



Staying Focused While Staying Home

By: Elle Airhart

2020 is officially over! Everybody celebrate! Wait, what? Oh...testing. Nevermind, don't celebrate just yet sadly. Tears aside, first things first: I can't predict the future. At the time of writing this article, I'm not sure if midterms are behind us or looming over us like 2020 v2.0. Either way, big testing is still ahead of us. While 2020 really messed up state testing, we may or may not have them this year.



Either way, studying tips during our unique circumstances might help. As students, we have other major tests to prepare for. Juniors have a mandatory ACT test along with any other students who decide to sign up to other scheduled tests. CCP students have an even bigger work load when trying to prepare for college level exams along with everything else going on in MHS. We have a lot to study for but it's not over (is it ever?). We also have the aftermath and maybe even the continuation of a pandemic. So, with all of this, how could someone stay focused?

In This Issue	
Staying Focused	1
Staying Focused (continued) Online Schooling	2
Online Schooling! (continued) McDonald, Briefly Student Spotlight- Emma O'Connell	3
Student Spotlight- Molly Howard Editorial	4
Grinds My Gears Song of the Month	5
Song of the Month (continued) People on the Street	6
Horoscope of the Month	7
Backpage Pics	8

Studying is pretty difficult. Let's try it with a pandemic. As daunting as that sounds, it will basically stay the same. The first thing to do is get ready for a good ole study session. Make sure your workspace is clean and your study material is within reach. Clear away those water bottles and old cereal bowls, because we have work to do! Laying on your bed is comfy but you might want to use a desk or chair since you will have less of a chance to conk out while working through a Geometry question. As Sophomore Savannah Jones says, "My ideal place is anywhere I can let my mind focus. This can be anywhere as long as it's quiet."

Staff Writer:
Riley Myers

Editor Staff:
Theresa Greathouse
Hannah Werle
Elle Airhart

Broadcast Staff:
Bri Callow
Ethan O'Connell
Elise McMaster
Sage Mason

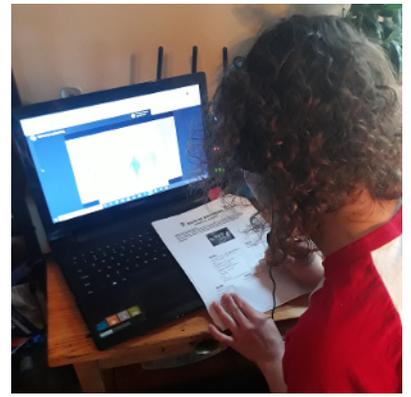
Editor in Chief:
Mr. Backur

Follow on Social Media
@MHS_Villager 
The Villager Vlogs 

Article continues on page 2



Staying Focused continued... Some like to listen to music while they work and especially now since we have full capability of doing so since we are home more often. That's great, however, try to make sure you limit distractions if you plan on really putting this important information into your brain. Though, if you truly hate the silence--like me, put on a quiet playlist. A personal suggestion is lofi. It's a chill genre with little to any distracting notes in the music. "My preferred environment has no noise and I found piano and string quartet music sometimes helps me focus," says Junior Anna Airhart.



Anna's ideal studying spot.

Another way to stay focused is to remove your phone from the picture. No Snapchat or Instagram to distract you now! A tip for that would be to put your phone on Do-Not-Disturb or on the other side of the room so you aren't tempted to check while you're studying.



One last tip for those who still struggle. At this time, many teachers are recording their lessons and making them available to students so if listening helps you better understand the information being said, listen to the lessons as much as you need. Maybe grab a friend. Maybe not now, but virtually grab a friend into a call and study together. If bouncing facts and concepts off of other people helps you grasp the information better, do it! Whatever helps you retain that information, do it. It will only help you.

Everyone is different and finding what helps you individually remember the information is a big part of staying focused while studying. So maybe if simply sitting in a quiet room and staring at a book for who knows how long isn't helping, try maybe having someone read it to you or grab a notebook and write down important details that you may want focus on better.

So, keep your heads up--or I guess in this case down in the books--and try to study as often as you can if you don't remember or understand something being taught in your classes. Also, don't forget that you have teachers who will be happy to work with you and help you understand if you're having trouble. Stay focused and ready for midterms if they haven't happened yet and if they have, think back to this article for future tests. After all, everyone has the potential; it is simply who decides to use it.

