

THE DRAGON

VOL 6 • No. 2 • Design Tech High School • dtechdragon.com • @dtechdragon

May 2022

Is d.tech Becoming Too Strict?

By Lydia Rak | Staff Writer

When asked why they came to d.tech, students have a range of responses – the design thinking model, the beautiful campus, the flexible schedule, or the accessible teachers and staff. Students, however, don't mention the order, stringent rules, and structured policies.

Illustration by Nicolas Gibson Lately, many students have noticed that d.tech is changing. Administrators have added more rules and policy that make students wonder: is d.tech becoming too strict? Why is there a sudden change? How will these changes affect students? Staff members have added new rules this year on hall passes, WYN, FIT, and detention, and are planning to implement stricter rules next year, especially regarding phones. Some students feel d.tech is transitioning into exactly what they came to d.tech to avoid: a "normal public school."



"I think part of it is [administrators] were a lot more laid back in COVID and I think they realized they have to rein stuff in," said Sophomore Luca Tartagila. He continues saying, "The school is becoming too big and [administrators] aren't able to incorporate the ideas of self direction like they used to." Other students agreed that part of the culture of d.tech is a more relaxed environment. At d.tech, teachers and students are seen as equals, and there is an emphasis on community. This is a key reason many students enrolled in the school to begin with.

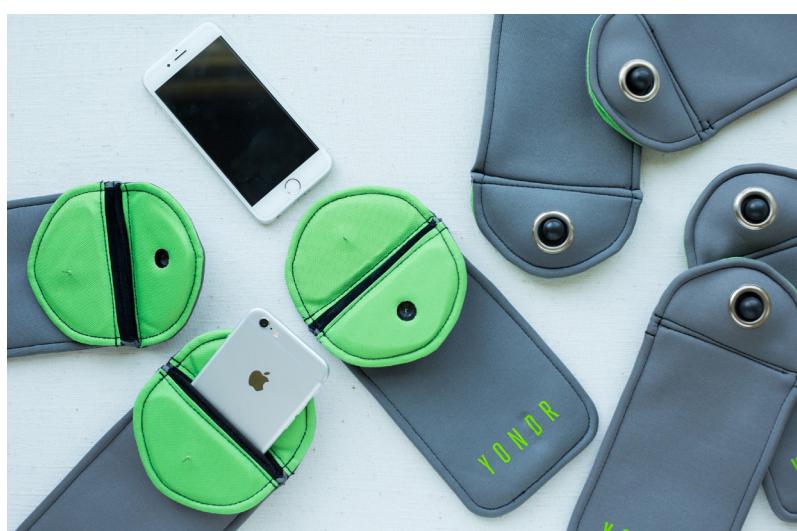
Freshman Will Kizer said, "If I was an 8th grader knowing about Yondr or new policies I probably would not come." Kizer said the policies, "create a divide between students and teachers...When there are so many restrictions it feels like the administrators don't trust us."

Is d.tech Becoming Too Strict? continues on page 5.

Op Ed - Yondr Pouches: Traversing the Sea of Arguments

By Tyler Stray | Contributor

When considering the numerous arguments that are made for and against the implementation of Yondr pouches at our school, we must realize that neither implementation nor non-implementation of Yondr at Design Tech will be a perfect solution to the problem of phone use. Many issues will remain due to certain tradeoffs, and we can only choose what to prioritize and what not to. What I aim to do here is to explore the arguments for and against this implementation. Although I have my own opinions, and even though I will describe why I feel our school would remain better without Yondr pouches, I believe that an exploration of both arguments is necessary. I think this is necessary because there is a sentiment of the opposition on either being dismissive of their arguments present for both students, who are generally against Yondr pouches, and staff, who are generally for them. Neither side feels that they are being heard, or more importantly, listened to. The staff may believe that students will not accept the implementation of Yondr pouches primarily because of the impulse and addiction to use their phones, while the students may believe that staff will not hear their arguments because they are perceived only as children. These mentalities don't generally allow friendly discourse on the subject, and many of the discussions that I've seen have involved some variation of anger or impatience. I hope that what I set forward will allow both sides to be heard and that I've accurately represented the arguments of each side to that end.



An arrangement of Yondr Pouches. | Photo from NPR

Statistics and Results

Two types of statistics are important to the discussion of Yondr Pouches: Stats on Effectiveness and Stats on Opinions. The statistics on the effectiveness of Yondr pouches portray them as very effective. The one-pager found on Yondr's website, which was cited by staff in an email sent to the school, showed that of the 900 schools surveyed, the majority saw improvements in a variety of ways. 65% of schools saw an improvement in academic performance, 74% an improvement in student behavior, and 83% an improvement in student engagement. On top of this, a survey conducted by The Aragon Outlook found that 88.6% of San Mateo High School staff believed that the use of Yondr pouches at their school should continue. These results on effectiveness conflict heavily with the opinions of students. Of over 200 students who were surveyed at Design Tech, the majority had a very negative opinion of their effectiveness. 76.4% believe that Yondr pouches should not be installed at Design Tech, versus 12.5% who thought they should be installed. 58.7% said they believed Yondr would not prevent cell phone use, versus 33.2% who believed they would. 74.0% said they believed student behavior would not improve, versus 9.1% who said it would. 55.3% said the academic performance would not improve, versus 24.0% who said it would. 55.8% said student engagement would not improve, versus 27.9% who said it would. Numerous written responses also displayed opposition to the idea, such as one student who wrote, "This is going to ruin morale, break apart our community, and make people hate admins more."

Of course, displayed effectiveness is more convincing than individual opinion, but there are reasons to be skeptical of the statistics cited. It is true that a majority of schools see improvements, but what of the hundreds of schools that did not see an improvement? Although 65% saw improvements in academic performance, 35% didn't see an improvement, representing at least 300 schools. On top of that, over 200 didn't see improvements in student behavior, and over 150 saw no improvements in student engagement. What set them apart from those that saw improvements? The one-pager provided also doesn't display whether or not schools that didn't report positive outcomes had negative outcomes, neutral outcomes, or a combination of the two, which casts doubt on how trustworthy these reports are, especially knowing that they are sourced by the company profiting off of their implementation. Considering the major differences between the "average school" and Design Tech, there's no reason to assume that our school will certainly improve in these areas solely based on these survey results. Are they helpful in supporting the idea that Yondr pouches will be effective at our school? Probably. Do they entirely justify their implementation, given their costs and potential consequences? Probably not. This is the same for the results of San Mateo High, which is also different from Design Tech in many ways.

VAPA Varieties: Next Year's Plan for Sophomore's VAPA Class

By Kaz Murray | Staff Writer

With the end of the school year nearing, d.tech will be welcoming in new Freshman and the returning students will be one step closer to graduation. But for the current Freshman, that's one step closer to their visual and performing arts credit, or VAPA classes.

