

Advice to the IB Class of 2003

From the Class of 2002

Last year, students in trig & analyt were asked on a couple of occasions to write about what things had been giving them difficulty and what they thought would help or had helped. Excerpts from their answers comprise the first part of this paper.

Then, as part of their second semester exam, they were asked to answer the following question:

Think back on your experiences in school this year. What advice would you give to a friend who is a year behind you and is about to take the same courses you have just completed? Your advice can address any aspect of life in IB, but must be basically serious and reasonable. If you choose, you may write your response in the form of a letter.

Following the first section, you will find their answers. They have been edited only slightly, often to remove typos, and occasionally to temper some statements that might have been taken more seriously by the reader than they were originally intended to be. The responses of the four sophomores in the course last year are at the end, and their remarks apply more specifically to sophomores enrolled in the course now.

What works (and doesn't work) for me...

Student "teaching" best displayed through student board work allows learning not to happen just for that student but the entire class. Sure, it may be embarrassing at times, but hey if it embarrasses you then maybe you might just want to learn it, so next time you get called to the board you can do the work flawlessly.

Take time to figure out what you don't know and ask how to do it. Make sure to take retests to help your grade.

My best test grade came because I took some time to study the night before the test. But it wasn't major hard studying, since we'd been over the stuff in class. It was enough so that I understood the concepts and was able to apply them. I had to take the initiative to study, though.

When the teacher asks if you understand what's happening, don't keep quiet just because you're lost. You may think that it seems that you weren't paying attention or just have no clue as to where to start. But much of the material builds on itself, and if you don't get it at the start, you may be left in the dust. If you don't understand something, there are probably at least three other people in the class who don't get it either. So ask.

The reason I have had trouble with some topics is lack of study. Really lack of study has been my problem overall for the class. Because I didn't study these topics, which turned out to be pretty important, I had major trouble understanding most of all the following topics.

The breakthroughs that I had this year were through studying, or through sitting down and examining a topic with friends.

Finally after doing practice problems in an algebra book, looking over the rules of <topic>, and giving the subject time to soak in — I understood and was able to do <that topic>. Some concepts take more time and practice for them to click with me.

I found that I had trouble memorizing exact values of sine, cosine, and tangent of the key angles used in class and the equalities involving the functions and relationships among the functions. This problem was solved using flashcards. With time, I was able to remember the numerous formulas. I think this really helped me prepare for the test and helped me when I worked on a lot of the homework.

Every night <student> and I get on the phone and go through every problem one by one until it is all finished. I like doing this because I have one on one with someone so I can ask as many questions as possible.

My only problem has been the lack of school I have been attending. I do know that this is my own problem, but I cannot go back and fix it.

Study sessions after school, where we come in and work problems with the teacher for like 30 minutes and ask questions about things we don't understand help a lot because sometimes it's hard to come up with questions about what you don't know (you don't even know where to start). If you have a problem to solve, you can go from there and say what you don't understand.

My refusal to make extensive notes was problematic.

<Topic> was taught when I was <out of town>, and I never quite picked it up.

It's essential to memorize the formulas and recognize how to apply them to solve problems. It's also important to recognize the special symbols such as what Tan stands for or what \in means. One last thing — by double-checking myself before I turn something in, I can eliminate a lot of unnecessary error.

I experienced a lot of breakthroughs when I actually read the book. Who knew? It really helped to follow step by step and see how everything is done. Of course, that's done on the board in class, but I think it gets reinforced if I read it. Also, it helped when I asked questions on the homework in the morning before class, so I could at least try to do it myself.

It's a problem when we set things [assignments] aside too much and never get to them. By the time we get to them it's too late and the test is there.

The only true difficulties are the ones that we choose to neglect. Once you begin to ignore a problem it only gets worse and worse, until what you have on your hands is the Great Wall of China, and you are clueless of where to go. Address your difficulties and ASK for help. "Obstacles only appear when you take your eyes off the goal!"

Though most people think that mathematics has to do with adding simple numbers or using some formula, it's more than just that. I did not realize that until I started this course. However, I did not realize the intensity of the course until that second day I came.

To solve my problems in these areas, I did a few things. First, after every math class, I would look over my notes and start my homework right away. However, I would only finish half of the problems. The rest of the problems I would do the next day. This would help me remember the formulas or techniques I just learned. Also, I looked through the book after every math class to help elucidate the chapter or lesson. These are a few suggestions that I have found to be helpful. However, the breakthrough was the review of notes every day. This allowed me to repeat what I learned and what it meant. This saved me hours on homework. Because the material was fresh in my mind every day, I was able to perform the homework with ease.

There has been one principal non-academic area that I have always found troubling: helping others to understand. With respect to this, I feel that I have been considerably strengthened. I cannot tell you how many hours I have spent on the telephone this past semester discussing the homework with others teaching others the concepts and formulas, and, by doing that, coming to a better understanding of them for myself. As a result, I have come to the realization that two heads truly are better than one. I know that there are down sides to this. With cooperative learning on any level there will be those who take advantage of it, making it full-fledged cheating rather than any form of learning. I do not say this in arrogance or superiority, for I, too, have sometimes fallen to the level of asking "what?" rather than "why?" or "how?" Yet for those who use it properly, it is an excellent tool, motivating us to teach ourselves rather than having it forced down our throats so that we may regurgitate it later.

I dedicate this paragraph to the people who made it possible for me to grasp things like the identities. The only reason I began to understand the identities was to have a discussion about them with my closest of all my friends. Problems only work so well, but for it to stick, have an argument of *why* you would do something and you will remember.

Algebra reviews every once in a while help. I've helped some people with homework, and they seemed to have trouble with basic algebra.

One thing that has really helped me is doing problems on the board. That way we can get more done and the people who are explaining them can learn through the process. Group study sessions would also help a great deal so that students can get help after school.

Working in pairs to demonstrate problems lets us have practice at communicating what we did and gives us a better chance to catch any mistakes that we make.

Once I realized the difference between \tan^{-1} and \cot , I really understood the identities chapter well. I did well with the identities and proof afterwards, too, because of the realization of this difference. Other people may have had more of a problem with the identities, but most of what I saw was a misunderstanding of algebra, not trig.

I face the problems of time and concentration. But if I work at something long enough and figure out the problem I am able to understand it better and it sticks more in my brain.

The only problems I have had have been because of my lack of studying and completion of homework on time.

If there was one problem I did have, it was with being able to work with both inverse and regular functions, but after working with the teacher one on one for about 15 minutes, I began to understand it. I honestly feel that when I do my homework and study, I hardly have any problem in trig.

My problems were my fault for not paying attention. It was mostly me not studying. To help with my mental deficiency, I went for help after school.

Being in school when concepts are taught really helps.

