

THE IMAGINE SOCIETY

AUGUST 26, 2020



SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING **RESPECT & DIGNITY**
KIDS QUARANTINE EDITION VOLUME 12!



“We should all consider each other as human beings, and we should respect each other.” - Malala Yousafzai

HELPING MY COMMUNITY

by **Jesus Tiburcio Zane**

The Ascension Church Food Pantry has helped the community so much throughout the years. This is the only pantry run by kids which is what makes it great. Children get to learn to help others and to value what they have. Robin Klueber is the reason why everything is the way it is.

I started helping the Food Pantry almost 2 years ago. I was in the 8th grade preparing to get confirmation. I would see people from our community I've never seen before. Back then, it was like a grocery store, people had the option to receive certain foods or not. They would read labels, and see if they would be able to eat or tell us what dietary restriction they had. I would help by moving crates to the center, by handing out food and helping the Spanish speaking people in



Artwork by **Isa Andrade (14)** and **Gigi Fitzpatrick (11)**

Imagine Teen **Jack Gaffigan (14)** created the **#OneFiftyNine** campaign to raise funds for **The Bowery Mission**, where for only \$1.59 you can help them provide full meals to people experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. We're on our way to our goal of 2000 meals donated! Go to [@theimagesociety](https://www.instagram.com/theimagesociety) for how you can help!

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our community. Since the Pandemic everything has changed. We weren't a pantry exclusively operated by children, the children weren't allowed to help anymore. There were only 4 people helping the pantry. We would have to put out cans of beans, separate the fresh produce and bag it. At the time we would only serve around 60 to 80 people a week. After being able to help for 2 weeks, I had fallen ill. I had COVID. I had a high fever, so we decided to close the pantry for two weeks.

Once we were in Mid-April, the pantry grew extremely with clients and with volunteers. That also meant we had to be quicker and were able to help more people. We started doing deliveries. People called my phone number to register if they spoke Spanish. Sometimes they would call as early as 6:00 AM in the morning and as late as 10:00 PM at night. It could be stressful sometimes because they could call while I was in class or doing some homework. There were bigger problems with it as well, people would yell at me for not being able to pick up the phone or they would come in line again to receive more food. We had to become really strict with our clients because at this point we were serving over 200 people a week. We implemented our new system of having blue cards to make sure we weren't having people come in the line twice. We also made them register for delivery through the office phone. Every Friday I sat for almost 2 hours going through all the voicemails.

Robin works hard for the people. She would spend more than 50-60 hours a week. I help her in whatever way I can. She would be on meetings and phone calls trying to apply for grants, trying to get money so we are able to keep on working. She would talk to Catholic Charities asking what they had, and telling them what we needed. She would have flyers so the people would know the correct information. She would tell people what other pantries are available and gave toys to the kids who had to wait in line for hours. I had to buy a megaphone because every week I lost my voice. I would yell the announcements. I usually say,

"Good Morning everyone, we will be serving ..., and if this isn't enough food for you and your family please call 311, they will be able to deliver food to your house. Some schools are open and you are able to receive school food. Also please register to vote, your voices are important. Tell your friends, tell your family members or even your neighbor."



Jesus at his bullhorn! An inspiring youth leader who cares and works for the betterment of his community. Seen here at the 4th of July #FOODFORFAMILIES service at The Ascension Food Pantry.

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Whenever I am able to go into the office and help Robin, I do. I have to take inventory on how much of an item we have, how many items we have, try to come up with a theme or a recipe. I log the new clients in our system, make blue cards, call people and thank them for their donations. If Robin needs to go away, I'm in charge of basically everything. I would be the mini version of her. I would wait for deliveries, make sure we got everything we ordered, package everything, make sure everyone is comfortable with what they're doing; also have some food for our volunteers, have everything set up for Saturday and make sure we have a good time. Right now, I'm helping with the emergency distribution at the rectory. I prep some bags with the volunteers, go through the voicemails, and see how many people need it.

