

# Double period classes hurt students more than help

by Victoria Smith

The schedule for double period classes is not beneficial for students or teachers, and all involved would be better off having those classes everyday for a single period.

It is very difficult for the average high school student to stay completely focused for the duration of one period, let alone two. It is especially hard if the students are not particularly fond of their double period subject or they are just not interested in the topics discussed on a certain day. Slowly but surely, everyone in the room starts to zone out; some come back, some go in and out of comprehension and some are lost for the remainder of class after the first forty minutes or far sooner.

Since so much information must be covered in one meeting, teachers, through no fault of their own, feel pressure to squeeze in as much of the necessary material as possible. They are aware that they will not see the class again until the day after the next and know they have a set curriculum they must attempt to teach for the year. Students are deterred from asking questions, not wanting to distract the teacher for too long on one question, knowing that would anger both the teacher and dedicated students. This is no way to encourage class participation and only hampers students' ability to learn.

The teachers also often waste time each class repeating what they have already said during a previous class because they have forgotten the details of what they taught after so much time has elapsed between the classes. On the

bright side, the students do not notice or do not care about the reiteration because they too have forgotten or need a refresher on what was covered.

Another important factor to mention is that teachers are not immune to going off on tangents or losing their trains of thought. As difficult as it is to sit through a class for an hour and half during a long school day, it is equally tricky to teach for that long, especially while rushing, repeating and rambling to twenty lifeless bodies.

If changing double period classes to single period classes who meet daily instead of every other day is too drastic, perhaps instating a required break in between the two periods would help alleviate some students of the "zombie syndrome." A few teachers do allow a five minute break at that time already, but many do not and will not unless it is mandatory. Another disappointment is that the TV studio's afternoon announcements go on around then between eighth and ninth period. A good number of teachers of some double period classes completely ignore the announcements or feel the need to try to teach through them. This is unfortunate because students could miss hearing something important and also because the TV studio staff works really hard to put these announcements together.

Double period classes are not useful and should not exist, with the exception of certain AP classes, where most of the students will force themselves to stay on track and go in knowing what they are signing up for. Otherwise, the pre-mentioned reasons prove that double periods ought to be abolished.

# Christmas excitement starts early

by Michelle Moore

As December rolls around, it is yet again a time for thoughts of Christmas and holiday spirit. People are starting to get ready to decorate and put on the radio to listen for holiday jingles. However, many are now realizing they are some of the last people to do so, as most people decorate well before the winter holidays today.

Years ago, decorating after Thanksgiving was normal. Today though, people are getting ready for the holidays much earlier. Before Halloween is even over, many stores are already putting out their Christmas and other holiday decorations. These same stores are also putting advertisements in the paper and advertising in stores before Thanksgiving dinner is even served. This causes stress and chaos for parents and others who begin to worry if they will have enough time to shop for gifts. It does not help that many of these advertisements are geared toward children, who then talk about the holidays nonstop well before the actual date.

As soon as these decorations go into the stores, most families are already thinking about decorating for the Christmas time holidays. Long gone are the days of decorating for Halloween and Thanksgiving along with Christmas. Today, Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza decorating is the main priority. Many families feel as though holiday decorating with their families brings them closer together. This is thought to start new holiday traditions which may be loved by many but hated by others.

One of the aspects of the holidays happening much earlier is the playing of Christmas carols. This long loved holiday tradition dates back hundreds

of years and is still alive today. Many people love these songs so much that they play them in their cars and homes as early as September. This annoying habit can cause much frustration for those not equally enthusiastic. The playing of these songs is also beginning to be played much earlier on the radio. Some stations start playing these carols as soon as the air starts to turn cool, and the ones that do not start playing them as soon as Thanksgiving rolls around. Although these song are loved and appreciated by some, there is such a thing as too much. By the time December arrives, carols are being played on many stations all day and night. A good percentage of these radio stations do not even play any other songs during the holidays. This can be quite an annoyance to many when all they hear all day long are Christmas jingles. The holiday time is loved by countless amounts of people. It is a time to be with family and friends and to celebrate. Children and adults alike get excited when they see the first decorations in stores or get holiday advertisements in the mail. They get that tingle of joy when they turn on the radio and hear that first Christmas carol being played. The holidays are a time of joy and charity. It is a time to give to others and feel good about it. This joy is increased by the amount of holiday signs everywhere.

For every Christmas loving spirit in the world, though, there will always be a Scrooge. These are people that, as soon they see or hear any sign of holiday joy, are annoyed. People like this feel as though the holidays come too soon and are an annoyance. These people have a point, though. With Christmas coming earlier and earlier, in ten years it might be a six-month event.

# Students receive too much work

by Michelle Moore

High school for current students is a stressful time. As students grow older, they realize that life is hard and full of work. An hour of homework a night changes to two or three hours and can eventually add up to five or more hours. At some point

this amount of work can be threatening to the students' lives and health.

On a normal basis, students spend about seven hours in school a day. The school day can be long and stressful, usually incorporating several tests and stress inducing assignments. On top of this, these

students come home and have several hours of homework to complete each night. This heavy workload leaves students staying up late often pass midnight in order to complete these assignments. students' health. It is well known that during the sleep process the immune system is gaining strength and healing. Without this sleep, the students' health can decline leading to an increased number of visits to the doctor's office and often times, several missed days of school. Many students do not want to miss school because of the amount of work they will have to make up upon returning. Therefore, those who are sick insist on going to school and as a result are infecting the other students. There are many other reasons besides sickness that causes the incompletion of assignments. Regularly, students will have hours of homework a night in addition to other activities, and it becomes

apparent that there are not enough hours in the day to complete all work. Still, the students try to complete all tasks, seeing as when they do not keep up with their work, their grades begin to slip.

Stress is a common issue in high school students that is linked to school work and college admission. In today's

world, too much pressure is placed on students to do well and to get into the best possible college they can. Soon this is all they can think about, forgetting about more important things like friends and family.

All this stress causes these students to think about school and little else. They forget what used

to be important to them, such as friends and family. These same students that were relaxed and practically care free in middle school, transform into high school students who fear failure and have night terrors constantly about not being the best and failing life. This fear can also cause health issues.

With all this homework and studying, high school students have little free time. For many of these high school students, homework takes up so much time that the only free moments they have are filled with school-related, extra-curricular activities. Many of the students who are participating in these activities are doing so simply because it looks good to colleges. By doing this, students are only putting more stress on themselves.

Instead of spending so much of the day participating in as many clubs as possible, these students should be taking out more of the week to relax with friends, or even maybe do the unspeakable, sleep.

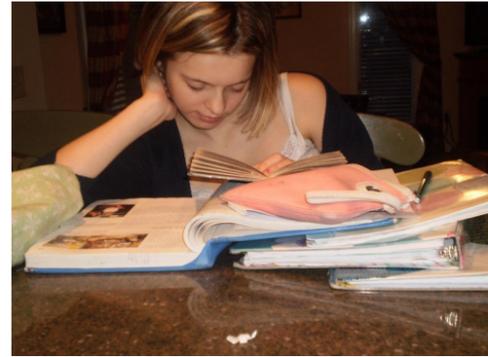


Photo by Michelle Moore

Students often need to pull all nighters if they want to keep up their grades.

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