For the most part IB has truly been a great learning experience, but for me it has also been the most depressing time of my life. I suggest that those who don't like it evaluate really if they want to be here or to leave. To stay through, one must have great motivation and a purpose to being here. My purpose is what has kept me here for this long!

Board work forces me to learn the material for myself, on the chance that I will be asked to put a problem on the board.

Trigonometry can be difficult for students who don't have a strong grasp of algebra.

One of the main things I regret about the first semester is not being smart enough to do *all* my homework. There are certain things in IB that will kill you, and this is one of them.

Advice to those who follow...

The best advice I have to give you this year is to stay organized and work hard. With the large amount of work you all have this year, staying organized is essential to your success. If you are still in the IB program, you probably already work hard, but you must stay on task. Having the drive to do your work is probably the most important part of IB

Other advice I have to offer you is to make sure to have fun whenever possible, but not in detriment to your grades. Make the best use of your time. If you want to spend time watching TV every once in a while, that's OK, but make sure you do something remotely exciting every two weeks or more if possible. There's no sense in sacrificing your grades and your sleep because you were not effective with your time.

One last piece of advice I can give you is to do your best. Most people are afraid to do their best because there are no excuses. If you slack off because you do not think you can do it, that's worse than failing. And, chances are, if you try, you will succeed. You are all talented individuals; you would not be here if you were not. Trust your talents.

Michael Machata

I know that you have a lot of questions about the upcoming year. You will be officially IB (very exciting). There are three things that you need to remember. The AP exam will scare you, and it should. Keep up with your homework. Don't say things about people if you can't say it to them.

The AP exam is important and for those not in art you also have an IB test in psychology. Remember this always as you study throughout the year. This counts for your diploma. The AP is cumulative; it doesn't help a lot to pass it if you wait to learn (or at least try to learn) before the exam.

Homework is important. It always has been, but this year it's even more so. Doing your homework will not only help with grades, but with your understanding. With understanding you also get test grades. It's a no-lose situation if you do your homework. Sometimes time management is good, too.

This is going to be your third year with these people. Be nice and try to get to know people that you never talk to. You might be pleasantly surprised. Don't talk about other people if you can't say it to them. A lot of feelings can be hurt and a friend lost if you gossip too much.

Rachel Desamero

Dear Meat for the Grinder,

I hope you enjoyed last year, because last year was your first and last easy year. Your life is going to change; for the better or the worse, you will change. Some people will see this letter and say that it's not true and the junior year is going to be easy. These people are your non-procrastinators (yes, we have a few). But I know that you know the majority of IB students are procrastinators and we dig our own grave. It's for those like me I write this for. Use this as a guiding light in a swirl of darkness known as "busy work." The term "busy work" as "we" know is the term use for work that we see as pointless and is not worthy of being done. But let me tell you something, if you wanna pass it will be done. All of your teachers (except Ms. Frisbie) give you it. Just do it, and your quality of life will improve. I believe this is the most important part of being a junior in IB, but not the way to survive. If you wanna survive, read the next paragraph.

The key to survival will be easier if you chose to take physics. The key is to have fun with your teachers. Find ways to create lasting relationships with them, it's worth it. "How?" you ask; easy, make fun of them and be sarcastic and accepting of them. Remember they are people and they have feelings. Don't make them cry by going overboard.

Are you ready? I can't wait to be in English III with you, fresh meat for the grinder, you can make it if you help each other.

Good luck.

Brandon Harrison

Some may lead you to believe that one year is harder than any other. I am writing to tell you that I don't think it is.

Don't panic, just take your junior year as another step in your development. Yes, the classes require more responsibility, but if you just apply yourselves as you have thus far then you will have no problem.

As a proverb said once, "If you do what you've always done, then you'll get what you've always gotten." So if you apply yourself, you will succeed; if you don't, you will struggle.

I didn't apply myself as much as some others, and thus didn't do as well. I just urge you to study, read, and do your homework, and to not procrastinate, because now is when procrastination will come back to haunt you.

I have faith that you will continue to succeed and hope you have the courage to do so.

David Vogt

As a survivor in the IB class of 2002, I feel it is my duty to guide you in your pursuance of the illustrious IB Diploma. Pertaining to your junior year, I have two suggestions. Do not simply read, but live by these words of wisdom.

First, never panic, despite the circumstances you're in. To give legitimacy to my advice, I quote Douglas Adams' *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*: "Don't panic." Why I tell you this is because panicking causes you to lose focus of your objectives, which only prompts more problems.

Second, learn how to do most math operations in your head. This is a timesaving and infinitely useful skill. If you learn to do basic math and a few others, like roots, exponents, logarithms, and simple algebra mentally, you will be amazed at the basic power you will command over your peers lacking these skills.

Most of all, never lose your drive or yourself. At all times hold true to yourself, or you won't be able to survive the coming year.

James (Ricky) McKee

You are already a tenth grader in the IB program. You may think you're halfway through, but your troubles are just beginning. In order to be successful, when times are tough, don't do what I did. You must S.T.O.P. and learn from my mistakes.

The first key to success is Sleep. Sleep is essential to function. I found myself sleeping in the afternoon because I was so tired from school, and, then, waking up at 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. to do my work. I got more and more tired, and the likelihood of doing my work well, or doing it all, became small. It's a vicious cycle which you must never start.

The second most difficult step of S.T.O.P. is the T — Time management. Procrastination plagues IB students. This is a disease you must avoid. Work on projects ahead of time and do homework the night it is received. Work will not build up, and it will truly seem as if IB is not that difficult after all.

The third key is Orientation with people, places, and work. It will keep you in touch and stop you from feeling lost, which is easy in an advanced course. Understand your teachers, their moods, and their rules. Discover your perfect work environment. If doing work in your bed makes you fall asleep, find another place. Finally, look over your notes after each class and even read chapters when they're assigned. It can save you hours the night before a test.

Finally, Plan ahead. Procrastination is *not* the key to success. If you wait until the last minute, nothing ever gets done right.

Follow my plan, and you will be a model student. Each of the four keys is crucial. You must S.T.O.P. and think about every one before and during eleventh grade.

Brittany Melson

If I could give you advice on three things about junior year they would be these: really learn the stuff, fill out your CAS stuff when you do it, and be nice to those around you when you are stressing out because chances are they are stressed out also. If I had not only heard this stuff at the beginning of the year, but really understood how important they were, I might have done them, and believe me, it helps a lot.

The reasons for these things are as follows: you need to really learn the stuff because at the end of the year you get to have fun taking and preparing for up to 4 AP tests as well as two days of IB Psychology testing. As you approach these tests you become aware of all the things you don't know and how you wish you had learned them when you were supposed to. Then from the AP tests you start to fear the IB tests because they equal a diploma, or in some cases no diploma. Learning the stuff when you're supposed to and not just doing it to get the grades really helps you on the tests and helps your stress level.