After a long time of VAPA samplers, where students tried out shorter versions of VAPA, the time has come to choose which class they'll be taking as Sophomores. There are plenty of amazing options, such as Animation, 2D and 3D Fundamentals, Dance, Electronic Music, and many more, so there's something for everyone.

"During Intersession we've been able to provide a variety of classes, and every year we've done something different in terms of VAPA," Lilia Pineda, the Director of Intersession, talks about popular classes. Normally, it varies from class to class, but there's always a few favorites. "The popular options have always been 2D and 3D art and photography." While this is an exciting time for many, the schedule for VAPA will be different than what people have thought.

VAPA Varieties continues on page 3.

Yondr Pouches: Traversing the Sea of Arguments continues on page 6.

Introducing the New Co-Editor in Chief: Mei Peters

This year, the Dragon is saying goodbye to our Co-Editor in Chief of two years, Isabella Gámez. Isabella was one of the two people who stood up at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year to keep the Dragon alive. She has been working hard ever since to keep us going, and she lead the way to restarting print editions. Her departure is leaving some pretty big shoes to fill, but we have no doubt that her successor will fill them with ease.

Introducing the new Co-Editor in Chief of the Design Tech Dragon: rising Junior Mei Peters.



Mei has been a writer for the Dragon since September 2020, the start of her freshman year. That year, she wrote about the return of in-person school, Physics teacher Alice Pevyhouse, the departure of Mr. Groat, and Black History Month. She immediately demonstrated a dedication to the Dragon and an impressive talent for writing. When the Dragon went in-person in the second semester of that year, she made a point of showing up to every meeting and doing everything she could to help us keep the Dragon alive through COVID.

This year, she was promoted to Section Editor, becoming the youngest person on the Dragon to hold that role. She has worked hard to help our writers grow and create amazing content, as well as writing some incredible stories of her own. She has continued to show incredible dedication to the Dragon, showing up every week and doing everything she can to help.

Next year, she is taking on a big new role. We're not sure she knows what she's getting into, but, hell, neither did we, and we're doing fine, right? ...right?

- Isabella Gámez and Steven Sutton
Co-Editors in Chief of the Design Tech Dragon 2021-2022

Mei Peters, the new Co-Editor in Chief for The Dragon | Photo by Steven Sutton

A Message from Isabella Gámez

Hello d.tech and Dragon Team,

Thank you all for a special and memorable ride and Editor in Chief. My time on the Dragon has been filled with beautiful memories and some crazy nights. Those of you who have been following The Dragon saga know that it has been a long road to get back up to speed following the past few years'...events. However, with the help of those dedicated we are happy to announce that we are back and here to stay! I deeply appreciate my team's dedication and service to this project, and want to thank all those involved for being an essential part of our team this year. Without the support of our hardworking staff, editors, artists, and of course, loyal readers, my past couple years as Editor In Chief would not be possible. Thank, YOU.

On that note, I want to extend an extra personal thank you to my Co-Editor in Chief, partner in crime(s), and dear friend, Steven Sutton. It is because of his love of words and passion The Dragon has transformed into the meaningful body of special individuals with a peep in their step and stories to share. Over the course of the last few years Sutton has dedicated his efforts to producing the highest quality of work in revamping our website, writing articles, and acting as voice of student body. So here's to you, Steven, thank you.

Ah, the time has finally come, and the curtain begins to close. It is with a heavy heart and the greatest enthusiasm that I now relinquish my title and pass it on to a fresh face. From Section Editor to Editor in Chief, I could not be more at peace knowing The Dragon will be in the capable hands of, one, Mei Peters.

Congratulations Mei, I could not be more excited for you and all your electric ideas! I admire your drive and inquisitive energy, and know you will share these qualities well into the next school year.

THE DRAGON

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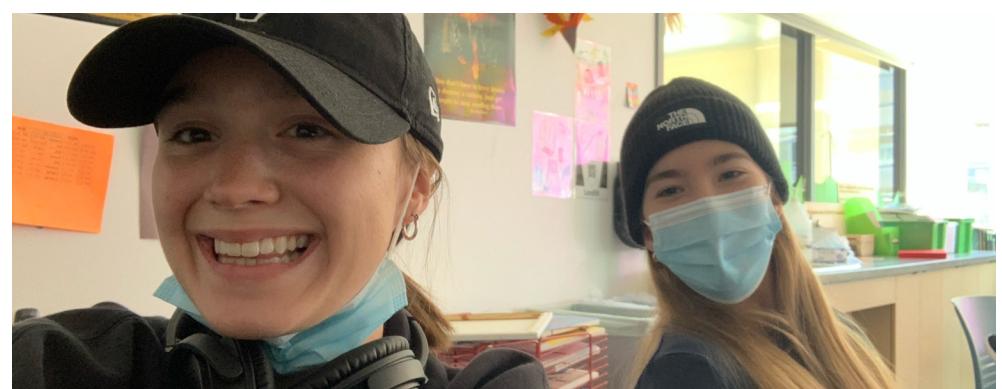
Join our team!

Email dragon@dtechhs.org or just ask Steven!
There's a place for everyone at The Dragon



Thank you to all,

- Isabella Gámez Isabella Gámez & Mei Peters | Photo by Isabella Gámez



Calling all Graphic Designers, Web Designers, Illustrators, Photographers, Researchers, and Writers!

Do you have a passion for truth? A desire to get involved? Do you want to make something tangible and real? Do you need to add something to your college applications? Do you love the Oxford Comma?

Come join the Dragon! Help create our amazing newspaper and report on the school! Voice your opinions; wade through lies, exaggerations, and political answers to find the real truth; get inside access to the inner-workings of this office-building-turned-school; and help keep one of the last vestiges of old d.tech alive.

VAPA Varieties: Next Year's Plan for Sophomore's VAPA Class (Cont.)

By Kaz Murray | Staff Writer

"Sophomores will enroll in a VAPA class as part of their regular schedule," Pineda says. She explains that, instead of having VAPA during Intersession, it would appear in everybody's regular class cycles. It's unknown whether or not this will take up from WYN time or shorten regular classes to fit itself in, and if it will happen like VAPA samplers, which happened two days out of the week.

Speaking of the latter, VAPA samplers have been a subject of debate recently between staff and teachers. Pineda talks about their conflict, and how it hasn't been an easy choice; "[VAPA samplers are] something that has not been decided and it depends on the bell schedule and the structure of WYN time. At the moment, it does not seem like the VAPA sampler will be happening next year."

