

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE NEWSLETTER



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DEAN'S MESSAGE OF THE MONTH



I would like to congratulate everyone for the New Year, and I hope we will be writing a new chapter in the development of our college in terms of education, research, and clinical training. I am expecting the year 2025 to be a distinguished year in our achievements.

I would like to welcome everyone back after the exams and I wish students the best in all their efforts. I would like to thank the faculty and supporting staff for their efforts in preparing and conducting the examinations.

There are some excellent events lined up in the next few months and I look forward to seeing participation from students, staff, and faculty to ensure we keep our college dynamic and active.



COLLEGE

news

Symposium on Medical Education

On 14th December 2024, the College of Medicine and Health Sciences at United Arab Emirates University held a symposium titled "Medical Education: Focusing on Competencies," attended by Prof. Eman Abu Gharbieh, Dr. Emad Nosair, and Dr. Mohamed Taha. The symposium's role was to address modern challenges, foster innovation, and align academic programs with job market demands. Key recommendations for improving medical education and training were discussed during the event.

A notable highlight was the signing of the "UAE Medical Education Declaration 2024" (EmiratesMEDs) with the National Institute for Health Specialties and UAE Medical Colleges, in the presence of Deans of Colleges of Medicine and Health Sciences in the UAE. The declaration aims to elevate medical education standards, focusing on AI applications and advancing healthcare services.



Centre of Excellence for Public Health

The launch of the Centre of Excellence for Public Health, part of the Research Institute for Medical and Health Sciences (RIMHS), was held on 14th December 2024. The event was attended by HE the Chancellor, Dr. Hussein Al Rand, Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health at the Ministry of Health and Prevention, Vice Chancellors, public health researchers, academics, healthcare regulators, and industry stakeholders from across the UAE.

During the launch, Prof. Basema Saddik, Director of the Centre, emphasized the Centre's mission to drive innovative research, foster collaboration and strategic partnerships, and support public health policies. The Centre aims to address challenges in promoting research, education, and innovation in public health through the efforts of its diverse, multidisciplinary research teams. These include 9 dedicated teams and a total of 40 researchers working across various fields of public health.



FACULTY

news

UAEGSRC 2024

Dr. Jalal Taneera’s master’s student, Ola Al Shehadat, won third place for her poster presentation at the UAE Graduate Students Research Conference 2024 (UAEGSRC), held on 24th April 2024. The poster was based on a paper co-authored and supervised by Dr. Jalal, titled “HSD17B12 is a novel gene involved in the regulation of pancreatic β -cell function”. Dr. Jalal played a role in guiding and supporting Ola throughout the research process.



IFM 2024

At the 11th International Family Medicine Conference and Exhibition (IFM), held between 29th and 31st October 2024, Dr. Mahmoud Ramadan co-authored and supervised the poster that won first place in the Student Oral Poster competition. The poster was presented by graduates Dr. Maryam Al Masaabi, Dr. Eman Abd-Rabou, and Dr. Momena Daas from the College of Medicine, class of 2024. It was titled "A Case of Coronary Ectasia Presenting with Transient ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction in a Young Man."



IVPN-NeuroPsychiatry Educational Program

On 21st November 2024, Dr. Hamid AlHaj delivered a talk on “Migraine and Psychiatric Disorders” at the Intravenous and Parenteral Nutrition (IVPN) NeuroPsychiatry Educational Program. In his session, Dr. Hamid tackled the relationship between migraines and mental health, emphasizing the importance of integrating psychiatric care into the treatment of migraine patients.



Healthy Longevity Symposium

On 22nd November 2024, at the Health Longevity Symposium held at Khalifa University in Abu Dhabi, Dr. Jalal Taneera delivered a presentation titled “Novel Diabetes Biomarkers among Beta-Thalassemia Major patients” for which he received an award.



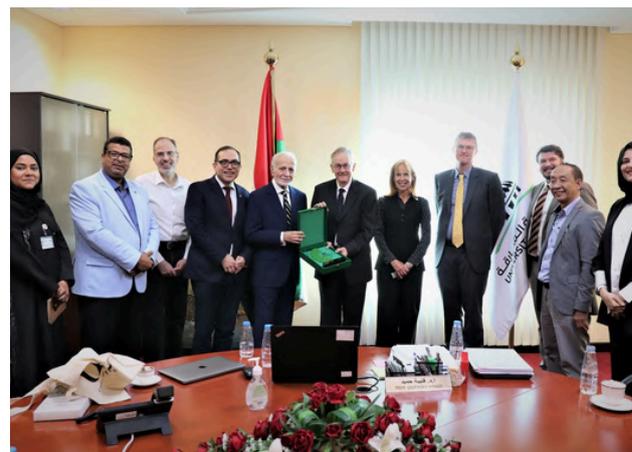
3rd Emirates Surgeons International Conference

