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BECAA

We want Justice

Fight for justice Reclaim the night

বিচার চাই

55

Edition

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(Formerly Bengal Engineering College)
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF USA EAST COAST



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Any questions/suggestions, please reach out to:

Site Admin:

Tanmoy Sanbui

Mail-to: tanmoy_sanbui@yahoo.com

Contact: [203-524-5216](tel:203-524-5216)

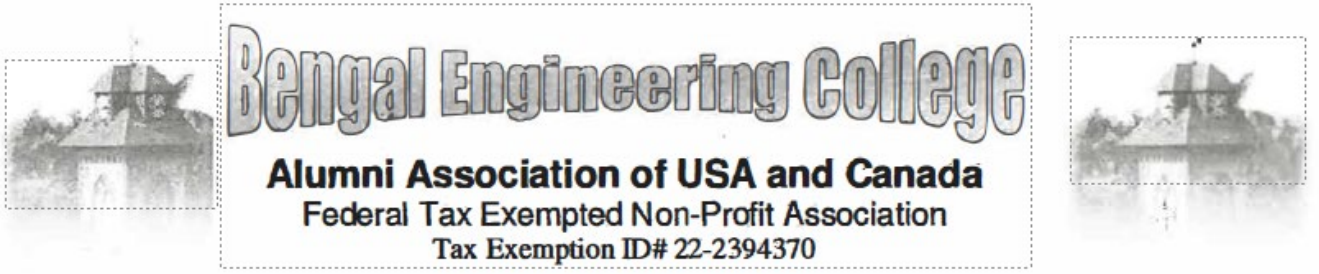
Our Best Wishes to BECAA

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210 Kingsland Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11222
Phone: (718)383-3860
Fax: (718)349-3369



September 7, 2024

Dear Alumni,

As a representative of the Executive Committee, it is my pleasure to welcome everyone to the 53rd Annual Reunion. Your support and involvement were essential for the executive committee to fulfil our duties effectively. I value the contributions you have made.

The establishment of our college dates to 1856. The cherished memories of our student days still echo warmly in our hearts. Without a doubt, we consider those days the best part of our lives. Our seniors founded BECAA East Coast in the year 1971. Ever since, we have looked forward to celebrating those memorable days annually. The enduring legacy of professional excellence and close-knit community at our Alma Mater has established high benchmarks across all pursuits.

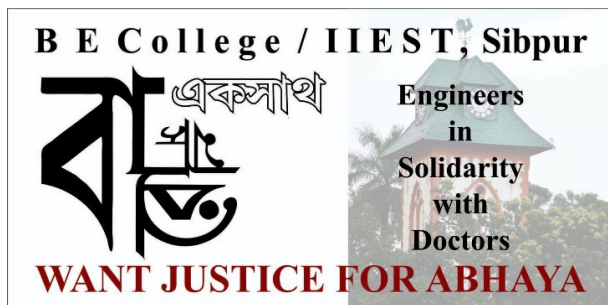
We are immensely proud of our younger Alumni members who have instituted a diverse program of social, cultural, and recreational activities throughout the year. We revived Bijoya Sammilani after ten years, organized networking events with seniors, and backed the protest march against student injustice in Kolkata. The effort and enthusiasm of Alumni volunteers have energized the association and raised alumni involvement to a new level. We hope to see this continue in the coming years and serve as an inspiration for all members.

I extend my gratitude to everyone for attending and taking part in this annual reunion meet. I would like to particularly acknowledge our event planning committee, advertisers, and sponsors.

Wishing you all a wonderful day!

Best Regards,

Bhaskar DasGupta



তিলোত্তমা

--সুমন কুমার চন্দ্র (EE'98)

তিলোত্তমা কোলকাতা, কোলকাতার তিলোত্তমা
একজন ডাক্তার, মানুষের জীবনরক্ষায় অঙ্গীকারবদ্ধ,
সাধারণ ঘরের এক অসাধারণ মেয়ে
মা-বাবার সাথে নিজের স্বপ্নপূরণের সবে শুরু
তবে ওই যে, তুমি তো সাধারণ ঘরের আর তুমি যে মেয়ে!
সাধারণ ঘরের মেয়ে লাঞ্ছিতা, ধর্ষিতা বা পাশবিকভাবে হত্যা
হলেও তা হতে পারে না
এদের হত্যা করা হয় না, এরা আত্মহত্যা করে
এদের আগে হয় সিদ্ধান্ত, পরে হয়ত বা খতিয়ে দেখা
আর এই মিথ্যেটাই সত্য করে প্রমাণ করা হয়।
সত্যও তো ঠিক করে ক্ষমতাবানেরা,
ওফ! ক্ষমতার কি প্রবল দাপট....
তিলোত্তমা-রা ধর্ষিতা হয় স্থান-কাল-পাত্র বিবেচনার অভাবে, পোশাকের জন্যে,
এদের শরীর-মন-মান-অপমান-বোধের অধিকারও
এদের নিজেদের নয়
আর দশ লক্ষের বেশী কতই বা দাম এদের জীবনের!
এই তো সাধারণ ঘরের মেয়েদের বাস্তব গল্প
হোক না ও মেয়ে অসাধারণ,
হোক না এই একুশ শতকের ঝাঁ চক্-চকে পৃথিবী
যখন উন্নতির চিহ্ন দুয়ারে-দুয়ারে,
এ কোন দিকে আমরা এগিয়ে চলেছি?

তবে এবার কিন্তু তা হয়নি তিলোত্তমা!
লাখে-লাখে মানুষ আজ ফুঁসছে
রাগে-ঘৃণায়-যন্ত্রনায় আর মানবিকতার তাড়নায়,
প্রতিবাদে নেমেছে লক্ষ-লক্ষ মানুষ,
বিদ্বজ্ঞ হবার দরকার নেই, মনুষ্যত্ব আর সাধারণ বিবেক-বুদ্ধি টুকুই যথেষ্ট,
মানুষ, সাধারণ-মানুষ আজ বিচার চায়
শুধু একটা ফাঁসিই এর বিচার নয়,
লোকদেখানো, লোকঠকানো বিচার তো নয়ই,
একটা অব্যবস্থার ফাঁসি, একটা অরাজকতার ফাঁসি,
মুখোশ খেলার বিচার।
বানানো গল্পগুলো পা দিয়ে মাড়িয়ে আসল সত্যিটা সামনে আসুক,
সবার সামনে।
রাঘব বোয়ালগুলো সামনে আসুক।

তাদের কার্যকলাপ, মানসিকতা, ক্ষমতা
ধর্ষকের যৌনাঙ্গের মতই ভয়ঙ্কর!

তোমার ডায়েরীতে কি লেখা ছিল জানি না তিলোত্তমা,
তোমার কষ্টের কথা ঠিক জানি না আমরা
তবে যেটুকু অনুভব করি
তোমার শেষদিনের বা শেষ ক'ঘন্টার কথা ভেবে
রক্ত হিম হয়ে যায়
অবশ হয়ে যাই – শুধু একটু ভাবলেই!
বনের হিংস্র জানোয়ারগুলোর কবলে পরলেও
যন্ত্রণাটা এত ভয়ঙ্কর হত না,
চিৎকার শোনারও কেউ নেই,
আর সাধারণ ঘরের একটা মানুষের মুখ চাপা কি এমন কঠিন?
আকাশ ভাঙ্গার পরে অসহায় বাবা-মা, জানে না কি করবে,
আর শাসানি তো শাসকের ভূমিকা – যে রঙেরই হোক,
ক্ষত-বিক্ষত মরা মেয়েকে নিজেদের কাছে পাবার কি করুণ আর্তি!
তার ওপর ওপর-মহলের কত রকমের নির্দেশিকা!

অন্ধ আশাবাদী আমি নই,
তিলোত্তমাদের ইতিহাস আমায় আশা দেয়ও না,
তার ওপর আমি অতি স্বার্থপর, আমরা স্বার্থপর প্রজাতি,
নিজের ঘরে বাজ না পরলে নিজেকে নিয়েই বাঁচি,
কি হবে সমাজ, দেশ, পৃথিবী – এসব নিয়ে ভেবে!
প্রতিবাদের আশ্রয় কবেই নিভে গেছে,
শুধু বাকচাতুরী আর অন্যের নিন্দে করেই তো কাটাই জীবন,
সমাজ, দেশ, সরকার – আমাদের নীরবতারও ফসল।
তবে আজ যেন আবার আশা দেখছি তিলোত্তমা!
না – মুখ্য বা গৌণ কোনো মন্ত্রীদের জন্য নয়,
তিলোত্তমারা ঘটে সব জমানায়
তাই কোনো রঙ-য়েই আশা নেই,
প্রশাসনের জন্য তো নয়ই – সে তো প্রহসণ,
সে তো পকেটে পুড়ে ফেলেছে ওরা কবে!
আশা দেখছি ওই লক্ষ-লক্ষ মানুষের নির্ভীক প্রতিবাদে,
তিলোত্তমা কলকাতায়, সারা দেশে ও বাইরে...
বিভিন্ন রং-য়ের নোংরামির মাঝেও
লক্ষ মানুষের সোচ্চার প্রতিবাদে,
যাদের মনুষ্যত্ব, বিবেক আজও বিকোয়নি
যেমন বিকিয়েছে বহু ক্ষমতাবানের, মেরুদণ্ডও!
তিলোত্তমা, আজ আশা জাগে মেয়েদের রাত দখল করার গর্জনে,
স্বাধীনতার দিনে পরাধীনতা থেকে মুক্তির আওয়াজে,

শহর-গ্রাম-দেশ-বিদেশের কোণ থেকে, প্রতিবাদে।
জানি না কতদিন এ আগুন জ্বলবে
তবে এ প্রতিবাদ দেখিয়ে দিয়েছে যে
রাজা তুই উলঙ্গ, রং-এ কি যায়-আসে, তুই উলঙ্গ
আর বীর্যপাতও তোদের হয়ে গেছে।

তবে আইন চায় প্রমাণ
আর বীর্যবানেরা পারে তা লোপাট করতে,
যারা হয়-কে-নয় করে, কত কিছু নয়-ছয় করে।
হয়ত এর পরেও আসল প্রমাণ মিলত যদি কেউ
জিজ্ঞাসা করত আর জি করের অলিন্দগুলোকে বা
সেমিনার ঘরের দেওয়াল গুলোকে বা মেঝে-কে,
মাথার ওপরের সাক্ষী সিলিং ফ্যান গুলোকে
বা ঘরের চেয়ার বা প্রজেক্টর-কে
কিংবা ওই অভিশপ্ত ঘরে আটকা পরে থাকা অবশিষ্ট কিছু বাতাস-কে,
কিন্তু ওরা তো নীরব সাক্ষী!

