

BASIS SCOTTSDALE GAZETTE

Electrifying Electives

by Mintra Waram

All of us are wondering how the decisions we make next month can affect next year. What science should I take? What elective should I take? So, I am here to debrief you and give you a truthful review of all the electives and sciences for high school students.

AP Physics 1: “AP Physics 1 was a beautifully challenging class that prompted students to think critically. Mrs. Proctor is an amazing teacher who cares about every single one of her students and kindly led us all to success.”

Honors Chemistry: “Honors Chemistry is very time-consuming and hard, but the teacher [Dr. Remus] is one of the smartest women I have ever met. The way she simplifies the concepts makes them much easier to understand. In Honors Chemistry, we also go through most of the AP Curriculum, which is especially hard, but I feel like this will prepare me for AP Chemistry.”

Honors Biology: “Honors Biology really helped prepare me for AP Biology. Most of the content is the same, and we go over it in lots of detail so we can understand.

SAVE THE DATE

International Women’s Day
3/8

St. Patrick’s Day
3/17

Co-ed Volleyball Game
3/20

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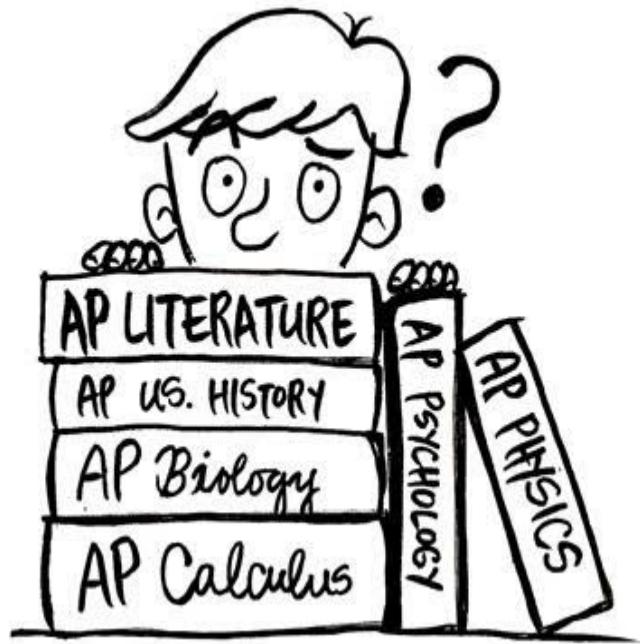
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It is hard sometimes; we cover the content really deeply, but it is interesting to learn important information for the future. In AP Biology, the teacher [Mr. Carey] expects us to know the content already, so Honors Biology really helped me prepare.”

AP Environmental Science: “APES was a very dense class, but all of the units followed very well into each other. We covered many real world problems, like deforestation, rising ocean temperatures, and poverty, and we also got to do hands-on experiments. The class overall was not difficult and the information was not hard to memorize. As for the AP test itself, studying for it was actually pretty fun due to the fact the information you are learning is actually relevant and interesting.”

Human geography: “AP Human Geography was the lightest class I’ve ever taken. All we did was take notes in the morning and sometimes we practiced FRQs. There are no essays for the AP test so I lowkey wish I self studied and took psych [instead].”



Source: The Talon Tribune

The BASIS of Debate

By Claire Hong

As BASIS students we are often reminded of how different BASIS is from the realm of public school. These qualities are often the reason why students leave the school but can just as well be the reasons parents enrolled their children here in the first place. This article will be looking at three distinguishing qualities BASIS holds that make our community unique: teacher experience, competitive environment, and the smaller class sizes.

Teacher Experience:

Here at BASIS we have what the school calls “subject expert teachers” (SET) which is a fancy term for saying the teachers have a degree in the subject they teach, but, in most cases, they don't have a teaching degree. Some may perceive this as a positive because as the BASIS Ed website states, “SETs use their passion for their subjects to inspire students while teaching them at a higher level than what is expected of students of a particular age.” But with this passion comes inexperience. Many of the new SETs don't have any experience within a classroom and don't know how to handle the chaos that children are capable of, resulting in teachers who quit in a couple years, forcing the school to rapidly hire more inexperienced teachers. We do have experienced teachers who have been at BASIS for years (most of which teach high school) but when it comes to the new hires, it's shocking to see them last more than a year.