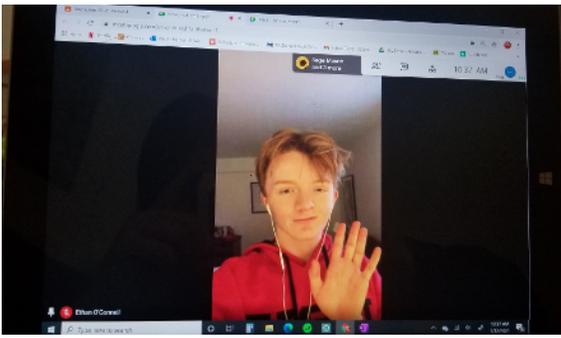
Online Schooling! Here We Go Again...

By: Riley Myers

This has certainly been a different and challenging school year and the word "disruptive" is an understatement. We miss going to school regularly and seeing our friends. Not to mention that everybody is having a hard time keeping their grades up. I know a bunch of people who really just want to go back to school and have fun learning without looking at a screen for hours on end. Just last year everybody was saying, "I don't like school" or "I wish we could get out already." Now we're begging to come back and realizing how deeply we took school for granted.

That said, establishing camaraderie among the students is a good moral boost.. Please, check on how other people are doing these long school days sitting behind a computer. Sophomore Mariah Leskovac had this to say about the virtual learning system: "Doing a fully virtual model has proven to be quite strange. Instead of getting up and ready to head to school, I get up and make my way over to my computer. I get bored easily due to sitting still and staring at a screen for a good majority of my day. I would say that one good thing to come out of this is that my typing skills have greatly improved. I've had to adapt to online versions of assignments and note taking."

We tend to take for granted many of these things when we go to school everyday, but now we can't see our friends or learn in-person with our teachers. Mariah continued, "I prefer to be in school. However, I find it difficult to switch back and forth between in-school and online when we do the hybrid model. Right when I start to get used to being in school, all of a sudden I'm back at home logging on for classes. Plus, it's weird being in such small classes." A lot of people are having similar problems, however. Students and staff alike are struggling going back and forth while also trying to stay on a steady schedule.



Ethan O'Connell waving from home.

While the hybrid has presented some challenges, there's at least the opportunity to go to school in person a few days each week. Sophomore Michael Woloschak said, "I honestly like the system we have now with the cohorts, although I would prefer if we were in school all week long instead of online half the days of the week."

Others are getting more distracted than usual at home now since their beds are at home and their pets are prone to bother them. Michael continued, "I do feel more distracted when I'm at home doing school work; it almost feels like an option, if that makes sense. I'm not stating that it is an option, but it does feel as though it is." The online learning system can definitely be a test of our attention spans.

The students are not completely alone however; teachers are working their hardest to keep students engaged in the learning process. Mrs. Evans, the high school's French and culture teacher, elaborated with us about her efforts to keep everyone excited. She said, "We have been able to incorporate so many interactive features by using a wide variety of technological resources this year. It has challenged me to think outside of the box in order to create fully immersive classes." Although online learning can be hard, the school has been working hard to find resources such as Google classroom, Google meet, and other online schooling programs that will keep students motivated.

We got through this year, 2020 is finally over. 2021 is here now and let's hope that this year is going to knock the socks off 2020. Have a great year!

McDonald, Briefly

By: Theresa Greathouse



Welcome back MHS ! We hope you enjoyed your holiday break, catching up on sleep, and enjoying holiday foods, especially the cookies! But now it's time to get back into the groove of things and get ready to use your brain again.



School's is now back in (hybrid) session! Last month we were all virtual, which had its perks, but it's nice to return to our regularly scheduled routine! Don't forget to thank your teachers for their determination when we were virtual!



Senior Emma O'Connell Named a Part of Twenty Under Twenty

Congratulations to Senior Emma O'Connell for being named one of this year's Twenty Under Twenty. Emma was nominated by her brother Ethan O'Connell, who believed she earned the spot for not only helping others and giving back, but because she's selfless and puts others' needs before her own. Emma partnered with some classmates to open a food pantry in the high school for students who need food for any reason. Emma not only gets involved with the community but is also a 4.0 student, a member of NHS, McDonald Cross Country and Track, and vice president of the McDonald Volunteer Club, which she helped start. Great job Emma and thank you for what you've done to help out the community.



Senior Molly Howard Scores One Thousandth Point

Congratulations to Molly Howard for earning her one thousandth point during the January 7th game against Western Reserve! Recently, she was also named WKBN's Student Athlete of the Week. Molly has been captain of the basketball team for two years and was named 2nd Team All Ohio, 1st Team Northeast, 1st Team Trumbull County, and 1st Team MVAC. She also plays volleyball with many of her friends and is a great middle hitter for the volleyball team. Molly also helps tutor students, and still manages to earn all A's with a GPA of 3.95 and is in the top 15 of her class!

