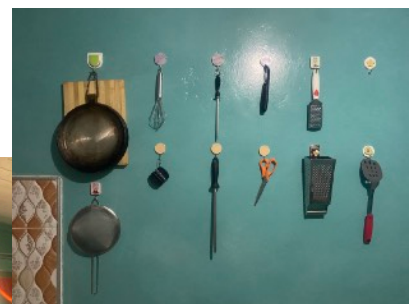


Hello Friends and Family,

Damn, It's been a minute. I just completed my first two months at site and it has been a whirlwind! Can't believe I'm doing this for free! But anyway as promised in my last newsletter here's a tour of my house. Other Volunteers and the Kenyan Country Directory say I have a Posh Corps set up, but my house doesn't have AC, a dryer, or a sitting toilet! I'm really roughing it! Here's the frontal view:



Living Room Below. Shouts out Mugi, Elda, and Zoe for fixing the fungusway Kitchen and hanging kitchen utensils to the right.





Where the magic doesn't happens my bedroom:



Some photos of friend and family I printed out before I left. shouts out if you made the cut!



If you didn't make the cut email me a picture and I'll see if I can print it out! Or you can send me a photo/package to the address at the end of this newsletter!

Here's a view of the my Yard. I live on a compound next to an Evangelical Church called Hafsaya. The squat white building is the pastors house and my house is in the back with the blue roof. The tall orange building are church offices, classrooms, and bedrooms. The pastor also works as a Prison Officer in Nairobi and his wife works as a principle at a school 2 hours north of their house. So during the week they're not around and I hold down the compound. (With his 16 security cameras)



Below is a table that highlights some of the differences between American and Kenyan secondary schools.

	American	Kenyan
Class size	25-30	50 - 60+
How students get to school	Bus, drive, or a parent drops you off	Bicycle (If you can afford one) or walk 0.5 - 2 hours
Respect	Respect must be earned by teachers	Respect is given to teachers automatically
Moving from class to class	Students move from class to class	Teachers move from class to class
Who cleans the school?	Janitors	Students
What time are student in school	7:40 AM - 3:30 PM	6:30 AM - 6:30 PM
How school is payed for	Property Taxes	Student Fees and Gov't Funding
Dress code	None	Strict - non uniform attire will be burned students sent home
Lunch time	One forty minute period between 10 and 2	Everyone has lunch together at 1:10pm
Lunch cost	Only free for some students	Free for all students and teachers
Tea time	? You can grab a coffee at lunch	Everyday at 10:00am
Class mixing by gender and grade	Genders mix and some grade levels mix	Classes strictly divided by grade level and gender
Safe sex teaching	My HS handed out condoms	Absintence only
Corporeal punishment	Illegal in NYS	De-jure Illegal but not enforced
Religion	Seperation of church and state	Religion is mandatory you must take Christian, Muslim, or Hindu class, and you must go to church every Thursday morning.
Curriculum	Dictated from the state	Dictated from the national gov't
State tests	At the end of every school year	Only at the end of senior year
School on Saturday?	What? Saturday is for sports	Mandatory
Time between secondary and university	2 - 3 months	9 - 12 months
Who provides Guidance and Counseling	Guidance counselors	Teachers

School/Student Psychologist	A trained psychologist	Teachers
School Nurse	A trained nurse	Teachers
Who dismisses the class?	The bell	The Teacher (some teachers show up late and keep kids late)
Who creates the timetable	Admin/computer program	Teachers
Who is the Lunch Monitor / Hall Monitor	An adult lunch monitor/ hall monitor	Teacher
Do Principals and Assistant Principals teach?	No	Yes
Homework	A lot of HW	Little HW because no time
Phones during meetings	Not appropriate	Everyone seems to be on theirs
Grades?	Private	Totally public
What is considered a "good" grade?	90 -100	60 - 100
Parent involvement	Heavily involved	Little to no involvement
Long break between grade levels	July and August	December, January

Difference in Student Schedules:

American School Schedule below

Kenyan School Schedule below

*This bell schedule goes into effect in September, 2019*

1	8:00am	8:44am
2	8:48am	9:29am
3	9:33am	10:14am
4	10:18am	10:59am
5	11:03am	11:44am
6	11:48am	12:29pm
7	12:33pm	1:14pm
8	1:18pm	1:59pm
9	2:03pm	2:44pm
Extra Help M-W-Th	2:44pm	3:14pm

<b>Arrive</b>	6:30 AM	7:00 AM
<b>Remedial/Church/ Personal Studies</b>	7:00 AM	8:00 AM
<b>1</b>	8:00 AM	8:40 AM
<b>2</b>	8:40 AM	9:20 AM
<b>3</b>	9:20 AM	10:00 AM
<b>Tea Break</b>	10:00 AM	10:20 AM
<b>4</b>	10:20 AM	11:00 AM
<b>5</b>	11:00 AM	11:40 AM
<b>Short Break</b>	11:40 AM	11:50 AM
<b>6</b>	11:50 AM	12:30 PM
<b>7</b>	12:30 PM	1:10 PM
<b>Lunch</b>	1:10 PM	2:00 PM
<b>8</b>	2:00 PM	2:40 PM
<b>9</b>	2:40 PM	3:20 PM
<b>10</b>	3:20 PM	4:00 PM
<b>Games Time/ Clubs</b>	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
<b>Remedial Lesson</b>	5:00 PM	6:00 PM
<b>Clean Up and Leave</b>	6:00 PM	6:30 PM

Probably the only benefit of having the British colonize you is institutionalized tea time. Everyday at 10:00am (aka Saa nne - Swahili for fourth hour more on that later) we have tea time where everyone has a 20 minute break to drink tea and eat snacks. The students drink black tea the teachers drink milk tea. SAD! Here's a photo of the students getting tea - separated by gender:



Now for similarities:

While there are those differences our two school systems still have many similarities. High school/secondary school still consists of four grade levels. You still have your mix of smart students and dumb students. You still have your mix of hard-working teachers and lazy teachers. The teacher workload seems about the same between Kenya and America. Students learn pretty much the same things. We both have sports. In Kenya Football, Netball, Handball, and Volleyball dominate while in America American Football, Basketball, and Baseball dominate. (I know dominant sports vary by school. At my high school tennis, golf, and track dominated). Both our school systems still have science fairs and clubs. Except here the two religious clubs -