By doing all of this, I learned to be strong, tough, to be a leader and to fight hard for others. It takes plenty of work, dedication, time and patience to run a pantry. This really helped me grow as a person and know what it felt like to run it.



Jesus Tiburcio Zane (15) is a rising Sophomore at Academy for Software Engineering

Follow us on Instagram! @theimagesociety

SHINING STARS!

A SHINING STAR GIVES HEALTH TO OUR HEARTS!

Vincent Noth is the Executive Director of the **Riverwest Food Pantry** (@rwfp.mission.life) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and he believes that food pantries improve health and reduce poverty. Under his leadership, the pantry has transformed into a dynamic environment that promotes nutrient dense food and improves dietary health. RWFP rescues, grows & buys 80,000 pounds of produce annually and their food demos transform processed food into a healthy diet. They've designed a mentoring program that trains volunteers with resources and skills to walk with pantry shoppers towards greater economic and/or social stability. Since the COVID-19 crisis began, 1,500 households in the neighborhood have been able to come and receive food more than 3,500 times thanks to his leadership, an incredible staff and an outpouring of generosity from the community. In spite of the challenges presented by the pandemic, more than 30,000 pounds of food have been distributed to families. **Thank you Vincent, for being an inspiration to *The Imagine Society* in your mission to end hunger, isolation and poverty and to nourish health, belonging, and economic opportunity, and for your vision of a community where all of us belong, and all of us can prosper.**



A SHINING STAR WHO INSPIRES US!

Emery Brown (16) is a treasured member of ***The Imagine Society***. He helped introduce us to and start a partnership with our new friends at ***Gigi's Playhouse***, of which he is also a member! ***Gigi's Playhouse*** is a Down syndrome Achievement Center that focuses on a global message of acceptance, where individuals with Down syndrome are embraced by our families, schools, and communities. What Emery has shown us at ***The Imagine Society***, is that there are no limits to what he can do and how big his heart is. His mom Laura tells us how much pride Emery takes in being able to serve others, he even did a school-wide presentation about ***The Imagine Society***! His favorite service so far has been being a part of The Image-Inn dinner service at ***The Ascension Shelter***, and his contributions to the ***Imagine Newsletter***, **#MessagesofLove** and **#OneFiftyNine** campaigns have helped spread awareness and compassion. **Thank You Emery for your limitless kindness and dedication!**



If you would like to share what you or your group is doing, would like to contribute to the next newsletter or even be a guest editor please email us: outreach@theimagesociety.org



The Imagine Society recently celebrated the launch of our partnership with Gigi's Playhouse! Gigi's Playhouse is an achievement center for individuals with Down syndrome and their families with locations across the country. The New York City branch especially focuses on changing New York's perception of Down syndrome, so that the abilities and contributions of our community are recognized and embraced by all.

Gigi's Summer Adventures program participants met with Imagine Society Teen Leaders over zoom to talk about service work and how to make a difference in our communities. We shared ways to help while social distancing like drawing pictures to spread support and donating to food pantries.

Special thank you to Imagine Leader Ella Brown (18) who has been involved with both organizations for leading and making this wonderful partnership happen! We look forward to expanding upon this incredible partnership in the coming months and years, working together to help our NYC community!



Follow Gigi's Playhouse NYC on instagram [@nycgigisplayhouse](https://www.instagram.com/nycgigisplayhouse) to learn more about their amazing programs!

DIGGING FOR DIGNITY

by Jack Gaffigan

When I was working on the urban farm even though it wasn't fun and it was really hard work, I had a strong sense that every hole I dug and every weed I pulled out of the dirt was in some way helping someone else I didn't know, so it made it mean something more.

Because of the social distancing we would pack groceries inside the pantry by ourselves off of a list for the size of the family, and then with our masks and gloves on, run the groceries out to the car where the clients were waiting and we would put the groceries in the trunk so we didn't really interact much, but we made sure that we were really friendly, said please and thank you, and made every effort to treat people with respect and dignity, as if they were paying a lot of money for a fine delivery service. Just because someone has found themselves in a situation where they need to come to a pantry for donated groceries does not mean they should be treated with less importance than anyone else. Maybe they should even be treated a little better.

