The Mansfield High School NEWSPAPER

SPRING ISSUE

Paris, often referred to as the "The City of Light," is a dazzling metropolis where history, culture, and timeless elegance meet, Paris has become one of the world's most beloved cities. Established centuries ago along the Seine, it grew into a global hub of art, fashion, and revolutionary ideas, with every street and building reflecting its rich, storied past.

From the spires of Notre-Dame to the avenues of the Champs-Élysées, Paris is rich in history and beauty. Landmarks like the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, and Arc de Triomphe captivate visitors, but in the quiet cafés, neighborhoods, and galleries, Paris reveals its true charm.

EXCLUSIVE
EXCLUSIVE
EXCLUSIVE



Beyond its historical and architectural grandeur, Paris is a city of innovation, constantly evolving while maintaining its charm. The city is at the forefront of fashion, setting trends, and is also a culinary paradise where you can enjoy everything from fine dining to quaint bistros. Its vibrant arts scene, with modern galleries and street art, ensures Paris remains an exciting cultural destination for visitors of all tastes.

Paris enchants its visitors with charming streets, the wonders of the Louvre, and enjoyable moments along the Seine. The city's distinctive blend of history, art, gastronomy, and romance offers unforgettable experiences that captivate travelers and leave them yearning for more.

EXCLUSIVE
EXCLUSIVE
EXCLUSIVE

SCROLL FOR FUN ARTICLES, STORIES, AND MORE WRITTEN BY STUDENTS!

SPRING ISSUE

THE MHS NEWSPAPER

SCAN QR CODE TO READ!



ARTICLES
FUN FACTS
COOL INFO

STORIES
&
COMICS

INTERVIEWS
&
MORE

MHS NEWSPAPER

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Learn about the Seal of Biliteracy with Ms. DiBiase!

Q: What is your background in Spanish?
A: I grew up speaking Spanish at home, my parents were both from Mexico. Neither one of them or my older siblings knew how to speak English. I was born in the United States, so my Spanish was spoken at home but my schooling was in the United States with English as my language.

Q: What does the Seal of Biliteracy mean to you, and why is it important for students?
A: Seal of Biliteracy is very important for me and it's a great opportunity for those students who also spoke another language at home. It is important for them so that they can share that they are proficient in their reading, writing, speaking, and listening abilities in their native language.

Q: How do you support students in developing proficiency in all four domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing?
A: For our non-native speakers we try to support students in developing proficiency by practicing speaking, listening, reading and writing in all of our world language classes, French and Spanish. For our native speakers we're automatically taught to do that at a young age.

Q: How do you prepare students to meet the proficiency benchmarks required for the Seal of Biliteracy?
A: We practice with students to prepare them to meet proficiency in their language, not just for the Seal of Biliteracy, but just for their own ability to use it outside of the classroom.

Q: What strategies do you use to differentiate instruction for heritage speakers versus language learners?
A: For heritage speakers, it's a little bit easier, but we want them to feel comfortable. One of the hardest things for them is if they aren't well versed in their writing. Their listening is great, their speaking is great, but sometimes the writing is the hardest part for them.

Q: How do you incorporate authentic cultural materials into your lesson?
A: We try to use as many authentic cultural materials as possible in our language learning. It's really different from your old way of doing things where you had a book and you would just go through all the chapters. There are so many opportunities to find these articles, media, podcasts, and videos on the internet. So I think that just digging around we can find some really great authentic cultural materials.

Q: How do you assess student progress toward biliteracy throughout the year?
A: We definitely assess our students' biliteracy using those four proficiency skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A lot of it has to do with encouragement and showing them that they can get better in these skills.

Q: How do you encourage students to take risks and build confidence in speaking Spanish?
A: I encourage students to take risks and build confidence in speaking Spanish. For me personally, I need the classroom to be a very comfortable atmosphere. I show them that it's easy for me to make mistakes and it's easy for them as well, but I'm always trying to correct or learn something. If I don't know a word or how to spell a word or say something it's totally okay to look things up, but you need to practice that.

Q: What role does feedback play in your classroom?
A: Feedback in the classroom is really important. Students don't know what to say or how to look for something. So I think as teachers of any language or any subject, it's really important to show them how to research, how to look for things, how to say things, how to write things correctly. So I think that everyone can make progress, but we need to show them where their challenges lie and how to get better.

Q: How do you promote biliteracy beyond the classroom and to take the Seal of Biliteracy?
A: I encourage all students to take the Seal of Biliteracy test here at Mansfield. There is no charge for it, and it's just a great way for the students to know that their proficiency skills can be really different. They may be really good at their listening, some are better at their writing, they might lack in their speaking, but it's a good way to assess those proficiency skills and say, "'Okay, I know I need to get better in this particular skill'" and then make ways to do that.

MARCH 31ST ~

TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY

Transgender Day of Visibility is a day to celebrate transgender people and to raise awareness towards the discrimination that they face all over the world. It's seperate from **Trangender Awareness week**, which is more focused on educating and advocating leading up to **Transgender Day of Rememberance**. TDOV is also meant to be uplifting in visibility for trans folks.

Transgender people as-well as trans kids are discriminated against and still face challenges today just from identifying with a different gender than they were assigned at birth. Especially today by our own government. Taking away gender affirming care for youth being debated in our government, revoking transgender people's licenses in Kansas and even being threatened to be thrown into jail. Trans people have always been apart of our communities, which is why we should support and advocate for trans individuals. You can celebrate TDOV by educating yourself and others on trans issues, supporting trans content creators, and showing your support for the trans community in our school by being more inclusive.



April Fools joke ideas!

Broken Phone Screenshot
Set a cracked-screen wallpaper on someone's phone (if they let you borrow it) and watch their reaction.

The "Auto-Correct" Prank
If someone lets you use their phone for a second, change a common word in their keyboard shortcuts so it replaces it with something silly like "banana."

The "Your Shoe's Untied" Classic
Tell someone their shoe is untied when it's not. Old but still funny!

Upside-Down Screen
Rotate someone's computer screen upside down (there's a quick keyboard shortcut on many computers).

Glasses or Pencil Case Swap
If you and a friend have similar supplies, switch them and act confused together for a moment.

Tape Over the Mouse Sensor
Put a tiny piece of tape under a computer mouse sensor so it won't move. When they try to use it, it "doesn't work." (Just remove it after!)

