

BASIS SCOTTSDALE GAZETTE

BASIS Scottsdale Assassins

by: Aarush Ravichand

On September 2nd, the BASIS Scottsdale Juniors and Seniors will partake in the traditional game of Assassins. This year, BASIS Scottsdale hosts a total of 24 teams, put against each other for six weeks of strategic combat. This article is your guide to the game, whether you're an assassin who's too lazy to read the official rulebook, or you're a jealous lower schooler, too young to participate. Whoever you are, you're probably wondering, how does the game actually work?

The game is divided into three main stages: In Stage 1, teams are assigned targets, and they must eliminate the entire target team to inherit their targets. In Stage 2, surviving teams can target any remaining player. In the final stage, teams become irrelevant, and the game becomes a quest until one player reigns supreme.



SAVE THE DATE

Trunk or Treat: 10/30

Beginning of Diwali: 10/31

Halloween: 10/31

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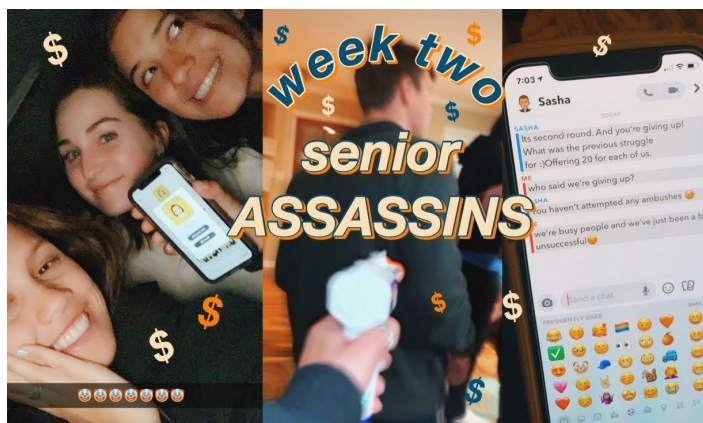
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How do you “kill” an opponent? There are three types of weapons: guns, grenades, and bombs. Really, they’re just water guns, water balloons, and sticky notes. Water guns are the primary weapon. A kill is made when the target is hit with water on their skin or clothing. Grenades (water balloons) are a more fun weapon: they must hit and explode on the target's body for the kill to count. Car bombs are the sneakiest of them all: if a target leaves his parking space with a sticky note attached to his car, boom! The sigma dies in a fiery explosion.

Next, there are safety items and safety zones. Primarily, swimming goggles, when worn visibly on the neck, ankle, or arm, protect against water guns and grenades, but not car bombs! You better check your car for any sneaky sticky notes, because no safety items protect you from bombs - except safety zones. There are four tiers of safety zones, as you go up the tiers, less and less safeties work, until you’re at a Red Zone: no safeties work, and kills are allowed anywhere on the premises.



Source: YouTube

Too young to play? Too busy to play? Or just no friends to team with? How can you participate in BASIS Scottsdale Assassins? Non-players can contribute to the game by providing information, acting as witnesses or distractions. However, they are generally not allowed to participate in any assassinations. In conclusion, the game of Assassins is a test of strategy, skill, and wit. As the weeks progress, alliances will be formed, betrayals will occur, and the tension will rise. Who will emerge victorious and claim the title of the ultimate Assassin? Only time will tell.



Source: The Prospector

Welcoming the BASIS Scottsdale Flag Football Team: Working Towards More Touchdowns

by: Valerie Polukhtin

Starting in the 2024-2025 academic year, BASIS Scottsdale is proud to present its newly-formed flag football team. The season began September 12th and will run until October 17th. Coached by Mr. Robert Lynne, this team is composed of 14 members, many of whom are actually middle schoolers. Currently, the team is captained by freshmen Chad and Nishka.