তিলোত্তমা তুমি আজ ঘুমাও,
তিলোত্তমাদের শেষ হয়ত এখানেই নয়,
তোমার কষ্ট-যন্ত্রণা আমরা ভাগ করতে পারিনি তিলোত্তমা
তবে এই কোলাহলে ভরা পৃথিবী থেকে আজ দূরে থাকো,
চির নিদ্রায় থাকো।
যদি এই লক্ষ-লক্ষ মানুষের প্রতিবাদ সফল হয়
যদি তিলোত্তমা ঠিক বিচার পায়
শান্তি পাবে আগামী দিনের তিলোত্তমারা
শান্তি পাবে তোমার অসহায় মা-বাবা
আর হয়ত শান্তি পাবে তোমার অমর আত্মা।
আজ তুমি ঘুমাও তিলোত্তমা!

My Experience at Columbia

Ritika De (Daughter of Sheuli Majumdar MET'97 & Jayanta De)

Arriving at Columbia University for a three-week intensive in Game Theory, I was filled with a mix of excitement and anxiety. The thought of navigating a new campus alone in New York City felt intimidating. However, my nerves were quickly settled by the friendly and supportive people I encountered on the first day. The welcoming nature of the campus and students made me feel secure enough to venture out in the streets for lunch and to explore the city beyond the campus. The course itself, Game Theory, was a deep dive into the intricacies of mathematical economics. Game Theory is a field that explores strategic decision-making through scenarios shown with mathematics. We studied various normal form games like the popular Prisoner's Dilemma. We learned how to analyze different aspects of their outcomes, including best responses, dominant strategies, and Nash equilibrium. The course itself presented us with a mix of challenges and fun projects that shaped my learning experience.

The professor, while passionate and committed, was relatively new to teaching and had no prior experience with teaching Game Theory. His enthusiasm was evident, he made significant efforts to engage us through interactive methods like movie scenes and games. Although his innovative approach was commendable, his inexperience sometimes affected the clarity of instruction. An instructor with more experience in Game Theory and a connection to Columbia University might have resulted in a deeper understanding of Game Theory. Despite the challenges our professor was able to nail the basics. The course content focused primarily on the economic aspects of Game Theory rather than its mathematical components. We explored various "games"—scenarios made to help analyze interactions within companies or among individuals—to understand concepts like Dominant Strategy, Nash Equilibrium, and Utility Theory. This practical application of theoretical ideas helped us grasp how to predict outcomes based on rationality and by using behavioral assumptions. Upon completion of this course, I realized it extends beyond traditional economics as it reflects into complex global issues.

My time in New York was both thrilling and educational. The opportunity to immerse myself in the city's rhythm and Columbia's academic environment was rewarding. I was able to meet such kind and welcoming friends through an event held by Columbia volunteers. The Student Life Extravaganza was where I was bombarded with the hundreds of students coming to make new friends. My friend Vania, from class, joined me as we went around meeting new people which slowly turned into a friendly competition. We competed, running around the entire venue meeting and collecting people's instagram accounts. The requirement was to get the person's name, course, where they are from, and their instagram account. With this challenge, we were able to meet so many new people from around the world. From Turkey, India, China, Iceland, Italy, and so much more. Eventually the competition began making its way around to others and grew bigger and bigger as more people joined our challenge. By the end of the event, we had made so many meaningful and diverse friends.

With these new friends, I enjoyed exploring the campus, making the most of Columbia's countless resources. The university library stood out as a highlight, with its vast collection of books spanning diverse subjects and eras. The air conditioning in the library was so powerful it felt almost like an obstacle course to get inside, but once there, the expansive space and rows of books provided a

perfect environment for study and reflection. The library's study rooms, which were well-lit, spacious, and quiet, became my go-to spots for working on projects and assignments. Specifically the first week, many of us in the class were quite confused and needed extra help, so we all ended up going to the library almost everyday to finish our project. Half of us would grab food for everyone while the other half would guard each other's belongings. This system worked well and it led us to get closer.

My peers and I got closer due to our two-hour lunch breaks which was both a luxury and a challenge. I was initially overwhelmed by choices with numerous dining options available, from my favorite dumpling and bagel place to Shake Shack and McDonald's. I settled into a routine, rotating between all these options, while my stomach took a minute to adjust to the abundance of outside food. H Mart became my best friend as it had a variety of affordable snacks and instant meals, offering a variety of options that were perfect for quick bites between and after classes.

By the last day, I felt some kind of familiarity towards Columbia and my Professor. It hurt having to leave the place I made so many memories with so many different people. By the time I reached the car to go home, I was already missing my friends, but I also felt accomplished. I was able to spend 3 weeks in NY, essentially by myself and completed a brand new course I didn't know anything about. While I was reminiscing about the three weeks, my dad broke my train of thought and started asking me about my day and the overall program. I did not want to answer any of his questions until he asked, "Who would you recommend this course to?" Which got me thinking, who is this course really for? Honestly it would help a variety of people in the business world and everyday life so really I would recommend it to everyone. He then asked a more specific question, "Which one of your friends would enjoy this course?" I found it challenging to identify specific friends who would appreciate the course's depth, but it led me to realize that not all my friends would've appreciated it like I did. My dad's questions about who I would recommend made me consider it further: while some might find the course overly complex or trivial, others would be genuinely intrigued by its depth. Ultimately, the course's value depends on an individual's perspective and their willingness to engage with intricate concepts.

ঝুমকির ঝমক

কৃষ্ণা (মুখোপাধ্যায়) চৌধুরী

চলতে চলতে হঠাৎ ঝিনি ঝাস্তার পাশে উবু হয়ে বসে পড়ল। পাশে পাশে ঝিনিকে দেখতে না পেয়ে সলিল পেছনে তাকিয়ে দেখে ঝিনি ফুটপাতে বসে কি যেন খুঁজছে।

“কি হলো? কিছু পড়ে গেছে নাকি”?

“না কিছু নয়, তুমি চলতে থাক আমি আসছি”।

সলিল ফিরে এল ঝিনির কাছে। “কি হয়েছে, কিছু পড়ে গেছে”?

“না, আমি সেপটিপিনটা খুঁজছি, এখানেই পড়ে গেল ব্যাগ থেকে”।

সলিলও বসে পড়ে খুঁজতে লাগলো, “সেপটিপিন দিয়ে কি করবে তুমি? এই নাও”।

সলিলই খুঁজে পেল ওটা।

“এই যে দেখোনা চটির স্ট্র্যাপটা ছিঁড়ে গেলো, এটা সেপটিপিন

দিয়ে না আটকালে খালি পায়ে চলতে হবে আমাকে”। সলিল অপেক্ষা করে রইল, প্রায় দশ মিনিট লাগলো ঝিনির চটি সারাতে। ঠিক মুচিদের মতো সারানো চটি পরে দুচারবার হাঁটাচলা করে নিল ফুটপাতের ওপর,

তারপর এক গাল হেঁসে বলল, “নাঃ এবার আর ছিঁড়বেনা”।

কদিন আগে এসপ্ল্যান্ডে মেট্রো সিনেমার কাছাকাছি হঠাৎ থেমে পড়ে বলে, “আমার দিকে পেছন করে একটু আড়াল করে দাড়াও তো, আমার ব্লাউজের বোতামটা ছিঁড়ে গেছে একটা সেপটিপিন লাগাবো”

সলিল তো তাজ্জব। এ মেয়েটা বলে কি? এই জনাকীর্ণ রাশিরাশি পথচলা লোকজনের মাঝখানে ওকে আড়াল করে রাখতে যাতে ও ব্লাউজের বোতাম সেলাই

করতে পারে। এহেন অদ্ভুদ কথা সলিল বাপের জন্মে শোনেনি। কিন্তু উত্তেজিত না হয়ে শান্তভাবে বলল “শাড়ীর আঁচলটা গায়ে জড়িয়ে নাও, চল রাস্তা ক্রশ করে ওপারে ট্রাম গুমটির কাছে একটা বাথরুম আছে ওখানে গিয়ে তুমি ব্লাউজ ঠিক করতে পারবে”। রিনি বাধ্য মেয়ের মতো সলিলের কথা শুনল। ট্রাম গুমটির সামনে গিয়ে সলিল বলল “যাও ঐ যে বাথরুমটা, আমি এখানে দাঁড়িয়ে রইলাম”। রিনি চলে গেল।

সলিল ভাবতে লাগলো এইরকম মেয়ে সে একটাও দেখেনি। প্রথম প্রথম ভাবতো মেয়েটা একটু ছিটেল আছে। কিন্তু যত দিন আছে দেখতে পাচ্ছে মেয়েটা সাধারণের থেকে আলাদা। ১৮ বছর বয়সে খুবই ভাল রেজাল্ট করে ইউনিভার্সিটিতে চুকেছে, বুদ্ধিশুদ্ধি প্রখর, কথাবার্তায় চমক আছে, আত্মসন্মান জ্ঞান অসম্ভব কিন্তু কিঞ্চিৎ পাগলাটে। কে জানে বংশে কেউ হয়তো পাগোল ছিল।

একদিন রোড রোডের পাশ দিয়ে হাঁটতে হাঁটতে উল্টোদিক থেকে একটা ট্রাম আসতে দেখে রিনি সলিলকে বলল, “চল ঐ ট্রামটাতে উঠে পড়ি তাহলে এসপ্ল্যান্ড যেতে আমাদের আর হাঁটতে হবেনা”। “কিন্তু ওটা তো উল্টোদিক থেকে আসছে, আমাদের ট্রাম লাইন পেরিয়ে ওদিকে যেতে হবে তো”। “তুমি এসোতো আমার সঙ্গে”। বলে সলিলের হাতটাকে শক্ত করে ধরে একলাফে চলন্ত ট্রামটার সামনে দিয়ে লাইনের ওপারে লাফ মারল। ট্রাম ড্রাইভার জোরে ব্রেক কষে ট্রামটা থামিয়ে দিল। ওরা দুজনে টপ করে ট্রামে উঠে পড়ল। সন্ধ্যাই হতভম্ব হয়ে গেছে এই ছেলে মেয়ে দুটোর কাণ্ড দেখে। সেদিন দুজনেই ট্রাম চাপা পড়ে যেত।

সবচাইতে চমকপ্রদ ঘটনা ঘটিয়েছিল গতবছর কালিপূজোর আগের দিন। হাজার হাজার মোড় থেকে দুজনে গল্প করতে করতে কখন হেঁটে হেঁটে ভিক্টোরিয়া মেমোরিয়ালের সামনে পৌঁছে গেছে দুজনের কারোরই খেয়াল নেই। কথা বেশী রিনিই বলে, সলিল বেশীরভাগ সময় শুনে যায় কারণ রিনির কথাবার্তায় চমক আছে যটা সলিলের জানাশোনা কোনও মেয়ে বা ছেলের মধ্যেও আছে বলে জানা নেই। ওর কথা শুনতে সলিলের ভালো লাগে।

