

KAMSC's 84 Steps



Spring 2012



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Letter from the editors

Spring has sprung in Kalamazoo, and even though the warm weather has made us feel like it might as well already be summer, we still have a little work to do before the schoolyear draws to a close. April and May host a frenetic rush to the finish here at KAMSC, giving us time to finish up our research projects in preparation for Project Day, reclaim our cricket championship title, and welcome the eighth graders into our fine establishment. The home stretch to summer should put everyone in high spirits: seniors, of course, look forward to graduation, freshmen get to say that they've completed a whole year at KAMSC, sophomores will get to transition to KAMSC in the afternoon and juniors... well, we'll just say that there's a special surprise waiting for you nearer to the end of the year, 'kay? For everyone at KAMSC, but especially for the seniors, we only have a little time left, which makes our job clear: carry on and finish strong.

Your editors,

Grady Sertic

Samir Deshpande



Spring Green

by Genevieve Sertic

I read an interesting article in the March 12 edition of *Time Magazine* by Daniel Goleman entitled “Handprints, Not Footprints” which describes a different environmental calculation than the depressing measure of the size of our carbon footprint.

That alternative calculation results from measuring the size of our “handprint”, which represents the tangible benefits we can bring to our planet. Gregory Norris of the Harvard School of Public Health identified the idea of handprints and has a website, <http://app.handprinter.org>, that measures how big our handprint is.

Take a look at some ideas for how we can continue to have a positive effect on the environment, especially now that spring is here:



- * The weather is nicer now, so walk or bike more often to get where you're going. It's good for the earth, and good for you.
- * Plant an edible garden. If you don't have a lot of room, just plant a few smaller vegetables or greens.
- * Food scraps can be composted instead of tossed. Use the compost in your garden!
- * Eat fresh vegetables and fruit. You don't have to cook or prepare, which saves you and the world both some energy.
- * Use plates and cups and wash them instead of using disposables. Don't use plastic bags when you can use a washable container.
- * Freshen the air the natural way. Instead of buying air fresheners, open the windows and leave out a box of baking soda (the baking soda will absorb any odors). If you can, bring in fresh flowers.
- * If you need to do some spring cleaning, you can get a lot done by using natural vinegar. Skip the expensive and potentially harmful chemicals found in many other cleansing products, and try some vinegar first to clean windows and floors.

Top Technology Today by Raoul Wadhwa

Perma-Doodle

The Perma-Doodle is a memo board that saves sketches, lists, notes, and for students, classroom doodles. It possesses liquid-crystal technology under the surface of its touch screen; the screen turns green when even the slightest pressure is put on it. In addition, the Perma -Doodle contains a PDF converter that saves as many as 200 doodles for later transfer to a computer. Its main use for KAMSC students is during two-class days, and (for upperclassmen) during the dreaded C-weeks. Doodling when the teacher's back is turned is now a very viable option; if the teacher turns around, you can switch back to the page with your notes.

Website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/kamsc-gadget1>



Auto-Destruct Flash Drive

No need to be afraid of losing your flash drive anymore! The Auto-destruct flash drive protects all files with a password. If a hacker attempts to use malicious software to find the password, the flash drive draws power from the computer's USB port, and destroys itself, along with any and all data.

Website: <http://tinyurl.com/kamsc-gadget2>



Mouse Plus Calculator

If a wireless mouse isn't good enough to get on your top tech list, this gadget surely will make it. With a full-fledged scientific calculator attached to its surface, the latest model of the Canon X Mark aspires to be titled the new "Nerd's Best Friend" (attempting to replace the graphing calculator). The keypad on the mouse can also be used to enter numeric values on the regular screen of a desktop or laptop computer, replacing or adding a new numpad with great ingenuity!

