

# The Purple Press: Elementary School Edition

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PHOENIXVILLE AREA HIGH SCHOOL

“HOME OF THE PHANTOMS”  
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## What did you want to be when you grow up?



**Written by:**  
Katie  
McGinnis

dream of becoming.  
**An astronaut**

I feel like the most classic response when you ask a child what they want to be when they grow up is that they would like to be an astronaut. Children will look up into the stars and see the “unknown” and want to explore that. Of course, as children, we don’t have a grasp on what it takes to become an astronaut. Being an astronaut requires some sort of graduate degree in STEM, training at NASA, and a lot of motivation.

**A famous celebrity**

A lot of children always want to be famous celebrities of some sort. Whether it would be a famous actor, dancer, or singer, children would see famous people in the media and romanticize the idea of being just like them. I remember watching shows such as “iCarly” and “Victorious” as a child and not

What did you want to be when you grow up? For me personally, I can remember wanting to be a baker because I would love to help my mom cook. As children, we all had big dreams of wanting to be something: like an astronaut, a famous athlete, a movie star, a doctor, a lawyer, a cop, or even a superhero; the list goes on and on. We even had ideas about what we were going to be like now, as high schoolers when we were children. As children, we were so excited because we saw our older siblings or high schoolers in TV shows and



My ten year-old self making chocolate chip cookies to live of to my aspirations of being a baker.  
Photo courtesy of Katie McGinnis

dream due to the fact that it’s so difficult to pursue something in performing arts, and then become famous. First, you have to be extremely talented, then you have to get into contact with an agent, and then you have to somehow have some “big break,” get steady work, and become famous.

**A star athlete**

When I was younger, I played basketball for about five years. I

people. However, as children, we couldn’t comprehend how much mental energy it would take to fulfill these aspirations, such as the years of school or money it would take would be a doctor, or the amount of training it would take to be a police officer or fire-fighter

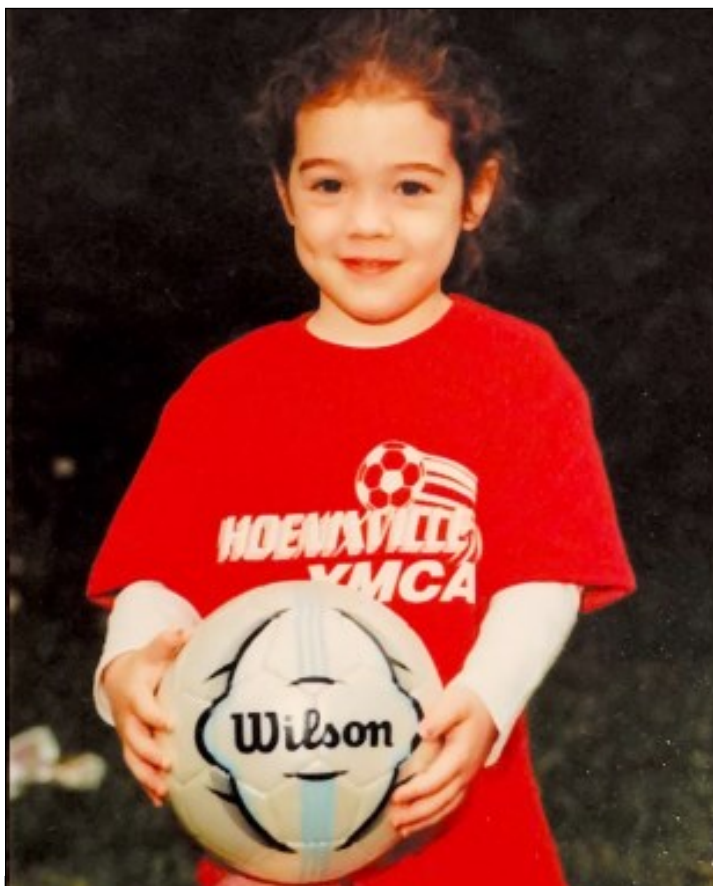
In the end, as children, we imagined how great we would be when we grew up. We were so idealistic because we didn’t have a grasp on



Senior **Zaid Abdel-Majid** living out his dream of being a firefighter!  
Photo courtesy of Zaid Abdel-Majid

thought they were so cool, so we wanted to be like them as well. However, the whole issue is that as children, we weren’t able to actually understand what it takes to become what we would always

only wanting to be like the characters because they were older, but wanting to be like the actors that played the characters because of how cool I thought they were. As children, we couldn’t fulfill this



Senior **Gabrielle McNamee** as a young soccer player, hoping to become a star athlete.  
Photo courtesy of Gabrielle McNamee



Senior **Becca Fine** during her career day in elementary school, dressed up as an ER nurse.  
Photo courtesy of Becca Fine

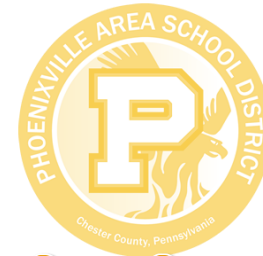
played the sport because I loved it so much I wanted to be a famous basketball athlete in 4th grade. Now, I’m a cross-country and track runner, something that I never envisioned would happen. A lot of children envisioned being a famous athlete in the sport that they played, and they either actually stuck to the sport, play a different sport, or don’t even play a sport at all. I hope I don’t take anyone’s hopes away. In the end, your prospects of becoming a professional athlete are slim. It is only achieved by 1% of the top 1%, but at least there’s hope of becoming an NCAA athlete in college!

**A helping profession (police officer/fire-fighter/doctor)**

Personally, I never remember wanting to be any of these, but many children want to be a police officer or firefighter because we always saw them glorified in the media or on TV, helping other

the process and what it would take to become what we dreamed of. As we grew up, things changed for us, and something happened to shift our interests.

Our current aspirations now either originate from something interesting we learn in school, a work experience, family/friends, or maybe our child aspirations. I went from wanting to be a baker in kindergarten to wanting to be an interpreter for the deaf. My connection to the deaf community was never understood as a child because I couldn’t even grasp on the idea that my parents were deaf and everyone else was different from me, but now as an adult, I have a much better understanding. Working and supporting deaf people is something I’m passionate about and it feels the most comfortable for me, though I can still bake on the side!



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# \*TOYS, GAMES, AND MORE! \*

## Throwback toys



Written by:

Sharlene  
Mauricio

We are finally growing up, with no time to go out and buy toys and play with them, but we did have that wonderful time in life when we did. Let's take a ride down memory lane where we would come home, invite our friends over, and play with numerous toys. Beyblades, Bop-it, Finger Skateboards, and Paper Jamz were some over the top toys that made each of us competitive, while toys like ZhuZhu Pets and Kinetic Sand were just awesome fun.

Beyblades were the talk of the school. Kids would bring their arena to schools; even though it wasn't the smallest, it was portable to carry around. Kids would bring their own beyblades to see who would have the stronger one in battle.

Everyone would surround the arena with their Beyblades ready to release, then scream, "Let it rip!" and the blades come off the launcher onto the arena and start to spin to knock out others.

Bop-it was another toy that made us competitive, making us anxious to not mess up the next move. You would hold on the handles like it was a steering wheel. Then with the five buttons on the sides, you either "pull it," "flick it," "spin it," "twist it," "shake it," "say it," or "bop it." With time, the game would get faster and harder to keep up with and you'd eventually lose and give it up to the next person.

Fingerskate was somewhat a competitive toy. It was just a small skateboard for your fingers as if they were your legs. People would see who had the cooler skateboards with the designs at the bottom like a normal skateboard. Not only that, but everyone would see who made more tricks like balancing on rails, stairs, or the edges of desks.

Paper Jamz is a guitar almost paper thin, not really made of paper. It came with various songs to play and jam out like



Beyblades' Burst Stadium with two Beyblades and rapid launchers was a huge childhood hit.

Photo: Target



Mr. Squiggle, a ZhuZhu Pet hamster, running on a "Spiral Slide & Ramp."

Photo: The New York Times

"Sweet Home Alabama" and "Hey There Delilah." Many students would play as if they were rockstars and jam out non-stop. Some kids would get together with friends and start a "band" and try to outshine the others.

Toys that weren't so competitive, but still fun to play with, were Zhuzhu Pets. Everyone wanted a pet but couldn't take care of a real one, so these mechanical fake hamsters were the next best thing. They came with unique names and birthmarks, the birthmark being on the back. You could buy a different fun house where they could run around as if they were real. It was even better if you had multiple ZhuZhu Pets.

A final toy that was popular was Kinetic Sand, so you could pretend that you were

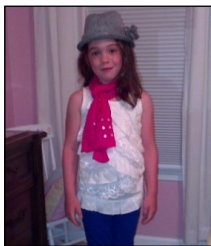
at the beach. The sands came in all different colors, letting kids' creativity flow to create different things from molds, like a spectacular sand castle. Even though it was a joy for us kids, it was a hassle for the parents as the sand would get everywhere.