As of Sunday, September 22nd, the flag football team had played in six total games and, quite unfortunately, lost all of them. They played their first two games on September 12th, against Academy with Community Partners, losing both rounds 0 to 42. According to team member Ethan Florento, during the game they suspected they spotted scouts in the crowds. When talking with the referees after, it was confirmed; scouts had indeed come to watch players from their rival, Academy with Community Partners. While our newly formed flag football team might seem, at the moment, just a fun past-time to students at this school, other schools seem to take flag football much more seriously, enough to attract recruiters for professional or college-level teams.

The BASIS Scottsdale flag football team played their next games on September 17th against the Gilbert EDUPRIZE school, losing 0 to 57 and 6 to 46. They played their last two most recent games against Jones-Gordon on Friday, September 20th, at Chaparral Park, losing once again 0-45 and 0-42. According to the NFL Flag rules guideline for flag football, a game is generally considered over when a team is winning by a 28 point or larger margin. Thus, it appears that, despite their best efforts, the flag football team is not one of BASIS Scottsdale's best assets.

We hope that as the season progresses, prospects for this team increase enough to bring one victory home. Possibly, with an extra year of preparation, next year we will be looking at a very different level of team.



Source: Valerie Polukhtin

REVIEWS

Scholarly Suggestions

by: Claire Hong

Have you ever wondered what books your teachers would recommend? ...No? Well I'm going to answer the question anyways. For those who have or had Honors English Language, Creative Writing, or AP Art History, you know Ms. de Blas, who has the best decorated classroom in the school. And since she is an English teacher, I thought she might have a few book recommendations up her sleeve.

“The alternative history novel, *The Cautious Traveller's Guide to the Wastelands* by Sarah Brooks is a must-read for those concerned about hypercapitalism and climate change. Through its gripping narrative and dark humor, the novel offers a powerful commentary on survival in a world ravaged by greed and environmental collapse yet resistive to alternative possibilities, serving as a both cautionary tale and a hopeful call to action.”

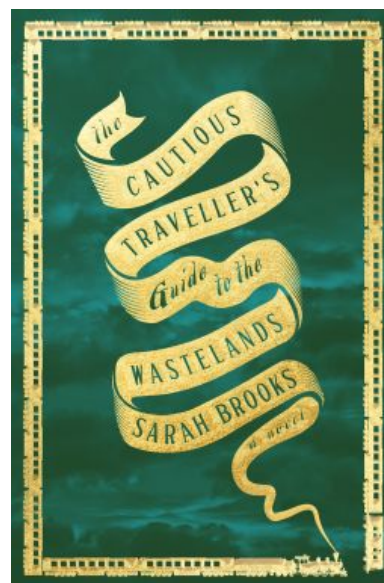
-Ms. de Blas

I was a little cautious myself when I first read the title but nonetheless I started reading.

The Cautious Traveller's Guide to the Wastelands is a historical fiction novel that explores a world afraid of change. This book is set in an alternate version of the late 1800s, where what we know to be Siberia has succumbed to changes transforming it into a land full of nightmares and unknown creatures called the Wastelands.

We follow three characters on the Trans-Siberian Express, a (supposedly) very secure train that crosses through the Wastelands while traveling from Beijing to Moscow.

The first character we meet is Marya, a passenger traveling under a fake identity in order to solve a personal mystery relating to the suspicious events of the last train crossing. The next character is Zhang WeiWei, a child of the train who has lived and worked on the train her entire life and who forms an unlikely friendship; and finally Dr. Henry Gray, a naturalist whose reputation had a recent fall from grace where he is hoping to recover it by discovering something revelatory from this crossing. All three of the characters have vastly different motivations, yet all feel very human.



Source: Goodreads

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In my opinion, Weiwei's story is the most relatable and explores the themes the best. You can feel her creeping feeling of loneliness and how her fear of change pushes her to make certain decisions. Dr. Henry Gray, on the other hand, is more of a polarizing character. While I do understand his motivations, the way he goes about pursuing his goals is very disturbing, even though this characterization is on purpose. Brooks masterfully portrays the constant feeling of horror the passengers feel of the unknown outside the train and their need to distract themselves in silly, superficial ways.