One incident that really stuck out to me was when I was bringing milk and bags of food out to a family in a small black Honda with one of the doors was a different color, I think a sort of red. The family was a mom with five kids, from a baby in diapers to a teenage girl about my age or a little younger. The whole family was living in the car. That was their home. It was about 90 degrees in the parking lot, but all the kids were wearing sweatshirts and jeans. They looked really hot and the windows were down and there was not air conditioning in the car. My uncle told me we could go into the basement storage of the pantry and look for some summer clothes for the kids. Before the pandemic, the food community center had a free thrift shop where families could come and pick up donated clothes if they needed them. Because of covid, they had to close it down and put everything into storage. I went through a bunch of boxes and I found some really cool stuff for those kids to change into. We also found some bathing suits for them and we sorted everything into separate sizes. Then we found them some books at different age levels.

When we brought the bags to their car, they were so grateful and thankful and really humble. I remember acting like it was no big deal and I made conversation with the mom and made silly faces back and forth with the kids through the windows and made them laugh. When I left that experience, I felt more grateful to them for giving me the opportunity to help than they were to me for the clothes. I didn't feel like I had done anything heroic or noble, I was just doing what was right for what they needed. From treating others with respect and dignity, I gained more respect and dignity for myself. Everyone could learn a lot from volunteering at a food pantry. I am so glad my uncle let me come intern for him and have this opportunity.

Jack Gaffigan, 14, is a rising 9th Grader at York Prep



LABOR ARTS



THE
IMAGINE
SOCIETY

Please see below an excerpt from one of **The 2020 Clara Lemlich Awards Imagine Society** interviews between 2018 Honoree **Doreen Wohl (88)** a lifelong social activist, who ran one of the most successful food pantries in the country for 20 years, and **Dayelin De La Cruz (17)** rising Senior at Loyola School. To learn more about the 2020 Honorees and read the full interview please go to: laborarts.org/lemlichawards/2020/index.cfm

DD: *Aside from the challenges you faced with the pantry, did you encounter any other challenges along the way?*

DW: Oh, yes. Non violence is a very basic principle principle for Quakers. So I am basically a pacifist. Back in the time of the Vietnam War, almost the beginning of that war, there was a group of us living in Columbus, Ohio and it was a very small group. A lot of good things can happen in small groups, the stimulus is always much smaller. We knew that the majority of people that had gone into the war were coming from low income communities. Both poor whites and and people of color. They were not getting the information about the right to conscientious objection to do ultimate service.

Doreen - an inspiration!

We decided, we would put together a leaflet, which was based on constitutional rights. We distributed it at the high schools in Columbus, Ohio. We went to each high school but we were not invited inside so we set out to distribute the leaflet on the outside, not on the school property but just at the entrance. The principal got on the loudspeaker and told the students not to take our leaflet. Well, what is going to make the students want to know what's in that leaflet more than the principal telling them not to take it? He was furious. To him, we were doing something that he obviously felt was totally unpatriotic and I'm sure he thought we were communists or aliens.



We ended up going not only to the high schools, but we would go to churches and we would do have a vigil outside of the churches. People were going and distributing, and the churches invited us in. We had conversations.

DD: *What advice would you give us for becoming lifelong activists?*

DW: Always become involved just like you have. You really learn by doing.

DD: *Is there any quote you live by?*

DW: My mother used to say something to me and it certainly comes back into my mind now that my grandchildren are between 20 and 30. My mother, when I was a little bit younger, would say, **“Be good and if you can't be good, be careful.”**

Looking back at that, that was an amazing time. We understand in exploring. Young people should do some things differently. It is a time of exploration.



Thank you
Dayelin for your
incisive and in
depth interview!