These were just a sampling of toys most kids wanted back then. Some would fight over them, while others would simply share. It was a nice time playing with toys that didn't involve any screens to be used.

What was your favorite, and do you still play with any of them? Take the survey to vote on the best toys of your childhood.



## Top 5 childhood games



Written by:

Gabrielle  
McNamee

Picture this: it's a rainy day in the middle of November 2014. It's too cold to go outside, so after lunch, you and your classmates have a classic indoor recess. There's the classic card games, Uno, Spoons, and Bull, but nothing compares to the good, old fashioned, games of our childhood. Here's the definitive top five games of our elementary years!

### #5: Candy Land

Candy Land is like the mother of all board games. Although it can get a little boring after several rounds, it's too classic to leave off the list. The board design is extremely colorful, making it memorable and engaging. The very specific board edition shown below is the best by far, with the cutest design out of all other versions. In my opinion, no other game has a style as renowned as Candy Land, and it eventually inspired other similar games like Chutes and Ladders. With the

objective to get to the candy castle first, Candy Land gets extremely competitive, and is a great game for everyone!

### #4: Operation

Although not designed like a traditional board game, Operation is quite memorable. With the goal of using a steady hand to remove foreign objects from the body of the man on the board, Operation creates a game which quickly becomes competitive and even slightly addicting. No game has a similar objective or style as Operation, making it a one-of-a-kind game. The random objects placed in the body have their own special sound effects as they are removed, adding a little humor to an otherwise tense, serious surgery. Although this game isn't exactly breeding future surgeons, it's wildly entertaining and unique.

### #3: Memory Match

This game is iconic, as there have been countless editions and themes by various companies. The game is played by placing all the cards provided face down, and then players take turns flipping cards until they find a match. Once a match is found, it remains that person's turn until they can no longer find a match. This style of play makes the game highly competitive



The adorable elephant ready to launch butterflies!

Photo: Walmart

between players and encourages all players to remember as much as they can.

### #2: Elefun

Although I don't think this game was as popular as some of the others on this list, Elefun is fun for all ages and particularly memorable. To play Elefun, you first fill the elephant with the butterflies in the game. Then, when turned on, the butterflies shoot from the Elephant's trunk. In order to win the game, the players must catch the most butterflies with their given net. The game is adorable with the star of the game being very charming. It's perfect for players of all ages and although not traditional or perhaps even common, Elefun is a great game.

### #1: Hungry Hungry Hippos

In the spot for the number one game of our elementary school years, the all-righteous Hungry Hungry Hippos takes the cake. Designed for four players, Hun-

gry Hungry Hippos is designed with four hippopotamuses waiting for colored marbles. Each player uses a hippo, and when the marbles are released into the little pond in front of the hippos, each player tries to "eat" as many marbles as possible by pressing levers on the hippos designed to open and close their mouths. Hungry Hungry Hippo gets dangerously competitive, and although various pastel hippos eating marbles isn't exactly reflective of the real world, the design of the game, similar to others on this list, is extremely unique and alluring.

Maybe I have a special affinity for games designed around large African land mammals, or maybe Elefun and Hungry Hungry Hippo are easily the top two games of our childhood. Disagree? Use the QR code below to vote for YOUR favorite game!

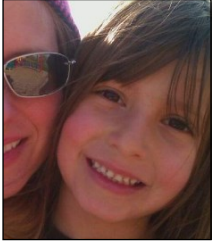


This classic board is a great game for any ages!

Photo: Country Living Magazine

# \*TOYS, GAMES, AND MORE\*

## Gadgets from the past



**Written by:**  
Olivia  
Giardina

If you've ever woken up on a Christmas morning to tear open a present containing

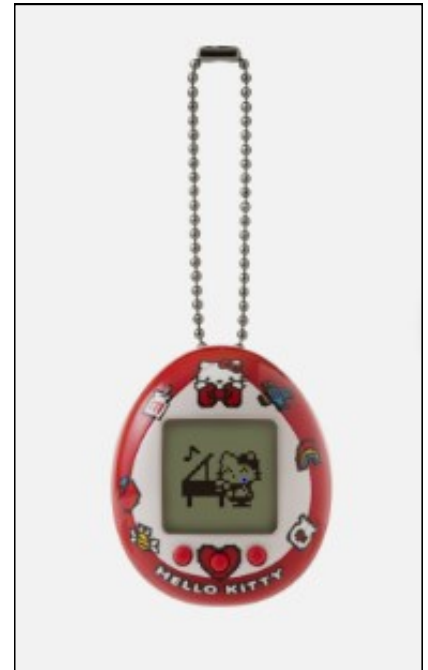
a brand new Nintendo DS, games included, then you understand the importance of electronics as toys in childhood. Born in the peak era of technological progress, our high school generation grew up with the most and best tech. Whether we stole them from our older siblings, had our own, or traded with friends, electronics were present in our youth and the nostalgia of the fun we had makes us wish we could go back in time.

Nintendo's Wii is a classic to always remember. If you were really cool, you had a red one with different color controllers. Then came the handheld devices like Gameboy, DS, and 3DS, which blew ten year-olds' minds when they saw their favorite characters popping out of the screen in 3D. Hours could be spent playing on these consoles, forcing a player to hide under the covers when Mom walked in your room past bedtime.

Playstation and Xbox had their fame, too. Booting up the Sony PS2 on a school night and hearing that deafening sound was satisfying like nothing else, though being handed a controller that wasn't plugged in was the betrayal of childhood. Microsoft's Xbox 360 gave way to being the prime gaming console for playing online with friends like Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto, and Minecraft.

I remember playing with my 16 year old sister's old Nokia, pretending to be talking on the phone, feeling all cool. So when the iPod Touch became a possibility, it was the biggest craze. Having one meant being able to text for the first time, though everyone used Kik for some reason. Games were able to be downloaded and played whenever. You could Facetime friends at any hour, so long as the iPod didn't explode from being at such high temperatures for so long. Once people started getting phones in middle school, it was a must have or somehow all popularity was lost. And if you had an Android then, it wasn't cool enough.

It would be shameful not to mention Tamagotchis. They were your own little pet to feed, care for, and play with. With only three buttons and a colorful egg-shaped body, these were the perfect toys



Hello Kitty Tamagotchi playing the piano after being fed by a six year old.

to carry around and protect. If you left them alone for too long and they died, the world was literally ending.

While these devices all still exist in today's world, we have grown up and modernized these electronics into our phones, computers, and advanced consoles. Though they are outdated now, the electronics of the 2000s still live in our hearts.



Nintendo DS with the stylus pen that is always lost and never found.  
Photos: Walmart.com

## 2000's style: the good, the bad, and the ugly



**Written by:**  
Becca Fine

In elementary school, you don't exactly have a choice when it comes to your style. It all depends on what your mom picks out that day, and the current trends. Looking back, some of these styles were cute and are still popular today, others were... questionable. We're going to take a look at the good, bad, and awful clothing trends of the 2000's.

### Good

Anyone born in the early 2000s remembers one key fashion statement: Sillybandz. Making their debut in 2008, Sillybandz quickly became popular among the youth: collecting them, trading them, and wearing so many that your arms turned purple. Very soon after their popularity rose, however, Sillybandz were banned in most schools. Today, Sillybandz are still looked upon fondly by almost all



The hottest pair of shoes on the market...  
Twinkletoes.  
Photo: Pinterest.com



The most recognizable monkey of the early 2000s. This one is light blue, but it came in every. Single. Color.  
Photo: Walmart.com

young adults.

When it came to shoes in elementary school, there was one pair that would immediately catch everyone's attention: Twinkle Toes. Twinkle Toes are a Sketchers shoe that is completely covered in rhinestones and other sparkles, some even lighting up with LEDs. Almost every young girl in the 2000s had a pair of these bedazzled sneakers, lighting up and shining at recess. Although this trend died out fairly quickly, Twinkle Toes are a fond memory for most girls, and oddly enough are still sold in stores today.

After Sillybandz, there was an open spot left for trendy bracelets. This slot was filled by Rainbow Loom. Made by both boys and girls, Rainbow Looms were bracelets made from tiny rubber bands that could be made into any color, shape, or design of choice. Very quickly, kids became masters of this craft, creating the most intricate and sought after designs. After innocent trading became a vicious black market, Rainbow Looms were also banned in most schools.

### Bad

When it came to hair, the early 2000s had many trends to offer. One of the

worst was frosted tips. Frosted tips was a guy's hairstyle most popular in the 1990s through the 2000s. This hairstyle consisted of bleached tips, usually styled into spikes with hair gel or hairspray. While this wasn't the worst hairstyle of the 2000's, it was definitely... questionable.

