

# Pescadero Post

**The Student Journal of Pescadero Middle School**  
*Volume 4, Number 1*      *"The Big Question Edition"*      *November 2017*

Welcome to the first edition of the Pescadero Post for the 2017-18 school year.



## Why is the Sky Blue?

By Faviola Rivera

I chose this question because I've always wondered why the sky is blue and not a different color. During my research I learned that the sky is blue because of the molecules in the air that scatter blue light from the sun. Those molecules change the color of the sky. Something interesting that I learned while my research is that white light from the sun has a mixture of all the colors of the rainbow. Another interesting thing is that the visible part of the spectrum ranges from red light with the wavelength of about 720 nm to violet with a wavelength of about 380 nm, orange, yellow, green, blue, and indigo are in between. The three types of color receptors of the human eye respond most strongly to red, green, and blue wavelengths. Another interesting fact is that when we see a rainbow we always see red first because it has longer wavelength than violet. Violet has a shorter wavelength, so if shorter wave lengths are more easily scattered then why is the sky not purple? Because it depends on how our eyes react to the light!

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## Q & A!

By R. Vail

*This year, Middle School Intensive English started off with "100 Questions," an assignment meant to provoke critical thinking and elicit big questions. Why is the sky blue? What happens when we die? Does God exist? Who invented this & that? And on and on and on! Then, the students were asked to pick their "big question" - the most interesting, the most important, the most compelling question - and answer it (or at least try)! The following articles are just some of their responses...*



## Why Do We Attend School?

By Pilar Carmona

Have you ever wondered why we have to attend school? I have. Many kids ask this question a lot. Although most kids hate school, they should like it. Schools give students an advantage of having a better future. Kids usually only attend school from pre-school to high school and

graduate. But most kids have a better future if they keep attending school, and a better life.

Kids used to have to educate themselves hundreds of years ago. Kids did not actually attend school until 1837. Although all education was developed in Europe, the first school that was created in the United States was in Massachusetts. The school was the first school that had a teacher to educate the kids. People from Massachusetts had an idea of building a school so that their kids wouldn't be in their house all of the time. Horace Mann had the idea of building the school there and having the kids be educated. Kids at the school would learn how to read and write. The British too, wanted their people to learn to read and write.

In conclusion, one possible answer of why we have to attend school is that the British wanted their people to know how to read and write. Another possible answer is that if people liked the school in Massachusetts and their kids started to learn then they probably started to tell other people and other states and countries built schools too.

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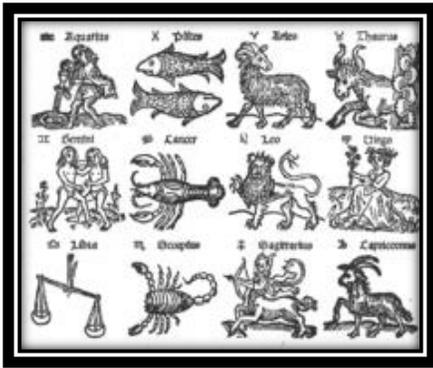


*I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift should be curiosity.*

~Eleanor Roosevelt

*The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality.*

~Albert Einstein



# The Zodiac

By Lisette Gomez

The twelve Zodiac signs are Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces. They are based off of twelve constellations first developed by ancient Mesopotamians during 3,200 BC to 500 BC. The word "zodiac" comes from the Latin word "zodiacus" meaning "circle of animals." The term also describes the circle of twelve parts that measure 30 degrees, of celestial longitude that centers upon the path of the sun. Around 500 BC The Greeks took over this system. Not only did the ancient Mesopotamians and Greeks use a system similar to this but so did other cultures including the Chinese, the Indus Valley civilization, the Egyptians, and many other cultures.

Zodiac signs are also associated with horoscopes. The word "horoscope" comes from the two Greek word "hora" meaning time and "skopos" meaning observer. Horoscopes are the predictions of someone's future. They tell what the actions of that person will be like based off of the position of the stars and other characteristics.

