

## THE PANDEMIC DIARIES

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*The following journal entries are directly from a student during the pandemic.*

April 6, 2020

Today is the 24th day of quarantine due to the coronavirus. Starting today, I am going to journal my feelings or thoughts on what is going on during the pandemic. During my online English class meeting, my teacher brought up how it is important to journal during this time because life is so different now and we are experiencing a big event in history. I figured there is no reason not to journal. Later on, people may look back on this book and gain insight on life during the pandemic. Quarantine life for me has been okay. I have tried to attend as many optional school classes as I can, but it feels weird being able to wake up 5 minutes before class. I do not know what is going to happen with school, but there have been optional non-graded assignments and Google meets. Anyways, that is all I have for today's journal.

April 8, 2020

A woman from an organization that I am a part of texted me to ask if I could help volunteer in calling other students to check in on them. It was nice to know that we have people who want to help us and care about us. Even though the pandemic is rough, I am glad that the community is helping each other. Starting May 4th, school attendance will be marked and assignments posted will be graded. Apparently, grades can only improve from the grade that we had in March. I am not sure how graded assignments will work, but we will see.

April 28, 2020

My English teacher was sick from the coronavirus so we did not have class for all of last week. I was worried for her so I sent her an email, and she replied back saying that she was getting better, which was great. Also, I am scared for au (*translates to uncle from Indonesian*) because he is still working everyday, and I don't want him to get sick. I heard that a man was sick at his workplace. He also rode in au's car. We are not sure if he has COVID-19 or a different sickness, but he did not say anything until someone approached him about it. This could be because he was scared of being outed or did not want to stop working. I understand why he did not want to reveal how he felt, but he should have said that he was sick to protect the people around him. I hope au is okay.

May 5, 2020

Turns out the man did have COVID-19, which was frightening because there was a chance that au could have been affected. But, au took a test and was not positive for the coronavirus, thankfully. Today, online school officially started. It was a bit weird because I had to manually mark myself present for every class by 11:00am and type "here" in the chat when I attended the meetings, but I guess this is the new normal now.

May 13, 2020

It feels as if the teachers are giving more work than they normally would in class. I understand that due to optional class in the beginning weeks of quarantine, classes were behind in the lessons. But, there is so much schoolwork. Sometimes I find it hard to be motivated and find the time to do work, which is odd because there is not much to do during this time except online school. I like to finish all of my work in one day instead of doing little by little everyday so I tend to forget everything that I learned in the homework after a week or so. Every time I have a quiz, I have to review and relearn everything in the morning. In precalculus, the teacher said that some students blatantly cheated on the quiz we took last Friday. It was a 15 minute quiz so I do not know how people cheated. Because of this, she said that she will not be doing any more quizzes. Honestly, I do not understand why people cheated because it is only to show what we may not understand and low scores will be dropped from our final grades.

May 30, 2020

With the other 9 highschoolers of the UPENN College Access Program that I am a part of, we presented over Zoom about the college process and how race and social class may affect it. We wanted to help students be able to prepare and learn more about it, especially due to the impacts of the pandemic on college access and summer programs. There were over 50 people who viewed the presentation. I was lucky enough to learn so much from the program and be able to help spread knowledge about the college admissions process.

June 7, 2020

A lot has happened in the past 86 days of quarantine. Today is my birthday, but I am saddened by all of the outrage and hatred in the country. The death of George Floyd and a long history of racism has sparked protests against police brutality and systemic racism. My heart breaks for all of the countless innocent lives lost. I do not want to be selfish because I know that there are many more important things going on, such as ending racism and lowering the spread of coronavirus. But, I cannot help but feel sad that all of this anger and calamity is happening during my sweet sixteen. I know it is cliché, but my birthday wish is for people to be more accepting of one another. After all, we are just humans with the same things inside of our bodies, regardless of skin color, gender, or looks.

June 12, 2020

This week is my last week of classes. I did not expect school to end in June. I figured that we would have classes until July to make up for all of the school days that we missed in April from the coronavirus. Also, I cannot believe that I am becoming a junior. I thought that I would have more time as a tenth grader with my favorite teachers and having fun in the summer before having to spend most of my days worrying about life after high school. Instead, COVID-19 cases are skyrocketing in the United States extending the quarantine, and the future is cloudy. Hopefully, the days will brighten and be okay. This is my last journal entry of tenth grade me. Until next time!

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