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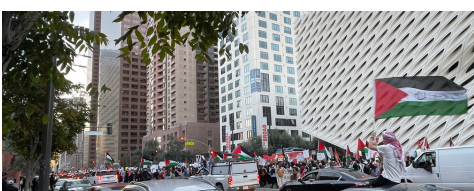
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South Korea's Devastating Population Decrease

by Eugene Kwon, Samuelli Academy



South Korea is currently experiencing the worst population crisis of all time. Since 2013, it has been ranked last in terms of birth rates within the OECD, and their national birth rate is an average of 0.78, less than 1. What's even worse is that Seoul's birth rate is lower, as it has an average of 0.59. 249,000 babies were born in 2022, which is a decrease of 4.4% from the previous year. South Korea is continuing to reach its lowest birth rates every single year, and situations are not getting better. Experts say that the country needs to have at least a birth rate of 2.1 to keep the population stable at the current 52 million. On the other hand, with the current trend, the population is expected to shrink to 37 million by 2070. Solutions that will boost the country's birth rate are urgently needed, and must be implemented rapidly. However, it is important to analyze the primary reasons behind the low birth rates in order to produce an efficient solution.

There are two main factors that influence the birth rate: economic barriers and societal prejudice. South Korea currently has a poor unemployment rate of 62.7%. Especially for young people, jobs are becoming more scarce.

In addition, real estate prices continue to rise, and rent is becoming more expensive every day. In fact, in 2021, real estate prices in the Seoul area will have increased by 24%. For young men and women in South Korea, it is already difficult to create a sufficient lifestyle for themselves. Many say that it is a financial burden to support a baby, especially when both parents are working, as they would need to hire a babysitter or apply for an extensive daycare service. Not only this, they would need to pay for the baby's necessities, such as food, clothing, healthcare, and education. Also, this doesn't only apply when the child is young. As they grow older into middle school and high school, the financial burden doesn't leave the parents and sometimes even worsens.

Next is societal prejudice. While many are now gone, because South Korea originated in a Confucian society, there is still a lot of pressure that a woman can feel when having a child. For instance, there are incidents where women are disliked in a workplace just because they used their maternal leave.

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Also, it is hard for many women to resume their careers after giving birth because of the long career break. For example, 39% of women claim that they have been discriminated against in their workplace just because of their use of maternal leave.

Then what has the government done so far to resolve this situation? The government spent approximately 210 billion dollars in the past 16 years to change the trend of decreasing population. President Yoon recently implemented a plan that pays

\$540 for a family that has a child less than one year old. Also, the government is trying to reduce working time, improve daycare facilities, and create affordable housing. However, what's most important is to create a society where having children is not considered a burden. In order to accomplish this, some critical problems need to be solved. First, the youth need to be financially stable. If an individual is having a hard time supporting themselves, it would be absurd to encourage them to create a family.

Workplaces need to increase, and real estate prices must settle down. The government needs to offer housing that is lower than the market price and offer loans with low interest rates. Also, workplaces must implement work from home policies, which allow parents to spend more time with their children. Lastly, free and high quality daycare centers and kindergartens must be created so that parents can work without disturbance.

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF: UKRAINE VS RUSSIA

by Kevin Choi, University High School



The complex and enduring conflict between Russia and Ukraine is an intricate tapestry woven from centuries of shared history, geopolitical shifts, and competing national aspirations. Ukraine's emergence as an independent nation in 1991 marked a pivotal moment in the region's history following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The newfound independence, however, was quickly accompanied by territorial disputes and influence disputes, notably Russia's annexation of Crimea and support for separatists in eastern Ukraine, which intensified tensions.

This ongoing confrontation mirrors the historical model where dominant powers have sought to expand their territorial control for strategic dominance. Russia's endeavors to consolidate authority in regions harboring substantial Russian-speaking communities reflect a recurrent narrative of powerful entities historically aiming to broaden their influence and secure strategic positions. These historical echoes resonate with the struggles of past empires and nations eager for territorial expansion and geopolitical advantage.

The protracted conflict between Russia and Ukraine is underpinned by deeply established historical grievances that continue to shape contemporary geopolitical dynamics. The multifaceted differences in culture, language, and political identities, deeply rooted in their intertwined history, intricately contribute to the complexity of the conflict. The causation of these disparities unceasingly seems to result in disputes, a perpetual and intricate historical pattern.

The resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict entails a comprehensive and introspective approach that grapples with the layers of historical complexities while fostering sustained dialogue and mutual understanding. Diplomatic endeavors must earnestly engage with historical grievances, seeking avenues to reconcile conflicting national identities and territorial claims. The untangling of these historical threads assumes paramount importance in steering both nations towards a sustainable path of peace, cooperation, and mutual respect, acknowledging that the echoes of the past profoundly influence the contours of their present relationship, and understanding these echoes is pivotal in charting a more harmonious future.

UPS AND DOWNS OF LAB GROWN MEATS

by Portia Nee, Beckman High school



these facilities would increase production, the labs would require more land and new equipment, which could increase costs even more. Lab grown meat produces both limits and opportunities. Despite these challenges, possibly new technological advancement could help fix these problems.

Lab grown meat has many benefits. Compared to traditional meat, lab grown meat has no microplastics, mercury, antibiotics, and pollutants. This addresses the concern of traditional meat affecting humans. Another benefit is that it has the ability to create an unlimited cell line, which would create a sustainable and consistent supply. For example, harvesting stem cells and storing the viable cells in a cell bank, would allow us to use them for up to 10 years. In addition, these stem cells can also come from the feathers of a chicken or biopsies of a chicken. Even though we need an animal to produce lab grown meat, it would require less pain compared to the traditional meat industry. In conclusion, lab grown meat has benefits such as less health problems, creating a consistent supply, and less harm.

Lab grown meat has many benefits and downsides. In the future, I wonder what new advancements will affect lab grown meat.

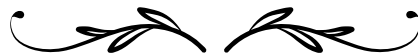
What is lab grown meat? Lab grown meat is meat that is produced by collecting the stem cells of an animal, then placing these cells to grow in a bioreactor, and giving it nutrients to help it mature into animal tissue. We can create lab grown chicken by collecting the stem cells of a fertilized chicken egg, check for quality, freeze the best stem cells, put the cells in a bioreactor, and over time it will become protein.

Lab grown meat affects the environment in many ways. For example, lab grown meat could lead to a reduction in greenhouse gasses. The traditional meat industry also creates methane gas, nitrous oxide, and carbon dioxide. By limiting the traditional meat industry, we could cut back on greenhouse gasses. On the other hand, these labs require a sterile environment, which could lead to 55% more carbon footprint than the car industry. According to a study done by UC Davis, lab grown meat produces around 4 to 25 times more energy than traditional beef. A way lab grown meat benefits the environment is by using less water and land. To conclude, it is essential to recognize both the negative and

positive impacts of lab grown meat on the environment.

However, lab grown meat has downsides. Lab grown meat requires a controlled and sterile environment to prevent contamination and diseases. However, a benefit of this downside is that it would mean less antibiotics and medicine used in the animals. Traditional animals have an immune system, but it requires many antibiotics to prevent the spread of disease. According to the University of Washington, the use of antibiotics in livestock has killed around 35,000 people per year. Another downside is that the cost is very high. The first lab grown burger ever produced cost about \$300,000. Just in the last couple of years, there have been more technological advancements leading to a decreased price of around \$50 per burger. These labs require land and equipment which can add up very quickly. Another downside is the limited amount of meat produced. For example, the Emeryville facility can only create about 50,000 pounds of lab grown chicken per year. Compared to the United States producing 50 billion pounds of chicken per year. If





TRANSGENDER ATHLETES IN WOMEN'S SPORT

by Kayla Park, Irvine High School



The debate about changing women's participation in women's sports has become contentious in recent years, with views from all sides. The issue affects areas such as gender identity, integration, and fair competition. Striking the balance between recognizing the rights of transgender people and protecting the integrity of women's sports is a difficult task.

The basis of the debate is the principles of unity and justice. Advocates believe sports should be a place where everyone, regardless of gender, is welcome and encouraged to participate. Trans women who identify as women believe that their exclusion from women's sports undermines their right to participate in activities based on their gender identity. Inclusion, they argue, fosters a more diverse and enriching sports environment.

However, concerns have been raised about the potential impact on competitive fairness. Skeptics worry that differences in physical attributes between cisgender women and transgender women might lead to an uneven playing field. Advocates for maintaining categorical divisions argue that such distinctions are necessary to ensure fair competition and safeguard the integrity of women's sports. To navigate this complex terrain, it is crucial to consider the evolving scientific understanding of gender and athletic

performance. While physical differences between cisgender and transgender individuals exist, the extent to which these differences influence competitive outcomes is nuanced. Studies suggest that factors such as training, skill, and strategy play significant roles in athletic success, mitigating some concerns about inherent advantages.