The book feels reminiscent of an Agatha Christie murder mystery in the sense that it takes place in a contained space with nowhere to go and it follows the same build up of tension. One of my favorite parts of the book was the mystery element. Brooks is able to fill the story with questions and carefully reveal important information in the right moments. A lot of the story is centered around build up and payoff which the author handles very well most of the time.

The ending felt rushed, and I don't feel as though Brooks put as much thought into the ending as the rest of the book, even if it still contains all the necessary elements of a proper conclusion.

The pacing of this book is a little slow because a lot of the scenes are flashbacks and worldbuilding. This is not necessarily a problem, just a preference. Some readers may prefer faster-paced books, so this may not be the best fit for their liking.

One of the strongest aspects of this book is the imagery. The ways in which Brooks describes the train and the Wastelands, doesn't just tell you what it looks like but how it affects people. It gives you enough information of the surroundings while still allowing your imagination to take over. It makes you feel as if you are there!

I think the best part of this book is the characters and the connections between them. It really makes you understand the world around them so much better, and the characters are what pull all the wonderful elements of the book together. It is the fantastical setting that first draws you toward the books, the mystery that keeps you reading, but the characters that make this book truly magical.

I give *The Cautious Traveler's Guide to the Wastelands* a 4.45 stars out of 5. This was an amazing recommendation from the even more amazing Ms. de Blas. I look forward to reading more books from teachers :)

Book Review:

Gentrifier: A Memoir by Anne Elizabeth Moore

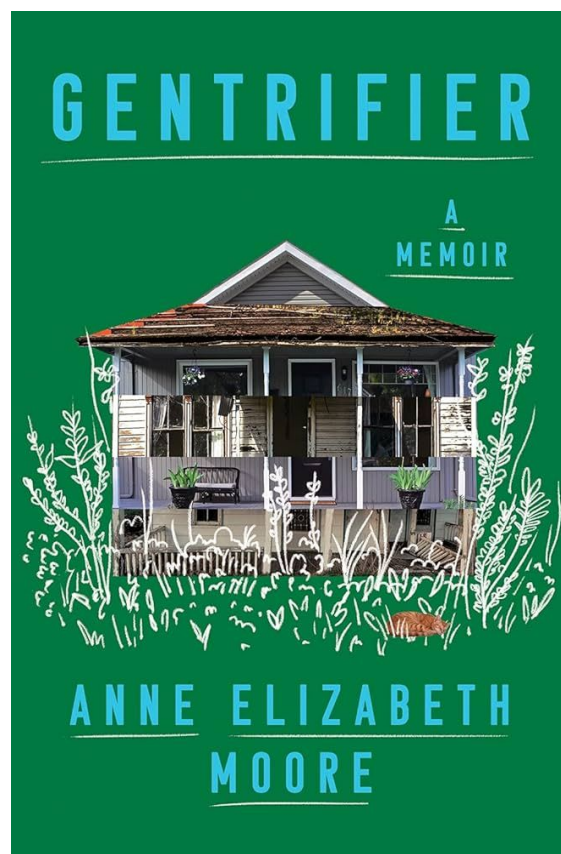
by: Valerie Polukhtin

Who doesn't want a free house? With rising housing costs and interest rates, this proposition sounds almost too good to be true. In her latest book, published in 2019, Anne Elizabeth Moore chronicles her own experience receiving a free house in Detroit as part of an initiative for writers.

In 2014, Moore won a writing program that "gave" her a free house to free writers from rent and leave space for creativity. The only stipulation was the requirement to spend two years before officially receiving ownership of the house. Moore's house was located in a Bengali neighborhood in Detroit, where she tries to connect with those around her despite her misgivings at being a possible white gentrifier. Her early days in the house are spent cleaning, removing debris piled and, more importantly to her, planting a garden. The garden helps craft a sense of established roots, and when Moore describes her childhood and her distancing from it, the reader understands the beauty of home ownership, this feeling of safety.

Moore describes her experience living there as a collection of anecdotes. Random people examining her garden, getting a new truck, trips to the hardware store, the little girl across the street who called her name, neighbors' kids chatting about random things, invitations to join prayers, Eid celebrations.

