

# 2024 MHS Poetry Out Loud

by Sloan Farrell



2023/24 POL School Champion Calysa Alba poses with her mother and 1st place medal.

Poetry Out Loud, a competitive event where students memorize poems and recite them to an audience, took place this January at Methuen High School, along with 19,000 other high schools across the country.

In the competition, students must recite a poem of their choice to their English classes. The winner of each class continues to the block semifinals, where up to three champions are chosen from each block and proceed to the school finals, where

they must recite two poems.

11 exceptional students proceeded to the finals in this year’s competition. Grade 12 student Calysa Alba was named the Methuen High School 2024 Poetry Out Loud champion.

Calysa will go on to represent Methuen High School in the Massachusetts semifinals taking place in March.

Congratulations to Calysa and the finalists (listed alphabetically):

- Calysa Alba, Grade 12, Mr. Jennings - *MHS POL Champion*
- Fabian Montanez Crespo, Grade 12, Ms. Symonds - *First Runner-Up*
- Isabella Cerbone, Grade 11, Ms. O’Sullivan - *Second Runner-Up*
- Maria Clara Teixeira, Grade 9, Ms. Smith
- Myali Dominguez, Grade 12, Ms. Grant
- Kelvin Jamie Abreu, Grade 9, Mr. Bellistri
- Gabrielle Larochel, Grade 10, Ms. DiGloria
- Abigail “Echo” LaRochelle, Grade 12, Ms. Paquette
- Yahir Nunez Rivera, Grade 10, Ms. DiGloria
- Natalie Silvera, Grade 9, Ms. Smith
- Maribelle Spiridon, Grade 12, Mr. McKenna

*Head to page 4 for more photos!*

## 3D printed Shark-Frogs Taking Over MHS?

by Sloan Farrell

Many future business leaders currently attend Methuen High School, but for sophomore Collin Henry, there is no ‘future’ in that title.

Collin’s business, Shrog Co., has amassed a cult-like following in the walls of MHS selling his 3D printed figurines.

The most popular figurine sold is the shark-frog known as the “shrog”. The namesake figurine was the first design they sold back in October 2023.

The company consists of Henry, the creator of the items, and six friends who work as salesmen, selling and distributing orders. Students choose their figurine’s shape and color and Shrog, Co. delivers in school. Orders are placed over their Instagram or directly with these salesmen and almost all of the orders are fulfilled during school hours, in passing periods and lunch blocks.

So where did the business model come from? Henry explained that the concept came to him in a dream and he went from there. He sourced some designs from a CAD (computer-aided design) Creative Commons but he is the mastermind behind the printing and distributing. He invests the money made back into his interest and continues to expand his 3D printing paraphernalia.

On the future of the business, Collin stated his interest in expanding the sales into the online realm. He plans on selling his inventory through Amazon within the next year, which would exponentially increase the size of the company.

When fulfilling orders, the printing process is not perfect and there are many rejected products. The company’s professional manner of business is important to Collin, who said, “[They] take pride in quality.”



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# The Presidential Primary

by Eleanor Kreisz

A presidential primary is an anonymous voting system that most states participate in. It is held 6-9 months before the presidential election.

Massachusetts holds a semi-closed primary election. In this system, voters who are connected to a political party have to vote within that party. Voters who are not connected to any political party, also known as third party, participate in the partisan primary election of their choice.

The 2024 Democrat and Republican

primary election took place on March 5th. Registration deadlines are February 24, 2024. Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m to 8:00 p.m. The 2024 presidential election will take place November 5th.

Massachusetts is a Democratic state that has not had a Republican presidential candidate since 1956 with Dwight Eisenhower. The candidates that were running for the presidential election in the Democratic party included Joe Biden, Dean Phillips and Marianne Williamson. Candidates in the Republican party included Donald Trump and Nikki Haley.

Third party candidates included Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Cornel West for the independent party, Chase Oliver for the Libertarian Party, and Jill Stein for the green party.



