

Solon Grover

Socratic 1 & 2

Mrs. Cannon

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### A Cold Dive

Though it happened just over a year ago, it seems like forever since I was on the 2020 Agriculture Winterim trip. So much has happened, and it feels like the many tourist activities we had the privilege of participating in would be impossible in today's plague culture. We were able to gather in large groups, and heaven forbid, we even traveled in cars together. The world was different then, and wholly untainted by bat diseases.

Most of the trip occurred in the El Centro area of southern California, but we did get to go to the San Diego Zoo, and afterwards we stopped by the beach for an hour or so. Now remember, this is a California beach, and it's January, so going to one is probably something a local would view as typical stupid tourist behavior. The weather itself wasn't that bad, and it was probably in the mid sixties Fahrenheit (which was certainly an improvement from Utah weather), but the water was more relatable Dante's ninth circle than any previously experienced earthly situation. A dip into that water causes a frozen paralysis, and a desire for swift death as an end to the pain. After a minute or so of standing on the sandy shore, a small group suddenly decided to engage in an act of masochism, and rushed to the salty brine.

This charge was led by none other than Ms. Ure, a well known advocate for mottos such as "just do it" and "face the music" and "the water is fine, you're just a weakling. If I had a window, these would be prime grounds for defenestration". It seemed impossible to me as I stood with the water just barely reaching my ankles that others could be so far in, and seemingly

unaffected by the cold. In reality, this was only true because they were incapable of feeling how cold it really was; their nerves had been numbed, they had achieved a new normal. Eventually I began to move into depths greater than just the height of my feet, and then I began to realize what they were thinking. After getting wet, there's really no point in turning back. The worst is over (at least for the portion of the body that actually did get wet), and returning to dry land would only bring enough warmth to feel just how cold you really were. And thus I continued until I reached the others, and was delivered into the strangely warm hands of hypothermia.

It turns out that jumping with the others as the waves came rolling in was pretty fun, and it made no difference when the clouds arrived and covered the whole coast in shade. Even after getting so far out, Satan's icy liquid hadn't yet reached my face, the last remaining symbol of my procrastination and uncommitted attitude towards the activity. I knew what I had to do, and after a few seconds of mental preparation I plunged my head into the water, completing my initiation. I was now ready to play without risk, and completely prepared to face the waves with no fear.

Just like Californian ocean water, the whole academic experience here at Maeser, I believe, is best approached in a sudden dive. A dip in the water or an easy schedule is often comparable to a limbo where there is just enough to complain about, but too little to grow and become numb to the tougher aspects of the journey. The best thing a student can do for themselves is to stretch their capacity for long study and effort by taking on new and challenging classes. For this coming school year, all students, especially we seniors coming upon our new college study, should stay diligent to the theory of progressive overload as we select our courses and work to become stronger people.