



8TH GRADE SEARCH HISTORY

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Prose Contest - Third Place

Google

I've had access to and used Google for as long as I can remember. I've googled everything from formulas for math class to, more recently, convoluted essay topics for information. I like to search things online because I can get a clear cut and simple answer. I might have to poke around a little bit to get my answer, but I'll get it. I can get sources to support that answer, and when I share it with others, they can search the same question and back up my answer. The internet lets me put out my opinions, my questions, my feelings, into a huge never-ending void where strangers can pick them up and examine them. They can argue, agree, answer, and validate what I've sent out into the internet, giving me attention or ignoring me. I can feel seen through the internet and, sometimes, I need to be seen.

How to Conjugate Ser

Ser is the Spanish verb for “to be” in a permanent sense, as opposed to *estar* which is “to be” in a changeable way. *Ser* describes characteristics, profession, age, and other similarly hard to change features of people, places, and things. In class my teacher asks us to describe ourselves with *ser*, using our new vocabulary of adjectives to tell those around us who we are and what we’re like. I am lots of different things. I am an intelligent and kind girl. I am funny sometimes. I am short. I am a brunette. I am in 8th grade. I am thirteen. I am single. All sentences I can use *ser* to describe. It’s a short, incomplete list of who I am, but I’m afraid of what a completed list could hold.

What Channel is ABC family DirectTV

Things change. For example, your cable company changes. Maybe because the rates were better, or you were tired of dealing with the customer service that didn’t help. Regardless, a change was made, and you have to adjust. Relearn all the habits that used to be natural, such as typing in 300 and knowing you’d be changing to HGTV and that the movie channels are in the 600s. Suddenly your channel menu is an unknown world and you lost the guide they gave you when they installed your new cable. So, you run to your old friend, the internet, and hope that someone had the sense to put the channel list online, so you don’t have to waste time channel surfing. Lucky for you, they did, and you can enjoy Harry Potter weekend in peace.

How to tell if my crush likes me back

My crush of the year program was in full swing back in junior high. I had just unceremoniously dumped my boyfriend who I hadn't wanted to date. He asked me out in front of everyone and saying no wasn't an option, so instead I pretended to be okay with it for a few months and then got the hell out of there. My current crush was Gavin. We liked the same music, he was fairly smart, and he was accessible. So, he was the new crush of the year. At sleepovers and girl-only hang outs he was the topic of my gossip and my friends and I examined every interaction with him.

If I was being honest, I didn't particularly care what he thought of me. I thought he was pretty cool, but if nothing ever came of my crush, I wasn't going to be heartbroken. In fact, no crush had left me heartbroken. I just eventually forgot I was supposed to have one and then at the next gossip session centered around boys I would drop the first name that came to mind and keep him as my crush until I forgot about this one as well. I never really flirted, we would just hang out as friends—after all, we liked the same things. We were on a science team together, we had a bunch of classes together. As I said, he was convenient. Eventually, he was forgotten, like every other crush I had chosen, and I moved on. Who knows if he ever knew I had a crush on him or if I really had one at all.

Am I Gay Test

This is in every queer kid's search history at some point. Nobody wants to have to do the soul searching required to find an answer for themselves. Instead we find these tests that ask questions like "Imagine being married to someone, what gender are they?" and we key in the answers that have been ingrained in us from day one. When it asks if I've ever had a same sex crush, I think of a couple girls that make me nervous and giggly, and then click no. It asks what gender I see myself marrying and I think of how, when I dream of my wedding day, I can see everything but the groom. It's just me standing at an altar with an empty suit floating next to me. I click opposite gender anyways. When I get to the end of the test, it proudly declares I'm straight or bisexual, depending on how honest I was that day. It never says I'm gay, but I never tell the whole truth. I took these tests to find the answers I wanted, not the truth.

While the internet can give us clear cut answers, there are some things that you have to discover for yourself. While my life would've been infinitely easier if a letter had showed up in the mail that said "Congrats! You're gay!" it never came. So, I dubbed myself questioning, since it was noncommittal. I could turn out to be straight so it held absolutely no risk. It was a label that wasn't a label, leaving me in a limbo where I didn't have to come out and I could keep on like I had been. No uncomfortable change necessary, no scary conversations with my family, no worry. I could just be, and nobody would ever have to know. The permeance of creating an "I am" statement was terrifying and alienating. I knew that if I ever came out, many spaces of my life had the capacity to become unsafe. My home, my church, my school. Instead I kept my vague label to myself and carried on lying to both myself and others.

How to memorize the books of the bible

In the Lutheran church, confirmation occurs in 8th grade. Confirmation is when you take charge of your connection with God. At birth my parents made a covenant with Him that they would raise me into Christianity by baptizing me and my confirmation was a way of saying “Hey God! They did it! I love Jesus and want to be a Christian!” Now my parents had always said it was my personal choice to get confirmed, that they had only raised me in Christianity so I would understand religion and be able to make an informed choice. Sunday school and confirmation classes were supposedly tools to make sure I had all the information so if I wanted to go through with it, I could. I was ready to say no, I didn’t want to get confirmed, I wasn’t interested with the church and in fact usually disagreed with the church.

Sometimes I even felt unsafe there. It was a place that created self-loathing, so I didn’t want to stay there if I didn’t have to. But, my mom made the announcement that despite any decision I made, I would be expected to come with the family to church every Sunday as it was good quiet reflection time and the basic lessons of it were good. I realized I couldn’t just say no and come every Sunday to see my pastors’ disappointed faces, have everyone know I never got confirmed, sit alone during communion while everyone else went to receive the blood and body of Christ. A stronger person would’ve said no. A stronger person would’ve gladly sat, head held high, in a church that openly hated them. I was not a stronger person. I wrote a speech I didn’t believe and read it in front of everyone. Sat awkwardly while my whole family and pastors prayed over me for a God I didn’t believe in. I smiled for the pictures but stopped smiling anywhere else.

Am I depressed

It was a fair question. I found myself sobbing alone at night, heaving in my bed because I couldn't breathe and my brain wouldn't stop racing. I sat in corners, hiding behind a wall of hair that slowly filled with snot and tears and I screamed at my parents when they demanded I tell them what was wrong. I told them I couldn't tell them that it was mine to deal with, not theirs. Nothing made me happy and I was always angry, guilty, or sad. I read journals and articles and told myself I didn't have enough of the symptoms. I was overreacting, it was just regular PMS or something like that. So, I never said anything about anything.

No matter what I felt, I always told white lies to make it more comfortable for everyone until I couldn't even tell myself how I was feeling and 5 years later I'm still learning how to say things out loud regardless of any discomfort it causes others. My search history only holds half-truths because I lied to it in order to get the answers I wanted and while today I can say somethings out loud, I still tell myself lies and I still use Google.

