



CK Reporter of the Week
Abigale Morris, Aurora

'Last Jedi' lives up to the hype



It's December, and everyone knows what that means... No, not the holiday season, Star Wars season!

"Episode VIII; The Last Jedi" is a spectacular, action packed thriller that continues the greatest saga ever told a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...

With the First Order closing in on the depleting rebel forces, the remaining leaders must step up and take charge.

If they want to have any chance of victory, they must act now.

Simultaneously, Rey is urging Luke Skywalker to teach her the ways of the force so she can help defeat the First Order, but Luke is hesitant.

Along with classic Star Wars characters, there are exciting new ones, some of which appeared in Episode VII, but brand new ones as well.

This journey takes us through hyperspace to remote corners of the galaxy, and to lightsaber battles so intense that your hair will be standing on end.

This movie is a fantastic movie for lots of different fans.

It offers lots of iconic scenes for die-hard Star Wars fans, action-packed battles for those who enjoy a good action movie, as well as some heartwarming moments.

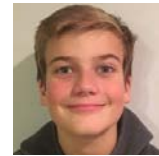
"The Last Jedi" is over two and a half hours long, but you won't be bored. This movie is full of excitement, the characters are likeable and fun to watch, and the suspense is high throughout the whole movie.

There isn't one second that this scrappy group of rebels isn't fighting tooth and nail for what they believe in.

Even if you're not a devoted Star Wars fan, you can still appreciate the fun action and compelling characters of this daring and adventurous early Christmas present.

However, I would recommend this movie for children 12+ as there are several scenes of intense violence.

So, Star Wars fans and regular fans, come and see the eighth installment of the most popular film series of all time.



By Lincoln Boyd,
13, a CK Reporter
from Louisville

Are the holidays a good time to add a pet?

On a sunny December afternoon, Crystal Yoder was deciding if she should get a dog.

The dog was Ritz, a playful white pit bull mix with brown spots at the Humane Society of Boulder Valley.

"I'm not a fan of adopting for the holidays," she says, even though she was thinking of getting a dog close to the holidays.

Pet owners and experts have been debating if it's good to get a pet as a gift or not.

Though a surprise pet would be fun, it's not fair to the animal, some people say, because the person receiving the animal may not like it and return it.

"At the end of the day, if you don't prepare, it's not fair to the animal" -- Crystal Yoder

Having a pet as a gift can be done responsibly if you prepare for the animal in ways such as researching and buying the right stuff for the animal, some pet experts say.

It can be a good thing because during the holidays people may have time off to take care of the animal.

"At the end of the day, if you don't prepare, it's not fair to the animal," says Yoder.

Adoption Services Supervisor Will Rounds says adopting a pet for the holidays can be a good idea.

"It depends on the situation," he says. "It's a good idea to have the person who's getting the pet to know about it and be involved and it's a good idea for them to know how to take care of it. It would be a bad idea to get someone a surprise pet because they might not like it and return it."

For instance, he said, "One time someone wanted to get a surprise pet for their husband, but they both got each other a pet and ended up having to return one of the pets."

Some tips Rounds offers for giving a pet to someone are to get information about the animal you're adopting and to come in, and visit the animal and ask questions.

Another great idea is to give someone a gift card for the animal at a local shelter, so they can take their time to choose the right animal.



Crystal Yoder and her dad think about adopting Ritz, a young pit bull mix at Humane Society of Boulder Valley. They liked him, but decided to wait for the perfect dog to fit their family. (Photo: Jazzy Marshall)

But a third option is just waiting for another time to get a pet because getting an animal may be stressful during the holidays.



By Jazzy Marshall,
11, a CK Reporter
from Lafayette



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Bright lights blossom in winter nights

The Botanic Gardens can be fun in the winter, though you may think of them in terms of spring and summer activities.

Luckily for all plant and holiday lovers there is Blossoms of Light.

