

The Meredith Herald

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How To Beat Winter Break Boredom

Sarah Smerko, Features Editor

The first several days of winter break are glorious: sleeping in, wearing pajamas all day; endless Netflix. But then that moment of shame comes when Netflix asks "Are you still watching?", and you realize you have dried Cheeto dust on your laptop and you see your unbrushed hair in the reflection of your laptop and decide that it is time to get off of the couch. If you get bored of watching TV (there is such a thing as too much Netflix!), try one of these winter break activities!

Read for fun

We do so much academic reading for class that it is easy to forget what reading for pleasure is like! I currently have several unread books on my shelf collecting dust that I am excited to dig in to over break. Check out your local public

library or used book store for free or cheap new reads. (Or ask family members for a gift card to your favorite bookstore for the holidays).

Get in shape

It can be tempting to sit around and watch the 25 Days of Christmas while eating holiday treats, but if that's all you do over break, you won't be able to get off the couch. I plan to eat my fair share of Christmas cookies AND get back in the swing of running—it's all about balance! I'm still mooching off of my family's YMCA membership, but there's still ways to exercise without a gym membership. Just lace up a pair of running shoes and get outside!

Learn to cook

I'm personally sick of my five go-to

dinner recipes, but it's hard to find time during my busy school week to teach myself a new recipe. I plan on scouring mom's cookbook collection for some new ideas over break.

Get a head start on spring cleaning

I like to clean out my closet every season and put together a bag of clothes to donate to Good Will or Bargain Box. If you don't wear that shirt from tenth grade in the back of your closet, go ahead and donate it so someone else can get some good use out of it. A good closet-cleaning makes room for new clothes.

Do something creative

You don't have to be an artist to pick up some colored pencils or crayons and a coloring book. Or

maybe you have always wanted to learn how to knit! Winter break is a great time to de-stress from a busy semester with some relaxing, creative activities like coloring, painting, drawing, or crafting.

When I get bored of binge-watching Parks and Recreation, you will find me doing one of these relaxing and fun activities! Who knows, maybe you will pick up a new skill or hobby to carry into 2018!

HAVE A GREAT
WINTER BREAK!

- THE MEREDITH
HERALD STAFF

Why You Should Study Abroad This Summer

Ashley Ricks, Staff Writer

Have you ever dreamed of studying abroad, but you do not believe you have enough time in your schedule to study abroad for an entire semester? Well, luckily there is an array of study abroad programs that occur during the summer! Meredith has up to 11 programs just for the summer of 2018. These programs include trips to Italy, Peru, Cuba, Spain, Paris, and the United Kingdom. If you want to travel to a place where a Meredith program does not exist, the Office of International Programs has an entire list of reputable affiliate programs students can choose from. Previous students who have studied abroad during the summer found that they were able to immerse themselves in a new culture while also taking courses

that pertained to the country they are studying in. Stephanie Semaan, who is currently a junior majoring in psychology, studied abroad during the summer of 2017 with the Italian Life and Culture program. Semaan believes her experience abroad "made me grow as a person because I had to navigate a foreign country by myself for the very first time. The complications that arose from traveling in a new country made me grow into a better person." Semaan believes studying abroad has impacted her life in a positive way and recommends anyone who is able to embark on this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Even though the summer seems to be a long ways ahead, it is never too early to start thinking about applying for the summer

programs. Semaan recommends "applicants finish their application during winter break because students often have a lot more time during the break to work on their application." It is also suggested for applicants to talk to professionals who can write a recommendation for the applicant early on to prevent any added stress on the recommender. Feb. 15 is the deadline for most Meredith abroad summer



Photo Courtesy of Stephanie Semaan.

programs, but applicants should ideally get their materials in before this date to have an even better chance of getting into the program.

Not Another Canvas Painting: Big/Little Gift Ideas

Tishya Robertson, Staff Writer

Are both finals and Christmas creeping up on you? Secret Santa, Big/Little dinners, and other parties are imminent, so here are a few gift ideas for your bigs, litties, roommates, and other friends so you don't have to make them yet another canvas painting or get them candles that aren't even allowed in the residence halls.

Socks — Target has new Advent calendars featuring Twelve Days of Socks for \$15. Let your pals count down the days until Christmas with warm feet.

Baked goods — If you love baking, give them something

homemade. Make sure you subtly ask them about any food allergies beforehand though.

Stickers — Your friend's laptop or water bottle will thank you for using Redbubble, which offers a plethora of stickers for any interests. Plus, if you buy at least ten, all of your stickers are half off!

Room decor — Francesca's and Altar'd State have lots of reasonably-priced wall decor and trinkets to decorate any apartment or dorm room while maintaining your aesthetic.

Bath bombs — Although older

generations see these as a millennial luxury, they can help you de-stress, especially as a college student. #TreatYoSelf and get one too.

Matching jewelry — Prove to everyone in sight that you're the best big or little ever with coordinating necklaces or bracelets. You have an excuse to get yourself something to wear too.

A donation to their favorite charity — Giving to women's health organizations, local food banks, disaster funds, and churches can help others in need this holiday season.

Gift cards — If you've procrastinated too hard on your Christmas shopping along with your end-of-semester projects and papers, gift cards are the way to go. E-gift cards are even personalizable with cute designs and your own message. You can't go wrong with money for Starbucks or Target (especially if you can use it at the new one on Hillsborough Street).

Lastly, if all else fails, just get those creative juices flowing, hit up Pinterest, and adorn their walls with another one-of-a-kind piece by you. No matter what you give, your Big/Little will absolutely love it!