Prof. Basema Saddik and Dr. Amal Hussein were featured as speakers at the Third Emirates Surgeons International Conference, which took place on 22nd and 23rd November 2024 in Dubai. Prof. Basema delivered a talk on "Choosing Research Methods," while Dr. Amal presented the topic "Understanding Statistical Analysis in Clinical and Biomedical Research."



University of East Anglia Delegates Visit

On 27th and 28th November 2024, Dr. Hamid AlHaj organized a visit by delegates from the University of East Anglia (UEA) to the University of Sharjah, featuring workshops, a breakout session on clinical supervision skills and evaluation methods, as well as a stakeholder discussion on masters programs. The visit concluded with a closing meeting to finalize plans for future collaboration, including timelines and financial considerations.



Al Amal Research Award

Prof. Basema Saddik and Dr. Hamid AlHaj were invited to serve as judges at the 2nd Al Amal Research Award Day on 12th December 2024. The purpose of this event was to highlight advancements and innovative ideas in mental health research, presented by academics, health professionals, and students.



Medical Education Symposium

On 14th December 2024, at the Medical Education Symposium organized by United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, Dr. Mohamed Hassan Taha delivered a session titled "Transforming Medical Education: Integrating Health System Science for Future-Ready Healthcare Professionals." This session highlighted the role of integrating Health System Science (HSS) into medical curricula to bridge gaps between education and healthcare systems and address population health challenges, as well as aligning it with national health priorities.



Public Health Research Priorities Workshop

On 16th January 2025, Prof. Basema Saddik and Dr. Wafa AlNakhi were invited by the Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre to attend the Public Health Research Priorities Workshop "Charting the Future of Public Health", where they contributed to identifying and discussing key research priority areas in public health.



Clinical Sharjah Training Center

On 17th and 18th January 2025, Dr. Ghada Mohammed coordinated the Perineal Repair course, held for the first time at the Clinical Sharjah Training Center, with 20 candidates from different emirates attending. The practical training was supervised and facilitated by Dr. Noha Mousa and Dr. Ream Langhe.



Emirates Pathology Society

Prof. Iman Talaat has been elected by the Emirates Medical Association (EMA) as the General Secretary of the Emirates Pathology Society for the 2024-2027 term.



Emeritus Professor Title

Prof. Nabil Sulaiman is the first UOS faculty member to be granted the honorary title “Emeritus Professor”; an honorary title granted to a faculty member who retires from a position of distinction.



DUPHAT 2025

On 9th January 2025, several faculty members from the College of Medicine were invited to speak and present their research projects at the Dubai International Pharmaceuticals and Technologies Conference and Exhibition (DUPHAT) :

- Prof. Eman Abu Gharbieh: “Knowledge and Preparedness of Pharmacists and Pharmacy Students in the UAE for Managing the Mpox Outbreak.”
- Prof. Iman Talaat: “Exploring the Expression and Role of the DEAD Box Protein DDX1 in Renal Cell Carcinoma.”
- Prof. Mohamed Saleh: “Optimizing Cardiovascular Health Through SGLT2 Inhibitors.”
- Prof. Waseem El-Huneidi: “Exploring the Possible Involvement of FOXP1 in Pancreatic β -Cells Function.”
- Prof. Amr Amin: “From Spice to Cure: Unveiling Saffron’s Therapeutic Potential in Cancer Treatment.”
- Dr. Mohamed Eladl, keynote speech: “Educators’ Role and Best Practices in Promoting Integrity and Ethics in Medical Education.”
- Dr. Firdos Ahmad: “Glycogen Synthase Kinase-3 α : A Promising Therapeutic Target for Cardiac Diseases.”
- Dr. Abubakr H. Mossa: “The Role of proNGF/p75NTR Axis in Smooth Muscle Phenotype Transformation and Its Application in Diabetic Bladder Dysfunction.”
- Dr. Noha Emam: “Unleashing the Potential of Natural Killer Cells by Curcumin Treatment in Renal Cell Carcinoma.”
- Dr. Hiba Barqawi: “Assessing Meningitis Knowledge and Vaccination Attitudes and Practices Among United Arab Emirates Parents.”





