



Our lockdown, consisting of my mum, dad, 2 dogs and 2 and a half cats (it's a long story) was pretty easy going. The first week of lockdown, my dad and I built a bird table.

I think it was the second week that we started binge-watching the Harry Potter and Fantastic Beasts movies. For the Harry Potter movies, I had a look at the chapter titles, recalled what happened in them and picked out a few snacks from the pantry that would match the mood I would be in for that chapter e.g., for The Journey From Platform Nine and Three-Quarters I would have sultana pasties because they're about the closest thing in my pantry to pumpkin pasties and anything else from the trolley. I have the Fantastic Beasts original screenplays so when we were watching those movies, I followed along with them by looking at the screenplay.

Another thing I did was baking. Chocolate chip biscuits, cheese puffs, Anzac biscuits. I also made some watermelon sorbet from scratch (this had to be made a few times as it was a bit sweet the first time).

This year I have started to learn how to play the piano. Since I couldn't have any lessons during lockdown, I have been practising, about 30min-1hr a day. I have discovered Simply Piano, a well-known piano teaching app. It is such a good app and I really enjoy following along with the songs. My dad let me subscribe to Disney+, so we started to binge all the MCU (Marvel Cinematic Universe) movies in chronological order. We have gotten through 9 so far... 14 to go! I had watched Frozen 2 and was scrolling down to see if there were any more movies I could watch when I saw the Walt Disney Animation Studios movies sorted in a category, and after that I've started to binge all of them. From Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs to Peter Pan, from Mulan to Moana.

My mum and I have been doing a lot of puzzles. We've completed the first one we got (a French Patisserie) 3 times. We have two more, a wine one and a



christmas one. We finished Christmas one a couple of days ago, and we've only done the wine one once because my mum hated it!

My mum has started to take the dogs for a walk up the Centre of New Zealand and I've joined them. We start at the Maitai Valley and walk up next to Bradford Park. When we get up to the top of the hill, below the Centre of New Zealand, we follow the sign that says Maitai Valley and make our way down the path, which has a beautiful landscape of the Maitai Valley at the top. I have enjoyed this so much, and I think it has to be my most favourite part of lockdown!

Something else we've been doing is playing The Game of Life Empire, but changing the rules e.g., you would usually only have to get 6 brands and then make it to the finish line, but in our version, you have to get the usual 6 brands, but you also have to have at least \$2,000,000 as well. The supermarkets are crazy, and I got a bit controlling because from the car, while my mum was lining up, I noticed at some points she wasn't keeping her 2 metre distance, so I had to call her and tell her off! Looking through the window, I could see the mask-covered faces of the eager customers, behind the protective screens of stressed but hard-working workers. I really have some respect for those people who are working as hard, and a lot harder than normal. Also, the hand sanitiser was about \$10!

Moving into lockdown hasn't really changed anything in my family, or at least that's what I thought. So much is different in my life than it would have been if this covid crisis never happened. Now that lockdown is over, it feels normal, like it never happened, though I am still, my class included, washing my hand much more thoroughly and more than I usually would. I have also gained a deeper appreciation for social distancing, and for our country. I am so grateful and proud to live in New Zealand. We have no war, no riots, not really any chaos, and we were one of the first countries in the world to stamp out covid-19. Lockdown has ended, and covid-free life is starting to be the new normal. Covid sucks, but with a terrible thing comes something incredibly good, in this case, lockdown. Overall, my lockdown was super enjoyable, active yet still lazy, and fun!