# MHS Science Fair      Lunar New Year

By Sloan Farrell



Image courtesy of Alexa Rabs

Congratulations to all participants and winners for their outstanding work!

of all students enrolled in an Advanced Placement science course, but any student taking a science course can opt into the fair.

The awards are as follows:

First Place: Ibrahim Afzal, Thomas Le, Tayyab Afzal - Creating a Solid State Ionic Engine to Power a Plane

Second Place: Elias Castillo, Milo Issacs - From Waste to Fuel

Third Place: Divier Ramos-Delgado, Yasmine Bridaa - Creatography: The Design and Application Assessment of a Low-Cost Gas Chromatograph

Outstanding Biology Project: Ella Duffy - C.diff and Alternate Treatments

Outstanding Environmental Science Project: Sydney Chalupa - Maximizing Green Roof Benefits

Outstanding Physics Project: Jarell Espinal, James Lug, Dael Osorio - How Different Surfaces Respond to Impact Force

Outstanding Research Project: Valentina Carideo - Optimizing Blood Glucose

Outstanding Laboratory Project: Jillian Bradley, Angeliris Cabrera - How Does the Amount of Vegetation on Hillsides Affect Soil Erosion?

Outstanding Engineering Project: Sloan Farrell - Spin Cycle

The annual science fair at Methuen High School took place Monday February 5, 2024. Boasting 82 group and individual projects, the event gives students the opportunity to showcase their scientific knowledge.

The science fair is required

by Emma Lam

Lunar New Year is the celebration of the new year, however it's not the new year we all know, which is celebrated on January first.

Lunar New Year is based on a different calendar, the Lunar calendar. The Lunar calendar is based on the monthly cycles of the moon phases, and the holiday falls on the second new moon after the winter solstice. It falls on a different day every year in the months January and February. This year, 2024, Lunar New Year is on February tenth.

Every year has a different zodiac animal. 2024 is the year of the dragon. The holiday is often called Chinese New Year, but other countries celebrate it too, like Vietnam and Korea. On this day, families gather together and carry out many traditions throughout the day.

Lucky red envelopes are given out to the children to reward them for their hard work from the past year, and to wish them luck in the year ahead of them. Money is given to the younger generation and those who aren't married yet. Red is the color that represents luck, and all the decorations have red and gold on them.

Different cultures wear their own traditional clothing as well. Vietnamese people wear áo dài, Chinese men wear Tang suits, and women wear qipao or cheongsam. Korean people wear a hanbok.

During the celebration, there's always a large abundance of food. Vietnamese culture has many different types of food, such as banh bánh chưng, a sticky rice cake, thịt kho, which is braised pork belly, Gà luộc, which is a boiled chicken, and much more. Some foods the Chinese culture eats is a whole steamed fish, noodles, dumplings, and sticky rice balls. Some from Korean culture are tteokguk, a rice cake soup, dumplings, and japchae, a glass noodle stir fry dish.

There are also public celebrations. For example, there is Tết in Boston, celebrating Vietnamese New Year. In these events, there's always a lot of people and a lot of food. There are also performers who hold the dragon dances, or in Vietnamese culture, lion dances. Everyone gathers around to watch the performers go around in costumes and dance, often performing very acrobatic moves. The crowd can also offer money by putting it in the dragon's "mouth". Lanterns also go around to the people, and as decorations, making the scenery beautiful at night.

Lunar New Year is an event celebrated with families and friends, and can be celebrated many different ways along with yearly traditions.



# The MHS Quinceanera Ball

by Sophia Polit

This year’s 6th annual Quinceanera Ball took place on February 9th, 2024 from 6-9 PM at Methuen High School, and was sponsored by the Spanish and Multicultural Clubs. Supervisors Maria Figuereo, Spanish Club Director and Laura Enright, *MHS* World Language Department Chair, along with the Quinceanera court have been hard at work to make this event possible. Latin food, music, and traditions were all shared during this event.



Image courtesy of Blue & White Staff

Members of the Quinceanera court read from a script.