The "You're Late" Prank
When a friend walks into class, whisper:
"You just missed the attendance check."

Fake Snack Switch
Put grapes in a candy bag or baby carrots in a chips bag and offer it to your friend.

The Delayed Joke
Write "Turn this paper over" on both sides of a sheet of paper and give it to someone.

Fake "AirDrop / Share" Name
If people around you use AirDrop or device sharing, temporarily change your device name to something funny

Water Bottle Confusion
Put a small label on a friend's water bottle that says something silly like:
"Top Secret Science Experiment."

The Confusing Compliment
Walk up to a friend and say:
"Congrats!"
If they ask why, just say:
"You'll find out later."
Then later say April Fools.

-Sisira Mannava

"A GIRL THAT'LL BLOW YOU AWAY"

By: William Ng

1.



2.




OH GODDANDIT, IT'S FINALLY HAPPENING. JANETTE, YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO TRUST ME.
Honey, what's going on? I'm scared.

3.


Listen to me sweetie. Take care of the baby, and rest assured, no matter what's about to happen, I will find you again. You, me, our family and friends. We will be together again.

4.

5.



6.


I already have a feeling that something wonderful just happened somewhere!

THE END

nerdy nectar

by Josie Gallagher



Science: Rainbows

We see rainbows due to the reflection and refraction of sunlight in raindrops. When a ray of light enters a raindrop, it is bent (refracted) slightly off of its original trajectory and hits the curved edge of the drop. This edge, like a mirror, reflects the light back out of the drop, where it is again refracted. The ray of light separates into different colors due to the differing wavelengths of light colors. Not all of the energy escapes after being reflected once, which is why we sometimes see a double rainbow. It is possible for light to reflect more than twice in a raindrop, but these additional rainbows are usually not visible to the human eye.

History: Joan of Arc

Joan of Arc is believed to have been born on January 6th, 1412. She grew up in a peasant family in France, which at the time was fighting off invasion by the English. She believed that she could hear the voices of saints, telling her to fight for her country. At sixteen years of age, Joan won the approval of Charles the dauphin, the heir to the French throne. She is most famous for driving out the English in the Siege of Orléans, allowing Charles to become King Charles VII. Captured not long after by the Burgundian allies of the English, she was burned at the stake before reaching the age of twenty. Joan earned the title of Saint due to her dedication to the Christian faith and heroism for her country.



have a fun fact you'd like to see in the newspaper? email any nerdy nectar suggestions to jgallagher28@mansfieldschools.com

nerdy nectar



Sports: Curling

A game of curling takes place on a long sheet of ice, typically being played by two teams of four. Both teams elect a skip, or a chief strategist, and a vice-skip. In each of eight to ten rounds (called “ends”), each team will deliver eight stones to a target on one side of the sheet, which is referred to as the house. As one player delivers a stone, others will “sweep” the ice in front of it in order to warm up the ice and straighten the stone’s trajectory. At the end of each end, the team whose stone is closest to the center of the house will receive one point for every stone they have closer than any of the other team’s stones.

Music: Periods of Classical Music

All increments of time listed are approximations since these periods do not have hard and fast boundaries of when they start and end.

- Medieval Period (1150 - 1400)
- Renaissance Period (1400 - 1600)
- Baroque Period (1600 - 1750)
- Classical Period (1750 - 1830)
- Romantic Period (1830 - 1900)
- Twentieth Century (1900 - 2000)
- Contemporary Period (2000 - Present)



LITERATURE & LANGUAGE: RAREST LANGUAGES ON EARTH

Taushiro - Spoken by only one person, originated from Peru

Tanema - Spoken by only one person, originated from the Solomon Islands

Lemerig - Spoken by two people, originated from the island of Vanuatu

Njerep - The nearly extinct language of the Njerep people in Nigeria

Ongota - Possibly still spoken by one or two people, but uncertain, comes from a village in southern Ethiopia

To Bee or Not To Bee: Contents

- Band
- Choir
- Orchestra
- Theatre
- Winter Percussion
- Tri-M

MHS Band

CONGRATS TO THE BAND FOR A SUCCESFULL ALL MANSFIELD BANDS CONCERT, AND FOR EARNING A SLIVER MEDAL AT MICCA!

CONGRATS AS WELL TO THOSE WHO AUDITIONED FOR AND PARTICIPATED IN THE SEMSBA FESTIVAL THIS YEAR!

NEXT UP:

APRIL 8 - JAZZ AND PERCUSSION NIGHT

MAY 23RD - MANSFIELD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

MAY 7TH - SPRING CONCERT

MHS

Choir

CONGRATS TO THE CHOIR FOR AN EXCELLENT ALL MANSFIELD CHOIRS CONCERT!

WANT TO JOIN?
CONTACT MS. BROPHY AT LAURA.BROPHY@MANSFIELDSCHOOLS.COM

AFTER SCHOOL CHOIR MEETS ON TUESDAYS IN THE CHOIR ROOM

NEXT UP:
MAY 7 - SPRING CONCERT

MHS Orchestra

Congrats to the MHS Orchestra for earning a Silver medal at MICCA, as well as an amazing performance at the All Orchestra Concert!

Coming up:
May 7th – Spring Concert
May 23rd – Mansfield Symphony Orchestra

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THE SPRING PLAY?

The MHS drama department will be putting on a production of Cabfare for the Common Man on May 15th and 16th this spring! The show is a collection of eight 10-minute plays (comedies AND dramas) that are all being directed by MHS students. To celebrate the beginning of the rehearsal process, the MHS Newspaper interviewed a couple pairs of directors.

Interview 1:





What are your names?

H: My name's Hazel

G: Gwen

What shows are you directing?

H: We're directing...

G: LA 8AM

Both: and Cabfare for the Common Man

Can you give us a little explanation of your shows?

H: I'll do Cabfare. So, Cabfare is about this young man who is kind of watching his life go by in the span of like 10-ish minutes, and the kind of point of the play is about taking the time to slow down and appreciate what you have.

G: LA 8AM, we're kind of taken through the mind of Kevin, this man who loves to keep track of his life in numbers, and eventually we learn that someone's time is up in the show.

What do you think makes you a good director?

H: I think good directors are strong leaders and strong role models for their casts, and help their casts grow. Wanna add anything Gwen?

