



Vol. 89 No. 10 ISSN 1554-2440

DECEMBER 21, 2020



SCHOLASTIC

# News

EDITION  
5/6

BIG DEBATE

## Should Kids Be Allowed to Buy



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THESE VIDEOS!**  
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★ Find out what's hiding in junk food.

★ Explore the *Titanic*.

★ Become an expert on hurricanes.

**Some places in Mexico have banned kids from buying junk food. Should we do the same in the U.S.?**



# Should You Be Banned From Buying

# JUNK FOOD?

**AS YOU READ, THINK ABOUT:** What are ways that eating too much junk food can affect your health?

Imagine going to a store and not being allowed to buy a bag of chips. The reason? You're too young! That's what may happen in one state in Mexico, which recently banned the sale of unhealthy snacks and sugar-sweetened drinks to kids younger than 18. Several other Mexican states are considering passing similar laws.

The goal of these bans is to improve kids' health. Research shows that eating too much junk food can lead to obesity—the condition of being severely overweight. People with obesity are at higher risk for health problems such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

But some people argue that a ban on buying junk food isn't a good way to change kids' eating habits.

Should states in the U.S. also consider banning the sale of junk food to kids?

—by Alessandra Potenza

## What exactly is junk food?

It's food and drinks that are high in fat, salt, or sugar and have little nutritional value.

## WORDS TO KNOW

**calories** *noun, plural.* units that measure the amount of energy released by food in the body

**consequences** *noun, plural.* the results of an action





# YES

**Our love of junk food is contributing to a serious health crisis.**

**150 CALORIES**  
Number of calories in a snack-size bag of Doritos. It would take 1 hour and 20 minutes of walking to burn that many calories.\*

\*Activity time is for a 10-year-old who weighs 70 pounds. Sources: Frito-Lay; C.S. Mott Children's Hospital

# NO

**It's better to teach kids about making healthy choices.**

Many people point out that parents—not kids—buy most of the unhealthy foods that children consume. Also, critics argue that banning the sale of junk food to kids won't encourage them to eat healthier foods. In fact, it might have the opposite effect, says Sara Dimerman. She's an author and a psychologist who works with children and parents.

"If children believe they are being denied something, they want it more," Dimerman explains.

Many health experts say there's nothing wrong with eating a candy bar or cupcake once in a while. They say that rather than denying kids junk food, we should teach them how to make healthy choices. That includes learning how to read nutrition labels on food and drink packaging.

"We have to teach children *how* to think, not *what* to think," Dimerman says.

**WATCH A VIDEO**

**How to read nutrition labels**

**39 GRAMS**  
Amount of sugar in a 12-ounce can of Coke. That's more than 9 teaspoons of sugar.



**WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?**

Use evidence from the article to prepare for a class discussion. You can cast your vote at [scholastic.com/sn56](http://scholastic.com/sn56).

# 2020: YEAR IN REVIEW

This year will forever be remembered for the Covid-19 pandemic. But that wasn't the only news of 2020. Here's a look at some of the year's other big stories.



## A NEW PRESIDENT

**M**ore than 150 million Americans cast ballots for president this year—the most in U.S. history. That includes a record number of people who voted by mail. Counting all the votes took longer than usual, but Joe Biden was eventually **projected** to be the nation's 46th president. He and his vice president, Kamala Harris, are expected to be sworn in on January 20.

## BTS IS DYNAMITE!

**S**outh Korean K-pop group BTS already had countless fans around the world. But their popularity really went through the roof this year thanks to their massive hit “Dynamite.” The video for the song set a record by racking up more than 100 million YouTube views in its first 24 hours. In September, “Dynamite” became the group's first No. 1 hit in the U.S.





## STORMY WEATHER

This year saw an epic hurricane season. At least 30 major storms formed in the Atlantic Ocean—the most in recorded history. Twelve of them made landfall in the U.S. That's also the most ever.

There were so many major storms that the World Meteorological Organization ran out of names for them. The group names the first 21 big storms each year, but the list was used up in September. The agency used letters from the Greek alphabet, such as Beta and Delta, to name the rest.



Hurricane Laura tore through Lake Charles, Louisiana, in August.

### WORDS TO KNOW

**projected** *verb, past tense.* predicted or forecast based on current information or trends

**meteorological** *adjective.* related to weather and weather forecasting



On October 11, LeBron James led the Los Angeles Lakers to the National Basketball Association (NBA) championship. The victory ended the NBA's strangest season ever. Because of Covid-19, the league halted the season on March 11. The season restarted on July 30, after players and coaches moved to an isolation zone, or "bubble," in Walt Disney World in Florida. The NBA's plan to keep everyone safe worked. There were no reported cases of coronavirus in the bubble.

Less than three weeks after the Lakers' championship, Los Angeles had another reason to celebrate. On October 27, the Dodgers won the World Series for the first time since 1988.



# I CREATED A NEW LAW



Lily with Texas  
Governor Greg Abbott

Lily gives a speech to lawmakers.