Every year since 1988 the Botanic Gardens has put on this light show, and the first thing about it that is amazing is that now nearly all the lights are LED's and so are saving energy.

As you walk in the front gate you are immediately welcomed by the brilliant lights and the cheerful staff.

Throughout the gardens there are different color themes and different types of lights, all of them exciting and impressive.

Even though it may be cold -- since it is done only at night and only from November 24 until January 1 -- it is fun. They even have hot chocolate, apple cider, and fresh roasted nuts.

According to Erin Bird, the communications manager at the Botanic Gardens, "Many families come back year after year and there are sometimes even marriage proposals done here."

There is no doubt to why they keep coming back. Between the friendly staff and



photo/Ariana Bates-Erich

the colorful light shows, it is a blast, even with the cold blowing at you.

And believe me, I felt it, because when we went it was snowing and windy.

One of the coolest pieces of the light show is in the UMB Bank Amphitheater.

There is a set up of light rods that are based on different music and will change colors and rhythms.

At this amazing sight there is a place where you can play music from your phone and whatever song you play will create the light show.

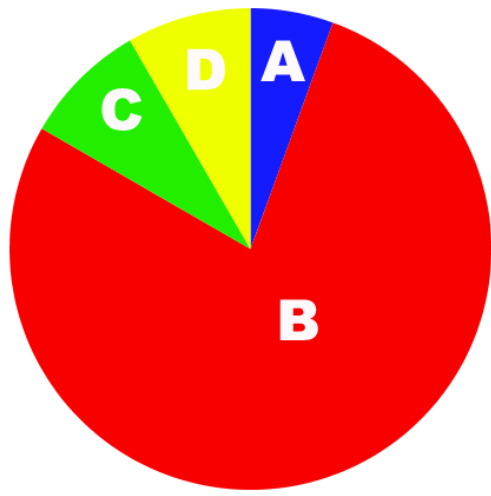
This is a limited time event and one that can sometimes be a hassle to get into because of finding parking and the occasionally long lines, but it is definitely worth the time for the experience that you and your family will have.



By Ariana Bates-Erich, 11, a CK Reporter from Arvada

We asked you, you told us:

For most readers, there's no place like home for the holidays



An old Christmas carol goes, "There's no place like home for the holidays," and most CK readers who responded to our question are lucky enough to be able to make that sentiment come true.

While a few of you will be traveling over the holiday, and a slightly larger number will either be stuck home while parents have to work or have no idea what the holidays will be like this year, more than three-quarters are looking forward to some family time.

Here's what we asked you, and what you told us:

What does your December holiday break look like?

A. I'll be on the road. 6%

B. Family time at home. 78%

C. Folks have to work. I'll just be hanging out. 8%

D. Nobody tells me anything. 8%

Now here's our next question:

Of these types of movies, which one is your favorite?