DAYELIN'S FINAL THOUGHT: *To me, this interview was very inspiring and hopeful. Doreen took what she was surrounded by in her childhood, and carried it on until she stopped working at the age of 80. She truly showed me the definition of a powerful woman activist. We, as a generation, need to take advantage of all the service opportunities we get and learn from them. Life is full of learning. As Doreen would say, “we learn by doing.” I look forward to gaining more experiences of service and continuing to pursue my love for giving back in any way possible.*

BLACK LIVES MATTER ACROSS THE USA

Welcome to Part Two of our special four-part series in which *Imagine Teens* interview photojournalist and friend **Tobias Everke** @tobias_everke about his travels throughout the United States during the Black Lives Matter movements across this country.

We continue the series with **Paul Bloom (age 16, a rising Senior at Bard High School Early College Manhattan)** and Part Two: *The Funeral of George Floyd*.

PB: I want to thank you for being part of this interview series as it has proven incredibly insightful and rewarding.

George Floyd was an innocent victim of an unnecessary murder but his death made him an unintentional martyr for a larger cause. After we witnessed the horrific video footage of his senseless and brutal murder, it became clear that the pandemic and the reaction of the country and the world were intertwined: Covid statistics showed that the inequalities that Black Americans faced went far deeper than any video could show. Nearly one third of those who have died across the country are Black – much higher than the national Black population of 13 percent. His funeral and our national mourning were more than mourning the loss of one man's life. His name became a cry for justice. What was it like to be there at this historic event? Did you feel a responsibility to show the world what was happening for all of us who could not be there? You could have felt, in part, that you were “the eyes of the world.”

TE: It is always very moving and emotional to be at a funeral, but in this case, anger and hope were part of the emotions. Anger, because his death was a crime, and hope, because we all hope that it was a trigger for society to look in a mirror and think about the treatment of minorities. As a photojournalist I always feel that it is my job to show the world what is happening. In this case, the world was present. There were reporters and TV stations from around the world.

PB: Your photos of this event capture the emotion and the passion of this larger, cultural shift. Your shot of his coffin in the white carriage really reminds us that, at the core of all of this, a human life was lost. A family is mourning one man. Did you intentionally frame out the crowds in that photo? It is a powerful image among all the others.

TE: I was lucky to be able to get this close to the white carriage. We waited for about one hour outside the cemetery. There were a few hundred spectators lined up outside the gates. Police handed out water, because it was really hot. I was a little surprised that not more people had showed up. There were barricades and police kept things organized and under control. My job is to anticipate what will happen when the funeral procession arrives. How will people move, will my position be blocked, what shot/perspective will tell the story best? And then the carriage came. Police and private security everywhere. But there were already press photographers walking with the carriage and as always during big events with too many people in charge, one does not know what the other does and when you move with the crowd and don't hesitate and just behave as if you belong there, nobody will say anything. So I left my spot on the sidelines and just walked straight up to the carriage and was able to walk next to it for the last few hundred feet before the cemetery gates. The reason no people are in the shot is, that I was actually too close to the coffin and had the wrong lens on my camera (based on my previous position on the sidelines).



PART TWO: THE FUNERAL OF GEORGE FLOYD

...continued from page 9

PB: As the country endured the first few months of the pandemic, it was becoming clear that the disproportionate treatment of Blacks and people of color was creating a powder keg, and the murder of George Floyd lit the fuse. How did it feel to be a photojournalist during this historical movement from pandemic to social explosion? As you were out there in the country covering the initial reaction to the pandemic, were you aware of this perfect storm brewing?

TE: I was telling friends and family from very early on, after my first trips covering the pandemic, that it is only a question of time before another revolution happens. The injustices and the gap between rich and poor is too great, there is no social system in place to help the less fortunate and there are too many weapons out there. Voters are being suppressed, systematic racism and an upper class that does not care. I think the BLM protests and the use of masked and unidentifiable federal agents just scratched the surface of what is to come if nothing changes. You and your generation, your friends, relatives, family, neighbors, you all have to vote. That should be the number one goal for the next few months leading up to the election.