Editorial: Oddball- Blending In or Standing Out?

By: Theresa Greathouse

Nowadays in society, people find themselves prioritizing fitting in with others instead of feeling comfortable enough in their own skin to stand out.

It's okay to want to wear or do certain things or try new things out that other people have done, but some say it stunts one's growth to reach their full potential. It's like in today's society many teenagers have different styles, but we're all shaped differently and still receive ads for workouts, diets, and even plastic surgery. So for many teenagers or young adults it is hard to want to be yourself when the media portrays a different image. Simply put, there is no perfect image, no perfect girl, no perfect body type, no perfect person. I think the media should focus more on how teens need to love themselves rather than promoting diets that are unhealthy and models as an ideal image for the younger generation.



It's okay to stand out and be yourself, to have a different style, or a different image. It's okay to be yourself. One of the biggest things in society today is many young adults are afraid of being the oddball of a social group so many decide to default to something or someone they really aren't. Similarly, it's okay to want to fit in, but to what extent? Think about how free you feel when you don't have to tell a lie when you can be yourself; it's like everything runs smooth as butter. Standing out could also show others that it's cool to stand out and can possibly even help others.

So should you stand out? Or should you blend in? Well I guess the answer lies with who you are and what you want to do. Personally I don't think either is a bad thing, but I also don't think blending in with others your whole life is a good thing either. I think that if one is comfortable enough with oneself they should go ahead and stand out.

What Grinds My Gears

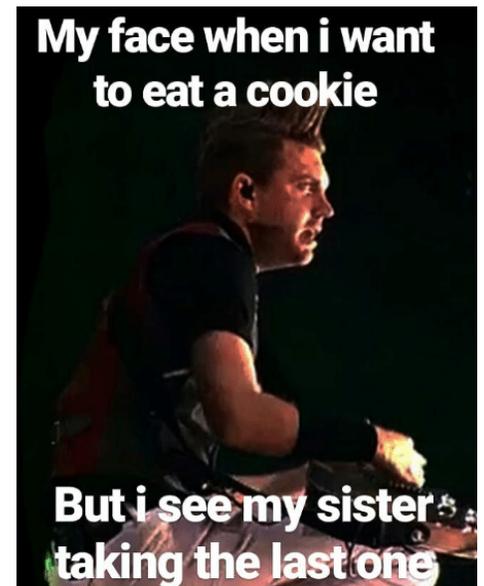
By: Riley Myers



You know when your grandma makes those delicious cookies and you are about to go over to her house on a holiday waiting to eat those cookies. Well, when you get there you're thinking, "Oh man, I'm ready for those Christmas cookies!" When you walk inside you stroll into that kitchen and there are no cookies. Oh... My... Goodness... Who took all the cookies? Then you see that one family member stuffing their face with your favorite cookie. "Revenge, I say... revenge! They have been warned."

Okay, I get it- you're there before me, but still you already had thirteen cookies. Why couldn't you save me one delicious and decorated cookie? You knew they were my favorite. Just why? I'll remember when you want to spend the night or want a birthday present. You don't see me taking the first or last birthday cake when it's your birthday, so why would you take the cookie? Now, when it is your birthday I won't get you a birthday present and I'll take the last piece of that birthday cake.

We could have stopped all this madness if you just left me a cookie. Just one. But now we have to learn the hard way. Till then you will be forever held accountable for your action that you did. You did it and you will never outlive what you have done to a piece of my soul. You were warned and you didn't care! You were once my favorite family member, but now I have found a new one. You did this to yourself. Good luck ever trying to be the favorite again.



Song of the Month: "Snowman" by Sia

By: Elle Airhart



Alright. Here's a song for the season. Maybe a little late to the Christmas scene, but it's still winter! Why not go out and build a snowman...if there is any snow. After a careful and a slightly panicked search to find a song, I have finally found a new song to pick apart. I hadn't heard of this song until one of my friends recommended it to me, so I needed to do a bit more research to know what it's all about.

The artist Sia is an Australian singer-songwriter who released the song "Snowman" in 2017. Only recently through the popularity of everyone's favorite app, TikTok, did the song resurface. As of now, it has been blowing up there and with the suggestion from my best friend, we're going to sit down and tear into this thing like a Christmas dinner. Y'all ready? Well, even if you're not, I'm going to continue.

After reading through the lyrics and reading up on Sia, "Snowman" appears to be about a crush that the artist felt during some of the winter months. According to the interview held by Billboard, Sia felt that this relationship was going to disappear by the spring. Combining that with her idea to create a modern and original 'good' Christmas song, "Snowman" was created with the help of her producer Greg Kurstin. The mainstream meaning is that she would like her drifting partner to hold on a little longer and not "melt away" by spring. The main character's feelings towards this partner are hopeful and pleading with their significant other to continue to stay with them and keep this love alive.