Competitive Environment:

BASIS is famous, or maybe infamous, for its highly competitive environment that puts an intense pressure on students. The curriculum is a few grades ahead of that of a traditional school and it is not uncommon to have multiple assessments in a day. For some students this fast pace style suits them and allows them to live up to their full potential as students and flourish in their future. But for others, this environment can be extremely stressful causing burnout and anxiety. This environment can also force students to have high expectations in their grades which can be especially harmful since many students already experience a substantial amount of pressure from parents. So although this environment can lead many to success, it may lead some to their failure.

Small Class Size:

This quality is more about preference than anything else. Many people leave BASIS after middle school to go to Desert Mountain since they want to get the so-called “real high-school experience” meaning a big school with large classes and big facilities like an auditorium or a football field. Although all of this sounds great, some prefer to have smaller focused classrooms, which is where BASIS comes in handy.



Source: Google Images

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

Time to Sham-ROCK the Green by Sahasra Sontineni

March 17th is a day not widely recognized like December 25th, January 1st, or February 14th. Ironically, we all know what Saint Patrick's Day is. That brings us to the question: What is St. Patrick's day? Who is St. Patrick? Why is St. Patrick's day associated with luck and leprechauns? The earliest origins of St. Patrick's day are shrouded in obscurity, but there are some key details that make it as important as it is today.

Back in the 5th century, a 16 year old boy was kidnapped from Roman Britain and brought to Ireland. He escaped, but came back a few years later and brought Christianity with him. This boy grew up to be St. Patrick, a widely known Saint of Ireland who established many churches and schools there. Many astounding legends revolved around him, such as him explaining the Holy Trinity with a traditional Irish shamrock and driving the snakes out of Ireland. Ireland celebrated him on March 17th, St. Patrick's death day, with lavish feasts and religious ceremonies. The day later was celebrated secularly, and became widely known after its introduction to America.

Cities in America with a substantially large Irish population started the hype of St. Patrick's Day in the West. Irish immigrants brought a bit of their culture with them and threw St. Patrick's day parades and feasts in the United States.

The association of Leprechauns with St. Patrick's day came from old Irish fables about them. Leprechauns were very tiny shoe makers who hid pots of gold at the end of rainbows. Since they were pretty difficult to catch, catching one would reward three wishes from the leprechaun in order to be set free. A Walt Disney movie, *Darby O'Gill and the Little People*, was released in 1952 and is a story about leprechauns. This movie was also released during the popularization of St. Patrick's day and since leprechauns were already associated with Ireland, they became a symbol of St. Patrick's day.

St. Patrick's history is quite vague and there is not much to be said about it. However, the roots of this widely celebrated holiday are tied to Irish culture and mythology when considering the leprechauns. Make sure to wear green on March 17th!



Source: National Geographic

Chinese Idiom

In this school, we have met a lot of people speaking Mandarin and Cantonese, or some that are taking them as a subject. So, I thought it would be interesting if I could share a Chinese idiom to all of you. The idiom I'm going to share today is “抛砖引玉”.

“抛砖引玉(pāo zhuān yǐn yù)” means to cast a brick to attract jade. This idiom originated from a story about the Tang Dynasty poet Jian Chang. He wrote the first two lines of a poem on the wall of Lingyan Temple in Suzhou, hoping to inspire the famous poet Gu Zhao to finish it. When Gu Zhao visited, he saw the lines and was inspired to add two more lines, completing the poem with superior verses. This act of offering something modest to elicit a greater contribution is what gave rise to the idiom “抛砖引玉,” which is now used to describe a situation where someone offers an idea or suggestion hoping it could lead to a better contribution. Basically, it means to toss out an idea.

But this idiom not only means to toss out an idea, it also means to make our opponent fooled and fell into a trap by using something. The “砖” (brick) and the “玉” (jade) are just other words for “bait” and “objective” while “抛砖” is the method for reaching our goal.

The original text was: “类以诱之，击蒙也。” meaning “to use something to fool the enemy.”

By Ran Cao

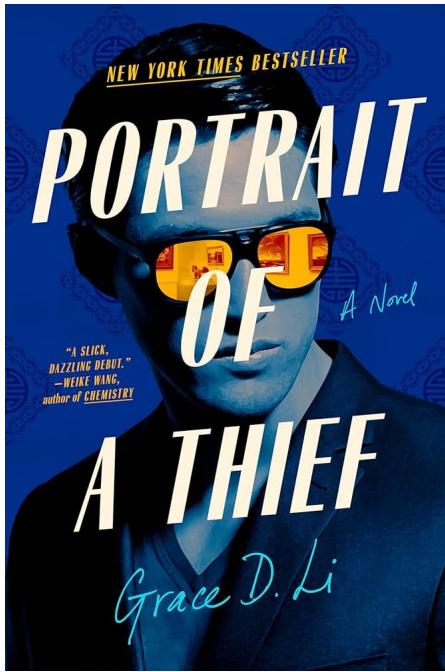
In Chinese, there are lots of super fascinating idioms to be discovered! I strongly urge everyone to take a look at different cultures and feel the foundation of each culture's literacy works.



