

31 ,536 ,000 Seconds, 525 ,600 Minutes, 8,760 Hours, 365 Days, 52 Weeks, 12 Months,  
A year,

Yet it seems all my life I have been sitting in my room in the dark remembering better days. Remembering the life we knew, the life I had known for 15 years. The life where I have screen time as a reward, something fun I enjoyed that now seems to be a burden. I dread waking up in the morning and having to sit at a desk for 7 hours staring at a screen. All I wanted was to have a normal first year of highschool, yet there I was; having my last day of school... on a computer.

Then my brother moved out, he loves us dearly and I know that. But with him leaving and not seeing my friends I felt alone. So I turned to my books, lying awake at night imagining I was walking around Hogwarts with the Weasley's, fighting demons with the Lightwoods, Jace, and Clary. I could clearly see myself running down the beach in Cousins with Conrad, Belly, Jeremiah, and Steve, I could imagine the day of my 16th birthday choosing what faction I was to be a part of. Yet all of that was in my mind. And I would wake up every day ready to go sit at a desk. How are you supposed to live without human interaction? How am I to be happy with staring at a big screen only to go to my room and stare at a small one to talk to a friend.

I missed the life I knew before this stupid virus. The days were everything felt heavy but the second I stepped into the choir room I couldn't help but let the smile rise to my face. I miss being able to help my friends with finding a pitch, or simply just hugging each other. I miss the practice rooms where there were jokes made that I will never forget. For a reason I will never know, I miss sitting on my extremely crowded bus and waving to random people on my hour long bus ride home. I miss sharing food with friends, and watching movies and listening to music.

But when it comes down to it, the life I knew will never be the life I know now and will know in the future. Because that isn't how life works, with or without the COVID19 virus, will never be the same. Did we really know that the coronavirus would make its way to St. Mary's county? Maybe, maybe not. But without it, my older brother still would have moved out to have a life of his own. My choir group would have changed, the bus would become less crowded because of seniors graduating. I would have started driving.

Though some things still stay the same, I haven't lost my hope I have had since the first 2 weeks. I still imagine running around Hogwarts, I am with the people I love. We still have connections. We still have connections to the life we knew before. Maybe one day when you're older and you are rummaging through boxes or something you'll find a mask, or something you have discovered this year and think to yourself 'That was the year things changed' but that doesn't have to be bad. Because through this struggle we have found great things.

31 ,536 ,000 Seconds, 525 ,600 Minutes, 8,760 Hours, 365 Days, 52 Weeks, 12 Months,  
A year,

Yet it seems as though it has been all my life that things have been changing. For better and for worse. Remembering all the small things I missed and didn't miss throughout my life. The life times that meant so much, the stupid things I did and their horrible endings. I still sometimes dread waking up in the morning and having to sit for 7 hours staring at a screen. All I wanted was a normal 4 years of highschool , yet here I am; having an amazing second year.. full of unknown adventures, twists and turns. Things I could have never expected, even if I tried.

And sometimes it is hard to be positive but we have to think about the bright side. We are the first kids to have ever lived through a pandemic and do virtual learning, we are facing crazy new obstacles and sticking through it together. This is the first time (most likely) any of our parents are dealing with having kids during a pandemic.

In this struggle we can find bright parts, things that are the smallest stupidest things. If it was, you had enough energy to clean your room. **YOU DID IT!**  
If it was that you didn't get upset. **YOU DIDN'T GET UPSET! I'M SO PROUD OF YOU!**  
If you got dressed. **YOU ARE LOOKING AMAZING!**  
If you made an important decision. **YESSS!!!**

It doesn't matter what it is, you did it! And we should all be proud of each other.  
31 ,536 ,000 Seconds, 525 ,600 Minutes, 8,760 Hours, 365 Days, 52 Weeks, 12 Months,  
A year,

A whole year we have been at home, a whole year of crazy things. And there is still so many more to come, hold on for those years coming.