Although these stories are interesting, together the narrative does feel a bit disjointed. At times, it feels like merely filler for Moore's more sharp commentary on the whole situation. Moore's narrative of the time moving to and living in the house is interesting but often too meandering in my opinion. However, I did applaud the hidden gems such as how community "is the people who show up... invited or not, desirable or not."



Source: Goodreads

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Moore's memoir really shines in the last third. After Moore has officially acquired her home, she decides to sell it because she finds the life there repetitive and the jobs lacking. It's at this point the plot really thickens. When she goes to list the house, her name's not on the title, despite the organization giving her the deed. Immediately, she suspects something amiss because the organization that selected her had a problematic past (poor communication, lacking in certain basic repairs, bad standing with the state government).

As Moore begins her own investigation, she suspects the house was not, as they claimed, abandoned, but actually seized by the government. Moore continues until the end of the book to unsuccessfully search for the original owner. Meanwhile, she researches the history of property seizure in Detroit. Moore lays out the abnormally high amount of property foreclosures, often due to undisclosed taxes, and the record profits the County of Wayne made off homes in Detroit.

Moore's discovery is astounding. Over one in four properties in the city underwent foreclosure between 2002 and 2014. Moore collects stories about the lack of financial literacy, confusing legal jargon, and often complete lack of communication that led to hundreds losing homes over unpaid taxes bills of only a few hundred dollars. Her investigative work at the end is equally impressive and horrifying. Moore receives her house in an illegal and unethical manner, an experience she feels "so deeply American it sickens."

Although she manages to sell the house in the end, it's a period of her life she would never repeat. As Moore concludes, the "free house I was given to write in was not free or mine," a beautiful uncovering of a deal too good to be true. Moore unravels the systems in Detroit that exploited, and in different ways continue to exploit, lower-class and ethnic communities in their home ownership goals.



Source: gettyimages

Haunted House

by: Ethan Kim

With the upcoming halloween season, everyone has been more motivated than ever to start getting their Halloween costume, plan out their route for trick-or-treating or getting tickets for a Haunted House that they want to go to. Telling spooky stories about the creepy house in the neighborhood are all fun and lighthearted until someone brings up a real haunted house with a creepy story that happened there. It feels like it's straight out of a movie and that there would be no way that there is an actual haunted house in the US. There are actually multiple famous haunted houses in the US, and each story behind it is extremely unique and spooky at the same time.

In California, The Whaley House Museum is well known for a disturbing event that occurred there. In the mid 19th century, James Robinson was killed by choking to death with a rope around his neck since he had committed a crime of grand larceny (stealing a very valuable item). After this punishment, a couple, Thomas and Anna Whaley, had built a new house on the exact same place where Robinson died. According to Thomas and Anna Whaley, they could hear his footsteps that were surrounding the house and that James Robinson kept on haunting them. Additionally, ghosts other than James Robinson were claimed to be showing up around the house, and a young girl and a dog show up from their graves to haunt the house. Today, it's possible to tour this house in San Diego, California, if anyone is feeling up to seeing this old but well-kept site.