People today question the legitimacy of the system. NASA came to the conclusion that the position of the constellations have changed over the years. Another article wrote "the actual constellations have shifted over the ages, but western astrology follows a different system, which uses 'artificial' constellations." This means that western astrology doesn't use the movement of visual stars but based on the path of the sun looked at from our perspective on earth.

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# Who Invented Soccer?

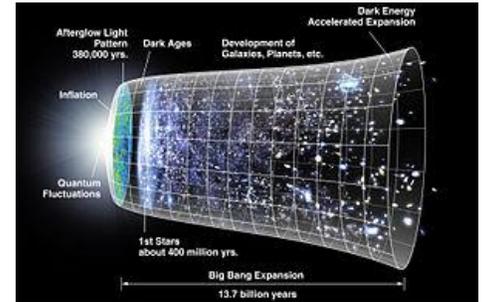
By Amelia Harper

Many people overlook who invented soccer. People, who don't know anything about the history of soccer, assume that it started in Spain because soccer is very big in Spain. It is big in other countries, but in Spain everyone knows about soccer. Some of the biggest clubs in soccer are in Spain like Barcelona, and Real Madrid. The League in Spain has 20 clubs in it, the league is called the La Liga. (Incidentally, Cruyff helped mold Barcelona as a player and as a coach.)

Soccer is the most watched sport in the world. The 2014 the World Cup got over 3.2 billion views. The World Cup also has to do with music. In 2014 there were two World Cup songs: We Are the One by Pitbull, and Beyonce and La La La by Shakira. The World Cup means a lot to soccer fans around the world. Some players who have helped the game where important in the world cup like Pele and Maradona. They came up with moves and different styles of playing the game.

Hard core soccer fans will know that soccer started in England. Soccer started in the mid-19th century, the first soccer club was started in 1862. The first soccer club's name is Notts County. When the English invented modern soccer they called it football because you play with your feet, and with a ball. In America, we call it soccer. Soccer started in London, England. Since then, soccer is big all over the world. Some of the rules have changed, for example they have added the offside rule. Playing soccer used to be a passion (it still is for younger players), but now it is mostly about money (in professional soccer). Anyway, it is still a beautiful game.

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# Staring at the Stars

By Sophie Mateja

"Are humans alone in the multiverse?" This question has been asked since the first Hunter-Gatherer looked up at the starry night sky. The question is even more prominent now because we have the power to gaze at the night sky through powerful telescopes, launch telescopes into the great heavens, and bring a human onto the moon. We search for inhabitable planets, and plan missions to Mars. Humans are constantly searching for alien life

For almost as long as humans have been looking through telescopes, we have been searching the stars for other inhabitable planets. On April 17, 2015, NASA published an article on the first Earth-size planet in the "habitable zone" of another star. "The discovery of Kepler 186-f is a significant step toward finding other worlds like Earth," said NASA's Astrophysics Division Director. Kepler 186-f is likely to be rocky, and has some bodies of water smaller than Earth's. Kepler 186-f is located in the Kepler 186 system, about 500 light-years away from Earth. "We know of just one planet where life exists-- Earth. When we search for life outside our solar system we focus on finding planets with characteristics that mimic Earth's" said Elisa Quintana, research scientist at the SETI institute. "Finding a habitable zone planet comparable to Earth in size is a major step forward." Even more recently, on August 24, 2016, the closest inhabitable planet to Earth was found. Proxima B lies in the habitable zone of Proxima Centauri which is roughly 4.243 light-years away. It is a rocky planet with some bodies of water, and is estimated to have a mass 1.3 times the size of Earth. Its week (orbit) consists of 11.2 Earth days.

The Drake Equation is very important to scientists searching for intelligent extra-terrestrial life. It estimates the number of intelligent civilizations in the multiverse. The equation includes values for the number of civilizations with electromagnetic emissions, the rate of formation of stars suitable for the development of intelligent life, the fraction of those stars with planetary systems, and other values relating to the probability of life.

Ever since humans first started using satellite dishes, we have been broadcasting ourselves into space. We have been projecting ourselves for nearly seventy years. Every time you turn on a television or make a call to a friend, you are broadcasting yourself to other life. Sometime in the near future it is probable that we will come in contact with alien life. Even if humans are alone, it is even more necessary to protect life on Earth. We are special, unique. Every form of life, down to the smallest beetle in the soil to the largest blue whale, life is precious. All life is beautiful.