PB: The pandemic was like the hurricane that "blew the roof off the house of our country" and let the light shine in for all to see what was really going on. Many were aware before but now it's clear for all to see. Did any of our country's realizations come as a surprise to you?

TE: I think that the general public still does not see what is going on. Unfortunately. The level of education is low. As long as you can easily own a pick-up truck, a large screen TV and maybe a house, nobody cares. And if people are not doing well, populist will find a culprit who they can blame. Being raised by parents who grew up under Adolph Hitler, I am most surprised by my own naiveté, that nobody learned anything from history. I had hoped otherwise.

PB: As much as George Floyd's murder became a symbol for Black oppression, he was still a person like any of us. How much of the mourning you witnessed was about the man, George Floyd, and how much was about what his death represented?

TE: It depends on who we talked to. People who knew him (we did interview two of his high school football coaches) mourned the man. Strangers, especially Black Americans, were probably reminded about their own place in society and that it could happen to them at any time as well. There were many people leaving the church after the viewing with tears in their eyes.

PB: How would you describe the mood and energy of the public who came to mourn?

TE: The people who waited in long lines outside the church for the viewing the day before the funeral were very respectful. Some of them drove all day to attend. One man brought a portrait of George Floyd, that he had painted to the church. Others, as during any major event, printed t-shirts for sale.

PB: Funerals are celebrations of the past as well as visions for the future. What is that vision?

TE: I can not answer this. If just half of the most positive vision from that funeral would come close to reality, I would be happy. But I am not that optimistic, because the people in charge are generally not effected.

PAUL'S FINAL THOUGHT: *Tobias expresses a view that has become quite common amongst the people I talk to regularly. This pandemic is so pervasive in our lives that we cannot comprehend it exclusively as a public health issue. It exposed the bones of our economy, our workforce, our healthcare, and our country. I often forget, but Tobias' photos show that this movement started with a man. A life was taken for our country to pay attention to our history and future. With the pandemic, it feels as if no amount of lives will cause our government to get serious about this virus.*

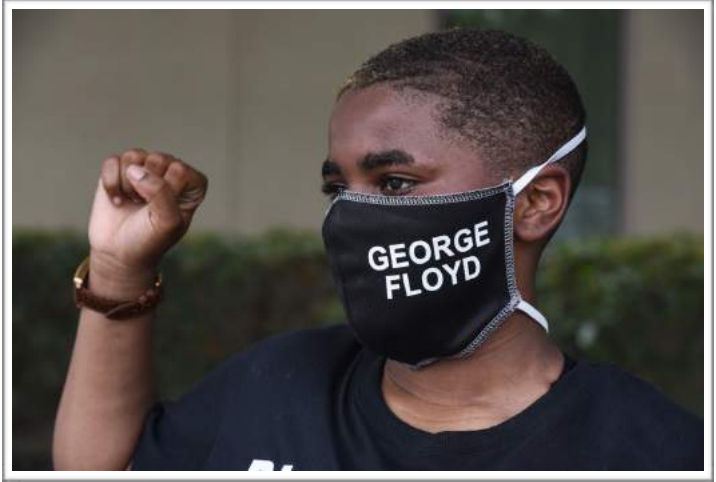
Our country was founded on the notion of autonomy and individuality which, in most respects, is a great thing. However, it should not take our countrymen dying for us to consider others' lives. Our government may not immediately change, but any change starts at the bottom. Individuals prioritizing their community's health, safety, and comfort are the ones who will shape our country's growth.