A VERY USUAL MORNING



BY: DR KHALID ALTIRKAWI

Nothing seemed out of the ordinary that morning.

My patients were doing well, and most were ready to go home. "A quiet weekend," I thought as I walked through the lobby toward my office. My thoughts were interrupted by a message from the clinic nurse: "We have a patient waiting for you. He's crying a lot, and his father seems very upset!" With no time to waste, I hurried to the clinic. As I entered the room, I saw a man in his thirties sitting in a chair next to my desk, holding a two-year-old child in his lap. Both looked unhappy, especially the father, who appeared worn out and disheveled. The child's crying was more of a whine than a full-on cry—he would cry for a while, rest his head on his father's shoulder, then resume crying a minute later. The relentless, tiresome sound of his wailing could drive any parent to frustration.

"What seems to be the problem?" I asked after introducing myself and greeting the father.

"As you see," the father answered meekly, "He's been doing this for the past two days."

"How did it all begin? Was there any fever?" I gently prompted him to share more.

"Two days ago, he had a fever and kept tugging at his ears," he replied. "We visited a nearby clinic and the doctor said it's an ear infection. He gave us some medication but the boy isn't getting any better!"

"That sounds familiar," I thought, "not all ear infections respond well to standard treatment. May I examine him?" I asked.

"Please do!" the father replied, his desperation clear.

...

Fifteen years have passed since that encounter, but I still remember how difficult that experience was. The child, Sami, was so irritable that he kept evading the examination but his tear-filled eyes were pleading for help. The examination was challenging—nothing seemed to calm him. It was nearly impossible to listen to his heart, palpate his abdomen, or examine his throat. The only thing I could discern for sure was how stiff his neck had become. "Oh no, is it meningitis?" I whispered to myself. "It seems to be more than a simple ear infection," I said, turning to the father. "We need to run some urgent tests to determine what's going on." The father nodded in approval, and when I asked for his permission to proceed, he agreed without hesitation. Blood samples were quickly taken, and a spinal tap was performed, yielding "dirty-looking" fluid. Sami was then transferred to his room for treatment. Two hours later, the first test results came in, confirming my suspicions.

Once my clinic work was done, I rushed to Sami's room. The boy was asleep, and the incessant crying had finally stopped. The exhausted father was resting in a nearby chair, staring at his child with relief. When he saw me, his face lit up with a genuine smile of gratitude. I pulled up a chair and sat next to him.

“It seems that Sami has meningitis,” I said calmly. “I want you to be prepared for some bumps along the way.” Despite his fatigue, the father expressed his desire to know everything. I assured him that he would be kept well-informed, then left him to rest. The next morning, the preliminary results from the spinal fluid culture came in—it had grown what seemed to be non-contaminant bacteria. The microbiologist informed me: “It’s H. flu.” When I explained this to the parents, they seemed confused. All they wanted to know was whether this “bug” was dangerous. I had to elaborate. The painful moment came when they learned that there was a vaccine for this “bug,” one that could have been given to Sami long ago. The mother’s face fell into tears, and the father sank deeper into his chair. Thankfully, the treatment went smoothly. The fever subsided, and all tests returned to normal soon after. Most importantly, little Sami’s joyful face returned, and his parents looked relieved. I kept them updated, answering their questions, and alleviating their fears. Two days before discharge, the mother—who had been quiet and rarely asked questions—made an insightful observation. She pointed out that Sami was “ignoring” her when she called his name or tried to engage him in play.

“Could it be that he’s angry with me?” she asked.

“I’m not sure,” I replied. “Let’s run some more tests.”

“What kind of test?” she asked.

“It’s a hearing test,” I explained. “Some patients with meningitis can develop hearing issues. This test will tell us if Sami has any problems.”

Unfortunately, the urgent test results confirmed that Sami had profound hearing loss in both ears. The mother’s face once again filled with tears.

...

The day Sami and his family left the hospital was an emotional one—smiles mixed with tears. Before they left, I made sure the family received a referral to a specialized hearing center. The parents expressed their deep gratitude and promised to stay in touch. Seeing Sami back to his old self was a true blessing.

Nearly three months later, I was finishing some paperwork in the office when the phone rang. A warm, friendly voice greeted me.

“Hello, Doctor. I hope this is a good time to speak.”

“Yes, sure!”

“I’m Sami’s father, one of your patients. I hope you still remember us!”

“Of course, I do! How is he doing?”

“He’s doing great! I have some good news.”