Source: Google Images

MEDIA REVIEW

Portrait of a Thief Steals Your Time by Valerie Polukhtin



In the past five years, the fashion industry has accelerated its rate of production faster than ever. Fast fashion has transformed the industry entirely from one based on quality and style to companies putting out new clothing every week to meet increasing consumer demands. This overconsumption, often fueled by microtrends on TikTok, isn't limited to fashion; it's also spread to the publishing industry. Increasingly, in the past couple years, social media following and social media trends, such as specific "tropes," has driven the publishing industry. Authors are often pressured to acquire a certain number of followers before beginning the querying process, working to promote their book online.

And unfortunately, I am not entirely immune to such advertising. For months leading up to the release of this book in May 2022, I received numerous posts and videos about the author, her book, and her background. So, by the time the book was released, I felt intrigued enough to purchase it, although it lay waiting for another year before I opened it.

A Portrait of a Thief follows five Chinese American college students through their five different perspectives. The head of a large private Chinese corporation hires these students to rob five museums around the world. In 1860, Britain's High Commissioner to China, Lord Elgin destroyed the Summer Palace in Beijing and looted many artifacts, including five of the twelve bronze zodiac heads. Five college students are hired to steal back these zodiac heads, now scattered in four museums worldwide, starting in Stockholm, Sweden, and ending their heist at the MET, New York City. At the same time, they all deal with their complex relationship with and feelings toward China.

The plot is interesting enough, an *Ocean's Eleven* situation (even referenced that way in the book). The premise is what really sets her debut novel apart. Art repartition has been a very hot subject the past few years, and most likely hits very closely to Li and her own Chinese heritage.

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Her analysis of art as a tool of power and its positions in museums is just amazing. While she definitely does take the stance, “Art belongs to the creator,... not the conqueror,” she defends that position extremely well. To her, art will always be political. She writes, “History is an ongoing process, though, isn’t it? ... And what we remember has always been determined by what museums choose to display.” Absolutely gorgeous.

Li also masterfully portrays the dynamic between immigrants and their American-born children, the balance between wanting more for your child and accepting their desires. Li understands the difficulty in the phrase, “I love you,” those words are seen through offering fruit rather than articulating words. She captures the pain of this relationship, how, “All parents leave scars. We’re the ones who have to heal from them.” Li provides cutting commentary on all of these dynamics in a Chinese American household.

However, some of the methods of delivery failed. Writing is often as much a study of its author as of its subject, but here, it’s gone too far. The characters blend into one another, and it feels the author has poured so much of her feelings into this book, I don’t know where her thoughts end and the story begins. All the characters have similar opinions toward their homeland, and it feels like the author is battling with herself through them rather than developing unique persons with their own set of virtues and ambitions.

At some points, it feels like I have opened Li’s diary rather than a story independent of her.

This flaw translates into the characters she writes. Although it’s clear the characters are complex individuals based on their background (higher education, emotional maturity), most of the time they came off rather flat. Beyond their opinions toward China, they lacked definitive character traits. It often made it hard to care about them. Despite the fact that Li uses five – yes, five! – different points of view, they do not give insight into the characters.

The characters feel like archetypes. And beyond facing these emotions about their homeland, they lack character. Without trauma, there’s nothing much to define them.