But individuals who feel like the VAPA options aren't calling out to them can take Concurrent Enrollment, which can be finished in one school semester and has many unique options. If you are interested in choosing Concurrent Enrollment, either during the summer or in the 2022-2023 school year, make sure to talk to Molly Robertson during her WYN Office Hours on Tuesdays.

d.tech Summer Break

By Samantha Wolff | Staff Writer

The thrilling season of summer break is almost here, and the students at d.tech are excited. This school year has definitely been a whirlwind, with it being the first year back in person for most students, the WYN Time schedule changing halfway through the year, some students returning back to independent study for a few weeks, and so much more.

d.tech students are ready for a change in scenery. Whether this means "going to Illinois to see family", like Freshman Isabelle Anderson said, or, like Freshman Tigran Bagiryan, going all the way to Armenia, the d.tech community is taking advantage of this time off. While traveling around the world is a high point in many students' summer breaks, staying home and spending the ten weeks off of school on rest is also pretty nice. There's also plenty of students who use their time off to catch up on all the YouTube and video game updates they've missed. "I am looking forward to not having school work to worry about, as I have been involved in a lot of clubs recently," says Senior Nicolas Gibson. A great number of other students also said that they are looking forward to a break from all the stress, and school in general. On the other hand, some students are using this time to continue learning, by studying art in Michigan like Sophomore Andy Brown, or attending college classes to get ahead. One final thing that a lot of students are looking forward to is hanging out with friends and family, some of whom they can only see in the summer, such as camp friends and family members that live far away. Freshman Cereal Chang says, "I might go to a cosplay convention with friends or just around the general Bay Area to hang out with friends." All in all, the d.tech students are prepared for their time off and can't wait to get going on their summer plans.

Simone-isms

by Simon Karlon

New Classes

By Mei Peters | Section Editor

In the upcoming school year, there will be a number of added and removed classes, but this is most likely not new information for many students, as everyone should've received an email regarding this. The new classes will be d.lab offerings and potential electives, meaning that each student's core classes will not be changing.

d.lab Class - Art and Design

Art and Design is a class focused on designing and creating artwork in various forms, including paint, fabric, and technology. This class will be taught by Mike Bam, a professional mural artist who, in addition to mural painting, has experience in graffiti, graphic design, 3D modeling, 3D printing, and airbrushing. Over the years, he has helped direct and paint numerous murals seen on the d.tech walls.

Students who requested Fashion Design or Video & Sound Production will be placed in the class unless they request to transfer to a different d.lab class.

Potential Elective - History Through Sports & Music

History Through Sports & Music will teach students about how sports and music have evolved over time, and how they have influenced today's society. This class will be taught by Mike Gutierrez. Mr. G currently teaches American History, but as of next school year, he will fully transition to this new class.

Potential Elective - Leadership

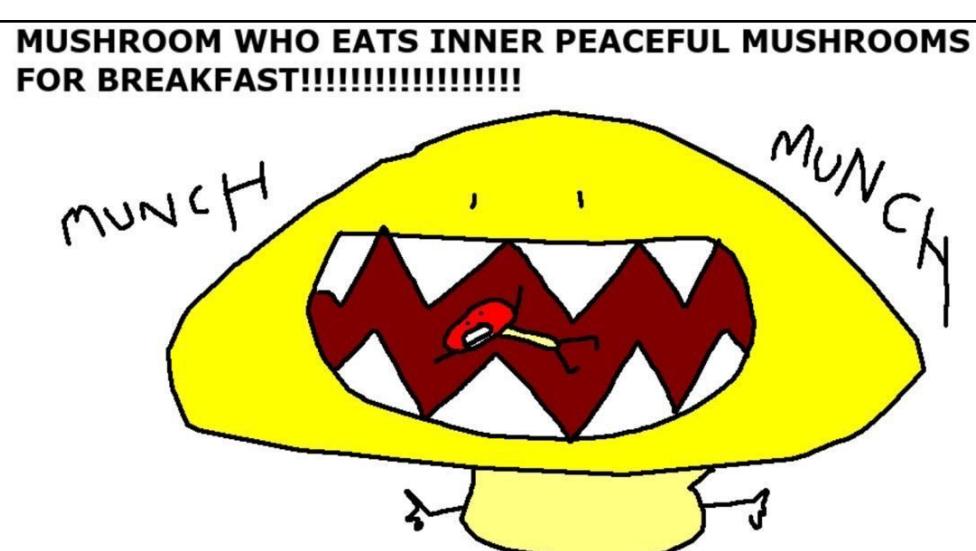
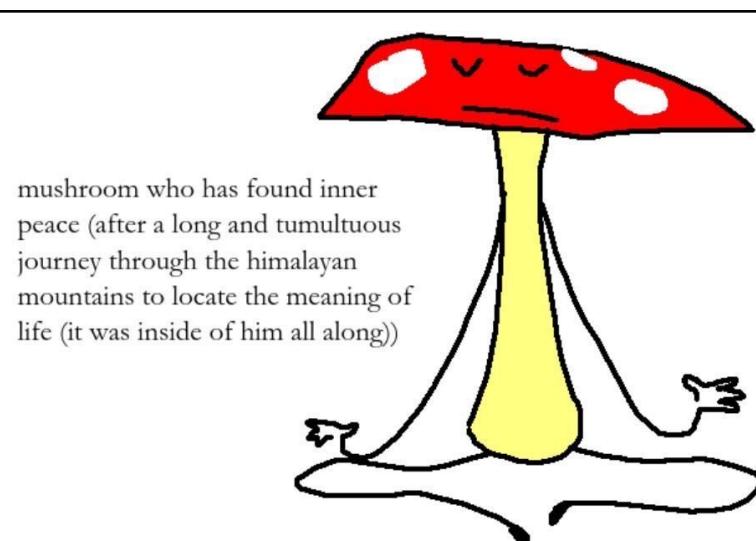
Leadership will focus on providing students with a better understanding of good leadership skills and how to apply them to a leadership position. This class will be available to all club leaders and students in d.leadership who have a FIT period in their schedule. It is a pass/incomplete class and is not UC A-G approved, meaning that it is not certified through the UC course approval process. Although this class won't affect the students' GPAs, it will be viewable on their high school transcripts. Leadership will be taught by d.tech admin.