Catholic and Protestant - are by far the

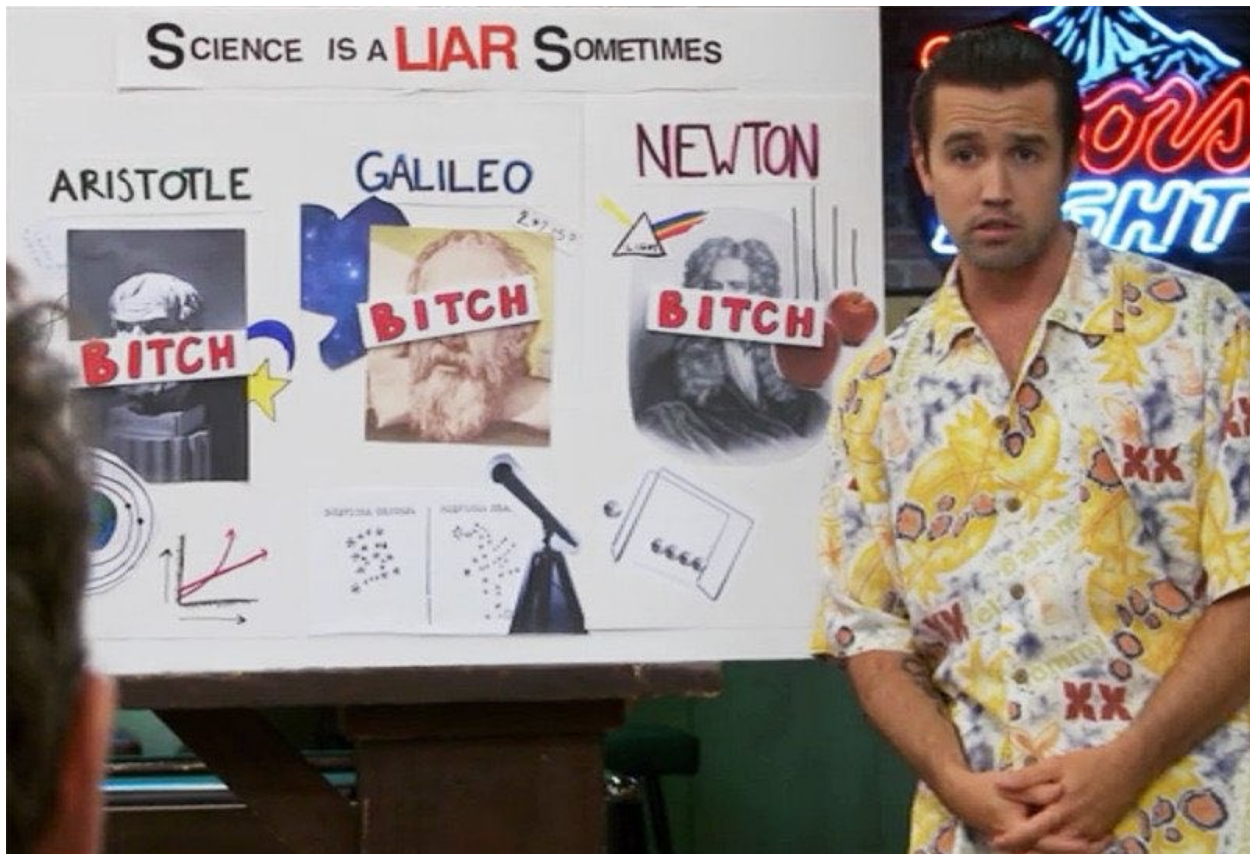


most popular. Below are some photos of me with students:





I currently teach 9th grade math. 9th grade computers, 10th grade life skills, and 9th grade ladies P.E. I also fill in for the other computer teacher when he is absent, which is often. I'll go into more depth in my next newsletter but these images basically sum it up (I teach in a Catholic school btw):



I'm a member of the Guidance and Counseling committee, which means I'm a guidance counselor for these students. The school advocates an abstinence only approach when it comes to sex ed. This led me to do some research into the efficacy of abstinence, and all I can come up with is this green liquid and pictures of perverted French men leering at women like this:



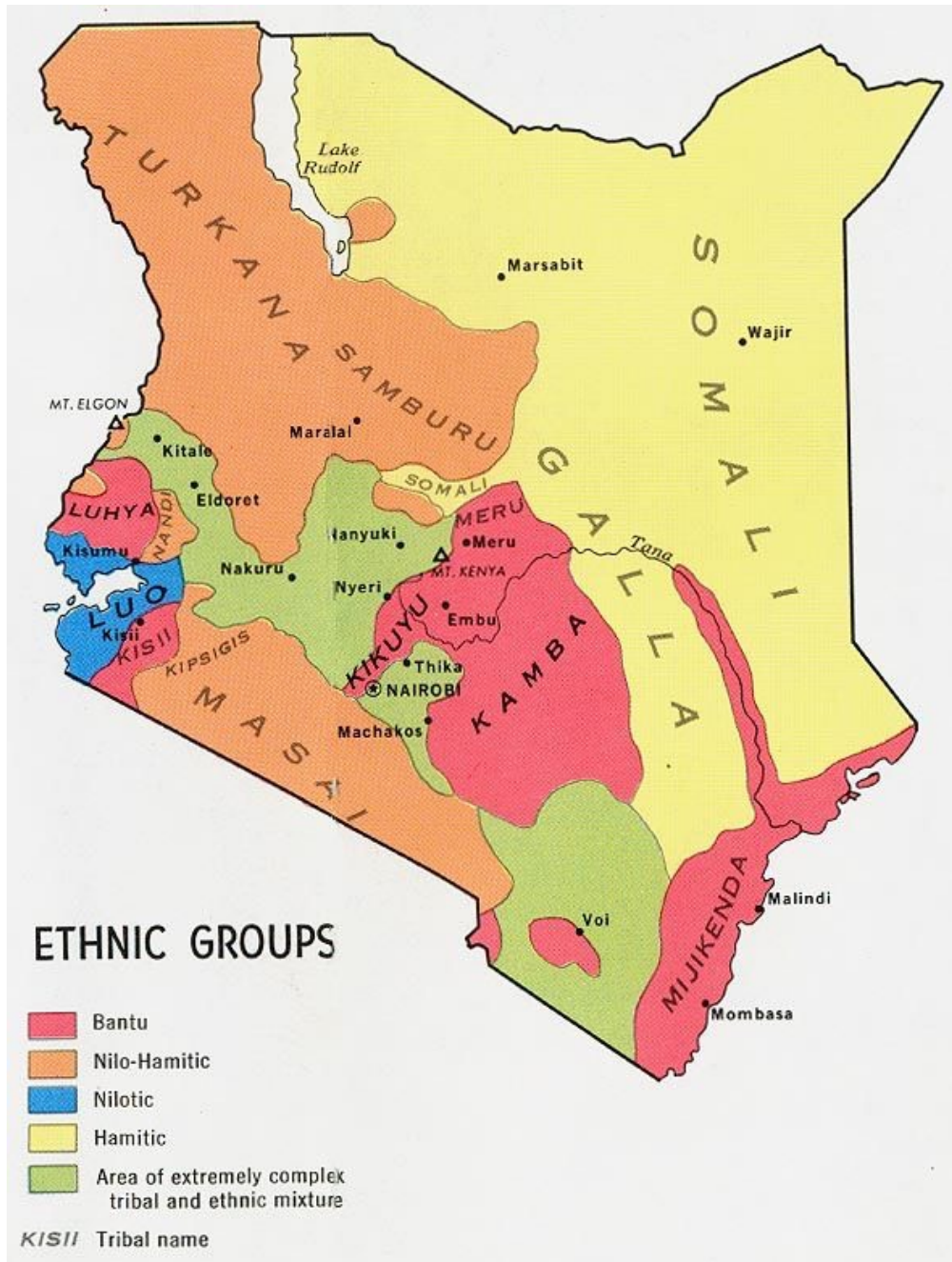
Not sure how to teach that so I tend to just avoid the subject entirely (or foist it onto another teacher)

We both have science fairs. The Kenyan science fair started in February and competition is ongoing. As a member of the Science Fair committee and the fastest typer in the school I was able to help 12 students (6 groups) formally type up their projects. These projects include: the construction of a website, the construction of a computer, the creation of an anti rust fluid from animal bones, the use of counting boards in complex multiplication, adding ground walnuts to cow dung to improve burn yield, and using Tobacco as an insecticide (I'll smoke to that!) We've been to two competitions so far (zonal, and sub-county level) and five of the projects have advanced to the county level which is tomorrow. Wish us luck! Here's some photos below:



## A Note on Language

It's crazy how much the language you speak colors the way you see the world. It's said that Eskimos have over fifty words for snow, the Greeks have eight words for love, and Italians have thirty three hundred words for pasta. Here in Kenya the two lingua francas are Ki-Swahili and English (also known as Ki-Ingereza or Ki-Zunga). Everyone in Kenya typically speaks three languages at a minimum - Swahili, English, and their mother tongue. In my area the mother tongue is Ki-Luhya from the Luhya tribe. Here's a map of the linguistic breakup of the country:



If you look at the map you will see Luo highlighted as blue because it is in the Nilotic language family. I am living just above that area in the red area labeled Luhya. Fortunately, like Swahili Luhya is a Bantu language. The structure between the two languages is extremely similar. It's just a matter of plugging different sounds into the same structure I learned in my three intensive month of Swahili study.

Now for a quick intro into Ki-Swahili. Swahili is an incredibly verb heavy language. The way verbs are conjugated implies the noun it's associated with so often times the noun is dropped when spoken. Most of the sentences I say consist entirely of verbs stringed together with different conjugations. This works for everyday parlance, but would not be accepted at an academic or legal level.