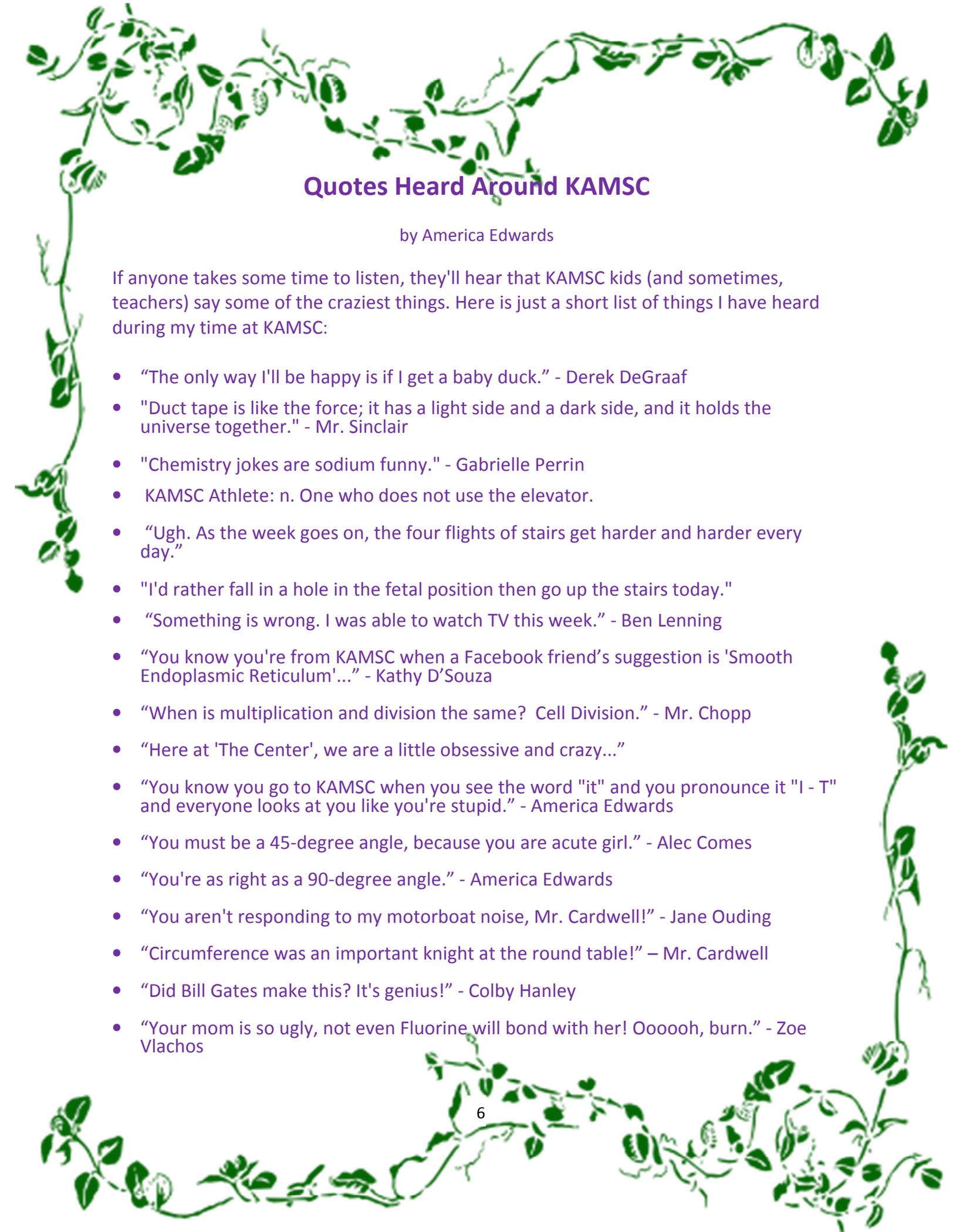
Website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/kamsc-gadget3>



Solar Cell Smartphone

The Green Revolution has taken another step forward! Samsung has just come out with the newest device that runs on solar energy: a smartphone. The Samsung Replenish is very efficient, with 10 monocrystalline solar cells on the battery cover that will serve to save power and impress your friends!

Website: <http://www.tinyurl.com/kamsc-gadget4>



Quotes Heard Around KAMSC

by America Edwards

If anyone takes some time to listen, they'll hear that KAMSC kids (and sometimes, teachers) say some of the craziest things. Here is just a short list of things I have heard during my time at KAMSC:

- "The only way I'll be happy is if I get a baby duck." - Derek DeGraaf
- "Duct tape is like the force; it has a light side and a dark side, and it holds the universe together." - Mr. Sinclair
- "Chemistry jokes are sodium funny." - Gabrielle Perrin
- KAMSC Athlete: n. One who does not use the elevator.
- "Ugh. As the week goes on, the four flights of stairs get harder and harder every day."
- "I'd rather fall in a hole in the fetal position than go up the stairs today."
- "Something is wrong. I was able to watch TV this week." - Ben Lenning
- "You know you're from KAMSC when a Facebook friend's suggestion is 'Smooth Endoplasmic Reticulum'..." - Kathy D'Souza
- "When is multiplication and division the same? Cell Division." - Mr. Chopp
- "Here at 'The Center', we are a little obsessive and crazy..."
- "You know you go to KAMSC when you see the word "it" and you pronounce it "I - T" and everyone looks at you like you're stupid." - America Edwards
- "You must be a 45-degree angle, because you are acute girl." - Alec Comes
- "You're as right as a 90-degree angle." - America Edwards
- "You aren't responding to my motorboat noise, Mr. Cardwell!" - Jane Ouding
- "Circumference was an important knight at the round table!" - Mr. Cardwell
- "Did Bill Gates make this? It's genius!" - Colby Hanley
- "Your mom is so ugly, not even Fluorine will bond with her! Ooooooh, burn." - Zoe Vlachos

KAMSC Director and Instructors

by Grady Sertic

J C D B L R R Q J D T A K N P
H O X H S B W U A B H L O P L
E O Y M M P Z Y X O G S O J T
S I N C L A I R U W N H I O I
B I D G E P N T R E C E K V C
G T U U L Z R V T A Q H V Z L
W B Y C O O Q S N F J R T P E
G C D X U G R E U F M I L K A
R V A W D O N D T M D G L L E
Q L R R H O S N M Y I S F F F
H H U T D K Q J S I B P U Z F
A M O P Z W T E M Z R T D I O
C E Z P S W E S N I N L A K N
H O E K V U E L M Q Q D L O A
V D B C I N K U L D R H E C T

**ALSHEHRI
GOUDIE
JOYCE
SINCLAIR**

**CARDWELL
HACH
KALNINS
TANOFF**

**CHOPP
HOUTROUW
MILKA
THORSTENSON**

Horrorscopes

by Genevieve Sertic

Aries: (March 21-April 20)

Everyone around you seems to be freaking out about a lab practical, but you're pretty sure they're just trying to scare you. When your friends ask you, "Have you studied for the lab practical?" you say, "No...I haven't studied for the lab practical...because the lab practical doesn't exist." You fail that lab practical.



Taurus: (April 21-May 21)

You will wake up and find that your beautiful research board has been plagued by glitter and an array of pony stickers! Your attempt to find the culprit will prove futile, however, and you may be forced to explain what glitter has to do with the immune system on project day...



Gemini: (May 22-June 21)

You will come to the realization that a friend's research board could use some spicing up, but you don't have any art supplies at your house and your friend gives you only glitter and pony stickers. You decide to make do.

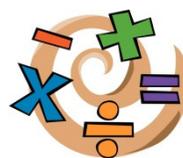


Cancer: (June 22-July 22)

A lab practical is imminent, and you can't stop thinking about it. However, when you get in front of that chemical/pig/mineral, you realize you actually know most of the answers, and you can't believe your good fortune. Then you realize it's probably just because you studied, and it suddenly loses its magic.



Leo: (July 23-August 23)



You will find yourself unable to solve a seemingly simple math problem, and you realize it's because your little sister (or a rough equivalent) is playing around too much with her glitter and pony stickers. You confiscate them and decide to try to pawn them off on one of your friends.

Virgo: (August 24-September 23)

You will spend hours on a USACO contest and believe you've figured out all of the problems. You're just about to relax and reward yourself with some ice cream when you realize you forgot to press Submit. You rush to the computer...but is it too late?



Libra: (September 24-October 23)



You suddenly will start craving ice cream because of the ridiculous weather, and you call two of your friends to go to Dairy Queen. One agrees, and the other starts to, but breaks off and yells "OH NO!" without hanging up the phone. You shrug and have ice cream with your friend. You later learn that three hours of your friend's life were one second away from being for nothing.

Scorpio: (October 24-November 22)

Overwhelmed by a feeling of generosity and kindness, you decide to buy something for your friend's little sister for her birthday. The checkout employee mysteriously tells you that the choices you make here could have far reaching effects. You smile politely as you stuff the glitter and stickers into the plastic bag.