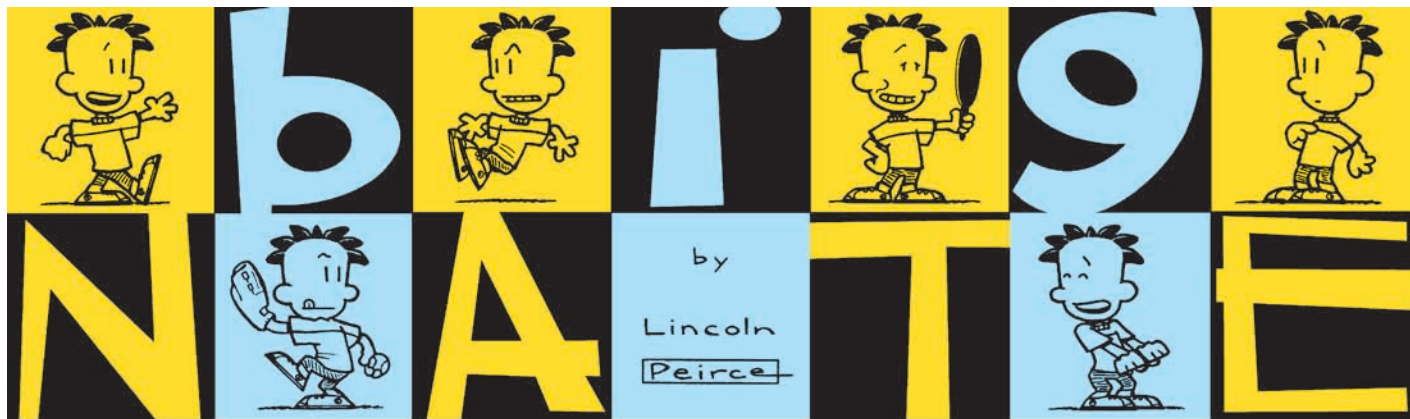
A. Wall-to-Wall Comedy

B. Fast-Paced Action

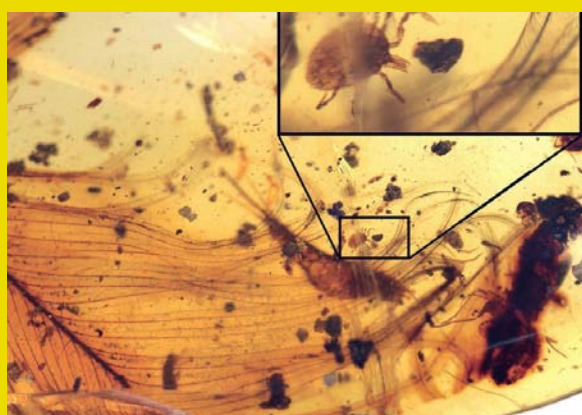
C. Happy Ending Romance

D. Character With A Problem

To answer this question, go to <http://nextgen.yourhub.com>



Ancient feathered reptiles had a modern little parasite



Amber is fossilized tree resin, and is often yellow and fairly clear and hard enough to polish and make into jewelry.

What paleontologists like about amber is that it captures small things that might not survive regular fossilization, but which were trapped in the sticky resin before it turned into amber.

The latest discovery from looking into amber is either very interesting or very disgusting or

maybe a little bit of both.

Some pieces of amber collected in Myanmar contain ticks, and, as you can see in the close-up section of this photograph from the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, ticks haven't changed much in 90 million years.

What has changed is this: The feather that tick was clinging to when it died didn't come from a bird, because there weren't any. The feather is from a dinosaur,

and so the tick had been a pest feeding on the blood of one of the flying dinos scientists believe eventually evolved into birds.

Someone suggested that, if you could get the tick out of the amber, you might be able to take some DNA from the dinosaur blood in its belly and use that to create your own Jurassic Park.

Whatever you think of that idea, DNA doesn't last that long, even preserved in amber. photo/E. Peñalver

'Ferdinand' brings encouraging hilarity



"Ferdinand The Bull" is a great way for Blue Sky Productions to wrap up the year.

"Ferdinand The Bull," voiced by ex-wrestler John Cena, starts off in the past when Ferdinand is a young calf.

He looks up to his father, but his father wants Ferdinand to be a fighting bull like him.

Ferdinand doesn't want to fight, he just wants to live a calm, easy life; he wants to sniff the flowers and fresh Spanish air.

All the other bull calf's in the "Casa Del Toro" want to fight the bull fighters and win, and, because Ferdinand doesn't have the same idea as the other calves, they bully and make fun of him.

But then something happens and he finds a different, better life.

He grows and develops into a huge strong bull with a new family until a fateful accident causes his dream life to be flipped upside-down.

The messages that the movie presents to children are beyond amazing, one of the most important being, "pave your own road in life."

But, all seriousness aside, this movie is also hilarious, with the majority of the comedy coming from the goat, Lupe, voiced by SNL's Kate McKinnon.