Lily Kay

**Y**ou might think you're too young to change how our government works. That's not true. My name is Lily Kay, and I helped get a law passed in my home state of Texas.

Two years ago, when I was in fourth grade, I visited a bunch of national parks with my family. Under the Every Kid Outdoors program, fourth-graders and their families get into national parks for free.

That trip got me wondering if there was a similar program for kids to visit state parks in Texas. I found out there wasn't.

I decided to write a letter to my state representative, Morgan Meyer. I asked him to introduce a bill (a written plan for a new law) that would give fifth-graders and their families free passes to state parks. I decided on fifth-graders because we learn about our state history in fourth grade. If we got free passes the following year, we could visit the places we learned about, like the battlefield at San Jacinto.

Fortunately, Representative Meyer liked my idea and introduced the bill in the Texas House of Representatives. Last

year, he asked me to explain my proposal to other state lawmakers. I gladly accepted and gave speeches before two different committees.

Along the way, the bill had to be approved by the state's House of Representatives and Senate. Finally, in June 2019, Governor Greg Abbott signed the bill into law. It was a lot of work, but I kept thinking about the big difference this would make for families in Texas!

I'd like to encourage all kids to dream big—even if your idea seems impossible.



# A TITANIC TREASURE

**T**he *Titanic* was in danger. Inside the massive ship, crew member Jack Phillips leaned over a machine called a telegraph and tapped out a series of **distress** calls. One read “SOS,” which is code for “We’re in trouble.”

It was just after midnight on April 15, 1912. The *Titanic* was on its way from England to New York when it struck an iceberg and began to sink. Phillips hoped other ships would answer his calls for help.

In only a few hours, the *Titanic* sank to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. About 1,500 people died—including Phillips. But thanks to the

## WORD TO KNOW

**distress** *noun*, a state of danger or desperate need

telegraph, rescue ships located and saved hundreds of survivors who had escaped in lifeboats.

## Returning to the *Titanic*

The shipwreck was discovered in 1985. Since then, hundreds of explorers have visited the site and collected clothing, jewelry, and many other artifacts.

Now a company called RMS Titanic Inc. is planning to recover another treasure: the telegraph used to send those last desperate messages.

The company wants to send a remote-controlled vehicle called a submersible to recover the telegraph. It would then be displayed in a museum.

“It is a piece of history,” says Bretton Hunchak, the president of RMS

Titanic Inc. “It is the only reason that anyone from the *Titanic* was rescued.”

But some people think the *Titanic* should be left alone. They argue that removing items from the wreckage is disrespecting a gravesite. Others fear that removing the telegraph could damage the wreck, since it might require cutting a hole in the ship.

**What do you think?**

## ALMOST GONE

Some say it’s important to recover the *Titanic*’s telegraph before the ship completely rots away. These photos show what the telegraph looked like in 1912 and what it looks like now.



**THEN**



**NOW**

**WATCH  
A VIDEO**

Take a  
voyage to the  
*Titanic*!

MAP

# A New Year Around the World

Check out some of the different ways people around the world will ring in 2021!



To bring good fortune, some people in **MEXICO** hang a stuffed toy lamb on their front doors!

Some people in **ECUADOR** hide money around the house. They believe this will bring success in the coming year.

In **DENMARK**, a lot of people smash plates against friends' doors. The more mess, the luckier the new year will be!



Round items are thought to be lucky in the **PHILIPPINES**, so many people wear polka dots, eat grapes, and carry coins.



People in one city in **SOUTH AFRICA** get rid of the old to make room for the new by throwing furniture out the window!

- On which continent is the country where people hide money on New Year's Eve?
  - Europe
  - Africa
  - Asia
  - South America
- In which direction would you travel to go from the U.S. to the country where people smash plates?
  - northeast
  - northwest
  - southeast
  - southwest

## Should You Be Banned From Buying Junk Food? pages 2-3

- Junk food is usually food and drinks that are low in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - calories
  - nutritional value
  - salt
  - sugar
- Which is a main argument for banning kids from buying junk food?
  - Most junk food is bought by parents.
  - It's OK to eat junk food sometimes.
  - Kids need more control over what they eat.
  - The ban will help reduce obesity among kids.
- Sara Dimerman would likely agree that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - kids don't know what foods are good for them
  - banning junk food will end childhood obesity
  - kids should never eat junk food
  - kids can make healthy food choices

## 2020: Year in Review pages 4-5

- According to the article, which of the following was **NOT** a record set this year?
  - most votes cast for U.S. president
  - most votes cast for president by mail
  - most major storms formed in the Atlantic Ocean
  - most victories by an NBA team
- As it's used in the article, **projected** is closest in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - voted
  - won
  - predicted
  - protected
- Which of the following happened last?
  - "Dynamite" by BTS became the No. 1 song in the U.S.
  - The Dodgers won the World Series.
  - The Lakers won the NBA championship.
  - Hurricane Laura hit Louisiana.