LUMINOUS

2020 EDITION



WE EXIST IN EACH OTHER



The cover photo is a hand-drawn continuous line drawing. It is an attempt to capture the essence of individuality in us, and also a deeper cosmic connection that we humans have with each other... how a little bit of us always exists in another. ***-- Ananya Rathore [IBDP - 2]***



The logo depicting the sun in all its 'luminous' glory was inspired by the Warli art form. It symbolises the harmonious relationship that the Warli people share with nature, which is intricately depicted in all their artworks.
-- Ananya Rathore [IBDP - 2]

editor's note - - -

editor's note

Dear Readers,

Luminous is Podar International School's annual student-led publication, founded in the year 2018. As an initiative taken by the IBDP 1 students of the school, the 2020 edition is the third edition of the publication. Within, you will find a collection of stories, poems, articles, paintings, sketches, graphic illustrations, as well as photographs contributed by our school's students.

Apart from providing an avenue for creative expression within the school community, Luminous is a kaleidoscope of perspectives of students who may not have found a safe outlet yet. Over our lifetimes, our generation has witnessed the materialization of some solid changes in the mindset of people. We've seen ideas being made, we've seen ideas being overshadowed. As members of Gen Z, we are part of an age that symbolises revolution. With ideas of society embedded in our minds so early on, not only have we already formed opinions, but are also ready to independently voice them without any inhibition.

This year, our magazine is based on 2 themes: 'The world as I see it' for grades 7-9 and 'Coexistence' for grades 10-12. At an age where our minds start to mature and become more aware of the reality that surrounds us, we begin developing different opinions and realise the importance of being sensitive and acceptive of others' ideas. We also learn to understand and respect the interdependent relationship between contrasting opinions, regardless of our own biases. We have received a plethora of remarkable entries by cognizant students who have interpreted the themes in unimaginably unique ways.

As editors of the magazine it was an absolute delight to view these fantastic pieces sent in by students across age groups. We hope this magazine allows you to see the world from a billion more perspectives, and we truly wish that you enjoy this year's edition!

The Editorial Team, Luminous Edition 3
2019-2020

meet the editors

Chahak Pahwa: Editor-in-chief

If you are a true Podar kid, you're definitely no stranger to the Pahwa brand. From politics to a Netflix series, chirpy Chahak loves to express her opinion uninhibitedly (you might want to reconsider asking "what's in a name?" Shakespeare). In her own words, her cells 'swim in a medium of inquisitiveness' which definitely has the potential to exasperate students and teachers alike. Although she does come off as a tough, "no-nonsense" kind of girl at first, it is not rare for those close to her to see her soft side, one that is goofy and fiercely protective of her friends. As cliche as it may sound: love her, hate her, but you most certainly cannot ignore her.

Ananya Rathore: Head of Design and Layout

With her creative insight and seamless command over the English language, Ananya Rathore is an absolute asset to the Luminous team. Ananya, with her bright smile and calm comportment, makes any task an utter delight. While she has what it takes to whip up fantastic art pieces, she is also known to write some of the most riveting essays in English class. Ananya spends her free time immersed in art, building her family on the Sims, graphic designing, constructing alternate realities in her head, writing, and listening to Blackpink. Spend some time with Ananya and you'll be impelled to explore your humourous side.

Sakshi Rajesh: Head of Editing

Sakshi is the human embodiment of an oxymoron. She got all 8A* in her IGCSE, but didn't know that pasta has to be refrigerated. She has competed in multiple sporting events including track and swimming, yet manages to trip and/or fall at least thrice a day. She enjoys cooking, yet has been banned from her kitchen twice, and that's just the times she's told us about. Besides the eccentricity in her life, Sakshi is a huge dog lover and if a golden retriever puppy were given a human body, she would be the result. One would be hard pressed to find a happier, bubblier human being, who's as humble, intelligent, and funny as she is.

Anusha Dharnidharka: Head of Editing

Foodie, shutterbug, artist, bookworm, Anusha is the complete embodiment of "jack of all trades." With her love for all forms of artistic expression-growing from her meticulous ability to view the world through multiple perspectives (yes this is a deliberate use of IB vocabulary)- Anusha adds immense value to Luminous' editorial team. If you are going through a mental breakdown, and desperately need a shoulder to cry on, do not hesitate to approach Anusha. She is bound to support you and give great life advice. You can be your true self with her; however, never make the blunder of disparaging Harry Potter in front of her. Trust me, there will be nothing short of a black eye.

Aryan Mahadevan: Head of Editing

Though he may initially come across as cold, sardonic and cynical, once you get to know him, Aryan is the biggest nerd you'll meet; a textbook example of that one guy who goes "ummm actually..." Don't even try and get your star wars facts wrong in front of him, unless you wish to be brutally attacked and corrected. Nevertheless, it is no doubt that Aryan is incredibly sharp and quick-witted; ask him a question and he will come up with 2 different answers instantly - one being the genuine answer, and the other being the most absurd (and creative) answer to the question you could possibly hear. If you ever need someone with whom you want to get work done, but also feel like you're having fun and taking it easy, Aryan is your man.

Neha D'Souza: Head of Editing

Despite her fervent denial, Neha is a linguistic maven, whose infectious smile could instantly make the Grinch's heart triple. Each morning she gulps down a hearty bowl of intellect with a side of chill pills, explaining her terrific commitment and composure. She'd be the perfect companion for a fantastic conversation, especially if you too enjoy good literature and are obsessed with cute stationery. If ever though, you choose to disagree with her, I'd say simply retreat; she is NEVER wrong. They say: Beauty may be dangerous, but intelligence is lethal. Beware then, equipped with both, it makes dainty-looking Neha the most menacing person around.

the world as i see it



'the blue bin' by ananya rathore.



The Blue Bin: *The theme "The World As I See It" prompted me to , reflect on my current situation, wherein most of us have been confined to our houses, for almost two months now. This introspection led to the creation of the mix-media collage, inspired by the art movement 'Dadaism,' which rejected the logic, reason and aestheticism of the modern, capitalistic society.*

Created with foraged bits and pieces of trash and waste material,old books, discarded buttons, teabags, soldering wire pieces from the blue bin in my room to create this collage on a brown grocery bag paper. This is the world as I see it. ***-- Ananya Rathore [IBDP 2]***

it's a colourful place just look at the sun rise

by priyanka kuckian & aryan kuckian

With your eyes closed, can you see?
Blind to the colours; all but black.
You think the world is doomed,
You shoot at the tapestry of your soul.
The cloth now rags, destroyed beauty.
And who destroyed it?
You, you, you, you, you.

Blue, blue, blue now, oh so blue.
You start opening your eyes,
Eyesight blurred by your cynic sense.
You cry for the flaws of the world.
Lost in your gloom, lost to you is joy.
Your heart squeezed, pours blue.
Where is the hope? You wonder.

You ponder, in your violet hysteria,
If there's more to the world,
Brewing below its bleak appearances,
Beneath the mushrooms and bacteria.
Should we seek a brighter light?
Would we really escape our dystopia?
Could we fly out of this purple void?

Sorrow's tentacles loosen around you,
You can move now, less paralysed.
The vibrance is an astonishing red.
Did you really not see the world's flair?
You swear you smelled the hapless air.
The world was in ruin…could this be true?
Or is it just blood which sadness drew?

You know it isn't, you're not deranged.
The road's alight now, the world's orange.
Tentative steps, you move, walk, run.
The fire, now a flame, brings the sun.
With it comes life, attracting you.
Like a moth, scared but intrigued too,
You advance towards it; will it burn you?

It didn't set you ablaze, it wasn't fire.
Closer, you could hear its yellow oath.
The weightless twilight didn't seem so dire.
Filling you entirely, you could be afloat.
Finally, in a universe you could admire,
Unlimited by the world, you're not remote.
Yellowing antiquity now turned gleaming desire.

Eyes filter these colours, you're overturned.
Diffusing your soul, white dynamism.
Product of these colours, free from despotism,
Coexisting within you, a kind of light-dark dualism.
Eyes painted, your body has a new mannerism.
Beyond yourself you see a multicolour world.

the world as i see it

by atishaya gupta (grade 7)

"The world is an intricately interwoven web of infinite relations"
-Daisaku Ikeda

The world is a work of art,
Its gems does it impart,
Helping humanity for a billon years,
The world makes sure we are never apart!

Giving everything we humans need,
Even though we are exploiting this heaven in greed,
The world teaches how to survive,
Giving us the wisdom of how to stay alive,

Looking from the eyes of a grain of sand,
Or from the enormous elephant standing grand,
The beautiful world has a look of peace,
Even though humans are making it cease,

Helping humanity to prosper,
The world gives like a river,
The word as I see it is so serene,
Water flowing and trees looking pale green,

The world is full of hope and joy,
I am enjoying it as a boy,
There are struggles to revive the world,
As humans look to let the space flag unfurl,

The world from my eyes as I see,
From the almost never-ending trees,
Or from the fragrant lingering breeze,
Is blithesome and awesome,

As the lovely flower buds bloom,
I hope and pray to end this gloom,
As we continue to protect this land,
All the challenges are in our hand,

But we will solve them of course,
Until I shout myself hoarse,
I will do my best to bring a change,
Protecting everyone within my range,

The world can once again be our haven,
Saving everything, even a raven,
Man ruins, kills and shoots,
Please help me to go back to our roots.

the world through our eyes

by aanya gupta & aanya amit gupta (grade 7)



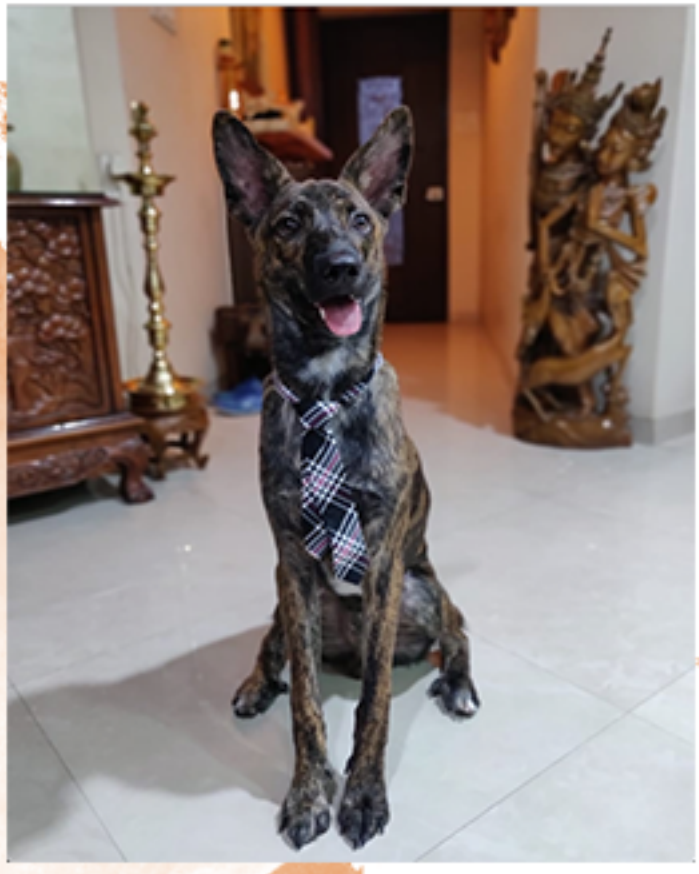
The world is a place of constant disgrace, and a rare ability to like,
Many live in harmony while others individually survive.
Everyone is different in many ways, right from brain to heart,
But over time we learnt to keep our differences apart.
After all the insides are what count, not the colour, shape, gender, or size,
Change is normal, and we must adapt,
We must know how to, for it is an essential skill in life
Everyone sees the world differently and this is how we see ours
A world full of life, surprises and more,
Who knows what else is hidden inside?

Happy as our lives are,
We tried to improve them more,
From this desire, technology was born
Technology has helped us no doubt
In good ways and in bad too
It was designed to make our lives easy and efficient,
And make our dreams come true.
Technology has advanced fast, and we have to keep up.
Nowadays most things are considered normal objects to you,
Like on slides we laugh and play
At school in classrooms we spend the day
Helping us get out and about,
Making sure we don't have to shout!
Mobile phones, iPads, Ice Cream Trucks, Gym equipment and things alike.
They all contribute to a happy, healthy life!

We have flora, fauna, nature, galore
The Earth is so beautiful, and we cannot ask for more
But we still saw our way through trees,
And Mother Earth has to pay the fees.
This is unfair so understand please,
Help us in this cause, for it's important to you and me

Earth is defined as our home,
And this is what we most prize
And we are what keep it alive
This is the world through our eyes,
The way we see our Earth, our life.





Every morning, I wake up to my dog stepping all over me and licking my face - yes it's cute, but maybe not as early at 6 in the morning! He bites, scratches, and barks his heart out while I'm studying; essentially, he's a nuisance. Then again, so are all of us children, yet our parents don't love us any less. His bites are an attempt to tell us that he wants to play, his scratches are just his way of showing us that he knows the command "paw", and his barks are nothing but a sharp alert, signalling to us that somebody is outside the door. Though he only entered our family about a year ago, he has quickly become a part of my life that I cannot imagine living without - one could even say that he has become my whole world. Speels, if you're reading this, I love you! -- ***Shriti Rajesh [Grade 7]***



In this drawing, I see our world as a broken bulb. The plastic affecting the animals leads to overall destruction. These animals are often harmless and don't hurt us, and we are the villains hurting them. We don't see the pain that we cause these animals. The light bulb shows that there is hope and still a chance of light, if we can repair what is broken and has been broken by us.
-- Ipshita Ranjan [Grade 8]



In the photo, you see a disintegrating globe, something that I believe reflects the reality of the world of today. Each small dot is is representing the bits of Earth that are destroyed each time we pollute or do something minute like litter. You can't, however, see us, the people, because to us it has become so normal to largely impact the environment. My photo doesn't have people actually causing this damage because we view it to be so normal. I want to show that there is still hope because the Earth isn't fully destroyed but has more than half of it that can still be saved.. --
Ipshita Ranjan [Grade 8]

a candle of hope

by arjun varshney & agasthya varshney

Coronavirus, a plague that has been haunting humanity from the beginning of the century, each time infecting more people, has reached its peak. 2002, 2004, 2012 and now the latest the 2019 attack is the true test for humanity. As the weeks have turned into months, we will find ourselves increasingly helpless as the virus spreads across the globe. Scarier than everything we know combined though is everything we don't. When will pharmaceutical companies procure a vaccine or a cure? When will we be able to resume our normal lives? And most importantly how will this impact the economy for the foreseeable future? As cliché as this may sound in the face of adversity, every cloud has a silver lining, even this one.

Now we all know about situation in Italy and the ever-increasing number of cases round the world, however it is time for us to think about the other side of this pandemic. As students of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme quarantined to the confines of our houses, we have been granted the most precious gift of all- time. No longer do we have to travel to and from school everyday and face the wrath of eight consecutive lectures with a multitude of CAS reflections, internal assessments and extended essay deadlines waiting around the corner. Often times we tend to lose ourselves in the assignments and tests that bombard us week after week with no time to spend on ourselves. However now we have the time. Time to read new books. We have the time to revisit old hobbies and start new ones. We have the time to reconnect with long lost friends and family. We have time to improve ourselves. So, what if we are trapped in these four walls? So, what if we cannot wander out of our houses with out friends? Let's all take this time and make a promise to ourselves to make the best out of this time and be grateful for the opportunity to slow down and introspect.

There's a saying, "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God, which is why we call it the present" by Bill Keane, and while it seems hard to hold out a candle of hope in these dark times, know that we are together, through the thick and thin and we are going to make it through this pandemic.



As the first drops of rain fall from the clear sky to the rich earth full of life, the 'whooshing' of the wind and 'the pitter-patter' of the rain coupled with the calming smell of the earth, this is what sets my zestful mind at ease. The primeval trees standing tall against the vagaries of nature, the huge, verdant mountains towering over me, it is them that make me feel protected. The sparkling rivers flowing swiftly with a firm purpose, it is she who teaches me to be determined and to have unwavering faith in my abilities and my strength. "Home in the middle of nowhere, petrichor lingering in the air." This is my visual representation of how I see the world. ***-- Maahi Shah [Grade 7]***



This drawing emphasises the effect of international mindedness as Marshmellow is an world renowned artist and his mask is usually white. However, in this drawing, his mask is of different colours which represents different cultures and countries. Music has played a very important part in my life and Marshmello is my biggest inspiration. His story has inspired me to do many great things and listening to his music always makes me happy. Marshmellow has travelled all over the world and has achieved great things in his life which I aspire to do. ***-- Trijna Kapileshwar [Grade 9]***

living with many selves

by aishwarya potdar (alumna)

I had watched a YouTube Video on Anthony Padilla's channel wherein he spoke to people with Dissociative Identity Disorder (aka Multiple Personality Disorder). It is a psychological response to cope up with severe trauma, or abuse, a child 'dissociates'- and forms alternative states of identities: alters (google this up).

Few 'alters' endure the abuse, these are often stuck in a 'time loop' of trauma containing the horrific emotional and physical impacts; others serve different roles in the system: some protectors, some healers, some emotional caretakers. This occurs when there is another critical factor involved: the absence of a child's healthy attachment to an adult, a caregiver, a parent. Without this bond, a child is left to fend for itself. And these alters co-exist, helping the child to survive the trauma. it's the ultimate adaption system. Our brain is so fascinating: It utilises the subconscious to adapt behaviours and functions in order to survive and be safe.

When I first read about DID, I honestly couldn't imagine how difficult it must be to live with more than 21 people inside your brain. It must be utter chaos. Curious, I explored Nin's channel on YouTube (@DissociaDID- check this out). Nin has DID, her system behaves differently depending on who is 'fronting' the mind. However unbelievable it sounds, if a four-year-old fronts the mind, Nin isn't 'acting' like a four-year-old. She is that four-year old, until another 'alter' fronts. These alters have their own name, gender, appearance, values, memories- they are their own selves. And they learn to share the one life between them.

At times, the alter is a charming Caucasian boy with a prominent British accent, or a warm woman in her 20's who loves gardening or an anorexic Asian man in his late 40's or even non-human alters. They maintain communication through an Organisation Journal, a diary to ensure an alter can document what they did when they fronted so that all are responsible for collective action. Chores like shopping or designing the apartment need to accommodate all alters' needs, which leads to an adjustment of some sort. For instance, an emo alter may prefer only gothic style, which may scare the child alters away. Hence, the entire system needs to be sensitive of each other's preferences and comfort levels.

Additionally, travelling also becomes a complicated task. Alters often leave sticky notes signed with their names in pockets/handbags/suitcases (as many places as possible) about directions to the airport, the address of the destination so that alters don't feel lost in foreign surroundings. Communication is absolute necessary to reduce the impact of inter-identity amnesia and stress. Some alters may want to front more and it completely breaks my heart to think about that. 'Switching' between alters, which determines who takes control of the body can be extremely tiring and having 'competing' alters can lead to migraines and intense fatigue. Alters may want to take over, live their own life, have their own relationships but they can't. They live in a system; the body is not only theirs. They all agree to live harmoniously together.
As a global citizen, this is an important learning for me. In this world that is spinning madly out of control, Nin and her system of alters has taught me something beautiful. Despite our differences, we have to realise that we are fragments of the same world. Despite our differences, we all are related. We may not be one, we at times might fail to fully understand each other, we have our differences. But we need to adjust. We need to communicate. We need to learn to harmoniously co-exist with one another. Together is a beautiful place to be.

every moment is a fresh beginning

neha d'souza, sakshi rajesh, anusha dharnidharka, chahak pahwa, aryan mahadevan

Today, I was playing with some friends in the park and decided that it would be fun to sit on the swing. I still can't swing properly because my legs are too short, but I like to pretend that I am an expert. All my friends think I'm the best at swinging in our class! So anyway, I sat on the swing and tried swinging all by myself. Without anyone pushing me. For the first time. I felt so proud of myself until I went flying and landed on my face. Everyone started laughing at me and nobody even came to pick me up! I honestly felt like crying but then I then started to think. Wow, the way I fell was actually so funny. I began to laugh and laugh and then I couldn't stop laughing. My fall in the park was the highlight of everyone's day. I like it when the people around me are happy; it really does make me happy. Ooh did I mention, my tooth also fell? I didn't realise until my best friend found it lying in the same place where I had fallen. This is my first tooth to ever fall and I am so happy that it happened so painlessly. I didn't even realise it had fallen even though it was quite wobbly for sometime. I had made this little envelope in school to keep my tooth in and I can't wait to place it under my pillow tonight. On the envelope, I made sure to write my name and address, just in case the tooth fairy forgets. I hope the tooth fairy arrives close to my bedtime so that I can sneak a peek at her and see what she looks like! I bet she's really pretty. I wonder how much money she's going to leave for me. I know I've been a good kid so I am not too worried. I'll surely get something. I already know what I'm going to buy with the money she leaves. Sorry, but I am not going to tell you what. The only person who I've told is Mama and I know she can keep a secret. Gee I'm so excited. I wonder what tomorrow's going to be like.

I'm scared. Application deadlines are coming closer and closer, doomsday inching towards me. The parties, outings, and relationships I had once visioned, ended up being exams, puberty, and existential crises. It's too soon, way too soon for me to decide my future. What if it doesn't work out? What if I choose wrong, sentencing myself to a life of regret and failure? I make self-deprecating jokes as an attempt to hide my insecurities, passing off the disappointment I bring to my family, as a joke.

I am a joke. I yelled, I cried, I slammed my door shut, closing myself off from my parents - from their expectations. My grades, they're dropping at a rate faster than my self-esteem, while my parents, the manifestation of my deepest fears, express their sheer horror at the same. I am not the child they want me to be, and I never will be. "YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ME", I cried. They're older, I must respect them, I must treat them like my god - to hell with that. If they don't even try to show compassion for my struggles, what's the point in putting in so much effort? I try and try and try again, because I want to have a good relationship with them. Honestly, there's nothing I want more from life, than for them to not just be my parents, but also my friends. I hope that's what lies in my future, but I really don't know yet.

"Carve out your own path in life," they say. What if I don't want to get good grades? "Now that's bad,

you need to get good grades". We live in a world of irony, an irony that seems to have a vengeance against me. It's ruining my life; they're ruining me. "We're always here for you," they lie through their teeth. I am alone in my journey. When everything goes bad, when I'm living a life of turmoil, who will come to help me? My parents? My teachers? Society? No one. They all hate me with the same passion with which I hate myself. If we are living to die, destined to live an unsatisfactory life, what was the point of being born at all?

"What do you want to be in the future?" a question that adults think us children have the answer to. I want to be a good child. I want to be a loving parent. I want to be successful. I want to be happy. Happiness, why is something so seemingly fundamental, so unattainable? College is supposed to be the next step towards a happy future, but I can't do college. School itself is a pain, and they think I can handle more?

Maybe I should just run away.

The past few days have been complete pandemonium. The days pass by in a haze. Between rummaging through a flurry of people to find my class through the day and hurling myself into mountains of books at night, I feel myself trapped in the exhausted body of a stranger who never wanted to be here in the first place. I am a puppet who is constantly frolicking around without knowing why. It is nothing like what I had imagined.

A month ago the thought of college invigorated me. Bubbles of excitement fizzed up inside me as I practiced the arguments I would win against my intellectual college friends. That was back in my room, back at home. It seems like another life. "Oh! the independence!" I conjectured. No curfews, no rules! Everything seemed perfect. I was supposed to ace this life. Yet here I am, lost, desolate. A monarch in my solitude.

You'd think the loneliness would only strike at night, while procrastinating over the next day's deadline as I sit nibbling on a piece of charred toast. Not true. The loneliest I feel is surprisingly in the company of the whole world that has been compressed into the college campus. I look at the people around me. I feel invisible amongst this decorated variety; if there is something I can do well, there is always someone who can do it better. I am not sure if I belong here. I'm disoriented. Primitive.

I have never felt as vulnerable, everybody's pricking eyes pierce through the layers of my skin, their volleying judgements reverberate in my ears as I lay down to sleep. I feel nauseous as the world spins around me, helpless, hapless, hopeless in the centre. I am so far from home. I am distanced from everything I have known, everybody I have loved. This is not the same world I used to live in. It is bigger, scarier and stranger. The people around me seem farce, too busy with their own lives to care about mine. If I fall, will there be anybody to pick me up? Will anybody wait? Do I even matter?

I could see from far that the nurse had her swaddled in a baby pink blanket. As she approached me, the butterflies in my stomach intensified. My heart was racing. The blood in my veins was rushing. In just a few moments I was about to hold her for the very first time. I was restless; I was excited; I was vexed. But then I saw her, and she made me gasp for air. Her beauty left me awestruck. She genuinely was the most beautiful being I had ever seen. I held out my trembling arms and the nurse placed her gently on them. Oh, I wanted to embrace her so tightly; however, her precious, fragile body finding comfort in my arms calmed my euphoria. I wouldn't allow myself or anybody to give her even the slightest of discomfort. All my initial confusion and worries just dissipated by simply gazing at her. She instantaneously put a smile to my face. I couldn't believe that a few minutes ago she didn't even exist in this world. And now I can't imagine her not being in my arms. I can't imagine not caring for her. I can't imagine losing her.

Time passed by, but she continued to be in my arms. She was sleeping so peacefully that I didn't want to move one bit, only to regret seeing her wake up. I hope she was comfortable in my arms. I hope that she felt loved and secure in my presence. For some reason, I felt like one of my life's purposes was to protect her. During her state of serene, I saw her yawn, and my heart melted. She tried to open her petite mouth as wide as possible, clenched her fists a bit, wiggled her fingers, and wobbled her arms so much that it loosened her swaddle wrap. As she yawned, her sparkling, sky-blue eyes opened for a few seconds. A pair of sapphire gems they were! I shed tears of joy at that very moment. I had never seen someone so pure, delicate, angelic, and full of vitality. I wondered what I had done to be blessed with a princess. Instinctively, I caressed her soft, pillow forehead so that she could go back to sleep. Thank you for being born- my very own princess. Thank you for gifting me with parenthood.

When did I develop a tremor? My hands can't stay steady anymore, despite my best efforts. I can't even recognise them, filled with wrinkles, and loose skin, I can even see my veins protruding from below, and I can trace them through my arm. My bones never cease to ache either, a constant reminder of my age. When once I would run through the streets with my friends for hours on end, shouting and screaming, I now need time just to get out of my bed. When did that happen? When did my children start outpacing me? When did I start holding onto the rail every time I walked up or down a flight of stairs? It's funny now, thinking back to my youth, how many days I spent worried about such menial things. It's almost ironic, throughout life people tell you "use your time wisely, it never returns" but you never really understand it, you never truly comprehend just how fleeting time truly is, until you run out of it. Of course, most people hate thinking about death, and I'd be lying if I said I wasn't one of these people for most of my life. Yet, now that I'm nearing it, I've had a revelation. Death isn't horrible, it's not grim, it isn't something that should be treated as taboo, locked away in the back of the mind and never to be thought about. Death is beautiful; if not for death, life would have no meaning, if life were endless and continued for an eternity, what would be the point in living at all? Of course, this argument is one for philosophers and ethicists, not a feeble old woman such as myself, but when you're retired and don't have much to do, these are the things you think about. I can feel it coming, my muscles weaken by the day, my grandchildren have to yell for me to hear them, I need reading glasses, and every morning I feel as If I have less energy than I did the previous day. But I'm not scared, I'm not dreading it, nor am I trying to avoid it. I've lived a long life, and a good one at that, so I've made my peace with my mortality. Now I wait for my time to come, and spend as much time as possible with my family, so when I do go they can make peace with it as well.


by ananya rathore



coexistence

`dichotomy' by ananya rathore.



Dichotomy: *We exist in an increasingly dichotomous world. Both Trump and Macron, leaders of the free world have different perspectives and approaches when dealing with similar issues. This collage conforms to the tenets of Cubism and views issues from both their perspectives.*

The moustache, a conventional symbol of masculinity, is created from the articles related to Trump's attempts to isolate America, and Macron's efforts to keep Europe together and inclusive.

Mix-media collage on paper ***-- Ananya Rathore [IBDP 2]***

coexistence: a salient antidote

by tisha banerjee (IBDP - 2, junior editor)

When society changes,
Nature arranges.
An unembellished alteration;
To rid us of suffocation.

Take the morning paper in your hand,
Lives are missed by a single hair strand;
Conflicts, hostilities and destruction amass.
Where is the love? Is it all just a farce?

People are killed from time to time,
This undoubtedly is disregarded as sublime;
The marginalised have no say,
One can only look to their feet in dismay.

It's when life is absurd,
When things simply aren't fair;
We search for one single word,
Coexistence is in the air.

When we all work together
To win our life's race
Just think happy thoughts
And the world will embrace

Coexistence is ubiquitous
Coexistence is adequate
Let's make a change together



It is a simple yet toxic relationship between man and nature. Where nature offers us all: warmth, light, water, fresh air, and we almost nothing.-- ***Vanshika Sood [alumna]***



This is a subtle representation of humans and nature coexisting; instead of the mountains being demolished. It shows how man was able to actually build robust homes and structures inside the mountains. ***-- Vanshika Sood [alumna]***

the sizzling chemistry between mankind and nature

by sreeprabha g nair (IBDP - 2, junior editor)

'CO-EXISTENCE,' a word so vast, so deep and rich in meaning. In this article I would like to provide a small perspective on this prodigious theme. Before I unravel the beauty of the word 'co-existence', I would like to present a small idea on what existence in itself, truly is. Existence, in my opinion, is when you realise your purpose in this world and the pathway that will lead you to your final destination as well as the will to overcome all that comes your way in order to achieve this very purpose. As you can see, existence is about one individual, one element in this vast, diverse spectrum of life. Co-existence on the other hand is made up of two words 'co' meaning cooperation and 'existence'. 'co- existence' is when you acknowledge and appreciate the presence of other living and non-living elements around you, and understand how each of these magical creations are dependent on each other and as a result are aware of how to exist as a community without destroying each element's individuality.

Among the diverse interrelationships that co-exist in this world, I am going to explore the beautiful co existence between nature and humans, which has continuously evolved since the advent of time. The first traces of humans were found 66 million years ago. nature existed long before this, thus, as humans began evolving it was the forces of nature that determined their features, habitats and way of living. Humans were highly dependent on nature but while using it for their benefit, they also remembered to give back. Back then nature had the upper hand, it had the power to control the development of humans.

As said by Albert Einstein 'a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. So is a lot', as humans began gaining more and more knowledge, they found all the benefits they could extract from nature. And the difference was, this time they forgot that nature was the one who created them and so they began exploiting it for their own benefit. In today's world, science has advanced so much that the earth contains more man-made structures than natural ones. Humans have become so proud of their achievement that they forgot that everything man made has been extracted or borrowed from nature itself. On my recent trip to Australia, I went to the Daintree Rainforest, the oldest rainforest on earth. There I learned the concept of peppermint spray is something we borrowed from nature. An insect called the peppermint stick insect resides within the midrib of a plant and it sprays peppermint which instantly creates a burning sensation on the affected area of its prey.

Through this article I want to tell you that humans and nature have been coexisting for millions of years. While on a drive on the great ocean road, I saw a billboard that said 'cats have nine lives, you have one'. While the point of this message was to warn drivers to drive safely, something totally different struck me, we humans live in this world with such a multitude of species: some that walk on four legs, some on two, some that come alive at night, some in the morning, some that sleep throughout their life, some that are always active, some that have so called nine lives and some that have just one. Humans have to realise that they are just a small point in this vast spectrum of evolution and diversity. And to be able to survive on earth amongst its multifariousness requires just one thing 'the ability co exist' to acknowledge, appreciate and most importantly live in harmony with everything around them.



I took this photo while on a road trip to Greece. There was no one around except for my family and myself, and the moment felt rather serene. In the dead silence, the first thought that came to my mind was the clear coexistence of technology and nature. Here stood two towering wind turbines that provided power for the people, while leaving the beautiful scenery intact, barely damaging it. They even managed to utilize the natural resources that we take for granted, and perform the crucial task of generating electricity with no by-products, a perfect example of how technology and nature can both exist in harmony. ***-- Aniket Gotety [IBDP - 2]***

nature

by riya kharate [A Levels]

On a splendid yellow day had sweet betrayal
danced in the arms of fear.
"I can't sleep" I lied and she led into the back-yard
through a passage of teak and vein.
I followed then, a lone procession of one.
Her palm on a tall oak, her breath quivering,
and now I see that it has grown:
She proclaimed, to me, to the tree, to the half-brilliant glint in her own eyes:
"you gave it water, I loosened the soil. "
I was afraid then that the tree would deject
his thirst for water.
Betrayed that he never spoke;
for the speechless are often misheard.



The people living have made sure to retain the intrinsic value of the place and not cut down the trees, which add to the beauty of the vicinity.

-- Vanshika Sood [alumna]



Nature and mankind. Before, we used to coexist and treat nature equally; but now we've assumed that we rule the forces of nature and we drive them. This very snap here captures the truth. Even though there is total darkness and no artificial light provided by humans, this flower here (Indian shot) is illuminated by its own radiance.....from this I can conclude that nature and mankind are interdependent, neither is anyone superior nor inferior. I believe this snap here can prove that if we continue to destroy nature and trouble it in the form of pollution, deforestation, animal cruelty and etc...it'll take revenge. Mother Earth will make us repent, and we will gravely regret our actions. Thus we need to learn to reverse our actions, learn to coexist and let go our ego ***-- Harshidi Panchal [Grade 10]***

a relationship beyond words

by yohaan patil (IBDP - 2)

"The essential joy of being with horses is that it brings us in contact with the rare elements of grace, beauty, spirit, and freedom!" ~ Sharon Ralls Lemon.

One of the finest gift that Mother Nature has adorned us with is horses. Despite not having words to communicate with us humans, the raw emotion one is filled with just by touching a horse is simply magnificent. The amount one can learn from these refined creatures really is unparalleled.

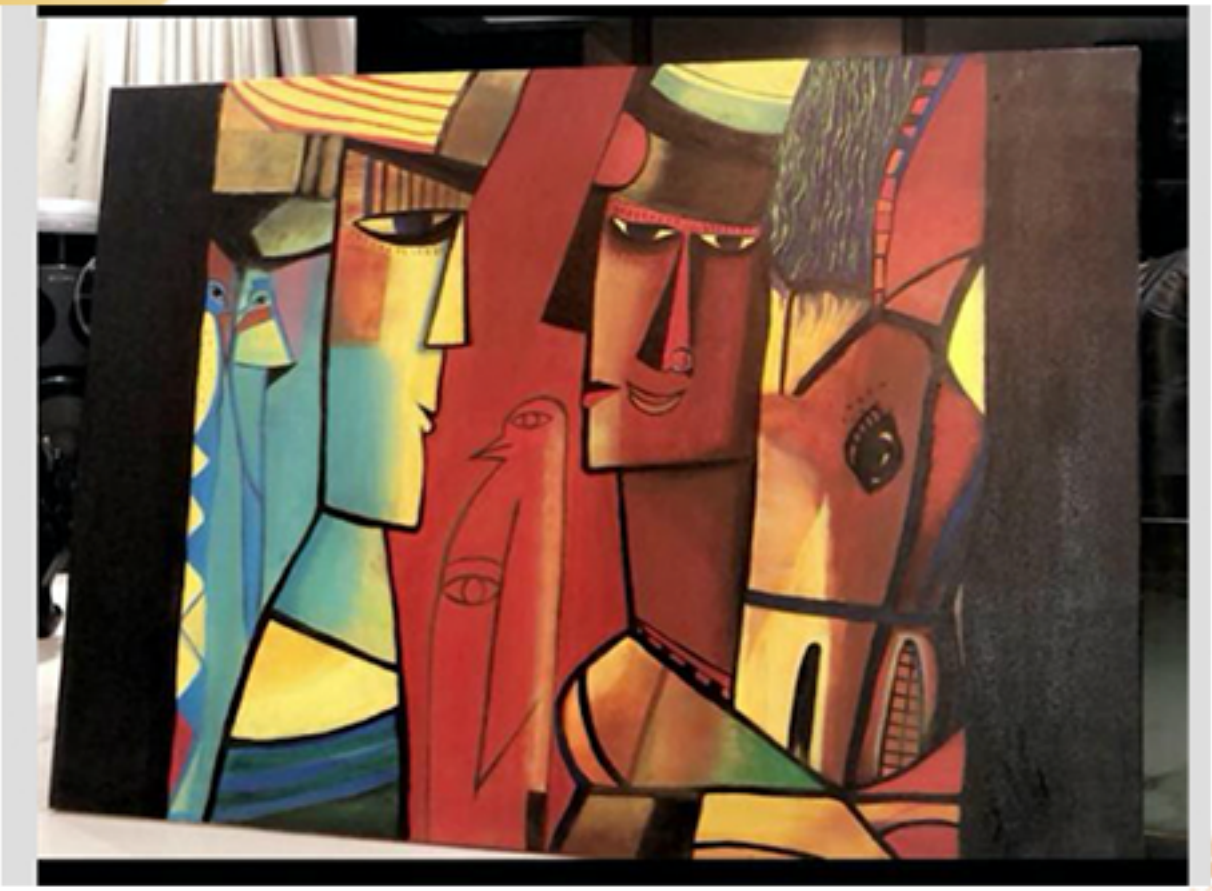
I volunteer at an equestrian center that hosts annual camps for children to embark on a journey of horse riding. My own expedition began two and a half years ago, when I first mounted a horse, and ever since that day I've never looked back. Coexisting with these impeccable beings of nature brings me the sheer visceral joy of being alive.

Earlier this year, I rode a horse that went by the name of 'Tashi' and little did I know, he'd have such a bewildering impact on me. He taught me almost whatever there was to learn regarding the sport, he became my companion, a guiding light, he understood me for who I was. In all sincerity, Tashi was my 'happy pill'.

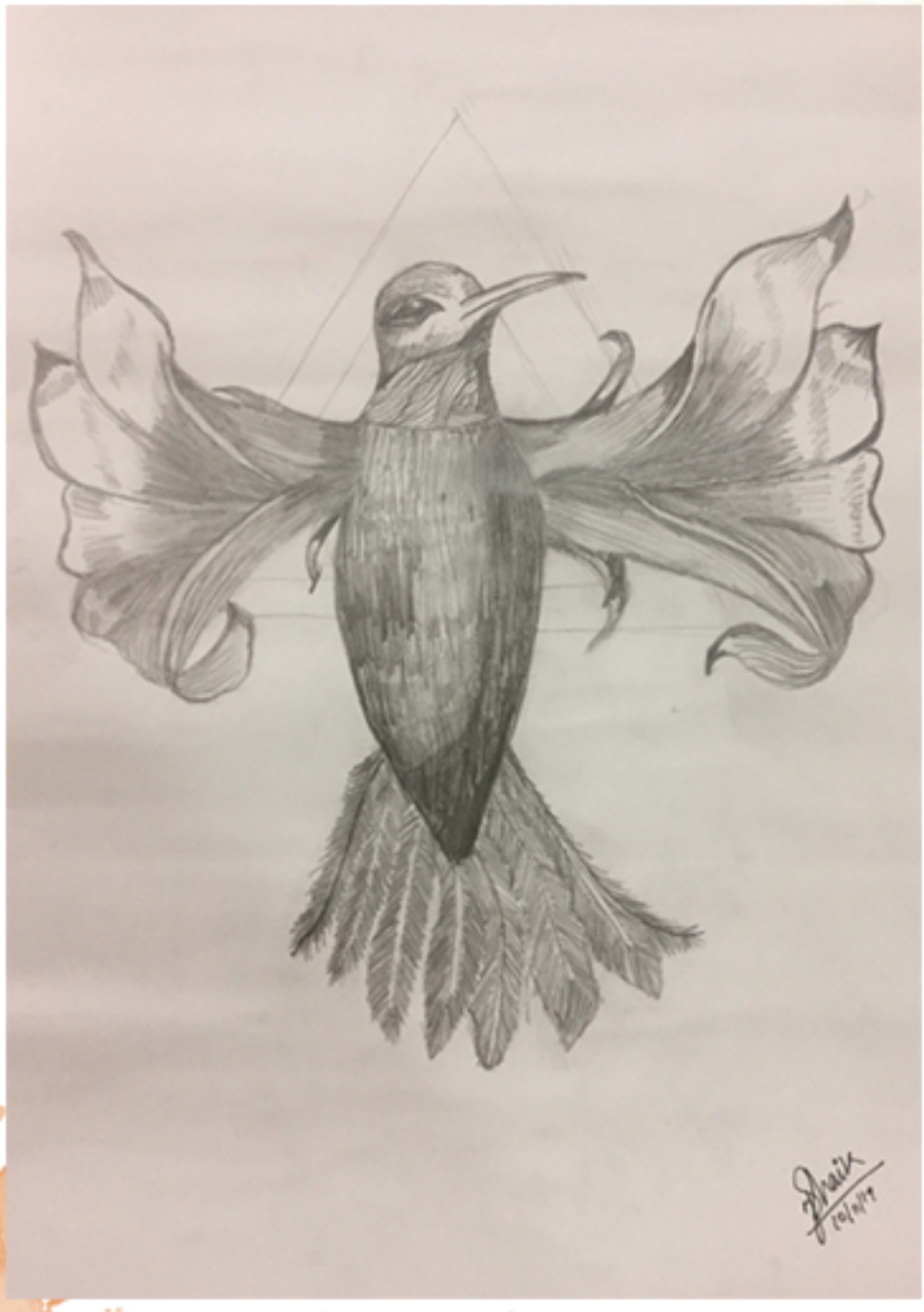
Horses have coexisted with humans throughout history, a rather significant instance would be the bond between Maharana Pratap and his horse, Chetak. Chetak stood by the king of Mewar's side whenever he was in need, got him to safety at war and abided by his every decision.

The connection between horses and humans is powerful beyond measure. Being social, amicable and heavily family oriented are traits deep rooted within both species. This makes it easier for us to administer our trust within them and theirs within us.

In a broader aspect, coexisting with animals is essentially the only way us humans can survive. Conserving the environment and having a harmonious relationship with nature can bring us to great lengths!



Coexistence is defined as man in the realm of nature showcasing complex interactions. This painting is a partial replication of the artwork by Mr. Paresh Maity. The artwork is a vibrant and bold coalescence of man and other marvellous creatures of nature to depict our harmonious coexistence. I aim to emphasise, through my art, the importance of preserving the nature that we are callously endangering in order to embody a relationship that is mutually beneficial. ***-- Tanisha Lalani [IBDP - 2]***



Each day the bird flies from flower to flower collecting nectar, transferring pollen to let them grow and bloom. Every day, she sings her saccharine melody for the branches of the trees she has built her nest on. They coexist passively, the bird and nature. A relationship so sweet, so hallowed that when her wings are clipped and her flight is nixed, flowers bloom on her sides. "You will fly again." ***-- Jeba Shaik [IBDP - 2]***

opposites attract?

by aaryan potdar (IBDP 1)

I read thirty to forty pages that day. Claire read none. Once I was done reading the first few lines of page 8, I waited for her to pick up from where I had left off; she insisted that I continue. Was it her incessant pleas of "one more" or the fact that reading had always been one of my favourite hobbies that kept me going page after page? Most of the time, it was the shower of "please" and "pretty-please" that left me helpless. I did not mind as it reminded me of papa.

The memory of the time I spent with my dad is no less than a blur. However, his countless bedtime stories are still quite fresh in my mind. Every time he read a story, he enacted every character - from the posh city-mayor to the lunatic king and even his jolly pet monkey! Every word he uttered seemed to be delivered by the characters themselves. Once he even convinced me into believing that animals communicated with humans in Hebrew! He narrated hundreds of tales to me. There was always, if not hours, a few minutes for him to devote to my entertainment.

Mama was an avid reader herself. In fact, they both first met at a bookstore and bonded over their common love for Ernest Hemingway's fiction novels. Papa would lend his most precious and treasured books, only to meet mama at the store. Sounds like a page straight out of a romance novel I must say… Unfortunately, their shared interest was not enough to keep them together. Last year, mama filed a divorce after she discovered that papa would consume sizeable amounts of alcohol after work at a nearby pub. Considering that she is a stern lady and could have easily helped papa out, his alcoholic traits couldn't have been enough to end their marriage.

Apart from their shared-love for reading, they both lacked any common-interests. They were like characters from two different books. Many people firmly believe in the fact that 'opposites attract,' but in mama and papa's case, their conflicting nature was what led them away from each other. The idea that 'opposites cannot always co-exist' was exactly what frightened me in my relationship.

I looked up after a few pages to see if Claire was still paying attention. And she was. At times, I felt like she would blankly stare at me, her mind occupied in a completely different world. Other times, her sharp gaze assured me that she was taking in every word that left my lips. The book was one of papa's captivating reads. If I were not there, the book would have never made it out of his old trunk. If I were not available on Monday, the same page would greet me on Tuesday. It was quite clear that Claire preferred numerous activities to reading while it was more than just a hobby for me. Likewise, painters like Michelangelo never fascinated me, but I would be ever ready to visit art-showcases with her and even try a few brush strokes myself.

Despite our contradictory preferences, Claire and I always try to indulge in activities that we both love. For instance, she is fond of my storytelling skills and I admire her knowledge of eminent artists. The happiness that we garner from staying around each other suggests that two completely different individuals can co-exist together. Is it because of our ardent love for each other or the activities that we derive joy from or simply because 'opposites-attract'? … that will remain a mystery.



The sketch is about marginalisation of a large section in a society where all humans should co-exist. Marginalisation sometimes also called social exclusion, refers to the relegation to the fringes of society due to a lack of access to rights, resources and opportunities. A varied section of population ranging from handicapped, blind, child labour, sweeper, tribal woman to a construction worker find themselves in a situation wherein they feel they are living inside a barbed wire fencing with no way to escape from this hardship. ***-- Priyanka Dey [IBDP - 2]***

Watching what animals have to go through all around me disturbs me leaving me feeling confined. I envisage a day where animals are given the importance and love they deserve. As exhibited in the sketch, the shrivelled faces of the animals signify their need of immediate help and the artist's call to preserve these innocent animals. Through this sketch, I vow to protect these animals and sensitise people to help conserve animals and create a safe environment for the delightful creatures! ***-- Priyanka Dey [IBDP - 2]***



the tao key to to coexistence

by zai jivan (IBDP - 2, junior editor)

Taoists say "The wise person is flexible". Flexibility is adaptability; adaptability is the quality of adjusting to new conditions. Humans adapt to the environment and must learn to coexist. Many of us are aware of the concept of Yin and Yang. Yin is the darker side and Yang is the lighter side. Yin is associated with shadows, femininity, and the trough of a wave; whereas, Yang signifies brightness, passion, masculinity, and growth.

It is said that everyone contains the spirit of Yin and Yang. One has both a dark and light side to his or her spirit. The manifestation of this spirit depends on what he or she chooses to be. Do we want to be that person who cannot tolerate the idea of humans not being the only animals in this world? Do we want to be that person who demeans someone for the colour of his or her skin?

The question is: "Are we already those people?" We must reflect to know whether we are these people. If we hold neither Yin nor Yang in our lives, we do not hold the ability to coexist

"Everything contains the seed of the opposite" is the connotation of the two dots within the Yin and Yang symbol. Each portion has a dot of the opposite colour. This does not prove that the two are the opposite of each other. Instead, it denotes that the two are relative to each other. The Yang starts an action and the Yin completes it. In other words, they coexist.

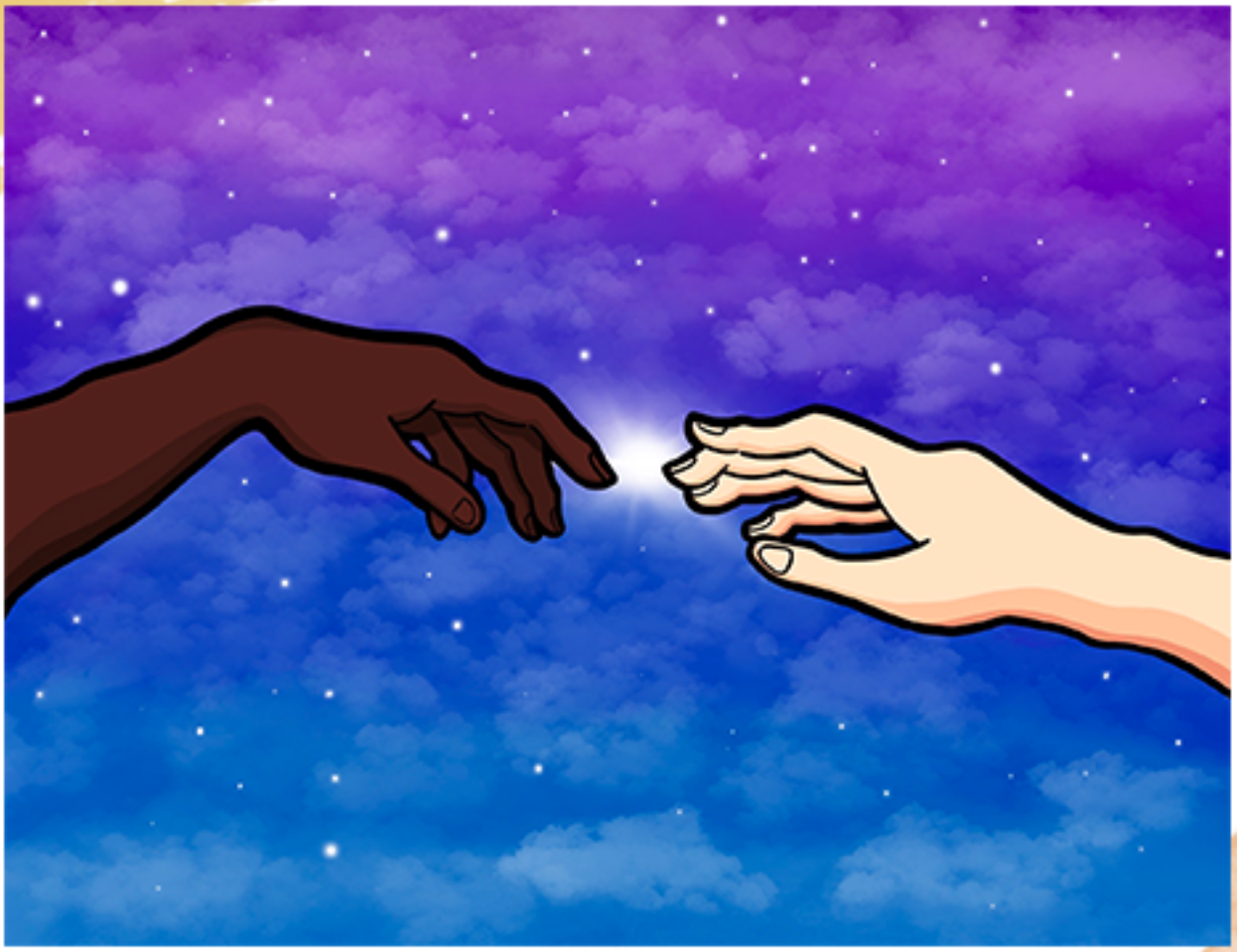
Taoism teaches us that we should all learn from this emblem of coexistence. Living in harmony with the way things are is an important aspect of Taoism. That way, the person will not have to fight against the universe's natural flow (the ultimate power): deeper and truer than any other force. A person is guided to implement just four things in their life to achieve and live with the true spirit of Yin and Yang:

1. Don't worry about being the best. Be who you are.
2. Be prepared to repeat or undo something. That way you'll make faster progress.
3. Listen more and argue less.

And last, but the most supreme:

4. Live simply; complications take you away from the Tao (the way).

Essentially, live in accordance with the four quintessential notions of the Tao and simply coexist.



This artwork connects to the theme of coexistence by capturing a myriad of symbolisms and ideas. The two hands of different races reaching out to each other depicts acceptance, harmony and dependence on one another to survive. The infinite expanse of space in the background indicates that coexistence isn't confined to one place or type of people and that it is ubiquitous, to be found throughout the world. ***-- Nikhil Pol [IBDP - 1]***



Is Asia only restricted to China or Japan? This misrepresentation of Asian culture is what drove me to create this representation of a traditional Indian Vada Pav being consumed with the help of chopsticks. Middle Eastern countries, UAE, India and others, are conveniently unrecognised and are a forgotten part of the large Asia. Food is a quintessential part of the lives of people from a range of different countries. My artwork's intention is to exhibit the connectedness of people from every single country in one continent. It also indicates that while the cultures might not be in harmony with each other (through the chopstick being unfitting of the Vada Pav), we still manage to coexist and ultimately, that's what matters. ***-- Siddhant Parwani [IBDP - 2]***



This image is my take of the concept of coexistence, as if encapsulates the variety of cultures, races, and religions living together on one planet. I felt the need to put in these specific images, as they show the coming together of all races, from Asian to Caucasian, and a polychromatic flower in the centre to show that, regardless of the colour of the flower, beauty will shine through. On the topic of the logo itself, I have manipulated the original coexist logo created by Piotr Mlodozeniec with chromatic dispersion, to give it a more original flair, as the chromatic dispersion is expression of my own self onto that symbol, showing the blurring of the metaphorical lines of culture and religion, to provide something that people can interpret for themselves: art ***-- Siddharth Mahadevan [IBDP - 2]***

poetry analysis

by aayush ganjoo (A Levels)

"The Tyger" by William Blake has to be one of my all-time favourite poems yet. Assuming the theme of duality, Blake touches upon the coexistence of the virtuous and the evil, the powerful and the powerless. The poem begins by questioning the great man in the sky himself regarding the creation of the tiger; tigers, quite commonly, are viewed as metaphor for power, fear and ferocity. Blake, being a clergyman, incorporates various biblical allusions in his literature. While not particularly explicit, this poem is thought to be a direct reference to Isaiah 45:7 – "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things." Beautiful, is the transition from fear to questioning, where Blake challenges the notion that God has the autocratic right to create and destroy. Though quite thematically rich, the primary theme of coexistence lies in the last two stanzas. The second last stanza denotes the metamorphosis of life itself. "The stars threw down their spears" is symbolic of the advancement and change under the guidance of "he", the creator himself. There are two doubts in the mind of Blake regarding the development: Whether the creator of the lamb is the aforementioned creator of the tiger, and whether the Lord was pleased with himself. Rhetorically, these questions revert back to Isaiah 45:7, where the Lord states that he is responsible for everything good and evil. Contrast is an element that not only distinguishes, but also exemplifies the existence of various factors of life. Just as light cannot exist without darkness, good cannot exist without evil. Similarly, the prey – the lamb – cannot exist without the predator – the tiger. For there to be strength, there must be weakness, and though it might seem overtly ineffective, it is inherent in nature. Holistically, this concept is vastly applicable to us as humans too. Within ourselves coexists an amalgamation of good and evil. We often do things we are proud of, while we occasionally make mistakes we regret. This is because we have a conscience which self-contradicts in its ability to make favorable decisions – and that is what makes us human. William Blake's uncanny ability to condense the complexity of this notion into a few lines is remarkable, and he is truly an author who has left a strong impression on me.

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies.
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand, dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, & what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? & what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain,
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp,
Dare its deadly terrors clasp!

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger Tyger burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

-William Blake

the final hour

by hridya shah (IBDP - 2)

If you murder, the law murders you
If you steal, the law steals from you

Who decides the law?

Who decides between right and wrong, and wrong and right, and everything in between?
Who decides the victim, who decides the perpetrator?
Who rates one crime graver than the other?
Who rates another crime pettier than the other?

Do we really have the integrity, the purity to cast the first stone?

Thought after thought after thought
Invading my subconscious as I wait
I wait in my chair, plagued by these thoughts
I wait.

When will this all be over?

There's a fire raging, both outside and within
I can smell it in the air, the heavy odor weighing my lungs down
I want to cough but the tension is too thick,
I'm choking, gagging, so afraid

Isn't fear pointless?

Triumph. That's what those people feel
The ones that stand outside, intoxicated grins smeared across their faces
Hypocrites. That's what I call them
They celebrate the death of another

Will my opinion never matter?

As I sit, awaiting the inevitable
I sit, I sit and I sit
Thinking, what makes me different from them, or them different from me
In the end, we all relish the satisfaction of murder.

I begin to realize we need each other

I need them and they need me
They rely on me for a sense purpose
I rely on them for gratification
We're one and the same

Human.



Through this picture of my dog, I intended to convey a message, using subtle symbolism, and hint at how ones body coexists with their reflection. A reflection is more than just a mirror image of yourself on a plain surface; It's a glance into your inner self and your consciousness. When one reflects on themselves they look into their thoughts, past actions and their learning's and being able to do so and live along with both your physical and inner self is what I find to be important. ***-- Apurva Joshi [IBDP - 2]***

perspectives

by tanishka mauskar (IBDP - 2, junior editor)

Holding your hand always feels like a pleasure.

There are so many feelings I feel that do not have a name, a label. Just like us. What are we? What do we want to be? What were we? Some things are better left unsaid, unanswered.

The thought of losing you is above my understanding. The thought of losing you forever fills me with dread. It doesn't affect you because I always feel too many things at once, especially when it comes to you. But I never know how you feel because you never speak to me the way you used to and I will never ask you because maybe in the back of my head, I know what you mean.

Maybe I want it to?

Truth is, I'm scared. I'm scared to ask you how you feel about me. I'm scared to know. After everything you've done to me, I think I deserve to know.

Don't apologize to me. It's never going to be enough. Maybe I should leave your hand. Maybe we should go our separate ways to make everything seem better.

We deserved better.

Holding your hand always feels forced.

There are so many feelings I feel that don't have a name. Maybe they do: anger, rage, frustration, I can go on forever. What are we? What do we want to be? What were we? Some things are better left unsaid, unanswered.

The thought of losing you fills me with happiness. The thought of not being able to see you gives me joy. It gives me a sense of hope. It gives me time to think about what I can finally do without you. It gives me time to think about what I want.

I don't feel comfortable around you anymore to tell you how I feel. I'm scared to answer your questions.

After all the lies and cheating, I can't give you a sense of false hope. It's not like you mean anything to me anymore. You were my muse for a few years along with others who I adored just as much.

I think I should apologize but I know I don't mean it. Maybe I should leave your hand now. Maybe we should go our separate ways to make everything seem better.

We weren't meant to be.

speak out

by ananya sambasivan [A Levels]

my mind sails stormy seas and sees sceneries
too wide,
too wild,
for me to speak out.

and whilst the outgoing ones
seek to meet the people they greet daily
i can only fleet past
without speaking out.

"you should talk to him
to show you're not so dim"
but are my chances that slim
to be able to speak out?

what if i did?

what escapes my mouth is a volley of words,
stringing together with intention and pride
just like that, my shyness died
and i could finally speak out-

-snap.

back to reality, i sigh, opening my eyes
from a romantic dream
that one day
i would speak out.

the best of both worlds

by kusum kotian (IBDP - 2)

High school can be a melting pot of personalities. While some students revel in heated debates about the latest political issues and the long-awaited group projects, some of us find solace in 'boring' tasks of reading classic literature or solving mind-boggling math problems. I still remember my first day in the DP program; when asked whether we perceive ourselves as risk-takers, a vast majority of hands immediately shot up. But when it came to being reflective, not a single student paid heed. In a generation that has forgotten the need for individuality, where herd mentality takes the upper hand, introversion is usually shoved under labels of being 'nerdy' or 'shy'.

I, however, believe it to be futile to form such prejudicial presumptions. To me, being an introvert is to have a strong moral compass, to be independent in my learning and to have a distinct self-awareness of my words and actions. In a world that just can't stop talking, it is introverts who hold the power to introspect, imagine and tap into their creative selves while in solitude. One of physics' most beautiful equations: e=mc2 and the magical wizarding world were both created inside of an introvert's mind. On the other end of this spectrum, it is hard to imagine a world without the loquacious and quirky extroverts. As introverts, their uncanny ability to effortlessly become the life of every party continues to mesmerize me; their presence glows wherever they go. In essence, extroverts and introverts and all the shades in between form the yin and yang of our society, and their interdependence is of significant importance. To live in a world with solely introverts or extroverts or to even purely be one of them would end us up in a lunatic asylum. Beneath every introvert's quiet persona coexists a fun fat kid in a candy store. Similarly, every extrovert has a soulful side to their gregarious nature. The two complete each other.

Despite our characteristic differences, what's important is that we always stay true to ourselves and respect every individual's way of thriving. By conversing with individuals who thrive differently from you can challenge your ideal school of thought, perhaps leaving you with profound awakenings and paradigm shifts. Loud and quiet. Good and evil. Believers and Non-believers. Such differences are inevitable and the nature of the life we live. As a matter of fact, we need these differences, because it is our differences which unites us all. Only by embracing our differences can we truly coexist.

the coexistence of marvel vs dc

by prachi sadhwani (A Levels)

Whether the argument is about IBDP or A Levels, Apple versus Android, or the N(ew)tella/ Nutella dispute, we pick a side and stick to it. We get defensive and hostile when someone even slightly disagrees with us. The Marvel Comics and DC Comics fan war is another example of this. Fans are compelled to choose a side and defend it, more than the superheroes defend the planet in the movies/comics.

For those who need clarification, Marvel comics include the Avengers while DC includes Justice League. The Marvel Cinematic Universe (or MCU) is made up of carefully intertwined TV shows and movies. DC prefers to separate their television universe and cinematic universe. Popular DC heroes include Superman and Batman while Marvel features Captain America and Iron Man. The two comic companies seem to mirror each other in many ways, this is evident in Green Arrow (DC) v Hawkeye (Marvel), Deadpool (Marvel) and Deathstroke (DC), Aquaman (DC) and Namor (Marvel); the list goes on.

Somehow, it's become almost impossible to love both. It's imperative that the fandoms are divided. Loving both is not a rare situation but so many frown upon it. You can simply state something about one of the companies and instantly a war is unleashed, with fans at each other's throats with the craziest threats. Both sides are so stubborn to see that each sides have their strengths.

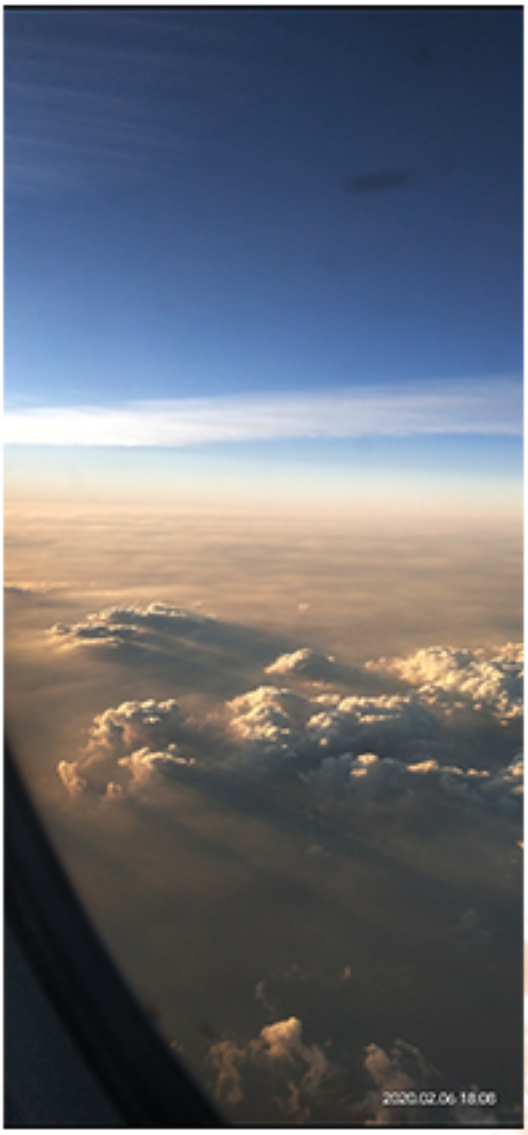
At the moment, Marvel seems well ahead of DC in the cinematic world. DC fans were reigning in 2015 when Marvel's "Age of Ultron" proved to be disappointing compared to the first Avengers movie and DC's "Batman vs. Superman" and "Suicide Squad' seemed promising. However, DC fans were severely disappointed after these movies released. Furthermore, 2016 was a major year for Marvel with significant movies such as "Civil War", "Doctor Strange", and "Deadpool".

The co-existence of the two fandoms isn't a new concept. Despite this being called a fan war, DC fans don't seem to completely hate Marvel and Marvel fans don't seem to completely hate DC. Both sides understand and appreciate certain creative aspects of each other. Many have longed for a crossover of both studios. The comic studios previously explored this co-existence in 1996 when they released a series of comics which featured crossovers between the two all these superheroes now existed in one universe.

Granted that due to rival companies (yes, Disney and Warner Brothers have their own feud) the chance of this crossover actually happening is very low, it doesn't mean that the fans can't get along. In an honest opinion, its useless fighting over which studio is better because both sides are so rigid with their stance so they won't listen. This rigidness comes from the belief that if one comic must be successful, the other needs to be a billion feet underground and forgotten.

Nevertheless, while they may not co-exist in complete harmony, Marvel and DC create a wonderful heroic escape. The mixture of Marvel's light hearted humour and DC's darkness and exploration into more realistic stories are sure to satisfy anyone looking for a superhero (or heroes) to count on and relate to. Therefore, I believe that a better co-existence of these legendary companies is very much possible.





These pictures were taken on a remarkable evening that I had the privilege of spending in an airplane. The sky looked absolutely stunning and almost instantly compelled me to capture the moment. However, what really astounded me was the fact that my father was seated right beside me but the incredible view failed to catch his attention. I reckon he was thinking of the immense work that was waiting for him back home once we landed, while I remained inseparable from my camera. Despite the stark contrast in our thoughts and the lack of words exchanged between us, my father and I felt absolutely no uneasiness while spending our time the way we did. This showed me that even though every individual's thoughts and ideas don't always match, we can complement one and other, coexisting even in pure silence. ***-- Kane Basu [A Levels]***

the last dream

by taskeen shaikh (IBDP - 1)

When I was a kid, around 5-6 years old, I used to tell my parents that I want to be a doctor but like a normal kid my attention flitted from one place to another until I found something that I was utterly fixated upon. I was surrounded by talented artists, directors and actors including my father, who worked in the industry and then went on to become a very successful businessman. He is someone who I have always looked up to and I couldn't have asked for a better father. As I grew older, I began to fall in love with the idea of filmmaking. It's not an easy task to create a film, which only made me want to explore the field to increase my knowledge, so that I can become one of the best directors the world has ever seen.
So I took the first step in my journey of greatness.

I directed my very first short film 'The Last Dream' in 2018 when I was 14 years old. I believed that the earlier I start, the more experienced I will be. I always want to be one step ahead of my other fellow peers.

Suicide is one of the main social issues in our world. While there are multiple methods used, a gun is the most frequent means of suicide. It is also likely that suicide by drug overdose is more common than we realise. Many children across the world experience suicidal thoughts because of family problems, stress, relationship issues, insecurities, etc. and I found my calling in requiring to make a film of this caliber, even though I cannot prevent every single child from this act, I can at least utilise my capabilities and talents to create something that can facilitate change.



This film follows the story of a boy who administers sleeping pills to himself. An overdose leads to a bizarrely intimate conversation with Death wherein I bring light on his reasons for attempted suicide and the bittersweet truth of life. Veer finds himself stuck in limbo of neither being dead nor being completely being alive, to top it off Death takes him through time in a uneventful yet heartbreaking adventure. This film aims to empowers the audience to see the meaning of life and what a gift it truly is.

My friend Miraya Borah is a young writer and after discussing our thoughts together, we came up with this beautiful story. I was so happy to have her on board. My mother, Atiya Shaikh, supported me in every way and produced this film with her own production house '16 Pictures'. My mentor, Prabhuraj, who is a famous director, guided me in every step of the way. This film would be incomplete without the cast : Mitansh Lulla, Divyaa Sharma and Swapnnil Ralkar. I had an amazing experience working with the Director Of Photography, Anuradha Pathak, and all the other departmental heads. It was a huge challenge for me to take part in the pre-production and post-production because of my obligations as a student. However, I found the passion to complete the project with my heart and soul.

I was privileged enough to have my very own film screening where we had directors and actors from every wan of life come and watch my film including all my supportive friends. I was so overwhelmed with the responses that me and my team had received. I want to thank my family because it wouldn't have been possible without my supportive parents.

Till now I have won 4 awards from Agra (Best Debut Director), Mumbai (Young Director), Bhutan (Best Young Filmmaker) and Ayodhya (Young Filmmaker Award). I am yet to see if the film will be graced with more awards as we apply to more film festivals all around the world. I thank Allah for this incredibly beautiful adventure.

distinctions

by soumya sathe (alumna)

I picture a room. It is a bright room, positively sparkling. Maybe even blinding. Numbing. So bright that an artist's brush wouldn't be able to paint any colour – any distinction – into it because its walls are made of light, not matter. Whenever I walk into this room, I become bright too, and that terrifies me. Seeing my limbs disintegrate into a meaningless illusion petrifies me. Just existing in this room dissolves every semblance of the identity I thought I had.

Yet, I am forced to stand here, where distinctions disappear.

Distinctions: inside and outside, within and without, 'I' and you. We base our reality on these distinctions, forming experiences and memories from distinct bursts of sensory stimuli that we weave into a coherent narrative.

Perhaps we wouldn't even be able to recognise ourselves if it weren't for these distinctions. After all, what does it mean to have an identity? To me, it means nothing but recognising the input and roles of a seemingly conscious, controlled entity 'I' within the mosaic of external stimuli that bombard our lives. Without this separation of I and the rest of the world, we wouldn't be conscious.

This room does not allow for distinctions, because it drains the power from every entity that dares to step in, instead, empowering it with the fluid, electric energy of light. The kind of energy that lets different frequencies fuse together into one brilliant beam, only to encounter an obstacle and shatter into fragments of colour. The entities, too, are organically volatile. They're not living beings, but may as well be; they are, in fact, thoughts. Thoughts that run into each other, converging or perhaps diverging like streams from a river.

All the room does is allow these thoughts to come in and stay; they attain their actual brightness of their own volition (maybe even their destiny).

I realised that our reality is a lot like this room. Reality is not just a collection of distinct experiences. Reality is created from thought, and thought is light. Thought knows no boundaries; it seamlessly detaches from and merges with itself. When we process the world around us, all we're doing is allowing our thoughts to coexist, to be. Then, we set them free to interact. Our distinctions start blurring, and our internal and external paradigms start shifting; they get intermittently diluted and concentrated by our feelings and by new thoughts.

Maybe we should stop recognising ourselves by how we are distinct from the world, and instead start finding identity in how we embody pools of boundless, coexistent light.

Immense thought, effort, and time was spent in the creation of this Luminous. Not just by us editors, but various other people involved. We would never have been able to reach where we are today without all those who have supported us throughout our journey, and for that, we are eternally grateful to them.

First and foremost, we'd like to extend our thanks to our principal, Vandana ma'am, without whom none of this would have been possible, let alone successful.

We'd also like to thank our IB coordinator, Hema ma'am, for looking over us and guiding us throughout. She is part of the reason we were able to transform our thoughts into art, to create a platform for young students to express themselves.

Not just Hema ma'am, but many of our own teachers in IB helped and motivated us throughout. Their experience and encouragement pushed us to work as hard as we could to bring this magazine to the table. It's hard to imagine how lost we would have been if we hadn't spoken and gotten advice from them.

We'd also like to express our gratitude towards the whole Luminous team and junior editors - Tanishka Mauskar, Zai Jivan, Sree Prabha Nair, and Tisha Banerjee - for their time and effort channelled towards the creation of Luminous. We are thankful for the proactiveness undertaken by this incredible Luminous team.

We would like to thank all the members of our student community who contributed any work towards Luminous. It is evident that Podar International School is composed of many talented artists, writers, photographers and digital creators.

Most importantly, we would like to thank all those who have taken time out of their busy lives to read this edition of Luminous. A lot has been invested in the process of making this magazine and we are grateful for all the support we have received thus far.

We truly hope that you have enjoyed reading this version of Luminous and you are now able to see the world from a billion more perspectives!

The Editorial Team, Luminous Edition 3,
2019-2020

LUMINOUS

2021



PODAR

Nurturing The Future. Since 1927.

Message From The Director's Desk



Podar International School's aim is to provide conditions conducive for the growth of our students, to nurture them and help them metamorphosize into the people we know they can become- pre-eminent citizens of the world. Our goal is to create independent capable individuals who have the ability to remain grounded and focused while letting their imagination soar - unfettered.

At Podar, we expose our students to various perspectives and global situations, in order to broaden their horizons and think out of the box. We want each and every one of our students to reach their potential and achieve personal mastery. We do this by providing an encouraging, stimulating and engaging learning environment, aided by the tactful guidance of our dedicated group of educators. We never let our students' creativity stagnate. While focusing on helping them gain academic knowledge we also provide platforms for our students to showcase and advance their unique talents. We help our students develop holistically by instilling in them the life skills of communication, collaboration, inquiry and reflection.

The Luminous magazine is an excellent example of an initiative that incorporates almost everything the IBDP programme expects from its students and what it wants its students to develop throughout the course, completely in sync with the International Baccalaureate`s philosophy. Not only the diligent Luminous team members but also students who are gifted writers and creative artists, who have contributed to the newsletter, have displayed such mastery of the attributes of the IB learner profile. The theme itself, 'Ingenuity' reflects the spirit of the International Baccalaureate Organization. With Innovation and Transformation everywhere in the current challenging times, this magazine gave the students an opportunity to express their own uniqueness while inspiring others. This theme urges the students to use their imagination and aims to display their rich creativity, skill, inventiveness and originality.

The Luminous Magazine has provided an avenue for our brilliant students to showcase their extraordinary literary talents while making us teachers beam with pride. This being the 4th Edition is an attribute to the determination and never-ending creativity of the students. It demonstrates effective team work and the excellence of the students of Podar. I extend my appreciation to the Luminous Team, as it is their vision and herculean effort that has made this endeavour possible.

Dr. Mrs. Vandana Lulla

Director/ Principal

Chief Editors

Aaryan Potdar

Kimberly Roy

Heads of Editing

Diya Mahesh

Mannat Ghumman

Parnika Saxena

Trisha Kulkarni

Feature Writers

Rwitika Sarkar

Saanchi Shah

Sahir Devraj

Tanya Vaswani

Yuval Gupta

Head of Design

Tanisha Dewan

Art Director

Nikhil Pol

Junior Editors

Ananya Pathak

Rittika Banerjee





Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

We are absolutely delighted to present to you the 4th edition of our Podar International School Magazine, 'Luminous 2021'. This is an IBDP1 student led initiative that was only possible due to the hard work, co operation and brilliance of the students.

This year's theme is Ingenuity. With innovation and transformation in the air, this gave the students an opportunity to express their own uniqueness while inspiring others. We recognized the fact that the students of Podar are teeming with potential and wanted to give them a platform to express their creativity, their innovation and themselves. To meet the broad requirements of this theme the students reached into their imagination and have displayed their high skill, inventiveness and originality.

In this magazine you will not only see brilliant articles but also a range of other types of pieces from informative comics to gorgeous paintings to relatable poems. To make the magazine diverse we have divided the magazine into sections of ingenuity: Literature & Language, Science, Technology, Current Affairs, Social Cause, Culture & Cuisine, Art & Photography, Entertainment and Health.

This has been a journey of a lifetime. Each member of the Editorial team learned something from those who submitted. It was a team effort- from interactive meetings establishing the frame work of the magazine to figuring out the design layout, tapping into the creativity of the members of the Luminous team. It was so overwhelming to receive such interesting entries from each grade, from 6th to 12th.

The success of this magazine is all thanks to the efforts of the Luminous team; the motivation from our Director Principal, Dr. Mrs. Vandana Lulla, whose support and love for her students is unwavering; the valuable inputs from our IBDP coordinator, Ms. Hema Rajan and Executive coordinator, Ms. Prema Mathew; the constant guidance from our teachers; and of course, the innate creativity of the contributors.

We would like to extend our immense gratitude to each and every person who helped make the production of this magazine possible, including our beloved readers. Thank you all for having faith in the spirit of the magazine.

Happy reading!

Aaryan Potdar

Kimberly Roy

Co-Editors in Chief


NEWS

Index

Language & Literature ——— **7**

Science ——— **45**

Technology ——— **56**

Social Cause ——— **70**

Current Affairs ——— **83**

Cuisine & Culture ——— **98**

Art & Photography ——— **108**

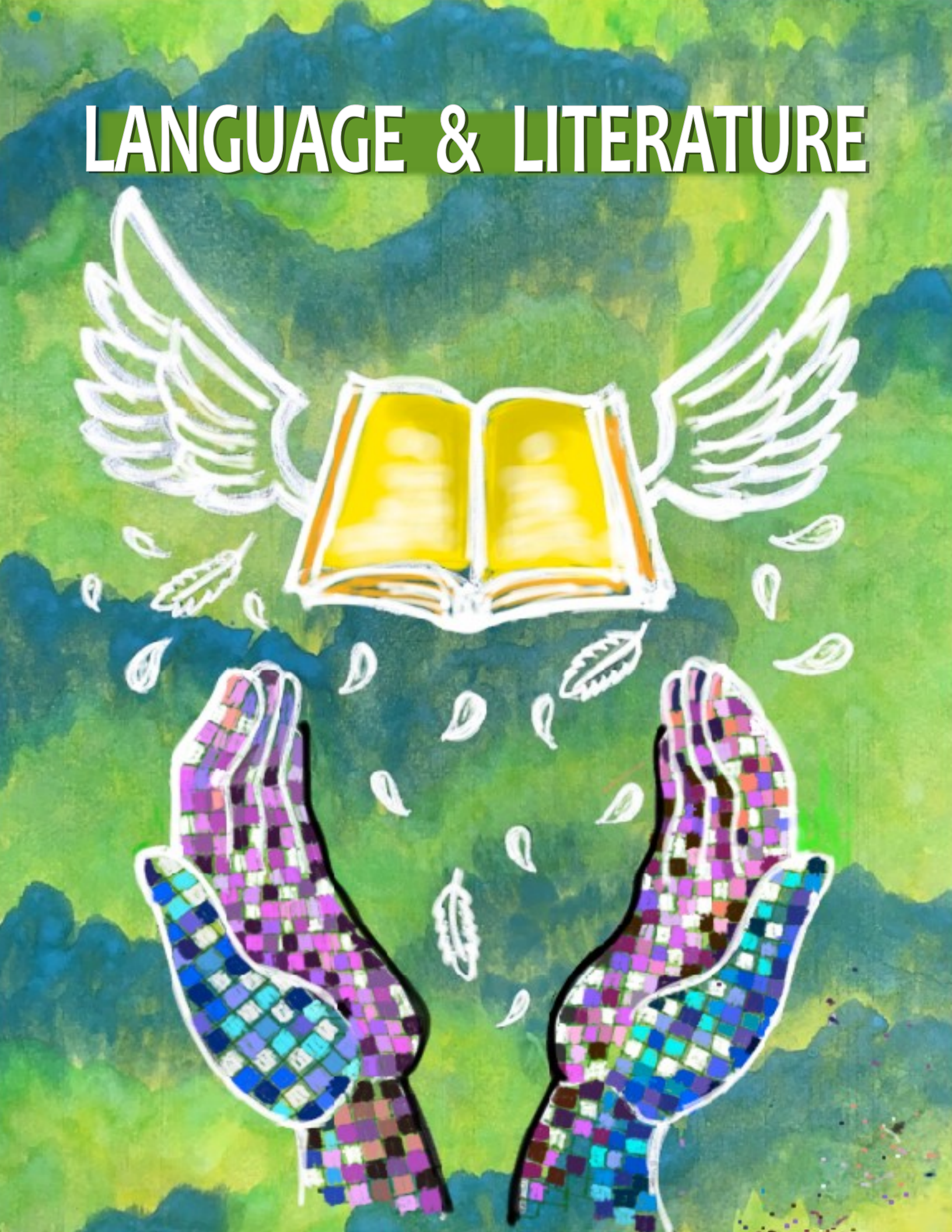
Entertainment ——— **121**

Health ——— **133**

Alumni Special ——— **146**

Faculty Special ——— **153**

LANGUAGE & LITERATURE



EDITORIAL

REVISITING

By Trisha Kulkarni, IBDP-1

How could a tiny, ruptured wooden box do justice to half a century's worth of memories.

Yet, within the dimensions of that precious little chest,

Countless moments and an infinity of recollections lay buried and repressed.

Monochromic photos stuck to yellowed pages,

Of families and loved ones promised to be cherished forever,

Yet lost within the passage of ages.

Wooden dolls once held dear and subject to innocent admiration,

Now cast aside, bearing lost limbs, on the verge of devastation.

Delicate copper plated bracelets and a fading cameo ring,

Knotted to the heart by love, loss and similar strings.

However, rings may rust, photographs will fade,

Yet what will never be forgotten are the beautiful memories made.

The reel of our minds, forever holds,

A recollection of moments and memories,

As precious to us and resistant to corrosion as pure shining gold.

THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

By Nayeel Qaazi, Grade 8

In this grave situation,

What will become of our education?

So our school came with a solution,

To continue teaching us the various arts.

To try to make us learn something,

And keep education in our heart.

To achieve a level of excellence,

For knowledge we must yearn.

Through the virtual classroom all of us can learn.

Podar gave this opportunity to you and me,

So let's take full advantage with enthusiasm and glee.

Sitting at home comfortably,

Your pet by your side.

But when you are online,

By the rules you must abide.

The teacher does her part, so the student must too,

All that you are studying now will only benefit you.

A SOLDIER'S LAST LETTER TO HIS MOTHER

By Harit Paurana, IBDP-1

My life was as peaceful as it could be,
And I was going to be a lawyer as far as I could see.
I was studying law in a small town,
When the war turned my life upside down.

All able young men were called to fight,
We were issued our weapons and sent to the site.
Half of us had never picked up a gun,
And now we were drafted in a world war which was to be won.

According to me a war is never won or lost,
It is our greatest mistake with innocent human lives being the cost.
I don't believe that our enemies are the German,
I believe that they're our brothers because they're human.

The D-Day arrived, and we reached the beaches of France,
Where the enemy artillery was busy taking its stance.
As we advanced, fellow soldiers cried and threw up with fear,
They could probably sense that death was near.

The silence then gave way to a thunderous storm,
Within seconds the raining bullets took out our entire first swarm.
Most turned into a mutilated state,
Even before they had the chance to retaliate.

With blood, the sea turned red,
And the sun hid behind the clouds for it had tears to shed.
The wind stopped blowing and time stood still,
To honour the martyred and their iron will.

The war then took us throughout the French countryside,
Abandoned hotels and churches were our only means to hide.
Amidst this blood-thirsty trouble,
I saw magnificent towns turn to dust and rubble.

Day after day, our strength became low,
Yet, I did not leave the fight and go.
I was held captive and tortured but I did not fall to my knee,
For a moment of pain is worth a lifetime of glory.

Mother, I couldn't become a lawyer, and I ask God why?
Maybe I am a soldier, born to die.
With a smile on my face and a tear in my eye,
I thank you for everything, and kiss goodbye.

STAGNANT

By Sakshi Rajesh, IBDP-2

Stagnant

Unmoving walls are closing in

And as darkness is coupled with hopelessness

I cannot escape this box.

Curiosity killed the cat.

I yearn for a new life

Away from the shackles imposed on me

While longingness proliferates in my mind

I do not indulge.

Curiosity killed the cat.

Eat sleep repeat; eat, sleep, repent

If dreaming is synonymous to living

Why can't I feel alive?

I want to be alive.

Curiosity killed the cat.

I need to materialize

The virtue that lies beyond

The horizons of a figmented box

Because imagination has no limit.

Curiosity killed the cat.

But satisfaction brought it back.

DIAMONDS

By Diya Purohit, Grade 9

We are diamonds ,imperfect yet pressurised into perfection

We all have time for pointing out people's flaws

What about ours?

Who is pointing out our flaws

Before getting thorns out of your mouth

Spread roses say words like you're looking pretty

Don't show pity if they have any inadequacies

Because at the end of the day we are all trying to shape ourselves into something nice

Don't criticise be nice

Spread love, not hate

Don't try becoming a diamond it takes a long time

Everyone is perfect just the way they are

YOU are perfect

INGENUITY

By Mahema Singh, Grade 9

Inventive and creative thoughts give birth to great ideas

And resourcefulness will help to execute what the mind thinks of

New and original designs of fantastic plans

Are often a result of intelligence channelised towards innovation

Genuine efforts coupled with strategic planning

Gives one the right direction towards achieving one's goal

Endeavours of life taken up with grit and determination

Will always be successful and attain desired outcome

Never lose hope and don't let anything take your eyes off your target

Sincerity and consistency are a must for any accomplishments

Use your energy for productive and constructive activities in life

Time is something you can't recover once it's gone

Ingenious thinking makes one explore a plethora of methods and solutions

Eradicating every excuse that could be a hurdle

The skilfulness of any concept or of any design

Stems from a brain that accepts change is needed for improvement

Your hard work and vision can turn imagination into reality

Marvels and wonders are nothing but products of ingenuity

SUNSHINE

By Mannat Ghumman, IBDP-1

She wasn't the kind of sunshine i was used to,

She was the kind of sunshine that peeked

through clouds sometimes,

She was the kind of sunshine that i knew

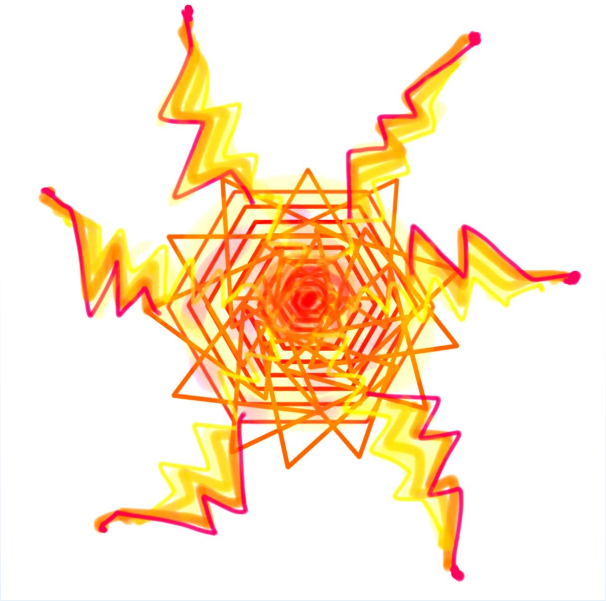
battled storms every night,

The kind that brought a little bit of catastrophe,

The kind that wore her scars as lightning brightening her sky,

She wasn't meant for the ordinary as As she was anything but,

She was sunshine but also anything but.



THE UNANNOUNCED PLAGUE

By Ayman Momin, IBDP-1

I remember the days I'd speculate

That studying from home was really great!

Didn't need to wear uniforms

Or follow any other norms.

Until the day I realized

I couldn't be mesmerized.

I wanted to move out of my house

But I was trapped like a mouse.

All my holiday plans were on abort

Since the whole world came to halt.

Masks were the shields, sanitizers the swords

Let the war rage on.

The era was our nightmare

The impact of which was unaware.

Doctors were tired, the police were too

Large masses got unemployed with nothing to chew.

The COVID-19 outbreak was surely miserable

But it made us realize that we aren't invincible.

We must play by the rules of Nature

Or else, face its evil gesture.

EDITORIAL

BROKEN WINDOWS

By Trisha Kulkarni, IBDP-1

Among the shattered shards of glass,

Lay broken dreams, lifelessly floating on dampened blades of grass.

Where decades ago, layers of silica filled the spaces,

Now emptiness reigned, its dimensions stroked by loneliness,

streaked by sullen traces.

Darkness and gloom radiated through the roughly panelled walls,

As inside, cracked floorboards creaked painfully, and smiles were left engraved, forever stalled.

Beyond the hollowness,

Enclosed by rotting wooden panes,

A tiny tear-drop shaped bulb spread warm yellow light;

Casting a heavenly halo that sliced through the doom surrounding it,

With tangential rays, angelic and bright.

As in every fairy tale,

Like good and evil,

Hope and doom together reside.

Which path is to be chosen is but a matter of choice.

QUIET BEFORE A STORM

By Shriya Chandran, Grade 9

Do you know it's quiet before a storm?
The eerie silence before rain falls.
The still of trees
And the birds seemingly asleep.

When the dancing wind
Stops all at once.
Making you wonder,
If time has stopped.

You don't understand,
Why you feel so unsettled.
Why you can't enjoy
This kind of peace.

For is it not ideal,
Like something surreal?
Let me tell you its nature
A dream is what it is.

It is so inexplicably short,
Like the momentary still before the fall.
Like the calm inhalation;
Before a torrent of anger takes its place.

A dramatic pause.
So powerful, seemingly oh ***so*** *tranquil.*
It is, after all; The quiet before the storm.

INGENUITY

By Riddhi Gupta, Grade 9

Whether it be looking past horizons to generate new ideas,

Creating a fantabulous piece of art,

Writing intriguing scripts and stories for the mass,

Ingenuity is what plays a major part.

Without ingenuity, details remain unseen,

The same paths followed again and again,

Monotony in every aspect of life becomes the norm,

And of ennui, the world faces a storm.

Without ingenuity, the laws of physics would have remained undiscovered,

Imagination for development of several fields unstirred,

Everyone's thoughts and actions would be similar,

As a feeling of captivity and confinement prevailed in the world.

It allows one to stand out in the crowd,

To express themselves in ways unfound,

To go against the general flow of thought,

As numerous changes to mindsets are brought.

AUTUMN

By Amyshka Shenoy, Grade 9

The autumn of Orange

Autumn, the word itself represents arrays of orange and yellow,

With the gentle breezes leaving you chilly and the weather being mellow,

It's a time to rejoice and meet up with new friends,

As the time of the cold winter slowly ends,

The bright red leaves fall down in a trickle,

Just like the flames of a fire that was fickle,

As I walk down the path of cobblestone,

Between the leaves of the trees, yellow light shone,

Time stops as my memories flash past,

Oh how I wish the world didn't move so fast.



मेरा छात्रावास जीवन

By Khushi Shah, IBDP-1

ज़ोर चिलाती, आवाज़ लगाती।
हमारी वॉर्डन हमें कुछ इस तरह उठती।।

कम्बल को अपनी ढाल बनाये,
खुदको उसकी आवाज़ से बचाये।
दिल से यह निकले हाय,
५ मिनट और नींद मिल जाए।।

आँख खुली नहीं की निकले नहाने।
ज़िंदा लाशों की तरह निकले खाना खाने।।

फिर शुरू होती हमारी ६ घंटों की जंग।
पाठ्यक्रम को देखकर रह जाते हम दंग।।

कक्षा-कक्षा घूम- घूमकर टाँगे दे गयी जवाब,
अपना बस्ता धो-धोकर हो गयी हालत ख़राब।
सपना देख इंजीनियर बनने का जनाब,
देख गणित की किताब, दफना दिए अपने ख्वाब।।

आधा दिन जैसे तैसे निकल गया,
आयी अब खेल-कूद की बारी,
यह एक घंटा भी हाथ से निकल गया।

थके हारे पहुंचे छात्रावास में।
अधमरी हालत में चले आये क्लास में।।

किताब में मुँह गुसाए, खुली आखों से देखे ख्वाब।
प्रष्न गणित का, और हिंदी में लिखे जवाब।।

नींद छड़ी आँखों पर,
लौटकर जब छात्रावास आये।
भूलकर सारे दिन की थकान,
बिस्तर को गले लगाए।।

छोटी कविता ने कह दिया,
हमें क्या-क्या सहना पड़ता है।
यह मेरा विद्यालय,
यहाँ एक दिन ऐसा गुज़रता है।।

A TRIP TO SCHOOL

By Sudiksha Nagre, A-Level

Just before reaching the corner, they turned and waved goodbye as the car finally disappeared around the bend. Both siblings turned to face each other, the smiles they harboured had now disappeared. "You go first" Suna nudged her brother. He scowled at her as he bent down and tightened his laces. His sister kicked him from behind, causing Nabil to lose balance and land on his palms. Nabil looked up to stare at his sister. Her small frame towered over him. "If you're going to act like a coward then I'll go first." She claimed arrogantly.

Suna shoved past her brother and stood confidently in front of the cornerstone wall. She ripped her bag off of her shoulder and passed it backward, crashing it into her brother's arms. "Pass me the pill bottle." She commanded her brother as she opened the faux flap on the cornerstone wall to reveal a red emergency button. She paused for a second, her brother tapped her shoulder and then passed the multi-coloured pill bottle to her. "Good luck," he said as he stepped back, giving his sister space. Suna took a deep breath and finally pressed the button. She hurriedly opened the pill jar and tossed the lid out of her way as she stepped onto the opaque floor that appeared.

The once sound and still wall began to shift, breaking and cracking into the shape of a tiny door, barely reaching over Suna's foot. Suna rumbled through her pill bottle in desperation as she swore under her breath. She looked up at the door to see the door had begun moving towards her, in a moment of desperation, Suna tipped her pills onto the opaque floor, getting onto her hands and knees to sift through the pills. "Found it!" she yelled as she picked up and dusted a bright yellow pill, without thinking she popped the pill in her mouth and swallowed it. She halted for a second, waiting for the pill to work its magic. The wall with the small door kept approaching her, but she was still big.

Suddenly, Suna's head began to spin, her body began to feel like it was being stretched and pulled in all directions. She didn't feel so good. "It's working!" She heard her brother yell in a distance. "POP" a sound went, and before she could blink, Suna had become small. The once tiny door now seemed a normal size to her. She stanched herself with her arm out reaching for the knob as the wall got closer. Once the wall was close enough, she leaped onto her tiptoes and reached for the doorknob, swinging the door open. She retreated her hand and waited for the door to pass her by. Suna shut her eyes in excitement; she could feel her heart race in her throat. She let out a small yelp as she felt like she was being pressed and pulled.

"*Whoosh" the wind danced*

Suna took a deep breath, wet grass and spring moistness filled her nose and lungs. She loosened her body and slowly opened her eyes. She was greeted by the warm sun caressing her face. She observed her surroundings; hills filled with vibrantly colored flowers filled her eyes. A sharp object pushed into her shoulder blade, causing Suna to trip over her own feet. She winced in pain as she turned around to be greeted by Nabil, who was also marvelling at the sight before him. He, like his sister had also stumbled through the wall. "Watch it!" she said as she nudged him with her elbow.

"Sorry, sorry" he retorted as he raised his arms to block her elbow.

"Bam! Bam!" The bags sounded as they fell from the sky, the whole ground shook beneath them. They paused and looked at one another, they began to giggle as they reached for their luggage on the ground. The siblings dragged their bags as they walked and chatted along the path. "Oh, I see the bus stop!" Nabil yelled as they reached the top of the floral hill. "I'll race you there!" Suna said as she darted ahead, her luggage tilted and tumbled behind her. Nabil's eyes widened in disbelief as he watched his older sister race ahead of him. "That's not fair!" He screamed as he gripped his luggage and tried to catch up to her.

The brother and sister pair waited for the bus to arrive, their constant chatter was the only noise that filled the area. "Beep, Beep" a distant horn sounded, causing the siblings to stand up from the bench and lean forward in anticipation of the awaited vehicle. The petite sky blue bus slowly appeared over the horizon. The siblings stared in awe as they witnessed the vehicle hover over the hills. "Magic..." Nabil whispered

"Don't be silly, it's advanced science." His sister cut him off. Nabil extended his arm, flagging the bus down. The small bus hovered over toward them, the electronical whirring stopped as the bus braked in front of them. The double doors folded inward, revealing a hologram sitting in the driver's seat. "Where ye off te kids?" The hologram asked in an Australian accent. The siblings took a moment to understand the thick foreign accent.

"Uh..." Nabil stumbled on his words

"We don't got all day mate." the hologram grew impatient.

"Two tickets to the Hemming's School for the Gifted and Talented" Suna but-in

"Right then, take ye tickets from the machine at the back and lock yeself onto a seat, it's a rough ride." The hologram said pointing to the back of the bus.

Suna smiled at the hologram politely and stepped into the bus. She stopped dead in her tracks; the bus had more room than she thought. She turned around and peered her head out of the bus; it was still small on the outside. The bus extended further than a train, she saw no end to it. "It's bigger on the inside!" The hologram said smiling. Nabil stepped onto the bus, pushing his amazed sister ahead of him with one hand and dragging his luggage with the other. "Thank you" he said to the hologram as he passed it, towards the ticket machine. Nabil tucked their large luggage into the overhead compartments, as Suna got comfortable on the window seat, removing her jacket and footwear. Both siblings sat side by side as the bus began to move. Some time passed in silence "You excited?" Suna asked as she broke her gaze from the view outside and looked at her brother. Nabil, who was thoroughly studying the pamphlet for his new school looked back at his sister and smiled "Of course I am." He said.

INSOMNIA IN A DORMITARY

By Nishika Sarma, AS-Level

She walked through the dimly lit hallway searching for someone who could help her find exactly what she wanted, a perfect book to accompany her throughout the night while all those around her would snore into oblivion. It was difficult to find a book she wouldn't get bored of, clichés made her want to throw up and all everyone wanted to read was cliché stories. No woman leaves everything and finds true happiness the moment she enters into a stable relationship. She'd say those words with judging eyes aimed at her that felt like they were staring right into your soul every time she saw someone read those books that never sat collecting dust at libraries. Her favourite books? The one's that sat in a corner for months, those books were her best friends at times even more than us. These books kept her company so it was obvious that she loved them as much as she did.

The matron would come and tell us to switch off our lights but never, not once did she tell her because she knew that the effort would be futile, her screaming won't put the girl to sleep. She pulled out her kettle knowing none of us had slept yet and the noise wouldn't be an issue, made herself a steaming cup of tea that all the articles said would put her to sleep but they rarely ever did. I generally stayed up much later than lights out time to keep her company and finish the day's work we never got time to complete during the day. She believed that's why she liked having me around, because I never slept early. An evident hatred ran through her veins for people who slept the moment their heads hit their pillows. She felt it was unfair that her eyes would stay open for days but theirs would close for hours.

She'd generally play music to try and sleep, the playlist was even named 'sleep music'. Ironic at times, some days the tunes would work and others she'd be cranky in the morning because of all the flaws in the music and because she stayed up all night again. Even though her eyelids felt like boulders over her eyes she couldn't get a wink of sleep.

There were times when she'd explain it to me, her problem, why she couldn't sleep but I never really understood. Some days the bed was clammy and some it felt like a bed made of ice, the pillows like rocks under her head and a sudden urge to go shower the moment the clock struck midnight. She'd always be confused, was there something she was doing wrong? Something that everyone around her knew was needed to fall asleep but somehow she didn't. Sometimes she wondered whether she's hungry, digging into her snack stash to search for something that might finally be the secret to sleep, but sadly she's always wrong.

I woke up the next morning to find her in the very same position, curled up with the book in her hands. The only difference was that when I fell asleep her book had merely twenty pages on the read bundle but now there were merely twenty pages left for the story to finish.

THOUGHT THEY WERE YOUNG

By Prisha Jain, Grade 8

"Shush, don't you dare say a word", he whispered into my ears, I was so scared that they would find and lock me into that room. The room had no doors and no windows; the only entry and exit was the roof. I hadn't changed since morning even though there were clothes kept on a table. Those clothes were strange, they had cuts all over and were very tight looking, I never wore such clothes, they looked familiar though for some reason, back at home women could only wear saree or kurta, only one however girl wore modern clothes and that was my sister Kira even though I always wanted to wear them but the only reason I didn't because I always felt someone was looking at me. It was a torn pair of tight jeans that Kira called ripped, along with a weird top that wasn't describable. When I held the clothes they smelt familiar, I sniffed them closely, they smelt like Kira. That means she had been here before…

We are still hiding in the water tank Kabir had fallen asleep, I, on the other hand, were wide awake cause by no means did I want to go back there, unfortunately, due to low oxygen levels in the tank I had passed out when I woke up I was in a room, this one was different it had a fan a bed and lots of other things. I couldn't move my hands and legs were tied to a chair and all I could hear was someone banging the cupboard, I somehow managed to crawl to the cupboard and banged my chair to the cupboard and the chair broke along with the cupboard that flung open it was Kira, her nose was bleeding, her clothes were soaked in blood, her hand was was twisted, and her legs were shaking. I was shaking. I didn't know what to do to see my older wound so critically. I carried her to the bed and made her lie down. She was hardly in the state to talk. I decided to let her rest but she would continuously mummer something that was beyond my understanding. It sounded like running away before I could take any action there was a thud at the door. "A man came in and told us "oh, so you two managed to get out, but unfortunately I came in at the wrong time, both of you are just as are good as your dad and even prettier than your mom and family is pretty remarkable also I think its destiny for the entire family to be buried here". He started walking towards me and just before he was about to hold my hand Kira kicked him and both of us ran towards the water tank I couldn't believe that he was still in there we pulled him out along with our guns and killed everyone there because they were responsible for the death of our mom and we fulfilled our dads wish to kill the ones who killed them and to work for the country…

DELPHIE

By Heer Visaria, AS-Level

There she is, my love, my life. Her auburn hair falls perfectly over her shoulders and her eyes twinkle making the stars look like they are not shining. The grey in her eyes shine, teasing me. These are the most precious jewels; these eyes never fail to make you feel loved, feel wanted. My hand, as if out of habit, moves to her cheek. They are as soft as cotton and smooth as silk, and my fingers glide over them as a feather in the air. My thumb travels to her lips, luscious and plush, they part seductively, and a sigh escapes her mouth. She closes her eyes, waiting for my lips to meet hers…

And then as if by some invisible force she is pulled away from me and her eyes shoot open. They are no longer twinkling- they are pleading, begging for me to hold on to her. She extends her arm but she is too far away. She is fading, her lips are losing colour and her face becomes as pale as snow. My heart hammers in my chest, I shout but nothing escapes my mouth. She is fading, crumbling as if made of dust, disappearing into the oblivion, her eyes pleading… She's gone.

I wake up with a jolt. My heart hammers in my chest and sweat covers every inch of my body. I look around and suddenly the room seems to suffocate me, the walls are closing in on me, moving closer with every second, threatening to trap me. My breath is rough and laborious as if the space around me has been robbed of oxygen, and I am unable to move. The silence of the night is now filled with screaming noises of that night, the police, my Delphie, the hospital, the sirens… all of them hit me like a wave, mixing and mingling and getting louder with every second. I press my palms against my ears; still, they hurt. And now the only thing that pierces me is the silence. It accuses me of my deeds and how they left me here. It accuses me of being me, of never understanding others' needs, of never being able to be there for the people I loved. It accuses me.

I run to the balcony. As soon as the cold night air hits me, I collapse, my back to the wall and my knees close to my chest. I breathe and take in the guilt-filled air and wait for the tears to come, but they never do. It's just the silence that hurts me like I hurt everyone. It's just the memories that come flooding back.

It was all my fault. My Delphie isn't here because of me. Only if I hadn't been so drunk; only if I had been there to take her to the hospital; only if I had been there to take care of her. Only if I had been there for her, like all the times she had been there for me. Her face, her beautiful face, keeps floating around me, pricking my heart about how careless, how fickle I had been.

There she was lying on the road covered in her own blood... dying because of me. I scarcely remember that night. I had come home, high and drowsy and had collapsed on the couch. I can see vague images of her in her favourite yellow dress, fumbling, sweating, falling, asking me to take her to the hospital. It is what I said to her that I remember most clearly, it is those words that burn my soul. "Don't act, Delphie. Go to bed." I had told her. I can't remember what happened next; only the call next morning from the hospital… and my world had come crashing down.

When I close my eyes, I can no longer see her smile, the twinkle in her eyes or hear her laugh. All I can see is her hair scattered, stained in her own blood. Her limbs lying on the road at unnatural angles. Her dress soaked in her blood. Her eyes- her eyes wide with fear and surprise.

Now every day is just the same without her. There are no surprise dinners, or midnight walks, no bike rides and no parties. It is just my grief and me, going to work, returning home and sleeping. Emotions have ceased to exist in me. It is as if my life has hit a dead end. There is no going further.

I know she has forgiven me, but I don't think I can ever forgive myself.

WE'LL WALK TOGETHER

By Dyumna Awasthi, AS-Level

The serenity of the world just encapsulates us in its grasp; the cheery but calm morning gently waking us up to face another day. The sun kisses me on the cheek while the wind softly caresses me, almost as if attempting to console me, making me believe that better days are to come.

I envy the birds that roam, flapping their wings, roaming the realm of the earth while all I can do is stare out of this tiny window; I try not to let it dishearten me but the pigeons come every day, impossible to ignore, perched upon the thin grey railing, mocking me incessantly.

The flowers represent my pain, sitting so diligently and patiently, waiting for the day they can finally bask in the glory of the sun, but alas, they stay stuck in their little mud pots, confined, imprisoned. The petals, frantically getting ready for the day they may be able to get out… a girl must look her best, even if she cannot show it off.

The sun gently teases the leaves, almost within their reach, but almost is never enough. The buildings in the distance ensconced in its heat while the only sliver of warmth I receive is from my daily cup of tea.

Though perhaps, staying inside has darkened my perspective and all I need to do in step into a little light; because there is beauty in this tiny balcony, and hope still finds a way to creep into both my garden and my heart.

The skies are calm today, tired of putting on concerts every evening as dusk approaches, tired of having to hold the fort while the seas play, and the fields frolic around without a care in the world. The sky looks down at me, reminding me of the beckoning horizon that lies where the sky meets the sea; I stare at that majestic cyan canvas that even the clouds not dare cross. It stares back, just as confused, just as scared.

I spend my days sitting on the webbed chairs, staring out onto this vast world ahead—it scares me now, to think that it's been months since I've even been downstairs, but while it's scary, it's also relieving. We stay strong in the middle of a global pandemic and it is people like us who will take the world forward. This adversity will end, and we will be at the forefront, as the beacons of positivity and living proof that this too shall pass, and we too shall survive.

The roads that seemed so familiar now only a distant dream, and all I can possibly do now is wait. Wait for the day when the siren of the factory will echo through the neighborhood, and children's playful screams will resonate again. Smiles will no longer be hidden behind a mask of a mask, and lives will no longer be unlived. The little balcony of mine represents me, and the world outside representing all my fears and inhibitions; and all I have to do now is wait until we're ready, for we'll all walk again, but this time we'll walk together.

FEATURE ARTICLE

MY JOURNEY INFILLED WITH CORONA

By Tanya Vaswani, IBDP-1



My entire life I grew up in West Africa, more specifically Benin, Cotonou. This country along with Togo have always had a special place in my heart because I was born and brought up in these countries. My friends, my family and my dog are all back there scattered in West Africa. The past 4-5 months have been hectic because one minute I'm studying constantly, to suddenly being under lockdown at home with my mum, while my dad is abroad working. COVID-19 has triggered panic within us but I am not worried because I know when it is time for me to kick the bucket, I will die. I believe fear is irrational, and now is not the time to fluster, instead to just obey the rules and soon everything will roll over.

My eldest sister, Laksha was stranded in India but she had the company of our aunt and cousins. Meanwhile, my other sister Shikha was in Bath, England. Shikha and I knew she had to come back to Cotonou as soon as possible because we knew there would be a lockdown soon enough in the UK. Within a week, Shikha reached home and the UK had shut its borders.

My family and I frequently communicated via video chats or text messages to see how each other were doing. My dad and my mum decided that it was time for us to shift to India due to the fact that both of my sisters have graduated from their universities and are beginning to build their lives in India. Likewise, my dad would also be busy due to the fact that he has to continuously move country to country for work. So, it would work out perfectly if we were all under one roof like how it was 7 years ago.

The next step was to apply for schools in Mumbai. My mum loves Podar International School and wanted me to get in so when we first got a reply from the school, it took her 0.01 second to agree for me to start virtual learning. A few days later it was my first day of online school, halfway across the world. The dreadful part is that I had to wake up every day by 3 a.m. Sometimes I pulled all-nighters because I knew that once I slept, I would sleep like a log and miss my classes, which happened time-to-time. My sleeping pattern was extremely messed up and even now I still wake up during the night. Whether it is 1 a.m. or 3 a.m., I am awake.

Even though I had to sleep in the afternoon to catch up on sleep, I never wasted any opportunity to be either studying, hanging out with my sister or my dog- Mr. Rocky, or simply baking. Cotonou had not been closing its borders and instead took precautions and made strict rules so that it permitted people to meet up, though in small gatherings.

Once the borders of the UK reopened, my sister went back while I stuck around for the next 3 months or so. My grandmother fell ill so she had to come to Cotonou but then the Togo borders closed and she refused to go to Mumbai. However, she later realized that there was no other option but to go to India as it was becoming more and more difficult for me to cope with not only the time difference but studying with no physical textbook, that caused my eyes to often turn pink from staring at the screen too long.

Music kept me sane and helped me block out everything happening around me. I forgot about the stress of IB (though I know next year will be worse), the problems of the world and then it was just me. Besides music, my friends and I met up nearly every two weeks. Physically having a conversation has never been more important. I learnt that taking advantage of opportunities is great but everything has a cost in the end.

My flight to Mumbai was on the 2nd of September 2020, and I reached safely. I am currently quarantined at home with nothing to do but study and miss my Rocky. Sadly, it is back in Cotonou without me. However, I shall bring him with me to Mumbai as soon as I go back home.

For now, I have to settle with daily photos of him, while trying to settle down in Mumbai. No matter what, I will miss home, my friends, the food, and the culture but for now I just have to accept whatever comes my way. I just hope with my fresh start in Mumbai, people accept me the way people in West Africa did, and respect my ethics.





WHY BAN A BOOK THAT IS ABOUT BANNING BOOKS?

By Ananya Pathak, Grade 9

"If they give you ruled paper, write the other way." —Juan Ramón

The quote that sets the tone for this book, is in itself a bold statement—perfect for an even greater book. 'Fahrenheit 451' by Ray Bradbury is a dystopian novel that has come a long way since it's first publication in 1953. Set in a future wherein the reading or owning of any literary work is illegal, it is a gripping tale that follows the inner turmoil of Guy Montag as his quest to discover meaning in his dissatisfactory life leads him to question whether the answers may lie in the very objects he has been told to burn all his life. Going against the law, he starts to hide books—and he watches as they set fire to his life as he knows it.