Footwear has always been the make or break of a cool outfit. Even today, if you're not wearing Nike, or Jordan, your shoes are kind of uncool. Back in the early 2000s, Ugg boots were the go-to shoe. Worn in the summer, winter, outside, and inside, these fleece-lined boots were the ultimate fashion statement. Presently, Ugg boots are still worn, but not nearly as crazed over.



Shield your eyes: an example of the wretched highlighter outfit.  
Photo: Reddit.com

Back in elementary school, everyone remembers a certain monkey brandishing our favorite t-shirts: Paul Frank. Back in elementary school, almost every kid was sporting a signature Paul Frank shirt, coming in almost every color. Looking back,

this trend made everyone look like they were in some Monkey cult, which is why it is not popular in the present day.

### Awful

An awful trend from the early 2000s, still prevalent today, is the iconic highlighter outfit. Worn by almost every boy in elementary and middle school, a highlighter outfit consists of bright, neon colored clothes: usually Nike basketball shorts and a matching athletic shirt. These outfits blinded the kids around them, and made a lasting mark in every kid's memory.

Circling back to foot wear, knee high Converse were a crime against fashion. Sneakers that go up to your knees, laces and all, should not have been allowed. I'm sure we all remember this monstrosity, along with some of us who begged our parents to buy them. Surprisingly, with the alt style coming back today, these lengthy shoes are making a comeback.

Most of the bad clothes mentioned before could be found at one store: Justice. Justice had all things neon, sparkle, mustache-themed, and frankly a little too grown up for toddlers. I remember owning a few too many frilly shirts, neon shorts, and Paul Frank t-shirts from Justice. Recently, Justice began shutting down most stores all over the country (a blessing in disguise).

Every generation has style trends. There's always the good, bad, and awful trends; some come back, and some stay dead as they should be. Everyone is slightly embarrassed of their elementary school style, often for good reason. As kids of the 2000s, you should take the survey to vote on the best or worst trend of our childhoods.



# \*ENTERTAINMENT\*

## Best TV shows of our childhood

**The Purple Press** is written, edited, produced and distributed monthly by the Phoenixville Area High School Journalism class (Period 2).

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The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of school administration and/or faculty members. In fact, this entire issue is a joke intended to spread some levity in these harsh times. We hope you enjoy reading our Elementary School issue as much as we enjoyed writing it.

If you have a comment, question, correction, or letter to the editor, please e-mail the advisor, Mr. Zittel at [zittelj@pasd.com](mailto:zittelj@pasd.com).

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**Written by:**  
Jonathan Neiman



An all time classic sponge show: *SpongeBob SquarePants*

When we think back to our elementary school years, many of us have created core memories, whether that be on the playground, in little league games, or just hanging out with our friends. But for many of us, those fond core memories were created sitting in front of the TV enjoying our favorite childhood shows. I remember sitting in front of the TV after school to catch the latest episodes of my favorite shows. My favorites to watch had to be “Blues Clues,” “The Backyardigans,” “Regular Show,” and of course “SpongeBob SquarePants.”

“Blues Clues,” which aired on Nickelodeon from 1996 to 2006, featured a friendly and curious blue dog named Blue, who leaves clues for the show’s host, Steve (or Joe), to solve. Together with the viewers, Blue and the host solve mysteries and puzzles, play games, and also

learn important valuable life lessons about being a better person. The show is remembered for its one on one interactive style where the characters directly talk with the viewer, making the show much more personal and enjoyable to watch. To this day, “Blues Clues” is still one of the most popular kids’ shows among families whether they are watching the new rebooted series, or watching classic reruns of

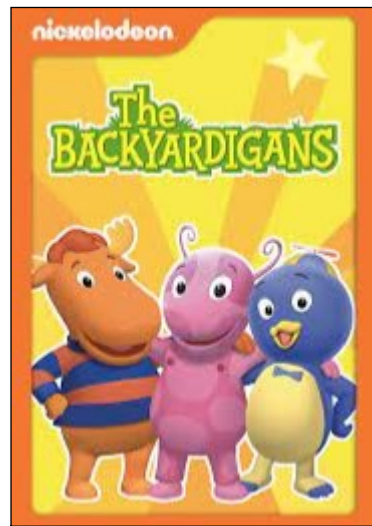
the original.

“The Backyardigans” is a classic among all ages. Airing on Nickelodeon from 2004 to 2013, the show followed five cartoon friends, Uniqua, Pablo, Tyrone, Tasha, and Austin who together use their imaginations to create and go on exciting adventures in their backyard. In each episode the friends “travel” across the world to places like the wild west, ancient Egypt, and even space. They encounter difficult challenges and obstacles, but always end up learning and teaching important life lessons about teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving. “The Backyardigans” has remained a staple in children’s tv years after the show came off the air.

Moving on to one of the newer shows, “Regular Show,” which aired on Cartoon Network from 2010 to 2017, follows two lifelong friends Mordecai (a bluejay) and Rigby (a raccoon) and their strange adventurous lives as groundskeepers at a local park. The show is known for its wacky sense of humor, pop culture references, and outrageous situations. Mordecai, Rigby and the other park workers always seem to find themselves in strange situations, whether that be going to fight giant space babies, playing 1v1 with the god of basketball, or even adopting some ducks. Despite the show’s unrealistic nature, it always finds ways to teach lessons about responsibility, friendship, and love.

“Regular Show” still has a cult following to this day and will always be remembered as a classic among kids.

“SpongeBob SquarePants” has become one of the most iconic TV shows since first airing on Nickelodeon in 1999. The show follows the crazy life of a cheerful, optimistic fry cook named SpongeBob



Backyardigans! A great show about a penguin, moose, and... whatever the animal in the middle is.

SquarePants and his friends (Patrick, Mr. Crabs, Squidward, and even the villain Plankton) and their wild adventures in the underwater town of Bikini Bottom. The show’s colorful and playful animation, catchy theme song, and quirky humor made it popular with both children and adults. The story continued with the SpongeBob films, “The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie” released in 2004, and “The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge out of Water” in 2015. The show has been remembered for catchy songs like “F.U.N.” and the goofy goober song.

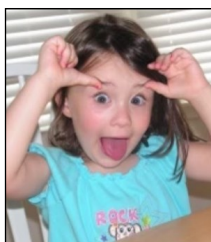
Some popular honorable mentions that just barely missed the cut: “Dora The Explorer,” “Phineas and Ferb,” “The Fairly OddParents,” and “Super Why!”

Use the QR code to vote on your favorite childhood TV show!



A Cartoon Network favorite— *The Regular Show!*  
Photos courtesy of Wikipedia.

## Most iconic childhood movies



**Written by:**  
Emma Ward

“Frozen,” “Inside Out,” “The Lego Movie,” and “High School Musical.”

**“Frozen”:**

Currently holding the position of the #4 Billboard’s Greatest of All Time Disney Songs, the song “Let it Go” sung by Idina Menzel, who voiced the character of Elsa, is enough to make the movie “Frozen” a classic in and of itself. Princess Anna (Kristen Bell) teams up with an icemaker, Kristoff, his reindeer (Sven), and a snowman (Olaf), in search of Queen Elsa who had run off after the entire town of Arendelle witnessed her ice powers. “Frozen” is a very thrilling, funny, and magical movie that contains many incredible songs. If for some insane reason you have never watched “Frozen,” add it to your watch list, as it was most likely a childhood favorite of many of your friends.

**“Inside Out”**

“Inside Out” is the story of 11-year-old Riley navigating her new school and managing her emotions: Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust. Unexpectedly, Joy and Sadness (Amy Poehler and Phyllis Smith) are separated from the others and lost within Riley’s mind, leaving the remaining three emotions to make her decisions for her. “Inside Out” is loved by so many as it depicts the feelings many adolescents experience when entering a new environment, whether it be school, a sports team, or a new friend group. The message that an individual doesn’t need to be happy all the time, and that it’s okay to feel other emotions is a key aspect many love about this movie.

**“The Lego Movie”**

The infamous “Everything is Awesome” song that every 10-year-old knew the lyrics to originated from “The Lego Movie.” This movie follows the main character, Emmet (Chris Pratt), as he strives to save the Lego Universe. In the process, he attempts to stop the antagonist in the story, Lord Business (Will Ferrell). Being unprepared for his journey, Emmet spouts many comedic one-liners that never fail to make viewers laugh. If you are in search of a light-hearted and hilarious movie, you should check out (or re-watch) “The Lego Movie,” as it could make you want to get your Legos out again and build stuff.

**“High School Musical”**

Meeting at a New Years Eve Party, Troy Bolton and Gabriella Montez (Zac Efron and Vanessa Hudgens) quickly form a strong relationship. Both Troy and Gabriella decide to audition for their high school’s musical, which is a very controversial decision for Troy, as his typical social clique is



**Troy (Zac Efron) and Gabriella (Vanessa Hudgens) perform together on stage during East High School’s musical.**  
Photo: eonline.com

the basketball team. A jealous Sharpay Evans (Ashley Tisdale), another student who attends East High School, conspires to squash their chances in the musical. The classic songs are still, to this day, known by almost every high schooler in the United States. If you’re a senior looking to reminisce before leaving, I suggest rewatching “High School Musical” before your graduation..