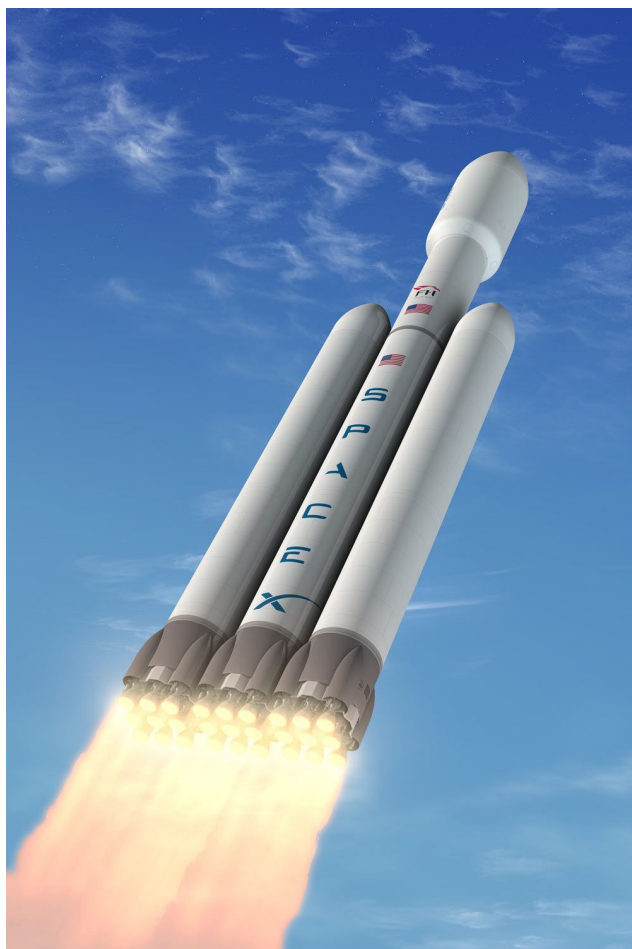
Source: Freepik

October Shuffle:

CURRENT NEWS

SpaceX Stranding

by: Anika Chintakuntlawar



Source: Space.com

NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore took off on the Boeing Starliner in June, but the Capsule thrusters were deemed not safe enough for the deorbit burn and re-entry. For two months since the launch, the two astronauts have been docked at the ISS. NASA and Boeing had two options: to send the capsule back alone and a new rocket up with four vacant seats for astronauts or fix the capsule. Sunita and Butch will be sent back in a SpaceX rocket, not Boeing. This means they will be in space for much longer, until February 2025.

An issue that seemed to worsen during the flight was a helium leak. The helium leak was acknowledged before launch. Five of the Boeing Starliner Engines had malfunctioned before docking. The malfunctions and helium leak caused an hour-long delay in the docking of the ISS. This was Boeing's first manned mission, which was supposed to last only 8 days. Although Boeing regained faith in the starliner, NASA officials unanimously decided to go with SpaceX for a safe return. It has been confirmed that the two astronauts will return on a SpaceX flight in February 2025, 9 months after their launch.

Earth's Second Moon

by: Aarush Ravichand

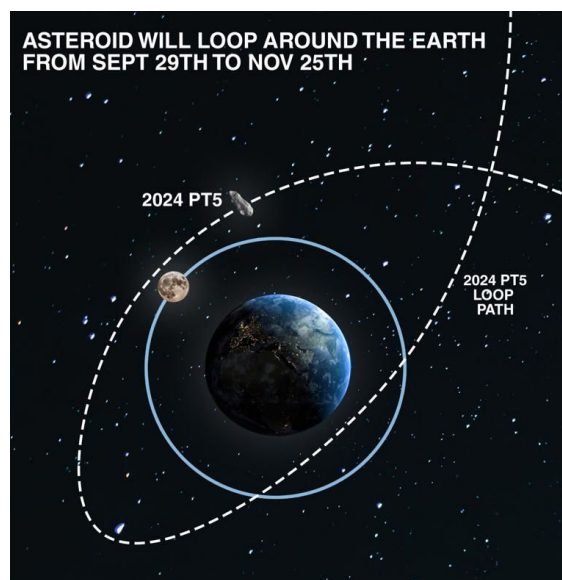
Starting September 29, Earth will experience a rare and fascinating event: the arrival of a temporary second moon. An asteroid named 2024 PT5 will be captured by Earth's gravity and orbit our planet until November 25. While this phenomenon might sound like something out of the book, it offers an opportunity for both scientists to observe and study near-Earth objects.

2024 PT5 is a small asteroid, approximately 10 meters (33 feet) in diameter. Discovered on August 7, 2024, by NASA's Asteroid Terrestrial-impact Last Alert System (ATLAS), this asteroid hails from the Arjuna asteroid belt. Its size and trajectory make it a perfect candidate for becoming a "mini-moon," a term used to describe asteroids temporarily captured by Earth's gravity.

From September 29 to November 25, 2024, PT5 will orbit Earth, making it a temporary natural satellite. Unlike our permanent moon, which has been a constant companion for about 4.6 billion years, 2024 PT5's stay will be brief. During its 57-day orbit, the asteroid will complete one full revolution around Earth before breaking free from our planet's gravitational pull.