New Freshmen Class - Ethnic Studies

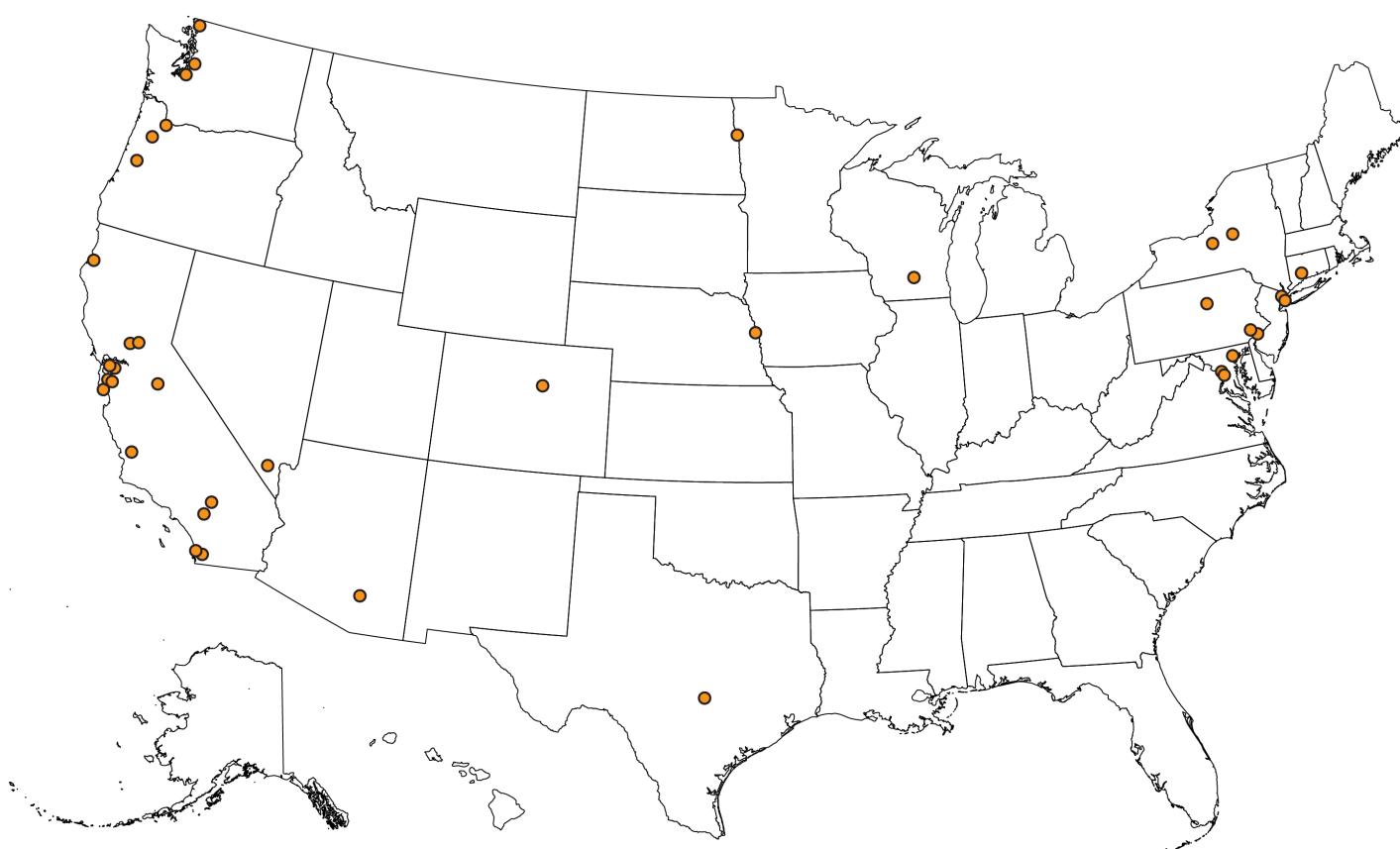
Incoming Freshmen will be required to take a semester-long Ethnic Studies, a class focused on "the struggles and contributions of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans and other ethnic groups," as stated by The New York Times. In October of 2021, Gavin Newsom, the Governor of California, signed off on making Ethnic Studies a required class in all public and charter California high schools.



Illustration by Cynthia Shi



Class of 2022 Decisions



Class of 2022 College Decisions map by Steven Sutton & Mei Peters

To Seniors; Us

By Isabella Gámez | Co-Editor of The Dragon

Senior year, it was the best of times, it was the worst of times, and sometimes it was just a time. But as the school year comes to an end, the question many of us are left asking is: Where did all the time go? I mean, let's face the music, however sweet or bitter the sound, it has been anything from ordinary.

From extended field trips to the land of Zoom and invitations to parties of one, it is fair to say the Class of 2022 has had a rather, well, different experience. So while we pause at the notion of "what now", let us take a few moments to reflect on the vibrant memories of this bunch of these amazing graduates!

Through d.tech's ever changing schedules and grading policy, it is strange to believe that there has been one constant: Advisory. @dtech's have been a stable part of dtech culture since the founding class of 2018. Now, a full four years later, here we are. It may look a little different, but the Class of '22 will be leaving with a, "Little family of our own," comments Senior and future Pomona College freshman Miram Brody. She pauses and laughs, "I just really like Mr. Atkinson being awesome everyday!"

Yet another tradition to waltz its way out the door after the pandemic is the infamous Freshman camping trip. While some share fonder moments than others, it is safe to say it is a time none present will soon forget. Liam McAlexander recalls, "I was demanded to put on pants on that trip! I wasn't cold! I didn't want to wear pants!"

Allow us to pause for a moment to return to something special. For those of you who have served your full four years here at d.tech, you may recall a certain assignment, in which letters were written to your future selves. Your senior selves to be exact. According to the person who kept these pieces, these last few years, you can expect your letter in the next coming weeks! So, look out, your ghost of freshman past is coming to a mailbox near you. Soon.

d.tech has borne many faces over many years and it is hard to say exactly what is coming next or what is truly permanent at this institution. Many iterations have come and gone, and one favorite swept away with it. "Lab day was my favorite," said Senior Julia Hom, "I remember we used to spend the whole day having the best time but the hot chocolate parties are what I remember the most." And who knows, maybe Lab Days will make their great return, one day, but for right now all we can do is hang tight and look back in gaiety.

Would you have believed it, if you were told d.tech would not only have a sports program but a league winning sports program? Well, stranger things have happened evidently, because this marks the new beginning for d.tech and shines the light on something rather promising. Varsity basketball player and Senior, Fumi Shynagua, notes, "d.athletics is something different, on the team every player is valued and given room to grow in a good way which creates a really cool and confident atmosphere." This year the boys' basketball qualified for CCS and played their way to the Quarterfinals. People will always believe a confident person who lacks wisdom over a wise person who lacks confidence. Confidence is a kingmaker and it can make a huge difference in who you are, and who you will ultimately become. This year, we Dragons became winners. Another team, girls' softball, led by Seniors Annie Philps, Lauren Wu, Miriam Brody, Samamtha Sito, Kasvi Sihgn, and Isabella Gamez became the first d.tech team to win the title of league champions!