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## What Is Crazy?

By Shay Barton

We know and know of plenty of people who we consider to be *non compos mentis*. Isaac Newton, for example, the possibly autistic and definitely antisocial and paranoid man who was actually determined to be remembered for his religious writings and not his discoveries in the fields of physics and optics. Or your dear old Uncle So-and-so, living proof that madness and genius do not live hand in hand. However, since so many of our standards and judgments are dictated by cultural and societal norms, I wonder if

the labels "insane", "crazy", "mad", etc. might occasionally (or often) land in that category.

Let us begin with the fact that when most people consider someone as crazy, it is because the labeled individual displays irregular, deviant, or just generally unorthodox behavior. What behaviors qualify as ordinary and rational are so dependent on the group of people that this method of deducing someone's level of sanity is utterly idiotic and unreliable. Something as simple as sipping sugared tea from some ornate cup might seem ridiculous and maybe even crazy to some cultures for whatever reason, but to the stereotypical British this custom is as constant as the tide. Cannibalism, which to us Americans seems barbaric and inhumane, may be socially acceptable as a religious ritual in other regions of the world. Cultural norms cannot define someone's sanity.

A more scientific way to categorize people as insane would be to observe actual physical defects in the brain. If someone's brain is obviously deformed (although in this case they would still be functional people), considering them in an unfit mental state seems reasonable. However, these sorts of defects manifest themselves in so many different ways pertaining to the individual that the how-the-heck-is-the-pink-spaghetti-put-together aspect becomes only one element in the multitude of variables that define crazy.

In more educated circles where insanity is not defined by adherence to social norms, to be crazy is to be irrational, incapable of empathy, and to perceive reality "incorrectly". Whilst this provides a clear, concise and logical summary of terms often carelessly tossed about, it forces those inclined towards philosophy to question whether or not it is fair to disregard one person's perception of reality and feeling when we really have no proof as to the accuracy of our own.

For the sake of convenience, we will here deploy Newton's Flaming Laser Sword and say that the generally accepted perception of reality cannot be settled by experiment and therefore is not worth questioning. Just because a person is genuinely insane in one way or another does not mean they are worthless as individuals and cannot contribute to

society. Madness and brilliance coincide remarkably often. Take for instance Pythagoras, credited with the Golden Ratio and the Pythagorean Theorem. Despite these mathematical developments which are still relevant today, a brief look into the cult this guy had will convince you that he was honest-to-gods whacked. The downright illogical and paranoid beliefs held by Pythagoras were not consistent with the rational mind of a mathematician. This does not mean he was mentally inferior, however, as is evidenced by his achievements.

In the end, I believe that if someone is obviously unstable, delusional, and sadistic then of course treatment is definitely justified and a positive thing. If someone is a danger to himself and others we should not hold back help because it makes us feel like we are contemplative. This does not mean that we shouldn't question our own labels. Even if "crazy" is with certain persons a clear cut thing, deducing the personal line we draw between the sane mind and the insane one is the sort of pondering that gives us further invaluable insight as to who we are as human beings. An effort should be made to understand those who differ mentally and why we think what we think of their behaviors, not only because this is the humane thing to do but because through this an effort is made to understand ourselves. The label of "crazy" can often say more about the labeler than that human which is classified.

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*"To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an hour."*

~ William Blake

*"The world is full of magic things,  
patiently waiting for our senses to grow  
sharper."*

~ W.B. Yeats

*"Judge a man by his questions rather  
than by his answers."*

~ Voltaire



## Why Do We Dream?

By Cinthia Vazquez

Why do we dream? This is a common question we all ask ourselves. Is it bad to dream? Why do we have nightmares? Sleep is something we need every day. But why do we dream?

