



# The Comet Newsletter

March 2020

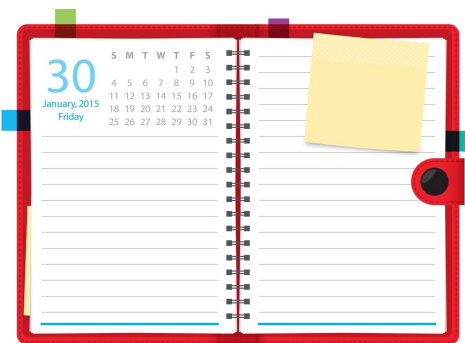
## Tips for Stress-Free Learning in School

With school starting in on the no-days-off month of March and spring break just on the horizon, it's important to check in on your mental health and stress levels. Here are some tried and true tips for a healthy learning environment at CMS, right from our resident eighth-graders.

The first tip when on the studying or homework grind is to **keep unnecessary distractions** (e.g. devices) **out of the room**. If you don't need it right at the moment, put it aside. As Livia Zhao, a fellow classmate, says, "It really does help to keep your phone in another room and turn off notifications." She adds that **moving around to different studying places** is helpful in getting a change in scenery once in a while.



Another popular tip from students is **don't procrastinate**. It may seem old-school, but leaving schoolwork till the last minute can have unnecessary consequences in the long run. "I'll make sure I set aside a reasonable amount of time to do [homework]," Shreeya Chand says. **Setting aside time for studying** is another way to get ahead of the bend. Just listen to Shruti Vadlakonda, who plans "studying for quizzes ahead of time based on [her] extracurriculars that week." According to an anonymous peer, **listening to music** can be a good motivator as well -- just as long as it's not distracting.



For studying done right, there are several methods to help you memorize those vocabulary words or War of 1812 dates. Shreeya shares hers here: “I’ll **go over old notes and homework** and make sure I understand every topic completely. I’ll also try to find some practice online.” For the tech-savvy, Stephanie Grippando recommends **Quizlet**, an app that mimics flashcards that can boost study sessions.



Finally, make sure to **take reasonable breaks** in between homework times. It is a thousand times easier to return to a task refreshed, rather than plow through it and lose stamina. Rebecca Lavner in particular utilizes her rest times to their full potential -- “I always find that making a schedule of everything I need to do with breaks helps me organize [my work].”

If you’re feeling a little overwhelmed at the moment, you’re not alone. After all, it isn’t easy to juggle workloads between schoolwork, extracurriculars, *and* a social life. They may not work for everyone, but these tips are certainly beneficial. You just might find yourself trying them out sometime.

- Naomi Ling

### Ten Questions with Mrs. Marcotte

*In this column, we put a spotlight on one exceptional CMS teacher each month.  
Mrs. Marcotte is the Clarksville Middle choir/music teacher.*

1. **What made you decide to become a teacher?** I actually never wanted to be a choir teacher until grad school. The first time I conducted/directed a choir during a choir methods class, I knew that was what I was meant to do!
2. **Who inspired you to continue what you do until now?** My parents were always super supportive of me. They went to all my band, choir and orchestra concerts, paid for lessons and instruments and never questioned my passion.
3. **What did you want to be when you were little?** I wanted to be just like my dad. He was a biochemist. It's too bad I'm awful at math and science.
4. **Do you have any pets?** No... just a stuffed Husky dog named Dakota.

5. **What do you do in your free time?** I like to work out at Pure Barre, cook healthy meals, go on walks with my son, or play with him at home.
6. **What is your favorite music genre to sing?** Probably Romantic (19th Century) choral music like Brahms or Faure.
7. **How is choir somewhat like a community to you?** Choir is a place where you can be yourself and express yourself!
8. **What is your favorite season?** Summer of course!
9. **Which school has been your most favorite for teaching? (Say CMS!)**  
Teaching at CMS has definitely been the most musically rewarding. I have amazing sight-singers here 😊.
10. **Imagine that you're stranded on Mars with nothing but a brick, a hula-hoop, and a grizzly bear. How would you try to survive/communicate with family/etc.?** [No answer.]

- Naomi Ling

## What's Happening?

### CMS Blue Ribbon Celebration Survey

In the past week, SGA sent out a survey on Canvas for the student body to fill out regarding our June celebration for the National Blue Ribbon award. The survey results will decide food, activities, and games on the day of festivities. Thank you to all who participated in it, and we look forward to seeing you at the celebration!