Seniors remember this: your cap, gown, and diploma mean you have finished high school, but they do not mean you have finished learning. If d.tech has taught us anything, it is that you will learn from others, you will learn from circumstance, you will learn from experience, and you will learn from discovery. Don't ever trust you have it all figured out and become set in your ways, because, just like d.tech, things are going to change.

Please note that this is not meant to be a comprehensive list of all senior decisions.

West Coast:

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt

California State University, Fullerton

California State University, Sacramento

Claremont McKenna College
George Fox University

Oregon State University

Pomona College

Saint Mary's College of California

San Diego State University

San Jose State University

Santa Clara University

University of California, Berkeley

University of California, Davis

University of California, San Diego

University of California, Santa Cruz

University of Portland

University of Puget Sound

University of Washington

Western Washington University

Central United States:

Creighton University

The University of Arizona

University of Denver

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

University of North Dakota

University of Texas at Austin

University of Wisconsin-Madison

East Coast:

Bryn Mawr College

Bucknell University

Colgate University

Cornell University

Drexel University

The George Washington University

Howard University

Johns Hopkins University

New York University

Yale University

Friendship Spotlight : Nick Barella and Joe Schneider

By Roxie Baggot | Section Editor

The halls are quiet at 3:00 PM on a Wednesday. Yet, in a secluded pocket of the school, Nick Barella and Joe Schneider laugh as they play the Dordle (double wordle). Barella and Schneider first met at the new teacher training when Barella lost his badge, and he “came up and he grabbed [Schneider's badge] off [his] neck, yanked it up, looked at it, and went ‘nah’ and just walked away.” While they clearly already had a strong bond after that invigorating experience, their friendship truly blossomed when they started eating lunch together.

After Barella disclosed that he listens to a podcast discussing “the hayday of McDonald’s pizza” and the investigation into what “happened to the pizza at McDonalds,” they began coming up with ideas for more “dumb podcasts.” Some of these ideas included, but were not limited to “puzzle pod” – a podcast where someone “just jigsaw puzzles” or “magic pod” where they would “record at magic shows, so you’re listening to a magic performance,” and this common interest of ideation itself lead to their next shared enthusiasm: denim.



For a long time, the two have bonded over their love for denim, and they wear denim every Thursday on what they have coined as “denim Thursdays.” This obsession goes even further as they talk about creating a denim-centered intersession class. This is anything but a new idea and is even known around the school. Freshman Aishani Garg describes a class in which Barella “started talking about jorts [jean shorts] and would not stop talking about jorts.” Schneider confirms this explaining, “we both like jeans a lot and denim products, so we were thinking about making an intersession class about denim – just idea guys really.”

When they have time alone together, they partake in various activities including eating, watching tv, and going to the d.tech basketball games. However, basketball isn’t the only sport that they relish. One of their favorite activities is playing doubles pickleball. Schneider describes pickle ball as a “sport,” “a dynamic sport,” Barella interrupts, continuing to explain that it is “not unlike tennis. In fact, the rules are very similar, but the net’s a little shorter, the courts a little smaller- so we can’t really run... It uses wooden paddles and a wiffle ball, and you just kind of [bonk] it around.” They described their recent defeat against a Foster City youth group in which they “got waxed.”

Despite how idyllic this friendship may seem, Schneider clarifies that “it’s not all daisies.” Barella often does not bring a lunch, meaning Schneider has “to peer pressure him into eating,” Barella adds on, “Joe brings me chips.” Schneider concludes, “I guess that’s it.”

From start to finish, their friendship has been anything but conventional. Despite this, it has bloomed into something beautiful and unique. Barella draws his thoughts to a close by exclaiming, “I think there’s a unique appreciation for the ridiculous that we both share.” Caring and somewhat absurd, this friendship is clearly one for the ages.

Nick Barella and Joe Schneider talking whilst holding drills in Ms. Lecroy's room.
Photo by Ty Gannon

Are Hallpasses Necessary?

By Katya Olshansky | Staff Writer

Are controlled bathroom visits really helping? There have been multiple new policies put in place around d.tech recently, one of which is the bathroom passes. There is a new addition to the passes, where students need to leave their phones when going to the restrooms. They are fairly controversial around the d.tech community, and there are mixed reviews about whether students and teachers think they are needed or not.

Junior, Lea Sounthong has conflicting feelings about the passes. She thinks that “they are a good way for teachers to track how many students leave the classroom at a time,” but also states that they are not as effective as the staff intended them to be. She feels that “the system was fine before, and leaving the phones is a bit unnecessary,” and she did not see any issues with bathrooms before the passes. She mentions that she has never been checked in the hallways to see if she has a pass or not, but “the staff make out to be like there are staff members constantly checking students for them.”

Junior, Luis Mendez-Stacker has very strong thoughts about the hall passes. He starts off by saying, “People come to this school to not experience a regular public school system, and the staff don’t have trust in their students anymore.” He later says that it is unfair for people that actually need to use the bathroom, and misses when there were not “all of these new restrictions,” he does not see a reason for the passes and finds them to be wasteful and unnecessary.

Overall, there are some mixed reviews, but for the most part, the d.tech community does not see the hallpasses as necessary. Although they know that the passes have some benefits, they think that they are not being handled properly.

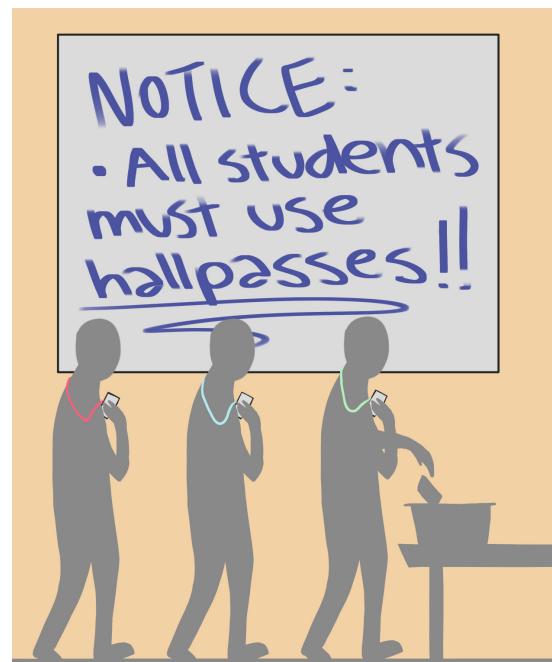


Illustration by Cynthia Shi

Is d.tech Becoming Too Strict? (Continued)

By Lydia Rak | Staff Writer

With what seem to be drastic changes, students are wondering why the administration is imposing these new policies. Freshman Cereal Chang said “I think [administrators] are changing because the freshmen and sophomores can’t control themselves. While I do think that a bunch of the school is, in a way, addicted to their phones, I think it’s unfair to punish all the students.” Chang said she thinks the need for change is valid but suggests that, “instead of using design thinking skills to solve the problems, [administrators] are using regular thinking, which is the problem.”