What is important to know while asking this question is that there is no way to see dreams, but there is "Oreinology" (the study of dreams). We can see the amount of electrical activity happening during sleep. There is also something called REM sleep. (Rapid Eyelid Movement) If you measure the amount of the electrical movement it's almost the same as the electrical activity when you are awake. During REM sleep the chemicals in your brain, like histamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin, are blocked. Because these brain chemicals are blocked, you are not able to move while you sleep. This is why you can dream of yourself walking or dancing, but in real life you don't move. Sometimes you can. Ever wake up and not be able to move because your brain hasn't adjusted and you are still in REM sleep? But people with REM-atopia move around during their sleep reenacting their dreams.

There is also something called lucid dreaming. Basically it's when you know you are asleep and you know you are dreaming, but you are aware of it and you can control your dream.

There are multiple theories on why we dream. The more popular ones are that we dream to prepare ourselves. This theory thinks that you dream something scary (a nightmare) to prepare yourself for something anxiety producing in the real world. This theory began "back during the day when we weren't sure what kind of threats we would encounter during the day and so to prepare us our brain would simulate anxieties while we slept to make us better prepared for that feeling in the real world" (Vsauce) For example: a test or a big speech. Another theory is that the

brain produces random electrical impulses that confuses the brain so it makes a cohesive story. This would make sense since the brain is always looking for patterns. In summary even though scientists know what is millions of miles away in space we aren't able to know why dreams happen but we can guess.

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## Fear of Snakes?

By Zephyr Webb

My question addressed why people are afraid of snakes. I chose to address this because I have been interested in it for years. I've been interested in it because there are people I've met who love snakes and also people who hate them. I have also heard of people who think a fear of snakes is innate, which I know is untrue.

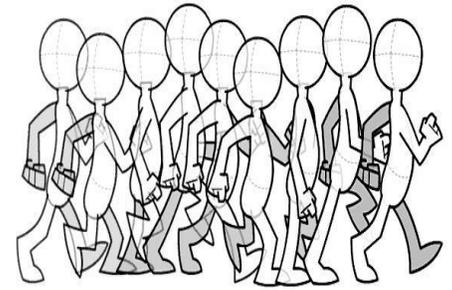
According to the articles I read during my research, my initial suspicions were correct, and the fear of snakes is caused by cultural normalcy. My own lack of fear of snakes is due to being an introvert raised on a mountain by people who would give them to me whenever they were caught. My sister is an extrovert and was a little scared of them at first but got over it because I rubbed off on her. There is also the matter of unflattering stories about snakes. For example, Adam and Eve. That particular story was actually the cause of fear of snakes for one of my acquaintances. It portrays the snake as a 'devil' character, which initiates fear.

I did learn something new, though. Humans are able to recognize snakes in a variety of different locations very quickly from an early age, but not other, more harmless animals. This suggests that people who could not quickly recognize snakes often died from picking up a rattlesnake of something like it, and didn't pass on their genes.

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## What is Animation?

By Ché Fitzgerald

Ever wonder how cartoons are made? Find out how to create a cartoon by reading all the requirements needed to hopefully become an animator! Here you will find all sorts of info on animation, cartoons, and video games!

Animating takes a lot of time and patience to actually be able to make a cartoon out of it. Animating also requires years of experience for drawing. Drawing is the most important part and the needed item for animation! The specific definition for animation is the process of making the illusion of motion and the illusion of change.

In order to animate, you must at least have a story written down in sentences or bullet points. It would be most appreciated by most if it was drawn out in story boards like Pixar Studios does but either way, the animation can go based off of any story made!

The old version of animation took lots of work. People would have to draw what they call a frame. Making multiple frames was time consuming back when they made Snow White and the Seven Dwarves. When movies were made, they had what was called VHS tapes which was a tape that had lots of film which holds a picture or a frame.

The newer version of animation is now made on computer. It is still time consuming but takes less time for the actual animation to occur. When you animate on the computer, it's all used with codes and commands. Almost like an old computer, but without the green code screen.

