**Reading:**Read the assigned Newsela article, “Why Tough Times Can Create Better Neighbors”. Write a one sentence summary for each paragraph as you read.

**Writing:**Write about how this virus has impacted YOUR life? How has it impacted concerts, assemblies, sporting events? How do you feel about the impact this virus has had on your school year? Write at least half a page.

“Why Tough Times Can Create Better Neighbors”

Residents of a neighborhood in Boston, Massachusetts, emerged from their apartments for a lash mob on the morning of March 14. Staying more than 6 feet apart, the neighbors waved to each other and joined in singing the Beatles song “Let it Be”. One of the residents, a professional cellist, played for a sing-a-long of “Lean on Me” by Bill Withers. “Everyone appreciated the activity, which brought much-needed levity and connection,” resident Minda Sanchez said via email. The activity not only brought community members to their feet to dance in the sun, it brought many to tears.

Similar scenes are playing out in neighborhoods across the world quarantined because of COVID-19, (short for coronavirus disease 2019). The coronavirus is a flu-like illness that began in China and has been spreading across the globe since December 2019. In Wuhan, China, whole blocks of apartment buildings chanted, “Keep up the fight.” In Rome, and Siena, Italians on lock down lean out of windows and balconies with tambourines and accordions to sing songs. On March 14, citizens throughout Spain began clapping in unison to cheer health care workers.

**Reaching out to Strangers**

As the practice of “social distancing” burgeons, people are finding ways to meet even though they can’t meet face-to-face. Social distancing is the practice of keeping away from crowds and public places to slow down the spread of the disease. Instead, people are using video calling and social network connections. However, people aren’t just staying in touch with friends and family. The global crisis has roused a sense of shared humanity that’s causing people to reach out to their communities.

Instances of selflessness have become increasingly common. Professional basketball players such as Giannis Antetokounmpo and Zion Williamson have donated money to cover the salaries of arena workers affected by the suspension of the season. Other acts of kindness include providing food for children who are out of school.

To be sure, there are many instances of acting unkindly at the moment. Fights have broken out at supermarkets as people wrestle for the last remaining item on a shelf. Some are hoarding sanitizer, face masks, and toilet paper. Many ignored pleas to practice social distancing, gathering at restaurants. In response, governors in several states, including Massachusetts and Ohio, shut down restaurants except for delivery and takeout.

The crisis will alter the way we connect socially. Even if it is online, what matters most is how we interact with others. It is recommended we try to calm each other to the extent that we can and not raise panic because that helps all of us to be a it calmer.