- SGA Executive Board

### TV Spirit Day

Last month, we had students dress up as people from different television programs and movies. The sixth graders displayed their *Animal Planet*-themed costumes and seventh-graders dressed up with ESPN clothes. Eighth graders came as characters from Disney, such as the bikers and surfers from the iconic *Teen Beach Movie*. Creativity and spirit were everywhere!



### History Months

As many of you already know, last month was **Black History Month**. It is a time for celebrating and appreciating African-American history and importance in society. The recognition started in 1915 as only a week-long event and became known as Black History Month by President Gerald Ford. Since then, it has been celebrated every year, each year with a different theme. This year's theme was "African Americans and the Vote" to celebrate the sesquicentennial of the Fifteenth Amendment, which gave African-American men the right to vote. Black History Month is one of the many annual heritage months in our country, including this month's Women's History Month. This celebration also comes with a theme, "Valiant Women of the Vote," honoring the 100th anniversary of the Nineteenth Amendment that finally granted women the right to vote. The purpose of these heritage months are to spend some time honoring our country's diversity and to learn about new cultures.

### School Closings and Holidays

(Unfortunately for us students) there are no predetermined school closings in March. With the recent weather patterns, it is unlikely that we will have inclement weather days. But, don't worry, Spring Break starts on Saturday, April 4th and lasts a total of ten days this year. The Friday before is even a half-day, giving us a little head start on our break. Although there are no days off, March has St. Patrick's Day, when we will have another spirit day to show off our greenest garments.



Stay healthy and focused this month, everyone!

- Livia Zhao

### **All About Four Leaf Clovers**

As St. Patrick's day comes around, finding a four leaf clover is like finding a pot of gold under a rainbow -- nearly impossible. Did you know that the fourth leaf on a clover is usually slightly smaller and discolored, as it's actually a mutation (which is why they are so rare)? Not to mention, there are approximately 10,000 three leaf clovers for every four leaf clover. Many might consider four leaves enough to

be lucky, but in Japan someone spotted (and snagged) a clover with 56 leaves! Imagining how much luck that would bring! If you find a four leaf clover, there are probably more around you, the same plant you plucked the clover from might hide another lucky charm! Good luck spotting these infamous signs of love, faith, hope, and (what were you expecting?) luck. **Happy St. Patrick's Day!**

- Sitara Chakkamadathil

## Photography

#1: Gold Sunrise



#2: Just Chillin



#3: [No Name]



#4: [No Name]



- Lincoln Tripp

## Sports Time

Following up on last month, Zion Williamson was not expected to win NBA rookie of the year because of an injury before the season, which resulted in him not playing for quite some time. Now, people think it will be a tough race between him and Ja Morant of the Grizzlies, who is also playing extremely well. Williamson is looking to improve the Pelicans as a whole, after a few unfortunate seasons. As of now, in the NHL, the Capitals are third in the entire league. Speaking of the Capitals, Alex Ovechkin recently scored his 700th goal, which has only been done by seven other people.

- Justin Blackman

## Book Nook

*Clockwork Angel* by Cassandra Clare is a wonderfully crafted novel that dives into the world of magic. Tessa Gray traveled to London in hopes of seeing her brother, Nathaniel. Her plans are destroyed when she is taken captive by two strange women; Tessa refers to them as the “Dark Sisters.” During captivity, Tessa unlocks an unusual ability that makes her a valuable asset to the Dark Sisters - an ability people would kill for. Soon, Tessa is rescued by Jem and Will who are Shadowhunters, an organization that makes it their goal to stop monsters referred to as “Downworlders.” Once rescued, Tessa agrees to work with the Shadowhunters and help their cause by using her ability. However, she does so under one circumstance: they must help her find her brother, who had been previously captured by the Dark Sisters. As Tessa works with Jem and Will, they soon uncover an arcane plot that could destroy all Shadowhunters.



- Shruti Vadlakonda

## Sources

### What's Happening?

- <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/womens-history-month>
- <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-month>

## About Us

Hey! *The Comet* team consists of seventeen middle schoolers who are passionate about writing, editing, and the arts. Contact us at [thecometnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:thecometnewsletter@gmail.com); we would love to hear feedback!

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