Source:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animation>



## Is Being Unhealthy Good?

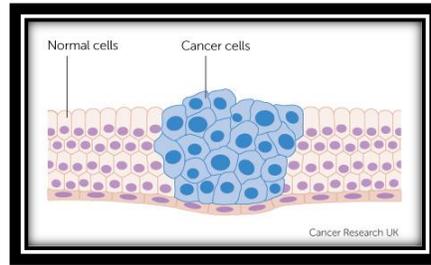
By Erika Gomez

The answer to this question could be true for many reasons. #1 Weight loss industries make money off of people who are overweight, if you are not overweight they can't make money off of you. Currently, the weight loss industry is worth at least 80 billion dollars because people love to go to fast food restaurants and sometimes they are too lazy to cook. If you go to a fast food restaurant you will most likely want to buy more and more food than you actually need (or want). And if you ever get the feeling like you want more food even if you are full this is because fast food restaurants add chemicals into their food that include casein and MSG which enhances the flavor of the food and also wants you to crave it more. The more you eat, the more likely you are to start following a cycle, and the cycle is: you go to a fast food place, you gain weight, you go to a weight loss place, you lose weight, then you go back to a fast food restaurant. And the cycle keeps going which means the weight industry can now make more money off of you.

Chipotle is a fast food restaurant (sort of) that claims to add no chemicals in their food, they even produced a short film in which a scarecrow goes on a journey in a factory where chickens are being plucked with chemicals, and cows are stuck in small cages, but it also shows the people who eat the food who have no idea how their products are made. Although the film does have a happy ending, 2 years after the film was released Chipotle had an E.coli outbreak. Then more people went to the other fast food restaurants such as McDonalds and even though it did not take long for customers to go back it did make them stay away for some time. Many people believe that some sort of corporation contaminated Chipotle's food so people would stay away. Although these facts may not be true it might show that the government is hiding things from us.

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## Will We Ever Cure Cancer?

By Grace Jones

I choose this question because I felt like it is the most relevant to the modern day. Also, it seemed like I could actually answer it. Another thought that I had was the fact that 7.6 million people die a year from cancer. This is giving me the idea that 7.6 million is a huge amount of our earth's population. I feel like sense it is such a big issue, and sense it has been going on for such a long time we have to find a simply perfect cure. I have a feeling that modern day medical doctors are getting more and more experienced so we will find that perfect cure soon.

Cancer, there are many different types of cancer, and there are many causes of cancer. Lung cancer, about 80% of lung cancer death is caused by smoking or caused by the exposure to second hand smoke, this is giving me an idea that people who smoke have a higher risk of getting lung cancer. Another sad truth is the fact that 7,330 people die a year from lung cancer.

Cancer cures some types of cancer might be cured, well that's already happened. But new cures are rare. Over the next century the chances of a single cure for cancer is very high.

Breast cancer, the main risk of breast cancer is the fact that many women are considered at high risk of getting breast cancer and do not know while other women do know that they are at high risk of getting breast cancer and those women who don't know are the ones that usually end up getting breast cancer. Also did you know that approximately 40,610 women die a year from breast cancer.

I believe that we will cure cancer, I think this because modern doctors and modern technology is getting so much more advanced that we have to cure cancer. The only problem is the fact that health care prices have gone up so high that people who have cancer might not be able to afford it which breaks my heart. Because it is such a big problem we will find a cure.

Source: Google, Scientific American



## Rivers?

By Cynthia Amezcua

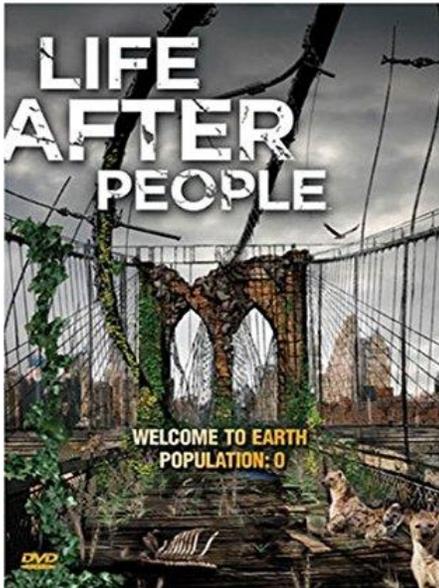
The question I asked was where does water in the rivers come from? When I was younger, I used to wonder where drinking water came from, but now that I know that it comes from rivers. Then, I started to wonder, from where does the water in rivers come. The stuff that I think is necessary to know to answer my question is to know how the water in the rivers are used. It's important because sometimes we drink water from rivers and sometimes the water could be dirty. Sometimes people put trash and other bad things that might harm us. The only answer I have for this question is that sometimes the water comes from the ground which is spring water or artesian aquifers, and sometimes rain falls in rivers or river watersheds. Other places water comes from are glaciers and mountain snow melt. The answer to my question is the hydrologic cycle or the water cycle. How the hydrologic cycle works explains water in oceans, rivers, lakes, and in my water bottle.