You should also fill out your CAS hours when you do them because it becomes a pain in the last week of school to try to figure out all your hours and fill out the paperwork, and even harder to find the sponsor to the event that happened 3-6 months ago. In the long run filling out one or two papers occasionally is a lot easier than filling out 20 in a week when you need to be studying.

Last, you should always be nice to people, but especially when you are stressing out about work (which you will), try not to take it out on others because really they have the same work as you, and chances are they are also stressed out. So in taking out your stress on others you might just be stressing out someone who is already stressed out, like you. It just helps to be understanding and try to stay calm. We're in IB, we're all in it together so we should help each other out and be understanding.

Tina VanNocker

If you are reading this, then obviously, you are already in the IB program. This letter isn't meant in any way to be negative towards the IB Program, you, or anyone. I know that you've been through a lot these past two years, or at least, you think you have. However, the truth is that you've been through and experienced nothing. The past two years were meaningless. This year you are a different person and you begin a new life, officially in the IB Program. The following is some advice you should seriously consider... take it to heart, if you will.

You took a test in January of your eighth grade year. You not only passed that test, but surpassed the scores of possibly hundreds of others. In doing so, you've proved yourself worthy of one of the most formidable educational challenges in Polk County, and also one of the most worthwhile journeys that can be taken in not only this county or even the state of Florida, but these United States and even the world. Though you passed that test, you still had to go through 2 years of preparation for the path you are about to travail. The question now is can you take it? The question of whether or not you are capable was answered long ago. Now you must ask yourself if you can handle all of what is coming to you. It is a question not of your intelligence, but of the circumstances surrounding you and your will to succeed, and of your own faith in yourself. There may come a time when the tasks before you or life surrounding you or some combination of both have drawn from you every last ounce of strength.

Though there is cause for concern, there is no need for alarm, for at such times, it would be perfectly all right, and even highly recommended that you rely on the strength flowing from the loved ones around you. In doing so, it would only be a matter of time until your own strength returned, and you were able to continue of your own power (if it is really even true that one ever does anything of one's own power in the IB program). However, other situations may arise that you must anticipate and question yourself for now. Why did you come to this program? Did you arrive of your own power, or were you coerced or maybe even forced into coming?

If you did not make the conscious decision to attempt the IB program, then you must ask yourself yet another question. How much do you believe in yourself? The issue of your faith in your own ability to succeed is of the utmost importance. At times, though you may weaken, though you may even lose your will to continue in the program, you can always rely on loved ones to help you. However, even shadows of doubts of yourself now can escalate into major problems later on, for at times, you may have no one else's faith in yourself but your own, though in fact quite the opposite is true. Dr. Vetter, Dr. Katz, and all of your teachers most likely will have the utmost faith in your abilities, but when it comes to the issue of faith, only yours matters. If you do not believe in yourself, then you cannot excel in this program. A lack of faith would invariably lead to a loss of will, eventually followed by the loss of strength. If you find yourself in this situation, you need to

talk to your loved ones, but even more importantly, talk to yourself, for the solution is within you. If you find that you cannot come upon the solution to your problem of faith, you may seriously want to consider leaving this program. Also, if you find that after a period of time circumstances have caused in you a loss of faith, devote what energy you can to finding it again, for it is the backbone of all you will do in the program.

This program either has or eventually will have tested you in every area of your life. It will probe your intelligence, try your strength, bear on your faith and spirituality, and tear at your social abilities. It's safe to say that most likely, in some manner or another, this program will touch every other aspect of your life. You must now ask yourself if your life will allow such an intrusion. To conclude on a different plane of thinking, one can think of the program as a magnifying glass. It will focus the most prominent of either of two things in your life among others... either happiness or unhappiness. Please take that into consideration.

Final thoughts that someone else said much better:

"This is the foundation of success nine times out of ten — having confidence in yourself and applying yourself with all your might to your work." *Thomas E. Wilson*

"When unhappy, one doubts everything; when happy, one doubts nothing." *Joseph Rowe*

"It's not good enough to be good if you have the ability to be better." *Alberta Lee Cox*

"I have measured out my life with coffee spoons."
Thomas Stearns Eliot —don't let this be you—
Himmler Michel

This year will be difficult. You will be very stressed with all of your reading in Mr. Goss' class and all of the books Ms. Smith assigns. Those of you who are organized will probably do better. You won't have to worry about being surprised or have to prepare as much for tests.

Keeping a trig and history notebook are very important. Take notes on what the teachers say and write, then place them in order. This will help on trig notebook tests and can raise your grade. It also helps studying in the classes, because most of what is said is on the test. The important thing is not to lose hope even when there are 10 things due at once. Start with the first one due, because you can't get them all done in one day. Many papers, to get a decent grade, you need to work on it a little longer than two hours. Take it over time because all that will happen is you will get ten other assignments due that day and you will just have a lower grade.

We all procrastinate, but at least keep your notes together and get homework done before school. Once you worry about homework and assignments due you will have plenty more to worry about. All that happens is you get stressed, discouraged, and your work suffers. It is not a good thing!! It will be all right if you stay calm and make sure to stay organized.

Brenton Kollinger

4 August 2003

My beloved sister, Elizabeth:

Mere words cannot ever hope to express my admiration and acclamation I have for you, my precious sister, on successfully making it through your grueling freshman and sophomore years here in the International Baccalaureate Program. I know you have suffered, and understand more than you will ever know the stress and hardship you have endured for the sake of your characteristic excellence of academia. I have heard, and listened to your cries of exhaustion and have dried your tears when the pain and torment of an insomnia-wracked body became too much for even your gentle, yet stalwart spirit, for I, all too well, remember the grinding-stone that was my first years in “pre-IB.”

Next year you will embark into the forbidding lands, for next year you are officially of the IB status. I make not one single false pretension; the next year will single-handedly be the most difficult of all the years in which you will be in IB, but I beg you not to turn back now. It may, nay, it will seem to be one titanic mass of extra homework, and the severity of your studied subjects’ structures will appear to triple at least one-hundred fold, yet there are several things of which I have learned through my personal experiences that might serve you well in keeping you sane. Unluckily for me, I learned much of this far too late, and for this did I suffer in torment. I pray that in imparting the wisdom of hindsight unto you, you will not be forced to become a diamond unwillingly.

The single, most insurmountable truth in the schema of my advice is this: I have already told you that the year of your juniority will be the most difficult of all, so do not go running headfirst into oblivion, as you will only smear your cranium on the brick wall on the other side of the fog. Throughout the year, concentrate upon the mountain-peaks, upon which exists the guiding demon within your self. Ask the unity of your heart and mind within the whole of your being if sacrificing yourself upon the altar of (m)others’ judgments fully attains what it is you search for within your heart. It is perfectly acceptable, no matter what (m)others say, to receive “B’s” and enjoy life with the friends you make here at the Program, than striving for “A’s” and denying yourself the essence of what it is to be an adolescent. It is wonderful, and, in my fraternal opinion fully within your capabilities, if you somehow do chance to succeed with flying colors, but do not judge yourself too harshly if you do not measure up to such expectations.