Students are also concerned about how some of these changes will affect their daily lives at school. Junior Margaux Knobels said, “I think there are other issues we need to work on before we invite new things into our school. It feels like one more thing the teachers are going to have to police and focus on, when I just want to focus on my studies.” Knobels is wondering whether these policies are really where the school should be concentrating on. Knobels also spoke about how a lot of her school work is self-directed. “If your phone is a problem, you need to figure that out on your own,” said Knobels.

Although many students agreed that d.tech is becoming more strict, some seemed to have a more optimistic perspective. When discussing the idea of d.tech becoming more strict, Senior Yasmine Fugioka says “I would definitely say not. d.tech is giving us a lot more freedom than we had as freshman or sophomores. Especially because I am a senior and seniors get to leave school early.” Fugioka believes that, post-COVID, d.tech needed to and is continually trying to transition back into a “real school”. Freshman Maiko Ono feels similarly. Ono said she doesn’t mind the new policies and is content with not having her phone next year.

To close with the words of Greek philosopher Heraclitus: “The only constant in life is change.” Perhaps this is true of d.tech. The question remains how these changes will impact the d.tech culture and experience for current and future dragons.

Op-Ed - Yondr Pouches: Traversing the Sea of Arguments (Continued)

By Tyler Stray | Contributor

Workarounds and Alternatives

As is described by the student body, there are many ways to open a Yondr pouch. Searching "How to Open a Yondr Pouch" on Google gives 20,600 results alone, and there are popular videos on YouTube displaying how to open them, such as the video from LockPickingLawyer with over 900,000 views displaying the creator opening one using only a magnet almost instantly. One student wrote to this end, "Bypassing the Yondr pouch lock is honestly hilariously easy. All someone needs is a magnet." Students can find ways to open the pouches if they are motivated to. Other methods exist as well, such as banging the pouch on some hard surface, using a replacement burner phone to put inside the pouch, and destroying the pouch itself to get it open. The argument is that if a student was even slightly motivated to use their phone, there are methods to do so that require little effort. If the added effort were to make students less likely to use their phones, then this problem would need to be solved one way or another. At the point where you need more restrictions to see any results, why bother with Yondr pouches at all?

Even if methods of opening Yondr pouches were somehow restricted to the point where students couldn't use their phones during class, the existence and pervasiveness of Chromebooks can't be negotiated around. Despite attempts to restrict the use of Chromebooks outside of productive purposes, students can still find things to do on a Chromebook that can easily be more engaging on demand than schoolwork could ever be. Chromebooks could be restricted at certain times, but students will eventually need to work during class through electronic means. It will always rest on the individual student to stay on task, and there will always be a population of students who won't. If keeping the students on-task will remain the responsibility of the teacher to a similar extent as without implementation of Yondr pouches, then, once again, of what use are they?

Beyond alternatives to phones, there are also alternatives to Yondr pouches that would prove just as effective, if not more, and cheaper. One student wrote, "I do not see the problem with simply requiring that students' phones be left in bags. It always worked at my middle school." This and similar suggestions would involve much less cost, at perhaps \$15 per classroom, or somewhere around \$500 in total, assuming that the teachers don't already have the resources to implement such a system. This is in comparison to Yondr pouches, which cost \$15-30 per student per year, which would amount to a total of around \$10,000 per year. These sorts of systems have been done before at d.tech, such as in Nick Barella's prototyping class during the 2019-2020 school year, and are described by students as having a relatively positive impact. These systems would face the same problems as Yondr pouches, of course, since students would still prefer to have their phones and teachers would still need to monitor students for phone use. However, the reduced cost could allow resources to go into other things, like improved academic support.



Tyler Stray | Photo provided by Yearbook (iClickSmiles)

Consequences and Mental Health

Under the assumption that students will obey the Yondr pouch restrictions, there would be many restrictions on the students' ability to communicate. Only during emergencies would students likely have the same availability of communication, since the front office could just call the student to receive messages with little hassle. What Yondr pouches will restrict is communication for work and transportation.

As many students travel long distances to get to and from Design Tech, and since not every student is independent in their means of transportation, communication during school is necessary to get to and from school. Students who are driven by carpool or by parents must know if there are changes to transportation plans, and not knowing of any updates until school is over may be harmful, especially at longer distances. This would also apply to students who have varying means of transportation. Many upperclassmen also must maintain communication with employers, and students who work jobs that require constant communication will suffer as a result of Yondr pouches. One student wrote, "I have a part-time job after school, and my manager contacts me via text during school hours." Although these groups likely make up small portions of the school's population, it's important to consider how these restrictions negatively impact them.

One of the arguments often given by the staff is that the restriction of phones outside of class, during lunch, and at other times, will improve students' mental health. It is certainly true that phones can harm mental health, as many studies have shown the negative effects they have. To summarize those points, we know that phones and social media generally increase the likelihood of depression, the likelihood of anxiety, and contribute to poor sleep quality, while in some cases also creating a negative self-image. It's also argued that restriction of phones during these times will increase communication among students, which would come with improvements to mental health as well. However, improvements to mental health would be inherently limited. Even if schools were to successfully restrict phone use during school, many students will remain spending most of their time outside of school on their phones. The majority of free time will always rest outside of school, meaning that students will encounter these problems due to using their phones at home. The mental health of a student can only greatly be improved by parent intervention, whether that involves restricting phone use at home or getting some means of help. Communication arguably will improve at school since, without their phones, students would be more inclined to speak to one another during Lunch. However, this wouldn't be the scenario for every student. Only those who are generally socially adept will be likely to communicate during lunch. To students who aren't, Yondr pouches remove one of their potential means of escape from their loneliness. These students may communicate online with others, or they may simply use some sort of entertainment or social media, but they will be left without those things if their phones are taken away. This problem may only be solved by allocating adequate resources to help them, but the monetary costs of Yondr pouches would take away from such resources.

Another group harmed by this decision may be students with IEPs or 504s that require them to use their phones during class. There are few workarounds for students who may need their phones for work, and in the case that phones are restricted, having their phones out would paint a big red target on their back. It takes away the element of choice that they have about whether or not they want others to know about their IEP or 504. These students would be very open to discrimination as other students realize why they are permitted to have their phones out. One may argue that Design Tech is an open community, and that discrimination is unlikely as a result, but is it effective to rely on the blind hope of goodwill? There will always be some students who aren't as open, regardless of our school's mission and attempts to reprimand them.