A Quinceanera is a latino-hispanic traditional way of celebrating a girl's 15th birthday. However, in American cultures, it is usually celebrated at 16 as a “Sweet 16”. Unlike a Sweet 16, a Quinceanera is filled with cultural traditions that symbolize different things. For example, at the start of the night, the Quinceanera begins with a shoe change from a sneaker or sandal, into a heel. This was represented by Marcelli Reyes, Argentina Rosario Castillo, and her cousin Alex Morales, and it symbolizes a transition from childhood to womanhood.

The second activity of the night was *El Valz* or “*The Waltz*”, followed by *El Baile Sopresa* or “*The Surprise Dance*”. These are danced by all members of the



Image courtesy of Blue & White Staff

Quinceanera participants pose for a group photo

Quinceanera’s court. The ‘court’ are all of the people who accompany the girl throughout her night. Here, instead of a court, the party was filled with multiple Quinceaneras who were accompanied by their partner. and each girl represented one of many different traditions.

The Quinceanera Court included as followed:

- Marcelli Reyes and Jesus Cedeno Bravo
- Brianna Issac Felix , Alenalis Vega, and Justin Fajardo
- Kaylany Mercado, Fernando Ramos, and Odry Antigua
- Along with the Quinceanera Court, the night was led by the *Masters of the Ceremony*, Sabiel Sanchez and Kimberly Natareno Vasquez. Both provided English and Spanish translations through all of their announcements to make the night enjoyable for all!



Image courtesy of Blue & White Staff

Ms. Figuereo and Ms. Enright pose in front of the dessert table.

Next was the doll exchange. In a traditional Quinceanera, the doll, or *La Muneca*, is usually presented by the girl's father. The doll is passed down to a younger family member who has not yet turned 15, and again symbolizes the change from childhood to adulthood. On this night, the doll exchange was done by Brianna Isaac and her cousin Alenalis Vega.

After dinner, which included different hispanic traditional food such as pork shoulder (*Pernil*) and rice, the flower



Image courtesy of Blue & White Staff

The 'doll' cake and cupcakes.

ceremony began. Each girl was given a rose that they could give back to their loved one, usually their mother or a parental figure, to express their love and gratitude for guiding them as they have gone through this transferring period of their lives. It is emotional, but an incredibly special addition to the celebration.

Finally, to conclude the night was all things fun! All were warmly welcomed to dance and bond with one another to all kinds of different genres of Latin music. There was a backdrop to take tons of pictures, and a doll cake with pink cupcakes for everyone to enjoy.

*A special thank you to the JROTC and Spanish teachers + Staff for helping contribute to making this celebration once again a success.*

# French club crêpes

by Eleanor Kreis

MHS French teacher Mrs. Ogeron hosted a special French club crêpes event in the cafeteria on January 24.

For those unfamiliar, crêpes are like thin pancakes. Mrs. Ogeron and Mrs. Mattison helped make the crêpes by making a light batter and using a griddle to stamp them onto the stove and let them cook to a light brown.

Mrs. Ogeron gave out the crêpes and students got to decorate them with strawberries, blueberries, Nutella, chocolate syrup, banana and apples.

There are two types of crêpes. One is the sweet crêpe that can be topped with jelly, sugar, caramel or chocolate. The other are savory crêpes. Made from buckwheat flour, they feature more salty things like cheese, ham or eggs.

On February 2nd, France celebrates a day called La Chandeleur, also known as 'Candlemas' in English. It is believed that making crêpes during this time will allow for a beautiful harvest.



# POETRY OUT LOUD 2023/24!



## Samantha Pfeil Scores 1000th Point

by Joshua Najeeullah

In an extraordinary display of skill and determination, local high school basketball sensation Sam Pfeil officially surpassed the 1,000-point milestone in her high school basketball career.

Pfeil, a senior at Methuen High, has been turning heads since she first stepped onto the court. Known for her sharpshooting and dynamic play, Sam has been a key player for the Methuen Rangers throughout her high school years.