Coming up next Issue: Part 3: Seattle's Occupied Zone

Please see the next page for Tobias's photos from The Funeral of George Floyd



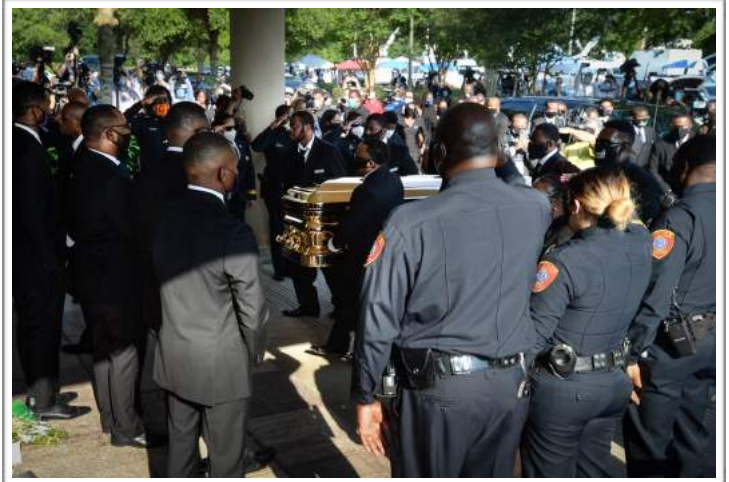
The public viewing of George Floyd at the Fountain of Praise Church in Houston drew thousands of mourners. Nkechi Adagbo (12) & her sister Kelechi (8) came with their own posters.



A young mourner wears a custom made face mask.



Children with BLM signs outside the church.



George Floyd's golden coffin being brought into the church while police officers salute.



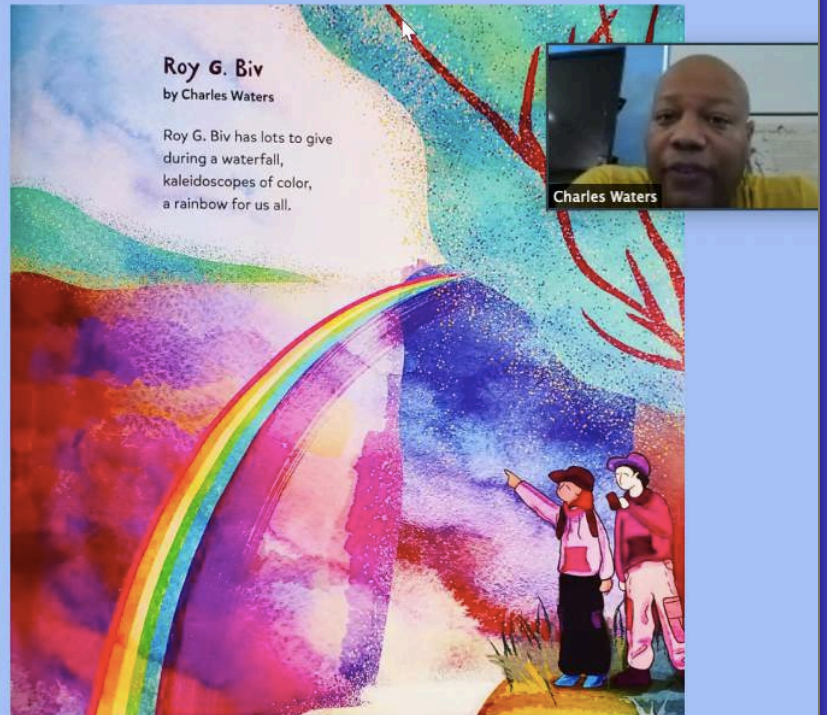
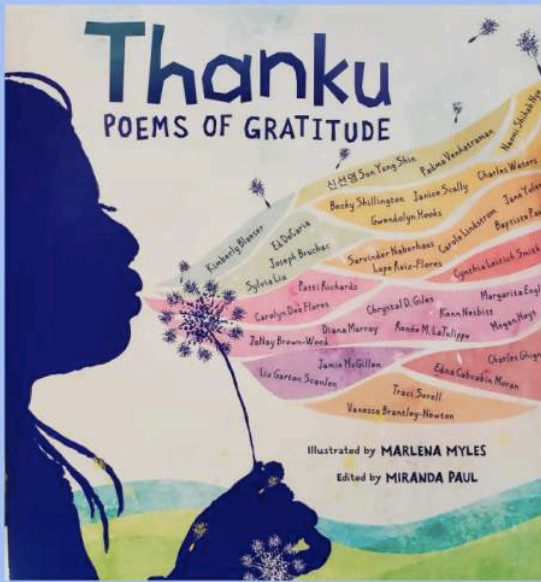
George Floyd's coffin passes a make-shift memorial with his portrait while being carried into the church.