For the most part, the movie advocates teamwork,

saying that even your worst enemies can become your best friend, and that, if you work hard enough, you can achieve anything.

I also feel as though this movie is a happily-ever-after type story base, this meaning, if you like happy endings; by all means go see this film.

If you're between 3 and 12 the film has some good lessons and humor you may enjoy.

For those 40 and up, this may be a good movie to see just to bring back

(I) if you like happy endings; by all means go see this film.

some memories from the book or even the older movie, while taking the grandkids to see it, well, that's killing two birds with one stone!

My final rating would be 4.5/5 stars.

Not only is "Ferdinand The Bull" a great movie for multiple selections of ages but the messages and humor are a great way to spend the holidays with family and friends.



By Van Brown, 13, a CK Reporter from Littleton

Realistic novel captures kids' panic over testing

"The Perfect Score," is a new novel by Rob Buyea, who previously wrote a series of books about a character called "Mr. Terupt."

Interestingly enough, Mr. Buyea was originally a 3rd and 4th grade teacher. Then he moved to high school to teach biology.

This is a realistic fiction story about Randi, Natalie, Scott, Trevor and Gavin, five middle school friends who are stressed out about school and life.

Each of the characters has their own personal story about the challenges of growing up.

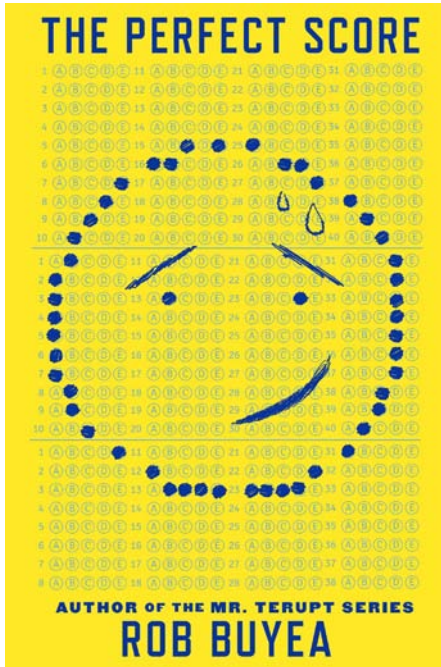
Randi is a gymnast that works hard in and out school.

Natalie is a future lawyer and a super know-it-all, so not everyone finds her to be the best of their friends.

Scott cares a lot about people and being nice, especially when it comes to family.

Trevor acts like tough guy to make kids think he's cool, but that is because, while he hates school, he hates his home life more.

Finally, Gavin loves football, but falls behind in school



because he has a hard time with reading.

All these kids have plenty to worry about at school but they are super freaked about the CSA test.

One of them thinks of a way to ace the test but when something goes wrong the others are scared that they are about to fail this big time test.

I'm a fifth grader and I think this book would be interesting to other fourth, fifth, or sixth graders because the characters and their stories are easy to relate to.

And, personally, while this wasn't my favorite book ever, I could really connect to Randi because I am a gymnast as well.



By Sadie Perry, 10, a CK Reporter from Aurora

Sudoku

5					
	6	1	2		
	5				6
			4		3
1				3	
		4		1	

Rules: Every row across, every column down and each of the six smaller boxes must contain numerals 1,2,3,4,5 and 6, one time and one time only.
The solution to this week's puzzle is on Page 4.



Brainteaser

On this date in 1777, General George Washington settled his Revolutionary War troops in a long, cold, hungry winter camp, so our answers this week will each begin with "V" for Valley Forge.