Although these movies are all unforgettable, there are countless that I failed to mention that many childhoods were built around. Some honorable mentions include “The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie,” all the “Harry Potter” films, and “Spy Kids.” If you want to give your opinion on the best childhood movies, be sure to take the survey using the QR code!



**Elsa (Idina Menzel), Sven (Jonathan Groff), Olaf (Josh Gad), Kristoff (Jonathan Groff) and Anna (Kristen Bell) save Arendelle in “Frozen.”**

# \*ENTERTAINMENT\*

## The best and worst music from my childhood



**Written by:**  
Celeste  
Lennon

For the most part, change in music taste is inevitable. Growing up in the 2010s, my music taste then was entirely different than it is now. Even though I still listen to lots of music released in the

2010s, different music catered to me as an elementary schooler. My opinions on the music I listened to in childhood are very polarizing; some songs still give me a pleasant sense of nostalgia, while I now can't stand other music I listened to as a kid.

### Best music of my childhood:

1. "1989" by Taylor Swift  
It's no surprise that Taylor Swift would make the top of the list considering her popularity today. I began listening to this album in early elementary school, and continue to listen to it today.

2. "Firework," "California Gurls," and

"Roar" by Katy Perry  
From the amazing music videos, to Katy Perry's even better Super Bowl XLIX performance in 2015, these songs have stood the test of time and never fail to make me reminisce.

3. "Uptown Funk" by Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars

This song is incredibly catchy, making it one of the most popular songs in 2015 when it was released.

4. "What Makes You Beautiful" by One Direction

I have many memories of singing along to this song as a kid, so it brings me back to the moment whenever I hear it, even if the song isn't great.

5. "Call Me Maybe" by Carly Rae Jepsen

Although I would never listen to this song today, it was my absolute favorite song as a kid. I even had a Build-a-Bear with a music box in it that plays this song.

Honorable Mentions: "Cups" by Anna Kendrick, "Happy" by Pharrell Williams, and "I Love It" by Icona Pop and Charli XCX.

### Worst music of my childhood:

1. All Kidz Bop songs

While the concept of Kidz Bop is smart for little kids, I now find it entirely unbearable to listen to good songs being butchered by kids. It's much better to just let kids listen to the real versions of songs instead of subjecting them to Kidz Bop.

2. "The Fox (What Does the Fox Say?)" by Ylvis

Between the pointless lyrics (such as "Gering-ding-ding-ding-dingeringed") and annoying beat, this song was as obnoxious then as it is now.

3. "Watch Me (Whip/Nae Nae)" by Silento

While the dance was fun at the time, this song is definitely not worth the listen anymore.

4. "Can't Stop the Feeling!" by Jus-



Kidz Bop released this awful album on January 14, 2014, featuring covers of "Best Song Ever," "Royals," "Wrecking Ball," and "Applause."  
Photo: Amazon.com

tin Timberlake

Released in 2016 as a part of the "Trolls" movie soundtrack, this song is too repetitive and extremely annoying.

5. "Cake by the Ocean" by DNCE

In my opinion, this song is the epitome of 2016 pop music. While it isn't entirely awful, it's definitely not something I would ever listen to today.

Honorable Mentions: "Stitches" by Shawn Mendes, "Shut Up and Dance" by Walk the Moon, and "All About That Bass" by Meghan Trainor.

It's safe to say that everyone's music taste tends to change dramatically throughout their lifetime.

However, most songs from my childhood bring back happy memories, even if they're bad. Use the QR code to vote on your favorite and least favorite songs from your childhood!



Taylor Swift's album "1989" was released on October 27, 2014. This album features songs "Out of the Woods," "Style," "Blank Space," and "Shake it Off."  
Photo: Wikipedia.com

## Take a look, it's in a book!



**Written by:**  
Chris Melvin

When you think about the good days of elementary school, you might reminisce on recess, field trips, field days, or even the holiday parties, but the books we read in elementary school are just as, if not more, nostalgic. Book series' such as "Magic Tree House," "Diary of a Wimpy Kid," "Bone," "I Survived," and "Who Was:" provide a needed blast to the past. There are count-

less books I read that I loved, but these five series were the most important to young me.

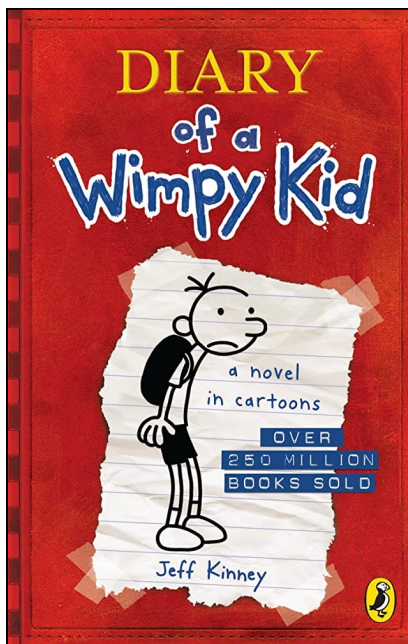
"Magic Tree House": Jack and Annie discovering the tree house is definitely a top five moment in our childhood. We didn't know it at the time, but we were reading peak fiction, and "Magic Tree House" is a legendary series. The series was written by children's author Mary Pope Osborne, and she released her first edition of "Magic Tree House" in 1992.

The first book, "Dinosaurs Before Dark" introduces us to our main characters, Jack and Annie, two eight year old siblings, who discover a treehouse in the woods of our home state, Pennsylvania. Jack decides to investigate the treehouse, and discovers it's full of books. Jack wishes he could go back in time to the dinosaurs and his wish is granted, taking them back in time to the Mesozoic (dinosaur) era. Lots of crazy adventures follow!

"Diary of a Wimpy Kid": This book needs no introduction, as this series was a staple of elementary school and possibly even early middle school. Jeff Kinney created a relatable world that includes main characters Greg Heffley, Rowley Jefferson, Manny Heffley, and Rodrick Heffley.

Greg, who is entering middle school at the start of the series, is worried to grow up. He is walking the halls with people bigger, scarier, and older than him. The first book, "Diary of a Wimpy Kid," came out April 1st, 2007, and its sequels are still coming out to this day, with the latest issue coming out October 25th, 2022.

"I Survived": A historical fiction series that focuses on a different character and situation in every book, such as the sinking of the Titanic, Hurricane Katrina, the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and the San Francisco Earthquake of 1906. The first



The first book of the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series, also titled "Diary of a Wimpy Kid".  
Photo: amazon.com

book in the series, "I survived the Sinking of the Titanic, 1912," came out June 18th 2010.

I think the reason this series was so good in elementary school is that it was a stepping stone into history. These books bridged the gap between me and history and I'll always appreciate that. The book that I remember the most from this series was "I Survived Hurricane Katrina, 2005." This story felt real, and captured my attention through great storytelling.

"Who Was?": With over 250 titles in the "Who Was?" series, there is a wide variety of historical figures, from athletes, movie

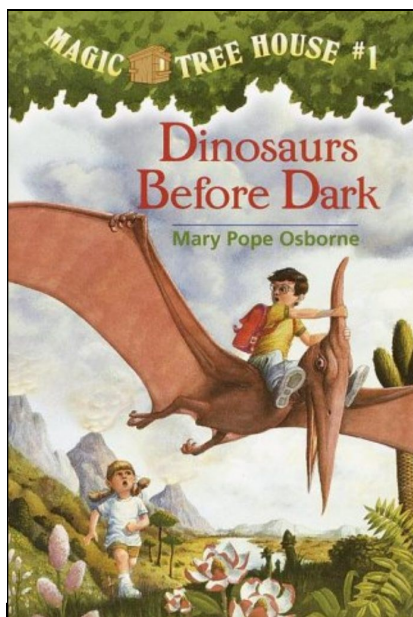
stars, activists, and artists to read about. I loved learning through these books; they are well written and you can tell that the author knows a lot of information about the people (living or dead). There isn't one author who writes all of the books, and some of the known authors are James Buckley, Megan Stine, Janet B. Pascal, and Jim Gagliotti.

My favorite biography was the one about LeBron James. LeBron is the GOAT of the NBA, and to read a biography about him from when he was still in the league brings a tear to my eye. Combine that with how descriptive and informative the books are, and you have the perfect biography. "Who Was?" first came out on February 18th, 2002.

"Bone" series: "Bone" is a nine book graphic novel series by Jeff Smith about three cousins who got kicked out of their hometown, Boneville. It follows their adventure through the desert, and when the locusts sweep them away, one by one, they stumble across the valley. In this valley, there are monsters, dragons, and all types of crazy creatures our main characters Fone Bone, Phoney Bone, and Smiley Bone have never seen before.