The historic game took place on Sunday January 28th, with fans and family members packing the stands. The atmosphere was electric, and anticipation was building as Pfeil inched closer to the 1,000-point mark. With a hard foul Sam went to the line and knocked down her 1000th point.

The crowd erupted into cheers, and the game briefly paused to honor Pfeil's achievement. Her teammates and friends rushed to congratulate her, as she was awarded her banner by Athletic Director Mathew Curran.

Her coach, Mr. Middlemiss, had this to say about Sam's outstanding achievement:

“I am Incredibly proud of Samantha, it's an amazing accomplishment. She is the 11th in Methuen High School basketball school history to achieve this goal and she'll be the seventh girl all time. She's also trying to either finish third or second on the girls scoring list so it's an incredible achievement and I am beyond grateful to have been able to coach her.”

As the season continues, Pfeil has her sights set on leading the Rangers to a state championship. With her talent and drive, the future looks bright for this young athlete.

For now, Methuen celebrates Sam Pfeil's impressive achievement, a testament to her hard work and the support of her community.

Congratulations, Sam, on reaching a phenomenal milestone in your high school basketball career!

## Boys hockey game (Military Night)

by Sarah Fairchild

On Saturday, January 7th, at 7pm, The Methuen Rangers beat the Haverhill Hillies at Methuen High School rink for the military / first responders night. The Rangers took the win against the Haverhill Hillies, 6-3.

This was a fun game with both teams scoring right after the other, a lot of penalties, and the student section getting hyped. Methuen High School students participated in a 'USA' theme, showing support for both the Rangers and those in the military or the first responders.

The game started with a Rangers goal from forward Patrick Morris, assisted by forward Bryce Muray, three minutes into the game. Seven minutes into the game,

forward, Liam Worden, got a penalty for a high stick. Shortly after the penalty, the Haverhill Hillies scored, tying the game 1-1.

Another penalty for slashing was held nine minutes into the game from MHS' Quinn Ronan. The first period ended with the score in a tie, one to one.

The second period quickly started with a goal only a minute in by forward Aiden Cashman, assisted by forward Quinn Ronan. Only two minutes after the first goal, defenseman Sean Morris scored, assisted by Patrick Morris, making the score three to one Rangers.

The Hillies then got back on the scoreboard three minutes later, making the score 3-2, when all of a sudden forward Dominic Romano, assisted by Forward Will MacLaren, made the score 4-2 Rangers.

Soon after, forward Will MacLaren scored only seconds after the 4th goal, making the Rangers fans go crazy.

11 minutes into the second period, Murray got a penalty which ended early due to the Haverhill Hillies scoring right after it was called, making the score 5-3 Methuen Rangers.

To start the third period off forward Zach Anderson got a penalty for elbowing four minutes in. After many penalties from the Methuen Rangers, Romano scored for the Rangers once again, assisted by forward Will MacLaren and defenseman Andrew Cox.

The game ended up being another successful win for the boys varsity hockey team against Haverhill High School. The final score ended up being 6-3 Methuen.



# Should MHS Switch to Trimesters?

by Kaylie Lam

Trimesters or semesters? This debate has been recently brought up among school districts. MHS currently follows a semesterized system with two quarters in each semester, but what would a trimester system look like?

Following a trimesterized system can offer many advantages, but also many disadvantages. This leaves the question, should MHS switch to trimesters?

With trimesters, students have more flexibility in their schedules. They can choose to take different courses every trimester instead of taking the same course for two to four quarters. However, this does have setbacks. The curriculum of a course would have to be squeezed into one trimester instead of the typical two to four quarters, forcing students to keep up with a fast paced, college-like environment. This could really impact a student’s mental health and grades.

Students enrolled in schools following a semesterised academic year cannot take as many electives as students enrolled in schools following a trimester based academic year. At MHS, most electives are half a year (though some are quarters), meaning you can only take two electives a year- at least as freshman or sophomore.

Juniors and seniors typically do have the flexibility in their schedules to take more than one elective in a semester.