ভিক্টোরিয়া মেমোরিয়ালের সামনে বেশ কিছু আইসক্রীম ভেন্ডাররা ঘোরাঘুরি করে। রিনি আইসক্রীম খেতে খুব ভালোবাসে, বাইরে বেরোলে চোখে আইসক্রীম দেখলেই ওকে একটা কিনে দিতে হয়। কিন্তু আজকে আর তা করলনা, বরং নিজের ছোট পাসটা সলিলের হাতে দিয়ে বলল, “তুমি এটা তোমার পকেটে ঢুকিয়ে রেখে দাও। আমি হাজার চাইলেও আমাকে দিওনা। ডাক্তার আমার আইসক্রীম খাওয়া বারণ করে দিয়েছে, তুমিও কিনে দিওনা, আর আমাকেও কিনতে দিওনা। সলিল কোনও কথা না বলে রিনির পাসটা পকেটে ঢুকিয়ে নিল। তারপর দুজনে মিলে ময়দানে ঘাসের উপর বসল, গল্প করতে করতে রিনির চোখ কেবলই আইসক্রীমের গাড়ীর দিকে চলে যাচ্ছে কিন্তু এগোতে পারছেনা। হঠাৎ করে বলে উঠল, “যাই একটা আইসক্রীম কিনে আনি। একটা খেলে কিছু হবেনা, কি বল”? সলিল উত্তর দিল, “ডাক্তার যখন বারণ করেছে একটা দিন নাহয় নাই বা খেলে”। শুনে একটু সময় চুপ করে থেকে রিনি বলল, “না কিছু হবেনা। দাও একটা কিনে দাও”। সলিলেরও কেমন জেদ চেপে গেল, “না আজ তোমার আইসক্রীম খেতে হবেনা, আমিও কিনছিনা।” এদিকে কিছুক্ষণ আগে বলে রেখেছিলো যতই চাক পাসটা যেন সলিল কোনওমতেই তাকে না দেয়। ভুলে গেল সেকথা? সলিল জোর দিয়ে বলল, “না তোমার পাসও আমি দেবনা”। রিনি প্রথমে কাকুতি মিনতি শুরু করল, তারপর আস্তে আস্তে গলা চড়তে শুরু করল রিনির, চারপাশে লোক জড়ো হতে শুরু করেছে। শেষপর্যন্ত রিনি চীৎকার করে বলতে শুরু করল, “শীগগির আমার টাকা দিয়ে দাও তা না হলে আমি পুলিশ ডাকবো”। রিনির এইরকম চেহারা সলিল কোনওদিন দেখেনি। চারপাশের লোকজন ভাবতে শুরু করল লোকটা মেয়েটাকে ভোগ করে পয়সা না দিয়ে পালিয়ে যাবার চেষ্টা করছে। সলিল দেখল রিনি যেরকম বেগে গেছে হয়তো লোকগুলো সলিলকে ধরে

মারধোর করতে পারে। অগত্যা পকেট থেকে পাসটা বার করে দিয়ে দিল। রিনি একমুহূর্ত সময় নষ্ট না করে দৌড়ে বাস স্টপেজে গিয়ে একটা বাস দাঁড়িয়ে ছিল সেটাতে উঠতেই বাসটা ছেড়ে দিল। সেদিন সলিল প্রতিজ্ঞা করল আর কোনওদিন রিনির সঙ্গে দেখা করবে না। কিন্তু সেই প্রতিজ্ঞা সে রাখতে পেরেছিলো কি?

তা না হলে এই পাগোল মেয়েটার হাত ধরে জীবনের এই দরজায় এসে পৌছতে পারত কি?

প্রতিজ্ঞা তো রাখতে পারলো না সলিল, দুদিন কোনওমতে কাটালো তিনদিনের দিন সন্দের দিকে গুটিগুটি রিনিদের বাড়ীর দোরগোড়ায় পৌঁছে গেল সে। রিনির মা দরজা খুলে দিয়েই রিনিকে ডেকে দিল। রিনি এসে একগাল হেসে বলল ‘এইমাত্র বুলু এসেছিলো’। বুলু সলিলের বোন। ‘কেন?’ সলিল জিজ্ঞেস করল। ‘কেন আবার এমনি, গল্প করতে’। তাইতো, সলিল ভাবল বুলু তো রিনির বন্ধু এমনিতে। রিনির হাবভাব দেখে মনেই হলোনা দুদিন আগে সে কি কাণ্ডটা ঘটিয়েছিলো।

সলিল আর কিছু বলবার আগেই রিনির বাবা ঘরে ঢুকলেন। ওনাকে সলিল খুবই সমীহ করে। ভদ্রলোক চোখে দেখতে পান না কিন্তু তাই নিয়ে কোনওদিনও ক্ষোভ প্রকাশ করেন না। মুখে সর্বদা হাঁসি লেগে রয়েছে আর খুব গল্প করতে ভালোবাসেন। খবর শুনে শুনে সারা পৃথিবীর কোথায় কি ঘটছে তা সমস্তই জানা ওনার। যথেষ্ট জ্ঞানী মানুষ এবং খুবই বিদ্বান, শুনেছে উনি আই এস সিতে ফোর্থ হয়েছিলেন। কিন্তু চাকুরী জীবনে গোড়াতেই gradual optic nerve atrophy নামে একটি রোগে আক্রান্ত হয়ে উনি দৃষ্টিশক্তি হারিয়ে ফেলেন। রিনিকে উনি ঝুমকি বলে ডাকেন। এই মেয়ে হচ্ছে ওনার অন্ধের যষ্টি। আর রিনিরও অন্ধ বাপের ওপর অগাধ পিতৃস্নেহ, হ্যাঁ পিতৃভক্তি বললে কম বলাই হবে, তাই পিতৃস্নেহটাই ঠিক উপমা।

সলিল এবং সবাই দেখে রিনি যখন তার বাবাকে নিয়ে কোথাও যায় মা যেমন তার বাচ্চাকে আগলে আগলে নিয়ে যায় রিনি ঠিক তেমনি করেই তার বাবাকে সাবধানে ধরে ধরে নিয়ে যায়। কথা প্রসঙ্গে কতবার বলেছে ও ওর একটা চোখ বাবাকে দান করতে চায়। সলিলের কাছে এই ভাবনা অভূতপূর্ব এবং অশ্রুতপূর্ব। ওনার সঙ্গে কথা

বলতে সলিলের খুবই ভালো লাগে। ওনার কাছেই ঝুমকির অনেক কঠিন অসুখ এবং বহু দুর্ঘটনা থেকে বেঁচে ফিরে আসার গল্প শুনেছে।

ঝিনির সঙ্গে দেখা সাক্ষাৎ চলতেই থাকলো, সলিল এখন ঝিনির পাগলামীটা নিয়ে বেশী মাথা ঘামায় না। এর মধ্যে এদিকে দেশে চাকরী বাকরী পাওয়া দুস্কর, শয়ে শয়ে বেকার ইঞ্জিনীয়ার। সলিল একটা ছোটোমোটো ব্যাবসা শুরু করেছে এক বন্ধুর সঙ্গে, আর আমেরিকা চলে আসবার প্রস্তুতিও চলছে সেই সঙ্গে। দিন যায়, মাস যায়, বছর কেটে গেল। একদিন পূর্ণিমার রাতে ঝিনিকে জানালো যে সে আমেরিকায় চলে যাচ্ছে। ঝিনি বলল, “ওখানে গিয়ে তুমি মেমসাহেব দেখে আমাকে ভুলে যাবে নাতো”? “আর যাই হোক ইংরাজীতে চাঁদ দেখাইতে পারুম না”। শুনে ঝিনি হো হো করে হেসে উঠল।

অতঃপর যাবার আগে সলিল বহু বাধা বিপত্তি, আপত্তি, ধমকানি, বাড়ীর গুরুজনদের কথা, বন্ধুদের সদুপদেশ, টিটকিরি “ঐ মেয়ে বিয়ে করলে তুই বেশীদিন বাঁচবি না”, “তোরা শ্রাদ্ধে আমেরিকায় নেমন্তন্য খেতে যাব,” ইত্যাদি ইত্যাদি এ সমস্ত কিছু অগ্রাহ্য করে এই ছিটেলগ্রন্থ, দঃসাহসী, দুর্ঘটনাপ্রবন, অদ্ভুদ চরিত্র, অতিশয় বুদ্ধিমতী এবং অপার করুণাময়ী ঝিনি ওরফে ঝুমকিকে বিয়ে করে বিদেশে ভাগ্য অন্বেশনে বেরিয়ে পৰল। পাঁচমাস পরে ঝিনি উঠল প্লেনে জীবনে প্রথমবারের মতো। আগেরদিন সারারাত বাপের পিঠে মুখ গুঁজে কেঁদেছে। বাবা, মেজোমামা সবাই সান্ত্বনা দিয়েছে যে বাবাকে দেখার অনেক লোক আছে, চিন্তার কারণ নেই। এয়ারপোর্টে সলিল ওর দুই বন্ধু অলোক আর মনীষ এবং তার বৌকে নিয়ে ঝিনিকে তুলতে এসেছিলো। রাস্তায় ঝিনিকে হাজার রকম দেশের খবরের প্রশ্নের উত্তর দেওয়া শেষ হলে মনীষের বৌ তার ঝোলা খুলে বসল। তার বিয়েতে তার বাবা ৮০ ভরি সোনার, জড়োয়ার সেট, মুক্তোর সেট, মনীষের হীরের আংটি, সুইস ওয়াচ থেকে কলকাতার সব চাইতে নাম করা ডেকরেটরকে দিয়ে বিয়ের প্যাণ্ডেল তৈরী, বিলায়েত খাঁর ছাত্রকে দিয়ে নহবৎ বসানো এই গল্প শুনতে শুনতেই তারা বাড়ী

পৌঁছে গেল। ঝিনি কিছু বলার আগেই সলিল জানিয়ে দিলো এই ফ্ল্যাটটা সে সাবলেট নিয়েছে এক গুজরাটি ভদ্রলোকের কাছ থেকে তিনমাসের জন্য। ওরা রাত দুটো থেকে দুপুর দুটো অবধি ঘুমোলো। ঘুম থেকে উঠে আলাপ হল প্যাটেলের সাথে। তিনি জানালেন মনীষ চারবার ফোন করেছিলো, সলিলদের ওদের বাড়ীতে খেতে যেতে বলেছে। সলিল সঙ্গে সঙ্গে মনীষকে জানিয়ে দিল যে ওরা কিছুক্ষনের মধ্য আসছে। প্যাটেল চলে গেল। ওরা বেড়ী হয়ে বেরোবার মুখে ঝিনি বলল, “তুমি কেন সকলের কথা না শুনে আমাকে বিয়ে করতে গেলে? তাহলে কত বড়লোকের মেয়ের সঙ্গে তোমার বিয়ে হতে পারতো”। সলিল ঝিনির মোটা লম্বা বিনুণীর গোড়াটা একটু নেড়ে দিয়ে বলল, “ঝুমকি ইয়ার, বাত এহি হ্যায় কি দিল লাগে গাঙ্কিসে তো পরী কেয়া চীজ হ্যায়”। “এ্যাঁ তুমি আমাকে গাধা বললে”? “ঐ কাছাকছি। এখন চল তো ওদের বাড়ী যাই, খুব খিদে পেয়েছে। আর তুমিও দেখো বড়লোকের মেয়েদের কাছ থেকে কিছু আদব কায়দা শিখে নিতে পার কিনা”। ঝিনি সলিলকে একটা চিমটি কাটল। এবার দুজনেই হেসে ফেলল। সলিল ঝিনির কাঁধে হাত রেখে বলল, ‘চল, যাই বড়লোকের মেয়েদের রান্না কেমন খেয়ে আসি’। ঝিনিও সায় দিয়ে বলল, ‘হ্যাঁ চলো যাই’।



Adventures in Austria

(by Anandini Mukherjee, daughter of Amalendu & Haimanti)

Museums, Museums, Museums!