The first book in the series, "Out From Boneville," came out on May 29th, 1991, and what made this book so appealing to elementary me was its compelling story line, plot twists, and likable characters. This still holds true today, even after I re-read it, but the books are even better now that I understand the theme better.

Now you decide which one is the best! Take this survey below to vote on your favorite book from elementary school.



Book one in the series "Magic Tree House", titled "Dinosaurs Before Dark".  
Photo: amazon.com

# \*THE BEST OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL\*

## School performances: Out of tune and off-mark



**Written by:**  
Zaid  
Abdel-Majid

School performances have always been a spawn of stage fright and embarrassing moments for kids. However, for those talented few, they were a place to show up all the other uncoordinated kids and steal the show. Having done a lot of school performances in my past, I thought it would be a good time to look back on some of the fun times we all had in elementary school when we “performed.”

The fifth grade musical, “Tut Tut,” at Schuylkill Elementary School was such a big deal that they had two teachers directing the play, a costume coordinator, and of course the music teacher to instruct us in our musical numbers. With the huge amount of kids wanting to be on stage, around 70 kids, the teachers had a lot to handle. The play was about how King Tut and a poor kid swapped places for a day. The play had a nice message about appreciating what you have and that the grass isn’t always greener on the other side.

The teachers made us do auditions for



Students in Select Choir singing a song while being directed by the retired music teacher, **Mr. Wilson**.

any important speaking roles, which brought its own troubles. I remember we had a small dialogue to remember and recite at our audition, so my best friend and I practiced for hours. When it finally came time to perform the auditions and I stepped on the stage, I was so prepared. But when my best friend, Ava, and I practiced, we didn’t actually learn the lines; we just relied on each other’s dialogue as cues to remember our own lines. When we went to perform our auditions and my best friend and I weren’t paired together,

I really started to panic. To put it shortly, I got all psyched out and I didn’t get the role I wanted. Instead, I was one of the peasant kid’s best friends. That year I learned that I, along with some other kids, sucked at memorization and were often off-mark.

The play ended in a musical number that had all of us dancing to the song ‘King Tut’ by Steve Martin and the Toot Uncommons. Some of the choreography was questionable at best, but parents had said that we looked like we were having a great time. Finally, we ended the musical finale with a perfectly timed dab. Even though the teachers and volunteers were so controlling, we all ended up having a fun time messing around and dancing. Ava Smith, senior, said she remembered it was “a ball of fun” (in the play she was Camel Vendor #3).

In addition to musicals, some of us performed in choir. In fourth grade, my music teacher introduced the concept of ‘select choir’ which was deemed, “a group of vocally gifted children.” Of course I wanted in, both for the recognition that I

had a good singing voice, and to feel superior to my fellow classmates. I’d gone home and started singing everything, from what I wanted to drink to how my brother was annoying me. This drove my parents absolutely nuts, but I like to believe that they began to find it endearing and not absolutely obnoxious. Eventually, my music teacher had auditions, which meant that five of us would stand in front of his piano and one by one sing “Happy Birthday.” Looking back and ignoring how incredibly embarrassing that whole situation was, I remember being super proud of myself for singing and being chosen to be in select choir along with a bunch of my friends. Every Tuesday after that day, we would go in early to practice some music for our concerts.

There were some other performances like the grandparent’s day concert, or the various second grade plays, so to vote on your most interesting school performances, scan the QR code!



Current senior **Emelia Faulkner** performing in Schuylkill’s fifth grade play, “Tut Tut.”  
Photos: Schuylkill Elementary Website

## A kid’s favorite part of school: Field trips



**Written by:**  
Gavin Cataldi

Field trips were some of the most exciting experiences in elementary school. Who doesn’t love missing school to go to something more fun? Many great memories came from field trips, along with the bus rides and packing lunches. The five most memorable field trips from elementary school for me were hay rides, overnight camping, the zoo, the aquarium, and the police station.

Going on a hayride was one of our very first field trips in elementary school, which set examples for how fun all of our future field trips would be. On the hayride we saw scarecrows and different “monsters,” which everybody loved as a kid. After the

hayride, we all played around in a maze and picked out pumpkins, getting us all even more excited to celebrate Halloween.

The overnight camping trip was one of the most memorable trips for me because of the activities they had us do, the delicious food they made for us, and how we got to sleep in a cabin with all of our friends. We did group work by solving puzzles and doing physical activities that challenged our ability to work as a team. There were also many games we could play in our free time, such as gaga ball and tennis. The overnight camp also had friendly snakes that we got to pet, and we got to churn butter. When the sun set, we all gathered around a campfire to listen to spooky stories and eat s’mores.

The Philadelphia Zoo was also an unforgettable field trip because of all the different animals we were able to see at a young age. This was most likely the first time we had the opportunity to see most of these animals, such as gorillas, lions, pandas, and giraffes. We were also able to



Excited elementary school students as they arrive at their field trip at Belle Isle Nature Zoo in Michigan.  
Photo: Drivergent.com

feed the giraffes lettuce, and got to see the giraffe’s purple tongue when they opened their mouths to eat. This provided us with a great learning experience, while also being fun and getting to see lots of animals you’ve only seen pictures of before.

The Adventure Aquarium was a very notable experience because of all the cool sea creatures we got to see. Like the zoo, this was our first time being able to see animals like this. We got to pet stingrays, touch starfish, and watch sharks swim above us. My personal favorites were the penguins because they’re just so cute.

The field trip to the police station wasn’t a very long or fun one, but it was very memorable because we got to talk to somebody who was in jail. The incarcerated person told us about how we should

not make the same mistakes they did and to follow the law. Looking back on this, I doubt that this was actually a prisoner, but rather a police officer disguised to try to make us behave well.

Overall, field trips were the highlight of elementary school, especially the ones that made this list. I will never forget the anticipation of waiting for the next field trip and the memories made on the day. Middle school and high school field trips just aren’t the same, and they are not nearly as frequent. If you remember these field trips, vote on which one was your favorite by scanning the QR code and seeing what other people picked too!



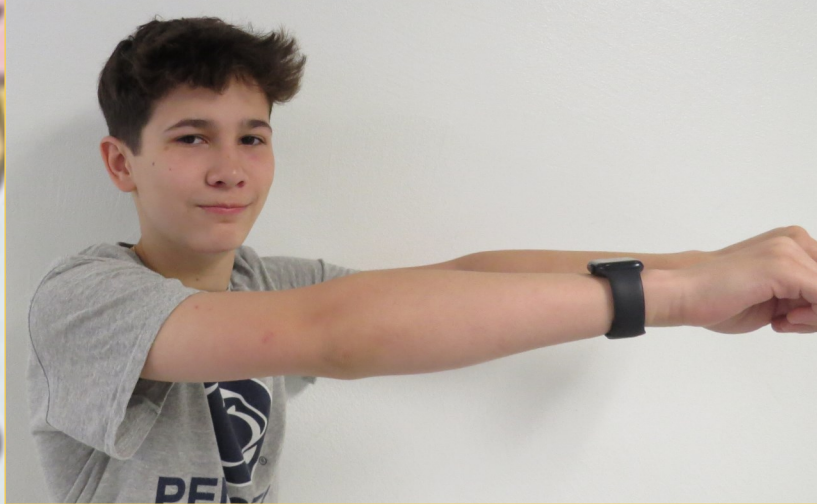
First grade students on a hayride field trip. After the hayride, they fed baby animals, went on a boat ride, and played on a playground.  
Photo: reformelementary.net

# Speak out!

*When you were younger, what did you want to be when you grew up and why?*



**Gianna Engle (junior)**  
“A veterinarian, because I like animals.”



**Angelo Mastrocola (Clark Kent)**  
“Superman, so I could fight people.”



**Caroline Hallman (sophomore)**  
“A lawyer, because it sounded like an easy job.”



**Joey Jackson (freshman)**  
“A successful single black man, because I want to be a prominent black figure.”



**Tawan Srion (senior)**  
“I wanted to be a doctor in the military, because that’s really interesting to me.”



**Hudson Narke (Jude admirer)**  
“I wanted to be Jude Daly because he is an Olympic level swimmer, and his calves were/are enormous.”



**Mr. Laluna (squid enthusiast)**  
“I wanted to be a marine biologist, because squids are cool.”



**Kolton Finger (#1 Nate fan)**  
“I wanted to be Nate Stewart because (even then) I admired his efforts to impress the ladies.”



**Erin Ulcay (freshman)**  
“I wanted to be a teacher, because I like talking to people.”

# \*RECESS\*

## Recent recess recession



Written by:

Griffin Meanix

When reminiscing on the quintessential events of elementary school, recess seems to be the place in which many strong memories and friendships were formed. Whether it was playground rivalries, the climax of a multiple month long make-believe-adventures with your comrades, or just playing some good old American kickball, it would be neglectful to exclude these escapades from a synopsis of elementary school experience.