1. The most popular flavor of ice cream, it's made from a type of orchid
2. The first US President born a citizen and the only president so far for whom English was a second language; his family spoke Dutch at home
3. Often a synonym for speed, it actually means speed in a specific direction
4. Aphrodite, when she's in Rome
5. A large tub or barrel used to hold liquids
6. Michael Pence
7. French science-fiction author of "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea," "Around the World in 80 Days," "Journey to the Center of the Earth" and more
8. First name of the very unpleasant Ms. Salt in "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory"
9. Vesuvius, Mt Saint Helens or Krakatoa, for instance
10. a, e, i, o, u and sometimes y

(answers on Page Four)

Mysterious Oumuamua exits solar system as quickly as it came

Most of the descriptions of Oumuamua are saying that it looks like a cigar.

What it doesn't look like is an asteroid or a comet, and yet it flashed into our solar system, took a quick loop between Mercury and the Sun and is now headed back out.

So what is it?

Well, it's not a cigar, and it's also not a comet, and, if it's an asteroid, it's a very unusual kind.

If it were a comet, its ice would be forming a tail behind it, and, if it were an asteroid, it would probably have broken apart from the speed that it's moving.

And then there's this idea: If you were going to make a space ship, you might make it the shape of a cigar, so it could slip through

space without friction and with less chance of smacking into the debris out there.

They've named it Oumuamua, which is Hawaiian for "First Visitor," but scientists are very sure it's some kind of rock and not some kind of space ship.

But if it were from somewhere else, we'd be pretty foolish to just let it zoom in and out of our solar system without giving it a look.

It's too late for a close-up view: Oumuamua is all the way back out by Jupiter now, so we can't send a probe to check it out.

But astronomers will listen from here to see if there is any kind of radio signal coming from this odd object.

There almost certainly isn't. But then again, what if? photo/European Southern Observatory



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NIE Special Report

<http://tinyurl.com/ckniereport>

Headline Geography

<http://tinyurl.com/ckgeography>

Pulse of the Planet

<http://tinyurl.com/ckpulseplanet>

How to become a NextGen Reporter!

<http://tinyurl.com/colokidsreporter>



To read the sources for these stories

Ticks in amber

Oumuamua

go to <http://www.tinyurl.com/ckstorylinks>

Sudoku Solution

5	4	2	3	6	1
3	6	1	2	4	5
4	5	3	1	2	6
2	1	6	4	5	3
1	2	5	6	3	4
6	3	4	5	1	2

Brainteaser Solution



(see Page Three)

10 right - Wow!

7 right - Great!

5 right - Good

3 right - See you next time!

1. vanilla 2. (Martin) Van Buren 3. velocity 4. Venus 5. vat
6. Vice President 7. (Jules) Verne 8. Veruca 9. volcano 10. vowels

CORRECTION

The review of the "Project Mc2 Perfume Maker" in our January 5 issue was written by Talia Schanman.

We regret the error.

Ariadne and the Magic Thread

Chapter Fourteen: Marooned

Our story so far: The ship with Theseus and the others has sailed for Athens, leaving Ariadne alone on the island of Naxos.

For the first few months, Ariadne walked to the beach each day, or stood on the hilltop above her cave, looking down at the sea in the direction the Greek ship had sailed.

At first, she would cry. Later, she began to just stare out to sea, feeling empty and lost and alone.

But one cannot simply cry every day. After some time had passed, she began to explore Naxos.

She found places where grapes grew, and figs, and almonds, and she found some wild goats and managed to lure a nanny with fresh grass, then toss a rope around its neck. She brought it home with its kid, and built them a pen so she would have fresh milk and tart yogurt to go along with the smoky cheeses she had found in one of the jars in her cave.

When autumn came, she gathered seeds from the flowers and wild herbs on the island, and the next spring, began a small garden, until, by the time two years had passed, Ariadne was quite fond of her cave and her garden and her goats and her life.

She still thought of Crete, and of Theseus, and sometimes she wept a little, wishing she could have family near, and friends.

Sometimes she would find things washed up on the beach that had been lost from ships, simple things like a sandal or the cork from a wine jug. She would pick each of them up and turn it over in her hand, imagining where it came from and who had owned it.

Then one day, she found something else washed up on the beach, lost from a passing ship: A young man.