Once upon a time, a girl went to Austria with her family. On their first day at Vienna, the capital, they saw a lot of art at the Belvedere Museum. The most famous painting in the museum was by Gustave Klimt, an impressionist. It was called the Kiss. They also saw a lot of art done by Monet in the museum, which consists of two Baroque palaces (Upper and Lower Belvedere), an orangery (garden) and stables.

Prince Eugene of Savoy (Commander in chief) constructed Belvedere. He was a great lover of art and had frescos painted on some of the ceilings. It also has a huge garden with fountains and many exotic plants and flowers. After some more sight-seeing, they went home.

The next day they went to Albertina. It was another art museum. They saw lots of paintings of different styles- Pointillism (painting with small dots), Fauvism, etc. One of the painters, Frank Grabmayr sculpted his own canvases and threw paint on to them. He even stuck hay and poured oil on some of his paintings.

After touring Albertina, they went to the carriage museum in the Schonbrunn Palace (summer residence of the Habsburg dynasty). They saw royal carriages of all shapes and sizes and even a sled for winter. Some of the royal clothing was also on display. The carriages were used by Queen Elizabeth (not the one in England) and her husband, emperor Franz Joseph I. Queen Elizabeth was popularly known as Sisi and was famous for her love of sports, specially riding.



Sisi's dress



Fresco on the ceiling of Belvedere



Vintage tiled fireplace

Hiking through the Alps

Now they had enough of museums, so they drove to the west of Austria to see the mountains and spent next few days hiking in the Alps. On their first day they drove to the Zillertal Alps to hike up to Ospererhütte (in German hütte means hut), perched at a lofty 2,388 meters above sea level. Little did they know about the challenges of the climb! Her parents thought the ascent will take about 2 hours; however, it took almost 4 hours. They had to take many breaks, but surprisingly her four-year-old little brother managed to climb to the top!

On their to the top, they were amazed by the breathtaking views of the Schlegeis Reservoir, towering peaks, pine forest, mountain goats and glacier-fed waters. They crossed a footbridge (wooden plank) over a small stream and filled up their water-bottles from the stream. Upon reaching the top, they enjoyed the hearty mountain food served in the hütte, before heading to the iconic suspension bridge, famous for its panoramic views and amazing pictures. Under the bridge there was a mountain stream rushing through the rocks. She stood on the rocks and took pictures of her family on the bridge, appearing to suspend over the valley far behind. After some time, the family headed down the rocky slopes, enjoying the captivating views of the sunset.

The next day they drove to a cable car station in Verarlberg and took a cable car up to the K Sangremstein trail area, where they got. . . frozen calzones! The kids were little confused but at the end of the trail they found the answer. There was a barbecue area with clay ovens where they could bake and enjoy the calzones! Great day indeed, but trouble was awaiting them on their way back home. . . **THEY GOT STUCK BETWEEN TWO MASSIVE MUDSLIDES!!!** In the mountainous roads, landslides are common during heavy rainfall. Her parents talked to the other stranded people and concluded that their best chance was to spend the night in the tunnel till the roads are cleared. Soon muddy water began rushing in the tunnel. The family prepared to sleep in the car. A few hours later an evacuation van came and took them to a shelter. She was impressed by the amazing volunteers of Red Cross (Rotes Kreuz in German). After few hours, the roads were cleaned up and they finally reached home at . . . **2 a.m.!!!** They had enough of mountains for now, so where did they go?



The mudslide



The barbecue area



Reservoir from Osperhütte

Fountains and Castles

She visited a small town named Melk! While they were roaming in the Melk abbey, her parents almost forgot that they have to get onto a cruise on the Danube River. And guess what.. they had to run to catch the cruise on time. Her mom and brother could not run fast and almost boarded the wrong ship! Thankfully she yelled really loudly at the right time and they were able to board the right ship to Durnstein. Everyone got on and the cruise started. The views were amazing and the food too- they enjoyed Schnitzel and Apricot dumpling on board. The ship finally docked at Durnstein, where they got off and walked toward the town and went through a gate. Right after this gate there was a small path that led up a mountain. They went up it and after some minutes they already saw the blue church steeple of the Durnstein abbey. It didn't take them much time until they already reached the outer castle yard. There were ruins of a castle on top of the mountain. They started to explore the castle grounds. The castle had become famous when Richard 1 the Lionheart had been captured on his way back to his homeland and imprisoned in the castle. The view was spectacular from top.

The next day they took a train to Salzburg, another city and went to a palace named Hellbrunn that had a big garden with fountains. It was built by Prince Archbishop Marcus Sitticus. There was something special about the fountains. They were usually not spouting water! But when someone pulled a handle somewhere, the fountains (they were in unexpected places like seats so people sitting on them would get their pants wet) would start watering. There was also a musical theatre, and the figurines would move. But the fountains and the theatre were all built with the power of water some 400 years ago! Marcus Sitticus clearly liked to impress his guests! She loved Hellbrunn and the tricky fountains over there. They had a lovely vacation!



Danube River from Durnstein



The Trick Fountains table



Ruins of Durnstein castle

A Bunny Encounter

Somdeep Nath, Son of Moloy Nath (ETC '02) & Sudipta Bandyopadhyay

On May 19, 2024, a bunny gave birth and life was given to five little bunnies in the backyard of 8 Harvey Drive. The small portion of their lives spent in our backyard will always have a place in my mind (and maybe theirs). In total, the bunnies spent around 9 days in total in my backyard, being born on the 19th and departing from my backyard on the 28th.

The story of these bunnies begins with a bark. The bark of my dog, Percy, to be specific. You see, my backyard is where Percy goes to do his business, and he was quite startled to find five tiny guests in his domain. Therefore he did what he does whenever he sees something or someone that he doesn't know, he barks. At first, he was observing them by sniffing their fluffy exteriors, and after a good minute of observation he started trying to eat them because he realized that those bunnies would make for a pretty good snack. I was observing this from inside the house, and once I saw Percy open his mouth, I knew what he was trying to do. So I ran outside, scared Percy away, and for the time being, put a flower pot over the bunnies so Percy couldn't harm them in any way. As soon as we got Percy inside and away from the bunnies, I devised a plan. I found a box with strange holes and some fluff to keep the bunnies in, and I went outside to utilize it. When I got to the scene, I realized that the bunnies wouldn't budge from their original spots. So I improvised and used the box to hold up the flower pot on one side so that the mother bunny could come in and out of the pot to see and feed its kids, and the bunnies would still not be vulnerable to the looming threat of Percy.

For the first three days of their lives, their eyes were closed and barely moved. Once I went in to observe them and I decided to touch one of the baby bunnies. My finger dove down and slowly stroked it. As soon as my fingertip made contact with its fur, a warm feeling immediately surged through my body, like the one you get when you drink tea or hot chocolate. I pondered whether I could keep the bunnies as pets and even presented the quandary to my mom, who then denied my offer and stated that bunnies were too difficult to take care of and if they came into the house, the threat of Percy would grow even larger. A few days after that failed endeavor, I noticed that the bunnies opened their eyes and started moving in their den a little more. I was rather fascinated about the growth cycle of these miniscule creatures and watching it unfold in real life.

Every day after school when I arrived home, I immediately went to check on the bunnies and see their status. Soon enough, the bunnies became lively and joyful, and as I tried petting one with my finger as I did a few days ago, it jumped and hopped in a circle around its den to then jump back in and sleep. I also noticed that the grass around the den started to disappear, so I inferred that the bunnies started to graze on the grass and are beginning to depart from their ways of drinking their mother's milk. Somewhere in the back of my mind, I felt as if the bunnies were starting to become restless and maybe wanted to leave their home to go explore someplace else.

After 2 days, I went to pet a bunny again, but to my surprise, the bunny I petted decided to jump out of the den and hop out of my backyard! I believed the bunny to be long gone as it was the most adventurous one out of its litter, as the other four bunnies haven't moved much compared to the adventurous bunny, who I named Alejandro because why not? However, on the next day when I went to do my daily check, I realized that Alejandro was back in the den, so he must have come back and remembered the way home.

Finally on May 28, 2024, all of the bunnies left our backyard. My time with them was short, but well spent. I was able to feel the immense pleasure of watching them grow into the capable grass munching machines they are today.

MESSI MANIA!

By Anagh Mandal , Age 10, Son of Anindita Chattopadhyay (EE 2005) & Arghya Mandal (EE 2003)

June 25,2024



There was a Copa America match between Argentina and Chile at MetLife stadium, and I got to see Lionel Messi live!

Here is my experience seeing Messi and how I had lots of FUN! So far, Argentina's Copa America Defense has been going well. They beat Canada 2-0.

On the day we went to the game, we picked up my brother from daycare, Now, I was feeling very excited to see Lionel Messi! On the way to MetLife stadium, I fell asleep in the back of the car to save my energy so that I could cheer loudly. When we got there, I ate half of a subway sandwich.

When we entered the stadium, all the fans had to settle down until both Chile and Argentina came to practice. That's the reason why we came early! Messi also waved at me! I felt happy that he did that! I am also a soccer player! I came early to see Messi train and get ready for the match. I play for a team, but not a professional team. Messi's training routines are very good before a game.

The match started and Argentina had so many chances that were being saved by the Chile goalie. Argentina fans were cheering very wildly, and they were standing up often. Almost all the fans were wearing Messi jerseys. – some were of the fans were wearing Chile jersey or something else. My eyes were glued to Messi. I was analyzing Messi's moves, He had chances, but he kept getting unlucky. He also created chances for the team. Chile also was attacking and had chances, But, Emiliano Martinez in goal was making crazy saves.

In the second half Lauturo Martinez came on the pitch to play, Argentina started to create a lot more chances with Lauturo Martinez. Then In the 88th Minute Messi whipped in a corner It deflected to Lauturo Martinez and he scored!  1-0  at full time.

