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It's 8:45 in the morning, the time I would jump onto the bus with my backpack and say goodbye to my mom. Then I would spend most of the day at school. Teachers taught different subjects and we would have a wonderful time talking, laughing, and playing with our friends during free times like recesses and breaks. Finally, I would come back home around 3:30 pm with my backpack full of folders and utensils, tired but content.

But now, everything has changed. I start my day in front of my computer. I will check which courses are updated and put them on my schedule to accomplish for the day. It is not an easy thing to do at first, but with more and more practice in the past months, I get used to this new type of online learning and handle them quite well.

It has become the new normal since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. My school routine has experienced a very big change. We no longer go to school and are trying to keep up with online learning, in a way that is probably not that effective and efficient. Teachers prepare course materials pretty differently and we spend a lot of time getting familiar with different learning platforms, such as Moodle and Google classroom. Fortunately, I'm not alone to deal with the virtual classes at home. My parents kept encouraging me to do a good job and said it would pay off. With a lot more things would move to the internet, online learning is a good way to prepare us for the future. At least this is what I see: my Mom and Dad both started to work remotely from home shortly after the school was closed. Like me, they spend most of their day in their office.

I think there are positive changes in the pandemic as well. A lot of people are now working from home, which means there are a lot less traffic on the roads and much less emission that goes into the air, which is good for the environment. Meanwhile, it also means that families would become closer as they spend more time together. My parents care a lot about my online learning and help organize my time well. I also get a chance to see what they are working on and understand how hard they work on their jobs. I think I understand them better than before after this unforgettable experience.

Another notable change is that we have restricted our outing to a great extent to reduce the risk of getting the coronavirus. Now we don't go out for shopping in malls or watch movies in theaters. In general, we avoid any events with large crowds. We only go out for essential grocery shopping, twice a month. Many stores have been closed and people are no longer traveling. My family has canceled our plan to visit my grandparents and enjoy yummy food in China during the summer vacation.

What I miss most during this horrible pandemic are my friends and teachers. Even though I still keep in touch with them through online chats, I really miss the days we met in person and played together. I really hope COVID-19 could recover soon, so I can see everybody at school, and pick up my favorite sport figure skating and get back on ice.