Ironically, this book has itself been banned several times amidst public outrage—but it still remains to be one of the most acclaimed pieces of modern literature. A brilliant read for readers who look to analyse society and the role of those who think outside of it's barred boxes.

While Fahrenheit 451 was in most ways, disturbingly similar to the world we live in today, the dystopian world in 'The Giver' has gone through a complete evolution. In a bad way or a good way? Well, that's up to you to decide. Jonas lives in a perfect world where the concepts of war, hunger or pain never bother anyone. Like all other citizens, he only desires to play a cooperative role in the community. But then he's selected as the Receiver of Memory.

He discovers that there is so much more shrouded under the layers and layers of a perfect world. And these dark lies—they will take him on a mission to find the truth. With a younger protagonist and easier-to-read language, this book was originally intended to be a children's adventure novel. The author Lois Lowry writes in the Author's note, 'I sat down in 1993 to write an adventure story...somehow, unintentionally, I tapped into something that fed a hunger out there.' It is, in a way, just like any good ol' dystopian novel with it's deep thought-provoking interpretations of concepts like herd-mentality, societal norms and suppression of individuality. Needless to say, this book has also been banned often.

Why is it that dystopian books more often than not find themselves to be a target of censorship? Is it that we haven't learnt to accept others' opinions? Is it that people cannot handle the self-realisation? Is it that we, as humans, are terrified of our own imagination?

The answer is yours to discover. Though keep in mind—these books are not for the faint-hearted nor the simple-minded. No. These books explore the nightmarish world that is—although depicted in the future—a warning sign of our own growing reality.

QUARANTIMES

By Devika Mehta, IBDP-1

Did any of you ever wonder this day would come? By "this day" I mean the day when I'd start learning the most eclectic things; from cooking to minor household repairs. On some days, I feel very grateful for this quarantine period because it didn't only invoke the inner peace that we all had been waiting for but also let us explore ourselves. Who knew that I'd be planning to stand in the Master chef line after quarantine? Jokes apart, I never imagined I could make crème brûlée at home!

Well, the list of things I cooked at home is pretty "laung". I started off by cooking ramen for myself and as each day went by I googled more and more salivating recipes to cook. The list continued with banana oatmeal pancakes, Dalgona coffee, pesto lasagne, Aglio-e-olio, cheese burst pizza, homemade bread, Waldorf salad and more. I'm sure your mouth is watering by now so I'll stop talking about the dishes I cooked while in lockdown.

Moving on, I also discovered I could fix a few minor repairs in my house for which I had to call the carpenter all the time. It's nothing too complex but it is helpful in the short run. It includes fixing a screw into a wall or rather fixing anything minor that has fallen apart!

Since covid-19 cancelled all our travel plans and quarantined us, I had no option but to take a virtual world tour. Ever heard of it? No? Neither did I. I was randomly scrolling through YouTube and accidentally clicked on a video called "virtual world tour". At first I was startled just as you are right now. It is definitely not as galvanising as visiting a new country in real life but I'm sure this will work for you in quarantine. The video explores different cities and countries of the world. It virtually shows you what is happening in that country right now, what are the most prominent dishes, cultures, traditions and the people of that country. Fascinating right?

On the other hand, the most non-fascinating thing that I learned during quarantine was to mop and wash vessels. I'm sure most of you must've learned it too! How did that feel? Monotonous? If quarantine can make us wash vessels and mop the floor why can't we see it from a different perspective? Play your favourite pop song on full volume and dance while you mop or wash vessels. Create your own steps like I did and you'll be able to burn all the calories from the fatty foods you've eaten in the past month. The most amazing part about this is that you don't have to wait for lockdown to get over to burn calories at the gym!

Lastly, the most prominent thing I learnt was to accept and to seek good in things like the Yin Yang symbol. The Ying Yang symbol represents the philosophy that life is incredibly non-dualistic, which means that there is a little bit of something in everything. In the good there is bad and the bad there is good. Who knew something so disastrous would hit the world and put the world into lockdown? Maybe this is a message for all of us to spend this time with ourselves and our loved ones. This is the time to explore yourself completely because you never know, you might turn out to be a great cook like me.

FACT OR FICTION

By Darinn Carvalho, Grade 9

The unknown has always been man's greatest fear, as it's unclear if something or someone may surprise you, and harm you or not. Often people have claimed sightings of the unknown, and there has been no scientific facts to back them up- or are there?

Lana, a thirteen-year old pale skinned girl with light brown shoulder-length hair and big black eyes was born and raised in the United Kingdom. She was visiting her mother's family for the winter. She had arrived earlier and her mum was to join them later as she had some work commitments to complete. Her cousins lived very close to the Canadian border, a small cottage in the middle of the woods. Not only was the place beautiful during the winter- her favourite time of the year with the Christmas holidays coming around the corner- but she also adored the twins, Zeke and Zoe, her cousins, who were ayear younger than her and the family's two huskies, Bruno and Spike who never seemed to leave the twin's side unless she was there. They spent many hours decorating the cottage and the tree; sipping hot chocolate on the front porch as they admired the huge conifer trees which slowly got blanketed by the softly falling snow while the huskies busied themselves chasing rabbits.

One day Lana was out with the twins and playing football; she had always been an outdoor person and the bright sunny day was a welcome treat as it had snowed for the past couple of days keeping them locked indoors. Zoe, accidentally kicked the ball over into the woods. "Oh no! Not again Zee," whined her twin. Both Bruno and Spike chased after the ball but stopped at the edge of the woods as the sun had now set and the sky was darkening. Lana whistled for the dogs to come to her and marched them home along with the twins. She took up the task to find the ball all by herself and began her walk into the woods, hoping she would not have to go too far as the shadows of the trees seemed to cover the area making it gloomier than it already was.

A few paces into the woods and somehow, she couldn't help but be terrified of how pitch dark it had gotten so soon. It seemed that the moon too had deserted her when she needed it the most. She again reassured herself that the ball was close, but as the trees swished and eerie sounds of the branches brushed against the wind, the hair on the back of her neck prickled. The dull moonless night was soon accompanied by softly falling snow. She sighed and increased the pace at which she walked, pulling her jacket tighter around her. Juggling her way through the trees seemed tricky at times as they seemed quite keen to grab her. Her heart was beating very fast now in her chest as just when she thought of turning back, she spotted it- the bright green football stuck in a bush. Relief flooded through her as she grabbed the ball and spun around to make her way back to the cottage. But now a new problem arose; she had no idea where she was.

She froze in shock, not knowing which direction to proceed. The trees whooshed around her wailing, as if they felt her fear. Tears began to roll from her eyes. She panicked, and begun to scream, "HELP!!!" "Is anyone there? Please help me…" her voice faded off into the crying of the wind. The darkness had now crept in very silently over the starless sky and even the white coat of the snow which made an effort to brighten the night had little success.

Lana now began to shiver from the cold, which seemed to have crept in through her double-layered jacket, muffler and monkey cap chilling her bones. Thoughts of panic and hypothermia ran through her brain. She picked a direction and walked briskly through the snow which seemed at times to take extra effort to cover up her footsteps. Within minutes she soon realised she had been walking in circles.

Exhausted she huddled under a tree and sobbed. And then she heard it, in the stillness of the dark- a soft voice, very gentle, very reassuring, "Lana! Lana! My baby". She listened again, "Lan… it's me. Mom." She knew that voice anywhere. It was her mother's. "Mom, is that you? I'm lost," she wailed. "Don't worry honey. I'm here. I'm not leaving you alone. Follow my voice...It will guide you home," her mom reassured her.

Relief flooded through her like a burst dam. She jumped for joy, "Mom. You're here? I'm coming". "Come soon honey", the voice replied.

Lana followed the voice as if in a trance. Within minutes she could see the cottage. She dashed in to find the twins and her Aunt all huddled around the fireplace. They were white with shock. "I'm ok you guys," announced Lana beaming at them. "I was lost, but guess what? I heard Mom. She led me home.

Where's she?" They all stared at her as if she was a ghost. "Zoe, Zeke what's, wrong?" She questioned them.

"Lana, come sit down near the fire. Glad to see you are all right," cooed her Aunt Jane. The twins rushed to her and hugged her so hard, she thought her spine would snap.

"Guys, I'm okay really," she giggled. "I was lost but I found my way back. I heard mom guiding me back home. I know it sounds strange," she continued.

"Lana honey... please be strong", said her Aunt. "There's something you need to know. We've just heard the news that your mom's plane has crashed. There are no survivors".

THE ART OF DECEPTION

By Nayeel Qaazi, Grade 8

Sheldon woke up to the sound of chirping birds outside his window, the crisp sunlight shining through the window and the smell of freshly baked pancakes wafting through the air. Sheldon lived in an old apartment crowded with junk everywhere; he along with his father lived alone here since the death of his mother 4 years ago. His father worked as a policeman for the NYPD in the crime-solving department. Sheldon saw a note attached to the fridge's door saying his father had gone to work. Sheldon had always respected his father being the best son he could, he was always well behaved and also adapted to some of his father's detective skills. He went to find out where his father was currently working and on the way, in the paper, he read the reserve bank had been looted of 25 million dollars worth of cash. The perpetrator had slipped into the vault undetected and taken the money disabling all the electric equipment. It was a thoroughly puzzling case but Sheldon knew his dad would solve it.

He headed towards the bank to meet his father. The vault was covered with yellow police tape and there were cops everywhere. He found his dad talking to the superintendent. His father was happy to see him but at the same time also worried, his hair streaked with grey, his skin glistening with sweat and his eyes sunken by fatigue. He told Sheldon about what a tough case it was and how the crime had taken place.

Sheldon decided to help his father and devised a plan. The robber had disabled all electrically powered machinery and had commenced the heist but what the robber had forgotten to do was disable the cameras that lockers have which are battery operated. With his hacking abilities, Sheldon hacked into the mainframe looking for the battery-operated camera footage but found out it was locked, in frustration he tried every method of hacking but could not generate the password. He went to bed for the night and decided to tell his father the discovery he made.

But when he woke up in the morning he was devastated, with tearful eyes a friend of his father told him how his father had died in a car accident. Something wasn't right. His father was the safest driver he knew and did not drink or smoke. When he went outside to get the mail he found a rugged old black bag. Sheldon was afraid but curious, he slowly opened the bag, trying to resettle his eyes in after the shock of his life. The bag was packed with money down to the brim. There was a note attached which only gave the password to his fathers' computer. Sheldon was mystified, but then everything clicked.

He opened the bank mainframe again and logged into the battery cameras using his dad's password he was flabbergasted! When he opened the recording all he saw was a man in black with a pocketknife Sheldon had gifted his dad for his birthday…

MURDER MYSTERY

By Karan Kulkarni, Grade 8

He stood motionless in front of the corpses. They were dead-his parents, police were panicking as there were no traces of the murderer, and a boy stood-a young, 9-year-old boy named Sam. "Where are my parents? What happened to them?!", screamed the boy. "We're sorry, but they are gone.", replied the police officer calmly.

20 years later,

Sam had joined the police and was working on a case, his boss called him to his office. "Today, we have a new case or an old case for you to work on." "Which case?", asked Sam reluctantly. "The one where your parents had died.", his boss said sadly. "I'll start the case immediately.", said Sam. He walked out of the office, went home and took his flashlight and pistol, walked back outside to start working on his case. He had to head back to the place he hoped to never see again.

It was the evening and the Sun was setting, Sam walking in a deserted sidewalk; not a single car or person was present, there were abandoned theme parks and houses but the building that stood out the most was his old mansion where his parents were brutally murdered. The windows were covered with planks, spider webs were everywhere, all the plants around the mansion were dying. He walked inside the house shaking. Suddenly, the door closed behind him, he was stuck inside…

Inside the house seemed perfectly normal with normal furniture, normal decoration and normal flooring but there was no electricity the house was completely dark -as dark as an abyss. Eerie sounds could be heard; a witches cackle, the sound of flowing air, and the crackling of electricity. He walked further into the hallway and took a right into his parent's room. In front of the dresser stood a figure- a silhouette of something depicting a couple, it was hovering midair and was translucent.

"H-h-hello ,w-who's there?", Sam asked frightfully. The figure is turned towards him and dissipated. Sam stood motionless. It was his mother, but something was wrong; they did not seem human but more like ghosts left to haunt the house. Quickly, he ran out of the house. It was 3 o'clock in the morning. He turned around. His mother was at the door of the mansion, waving at Sam. Sam got scared and shot the ghostly figure of his mother, and ran down the road into an alley. In front of him stood his parents, his parents were holding a knife. He screamed, turned around and walked a few steps. He felt something- something painful in his chest. It was a knife. Sam fell down on pain and anguish. He looked at his mother and asked: "Why?" "…because I like to, I have already killed our entire family just for fun.", said Sam's mother as she walked away.

Just before Sam died, he tried calling the police and left a message in blood: 'Mom killed'. The police had seen the message but Sam's body was never found.

THE BATTLE OF THE COSMOS

By Ishaan Chakraborty, Grade 8

The three military spies boarded the evil crux clan's spaceship. They wanted to put an end to the cruelty of the crux, who were enslaving people to make illegal weapons and spaceships in a hidden factory in the far side of the galaxy. The crux wanted to take down the peaceful democratic government who ruled the cosmos. They needed to find the location of the hidden files, which contain the location of the hidden crux headquarters without being seen by the crux troops. While they were hiding, one of the crux troops suddenly saw them. "FIRE AT WILL!" said the troop.

"Take cover"- said Granados, the lead spy softly. One of the spies, Rayne, said- "maybe I can take down those 3 daydreaming troops and get their blasters." "But the plan was not to cause any violence"- said Hamrock, the other spy. "We must do this if we are to survive and extract the files." – Said Granados. Rayne swiftly went across to the other side of the room as she stole their blasters. She quickly knocked them down and got the blasters over.

They started firing the blasters, knocking down the troops as they went to the sector of the ship where the files were kept. As they walked through the door, they were greeted by a heavily armed robot who started firing at them like a turret. They were struggling to dodge it. Hamrock flipped over its head, barely missing one of the blaster shots as he disabled it. They had successfully defeated the robot and extracted the files.

But their mission was not over yet.

"We need to get to the escape pods immediately." Said Granados, as he reloaded his blaster. "Why can't we use the space fighters that we used to board?"-said Hamrock. "They're already on the military base on the planet Kreskin. We have to go there to decode the files." Said Rayne. "We will have to take down many troops to get to the escape pods. They are on the other side of this massive spaceship."- said Granados.

The spies rushed out of the room, taking down every troop and getting closer to the escape pods by every second. It was a humongous ship. They started to get exhausted, barely being able to take down the troops, until they reached the escape room, filled with troops with blasters at the ready. "What are we going to do?" Asked Rayne. "Relax, I came prepared for a situation like this." Said Granados. He pulled out a metal rod and made a crack in the glass window of the door. He flung a grenade into the room, killing all the troops.

They opened the door to see that there was lucky, one escape pod remaining, getting into the escape pod, plotted the coordinates for the planet and left the ship. The planet was fortunately close to where they were. The pod was slightly small, but it fit all of them inside. They had successfully extracted the files and reached the planet.

THE MYSTERIOUS CREATURE

By Zhiaan Lakdawala, Grade 8

Once upon a time, there lived a boy who's name was Kunam.

Kunan was a very obedient and an innocent guy.

He loved to eat food. He always dreamt of food lands and imaginary lands.

He didn't even question his parents and so didn't they.

They all lived as a happy family

Kunam had a friend named Kisam. Kisam, on the other hand, was very naughty.

Kisam invited Kunam one day, to play in the woods.

Kkunam asked "Why the woods?" Kisam said "Just come"

They both went along. Kisam started to hear noises and was scared but didn't want to tell Kunam as he knew he would F-R-E-A-K out.

So he decided to not tell Kunam. They both continued deeper into the woods and finally reached a seashore.

Kunam told Kisam "Now what". Kisam replied I don't know where we are. I thought we were going to my tent which I had set up with my parents"

They then saw a bottle floating toward them.

Kisam opened it, there seemed to appear some type of creature.

At first they thought they would run.

The creature uttered in a screechy voice "Don't try to run from me, you won't be able to. I am here to help you and I may grant one wish.

Kunam replied," Ok then, grant me an island of food. "

They both entered.

The creature along with Kisam and Kunam vanished.

Two years later they both were found dead.

THE SCARLETT ROSE

By Saaya Patni, Grade 8

"Well I can't believe we're actually doing this"

"Oh come on Olive, I've been waiting for this my entire life! It's gonna be so fun!"

"Fun!? Lily, we're moving into a house in which the previous owners have died!"

"Yup and their gonna come and haunt us. WoOoOo" I said as I laughed. "Are you serious Lily!"

This is my best friend Olive, prominent thing about her is her bright, wavy ginger hair. She's has a really nice persona to be around when you wanna have some fun, yes she can be a bit lousy sometimes but I feel contented when I'm with her. We've been best friends since second grade and till now even after graduation, we don't hesitate to make fun of each other. We recently decided to move in together into a new home, a new city and maybe get a job.

"ok, so we got everything?"

"Yup"

"Toothbrush, toothpaste, biscuits for the bus, charger, water bottle-"

"Check, Check, Check and Check, we got everything, just chill out, we'll do great"

We broke into a laughter that was very soon silenced by the thought of saying goodbye to everyone else. As I looked outside the window into the caliginosity with pops of bright stars… taking in the most I could, cause I knew, I knew nothing would be the same. "Everything's gonna change now isn't it," I said turning to look at Olive. She wrapped her arm around me and replied, "yes, yes it is".

The next morning we left.

I felt happy but at the same time I panicked, it felt surreal, deep down I had a feeling something wasn't right. But I wanted to do this my entire life, what could possibly go wrong? I told myself.

When we reached I saw a row of 5 bungalows and the centre one had dark brown oak wood, grey pipes, empty pots that had almost cracked to pieces and a few trees around. "Well, this is gonna take some working on" sighed Olive. "You know what they say, don't judge a book by its cover," said a young man who was walking towards us with a leather briefcase, wearing a brown coat and a hazel hat. He shook hands with us as he said, "allow me to introduce myself, I am George White your neighbour." "Oh hello Mr White, I am Lilian Swan, you may call me Lily," I said. "and I am Olive Sanders, nice to meet you, Mr White." "A Mr White may I ask you where the rest of the neighbours are?", asked. " oh yes yes, the 2 houses on the extreme left are actually empty, the one on the right is mine and the other one on the left belongs to Liam Martin, he likes to keep to himself. Well, I got to go now, bye ladies." " Bye Mr White," we both said. " come on let's go," I said dragging Olive with me.

A few days passed by, Olive and I were really happy, everything was going well until one day a local Gardner got murdered. The police came in for investigation and everything fell silent suddenly. That night Olive and I were eating dinner when she said, " you know they took Liam Martin for investigation." " Liam Martin? Our neighbour?", I asked. "Mmhmm", she said "I mean he does have a criminal record and not to mention the knife he got murdered with had the same weird sign that was found on a diary in Martin's house.

When the cops took him they said that there had been two other murders the day before we came and had the same weird sign." "Well I heard about that and I think we should go back to our parent's house for a couple of days till this gets sorted," I said. "But the murderer has been caught and he's in prison so I don't think that's necessary." She replied. "But he hasn't yet admitted it and besides I've already booked the tickets. By the way, did you get new roses?" "Nope," she said as she stuffed some bread in her mouth. "Well, how is that possible in the morning they were red and now they're white," I said startled. "Well, you must have seen wrong," Olivia replied. "That's not possible I remember when we heard the gardener's scream I came running down and the roses were red!" I panicked. "Honestly, I think you need some sleep and so do I. Good Night." "Maybe your right, Night," I said getting myself together.

That night I couldn't sleep, looked at the Roses, and to my astonishment they were Red again. I immediately got off my bed to call Olive when I heard a loud AAAAHHH scream coming from Olive's room. I ran toward her room screaming her name, as I entered I saw her lying in a pool of blood, stabbed across her stomach, but luckily still breathing. And next to her lay a knife with the same sign on it. I called the 911 as tears ran down my cheeks, I was devastated. When the doctors and cops arrived they took her to her parent's hometown hospital and told me, "don't worry Miss Wright, Olive is not critical and will be fine in no time. Liam Martin has escaped prison this night, but we assure you will find him. We recommend you to leave first thing tomorrow morning and we have an officer that will be by your door making sure no one enters. If you need anything you can inform us, thank you." With saying this they left.

With relief, I packed my bag for the next day and sat on the couch in the hallway. I called up my mother and told her everything. She said she'd come to pick me up the next morning and bid me good night. I looked at the roses, they were White again. I sat wondering, why would the Roses only turn Red when someone was getting attacked?

There was something wrong, I felt the police had picked up the wrong guy if Martin had escaped prison why would he come back here? I tried not to think about it but something was off. And plus I felt like I had seen that sign on the murder weapon. But where? I tried my hardest to remember, and then it struck me like a huge lightning bolt, I quickly called up my mom and told her "in George White's briefcase there a small brown diary on the day we first met him and it looked exactly like the one in Martins house! That's it is calling the cops. I got up and to my fear, the Roses, they were slowly turning Scarlett, next to them lay an oval wall mirror with Gold plating, I looked through it behind me and it was him, George White.

THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT

By Sunaira Jain, Grade 8

It was a dark, withered midst of a gloomy winter's month. Sloppily hunching across the tattered footpath, Shazana drooled off into captivating daydreams with that forlorn smile reaching the tips of her vivid chestnut eyes, enveloped by her long eyelashes. Ah, she imagined, what wouldn't she give to live a seemingly opulent life. Suddenly...striking her oblivious state…BAM!

Shazana miraculously found herself bearing a dark, deserted night. A somewhat engagement of danger wafted around in the heat of the night. Thud, thud, thud, rain poured heavily, and the cloudy sky seemed an unusual shade of grey. Shivering in the moist atmosphere, Shazana was highly ascertained that she could hear the faint sound of owls hooting and predators growling. Arr! She froze on the spot on hearing the loud roar of a lion, followed by the sudden creak of a bridge. She should have never come here in the first place.

Shazana continued to walk through the forest. After an hour, her search for shelter had started to become extremely frustrating. Her shoulders tipped with fatigue, and her teeth clattered at a rapid pace. Suddenly she was dragged to a lonely but creepy area. Shazana gasped. For right in front of her was a bridge making the same eerie creaks that Shazana had heard an hour ago. A cold hand crept up Shazana's back, and Shazana wheeled round. She came to an abrupt halt. For there was a witch with gleaming red eyes scarier than those of a devil! In a bloodcurdling and raspy voice, the witch wailed Shazana's name out loud. Shazana stood rooted to the spot. Every inch of her body shook with anxiety, and several chills ran down her spine. At that, the witch's yellowed teeth cackled with wicked laughter. Shazana's mouth opened and closed, but silently. She finally managed to stutter, "W-who are y-you?" The witch merely switched her gaze from Shazana to the night sky. Her face creased into a wicked grin. With the snap of her fingers, she conjured up a tornado of burning hot chilli! Shazana's eyes widened with fear as she got dragged into it, her nerves gasping in dread as the chilli powder made its way into her throat. Shazana yelled in excruciating pain…

Suddenly, everything went pitch black. Glass slowly began to surround Shazana, the monstrous voice approaching her, "SHAZANA…..OOO….THE DELIGHT IN YOUR PAIN…HEE-HAA-HAA-HA!" As the scary chuckle ended, Shazana realised she was in a glass ball. Ghosts and shadowy figures headed towards her. To top it off, sharp teeth dug into the back of her neck. Struck with terror, Shazana let out a strident yelp. Yelp after yelp. She banged on the ball's walls, sweat and hopeless tears draining down her panic-stricken face. It was horrifying. Alas, it was then that the amazing part came: her loud and screechy cry shattered the glass ball into pieces! The ghosts began to drift away, and all that was left of the witch was her cloak! Shazana's tired fingers slowly reached out towards the cloak…..BOOM! At once, with a large flash, Shazana was transferred to…wait what….the process of …..opening her…eyes....?

Shazana blinked her eyes in surprise, shuddering to think of what she has just witnessed. Ping! Her senses restored back into her overwhelmed mind like a loose screw being tightened. Ah, she mused to herself lazily, must've been the long day that got me lost in this nightmarish mess. Yawning merrily, it was then that her instincts alerted her, and gathering herself up, she walked heftily towards that shaggy loft, a cold dinner awaiting her.

THE USUAL HEIST

By Agastya Chordia, Grade 8

Last year, an FBI agent Dave Parker was assigned for chasing behind the unusual illusionists and thieves. They were Unknown. Untraceable. Nameless. Unrecognized. To the rest of the busy world. Suspiciously, only one of them was familiar, he was a white male, approximately 6 feet tall and a medium build. The Interpol had identified him as Harlow Archer. He was notoriously known for his criminal records. Twenty-seven heist. Jewellery stores. Auctioned houses. Four watch shops. His biggest loot: Van Cleef & Arpels, Tokyo, 577 Diamonds. He was the head of the Heist.

They were named using countries. All wore a plain black suit with a funny mask. They were imperceptibly planning to pull off the biggest heist in human history. Cash over $3.6 billion. To execute this heist, one had recruited the best of the best thieves and illusionists. They were going to wipe out the tonnes of money on the second Friday of November from the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) headquarters in London, England.

D-Day had finally arrived.

They broke into the Bank, by hijacking the truck carrying the rich paper used for printing money. Unknowingly, the security granted the truck permission. They progressed through their Stage 1. Without any haste, all the doors were sealed. The hostages were Panicked Petrified. Frightened.

They were carrying one of the most deadly ammunition and firearms. FBI and the Interpol had surrounded them with the toughest security to escape. There was no chance for them to escape. They drew all the smartphones from all the hostages and cut all the lines of communication. They smashed the CCTVs for safety and privacy. They unlocked the vaults and rapidly stuffed all the money.

Now the prime role of the illusionists has started. They will help to evacuate us from the Massive Bank. They will unknowingly fool the government. This was planned a while ago, there was a tunnel built in the vault 3, deep as 85 feet. Which connected to the warehouse. They quickly put all the hostages to work, they passed on the money to the warehouse. On the other hand, the illusionists were setting the mousetrap for the Interpol, once they enter the bank while they were exiting. From the warehouse, they would take the money to the Island Irneoz.

A GIFT OR A CURSE

By Prisha Rodrigues, Grade 8

People call me Mitchell. I was always the quiet one in class. I didn't speak much I wasn't smart either. I barely had any friends, the only ones I had always ignored. I didn't mind though. I liked being alone. It's one way to find inner peace. I wasn't that fond of people either. People were always scared of me….maybe its because whenever someone is about to die….I see it…. When I first started seeing the visons it was with my mother. Around 6 years ago, when I was 10, I was playing with my mother. It was just like how any other day would pass. After I had finished my homework she would play with me for an hour. We were playing with my dolls when I saw it…. I was standing in the middle of a road, I saw my mum crossing it. She was wearing her work clothes. It was probably 9 in the evening from the way the sky looked. I suddenly got chills down my spine breaking into a cold sweat. Everything felt so off. Suddenly from a distance, I see a truck coming straight towards my mom. After realization kicked in and tears filled my eyes making it hard to see I shouted "Mum! Behind you!" Although she couldn't hear me. "Mum! Mum! Mum!" I screamed again, struggling to hold back my tears. No reaction yet. And she was gone before I knew it. The truck struck her everywhere, splattering blood. I was no longer able to hold it together. I could feel tears rolling down my cheeks. I have never before felt so terrified. "Baby! Honey! You're okay!? I snap out of my vision to see my mother staring at me all over her face with apprehension written on her face.

We were back in my room. It's like nothing had ever happened. Everything was back to normal. That evening when she left for her shift at the hospital she was hit by a truck. That was when I realized what my power was. I guess seeing that much gore for years does something to a person. I saw my best friend die in a car crash, a classmate killed himself, my old English teacher pass for natural causes and a lot more I wouldn't like to mention. I got really distant from people after that, afraid of what other dark stuff would be waiting for me. I avoided everyone, my father and other family members.

The worst part was that…. I was never able to save any of them… and I hated myself for that. One day I was walking down the school hallway. A soft breeze was blowing past my face, It was about 5 pm, I took a deep breath and stopped. I saw another vision. I looked around to see who's death I was about to witness. Although this time I saw no one. I was alone. I heard gunshots followed by screaming. And saw another me get shot. I guess it took me a while to process that because the minute I snapped out of it, it was too late. "During a school shooting 3 kids were killed Amanda Rose Sarah north and Mitchell Winchester" I saw the news as my father wept. I still can't get over the fact that I'm dead..

ARE ALL ANGELS LOST?

By Agastya Chordia, Grade 8

Since Childhood, I was in love with angels, Their snow-white wings, shining halos, gold crowns, beautiful flowing white gowns. I knew angels didn't exist but just imagining about them was so beautiful.

Running late for collage "I am sorry" or "excuse me" was the only thing I kept saying until CRASH!!!

"Oh god! I am sorry" I quickly picked up fallen books. "Hey! CAN'T YOU SEE WHERE YOU GOING". Hearing that I looked up, saw a beautiful girl just like an angel, but her personality did not match one bit. I apologized once again and ran to class.

At Lunchtime, I heard a commotion and saw the same girl whom I had bumped into. She was yelling at the old janitor and hitting him with her handbag. I ran over and pushed the girl down, as I helped the janitor to his feet. What a mean girl I thought!

After school while walking home, "Come here," said a voice in the alley. I turn to see if anyone is there but nothing. I see an old tattered book on the ground. I pick it up. "Angels and Devils" I whispered to myself.

Flashback: mom used to read me angel tales.

Why was the alley dark and cold. Yikes!.

Reaching home, I picked up the book and started reading, "Chapter 1- Angels" I was drawn into the book with its illustrations. All the while I was telling myself 'but angels don't exist'.

I went a few pages ahead and Chapter 2 – Devils. I found weak spots, powers, curses etc. Chapter 4–half breeds ". Suddenly I realized the book won't let me read or turn a page. A bit shook I hit my bed.

At the café, I open the book. "Why won't you let me read". I saw a small lock holding those pages together it looks as small as a key necklace my mom gave. I remove it from my neck and put it in the lock

CLICK!

The book opens to a picture of my mom, dad and me. It was my parent's backstory. I read more, it shows my mom in Angel form with beautiful wings but my dad had black wings which looked like a raven. WAIT! MY MOM WAS AN ANGEL AND MY DAD WAS A DEVIL!

So I am an Angel-Devil mix. Like How??

As the night falls further, I am tortured with evil dreams with dark forces killing Angels. I go back to sleep, after a few minutes, I see a girl killed by a dark figure. And then it went all black.

The next morning, I saw the same person who died in my dream on TV, with the anchor saying that she was murdered I dropped my glass on the floor. This kept happening every night I saw the same thing kill people, the next day the news said they died. It hurt to keep seeing it happen.

Is there a meaning to what I see? Is this world being rid of good people who are really angels? Maybe it is the sign of times that we are becoming more devilish in our nature and killing our own planet. With so much hatred, mistrust and war around us I ask myself - "are all angels lost?"

HOW I WAS FOLLOWED BY A MURDERER

By Avaneesh Nagare, Grade 8

During the mid-1960s, I was in my end year of junior high school, which was the start of the summer break. The first day of summer vacation began for my sister- Celia, my friend- Jolie and myself- Antara. We decided to go on a car trip to Nashville's national park, the three of us had hopped into my sister's old SUV.

It took us 2 hours and 30 minutes for the arrival of our destination, during the car trip, we were being the typical girls of our time: talking about what we'll do in the summer break, sharing our secrets and listening to the trendy music of the time- disco. Since we wanted a break after our painful exams along with the fact that the park is beautiful in summer, it was an obvious decision to visit.

The first thing we noticed was not the greenery, nor the beauty situated in the park, but instead the openness and silence. It was almost too silent. There was an eerie, uncomfortable atmosphere created when we arrived, which gave us a sadistic feeling. It was also obvious from our expressions that an unspoken mutual feeling of regret was among us.

We parked the car in a deserted parking lot which was. We scouted for a good place to set up a picnic and enjoy the park. The camp was set up right at the mesmerising pond, our plan was just to stay for a couple of hours, talk, gossip, and eat till our heart's content. We were enjoying the fact that summer had just begun and a pleasant mood was in abundance.

Unlike Jolie and my sister, I had visited the park several times with many others, it was often filled with people and peace. Except for this time, it was less peaceful; and strangely, not as crowded as it usually is, which was strange for a nice day.

Anyways, there we were just being us and enjoying whatever we could, until… I noticed a man; across the pond. I tried to stay engaged in our conversation but I couldn't help notice the man; he was well dressed, good looking and yet I had this bad feeling about him.

A couple of minutes go by and I lose my focus on the man. I was trying to get another sandwich out of the basket and when I looked up I saw him... except this time he grinned at us.

It was such a sinister grin...and his dark gorgeous eyes had beauty written all over them but bad luck as well. He was rubbing his hand against his chin thoughtfully, almost telling us… 'I see you'. Unlike last time I wasn't the only one acknowledging his frightful presence.

'I'm getting scared, let's move our things. Pack up', I said. However, Celia convinced me that I was overthinking and we decided to just stay, as it's a public park and anybody can come.

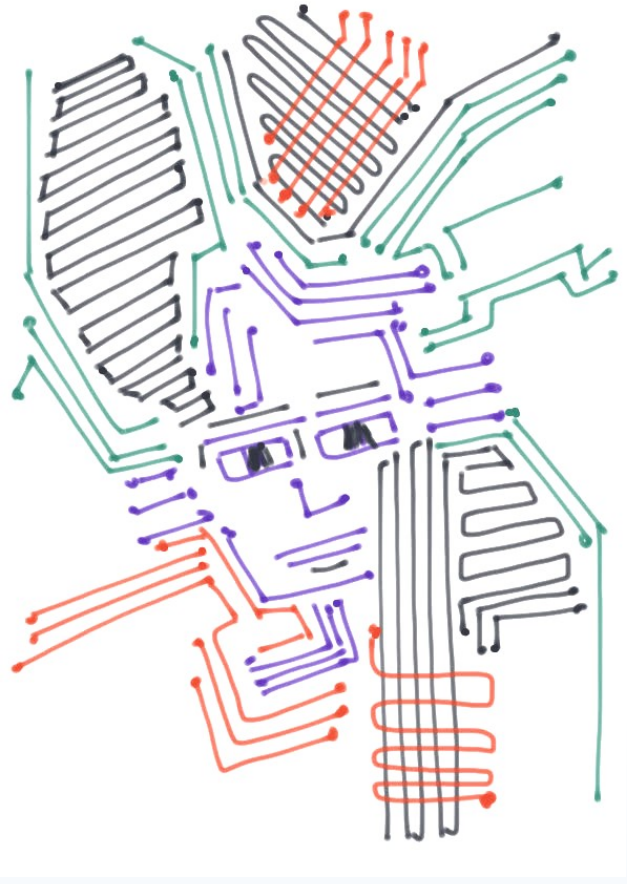
I go out and about my day, keeping an eye on him but having fun until... I notice that there's a slight intentional movement. My eyes- subconsciously by a command from my instincts- dart across the pond.

He wasn't there.

Suddenly I see the man, he's walking along the pond. It almost felt like he was coming towards us. With command but softness, I pointed at the man. We all agreed something wasn't right and that we should move. We packed up our things and started moving back to our car. As we were walking to the parking lot I could still see him, walking towards us and even a fool would know that he's bad news. As we gained speed so did he. We quickly trashed everything into the boot of the car and drove out.

He lost us, then...we saw a car coming from the parking lot- old, yellow and a lot like a Honda, following us. My sister Celia steps on the gas pedal for dear life. We sped out as far as we could and parked in a petrol station, to our relief the car passed.

We drove out of the petrol station until a policeman stopped us and informed us of a serial killer named Adam Stam-…well dressed...good looking… and had an old yellow Honda.




SCIENCE

FEATURE ARTICLE

SPACE EXPLORATION: IS IT JUST A WASTE OF TIME AND MONEY?

By Sahir Devraj, IBDP-1

For centuries, space has been the final frontier for mankind. In the 1950s, this frontier was within our grasp when the Soviet Union sent first an unmanned satellite, then a dog named Laika and finally a human being into space. The United States landed a man on the moon, and the space race was on. However, when the Cold War between the two superpowers died out, space exploration was no longer a priority. It may sound hard to believe but it's been almost fifty years since a man walked on the moon.

So why have we given up on what was possibly the greatest endeavour of mankind? Well, some people believe that space travel was always a very expensive proposition with astronomically low returns. Instead of trying to discover what lies inside a black hole, they argue, we should be trying to find solutions to the problems we have down on Planet Earth - famines, droughts and poverty. We should use our limited resources to study the climate-change crisis on earth, not the atmosphere on Mars.

These are all valid arguments no doubt. However, I believe that we cannot give up on space exploration; it is essential for our advancement as a species. Space exploration has helped advance our understanding of the universe, scientific knowledge that may one day lead to discovering valuable resources and harnessing new forms of energy. Space programs have led to technological benefits such as GPS navigation and LEDs, as well as medical advances such as MRI scans. And it has also helped us understand and find solutions to the issues that our planet faces today.

A considerable portion ($2 billion) of NASA's yearly budget is spent on earth science: the study our planet's interconnected systems. NASA's network of satellites can provide us real time information that measures precipitation, tracks dust storms and can even look into the eye of a hurricane. This information can help farmers living in remote areas and also, over time, help us understand changing weather patterns and find a solution to the ever-growing problem of climate change.

Apart from this space exploration can help us discover natural and mineral resources to sustain the future of the human race. Instead of depleting the Earth's finite resources we could look to other planets. Today, startup businesses such as Planetary Resources are proposing schemes to mine asteroids for rare raw materials. Who knows, they may find new additions to the periodic table unknown to modern science, with properties beyond our imagination.

Space exploration has indeed been a giant leap for mankind. Over the years, NASA has invented many new technologies for use in space. These have been released to the general public through the NASA Technology Transfer Program and have had a huge impact on the world. From enriched baby food to improved radial tires, NASA's innovations transform our lives in unexpected ways. NASA scientists have helped develop lifesaving heart pumps and artificial limbs, while also conducting research to cure diseases.

One of the major issues of the current world is that people in remote areas do not have access to communication technologies. This is where space technology can be of great help. Internet companies such as OneWeb have plans to send hundreds of satellites to create a network providing high speed internet across the world.

As the example above shows, space technology is not limited to pure science and has practical applications which are being exploited by entrepreneurs. Elon Musk's SpaceX has plans to launch commercial flights into space. Its goal is to enable all of us to become spacefarers and multi-planetary citizens. Its sights are currently set on building a self-sustained settlement on Mars. Although these plans may seem unrealistic, Musk thinks of them as a necessary 'giant insurance policy'. If an asteroid crashes into earth tomorrow, humans can avoid the fate of the dinosaurs by moving to other planets.

You may still take a chance and say that you don't want your tax money wasted on space exploration. Even though the money spent by just NASA may look like a huge sum ($18 billion), it's actually comparatively small. In Americas huge GDP, 18 billion totals up to around half a percent! Hardly a dollar from an American tax payer goes towards NASA.

Finally, one of the most important reasons: we are curious. As Stephen Hawking once said- "We are, by nature, explorers." Since the dawn of time, humans have sought knowledge about the world they live in. We know extremely little about the universe, and now that we have the means to expand our knowledge, we should not be content to live in ignorance. To quote the famous astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, "the day we stop exploring is the day we commit ourselves to live in a stagnant world, devoid of curiosity, empty of dreams."

INGENIUM: THE ENGINEERING OF A WORLD

By Shiv Vale, Grade 9

A world of spectacle. The shower of light amidst the black tunnel. The dust settles today. The storm brews.

We see, over the course of a week, the brilliance of the human race flood up and as the gates open, the world as we know it ceases to exist.

A new one takes its place. One in which humans remember last week's humans like they remembered Neanderthals.

Human genius knows no bounds; statistically, the lowest (and sparsest) IQ is 120 and it increases by the day. Each new day sees a new Einstein: but never by name. The ideas are endless and just as deep: poring over Doctorate Theses in Our World will do nothing to help comprehend their's— half of it might be negatively useful.

The first target: a solution for COVID-19. Billions of able minds work together and divided to ensure they eradicate it in (literally) billions of different ways.

Next, the playful minds wander beyond prehistory to Make the World a "Better Place". They are able to race ahead, literally and figuratively, by conjuring up mechanisms of creating Perfect Life— A Small Step from Genetic Modification, they called it.

Finding Biology too limiting, some simply harnessed the dead matter to make dead, thinking Artificial Intelligences— Artificial Intelligences integrated with Quantum Computing to properly cripple Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle: a foundation of Modern Physics (they solved it within hours as well, of course).

Projecting their ideas onto thin air, though, was their first step with the invention of proper holographic technology in day one.

And naturally, all of these things had approximately an average of 10^9 different variations and methods of performing the same task: so much so that it would take a plurality of years to optimise them— leave it to the market forces!

Terra also seemed too limiting. It is Anecdotally proven that Intelligence or Strength causes a yearning for expansion. So, we will conquer the star— the Sun. This will probably happen in the next twenty years and will only take that long because we have to settle on a way to do it (it's not as though we can all mine out a planet!) or simply eliminate all others.

Contact with Extraterrestrial Lifeforms appears upon the horizon.

Within a century, we'll be Interstellar if not Intergalactic or Inter-universal or some other "Inter"- once Someone dreams up a method of creating Wormholes or something beyond Our World's imagination.

So, let us take a look into the life or Someone… or at least their parents who live now.

The city of Rome. One in which the humble Habilis and Callidus will parent the Paradigm-Shifting Ingenium in a decade.

But right then, they lead sufficiently intellectually engaging lives. The former a passionate problem-solver and the latter a fascinating inventor. Their families contain a set of geniuses who would be marvelled at today and are unbearably commonplace in Their World.

Callidus begins the day at office—the solution to how to maximise solving time? Sleep at work apparently—waking up to a desk full of unsolved Mathematical, Scientific and Logical problems. The entire day is spent analysing, dissecting and killing the problem— the unsolvable, million-dollar problems from That Time (et cetera). The last half an hour: solving the problem of how much she is paid which, at times, is immensely tedious work which is better left to the assistants and all for the triviality. Sleep patterns have been optimised too, of course.

Once in a while, the stupor is exited and it is realised that the world has changed: there are innumerably more facilities to optimise work, such as systems to regulate the environment based on an automatic, nigh-perfect, analysis: an invention of Habilis.

Habilis who has much more technological access than Callidus…. due to his profession. Beginning at home, he zips into work with a personal transporter. Within a day, the change to the world is equivalent to that of the inventions first quarter of the 20th Century; solving problems that have plagued (figuratively and literally) our world for decades: *seeing distant planets, for example. Breakthroughs are sprinkled throughout the day.*

But of course, this is the life of everyone. It is not the life of everyone. Everyone finds a different, surprisingly effective, answer to the same problem. One can have a quarter million options for daily activities and a trillion more they didn't know of at a spectacularly minuscule monetary cost however a towering intellectual one: simplification is not a problem Callidus (or anyone) deals with. This displeases many clients: something the social Habilis sees.

Habilis enjoys roaming around, conversing with loved ones, some of these conversations (to his utter astonishment) go like so: "Did you not prefer your old life?" "What?! Absolutely not."

"Well," shrugged his fellow converser, "It was simpler."

"So? This is better." "Simpler is better for me." Leaving him agape.

This particular converser wished to act upon his belief. A million people did. The world was a confusing, bungling, ordered, Kafakaesque mess. The world was a maze manufactured by the inhabitants who did not want to get out while they themselves could not enjoy this supposed wonderland. The ridiculous flood of new updates causing indecision and erratic outdating— 25 years in a day—such that the jobs of their peers was an enormous irony— jobs which the millions could not have. No income, no ability to access the development and no understanding of the illogical logic.[4]

All this will drive *the Million outside the urban jungles into the recently-abandoned rural areas to begin their own communities. The settlements are much simpler. Yet much richer. Where interconnectedness was the norm: not just a peek outside an unbreakable bubble. A haven of preserved bliss: a fossil.*

Imagine *Our World scaled down by 750.*

A more accurate analogy, though, would be native societies outside Europe during the Age of Exploration.

So is this truly the Eutopia I made it out to be?

To add in another wrinkle, read a dialogue within officials:

"Where did we store the samples of COVID-19?"

"With the… MEDICINE WHICH COULD-" "CONDITION IT!"

-The World Built on Intellectual, Theoretical, Ingenious Clouds.

FRUGAL FUNCTIONAL FUTURISTIC

By Jahnvi Galgali, IBDP-1

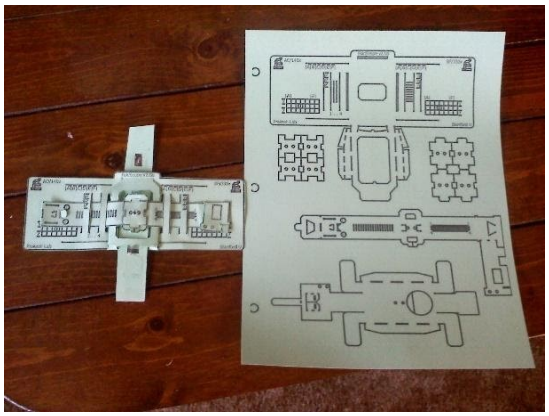
Microscopes! One of the most iconic symbols of science! Most view them as these advanced gadgets with which one can study the wonderful world of microorganisms. Some might also consider it expensive. Others may think it is too fragile. Often, these factors form the barriers that separate some from exploring the exciting world of science.

Introducing the Foldscope

What if you could carry a microscope *in your pocket! Does that sound like a far-fetched thought? Maybe. But as we know in the world of science, nothing is impossible. The Foldscope is a mini microscope that one can carry and distribute with ease. Another interesting fact: paper forms the primary constituent of this tiny wonder. This fact is particularly significant because paper is an easily procurable resource. It is also eco-friendly as compared to metal microscopes.*



An assembled Foldscope



Blueprint of the Foldscope

About the Foldscope

The Foldscope consists of a lens, a magnet, and paper. Its simple design and structure is not a hindrance to its quality as it functions just as well as a simple light microscope with a magnification of 140X and 2-micron resolution. One can view bacteria, tissues, single-celled organisms, and even non-living matter such as atmospheric particulates.

Birth of the Foldscope

Manu Prakash and Jim Cybulski (the creators of the microscope) knew about the lack of proper equipment. Prakash, during his field visit to Thailand, observed that that people were afraid to use a microscope because it was very costly and delicate. Can a good quality microscope reach every person in this world? This question is what drove him to create a cheaper and effective microscope. The ultimate goal was to make the microscope functional and accessible to those who never had the opportunity to satisfy their curiosity.

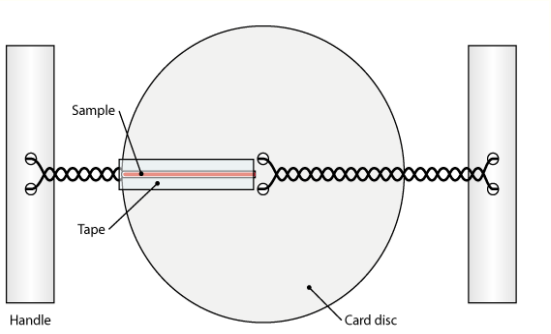


Capable of change

Children in Uganda using Foldscopes.



Exposure to **science**, specifically in developing countries, can help people to cultivate an appreciation for it. It would be marvellous to see children from all backgrounds investigating the miniature world of microorganisms. The world would uncover hidden gems if everyone had access to science. These inspired minds could change the world and make tremendous progress for humanity if given a chance.



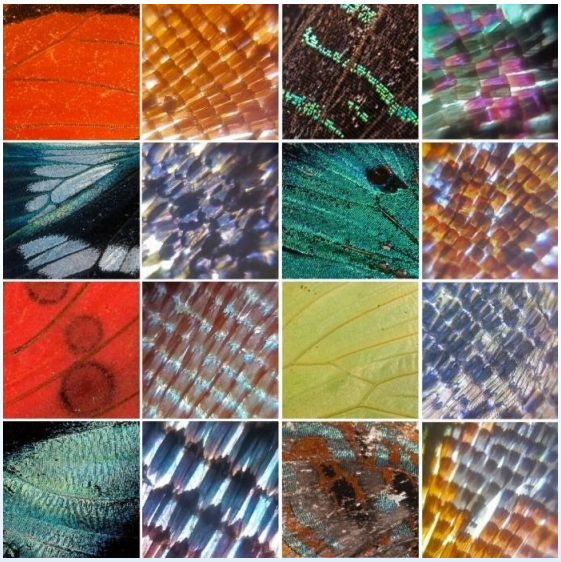
A simple diagram of the Paperfuge

The Paperfuge

Inspiration by one **can** inspire many because the spark of curiosity always multiplies. Even in this case, Prakash developed a 'Paperfuge' after the Foldscope. The Paperfuge (taking inspiration from a spinning toy) is a cheaper alternative to a conventional and expensive centrifuge. A centrifuge separates the blood cells from the plasma. It enables pathologists to detect diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis. A Paperfuge becomes extremely important in situations where a centrifuge is not available. One can save a life with this Paperfuge.

Ingenuity and Science

These incredible inventions are the embodiment of ingenuity. The creations of such complex structures with such simple materials iterate that humans are capable of great things. 'Frugal Science' is a reminder that one can be innovative and inquisitive without using complicated machinery and expensive resources. Prakash describes it best. He explains, "*Science is not in the lab. It is wherever you are. It is all around us. Right around our noses are thousands of phenomena that no one understands.*"



Different scales of butterflies as seen under the foldscope



Recrystallized citric acid as seen under the microscope.

MATHEMATICS -THE OXYGEN OF EVERY ASPECT

By Nihar Gandhi, A-Level

Mathematics, a subject dates back to over millenniums. It is classified as a science, a language and as an engine of education. Every profession or job requires mathematics. Calculations are an important aspect of life. From business to medicine and from engineering to daily household chores, mathematics plays a vital role.

Maths not only involves calculations, shapes and drawings, but also estimations, approximations and statistics. Hence achieving accuracy in this subject is as significant as having fresh air for the body. Firstly, mathematics is necessary for trade and exchange, as all businesses are measured in monetary terms, which involve strong calculations to know the right income or profit earned.

Secondly, maths can be considered as the life of physics, as most calculations use mathematical computations. Topics like calculus, trigonometry are the heart of maths and the foundation of physics. The Apollo-11 mission to the moon was 75% based on maths and physics. Without mathematical concepts the rocket wouldn't have been developed and without maths it wouldn't have been launched. This is indeed an advanced level application of maths in our lives. Wonder how Christopher Columbus discovered America? It was using right maths. Maths involves bearings, which are very essential for navigation and identification of locations. Bearings can also help in calculation of distances between countries just with the help of a ruler and a protractor.

Thirdly, mathematics combined with science is useful for biologist and doctors. It helps them in researching about the effect of medicines and drugs on animals or experimenting with chemicals which helps them attain accurate results. Doctors use the fundamentals of mathematics for knowing the right dosage of each medicine, pharmacist use it to calculate their inventory and patients use it to know how much medical expense they incur each month. Statistics helps them to analyze data with limiting factors and carry out comparisons with averages and variances. This helps the medical department to estimate the number of people getting affected by a disease or the number of patients getting cured by the medicine.

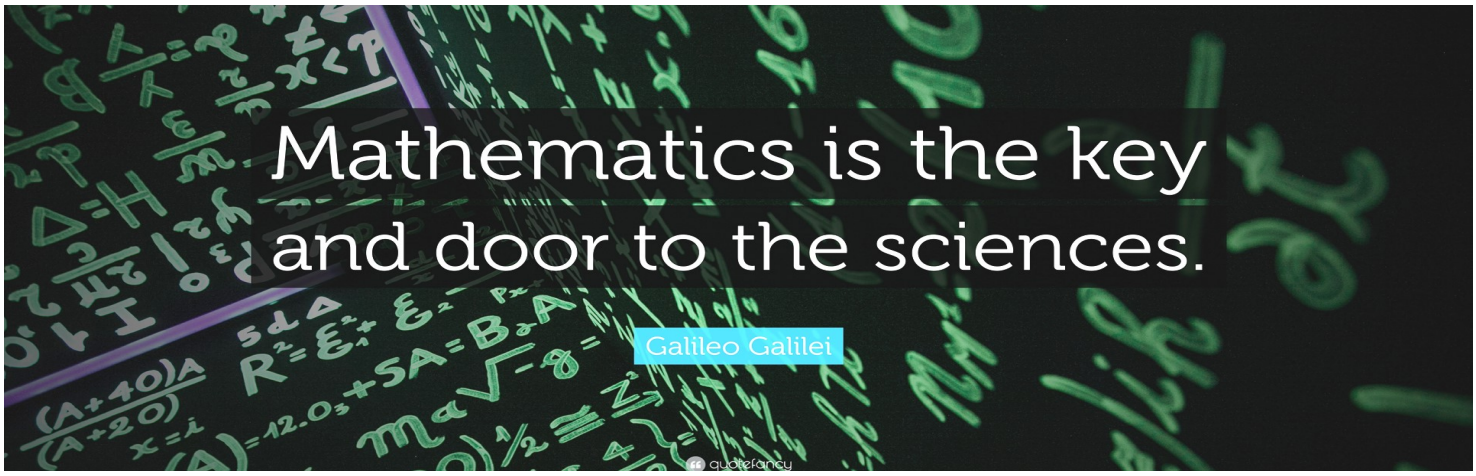
Moreover, mathematics is used in all sectors of the economy and is also important for the government in planning and governance. Economic indicators are derived with the help of mathematics and statistics. Example: In order to know the value of real income per head (Real GDP per capita), the total value of output is required, the inflation rate is required and the total population count is needed. All of the above use quantitative methods. The total population is also calculated using averages of birth and death rates. Government also needs to calculate its budget, spending and borrowing which is all based on this wonderful subject.

Let's have a look at the basic usage of mathematical concepts in our day-to-day lives. It's an essential part of cooking and baking. Right estimation techniques and exact quantity of ingredients need to be added while preparing food or else food wouldn't be edible or flavorsome. For instance, a cake with undercooked sponge-base and too much sugar will never be a preferred choice. Cleaning also uses mathematics. Formulations of detergents and floor cleaners need to be in correct proportions or else they are sure to damage clothes and furniture.

What's more, the houses we live in our also built on the basis of mathematical fundamentals. For example, the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa. It was constructed after several years of planning. Architects made critical use of mathematical concepts in developing the structure, the calculation of floors, the total height and the depth needed under the ground. Constructions of monuments and towers include good application of maths. A builder would never want his or her building to fall within months, because of inaccurate computations.

However, mathematics does not play a strong role in influencing languages and literature, as these fields do not involve numbers. Mathematics may also not play a significant role in the life of a young child as they are not concerned with any critical calculations during their childhood.

After all, we can see that mathematics is an irreplaceable aspect of life and it is required in every task which a person carries out. Mathematics is the seed from which every subject grows and blossoms. Hence, in today's fast -paced world, mathematics cannot just be ignored. So we can say mathematics plays the role of oxygen in everything that we do.



INGENUITY: A BOON OR BANE FOR HUMAN SOCIETY

By Aarav Parikh, Grade 9

Ingenuity is often understood as being highly smart and clever. Yet the true meaning of ingenuity is much wider; comprising of being original as well as inventive.

One example is of Dr Robert Oppenheimer. As he once said, "I am become death, the destroyer of worlds." He was commonly known as the father of the atomic bomb. What was a mind-blowing invention for one country was a catastrophe for another. The events of its usage called for the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. But invention and innovation are not always bad. Take Elon Musk for example. An inventor who changed the world, with his radical ideas; changing science fiction to reality. He has various companies working on a variety of projects such as SpaceX and Tesla. Both have made extraordinary developments in privatised space exploration and a transfer to both electric and autonomous cars respectively. One of his companies, OpenAI, is working on developing friendly artificial intelligence too. There are considerable advantages and disadvantages, both direct and indirect in both these cases. Still, one is understood to be inherently destructive while the other contributing to the development of human society. And war, is the biggest motivation for destructive innovation.

All inventions sprout from the most basic of ideas or feelings. A feeling of patriotism perhaps, or the "Need for speed". Companies around the world such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing and Northrop Grumman have been at the forefront of military development. Planes that currently serve in the USAF, and are developed by the above companies, are the most advanced that have ever flown. This technology at first seems revolutionary, but then evolves into its true right as the most advanced agents of destruction. Take the B2 spirit bomber for example. It is a stealth bomber capable of carrying 40,000 pounds of weaponry, including laser guided missiles, gravity bombs, mines and a range of conventional and nuclear weapons. The F-22 is the world most advanced combat fighter with stealth capabilities, placing only behind the F-35 series which is used for mainly reconnaissance purposes. The targets wouldn't know what hit them. The F-16 Vector is the most manoeuvrable fighter jet; the only limits to its capabilities are the capabilities of the pilot himself/herself. And one should not forget the atomic and nuclear bombs themselves. This is the destructive nature of innovation.

On the other hand, in my opinion, collaboration and peace is the best motivator for developmental technologies. The International Space Station is the greatest example of this. A marvel of human engineering, achieved solely through the joint efforts of space agencies around the world, including NASA, Roscosmos, JAXA, and the ESA. Another example, as mentioned, is OpenAI. It is simply an artificial intelligence that can be contributed to by people all around the world. An example of one of its projects is Image GPT. This AI has the ability to randomly generate recognizable images, and also to complete half images. GPT-2 is capable of simple reading comprehensions, machine translation, question answering, and summarization. Another project is GPT-3, that is an autoregressive language model with 175 billion parameters. This is capable of generating articles and reports with only a topic provided, that can hardly be distinguished from anything a human has written. And finally, there is the Jukebox, an artificial intelligence that is capable of generating music and rudimentary singing in a variety of styles and genres. All of these are examples of labour-saving programs and that help in expanding the horizons of knowledge and human abilities.

Ingenuity is the root of innovation and creation and like most other things, it comes as a double-edged sword. It comes down to the person who creates, the idea behind the creations and the way in which it is used. May sense prevail

HAPPILY UNREAL

By Rakhi Shah, Grade 8

Life has been an amazing voyage of some glorious and some not so glorious moments too. Currently, I am distorted and abandoned by the mighty world. Me, being an enthusiastic astronaut, I have not had the easiest of journeys. One memory that I truly cherish is worth hearing as this one memory was distinctive form all.

I was venturing through space, approximately 25 million kilometres from my planet when I encountered a solar storm. My spacecraft lost signal as it trembled here and there. I thought we were going to vanish into a black hole! Suddenly, my spacecraft started approaching a random, unknown planet. How? I have no clue. Frankly, I don't remember what happened next but I can assure you that I woke up after a long sleep on a deserted island.

The sun shone like a gemstone, the soft chirp of birds was reverberating in the air. Leaves rustled in swirls of red and gold along with the algal bloom completely engulfing the lake. Obviously, I had nothing with me except for my blue remote users to communicate with my space agency. Thank god I wore it around my neck! Onsight was only a small beach with few people. That was the target. I had to reach there, come what may. I broke a log of wood from a tree nearby and simultaneously moved my hands in an oscillatory pattern. After 2 long hours, I finally reached. To my shock, those people were so strange. They all had different coloured skin: some white; some black; some bright; some dull. They had attached some straight, rough things on their head. How uncomfortable! This place seemed to be a total fright!

I marched along the coast finding a way to go to the main city. Eventually, I realised that people over there were so different. I caught a bus from a nearby station and explained to the driver where I wanted to go. I reached the city- centre and was astonished to see the extraordinary infrastructure and advanced technology. They had working robots on roads, people worked virtually(I was still on the bus). After I got down, my heart came in my mouth when I realised my remote was robbed.

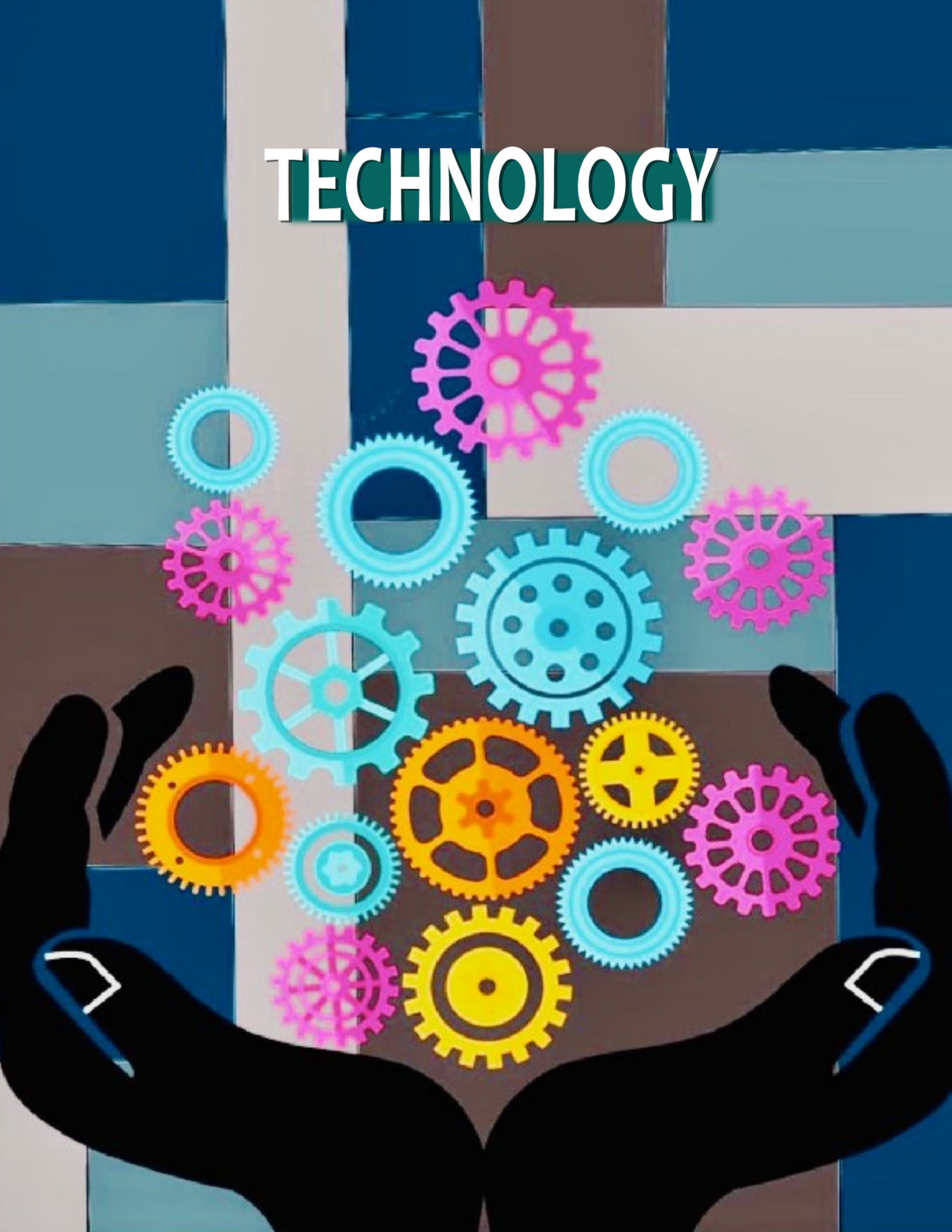
I was walking on the street in extreme tension and worry. A gang of thieves surrounded me and pushed me into a car. They tied my face and blocked my hands with handcuffs. Anxiety paralysed me like a jellyfish sting.

Where they took me, seemed to be a forest. Soft sounds of crackling wood could be heard, a stale smell greeted my nostrils. The outline of a tombstone was on sight and even the moon didn't dare to shine over that mysterious place. I heard someone speaking, he said, " Yes, here you are, I am waiting for you since an eternity. I still have to gain a lot from you." I was speechless.

'A-L-I-E-N' he called me.

Ferociously furious, my mom slammed the door for me being late for work.

TECHNOLOGY



TECHNOLOGY: A DOUBLE-EDGE SWORD

By Nihar Gandhi, A–Level

'In the era of increasing automation and computerisation mankind will be unable to continue earning a living.'

"Hey Alexa! Can you start the dishwasher please?" This is what people say nowadays when they want wash the vessels. However, two decades ago one would get up and exercise his/her body for getting the vessels washed. This change has only been possible due to the technological advancements and A.I developments that have taken place in recent years. All of this has influenced and affected the living of several people in significant ways.

To begin with, the weapon of technology has attacked every industry in the world. It has replaced many tasks carried out by humans. This has been a benefit for some, but a limitation for others. In the banking and finance industry it has contributed to a massive change. Initially people would always need to go to a bank and contact the employees for any work. Now everything is possible using a click on to net banking and online transfers in order to make payments. According to a research more than 88% of registered business use online banking and pay by the RTGS facility. This has reduced need of employees in this sector.

In continuation, the accounting system has also undertaken a noticeable change from introduction of software called 'Tally'. This software has allowed firms to prepared their accounts easily and quickly instead of maintaining large books and files, which in turn has also led to the less requirement of daily accountants called book-keepers.

Furthermore, the jobs of people employed in the manufacturing or secondary sector have been put near the sword, as machines have replaced a greater proportion of activities carried out by workers in the production line. For example, cars and mobile phones are completely made and assembled by machines where just few supervisors are needed to check on the process. This has made about 48% labourers working in these industries redundant, leading to a lack of incomes. Simultaneously, the construction line has adopted the use of large cranes and mixers, which has reduced demand for construction workers and labourers making it difficult for them to find jobs.

Not only, this has affected the teaching industry, but also has interrupted in the life of households. Firstly, teaching methods vary from teacher to teacher and students also learn in different ways, however the new platform of online teaching and e-learning has eliminated the need of travelling long distances and tutoring, which has resulted in lower need of teachers and also transportation employees losing their income. Secondly, the households who could afford staff for work are no longer need them, because self-cooking devices, floor cleaning robots and self-driving cars have taken out the need of cooks, drivers and cleaners leaving them unemployed and poor.

Thirdly, in places like libraries, a few members of staff would be needed to observe customers and help them, but e-reading devices like 'Amazon Kindle' have transferred readers from libraries to anywhere where they would wish to read their favourite book. In 2016 BBC reported that 'Widespread library closures across the UK have resulted in the loss of almost 8,000 jobs in the last six years.'

In addition, the people employed in transportation and travel firms are also losing jobs as vehicles are being driven by machines automatically. For example, the airline Emirates flies two-thirds of its aircrafts using autopilot which has reduced the need of having two or three pilots, now requiring only. Even more advanced are the railways, as most of the developed nations like USA, China, Japan have their trains operated automatically without motormen, which has removed the want of those jobs leading to lower incomes for those.

A noticeable change has also occurred in the medical sector, as many surgeries are taking place using robots. Even pathology tests are conducted by robots, which has again reduced the need of those skills and making them unemployed. For instance, people with diabetes check their sugar levels at home using the machine instead of going to a medical lab.

After all, this sword of technological advancements has kept everyone's neck near the chopping block and left them uncertain about their future career and job prospects and has also made it difficult for most to earn a secured living. This change is unstoppable and inevitable created by humans only, thus we can only tackle it effectively together.

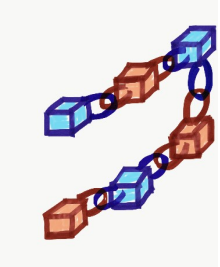
EDITORIAL

BLOCKCHAIN FOOTPRINT IN THE EDUCATIONAL WORLD

By Aaryan Potdar, IBDP-1

When I first learnt about Blockchain, what came to my mind was, of course, bitcoins! Yes, I mean the cryptocurrency that rules the finance market. To add to the list is supply chain and health care industries. Today, even the education sector has joined the league. Why not? The extraordinary benefits of Blockchain technology are crucial as they provide a safe and secure auditable ledger system.

What is Blockchain?



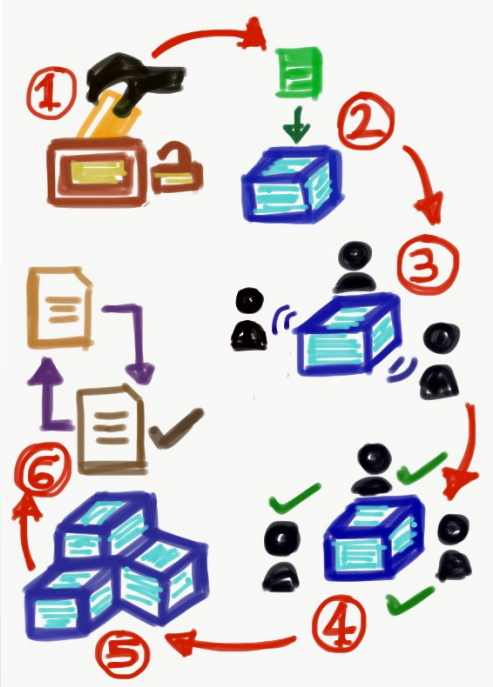
To explain in simple terms, a blockchain is a database shared across a network of computers. The records are bundled into blocks and the blocks are then linked together in chains. Every transaction is captured in a record along with the digital signatures of both parties which are then verified by the computers on the network to check its validity. The record is then added to a block. Now, this might sound simple, but the entire processing involves a tremendous amount of computing power, so much that it is virtually impossible for hackers to play with these data blocks.

The blockchain is a decentralized ledger system open to all; the 'nice guys' and the 'bad guys'. As the system does not know who is trustworthy, it conducts tests called 'consensus models', to validate the computer-nodes that want to make any changes to data records. For example, if a computer wants to add a block it has to demonstrate a 'Proof of work' which involves solving a very complex computational puzzle. This process is called mining and requires a vast amount of computational power. 'Proof of Stake' allows participants to buy tokens and gain access to the network. The more the tokens, the more they can mine.

The Blockchain process

(Follow the diagram for ease of understanding)

1. Someone requests a transaction
2. The transaction is represented as a block
3. Block is broadcasted to all members on the network
4. Members validate the transaction, provide consensus
5. Block is added to the blockchain
6. A single copy of the shared ledger is updated and made available to all network members



Why is Blockchain technology important?

- Distributed
- Data security
- Transparency
- Immutability

When we think of the educational field, we expect an evaluative environment, degree verification, prevention of plagiarism and even admission processes. Moreover, these are currently the major challenges we face with the online education. "In 20 years, students won't be applying to colleges; colleges will be recruiting students," says Manoj Kutty, the proud owner of Greenlight Credentials. Greenlight Credentials is currently the only platform today on which users can make their credentials work for them! It might seem surprising, in Dallas, more than 250 schools have already ventured together in the Mastery Transcript Consortium that allows employers and colleges to verify multiple-source transcripts instantly. Now that's indeed a breakthrough, isn't it?

Current challenges of the educational sector

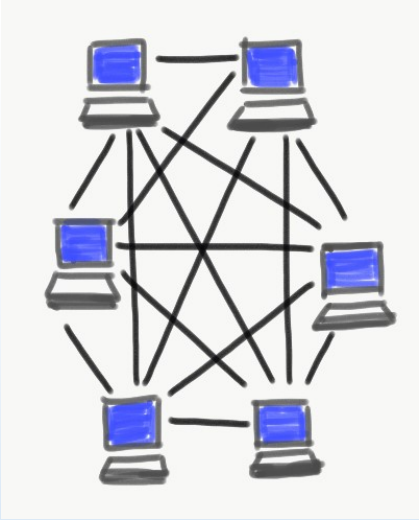
Today universities, individuals and employers face multiple challenges:

- Degree fraud, an inefficient certification process
- Problem translating and comparing the same degrees across different learning institutions
- Validation of skills - no standard guideline accepted by all companies, countries, and institutions
- Paperwork, printing, authenticating, and storing degree and certification - a costly affair.
- Inability to validate skills contributes to the large gap in the workforce
- Lack of educational data protection/security, non-immutable record keeping

Can we overcome these challenges and make it easier to apply for jobs and hire qualified candidates?

Yes! The blockchain-based educational system is a safe, fast, cost-effective way to structure huge unorganized data.

Benefits of Blockchain



Adopting a standardized blockchain to process billions of transactions between devices can fundamentally reduce the expenses related to maintaining large centralized data centres. The decentralized approach can solve a lot of problems regarding security, paperwork reduction and job issue. Blockchain is immutable and so can reduce degree frauds. As lessons and courses can be fed into blockchain using the smart contracts' capability, it is a sure shot solution in current circumstances of lockdown. Furthermore, it can improve the system's capability of calculating scholarships for students, salaries for teachers, and provide a fair mechanism with complete transparency for funding educational projects.

Are there any educational blockchain projects piloted?

Yes, various educational models that support small-scale IoT systems have been initiated. The most significant achievement of the models is that they not only provide the skills to the learners but also enable them to improve their economical positions. So let us gain an insight into a few of them:

- ‘ Edge-Coin’ stores educational documents like degrees and course certificates on its block for third parties that directly confirm their validity. This cuts cost for students since they don’t have to pay for a notary and for institutions it eliminates bureaucracy and paperwork
- The ‘TMP blockchain architecture’ divides itself into two layers: private and public. Private layer stores private and personal user data as well as materials protected by copyright. Public layer stores data, verified for its integrity and reliability by the network
- ‘ Scoring System’ service provided by ‘Sony Global’ and ‘TechMePlease’, uses blockchain feature, smart contract, to give grades according to the performance of students.
- Woolf University, founded by Oxford and Cambridge academics, is the first blockchain-powered, nonprofit, borderless university. It relies on smart contracts for a relationship between learners and educators.

Blockchain technology is all set to reinvent the educational ecosystem. However, this will require updates and up-grades to the current processes and our outlook. A significant amount of investments for the initial setup is also required. Additionally, government bodies and private business groups should develop appropriate infrastructure.

Today we need a global involvement to achieve a global evolvement.

References

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333767185_Blockchain-Based_Applications_in_Education_A_Systematic_Review

https://www.ibm.com/in-en/blockchain/what-is-blockchain

https://hbr.org/2017/01/the-truth-about-blockchain

https://hackernoon.com/what-type-of-blockchain-would-be-better-for-educational-tasks-a203dde826c3

FEATURE ARTICLE

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION: BOON OR BANE?

By Yuval Gupta, IBDP-1

By definition, innovation is "(the use of) a new idea or method" however, it is so much more than just that. It's pure human creativity, imagination, and ingenuity. Its empirical proof reason and proof that man really is the greatest of all animal species. Mankind was able to evolve from a savage living in a cave to sitting upon its very literal and metaphorical throne because of several billion innovations throughout the last thousands of years, starting with the innovation of creating fire around 300,000 years ago with the help of merely stones and twigs. For the people of 15th CE, the printing press was one of the greatest innovations, Pencil for the 16th, the steam turbine for the 17th, vaccination for the 18th, electric light for the 19th, an aeroplane for the 20th, and artificial intelligence for the 21st Century. As time has gone by, innovation has kept taking place at a larger scale. Humanity went from something as small as a pencil to something as advanced as a talking robot, which can comply and carry out tasks much more accurately, efficiently, and quickly than humans. In fact, these robots can perform activities, which would be simply impossible for any human unless he or she dons a red cape and flies across the Atlantic at supersonic speeds!

In 1956, it took around a forklift and way too much of manpower just to load a 5 MB IBM hard drive, weighing over a ton, into a truck! However, today, an 8 GB hard drive disk weighs only two grams and is the size of a quarter or stamp! It is innovations like this, which have allowed our smartphones and smart-watches to exist.

To be honest, I cannot even imagine waking up one morning without having my phone to scroll through the news on New York Times application, watch movies on Netflix, chat on Instagram, click pictures using Camera application, listen to songs on Spotify, etc. My whole life revolves around my gadgets. I can do anything and everything I want to do or achieve if I have my laptop, phone, and a good internet connection. In economics, we learn about needs and wants and we always classify 'food, water, clothes, shelter, and electricity' as needs but I challenge anyone to prove me wrong when I list my technological devices as necessities for survival in the modern world.

Obviously, these technological innovations and advances have made our lives much better and can be considered a bane, however, the fact that these devices have become a necessity shows our dependency on them. And this problem of dependency on technology is ever-increasing, which has been specially accelerated due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, many countries have enforced lockdown and enforced protocols, which has stopped most basic of daily activities such as going grocery shopping to the nearest supermarket. Due to this lockdown and concern for oneself and loved one's safety as well as growing fear have caused people to switch to something known as the 'online world'.

In this 'online world', grocery is ordered through Amazon, school lectures take place on Zoom, office meetings are conducted on Microsoft Teams, friends interact virtually on House Party, and even the dogs are walked by drones! While many believe that the innovation of new technology is the only pleasant outcome and a direct result of this COVID-19 pandemic, I believe that this is very far from the truth.

If anything, there was limited innovation or development of new technology. In fact, the development of pre-established technological ideas was sped up. Therefore, we have access to technology we would not have access to for probably another half a decade. This has turned out to be very beneficial for us in the short-term but the long-term effects still remain anonymous as this so-called 'innovation' has made us rely way too much on technology. The idea of humans buying drones to walk their pets seems convenient but is also a sign of increasing reliance on technology for basic human tasks and daily-life activities. Businesses too in fact have now seen the limitations of labour and, invested heavily to switch to the capital-intensive structure. That can be disastrous for an economy and daily-wage workers. Not only that but businesses, which cannot afford the expensive technology would be on the wrong side of this new digital divide. Overall, it seems that many businesses and individuals will experience a disadvantage due to this 'innovation' and the technological advance, which we call an advantage or boon may be actually a bane-in-disguise.



A RETURN TO SIMPLER TIMES

By Rittika Banerjee, Grade 9

Einstein once said, "I fear the day that technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots." Unfortunately. the day Albert Einstein has feared, isn't a tragic fairy tale ending anymore, it is a reality smacked in front of our faces. We might not realize it at first, however, the world will inevitably open our eyes to the truth. Lately, with the influence of technology in our lives, it has created an enormous dent in humanity. We are worshiping it, relying on it, being a dependent clause in a sentence, which in this case, is society. Believe it or not, this world is now a world of complexity. People expecting the best. Having high expectations without a limit.

Majority of the world believes that technology has evolved to an unimaginable extent and influences human lives positively. However, a tiny minority would disagree and say that the good old times were better. A large chunk of this minority definitely believes that the older times were better when everyone met each other face to face, heart to heart, ear to ear; when smiles on little faces ran around with great joy through the green meadows; when the sky wasn't filtered with Juno, Ludwig or Gingham. It was those times when technology had not created back pains, sore throats or headaches. The times when communication cured anxiety and depression instead of being the distinctive cause of poor mental health in many.

Looking around us at this moment, we can count more than five appliances that could count as 'technology' that most could not live without. Day by day, as more time passes us by, the world becomes more complex with higher standards of living. Gone are the simpler times of sitting out on the front porch on a hot summer day with friends and enjoying an iced lemonade. This is all because instead of using technology to aid us, we have come to rely on it.

In the olden times, technology was much simpler. No complexity. No confusion. In this day and age, social media has created the biggest dent in society trying to live up to an expectation on how you are going to be perceived by the whole world. Teenagers have been pushing themselves to look how they do not look, trying to satisfy everybody else's non-quota expectation, unconsciously not realizing they are running away from someone, themselves. Technology has made teens outliers in their own heads.

When we hear the phrase, 'playing a game', the first thought that comes to mind is a person playing a video game in front of a computer screen for hours on end. Back in the day, games were much less complicated. There was no need for internet connections, no isolation but instead playing a game brought smiles on everyone's faces, whether it was a family game night or just a regular day of board games with friends. Just playing a card game exercised 26 muscles in our face when we smiled and felt loved.

If you have a dream and goal, the way to succeed in life is to work hard with determination. If you want a proper successful life, you have to work for it, from taking a pail of water from the well or ironing your clothes, how will children of today ever learn discipline? How will they feel love when they are obscured by these walls of separation playing games with non-existent beings? How will their voices be heard when the world isn't even listening?

This is what technology has done to our society. It has isolated us from communication and love, it has shielded us from valuable life lessons from our family and created a glass wall between us and our loved ones. Technology is way too complex in this generation we are living in compared to when most of us were younger when the sky was blue and was not pixelated. If we choose to keep this up, we will certainly live in a world of idiots, too scared to be heard. So please use your voice to create a difference in this world instead of hiding behind a screen.

INGENUITY DOES NOT MEAN INNOVATION

By Falak Shah, IBDP-1

Ingenuity is defined as the quality of being clever, original, and inventive, and innovation is defined as a new thing or a new method of doing something. Generally, both of these words are used interchangeably, while describing or just simply talking about things, however, this does not make sense. Innovation is a part of ingenuity and ingenuity can be seen as an umbrella under which innovation lies.

Using these words like synonyms had led to the loss of meaning of the words. Ingenuity is a far deeper and more ambiguous word than innovation. Ingenuity covers a multitude of words like creativity, originality and intelligence. In recent days, the smallest innovations or even upgrades on previous inventions are labelled as ingenious and groundbreaking, causing the world to lose the depth of the meaning. While some inventions like GPS, electricity and prescription eyewear could be labelled as ingenious, others such as portable power banks are not ingenious. Recent innovations have become about making life easier. They do improve the quality of our lives and pave the way for future inventions.

For something or someone to be ingenious, there needs to be adversity and clever solutions and ideas to the adverse situation and only then it can be called, "ingenious," because the solution to the hardship would make day-to-day practices easier and bearable. Something as small as a smartphone upgrade will not make life easier because life was not difficult or problematic before it.

The word 'innovation' implies that something is new, although the word 'ingenious' is timeless and applicable to any idea no matter how old or new. Many indigenous societies have had many such ideas for making survival easier without modern healthcare. The Tsimane people of Bolivia have figured out natural sleeping patterns which improve the quality of sleep and have been proved to have an overall positive impact on one's health and several other benefits. North American tribes also created and followed a traditional diet, involving all the food groups, enabling their proper growth and functions. These indigenous ideas may seem rather small and insignificant but have contributed a great deal to the health of their people. Even though these practices were discovered and proved to be beneficial, they are still occasionally ignored by many.

These are just some examples of practices that are known and which have been implemented in our day-to-day life, although there are many such similar practices that go unnoticed. This is largely due to the belief that modern technology and methods are more reliable and efficient than primitive ones, and while that might be true for some of the ideas; it isn't for all. The idea of herd mentality could also be used to explain why people tend to trust modern and technologically advanced methods rather than indigenous ones. It can also be argued that in the past technologically advanced methods have never negatively impacted us on a large scale, which obviously improves its reliability.

Ingenuity should not be confused with innovation. Innovation should be looked at as a goal, but ingenuity should not. This is because ingenuity can change from day-to-day as the hardships faced are different every day. The goal for innovation, however, remains the same.

ENTRY 72,389,152 OF A DIMENSION - Travellar's Journal

By Ananya Pathak, Grade 9

Earth Unknown

Year Unknown

Time Unknown

The Changer suffered an untimely malfunction a while ago and I ended up here. The problem is I don't know when or where here is. 'At least there is life here.' I'd thought, 'The lifeless Earth X1# is still number one on the Worst Earths list.' How very naïve of me, as if billions of years of experience have amounted to nothing. After having spent a day here, I must re-evaluate my original impression. This Earth would fare far better without the humans.

On this Earth, there is only one mainland apparently. And the people inhabited here are divided into two classes. The normal class live securely in a completely cordoned-off structure. They don't have a sky; only an artificial sun and a brick dome to suffice for one. Living inside grand castles, there exists a smaller group of even more pompous people who govern everything.

And then here, trapped in between the fortified walls and the shore that leads to endless sea, is a village of the abnormal class. I suppose, now that I think of it, this is fate's cruel way of symbolising the open-mindedness and the vast imaginary expanse of creators.

Ok, let me back up and tell you exactly how I came to be stranded on the outskirts. Now, I normally would not describe myself as imaginative. However, Under the Dome, my basic technological skills would get one Expelled. The worst punishment, only for the most heinous of crimes: showing the desire to create something. Asking for chemical elements is a no-no, waving blueprints in the air is an even bigger no-no and demanding to see a scientist…wow, what was I thinking?

Remember I mentioned those classy governors before—they have a leader too. The only legal creator Under the Dome. She is the one who designs everything. And by everything—I mean everything from a tissue paper to the housing. Each design is then mass produced repeatedly in large scales of single-type commodities. Talk about a monopoly.

So, yes, when I asked for a scientist to aid me with the Changer, I was escorted to this wonderful lady. She smiled down at me, eyes so darkened that I couldn't help but wonder, 'How far down her imagination would have taken her—for her to have decided that others could only be protected by rendering them imagination-less.' Her grand speech voiced her deepest regret that another of their true civilians should be sent Outside, which was followed by a synchronised wave of identical shudders. But it was necessary, apparently, because otherwise everyone would start imagining. People would start talking about mad things like Dimension-Travel! Sure, I'd had my share of people calling me mad for talking about Dimension-Travel when I'd ended up in a universe where the Changer hadn't been invented yet. This was a whole new world altogether though. Trying to attest my honesty and provide evidence was as helpful as a broken compass—every frustrated word that I uttered was quickly shot back against me—and I was quickly disposed off.

Sliding down the chute, I landed on hot sand, looking up to a faded banner swaying between two palm trees. 'Welcome to the World of Imagination'. At first, I scoffed at the irony. Until I met the people.

This is where it gets even weirder. You'd suppose that the most brilliant minds banded together would surely be able to pull down the dome brick-by-brick and advocate the freedom of living. You'd expect a secret society, a rebellion. Hundreds off people charging and twirling towards the walls of ignorance wielding their infamous paintbrushes and shattering bricks with their high-pitched sonnets, at the very least.

But the outcasted creators were—contented? I know, contented is a rather positive word, but I mean it in the most dangerous sense possible. Oh no wait, I have the right word: ignorant.

Ignorant? You ask. Yes, ignorant. These creators have stopped caring about the happenings Under the Dome. "You can't flatten a cantankerous dome," they say and they walk away. They each live contented on their own, each in their own little worlds painted with the bright shades of the sunrise. They are independent, don't form any connections nor attempts at a society, because quoting another poet I came across, "Society leads to the downfall of society." They couldn't care less that behind their backs, there is a wall. And that behind this wall, there are prisoners who cannot see the sun.

It is not that they do not have the skill. They have the profound architectural intellect to build structures the disobey the laws of physics. So profound in fact that I predict that they will be more than capable to invent a Changer in another century or so. It's certain that I'll find the equipment I'll need to fix my Changer and then I'll be off to the next dimension.

This Earth will never stop haunting me though. It has proven to me that my imagination is a tool. A wicked one at that. I can either use it as a scythe to harvest the Earth's crop for myself or to cut down my enemies until they are mere brainless, satisfied, carefree people. And that each extreme is equally as treacherous.

I must conclude here, but I shall conclude with a message to whosoever flips through these pages next. Even the frozen dungeons of the underworld can be as warm as a genuine hug, if one can imagine the feel of fire. Even as one is frozen solid.

JUGAAD

By Sindhuja Venkataraman, Grade 9

We think of Elon Musk when we think of ingenuity,

We think of Issac Newton, for he discovered gravity.

We think of Magnus Carlsen, for his intellectual ability,

We think of Stephen Hawking, for his scientific capability.

But we forget our India; we have many a ingenious mind,

Not just Bose and Raman; the entire nation combined...

In merely 450 crores, ISRO's Mangalyaan, a grand success,

Using washing machines, Punjabi *lassi is making progress.*

Tata Nano is now the cheapest car worldwide,

Dabbawalas fill stomachs on their two-wheeled ride.

Even common commuters are ingenious; you know, the 4th seat,

And MittiCool, a refrigerator made of just clay, to keep out the heat.

The Ambanis know to manage financial matters brilliantly,

Shankar Netralaya provides safe eye-care, cost efficiently.

In both Indian cities and villages, ingenuity thrives,

For we *desis believe in jugaad. Jugaad, the spirit of life.*

VOITURES SANS CONDUCTEUR: UN ATOUT!

By Dea Ajmera, IBDP-2

Bonjour, je m'appelle Dea Ajmera et j'étudie à l'école Podar Internationale. Aujourd'hui, je suis debout devant vous pour vous parler à propos de comment dans quinze ans, toutes les voitures rouleront sans conducteurs. Qu'est-ce que vous pensez sur ce sujet? Est-ce que les voitures sans conducteurs seront utile pour tout le monde.

À mon avis, l'innovation des voitures sans conducteurs dans quinze ans seront très bénéfique pour le monde. Dans ce discours, je vais proposer les avantages et aussi un peu les desavantages sur le sujet des voitures sans conducteurs. D'abord, dans quinze ans, ce sera plus facile pour utiliser les voitures sans conducteurs parce que vous n'avez pas besoin de le conduire, il vous suffit de donner des commandes. Alors, les gens n'ont pas besoin d'apprendre a conduire pour se rendre dans des endroits. De plus, ce sera plus facile pour les gens vieux et les personnes handicapés pour voyager autour de la ville car ils n'ont pas conduire. Donc, dans quinze ans, les personnes vieux et les gens handicapés seront aux anges. C'étaient facile, convenant et très formidable.

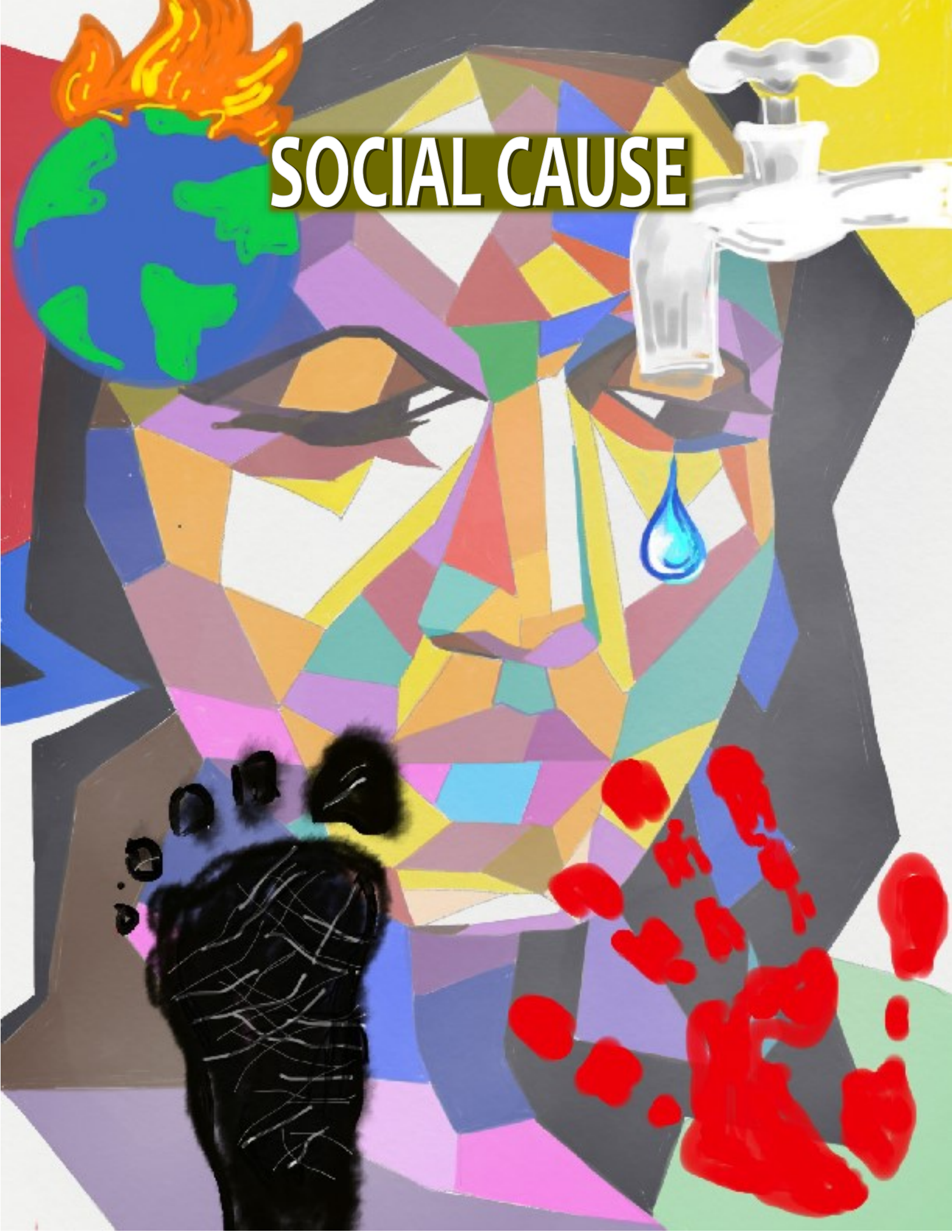
Puis, on peut arriver à leur destination plus rapide par utilisant les voitures sans conducteurs. Grâce à ce, on n'aura pas à faire beaucoup d'efforts pour maintenir leur vitesse parce que les voitures sans conducteurs sont plus rapide en comparison avec les voitures qui sont conduites par les conducteurs. De plus, quand les voitures sans conducteurs seront en train de garer, ce sera plus convenant pour eux, et ce sera un avantage pour l'innovation de monde car aujourd'hui, c'est plus diffcile trouver un endroit pour garer la voiture.

J'aimerais ajouter qu'il y aura moins les accidents car les voitures garderont une distance appropriées. Ensuite, les régles de circulation seront suivies par les vehicules donc les accidents réduiront à l'avenir. Ce sera la cerise sur le gâteau pour le gouvernment dans tous les pays.

Cepandant, les voitures sans conducteurs sont très risquées parce qu'il y aura un manque de jugement humaine qui peut être nécessaire dans une situation d'urgence. De plus, ce sera très cher et tous les gens ne pourrons pas payer de les. Puis, le chômage pourra ajouter et l'économies de tous les pays vont souffrir. Alors, il est douteuse que les voitures sans conducteurs fonctionnent bien.

Merci pour trouver le temps pour m'écouter. J'espère que mes opinions seraient utiles pour chacun. Enfin, si nous encourageons les voitures sans conducteurs à l'avenir, nous les verrons.

À bientot


SOCIAL CAUSE

EDITORIAL

INNOVATION IN INDIA

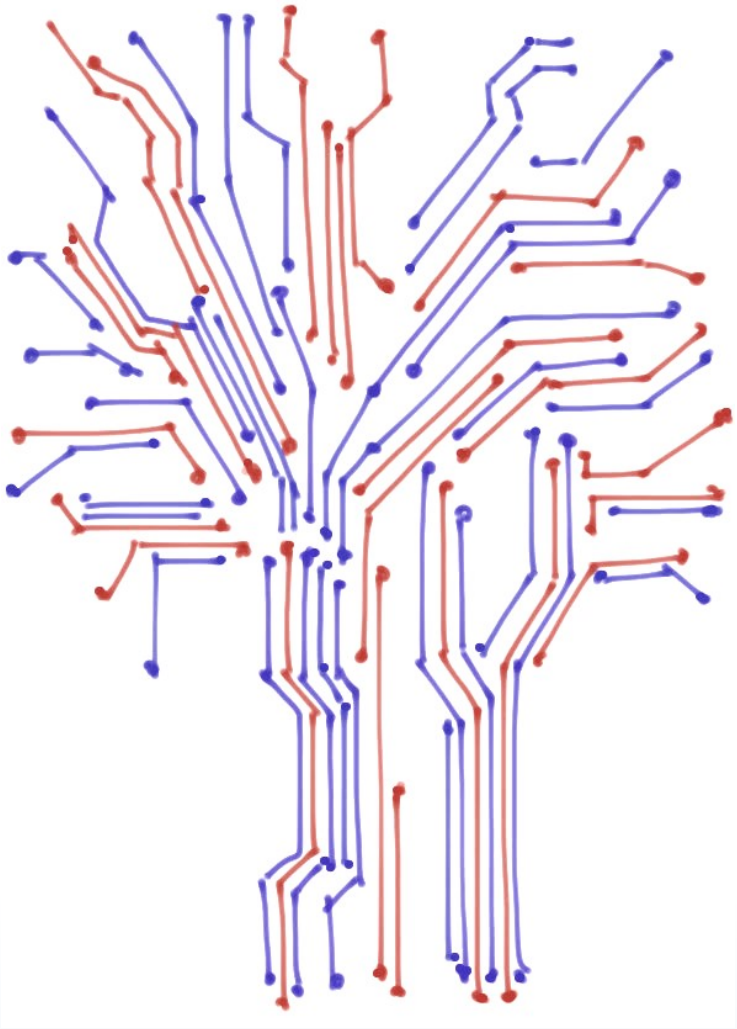
By Kimberly Roy, IBDP-1

Innovation, Ingenuity and Creativity are beautiful things. They spread like wildfire, improving the world while stoking brilliant minds. The success of a creation is not only measured by how well it satisfies a requirement and its efficiency but also by how it enhances the world and to what extent it helps mankind. The most satisfying thing for a creator is seeing how their product has a profound impact on so many lives. Being ingenious means having the ability to visualize, being clever enough to meet the challenge while keeping in mind the interests of the target population. In the social sector the smallest contributions, the seemingly mundane innovations, have a resounding effect.

The Indian Government has been subject to a lot of criticism, but in this article, I want to shed light on one of their successful programmes that have helped many people. The Government has successfully applied some of India's brightest minds for a task that has helped crores of people. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005, launched by the ministry of rural development, is a provision to protect the people of India from the horrors of unemployment. It is an Indian labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the 'right to work'. MGNREGA aims to enhance the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing at least a hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. It has *13,28,26,376* active workers and more than twice as many total workers. This is an elaborate structure connecting crores of Indian people, gram panchayats, the state Governments and the central Government. A fascinating thing here is that it brought the two major rivals in Indian politics on the same plane, as it was introduced by a Congress Government and continued by the Bharatiya Janta Party Government.

All successful initiatives have obstacles to overcome. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme has a provision of ₹61,500 crore in the Union Budget. Previously, all employment and payment transactions from the Government to the people were done through contractors. However, there were cases in which the middle man faked the workers' identities and siphoned money, thereby cheating the Indian Government and putting the Government at a loss. Because of these leakages, the real hard workers weren't paid well, causing both them and the Government to suffer. As explained earlier, this also caused welfare issues. To counteract issues such as this one, the Government introduced the Direct Benefit Transfer scheme (DBT) in 2013. The DBT is heavily dependent on JAM - the trio of Jan Dhan Yojana accounts, Aadhaar and Mobile connections. The idea and its implementation were aided by a team headed by Nandan Nilekani, the co-founder of Infosys and ex-chairman of the Unique Identification Authority of India, the developers of Aadhaar. Aadhaar (unique identity card) itself is an ingenious platform, where 98% of India's population are registered. Under DBT, benefits are transferred directly to the beneficiaries' accounts, duly authenticated using Aadhaar. This removes fake beneficiaries, plugs leakages, and cuts wastage, thus ensuring the effective use of resources for schemes. This also eliminates the need for the middle man and builds a foundation of trust between the people and the Government and promotes transparency.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme is an amazing example of ingenuity in the social sector as it checks the boxes of brilliancy, meeting the challenge and helping a huge number of people. One of the most important responsibilities of the Indian Government is the upliftment of its rural population, and that is exactly what it is trying so hard to do, and succeeding in doing so. It is considered to be "the largest and most ambitious social security and public works programme in the world" by the Government. In its World Development Report 2014, the World Bank termed it a "stellar example of rural development". This programme has been successfully helping the Indian people since 2005, and will continue to do so for a long time owing to the cooperation between the people and the Government.



UNSPOKEN STRUGGLES OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

By Sachi Chaini, IBDP-1

The increasingly rapid growth of the COVID-19 virus over the span of this year has adversely shaped the lives of millions around the world. Being a part of the modernized urban community, as a collective, we have been safeguarded from more possibly complex issues. The growing threat of the virus however exposes the smaller rural communities to vulnerability. The prediction of a new possible vaccine in the near future overlooks the differences between the socio-economic backgrounds of the 2 communities, holding a high probability that the vaccine is more likely to reach urban areas before the low lying rural areas. The government stands to be more keen on protecting the working population of the country, residing in such urban locations, for the holistic benefit of the country. A great majority of the rural population lack the means to afford the expenses of a new vaccine. The artwork portrays the unspoken struggles of rural communities in terms of the quality of healthcare services they are provided with and the limit of their socio economic background that prevents them from obtaining a vaccine, that once discovered only becomes a basic need.



SOCIETY

By Haana Mehta, IBDP-1

The walls of the society have kept us confined,

But who gave them the rights to define?

What I should do or be.

As right at this very moment, I simply do not feel free.

I am not who I want to be,

I am who I am forced to be.

I might not fit into the regular niche for a girl,

But doesn't every girl have a different swirl?

Every single day, each passing hour, there is a tear in some boy's eye

But he never has had the courage to show,

Because don't you know?

"Boys don't cry!"

Homosexuality, menstruation and mental health are just some of the taboos,

It's almost as if they have stolen our right to choose,

Our partner, our gender or our mood

When it comes to change, they always press snooze.

Thousands of people die due to anxiety

Because of the suffocation by SOCIETY,

But alas, the judgemental society will never change its mentality.

Let's change society's way of identifying,

Let's normalize girls playing sports and boys crying.

Let's normalize mental health, menstruation and homosexuality,

Let's come together and change the mind-set of this damn society.

CORONA CONTAGION

By Kashish Rajani, Grade 7

From Australia to Canada I have been,

COVID19 was no where to be seen,

Until in China one day,

Social distancing is all they would say,

Sanitise and wear masks,

People thought it was a task,

They went out without these things,

And when they returned they were corona kings!

They then realised these were vital,

So they didn't come for my poem recital...

So here's that poem to tell you that,

Stay home, stay safe is the best act!

I SCREAM NOW & HUMANITY

By Mannat Ghumman, IBDP-1

I SCREAM NOW

I scream now,
Because civility is what I unlearned,
I won't back down,
Because the quiet nice kids got the shiniest prize,
I scream now
Because my quietness is my compliance,
I won't back down,
Because the injustice might not be frail,
but the largest empires only needed one voice to break.

HUMANITY

Why is it our humanity only arises out of
social obligation to brutality,
Why is it our humanity only arises when,
the water seems bloody and not when each drop falls,
Why is it our humanity only responds to violent screams
but not suffering silence,
Why is it that our humanity looks for pitying
suffering to justify sympathy.
Maybe because our idea of humanity is flawed.

SEMICOLON

By Aditi Prashanth, IBDP-1

Semicolon;

it is used when an author could've ended the sentence, but chose not to.

The author is you and the sentence is your life.

Mental health matters and it is as important as physical health.

Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you don't know about.

Be kind, everyone's at war.

You are not alone;

Today we choose life,

You don't have to struggle in silence,

it's okay to not be okay, just don't give up.

Healing takes time and asking for help takes courage.

SOCIETAL WOES

By Amyshka Shenoy, Grade 9

So many questions race in my mind, yet not one academical.

I'm told to study all the time and keep lists that are alphabetical.

Our Society created numbers that define ones self worth,

Leaving children who struggle to cope, be left with sorrow and no mirth.

Why must the world spin so fast, why can't it slow it's pace?

Why it is that only a mere 3 must always win a race?

Children cry themselves to sleep everyday,

Wishing so dearly, to make the pain go away.

Because our society is cruel and unjust to be fair,

It leaves one sobbing and pulling their hair.

We study everyday and it's hard, oh it is,

Leaving us students falling in a terrifying abyss,

Hoping that the new day keeps our tears at bay,

And makes the ruthless pressure and studying go away.

Life is hard, we all agree,

But sometimes we feel like breaking the restraints and just being free.

But sadly that day has not come yet,

So a monotonous routine has yet again been set,

This new lifestyle has been hard to bare,

I guess it was too much to ask life to be fair...

WHEN MAN BECAME THE DEVIL

By Harit Paurana, IBDP-1

There was an unimaginable point in time,
When man committed the most heinous crime.
Such hatred towards God's children was shown,
That one man slaughtered millions of his own.

It started with a racial atrocity,
A Jew couldn't attend a German school or university.
Jews and Germans who used to be best friends,
Were now declared archenemies standing on opposite ends.

The Jews were then loaded up on a train;
And sent to the middle of nowhere.
Even though their fate was filled with agony and pain,
Initially they didn't even know why they were there.

On arrival 90% of them were subjected to immediate murder,
While the ones fit enough were allowed to live under forced labour.
They were starved, made to live in conditions that were disease prone,
People who were once hale and hearty were now reduced to flesh and bone.

Thousands were killed daily, families torn apart,
The sight of the dead was not for the faint of heart.
When the Allies were near, they set out on a march to death,
They were shot if they lagged behind or stopped for breath.

I don't understand how one can be so inhumane,
Killing the innocent, finding joy in their pain.
God is one, religions quite a few,
Was it their fault that they were born a Jew?

Just the thought of their sufferings makes my heart pound,
The walls of the concentration camps resonate their pain filled sound.
Learning about this unfathomable sin,
Has shattered me outside, and scarred me within.

The terror filled past, my words cannot explain,
It is up to us to make sure it never happens again.
Even though the human race has come quite far,
It shall haunt us and forever remain a scar.

ALONE

By Mehak Kapoor, IBDP-1

Here, yet not.
Surrounded by so many,
Yet, my brain tells me, it's empty.
I hear the laughter of the students,
Try to convince myself that,
"It's not me, It can't be me
they are blabbering about."
I fade, unnoticed.

So is the thought process of a teen,
like a tornado inside a case of glass.
Simply withheld, to appear as if it can do wonders,
As it destructs itself on the inside.
Maybe it's an exaggeration,
But it felt this way,
To be standing in front of many like you
And still, be talked about as if you're different.

Trust issues, cover the eyes
Like blurred lenses, questioning reality,
And yet I wear them every day,
In the hope of protecting myself,
Only to lose what lies in front,
People who actually care.

It seems easy, to hide it all,

Contain it in,
For no one will know,

Until the glass breaks, and you can't see anything anymore,

And you reach out,

But the world is astonished by the cracks,
And the tornado is destroyed, and the world moves on.

FOR INDIA's DAUGHTERS

By Vriti Khandelwal, IBDP-1

Does my too perfect to be true attitude
stir you up?
Or do your demons explode
when they realise that
there's a woman rising in you?

Is it my birthright
to cook for you
and do your household chores?
Or for my schools and
colleges on my face
you've shut the doors?

Are you mortified by the idea
that I may walk down the lane
with a sanitary pad?
Or are you holding my hand
so that society doesn't shame you
if I fall for a nomad?

Do you walk me down the deathbed
while I am still dreamy in the womb?
or are you petrified of the dowry
that may cost you
the food you consume?

Are you the one
who will drop your female friend
home tonight?
Cause her short skirt
and her cleavage
are like ATM for them
24hrs open for sight.

Do you dance on the songs
that cannot distinguish
between me and coca cola?
Or have you reduced me
to an hourglass figure
that you now call 'Pataka' or 'Shola'?

Are you the one
who told everyone
to keep their eyes away?
And then did you crush her belief
in a room
where god's feet lay?

Did you walk by her house
a thousand times
for her rejection to you was a crime?
Did you throw acid
on my face
when you saw me the next time.

I had to amend this poem
to add a name
to the list of India's daughters
She was a doctor
who was going back home
following all the rules you made
Seven days from then the
weight of her ashes was
again lighter!

When I finally thought
it couldn't get any worse,
that is when the society came into picture.
I wish they would have
learnt the ethics
about which they gave me a lecture.

Cause the next 'she' can
be a daughter, a sister,
a mother, or just a girl you know
Silenced, stopped and held back
her pride in this society today
is too low!

ANTI-SPITTING COMIC

By Riyan Sawdekar, Grade 6









CURRENT AFFAIRS









EDITORIAL

PERILOUS DICHOTOMY

By Mannat Ghumman, IBDP-1

Out of 8.7 million species on planet earth, only one is conscious of its reality and questions their place in the universe. It thinks and then thinks again, comes to conclusions only to conclude something entirely different. Sounds familiar, but it is incredibly frightening too because no precedent teaches us how to navigate the power of this consciousness, to find hopefully find happiness.

Happiness, the sole purpose it seems for life, to be happy that is, but it offers its own conditions too, out of billions of ways to 'achieve' it, there exists a unique solution for each individual. Well, we have always had a thing for problem-solving, the history of inventions shows the same. After all, it's only an invention if it increases the quality of human life. And because there is no precedent, this consciousness paved the 'method' of happiness into the understanding of self. Finding its basis, that humans who have the inherent power of consciousness, only be 'happy', if they have questioned and understood each working part of themselves; That is happiness is found on the road to understanding of the self.

Which at first, makes sense, An understanding of the self tells you, your dreams, your weaknesses, your strengths. But that notion has revised to have different connotations today. That is, an understanding of the self allows you how to aptly apply yourself and develop the required skillset for maximum social gain or monetary gain, and therefore happiness. It expresses happiness as a problem to solve and to introspect and then develop skills that help you to monetise yourself, as the solution. But, while an understanding of the self might tell you what dreams of yours are nightmares playing pretend, or bring you monetary success, if this were the path to happiness and what it entailed; the largely successful working population wouldn't categorise them as unhappy, and happiness wouldn't be the unfathomable social construction we see it today as. So, if no precedent exists and our current method is inherently flawed, is happiness then a social construction. But no matter the various approaches one might believe lead to true happiness, it is definitely agreeable True happiness is innate. But, not in the way, it asks for introspection to bring out qualities that you can utilise for social gain. Because an idea of happiness that offers qualitative measurement invites its fluctuation.

So how do we describe the innate nature of happiness then, according to the *Oxford Dictionary of English* "happy" means feeling or showing pleasure or contentment. We can immediately eliminate the word **"pleasure"** from the definition of true happiness. As we have seen, pleasure can never bring a long-lasting sense of happiness, it often brings suffering in its wake. The word **"contentment"** contains some of the same meanings as happiness. However, it's also defined as a sense of "ease." Take a moment to think of someone you know who exudes contentment, Don't they seem unruffled by the winds of life, Don't they seem to have an inner strength of being. This comes far closer to what could be true happiness, not a momentary feeling of joy, but a perspective and a way of being.

However, it could also be argued that without monetary success at least to a level of comfort, happiness in the 21st Century is unachievable. While these arguments could continue forever, discussing the dichotomous nature of achieving happiness, the various faults and discrepancies each method seems to present and how its interpretation and application may not even lead to happiness. Maybe, the modern perception of the definition of happiness is where the fundamental fault lies.