The father shared that after discharge, Sami and his family had visited the specialized center I had recommended. Sami underwent further hearing evaluations and was advised to get a cochlear implant, which he received a month later. “There were some tough days at first, but with the help of a great team, he’s doing very well now,” the father added.

“I’m so happy to hear this,” I said.

“Doctor, thank you for the amazing care you gave my son. He wouldn’t have made it without your help.”

“That was truly uplifting!” I murmured.

...

Was it really? This case was a mix of emotions. Although I had provided the right care when needed, some questions still lingered: how much blame can be placed on the delay in vaccination or the late diagnosis? Unfortunately, there are no clear answers. All I can say is this: when you wake up in the morning, even if it seems like a very usual day, be prepared to lend a hand to someone in need, just like Sami and his family.



STUDENT

news

Community Outreach with Mobile Clinic

During November and December 2024, the mobile clinic conducted five visits to key public areas across Sharjah, including Al Qasba, Al Noor Mosque, Al Heerah Beach, Sharjah Corniche Al Sharq, and a final visit to Sajaa. The Sajaa visit, organized in collaboration with Sharjah Charity International for the 14th Medical Camp, featured consultations by physicians from the University Medical Clinics. These visits provided primary preventive services to approximately 500 visitors, including screenings for high blood pressure, blood sugar, and obesity, along with personalized health counseling.



MEDICAL OR MYTHICAL

CATCHING A COLD IN THE COLD?

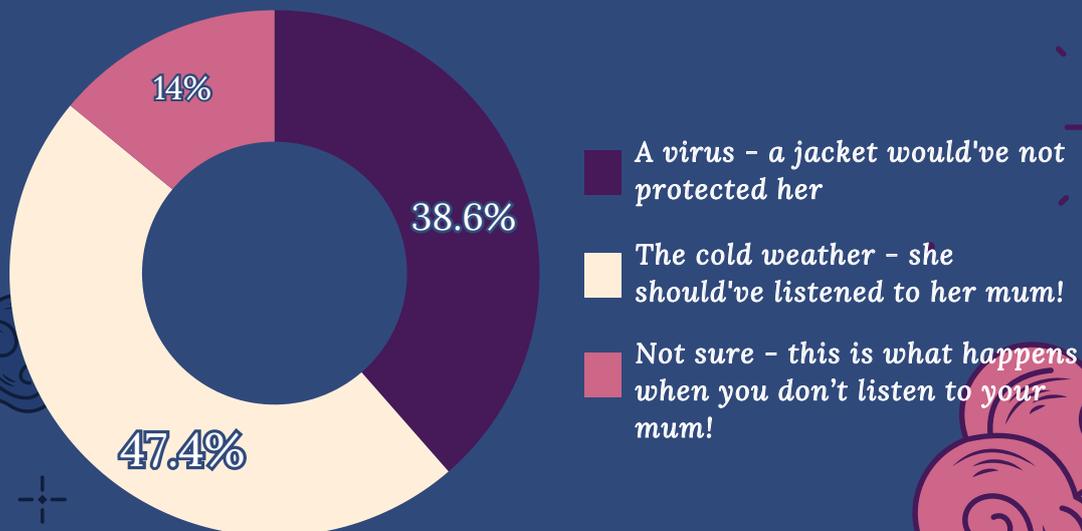
By: Jana Eissa

Amina, a 19-year-old university student, has a talent for ignoring her mum's advice. One chilly evening, her mum told her to grab a jacket before heading out to global village, warning, "You'll catch a cold without it!" But Amina, of course, left without it anyway.

The next morning, Amina woke up sniffing with a sore throat. Now she's lying in bed, wondering if her mum was right all along.

What's to blame for Amina's sniffles?

Results



THE VERDICT

Can you catch a cold from getting cold?

The short answer is: no, cold weather itself doesn't cause colds!

After inoculating volunteers with rhinovirus and exposing them to cold temperatures at various stages of their illness (seriously, where was the ethics committee?), Douglas et al. (1968) found that cold exposure didn't affect the severity or spread of the infection. Volunteers exposed to cold showed no significant changes in virus shedding or immune response.

However, Foxman et al. (2015) found that rhinovirus thrives in the cooler temperatures of the nasal cavity (33–35°C), where your body's immune response is weaker. That being said, you still need to be exposed to the virus in the first place for an infection to occur.

So, while cold air might make your nose a more inviting place for the virus to thrive, it's not the direct cause of your cold. Colds spread when viruses pass from person to person, not from a chilly breeze.

Stay warm, practice good hygiene, and always listen to your mum!