I do not imagine that this will be much of a problem for you. I know that you have always understood the innate goodness of eclecticism and balance, and will use this to your advantage in every way suitable to your own purposes. I warn you simply because I knew this only in the waning years of my IB days, and I would never desire for you to dwell in the personal Hell of doubt and self-criticism for having denied yourself your human aspects.

Your loving brother,

Greg Saari (a.k.a. Lucifer)

The IB program is not an easy one, but it is doable. There are many lessons that you must learn (and I don’t just mean academically). In case you have not figured them out yet, I have written three of them that I consider important below. They are as follows: time management, teacher talk, and fun.

Time management is a skill that some IB students learn in one year, and others learn in four years. I cannot stress the importance of this enough. *Do not* wait until the last minute to do a large assignment. Yeah, sure — the first all-nighter might seem cool enough, and you might not feel tired at all because you’re running on adrenaline or caffeine. But mark my words, if you keep it up it will catch up to you and you will get tired. If you learn to master time management (not just with large assignments but also with everyday homework) it will make IB life easier. Plus you’ll have more time for fun things.

Now it’s time for teacher talk. Believe it or not, it is sometimes helpful to talk to your teachers or to listen when they talk to you. Stay awake sometimes during class; you might just learn something. And if you are concerned about your grade in a class, ask the teacher (sometime before or after class) if you may see your grade. Teachers tend to be more willing to help students that seem to care about their grades.

And last but not least, have fun. As much work as IB is, if you don’t throw in some fun here and there you might turn into a crotchety old man (or woman).

P. S.: Be good to your fellow classmates. You are each other’s source of help throughout these years. The IB program does not get easier. If you’re in such a program, wouldn’t you rather have friends instead of enemies?

Debbie Renelus

As you are now leaving the pre-IB stage of your schooling and are entering actual IB life, you have an awful lot ahead of you. If you are lucky and are currently organized and studious, you will do fine, but if not, you are in for an experience. Your life will change next year in school work relationships and important exams that do not concern your immediate grades, so take heed.

The junior year in IB is not easy by any shape or form; however, if you stay on task it is fine. Here are my suggestions and then I’ll leave you alone. First, get a weekly system for homework and stick to it. With many extra papers and portfolios added in, you need to be able to handle the everyday stuff. Next, stay friends. Our class has broken off into groups and is almost hateful to each other. Do not do this. You need each other. Finally, do your CAS hours and keep up with the paperwork, because you need to not have (like some of my classmates) 150 hours left going into the summer after your junior year.

Please take this advice and keep working. You have made it this far, and you belong here, so do not let anyone tell you otherwise. This will be your hardest year, but it is also a fun year. And, hey, be nice to Ms. Frisbie and she will be a great teacher. [Editor’s note: he asked for extra credit for this remark. He didn’t get it.]

Darren Vogel

Hey Junior!

So you think you are ready to become a real IB student? Well it is quite an honor to be in such a position. But in order to survive this rigorous program, I have a few tips in order to help you out. So pay attention.

The biggest problem an IB student will face is oneself. Often you will find your social life much more appealing than that essay you have to write, and thus put it off, Try not to. The History essay on communism is a good example from this year. We had 2 months to complete the assignment, which included the reading of a novel as well as researching a nation and applying the novel to the revolution of our chosen country. Many of us waited until the night before to start it. I, however, realized the importance of this assignment and started it a week in advance. It seems to have worked out well, since I received a decent mark on the assignment, whereas some of my peers did not. So budget your time. It hurts to not watch TV and talk to friends all the time, but in order to do well it most likely needs to occur.

Another little aspect that needs to be monitored is the little cheating rings. I would strongly recommend not indulging yourself in it. Now that you are in IB it is strongly frowned upon. Malpractice on anything IB can result in dismissal from the program and invalidation of your IB diploma. It would be a shame to waste all of the time spent on getting here and blowing it for a small assignment. History workbooks definitely need to be done by yourself, as I know for sure. Doing all your work yourself is definitely a good thing. I strongly recommend it.

Well, my dear friend, I wish you all the best of luck. IB certainly is a place of champions, and even though everyone may be a champion, the only true winner is the one who comes away as pure as possible.

Do Enjoy,

Kurt Stefanie

You have completed your two years within the Pre-IB program, and you stand upon the precipice preparing to leap into the unknown — the official IB program. This is a momentous step within your education. As an individual who has made this transition, I will offer you certain pieces of advice that may make your transition easier. Your life will be different because of IB, yes, but that doesn't mean it will be worse than it is now. In my experience, the IB program will make your life better by showing you how much you are really capable of. Success is possible, and if you try you can not only attain it, but be a better person.

The first piece of advice I offer you is a simple one. Forget everything you've heard from juniors or seniors about life within the IB. Many students have a way of exaggerating its difficulties because of their own lack of determination. Some may try to frighten you by embellishing the amount of work that you will have to do. Yes, the IB is hard and demanding, but if you keep a positive outlook in your mind, you will do all right. However, if you expect the IB program to be exceedingly

difficult for you, it most certainly will be. Remember that you are in control of what happens to you in IB, so your thoughts are going to shape what happens to you.

The second deals with the academic aspects of the IB program. Many students who become overwhelmed with work in the program begin to procrastinate compulsively. Some begin to turn in no work at all or very late. It is true that your grade in a course will not affect your getting the IB diploma: the diploma is awarded upon IB test scores taken the in spring of your junior and senior years. However, not doing the work will affect your GPA. Most colleges will be impressed with your work in IB, of course, but if your GPA is weighted to a 2.0, your road to college will not be a smooth one. Do your work, and do your own work. By taking zeros or forging the work of others you only set yourself up for failure.

Perhaps the most important piece of advice I can give to you is to remember the value of your friends. You are stuck with your group for another two years. You must learn to love your classmates and forgive them for crossing you when they do not intend to. There are too many shared classes, shared projects, and shared lunch tables to hate others in your class. There is no reason to embitter yourself over the foibles of those around you, for you are just as flawed as they are. A time will come when you will have to depend on your classmates either academically or morally, and spite could seriously hamper this.

Finally, you must never give up. Sometimes you will want to leave IB and never look back, but you are already half way through, and it will seem like it is over in no time flat. Times will be tough. Nevertheless, if you live life one day at a time, fall back and regroup when necessary, and never give in to the temptation to leave IB, crawl into a dark corner, and die, you will make it. IB is difficult, but so is life. You must learn to deal with that at some time or another.

