

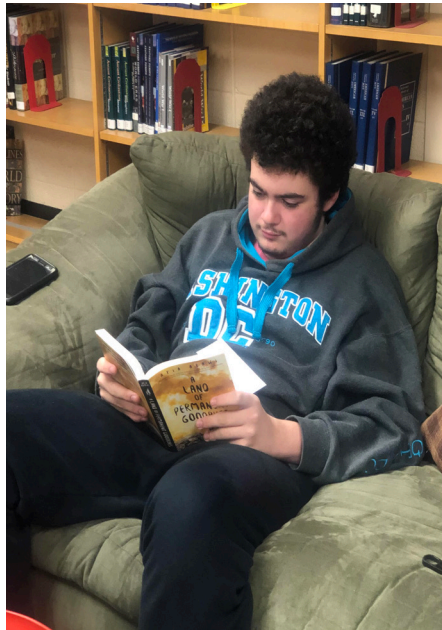
# Alliance of words

By: Jaquan Matthews  
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Book club is a place that you wanna go if you like getting lost in books, if you wanna make friends or if you just want to read more. The mission of the book club is to encourage reading and enlightenment. They want to open members up to new genres and authors, create discussion and provide an opportunity to meet new people all over the school. Book clubs offer people a chance to try new things. There are plenty of people in the club, like Laura Olson, senior.

Olson goes to the book club every Thursday with her friends in the library. The book club starts at 3:00 and ends at 4:00. "I joined it because I liked reading and I wanted to make more friends who read," said Olson. She told us that they do a lot of talking about part of the book that they just read. They select a wide variety of books. They choose books from the Iowa Choice Awards list. They read all types of books like fantasy, science fiction, and historical fiction. The book club will affect Olson in the future. She said that it will make her more able to analyze literature and have good conversations about the books she reads. They read about one book per quarter. They sit down, have discussions and have debates about the book they just read. If the debate gets heated they try to calm it down. "Talk it out and make sure it doesn't get violent," said Olson. The debates are not that serious usually. "You can be anyone meaning if you want to read more or if you just want to make friends," Olson said. The book club accepts anyone.

Another person in the book club is Gabe Larios, a junior. Larios goes to the book club every Thursday just like Laura Olson. He loves to read and he says it's a great way to pass time. "I wanted to read and I could never pick out a book on my own and I would have people decide for me," said Larios, which is why



Gabe Larios, junior, gets lost in his book, *Land Of Permanent Goodbyes* during book club.

he joined the book club. The book they are currently reading is *Land Of Permanent Goodbyes*, which is about a kid named Tareq and his family living in the midst of a Syrian war. His family's lives are changed when one of the feared "bombs that fell indiscriminately from the sky" destroys their apartment building. The author is Atai Abawi. Larios says that he likes the book. Gabe's favorite book from the book club is *Wrath Of Dawn*. The author of *Land Of Permanent Goodbyes* is going to be at the Marion Public Library so they all hope to finish the book by then. Larios now wants more people to join the book club because simply, it's fun. He likes it and he is pretty sure that other people will like it too. The club gives people a chance to try new things. You might find a new genre that you never thought of reading. If you love reading or if you want to make friends then go ahead and join. The book club accepts anyone and everyone.

# Unapologetically proud

By: Autumn Poston  
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GSA is a safe place for teens to come together and unapologetically be themselves. GSA stands for gay-straight alliance and is available and welcoming to all. It is a club in schools all around the country that's mission is to make a more accepting school environment for everyone no matter sexual orientation or gender identity. Last year, Marion's GSA met once a week on Wednesdays in Paige Junge's room. However, currently GSA is not meeting because it is still only the first quarter. There have been some contradicting opinions on how the club was run.

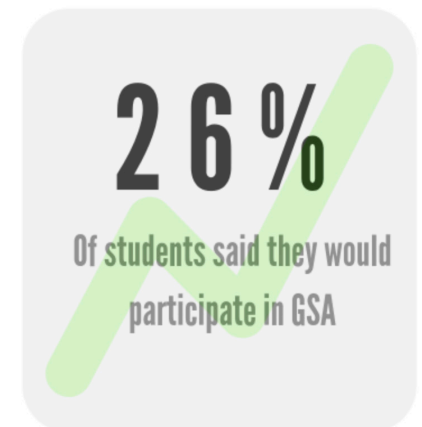
Grace Richards, sophomore, is very happy with the way it was run, "There's a lot of good people and fresh faces including me," said Richards. Overall everyone there is extremely supportive and welcoming. When they meet they talk about issues, drama, and even watch RuPaul's drag race. Hanging out with friends is another reason why people are happy with the way it was. It gives friends a spot to just chill and hang out together after school. However, not everyone has the same opinion as Richards.

Charlie Nelson-Moser, junior, is less happy about the way GSA was run, "the organization was chaotic and not very scheduled." He also wishes that the focus was more specifically on GSA instead of getting off topic as much as it has. However, getting off topic can be fun at times. Nelson-Moser also has good things to say about GSA. "It's overall just a very open place where there's no judgment," said Nelson-Moser. It is important for teens to feel as though they are welcome among a group of others with similarities.

Getting involved in school activities can make teens feel more accepted. Feeling accepted helps with mental health especially among teens who are already struggling with

social media and fitting in. That's why clubs like GSA are important to have in high school. Knowing that you are accepted in a club no matter what can make students feel more connected and welcomed at the school. Getting more people involved could open doors for people that they didn't even know needed opening.

There are many benefits of GSA in schools including awareness of gay rights and acceptance among students. Overall, clubs like these are very important to have while teens are growing and forming their own opinions. It helps open teens up to be more accepting of others. The club helps build character in students and prepare them for the future. In order



Out of a convenience 26% people said they would personally join GSA.

for students to gain these benefits, more people should get involved.

Getting more people involved could help GSA be more known around the school and be able to do more activities. Even starting a conversation about GSA could get more people interested. If you are at all interested in joining, just go give it a try. Anyone and everyone is welcome so why not take a chance. You could end up finding something that makes a lasting impact on your life.