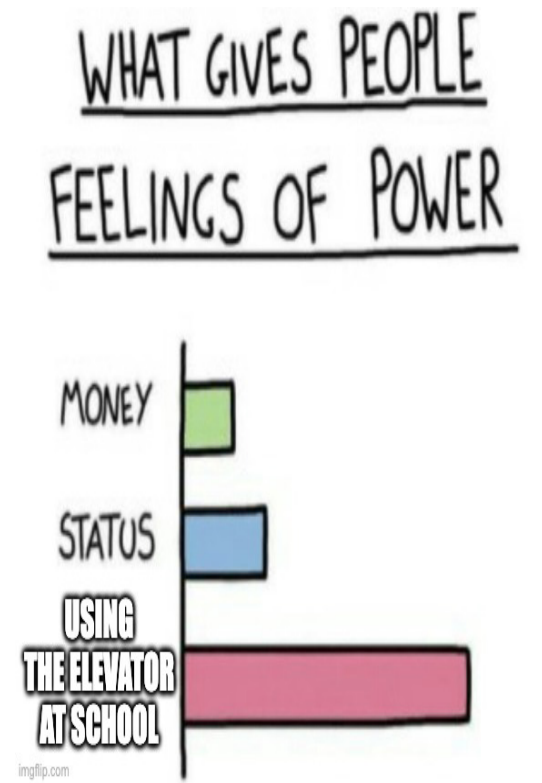
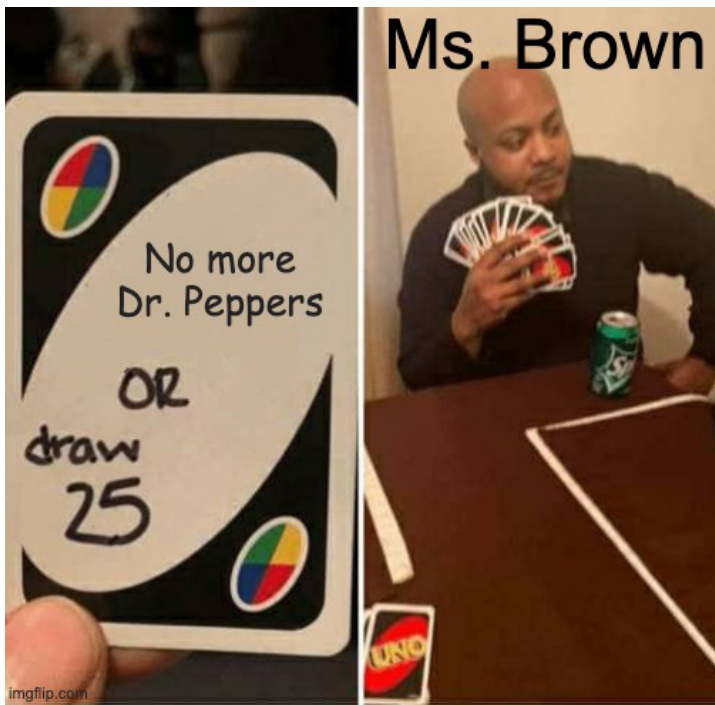
Even though there is no option to read this paragraph, it appears that you are a "free-thinker," and that is another reason why interactive stories are so interesting. Normally, the whole article should be read, but

this element of secrecy creates an air of mystery that cannot be reached conventionally. [Go back to A].

Fun is the main reason why Choose Your Own Adventure stories exist. No other literary medium has the ability to create that type of immersion in a story; yet, whether the story itself can grip the reader is up to the author. Interactive storytelling can create a vastly different experience as the audience reads along with the story and books like Romeo And/Or Juliet by Ryan North showcase how just adding that interactive element switches things up drastically. In conclusion, interactive storytelling is more than a gimmick that kids will enjoy; there is genuine merit to it as long as the author can tell a compelling story without relying on it.

Magazine, Smithsonian. "The Surprisingly Long History of 'choose-Your-Own-Adventure' Stories." Smithsonian.Com, Smithsonian Institution, 4 May 2022, www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/surprisingly-long-history-of-choose-your-own-adventure-stories-180980014/.

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