G: I believe that a good director is very motivated, very organized, and just has a passion.

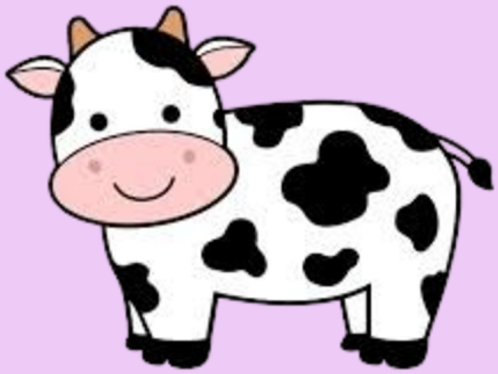
H: Passion for theatre!

Interviews conducted by Violet Roth

What are you excited about as student directors?
H: I'm excited to get this experience and kind of have a different theatre experience than what I usually have because usually I'm an actor, so it'll be kind of fun to try out something new and maybe grow my overall theatre skills.
G: My freshman year I had two great student directors named Zoey Roth and Ryan Smith...
H: Yep, miss them dearly.
G: ...and they left a big impact on me as an actor, really changed my whole perspective and I'm hoping that now I can full circle and do that for an underclassman.

What's one thing you want to say to get people to come see the show?
G: I think it'll definitely change your outlook on, if not life, your day. Definitely, the deeper shows have a lot of reflection, but I'd love for you guys to come see the other shows cause there's a lot of fun ones in there.
H: Come support the actors, the crew, the directors, and come see what we do at MHS drama!

Interview 2:



What are your names?
K: Keegan Connery
I: Ikey Scire

What show are you directing?
K: The Prodigal Cow

Can you give us a little explanation of your show?
I: There's a cow, and he's invited to a party, but it turns out that they're gonna eat him at the party, and he comes to accept that fact.

Interviews conducted by Violet Roth

What do you think makes you a good director?
K: I think a good director is someone who is firm, but also kind, someone understanding, but also can set boundaries and expectations for their cast.

What are you excited about as student directors?
I: To have the opportunity to work with people who are the same age as me, so they'll understand stuff.
K: And to try something new as well.

What's one thing you want to say to get people to come see the show?
K: It's very funny.
I: It's mad funny, bro!
K: On the script it says it won 'best play award.'
I: That's just 'best play award' in general. Best play to ever happen, ever.
**Editor's note: The Prodigal Cow was not deemed the best play ever, but it has won several awards!*

Come see Cabfare for the Common Man to support the work of these four directors, as well as five other student directors AND all of the students involved in acting and tech!
(Hints about some of the other plays below!)







Interviews conducted by Violet Roth

WINTER PERCUSSION

Presenting the "Infernal Railroad" in their 2025-2026 season, MHS Winter Percussion has been working hard since November to bring together four songs to tell one story. It begins with a group of workers building a railroad, but they grow very weary of their work, and make a deal with "The Devil," played by Emmy DeJesus, and in the end they all lose their souls.

Congrats at:
NESBA Blackstone Millville Regional HS - 73.30
WGI New Jersey - 70.80
NESBA Dartmouth HS - 81.10
NESBA New Bedford HS - 86.15
NESBA Salem HS - 85.25

Good luck at:
NESBA Finals & the Dayton Ohio Competitions!

MHS TRI-M

MARCH - MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS

Join us for:

Hornet block events

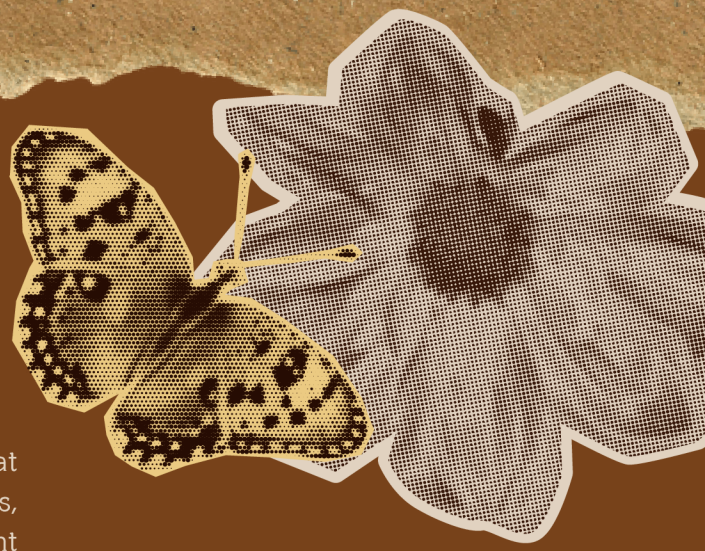
DJ Friday lunches

COMING UP:

April 28th - Honors Concert

Coffee House/Karaoke Night in May

Exemplary Women From the 1800s to Now:



As many people know, March is Women's History month, and that being said it is important to not only recognize the women around us, but the women before us too. These women have made significant contributions to society in terms of physical, scientific, and social developments, and their actions and ideas have outlived them and continue to persevere through today's world.

Written by Mia Schwehm

Malala Yousafazi:



Malala was born in Mingora, Pakistan, in 1997, and attended a girl's school run by her father until 2009, when the Taliban took control over her town and banned many things, including girls going to school. From there, at only 11 years old, she began to speak out on girls' access to education and was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize as well as Pakistan's National Peace Award for Youth. However, in October of 2012, she was shot on the left side of her head while on her way home from school, and amazingly survived it. After months of surgeries and recovery, she vowed to continue advocating for women's rights, and spoke at the United Nations in 2013. She started Malala Fund, an organization that supports girls' rights to pursue a complete 12 years of education, and is seen as a brave and heroic activist across the world.

Maria Skłodowska-Curie:



Most known as simply Marie Curie, she was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize and a revolutionary chemist and physicist. In 1867, she was born in Warsaw, Poland, where she first began her scientific studies before moving to Paris with her sister in 1891, where she earned two degrees. Through her studies in science, she met Pierre Curie, a fellow scientist, and they fell in love with each other as they worked together, and married in 1895. After the invention of X-Rays, she began to study uranium rays, and her investigation led her to the discovery of polonium and radium in 1898. Pierre had joined her research as it progressed, and the pair published joint papers on the discovery of the new elements, and they were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1903, although Marie was almost not included in the nomination due to her being a woman. In 1911, she was awarded a Nobel Prize in Chemistry, and her discoveries and studies went on to help shape the field of radioactivity, nuclear physics, and even cancer treatments.