He lay half in the water, his skin baked by the sun, his hair crusted with salt and his lips cracked and bleeding, but he was alive.

Ariadne poured water over him to wash away some of the salt, then gave him a drink and helped him into the shade. After a short time, he was able to sit up and speak.

"I have a cave on the hillside where you can rest," she told him. "Don't worry, no one will hurt you here. I am ..."

"Ariadne," he said, then responded to her surprise. "Everyone knows of you, and of Theseus and the Minotaur."

"And yet nobody came for me," she said.

"Theseus said the gods wanted you to stay here," the young man said.

"Theseus," she repeated, as memories stirred. "Is he well?"

"He is king," the young man replied. "Did you not know?"

"How could I?"

"I thought perhaps he told you, if, as some say, he did it on purpose," the young man said. "His friends, of course, say that he was so sad over losing you he forgot his promise."

"What promise?" Ariadne asked.

"Every day, his father, old King Aegeus, went to the top of the cliffs overlooking the sea, watching for the return of the hostage ship," the young man said. "Theseus promised him that, if he killed the Minotaur, if he were coming home alive, he would raise white sails. If the ship returned under black sails, it meant the king's son and all who went with him were dead."

"He forgot?" Ariadne cried. "He forgot to change the sails? And he blamed it on me?"

"The old man saw the black sails and hurled himself off the cliffs into the sea. Theseus sailed from Naxos a prince and landed in Athens a king," the young man said. "And all because he was so sorry to have lost your love, as he told the story."

"And he lost my love, he said, because he was so afraid of disappointing his father," Ariadne shook her head. "Well, never mind. Let's get you up to the cave."

She started to help him to his feet.

"Do you still mourn him?" the young man asked.

Ariadne paused. "No, I don't," she said, with some surprise. "What you tell me makes me feel better about it, but, no, I had already stopped."

They walked up the path, the young man leaning upon her as he staggered under shaky legs. "You're very kind," he said. "But you always were."

"How do you know that?" she asked.

"In all those years, how many prisoners worked for you in the Labyrinth?" he returned. "They didn't all stay in Crete. The story spread of the princess with the horrible monster and the gentle heart."

"I'm ashamed of those times," Ariadne admitted. "I never should have helped my father hurt all those people."

"As soon as you were old enough, you risked everything you had, you even risked your life, to help Theseus stop it," the young man reminded her. "Until then, you were a child, and yet still you helped everyone who came near you, as much as you could. You began walking the hostages through the mob when you were far too young to take such risks."

She was about to answer him, but, as they came in the door, the spool, which had not moved in more than a year, suddenly began to vibrate.

When the thread shot from the spool, however, it did not lead anywhere. Instead, it looped all around the cave, in and out of the jars, across the ceiling and back, until, for the first time ever, it had all spun off and the spool stood empty.

The young man looked at the thread, looped here and there and all over, and laughed aloud, and, as he laughed, the thread began to turn, first a pale green, then darker, until it was the color of ivy, and leaves and blossoms had sprouted all along it.

Then, as Ariadne took her eyes from that amazing sight to look at the laughing young man, she saw that he, too, was changing.

No longer weak, he now stood straight, tall and strong. His face was no longer salt-crusted, but tan and smooth, his hair was glossy and thick, his face more handsome and kind and full of laughter than any man she had ever seen.

And so it was that Ariadne learned to listen to her heart, and to follow its thread, away from danger and always towards the right path.

And so it was that the god Dionysius found a heart brave enough, and kind enough, and great enough, to sit beside him on a throne far more splendid than that of Theseus, and even than that of wealthy King Minos.

And if, on a clear night, you look between the constellations Bootes and Hercules, you'll see the beautiful crown, the Corona Borealis, that Dionysius gave his queen, Ariadne, flinging it high into the heavens with a laugh, so that all could see it as a sign of the happiness she had brought him, always and forever.

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