UNSOCIAL MEDIA

By Yanya Bhatia, IBDP-1

Technology has become something which everyone has access to, you will see an eight year old in a restaurant with a tablet in their hands watching a YouTube video because parents are sing such opportunities incorrectly to distract the child. Now the question is what happens when something that was used as a distraction once starts to become an addiction?

The main purpose of a phone is to stay connected with your loved ones at all times which usually happens via social media platforms.

What is social media? For each person it has a different meaning— for someone its a place they spend their free time; a platform where they can conduct their work; their life if they don't use it there is nothing for them to do or just a simple mean of communication. Whereas the actual definition for social media are websites and applications that enable users worldwide to create and share content or to participate in social networking. While communicating is the main agenda, it is part of the many other facilities available. The users can learn a lot thru social media regardless of whether it has a good or bad outcome.

As of February of 2020, there are 3.5 billion social media users worldwide. There are hundreds of platforms available for free, however, the main ones that gather the most attention from us is Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter and Pinterest (with Facebook being the most popular of all). Therefore, 63% of the worlds population is active on social media when looking at eligible audiences above the recommended age of 13.

First of all, it is worth considering the positive impact of social media, one of the many benefits is that it has the ability to create lifelong friends and being the most easiest way for staying in touch with anyone across the world as well as finding people from different parts of the world. Moreover, it is a platform that allows one to showcase one's own creativity and thinking. One even has the ability to learn new information about the world. Social media also benefits students, for instance it helps to sharpen their thinking in subject matter expertise.

It is extremely easy today to lose sight of the fact that these very tools have created some wonderful things in the world. There were meaningful positive changes happening around the world because of these platforms. Despite of the many benefits that it possesses, what about the actual impact that it can have on a young mind? It has a lot of side effects and an overall negative impact that it can have on one's health, mind, opinions and beliefs.

The tools that have been created today are starting to erode the social fabrics of how society works. What is wrong in the tech industry at this date? One can say that there is a cacophony of scandals, tech addiction, fake news, "they stole our data" etc. Whereas, what about the fact that all of this can have an opposite effect without us understanding it?

Since 63% of the world population above the age of thirteen are the main users, the first thing that comes to mind is comparison. As to how the pictures posted and the theory of the number of likes on a picture can effect oneself mentally. The adolescents start to compare themselves to the image they see on their screens, without even considering the fact that it may not even be the actual reality. Research has found that there has been a gigantic increase in anxiety and depression for American teenagers which began around 2011 to 2013. It leads to the point where teenage girls in America started to self-harm themselves, from 2009 it is up by 69% for older teen girls and up by 189% for pre-teen girls. Including the child suicide rates to have soared by 150% in a decade. Cyberbullying is to be partly behind the rise, along with the youngsters desperation of approval on the "addictive" platforms.

The reason as to these platforms becoming addictive, for example when an individual is bored they tend to pick up their phones to scroll endlessly on these apps, or for instance, when one receives a notification as an instinct one goes to grab the phone to check which causes one to deviate from our actual task. These platforms are free to us, but they are not free— the are paid by the advertisers hence we see their advertisements in exchange. We the users are the product, our attention is the product that is being sold to advertisers, to see how long we keep scrolling.

Our attention can be mined, it can manipulate our thinking; goals; beliefs; values, without us even realising that our minds are being conditioned to believe somebody else's thoughts and that we are following it and allowing it to continue.

In the future social media will end up dictating our lives, as the youngsters over engage with social media they are foregoing so many other interest and activities, soon it will enslave millions of young adults compromising their freedoms and better informed choices that they could rationally and logically make.

INGENUITY AND INDIVIDUALS

By Vrishin Rao, IBDP-1

Ingenuity. What is Ingenuity? What is its significance in our lives? And why do all of us need to be ingenious? We have often been told that ingenuity is quintessential in our lives, it is of paramount importance to make us successful and is one of the qualities that distinguishes us from other species on the planet. Ingenuity has led to the success of mankind, it has allowed us to adapt to the ever-changing environments. But well… What is ingenuity?

Ingenuity can mean differently for different people; the dictionary definition for ingenuity is the quality of being clever, original and resourceful, many have thought of it to be the 'secret sauce' of human beings' competitive advantage over time. This is because nature won't stop changing and won't stop throwing challenges at us and complexity of these challenges will only rise, ingenuity is the quality that will lead us human beings to a better future.

Ingenuity will allow us to not only solve the problems at a worldwide scale - the problems that the world currently is able to find no solutions to - but also the problems we, as individuals, face in our daily lives. To be ingenious, you don't necessarily need to start off by finding a solution to a global issue, you can simply start by finding a unique and practical solution to overcome a small problem in your sphere of life and gradually work up the ladder and begin tackling the problems that grip the world. For instance, the workers at the Chrysler (a famous car manufacturing brand) plant in Detroit created something known as a 'Happy Seat'. It is a device suggested and designed in part by hourly workers at Chrysler's Sterling Heights plant to allow them to slide into a vehicle and more easily attach the front console to the frame. Prior to the development of this device, such work was onerous because it caused stress to the back and joints. It may be true that this device will not help solve global issues and issues faced by the masses, it is certainly extremely ingenious and innovative. Well, now that you know what ingenuity is and what it is to be ingenious, you must be wondering why do all of us need to be ingenious?

The amount of problems that the human race faces is innumerable, more so these days due to the outbreak of the pandemic. The list of social, economical and environmental issues that we face outstrip our supply of solutions for these problems and this leads to an 'Ingenuity Gap'. We experience the consequences of this gap in our lives - globally, locally and personally - and we must accept that we do not live in the ideal world and everything isn't really alright. Luckily for us, we have the quality of being ingenious. Humans for long have conquered each of their challenges and have collectively worked to evolve into a greater species due to ingenuity. The acumen of some has translated into more pivotal inventions and discoveries while that of others played a slightly smaller role, however, the collective ingenuity was vital to the success of humanity. We need not even look too far into the past to find evidence of how ingenuity shaped the world, the recent COVID-19 pandemic has sparked innovation in a large part of the world and our partial success in the battle is a result of people coming up with pragmatic ideas and translating those ideas into reality.

For instance, the invention of a hygiene smart band by a Seattle based company called Slightly Robot, during the early days of the virus, was extremely creative and played a role in reducing the spread to a certain extent. The band, known as Immutouch, was programmed to alert users with a sound when they tried to touch their face (a precaution recommended by WHO to decrease the risk of contracting the virus). The band might not sound very elaborate or complex with respect to the design and concept but it is certainly creative and a clever invention, it was ingenious of the company to come up with this device and it certainly played a role in combating the virus. Now this provides further evidence to why we need to be innovative and creative - it allows us to tackle the problems we encounter and defeat our challenges - but... why do we all need to be ingenious? That is because, this single device, in this example, is not enough to reduce all the risk of contracting the virus. It was necessary that someone else came up with the idea of a mask, another with the concept of a face visor and someone with the idea of gloves, for instance. There are still other risk factors involved which we haven't found solutions too and this requires our ingenuity, we must be clever enough to come up with a practical idea, we need to have faith in ourselves to implement the idea and we need to be resourceful enough to implement the idea without the need for too many extra resources.

All of us must learn to explore, innovate and simply believe in ourselves because the world needs us. As I mentioned earlier, the problems mankind faces are greater than the number of solutions and for this very reason each one of us must do our bit. We must also strive to outdo ourselves and continue to 'tap in' to our valuable asset of innovation, this is very well highlighted by the Japanese with a simple example. The Japanese import their fish from countries like the U.S.A, Australia and others, originally the fish they would import would often be stale due to the transportation time so they decided to get creative and import the fish in fish tanks. Very innovative, isn't it? Well, it was certainly innovative but not enough because the fish were still insipid due to the little movement in the tanks so they improved even further. The Japanese decided to transport the fish along with a small shark in the tanks, this would mean the fish continued to stay active within the tanks and kept moving. While the shark would certainly eat a few fish, the higher revenue the exporters earn and better quality the Japanese received was far greater than the cost incurred.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that these are only a few of a plethora of examples of people's creations improving their own and other's lives. This should be motivation for you to continue to think out of the box and not conveniently choose the discovered path or turn a blind-eye to the problems around you. And in case you are wondering how to develop this ingenuity, look no further than yourself. Creativity and innovation are present in each one of us and as you begin to try to solve problems and discover the uncharted areas, the innovation will automatically come about because as they say, "Need is the mother of all invention".

BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION AND NOT POLLUTION

By Gresha Chheda, IBDP-1

Much like charity begins at home, sanitation and hygiene starts with You and Me. My vision is to make India a proud country by making it clean. Moreover, my aim is to see this task being completed in the next 4 years. India is a melting pot of culture, heritage, traditions, language also beautiful, having encompassed all landforms from mountains to rivers. If such a country is not clean then it reflects as a colossal shame for its citizens!

Swachh Bharat entails not only ensuring cleanliness, but also a pledge to build toilets, on a national scale, across cities, villages and states. The father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi had dreamed of making India a clean country. The mission has targeted aims like eliminating open defecation, converting insanitary toilets into pure flush toilets, complete disposal and reuse of solid and liquid wastes, spreading cleanliness awareness in the all urban and rural areas. This movement in a chain form passes from smaller groups to larger ones, only then can it be deemed efficient.

Furthermore, the states to have come forward and apply the policy of clean India are Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. However, in order to ensure the country-wide success of this moment, other states must come forward too. “Go green”, “Swachh Baharat abhiyan”, “Dasra" and many more such movements have already been initiated till date. Not only these but also other campaigns like name and shame and many more like these to help India make a clean India.

Every citizen has the right to sanitation, let’s work towards it.

“Sanitation is more important than political freedom”- Mahatma Gandhi

Clean India should be our responsibility. To the end of this article, let us all pledge and join hands towards a cleaner and greener environment. Let us all be a part and make India a clean India and the proud citizens of our country. I pledge to make “My” vision “Our” vision.

THE OTHER SIDE: TALES OF THE RECOVERED

By Sahana Radhakrishnan, Grade 9

In light of the Coronavirus pandemic, all of us have been racking our brains about how not to get infected, but have we given a thought about the inspiring stories of the rebounded? We have only been worried about one side of the story, and this pandemic, like every other aspect of our lives, has more than one side. Why can't we think about the people who have bravely fought for their lives and succeeded, instead of crediting only the deceased?

The stories of the people who have fought the virus and recovered, are possibly the most inspiring stories out there.

This disease is said to prove fatal to most of the population whose ages exceed 60. However, from Kerala, on March 31, 2020, a 93-year-old man and an 88-year-old woman recovered from the virus, namely Thomas and his wife Mariyamma. Their recovery has been dubbed as the rarest of the rare survivors, because they had been suffering from other ailments apart from the virus. They are the oldest Indian couple survivors as of now and have recently expressed their happiness for being able to live another year and see another Easter.

A of October 15th, 2020, Bela Samanta is the oldest COVID survivor in all of Jharkhand, aged 90 years old. Out of the nine days she spent in recovery, two were spent in the ICU. The doctors say that she is rather optimistic and enthusiastic for her age. Apart from the virus, she also suffered from Hypertension and gastro-intestinal ailments.

The young too, are deserving of praise for combating this virus and winning the battle. Hailing from Kolkata, a 33-day-old boy managed to fight off the virus and its after-effects after 30 days of recovery, making him the youngest COVID survivor in West Bengal as of September 10, 2020.

These people are beacons of hope for all the people out there, whether old or young; sick or healthy. We must think like these fighters, who were as brave as the army in their own way and think positive even during these dark times.

CORONA PANDEMIC

By Rahi Shah, Grade 8

In December 2019, outbreak of the Corona virus began,

First in China, then Italy, US and Japan.

From an epidemic to a pandemic in a few days,

Urging countries to protect its people in as many possible ways.

Countries have enforced a lockdown,

Resulting in economy to break down.

Blessed as we are with family time so precious,

Isn't it best to be progressive and at our productive best?

Washing our hands a hundred times a day,

Along with social distancing, helps keep troubles at bay.

Let's not forget our heroes in these times of crisis,

Salute to the doctors, the nurses and the police.

In gratitude we look up to the people who risk their lives,

Selflessly stepping out to save our lives.

As the sun rises bringing with it a new day,

I thank God, for giving us the strength to ward off dismay.

A commentary on this generations unwavering beliefs and

A CRY FOR HELP

By Tia Arora , AS-Level

This is not a cry for help.
Do you hear my whispers through those thick walls?
Do you hear me screaming?

This is not a cry for help.
I am not tired of fighting,
I am not tired of standing
For those who can't,
For those who won't,
For those who need.

This is not my cry for help.
I am not alone.
Do you see us coming?
Do you see us rising?

This, is not our cry for help.
We build each other,
The way you've torn one and other down before.
Do you feel as we feel?
Do you taste the bitter air that we do?
Don't you feel poisoned too?

This, is not, a cry for help.
This is the screech of the undead.
This is the war cry of those we defend.
This is the sound, of a revolution.

Allow me to remind you.
That this is not, a cry for help.
Allow me to remind you!

None of us are too tired to keep fighting,
To keep standing,
To keep breathing,
To keep returning.
With those who can,
Those who will,
Those who give,
Those who need,
With those who love, just as we all do.

Because our lives, are no longer, a cry for help.

There is much to be said about the state of the world.
We will not break.

There is much to be said about the constant struggle.
We will not break.

There is too much to be said.
Too much to fight for,
Far too much for us to hold on to.
And we will not break.

Though when I break,
They will build me again,
As I will, for them.

From the beginning we learnt we were stronger together,
Our hands in one chain.
From the beginning we knew we were meant to be better,
Our hearts in one lane.

The actions we dreamt of,
It's our time to act on.
And we refuse to break.

Now, we will not break.
And we will not cry.
For we are one.
And for this wave of change,
We are the reason why.

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

By Harit Paurana, IBDP-1

Prisoners of ourselves, as we continue to stay,
Life under lockdown struggles to find its way.
Trapped in cages like birds are we,
Wings that fly high, but are unable to break free.

As urbanization came to a halt in its existence,
I could hear the wind blow; the birds sing.
I thought I had found a new, blissful silence,
A silence, that has now turned deafening.

Streets are deserted, shops shut down,
The city of life has now turned into a ghost town.
The pandemic has brought us such a plight,
7 billion people, but not a soul in sight.

This is but a test for mankind,
A time to reinforce the ideas that Darwin left behind.
This is the time to save, but also to give,
The underprivileged need our help in order to live.

While I sit here, penning down my thought,
Out there is a great battle being fought.
For a while our wings shall forget to fly,
This is a new normal, one that no man can deny.

THE LOCKDOWN

By Suhaani Shah, Grade 8

The Lockdown by Suhaani Shah

Entertainment has bid adieu to human kind,

The streets are shut and there's nowhere a car to find.

Prime Minister Mr. Modi says, "This is a lockdown".

Several citizens have faces with a sad frown.

Coronavirus spreads faster each day,

God forbid, if this this curfew has to continue up till May!

Every second counts during this difficult time,

However, I'm glad the Gods' have blessed us and kept us fine.

To overcome this situation, one shall remain positive,

As the demon of Covid-19 rears its ugly head the negative.

These months of quarantine have made us to be productive,

I certainly am utilising my time and not being destructive.

Kids my age are happy as long as they are online,

But, adults have a heap of paper bills to sign.

I understand that the situation is driving us insane,

But, isn't it all to break apart the coronavirus chain?

THE CORONA VIRUS

By Nayeel Qaazi, Grade 8

Fear in the streets everywhere

No one to help and care

This is a rising calamity

Don't show your inhumanity

People losing their sanity

People in pain

Can we do anything

It's almost inhumane

Together we can withstand this you and me

The responsibility rests on the shoulders of thee

Praise the people who are soldiers in this fight

Who work for us day and night

Take care, be brave, stay bright

Be a beacon of hope a plethora of light

Take utmost care of your health

You know there is no bigger wealth

Wash your hands when you sneeze

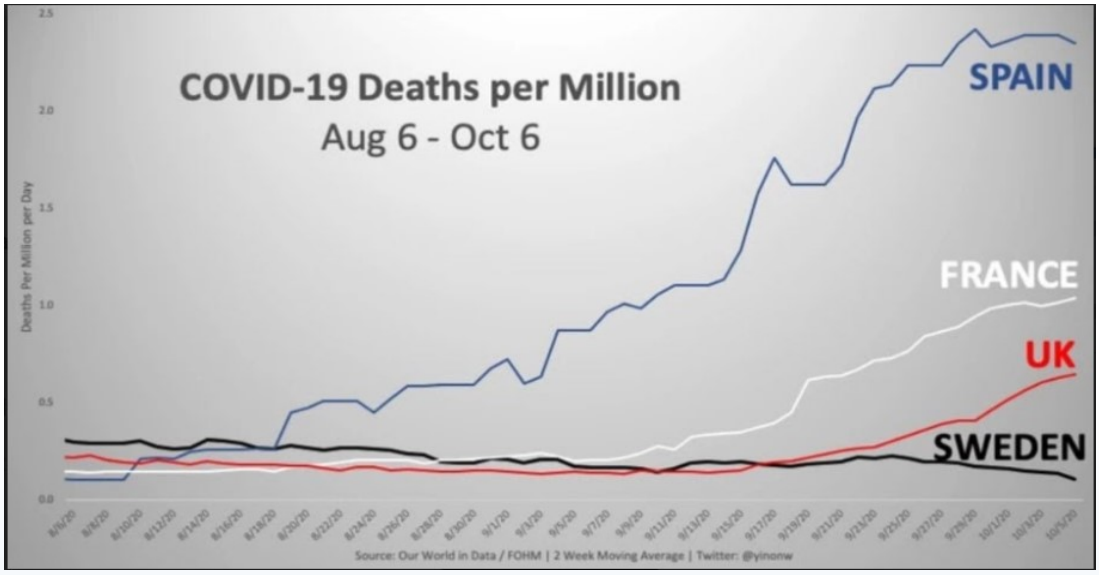
In the deaths we want a decrease

A NEW OUTLOOK

By Dhyana Shah, Grade 7

Taking a new approach to any issue is often something that people refrain from doing, worse still, it may even be frowned upon. But, with the rise of the Covid-19 pandemic, governments have been met with increasing pressure from various stakeholders about how the situations should be handled. Amidst this, President Stefan Löfven from Sweden has decided to rely upon social awareness and responsibility in order to tackle this virus that has brought global superpowers such as China and the USA to its knees.

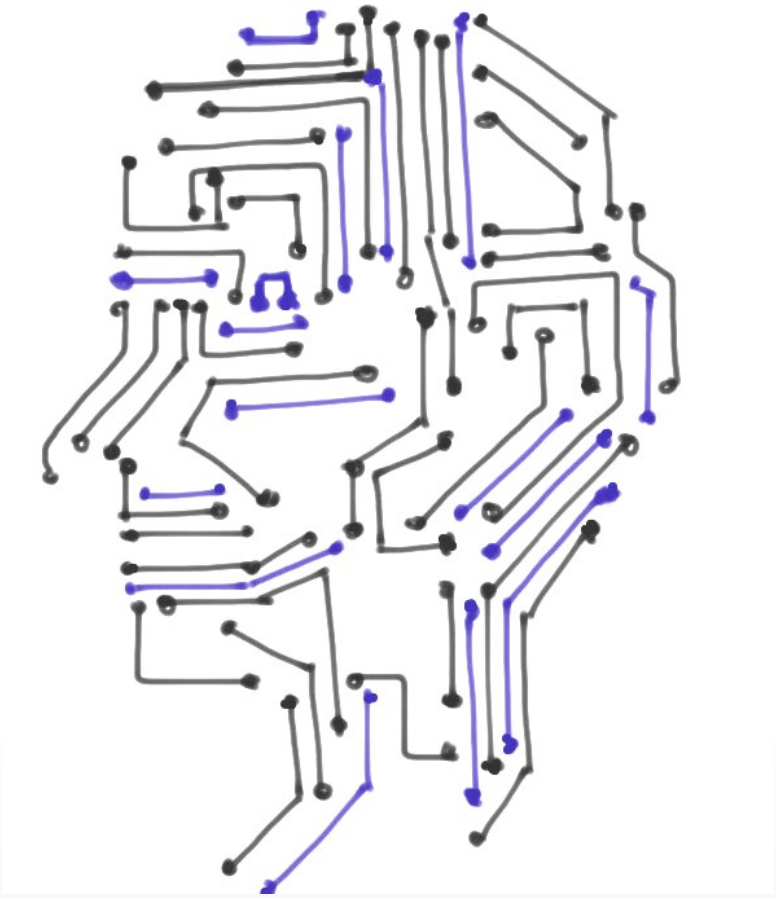
Currently, the main global agenda in relation to the pandemic is to flatten the curve. Countries like the USA and India, with all sorts of aiding methods to 'prevent' the spread of this virus are surprisingly unsuccessful at this. However, Sweden has not imposed any sort of lockdown on its country and yet are still successful. How? Unlike what other world leaders are doing, they didn't implement the use of masks or a mandatory lockdown and instead began improving their healthcare system and people began incorporating social distancing measures into their lives. A main reliance in this, were the people; the government simply relied on their people's responsibility to follow such a small yet beneficial rule. The government has been a very reliable and helpful source for funding, in the matters of health. Additionally, Sweden hasn't faced an economic slowdown unlike other countries such as India, whose GDP has experienced a fall by 23.9%. Residents are being encouraged day in and day out to get a stable and secure health insurance company. By doing all of this, Sweden has been successful but there are some downsides to this because after all, every coin has two sides.



Not imposing a mandatory isolation rule has created a huge impact on Sweden's neighboring countries. This is primarily because Sweden hasn't considered closing their borders unlike places like Denmark, thus causing an influx of people from neighboring countries, resulting in increased Covid-19 cases. As of now, Sweden is balancing and maintaining a number of 103, 200 cases with an addition of 5918 deaths. They are currently at the forty-fourth position in terms of cases, which is truly remarkable that they have such control over an uncertain situation like this one. They are expecting to continue these kinds of mild restrictions and precautionary measures for about another year.

It is evident through this example that just being a follower to what others are doing isn't going to do much because one could lose their decisiveness. This also signifies that you wouldn't be thinking outside of the box perhaps even inventing. What Sweden is doing is trying to prevent all of this by not 'following' what other global leaders are doing. The message is that if you try something new, who knows, maybe it will work, just like it did for Sweden. They certainly didn't know if this idea was going to work or not, but they made it work by trying their best. Taking this as an example and then using it in our daily lives will definitely benefit us and teach us that we must try things out and be ready for anything that could happen.

Overall, I believe that Sweden's new strategy to combat this extremely challenging time is something that we all should take something new from, we should try to learn new things from it on how we should be in charge of our own methods, push ourselves and think outside the box.









CUISINE & CULTURE







EDITORIAL

INVOCATION OF ERIDA

By Parnika Saxena, IBDP-1

We hate, we speak, karma, repeat. It never ends till we end it. "Hate speech is not free speech!" Let's all agree on one fact; we all give voice to this, but we still use slurs so frequently in our everyday lives. Also, we just cannot stop commenting like: "Ugh, I hate the way he dresses". Is this free speech or hate speech? Hate speech is not just language attacking a certain area of the society or culture like race, religion or sexuality. Hate speech can be words and phrases we use in a generalized manner. It has become deep-rooted in the hate culture, in our own cultures. Except, how does this start and how far does this affect us?

We hate. We let our feelings and emotions get the worst of us. Hate is a strong word to use, but is also a strong feeling. We feel those thin shreds of anger and hatred in us when something or someone triggers us. You know you hate something, when you see it, and your heart beats faster, you can feel the nerves near your eyes straining inside your flesh, and in worst case scenarios, you start to cry.

Why do we hate? Is it based on the perception of the disposition of a person or a certain group of people? No. I think it's the fear. It's the fear that an "outsider" will bring danger or threat to us or our loved ones. Or maybe it's the fear of ourselves, rejecting parts of life that we don't like about ourselves. Or perhaps, it is because of our past experiences, inner pain, or the societal and cultural pressure. However, there are so many other reasons as to why we use the word "hate" and feel it so much. The discrimination millions of us face, whether it is based on gender, sexuality, race or religion, is usually because of the fear of change in the society and community.

We speak. We gossip all the time, almost every minute of our life! We talk, spread our political views, cultural views, personal opinions and perspectives with the belief that your views will now be understood and made to use by others as well. It is a part of the "human nature and culture". But how? Technology. No, I don't blame technology entirely, despite the constant use of algorithms to trick the mind with only one-sided information. I majorly blame the society and myself included. I blame all of us.

We are trusting fake news, creating our own interpretations (due to the fear) and are spreading misinformation through social media or riots and rallies. In doing so, we entangle ourselves in the loop of "free speech" and "hate speech". It might feel like we are just expressing ourselves, since we have the freedom to, but we end up expressing hate that is driven by the fears, causing conflicts in the society. And how far does all of this affect us? Eventually, it leads us to a rise in war, terrorism, and bloodshed.

Karma. This famous principle has grasped us by our souls. "What you put out will come back to you in unexpected ways." I personally believe in this principle, and many others do.

Whether we enact a "good" karma, or a "bad" karma in our life, its effect will always return in the same way. As the quote "Freedom of speech does not mean freedom of consequences" suggests, we cannot speak whatever we want, and expect no consequences of it in return.

Somewhere down the line, we are bound to face hate comments, and as our younger generation calls it "trolling" on social media, which has the significant power to make one stand up and start a cult or pack within few hours. And somewhere down the line, we all will face the consequences of the "good" or "bad" deed we have performed or perpetrated. Perhaps instantly, perhaps in few years or even decades.

Repeat. This vicious cycle will repeat, till we put an end to it. If we hate, we speak. If we speak, we face similar consequences no matter what. We wage wars and terrorism, there's always going to be bloodshed. Yesterday it was for technology. Today it is for religion. Tomorrow, for scarce resources? Supreme power and hegemony?

The Greek goddess of hate, Erida, in the Iliad has been shown as the goddess with anger who is never satisfied, and uses her possession: the golden apple that everyone desires, to drive hate and anger in all individuals. As bizarre as this sounds, the golden apple is amongst us, powering everyone's desire to want what they want, whether it can be portrayed as technology, religion, power or freedom. She wants war, but we want peace.

Peace can be invoked if we decide to have self-control over our anger and hate, because when we hate, we speak, karma, repeat.

SNACK ATTACK@MUMBAI

By Ananya Pathak, Grade 9

You've just woken up to the sound of honking cars and the phone's buzzing, another busy day in the busiest city of India. There's a quick succession of ping!s followed by more buzzing as your home screen is flooded by cringy 'Good Morning!' messages. What is more motivating, though, is the time. You really don't want to hear another disappointed 'You're late.' In a rush, you're already outside the door, when there is a deep rumble from the depths of your stomach. There's no time for a full-fledged home-cooked meal at the dining table, unfortunately. Fortunately, the magical scent of tea wafts towards, guiding you to its source. Your saviour of the

day, the tapriwala. And just your luck! One-plus-one! There's another stall right next to it, serving vada pav. While you munch down the deep-fried battered potato sandwiched in a bun along with lasoon (garlic) chutney and fried chillies, you think about its origin. It was invented by a stall keeper selling vadas to the textile mill workers of the 1960s, when he experimented adding it to a pav from a neighbouring anda-pav (aka, the sunny-side-up and toast of the common folk) stall. Naturally, politicians couldn't just let the dish enjoy its popularity and had to get involved, but that simply adds to its rich history. Further back in time, pav came from the Portuguese word pão and even further back, chillies originally came from Mexi—

Right! You're late to work! You chug down the last of your searing masaledar chai and, after making quick payments, walk down to the bustling train station.

At the end of your hour-long commute and another fifteen-minutes of walking, you find yourself in a white and powder-blue room, making phone calls for the rest of the day. Some more tea perhaps? Good thing, there's that Irani café by the corner, where you can get yourself some traditional brun maska along with some Irani chai. A kind-of brunch, I suppose. The café probably exists thanks to the plague of the beginning of the 20th Century that led Hindu businessmen to believe that certain stores were unlucky. Irani businessmen had no such qualms and set up their cafés there. That's why you can now enjoy traditional Irani cuisine, while you admire the rustic décor and chequered tablecloths. That special chai was exactly what you needed to get back to work.

After that never-ending meeting, lunchtime finally arrives at four o'clock. A stop at that favourite dosawala? Sure. The "dosa"s are hardly traditional. I mean, Spring Chinese dosa? As you chew through the crisp paper-thin crêpe-like food and saucy noodles, you listen to your friend talk about Nelson Wang, who is given credit for contributing greatly(and possibly inventing) the "Chindian" cuisine in the late 1900s. That and the immigration of South Indians, looking for work in the 1920s, would have led to this marvellous creation.

Your friend gets a classic Bombay Sandwich from the stall next. To refresh your memory a bit more—and also because you really just want to taste it—you take a small square piece of sandwich from your friend's paper plate. Soft buttery bread meets hot harra(green) chutney, tangy ketchup and slices of veggies(cucumber, tomato, beetroot and potato), what's not to love? First bite in and your mind wanders off to the Bombay of before. The period of emergence of these fusion cuisines.

The good ol' times.

Back to now.

Some more stressful work later, even though you're still quite full, you accompany your friend to a chaat stall. Once you get there, you can't resist. You decide to share a plate of bhel puri. Your work is really getting to you, huh? Maybe, you should drive down to Lonavala this weekend.

Anyways, back to the fantastic food you're eating. Chaat came from the northern regions to Mumbai, where it met Gujarati cuisine and the unique chaat of Mumbai was born. The bhel of bhelpuri is said to come from the Marathi word Bhadang for puffed rice, which makes up the base of the dish. A true connexion of every flavour and texture. Sweet, spicy, salty, tangy, crunchy, crispy and soft. All together in one dish. Cue chef's kiss.

Just a little more work later and you're ready to go. Your "9-5" job is naturally much more like a 9-9 job, so when you emerge from the artificial light of your shut-off office, you are welcomed by the darkness of the sky and the glimmering lights of the city. The train ride back home isn't any less tiring, so you decide to eat out for dinner too—because Maggi doesn't really take just 2-minutes.

Buttery, spicy, full of flavour, presenting to you, Pav Bhaji. Go on, enjoy your meal, while I tell you a last bit of history.

Much like you right now, when textile mill workers returned, they were exhausted and hungry. While the humble beginnings of Vada Pav(1950s) stemmed from their need for a quick and cheap breakfast, Pav Bhaji (1860s) stemmed from their need for a quick and cheap dinner.

Now here's where it gets confusing. Some believe that it was invented by their wives who had to make a quick, wholesome meal, while others believe it was invented by food stall owners, who mashed up the remaining vegetables from the day with some spices and later butter. The wives apparently served it with bhakris (a flat-bread made of millet), while the food stall owners served it with the less-healthier buttered pav(bread), which is how it is prepared to this date.

Either way, you can now get a good night's sleep after that filling meal.

And repeat the next day.

References:

https://roadsandkingdoms.com/travel-guide/mumbai/a-history-of-mumbai-in-11-dishes/

https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/food-news/vada-pav-history-of-the-popular-mumbai-snack/icleshow/76973714.cms

https://wonderfulmumbai.com/top-10-food-started-in-mumbai-and-unique-to-mumbai/

https://medium.com/@hitendrabavadiya/who-invented-the-famous-indian-dish-called-pavbhaji-f6ae40c6d4c7

KINTSUGI—ADMIRING IMPERFECTIONS

By Akshita Goyal, IBDP-1



For many centuries zen masters argued that broken or damaged cups and bowls shouldn't be thrown away. Instead, they should be provided with our attention and care. There is a Japanese tradition of fixing which is known as Kintsugi. "Kin" meaning gold and "tsugi" meaning joinery. The broken pieces are reassembled and glued back together with lacquer mixed with dusted gold. Every break is unique and instead of repairing it like new, it highlights its "scars" and "imperfections" as a part of the design. The theory for its origin is that, Japanese shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa had damaged his favourite tea bowl and was desperate to get it repaired, so he it sent it back to China, in the late 15th century. When it returned, it had lost its aesthetic value, as it was repaired with ugly metal staples. This prompted the Japanese artists to come up with other solutions and that's how they found Kintsugi. There are collectors who purposely smash pots and bowls just to join it back and make it look more beautiful and stronger.

Kintsugi can be seen to have similarities with the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi, an acceptance of imperfections or flaws. This art form is also used as metaphor for healing people by the Japanese. It shows how sometimes in the process of repairing things that have broken, we actually create something more special, attractive and resilient. The care and love that these broken pots are joined back together with lend us the confidence to respect damaged and imperfect. It encourages us to be heal ourselves and shows that there is perfection in imperfection.



THE ICONS AND THEIR PACE IN MY HEART

By Diya Mahesh, IBDP-1

You'll be able to picture what I describe if you've ever been to the legendary Britannia.

One of Bombay's most loved, and cherished Parsi Diners, Britannia has stood the test of time. Nestled between the lush maze-like streets of Fort. On the ground floor of a Colonial Era building, Britannia & Co, still stands proud. When you enter, the bright colours and old-time charm lures you into yesteryear. A life-size cut-out of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge look down at the steady stream of customers, while the Queen has her spot on the wall. The tables are covered with a familiar red and white checked tablecloth, and the food stands out on the pale-yellow plastic plates.

The place smells amazing, of Iranian food and beer. The talk is loud and the kids louder. And enveloping all this chaos is the timeless history of the place.

Alongside the picture of the Queen, is framed articles of reviews in French gourmet magazines, praises from patron from all around the world.

This humble eatery was opened in 1923, to service the British officer who were stations in Fort. Not much as changed since then, not the food, not even the furniture.

Like Britannia, South Mumbai boasts so many other iconic restaurants like this.

Britannia's neighbour, Café Leopold, is one other jewel in Mumbai's crown.

Opened in 1817, this place has braved tragedies. It was one of the first sites of the 26/11 attacks, and even today, customers can see the bullet holes in the old walls. But the café was strong, opening defiantly after only 4 days, and it still continues to serve thousands of happy people.

However strong these places, these people may be, unfortunately, the pandemic has brought them to their knees.

During these unprecedented times, these restaurants have lost lots of money, people have lost their jobs and the whole industry is suffering the wrath of incessant lockdowns and lowered public consumption.

Not only restaurants, but other cultural landmarks in this city as well. Recently, Wayword and Wise, one of the most charming bookstores, in the city, announced they would be shutting down. They too lost money, and when I went to visit, it made me so upset to see bookshelves void of books, and stands of bestseller of the past.

What ever happens in whatever time we have left this year, and the new year, I hope that we don't crumble. We've come this far, it's too late to turn back.

PAT A CAKE! PAT A CAKE!

By Prakher Sharma, IBDP-1



Due to current circumstances, we have had to confine ourselves at home. And I have spent most of my weekends trying to master the art of cooking in my kitchen. So why not try putting together something healthy which also fulfils our cravings to eat something sweet?

Lets make an healthy cake! **A carrot cake!!**

INGREDIENTS

For the cake

250 ml coconut oil (melted)
300 g light brown sugar
1 1/2 tsp vanilla essence
210 ml milk (any milk is fine)
420 g plain flour
1 1/2 tsp baking powder
1 1/2 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp ginger
4 medium carrots, grated
1 orange, zest only
Chopped walnuts (any quantity is fine)
Sprinkles of your choice (optional)

For the icing

200 g creamed coconut
1 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tbsp. casher nut butter (unsalted is also fine)
50 g icing sugar
60 ml oat milk

METHOD

1. Start by making the icing first. Mash the coconut cream with 2tbsp of hot water and the lemon juice until smooth. Add the butter and oat milk in the icing sugar and whisk it well. Then, add the coconut cream mixture to the icing sugar mixture, continue to whisk well until fully combined, then leave the icing in the fridge until needed.

2. To make the cake, whisk together the coconut oil and sugar. Then, add the vanilla essence and milk. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and orange zest. Add the dry mixture to the wet mixture and stir well. **Do not whisk the mixture, using a spatula**! Use the 'cut n fold method' to mix. Finally add the nuts and carrot to the mixture and mix well again. Then heat the oven at 180 C. When the oven is heated, bake the cake for 25-30 mins. Once the cake is done, let it cool for 10 mins.

3. Finally, you just need to ice the cakes using the icing we made earlier, and, preferably, add some nuts and cinnamon on top for decoration along with some sprinkles if you wish to.

HOW COOKING HELPED ME DURING LOCKDOWN

By Sahir Devraj, IBDP-1

You will definitely agree with me when I say cooking is a great way to relax. I must admit that I feel hungry right after school ends and I usually help myself by making a meal or even just a snack.

Lockdown has played a significant role in enriching my culinary journey. There were already a few dishes in my recipe arsenal before the lockdown started, but, being in quarantine only expanded this list further. Apart from opening a lot more packets of Maggi noodles, I also tried my hands at cakes, pasta, soya sauce chicken, butter garlic salmon, along with various sauces, and a plethora of salads.

Chinese is my favourite cuisine, and not being able to eat it in an eatery has been an unfortunate aspect of this lockdown. The fact that fried rice is simple to make and tastes exactly like restaurant quality, makes me so much more eager to cook it. To make it you need:



INGREDIENTS

- One bowl of rice
- 2 scallions, chopped
- 2 eggs

And that's it! Garlic, sausages, shredded chicken, onions and other similar things can be added for some additional flavour, but the rice, scallions and eggs are the main part of it.

INSTRUCTIONS

- First, whisk two of your eggs and pour them into a pan. Scramble the eggs and set them aside.
- Next, heat up some oil (on low heat), add scallions and let it simmer until fragrant.
- Then, add your rice, eggs and other ingredients and mix them together on a high heat.
- Add some soya sauce and pepper.
- Taste it and lightly salt, as the soya may contain enough of it already.

To be fair, I'm in the kitchen to help my mother more times than not. She often appoints me as her sue chef, making me cut vegetables, mix together something that's cooking or whisk eggs. But I enjoy doing those things as much as making a regular meal. There's something therapeutic about peeling potatoes that I can't seem to find anywhere else. Cooking has enabled me to distract myself from all the homework I've been given and momentarily sink into my own world of fantasies, which usually ends with me preparing something really flavoursome.

The only thing I'd want after having a delicious serving of fried rice is something to satisfy my sweet tooth. Something so tasty that it takes my mind off this lockdown, yet is extremely easy to make. Something with a criminally perfect texture that quenches my thirst for chocolate with common household ingredients. Look no further as the answer to all our prayers is obviously a freshly baked batch of brownies!

While the recipe for a perfect brownie probably remind you of your grandma, I am sharing a recipe that is surprisingly easy and the best brownie my kitchen has ever seen.

INGREDIENTS

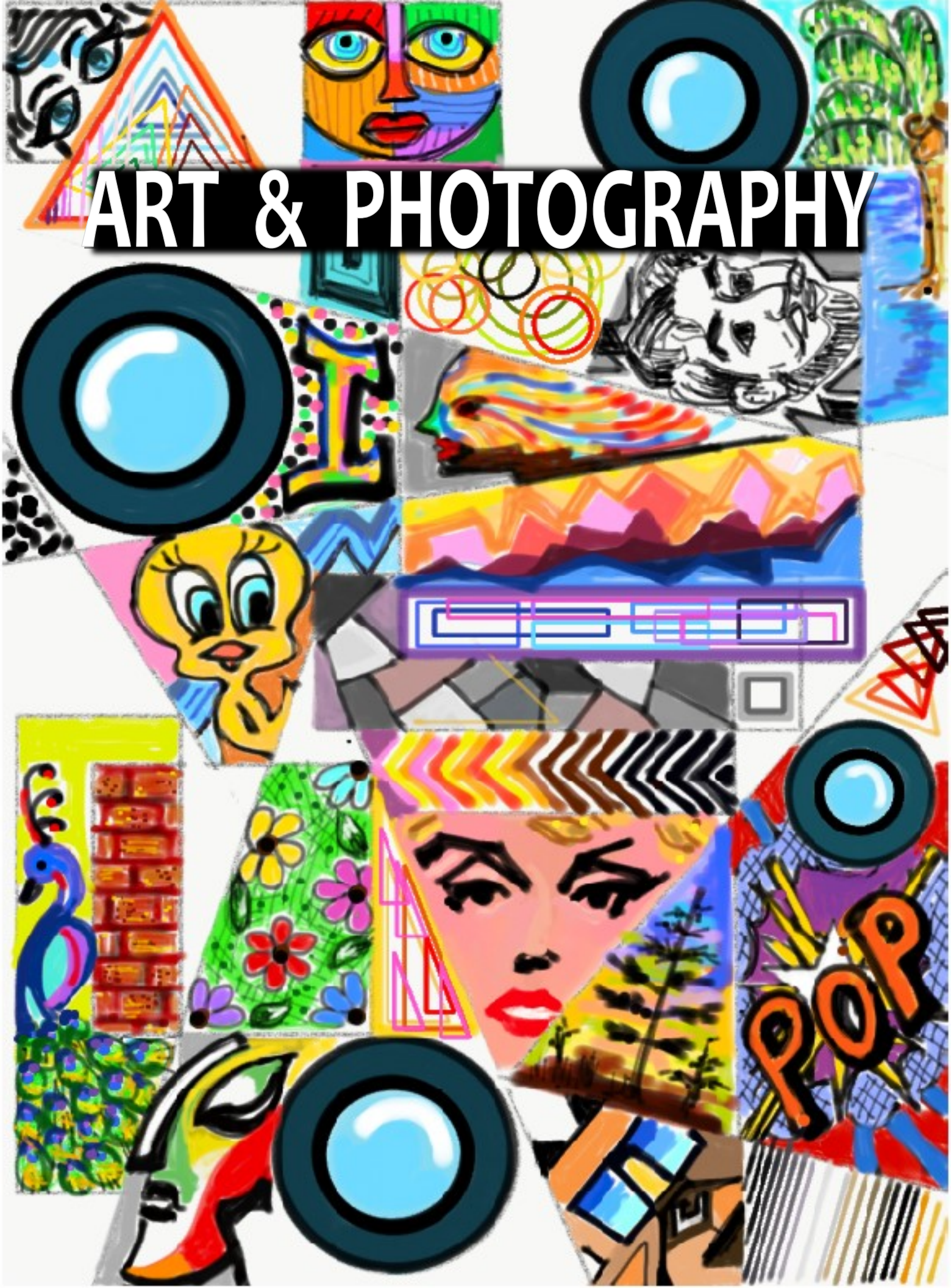
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted and HOT
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil, (olive oil or coconut oil is fine)
- 1 1/8 cup superfine sugar, (caster sugar or white granulated sugar)
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup all purpose (or plain) flour
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt



INSTRUCTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
- Lightly grease an 8-inch square baking pan with cooking oil spray. Line with parchment paper (or baking paper); set aside.
- Combine hot melted butter, oil and sugar together in a medium-sized bowl. Whisk well for about a minute. Add the eggs and vanilla; beat until lighter in colour (another minute).
- Sift in flour, cocoa powder and salt. Gently fold the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients until JUST combined (do NOT over beat as doing so well affect the texture of your brownies).
- Pour batter into prepared pan, smoothing the top out evenly. (OPTIONAL: Top with chocolate chunks or chocolate chips.)
- Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until the centre of the brownies in the pan no longer jiggles and is just set to the touch (the brownies will keep baking in the hot pan out of the oven). If testing with a toothpick, the toothpick should come out dirty for fudge-textured brownies.
- Remove and allow to cool to room temperature before slicing.

If you really want to go the whole nine yards, like I usually do, you can add a layer of either Nutella or whipped cream on top of the brownies. It really enhances the flavour in my opinion. If you're really feeling like a daredevil though, you can add rainbow sprinkles and sea salt. Perfection!


ART & PHOTOGRAPHY
POP

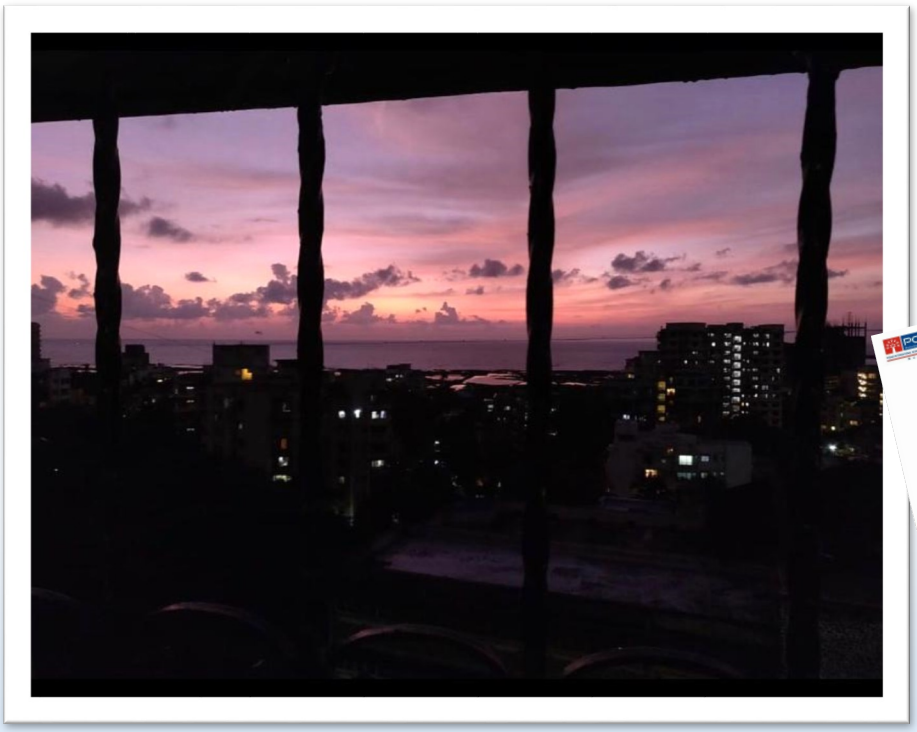
THE SUNSET PRIVILEGE

By Aarav Nichani, IBDP-2

Every sunset brings the promise of a new dawn. An **opportunity** to reset. A hope for a new world, brighter and better until the next pandemic... 100 years away. Locked down at home as the numbers rise ...as the sun sets and rises again. Day after day nothing to look forward to other than the sunset by the bay. The only sunsets I hate are the ones I miss, another day gone by and the frustration only rises. The interaction with nature is the only bliss, value for life and the inexpensive gift.

Over the three and a half months in lockdown as the virus hit, more and more people infected, some left hungry and migrants walking miles away bare feet to villages, life has taught each one of us a lot. From the rich to the poor, the doctors to the milkmen, cancer patients and diabetics, the virus has spared none! Nature has rebelled. The world will never remain the same. Medical teams hustling for a vaccine to policemen maintaining order and everything in between, our frontline warriors are truly the ones we owe our entire life to from here on. I came across a policeman the other day when I was visiting my ill grandmother, a slight smile with a tear in his eye as he said in Hindi, "My family has left me to die". The sacrifice they make each day is unaccountable and tremendous. Migrant workers trying to reach home to be with their families and save some from their pockets by avoiding expensive rents. Many unemployed and starving to death, the fear among the elderly is way beyond our understanding as we still lay on the couch with air conditioners and controllers of video games, the world isn't fair… ain't it?

Sleep for 8 hours and rise again, bright and fresh with hope but nature is STILL trying to get in your head…all sunsets are not the same… rise to the occasion and then rest at the end of the day…sunsets are proof that endings can be beautiful too… do your part, open up your minds, help out and then watch the sunset with a smile as you rest and trust me **hope** for a better world will be knocking by your doors…until it's another 100 years again.





DUSK

By Diya Gada, IBDP-1

The image I've painted portrays the roof of a building located in an urban setting at sunset. A man stands at the edge of the roof, peering over to look at the wonderful sunset before him. The angle at which the scene is painted is unconventional, focusing on the building and Japanese letters rather than the sunset itself. The building is illuminated through multiple light sources, both artificial and natural. The point of the artwork is to highlight the beauty in generally overlooked objects and bring a unique perspective to 'dusk'.

Medium- Ink and Watercolor on paper



PAINTINGS

By Yuval Gupta, IBDP-1

Sunset By The Beach

Method: Sponge-dabbing for background layers; brush painting



Inspiration for the Painting: Given the fact that my father is in merchant navy, I have spent a lot of time aboard huge ships touring through innumerable majestic cities and nations. One of those cities was New Plymouth in New Zealand. This painting is my attempt to capture the picturesque and breath-taking beauty of New Plymouth's sunset during summers, which I was fortunate enough to view and experience.



Unicorn And Waterfall

Method: Neo-impressionist technique with flat brush strokes

PAPER-MACHE GANESHAS

By Aaryan Potdar, IBDP-1

Making Ganesha models has been my passion since childhood. And creating a zero-waste world is my dream. During this lockdown phase I came up with this idea of making eco-friendly paper-mache Ganeshas using simple resources such as old newspapers, easily available at home. It has given me immense happiness to make Ganesha models and present them in my localities to families which could not afford Ganesha idols during this lockdown period. Here I share with you 3 models out of the many idols that I had created.





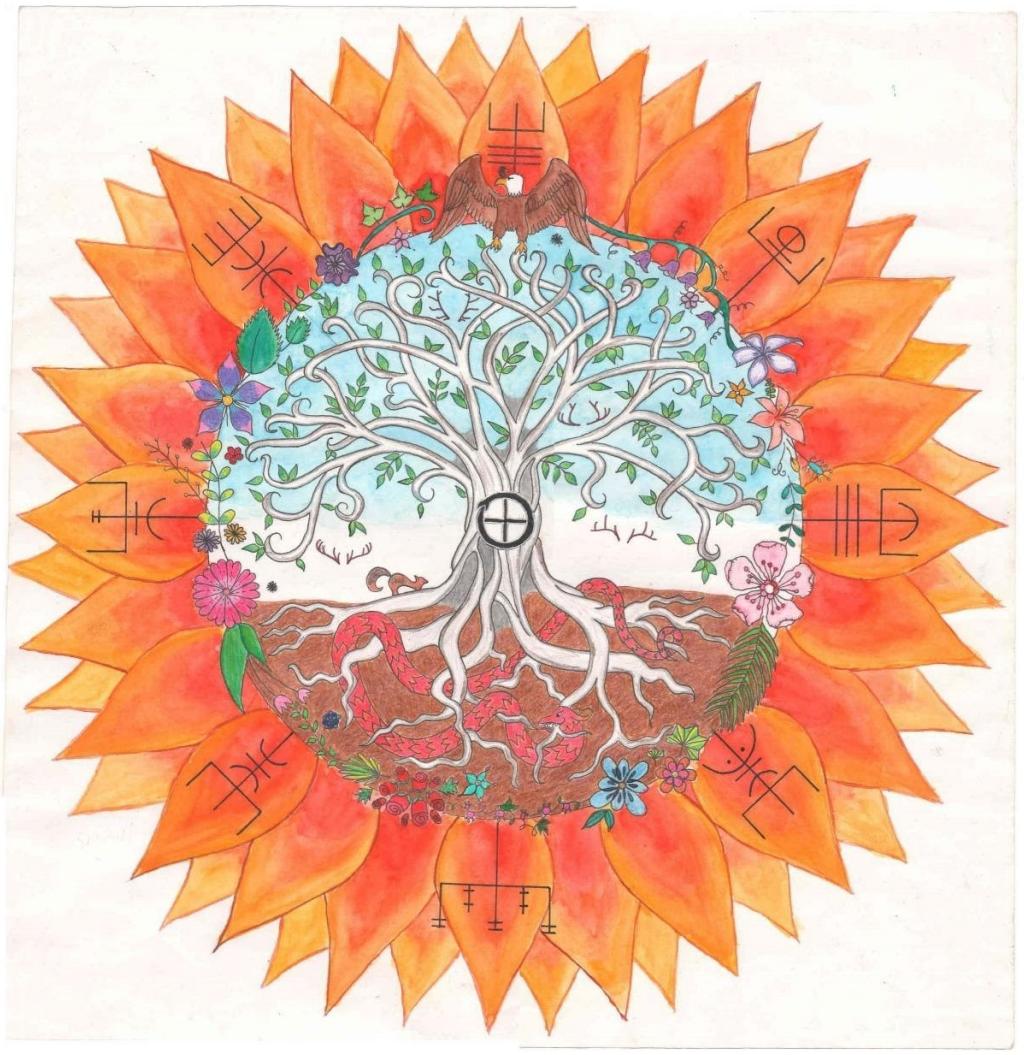


ART BASED ON NORSE MYTHOLOGY

By Kimberly Roy, IBDP-1

This art work is an artist's interpretation of the World Tree and the spirit of Midsummer. It is packed with symbolism and detail.

The World Tree has been depicted as a traditional ash tree. Miðgarð (Earth) in the center is represented by Jörmungandr (the Miðgarð Serpent) and the solar cross. The solar cross is a modern astronomical symbol for earth and the Nordic symbol for the sun. This adds to the spirit of midsummer. The other eight worlds have been represented by their Nordic symbols, projecting outwards from the tree.



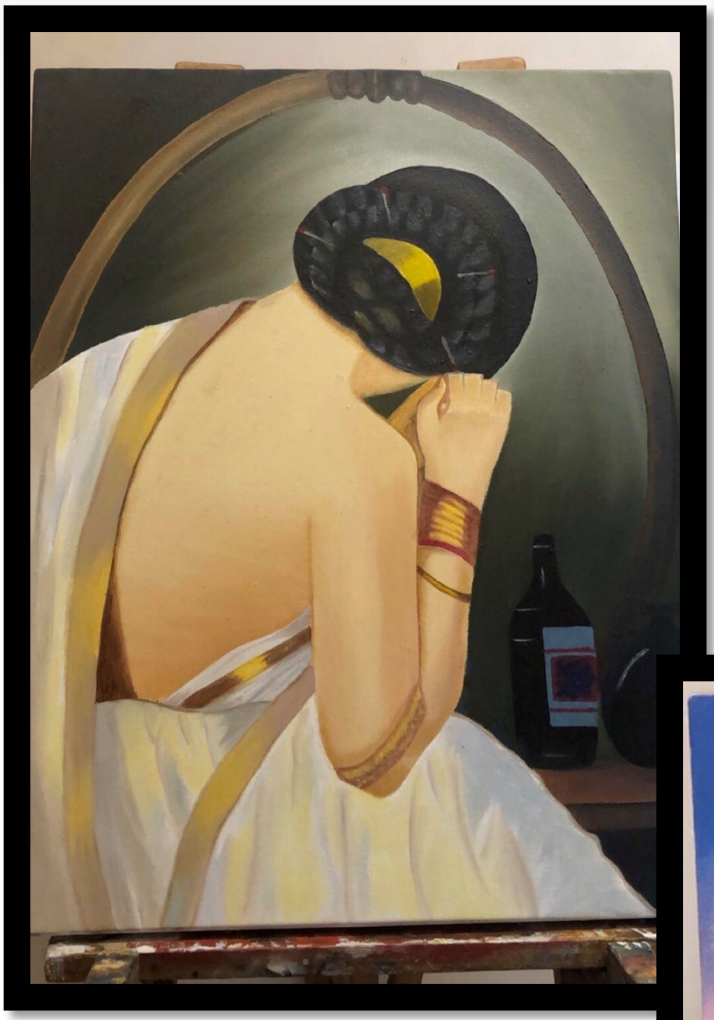
Entangled within the roots of the tree, we have Níðhögg, the serpent gnawing at the roots of Yggdrasil (the World Tree). Perched at the apex of the tree we have the eagle and the hawk, Vedrfölnir, sitting between its eyes. We have the squirrel Ratatosk carrying messages between the eagle and Níðhögg, creating conflict. Amongst the branches of the tree are four pairs of antlers that represent the stags of the tree. At the tip of each of the three main roots of the tree is a blue flower. Each flower represents the sources of nourishment of the tree: Spring of Hvergelmir, Well of Urð, and Spring of Mímir.

Midsummer is the longest day of the year, the day when the sun shines the longest. The goddess of the sun is Sól. One of her symbols is the sunflower. Therefore, the petals around the tree are those of a sunflower. Bonfires are a symbol of midsummer. Therefore, I have chosen to depict a fire sunflower (Helianthus annuus) around the tree. The shaded petals show the flickering blaze of glory of the midsummer bonfires. The wreath of flowers separating the tree and the petals is another symbol of midsummer.

In summary, I have tried to incorporate Yggdrasil and the spirit of midsummer in a single flower. Flowers not only represent midsummer but also the beauty of nature: one of the pillars of Norse mythology.

ARTWORKS

By Taskeen Shaikh, IBDP-1

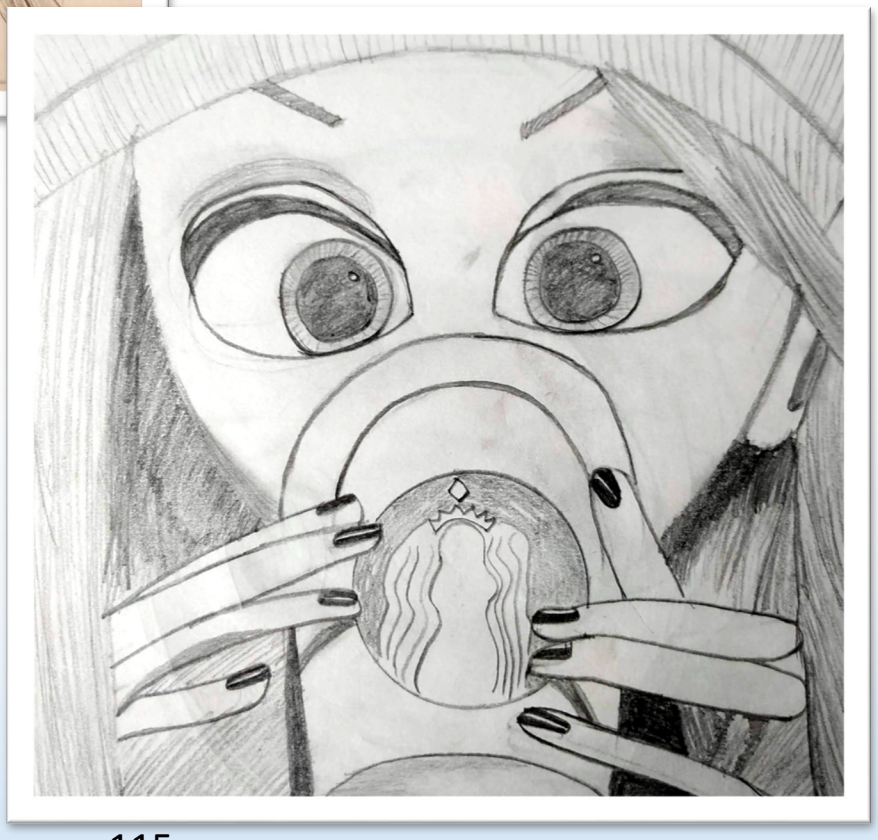




PENCIL ART

By Tasneem Ali, Grade 9





WHAT IS INGENUITY?

By Chahak Pahwa, IBDP-2

1. Take a fresh piece of white canvas.

2. Use the thickest square brush you have and dip it entirely in a bottle of blue acrylic paint.

3. Paint the entire canvas with the brush till you see a uniform, smooth background of deep blue.

4. Take two new small round brushes and dip one in crimson red and the other in orange.

5. Alternatively paint round circles filled circles of red and orange of different sizes in the central region of the canvas.

6. Use the thinnest brush you have and dip it lightly in green.

7. Make thin lines of green across the canvas, connecting together two edges of it.

8. Take any brush and dip it in black paint.

9. Now aggressively throw the paint four times randomly, at a distance from the canvas.

And voila! There you have it in front of you, ingenuity.

The journey of ingenuity begins with a strong foundation of one's intelligence and faith in their own abilities and skills. One must then focus all their energy, passion, creativity, and enthusiasm towards this process. At times, the journey yearns for more creativity than energy, let your mind decide what is needed. Along with this, remember that not only should the product of ingenuity grown, one must grow as well throughout this journey. Bring stability in the journey, bring structure to the process. And lastly, don't forget to do everything you can with elegance and sophistication. Don't fear if it is overpowering. Ultimately, whatever it is that you make, will be ingenuine. It will be a product of your ingenuity.

PAINTING

By Prisha Jain, Grade 8



HOPE IS NEVER LOST

By Shriya Chandran, Grade 9



SUNFLOWER LOVE

By Ananya Choudhary, Grade 9



CHIRON

By Yohaan Patil, IBDP-2




ENTERTAINMENT

A DYING BREED—GUITAR VIRTUOSOS

By Melvin Thakkar, IBDP-1

Guitar Virtuosos are a rare breed and they are only becoming fewer as time passes. A handful of people understand the term Virtuoso today, almost like a piece of history that is long forgotten and only remembered by those who really admire the art in its true essence. Virtuoso Guitarists cannot be described in one line, rather, they need to be experienced. By definition these are just players with exceptional skill but that would be a mere understatement.

They have received far less attention in the past few years and the traction shifting away from them is not a one-day phenomenon but rather a slow death that occurred over the last 20 years while electronic music became the new 'thing' for teenagers across the world. Artists like Steve Vai barely rack up only 500,000 monthly listeners on Spotify and let me remind you that this man that could fill up back to back stadiums in the 1980s. After a certain generation of players, there hasn't been anybody to take up the mantle of Virtuoso guitar.

This style of playing is ear candy for those who truly seem to understand it or even try to indulge themselves in a rustic record with just a guitar trying to convey emotions without the use of lyrics, primarily performed on crazy looking electric guitars. It seems alien to many around the world today. Understanding such an artist is much more difficult because of their stand-alone personalities that were reflected in their genre. The very same Virtuosos once infiltrated pop music with their iconic solos such as Eddie Van Halen's solo in 'Beat it' by Michael Jackson.

However, one major issue with this genre is that, currently rock music in itself isn't a very popular genre. The latest rock anthem off my head reminds me of Boulevard of Broken dreams but it was the last of the lot back in 2004.Most trending playlists right now would include Hip-hop and Electronic artists who understand, relate and connect to the newer generation. When any modern guitarist picked up their instrument, they would idolize someone like Slash or Joe Satriani. Most modern guitarists will give credit to some previous legend in making them who they are. Just like how Ed Sheeran became Shawn Mendes' initial influence. In the past few years a decline of successful Rock bands resulted in fewer people even knowing that such artists exist.

It is unsaid but Hip Hop is the new cool now and nothing looks to replace it in the near future. It has been on the rise ever since its beginning in the 1970s and now it has taken over the world and there is no limitation to what rap could become in the future with the genre diversifying continuously.

Speaking of diversification and development, Guitar firms also played an important role in the death of Virtuosos. Fender and Gibson made similar models each year and there is very little difference in terms of design between a Stratocaster model from the 1950's and a new Stratocaster made today. Guitar firms relied on their best selling models and kept reproducing those stock versions to keep sales high without considering other options. Electric Guitars lacked creativity for newer folk to pick it up. This mismanagement lead to Gibson filing for bankruptcy in 2018.

The final nail in the coffin for this style of music was the change in how producers used a guitar. Over the years, it has become an effect based instrument with lesser focus on playing and more attention being drawn towards gear. Modern music uses bits and pieces of instruments on loops which are then recorded alongside several layers. The guitar isn't dead as such but Virtuoso lead guitarists don't have a space for themselves in the scene. Lucid Dreams by JUICE WRLD displays exactly how hip hop has superseded other genres. The original loop for the song is very similar to 'Shape of my Heart' by Sting but the way it was used made it made all the difference. Electric guitar riffs are still quite common today too. The Chain-smokers filled their music, with similar repetitive guitar loops and it worked. Guitar Virtuosos rely on their phrasing and expression through the instrument which is no longer popular. These Virtuosos used Guitar Solos to do this and the space for guitar solos barely exists in modern music.

It is too late to save the generation of Virtuosos but then their works can be admired before we lose such heavy live performers who could play much better in front of an audience than on a recording. Below is a list of Artists with a few recommendations that you should surely check out, a simple internet search and you will be amazed to see their work:

Cliffs of Dover- Eric Johnson

Tender Surrender-Steve Vai

Eruption-Van Halen

Always with me, Always with you – Joe Satriani

Terminal Velocity- John Petrucci

Purple Haze-Jimi Hendrix (Out of everyone, deserved to be on the list the most)

EDITORIAL

THE POLITICS OF FASHION

By Diya Mahesh, IBDP-1



For me, fashion is a way of expressing myself- it's a way for me to talk to people without saying a word. Most people around me would know that if I put on my brightest colours, I'm in the mood to socialise, while if I put on my oversized grey sweater, I'm hoping no-one talks to me. Sure, to some people, clothes may just be a way of keeping themselves warm, but to me they're something bigger. I view fashion simply as one of the greatest forms of storytelling.

While fashion can be used as a great tool for the common man, it can also be a powerful weapon- that is, when powerful people choose to make it one.

Picture a bright red dad cap. Now make it a sea of them. Flashbacks from 2016 anyone?

The red "MAGA" hat became the symbol of the 2016 American presidential election. Trump supporters donned these caps in support of the now president, creating a sense of unity between everyone wearing the hat. It may seem like a minor detail, but in the end, it contributed to him winning the election (as did Russia).

On the other hand, a second fashion statement from the same election was the iconic monochrome pantsuit- known as the symbol of feminism, change and a few shady e-mails.

The election was a battle of these two fashion-related symbols, with Beyoncé performing in a bright pantsuit, and Kanye West wearing the cap while telling people that slavery was a choice (Thank you Kanye, very cool!). But why exactly did politicians start using fashion as a statement?

"Access to the press, governmental bodies or educational institutions is variable, but everyone has access to their own bodies," says Dr Jonathan Michael Square, a writer and historian currently teaching at Harvard University. "Fashion is, thus, one of the most readily available political tools. Even the decision not to care about fashion is a political statement."

Some of India's most influential politicians, used and continue to use fashion as a symbol for their leadership. Mahatma Gandhi always had his cotton robe, Jawaharlal Nehru had his red rose, Indira Gandhi was always seen in her elegantly draped saris and Narendra Modi's signature fashion statement is undoubtedly his colourful Nehru jackets (ironic, considering Modi loathes anything to do with that family). Another critical Modi fashion moment that I think is worth mentioning is the Nehru jacket with NaMo printed on it, which he wore to meet the commander in chief of a country that once banned him. Quite the power move, in my opinion.

Politicians use fashion as a way to craft a 'brand' for themselves. This is because they aren't selling a particular product, they're advertising themselves. After all, because they're constantly exposing themselves to critical public eyes, their choice of clothing stands out. Fashion is incredibly diverse and is a powerful medium of communication between public figures and the people of a nation. Emilia Ferrera, a fashion journalism professor at Georgetown University, had this to say about political fashion- "I do regard fashion as an imminent vehicle for strategy and excellence. The more options in your arsenal, the more power you have."

With each new bold fashion choice, politicians are generating headlines, which in turn brings them publicity. While the feedback may be a mix good and bad, it serves another purpose- it creates an unforgettable image in the minds of the public. From AOC's white cape blazer to Theresa May's leopard print kitten heels, the world remembers them through their outfits.

The extent of influence that fashion has on people is beautifully encompassed in Miranda Priestley's monologue on cerulean in *The Devil Wears Prada*. The "domino effect", as she explains, highlights the sheer number of variables that are affected by one bold fashion choice. The monologue serves as an example of how our fashion choices are read by others.

For decades now, brands have been fully aware of the significance of fashion on political movements. The now-iconic beacon of the grunge aesthetic, *Doc Marten Shoes*, was created in the 1980's in support of far-right political organisations. In 2016, the sneaker company *New Balance*, was labelled as the 'official shoes for white people," by the neo-Nazi (a title bestowed upon him by the American media) VP of the company, in solidarity with Trump.

Social media culture has been defined by fashion-centric political movements. At the Golden Globe Awards in 2018, attendees dressed in black in support of the #MeToo movement. This was one of the most politically charged movements in recent history, and fashion played a huge part in it.

The 2020 Black Lives Matter movement also prompted a fashion adjacent response from the people. Black-owned clothing businesses flourished, with a heavy inflow of customers showing their support for the marginalized community. A lot of racist organisations were also burnt to the ground (Twitter enjoyed cancelling *Dolce and Gabbana* and *Gucci*).

With the rise of demand for statement-making fashion, another industry that is rising up is the fast-fashion industry. Although it sounds like good, cheap and trendy clothing, is it worth the repercussions? Fast fashion companies outsource their manufacturing to countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam, where factory workers are subjected to inhumane and unethical conditions- like child labour, and microscopic pay. With the exploitation of workers comes the exploitation of the environment. In 2015, it was reported that the fashion industry consumes over 90 billion cubic meters of fresh water and emits over a million tonnes of CO2. On top of this, world governments are shying away from cracking down on fast fashion companies- just so that they earn more tax revenue!

Whether we like it or not, the clothes we choose to wear and the brands we choose to support will have an impact on how society views us. Fashion has transgressed from being about superficiality, to something deeper. Fashion is now a way for our generation to empower one another, question narratives, and represent the community you are a part of.

Fashion can maintain and deepen inequality, but it also has the potential to challenge structures of power. I'm a believer in the transformational power of fashion to change how we see ourselves and our place in the world — whether it addresses racial inequality, promotes body positivity, questions gender binaries, or calls for more sustainable industry standards.

FEATURE ARTICLE

THE GENESIS OF MELODY—THE PATHWAY TO ANY HEART

By Rwitika Sarkar, IBDP-1

Rhythm and tune have always existed in nature and there is no denying the fact that generation-to-generation, everyone is connected by musical notes. From natural tunes of wind and sea to the pop music blasting on your radios and earphones, music is everywhere. Being a classical singer for over a decade, I have always wondered when and how this journey of rhythmic beats and chords came to being? The answer to that is rather ambiguous.

Some believe that music in the prehistoric days was derived from the soft sounds and the rhythm laid in nature such as the whistling of the wind through a green land of grass and so on. But the starting point recorded in the history books is the influence of the Ancient Greeks for which the records are too vague to resort to a conclusion. The seven notes we use for any song, known differently in every country- the 'solfège' "Do re mi", the hexachord system " A B C D E F G" major chords, the Indian system "Sa re ga", were created by an Italian monk, Guido D'Arezzo. The discovery he made was that people had trouble memorizing the tune and notes of the chants, like many of us normal citizens still do, and decided to create 4 lines and placed these notes, called the "Neumes", between these 4 lines, creating the musical notes we come across today and use it for learning the tune of any song.

The weird note made here is the role of Pythagoras (c.500-c.570); yes the one who created the Pythagoras theorem, which we learn today. He noticed these regular intervals and numerically presented these creating different octaves and pitches. The fact that mathematics played an important role in the creation of such an artistic concept leads to the thinking that everything in this world is correlated to each other and inventions like these take years of refining to conclude or maybe not.

Through the Renaissance and Baroque eras, these seven notes developed, and in some parts of the world, we consider 12 notes (including the major and the minor notes).

Music is way similar to art than we think it is. Imagine a palette of only 7 base colors and a blank canvas. Creating a masterpiece from just 7 colors would be applause considering the complexity of something like art. But music is similar as these 7 notes are the only ones, which are twisted and turned to create combinations, which make your favorite songs sound way different than each other although the base is the same.

Different emotions are associated with the way these 7-12 notes are assembled in the song. These emotions are based on the Nine Sentiments- Erotic, Humorous, Pathetic, Anger, Heroic, Fearful, Disgustful, Amazement, Peaceful. The importance of music was never lost and has continued to be passed down through generations as a part of culture and tradition. Taking a widely known example of Indian ragas, every raga has a specific time associated with it and although it is not that important in such a modern world we live in, it was one of the main factors of singing these ragas. A hard and fast rule was set that these ragas cannot be sung out of their time because if so, the emotions that should be awoken while hearing these ragas won't even be touched upon. Such as raga Todi created by the ever known Mian Tansen has to be sung in the break of dawn to awake the emotions of a refresh and the feeling of a new day.

These timings have been fixed based on the overall aura as well as the tonal structure of the notes used. These also were a key factor in the season changes. Some ragas were considered to be a monsoon song, as they were believed to have the power to make the clouds align and rain, especially popular amongst farmers as in the past they relied on this music for rains so that their crops were watered. And as absurd it may sound, some of these ragas were believed to cure blood pressure, diabetes as well as depression and anxiety.

Music is also widely associated with the celebrations from the historic times of Durban music echoing in the palace of Mughals to the EDM bass ripping through your ears in birthday parties and so on, music is an invention which can and will never be forgotten as it has been engraved into our development and believe it or not, the chords and beats you hear every day makes a difference in you as a person.



NEON GENESIS EVANGELION: A NEW TAKE ON TECHNIQUE

By Devansh Vajpayee, IBDP-1

"How do you know when to cut?"

Perhaps the question most frequently asked to editors when talking about their process. The answer is simple: you don't.

Editors don't cut based on knowledge, but instinct. They move through the clip with emotion and thought, cutting at just the right time. But how exactly does the editor think and feel?



Here's what you need to know. Editing is all about the eyes. More than any other feature, the character's eyes display the emotion of the scene. To become a great actor, learning to emote through the eyes is far more important than learning to relay it through a dialogue. A change in the eyes can signify a pivotal decision, a game-changer. Shots in which the camera zooms into eyes dripping with emotion are only as powerful as they are because they can work so well in tandem with other shots. For instance, when an editor cuts from the eyes to the object, it tells us, without any words at all, what the character is thinking.





Although it seems simple; emotions take time. When we watch people on a screen, we feel an innate connection to them, and that's because we have time to watch their faces before they speak…

And time to watch them afterwards. Editors have the important power to decide, "How much time do I give this emotion?" These choices are difficult, with no correct answers.



Rhythm is also an important part of editing. Sometimes the rhythm is obvious like when the character is doing something physical.



However, other times it is more subtle, like when characters are simply walking back and forth.

These are closer to what we feel in everyday life and they're often harder to edit, but if you watch anything with enough attention, you can feel the moment when the shot itself is asking you to cut. Classical Hollywood editing is usual cut with the rhythm of the scene. This is regularly brought up as an example for editing being invisible. The edit is so natural that the audience doesn't even notice it. However, it doesn't always have to be invisible; some emotions play better if cut in a jarring way, such as anger and discomfort.



Now let us apply these techniques to one of the most interpretive shows ever made. There's no shortage of theories, speculations and, most importantly, misinterpretations. Something I find very underdiscussed for Neon Genesis Evangelion, and animation as a whole, is its editing. Usually in animations, editing is done in the pre-production, along with the timing and storyboarding. Unfortunately, this doesn't allow the editor to choose the cuts since it's already been decided. Evangelion instead opts for the traditional method used in live action movies and shows. The show often has its backgrounds drawn longer than what can actually fit in the frame to simulate camera movement.

Evangelion has a very striking use of text, utilizing bold impact font and its Japanese equivalent, to break up its flow and even transitioning into new scenes and locations without losing momentum.





The show also uses the common technique of introducing villains from the right and heroes from the left. This is because a majority of the world's population reads from left to right. This philosophy is also why Mario always enters from the left and fights enemies on the right. The show uses trees, people and many other objects as screen wipes to transition more smoothly into the next shot.

Evangelion uses eyes efficiently, and makes the viewer aware of their importance. Many shots end with characters shifting their gaze to something off screen, clueing us in that the next shot is going to be what they are looking at. There are also many close ups of eyes to show real emotion. Eyes are seen as the windows into the soul and hence show the characters' true emotions.





Evangelion uses many of these editing techniques to stand apart from many other shows and is one of the reasons why it is still relevant 2 decades after its release.



FRANKENSTEIN

By Anusha Dharnidharka, IBDP-2

Frankenstein was a book by Mary Shelly which captured the essence of human ingenuity, and the power it held. It emphasized on the disasters lackadaisical usage of this power could bring about. Parallels, unfortunately, can be drawn to our scary reality.

Man saw the immenseness of the world: the distinct and discrete beauty in its abundance of colours, fragrances and harmonies. Man decided that to extract the fullest spirit of mankind, every being must work together, as a whole. So, he strung together fragments of inconceivable codes to design a phenomenal system which pinched closer the north and the south; the east and the west. Idealistic.

Soon after, man returned to inspect his creation. What was supposed facilitate unity had punctured its very basis. His monster had grown to become a scary world of its own. A mesocosm, enriched with hate; abuse and vitriol fertile with the systems convenience. This virtual universe had scrutinized the cracks within mankind, pulling at them to widen the discrepancies. Words cut, and hashtags gashed. A binary bloodbath.

Man saw the need for sustenance. Something that would propel indispensable progress in an overwhelmingly dynamic world. After years of research and countless failures, he forged a way to blitz up insurmountable energy from the splitting of miniscule matter. Man saw this as an absolute victory, as an opportunity to facilitate uninhibited progress.

Years later, man reflected. He saw the particles in the obstinate fumes of his invention continually corrode the insides of innocent, juvenile lungs. Lives and livelihoods had impoverished into the ground, leaving it arid beneath the haunting rubble. Fukushima, Chernobyl, Three Mile Island; the list of its prey ran long. Sure, progress had been made, and the services of the monster in this progress were undeniable. But at what cost?

The best part about the book, perhaps, was that it was fiction.

PASSION: THAT'S ALL IT TAKES

By Taskeen Shaikh, IBDP-1

When I was a kid, around 5-6 years old, I used to tell my parents that I want to be a doctor but like a normal kid my attention flitted from one place to another until I found something that I was utterly fixated upon. I was surrounded by talented artists, directors and actors including my father, who worked in the industry and then went on to become a very successful businessman. He is someone who I have always looked up to and I couldn't have asked for a better father. As I grew older, I began to fall in love with the idea of filmmaking. It's not an easy task to create a film, which only made me want to explore the field to increase my knowledge, so that I can become one of the best directors the world has ever seen. So I took the first step in my journey of greatness.

I directed my very first short film 'The Last Dream' in 2018 when I was 14 years old. I believed that the earlier I start, the more experienced I will be. I always want to be one step ahead of my other fellow peers.

Suicide is one of the main social issues in our world. While there are multiple methods used, a gun is the most frequent means of suicide. It is also likely that suicide by drug overdose is more common than we realise. Many children across the world experience suicidal thoughts because of family problems, stress, relationship issues, insecurities, etc. and I found my calling in requiring to make a film of this caliber, even though I cannot prevent every single child from this act, I can at least utilise my capabilities and talents to create something that can facilitate change.

This film follows the story of a boy who administers sleeping pills to himself. An overdose leads to a bizarrely intimate conversation with Death wherein I bring light on his reasons for attempted suicide and the bittersweet truth of life. Veer finds himself stuck in limbo of neither being dead nor being completely alive, to top it off Death takes him through time in an uneventful yet heartbreaking adventure. This film aims to empower the audience to see the meaning of life and what a gift it truly is.

My friend Miraya Borah is a young writer and after discussing our thoughts together, we came up with this beautiful story. I was so happy to have her on board. My mother, Atiya Shaikh, supported me in every way and produced this film with her own production house '16 Pictures'. My mentor, Prabhuraj, who is a famous director, guided me in every step of the way. This film would be incomplete without the cast : Mitansh Lulla, Divyaa Sharma and Swapnnil Ralkar. I had an amazing experience working with the Director Of Photography, Anuradha Pathak, and all the other departmental heads. It was a huge challenge for me to take part in the pre-production and post-production because of my obligations as a student. However, I found the passion to complete the project with my heart and soul.

I was privileged enough to have my very own film screening where we had directors and actors from every walk of life come and watch my film including all my supportive friends. I was so overwhelmed with the responses that my team and I had received. I want to thank my family because it wouldn't have been possible without my supportive parents.

Till now I have won 4 awards from Agra (Best Debut Director), Mumbai (Young Director), Bhutan (Best Young Filmmaker) and Ayodhya (Young Filmmaker Award). I am yet to see if the film will be graced with more awards as we apply to more film festivals all around the world. I thank Allah for this incredibly beautiful adventure.

THE MUSICAL RHAPSODY OF LIFE

By Amyshka Shenoy, Grade 9

Music plays such an important role in our lives,

It makes one smile whenever it arrives,

Mere words can unravel a story never told,

It makes you feel warm inside, even if it's cold.

Music helps people get through the toughest of days,

With its unknown but yet beautiful ways.

I sit here listening to the time tick by,

Waiting for the joy that only music can supply.

Life has its up and downs, so we all know,

If today was tough, just know there is always tomorrow,

Rhythms and beats in our daily lives are vital,

From the beating of our heart to our daily recital.

Never give up and keep chasing your dream,

Don't let anything anything bring down your self esteem,

You have a unique melody hidden within,

Waiting for your new adventure to begin.

Just go with flow as they all say,

Because something new will await you everyday.

HEALTH



FEATURE ARTICLE

INTERMITTENT FASTING

By Saanchi Shah IBDP-1

Over the past few years, Intermittent Fasting has surfaced across several social media platforms and is deemed to be one of the most effective and creative techniques to reach the pinnacle of one's health and lose excess fat. For the uninitiated, intermittent fasting is a pattern that revolves around specific periods of fasting and eating. Its central premise specifies not what to eat, rather when to eat it. Experts define this type of fasting as a lifestyle as opposed to rigid diet, they deem this to be more natural than our conventional three or more meals per day. There are various versions of intermittent fasting, the most common being the 16/8 method, which involves restricting one's eating period to 8 hours and then fasting for 16 hours.

The fasting allows for increased levels of Human Growth Hormone to be produced, researchers claim that it could increase by up to 5-fold after a fasting period of 2 days. This is a natural method to help with fat loss and muscle gain, with virtually no side effects. Furthermore, this hormone aids in the maintenance of lean mass, both muscle and bone. Secondly, fasting is proven to have lasting effects regarding insulin and blood sugar levels. It has been found that blood sugar while fasting can drop by 6%, thus, offering protection against Type 2 Diabetes. It has also been seen through a research in rats that fasting protects against kidney damage, one of the most severe complications in diabetes. However, studies have also shown a deterioration in women's blood sugar control after an intermittent fasting period of 22 days, but no such effect was seen in men. Additionally, insulin levels in blood experience a decline, facilitating fat burn in a natural manner.

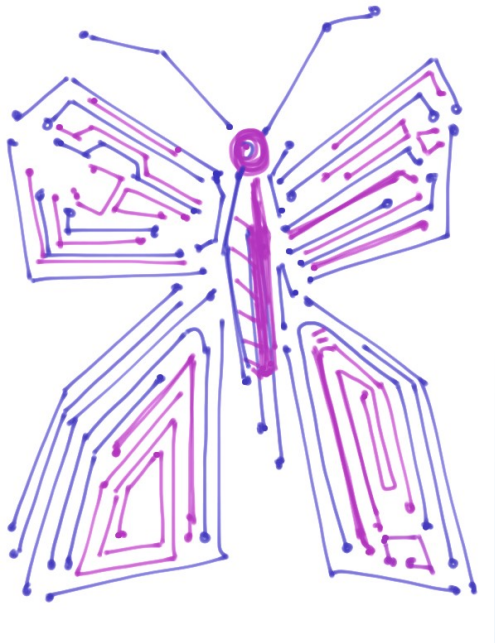
Research has also found that intermittent fasting alters the function of cells and genes. The body induces several essential growth and repair processes, such as autophagy, the removal of waste products from cells, while it is fasting. This primarily involves breaking down dysfunctional proteins that build up in our cells over time, this is shown to lend protection against cancer and Alzheimer's disease. Studies have also shown that fasting can reduce the side-effects caused by chemotherapy. Furthermore, the changes in gene expression are said to offer protection against diseases and lead to longevity and better quality of life in one's later years. To simply put it, when we live our conventional lifestyle with an average of 3 meals, our body is far too occupied with digesting all the food to focus on the growth and repair of cells. By fasting, we train our body to accept food for a stipulated period of time, allowing the body to focus on growth during other times of the day.

Experts claim that intermittent fasting may be beneficial for heart health, which is currently the world's biggest killer, estimated to cause 17.9 million deaths every year. As aforementioned, intermittent fasting can improve numerous risk factors that are known to cause cardiovascular diseases, such as cholesterol levels and triglycerides, thereby, reducing chances of getting heart diseases. However, many of these studies have been conducted on animals, therefore, not much can be said about the effectiveness of fasting on humans and whether or not any recurring negative impacts are seen.

Some noteworthy effects of fasting are those that are seen on the brain. The new cells and disease-fighting capabilities that are developed allow a person to think with greater clarity, allowing for further focus and extended attention span. A study even went to show that a 'sensible' fitness regime goes a long way in reducing depression and anxiety levels, also increasing serotonin levels in the body, enabling the person to feel happier than usual. However, an important aspect to note in this, is the use of 'sensible' in the study by Yocheved Golani, a Health Information Management professional. In this case, it is evident that it refers to a eating plan that caters specifically to an individual's body as opposed to a generic 'One-size fits all' type of meal plan. So, from this, we can deduce that in order to avail these literally 'mind-altering' benefits of fasting, it needs to be done carefully with guidance from an expert.

Given all the aforementioned arguments, it seems that intermittent fasting is a method to guarantee weight loss and several other benefits while minimising the negative effects caused by common prescription drugs. However, fasting is, in essence, abstaining from food; so, given the lasting effects of abstinence from food, there must be some negative side effects of fasting on our body. It could result in increased cortisol levels as fasting can be perceived as stress on the body due to food deprivation for long periods of time. This leads to an increase in the fat stores. Furthermore, studies have also shown that intermittent fasting can hinder one's fitness goals by reducing energy levels or causing one to run out of glycogen stores.

To wrap up, it is evident that Intermittent Fasting has numerous benefits, detached from the aspects of vanity, it also offers protection against diabetes and several fatal diseases. Having said that, the effectiveness of this regime depends on various factors and this lifestyle is definitely tricky for beginners. In my opinion, with any fitness or dietary regime, the main aim is to make it a sustainable lifestyle in order to maintain the health benefits and dodge the adverse effects that are presented by the rigorous fitness practices.



FINDING YOURSELF

By Khushi Rao, IBDP-2

Have you ever sat down with a pile of your portfolios, report cards and achievements from you when you were young, most probably from the first or second grade, and thought that ok "let's stop here" but still kept digging further and further, as if you were trying to find or better rediscover yourself within a pile of your old stuff, within a pile of the old you. Maybe because you were feeling lost, maybe because you don't know who you are anymore, maybe cause your life is so messed up all you want to do is remember and reminisce about those times, those days. To when you had nothing else to worry about. To when the hardest decision you ever had to make was "which toy should I play with'. To when your school used to be filled with happy faces rather than reeking of stress and anxiety. To when friends didn't break your heart or leave you isolated when you were stressed. To when heart breaks and patch ups weren't a part of your daily routine. To when fights with your parents didn't exist. I don't know about all of you, but I would definitely like to go back to when this was the case. To when we didn't worry about the tiniest issues in our lives. To when we didn't obsess over things that were beyond our control. To when we felt like waking up and facing a new day and new people every day. To when we weren't accustomed to fake friendships or toxic relationships.

When we look back and reminisce those days, we realize how toxic and artificial our lives have actually become. The constant fighting, be it with our friends, families or significant others. These days all we think about is how do we excel in our lives or how do we maintain our relationships with others. In this mess we have forgotten to care about ourselves, started to experience stress and anxiety and even gone into depression. The list is endless. These are the reasons we constantly keep going back, we keep digging, we keep revisiting the town of nostalgia again and again, in the hope of rediscovering ourselves in the pile of our old achievements, within a pile of who we used to be, within a pile of the best versions of ourselves. But sometimes this trip fails, it fails to meet our expectation, it makes us think about how we have changed, it makes us realize that we are not the same immature individuals anymore, it shows us that we have evolved, we have evolved into the best possible version of ourselves that there could be, the version that makes us feel confident, the version that we are for ourselves and not for or because of someone else, but most of all it shows how far we have come, it shows us our journey!

MASKED FATALITY

By Amyshka Shenoy, Grade 9

In a world like ours, we are told to stay strong,

to keep our problems to ourselves and to show the world that we belong.

But sometimes our woes get too strong to hide,

with the tide of emotions we just sat and cried,

but we mustn't, oh we mustn't.

Since crying is for the weak,

and our feelings aren't important to the world that we seek.

So we put on those facades, those smiles that bear so much pain

Since anguish will bring one no gain

and go on with our day hoping no one sees tears brimming in ones eyes.

Because the world keeps moving, so we keep saying these fatal lies.

We wear a mask of joy everyday,

but hope that secretly your eyes don't betray.

So the masks stay on, and the world goes by,

hoping the ticking bomb of tears will comply.

ANXIETY MY OLD FRIEND

By Yesha Shah, IBDP-1

The walls are closing in and I cannot breathe

This is not exaggeration, I promise, but reality.

The madness in my head, I cannot get it out, I fail to speak and I fail to be loud.

They call it anxiety, but I call it society

Society put me here, and I have no say

I take a step forward, only to pay a price

Sometimes I wonder, if I wasn't wise?

Nights are the hardest, hence I await the sunrise

But down I fall and lose myself in this spiral and in this mess.

My heart skips a beat, I lose control with my vision being blurry I am simply a dead soul.

Heavy breathing, I cry as I indulge into the darkness, waiting for a voice to say

"Hey, it's going to be okay."

Loneliness is my best friend, the only one who wouldn't leave

I decided to fight back and now it is your turn!

Take this as a challenge, do not quit, I promise this is not the end, days will get better,

'Anxiety my old friend' your time is now over.

LIFE OF MIRTH

By Amyshka Shenoy, Grade 9

I'll never be successful is what they say,

But I won't give them the time of my day.

My capabilities are in my hands,

It's time for me to listen to my own commands.

I'll go through it all one day at a time,

The ladder to success is the one I will climb,

Life moves on and so will I,

I will spread my wings and I will fly,

Failure is an integral part of who I am,

But I won't be defined by a single exam.

Repercussions are a part of life as it is,

I can't be let down by a silly quiz,

I'll keep my friends close in my heart,

Even when we are miles apart.

I might face hurdles along the way,

But I'll face it head on everyday.

That's how life is, so you see,

It shapes you up to who you want to be.

The world might spin, quickly and fasten its pace,

But that doesn't mean I'll back down from this race.

BULLET JOURNALING

By Parnika Saxena, IBDP-1



Every time I mention to someone that I am fond of "bullet journals", they ask me "what's a bullet journal", and every time I have to answer back with an obnoxious answer "it is like a miniature planner, where you can throw in your creativity". This may not sound as obnoxious to the reader, as it sounds to me. Although, I think I have finally managed to come up with a proper definition.

Let me rephrase what bullet journaling actually means to me. Bullet journaling according to me, is a way to express yourself, fill your life with colours that was once black and white, and to manage your life in the way you wish to.

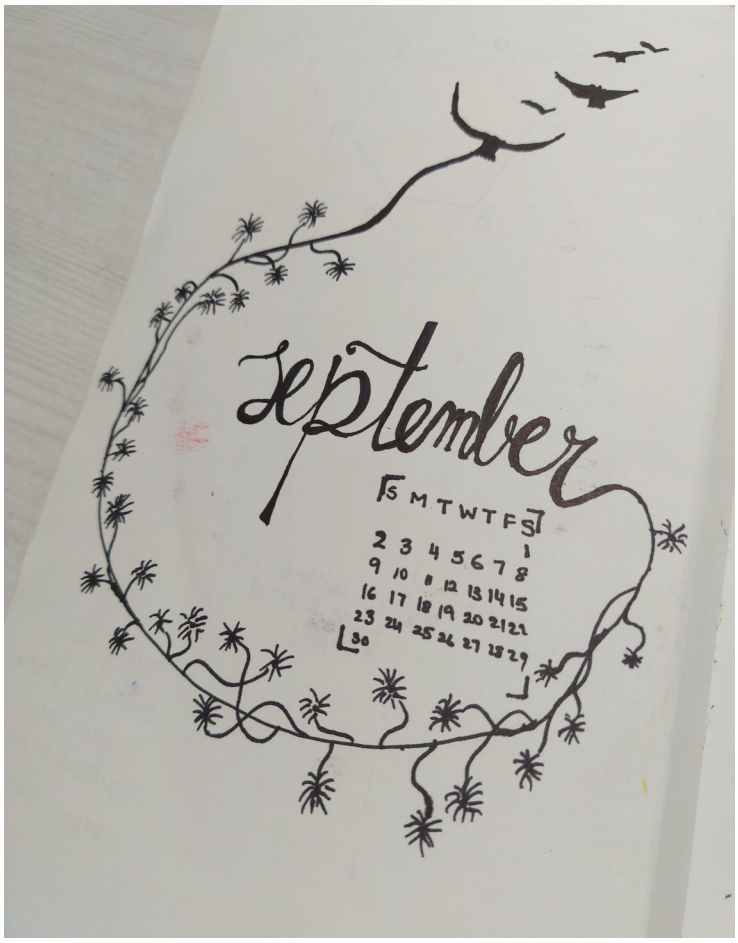
It not only keeps track of your to do list, but also reflects on your personal growth and development. If you are an artistic person or enjoy doodling, maybe bullet journaling can be starter for your career in design and arts!

Ryder Carroll, a college student who was diagnosed with attention deficit disorder, came up with the method of bullet journaling to cope up with the learning disabilities, in the 1990s. He then shared this technique with the rest of the world in 2013, through social media. Within few years, this method was being used worldwide to cope with work stress, and mental health issues as well. The hype for bullet journals increased in December, 2018, with over 3 million Instagram posts of bullet journals created by individuals.

The craze started in 2018 for me as well. When I saw bullet journalists on Pinterest creating new designs for their bullet journals, it inspired me immensely. I started off with a black and white template since I was not very keen on using different colours. A white blank journal, and a black pen. That's it. Pinterest was the only app I used to gain inspiration to create my own designs. As I got used to the daily or weekly planning, I started to witness more free gaps in my schedule, allowing me to give time to do activities I was not able to do before. I would create the template for the upcoming week, track all the work I had to get done, extra activities I had to complete, and almost every day stick to the schedule I had planned for myself. I started to spend my free time on decorating my bullet journal, filling it with colours and creativity, that soothed me very much.

With this, I also noticed better grades. The growth was slow initially, but with the help of a bullet journal, I learned time management skills, a key element to survive IB. Furthermore, if you are going through depression or experience high levels of anxiety, starting a bullet journal could be a way to revitalise your mental health. Art can be soothing, and with bullet journal being a part planner and part diary, they can often be used to stay organised and motivated to work towards a single long-term goal. For instance, every time I felt anxious or nervous in a class, I would remove my bullet journal from my bag and doodle or note few things down while listening to others. It allowed me to feel less overwhelmed. Not only that, bullet journals can also be saved and kept as a memoire of your teenage or childhood years, and the vibrant creativity that you possess.

If you are not the person who would like to create a physical journal, you can always find bullet journal apps that can allow you to create a virtual one and keep track of every little idea or plan you have in mind. This is the beauty of a bullet journal. You can create a bullet journal that portrays and illustrates you, and have the freedom to let your thoughts and ideas flow from your mind to a blank piece of paper! Implement your ideas to actual life with the help of a bullet journal. Happy bullet journaling!



A SEED IN BETWEEN 13 PLANTS

By Suhaani Shah, Grade 8

When I was born on the 1st of August 2007 and took a glimpse of this colourful world through my miniature, green eyes, I was met with a heart-melting sight, I saw faces of several earthlings (who turned out to be my family) light up in happiness. My mother was as joyful as a poor man with a bag of gold. Her 'what a beautiful daughter!' tears spoke out to me clearly, after having a connection with these enthusiastic and prodigious people for nine months I could understand their contentment. After spending 12 cheerful months with my family of 13 citizens, on my 1st birthday, I finally spoke out my first word-'mamma'. Like a typical Gujarati family, with a typical mindset of showing off my grandpa phoned all of his pals and proudly announced, 'my lovely daughter just said out her first word-mamma, my baby is growing so big so quickly.' That was the day I learnt 'just remember you're never too big to be on your own so, no matter what happens these magnificent men and wondrous women are never going to leave your side'

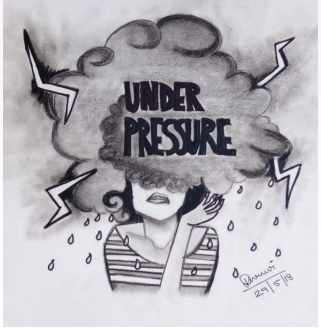
And they didn't! During these times of crisis when the demon of COVID-19 has swallowed the world each one of my loving family members has held each one of my fingers. Every morning as my eyelids open, a thought of: 'today I am going to try something new' pops up in my mind. However, that's when I remind myself that we are currently suffering through a lockdown, which leads to a dull face and a blue mood. Well, when I shared these thoughts of mine with my grandfather, he replied," suffering? You think we are the ones suffering, well, we are the ones safe, secure and away from the suffering, away from the dangerous disease of COVID-19." He continued saying," a piece of advice? When you and your fellow members are giving up something for your family's safety and benefit there is nothing to regret or crib about because family comes before luxury, money and job. If you have to give up 400 workers for the well-being of your family we shall not hesitate. Also, isn't that exactly what dad did?" These precious words, told to me at the beginning of the curfew are still etched in my mind and help to motivate me to be positive and pragmatic about this adverse situation that not only me but all families in India are going through. This little event tells me, rather asks me 'do you think everyone in this world has the advantage or opportunity to have such an experienced member amongst them with such awe-inspiring and splendid thoughts?

To conclude, I shall remind myself to thank god to give me this opportunity of living with 13 awesome people for it has certainly helped me to consider different perspectives, understand other men's feelings and emotions and finally, to understand the key to a successful and happy relationship-'to let it go.'

TEEN TROUBLES TODAY

By Khushi Rajani, IBDP-1

Courtesy: Dhruvi Wala



As teenagers, we are stuck in a very puzzling stage in our lives. Most people don't know whether to treat us as children or adults. In my experience as a teenager, I honestly don't know either: I don't want to bear too much responsibility; I like being carefree and not bothered by the consequences of my actions. However, at the same time, I wouldn't like to be berated by my parents as if I were a child. I feel that academic pressure and peer pressure are the two most excruciatingly exhausting things we, as teenagers in the 21st century, face. Let's talk about each of these individually.

In today's highly competitive world, we face tremendous academic pressure. Our college admissions depend on the grades we get at the end of high school and our jobs depend on which college we graduate from. To put it simply, our future depends on how well we study from a young age. This thought adds heaps of stress to our already demanding lives. Moreover, we are expected to develop various skills over the course of our schooling time. For instance, we have to improve our communication and social skills, as well as indulge and excel in various extra-curricular activities. This creates an immense pressure, a pressure which results in problems like depression, anxiety, and stress disorders. This creates a loop, a downfall in our academic performance is likely to result into us feeling more depressed or even worthless.

While we know how harmful too much academic pressure can be, it can also be viewed positively. Academic pressure pushes us to do our best, it prepares us for the real world. Therefore, we have to learn how to deal with academic pressure so that it is not too overwhelming for us. The best way to do this, I've found, is to be organized. Budget your time and plan your study hours well. This way we will be able to enjoy our lives while excelling in our academics at the same time.

We humans follow certain rules that society sets for us. We behave in certain manners and learn certain etiquettes, just to fit in with the people around us. Likewise, our peers in high school also have many expectations from us. No one wants to be the kid who sits alone at lunch and has no one to talk to, we want to fit in. This is precisely why we easily get influenced by our friends; they knowingly or unknowingly pressurize us to change our attitudes, values and behaviors to conform to the socially acceptable conventions in high school. It can range from smallest of things, like skipping lectures to something much worse, like underage drinking. We usually give in to peer pressure because we don't want to be picked on by our friends, or simply because everyone else is doing it. What we don't realize is that we are losing ourselves while trying to fit in with others. We end up doing things that we normally wouldn't even think about doing- like taking drugs. Giving into peer pressure usually means self-destruction. However, there are a few positives. Peer pressure can also be about our friends pushing us out of our comfort zones because they want us to get the complete high school experience. At times, we could be pressurized into doing the right things like being more goal oriented, working on our physical fitness or learning a new technology or an art form.

The easiest way to deal with peer pressure is to leave the friends that don't accept us the way we are and force us to change. We have to be ourselves, remember our values and find friends who like us for who we are.

All in all, we teenagers, are confused human beings, who have struggles that may not seem minute but in reality, they are. We need to learn to stand up for what we believe in and learn to man-up and deal with our troubles. While we may not be adults, we aren't children anymore, which means we know what's good for us. This is the time when we have to start acting responsibly and not succumb to any kind of pressure.

We may not be able to control the situation and its consequence, but we definitely can control our attitude and how we deal with it.

REFLECTIONS ON THE LOCKDOWN

By Darinn Carvalho, Grade 9

"When asked if my cup is half full or half empty, my only response is - I am thankful I have a cup".

As I ponder on these lines, I look at the situation around me; never had we imagined that we would be at a standstill today, in this century, by a virus. My knowledge of science had convinced me that illnesses are something of the past, nothing to be feared about anymore, vaccines and treatments are available for every known ailment and then it hit me....what about the unknown?

As 2020 rolled in, with so much happiness and fun- the start of the new decade as we called it, the start of all things good and new, new resolutions, new hobbies, etc. The past few weeks have turned it into a horror story, a nightmare unfolding before our eyes daily- the Coronavirus, a disease with no cure.

My parents are not the type to sit at home with a simple cough or cold, let alone a mild fever and honestly, I grew up with the same attitude. But soon their confident and relaxed attitudes started changing as they heard the news daily. Their fears turned to paranoia when the lockdown got initiated in India. I personally thought it was too much fuss over a common cold just because it is caused by a virus which has no cure right? We have immune systems for that. But no one seemed to pay attention to what I said. I was ignored and overlooked. A simple sneeze in class during the final days of school term got me such a weird reaction from my friends, that they bolted to the other end of the class like I was an untouchable. A mad dog with rabies. Luckily, just as the lockdown was initiated, my spring break begun.

Thankfully it was not the Christmas season because then I would have been really upset. So now it honestly didn't bother me too much, as I am more of a homebody, a loner and introvert, happy in my own company... well most of the time. So nothing pleased me more to just be at home, chill out in front of the television, with the air conditioning on full blast and Dad's delicious recipes rolling out daily. In fact I had it all planned out, 10 episodes of anime daily along with two manga comics from my unlimited library. It was pure bliss… at the start.

After a week, things started to change. I started getting restless with Mom and Dad at home too, daily, from morning to night. It began to get to me in a weird way. The constant updates on the news of our area getting quarantined, the fear of going out to buy essentials, going fully masked and gloved like getting suited up as an action hero ready to take on the enemy, the constant need to wash or sanitise your hands. It started to worry me more than I would admit. I tried to ignore the conversations between my parents as they heard the news daily- sometimes even twice or thrice a day initially, especially when they spoke about friends and colleagues they knew who were infected. Deep down I felt the fear creeping into me too. When would the situation get better? What if it got worse?

Mom and Dad tried their best to keep things around me as normal as possible. They tried to hide their concern from me but I sensed it. They made me take up new hobbies like drawing and sketching my favourite anime characters along with reading. I pursued it with a fevered passion, keeping a target of three days per book, just not to let my mind wander and of course the plus point of being immersed in a totally different and happy world. And just when all was going well, the onset of the new term of school beginning brought on the emergence of an additional cause for anxiety. Don't get me wrong, it's not that I don't like school or anything, it was getting accustomed to something new- virtual online classes. I had the experience of a few online classes during the spring break from workshops and music sessions, but school? I wasn't prepared for that. The first couple of days, like most teens with raging hormones, I was filled with irritation. It was nothing like my past experiences of online classes. One could constantly hear me yelling, "Ma.. the internet has conked… now look what you've done… can you please disconnect other gadgets from the wifi?.. I missed assembly yet again… Ma'am's going to be pissed at me… Dad can I use your laptop? Mine seems to have frozen…All can hear ma'am … why can't I? Should I use headphones?"

Mom and Dad are usually the calm types who never shout back, but now they too seemed to be under the stress of the lockdown They both screamed back at me, "Its high time you check your gear before class starts. You are big enough to handle your own things," etc. etc. as they had their own issues- the ghar ka khana has to be done, dusting karna hai… will only sweeping suffice today? Does the swabbing need to be done too? etc. etc. Things were more difficult as now not only the house maid but also the cook was absent and under lockdown. No way any virtual online cleaning or cooking session could help them. But we've all learned to cope in our own ways as the days passed. We learnt to adapt to the situation. In no time we landed up finding fun things to do, like watching movies together- a common passion we all share as a family and trust me there is no greater joy than watching horror movies in the dark, cheating at monopoly or cards, playing old board games of Life, ludo and snakes and ladders- my childhood favourite, rebuilding old lego sets, following in Dad's footsteps by trying out new recipes, doing yoga together etc.

All in all, this lockdown has shown me how to take care of my mind, how flexing the muscles of the mind daily help in controlling one's fears and anxieties, how to take care of my body with good hygiene and exercise and most of all, how to take care of my soul. It made me realise that most of us take little things for granted. Spending time with my family made me realise that I should always be thankful for life's simple pleasures, being surrounded by the family I love, safe in the confines of my cosy home, with food on my table, good health and the sound of laughter…

Because at the end of the day it's not the happy people who are thankful but the thankful people who are happy.

THANK YOU PODAR!

By Shritanjay Bhatia, Alumni 2018

I joined Podar in the sixth Grade. It has been a pleasure to be a part of such a school throughout secondary and high school. I would say there are a lot of experiences at Podar that have helped me in my career, journey at university, and setting a foundation.

It is rare to find a school that has such a personalized and unique path for each student. This personal touch has made a lifelong connection with each teacher who has taught me from grade six to twelve.

The application process to university became so smooth after being in a school where each teacher, and coordinator personally knew me. My applications would not have been as strong, without the stunning reference and recommendation letters that I received.

I got into ten out of the eleven universities that I had applied to. I decided to go to UBC, with an eighty-thousand-dollar scholarship.

At UBC, I founded the first ever cricket club. I garnered more than four thousand dollars worth of sponsorship, and had more than hundred paid members within the first four months of commencement.

A lot of this was inspired by my experience as the senior sports captain at Podar. Studying Canadian Literature, Mathematics, and Economics was a lot easier after receiving top quality education from such qualified teachers at Podar.

THE CHAIN OF DROPLETS

Queen's Commonwealth 2020 Gold Award Winner

By Aishwarya Potdar, Alumni 2020

One.
The Gods.
It's their concern.
From Hindu's Lord Varuna
to the divine blue boy Krishna,
From Poseidon, Greek God of sea
to the Goddess Mazu, as in Chinese,
All shed tears when beautiful coastlines
are encroached by ugly, acrid pipelines
The distraught heavens and angels cry
unable to watch their Earth go dry
They created this planet after all
they should fix this pitfall.
It's their concern.

Two.
The Royals.
It's their concern.
They're superbly wealthy
So, cost is their responsibility
They pay for all, it's called equity,
it's what's only fair for you and me
In debt and poverty, we need finance,
fundings from the elite is our chance
To protect pearly corals in our seas,
let's impose giant austere duties
They must repair all the loss,
they can buy this chaos.
It's their concern.

Three.
The Common.
It's their concern.
Indulging in every strife,
They threaten our marine life
To the ocean, they've bid adieu,
Each time, filling it with toxic brew
Living their lives in a self-serving slur,
They've never cared about their future
Heedless, opportunistic, and unmindful
Each fish they see, each reel they pull
Hiding chemicals in their vile inns,
They have to pay for their sins
It's their concern.

Four.
The Peasants.
When we transgress,
They always clear our mess
No, no. We're not being 'blunt'
In our society, they are the servants
Some drown in circulating ocean gyres
Few get marine infections, breathe hellfire
They bear the consequence, it's a bummer,
But it's fair, because they hold no power
The ocean water is their sole livelihood
They keep it clean, as they should
It's their concern.

Five.
The Animals.

It's their concern.
Protecting one's abode
How can that be our load?
Our purpose is to be economical
What humans do stays indispensable
If birds and turtles get stuck in plastic,
How do we become abusive and toxic?
It's survival of the fittest, a game of dice
Humans pollute within need; not choice
Animals should strive, survive, thrive
Protect themselves and stay alive
It's their concern

Six.
The Chain of Being.

Tiptop, tiptop, tiptop, tiptop, tiptop.
Each blue droplet is a sorrowful teardrop

Every single time you blame others, you hide behind
Turning your back on the ocean, acting foolish and blind

Is it because you never seem to care or never seem to dare?
Criticizing others, disregarding all the signs that say 'BEWARE!'

No, no, it's not me, it's them, it's those on the Great Chain of Being!
But you ignore that you're a part too, it's a change we ALL must bring!

Untreated sewage, poisonous pesticides and all the sickening garbage…
It's our fault, our responsibility, our obligation to resolve this wreckage

Life, oxygen, climate, remedy, recreation: the oceans are magnanimous
Then, why being its prime beneficiaries, we create such a huge ruckus?

Oh dear, the old phrase has a literal meaning now, let me quote:
Remember little ones, "We're all sailing in the same boat"

Ocean is our saviour, our unifier, it's our mother
It's always our pride, majesty and honour!
Let's all be droplets of our ocean
It's our concern.

THE MASSACRE OF ORADOUR SUR GLANE

By Vanshika Sood, Alumni 2020

The massacre of Oradour sur glane was the war of greed
Where innocent lives were taken even when they pleaded to be freed

The conditions never got better, they worsened for the worse
It felt like drowning in water; fully submerged

I saw homes being banished and people beaten to bleed
I saw children screaming for their mothers who were snatched from them mercilessly

I couldn't help but wonder what ever happened to our peaceful little town?
What deed did we commit that turned our world upside down?

Was it the old lady that lived by the river?
Did she commit the horrifying deed to feed the stomach of those in need
Or
Was it every other citizen of this little town who put others before their own selves, and stood united from ground?

But of course the truth doesn't matter, it never did
What good would my testimony do if no one believed in it?