Marsha P. Johnson:

In 1945, Marsha was born in Elizabeth, New Jersey, and moved to Manhattan after graduating high school years later, where she spent much of her time on 42nd Street in Times Square. She would often wear partial drag with vibrant accessories in her day to day life, despite the harassment she received for being a transgender woman and dressing feminine. She participated in the Stonewall Riots of 1969, which were caused in response to a police raid of Stonewall Inn, one of the few gay bars that existed at the time. After Stonewall, Marsha became an active member of both the Gay Activists Alliance and the Gay Liberation Front, organizations that worked for creating equal rights for gay people of the time. Later, she helped create STAR, an organization that provided food and shelter for homeless transgender youth, and she was a strong activist during the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, as well as helping care for her friends who were dying due to contracting AIDS. She was seen as a strong figure in moving the world of gay and trans rights forward, and has helped fight for progress that can be seen in today's society.

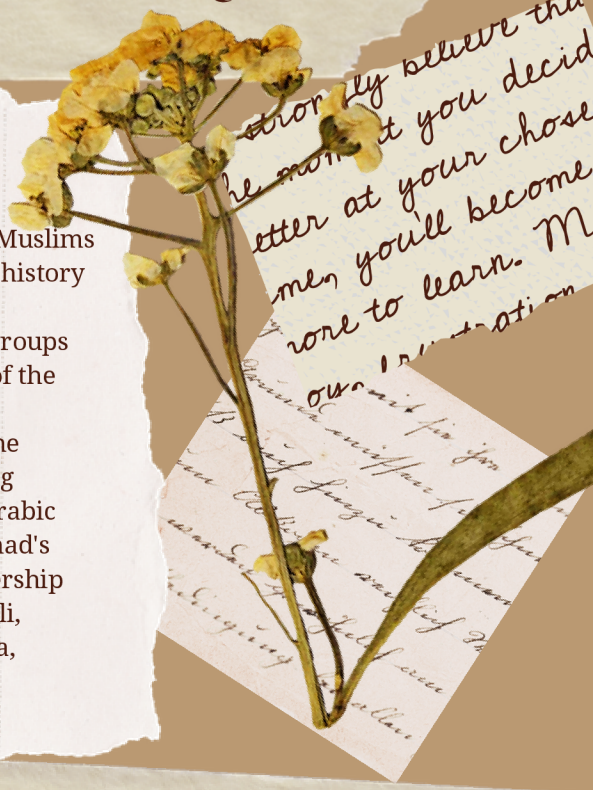
Sophie Scholl:

Born in 1921 in Germany, Sophie grew up during the Nazi regime with her brother, Hans, and was appalled by their actions and oppression. In 1940, Hans started a group with a few close friends who shared his anti-Nazi sentiments, and began a strategy of developing leaflets that promoted the overthrow of the government. The group called themselves the White Rose, and in 1942, Sophie discovered the group and eagerly joined in, with four leaflets being completed by that time. These leaflets were distributed through telephone books and mailed to professors, students, and other universities to be spread even further. Due to being a woman, Sophie was less likely to be searched by the SS, so she took on the transfer of many of the leaflets. However, on February 18th, 1943, Sophie and Hans brought a large number of leaflets to LMU Munich which were distributed throughout the school while the other students were occupied with lectures, but they were seen by the school janitor. After this, both Hans and Sophie were taken into custody by the Gestapo and after learning that Hans confessed, Sophie assumed full responsibility to protect the other members of the White Rose. She, Hans, and one other member were executed, but while she died, her ideas lived on and prompted others to question the government and speak up for those oppressed.



KEY DETAILS ON THE SUNNI-SHIA SPLIT

BY GIA SEN



CHOOSING A CALIPH

More than 1.6 billion people practice Islam worldwide, but many non-Muslims may not know that the faith is divided into two major branches with a history stretching back nearly 1,400 years. The divide between Sunni and Shia Muslims isn't about the Quran or the five pillars of Islam, which both groups share. It goes back to a single, turbulent moment in 632 CE: the death of the Prophet Muhammad, and the question of who would lead next.

Muhammad left no clear successor when he died. Most believed that the community's most respected elders should elect a new leader, following established tradition. This group became known as Sunnis, from the Arabic word *sunna*, meaning tradition. They chose Abu Bakr, one of Muhammad's closest companions, as the first caliph, or leader. Others believed leadership should stay within Muhammad's family. Specifically, they supported Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. This group became known as Shia, shortened from *Shiat Ali*, Arabic for "followers of Ali."

72 AGAINST 4,000

The Battle of Karbala on October 10, 680 CE was a major event in Muslim history. Ali had been killed, but his son Husayn remained the last living heir of Muhammad and the leader that the Shia faithfully rallied behind. When Yazid I of the Umayyad dynasty became caliph, Husayn refused to accept his rule and moved to confront him. He was met by a Sunni army of roughly 4,000 soldiers, but he only had approximately 72 men. Husayn and nearly all of his followers were killed. The battle decisively established Umayyad Sunni rule and ended any realistic prospect of a descendant of Muhammad leading the caliphate. For Shia Muslims, Karbala became a defining act of martyrdom and is mourned to this day during Ashura.



1,400 YEARS LATER

Today, the Sunni majority makes up roughly 85 percent of the world's Muslims, with the Shia comprising about 15 percent. What started as a dispute over succession gradually evolved into something larger. Over the centuries, the Sunni-Shia divide became entangled with politics, wealth, and empires. It became less about who was the rightful heir of a 7th-century prophet and more about identity, loyalty, and power. Today it shapes geopolitics across the Middle East, but it's worth remembering what the divide is not: a disagreement about the core tenets of Islam. Both Sunni and Shia Muslims pray five times a day, fast during Ramadan, and revere Muhammad as the final prophet.

REUSABLE POLAROID FRAME

A cute, reusable craft

Materials:

- Felt
- Pen/pencil
- Fabric glue or superglue
- Scissors
- Decorating materials buttons, beads, cut pieces of felt

Steps:

1. Measure and draw out a frame that holds your polaroid while displaying the picture
2. Cut out scalloped front piece and square backing
3. Glue on your decorations to the front scalloped piece
4. Glue the front and back pieces together
5. To finish, you can glue a magnet back, stitch on a safety pin, or keychain. Choose depending on how you want to display your polaroid!

