

Middle Schools at work create a supportive environment to reach all adolescent learners. Students at Titusville Middle School celebrate learning achievements AND nurture their "inner authors" through...

# MIDDLE MATTERS



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Titusville Middle School

Titusville, PA

## Future Titusville

Seventh graders in Mrs. Quirk’s ELA classes worked on a Time Machine story where they traveled to future Titusville to find that many things changed. Future Titusville is a tightly controlled dystopian world. How do students strive to survive in this new world? You will find their stories in this issue of *Middle Matters*.



## Dystopian Adventure

By: Annaliese Hartshorne

"Sarah Anderson," the announcer calls my name, "it's time." I step into a small dark room with a mysterious machine that glows. That's the machine that will teleport me 100 years into the future. I don't know what I was expecting. I slowly stepped into the time machine.

The countdown starts. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. *Whoosh!* I am now in Titusville, PA, 100 years into the future. I stepped out of the time machine and saw tall metallic buildings that I thought went on forever. Every person I see looked perfect. Their hair perfectly draped on their shoulders, or combed back with a strong gel. Their clothes perfectly fitted to their waists. Their faces are weird, lifeless almost. I hadn't seen one show any emotion whatsoever. I trip over my own feet while cluelessly looking around. My hands touch the ground. It's perfectly clean. Not one spec of dirt to be seen. I feel eyes from above watching me, wondering.

I see a small boy walk up to me, trying to help me to my feet. "Quick! Let me help!" he says. Quick? The second he reaches for my hand, I see strong men in black suits drag him away. I see him mouth the words, "I'm sorry," before they take him to a small, dark building. *What did he do wrong?* I wonder. *What is wrong with this place?*

I hear a masculine voice from a loudspeaker say, "Day 36,520 of isolation. Report to the Hall for mandatory bug checks." *What are bug checks? Why is everyone in isolation?* I hop into a single file line heading to whatever the "Hall" is. I enter a tall white building with tall statues in the front. I see more men in black suits with a device, scanning all the people in the lines. Buzz! The lights flash red and men in hazmat suits drag away a woman. I hear her children screaming "Mommy!" as she gets thrown into a dark room.

I get through the line and the men in suits scan me. The device sent shivers down my spine. Once they scanned me from head to toe, I heard a "clear" from the device. The men then guided me to the back exit of the building, where I hopped into a line of more people walking down the street. I walked past a building that seemed to be a library. I figured I could find some answers there, so I walked in the front doors. A robot greeted me, saying "Welcome! Looking for anything specific?" I kept walking, and the robot turned to me. Its eyes blinking rapidly while it tilted its head.

I walked down a long narrow hallway until I saw a "History of Titusville" sign. "Perfect!" I said. I picked up a couple of books that looked like they would tell me something.

As I sat down to read, a girl came up to me. Not a robot, or a man in a black suit. A real girl, and she even looked happy. "Hi! I'm Lucy. What's your name? I haven't seen you around here before." This completely confused me.

"My name is Sarah. I just moved here." I replied.

"You did? I thought they rarely let new people come around here," Lucy said.

"Oh, I guess I'm just an exception. Do you know what happened here? Why is everyone so strict?" I asked.

"You don't know? There was a great outbreak of this special plague we call the Bug. It is very contagious and kills you almost immediately after it gets to its worst point. We have daily checks that catch it early on. Ever since they got it under control, everything is so strict around here to make sure it doesn't happen again. We can't get too close, just in case."

That's when I noticed how far away she was standing from me. About 6 feet. "When did this plague start?" I asked.

"Today is five days away from 100 years ago. How do you not know about this?" Lucy replied, confused.

Wait! five days until 100 years ago. That means the plague starts in five days for the people in the past. I have to get back to the past!

As I rushed out the door, Lucy called back, "Wait! What's wrong?"

"No time. I have to go!" I called. I swung the big front doors to the library open and jumped into a moving line of people. I did not know where the time machine was. I'm lost. I decided to just trust my instincts and keep going. I felt like was walking forever. I was trying to find anything familiar. Eventually I passed the Hall. I walked up the steps to the main entrance to see if I could spot the machine. I found it! It was sitting about a half a mile away from me. I ran, hopped in the machine, and pushed the button. Nothing happened.

I saw Lucy running towards me. "What is this thing?" she asked.

"Can I tell you something crazy?" I said. "This is a time machine. I'm from 100 years in the past." Lucy laughed like it was a joke. I mean I would too. "I'm not joking. I have to get home, but the time machine is broken," I said.

"Don't worry, I can help. I'm great with building robots." She pulled out a little box with a robotic arm that pooped out. She placed the box inside the time machine and closed the door. A couple of minutes later, she opened the door. "All fixed! You better get back. Maybe you can stop this terrible plague." She said.

"Thanks for all your help!" I said as I shut the door and pressed the button to take me home. *Whoosh!* I stepped out of the machine and told everyone that we need to stop the plague. We all went into isolation. A week later, no one ever knew about the Bug.

## Mission Trips: The Marc & Splash Lagoon

Students travelled to The Marc for the second Mission Trip and Splash Lagoon for the third. At the MARC, students had fun ice skating and swimming. Students had to have 75% in all classes to qualify for the trip to the SPLASH LAGOON. Students enjoyed gliding down the slides and playing games in the arcade. A fun time was had by all!