After the game I was celebrating with the Argentinian fans, and I opened my shirt and danced. In the car we had Chinese food called. Sultan wok, it was very yummy! I was feeling very sleepy after cheering. I went to sleep.







Love one! Respect both!

Tips & Tricks for College applications

Ritisha De (Daughter of Sheuli Majumdar MET'97 & Jayanta De)

Hello future college goers and parents/ guardians of future high school seniors! Does the world of college applications and common app essays feel completely terrifying and unknown to you? One could even describe the whole process as a black hole. Fear not! The process is actually just about telling college a story, that story being you, and giving them the confidence to invest in (aka accept) an enthusiastic and hardworking applicant such as yourself. Here are some tips to prepare yourself in telling the story about you!

Tip 0: It's never too early (or late) to start!

Attention high school freshmen and underclassmen:

If you are a *high school freshman*, beware! You might blink and suddenly it's junior year and you're taking your SATs but you have no idea what you might write about in your essay or how you have shown leadership or teamwork! Start those volunteering, club, sport, dance hours now!

Attention high school juniors and upperclassmen:

If you are in fact a *junior* wondering what you have accomplished so far, it's also never too late to start something! If it's too late to join something and make substantial progress, no worries! Solo and volunteering projects are a great way to showcase passions and dedication to a subject. Confused where to start? Talk to your guidance / college counselors if there are existing projects you can work on or if any school teachers are looking for student helpers. Also the internet has some great suggestions too! Take your time to read and find something that interests you and you can dedicate a lot of time and effort into.

If you are a *junior / senior* and you don't have a lot of time, skip to Tip 7 to see how you can spin things you have already done into resume and essay worthy experiences!

Tip 1: Consistency & Growth (Two things Colleges Look For / Love)!

Disclaimer: varies from college to college so highly recommend doing research into each college and seeing what previously accepted students look like!

1. **Consistency:** Colleges love to see a consistent student whether it be grades, dedication to a sport, club, extracurricular activities, student organization, volunteering work etc. My advice? Find an activity you enjoy doing and try to advance in that activity from general participant to a leadership position! Even if you can't, 4 years or more in the same organization shows dedication and commitment which are key values colleges look for in their student leaders.
2. **Growth:** Colleges love to see a story and growth in anything tells them the story of how you struggled but persevered and did better. It is very common for a student to do well in high school and then arrive at college and struggle with classes or student life but if they see you have already overcome that struggle once, they will have more confidence in you that you can handle that pressure again. It is important that colleges see a general upward trend whether it be grades or extracurriculars. A student who starts out freshman year with Bs and Cs but continues to challenge themselves and with each year they see less Cs and more As might show more promise and strength than the student who had straight As in all accelerated classes all 4 years. Even the student that has a

bad year or semester but is able to finish off junior year or start senior year well shows perseverance and a strong will to be better.

It sounds contradictory I know, how can you be consistent and have growth at the same time? Your consistency in a community shows them that if they accept you, you will be committed to the college and its student communities. Your growth in areas you have fallen down shows colleges who want to see that if you falter once arriving, that you will be able to pick yourself back up and start again.

Tip 2: Research Research Research!

Take my word when I say it is the single most important thing in a college application process. Knowing and understanding what institution you are applying to is key to a good application and college experience, especially if you are aiming for a specific type of college.

What do I research you might ask?

1. How is the undergraduate program set up?
 - Is there a predetermined number of classes they decide for you to take?
 - Do they give you more freedom to take the classes you want to and make your own major?
 - Ex. Information Systems at CMU is flexible in that 2 IS students can have drastically different schedules (one could be taking more business classes, the other more coding) but they graduate under the same degree.
 - Ex. CS and ECE on the other hand tend to have less flexibility and most students' schedules look the same.

This is important to look at because you may want that flexibility to do different things or you might want a set path to follow, either way, this is different across all majors and colleges but course information is usually publicly available to view!

2. How difficult are the core classes? Will I be able to maintain a social, extracurricular life outside of classes?
 - How many hours per week/ day are you spending in each class?
 - How many assignments do they give every week / month?
3. What does their student life encompass?
 - Do they have a lot of student clubs, opportunities to be a student leader?
 - Do they have your existing passions available as a recreational club or a competitive team?
 - Does the school encourage you to join or already have student opportunities set up by major?
4. What company / educational connections do they have / promote for post-grad opportunities?
 - Maybe there is an undergrad program that feeds you into the masters program at the college you know you want to do post-grad at.
 - Maybe you know you want to work at Company A and College B tends to have a lot of graduates employed there.

- Some colleges post their post-grad statistics so it's pretty easy to see what companies have existing relations with certain colleges.
 - Some colleges have Co-Op programs where the colleges themselves connect you to work part-time in a company whilst completing your degree. Or might have you take a semester off to work and will help you find those opportunities.
- 5. How is their dorm life experience?
 - Is it individualistic and your dorms are just where you live or is there a sense of community the colleges promote?
- 6. What does Greek life look like?
 - Greek life can have many networking opportunities and major specific opportunities that can help you with securing post-grad opportunities.
- 7. What is the student body and professors like?
 - Are the professors heavily involved in clubs, research, student opportunities?
 - Is the student body known to be welcoming and supportive or is it known to be more each person for themselves?
 - Talking to alumni and reading forums about specific colleges helps you get a REAL sense of what it would be like to be a student there.

Tip 3: A grades are important! But they don't show everything!

Some advisors might tell you a transcript with all As in all accelerated classes looks better than a transcript with As, Bs, and Cs in honors classes but this is known to not be the case. Colleges love to see a student who is willing to challenge themselves and not back down because a class is too hard. In other words, they want to see how you will fare in their much harder classes in addition to student activities. If they see you are taking the comfortable route by just getting straight As in accelerated classes instead of challenging yourself to take an honors class and end with a B, they might not think you are up for the challenge!

My advice? Take that honors class, strive for that A and worst case end up with that B. Another common misconception is that you need to take every single honors and AP class your school has to offer. Don't. Quality over quantity is key! Focus on the subjects you excel at and take the Honor / AP classes / tests in those subjects. If you think you will do well in all or you don't know yet what you want to do, then take this opportunity in high school to branch out and explore what interests you! It helps a bit when applying if you have a general idea of what works for you, and even if you don't, don't worry because that is also what college is for.

Tip 4: Standardized Testing Has Changed!

While the SATs are still usually mandatory in an application, standardized testing no longer holds as much weight as it used to due to COVID. If you are unable to score well overall, that's ok! If your English score is much better than your math, that should tell you to find more ways to validate your writing skills and vice versa. A writing student doesn't have to be great at math so search for other opportunities like competitions, online writing submissions, school newspapers, teacher-led projects and more to help support those scores and take eyes off those not so awesome math scores. Colleges like to see that you are able to recognize your own

strengths and continue to apply those skills instead of just stopping at assessing skill levels because that is exactly what they expect you to do on campus. They want to see good writers not just doing well in classes but going out and being in competitions or contributing to a column to help bring name recognition back to the college.

While SAT Subject tests don't matter nearly as much, they are good indicators of what subjects you excel at if you already know what majors you are applying to. If you can and can do well, take it! It will always be a plus point.

Some AP courses aren't necessarily offered at every school but are still available for testing if you study at home. Some AP tests don't even require you to take the course through the school (again varies from school to school) so if you are looking for resume boosters, AP tests are a great way to show academic excellence.

Tip 5: Honor Societies

Honor societies are a quick and easy way for colleges to evaluate the academic level, community efforts, and community presence of a student. Most if not all have strict requirements such as all As (or all As in chemistry classes for chemistry societies), strict volunteering hours, and multiple recommendation letters from subject specific teachers.

As a recruiter, a student in a math honor society might pique my interest as I already know they must have good math grades, contributed to math related extracurriculars or competitions (for those volunteering hours) and are in good relations with their math teachers. As a result, I might take a closer and more careful look at this student's resume and essays to learn more.

These societies are also great and easy ways to get more involved in extracurriculars and subject specific work to rack up those resume bullet points with credible sources (your teachers) to support you.

Tip 6: Be an all rounder! Even if you have a centralized focus!

If you are not sure what you want to do yet, being an all rounder is key to getting college acceptances. Colleges want the next best thing to a contract guarantee that no matter what major you eventually choose you can and will do well and that is your diverse high school experience.

If you know exactly what you want to do, try to curate your resume to show dedication to a subject or passion but still show that you are capable of more than just studies. Versatility is always valued and even if you know exactly what you want to do, colleges want to see that you can handle more than just doing what you want to do. They want to see you can go outside your comfort zone and interact with people across various fields of study and backgrounds.

You will have to juggle living alone, student organizations, office hours and making student connections in addition to studying. If you are able to show you can handle studies and a club or two, it gives them confidence that you can do the same on campus. Being in these organizations continues to show commitment, dedication, and routine on your behalf.

Just being in any of these communities will give you leadership, teamwork, responsibility, diversity, and personal growth or challenge experiences to draw from for your essays!

1. **Student Organizations:** Student Council, Key Club, HOSA, Model UN, FBLA
2. **Academic Orgs:** Robotics, School Newspaper, Coding, Honor Societies, Writing Club, Girls Who Code
3. **Sports:** Marching Band, Cheer, Football, Soccer, Golf, Tennis etc.
4. **Creative Clubs:** Dance Team, Art Club, Choir, Orchestra
5. **Cultural:** Setting up, Dancing, Singing, Performing for any cultural community → Volunteering Hours

Note: These organizations do not have to be through the school, they can also be outside the school but I do recommend being in at least one school related activity to show commitment to your school community and be involved with your passions in outside communities.

Tip 7: Everything you have done, no matter how small matters!

One thing I realized in the application process is that everything is resume / essay worthy even if you don't think it is. Students have a tendency to undermine day-to-day things they do or the communities they are a part of on a daily basis. The cultural communities you have been a part of since childhood might hold volunteer work worthy of a resume bullet or a personal experience that could answer an essay question. Your experience in the classroom is also often overlooked in resume and essay content.

Say you are struggling to find a leadership experience to talk about in an essay because you don't have official club titles. That's a-ok! Maybe you were in a group project and you took the lead in distributing the work or making sure everyone submitted their part on time. Maybe you took on the responsibility of communicating project expectations with the teacher. Say an essay asks about a time you struggled with teamwork and how you fixed the issues. Maybe a project partner was struggling to hand in their work on time so you took the initiative to communicate with them and find a more manageable timeline. Or maybe they didn't bother trying to help at all and you took the responsibility to notify your teacher and ask for help. This shows that you did not just let the problem fester and you are able to reach out for help when needed.

If you are struggling to answer an essay question or find resume bullets to add, take a closer look at all of your personal and collaboration experiences, not just the ones they expect you to talk about (clubs, sports, extracurriculars etc).