Who would ever believe that my town was as pure as gold
And it wasn't my peoples neck but the Waffen SS soldiers neck to behold

"I fear no evil for you are with me"
started the mortician with a voice so lowly
Then began my wife with her eulogy
Tear stained cheeks and a figure now so bony, I hardly recognised the woman she once used to be

"Oh dear husband your soul lays buried deeply
For it was not of you, none of us could be flying so freely

In your eyes laid courage and in your heart kindness that one won't be able to reap

But like the Phoenix rose from the ashes, and Jesus from the dead you shall too dear husband
Although until then, goodbye is all that is said"

While she laid down the body and lowered the casket
It's in that moment when I realised that I was actually dead

Was my sacrifice a gain or was it all for vain?
An answered I'd never know
But what I did know was that I was a fighter and a proud resident of Oradour sur glane

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING US

By Aman Mehta, Alumni 2020



Imagine a creature over your head watching all your activities and gaining all insights about what you do on your phone. This creature thrives on creeping into your privacy and gaining information about your life. It's not a time to imagine anymore, it has, sadly, become our reality. In some way, the social media platforms have become an eerie but ubiquitous presence in all our lives.

This article isn't advocating "Science and Technology" but one that brings out all that it has done to psychologically injure us; a necessary **warning** for all of us.

I gained inspiration to write this after watching a documentary on Netflix called, 'The Social Dilemma'. This eye-opener highlights the terror social media imposes upon us. It raises issues of privacy, addiction and mental health on its users. Former employees of Facebook and Twitter come along to show us the ways in which Artificial Intelligence can affect our daily lives for the sole reason that these ruthless companies can gain money.

All throughout school, we often learn about the harm computers and technology can do to us. It was always taught in terms of the physical damage prolonged use of technology can cause; the harm done to your neck, back, eyes and wrists. However, we never extensively learnt the psychological injuries prolonged use can cause.

I have often seen many students taking a "social media break" during exam season (I did this too). If we are so aware of its impact on us and our productivity, why haven't we taken bolder steps to get rid of it completely? Even after these small periods of time without it, we usually succumb to it, but I guess it's time for us to control it more than being controlled by it. Do we really want our daily lives to be controlled by a group of programmers who need us to spend as much time as we can on our phones for their commercial benefit.

The dopamine effect. This is the reason why we could spend so much time on social media. Using social media produces and releases dopamine (a hormone that plays a role in how we perceive happiness and is often released upon eating good food or exercising). A small notification on Instagram can be perceived as attention from a social network, leading to the release of dopamine (= gratification and happiness). And, but naturally, the human brain will seek methods to attain more and more gratification. This is the reason why you can mindlessly spend hours and hours on a social media platform without realising or being bored of it. The internet has become an evil and daunting creature that provides us small dopamine treats to lure us into its trap.

Another reason which makes us stay on the platform for a long time is their clever use of AI. It has learnt our likes and dislikes and it shows us photos and videos in a particular order to maximise our time spent on the platform. Also, many people have the fear of missing out ('FOMO') which makes them addicted to social media because they don't want to be away from a place where most people are present.

There have already been several privacy concerns: bullying, harassment, stalking, hate speech and spread of unsolicited images amongst other issues. In the name of marketing and viewership strategies, these platforms have access to *everything, everything (likes, comments, messages sent, time spent looking at a photo or a video, etc.) you do on social media. Big Brother is always watching.*

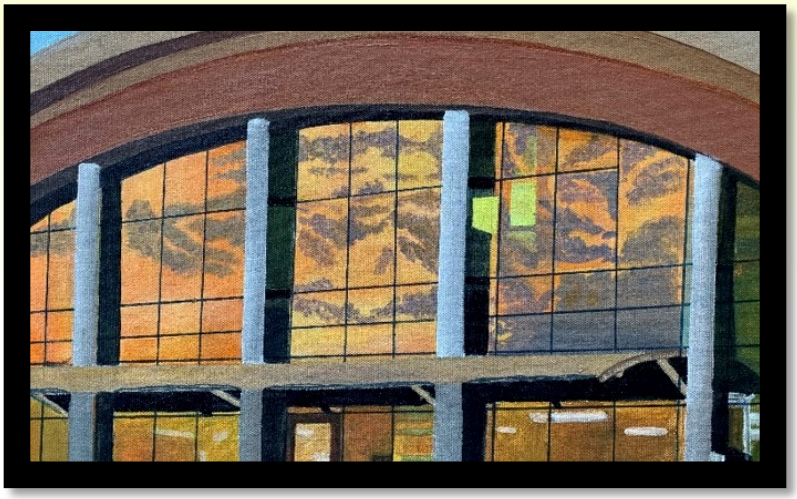
Amongst these concerns regarding mental health, privacy, addiction and academic performance, there are a few things that we must do to moderate, rather than completely stop, our use of social media. The first thing you could do is turn off all notifications from the application, this will instantly reduce your time spent on it since you get rid of the urgency to respond to every notification. Second, you should check your time spent on your phone (it really will be an eye opener) and there are many options present to lock the application after a set amount of time. You might just go the distance and take extreme measures to get rid of it all at once.



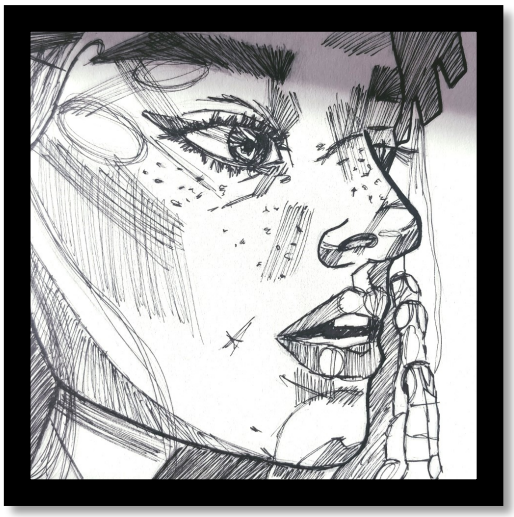
ALUMNI

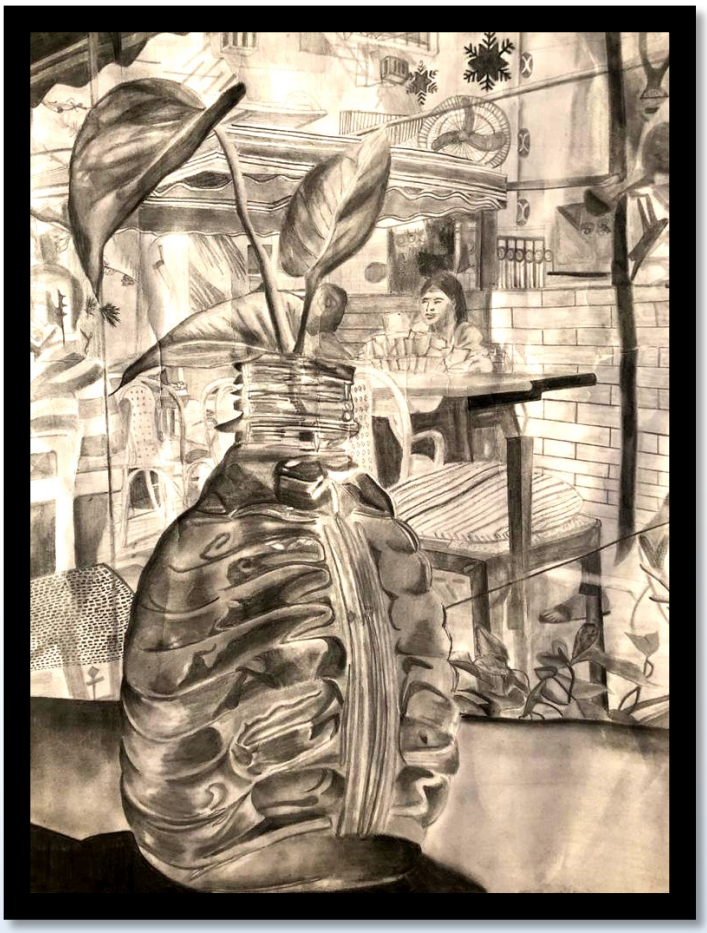
ARTWORKS

By Eryn Wali, Alumni 2020











FACULTY

CHANGING NEGATIVE THOUGHTS TO POSITIVE

By Dr. Anju Rani Yadav, Psychology Faculty & Therapist

Being in the negative frame of mind is extremely difficult, challenging and stressful. None of us want to be in that frame of mind. The major issue with these negative thoughts is that they occur automatically. You might consciously try to control them but you will notice that your mind constantly leads you to those same thoughts.

Therefore, it's important to bring about a change in these negative thoughts.

The first step towards doing this is to identify your current **Thinking style**.

Are you rating yourself in terms of your success or failure in every situation? Then you are involved in the 'Black and White' thinking distortion.

Similarly, there are various cognitive distortions or faulty thinking patterns such as Overgeneralization, Catastrophizing or jumping to conclusions. If you use any of these unhelpful thinking patterns then you might be distorting the reality and giving some irrational explanations for your behavior.

An awareness about these cognitive distortions makes people simply ignore or just tell themselves to stop thinking negatively. This provides only temporary solution but deep down you are dumping all these negative thoughts in your unconscious mind. So rather than suppressing these thoughts face them and deal with them. One way is by maintaining a **thought diary** where you must record the situation in which your negative thoughts got triggered, what were the thoughts specifically and what emotions you experienced. This will help you to understand the reason behind your irrational thought processes and also help you remove all the negative thoughts on a paper.

The next strategy that you can use is being **mindful.** This can be done by sitting in a quiet place in a relaxed manner. Focus on your breathing and then try to detach yourself from all the negative thoughts.

Another way to deal with this is to be more **assertive**. Your inner critical voice will stop you from doing certain actions and thus you will end up in the same miserable thought pattern. So take the step of being assertive, practice it with your own self at home and then implement it in the real world situations.

Lastly, if you feel that you are struggling with your negative thought patterns and these thoughts are impacting your life decisions then you can seek help from a Cognitive Behaviour Therapist (CBT) who can help you change your negative thought patterns to positive ones and help you take rational decisions.

FACULTY

WHERE WOULD I RATHER QUARANTINE

By Rohit Vaswani, Mathematics Faculty

For a lot of you I might be this nerdy math soul living the so called boring life of a math teacher, though I'd bet on anything to disagree that, only to be fortunate to see this surreal world of mathematics and experience the beauty of it but I'd let that be a discussion for some other time. Today, I would like to talk about something that I am equally passionate about (Yes! There exists one over and above math) and that's TRAVEL.

I think the nomad bug in me brings out the best side of me when I travel and experience different cultures, meet different people, experience the food and just the whole world that it takes you is something I wouldn't be wrong in saying that I truly live for. This year however due to the global pandemic unfortunately all our travel plans went kaput. On my patio, as I sat one day a thought just crossed my mind, where would I rather quarantine had I known something like this were to happen. Came in, a rush of places, architecture, food and all the other things that I had experienced in my previous trips.

So I thought, let me share my top 3 spots where I would rather quarantine myself

Pick 1:

The sand dunes of Jaisalmer desert. Sleep under the open sky and trip on the dunes. The idea of isolation has not been a strange one. In my travels, every now and then, I seek the most distant location (as much as I can) away from civilization (very difficult in India) and choose a spot with the best look out. The less the number of people the better it is. Perhaps it's perfect with your best friends and with the few chosen ones (or may I add with the chosen one). But life is imperfect. Only if, I could, foresee the future, I would have escaped to this place my soul fancies. To settle my mind at and perch my lower half at, while I do absolutely nothing. Alright, maybe sip on some 'garam' chai (coz finding less sweet and proper proportioned coffee here can be a task) and stare at the horizon, sky, clouds, moon and sun despite the mercury retrograde

Pick 2:

The pristine, uncorrupted and tranquil land of waterfalls at the Havasupai Indian reservation. The air, water and earth at Havasupai is the most immaculate, uninterrupted and raw, of all I have experienced. Every adjective is an understatement to describe this surreal landscape. Situated at 8 miles away from the nearest road, it needs walking down the canyon and then in between them for 5 – 6 hours to reach this magical land. Here the nature speaks to you with a constant humming, only that she does it without the humming. The camping grounds are situated between two deep/long waterfalls. The sound of water is constant and the ground feels like nature's cradle which soothes you with a lullaby. It's calming and grounding. Without a doubt, the undisputed champion of place to do absolutely nothing but surrender to the energy of the earth.

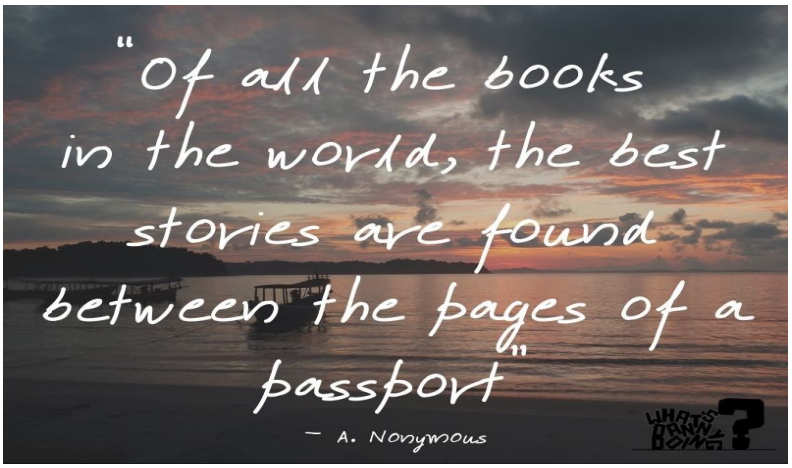
Pick 3

On the dock by the clear lake in Ely, Minnesota. Ely is serene, peaceful, calm and situated deep in the great lakes zone. It is surrounded by lush green landscape and magical clouds. Each day here is like a tranquil vacation. The lakes are blue, clear and refreshing. Hidden behind the birch trees and foliage are exquisite Lake Homes with docks protruding out of each one of them. Any dock here is just great to spend your time. So many memories here in just 5 days. We spent day time jumping in the lake, sometimes just sitting and staring at the water, clouds and distant canoes. Evenings were spent gazing at the colorful sunset followed by the bonfire. Some evenings of course we set out on canoe to say hello to the lake – spirit right in the center of us. Nights were spent gazing at the stars (super theatrical). Late nights were spent listening to the Loon mating calls and the subsequent replies from across the lake. Even if not quarantined, I am sure I can spend weeks and months in Ely without seeking much .Absolutely magical.

Finally, best advice I can give to the young enthusiasts -

Be a traveler and not a tourist. Life is not meant to be lived in one place. Travel as much as you can, as far as you can, as long as you can. So much of who we are is where we have been. Explore and evolve!

On that note, I shall sign out only in the hope to travel very soon.



FACULTY

STEM EDUCATION & GEN NEXT INNOVATORS

By Parbati Roy, Physics Faculty

"I have no special talent, I am only passionately curious". ---- A. Einstein

His philosophy proves helpful and inspirational for online learning in today's world. Space age technology is one of many disciplines which amalgamates his views with STEM Education.

STEM education benefits the learner by fostering creativity, the highest level in Bloom's Taxonomy, aided by experimentation, teamwork, adaptation, problem solving, building resilience and use of technology.

Application of four disciplines of STEM, viz; science, technology, engineering & mathematics to various aspects of study on 'Space' is noteworthy. I wish to draw attention of Podar International School students to the NASA STEM engagement program for grades 9 to 12.

Space has fascinated mankind for generations. One of the most leading organisations in space research is NASA --- National Aeronautics and Space Administration formed in 1958 in Florida, USA.

To mention a few of NASA's STEM research--- the first that comes to my mind is to **simulate a model rocket launch**. This meets many standards like science as inquiry and mathematics as problem solving. **Rocket modeller** is a simulator that is used to design and check the flight of a model rocket. Various design variables can be changed like size, shape, fins, nose cone, materials for each component. The software calculates the weight, drag co-efficient, centre of gravity and pressure of the rocket to determine its stability. The students can then launch the rocket and observe its flight trajectory. Students can record the data and fly rockets on Earth, Moon or Mars.

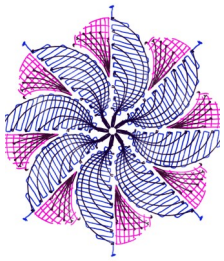
Another STEM worth mentioning is **build your own MARS rover**. The JPL open source rover is a six-wheel rover design to explore the surface of Mars --- which was intended to be a teaching-learning experience for those who want to pursue mechanical engineering, electronics and robotics. This caters to creativity which is the highest level in Bloom's taxonomy.

There are many other activities like building a **multistage rocket**, **how to become an astronaut** and how to **make stomp rockets** --- to name just a few. Students can also take virtual tours of commercial crew facilities, Hubble control centre and explore the solar system.

Writing about space without mentioning ISS --- **International Space Station** would be an incomplete article. **STEM on station for students** is an effort to bring the experience of living in space and know about the space station into the classrooms with videos, web page and infographics. Projects like **EarthKAM and ARISS** have made it possible for students to be involved in ISS programme. Projects like Amateur Radio on International Space Station (ARISS) helped students make radio contacts with crew members directly.

Hopefully, with this short and brief article, I have been able to inspire the next generation of Podarites to grow into next generation innovators, thinkers and scientific crusaders, who can surely achieve the pinnacle of success.

*TOUCH THE SKY WITH GLORY*



Graphics Team

Magazine Cover ——— **Nikhil Pol**

Current Affairs

Language & Literature ——— **Tanisha Dewan**

Technology

Cuisine & Culture

Entertainment

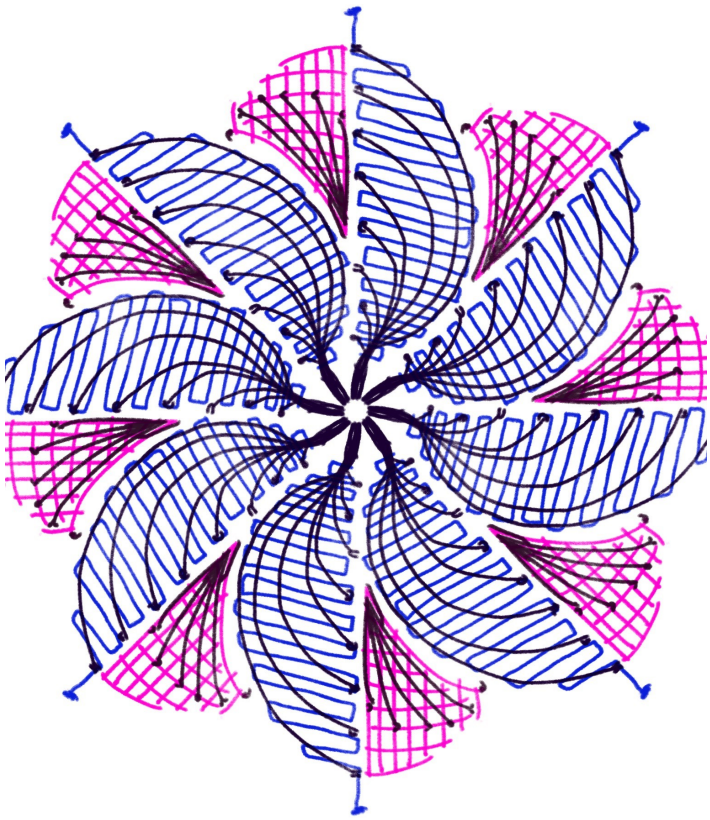
Science ——— **Aaryan Potdar**

Social Cause

Art & Photography

Health

Design & Layout



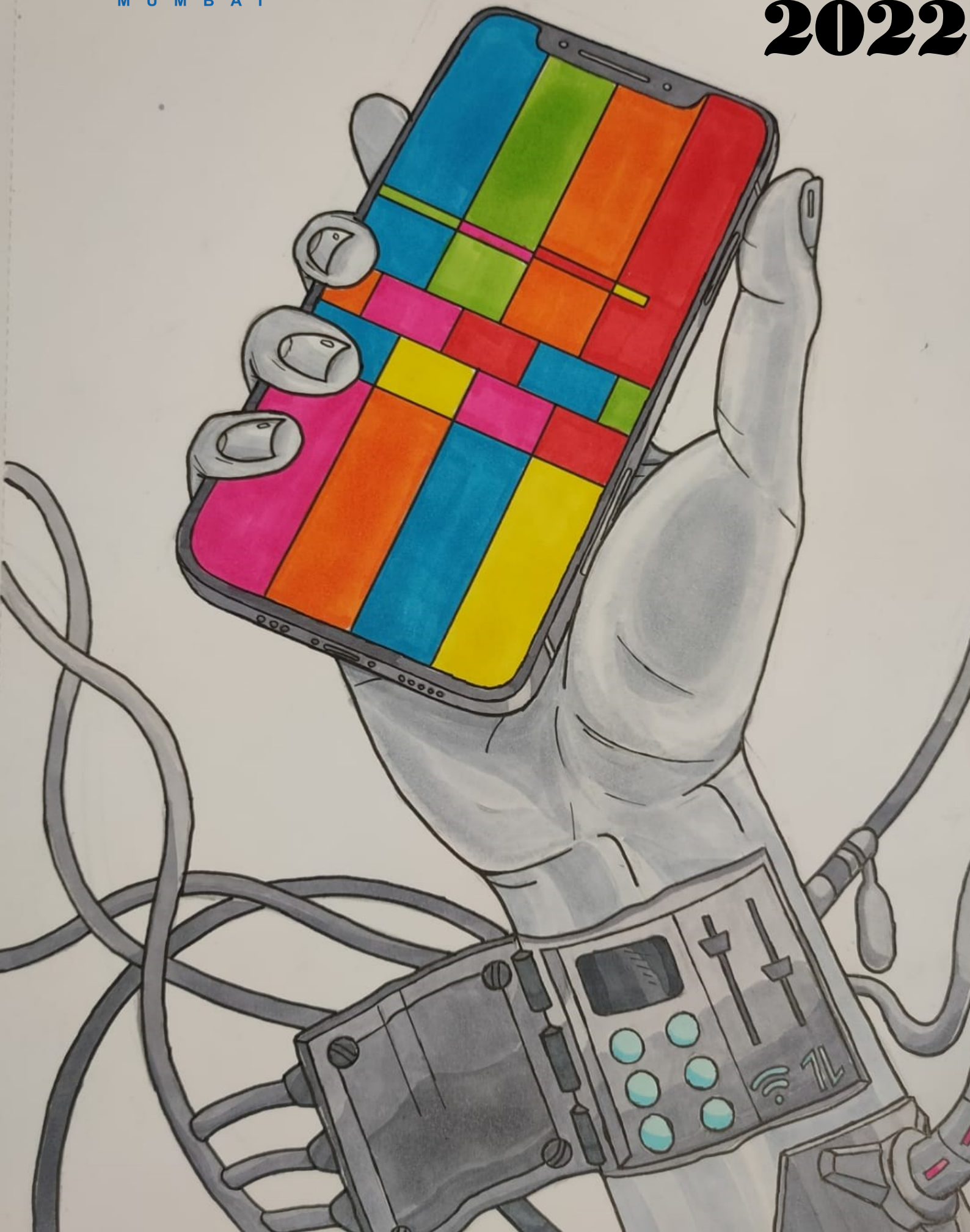
PODAR
Nurturing The Future. Since 1927.

PODAR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (IB & Cambridge International)

M U M B A I

LUMINOUS

2022



From the Director's Desk:

Podar International School's aim is to provide conditions conducive for the growth of our students, to nurture them and help them metamorphosize into the people we know they can become- pre-eminent citizens of the world. Our goal is to create independent capable individuals who have the ability to remain grounded and focused while letting their imagination soar - unfettered.

At Podar International School, we expose our students to various perspectives and global situations, in order to broaden their horizons and think out of the box. We want each and every one of our students to reach their potential and achieve personal mastery. We do this by providing an encouraging, stimulating and engaging learning environment, aided by the tactful guidance of our dedicated group of educators. We never let our students' creativity stagnate. While focusing on helping them gain academic knowledge we also provide platforms for our students to showcase and advance their unique talents. We help our students develop holistically by instilling in them the life skills of communication, collaboration, inquiry and reflection.

The Luminous magazine is an excellent example of an initiative that incorporates almost everything the IBDP programme expects from its students and what it wants its students to develop throughout the course, completely in sync with the International Baccalaureate`s philosophy. Not only the diligent Luminous team members but also students who are gifted writers and creative artists, who have contributed to the newsletter, have displayed such mastery of the attributes of the IB learner profile. With Innovation and Transformation everywhere in the current challenging times, this magazine gave the students an opportunity to express their own uniqueness while inspiring others. This theme urges the students to use their imagination and aims to display their rich creativity, skill, inventiveness and originality.

The Luminous Magazine has provided an avenue for our brilliant students to showcase their extraordinary literary talents while making us teachers beam with pride. This being the 5th Edition is an attribute to the determination and never-ending creativity of the students. It demonstrates effective team work and the excellence of the students of Podar. I extend my appreciation to the Luminous Team, as it is their vision and herculean effort that has made this endeavour possible.

Dr. Mrs. Vandana Lulla

Director/ Principal

Credits:

Editors:

Diya Vartak

Shevadhi Tripathi

Kavya Kashyap

Roopkotha Chakrabarti

Archisha Yadav

Shivom Srivastava

Tanvia Jerry

Junior Editors:

Rahi Shah (9D)

Avaneesh Nagre (9D)

Kamya Ramachandran (9C)

Illustrators:

Vihaan Shilov

Aaliyah Sakxena

Kavya Kashyap

Jayath Paurana

Sindhuja Raman

Editors' Note:

Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the 5th edition of our school's magazine, 'Luminous 2022'. This initiative was taken up by the students of IBDP-1 and has only been possible due to the cooperation, dedication, and excellence of the students.

Palmer Luckey once said, "Why shouldn't people be able to teleport wherever they want?" The Luminous Edition 2022, with its theme of Virtuality, challenges this very question by allowing the students to teleport their thoughts and talents onto the pages of our prestigious magazine. To meet the broad requirements of this theme, the students actively displayed their creativity, capability, and competency through their artistic creations.

The essence of the magazine was perfectly captured by the diverse submissions made by the students, ranging from grades 6th to 11th, on the topics related to Language and Literature, Science, Technology, Social Cause, Current Affairs, Cuisine and Culture, Art and Photography, Health, as well as Multilingual Entries.

We dedicate the success and production of this magazine to our encouraging and inspirational leadership team led by our beloved Director Principal, Dr. Ms. Vandana Lulla, who never fails to nurture the creativity of her students. We extend our gratefulness to our IBDP coordinator, Ms. Hema Rajan, and ,Executive coordinator, Ms. Prema Mathew for their helpful insights at every step of the way.

With immense appreciation for not only the students who shared their innovative ideas with us and our revered readers but also the visionary art team with their 'luminous'-ity without whom this magazine would have been incomplete. Hope you, readers, enjoy reading our cherished magazine as much as we did while creating the same.

Happy Reading!

With gratitude and warm wishes,
Editorial Team 2021-22

Index:

Language and Literature

Science

Technology

Social Cause

Current Affairs

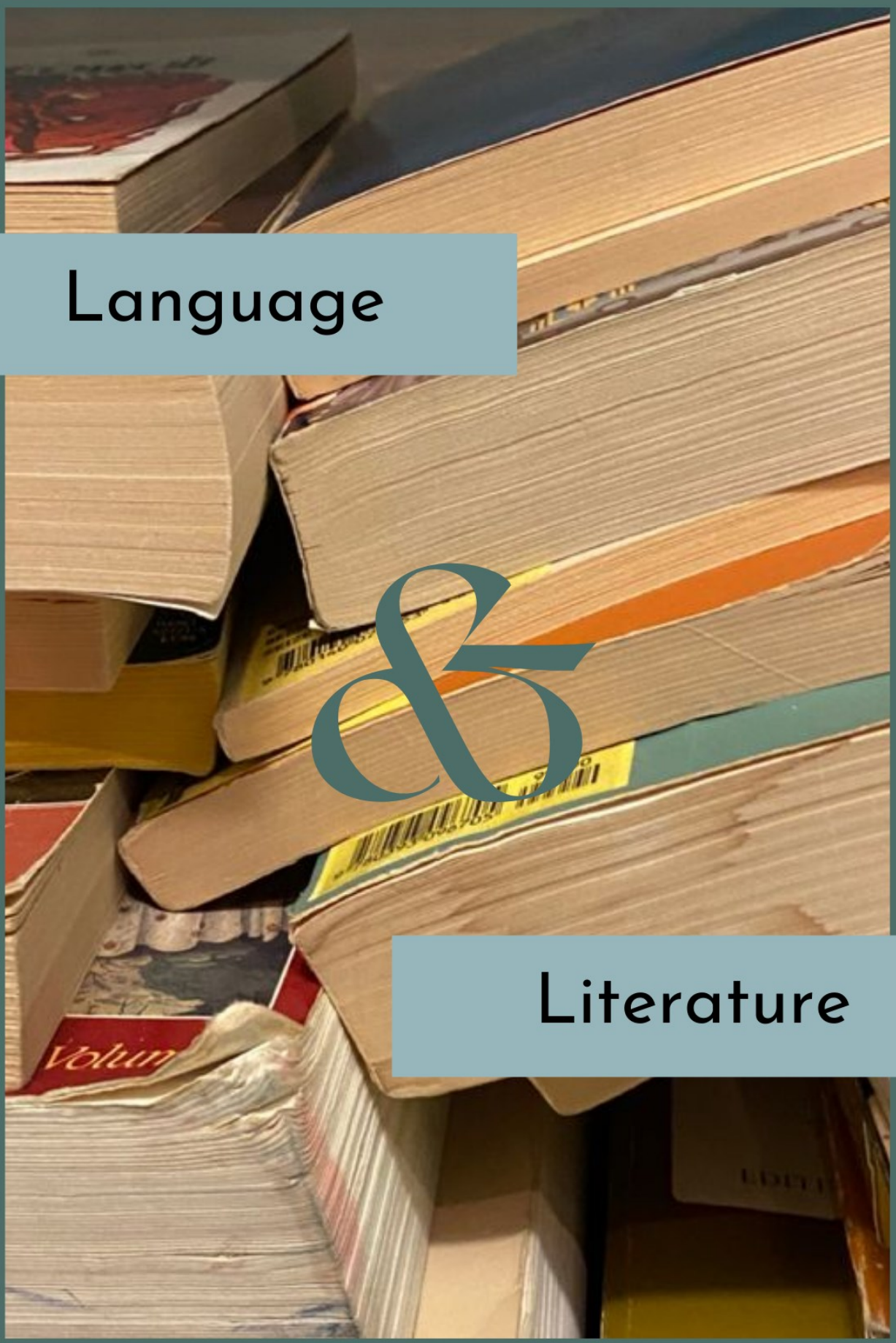
Cuisine and Culture

Art and Photography

Health

Multilingual Entries

Language & Literature



Sanyu Pipalia [6A]

A Homo Neuron in the 17th Century

It was the year 3002. Max was a Homo Neuron, an advanced species after the Homo Sapiens. He lived in a sparsely populated place. It was lonely usually, and all Max had to play with was his cantankerous sister, with whom he would quarrel quite a bit! He lived on the outskirts of a small city on Mars.

One day, his class teacher at school, Miss Jones, had taken a day off. Instead, it was her hologram that was teaching the kids. She sat in a rigidly formal pose, her eyes stern and her lips in a tight smile.

She taught some geohistory of the 17th century, some science and math on multiverse transformations, some digiarts and some practical stuff like how to repair your damaged nerve cells on your own etc. Max was quite a nerd and loved to read, so he knew most of these subjects anyways. He didn't find school particularly useful.

After Miss Jones' image faded away, he leapt on the teleporter, touched the screen on his virtual watch, and it immediately teleported him back home. The teleporter would scan his brain to see where he wanted to go.

He found himself sitting on his bed back at home. Being tired and bored, he dozed off to sleep. When he woke up, he realized that his parents were out for some work and his sister was not around. He strolled into his dad's room and saw the time travel machine that his dad was experimenting with! His dad was an inventor, and loved tinkering and building new devices, though most of the time his dad's inventions did not work!

He knew he wasn't supposed to use it, but just randomly he spun some numbers in the time machine in the the area where he was supposed to enter the date. It seemed to display the year AD 1621. Super interesting,
he thought, since he had heard his teacher saying that this had been the reign of the notorious King Henry Williams, the terrible!

All of a sudden, his sister, who had crept into the room behind his back, shouted from behind to surprise him. And he pushed the start button of the time travel machine by mistake!

It started spinning, and Max felt a bit dizzy. He couldn't believe he was thrown back in time, and was extremely angry with his sister for playing this prank on him!

Now, he found himself in front of an enormous palace, surrounded by vast areas of villages. Using the mind-printer that he always carried in his bag, he made some 17th century styled clothes that fitted him and started moving around.

He started realizing why Henry Williams was known as the terrible king! He would torture his subjects for no reaon at all, and throw them to the dungeons. If he did not like any of his slaves, he would give them the death penalty or feed them to the lions.

When Max spoke to a few people in the kingdom, he realized that King Henry's brutal nature was caused due to a childhood fight with his (King Henry's) brother. This had made both brothers bitter and resentful. Since that day, both had become sworn enemies and this had caused Henry to take out his anger on his kingdom.

Max suddenly remembered that he was carrying his anti-Memorall device with him, which could make a person forget specific incidents from their past. It was a gun shaped device, where you could set a date and point and shoot it towards a person. And this target would then forget about all incidents on and around that date. He decided to transport himself into King Henry's chamber and administer the King with this device to make him forget that painful childhood incident.
So, he transported himself into the palace gates and sneaked into the main hall of the palace walls. From the side, he targeted his anti-Memorall device at King Henry and set the date to King Henry's childhood year when that incident had taken place. He then took aim and pulled the trigger. He managed to hit the King, who immediately turned towards Max when the beam hit him.

Before Max knew, several palace guards started rushing towards him from all sides! He fumbled and with sweaty hands was trying to find his transporter, but was unable to locate it in his bag. While still searching, one huge palace guard caught him and hit him hard. Max started getting dizzy and thought that this was the end!

Slowly, he woke up, and saw his mom and dad in front of him! His dad had managed to reverse the time machine and get Max back. Max was extremely thankful and tightly hugged his parents!

But he was still very upset with his sister, and decided he would not talk with her at all for sending him to the 17th century.

Next day, at school, while Miss Jones continued her geohistorical lessons, Max realized something unbelievable! In the 17th century, King Henry had started his rule with terror and cruelty, but in the later half of his rule, he had been gentle and kind! And Max could not believe that he had managed to make history!

That day, he decided to walk home instead of using his teleporter. And he realized how forgetting a few negative incidents can make a person happy and at ease with themselves and in their relationships.

And when he reached home, he first went and met his sister, and apologized for being angry at her. And from that day onwards, they would both have tons of fun, and loads of laughter together with their parents.

Saarth Agrawal [6A]

Tête-à-Tête with Aliens

It was a quiet Moonlight night. I was walking along the street, curiously looking at the time on my watch. My watch was blue coloured and had a long dial so that I could see the time easily. I had heard of aliens. There was also mention of aliens visiting the Earth at midnight. All of a sudden, aha, the time on my watch started flashing 12:00. I jumped out of my skin when this strange thing happened. I could feel the sweat trickling down my back. I had read that if I move the dials of the watch in the anti-clockwise direction, I would be able to see the past. I shifted the clock dials to 11:48 which was very hard to do.

Swoosh, I saw an asteroid coming towards Earth at a lightning speed. The asteroid was as big as Mount Everest and it was gray - coloured. I was scared, but it was a fuss over nothing. I saw it resting on Earth in a tilted direction far away from me. It directly transformed itself to a big, black house which was really weird.

Four strange people came out of the house. They looked bizarre and expressions on their face were like a cat in a strange garret. They had three eyes, green coloured skin, short legs and hands. I suddenly realized that they were aliens. They were doing something to the house. It looked like they were renovating the house. Adventure excites me so I found a big, tall tree with a thick trunk near the house, and hid behind it to observe them. Surprisingly, I heard the tree speaking to me! I was astonished and asked the tree, “Can you speak, Mr. Tree?”

It replied, “Yes”

I was amazed and asked for some information about the strangers.

The tree grinned, “Hey, those strange people are aliens. They are very powerful and can speak in any language. They have come on Earth to discover it and want to make humans their friends. They live on asteroids and when they land on an unknown planet, they change their asteroid homes to haunted houses.”

I asked him if I could meet the aliens and become their friends. The tree warned me to be careful as they were strong and could pack a punch. I went near the haunted house and they spotted me, “Who are you and why have you come here?”

“I want to be your friend.” I replied swiftly.

All the aliens were full of the joys of spring as they got a new friend. They led me inside the house. The haunted house was pretty creepy. It had ghosts hanging upside down from the ceiling and bats flying around but I wasn’t scared. An alien offered me some snacks. They devoured bones and meat for snacks but it was unwelcoming so I refused to eat it. Then they suggested we play. They had very weird - shaped toys but the toys were interesting so we played for an hour, with bells on.

While playing, I asked them their names.
I am Jolo, they are Momo, Holo and Golo”

Jolo was tall and used to respect anyone he met. He was a wise alien and had a charismatic personality. He was the cream of the crop.
Momo on the other hand was very mischievous and liked distracting others. He liked making friends but didn’t have many.
Holo was a dwarf and was very wise. He was different from others as had only 2 eyes. Golo was as tall as Jolo but looked arrogant. He didn’t like making friends and was scared of humans.

They looked very puzzled when they saw some buffaloes running near the house. Jolo questioned me, “What are these strange creatures roaming around our house?” “We also want to know a few facts about Earth.”

I thought I could answer some of their questions as I had learnt a lot about Earth in school as part of the “Sharing the Planet” theme. I replied, “Those are animals. There are different animals found all over Earth. Some of them are - Flamingoes, Buffaloes, Giraffes, Lions, Tigers, Cows etc.”
They were very interested and wanted to know more.

Holo enquired, “Is there cement all around Earth as roads and playgrounds?” “No, there is soil covering the Earth.” I responded.
“Are there different types of soil?”
“Yes, there are three different types of soil. These are Loamy Soil, Sandy Soil, and Clayey Soil.” “What are these pointed……?”, Before Golo could complete his question Momo started acting as if he had got hurt, “AAAAAAAHH!”

“Stop acting, Momo”, Holo looked at him menacingly.

“Where was I? Yes! What are these pointed things near the house?”, Golo continued. “Oh, these pointed things are called mountains. Mountains can be of different heights and the tallest mountain in the world is Mount Everest. It is very difficult to climb mountains but there are other pointed things like mountains found on Earth. Those are called hills and we can climb them easily”, I stated.

I explained to them a lot about mother Earth. All of a sudden, Jolo screamed “Night is about to get over, we should rush back, else we might land into trouble!” They instructed me to leave. The house changed itself to an asteroid and flew high in the sky like a rocket. I happily went home and told the incident to my parents. They were astonished and expressions on their faces were of stunned disbelief. I knew that they would not believe me so I didn’t try to convince them. I went straight to my room to sleep and started dreaming of those aliens whom I had met.

Sahana Malik [6B]

BELIEVE!

You need determination from heart to soul and soon you will reach your goal!

Believe in yourself no matter what happens as you are your captain

Just believe in what you are doing because what you are doing needs pursuing

Whether your goal is far or near never stop believing in yourself despite your fear,

All you need is a growth mindset today and then there is no one in your way

You got this, you can do it, never ever quit!

OUR GIFT!

You have your own light within you. You might not be able to see it, but it will definitely come through.

Just keep trying and before you know it you will be flying.

The uniqueness in you never fades and you should never try to hide behind the shades.

The sky you need may be out of reach, but you should try, try till you succeed.

Zuri Savla [6B]

MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

Climate change is a great hard challenge, don't let the world die, we are making this happen.

Increase of global warming day by day, listen to what we say.

Plastics and plastics are littering the world, as well as fossil fuels are getting burnt.

Rising sea levels in the arctic, while there is no water in the desertic!

Trees get cut every single day, should we stop using papers today?

Population growth is the main factor of climate change, so don't let the world over-populate.

Melting glaciers, a problem for polar bears, will they migrate or share.

Help! Help! Help! Shouts our Mother earth.

Save! Save! Save! For our childrens' future.

Make the world a better play for you and for me and for the entire universe

Jack, the boy who loved television

There was a boy whose name was Jack,
He had a father called Mac.
But Jack didn't love him, not at all,
Instead he loved a monster tall.
The monster loved to spoil all children,
It was called the television.
Jack watched it all day, all night,
He never let it out of sight.
His father begged, ordered and talked,
But adamant Jack never stopped.
Then one day Jack began to shrink,
HIs eyesight blackened, he couldn't think.
Poor Jack died in the end,
And that is how the story ends.
So don't watch too much TV mate,
Unless you want to meet Jack's fate.

Riyan Sawdekar [7E]

I like to connect with people in the virtual world
I feel free like a bird
Some people may find it absurd
But I'll Keep it unheard

You know you can create your own avatar
And Communicate with people really far
That's how I expand my Imagination
Maybe it's a thing with our generation

From the south pole to the moon
I have seen everything too soon
I keep myself in Isolation
My virtual world is my innovation

Snorkelling Experience

It was a cool breezy morning, all set to go to Sri Lanka on a summer vacation. I was all excited while boarding the flight which would take us 2hours to reach Colombo. We reached at 11am, the weather was cool and had just begun to drizzle. The car was waiting with a guide to take us to the hotel. It was a spectacular place, full of greenery. After we checked in-to the hotel, had a quick wash and proceeded to see an ele-phant orphanage. I had heard of Children orphanage, but this was something unique and different. The place is called Pinnawala Elephant Orphanage.

It is an orphanage, nursery and captive breeding ground for wild Asian elephants located at Pinnawala village. There are about 93 elephants and they are taken care of by mahouts. They are trained to obey the mahouts, The daily routine is a drill of walking in a straight line from the orphanage to the river where they are given bath daily. It was a different expe-rience to see the orphanage which was so well kept and the people were very kind to the elephants.

We had a good thrilling experience at the orphanage.

At dawn the next morning , we set off to a place called the Pigeon Islands. A short distance from Trinco Blu by Cinnamon is another little haven with clear turquoise waters – The Pigeon Island. Breeze through an early morning boat trip, and reach before the sun gets too harsh. The weather too changes suddenly and it's raining, making the travel from the shore to the island difficult as the ocean gets choppy and rough.This place is famous for Snorkelling. Corals in beautiful colours, luminescent fish and turtles swimming around you will make you wonder about nature's spellbinding creativity. There are guides who take you underwater to enjoy the breathtaking beautiful view of sea life . Initially I was too scared even though I had worn the set to dive underwater. But after a few repeated attempts , I finally managed to gain courage and dive down. Oh my !!! What a view, beautiful blue water, orange fishes, tubelight fish, baby sharks and turtles swimming around me.

I thoroughly enjoyed being underwater. We took a break and dived in again. By this time , I was confident and having fun swimming underwater with all the sea animals. We took a tour around the islands which were full of coral reefs of different shapes and sizes. I was very keen to get back home to some of the reefs, but we were warned by the guide that it is an offense and crime to take the reefs from there, penalty could be fine or even imprisonment.

We had to cut short our stay at the islands as it got very dark and was going to rain. We quickly got on to the boat to get back to the shore. Meanwhile it started to rain and the sea went very rough and waves hit hard onto our boat.

Finally we reached the shore safely. This was the best experience I had , a memory to last me for very long. I will definitely want to come back to this place once more and enjoy the sea world.

Aarav Shah [8D]

Child labour is illegal,
Do you know why it is critical?
Small hands are made to play,
not to work hard every day.
They are allowed to go to school,
not jump in puddles and pools.
As a result they get sick,
and some don’t get proper medical treat.
Some are rich, some are poor,
some face risks, some get opportunities.
But all have a right, so they can be bright.
Some sit on the roads and behave lame,
some sit at home and play a video game.
"Please give me money", some say,
some shout some beg every day.
Sometimes my mind asks me that why we all are not the same?
Children are gods stupendous creation,
not made for destruction…

Rishabh Sriram [8F]

The Division

Two worlds, black and white
Rival twins, yet they persist
Unity stands close

The Limits

With a finite sight
With the infinite new minds
Still, gateways are closed

The Happiness

Ground paused into zero
Metal scratching through the nights
Time to go skating

The Future

A fine addition
In a land of beginnings
It still perseveres

Pahal Shah [9A]



As time passes by I look up at the sky In search for some answers

When it all suddenly became surreal the well-lit church caught my eye

Overlooking the 100 year old oak tree the sun glistened through my glass windows Birds soaring through the sky the timing fit perfect

that's when it hit me the answers were there all along

Ignorance and negligence

Ok, let's get things back on track. Every day, I hope to be given due respect and sympathy about being a companion who will never leave your side and mind, (or at least keep lingering in it), and yet I see you everyday brushing your teeth, with your haywire hair dangling line wines on your forehead, just for you to push buttons and show an un-interested face amongst the remaining people in your class.

Though I am your laptop, your ONLY way to escape from seeing the same people in your house over and over again, you should applaud, praise, and sing songs of my gratefulness! However, all you ever say about me to all your friends who, once again, you can only see BE-CAUSE OF ME, "Guys, I am so tired of seeing you all through my lap-top! I wish I could stop being dependent on my laptop just to speak to you all! I am SICK AND TIRED of my laptop!!".

Alright you there! In case you haven't realised by now, I am the one who is able to store all your files! I am the person who connects you to the people of the world! I am the one who has given you the right and authority of being called a person from the 21st century! I can go on and on but no one will even realise that I am weeping, especially due to the fact that water will ruin my electrical circuits, just causing more damage to me, thus I try not to show my tears.

Even when it comes to emotions! No where can I express my thoughts and will. When I am happy and well-functioning, humans take advantage of this and that is when their love and affection for me starts to show. Uff! My keys have gotten so tired of getting clicked again and again and again, that sometimes I just want to shut off for the day. And when I get hot, humans stop using me thinking I have gone bad, and crib with their parents to buy them a new laptop to replace ME…I feel bad that they think of me as a mere object which has no value in life other than the times when they need me. I hope that changes soon, for I know the exact purpose for what I have been made…

Sunaira Jain [9D]

Time

The cobwebs of time and the ones spun by the teeming spiders have imprisoned me in what I once proudly called my own abode. The creaking sound of the mahogany shelf that once served as a safe refuge is slowly falling prey to the storms of time too. Its humped back is like a ticking time bomb which will announce its demise any moment taking along with it, my companions and me towards the natural call of gravity. The room is rank with fungus and disuse while the once shining glass panes are now covered with pigeon excretion and encrusted with years of dead unidentifiable insects that seem to have been fossilised on their glass grave. Ants and flies have disintegrated into small heaps of iridescent dust that form a thick layer on the edges of the chipping window sill.

Time and again, my thoughts travel back to when I was quite popular…when I was constantly exhausted by being captured into multiple hands. I recall my fascinating adventures in the opulent classrooms where I relished in boasting my entrance to the earnest faces glaring down at me, while they flipped through my withered pages in search of knowledge. It was really the best time of my life. As time flew by, I gradually grew fond of hearing those familiar footsteps rushing towards me.

My face beamed with satisfaction as students were dictated to take my fellow dictionaries and I on yet another trip. Furthermore, I fondly reminisce about my long conversations with my family. We basked in delight at our important role in the esteemed school. Of course, not everything was perfect back then – there was never a pinch of fathom between me and my greatest nemesis, Big Bully, who was the biggest, thickest, oldest dictionary that stood between the freshly painted walls. Our arguments were the highlight of every night. Big bully took the thrill in bragging about his powerful position at the dimly lit library. Meanwhile, my aggressive temper pushed me to retaliate by screeching out words which were plausibly a sin to say out loud. And so went on our battle, back and forth. Alas, never would I have imagined that I would deeply miss these shenanigans...

The best of times slowly turned into the worst of times. A decade later, as a new species mightily announced its grand arrival, it felt like things had turned upside down. I absolutely did not get the obsession behind computers. Us dictionaries had provided profound wisdom to our beloved readers for centuries, only for computers to grasp the world in the palm of its hand within a second. It was outrageous, it was unbelievable.

The computers were seated in the laps of luxury while me, my family, my friends and even Big Bully were swallowed into depression. Not a hint of empathy flashed by as people merely deserted us, leaving us isolated into the hollow pitches of dark barriers. Our once prized pages were now destroyed into creases while our backbones, the walls, started crumbling down, bit by bit. Our reputation was tearing apart, and no one seemed to care. Students nonchalantly dismissed us for the 'fancy' computers. If not all, the teachers' stern commands were no longer directed towards us. The footsteps, which had been melody to my ears, seldom approached me. It felt like someone had punched me in the gut. My shoulders tipped with fatigue as I was forced to stand on the hard, patchy shelves... Here I was, suffering in misery, while the ferocious beeping of computers enveloped the room.

Fast forwarding to now, where a dull and dusty atmosphere besieges my sooty setback of a home, the once blossoming and bright smile no longer rests on my face. My brittle yellowed brown edge pages are slowly disintegrating. The corollary of the heinous digital revolution has been a heartache to watch...my colleagues have all kicked the bucket...I could only pray for them a safe journey up above. Tears fiercely roll down my eyes as I witness this terrifying nightmare take place.

I'm frustrated, I'm shaken, I'm weak with disbelief. And no one, not a single soul, is here for me. I'm desperate to fight back, I want this type of world to end. But nothing is working. No one listens to me. It's agitating, it's gruelling, it's horrible. I am a skeleton, a carcass, a worthless object that is no longer of any use. Recently, I overheard a cheeky lad mention that I will be burnt…just like my late family and friends. My thoughts are clouded with gloom and anxiety…with bated breath, I am waiting for that dreadful moment when I shall turn to ashes lighting a bonfire and illuminating the world for one last time like I had done in my prime days by spreading the light of knowledge.

Shanysa Jain [9E]

THE SMELL OF CHRISTMAS

I love the smell of Christmas
on those frigid, shivery winter nights
the crimson glow in the fireplace
red brick walls plastered with lights

The aroma of Christmas treats
cinnamon cookies straight from the oven
a sprinkle of ginger and honey
cranberry pie baked with love for
children
whiffs of evergreen leaves
gliding down towards us from those cone
shaped trees which are woven with the first
scent of delight jingle bells, candy canes and
a star shining so bright
scarlet sparks of hope
soaring from the sky like rain
on crystal white layers of snow
in which footsteps have carved a trail

shopping downtown at the mall
there's a photo session with Santa Claus
fairies are dancing to Christmas carols
flushed little elves juggle colourful balls

pure bliss is the ambience today
timber and bright red holly deck the halls eve-
ryone's stoked to dig in to some strawberry
pudding alongside sips of cider
and to shed tears to the greatest Christmas
movie of all
warm mittens on tiny little hands
claw their way through presents and
stockings mistletoe hangs from the door-
way
sending electric signals as fast as a speed-
ing train that it's arrived, this season is
here
the one of magic, love and with a promise
of forever

Real Bravery in unprecedented times of Covid-19

“Khushi, you're a coward,” Chahat said. “No, I'm not,” Khushi murmured, her eyes welling up with tears. 'Look, I can climb this wall, but you're not even trying,' Chahat replied. Showing off, Khushi responded, does not mean bravery. I can climb any wall, but what's the point if it's for no reason? My parents instilled in me the value of being focused and not flaunting myself. Khushi began walking home after saying this. Chahat and her pals began to tease Khushi. Khushi, on the other hand, was unperturbed. She was well aware that flaunting one's bravery does not constitute true bravery.

Soon they arrived at a house that was on fire, with a little kid pleading for help. No one seemed to be willing to help. Khushi looked at Chahat, whose face was white with fear. Khushi realised she needed to act quickly to save the boy. She instantly jumped and climbed the wall which was considerably higher than the one which Chahat had climbed previously. She extended her hand to the child and instructed him to grasp it tightly. He was, however, terrified. Khushi told him that she was his friend and he should not fear anything. The boy put his hand forward and so Khushi held him and brought him down.

Soon the fire brigade also came and they doused the fire and everyone praised Khushi. You are indeed The bravest girl in the class". Said Chahat. The boy introduced himself as Neptuno and explained that his parents had gone somewhere so he had no place to live. Khushi was perplexed, but she took him home.

As she reached home, her parents were surprised to find the boy but as Khushi insisted, decided to keep Neptuno at home. Her father called the local police and informed them and said that in case Neptuno parents come, please inform them and Neptuno whereabouts.

Neptuno was very quiet and watching all this. He was thinking that whatever his parents had told him was not true. Planet Earth had very nice and helpful people. Actually Neptuno had come from Neptune and he was a robot. His mission was to destroy planet earth by spreading CoronaVirus.

Khushi's mother, who was at home, made a special cake for Neptuno and Khushi. He really liked it and wanted to thank her but kept quiet. As night went by Neptuno could not sleep and soon he heard voices, his parents had come and told him why he had not done anything by spreading viruses when his two other friends had done the job. Neptuno said that all his gadgets to spread corona were destroyed in fire.

Now he only had one gadget left which was called 'Covido 19'. He said he could not use these people as they seemed like angels, who had saved his life. Listening to all this Neptunos parents also realized their mistake and gave him a special soap gun which could combat Covido 19.

Neptuno left a special soap gun with Khushi's parents and left for his home planet. Khushi said goodbye to him with a heavy heart. Khushi's parents used the Soap gun to finish all the Corona virus from which fortunately had not spread beyond their town. Khushi was very happy and now had a friend even on planet Neptune.

Adya Munshi [10A]

In presence of

This town has never been so quiet. Even on the most gloomy days, you'd hear the laughter of the children floating through the air, you'd hear the chatter of the shop vendors and the rustling of the apple trees, the air filled with the sweetest scent. Today however, I don't hear a single child, not even the subdued chirping of the birds. The sky above me was dark and there was a slight chill in the air, which wasn't unusual wherever I went, but the stillness of it all shocked me. My senses were sharpened as I walked down the road, the sound of my shoes hitting the asphalt ringing out into the quiet. My ears strained to hear a familiar sound, but failed, where were these people? Where were the women talking and laughing outside the supermarket I just passed by ? The single father roasting nuts and crispy meat to fend off the cold and to warm our insides ? Where had the world disappeared ?

I entered the little playground behind the school and explored the empty space, the still swings, the untouched sand in the sandpit, a lone water bottle sitting in the middle of it, a children's cartoon character staring up at me. My heart, if such a thing exists, felt heavy as I exited the playground and walked into the street to do what I came to do.

I wished I had time, I wished I could see the people that I cherished so much, I wish I knew what had happened. Legends say that death doesn't feel anything, that death comes and goes as silent as the night without any remorse but did anybody ever care to ask death whether it was true? If death had no remorse, then why would it free the soul of the suffering woman, who couldn't treat herself? Why would it heal the troubled souls in old bodies and allow them to leave ? Death has remorse, death can be kind.

The old house looked the same as it always had. The same Banyan tree cast a shade over the roof, it's great roots spread out under my feet. The door had been left open, and a tabby cat sat on the patio, his tail swishing back and forth as he watched me enter. There was no life outside of the house, on the road, a road where you'd hear laughter and music throughout the day and smell home cooked meals and watermelon in the summer. It was all empty. It was only when I was about to enter the house that I saw them. About 5 or 6 people sat huddled at the base of the banyan tree, all of them seemed to be holding hands, someone was crying. "Will she be okay ?" A child whispered, I knew who he was talking about, of course I did. "Yes, yes of course she will, don't worry" an adult from the side reassured, taking his hands into hers.

They can't see me, nor can they hear me, but if they could, they'd hear me scoff. It always amuses me how easily adults can lie. I walk into the house, and stare into its turning corners. The house had always been big, almost maze-like, which is why upon walking into it, a few wrong turns led me into an unknown room. The room was empty except for an old piano and four pillows overlooking another part of the garden. On the piano sat an old lady, her long silver hair, twisted into a bun. She played the piano into the empty room, the violent notes never leaving the four walls.I stood there for a while staring at the back of her head, occasionally watching her worn out fingers as they danced about the keyboard. I left the room minutes later, *Danse Macabre by Camille Saint-Saëns spilling briefly into the hallway. The dance of the dead was an eerie composition to play on such a day.*

It was at the end of the house that I found her. Sophie Winters was 8, laying on the floor and at the brink of death, all it would take for her to leave her body and come away with me, is just one touch, but unlike every other time I've carried new souls, I don't immediately go to her. A little boy around the age of 6 knelt by her bedside and held her hand. He looked just like her, same brown hair and kind face.

“Is it true that nobody is safe in the presence of death? Our parents were talking about it, Sophie” he whispered into her ear “ don’t be in the presence of death just yet Sophie, we’ve got so much to do ! We have to finish the movie and make 1000 paper cranes, we’ve only reached 100 yet…” the child was crying now, but quickly left the room when it got too much. I stared after him and wondered. I walked up to the sick child and sat beside her, staring into her pale face. “It’s time to go Sophie, it’s time to leave these friends and this town and your little brother, you know that right ?” I asked her, not a single movement came back as an answer. I’m careful not to touch her as I bring my face near hers, I hope I don’t regret this. “It’s time to go, but I’m not going to take you, build your 1000 paper cranes and watch all the movies you want. We’ll meet again” I stare at her face one last time before getting up and leaving the house. I’ll let the adult’s lie come true.

As I walk up the asphalt path, signs of life come back into the town, the shutters are opening, the birds are chirping and an old radio is playing somewhere. Death doesn’t always have to be bad, death can be kind. The sun comes out from behind the clouds as I leave the town, I wonder if they’ll ever hear from me again.

Shanay Kashyap Shukla [ASci-1]

Addicted

I stand alone, staring down a facade
of peace and positivity, locked behind a wall of glass, pathways to the soul, smiling outside, hiding true intentions,
Adroitly masked by resolute walls.
small box, full of lies and spite,
Hiding another me, idealised among pixels, I
Feel like Coraline in the Other World,
Greeted by smiles of plastic, reeking of faux kindness.
Sitting in my room, i scroll through
Endless photos, trying to find the line
Between usage and addiction, all the while
Slowly fading away.
Wasted potential, almost unrecognisable
Become a monster, in search for
Endorphins, and false validation,
From sources unknown.
Other me, why do you smile like so,
Full of life and joy that isn't real,
But a show for those who wish to see
Into a sea of binary code, that doesn't even matter,
To those in the real world.
Pulling myself down,
Over flaws that can't be changed,
Egged on by pretenders who claim they're friends.

No lanterns for us in the abyss
Of Addiction, only the
Fleeting glimpses of light, swallowed again by the dark.
What mistakes did we make, for us to succumb,
To technology's false praises, a sickening malaise
That plagues our souls,
Running rampant all through the world.
Likes and comments are like
Beautiful sustenance for this ravenous being,
That threatens to consume everything.
Broken bonds, lost souls, let it in and I lost control,
Beautiful soul tarnished by sins unsurmountable,
Courting technology, pointless virtuality.
I wonder which doctor discovered Twitter,
Probably a witch-doctor mixing potions that
Enthrall all, algorithmically.
Feel it encroaching deep inside,
I don't know if I can hold
On any longer, before
The Beldam grasps,
Silken strings that twist emotions,
Pain to pleasure,
Sorrow to joy.
Looking forward, but stuck in the past, I feel remorse,
Forced to live an endless loop,
Of Addiction, and slavery,
To the will of the screen.

OMAHA BEACH

June 8, 1944, Omaha beach, an eight-kilometer-long white sanded beach which hosted perfect blue water surrounded by a breathtaking cliff, indeed a picture-perfect location, was situated in the now German controlled land of Normandy, France. Once full of life was now a lifeless barren gray land. 12 nations meanwhile planned the biggest amphibious assault in history and on the 6th of June 1944, rattled the ground by storming into Omaha beach, better known as “Bloody Omaha”, Over 43000 troops and 1000 war planes and ships paraded through the beach, defender by 10000 German troops and 200 of their biggest artillery. The gray sand turned red with blood as air smelt of gunpowder. On the 9th of June, the black sky with war planes overhead and bodies of American, British, Canadian and free France troops levelled the ground, the mountains caught fire with the Royal air force pounding the mountains with bombs, a fire-work spectacle like no other. Firing never stopped, suddenly, the ground rumbled as missiles roared in the distance, a sight no soldier wants to see as they hopelessly watch the inevitable approach them. The mountain now gushed with waterfalls of blood as neither side gave up. Coated in a cover of Bullet shells.

Many bleeding out, many were shocked, wanting to go back home, some killed themselves, but even as the mortars roared and fired, no one surrendered the days never went quiet as marshals kept howling war cries to keep up the moral. At night, when the tide rose, bodies rose with the water, much like a demon rising at the will of night.as the tide pulled out, bodies were mercilessly pulled away, at the will of the seas into a unknown oblivion. Next day, the beach smelled of rotten bodies, the only ones running around were wet, blood drenched, red color medics as they tried their best to save the warriors, the last glimmer of hope for many, an angel In the devil's nest. The impending sight of blood impaled fear amongst even the toughest. Even as bullets buzzed past their ears, as mortar shells landed feet away, as sand filled up in their eye, as they drench in their brothers blood, they never, gave up Days and nights went by with the unrelenting fire, the bodies now lay ashore along with the living as bullet shells toppled over each soldiers shoulders, drilling in-to the mountain face of the mountain, starting mountain fires that charing any German soldier that was mercilessly swallowed by the flame, as the fight raged on ,many on the mountain lost their footing and slipped down, smashing their bodies against the rocks, or against the allied forces guns.

They rag dolled down, sometimes on fire, their screams being heard all along the dead, red beach shore. Then in the distance, a sudden sound, it made the ground rattle, the water vibrate, the sound of motors as 200 royal air force planes descended from the thick layer of black cloud, like a roaring lion through the dark field of battle, As they ripped through the clouds, there was a sudden calm, the battle field was silent, as the Germans saw what was going to seal their fate, as they saw the roaring courage of a wounded lion, the soldiers pushed on with confidence, like a group of hyenas making a huge push. In the end the allied forces took the won, but at a heavy price, 10000 brave hearts lost their lives in battle, the black skies, red water, fire and smoked mountains, and gold bullet casing covering, the once beautiful place became a place of horror, the mountains lost, the beach stained, the atmosphere ruptured and all citizens of the colony white in fear. As the dawn shined over, a pulse of serenity struck the battle field, a soldier, lay down by a beached boat, pulled out a half burnt picture of his daughter, as he smiled to her, he teared up, He teared up and scream about how he wants to see her, play and lay down in the soft green grass, The picture, that also had a bullet hole,

Was a sight that no one could look away from ,as the soldier put down the picture, he looked down to his wound, blood gushing out of shoulder, both his legs covered in glass and shrapnel as with every move-ment they pierced into his bone , his vision getting blurred, he knew this was it, that if the tide doesn't swallow him, he will return to his daughters, wrapped in a flag. There are no winners in war, no sacrifice to great, it's not a matter of who is right, it's about who is left

THE IRRESISTIBLE TOME & THE CURSE

I lie on a cosy bed, nestled by pillows. The coverlet tangled in my feet, warming my chilly toes. I snuggle closer into my fortress of pillows and heave a relaxed sigh, picking up my book from the bedside table and burrowing my nose in the book.

The sunlight filters in through the window screens, painting the extravagant tiles gold. I sit up and gaze through the window, not quite believing the scene spreading before me. The rolling green hills, shining emerald beneath the mid morn sun. The sky is a canvas of a subtle blue with thick brushstrokes of clouds cradling the dazzling sun.

I stride towards the window and inhale the refreshingly ever-present scent of pine and brine. The melody of birds and cicadas hangs heavily in the air, like an orchestra.

I hear a sharp rap on the door and a girl barges into the room without waiting for a signal. *Drusilla. My best friend. She is a lovely girl with a bronze sheen to her skin. Her heavy mahogany hair cascades down her shoulders, reaching her waist. She promptly collapses on a sumptuous armchair near the fireplace rug, extending her arms towards the blazing fire.*

Her set of shoulders, the slight upward tilt of her lips, her fingers fidgeting with her skirts. “What’s wrong, Dru?” I ask, concern barely hidden in my voice. “I miss Mom and Dad so much, it’s almost like a physical hurt. Mom had promised me she will always remain by my side” she manages out. Her voice cracked at the last bit.

I push from the bed and close the space between me and Dru. I hug her fiercely. She startles but hugs me back just as fervently. I can feel her wet cheeks against my neck. Her shaking fingers smooth down my hair.

I begin to reassure her that I will always be with her. No matter what I will never leave her side. But I cannot get the words out. How can I be so sure? I just tighten my grip around her neck and inhale the rosewater scent of her locks. Afraid of not knowing what lies ahead of us.

***

The air shimmers with summer sun, sparkling as if sprayed by glitter. The sunlight grazes my skin, a scalding but gentle caress. The sky is a clear blue. I inhale the salty mist. There is blue for as far as I can see. The cerulean sky bows gracefully to lower to the teal ocean, as if submitting itself to the ocean’s serene majesty.

The calm water surface is occasionally broken by a school of dolphins or something enormous that breaks a shudder down my spine. Gazing over the ocean, I feel ease and peace warring with fear and anxiety. *What enormous creatures live there, ready to gulp you in a single swallow? The sea always makes me jittery. Its vastness makes me feel like a blade of grass in a rainforest.*

I turn away and face the open meadow. The relief is so instant that my heart constricts and I have to swallow to ground myself. I remember playing here with my cousins and friends. And Dru and Cole. My heart warms at their thought. I recall all my memories of them. Reading together in the town library, sneaking cookies from the kitchen at midnight, dancing in the rain and arguing at family dinners. The image of his crooked glasses and her muddy skirts makes my lips stretch into a blooming smile.

I see a shift in shadows under the willow trees. I suspect it to be Dru and Cole, hiding there to give me a jump-scare. I smirk at not being a victim and creep towards the tree. A figure slips from the shadows and heads towards me.

I freeze in my tracks. I eye the figure suspiciously. It is tall and lean, a dark cloak thrown over its shoulders. It slides gracefully across grassy expanse barely leaving a footprint.

Definitely not Dru or Cole.

It approaches me and says “Cecily?” *Her voice is smooth, like water trickling down rocks in a stream. Familiar. “How do you know my name?” surprised to hear the steadiness in my voice. Definitely not reflecting my inner maelstrom of confusion.*

“I am Jocelyn, Drusilla’s mother.” I suck in a breath and bring my hands to cover my mouth. Now I place her smooth voice. The voice that read me bedtime stories, that taught me about science and mythology. *That’s not possible. They died. I saw them die. An unbidden voice whispered, We never found their bodies. I always dismissed Dru’s claims of her parents being alive as self-assurance. I never believed her. Oh Dru.*

“We need your help. We need to break the curse.”

***

My phone buzzed and I broke from my reveries. Ugh. Random notifications. I forgot to silence the phone. I think back to the book. *So Dru’s parents were never dead. And Cecily will be the one to break the curse. I’ll continue it later. I already know this is going to be another fabulous book*

Aaliyah Saksena [DP1]

E x t e n s ï o n ????

I barely recognise myself in the morning
I have no memory of who you were
Are you just an extension of your old self ?
You don't seem like *you*
Somethings changed
And I can't really say
But the way you talk to me
The way you sit and stare
Its like your whole world shifted
And somehow i'm still there
Am I an extension of *you ?*
Is that why I barely recognise myself in the morning
I can't remember even if I seem to try
What did the world feel like
Without you here by my side ?
Did time move as slowly
Was the sky less blue
Were the clouds just as big
Were you still the old *you ?*
I don't seem to like it here
But I can't be sure
Because I barely recognise myself in the morning
The memories of who I used to be fade some more

Am I an extension of my old self ?
And if I am
Then why can’t remember what it felt like to be the old me
How can I be nostalgic about something I barely remember
I seem to ask myself this question 12 times a day
I haven’t gotten an answer as yet
I barely recognise myself in the morning
I have no memory of who you were
We all just seem to be extensions of our old selves
We move on and on
Forgetting what came before us
How we got here
Just aimlessly moving along
Honestly it doesn’t make sense
But we’re here now
and
I’ve started to recognise myself in the morn-ing
It feels nice to be back
<3

Anvi Parkar [DP1]

Small pleasures of life

Life, more often than not, has a way of getting me down. So whenever I find the walls closing in on me, or feel like the world is too big and I'm too small, I indulge in the small pleasures of life to make up for my heart breaking and my stomach aching. I write down my thoughts in a journal that's small enough to fit in my hand, and I turn my music up to hundred, and dance to no song in particular in my room. I cook for my brother, and I sing into the spoon covered with soup. I make a cup of coffee that's sweeter than candy and I drink it while re-reading my favorite book. I butter a piece of bread I made and toast it until it's a little burnt on the sides and load it with enough jam to give someone diabetes. I take a needle and thread and fix my dad's old shirt's button, and stitch a flower into his collar. I put on an outrageous outfit that my friends love and walk around with them for hours, talking about everything and nothing. I learn to leave that heart break behind, piece by piece. I paint the panels on my bed like they're an artist's canvas and tell my mom to join me. We both giggle like little children when the red flecks of paint fall on the pillow. I yell out of my balcony to my childhood friend who lives across the building, and she yells back in response. Something gets lost in the wind, but the bits that reach me are satisfactory enough.

My stomach ache reduces every time I have tea that my dad made, which has too much ginger and not enough sugar, but there's something magical in it that compels me to drink it. I watch the sunrise and take my cycle out for a spin, and I feel the cold wind undo my ponytail as I race against it. I tell my friends I love you as a goodnight text, and I feel warm all over when they reply with

"Nerd! I love you too, tho."

I've learned to heal, so many times over. I've learned to look at every aspect of life and enjoy it while I can, even when the world throws its worst at me. I've learned to love and to not hold myself back and to cry when I need to and to laugh when I want to. I've learned to love life over and over again, and I'm always willing to learn again.

Forget-Me-Not

The wave crashed onto the rocks, meticulously yet delicately. The hymns of the receding tides as it flooded through the pores of the coral reef below. The low hum of the wind, as it flew throughout the sky, as if Lord Vishnu himself was riding his chariot within.

Upon the lone cliff, where the beating waves crashed, the hard sandstone bore a patchwork of greens and yellow. Short bristles of the velvet grass adorned the cliff with its flora and fauna. Yet the edge lay barren and empty. Except for a small little sapling of a flower whose petals never wilted – simply grew as time passed on.

As the clouds grew around the warm, mellow sun, the sea's restlessness emerged. Like a kid in a candy store, the waves thrashed the rocks with such vigor that the rocks were mere seconds away from withering from existence. The wind howled, the seas roared, yet the lonesome flower withstood all that came its way, as if protected by a halo of benevolence. No matter what – a storm, a landslide, a drought or a flood, the flower stood pridefully at the edge of the cliff; its petals to the world and beyond.

A whimper through the wind is heard, quiet and faint. The world turns a deaf ear to it, while the flower beckons the voice to its roots. Like echolocation, the flower hums in return a tune only audible to the lost voice in the wind. A code no one can ever break, for no other key will fit the rusty old lock.

The storm keeps raging on. The flower kept humming. The voice kept looking.

And as suddenly the storm took hold, so did it recede. A single sunlight, spotlighted onto the little flower.

Its rich blue color compliments the golden tips of the cliffside. Right above the lonesome flower stood a translucent silhouette. The voice had found the song. The figure, though faceless, pondered around the bloom with curious nature.

'*Who are you?', the figure spoke aloud, unsuspecting of any onlookers, for there were none in this world ruled by nature.*

'*Humans call me **Myosotis**, but the gods named me **Forget-me-Not**', replied the flower, as nature calmed itself from the intoxicated sugar rush of before.*

'*Why did you call me…why here, why right now.'*

'*Come on down closer, listen to my song. Of a place yonder at a time we simply ponder.'*

A gust of wind blew across the cliff as the silhouette crouched below to the call. Their expression softened, if there were one to begin with. The little bud illuminated the figure, its scent surrounded the world. Time was moving behind; scenes shifted to before; life grew and fell and grew.

***


SCIENCE

Kulsum Ansari [8A]

Reality is an illusion

"Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one."

- **Albert Einstein**

This article is based upon the 3-decade long research done by Cognitive scientist Donald Hoffman. As generations come by, opinions change, perceptions change. People change as they grow up, that's no old news, really. What we don't realize is all the sights, sounds, textures and tastes we perceive as the accurate representation of the world could actually be the complete opposite, all the sights, sounds, textures and tastes we know are what our brain believes they are .when facing color blinded, specially-abled people even animals we miss a point the point that we all have a different point of views in the smallest of differences between colors or tastes. The world that we seem to perceive is a mere illusion created by our brain. The true reality of the world might be always beyond our reach, but it's for sure our 5 senses give us a good introduction of what it's really like. Many disagree with this thought process but let's get into the science part of illusions, there is actually no color but instead The wide range of electromagnetic waves reflected from an object; only a limited range that is captured by the photoelectric cells in our eyes.

We call it visible range. When these photons hit our retina, they are converted to electric signals and sent to the visual cortex at the back of our brain. It then projects on another line that assigns certain wavelengths as colors and we perceive our world as colorful. There are many other radiations like radio waves, alpha waves, gamma waves etc. that our eyes can't detect and for us they don't exist, yet some of these still do exist for bats and other animals. Illusions are what our brain deceives us into perceiving and these very illusions make up our daily life or realities!

Jiya Kher (IBDP-1)

Could we become real, live X-men?

Genetic engineering, especially on humans to create 'designer babies' is a loaded field of study. It, at its core, uses a phenomenal enzyme called Cas-9 to essentially cut, copy and paste strands of DNA into other strands; a collage of sorts, packed with genetic information. This along with CRISPR technology gave rise to the cheapest, most accurate and simplest way of gene editing known till date.

CRISPR, or Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats, has been in development since 2016. The scale at which it has advanced within its years is tremendous, with a success rate of over 99.9%. It sounds close to advertisements on sanitizer bottles promising to kill 99.9% of germs! Something that has both the precision of a surgeon and the ability to literally eradicate most auto-immune disorders very effectively just by changing a line of genetic code is full of unrivaled potential. Not only is it incredibly accurate, it reduces the time frame of experiments from what was years to weeks. Genetic engineering before CRISPR was extremely difficult: years of testing, animal organ harvesting, money loss and general complexity.

CRISPR has the capability to change humanity's traits and features right from birth, which is why people have given genetically modified humans the moniker of 'designer babies'.

There is a lot of hesitance to give the go-ahead and put CRISPR into practice, with people fearing that “defective” and “imperfect” people will be shunned from society in the process, not to mention the technology might only be available to the rich, furthering the social divide between income groups. However, it is important to realise that the more the technology progresses, the more unethical it gets to not use it for strictly medical purposes.

If we take an example of medical defects within infants, such as Down Syndrome, it is noted that over 92% of recorded pregnancies with a Down Syndrome diagnosis in the UK were *terminated. Prejudice against birth defects has already existed, and it is crucial to understand that the existence or use of genetic engineering technology isn’t going to create a more rigid set of human ideals, but it might make the idea more prominent. Using CRISPR is in fact, saving lives, because if genetically adjusted babies were to be made, they would most likely be physically healthy and able to live longer, or be more fulfilled in their lives.*

Looking ahead to the future, CRISPR revolutionizes what space travel could be like for humans. Human biology could be changed to be able to survive on different planets, adapt to different professions easily and make simply existing much more beneficial for us and the planet we live on.

Not only that, but we could harvest genes from animals with desirable traits and apply it to our species, *without any side effects. Think about carefully borrowing a gene from a cuttlefish and suddenly being able to camouflage with your surroundings- the possibilities are vast. It sounds like it might end how Andrew Garfield's The Amazing Spider-Man did, but superpowered lizards are not the end goal for humanity. In fact, most cancers could even be reduced to something you need to just get vaccinated for. Perhaps racist behavior could be culled, since genetic engineering ourselves would reduce the biodiversity we'd possess and no longer have race-specific features.*

It's important to address that there are in fact disadvantages and risks to using genetic engineering. However minute the error rate of CRISPR might be, there is still a chance of seriously damaging someone's body. It could be used for abusive purposes. Lastly, there is always the probability that a disease we were functionally immune to could mutate, and with our reduced biodiversity, wipe out millions of people. Even so, the profit of using genetic engineering on humans outweighs actual disadvantages by far, seeing as the downsides are mostly risks that can be regulated within reason.

It is absolutely necessary to create regulations and heavily discuss strategies and plans for the inevitable use of CRISPR.

People, once they hit a certain age could be allowed to modify themselves as they wish, like a legal age to get a tattoo- both are bodily modifications. It is a very personal choice for parents to want to alter their children, but it would also be unethical for the child without their consent, therefore, parents could only be allowed to adjust susceptibility to disease and increase life expectancy. Once the first amended baby is delivered, a door of possibilities opens up for all of us.

Amyshka Shenoy (IBDP-1)

The spaghettification of science?

Science has revolutionised the world in an innumerable amount of aspects, be it wireless headphones to GPS systems. Everything that we fancy is available at a whim. With one click of a button, items get delivered to our homes, and that's all through a single mobile device. If you could tell your ancestors centuries back that by tapping a slab of metal in all the right places will bring tasty food- that's the kind of information that would make a Victorian child faint.

Our scientific knowledge today broadens, branches out- like a black hole stretching out various fields into information-loaded noodles. By the day, a huge amount of people across the globe dedicate their lives and careers towards making these advancements. It is because of our commitment to science, in all its vast fields, that we were able to reach the moon, that we were able to access VR (virtual reality), and were able to combat climate change's growing ascent with innovative solutions like hydroelectric and nuclear power. Of course, we have to talk about our scientific progress with the Covid 19 vaccine that we developed in a record-breaking time, protecting millions.

Science united all of humanity for one single goal: to eradicate the virus, and brings us together in so many different ways. Think about it- we used science to develop communication. Communication bands us all together in one way or another, whether it's calling your mom to teach you how to make spaghetti or checking in with friends online. Some bond over enjoying the same kind of physics research paper. Some make friends just by learning how to apply scientific concepts and helping others with it. We all consume science day in, day out, in thousands of ways. Paying our respects to the knowledge that we gained due to the pandemic as well as due to the extensive research and analysis that we could do of the composition of the virus through beautifully crafted, visionary tools all goes towards science. Had we not been at the stage we were at here and now, the pandemic may have lasted much longer than intended and we wouldn't be given the luxury of not having to worry about this invisible enemy every step we took in the healthcare field.

Still within healthcare, robotic body parts which aid amputees or who suffer from limb damage exist- to give them a second chance at living a 'normal' life with these prosthetic limbs, helping them carry out all the tasks that able-bodied folks can, even furthering the acceptance of such people by normalising their existence.

On a fruitier note, we've been able to completely recellularise (replace all the cells) within living organisms such as fruit. Yes, they technically did end up doing surgery on a grape- converting it to a grape with animal tissue within. It may not sound very impressive at first, but to look ahead and think of the way cells can be shaped to grow and replace vital organs could eradicate the need for people to donate their own kidneys to save lives.

Not only growing your own organs like some kind of Edgar Allan Poe-esque macabre botanical experiment, but we can now 3D print them! Scientists have been experimenting with artificially creating mammalian arteries with truly promising results for those who suffer from heart disease- instead of using grafts, bypasses or even blowing up your arteries with a balloon: they can now simply just be replaced. Think of it as changing the tires on your precious car instead of sewing up the holes on them repeatedly until they give way. It's possible to go on about the achievements just in human healthcare for pages, but it couldn't do justice to the majesty of what science can do for us and what we've achieved so far. To conclude earnestly, science is something phenomenal that can go miles for us as long as we work with it. Even if it involves fruit made out of meat.

Jiya Kher (IBDP-1)

Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Charles Darwin: some of the most popular names in the science community, and guess what? They're all men.

Marie Curie, Rosalind Franklin, Janaki Ammal, Vera Rubin: less popular names but still much better known within the science community.

Women have been snubbed of so much recognition within the scientific world, with work often stolen by male colleagues, work not credited and more. But... imagine being a lesbian woman in the field of science. Discrimination is indisputable.

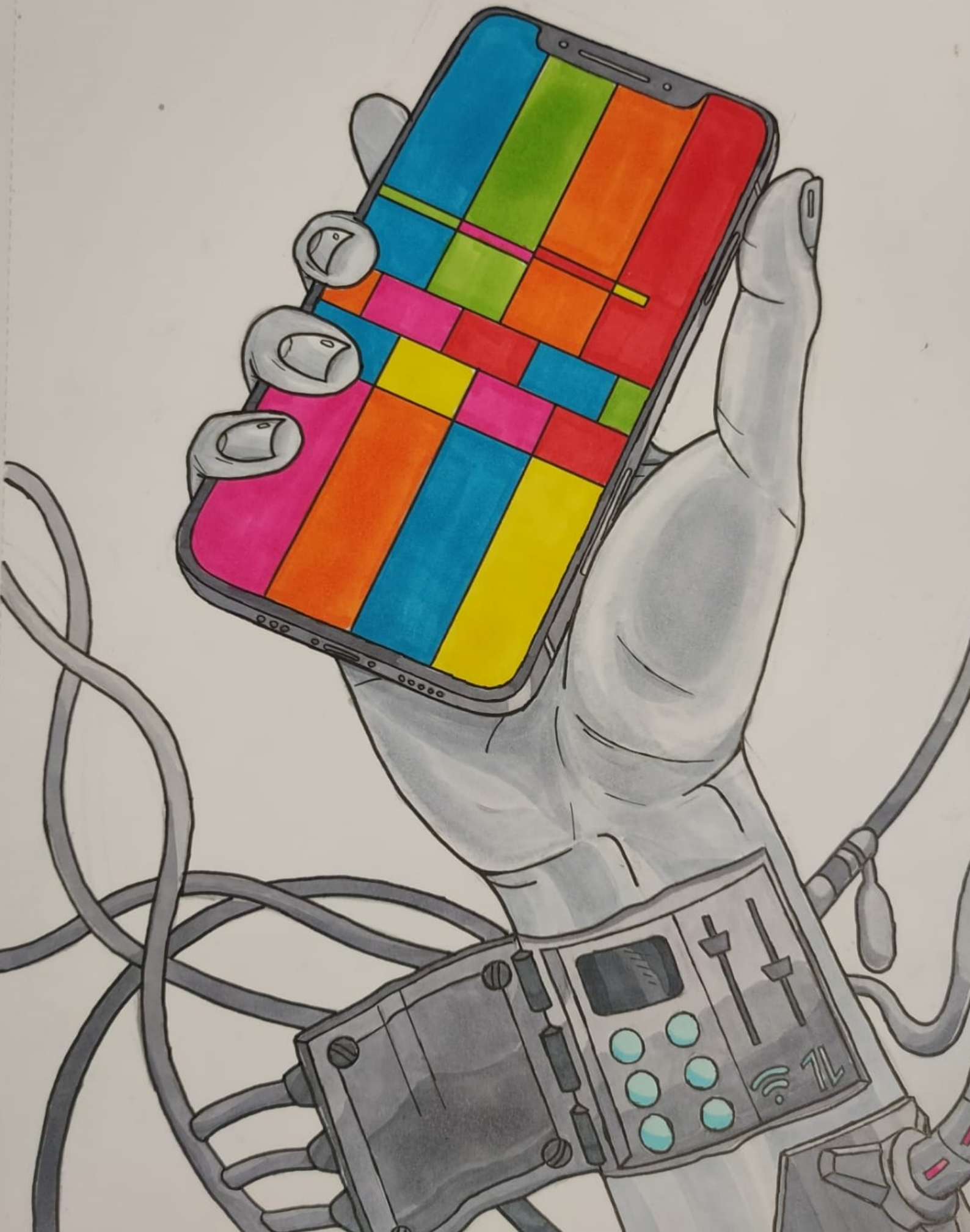
Sally Ride, the first American woman in space was a lesbian woman. Not many knew of this in her lifetime, and it was only public knowledge after her death in 2012. While Sally was indescribably a great physicist and astronaut, she is today the cause of multiple policy changes at NASA. It is believed that she was unable to ever talk about her sexuality due to homophobic policies at NASA, stating homosexuality as disqualifying, but post her death, NASA has changed their policies to include and protect LGBTQ+ people.

The third woman in space, Sally Ride has always been a role model for young girls interested in STEM, and has made her mark in the scientific community for all her brave contributions in the years before.

While men have often been widely recognised in the scientific community, living as an openly trans-man was definitely not easy. Ben Barres, leading neurobiologist, mentor, advocate and professor lived his later years as an openly transgender scientist at Stanford University. Barres studied glia, a type of brain cell that makes up 90% of the brain, and left a rather powerful mark in the field of research. A beloved professor and mentor to students at Stanford University, Ben Barres fought for equality. He stood up to healthcare discrimination for transgender people and even advocated for the rights of women and stood up against male privilege. Thanks to Barres, today, we know that glial cells help neurons form synaptic connections in the brain; a rather surprising discovery by him. Ben Barres has been a groundbreaking researcher and has helped advance biomedical research surrounding the brain to a large extent.

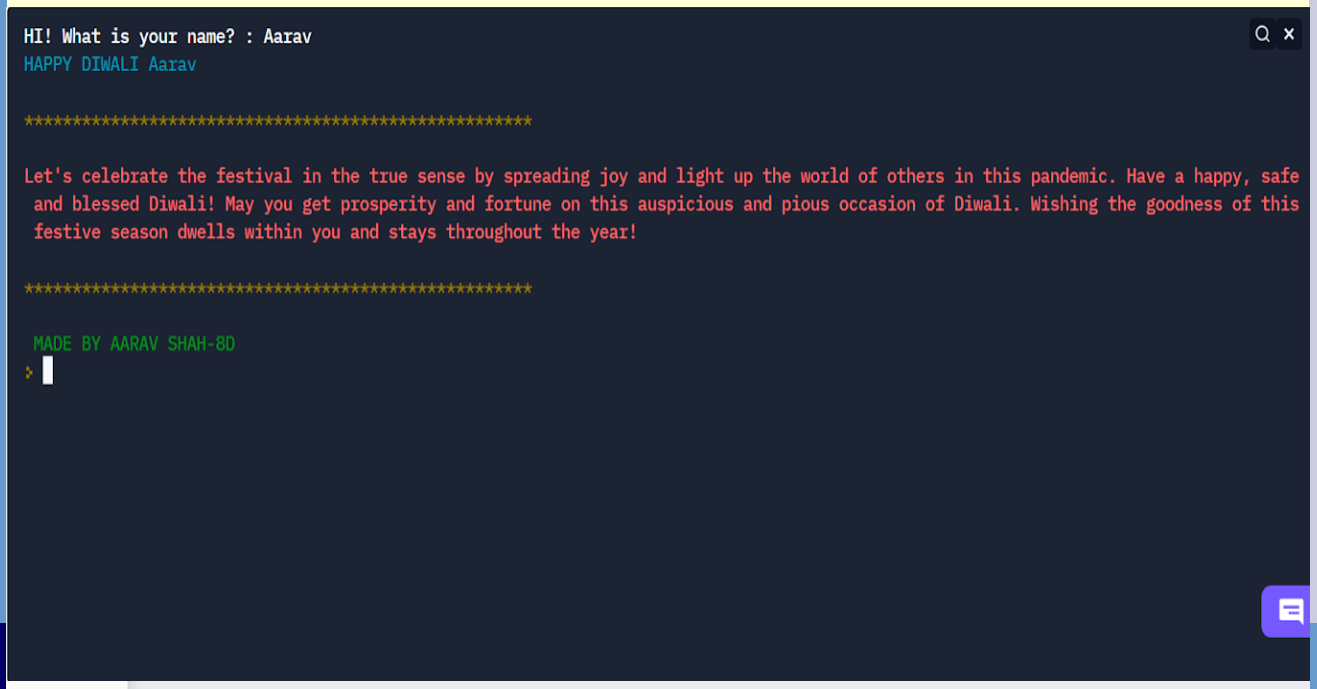
These are just 2 examples of scientists who dared to dream and lived their truth, whether public or private. The science community today has people from all spectrums: gay, non-binary, bisexual, transgender, intersex and more. It is the need of the hour to end discrimination in science, because like everything else, *Science truly is a spectrum.*

TECHNOLOGY



Aarav Shah [8D]

I made a program using Python language by using replit.com to wish Happy Diwali. Due to the pandemic, we cannot meet our near and dear ones, so we can wish Diwali online by using this program.




```
TGREEN = '\033[32m'  #TEXT COLOUR GREEN
TRED = '\033[31m'  #TEXT COLOUR RED
TORANGE = '\033[33m'  #TEXT COLOUR YELLOW
TCYAN = '\033[36m'  #TEXT COLOUR ORANGE

name = input("HI! What is your name? : ")

print(TCYAN + "HAPPY DIWALI " + name)

print(TORANGE + "\n**********************************************************")

print( TRED + "\nLet's celebrate the festival in the true sense by
spreading joy and light up the world of others in this pandemic. Have a
happy, safe and blessed Diwali! May you get prosperity and fortune on this
auspicious and pious occasion of Diwali. Wishing the goodness of this
festive season dwells within you and stays throughout the year!")

print(TORANGE + "\n**********************************************************")

print(TGREEN + "\n MADE BY AARAV SHAH-8D")
```

Ananya Tejuja [8D]

Technology

We have all experienced it , doing online class and the teacher asks you a question , “ Maam my mic isn’t working “ most people are scared , I’ve done it once myself.

This is a classic example of taking advantage of Technology according to your convenience , and let's face it everyone has been told this ,“ taking the easy way out is never a good option “ but according to you it's still a way out and even better if the way out is easy.

All I’m saying is that when it comes to technology there are 2 types of people , ones that hide behind the screen and ones that use the screen to help express themselves . I believe in being the second type of person , because a screen can do a lot but that's not your personality , that’s the personality that the internet creates for you according to the trending tab . Because of the screen people have missed countless memories , I implore you to count how many memories you missed yourself. In most cases technology is the villain , when your parents try to protect you from the world technology exposes you to it, I understand it causes confusion and that creates doubt , which in turn kills your self esteem. For this new year I have a challenge

If you attend online class for any reason like you are shy or scared of what your classmates will think of you , I implore you to switch your camera on in every class and actively participate , it will help you understand that not everyone is perfect and open up some more , most importantly the same technology that allows you to get to class , will be the same technology that you can use to express yourself , it's the same technology that helps you get over your anxiety and just , be you!

What Is the Impact of Virtual Reality on Education?

The concept of virtual reality (VR) was originally introduced in the 1936 science fiction short novel "Pygmalion's Spectacles." This was a groundbreaking notion at the time, but it was merely a dream, much like stepping on the moon. However, much as Neil Armstrong became the first person to set foot on the moon, virtual reality (VR) has progressed from a concept on paper to a technology used in classrooms by more than 6 million pupils, according to CNN.

The Educational Path to Virtual Reality

How did cutting-edge technology become so broadly available? According to Wired, it all started with the Oculus Rift, a 2013 headgear attached to a display that enveloped the user in a 3D world. Since its inception, virtual reality has altered not just how we experience video games, but also how we see the whole digital realm, including the usage of virtual reality in education.

Since 2013, virtual reality has undergone a massive technical revolution. As headgear became smaller, more transportable, and more powerful, the technology became far more accessible. Furthermore, 5G phones have enabled access to the virtual environment from everywhere.

Because of this improved accessibility, virtual reality (VR) is now a viable choice for schools. 360-degree cameras and innovative programmes like Google Expeditions have taken VR into the classroom, allowing teachers and students to approach education in ways never previously possible. According to the media website Built In, the usage of virtual reality in classrooms is expected to skyrocket over the next six years.

Traditional vs. Virtual Reality Education

The method children learn hasn't changed much over history. The conventional approach to education has long been fact retention teaching. The traditional classroom experience consists of studying for examinations, sitting for lectures, and attempting to picture history through a textbook.

However, with the development of VR, students may now experience their education in more immersive and engaging ways. Virtual reality can transfer students from their seats to the Roman ruins, enabling them to combine volatile chemicals and see the response without being physically hurt, and allow them to not only see but also interact with virtual environments.

As a result, the teacher's job has moved from material delivery to facilitation of learning.

According to Adobe, "teachers will be focused on establishing circumstances for exploration rather than offering ready-made information." Adobe also claims that virtual reality will improve pupils in six ways:

1.Improved feeling of place: Students may learn about a subject by seeing it firsthand.

2.Scalable learning experiences: Educators may develop virtual laboratories to save expenses and expand accessibility.

3.Learning by doing: Instead of merely reading, students may learn by completing projects.

4.Emotional response: Educators create memorable experiences for pupils in order to boost retention.

5.Tilt Brush technology, for example, expands pupils' opportunities to be creative.

6.Visual learning: Educators may help visual learners understand educational information better.

VR in the Classroom

Virtual reality offers a wide range of uses in education that help both instructors and students.

Lesson Preparation and New Teacher Training

Teachers are frequently forced into classroom settings immediately after completing their undergraduate degrees. When it comes to putting their expertise to use, students still have a lot of real-world learning to complete.

VR provides a means for instructors to increase their education before they enter the classroom. According to DistrictAdministration.com, instructors may rehearse classes in a mixed-reality scenario using technologies such as TeachLiVe. During the session, student avatars reply as if they were in a classroom, giving teachers the opportunity to practise their abilities. This also helps present instructors by allowing them to rehearse challenging lessons and assess their pupils' potential learning.

According to Ed Tech, Crosswater Digital Media has even developed a technology that puts educators into conflict scenarios. This enables them to learn how to deal with a tough student or scenario before they face real-life consequences.

Classroom Session Digitization

By capturing and reproducing genuine classroom sessions, VR can also assist students and teachers learn classroom insights. According to the software startup vSpatial, instructors have already begun to generate thorough recordings of courses using 360-degree cameras. If a student misses a lesson, they may utilise VR recordings to digitally transport themselves into their classroom, observe their friends, and study as if they were there.

Teachers can benefit equally from virtual classroom sessions. Teachers can acquire significant insights into their students' learning styles as well as their own teaching method by recording and modifying classroom sessions.

Greater Learning Possibilities

VR also increases the possibility of student field trips and laboratory activities. Previously, educational trips were restricted by expense, distance, and accessibility; now, virtual reality removes these constraints and opens up a world of possibilities.

Google Expeditions built virtual reality environments for pupils to experience, such as swimming with whales and exploring Mars.

Students can even board genuine school buses that have been converted into virtual reality environments by replacing windows with 4K monitors.

Science laboratories are also being digitised, which reduces expenses while offering over 100 different experiments and increasing accessible to low-income populations, according to AR Post.

Lead Education's Future

Teacher education is changing as virtual reality becomes more relevant, accessible, and effective in classroom settings. LSU Online's Master of Education in Educational Leadership and Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis in educational technology prepare future leaders to use cutting-edge technology in education, such as virtual reality. Both master's programmes prepare teachers to develop their careers in education and alter classrooms via the use of technology

Jiya Kher, IBDP-1

More Than Just a Time-teller: Why Smartwatches are THE Coolest Technology

The watch was a simple accessory: singular purpose, stylish design and lightweight. Until the introduction of smart watches, there wasn't really much more to the technology side of the watch. Or for that matter, any side of the watch. Skeletonized watches or even solar powered ones were about as far as it got. Smart watches revolutionized two aspects of something as mundane and unnoticed as a watch: consumer health and technology. Now, something that is easily accessible can almost simulate the experience of visiting a medical professional: checking your pulse rate, your blood oxygen saturation, even the time you sleep for—not to mention some watches even have an inbuilt search engine that allows you to answer your most pressing medical issues within seconds. Headspace meditation is also an option, allowing for therapeutic visuals to calm you down. To have something resting on your arm with the brainpower of a trained doctor of many fields is astonishing, to say the least.

Smart watches also improve your quality of life and push you to take care of your health, blessing you with 'walking goals' and other milestones of physical movement to achieve during a day, giving people the motivation to take that step and reach their goals.

They can hold impressive microprocessors and store multiple gigabytes worth of data, truly allowing them to be considered full fledged computers! They have been engineered to be scratch, shatter and even waterproof, with fascinating research being done on how to even further the progress of the smart watch.

Many other factors have also been taken into consideration in addition to health and technology, such as durability, style and even consumer comfort, with only select high quality materials being used to create the bands of the watch. All in all, the watch is a tiny but powerful example of how subtle changes of technology in our everyday lives can completely change our health. This has the power to incentivize us to do better and strive to be healthy.

The OG 19th-and-20th-Century Girlbosses who Shaped The Tech World

While most of us know that Thomas Alva Edison pilfered ideas from Nikola Tesla, and that Charles Babbage created the first computer, did you know that Augusta Ada Lovelace was the creator of the binary digits—the stuff that is now the backbone of every computer system—only because her mother didn't want her to become a poet like her father? Did you know that the technology which created WiFi was pioneered by Austrian-American actress Hedy Lamarr?

Gender ain't a binary, but the mathematics of computers are

Lady Augusta Ada King, the countess of Lovelace, was born to poet and writer George Gordon Byron (a leading figure of the romantic movement) as his only legitimate child with Lady Byron, (with the rest of his children being born out of wedlock with other women) on December 10, 1815. The couple split after one month of Ada's birth, and four months later he wrote a poem about how he wanted to see her.

He died in Greece when she was eight years old.

Her mother, a mathematician herself, encouraged Ada to pursue her passion in logic and mathematics to prevent her from falling into her father's perceived insanity. While she was often sick, she was still

very regular with her studies, leading her to meet people like Andrew Crosse, Micheal Faraday and Charles Dickens to name a few.

When she turned 18 in 1833, she met Charles Babbage, starting a close working relationship with him that lasted several years.

In the years 1842-3, she translated mathematician Luigi Menabrea's articles on Babbage's notes on the Analytical Engine. Along with this, she explained his complicated analytical system ideas and the article was well received.

She calculated the sequence of the Bernoulli Number sequence via the analytical engine, making her **the first computer programmer in the world**, as she published the world's first ever computer algorithm.

W for Wonderful Woman Who got us WiFi

Hedy Lamarr was born on November 9, 1914 as Hedwig Eva Keisler in Vienna, Austria. She inherited her fascination for machines and devices from her father, who told her about the inner workings of machines like the printing press. At five years of age, she could take apart a music box to see how it worked.

At age 16, she was discovered by director Max Reinhardt, who introduced her to the big screen, where she started acting in various films.

She only got recognition in 1932, for acting in a controversial film, “Ecstasy”.

In 1933, she married Austrian arms-dealer Fritz Mandl, who was one of her many fans. She soon however ran away from him to London in 1937, when she realized he would dominate her and the marriage without giving her a say in any matters. During this time, she learnt about arms and ammunition from all the times she had to smile and nod for his friends, many of whom were associated with the Nazi party.

In London, she was introduced to Louis B. Meyer, the head of MGM, and that was when she started her career as a Hollywood actress. During this time, she met pilot and businessman Howard Hughs.

While she dated him for a while, the biggest impact he had on her was reintroducing her to the world of science. She had seen the jets being sold to the US Military, and decided to design faster jets. She created a design that used the streamlined shape from birds and the fins of fish combined with the wings of birds.

In 1940, she met George Antheil, with whom she went on to create a method of “radio hopping” for the soldiers to communicate with. While it received a patent from the US, the army decided against using it in 1942.

However, only in her later years did Hedy Lamarr get recognition for her creation. She became the first woman to receive the Invention Convention's Bulbie Gnass Spirit of Achievement Award. She, along with Antheil, received a pioneer award from the Electronic Frontier foundation in 1997.

While she died in 2014, she was added to the scientists' hall of fame for her radio-hopping technology, and is now known to the world as the mother of WiFi.

Both of them are the backbone of technology, and without them, I wouldn't be able to type out this entire article, and you wouldn't be able to read it on your own computers. So let's hear it for the women who changed the world with their inventions!


ANTI-VIRUS DETECTED
VIRUS DETECTED
Anti-Virus Protection
PAY ₹999/MONTH FOR ANTI-VIRUS PROTECTION
I CAN'T BELIVE IT. ANOTHER SCAM ... REALLY?
WAIT A MINUTE
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS EXPIRING
DARN IT MCAFEE YOU BECAME THE THING YOU SWORE TO DESTROY

How has technology affected the life of teenagers

In the high paced modern world social media and other forms of technology are a norm of life which if not used can mark an individual as an outcast. The world has changed and social media has changed a lot of lifestyles, count is a curse or boon it has both ends of the spectrum with it. The positive of social media is that it has enabled millions of people to connect with each other, and it has given a platform for individuals to showcase their talent of art work which can be in any shape or form, many have consumed knowledge through social media too. However social media also has a huge dark spot which has caused many people to victims of cyberbullying and other form of harassment, people have now became addicted to the use of social media where upwards of several hours are spent on social media which has reduced there overall real life socialization and has made them comfortable with staying inside the house all day long rather than spending time with family or friends, this lack of socialization has given many people social anxiety, depression and anger issues which are some serious mental health issues. The sudden rise in the popularity has showcased many different cases in which people have transformed their life into a healthy and positive life by consuming and presenting positive information, on the contrary many people have ruined their social, academic life making them

lack behind on the wonders of life. When it comes to my personal view on the same, it totally comes down on how a individual chooses to use the tool, the people who used it for their own benefit with proper understanding have gained immense, whereas the one who uses it without any sense of consent and second thought have lost out with many.

Miron Mistry (IBDP-1)

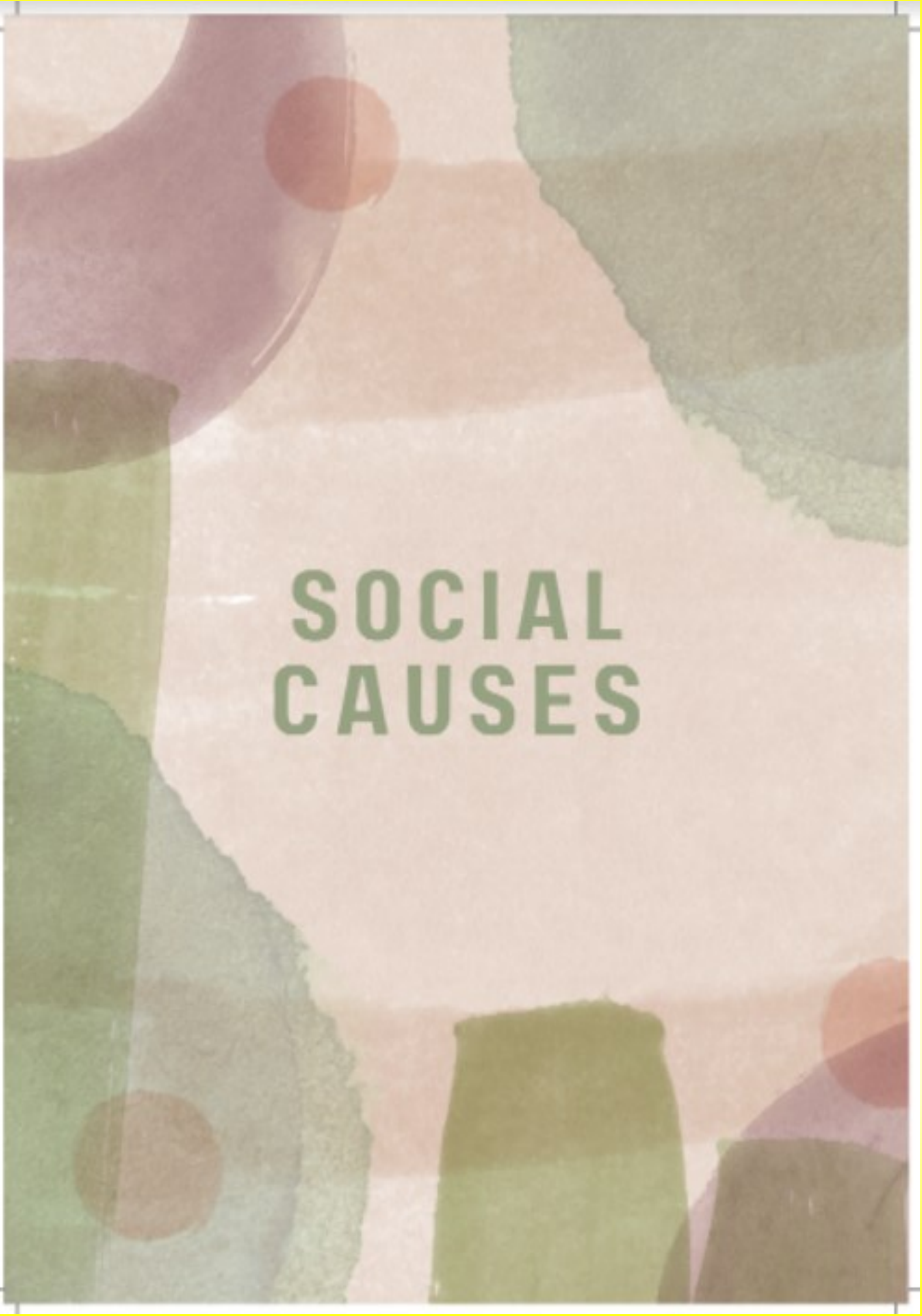
A phenomenon that took the world by storm, a game recognised worldwide.

Not many can boast of having broken the 2.5 billion downloads barrier and having 27 million daily active users. This game has perhaps been the first introduction of gaming to multiple generations. This game is none-other than the endless-runner genre's most popular, Subway Surfers.

Released on 23 May 2012, Subway Surfers soon celebrates 10 years. The concept of it surrounds their default character Jake as he graffitis a train and is chased by an Inspector and his dog. As Jake, the player has to jump, dodge and slide under objects to avoid getting caught. The simple concept is made more interesting with power-ups and coins that the player can collect to play as different characters or to upgrade their power-ups.

The popularity of Subway Surfers can be attributed to its release aligning itself to the dawn of smartphones being more accessible for the rest of the world. To be a well polished game that ran well and gained quick popularity in such a time resulted in many remembering it fondly and associating it with their reminisced about childhood. Such emotional connects held by millions across the world,

plus the developer's dedication to be aim for constant improvements creates something so much more than a game by maintaining true to its ideology, yet never ageing.


SOCIAL
CAUSES

Aarav Shah [8D]

Participated in Swachh Bharat Mission Campaign





Street play-Creating awareness on preventing child drug abuse and child marriage.





Action Against Hunger- Run for Hunger.



Yash Vadhar (IBDP-1)






Humongous concrete jungles such as the financial capital of India, Mumbai and the capital of India, Delhi overshadow miniscule villages such as the one shown in the above photographs that are only to be found in the back of the beyond deep in these Brobdingnagian metropolises, where, as unfortunate as it may be are drenched and enveloped in utter poverty, where there is no sign of modern infrastructure and doesn't give off an aura of the 21st century rather reminds us of India back in the 20th century, yet worse due to people not having and not being able to afford the basic necessities of life: Food, Shelter, Water, Clothing. People although happy with what is on their plate, unlike people in cities that are to wimp if aren't handed with the latest iPhones or aren't taken out for regular trips to the cinema and 5-star restaurants, as they say that "There is always something to learn from everyone", this is something the people in cities need to learn from these people.

Utso Chaudhuri (IBDP-1)



The boons of nature are on a slow decline due to our own misdoings. Climate change has been rampant and the white, scintillating snow over time will decay due to the temperature and may cease to exist altogether but at this very moment we can work towards a glistening future. A future similar to the photograph.

Same sex marriage: Should it be legalized?

Many of us would hotly deny that our beliefs and thoughts should definitely not exist at the cost of the basic human rights of other people like us. However, even in this day and age these same mentalities violate Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, also known as the right for people to marry whoever they want, or to put it simply, the beliefs of many people around the world prevent the rights to marry for same-sex couples.

People claim that sometimes children need both parental figures, which means that the male and female parties have to be involved in it. However, this argument can easily be invalidated by the fact that single parents, who raise their child without the other parental figure, are also very much legal. If you have to illegalize one, the other should also be illegal.

There is also an additional claim that children from adoptive parents may question their birth parents. While this is true, the common belief that the children have to be raised by their “real” family is completely false. People can call anybody family if they want. And as the saying goes, “Blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb”.

People argue against this, saying that evidence that same-sex parents can raise a child is inadequate. This somehow implies that same sex marriage is perfectly legal and that these couples aren't jumping the gun to have chideren, which is absolute hogwash because how would same sex couples be able to raise children if they aren't married?

There are also various parties who say that children raised by same-sex parents experience gender and sexuality disorders which while isn't entirely true, is to be honest quite desperate. This particular argument claims that children exploring their gender and sexuality more freely with same-sex parents as compared to heterosexual parents and is calling this a bad thing. Is being closeted and having to constantly worry about disapproval based on something you can't even control a better option than being supported? Does this feel logical?

"Same sex marriage would destroy the procreative purpose of marriage," people say, as if the world isn't overpopulated already. There are millions of children who need homes and parents, and isn't it completely unethical to deny them that basic necessity? Is the government going to deny parents and children loving families because of their sex? Is this what the 21st Century Development means?

If same sex marriage also diminishes the expectation of parental commitment by claiming that men are more likely to leave their pregnant girlfriends, then maybe the problem isn't with the homosexual people.

People also say that heterosexual marriage helps in women domesticating men, which is quite absurd. Are men really so incapable of taking care of themselves after they leave their homes that they need to marry another woman to mother them and keep them in check? Even this doesn't lie with homosexual people; clearly there is another party at fault here.

In conclusion, same sex marriage should obviously be legalized because it is a human right. Most of the arguments people use against it are based on personal opinions and prejudice and therefore completely invalid, ruling out any possible reason not to make it legal.

Not a war against reality, but a war for equality:

The recent creation of a much more inclusive gender neutral birth certificate policy issued by New York City has captured concerns about the growing range of these gender identities, boiling it down to the fact that it is detaching the idea of a person's assigned biological sex from what they identify as. This, in fact, is what allows people to be more secure in their bodies, in a society where gender roles are ever present. Now, there are a wide variety of nonconforming gender identities, from demigender to genderfluid. To disregard these completely, the genders that people feel most comfortable expressing themselves with, and to claim that they are against reality is to contribute to discrimination that these people face on a nearly day-to-day basis.

Individuals who identify as non-binary help challenge the idea that there are only two genders. People have to face violence, hate crimes and harassment against them simply for existing the way they choose to be, and deal with stigma from a biological standpoint, as well as their own personal feelings and the gender dysphoria that comes with not feeling safe enough to be yourself. What some protesters have identified correctly is that gender identity is *not equal to biological sex.*

Gender is mostly a social construct that designates roles for the two genders in the binary. However, it is a well-known fact that there are not only two biological sexes, and therefore there cannot be only two gender identities, much less have those identities rely on biologically assigned statements. To not only place emphasis on the existence of the gender binary but to outright say that gender identities conceal the objective biological reality of sex is sorely misjudged.