But that sounds pretty depressing, even for a Christmas song. When I first heard the song and looked over the lyrics, my theory was that even in dark times or in the song's case, heated times, the people who love you the most will stay by your side and push you to grow from the worst of it instead of dripping into a puddle of despair. I mean just read some of the chorus: "I want you to know that I'm never leaving; 'Cause I'm Mrs. Snow, 'til death we'll be freezing/ Yeah, you are my home, my home for all seasons/ So come on, let's go". Like, how could you not feel warmhearted and relieved to hear someone say something like that? They are literally saying that they will stay with you until the end. That alone could cure any ailment in my opinion.

In these unique and strange times, we need to surround ourselves with people like the song depicts and keep them close if we're going to get through this. So, grab your favorite snowmen (and snow-women) and hug 'em close :).

People On The Street-"How Do You Feel Coming Back to Hybrid Learning?"



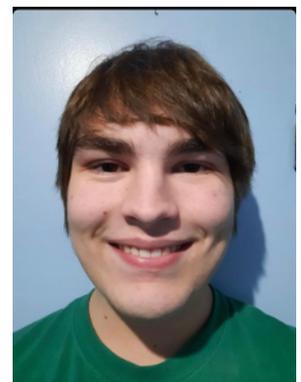
By: **Bri Callow**

It feels like ages since MHS students were in the building. After our three weeks online and then winter break it definitely could feel weird to be back at times. Many of our MHS students voiced their own opinions about how they feel coming back to school.

"I don't feel happy about doing my work at school and didn't look forward to coming back, but I am happy to see my friends and teachers." -Scott Jones



"I'm disappointed to return, but am excited for the end of this semester and the start of a new one." -Ryan Smith



"I'm excited to be back. I feel like I don't pay attention as well during online and I miss seeing my friends in class." - Jacob Wolford



"I like that we're coming back to school because that means our basketball season can finally start up again." - Gracie Callow

Zodiac Sign of the Month

By: Riley Myers

Capricorn: December 22 - January 19

Element: Earth

Color: Black

Day: Saturday

Ruler: Saturn

Lucky Number: 4 or 8

Strengths: Responsible, discipline, self-control, and good-manners

Weaknesses: Know-it-all, unforgiving, condescending, and accept the worst

Capricorns Likes: Family, tradition, and music

Capricorn Dislikes: Almost everything at some point

Overall: New insights come in with this December. You are aware that some large moves and shifts in the world must take their course and last for a while longer, but you don't want to stay stuck in circumstances that you have the power to change right now. People will surprise you and so will colorful relationships that bring a smile in difficult times.

Aquarius: January 20 - February 18

Element: Air

Color: Light-blue

Day: Saturday

Ruler: Uranus

Lucky Number: 7 or 11

Strengths: Progressive, original, independent, humanitarian

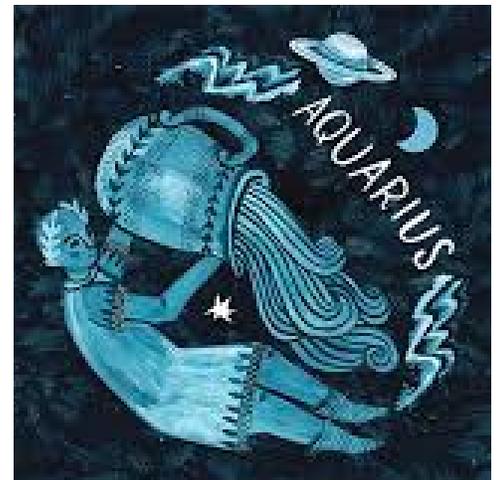
Weaknesses: Runs from emotional expression, temperamental, uncompromising, aloof

Aquarius Likes: Fun with friends, helping others, fighting for causes, intellectual conversations, a good listener.

Aquarius Dislikes: Limitation, broken promises, being lonely, dull or boring situations, people who disagree with them.

Overall: You can say and do a lot more than you imagined. By the end of December, your actual possibilities will become clearer. Freelance opportunities may arise, new offers might knock on the door, and friendships could be found in the most unusual ways and places. Keep your heart open and your body in good shape, energized and ready to take on new and improved versions of events in your life.

Source: [12 Astrology Zodiac Signs Dates, Meanings and Compatibility \(astrology-zodiac-signs.com\)](https://astrology-zodiac-signs.com)



Backpage Pics

By: Hannah Werle