I hope that my advice has helped you and will help you with your time in the IB. Best regards and well wishes for a successful education,

Matt Townsend

The 11th grade in some ways can be considered a continuation of the previous two years of IB. You take the same basic classes (e.g., Science, Math, History, Foreign Language, and English). However there are added requirements in the 11th grade — a psychology course if you did not take art and Theory of Knowledge. Even in the basic classes that you've taken before, there are major changes.

Science to most IB students will be your most challenging class, especially for people taking Chemistry and Biology. This is due to the many hours outside of class you need to invest to finish your lab work and the difficulty I have studying for chemistry tests. I estimate half of the time I use studying deals with Chemistry. If you do take chemistry, there is great flexibility in when to turn in your labs. However I would highly recommend not putting the labs off. Consider, there are on average 6 labs per 9 weeks. Each lab requires 2-3 hours. That translates into 12 hours that if you procrastinate will need to be finished in 1-2 days. Also I would highly advise you if taking chemistry to buy an AP Chemistry practice book. (My recommendation would be Cliff Notes AP review.) This book will let you grasp all major concepts Mrs. Bond covers and also prepares you very well for her tests and labs.

You will see major differences in teaching styles in math, English, and history. Some people will respond better and some will respond worse. I cannot point to any changes from this year's math teacher since I did not have the teacher who replaced Mr. Woods. However, Trigonometry is in many ways a more organized learning environment. In history, the opposite is true. Mr. Goss does know enormous quantities of U.S. history but the class notes can be considered anything but organized. It is imperative to check other classes to see if the teacher forgot anything. English will be more McAllister like than Graffamesque.

This next point addresses French students only. Eleventh grade French is dramatically different than 10th grade French. Instead of speaking just 20% of the time, you will speak French 98% of the time. Brush up on speaking skills and doing the large amounts of homework she gives you will improve your grade tremendously.

In psychology be prepared for classwork like what you had in 9th grade government. That means vocabulary, review worksheets, etc. Getting a good grade in the class depends on doing the classwork, and reading the chapters. This will allow you to do adequately on the test. Also in reviewing for the AP exam in the spring, buy the "College-Psychology" cram sheet on sale at Books a Million. Even though the sheet costs \$4.00, it has many essential facts to the psychology course. I reviewed the sheet before the exam, and half the answers could be found on the sheet. This sheet is especially useful in biological areas of psychology such as the structure of the ear and brain.

Theory of Knowledge is also a new addition. If you have Mr. Graffam as your teacher for this class, expect more in-depth discussions on topics such as truth,

knowledge, etc. These topics seem abstract but if you just say what you critically think about the topics, and do the papers and projects adequately, you will be fine. Next year shows many changes and the following year will have many more. However, those changes can be manageable. I hope this advice letter has helped.

Chi Zhang

Well my junior year was definitely something I will never forget. So many things happen during this year, and it's especially important because it's your first year of IB. In journeying through your junior year in IB there are a few things that I would give you as advice: first don't put things off until the last minute, second sleep as much as possible, and lastly don't take everything so seriously — leave time to relax.

I first tell you not to PROCRASTINATE because if you do I guarantee sooner or later things will snowball on you. Waiting until the night before to do an English essay, trig portfolio, CAS hours or a lab is not a good idea. The more you keep putting things off the more things will pile up for you in the long run. I've known people that this has happened to and they end up staying at home trying to finish their homework and meanwhile they're missing all the new material. It's funny, because IB is the only place where people actually stay at home to do homework, and use that as an excuse. In essence don't dig your own grave here, and believe me you can manage to schedule your time to get everything done and still have a life.

Next I advise you to get enough sleep. If you don't sleep at home, you'll probably end up sleeping in class and missing all the material anyway. See the correlation with procrastination. You could have just stayed home and done that. The point is that you come to school to learn and you should try to learn things. Hey, if you can sleep through class and still manage to pass (like <student>), more power to you. Oh yeah, just in case you were wondering, there is no such thing as catching up on sleep. Theoretically if you don't get enough sleep on one night you only need to get a normal 8 hours the next night to "catch up" and that's it.

Finally I advise you to relax and take things in stride. Believe me you can get stressed out so easily, and don't get me wrong — try your hardest. Just don't push yourself to the point of no return. Take time out after you come home for about an hour to sit and have a snack, or on the weekends go do something. It may seem that all your teachers pile everything on you all at once and no end is in sight. If you manage your time and get enough sleep you will conquer your junior year. Don't try to rush things either; things will come in time. Oh yeah, and towards the end of the year when we, the Class of 2002, have left and you become "seniors," don't let premature senioritis kick in because you still have another year left. Now as I close I just want to say enjoy your time here because your time in high school is coming to an end and you'll never have that time back.

Roshni Patel

JUNIOR YEAR FOR DUMMIES

Hey, you're reading this, so you do the math ... dummy.

To the incoming ~~insignificant and inferior beings~~ Juniors,

Well we all know how hard Sophomore Year was, and I congratulate you on passing... oh wait, silly me. I forgot sophomore year was the easiest. So if you couldn't handle that, my first words of advice are head for the hills, young ones. That's right, welcome to Junior Year.

Now to make this easy, I'm going to let you in on all the stuff that you need to know about your Junior Year. Now, I know you are used to not doing any homework whatsoever since not much is required in your Sophomore Year, well wake up and smell the tear gas, kiddies. My first problem was, and still is until this very day, the day before school lets out for that oh-so-lovely thing called summer, was that I never woke up from my summer daze. Procrastinating, mainly on projects and papers, will get to you and beat you around worse than the time I stuck a banana down my pants and jumped in the monkey cage. And if worst comes to worst, or normal for me when I was a Junior, you can usually toss some work in along with a nap or two throughout the day... except in Mr. Goss' class!

[Editor's note: the following paragraph should be read with the understanding that the writer is less of a Gossian than a Graffamite. Take it with a ~~grain~~ boulder of salt.]

Mr. Goss, he's one bad motha (shut yo mouth!). What? I'm just talking about Mr. Goss. Anyways... do work in there, and you might as well ask him to use it for toilet paper because you will never see it again. And as far as sleeping in there... this is where it seems odd... only sleep if you're sitting in the front row of class. See, because of all the "nose candy" Mr. Goss buys from Ms. Smith, his sight is distorted and he doesn't even notice the front row of students sitting right in front of him sleeping until he starts walking around. However, if you were like me and sat in the back, he'll go all the way back there to wake you up. Also, if he calls on you, the answer is always either "TED-DAY!" or "The Second Great Awakening." Trust me, just go with it. Try not to take everything he says too dirty, especially his stories and all of his references to S&M. And I quote, if you were wondering what to get him for a birthday gift, "Sticks and stones may break my bones but whips and chains excite me."