Trimesters, on the other hand, allow for *everyone* to take three or more electives a year. Taking many electives can be really beneficial, as students can gain more experience in a subject and meet new people.

A couple of MHS students expressed their answer to the question, “Should MHS switch to trimesters?”



Image Courtesy of Google

**Freshman Michael Bulbian:** “No, because most schools in the US have this (semesterised) system and it’s much easier to navigate. But, I still think we shouldn’t have year-long electives and should be

allowed to choose our own electives every quarter.”

**Sophomore Matthew Antunes:** “Uh, no, I don’t think MHS should switch to trimesters. Switching to trimesters would limit student options and interests because a trimester is limited to a rotation of three times while quarters are limited to four. This gives students four chances to experiment more electives, (mainly classes that are a quarter long). This will be good for students who still need to find interests in time for college.”

**Freshman Kai Irrizary:** “No, we shouldn’t.”

**Freshman Chloe Santarpio:** “I think we should stick to quarters instead of switching to trimesters. Going by quarters helps a lot of us when parts (courses) of our schedule are going to change. Having quarters also shows us how much we progress throughout the year more than trimesters do.”

Switching to trimesters would have a change on the way MHS operates. While there are many benefits to a trimesterized system, there are also many drawbacks. Whether MHS makes the switch to trimesters or not, it should be taken into account what works best for MHS’ students and staff members.

# Should Phones be Banned in School?

by Chloe Cochrane

In today’s age, people all around the world rely heavily on their cell phones. Being reliable, easy to use devices, phones have been made essential for communication, research, simple photography, and navigation. Phones can also be used to transfer money sufficiently, as music players, and as calculators. It’s easy to tell why these convenient devices are so heavily sought after. However, in some places, phones are banned. A common example of this is in schools.

Phones are incredibly handy devices, but they also provide for entertainment. If you ask a teenager to borrow their phone, chances are that the device will be filled with social media apps like TikTok and Snapchat, as well as apps— like Netflix or Hulu— where you can watch movies and shows. In high schools, phones are commonly banned because these apps provide attractive distractions that can be accessed effortlessly.

Experts also argue that phone bans in schools will lead to increased academic performance, lower rates of cyberbullying, and prevent cheating on academics.

Although all of these are clear benefits, there is one argument against banning phones that remains prevalent. Dangerous situations in schools like intruders and fires remain great risks. In these situations, it is essential for the safety of students to be able to communicate– whether with first responders or with family– and phones are the only way to do this. It’s also important for families in general to be able to communicate in the case of medical emergencies or family emergencies.

While I agree that phones are a distraction in schools, it is undeniable that they’re important, too. Students shouldn’t be able to pull out their phones in the middle of a lesson if they get bored, but being able to message people in their lives is pivotal. I believe that phones should be allowed in schools for this reason– albeit with restrictions that will get rid of the distracting aspects of the devices.