INSPO ON NEXT PAGE!

REUSABLE POLAROID FRAME

A cute, reusable craft



Note: These examples are stitched together, but using glue will work as well. However, you could totally try the sewing route if you'd like!

BELEN M. N.

STATIC

BY WREN CONNOLLY

I didn't remember much.

Well, not anything, really.

The woods were nice, I suppose. Twigs didn't make very comfy blankets. Or pillows. Why my past self had decided they would, I wasn't sure. Not that I was sure of anything at all.

Anyway, I didn't have much choice but to deal with it. I woke up in the middle of a cloudy, cold, and damp forest, all alone, at what I was assuming was the middle of the day in fall. Maybe winter, because it was freezing.

And the leaves were all gone. But mostly the freezing part.

Moving on, you can imagine my first reaction to my situation: absolute panic.

“What the hell?” I exclaimed. “Where am I? What time is it? What's going on? Why don't I remember…”

My throat closed off in fear. “Why can't I remember anything?”

My heart began to pound and I shot to my feet, whipping around for anything familiar. Except, I didn't know what was familiar and what wasn't.

It was then that I realized, “I don't even know who I am.”

My breathing sped up, an electric buzz traveling through my nerves. I stumbled in circles, calling for help until my voice was raw and hoarse. My eyes stung and my hands shook. I didn't know if I used to, but I definitely hated the woods now.



When I calmed down, I took some deep breaths and looked around. But when one is in a forest, there's not much to see other than eerie trees. Especially when in a remote forest, like mine.

My relaxation tactics were not working at that moment. For example, the very first coherent words I spoke were, “Okay, Zak, just breathe. Keep a clear head, and foc—wait, did I just say my name?” Thus triggering a string of curses.

“Calm down,” I told myself, “take a breath. What do you do in the woods to survive? You need, uhh...Weapons? Yes, you need weapons in the woods, right? I need...Aha!” I triumphantly lifted a large stick from the ground. After deciding it to be sufficient enough defense, I slowly crept through the dark, grayed trees.

I hummed my way through the wood, trying to soothe my nerves. I didn't know what I was humming, yet I seemed to know exactly how the melody went. I did my best to not think about it and just focus on finding safety. It helped until it began to echo, sounding like a ghost approaching me. Then I stopped humming.

At last, after walking for what felt like forever, I heard another sound.

Laughter.

After making sure some ghoulish creature wasn't near me, I sighed with relief.

“Oh, thank God,” I breathed.

I dashed towards the noise, regardless of branches and thorns scraping my face. I had to reach some sort of civilization as soon as possible, or at least be among animals that I was 98% sure didn't want to kill or eat me.

I found myself panting and bleeding at the fence of a children's playground. Not a great location to come thundering out of the trees at.

About eleven kids paused their elaborate game of tag to gape at me for a few minutes. One of the girls turned to her dad and said bluntly, “Daddy, he looks silly.”

“Wha...” I was too confused and out of breath to process what was going on.

The man that I assumed was her dad gasped when he saw me, and quickly ushered her away along with the other kids. I realized it probably looked like I was threatening them, so I dropped my stick.

“I have to get to a building,” I gasped.

I ran to the only place in sight: the public restrooms. That was the last place I wanted to be, but I didn't have anywhere else to go. Against my better judgement, I rushed into one of the rooms and locked the door.

“Zak,” I muttered, nodding. “Yeah, Zak. Okay, that's not terrible. What was my last name, then? Something short, like... Rain, or Hart, or...Hale! Yes, Zak Hale. I am Zak Hale! That's a start!”

I felt something run up my spine. A fizzing sensation filled my bones for a moment. My eye twitched, but other than that, nothing really happened.

“Strange…” I decided to brush it off. Then, I was hit with a realization. “Mirror. I need a mirror. I have to know what I look like.”

I turned around and noticed one on the wall at the far end of the room. I walked to it slowly, oddly suspenseful. I mean, the kid did say I looked funny, right? I didn't know if I was comfortable with being described as “funny-looking”.

When I finally reached the mirror, I turned to my right, surprised.

“Okay,” I muttered. “I mean, that's not bad.”

I was a teenager, which I could've guessed, about 16 or 17. I had dark hair, pale, almost beige eyes, and darker skin. I was average height, as far as I could tell, and pretty fit, too, which was a plus.

“Nice to meet you, Zak,” I mumbled. “This'll be interesting, yeah?”

Women's History Month Interviews

Hello MHS! Below is a series of interviews from one amazing woman in each department to celebrate Women's History Month. Unfortunately, it was impossible for me to include more than one, due to time constraints, but please know that all female staff members in this building are some of the most hardworking people I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. They deserve infinite respect and gratitude for everything they do for us.

Each staff member had such unique, diverse responses, and they were all extraordinarily kind to me throughout the interview process. I wanted to take a moment to thank the participants for their time and their kindness! Thank you!



Math Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Mrs. Mintz

My name is Mrs. Mintz.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Mrs. Mintz

Math.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Mrs. Mintz

Probably Nadia Comaneci. She won the 1976 Olympics for Romania. And then she had trials in her life, and came back to compete after she had struggled so she didn't give up.

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Mrs. Mintz

Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Seriously, the lady is awesome, the stuff she did and the way she just forged new paths for people and stood up for people that she believed needed to be stood up for. She's just where we should all be as women, like she was just unbelievable.

Interviewer

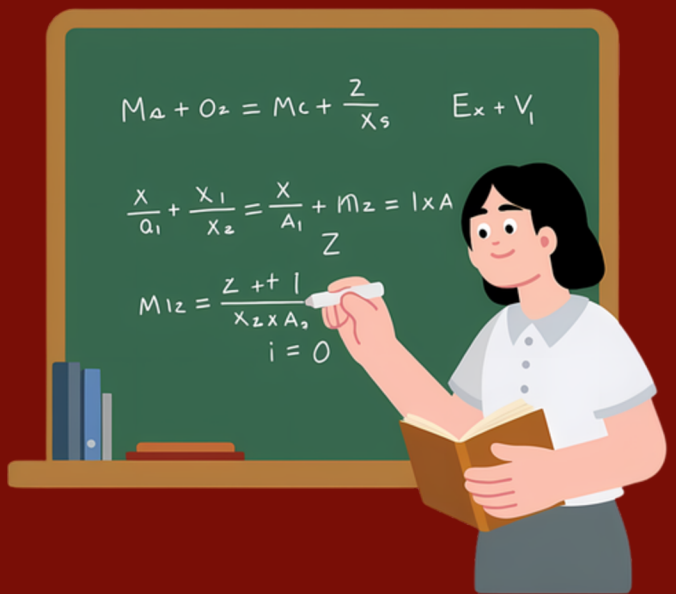
Do you have any advice for young women?