Even worse, Peter Sprigg, a prominent member as the senior fellow for policy studies at Family Research Council states that the existence of intersex people does not justify the need for a gender-neutral outlook on legal documents like birth certificates, which provides harsh criticism against not one, but two large groups of the LGBTQ+ community. People possess different kinds of chromosomes and therefore have different biological sexes, the six most common types being: X, XX, XXY, XY, XYY and XXXY. To further this point, you cannot rely on reproductive organs to determine sex, and it is horrifyingly reductive to base an individual's role in a society on what's between their legs. It *is possible that brain chemistry, the body and the reproductive system have different biological sexes. The repeated way that people deny their existence and assert that a gender-neutral birth certificate does not reflect correctly what people are is more than genuinely disrespectful towards those gender non-conforming individuals.*

The only reason that any sort of importance should be given to reproductive organs is when medical treatment specific to some biological sexes is necessary, since biological sex affects response to treatment and the progression of diseases, leading to different outcomes in health. This is why many may use the terms “AFAB” and “AMAB”, respectively “assigned female at birth” and “assigned male at birth” during medical procedures to allow the doctors providing them treatment to prescribe accurately while still respecting their gender identities.

Those against gender nonconforming people even goes as far to call the concept of these birth certificates absurd. In reality, including a gender that is not exclusive to the two most common genders is a huge step towards the acceptance of non-binary people. Declaring that it is waging a war against reality is heavily exaggerated- the closest thing to war would be people grumbling over adding new pronouns to their vocabulary. In addition to that, no evidence exists where it says that this could even potentially negatively affect a society, much less start a war. It has been scientifically proven that generally allowing individuals to express themselves freely reduces suicide rates, reduces stigma, and fully lets people achieve their own potentials while being comfortable in their bodies. The most inconvenience

a cisgender individual could face is tripping up with someone's pronouns, which are still grammatically correct and can do no harm as long as they are not disrespectful towards pagan religions.

There is no enemy. There is no oppression. There is virtually nothing but the mere acknowledgement that many types of humans exist and everyone has to do their best to respect their needs and basic human rights.

In conclusion of the more than contentious viewpoint, the fact that New York City and other places such as Oregon, California and Washington as passing bills to be more inclusive for gender non-conforming individuals is nothing if not an indicator of a glowing future of gender equality, not just between men and women but all individuals with their unique and diverse identities.

Not a war against reality, but a war for equality:

The recent creation of a much more inclusive gender neutral birth certificate policy issued by New York City has captured concerns about the growing range of these gender identities, boiling it down to the fact that it is detaching the idea of a person's assigned biological sex from what they identify as. This, in fact, is what allows people to be more

secure in their bodies, in a society where gender roles are ever present. Now, there are a wide variety of nonconforming gender identities, from demigender to genderfluid. To disregard these completely, the genders that people feel most comfortable expressing themselves with, and to claim that they are against reality is to contribute to discrimination that these people face on a nearly day-to-day basis.

Individuals who identify as non-binary help challenge the idea that there are only two genders. People have to face violence, hate crimes and harassment against them simply for existing the way they choose to be, and deal with stigma from a biological standpoint, as well as their own personal feelings and the gender dysphoria that comes with not feeling safe enough to be yourself. What some protesters have identified correctly is that gender identity is *not equal to biological sex. Gender is mostly a social construct that designates roles for the two genders in the binary. However, it is a well-known fact that there are not only two biological sexes, and therefore there cannot be only two gender identities, much less have those identities rely on biologically assigned statements. To not only place emphasis on the existence of the gender binary but to outright say that gender identities conceal the objective biological reality of sex is sorely misjudged.*

Even worse, Peter Sprigg, a prominent member as the senior fellow for policy studies at Family Research Council states that the existence of intersex people does not justify the need for a gender-neutral outlook on legal documents like birth certificates, which provides harsh criticism against not one, but two large groups of the LGBTQ+ community. People possess different kinds of chromosomes and therefore have different biological sexes, the six most common types being: X, XX, XXY, XY, XYY and XXXY. To further this point, you cannot rely on reproductive organs to determine sex, and it is horrifyingly reductive to base an individual's role in a society on what's between their legs. It *is possible that brain chemistry, the body and the reproductive system have different biological sexes. The repeated way that people deny their existence and assert that a gender-neutral birth certificate does not reflect correctly what people are is more than genuinely disrespectful towards those gender non-conforming individuals.*

The only reason that any sort of importance should be given to reproductive organs is when medical treatment specific to some biological sexes is necessary, since biological sex affects response to treatment and the progression of diseases, leading to different outcomes in health. This is why many may use the terms "AFAB" and "AMAB", re-

spectively “assigned female at birth” and “assigned male at birth” during medical procedures to allow the doctors providing them treatment to prescribe accurately while still respecting their gender identities.

Those against gender nonconforming people even goes as far to call the concept of these birth certificates absurd. In reality, including a gender that is not exclusive to the two most common genders is a huge step towards the acceptance of non-binary people. Declaring that it is waging a war against reality is heavily exaggerated- the closest thing to war would be people grumbling over adding new pronouns to their vocabulary. In addition to that, no evidence exists where it says that this could even potentially negatively affect a society, much less start a war. It has been scientifically proven that generally allowing individuals to express themselves freely reduces suicide rates, reduces stigma, and fully lets people achieve their own potentials while being comfortable in their bodies. The most inconvenience a cisgender individual could face is tripping up with someone’s pronouns, which are still grammatically correct and can do no harm as long as they are not disrespectful towards pagan religions.

There is no enemy. There is no oppression. There is virtually nothing

but the mere acknowledgement that many types of humans exist and everyone has to do their best to respect their needs and basic human rights.

In conclusion of the more than contentious viewpoint, the fact that New York City and other places such as Oregon, California and Washington as passing bills to be more inclusive for gender non-conforming individuals is nothing if not an indicator of a glowing future of gender equality, not just between men and women but all individuals with their unique and diverse identities.

Anisha Bhatia (IBDP-1)

The sun is a man, but the moon is a woman. The sun is a man because it's blazing, constantly shining, a source of life - a breadwinner, a star, a sole entity. But... the moon? The moon is reliant, dependent, silent and shy. Quiet and hidden in the darkness, she is merely proof that the sun exists.

The sun is a man, on the forefront of glory, don't get me wrong, he faces challenges and judgement but life treats him much better. The sun has never had to worry about being shamed, demeaned or told that he is less than he is, that he should hide behind the shadow of a title or be silent and submissive. The sun received glory, you see? He can be whoever he wants to, he can get paid equally. He's not a part of some 'diversity quota'. He is known to be sustenance and life, for without him we are nothing.

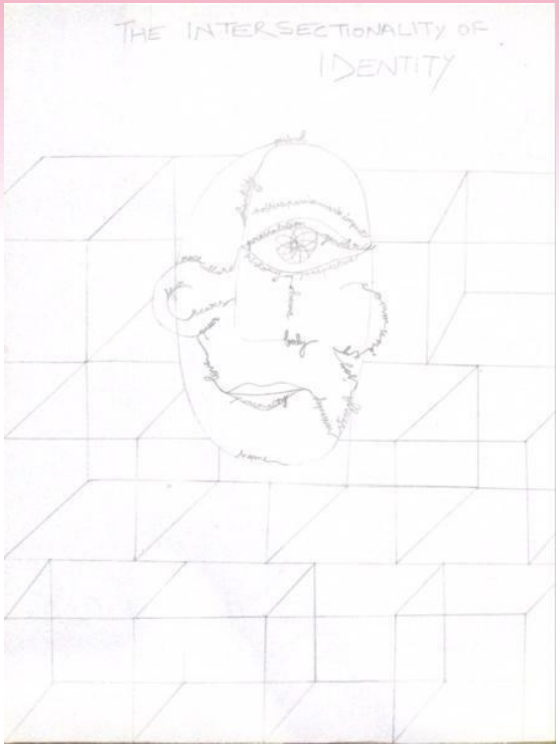
The moon is a woman though. She's pretty, perfect for pictures or night gazing, approachable, reached and no longer intriguing. She's never thought of as a star on her own, for she borrows the light of the sun to shine. She moves and wanders, never the same: sometimes raging red and others, calm as you've ever known. Her image is the product of generations of patriarchy, you see.

The moon saw stories of others extinguishing, being left behind or disappearing and she feels like her worth is only in her appearance. At least that's what society has made her feel. The moon is treated like

she is secondary, like her primary focus is her appearance, that a so-called 'life-skill' is more important than the actual person. The moon has often been a part of stories, of men howling at her, of her disappearing for a couple of nights each year. The stories are endless, she never gets a chance to speak. Oh dear, being the moon appears to mean that everybody but you can decide who it is that you are.

The sun is a man is a *metaphor, a metaphor because as much as we don't want to admit it; as a society, men hold so much more importance. The bias starts when we are all but children and doesn't really ever end. Have you ever questioned why there is so much power over a surname? Have you ever questioned why people assume that it's women who do the chores? Have you ever questioned why even though more girls as compared to boys choose STEM subjects in school, 20 years down the line, statistics show that it is only men who dominate the field?*

You see, in this world, the sun *is a man and the moon is a woman, but I'll tell you what: you can be the amalgamation of both, because that will always be the most powerful.*



A face surrounded by straight-edged, sharp cubes. The face is made up of curved lines instead, and the words: mind, fear, scars, disability, queer, depression, struggle, joys, love, community, race, culture, history, perspective, dreams, gender, presentation, personality, hobbies, passion, work, impact, home, body. The order of the words is perceptive. The eye's iris has overlapping ovals, to once again symbolise intersectionality.

A quick doodle I made because I got inspired to put forth the concept of intersectional identity and experience through a visual piece. This piece conveys how complex people are and how people cannot be fit into society's boxes

CURRENT AFFAIRS



North Korea's Laughing Ban:

North Korea. A country located in the north half of the Korean Peninsula in North-East Asia and is infamously known as the home of Modern Dictatorship. Ever since its independence in 1948 led by Kim-IL-sung, the North Korean leader and his family descendants have ruled North Korea as a Totalitarian Dictatorship. North Korea has had 3 leaders until now. The founder; Kim Il Sung, then his son; Kim Jong-il and now his son; the infamous and cruel Kim Kong-Un. While the Kim dynasty has enjoyed nothing but luxury, North Korean citizens have been forced to live in an open, green prison. Extreme rules have been forced on their living and their freedom has been compromised. No North Korean can't think freely, live, or enjoy life as a whole freely. North Koreans can't have opinions against their leaders, can't follow a religion of their choice, have a job of their choice, elect a leader of their choice and now can't laugh for 11 days. You read it right! They can't laugh for the next 11 days and if found laughing would be executed.

Why so? Well, starting from this week, North Korea mourned their second leader Kim-IL-sung's 10th death anniversary. And as it's been a decade since his father's demise, Kim Jong-un has decided that his country won't laugh for the next 11 days starting from the 17th of December. This clearly shows the misery North Koreans are forced to live in. Other rules alongside the laugh rule are that they can celebrate birthday parties, have music or dances, mourn other people's death or even do something which gives them pleasure or leisure.

These living standards in North Korea and this insane laughing rule is an example of how we should appreciate our freedom. And we shall pray for all North Koreans unfortunate enough to live or to be born in the country of North Korea and shall hope that their misery ends soon.

Utso Chaudhuri (IBDP-1)



hands. they're everywhere, still hovering and each touch is like a humiliating burn and i want it off, *off* me. (what do you want from me?) the need to shout wells up inside me once more but my tongue seems to rest uselessly in my mouth and aching all the while; i swat weakly to no avail. my voice translates fear and *horrible*, intrusive pain but it can't hold up much longer.

i can only bear it while i wait for this wave of violating pain to ebb and prepare for the next. their grip tightens sporadically. *is this what i deserve?* ~~i want to go home please let me go home i'm only nineteen~~

they laugh. it rings in my ears. they degrade, and there are insults when they kick at me and bend me backwards. (there's splintering and there's nothing more i want than to just wake up from it and pretend it was a dream why won't it *go away*) i want to scream when i hear a crack. normally, i should be at the market or helping my mother with getting food for the cows. abnormally, i am *here*. i don't think it's sunk in for me yet, but it seems to hurt more now.

when i choke on his hands, the air smells like crackling ash and i wonder if i will die peacefully. ~~the answer is no you get your ligaments ripped and spine curved till it snaps and will still be blamed~~

i lie here in wait. the grass flips in the wind and flicks morning dew onto my wounds. maybe nature is trying to help me undo the effects (i lie lie *lie* in hopes of keeping myself alive long enough) and wash it away. as i sprawl my limbs, i think this might be a good resting place.

"media wale to chale jayenge, hum hi aap ke saath khade hain." ~~there's blood on your hands there's blood staining this country it's on us all~~
it's your fault.

Boris Johnson coming to India - Ulterior Motives?

During his two-day visit to India, UK prime minister Boris Johnson's first stop will be Ahmedabad in order to meet the dairy representatives in Gujarat. The next day, he will be meeting PM Modi in New Delhi for the bilateral summit.

Sealing the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) with India will be Johnson's primary aim. What has led to this is the ban on sale of Indian dairy products in the UK and EU(European Union). Regulators in these countries say that dairy products from India fail to meet the European food safety standards. Another point to note is that producers in the Britain and European countries only sell cow milk while dairy exporters in India sell buffalo milk, which is also exported to the US and Canada.

In January, this year, the issue was discussed with Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan and negotiations were formally launched. Sources said that New Delhi has asked London to negotiate the dairy aspects at a later stage of the trade negotiations. This would be extremely beneficial as the countries could analyze the positive outcomes and avoid upsetting its citizens. Furthermore, the UK sources said that they will initially be focusing on exporting higher-value dairy

products with specialized items targeting the growing Indian middle class. Not to mention, just days before Johnson's visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a new dairy plant in Gujarat's Banaskantha district. "India produces milk worth Rs 8.5 lakh crore per year and is the world topper in milk production," Modi said at the time.

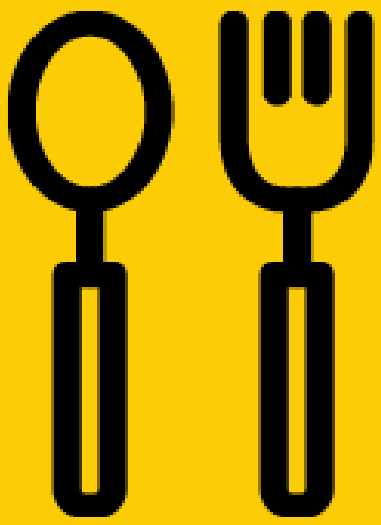
Johnson's itinerary is no secret for Gujarat. Since the British and European dairy products have been wanting a greater market access Gujarat's remunerative dairy industry has been protesting against it. As a matter of fact, Amul is one of the largest dairy companies in the world. For the year 2020-21 Amul recorded its highest ever sales at Rs 39,248 crore. Therefore, if the British markets gain access to Indian markets, Amul's profits will fall. This would be a disadvantage not only for its employees but also for the entire economy as Amul is one of India's main companies.

According to Arpita Mukherjee, professor at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, the UK is facing a huge amount of protests from Indian producers over the import of dairy products from Britain. She mentioned, "UK companies want India to reduce tariffs on dairy products, which is currently 100-150 per cent and are asking if some of their products can enter in the high-end specialized market. Discussions may focus on this aspect."

This would cause a great inflow of money due to higher exports for the UK.

To conclude, Johnson requires access to the Indian market and needs this free trade agreement to be in action. Will Boris achieve his target or will the Indian dairy producers keep fighting? To find out, keep up with the news.

CUISINE AND CULTURE



Aarav Shah [8D]



He made a video on Multilingual day and as he is a Gujrati, He made a famous dish- Dhokla.

The Real dishes of India!

India is similar to a sponge as it takes and adopts common fruits and vegetables from foreign countries and turns them into delicious dishes that have now become an integral part of Indian culture.

Spain has given a lot of its fruits and vegetables to India. Can you guess what one of them is? It is included in sandwiches as well as Sambhaar (not Samber as pronounced in some hotels!). It is every-one's favourite(not mine) tomato.

This vegetable was introduced by Spanish voyagers in the 14 century. Before the Tomato, the souring agent used was either tamarind or raw mango powder(amchur). I

I guess that is also a reason why the Indian Holi is inspired by the La Tomatina festival in Spain (or vice-versa, I am not really sure. Most likely, vice-versa)

Portugal has also given us a lot of things. One is a popular snack and the other is an important ingredient. The vegetable is both in Mutter Paneer and Sambar. If you haven't guessed yet it is the Chilli. It came from Portuguese ships.

The spicing agent was Black pepper, which caused the British to conquer India(but that is another story).

The famous snack is what we call Pakoda. This battered vegetable dish was introduced again by Portuguese sailors. When Portuguese people went on to Japan the Japanese wouldn't admit it but the tempura is a fancy way of making pakora.

Another snack is the samosa. Arabian sailors called it samusak and it was a fried pastry filled with dry fruits. The Portuguese gave us the hot peanut oil to fry it in and the chillis. The quiet cook at the local "mithaiwala" turned it into the delicious samosa we know today.

Last but not least, is customisation and innovation and the creation of famous fusion food. Indo-Chinese food is a very popular fusion. No one has ever made Chicken Manchurian or Hakka noodles in China, but was innovated in India

Another fusion food is a Dosa. A Dosa is a large crepe/pancake made from frying and spreading rice flour, It is filled with everything from spiced potatoes(masala) to pizza sauce and cheese. Things such as paneer slices on pizza will make Italian chefs wonder, so we can claim that paneer pizza is Indian and part of innovation.

To end off on a sweet note neither, gulab jamun or gulkhand is Indian.

Being a foodie, I don't care about the origin!


art
&
photography

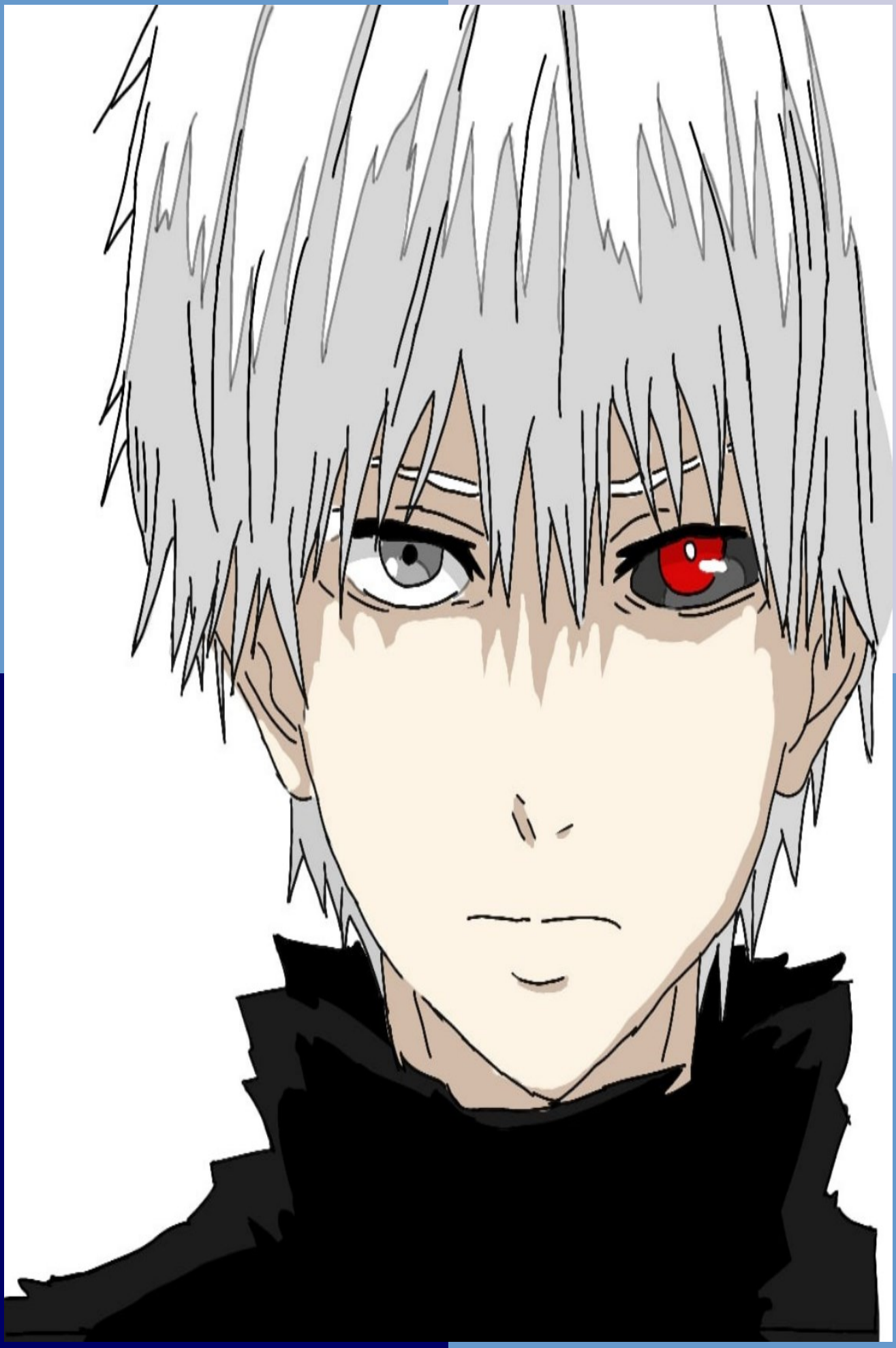
Saarth Agrawal [6A]



Aanya Babbar [6A]



Aanya Babbar [6A]



Aanya Babbar [6A]



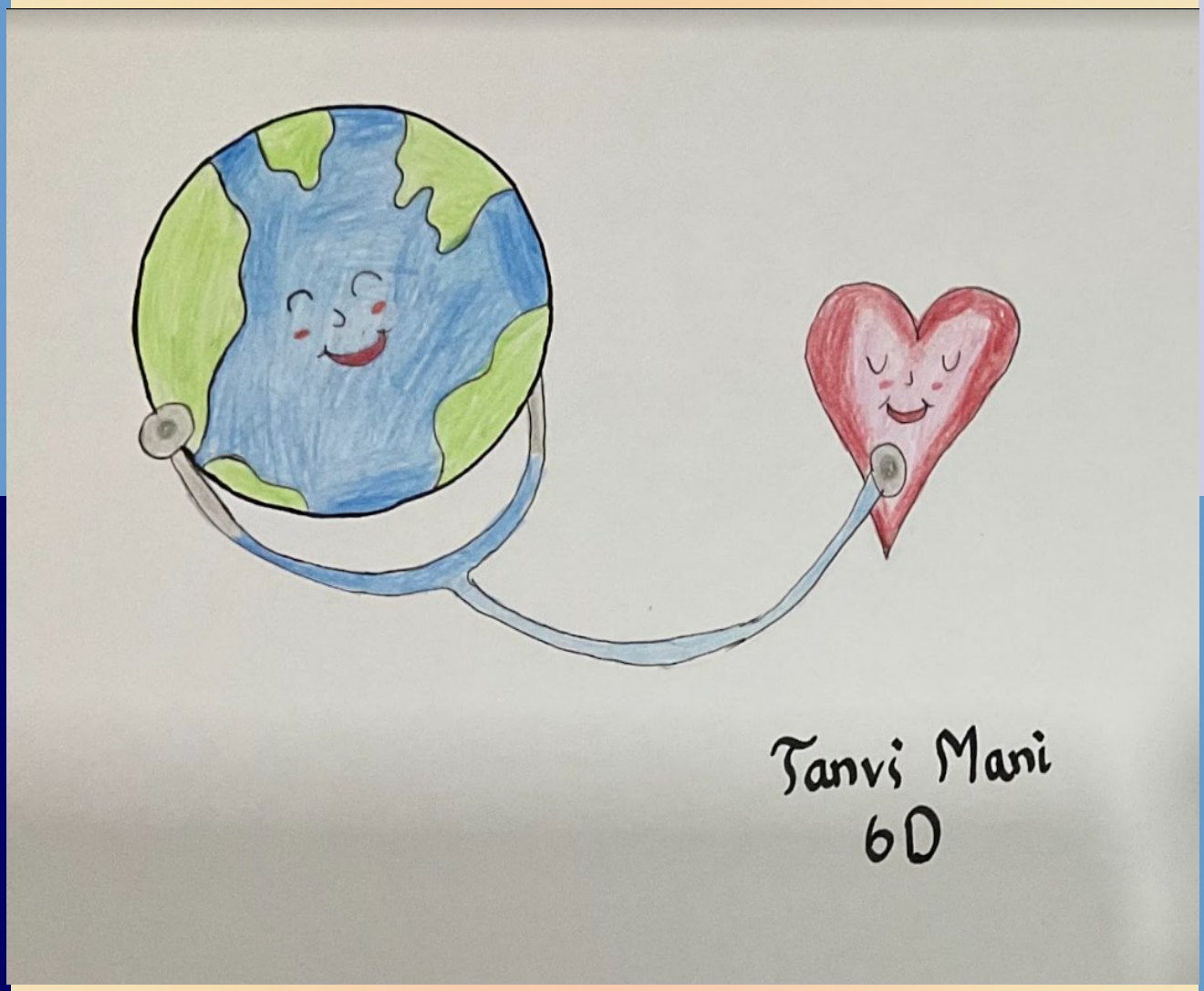
Myra Jhawar [6B]



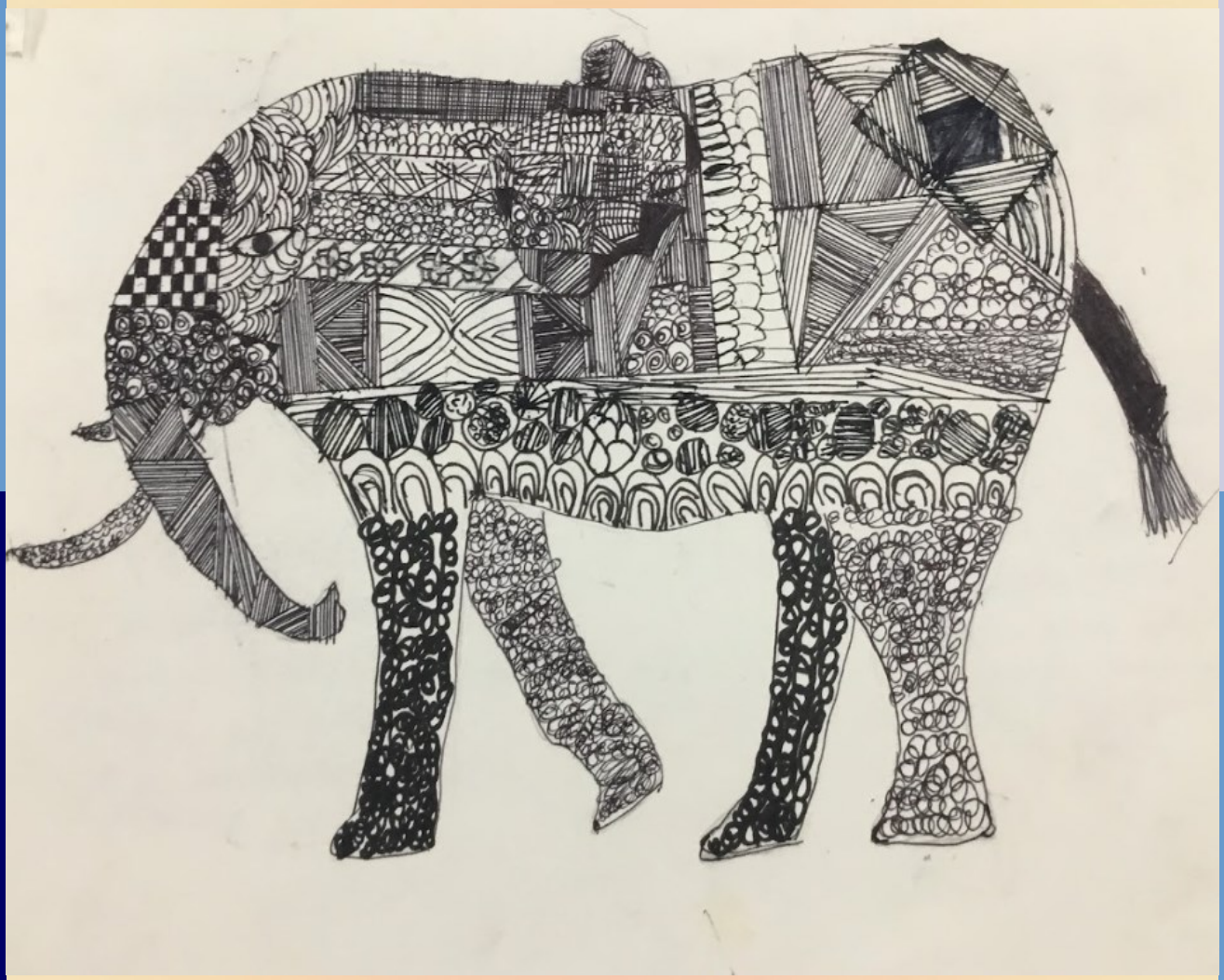
Poornata Jadhav [6C]



Tanvi Mani [6D]

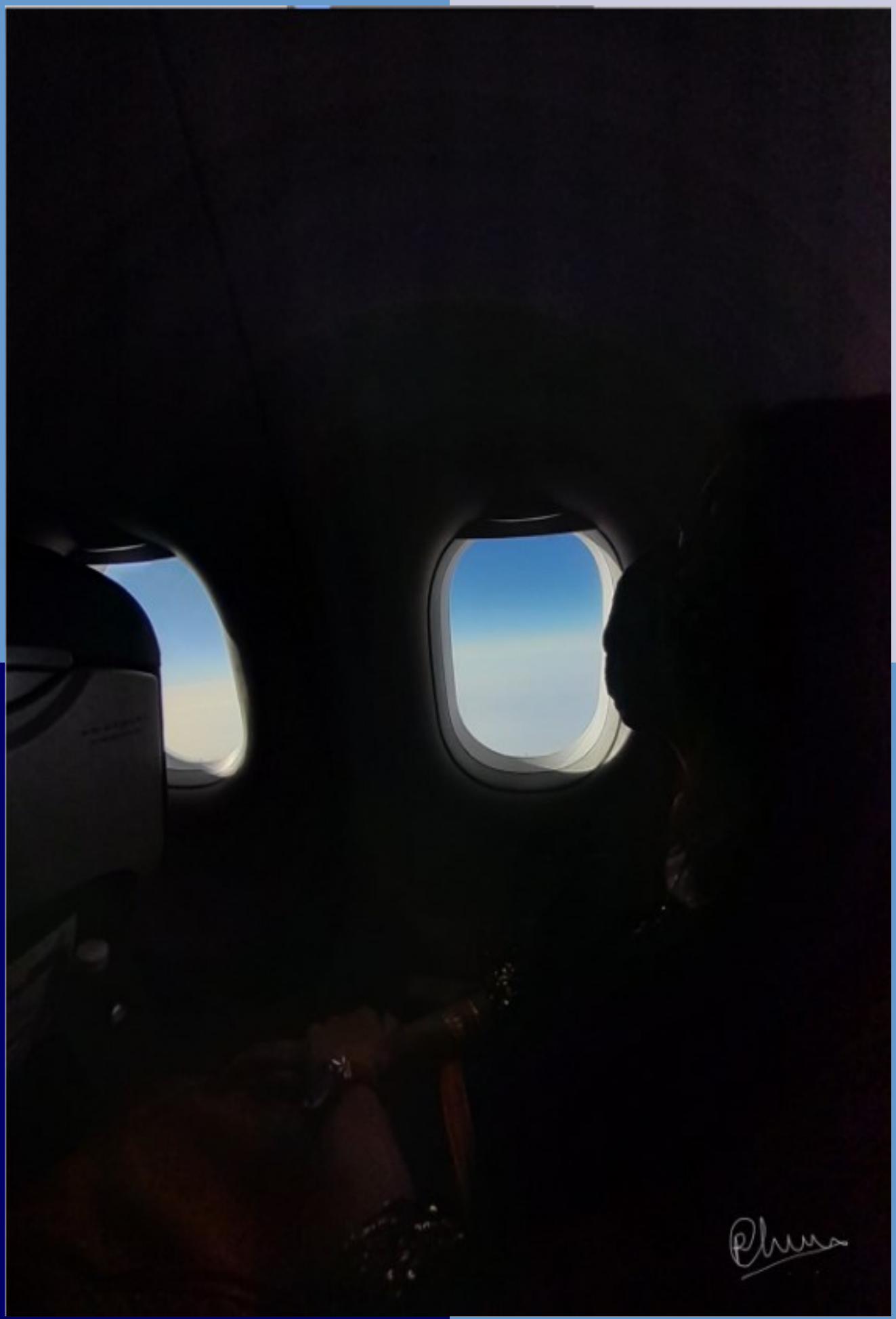


Shayan Elavia [6D]





Ruheena Roushanara Choudhury [7A]



Ruheena Roushanara Choudhury [7A]



Ruheena Roushanara Choudhury [7A]



Ruheena Roushanara Choudhury [7A]



Aarav Bhatia [7B]



Aarav Bhatia [7B]



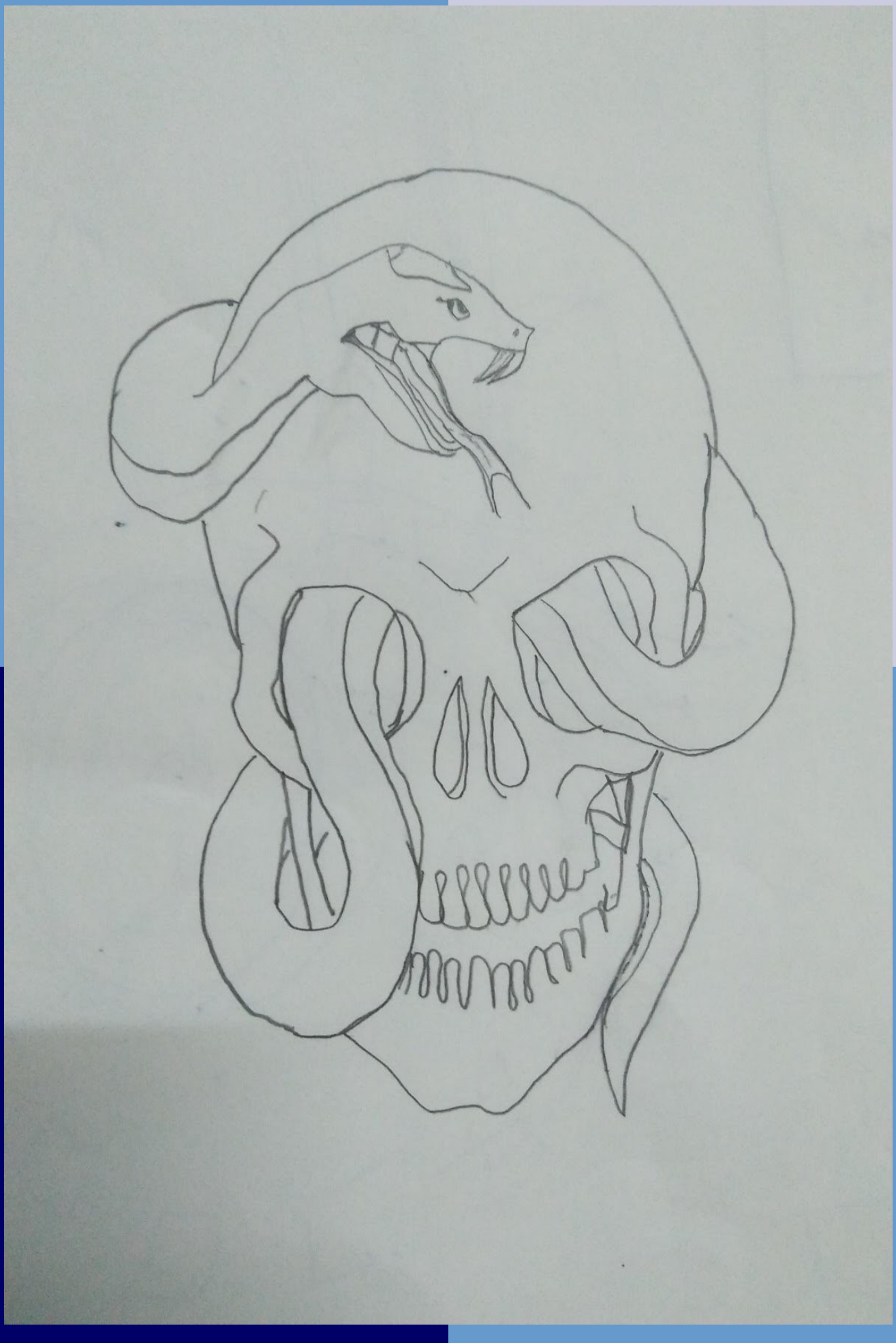
Pranaya Ahuja [7B]



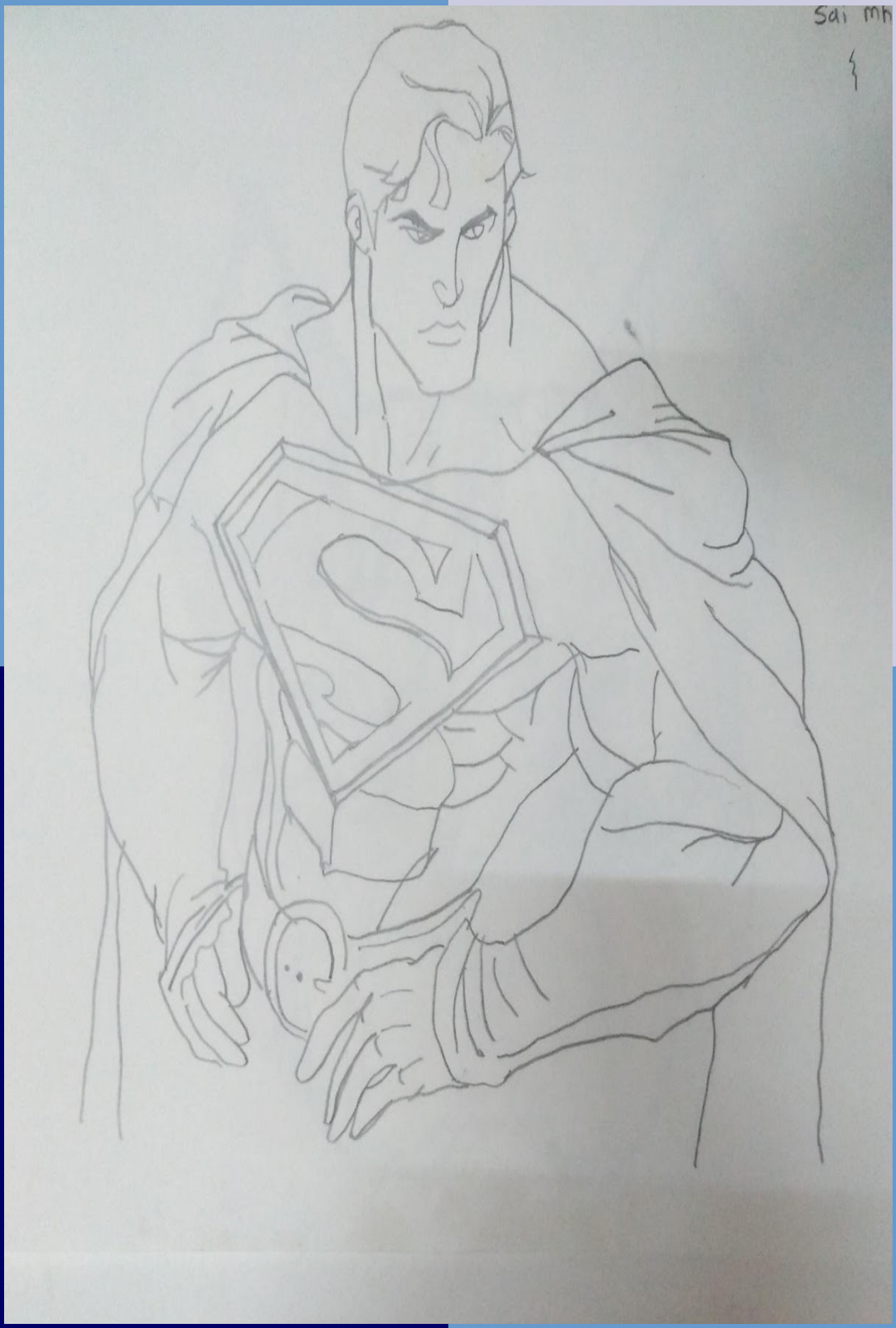
Pranaya Ahuja [7B]



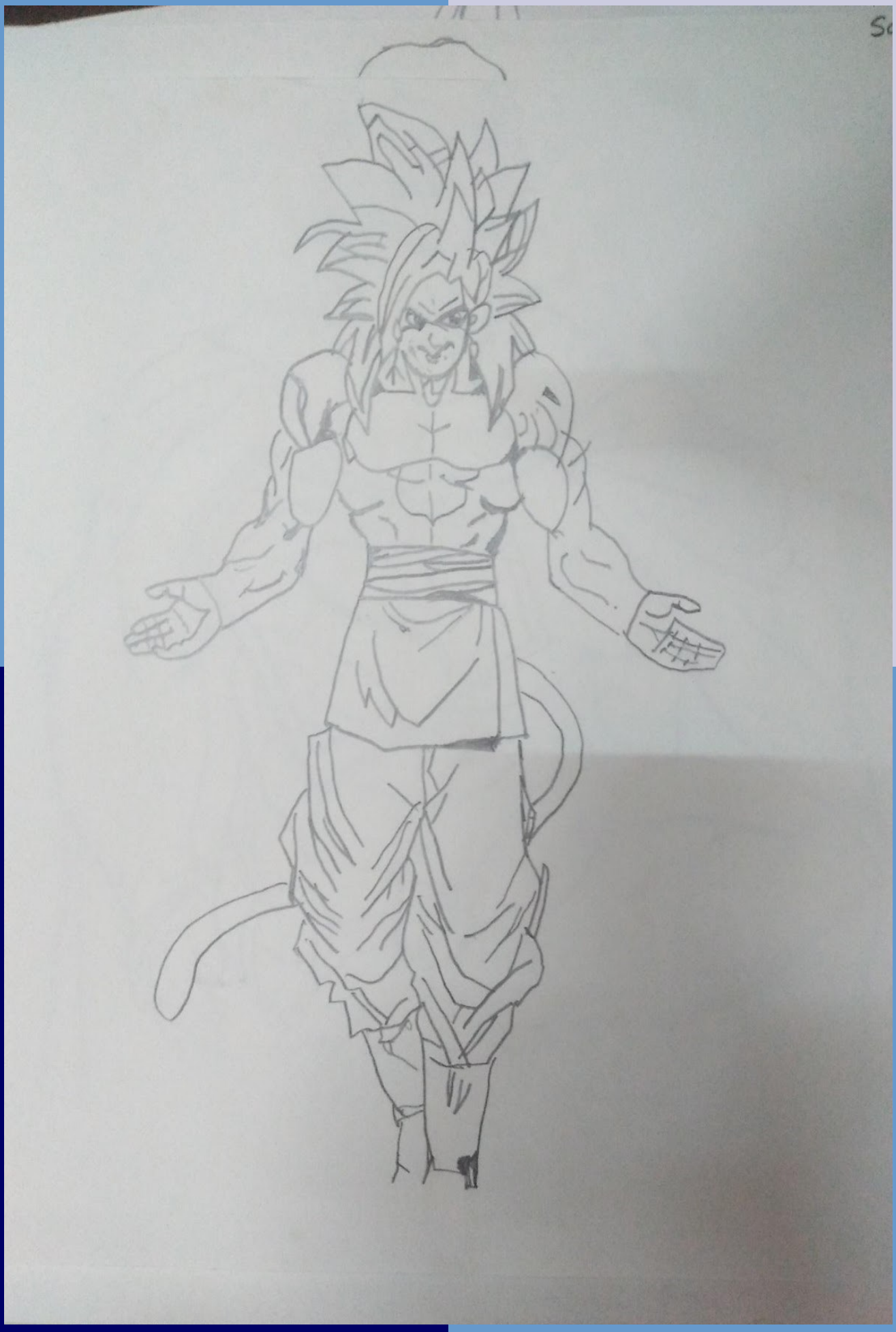
Sai Mhaske [7B]



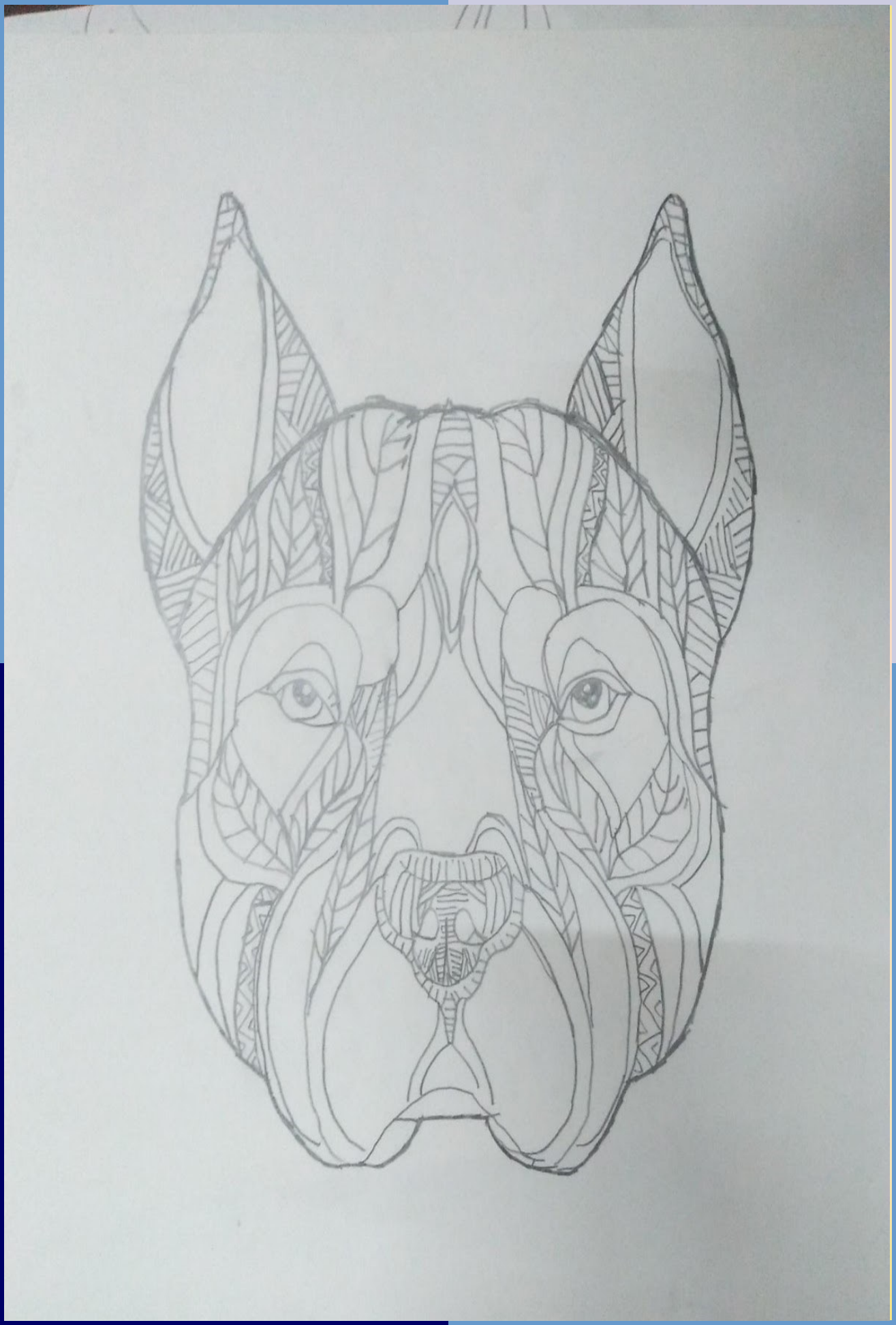
Sai Mhaske [7B]



Sai Mhaske [7B]



Sai Mhaske [7B]



Sai Mhaske [7B]



Riyan Sawdekar [7E]



Kimaya Singh [8A]



Shailaja Venkataraman [8A]



Meher Bhuta [8C]



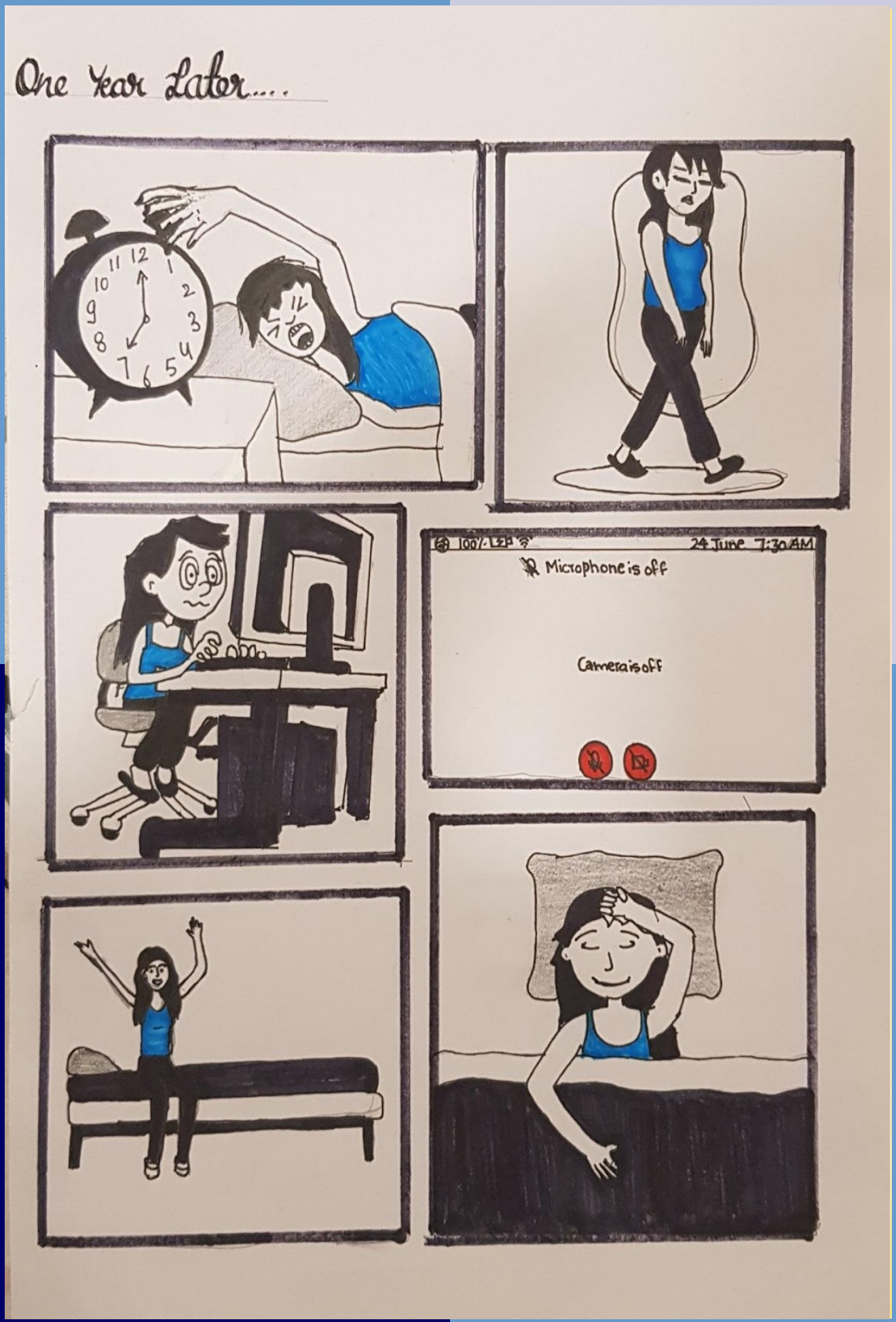
Aarav Shah [8D]



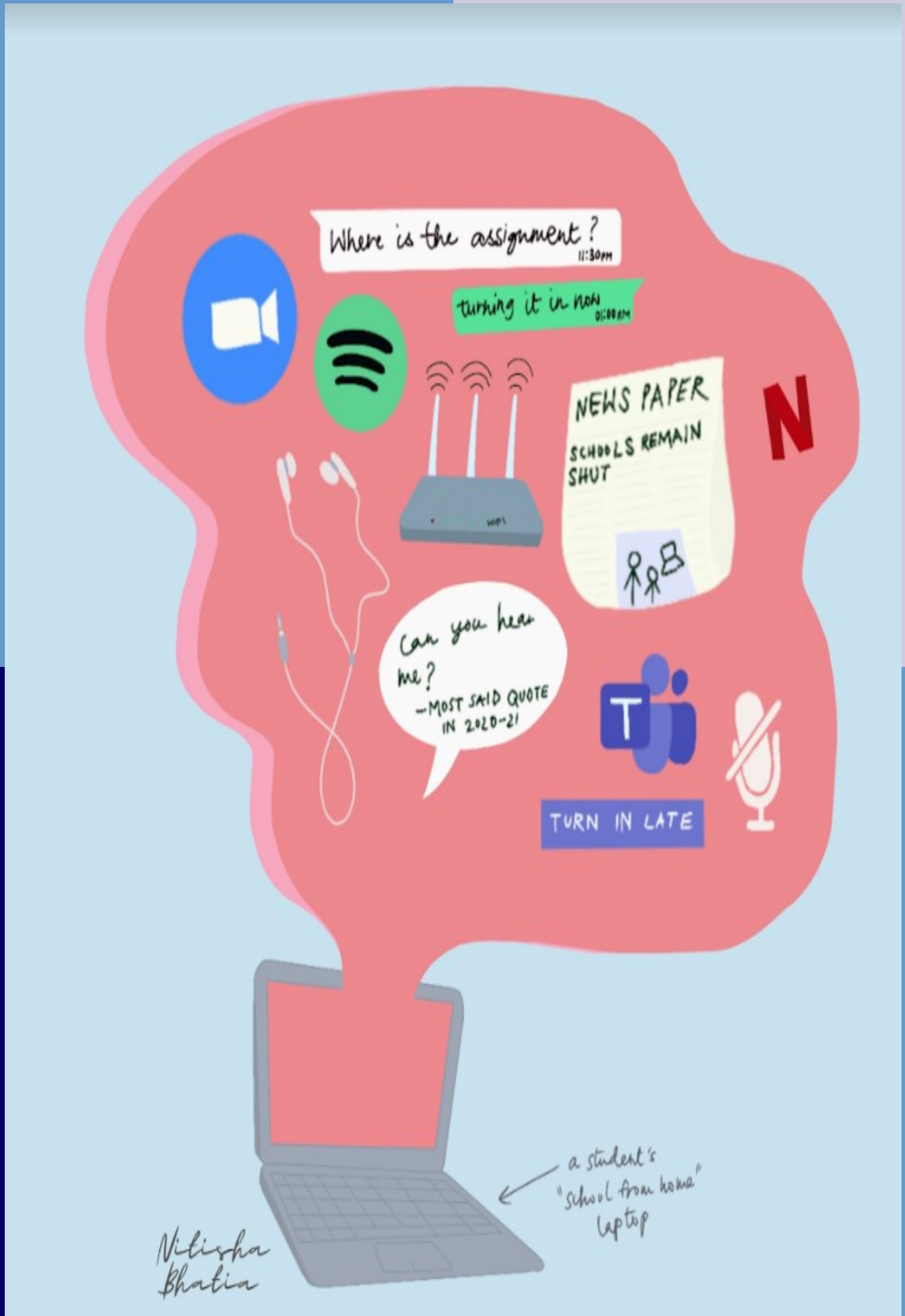
Aurailie Bakshi [9B]



Aurailie Bakshi [9B]



Nitisha Bhatia [9C]



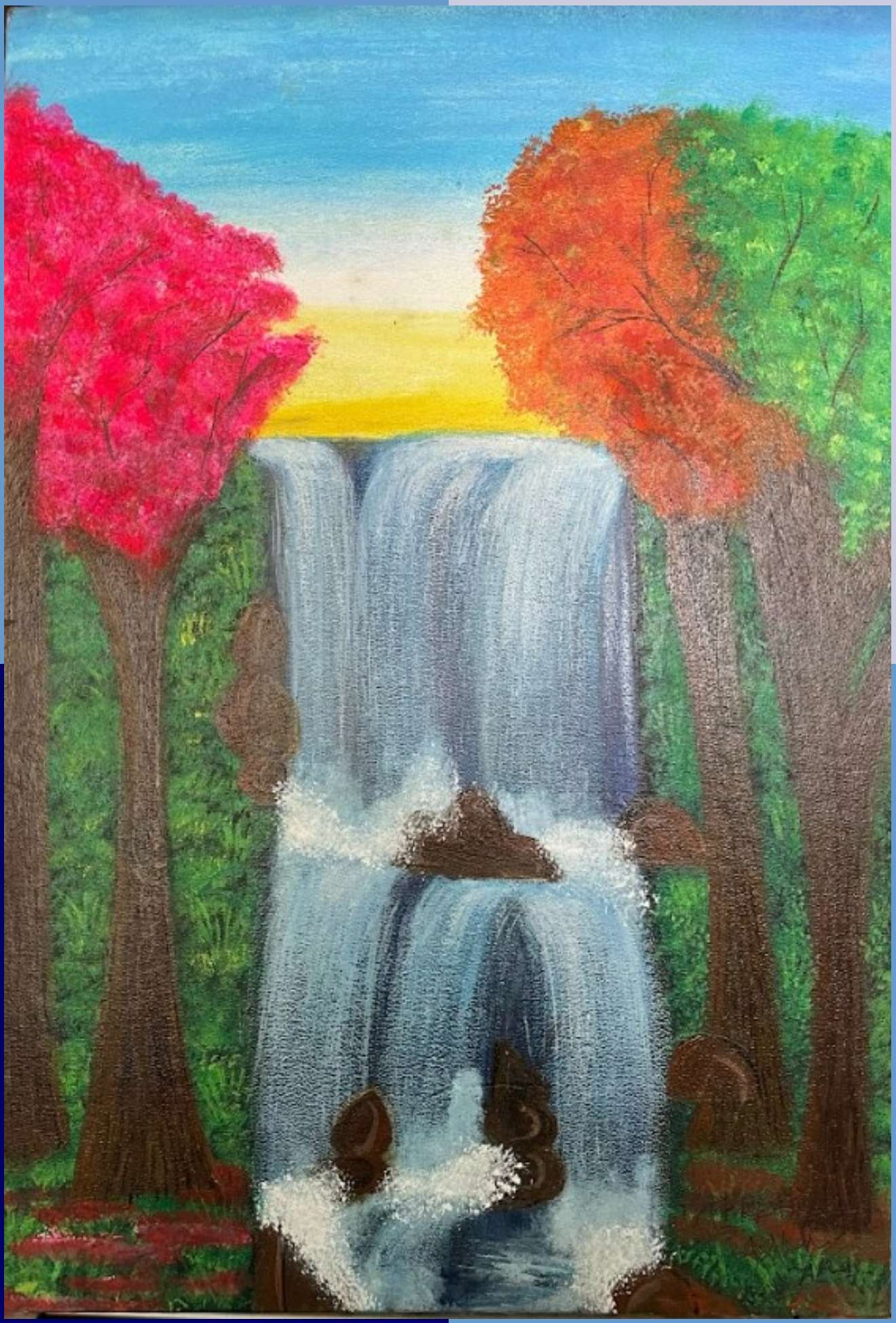
Prisha Ghuste [9E]



Tia RaoRane [ASci-1]



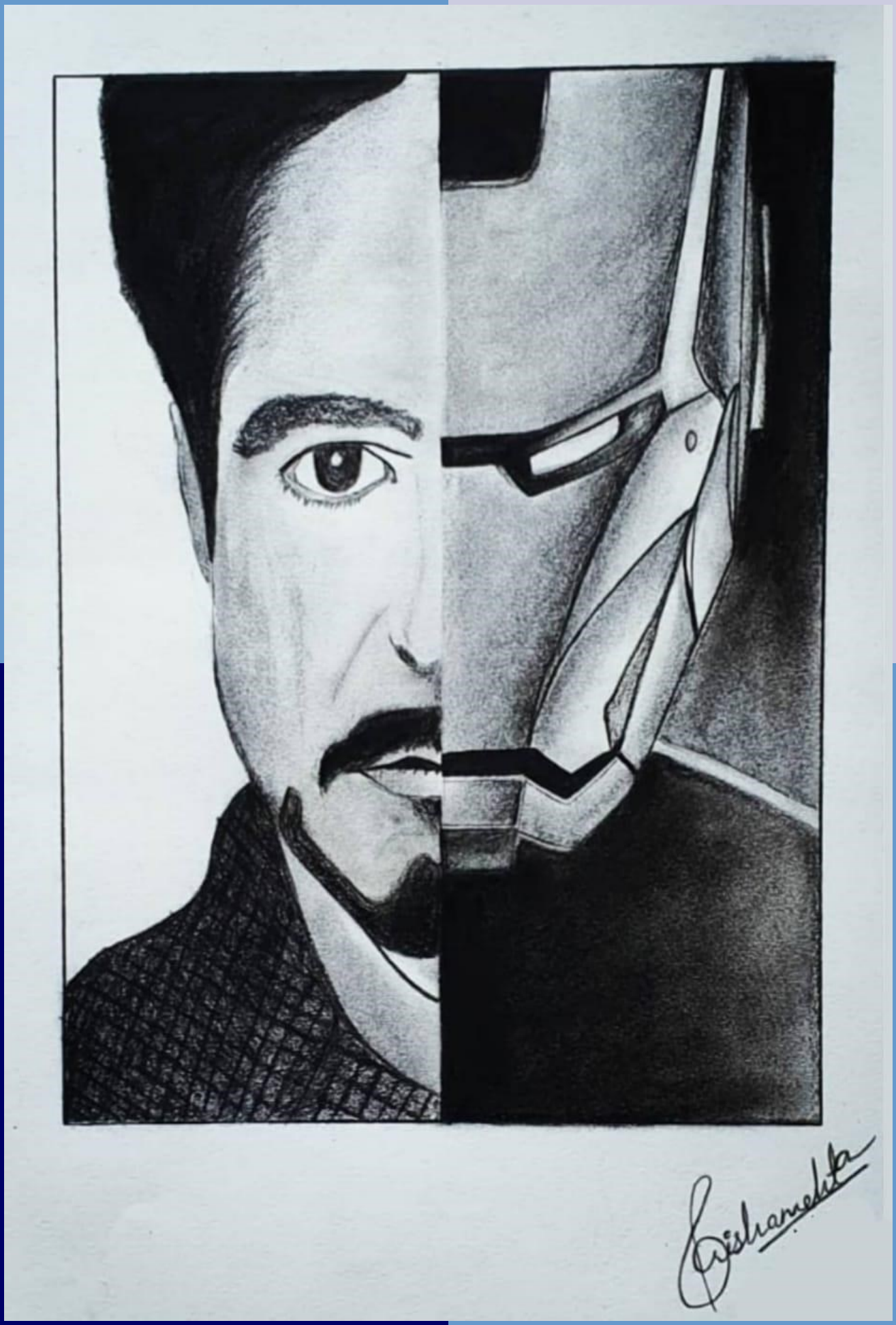
Tia RaoRane [ASci-1]



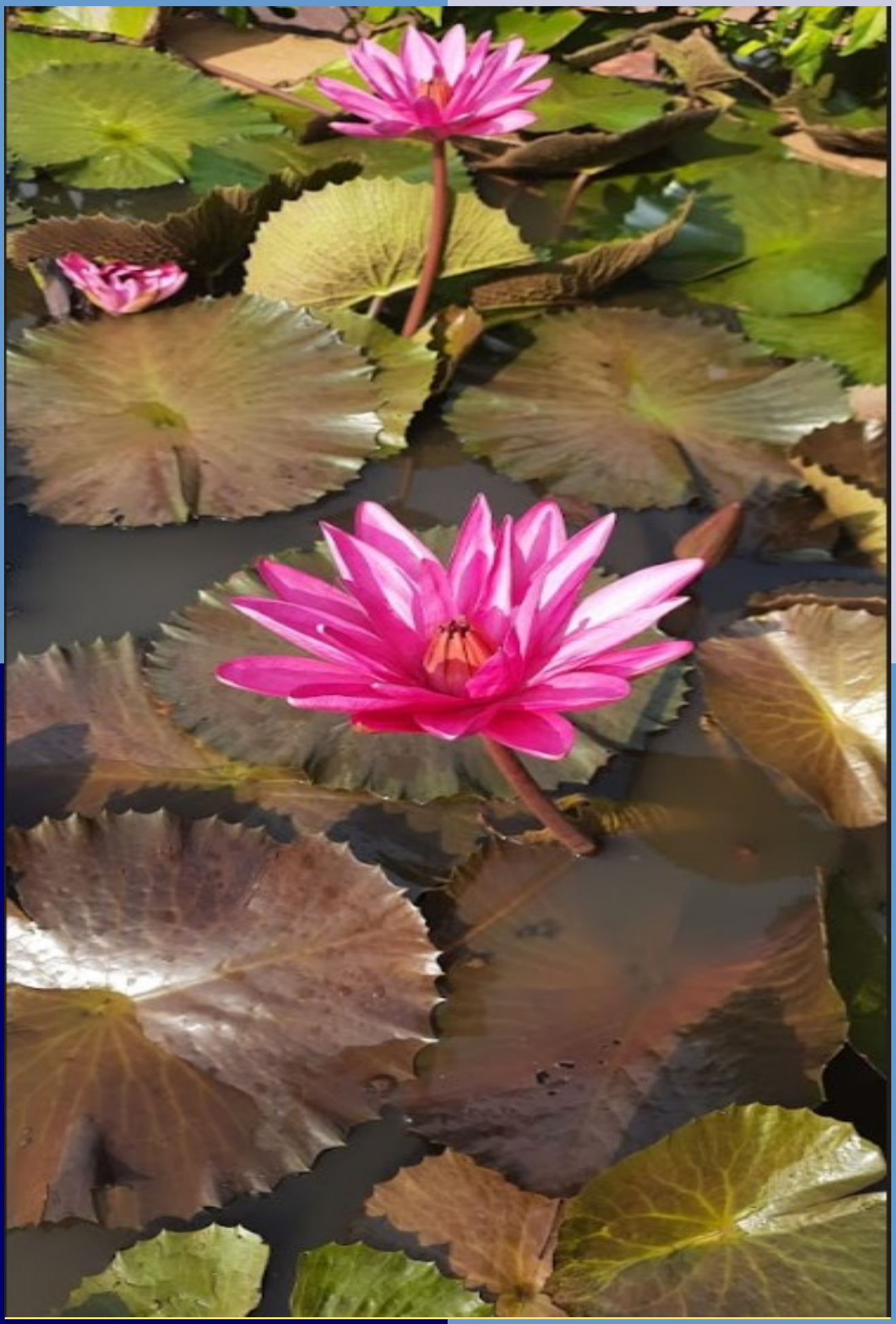
Dhruv Gupta [AComm-1]



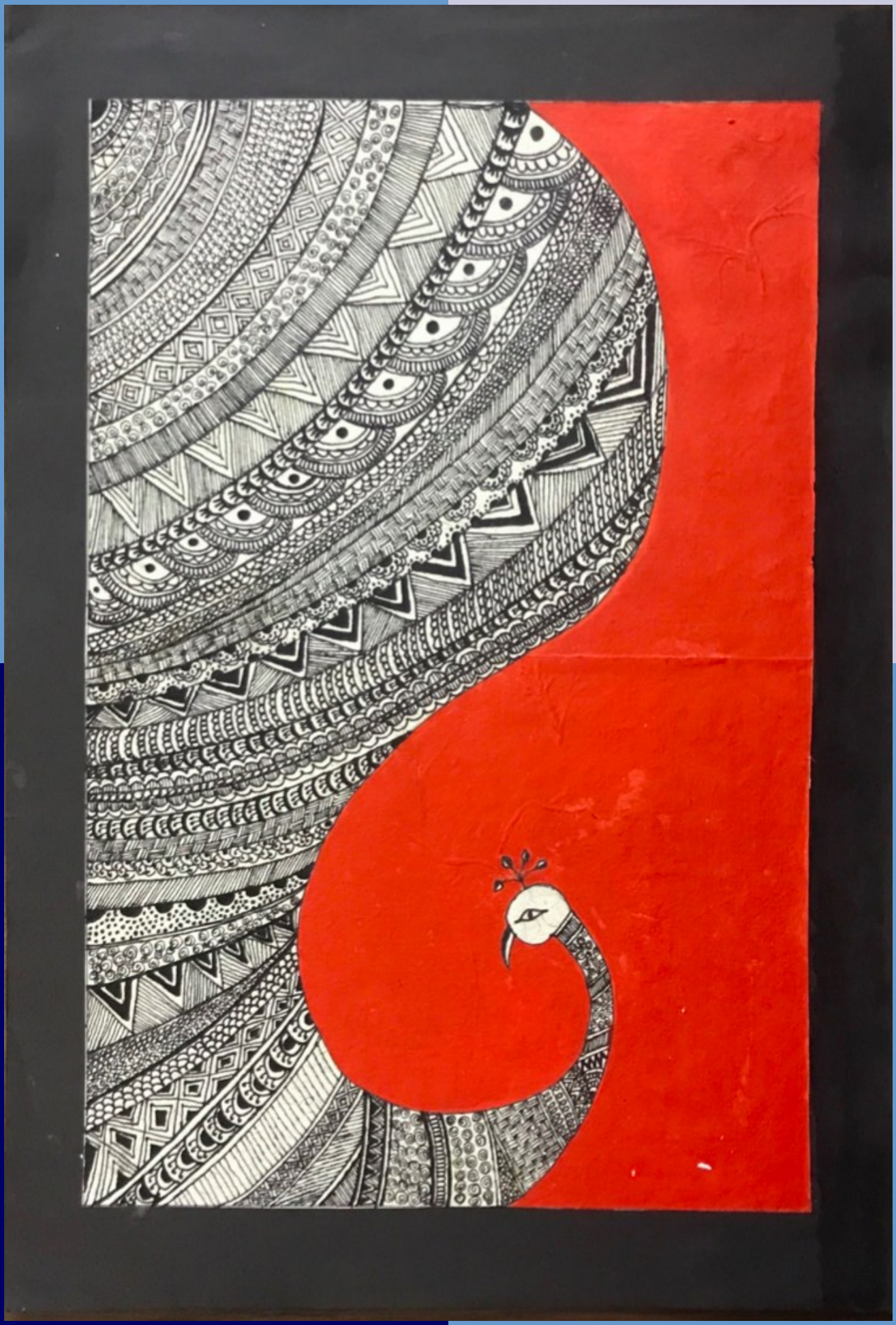
Prisha Mehta [AComm-1]



Aruushi Naik [DP1]



Sanvi Sharma [DP1]



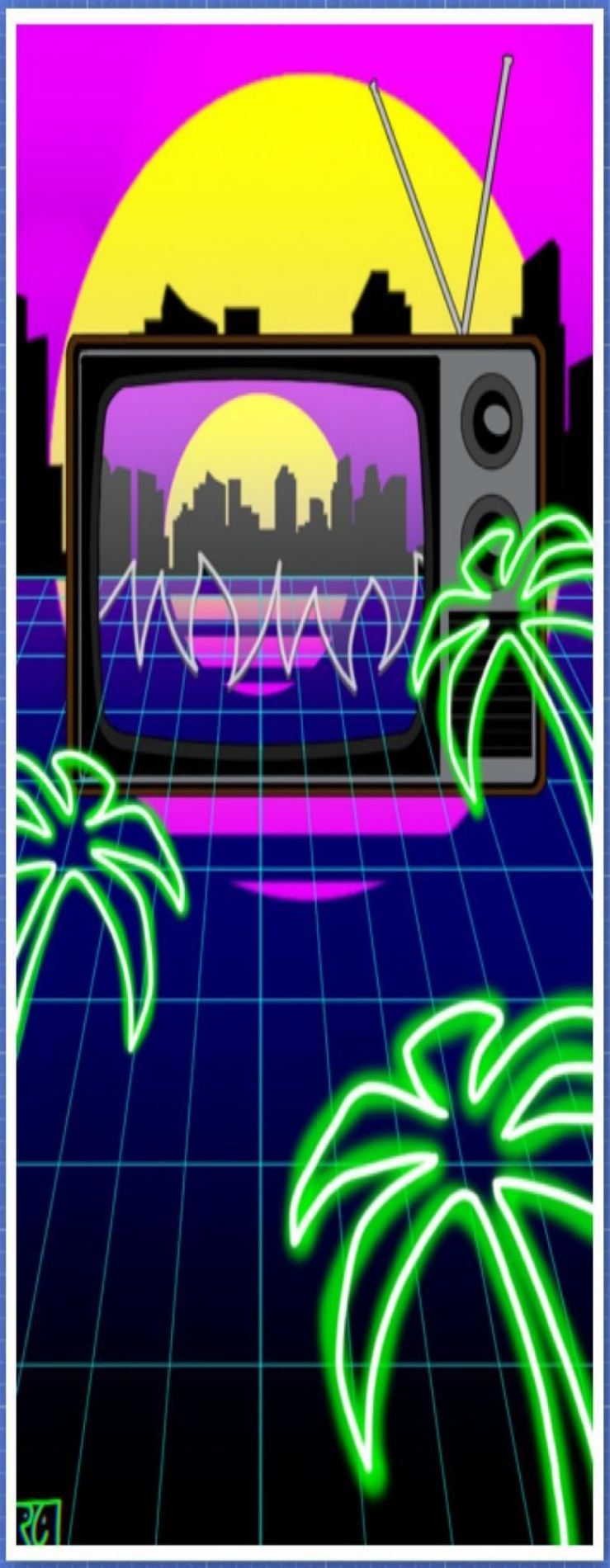
Sanvi Sharma [DP1]

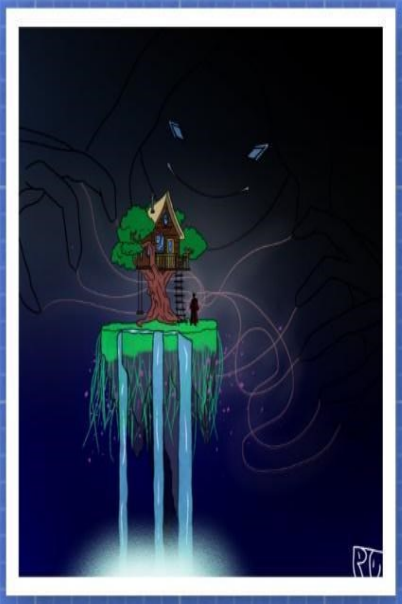


Sanvi Sharma [DP1]



Roopkotha Chakrabarti [DP1]









HEALTH



Nyssa Ruparelia [7E]

During this pandemic health and hygiene has become very important to maintain, honestly I'll tell you something during this pandemic I've become very hygienic like I mean VERY hygienic I don't touch anything without cleaning it I may sound like Monica honestly speaking I am Monica now.

This is what I do, I get a tissue or a wet wipe just to use the remote, to open the door, to flush, to drink water I swear this is me now, if you open my bag you'll see a pouch which contains wet wipes, tissues, a hair brush, 2 sanitizers, a perfume, sanitary pads, tampons.

•

Even menstrual has changed me, for those of you who don't know what menstrual, PMS, chums, periods are they are basically a week where we girls, women bleed for our egg to develop for us and our vagina to get ready to give birth and honestly in India well not only Indian many other cities, countries etc. even women and men are grossed and they tend to find menstrual "IMPURE", I understand we all have pretty much been told by our mom, grandma and our relatives not to talk about menstrual because it's "IMPURE"but it's not normalise us talking about Menstrual, us asking guys to get us pads, tampons etc.

As it's NATURAL you get me it's NATURAL and you need to get used to it, due to that you are able to get a family.. so normalise us having menstrual, and stop giving us pads covered with paper it's NORMAL.

Well health has a A lot of impact on us, our diet, environment, physical health, mental health, hygiene has a lot to do with us, During this pandemic teens are getting depression, anxiety, stress and insecure about ourselves, and I relate to it I am at a very bad mental health stage but yes I try to make myself feel better.

Mental health is the most important thing at this point, it matters a lot, it affects how you react, talk, behave. A bad mental health can represent you as a dull, depressed, feeling-less, sad where as a good mental health can represent you as a health, happy, joyful.

Ways to help you with a bad mental health-

- Try doing something you like to do
- Hang around with people who make you feel you
- Focus on your goals
- Be you

- Focus on yourself
- Cut out the toxic people, things that let you down
- And smileeeee

Musings on Health

Health, the word itself has multiple different interpretations and connotations. Some take the word positively and as a source of motivation, whereas others take it in a negative light and get reminded of bitter times or news. However, the word itself brings to mind, for the most part, different types of health. Be it mental health or physical health, we all need that word in our lives to function at our highest capacity.

Maintaining or bettering one's health is a tedious but achievable task. If we were to refer to physical health, there are a myriad of possibilities and some are definitely more helpful and achievable than others. One could do the simple task of walking, and if they truly enjoy running around and breaking a sweat, many sports and gym exercises help give their health a push in the right direction. Not really into movement? Fret not, because the extremely affluent diet culture is here to save you. A simple cut down in excessive sugar and other processed foods in themselves can help motivate your body to recuperate at a faster pace. And with how popular diet culture truly is, there are plenty of diet friendly food alternatives for people not interested in just eating salads. But here's where my (and I'm sure your) favourite

way of improving health comes: sleep. Sleep is one of the best ways for the body to heal and for one's health to improve by miles, so make sure to get those 8 hours of beauty rest.

Now if we were to talk about maintaining and bettering mental health, that's where the path turns a bit rocky. Everyone's different and everyone deals with situations in a different manner. But always make sure to take breaks whenever you need: whether it be from studies, from activities or anything in general. Try and make time for your hobbies and interests, it is your life after all. Talk to someone you trust when things get overwhelming and if need be, go to a professional. Whatever makes you feel better in the end. As long as you remember that there's always someone there for you and that you're not alone, everything will be fine. The tough times will pass.

Health has and will always be an integral part of our lives, so remember to take care of your body, be it physically or mentally. We may all face those moments where we neglected our health for little things like exams. So the next time you feel like you're neglecting your health, remind yourself of how hard your body works for you to function, how intricately designed it is, how every part of it has a great role and give your body the break and care that it deserves.

I hope you're ok: A Brief Message to Activists

Dear Activists,

I hope you're ok. I'll try to keep this brief, as promised, but I tend to overwrite, so pardon me for my lack of conciseness. I just want to tell you that you are amazing. That you are beautiful and kind and even though I may not know you, I am grateful for your existence. I am grateful that you are out there, making a difference. I am grateful for how you are using your unconditional love for something to bring about positive change.

Are you remembering to love yourself too? When was the last time you did something for yourself? And just for yourself? I hope that when you're experiencing anxiety or depression or climate anxiety or grief or anger or the guilt of not doing enough, you spend time with someone you trust. I hope you talk about your feelings with your community. I hope you have a community that loves and supports you. I hope you know that whatever you're doing—no matter how small or seemingly insignificant—is more than enough. You are enough.

The fight that you are fighting for our earth, for our society, for matters that no one else seems to care about, is important. But you are important too. I hope you know that.

I hope you know that you, as a human being, are giving us hope. I hope that you remember that water only flows from a full tank (please ignore my terrible analogies, but you get the point.) I hope that you're taking the time to have fun, and nourish your body and mind, to be happy just for the sake of being happy. I hope you know that you are strong and that it is okay, and important, to take breaks. I hope that you celebrate the little victories, the little joys. They are worth celebrating. You are worth celebrating.

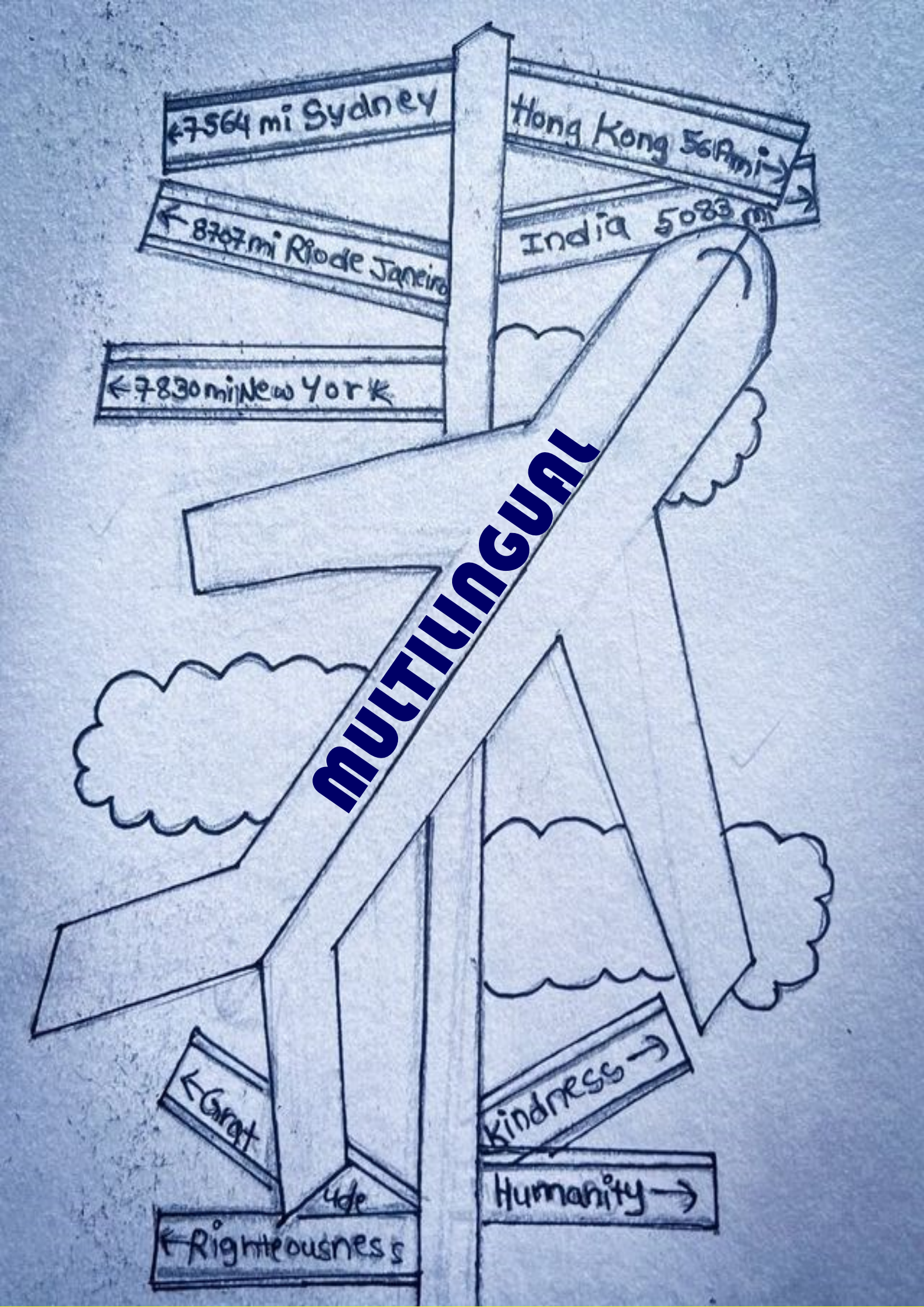
I hope you know that you, you as a person are important and loved and your work is important, yes. But you are important too.

I hope you know that your mental and physical well-being is important.

Please, take care.

Just a human being,

Ananya.


←7564 mi Sydney
Hong Kong 56 Ami→
←8707 mi Rio de Janeiro
India 5083
←7830 mi New Yor
MULTILINGUAL
←Great
Kindness→
Humanity→
←Righteousness

Honnêteté et Intégrité Académique

« L'Honnêteté Académique » est un terme que nous avons tous entendu de nos parents et enseignants. C'est une pratique très importante pour être un bon et responsable être humain. À cette époque, quand tout est en ligne, de l'école aux achats, l'honnêteté académique joue un rôle important. En plus nous ne pouvons pas avoir nos parents et enseignants tout le temps autour de nous regarder et nous guider. Nous devons pratiquer l'honnêteté comme des citoyens numériques responsables de ce monde virtuel d'apprentissage. Laissons-nous comprendre quelle est l'intégrité.

Intégrité

Elle signifie faire la correcte chose même quand personnes ne nous surveillent pas.

Un exemple d'Intégrité est de trouver l'argent sur le sol du supermarché, mais au lieu de le garder avec nous, il faut le donner au vendeur. La personne qui l'a perdu pourrait venir le chercher plus tard.

Intégrité Académique

Elle signifie agir avec honnêteté, vérité, justice et respect au travail académique. Elle inclut faire notre propre travail et juste faire allusion au travail des autres. Elle ne signifie pas copier le travail des autres.

Malhonnêteté Académique

Le contraire de l'Intégrité Académique est Malhonnêteté Académique. Elle signifie participer à la Malhonnêteté Académiques actions et elle peut inclure tricheuse, plagiat ou autres formes de la Malhonnêteté Académique.

Des exemples de la Malhonnêteté Académique sont :

· Copier les réponses à l'épreuve, au questionneur ou autres de-
voirs de quelqu'un. · Faire le travail de quelqu'un pour eux.

· Donner à quelqu'un les réponses de l'épreuve ou questionner ou prenez les réponses d'ils en avance.

· Payer quelqu'un faire notre travail pour nous.

Plagiat

C'est copier le travail des autres et montrer ce comme notre propre travail original.

Exemple :

Un étudiant a un examen prévu pour un jour. Il cherche et trouve des épreuves en ligne avec réponses et il les imprime. L'épreuve était disponible pour vendre, mais il un mal employé ce pour son propre but.

Plagiat inclure :

- Copier et coller d'Internet et réarranger les mots et phrases.
- Utiliser information sans faire allusion.
- Payer autres faire notre travail.
- Réutiliser un travail.

Information que nous utilisons de n'importe quel source doit toujours être fait allusion à notre travail. Même si c'est une idée d'un ami, une phrase d'Internet ou une strophe de notre chanson favorite.

Dans certaines cultures, copier les mots d'un auteur est accepté et même considéré un éloge à l'auteur.

Aux États-Unis, nous montrons respect pour le travail d'autres personnes par toujours faire allusion à l'auteur du travail. Ne pas le faire est considéré tricher, voler, et c'est une très grave infraction. Si nous sommes pris, nous pouvons échouer les devoirs, le cours, ou même être suspendu ou expulsé de l'Université.

Travail de Groupe

Avec un travail de groupe, chaque personne doit soumettre son propre travail original, même si la réponse est la même.

Faire :

· Vous devez aider les autres à trouver la réponse ou renseignements ensemble.

Ne fais pas :

· Copier de chaque autre.

· Soumettre le même travail

Conclusion

1. Comprendre les règlements sur tricher, plagiat et autres formes de Malhonnêteté Académique

2. Apprendre comment faire allusion au travail d'autres correctement 3. Comprendre les règlements à chaque course

Nos enseignants peuvent avoir différents règlements, mais ces règlements vont faire écrire à la cours programme et si nous avons des doutes, nous pouvons toujours demander.

Nous avons choix :

· Utiliser ressource de campus

· Diriger notre temps judicieusement

· Parler à nos enseignants

· Apprendre et respecter les règlements

Agir honnêtement à notre travail académique va nous préparer pour la réussite à notre personnel et professionnel futur et quand nous recevons notre diplôme nous serons sûrs que les habiletés et la connaissance que nous gagnons vraiment appartenir à nous.

Où que vie prenons-nous, les personnes nous coopérons avec vouloir respecter honnêtement que nous avons pratiqué à notre vie académique.

Myra Jhawar [6B]

Tandis que je vieillis, je réalise qu'il y a beaucoup à la vie.

Et il me fait peur, de penser à tout ce qui va arriver à l'avenir.

Chaque jour et chaque nuit, je dois tout affronter.

Je ne peux pas m'échapper de ce labyrinthe de confusion et de fausseté.

Je souhaite que je pouvais apporter tout le temps que j'avais.

Je souhaite qu'avec chacun de mes souffles, je l'ai utilisé.

Tout je sais maintenant, je souhaite j'ai su plus avant.

Mais ce sont juste des souhaits, rien d'autre.

Je ne peux pas vouloir quelque chose de se passe,

Comme je ne peux pas vouloir une nuit des nuages de changer en ensoleillement.

C'est une chose étrange, la vie.

Ça sent comme la vie est un une ellipse sans fin

Plus et plus inexprimée, et surtout incompris.

Zuri Savla [6B]

Zuri Savla
6B

2021

CUISINE FRANÇAISE

LES ENTRÉES

la Soupe.....	€ 2,70
la baguette.....	€ 1,80
les wedges.....	€ 2,10
les frites.....	€ 2

PLAT PRINCIPAL

le pain indien.....	€ 1,10
le riz.....	€ 1,10
les lentilles.....	€ 1,50
les pâtes.....	€ 2,30
la pizza.....	€ 3,10
les légumes marinés.....	€ 1
l'omelette.....	€ 2,40

LE DESSERT

Café liégeois.....	€ 2,60
Clafoutis.....	€ 2,20
Mille-feuilles.....	€ 2,70
la crème glacée.....	€ 3,10

LES boissons

Un milkshake à la fraise.....	€ 1,70
le café.....	€ 1,10
le chocolat chaud.....	€ 1,10
le jus d'orange.....	€ 1

FOR EDUCATIONAL USE

Source - Word Reference app and Metro referene textbook pg 74

यह समय भी संभल जाएगा

जीवन की तेज़ रफ़्तार में रूकावट का एक मोहरा ही तो है,
परिश्रम और एकता से यह भी उखड जाएगा,
नदी के तेज़ बहाव के बीच आनेवाला एक पत्थर ही तो है,
यह समय भी संभल जाएगा।

सूरज की बढ़ती रोशनी को रोकने वाला एक छोटा सा पर्वत ही तो है,
चैर्य और धीरज से यह संकट भी टल जाएगा,
नदी के तेज़ बहाव के बीच आनेवाला एक पत्थर ही तो है,
यह समय भी संभल जाएगा।

पत्तियों को हिलाने वाला पवन का एक झोका ही तो है,
तटस्थ खड़े रहने से यह भी कुछ नहीं कर पाएगा,
नदी के तेज़ बहाव के बीच आनेवाला एक पत्थर ही तो है,
यह समय भी संभल जाएगा।

विशाल समुद्र के बीचोबीच आनेवाला एक तूफान ही तो है,
डटकर सामना करने से यह भी पार हो जाएगा,
नदी के तेज़ बहाव के बीच आनेवाला एक पत्थर ही तो है,
यह समय भी संभल जाएगा।

- जयथ पौराणा

ग़ुलाम हिंदुस्तान

जिंदगी और मौत में कहीं अंतर् नहीं दिखाते थे कि कहीं वे बग़ावत करना न सीख लें,
ग़ुलाम बनाकर अपना देश कहते थे कि कहीं वे अपने वतन पर मरना न सीख लें।

मेरा कहा कि कहीं वे हमारा न सीख लें,
हिन्दू और मुस्लिमों में आग भड़काई कि कहीं वे भाईचारा न सीख लें।

सपने इतने दिखाए कि कहीं वे सपनों और असलियत में भेदभाव न सीख लें,
सभी तेज़ ज़ुबानों को बंद कर दिया कि कहीं वे युधिष्ठिर का दाँव न सीख लें।

भूत में रहकर भविष्य दिखाया कि कहीं वे वर्त्तमान न सीख लें,
उनके गौरव को पैरों तले दबा दिया कि कहीं वे आत्मसम्मान न सीख लें।

ग़मों का क़हर बरसाते थे कि कहीं वे ग़मों को पीना न सीख लें,
आज़ादी की कड़ियों में जकड के रखते थे कि कहीं वे स्वतंत्रता से जीना न सीख लें।

- जयथ पौराणा

Les microscopes électroniques ont le puits, la portée, pour "zoomer" jusqu'à présent sur les objets que leurs machinations internes peuvent être vues avec des détails incroyables, car ils utilisent un flux d'électrons qui grossissent beaucoup mieux qu'un simple microscope composé qui effectue la même chose et repose sur une source lumineuse car elle n'est pas limitée par la longueur d'onde d'une onde lumineuse. Ces microscopes électroniques sont ensuite divisés en microscopes électroniques légers (LEM), microscopes électroniques à balayage (SEM) et microscopes électroniques à transmission (TEM), dans l'ordre respectif de puissance de grossissement. Il est presque impossible de croire que l'appareil avec le grossissement maximal le plus élevé, TEM, a la capacité d'agrandir quelque chose de cinquante millions de fois. Aucun exploit de la nature ne pourrait même se rapprocher du talent pur que ce monstre d'ingénierie d'une machine a atteint.

Regarder des micro-organismes et des tranches de feuilles donne l'impression qu'ils commettent un acte sacrilège - jouer à Dieu en regardant la vie plus petite continuer, en l'observant de près ou même en la manipulant. Mais la sensation est incomparable. Cela pousse à réfléchir à l'avancement humain, à tel point que nous sommes capables de voir les parois de nos artères dans les moindres détails, de les analyser : elles font à peine quelques millimètres d'épaisseur.

Avoir le privilège d'étudier la vie qui nous entoure sous une forme microscopique, de rassembler tous les brins d'information et de les reconstituer pour notre avenir. Qu'est-ce qui nous a donné un tel pouvoir ? Est-ce mal de demander d'avancer davantage ? Serons-nous capables de voir les fondements mêmes d'un atome, des orbitales et de tout ?

Il est difficile de ne pas rêver d'un avenir où les quarks et les électrons eux-mêmes sont visibles par notre propre conception, et où les recherches de l'humanité, petites mais en constante progression, et certainement pas insignifiantes, ne faiblissent jamais. Ceci n'est que le début.

Amyshka Shenoy (IBDP-1)

Une nouvelle vie en IBDP 1

J'ai commencé IBDP il y a 2 semaines et cela a été un peu difficile. Amusant, mais difficile. Cela a également été différent de ce que j'ai fait auparavant. Dans IBDP, je dois changer de classe pour mes matières et avoir des camarades de classe différents dans chaque matière. J'ai de nouveaux sujets qui me passionnent et je suis toujours intéressé par ce qui est enseigné. J'ai l'occasion de visiter des laboratoires et de faire des expériences en biologie et j'ai réalisé des PPT et des vidéos pour la psychologie et l'histoire. Ce fut une bonne expérience. Mais, j'ai beaucoup de devoirs. J'étudie normalement 2-3 heures par jour après l'école à l'IBDP et je trouve cela un peu ennuyeux. Cependant, les missions sont intéressantes. Je viens de commencer IBDP 1 et je suis ravi de continuer.

Faire la cyclisme pour le climat

Pour moi, mon vélo est mon meilleur ami. Non seulement peux-je l'utiliser pour voyager avec liberté, mais aussi, c'est très bon pour mon santé. En plus, plus importantement, ce ne cause pas les émissions de gaz carbonique, alors cette mode est utile pour réduire l'effet de serre. C'est mon niveau personnel pour créer moins d'impact négatif sur l'environnement. Avant cette réalisation, je prenais un pousse-pousse pour faire les petits trajets, pourtant, maintenant, j'essaie de marcher ou d'aller à vélo souvent.

À mon avis, je dois faire quelque chose qui est possible pour contribuer à sauvegarder nos futurs comme les habitants de notre planète. Je t'encourage essayer cette nouvelle activité, je promis que tu t'amuseras, comme comment faire la cyclisme me donne la joie de faire quelque chose bonne.

SPECIAL THANKS

IBDP Co-ordinators:

Hema Rajan

Rashmi Talreja

Front and back covers made by:

Vihaan Shilov


esc

PODAR
Nurturing The Future. Since 1927.

LUMINOUS

IBDP MAGAZINE

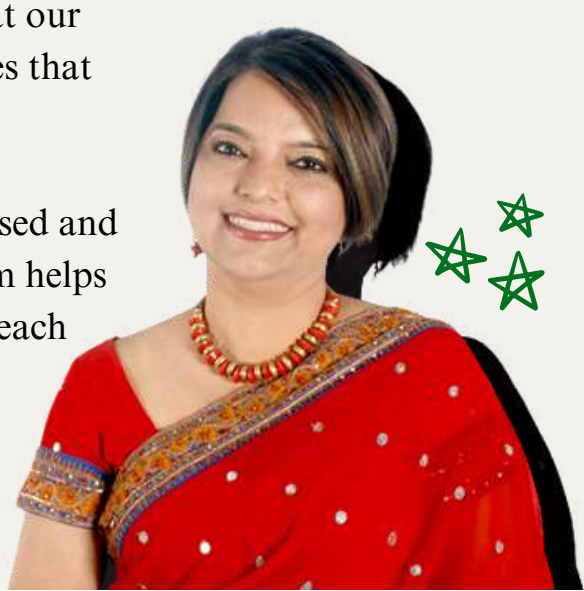
2023

From the Director's Desk

Here at the Podar International School, we have been striving to promote a well-rounded education that equips students with the necessary technical, problem-solving, interpersonal and social skills required for success in the 21st Century. By providing our students with the opportunities to excel in their areas of interest and to develop keen passion for the fields of the future, we prepare them to reach heights beyond our imagination. Therefore, we have always balanced our pursuit of knowledge within the academic disciplines with a research-oriented creative method of learning. This enables students to develop holistically as individuals who are well-equipped and ready to create innovative solutions to real world problems.

The Student Community of Podar is built on a foundation of open-mindedness, inquiry, and communication, all of which is embodied by the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme's (IBDP) continued legacy of the Luminous Magazine—a student-led initiative which effectively incorporates the various spheres of creative expression and international-mindedness that is central to the International Baccalaureate's vision. In keeping with our mission of developing an inclusive environment for collaborative learning, each year, we support the Luminous Editorial Team in collating the art and writing of our students into a body of work that engages in cultural commentary, scientific inquiry, and analytical praxis. The magazine functions as a site for promoting intercultural understanding and developing newer ideas on topical areas of global relevance—spanning **ecology**, **science & technology**, and **society & culture**. By illustrating the learner portfolio and the school's pioneering vision, the magazine becomes a safe and stimulating environment for learning—where students from the secondary section worked collaboratively and built multi-perspective approaches to knowledge. Through centering the authentic student experience, this publication fosters an environment of wellbeing and upholds our core values of academic integrity.

This, the 6th edition, serves to address the global issues that our student community ponders upon and share the experiences that bond us together in a space of persistent learning. As a cornerstone of creativity, we believe in the potential of the Luminous Magazine, where the students' agency is prioritised and students' voices are at the forefront. This inclusive platform helps develop balanced, caring, and principled individuals, and, each year, we are always delighted to see the outcomes.



Director Principal
Dr Mrs Vandana Lulla

INDEX

Short stories	5
Poetry	24
Reviews & Recs	32
Mind & Body	42
Science & Tech	50
Fashion	61
Society & Culture	73
Ecology	83
Pets	91
Sports	98
School Club Features	109
From our alumni	119
From our teachers	125

From the Editors Desk

"I paint flowers so they will not die."

-Frida Kahlo

We started off working on Luminous 6.0 in the hope that we can bring together the collective knowledge of the school community. We were very inspired by Kahlo--in that we sought to capture this moment in Podar time and the creative spirit that a post-pandemic world of education brought on. Thus, without a theme or a set structure, we embarked on a months long exploration of what it means to paint the world as it is now and to preserve it for our future generations--and selves--to reflect on this particular moment in time.

Seeing as a diverse background means a collage of ideas from various people, each of our individual voices are present throughout this magazine. The editors' personal styles have been incorporated into a magazine that lives up to its idea of being a "compilation" of stories--as though each is a handpicked page from, at times, a novel, at others, a blog, a sketchbook, or a journal.

A patchwork of ideas later, we discovered with a keen surprise that this moment was filled with discourse spanning student actions and animal rights to safeguarding places and embracing art as a mo(ve)ment. We developed entirely new categories--Fashion, Ecology, and School Club Features to reflect this novelty in thought and praxis, beyond simple and set notions of fields & disciplines. Mind & Body emerged as a means to explore non-dualism, and Science & Tech to investigate future trajectories of innovation. Short Stories and Poetry, as always, serves to shine a literary lens on the human condition. Moreover, Cultural commentary seemed to be an overarching theme of the 2023 edition, with the Society & Culture and Reviews & Recommendations categories amassing a wealth of criticism on the media we consume and the social structures we are a part of. And lastly, our beloved classics: the Alumni and Teachers' insights that enrich our student lives with the perspectives of the people who have come before us, who have done this before us, and who are now imparting the wisdom that comes with that experience.

So, the question remains: how do we capture the sheer haunting beauty of a flower at this point in its circle of life? We found the answer amongst the words and colours we received from the school community--and we hope you do too.

From the IBDP Batch 2024 Editorial Team


I
SHORT
STORIES



On Shuffle

by Haniyyah Katyal, 10C

It is the brink of midnight, and she is about to turn ten thousand nine hundred and fifty days old. Laying impassively on her couch; in her mind she had one conjecture playing on repeat. Would the witching hour drive a dent into her youth? Or would it precipitate into unending disquiet over thirty wasted years?

She had little memory of parts of her life that might be remarkable. The dry cake on her coffee table, the lonely candle perched on top, the dwindling stir of the avenue or the absolute disorder of her house, -nothing sparked the thrill of surviving another year.

Reaching for the TV control, she mindlessly ran her fingers over its buttons. She felt the mellow glow and heat of its beam but didn't turn her head to catch a sight. That was until the arbitrary tangent came along. A trail of ideas spiraling like space debris across her vision, coherent in essence yet haphazard in order.

Over these days, her body had housed many people. She couldn't really place a finger on any consistency in her personality. People often believe that adolescence is the most tumultuous time, though every fiber of her soul wished to relive those glorious years. In hindsight, that period was redolent of a swing that hurled her back and forth between a matrix of emotions. The air of the pathway between childhood and maturity was frenzied, yes, but she adored the invigoration of the wind it made upon harmonizing. The dreams this wind brought about, however, were a subject she would usually avoid.

A "Backstreet Boys" single suddenly echoes from the TV and all she can think about is those dreams, or rather the utter failure of them. Now every morning she rose in a bedroom that was not majestic, with sheets that weren't made of silk and curtains that didn't quite sway in the breeze as she would like. She wouldn't visit her poolside patio every Friday night , nor would she make conversation with a lifelong friend on a barbecue deck. Every day was just a facet of jarring mundanity, blurring together with no opulence, material or emotional.

The last time she garnered any fulfillment would probably be the day she got her first job, regardless of whatever ensued after. What started off as a sightless hope for the future rapidly transitioned into the constant labor of coping up. If she were to articulate happier times, she would point to her childhood. Considering what little she could remember of it; it had simpler swinging experiences and an unrelenting nonchalance for the heavier aspects of the universe. The agonizing comparison of then and now pushed her off the couch. She clutched her head and hissed, as if wanting nothing more to escape this trail of thought.

A few lights down the street were still illuminated, with a group of elder ladies chattering their night away, so she made her way through the breeze of the chiffon curtains into the narrow balcony. She tried to imagine what she would be like as an old maid, with her skin all gaunt and lined with prudence. Maybe she would sit in her unflustered rocking chair, beholding a country view like a true empress of the terrain while bearing the brunt of its seclusion too. She hopes that if nothing else, at least she would be content with that seclusion, not once grumbling about the daunting silence. For some wicked reason, this thought won a small smile from her. What better than to be an aging wildflower in the sprightly meadows?

Throughout most of her adult life, she has been clueless about whether she would like the same media as she did when she was younger, or whether she would still enjoy picking strawberries in a farm; her favorite ice cream flavor, her appetite for photography, the prolonged tangents her mother could've witnessed or the ludicrous laughter she could've shared with her best friend-all of this was such an inordinate mystery to her. She wished she could play these defining factors on shuffle to merely avoid the plight of choosing where to start.

With only five minutes to the fourth decade of her life, sighing ruefully and pitying herself shouldn't be an option anymore. She pulled herself together, attempting to pull her apartment together too, while she was at it. This space is surely about to go through some rigorous redecoration once she placates the birthday blues. As for her cake, she had a couple ribbons that could possibly fabricate the number thirty onto it. She'd place the numbers on the cake with all the pride, now that she had made a transcendent promise to herself. Running on a time crunch of ten seconds, she hurriedly lit the sole candle and waited for her smartwatch to ring the birthday alarm. But it didn't ring, what rang instead was her phone, with the first and perhaps only present in the form of a video call from her mother.

Initially, an immediate burst of gratification lifted her off the cold, hard ground. Faces she hadn't seen in ages were now serenading her, and in a way that is shown in the movies, she's brought back to life. However, it ended as soon as it began. With the shine of the candle subdued and the voices from the other end of the phone gone, the dourness was rebirthing. Grimacing, she slumped on her couch again, wondering when this vicious cycle was going to end.

She lazily proceeded to seal the doors and the windows, in preparation to get through the night where the notion of fulfilling her goals in pure aloofness would prompt her nightmares. But then she heard her doorbell go off, instantly procuring her guard up and readying her to put up a fight. Who she found to be her unsolicited guest, comprehensively knocked her down with a feather. There she was, holding a heart-shaped balloon, a gleaming gift box, and an even sweeter smile. Pure gold personified. Her oldest companion and the fuel to her missile jubilation. Her best friend was here, and now her bones felt lighter and somehow stronger.

The early hours of the A.M. let them rewind and reflect in all the radiance of a long-awaited reunion. The directions she would veer in thereafter would be consequential, which is the only thing she is certain of at this moment. Though for now, she was at ease in her living room with the presence of her confidant, admiring a small chit that messily read, "Happy Birthday".



My Irresponsible Son

by Aaditya Sawant, IBDP 2

Content Warning: Gore

It was a colourful dream that succoured me into a deep sleep. As deep as the wound that caused me to faint. My wound was like a well from the underworld. Bright red, filled with my blood. Not Satan but a manifestation of the combination of three devils was the architect of this well. Corroded was my abdomen owing to the hellish desires of the 'master' architect. I cannot see because he's stabbed my eyes. It would have looked as though a tot was using a fork to eat and then pluck a flower. The way a soft cube of cheese is stabbed with the fork by the tot repeatedly for elation; the way a flower is plucked out of a plant; and the way nectar and water drips out of the terminal. How blissful would it look if the flower was replaced by my very eyes and the fluids with my blood! I call them my tears of blood. I nurtured him, nourished him, and this is what I reap. What can I even do after all? He is my son and I shall always forgive him like an ideal mother. But what does the quintessential son do? Maybe I can use the precedent of my experience with my son to answer.

I only hear things now. My sense of listening is sharper than his fearsome weapon because it was that very weapon which was utilised to hamper my very vision. What next? I hear him approaching with that weapon in his hand. Oh son! You've skinned me already! What is this for? I cannot speak because it is my mouth that is devoid of a tongue. You may ask why I don't possess a tongue. It was eaten, dry, by some of my children as part of a tradition which prohibits them from uttering a word while consuming my organ. Maybe that is why my own children did not stand up for me. Probably they won't ever stand up again. They cannot raise their voice against the atrocities their mother faces because they are bonded by a mere tradition. They may end up eating me up tomorrow but all I would do is forgive them. My children would probably not stand up against the irresponsible son. Who else is left, then? I won't stand up for myself if my corroboration goes against the will of my children. I am a mother. You may think about my animal family, that could garner support for me.

But I don't have any animal family now. My husband is gone. His birth was painful and so was his death. Whose birth was like a curse to his breeders, was my very husband. Whose death was celebrated as part of the festivities of a grand Hispanic Fiesta, was the very father of my children. What did he do that he reaped such a painful death? I still ask this question to myself and now I bestow it upon you, my child. What was my husband's mistake?

They blind him in broad daylight,
And feast on him by midnight.
They make him run among thousands of his kind,
Only to be slaughtered to entertain people unkind.

How unkind can people get? All families in my locality pray to get closer to God. So, why are my children deviating away from the divine path and moving closer to the Fiend? The Matador, the butcherer of my husband, the entertainer of the crowd yet my son, is the farthest from the Almighty. He is the one who relishes animal suffering until the animal's ultimate death. If not so, why would he stab my husband with those perilous lances one by one, savouring each stab? The ruddy process is strikingly similar to the Chinese tradition of piercing a watermelon with a thousand needles, to extract its juice. Towards the end of this vicious course of stabbing, my husband's body boasted a thousand wells like the one on my abdomen. The only difference was that the wounds were not left open because of the pierced weapons. That did not stop the blood from oozing out however. The watermelon's juice normally tastes sweet; my husband's blood dripping from the many wounds would taste innocent. The matador adores the way the dumb animal's poor soul gradually leaves his body: initially black and now red. The periodic stabbing continues until the matador's patience is challenged. It is then that he bestows the final agony upon my husband. The 'final stab' or the 'winning slice' as they call it. This is a grand one, made with the Matador's personal sabre. One stab in the centre of the head and the weapon is left stabbed for a couple of minutes until the poor animal loses its life forever. It is believed that the animal's flesh becomes tender as it experiences spells of throbbing pain. The flesh of the slain animals in this Fiesta is believed to be of apex quality and one of the most expensive in monetary terms. A trifling price that's added on to each bull is his animal family, so trivial that nearly 150,000 animal families are neglected every year. The fiesta lasts for a 'week' only! How much more can the matador or the viewers endure, anyway?

They named this horrendous festival after a saintly individual. It often makes me question the credibility of such saintly personalities. Are saints violent? Do they like bloodshed like the viewers of this horrible sport? If not any of these, then why don't they catechise the population?

