



Page	Title	Summary and Discussion Points	Content Area
2	Barron Prize awarded to young heroes	On September 15, the recipients of the 2026 Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes were announced. The award recognizes children and teens in the US and Canada who “have made a significant positive impact on people and the planet,” according to its organizers. How would you define a hero? What, if anything, surprises you about this year’s winners?	Community Service
3	Equality advocate is remembered	Trailblazing journalist and activist Gloria Steinem, a leading figure of the modern women’s movement, died on September 2 at age 92. She advocated for women’s equal rights through writing and political organizing. What is Gloria Steinem’s legacy? How could someone your age best carry on her work?	Social Studies
4	Largest US school districts ban AI	The nation’s two largest school districts announced that they are banning artificial intelligence (AI) in some or all grades for the 2026–27 academic year. Why is AI being banned? What are your thoughts on this decision?	Technology
12-15	Our contest winners	This year marks <i>The Week Junior’s</i> sixth annual Nature Photo Contest, and 1,985 young photographers submitted entries—a record number. Readers captured striking images of animals, flowers, and landscapes. What makes a good nature photograph? Which winning photo is your favorite, and why?	Visual Arts
18	New champions at US Open	From August 30 to September 13, top tennis players from around the world gathered in Queens, New York, to compete at the US Open. Who won the women’s and men’s titles? Why were these wins so significant?	Social Studies

FEATURE OF THE WEEK JUNIOR: This week’s book (page 22)

Invite students to look at this week’s feature and answer the questions.

1. What do you think the book Building 903 might be about?
2. After reading the review, how would you describe the book in just six words?
3. Does the review make you want to read the book? Share specific examples of why or why not. Which featured book would you most want to read, and why?

	DEBATE	CREATE
ARTICLE	Largest US school districts ban AI (page 3)	"Our contest winners" (page 12-15)
VOCABULARY	banning, artificial intelligence, enacted, restrictions, chatbots	Landscapes, showcase, depth, compelling, composition
ACTIVITY	Challenge small student groups to create and "pitch" the ideal school AI policy to a panel of student "investors" (similar to Shark Tank judges) who control a fictional district's decision. Give teams ample time to conduct and summarize research into a 3-minute pitch of their policy (full ban, regulated use, AI-literacy curriculum requirement, etc.), backed by evidence from the news article and additional research. Encourage groups to create a simple one-slide deck, poster, or index card showing their policy's key rule, one risk it solves, and one trade-off it accepts. Direct student judges to grill each team with tough questions before deciding which policy gets funded/adopted. Challenge each judge to explain <i>why</i> they picked the policy they did and to debrief on what made the arguments most persuasive.	Direct students to vote for their favorite photograph from the contest winners. Ask students what they know about photography techniques. Introduce three composition techniques: the rule of thirds (placing the subject off to one side rather than dead-center makes a photo more visually interesting), changing the angle (crouching down to a bug's or flower's eye level, or shooting from below, creates a more dynamic and immersive shot than the usual standing-and-pointing-down approach), and natural framing (using branches, leaves, gaps, or shadows to frame the subject draws the viewer's eye right to it). Then send students outside (or to a garden/tree area if outdoor access is limited) for about 15 minutes to take 5–10 photos, trying to apply at least two of these techniques. Have them pick their single best shot and write 2–3 sentences explaining what they were going for and which techniques they used. Then wrap up with a quick gallery walk or slideshow where students share their photos and reasoning with the class.
EXTEND	Invite students to learn/propose changes to your district's actual AI policy.	Learn photography tips and tricks.

	CONNECT	ACT
ARTICLE	"Equality advocate is remembered" (page 4)	"Equality advocate is remembered" (page 4)
VOCABULARY	equality, advocate, trailblazing, activism	gender discrimination, working class, indigenous, memoir, humanity
ACTIVITY	Challenge students to name milestones in the battle for equality for women. How many can they name? Challenge groups to review the article and sites like this to build a simple timeline of at least 10 milestones in women's equal rights, e.g., the 19th Amendment and women's suffrage in 1920, the founding of <i>Ms.</i> magazine in the 1970s, Title IX, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Gloria Steinem's career gives students a real throughline to anchor the timeline to, since she was a journalist and activist who became one of the most influential figures in the American women's rights movement and a prominent advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment. Once groups have their timelines built, invite them to share the milestones they chose and have each group pick one milestone and answer: "What was life like for women before this happened, and what changed after?" Wrap up with a short class discussion by asking students: "What's one right people had to fight for that you now take for granted?"	Challenge students to identify at least three things Gloria Steinem did to advance equality for women. Then, invite students to write a short statement identifying one fairness or equality issue in their school or community they personally care about, why it matters to them, and one thing that could change it. Encourage them to identify one concrete action to carry out — e.g., writing a letter to a decision-maker, designing a flyer to post around school, drafting a doable proposal for a school-level change, or recording a short 30–60 second PSA video. Pair students up for a quick feedback round to check each other's ideas for clarity and whether it would actually reach the right audience. Once revised, help students follow through: send the letters, print and post the flyers, or share the videos with the class. Circle back with a short class discussion on what happened and what students learned about the power of creating positive change.
EXTEND	Read Gloria Steinem's last public words.	Learn about 12 women who changed the world.

* Note: On your computer or mobile device, click or tap blue links to access linked content.