Mrs. Mintz

Again, don't give up, even if there's something you want to do when they tell you you can't do it, specifically coming from a math field that's traditionally male. Just because you struggle at something doesn't mean you can't do it. Just continue to keep doing it, and you will get there eventually. It may take you a longer or different route, but don't give up on your dreams.







English Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Ms. Sawyer

Miss Sawyer, Christina Sawyer.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Ms. Sawyer

10th grade English of all different levels.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Ms. Sawyer

My mom, definitely, and, I don't know, maybe different authors that I've read in the past.

Interviewer

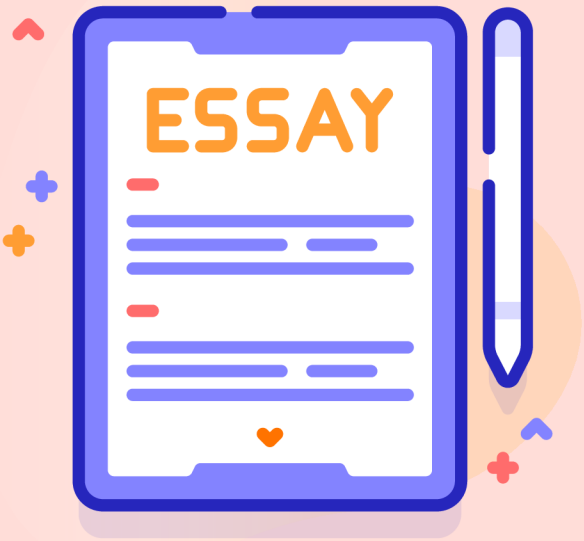
Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Ms. Sawyer

Well, our old department head was Cindy Carly, Mrs. Carly, and she was a great teacher and a great department head. And I would say I looked up to her and modeled a lot of what I do with 10 Honors from things that we worked on together. And I was very sad when she retired.

Ms. Sawyer

Yes, I do have lots of good advice I would give to young women. I would say, follow your dreams, know your worth. I would say, you know, be as independent as you can be. I would say that you are in charge of your own destiny, and you don't need anyone else, and you can be independent and strong and fierce, and just go with that. And just try to live life like it's an adventure, and, yeah, just stay true to yourself and don't change yourself for anybody else.





Science Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Mrs. Gentili

Mrs. Maggie Gentili

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Mrs. Gentili

AP Environmental Science and Environmental Issues & Conservation

Interviewer

Who is a woman who inspires you in life?

Mrs. Gentili

The woman that MOST inspires me in my personal life is my daughter, Hannah. As a young woman, she is already so much stronger than I ever was...not just when I was her age. Having a daughter like my Hannah inspires me to be courageous and tackle "hard things" that come my way. She is so adept at facing challenges and being resilient. She remains rational in emotional situations and has an ability to rebound from obstacles much better than I ever could. Watching her stay sweet. hopeful, empathetic and gentle with strength and quiet confidence when she is overwhelmed... inspires me to step up and adopt that same growth mindset. Hannah inspires me to be the best version of myself and motivates me to remain curious, creative and enthusiastic.

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Mrs. Gentili

A woman that I look up to professionally is Jane Goodall. In my opinion, the world lost a Saint when she passed last year. Jane Goodall was the epitome of what it means to devote yourself to a cause that you are passionate about. Her dedication to protecting Earth's wild animals has had a profound impact on me as an educator of environmental science and as a lifelong learner. I especially love her work with youth empowerment and her efforts to encourage and inspire adolescents to refuse apathy and instead, embrace HOPE. With hope, she says, comes action. Her particular style of advocacy is one that I attempt to emulate. She is gentle but incredibly knowledgeable; she is commanding without being demanding. Jane Goodall lived a beautiful life of service; she never lost her passion and she inspired generations to follow in her footsteps.

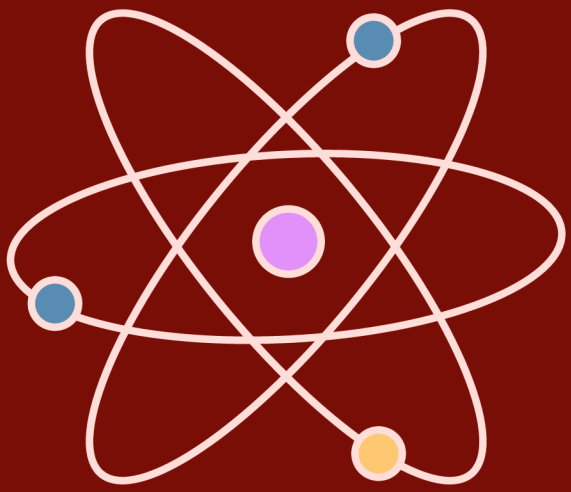
Science Department

Interviewer

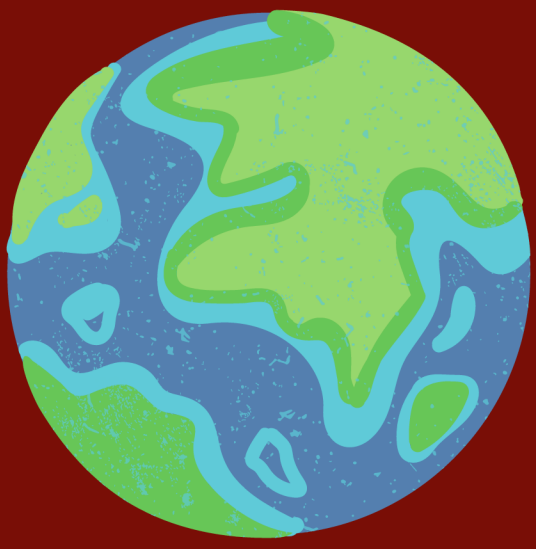
Do you have any advice for young women?