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*"The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction."*

~ Rachel Carson



## Will People Disappear?

By Tallulah Alexander

When will people disappear? Will we ever know? Humans may never disappear or they will. We can't predict the future but we were all born to die. Maybe we'll die out or some huge explosion wiping us off from the face of the earth will happen. Maybe there will be a disease or just something that could wipe out the existence of humans. We could predict so many ways of how we could die. Scientists might not even know when people will disappear. It will take years just for creatures like us to somehow go extinct. Honestly, humans will probably disappear in a few hundred or thousand years. We can't just stay on Earth forever. Some point in time we won't be here anymore. We might not even disappear from the world. Maybe we will only disappear from the planet we live on. We might go to mars or any other existing planet in the universe. There's many planets we haven't discovered that we might appear on one day. No one is exactly sure if we will disappear or not. Once or if we do than at least animals will be free and so will nature. Earth would probably be better without humans on it and it would turn into something better like a jungle or a huge forest for other life. Humans could always go extinct from overpopulation or something else. Maybe somehow we will just disappear into thin air. Global warming could also cause humans to go extinct. I'm sure there are many ways we could disappear. We just don't know when.



## A Tragic Loss?

By Seth Watson

I've found myself lying awake at night, restless, all because of one question: Why don't humans have fur? After Mr. Vail's 100 question assignment, I have either found myself in the middle of an existential crisis or flustering myself with illogical questions such as this one. Today, illogic will be taking the spotlight. Why is it that humans no longer have fur? Scientists have done lots of research regarding this question. Most researchers believe that primates (our ancestors) tragically lost their coats because of the fact that they were sweating. The purpose of sweating is merely to cool down in hot climate, therefore, fur coats made sweating a difficult process. For once, a rational reason for preferring a naked partner comes to mind. Primates wanted their partners lacking fur so that before participating in procreation, the two lovers could inspect one another for parasites. Parasites such as fleas, ticks, and lice would cuddle up in the sweaty, matted fur of primates and burrow in their skin and hair. It was utterly disgusting; fur coats really dodged a bullet. If fur coats decided to ditch the human race, then why do we have hair on our heads and various other places? According to [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com), "Humans kept the hair on our head which reflects harmful UV rays, but our body hair was reduced. Therefore we have hair on our head maybe because it looks sexy and protects the head from sun at the same time. In conclusion, I should be glad that we're not sweaty, festering mounds of fur. Somehow, I am still a bit saddened at the fact.

*"No one asks how to motivate a baby. A baby naturally explores everything it can get at, unless restraining forces have already been at work. And this tendency doesn't die out, it's wiped out."*

~B.F. Skinner



## Why are things scary?

By Jack Christian

Why do people get scared? It happens to everyone at least once. But why does it have to happen what are the things that go on inside of your brain and your body. It is less strong than a happy gene or like a sad gene but it surprises us a little bit more than anything else. I think that now your brain is the judge about what is scary or not but all I can say is your brain is your boss and your body is your job. Look at scary movies like for example Stephen King's "It" just came out last Friday and it appears to be scary. But that is my point! Things can appear scary they are not just because of a quick noise or flash or something, it is all in your head. Sometimes fear is triggered by something that is startling or unexpected like a loud noise, even if it's not actually dangerous. That's because the fear reaction is activated instantly a few seconds faster than the thinking part of the brain can process or evaluate what's happening. I think why you get scared is because just the fact that you can get frightened.

**The  
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