Now that we've discussed SuperGoss, on to the Bearded Wonder. That's right, Mr. Graffam is back this year in a steel cage free-for-all match that we like to call Theory of Knowledge. This class wasn't exactly my forte, then again none of them were. Just come up with cool words like "Paradigmable" and look confused a lot and you'll do just fine.

Trig! Now that's a fun class. Ms. Frisbie is one the coolest teachers you'll have this year and I'm not saying that because she's grading this either). For the most part, this class is fairly easy, but if you're like me the

homework will kill you. My favorite thing in here was probably the partner test and all the group work we've done and then go to the board with it, because not only do you receive help with your work to see where you're going wrong, but you get to write on the board and come up with cool group names like "The Shish Kabobs" and repeatedly write "MooOOOOooooOOOoo!" and "We're pretty" on the board. Probably the worst part about that class is tucking in your shirt, because seriously that is one cool class.

Your other cool teacher this year will be Mr. Keers if you were smart enough to pick physics. In Mr. Keers we trust. Don't let his sarcasm fool you, he really does care about you... no, really... I'm serious... stop laughing at me... that's just rude. Anyhow, now the physics labs are not playing with nukes and lasers as many of you have hoped but at one point you do get to play with a machine that launches metal balls pretty good distance. Mr. Keers will help you with whatever you have a question with as long as its not something like "Uh what's the variable for gravity? F or G?" So if you do ask that, get a camera because he'll give you a look funnier than watching a dolphin get caught in a fishing net. Wait... that's not funny. OK, funnier than a one-armed puppet show. Oh, and don't let those paper towel rolls go to waste once they're empty: recycle them into a club.

Erm... well that's about it I suppose. Now beware, for these are days. You are now living in an age in which your class will undergo a civil war and be tom to become a Gossian or a Graffamite. So, when you've lost all hope remember to pack your IB Survival Gear: hypodermic needles loaded with cappuccino, a box of tissues, and a nice soft desk to ~~sleep in~~ diligently work in.

Your ~~God King Senior Advisor~~ SUPREME BEING Senior Advisor,

Robert Teves

Well my friend, you are about to enter into hectic year filled with too many deadlines to meet, CAS hours to fill, and head on encounters with various teachers' dictatorial management (it's their way or the highway). One of the important changes this year that the teachers scare you the entire year with is the AP tests. From the first day of school they warn you of the dreaded test. And let me tell you, they are, for the most part, just as scary and just as hard as the teachers say they are. The only good thing is that you don't have to go to school the rest of the day after you take the tests (which of course spoils you for the following week when you return to a normal school schedule).

Another important aspect of your junior year is just trying to finish all the work you are handed. It is possible and very likely to have several assignments that will take at the very least an hour (or more) of your time and have them all due the next class day. Teachers will also use the line, "You are in IB now," as their way of rationalizing situations that they normally would not win. They also use this line as a way of saying that this year is a year of focus and determination. Without it you will easily stray and not get your work done. Getting work done is not a department to be weak in this year. Teachers have their deadlines set, due dates for you to turn in your work by, and have no problem not accepting your work if you didn't do it, "leave it at home," or you "just can't find it." (But there is one teacher whom you may get the luck of having who will understand that these things can happen and sometimes you really do forget your work or you have a really bad day and need to make up that test you bombed.)

Junior year seemed to me to be a rather boring yet tedious year because you suddenly seem to realize that, "Oh my God!" colleges are going to be looking at this year and you have to perform well in everything you do. You may feel the stress of SAT scores, ACT scores, passing the AP tests, and passing your classes — added perhaps to working hard on the extracurricular activities (clubs, sports) that are demanding of you, too. I know that I look back at this year and see that it was a lot of hard work. It was more of a "Put your nose to the grindstone" year than anything and I also had to get my little (well ...) behind motivated very early or else... Overall though, the year seemed to help all my friends and I grow up a lot. It also helped us learn to rely on one another and know that it is helpful to get your friends to help you in areas you are struggling so that you don't get overburdened and too frustrated. Though, I do think we also learned to rely on ourselves and learned about what are limits and capabilities are emotionally, physically, and in dealing with stress.

Oh and PS! This is a very important FYI!! Don't be ashamed to ask for help from your teachers!! Ask them questions about what you don't understand because your friends are not always the best resources! Hehe ☺

Katie Carlson

Little do you know what is in store for you next year. There is an incredible change from the classes and work that you have just finished and the work that you will complete next year. If you think that you have a heavy load of work right now, you will truly understand what busy means in just a few short months. On this note, enjoy your summer, as you will not get an extended break for quite some time. I know that this sounds extremely pessimistic so far, but you ought to be prepared for the shift. On the other hand, if you were somewhat tired of the busy-work that you have previously experienced, the work of your junior year has more purpose to it. Rarely will you claim that you do not understand why an assignment is given, or how it applies to the class. Another change that you will notice is that the teachers no longer attempt to make sure that you do not have more than 2 tests in a day, or too many projects due in a week. Several of the teachers will claim that they attempt to do this. The evidence obviously shows otherwise; however, most of your teachers are very up front from the beginning, so you should know what is expected of you.

One of the perks of being a junior is that you and most of your classmates can now drive. Remember all of the problems that you have previously had with group projects? You will now have little difficulty meeting at any time. The quality of group projects increases exponentially. On the other hand, being able to drive also allows you to get out more. This can provide great opportunities for stress-relief. I would suggest bowling; knocking down short, white pins with a heavy object is a wonderful way to relieve any stress-related aggression you may be experiencing. Always bowl with a group of friends; remember, they can stand to have fun, too.

The number one piece of advice that anyone can tell you has probably already been hammered into your brain countless times: do not procrastinate. If you can get it done today, then finish it. Don't think that you will have time over the weekend, or tomorrow night, because something undoubtedly comes up to either prevent that, or make you stay up really, really late to finish your assignments. And, as a side note, printers have a nasty habit of messing up the night before a big paper is due. I think you will quickly find that in this case, the Internet is your best friend. Simply e-mail your essay to a friend, and have them print it out. And always save it to a disk as a text file, just in case. There are of course times when it is no longer expedient to continue working — either you are burnt out, or just plain bored. You should know yourself well enough by now to know when this is the case (versues when you just do not wish to continue working). So when that happens, and it will, go jog around the block, or watch a movie, or do something to make you forget schoolwork for awhile (or better yet, take a nap). But do not put off your work for too long, it unfortunately does not go away, and still has to be done. So as you go into your third year of high school, just remember not to overwork yourself, get sleep, always do your homework, and have fun with life.

Lindsey Spann

Here's some sound advice from an experienced IB Junior: DROP OUT while you have the chance or you may become entrapped in a vicious cycle of all homework and no sleep, as you probably are already. Never mind that. DON'T DROP OUT if you think you actually have a chance of graduating with an IB diploma — it really might be worth something someday! Am I confusing you? Anyway, I can only wish you the best if you are leaving. However, if you decide to clench your fist and fight your way through the homework in IB for another two years (yes, this is the real IB), I'd like to share a few of my experiences with you, and perhaps you can use that knowledge to help you through the journey that lies ahead of you.