Mrs. Gentili

My advice for young women would be to cultivate self-confidence and focus on your own journey... comparison is a thief of joy! Measure your successes through personal growth; remember that growth happens through the challenges and struggles in life so recognize when life throws some curve-balls your way, you are building your character and developing crucial life skills. Set clear and strong personal boundaries and ENFORCE them! DENY ALL OF THE SOCIAL LIMITATIONS GROSSLY APPLIED TO WOMEN!! BREAK THOSE GLASS CEILINGS!! Lastly, be gentle with yourself. Love yourself. Give yourself the same grace that you do to others. My "mom motto" for all of my children has always been this: "Always finish what you've started. Always give it all you've got. Always keep JOY in your heart."







History Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Mrs. Atwood

My name is Mrs. Atwood.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Mrs. Atwood

I teach World History, Asian Studies, AP, Psych and Making History.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in life?

Mrs. Atwood

I would say my mother. Before she retired, she was a physical therapist, she worked full time. She's a big supporter of women's rights and all about freedom, and she inspires me.



Interviewer

Is there one that inspires you professionally?

Mrs. Atwood

I would say Mrs. Farrington. She's a hard working, dedicated professional. Just her zest for math, and her love of learning, and she always keeps such a great, positive attitude.

Interviewer

Do you have any advice for young women?

Mrs. Atwood

Stand your ground, be confident in who you are, and don't give in just because sometimes society makes you feel like you should.



Language Department

Interviewer

Okay, first of all, what is your name?

Profe

So my name is Jenny Donahue, but when I started here, I was Jenny Smith, and I got married, and I'm not even married to Mr. Donahue anymore, so I go by Profe. That's, that's the real deal.

Interviewer

Okay. What do you teach?

Profe

I teach high school Spanish. I teach the AP level. I've taught every course there is in this building, as far as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Currently it's Spanish 2 and AP. And then I teach the class called World Language Practicum, where I teach kids how to teach and then they go over to the elementary schools and teach French and Spanish. And some of them remember having people come to their classes, and now it's coming full circle. And a lot of these students that I've had, have gone on to become teachers, some even language teachers, so it's kind of a really neat tradition that we started. I think this class started in like 2009 and it's just great. You know at the end if you want to be a teacher or not, ...and you don't have to pay any college credits.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Profe

When I pre- read the question, obviously my mother came to mind, and she died in 2020, not of covid, but during all that time, so we had already not been able to see each other. So it was still kind of raw. But she was so unique. She went to college for sociology, I think that was her major, but she ended up being a teacher. She was like a fifth grade math teacher for a while, and then when she had my older brothers and I, she was the stay at home mom, and she also babysat all the other friends' kids. So we just always had a bunch of people around, and she was always making something out of nothing, which is kind of like my classroom, like, oh extra elastics! We'll make a craft out of that. So she was just crafty and resourceful and creative. I never knew that we didn't have the money that the other people in town had. It never once crossed my mind that I might be considered poor.

Language Department

I always had food, I always had clean clothes, I always had love. She put us first. She probably made sacrifices. And I see that in my parenthood, it's just that's the natural thing to do. Her ultimate job was that she became the Director of Religious Education at our church, Unitarian, Universalist Church, and she just inspired all these other children from a church school perspective, a very liberal religion, and I just got to take her home on Sundays. So everybody got her, but I got to take her home.

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Profe

Well, because my mom was a teacher, I would put her there, but I was inspired by a lot of my own personal teachers over the years. Like in third grade, I knew I wanted to be a teacher, and the fact that it's high school Spanish just sort of evolved. But I can tell you something about every single teacher I ever had, starting with preschool, kindergarten, first grade. ...Every teacher comes with another layer to your education and another layer to being your best self.

Interviewer

Do you have any advice for young women?

Profe

Strive to be your best self, which does not mean you compare yourself to anyone else. It's your best self. Wear the clothes that you feel good in, eat the foods that you feel make you feel happier or healthy, be with friends that make you feel supported, and just, you know, treat others the way you want to be treated. Your best self does not mean perfect. Nobody is ...perfect. ...You already have the whole package. Just make yourself feel comfortable in it and be your best self.





Business Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Ms. Collins

Jacqueline Collins.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Ms. Collins

Business classes, entrepreneurship, personal finance and design publication.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in life?

Ms. Collins

In life, definitely my mom. She was a teacher for 30 years, and she did everything. She was a mom, she was a career woman, and she showed me that you can have them both.

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Ms. Collins

Professionally, there was a mentor that I had, and I still talk to her every once in a while. She was in the education field in Massachusetts. She was one of the very first female superintendents in the state, and she went through everything that you had to go through to prove yourself, because they held her down and made it so it wasn't very easy for her. So she had to be every role leading up to Superintendent, where she needed to become a teacher, a vice principal, a principal, and, you know, curriculum director, assistant superintendent, and then a superintendent. She has a great story. She's a Holocaust survivor. And I really look up to her. And any opportunity that I have to work with her, I jump on it. We both volunteered at the same organization, so it was amazing to hear about, just the transformation about education in general, and also the power that women can have and that you can do it. You don't have to be held back by your gender.

Business Department

There is a woman, her name is Shirley Chisholm, and she said this quote. (I love this quote!) So she's the first African American woman elected to Congress, and she said, “If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring in a folding chair.” I can't tell you how many times that I have done that in my life, because I've been shut out, or I have not been invited to places I should have been. I make my own way in, and I’ve done a great job, succeeding even if I have to find my own spot.











Wellness Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Ms. Crook

My name is Hillary Crook.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Ms. Crook

Physical Education at the high school.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Ms. Crook

I have two. Okay, pretty much all women in my family, but my mom, she was also a PE teacher and she did college volleyball. Just always kind of did that stuff and always encouraged me. But I also am going to pull someone I've never met: Billie Jean King, who is one of the best pioneers for women's sports. She's, if you don't know, she's a famous tennis player, who pretty much put women's sports on the map, and she's still an advocate, and I just like what she does, and she's a great competitor, and I respect that.

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Ms. Crook

There's been such an uproar in women's sports. It's been awesome, like from Simone Biles, so much talent. And then we just had the Winter Olympics. The women's national soccer team is always up there. We have women's hockey. That's the big one. Hillary Knight played for team USA and was a captain. This was, like, her seventh Olympics, and she scored the goal that got them into overtime, then we won the gold. So, like, her name's awesome too. So, yeah, she's definitely up there. There's so many. It's been awesome.