Striking a balance requires careful consideration of policies and guidelines that address both inclusivity and competitive fairness. Establishing clear eligibility criteria that go beyond simple binary categorizations may be one way to ensure fair competition while respecting the rights of transgender women. Continuous collaboration between sports organizations, medical professionals, and LGBTQ+ advocates is essential to creating an environment that accommodates the diverse identities within the realm of women's sports.

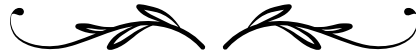
In conclusion, the inclusion of transgender women in women's sports is a multifaceted issue that requires a thoughtful and comprehensive approach. Balancing the principles of inclusivity and competitive fairness is challenging but essential for fostering a sports

environment that embraces diversity and reflects the evolving understanding of gender identity in society. Through open dialogue and collaboration, it is possible to establish guidelines that respect the rights of transgender women while preserving the integrity of women's sports.

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THE JA MORANT SUSPENSION IN THE NBA

by Neil Hwang, Fairmont School North Tustin Campus



The NBA is a globally known and favorite basketball association that can be a dream for anyone who plays the sport. An average 1.89 million people globally watch the regular season games, and during the playoffs, the number rises even more. What makes the NBA so popular are the dynamic plays that the players make, ranging from: impressive dunks, long distance three pointers, and controversial statements and actions.

If Magic Johnson and Larry Bird led the 80s, Shaq and Allen Iverson led the 2000s, and LeBron and Curry led the 2010s, then Ja Morant is most likely in the conversation for leading the next generation of NBA basketball.

Temetrius Ja Morant was drafted second overall in the first round of the 2019 NBA draft by the Memphis Grizzlies. Throughout his career so far, he has been compared to legendary point guard Derrick Rose. Rose has been known for his insane athleticism and his legendary 2011 MVP season. Rose was able to gracefully run across the floor and shock the crowd, usually with his electrifying dunks, and even leave his opponents in awe. At the young age of twenty-four, Ja Morant has shown success: winning rookie of the year in 2019, taking his team to the conference semifinals in 2022, and even making his first all star team in 2022. However, people make mistakes.

On March 4, 2022, Ja Morant was seen with a gun on Instagram Live in

Denver. Although he was not facing any criminal charges, he was faced with an eight game suspension by NBA commissioner Adam Silver. Following this incident, the NBA decided to have an investigation on Morant. Morant's conduct had been concerning even before the March suspension. After a game in January, members of the Indiana Pacers reported that what could have been a laser sight from a gun was pointed at them after the game. People close to Morant had clashed with Pacers players during the game.

This was not the only problem. A 17-year-old teenager, Josh Holloway, had sued Morant for an incident that happened in the NBA star's Memphis residence.

Last summer, Morant had a pickup game with the teenager and supposedly threw fists. Holloway stated that Morant came out armed

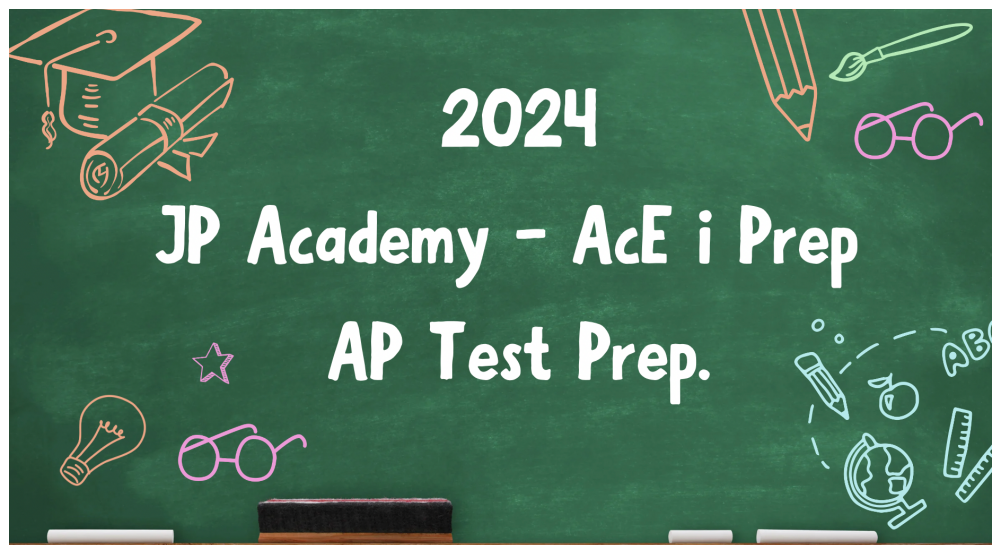
with a gun afterwards. Morant told the police that it was only self defense, and that it was because Holloway had thrown the basketball at his head.

