



Rosemead School District

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News Release

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Rosemead School District Teacher Challenges All Students and Adults to Join the New Initiative and Take the *gramMARCH* Challenge

Rosemead, CA, March 30, 2015: In the midst of a technological era filled with text messages, slang and abbreviations (used heavily throughout the social media world), Rosemead School District 7th grade teacher, Heather Shotke challenged both students and adults alike to “makeover” their prose by taking the *gramMARCH* Challenge and embrace intelligent communication.



The *gramMARCH* Challenge, was launched on March 1, 2015. It lasted throughout the month, and challenged everyone to write in full sentences, proper grammar and use entire words in all forms of written communications. Shotke realized that technology has allowed people to text, tweet, Kik, Skype, Vine, SnapChat, Facebook, Instagram, and e-mail by utilizing an unfortunately improper form of grammar. With all these forms of rapid and constant communication, shorthand text-speak, slang and abbreviations have become the unapproved norm in the classroom and in the day-to-day communication for many adults, blurring the lines between formal and informal communication.

Shotke, founded *gramMARCH* last year. She is a graduate of the Annenberg School for Communication at USC, and she has seen these abbreviated forms of language migrate from the screens of smartphones to the pages of her students’ assignments with an alarming increase. The veteran teacher is concerned society has become too acceptant of this new-era shorthand. She feels that students are not the only ones at fault. Adults too have adopted this lax method of prose.

“People don’t seem to give their ‘text-slang’ or abbreviations a second thought,” Shotke said. “But the reality is, their writing is often a first impression on employers, college admission counselors, supervisors or potential ‘friends,’ both real and virtual.”

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This shorthand language became increasingly popular with the advent of social media, especially in applications that limit characters and essentially force words to be shortened in order to relay the full essence of the message. Research shows that 91% of mobile internet access is for social activities with 73% of smartphone users accessing social networks at least once a day.

Shotke strongly believes that if students were to use proper grammar in these communications, because of the frequency of use, it would be a productive way to practice comprehensive and thoughtful communication and bolster an affinity for writing – a skill that could be transferred to academic assignments and extend itself to their workplace communication. **Through the gramMARCH Challenge, Shotke is challenging the nation to slow down and think about what they are writing, so that thoughts and words are concise and given respect.**

“Anecdotally, it takes about 30 days for something to become a habit,” Shotke said. “So, if we can get people to accept the gramMARCH Challenge and write with proper grammar in all communication forms – including texts, tweets, Kiks, Instagram captions, twitter posts and status updates on Facebook – for the month of March, we may be able to make the shift back to intelligent communication.”

The gramMARCH festival included language arts related carnival type games, giveaways, raffle prizes from organizations such as: the LA Galaxy, LA Clippers and local Rosemead businesses (Jamba Juice, In N Out, and Starbucks) and performances by Get Down District and Curly Fryz.



Pictured (left to right): Heather Shotke, Teacher and Jessica Ancona, Principal of Muscatel Middle School, Rosemead, CA

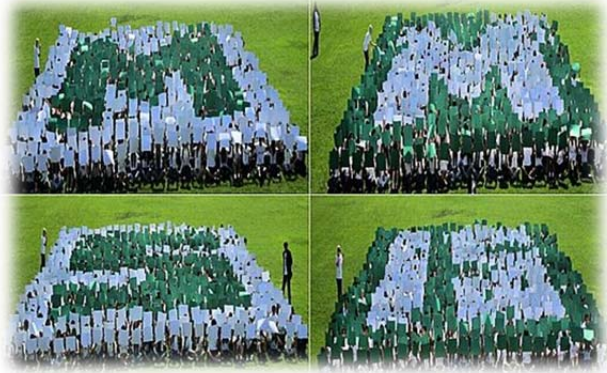


Pictured (left to right): Front Row: City of El Monte, Councilwoman Victoria Martínez; Actor Erik Valdez; Teacher Heather Shotke, and Author J.J. Canon / Back Row: Entrepreneur Rome Douglas

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*Pictured Upfront: Principal Jessica Ancona,
Middle: Heather Shotke, Teacher
Back: Student Body of Muscatel Middle School*



Pictured: 2014-15 Student Body of Muscatel Middle School and Staff

gramMARCH

PHOTO CHALLENGE

1: Picture of yourself accepting the challenge and challenging someone else	16: Homophone
2: Simile	17: Pun
3: Rhyme	18: Oxymoron
4: Declarative Sentence	19: Analogy
5: Metaphor	20: Conjunction
6: Homograph	21: Homonym
7: Alliteration	22: Imperative Sentence
8: Hyperbole	23: Compound Word
9: 3 Adverbs	24: 3 Adjectives
10: Personification	25: Anagram
11: Interrogative Sentence	26: Imagery
12: Onomatopoeia	27: Interjection
13: Antonyms	28: Palindrome
14: Idiom	29: 3 Pronouns
15: Exclamatory Sentence	30: Compound Sentence
	31: Irony

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For more information regarding the gramMARCH program please contact Jessica Ancona, Principal at Muscatel Middle School at (626) 287-1139 or email jancona@rosemeasd.k12.ca.us or Director of Educational Services John Lovato at (626) 312-2900 x213 or email jlovato@rosemead.k12.ca.us. You can also log on to www.gramMARCH.org. Follow the gramMARCH movement on Twitter and Instagram @ gramMARCH, and Facebook at The GramMARCH Challenge.

For more information regarding the Rosemead School District programs please contact Director of Educational Services Mr. John Lovato at (626) 312-2900 x213 or email jlovato@rosemead.k12.ca.us. The Rosemead School District offers programs as follows and are not limited to: English Language Development (ELD); Instrumental Music program (4th-8th grades); Student in Need program; State Preschool; Transitional Kindergarten; Full Day Kindergarten; Before and Afterschool programs: K.S.A.R.T. (Kinder After School Recreational and Tutorial), A.S.A.R.T. (After School Recreational and Tutorial), A.S.E.S. (After School Education and Safety) program; Migrant Education Program; Gifted and Talented Program (GATE); Science Olympiad; Franklin Covey's Leader in Me® Program and 7-Habits©; Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS); gramMARCH Challenge; and Special Education Programs.



To learn more information about J.J. Canon, freelance writer, best selling author, television & radio guest, visit her website at www.sophietakesaselfie.com and www.welladjustedorsothersay.com.



To learn more information about City of El Monte Councilwoman Victoria Martinez, visit the City of El Monte website at www.ci.el-monte.ca.us.



To learn more about Rome Douglas follow him on Twitter @BIGGROME78.



To learn more about Curly Fryz follow them on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @curlyfryzmusic or visit their website at www.curlyfryz.com.



To learn more about Erik Valdez follow him on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram @erikvaldez.



To learn more about DJ AG follow him on Instagram @ayyygeee.

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To learn more about The Get Down District follow them on Facebook @Get-Down-District, Twitter & Instagram @getdowndistrict or visit their website at www.getdowndistrict.com.

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The Rosemead School District (RSD) is a Local Education Agency led by Superintendent Dr. Amy Enomoto-Perez. For more information, please visit www.rosemead.k12.ca.us or contact the Superintendent's office at (626) 312-2900 x212.