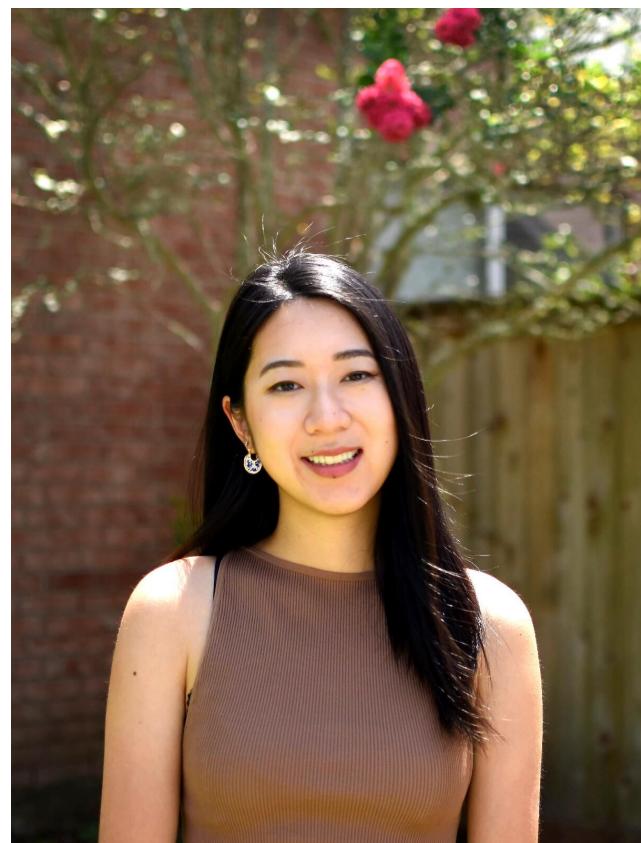
Finally, the writing is too hazy at times. The author felt some feelings they couldn’t describe, something about her connection to the diaspora, which is powerful in its own right. But then, they draw this feeling out too much. Too many sentences of independent clause filled with endless trailing participle phrases, comma after comma after comma. It gets bland at times, especially when we revert to the same description of the heist from five different perspectives.

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This story drags its feet. How can a book about a heist move so slowly? The people in this story are racing cars, breaking into museums, shattering glass, and yet, adrenaline? Tensions? Where is it? All of the characters long for China, but it's the same variety of phrases about longing repeated again and again. It does not pinpoint locations, recall specific members, or concretize what China means to these people. It's vague. It's fluff. It makes it feel like I'm viewing this entire story through foggy windows or a snowstorm.

The Chinese diaspora, and just generally feelings toward the homeland for first and second generation immigrants, are incredibly nuanced and fascinating topics. Underlying all this empty writing, Grace Li has a lot of insightful commentary. I just wish that was pushed to the forefront.

Source: LA Times

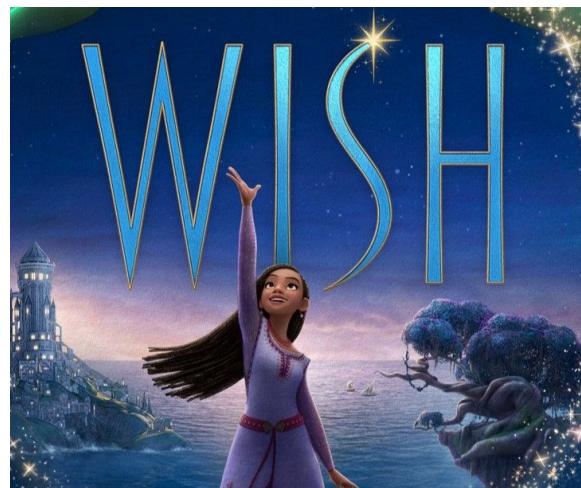


Disney's Downfall

By Dana Nam

Disney has recently hit its 100th anniversary. To celebrate, the company has released a brand new original animated film called *Wish*. In an attempt to honor Disney's beginnings, the animators tried to recreate a 2D style with a 3D model similar to how *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* as well as *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse* animated their movies. While this style has been replicated by many companies other than Disney, *Wish* seemed to receive a lot of backlash for not only its animation but also its poor writing. Moviegoers claim the movie feels AI generated and that the villain lacks the same character or charm that original Disney villains had. Since this was an anniversary movie, fans were expecting much higher quality or something that honored the company's past better. And while Disney did make a short film for Disney 100 that was released on Disney Plus, their main movie has caused a lot of dispute among Disney fans.

Wish has severely disappointed fans and it seems Disney is starting to fail as a movie studio with their constant use of nostalgia to try to appeal to fans. Others have been beating out Disney with companies like Sony and Netflix reigniting animated movies with clever dialogue and appealing designs. Maybe Disney will get everything together to create a movie to capture people's attention, but for now, it seems the company has started sliding down the top of the animation industry.



Source: lindynews.org

P.S. MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS!

by: Payton Dymek and Stephanie Lobodanescu

PUZZLES

El Wordo

by: Payton Dymek



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Comic:



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El Wordo Answer: Lucky