There are many of these smaller consequences that add up. Students won't be able to easily listen to music, which can often improve studying and focus during independent work time. Teachers would have to work around the fact that students couldn't easily submit paper assignments to Canvas by taking photos with their phones. The system to unlock phones may cause large crowds to emerge, needing to unlock their phones before leaving school. Certain curiosity projects require the use of phones to work properly and would be restricted as a result. Students may need to log into other emails and accounts for concurrent enrollment, which is sometimes blocked on Chromebooks. These and other consequences must be considered when deciding whether or not Yondr pouches are a good idea.

Conclusion

Although I primarily criticized the arguments for the implementation of Yondr pouches, I still believe that there are tradeoffs that come with each option. In all likelihood, Yondr pouches would slightly improve classroom attention and academic performance, and it would slightly improve mental health and communication between students. However, the consequences of these decisions aren't negligible and are why I think their implementation would overall harm Design Tech. Many people would be negatively impacted by the decision, the approximately \$10,000 annually that it would cost to implement which could be redirected to other, more beneficial purposes, and there are many ways that it would be ineffective as compared to other methods.

Something I didn't consider in any of the categories above was how this would impact school culture. For a long time, students have disliked the decisions made by the Design Tech staff. The school's personal devices policy made waves at the beginning of this school year, and changes to the WYN schedule's allocation of club times made a stir when it was implemented, among a few other events. These decisions, regardless of whether or not they improved the school, alienated students who felt as though they had no say in the matter. A student to this end wrote, "I truly find it sad to see d.tech is going in this direction; it is completely against their values." I think that this is one of the more important problems with the implementation of Yondr pouches. It's simply that it's against the will of the majority of students to do so, and it deepens a divide between the students and the staff members that has been growing since the end of quarantine. Maybe there will be more improvements than consequences with the implementation of Yondr pouches, but that won't negate the fact that there are more serious problems that underlie just this Yondr pouch argument which students and staff will need to work to solve in the near future.

Op-Ed - Keep Yondr Out of d.tech

By Alexander Baker | Contributor

Practicality concerns regarding Yondr include using a phone hotspot when the school wifi is less than adequate, accessing websites for school that are incorrectly blocked (Which can quickly become a hassle for us to get sites unblocked every single time), and using phones for school related purposes like Kahoot! and other applications. Additionally, many of us use our phones to take pictures of assignments and submit them to Canvas which we wouldn't be able to do if denied phone access. Another issue regards communication, as we will not be able to contact our parents about pick up times or any other logistics. We might need to receive and send urgent messages during the day about late pick-up times or troubles with transportation. The "solution" that d.tech is proposing would imply that students have to email their parents or friends in every instance of need. This is an issue because not everyone checks their email 24/7 or knows how to use it, and students do not have access to any other Google account than their d.tech one on the school-issued chromebooks. Additionally, we can often be sent important information on alternate emails and will not be able to access this information on phones. Going through the school for something small is inefficient and unnecessary. This would also cause the front desk to be overwhelmed with calls coming in from parents and 6 students trying to make calls out to their parents.

The announcement of becoming a "phone free" school next year and using a product called Yondr to do so causes more problems than it solves. Concerns about this product include practicality concerns, mental health as well as safety concerns, and personal concerns that vary from student to student.

Continued online at dtechdragon.com

Mask Mandates Ending

By Liam Deacon | Section Editor

The threat of Covid-19 that has been looming over us for the past two years is finally slowing down. New variants are becoming less and less threatening, and many governments around the US are responding carefully by slowly lifting mask mandates. Over the past few months, all but three of the states have lifted restrictions in schools. On March 11th, California, alongside Oregon and Washington, were the last few to lift their mask mandates.

Over the past two years, the flow of new Covid-19 variants have caused the disease to gradually lose its severity. First, we had the delta variant, which had a greater mortality rate than even the starting variant. Now, we have the omicron variant that has grown fairly similar to the common flu. As a result, the needs for masks are decreasing, and governments have responded accordingly. With mask requirements going away, many things will change, and not everyone may be on board. Junior Nicole Cho said, "I wouldn't mind going back to normal, but I'm not comfortable taking off my mask anymore after getting used to it for so long", which is an opinion that is shared by a large number of the students. She says this is for two reasons, appearance and safety. Firstly, many people have grown accustomed to not showing half their face, and have understandably become insecure about their facial appearance. The second reason, safety, is a very controversial topic. Previously, when states have lifted mask mandates, cases have risen dramatically and were subsequently put back into another lockdown. With this being a possibility, "if something big happens, as contagious as omicron, then it will be really bad to have the whole mask mandate lifted" says Junior Emilie Tung.

All in all, the ending of the mask mandate is just that: no longer requiring people to wear masks, but still leaving them highly recommended. This means we should expect the majority of people to keep their masks on, and respect the people who choose to take theirs off. Looking back on the past, rushing things like this have always caused another outbreak, and in the future, we should all be careful by taking the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of a possible new variant.

Your Horoscopes

By Steven Sutton | Co-Editor in Chief

Please be aware that the following is completely satirical, and solely for the entertainment of the reader. Neither the author nor the Dragon News intends to offend with the following, and any relation to actual events is purely coincidental. Again, this is, in its entirety, satire.

Aries (Ram): March 21–April 19

Despite all the evidence you may gather, believing in Tinker Bell will not keep her alive.

Taurus (Bull): April 20–May 20

While the millions you'll make in cryptocurrency and NFTs may make you more enticing to women, they will quickly be turned away by your garbage personality.

Gemini (Twins): May 21–June 21

Call your mother, she misses you. Plus, she brought you into this world, and she can take you right back out.

Cancer (Crab): June 22–July 22

Congratulations! You've won an all-expenses-paid vacation to Hawaii! But act fast, because the offer expires at the end of this sentence; call 1-888-447-5594 to claim your vacation!

Leo (Lion): July 23–August 22

When you were younger, people told you to reach for the stars. However, these days, I'd recommend just trying to make it to college.

Virgo (Virgin): August 23–September 22

Pay very close attention to the upcoming Midterm elections, as the impacts on your beloved aunt Sheryl will be deep and long lasting.

Libra (Balance): September 23–October 23

If you've been struggling with mental illness recently, that's okay. Take some time, step back, and remember that you're just faking it for attention.

Scorpius (Scorpion): October 24–November 21

As the stars told you last time, they really don't care about you *wink*.

Sagittarius (Archer): November 22–December 21

You may think there is no one else like you, but remember, there are 7 billion people in this world, one of whom is bound to enjoy the Marvel Cinematic Universe on an equally deep level as you.

Capricorn (Goat): December 22–January 19

Is your refrigerator running? Because recent advancements in CRISPR technology have given it legs and a thirst for revenge.

Aquarius (Water Bearer): January 20–February 18

Must be mighty dark behind that closet door, huh?

Pisces (Fish): February 19–March 20

While you won't be able to find happiness in the contents of the vending machine, look behind it. There's always something delicious behind the vending machine!



