



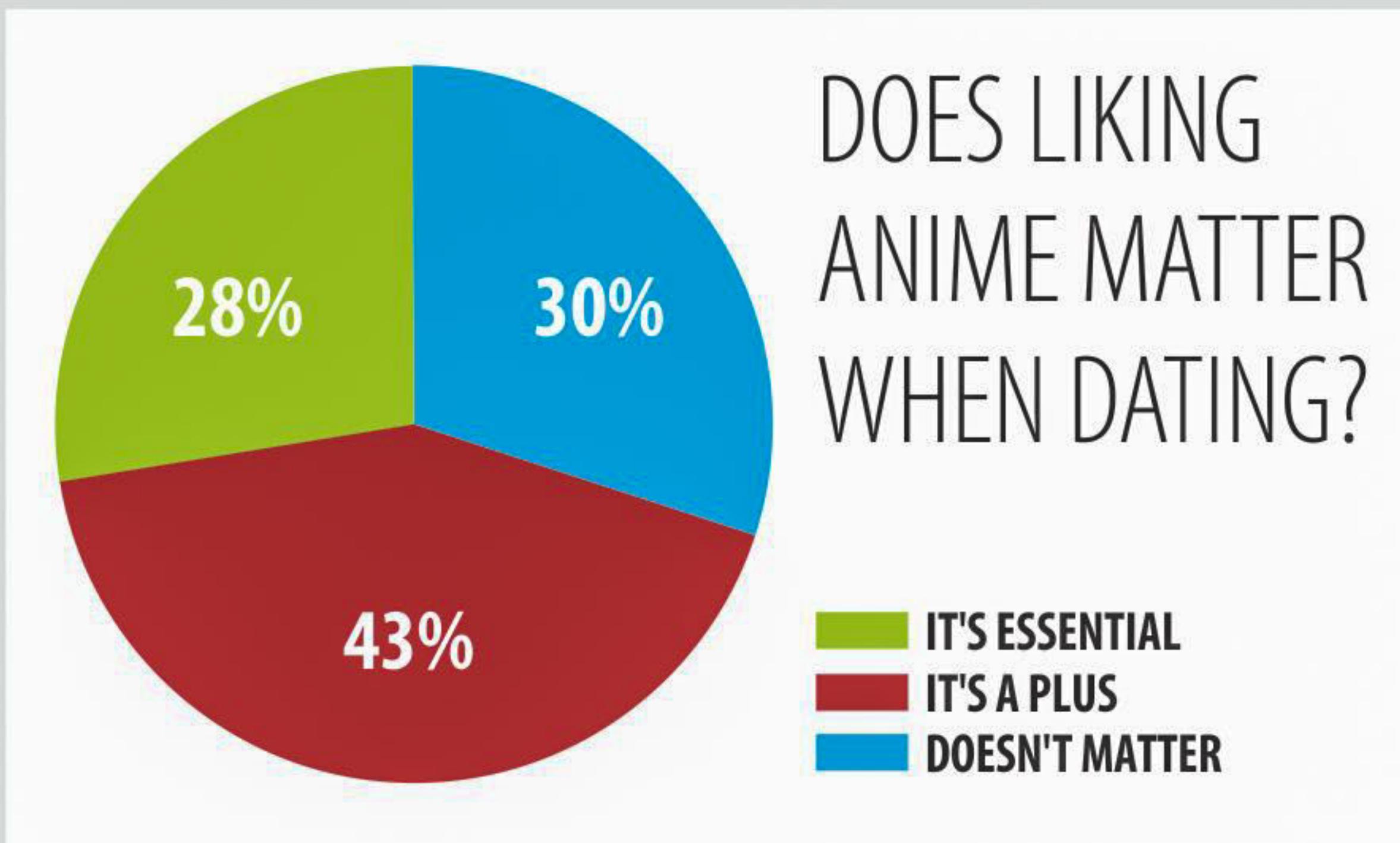
DATING AN OTAKU

When the Bento wasn't big enough

RAYAAN IBTESHAM CHOWDHURY

I should have known I was making a big a mistake when I told her SpongeBob was my favourite anime character. She gave me the sort of glare that I only thought your date's father was supposed to give you. "Senpai, don't be a baka," she said while eating from her lunch box. I didn't get why she was angry but I decided to let it pass. "Can we share lunch boxes?" I asked her, looking to change the subject. "Senpai, this isn't a lunch box, this is a bento." I cannot begin to describe how disappointed she looked with me at that point. I tried my best to look apologetic.

I should tell you how we started dating. It was a fine summer afternoon when I was going through the DVD collection in the mall. It was summer vacation and you can only sleep for so long, so I decided I would get a TV show. As my hands roamed the boxes, it came to a halt at an interesting looking DVD: "Naruto, Adventures at the Hot Springs". But I hadn't noticed someone else standing next to me and when I came to a halt at that particular DVD, I felt another hand rest atop mine. It was that girl from school. The way she



looked at me told me we had suddenly connected on a deeply spiritual level. "Senpai," she said, though we are classmates and I am not her senior, "You are going to be my ichiban." I tried thinking of a response but I let it pass. "Pikachu," I responded. It was the most I could think of.

Our first date was going to be the most romantic one possible, she had told me. I didn't know where we were

DOES LIKING ANIME MATTER WHEN DATING?

■ IT'S ESSENTIAL
■ IT'S A PLUS
■ DOESN'T MATTER

going. Turned out it was a Comic Con. "Senpai," she gave me that deep, scanning look as I walked into the building, "put this on." She handed me a bag full of clothes. I looked inside. It was a Sasuke Uchiha costume. I did not protest. May be it would be fun. She dressed as Orochimaru. Those who do not know, Sasuke and Orochimaru are Naruto characters. Sasuke is willing to let Orochimaru have his body after his

death, in return for power Sasuke could use to kill his brother. Orochimaru is a mad scientist Ninja who prolongs his life by shifting bodies.

"The idea of me living in your body after you die makes me blush, Senpai," she said after I came out dressed in my costume. She had plastered tones of talcum powder to pull off the classic Orochimaru dead snake look. We had a fun time at the convention, taking pictures with random strangers. "Senpai, do you want to act out the scene where Sasuke kills Orochimaru?" I wasn't sure. "Do you find that romantic?" I asked her, confused. "If Senpai says so," she replied with a blush.

It was another fine summer afternoon when I voted "Superman" in an online "Goku VS Superman" poll. It was only a half hearted vote I didn't really care about. Sadly, she did. "Senpai, how could you?" she asked over the phone, clearly crying. "I—" I stuttered. "No, senpai. No," she hung up.

Rayaan Ibtesham Chowdhury is a 19 year-old with pent-up years of teenage angst who loves to complain about most things while listening to blues guitar tracks. Ask him to stop writing at rayaansmail@gmail.com

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- 6th in largest percentage of international students
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