Security guards walked alongside George Floyd's coffin on his way to the cemetery.

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE IMAGINE YOUNG POET'S SOCIETY!

On August 19th, our friend and author **Charles Waters**, led a virtual Youth Poetry Workshop for members and friends of **The Imagine Society**. What transpired was an incredible discussion of the creative process. How we can learn to express ourselves and our feelings while writing poetry, and the exploration of language, imagery, memory and emotion. Charles shared his unique and liberating approach where it's impossible to make mistakes, and only possible to create art and have fun! In the days that passed, many of the kids that joined started writing their own poetry, inspired by Charles message and enthusiasm. Thank you Charles and thank you to everyone that joined this exciting event! See the next page for a poem that was inspired by this workshop!



WATER SLIDE

By Charles Waters

Raindrops parachute
onto curved crocus petal –
nature's water slide.



Butterfly Alone

by Katie Gaffigan

A bug with large colorful wings
Through the air sings
a hue of the sun,
Orange flapping, two as one

Solo was the way he had most fun.

The others saw him alone in the sky
And crowded around to help the poor guy.

"Hello orange butterfly why must you be so blue?
Come have some fun! Join our crew!"

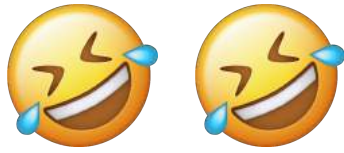
"Thank you kindly,
but being alone is my escape from reality.

I love the cold breeze
and the flowers on trees.

I don't need others to fill that need."

The butterflies were confused and thought him quite silly.
But they still left, to respect his privacy.





FUN PAGES



Putting your phone away and paying attention to those talking to you? there is an app for that- It's called **RESPECT**



Edited by
Junior Members
Katie Gaffigan (11)
& Audrey (11)

THIS IS A SHARED ZONE



PLEASE RESPECT OTHERS & CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF generator.net

I went outside today and it was very peopley.



I do not recommend it. Stay inside.

Katie & Audrey's Fave Memes

Lol!

We hope you had a great summer. Welcome to third grade.



GIF Call me.

Best way to earn respect is.

Truth Inside Of You



By treating others with respect!



Audrey and Katie's "RESPECT & DIGNITY" Word Search!

NLHONORABILITVBVNHDSJDUWTKOWOZ
 JXOSQZKEAJGGZHLIWLJLSLZIDFNBTFB
 XFBYAZKSYIRAINSFKZGUIUJPRKIJRJ
 HVPAAFRTWPTRPVKXONXGYZJGIMSCSJ
 PXSOTLJECAPHDPIBCRKKWCNKETJZEP
 ZKMHEIREGTTRJKRNLXGTBMSUNARJUX
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 DUJ AQTRLMBOVNITSHGEGXRSBOUVSTU
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 USHFLFZORJIYXZPGBZWTXSEBSCGKCF
 KFAUAHQVSWZVHENTLUEKWYOWZFBYTV
 OLNLTKHRNHGREIWB EACKQDZCHTRWSP
 RYGFFLSDSCHOSPITABLERESPECTFUL
 SCOAQUVXENNDCTVCNKPAMRQJVCKVZX
 YUWUSRPLHIJJCYEKVBQWXMRTIITH
 JORESRJCJUSTNDXVTPTUMOWRXXXVNH
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|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Understanding | Righteousness | Honorability | Appreciation |
| Worthiness | Hospitable | Empathetic | Respectful |
| Inclusive | Integrity | Truthful | Forgiving |
| Friendly | Grateful | Patient | Helpful |
| Esteem | Admire | Caring | Giving |
| Generous | Humble | Loving | Kind |
| Nice | Honest | Loyal | Just |

Edited by Junior Members Katie Gaffigan (11) and Audrey (11)!