Interviewer

Okay, and do you have any good advice to give to young women?

Ms. Crook

Try every sport, every new sport. If you've never done it, try it. Don't be afraid to try it. Just just do and be yourself and have confidence. Be confident. You belong in sports and in everything. So do the thing.



Visual Arts Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Ms. Martinelli

My name is Jen Martinelli.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Ms. Martinelli

I teach art and ceramics.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Ms. Martinelli

I have a friend who is very open and willing to try new things. And her motto is, “how hard can it be?” And I feel like that's a really awesome motto, that she believes she can learn anything and do anything if she tries hard enough, and she actually does, which is super inspiring!

Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Ms. Martinelli

I feel like there's a lot of painters that I look up to as far as artists go, but I had a college professor that many considered mean, but she took her job very seriously, and she wanted all students to really push themselves and challenge themselves. So she pushed me to really get outside my comfort zone, and it definitely made me a better artist. And she was very honest with me, which was sometimes scary, but very helpful in the end.

Interviewer

And lastly, do you have any good advice to give to young women?

Ms. Martinelli

I would say, don't be afraid to learn new things and to step outside your comfort zone, or be afraid of what people think. Just do what you want to do, and don't let anyone tell you not to.





Performing Arts Department

Interviewer

Okay, first question, what is your name?

Ms. Colombo

My name is Ms. Colombo.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Ms. Colombo

I teach Music and technical theatre.

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Ms. Colombo

Probably my grandmother, who passed away 10 years ago, but she was very kind, caring, but also bold but would also, like, speak up for herself and for others, and it was a good balance.



Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Ms. Colombo

Her name is JoAnn Falletta. She was the first American woman, and the first woman in general to conduct a major American orchestra. She is very fancy and expressive. She's the conductor of the Buffalo Symphony Orchestra.

Interviewer

Do you have any advice for young women?

Ms. Colombo

Yes. Do you, be kind to yourself, be bold, and your voice matters.





Special Education Department

Interviewer

What is your name?

Mrs. Mooney

My name is Liz Mooney.

Interviewer

What do you teach?

Mrs. Mooney

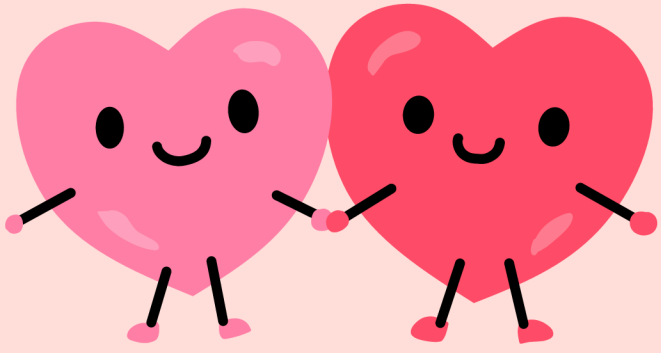
I teach English 10 and 12, and I am a special education teacher,

Interviewer

Who is a woman that inspires you in your life?

Mrs. Mooney

I would probably have to say my mom. I feel like that's an easy one, but I would definitely say my mom in a lot of ways. She was a teacher as well for about 40 years. So she really instilled in me a lot of the qualities that I feel I have as a teacher [and as a person].



Interviewer

Is there one that you look up to professionally?

Mrs. Mooney

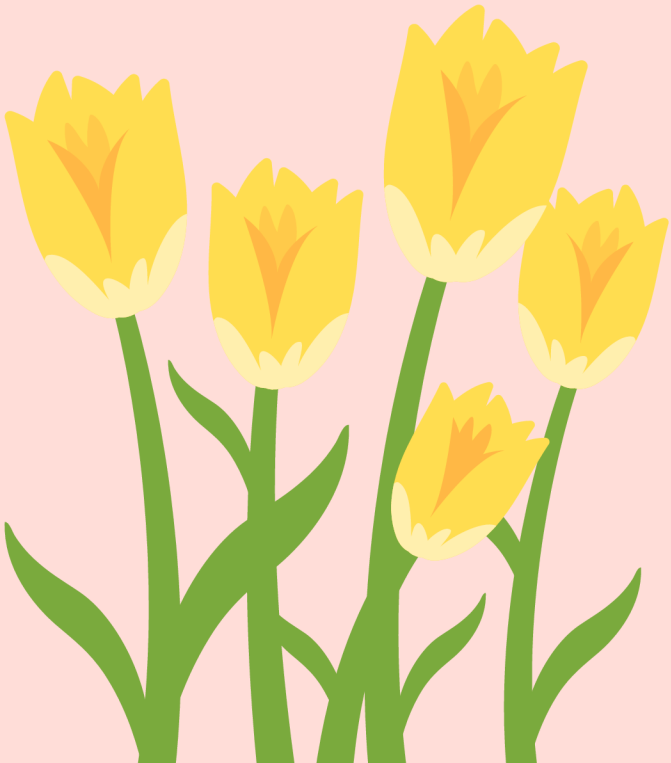
Professionally, I look up to Mrs. Frias. She's awesome. She's taught me a lot since I've been here.

Interviewer

Do you have any advice for young women?

Mrs. Mooney

It is important for you to learn to say no. You can say no to things that you do not want to do professionally, personally. Just make sure that you feel comfortable in whatever setting that you're in and what profession you're in.



poems about early spring





Poem

By Ron Padgett

I'm in the house.
It's nice out: warm
sun on cold snow.
First day of spring
or last of winter.
My legs run down
the stairs and out
the door, my top
half here typing

Poetry foundation
https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/poems/56418/poem-56d238e5159dc

After The Winter

Claude Mckay

Some day, when trees have shed their leaves
And against the morning's white
The shivering birds beneath the eaves
Have sheltered for the night,
We'll turn our faces southward, love,
Toward the summer isle
Where bamboos spire the shafted grove
And wide-mouthed orchids smile.

And we will seek the quiet hill
Where towers the cotton tree,
And leaps the laughing crystal rill,
And works the droning bee.
And we will build a cottage there
Beside an open glade,
With black-ribbed blue-bells blowing near,
And ferns that never fade.

Poetry foundation
https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/52818/after-the-winter