Tip 8: Pre-College / Summer Programs

Most colleges and universities of all levels offer various summer programs (free of cost and paid) to students of all ages to help students get an idea of what college is like. I highly recommend that if you are able to, try to spend at least one part of summer doing a summer program (of any kind) as it shows not only demonstrated interest in the subject but the college as well.

If you have a dream college in mind, attending a pre-college program might give you a better insight of the campus life and classes and help you decide if it's the one for you. Even if it's not your dream college, it will help you understand a college kid's perspective and how college classes are structured.

Summer programs are also a great way to explore subject areas you are not familiar with and give you an insight into various majors that aren't covered in high school. They also give you a plethora of experiences to talk about and refer back to even if it ended up not being something you are interested in. Colleges are also interested in hearing how you narrowed down what you want to study.

Confused on how to find one? Reach out to your guidance / academic / college counselors. They usually have a giant list of summer programs you can attend and can also help you apply to them. If they don't have anything you like, a quick internet search will land you at least 100 you can look through.

Tip 9: Teacher / Coach / Academic Advisor Recommendations

It goes without saying that a recommendation letter could make or break your application. I said it anyway because students tend to forget that a transcript, a resume and a student written essay don't give colleges any outsider perspective of a student. Recommendation letters are recruiters' only ways of understanding what a student is really like in a classroom or a team. Students generally do not get to see the letters themselves but have every opportunity to guarantee it highlights their strengths and weaknesses in the best way possible.

How do I get a good recommendation letter?

1. Start Early! Be a good student and build a relationship with them from day 1.

Teachers usually have a limit of 10-20 letters and they will reserve them for the students who have been consistently making a good impression from day 1. Building a relationship doesn't always mean staying after class everyday to talk to them or trying to do extra work for them. Just having a quick and polite conversation or being a recognizable student they can easily write good things about (even if it's generic) makes their life easier and more willing to say yes to the letter.

2. Ask for quality letters!

Colleges prefer letters from junior year teachers as they are the most recent ones; however, a letter from a coach or a teacher who has known you for years across academics and sports could be more valuable.

It is also important to recognize which letters go to which college and what major as well. If you are applying to a writing major, you would probably want your writing teacher to talk about your skills and how you are as a student. Say for some reason they don't have the best impression of you or doesn't seem like they know you that well, get the letter from the science teacher you talk to everyday and knows how hard you work in their class. Let them know you are applying for a writing major and they might be able to draw a focus on the high writing level of your lab reports in addition to your character.

3. Be prepared for a no, always have backups!

Teachers are also not obligated to give any student a letter and it is very much their right to say no at any point. Always have back up teachers / letters ready in the worst case possible they can not write it for whatever reason or just say no. It happens and can often be a teacher's fault

more than yours so make sure you get those letters in on time and have backups ready just in case.

4. Always ask in person, never ever in email and with utmost respect!

Like I said earlier, teachers do not have to say yes and if they get a generic email asking for one, 99/100 times they will say no. Teachers will always rather you ask them in person and that you ask them early enough so they can start planning how many to write and when. If it's a teacher you are meeting for the first time, spend the first weeks of school really getting to know them so by the time October rolls around, they are ready to write you a letter.

Tip 10: Future Tip, don't be afraid to transfer!

The process doesn't end once you have made it in. A good number of students end up realizing that the major isn't for them or the college environment isn't what they expected. Do not be afraid to open up the discussion of transferring to a different college or another major. You aren't stuck and there are entire departments dedicated to helping students transition. You would go through another research and application process but if it is really not working for you, do not worry because there are people there to help!

Alumni Advice:

It helps to know where you are headed and how to prepare for that, is to find other students who have already done it! Find alumni (high school and college) who are willing to talk (again go through advisors / schools tend to have a list) or use social media (Linkedin, Instagram etc). Be respectful and understand they don't gain anything from talking to you so having a genuine interest in their journey is important. Alumni generally do not give free advice to students who they don't think will use it well!

Also the internet exists! There are loads of online forums where people give out their experiences on teacher / professor / course / class experiences such as Reddit, My Professor etc. Reading through them also helps to get a background idea of the overall experience as well.

Key takeaways:

1. Get those As but challenge yourself with higher level classes!
2. Participate in activities in and out of your school to show you have dedication to the various communities you are a part of.
3. Research everything and go into things with preparation!
4. Talk to advisors, alumni, and students! Communication is important and gives you an idea of what the experience really will be like!
5. Maintain relationships from day 1, you will need them!
6. The internet is your friend! Don't know something? Not sure where to start? Go ask google, someone will already have had that question.
7. Don't try to do everything, do 1-2 things well.
8. Visit colleges, show interest! Reach out to recruiters and do an interview if they allow!
9. Transferring is an option and you are never stuck in a decision you made as a high school senior.

PSA to Parents: Your kids have got this! Remember to be supportive and help them find something they are passionate about and not just something to default on. Most students have no idea what they want to be doing at age 18 and end up wishing they had known better when applying to not just follow everyone else and default. Encourage them to learn and research and encourage them to know better! They may not want to at the time but college they might thank you for helping them find the institution and the right environment that helps them make life changing decisions much later in the future!

Importance of Macroeconomics to Everyday People

by Arkadeep Das (Gr 12, South Brunswick High School)

To most, macroeconomics is the study of large-scale economic factors at a national and global level, but it's more than just that. Macroeconomics affects our everyday lives in some form or another. Understanding the crucial concepts in macroeconomics would help enable individuals, businesses, lawmakers and politicians to make careful decisions, anticipate economic trends, & respond effectively to financial crises such as the one from 2008 or even the one that happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. It equips us with the vital info to navigate complex economic situations that affect our daily lives. In this essay, I am going to expand on few major macroeconomic aspects that have a big influence on average Americans in everyday life.

An important economic factor that most people think of when it comes to macroeconomics is a country's GDP or Gross Domestic Product, which is the monetary value of the final goods and services produced. It basically gives a measure of how good or bad the economy is doing. It also helps policymakers & central banks (e.g. the Fed or The Federal Reserve) infer whether the economy is shrinking (i.e. recession) or growing. Investors use data based on the nominal (the raw value of goods and services produced as collected with inflation) or real (a measure that is adjusted to not include inflation) GDP to assess an economy's condition without price changes. To calculate GDP, consumer spending, government spending, business capital spending, and the country's net exports (exports - imports) are added up. During the second quarter of 2024, the real GDP for the US rose 3.0% from the previous quarter to \$28.65 trillion. This increase reflects increases in consumer expenditure, private inventory investment, and more. When the GDP is growing, it indicates that more people are being hired and that families are spending more on different items as people have more money in their pockets than they did this time last year.

Another economic indicator that concerns everyday Americans is the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI measures the average price change based on a basket of goods and services over a period. It is also the most widely used measure for calculating the inflation rate. The inflation rate is calculated by taking last year's CPI, subtracting it from the current CPI, dividing it by last year's CPI, and multiplying that by 100. Just like GDP, economists use the CPI to make informed economic decisions. The Fed uses it to determine its economic policies. For July 2024, the CPI rose 0.2% from the previous month & 2.9% over the last 12 months. The price of the food basket within the CPI rose by 2.2% in the 12 months ending in July 2024. In regard to everyday Americans, it describes the prices of different household items that are bought & it shows how expensive different items are getting compared to last year or month. This also shows that some things might not be affordable for everyday Americans at the grocery store. Although

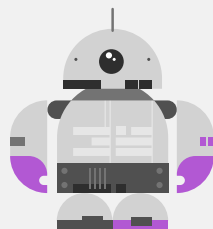
everyday prices have gone up a lot recently, I expect them to go down or remain elevated in the short run. If household items prices remain higher our purchasing power will decrease each year if our family's income doesn't increase at the same rate or more than the annual inflation rate.

Lastly, another big economic indicator that many Americans look at is the unemployment rate. The rate is the proportion of the able workforce that is currently unemployed. It is used to make economic decisions as well as influence monetary policy. U-3 is the employment rate number that is commonly seen by most individuals. It is calculated by dividing the number of unemployed over the total workforce. It considers the number of people not working that have been looking for work for the past four weeks. For July 2024, the seasonally adjusted U-3 rate rose 0.2% to 4.3% and now sits at 7.2 million people. These numbers have been rising since the U-3 rate hit a low of 3.4% in Jan and April of 2023. A rising unemployment rate can also have big effects on people such as decreasing the disposable income of families with unemployed people, eroding purchasing power, diminishing employee morale by making them more fearful of losing their jobs, & reducing an economy's annual output shown through its GDP.

Overall, I feel more informed about different economic indicators but there are so much more than just these three main ones. Another important aspect in macroeconomics is the concept of supply and demand, e.g. of housing. Although interest rates have a huge impact on the housing industry, supply and demand also play an important part. For example, understanding supply and demand for different goods and services gives us a good understanding of the complexity of national and global economies. By studying these core principles of macroeconomics, individuals can better understand the importance of each economic indicator and the role they play in the economy. These concepts are vital for making informed business and policy decisions and to promote economic well-being. Some people are out looking for jobs, others are trying to navigate this environment of high food and gas prices and still others are trying their best to keep their jobs without losing them and becoming unemployed. Regardless, macroeconomics is very much involved in our day to day lives.

In today's fast-paced world, we're all juggling a thousand things at once—kind of like being in a circus, but without the cool costume or applause. Whether it's meeting *tight deadlines*, *managing sky-high expectations*, or *putting out figurative fires* that somehow always flare up at the worst possible moment, we've all wished for a **personal assistant** (a PA) who could magically swoop in and handle it all.

Enter Generative AI or GenAI, the sidekick we didn't know we needed, but now can't live without.



In this brief read, I'll walk you through **some real-life and detailed scenarios** where GenAI steps in to save the day. No, I'm not going to bore you with the technical mumbo jumbo – that's for another day maybe.

We're just here to talk about the "what" and not the "how" on 'GenAI in everyday life'.

First off, what's GenAI.

Well, in fancy terms, "*Generative AI (GenAI) refers to a class of artificial intelligence systems that have the ability to generate new content, such as text, images, or other data, that is similar to, but not directly copied from, existing examples.*" In simpler terms, it's that magical tool that turns your mundane tasks into something much less painful.

Now, let's break down some of the regular tasks we face and execute each day into three categories: simple, medium, and complex.