I cannot forget the way I lost my husband. His final moments are engraved in my memory like the way I was branded with hot iron near my neck. When the Matador drove his sabre towards my husband's head, he missed the head and ended up attacking his lungs. How ghastly could a sight be! My husband lost his life after a protracted death, with his blood flowing and bubbling through his mouth and nose. How could I ever forget this? This was the crudest exhibition of my child, the Matador's, Satanic traits. I saw this massacre through the cage. It was a mournful atmosphere. I had the company of more than ten thousand cows who were widowed during the so-called fiesta. I was the queer fish and could not stand the oppression. So, I attacked one of my sons. Now I reap multitudes of pain and you're witnessing my ill fate through this piece of work.

Some of my cousins from India reaped a better fate than the father of my children. All they bore was their tails being cut off and spices thrown in their eyes to blind them temporarily. All this violence to succour them to run faster than their counterparts in order to win the race. Such atrocities (if I could call them atrocities with respect to my husband's fortune) last for fifteen minutes only. Moreover, they are fed, irrespective of their win or loss in the race. I can place my bets on everything I possess, even if it is only this soul that I have now, and claim that my husband would've chosen spices thrown into his eyes and tails sliced over him being slain so horribly any day. Needless to say, however, he would not be able to see another one ever again.

Oh, good lord! What is this fortune thy have blest me with?

You did not even spare my offspring who were also separated from me. Nevertheless, the countless desires of my children did not come to an end. How could they even get over it? They stooped so low that they even deprived my calves of their birth giver's breastmilk. What for, you may ask. Mere MILK PUDDING. They say that my breast milk, or more sophisticatedly colostrum, is a precious liquid that's used in making the pudding. They call this pudding

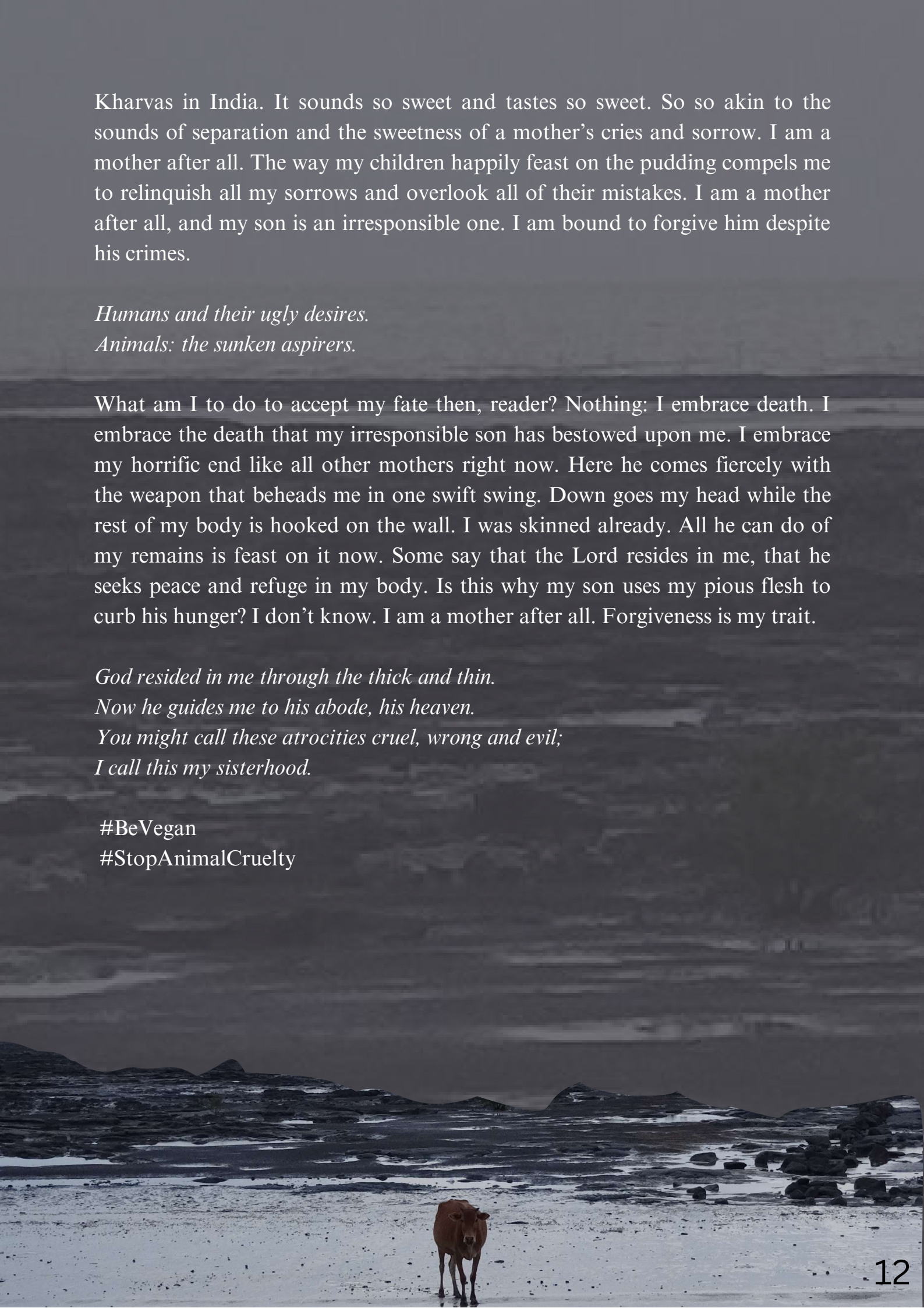
Kharvas in India. It sounds so sweet and tastes so sweet. So so akin to the sounds of separation and the sweetness of a mother's cries and sorrow. I am a mother after all. The way my children happily feast on the pudding compels me to relinquish all my sorrows and overlook all of their mistakes. I am a mother after all, and my son is an irresponsible one. I am bound to forgive him despite his crimes.

Humans and their ugly desires.
Animals: the sunken aspirers.

What am I to do to accept my fate then, reader? Nothing: I embrace death. I embrace the death that my irresponsible son has bestowed upon me. I embrace my horrific end like all other mothers right now. Here he comes fiercely with the weapon that beheads me in one swift swing. Down goes my head while the rest of my body is hooked on the wall. I was skinned already. All he can do of my remains is feast on it now. Some say that the Lord resides in me, that he seeks peace and refuge in my body. Is this why my son uses my pious flesh to curb his hunger? I don't know. I am a mother after all. Forgiveness is my trait.

God resided in me through the thick and thin.
Now he guides me to his abode, his heaven.
You might call these atrocities cruel, wrong and evil;
I call this my sisterhood.

#BeVegan
#StopAnimalCruelty



A trip back in history!

by Vivaan Talreja, 9A

I was busy practicing my fielding with my dad when he threw the ball stridently on the wall. Unfortunately, when I went to retrieve the ball, I bumped my head against the wall with a loud thud. Blood was oozing from my head profusely, as I noticed the wall was sucking me. A few seconds later, I was pushed out of another wall like gushing water!

My heart was in my mouth at that moment…and I must have lost consciousness after that.

After a while, once I regained consciousness, I couldn't see very clearly. Slowly and steadily, I contorted my head to locate where exactly I was. I saw something out of the corner of my eyes– a big board saying, “Arabian Sea Coast 1930.” I rubbed my eyes; was I seeing things? Was my concussion so bad that I was seeing things in the past now? A thousand questions flooded my mind. I blinked hard, hoping it was just a trick of the light.

But, nothing seemed to change. One thing was sure enough, that I had gone back in time. Did I land in the times of the “Salt March” that I had learned about in the History lessons at school? Was Gandhi there?

I made up my mind to saunter about, but before I could do so, I decided it would be nice to keep a large red leaf near the wall so I could go back in the future once more. A few people nearby had caught my attention; so I went towards them to take a closer look.

It was Gandhiji! Followed by Pyarelal Nayyar, Chhaganlal Naththubhai Joshi and many more people in a rally. I couldn’t believe my eyes. They were carrying large sacks of something, which I assumed to be salt. I stood in shock, and opened my phone to take photos as corroboration for my parents; proof that I saw the Salt March, but it wasn’t working. That was fair after all; smartphones hadn’t been invented yet.

Suddenly, I could hear the *thumps* of footsteps approaching them. I turned to

see soldiers dressed in uniform– British uniforms.

The head of all bellowed, “Soldiers! Arrest all of them!,” in a British accent. It was the British, who were jealous of the wealth of the Indians. Each and every person of the Salt March was being held from moving and arrested. When they struggled against the handcuffs, I could sense and empathize with the agony the Indians faced, the bravery they had, before independence. I could hear cries and shrieks– protestors and civilians alike– all around me.

60,000 people– all arrested just like that.

After a few minutes, I decided to go back to the future. I wanted to go back to Independent India, and besides– my sudden disappearance must have made my parents extremely worried.

I gripped the leaf I had grabbed from the wall and willed myself to return to the future, and lo and behold! The Arabian Sea Coast sign was gone and I could hear the familiar sound of my ringtone. I checked the phone to see my parents call.

I should probably pick that up.



The Best Sunday of my Life!

by Vivaan Talreja, 9A

It was a thunderous Sunday afternoon; the rain was so fierce and the wind was whooshing at breakneck speed all around the place. The whole of Paris was empty and bleak. However, it was a good day for all the pluviophiles out there. But most importantly, it was a good day for everyone to have a much-needed siesta to relax from the exhausting week at work and all the hustle and bustle. Not a single person was to be seen for miles and miles ahead. Too add to, even my own family had barely slept.

The whole place felt so soulless.

The Sunday that I anticipated would be the best day of the week felt so dull and colourless. No one wanted to move their legs even one step forward. That is when I had to turn my boredom into an opportunistic mindset. My eagerness for settling scores with my boisterous brother, for all the crimes he had committed against me was just too much to resist. Furtively, I tip-toed, without leaving any hints about the malevolent prank (pranks *plural*, actually, since I– well, you'll see) that was going to transpire in a while. I made a beeline to the hall room, to set up the snares. My nosy house helper was on my tail, at each step that I took, because Arham, my brother, was the apple of her eye.

She had a face which looked like she'd just bitten into the worst lemon of her life, her expression saying *stop what you're doing, this instant!*, so to stop her from stalking me, I turned on the television, so that she'd think I was not up to anything.

As soon as she was out of sight, I continued with my mission. I set up traps all around the house right from the bathroom to the hall, because I knew my brother would follow this path.

After a while, after hours of relentless arduous work and toil, I let out a sigh of relief and was all set to witness a comedy show.

All the traps were in place, they just had to be implemented.

Within a short span of, precisely two minutes, my clueless brother got up and howled in agony. He made his way to the bathroom, unbeknownst of what was coming his way. As soon as he set foot, in the bathroom, a plate full of flour smashed on his face. Seeing his shocked face covered in white flour was definitely one of the best things I'd witnessed all week– nay, my entire life! The experience was enhanced by him opening and closing his mouth without a sound, kind of like the old goldfish we had when I was six.

The next thing that he went to do was to wash his face, but I snuck a little coin up the tap, which spluttered the gushing water all over his body. He was drenched from head to toe.

He looked like an ice cream melting under the sun!

Next in the queue was wiping his face with a napkin. But what he did not realise was that the napkin was filled with sriracha sauce and tomato ketchup. Without a second thought he rubbed it all over his face. His eyes were burning with fury and was running helter-skelter all around the hose, screeching on the top of his lungs, "Heeeeeelp!!!!!"

He darted to the kitchen and before turning on the tap he made a couple of test runs, just to see if there was a coin stuck up or not. There was no coin there, fortunately for him, but I had shut the water source of the tap so no water flowed out at all.

He continued to scream in agony and apologised for all the trouble he had ever caused me. Then, like the good, kind brother that I am, I turned on the water power and he cleaned his face. He felt relieved and went to eat an Oreo.

He took two handfuls of Oreo out of the packet and dumped it in his mouth. His gluttonous behaviour continued.

What he did not realise, however, was that the cream was replaced with toothpaste and the cooling sensation burned his mouth to minus ten degrees Celsius.



Enveloped

by Vani Sharma, 9D

Diwali. The word holds so much beauty, so much excitement in it.

What first crosses your mind when you hear the word? I can answer easily: lamboyant fireworks, mouth-watering Indian delicacies, the hustle and bustle around the house, putting together rangolis and hanging up lights and strings of flowers. But is that the true meaning of Diwali?

Deepavali, as the festival is called synonymously, quite literally means ‘a row of lights’ in Sanskrit. This came to be as when Lord Ram, Sita and Lakshman returned to Ayodhya in the dark evening, the villagers lit up lamps in rows along the streets to guide them to the Royal Palace.

To me, this does not only symbolise the win of good over evil or light over dark, but also the unity of light, the support of the people who came together as one to help their exiled king find his way back to where he truly belonged.

As the years passed, Diwali has turned into something else entirely. Now, we merely celebrate the broad conclusion of the beloved story—not the passion, the integrality of people, which is what truly brought the festival to life.

I had this epiphany of sorts early one morning in my home town in North India, as we were driving to the airport for our flight back home. We had barely left the driveway when fog (as is very common in winter months in the North) enveloped us. I hadn’t quite experienced this before, and began to get worried as we had close to no visibility. My family calmed me, however, by merely pointing out the window.

In the distance, glowing surreally, were the lights adorning the neighbouring houses. Just bright enough to show us the road: as if they were put there just to guide us. And that they did; all the way until dawn broke through and light returned once again

In the end, it's really all about perspective. The true meaning of Diwali is still alive, and it finds us in the most unexpected places at the most unexpected times.

We just need to know how to look.





A Strange Place

by Kyra Narain, 9B

The gaudy room, filled with strange people was not helping Alice. As she tried in vain to find her phone. It was perhaps her last hope of getting out of this strange place. Time glided by and the people, completely oblivious of her presence continued on their way. She was quite close to losing hope of ever getting out when a peculiar-looking lady with stars splattered across her gown marched up to her. Alice quavered. All questions vanished, as she shivered under her powerful aura and remarkable poise. She glanced out the carriage window, with guards holding her down by order of their queen. Her eyes scanned the surroundings, taking in every shop, every house. She squinted, the lights of the queen's courtroom blinding her. The queen addressed her like a cautious detective on a dangerous case. Her presence itself was a threat to them. Poor Alice, she did not even know how she was here. The courtroom buzzed, every entity present discussing her case. The last thing she could remember was a bright bolt of light hurling towards her, as she descended into a dark abyss.

In The Middle of the Ocean

by Vani Sharma, 9D

Many would describe the middle of the ocean as the middle of nowhere. For 7 year old me, however: there couldn't be a notion more wrong.

My father, a master mariner in the merchant navy, would often take me on-board during my holidays. On board, I would observe people of various nationalities and cultures come together and work as one; an organism comprising different cells, each with a distinct role to play.

My learnings on-board weren't limited to the observations of my young eyes. My father, when he found some time off (this was a particular occurrence when we were mid-course) would show me around…and our trips would more often than not include a snack, a long walk on deck, dolphins(if we were lucky) and lots of wisdom from my father.

One such trip I will surely remember took place long after my bedtime. I told my father I couldn't sleep, and without a word, he took me on the deck to see the stars. I was always quite an astrophile, and the pure wonderment I felt that night was unparalleled.
He then pointed to the sky and told me, "Everyone in this world is like a star. Everyone is equally important. If a star vanishes from the sky, you and I won't come to know, but the sky just won't quite look the same anymore. As the seasons change, the stars come and go, constellations evolve, but every star—like every person—deserves a special place in the sky."

It seemed like nothing more than a bedtime story to put a 7 year old to sleep, but today, when I look back, I realize just how much it impacted my way of engaging the world around me. It is what birthed my passion for equality and teamwork. It is what essentially taught me that even if I were to find myself alone in the middle of nowhere, I wouldn't be forgotten; because, you and I? We'll still have our place in a sky full of stars.

Oh my darling Clementine

by Vani Sharma, 9D

Once upon a terrible and torrid time, there stood a castle on the shore of the vast ocean, in which dwelt a King with his two daughters. The Queen had passed away a few months after the birth of their second child. After her death the King diverted all his attention to his two thriving daughters.

The elder daughter was gifted with beauty and grace, enough to rival her mother. With long hazel locks, eyes as blue as the ocean, and lips as red as shimmering rubies, there was no one Clementine couldn't charm.

Her younger sister Cordelia, however, valued her intellect more than her beauty. She seldom gave more than a moment's notice to how she looked.
And as the girls grew, so did Cordelia's envy for her sister, who was marginally more liked by everyone at court; their own father preferred Clementine over Cordelia, showering her with all his love and attention. Over the years, Cordelia's constant yet vain attempts to gain her father's affection began leading to desperation. She often found herself wishing her sister were dead, believing that with her sister out of her life people would finally see her for who she truly was, instead of a weak imitation of the all too perfect Clementine.

As time passed, the notion of the Princesses' betrothal was raised, and Clementine's excitement could only match Cordelia's reluctance. As suitors came and went, each one promising something even more surreal than the last, one of them stood out to all; a young prince, wise and brave and witty. The Prince and Cordelia began spending time together; long hours of reading together in the library, and he slowly, but deeply, fell in love with her. However, Clementine had fallen in love with the handsome Prince, and for the first time in all these years, felt truly envious of her sister.

In due time, the Prince asked Cordelia to marry him, mistaking her kindness and attention for romantic interest. Cordelia, startled by the proposal, requested for a fortnight to respond.

That night, she decided to visit her father and ask for his opinion on the matter. When she reached his study, she found him drunk and in pure joy, misunderstanding Clementine to be the one receiving the proposal, and thinking she had agreed to a marriage which would lead to a mammoth increase in his power. As he sang joyous odes to his elder daughter, proclaiming her as a child of god himself, Cordelia's blood boiled with a wrath that could only be fueled by hatred. Every day she was reminded of being second to her sister, always the one to pale in comparison, never receiving so much as a moment's notice from her father, while her sister got not only his love and affection, but that of the whole kingdom.

And so, the very next day, Cordelia went up to the Prince and agreed to his proposal, and enjoyed finally being the center of attention, just like her sister had been all these years.

However, that very night, as Cordelia entered her chambers, she heard Clementine weep and lament, declaring her life meaningless if she couldn't spend it with the Prince she loved.

A part of Cordelia truly did want to take back her consent, but a greater part of her, one that had yearned for her father's love when all he could see was Clementine, that had envied her charm and popularity, wanted nothing more but to be an object of that envy herself.

On the day of the wedding, Clementine rose early and hiked up to a cliff, high above the inky depths of the ocean. She stared, long and hard into death's eyes, and just as she felt herself succumbing, she leaped back.

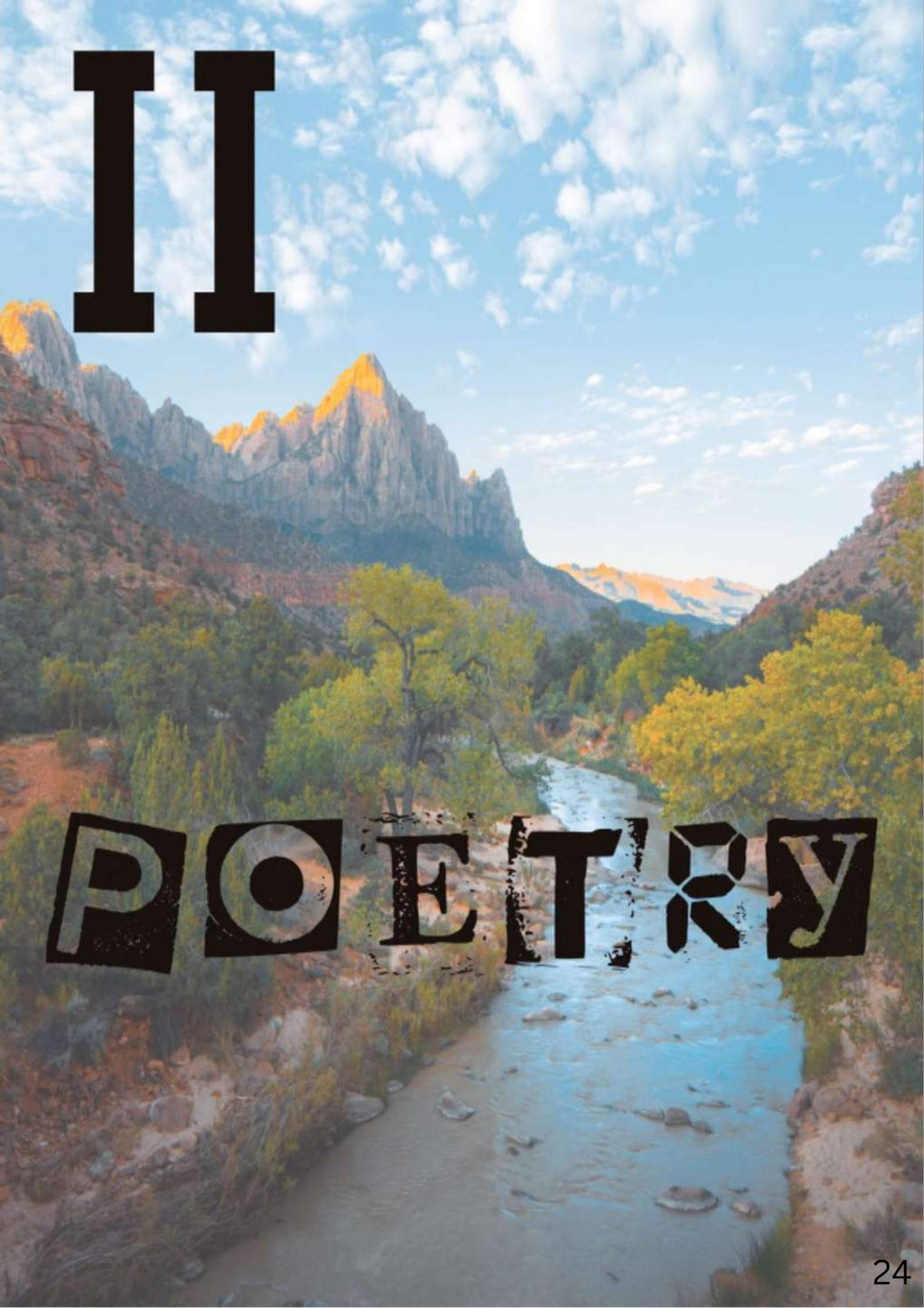
She realised that while a life without her prince did seem like torture, she wanted to be there for her father, who she loved more than life itself. Cordelia, who had followed her trail, saw her standing at the very edge of the cliff. Under the assumption that her sister was going to jump, she reached out her hand to stop her.

However, as soon as she touched Clementine's shoulder, Clementine lost her balance, and slipped off the edge of the cliff into the unforgiving arms of the sea, lost to this world that had been both kind and cruel to her.

Paralyzed with shock, fear and self disgust, Cordelia was in disbelief as she walked back to the castle.

Years later, the void of the King's heart had begun to fill, and he now devoted all his attention to Cordelia, and regretted greatly how he had neglected her for years. In the light of their repairing relationship, Cordelia helped him rule the vast expanse of their Kingdom. A wise and just ruler, she was loved by all the subjects.

Years after an unfortunate incident that Cordelia certainly did have a hand in, she had everything she had ever wanted from her sister. But now that Clementine was well and truly gone forever, she found one question pounding her head through the dark hours of the night; had she really wanted this? And if not, then why did she feel no remorse?


II
POETRY



Science of the Human Soul

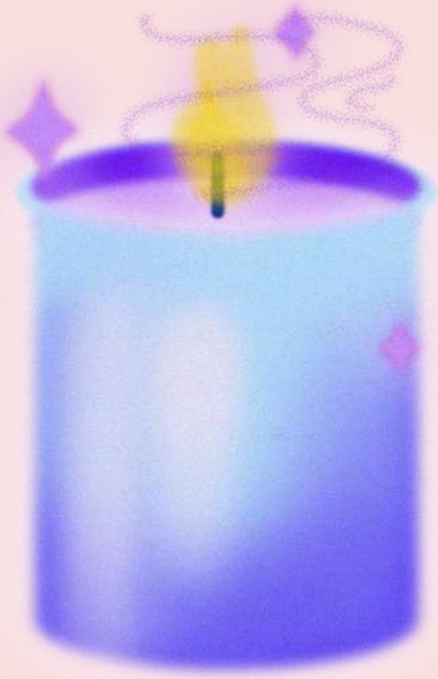
Schanna Muliyil, IBDP-1

In the realm of thoughts, where mysteries reside,
A study of the mind, a captivating ride,
Psychology, the science of the human soul,
Unraveling the depths, making us whole.

Exploring the unconscious, shedding light,
The psyche's labyrinth, intricate and vast,
Psychology seeks to understand it at last.

In the realm of emotions, psychology delves,
Unraveling the stories that the heart tells,
From joy and love to sadness and despair,
The human experience, it aims to share.

The mind's complexities, a fascinating maze,
Cognitive processes, attention's gentle blaze,
Psychology unravels what it means to be you.



Through research and study, it seeks to find,
The patterns and behaviors of humankind,
From nature to nurture, the interplay,
Psychology unveils the human sway.

In therapy's embrace, it lends a hand,
Helping minds heal, helping hearts expand,
From trauma's grip to anxiety's hold,
Psychology aids in stories yet untold.

But psychology is not just science's domain,
It touches our lives in ways we can't explain,
It offers insight, empathy, and grace,
A lens through which we see the human race.

So let us explore the depths of the mind,
Through psychology's lens, may we find,
A deeper understanding, a compassionate view,
Of the beautiful complexities that make us, me and you

My brother and me

Kendarit Lodha, 9A

A real brother is not just from the same mother,
But a replica of the other,
And always like a protective cover,
Lastly they care for one another.

Not fighting with each other is like freezing in motion,
And they know us from when we were putting lotion,
Their main aim will be to play with our emotions,
But lastly our trust will never be broken...

My brother and me...

My brother, young with little brains,
Behind him, my energy drains,
I don't know why he always runs across the lanes,
Lastly, I cannot bear the pain.

They will always buzz like a bee
And our relation will grow like a tree
Then the whole world will see
My brother and me…

A mother does not abandon her child and so my goddess won't leave me.
I am lost and so shall it be.
Oh, my loving mother, come help me!
The woods scare me and the dark forces engulf me;
Oh, my powerful mother, where have you been?
Answer my prayers, for I am a devout admirer within!



Oh, My Mother, Come Help Me!

Aaditya Sawant, IBDP-2

This long-lost son has lost his path,
Help him escape his past!
Oh, my wise mother, come guide me,
Come light the path for me!
The fiend strangles me and so I yelp;
Oh, my strong mother, this son desperately needs your help!



You are my strength, so let me manifest you;
Oh, my mighty mother, come to my rescue!
The dawn of creation and the ruler of death:
You are everything that can, and ever will be!
Oh, my dear mother, come help me!
You are everything that can, and ever will be!
After all, you, my mother, are the almighty Shakti!

I will raise my voice
For roars on city streets,
For tumbling homes,
Homes of naïve critters,
Homes of feeble souls

I will speak up
For we have long domesticated,
Enslaved animals,
Poached the ingenuous,
All in the name of moronic speciesism

Symbiosis

Sarah Kathuria, IBDP-2

I will revolt
For the ethics of eating meat
For the dilemma of riding horses,
Hunted in the past,
But why are we living there now?

I will deride
For this lack of symbiosis
For decadent humanity

Nature will
And always fights back

Her strengths lies not in her victories,
But in her scars that don't mend,
The scars of her battles lost and barely won,
But with bravado fought till the end.

She Who We Call A Warrior

Vani Sharma, 9D



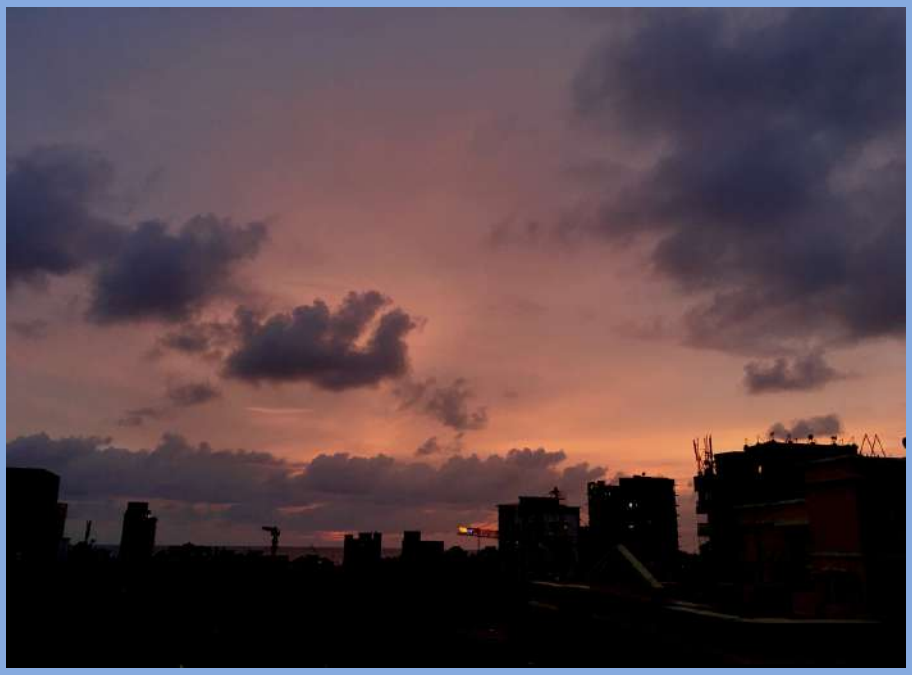
Her strength lies in the way she rises
From the inky depths of night like dawn
To meet the battlefield of a new day
And she fights, saying to all fear;
'Begone'.

Her strength shows not when she shines on the top,
But in unforgiving struggle to get there;
In her every humiliating loss
And her every act of strategy and dare.

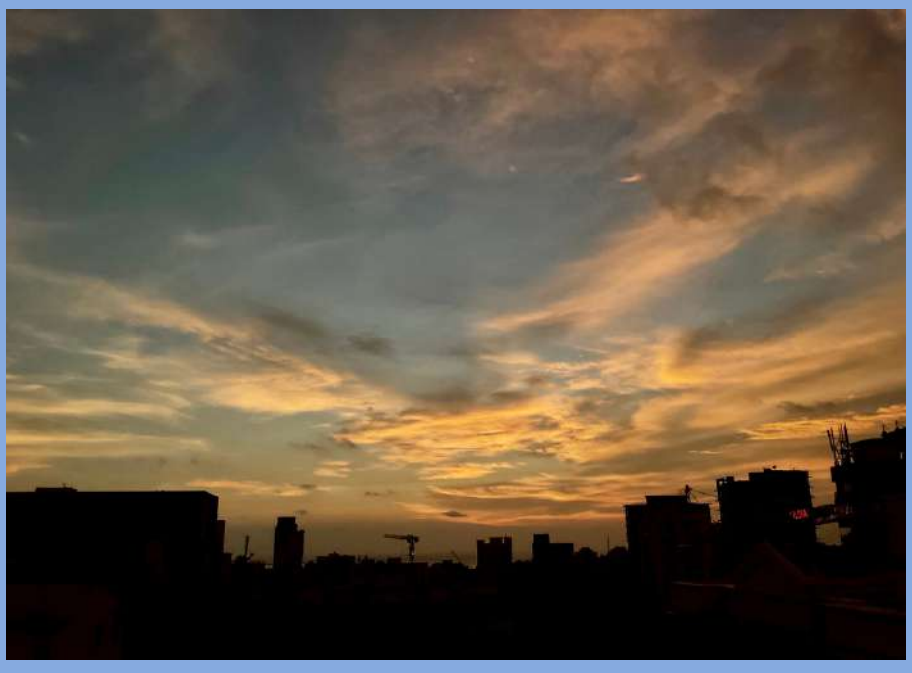
Her strength shows plainly on her face,
A face not one where tears are never found,
But one that cares not for them, holding her head high,
Despite the shackles of agony that pull her to the ground.

For her strengths lies in her spirit,
That every time scarred, broken and built,
Glows a stronger, mightier weapon
And calls she who wields it;
A warrior.









on clouds & skies

photos by Khayal Shah, IBDP-2



photo by Yash Vadhar, IBDP-2

If we could comprehend the airy language of
the clouds--what would it tell us? Would
it be sorrowful of the smoke-filled urbanity
we call home? Would it be delighted at the
human vision that captures it in so many
different hues? Would we realise that
that the sky and the clouds
are, together, one big
small painted-on
mural for
the whole of life?

musings by Ananya Pathak, IBDP-2

III

REVIEWS & RECS

Ruben Fleischer's Uncharted:

An Ideal Way To Capitalise On A Live-Action Adaptation Of A Video-Game Franchise?

By Aaditya Sawant, IBDP-2



Making live action adaptations of video games is an arduous task---the failure of movies like Mortal Kombat and Lara Croft simply adds more credibility to this statement.

Makers of films belonging to this genre are answerable to a wide audience. There are chiefly two categories of viewers who are equally difficult to deal with: those who have already played the game and newcomers with no idea about the game.

Players of the video games are already aware of the plot of the games and have elevated expectations from the movies. They require a newer storyline based loosely, ***but not entirely*** on the games and simultaneously crave for the 'feel' of the video games in live-action. On the other hand, newcomers need something that is simply intriguing and not too fast-paced for those without pre-existing knowledge. This is indeed a colossal job and with his latest movie Uncharted, Fleischer should be lauded for having taken up the challenge and successfully delivering exactly what the audience at the box office needs.

I have been a huge PlayStation fanboy for almost a decade by now. Video-games have always been an important part of my life and especially memorable ones like the Uncharted Franchise. For the unaware, this video game series is one of the greatest video-game hits. With four main instalments and four spin offs, Uncharted has been developed exclusively for PlayStation consoles which includes all generations after the PlayStation 3. Uncharted games are full of mind-bending puzzles and everlasting adventures, accompanied by a thrilling background score.

Players cannot think of 'Uncharted' without two core elements: an intimidating storyline and an immersive gaming experience which improves with each new instalment. Fleischer is aware of this and capitalises on what these players expect from his movie---even more 'Uncharted' but ***not too much***.



Inclusion of jaw dropping action sequences inspired by the games and Nathan's humour are a few among many other core components that one would expect from any work of entertainment produced under the banner of 'Uncharted'. The film too, encompasses the basis of all Uncharted games, that is, NO ONE CAN BE TRUSTED. On the other hand, the movie is based on Magellan's Voyage while the games follow the tale of Sir Francis Drake. This was a wonderful creative choice that worked very well with audiences exposed to the franchise before. As a player, it was refreshing to follow Magellan's tale rather than what the games followed for nine full years!

As an action-adventure movie, Uncharted also performs well in entertaining those who are unaware of the franchise, or generally remain aloof from video- games. These alien eyes get to see what they have been missing out on ever since the release of Uncharted: Drake's Fortune, the first instalment in the franchise. The movie enthralls these viewers with its stunning visuals and intensity. The element of humour is well-coordinated and the story is not too fast, which helps the movie to 'cling onto the viewers'.

Apart from Fleischer and the production houses, the actors deserve praise too. Tom Holland plays the protagonist Nathan Drake, the main character of Uncharted, and is the centre of attraction in the film. His performance convinces viewers that he is the perfect choice to play an iconic character like Drake. He could accurately grasp the comic and slightly immature character of Drake with a touch of his own sense of humour, to such an extent, that his character in the movie feels like Nathan Drake and Peter Parker at the same time. As a Marvel and Uncharted fan, I absolutely loved it!

In the games, Chloe Frazer is a very easily lovable character but the last person one can trust. Her ventures are largely driven by her personal ambitions and she could go to any extent to acquire what she desires. She has also been Drake's love interest. This character is played so well in the film by Sophia Taylor Ali that even a non-Uncharted fan would love and hate her simultaneously (like the players do) after watching the movie. Ali even makes efforts to learn Chloe's accent which showcases the cast and crew's dedication.

Mark Wahlberg, who carries the experience of playing a father-like figure from his previous films, does the same in Uncharted. He plays Victor Sullivan, who is a father figure and mentor to Drake in the games. Without any doubt, all the actors in the film have done a commendable job.



A live action adaptation needs a plot that is simply based on the games and not a mere recreation. When fans are deprived of the excessive dependence of the movie on the games, the hidden essence of the film is perceived by them. Essentially, as mentioned earlier, fans need just the 'feel' of the games and not the entirety. Understand this analogy: a dish (live-action film) is dressed with sauce (plot) and seasoned with herbs (video-game references). This factor is probably even a substantial success criterion for such films. For example, the filmmakers chose not to make Sir Francis Drake the pivot of the movie's narrative unlike the games while concurrently preserving the intense atmosphere of trust issues evident in the games.



Similarly, the entire plane sequence was adapted from the memorable chapter - ***Into The Desert*** from ***Uncharted: Drake's Deception***. The plane in the game flew over a desert while the one in the movie flew over an ocean. Such a strikingly similar scene fulfilled its purpose of simply providing the feel without being a complete remake. The auction scene in the movie was akin to the one in Uncharted: A Thief's End. Again, a few minute changes could do the work.

The loss of a greater part of the ultimate treasure, Sullivan's iconic moustache and Cuban cigar in the post-credit scene and the accent of Chloe throughout the film are three instances where small details derived from the games worked really well. To summarise, the makers knew how to create the perfect blend using adequate *sauce* and *herbs*.

The movie also has its own flaws and a very few cliché moments. A very plausible question is: how did the two ships laden with treasure manage to remain concealed despite being hidden deep in a cave with a wide cavity on top, for so many years? It could easily have been spotted owing to the size of the opening. Another feature about the film is that it feels very incomplete (for good). There are many stones in the plot that are unturned. Nevertheless, these simply arouse questions in the minds of viewers. This is a clever way of creating the hype for Uncharted's sequels. The ending and the post-credit scene of the film leaves the audience on a cliff-hanger and in a way, compels them to anticipate the plot of the next film! Drake and Sullivan were dumbstruck in the post-credit scene and what they saw still remains a mystery.

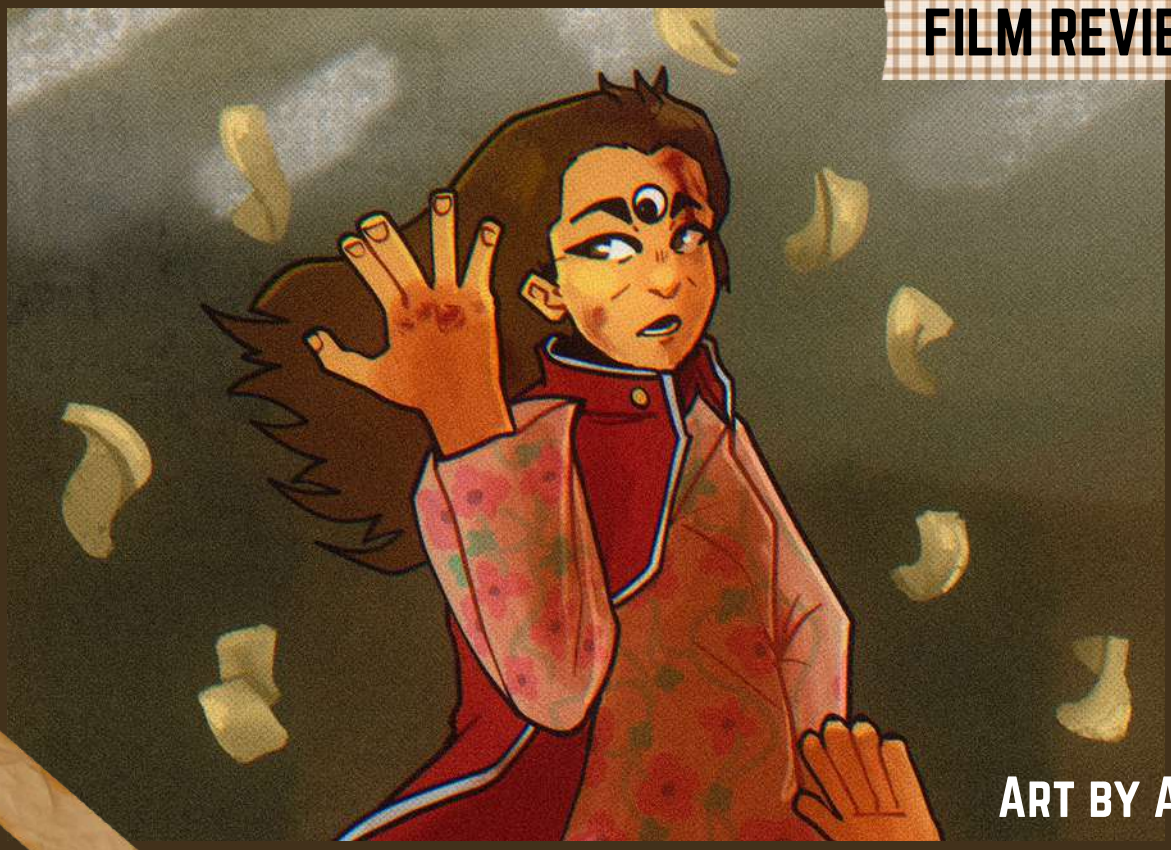
Is Jo dead? There is a popular technique among filmmakers that compels viewers to believe that a certain character is dead for a certain period of time, who isn't really dead and appears out of nowhere in the future. Has Fleischer planned something similar with Jo? This is something the audience doesn't know! Maybe she dived under the water so quickly that she managed to avoid the brunt of the impact of the ship that fell towards her. The film also teases Sam, Drake's elder brother who has been a protagonist in the games and also a prisoner. An obvious question arises: will Sam join the adventures of Drake in the immediate sequel of Uncharted? All such questions may remain unanswered but certainly point out the possibility that the makers planned something more than just the first film!

Therefore, I highly recommend Fleischer's Uncharted to people who are unaware of the video game series and even more to those who are versed with the Uncharted franchise already. The 166 minutes long runtime makes it very rewatchable as a standalone film. One can stream the movie on Netflix. Even though the official IMDB rating is 6.4/10, I strongly believe that it deserves a rating that's above 8.5/10. As a fan, I am really grateful to the makers for making this film as it helped me to move on from the Nathan Drake saga in the games that came to an end with Uncharted 4. As of now, following Holland's Drake seems fun and I expect the sequels to answer my trove of questions.

On a concluding note, yes, Uncharted (2022) is an ideal live-action adaptation of a video game franchise, especially a popular one. Other studios certainly have something to learn from the makers of Uncharted regarding the far-sighted vision and the execution of the film. Maybe, this is the dawn of a new era in the history of this genre. Will we be able to see more live-action adaptations after the courage and brilliance shown by the filmmakers of Uncharted? Only time will tell, until then, kudos to the team of Uncharted!

Images Courtesy of ScreenRant, Wikimedia Foundation, and the Uncharted creators.

FILM REVIEW



ART BY ARMAAN

EVERYHTING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE:

THE CINEMA THAT DEFINED THE DECADE

A perfect collage of cultural identity, maximalist symbolism and the chaos that makes us human--the Daniel's 2022 film speaks to the diverse sensibilities of a society that is fragmented by interconnected. Every shot explores how we define our fates.

The film reshaped how we think about multiverses and the concept of infinite choices, centering (for perhaps the first time in several histories) the story of a 50-something Chinese-American mother, entrepreneur, and person, as she navigates her relationships with her family but make it surreal sci-fi battle scenes (as illustrated above).

REVIEW BY ANANYA AND ARMAAN, IBDP-2

THE WEB OF LIFE AND DESTINY:

Armaan F.D.'s review of



——LIGHT SPOILERS AHEAD!! ——

Ah, Spider-Man: Across The Spider-Verse.. Where can I even begin with my feelings towards this movie? Almost 5 years ago, when its predecessor Into The Spider-Verse released, I thought to myself, "This is the absolute peak of movies. It can never get better than this." 4 years, 6 months, and a 136 minute movie later, I cannot believe how wrong I was. Across takes elements from all over the Spider-Man mythos, and uses them to create a beautiful tribute and look at the iconic character.

Of course, there's the animation. It's almost a moot point to say "Across the Spider-Verse has beautiful animation", since that's one of the main takeaways everyone can have from the movie, but honestly? It's an understatement. The movie takes cues from its predecessors medium-defining animation, and takes it a step further. Some highlights for me were Gwen's beautiful, paint-like universe full of bright vibrant colours, and Hobie's punk-rock cutout style that blew me away upon first watch. Of course, I need to mention Pavitr Prabhakar's inclusion; seeing representation of the culture and city I grew up in in an entry of my favourite franchise ever was something really special. (Don't you DARE call it 'chai tea'.)



But aside from what most people's takeaways would have you believe, this movie isn't simply eye-candy. The transcendent animation itself is simply a companion to the movie's captivating story, impressive voice acting and amazing music. (Seriously, Daniel Pemberton's score AND Metro Boomin's soundtrack? We were blessed.) This movie is such an intensely layered web (Get it?) of detail, love, and attention. Across the Spider-Verse continues to display how animation isn't just a genre, and it is truly pure cinema. As a fan of Spider-Man and animation itself as a medium, I feel no shame in saying this is my favourite movie of all time.

11/10. A simple scale of 1 to 10 is less than this movie deserves, honestly.

OPPENHEIMER

Sahana Radhakrishnan, IBDP-2

We all know the line. J Robert Oppenheimer's famous words after creating the first atomic bomb: "I am become death. Destroyer of worlds."

With a career as monumental as his, it's no wonder his inevitable biopic would be directed by one of the greatest directors alive right now: Christopher Nolan, who also wrote the script for the movie. The film depicts Oppenheimer's life, the story of how he discovered theoretical physics and eventually led the (in)famous Manhattan project. Nolan integrates visuals with stellar soundtrack and the use of eerie silence to amplify events and Oppenheimer's emotions into a movie that deserves all the attention it has gotten from the internet the past few months. A movie that deserves to go down as one of the best movies of the year.

Let's start with the positives: Ludwig Göransson (who has composed tracks for other media like Community and New Girl) does a stellar job with the soundtrack, making it beautiful with a sense of incoming doom, much like the way Oppenheimer himself viewed his bomb. Nolan uses these with complete silence to intensify the emotional value of the scenes. For instance, when the bomb first goes off, there is no sound – not from the characters, not from the soundtrack, not from the explosive itself; it is allowed to revel in its simultaneous beauty and horror, as seen from the perspective of the scientists in the project. The words "I am become death. Destroyer of worlds" are uttered by Oppenheimer, and are followed by the deafening explosion of the bomb, heralding all the damage it is going to do to the world, to America, and to him.

The script is, on the most part, beautifully written, with most characters being fleshed out to a great degree; the motives of most characters are understood and the lines don't feel cheap and shoved in just for the sake of a cool Tiktok or Reels edit (songs that sound amazing for the fifteen seconds a reel allows them to have but sound abysmal for the remaining 3 minutes of its runtime, I'm looking at you). The actors also do a phenomenal job of delivering their lines. Robert Downey Jr's eerily calm tone revealing his involvement in the 'Oppenheimer incident' got the entire theatre to gasp around me. While I don't think the Ken-nergy of Ryan Gosling could ever meet its match, Downey Jr's acting was skilled in its own way. Emily Blunt delivered her lines with efficiency, and I was able to empathise with her character despite her limited screentime.





The actor who truly stole the show, however, was Cillian Murphy, or J Robert Oppenheimer himself. I don't think I've ever seen an actor act with his eyes the way Murphy does. If Oppenheimer had been played by any other person, I truly believe I would have just pointed and laughed at these characters feeling bad about making a weapon of mass destruction. But with Murphy? I could empathise with him. I felt bad for him. I was able to understand why Oppenheimer did what he did. If he doesn't win Best Actor, I will eat my hat for dinner and this is a promise.

Now, on to the negatives. Florence Pugh's character was frankly dull, with her five minutes of screentime consisting of her being naked on camera and killing herself. The treatment of women in this movie was a significant issue, with the female scientist in the Manhattan Project getting less time on-screen than her male counterparts, and Emily Blunt having limited screentime and less personality than literally every male character in the movie, despite playing the role of Oppenheimer's wife.

This movie also does not touch on the fact that the Project destroyed the lives of several people in New Mexico due to the nuclear testing – both indigenous and non-indigenous people. It glosses over the suffering non-white people and other residents of New Mexico faced, and instead focuses only on the moral dilemma faced by the rich, (mostly) white scientists and politicians.

I think, after taking all this into consideration, I would give Oppenheimer a solid 8.5/10; it was well directed, acted, and written, and Nolan's message could be (mostly) seen. It does, however, give a somewhat sanitised and male-centric view of the events which occurred, but if you can get past those things, it is an amazing watch and I recommend everyone see it at least once.

photos courtesy of the creators of Oppenheimer

IV

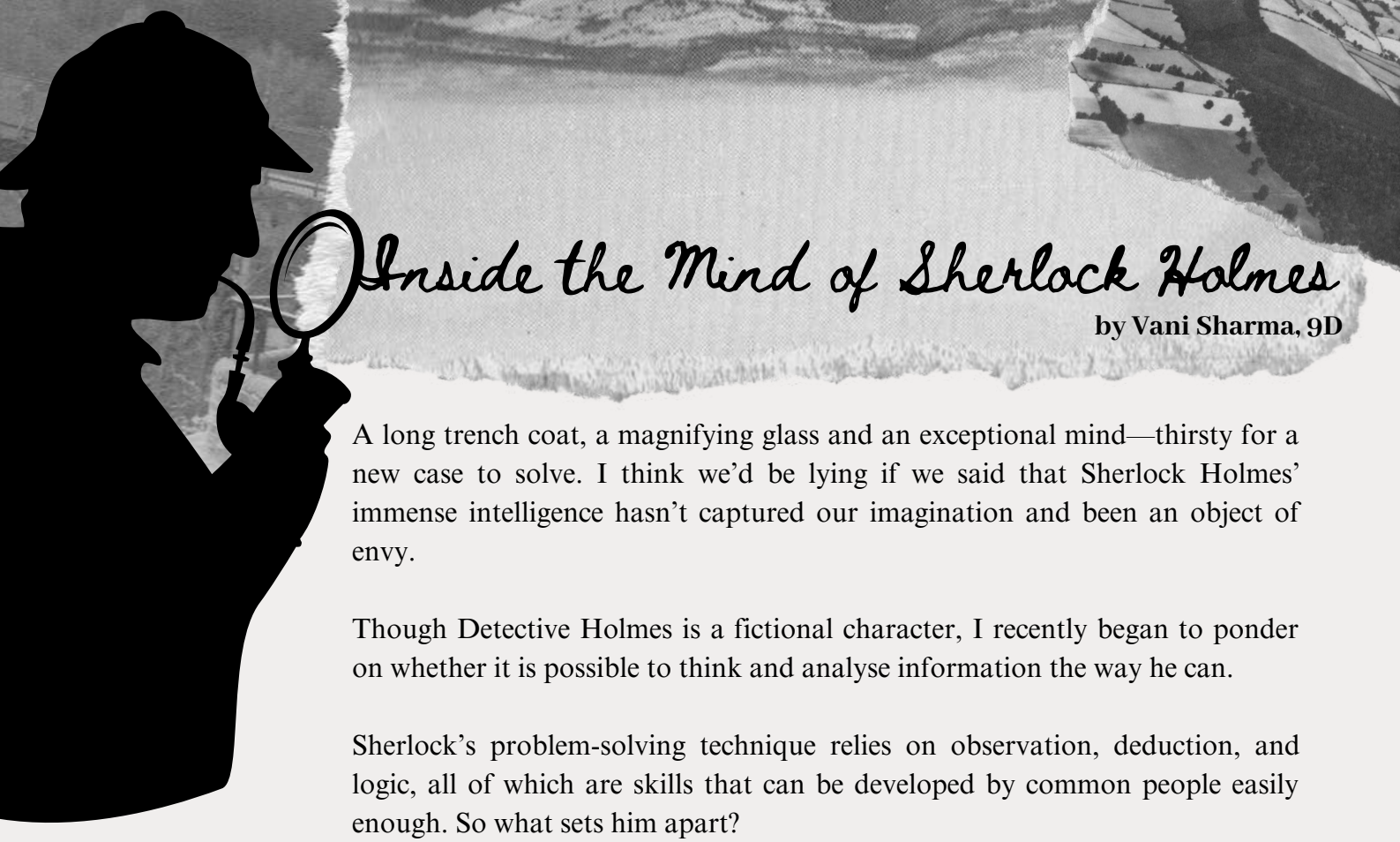


MIND & BODY



Art & Caption by Ishana Tibrewala, IBDP-2

With the help of social media everyone is able to put forth their opinions.
Yet, these opinions are not necessarily heard in the large influx of voices in the media. From my perspective I feel voices go unheard even if they have been given a platform. Even after being heard there no change has been made or no help given. Many individuals do not get the appropriate attention to what they want henceforth feel misunderstood and unheard.
Voices get frequently ignored…



Inside the Mind of Sherlock Holmes

by Vani Sharma, 9D

A long trench coat, a magnifying glass and an exceptional mind—thirsty for a new case to solve. I think we'd be lying if we said that Sherlock Holmes' immense intelligence hasn't captured our imagination and been an object of envy.

Though Detective Holmes is a fictional character, I recently began to ponder on whether it is possible to think and analyse information the way he can.

Sherlock's problem-solving technique relies on observation, deduction, and logic, all of which are skills that can be developed by common people easily enough. So what sets him apart?

Well, along with these important skills comes the understanding of mindfulness. Sherlock analyses the world, the situations around him with full consciousness, which allows him to engage his surroundings from a completely different perspective.

So what is mindfulness? It can be put as simply as the state of being conscious or aware of something. One might ask, if I am consciously experiencing my daily life, doesn't that mean I am being mindful?

The answer will be no.

While we are experiencing what is going on around us, we are not truly being mindful of it. And that's exactly where Holmes can one up us.

The greatest difference between Holmes' system of thinking and ours is how we spend our attention. Attention is a limited resource, and one that cannot be spent in multiple foregrounds all at once. Attention is also closely related to observation and deduction, for example:, if you pay close attention and observe all the apparatus in the chemistry lab, you may completely miss out on what the teacher is saying. The Sherlock thinking pattern has been trained to focus on details of importance; first by analysing the bigger picture and then deciding what to focus minutely on.

We shouldn't confuse mindlessness for mindfulness. Passive absorption of information around us, without analysing and engaging it, is useless. We must shift our thinking pattern to active awareness, by having mindful interactions with the world.

Now let's get to whether it is possible for us to adopt his way of thinking.

William James, father of modern psychology wrote that ‘The faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgement, character and will.’ To put it simply: training the mind to stay focused and attentive is the key to achieving mindful presence. And how can we do that?

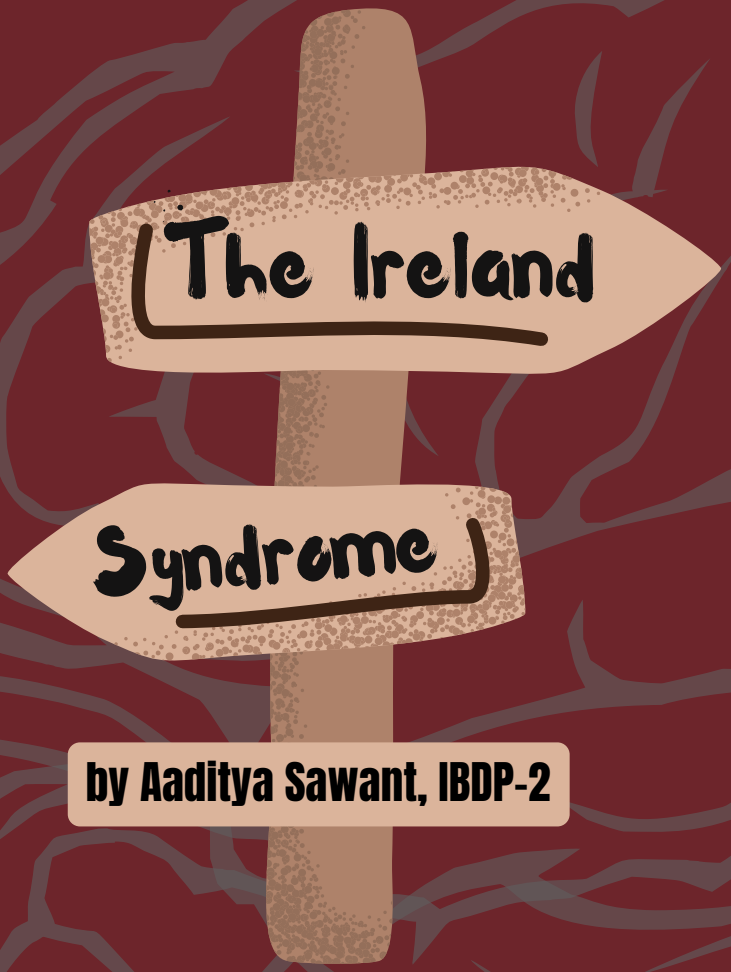
The answer to this is unsurprising; the single powerful step to attaining this state of mind comes from **meditation**.

Recent studies have shown that meditation **for just 15 minutes a day** can help us become more insightful and productive, encouraging an actively aware approach to situations around us. Once our brain has adapted to the pattern of mindful thinking other skills will follow.

However, while training our brain to work in the Holmes pattern of thinking, we will encounter hurdles as our brains are adapted to paying minimal attention in multiple directions; our species is often found scrolling through instagram while doing homework, or eating dinner while watching Netflix and keeping track of the cricket score simultaneously.

However, **hope is not lost**; it is very much possible to attain mindfulness and shift to a Holmes way of thinking, and when you do, grab that trench coat, find yourself a magnifying glass and set to work!





The Ireland Syndrome

by Aaditya Sawant, IBDP-2

What could the Ireland Syndrome be? To understand this, consider a hypothetical cricket match between Ireland and India. India doesn't play well in contrast to what it usually does, which makes the Indian audience dull and disappointed. They came to see the match with high hopes from the home team but were witnessing their very hopes shattered. They are unhappy with the Indian team's performance so they blame the Irish team for its outperformance. This is where the syndrome gets its name from. The audience with the Ireland Syndrome would never think of questioning the shortcomings of the Indian Team, but would whole-heartedly criticise the Irish team. Isn't this wrong?

We experience this in so many ways in real life. "Why did she get a special mention in the MUN wherein I was the one to author the directive?" I call this a hypocritical mindset. Why are our minds trained to accuse others before scrutinising ourselves?

Blaming others won't help but would rather not only hamper our relation with the accused, but also cause damage to our own selves. In context of the match, imagine if like many of us, the Indian team would continue cribbing about Ireland's outperformance and accuse them of various crimes such as tampering with the ball, for the rest of the tournament. This is the least feasible way to go about with failures. Failures shall be embraced and worked upon and not cribbed about. If the Indian team proceeds with this attitude of blaming their opponents, they would never be able to win the match! They must scrutinise and realise the shortcomings about themselves first in order to improvise.

This syndrome also has ties with the laws of manifestation. As the Principles of Manifestation by Bob Doyle in Rhonda Byrne's The Secret suggests, our perspectives shape the world around us and what we attract. According to Boyle, the Universe is biassed towards positivity, which we as humans should naturally be. It is more likely to be considered 'pro' feelings than 'anti' feelings. For example, in terms of the match, the Indian audience thought more about the 'anti-Irish' feelings than the 'pro-India' feelings. Consequently, the Universe by the Law of Manifestation, translated the anti-Irish feelings as pro-Irish feelings. This made the Irish team play well for the rest of the match, for, their victory was manifested by the Irish audience as well as unconsciously by the Indians as well.

In an attempt to help you realise about the Ireland Syndrome, I took the help of India's most loved sport and the most powerful thing in the Universe- thoughts. Thoughts play a big role in our materialistic lives and luckily, we have the liberty to choose what we think. Carrying the Ireland Syndrome around us will make us even more disappointed with our lives, because every single incident will result against our antagonistic thoughts. Hence, we must rid ourselves of this syndrome by being inclined towards positivity and by trying to not blame our circumstances, which play no significant role in our lives. The more we think about the circumstances at present, the less self-aware we are and thus, we should all learn to accept our lives and focus on changing them instead of being mere complainers. Even if we complain about the present circumstances, what would we manifest? Even more of them, which we don't really desire!

Sources:
You Don't Need A Godfather, by Elango R
The Secret, by Rhonda Byrne
The Power Of Now, by Eckhart Tolle
Life's Amazing Secrets, Gaur Gopal Das

Portraiture

art by Vihaan Bhatia, 9A









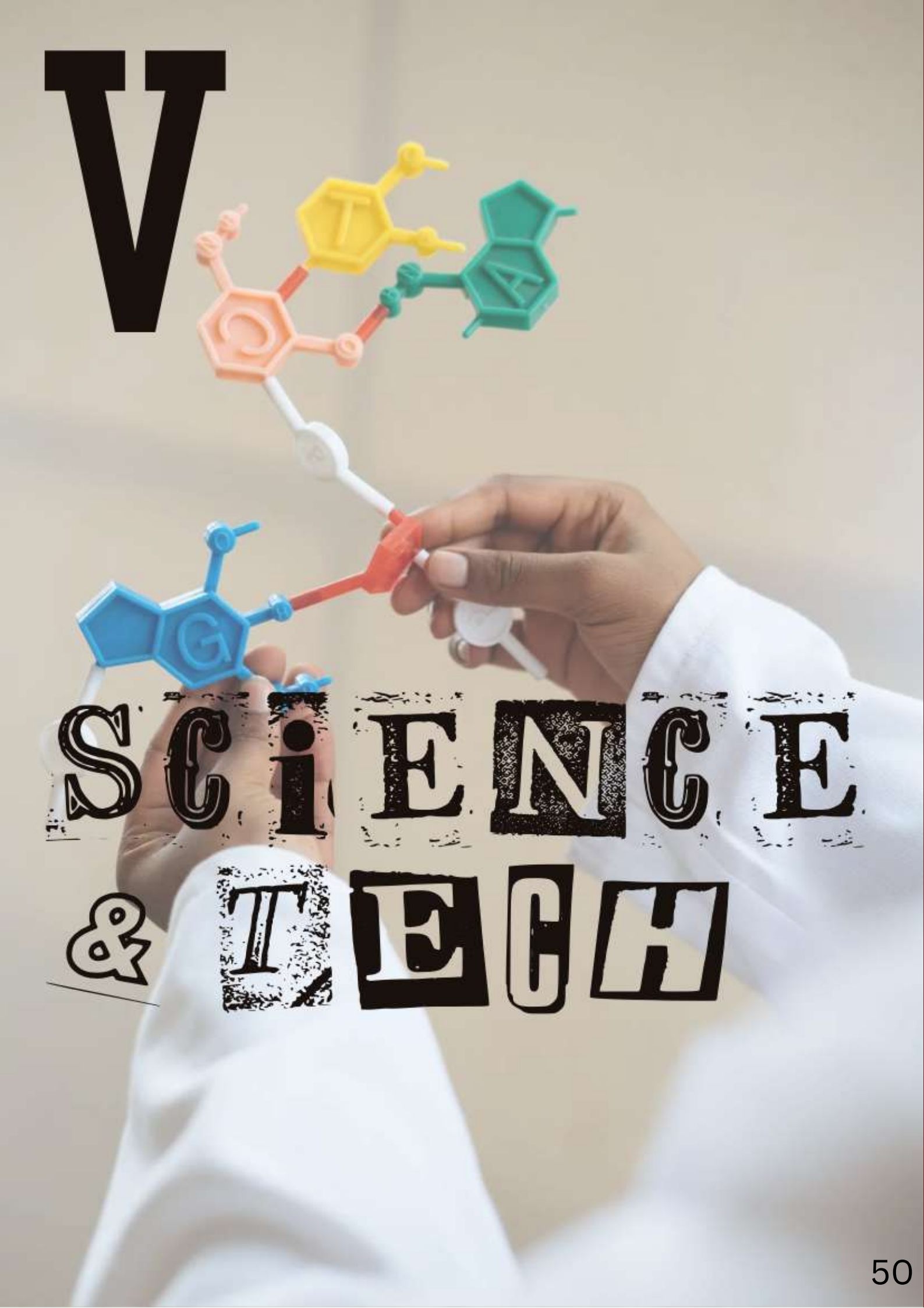
Patterns



comic by Armaan Dadyburjor



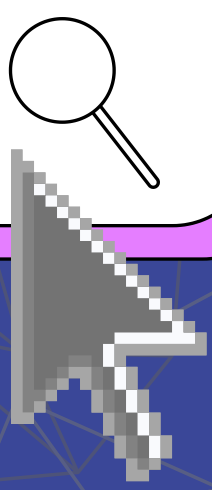
"Self-portrait, 2022" by Armaan Dadyburjor


V
SCIENCE
& TECH

SCI-FI MOVIES BECOME REAL?!

HUMAN IDENTITY CHIPS: A NEW FUTURE

BY AMRIT RATHI, 10C



From shows to stories, human identity chips have found their way everywhere. A perfect picture of a horrifying universe where an evil organisation controls all the citizens. Well…that slowly might be becoming a reality---a serious possibility but not entirely.

Technology keeps merging closer to our bodies, from smartwatches to earphones, and it is now getting under our skin literally. A microchip was first implanted into a human back in 1998, but it is only during the past decade that the technology has been available commercially.

The cons of such technology go without saying: there is always a dark side that has a potential for abuse. The main challenges facing the implementation of microchips can be summarised in three words; security, safety, and privacy. They are the pillars of any potential user's trust in new technology. Researchers also point out that implanting chips in humans have the same privacy and security implications as those raised by the rest of the devices that connect and exchange our personal data. Cameras in public places, facial recognition apps, the tracking of our locations, and our spending histories—to name a few examples—are already being collected and stored by every device for analysis later.

Firstly, companies that manufacture and program microchips often need access to the chips to be updated. With this, upgrades and new features are part of any product's life span, but this might be difficult for something implemented inside your body—an embedded microchip is not a smartwatch that can be replaced at a shop or mailed to the manufacturer. Also, the process could be painful and risky, with possible technical glitches.

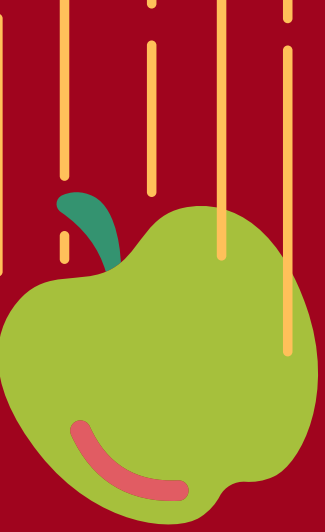
Then there are to obvious ethical concerns. It is one thing for animals to have microchips to identify them (which has been going on for years); there is no need to gain informed consent. Nevertheless, now the industry is dealing with humans—who should be able to decide whether or not they want the chips tied to them for a lifetime and who may change their mind at a later date. In addition, some repressive governments may attempt to force the chips on specific groups, giving authorities the power to monitor them for their entire lives.

In addition, regardless of whether it is active or passive, a microchip requires a communication channel that uses Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, or a mobile network between the microchip and its receivers—opening up an opportunity for hackers to take control over your chip remotely and gain access to what you have stored on the chip—or even worse, altering or damaging it with many consequences.

After every storm, there is a rainbow. So, of course, there are boons to this fancy technology. With implanted microchips, processing of payments will be possible anywhere and everywhere, at any time—the embedded microchip would take the place of the contactless terminals now seen everywhere.

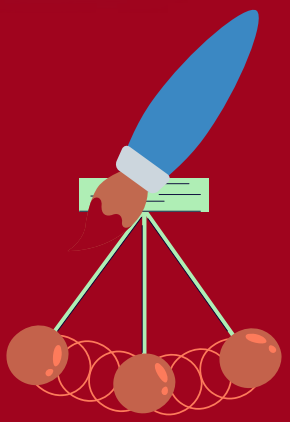
Health care, too, will benefit from easily stored and accessed health data and identification. A microchip under the skin could collect vital data and save it. With access to your complete health records stored in an electronic database, it is easier for doctors to track your health and recommend suitable treatment. It is even convenient to keep track of patients and families (such as mothers and their babies) in large busy hospitals with hundreds of patients, avoiding medical errors.

For many of us, the idea of having such a chip implanted in our body is appalling, but a 2021 survey of more than 4,000 people across the UK and the European Union found that 51% would consider it. (European Payments Landscape in 2030 Report) This technology is still early in its life cycle, and we will know more as more people use it. Better circuits and materials in the chips, in addition to more secure communication protocols, will expose the glitches and solutions, making a stronger case for using it. As Albert Einstein himself said, 'It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity.'



Art in Physics: a Glimpse into How we Conceive the Inconceivable.

V. Shiv Vale IBDP-2

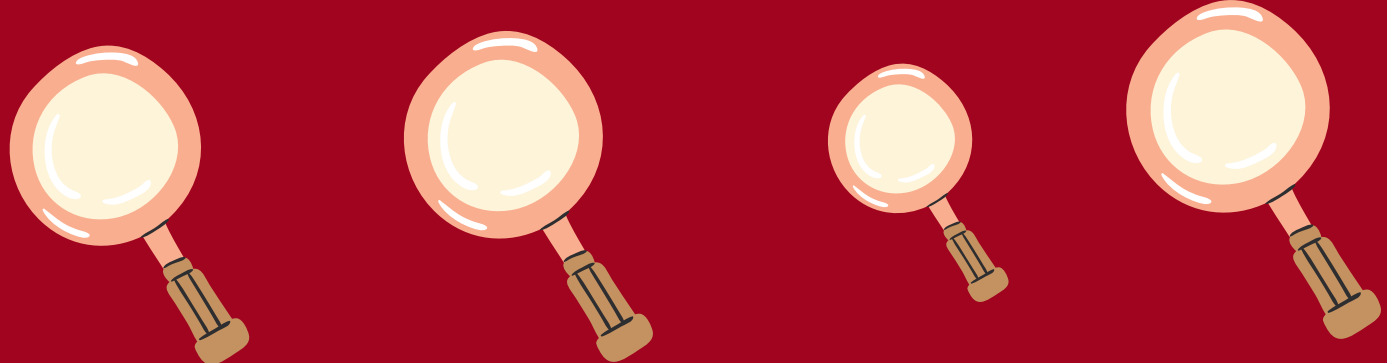


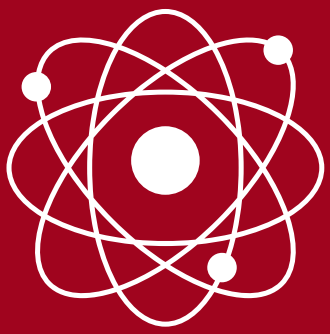
For centuries, the field of Physics has been a purely empirical pursuit, with observations which range from *easy* to merely *possible* to make. While this took imaginative leaps, an era dawned in the latter half of the last century which I would argue elevates it to an Artform. String Theory: an umbrella term; a style hundreds of painters could employ for millions of paintings of the universe; **a collection of models which consider "strings" as the fundamental building-blocks of the universe**.

Note that I do not possess any particular authority; this is merely my opinion. My knowledge comes from a basic 10-lecture series by Prof. Leonard Susskind (a developer of the theory).

In virtually all other areas of Physics, current technology can make empirical verifications, unlike in String Theory, which has no experimental means of investigation. Thus methods other than observing and explaining were employed. One limitation stems from size: even if electrons are made of strings, you still cannot look *inside* an electron for them.

So how did Scientists come up with String Theory? They noticed that some particle interactions (if not all), like the Strong Force, act in ways very similar to strings and decided to explore! But that's just the beginning; next is the prediction of the existence of *26 dimensions* (including time). Relying on equally creative Maths, Theorists realised that strings needed more than three ways to wiggle to resemble real things (like light) so gave them 25 (plus time). Both show the artist's eye for metaphorical connections and their willingness to cross all boundaries for *beauty*.




I would say that unlike the older, linear Physics of 'yes' and 'no', this newer form is more like a puzzle, with pieces from every part of Physics and Maths with a paintbrush for flair; a puzzle which can be arranged into millions of possible ways all equally possible but only one perfect. A particle and its antiparticle meet each other and annihilate; a D-brane is a structure to which string ends are attached. Similarity? Well, if two ends meet, they are no longer ends! They are free to leave our 3-dimensional D-brane slice and wander the 25-dimensional world, "annihilated".

We are in an exciting era of Physics; hopefully its Magnum Opus.

As promised, this is but a glimpse into the layered metaphors which arise from the **Theorists' adoption of the artist's toolkit to compensate for the experimentalists'.**

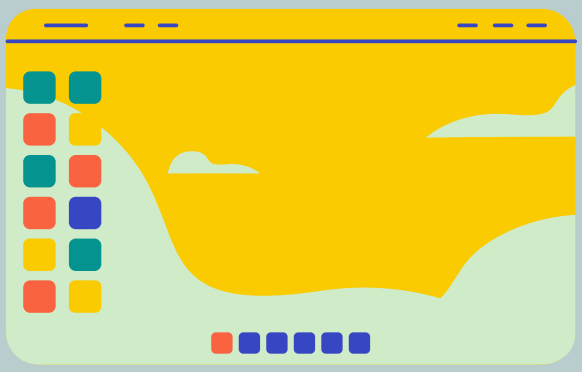
Work Cited

Susskind, Leonard. "Leonard Susskind: String theory and M-theory." YouTube, Stanford University, 22 June 2014, https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL202191442DB1B300.



CHINA GROWING ITS OWN OPERATING SYSTEM?:

DHRUV BEHL IBDP 2





The logo of this new operating system - Credit: It's Fox News

As typical consumers of technology, the majority of us likely utilize the widely popular operating system, Windows, with a significant portion also opting for Mac. However, for those with a more advanced technological mind, another available option is Linux. Recently, China introduced its own operating system, OpenKylin, which is now available for public use. Let us delve deeper into its specifics. So why was it created in the first place? It is common knowledge that China harbours a preference for domestically developed software over Western technologies, in an effort to reduce reliance on foreign entities. This preference served as the driving force behind the development of OpenKylin, the latest addition to China's growing repertoire of homegrown technology. In 2014, China also unveiled a mobile operating system called COS (China Operating System) to decrease the number of Android and iOS users.

CHINA GROWING ITS OWN OPERATING SYSTEM?:

DHRUV BEHL IBDP 2

What is it exactly?

Initially released in 2001, Kylin OS is derived from a Linux-based distribution called FreeBSD. Subsequent versions also incorporated a more user-friendly distribution known as Ubuntu as their foundation. Recently, an open-source version of this operating system was released for general use by the Chinese population. However, it was originally intended for use by government officials and military personnel. The development of OpenKylin involved the contributions of over 4000 developers, 74 Special Interest Groups, and more than 200 Chinese enterprises.



2 A quite nice operating system, looking like a cross between macOS and Windows. Credit: Desde Linux

CHINA GROWING ITS OWN OPERATING SYSTEM?:

DHRUV BEHL IBDP 2

OpenKylin supports the ARM, RISC-V, and x86 architectures, meaning that the vast majority of personal computers manufactured within the past two decades should be capable of running this operating system. By including support for the emerging ARM technology, China appears to be future-proofing OpenKylin in the event that ARM dominates the industry. While OpenKylin can certainly be run on a standard personal computer, it can also be utilized on more specialized devices such as Raspberry Pi, Arduino, HiFive, and other engineering development boards.



3 The range of platforms on which KylinOS can run on. Credit: Aroged

CHINA GROWING ITS OWN OPERATING SYSTEM?:

DHRUV BEHL IBDP 2

Interestingly, macOS is derived from a Unix-like operating system and shares many similarities with Linux systems. One such similarity is the way in which macOS handles multiple windows. Every Linux operating system has a desktop environment, and for macOS, this is called Aqua (if you have a Mac and open "Activity Monitor" to search for "WindowServer," you can see your window manager in action!). While most Linux operating systems use KDE, Plasma, or GNOME as their desktop environment, OpenKylin employs its own independently developed UKUI (Ultimate Kylin User Interface) to handle GUI functionality. The result is a clean and visually appealing interface.



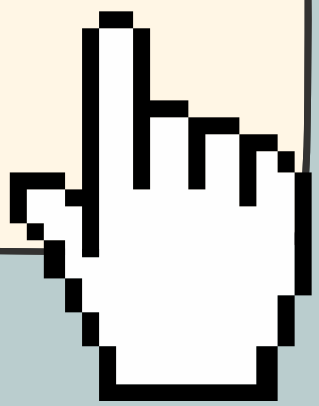
4 An image of KylinOS running on a tablet similar to an iPad. Credit: ARY News

CHINA GROWING ITS OWN OPERATING SYSTEM?:

DHRUV BEHL IBDP 2

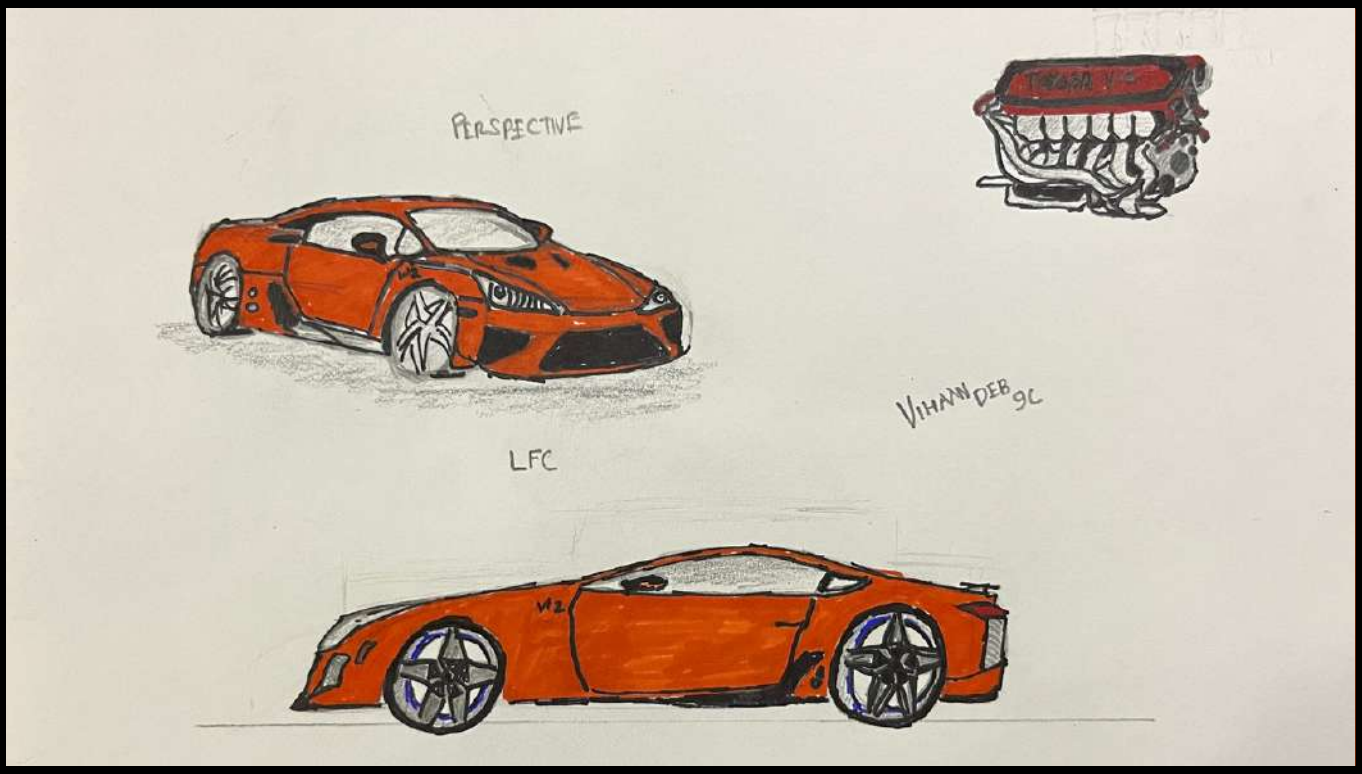
SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US MAC AND WINDOWS USERS?

Not much really. Linux has quite a bad reputation as a daily driver operating system due to its lack of compatibility with many of the applications most of us use on a day to day basis, not the fault of Linux but more so the fault of the developers of the applications *ahmm* Microsoft *ahmm*. As such, due to OpenKylin being based off of Linux, it's not expected to arrive in our hands anytime soon. However, with a growing distaste for mac and windows
emerging on the horizon due to a lack of innovation and lack of privacy, many people have started to consider to switch to Linux, and at the rate that Linux usage is increasing, we might even start seeing the effects of it by tomorrow!



Cars....

art by Vihaan Deb, 10C



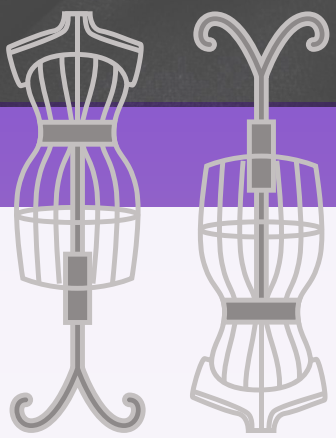
VI



FASHION

The Slow Descent of Wardrobe Oppression

by Haniyyah Katyal , 10C



In the boundless expanse of the world of fashion, society has been the dictator of stereotypical trends and the imprisoner of individuality. Sure, globalization is gradually breaking down the tough wall separating masculinity and femininity emanated through clothes, though how often have you spotted a man donning a blouse and stilettos on the street? Such a gesture is largely viewed as a public statement, when it really is an attribute of oneself.

The conventional idea that pants are for boys and skirts are for girls wasn't rooted in the social construct before the eighteen hundreds. The Post-Vedic Era in India had both men and women wearing "antariyas", gold jewelry and ornate footwear as status symbols. In fact, the intricacy of your clothing was a determining factor of your social rank, discounting of gender. As the next century brought industrialization with it, this former route of fashion deviated immensely. Meekness, elegance and sensitivity were anchored as typical feminine traits, while males took on simplicity, strength and assertiveness. So much so, that any flamboyant garments were deemed unsuitable for men-primarily due to the introduction of business attire and class distinction in society. Thereafter, widespread media representation of cliched standards instilled gender conformities in the audiences, which eventually turned them into norms.

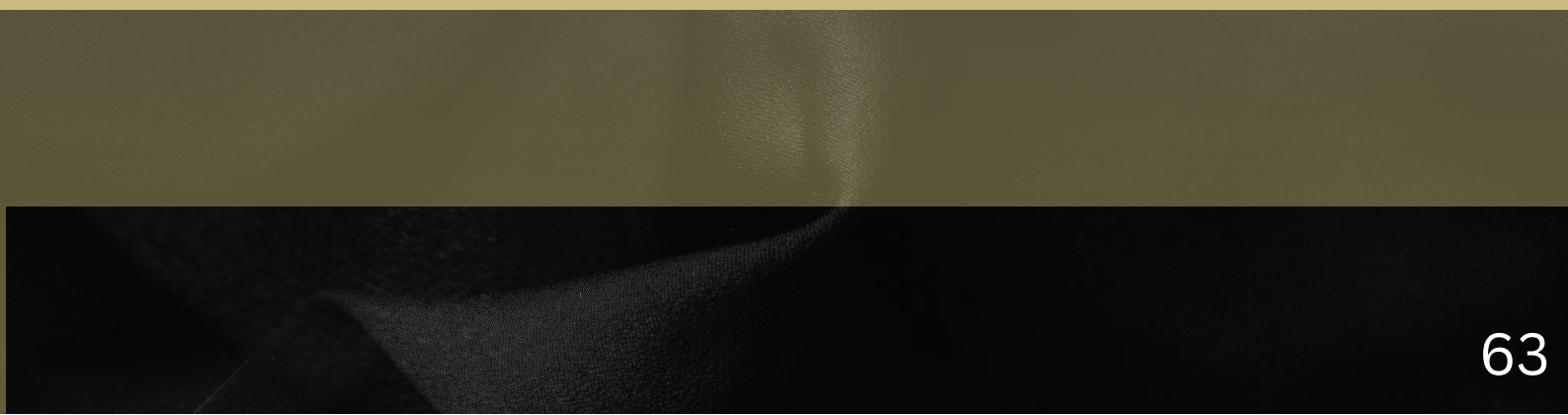
Growing up, boys are constantly made to believe things like "being tough is par for the course" or "you can't wear pink, it's too girly". This frame of thought is a facet of masculinity essentially translating to power and dominance, which is where a cardinal polarity of double standards arises. A man in a dress would easily earn sniggers, foul looks or malignant flak on twitter. But women are lauded for instigating their road to milk and honey in a suit. The well-known idiom of "wearing the pants in the family" is directly attached to command being a masculine characteristic; femininity has been brought down to submission and the character of a follower rather than a leader. Hence, dressing like a girl is esteemed as a loss of authority, almost as if it were an expletive.

Leading lights of pop culture like Harry Styles and Billy Porter have been admired for getting past these standards and dressing under their own discretion. Male models are especially embracing the flexibility of fashion. The London Fashion Week has dispensed the need to separate menswear and womenswear, so have designers in their clothing stores.

The emerging generation is ostensibly in favor of this evolution too. A fashion student in Dubai remarks, “I feel like it's a very positive movement, it shows how humans are evolving to accept people and not discriminate against one's fashion choices. It shows the appreciation of cultural values as well, considering the way Egyptians and Arabians used to face disapproval of their attire. I believe fashion is the portrayal of your inner beauty and I find it impressive how people find joy in expressing that freely.”

Although the revitalization of this concept has been prominent in past few years, the average man, however, would be too ashamed to disturb the norms. Clothes aren't fabricated with the goal of serving a particular gender’s aesthetic, and so they shouldn’t be marketed like they are. They are indescribable, only elucidated by the person who chooses to wear them. The carte blanche and the liberation that make up integral parts of fashion are yet to be unveiled by the entirety of the globe.

Radical indifference is yet to be achieved as a society. Complete revolution is yet on the horizon.



FASHION AND MUSIC: THE ULTIMATE TANGO

How Both Industries Are Interdependent

BY HANIYYAH KATYAL , 10C

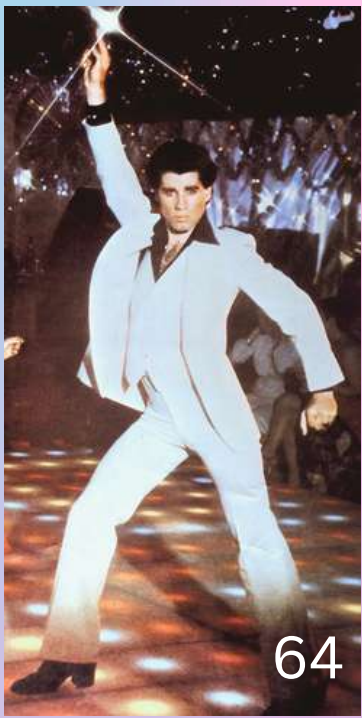
Music is not just limited to sound that makes you want to break into a dance, it has the power to unite individuals, make them feel understood, it's something to bond over. It's a medium we can express ourselves through. But then again, so is fashion, being a true art form that has saturated every aspect of human culture, and a tool for self-empowerment. So where exactly do these two cross paths and to what extent are they interconnected?



On multiple occasions, the two industries have come together, producing the most dynamic visuals in history. I mean, can you really imagine how black and white the world would be without them? The exclusive designs donned by artists in their music videos quickly make their way to being the talk of the fashion industry, setting trends that live on for a long amount of time. There is evidence throuhout history of music's influence on fashion.

THE 1970s: THE DISCO FASHION ERA

Starting off in the 70s, the disco fashion era picked up elements from the 60s and exhibited female and male liberation. This era was built on a dance floor, so it is inevitable that fashion played a vital role in fulfilling the disco experience all while taking care of the venue and music. Together, John Travolta's white three-piece suit from Saturday Night Fever, and Diane Von Furstenberg's wrap dress were definitely the climax of this era. Shoes, furthermore, were just the icing on the cake. Not just women, but men too wouldn't hesitate to put on a pair of chunky high heels. The dance floor was now loud and bizarre, like a replica of Disneyland where anyone could be anything they wanted.



THE 1980s IN BIG AND BOLD



During the 80s, much was happening in the world of music. The pop artist “Prince”, revealed his fierce and adventuresome personality by pushing the boundaries as far as possible. His diverse palette consisted of velvets, purples, golds and the iconic animal print, a signifier of the birth of goth music inspired by deathrock mimicking gloom and shadows.

Amongst the boatload of upcoming designers collaborating with artists, were Christian Lacroix and Drew Bernstein. Lacroix’s designs, on the contrary, were filmy, flirtatious and floaty. His clothes emphasized plentitude and saturation. He dressed big names like Madonna, Rihanna, Sarah Jessica Parker, and the list doesn’t end there. Drew Bernstein founded the Lip Service clothing company in 1985, lured by the spell of glam and deathrock. After having given one of his jackets to the singer Axl Rose from Guns N’ Roses to enrobe, his sales skyrocketed and a significant trend ensued.



THE 1990s: SPEAKING IN RAP BATTLES AND BREAK DANCES

During this era, rap battles and breakdancing became a medium of communication to put across feelings, thoughts and social injustices of the time. Halter-necks, crop tops, jelly shoes and tracksuits became the centerpieces of this subculture. Another exhibit was gangster fashion. Celebrities like Tupac, Snoop Dogg and Diddy were seen showing off double-breasted suits, textured alligator shoes, and silk shirts.

Before diving deep into the world of fashion, Tommy Hilfiger was an aspiring rockstar. After Snoop Dogg was spotted performing at the Saturday Night Live show wearing a red, blue and white rugby shirt, everyone wanted one, including the most influential stars in the R&B and pop industry. That marked him as one of the first to create an uncontrolled promotion in the golden era of hip-hop. Usher, Gwen Steffani, T.L.C and Destiny’s Child were a few of the many artists he dressed.



PRESENT DAY

Fast-forwarding to decades later, music artists continue to strongly influence the fashion industry and have a more significant impact on the “snazzy and chic” generational style . Constantly cosigning labels, and brand deals and building their own clothing lines, they have a hold over fashion like never before.



Beginning in 2010, popular artists like Drake, Rihanna and Kanye west heavily impacted what’s trending and what isn’t. At present, it’s hard to spot a well-known artist without a brand deal or endorsement. For instance, Kanye West, the rapper and owner of Yeezy, a brand that has altered the course of streetwear as we know it today. Even though rap music considerably affects fashion, other genres are no less. For instance, Billie Eilish is creating her own definition of style. With her baggy outfits and neon beanies, she has individuals across the globe wearing t-shirts with her name and face all over them. Now that’s what you call heavy influence. Rihanna also has a cosmetics brand called Fenty Beauty that was established in 2017.

All these creators have myriads of fans and followers with figures going up to millions. Their fans certainly do not miss a chance to sport garments designed by brands owned by their favorite celebrities. Hence forming a trend that impacts the fashion industry as a whole.

One influences the other and vice versa, giving way to a never-ending shift of trends. Music is an ever-changing animal that mirrors fashion in numerous ways, and without the firm rapport these two industries have with each other, entertainment would cease to exist.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

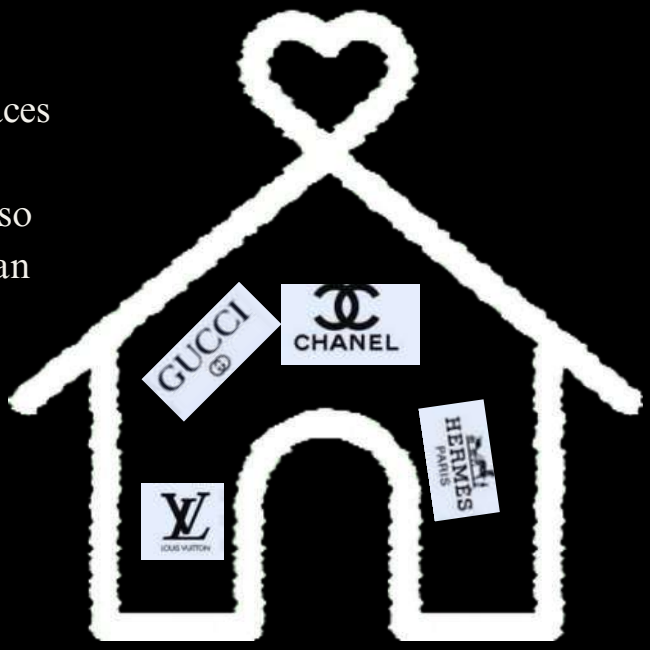
- https://www.numeromag.nl/how-music-influenced-the-fashion-industry-from-the-60s-till-today/#:~:text=Music%20has%20been%20associated%20with,influence%20fashion%20unlike%20ever%20before
- fashinza.com/textile/tips-for-fashion-brands/10-reasons-how-the-music-industry-influences-the-fashion-industry/
- https://www.thomann.de/blog/en/fashion-and-music-a-strong-connection/

IMAGE CREDITS

- https://www.wsj.com/articles/from-rihanna-to-kanye-west-why-musics-biggest-stars-arent-focused-on-actual-music-11595466000
- https://www.billboard.com/music/features/tommy-hilfiger-hip-hop-relationship-7677920/
- https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2012/aug/06/john-travolta-white-suit-v-and-a
- https://ew.com/gallery/prince-fashion-photos/
- https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/spring-1988-couture/christian-lacroix

LEADING FASHION HOUSES
AND THEIR INFLUENCE

BY PARI KRIPLANI, 10C



Each year in the fashion industry, a new trend surfaces becoming a straw that stirs the drink of revolution. A revolution that not only tosses out the old, but also embraces the new. Fashion is not just clothing, it's an art, a passion that creates a dream and designs a vision for life. Although, what is the creation without the creator? Art without the artist? The fashion without the designer? Like pieces of a puzzle, fashion and the designer just fit. Plenty of designers change fashion, with a cutting-edge hemline or a much-replicated outfit, but few have influenced the industry this monumentally.

From bending and testing the laws of fashion to achieving the unachievable, these designers really have done it all and it certainly hasn't been a walk in the park. To name a few, Gianni Versace would definitely be on top of the list in bold, just like his statement-making designs.

> **Fashion is entertainment.** ”

Everyone knows that now and Gianni Versace made sure of it. That is what Versace did. He blew the cobwebs off haute couture, added a much-needed plethora of colours and cranked up the volume, transforming clothes into Pop.

Versace's creativity, efficient use of resources and his precisely calculated risk- taking are exactly what led him to become a pioneer in the fashion industry, influencing a multitude of individuals. Not just fashion designers and celebrities, but also visual artists, graphic designers, creators and the list goes on. In fact, Versace designs have been featured at the Victoria & Albert Museum, New York Museum, Museo del Traje, Madrid, and many more. He was among the first to fully recognize the true potential of models and their hold over the industry.

From square one, Versace has been all about challenging snobbery. His dresses were definitely not created along the lines of the rulebook, further proved by their unrestrained print, lavish glitz, or excessive display of bare skin. The colours celebrated the exuberance of fashion at street level and put it on the runway for the first time. Saying that Gianni Versace carved the path for international fashion with his keen eye for authenticity and his bravado, would not be a stretch. By tearing down barriers, he undoubtedly made his mark in history and incomparably impacted the future in fashion. When it comes to being the most influential female fashion designer, Coco Chanel certainly takes home the cake.

> **In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different.**
>
> **- Coco Chanel** ”

The name Coco Chanel is often associated with fashion, simplicity and elegance. But how did she pave her way to becoming one of the most impactful designers in fashion history? It is no surprise that she did innumerable things differently in the fashion industry and had a colossal impact on women's rights. She influenced fashion forever with her fusion of women and men's wear, after she introduced pants that were inspired by her love for horse riding.

Coco Chanel created her revolutionary clothing line with the 'working woman' in consideration. After she freed women from confining corsets there was no stepping back. Her sophisticatedly simple designs pushed women to discard complicated and bothersome clothes like the 19 th century petticoats and corsets.







Her creations highlight comfort and effortlessness reflecting her fashion belief that caused a significant breakthrough for the industry, changing it forever. This is visible in her iconic 'little black dress' that in today's world is seen as an essential in every wardrobe.

"A woman that does not wear perfume, is a woman without a future" was also rightly said by Coco Chanel and exhibited by her best known fragrance, Chanel No.5. She has made many other contributions to the fashion world, such as costume jewellery and the quilted purse, all of which helped her get to the top of the ladder.

To wrap it all up, let's end with probably the most misunderstood one on the list, none other than the creator of the most famous American fashion house : Calvin Klein. Though the name Calvin Klein may conjure up visions of a young male model in white boxers or jeans, the designer's footprint in fashion is much greater than that. He's known for founding a brand based on American minimalism in fashion that is truly an example of the phrase "Less is more".

Remarkably affecting everything starting from the popular grunge and hip hop era of the 1980s to minimalist evening fashion and women's wear in the current day. His very first creations demonstrated how underestimated simplicity was along with the contradiction and reward of restraint in simple dressing. His effect is also mirrored in the greater parts of the fashion pyramid as he transformed controlled minimalism into wonderfully uncomplicated silk slip dresses worn with lipstick and heels to multiple occasions including the Oscars. His casual style brought America to equal footing with Paris. The man behind the designer jeans craze of the 1970s, Calvin Klein has indeed built a fashion empire.

Ultimately, these fashion houses evidently dominate the industry, being the original trendsetters and creating footsteps for the future generations of designers to follow in. They sowed the seeds fashion needed in order to flourish, spread out its branches and bloom into the multi-billion dollar industry we know it is today.

IMAGE CREDITS:

- https://www.lifestyleasia.com/ind/style/fashion/how-coco-chanel-revolutionised-womens-fashion-with-just-a-jacket/
- https://blog.makersvalley.net/history-of-the-little-black-dress

VIVIENNE WESTWOOD: A PUNK PIONEER

by Anushka Sriram, 10C



Vivienne Westwood passed away peacefully at her home in Clapham, London on 29th December 2022 at age 81. Widely recognized as a punk icon and the messiah of the new punk movement, Vivienne breathed life into cliched trends and defined 'in vogue'.



Born Vivienne Swire in a small village– Tintwistle– in Cheshire, she had fashion dreams from the start. At the University of Westminster, Swire pursued a course on jewelry and silversmithing. However, she soon dropped it, claiming the art world was not for her. As she took on other jobs she continued making her own jewelry. In 1962, she married Derek Westwood and received her memorable surname.

After a divorce and remarriage to Malcolm McLaren, Vivienne and Malcolm opened a shop together. The shop quickly grew into a meeting area for the early London punk scene. This is where she flourished, skyrocketing to fame with her provoking and contentious clothing. Ripped shirts, safety pins, political and provocative slogans - she was unafraid to challenge the norms of fashion. A rebel in the truest sense.



Vivienne inspired the style of punk icons often enough too. Viv Albertine wrote in her memoir that "Vivienne and Malcolm use clothes to shock, irritate and provoke a reaction but also to inspire change. They conveyed that it's okay to not be perfect, to show the workings of your life and your mind in your songs and your clothes."

Westwood's first runway show, in 1981, for her Pirates collection, was a cardinal step in the punk rebel becoming one of the fashion world's most revered stars. Despite the newfound fame she accumulated, Vivienne was adamant about remaining ever-changing and constantly inventing. She seamlessly melded punk and haute couture, creating a whole new niche of fashion. When the scandalous graphic tees became old, she moved on to devising the mini crini and more traditionally feminine clothes.



Westwood was additionally known to be quite the activist. In spite of the industry she was in (which was infamous for profiting off of sweatshops and unethical ways of producing clothes), she never budged on her beliefs. All her collections and items were ethically manufactured in Kenya and proudly said so on the tag.

From calling Margaret Thatcher a "once punk" to creating t-shirts with the phrase 'i am not a terrorist, please don't arrest me' inscribed on them to protest the unlawful treatment of prisoners, Westwood believed in expressing her opinion. "We can only take democracy for granted if we insist on our liberty", she declared. Though perhaps the biggest cause Vivienne stood for was climate change.

In an era where the pleas of scientists were ignored, Westwood donated and contributed to plenty of climate change funds, actively spoke out, and collaborated with people on the harmful impact caused. A huge focus in her life was creating sustainable reused clothing and encouraging other designers to do so.

In fact, she didn't even like people purchasing her collections: she vehemently expressed her dislike for consumerism and conspicuous consumption. She was contradictory in a lot of ways. While she won several awards from the British Empire, she constantly showed up to receive them in outrageous pieces, grinning at the paparazzi.

Ultimately, it is fearless, appalling women like Vivienne Westwood who dare to dream, who dare to invent, and dare to challenge. An irreplaceable figure in the fashion industry, her presence will be missed by many. She is survived by her second husband and two sons.

Bibliography: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vivienne_Westwood] [https://www.thehindu.com/life-and-style/fashion/vivienne-westwood-influential-fashion-maverick-dies-at-81/article66323687.ece]
Image credits: [https://www.anothermag.com/fashion-beauty/3216/malcolm-mclaren-the-definitive-punk-visionary
[https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/features/westwood-bound-dame-vivienne-s-family-album-780620.html]
[https://www.vogue.com/article/the-pirate-look-in-fashion-1981-2021]

VII

SOCIETY & CULTURE

Cultural Commentary

Heroes: navigating heroism

by Haniyyah Katyal, 10C

Whether actual or imagined, history has weaved a myriad of heroic figures onto its allegorical song and dance. Upon hearing the word “hero”, a lover of myths might think of the ancient Greeks, with the raging and unforgiving Achilles, the rebels of Theseus, Odysseus's shrewd art of war or the incredibly resilient Heracles. All of these were flawed humans, as well as of divine ability, but together they constructed perhaps the most violent account of bravery, especially considering the dramatized circumstances and extreme bloodshed that brought it to life. In doing so, they defied the perfect moral compass of a conventional modern-day hero.

If a hero was to be a savior of mankind; the heaven-sent gift for all, heads would probably turn towards the beloved Percy Jackson and Superman, or patriotic figures like Mahatma Gandhi and social activists like Malala Youzafsai, each of whom have brimmed with courage and an overwhelming sense of selflessness, all while undoubtedly surpassing the Greek heroes in the race of humility. Some would argue that cinematic heroes are interchangeable, and it is true that a bunch of astounding CGI effects can easily subdue the endurance and fortitude that real-time warriors experience in the most genuine, rawest form. Sometimes, we lose ourselves in the glamour of the big screen’s depiction of the big-hearted which organically sets back the heroes' humanity has in the flesh.

Heroism in its most authentic essence exists without an ulterior motive-it is one-way and purely for the sake of others. Bravery is not limited to warfare and schemes. From saving the entire world to scurrying a child away from a highway car and everything in between, these actions require true empathy and an unrelenting desire to satisfy a moral code of conduct. A common misconception suggests that all heroes are larger than life, invincible, not to mention muscular and fit as a fiddle-an idea only strengthened by most of mainstream action, and even romances that generate and elevate this narrative time and time again.

In all actuality, everyone’s definition of a hero is variable. To Fred Rogers, a hero is “anyone who does anything to help a child in his life”, and “an ordinary person who makes themselves extraordinary” to Gerard Way. With each inhalation, soldiers out there on the national borders determinedly shield every one of us with immeasurable love and grace. So, it may be that a hero would be someone who’s ready to “die for something”, gaining victory over “cowardly self-preservation" as per J.R.R Tolkien's writings.

The levels of abstinence throughout the mentioned examples greatly differs, but it safe to say that a hero need not jump over skyscrapers, take down a couple goons, be a mastermind or fall a truck with bare hands. There is no hard and fast rule of gymnasium in the air over eyes hid behind a famed mask.

In today's time, it could be as simple as the act of honesty against social backlash or any other retaliation. Taming unproductive impulses or conquering one self's internal turmoil is all the more applicable to the same. Even a businessman, who wouldn't be one without risking a fortune. With this definition of bravery, you could walk through a bustling market and each face would be heroic.

Heroes are distinct and common, mysterious and effortless. The epitome of nobility, the innate tendency of sacrifice, and the persistence of will power. A mother to her little girl, a mentor to a tireless dancer, a doctor to a relived patient. The lionhearted are produced through a mixture of the brilliant and the bad, without which the human population won't be human anymore, with the painstaking constant of colorless and eternal dullness.

Princess Qajar: A Testimonial To The Deceptions Of The Internet

by Aaditya Sawant, IBDP-2

The internet is as deceptive as something could be. There are many revelations that occur way after something or someone that was wrongly interpreted or misunderstood, becomes 'viral' on the internet. Such viral media is widely discussed on the internet, often made fun of in the form of 'memes'. A meme, though a very commonly used word, is defined by the Oxford dictionary as an image, video or piece of text, typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by Internet users, often with slight variations. In most cases, memes don't affect the dignity of an individual. Still, there have been numerous public figures who have mocked on the internet through memes based on misinformation or inspired by propaganda. Such memes cause controversies as well as add to the lustre of the misleading and unreliable nature of the internet.

Princess Qajar, as she is wrongly referred to on the internet, is an individual who has her dignity attacked and manipulated, for nearly a decade. You too, must have come across a meme that alleges this public figure of being the reason why thirteen men gave up their lives. Apparently, as these memes suggest, the bearded princess was a symbol of beauty in the kingdom of Persia, whose rejection to the proposals of marriage proffered by thirteen men, compelled them to go as far as ending their lives. This sounds bizarre, because accepting a bearded woman as a symbol of beauty contradicts the modern definition of a beautiful woman. She has been heavily trolled for the same and rude and disdainful comments are made about her personality and appearance, even to this day. When I spotted one such meme on my Instagram feed, I was adamant to learn more about this personality and thus turned out to be a queer fish amidst the harsh lot that made fun of the queen in the comments section.



Firstly, the pictures of Princess Qajar feature not one individual but two Persian princesses, falsely claimed as one individual. They were the daughters of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, ruler of the Qajar Dynasty, who in reality, led way colourful lives as opposed to the mundane lives assumed by the memes. The reason why so many pictures of the two are available is because the King had an obsession with photography and clicked pictures of Persia, the royal family and also his cat named Babri Khan. Princess Fatemeh Khanum Esmat al-Dowleh, was the second daughter of the king while Princess Zahra Khanum Taj al-Saltaneh was the twelfth daughter. Both of them were married at a very young age and so the chances of thirteen suitors having proposed them for their hand in marriage sounds dubious. The older princess led an artistic life for she studied embroidery under a French tutor, learnt to play the piano and hosted European wives of the diplomats who paid a visit to their country. On the other hand, the younger princess was a radical feminist who sought feminism in Persia. She divorced two husbands and earnestly advocated women's rights. She made use of her writing prowess and wrote a book on her ideologies named Crowning Anguish: Memoirs of a Persian Princess from the Harem to Modernity. Undoubtedly, both the royal women lived up to their royal titles and are timeless examples of ardent feminists.

The posts simply mock the royal duo because of their outward appearances. They blatantly neglect the other aspects of their extraordinary lives. Nevertheless, the memes surprisingly get only one thing right about the two princesses- the fact that bearded women were beautiful in Persia.

Photo Credits: http://www.qajarwomen.org/en/

Cajole and Correct: Aaditya Sawant (IBDP 2)

Correcting our loved ones is something we all do. Preventing someone from deviating from the right path and enlightening them about the right path is a moral obligation—moreover when the need to correct our loved ones arises. However, things usually turn ugly when we are not able to help the receiver of our feedback, who does not grasp the gamut of what we try to convey. Our very words of care can often end up antagonizing our loved ones and in extreme cases, hamper our relationships with them. Personally, I have witnessed countless incidents wherein, good feedback causes more harm than not speaking about improvisation at all. I have concluded that to correct our loved ones is a herculean task and requires us to keep a few things in mind before committing this moral obligation.

//The Wielding of Words//

We shall always be precarious about the words we choose to bestow upon our loved ones for correction. This is because our speech may end up becoming the foundation of the pillars of the bridge that succours in separating us. WORDS and SWORD are two words that comprise the same letters and can be used interchangeably for the sole purpose of—destruction. Our words, just like swords, can very easily ruin our personal relationships. Under the influence of an emotional mind, it is very easy to douche a few harsh words and crude statements. It may be unintentionally done but transforms into a scar in the relationship eventually. Therefore, it is very essential to think twice before uttering words of advice.

//On the Receiving End//

It may happen that our very parents make use of very unkind words in an attempt to correct us. Comparisons and mockery may ensue. This could even break the hearts of those with brassy bosoms because our parents are the dearest ones to us (in most cases). We may be disheartened and demoralised to an enormous extent. Yes,parents can be wrong in their thoughtless choice and use of words. Still, there is a ray of hope for the relationship to sustain if the receiver of the advice acts in a mutually-favourable manner.

We are not always the advisors however. Sometimes, we may find it very difficult to accept hurtful comments from a loved one which could have been wrongly voiced suggestions. The words may come as an initial blow but contemplation about the actions of the person may either break or improve the relationship—it is up to the receiver.



Her rights or ours?: Kyra Narain (9B)

The world is in turmoil as the United States of America supreme court, has decided to abolish Roe v. Wade. The news has sent shockwaves across the globe, as protestors take to the street. There are the ones who are celebrating the Supreme Court's decision, while most disagree. The Senate faces constant backlash which they have been unsuccessful in responding to. While the question constantly remains, why are women being refused their fundamental reproductive rights?

This decision was expected due to the leaked document back in May, which nevertheless did not lessen the blow. What started in Texas in 1970 as a challenge opposing a law that banned any kind of abortion unless the mother's life was in danger, has resurfaced as a larger problem. Norma McCorvey under the name of Jane Roe, brought a lawsuit, challenging Henry Wade, a district attorney from Dallas County. She was a single mother and pregnant at that time and wanted to terminate her pregnancy.



Her rights or ours?: Kyra Narain (9B)

She could not afford to travel outside Texas and it would be illegal for her to have an abortion. Her lawsuit said that this law violated her right to privacy, which was supposed to be protected by the First, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth and Fourteenth Amendments and sued on “behalf of all women”.The case reached the supreme court and in 1973 the Supreme court ruled that during the First trimester of pregnancy, a woman had the right to an abortion “free of interference by the state”.

After nearly 50 years of having this right, it’s amazing how suddenly it has been taken away. A draft of the document, which was circulated among the justices was leaked in May. The decision to finally abolish the constitutional right to abortion was released in June. The reaction from the public clearly showed how out of line the Supreme court actually was. From coast to coast people gathered to participate in protests against the new decision. The right to women's bodies was being taken away from them. Regardless of the religious beliefs that certain groups including some of the Justices had, it is entirely unreasonable to force someone else to live by your religions and morals. Abortion should be a right of every woman who has been sexually assaulted, who could die giving birth due to her child’s condition, who does not want to bring a child into poverty and who is not emotionally, physically or financially ready enough to have a child. Every woman should have the right to an abortion, simply because she wants one.

