

PHS should enable Youtube

by Cain Azar

With technology growing at a rapid rate, more students are turning to Youtube to create and watch videos. If a Parkland student were to attempt to log on in school, without a proxy, they would be happily greeted by a beautifully subtle “SENTINEL WEB FILTERING SERVICE” screen. To add to the excitement, their actions are logged and monitored, an added benefit. Although packed with entertaining clips, Youtube can offer beneficial demonstration. Teachers could use Youtube in many subjects to teach students and show them methods through videos.

Nobody will deny that students will occasionally get off task if Youtube is enabled.

But honestly, the main goal for students in the computer lab is to get off

task. There are always proxies circulating the web and students can find a way into pretty much any site, regardless of the filtering service. Many proxies are blocked, but new ones surface every week. Even without Youtube, there is Facebook, email and MLIA. It is not a rare sight to observe someone taking frivolous pictures of themselves with PhotoBooth or blowing up flying saucers with spaceships. An uncommon sight, however, is a student merrily searching a topic on a non-wikipedia website.

The filtering system is far too limiting.

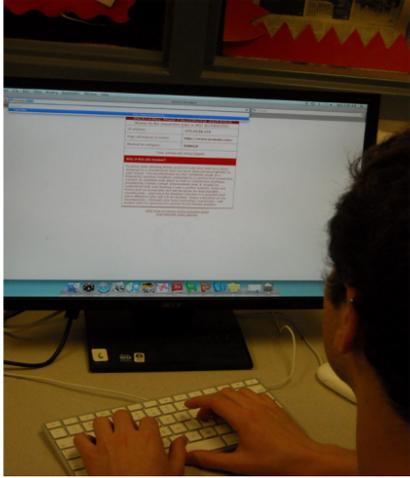


photo by Cain Azar

A student tries to watch an educational video, but the school has blocked it.

A student is sent the big red warning for even typing “violence” in Google. Of course, many precautions should be made to ensure students are not on X-rated sites. These restrictions, however, have made searching for Christopher Columbus dangerous. Many random pop-ups display the web warning and state that actions are being logged. Without even going on a bad site, one can be hit with a warning.

Teachers even ask students to help them get on Youtube. The site offers instantaneous videos relating to the news. In addition, many health and science videos are available for education.

Health classes could watch the man who looks like a tree, history classes

could view a clip about foot binding and science classes could see the “Mitosis Song.” There are endless possibilities outside of the famous clips, “David After Dentist,” and “Narcoleptic Dogs.”

Youtube can prove valuable to student learning. Despite web filters, the site is still visited via proxies and other methods. Enabling the site would allow access to many interesting videos that are beneficial to learning. The school should reconsider blocking Youtube from the student body. It adds frustration, in addition to blocking kids from many intriguing videos.

SATs: top ways to top your score

by Brandi Tebo

March 13, May 1 and June 5: any given Parkland junior is bound to be familiar with that series of dates. Whether the mention inspires fear, anxiety or relief, the dates certainly evoke emotion. For everyone besides the juniors and the guidance counselors, those dates pinpoint the day on which juniors will arise early and travel—calculator and number two pencils in hand—to a destination at which they will take a standardized test that will determine their future. Now although this overdramatized version may exaggerate actuality slightly, this is likely the mental image with which most juniors regard the SATs. For this reason, they and their parents decide upon investing hundreds of dollars in preparation for this very day.

Whether it is classes, private tutors or simply a guidebook, most juniors partake in some sort of preparation for the SATs. However, they all seem to be wondering the same thing: “Is it worth it?” Here is a brief low-down on what the Lehigh Valley has to offer for aspiring SAT masters.

Perhaps some may feel more comfortable with a one-on-one session with a private tutor focusing on specific needs. In that case, it may be best to ask Mommy for help. After studying alone, each student should be aware of his or her own downfalls. Therefore, rather than throwing away hundreds of dollars on short, private tutoring sessions with an individual who is unfamiliar with each student, it may in fact be best to exploit the individual talents of relatives, family and friends.

A student who is having trouble with math should go knock on the

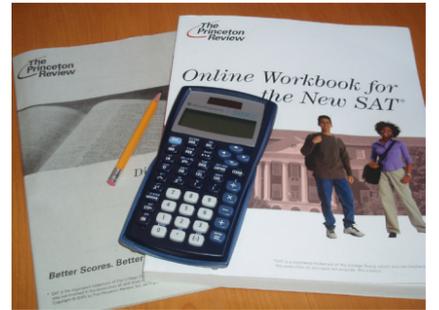


photo by Katie Sheinberg

neighborhood math teacher’s door. They would be happy to help for little to no price and chances are, they would even make it fun. Or, perhaps, schedule a Sunday afternoon study session with some friends where everyone can contribute their specific talents to the group effort.

Or, students may want to try an SAT prep class. However, the obvious downfall to a prepare class or a private tutor is the price and the time commitment that not everyone can afford.