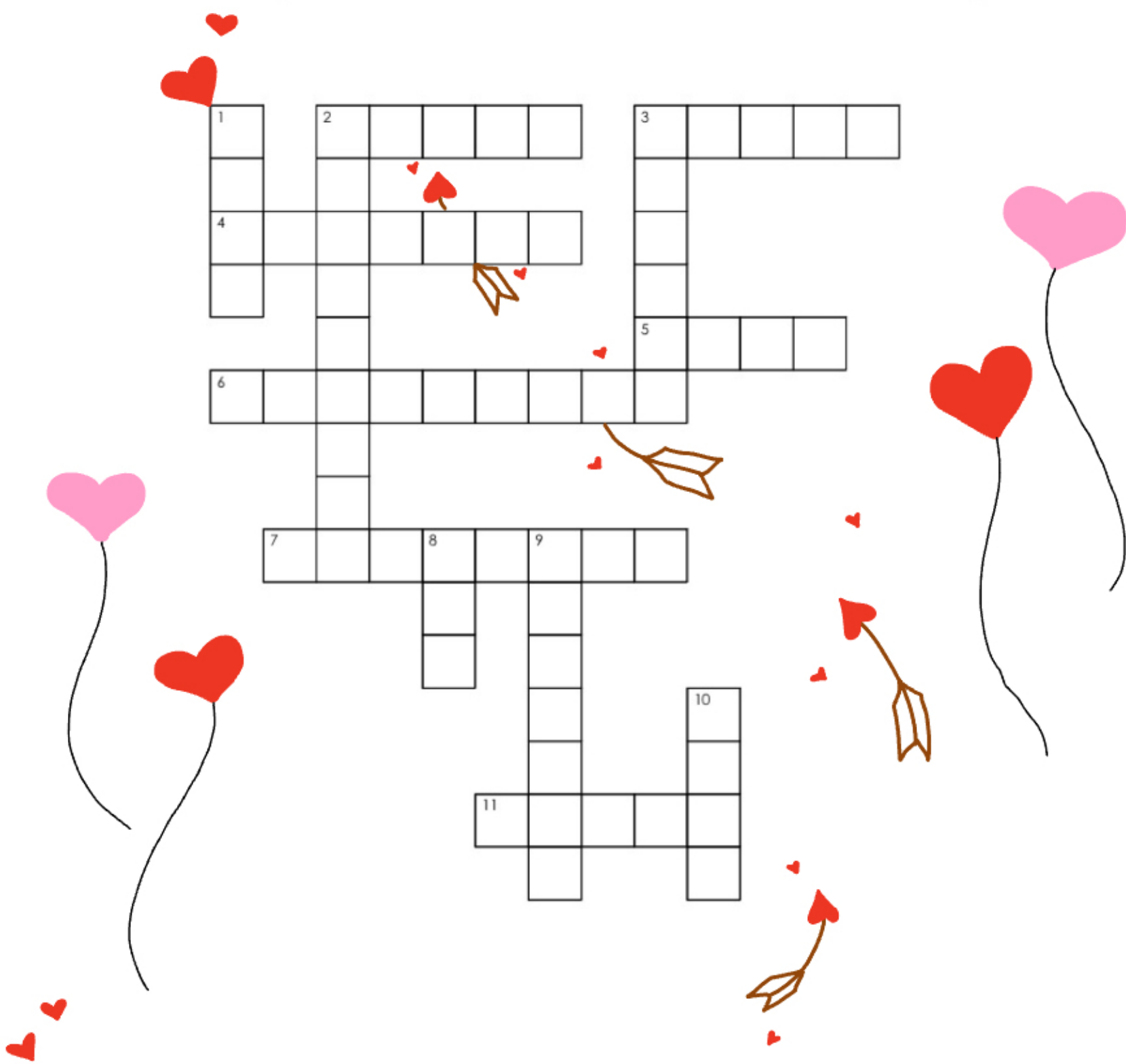
**What’s your take? Do you think the benefits are worth the risk?**



Image Courtesy of Google



February Crossword



Across: →

- 2. Person that shoots love arrows
- 3. Sweet treats
- 4. Plants you can give as a gift
- 5. Intense feeling of deep affection
- 6. "Will you be my\_\_\_\_\_?"
- 7. Second month of the year
- 11. Vital organ in the body that pumps blood

Down: ↓

- 1. Some give their valentine a \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Brown colored sweet treat
- 3. Two people in love are a \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. First color of the rainbow
- 9. Some people have a secret \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Couples go out on a \_\_\_\_\_



February Word Search

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

Find the following words in the puzzle.  
Words are hidden ➡ ⬇ and ↘ .

ADMIRER  
BALLOONS  
CANDY  
CARDS  
CHOCOLATE  
COLD  
COMFORT  
COUPLE



CUPID  
DATE  
FEBRUARY  
FLOWERS  
FUN  
GIFTS  
HAPPINESS  
HEARTS



LOVE  
MEMORIES  
PINK  
RED  
RELATIONSHIP  
SPECIAL  
SWEET  
TEDDY BEAR



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