Sagittarius: (November 23-December 23)

You will wake up one day and you



will realize that the last three months of your life have been a dream. You wake up the next day and you realize that the day before was a dream. You're a little annoyed about losing that day but then your friend reminds you that you got back three months, so you're pretty happy.



Capricorn: (December 24-January 20)

You are overcome with skepticism and believe that every question on your lab practical is a trick question and have answers such as "neither a vein nor an artery", "The compound is a mix of glucose and strontium chloride", or "gum". You are left to commiserate with your Aries friend.

Aquarius: (January 21-February 19)

You will discover the magic of double-sided tape. Your research board is saved. You run to tell your struggling Pisces friend.

Pisces: (February 20-March 20)

You realize, at the last minute, that globs of Elmer's glue and Scotch tape are not the best way to go for your research board. However, your Aquarius friend comes to the rescue.



Ask Brice

I'm the KAMSC advice columnist, here to answer any questions you might have. Please send them to kamsc84steps@yahoo.com!

~ Brice Calco

Dear Brice,

I have no motivation to work. How can I fix this?

**Sincerely,
Senioritis**

Dear Senioritis,

Have no fear- the end of the year is nearly here! On a more serious note, just simply try to stay focused and motivated for a little while longer. We have just finished up another quarter here at KAMSC and so do not worry for the year is almost over.

Dear Brice,

What can I do to fulfill my lonely Saturday nights?

**Sincerely,
Lonely**

Dear Lonely,

It does get lonely spending every Saturday by yourself- trust me I would know. Not that I don't have a social life or anything... However, if you really are that lonely try doing some fun things by yourself like: sitting alone in an empty movie theater, tweeting yourself on Twitter, or even finishing up the next problem set on USACO! On a side note, I never have the problem of being alone on the weekends!

Dear Brice,

What can I do to become more artistic?

**Sincerely,
No Creativity**

Dear No Creativity,

Don't worry most of us are not naturally artistic for that is a rare talent and it does not come often! However, if you want people to think you are artistic, try dressing like a hipster or saying really deep things that make no sense to your friends. In no time, you will be the next Picasso!

Dear Brice,

I never seem to win anything and it really hurts my self-esteem. Sometimes I feel like all my friends get stuff that I never get! What is a guy supposed to do?

**Sincerely,
Forever Losing**

Dear Forever Losing,

With that attitude I can see why you are never winning! Keep your head held up high and maybe things will turn around for you. You have to try to be positive and believe you will win something and simply always hope for the best. And if it doesn't work out, perhaps it just simply was not meant to be!

Depths of Digital Tech

by Humza Mirza



With the new release of the third addition to the **Uncharted** franchise, with newer innovations and looks at the digital anatomy, Sony has really outdone themselves. An immense look at three dimensional environments pushes the limits of perspectives to a whole new degree. Beside the immense levels and layers of the interactive environment, true gamers are wondering why **Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception** is getting so much attention.

For one, as previously mentioned, the dynamic environment provides players with a new sense and look at the story of the game. With the utilization of the relatively new Sony 3D display, as well as 3D gaming support on the PS3 platform, users are drawn in to the game like never before. Although graphics are marvelous, what makes the game so believable is the teaming up of Sony digital designs with Google Sketchup to produce a fantastic environment that allows gamers to utilize the full potential of the Playstation System. With real artists working alongside programmers, the game is packed with unbelievable graphics.

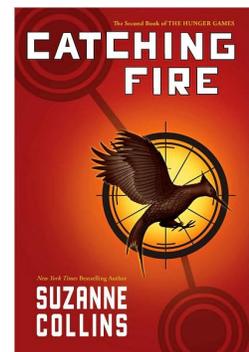
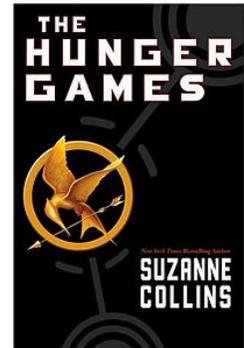
Understanding the work behind building an artistic gaming environment is a true achievement; however that means nothing without the addition of an ingenious storyline. Although the veterans of this game are familiar with the dimensions and plot of the game, for some of us new gamers the basic story line consists of an immersive adventure to a lost city with lots of challenges and struggles along the way.