There is no trick to being in IB. You can expect TONS of homework, but maybe you've gotten use to that part of life already from your training in pre-IB. I think it did for me, even though the work was more than I expected. The teachers are generally nice and considerate, although you may become inclined to disagree with me :). Time management is essential, and being organized would be a great aid to the hysteria that may set in next year. Essay writing for History and English was an extremely tedious process for me; because I'm a perfectionist, I spent entirely too much time on these papers, leaving almost no free time to enjoy life. I often went to parties carrying books or worksheets with me because I couldn't finish it at home. That's why you need to allot some time on your busy schedule for FUN. It is especially important since you need some relief from the intense pressure and stress of trying to turn everything in on time, if you're anything like me. I know the word "fun" probably doesn't sound familiar to you anymore, but it can happen if you try to make it happen because don't forget — we're still kids at heart.

I know you're wondering about the teachers and the classes. I can only tell you to work hard and always respect the teachers. Something happened in Mrs. Smith's English class this year — I'm not sure what it is because I wasn't there. She's new to the clan, so be patient with her (she needs as much patience as we do). Chemistry is HARD, very hard. It's extremely difficult to understand because there's so many new things to learn, even though Ms. Bond tries arduously to teach us. Be sure to take notes and read the chapters!!! I would advise the same thing for History class. Mr. Goss is quite a character — you may find yourself squaring off with him on some Democratic-Republican issue in the middle of class. The good thing about him is that he is open to suggestions and reform regarding his teaching style, so don't hesitate to ask if you have trouble understanding what he is lecturing about or you have a good idea about how to learn the material quickly. He can be demanding when it comes to homework, just like Ms. Frisbie, our Trigonometry teacher. The homework helps us understand the material better, though, and it reinforces what was taught in class. Ms. Frisbie is usually very humorous, and you'll have fun learning math from her.

Theory of Knowledge is the most unusual class of the year. You'll find yourself debating about knowledge and whether you really know something. You could get a headache from thinking too hard, but make sure to contribute some ideas in class. I never know when I'm correct when I say something in there, and there may be people who disagree with me, but that comes with the vague concepts of the class. It can be fun too because Mr. Graffam sets up activities that stimulate your thinking and make you wonder. Art would be a time to relax your brain after all this hectic thinking, and make something creative. Spanish class can also be intriguing if you like it.

Finally, I'd like to conclude by saying that you'll find many of the issues you face next year to be the same ones you faced as a sophomore, but there's a freshness and novelty to the things you do. You will have the same friends you've always had, and maybe discover one or two more. Remember, most important of all, that genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration (according to Albert Einstein). Word hard and SUCCEED!

Han Huang

You're about to embark on a challenging endeavor. Here's some advice that will make your life at IB much easier. First of all, DON'T procrastinate. Time your assignments well and it'll be less stressful. If you're like the rest of us, you'll wait until the last moment to complete your work. This is the source of all your frustration and sleepless nights. In fact, I'm procrastinating on this letter. It is now 10:19 at night. This is something you do not want to do. IB students generally receive about five to six hours of sleep a night, and that's if they're lucky. I've seen people who've worked through the night and come to school the next day. They do not look very attractive.

Secondly, form a regular study group. This is not a group of people who get together with the goal of studying but end up partying instead. Try to find people that you know you won't goof off with. This will be extremely helpful during semester exam time and all those other tests that you'll have. The test material can be divided into equal sections according to the number study partners. Each person can take turns "teaching" the material to the rest of the group. This is a quick and efficient way to study.

Lastly, make certain not to "share" information. There is a fine line between group work and cheating. Even though I am referred to by Ms. Frisbie as "The Ethics Girl" (strictly in a sarcastic sense), I can tell you that cheating is not cool. It's okay when teachers allow group work, but don't stray from the assignment and let the others do it for you. You'll regret it during exam time. You must be careful about group work when it comes to IB assignments — essays, portfolios, and projects. This can lead to the not so pleasant grade of a zero and maybe even the loss of your chance at the IB diploma.

Good luck and GOD BLESS,

Jing Liu

Looking back on this year, I learned a few important lessons and thought I would pass my infinite IB wisdom on to you. To start out with, one important aspect of being in the real IB Program is the large payload each student must carry as part of the IB whole. The IB Program at Bartow High has over a ton of books, papers, machinery, and other classroom materials. Naturally, the cost of storage for all of this would be unaffordable for such a small city as Bartow, so the organization communistically distributes the weight among the students. The conclusion you should gather from this molecular piece of knowledge is that you should begin exercising your back over the summer so you do not have to exorcise it during your junior year. In addition, buy a therapeutic Sealy mattress and be sure to research, design, and create a backpack that is capable of carrying your weight in books without straining your back. This would be an excellent source for CAS hours, too.

This brings us to our second point — CAS hours. IB students must earn 150 CAS hours by the end of their senior year. Over the summer, you should definitely get the maximum number of hours possible over the summer (35). This will save you from having to make up activities and being nefariously immoral. Besides, you will probably be bored sometime during your summer. Why not spend it working? (Note: Do not answer that).

Another tip you may find ameliorating is that you should definitely be nice to your teachers. Most of the teachers will remain your teachers for your second year of IB, so it is important to develop healthy, functional relationships with them. Be sure not to joke around, laugh and goof-off, relieve stress, or have fun between bells. Remember, these very teachers will be writing the recommendation letters that will get you in to college.

One final tip that is without a doubt the most important is sleep as little as possible. This might sound nonsensical, but this tip will allow you to have a life and be successful in IB. Good grades are of the utmost importance, and working late at night when no one can bother you is very productive. Therefore, avoid sleep. Have fun and relieve stress during the day — you will need it.

Eric Stubbs, IB God

Next year will seem like the beginning of the years that the Bible calls the Tribulation. It won't be pretty, but you need to bite your lip, tighten your belt and jump into the cesspool of IB. In the following paragraphs, I will discuss the basic ways to pass three of your seven classes. They are Trigonometry, ToK, and American History.

To start off, you will have to take trig. Trig is not that bad. The basic thing that will help you get through the class is listening to the God gifted, awe inspiring, latent Republican Ms. Frisbie. She will help you understand pretty much everything you need to know during the class time. However, it is my advice that you pal up with one of the "smart" people and work with them as a homework study person. This will help you because they will walk you through most of the problems and they will

sometimes have a better way of looking at a problem than that of Ms. Frisbie, however that is not often. One more thing that will help you a lot is to play with the graphing calculator. Learn what is on it and how it can apply to what you need to do. I believe that if you do these things trig will still be challenging but not over-bearing.