The arrival of 2024 PT5 provides a rare opportunity for scientists to study near-Earth objects up close. The last mini-moon, 2022 NX1, was a repeated visitor from 1981, then in 2022, and next in 2051. These mini-moons can offer valuable insights into the composition and behavior of asteroids, which is crucial for planetary defense and potential asteroid mining.

Despite its proximity, 2024 PT5 will be difficult to observe with just the naked eye. However, with a telescope, like the one alluded to in the AI Playboi Carti song, you can catch a glimpse of this temporary moon. Its presence in our skies will indubitably spark curiosity for those fascinated by the wonders of space.



Source: MSN

Horoscope

by: Valerie Polukhtin

Aries (March 21st - April 19th): The full moon rises for Aries in October. Aries should prepare to feel energetic and revitalized, capitalizing on this prime opportunity to reach new depths of passion in a project.

Taurus (April 20th - May 20th): As we approach the day when the boundary between the living and the dead is thinnest, beware the secrets of the dead who will test your loyalty to one whom you love.

Gemini (May 21st - June 21st): While some celebrate the dead, you will celebrate life. October is a month of newfound love for you. The letter 'W' will be very lucky, so hold it dear.

Cancer (June 22nd - June 22nd): This month, you will suffer. You will fail to communicate properly, and as a result, lose something you were so close to grasping. Prepare for loss.

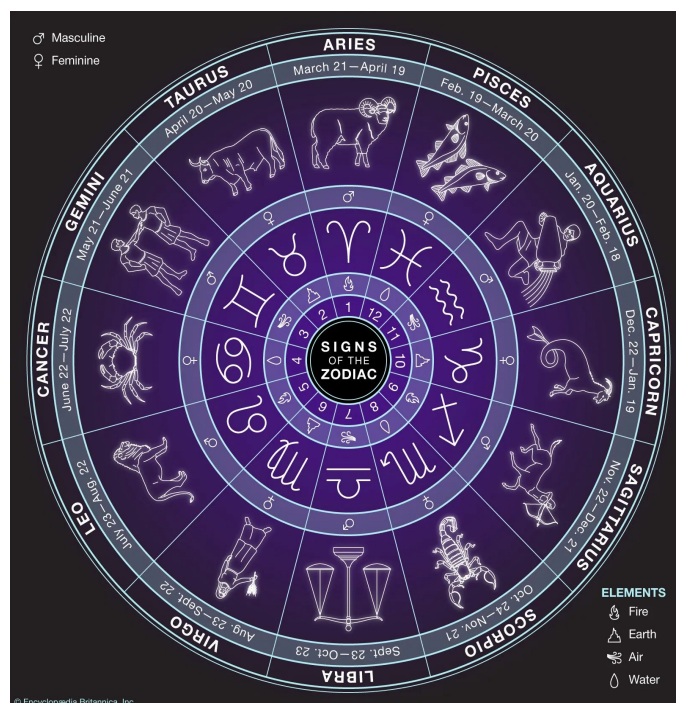
Leo (July 23rd - Aug. 22nd): Your mannerisms will fail you this month. That which comes most easily to you will now fight you, like resisting a current. Measure your confidence, for this month you will not be as assured.

Virgo (Aug. 23rd - Sept. 22nd): You will be held accountable this month for a transgression during the summer. As the world outside darkens, a light inside will shine on your sin.

Libra (Sept. 23rd - Oct. 23rd): Your compassion will temporarily flee in fear. When given a choice, this month you will decide upon cruelty, unleashing a side of you usually hidden.

Scorpio (Oct. 24th - Nov. 21st): You will remain unbothered, like a calm sea, this coming month. While most signs must battle the influence of Samhain, you will bunker down and enjoy inner peace.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22nd - Dec. 21st): Observe your surroundings carefully, for in this upcoming ominous month, if you watch closely, you may be able to monopolize the dread that slowly suffocates others.