1. Simple Tasks:
 - Meeting Notes Summary
 - Report Generation
2. Medium Tasks:
 - Dataset Analysis
 - Risk Analysis
 - Cost and Schedule Estimation
 - Cost-Benefit Analysis
3. Complex Tasks:
 - Business Case Creation
 - Decision Making and scheduling of personal and office projects

Here's how GenAI can help in these 3 areas:

- **Simple Tasks:** GenAI automates these. Imagine it's like that reliable intern who doesn't need coffee breaks and never messes up the coffee order. It takes care of report generation, document analysis, and meeting note summarization with ease. *So, it can **AUTOMATE** for you.*
- **Medium Tasks:** Here, GenAI is like a trusty co-pilot. It'll help draft initial reports, conduct a preliminary analysis, and even highlight potential risks. You'll still need to step in to polish things up, but the heavy lifting is already done. *So, GenAI **ASSISTS** you.*
- **Complex Tasks:** For the tough and complex stuff, GenAI works alongside you, helping you brainstorm and refine complex strategies. It's like having a supercharged assistant who keeps you on top of your game. *So, GenAI **AUGMENTS**.*

But too much theory makes everything dull and mundane.... Let's make this interesting. So, let's dive into some real and detailed use cases, one from each category to see GenAI (in this case, with our good friend **ChatGPT**) in action.

Use Case 1: Meeting notes Summary [a simple Task]



Excerpts from a brief project meeting:

Person 1 (Alex): Hey team, let's kick off this project management call. We've got a tight deadline ahead. John, can you update us on the project timelines?

Person 2 (John): Sure, Alex. So far, we're on track with the initial milestones. The design phase is almost complete, and development is underway. But I've noticed a potential bottleneck in testing that might push us a bit.

Person 3 (Maria): Testing? What seems to be the issue there, John?

John: Well, Maria, it's the integration testing. Some of the components are taking longer to sync up than anticipated, and I'm worried it might spill over into the next phase.

Person 4 (Chris): Okay, that's a concern. Maria, any thoughts on how we can address this challenge?

Maria: Thanks, Chris. I think we should allocate additional resources to the testing phase. Maybe pull in a couple of extra testers to speed up the process. It's a critical step, and we can't afford delays there.

Alex: Good suggestion, Maria. Let's get that arranged. Chris, any insights on potential impacts on the overall timeline?

Chris: I've run some scenarios, and if we bring in extra hands for testing, we might be able to catch up and avoid a significant delay. However, it's crucial we communicate this to the client ASAP to manage expectations.

John: Agreed. I'll draft a revised timeline and share it with everyone before we reach out to the client. Also, we might want to reassess our risk mitigation strategies for the future phases.

Maria: Absolutely. It's better to be proactive and transparent about these challenges. They'll appreciate our honesty, and we can work together on solutions.

Alex: Great, team. Let's move quickly on the additional resources for testing and ensure the client is informed promptly. We've got this – we've tackled tougher challenges before.

John: Agreed, Alex. We'll get through this, and the project will come out even stronger.

[Note: This is a very linear conversation for the sake of simplifying the use case. In real scenario, these conversations would be longer and filled with noise. But today's GenAI models are equipped to take out the noise from a conversation]

So, this is a simple meeting where some decisions were made.

Imagine you were not present at the meeting, but you wanted the summary and a few other things. Can GenAI help? I provided this input to ChatGPT and asked some interesting questions. Let's see the answers it gave.

Q1: Generate a brief summary of the meeting.

ChatGPT answer: In the project meeting, the team discussed the status and upcoming challenges. John updated everyone on the project timelines, noting that while the design phase is nearly complete, there's a potential bottleneck in integration testing that could delay the next phase.

Maria suggested allocating additional testers to speed up the testing process, which was agreed upon by the team. Chris emphasized the importance of informing the client about the potential delay in managing expectations. The team decided to bring in more resources for testing and revise the project timeline to mitigate risks and ensure transparency with the client.

Q2: From the excerpt, can you tell me the role that each person plays within the organization.

ChatGPT answer:

1. **Alex** appears to be the Project Manager or Team Lead. He is facilitating the meeting, assigning tasks, and ensuring that the team addresses any challenges.
2. **John** seems to be responsible for overseeing the project timelines and milestones, likely playing the role of a Project Coordinator or Senior Developer. He is aware of the overall project progress and identifies potential bottlenecks.
3. **Maria** likely holds a role related to Quality Assurance or Testing Management. She is focused on the testing phase, suggesting solutions to mitigate delays.
4. **Chris** seems to be in a role that involves project planning or risk management, possibly a Project Planner or Risk Manager. He assesses the impact of potential delays and advises on communication strategies with the client.

These roles are inferred based on their contributions to the discussion.

Q3: What was the tone of the conversation?

ChatGPT answer: The tone of the conversation was professional, collaborative, and solution oriented. The team members communicated openly about potential challenges, such as the testing bottleneck, and worked together to find proactive solutions.

Despite the pressure of a tight deadline, the discussion remained constructive, with a focus on teamwork and maintaining transparency with the client. There was also a sense of determination and confidence, as reflected in Alex's encouragement that the team has tackled tougher challenges before.

Q4: What were Maria's main points.

ChatGPT Answer:

- *Identifying the Issue:* She asked John for more details about the bottleneck in the testing phase, showing her focus on understanding the root cause of the delay.
- *Proposing a Solution:* She suggested allocating additional resources to the testing phase by bringing in extra testers to speed up the process. Maria emphasized that this step is critical to avoid delays in the project.
- *Emphasizing Proactivity and Transparency:* Maria highlighted the importance of being proactive in addressing challenges and stressed the need for transparency with the client, believing that honesty would help in finding collaborative solutions.

These answers, actually, are pretty accurate to the context and to the point.

So, Boom! Now you're in the loop without having to sit through an hour of corporate lingo.

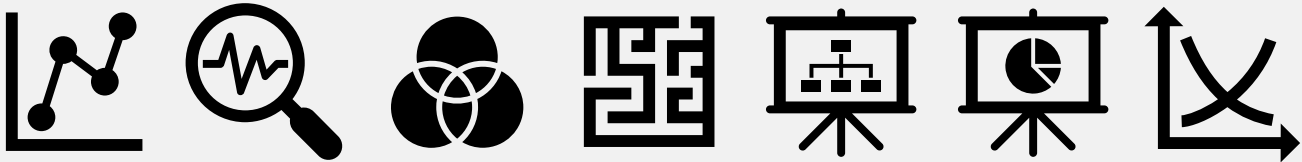
ChatGPT AUTOMATED my task here and it did quite well.



Use Case 2: Analyzing a Dataset [a medium complex task]

Excel sheets—they’re the unsung heroes of both our office and personal lives. Whether we’re tracking budgets, planning projects, or trying to make sense of our ever-growing to-do lists, those grids and cells are there for us.

But let’s be real: digging through data in Excel can sometimes feel like trying to decode an ancient language. Sure, there’s a treasure trove of insights hidden in those sheets but getting to them can be a bit of a brain workout. Wouldn’t it be nice if we had a little help cracking the code?



To illustrate how GenAI can help here and how anyone can do it - let’s go through the flight data excel (as below) first.

Flight ID	Airline	Origin	Destination	Departure Date	Departure Time	Arrival Date	Arrival Time	Flight Duration	Distance (Miles)	Aircraft Type	Ticket Price	Passengers	Delayed
FL1001	Delta	JFK	LAX	2023-01-01	12:00 PM	2023-01-01	03:00 PM	3h	2500	Boeing 737	300	150	No
FL1002	United	LAX	ORD	2023-01-02	08:00 AM	2023-01-02	01:00 PM	5h	1800	Airbus A320	200	120	Yes
FL1003	American	DFW	SFO	2023-01-03	03:30 PM	2023-01-03	07:30 PM	4h	1600	Boeing 787	400	180	No
FL1004	Southwest	LAS	DEN	2023-01-04	06:45 AM	2023-01-04	08:45 AM	2h	800	Airbus A319	150	80	No
FL1005	JetBlue	BOS	MCO	2023-01-05	02:15 PM	2023-01-05	05:15 PM	3h	1200	Embraer E190	180	100	No
FL1006	Delta	ATL	IAH	2023-01-06	10:30 AM	2023-01-06	01:30 PM	3h	700	Boeing 737	250	130	Yes
FL1007	Alaska	SEA	PDX	2023-01-07	04:45 PM	2023-01-07	05:45 PM	1h	200	Airbus A320	100	50	No
FL1008	Spirit	FLL	LGA	2023-01-08	01:00 PM	2023-01-08	04:00 PM	3h	500	Airbus A319	120	70	Yes
FL1009	Frontier	MIA	DCA	2023-01-09	09:30 AM	2023-01-09	12:30 PM	3h	600	Airbus A320	140	90	No
FL1010	United	IAD	ORD	2023-01-10	07:15 AM	2023-01-10	10:15 AM	3h	800	Boeing 787	220	110	No
FL1091	Southwest	SJC	SAN	2023-01-31	11:30 AM	2023-01-31	01:30 PM	2h	400	Airbus A319	100	60	No
FL1092	JetBlue	JFK	MCO	2023-02-01	02:00 PM	2023-02-01	05:00 PM	3h	1100	Embraer E190	170	90	Yes
FL1093	Delta	LAX	LAS	2023-02-02	05:45 PM	2023-02-02	06:45 PM	1h	300	Boeing 737	120	70	No
FL1094	American	DFW	MIA	2023-02-03	10:15 AM	2023-02-03	02:15 PM	4h	1200	Boeing 787	320	180	No
FL1095	Southwest	DEN	PHX	2023-02-04	03:30 PM	2023-02-04	05:30 PM	2h	600	Airbus A319	90	50	No
FL1096	Spirit	ORD	ATL	2023-02-05	08:00 AM	2023-02-05	12:00 PM	4h	800	Airbus A320	150	80	Yes
FL1097	United	IAH	SFO	2023-02-06	01:45 PM	2023-02-06	04:45 PM	3h	1400	Boeing 787	250	120	No
FL1098	Frontier	MCO	BOS	2023-02-07	06:15 AM	2023-02-07	10:15 AM	4h	1000	Airbus A320	180	100	No
FL1099	Alaska	SEA	SJC	2023-02-08	12:30 PM	2023-02-08	01:30 PM	1h	300	Airbus A320	120	60	Yes
FL1100	JetBlue	LGA	FLL	2023-02-09	04:00 PM	2023-02-09	07:00 PM	3h	700	Embraer E190	200	110	No

Now, after uploading this Excel file to ChatGPT, I've essentially unleashed the power of GenAI to dive deep into the data and reveal its secrets. No complicated formulas or endless scrolling—just simple questions and answers, all in plain English. It's like having a conversation with your spreadsheet. So, buckle up and follow along!

Q1: Please provide me with a grid, on descending order, by Aircraft type, with respect to the total distance (Miles) in the data provided.

ChatGPT Answer:

AIRCRAFT TYPE	TOTAL DISTANCE (MILES)	NUMBER OF FLIGHTS
AIRBUS A320	5,800	6
BOEING 787	5,000	4
BOEING 737	3,500	3
EMBRAER E190	3,000	3
AIRBUS A319	2,600	5

Q2: Which section was costliest?

ChatGPT Answer: The costliest sector in the data provided is the flight from DFW to SFO, with a ticket price of \$400.

Q3: Is there a way I could have travelled from JFK to LAS? How?