Devotion to the Lord

art and caption by Sindhuja Venkatraman, IBDP-2







I am no artist, but I enjoy drawing and colouring silhouettes of the Gods I worship, using reference artworks online. The full, but dark figure of the Lord tells me that I don't have to define Him. His form is merely an aid to understand Him - a stepping stone to reach Him. The energy He radiates (the coloured concentric circles) are the power many worship. The power that protects and heals many. The power that I believe in. Representing this idea through virtual art is one of the many ways I enjoy expressing my devotion to the Lord.

VIII

Ecology

Red Pandas

Nahush Tirumala, IBDP-2



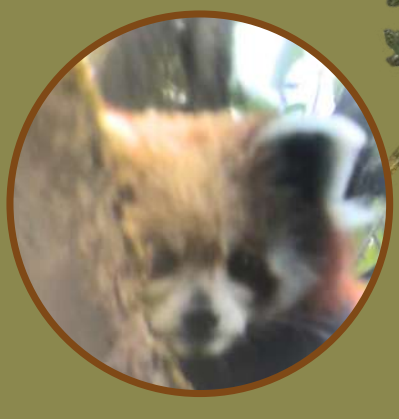
The red panda, also known as fire fox, is an endangered species that is native to parts of china and the eastern himalayas. The Singalila national park, a national park in the darjeeling district of west bengal at an altitude of more than 2300 meters above sea level, heavily protected by the Indian and Nepali military, is teeming with pulchritudinous biodiversity and a major habitat for the ever elusive red panda. The Singalila national park is estimated to have around 40 overall red pandas in the wild. It is also estimated that there are less than 10,000 red pandas left in the wild in total.

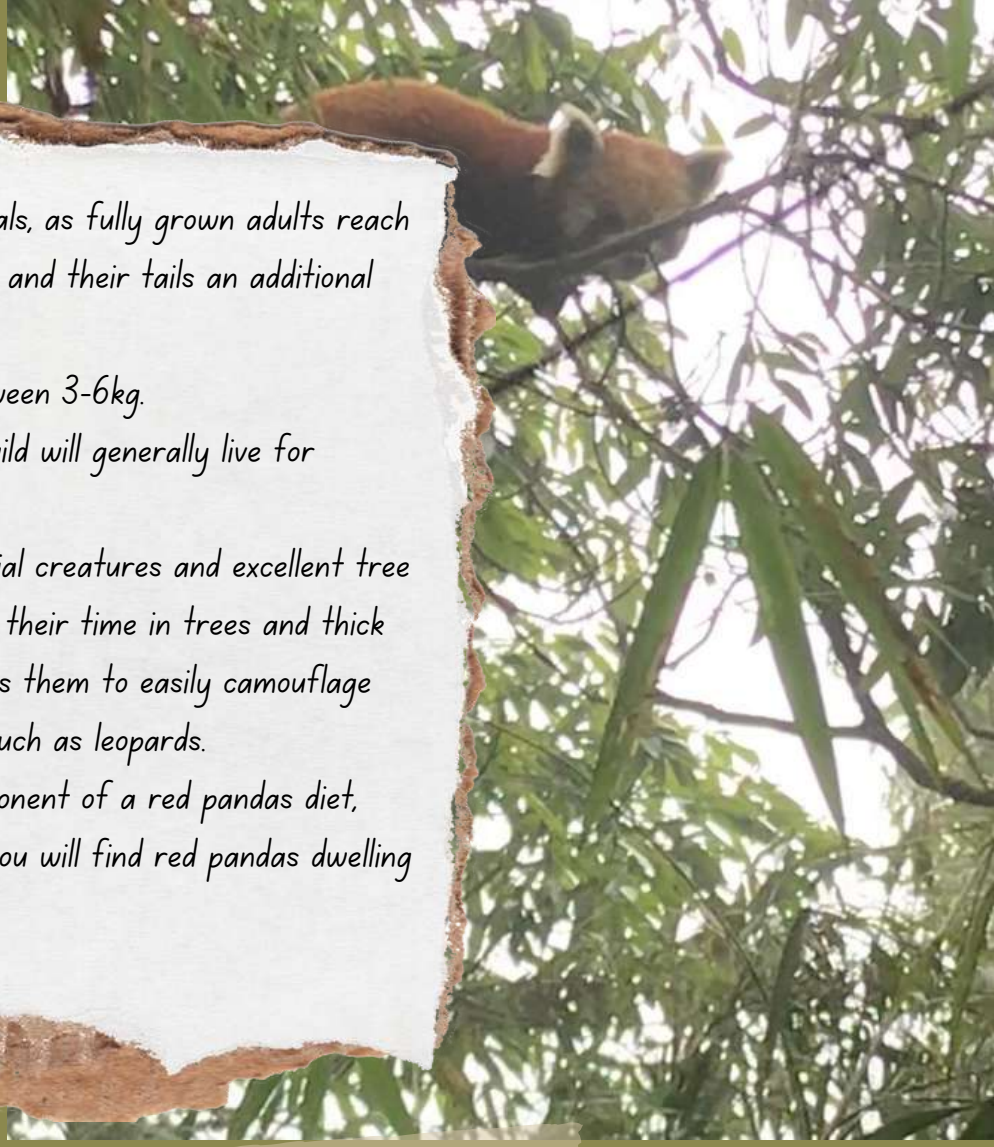
In April, I was fortunate enough to be offered the opportunity to visit Singalila national park and embark on a red panda expedition to try and find the magnificent ailurus fulgens in its natural bamboo filled habitat and view it in all its glory. Here's what I learnt:





Red pandas are critically endangered and are in desperate need of our help and cooperation to ensure they don't go extinct in the next few years, as red panda numbers are dropping at an alarming rate. During my time in the Himalayas, I noticed huge heaps of trash discarded thoughtlessly, blatantly ruining the biodiversity of such an enigmatic place. The least we as responsible citizens could do is spread awareness and educate people living in small settlements such as the ones in the Himalayas that don't understand much about conserving biodiversity and coexisting with beautiful animals such as the red panda. we should also take efforts in spreading awareness against the poaching and trafficking of these animals, because these are two of the leading causes of their exponential decrease in numbers. Red pandas are only one species, but every single species that shares our earth with us is getting negatively effected every day because of our actions. We must take efforts to learn how to coexist with these animals, and especially keep out of their already depleted habitats. Not just for red pandas, but for all the 8.7 million species of animals on this globe, because animals are beautiful people.





- Red pandas are small mammals, as fully grown adults reach up to 20-25 inches in length, and their tails an additional 10-20 inches.
- They weigh anywhere in between 3-6kg.
- A healthy red panda in the wild will generally live for around 7-12 years.
- Red pandas are mainly arborial creatures and excellent tree climbers. they spend most of their time in trees and thick bamboo vegetation. This allows them to easily camouflage and escape from predators such as leopards.
- Bamboo is also a major component of a red pandas diet, hence more often than not you will find red pandas dwelling in dense bamboo thickets.

Red pandas are extremely shy creatures and don't come out of their bamboo thickets very often, which makes them incredibly hard to spot. The rare lucky tourist will get to see a panda basking in the sun on a tree branch early in the morning to dry the dew drops that cling onto their fur during the nights. Once the sun fully rises they vanish back into the depths of the thickets. Red pandas almost always prefer to live a life of solitude. The cubs stay with their mother till they're about 1 year old, which is when they've approximately fully grown. Red pandas mate once a year, and mate with multiple partners throughout their life. These animals however rarely interact with each other apart from mating season, which is around early winter. Once mated, the male red panda has nothing to do with the female or its young.

Wildlife photography: Anokkhi Shah (IBDP-2)

One of the many ways I get to interact with animals in their natural habitat is through wildlife photography. I began photographing wildlife when I was ten years old, and I've been doing it ever since. It's impossible to duplicate the sensation of being on a jungle safari, surrounded by lush green trees, melodic bird chirps, roars of tigers, and merely the feel of the wind on my face. These images were captured at India's Maharashtra state's Tadoba-Andhari National Park. These creatures belong in the forest, where they are most at home. Zoos and private backyards are not the ideal place to keep such rare and threatened species of animals because doing so amounts to animal mistreatment. I hope this motivates people to take pleasure in spotting and tracking animals in the jungle because that is the responsible and appropriate way to do it.

Photos!









Mushrooms and why they scare me

by Jiya Kher, IBDP-2

Mushrooms are enigmatic organisms, belonging to the kingdom Fungi. These little things possess a multitude of intriguing qualities that make them both terrifying and insanely cool even to people who know little about them. One of the most remarkable aspects of mushrooms is their adaptability. They thrive in a diverse range of environments, from dense forests to decaying logs, and even in the lightless bowels of caves. When I say anywhere, I mean anywhere. This adaptability has led to the evolution of incredible mushroom species that possess awe-inspiring attributes. Consider mushrooms with the trait of bioluminescence, which, through the activation of a chemical called luciferin, emit a haunting blue glow in the darkness. Bioluminescence is just one otherworldly spectacle that is as beautiful as it is ghostly, really.

While many mushrooms are harmless or even edible, a number of species produce toxic compounds, making them almost lethal if consumed. But some others produce life saving substances. They are neither plants, nor animals, nor something in between: purely making them unable to categorize. Some are so closely related to humans by way of genetics that if a human consumes them, they have an allergic reaction with their own body. The mushrooms may look unassuming, but the names Destroying Angel and Death Cap start to make sense now.

Not only that, mushrooms are after your mind. Certain species contain psychoactive compounds like psilocybin, resulting in hallucinogenic experiences. In addition, from the compounds they produce, they can literally take control of your mind. The Cordyceps fungus, for instance, infect insects and take control of their bodies, ultimately leading to a grotesque and terrifying transformation. They basically zombify them to the point where the boundary between being alive and dead is blurred because the motor functions of the insect are still somehow controlled by the fungus. No Cordyceps risotto for me.

Mushrooms are extraordinary organisms, captivating our senses with their biodiversity and seriously freaky properties. From their adaptability and breathtaking beauty to their deadly toxicity and mind-altering effects, mushrooms embody a side of nature that is so unabashedly free and wild that it can't be explained; only admired. But they still scare me.



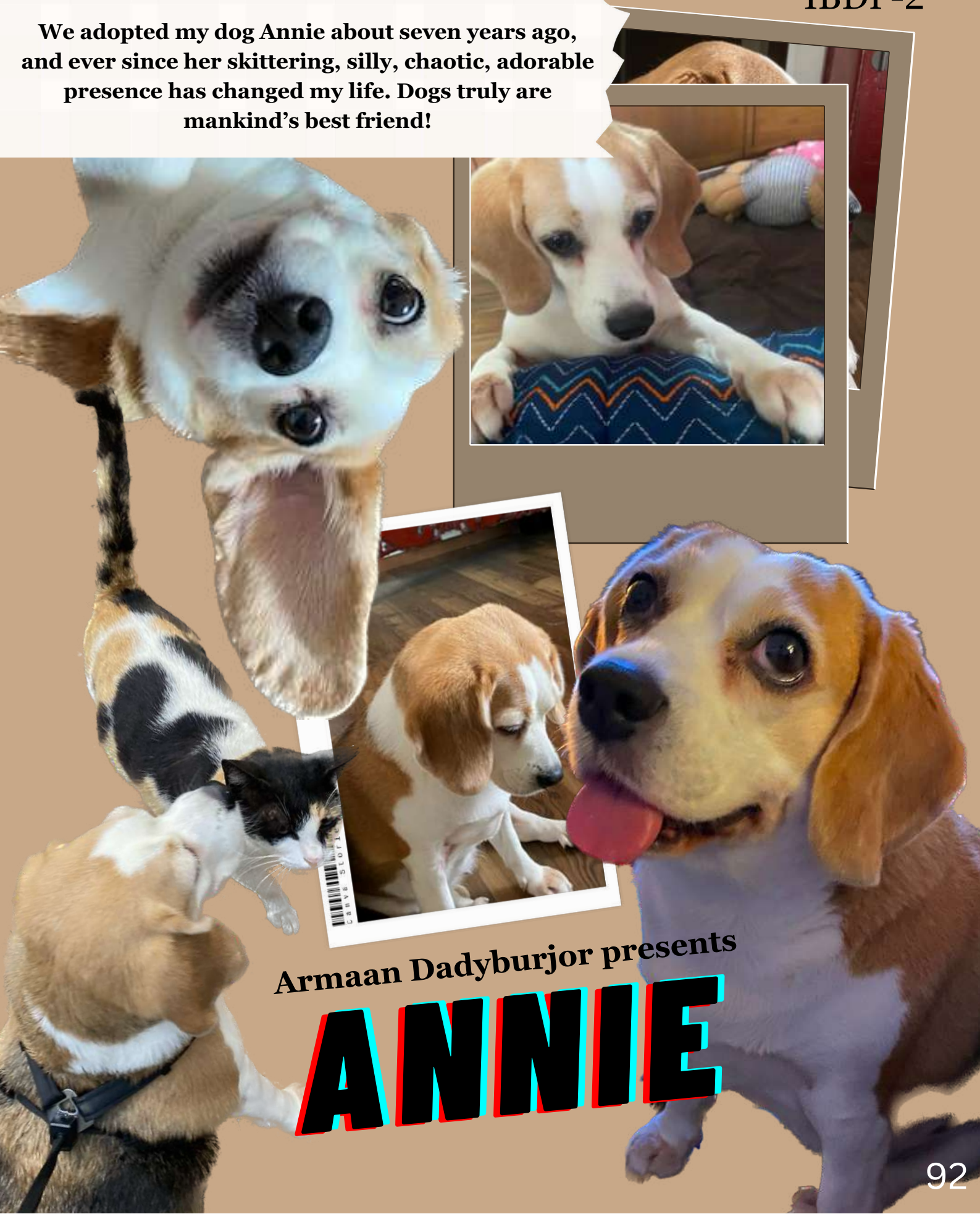
IX

PETS

Meet our adorable pets!

IBDP-2

We adopted my dog Annie about seven years ago, and ever since her skittering, silly, chaotic, adorable presence has changed my life. Dogs truly are mankind's best friend!



Armaan Dadyburjor presents

ANNIE

Meet Ginger, the cutest ginger cat I met seven years ago. When I first met this shy stray, he managed to steal my heart with his adorable charm. As time passed, Ginger transformed into a confident and loving friend. It's heartwarming to see how far he's come, yet he still retains that adorable fear of mice.

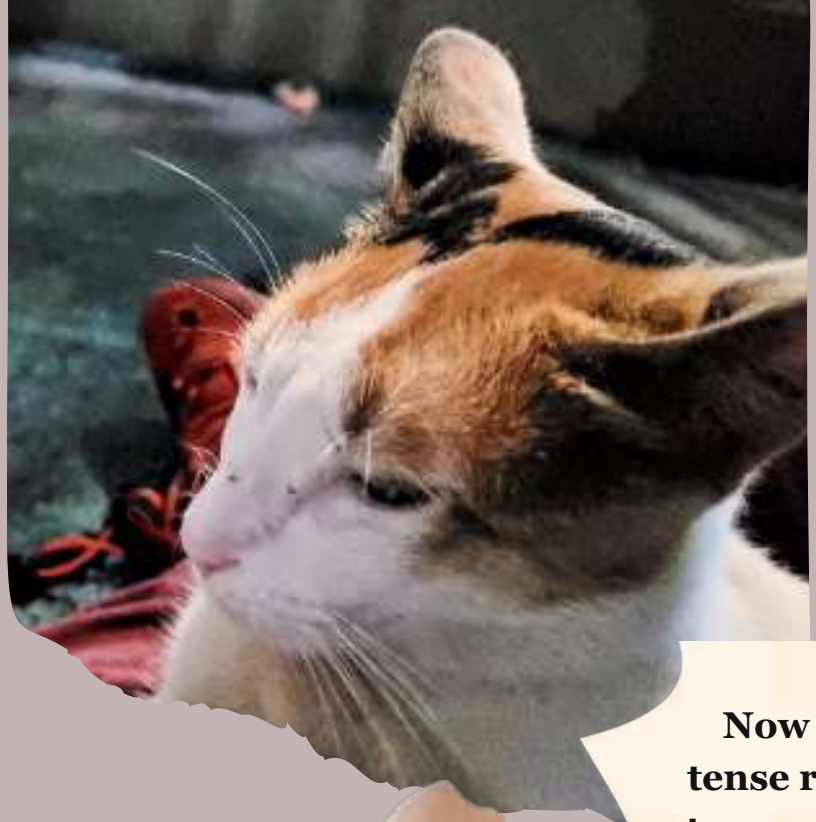






Aashrita Narayan presents

GINGER



Now this cat and I have had extremely tense relations, while she was the first cat to scratch me and hiss at me, she was also the only cat that found comfort in me. Here are a few adorable pictures I found, wherein the cat is napping and playing on my lap



Taksheel Patel presents

PSPS



Sol!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Meet Sol! He's nervous like 98% of the time due to him being a rescue puppy, but he is so, so lovable. He loves food more than anything and probably would sell me for a good biscuit if he had any concept of currency. The only problem is: He thinks everything is food. I cannot tell you how many times I have to say my dog ate my homework because he will chew on anything and everything thinking it's a treat.

He's also very fluffy for an indie dog, and he's just a puppy so half his fur hasn't even grown out yet. He's great to pet and he jumps around near constantly. We love him loads!







Jiya Kher presents

SOL









Kyle Henriques
presents

DUKE, STELLA, TING TANG, LYKA, PANDA, ZORO, ZUES, CHAMP'

Sharing a singular brain cell Cookie and Kiara are 2 pups at heart. Enjoying their walkies thrice daily they fulfil the Labrador stereotype by stopping at every person that walks by with the hope of being pet, and always looking forward to their next meal. One tiny and one larger, the younger and the elder, the doggos have bonded through as sisters.





Miron Mistry
presents

KIARA AND COOKIE


X
SPORTS

FOOTBALL

TAKSHEEL PATEL IBDP2



I am a left back at Feugo Tormento, and I've been playing football for as long as I can remember. Through my journey, I have realised that football is mainly a game of passing and patience. 90% of the game relies on your ability to scan the field and make crucial passes. Dribbling and shooting are just tools used to help you score. It was noticed that most successful dribbles take place when you have open space, and no one is free for a pass.

Furthermore, dribbling doesn't need flair or fancy skills to be successful. A simple hesitation or faint is enough to do the job and give you the opening you need without using up too much stamina. Here is me performing a cut-back in order to lose my defender and pass it to an open player. Holding the ball for too long while dribbling makes it easier for defenders to catch up and intercept. So, why not give simple dribbling without holding onto the ball for too long a try? The results will shock you!

FOOTBALL

VISHESH AGARWAL
IBDP 1





I play football competitively for my club Mumbai Royals, I joined this club in the midst of 2022 and never looked back. I started playing football during covid and fell in love with the game, I then joined a club with which I played for 1 year and then I switched to another then finally to Mumbai Royals. I love playing football as the game has a lot of competition and that's what drives me and there is a lot of thrill in the game. I had played a lot of leagues and tournaments with my club and it has been a great journey. All the tournaments kept getting harder which helped me improve and grow, football also helped me develop as a person as it made me more communicative and improved my leadership qualities.









CRICKET

FARISH PRADHAN IBDP 2

For me cricket is more than just a sport. It is the only thing for me which comes really close to explaining life. Sometimes, when your day is going bad, you just need to bat till lunch. And in the second session when the sun comes out the runs flow. Sometimes you need to leave all stumps in the open, open your guard to make achieve something more. And you can never lose in one day, it requires a 5 day consistent effort and sometimes the best thing you can get from life is a draw.





Kickboxing

PremKhanvilkar IBDP 2



In November 2020, I stepped into the world of kickboxing with a burning passion and a relentless determination. Little did I know that this journey would take me to places beyond my wildest dreams. From humble beginnings to international recognition, my experience has been nothing short of a rollercoaster ride. Along the way, I encountered opponents of various calibers, witnessed the heights of success, and faced the depths of defeat, though I never lost a fight, I lost myself in the process.

The road to greatness demanded extreme sacrifices, as I underwent grueling training sessions and a transformative process that pushed me beyond my limits. Through it all, I have emerged stronger, wiser, and more resilient. Every bruise, every setback, and every hurdle has shaped me into the kickboxer I am today. My journey has been far from easy, but I wouldn't trade a single moment of this exhilarating ride for anything else in the world. Kickboxing has become more than just a sport; it is a way of life, and I can't wait to see where this remarkable path takes me next.

Sailing

Trijna Kapileshwar IBDP 2



Sailing, my recently discovered passion. My father introduced me to sailing when I was quite little. He used to be an international champion, so it wasn't difficult for me to pick up the sport. I never really took an interest in it, until recently, when I discovered the true beauty of this sport.

School comes with its own issues and difficulties, and we all need some "me" time. Sailing is my "me" time because of the incredible adrenaline high it provides. For me, sailing is a metaphor for life; you are on your own and are in complete control of the boat. Like rough waters and unpredictable weather conditions, life presents us with various challenges. Sailing helps us to adapt, maintain composure in stressful situations and navigate our way through challenges.

CYCLING

MIRON MISTRY IBDP-2

Cycling has always been a part of my life, thanks to my dad who used to cycle long rounds around Marine Drive. As a child, I would watch him with awe as he effortlessly glided, and it wasn't long before I decided to hop on a bicycle myself and join him in rounds. Little did I know that this simple childhood fascination would lead to one of the most unforgettable experiences of my life.



One day, my buddy Steeven and I decided to embark on a long cycling trip of around 120 km. We traveled from Mumbai all the way to a village near Murud. We had planned a route that would take us through scenic roads, and charming villages.

As the hours passed, a sense of fatigue started kicking in. Nevertheless, we cycled side by side, sharing and creating lasting memories along the way.

On the way, I had made the mistake of taking a wrong turn which only after 4 km of cycling on my own I realized. I looked at my phone to Steeven only to find out I had twenty missed calls. I turned back immediately, as fast as I could. Fortunately, I reached him safely. On the other hand, we were delayed due to us not being able to find the house, it ended up being dark and having had taken a lot of breaks in the middle. Instead what was supposed to happen was that we were supposed to eat our lunch and return back home but, we had to sleep there for the night and continue the next morning.



At this point, I was filled with uncertainty as I was unaware of what wouuld happen and even though Steeven knew and trusted them, they were still unknown to me.

I woke up the next morning, extremely fresh. Although, I was doubting whether I would be safe and didnt even know the people I was staying with, they were one of the sweetest people that I had encountered.

Finally, I had to say my goodbye and Steeven and I travelled to the jetty to take a a ferry back to the gateway of India.

Looking back on that day, I couldn't help but marvel at how cycling, a simple activity born from my dad's love for it, had brought me so much joy and unforgettable memories into my life. The journey already become one of the best experiences I had ever had.

Aashrita Narayan, IBDP-2

Chess



From such a young age of around 3, I started playing Chess. My dad would always play chess with and would take me to all his tournaments in New York. I would even play in my school competitions which marked the start of my love for the sport.

When I moved to India, due to the larger appeal I was able to join my first official class. I still remember it vividly to this day. After some time, as I had shown a consistent improvement, I was upgraded to the Intensive Program and that class was one of the best but at the same time the most rigorous class. I would sit on the weekends for 10 hours continously.

But this is all finally paid off when I finally got my rating in a tournament which really boosted my confidence and I ended up winning the rest of the tournament.

I think overall, out of all the tournaments including my State ones, this was the one that really stood out because no one other than yourself knows how satisfying it is to finally see your hard work pay off.



BADMINTON

Khayal Shah, IBDP-2



I've been playing badminton for ever since I can remember. Whether it was just down in the building or playing with the toy rackets at home, it's been and is a big part of my life. I never really had a big passion for anything like I saw everyone else did. I played basketball, table tennis, and did skating, gymnastics and swimming and I definitely liked doing them but I never loved them from the bottom of my heart. I started training for badminton just for the sake of exercising but it wasn't long before I fell in love with the sport in all its glory. It was no longer a just a way for me to be active but rather something that gave me a sense of purpose and focus.

Friday evenings were training evenings, and they were something that I always looked forward to, but soon enough, they became what got me through the week. There were definitely phases where I wanted to play professionally and not "just for fun" anymore, but I feared making it into a career would mean that I'd lose my love for the sport. And I'm glad I made that choice. I'm glad because this is something that I know will remain a "hobby" for the lack of a better word, for the rest of my life. I know this is something I will always make time for no matter what. In the mornings before work and at the end of a bad work day, I know playing a match will lift up my mood better than anything else would be able to. That's how something that started off as a way to better my health became something I truly can't live without.





FOOTBALL

Football is much more than a sport. It is a way of living which helps unite people through strategy and hard work. The bonds formed between footballers are near unbreakable and can be perceived as a universal language as it eliminates the boundaries of language, cultures, race and more. Football helps teach people true values like discipline, teamwork and perseverance. The unforgettable memories and the numerous amounts of football sessions helps further deepen my love for football



KYLE HENRIQUES, IBDP-2

RUNNING

I started training for athletics when I was 7 years old and have been training ever since then. Every day I wake up at 4:30 am to go for my training to either Juhu beach or Wings Sports Center in Bandra. I enjoy my training because the physical activity complements the mental rigor of school. Athletics has helped me grow as a person and has changed my mindset and outlook towards everything. It helps me abide to schedules and keeps me fit. Over the years, I have participated in many city level, state level and international level competitions: the YMCA, MSSA, DSO and various other track meets, to name a few. Amongst my wins in district, city and state level competitions, my most memorable competition was the Avon Athletics Meet in the UK. I was the only Indian in my race and against all odds of weather conditions and me being a year and half younger than all other participants, I won the silver medal in 100 meters sprint.



NAHUSH TIRUMALA, IBDP-2

XI

SCHOOL CLUB FEATURES

Editor's Note

This is a special new category contributed to by members of various school clubs and edited by the founders. This space serves to compile the experiences of the 2024 IBDP Batch in building their own student-led projects

Atlas Club

We felt that there are a lot of unknown cities to view and visit in India itself. Like in several magazines top tourist places around the world are published, we wanted to popularise some of our own hidden gems.

Farish Pradhan,
Founder

Guwahati, Assam

Profiled by Farish Pradhan

How can a list of underrated Indian cities miss out on the Northeast?
Well, Guwahati is the gateway to the rich culture of Northeast India. It is built around the steady flowing waters of the Bramhaputra. Lush, green hills overlooking the river invites tourists from around the country to savour a serene view.

Tourists will find heaven in Guwahati due to the uncountable temples on every nook and corner. The cool and mist of the city add to the heavenly atmosphere of the place. 24 Kms away from the city centre, you will find a band of devotees joyfully walking towards Hajo. Hajo is concentrated with temples, holy sights and a mosque which makes it a pilgrimage destination for Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims. One can also steal a glimpse of the one horned Rhino in the famous Assam State Zoo.

If you are interested in the city already, you will be astonished to know the multiple universities in the city. IIT, NLU (National Law University) and Royal Global are all located in the city.

The local cuisine of Guwahati is extremely diverse. This is because the city's population comprises of Assamese, Indigenous, Bengali, Bangladeshi, Nepali and Punjabi People. Moreover, the food is overshadowed by tea. Assam Tea is famous all over the world and most of the traders are located in Guwahati. Tea exports amounted to 17 Billion INR.

Guwahati is not only a place for culture, it is a place for business, education, devotion, nature, and tea.

Hemis, Leh Ladakh

Factsheet by Yash Vadhar

Hemis is situated to the south of Leh close to the western banks of the Indus River. The Hemis Monastery made in 1630 is the largest monastery of Ladakh. Hemis is different from the other important monasteries of Ladakh, as the monastery is dotted on all four sides with colourful prayer flags that flutter in the breeze sending prayers to Lord Buddha.

Pangong Lake: Pangong lake is an endorheic (landlocked) lake situated at 4350 metres. It is famous amongst tourists as Ladakh lake, the spot where the Bollywood movie "3 Idiots" was shot.

Hemis Monastery: nearby town of Hemis, landmarked by its monasteries, gompas and an occasional spotting of the rare snow leopard at the highest wildlife sanctuary in the world.

Hemis national park: At an altitude ranging from 3,300 m to 6,000 m above sea level, this sanctuary is known to be the highest in the world as well as the largest park of South Asia. It is also a habitat for Snow Leopards that are rare to find.

The Hemis Festival: celebrated as a sign of victory of good over the evil and demonstrates that no matter what we do in life evil can never come victorious. This festival is a very important part of the Ladakh culture and diversity is mainly celebrated by the Buddhist community but is a festival enjoyed by all religions and cultures.

Pali, Rajasthan

Factsheet by Trijna Kapileshwar

One of Rajasthan's 33 districts, Pali, is situated in the state's centre. Pali is well connected to neighboring districts and states through the road and rail networks.
It is known as "The Industrial City."

Industries in Pali -

Although Pali's economy is largely reliant on agriculture, the city is also well-known for its textile industry. These businesses provide yarn, cotton, and synthetic clothing at extremely low prices to other states in the nation. Pali is home to the largest and most renowned composite textile mill in India, the "Maharaja Shri Umaid Mills." Here, additional industries like marble cutting and finishing have also grown.

Agriculture in Pali -

The Pali district has a lot of irrigation dams. But about 50% of farmers in this area rely heavily on the monsoons. Jowar, bajra, moong, groundnut, rice, and red chillies are the main Kharif crops in Pali.

Service Industries in Pali -

There are many textile and printing businesses in Pali, and there is room for both providers of natural colour dyes and machine repair and maintenance services. Tourism is another important service sector where fresh investment is being made and where some significant firms are investing.





Vrindavan, Uttar Pradesh

Description and photos by Bhavee Senghani

Vrindavan is a city in Uttar Pradesh, more specifically located in the Mathura district. It is 11km away from the main Mathura city. Vrindavan is known as the city of temples as it has over 4000 temples dedicated to Lord Krishna and his love Radha. Each temple has its own unique story.

For example, the temple Nidhivan has many Tulsi plants which are paired together. It is said that at night the plants turn into Gopis and Krishna and perform a huge Raas Lila. This is why no one is allowed into the temple after the evening aarti. Legend also says that anybody that tries to see the Gopis and Krishna dancing would either become visually impaired or would lose their sense of hearing.

Not only this but the city is full of beautiful paintings of Lord Krishna and Radha on every wall you see. The wall paintings and the temple create such a positive energy around one that they feel nothing but happiness in the city. Another thing to add to all this happiness is the food of Vrindavan. Nothing too fancy but the street food at Vrindavan is a must try especially the flavourful Kachori and sweet Jalebi that just melts in your mouth.







Ratnagiri, Maharashtra

Edited by Aaditya Sawant

In the southwestern region of Maharashtra lies an attractive and lively port city. This city has had a prodigious history and its government has made efforts to keep it as relevant as possible with institutions for higher education, extensive network of roadways and railways, etc. Surrounded by beautiful hills of Sahyadri ranges, this city is also highly blessed with a wide range of flora and fauna. This city is India's Ratnagiri. The name of this city, in itself, is an appropriate description of this city, which would translate roughly to the *land of gems*. Ratnagiri has produced *ratnas* (gems) throughout history and continues to do so even today. Maharashtrian culture is deeply embedded in the residents of Ratnagiri, evident from their amiable nature, food, patriotism and their mother tongue- Marathi.

Land of Freedom Fighters

Ratnagiri is indeed the land of freedom fighters. The city houses the Jaigad Fort, said to have been built in the 16th century by the Bijapur kings, which played a pivotal role in Maratha History. Towards the close of the sixteenth century, it was throned by the Naiks of Sangameshwar who battled against the combined Portuguese and Bijapur forces from 1583-85. Nearly 200 years later, it was under the control of Balaji Vishwanath, who was part of the Maratha Civil War and later went on to be appointed as the Peshwa by Shahu Bhosale I (Fifth Chhatrapati and grandson of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj). In 1713, this was one of the ten forts ceded by Vishvanath to Kanhoji Angre on his promising to release the Peshwa, restore all his conquests, and maintain the cause of Shahu I. Unfortunately, in June 1818, the fort was under the hands of the British forces.

Nevertheless, Ratnagiri is also the birthplace of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who though born in British India, devoted his entire life to rename his nation as The Republic of India. Tilak also helped to revive the Shivaji Jayanti and Ganesh Chaturthi festivals in Maharashtra to unite people against the ultimate foe- the British.

Land of Wonders

Alphonso mango is a seasonal fruit, considered to be among the most superior varieties of the fruit in terms of sweetness, richness and flavour. It is also one of the most expensive varieties of mango and is famously known as *Hapoos* in Marathi.

The Royal Thibaw Palace was built by King Thibaw of Burma in 1886 in Ratnagiri. This is historically significant because it signifies transfer of power to the British crown and annexation of Burma by the British, who held the king and his family prisoners, forcing them to exile in Ratnagiri (then under British India). The palace is a tourist attraction owing to the wonderful views of the Arabian Sea, Bhatye Bridge and Someshwar Creek, all of which are landmarks in the city.

Dharampur Lake is another landmark of Ratnagiri, which is the largest in the city and a man-made one, constructed by King Nagesh Desai in 1530. It is known for its clear water and hill ranges and lush greenery on both sides, that includes dense plantations of mango, kokum, and coconut trees. In addition to the Raigad fort, Ratnagiri is also home to 29 others which includes peculiar ones such as Ratnadurg and Bhagwati Forts.

Land of Beaches

Since Ratnagiri makes a part of the mighty Konkan Coast, it is blessed by nature with numerous picturesque beaches. Unlike the ones in Goa and Mumbai, these beaches are less crowded and thus less polluted. Nevertheless, the small number of tourists does not discourage the locals from letting visitors make use of the services offered in most quintessential beaches. This includes refreshing water sports and small restaurants along the beaches. Some of the beaches that stand out are:

The Ganapatiphule Beach
The Guhagar Beach
Pandre Samudra
The Ganeshghule Beach

Land of Devotion

Ratnagiri does not fall short of gems, some of which are the temples situated around the city. Most of the temples in the city are dedicated to Lord Ganapati and Lord Shiva, two pivotal figures in Hindu belief. Three among the countless number of temples in Ratnagiri are as follows. Each one of them is extraordinary in a way and even though all of them are dedicated to the same deities, they are distinct among themselves.

The Marleshwar Temple
The Swayambhu Ganpati Temple
The Jai Vinayak Temple

Land of Advancement

The people of Ratnagiri have always had a progressive mindset and their ambitious nature is evident from the various development projects the city has undergone in the fields of education and transport. With continual efforts of the government to seek the progress of the city, Ratnagiri can rightfully be called the land of advancement.

There are many colleges and institutions for higher education. Two of these are affiliated to the University of Mumbai, namely, Rajendra Mane College of Engineering & Technology and Finolex Academy of Management and Technology. A few colleges are also aided by the government that includes Government College of Engineering, Government College of Pharmacy and Government Polytechnic. There is also a branch of Podar International School in the city.

In terms of transport, Ratnagiri is well connected to the other parts of the state and country by the National and State Highways. Private and MSRTC buses could be used to commute to other parts of the state. The Ratnagiri Railway Station is a major railhead on the Konkan Railway and has the daily connectivity to important cities of India. All special trains such as the special trains for Ganesh Chaturthi and Christmas halt at this station. It offers uber-amenities like free Wi-Fi and lifts on each platform. Ratnagiri also has an airport which would start commercial air travel shortly. It is named Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak Ratnagiri Airport to honour the legacy of the assertive nationalist.

Ratnagiri encompasses the Marine Biological Research Station which was established in 1958 by the Government of Maharashtra. This station is one of the premier institutes with an enormous field facility including a three storied building at the main campus, a well-equipped aquarium and museum, a modernised brackish water fish farm, various laboratories at its disposal, etc. It generates professionally trained manpower in fish culture and transfers the technologies to fish culturists. The station is also a tourist attraction because it boasts some of the rarest specimens of aquatic life, like the sea horse, sea turtles and sea cucumbers and, ancient skeletons of whales.

Land That Lacks Attention

To conclude, Ratnagiri is one among the many underrated cities of India. Like the others, this city is also neglected by the world which negatively impacts the local government and population. It discourages both and distracts them from the path to development and prosperity. Encouraging tourism through advertisement is a feasible process but an expensive one. Such tier-II and tier III cities are highly overshadowed by the financial hubs of the nation such as Mumbai and Delhi. As responsible citizens, it is our duty to bring these cities to the books, against the prolonged ignorance. We must keep our minds open and encourage tourism in these cities. Not only by paying a visit but also help promote the cities by highlighting their métiers as well as by dispelling their flaws.

Bibliography

https://ratnagiri.gov.in/
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratnagiri
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5dEViFfzMU
https://www.thrillophilia.com/places-to-visit-in-ratnagiri
https://www.holidify.com/places/ratnagiri/restaurants-places-to-eat-local-cuisine.html
https://www.holidaytravel.co/destination-dtl/ratnagiri.htm
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jaigad_Fort
https://cultural.maharashtra.gov.in/english/gazetteer/RATNAGIRI/places_Jaygad.html
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratnagiri_Airport
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ratnagiri_railway_station

Climate Action Club







Upon realising that information about the climate was limited to pure ecological science, we decided to conduct participatory sessions on intersectional climate justice-- which is centred on prioritising lived experiences and marginalised voices in climate action. What started off as a PPT and an impassioned discussion, kicked off a series of student-led actions for safeguarding our present and future ecologies and societies.

Over the course of these two years, we have conducted several strikes and activities related to everything from waste management to fossil fuel non-proliferation. Here's an insight into some of the behind the scenes.

by Ananya Pathak, Founder



Aren't you tired of creating biohazardous waste? One disposable sanitary napkin is equal to 4 plastic bags!

Taking this shocking fact into consideration, one of the many projects undertaken by the Climate Action Club(CAC) led by the student body of the 2024 IBDP batch is the **Sustainable Menstruation Project.** This project aims to stir up conversations about the perils of using disposable sanitary napkins and their impact on the environment.

We have partnered up with the Asha Trust Mumbai to amplify their recent initiative of teaching underprivileged women to sew and produce cotton pads at an affordable rate hence providing them with a source of income and breaking taboos surrounding the same. The current undertakings by the CAC includes the conduction of a survey to test out the cotton pads. After the collection of multiple in-school volunteers, we successfully completed the survey last December.

We do understand that it is a personal and rather intimate preference but we strive to encourage everyone to at least try it out and play their part in working towards a sustainable future.

by Sarah Kathuria,
SM Project Lead

I had an extremely fun time taking part in **The Gardening Project** held by the Climate Action Club which was where we had to make potted plants to put near the windows of our school. I remember we had to bring recycled plastic bottles and make our own pots out of them. After which we filled each one with soil, took a lot of time for the whole thing but, after finishing the entire potting of the plants we were finally able to put the seeds in. We planted a few plants like cilantro and radish. To say the least this was a messy but enjoyable process and I had a lot of fun with my group, especially watering the plants everyday and even sometimes renewing the seeds and pots for certain plants. Overall, I would absolutely be thrilled to do this again.



by Aashrita Narayan,
CAC Member



PODAR CLIMATE SYMPOSIUM 2022

logo designed by Armaan Dadyburjor for PCS '22

The **Podar Climate Symposium 2022** was the first of its kind 'Climate' conference organised by Podar International School in October 2022. Students from grades 8, 9 and 11 showed the most enthusiastic and active participation in the endeavour to learn more about the environment and hone their debating skills. The Podar Climate Symposium, organised by the grade 11 Secretariat, was an essential step towards making the future leaders of India more aware of natural disasters and atrocities brought in by humans. The event not only sparked interesting debate but also developed environmentally sensitive and empathetic individuals in the process. It would be safe to say that PCS 2022 was a grand success!

- Meher Bathija

by Meher Bhatija,
CAC Member
& PCS EB



"I learnt today that we need climate action and we need it now, because this is much more urgent than anything we had imagined before."

a 13-year-old student participant

To see the interest in issues surrounding climate action was a unique and enthralling experience and the event was a testament to the power of words and small actions leading to big change. Being a part of this event through from ideation through to execution has been a truly fulfilling journey.

Rhea Mehta,
CAC Coordinator
& PCS Logistics Head

The concept for the symposium started with an idea fervently outlined in a text message in a Climate Action Club team group chat--over the course of the next 2 months, we brought this to reality: a model international policy conference centering climate concerns with over 250+ delegates from across ages groups. We realised that there is a severe lack of awareness about the socio-cultural, trans-boundary, and health impacts of the Climate Crisis and even lesser awareness on how we can mitigate the problems and adapt in adversity through a just transition to sustainable societies. With an increasingly vulnerable climate, the youth are the most affected--and thus need to be the most empowered to choose action pathways, careers and lifestyles centering sustainability. Spanning 9 different committees (including, but not limited to, UNSC, ECOFIN, and WHO, as well as our key commitee The MOCK COP27), we explored the measures needed for climate action across the board and not just through a singular isolated climate committee. We knew it was all worth is when one student shared that they had only just discovered the holistic implications of our seemingly tiny actions and policy changes.



by Ananya Pathak

XII

FROM THE ALUMNI



Reflections from Japmehar Kandhari

Batch of 2019



I am Japmehar Kandhari, a recent graduate in Chemical Engineering Computer Process Control from the University of Alberta. I often find myself reflecting on the invaluable years I spent at Podar International School. Being an alumnus of this esteemed institution fills me with immense pride, as it was during my time there that I gained the knowledge, skills, and experiences that have shaped my journey to success.

One aspect that truly stood out during my high school years at Podar International School was the exceptional faculty of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP). The teachers with their remarkable expertise and dedication, played a pivotal role in molding my academic trajectory. Their passion for teaching and unwavering support ensured that I received a transformative educational experience.

The excellent years I spent at Podar International School proved to be a solid foundation for my university journey at the University of Alberta. The rigorous academic curriculum and holistic approach adopted by the school equipped me with the critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and discipline necessary to excel in the demanding field of chemical engineering. The lessons and values I imbibed during my time at Podar International School continue to benefit me in my university studies and will undoubtedly shape my future endeavors.

As an alumnus, I hold Podar International School in the highest regard. It was there that I discovered my passion for learning, nurtured my intellectual curiosity, and honed the skills that have propelled me towards my goals. The school's unwavering commitment to providing a world-class education, supported by an exceptional faculty and staff, has undeniably played a pivotal role in shaping the person I am today.

“The Evolution Within”

Aishwarya, Batch of 2020



It’s one thing to witness, and another to experience. To internalise. To believe, change, grow. That’s what the IB was for me. An experience. Every moment spent engrossed in writing my extended essay on Draupadi, every late night devoted to mastering calculus (which has proven invaluable for my Masters—where we're diving into a Math workbook this summer!), every weekend immersed in coding, and even every roleplay in my French class—where I passionately debated everything from my right to a croissant to the violation of human rights in Syria—has been truly enjoyable.

I mean it. Even when I rewrote my 9th Business IA draft, I was grateful because these experiences helped me grow organically. DP subjects are not more "subjects," they are schools of thought that come to life through IAs, EEs and TOK. And DP is not just a curriculum. It’s a mindset, an exploration, and a way of life.

Nonetheless, it was a time of struggle. But this struggle is part of the story. I strongly believe that strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle. To me, setbacks are like assets, you need to collect them and be proud of them. Each time I had to re-work on my extended essay draft from scratch or each time, I had exceeded my intellectual capability to solve a math problem, I was grateful. Grateful that there was a transformation happening and that the momentary pain I felt was the beginning of a revolution in myself. IB made me more comfortable with discomfort. It gave me the courage to be bolder in my pursuits. I began to increase my attacks during sparring sessions at Karate classes. I began to attempt vocals and songs out of my comfort zone. I participated in the Annual Day at Podar, in a musical, dressed up as a scarlet macaw. Small changes, big changes, different changes—I saw myself evolve.

With an evolution of the mind and a revolution deep inside my heart, I grew with the support of the community around me: the community at Podar and at University of London.

Very honestly, I owe my deepest gratitude to my mentors, for without them, I would be but a mere fragment of who I am today. They have believed in me when I doubted myself, pushed me beyond my limits, and inspired me to reach for greatness. Beyond academics, they were role-models. They fostered an environment of intellectual curiosity, encouraging us to explore beyond the textbooks and to think critically. Their unwavering commitment to our success instilled in us a sense of determination and resilience. When I fall back, I think of them. What they would've said, how they would've thought. Their advice, style of thinking and perspective in life is something I try to imbibe each day.

My community—my teachers, my peers, my parents—all have been paramount to my growth during those two years. I believe that Luminous, the student initiative of Podar, stands as a radiant testament to the transformative power of this collective support. Witnessing this initiative being carried forward by our juniors fills me with immense pride and gratitude. During my time as an editor for Luminous, I discovered that everyone at Podar possesses a fascinating narrative waiting to be shared. My colleagues, whom I thought I knew so well, revealed unexpected facets of themselves, whether it be their sporting accomplishments or their profound passion for art. Capturing these distinctions in thought, style, and culture was a truly magnificent.

Even to this day, I view my IB experience at Podar as a blueprint for shaping my future. As cliché as it may sound, IB doesn't ever leave you. From essential skills like time management to the willingness to take risks, IB traits become an ingrained habit in your life. They instil character and desire to seek, discover and re-invent the world around you. To me, these two years was the ignition of an ongoing journey of personal growth and limitless possibilities.

To me, this evolution was a start of many.

"Power of Embracing Change"

Aman Mehta, Batch of 2020



I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the teachers and coordinators for providing me with the opportunity to be featured on this platform. I am truly honored to have the chance to share my experiences and journey with all you students. The support, guidance, and education I received during my time at high school have played an invaluable role in shaping who I am today. I wanted to take all of you back a few years and take you through my journey.

March 22nd, 2020 will forever be etched in my memory. On that fateful day, my classmates and I received news that shattered our expectations and left us grappling with uncertainty. The COVID-19 pandemic had forced the cancellation of our final IB examinations, leaving us with only our Internal Assessments (IA) to determine our grades. The news filled us with doubt and raised questions about the validity of our hard-earned achievements. For a lot of my peers, the universities started retracting offers due to disparities between the predicted and final grades, casting a shadow of fear over our hopes and dreams.

Yet, here we stand today, making it through the periods of extreme uncertainty and entering our senior years at university. I am a senior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), ready to reflect on the remarkable journey that unfolded over the past five years since I joined the IBDP as a 16-year-old. It's amazing how hindsight can reshape our perspective and reveal the silver linings in the darkest clouds. With each hurdle I faced, I learned valuable lessons about resilience and discovering beauty in the most unexpected places.

Stepping into my freshman year of college, I never imagined I would be taking classes online from my room in the middle of a freezing winter. It wasn't the vibrant and exhilarating university experience I had envisioned. But even in those challenging circumstances, I discovered the power of embracing change. Amidst the pandemic's turmoil, I decided to change my major from Engineering Physics to Mechanical Engineering, the most competitive field at UIUC. It was a leap of faith fueled by my passion for renewable energy and sustainability. This bold move taught me a valuable life lesson: it's never too late to pursue your true calling.

As the conditions started settling down, opportunities unveiled themselves like I couldn't have
imagined. I found myself leading the Research & Development endeavors of a startup company which is developing a long-duration energy storage system, securing two rounds of funding, and pushing the boundaries of innovation. My dedication to sustainability led me to assume the role of chairman of the Energy Committee on campus which handled a substantial $2 million fund. During my time with the committee, I advocated for policies and implemented technological advancements that propelled our university towards a greener and more eco-friendly future.

But the journey didn't end there. I found myself immersed in the world of academia, where curiosity fueled my drive to explore new frontiers of knowledge. Through internships, research positions, and countless hours of dedication, I had the honor of contributing as an author to three published research papers. These experiences reinforced the importance of resilience and the pursuit of excellence, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable challenges.

Looking forward, the horizon shimmers with promise. Yet, as I reflect on my time at Podar, I can't forget the role that my years at Podar played in shaping me. It was there that my journey truly began.

Entering the International Baccalaureate (IB) program as a wide-eyed 16-year-old, I was unsure of what lay ahead. The first test scores I received shattered my confidence —a modest 35/45 grade point, a far cry from my desired target. It took a long time and a lot of effort before achieving a 45 Predicted Grade Point, but it just goes to show that a turnaround is possible if you put enough work in.

I carry with me the memories, the lessons, and the faith that the path of perseverance leads to extraordinary heights. To my fellow students embarking on their own journeys at Podar, I extend my heartfelt wishes. May your remaining years be filled with vibrant experiences, determination, and the unwavering belief that you have the power to shape your destiny.

Embrace the challenges, for they will become the stepping stones to your greatest achievements.

If you would like to learn more about Aman's work, he'd be happy to speak to you and you can write to him at: amanm2@illinois.edu

XIII

FROM THE TEACHERS

7th Heaven: A Coordinator's Journey

by Hema Ma'am

When good people die, they reach heaven.

At least that is the commonly held belief. For the DP Coordinators of the seventh floor, when good students follow deadlines, we reach 7th heaven. However, the journey is never a straightforward one. One is obligated to cross six levels of hell first.

Here is a brief description of the aforementioned levels of hell using the linguistic quirks typical of a classic IB submission:

1st Level – When, having just finished unpacking the TOK essay titles, you are met with dead silence to your question, "What are the four aspects of the knowledge framework?"
(I die just a little.)

2nd Level – Planning sheets must now be submitted, and students must decode the essay titles in their own words. One student examines the essay title of 'Do you agree that so little knowledge gives us so much power', and replies with a resounding "Yes!"
(The little knowledge leaves me with a sinking feeling.)

3rd Level – The drafts of not just the TOK essay, but other IAs as well, are submitted, and run through Turnitin.
A draft of cold air passes through me and then changes to feeling hot under the collar.
(Death would have been merciful, but...not just yet.)

4th Level – The requests for extensions come. As expected.
The plethora of reasons ranging from laptops crashing to files not opening leave me feeling lightheaded and fleet-footed, as I now have to run behind everyone – students, parents and teachers.
(Before I, myself, am run down.)

5th Level – I have to now upload all the final IAs, EEs, TOKs, IOs. All the abbreviations of the world leave me short of breath and gasping for respite.
(This must be hell, no? I am filled with self-doubt.)

6th Level – The IB exams are on. Seeing stressed faces, heads bent over papers, and hearing pens scratching, feet scraping, the sighs and pent-up breaths...the examination has ended, please stop writing. This must be the end. So close and yet so far. Two months to July 6th. This particular level of hell can leave me so very happy, yet so truly sad that a cohort's two-year sojourn has now come to an end.
(I hope we all did our very best.)

The seventh heaven is on the seventh floor. I experience it each day. I see small triumphs, those "AH-HAH!" moments in classes, the fist bumps, the moving from one class to another. The passing of time each year. From guiding students in their subject choices, teaching, giving feedback, registering students for exams, uploading it all (before getting uploaded myself), conducting exams, discovering results...and then, back to the beginning with a new batch. We may drag ourselves through six levels of hell each day, but we also reach seventh heaven on each of those days. Here, in the thick of the action, is what truly matters. When drafts turn to final submissions, when tears of stress turn to tears of gratitude, and when success is showcased in the form of university acceptances. Those six levels of hell? All worth it. And seeing the sweat, blood, and tears transform into sweets, wide smiles, and tassel-turning? Seventh heaven.
(At last!)

Language Teachers: Modern-Day Hercules Without the Muscles!

by Rashmi Ma'am

In the enchanted realm of education, language teachers find themselves in a Herculean predicament, juggling tasks that would make the mythical hero himself break a sweat. They don't have superhuman strength, but boy, do they face some ludicrous challenges! So, let's dive into the perilous world of language teachers, where the labours they perform day in day out will put the mighty Hercules to shame!

Labour 1:

Language teachers face the insurmountable task of handling diverse learners in their classrooms. It's like dealing with a bunch of shape-shifters. From students who fly through lessons like Pegasus to those who struggle like an ant pushing a boulder uphill . We are all guilty of holding some of them to ransom, not letting them use the washroom till we hear the magic words" peux-je aller aux toilettes? it's like juggling tasks that require both the wisdom of Athena and the patience of a saint and we do it with a smile!!

Labour 2:

Hercules might have faced daunting mythical beasts, but language teachers contend with something far more terrifying: technology! Embracing the ever-changing landscape of educational apps is enough to make anyone feel like they're wrestling with a Sandman. As If online translators were not enough, now we have the mightiest of all beasts CHATGPT!! I can hear a collective sigh from my colleagues!! This too shall pass, my dear friends!!

Labour 3:

Imagine Hercules trying to convince the Titans to join a dance party - that's the level of motivation and engagement a language teacher has to conjure. Encouraging students to stay enthusiastic about language learning feels like attempting to solve the enigma of the Sphinx every single day. You have to be a dancer, singer, actor, all rolled up in one if you are to hold their attention!!

Labour 4:

Just like Hercules' multi-headed foe, the grading Hydra keeps sprouting new heads. Language teachers have to grade mountains of assignments with the speed of Hermes, only to have students asking about their grades like sharks. Finding a balance between meaningful feedback and appeasing the grading gods can feel like an eternal struggle and yet we manage to do it seamlessly.

Language teachers may not wear lion skins like Hercules, but they certainly face Herculean challenges in their noble quest to educate and inspire. Their journey is nothing short of a comic adventure. Maybe someday we will have a Marvel character based on the Language teachers!! So, let's raise a metaphorical goblet of ambrosia to our language teachers - the true modern-day Hercules without the bulging muscles! May they continue to conquer the ludicrous challenges of education with wit, humour, and boundless determination.

Why be a Biology Teacher

Kalpana Ma'am

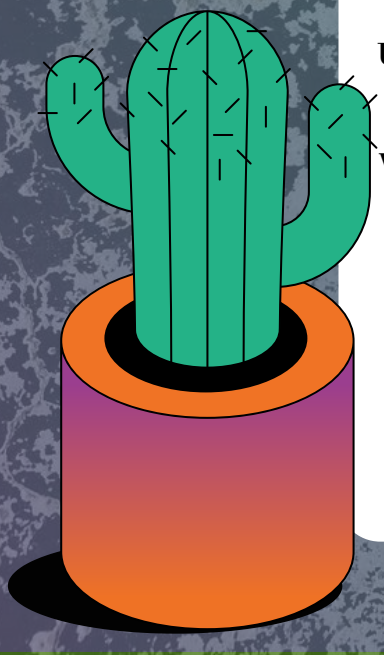
A couple of years ago, in a bustling grade 9 classroom, a young and enthusiastic student who had a passion for physical sciences bravely raised her hand and asked me, "Ma'am, can I ask you a question?" With a nod of encouragement, she proceeded, "Mam, don't you get bored teaching the same subject and topics year after year?" The question sparked a moment of reflection for me, and I replied thoughtfully, "The subject and topics may remain constant, but the students, their individual sparks of understanding, and the ever-deepening understanding of life make each year unique and energizing."

-

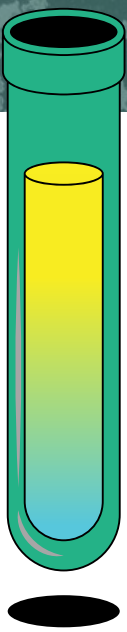
Teaching is not merely a profession for me; it's a source of joy and fulfillment. Being in the company of growing minds, nurturing them, answering their endless "whys" and "hows," and witnessing their physical, mental, intellectual, and emotional growth is a privilege that fills my heart with warmth.

-

Now, you might wonder, why specifically teach Biology? Biology is the awe-inspiring science that unravels the very mysteries of life. It delves into the profound questions of how life began, the vast diversity of living organisms, the fascinating story of our evolution, the intricate web of interdependence in nature, and the remarkable similarities and differences among all forms of life. Who wouldn't be curious about such an intriguing subject?



And let's not forget the focus on us, the mighty humans! Understanding our own bodies is essential— how are we born, what keeps us ticking from birth to death, what happens when things go off track, and the marvellous chemical factory in our minds that gives us our emotional highs and lows. As a biology teacher, there's nothing more exhilarating than unboxing the complexities of human systems to my students, helping them appreciate the wonder of their own existence.



Over the past two decades of teaching biology, I find immense satisfaction in knowing that I have ignited the passion of numerous students to pursue successful careers in allied fields such as medicine, pharmacy, environmental science, biochemistry, genetics, and more. Seeing them blossom and contribute to the world in meaningful ways brings a sense of fulfillment that words cannot express. It gives a sensation of life lived worthily.

-

Teaching isn't just about imparting knowledge; it's about instilling curiosity, igniting passion, and nurturing future generations to become compassionate and knowledgeable stewards of the world. So, as I continue my journey as a biology teacher, I look forward to inspiring many more young minds to unravel the mysteries of life and make their mark in this beautiful tapestry of existence.



GLOW UP

by Tapati Ma'am

It is not just about big decisions of life, it's more to do with the seemingly small things in life. The way you greet people, the way you affirm and speak to them, the way you care for other people and encourage them. Understand that a truly meaningful life is made up of a series of daily small acts of decency and kindness, which, ironically, add up to something truly great over the course of a lifetime. Reject versions of the world that define success solely in terms of money, accumulation of things and over-emphasis on status and security. Resist shallow definitions of what constitutes a worthwhile and valuable life. And finally: "DON'T QUIT"

"Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems afar,
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things seem worst that you mustn't quit."
--Edgar A Guest

Ode to Economics

by Vajrakant Sir



In a world of numbers and charts,
Where choices mold the finest arts,
Economics weaves its grand design,
Balancing wants, needs, and the bottom line.



Supply and demand, a timeless duet,
Price and quantity, they never forget.
As consumers seek goods to acquire,
Producers toil, their dreams to inspire.



In the marketplace, ideas take flight,
Entrepreneurs' visions shining bright.
Risk and reward, they dance hand in hand,
Creating jobs and a prosperous land.



The invisible hand, a guiding force,
Fostering growth, charting the course.
From Adam Smith's pen to modern day,
Economies thrive in a dynamic display.





Monetary wizards, the central banks,
Taming inflation with tactical ranks.
Interest rates sway, currencies glide,
In the quest for stability worldwide.



Trade across borders, a global embrace,
Fostering ties, enriching each place.
From goods to services, a flowing tide,
Connecting nations far and wide.



Yet challenges loom, as cycles turn,
Economic downturns cause concern.
Policies crafted to steer the ship,
Tackling hardships with a steady grip.



Through booms and busts, we forge ahead,
The quest for progress, never misled.
Economics, a journey we traverse,
In this ever-changing, diverse universe.

सातवीं मंज़िल

- संगीता गुप्ता

पोदार अंतर्राष्ट्रीय विद्यालय की सातवीं मंजिल पर जो अनुभव होता है वह अवर्णनीय है, यहाँ का हर छात्र अपने में अनूठा है | यहाँ के विद्यार्थियों में कभी सूरज की किरणों से बने मनोहारी इन्द्रधनुष के सात रंग लाल, नारंगी, पीला, हरा, नीला, जामुनी, बैगनी नजर आते हैं तो कभी शरीर के सात चक्र | कभी संगीत के सात स्वर षड्ज, ऋषभ, गांधार, मध्यम, पंचम, धैवत और निषाद जिनके संक्षिप्त रूप सा, रे ग, म, प, ध और नि हैं, तो कभी सप्ताह के सात दिन नजर आते हैं | यह सातवीं मंजिल इन विद्यार्थियों के जीवन में बहुत महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती है, कभी हंसाती है तो कभी रुलाती है, लेकिन उनको सौंदर्य देती है, ज्योति देती है, शीतलता देती है, शक्ति देती है, और इस प्रकार इनके आनेवाले जीवन को खुशनुमा बनाती है। यह सातवीं मंजिल इन विद्यार्थियों के जीवन में उत्साह, प्रकाश, जागृति बनकर आती है, यह सिखाती है कि कैसी भी विषम परिस्थिति हो, उससे उबरिए, उंचा उठिए, आगे बढ़िए।





LANGUAGE AND THE SEVENTH FLOOR

-Pavitra Ma'am

¡Hola amigos! Navigating the linguistic labyrinth on the 7th floor, my journey has been nothing short of a fiesta! Since stepping into this realm last year, I've danced the salsa of knowledge, painting vivid vocabularies and conjugating verbs with flair.

From engaging debates that sizzled like a caliente salsa to thought-provoking discussions that kept us hooked like a thrilling telenovela, every day was a linguistic adventure! And, ah! The treasure hunt we embarked upon, unearthing hidden gems of wisdom amidst gales of laughter, brought us closer as one spirited familia. Who knew that decoding riddles would be a metaphor for our exhilarating classroom life?

Together, we've surfed the waves of language, laughing and learning in equal measure. Those moments truly made the 7th floor a place of laughter, growth, and camaraderie. It has been a space where minds meet, and bonds of friendship flourish. Together, we've conquered grammatical dragons and unlocked the doors to new worlds through the gateway of language.

¡Hasta luego, mi gente! Keep flipping through the pages of life, where every chapter holds a "taco"-load of adventures!

A FLOOR OF DESIRES

ANKANA MA'AM

"Why are all the students with a laptop?" inquired a middle school teacher on her first proxy on the seventh floor in room 704.
Well, wherein knows the truth. It's the desire to excel that propels one to go beyond, to research ideas and to investigate their authenticity.
Stay calm and fasten your seatbelts. Let's continue with an investigation of fulfilling desires in the following few months:



August: The perennial desire to be independent just sets in. Plans for counselling sessions continue and the season of essay writing commences.



September: TOK essay title released. To desire or not to desire becomes a question- the fundamental paradox.

October: IA update with red flags noticed. The Tom and Jerry show begins—*Desire Season 4*.



November: The desire to spend the last Diwali with family and friends before embarking for further studies suddenly grips in.



December:

6

January : IA, TOK, EE—which does one desire more over the other?

7

February: Universities desire a particular grade. A desire to get 45 churns in—*Season 8*

5

Desire in 150 words—EE final reflection. *WHAT—a saga of 4000 to be told in 200?*

8

March: IBIS desires that work should have been long completed.

9

April: Desire to graduate—further desire to be the Valedictorian—further and further desire to receive the Principal's Award.

10

May: IB has desired that the exams go off early April. May desires a near completion of the two years toil.

11

June: A desire for internships. Examiners desire to fulfil marking allotted scripts within a deadline.

12

July: IB desires a particular date to release the pain of two years. You desire that EMPATHY would strike the right chord.



The 12 months of desire are over. Are you floored?

You are seated on a chair on the 7th floor of desire. There is nothing above to desire. You are seated in the heart of tales with Desire glittering its flashing sharp edges—and in your singular pursuit of desire leaves you in a muddle of confusion. Only for you to strive to be on the brink of divinity. Fueled by a desire to dream and thwarted with fear and shortcomings in its path, your curiosity still does not get killed. Think you are now unravelling a mysterious collection of knowledge and as it aggravates, you hear a voice crying out—CHARGE!! Do not succumb for your moment of blissful desires; you will soon gain an extraordinarily passionate culmination.

Reflect: Did you have the right desire? Should 7 be the desired number? Could you have worked harder to fulfil your desire?

Now, switch timelines: enter back into the desires of today.

What are you waiting for? Did you take 12 minutes to read the above chronology of desires? Do not take 12 seconds more. Are you looking, still, for self-gratification? Do not suppress your desire. Simply plunge into this ocean of desires by asserting your control on it. Remember the depth is infinite. The clock is ticking...

Disclaimer:

Word of caution: You are on a Race-car named Desire – not a Streetcar

To Podar, with love

Gurneet Ma'am

The day I stepped in Podar marked the beginning of a completely new life. Coming from an aviation background to an educational institution was a big step but, as it's said if you're under good guidance you not only learn how to work, you actually work like a professional.

But most importantly, I can't even express and thank all my students for all the love they keep giving me – their love which is so pure and expects nothing in return. I might not be their teacher but they have always respected me like one. If I may quote one of them, " You might not be our subject teacher but you're our emotional support teacher 😜" I wouldn't have enjoyed working so much if it was not for these amazing students in IBDP.

I really miss their cute faces when I come to work on a Saturday and I see empty corridors with no noise or mischief 😄. I will always be grateful to God for giving me this opportunity to meet such young amazing minds and loving souls.

CREDITS

Editors:

- Swastika Singh
- Sahana Radhakrishnan
- Kavita Ballani
- Jiya Kher
- Ananya Pathak
- Aashrita Narayan

Design Editor:

- Armaan F. Dadyburjor

Junior Editors:

- Vivaan Talreja, 9A
- Vani Sharma, 9D
- Kyra Narain, 9B
- Hanniyah Katyal, 10C

Design Elements Credits: Canva
Category Pages Photography Credits: Pexels
Short Stories Photography credits: Ananya Pathak, Pexels
Pets Section Photography Credits: the pet parents


The International Baccalaureate® (IB) learner profile describes a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!
• Open-minded
• Caring
• Risk-takers
• Balanced
• Reflective

LUMINOUS 24'

100% Match 2024

The Luminous 24' brings with it interesting themes ranging from biodiversity to traditon and sports to law!

Play

+ My List

From the Director's Desk



At Podar International School, we have been striving to promote a well-rounded education that equips students with the necessary technical, problem-solving, interpersonal and social skills required for success in the 21st Century.
By providing our students with the opportunities to excel in their areas of interest and to develop keen passion for the fields of the future, we prepare them to reach heights beyond our imagination. Therefore, we have always balanced our pursuit of knowledge within the academic disciplines with a research-oriented creative method of learning.
This enables students to develop holistically as individuals who are well-equipped and ready to create innovative solutions to real world problems.
The Student Community of Podar is built on a foundation of open-mindedness, inquiry, and communication, all of which is embodied by the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme's (IBDP) continued legacy of the Luminous Magazine—a student-led initiative which effectively incorporates the various spheres of creative expression and international-mindedness that is central to the International Baccalaureate's vision.

In keeping with our mission of developing an inclusive environment for collaborative learning, each year, we support the Luminous Editorial Team in collating the art and writing of our students into a body of work that engages in cultural commentary, scientific inquiry, and analytical praxis. The magazine functions as a site for promoting intercultural understanding and developing newer ideas on topical areas of global relevance—spanning from ecology, science, technology, society and culture. By illustrating the learner portfolio and the school's pioneering vision, the magazine becomes a safe and stimulating environment for learning—where students from the secondary section worked collaboratively and built multi-perspective approaches to knowledge. Through centering the authentic student experience, this publication fosters an environment of wellbeing and upholds our core values of academic integrity.

This, the 7th edition, serves to address the global issues that our student community ponders upon and share the experiences that bond us together in a space of persistent learning. As a cornerstone of creativity, we believe in the potential of the Luminous Magazine, where the students' agency is prioritised and students' voices are at the forefront. This inclusive platform helps develop balanced, caring, and principled individuals, and, each year, we are always delighted to see the outcomes.

Director Principal
Dr Mrs Vandana Lulla

WHAT'S NEXT?



BIODIVERSITY



TRADITION, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY



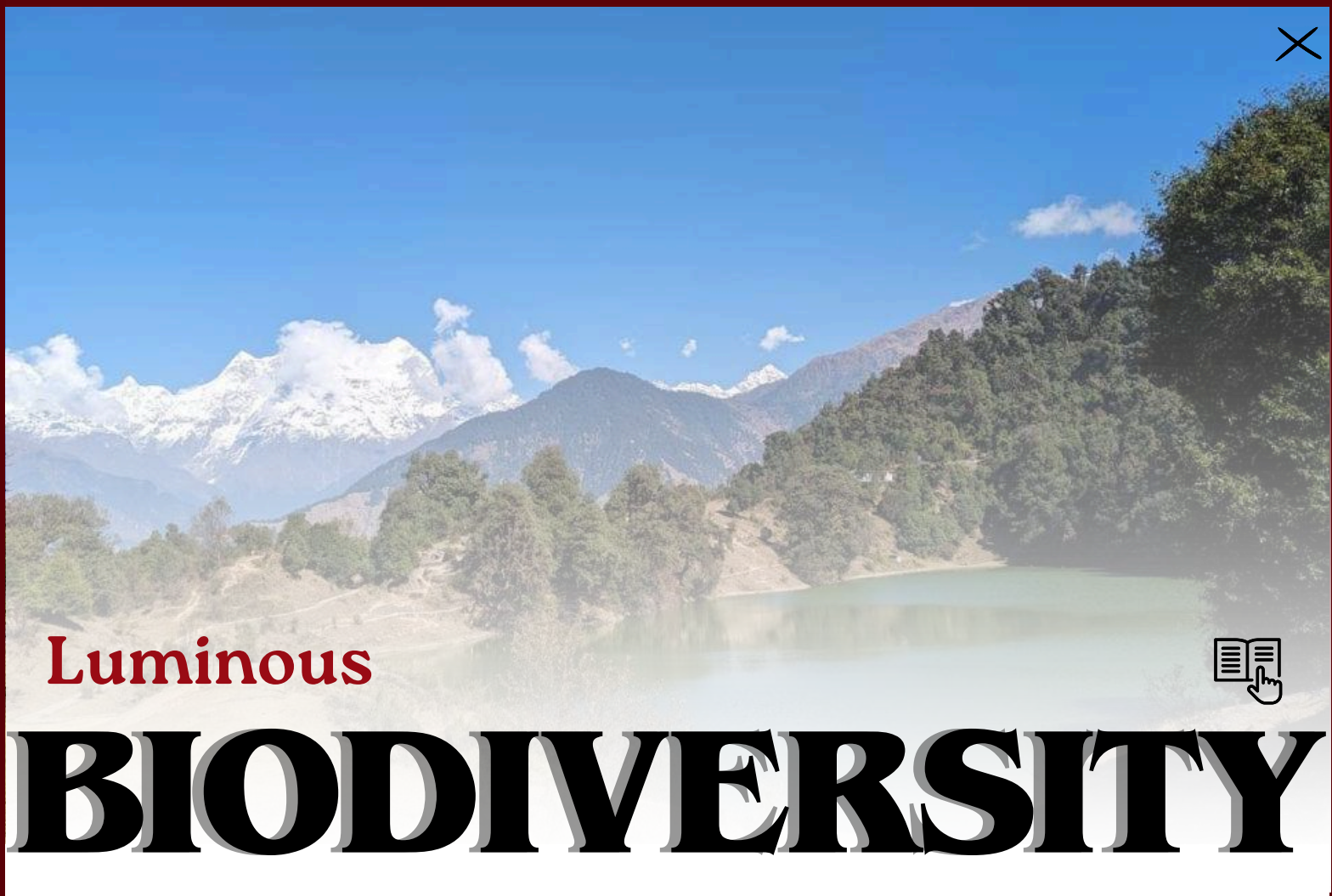
SPORTS AND RECREATION



LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION



LAW AND LEGALITY



Luminous

BIODIVERSITY

READ

99% Match 2023-2024

U/A informative, intriguing

Episodes

Limited Series







S1: E1

Let it Flourish

- Aarav Bhardwaj, 6C

Diverse ecosystem composes the key fabric of life on Earth on which we all are dependent. Ecosystem services serves as a set of useful functions that are beneficial to human well-being. However, hostile human actions often diminish the richness of local ecosystem. Over the last 50 years nature's capacity to support us has plummeted. This really is an emergency! But conservation and preservation of biodiversity could to a certain extent restore the natural ecosystem- a way out of this alarming situation.

Biodiversity feature prominently across many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets as it maintains the ecological balance and contribute directly to human well-being and development priorities. Despite that, human activities such as deforestation, burning of fossil fuels, infestation of alien species, climate change, fragmentation of habitat have exposed the Earth's diverse biodiversity to the risk of extinction. Earth is a beautiful planet that has bestowed us with unique natural things which we must conserve. Strategies such as Education on importance of biodiversity, controlling population and pollution, reducing deforestation, evading wastage, needs to be adopted in order to encourage conservation. Biodiversity encompasses genetic, species and marine diversity of the ecosystem that allows nature to be productive and resilient.

Our challenge is that we accept, understand and realize that we are very much a part of the Earth's ecosystem and we must learn to respect and live according to the basic biological laws of nature. "Save, Survive and Support Biodiversity."

S1: E2
The crucial impact of biodiversity

- Shaurya Thakker, 6C

Biodiversity is the presence of different species of plant and animals on the Earth. Moreover, it is also called biological diversity as it is related to the variety of species of flora and fauna. Biodiversity plays a major role in maintaining the balance of the Earth.

Biodiversity is an integral part of culture identity. Human culture co-evolves with their environment and conservation is a priority for cultural identity. Biodiversity is used for medicinal purposes. Many plants and animals are used for medicinal purposes like vitamins and painkillers. It contributes to climate stability. It helps in controlling the efforts of climate change and managing greenhouse gases. Biodiversity provides more food resources. It supplies many vital ecosystems, such as creating and maintaining soil quality, controlling pests, and preserving habitat for wildlife. Biodiversity has a relationship industry. Biological sources provide industrial materials including rubber, cotton, leather, food, paper, etc.

Furthermore, everything depends upon the biological diversity of different plants and animals. But due to some reasons, biodiversity is decreasing day by day. If it does not stop then our Earth could no longer be a place to live in. Therefore different measures help in increasing the biodiversity of the Earth.

S1: E3
Benefits of Biodiversity

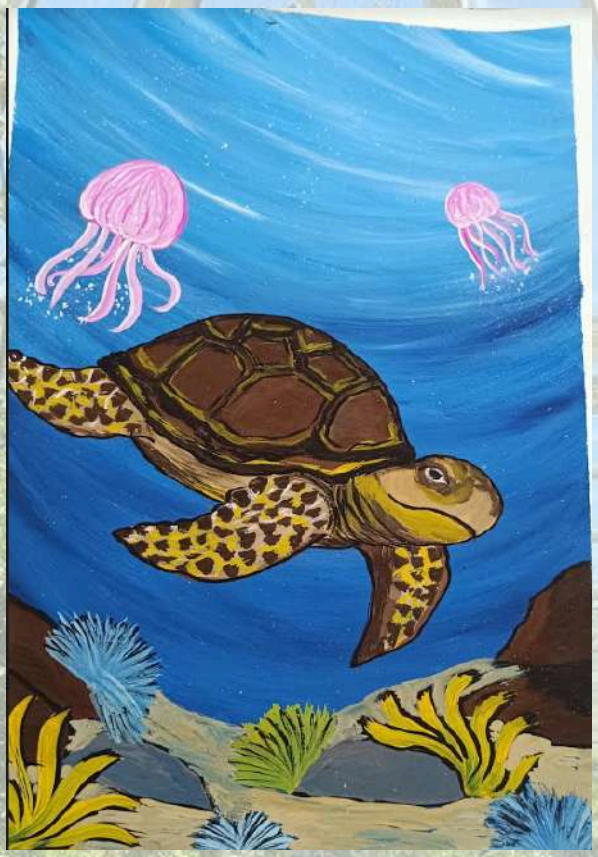
- Keshav Balaji, 6c

Biodiversity refers to the variety of living species on Earth, including plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi. It encompasses the richness and variety of life across different ecosystems.

- **Helps in development of medicine: Many medicines are derived from natural compounds found in plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms. Biodiverse ecosystems provide a rich source of these compounds, which have been used traditionally in various cultures medicinal purposes.**
- **Protects against climate change: Biodiverse ecosystems such as forests, wetlands, and grasslands act as carbon sinks, sequestering carbon dioxide(CO_2) from the atmosphere through photosynthesis and storing it in biomass and soil. Forests, in particular, are highly effective in storing carbon, helping mitigate the greenhouse effect and reduce atmospheric CO_2 levels.**
- **Ensures food security: Biodiversity provides the genetic resources needed to develop resilient and productive crops, livestock and fisheries. Wild relatives of cultivated plants contain valuable traits such as disease resistance, drought tolerance, and nutritional quality, which can be bred into crop varieties to enhance their resilience to environmental stresses and improve their productivity.**

- **Fights diseases: Biodiverse ecosystems tend to be more resilient and stable during disturbances, including disease outbreaks. Complex ecosystems with a variety of species are better able to recover from disturbances, preventing the emergence or spread of diseases associated with. disrupted ecosystems 5. Supports economic opportunities: Biodiversity-rich ecosystems, such as coral reefs, rainforests, savannahs, and national parks, attract millions of tourists worldwide, generating significant revenue for the government through ecotourism, adventure tourism, wildlife watching and nature based recreation activities. These are only some of the benefits of biodiversity.**
- **Supports economic opportunities: Biodiversity-rich ecosystems, such as coral reefs, rainforests, savannahs, and national parks, attract millions of tourists worldwide, generating significant revenue for the government through ecotourism, adventure tourism, wildlife watching and nature based recreation activities.**

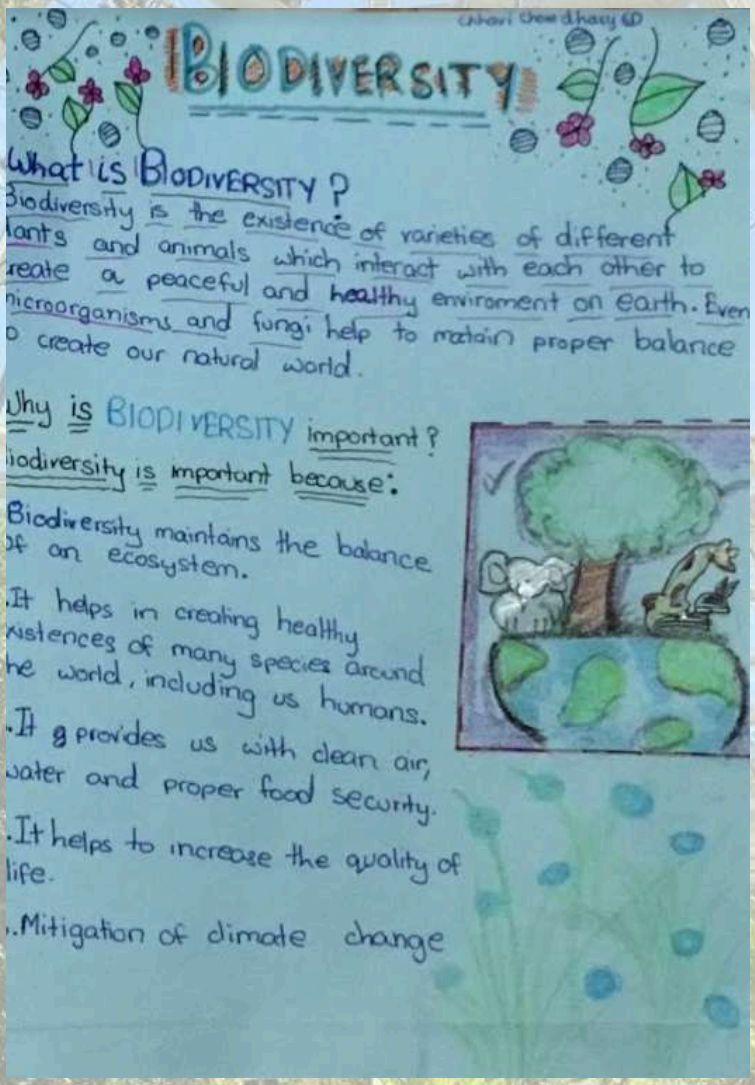
S1: E4
“Yuvraj Sharma, 6D”



This vibrant painting captures an underwater scene with a sea turtle swimming gracefully among colorful coral reefs. Two pink jellyfish float nearby, adding a whimsical touch to the deep blue ocean background. However global issues sch as climate change, pollution, overfishing, and habitat destruction has significantly impact marine biodiversity. Overfishing depletes fish populations and disrupts ecological balance, including coral reef degradation. These combined pressures diminish marine biodiversity, impair ecosystem functions, and compromise the ocean's ability to provide essential services to humans and the planet. Therefore it's very important to have harmony amongst all a peaceful coexistence.

S1: E5

“Chhavi Chowdary”



Biodiversity is a variety of different species living altogether in Earth’s ecosystems. Biodiversity is very essential for maintaining and sustaining life as various plants and animals are all interconnected to one another for creating balance throughout the glove. Biodiversity is important in several ways which include conserving life processes so organisms can get all required necessities, preventing climate change and enhancing quality of life.

S1: E6
“Better Together, Aarit Ranjan 7D”



Two divers dive into the deep and beautiful sea only to find that it has been polluted by humans and all the beauty has dissipated. Although they are from different countries they must work as one to rid the sea of all the pollution. They pick up the trash one by one and cleanse the sea. The sea’s color returns as the divers return home. On their way back, the fishes come to thank them for their deed which will serve as a reminder not to pollute the sea and that the fishes also deserve clean habitats to live in.

S1: E7
“Darsh Golecha, 8E”



The photograph is the essence of the beauty of life in the oceans and seas of our planet, capturing just how diverse and phenomenal animals really are.
This photograph also conveys the message of saving these precious creatures and preserving thier biodiversity so they do not get extinct.

S1: E8
“Praket Mahapatra, 9B”











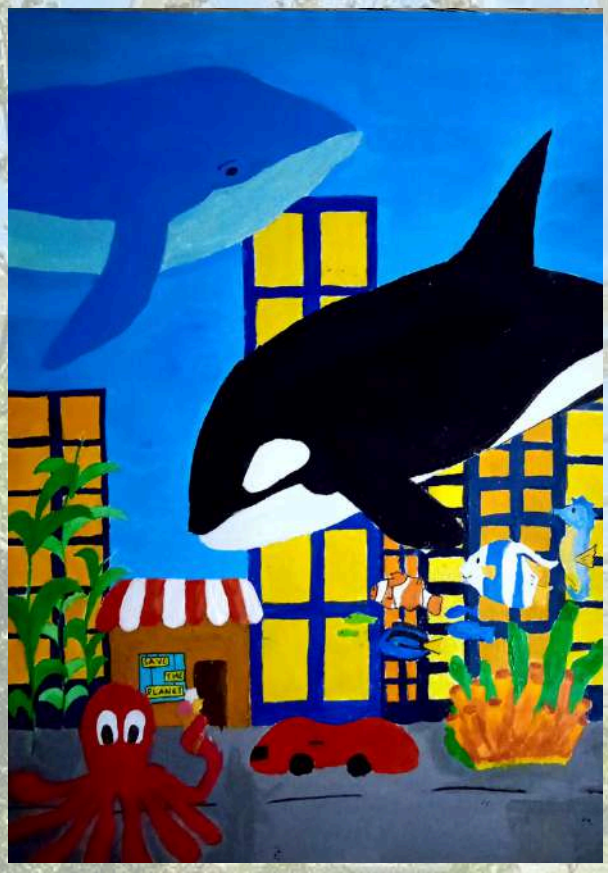
Marine life is connected to us in important roles that are necessary for our daily lives. Oceans keep absorbing carbon dioxide and heat which helps reduce the effects of climate change. They provide food for people and their livelihoods depend on the oceans. Keeping them safe can enhance our well being.

S1: E9
“Richness of Marine Life, Zanna Bhagat 9F”



The black and white section may represent the diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds found across the globe, while the colorful section symbolizes the richness and vibrancy that comes from embracing these differences. Together, the two sections show us the interconnectedness of our world, reminding us that despite our distinctions, we are all part of the same global community.

S1: E10
“Shreya Prasad, IBDP 1”



My artwork blends urban landscapes with oceanic life, showcasing submerged buildings and roads alongside marine creatures and sea plants. This exaggerated flood scenario, a result of climate change, underscores global issues impacting us all. It emphasizes the theme of Global Perspectives and Interconnectedness by revealing the effects of rising sea levels on diverse ecosystems and societies, illustrating that actions in one part of the world can have far-reaching consequences, affecting environments and communities globally.

S1: E11
Recycle Revolution

- Schanna Muliyil, Ira Gupta, IBDP 2



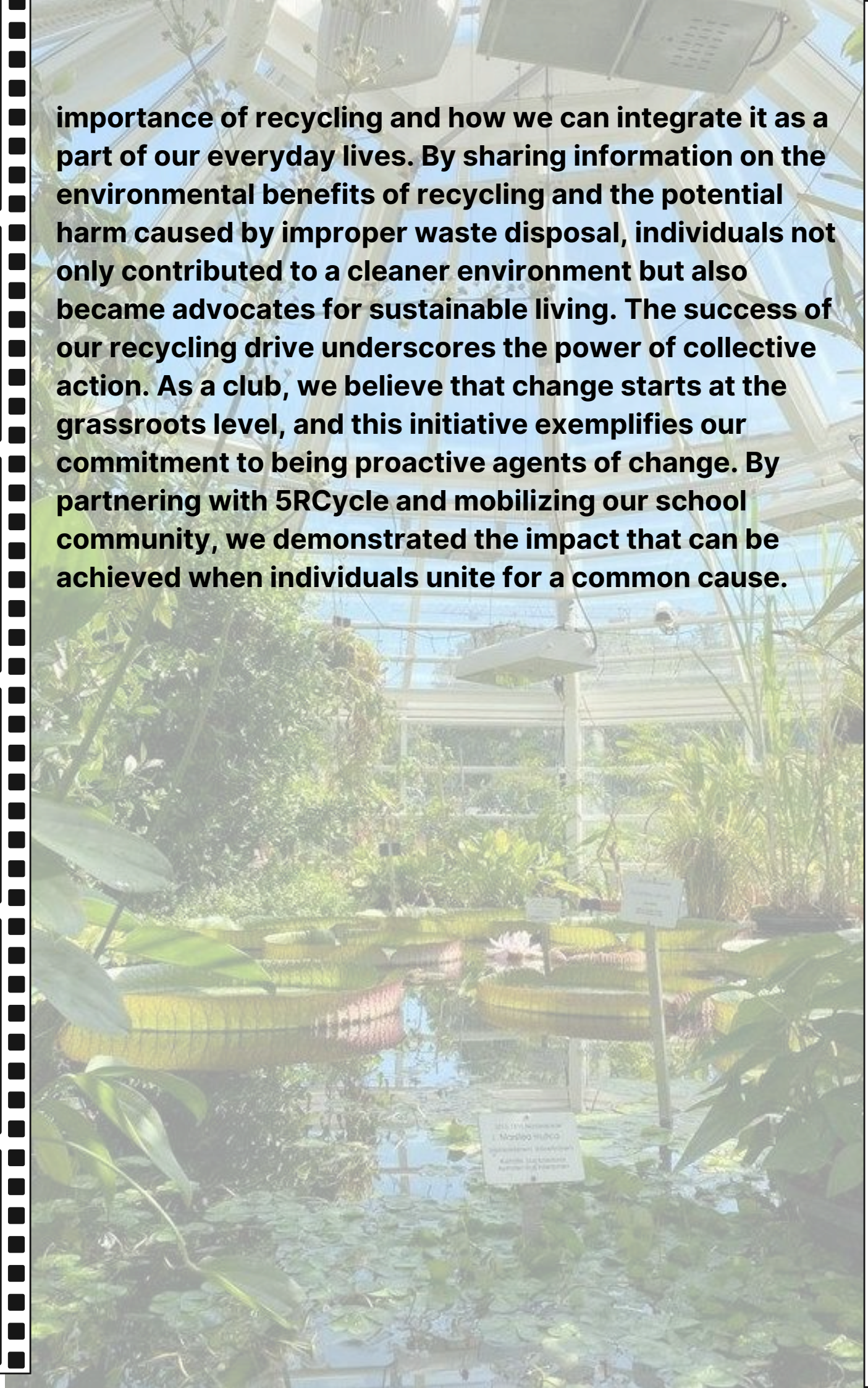




In the spirit of commitment to environmental stewardship, the Podar Climate Action Club ended 2023 with a three-day recycling drive in collaboration with 5RCycle. This endeavor aimed not only to raise awareness about the importance of recycling but also to take a practical step towards reducing our environmental footprint. The result? A staggering 115 kilograms of paper, plastic, foil, glass, and electronic waste were collected, marking the success of our collective effort to make a positive impact on the environment.

For three consecutive days, our dedicated team of IBDP and IBCP students took to the gates of our school armed with boxes and bags, ready to collect all kinds of recyclable materials. The drive served as a beacon, inviting students, teachers, and staff alike to actively participate in the recycling movement. The response was overwhelming, with the school community wholeheartedly embracing the opportunity to dispose of their waste responsibly.

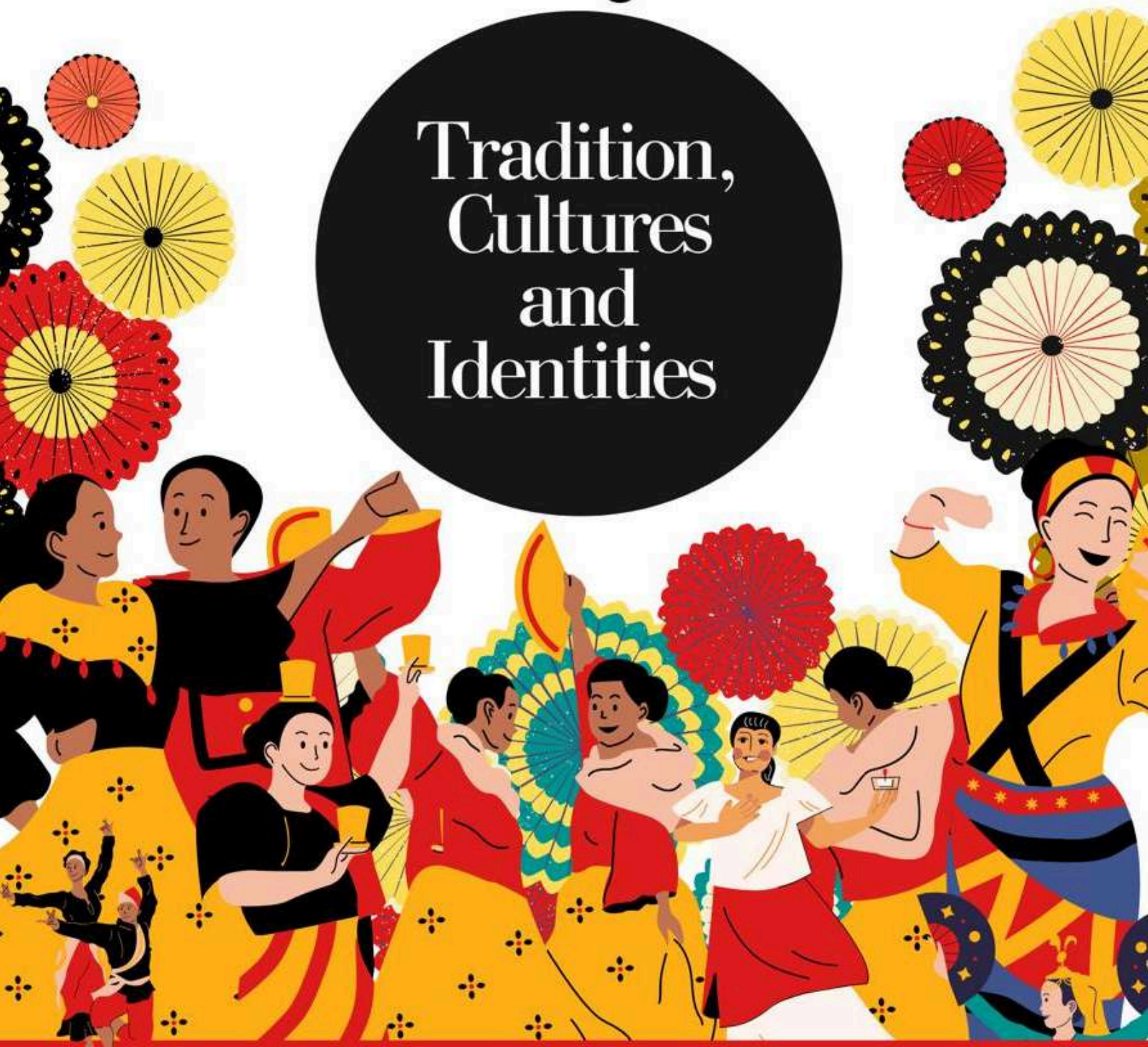
The success of this recycling drive was measured not just by the enthusiasm of our organisers and participants but also by the tangible impact we made. Over three days, we collected a whopping 115 kilograms of recyclable material. This included paper, cardboard, plastics, and more—each piece is a small contribution to a larger, more sustainable world.



importance of recycling and how we can integrate it as a part of our everyday lives. By sharing information on the environmental benefits of recycling and the potential harm caused by improper waste disposal, individuals not only contributed to a cleaner environment but also became advocates for sustainable living. The success of our recycling drive underscores the power of collective action. As a club, we believe that change starts at the grassroots level, and this initiative exemplifies our commitment to being proactive agents of change. By partnering with 5RCycle and mobilizing our school community, we demonstrated the impact that can be achieved when individuals unite for a common cause.

Luminous original series

Tradition, Cultures and Identities



Play

2023-2025

informative | fascinating | historical

Episodes

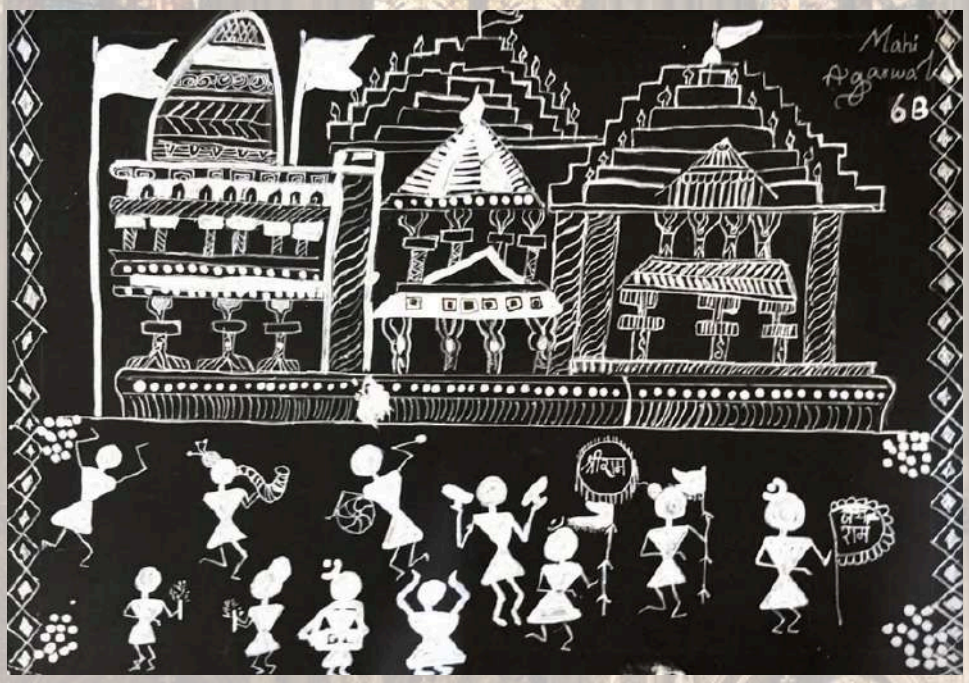
① 

② 

③ 

Let's ignite creativity and inspire positive change!

S2: E1
“Ram Mandir, Mahi Agarwal 6B”



The Ayodhya Ram Mandir, a cultural and architectural marvel, reflects India’s rich heritage and spiritual ethos. Moreover, this mandir is potrayed in a traditional warli style heightens the spirit of tradition that lingers behind this architectural monument.

S2: E2

Cultural Tapestry

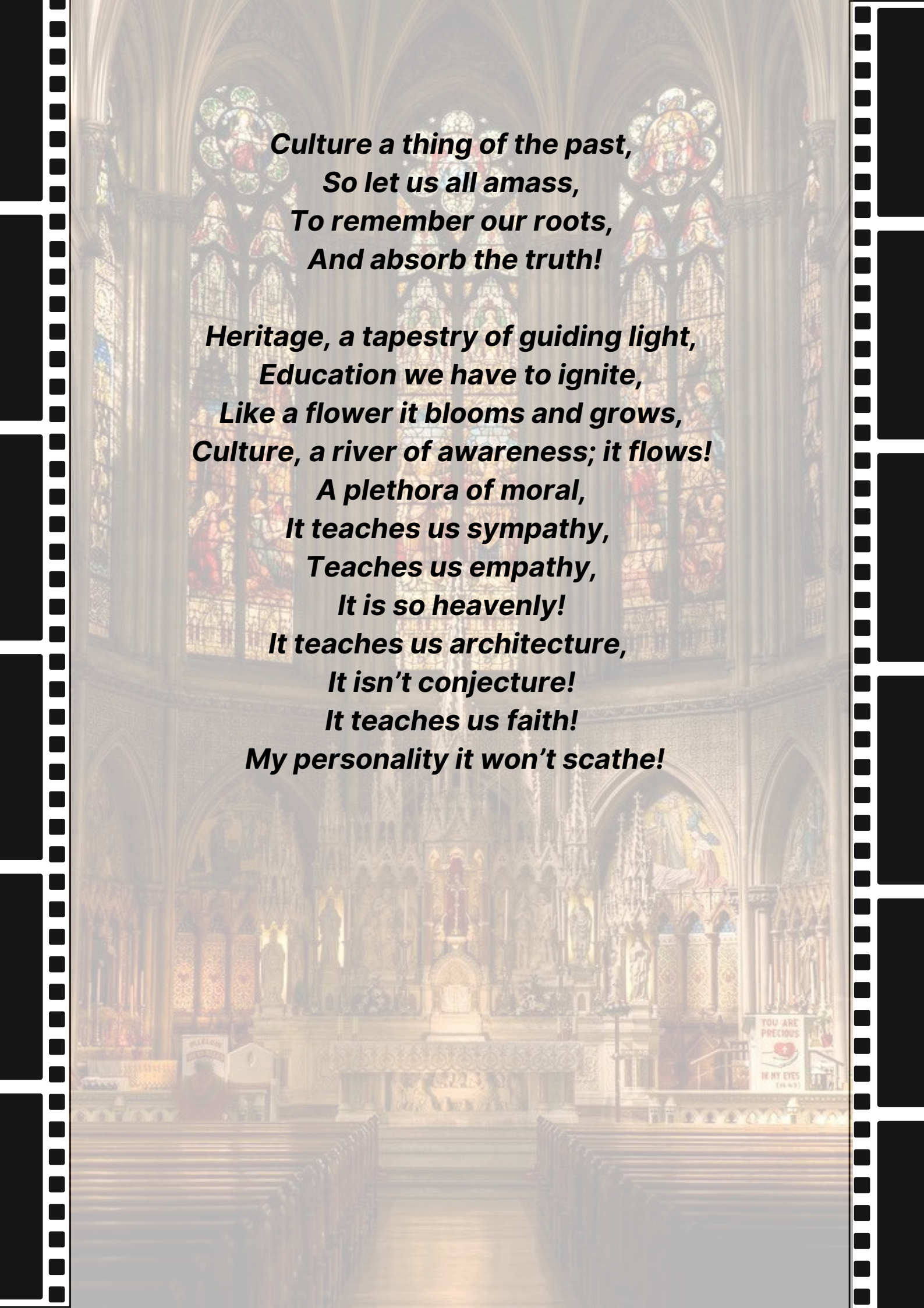
- Khwati Swain, 6B

Culture, a word full of pride,
Why does she need to prove her might?
From the snows of the North,
To the fleece of the South,
From the trees of East,
To the sands of the West.
Only one thing stays intact,
Inanimate from the past,
CULTURE IT IS!

From the time of the Harrapans,
To the era of technology,
People kept everything,
But forgot one thing,
CULTURE!

It is a word with a million meanings,
With diversity and faith, it is teeming!
A global perspective can be nurtured,
If only culture is preserved,
Our conscience won't be shattered,
Let us not leave CULTURE unobserved!

Perspectives both local and global,
Cultural heritage titled noble.
An approach towards this concept,
A valiant attempt let us all accept.



Culture a thing of the past,
So let us all amass,
To remember our roots,
And absorb the truth!

Heritage, a tapestry of guiding light,
Education we have to ignite,
Like a flower it blooms and grows,
Culture, a river of awareness; it flows!
A plethora of moral,
It teaches us sympathy,
Teaches us empathy,
It is so heavenly!
It teaches us architecture,
It isn't conjecture!
It teaches us faith!
My personality it won't scathe!

S2: E3
Preferring Heritage

- Krishiv Gogia, 6B

The importance of tradition, culture and identity are like the roots of a tree, while helping us grow into the future. Preserving our heritage is the only way of remembering where we come from, but it also shapes who we are where we are going.

Firstly, the preservation of heritage connects us with our ancestors. Imagine a world without the stories and rituals which were passed down from generations to generation. Our traditions are full of lessons and knowledge that have stood the test of time. We keep our history alive like this.

Tradition and Culture provide us with a strong sense of belonging. Think about a family gathering or even a community celebration. These moments create bonds that go beyond just being blood related or living in the same neighborhood.

Cultural identity is like a fingerprint, unique to each person and community. It reflects the values and customs that make us who we are. It is not about closing ourselves off from the world, but about celebrating our uniqueness and appreciating differences around us.

In conclusion, tradition, culture, and identity provide roots, a sense of belonging and a unique identity. By preserving our heritage, we not only honor our past, but also live a richer and more connected future.

S2: E4
Tradition & Culture

- Ayaan Sharma, 7

Tradition and culture are like the special ingredients that make a recipe unique. They're the things that people in a group do, believe, and celebrate together. Imagine you have a secret handshake with your best friend – that's a bit like a tradition, something special shared between you two.

Traditions are like time travellers. They pass down stories, customs, and celebrations from grandparents to parents, and then to you. Maybe it's a family game night every Friday or a special meal during holidays – these are traditions that make your family, well, yours.

Now, culture is like a big, colourful mosaic. It's not just about what you do; it's also about how you talk, what you eat, and the stories you tell. Culture is the music you dance to, the language you speak, and the art you create. It's the unique way your group expresses itself. Imagine a world where everyone liked the same things and did everything the same way. It might be a bit boring, right? That's why having different cultures and traditions is so important.

It's like having a box of crayons with every colour imaginable. But, here's the thing – just like you wouldn't want to lose your favourite crayon, we don't want to lose our special traditions and cultures. In our big world, where people from different places meet and share, it's important to learn from each other while still keeping the things that make us who we are. So, whether it's celebrating birthdays, telling stories, or enjoying special foods, traditions and cultures make our world a vibrant, exciting place. They're the spice in the soup of life, making everything a little more interesting and colorful.

S2: E5
Life in Rajasthan

- Selvi Somani, 7D

I am from Rajasthan and you may know that state as a dry desert. However Rajasthan is much more than that, it is the largest state of India with vast culture,authentic tradition and beautiful architecture. It is home to many cities and forts. Including Jaipur:The pink City and Jaisalmer Fort which is an exquisite and one of the most famous forts in Rajasthan. There are over 250 forts and over 50 cities in Rajasthan.

Culture and traditions:
Rajasthan has a rich tradition of folk music and dance, with each region possessing its unique style. The music has strong religious undertones to it and is sung with devotion. The Ghoomar dance from Jodhpur and the Kalbeliya dance of Jaisalmer have gained international recognition. Folk music is a vital part of Rajasthani culture. Bhopa, Chang, Teratali, Ghindar, Kachchi Ghori, Tejaji, and Parth dance are examples of traditional Rajasthani culture.

Clothing:
Some of the traditional dresses of Rajasthan are the colorful Ghagra and Choli for women and Dhoti and angarkha for men, with Jootis or Mojris for both of them.

Food:
Rajasthani culinary tradition is known for array of sweet dishes and desserts from the Naivedhya tradition of Hindu temples. Since Rajasthan is a state dominated by Hindus who consider cows as holy and divine, Cow milk has special significance in their diet.

Language:
Rajasthani is the official language of the state and is spoken by the majority of the population. However, there are also several other languages spoken here, including Hindi, Marwadi, and Urdu. The oldest language in Rajasthan is Marwadi.

Rajasthan is not only a beautiful state it's also very colourful and full of rich history. I would definitely recommend you to visit this enthusiastic state.



S2: E6
Cultural Perspectives

- Rashi Chawan, IBDP 1

"The beauty of the world lies in the diversity of the people"

Family is one of the greatest bindings of human kind. It brings together people through support and love. Regardless of any circumstances, family accompanies us throughout. Whether it is a happy family or a family based on memories of ancestors, everyone has relatives bound by intricate blood ties, intertwined relationships and cultural heritage.

As documented by numerous professionals, culture plays a key role in defining a particular group of people. From physical objects to different ways of thinking, culture adds significance to human life and unites people with similar views and interests. Described by several anthropologists, there are approximately 3814 distinct cultures, each with their own beliefs, tradition, language, history and art forms. The species as a whole exploits the tendency to diverge through cognitive systems which marks differences between communities, forming different cultures.

Cultural identity is used as a reference to the way a group of people lead their lives. Culture also greatly influences communication. Communication varies in different cultures creating a barrier between groups of people. As such, what is deemed acceptable by one culture or community may not be accepted by another.

There are a myriad of beliefs and customs which differ between different cultures. The mere concept of love marriage is not acceptable among many Muslims whereas it is encouraged in the American continents. According to the Islamic religion, the concept of 'love before marriage' is not inherently haram, but rather the expression of romantic or intimate love outside the framework of marriage is considered haram. Even with marriages, many cultures have unique ways of celebrating weddings.

The basic forms of greeting also differ between cultures. 'Namaste' is commonly used to express deep respect and greetings. It is a formal salutation used not only in India but also in Nepal, by Hindus, Jains and Buddhists, and many continue to use this outside the Indian subcontinent. Bows are the traditional greeting in East Asia, particularly in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, China and Vietnam. On the contrary, in continents other than Asia a simple firm handshake is used to show greetings.

The frequency of cultural and population differentiation also relates to the probability of a boundary, natural or social, forming between two communities. High levels of diversity of cultures are more likely to occur where there is a high probability of geographical isolation, and where there is a high gradient in resource availability between habitats. Culture is what shapes us and our identities. Culture is a treasure trove of richness and diversity and a reflection of our shared human heritage that is both fascinating and beautiful.

S2: E7
Threads of Tradition

- Ira Gupta, IBDP 1

In a world that will never stop evolving, keeping connected to one's roots and heritage is of utmost importance. Having a cultural identity provides a strong connection not only to our heritage but also to our ancestry, which further allows us to understand and appreciate our roots.

Knowing where we come from gives us a sense of pride and belonging, we become part of a larger cultural community. It's about finding that balance between embracing change while simultaneously holding onto our roots.

Cultural identity also plays a vital role in preserving our traditions and culture. These customs and beliefs are not just part of our history; they shape who we are as individuals and how we behave in today's society. Being a cultural ambassador is not just an option; it's a responsibility.

When people share memories, traditions, and holidays in a society that might feel divided at times, it becomes a way to promote understanding between all.

Maintaining a cultural identity is not about resisting change it's about influencing the present with knowledge of the past. It's a promise of a future where so many cultures can live together in harmony.

S2: E8
“Mandala Heart, Gunjan Pithwalla IBDP 1”



This artwork shows a human heart with mandala designs inside of it, it is a beautiful intricate art piece which is also comforting to one. This drawing creates a harmonious balance between emotional depth and spiritual symmetry. It symbolises love, inner peace, and the interconnectedness of all things. Overall, a heart drawing with a mandala would be a captivating and meaningful piece of art, inviting contemplation and reflection. The heart here signifies love, affection, unity to our spiritual soul, courage and strength and the heart is often associated with healing and compassion, both for oneself and others. It symbolizes the ability to heal emotional wounds and show empathy towards other’s pain. Mandala designs are rich in symbolism, with each element carrying a specific meaning. Over here it is trying to show that we should know where we originate from.

S2: E9

“Tanisha Chowdary”



India is known for its numerous cultures. One of them includes Vedic chanting. This chant has been known and practiced 3000 years back and it is India’s oldest culture. India also has many traditions. The most prominent one is the ‘Namaste Greeting’. This greeting showcases veneration, worship and reverence. India’s identity is shown by its national flag and its multiple regions

LUMINOUS ORIGINAL

SPORTS AND RECREATION











PLAY

S3: E1
Roblox, Bringing Everyone Together

- Shiv Chatterjee, 6B

Roblox is an online multiplayer game released in 2006. This game allows users to play and create their own game. It was created by David Baszucki and Erik Cassel. This game also has its own currency called “Robux” which you can use buy gamepasses.

The beta version of Roblox was originally under the name “Dynablocks”. After the testing of the demos, the game was renamed as “Roblox”. The game was officially launched on September 1 st of 2006. The game has had many updates over the years, and you can also play it in VR. There are also a dozen of experiences that you can be able to play with the click of a button, the two most popular games on Roblox is Brookhaven Roleplay and Adopt Me.

Roblox currently has about 164 million users and has grown rapidly in 2019 because of the COVID- 19 pandemic. This game allows users from different country’s to play, connect and be friends with each other. The game also helps the users chat with each other. Users can also make their own experiences with the Roblox Studio app. I got into this game because my friend was playing it on his computer, and whenever we play it, we have fun and it helps remove our stress. The game has also received a lot of praise by critics and audiences alike.

Technology can help us make other games like Roblox. Technology also allows interconnectedness because it helps us play together on different platforms. When we play together on the game we share different feelings like happiness and sadness and fun. Interconnectedness helps us play to play, build communities and understand each other.

S3: E2
“Henriqua Patel, 6C”



This artwork is a vibrant representation of various sports, divided into four quadrants each depicting a different sport with silhouettes: soccer, field hockey, tennis and cricket. At the centre is a trophy, symbolising achievement and the competitive spirit common to all sports. The use of bold colours and dynamic silhouettes captures the energy and diversity of athletic activities, celebrating the passion and skill involved in each sport.

S3: E3
Dancing with the Ball, Messi!

- Aadi Vij, 7A

In the stadium, he dances with the ball.
like a maestro in a concert hall.
The name is Lionel Messi,
the greatest of all!

Messi has magic in dribbles and kicks,
he can put any opposition in a fix.
His passes are as sharp as a knife,
which makes the game come to life.

His passion is unmatched,
it shows in his match.
With his dedication,
he plays for his nation.

Messi has an exceptional teamwork,
it makes the team a dreamwork.
Messi loves his fans
and his fans love him back,
that's something that only legends can have!

S3: E4
Character Building Through the Realm of Sports

- Ashvat Rawat, 7A

Many associate sports with only competition with medals and trophies. While that isn't wrong, sports are also an extremely good and proven way to build character through camaraderie, sportsmanship and more.