The second class in which you will be subjected to is called ToK. You should be familiar with some of this already because you have taken PToK (a.k.a. English II). The main thing to do here is think (You better think, THINK, think what ya tryin' to do to me, ya betta think, THINK... oh sorry, this is a problem that you will run into in trig, Ms. Frisbie will often say thinks that will cause you to want to sing oldies, but when you do you will have chalk thrown at you.) Anyways, don't be afraid to think of new ideas and ways to see the world. Mr. Graffam, despite the fact that he might be a late blossomed Hippie, is not concerned with changing your morals, just expanding your mind. But if you find yourself not being able to expand your mind, use words like, Knowledge, Understanding, Paradigms, and Perception every third word in your diction while in his class. This will cause him to think that you are at least trying to do well in his class. I would suggest you look at your own life and use his concepts to find the strengths and weaknesses (according to him) of how you see the world. ToK is based on a personal level, and you will do well if you relate everything to yourself.

The last class I will inform you of is called American History. This is taught by an individual who predates the birth of Christ. His name is Gary Goss, often called <stupid nickname which needs not to be perpetuated>, by his students. The important thing to do in his class in order to pass is read his textbook. Don't concern yourself with the other two textbooks, they are merely there to cause you back pains the first and last days of school. Always listen to Scary Gary as he gives his lectures, you might want to take notes but I haven't since the Election of 1824. Note, if you like to cut up in class and you like history, then this is your class. Be careful not to laugh at all the references Mr. Goss makes that can easily be interpreted by young male minds to be references to S&M. Don't know what that is? Good. You're one step ahead. Also, it's a good idea to watch the history channel from time to time. One more thing, if you notice a vein that turns bright purple above Mr. Goss's right eye, duck.

In conclusion, yes this year is going to be a year of absolute academic Hell. You will spend many hours studying, doing homework, and calling friends up for help. Often you will be awake after 12:00 at night and will wake up at 5:30. Carnation makes this really cool coffee mix, Swiss Chocolate Mix, I suggest you try it with 2 - 3 bags of (cancer causing) Sweet'n Low all in a Bush/Cheney coffee tumbler. It will wake you up in the morning and will keep you awake at night. Napoleon got 4 hours of sleep a night, so do you. Good luck.

Richard D. Hill

President of the United States

Well, congrats on getting through another year. Before you start partying and doing fun summer stuff, you should know what you're in store for, and how to prepare. There are a few changes in the transition from 9th to 10th grade, and they will be pretty apparent once you get here.

Well, you'd better know what those changes are before you land on your face when the new year starts, so here's an important one. Do not make enemies. You may have heard this before you started IB, but it really will bite you in the butt in tenth grade. This is mostly because of the change of pace in your classes, where you will be required to work with a much more diverse group of people.

The second, and possibly most important change is in your responsibilities. Don't procrastinate, and you will be expected to be a role model for the new freshmen. Vetter will be reminding you of your good or bad (mostly bad) traits.

Ian Trulson

The most important lesson/idea I think a sophomore next year needs to realize is the fact that sophomore year may be the easiest, but it's easy to get behind. Many of the people in our class don't do a whole lot, and the class of 2003 is depicted as sorry slackers because of this. I am by no means innocent of this, and have a lot to correct in my habits next year. It may not be as much of a problem for next year's class as it has been for ours, but sophomore year is a bad time to get into these habits, as the years ahead just get worse.

For a few examples, my history grade has been borderline A/B for a while; it's the little extra that I never gave, and so many people are in the same boat. My chemistry grade has been good for the first three nine weeks, but fourth nine weeks was really hard, and because I haven't had to do hard work there in the past, my grade is suffering. My trig grade should be much higher than it is, but I've gotten behind and it's too late now. My grades are so close to being A's, but I haven't given my all, and so many people are doing worse than me.

Next year the sophomores need to learn not to slack off, despite this being the easiest year. It's a break from the years to come, but also a preparation. Hopefully next year the freshmen won't make our mistake. I doubt they will, but it's a good thing to learn.

Ryan Harris

As a sophomore about to move on to IB life, but having already taken one official IB course, I would like to tell those that follow in my footsteps to run, run like the wind. Granted, that there are what, only 3 freshmen at this point taking algebra 2 early, I still would like them to know that little tidbit of knowledge. Just kidding, no, I'd like to tell them that it's really a great opportunity to get your math credits out of the way ahead of time.

As for advice about each of the classes, figure it out yourself you lowly freshman, all you people do is

mooch... Anyway, Graffam is by far the most interesting English teacher you will have, though you have to actually think in that class. Also it's my belief that if you tug on his beard two times and snap your fingers you get to make a wish, though it's just a theory, one of you should try it out sometime. History, well that is all based on who you have as a teacher, but you do miss out on having Mr. Partain who is perhaps one of the best history

teachers around. Science, Mrs. Bond is ummmm... let's just say a little left of center (though if you know me, me being a chia pet happens to be that way too). Though I do dare one of you guys to print out one of her porn novels (though she classifies them as "romantic literature") she writes on her computer back there and make copies of it. Though if you are heading into math early like I did, then you will have no problem with chemistry and those lovely little significant figures.

Now its time for the most important class you will ever take, with perhaps the greatest teacher on the planet of all time (yeah, that's right, Plato eat your heart out), trigonometry. My advice to you is this, do not fall behind, it's a killer in that class. Yeah, missing two weeks of this class can be a bad thing, trust me, I know (again I'd like to state how me missing two weeks of trig class was not by any means intentional on my part). Though I would like to state how nice and cool Miss Frisbie is about letting you make up work, and how she will help you out whenever you need a break (and this I'm not saying to get extra points, this I mean). Ultimately my advice for you lowly freshman is that if you are willing to work hard, then you'll do great next year, but if you're like me, and work isn't something you enjoy, you will be able to coast by next year too.

Neil Masters

So you're going to be a sophomore... They say sophomore year is easier, and to an extent, they're right, but it's a lot different from freshman year, and I have some advice. Some of it may not make sense, but I hope it will be helpful. Here goes:

- Mr. Graffam is unlike any teacher you've ever had. Accept this fact and enjoy his class. Hopefully you'll like him. Hopefully he'll like you.
- Procrastination never helps. It may feel good at the time, but you'll pay when you lose sleep.
- Chemistry is hard. If you're one of the lucky ones that "gets it," you're lucky. If not, it's one of the hardest classes you'll take.
- If at all possible, don't get sick, especially during the hardest chapter of the year in chemistry. This school punishes you for absences.
- Don't procrastinate in Mr. Graffam's class.
- Enjoy sophomore year. This is the last year before it gets hard.

I hope this helps. If it does, I'll be happy to have helped someone. If it doesn't, I'm sorry.

David Massey