I will use the verb "to go" to explain the structure. In Swahili the word for "to go" is "kuenda." Here the verb root for "go" is "-enda," and the "ku-" prefix puts it in the infinitive. Now to conjugate "to go" you must add a subject prefix and a tense prefix. It will take the form: "*SubjectPrefix-TensePrefix-VerbRoot.*" For example "I go" becomes "ninaenda", "I will go" becomes "nitaenda", and "I have gone" becomes "nilienda." The chart more clearly illustrates the affixing verb tense prefixes:

Verb Tense English	Swahili Verb prefix	Verb Root "go"	Partially formed words"
Past	-li-	-enda	-lienda
Present	-na-	-enda	-naenda
Future	-ta-	-enda	-taenda

Now we have these partially formed verbs for "go" based on different tenses. Lastly, we need to add a prefix based on the subject. Swahili, like most languages, has 6 distinct subject pronouns: first-person singular, second-person singular, third-person singular, first-person plural, second-person plural, third-person plural. The chart below displays these pronouns:

Subject Pronoun English	Subject Pronoun Swahili
I	Nini
You	Wewe
He/She	Yeye
We	Sisi
You All	Nyinyi
They	Wao

Now, like I said before, these pronouns are typically dropped because the conjugation of the verb implies the pronoun. The following chart explains how the verb “go” is conjugated based on the pronouns:

Subject pronoun English	Swahili subject prefix	Verb root for “going”	Fully formed words
I	Ni-	-naenda	Ninaenda
You	U-	-naenda	Unaenda
He/She	A-	-naenda	Anaenda
We	Tu-	-naenda	Tunaenda
You All	M-	-naenda	Mnaenda
They	Wa-	-naenda	Wanaenda

Because Swahili is everyones second or third language and because verbs are conjugated and tenses are marked in such a formulaic way causes the language to be used in an extremely direct manner. When speaking Swahili, Kenyans don’t have time for flowery words or British politeness - a remnant of the colonizers. I rarely hear the Swahili word for please, thank you, or excuse me (they’re only used in a threatening manner). The language serves its purpose as the language of business and to connect the 42+ disparate tribes of Kenya.

Lastly, one very interesting aspect of Swahili is how time is states. The word “Saa moja asubuhi” literally translates to first hour of the morning, which is always 7:00am. Then we continue with “Saa mbili asubuhi” which translates to second hour of the morning, which is 8:00am. This pattern continues for every hour until we arrive at 7:00pm which translates to “Saa moja usiku,” literally first hour of the night. The same pattern follows for the dark hours (7:00pm - 6:59am.). The language does this because Kenya is located on the equator. No matter what months we are in sunrise always occurs at 6:30 am and sunset always occurs at 6:30pm give or take a few minutes.

**MANDATORY FUN TIME FUN TIME FUN TIME FUN TIME FUN TIME FUN TIME!!!!!!**

**ALL WORK AND NO PLAY MAKES COXY A DULL BOY!**

Writing has me exhausted I feel like this:



And now for some fun. I tried golf for the first time wow it was actually more fun than I thought. Can't wait to do this in retirement!

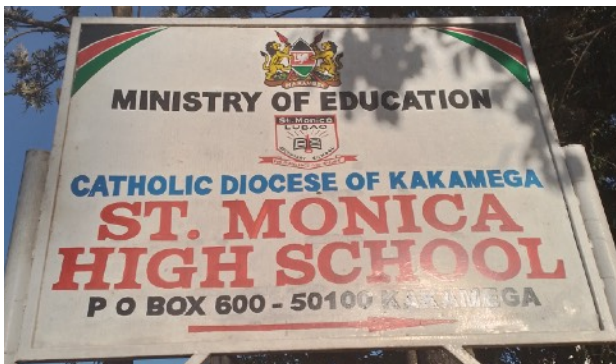


Also, my friends love visiting me and drinking booze because my house is considered “Posh Corps”



### The Closer

Alright, that’s probably enough for this newsletter. You should expect the next one sometime in April after this term ends. I think I’ll go over some of what I’ve been cooking and the public transportation system that exists in Kenya.



P.S. Here’s my address if you want to send letters or anything. This is the address of my school it should find its way to me I hope. I know that it’s hard to read in the sun it says:  
St. Monica High School  
P O Box 600-50100 Kakamega  
(I assume you have to add some more details for Kenya) Peace! 🕊️🕊️🕊️🕊️🕊️