REFERENCES 

MEDICAL MARVELS

By: Jana Al Shouha

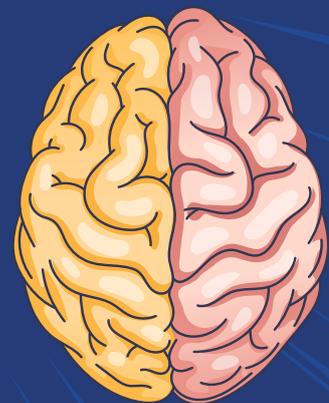
The Unexpected Gift

What if the way we perceive the world isn't the only way? What if certain minds possess a unique lens, focusing on details others tend to overlook, capturing otherwise fleeting moments? This describes a day in the life of individuals with savant syndrome, a condition where the human brain can simultaneously show areas of severe deficit and remarkable giftedness. Consider the famous example of Dr. Shaun Murphy from "The Good Doctor" – a fictional surgical resident diagnosed with autism who, despite having great social and emotional impairments, sees and diagnoses medical cases with exceptional clarity.



In this rare condition, individuals with neurodevelopmental disabilities - often autism spectrum disorder - exhibit "islands of genius" in specific domains like music, art, mathematics, calendar calculation, or spatial skills, along with a constellation of other abilities. The underlying mechanisms for savant syndrome are still being explored, but many theories point to a complex interplay of factors, including compensatory hypertrophy (damage in one brain area leading to enhanced function in another), disinhibition (reduced cognitive filtering allowing hyper-focus on details), and altered brain connectivity systems. Interestingly, some individuals were found to have acquired savant talents following a traumatic brain injury, stroke, or even due to neurological illnesses like dementia.

Studying such instances of "acquired savants" brought up new questions to the surface; is it possible that these exceptional abilities are found dormant (inhibited) in each one of us, only unlocked by a certain trigger that releases (disinhibits) them? While the mysteries of savant syndrome continue to unfold, only one thing remains clear: this syndrome challenges our conventional understanding of intelligence and human potential - especially the brain's remarkable plasticity and specialized function. Savants are living proof that even broken mirrors can reflect radiant light!

**REFERENCES**

based on a
true story

**EASY EMPATHY POINTS...
OR NOT?**

It was my first day on my emergency medicine rotation, and I was barely holding it together. A patient walked through the doors with severe burns all over his face and body, explaining that oil had exploded on him while he was cooking.

I was already sweating profusely, too nervous to even properly introduce myself before I started taking his history. Overthinking every step, I grabbed my pen and blurted out the first question that came to mind:

"Do you have any pain?"

Silence. Deafening silence.

I looked up to see the patient staring at me with an expression that could only be described as, *are you serious right now?*

My brain went blank. After what felt like an eternity, the patient finally broke the silence, deadpanning:

"What do you think?"

I wanted to evaporate. Or dig a hole and bury myself in it. Instead, I stammered out an apology, powered through the rest of the history, and silently vowed to Google *how to not sound like a complete idiot in front of burn patients* the minute I got home.

STUDENTS'

corner

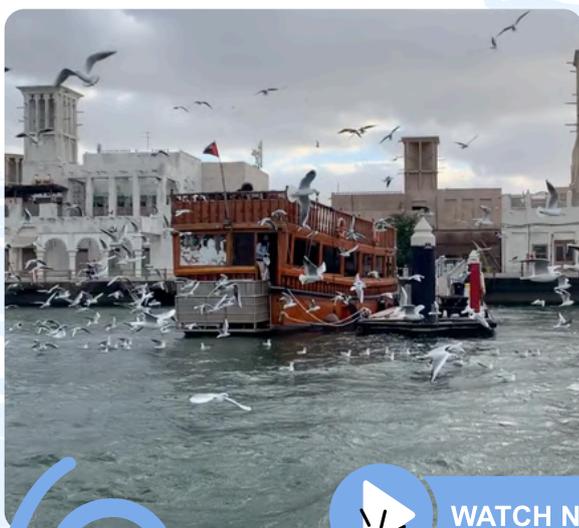
“

Mariam Wehbe

Year 3

My type of therapy <3

”



“

Syeda Sidra

Year I

Between the endless flow of water
and the fearless flight of birds
lies the essence of existence

”