Comic by @dtechracoons

My Dad's Haikus About Road Rage

I like to change lanes
Signaling is for the weak!
Who dares honk at me??

Parking spot ideal
What the - Don't take it lady!
Imma key your car

Speed by, cut you off
My cool red car drives so fast
Is that your finger?

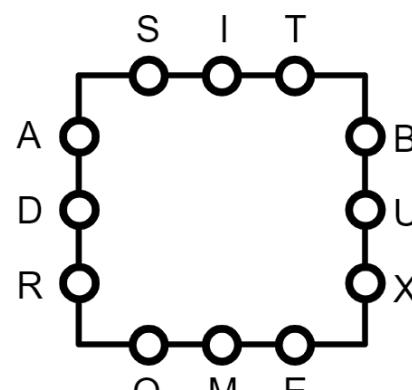
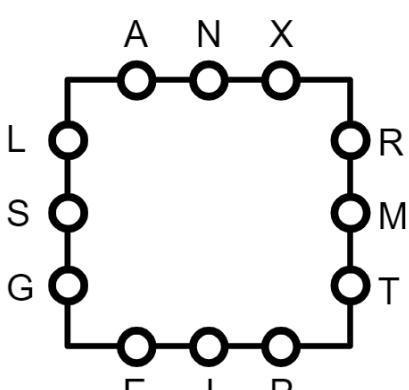
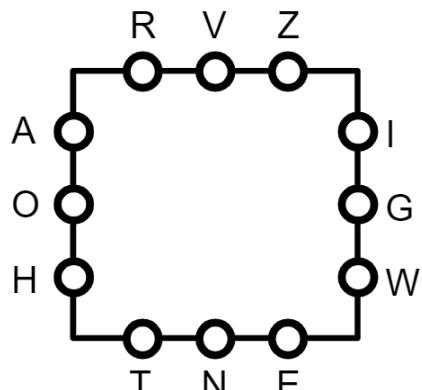
Letter Boxed

Make words by thinking inside the box.

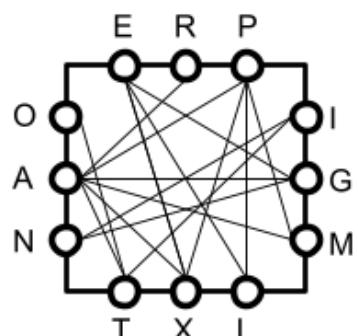
Draw lines to connect the letters and form words!

- The last letter of the first word becomes the first letter of the next.**
- Consecutive letters cannot be from the same side

- No letter may be used twice in a row
- Letters may be used more than once
- Words cannot be hyphenated
- Once you've used all the letters, you've solved the puzzle!**

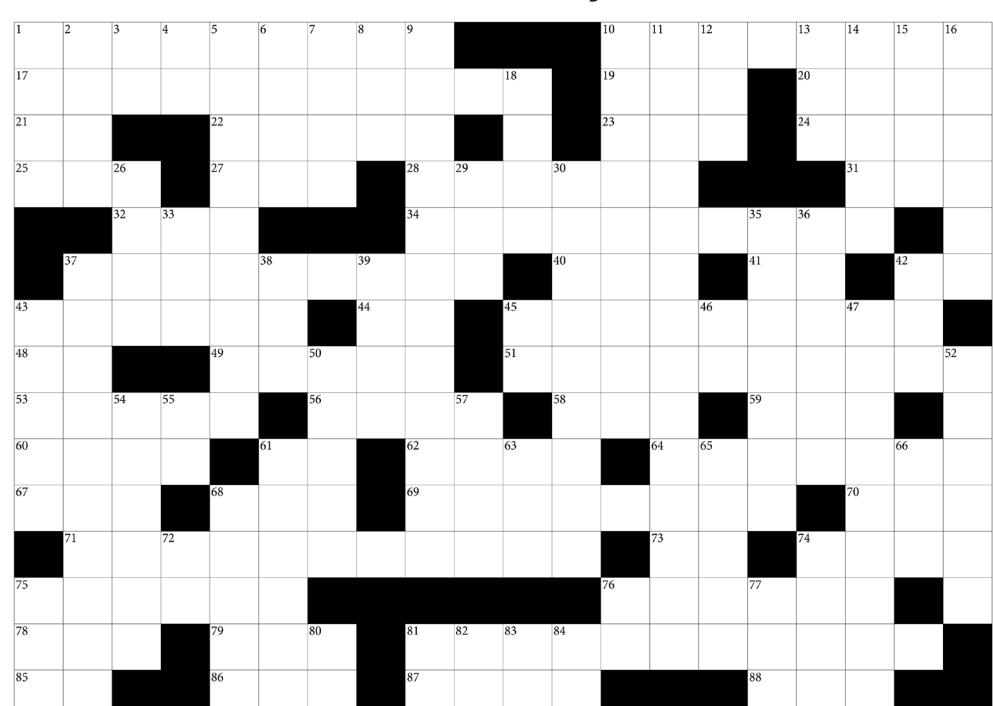


Here is our example.
Words used: EXAMPLE-EXPAT-
TOTING-GARAGE
Follow the lines to see how we
solved it!
Can you solve it with fewer words?



Stuck? See below for our solutions. • Idea courtesy of the New York Times. • Puzzles made by Nate Posner

Crossword : "Get Me Away From Here, I'm Dying" By Steven Sutton



Across

- Brightly colored gemstone
- See 11D
- Famed immigration station
- Opposite of afar?
- Origin of 37 across
- Ballet skirt
- Jar topper
- 1950's Presidential nickname
- Siding Manufacturer?
- One way of determining triangle congruency, or an airline of the high north
- Walmart electronics brand
- What plays when the X-Men leave?
- With 81A, band whose first album

- cover bore the words "Peel slowly and see"
Type of credit card, abbr.
Texters "your"
Calc. function
Hallucinogen
Video game company
Exclamation upon realizing your leaves were stolen?
The world's most popular drink, to a Spaniard
About the moon
Irish revolutionary donation?
Kids _____
Ye _____
Common chemical suffix
Institute of Higher Education in Nairobi or Newcastle
Manual aquatic propellers

Length: Long | Difficulty: Very Hard

- bags
Letter header
Purveyors of a workplace review, abbr.
Rent
Opposite of "from your left"
lithic
How to check for testicular cancer
Speaker, Sp.
What your grandma might call her new Apple headphones
They won a war against Australia
Young cow's meat
AOL Competitor
Former Senator Thurmond
Do-Re-

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

Word Search

Word List (14 words total)

Better	Penguin
Church	Signage
Detract	Thinking
Disbelief	Vendor
Ego	Whine
News	Winner
Nonbinary	Wonderment