ChatGPT Answer:

Based on the flight data you provided, here's how you could travel from JFK to LAS using available connections:

1. JFK to LAX:
 - o Flight FL1001: Delta Airlines, Departure: 2023-01-01 at 12:00 PM, Arrival: 2023-01-01 at 03:00 PM, Duration: 3h, Distance: 2500 miles.
2. LAX to LAS:
 - o Flight FL1004: Southwest Airlines, Departure: 2023-01-04 at 06:45 AM, Arrival: 2023-01-04 at 08:45 AM, Duration: 2h, Distance: 800 miles.

Q4: Which Aircraft Type carried the most passengers?

ChatGPT Answer: Boeing 787 carried the most passengers, with a total of 590 passengers across the flights.

Q5: Which Airline was Best and Worse in terms of delays?

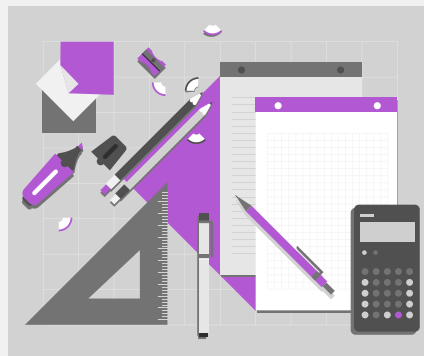
ChatGPT answer:

Best Airline (Least Delayed): American, Southwest, and Frontier, with 0 delayed flights.

Worst Airline (Most Delayed): Spirit, with 3 delayed flights.

So, within minutes, you've got the insights you need, minus the headache of running SQL (Structured Query Language) queries or fiddling with pivot tables. This used to take days—now, it's done in 5 minutes.

ChatGPT has ASSISTED me like a true co-pilot here. It did quite well actually.



Use Case 3: Decision Making and scheduling of personal and office projects [a complex task].

This is a complex situation where we need to make a project plan with a lot of project constraints.

Situation: As the Project Manager, you are leading a project team with a software feature development project. You need to plan out this project.

Team members:

- Alex (Backend Developer)
- Bella (Frontend Developer)
- Chris (QA Engineer)
- David (UX/UI Designer)
- Emma (DevOps Specialist)
- Frank (Full-Stack Developer)
- Grace (Full-Stack Developer)
- Harry (Mobile App Developer)
- Iris (Database Administrator)
- Jake (Technical Writer)



Project Constraints:

Fixed Project Timeline: The project will begin on January 15, 2023, and conclude on May 5, 2023, adhering to a 16-week fixed timeline.

Planned Time Off for Team Members:

- Alex (Backend Developer) will be on vacation during Week 5 (February 20-24, 2023),
- Grace (Full-Stack Developer) will be on vacation during Weeks 8-9 (March 13-24, 2023),
- Emma (DevOps Specialist) will attend a conference in Week 12 (April 10-14, 2023).

Phase Dependencies and Milestones: The project will be divided into four phases

- Planning (Weeks 1-2),
- Design (Weeks 3-4),
- Development (Weeks 5-10),
- Testing (Weeks 11-13), and
- Deployment (Weeks 14-16), each with clearly defined milestones.

Quality Assurance and User Acceptance Testing (UAT) Windows: Quality assurance testing will take place in Weeks 11-12, followed by User Acceptance Testing (UAT) in Week 13. No new development or major changes will be introduced during these testing phases.

Okay, with this whole thing uploaded in ChatGPT, I have asked it one simple English question again.

Question: So now give me a very detailed project plan based on the information shared and with the constraints. Please provide me with a grid.

ChatGPT response:

Here's a detailed project plan grid, breaking down the tasks into sub-tasks. This version provides a finer granularity of activities, assigned team members, days, start and end days, and remarks.

PHASE	TASK	SUB-TASK	ASSIGNED TO	DAYS	START DAY	END DAY	REMARKS
PLANNING	Kickoff Meeting	Prepare Agenda	All team members	1	15-Jan-23	15-Jan-23	Align goals and timeline.
		Conduct Meeting	All team members	1	15-Jan-23	15-Jan-23	
	Requirements Gathering	Gather Initial Requirements	All team members	2	16-Jan-23	17-Jan-23	Define project scope and deliverables.
		Document Requirements	Jake	2	18-Jan-23	19-Jan-23	
	Initial Project Setup	Setup Project Infrastructure	Emma	2	20-Jan-23	21-Jan-23	Setup initial project infrastructure.
		Configure Tools and Repositories	Emma	2	22-Jan-23	23-Jan-23	Configure tools and repositories for the project.

DESIGN	System Architecture Design	Define Architecture	Alex, Grace, Frank	5	25-Jan-23	29-Jan-23	Design system architecture and high-level design.
		Review Architecture	All team members	2	30-Jan-23	31-Jan-23	Review and finalize system architecture.
	UI/UX Mockups	Create Wireframes	David	5	25-Jan-23	29-Jan-23	Develop initial wireframes for the UI.
		Design High-Fidelity Mockups	David, Bella	5	1-Feb-23	5-Feb-23	Create high-fidelity UI/UX mockups.
		Review and Finalize Mockups	All team members	2	6-Feb-23	7-Feb-23	Review and finalize UI/UX designs.
	Database Schema	Define Database Requirements	Iris	2	25-Jan-23	26-Jan-23	Determine database requirements.
		Design Database Schema	Iris	3	27-Jan-23	29-Jan-23	Design and document database schema.
Review and Finalize Schema		All team members	2	30-Jan-23	31-Jan-23	Review and finalize database schema.	
DEVELOPMENT	Backend Development	Develop API Endpoints	Alex	10	8-Feb-23	17-Feb-23	Develop and test API endpoints.
		Implement Business Logic	Alex	10	18-Feb-23	27-Feb-23	Implement business logic and integrate APIs.
	Frontend Development	Develop UI Components	Bella	10	8-Feb-23	17-Feb-23	Develop UI components based on designs.
		Integrate UI with Backend	Bella	10	18-Feb-23	27-Feb-23	Integrate frontend UI with backend services.
	Mobile App Development	Develop Mobile Features	Harry	10	8-Feb-23	17-Feb-23	Develop mobile app features.
		Integrate Mobile App with Backend	Harry	10	18-Feb-23	27-Feb-23	Integrate mobile app with backend services.
	Integration	Integrate Frontend and Backend	Alex, Bella, Frank	10	1-Mar-23	14-Mar-23	Integrate frontend and backend components.
		Integrate Mobile App	Alex, Harry, Frank	10	15-Mar-23	28-Mar-23	Integrate mobile app with system components.
	Full-Stack Development	Address Integration Issues	Grace, Frank	10	29-Mar-23	8-Apr-23	Resolve issues found during integration.
		Refactor and Optimize Code	Grace, Frank	10	9-Apr-23	18-Apr-23	Refactor and optimize code.
DevOps Setup	Setup CI/CD Pipelines	Emma	5	1-Apr-23	5-Apr-23	Configure CI/CD pipelines for automated deployment.	
	Configure Environment	Emma	5	6-Apr-23	10-Apr-23	Set up deployment environment.	
TESTING	Quality Assurance Testing	Develop Test Cases	Chris	3	15-Apr-23	17-Apr-23	Develop and document test cases.
		Execute Test Cases	Chris	7	18-Apr-23	26-Apr-23	Execute QA testing and log defects.
	User Acceptance Testing (UAT)	Prepare UAT Plan	Chris	2	27-Apr-23	28-Apr-23	Prepare plan for user acceptance testing.
		Conduct UAT	All Developers	3	29-Apr-23	1-May-23	Perform user acceptance testing with stakeholders.
DEPLOYMENT	Final Preparations	Prepare Deployment Scripts	Emma	2	2-May-23	3-May-23	Prepare and review deployment scripts.
		Finalize Deployment Plan	Emma	1	4-May-23	4-May-23	Finalize deployment strategy.
	Deployment	Deploy to Production	All team members	1	5-May-23	5-May-23	Deploy the software to production.
	Post-Deployment Review	Review Deployment Results	All team members	3	6-May-23	8-May-23	Review deployment and address any issues.

Constraints Management

- Alex: Vacation Week 5 (Feb 20-24, 2023) – Covered by adjusting backend development tasks.
- Grace: Vacation Weeks 8-9 (Mar 13-24, 2023) – Adjusted Full-Stack Development tasks.
- Emma: Conference Week 12 (Apr 10-14, 2023) – Adjusted DevOps tasks.

This grid provides a detailed breakdown of each task and sub-task, accounting for team member constraints and ensuring comprehensive project coverage.

For a moment, take a closer look at the plan. ChatGPT was able to decide the necessary tasks and sub-tasks. It might not be perfect yet, there might be **HALUCINATION** (check the grid closely again) but it has given you a BIG head start in devising the project plan with all constraints.

So ChatGPT has AUGMENTED me like a supercharged assistant. I would say it has done well – once again.

So those are the detailed Use Cases I thought would help. Of course there are many more.

Now to end this and just to have some fun and open our mind, let's go through some scenarios (the art of the possible) in not so far future with GenAI.

Here are a few I could think of. Can you add too?

AI-Enhanced Team Dynamics:

Imagine GenAI analyzing team communication in real-time. If it detects a drop in collaboration or a negative shift in sentiment during a virtual meeting, it could suggest team-building activities, virtual social events, or even recommend adjusting task assignments to improve team morale and cohesion.

Predictive Adaptability for Project Risks:

Consider GenAI analyzing historical project data and external factors.

If it predicts a potential supply chain disruption based on global trends, it might recommend alternative suppliers, adjust production timelines, or suggest risk mitigation strategies before the disruption occurs, ensuring project continuity.

AI-Driven Creativity for Problem Solving:

Picture GenAI actively participating in brainstorming sessions. If the project team faces a creative block in designing a unique feature for a mobile app, GenAI could generate diverse and unconventional ideas, inspiring the team and providing fresh perspectives to overcome design challenges.

Emotional Intelligence Integration:

Imagine GenAI analyzing team communication and detecting signs of stress or frustration. If it identifies a team member experiencing burnout, it could recommend workload adjustments, encourage breaks, or suggest mental health resources, fostering a supportive and emotionally intelligent project environment.

Personalized Project Management Assistants:

Envision GenAI learning that a project manager prefers visual data representations. It could customize its reporting style, delivering visually rich insights and dashboards tailored to the manager's preference, optimizing information consumption and decision-making.



That's all. If I have inspired, you to use GenAI in your daily life – this article has done its job.



Art By – Allyssia Ghosh

Parent – Prabir Ghosh (EE 2002) & Sumita



Art By – Nakshatra Ghosh

Parent – Prabir Ghosh (EE 2002) & Sumita



Allyssia



Art By – Nakshatra Ghosh

Parent – Prabir Ghosh (EE 2002) & Sumita Ghosh

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Please send your articles to
Debu Chaudhuri 201-289-0198,
debuc@aol.com