Sport offers many different paths to learning various skills like teamwork, problem solving, resilience, perseverance and many more. However, because not every skill is related or assists in character building, it's important to narrow down the ones that do. The first, above all others, is sportsmanship. A great example of a complete sportsman is Virat Kohli. He is always focused on being the best version of himself, on and off the field. Whenever his team wins, he can always be seen applauding and acknowledging not only his teammates but also the opposing team and telling them 'Well played.' Even if he loses, he congratulates the other team and finds no shame in admitting that they were the better team on that day. He is a true sportsman in every sense of the word. He shows grace in the face of defeat and humility in victory.

Sport teaches you perseverance, discipline and patience too. It is a great analogy for life as well, both with their highs and lows, and the need it creates to navigate through confidence
and belief in oneself and their team.

S3: E5
The Ballon D'or Heist

- Nirvaan Mathur, 7C

This year, as it has been for the past 4 years, Lionel Messi has taken home yet another Ballon D'or. In a video shared on Inter Miami's YouTube Channel it shows Messi without a care about his eight Ballon D'or, holding it with simply one hand! Messi has won another Golden Ball but does he deserve it?

The stats say no. Haaland had 53 goals in the 2022/23 season while Messi had a mere 36 Halaand won a domestic double (Premier League & FA Cup) along with the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Super Cup while Messi has won the FIFA World Cup and Ligue 1. Even though Lionel Messi has paled in comparison to Haaland this season, the Man CIty marksman reacted like a sportsman when Leo won the award.

Another thing to lament about France Football is their unfair treatment to the backbones of any successful team, the defense. In its history, the Ballon D'or has been awarded to only 3 defenders and this motivates up and coming footballers to choose to play midfield or attack because every footballer wants individual glory and when you are in defense you have to sacrifice that.

Something funny that just recently happened is that Inter Miami had organised a friendly to honour Lionel Messi's record extending eighth Ballon D'or against a US Team.

And they lost 2-1 to New York City FC, in Miami! Instead of honouring Messi they humbled him.

S3: E6
Celebrating Interconnectedness

- Aayush Sing, 8B

Sports are a testament to the interconnectedness of the human experience. They bridge cultures, transcend borders, and bring people together in the pursuit of physical excellence. Whether it's a group of friends playing a casual game of basketball at the neighborhood park or the world's elite athletes competing on the grandest of stages, sports provide a common ground where people from all walks of life come together.

On the surface, sports are about competition, physical prowess, and entertainment. But beneath the surface, they offer much more. They promote social interaction, teamwork, and camaraderie. In the world of sports, one's identity, background, or beliefs matter less than their dedication and skill. This shared pursuit for excellence creates bonds that defy differences and reinforce our interconnectedness.

Sports figures, too, become role models. Their dedication, discipline, and sportsmanship inspire the next generation, teaching values that extend far beyond the playing field. These athletes exemplify how the pursuit of greatness can lead to success and inspire others to reach for their own potential.

In this interconnected world, sports serve as a universal language, breaking down barriers, fostering friendships, and uniting people with a common passion. Regardless of where you come from, sports provide an arena where everyone is welcome, and where the bonds formed through competition and shared experiences strengthen the ties that bind us all.

S3: E7
Vanquished Glory

- Mahi Shah, 9A

An ode to the interconnected beliefs that shaped the ICC Men's CWC 2023

In the fervour, our country strives,
To my school, the trophy arrives.
Hand in hand, we cheer for our country, confident,
A symphony of pride, a collective sentiment.
Witnessing firsthand, the heartbeat of a nation,
Interconnected cheers, a harmonious elation.

Matches unfold, global battles commence,
Patriotisms dance, an intricate sequence.
Interconnectedness unveiled on the playfield,
A medley of nations, woven tight, revealed.
Proud host country, amid the echoing cheers,
Each match, a sentiment of shared years.

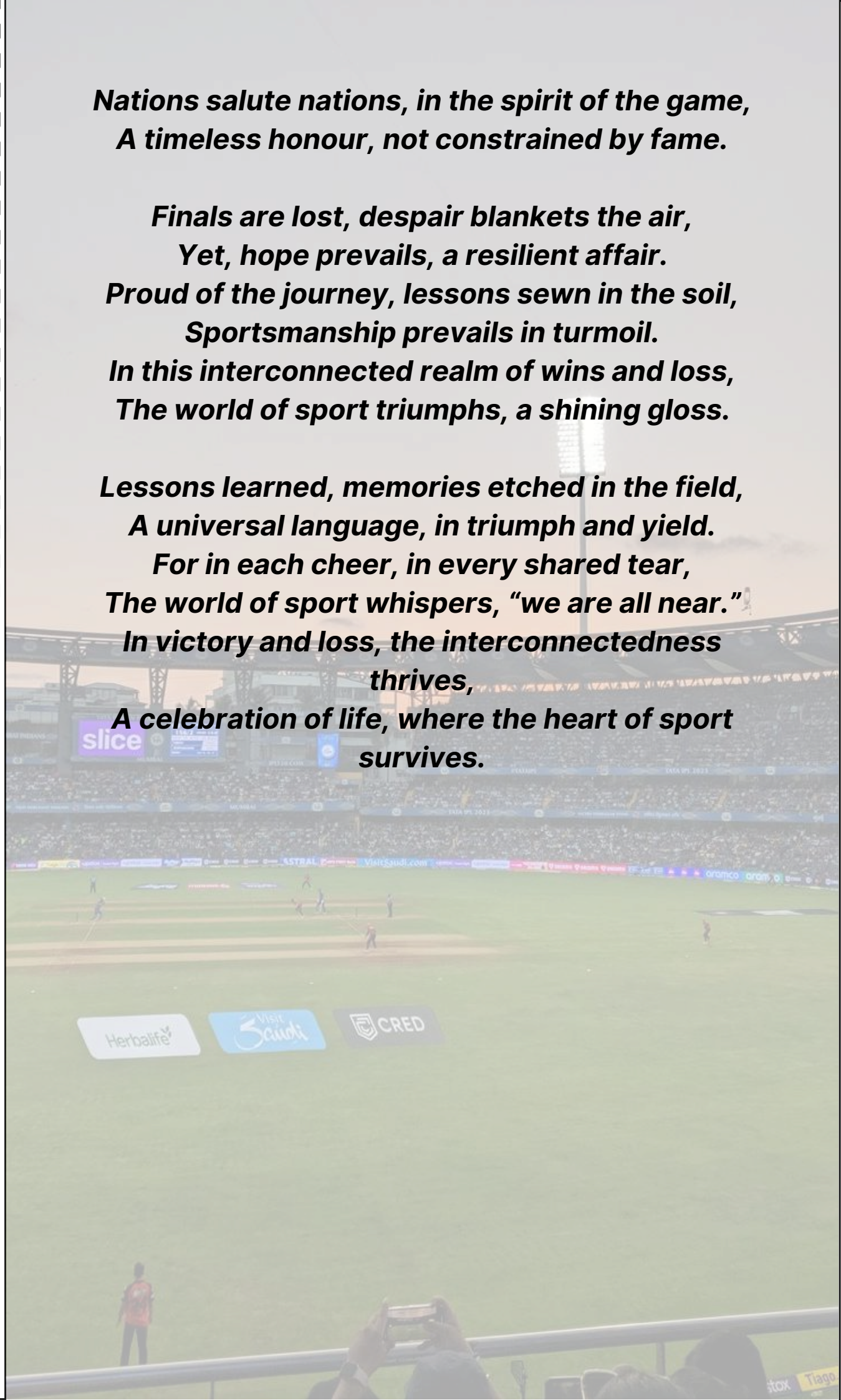
Undefeated streak, a triumph untold,
Ten matches in a row, history unfolds.
Proud and excited, hearts in unison beat,
In the realm of sport, victorys rhythmic feat.
Each match, fuelling our pride,
In the chase of triumph, dreams coincide.

In the semis', records are set,
But what lingers most is mutual respect.
Cheers echo, not just for the runs netted,
But for the bows exchanged, a virtue embedded.

Nations salute nations, in the spirit of the game,
A timeless honour, not constrained by fame.

Finals are lost, despair blankets the air,
Yet, hope prevails, a resilient affair.
Proud of the journey, lessons sewn in the soil,
Sportsmanship prevails in turmoil.
In this interconnected realm of wins and loss,
The world of sport triumphs, a shining gloss.

Lessons learned, memories etched in the field,
A universal language, in triumph and yield.
For in each cheer, in every shared tear,
The world of sport whispers, "we are all near."
In victory and loss, the interconnectedness thrives,
A celebration of life, where the heart of sport survives.









LUMINOUS

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION







S4: E1

My Motherland

- Mahi Shah, 9A

In childhood dreams, I sought distant shores;
Beyond my motherland, where dialects explored;
A world of voices, a symphony grand;
Outside my borders, in a foreign land.

In teenage years, within school's embrace;
I learned the languages, a linguistic chase;
Verbs and syntax formed a classroom toil;
Knowledge blossomed, like flowers in soil.

As an adult, with savings in hand;
I traveled wide, to places unplanned;
Learning languages, embracing the land;
A global dialogue, diverse and grand.

Yet, in the end, a truth steadfast;
I return to roots, where memories last;
My motherland, with cultures in hand;
A mosaic of worth, in each grain of sand.

S4: E2
Woven Through Semantics

- Navya Raghu, IBDP 1

The symphony had been alive from the beginning but only now can you feel it.

The sound has simmered over time through different mediums but the lay man had chosen to ignore it for it pushed their very comfortability of taking in new creation. A very nonsensical move indeed for what is life without the intake of knowledge, regardless of what tongue it is given birth from.

Put simply by Bong Joon-Ho while receiving a dual Oscar for Best Picture and Director, "Once you overcome the one-inch-tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films." This need not only be put through cinematography of course but the fact of the matter is that the average individual should not think that the process of consuming language has to be binary, or put simply, communicated through English!

This millennial and it's previous generations of course have provided gems which have lived up to [Bong] Joon - ho's words and have created the proper domino effect to let talents from across the world shine. Proving that the performance of universal emotions need not be held as a monolith because humanity is one which should allow the growth and not the stagnancy of linguistics.

With that, the cursor ends here alongside the reader. So tell me, who so ever glances at this mere narration, can you hear it? Can you hear the music?

S4: E3
Voices Unique

- Schanna Muliyil IBDP 2

Actions echo louder than words in the air
Hands of care,
bridging the unknown
Small gestures where love is subtly shown

Love knows no borders,
conquering fears
A message clear,
where everyone is dear

Diversity in languages,
an art untold
Let the beauty of unity,
in thy heart unfold

Let humanity speak,
in voices unique.

LUMINOUS ORIGINAL

LAW AND LEGALITIES



★★★★★

Luminous dives into the theme of law and legality.

PLAY 2023-2025







S5: E1
Peace & Conflict

- Aarav Bhardwaj, 7C

In today's age of globalisation, even the giant leap in the field of science and technology have failed to create a "culture of peace" – be it in the individuals, in society or among nations. The key reasons that has impacted peace building process thereby, making it challenging are conflicts, insecurity, weak institutions, limited access to justice and poor economic performance. They pose a threat to sustainable development as poor people as well as the underdeveloped nations are getting side-lined.

It is true that global economic integration is creating opportunities for people around the world, but it is also leading to widening the gaps between the poorest and richest countries which is a major root cause of wars. The identification and understanding of sources and causes of conflict will definitely be a key factor in reducing the incidence of conflicts, thereby establishing global peace. The concept of conflict, peace and security has undergone a sea change over the decades and the need is to usher in a more humane concept of peace and security, where individual rights and liberty are safeguarded and socio-economic inequalities are reduced. By respecting human rights in the time of crisis, we will build effective and inclusive solutions. Human rights put people at centre stage which result in preserving human dignity.

If the sources and core causes are eradicated and grievances of conflicting parties are addressed, conflict resolution will become a much simpler process leading towards the fulfilment of sustainable development goal (SDG).

S5: E2
Quantum Computing

- Schanna Muliyil IBDP 2

In the eternal tussle between human innovation and malicious intent, technological progress often serves as both a guiding light and an augury of ethical predicaments. Today, while quantum computing holds the potential to revolutionize our world, we are also confronted with the reality of its potential embezzlement.

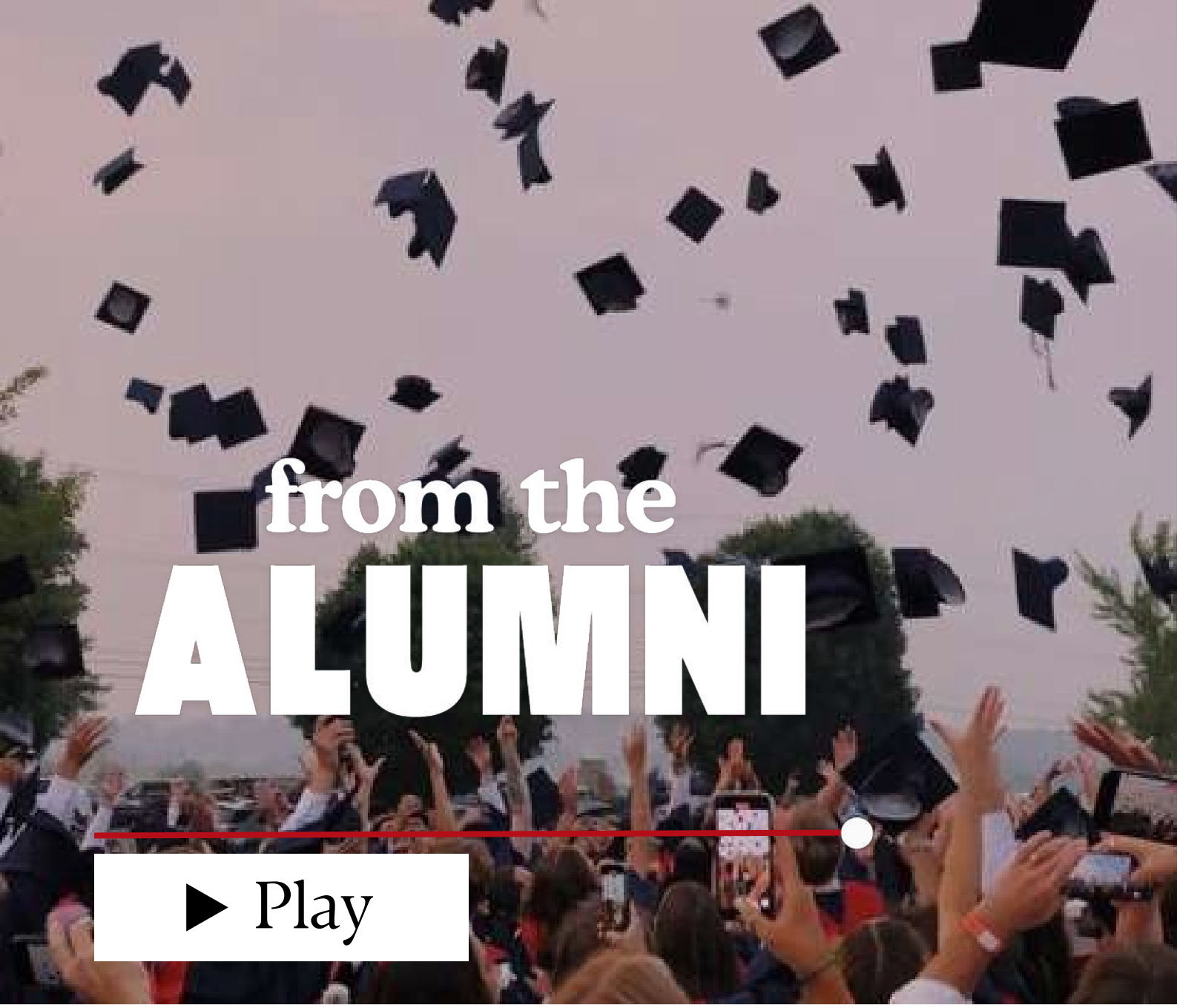
One significant development in computational ability is quantum computing. Unlike classical computers that operate on binary bits, quantum computers leverage quantum bits, or qubits, which can exist in multiple states simultaneously. While still in its early stages not yet widely accessible, quantum computing's potential for exponentially faster calculations is undeniable.

Yet, this unprecedented power poses a formidable threat to cybersecurity. Traditional encryption methods, reliant on the difficulty of solving complex mathematical problems, may falter against quantum algorithms like Shor's algorithm. While these threats remain largely theoretical, the possibility of cryptographic protocol breachment raises concerns. Efforts to develop quantum-resistant encryption techniques are advancing, but their efficiency remains uncertain.

Technology as a tool is quickly adapted by criminals. While the potential for quantum computing's malevolent exploitation is theoretical, concerns persist. Criminals could leverage quantum capabilities to decrypt communications, steal intellectual property, or even perpetrate financial fraud. Moreover, the advent of quantum computing may birth new, evasive forms of ransomware and malware.

The advent of quantum computing presents a dual challenge for law enforcement. While it may hamper traditional interception methods, it also offers potential benefits in data analysis. However, the borderless nature of cyber threats complicates regulation and oversight efforts.

Quantum computing stands as a double-edged sword in the realms of communication security and law enforcement. While it offers unprecedented innovation, it also poses substantial challenges. As quantum computing advances, collective action is vital to fortify encryption standards, enhance cybersecurity, and equip law enforcement with the tools to navigate this complex landscape. Only through concerted efforts can we steer the intersection of quantum computing and cybersecurity towards a secure future.



2024 1s 4ep HD

Read enriching pieces from our excellent alumni in the 6th season of Luminous 2024!

Cast: Manasi Kanojia, Nikoleta Kayya, Rhea Mehta, Ananya Pathak

Genres: Biodiversity, Culture and Identity,

S6: E1
Celebrating Biodiversity

-Manasi Kanojia, Class of 2020

Dear Podar family,

As a proud Podar alum from the Class of 2020, I'm thrilled to reconnect and share some thoughts on an essential, urgent topic—biodiversity. Our planet is an intricate, interwoven web of life, home to millions of unique species. Each one, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, plays a vital role in maintaining the natural balance that sustains life as we know it. Biodiversity provides us with everything from the air we breathe to the food we eat and the resources we rely on every day.

But our planet's biodiversity is under severe threat. Habitat loss, pollution, climate change, and unsustainable practices are driving countless species toward extinction at alarming rates. When we lose even one species, we lose part of Earth's resilience and beauty.

This may sound overwhelming, but every one of us has the power to make a difference. It starts with awareness and small actions—choosing sustainable products, reducing waste, supporting conservation efforts, and spreading the word. Each step we take today helps preserve the wonders of our world for future generations.

Let’s be the generation that values and protects biodiversity. Together, we can make choices that ensure a thriving planet for all life. Remember, our commitment today will shape the world tomorrow.

Stay inspired and keep working toward a greener, more sustainable future.

Warm regards,
Manasi Kanojia
Podar International, Class of 2020

S6: E2 Embracing Cultural Identity

-Nikoleta Kayya mega, Class of 2020

Dear Podar family,

As an alum of the Class of 2020, reflecting on my journey since my school years has deepened my appreciation for something often discussed but not always understood—cultural identity. In a world that's more connected than ever, knowing who we are and where we come from is both a source of strength and a foundation for growth.

Cultural identity is about more than traditions, language, or festivals. It's a sense of belonging that shapes our values, perspectives, and how we relate to the world around us. At Podar, surrounded by diverse backgrounds, I learned to respect, celebrate, and share in different cultures, which broadened my view and enriched my own identity.

The friendships and conversations I had, whether about customs, beliefs, or family stories, helped me understand that our differences don't divide us—they deepen our understanding of humanity.

Today, as we navigate an increasingly global society, it's important to hold onto our roots while remaining open to others. Embracing our cultural identity reminds us of who we are, and at the same time, allows us to connect authentically with others. For me, being rooted in my culture has been an anchor, helping me stay grounded as I grow, explore, and make my mark in the world.

To all current students: honor your heritage, be curious about others', and carry your cultural identity proudly. In doing so, you'll find strength, resilience, and a sense of belonging that travels with you, wherever life may lead.

Warm regards,
Nikoleta Kayya
Podar International, Class of 2020

S6: E3
Alumni Experiences

-Ananya Pathak, Class of 2024

Another year, another Luminous Magazine Edition! It's incredibly gratifying to witness this magazine live on and to have had the opportunity to contribute several times—both when I was still a Podar International School student and now that I have graduated. I'm grateful to the coordinators, the teachers, and the editorial team of 2024 for creating this space.

As an English Literature major, I ought to be well-equipped to concisely describe those two years well-spent—drafting more IA drafts than should be humanly possible, co-creating more club activities at every turn, running late to class with garishly-coloured hands from dyeing my latest art piece. Not to mention putting together a theatre production of Lorca's *Blood Wedding*, repotting the Climate Action Club's plants between classes, and working through an endless number of Extended Essay revisions. Yet, when I try to think of a singular moment or metaphor to represent my IBDP experience, I can come up with none. It was always a journey of multiples, juggling uncountable commitments with more to squeeze in as and when they came my way.

Finding space, within all this, to grow into my own intellectual curiosities and passionate side-quests was a task of its own. But I think I was guided well—anytime I'd knock on a teacher's classroom door with a new research idea or on the coordinator's office door with anxious queries, I would be met with genuinely indulgent interest and kindness. We'd be able to exchange discourse, stories, and theories without fear of running out of time.

Oddly enough I have found time to pass by quicker in college. Here it's class to class, committee meeting to committee meeting, deadline to deadline, with some idle banter with batchmates in the in-betweens. This may not seem so different from the IB lifestyle, but really having time on-hand to introspect and explore felt more abundant in school. This, not because college is more strenuous than the IBDP (which was a rather singularly exacting challenge), but because the people and opportunities here really do make the transition to academic thinking easier. Maybe, this is just my honeyed nostalgia coming through, but you do come out of the program with a nuanced and fresh perspective on the world. Personally, those global perspectives are really coming in handy with my Anthropology minor.

For those of you currently waiting for the DP programme to be over, I hear you. You'll always be able to make time for yourself and if you aren't, you'll always have the option to ask for help. Life after is really not that different from life in the program—you keep pursuing knowledge, making friends, learning from shared stories. You've already accomplished incredible things and it's only a few more incredible things until you get to the really incredible part.

For those of you who have only just started, you've got a wonderful adventure ahead! You'll reach crests and troughs of self-discovery, alongside the near-constant never-ebbing workload that you'll have gathered by now. Each day, you'll have made some progress—even if it was just one new IB command term you finally figured out or just resting—so pat yourself on the back!

With all the chaos of the world right now, I've found that learning to care and foster empathy in each of my decisions has come to be the most useful skill from the classroom. I hope the IB journey helps you find that too.

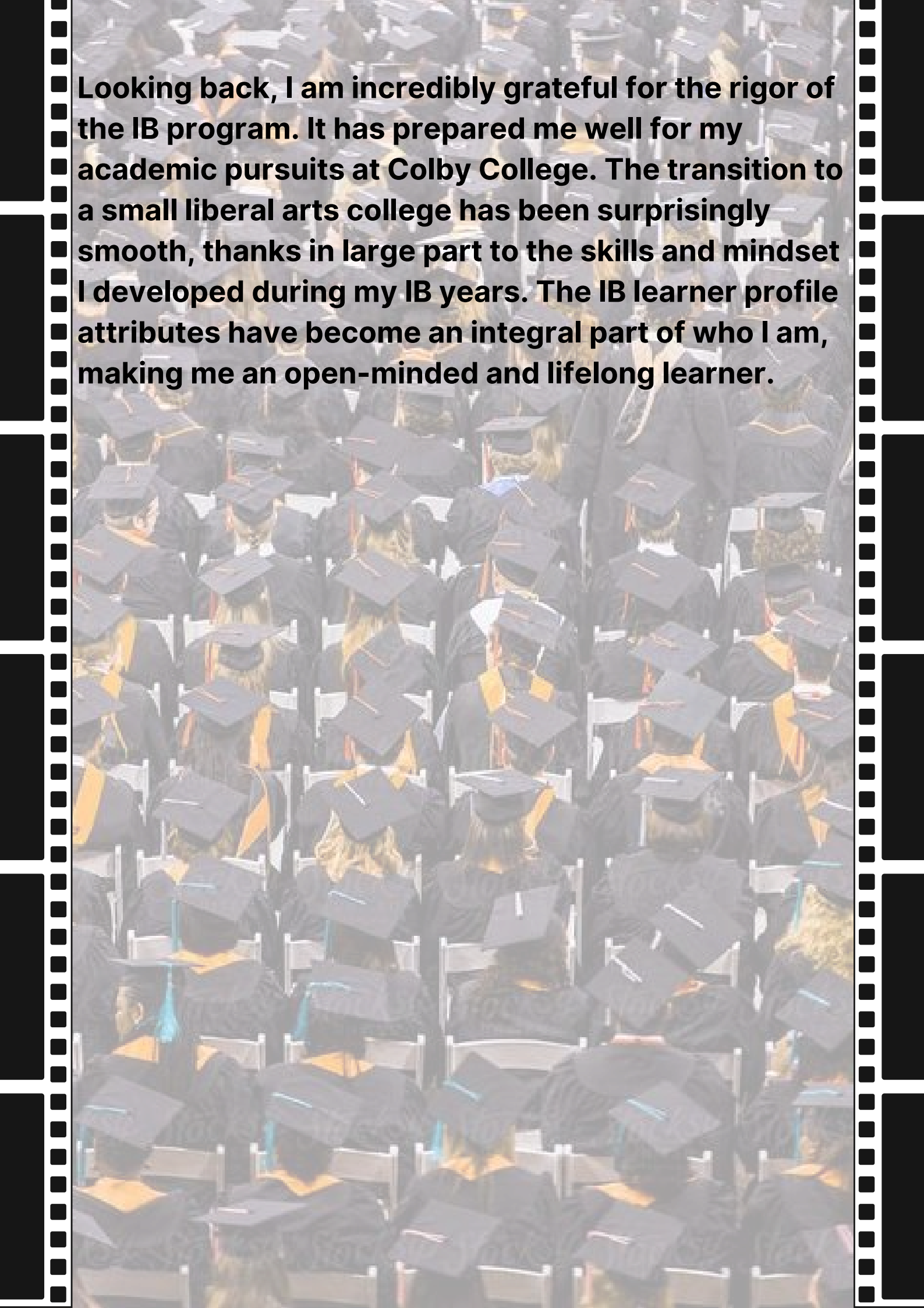
Ananya Pathak, Batch of 2024
Currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts from St. Xavier's College, Mumbai

S6: E4
Alumni Talks

-Rhea Mehta, Class of 2024

In the 14th century, the most ambitious merchants embarked on a two-year journey from China to Rome. In the 21st century, the most ambitious learners embark on a two-year journey to earn the IB Diploma. Both journeys are fraught with challenges, but the rewards far outweigh the hardships. For the merchants, the reward was valuable goods to trade. For IB learners, the reward is a resilient mindset and critical thinking skills that equip them to navigate the complexities of the real world.

Reflecting on my own IB journey, I recall countless moments of intense focus and intellectual stimulation. Whether it was the late nights spent rewriting my Extended Essay or the countless hours delving into the intricacies of economic theory, every challenge honed my critical thinking skills.
There were undoubtedly moments of doubt and frustration, but I was fortunate to have the support of the Podar community. The faculty and fellow students formed a network of encouragement, helping me persevere through the toughest times. Student organizations and events, such as the Podar Climate Symposium and PMUN, provided opportunities to connect with like-minded individuals and gain fresh perspectives.



Looking back, I am incredibly grateful for the rigor of the IB program. It has prepared me well for my academic pursuits at Colby College. The transition to a small liberal arts college has been surprisingly smooth, thanks in large part to the skills and mindset I developed during my IB years. The IB learner profile attributes have become an integral part of who I am, making me an open-minded and lifelong learner.



2024 1s 2ep HD

Read enriching pieces from our excellent faculty in the 7th season of Luminous 2024!

Cast: Ms. Pinki Panchal, Ms. Rushali Shah

Genres: Culture and Identity, Education

S7: E1
Fearless You

-Pinki Panchal, IBDP Faculty

Can you be so dear?
One who cannot feel fear, with you my dear
May the stars feel shy; to appear in the sky
But you can be so bright; Just like a sunlight
May the orcas feel shy; to deep dive
But you can be my dear one; with whom I can always smile.
You can be my hive; where I can deep dive.
In the ocean of stones and all curse loves
Be with no one but you; I can always survive.

S7: E2

The Power of Experiential Learning in Economics

-Rushali Shah, IGCSE faculty

As an Economics teacher, I firmly believe that learning extends far beyond textbooks and theoretical discussions. In today's dynamic world, it is crucial for students to connect their academic knowledge with real-life situations. This is where experiential learning plays a pivotal role.

Economics, at its core, deals with decision-making, resource allocation, and understanding the forces that shape our everyday lives. By integrating practical experiences into the learning process—through case studies, simulations, field visits, or even class discussions on current economic events—students gain a deeper understanding of how economic principles operate in the real world.

For instance, when students analyze the local market or participate in budget simulations, they aren't just memorizing definitions; they're developing critical thinking skills and learning how to apply economic theories to actual scenarios. This hands-on approach not only makes learning more engaging but also equips them with the tools they need to make informed decisions in their personal and professional lives.

Incorporating experiential learning allows students to see Economics not as a distant, abstract subject, but as a living, breathing part of their everyday existence. And that, I believe, is how we prepare them to be insightful and responsible citizens of tomorrow.



S7: E3

What Football is Not

-Hyginus D'souza, IBDP faculty

A goal is built up in a matter of seconds; it's scored in a fraction of one.

Yet, football is not about that fraction of a second. It's about the endless hours, days and years spent worshipping the game.

All those tiring laps on hot days; the repetitive drills that pay no immediate dividends; staying home when your best friends are living it up on late night outs; even looking away from that comforting donut that's crying for your attention.

Football is not about a spark of brilliance, it's about the fire that burns inside you, driving you to be the best person you can be.

Credits

Grade In-Charges

Aalia Contractor

Chantelle D'Amello

Rahi Shah

Riddhi Kwatra

Saisha Nimbalkar

Editors

Hrishika Sangharajka

Manasi Mehta

Muskaan Patel

Schanna Muliyil

Designers

Aalia Contractor

Ira Gupta

Kamya Ramachandran

Pearl Kothari

Shoyongdipto Choudhary

Design element: Canva, Adobe

THANK YOU

until next year!

LUMINOUS 2025

Nostalgia | Wildlife | Pop Culture

Emerging Fashion | Exploring Different Cultures



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The identities, passions and values of students are important and everlasting, and foster impactful discovery and growth. We at Podar International school believe that each student has within them a creative spark and passion that can fuel them to achieve greatness, and the will and desire to express themselves and reflect on the world and their place in it.

The culmination of these values lies in the Luminous magazine. Luminous lights the path, promoting the self-discovery and creativity needed to foster meaningful development of students. Luminous is a student-led initiative that spans various domains, including poems, essays, photography, art and so much more, and students are given a chance to express themselves and their views on these domains. The students create, reflect and design meticulously, perfecting every strand of their work, and provide their perspectives. Luminous is the magazine for the student's voice!

While the current magazine encompasses themes of nostalgia, wildlife, pop culture and more, we hope to expand our scope, and utilize the complete capabilities of the platform to allow greater engagement and expression. The magazine hopes to build every year, pushing the boundaries, and expanding into new territories and mediums. Luminous was a spark lit in 2016, and today, the flame still burns bright. It is more than a magazine, it is an initiative, showing the commitment and desire needed to foster creativity.

The current edition is only a start, and I hope that the future only holds more growth for luminous, may it's reach continue to spread into the hearts and minds of all the students working towards it, and to the numerous readers. The spark is lit, and it is now time for the light to shine the brightest, and for the luminous passion to last forevermore.

-Director Principal
Dr Mrs Vandana Lulla



CONTENT

1. Nostalgia
2. Wildlife
3. Pop Culture
4. Exploring Different Cultures
5. Emerging Fashion
6. Message from touch.edu
7. Memory Lane
8. Our P.O.V.
9. Credits

Nostalgia

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1		3	4	5
6	7	8	9		11	12
13	14		16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

A Magic Carpet Ride through the Nostalgic World of Disney

By Naina Bhatia - 8D

ATL Skill - Research Skills

Have you ever come across a Disney title while trying to find a movie to watch and felt suddenly transported back to your young self, curled up on the couch, popcorn in hand lost in a world where anything was possible?
Ever heard an old Disney song and you're suddenly eight again, imagining you have magical hair like Rapunzel or ice powers like Elsa?
There is definitely something special about these movies we grew up watching. They made us believe in magic and hope and they made our imagination ten times greater. From the alluring castles, to the charming characters and of course the trustworthy sidekicks, they aren't just a part of our past, they are a part of who we are.
But what is it that makes these timeless tales so nostalgic?
Well, there are too many reasons to mention in just an article but today we are going to delve into a few of the important ones which make these fantasies the lovable and magical stories they are. So, are you ready?! Well, buckle your seatbelts and join the magic carpet as I take you through “A whole New world” of dreams and imagination.
Whoosh! Looks like we have reached our first destination! Welcome to the first island in the working of Disney magic-Storyville.

Magical Stories

As said by Robert McKee “Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world.” Using the art of storytelling each Disney movie takes you on an unforgettable journey filled with adventure, love and self-discovery combining romantic moments and plot twists with a touch of humour. For example, take the movie “Tangled.” It takes us on an unimaginable journey through how Rapunzel, a lost princess, gets to escape her small world inside a tower and reach the dream she’s always wanted to with the help of someone she never imagined would help her- Flynn Rider, a thief who inevitably leads her to her real family. Just rewatching that last scene where she finally reunites with her long-lost parents still sends shivers down our spines.
Well, I know you would love to stay longer in Storyville but don't worry our next destination will be just as exciting. So, hop back aboard and let's fly away!
Woah! Do you hear that, that beautiful song that’s being sung? What island is this? Hop off and lets find out!

Musical Numbers

I understand it must be a little embarrassing to admit but I'm pretty sure every one of you has tried to dance or sing to “Under the Sea” or “Let it Go” when you were younger. I'll admit it, I have! But that's okay, because it's not your fault that these numbers are so catchy and uplifting! These songs have such deep enforcing meanings while being so melodic to listen to that they have somehow stuck with us all these ages and captured a special place in our hearts. Listening to these songs now still jolts us up with happiness and I bet if you listened to "Your Welcome” from Moana right now you'd probably be jumping up and down trying to imagine you are Maui. Time to leave and visit the last part that makes these tales the classical and timeless ones they are!

Renowned Characters and Life Learning Lessons.

Of course, there can't be a movie without characters! But Disney has not just created any normal variety of characters- It has made a whole league of timeless personalities that have stuck with us all these decades while still leaving a remarkable impact on our lives. How can we ever forget the famous, ever so loyal Woody from “Toy Story” who was brave, determined, smart and always cared for his friends like they were his family or the fierce and brave Mulan who would do anything to save her country and her family’s reputation. Even the comical sidekicks like Mushu, Pascal, Pumba and my personal favourite Olaf just made the movie more impactful with their witty jokes and clever words.

These movies did not just provide us with entertainment, they taught us important lessons of love, bravery, and true self. For example, take the movie “Frozen”. It teaches us the importance of love, self-confidence and the bond of sisterhood. It shows us that love is not just romantic but can be between family and friends. Or “The Lion King” which emphasises on the circle of life and finding our own unique path after overcoming severe loss. Or even Aladdin reminded us that our worth is not determined by our status but by who we are on the inside.

Sadly, we have reached the end of our journey on the magic carpet! But don’t worry you’ll be back soon enough. Disney continues to produce live action versions of each film and though these films do have same characters, great music and the same storyline there’s something particular about the animated world of the original Disney that holds a special charm. They show us how it’s okay to believe in magic no matter how old we are and mostly all Disney movies show us how to follow our paths no matter how wild they are and never give up on them no matter how tough they might be to achieve

Like Walt Disney himself once said ”Laughter is timeless, imagination has no age, and dreams are forever.”

Echoes of Nostalgia

Shimona Chopra IBDP2

ATL SKILL- THINKING

Humans are an amalgamation of the experiences they go through and the people they meet. Every interaction, every encounter holds some significance in your life. For example, I know I wouldn't be the same person without the round scar on my knee from when I fell down the slope or the faded brown color of my hair from when I dyed it flame red. We all may evolve and change, but we carry parts of our past with us and flashes of memory tend to transport us back to those moments. Nostalgia is a complex feeling which can hit you like a knife to the chest. A sudden sharp longing to go back to simpler times when life was easier and brighter is an experience we can all relate to. I keep contemplating whether nostalgia brings a sense of happiness or deep despair to our lives. Nobody is ever fully content with the present and thinking about how the past days were better may bring solace to many.

In my new room, I'm surrounded by a mountain of my fancy things and everything is just how I envisioned it. But the half-empty closet of my sister's clothes always hits me with nostalgia. Just looking at her few odd clothes left behind because they weren't good enough made me think of how we went from laughing together in bed every night to whispering on video call. " I'll be back in an hour" turned into " see you next month" in the blink of an eye.

Oh what I would give to go back to 2014, when we were just little girls playing dress up in our hot pink room. Princesses danced on the wall behind us, games and toys were scattered on the floor and the sunny days seemed to stretch on forever.

Nothing saddened us or hung like a cloud over our shoulders. I remember how curly and long my hair once was, cascading down my tiny back, before I chopped it all off. I open photo albums and look at us sitting on shopping carts while sticking our tongues out, wishing to relive that moment just once. I know growing up is not easy but nostalgia makes it harder not to reminisce about all the times i will never get back. Life is full of nostalgia and it comes in waves when you least expect it; just driving by the beach reminds me of the parties I threw as a child and a random clip of an old song on the internet brings tears to my eyes because i'm reminded of a time my late grandfather found comfort in listening to the same songs.

I open my laptop to write this article and I'm greeted by a sticker of my foster kitten. He sadly passed away recently due to an accident. I touch that sticker everyday, because i cannot go back in time to touch his soft fur one last time. I look at the videos I have with him and smile at our time together while tears form a pool on my pajamas. I can still feel his tiny paws scratching me as he runs up to his perch on my shoulder, though I know it won't happen ever again, I'm glad that I am able to remember the happy times we had together.

Nostalgia doesn't always have to be a sad emotion, it can remind us of the precious gift of living in the present. Even in psychology, nostalgia is often considered a positive and adaptive emotion when experienced in moderation. It can enhance well-being, provide meaning, and strengthen social bonds. The things we do now, the memories we create now, will make our future selves nostalgic, longing to come back to this moment again. It also reminds us of how we've grown and what we value, and it can be a source of motivation and identity which grounds us in who we are while helping us cherish memories without needing to relive them.

It is truly a blessing to be able to remember and look back on the things that make life worth living. A new study reveals brain oscillations associated with memory retrieval alter in the moments before death suggest the brain may replay significant life events just before we die. Even in the last moments of our existence, our brain plays the most nostalgic memories we have made. If the last emotion we feel is nostalgia, how can it be all bad?

Discovering the Joy of Learning through IB

Vivaan Patel - Alumni

ATL Skills- Thinking and Research

IBDP Economics has become the first academic subject that I genuinely enjoy studying. It transformed my perception of academics, which used to feel like a series of tasks that had to be completed. Now, economics captivates me, especially with topics like macroeconomics and international trade. I find myself reading the textbook with the same enthusiasm as I would a favorite novel.

The process of analyzing economic scenarios and writing 10- or 15-mark essays feels rewarding and stimulating, not like a chore. I'm always eager to discuss case studies and plan answers with my friends, turning what used to be "studying" into a collaborative and enjoyable activity.

This course has not only deepened my interest in economics but also changed the way I view learning altogether. It has also made me excited for the future, where I can delve even deeper into economics at university.

Reflection of My Journey Through this School.

By Naayel Qaazi - Alumni

ATL Skill - Reflection Skills

Looking back on my 15 years at this school, I feel a wave of memories and emotions. I remember the excitement of my first few years, the nervousness each time I moved up a floor, and the challenges I faced with new subjects. Now, as I get ready to leave this place for the last time, it's hard to believe how much has changed. From those early, playful days in primary to the intense work of the IB Diploma, each year has shaped me in ways I could never have imagine

In primary school, learning was so much fun. We had the Primary Years Programme (PYP), where our teachers encouraged us to explore and try new things. I especially loved Units of Inquiry (UOI). In these classes, we got to do hands-on projects and dive into different topics—from ancient cultures to the environment. Learning didn't feel like "studying" back then; it felt like play. I remember our UN Goal Days, where we got to work on creative projects about global issues. We painted posters, made models, and presented our ideas to each other. Those days were exciting and showed me that learning could be both meaningful and enjoyable.
Looking back, I realize how important these years were. They helped me build curiosity, think creatively, and connect with my classmates. The friendships I made during these years, working together on projects and exploring new ideas, are still some of my most treasured memories.

As I grew older, moving up each floor of the school building was both exciting and intimidating. Each floor symbolized a new level of responsibility, tougher classes, and bigger expectations. When I started in IGCSE, I faced my first real academic challenges. Subjects like Economics and Business Studies felt difficult at first. The terms were unfamiliar, and the concepts were hard to grasp. I remember feeling overwhelmed and doubting myself at times.

But, bit by bit, I started to understand. I put in the extra time, asked for help when I needed it, and slowly, I got better. Economics and Business Studies, which once felt impossible, became two of my favorite subjects. Not only did I manage to get through the difficulties, but I grew to enjoy them. These years taught me that hard work really does pay off and that it's okay to struggle—sometimes that's just part of the process.

Moving to the top floor for the IB Diploma felt like a huge leap. The workload was intense, and everything felt more serious. It wasn't just about learning facts anymore; it was about thinking deeply, questioning what I learned, and making connections across subjects. The Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge were challenging in ways I hadn't experienced before. I had to push myself to analyze, reflect, and really think for myself. It was hard, but it also taught me a lot about discipline and focus.

The IB Diploma brought a lot of stress, but it also gave me a huge sense of accomplishment. I learned that I'm capable of handling more than I thought possible, and I found ways to keep going, even when things got tough.

Now, as I get ready to leave this building, everything feels different. I remember when moving up each floor felt intimidating, yet now, leaving it all behind feels nostalgic. Each classroom, each hallway, and even the stairs I climbed every day carry memories of friends, teachers, and the ups and downs of growing up. I've spent most of my life here, and leaving it all feels surreal. This place isn't just a school; it's where I've grown up.

After 15 years at this school, I'm finally ready to say goodbye. I can't deny that there's a sense of relief in moving on—I'm eager to see what lies beyond these walls and to face new challenges.

The IB Diploma, with its endless deadlines and late nights, was intense. Leaving behind those pressures, the strict routines, and the endless tests is something I've been looking forward to.

Yet, as much as I'm ready to move on, there's a part of me that knows I'll always miss this place.

Road To Success

By Zidane Mahetar - Alumni

ATL Skill - Self Management Skills & Reflection Skills

IB was a tough curriculum but with the help of amazing teachers, I have been overcoming obstacles one by one. Chemistry is my favourite subject because I love playing with chemicals that's why I have chosen chem as my EE subject The workload of IB was immense but it can surely be done when you have the right friends around you to help you out along with laughter, it's like working hard and enjoying at the same time. CAS was the best way to showcase my love towards football. Along this crucial and rigorous journey, there were days when you felt like giving up but with the help of amazing support, you just kept on going and there were days of laughter knowing that we all would get through this together. What kept IB captivating is the opportunities you get through CAS and the individual will automatically change into a new person as he/she learns time management and a growth mindset.

The harder the journey, the greater the story.

My Experience Through Visual Arts

By Prisha Jain - Alumni

ATL Skill - Reflection Skills

My journey in IBDP Visual Arts has been one of growth and exploration, evolving from foundational skills in DP1 to deeper conceptual and technical work now in DP2.
In DP1, I began experimenting with different techniques to overcome challenges like perspective and detail, especially in architectural sketches of the Chand Baori and the Taj Mahal. This phase of trial and error laid the groundwork for the more ambitious projects I'm working on in DP2, where I've developed a unique artistic language.

Inspired by artists like Siddharth Kerkar, I started working with unconventional materials like pop, sawdust, and cement to create textured compositions. One highlight is my map-inspired works based on Mumbai's roads and islands, blending structure with abstraction to explore both personal and urban narratives. This phase has helped me focus on Criteria C, diving deeper into themes of identity, space, and construction in my process portfolio.

My latest pieces, like the wood grid with plaster of Paris, showcase my growing command over materials and my intentions as an artist. Moving from experimentation to an increasingly authentic expression of my voice, my journey has evolved to reflect both technical skill and thoughtful concepts, blending art and architecture in ways that feel distinctly mine.

Essay on my journey of Economics in IBDP

By Aarnav Sapani - Alumni

ATL Skill - Reflection Skills, Critical Thinking Skills

In my journey through IBDP Economics, I've gained insights into fundamental concepts that underpin global economies, with a particular fascination for trade and the intricacies of various economic policies. Exploring trade taught me how countries interact and depend on each other, each bringing unique resources and expertise to the global market. I've also studied different trade policies, learning how they impact nations and individuals on multiple levels—social, political, and economic. The process of analyzing policies has strengthened my understanding of how governments use tools like tariffs and subsidies to regulate markets and safeguard their economies.

Applying these concepts in my Internal Assessment (IA) was an enriching experience, as I could see the real-world impact of trade policies on specific markets. This practical application brought classroom theories to life and honed my analytical skills, allowing me to see beyond theoretical knowledge. I evaluated data, used models to assess the outcomes of policies, and gained a clearer perspective on how changes in trade policies directly affect economies, businesses, and consumers.

Economics is undoubtedly challenging, and I faced hurdles in understanding complex concepts like elasticity, market equilibrium, and the multiplier effect. To overcome these, I reached out to teachers, collaborated with classmates, and dedicated extra time to review. I also found that real-world case studies helped make abstract ideas more tangible and memorable.

This knowledge will be invaluable beyond IBDP, as economics equips me with a framework to understand the world, especially in architecture. By understanding the economic forces behindproject financing, market demand, and resource allocation, I can make more informed decisions, helping me balance creativity with practical constraints. This subject has laid a strong foundation for applying economic insights in real-world scenarios, enabling me to navigate and contribute to the economic and architectural landscapes effectively.

Nostalgia as Reflection

By Tanay Mody - Alumni

ATL SKILLS- REFLECTION

Everyone told me IB was just ‘sleepless nights’ and ‘endless stress’ but one voice really stuck with me. My friend and senior, Farish Pradhan, once said, ‘Don’t listen to anyone; nothing is tough’. His advice was simple, stay consistent from day one and stick to deadlines.

I won’t say it was all easy (especially because I did slack off here and there). But one thing I learned is that if you fall behind, it’s completely manageable to catch up. Sometimes, it only takes a single focused day to get back on track. You’ll still have plenty of time for fun with friends, going out, and enjoying life beyond studying.

So, hold your head up and remember to work hard, but don’t forget to take breaks and enjoy the journey. This is your last chance to experience high school with the friends around you before everyone moves on to new paths.

Take it all in, the challenges, the memories, and the laughs. One day, you’ll look back and realize it was worth it.

The Start of Something New

Raghav Senthilvel- Alumni

ATL SKILLS- REFLECTION

Joining the computer science subject class when I undertook the IBDP curriculum was one of the best decisions to be made by me. From spending 5 hours in front of the computer screen trying to debug one mistake in a 300 line code to sitting in front of papers and writing them down in a tense moment. It wasn't ever easy or natural, but hard work always takes control. I started off by getting a 4 in my first ever CS exam to now be one of the top scorers in the class, constantly getting either 6 or 7. This improvement in the subject made me see my love towards it and in turn this led me to choose it as my major for my future endeavors. The only thing I would change is how late I started coding, because once I start I will never feel the need to stop.

My Journey Towards Fulfilment

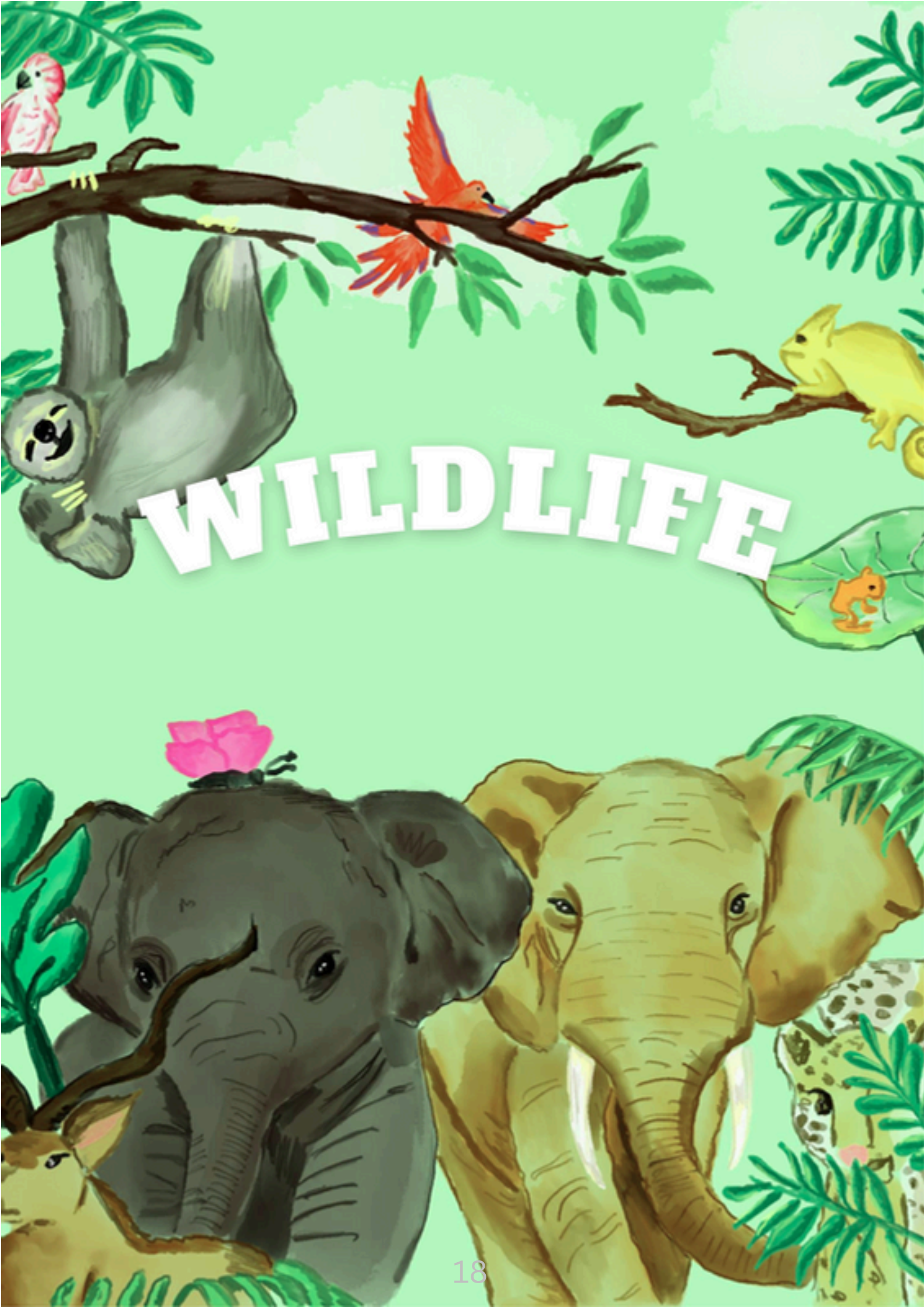
Ayaan Singh-Alumni

ATL SKILLS- THINKING AND SOCIAL

Switching schools from my original environment of comfort to a new environment of new possibilities was not easy(until i met Vivaan and Daksh) In the very start of my journey I always thought I was destined to be a loner and I would never make friends because I was considered to be a reclusive person. However, slowly with time in the strive and the need to prove myself to others and fulfill my dream of being the best in IB I started interacting with everyone else.

It was hard at first, I wanted to quit and during one time I wanted to quit IB and never look back and run back to my old school where I found comfort in. Slowly and steadily I found people who liked me around them and matched my perspective.

Moreover, IB taught me how to be more inclusive towards others allowed me to have an open mind when talking to other people. My willingness to follow this idea of inclusiveness and interacting I met so many amazing people and looking back it was a good decision to give inclusiveness a try and make new friends which made me a better person overall. A person who was open to everyone and not the awkward one last year who feared even the tiniest interaction or criticism and I hope to carry my attitude further on to become a better person.


WILDLIFE

Growl As A Tiger

By Agniv Roy 6C

ATL SKILL: Creative Thinking

Growl as a tiger,
scuttle like a spider.
Soar like flamingoes,
roar like lions.
Dive like seals,
slither like snails.
Swim like crocodiles,
sprint like cheetahs.
Creatures all around us that curl,
crawl and fly
which one is your favourite and
tell us why?

Artworks
Shivtej Patel 6C
ATL Skills: Creative Thinking

"Even if someone like me can't draw properly,
can we at least save the stripes?"



Ishayu Mitra 6A

ATL Skills: Creative Thinking

This photograph captures the beauty of nature through the image of hibiscus flower which is highlighted through the muted background reflecting the observation, patience and appreciation for nature.



Saving Wildlife: A Collective Responsibility

By Aarav Bhardwaj 7C

ATL Skills: Creative Thinking/Research

The term "Wildlife" encompasses a broad spectrum of flora and fauna, their habitats, ecological systems and the web of interdependence that binds them. Wildlife conservation is the science of preserving living species including plants and animals as well as their respective habitats. Wildlife is integral to the world's ecosystem, as it provides balance and stability to Earth's nature. The goal of wildlife conservation is to ensure the survival of these species, and to educate people on living sustainably with other types of species.

Animals who live in a wild environment can be called wild animals, which are also referred to as "wildlife" in the modern world. Some examples include: Fox, Eagles, Bull, etc. Deserts, forests and rainforests, are ecosystems where wildlife exists.

In the past, human interference was minimum and the number of wild animals was quite high. Contrary to that, the human population currently has grown rapidly to eight billion.

This means natural resources are being consumed faster than ever by everyone with the result that several species have become extinct and several others are on the verge of being so. Other threats to wildlife include the introduction of invasive species from other parts of the world, climate change, and poaching. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) estimates that 42,100 species are at risk for extinction. Remember, wildlife is something which cannot be recreated or constructed. Once it is gone, it is gone forever.

Humans can rebuild a pyramid but they cannot rebuild ecology.
So, how we can conserve species? Conserving wildlife requires collective efforts from individuals, communities, organizations, and governments. Here are some practical and impactful ways to contribute to wildlife conservation:

1. *Protect Natural Habitats* - Support reforestation and afforestation projects to restore ecosystems. Avoid activities that lead to habitat destruction.

2. *Reduce Pollution* - Minimize the use of plastic and dispose of waste responsibly. Support clean energy and sustainable agricultural practices.

3. *Support Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks* - Visit these areas responsibly and support conservation programs. Respect rules and avoid disturbing species.

4. *Prevent Poaching and Trading* - Raise awareness about the dangers of poaching. Report suspicious activity related to wildlife trafficking.

By taking the above actions, one can positively promote wildlife conservation which is the need of the hour and the call for the survival of the future. Albert Einstein once said "The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it".

A Trip To Gir

By Zuri Savla 9B

ATL Skills: Reflection







Gir, a sanctuary in the cultural state of Gujarat brimming with a wide array of Asiatic lions and several species that beguiles umpteen tourists every year. This narrative talks about my experience of spotting lions in the forest. My school took us on a trip to Gir in march this year; hence I was extremely zealous to visit the forest and encounter magnificent animals.

As we entered the vast forest at 4 in the morning, nippy air engulfed us and chills went down through my spine as we drove in an open jeep in the tenebrosity.

Our first glance was a deer swiftly crossing our path which was a jump scare. Everyone was hoping to spot a lion as soon as possible before the sun hit its peak as it is rare to find one in the daylight. Minutes passed by we caught a glimpse of several other species such as wild boars, peacocks, monkeys, etc. but we could not spot a single lion, we all were despondent.

Later that morning, the sun baked the barren land and wrapped us in its warm rosy glow. The color of trees and the land camouflaged with all the animals.

At that exact moment, in the middle of tranquilness and the serenity, we caught the sight of a ginormous lioness walking towards us. I froze like a deer caught in headlights, everyone was intimidated and were trembling looking at such a huge beast coming towards us.

Abruptly, she roared stridently as though calling her cubs, everyone was astounded and could not believe our eyes as she started walking right next to us.

Ahead of this, we spotted two humongous lions walking right past us and giving us a look. Everyone gasped and shook in terror, but it was a phenomenal experience. Later that day we saw a family of lions in distance which was a mesmerizing sight.

Moreover, we also spotted a light quenching his thirst by the small lake, everyone was engaged in clicking pictures which later scared the lion away.

We saw 9 lions in total with umpteen other unique animals and birds.

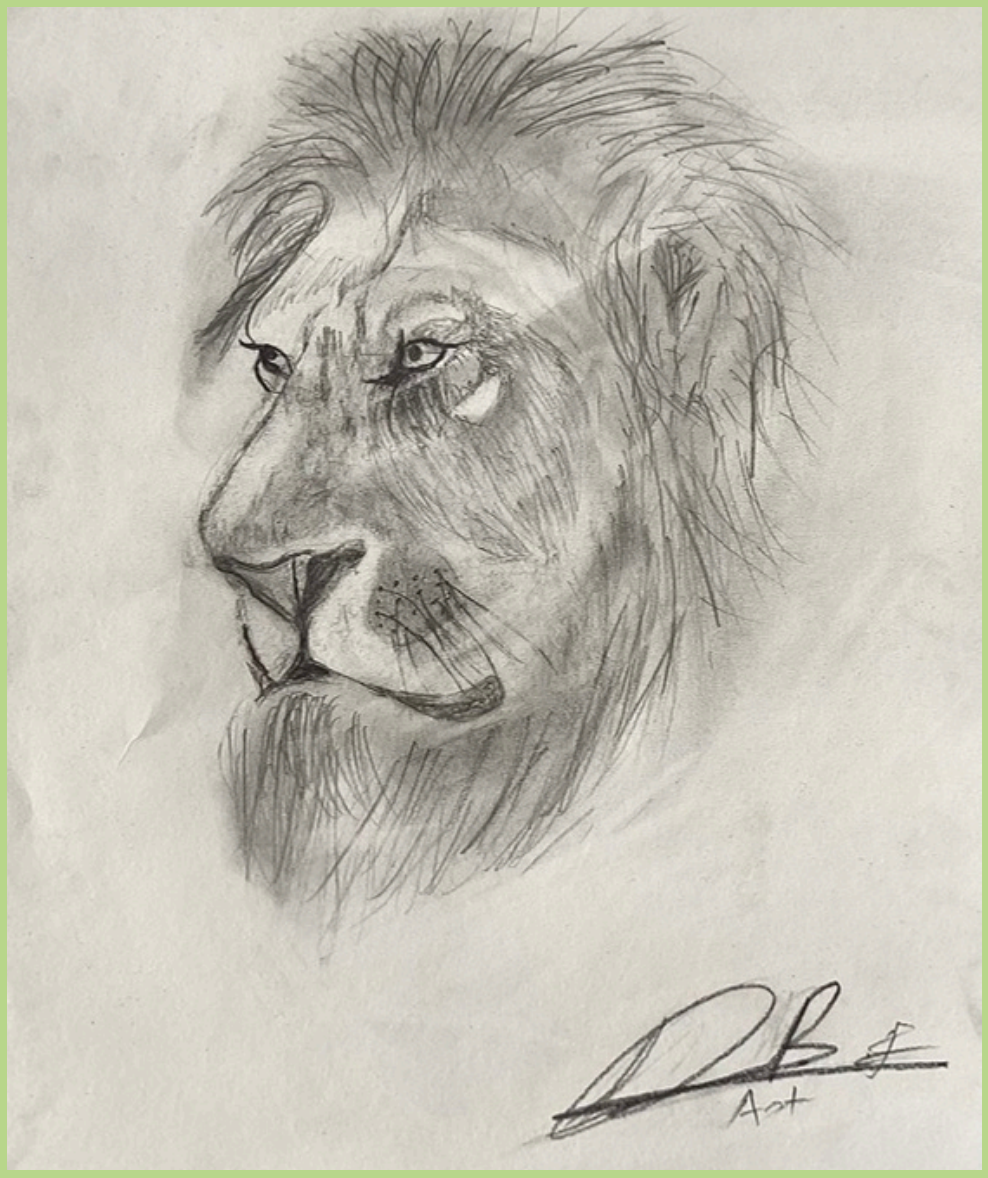
The entire journey through the forest was marvelous. I was on cloud nine spotting different animals and mainly lions that too this close. These memories will be etched in my mind for eternity.

Artworks

Daksh Bandal 10E

ATL SKILL- Creative Thinking

"Strength in every stroke, Creativity in every line."



Article on Wildlife

By Vivek Chunduru IBDP 2

ATL Skill - Critical Thinking / Reflection

The blazing sun towers above the vast savannah. while a canvas-like sky with clouds shaped like whisps of smoke. Craggy and majestic mountains decorate the picturesque national reserve while the dry yet still fertile land sustains the 90 species of mammals and birds. The 8th Wonder of the World Masai Mara National Park, boasts this and much more.

As a wildlife enthusiast since my early days, my trip to the Masai Mara was long-awaited. Located in Kenya, around six hours from the capital Nairobi, the national park is home to the Big 5: lions, Elephants, Leopards, Rhinos, and Cape Buffalos. Mara means spotted in the local language; ironically, that is what people flock here to do.

A game drive starts at around 7:30 am and ends at 5:30. The consensus would be that driving around and seeing animals for so long could cause ennui but it is quite the contrary. A Land Cruiser is the preferred means of travel through the semi-rural roads of the park while its pop-up roof is ideal for game watching and ventilation throughout the weather.

We started our journey by spotting a flock of zebras and wildebeest sprawling across the plains just enjoying the pleasant weather. Young zebras were playing around while the older ones were reprimanding them. An idyllic scene almost one of a large joint family meeting for a reunion. On the distant horizon, we could see the branching necks of Masai Giraffes enjoying their staple acacia tree leaves. The world's tallest mammals are often running across the plains with their herbivore brethren creating a symbiotic relationship.

Masai Mara also boasts a variety of deer, including gazelles, antelopes, and their unique deer The Topi. These small beasts often stick together in herds, foraging for food along with protecting each other from larger animals.

An unspoken rule of the Mara is that if one does not see an herbivore for 100m, it is likely to be the territory of a big cat. Unlike, India where tigers rule this domain, lions, cheetahs and leopards are the top of the food chain. These beasts boast rippling muscles along with years of experience of hunting as they scout the distance for their next meal. The best sight I saw was a pride of teenage lions just interacting with our group of cars. They were pawing at our cars and playing around with them. Their nonchalant attitude proves that they are the king of the jungle. Lions live for upto 25 years and are lovingly called Simba in the local language.

Another sight of the Mara is the Mara River. It spans across countries eventually branching into Tanzania. This river might look calm with an absence of rapids but on its banks bask hundreds of hippos and crocodiles. These gentle beasts are known to be extremely aggressive towards any oblivious prey. Speaking of prey, one herbivore stands out in the often predator-dominated field of the Mara. I am referring to the Cape Buffalo. They boast 1500 kg of muscle along with deadly horns that span up to 3.3 feet in length. These stay together in herds and can destroy a lion if it comes too close for comfort.

A trip to Africa would be incomplete without seeing the African Elephant. The term gentle giant comes to mind while seeing these majestic beasts. They bask around swamps as they eat 12 hours a day and rely on vegetation to fuel their sedentary lifestyle. They love bathing their kids and often do so in order to remain cool.

An evening on the savannah often means cool air and a return to your camp as entry closes at 7 pm to prevent poaching. My integration into the world of wildlife was one of pure euphoria and I can no t wait to visit another reserve again.

Photography

Vihaan Deb IBDP 2

ATL Skills: Critical Thinking / Reflection | Creative Thinking





The best sight I saw was a pride of teenage lions just interacting with our group of cars. They were pawing at our cars and playing around with them. Their nonchalant attitude proves that they are the king of the jungle. Lions live for upto 25 years and are lovingly called Simba in the local language.

Another sight of the Mara is the Mara River. It spans across countries eventually branching into Tanzania. This river might look calm with an absence of rapids but on its banks bask hundreds of hippos and crocodiles. These gentle beasts are known to be extremely aggressive towards any oblivious prey. Speaking of prey, one herbivore stands out in the often predator-dominated field of the Mara. I am referring to Cape Buffalo. They boast 1500 kg of muscle along with deadly horns that span up to 3.3 feet in length. These stay together in herds and can destroy a lion if it comes too close for comfort. A trip to Africa would be incomplete without seeing the African Elephant. The term gentle giant comes to mind while seeing these majestic beasts. They bask around swamps as they eat 12 hours a day and rely on vegetation to fuel their sedentary lifestyle. They love bathing their kids and often do so in order to remain cool. An evening on the savannah often means cool air and a return to your camp as entry closes at 7 pm to prevent poaching. My integration into the world of wildlife was one of pure euphoria and I can not wait to visit another reserve again.

I took these 2 photos of lions during my trip to the Serengeti. I have always revered wildlife since my childhood and as is lions are inherently awesome, thus taking photos to capture such a memory was a no brainer.

Photography

Aditya Tewari IBDP 2
ATL Skills: Creative Thinking











These are some of the pictures of tigers i captured during my visit to Ranthambore (Rajasthan). Photography be it nature, wildlife or of people has always been one of my interests and hobbies. Tigers are one of favourite animals due to fearless and savage nature. Tigers are a symbol of power, beauty, and bravery in Indian culture and mythology and are also featured in cave paintings and seals from the ancient Indus civilization.

Photography

Mayukha Mangipudi IBDP2

ATL Skills: Creative Thinking

These are pictures I took at flamingo sanctuary at bhandup. I went there with my family, gazing at the birds and being fascinated with every flap of their wings. These photos capture the feeling of motion and represent an important family bonding experience.







Shreya Prasad IBDP2

ATL Skills: Creative Thinking



A rustle in the leaves of a tree nearby as it wobbles back and forth. A hop from one branch down to another, peckering away at soft brown buds, arching over its food, and protecting it cautiously, is a parakeet. A sight that often remains invisible in even broad daylight due to its variances of green blending in with the leaves—as if they are one. A pop of blue soothing the eyes and a crimson red drawing attention to its face. Nature's beauty could never be admired enough by the eye of the beholder. Even so, one tries to capture the moment through a picture.

Photography

Shreya Prasad IBDP2
ATL Skills: Creative Thinking



I took this photo to capture a moment that many may overlook: the beauty in everyday life. Pigeons may blend into the backdrop of city life, but they have a quiet grace of their own—perched alone,
existing peacefully in the unnoticed corners of our world. The rough texture of the wall, contrasting with the softness of its feathers, adds to the peaceful simplicity of the scene. It is a reminder that even
the most common birds hold a beauty of their own, if only we take a moment to notice.

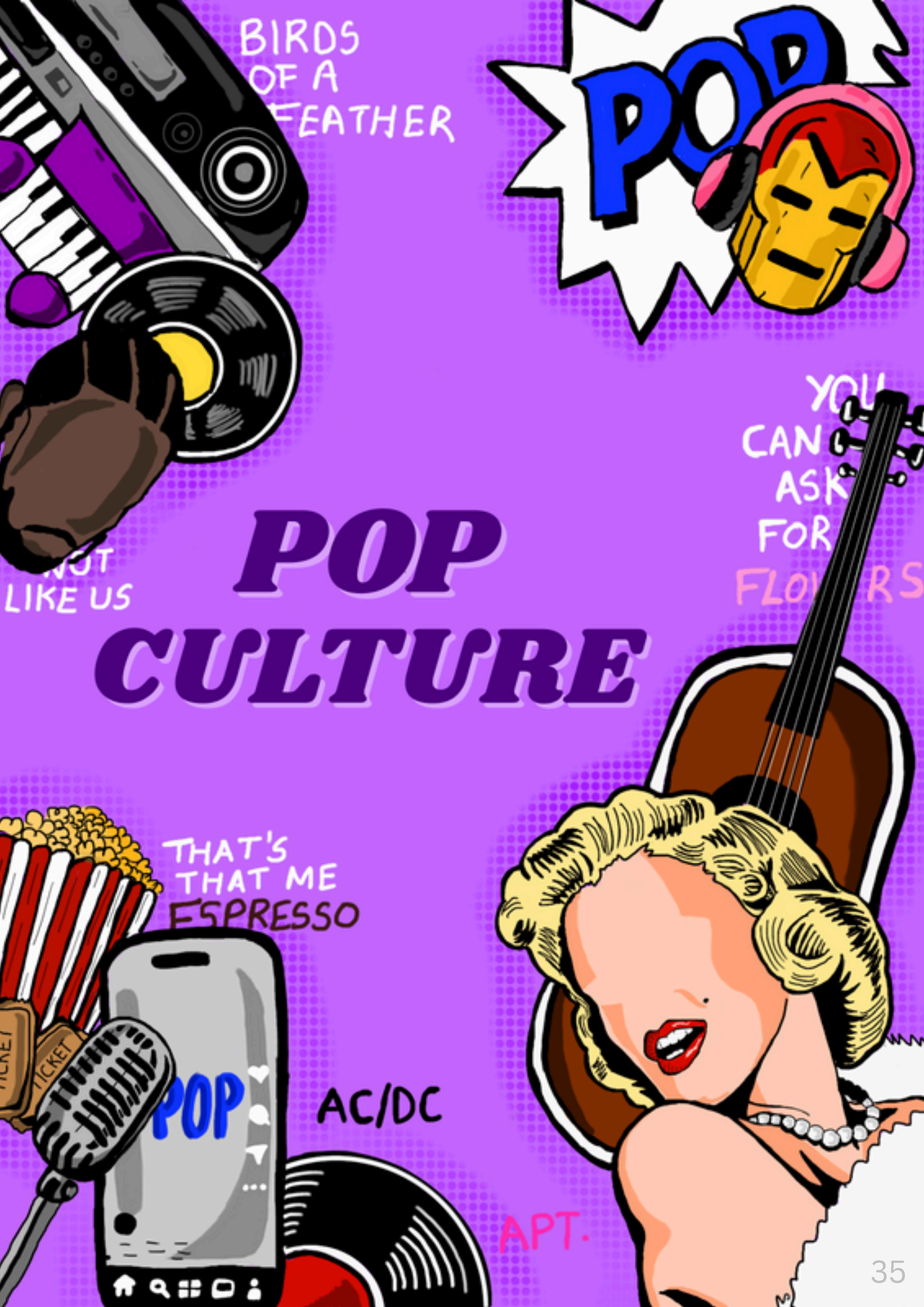
Artworks

Anagha Nair IBDP2
ATL Skills: Creative Thinking





I decided to paint a duck, merely for representative beauty of wildlife, attesting nature's intricacy. Ducks are incredible examples of resilience and adaptability-things that remind us of just how delicate the balance is in ecosystems.

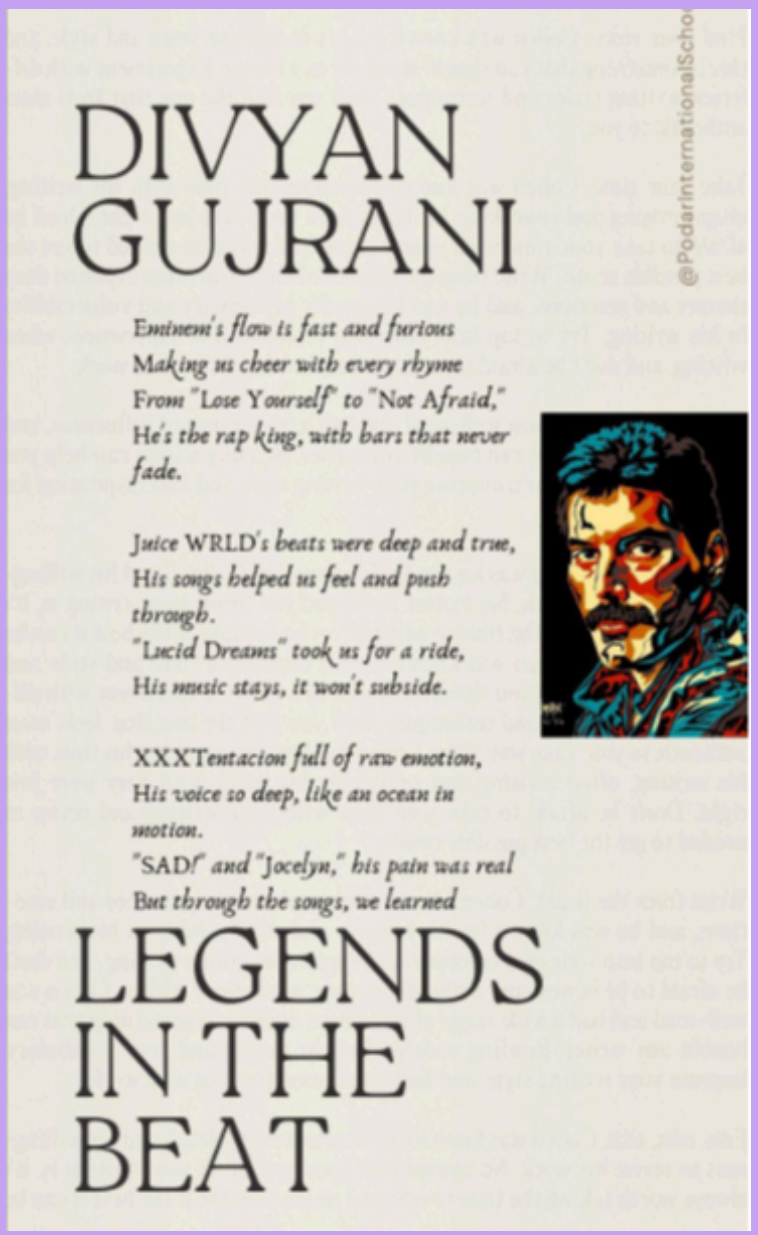

BIRDS OF A FEATHER
POP
NOT LIKE US
POP CULTURE
YOU CAN ASK FOR FLOWERS
THAT'S THAT ME ESPRESSO
TICKET
POP
AC/DC
APT.

Legends in the Beat

ATL Skills - Creative Thinking

Divyan Gujrani 6B

This poem connects to the approaches to learning skills of creative thinking. The student uses symbolic elements and vivid imagery to communicate ideas in a thoughtful way.



DIVYAN GUJRANI

Eminem's flow is fast and furious
Making us cheer with every rhyme
From "Lose Yourself" to "Not Afraid,"
He's the rap king, with bars that never fade.

Juice WRLD's beats were deep and true,
His songs helped us feel and push through.
"Lucid Dreams" took us for a ride,
His music stays, it won't subside.

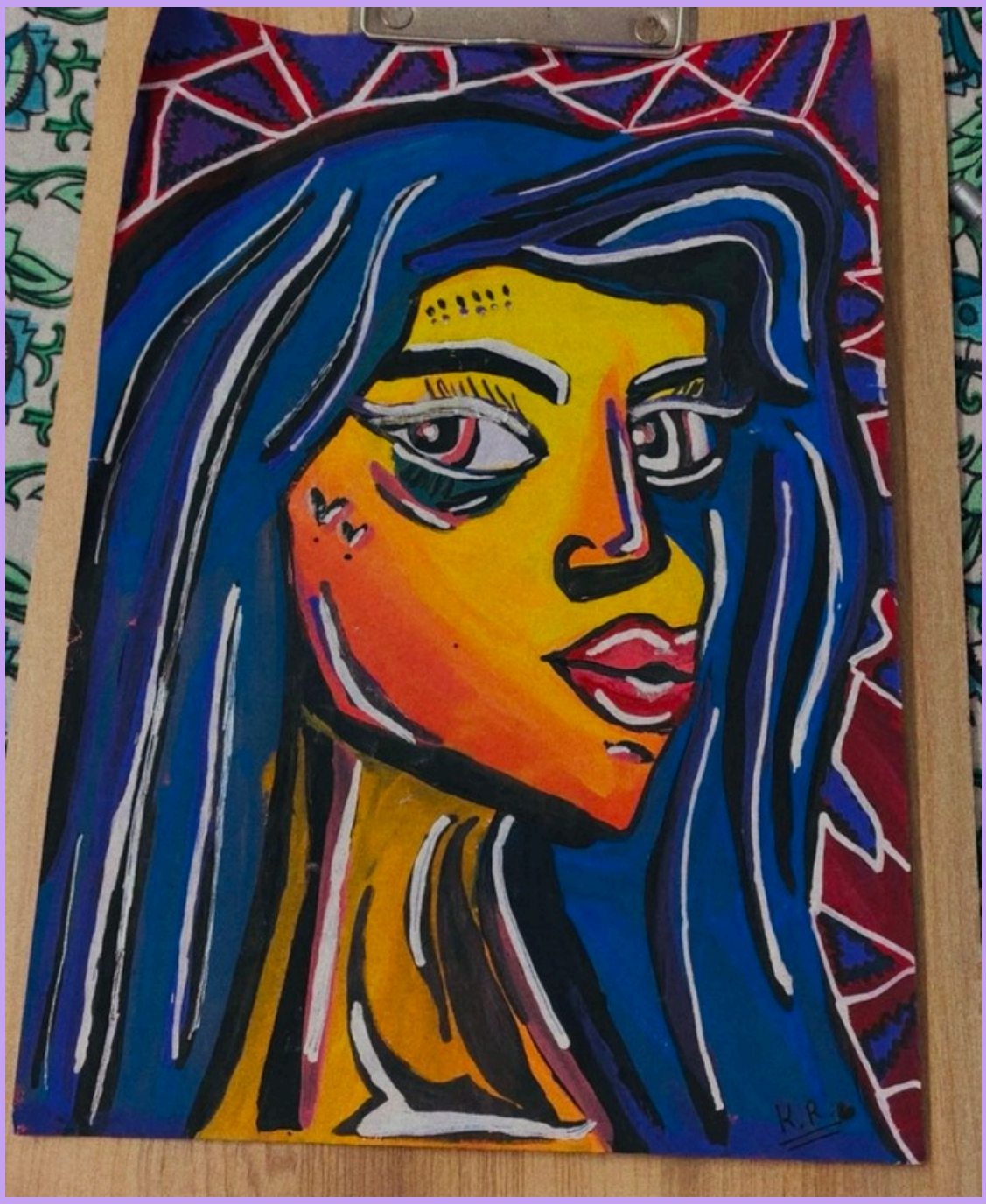
XXXTentacion full of raw emotion,
His voice so deep, like an ocean in motion.
"SAD!" and "Jocelyn," his pain was real
But through the songs, we learned

LEGENDS IN THE BEAT

ARTWORK

Krishika Rohilla 8D
ATL SKILL- creative thinking

"Art speaks without words"



Fandom Fever

Dhyan Rajan, 10A

ATL skill - Research

In recent years, fan culture has evolved beyond simple admiration, having the most influence in shaping identities, and even social movements. Fan groups that roam around icons like Taylor Swift, K-pop idols, and the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) have shown that fandoms are more than just communities—they are catalysts for expression in the pop world.

Swifties

Taylor Swift has built an empire by doing more than making music—she is created a world in which her fans feel seen, valued, and understood. Swift encourages her followers to decode hidden messages in her lyrics, posts, and videos. This intentional connection allows fans to feel as if they are part of an inner circle, elevating their relationship with Taylor to a personal connection. Swifties have proven themselves not only loyal but also active, rallying around her during public battles for her music rights and supporting causes she champions, such as LGBTQ+ rights. Swift's latest Eras Tour solidified her influence further, with cities across the globe turning her concert stops into events that boosted local economies and inspired charity drives.

The Bands of K-Pop

The rise of K-pop has turned global fandom into a cultural tank, blending music with social consciousness in a way that resonates deeply with Gen Z's values. Groups like BTS and BLACKPINK attract diverse audiences, breaking language barriers. K-pop fans, known as "stans," often find a sense of unity and identity within their own. K-pop fans have also made collective activism a core aspect of their fandom. During the Black Lives Matter protests, K-pop fans organised mass donations and took to social media to counter negative hashtags. They have also led environmental campaigns and fundraisers, their advocacy makes it more than music—it makes it a lifestyle and a movement.

MCU

The Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) has grown from the imagination of Stan lee's mind into a sprawling universe that uniquely identifies their fans. Gen Z resonates with the MCU because of its comedic characters that embody modern-day struggles and complexities. Films like Black Panther, Captain Marvel, and Shang-Chi have introduced heroes who represent distinct cultural backgrounds, helping in conversations around representation and empowerment. Marvel fans go beyond simply enjoying the films—they build communities where they analyse story arcs, share theories, and host charity events. Marvel cosplayers, fan artists, and writers turn their admiration into creative contributions, while social media groups allow fans to see the superheroes as reflections of their own values and aspirations.

The Pop Culture Effect

Shambhavi Lambe IBDP-2

ATL Skills- Research

Ever noticed how half the cafeteria was suddenly sporting the same style of chunky sneakers last month? Or how that one catchy TikTok phrase somehow made its way into every classroom conversation? Welcome to the fascinating world of pop culture – the invisible force that's quietly orchestrating our daily lives. Think about your morning routine. You probably woke up to music streaming from your phone, scrolled through social media to check what your favorite celebrity wore to last night's premiere, and maybe even tried to recreate that viral makeup trend before heading to class. Pop culture isn't just entertainment; it's the air we breathe.

This influence was hilariously evident during our recent Children's Day celebration. The student organizers transformed what could have been a traditional event into a pop culture festival. The stage echoed with trending catchphrases, and presentations were peppered with references from viral social media content. Who could forget the moment when the entire auditorium erupted in laughter as the students seamlessly wove popular expressions into their performances? It showed how pop culture has become our shared language, transcending traditional communication barriers.

But pop culture isn't all fun and games. Through music, movies, and social media, it's become a powerful platform for raising awareness about issues that matter to our generation. When popular artists speak about mental health or climate change, they're not just sharing stories – they're starting conversations that echo through our hallways and into our class discussions.

The influence extends to our sartorial choices too, walk down any school corridor, and you'll see how social media trends shape our fashion choices. Like how last year, everyone suddenly embraced the aesthetic of baggy jeans after they gained prominence online. It's like one day you wake up and the entire school has collectively decided on a new dress code.

Social media influencers have also emerged as the new tastemakers of our generation, wielding unprecedented power in shaping opinions and trends. From book recommendations that create instant bestsellers to workout routines that flood school gymnasiums, these digital creators have become the compass by which many navigate their lifestyle choices. Their impact extends beyond mere product endorsements – they're actively shaping our aspirations, values, and even our career choices, with many students now dreaming of careers in content creation and digital media.

Moreover, pop culture serves as a lens through which we interpret and understand contemporary society. It reflects our values, challenges our perspectives, and often pushes us to question established norms. The memes we share, the shows we binge-watch, and the music we stream all contribute to shaping our worldview and social interactions.

As we navigate this pop culture landscape, it's worth asking: Are we mindless followers, or can we be selective participants? The answer lies somewhere in between. While it's natural to enjoy and engage with popular trends, being aware of their influence helps us make more conscious choices about which aspects of pop culture we want to embrace.

Perhaps that's the real power of pop culture – not in dictating our choices, but in offering a menu of possibilities from which we can choose, creating our own unique blend of identity and expression.

What Football is Not!

Hyginous D'sousza - Teacher

ATL SKILLS - Reflection

A goal is built up in a matter of seconds; it's scored in a fraction of one.

Yet, football is not about that fraction of a second. It's about the endless hours, days and years spent worshipping the game.

All those tiring laps on hot days; the repetitive drills that pay no immediate dividends; staying home when your best friends are living it up on late night outs; even looking away from that comforting donut that's crying for your attention.

Football is not about a spark of brilliance, it's about the fire that burns inside you, driving you to be the best person you can be.

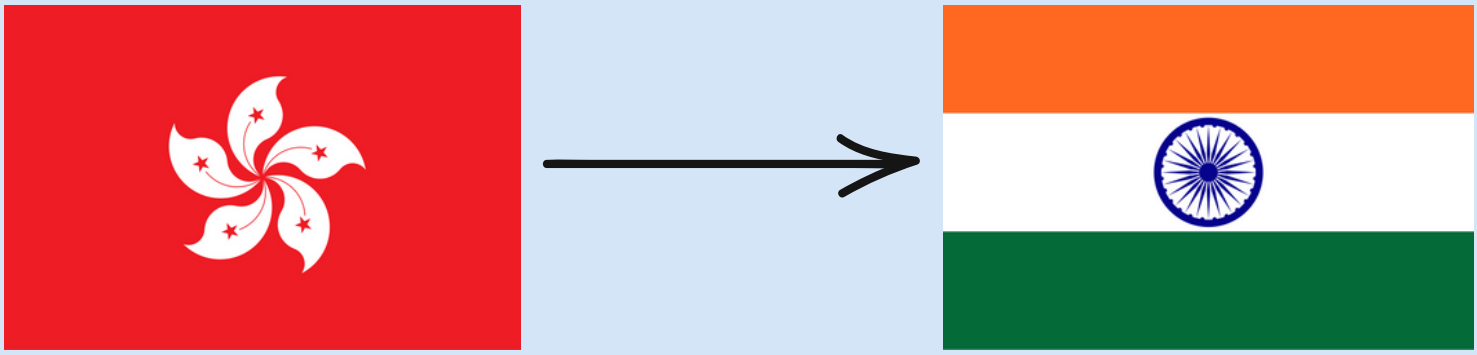


Exploring different cultures

From Hong Kong to India- a journey of joy!

Harji Khushi 7A

ATL SKILL - CREATIVE THINKING



Oh, Hong Kong, Oh Hong Kong, was so bright and so fair,
How quickly you faded, how lost was your flair.
We had to move on, find a place with some cheer,
So, we searched the world wide, both far and near.
To China we went, where respect meets the eye and where everyone was shy.
Then Japan, with its bows and its polite, quiet grace,
Every corner and step, a most curious place.
From lands full of dishes that give us fright,
Where they munch on bugs and strange bites every night.
Yet at last, we found magic, a wondrous place. It was dear India, with temples and laughter, so free. In villages small and cities so grand,
Everywhere we looked, there was humor at hand.
A place full of joy, of color, of song,
In India, we found thats where our hearts belong.

JAPAN

ZIDANE CRUZ 7A
ATL SKILL - CREATIVE THINKING

These. are beautiful pictures that i took during my trip to Japan. It captures the serene landscapes and cultural heritage through my perspective.















EMBRACING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

AARAV BHARDWAJ 7C

ATL SKILL - THINKING AND RESEARCH

Culture is known as ways of life, including arts, beliefs, and institutions of a population which are passed down from one generation to another. It is also sometimes called as “the way of life for an entire society.” Culture is often so impactful and inalienable that it defines a set of patterns of human activity within a society or social group including codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, and art, to name a few. Every part of the world has their very own culture, something which makes all of us special and gives us pride.

It is important for mankind to explore other cultures. Learning about other cultures promotes respect and tolerance and when you learn about another culture, you learn about their beliefs and different perspectives. This will transform you into an empathetic open-minded person. Interacting with different cultural backgrounds allows you to understand and appreciate other people’s ethnicity. What’s more, you will also learn stories from one another and master the art of enjoying your own culture from different perspectives.

Engaging in multicultural experiences allows you to experience a vast range of things away from your comfort zone.

The road to exploration of different cultures can begin with reading books and articles, travelling to different countries, attending and participating in multi-cultural events, connecting with people from diverse backgrounds, taking language or cooking classes, utilizing online resources and virtual experiences, and engaging with cultural media.

Travelling is probably the best way to explore other cultures, as evidenced through my own personal experiences. Travellers have the unique opportunity to immerse themselves in distinct backgrounds, deeply comprehend their practices and customs, as well as truly appreciate how culture shapes and influences daily lives of individuals.

Always remember that before respecting other cultures, respect your own culture without being judgemental or egocentric. This is the key to making meaningful connections and embracing other cultural differences while travelling and becoming a responsible GLOBAL CITIZEN.

SCENERY

BY LARA AGARWAL - 7C

ATL SKILL - CREATIVE THINKING

This artwork shows a small rural community living simply and peacefully in nature. The people are sharing the space and working together, which shows kindness and respect for others. The scene also reflects caring for the environment, as they live in harmony with the trees and natural surroundings without harming them. It reminds us to be responsible citizens by using resources carefully and helping one another. The people in the picture seem understanding of each other's needs, creating a sense of togetherness. Overall, it teaches us to live kindly, respect nature, and support others in our community.



AROUND THE WORLD

ISHIKA AGGARWAL AND DEBASHREE MUKHERJEE

ATL SKILL - CREATIVE THINKING AND COLLABORATION

"Divided by culture, united by creativity"



विश्व की अलग-अलग संस्कृतियों के बारे में जानना

संगीता गुप्ता
ए.टी.एल. कौशल - आलोचनात्मक सोच और अनुसंधान

आज के युग में वैश्वीकरण और इंटरनेट के माध्यम से दुनिया भर की संस्कृतियों के बारे में जानना बहुत आसान हो गया है। यह ज्ञान व्यक्ति को न केवल जागरूक बनाता है, बल्कि व्यक्तिगत और सामाजिक स्तर पर कई लाभ प्रदान करता है।

विभिन्न संस्कृतियों के बारे में जानने से हमारी जानकारी का दायरा बढ़ता है। हमें अन्य देशों के रीति-रिवाज, परंपराएँ, कला, भाषा और इतिहास के बारे में गहराई से समझने का अवसर मिलता है।
अन्य संस्कृतियों के संपर्क में आने से हम विविधता की सराहना करना सीखते हैं। इससे जाति, धर्म, और नस्ल के आधार पर होने वाले भेदभाव को कम करने में मदद मिलती है।
विभिन्न संस्कृतियों से प्रेरणा लेकर नई कलाएं, विचार और नवाचार उत्पन्न हो सकते हैं। कई लेखक, कलाकार और वैज्ञानिक अन्य संस्कृतियों से प्रेरित होकर महान कार्य कर चुके हैं।
वैश्विक संस्कृति को समझने से अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार, पर्यटन, और अन्य व्यवसायिक क्षेत्रों में सफलता की संभावना बढ़ती है। यह किसी भी पेशेवर के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण कौशल है।
अलग-अलग संस्कृतियों को जानने से नए दोस्त और नेटवर्क बनाने में मदद मिलती है। इससे अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर अच्छे संबंध स्थापित किए जा सकते हैं।

जैसे हर सिक्के के दो पहलू होते हैं, वह यहाँ भी सच है जैसे -

वैश्विक संस्कृति को अपनाने की होड़ में लोग कभी-कभी अपनी स्थानीय परंपराओं और मूल्यों को भूलने लगते हैं। इससे सांस्कृतिक पहचान पर संकट उत्पन्न हो सकता है।यदि संस्कृतियों को पूरी तरह से न समझा जाए, तो यह गलतफहमियां और पूर्वाग्रह पैदा कर सकता है। कभी-कभी अर्ध-ज्ञान व्यक्ति को भ्रमित कर सकता है। विभिन्न संस्कृतियों के संपर्क में आने से सांस्कृतिक विलय होता है, जिससे सांस्कृतिक विविधता खत्म होने का खतरा हो सकता है।बड़ी संस्कृतियों का प्रभाव छोटी संस्कृतियों पर पड़ सकता है, जिससे असमानता बढ़ सकती है। यह सांस्कृतिक और आर्थिक शोषण का कारण बन सकता है। किसी संस्कृति के रीति-रिवाजों और प्रतीकों का गलत तरीके से उपयोग या व्यावसायिक लाभ के लिए अनुकरण उस संस्कृति का अनादर कर सकता है।

अंततः यह कहा जा सकता है कि विश्व की अलग-अलग संस्कृतियों के बारे में जानना हमारे विकास और वैश्विक समझ के लिए बेहद फायदेमंद है। यह ज्ञान हमें सहिष्णु और सृजनात्मक बनाता है। हालांकि, इस प्रक्रिया में हमें अपनी संस्कृति को संरक्षित रखने और दूसरों की संस्कृति का सम्मान करने की आवश्यकता है। किसी भी ज्ञान को संतुलन और विवेक के साथ अपनाना ही उसे लाभदायक बनाता है।

VOGUE

emerging FASHION



DRESS DESIGNS

Renaya Batra IBDP1

ATL SKILL- CREATIVE THINKING









FASHION THROUGH AGES

SAISHA MERCHANT IBDP2

ATL SKILL - CRITICAL THINKING AND MEDIA LITERACY

Through economic crashes and wars, fashion has remained a constant. During the 2008 economic crash we embraced minimalism; through World War two we introduced shorter hems. How has fashion evolved to through constantly changing times?
The Renaissance era occurred from 1300-1600. These years encouraged creativity in fields such as art, science and technology. These years are often referred to as the beginning of modernisation. Fashion in this period was a complete contrast to minimalism we see in society today. Layering many articles of clothing and accessorising with bold jewellery was a common practice. Colours such as red, green and blue were also fairly popular. Corsets were promoted to encourage an hourglass body type that is often even glamourised today. Various elements like mutton sleeves, embellishments and velvet are seen in today's runways, particularly haute couture.
The renaissance has had a lasting impact in today's modern world and fashion is a clear example of that.
The French revolution in 1789 was a political and social movement that changed France completely. This movement led to the abolishment of the monarchy and the rise of modern ideologies. Prior to the revolution, fashion statements included corsets, powdered wigs, extravagant jewellery —— maximalism was all the rage. Fashion was more about social standing rather than individuality.

As the revolution progressed, like the monarchy, such grandeur was also abolished. The people of France shunned luxurious clothing as a symbol of oppression for more practical clothing. Empire-waisted dresses replaced corseted gowns. Lighter fabrics such as silk grew in popularity.

Although, post the revolution extravagance resurrected from the ashes in wealthier circles. Regency fashion came to existence at this time. Embroidery and more sultry looks grew in popularity, while still implementing fabrics such as silk and muslin.

The Roaring Twenties was the result of an economic boom post World War one. Women were given more rights than they ever had before.

To rebel against the centuries of oppression, for the first time in history, women wore dresses that only reached till their knees, rejecting the patriarchal society. Clothing such as corsets were exiled as boyish body types were considered the ideal body in this era. Pearls and feathers were often used to elevate clothing, a trend still used by a couple fashion houses.

Hollywood stars such as Clara Bow influenced dramatic makeup looks, further promoting mass consumerism.

Fashion from this age is more than just a look; it was a movement against the patriarchy.

The 90s was an era dominated by supermodels. Models such as Naomi Campbell and Kate Moss were looked up to by women of all ages. This period rebelled against social norms and was one of the most diverse periods of fashion the world had ever witnessed.

Naomi Campbell paved the way for black women globally by achieving worldwide recognition for being the first black Victoria's Secret angel, opening Prada shows and working with top brands such as Chanel and Louis Vuitton. She redefined the beauty standard with her bold features and long legs.

On the other hand, Kate Moss coined the term ‘Heroin Chic’. Heroin Chic is a waif look with dark circles, pale eyes and skinny body structure. Although she was considered ‘too short’ for the industry, she took the world by storm with her scandals and effortless looks. She rebelled against the delicate image women were forced to portray for a rebellious, uncontrollable persona. She influenced the implementation of fur jackets, leather skirts and messy makeup; a complete contrast to the feminine handbook women were expected to follow. Her signature So Kate Louboutins were a staple. Both of these women inspired a new route of feminism, straying from traditional ideologies.

Pandemic fashion is the term used for trends that emerged during the 2020 Covid-19 epidemic. Although fairly recent, this global event led through a breakthrough in fashion history. In an area where comfort comes last, the flip was switched where comfort became the main focus. Clothing such as sweatpants and hoodies were globalised like a wildfire.

Fashion has developed through history. Fashion has not just been about the way one looks but also one’s beliefs. Fashion is about rebellion and individuality, a voice when voices weren’t heard.

Y2K CULTURE

Anushka Sriram IBDP2

ATL SKILL- RESEARCH

At the dawn of the millennium, the future was shiny and digital. Two and a half decades later, everyone's living the dream all over again. From animal print to ballet flats, frosted lip gloss to digital cameras, the early 2000's are back in culture relevance. Gen Z has dubbed this style as Y2K – after the y2k millennium bug that put the public into panic in 1999. So why is everybody suddenly obsessed with the culture and aesthetics of a time period that was once considered a relic?

It's no phenomenon that fashion circles back. There's documented consistent evidence of trends, fashion and aesthetics recycling every 20 years – which is why many predicted the rise of the early 2000s when we hit 2020. Many attribute the resurgence of y2k to nostalgia, the death of originality, microtrends and even tiktok. I believe it's a meld of all those reasons, precisely why I also believe its death in pop culture is imminent.

Fashion and pop culture thrive on originality and creation, so why do they get recycled so often? For Gen Z, who were either babies or not yet born in the early 2000s, Y2K represents a past they never experienced firsthand. It's oddly nostalgic for a time that they were never a part of (also known as anemoia). The rise of Instagram and TikTok have made it easier than ever for the youth to explore the aesthetics and culture of past decades. Trends went viral these past few years featuring y2k-esque styling, makeup and music videos that allowed users to feel as though they were part of that culture themselves.

A large part of this obsession of categorization and aesthetics comes from the 2020 lockdown, which greatly shaped how we interact with culture. It provided something that felt familiar and comfortable, to belong in a certain group. Psychologists suggest the revival of y2k post 2020 came from a place of nostalgia being used as a coping mechanism via revisiting the past. For many, Y2K embodied a period before the complexities of the world became overwhelming.The entertainment and media industry, sensing this revival, started bringing back music and shows that further fuelled the y2k craze. Artists like Charli XCX, PinkPantheress and Doja Cat channel the glitzy R&B style of the 2000s into their music (2024's most popular album BRAT by Charli XCX is heavily y2k inspired) and brand image (PinkPantheress is often seen wearing animal print and baby tees, a staple of y2k fashion). Even large fashion houses haven't missed the memo; Blumarine, Diesel, and Miu Miu have leaned heavily into Y2K motifs, incorporating metallic fabrics, baby tees, and ultra-low-rise pants into their collections. These looks trickle down into fast fashion, making them accessible to a wider audience. Shows like Euphoria and reboots of Gossip Girl reintroduced the public to the glamour of the early 2000s.

But is this all really a harmless culture embraced by Gen Z? Beyond the glitter lies a fraught history of exclusionary beauty standards, unchecked consumerism, and early internet chaos that cannot be ignored.

Y2K fashion was dominated by low rise jeans and crop tops paired with a hyper-focus on ultra-thin bodies, further encouraged by celebrities and the media industry. The much coveted and admired "heroin chic" look of the time alienated anyone who didn't fit in the narrow beauty standards.

This fostered a culture of body shaming and disordered eating, with many Millennials and the oldest Gen Z'ers admitting surviving the early 2000s body culture was a horrifying experience, and left thousands struggling with body image and food to this day.

The culture also coincided with the peak of fast fashion and celebrity-endorsed brand obsession. The emphasis on disposable trends encourages wastefulness, even more dangerous in today's world that's far more affected by climate change. Early 2000s media lacked any kind of diversity and inclusivity we get today. Racist/homophobic jokes and caricatures ran wild, and the only thing that communities of colour and the LGBTQ community got in the name of representation was a grossly stereotypical side character, of course only serving as an elevating point for the white main character. Thin, conventionally attractive and white figures dominated the aesthetic, leaving zero room for marginalized communities.

However, many argue that the Y2K new age movement isn't a thoughtless replica of the past, but rather a more inclusive homage that embraces body inclusivity, accurate and meaningful representation of marginalized communities and encourages sustainability through thrift culture. Despite these improvements, there is a lot of criticism and discussion that the Y2K revival risks glamorizing an era filled with its own issues. By focusing on the glitter and gloss, it can erase the harmful practices and social issues that defined the time.

While this trend is dominating pop culture as of now, it's likely to fade out soon due to the cyclical nature of trends and the oversaturation of the aesthetic. It's in the nature of trends to come and go, with the 'clean girl look' and 'that girl' already gaining speeding momentum – putting an emphasis on minimalism and simplicity. Once a niche revival, now mainstream with its hallmark styles mass produced by fast fashion and overused by media, Y2K is bound to go soon.

Its ubiquity has made it less attractive to trendsetters, and younger generations like Gen Alpha might tire of an era they never experienced.

The return of Y2K culture reveals more about today's cultural climate than it does about the past. Our world today is full of global crises, new developing technology (like AI), economic instability and political wars. This generation's access to the internet raises a lot more problems with cyber culture too. To this Y2K offers a comforting escape, a reclamation of a moment in time where – according to its followers – life was simpler, even it really wasn't.

Message from Touch.Edu



Touch.Edu is a student based NGO run by students of PIS and few others who are trying to make a difference in the work by helping spread the word and eradicating stigma around the discussion of SA.

On the 16th of December, 2012, a dark and gruesome act against humanity shook our country to its core.

“Awindra and I just finished watching The Life of Pi! It was such an incredible story narrated on screen! I feel the subtle drowsiness settling in now that we’ve got to go back home. As we settled in the bus and started moving, I had this eerie feeling that made my skin crawl, something bad was going to happen. I felt it and so did Awindra...

“Stop the bus! Stop it right here immedia-“

Awindra tried to get us off safely, but before he could do anything the men started hitting him with an iron rod. My brain could only think of whether I would be next and what these sick animals would do to me... and as the fear took over my body and mind, my consciousness was also beginning to shatter into minuscule fragments...”

“We’ve received a report this morning about the brutal gang rape in a moving bus that took place last evening. “Nirbhaya” and her friend, Awindra Pandey boarded an off-duty bus at around 8 PM on the 16th of December. As they boarded the bus, something felt amiss, when they tried to stop the bus, they were attacked by the suspects.

Awindra Pandey suffered severe injuries due to repetitive trauma to the body from an iron rod and is recovering in the hospital at the moment. Whereas, Nirbhaya was brutally gang-raped and beaten repeatedly by the 5 of 6 men, when she resisted the juvenile perpetrator shoved a rusted rod in her, severely perforating and damaging her internal organs. Around 11 PM the two victims were thrown out of the bus, half-naked and bloodied until a passerby found them and got them medical attention."Doctors tirelessly worked to catalyse Nirbhaya's battle for life but with the inebriated abuse her body and mind faced, she succumbed to her injuries 11 days after the trauma.

"The fearless one", Nirbhaya had only been one case for which there was such public uproar that wreaked havoc on the nation. However, the anger and pain quickly fizzled, following the short-lived lifespan of a bubble. Our country still ostracizes the victims and hushes the stories of hundreds of battles fought each day, whereas the perpetrators go through not even a miniscule ounce of shame for their horrid crimes. Despite all Nirbhaya and the ones around her suffered through, justice had only been partially served, as the juvenile rapist has yet to be punished, he has been roaming free with a new name and identity ever since.

We're Touch.Edu, an organisation working towards eradicating the stigma that hangs over the issue, a stigma that we as a community very much created and now must erase. Individuals that had to suffer as children, or male survivors that have often been blatantly shut down for trying to share their story. Trying to shut down their stories does not cause the issue to cease to exist any longer, it inflicts further pain to the victim. We want to ensure the idea that crime truly knows no bounds is thoroughly understood and, in the future, no one has to suffer any longer due to ridiculous stigmas looming around the issue... #AllYouHaveToDoIsTalk.

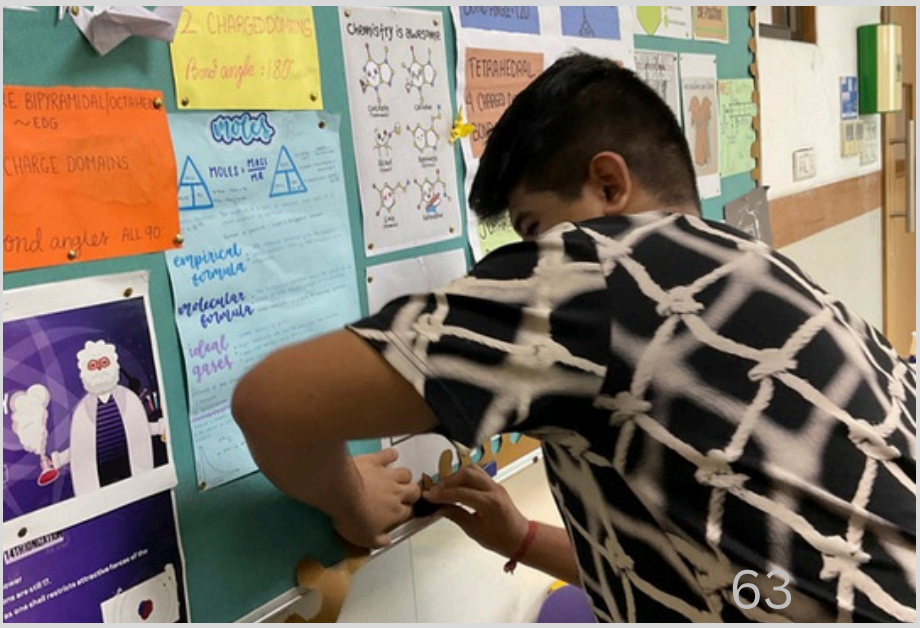
As of now we've conducted workshops and streetplays, along with fortnightly article releases to raise awareness on the issue, but with the voices of all those reading, we could do so much more and catalyze the impact we make on this issue. Reach out to us at: @touch.edu.sa

MEMORY LANE



"Friends made in school are the ones who never leave your heart, even if you leave each other's lives."





"Every classroom is a place to study and a stage to discover myself."

MEMORY LANE



“Group projects taught us that every idea, no matter how small, had value.”





“From building charts to building friendships, teamwork was the real lesson.”

MEMORY LANE



"Working in pairs taught us patience and compromise."





"Projects reminded us that effort doubled when responsibility was shared."

MEMORY LANE



"School days taught us that the toughest exams were not always written on paper."





"Every essay we wrote was less about marks and more about discovering our voice."

MEMORY LANE



“Every story we read in class stayed with us as a mirror of our own journey.”





“The exams we feared most are forgotten, but the lessons they left behind remain.”

OUR P.O.V.

OUR POV

PRAJEKTA SARKAR

"Luminous is the reflection of Podarites . It is our magazine. It is who we are."

Hi, I am Prajekta and I'm the head of luminous 2025. Moving to this new city was hard, but how it welcomed me with both its hands was unexpected. I started my IBDP journey in 2024 when I first came to Bombay. It was also unexpected that, being a new student who knew almost no one, to get selected as one of the heads, and I hope that I'm enough to fulfil the duty as the head to lead others in my team, including the writers, the design team, the formatting department, the photographers the editors, as well as my fellow other 2 heads.

Prashant was an IB DP student of the 2016 batch at Podar International School. He was the pillar of Luminous magazine. Inspired by the effort that he put into creating a magazine so close to every podarite's heart, we wish to pass it on generation after generation.

This year, we chose 5 themes for luminous: which are wildlife, pop culture, exploring different cultures, emerging fashion, and nostalgia. I always see people talking about Luminous as if it is kind of like Vogue magazine, even though it is a school-based magazine, because of how we resonate with the real world. Receiving submissions from grades 6 to 12 is not easy, but seeing everyone being so involved in this magazine makes me happy. With our teacher's guidance and Alba, Piaa and my leadership, we wish to create a platform to not just showcase works of art and literature but also to make people aware of who "Podar International School students" are.

I feel like a school magazine cannot have that much impact if it is not personally attached to you but with all the stories that I have heard from my seniors as well as Ankana ma'am, it makes me realise what it takes to be a part of luminous as well as a part of this school. Lastly, I want to appreciate the eagerness in the eyes of the future generation of editorial, which makes me very proud to understand that luminous will go into the right hands.

OUR POV

PIAA SANTANI

Hi! I'm Piaa Santani and I'm the Head of Luminous 2025.

When we first chose the five themes, I wasn't sure how people would respond, but what we recieved from students across the school was so much better than we expected.

What I loved most about the process was seeing how different people approached the same topics which looked different in each one of the submissions we recieved.

The platform is also meaningful for students themselves. Not only because of the experiences we had as the creators but also because sharing your work in any capacity takes confidence and this magazine gives people a chance to show their ideas to the public.

As you read through it, I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed putting it together!

OUR POV

ALBA KARANDIKAR

"I would say it's an imagination of childhood".

Hi, I'm Alba Karandikar of IBDP 2A and I'm one of the heads of Luminous. I think Luminous a great space for a collaborative experience from all students of Podar. And for them to come and show their real selves and what they are as creative people, not just as students. I think it's unique because it fosters an environment for people of all ages. We have taken students from grade 6 to IBDP, which is grade 12. So I think it provides several different perspectives from several different age groups. And I think that's quite unique. And you can't find that in magazines because children are seen as childish. So their thoughts are not taken seriously and I think that they should be. So any sort of creativity is an expression of yourself. And I think that is how your own personal uniqueness comes out in your artwork or your poems or your literature. Or anything that you are putting forth. And hence I think it gives all the students an area to project who they are.

OUR POV

Our Staff



SCAN TO REVEAL

OUR POV

Our Staff

SCAN TO REVEAL

OUR POV

Our Staff

SCAN TO REVEAL

OUR POV

Our Students



SCAN TO REVEAL

OUR POV

Our Students



SCAN TO REVEAL

OUR POV

Our Students



SCAN TO REVEAL

CREDITS

Heads

Prajekta Sarkar
Piaa Santani
Alba Karandikar

Editors

Aayush Shanbag
Mayukha Mangipudi
Zubair F. Madan

Writers

Vivek Chunduru
Shimona Chopra
Saisha Merchant
Anushka Sriram
Shambhavi Lambe
Ajita Mistry
Diya Gandhi
Anoshka Kulkarni

Art team

Angel Sawant
Ishitta Yadav

Photography

Divyam Doshi
Nishna Khandelwal

Formatting

Medhanya Karthikeyan
Jia Sajnani
Aarna Vats
Keisha Poojari
Renelle Patel
Araina Sandu
Kirti Singh
Paraj Patel

and of course, fellow students and teachers for their support

THANK YOU