WATCH NOW

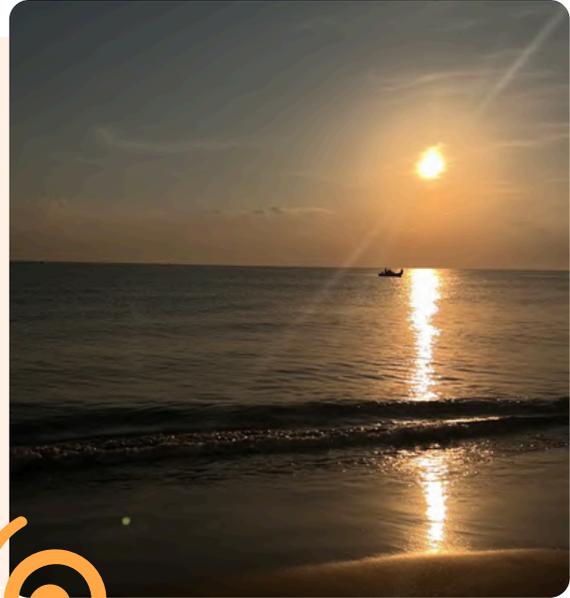
“

Nour Abughneim

Year 2

Sound of peace 

”



“

A. Abuku

Year 4

Guided by the light of the moon,
hearts find peace in prayer 

”

“

Nissi John

Year 1

Every ending is a chance for a new beginning. Stay resilient, and keep pursuing what sets your heart on fire.

”



“

Monassar Alajami

Year 2

One of my favorite trainings!

Running up hills 🔥

”



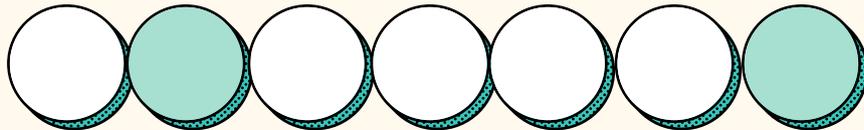
WATCH NOW

JUMBLE!

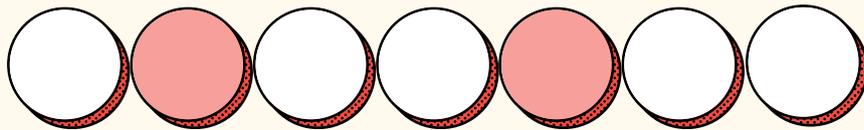
HOW TO PLAY?

Un-jumble the letters below to form a word. Finally, re-arrange the highlighted letters from each of these answers and use the hint to solve the final bonus Jumble!

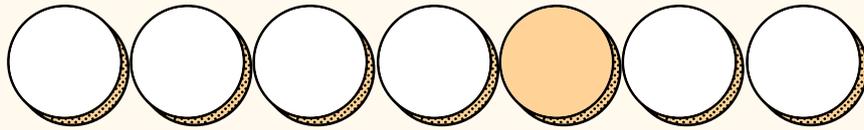
M D A N E B O



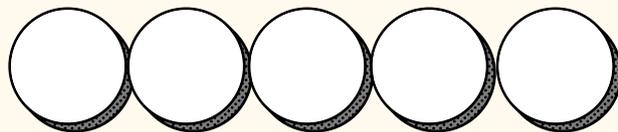
S I E A D E S



E R H A N I P



FINAL ANSWER:



Submit Answer



Hint

I finally figured out what's wrong with my - - - -: on the left side, there's nothing right, and on the right side, there's nothing left!



STUDENT LETTERBOX

I LOVED WINTER

I loved winter. Winter for me was when we would go to the desert until the sun disappeared, when we'd set up on the roof to barbecue, when I'd go sit on the balcony and people-watch for hours and hours, or when I would walk until my legs gave out—or at least until the breeze blew some spirit into me...

The last winter I remember vividly was the one before quarantine. It was the season when we'd go to parks, and the playground would be bustling with shrieks, laughter, and maybe a bit of gossip.

I ached to go again last winter, and when I did go, I wished I hadn't. The noise and the warmth of innocent happiness had faded and now remain as a nostalgic memory. That was the first time I hated hearing the loud sounds of the birds singing. Even then, I used to complain that we had to carry the picnic mats, the foldable chairs, or even the bag full of fruits. Oh, if only I had known, I would've done it in a heartbeat.

I could wish for winter again, but I'd hate to be that selfish. Wishing for winter now is like wishing for a tragedy—the tragedy of fragile and malnourished bodies submitting to the fatal weather, in the same country where my ancestors flourished. So until that's over, I loved winter, and that's in past tense.

Malak Abudoreg
YEAR 1

THE GENDER SLIP-UP

By: Alya Aljasmī