Overall, the true critique of this game shows a synthesis of aspects of violence, puzzle solving, and a glorious plot accompanied by a gaming environment that is short of reality. To tell much more about the game would spoil the fun and adventure of the gaming experience. With a developer like Naughty Dog, the creators of the **Crash Bandicoot** series, **Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception** provides an epic adventure that you cannot afford to miss out on.

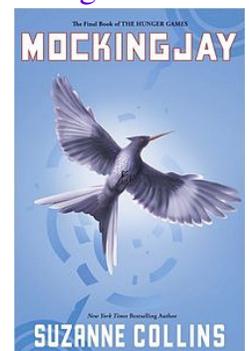
Nerd Book Review – The Hunger Games Trilogy

by Grady Sertic

The Hunger Games, *Catching Fire*, and *Mockingjay* constitute the **Hunger Games Trilogy** by Suzanne Collins. They describe a chilling future post-apocalyptic world where the land of Panem is divided into 12 districts, each supporting and subjugated by the Capitol, the place from where the all-powerful President Snow governs. Each district provides a certain need, from agriculture to coal to electronics to transportation, which purportedly supplies the rest of Panem but, in reality, supplies the Capitol to excess and the districts to poverty levels. Years before the **Hunger Games Trilogy** takes place, the districts waged a rebellion against the Capitol; the victor of this long-ago rebellion was the Capitol, who ostensibly destroyed a 13th district and demanded a payment from the surviving 12 districts in the form of the Hunger Games. The rules of the Hunger Games state that each child between the ages of 12 and 18 must enter a lottery where one girl and one boy are chosen to represent each district and to fight the others to the death in a staged arena, televised for all to see as both a form of entertainment and as a reminder of what the rebellion has cost the districts. **The Hunger Games Trilogy** follows the story of Katniss Everdeen, a 16-year old who has served as the head of her household since her father's death, as she is shunted both by circumstance and by choice into the chaotic survival of both the Hunger Games and the larger and deadlier political games played out by the Capitol.



The Hunger Games Trilogy is told in the present tense, and the action is constant and often unexpected in the first two books, giving the reader a sense of urgency to keep turning the pages. Katniss is a tough and independent survivor who loves her sister beyond measure but is deeply cynical about almost everybody else, and her reactions are a humorous counterbalance to the serious gladiator-style battling she is forced into. The love triangle that hinges on Katniss plays an important role in her ultimate characterization. While some readers may find this interesting, the overabundance of love triangles in young adult literature in general may leave others feeling bored. Still, Suzanne Collins's overall project seems to be, ultimately, a commentary on the futility of war, and Katniss is her effective but imperfect delivery vehicle for that message. Regardless, the story is a worthy read and I highly recommend it.



Nerd Film Review – Contagion

by Raoul Wadhwa

Covering not only the science behind an epidemic, *Contagion* also explores human nature as an epidemic transforms into a worldwide pandemic. *Contagion* truly demonstrates what a KAMSC-like Science Fiction movie is; it not only provides an enthralling tale, but also does so in a scientifically valid manner, receiving critical praise for its scientific accuracy. In addition to its captivating storyline, *Contagion* displays excellent performances by all the cast members, including Marion Cotillard, Matt Damon, and Laurence Fishburne, among others. The film also introduces a new topic of discussion for sci-fi enthusiasts, named Meningoencephalitis Virus One, or MEV-1. While this film does focus slightly excessively on multiple plots, rather than a single, main plot, it is a must-watch for all KAMSC students.

KAMSC Polls

by Grady Sertic

A new feature of our website at www.kamsc84steps.webs.com is the Polls tab. Take this poll and others by clicking on *Polls* in the Directory menu, and then click on *View Results* to see the tabulations!

What continent would you like most to visit in the world?

- a) Europe
- b) Africa
- c) Australia
- d) Asia
- e) South America
- f) Antarctica



Top Ten KAMSC Spring Break Activities

by Brice Calco

1. Studying for AP Exams
2. Finishing another chapter in USACO
3. Studying for final exams
4. Organizing all of the files on your computer
5. Going on college visits
6. Exploring the realms of a new video game
7. Making pretend plans to hang-out all the time
8. Finishing your homework for the next two months
9. Catching up on the sleep debt you've built up over the past couple months
10. Finding out when Brice is free to hang out

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Thanks to our advisor, Mr. Sinclair.