On days when it was too rainy or snowy

for outdoor recess, students were required to stay in their classrooms and spend their free time playing inside. This certainly created a bit of a problem with pent up energy. Occasionally, usually during January or December, it wasn't uncommon to have indoor recess a few days or even weeks at a time. Indoor recess would often include Legos, Connect Four, Monopoly, Game of Life, "fun" math games, chess, and if you were cool, your parents would let you bring your Nintendo DSi into school and play that when the teacher wasn't looking. Some students loathed indoor recess, while some loved it, and were called blasphemous for it.

Outdoor recess is where the real fun was to be had. Whilst playing kickball, there were a few usual characters: the one kid who never remembered there



Schuylkill Elementary school playground, a nostalgic site for many.  
Photo: PASD Website



The red kick ball that everyone can remember the sound and feeling of because of how well-loved it is.

Photo: Amazon.com

were no peg outs and would always throw the ball at other kids (usually in the head); the other kid who was so good at kickball, when they came up to the plate, someone would yell for the outfield to back it up, and would almost always kick it out of the playground; and of course, the kid who would roll the kickball back to the pitcher over and over, insisting that the pitches were unfair, to the point where their team was fed up with the waste of their precious recess time.

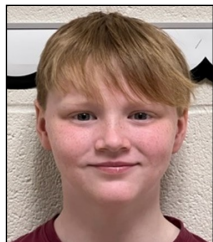
Lots of time during recess was spent playing games other than kickball too: Infection, (consistently dominated by MVP Noah Kocher at Barkley elementary), Wolves, House, Wildcats, or whatever make believe game that grabbed their attention by crawling and running around under the playset.

On the topic of playsets, a constant in recess was kids getting hurt on the play equipment. Whether that was falling off the top of a slide and breaking their arm, or getting the wind knocked out of them after a nasty fall on the monkey bars, it seems like elementary students consistently found ways to get injured.

Unfortunately, the blow of the whistle always meant the end of our daily bliss, followed by the classic routine of pretending to not hear the whistle and getting a few more minutes of playtime in before being banished to the inside. Have burning opinions about recess? Scan the QR code to try out our survey about elementary school recess!



## The importance of recess



Written by:

Haiden Hyde,  
a fifth grade  
student at  
Schuylkill  
Elementary!

I think all schools should have recess. And not only me, Mrs. Kurtz, an elementary school health and gym teacher thinks even though 30 minutes isn't the recommended amount of exercise it is still a tremendous indicator of keeping your body healthy. I think schools should have recess because students need exercise. I also think this because recess is another chance to socialize. And lastly, I think the Phoenixville school district should have recess because it gives the teachers more time to relax, eat, or even just get ready for their next class. And although some might not think this is important, this is just as important, and the problem deserves more attention.

The first reason the Phoenixville area school district should have recess is because it gives them exercise. And yes, I am informed there are sports but what if the child can't afford the activity and I am also informed that the sixth graders at PAMS cannot participate in sports, only seventh and eighth graders can do that. Firstly, proven from [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) children who are physically active have better grades, cognitive performance, and classroom behavior. The bigger idea here is that students would be healthier if you provided them with physical stimulation. And secondly a quote from [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov) "Basic cognitive functions related to attention and memory facilitate learning, and these functions are

enhanced by physical activity and higher aerobic fitness." I've chosen this quote because it can prove my statement that recess is healthy for the students. My last piece of evidence from [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) proves that students should have recess because only 30 minutes a day in a five-day school week can lower the chances of stroke and heart disease. This connects to the main idea because no parent wants to know their child could develop heart disease, which is partly what the school's job is (to keep their child safe.)

I also think Phoenixville area school district should have recess because they can socialize with other students, because would you rather them talk now or talk during class? Some people challenge this by saying they socialize during lunch. I'm against that claim because they're probably eating like they're supposed to. I can prove that the adolescents of PASD need socialization because researchers from [newportacadamy.com](https://www.newportacadamy.com) state that "Teens with positive social connections are not only happier, but also physically healthier. Socially active teens are healthier in key areas, such as weight, blood pressure, and stress hormone levels." This connects to the big idea because it shows that if you give the students recess it will benefit their health socially, and physically. [mercycare.org](https://www.mercycare.org) is a website providing evidence that socialization is necessary. For example, they state that better mental health can provide a lightened mood, which I strongly agree with because [ourworldindata.org](https://www.ourworldindata.org) proves there was scientific research done that being social does in fact make you happy, which is



good because it makes it easier for the students to learn, when they are happy.

Lastly, there should be recess at Phoenixville area school district because it benefits the teachers, for example, time. If there is only a 3-minute break between each class resulting in not much time to prepare for the next. And if the teachers already have time why not give them more? For example, research shows from [techmint.com](https://www.techmint.com) that burnout is a common effect of teaching, teachers can develop burnout by teaching too much or even not taking a break, which leads to the teacher not wanting to teach, causing the students' ability to connect with the teacher harder. Moreover, [edweek.org](https://www.edweek.org)

suggests that teachers don't get enough breaks, leading to again, the teachers not teaching as well for the students. I can back this up because an elementary school teacher, Ms. Lamont, stated she does not get to go to the restroom, or eat her lunch/snack until her students are somewhere else.

Overall, PASD students should have recess because it gives them exercise, lets them socialize, and gives the teachers a break. And I don't just say this for the kids there now, but for the kids and teachers to come.



# \*FRIENDSHIPS\*

## Do's and don'ts of elementary school friendships



**Written by:**  
Claudia Tracy

Elementary school is a vital time for children to learn how to make long-lasting friendships. It is when we learn how delicate friendship can be, and that it takes work to maintain a healthy relationship. Although our friendship issues become more complicated as we grow older, let's

take a look back to more simple times as a reminder of the importance of treating your friends in a deserving way.

**DO: 1) Include them in your recess playtime**

This is absolutely essential to making sure your friends feel wanted. Never let your friend swing alone or walk aimlessly around the playground because they might start to think they are better off alone. When it comes to tag, hide-n-seek, or whatever game is on the table for those 30 minutes, make sure to include all your friends, even if they seem to be enjoying sitting on that bench staring into

the abyss.

**2) Hold their hand when you walk in the hallway**

You think that's your best friend? Well then, you better make sure everyone knows it. There's only one way to show you are taken off the best friend market, holding their hand wherever you go. Bonus points if you play with each other's hair during carpet time.

**3) Find out who their crush is**

Even if you have to force this information out of them, even if they swear they don't like anyone, even if it takes days, you must get this information. And once you know, refer to Don'ts #1, because you better promise not to tell anyone.

**4) Share your snack with them**

Who do you love more? That bag of Goldfish or your friend? Choose wisely.

**DON'T: 1) Break a pinky promise**

Self-explanatory. You break this sort of commitment and it's game over. Your friend will never trust you again. They just shared something super private with you and want to ensure their secret will be safe, so you need to prove your trustworthiness and keep your lips sealed.

**2) Forget to invite them to your birthday party**

At this age there aren't many opportunities to hang out with your friends outside of school, except for the occasional play date and most importantly, birthday parties. No kid would feel good if they missed out on a trip to BounceU or Arnolds. The more the merrier, so make sure you invite all of your friends to enjoy some good ol' fashioned fun, along with pizza and cake.

**3) Backstab**

This includes tattletaling and gossiping. Even if your friend was the one who said a curse word on the playground, just mind your business for now. You need to have their back, even if it means compromising your morals. It's not like you were the one who said h-e-double-hockey-stick anyhow, so don't feel too guilty. As for gossiping, this is an ultimate betrayal. It can be tempting, but imagine how that friend will feel if you sacrifice your confidentiality for a moment of excitement.

**4) Call it quits after one fight**

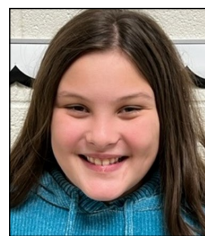
Friendships won't always be smooth sailing. Rules will be broken, feelings will be hurt, but if this is someone you value, don't break up a friendship so quickly. Maybe you messed up, so show them you care and want to improve. Maybe they messed up, so try to express why you are upset and work through it. Friends are some of the most important people in your life. You chose them for a reason, but remember that people are flawed. Forgiveness and moving forward are vital aspects of long-lasting, healthy friendships.

Maybe our friendships were simpler as younger kids, but we can still see many important lessons when we take a look back in time. The same messages shine through again and again: trust, sharing, kindness, communication, forgiveness. As we navigate friendships as young adults, we should remember the importance of being a true friend and how to be there for the people who are there for us.



