

# THE WEEK

**The Week  
at a  
Glance**



4	Global anxiety rises over Omicron variant	News	The discovery of the highly mutated Omicron coronavirus variant sparked alarm around the globe, as the World Health Organization rated its risk level as “very high” and scientists raced to assess potential resistance to existing vaccines.	World Studies Health
6	Biden: Why are his approval ratings so low?	News	President Biden’s approval rating sank to an aggregate poll average of 42 percent—at the very same time the House was passing his Build Back Better Act, a \$1.5 trillion package of climate action and assistance to American families that 58 percent of voters say they support.	Politics Government American History
7	Oxford, Mich. School shooting	News	A 15-year-old sophomore was charged with murder and terrorism after he went on a shooting rampage at his high school, killing four students ages 14 to 17 and wounding at least six other people.	Legal Studies Government
18	Democracy: Is it in real danger?	Opinion	In its annual report on global democracy, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance for the first time listed the U.S. as a “backsliding” democracy like Hungary and India, noting “runaway polarization,” efforts to suppress voter participation, and an “increasing tendency to contest credible election results.”	Government Civics
22	Kids: The emotional costs of social media	Technology	When teens went from “texting friends on flip phones in 2010 to posting carefully curated photos and awaiting comments and likes by 2014, the change rewired everyone’s social life.” Social-media platforms weren’t initially designed for children, but they’ve made kids “the subject of a gigantic national experiment.”	Technology Health

**BRIEFLY: Quick Questions & Ideas To Engage Students**

Pyongyang: Death for Squid Game smuggler PAGE 9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you know about the government in North Korea?</li> <li>2. According to the article, why was a North Korean man recently sentenced to death?</li> <li>3. What punishment were others related to this case given?</li> <li>4. What does this news story reveal about freedom in North Korea?</li> <li>5. Why, if at all, is it important for you to know about this news story?</li> </ol>
The Arbery verdict: What does it tell us? PAGE 18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you know about the murder of Ahmaud Arbery, and the recent trial of those convicted of murdering him?</li> <li>2. Why is the verdict being called a “glimmer of hope” by some?</li> <li>3. Do you think this case is an example where the justice system worked?</li> <li>4. How would you answer the question in the headline?</li> </ol>
Kids: The emotional costs of social media PAGE 22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do you think this article is about, based on its headline?</li> <li>2. What claim does the author of this article make? What evidence supports this claim?</li> <li>3. Do you agree that “something terrible has happened to Generation Z”? Explain your answer.</li> <li>4. Which social media platform(s) do you think is the most damaging to young people’s emotional health, and why?</li> </ol>

**FEATURE OF THE WEEK: The Cover**

Invite students to look at this week’s cover and answer the questions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the illustration on this week’s cover. Who is represented in the image? What symbolism is used as part of the illustration, and why?</li> <li>2. What story from this week’s issue does the illustration represent?</li> <li>3. What do you think the illustrator’s point of view is on this story, based on the illustration?</li> </ol>
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<b>MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #1 :</b> Based on the article, "Oxford, Mich. School shooting" (p. 7)	
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	sophomore, terrorism, rampage, semiautomatic, barricaded, skepticism, rendered, investigators, motive
<b>DISCUSS</b>	1. Why is the issue of gun rights vs. gun control often considered political? 2. Should parents of minors be charged if their children commit crimes using their guns?
<b>DO</b>	<p>Note: For guidance on how to talk with students about school shootings, you may want to read <a href="#">15 Tips for Talking with Children About Violence</a>.</p> 1. Write "gun control" in one corner of the room and "gun rights" in the opposite corner. Explain that the debate over gun rights vs. gun control is one of the most divisive in our nation, For many, it is grounded in the debate between the constitutional right to bear arms and protect oneself vs. limiting those rights in an effort to reduce gun violence, Ask students to create a human barometer by standing at the point in the continuum between gun control and gun rights that represents what they believe is most important. Discuss responses and invite respectful debate. Ask students if any recent events in the news have influenced their answers.           2. Write the following on the board: "A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed." Ask students if they know what these words represent. Explain that these words are written in the second amendment to the U.S. Constitution. What do students think these words mean? What is a militia? How would students interpret this amendment today?           3. Ask students what they know about the recent events in Oxford, Mich. where a 17-year-old high school student went on a shooting rampage at his high school. Invite them to read the article and conduct additional research to learn more about the story, the weapon used, how he got access to the weapon, and the role of his parents. Discuss the incident and how, if at all, the <a href="#">gun rights vs. gun control debate</a> relates.           4. Explain that, while there are federal gun laws, most laws related to guns are determined at the state level. Ask students what they know about federal gun laws and the gun laws in their state and in Michigan where this incident took place. Review <a href="#">federal gun laws</a> and invite students to research the gun laws <a href="#">in their state and in Michigan</a> . Which state has stricter gun laws?           5. Finally, invite students to answer/debate one of the following questions: Should Ethan Crumbley's parents be charged in this case? Could this tragedy have been prevented? How, if at all, could we prevent future school shootings like this one?
<b>EXTEND</b>	Invite students to read about the <a href="#">victims of the Oxford shooting</a> and to come up with ways they can honor those who lost their lives.

<b>MAIN ACTIVITY OF THE WEEK #2 :</b> Based on the article, "Legally rigging elections" (p. 12)	
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	rigging, gerrymander, legislatures, minority, sophisticated, flip, nonpartisan, commissions, aggressively, misshapen, prohibit, partisan, skewed, unintentional, conservative, partisan, advocates, vetoed, reform, redistricting, commission
<b>DISCUSS</b>	1. How does gerrymandering affect our electoral process? 2. Do you think gerrymandering is a problem? Explain your answer.
<b>DO</b>	1. Challenge student groups to answer the following questions: What is a congressional district? How many congressional districts does your state have? What state has the most congressional districts? Why would it be advantageous for a state to have several congressional districts? How many congressional districts are there in total? How are the number of congressional districts for states determined? Invite groups to present their guesses, and go <a href="#">here</a> for the correct answers. 2. Explain that the framers of the Constitution wanted citizens to be equally represented in congress and didn't want larger states to have more power than others. So they determined that each state would have at least one representative and that representation would be determined by "adding to the whole Number of free Persons" which eventually became what we now know as the Census. It essentially means that everyone's vote counts equally no matter where they live. They can read direct text from Article 1, Section 2 of the Constitution <a href="#">here</a> . 3. Introduce the term, "gerrymandering" and see if students know what it means and what it has to do with congressional redistricting. Explain that gerrymandering -- named after 19th-century Massachusetts Gov. Elbridge Gerr and the district he drew that looked like a salamander -- is when state legislatures draw congressional districts to favor a particular political party. In recent years, gerrymandering has become sophisticated and aggressive. 4. Invite students to read and annotate the article and answer the following questions: What are some examples of how states are using gerrymandering to gain a political advantage? Who does gerrymandering help and hurt? How would they describe "extreme gerrymandering"? What actions does the article suggest could help to "fix" gerrymandering? 5. Invite students to pick a state and look at the most recent Congressional election results using <a href="#">this map</a> . Compare how many votes each party earned in statewide elections to the number of congressional races won by each party. Is the ratio of total votes for each party comparable to the ratio of congressional races won? Which states have the highest and lowest levels of proportionality? Could this information be used to help fix gerrymandering? Why or why not? And if yes, how?
<b>EXTEND</b>	Invite students to research how their own state is districted and to determine if they think the districting gives one political party an advantage.

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