Lazy summer days vs. landscapers

Whether you're a first grader proud of the fact you survived your first year of full-day education or a grad student desperate for a study break, summer vacation means one thing to everybody: sleeping in on weekday mornings. There is no alarm to hit at 6:30 and no bus to chase after. And while days might be filled with summer jobs and day camp, those never seem to start quite as early.

So why is there a conspiracy working against students the minute the final bell rings and the last exam is turned in? And the culprit is visible in any given apartment complex, condo community or public park: landscapers.

I have lived in many towns and in homes of different shapes and sizes in my short, 23 years on Earth. And yet, no matter where I call home, I am faced with the same hardship: trying to sleep in on lazy, summer mornings while the lawn mowers are hard at work on public and private yards.

The townhouse neighborhood I called home when I was a little girl was a jam-packed street. We had more than 250 houses on my block alone. One of the things my mom loved about that house was its tiny yard.

My mother **does not have a green bone in her body**. She has killed every herb garden my sister and I have ever given her. So my mother was thrilled that our front yard was the size of a postage stamp. It, like every other yard on the block, only needed to be trimmed once a month to look good. And yet, every Monday and Thursday at 7:30 a.m., the city-contracted landscaping team would drive down our street and unload two or three industrial mowers and go to work on the little patches of public grass around mail boxes and trees.

Later, when I moved to Michigan, my family and I lived in a condominium complex our first year. As part of the deal, every yard was landscaped with big bushes and tulip patches. But to keep the yards all looking nice and healthy, the owners had full-time landscapers keep up with the maintenance. My mother was thrilled to have a full garden without worrying about killing each plant one by one.

Never having to before, I was thrilled I didn't have to mow this new yard that was 100 times bigger than the postage stamp one we had before. But I was not so thrilled when the mowers showed up on Saturday mornings. Saturdays! Were they serious? Mowing every yard on the street starting at 7 a.m. on a Saturday.

As an adult out on my own, I like that apartments don't come with yards I have to maintain. I am just getting the hang of remembering to buy groceries and having my own mailbox to check. If I had to add watering flowers to my to-do list, I would forget. But what I'm not so thrilled about is that Friday mornings is my building's scheduled mowing day. I live on the first floor of my building, with no way to muffle the roar of the mower against the side of the building when it is directly outside my window. No sleep for me.

I am not so selfish that I don't understand why mowers work in the morning. Landscapers have multiple customers to serve on any given day, and the earlier they start the earlier they can be done. Plus, it is cooler in the morning, and preferable, rather than at noon when the sun is high in the sky. But students work hard all year and look forward to a break from books, tests and alarm clocks.

So, in order to find a common ground between landscapers and students, I send this challenge out into the universe: whoever can build a silent lawn mower will get my undying gratitude, love and affection and whatever else they want, I promise!

What does the author like about summer holidays?

1. She works at a day camp.
2. She can have a summer job.
3. She has no school.
4. She does not have to get up early.