



Ryan Collantes, Andrew Lin, Jenny Pyon  
Humanities 4 (sophomore)  
Lauren Jackson, Humanities Teacher  
International Community School  
Kirkland, Washington  
March, 2021

### Canto Illustration Rationale

For our modern *Inferno* representation, we chose to do a graphic illustration inspired by comic book pages with two sins. The top circle is named The Pit of the Negligent. In this circle of Hell, the sinners are students who were late to class because they were eating, playing video games, chatting with friends, or not getting up in time. The inhabitants of this circle are relatively close to the center, at the second to last ring, because those who choose to not partake in school, receive no knowledge or education at all, and thus completely reject the concept of online school. This is also considered a more serious sin because we treated the concept of education like the *True Way* that Dante says he strayed away from in the beginning of the *Inferno*.

The punisher of this circle is Cronos, the Greek god of time. The emphasis on his scythe represents his power over all the inhabitants, and his ruling over time. The punishment for those that are late to class is getting eaten alive by Cronos, trapped within his stomach only to be regurgitated and thrown back up later. The contrapasso to this action is that the sinners who chose to eat lunch for longer and are late to their next class because they forgot are eaten by Cronos. Cronos is the punisher in this circle because in Greek mythology Cronos eats his children to prevent a prophecy, and he fits because here the sinners try to prevent going to class. The right of the illustration shows what happens to the sinners when they are not being eaten by Cronos. The sinners are forced to run tirelessly on a clock and the hands of the clock constantly push them to keep running, even when they are tired. This symbolizes how those that constantly fight against time will struggle and, in the end, waste more energy avoiding the clock (deadlines)

than gaining anything beneficial. The setting of this circle is a pit to show that sometimes it's possible to end up in this circle on accident and to be trapped here, for example, forgetting to set an alarm the night before. Once you start sleeping after the class has already begun, it's hard to wake up and get back on time. This idea was translated from Dante's *Inferno* from one of the earlier cantos, Canto V. There, his attitude towards Francesca and Paolo shows pity and it seems like he believes that they do not belong there, so we decided to include a similar idea. Sometimes you make an accident and end up being punished, with no way to climb out of the hole. Finally, the color of this sin is purple because the colors are slowly starting to shift warmer and warmer, to build up tension until the center. This sin is taken to a further level, thus it is mixed with red, the next, final, most severe sin.

The deeper circle of our ICS *Inferno* is the Furnace of the Dishonest. As this is the deepest circle in our *Inferno*, it should have one of the worst sins that could be committed in school: plagiarizing. Made even easier during the pandemic, these sinners have taken advantage of the fact that teachers can no longer see and confirm that they are doing their own work, and not taking from outside sources. The punishment in this circle is that the sinner will be burned by the stolen fire of Prometheus. Prometheus' main myth is that he stole fire from Zeus and gave it to the humans, a great disrespect to the higher gods. This reflects the sinners of this circle, who stole work or answers to get a good grade. This further shows why this is the deepest circle in our *Inferno*. In Dante's *The Inferno*, sinners in the ninth, deepest circle committed a great offense to God himself, hence why Satan is in this circle. In our *Inferno*, the deepest circle houses those who have committed one of the greatest offenses to teachers, cheating and plagiarizing. The teachers' job is to help you learn, and if you just take all the answers off the internet or someone else, then you are not helping them at all. This demonstrates the symbolism and the contrapasso

in the drawing because the thing being stolen is what is harming you. Prometheus' stolen fire symbolizes the effects of stealing because cheating for class doesn't teach you anything, and in the end, you will be hurt because you wouldn't know the content without the use of external sources. In the final circle, the color is a bold red due to the fire in the furnace. The warm, red color contrasts with that of the cooler colors of the previous circle. It emphasizes the symbolism of the color in that it is most associated with anger and danger.

#### WORK CITED

Alighieri, Dante. *The Inferno*. Translated by John Ciardi, Signet Classic, 2001.