It would have been great if that was the end of the bad and Morant would get back on the court. Unfortunately, more people started to mention incidents where Morant had been involved, usually in a bad way.

A mall employee had also accused Morant of assaulting him after Morant's mother had a dispute at a shoe store. Another person accused Morant of intimidation when Morant came to his sister's high school volleyball game because she was involved in a dispute.

Another issue started to rise, and this time there was video evidence. Only two months after Morant's first issue with a gun on Instagram Live, he repeated the same mistake. "Ja's conduct was irresponsible, reckless, and potentially very dangerous," NBA commissioner Adam Silver said in March after Morant's suspension. "It also has serious consequences given his enormous following and influence, particularly among young fans who look up to him." The Grizzlies managed to suspend Morant from any team activities.

Morant is a rising superstar who has signed with Nike for a signature shoe and was selected to be the face of Powerade. Morant has been destined for fame, but his questionable actions off the basketball court might poison his young career for good.



THE GREAT WAVE OFF KANAGAWA:
A PRINT BY HOKUSAI

by Shihoo Lee, Crean Lutheran High School



Beyond the Great Wave: Works by Hokusai from the British Museum

The waves, described as "claws, the boat is caught in them, you can feel it," wrote Van Gogh to his brother in a letter. The color woodblock print *The Great Wave* was published by Hokusai in his early seventies, in about 1831, in Japan. This woodblock print is only one of the many designs in the series of a total of forty-six views of Mount Fuji. All these designs had brought out a certain change in Hokusai's style, with an extensive use of the pigment Prussian blue, which had been recently imported into Japan. This new style, landscape views, would soon become a popular new genre in Japanese prints.

Hokusai, emerging from an art school, trained as a woodblock cutter, and then in his twenties, he joined the studio of Katsukawa Shunsho, which specializes in making prints of actors. Beginning in his thirties, Hokusai started to explore new styles and subjects. In his forties and fifties, Hokusai became successful by making illustrations for books and figure paintings.

From then on, he began to introduce himself to foreign art concepts outside of his usual boundaries.

Finally, when Hokusai was in his seventies, he started to work on the *Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji*, including ten additional woodblock prints that portray the different seasons and locations around Mount Fuji.

The Great Wave off Kanagawa, however, is known to be the most famous out of the forty-six prints, and it portrays three fast fishing boats heading into a great storm wave. Ocean spray appears to fall like gentle snow, while the wave's crest forms claw-like shapes. Playing with the western perspective, Hokusai incorporates the new color of Prussian blue, newly imported by foreign merchants, mixed with different tints of indigo. This composition reflects Hokusai's mastery of Japanese woodblock printing and how his art would become greater as he got old.

Not only was Hokusai an influential figure in Ukiyo-e art, but also had

art pieces that were significantly influential towards well-known European artists such as Monet, Renoir, and perhaps Van Gogh. His famous piece *The Starry Night* seems to have similar colors and strokes that appear similar to the likes of the sea. Hokusai's legacy also echoes through contemporary art even today.

On the whole, Hokusai's masterpiece, *The Great Wave Off Kanagawa*, is a significantly influential piece. In his seventies, his colors progressively changed along with his style. The print's iconic animated waves with Mount Fuji off in the distance inspired great artists and his legacy continues to endure, even today.



PRO-PALESTINIAN PROTEST IN DOWNTOWN

by Dawson Shin, Northwood High School



While millions of consumers run to the store to buy their long-awaited baggy jeans and sneakers on Black Friday, millions are suffering due to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Various protests are taking place not only in the Middle East but also on the other side of the world, in the United States. Specifically, a huge protest against Israel's war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip was held in downtown Los Angeles (LA).

Thousands of people marched to the middle of 6th Street, holding a giant Palestinian flag, to emphasize the deaths of millions of Palestinian civilians and spread awareness of the need for physical help for families, children, and the country.

Many young demonstrators were also present in the protests, highlighting the enormous size of Saturday's protest that filled the streets of LA. The younger generation decided to fight against the societal indifference to the war. According to the Washington Post, in the U.S., hate crimes against Arabs, Muslims, and Jews have increased since Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7th. Many connections have been made back to 9/11, and many protestors rose to emphasize how religion should not be blamed as the cause of this conflict.

Simultaneously, there were also pro-Israel protests at the University

of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) from student organizations such as the "Answer Coalition." Though the protests may be fighting from different perspectives, they ultimately share the same goal of sharing the grief of the loss of innocent lives.



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