Furthermore, some individuals are more apt to improving with their own self-discipline. For these individuals, investment in a preparation book might be a great idea. However, not every book out there is guaranteed to be effective. So while every student learns differently, the Princeton Review “Cracking the SAT,” statistically proves most effective. This book provides comprehensive information on each section of the SAT and includes several full-length practice tests. Packed full with strategy, one may feel confident with this SAT book in their back pocket.

There you have it. Millions of choices narrowed down to three. If you take advantage of all there is to offer, success is not a possibility but a guarantee.

Dancers deserve to be considered elite athletes

by Dolly Malik

People always say “anyone can dance,” but this statement is not true. When one says “dance,” the first thought that comes to mind is “social dancing.” Social dancing is the kind of dance one does at Homecoming, when everyone is in the dark with a bunch of loud music and just a square foot of dancing space. It is when people are simply moving to the beat and hoping they do not look silly, that their makeup still looks good or for guys, that their pants are not falling down. Real dancing is more like choreographed dancing. This dance is he dancing in music videos, the dance team performing at sports events throughout the year and even the “Bye, Bye, Bye” video everyone enjoyed with N*Sync dancing as puppets back in the day.

Dancing takes a lot more than just being able to move, “throw your hands in the air” and make “cool” faces. That is not dancing. It is true, some people may be extremely skilled at social dancing, but that sort of dancing does not require practice or hard work. It is just for fun and the ‘dance steps’ solely come from within. Performing different forms of dance such as ballet or hip-hop, on the other hand, takes a lot of work.

Parkland is home to many girls and guys who devote much time outside of school to dance. Many have been dancing since they were very young and they are the ones who have remained dedicated. Dedication to anything is difficult, but for dance, it is extremely important. A lot of people have taken dance classes before, but few have continued.

People quit dance simply because it is difficult. Do not laugh at that until stepping into a dance class – it is not at all easy. In fact, before dancers go

on stage, they are reminded to “make it look easy” and always “keep a smile on.” With a full audience, an entire gym or a world audience watching on live TV,



photo by Dolly Malik

One needs to jeté a mile in a dancer’s shoes before judging the sport.

going on stage can be nerve-wracking for dances, yet they still manage to put on a seemingly effortless performance.

People have a hard time believing this, but from the outfits to memorization, dancing takes a lot of work. Dressing properly is necessary in order to dance just like in any other sport. Form-fitting clothes are essential to any dancer because one cannot perfect dance moves unless every limb and muscle can be seen moving. A dancer cannot just show up to the studio in sweats and a baggy shirt. Normally, a dancer will don tights and a leotard with shorts, which really is not the most relaxing clothing combo out there.

Most dance teachers require students to wear tights – regardless of gender – and there are problems with that. Tights rip and tights shrink. Plus, they take forever

to get on to make sure they do not rip. It is not uncommon for a dancer to freak out before practice or class because of their tights. On the other hand, for basketball

practice, or something of the sort, it does not really matter what one wears. Also, there is the fact that a dancer cannot look as if they were going to the gym. They must look neat and proper. Hair still needs to look good and makeup cannot be messed up because the rest of the girls in the class may stare another dancer down, make a comment or even shun them forever. Hard to believe, but it happens and dancers can get a little catty sometimes.

Then there are the shoes, which are very expensive. Dance shoes are not basketball shoes; whether tap, ballet or jazz shoes, they need to be kept in good condition. If not, dancers run the risk of slipping and losing balance, which could lead to injury or not being able to perform correctly. With any sort of shoes, it is difficult to keep them in perfect condition.

Then there is the stretching. In order to be a dancer, one must be extremely flexible – and the statement “extremely flexible” means extremely flexible. Dancers must be able to touch their toes, do a butterfly and touch their nose to the ground, stretch backwards and touch the ground and kick to the height of their eyes. Even among extremely athletic people, not many can do that.

Dancers also need to be able to memorize steps and routines very well and practice. Most dance terms are in French, such as jeté, plié and pirouette.

There is a name for every dance step out there, and it can get pretty hard to remember them all. Dancers also have to remember their normally fast-paced and complicated routines.

Ask any dancer and they will explain that it takes loads of practice to perfect individual moves and even more to perfect an entire routine. Spot-turning, turning while keeping your head looking forward until the final moments of the turn, tends to be one of the more difficult aspects of dance, but no dancer can succeed without being able to spot-turn properly. Most people cannot pick up on this. That is why dancers need to practice to such an extent. For many dancers, there are not many times when they are not practicing, exercising or toning for dance.

It is a sad fact that most people do not recognize dancers for their skill. Dancers have more skill than many people and athletes. As in any sport, at the end of practice, dancers will leave the studio sweating, chugging down on water and possibly out of breath. This is not what anyone usually thinks of when they think of dancing. That is because dancers know how to make everything look so graceful.

Without extreme dedication and passion for dance, people cannot be dancers. From the need to be flexible to dance shoes and good memorization skills, dancing takes a lot of effort. Sure, the world will continue to say “anyone can dance,” but not everyone can truly be a dancer. A dancer needs to be extremely dedicated to the art of dance. Not many individuals can say that they are.

As the quote goes, “It’s amazing what goes into making something look so effortless.” Yet, it is even more so amazing that people do not realize what goes into making something look so effortless.