My best friend, **Ella Gauthier**, and I in our fifth grade class together. The start of a longtime friendship.  
Photo courtesy of Claudia Tracy

## Gossiping



**Written by:**  
Brooklyn Glynn, a fifth grade student at Schuylkill Elementary!

I want to tell you about why we should stop gossiping. We should stop gossiping. Here are my reasons. Gossiping affects mental health, physical health and lastly you could get in trouble. Before we get into my reasons, let me tell you about what gossiping is. It is when one person knows a secret and tells someone else or tells more people. Then, it goes around the whole school.

One reason is it affects your mental health. When people gossip about someone it is not like it just goes away. No, it stays! When you gossip about someone it leads to lowering their self-confidence. Gossiping about someone can lead to them having anxiety. According to the American Psychological Association, "Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure." Gossiping can make someone's anxiety worse. It can also lead to depression. Also, if you are just a sensitive person, gossiping can hurt someone badly. In *Word Effect* it says that because of gossiping some of the kids can turn toxic. What does that mean? It means that they are negative, and it is also about their behavior.

Another reason is that you can get in trouble. For example, the article *Character Lives* teaches that people have the choice of telling someone else or just ignoring it. If you tell someone about what someone told you the gossip spreads. You are making the choice to gossip, and you can get in trouble. You could make the choice to ignore this or tell an adult that it is happening.

My final reason is that it affects your physical health. Gossiping can give some people eating disorders. The two most important disorders are bulimia and anorexia. One is that someone does not eat at all. The other one is that after someone eats, they make themselves throw up. If someone is making fun of someone's weight, they could not want to come to school. They also might develop an eating disorder.

And let me tell you a little bit of what happened to me with gossiping. When I was 5 years old, I was diagnosed with diabetes. Then I went to kindergarten and kids would look at me up and down. They would tell people not to hang out with me because I had things on my body. So, at an early age, I started to hide them until I got to 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Then, I did not care anymore about what people said about my body.

In conclusion, this is why I think that we should stop gossiping. Next time you see or hear someone gossiping you should tell an adult. Just remember that gossiping can get you in trouble, it affects your mental health and your physical health. I know that I am not the only one who was gossiped about, and no one should go through this.



Gossiping can really hurt others!  
Photo: Brooklyn Glynn

# \*RULES OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL\*

## Littering



**Written by:**

Lexy Downs,  
a fifth grade  
student at  
Schuylkill  
Elementary!

I like to spend time outside in nature. I enjoy hiking in the woods and parks near my home. On many of my hikes I have noticed so much trash on the streets, trails, rivers and in the woods. We really need to do something to fix this problem. Pennsylvania is a beautiful state with so many wonderful places to spend time outdoors enjoying nature. The problem is we are trashing our wonderful state. I am looking for your help to solve this problem. We need to be more responsible with our trash because it is destroying our beautiful land, hurting wildlife, and polluting our waters.

We need to be more responsible with our trash because it is hurting wildlife. Our wildlife is important, and it is something we want to keep. Most people



*This plastic bag in the wood could suffocate any curious animal.*

know trash hurts the world, but it also hurts animals. Everyday items like plastic, aluminum cans, jars, and cups are hurting wildlife because we are not putting our trash in the right spot. Soda cans are harmful because animals can get cut on sharp edges of a soda can. They could eat little pieces of aluminum which could injure or kill them. Trash does not only affect big animals, but it can hurt small creatures. In the text "How Littering Kills Animals" it says that some small creatures looking for a little shade can get trapped in a can. We can prevent this from happening by telling people to make sure you wash and crush your cans before recycling them. Plastic is harmful to wildlife because plastic bags, plastic bottles, and more can blow into the ocean. This could cause a sea animal to mistake plastic for food and eat it. This is bad because this can affect the food chain and block the animal's digestive system. A plastic bag could wrap around an animal like a bird or turtle this could kill it by suffocating it. In the text "How Many Animals Die from Plastic?" Derek R, an animal expert says 1 million animals die from plastic every year. This shows we should do something about the trash problem in our state because so many animals are dying from plastic. Just imagine how many animals are killed from all the trash in the world. We could stop this from happening by telling people to cut up plastic rings, use paper and cotton bags instead of plastic bags, and use reusable and washable metal water bottles instead of plastic bottles. Jars and cups are dangerous for creatures because they can kill them. The text "How Littering Kills Animals" says a hungry animal looking for some food might spot a jar or cup with some food in it and try to reach it and could get its head stuck in it. This could really hurt the animal because this could stop the animal

from being able to breathe, eat, and live. Ways we could stop this is we could tell people to wash and put the cap on jars before recycling them. These are only a few examples of trash that hurt animals but there are more. All this information shows we should do something about all this trash. If we find ways to handle our trash, we can protect wildlife.

We need to be more responsible with our trash because our world is filling up with waste and it is destroying our beautiful land. Pennsylvania has so many beautiful lakes, woods, streams, and plants. We do not want to lose that. Our state would be even more amazing if we did not have trash everywhere. David Biderman, the executive director, and CEO of the solid waste Association of North America says garbage is everywhere. He says this because trash is covering our world and if we do not do something about it. It could get to a point where it is impossible to fix. Who wants to live on a street where trash is blowing around? Who wants to see or swim in water that has chemicals and trash floating around in it? Who wants to take a walk and see trash in the trees and leaves? It is getting out of control and soon people will not want to go outside to enjoy Pennsylvania. EPA says the trash problem is not too late to fix. People can take action in fixing this problem if we tell them. We can fix this by changing people's thinking, telling them to take a bag if they take a walk, and recycle more.

We need to be more responsible with our trash because it is polluting our water. Our water is important because it is used for many things. Like drinking, swimming, washing, cooking, providing different forms of life, and a home for many different creatures. But if our water is polluted with trash then we cannot do all these things. Little bits of trash and chemicals from garbage are getting into our



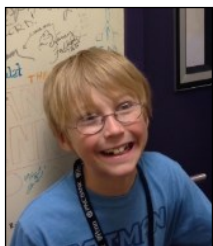
*Plastic bag and bubble wrap in the creek near a Phoenixville neighborhood could harm innocent animals.*

Photos courtesy of Mrs. Lamont

water. This is bad because garbage can get into the water we drink or an animal we eat. We can fix this by recycling more and spending time cleaning up our water.

As you can see, we all need to do better. Pennsylvania would be so much better without trash because it would not hurt wildlife, our world would be cleaner, and it would not pollute our water. We could fix this by creating less trash and recycling more, telling people how to be more responsible with trash, and creating tougher laws and fines for those that litter. The money from these fines could go to putting more recycling bins around and making sites that teach how to throw out your trash properly. We could also sponsor groups that will go out to clean up streets, parks, rivers, lakes, streams, sidewalks, and forests.

## Banned in elementary school?



**Written by:**

Noah Kocher

There were a lot of rules in elementary school. Of course, toys were never allowed. School was a place to learn and work, not a place to allow our young minds to wander with legitimately awesome action figures, cards, and other toys that we'd begged our parents for. Despite this fundamental rule, we all certainly still brought them, resulting in a continuous

battle between us wily smugglers and the teachers' legislated bans. While nowadays phones would be #1 on the list, let's look back at a short list of some of the most controversial contraband from elementary school:

### Pokemon Cards

Pokemon cards were explicitly, comprehensively banned at Barkley. My friend had given me my first card (Hippowdon) one day, before school, when we were corralled in the Barkley gym while the buses trickled in. The card stuck a little on the nasty gym floor, but I picked it up, and it was mine. No one, to my knowledge, really knew how to play Pokemon. You needed energy cards, or something, to do your attacks, and it was way more fun to have the little creatures and imagine them doing their special moves than to bother with how many tokens of the correct energy type you had in your hand, or even owned at all, for that matter. We were mostly concerned with collecting and showing off.

This, naturally, became a distraction across the school, and our otherwise fantastic principal committed the highest injustice by shutting down our pre-class bonanza trading by banning even mere possession of the cards.

### Silly Bandz

These toys were honestly fantastic. If you were deprived of them as a child, go try to find some, seriously. For about half of third grade, these animal-shaped bits of rubber enthralled us much more than the history of ancient Egypt, endangered animals, or fractions. I remember kids (including my little sister) who had full, rainbow sleeves of them. This fixation was apparently not conducive to our elementary education and within a month or two they were also banned — only to be replaced, weeks later, with Rainbow Loom



*Silly Bandz adorn a joyful pre-teen's wrists, a typical image from our third grade year.*  
Photo: The Press-Enterprise

bracelets.

### Slap Bracelets

The history of slap bracelets is long and complex. When my parents were children, they say, slap bracelets were banned because the sharp pieces of metal that gave the bracelets their entertaining snap also posed a risk of cutting the children that loved them. In my elementary years, I remember slap bracelets being both uncompromisingly banned and being handed out as party favors or as prizes in class. The most common hypothesis regarding this strange duality is that slap bracelet technology had evolved at a faster rate than slap bracelet banning policies — causing a hangover effect of our parents' experience onto ours, before innovations such as plastic bracelets and fuzzy, razor

proof outer coatings changed the perception of slap bracelets.