Source: Britannica

Capricorn: (Dec. 22nd - Jan. 19): Your stubbornness will deny you a shot at an advancement in your academic journey. Your failure to open your mind will keep you in the dark another cycle.

Aquarius (Jan. 20th - Feb. 18th): This month will see you turning your life around. Saturn's retrograde gives you a chance to renew your inner self and birth a new version of yourself.

Pisces (Feb. 19th - March 20th): Your optimism will transform pessimism this month. As the colder months loom closer, your mind will fall under a spell of darkness and everything will seem so much more hopeless.

PUZZLES

El Wordo

by: Neha Jasthi

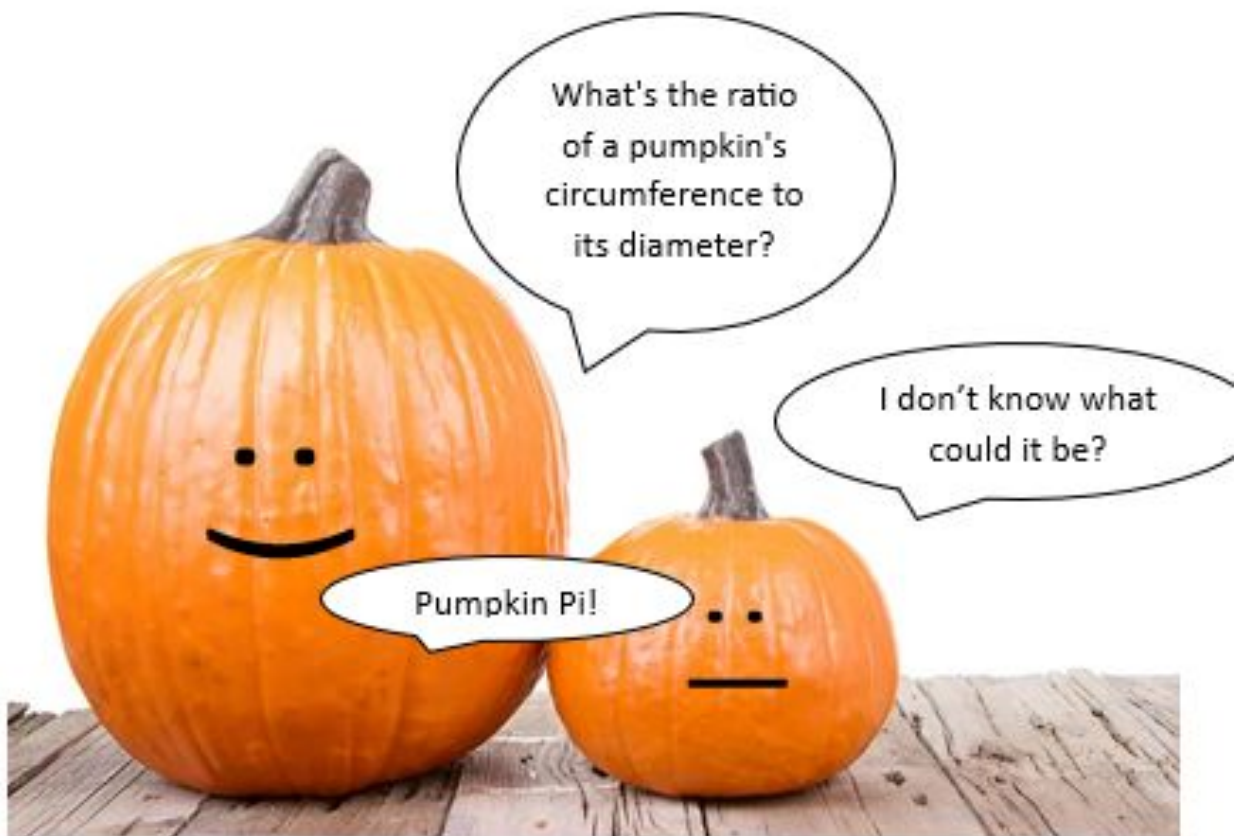
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= right letter, right place



= right letter, wrong place



Picture credit: Deposit Photos

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