Just like the Marxist dialectic, the conflict between elementary students' love for toys and the good-natured desire of teachers to have their students engaged has defined the history of our rules and the memories. If you remember any other great toys that were banned in elementary school, respond to a survey about grade school contraband using the QR code!

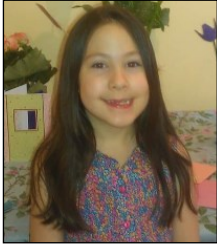


*Reshiram EX, definitely the coolest Pokemon card of 2013 because of its fiery art.*

Photo: Amazon.com

# \*SNACKS AND SPORTS\*

## Nostalgic snacks from our childhood



**Written by:**  
Bella Ericson

Do you remember the amazing snacks we got packed in our lunches during elementary school? Your sole purpose of coming to school that day was the anticipation of being able to show off the snacks in your lunch. Sadly, many of these snacks have been discontinued, although a small number are still around. There's also some snacks that just straight up sucked. Here's just a few of the amazing snacks many of us miss from our childhoods:

### **Trix Yogurt**

I have vivid memories of having Yoplait's Trix yogurt at lunch time during elementary school. Yoplait produced a line of the sugary cereal coveted by kids in yogurt form! Each cup of yogurt contained two different colors that were each a different flavor. You had a choice of eating each flavor at a time or mixing the two together, creating a swirl. This snack was discontinued in 2016, but brought back in 2021 due to popular demand!

### **Scooby Doo Fruit Snacks**

The "Scooby Doo" franchise made their own variety of snacks such as "Scooby Snacks," which were graham cracker cookies in the shape of dog bones, and fruit snacks in the shapes of all the characters. Everyone knew the best flavor was the blue Scooby Doo shaped gummy. Gen-Z's are understandably outraged

over the fact that the blue gummy's recipe was changed in 2015 when General Mills committed to removing all artificial flavors and colors in fruity products. The gummy went from being an opaque, pale blue to a translucent dark teal and has remained that way.

### **Gripz**

Gripz produced a line of popular kids' snacks, but in miniature form. The intention of this product was to make your favorite snacks easier to eat on the go. Gripz had three main lines of miniature snacks: Cheez Its, Kellogg's Grahams-cinnamon, and Kellogg's Grahams-chocolate chip, which were basically cookies. Having these at lunch, or at summer camp in my case, made you the coolest kid. Everyone would try to pawn off of you for a handful of this legendary snack.

### **Fun Pops Ice Pops**

Remember those juice filled ice pops that had like 20 in a pack and were found in the frozen aisle of the grocery store...but not in freezers? They were packaged in what looked like fishing nets and only cost like three dollars for the entire pack. Each pack came with your generic fruit flavors such as cherry, blue raspberry, orange, grape, and lime. Every pool party or summer event had them. When you would get out of the pool and wrap yourself in a towel after hours of swimming, your friend's mom would quickly hand you one. It was like a sacred ritual.

### **Gushers**

Gushers fruit snacks were one of the most envious snacks a kid could have in elementary school. Whether it was at lunch, snack, or recess, if word got out that someone had Gushers, they would soon be swarmed in hopes of getting just



Besides Sour Patch Kids, Gushers were the best gummies a kid could have.  
Photo: Amazon.com

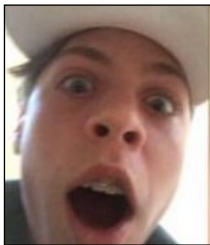
one of these juice-filled gummies. Luckily, these snacks are not discontinued! You can still relive the nostalgia of your childhood by picking a box up at your favorite grocery store.

These are just a few of the amazing snacks that channel our inner child. A few more honorable mentions include Hot Pockets, Capri Sun juice pouches, Pop Rocks, and Ring Pops, which aren't discontinued, but were amazing as a kid. We all have that snack that defined our childhoods, share yours by taking the survey!



Trix Yogurt in its original packaging showing two of their most iconic flavors, strawberry and berry.  
Photo: Change.org

## The good and bad of elementary school sports



**Written by:**  
Jackson Deets

When we were little almost all of us played sports at one point or another. Whether you were dragged to the idea of being a professional athlete, or your minivan driving soccer mom forced you into it, almost all of us participated in some kind of sport. Sports provide a great pastime for many little kids growing up around the world. As little kids, many of us experienced getting home from a hard day of 4th grade to then head to the field, pool, or court to practice our sport.

With many games on the weekends many parents, friends, and other kids gathered to watch our exciting, suspenseful, and sometimes embarrassing games.

**Soccer:** As kids, soccer was one of the main sports most of us played after school and was an exciting way to end the day. Playing soccer helps develop skills like hard work, problem-solving, and communication with other kids. However, practice and games were far from perfect. Getting hit in the face with a ball, pushed, shoved, and whined at by other kids were also memorable parts of getting on the field! These incidents would always be met with arguments, time outs, and tears from players and parents.

**Football:** Flag football, two hand touch, or tackle... whatever it might have been when you were little, it was always a funny sight to see: a bunch of little kids flock-



Elementary school sports are a memorable part of everyone's lives and offer a fun and exciting way for kids to stay active and have fun.  
Photo: Norchester Red Knights Football



Elementary athletes playing soccer at local club PASC.  
Photo: Phoenixville Area Soccer Club

ing across the field to attack other little kids to stop them from getting the ball to the endzone. Something about little kids playing football always seems a little awkward; the helmets are a bit too big, they clearly can't handle the weight of all the pads, and they all just run around hoping to get the ball to the right place. It can be both entertaining, and pathetic.

**Basketball:** Little kids awkwardly running around trying to handle a ball is a recurring theme with elementary school sports, and basketball is no exception. One of the funny key differences is that every once in a while there's the freakishly tall fifth grader that dominates everyone, and the kid who probably is lying about his age so he can be the MVP of every game but I digress. Overall, elementary school basketball never seems balanced or fair, but is anything really?

**Baseball:** Whether the bat was a little bit too heavy, or you couldn't catch a ball to save your life, little league baseball was

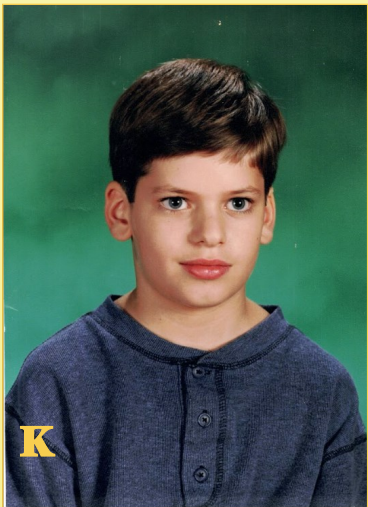
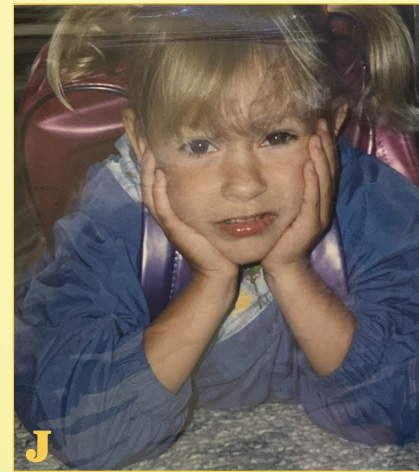
definitely far from perfect. Baseball can be a good way for kids to focus better and improve hand eye coordination, but there will always be kids that can't pitch far enough, or controlled enough to not hit the batter, and when it's time to try and catch the ball you already know that it probably won't happen. Overall, baseball can be another fun and exciting yet inconsistent and unpredictable sport when it comes to elementary school.

Sports in elementary school provided us with a great pastime while growing up and always kept everyone involved entertained, whether it was good or bad. Some honorable mention sports include swimming, karate and running. Vote for your favorite elementary sport by taking the survey through the QR code.



# Who's Who?

Can you guess which teacher is which based off of photos from their elementary school years? Check the key in the bottom left!



A) Mrs. Ehrenzeller B) Mrs. Greff C) Mrs. Johnson-Chilla  
 D) Mrs. Kilpatrick E) Mrs. Lees F) Mr. McAndrew  
 G) Mr. Weinstein H) Mrs. McLaughlin I) Mrs. Cordingley  
 J) Ms. Kurtz K) Mr. Sprengle L) Mrs. Pearcy  
 M) Ms. Schumehl N) Mr. Sobel O) Mrs. Weinstein  
 P) Fran Tavani Q) Mr. Hughes R) Mr. Zittel S) Mrs. Parr  
 T) Mr. Wilcox U) Ms. Chen-Iso